

Important Lessons for the Muslim Ummah

Lecture by Shaykh 'Abdul-Azeez bin 'Abdullaah bin Baaz
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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

All Praise is due to Allâh, we praise Him, and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allâh, the Most High, from the evils of our own selves and from our wicked deeds. Whomsoever has been guided by Allâh, none can misguide him, and whomsoever has been misguided by Allâh, none can guide him. I bear witness that there is no true god worthy of being worshipped except Allâh, alone, without partner or associate. I further bear witness that Muhammad is His true slave and Messenger. May Allâh, the Exalted, bestow His peace and blessings on the final Prophet Muhammad, upon his good and pure family, and upon all of his noble companions.

"O ye who believe! Fear Allâh (by doing all that He ordered and abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared, and die not except in the state of Islâm(as Muslims with complete submission to Allâh)" (the Holy Qur'ân 3:102)

"O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam) and from him He created his wife, and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allâh through Whom you demand your mutual (rights) and (do no cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allâh is ever an All Watcher over you" (Qur'ân 4:1).

"O ye who believe ! Keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth, He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allâh and His Messenger, he has indeed achieved a great success" (Qur'ân 33:70-71).

Know that the most truthful speech is that of Allâh's Book (the Qur'ân), and that the best of guidance is that of Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. The worst of evils are innovations (foreign to the true teachings of Islâm), and every innovated matter (in religion) is a Bid'ah, and every Bid'ah is a misguidance, and every mean of misguidance is in the Fire of Hell.

This is an introductory book for every Muslim. It is a summary of basic Islâmic beliefs and acts of worship. We ask Allâh by His Names and Attributes to accept this work and make it a benefit for those who read it and/or distribute it.

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The First Lesson:

Memorizing the opening Surah (Chapter) of the Qur'ân: Al-Fatiha (the Opening) and some short passages and Surahs from No. 99 (Az-Zalzalah) to 114 (An-Naas) Every Muslim must make an effort to memorize, recite and understand passages and/or Surahs from the Noble Qur'ân.

The Second Lesson:

Knowing the meaning and the conditions of the declaration of Ash-Shahadataan that: "there is no true God except Allâh, and that Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is the Messenger of Allâh". The phrase that "there is no true God" negates anything or anyone that is being worshipped other than Allâh, and the phrase: "except Allâh" confirms that all forms of worship, submission and adoration must be for Allâh alone, without setting up rivals with Him. The conditions needed to fulfill the meaning of Ash-Shahadataan are:

- | Knowledge about what it means.
- | Certainty about its meaning which dispels doubts and suspicions.
- | Sincerity that purifies its declarer from any form of shirk (association).
- | Honesty which negates hypocrisy.
- | Love and attachment to the declaration of Ash-Shahadataan, which leads to the dispel of uneasiness, dislike, or hate to what it implies.
- | Adherence: conducting what Allâh has decreed regarding His worship.
- | Accepting to obey Allâh by this declaration.
- | Dissociating from anything or anyone being worshipped other than Allâh.

The Third Lesson:

The six fundamental articles of faith are:

Believing in Allâh (His Oneness), His Angels, all of His Messengers, all of His Scriptures (in their original and unaltered forms), in the Last Day (of Judgment), and Fate and Divine Decree (whether good or bad), which Allâh Has measured and ordained according to His previous Knowledge and as deemed suitable by His Wisdom.

The Fourth Lesson:

Tawheed (Faith in the Unity of Allâh) is divided into three articles:

First, believing in the Oneness of Allâh in the sense of His being the only Creator, Preserver, Nourisher,...etc. This belief is called Tawheed Ar-Ruboobeeyah.

Second, acknowledging that Allâh alone is the One and Only true God who deserves to be worshipped and thus abstaining from worshipping any other being or thing. This belief is called Tawheed Al-Ulooheeyah.

Third, having faith and belief in the Oneness of Allâh's Names and Attributes. This belief is called Tawheed Al-Asmaa was-Sifat.

As for Shirk (associating anything or anyone in worship with Allâh), it is divided into three types:

First: Major Shirk (Ash Shirk Al Akbar) which Allâh does not forgive. Allâh says regarding Shirk:

"But if they had joined in worship others with Allâh, all that they used to do would have been of no benefit to them" (Qur'ân 6: 88).

"It is not for the Mushrikeen (polytheists) to maintain the Mosques of Allâh (i.e. to pray and worship Allâh therein, to looking after their cleanness and their building,...etc.), while they witness against their own-selves of disbelief. The works of such bear no fruit, and in fire shall they dwell." (Qur'ân 9:17).

The one who associate others with Allâh and dies on this shirk will not be forgiven and Jannah (Paradise) is forbidden to him, as Allâh, Most Mighty and Honored says:

"Verily, Allâh forgives not that partners should be set up with Him in worship, but He forgives anything else, to whom He pleases; and whoever sets up partners with Allâh in worship, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin." (Qur'ân 4:48).

"Verily, whosoever sets up partners in worship with Allâh, then Allâh has forbidden the Jannah for him." (Qur'ân 5:72).

Asking the dead or idols for help, slaughtering for them and making vows for them are examples of this Shirk.

Second: Minor Shirk (Ash-Shirk Al-Asgar) which is stated in the Qur'ân or in the Prophet's tradition but is not the same as Major Shirk.

Riya (showing off) and swearing by other than Allâh are examples of this kind of Shirk. Prophet Muhammad, *salla Allâh u alihi wa sallam*, said:

"Of which I fear for you the most is Minor Shirk". When he was asked what was it, he said, *"Riya"*.

He, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also said: *"He who swears by anything other than Allâh commits Minor shirk"*.

The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, also warned:

"Do not say: 'had Allâh and such and such (person) willed', but say: 'had Allâh then such and such (person) willed' ". This kind of Shirk does not necessarily lead to disbelief from Islâm or an eternal stay in Hell. It negates, however, the completeness of faith.

The *Third* kind of shirk is the hidden Shirk.

Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, explained:

"Shall I not tell you of which I fear for you more than I fear of the Anti-Christ?" They said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allâh", and he said, "The hidden Shirk, where one beautifies his way of praying only because another one is looking at him".

Alternatively, Shirk could be divided into two kinds:

Major and Minor. In this case, the Hidden Shirk encompasses both the Major and Minor kinds depending upon the act committed. It is Major if it is the same as the Shirk of the hypocrites who hide their false beliefs while showing off Islâm out of fear. It is Minor if it is the same as Riya.

The Fifth Lesson :

The five pillars of Islâm are:

Ash-Shahadataan: bearing witness that there is none worthy of being worshipped except Allâh and that Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is His Messenger; establishing prayers; paying the alms (Zakaah); fasting the month of Ramadhan; and performing pilgrimage (Hajj) if one can afford it.

The Sixth Lesson:

The nine conditions of prayers are as follows:

Islâm, sanity, maturity, performing the ablution (wudu), cleanliness from impurities (on the body, clothes, and place of prayer) dressing properly, having the intention of prayers, facing the right direction of Qibla (direction of Ka'aba at Makkah), and the praying at the proper time.

The Seventh Lesson:

The fourteen Basic Elements (Arkan) of prayers:

Standing (if one is able); saying "Allâh u Akbar", which means: "Allâh is the Greatest"; reading the opening Surah of the Qur'ân (Al-Fatihah); lowering the head and back down at the right angle (Ruku); resuming the initial standing position; prostrating with the toes of both feet, both knees, both hands and the forehead touching the ground (Sujud); rising in a sitting position; a short rest in a sitting posture between the two prostrations; tranquility in all actions; performing the Basic Elements of prayer in order, the last Tashahud (the second part); sitting for the last Tashahud; exalting the Prophet Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam; and turning the face to the right side and to the left one saying "Assalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatu Allâh" ("Peace and Mercy of Allâh be upon you") one time on each side.

(Note: Salaah is invalid if any of the above is missing.)

The Eighth Lesson:

The eight obligatory acts of the prayer are:

All the occasions of saying "Allâh u Akbar" other than Takbeerat Al-Ihram (which is basic); saying "Sami Allâh u liman hamidah" ("Allâh accepts any who are thankful to Him") by the Imâm as well as the one who is praying alone, and saying "Rabbana wa laka Alhamd" ("Our Lord, praise be to You") for both the Imâm and the individual; saying "Subhana Rabbi Al-Atheem" ("Glory to my Lord, the Most Great") in Ruku; saying "Subhana Rabbi Ala'la" ("Glory to my Lord, the Most High") in Sujud; saying "Rab Ighfir li" ("Oh my Lord, grant forgiveness to me") between the two prostrations; the first part (At-Tashahud Al-Awwal); and sitting for it.

(Note: if any of the above is missing, the Muslim need to make sujud al sahw).

The Ninth Lesson:

Knowing the contents of At-Tashahud:

First Part: "Attahiyyato li Allâh i wassalawatu wattayyibat. Assalamu alayka ayyuha annabi wa rahmat u Allâh i wa barakatuh, Assalamu alayna wa ala ibadi i Allâh i assalihin, Ashadu an la ilaha illa Allâh, wa ashadu anna Muhammadan abduhu wa Rasuluh."

"Greetings, prayers and the good things of life belong to Allâh . Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the Mercy of Allâh and His blessings. Peace be upon us all and on the righteous servants of Allâh. I bear witness that there is no true God worthy of worship but Allâh alone, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His true slave and Messenger."

Second Part: "Allâhumma Sallee ala Muhammad wa ala aali Muhammad kama Sallaita ala Ibrahima wa ala aali Ibrahim. Wa barik ala Muhammad wa ala aali Muhammad, kama barakta ala Ibrahima wa ala aali Ibrahim, Innaka Hamidon Majid."

"Oh Allâh! Exalt Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, as you did exalt Ibrahim (Abraham) and the family of Abraham. And bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, as you did bless Abraham and the people of Abraham, verily You are the Most Praised, The Most Glorious."

Following the reciting of the Tashahud, the slave asks Allâh's protection from the torment of Hell, the torment of the grave, the trials in life-time and after death, and from the impostor Anti-Christ. After that he may supplicate and ask Allâh whatever he wishes, especially the type of invocation said by the Prophet, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, :

"O Allâh help me to perform remembrance of You and to give all due thanks to You and allow me to worship you in the good way (i.e. as ordained by Allâh and His Messenger). O Allâh I have inflicted a great deal of wrong upon myself and there is none other than You who can offer forgiveness. Grant me forgiveness from You and grant me your Mercy. You are the All-Merciful, The Oft Forgiving. "

The Tenth Lesson:

The Sunnan (supererogatory) acts of the prayer:

1. The opening call of the prayer.
2. Placing the right hand over the left one with both over the chest while in the standing position.
3. Raising the hands up to the level of the shoulders or near the ears with the fingers being close together (not separated) when saying "Allâh u Akbar" at the beginning of the prayer, when performing the Ruku, when resuming the standing position after Ruku, and when standing to begin the third unit of the prayer.
4. Saying "Subhana Rabbi Al-Adheem" and "Subllana Rabbi Al- A'la" more than once in Ruku and Sujud, respectively.
5. Saying "Rab Ighfer li warhamni wahdini warzuqni wa'afni, wajburni" ("Allâh, my Lord, grant me forgiveness, have mercy on me, guide me, provide me with your blessings and console me") more than once between the two prostrations.
6. Bowing down, making the head and back on one level. This is the position of Ruku.
7. While prostrating, the arms should not be brought close to the sides nor the abdomen to the thighs or the thighs to the legs.
8. Raising the arms in Sujud.
9. Praying for the Prophet and the family of Muhammad, Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim (as in Tashahud).

10. Performing the early morning prayer and the first two units of the sunset and the evening prayer with an audible voice.
11. Sitting between prostrations on the outer side of the left foot (i.e. laying it flat) keeping the right foot erected with the internal parts of the toes touching the ground. The same position is to be taken while sitting in the first part of Tashahud.
12. Taking the position of Tawartruk during the recitation of the full Tashahud: The person sits on his left foot laid down with his right foot erected.
13. Making Du'a (to invoke Allâh) following the recitation of the last Tashahud.
14. Whispering the recitation in the Dhuhr (noon), Asr (late afternoon), the third raka' of Maghrib (sunset) prayer, and the last two raka'at of the Isha' (evening) prayer.
15. Reciting another passage from the Holy Qur'ân after the opening Surah of Al-Fatiha.

The Eleventh Lesson:

Invalidation of the prayers:

Any prayer is invalid and nullified if any of the following acts are committed:

Intentional talking. Laughing. Eating. Drinking. Uncovering the parts of the body of which are not allowed to be uncovered during prayer. Excessive alteration in the direction towards the Qibla. Excessive moving outside the regular acts and movements of prayer, without a proper reason. Nullifying the ablution.

The Twelfth Lesson:

The ten conditions for performing ablution are:

1. Islâm.
2. Sanity.
3. Maturity.
4. Intention and ...
5. ... its continuity (i.e. the person should not intend to discontinue his ablution before its completion).
6. If one performs Istinja' (cleaning the areas of natural discharges with water) or with stones, tissues, leaves etc. (Istijmar) before ablution.
7. Water must be pure and Mubah (i.e. it is not stolen or taken by force).
8. The removal of all things that prevent water from reaching the parts of ablution such as mud.
9. Those who continually lose their ablution (for example due to release of gas, urine, or any reason that nullifies ablution), must make prior to prayers.
10. Causes that requires ablution (e.g. urine, eating camel meat, sleep, etc.)

The Thirteenth Lesson:

The obligatory elements of ablution are:

1. Washing the face, including rinsing out the mouth with water and cleansing the nostrils of the nose.
2. Washing the two hands up to and including the elbows.
3. Wiping the whole head including the two ears.
4. Washing the two feet including the heels.
5. Doing the ablution in the prescribed sequence, without delays.

The Fourteenth Lesson:

The six nullifying acts of the ablution are:

1. Natural excretion, such as urine, feces, gas,...etc.
2. Any unclean substance excessively discharged from the body.
3. Losing one's reason due to sleep, loss of consciousness or otherwise.
4. Eating camel meat (because the Prophet, *salla Allâh u alihi wa sallam*, ordered so).
5. Rejection of Islâm.
6. Touching the sexual organs with hand (without any barrier: clothes and so on).

Notice: Washing the dead does not nullify the ablution except for that the washer's hand touches (without any barrier) the sexual organs. Kissing women with or without desire does not nullify ablution because the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, once kissed one of his wives and prayed without performing ablution. This holds as long as there is no associated sexual excretions (e.g. semen). As for the saying of Allâh, Most Glorified:

" ... or you have been in contact with women (by sexual relations) ...
" (Qur'ân 4: 43)

The contact with women is the involvement in a full sexual relation as related by Ibn Abbass (companion) and others, and it is the correct opinion.

The Fifteenth Lesson:

The recommended morals for every Muslim are:

Truthfulness, honesty, abstinence, modesty, courage, generosity, loyalty, refraining from everything that Allâh had made unlawful, being a good neighbor, helping the needy, and other morals stated either in the Holy Qur'ân or in the Prophet's, *salla Allâh u alihi wa sallam*, tradition.

The Sixteenth Lesson:

Islâmic decencies:

Greeting, cheerfulness, eating and drinking with the right hand, adhering to the Islâmic conduct in entering and leaving homes and mosques and while traveling, dealing kindly with parents, relatives, neighbors, the old man and the young; congratulating, lamenting, and other Islâmic ethics.

The Seventeenth Lesson:

Warning against Shirk (association) and against other wrongdoing such as witchcraft, murdering, taking the money of the orphan, dealing with interest (riba), escaping on the day of Jihad (war), speaking evil of faithful women, disobeying parents, breaking up with one's relatives, false witnessing, harming neighbors, committing outrage upon others, and other warnings as declared by Allâh and His messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

The Eighteenth Lesson:

Washing the dead body and performing the funeral prayer:

a) Washing the dead:

1. When a Muslim is confirmed dead his eyes must be closed and his jaws brought together.
2. When washing the dead body, the whole body beginning with the exposed parts of ablution must be washed. The abdomen is gently squeezed and followed by washing of the anus and

the sexual organs using a wet piece of cloth. Normal ablution will then be performed. The body is washed starting with the head and beard using water mixed with the leaves of Sidr (lote tree, if available). The right side must be washed before the left side and the body must be washed three times. Each time the abdomen is squeezed as above. The mustache and the nails are clipped, and when the body is clean, it is wrapped in three white cotton sheets covering all parts of the body and perfumed with incense. If the body is still unclean, ablution must be extended to 5-7 times after which the body is dried with a clean cloth. Men's hair should not be combed while that of a woman is to be braided into three chains and left hanging down behind her (as done to the Prophet's daughter).

3. It is preferred to shroud men with three white sheets without a gown or Amamah (head cover); children in one up to three sheets and women in five sheets, these sheets are:

1. Dir': a loose outer garment with sleeves slit in front.
2. Khimar: covering head and face.
3. Izzar: a sheet wrapped around the waist, and
4. Two overall wrapping sheets.

Young girls can be wrapped with a gown and two sheets.

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1. The one who has the most right to wash the dead body of a man is his chosen guardian (if any) then his father, his grandfather, then the closest of his relatives. The woman is best washed by her chosen female then the mother, the grandmother, then the closest one of her female relatives. The husband can wash the body of his wife and vice versa because Abu Bakr, may Allâh be pleased with him, was washed by his wife; and Ali bin Abi Taleb, may Allâh be pleased with him, washed his wife, Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet, may Allâh be pleased with her.

b) The funeral prayer (Salaah-Aljanaza):

Saying Takbeer: "Allâh u Akbar" four times. Reciting Al-Fatiha after the first Takbeer. Following the second Takbeer, one prays for the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, as he does in Tashahud. Then after saying "Allâh u Akbar" for the third time, one recites what is usually said in other prayers like asking Allâh to forgive all Muslims or any supplications he knows, preferably this:

"Allâhumma Ighfir li hayyina wa mayyitina, wa shahidina wa ghaibina wa sagheerina wa kabeerina wa thakarina wa unthana. Allâhumma man ahyaytahu minna fa ahyihi ala al Islâm, wa man tawaffaytah u minna fa tawaffahu ala al eeman. Allâhmma la tahrinna ajrah, wa la taftinna baadah".

"O Allâh, grant forgiveness to our living and to our dead, and to those who are present and to those who are absent, and to our young and our old folk, and to our males and our females. O Allâh, whomsoever you grant to live, from among us, help him to live in Islâm and whomsoever of us you cause to die, help him to die in faith. O Allâh, do not deprive us of the reward for patience on his (her, their) loss and do not make us subject to trial after him...."

Or one could say:

"Allâhumma Ighfir lah u warhamhu wa'afihî wa'fu anhu, wa'akrim nuzulahu wa wassi' madkhalahu, wa'ghsilhu bi l mae wathalgi walbarad, wanaqihî mina al-thunoubi walkhataya kama unaqa athawbo alabiado mina addanas, wa abdilhu daran khairan min darihi, wa ahlan khairan miin ahlihi, wa adkhillhu al Jannah, wa aidhu min adhabi al qabr, wa adhabi an Narr; wafсах lahu fee qabrihi, wanawir lahu fehi. Allâhumma la tahrimna ajrahu, wa la tudhlilna ba'dahu."

"O Allâh forgive him (her, them) and have your Mercy upon him; protect him and pardon him, receive him with honor and make his grave spacious; wash him with water, snow and hail, and clean him from sins and wrong-doings as is cleaned a white garment from impurity; requite him with an abode more excellent than his, and with a mate better than his mate. Admit him to the Garden, and protect him from the torment of the grave and the torment of the Fire; widen his space in his grave and bring him light therein. O Allâh don't deprive us from his reward and don't let us go astray after him."

Then after saying "Allâh u Akbar" for the fourth time one turns his head to the right (making tasleem) and thus ending the funeral prayer.

It is best to raise one's hand while saying "Allâh u Akbar"

In the case when the dead is a child or an infant, the following Du'a is made:

"Allâhumma ejalhu dhiktan liwalidayehi, washafeean mujaban. Allâhuma thaqil bihi mawazeenahuma wa a'dhun bihi ujarahuma wa alhiqhu bi salih el Mumineen, waj'alhu fee kafalati Ibrahim aleihi As-Salam, waqihî bi rahmatika adhaba al Jaheem."

"O Allâh make him a preceding reward and a reserve treasure (on the Day of Judgment) for his parents; a one whose intercession would be granted. O Allâh make of him an excess in the measures and in the rewards (granted by Allâh) to his parents. Let him join the company of the righteous believers and make him under the care of Abraham (may the peace of Allâh be upon him), and protect him, by Your Mercy, from the torment of the blazing Fire ".

The Position of the Imâm in the Funeral Prayer:

The tradition is for the Imâm to stand right next to the head of the body if it is a man, and to the middle of the body if it is a woman. If the dead were many, men, women, male and female children in one funeral, the following positions are to be taken:

The men right in front of the Imâm. The women further towards the Qibla. The male children are between the men and women and more towards the men while the female children follow women further down in the direction of Qibla (all of the dead bodies are to be laid parallel to those praying). The bodies are to be arranged such that the head of the male child lies next to that of a man while the middle of a woman lies next to the head of a man. The head of the female child lies next to the head of a woman.

The followers of Imâm are to stand behind him just as in other prayers. It is acceptable for one to stand to the right of the Imâm if he finds no place behind him.

All praise is due to Allâh and His blessings and peace be upon His Prophet, his family and his companions

A lesson given by Shaykh Abdul 'Azeez bin 'Abdullaah bin Baaz

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