

Shaykh Saalih ibn Fawzaan al-Fawzaan

The Declaration of Faith



THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

By
SHAYKH SAALIH IBN FAWZAAN AL-FAWZAAN

Translation and Annotations By:
ABU 'AALIYAH SURKHEEL IBN ANWAR SHARIF

© Message of Islam

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any language, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted by any forms or means; electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

British Library Cataloguing in Publishing Data

A catalogue record of this book is available from the British Library.

TITLE: The Declaration of Faith

AUTHOR: Shaykh Saalih ibn Fawzaan al-Fawzaan

ISBN: 1 902570 13 8

First Edition, 1419H/1998CE

Published & Distributed by:

Message of Islam

P.O. Box 181

Hounslow,

Middlesex TW5 9YX

United Kingdom

tel: +44 (0) 181 897 2023

fax: +44 (0) 181 754 9842

email: asgar@messageofislam.com

website: www.messageofislam.com

TABLE *of* CONTENTS

Translator's Preface	4
Author's Introduction	9
The Status of the Declaration of Faith	13
The Virtues of the Declaration of Faith	20
A Grammatical Analysis of the Declaration of Faith	25
The Pillars of the Declaration of Faith	27
The Conditions of the Declaration of Faith	32
The Requirements of the Declaration of Faith	34
When A Person Benefits from It and When He Does Not	50
The Effects of the Declaration of Faith	63
APPENDIX: Brief Biographies	72

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Indeed all praise belongs to Allaah, we praise Him, seek His aid and seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Him from the evil [whisperings] to our souls and from our evil actions. Whosoever Allaah guides, none can misguide, but whosoever He leaves to stray, none can guide that person aright. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshiped except Allaah alone, without any partner; and I bear witness that Muhammad *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* is His Slave and Messenger.

To continue:

Allaah the Exalted said:

فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا لَكُمْ
وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

“So have knowledge of *laa ilaaha illallaah*; that none has the right to be worshiped except Allaah; and ask forgiveness for your sins and for the sins of the believing men and women.” [Soorah Muhammad 47:19]

This is, by Allaah's Grace, a translation of the Arabic book: *Laa illaaha illallaah; its Meaning, its Requirements and its Effects Upon*

the Individual and the Society, by the esteemed scholar, Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan - may Allaah protect him and continue benefiting the *ummah* with him. Although a translation of this book appeared a decade ago, it was, however, in need of a number of corrections and improvements.¹ Rather than revising the existing translation, it was decided that these corrections were best dealt with by undertaking a complete re-translation; the result of which is now in the hands of the noble reader.

Furthermore, there were points in the text of the book for which it was felt that a further explanation would be useful to the english speaking reader and in some cases, perhaps even essential. Therefore, some explanatory notes have been supplied in footnote form - most of which have been taken from other writings and publications of the Shaykh himself - hoping that such notes may aid in enhancing the reader's understanding and appreciation of this vital topic. Indeed, knowledge concerning *laa ilaaha illaallaah* is the most fundamental issue of Islaam and thus it is the most important and most excellent type of knowledge, since: **"The excellence [of a particular type] of knowledge, depends upon what it is connected with."**² Also, the sources for the *ahaadeeth* have been referenced, along with a brief comment upon their degrees of authenticity, as have the statements and narrations from the scholars quoted in the text of this book.

1. It was published by Imaam Muhammad ibn Sa'ud University; Saudi Arabia - by the Department of Culture and Publications - under the title: *The Meaning of: There is no Divine but Allaah*; 1409H/1989CE. The translators were Dr. Yusuf Omar Babakr and Muhammad Muhammad Khamis; may Allaah reward them for their work and efforts.
2. *Sharhul-'Aqeedatit-Tahaawiyyah* (1/5) of Imaam Ibn Abil-'Izz.
3. Written records or narratives of what the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* did, said or tacitly approved of. The singular of *ahaadeeth* is: *hadeeth*.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to those who aided in the translation and publication of this book, in particular to Dr. 'Abdullaah al-Farsee; whose revision of the translation and suggestions for its clarity and improvement were very useful. Indeed, the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

مَنْ لَمْ يَشْكُرِ النَّاسَ لَمْ يَشْكُرِ اللَّهَ

“He who does not thank the people, does not thank Allaah.”⁴

Finally, I ask Allaah by His beautiful Names that He accepts this humble endeavour and that He causes the book to be of benefit to Islaam and the Muslims. And all praise be to Allaah, Lord of the universe; and may He extol and send the blessings of peace upon our master and leader (*sayyid*), Muhammad; and upon his Family, his Companions and those who follow them in goodness until the Day of Resurrection.

ABU 'AALIYAH SURKHEEL IBN ANWAR SHARIF
21st day of Rabee'uth-Thaane 1419H
(15th of August 1998CE)
London, England

4. Saheeh: Reported by at-Tirmidhee in his *Sunan* (no.2021), from Abu Sa'eed *radiallaahu 'anhu*. it was declared to be authentic (*saheeh*) by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *as-Saheehah* (no.416).

**THE
DECLARATION
OF FAITH**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

INTRODUCTION

Indeed all praise is for Allaah. We praise Him; seek His aid and assistance; and seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evil [whisperings] to our souls and from our own evil actions. Whosoever Allaah guides, none can misguide; but whosoever Allaah leaves to stray, none can guide aright. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshiped except Allaah alone, Who has no partner; and I bear witness that Muhammad, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, is His Slave and Messenger.

To proceed:

Allaah the Most Perfect, commanded us to celebrate His remembrance. He praised those who remember Him and promised them a tremendous reward. He commanded us to remember Him in general, and more particularly, after completing the various prescribed acts of worship. Allaah the Exalted said:

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِيمَا وُقُودًا وَعَلَىٰ
جُنُوبِكُمْ

“When you have finished the Prayer, then remember Allaah; standing, sitting or lying down on your sides.” [Soorah an-Nisaa 4:103]

And Allaah said:

فَإِذَا أَقَضَيْتُمْ مَنَسِكَكُمْ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ
ءَابَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا

“When you have completed your Pilgrimage Rites, then remember Allaah as you remember your forefathers, or with far greater remembrance.”

[Soorah al-Baqarah 2:200]

Allaah ordered that His remembrance be celebrated, particularly during the performance of the Pilgrimage (*hajj*) itself. About this Allaah the Most High said:

فَإِذَا أَقَضْتُمْ مِنْ
عَرَفَاتٍ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ

“Then when you leave ‘*Arafat*, remember Allaah at the Sacred-Site.” [Soorah al-Baqarah 2:198]

Allaah the Exalted also said:

وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَةٍ
عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ

“And remember the Name of Allaah during the appointed days over the beasts of cattle that He has provided them for their sacrifice.” [Soorah al-Hajj 22:28]

Allaah the Exalted also said:

وَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَاتٍ

“And remember Allaah during the appointed days.” [Soorah al-Baqarah 2:203]

Allaah ordered the establishment of Prayer (*salaah*) in order to celebrate His remembrance, as He said:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي ﴿١٤﴾

“And establish the Prayer for My remembrance.”

[Soorah Taa Haa 20:14]

The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

أَيَّامُ التَّشْرِيقِ أَيَّامُ أَكْلٍ وَشُرْبٍ وَذِكْرٍ لِلَّهِ

“The days of *at-tashreeq* are days of eating, drinking and remembering Allaah.”¹

Allaah the Exalted said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٤١﴾ وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً

وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾

“O you who believe! Remember Allaah in abundance and glorify His praises, morning and evening.” [Soorah al-Ahzaab 33:41-42]

The best remembrance (*dhikr*) is: None has the right to be worshiped, except Allaah, alone, having no partner; as is related from the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* who said:

خَيْرُ الدُّعَاءِ دُعَاءُ يَوْمِ عَرَفَةَ وَخَيْرُ مَا قُلْتُ أَنَا وَالنَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ قَبْلِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

i. Reported by Muslim in his *Saheeh* (no.1141) from Nubayshah al-Hudhalee *radiallaahu 'anh*.

Imaam an-Nawawee said in *Sharh Saheeh Muslim* (8/15): “The days of *at-tashreeq* are the three days following the day of [the 'Eed] Sacrifice.”

“The best supplication is the supplication on the day of ‘Arafah; and the best that I, or any other Prophet sent before me, have said is: None has the right to be worshiped except Allaah, alone, having no partner, to Him belongs the sovereignty and to Him belongs all praise and He has power over everything.”²

Therefore, since this great declaration (*kalimah*) of *laa ilaaha illallaah* stands out amongst the various types of remembrance and because it is not merely something that is uttered by the tongue - rather it has certain rulings, conditions, meanings and requirements attached to it - I decided to choose this *kalimah* as the subject of my discussion. I hope that Allaah the Exalted makes us all from amongst those people who cling firmly to it; recognise its true meaning; and act in accordance with its requirements, both inwardly and outwardly.

My discussion concerning the *kalimah* will be confined to the following points:-

- its status in the life of a Muslim
- its virtues and excellence
- its lexical analysis
- its pillars
- its conditions
- its meaning and requirements
- when it benefits the one who says it and when it does not
- its effects

So I say, whilst seeking the help of Allaah the Exalted:

2. **Hasan:** Reported by at-Tirmidhee (no.3585). It was declared to be sound (*hasan*) by the hadeeth master (*haafidh*), Zaynud-Deen al-'Iraaqee, in *Takhreejul-Ihya* (1/254-255).

- I -

THE STATUS OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

It is a declaration (*kalimah*) that the Muslims proclaim in their daily lives; in their call to Prayer (*adhaan*), their call to establishing the Prayer (*'iqaamah*), their sermons and their speeches. It is: "A declaration upon which the heavens and the earth are established, and for which the whole of the creation was created, and for which Allaah sent Messengers, revealed Books, and prescribed Divine Laws. Because of it the Scales and the Registers were set-up, as were Paradise and Hellfire. Due to it creation was divided into Believers and unbelievers; righteous and wicked. It is the root cause for [there being] creation, command, rewards and punishments. It is the right for which the creation was created and about it and its rights will they be questioned and brought to account. Because of it there is punishment and reward; due to it the direction of Prayer (*qiblah*) was set-up; upon it rests the very foundation of the Religion; and because of it swords are drawn for striving and fighting (*jihaad*). It is the Right of Allaah over His slaves; the Declaration (*kalimah*) of Islaam; and the key to Paradise; about it both the earlier and later people will be questioned. Indeed, no person will stand before Allaah without being asked two questions: What did you worship? And how did you respond to the Messengers? The reply

to the first is by realisation of *laa ilaaha illallaah*; knowing it, affirming it, and acting by it. The reply to the second is by realisation that Muhammad *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* is the Messenger of Allaah; knowing it, complying with it, and being obedient to it.³⁴

This *kalimah* is the dividing line between unbelief (*kufr*) and Islaam. It is the word of piety (*kalimatut-taqwaa*), the firm and trustworthy hand-hold (*al-'urwatul-wuthqaa*) and it is what Ibraaheem '*alayhis-salaam* made as:

كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقِبِهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

“A Word to endure amongst his offspring, that they may turn to Allaah in repentance and obedience.” [Soorah az-Zukhruf 43:28]

It is [a *kalimah*] that Allaah Himself has testified to, as have the angels and those who possess knowledge from amongst His creation. Allaah the Most High said:

شَهِدَ
 اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ
 لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٨﴾

“Allaah bears witness that none has the right to be worshiped except Him; as do the angels and those

3. Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan, *hafidhahullaah*, said in *Sharhul-'Aqeedatil-Waasitiyyah* (p.8): “Bearing witness that he is the Messenger of Allaah requires having faith (*eeimaan*) in him; obeying him in what he commanded; keeping away from what he prohibited; believing in whatever he informed; and following him in what is prescribed as Law.”

4. *Zaadul-Ma'aad* (1/34) of Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim.

who possess knowledge. He maintains His creation upon justice. None has the right to be worshiped except Him, the All-Mighty, All-Wise.”

[Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:18]

It is the word of purity and sincerity (*kalimatul-ikhlaas*), a witness and an invitation to the truth, a declaration of dissociation from *shirk*⁵ and it is the reason why the creation was created; as Allaah the Exalted said:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾

“I did not create the *jinn* and mankind except to worship Me.” [Soorah adh-Dhaariyaat 51:56]

5. The Shaykh, *hafidhahullaah*, said in *Kitaabut-Tawheed* (p.9): “*Shirk* is to set-up partners with Allaah the Exalted in those matters concerning His Lordship (*ruboobiyyah*), or His Divinity and Worship (*uloohiyyah*). The predominant form of *shirk* occurs in matters of His Divinity and Worship; such as supplicating to other than Allaah or directing any form of worship, such as slaughtering, vowing, or [reverential] love, fear and hope, to others besides Allaah - and *shirk* is the greatest of all sins.”

Imaam as-Sa'dee, *rahimahullaah*, has given a comprehensive definition of *shirk* in *al-Qawlus-Sadeed* (p.48):

“The definition of the greater *shirk* and its explanation that encompasses all its types and elements is: **The servant directing any form or part of worship to other than Allaah.** So every belief, statement or action which has been confirmed as being prescribed by the *sharee'ah*, then directing it solely to Allaah is *tawheed*, faith (*eemaan*) and sincerity (*ikhlaas*); whereas directing it to other than Allaah is *shirk* and unbelief (*kufri*). So adhere to this guideline concerning the greater *shirk*, [a guideline] which entails no exception at all. Likewise, the definition of the lesser *shirk* is: Every intent, statement or action that does not reach the level of worship, but is a means or an avenue leading to the greater *shirk*.”

Because of it Messengers were sent and Divine Books and Scriptures were revealed, as Allaah said:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾

“We did not send any Messenger before you, except that We revealed to him that none has the right to be worshiped except Me; so worship Me.”

[Soorah al-Anbiyaa 21:25]

Allaah the Exalted also said:

يُنزِلُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ بِالرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرٍ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ
أَنْ أَنْذِرُوا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاتَّقُونِ ﴿٢٦﴾

“He sends down the angels with the revelation of His commands to whosoever of His slaves that He wills, saying: Warn mankind that none has the right to be worshiped except Me. So fear Me [by keeping away from sin and disobedience].” [Soorah an-Nahl 16:2]

Ibn 'Uyaynah, *rahimahullaah*, said: “Allaah has not bestowed any favour upon His slaves greater than the favour of them realising *laa ilaaha ilallaah*. Indeed *laa ilaaha illallaah* is to the people of Paradise, what cool water is to the people of this world.”⁶

Whoever utters it will have his wealth and his blood safeguarded, but whoever refuses to do so, then his property and his blood are not safeguarded. It has been reported in [one of] the *Saheeh* collections that the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

6. Related by Ibn Rajab in *Kalimatul-Ikhlaas* (p.53).

مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَكَفَرَ بِمَا يُعْبَدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَرَّمَ
مَالَهُ وَدَمَهُ وَحِسَابُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ

“Whoever says: *laa ilaaha illallaah* and rejects whatever else is worshiped besides Allaah, then his property and blood become sacred and his reckoning is with Allaah.”⁷

It is the first thing sought from the unbelievers when they are invited to embrace Islaam, since as the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* was sending Mu'aadh to Yemen, he said to him:

إِنَّكَ تَقْدُمُ عَلَى قَوْمٍ أَهْلِ كِتَابٍ فَلْيَكُنْ أَوَّلَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ
إِلَيْهِ عِبَادَةُ اللَّهِ

“You are going to a people from the people of the Book. So let the first thing to which you call them be the worship of Allaah.”

This was reported in the two most authentic hadeeth collections (*as-saheehayn*).⁸

7. Reported by Muslim (no.37).


8. Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.1458) and Muslim (no.31). In the narration of Muslim (no.29) there occurs the wording: “So call them to testify to *laa ilaaha illallaah* ...”

Imaam Ibn al-Mundhir, *rahimahullaah*, said in *al-Awsat* (p.735): “There is a consensus from all those whose views have been preserved from the people of knowledge, that when an unbeliever who has reached the age of puberty and is sound of mind, testifies to *laa ilaaha illallaah*; and to the fact that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger; and that everything Muhammad *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* came with is the truth and frees himself from every religion which contradicts the Religion of Islaam - then he is a Muslim.”

So with this you have come to know about the place of *laa ilaaha illallaah* in the Religion, its importance in the life of a Muslim and that it is the very first obligation upon the people, since it is the foundation upon which all actions are based.⁹

9. As for the view that the first obligation upon each person is to know Allaah through rational proofs and contemplation - a view which has regrettably gained currency amongst a party of the present-day callers to Islaam - then this is indeed an error!

Imaam Ibn Abil-'Izz, *rahimahullaah*, spoke about this in *Sharhul-'Aqeedatit-Tahaawiyyah* (1/23): "What is correct is that the first obligation upon the one who is morally responsible (*mukallaf*) is to testify to *laa ilaaha illallaah*. It is not to rationally contemplate, nor intend to contemplate, nor to doubt - which are the views of the leaders of blameworthy and innovated speech (*al-kalaamul-madhmoon*). Rather, the scholars of the Pious Predecessors (*Salaf*) were all in agreement that the first obligation a person is ordered with are the two testifications of faith (*shahaadatain*)."

Imaam an-Nawawee, *rahimahullaah*, stated the likes of the above in *Sharh Saheeh Muslim* (1/187) saying: "In this is an evident proof for the view of the verifying scholars, as well as the majority of the *Salaf* and the later scholars (*khalaf*), that when a person binds himself to the Religion of Islaam - with a decisive belief, having no doubt about it - then this suffices him. He is a Believer from the people of *tawheed*. It is not obligatory for him to learn the proofs of the rationalists (*al-mutakallimoon*) or to know Allaah the Exalted by them. This is contrary to those who obligate this and make it a condition for him to be from the people of the *Qiblah* [i.e. Muslims], claiming that the ruling of someone being a Muslim could not be applied except by this. **This view, which is the saying of many of the *Mu'tazilah* and some of our colleagues from the people of *kalaam*, is a clear error**, since what is required is a firm and decisive trust which has already been attained; and since the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* declared trust in what he came with to be sufficient and he did not make knowing such [rational] proofs a condition." 

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said in *Dar'ut-Ta'aarudil-'Aql wan-Naql* (8/21): "A group held that knowing Allaah through rational contemplation was obligatory, there being no way to reach this except through it; so they obligated rational contemplation upon everyone. This view was spread in the *ummah* by the *Mu'tazilah* and their ilk."

Ibn Hajr al-'Asqalaanee, *rahimahullaah*, also rebutted this erroneous view in *Fathul-Baaree* (13/437) saying: "His words are supported by what Aboo Daawood reports from Ibn 'Abbaas: "That a man said to Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: Did Allaah send you so that we should testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allaah and that we should forsake [the deities] *al-Laat* and *al-'Uzzaa*? He replied: "Yes." So the man became a Muslim." The basis of this can be found in the report of the two *Saheehs* in the story of Dammaam ibn Tha'labah. In the hadeeth of 'Amr ibn 'Abasa, which is reported by Muslim, 'Amr said: "I came to the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* and said: What are you? He replied: A Prophet of Allaah. I said: Did Allaah send you? He replied: Yes. I said: With what? He replied: To single out Allaah alone with worship and not to associate anything else in worship with Him. [Amr then embraced Islam]." ... Also there are the letters that the Prophet *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam* sent to Heraclius, Chosroes and other kings, calling them to *tawheed*. These and other continuously recurring (*mutawaatir*) reports - which are *mutawaatir* in meaning - prove that when the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* called the unbelievers to have faith in Allaah and to affirm what he came with, he did not increase upon this [i.e. he did not require them to contemplate or to know rational proofs]. So whoever responded to the message, it was accepted from him, regardless of whether he contemplated or not."

Point to Note: Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Maani' said in *Sharhul-'Aqeedatis-Safaareeniyyah* (p.61): "Some scholars have said: Rational contemplation (*nadh'r*) is obligatory in some situations but not in others, and upon some individuals but not upon others. It is obligatory upon one whose natural instinct to submit to Allaah (*fitrah*) has been so corrupted that he is in need of rational contemplation. As for one who can acquire cognisance of Allaah without contemplation, nor has his *fitrah* been corrupted, then it is not obligatory upon him."

The likes of this was also stated by Ibn Taymiyyah in *Majmoo' Fataawaa* (16/328). For a detailed treatment of this topic consult: *Dar'ut-Ta'aarudil-'Aql wan-Naql* (8/351-359) and *Fathul-Baaree* (13/432-439).

- 2 -

THE VIRTUES OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

It has great virtues and has a great place with Allaah. Whoever says it with truthfulness will enter the Gardens of Paradise and whoever did not utter it truthfully, his property and blood will be safeguarded in this world, but his reckoning will be with Allaah the Mighty and Majestic. It is a concise declaration that contains few letters; light upon the tongue, yet heavy in the scales. It has been reported by Ibn Hibbaan, as well as al-Haakim who declared it to be authentic (*saheeh*), from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree *radiallaahu 'anhu*, that Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

قَالَ مُوسَى يَا رَبِّ عَلِّمْنِي شَيْئًا أَذْكُرُكَ وَأَدْعُوكَ بِهِ قَالَ يَا
مُوسَى قُلْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ قَالَ كُلُّ عِبَادِكَ يَقُولُونَ هَذَا قَالَ
يَا مُوسَى لَوْ أَنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعَ وَعَامِرَهُنَّ غَيْرِي
وَالْأَرْضِينَ السَّبْعَ فِي كَفَّةٍ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ فِي كَفَّةٍ مَالَتْ
بِهِنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

“Moses said: O my Lord! Teach me something by which I can remember You and supplicate to You. Allaah

said: O Moses! say *laa ilaaha ilallaah*. Moses said: O my Lord! All Your slaves say this. Allaah said: O Moses! If the seven heavens and all that they contain, other than Me, and the seven earths were placed in one scale, and *laa ilaaha ilallaah* were put in the other, then *laa ilaaha illallaah* would outweigh them all.”¹⁰

This hadeeth proves that *laa ilaaha illallaah* is the best form of remembrance, as also occurs in the hadeeth of 'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar:

خَيْرُ الدُّعَاءِ دُعَاءُ يَوْمِ عَرَفَةَ وَخَيْرُ مَا قُلْتُ أَنَا وَالنَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ
قَبْلِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ
الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“The best supplication is the supplication on the day of 'Arafah, and the best that I, or any other Prophet sent before me, have said is: None has the right to be worshiped except Allaah, alone, having no partner. To Him belongs the sovereignty, and to Him belongs all praise, and He has power over everything.”¹¹

10. Reported by Ibn Hibbaan in his *Saheeh* (no.2324) and al-Haakim in *al-Mustadrak* (1/528).

Even though the authenticity of this hadeeth has been disputed by some scholars of hadeeth - as pointed out by Shaykh Shu'ayb al-Arna'oot in his verification to *Sharhus-Sunnah* (5/55) of al-Baghawee - the actual virtue under discussion is mentioned in another narration reported by Ahmad (2/169), from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr *radiallaahu 'anhu*. This latter narration was declared to be *saheeh* by the leading hadeeth specialist (*muhaddith*) of our age, Shaykh Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee, in *as-Saheehah* (no.134).

11. **Hasan:** Its authentication has preceded (p.12).

A further indication as to how weighty this *kalimah* is in the scales can be seen from what at-Tirmidhee reports and declares to be sound - as well as an-Nasaa'ee, and al-Haakim who said that it is authentic according to the criterion of Muslim - from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr, from the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, who said:

يُصَاحُّ بِرَجُلٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي عَلَى رُؤُوسِ الْخَلَائِقِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
 فَيُنشَرُ لَهُ تِسْعَةٌ وَتِسْعُونَ سِجْلًا كُلُّ سِجْلٍ مِنْهَا مَدُّ الْبَصَرِ
 ثُمَّ يُقَالُ أَتُنْكِرُ مِنْ هَذَا شَيْئًا فَيَقُولُ لَا يَا رَبَّ فَيُقَالُ أَلَاكَ
 عُذْرٌ أَوْ حَسَنَةٌ فِيهَا بُرْهَانٌ فَيَقُولُ لَا - فَيُقَالُ بَلَى إِنَّ
 لَكَ عِنْدَنَا حَسَنَاتٍ وَإِنَّهُ لَا ظُلْمَ عَلَيْكَ فَيُخْرَجُ لَهُ بِطَاقَةٌ
 فِيهَا أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ
 وَرَسُولُهُ فَيَقُولُ يَا رَبَّ مَا هَذِهِ الْبَطَاقَةُ مَعَ هَذِهِ السِّجَلَاتِ
 فَيُقَالُ إِنَّكَ لَا تُظْلَمُ فَتَوْضَعُ السِّجَلَاتُ فِي كِفَّةٍ وَالْبَطَاقَةُ
 فِي كِفَّةٍ فَطَاشَتْ السِّجَلَاتُ وَتَقَلَّتِ الْبَطَاقَةُ

"A person from my ummah will be summoned in front of everyone on the Day of Resurrection. Ninety-nine scrolls will be unfurled for him, each scroll extending as far as the eye can see. Then it will be said: Do you deny any of this [i.e. your bad deeds]? So the man will reply: No, O Lord. Then it will be said: Do you have any excuse or any good deed? The man, in a state of terror, will answer: No. It will then be said: Rather, you do have some good deeds and no injustice will befall you this Day. So a parchment will be taken out for him, upon which there will be the testification of laa ilaaha illallaah and the testification that Muhammad is the

Slave and Messenger of Allaah. The man will say: O Lord, what is this parchment in comparison to those scrolls! It will be said to him: No injustice shall befall you. The scrolls will then be placed in one of the scales and the parchment in the other; the scrolls will be light in weight, whereas the parchment will be heavy."¹²

Indeed, this tremendous *kalimah* has many virtues, a number of which have been mentioned by Haafidh Ibn Rajab in his essay entitled *Kalimatul-Ikhlaas*. These include:-

- It is the price to pay for the Gardens of Paradise (*jannah*)
- He whose last words are *laa ilaaha illallaah* will enter the Gardens of Paradise
- It is salvation from the Hellfire
- It necessitates being forgiven
- It is the best of all good actions
- It wipes away sins
- It renews the faith (*eeimaan*) that is planted in the heart
- It outweighs, on the scales, the records of sins
- It traverses all barriers until it reaches Allaah the Majestic
- It is a *kalimah* whose sayer Allaah declares truthful
- It is the best of what the Prophets have said
- It is the best form of remembrance, the best of all actions and the one that is multiplied the most [in reward]
- It is equivalent to freeing slaves
- It is a protection against *Shaytaan*
- It is a means of safety from the darkness in the grave and from the terror of the gathering (*al-hashr*)
- It is a distinguishing sign for the Believers when they emerge from their graves

12. **Saheeh:** Reported by at-Tirmidhee (no.2641), from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr *radiallaahu 'anhu*. It was declared to be *saheeh* by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *as-Saheehah* (no.135).

● All eight gates of Paradise will be opened to its testifier and he may enter by any one he chooses. Even if its testifier enters the Hellfire due to falling short in fulfilling [some of] its rights, most definitely, that person will eventually be taken out from it.

These were the main points that Ibn Rajab mentioned in his essay concerning the virtues of the *kalimah*, bringing a proof for each one of these points.¹³

13. Consult *Kalimatul-Ikhlaas* (pp.54-66).

A GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

Since understanding the meaning of a statement depends upon knowing its grammatical analysis, the scholars - may Allaah have mercy upon them - have paid great attention to the grammatical analysis of *laa ilaaha illallaah*. So they say:

The word: *laa* [which means: *No*] is known as a particle of absolute negation. The word: *ilaah* is its corresponding noun, which is inflected and which carries with it an implication of an omitted syntactical term (*taqdeer*). In this case the *taqdeer* is designated as being the term: *haqq* (right); meaning that none has the right (or deserves) to be an *ilaah*. The phrase: *illallaah* (except Allaah) is an exception to the previous negation and is in the nominative case.

The meaning of *ilaah* is: That which is deified with worship. It is that which hearts love, adore and deify; hoping in it for the attainment of benefit or for the protection against harm.¹⁴

14. Thus the meaning of the declaration of faith is: That none has the right to be [deified and] worshiped, except Allaah.

It is an error to think that the ellipsis (*taqdeer*) is the word: existence (*mawjood*) or object of worship (*ma'bood*), because [the declaration of faith would then mean: No deity exists except Allaah, or: No deity is worshiped except Allaah]; whereas there are many things in existence that are worshiped besides Allaah; such as idols, tombs and other things. However, the only One that has the right to be worshiped is Allaah and whatever else is worshiped besides Him is futile; the worship of which is false.

This is also what the two pillars (*arkaan*) of *laa ilaaha illallaah* dictate:

THE PILLARS OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

It has two pillars: The first pillar is the pillar of negation (*nafee*), whilst the second is the pillar of affirmation (*ithbaat*). What is meant by negation is to negate divinity and worship (*ilaahiyyah*) for anything except Allaah, the Most High. What is meant by affirmation is to affirm divinity and worship only for Allaah the Most Perfect; for it is He alone that is the true Deity. So whatever else is taken by the unbelievers as deities to be worshiped are in fact all false and futile:

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَبَى مَا يَدْعُونَ مِنْ
دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ

“That is because Allaah is the true Deity to be worshiped, and whatever else they invoke besides Him is vain falsehood.” [Soorah al-Hajj 22:62]

Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim said: “The significance of *laa ilaaha illallaah* in affirming divinity and worship for only Allaah is far greater than just saying that Allaah is an *ilaah*. This is because the saying that Allaah is an *ilaah* does not negate divinity and worship to other than Allaah. This is different to the saying: *laa ilaaha illallaah*; which obligates restricting divinity and worship

to only Allaah. Likewise, those who explain *al-Ilaah* to mean: The one who has the ability to create and originate (*al-qaadir 'alaal-ikhtiraa'*) have, for sure, committed a grave error.”

Shaykh Sulaymaan ibn 'Abdullaah said in his explanation to *Kitaabut-Tawheed*: “If it is said: The meaning of deity (*ilaah*) and divinity (*ilaahiyyah*) have been clarified, but what is the reply to those who say that the meaning of *al-Ilaah* is: The one who has the ability to create and originate; or other such similar expressions? Then the answer to this is from two angles:- *Firstly*: That this saying is a newly-invented saying which none of the scholars, nor any of the leading linguists, have ever advocated; rather the words of the scholars and linguists agree with what we have previously mentioned. Therefore this view is false. *Secondly*: Even if this is accepted, then it is only an explanation of what is essential for a true *ilaah*. Indeed, it is essential that the true *ilaah* be a Creator who is capable of creating and originating. If this is not the case, then that is not the true *ilaah*, even if he is called this. It certainly does not mean that whoever realises that *ilaah* means the one who is capable of creating and originating, that

15. The Shaykh said in *Bayaan Haqeeqatut-Tawheed* (p.19): “Some of them explain *ilaah* to mean; the One that has the ability to originate and create. So the meaning of *laa ilaaha illallaah* in their view is: None has the ability to originate and create, except Allaah; and this is a serious error! For whoever explains [the *kalimah*] to mean just this, has not affirmed anything different than what the unbelievers already affirmed. They used to affirm that none has the ability to originate, nor to create, nor to provide and sustain, nor to give life, nor to cause death, except for Allaah - just as Allaah, the Exalted, mentions about them. Yet He did not declare them to be Muslims [because of this belief]. Yes, this meaning that is mentioned, enters into the [overall] meaning of *laa ilaaha illallaah*. However, it is not the main implication of this *kalimah*.”

Also consult the explanation of Soorah *al-Qasas*; verse 70 by Imaam at-Tabaree in his *Tafseer* (20/102) and Ibn Katheer in his *Tafseer* (3/408).

such a person has entered into Islaam.¹⁵ No one has ever said this, since it would imply that the Arab unbelievers would have to be considered as Muslims!¹⁶ If some of the later scholars did intend this, then they are mistaken, and [this view] is refuted by both textual proofs and intellectual proofs.”¹⁷

16. The Shaykh, *hafidhahullaah*, explained this matter further in *Mujmal 'Aqeedatus-Salafis-Saalih* (pp.10-12), where he said:

“The belief that Lordship and whatever it entails belongs solely to Allaah (*tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah*) is engrained in the very nature (*fitrah*) of man, hardly anyone amongst mankind has disputed this; to the extent that *Iblees* - the leader of unbelief - said:

رَبِّ مَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي

“O my Lord, because you left me to stray.” [Soorah al-Hijr 15:39]

And he said:

فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

“By Your Might, I will surely mislead them all.” [Soorah Saad 38:82]

Thus he acknowledged that Lordship (*ruboobiyyah*) belongs to Allaah alone and he [even] took an oath by Allaah's Might. The same is the case for the rest of the unbelievers who also acknowledged this; such as Aboo Jahl and Aboo Lahab and other leaders of unbelief who opposed [the Prophet]. They all acknowledged that Lordship belongs to Allaah alone - along with the fact that they were unbelievers and misguided. Allaah the Majestic said [about such unbelievers]:

وَلَكِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ فَأَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ

“And if you ask them who created them, they would surely say: Allaah. How then are they turned away.”

[Soorah az-Zukhruf 43:87]



And Allaah the Exalted said:

قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ
سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ

“Say: Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the Great Throne: They will say: Allaah.” [Soorah al-Mu’minoon 23:86]

Allaah the Majestic [also] said:

قُلْ مَنْ يَلِدُهُ
مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ
كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ

“Say: In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything, Who protects all, whilst against Whom there is no protector, if you do know? They will say: It belongs to Allaah.” [Soorah al-Mu’minoon 23:89-90]

Allaah the Majestic [also] said:

قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ
مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ
الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدِيرُ الْأُمُورَ
فَسَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ

“Say: Who provides for you from the sky and the earth? Or to Whom belongs hearing and sight? And Who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living? And Who is the Disposer of affairs? They will say: Allaah.” [Soorah Yoonus 10:31]

So they acknowledged all of this, along with the fact that in times of difficulty and hardship they would supplicate exclusively to Allaah alone. This is because they knew that there can be no salvation from difficulty except with Allaah the Most Perfect; knowing [also] that their deities and idols had no power at all to save them from [any] destruction. Allaah the Exalted said [about them]:

وَإِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فِي الْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَنْ تَدْعُونَ إِلَّا إِلَٰهَهُ فَلَمَّا بَجَدْنَا
 إِلَى الْبَرِّ أَعْرَضْتُمْ وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ كُفُورًا ﴿٦٧﴾

“When some harm inflicts you upon the sea, those that you call upon vanish from you, except Allaah alone. But when Allaah brings you safely to dry land, you turn away from him. Indeed, man is ever ungrateful.”

[Soorah al-Israa 17:67]

So whoever acknowledges [just] this type of *tawheed*, has not entered into Islaam nor will he be saved from the Hellfire. The unbelievers - as an example - acknowledged and affirmed *tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah*, yet their acknowledgement of it did not make them Muslims. Rather, Allaah [still] called them idol-worshippers (*mushriks*) and unbelievers (*kuffaar*) and the ruling upon them was that they would be consigned to the Hellfire for eternity; even with their acknowledgement of *tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah*!

From this can be seen the mistake of those who - because of adopting the way of the rationalists (*ahlul-kalaam*) in their writings concerning [Islaamic] beliefs - explain *tawheed* as [merely] being the affirmation that Allaah exists and that He is the sole Creator, Sustainer, etc. So we say to them: This is not the belief with which Allaah sent the Prophets, since the *mushriks* and the unbelievers - and indeed, even *Iblees* - already affirmed [the concept of] *tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah*.”

Imaam Ibn Abil-'Izz, *rahimahullaah*, said in *Sharhul-'Aqeedatit-Taahawiyyah* (1/28-29): “The *tawheed* to which the Messengers called and for which the Scriptures were revealed is *tawheedul-ilaahiyyah*; that Allaah alone has the right to be worshiped, without ascribing any partner to Him in this; and this encompasses *tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah*. Indeed the Arab *mushriks* used to acknowledge *tawheed ar-ruboobiyyah* and that the Creator of the heavens and the earth was One.”

Finally, Imaam at-Tabaree relates in *Jaami'ul-Bayaan 'an Ta'weelil-Qur'aan* (13/50-51) that Ibn 'Abbaas *radiallaahu 'anhu* said: “If you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, they will reply: Allaah. Yet along with this, they still worshiped others besides Him.”

17. *Tayseerul-'Azeezil-Hameed* (pp.56-57).

CONDITIONS FOR THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

It will not benefit the one who says it unless the following seven conditions are fulfilled:¹⁸

Firstly: Knowledge (*al-'ilm*) of its meaning, what it negates and affirms. If a person says it without knowing its meaning, nor what its requirements are, then he will not benefit by it, because he has not believed in what it requires. Rather, he is like someone who speaks in a language that he does not understand.

Secondly: Certainty (*al-yaqeen*), which is [to have] complete surety of it and which leads to repelling any doubt or suspicion about it.

Thirdly: Exclusively worshipping Allaah (*al-ikhlaas*), which is contrary to *shirk*. This is what *laa ilaaha illallaah* points towards.

Fourthly: Truthfulness (*as-sidq*), which prevents hypocrisy

18. Some scholars, such as Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azeez bin Baaz in *Majmoo' Fataawaa wa Maqaalaat Mutanawwi'ah* (7/56) and Shaykh 'Abdullaah ibn Jibreel in *ash-Shahaadataan* (p.77), add an eighth condition: The rejection of whatever else is worshiped besides Allaah.

(*nifaaq*). Indeed, the hypocrites uttered it with their tongues, but did not inwardly believe in what it signified.

Fifthly: Love (*al-mahabbah*) for this *kalimah* and having love and pleasure for whatever it necessitates. This is contrary to the [state of the] hypocrites.

Sixthly: Submissive compliance (*al-inqiyaad*), by fulfilling its rights - which are the obligatory actions - with sincerity to Allaah and seeking His good pleasure. This is its requirement.

Seventhly: Acceptance (*al-qabool*), which prevents rejection. This is achieved by acting upon what Allaah has commanded and abandoning whatever He has prohibited.

Scholars have deduced these conditions from those texts of the Book and the *Sunnah* which are pertinent to [understanding] this great *kalimah*; and which explain its rights and restrictions and that it is not merely a word that a person utters.

- 6 -

THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

It is clear from what has preceded, that the meaning of *laa ilaaha illallaah* is: None has the right to be worshiped except the One [true] Deity; which is Allaah, alone, without any partner. He alone is the One Who deserves to be worshiped.

Therefore, this great *kalimah* implies that whatever else is worshiped besides Allaah is not a true deity that deserves to be worshiped, rather, all such deities are false. It is for this reason that many of the commands to worship Allaah are also accompanied by a [command] to negate worship of other than Allaah; because the worship of Allaah is not correct if others are worshiped along with Him. Allaah the Most High said:

وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا

“Worship Allaah alone, and do not associate anything else as partners along with Him.” [Soorah an-Nisaa 4:36]

Allaah the Most High also said:

فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ
 اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٦﴾

“Whosoever disbelieves in *at-taaghoot* and believes in Allaah, has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that never breaks. And Allaah is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.” [Soorah al-Baqarah 2:256].¹⁹

Allaah the Exalted [also] said:

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ
 وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ

“We sent a Messenger to every nation ordering them to worship Allaah alone, obey Him, and make their worship purely for Him; and that they should avoid everything worshiped besides Allaah.” [Soorah an-Nahl 16:36]

The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَكَفَرَ بِمَا يُعْبَدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَرُمٌ
 مَالُهُ وَدَمُهُ وَحِسَابُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ

“Whoever says *laa ilaaha illallaah* and rejects whatever is worshiped besides Allaah, his blood and his wealth become sacred and his account is with Allaah.”²⁰

19. Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim, *rahimahullaah*, said in *I'laamul-Muwaqqi'een* (1/53): “*At-Taaghoot* is anyone concerning whom a person exceeds the limits, whether it is with regards to someone [who is pleased to be] worshipped, obeyed, or followed.”

20. Reported by Muslim (no.37).

Every Messenger said to his people:

يَقُومُوا عِبَادًا لِلَّهِ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ

“O my people! Worship Allaah alone. You have none other than Him that has the right to be a deity to be worshiped.” [Soorah al-A'raaf 7:59]

And there are evidences other than this.

Imaam Ibn Rajab, *rahimahullaah*, said: “To explain this meaning and to clarify it: When a person says *laa ilaaha illallaah*, it means, according to him, that none has the right to be deified and worshiped except Allaah. And *al-Ilaah* is the One Who is obeyed and not disobeyed; due to awe and veneration of Him, and due to love, fear, hope and reliance upon Him; as well as being the One Who is asked from and is supplicated to. And none of this is correct, except for Allaah the Mighty and Majestic.”²¹

This is why when the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said to the unbelievers of the Quraysh: Say *laa ilaaha illallaah*, they retorted:

أَجْعَلُ الْإِلَهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا الشَّيْءُ عَجَابٌ

“Has he made all the deities into a single Deity to be worshiped [i.e Allaah]. Indeed, this is something very peculiar!” [Soorah Saad 38:5]

They [the unbelievers] understood that this *kalimah* rendered false the worship of any and every deity and restricted worship to just Allaah alone, and they did not want this. So it is clear that *laa ilaaha illallaah*, along with its requirement, implies: That Allaah

21. *Kalimatul-Ikhlaas* (p.25).

alone should be singled out with worship; and that the worship of other than Him should be abandoned. So when a person says *laa ilaaha illallaah*, he is proclaiming that it is obligatory to single out Allaah alone with worship, and he is [at the same time] denouncing the worship of other than Him; such as [the worship] of idols; [the dead in the] graves; the pious and righteous.

The falsehood of those who worship the [dead in the] graves, and the likes, can be seen in that they believe *laa ilaaha illallaah* merely implies the affirmation that Allaah exists, or that He is the Creator and the One Who has the ability to originate or other similar beliefs; or that it just means judgement and sovereignty (*haakimiyyah*) belongs solely to Allaah. They think that whoever holds such beliefs and explains *laa ilaaha illallaah* in this manner, then they have reached the absolute truth of *tawheed* - even if they do what they do as regards worshipping others along with Allaah, or believe in [directing worship to] the dead; drawing closer to them by offering sacrifices to them; making vows to them; ritually walking around and circumambulating (*tawaaf*) their graves and seeking Divine blessings (*tabarruk*) from the earth around them! These people are unaware that even the unbelieving Arabs held these beliefs, and that they acknowledged and affirmed that Allaah was the Creator Who has the ability to originate. They claimed that they worshiped others along with Him because these [other deities] would bring them closer to Allaah; they did not believe that [these deities] were the actual ones who created, or were the providers of sustenance.

So [the fact that] judgement belongs solely to Allaah (*haakimiyyah*) is only a part of the overall meaning of *laa ilaaha illallaah*, it is not the main implication of it. Thus it is not enough to judge by the Prescribed Laws of Allaah (*sharee'ah*) in matters concerning rights, prescribed punishments (*hudood*) and disputes, whilst neglecting the existence of *shirk* in the very worship of Allaah itself! If the meaning of *laa ilaaha illallaah* was

as these people claimed, then there would have been no dispute between the Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* and between the *mushrikoon*, those who worshiped idols and others along with Allaah. Indeed, if the Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* had just asked them to affirm that Allaah is the One Who has the ability to originate and create, or to affirm that Allaah exists, or if he asked them to judge in accordance with Allaah's Prescribed Laws concerning issues of blood, property and rights - whilst remaining silent about the issue of [singling out Allaah alone with] worship - then they would have hastened in responding to the Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*. However, they were a people who understood the Arabic language, and therefore they clearly understood that if they were to say *laa ilaaha illallaah*, they would be affirming the falsity of worshipping idols and that this *kalimah* was not a mere phrase devoid of meaning. This is why a group of them said:

أَجْعَلُ الْآلِهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عُجَابٌ

“Has he made all the deities into a single Deity to be worshipped. Indeed, this is something very peculiar!” [Soorah Saad 38:5]

And Allaah said about them:

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يُسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ
أَبِنَا لَسَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ
لَشَاعِرٍ يُجْتَنُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

“When it is said to them: Say *laa ilaaha illallaah*, they puff themselves up with pride. And they say: Are we to abandon our deities that we worship, because of a mad poet?” [Soorah as-Saafaat 37:35-36]

So they understood that *laa ilaaha illallaah* signified that they would have to abandon worshipping anything else besides

Allaah, and that they would have to single out Allaah alone with worship, and that if they said it and continued worshipping idols then they would be contradicting themselves; so they refrained from this contradiction. However, the present-day grave-worshippers do not refrain from this hideous contradiction. They say *laa ilaaha illallaah* yet they contradict it by worshipping the dead and drawing closer to their shrines by directing various acts of worship to them. So woe be to those who have less knowledge concerning the [true] meaning of *laa ilaaha illallaah* than even Aboo Jahl and Aboo Lahab!

In summary: Whoever utters this *kalimah*, knowing its meaning, acting by its inward and outward requirements, negating *shirk* and affirming worship for Allaah alone, having an unwavering belief in what it implies, and acting in accordance with it - then he is a true Muslim. Whoever utters it and acts upon its requirements outwardly, but without believing in what it necessitates, then he is a hypocrite (*munaafiq*). Whoever utters it with his tongue, but acts contrary to it with [acts of] *shirk* that negate the *kalimah*, then he is a self-contradicting *mushrik*.²²

22. The Shaykh, *hafidhahullaah*, further explained in *al-Muntaqaa min Fataawaa* (1/9-10):

“Whoever utters the testification of *laa ilaaha illallaahu muhammadur-rasoolullaah*, the ruling of him being a Muslim starts there and then and his blood is sacred. If he acts upon the requirements inwardly and outwardly, he is a true Muslim, and for him are good-tidings, both in this world and in the Hereafter. If he acts upon the requirements, but does so only outwardly, then he is judged to be a Muslim based upon his outward conduct and he is treated as a Muslim, even though inwardly he is a hypocrite (*munaafiq*) whose affair is left to Allaah. If he does not act upon the requirements of *laa ilaaha illallaah*, but satisfies himself with merely pronouncing it, or he acts in opposition to it, then the ruling of apostasy will be applied to him, and he will be treated as an apostate. If he acts upon some of its requirements without

So it is essential to not only utter this *kalimah*, but to also have knowledge of its meaning, since this will be a means towards acting in accordance with its essential requirements. Allaah, the Exalted, said:

إِلَّا مَن شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

“Except those who bear witness to the truth and have knowledge.” [Soorah az-Zukhruf 43:86]

Acting according to its requirements means worshipping Allaah alone and rejecting the worship of anything else besides Him; this being the greatest implication of this *kalimah*.

Also, from the requirements of *laa ilaaha illallaah* is to accept Allaah’s Prescribed Laws (*sharee’ah*) in matters of worship, social transactions and in what is lawful and unlawful, as well as to reject all other laws besides it. Allaah the Most High said:

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ أَشْرَعُوا لَهُمْ مِّنَ الدِّينِ
مَا لَمْ يَأْذَنَ بِهِ اللَّهُ

“Or do they have partners with Allaah who have prescribed for them a religion that Allaah has not ordained?” [Soorah ash-Shooraa 42:21]

It is therefore obligatory to accept the Prescribed Laws of Allaah in matters concerning worship, social transactions, judging

acting upon others, then it will have to be seen: If the requirements that he has left constitute apostasy, then he will be judged as an apostate; such as intentionally abandoning the Prayer, or directing any form of worship to other than Allaah. If, however, that which he has left does not constitute apostasy, then he will be considered a believer whose faith (*eemaan*) is deficient in proportion to what he has left; such as those who commit sins that are of a lesser degree than [the major acts of] *shirk*.”

between people in that which they differ regarding their personal situations and other matters, whilst [at the same time] rejecting man-made laws. What this means is to reject all the innovations and deviations that have been introduced and propagated by the devils - from amongst mankind and the *jinn* - in the matter of worshipping Allaah. Indeed, whoever accepts anything of this has actually committed *shirk* in [the matter of] obedience to Allaah, just as Allaah said in this verse:

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ شَرَعُوا لَهُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ
مَا لَمْ يَأْذَنْ بِهِ اللَّهُ

“Or do they have partners with Allaah who have prescribed for them a religion that Allaah has not ordained?” [Soorah ash-Shooraa 42:21]

And Allaah the Most High said:

وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ

“If you were to obey them, then indeed you would be *mushriks*.” [Soorah al-An'aam 6:121]

أَتَّخِذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهَبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ

“They take their rabbis and their priests to be lords besides Allaah.” [Soorah at-Tawbaa 9:31]

In an authentic narration the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* once recited the above verse to 'Adee ibn Haatim at-Taa'ee, may Allaah be pleased with him (*radiallaahu 'anhu*), so he said: O Messenger of Allaah, we do not worship them. So he replied:

أَلَيْسَ يُجِلُّونَ لَكُمْ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ فَتُجِلُّونَهُ وَ يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا
أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ فَتُحَرِّمُونَهُ قَالَ بَلَى - قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ فَتَنَلَّكَ عِبَادَتُهُمْ


“Do they not make lawful to you that which Allaah has made unlawful, which you then deem as lawful? And do they not make unlawful to you that which Allaah has made lawful, which you then deem as unlawful?” He said: Yes indeed. So the Prophet *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said to him: “This is worshipping them.”²³

Shaykh ‘Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Hasan, *rahimahullaah*, said: “In this hadeeth is a proof that obeying the rabbis and priests in those matters which constitute disobedience to Allaah, is actually [an act of] worshipping them besides Allaah. This is one of the major [types of] *shirk* that Allaah does not forgive ...”²⁴

23. **Hasan:** Reported with this wording by al-Bayhaqee in *as-Sunanul-Kubraa* (10/116) and Ibn Taymiyyah declared it to be *hasan* in *Majmoo’ Fataawaa* (7/67). It has also been reported by at-Tirmidhee (no.3094), with a slightly different wording.

24. *Fathul-Majeed* (2/653).

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, *rahimahullaah*, clarified this point in more detail in *Majmoo’ Fataawaa* (7/70-71), stating:

“Those that take their rabbis and priests as lords obeying them in their making lawful what Allaah has declared to be unlawful, and their making unlawful what Allaah has declared to be lawful, occurs in one of two ways: - *Firstly:* that they know that they [i.e. the rabbis and priests] have changed the Religion of Allaah, yet follow them in this act of changing (*tabdeel*). They thus believe to be lawful that which Allaah has made unlawful; and unlawful that which Allaah has made lawful, following their leaders in this, along with knowing that they have opposed the Religion of the Messengers of Allaah. This is unbelief (*kufr*), which Allaah and His Messenger consider to be *shirk* - even if they do not actually pray or prostrate to them. *Secondly:* that their belief and faith in what is [truly] lawful and unlawful is established. But if they follow them in disobedience to Allaah, then their case is just 

So this is the major [type of] *shirk* which negates the very *tawheed* that *laa ilaaha illallaah* points towards.

Likewise, it is obligatory to reject referring judgement back to man-made laws, because it is obligatory to refer judgement back to the Book of Allaah and to abandon referring judgment to whatever opposes it from the man-made systems and laws. Allaah, the Most High, said:

فَإِنْ نُنزِعْنَكُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ

“If you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it back to Allaah and His Messenger.” [Soorah an-Nisaa 4:59]

Allaah the Exalted also said:

وَمَا اخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبِّي

“In whatever you differ, the judgement is for Allaah. Such is Allaah, my Lord.” [ash-Shooraa 41:10]

like a Muslim who commits an act of disobedience, which he believes to be an act of disobedience. The likes of such people have the same ruling as the sinful Muslims ... Also, this making unlawful what is lawful, and making lawful what is unlawful, if it occurs from a scholar whose intention is to follow the Messenger, but the truth [in this matter] was not clear to him, but he feared Allaah as much as he was able, then Allaah will not take him to task for his mistake. Rather, he will be rewarded for the scholarly striving (*ijtihaad*) he undertook in obedience to his Lord. However, whosoever knows that this is a mistake, yet still follows his mistake, turning away from the saying of the Messenger, then such a person has a share of this *shirk* that Allaah has condemned, especially if the person is following his whims and desires in this, supporting it with his tongue and hand, along with having knowledge that this opposes the Messenger. This is *shirk*, the doer of which is deserving of punishment.”

Allaah, the Most Perfect, has declared that the one who does not judge by what Allaah has revealed, has committed unbelief (*kufri*), wrong-doing (*dhulm*) and sin (*fisq*), and faith has been negated from him. So if a person judges by other than what Allaah has revealed, deeming it permissible to do so, or deeming that it is better or more appropriate than Allaah's Judgement, then this is [the greater type of] *kufri* and *shirk* which totally negates *tawheed* and which completely nullifies *laa ilaaha illallaah*. If, however, he does not deem it permissible to do so, rather he believes that it is obligatory to judge by Allaah's Judgement, but he is overcome by desires which cause him to act contrary to it, then this is the lesser type of *kufri* and *shirk* which decreases [adherence to] *laa ilaaha illallaah* and its requirements, [but does not take the person outside the fold of Islaam].

Thus *laa ilaaha illallaah* is a complete and integral way of life. It is obligatory for the Muslims to follow this way in their [modes of] worship and in their conduct and behaviour. It is not merely a word that is uttered for gaining blessings, or to be merely uttered as part of the morning and evening recommended supplications; without understanding its meaning, or acting upon its requirements, or traversing its path - as many of those who utter it with their tongues, but oppose it in their beliefs and behaviour, actually think!

From the requirements of *laa ilaaha illallaah* is to affirm the Names (*asmaa*) and Attributes (*sifaat*) of Allaah; those that He called and described Himself with, or those that His Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* called and described Him with. Allaah the Exalted said:

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذُرُوا الَّذِينَ يَلْحَدُونَ فِي
 أَسْمَائِهِ سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

“To Allaah belong the most Beautiful Names, so call upon Him by them. And leave those who reject and twist (*ilhaad*) His Names, they will be requited for what they used to do.” [Soorah al-A’raaf 7:180]

It is stated in *Fathul-Majeed*: “The root meaning of *ilhaad* in the language of the Arabs implies: Turning away from the objective, swerving away, deviating ... All of the Names of the Lord, the Exalted, are Names and Attributes by which He acquainted His worshippers and which point towards His perfection. Ibn al-Qayyim, *rahimahullaah*, said: “*Ilhaad* [of the Divine Names and Attributes] occurs through either: a complete denial and rejection of them; rejecting them by divesting them of their true meanings; distorting them by means of figurative interpretations (*ta’weelaat*); or by giving the Names of Allaah to His creation, such as the deviation of the people who believe in experiencing union with Allaah (*ahlul-ittihaad*), for they give these Names to worldly things, whether [they] are praiseworthy or blameworthy.”²⁵²⁶

So whoever commits *ilhaad* in Allaah’s Names and Attributes, either by divesting them of their correct meaning (*ta’teel*), by figurative interpretation (*ta’weel*) or by outrightly rejecting them (*rafđ*) - as has been done by the *Jahmiyyah*, the *Mu’tazilah* and the *Ash’arees* - have actually contravened what *laa ilaaha illallaah* signifies. This is because the true deity deserving of worship is He with Whom nearness is sought (*yatawassalu*) by calling upon Him with His Names and Attributes.

Allaah the Most High said about this:

25. *Badaa’ul-Fawaa’id* (1/169).

26. *Fathul-Majeed* (2/742-743).

فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا

“So call upon Him by them.” [Soorah al-A’raaf 7:180]

So that which has no names, nor any attributes, then how can it be a deity? How will you call upon that deity? What will you call upon that deity with?²⁷

27. Imaam as-Sa’di, *rahimahullaah*, said in *al-Qawlus-Sadeed* (pp.161-163), whilst explaining the above verse:

“The foundation of *tawheed* is affirming whatever Allaah affirmed for Himself, or whatever His Messenger affirmed for Him, as regards His beautiful Names; being aware of what they encompass as regards their majestic and beautiful meanings, worshipping Allaah by them and calling upon Him with them. So everything that the worshipper seeks from his Lord - whether regarding his worldly or religious affairs - then he seeks it by calling upon Him with an appropriate Name from amongst the beautiful Names of Allaah. So whoever calls upon Him requiring provisions and sustenance, should ask Him by His Name *ar-Razzaaq* (the Provider). Whoever requires mercy and forgiveness [should call upon Him with His Name] *ar-Rahmaan* (the Most Merciful), *ar-Raheem* (the Bestower of Mercy), *al-Birr* (the Most Kind), *al-Kareem* (the Most Generous), *al-Afu* (the Pardoner), *al-Ghafoor* (the Oft-Forgiving), *at-Tawwaab* (the One Who accepts repentance), and their like. What is better than this is that calling upon Him by His Names and Attributes is an act of worship providing that the meanings of His beautiful Names are acquired by the hearts, such that hearts are affected by what they signify and are filled with this awareness. So, for example, the Names [signifying] greatness, pride, magnificence and dread, should fill hearts with awe of Allaah and reverence to Him. The Names [signifying] beauty, goodness, kindness, compassion and munificence should fill the heart with love of Allaah, a yearning for Him, praise of Him and gratitude to Him. The Names [signifying] might, wisdom, knowledge and power should fill the heart with submissiveness to Allaah, fear of Him and humility to Him. The Names that [signify] knowledge, being informed, omnipresence, watchfulness and witnessing, should fill the heart with an awareness

Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim, *rahimahullaah*, said: “The people differed in many issues related to actions and rulings (*ahkaam*), but at no time did they ever differ about a single verse concerning the [Divine] Attributes. **Rather, the Companions and their Followers were agreed in affirming them and leaving them as they are; along with affirming their meanings and their reality.**²⁸ This indicates that it is the greater of the two types [of verses] that have been clarified and that concern for explaining it is of the utmost importance, since it is from the completeness of understanding the two testimonies of faith, and affirming it is from the most essential part of *tawheed*. This is why Allaah, the Most Perfect, the Most High, as well as His Messenger, have clearly and unequivocally explained it such that there can be no doubt or ambiguity about it. As for the verses related to rulings and actions, then it is mainly the elite from the people who understand their meanings. As for the verses related to the Attributes, then both the general people and the elite share in understanding them, in that they both understand the basic

that Allaah watches over every movement and moment of stillness, and thus makes one guard against having evil thoughts and corrupt intentions. The Names signifying self-sufficiency, richness and beneficence should fill the heart with a realisation of being dependant and in great need of Him, turning to Him at all times and under all circumstances.”

28. The creed and consensus of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*, regarding the Divine Attributes, has been superbly summarised by Imaam at-Tirmidhee, *rahimahullaah*, who said in his *Sunan* (3/266-268):

“It has been stated by more than one person from the people of knowledge regarding this hadeeth and about the likes of it from the narrations concerning the Attributes, such as [the hadeeth] about the Lord, the Most Blessed, the Most High, descending to the lowest heaven of this world every night, they said: Affirm the narrations concerning them; have faith (*eeimaan*) in them, do not imagine them (*laa yatawahhamu*), nor ask how they are. The likes of this has ➡

meaning, not that they understand their true nature or how they actually are.”²⁹

Ibnul-Qayyim also said: “It is known by the natural state (*fitrah*), by the sound intellects and by the heavenly Books, that whoever lacks the attributes of perfection cannot be the true *Ilaah*, nor the Controller of affairs, nor the Lord and Sustainer. Rather, such a being is imperfect, possessing faults and deficiencies; who will not be deserving of complete and total praise, neither in this world or the Hereafter. This is because complete and total praise in this world and the Hereafter is only for whoever possess the

been reported from Maalik ibn Anas, Sufyaan ibn 'Uyaynah and 'Abdullaah ibn al-Mubaarak. They said concerning these ahaadeeth: “Leave them as they are, without asking how (*amirroohaa bilaa kayf*).” This is the saying of the people of knowledge from *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*. As for the *Jahmiyyah*, they reject these narrations and say that this is resemblance (*tashbeeh*). However, Allaah, the Most High, has mentioned in various places in His Book [His Attribute of] Hand; Hearing and Seeing, but the *Jahmiyyah* make a figurative interpretation (*ta'weel*) of these verses and explain them in a manner other than how it is explained by the people of knowledge. They say: Allaah did not create Aadam with His Hand, rather they say: The Hand [of Allaah] actually means His Power! Ishaq ibn Ibraaheem [ar-Raahawayyah] said: Resemblance (*tashbeeh*) is when someone says: “The Hand [of Allaah] is like my hand, or His Hearing is like my hearing. So if someone says this, then this is resemblance. But if someone says what Allaah says: Hand, Hearing, Seeing, and he does not ask how these [Attributes] are, nor does he say that Allaah's Hearing is like my hearing, then this is not resemblance. Rather, it just like what Allaah, the Most Blessed, the Most High, said in His Book:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿١١﴾

“There is none like Him; He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.” [Soorah ash-Shooraa 42:11].”

29. *Mukhtasar Sawaa'iqul-Mursalah* (1/15).

attributes of perfection and magnificence, which would then make him deserving of complete and total praise. Due to this, the Pious Predecessors who wrote books concerning the correct beliefs and concerning affirming the Attributes of Allaah and that He is above His creation; and concerning His Speech and Him Speaking - they called such books: *Tawheed*. This is because negating the Attributes, rejecting them and disbelieving in them, is actually a rejection of the Creator and a denial of Him. Indeed *tawheed* requires affirming Allaah's Attributes of perfection, along with negating any resemblance, defects and imperfections for Him."³⁰

30. *Madaarijus-Saalikeen* (1/26).

WHEN A PERSON BENEFITS FROM THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

We previously mentioned that saying *laa ilaaha illallaah* must be accompanied by understanding its meaning and acting upon its requirements. However, as there are certain texts which may be misunderstood to mean that the mere utterance of it is sufficient, as some people incorrectly claim, this matter therefore needs to be clarified in order to dispel such misunderstandings from those who desire the truth.

Thus, concerning the hadeeth of 'Utbaan *radiallaahu 'anhu* which states:

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ حَرَّمَ عَلَى النَّارِ مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَتَّبِعِي
بِذَلِكَ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ

“Indeed, Allaah has forbidden the Fire to whoever says *laa ilaaha illallaah* seeking by it the Face of Allaah.”³¹

Shaykh Sulaymaan ibn 'Abdullaah, *rahimahullaah*, said: “And know that the apparent meaning of certain ahaadeeth is that

31. Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.425) and Muslim (no.33).

whoever utters the two testimonies of faith, then Allaah will forbid the Fire to them; such as this one, and the hadeeth of Mu'aadh who said:

أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَمُعَاذُ رَدِيفُهُ عَلَى الرَّحْلِ
 قَالَ يَا مُعَاذُ بْنُ جَبَلٍ قَالَ لَيْتَيْكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَسَعْدَيْكَ
 قَالَ يَا مُعَاذُ قَالَ لَيْتَيْكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَسَعْدَيْكَ (ثَلَاثًا)
 قَالَ مَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ يَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا
 رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صِدْقًا مِنْ قَلْبِهِ إِلَّا حَرَّمَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّارِ قَالَ يَا
 رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا أَخْبِرُ بِهِ النَّاسَ فَيَسْتَبْشِرُوا قَالَ إِذَا يَتَكَلَّمُوا
 وَأَخْبِرَ بِهَا مُعَاذٌ عِنْدَ مَوْتِهِ تَأْتِمًا

I was riding along with the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* as a companion rider when he said to me thrice: "O Mu'aadh ibn Jabal!" I replied to him thrice: Here I am, O Messenger of Allaah, at your service. He then said: "There is no one who testifies to *laa ilaaha illallaah muhammadur-rasoolullaah* truthfully from his heart, except that Allaah would forbid the Fire to him." I said: O Allaah's Messenger, shall I not inform the people so that they may receive good news? He said: "No, because they will depend upon this." However, Mu'aadh related this hadeeth just before his death, fearing that he may be sinful [i.e. by concealing this knowledge].³²

32. Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.128).

And Muslim reports from 'Ubaadah *radiallaahu 'anhu*, from the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

مَنْ شَهِدَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ حَرَّمَ
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ النَّارَ

*"Whoever testifies to laa ilaaha illallaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, then Allaah would forbid the Fire to him."*³³

Then there are certain ahaadeeth that state that whoever utters the two testimonies of faith will enter the Gardens of Paradise, but they do not actually state that the person will be guarded from Hell. From [such ahaadeeth] is the hadeeth of 'Ubaadah *radiallaahu 'anhu*, which has preceded, and the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah - when they were with the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* in the battle of Tabook - in which it states:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ لَا يَلْقَى اللَّهُ بِهِمَا
عَبْدٌ غَيْرُ شَاكٍّ فَيُحْجَبَ عَنِ الْجَنَّةِ

*"No one who meets Allaah having testified to laa ilaaha illallaah and that I am the Messenger of Allaah, having no doubt about it, shall be barred from the Gardens of Paradise."*³⁴

The best of what has been said concerning its meaning is what Shaykhul-Islaam [Ibn Taymiyyah] and others have said: That these ahaadeeth refer to whoever says it and dies upon it, since it has come with [certain] restrictions: That it should be said with sincerity from the heart, with certainty from the heart, without

33. Reported by Muslim (no.47).

34. Reported by Muslim (no.45).

entertaining any doubt about it, and with truthfulness. Indeed, the reality of *tawheed* is the soul's total affinity and attraction to Allaah. So whoever testifies to *laa ilaaha illallaah* sincerely from his heart, will enter the Gardens of Paradise. This is because sincerity is actually the heart's affinity and attraction to Allaah, the Exalted, by sincerely repenting to Him from committing sins. So whoever dies upon this state will attain Paradise. There occurs in some ahaadeeth that reach the highest level of certainty and authenticity (*mutawaatir*), that whoever says *laa ilaaha illallaah*, and has in his heart faith, even if it equals the weight of a grain of barley, or the weight of a mustard seed, or even the weight of an atom - will eventually be taken out of the Hellfire. It has been related in a continuously related narration (*mutawaatir*) that many of those who say *laa ilaaha illallaah* will enter the Hellfire, but will eventually be taken out from it. It has also been related in *mutawaatir* form that Allaah has forbidden the Fire from devouring the traces of prostration from the children of Aadam; those that used to pray and prostrate to Allaah. It has been related in *mutawaatir* form that the Fire is forbidden to whoever says *laa ilaaha illallaah* or testifies to *laa ilaaha illallaahu muhammadur-rasoolullaah*. However, they occur with certain weighty restrictions. Many of those who utter it do not know what sincerity or certainty [towards it] means, and it is feared that if they do not understand this, then they may be put to trial at the time of death, whereby they are barred from it. Indeed, most of the people who are put to trial at the time of death, or in their graves, are these types of people, as pointed out in the hadeeth:

سَمِعْتُ النَّاسَ يَقُولُونَ فَقُلْتُ مِثْلَهُ

"I heard the people saying something, so I said the same."³⁵

35. Hasan: Part of a lengthy hadeeth reported by at-Tirmidhee (no.737), from Abu Hurayrah *radiallaahu 'anhu*. Shaykh al-Albaanee verified its soundness in *as-Saheehah* (no.1391).

This mostly occurs from those people who blindly follow. They are the people who best fit Allaah the Most High's saying:

إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُّقْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

“Indeed we found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we will surely follow in their footsteps.” [Soorah az-Zukhruf 43:23]

Therefore, there is no contradiction between these ahaadeeth. Since if *laa ilaaha illallaah* is said with complete sincerity and certainty, there will not be - in such a state - a persistence towards sinning. Indeed, perfect sincerity and certainty necessitate that Allaah becomes more beloved to that person than everything else, and hence no desire will remain to do what Allaah has prohibited, nor will there be any dislike for what Allaah has commanded. Such is the person to whom the Fire will be prohibited, even if he committed sins previous to this. Since this faith, this sincere repentance and sincerity, and this true love and certainty, will not leave any sin with such a person, except that it will be blotted out, just as the night blots out the day.” Here end the words of the Shaykh, *rahimahullaah*.³⁶

Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhaab said: “There is another misconception that is raised. They say that the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* reprimanded Usaamah for killing a person after he had uttered *laa ilaaha illallaah*, and he said:

أَقْتَلْتُهُ بَعْدَ مَا قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ؟

“Have you killed him after he had uttered *laa ilaaha illallaah!*”³⁷

36. *Tayseerul-'Azeezul-Hameed* (pp.61-62).

37. Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.4269) and Muslim (no.159).

There are other ahaadeeth concerning withholding from one who utters the *kalimah*.

The intent of these ignorant ones is that whoever utters the *kalimah*, then it is not permissible to ever declare them to be unbelievers, nor to fight them - regardless of what they do! So to these ignorant ones it is said: It is known that Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* fought the jews and captured them, despite their utterance of *laa ilaaha illallaah*. And the Companions of Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* fought against Banoo Haneefah, inspite of them bearing witness to *laa ilaaha illallaahu muhammadur-rasoolullaah*, and despite them praying and claiming that they were Muslims.³⁸ Likewise was the case of those who were burnt alive by 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib.³⁹ Yet these ignorant ones affirm that whoever denies the Resurrection is to be declared an unbeliever and killed, even after saying *laa ilaaha illallaah*. They also affirm that whoever denies any of the pillars of Islaam is to be declared an unbeliever and killed, even if he has uttered the *kalimah*. So how is it that [uttering the *kalimah*] does not benefit a person when he denies a secondary [fundamental], but will benefit a person who denies *tawheed*; which is the very core of the Religion that the Messengers were sent with? However, the enemies of Allaah do not understand the meaning of those ahaadeeth."⁴⁰

And he, *rahimahullaah*, also said: "As for [what is to be understood from] the hadeeth of Usaamah who once killed a

38. That was when Banoo Haneefah apostasized under the leadership of the false prophet, Musaylamah. The Companions fought them at the battle of Yamaamah, during the rule of Aboo Bakr *radiallaahu 'anhu*, in the year 11H. Consult *al-Kaamil* (2/218-224) of Ibn al-Atheer.

39. Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.6922).

40. *Kashfush-Shubuhaat* (pp.45-49)

person who declared himself to be a Muslim, because he thought that he only did so due to fear for his life and property. Then whenever a person outwardly displays that he is a Muslim, it is obligatory to withhold from fighting him, unless it becomes absolutely clear that he has done something to oppose this [and for which Islaam requires that he be fought]. Allaah revealed about this [type of situation]:

يَا أَيُّهَا
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا وَلَا تَقُولُوا
لِمَنْ آتَىٰ إِلَيْكُمْ بِالْإِسْلَامِ لَسْتُمْ مُؤْمِنًا

“O you who Believe! When you go out to fight in the Path of Allaah, verify the truth, and do not say to anyone who greets you by embracing Islaam: You are not a Believer.” [Soorah an-Nisaa 4:94]

So this verse proves that it is obligatory to withhold and to verify the truth. So if after investigation it is proven that the person contradicts Islaam, then that person is to be fought, because of Allaah’s command to verify the truth. If it was the case that a person could never ever be fought, so long as he has uttered the *kalimah*, then the command to verify the truth would be pointless! Likewise is the case for those other ahaadeeth that we have previously mentioned, which are similar in meaning [and which state] that whoever outwardly displays Islaam and *tawheed*, then it is obligatory to withhold concerning him, except if it becomes clear from him that he contradicts this. The proof for this is that the Messenger *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

أَقْتُلْتُهُ بَعْدَ مَا قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ؟

“Have you killed him after he uttered *laa ilaaha illallaah!*”

And he said:

أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَقُولُوا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

“I have been ordered to fight the people until they say
laa ilaaha illallaah.”⁴¹

Yet he is the one who also said about the *Khawaarij*:

لَئِنْ أَنَا أَدْرَكْتُهُمْ لَأَقْتُلَنَّهِنَّ قَتْلَ عَادٍ

“If I were to meet them, then I would kill them, as the
people of ‘Aad were killed.”⁴²

[This was the case] even though they were the most persistent of people in uttering *laa ilaaha illallaah*, to the extent that even the Companions felt [that their own worship was] insignificant compared to theirs. The *Khawaarij* were also those who learnt knowledge from the Companions, yet their [utterance of] *laa ilaaha illallaah* did not benefit them, nor did their abundant worship, nor did their ascription to Islaam - since they displayed actions which were contrary to the Prescribed Law (*Sharee’ah*). Likewise is the case concerning fighting against the jews, and the Companions fighting against Banoo Haneefah, as we have previously mentioned.”⁴³

Al-Haafidh Ibn Rajab said in his essay entitled *Kalimatul-Ikhlaas* (pp.20-21), whilst commenting upon the saying of the Prophet *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*:

أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ

41. Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.392) and Muslim (no.35).

42. Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.6930) and an-Nasaa’ee (no.3823).

43. *Kashfush-Shubuhaat* (pp.49-51).

مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ

“I have been commanded to fight the people, until they testify to laa ilaaha illallaah and that I am the Messenger of Allaah, and establish the Prayer and pay the Zakaah.”⁴⁴

He said: “That ‘Umar and a group of the Companions understood [from it] that whoever pronounces the *shahaadatain*, would be protected from being punished in this world because of it. So they withheld from fighting against those who withheld from paying the Zakaah. However, [Abu Bakr] as-Siddeeq understood [from it] that fighting them should not be prevented, unless they fulfilled the rights of the *kalimah*, due to the Prophet *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*’s saying:

فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَائِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَّا بَحَقِّ
الإِسْلَامِ وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ

“If they do this, then their blood and their property will be protected from me, except what is a right by *Islam*, and their reckoning is with Allaah.”⁴⁵

Abu Bakr said: “Zakaah is a right which is due upon wealth.”⁴⁶ This understanding of Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq was based upon what was clearly narrated from the Prophet *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* by more than one Companion - which includes Ibn ‘Umar, Anas and others - that he said:

44. Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.25) and Muslim (no.36), from Ibn ‘Umar *radiallaahu ‘anhu*.

45. This is the end part of the preceding hadeeth.

46. Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.1400).

أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ
مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ

“I have been commanded to fight the people, until they testify to laa ilaaha illallaah and that I am the Messenger of Allaah, and establish the Prayer and give the Zakaah.”

This is also proven by Allaah the Most High’s saying:

فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُمْ

“So if they repent (from their unbelief), establish the Prayer and give the Zakaah, then leave their way free.” [Soorah at-Tawbah 9:5]

In a similar way, the [following] verse:

فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ
فِي الدِّينِ

“So if they repent, establish the Prayer and give the Zakaah, then they are your brothers in the Religion.” [Soorah at-Tawbah 9:11]

proves that the Islaamic brotherhood is not established except by fulfilment of the obligatory duties along with [the affirmation of] *tawheed*. Indeed, repentance from *shirk* can never be achieved except with the [affirmation of] *tawheed*. So when Abu Bakr resolved this with the Companions, they accepted his saying and saw that his view was correct. So now you know that punishment in this world is not absolutely lifted from one who merely utters the two testimonies of faith, rather he may receive punishment due to certain shortcomings in fulfilling any of the rights of

Islaam. Likewise, there could [also] be punishment in the Hereafter.”

Ibn Rajab also said: “A group of scholars said that what is meant by these ahaadeeth is that *laa ilaaha illallaah* is a cause for entering the Gardens of Paradise and being saved from the Hellfire, and that it obligates it. However, results will not come about except by the fulfilment of its conditions (*shuroot*) and the removal of any of its impediments (*intifaa‘ul-muwaani*). Consequently, rewards may be withheld due to the absence of one of its conditions, or due to the presence of one of its impediments. This is the saying of al-Hasan [al-Basree] and Wahb ibn Munabbih and it is the most prevalent view.

Al-Hasan said to al-Farazdaq, who was burying his wife: “What have you prepared for this day?” He replied: Testifying to *laa ilaaha illallaah* for the last seventy years. Al-Hasan said: “What wonderful preparation. However, *laa ilaaha illallaah* has certain conditions, so beware of defaming chaste women.”

It was once said to al-Hasan: Some people think that whoever says *laa ilaaha illallaah* will enter the Gardens of Paradise. So he replied: Whoever says *laa ilaaha illallaah*, fulfils its right and obligations, will enter the Gardens of Paradise.

Wahb ibn Munabbih was once asked: Isn't *laa ilaaha illallaah* the key to Paradise? So he replied: “**Indeed, but there is no key except that it has certain ridges and teeth. So whoever possesses that key, with those ridges and teeth, then the doors will be opened for him. If not, then it will not!**”⁴⁷⁴⁸

47. Reported by al-Bukhaaree (3/141).

48. *Kalimatul-Ikhlaas* (pp.15-17).

I believe that what I have quoted from the words of the people of knowledge is sufficient in dispelling the doubts of those who think that whoever utters *laa ilaaha illallaah* can never be declared an unbeliever, even if he does acts of great *shirk* which are still perpetrated today at the shrines and graves of the righteous; acts that totally and utterly oppose and contradict the *kalimah laa ilaaha illallaah*. This is the path taken by the deviants; those who take hold of general texts which they think are proofs for them, whilst leaving what clarifies and explains them from the detailed texts. This is similar to the state of those who believe in a part of the Book and reject other parts of the Book. Allaah said about this type of people:

هو

الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ
 وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ
 مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
 وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ
 إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٧﴾ رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ
 لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ﴿٨﴾ رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ
 النَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ إِنَّكَ اللَّهُ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْوَعْدَ ﴿٩﴾

“It is Allaah Who has sent down to you the Book. In it are Verses that are entirely clear in meaning (*al-muhkamaat*), they are the foundations of the Book; and other Verses that are not so clear (*al-mutashaabihaat*). As for those in whose heart there is perversity and deviation, they follow those verses that are not so clear, seeking discord and trial and seeking for its hidden meanings. But none knows its hidden meanings except Allaah.

And those who are firmly entrenched in knowledge say: We believe in it; the whole of it is from our Lord. And none receive admonition, except the men of understanding. [Those who say]: Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate from the truth after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from Yourself. Indeed, You are the Bestower. Our Lord! Indeed it is You who will gather mankind on the Day about which there is no doubt. Indeed Allaah never breaks His Promise.” [Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:7-9].⁴⁹

O Allaah! Show us the truth and grant us the ability to follow it; and show us the falsehood and grant us the ability to stay clear of it.

49. Imaam ash-Shaatibee, *rahimahullaah*, said in his valuable book *al-I'tisaam* (1/231):

“Anyone who follows the *mutashaabihaat* verses; twists the underlying reasons [of the verse]; gives an explanation to it not given by the Pious Predecessors (*Salafus-Saalih*); clings to the very weak or fabricated ahaadeeth, or uses that which is apparently a proof, for every view that agrees with his [pre-conceived] goals and intent - without finding a fundamental proof for understanding it in this manner - then this is the method of derivation which gives rise to innovations and the innovators.”

- 8 -

THE EFFECTS OF THE DECLARATION OF FAITH

If this *kalimah* is pronounced with truthfulness and sincerity and its essential requirements are acted upon, both inwardly and outwardly, then its effects upon both the individual and the society will indeed be praiseworthy.

From the most important of these effects are:-

1 - **Having a united word** which results in the Muslims acquiring strength and achieving victory over their enemies. This is because they submit to one Religion and to a single creed ('*aqedah*), as Allaah the Most High said:

وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا

“And hold fast altogether to the rope of Allaah and do not become divided.” [Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:101]

And Allaah the Most High said:

هُوَ الَّذِي آتَاكَ
بِنَصْرِهِ وَبِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَالْفَبِّ كَلْبِهِمْ لَوْ أَنْفَقْتَ

مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَا آفَقَت بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَا كُنَّ
 اللَّهُ أَلْفَ بَيْنِهِمْ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾

“He it is that has strengthened you with His help and with the Believers. And moreover, He has united their hearts with love and affection. If you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have united their hearts with love and affection. However, Allaah has united them. Indeed Allaah is the All-Mighty, All-Wise.” [Soorah al-Anfaal 8:62-63]

And differing in the creed is a cause for divisions, disputes and hostility - as Allaah the Exalted said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا لَسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ

“Indeed those who split up their religion and become sects, you have no concern with them in the least.” [Soorah al-An’aam 6:159]

And Allaah the Most High said:

فَتَقَطَّعُوا أَمْرَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ زُبُرًا كُلَّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

“But people have cut off their affair of unity between themselves, into sects; each party rejoices in that which is with itself.” [Soorah al-Mu’minoon 23:53]

So people cannot be united except upon a common creed of faith (*eemaan*) and *tawheed*; which is the implication of *laa ilaaha illallaah* - and this can be seen in the condition of the Arabs before and after Islaam.

2 - The prevalence of peace and tranquillity in a society that professes *tawheed* and submits to the requirements of *laa ilaaha illallaah*. This is because every individual will take only that which Allaah has made lawful and leave that which He has prohibited, doing so in response with what the *kalimah* requires of him. So he will refrain from aggression, injustice and transgression and in its place will be co-operation, love and allegiance for the sake of Allaah; acting upon Allaah, the Most High's, saying:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ

“Indeed the Believers are but brothers.” [Soorah al-Hujuraat 49:10]

This is clearly reflected in the condition of the Arabs before they submitted to this *kalimah*, and after they submitted to it. Before they submitted to it they used to be enemies, slaughtering one another, boasting about killing, looting and plundering. But when they submitted to it, they became brothers who had mutual love for one another. Allaah the Exalted said:

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رَحِمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ

“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah; and those with him are harsh against the unbelievers, but kind and merciful to each other.” [Soorah al-Fath 48:29]

And Allaah the Most High said:

وَأَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ
فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا

“And remember the favour of Allaah upon you, for you were once enemies to one another, but He

joined your hearts together in love, so that by His Grace you became brothers.” [Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:103]

3 - Achieving authority and succession of rule (*khilaafah*) upon the earth, and [maintaining] purity of the Religion and firmness against the various destructive thoughts and ideologies; just as Allaah, the Exalted, said:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا

“Allaah has promised those amongst you who truly believe and act in obedience to Allaah and His Messenger, that He will grant them rulership upon the earth, just as He granted it to those before them, and that He will establish their Religion for them and grant them the authority to practice the Religion which He chose and ordered for them. And He will certainly change their situation to one of security, after their fear, providing they worship Me, obey Me, and do not associate anything else in worship with Me.”

[Soorah an-Noor 24:55]

So Allaah has firmly tied the achievement of these lofty goals and objectives with worshipping Him alone and not worshipping others along with Him. And this is the meaning and requirement of *laa illaaha illallaah*.

4 - Achieving peace and tranquillity of the soul, as well as mental and psychological relief for whoever says *laa ilaaha illallaah* and acts by its requirements. This is because such a person is a slave and worshipper of only one Lord. He knows what his Lord wants and what pleases Him, so he does it. Likewise, he knows what angers Him, so he abstains from it. This is contrary to one who worships and is enslaved by many deities, each one desiring from him what the other does not desire, and each one planning and arranging for him something different to what the others plan and arrange. Allaah, the Most High, said:

ءَأَرْبَابٌ مُتَّفِقُونَ خَيْرٌ أَمِ اللّٰهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

“Are many different lords and deities better, or Allaah, the One, the Irresistible?” [Soorah Yoosuf 12:39]

And Allaah the Most High said:

ضَرَبَ اللّٰهُ مَثَلًا رَّجُلًا فِيهِ

شُرَكَاءٌ مُّشْكِسُونَ وَرَجُلًا سَلَمًا لِّرَجُلٍ هَلْ يَسْتَوِيَانِ مَثَلًا

“Allaah puts forth a similitude: a slave belonging to many partners who dispute and argue with one another, and a slave who belongs entirely to one master. Are the two equal in comparison?” [Soorah az-Zumar 39:29]

Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim remarked: “This similitude that Allaah the Most Perfect strikes is like that of one who worships others besides Allaah (*mushrik*) and one who worships only Allaah (*muwahhid*). So the example of a *mushrik* is like a slave who is owned by a group [of masters] who constantly dispute, argue and show enmity towards each other; so the person becomes ill-natured. Thus, since the *mushrik* is one who worships different deities, he is likened to a slave who is owned by a group of

masters who compete with one another to employ his service and obedience. It is therefore not possible for him to appease all of them!

On the other hand, the example of a *muwahhid* who worships Allaah alone is like a slave who has just one master to whom he submits. The slave knows the master's intent and knows also the ways to please him. Thus he is relieved of all the feuds and confusion [that are bound to arise if he has more than one master]. Rather, he is safe from his master, with no dispute over who he should serve and obey, with the fact that the master shows clemency, mercy and kindness to him, does good to him, and looks after his best interests. So are the two slaves alike?"⁵⁰

5 - Acquiring dignity and eminence, both in this world and in the Hereafter, for the people of *laa ilaaha illallaah*. Allaah the Most High said:

حُفَاءَ لِلَّهِ غَيْرَ مُشْرِكِينَ بِهِ. وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ
السَّمَاءِ فَتَخَطَفَهُ الطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوَى بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ

“Worshipping none but Allaah alone; not ascribing any partner in the worship of Him. And whoever commits *shirk* with Allaah, it is as if he had plummeted from the sky and the birds had snatched him, or the winds had hurled him to a far off place.” [Soorah al-Hajj 22:31]

So this Verse proves that *tawheed* is loftiness and ascendancy, whereas *shirk* is lowliness and ignominy.

The great scholar, Ibn al-Qayyim, *rahimahullaah*, said: “Allaah likened the loftiness, expanse and nobility of faith and *tawheed* to

50. *I'laamul-Muwaqqi'een* (1/187).

that of the heavens, which are its place of ascent and descent. From it faith and *tawheed* descend to the earth and to it they ascend. Abandoning faith and *tawheed* has been likened to plummeting from the heavens to the lowest of the lowly places with regards to the severe constriction [of the heart] and the ever-accumulating pain. The birds that snatch at his limbs and completely severs them are a similitude of the *Shaytaan* whom Allaah sends to drive him towards evil, to harass him and to steer him to the place of his destruction. The wind that hurls him to a far off place is his false desires which cause him to cast his soul into the most despicable of places, furthest away from the heavens.”⁵¹

6 - Safeguarding one’s blood, property and honour; due to his *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*’s saying:

أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَقُولُوا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ فَإِذَا قَالُوا
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَائِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَّا بِحَقِّهَا
وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ

“I have been ordered to fight mankind until they say *laa ilaaha illallaah*. So if they say it, then their blood and their wealth will be protected, except if they fail to fulfil its right, and their reckoning is with Allaah.”⁵²

What is meant by *except if they fail to fulfil its right* is: If they say it, but refuse to fulfil its obligations - which implies not fulfilling what it requires as regards singling-out Allaah alone with worship and staying clear of worshipping others besides Allaah,

51. *I’laamul-Muwaqqi’een* (1/180).

52. Reported by al-Bukhaaree (13/419).

and establishing the pillars of Islaam - then their property and blood will not be safeguarded. Rather, they will be fought and their property will be confiscated and given to the Muslims as war booty, which is what the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* and his successors did.

We thus conclude that this *kalimah* has tremendous effects upon both the individual and the society, whether in matters of worship, social transactions, or morals and manners. And with Allaah lies all success. And may Allaah extol and send blessings of peace upon our Prophet Muhammad; and upon his Family and Companions and his followers.

APPENDIX

BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES

The following are the biographies of those scholars that have been cited in the text of the book. Most of these biographies are fairly brief and are presented in alphabetical order:

'ABDUR-RAHMAAN IBN HASAN: He is the Imaam; the jurist; the scholar of hadeeth, 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Hasan aalush-Shaykh. He was born in the city of ad-Dar'iyah; central Arabia in 1193H. He was well-known for his mild and forbearing nature, as well as his kindness, courage, humility and abundant worship. Ibn 'Eesaa said about him in *'Uqdud-Durar* (p.54): "The Shaykh, the noble and exemplary Imaam, the head of the people of *tawheed* and the subduer of the deviants. He was a brilliant Imaam, hadeeth specialist (*muhaddith*) and jurist (*faqeeh*); who attained great proficiency in all of the religious sciences." The Shaykh died at the age of ninety-two, in the year 1285H.¹

AL-HASAN AL-BASREE: He is the successor (*taabi'ee*), the noble Imaam, the wordly abstainer (*zaahid*), Abu Sa'eed al-Hasan al-

1. Refer to *Majmoo'atur-Rasaa'il wal-Masaa'il* (2/20-24) and *'Uqdud-Durar* (pp.54-62).

Basree. He was born in Madeenah towards the end of the rule of 'Umar *radiallaahu 'anhu*; in the year 21H. He attended the *Jumu'ah* sermons of 'Uthmaan *radiallaahu 'anhu*, and witnessed the day when he was martyred. In later years al-Hasan became one of the leaders of his age with regards to knowledge and piety. Ibn Sa'd said in *Tabaqaatul-Kubraa* (7/156): "Al-Hasan was a scholar with comprehensive knowledge and high status; a jurist; trustworthy and reliable; a devout worshipper who possessed vast knowledge and aptitude." He, *rahimahullaah*, died in 110H; at the age of eighty-nine.²

IBN AL-QAYYIM: He is the Imaam, the jurist (*faqeeh*), the hadeeth master (*haafidh*), Shamsud-Deen Muhammad ibn Aboo Bakr; better known as Ibn al-Qayyim or Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. He was born in the year 691H in the village of Zar', near Damascus; Syria. From an early age he set about acquiring knowledge of the Islaamic sciences from the Scholars of his time. Describing his desire for knowledge, Ibn Rajab said in *Dhayl Tabaqaatul-Hanaabilah* (4/449): "He had an intense love for knowledge and for books, publications and writings." Likewise, Ibn Katheer said in *al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah* (14/235): "He acquired from [such] books what others could not acquire, and he developed a deep understanding of the books of the *Salaf* and of the later scholars (*khalaf*)." Ibn Katheer said in *al-Bidaayah* (14/234): "He attained great proficiency in many branches of knowledge; particularly knowledge of tafseer, hadeeth, and usool. When Shaykh Taqueed-Deen Ibn Taymiyyah returned from Egypt in the year 712H, he stayed with the Shaykh until he died; learning a great deal of knowledge from him, along with the knowledge that he had already occupied himself in attaining. So he became a single scholar in many branches of knowledge."

2. A delightful biography of him can be found in *Siyar A'laamun-Nubalaa* (4/564-588) of adh-Dhahabee.

Many of his students and contemporaries have borne witness to his excellent character and strength of worship. Al-Haafidh Ibn Rajab said about him in *Dhayl Tabaaqaatul-Hanaabilah* (4/450): “He, *rahimahullaah*, was constant in worship and performing the night Prayer (*tahajjud*), reaching the limits in lengthening his Prayer and devotion. He was constantly in a state of Allaah’s remembrance (*dhikr*) and had an intense love for Allaah. He also had a deep love for turning to Allaah in repentance, humbling himself to Him with a deep sense of humility and helplessness. He would throw himself at the doors of Divine obedience and servitude. Indeed, I have not seen the likes of him with regards to such matters.” Ibn Katheer said in *al-Bidaayah* (14/234): “He was constant in humbly entreating and calling upon his Lord; he recited well and had fine manners; he had a great deal of love and did not harbour any envy or malice towards anyone, nor did he seek to harm or find fault with them. I was one of those who most often kept company with him and was one of the most beloved of people to him. I do not know of anyone in the world in this time, who is a greater worshipper than him. His Prayer used to be very lengthy, with prolonged *rukoo’* (bowing) and *sujood* (prostrations). His colleagues would criticise him for this, yet he never retorted back, nor did he abandon this practice. May Allaah bestow His Mercy upon him.”

As for his scholarship, then Ibn Rajab said in *Dhayl Tabaaqaatul-Hanaabilah* (4/448): “He had deep knowledge concerning *tafseer* and *usoolud-deen* (fundamentals of the Religion), reaching the highest degree concerning them both. Similar was the case in the field of hadeeth, with regards to understanding its meanings, subtleties and deducing rulings from them; as was the case in the field of *fiqh* and its *usool* (principles) and the Arabic language, doing a great service to these sciences. He was also knowledgeable about *kalaam* (innovated speech and rhetorics), as well as the subtleties and details that occur in the speech of the people of *tasawwuf* (sufism).” Ibn Hajr al-’Asqalaanee stated

about him in *ad-Dururul-Kaaminah* (4/21): “He possessed a courageous spirit as well as vast and comprehensive knowledge. He had deep knowledge concerning the differences of opinions of the scholars and about the ways of the *Salaf*.” Ibn Hajr also said in his commendation to *ar-Raddul-Waafir* (p.68): “If there were no other virtues of Shaykh Taqueed-Deen [Ibn Taymiyyah], except for his famous student Shaykh Shamsud-Deen Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah - the author of many works which both his opponents and supporters benefited from - then this would be a sufficient indication of his greatness.” Also as-Suyootee said in *Baghiyyatul-Wi'aat* (1/62): “His books had no parallel and he strove and traversed the path of the great Imaams in [the field of] *tafseer*, *hadeeth*, *usool* (fundamentals), *furoo'* (branches) and the Arabic language.” Mullaa 'Alee al-Qaaree al-Hanafee said in *al-Mirqaat* (8/251), in reference to both him and Ibn Taymiyyah: “It will be clear to whoever aspires to read the explanation of *Manaazilus-Saa'ireen*, that they are from the great ones (*kibaar*) of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* and from the *awliyyaa* of this *ummah*.” Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim, *rahimahullaah*, died in the year 751H; at the age of sixty.

IBN RAJAB: He is the Imaam, the jurist (*faqeeh*), the master of hadeeth preservation (*haafidh*), Abul-Faraj Zainud-Deen Ibn Rajab. He was born in the year 736H. His teachers included some of the most outstanding scholars of his time; such as Ibn al-Qayyim and al-Haafidh al-'Iraaqee. Ibn Fahd said about him in *al-Lahdhul-Alhaadh* (pp.180-182): “The Imaam, the *haafidh*, the proof (*hujjah*), the dependable jurist; one of the scholars who shunned this world (*zaahid*), and one of the Imaams and worshippers. An instructive scholar from the scholars of hadeeth and an admonisher of the Muslims ... He, *rahimahullaah*, was a pious Imaam who shunned the world. Hearts inclined towards him with love and affection, and the different sects accepted him. His sittings for advising the general people were immensely

beneficial and they used to open up the hearts.” Ibn Rajab died in the year 795H at the age of fifty-nine.³

MUHAMMAD IBN 'ABDUL-WAHHAAB: He is the Imaam, the jurist, the scholar of hadeeth, the reviver (*mujaddid*) of the twelfth Islaamic century; Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhaab ibn Sulaymaan at-Tameemee. He was born into a noble and learned family in the town of 'Uyaynah; central Arabia, in the year 1115H (corresponding to 1703CE). Ibn Badraan said about him in *al-Madkhal* (p.447): “The great Imaam Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhaab. He travelled to seek knowledge and the scholars of hadeeth of the time granted him permission (*ijazah*) to relate the books of hadeeth and other matters. When he had absorbed the narrations and knowledge of the *Sunnah*; and had become skilled in the school of thought (*madhhab*) of Ahmad [bin Hanbal], he took the aid of the truth and waged war against innovations and rectified those false and ignorant practices that had entered into the Religion.”

With regards to the mischeivious writings and slanderous allegations which state that the Shaykh would make *takfeer* upon Muslims [i.e. declare them to be unbelievers] without the proofs first being established upon them, then the Shaykh himself said about this: “As for what my opponents mention about me that I make *takfeer* based upon conjecture or allegiances, or that I make *takfeer* upon the ignorant person to whom the proofs have not yet been established, then this is a great slander by which they desire to hinder people from the Religion of Allaah and His Messenger.”⁴ He also stated: “If we do not perform *takfeer* of

3. Refer to *ad-Durarul-Kaaminah* (2/321-322) and *Dhayl Tabaqaatul-Huffaadh* (p.536).

4. *Mu'allifaatul-Imaam* (5/25).

those who worship the idol at the grave of Ahmad al-Badawee, due to their ignorance and due to the absence of those who could clarify this to them, then how could we ever make *takfeer* of someone who does not even commit *shirk* with Allaah, merely because he does not migrate to [join] us.”⁵ Likewise, the Shaykh also stated: “We only make *takfeer* of someone who commits *shirk* in the worship of Allaah, after we have clearly established the falsity of this *shirk* to him.”⁶ The Shaykh, *rahimahullaah*, died in the year 1206H, at the age of ninety-one.⁷

SUFYAAN IBN 'UYAYNAH: He is the exemplary Imaam, the *zaahid*, the master of hadeeth preservation (*haafidh*), and the Shaykh of Islaam. He was born in Koofah; Iraaq, in the year 107H. He acquired a great deal of knowledge from many of the leading scholars of the *taabi'een* (successors of the Companions). Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee, *rahimahullaah*, said about him: “If it were not for Maalik and Sufyaan ibn 'Uyaynah, the knowledge of the *Hijaaz* (Makkah and Madeenah) would have passed away.” Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal said: “I have not seen anyone having more knowledge of the *sunan* than Sufyaan ibn 'Uyaynah.” He died in the year 198H, at the age of ninety-one; may Allaah shower mercy upon him.⁸

SULAYMAAN IBN 'ABDULLAAH: He is the jurist and hadeeth master; Sulaymaan ibn Abdullaah aalush-Shaykh. He was born

5. Quoted by Shaykh Ibn Sahmaan in *Minhaaj Ahlul-Haqq* (p.56).

6. *Mu'allifaatul-Imaam* (5/60).

7. Refer to *'Anwaanul-Majd* (1/181) and also *ad-Durarus-Saniyyah* (9/215).

8. Refer to *Hilyatul-Awliyyaa* (7/270) of Abu Nu'aym and *Siyar A'laamun-Nubalaa* (8/454-475).

in the year 1200H in central Arabia. He was a person of great knowledge and forbearance. He attained great proficiency in the knowledge of *hadeeth* and its related sciences; as well as knowledge of *tafseer* and grammar. The son of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem said: "He was a sign with regards to knowledge, forbearance, memorisation and intelligence." He died at the age of thirty-three, in the year 1233H.⁹

WAHB IBN MUNABBIH: He is the exemplary Imaam, the *taabi'ee*, the precise and reliable narrator (*thiqah*), the historian (*mu'arrikh*); Wahb ibn Munabbih as-San'aanee. He was born during the rule of 'Uthmaan *radiallaahu 'anh*; in the year 34H and narrated from a number of Companions; such as Abu Hurayrah, Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree, Ibn 'Abbaas and Ibn 'Umar. From his sayings is: "Knowledge is the Believer's intimate friend; forbearance is his minister; intellect is his proof; action is his most valuable asset; patience is the commander of his army; gentleness is his father; and leniency is his brother." He died in the year 124H, at the age of ninety.¹⁰

9. Refer to the introduction to *Tayseerul-'Azeezul-Hameed* (pp.7-8).

10. Refer to *Siyar A'laamun-Nubalaa* (4/544-557).

ABOUT THE BOOK: Since this great declaration of *laa ilaaha illallaah*; that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, stands out amongst the various types of remembrance and because it is not merely something that is uttered by the tongue - rather it has certain rulings, conditions and requirements attached to it - I decided to choose this declaration as the subject of my discussion.

Indeed, it is a declaration that the Muslims proclaim in their daily lives; in their call to Prayer and in their sermons and speeches. It is a declaration for which the whole of the creation was created; for which Allaah sent Messengers, revealed Books, and prescribed Divine Laws. Upon it rests the very foundation of the Religion and because of it swords are drawn-out. It is the Right of Allaah over His slaves; the declaration of Islaam and the key to Paradise.

The book's discussion concerning the declaration of *laa ilaaha illallaah* encompasses the following points:

- its status in the life of a Muslim
- its virtues and excellence
- its lexical analysis
- its pillars
- its conditions
- its meaning and requirements
- when it benefits the one who says it and when it does not
- its effects upon the individual and the society

ADAPTED FROM THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION



MESSAGE OF ISLAM

P.O. Box 181, Hounslow, Middlesex TW5 9YX, UK

Tel: (+44) 181-897 2023 Fax: (+44) 181-754 9842

Email: asgar@messageofislam.com

Website: www.messageofislam.com

www.IslamicBooks.Website