

The Three Fundamental Principles

By Imaam Muhammad Ibn 'Abd-il-Wahhaab
From Text of Al-Usool Ath-Thalaathah

It is compulsory on us to learn four matters:

1. Knowledge i.e. knowing Allaah, knowing his prophet, knowing the religion of Islaam with evidence.
2. Acting upon it
3. Calling people to it
4. Being patient when faced with affliction in its cause -and the proof is in the saying of Allaah the Glorified and the Exalted. In the name of Allaah most beneficent most merciful

"By al-'Asr (the time). Verily! Man is in loss, Except those who believe (in Islaamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (al-Ma'aruf) which Allaah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (al-Munkar) which Allaah has forbidden), and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allaah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islaamic Monotheism or Jihaad, etc)." (103:1-3)

Ash-Shaafi'ee (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "If Allaah did not reveal a plea for His creation except this soorah, then it would have been enough for them." [1]

Al-Bukhaaree (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: "Chapter : knowledge before speech and action and the proof from Allaah:

"So know (O Muhammad ﷺ) that Laa ilaaha illallaah (none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah), and ask forgiveness for your sin." (47:19)" [2]

So he started with knowledge before speech and action. Know, may Allaah have mercy on you, that it is compulsory on every Muslim man and woman to learn the following three matters and to act in accordance with them

That Allaah created and sustained us and did not neglect us but he sent us a messenger. Whoever obeys him enters paradise, and whoever disobeys him enters the hellfire, and the proof is in what Allaah the Exalted said:

"Verily, We have sent to you (O men) a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) to be a witness over you, as We did send a Messenger [Moosaa (Moses)] to Fir'awn (Pharaoh). But Fir'awn (Pharaoh) disobeyed the Messenger [Moosaa (Moses)], so We seized him with a severe punishment." (73:15-16)

Allaah does not approve that anybody is associated with him in worship, whether it be a mighty angel or a sent prophet, and the proof

"And the mosques are for Allaah (Alone), so invoke not anyone along with Allaah." (72:18)

Is that he who obeys the prophet and unifies Allaah in worship then (as a result) it is not permissible for him to befriend those who oppose Allaah and his prophet even if they are the nearest of kin, and the proof is what Allaah the Exalted said:

"You (O Muhammad ﷺ) will not find any people who believe in Allaah and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allaah and His Messenger (Muhammad), even though they were their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred (people). For such He has written Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with Rooh (proofs, light and true guidance) from Himself. And We will admit them to Gardens (Paradise) under which rivers flow, to dwell therein (forever). Allaah is pleased with them, and they with Him. They are the Party of Allaah. Verily, it is the Party of Allaah that will be the successful." (58:22)

Know, may Allaah guide you to his obedience, that al-Hanifiyyah, the religion of Ibraaheem (Abraham), is to worship Allaah with sincere religion to Him. That Allaah has ordered all Mankind with, and for that purpose He created them. Just like Allaah said:

"And I (Allaah) created not the jinn and humans except they should worship Me (Alone)." (51:56)

And the meaning of "they should worship Me" - is "they should obey Me", and the greatest thing Allaah has ordained is Tawheed (monotheism) which is singling Allaah in worship, and the greatest thing he has forbidden is Shirk (polytheism) which is invoking others beside him. And the proof:

"And worship Allah and don't associate any (partners) with Him (in worship)."

The First Fundamental:

So if you were asked: "What are the three fundamentals that a Muslim is supposed to know?" then say: " For a slave to know his Lord, his religion, and his prophet Muhammad ﷺ", and if you were asked: "Who is your lord?" say: " My lord is Allaah the one who is responsible for my up-bringing and the up-bringing of the whole universe with His blessings and He is the one I worship and I have no lord except Him. And the proof:

"All the praises and thanks be to Allaah, the Lord of the 'Aalameen

(mankind, jinns and all that exists)." (1:2)

And everything besides Allaah is an 'Aalam (world), and I am a member of that 'Aalam and if you were asked: "How did you come to know your Lord?" then reply: "With His signs and creations" and from among His signs are the night and day and the sun and moon and from among His creations are the seven skies and the seven levels of the earth and what is above it and what is in between them both and the proof is what Allaah the Exalted said:

"And from among His Signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. Prostrate not to the sun nor to the moon, but prostrate to Allaah Who created them, if you (really) worship Him." (41:37)

And the statement of Allaah the Exalted: **"Indeed your Lord is Allaah, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days, and then He Istawaa (rose over) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty). He brings the night as a cover over the day, seeking it rapidly, and (He created) the sun, the moon, the stars subjected to His Command. Surely, His is the Creation and Commandment. Blessed be Allaah, the Lord of the 'Aalameen (mankind, jinn and all that exists!)." (7:54)**

And a rabb (lord) is: the one who is worshipped. The proof is the saying of Allaah the Exalted:

"Who has made the earth a resting place for you, and the sky as a canopy, and sent down water (rain) from the sky and brought forth therewith fruits as a provision for you. Then do not set up rivals unto Allaah (in worship) while you know (that He Alone has the right to be worshipped)." (2:22)

Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The creator of these things is the one deserving of worship." [3]

The types of worship that Allaah has ordained are Islaam, Eemaan ,and Ihsaan . From it (worship) are supplication, fear, hope, trust, love, reverence, paying homage, sacrifice, vowing , and other forms of worship that Allaah has ordained. All of these are for Allaah and the proof: "And the mosques are for Allaah (Alone), so invoke not anyone along with Allaah."

So he who directs anything from it to other than Allaah is a polytheist and disbeliever. And the proof is what Allaah said: **"And whoever invokes (or worships), besides Allaah, any other ilaah (god), of whom he has no proof, then his reckoning is only with his Lord. Surely! Al-Kaafiroon (the disbelievers in Allaah and in the Oneness of Allaah, polytheists, pagans, idolaters, etc.) will not be successful." (23:117)** And in the hadeeth, **"Supplication is the core of worship". [4]** And the proof:

"And your Lord said: 'Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islaamic

Monotheism)] (and ask Me for anything) I will respond to your (invocation). Verily! Those who scorn My worship [i.e. do not invoke Me, and do not believe in My Oneness, (Islaamic Monotheism)] they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!." (40:60)

And the proof for fear is His saying: "So fear them not, but fear Me, if you are (true) believers." (3:175)

And the proof for hope is the Saying of Allaah the Exalted: "So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord." (18:110)

And the proof for trust is the statement of Allaah the Exalted: "And put your trust in Allaah if you are believers indeed." (5:23)

"And whosoever puts his trust in Allaah, then He will suffice him." (65:3)

And the proof for love, reverence and paying homage is the statement of Allaah the Exalted: "Verily, they used to hasten on to do good deeds, and they used to call on Us with hope and fear, and used to humble themselves before Us." (21:90)

And the proof for fear (khashyah): "So fear them not, but fear Me!" (2:150)

And the proof for turning to Allaah in repentance is "And turn in repentance and in obedience with true Faith (Islaamic Monotheism) to your Lord and submit to Him, (in Islaam)." (39:54)

And the proof for seeking aid: "You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything)." (1:5)

And the hadeeth: "If you are going to seek aid then seek aid from Allaah." [5]

And the proof for seeking refuge: "Say: "I seek refuge with (Allaah) the Lord of the daybreak." (113:1)

And: "Say: "I seek refuge with (Allaah) the Lord of mankind." (114:1)

And the proof for imploring assistance: "(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you." (8:9)

And the proof for sacrifice: "Say (O Muhammad): "Verily, my Salaat (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allaah, the Lord of the 'Aalameen (mankind, jinns and all that exists). 'He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims.'" (6:162-163)

And from the Sunnah: "Allaah has cursed he who sacrificed for other than Allaah." [6]

And the proof for fulfilling a vow: "They (are those who) fulfill (their) vows, and they fear a Day whose evil will be wide-spreading." (76:7)

The Second Fundamental:

Knowing the religion of Islaam with evidence i.e. submitting to Allaah through monotheism and following him in obedience and freeing oneself from polytheism and its people and it is three levels: al-Islaam, al-Eemaan, and al-Ihsaan and each one has its pillars. The pillars of Islaam are five:

To testify that none is worthy of worship except Allaah and that Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allaah

1. To establish prayers
2. To pay zakaat (charity)
3. To fast Ramadhaan (The month of the Islaamic calendar where Muslim fast)
4. And to make pilgrimage to Allaah's Sacred House
5. And the proof for the testimony of faith is the statement of Allaah the Exalted: "Allaah bears witness that Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He is always) maintaining His creation in Justice. Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." (3:18)

And its meaning is "none is worthy of worship except Allaah alone". "Laa ilaaha" negating all that is worshipped with Allaah "illallaah" and affirming it for Allah alone. He has no partners in worship just like He has no partners in His dominion .An interpretation that clarifies this is the saying of Allaah the Exalted:

"And (remember) when Ibraaheem (Abraham) said to his father and his people: 'Verily, I am innocent of what you worship, Except Him (i.e. I worship none but Allaah Alone) Who did create me, and verily, He will guide me.' And he made it [i.e. Laa ilaaha illallaah (none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah Alone)] a Word lasting among his offspring (True Monotheism), that they may turn back (i.e. to repent to Allaah or receive admonition)." (43:26-28)

And His saying: "Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): 'O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allaah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allaah.' Then, if they turn away, say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims.'" (3:64)

And the proof for the testimony that Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allaah is His saying: "Verily, there has come unto you a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from amongst yourselves (i.e. whom you know well). It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He (Muhammad ﷺ) is anxious over you (to be rightly guided, to repent to Allaah, and beg Him to pardon and forgive your sins, in order that you may enter Paradise and be saved from the punishment of the Hell-fire), for the believers (he is) full of pity, kind, and merciful." (9:128)

And the meaning of testifying that Muhammad ﷺ is the messenger of Allaah ﷻ is obeying him in what he commands, believing him in what he informs, staying away from what he forbade and warned about, and that Allaah is not worshipped except through the way he legislated. The proof for prayer, charity and (also) the interpretation for Tawheed is His saying: "And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allaah, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him), and perform Prayer and give charity (zakaat): and that is the right religion." (98:5)

And the proof for fasting is His saying: "O you who believe! Observing the fast which is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Pious." (2:183)

And the proof for pilgrimage is His saying: "And Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) to the House (Ka'abah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allaah, those who can afford the expenses (for one's conveyance, provision and residence); and whoever disbelieves [i.e. denies Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah), then he is a disbeliever of Allaah], then Allaah stands not in need of any of the 'Aalameen (mankind and jinns)." (3:97)

The second level is eemaan (faith) and it is seventy something parts, the highest is "Laa ilaaha illallaah" and the lowest is removing harm from the way. Modesty is (also) a part of eemaan. Its pillars are six: that you believe in Allaah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the last day and that you believe in preordainment, good and bad. The proof for these six pillars is His saying: "It is not al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and each and every act of obedience to Allaah, etc.) that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allaah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets." (2:177)

And the proof for preordainment is His saying: "Verily, We have created all things with Qadar (Divine Preordainments of all things before their creation, as written in the Book of Decrees al-Lawhul-Mahfoodh)." (54:49)

The third level is ihsaan of which the first pillar is "to worship Allaah as if you see Him and if you do not see him, then He sees you"

And the proof is His saying: "Truly, Allaah is with those who fear Him (keep their duty unto Him), and those who are Muhsinoon (good-doers)." (16:128)

And His saying: "And put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful, who sees you (O Muhammad ﷺ) when you stand up (alone at night for prayers) and your movements among those who fall prostrate (along with you to Allaah in the five compulsory congregational prayers). Verily! He, only He, is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower." (26:217-220)

And His saying: "Whatever you (O Muhammad ﷺ) may be doing, and whatever portion you may be reciting from the Qur`aan, - and whatever deed you (mankind) may be doing (good or evil), We are Witness thereof, when you are doing it." (10:61)

And the proof from the Sunnah is the famous hadeeth of Jibreel narrated by 'Umar as he said: "One day when we were sitting with the Messenger of Allaah , there came before us a man with extremely white clothing and extremely black hair. There were no signs of travel on him and none of us knew him. He (came and) sat next to the Prophet and put his hands on his thighs. He said, "O Muhammad, tell me about Islaam." The Messenger of Allaah said, "Islaam is to testify that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, to establish the prayers, to pay the zakaat (charity), to fast (the month of) Ramadhaan, and to have the pilgrimage to the House if you have the means to do so." He said "You have spoken truthfully (or correctly)." We were amazed that he asks the question and then he says that he had spoken truthfully. He said, "Tell me about eemaan (faith)." He (the Messenger of Allaah) responded, "It is to believe in Allaah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day and to believe in the divine decree, (both) the good and the evil thereof." He said "You have spoken truthfully." He said "Tell me about al-Ihsaan (goodness)." He (the Prophet) answered, "It is that you worship Allaah as if you see Him. And even though you do not see Him (you know) He sees you." He said, "Tell me about (the time of) the Hour." He (the Prophet) answered, "The one being asked does not know more than the one asking." He said, "Tell me about its signs." He answered, "The slave-girl shall give birth to her master; and you will see the barefooted, scantily clothed, destitute shepherds competing in constructing lofty buildings." Then he went away. I stayed for a long time. Then he (the Prophet) said, "O 'Umar, do you know who the questioner was?" I said, "Allaah and His Messenger know best." He said, "It was (the Angel) Jibreel who came to teach you your religion." [7]

The Third Fundamental:

It is knowing your Prophet Muhammad who is Muhammad son of Abdullaah,

son of Abdul-Muttalib son of Haashim son of Quraysh who are from the Arabs. The Arabs are from the progeny of Ismaa'eel the son of Ibraaheem, may the peace and blessings be on him and our prophet. He (The Prophet ﷺ) lived 63 years, from them are forty before prophethood and twenty three as a messenger and prophet . He was a prophet by "Iqraa" and a messenger by "al-Muddathir" (names of chapters in the Qur`aan.) His city is Makkah and he migrated to Madeenah. Allaah sent him to warn against shirk and to call to tawheed (monotheism) and the proof is His saying


"O you (Muhammad ﷺ) enveloped (in garments)! Arise and warn! And your Lord (Allaah) magnify! And your garments purify! And keep away from ar-Rujz (the idols)! And give not a thing in order to have more (or consider not your deeds of Allaah's obedience as a favour to Allaah). And be patient for the sake of your Lord (i.e. perform your duty to Allaah)!." (74:1-7)

And the meaning of (arise and warn) is to warn about shirk and call to tawheed (and your lord magnify) meaning, magnify him with tawheed (and your garments purify) meaning, purify your deeds from shirk (and keep away from ar-rujz) Ar-rujz are the idols and keeping away from them is leaving them, being free of them and of whoever is associated with them. He spent ten years calling to tawheed like in this way. After ten years he was ascended to the sky and the five daily prayers were ordained upon him and he prayed in Makkah for three years. He was later ordered to migrate to Madeenah. Hijrah is migrating from the land of shirk to the land of Islaam. Hijrah is compulsory on this Ummah (the Muslims as a whole) from the land of shirk to the land of Islaam and it is continuously valid until the last hour comes (the last day) and the proof:

"Verily! As for those whom the angels take (in death) while they are wronging themselves (as they stayed among the disbelievers even though emigration was obligatory for them), they (angels) say (to them): "In what (condition) were you?" They reply: "We were weak and oppressed on earth." They (angels) say: "Was not the earth of Allaah spacious enough for you to emigrate therein?" Such men will find their abode in Hell - What an evil destination! Except the weak ones among men, women and children who cannot devise a plan, nor are they able to direct their way. For these there is hope that Allaah will forgive them, and Allaah is Ever Oft Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving."(3: 97-99)


And His saying: "O My slaves who believe! Certainly, spacious is My earth. Therefore worship Me (Alone)." (29:56)

Al-Baghawee (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: "The reason this statement was revealed is because of the Muslims in Makkah that have not migrated. Allaah has called them "believers"." [8] And the proof from the sunnah his saying (saws) "Hijrah shall not be cut off until tawbah is cut off and tawbah shall not be cut off until the sun rises from the west. [9] When he ﷺ settled in Madeenah he

ordained the rest of the rules of Islaam like obligatory charity (zakaat), fasting, pilgrimage, jihaad, the call to prayer, ordering good and forbidding evil, and other rules of Islaam. He took ten years to establish this and after that he  died. His religion is lasting and this is his religion. He didn't leave any good except he led the Ummah to it, and he left no evil except he warned it (the ummah) from. The good that he has led it to is Tawheed and all that Allaah loves and is pleased with. The evil he has warned about is Shirk and all that Allaah hates and is not pleased with. Allaah sent him to all mankind and has made it compulsory to follow him for all of the Thaqaalayn, (two worlds) Jinn and Mankind and the proof:

"Say (O Muhammad ): 'O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allaah.'" (7:158)

And Allaah has completed religion through him and the proof is His saying: "This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islaam as your religion." (5:3)


And the proof about his  death is the statement of Allaah the Exalted:

"Verily, you (O Muhammad) will die and verily, they (too) will die. Then, on the Day of Resurrection, you will be disputing before your Lord)." (39:30)

And when people die they are resurrected and the proof is His saying: "From it we have created you and in it we are going to return you and from it you are going to come out another time." (50:22)

And the statement of Allaah the Exalted: "And Allaah has brought you forth from the (dust of) earth. Afterwards He will return you into it (the earth), and bring you forth (again on the Day of Resurrection)." (71: 17-18)

And after resurrection they are going to be asked and are going to be responsible for their deeds. The proof is the statement of Allaah the Exalted: "And to Allaah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, that He may requite those who do evil with that which they have done (i.e. punish them in Hell), and reward those who do good, with what is best (i.e. Paradise)." (53:31)

And he who disbelieves in resurrection, has disbelieved (in general) and the proof is His saying: "The disbelievers pretend that they will never be resurrected (for the Account). Say (O Muhammad )" "Yes! By my Lord, you will certainly be resurrected, then you will be informed of (and recompensed for) what you did, and that is easy for Allaah." (64:7)

And Allaah has sent all messengers as givers of glad tidings and warners and the proof is His saying: "Messengers as bearers of good news as well as of

warning in order that mankind should have no plea against Allaah after the Messengers." (4:165)

And the first of them was Nooh ('alayhis salaam) and the last of them was Muhammad ﷺ and the proof that the first amongst them was Nooh ('alayhis salaam) "Verily, We have inspired you (O Muhammad ﷺ) as We inspired Nooh (Noah) and the Prophets after him." (4:163)

And Allaah has sent a messenger to all nations from Nooh to Muhammad ﷺ, ordering them to worship Allaah alone and forbidding them from worshipping false deities and the proof is the statement of Allaah the Exalted: "And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): 'Worship Allaah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Taaghoot (all false deities, etc. i.e. do not worship Taaghoot besides Allaah).'" (16:36)

And Allaah has made it compulsory on All his slaves that they reject the Taaghoot and worship Allaah. Ibnul-Qayyim may Allaah have mercy on him said:

"A Taaghoot is what a slave exceeds his boundary with whether it be one worshipped or followed or obeyed and there are many Taaghoots." [9]

Their heads are five, Iblees may Allaah's curse be on him, he who is worshipped awhile agreeing to it, he who calls people to worship him, he who claims that he knows something from the future, and he who rules by that which Allaah has not revealed and the proof is the statement of Allaah the Exalted:

"There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in Taaghoot and believes in Allaah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allaah is All-Hearer, All-Knower." (2:156)

And this is the meaning of Laa ilaaha illallaah and in the Hadeeth: "The head of the matter is Islaam, its pillar is Prayer and the top of its hump is Jihaad in the way of Allaah" [11]

Allaah knows best and may Allaah send his blessings on Muhammad ﷺ and his family and companions.

Footnotes:

[1] Tafseerul Qur`aanil 'Adtheem (8/500)

[2] Saheehul Bukhaaree (1/92)

[3] Tafseerul Qur`aanil 'Adtheem (1/62)

[4] This hadeeth is reported by at-Tirmidthee and it is weak, see al-Mishkaat (no. 2331). However, there is an authentic hadeeth with the same meaning which

states: "Supplication is worship." See Saheehul Jaami'us Sagheer (no. 3407).

[5] Related by at-Tirmidhee, it was declared authentic by Shaykh Muhammad Naasirud Deen al-Albaanee in al-Mishkaat (no. 5302).

[6] Related by Muslim (3/1093-1094)

[7] Related in Saheeh Muslim (1/1-3). For a proper explanation of this hadeeth, refer to Majmoo'ul Fataawaa war Rasaa`il (3/143) of Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen.

[8] According to Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen, this quote from Imaam al-Baghawee exists only and meaning and can be found in his Tafseer.

[9] Related by Ahmad (4/99) and Abu Daawood (3/7) and ad-Daarimee (2/239).

It was declared authentic by Shaykh al-Albaanee in Saheehul Jaami'us Sagheer (no. 7346).

[10] A'alaamul Muwaqi'een (1/53)

[11] Related by at-Tirmidhee (7/281) and Ibn Maajah (2/1314). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunanit-Tirmidhee (no. 2110).