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(1703–1792 C.E., 1115–1206 A.H.) May Allah have mercy on him.

Fadl al-Islam means The Merit of Islam. This is an important matn because it teaches the great value of Islam and the importance of holding firmly to it. It explains why we must follow the Quran and Sunnah, stay away from Bidah and avoid paths that oppose Islam. It also teaches us to follow Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions. Learning these lessons helps a Muslim understand the value of Islam, protect their religion, remain firm upon the truth and worship Allah upon correct guidance. These lessons are taught upon the Quran and Sunnah as understood by the Salaf (Pious Predecessors) of this Ummah.

Introduction to Tawheed

Tawheed is the most important knowledge we can learn. It is the greatest and noblest subject to study because it teaches us about Allah and how to worship Him correctly. A person who truly believes in Tawheed and lives according to it will be saved from Jahannam by the mercy of Allah. Allah created the jinn and mankind for Tawheed which means that we were created to worship Allah alone. Tawheed is a cause of success in this life and in the Hereafter. The scales were created, the sky was raised and the earth was spread for Tawheed and the worship of Allah alone.

What Is Tawheed?

The Arabic root letters of Tawheed are:

و ح د

The word **تَوَحَّدَ** means to make something one or to single something out.

Linguistically: Tawheed means to make something one without giving it any equal and to single something out.

Technically: Tawheed means to single out Allah alone in everything that belongs only to Him. This includes His Lordship, worshipping Him alone and His Names and Attributes. So Tawheed means believing that Allah alone is our Lord, Allah alone deserves all worship and Allah has His perfect Names and Attributes.



Three Categories of Tawheed

1. Tawheed of Lordship (تَوْحِيدُ الرَّبُّوبِيَّةِ): This means believing that Allah alone is the Creator, Provider and Controller of everything. For example, Allah alone created the heavens and the earth. Allah alone gives life and death and Allah alone provides for His creation.
2. Tawheed of Worship (تَوْحِيدُ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ): This means singling out Allah alone in all acts of worship. For example, we pray to Allah alone, make Dua to Allah alone, rely upon Allah and worship Him alone. We do not direct acts of worship to anyone besides Allah.
3. Tawheed of Allah's Names and Attributes (تَوْحِيدُ الْأَسْمَاءِ وَالصِّفَاتِ): This means believing in the Names and Attributes of Allah that are mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah in the correct way. For example, Allah is Ar-Rahman (الرَّحْمَنُ), the Most Merciful and Allah is As-Sami (السَّمِيعُ), the All-Hearing. Tawheed was not invented by later scholars. It is the message that Allah sent all the Prophets with. Scholars use these three categories to organize and explain what is already taught in the Quran and Sunnah. Therefore Tawheed and Shirk must be understood from the Quran and Sunnah and not from personal opinions.

Is Tawheed Mentioned in the Quran?

Ibn al-Qayyim explained that every Surah in the Quran contains Tawheed. In fact every verse in the Quran contains Tawheed, gives proof for Tawheed or calls people to Tawheed.

1st Type: Some verses give us information about the Names and Attributes of Allah or the Actions of Allah. This is called Tawheed of knowledge and information. We must believe everything Allah has told us about Himself.

2nd Type: Some verses call us to worship Allah alone without giving Him any partners and to leave everything that is worshipped besides Allah. This is the Tawheed of worshipping Allah and seeking Him alone.

3rd Type: Some verses contain commands and prohibitions. They teach us to obey Allah's commands and stay away from what Allah has prohibited. These are from the rights of Tawheed.

4th Type: Some verses tell us about the people of Tawheed and the rewards Allah has prepared for them.



5th Type: Some verses tell us about the people of Shirk, what can happen to them in this life and about their punishment in the next life.

Therefore the whole Quran includes these types of Tawheed. [Madaarij As-Salikeen, Vol. 3, Page 450]

Words That Show Tawheed

Words in the Quran such as **أَحَدٌ** and **وَاحِدٌ** teach us about Allah being One.

First Verse: Allah says:

"Or were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons, 'What will you worship after me?' They said, 'We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him.'" [Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 133]

Ibn Katheer explained the words **إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا**, "one God", to mean that Allah is made One in worship. In simple words, Allah alone must be worshipped.

Second Verse: Allah says:

"And Allah has said, 'Do not take for yourselves two deities. He is but one God, so fear only Me.'" [Surah An-Nahl, verse 51]

Imam At-Tabari explained the words **إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا**, "one God", to mean that Allah is made One in His worship and His Lordship. This means Allah alone is our Lord and Allah alone deserves our worship. [Jami' al-Bayaan fi Ta'weel Al-Quran]

Third Verse: Allah says:

"They have certainly disbelieved who say, 'Allah is the third of three.' And there is no god except one God. And if they do not desist from what they are saying, there will surely afflict the disbelievers among them a painful punishment." [Surah Al-Ma'idah, verse 73]

This verse teaches us that Allah is One. Allah has no partners and no one else deserves to be worshipped with Him.



Is Tawheed in the Sunnah?

Yes. Tawheed is also clearly taught in the Sunnah.

Sunnah means: The statements and actions of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, things that happened in front of him that he approved of and his physical and personal qualities.

1. Hadeeth of Ibn Abbas: Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنهما reported that when the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent Muadh ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه to Yemen he told him:

"You will go to the People of the Book. Let the first thing that you call them to be to make Allah One."

يُوحِدُوا اللَّهَ

[Saheeh Al-Bukhari]

The words "make Allah One" come from the same Arabic root as Tawheed. The Arabic word used here is a present tense verb. This teaches us that making Allah One is not something that has a time limit. A Muslim must always worship Allah alone.

2. Hadeeth of Ibn Abbas: Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنهما also reported that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم told Muadh ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه:

"You are going to the People of the Book. When you come to them call them to the oneness of Allah."

[Saheeh Al-Bukhari]

This teaches us that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Muadh رضي الله عنه to begin by calling people to Tawheed.

3. Hadeeth of Ibn Umar: Ibn Umar رضي الله عنهما reported that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

"Islam is built upon five: that Allah is made One, establishing the prayer, paying the Zakah, fasting Ramadan and Hajj."

[Saheeh Muslim]

This narration directly connects Islam with making Allah One.



4. Hadeeth of Ibn Umar: Ibn Umar رضي الله عنهما reported that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

"Islam is built upon five: testifying that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, establishing the prayer, paying the Zakah, performing Hajj to the House and fasting Ramadan."

[Saheeh Al-Bukhari and Saheeh Muslim]

The first foundation mentioned is لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ, Laa ilaaha illa Allah: There is no one worthy of worship except Allah.

5. Hadeeth of Ibn Umar: Another narration from Ibn Umar رضي الله عنهما mentions that Islam is built upon five and begins with worshipping Allah and rejecting everything worshipped besides Him.

[Saheeh Muslim]

From these narrations we understand that worshipping Allah alone is Tawheed.

Tawheed in the Statements of the Salaf

The Salaf are the Companions and the early generations of Muslims who came after them.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

"The best of you are my generation, then those who follow them, then those who follow them."

[Saheeh Al-Bukhari]

Their understanding of Tawheed came from the Quran and Sunnah.

Jaabir ibn Abdullah رضي الله عنه: Jaabir described the Hajj of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and explained that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم began his Hajj by declaring Tawheed in the Talbiyah:

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ كَلْبِيَّكَ، لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ كَلْبِيَّكَ، إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالْبُحْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكُ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ

"Here I am, O Allah, here I am. Here I am. You have no partner. All praise, blessings and the kingdom belong to You. You have no partner."

[Saheeh Muslim]



Jaabir رضي الله عنه used the word Tawheed to describe what the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was saying and doing. This shows that the Companions understood that declaring that Allah has no partners is Tawheed.

Hadeeth of the Delegation of Abdul Qais: A group from Abdul Qais came to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commanded them to believe in Allah alone and asked:

"Do you know what is meant by believing in Allah alone?"

They replied:

"Allah and His Messenger know best."

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم explained:

"To testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and Muhammad is Allah's Messenger."

[Saheeh Al-Bukhari]

This teaches us that believing in Allah alone includes believing that only Allah has the right to be worshipped.

Ataa ibn Abi Rabah

Ataa ibn Abi Rabah was from the Tabi'un. The Tabi'un were Muslims who learned from the Companions. He was also a Mufassir which means a scholar who explains the Quran.

Allah says:

"And whoever denies the faith, his work has become worthless, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers." [Surah Al-Ma'idah, verse 5]

Ataa ibn Abi Rabah explained that faith or Iman in this verse means Tawheed.

[Tafseer At-Tabarani]



How the Scholars Explained Tawheed

The scholars of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah explained Tawheed through the statement:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

Laa ilaaha illa Allah

There is no one worthy of worship except Allah.

Imam Ad-Darimi said that the explanation of Tawheed in this Ummah is:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

Laa ilaaha illa Allah, Muhammadur Rasulullah. There is no one worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. [Naqd or Ar-Rad ala Bishr al-Mirrisi, Vol. 1, Page 152]

Imam Al-Ajuri said that Tawheed is to say:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

Laa ilaaha illa Allah with certainty in your heart. [Kitaab Ash-Shariah, Vol. 2, Page 553]

Having certainty means you truly believe it in your heart without doubt.

Why Do We Study Tawheed?

1. Allah created us to worship Him alone. We were created to single out Allah alone in our worship. We pray to Allah alone, make Dua to Him alone and direct our worship to Him alone.
2. Allah does not accept worship without Tawheed. Our worship must be sincerely for Allah alone and cannot be mixed with Shirk.
3. Tawheed is a cause of entering Jannah. A person must learn Tawheed, believe in it and live according to it. A person who dies upon true Tawheed will enter Jannah.
4. Tawheed is a cause of increasing the reward of good deeds. The stronger a person's Tawheed and sincerity to Allah are, the greater the blessings and rewards in their good deeds can be.
5. Tawheed is a cause for sins to be forgiven. Allah may forgive sins because of a person's sincere Tawheed and faith in Him.



6. Tawheed is a cause of guidance and security. Those who truly believe in Allah and protect their Tawheed from Shirk are promised guidance and security.

7. Tawheed is a cause of peace in the heart. Allah places peace and calmness in the hearts of the believers. True belief in Allah helps a believer remain firm and turn to Allah during easy and difficult times.

8. Tawheed is a cause of receiving the Prophet's ﷺ intercession. By the mercy and permission of Allah, the people of sincere Tawheed may receive the intercession of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Two Conditions for Correct Worship

Correct worship requires two conditions:

1. Sincerity to Allah (الإخلاص): All worship must be sincerely for Allah alone. The opposite of sincerity is Shirk. For example, when a person makes Dua they must make Dua to Allah alone and not direct their Dua to someone besides Allah.

2. Following the Prophet (المتابعة) ﷺ: We must worship Allah in the way that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ taught us. The opposite is inventing acts of worship that the Prophet ﷺ did not teach. For example, we pray Salah according to the way the Prophet ﷺ taught us. We do not invent a new type of Salah and call it part of Islam. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever does a deed which has not been ordered by us, then it is rejected." [Saheeh Muslim, Hadeeth 1718]

Sincerity without following the Sunnah is not enough. For example, a person may sincerely want to worship Allah but invent a new act of worship that the Prophet ﷺ never taught. Their good intention does not make the invented worship correct. Following the outward Sunnah while directing worship to someone other than Allah is also not enough. For example, a person may perform an act in the correct outward way but direct that worship to someone besides Allah. Both conditions are required. The worship must be sincerely for Allah alone and it must follow the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ is the only person Muslims must completely follow in the religion.



Why We Must Learn About Shirk

We must learn about Shirk so we can recognize it and stay away from it. Allah did not prohibit Shirk without explaining it. The Quran and Sunnah explain its meaning, types and dangers. Shirk is the opposite of Tawheed. Generally, Shirk means giving someone or something a share in something that belongs only to Allah. In worship it means directing an act of worship to someone or something besides Allah. Shirk is divided into Major Shirk and Minor Shirk.

Major Shirk (الشِّرْكُ الْأَكْبَرُ)

Major Shirk is directing an act of worship to someone or something besides Allah. It takes a person outside of Islam. For example, making Dua to the dead and asking them for something that only Allah can do is Major Shirk. Sacrificing an animal as an act of worship for someone besides Allah is another example. Major Shirk causes misguidance, removes security and destroys a person's deeds. If a person dies upon Major Shirk without repenting from it, Allah will not forgive it. It prevents the person who dies upon it from entering Paradise and leads to the Fire. Major Shirk is also the greatest injustice.

Minor Shirk (الشِّرْكُ الْأَصْغَرُ)

Minor Shirk does not take a person outside of Islam but it is still a serious sin. It makes a person's Tawheed and faith weaker and it can become a path that leads towards Major Shirk. One example is showing off in worship. For example, a person begins praying sincerely for Allah but then makes their prayer look better because they notice other people are watching them. This showing off can destroy the part of the worship in which it happens. Another example of Minor Shirk is swearing by someone or something besides Allah such as saying, "I swear by my father." A Muslim should swear by Allah or remain silent.

Hidden Shirk (الشِّرْكُ الْخَفِيُّ)

Shirk can also be hidden because it may be connected to what is inside a person's heart and may not be clear to other people. Showing off in worship is an example. A person may look like they are worshipping Allah while secretly wanting people to see them, praise them or think they are very religious. A Muslim should never feel completely safe from Shirk. Even Ibrahim عليه السلام asked Allah to protect him from Shirk.



Allah says:

"And [mention, O Muhammad], when Abraham said, 'My Lord, make this city [Makkah] secure and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols.'" [Surah Ibrahim, verse 35] If Ibrahim عليه السلام feared Shirk and asked Allah to protect him from it then we should also fear Shirk, learn about it and ask Allah to protect us from it.

The Prophet ﷺ also taught us to say: "O Allah, I seek refuge in You from associating partners with You knowingly and I seek Your forgiveness for what I do not know." [Musnad Ahmad] This teaches us to ask Allah to protect us from the Shirk we know about and the Shirk we may not recognize.

Final Summary

Tawheed means to single out Allah alone. We believe that Allah alone is our Lord, we worship Allah alone and we believe in Allah's Names and Attributes. Tawheed has three categories: Tawheed of Lordship, Tawheed of Worship and Tawheed of Allah's Names and Attributes. The Quran teaches Tawheed from beginning to end. It teaches us about Allah, calls us to worship Him alone, teaches us to obey His commands, tells us about the rewards for the people of Tawheed and warns us about Shirk. The Sunnah also teaches Tawheed. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم called people to worship Allah alone and taught his Companions to begin their call to others with Tawheed. For worship to be correct it must be sincerely for Allah alone and it must follow the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. We also learn about Shirk so we can recognize it and stay far away from it.

The meaning of Tawheed is clearly shown in:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

There is no one worthy of worship except Allah. upon The Qur'aan & Sunnah as Understood by the Salaf (Pious Predecessors) of this Ummah,



Bismillah

Bismillah means “In the Name of Allah.”

We begin with Bismillah for four reasons:

1. Following the Quran

Allah begins the Quran with Bismillah. This teaches us to begin with the Name of Allah.

2. Following the Prophet ﷺ

When the Prophet ﷺ wrote letters to kings and rulers, he began his letters with Bismillah. We follow his example by beginning with the Name of Allah.

3. Following the scholars

The scholars of Islam followed this practice and began their books and writings with Bismillah. We follow their example when beginning Islamic writings and lessons.

4. Seeking Allah’s blessing

We begin with Bismillah to seek Allah’s blessing in what we are doing. Saying Bismillah reminds us that all blessings come from Allah and that we depend upon Him.

When we say Bismillah before doing something, the action is understood even if we do not say it. For example, if we say Bismillah before drinking, it means, “In the Name of Allah, I drink.” This teaches us to begin good actions with Allah’s Name and seek His blessing.

The Basmalah contains three Names of Allah:

1. Allah: The One who alone deserves to be worshipped.
2. Ar-Rahman: The One whose mercy is vast and reaches all of creation.
3. Ar-Raheem: The One who gives special mercy to His believing servants.

We can see Allah’s mercy through the many blessings He gives us such as rain, food, water and everything we need for life.



The Messengers and Their Peoples

The first Messenger was Nuh عليه السلام. Allah sent him when his people went too far in honouring righteous people such as Wadd, Suwa, Yaghuth, Yauq and Nasr. The final Messenger was Muhammad ﷺ. He was sent to people who worshipped, performed Hajj, gave charity and remembered Allah often. However, they made created beings into intermediaries between themselves and Allah. They said that they wanted nearness to Allah through them and wanted their intercession with Allah. They called upon angels, Isa عليه السلام, Maryam and other righteous people. Muhammad ﷺ was sent to renew the religion of Ibrahim عليه السلام. Nearness to Allah through worship belongs to Allah alone. Worship is not for a close angel, a Messenger or any other created being.

What the Mushriks Already Believed

They already believed that Allah alone provides, gives life, causes death and controls all affairs. They believed that the heavens, the earth and everything within them were under Allah's command and power.

Surah Yunus 10:31: Allah asks who provides from the sky and earth, controls hearing and sight, brings the living from the dead and the dead from the living and controls all affairs. They answer: Allah.

Surah al-Muminun 23:84–89: They admit that the earth and everyone in it belong to Allah, that Allah is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Great Throne and that the control of everything is in His Hand.

Believing in Allah's Lordship alone was not enough. The Tawheed they rejected was Tawheed of Worship. They called upon Allah but also called upon angels, righteous people and Prophets.

All Worship Is for Allah Alone

Surah al-Jinn 72:18: Do not call upon anyone together with Allah.

Surah ar-Rad 13:14: The true call belongs to Allah. Those called upon besides Him cannot answer the people who call them.

Dua must be for Allah alone. Religious vows must be for Allah alone. Sacrifice as worship must be for Allah alone. Seeking unseen aid in matters only Allah can do must be for Allah alone. Every act of worship belongs to Allah alone.



The Meaning of La ilaha illallah

La ilaha illallah means that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah. An ilah is the one worship is directed to. The Mushriks did not believe their gods created, provided or controlled the universe. They knew these things belonged to Allah. Their problem was directing worship, seeking nearness and seeking intercession through created beings. The meaning of La ilaha illallah is required, not only saying the words with the tongue.

Surah Sad 38:5: When they were called to worship one God, they understood what this meant and asked: Has he made all the gods into one God?

They understood that La ilaha illallah required worshipping Allah alone and rejecting the worship of everything besides Him.

The Shirk Allah Does Not Forgive

Surah an-Nisa 4:48: Allah does not forgive Shirk for the person who dies upon it without repentance. He may forgive what is less than that for whom He wills.

The religion sent with all the Messengers is Tawheed. Understanding Tawheed also requires understanding Shirk so that a person can stay away from it.

Two Benefits of Understanding Tawheed and Shirk

1. Rejoice in Allah's favour and mercy because He guided you to Tawheed.

Surah Yunus 10:58: Rejoice in Allah's bounty and mercy. It is better than the worldly things people collect.

2. Fear falling into false belief or worship. Do not become overconfident about your knowledge.

Surah al-Araf 7:138: Some of the people of Musa عليه السلام asked him to make a god for them like another people had gods. This shows how serious mistakes can happen when Tawheed is not understood correctly.



Enemies of Tawheed

Surah al-Anam 6:112: Every Prophet had enemies from humans and jinn who inspired one another with attractive but misleading speech.

Surah Ghafir 40:83: When the Messengers came with clear proofs, some people became proud of the knowledge they already had.

The path to Allah has people who use strong speech, knowledge and arguments to oppose the truth. A Muslim therefore needs knowledge of the religion as protection.

Surah al-Araf 7:16–17: Shaytan said he would sit on Allah's straight path and approach people from different directions.

Surah an-Nisa 4:76: The plot of Shaytan is weak.

Surah as-Saffat 37:173: Allah promises victory for His soldiers.

Surah an-Nahl 16:89: The Quran is an explanation, guidance, mercy and good news for Muslims.

Surah al-Furqan 25:33: Whenever a false argument is brought, Allah gives the truth and the best explanation.

Two Ways to Answer Doubts

1. The General Answer.
2. Detailed answers to each specific doubt.

The General Answer: Clear and Unclear Evidence

Surah Al Imran 3:7: Some verses are clear and form the foundation of the Quran. Other verses may be unclear to some people. People with deviation follow what is unclear seeking confusion and false interpretation.

Hadith: The Prophet ﷺ warned Muslims about people who follow the unclear parts of revelation in this way.

A person may mention a true statement such as the high status of Allah's Awliya, the reality of intercession or the high position of the Prophets then use it to support something false.

Surah Yunus 10:62: The Awliya of Allah will have no fear and will not grieve.



Return unclear arguments to the clear evidence. Allah's speech does not contradict itself. The authentic words of the Prophet ﷺ do not oppose the Quran.

Surah Yunus 10:18: The Mushriks said that those they worshipped besides Allah were their intercessors with Allah.

Surah Fussilat 41:35: This quality is granted to those who are patient and to the person who has a great share of goodness.

Detailed Doubt 1: We Only Want Their Status and Intercession

A person may say: We do not believe anyone creates, provides, benefits or harms except Allah. Even Muhammad ﷺ cannot benefit or harm himself except by Allah's will. We are sinners and the righteous have a high position with Allah, so we ask through them.

The earlier Mushriks also admitted that Allah alone controlled everything. They did not believe their idols controlled the universe. They wanted the status and intercession of those they called upon. This is the same reason already answered by the clear Quran evidence.

Detailed Doubt 2: The Verses Were Only About Idols

A person may say: Those verses were revealed about people who worshipped idols. How can righteous people or Prophets be compared with idols?

The people mentioned in the Quran did not all call upon idols. Some called upon righteous people, Isa عليه السلام, Maryam and angels.

Surah al-Isra 17:57: Those whom people call upon themselves seek a way to become nearer to their Lord.

Surah al-Maidah 5:75-76: Isa ibn Maryam عليه السلام was a Messenger and Maryam was truthful. They both ate food. Nothing worshipped besides Allah has the power to harm or benefit.

Surah Saba 34:40-41: The angels will reject the worship people directed toward them.

Surah al-Maidah 5:116: Isa عليه السلام will deny ever telling people to worship him and his mother besides Allah.



Detailed Doubt 3: I Only Want Intercession

A person may say: Allah alone benefits, harms and controls everything. I do not want anything from the righteous except that they intercede for me with Allah.

Surah az-Zumar 39:3: The earlier people said they worshipped others only so those beings would bring them nearer to Allah.

Surah Yunus 10:18: They said: These are our intercessors with Allah.

Seeking nearness and intercession in this way was already the argument used by the earlier Mushriks.

Detailed Doubt 4: Calling Upon the Righteous Is Not Worship

If worship must be sincerely for Allah alone, then worship must first be understood correctly.

Surah al-Araf 7:55: Call upon your Lord with humility and privately. Dua is worship.

If a person calls upon Allah day and night with fear and hope then calls upon a Prophet or another created being for a religious need, they have directed an act of worship away from Allah.

Surah al-Kawthar 108:2: Pray to your Lord and sacrifice for Him. Sacrifice as worship is for Allah.

If a person makes a religious sacrifice for a Prophet, jinn or another created being, that act of worship has been directed away from Allah.

The earlier Mushriks worshipped through acts such as Dua, sacrifice, seeking refuge and seeking intercession. They still believed that those beings were servants under Allah's control.

Detailed Doubt 5: Do You Reject the Prophet's ﷺ Intercession?

The intercession of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is true. He will intercede and his intercession will be accepted when Allah permits it.

Surah az-Zumar 39:44: All intercession belongs to Allah.

Surah al-Baqarah 2:255: No one can intercede with Allah except with His permission.

Surah al-Anbiya 21:28: They do not intercede except for those with whom Allah is pleased.

Surah Al Imran 3:85: Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted.

Intercession belongs to Allah. It happens only by His permission and for those with whom He is pleased. Therefore ask Allah for the Prophet's ﷺ intercession, such as asking Allah not to prevent you from receiving it and asking Allah to accept his intercession for you.



Detailed Doubt 6: The Prophet ﷺ Was Given Intercession

A person may say: The Prophet ﷺ was given intercession, so I ask him for what he was given.

Surah al-Jinn 72:18: Do not call upon anyone together with Allah.

The Prophet ﷺ was given intercession but Dua is still directed to Allah. Ask Allah to allow the Prophet ﷺ to intercede for you.

Angels, righteous believers and others may also intercede by Allah's permission. Their being allowed to intercede does not mean they should be called upon in worship.

Detailed Doubt 7: I Do Not Commit Shirk

A person cannot correctly say that they are free from Shirk while refusing to learn what Shirk is.

Shirk must be understood just as worship must be understood. If someone says Shirk only means worshipping idols, ask what worshipping idols means.

Surah Yunus 10:31: The earlier Mushriks did not believe wooden idols or stones created, provided or controlled the universe. They admitted that Allah did these things.

If worshipping idols means calling upon them, sacrificing for them or seeking nearness and blessing through them, then the same rule applies when these acts of worship are directed to tombs or other created beings.

The Quran also speaks about people who were attached to angels, Isa عليه السلام and righteous people. Shirk is therefore not limited to worshipping wooden or stone idols.

Surah Sad 38:5: They objected when they were called to make all worship for one God.

Two Differences Mentioned Between Earlier and Later Shirk

Two differences are given to show how serious later forms of Shirk can become.

First Difference: Hardship and Ease

The earlier Mushriks called upon Allah and others during times of ease. During severe hardship, they would call sincerely upon Allah alone.

Surah al-Isra 17:67: When harm touched them at sea, those they called besides Allah disappeared from their thoughts except Allah.

Surah al-Anam 6:40-41: When punishment or the Hour came upon them, they called upon Allah alone and forgot the partners they had associated with Him.

Surah az-Zumar 39:8: When harm touched a person, he called upon his Lord. After receiving a favour, he returned to setting up rivals with Allah.



Surah Luqman 31:32: When waves covered them like clouds, they called upon Allah sincerely.

After reaching land safely, some turned away.

Second Difference: Who Was Called Upon

The earlier Mushriks called upon Prophets, Awliya, angels, trees or stones. The Prophets, Awliya and angels were righteous servants of Allah. Trees and stones do not disobey Allah. Some later people called upon individuals whose own followers described them as committing major sins such as stealing or abandoning the prayer. Calling upon a sinful created person cannot make directing worship away from Allah acceptable.

Major Doubt: We Say the Shahadah, Pray and Fast

A person may argue: The people at the time of revelation rejected the Shahadah, the Messenger ﷺ, resurrection and the Quran. We say the Shahadah, believe in the Quran and resurrection, pray and fast. How can we be compared with them?

First Reply

Accepting one part of revelation does not make it acceptable to reject another essential part. A person cannot believe the Messenger ﷺ in one matter then knowingly reject him in another essential matter.

Surah Al Imran 3:97: Hajj to the House is an obligation upon those able to perform it. The verse warns about rejecting this obligation.

Surah an-Nisa 4:150–151: Those who believe in some Messengers but reject others and try to take a path between belief and disbelief are described as disbelievers.

Second Reply

Tawheed is the greatest obligation brought by the Messengers. If rejecting an established obligation such as prayer, Zakah, fasting or Hajj is serious, rejecting Tawheed cannot be treated as something small.

Third Reply: Banu Hanifah

Banu Hanifah had accepted Islam, said the Shahadah, prayed and gave the Adhan but they accepted Musaylamah's claim to prophethood. Their Shahadah and prayer did not make that false belief acceptable.

Surah ar-Rum 30:59: Allah seals the hearts of those who do not know.



Fourth Reply

Some people connected to Ali ibn Abi Talib رضي الله عنه claimed Islam and learned from the Companions but held an extreme false belief about Ali رضي الله عنه. Their claim to Islam did not make the false belief correct. The original text also mentions a severe historical punishment. The important point for these notes is that a Muslim label does not make every belief acceptable.

Fifth Reply: Banu Ubayd al-Qaddah

Banu Ubayd al-Qaddah controlled Morocco and Egypt during the Abbasid period. They said the Shahadah, claimed Islam and prayed Jum'ah and Jama'ah. When they openly opposed essential teachings of Islam, the scholars did not treat their outward practices as proof that every belief they held was correct.

Sixth Reply

Scholars wrote chapters about beliefs, statements and actions that can contradict a person's Islam after entering it. Saying the Shahadah does not mean that every later belief, statement or action becomes harmless.

Seventh Reply

Surah at-Tawbah 9:74: Allah mentions people who spoke a word of disbelief after accepting Islam.

Surah at-Tawbah 9:65-66: Those who mocked Allah, His verses and His Messenger were told not to make excuses because they had disbelieved after believing.

They had been with the Prophet ﷺ during the expedition of Tabuk but their claim that they were only joking did not make their words acceptable.

Eighth Reply: The People of Musa and Dhat Anwat

Surah al-Araf 7:138: The Children of Israel asked Musa عليه السلام to make a god for them like another people had gods.

Hadith of Dhat Anwat: Some Companions asked the Prophet ﷺ to make a Dhat Anwat for them like the people of Shirk had. The Prophet ﷺ compared their statement to the request made to Musa عليه السلام.



Four Benefits From These Two Incidents

1. A Muslim, even a knowledgeable person, may say something connected to Shirk without realizing it.
2. A person should not become overconfident and say, 'We already understand Tawheed.' Tawheed must continue to be learned carefully.
3. The original text distinguishes between a person who makes an ignorant mistake then accepts the correction and repents and a person who knowingly continues after the truth becomes clear.
4. A serious mistake should still be corrected firmly even when the person is not treated as having left Islam.

The Argument Using La ilaha illallah

Another argument uses the hadith of Usamah ibn Zayd رضي الله عنه. Usamah acted against a man after the man said La ilaha illallah. The Prophet ﷺ strongly questioned him about what he had done.

Another hadith says that the Prophet ﷺ was commanded to fight until people testified La ilaha illallah. These evidences show the importance of accepting a person's outward profession of Islam and not rushing to judge people.

Surah an-Nisa 4:94: When travelling in Allah's cause, believers are commanded to verify and not rush to judge a person's claim.

When a person openly accepts Islam, their outward profession must be respected unless clear evidence shows something that contradicts it. Careful verification is required.

Surah al-Hujurat 49:6: When an unreliable person brings news, believers must verify it so they do not harm people through ignorance.

The original text also discusses the Khawarij and historical cases involving severe legal rulings. These are matters of qualified scholarship and lawful authority. Students should understand the theological principle and must not make personal judgments or take actions against people themselves.

Seeking Help From the Prophets on the Day of Judgment

On the Day of Judgment, people will go to Adam, Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa and Isa عليهم السلام then finally to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asking for help concerning the start of the Reckoning.

Seeking help from a created being in something they are present and able to do is different from directing a religious request for unseen or supernatural help to a created being.

Surah al-Qasas 28:15: A man from the people of Musa عليه السلام sought Musa's help against an opponent. This was ordinary help within a person's ability.



The people on the Day of Judgment ask the Prophets to ask Allah to begin the Reckoning. Likewise, a living righteous person who can hear you may be asked to make Dua for you.

The Companions asked the Prophet ﷺ for Dua while he was alive. The text distinguishes this from calling upon him after his death or directing Dua to him.

The Argument of Jibril and Ibrahim عليه السلام

When Ibrahim عليه السلام was thrown into the fire, Jibril عليه السلام came to him and asked whether he needed anything. Ibrahim عليه السلام replied that he did not need anything from Jibril.

Surah an-Najm 53:5: Jibril عليه السلام is described as having great strength.

Jibril عليه السلام offered help in something Allah had given him the ability to do. If Allah permitted him, he had the strength to move Ibrahim عليه السلام or move what surrounded him. This is different from directing religious Dua or unseen requests to a created being.

It is like a wealthy person offering a poor person a loan or gift. The poor person may accept the help because the wealthy person is able to give it or may choose to wait patiently for Allah to provide another way.

Conclusion: Tawheed Must Be in the Heart, Speech and Actions

Tawheed must be present in the heart, spoken by the tongue and shown through outward actions. Knowing the truth without following it is not enough.

A person may know that Tawheed is true but refuse to act upon it because of fear of people, loss of status, money, customs or other worldly reasons. Knowing the truth alone does not replace acting upon it.

Surah al-Baqarah 2:146: Some people recognized the Messenger ﷺ as clearly as they recognized their own sons.

A person may also outwardly appear to follow the truth while the heart does not believe it. This is hypocrisy.

Surah an-Nisa 4:145: The hypocrites are in the lowest depths of the Fire.

Two types can therefore appear: a person who knows the truth but leaves it for worldly reasons and a person who outwardly follows the truth without truly believing it in the heart.



Two Final Verses

Surah at-Tawbah 9:65–66: People who mocked Allah, His verses and His Messenger were told not to make excuses because they had disbelieved after believing.

Surah an-Nahl 16:106: A person who is forced while the heart remains firm in faith is excepted. The warning is for the one who willingly opens the heart to disbelief.

Surah an-Nahl 16:107: The reason mentioned is that they preferred the life of this world over the Hereafter.

A person cannot be forced to believe something in the heart. A person may be forced to say or do something outwardly while the heart remains firm in faith. The final warning is against choosing worldly benefit over the religion.

Final Review

Tawheed means singling out Allah alone in all worship. The earlier Mushriks already believed Allah was the Creator, Provider and Controller but they still directed acts of worship to created beings because they wanted nearness and intercession. La ilaha illallah therefore requires its meaning, not only its words. Doubts are answered by returning unclear claims to the clear evidence of the Quran and Sunnah. Dua, sacrifice and every other act of worship belong to Allah alone. Intercession is true but it belongs to Allah and only happens by His permission. Ordinary help from a living person who is able to help is different from religious requests for unseen matters that only Allah can do. Tawheed must be understood, believed in the heart, spoken by the tongue and shown through actions. A Muslim should learn the evidences carefully, stay away from Shirk and hold firmly to the Quran and Sunnah.