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The Obligation to Believe in Allah and Messenger (SAW)

The entire universe, in the way it is created and the way it is controlled, bears witness to the oneness of Allah: "Surely, His is the creation and commandment. Blessed is Allah, the Lord of the 'Aalameen (mankind, jinn and all that exists)! [al-A'raaf 7:54 – interpretation of the meaning]

The creation of the heavens and the earth, the alternation of night and day, the different kinds of inanimate objects, plants and fruits, the creation of humans and animals... all of that indicates that the Almighty Creator is One with no partner or associate: "That is Allah, your Lord, the Creator of all things, Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He). How then are you turning away (from Allah, by worshipping others instead of Him)?[Ghaafir 40:62]

The variety and greatness of these created things, the perfect way in which they are formed, the way in which they are maintained and controlled, all indicate that the Creator is One and that He does as He wills and rules and decides as He wants: "Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Wakeel (Trustee, Disposer of affairs, Guardian) over all things" [al-Zumar 39:62]

All of the above indicate that this universe has a Creator, that this dominion has a Sovereign, that behind these forms is One Who gives them shape: "He is Allah, the Creator, the Inventor of all things, the Bestower of forms. To Him belong the Best Names" [al-Hashr 59:24]

The soundness of the heavens and the earth, the order of the universe, the harmony among created things, all indicate that the Creator is One, with no partner or associate: "Had there been therein (in the heavens and the earth) aalihah (gods) besides Allah, then verily, both would have been ruined. Glorified be Allah, the Lord of the Throne, (High is He) above all that (evil) they associate with Him!"[al-Anbiya' 21:22]

These great created things either created themselves – which is impossible – or man created himself then created them – which is also impossible: "Were they created by nothing? Or were they themselves the creators? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, but they have no firm Belief"[al-Toor 52:35-36]

Reason, Revelation and the original state of man (fitrah) all indicate that this universe has One Who brought into being, that these created things have a Creator Who is Ever-Living and Eternal, All-Knowing and All-Aware, Powerful and Almighty, Kind and Most Merciful. He has the Most Beautiful Names and Sublime Attributes and He knows all things. Nothing is beyond His control, and there is nothing like unto Him:

"And your Ilaah (God) is One Ilaah (God — Allah), Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful [al-Baqarah 2:163]

The existence of Allah is something that is there is no excuse for not

knowing. It is the matter of common sense: "Their Messengers said: What! Can there be a doubt about Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth?" [Ibraaheem 14:10]

Allah has created people with the natural instinct (fitrah) to affirm His Lordship and Oneness, but the shayaateen (devils) came to the sons of Adam and caused them to deviate from their religion. According to a hadeeth qudsi, "I created all My slaves as haneefs (monotheists), but the shayaateen (devils) came to them and made them deviate from their religion, and they forbade them that which I had permitted to them." (Narrated by Muslim)

Among them are those who deny the existence of Allah, and those who worship the Shaytaan, and those who worship man. And there are those who worship the dinar [money], or fire, or genital organs, or animals. And there are some who associate in worship with Him a stone from the earth or a star in the sky. These things which are worshipped instead of Allah, cannot create or provide; they cannot hear or see, or bring benefits or cause harm. So how can they worship them instead of Allah? "Are many different lords (gods) better or Allah, the One, the Irresistible?"[Yoosuf 12:39]

Allah has condemned those who worship these idols which cannot hear, see or think: "Verily, those whom you call upon besides Allah are slaves like you. So call upon them and let them answer you if you are truthful. Have they feet wherewith they walk? Or have

they hands wherewith they hold? Or have they eyes wherewith they see? Or have they ears wherewith they hear?" [al-A'raaf 7:194-195]

"Say (O Muhammad to mankind): 'How do you worship besides Allaah something which has no power either to harm or benefit you? But it is Allaah Who is the All-Hearer, All-Knower'" [al-Maa'idah 5:76]

How ignorant man is of his Lord Who created him and provides for him. How he rejects Him and forgets Him, and worships others instead of Him: "Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the breasts that grow blind" [al-Hajj 22:46]

Glorified be Allaah far above that which they associate with Him. Praise be to Allaah the Lord of the Worlds: "Say (O Muhammad): Praise and thanks be to Allaah, and peace be on His slaves whom He has chosen (for His Message)! Is Allaah better, or (all) that you ascribe as partners (to Him)?" (Of course, Allaah is Better).

Is not He (better than your gods) Who created the heavens and the earth, and sends down for you water (rain) from the sky, whereby We cause to grow wonderful gardens full of beauty and delight? It is not in your ability to cause the growth of their trees. Is there any ilaah (god) with Allaah? Nay, but they are a people who ascribe equals (to Him)!

Is not He (better than your gods) Who has made the earth as a fixed abode, and has placed rivers in its midst, and has placed firm mountains therein, and has set a barrier between the two seas (of salt and sweet water)? Is there any ilaah (god) with Allaah? Nay, but most of them know not!

Is not He (better than your gods) Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls on Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations? Is there any ilaah (god) with Allaah? Little is that you remember!

Is not He (better than your gods) Who guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea, and Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings, going before His Mercy (rain)? Is there any ilaah (god) with Allaah? High Exalted be Allaah above all that they associate as partners (to Him)!

Is not He (better than your so-called gods) Who originates creation, and shall thereafter repeat it, and Who provides for you from heaven and earth? Is there any ilaah (god) with Allaah? Say: 'Bring forth your proofs, if you are truthful'"

The complete statement of the creed of the Muslim is: "Ash-shadu anna Laa elaha illa lah. Ash-shadu anna Muhammadar Rasoolulah." (I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger). This is the key to "Jannah" (Paradise) and also known as Shahadah.

The believer accepts whatever the implications of the shahadah are. This also means that he believes in whatever is stated in the Qur'an or stated by the Prophet (peace be upon him), without any right to choose what he wants to believe and what he wants to reject. Allah says in the Qur'an, "Do you believe in part of the book and reject part of it? And what is the reward of those who do so, except humiliation in the life of this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they will be sent to the most dreadful doom." (al-Baqarah: 85).

Whatever comes from Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him), the true Muslim believes in as the truth. This goes hand in hand with their testimony of faith. Actually, Allah has clearly made it a condition of faith that one submits to the command of Allah and His messenger. Allah says, "But nay, by your Lord, they will not truly believe until they make you [the Messenger of Allah] judge of what is in dispute between them and find within themselves no dislike of which you decide, and submit with full submission" (al-Nisa: 65)

"It is not fitting for the believing man nor for the believing woman, that whenever Allah and His Messenger have decided any matter, that they should have any other opinion." [Holy Quran 33:36] Whatever Allah and His Messenger have set out as being the Way of Islam is incumbent on the believer, man or woman to follow completely.

"He who obeys the Messenger has indeed obeyed Allah, but he who turns away, then we have not sent you as a watcher over them." [Quran 4:80]

This means to act on what Allah enjoins all of us to do (in the Qur'an) and what His beloved Prophet, Muhammad (pbuh) encouraged us to do in his Sunnah (his lifestyle and sayings personifying the Qur'an). After surrendering your free will to Allah and then ratifying the terms and conditions of the surrender, it is obligatory for the Muslim to live up to his terms of the bargain. It is his or her responsibility to do their best to obey the orders of Allah set forth in the Holy Quran and the teachings of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him.

Following the laws of the Messenger who has been sent to us, namely the Final Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), who was sent to all of mankind. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission"[al-Nisa' 4:65]

As for the obligation to follow him and obey his sunnah and follow his guidance, Allâh says, "Say: if you love Allâh, follow me and He will love you and forgive you your wrong actions." (3:31) "Believe in Allâh and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet who believes in Allâh and His words. Follow him, perhaps you will be guided." (7:157) "No, by your Lord, they will not believe until they ask you to judge between them in what they

disagree about and then they shall find in themselves no impediment touching your verdict, but shall surrender in full submission." (4:64) i.e. obey your judgement.

Allâh also says, "You have a good model in the Messenger of Allâh for one who hopes for Allâh and the Last Day." (33:21) Muhammad ibn 'Alî at-Tirmidhî said, "To take the Messenger as a model means to emulate him, follow his sunnah and abandon opposition to him in either word or action." Several commentators said words to that effect.

It is said that this was intended as a criticism of those who fail to follow him. Sahl said that the âyat from the Fâtihah (Sûrah 1), "The path of those whom You have blessed," means to follow the sunnah. Allâh commands this and promises they will be guided by following him by reason of the fact that Allâh has sent him with the guidance and the Dîn of the truth to purify them, teach them the Book and the Wisdom, and to guide them to the straight path.

In the first âyat mentioned, Allâh promises His love and forgiveness to those who follow the Prophet and prefer him to their own passions and inclinations. Soundness of belief is based on submission to the Prophet and satisfaction with his judgement and abandoning opposition to him.

It is related from al-Hasan al-Basrî that some people said, "Messenger of Allâh, we love Allâh," so Allâh revealed, "Say: if you love Allâh, follow me and Allâh will love you." (3:31) It is related that this verse was revealed about Ka'b ibn Ashraf and others. They said, "We are the sons of Allâh and His beloveds," (5:20) and "We are stronger in love for Allâh," (2:165) so Allâh revealed this âyat.

Az-Zajjaj says that the meaning of, "Say: if you love Allâh", is if you desire to obey Him, then do what He had commanded you to do since the love of the slave of Allâh and the Messenger

lies in obeying both of them and being happy with what they command. Allâh's love for them is His pardon to them and His blessing them with His mercy. It is said that love from Allâh manifests itself in protection and success. Love on the part of the slaves manifests and in obedience.

It is said that the slave's love for Allâh is to exalt Him and be in awe of Him, and the love of Allâh for him is His mercy to him and His beautiful concern for him. It can also mean praise. Al-Qushayrî said, "When love means mercy, desire and praise, it is one of the attributes of Allâh's essence." More will be said concerning the slave loving something else by the power of Allâh.

Al-'Irbâd ibn Sarriyah relayed the warning of the Prophet, "You must follow my sunnah and the sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Khaliphs. Cling to it fiercely and beware of new things. These new things are innovations, and every innovation is misguidance." Jâbir added, "Every misguidance is in the fire." (Muslim)

Abû Rafî' reported that the Prophet said, "Do not let any of you be found reclining on his bed when he hears an injunction from me which is from among those things which I myself commanded or forbade so that he says, 'I do not know. We only follow what we find in the Book of Allâh.' " (Ash-Shafi'î in al-Umm, Abû Dâwûd, at-Tirmidhî and Ibn Mâjah. A sound hadîth)

'Â'isha said, "The Messenger of Allâh did something as an example in order to make things easier for people but some people still refrained from doing it. When the Prophet heard about that, he praised Allâh and said, 'What do you think of people who refrain from anything that I myself do? By Allâh, I am the greatest of them in knowledge of Allâh and the strongest of them in fear of Allâh.' " (Muslim and al-Bukhârî)

It is related that the Prophet said, "The Qur'ân is hard and difficult for anyone

who hates it. It is judgement. Whoever clings to what I say and understands it and retains it, then it will be like the Qur'ân for him. Whoever considers the Qur'ân and what I say unimportant and neglects it loses this world and the Next. My community is commanded to take my words and obey my commands and follow my sunnah. Whoever is pleased with my words is pleased with the Qur'ân. Allâh says, 'Take what the Messenger brings you.' " (59:7) (Abû'sh-Shaykh, ad-Daylamî and Abû Nu'aym from al-Hakam ibn 'Umayr)

The Prophet said, "Whoever follows me is of me and whoever wants to abandon my sunnah is not of me."

Abû Hurayrah said that the Prophet said, "The best is the Book of Allâh and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. The word matters are innovations."

It is related from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs that the Prophet said, "There are three types of knowledge - any other knowledge is superfluous - a precise âyat, an established sunnah or a just share (of inheritance)." (Abû Dâwûd and Ibn Mâjah)

Al-Hasan ibn al-Hasan said that the Prophet said, "Doing a little of something which is a sunnah is better than doing a lot of something which is an innovation." (Ad-Dârimî)

The Prophet said, "Allâh will bring a man into the Garden by the fact that he clings to my sunnah."

Abû Hurayrah said that the Prophet said, "The one who clings to my sunnah when the community is corrupt will have the reward of a hundred martyrs." (At-Tabaranî)

The Prophet said, "The Banu Isrâ'îl split into about seventy-two sects. My community will split into seventy-three. All of them will be in the Fire except for one." They asked, "Who are they, Messenger of Allâh?" He replied, "Those who base themselves on what I and my Companions are doing today."

(At-Tirmidhî) Anas reported that the Prophet said, "Whoever brings the sunnah to life has brought me to life. Whoever brings me to life will be with me in the Garden." (Al-Isbahâni)

'Amr ibn 'Awf al-Muzanî said the Prophet told Bilâl ibn al-Hârith, "Whoever brings to life any of my sunnah which has died after me will have the reward of all those who act by it without decreasing their reward in any way. Whoever introduces a misguided innovation which does not please Allâh and His Messenger will have the like of all those who act by it without that decreasing their burden." (At-Tirmidhî, Ibn Mâjah considers it hasan)

In a clear in hadîth in which Jibrîl is reported as saying, "Tell me about Islâm." The Prophet said, "It is that you testify that there is no god but Allâh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh," and he went on to mention the pillars of Islâm. Then he asked him about belief and he said, "It is that you believe in Allâh, His angels, His Books and His Messengers." (Muslim)

As for the obligation to obey the Prophet, belief in him demands it. Confirmation of what he brought requires obedience to him because this is part of what he brought. Allâh says, "O you who believe, obey Allâh and His Messenger ... " (8:20) "Say: obey Allâh and obey the Messenger ... " (24:54) He says, "Obey Allâh and the Messenger and perhaps you will be shown mercy." (3:132) "If you obey him, you will be guided ... " (24:54) "Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allâh ... " (4:79) "That what the Messenger brings you and leave what he forbids you ... " (59:7) "Whoever obeys Allâh and the Messenger is with those whom Allâh has blessed." (4:68) "We did not send any Messenger but for him to be obeyed by the permission of Allâh." (4:63)

He made obeying His Messenger tantamount to obeying Himself, and He placed obedience to Himself alongside obedience to His Messenger. Allâh promises that doing this will result in an abundant reward and threatens a severe

punishment for opposing it. He made it obligatory to obey the things that the Prophet commanded and to avoid those he prohibited.

The commentators and Imâms have said that obeying the Messenger means to cling to his Sunnah and submit to what he brought. They said that Allâh did not send a Messenger without obliging those to whom he was sent to obey him and that obeying the Messenger in his Sunnah is equivalent to obeying Allâh in His obligations. Sahl at-Tustarî was asked about the Shar'ah of Islâm and he quoted, "Take what the Messenger brings you." (59:7)

As-Samarqandî said that it was said: obey Allâh in His obligations and the Messenger in his Sunnah. It is also said: obey Allâh regarding what He makes forbidden for you and obey the Messenger regarding what he conveys to you. It is said that it means to obey Allâh by testifying that He is the Lord and to obey the Prophet by testifying to his prophethood.

Abû Salamah ibn 'Abdur-Rahmân heard Abû Hurayrah say that the Messenger of Allâh said, "Whoever obeys me has obeyed Allâh. Whoever rebels against me has rebelled against Allâh. Whoever obeys my Amîr has obeyed me. Whoever rebels against my Amîr has disobeyed me." (Muslim and al-Bukhârî)

Obeying the Messenger is part of obeying Allâh since Allâh commands that he be obeyed. True obedience is obedience to Allâh's command and therefore obedience to His Prophet.

Allâh talks about the unbelievers in the depths of the Fire saying, "On the day when their faces are turned over in the Fire, they will say, 'Would that we had obeyed Allâh and that we had obeyed the Messenger.' " (33:66) They will wish they had obeyed when the wish will not profit them.

The Prophet said, "When I forbid you to do something, avoid it. When I command you to do something, then do it as much as you are able." (Muslim and al-Bukhârî)

In the hadîth of Abû Hurayrah we find that the Prophet said, "All of my community will enter the Garden except for those who refuse to." They asked, "O Messenger of Allâh, who will refuse?" He replied, "Whoever obeys me will enter the Garden. Whoever rebels against me has refused." (Al-Hâkim)

In another sound hadîth the Prophet said, "My likeness and the likeness of what Allâh has sent me with is like a man who comes to a people and says, 'O people, I have seen the army with my own eyes and I am a sincere warner, so save yourselves!' One group of his people obey him and they travel at the beginning of the night, go at their leisure and are saved. Another group reject him and remain where they are and the army arrives in the morning and wipes them out. Such is the likeness of those who obey me and follow what I bring and the likeness of those who rebel against me and deny what I bring." (Al-Bukhârî)

In a similar hadîth we find, "It is like someone who builds a house and lays out a fine feast in it and sends out a summoner. Whoever does not answer the summoner does not enter the house and eat from the feast." (Muslim and al-Bukhârî)

The house is the Gardens and the summoner is Muhammad (SAW), may Allâh bless and grant him peace. Whoever obeys Muhammad (SAW) has obeyed Allâh. Whoever rebels against the Messenger of Allâh has rebelled against Allâh.

Editorial

Assalamu Alakium

Dear Readers!

*Spread the word of Islam to
Muslims and Non-Muslims,
gently and kindly.*

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