

## Islamic Fiqh- Miscellaneous topics- Lesson(10): Is Man Compelled or is he Free?

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of Creations, and Peace and blessings be upon our prophet Muhammad, the faithful and the honest.

Oh, Allah, we know nothing but what You teach us. You are the All-Knowing, the Wise. Oh Allah, teach us what is good for us, and benefit us from what You taught us, and increase our knowledge. Show us the righteous things as righteous and help us to do them, and show us the bad things as bad and help us to keep away from them.

O Allah our Lord, lead us out from the depths of darkness and illusion, unto the lights of erudition and knowledge, and from the muddy shallows of lusts unto the heavens of Your Vicinity.

Some virtuous scholars have written a commentary on the correct aqida, but what draws our attention in it is that it is taken exclusively from the Book of Allah the Almighty.

So, the right aqida is that Allah, glory to Him, has described Himself as the Lord of the Worlds, and the position of lordship is different from the position of deity. Thus, Allah is the Creator, the Lord and the ilah; and one of the meanings of the Lord is that He is the Sustainer in so far as He provides mankind with what is necessary for them. However, He is the Lord of the Worlds not of human beings alone, the Lord of the whole of the Universe. Thus, Allah the Almighty describes Himself in the following way:

**( Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds.)**

(al-Fatiha, 1:1-2)

And also:

**( Master of the Day of Judgment.)**

(al-Fatiha, 1:4)

The affairs of this world are, in reality, governed by Allah the Almighty, but manifestly they are governed by someone or other.

**( And you (Muhammad) threw not when you did throw, but Allah threw. )**

(al-Anfal, 8:17)

**(The Hand of Allah is over their hands. )**

(al-Fath, 48:10)

Nevertheless, in the Hereafter, the affairs, both manifestly and in reality, will be managed by Allah the Almighty because the Day of Judgment, the Day of Resurrection is "owned" by Allah, the Lord of the Worlds; and Allah the Almighty mocks at the hypocrites, which means that He despises their deeds, much in the same way as, in the earthly life, a perfect man who has seen a silly, harmful, impairing, or disrespectful act, would despise it. One of the features which characterizes the perfect believer in this life is his rejection of every corrupt action; that is the meaning of Allah's mockery at the hypocrites. He says:

**(Allah mocks at them. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:15)

And He gives the hypocrites increase in their wrongdoings:

**(And gives them increase in their wrongdoings so they will wander blindly. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:15)

There is yet another meaning of "giving increase". Allah, glory to Him, says:

**( And had it not been for a Word that went forth before from your Lord, (their punishment) must necessarily have come (in this world). )**

(Taha, 20:129)

It means that Allah the Almighty has given us in the worldly life a chance in order to express ourselves, to show our reality. If He, glory to Him, has hastened and destroyed the kafirun, they would not have been given their chance in full. Therefore:

**( And had it not been for a Word that went forth before from your Lord, (their punishment) must necessarily have come (in this world). )**

The expression "Word" means that Allah has given the kafirun and all human beings a chance to show what they are. And man often wonders: Sometimes, a human being acts sinfully, oppresses, does wrong, and sometimes goes beyond the limits of what a human being is. Why does Allah the Almighty tolerate him?

The answer is that Allah, glory to Him, has sent us into the worldly life to show our reality. For example, if a student has entered an examination room and intends to sit for the exam, can his teacher, who knows that the student will not succeed due to his extreme laziness, prevent him from sitting for the exam? The answer is no, because if the teacher forbade him to sit for it, the student would say: "Sir, I'll succeed. I have studied hard." The student is given the adequate opportunity to go through the examination procedure in order to demonstrate what he really is.

**( So that those who were to be destroyed (for their rejecting Faith) might be destroyed after a clear evidence. )**

(al-Anfal, 8:42)

Therefore, Allah has given the tyrant kafirun a time limit in order for their reality to manifest itself and in order for them to receive guidance.

**( Go both of you to Pharaoh, verily, he has transgressed all bounds. And speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept admonition or fear Allah. )**

(Taha, 20:43-44)

Otherwise, Allah will take their light and leave them in their blindness. In fact, this light is the light of guidance and only the believer comes to know this Divine Light through which things are made understandable to him. He sees what is right as right and what is evil as evil. However, the hypocrites, the kafirun, and the immoral see what is right as evil and what is evil as right, the worst thing being when somebody boasts of committing sins. How did Prophet Yusuf feel about adultery? He saw its evil consequences, so he said:

**( Allah forbid! Truly he (your husband) is my master! He made my stay agreeable! Verily, to no good come those who do wrong. )**

(Yusuf, 12:23)

But the man whose heart is blind views adultery as an advantage, while, in fact, it may lead him to the abyss. So, when a man is given the Divine Light in the worldly life, it means that he sees what is good as good and what is evil as evil. Therefore, the most dangerous thing in this life is to lack the right vision of things.

Thus, the ignorant man sees the ill-gotten money as a gain, but he ignores that Allah, glory to Him, makes this money disappear in many ways. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, says in a noble hadith:

**"The money earned by instigation will be scattered by Allah."**

The licit gain is obtained through an effort and the illicit gain is obtained by aggression. Sometimes man

assaults other people's earnings by trickery, either through scaring them, or through deceiving them, or through defrauding them. So, there are two ways of earning money: either through a real effort and that is a licit gain; or through one of the illicit ways such as deceiving, pressing, or intimidating.

**"The money earned by instigation will be scattered by Allah."**

It's a principle. The money obtained in an illicit way will be dispelled through aggression. Who knows this? The believer does, because he has the right vision, but not the disbeliever whose heart is blind.

**( But Allah is ever round the kafirun. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:19)

Because the kafir is ignorant, he thinks that he can do everything he wants.

**( Verily, those who disbelieve spend their wealth to hinder (men) from the Path of Allah, and so will they continue to spend it; but in the end they will only have regrets and sighs. Then they will be overcome. And those who disbelieve will be gathered unto Hell. )**

(al-Anfal, 8:36)

Allah, glory to Him, owns everything. Sometimes, the kafir thinks that he can do everything he wants, but, in fact, his will is subjected to Allah the Almighty, so he can do only what the Will of Allah allows him to do, and:

**( Indeed! He has power over all things. )**

(Fussilat, 41:39)

If the word qadir comes from the verb qaddara (estimate), taqdir (esteem), then our estimation of Him should be as Wise and Knowledgeable; and if it comes from the verb qadara (be able) and al-qudrah (ability), then Allah is Able to do everything. So, if you want to be the strongest among people, you should put your trust in Allah.

**( Verily, He is the Forgiver ( who accepts repentance), the Most Merciful. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:37)

"The Forgiver" is in an intensive form, and means that Allah often does accept repentance from His servants.

**( And Allah knows well those who do wrong. )**

(al-Jumu'a, 62:7)

**( Think not that Allah does not heed the deeds of those who do wrong. He but gives them respite up to a Day when the eyes will (fixedly) stare in horror. )**

(Ibrahim, 14:42)

**( Then verily, Allah is an enemy to the kafirun. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:98)

Definitely, Allah, glory to Him, does not hate the kafirun, but He hates their deeds, much in the same line as a father, for example, who may hate his son's way of acting, yet takes care of him, sympathizes with him, satisfies his needs, and advises him. If the son ever comes to his senses, he will love and appreciate his father.

**( And Allah is the Owner of bounties unbounded. )**

(al-Imran, 3:74)

That is:

**( Has there not been over man a long period of time,  
when he was nothing (not even) mentioned? )**

(al-Insan, 76:1)

Allah, glory to Him, has honored us with the blessing of the creation and if it were not for the Will of Allah the Almighty to create us, what would we be? We would be nothing. Therefore, why did Allah create us? He created us in order to make us happy.

**( Except him on whom your Lord has bestowed His Mercy;  
and for that did He create them. )**

(Hud, 11:119)

Also, Allah has honored us with the blessing of bestowal and the blessing of guidance. So, He has created us, has bestowed on us, and has guided us. Therefore, it is said:

**( ... and to complete His Favor on you. )**

(al-Maidah, 5:6)

Guidance completes the blessing.

**( As for man, when his Lord tries him by giving him honor and gifts, then he says (puffed up): My  
Lord has honored me. )**

(al-Fajr, 89:15)

If somebody owns money without guidance, it is not an honor, but an examination.

**(Know you not that to Allah (alone) belongs the dominion  
of the heavens and the earth? )**

(al-Maidah, 5:40)

And that Allah, the Greatest, has Face:

**( Everything shall perish except His Face. His is the Decision,  
and to Him you (all) shall be returned. )**

(al-Qasas, 28:88)

Man may seek the Face of Allah the Almighty with his deeds. In the Hereafter, the righteous will look at the Face of Allah the Almighty. Also:

**( So wherever you turn, there is Allah's Face. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:115)

It means that wherever you turn your face, you find the Face of Allah.

"O Musa! Wouldn't you like Me to live in your home with you? Musa said: O Lord! How could that be? He said: Don't you know that I am with the worshiper who remembers Me, and whenever he seeks Me, he finds Me."

Allah is the Originator of the heavens and the earth; He Who has given them their form. For example, trees are familiar to you and so are mountains, but who worked out the design of a mountain? Were it not for them, life would be impossible. Inside them there are reservoirs of fresh water. Thus, if the earth were completely flat, as deserts are, from where would springs emerge? Think of the design of a tree: trees for protection, trees for shadow, trees for decoration, trees for wood, evergreen trees, deciduous trees, fruit trees. Think of the types of fruit. By whose favour do all these exist? By the favour of Allah the Almighty.

Sometimes, it is imagined that there are creatures living on Mars, but their representations are imitations as man cannot imagine but a creature with a head, arms, legs, and body, whatever the differences put into this representation.

Hence, who originated the form of the globe? Who originated the rotation movement? Who created the system of gravity? Who created water? Who worked out the design of water before it was created? Who worked out the design of air, metals, soil, fish, the growing of plants, and the flying of birds?

**( The Originator of the heavens and the earth. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:117)

The design of a submarine is just a bad imitation of a fish; the aviation is a bad imitation of birds' flight. The most sophisticated modern aircraft is a bad imitation of a bird. So, who originated the idea of flying? Who originated the idea of diving? It has been Allah, glory to Him.

Let us look at the concept of energy, so necessary for the differentiation between people. Man needs food, food needs money, and through earning money, you come to know the reality of a human being, whether they tell the truth or not, whether they earn money licitly or not, and whether they fulfill their tasks perfectly or not. So, the ethics of man becomes apparent through the way he makes his living.

Consider again –who has ideated the system of marriage?

**( ... of each kind two (male and female)... )**

(Hud, 11:40)

Allah, glory to Him, has done it.

He could have created all mankind at once and make them die at the same time, but in this hierarchy of creation and death there is for man a weighty lesson, in which death is the biggest exhortation in the life of a human being. Even if extremely arrogant, man gets afraid on seeing a dead person –although it is like a piece of wood unable to move. He was mentioned and then he became a story. He might have been an awe-inspiring person, but when Allah the Almighty has taken his soul, he has become just a name in the obituary, just an event. Who originated the idea of death?

Allah the Greatest says:

**( ... And We made them as tales (ahadiz, that are told)... )**

(al-Mu'minun, 23:44)

Who originated the idea of mating between human beings, between animals, and between plants? Have you ever thought why Allah has made sheep similar to human beings in their organic composition? Even if you have not studied medicine, when you see sheep's viscera, and observe their hearts, kidneys, livers, stomachs, intestines, brains, arteries, veins, muscles, bones and tendons, you will find the similarity between them and man's organs. There is a relationship between the human creation and the animal creation in which there is a lesson for us, and that is the meaning of the ayah:

**( The Originator of the heavens and the earth. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:117)

A child is always beloved. Observe that if Allah had created it otherwise, perhaps with a child's body but thinking as a young person, that is if the child's mind matured too early, such a child would never be beloved, whereas the reason behind the love we feel for children is their innocence. Sometimes, a father loves his little son's ingenuity, his limited way of thinking, and that everything makes him satisfied and happy. For a little girl, for example, a pillow may seem a doll or a daughter, so she holds it on her bosom to put it to sleep, but in reality it's a pillow. If children were mature, they would never be beloved. Who originated the idea of a child?

Allah the Almighty:

**( The Originator of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it: "Be!" - and it is. )**

(al-Baqarah, 1:117)

It means that everything is easy for Allah. So when man follows Allah, he will be under the protection of the Most Powerful, under the protection of the Absolute Force; but if he follows others than Allah the Almighty, he will be with the weakest.

**"I know of every servant who resorts to Me and not to My creatures through his intention, and when the people of the heavens and the earth deceive him, I shall make a way for him out of their cunningness. And I know of every servant that resorts to a creature instead of Me through his intention, and I shall make the ground sink under his feet, and prevent him from connecting with Me. On every servant who obeys Me, I shall bestow before he has asked Me, and I shall forgive him before he has asked Me for forgiveness."**

[ "Al-Jami' al-Saghirah", from K'ab bin Malik ]

**( And He is Exalted in power, full of wisdom. )**

(Ibrahim, 14:4)

"Exalted in power" means that He is entirely inaccessible, that He is beyond reach. Let me give you the example of a doctor who has given his patient an injection, but he forgot to ask him if he was allergic, which made the patient suffer a shock. The patient objected and reproved his doctor, who felt ashamed and apologized to him, so the doctor is subject to errors. Similarly, if you manufactured something and a client of yours detected a defect in it, then he would blame you. Thus, you have been reached by imperfection because inaccessibility requires perfection in ethics, perfection in conduct, and absolute wisdom.

Therefore, if our Lord the Almighty had not given man sufficient indicators, in his conduct and the Universe, then on the Day of Judgment He would not be inaccessible, and man could ask: "O Lord, why didn't You deal with me in the worldly life? Why didn't You remind me? Why didn't You frighten me? Why didn't You send anything to alarm me?" However, Allah will reply: "I did. I have offered you all the necessary indicators."

**( And He is Exalted in power, full of wisdom. )**

(Ibrahim, 14:4)

Allah is Exalted in power and full of wisdom because He fulfills the Covenant with those who fulfill it.

**( And who is truer to his Covenant than Allah? )**

(at-Tawbah, 9:111)

**And nothing is more painful than treason and denial of favour.**

**I had been teaching him shooting every day-  
And when he became professional, he shot at me!  
And how I taught him rhyme writing!**

## **And when he composed poetry, he lampooned me!**

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In the worldly life, no other feeling is more painful than that of betrayal, but Allah the Almighty never betrays the believer. Sometimes, a father puts great hopes in his son, but the son at times forgets his father, doesn't visit him for weeks on the pretext of being busy. The father feels heartbroken, because his son, whom he has made a great effort to make a man, no longer wants him. The father has become a burden to his son.

But when man follows the Way of Almighty Allah, He will be faithful to him.

**In the universe, it is called that We love him**

**So all creatures will listen to the order of our beloved**

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The kafir is miserable and pitiful, because he confides in anyone but Allah. Sometimes he puts all his hopes in his wife, and that's why the wisdom of our Lord the Almighty requires that He should lead him astray, and after he has put all his trust in her, sometimes she turns away from him, which makes him feel heartbroken. On the other hand, the believer confides in Allah alone, which causes Allah the Almighty to utilize his enemies for his sake, in addition to his friends.

Nothing is more beautiful than an ageing believer, because when he gets older, his stature, his prestige, his sobriety, and the love people feel for him increase, glory to Allah, and that is the sign of faith. In contrast, the sign of the one who has spent his youth disobeying Allah is that he will suffer a very tiresome ageing. Two or three days ago I saw a person who occupied a significant post in the Ministry of Education when I was a little boy, and he was quite frightening when he visited our school. Now, he is in a deplorable condition, stooping, leaning heavily on a walking stick... Nothing lasts but Allah the Almighty.

As for the believer, his situation is different since his work has been righteous. So, the old age is the reflection of the period of youth, therefore the young believer has a happy old age, and the kafir suffers in the worldly life, before the Hereafter.

Allah, Almighty, says:

**( And who is truer to his Covenant than Allah? )**

(at-Tawbah, 9:111)

**( Truly, Allah is full of kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:143)

Allah remembers those who remember Him:

**"If My worshiper has remembered Me in secret, I shall remember him in secret; and if he has remembered Me among people, I shall remember him among who are better than his people."**

[*"Ahadith al-Ihiya"*, from Abu Hurayra]

And that is by the Grace of Allah, which means that when you call people to follow the Way of Allah, the Almighty will make your name shine and your reputation stand out, and if it occurs to someone to lie about you, many people will be prepared to confront him and silence him, and that is from the Grace of Allah the Almighty. Here are some verses which transmit this sense:

**If Allah wanted to spread out His favour....  
He would allow a tongue of envious to talk  
Except for the fire flaming in what has adjoined it  
The perfume of incense has never been known**



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The "perfume of incense" means frankincense.  
And Allah remembers those who remember Him, so He says:

**( Then do remember Me, I will remember you. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:152)

**( Allah is with those who steadfastly persevere. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:249)

**(Be sure that Allah is He Who recognizes and knows. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:158)

Allah is the Only God. We must differentiate between the Only God and the One God. Allah is the Only One, the Unique, and the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need. The Only God means that there is no god but Allah, while the One God means that there is nothing like Him, so "the One" is a qualitative figure. For example, you can say that a certain student has succeeded, and he ranks fourth in his class, which does not mean that he is four, but that his rank is the fourth. Thus "first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and so on" are qualitative figures, they are assessing and ranking figures, not amount figures. Therefore, the Only God means that there is no god but Allah, but the One God means that there is nothing like Him.

**( And makes His Signs clear to mankind that they may receive admonition. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:221)

**( Allah does not like those who trespass beyond bounds. )**

(al-A'raf, 7:55)

**( And know that Allah is with those who fear and restrain themselves. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:194)

**( And Allah said: I am with you. )**

(al-Maidah, 5:12)

But his being with us is conditional:

**( "I am with you if you establish regular salah, pay zakah, believe in My Messengers, honour and assist them, and loan to Allah a beautiful loan." )**

(al-Maidah, 5:12)

Although we repeat constantly that Allah is with us, its meaning gets missed. If you tell someone "Allah is with you", it means that there is no force in the universe that can hurt him.

**O Allah, if you are with me in any situation  
There's no need for me to carry my provisions**

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If Allah is with you, who can do anything against you? And if Allah is against you, who can protect you?

**( But when Allah wills a people's punishment, there can be no turning it back. )**

If our Lord wants to debase a person, He afflicts him with a great, painful, and humiliating torment; because no one will honor the one whom Allah has debased. There are two types of humiliating torment: bodily and psychological.

**( Allah does not like those who trespass beyond bounds. )**

(al-A'raf, 7:55)

**( And know that Allah is with those who fear and restrain themselves. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:194)

**( Verily, Allah loves those who do good. )**

(Al-'Imran, 3:134)

**( Surely, Allah's Mercy is (ever) near to those who do good.)**

(al-A'raf, 7:56)

The manifestations, the luminosity, the attention, and the protection of Allah the Almighty are for the one who does good, therefore:

**"Secret sadaqah extinguishes the Wrath of the Lord."**

["Al-Jami'a al-Saghirah", from Ibn Abbas]

**"Give sadaqah early, so that the disaster doesn't overtake it."**

["Al-Jami'a al-Saghirah", from Anas]

It means that Allah the Almighty is definitely with those who do good. He shows them the right way, and He protects their children and wealth.

**( Surely, Allah is Swift in account. )**

(Al-'Imran, 3:199)

Sometimes, when a man intends something bad, Allah punishes him quickly, for example he hits his head against a pole and gets hurt. Thus, he has paid for his bad intention before he carries it out. As soon as he has repented to Allah, he feels as if a mountain has been lifted off his shoulders; he feels comfort and unconcern. Glory to Allah, in a second he is reconciled with his Lord.

"As soon as the servant has come back to Allah, a caller calls in the heavens congratulating this person for having reconciled with Allah."

As soon as the man has repented to Allah the Almighty, our Lord makes him somehow feel that He has accepted his repentance, He has pardoned the past, a new page has been opened in his life, and Allah, glory to Him, makes him feel that He is happy with his repentance.

**"Allah is happier with the repentance of His worshipper than a sterile woman who has been given a baby; more than somebody who got lost and who found his way; and more than a thirsty man who has found water."**

["Al-Jami'a al-Saghirah", from Abu Hurayra]

**( And Allah likes not mischief. )**

Allah does not like it when you admire yourself; when you make people sad on account of their situation; when you cause disagreement between a husband and his wife; between a man and his partner; or between a man and his brother. Allah the Almighty, doesn't like it when you encourage people to love the worldly life, or encourage them to do wrong; He does not like it when you separate the son from his mother by convincing him to live in an independent home; Allah does not like the talebearer, the backbiter, the mischief-maker, the rumourmonger. So, the more perfect man's faith, the more disciplined and farther from errors his words.

There was a scholar, may Allah have mercy on him, who would not allow anyone to backbite in his presence. If he heard a person backbite, he would immediately say: "Oh, what's this talk? My heart has darkened!" If there were no backbiting in societies, it would be something really beautiful.

A brother told me once that the regular meetings of his group had been going on for seventeen years, and throughout all that time, they all remained good friends. The secret behind the success of these meetings is twofold. Firstly, there is no backbiting whatsoever. Secondly, the absence of women, which means that there is no association between men and women.

It's not a puzzle to know whether Allah the Almighty loves you or not. The Qur'an is clear:

**( Verily, Allah loves those who do good. )**

(Al-'Imran, 3:134)

**( Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who keep themselves pure and clean. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:222)

Collect them, omit the repetition, and you will find that they are twelve ayaat. Allah does not cause mischief to people.

**( And Allah likes not mischief. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:205)

**( Certainly Allah likes not the treacherous. )**

(al-Anfal, 8:58)

**( Verily, Allah likes not any arrogant boaster. )**

(Luqman, 31:18)

**( Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:222)

If one has committed a mistake, he should not despair, or shrink, but he should immediately give sadaqah; and say: "O Lord, I have turned unto You in repentance." Allah loves tawab, somebody who permanently repents, but does not like the penitent whose tawab is an exaggeration, meaning the person who heavily repents:

"The believer always commits mistakes, and always turns unto Allah in repentance."

It does not mean that the believer can keep repeating the same fault, because it would be a mockery of Allah the Almighty. It means that if he didn't know that it was a fault, and then found it out, he immediately should abandon it, turning unto Allah in repentance. Whenever the believer discovers that there is a defect in his integrity, he immediately turns unto Allah in repentance. For example, it is something indecent that a man should talk about his wife, even if it is about her righteousness. Of course, he would be a cuckold if he talked about her attractions, but talking about her character points to lack of manhood because the people to whom he talks have no right even to imagine her. Such man might not know that he is wrong, but after he has found out about

it, he should repent, and he should never talk like this about his wife again. Our Lord the Almighty has taught us this by not having mentioned any woman's name in the whole Noble Qur'an:

**( Behold! Wife of 'Imran said... )**

(al-Imran, 3:35)

**( And Allah sets forth, as an example to those who believe, the wife of Pharaoh... )**

(al-Tahrim, 66:11)

**( O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters... )**

(al-Ahzab, 33:59)

If you examine the whole Qur'an, all the six hundred pages, you will not find a woman's name, except that of Maryam in "Isa, the son of Maryam" because of the specific problem which arises here, as he can't have been called "Isa, the son of Allah".

By the way, it's nice not to mention the name of the bride on wedding cards, but to write "the daughter of so-and-so", which agrees with the Word of Allah the Almighty.

Sometimes, souvenirs are given at wedding parties; but it is better to present a useful book which benefits its reader, such as the Noble Qur'an, or one of the al-hadith books. In case the reader has been influenced by the content of the book, the reward of Allah will go back to the couple. It's time to get rid of the traditions which are meaningless.

**( And of all things He has perfect knowledge. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:29)

**( Then verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. )**

(at-Taghabun, 64:14)

**(And it is Allah that gives (you) want or plenty. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:245)

The rich man thinks that he owes his fortune to his intelligence. In fact, it was Allah the Almighty Who has increased his provision, which before was limited, and our Lord the Almighty is the All-Wise and the All-Knowing.

**"Of My believing servants there is one who is righteous in wealth, and even if I impoverish him, the poverty will not corrupt him. Of My believing servants there is one who is righteous in poverty, and even I enrich him, the wealth will not corrupt him. Of My believing servants there is one who is righteous in good health, and even if I make him ill, the illness will not corrupt him."**

["Kanz al-Ummal", from Anas]

Our Lord the Almighty says:

**( This will be their prayer therein: Glory to You, O Allah! And "Peace" will be their greeting therein and the end of their prayer will be: "Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds." )**

(Yunus, 10:10)

( And the end of their prayer will be... )

"Their prayer" here means "the case"; your case with Allah the Greatest, the period since the day you were born until your death is summarized in one phrase: "Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds". It is the human condition of an individual –his environment, his body, his health, his income, his house, his wife, his children, his lifestyle, and his relations with others. Sometimes, he might suffer from a chronic bowel disease or liver inflammation, or general weakness. On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will lift the veil, and you will say: "Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds." This is faith.

Sayyidina 'Ali' said: "I swear by Allah, if the veil were lifted, my certainty would not increase." It means that he had such a strong faith in the mercy of Allah, in the wisdom of Allah, in the knowledge of Allah, and in the experience of Allah before lifting the veil that if it had been lifted, his faith would not have increased.

He also said: "The acceptance of the fate you dislike denotes the highest level of certainty." When I see a faithful brother who has a big problem in his life, but is satisfied with his fate, repeating constantly: "Praise be to Allah! This is the most appropriate thing for me! Allah is the All-Wise, Allah is the Merciful, Allah is the All-Knowing!", I consider it to be the highest degree of faith –when a man is satisfied with the fate he might dislike.

**(And it is Allah that gives (you) want or plenty. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:245)

**( Allah! There is no god but He, the Living, the Self-Subsisting, Supporter of all. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:255)

**( And He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory). )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:255)

Allah is the Most High in His Ability, and the Supreme in His Generosity:

**( Allah is the Protector of those who have faith. From the depths of darkness he leads them forth into light. )**

(al-Baqarah, 2:257)

**( It is Allah that gives life and death. )**

(al-Imran, 3:156)

**( Then verily, Allah is Free of all wants, Worthy of all praise. )**

(Luqman, 31:12)

Allah the Almighty is Free of all wants, and He treats His servants in a way for which He deserves to be praised.

**( And Allah is Exalted in might, Lord of Retribution. )**

(al-Imran, 3:4)

**(There is no god but He: that is the witness of Allah, His Angels, and those endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice. )**

(al-Imran, 3:18)

**( Say: O Allah! Lord of power (and rule)... )**

**"I am Allah, the King of kings; their hearts and forelocks are in My Hand. So, if the servants obey Me, I make their kings good for them; and if My servants disobey Me, I punish them through their kings. So, do not waste your time on cursing the kings, but turn unto Me in repentance, and I'll make them merciful to you."**

["Al-Jami'a al-Saghirah"]

**( Say: O Allah! Lord of power (and rule), You give power to whom You will, and You strip off power whom You please, and You endue with honor whom You please, and You bring low whom You please. In Your Hand is all good. )**

(Al-Imran, 3:26)

**( Verily, Allah is free of all needs from all Creation. )**

(al-Ankabut, 29:6)

**"O My servants! Were the first of you and the last of you, the humans of you and the jinn of you, as pious as the most pious heart among you, that would not increase My kingdom in anything. O My servants! Were the first of you and the last of you, the humans of you and the jinn of you as wicked as the most wicked heart among you, that would not decrease My kingdom in anything. O My servants! If the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you were to gather in one place and make a request of Me, and I gave everyone what he requested, that would not decrease what I have any more than a needle decreases the sea water if thrust into it. O My slaves! It is but your deeds that I reckon and then recompense you for, so let him who finds good, praise Allah, and let him who finds other -notice the accuracy of the hadith- blame no one but himself."**

[Sahih Muslim, from Abu Dhar]

Some people don't care about the judgment of Allah the Almighty. They say: "O Lord, what have we done to You? We performed the prayer, while that licentious man did not worship You at all!" As if they suspected of the wisdom of Allah the Almighty. I'll give you the answer through this example: In a school, a student who has entirely got out of hand is not held responsible for unfulfillment of his duties. This unruly student is not required to do homework, he is never questioned about his absences, or required to undergo hygiene inspection. But when our Lord the Almighty questions a man, it means that he is committed to the Divine School as an average student, looking forward to his future, unlike somebody immoral, who is not responsible for fulfilling any of his duties, making Allah angry with him and finally neglecting him altogether.

**(So, when they forgot (the warning) of which they had been reminded, We opened to them the gates of every (pleasant) thing, until in the midst of their enjoyment of Our gifts, all of a sudden, We called them to account, and lo! They were plunged into destruction with deep regrets and sorrows. )**

(al-An'am, 6:44)

The wise man should be happy when Allah the Almighty is trying him, because if Allah loves his worshiper, He tries him. It means that this worshiper is under the supervision and the loving care of his Lord; undergoing treatment and receiving Allah's Mercy. It means, furthermore, that his condition, far from being hopeless, is good. The ignorant man says: "I always pray and in spite of this Allah makes misfortunes come thick on me, and such and such does not pray, and yet never suffers from afflictions." You should know that you are different from that other person.

**( ... while Allah is Witness to all you do... )**

(Al-Imran, 3:98)

A scholar was once asked by a certain man for advice as regards one's disobedience to Allah. The scholar said:

- If you do five things, you will never be hurt by wrongdoing.
- That's something wonderful! What are these things?
- If you wish to disobey Allah, you should never live in His lands.
- So where am I to live?
- How could you live in His lands and disobey Him? Is it reasonable? If a person has welcomed you in his home as a guest, is it reasonable that you should hit his son while you're there? Is it reasonable that you should poison his food while you're there?
- Tell me the second thing.
- If you wish to disobey Allah, you should never eat of His sustenance.
- So what am I to eat?
- Is it reasonable that you should live in His lands, and eat of His sustenance, then disobey Him?
- Tell me the third thing.
- If you wish to disobey Allah, you should do this in a place where He cannot see you.
- But he can always see me!
- Is it reasonable that you should live in Allah's lands, eat of His sustenance, and disobey Him, knowing that He sees you?"
- Tell me the fourth thing.
- If you wish to disobey Allah, and the Angel of Death comes to take your soul, do not go with him!
- I can't do that.
- So, you live in His lands, eat of His sustenance, disobey Him while He sees you, and you cannot avoid the Angel of Death?
- Tell me the fifth thing.
- If you wish to disobey Allah, and the Angels of Torment come to take you to Hell, don't go with them.
- I can't do that!
- So, you live in Allah's lands, eat of His sustenance, disobey Him while He sees you, and you can avoid neither the Angel of Death nor the Angels of Torment! Have you heard enough?

**( ... while Allah is Witness to what you do. )**

(Al-Imran, 3:98)

**( Verily, my Lord encompasses all that you do. )**

(Hud, 11:92)

**( And that Allah may purge those that are true in faith. )**

(Al-Imran, 3:141)

Allah is Forbearing. Sometimes, He puts you in a situation which appears as a disease, then He treats you. After that, He puts you in another situation. As long as your heart keeps beating, Allah's treatment is continuous, in order for you to be innocent when you meet Him on the Day of Resurrection. So, you must not be sad.

**( And that Allah may purge those that are true in faith  
and destroy those who resist faith. )**

(Al-Imran, 3:141)

**( And Allah loves as-sabirin (the patient ones). )**

(Al-Imran, 3:146)

**( Allah is your Protector and the Best of helpers. )**

(Al-Imran, 3:150)

**( For Allah loves those who put their trust in Him. )**

(Al-Imran, 3:159)

**( And to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth. )**

(Al-Imran, 3:180)

**( And certainly, Allah is never unjust to (His) servants. )**

(Al-Imran, 3:182)

Allah watches us:

**( For Allah ever watches over you. )**

(an-Nisa, 4:1)

And He is Exalted in power, and the Great.

Of course, the subject requires a lengthy treatment. Nevertheless, the correct aqida comes from the Noble Book of Allah the Almighty and all the previous ideas have been mentioned in the Noble Qur'an.

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I wish that it were possible that when one of those present here were to be asked about the knowledge of Allah the Almighty, about His Subtle Kindness, about His Wisdom, about His Self-Sufficiency, about His Patience, or about His Affluence, he could talk for one or two hours, which would show that he knows Allah the Almighty. What do you know about His Beautiful Names?

Now, let's move to the story of the great companion Suraqah, which teaches us that our Lord is Ever-Pardoning, Supreme in Glory and Generosity, and that Islam forgives all sins committed before entering its fold.

One day, the Quraish woke up rather scared as the news of Muhammad's departure from Mekka had reached all their clans. Their chiefs did not really believe it, so they rushed to look for the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in all the houses of the Hashim clan and in those of his companions, and finally arrived at the house of Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, where his daughter Asma received them. Abu Jahl went forth and asked: "O girl, where is your father?" She replied: "I don't know where he is now!" On hearing it Abu Jahl got so angry that he slapped her on the cheek, causing her earring to fall down.

The fury of the Quraish chiefs was unbounded when it became crystal clear to them that Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, had left Mecca. They recruited all their trackers to determine the route which he had taken, and accompanied them in the search. When they reached the Cave of Thaur, the trackers said: "By Allah, the man that you want hasn't passed this cave. This is what the evidence points to."

The trackers were not wrong in what they had said as regards the evidence, that is the nest of a dove and the spider's net just at the mouth of the cave, but Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and his companion Abu Bakr were inside the cave, and the Quraish were standing just above their heads. Abu Bakr could see people's feet moving over the cave, and his eyes filled with tears. He whispered: "O Messenger of Allah! By Allah, if someone looked down at his feet, he would see us." The Generous Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, looked at Abu Bakr in a loving, kind, yet admonitory way. At that Abu Bakr added: "By Allah, I'm not crying because I'm afraid for myself, but I'm afraid that people might hurt you." His words reflect



the great love he felt for the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, so we may conclude that a man is not a believer unless he loves believers.

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, replied reassuringly:  
"Don't grieve Abu Bakr because Allah is with us."

These words are not something that was just said in the past, they are for us. They mean that if you are a believer, and you are upright and do good, and you have a problem, or you have found yourself in an embarrassing or dangerous situation, you should trust in Allah's mercy, and know that Allah is at your side. So, Allah instilled tranquility into Abu Bakr's heart, and while he was looking at people's feet, he said: "O Messenger of Allah, indeed if one of them looked down, he would see us." The Noble Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, answered:

### **"O Abu Bakr! What do you think of the two with whom Allah is the Third?"**

[Sahih Al-Bukhari, from Abu Bakr]

The example that may bring us nearer to the meaning of these words is that of the son of an army commander who has been called to do the military service. He would not be afraid of anything, because actually everyone would carry out his orders. Another example –when Pharaoh was chasing Musa, peace be upon him, and his people, and they got very close to the sea, people's trust in Musa began weakening. They found themselves between the enemy and the sea, so they said:

**( The people of Musa said: We are sure to be overtaken. Musa said: Nay, verily! With me is my Lord, He will guide me. )**

(al-Shuara, 26:61-62)

One last example: Our Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, brought to his people the good news of Rome and Persia falling under the Islamic rule at the time when all the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula got together, trying to exterminate Muslims in the Battle of the Trench. On top of that, the Jews had just betrayed their covenant with the Muslim forces. Some historians said: "A few hours separated the survival of this religion and its demise." Someone (at the Battle of the Trench) said: "Is your companion (meaning Muhammad) promising us that the countries of Chosroes and Caesar will be under Muslim rule, while we are not safe enough to be able to go and relieve ourselves?"

Sometimes, our Lord the Almighty makes the believer go through hardships to the extent that the situation seems hopeless; it is Divine Wisdom.

**( There, the believers were tried and shaken with a mighty shaking. )**

(al-Ahzab, 33:11)

Through a trial mysteries of the souls begin to surface and the difference is made between the Muslims whose belief is pure and strong and those whose belief is weak; just as the sieve separates the wheat from the chaff.

**( Among the Believers are men who have been true to their Covenant with Allah: of them some have died, and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed (their determination) in the least. )**

(al-Ahzab, 33:23)

The sign of faith is that you are a believer in good times and in hard times, in prosperity and in adversity, having children and being childless, having a righteous wife or an unrighteous one, having a large income or a small one –yet you should be a believer in all circumstances.

Now let's return to the story of Sayyidina Suraqah.

At that very moment, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and Abu Bakr heard a Quraish boy say: "Come and look inside the cave." But Umayya Ibn Khalaf, one of the Quraish chiefs, replied sarcastically: "Didn't you see that spider which had built its web over the cave mouth? Didn't you see the spider!? It's older than Muhammad!" Abu Jahl, another Quraish chief, said: "I swear by al-Lat and al-Azza (two of the Quraish idols), I think he is close to us; he is listening to what we say and seeing what we do, but his magic has covered our eyes." Some people said, which was not mentioned by the author, that Abu Bakr's eye met the eye of one of those who were pursuing them so he panicked, and said: "O Messenger of Allah! I swear by Allah that they have seen me." The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, answered: "O Abu Bakr! Didn't you recite the Words of Allah the Greatest?"

**( And you will see them looking at you, yet they see not. )**

(Al-A'raf, 7:198)

And yet the Quraish chiefs did not abandon the search for Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, so they announced among the tribes scattered along the road between Mecca and Medina, that they would give a hundred choice camels to the man who brought Muhammad to them, dead or alive. In our days, the price of one camel is seven thousand Syrian pounds, so the price of a hundred camels is seven hundred thousand Syrian pounds, which is the price of a good house.

Suraqah bin Malik was sitting at a meeting place of his people near Mecca, when one of the Quraish messengers entered and announced the news of the big reward offered to the person who apprehended Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. As soon as he heard about the hundred camels, the desire to gain them arose so strong in him that he could not control it, but he sat quietly, without saying a word so as not to stimulate the greediness of the others. At that a man entered, and said: "By Allah, three men have passed near us, and I think that they were Muhammad, Abu Bakr, and their guide." Suraqah, who was sharp, said: "Rather, they are the sons of so and so, as they keep looking for their lost camel." He was afraid that anyone should get ahead of him and snatch the reward away. The man answered: "Perhaps you're right." And nothing else was said. Suraqah sat there for a while, trying to avoid any suspicion of those present, and when they began to converse again, he slipped away from them, went home quickly, and told his servant girl to lead his horse secretly out and tie it at the bottom of the valley. He then ordered another servant of his to prepare his sword, then to fetch it from behind the houses so as not to be seen by anyone, and to put it in a place close to the horse. Then he went out and started walking as if aimlessly.

When he reached his horse, he girded himself with his sword, picked up his shield and mounted his horse; then rode quickly to get hold of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, before anyone else did, and to gain the reward promised by the Quraish.

Suraqah bin Malik was one of the best fighters among his people. He was tall, he had a big head, he was skillful at tracking and resistant to the hardships of travelling. On top of that, he was clever, intelligent, and a poet; his horse being pure-bred.

Suraqah was riding quickly when suddenly he fell off his horse. He thought it was a bad omen and said: "What's this? Woe to you, bad horse!" He mounted again and rode on, but he didn't go far before he fell down again. Our Lord the Almighty, gave him the first warning, then the second one.

His pessimism increased, and he considered turning back, but his greed made him think about the hundred camels, so he rode on. He was not far from the place where his horse had tripped, when he saw Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and his companion. He stretched out his hand to his bow, but his arm froze. Then his horse's legs started sinking in the ground and he could see smoke rising just ahead of them; seeing anything was impossible both for the horse and the rider. He tried to make the horse budge, but it was firmly set in the ground, as if it had been nailed there with iron nails.

At that moment, Suraqah realized that the man he was after was untouchable. He turned to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and his companion Abu Bakr and said imploringly: "O you two, pray to your Lord for me to set my horse's legs free, and I'll never hurt you." Some commentators said that when Sayyidina Suraqah approached the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, Sayyidina Abu Bakr cried again, so the Prophet said to him: "O Abu Bakr, what makes you cry?" Abu Bakr said: "By Allah,

I'm not crying for myself, but I'm crying because I am afraid for you; if I died, it would be just me, but if you perished, the entire nation would perish." The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

**"O Allah! Keep his evildoings away from us, whenever You want, and however You want."**

The Prophet, peace be upon him, supplicated Allah for Suraqah, so Allah the Almighty set his horse free. However, his greed was stirred once again and he pushed his horse towards them. This time the horse sank down even more than before. At that moment Suraqah pleaded again: "Take my provisions, my belongings, and my sword, and I'll swear by Allah to keep people away from you." They said to him:

"We do not need your provisions or your belongings, but keep the people away from us."

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, supplicated again and Allah the Almighty set his horse free. When the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and his companion were leaving, Suraqah called to them: "Hold on for a moment, I want to talk to you and I swear by Allah that I'll never hurt you." They asked him what he wanted from them.

He said: "By Allah, O Muhammad, I know that your religion will spread." (He was an intelligent man.) "And your rank will be high; so give me your pledge that if I ever come under your authority, you will be generous with me, and write that down." The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, ordered Abu Bakr to write what Suraqah had asked for on a piece of bone, and gave it to him, and when he was leaving, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said to him:

**"What would you say, O Suraqah, if one day you were to wear the two bracelets of Chosroes?"**

[*"Al-Jami'a al-Saghirah"*, from Ibn Ma'in]

Which is as much as to say to one of the Third World's people: "What would you say if you were to sit in the place of the presidents of the two strongest states in the world?"

Translation : Iman Nashar  
Auditing : Nayat Roszko