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(1912–1999 C.E., 1330–1420 A.H.) May Allah have mercy on him.

Important Lessons for the Muslim Ummah is a short Islamic book by Shaykh Ibn Baz. It teaches the important things every Muslim needs to know. The lessons explain short Surahs, the pillars of Islam and Iman, Tawheed and Shirk, Salah, Wudu, good manners and the duties Muslims have when someone dies. These lessons help us worship Allah alone and follow Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Tawheed means believing that Allah alone deserves our worship. These lessons are taught upon The Qur'aan & Sunnah as Understood by the Salaf (Pious Predecessors) of this Ummah.

Lesson 1: Surah Al-Fatiha and the Short Surahs

This lesson includes Surah Al-Fatiha and all the short Surahs from Al-Zalzalah to An-Nas. We must learn their correct reading, memorize them and understand their meanings. Surah Al-Fatiha praises Allah, teaches us to worship Him alone and asks Him to guide us to the straight path. The other Surahs are explained below in the same order as the lessons.

Surah Al-Zalzalah (99:1–8)

On the Day of Resurrection, the earth will shake and tell what happened on it. People will see every good deed and every bad deed, even the smallest one.

Surah Al-Adiyat (100:1–11)

Allah describes horses rushing forward and then warns that people can be ungrateful and too attached to wealth. Allah knows what is hidden in our hearts and will bring people out of their graves.

Surah Al-Qariah (101:1–11)

The Day of Resurrection will be frightening. Good deeds will be weighed. Those whose good deeds are heavy will have a good life while those whose scales are light face punishment.

Surah At-Takathur (102:1–8)

Competing to gain more things can distract people from the Hereafter. Everyone will die and will be asked about the blessings they enjoyed.

Surah Al-Asr (103:1–3)

People are in loss except those who believe, do good deeds, encourage each other to follow the truth and encourage patience.

Surah Al-Humazah (104:1–9)

Allah warns against mocking people, speaking badly about them and trusting in wealth as if money could make a person live forever.

Surah Al-Fil (105:1–5)

Allah stopped the army that came with elephants to attack the Ka'bah. He sent birds carrying stones and destroyed their plan.

Surah Quraysh (106:1–4)

Allah gave Quraysh safety during their journeys and provided food when they were hungry. They were commanded to worship the Lord of the Ka'bah.



Surah Al-Maun (107:1-7)

Allah warns about pushing away orphans, refusing to help the poor, neglecting prayer, showing off and refusing small acts of kindness.

Surah Al-Kawthar (108:1-3)

Allah gave the Prophet ﷺ great goodness. He commanded him to pray and sacrifice for Allah alone.

Surah Al-Kafirun (109:1-6)

Muslims worship Allah alone and do not worship what others worship. This Surah teaches us to stay firm upon Tawheed.

Surah An-Nasr (110:1-3)

When Allah gives victory and people enter Islam, the Prophet ﷺ is told to praise Allah and ask Him for forgiveness.

Surah Al-Masad (111:1-5)

Abu Lahab opposed the Prophet ﷺ. His wealth would not save him. The Surah warns about rejecting the truth and harming others.

Surah Al-Ikhlās (112:1-4)

Allah is One. He does not need anyone. He has no children or parents and nobody is equal to Him.

Surah Al-Falaq (113:1-5)

We ask Allah, the Lord of daybreak, to protect us from the evil of created things, darkness, harmful magic and envy.

Surah An-Nas (114:1-6)

We ask Allah, the Lord, King and God of mankind, to protect us from the whispers of Shaytan, whether they come through jinn or people.

Lesson 2: The Five Pillars of Islam

Islam has five pillars: the Shahadah (testimony of faith), Salah, Zakah, fasting Ramadan and Hajj for those who are able. The first pillar teaches that only Allah deserves worship and that Muhammad ﷺ is His Messenger. (Bukhari and Muslim)

Laa ilaaha illa Allah means that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah. The first part rejects the worship of anything besides Allah. The second part teaches that Allah alone deserves worship.



The Eight Conditions of Laa ilaaha illa Allah

1. Knowledge: Understanding what the statement means instead of being ignorant.
2. Certainty: Believing it without doubt.
3. Sincerity: Worshipping Allah alone without Shirk.
4. Truthfulness: Saying it truthfully rather than pretending to believe.
5. Love: Loving Allah, this statement and what it teaches.
6. Submission: Following what Allah has commanded instead of turning away.
7. Acceptance: Accepting its meaning and not rejecting it.
8. Rejecting false worship: Refusing to worship anything besides Allah.

Believing in Muhammad ﷺ as Allah's Messenger means believing what he taught, doing what he commanded, staying away from what he forbade and worshipping Allah as he taught us.

Lesson 3: The Six Pillars of Iman

Iman means faith. Its six pillars are belief in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and Al-Qadar. Al-Qadar means Allah knows and has decreed everything that happens, whether it seems good or difficult to us. (Muslim)

Lesson 4: Tawheed and Shirk

The Three Categories of Tawheed

Tawheed has three categories. Tawheed of Lordship means Allah alone created everything, gives us what we need and controls His creation. Tawheed of Worship means we pray, make Dua and give every act of worship to Allah alone. Tawheed of His Names and Attributes means believing what Allah and His Messenger ﷺ taught about Allah without changing it or comparing Allah to His creation. (Surah Al-Ikhlâs 112:1-4; Surah Ash-Shura 42:11)

Some scholars explain Tawheed in two categories by including Allah's Names and Attributes with His Lordship. Both ways teach the same beliefs.

Major Shirk

Major Shirk means worshipping someone or something besides Allah. Examples include praying to the dead, making a vow as worship to someone besides Allah or sacrificing for an idol. Major Shirk takes a person outside Islam and ruins good deeds. Allah warns that a person who dies upon it without repentance will not be forgiven for it. (Surah An-Nisa 4:48; Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:72; Surah Al-An'am 6:88)

Minor Shirk

Minor Shirk is a very serious sin but it does not take a Muslim outside Islam. Examples include showing off during worship, swearing by something besides Allah and saying that Allah and another person willed something as though both are equal. The Prophet ﷺ taught us to say that Allah willed something and then another person willed it. (Ahmad; Abu Dawud)



Hidden Shirk

Hidden Shirk is Shirk that other people may not see. For example, someone may pray so that people will praise them. Hidden Shirk can be part of Major Shirk or Minor Shirk. Worship must be sincere for Allah alone.

Lesson 5: Ihsan

Ihsan means worshipping Allah as if we could see Him. We cannot see Allah in this life but Allah always sees us. This teaches us to worship carefully and sincerely. (Muslim)

Lesson 6: The Nine Conditions of Salah

Salah is only valid when these nine conditions are met:

1. Being Muslim.
2. Having a sound mind.
3. Being old enough to understand right and wrong (discernment).
4. Having Wudu or the required purification.
5. Removing impurities from the body, clothing and place of prayer.
6. Covering the parts of the body that must be covered.
7. Praying after the correct prayer time begins.
8. Facing the Qiblah.
9. Having the intention in the heart to pray.

Lesson 7: The Fourteen Pillars of Salah

These fourteen pillars are the main parts of Salah. They must be completed correctly.

1. Standing if able.
2. Saying the opening "Allahu Akbar".
3. Reciting Surah Al-Fatiha.
4. Bowing (Ruku).
5. Rising and standing straight after Ruku.
6. Prostrating (Sujud) on seven body parts.
7. Rising from Sujud.
8. Sitting between the two prostrations.
9. Being calm and settled in every position.
10. Performing the parts in the correct order.
11. Saying the final Tashahhud.
12. Sitting for the final Tashahhud.
13. Sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ.
14. Ending with Taslim (Salaam) to the right and to the left.



Lesson 8: The Eight Obligations of Salah

Salah also has eight required actions besides its pillars.

1. Saying the Takbirs during Salah except the opening Takbir, which is a pillar.
2. Saying “Sami’a Allahu liman hamidah” when rising from Ruku for the Imam and someone praying alone.
3. Saying “Rabbana wa lakal-hamd” after Ruku for everyone.
4. Saying “Subhana Rabbiyal-‘Azim” in Ruku.
5. Saying “Subhana Rabbiyal-A‘la” in Sujud.
6. Saying “Rabbighfir li” between the two prostrations.
7. Saying the first Tashahhud.
8. Sitting for the first Tashahhud.

Lesson 9: The Tashahhud and Duas in Salah

The Tashahhud

At-tahiyyatu lillahi was-salawatu wat-tayyibatu. As-salamu ‘alayka ayyuhan-nabiyyu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh. As-salamu ‘alayna wa ‘ala ‘ibadillahis-salihin. Ashhadu an la ilaha illallah wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan ‘abduhu wa rasuluh.

Meaning: All greetings, prayers and good words belong to Allah. We ask Allah to give peace, mercy and blessings to the Prophet ﷺ. We ask for peace upon ourselves and the righteous servants of Allah. We testify that only Allah deserves worship and Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

Sending Blessings Upon the Prophet ﷺ

Allahumma salli ‘ala Muhammadin wa ‘ala ali Muhammad, kama sallayta ‘ala Ibrahima wa ‘ala ali Ibrahim, innaka Hamidun Majid. Allahumma barik ‘ala Muhammadin wa ‘ala ali Muhammad, kama barakta ‘ala Ibrahima wa ‘ala ali Ibrahim, innaka Hamidun Majid.

Meaning: O Allah, send Your blessings and favour upon Muhammad and his family just as You sent them upon Ibrahim and his family. You are worthy of praise and full of glory.

Protection and Supplication

Before ending Salah, we ask Allah to protect us from the punishment of Hell, the punishment of the grave, the trials of life and death and the trial of the Dajjal. We may also ask Allah to help us thank Him and worship Him well.

After the first Tashahhud in a prayer with three or four units, the person stands to complete the remaining units. Sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ during the first Tashahhud is also taught as a Sunnah action.



Lesson 10: Sunnah Acts of Salah

These actions are from the Sunnah of Salah. They make the prayer more complete.

1. Saying an opening Dua after the first Takbir.
2. Putting the right hand over the left hand on the chest while standing before and after Ruku.
3. Raising both hands near the shoulders or ears at the opening Takbir, before Ruku, after Ruku and when standing after the first Tashahhud.
4. Saying the words of praise in Ruku and Sujud more than once.
5. Adding praise after Ruku and asking forgiveness more than once between the two prostrations.
6. Keeping the back and head straight in Ruku.
7. Keeping the upper arms away from the sides and the stomach away from the thighs in Sujud.
8. Raising the forearms above the ground during Sujud.
9. Sitting on the left foot while keeping the right foot upright between prostrations and in the first Tashahhud.
10. In the last Tashahhud of a three- or four-unit prayer, sitting on the ground with the left leg beneath the right and the right foot upright.
11. Pointing with the right index finger during the Tashahhud and moving it when making Dua.
12. Sending blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ and his family in the first Tashahhud.
13. Making Dua in the last Tashahhud.
14. Reciting aloud in Fajr, Jumu'ah, Eid, the rain prayer and the first two units of Maghrib and Isha.
15. Reciting quietly in Dhuhr, Asr, the third unit of Maghrib and the last two units of Isha.
16. Reading more Qur'an after Al-Fatiha when appropriate.

Other Sunnah actions are giving extra praise after Ruku and placing both hands on the knees with the fingers spread while bowing.

Lesson 11: Eight Things That Invalidate Salah

1. Speaking on purpose while knowing that one is praying. Speech caused by forgetfulness or not knowing the ruling is treated differently.
2. Laughing.
3. Eating.
4. Drinking.
5. Exposing a required part of the body.
6. Turning far away from the Qiblah.
7. Making many continuous unnecessary movements.
8. Losing Wudu.



Lesson 12: The Ten Conditions of Wudu

1. Being Muslim.
2. Having a sound mind.
3. Being old enough to understand (discernment).
4. Having the intention to make Wudu.
5. Keeping that intention until Wudu is complete.
6. Stopping what caused the loss of Wudu before starting purification.
7. Cleaning the private parts after using the toilet when needed (Istinja or Istijmar).
8. Using clean and lawful water.
9. Removing anything that blocks water from reaching the skin.
10. For someone who continually loses Wudu, waiting until the prayer time begins.

Lesson 13: The Six Obligations of Wudu

1. Washing the face, including rinsing the mouth and rinsing the nose.
2. Washing both arms including the elbows.
3. Wiping the whole head including the ears.
4. Washing both feet including the ankles.
5. Washing the parts in the correct order.
6. Washing without long breaks between the steps.

In Wudu, the parts we wash can be washed once, twice or three times. Washing them once properly is enough. The head is wiped and the notes do not recommend wiping the head three times.

Lesson 14: The Six Things That Invalidate Wudu

1. Anything leaving through the front or back private passages.
2. A large amount of impurity leaving the body.
3. Losing awareness through deep sleep or another cause.
4. Directly touching the private parts without a barrier.
5. Eating camel meat.
6. Leaving Islam.

Washing someone who has died does not by itself break Wudu. Touching the private parts directly without a barrier requires Wudu. Touching a woman does not by itself break Wudu unless something comes out of the body. The verse about contact with women is explained here as referring to marital relations. (Surah An-Nisa 4:43)

Lesson 15: Good Character

Good character includes speaking the truth, being honest, protecting what people trust us with, being modest, having good manners, being brave, sharing generously and keeping promises. We stay away from what Allah forbids, treat neighbours kindly and help people who need support.



Lesson 16: Islamic Manners in Daily Life

When meeting people, give Salaam with a kind face. Say Bismillah before eating and Alhamdulillah after eating. Eat and drink with the right hand. After sneezing, say Alhamdulillah. When another Muslim sneezes and praises Allah, reply Yarhamukallah.

Islam also teaches us to visit the sick, attend funeral prayers, be kind to parents and relatives, respect older people and care for younger people. We follow the Sunnah when entering and leaving homes or mosques, travelling, dressing and wearing shoes. We ask Allah to bless marriages, welcome new babies and comfort families during hardship.

Lesson 17: Avoiding Shirk and Serious Sins

The Seven Destructive Sins

1. Committing Shirk with Allah.
2. practicing magic.
3. Killing someone without a lawful right.
4. Taking or dealing in Riba (interest or usury).
5. Taking the wealth of orphans unfairly.
6. Running away from a lawful battle when facing the enemy.
7. Falsely accusing innocent believing women of sexual wrongdoing.

Other great sins include disobeying parents, breaking family ties, lying as a witness, making false oaths, hurting neighbours, harming people or their honour, stealing, taking wealth unfairly, drinking alcohol, gambling, backbiting and passing on harmful gossip.

Lesson 18: Caring for a Muslim Who Has Died

1. When Death Is Near

A Muslim who is close to death is gently encouraged to say Laa ilaaha illa Allah. After death has been confirmed, the eyes are closed and the jaw is brought together.

2. Washing the Deceased

A Muslim who dies is normally washed before burial. A person who dies as a battlefield martyr is buried in the clothes worn at death without the usual washing or funeral prayer, as taught in the lesson about Uhud.

The person washing the body must cover its private parts and use a cloth when cleaning them. The body is given Wudu. The head is washed with water and Sidr or something similar. Then the right side is washed, followed by the left side. This is done three times or five or seven times if needed. Any dirt is removed. The body is dried and suitable perfume is placed on the body and shroud.

Long nails and moustache hair may be shortened. There is no need to shave private hair or circumcise the body. A woman's hair is made into three braids and placed behind her.



3. Shrouding the Deceased

A deceased man is preferably wrapped in three white cloths. A woman is preferably wrapped in five pieces: a shirt, a head covering, a lower wrap and two outer cloths. A boy may be wrapped in one to three cloths. A girl may be wrapped in a shirt and two cloths. At least one cloth must cover the whole body. A person who dies in Ihram is washed with water and Sidr, wrapped in the Ihram clothing and not perfumed. The rules of covering the body while in Ihram must also be followed.

4. Who May Wash the Body

The person chosen by the deceased has the first right to wash the body. For a man, his father, grandfather and closest male relatives follow. For a woman, her mother, grandmother and closest female relatives follow. A husband and wife may wash one another.

5. The Funeral Prayer (Salat Al-Janazah)

Salat Al-Janazah has four Takbirs. After the first, Al-Fatiha is recited. A short Surah or verses may also be read. After the second, prayers are sent upon Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. After the third, Dua is made for the deceased. After the fourth, the prayer ends with one Taslim to the right. The hands may be raised with each Takbir.

The Dua asks Allah to forgive and have mercy on the deceased, to give them a good place in the grave and to protect them from punishment. It also asks forgiveness for living and deceased Muslims. The words are adjusted when praying for a woman, more than one person or a child. For a child, the Dua includes asking Allah to reward and show mercy to the parents.

The Imam stands near the head of a deceased man and the middle of a deceased woman. If there are several bodies, the order is men, boys, women and girls. The people praying stand behind the Imam.

6. Burial

The grave is dug deep enough for the deceased. A side space called the Lahd faces the Qiblah. The body is placed on its right side and the knots in the shroud are loosened. The grave is covered carefully and may be raised about one handspan. When placing the body in the grave, the words “Bismillah wa ‘ala millati Rasulillah” may be said. Dua is made after burial.

7. Other Funeral Rulings

A person who missed the funeral prayer may pray at the grave within a month. Relatives of the deceased should not be made to prepare food for visitors. Friends and neighbours may bring food to the family. A woman may mourn a relative for up to three days. The waiting period after her husband dies is four months and ten days or until childbirth if she is pregnant.

Men may visit graves to think about the Hereafter and make Dua for the deceased. They give Salaam to the people in the graves and ask Allah for mercy. Shaykh Ibn Baz teaches that women should not visit graves or follow funeral processions but they may join the funeral prayer.