

MIFTAAH ONLINE

LIGHT UPON LIGHT



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Introduction

- Getting to know someone requires some time. We will give them names and call them by these different names depending on the situation or mood.
- We will get to know Allah through discovering His names and attributes.
- When the mushrikun came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and inquired about Allah, Allah revealed Surah al-Ikhlas.
- There is no better way to learn about the names of Allah through the names that He has chosen for Himself and asked us to call upon Him through those names.
- Through this, we are building a personal connection with Allah that is beautiful. This was why the Prophet (ﷺ) taught us the importance of engaging in the names of Allah.
- In understanding who Allah is, we grow in our ilm, improve in our theology as well as increase in our love.
 - Narrated Abu Hurairah: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "إِنَّ لِلَّهِ تِسْعَةَ وَتِسْعِينَ اسْمًا مِائَةً إِلَّا وَاحِدًا، مَنْ أَحْصَاهَا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ" "Allah has ninety-nine Names, one-hundred less one; and he who preserves them will enter Paradise." (Sahih al-Bukhari)

- While the Prophet (ﷺ) said Allah has ninety-nine names, His names are not limited to this amount. There are names that He has kept to Himself – it is part of *ilm al-ghayb*.
- On the Day of Judgment when the Prophet (ﷺ) intercedes, he will call upon Allah by His different names and praise Him in different ways like he has never done before.
- From this hadith in which the Prophet (ﷺ) made a *du'a*, we know that Allah has more than ninety-nine names:
 - Ibn Mas'ud reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying that if anyone is afflicted by much care he should say,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ وَابْنُ عَبْدِكَ وَابْنُ أَمَّتِكَ وَفِي قَبْضَتِكَ نَاصِيَتِي يَبْدِكَ مَا بِنِي فِي حُكْمِكَ عَدْلُ فِي قَضَاؤِكَ أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ سَمِّنْتُ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ أَوْ عَلَمْتَهُ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ أَوْ أَلْهَمْتَ عِبَادَكَ أَوْ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي مَكْنُونِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ رَبِيعَ قَلْبِي وَجَلَاءَ هَمِّي وَغَمِّي مَا قَالَهَا عَبْدُ قَطْ إِلَّا أَذْهَبَ اللَّهُ غَمَهُ وَأَبْدَلَهُ فرجاً

"O God, I am Thy servant, the son of Thy servant, the son of Thy handmaid, and at Thy disposal; my forelock is in Thy hand; Thy judgment is effective regarding me; just concerning me is Thy decree; I ask Thee by every name Thou hast by which Thou hast called Thyself, or sent down in Thy Book, or taught any of Thy creatures, or kept to Thyself in the hidden place of the unseen, to make the Qur'an the Spring of my heart and the means of clearing away my care and grief." He declared that no one had ever said it without God removing his grief and giving him joy instead of it.

(Mishkat al-Masabih)

- Amongst all the scholars in the world, Imam Ibn Hazm Al-Dhaheri is the only one that says that Allah's names are limited to ninety-nine names based on this hadith.

- Imam al-Nawawi explains that the majority of scholars have decided that this hadith does not limit the number of Allah's names. Instead, the meaning of this hadith is that it mentions the reward if one memorizes these ninety-nine names. Therefore, it does not mean that there are no other names other than these ninety-nine names. These ninety-names are common names that one can memorize.
- According to Imam Al-Khattabi, the ninety-nine names of Allah that were mentioned in different ahadith are the names that one can call upon Allah by when making supplication.
- For example, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ طَيِّبٌ لَا يَقْبِلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا" (O people! Allah is pure and, therefore, accepts only that which is pure). However, we do not call Allah tayyib.
- These ninety-nine names are an encouragement for us to call upon Allah. Thus, when the Prophet (ﷺ) tells us there are ninety-nine names, he is telling us that they are names that can be used in our du'as.
- This is similar to when the Arabs would say, "I have a hundred horses, and all of that is for jihad in the path of Allah."
- What this means is that they are not saying they have a hundred horses, but rather, they have a hundred horses that are fully equipped that will allow them to engage in jihad.
- Arabs were never accurate in numbers, and therefore they had their own ways of understanding numbers.
- Not all of the ahadith that list the ninety-nine names are authentic because the hadith itself is weak.
- The ninety-nine names however, are authentic. We should memorize them, know their meaning and live by them to obtain the reward of Jannah.
- Some of the names are jamaliyah (beautification). Allah has allowed us to beautify ourselves through embodying these names (i.e. being merciful, patient etc.)

- While other names are jalaliyah (glorious attributes). Allah alone can call Himself by these names (i.e al-Mutakabbir).
- The purpose of our studies:
 - Attaining Jannah
 - We are trying to achieve the pleasure of Allah and our end goal is to attain Jannah.
 - The promise of Allah was given through the Prophet (ﷺ) that upon memorizing and internalizing His ninety-nine names, a person is guaranteed Jannah.
 - Knowing Allah
 - When Allah first revealed iqra (read/recite), the first command to engage in iqra is **فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ** (know that there is no god except for Allah).
 - Therefore, we should know these ninety-nine names and by learning them, we are getting to know who Allah is.
 - Understanding the names of Allah and educating ourselves about them is fulfilling an obligation. It is fard because one who worships Allah must know who He is.
 - We cannot develop a relationship and connection with Allah as well as devote ourselves to Him, without knowing Him.
 - Nasab of Allah
 - This is how Allah introduces Himself. There is no long introduction of who He is and the background to His story. He introduced Himself in Surah al-Ikhlas.
 - Allah tells us:

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا

The most beautiful names belong to Allah, so invoke Him by them (7:180)

- The beauty of Allah's names is that we can use them in our favor which aligns to our needs. For example, if we want to open doors that are closed, we call upon **الفتاح** (The Opener).
- This is why Allah instructs us to call upon His beautiful names when making du'a. We should not limit ourselves by using one name.
- Al-ism al-Azam (the greatest name) to call upon Allah is **يَا حَيٌّ يَا قَيُّومٌ** (The Ever-Living and The Sustainer). When we say this name, we will be able to connect to Him on a different level.
- Increasing love for Allah
 - In the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), a Sahabi would always recite Surah al-Ikhlas after every surah. Sometimes they recite it in the first or second raka'ah.
 - 'Aishah reported:

رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، بعث رجلاً على سرية، فكان يقرأ لأصحابه في صلاتهم، فيختتم بـ{قل هو الله أحد} فلما رجعوا، ذكروا ذلك لرسول الله، صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: "سلوه لأي شيء كان يصنع ذلك؟" فسألوه، فقال: لأنها صفة الرحمن، فأنا أحب أن أقرأ بها، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "أخبروه أن الله تعالى يحبه"

The Messenger of Allah, (ﷺ) appointed a man in charge of an army unit who led them in Salat (prayer); he always concluded his recitation with Surat Al-Ikhlas: "Say (O Muhammad (ﷺ)): 'He is Allah, (the) One. Allah-us-Samad (Allah - the Self-Sufficient). He begets not, nor was He begotten. And there is none equal or comparable to Him.'" (112:1-4) Upon their return to Al-Madinah, they mentioned this to Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), who said, "Ask him why he does so?" He was asked and he said, "This Surah contains the Attributes of Allah, the Gracious, and I love to recite it. Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) then told them, "Tell him that Allah loves him". [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

- Anas ibn Malik reported: A man said, “O Messenger of Allah, I love this chapter, ‘Say: He is Allah, the One,’” (112:1). The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said,

جُبَّكَ إِيَّاهَا أَذْخِلَكَ الْجَنَّةَ

“Your love for it will admit you into Paradise.” [Al-Bukhari]

Allah

- Allah is taken from the word ma'luh (a worshiped object).
- Ilah comes from the word alaha. Alaha means abada or worship.
- Alaha is someone that is worthy of being worshiped. Therefore, Allah is someone that is worthy of being worshiped.
- Allah is someone that is complete in His names and perfect in His attributes.
- Allah is the one to be worshiped. This is why people feel a sense of humility with the mention of Allah.
- By saying Allah, one recognizes and understands their servitude, while acknowledging their weakness.
- Just calling upon Allah and hearing the name Allah, can send shivers down someone's spine.
- There was no one that called themselves Allah, including Firawn. No one can claim to be Allah.
- In his first claim, Firawn said:

أَنَا رَبُّكُمْ أَكْبَرُ

“I am your Lord, Most High”. (79:24)

- Rabb can mean giver, provider and protected. For example, saying a person is the Rabb of the house is permissible. It tells us that he is the giver of the family.
- In his second claim, Firawn said:

مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِّنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي

I do not know that you have any god beside myself (28:38)

- His second claim was far worse than the first. Therefore, Allah punished him first for it, before punishing him a second time for his first claim.
- Firawn never called himself Allah because he recognized that he is incomplete – he has limitations.
- Allah is incomparable to anything or anyone. He is absolute and complete in His essence and attributes. Allah is the embodiment of everything beautiful.
- There are many ayah in the Qur'an where the name Allah appears – approximately over 2,500 times.
- Simply saying Allah and La ilaha illa Allah is a form of forgiveness and it is the best dhikr to make.
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

مَا مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أَعَظَمَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ، وَلَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ فِيهِنَّ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأَيَّامِ الْعَشْرِ؛ فَأَكْثِرُوا فِيهِنَّ مِنَ التَّهْلِيلِ، وَالْتَّكْبِيرِ، وَالْتَّحْمِيدِ

"There are no days greater in the sight of Allah and in which righteous deeds are more beloved to Him than these ten days, so during this time recite a great deal of Tahlil (La ilaha illallah), Takbir (Allahu Akbar) and Tahmid (Alhamdulillah)." (Musnad Imam Ahmad)

- Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported:

عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ قَالَ مُوسَى يَا رَبِّ عَلَمْنِي شَيْئًا أَذْكُرُكَ بِهِ وَأَدْعُوكَ بِهِ قَالَ قُلْ يَا مُوسَى لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ قَالَ يَا رَبِّ كُلُّ عِبَادِكَ يَقُولُ هَذَا قَالَ قُلْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَرِيدُ شَيْئًا تَخْصُّنِي بِهِ قَالَ يَا مُوسَى لَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَالْأَرْضِينَ السَّبْعِ فِي كِفَّةٍ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ فِي كِفَّةٍ مَالَتْ بِهِمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Moses said: My Lord, teach me something with which I can remember You and call upon You. Allah said: Say 'there is no God but Allah.' Moses said: My Lord, all of Your servants say this. Allah said: O Moses, if the seven heavens with their inhabitants, as well as the seven earths, were upon a scale against the statement 'there is no God but Allah,' then 'there is no God but Allah' would outweigh them." (Sahih Ibn Hibban)

- Remembering Allah and His majesty by saying La ilaha illa Allah sincerely brings about great benefits. It will have an impact on one's heart as well as spiritual well-being.
 - Narrated `Utban bin Malik Al-Ansari: who was one of the men of the tribe of Bani Salim: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) came to me and said,

لَنْ يُؤَافِيَ عَبْدٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَقُولُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. يَبْتَغِي بِهِ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ، إِلَّا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ النَّارَ
"If anybody comes on the Day of Resurrection who has said: La ilaha illal-ah, sincerely, with the intention to win Allah's Pleasure, Allah will make the Hell-Fire forbidden for him." [Al-Bukhari]

- The Prophet (ﷺ) often reminded the Sahabah to renew their iman by declaring La ilaha illa Allah.
- Once a Bedouin said to the Prophet (ﷺ): "O Messenger of Allah, who will be in charge of bringing the people to account on the Day of Resurrection?" The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Allah, may He be blessed and exalted." He said: "He Himself?" He said: "Yes." The Bedouin smiled and the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Why are you smiling, O Bedouin?" He said: "When the Most Generous is in a position to punish, He forgives, and when He brings to account, He pardons." When this man left, the Prophet (ﷺ) called him a faqih (an expert in fiqh).
- This tells us that knowing Allah allows us to understand fiqh and its processes better. We should engage in fiqh with a spiritual motive by understanding the name of Allah.