

THE IMPORTANT LESSONS

Introduction

Ibn Baaz –may Allah have mercy on him- said: All praise and thanks are only for Allah, the Lord of everything that exists. The good end is for the obedient slaves of Allah. May Allah praise and send peace upon his slave and messenger, our prophet Muhammad, his family, and all of his companions. These words are about some of the obligations upon every Muslim regarding the religion and I have named it: "The Important Lessons for Every Muslim".

Lesson One

The Opening Chapter (Al Faatiha) and some short chapters The Opening Chapter, Al Faatiha, and some short chapters from Surah Az-Zalzalah to Surah An-Naas; reading it correctly to a Qur'an teacher, memorizing it, and knowing that which is obligatory to understand.

Lesson Two: The Pillars of Islam

The first and greatest pillar is the Testimony: "There is no deity that should be worshipped in truth except Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah". Their meaning will be explained along with the conditions of "There is no god that should be worshiped in truth except Allah". Its meaning: "There is no god" is a negation of everything that is worshipped

besides Allah. "Except Allah" affirms the worship for Allah alone. The conditions of "la ilaah illa Allah" are:

- 1- Knowledge, negates ignorance.
- 2- Certainty, negates doubt.
- 3- Sincerity, negates Shirk.
- 4- Truthfulness, negates lying.
- 5- Love, negates hate.
- 6- Submission, negates leaving it.
- 7- Acceptance, negates rejection.
- 8- Disbelieving in everything worshiped besides Allah.

Lesson Three: The Pillars of Eemaan

Its pillars are six: That you believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and that you believe in Al-Qadar (Divine Pre-Decree) – the good of it and the bad of it is from Allah.

Lesson Four: The Categories of Tawheed and Shirk

The categories of Tawheed are three: Lordship, Worship, and Names and Attributes.

Tawheed of Lordship: It is believing that surely Allah is the Creator of everything and the Manager of the affairs of His creations; He has no partners in any of that.

Tawheed of Worship: It is to believe that Allah is the only god that should be worshipped without any partners. This is the meaning of 'La ilaha ila Allah'. All of the acts of worship such as the prayer, fasting, and other than them. It is a must to perform them sincerely for Allah alone. It is not permissible to do any act of worship for other than Allah.

Tawheed of the Names and Attributes: It is to believe in everything which is mentioned in the Qur'an and the authentic statements of our Prophet regarding the names and attributes of Allah; to affirm them for Allah in a way that is befitting to Him the Most Perfect without distorting their meaning, denying them, describing them, or giving examples. Allah says "Say, "He is Allah, who is One [and Only]. Allah—the Sustainer needed by all. He neither begets, nor was He begotten, and there is none comparable to Him." (112:1-4). He also says "There is nothing like Him and He is the All Hearing the All Seeing" (42:11).

Some of the scholars have divided Tawheed in 2 categories; combining Tawheed of the Names and Attributes with Tawheed of Lordship. That is also correct.

The categories of worshiping other than Allah are likewise three: Major Shirk, Minor Shirk, and Hidden Shirk.

Major Shirk: It destroys one's good deeds and leads to the eternal punishment if one dies without repenting. Allah says: " Had they associated others with Him 'in worship', their good deeds would have been wasted" (6:88). He also says: "It is not for the polytheists to maintain the mosques of Allah while they openly profess disbelief. Their deeds are void, and they will be in the Fire forever" (9:17). Whoever dies without repenting from it, will not be forgiven and Paradise is prohibited. Allah says: "Surely, Allah does not forgive associating others with Him 'in worship', but forgives anything else of whoever He wills" (4:48). He also says: "Whoever associates others with Allah 'in worship' will surely be forbidden Paradise by Allah. Their home will be the Fire. And the wrongdoers will have no helpers" (5:72).

From the examples: Supplicating to the dead and idols, seeking their help, making oaths to them, sacrificing for them, etc.

Minor Shirk: That which has been called Shirk in the Qur'an and Sunnah; however, it is not Major Shirk. Such as showing off with a part of acts of worship, swearing by other than Allah, saying "whatever Allah wills and so and so", etc.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said: "That which I fear the most for you is Minor Shirk". When he was asked about it, he said: "It is showing off with acts of worship". He has also said: "Whoever swears by other than Allah has committed Shirk". He has also said: "Do not say 'whatever Allah wills and so and so'. Rather, say: 'whatever Allah wills then so and so' (Abu Dawood, Authentic). A Muslim does not apostate due to this, nor is one punished eternally for it. Rather, it negates the completion of Tawheed.

The Hidden Shirk: The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said: "Should I not inform you of that which I fear for you more than the Dajjaal? They said: Of course O Messenger of Allah! He said: "Hidden Shirk; A person gets up to pray and beautifies the prayer when s/he sees others watching him".

It is correct to divide Shirk in 2 categories: Major and Minor. The Hidden Shirk could be present in both of them. It is present in the Major Shirk of the hypocrites since they hide disbelief and show off with Islam out of fear for themselves etc. It is also present in the Minor Shirk of the Muslims when they show off with a part of their worship as mentioned in the above Hadith. Allah is the granter of success.

Lesson Five: Ihsaan

The pillar of Ihsaan: It is to worship Allah as if you see Him, even though we do not see Him in this life, He sees us.

Lesson Six: Pre-Conditions of the Prayer

Prayer has nine conditions:

1. Islam
2. Sanity
3. Tamyeez (Age of differentiating)
4. Having Wudu
5. Removing Najaasah/impurities
6. Covering the Private Parts
7. Entering of the time of prayer
8. Facing the Ka'bah
9. Intention

Lesson Seven: Pillars of the Prayer

The pillars of the prayer are fourteen:

1. Standing if able
2. First Takbeer
3. Reciting Al Faatihah
4. Bowing
5. Standing Straight after Bowing
6. Prostrating upon 7 body parts
7. Getting up from prostration
8. Sitting between the two prostrations
9. Tranquility in all of the positions
10. The order of the pillars
11. The Final Tashahud
12. The Sitting for the Final Tashahud
13. Making Du'a for the Prophet ﷺ
14. Giving Salam on both sides

Lesson Eight: Obligations of the Prayer

They are eight:

1. All of the Takbeers except the first one (which is a pillar).
2. Saying: "Allah answers those who praise him", (Sam'i Allahu Leman Hamdidah) for Imam and the one praying alone.
3. Saying: "Our Lord to You belongs all praise", (Rabbana Wa Lakal Hamd), for Everyone.
4. Saying: "My Lord the Greatest is Perfect" (Subhana Rabbee al-Adheem) while bowing.
5. Saying: "My Lord the Highest is Perfect" (Subhana Rabbee al-A'ala) while prostrating.
6. Saying: "O my Lord, forgive me" (Rabbi-iGhfir-lee) between the two prostrations.
7. The first Tashahud.
8. Sitting for the first Tashahud.

Lesson Nine: The Tashahud

Its meaning is: "All compliments, prayers, and pure words are due to Allah. Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings. Peace be upon us and upon the righteous slaves of Allah. I bear witness that no god should be worshipped except Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger". Then one makes du'a for the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and says: " O Allah, send prayers upon Muhammad and upon the family of Muhammad, as You have sent prayers upon Ibraaheem and the family of Ibraaheem, You are surely Worthy of Praise, Full of Glory. O Allah, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You have blessed Ibraaheem and the family of Ibraaheem, You are surely Worthy of Praise, Full of Glory". Then one seeks refuge in the last Tashahud: "O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the torment of Hell, I seek refuge in You from the torment of the grave, I seek refuge in You

from the trials of life and death, and I seek refuge in You from the tribulation of the Dajjal" (Bukhari and Muslim). Then one makes any du'a especially those which the Prophet has made such as "O Allah help me to remember You, thank You, and worship You in the best way. O Allah, I have greatly oppressed myself, no one can forgive sins except You, so forgive me with a forgiveness from Yourself and have mercy on me. You are surely the Most Forgiving and the Most Merciful". After the first Tashahud one may stand for the third unit of prayer or make du'a for the Prophet and then stand due to the general Hadith mentioned on the topic.

Lesson Ten: The Recommended acts of the Prayer

1. The opening du'aa'
2. Placing the right hand over the left on the chest while standing before and after bowing.
3. Raising both hands with fingers slightly apart, level with the shoulders or the ears with the first Takbeer, bowing, raising from bowing, and when standing for the third unit.
4. Saying the statements more than once while bowing and prostrating.
5. Saying more than "Rabana wa laka-lHamd" after raising from bowing and "Rabee ghfir lee" between the two prostrations.
6. Making the head straight with the back while bowing.
7. Keeping the elbows away from the sides, and the belly from the thighs, and the thighs from the calves while prostrating.
8. Raising the forearms away from the ground while prostrating.
9. Sitting on the left foot while it is flat on the ground and setting up the right foot in the first Tashahud and between the two prostrations.

10. Sitting on the ground in the last Tashahud in a four or three unit prayer and putting the left foot under the right leg and setting up the right foot.
11. Pointing with the index finger in the first and second Tashahud from the time one sits until the end of the Tashahud, and moving it while making supplication.
12. Supplicating and sending blessings upon our Prophet and his family as well as Ibrahim and his family in the first Tashahud.
13. Supplicating at the end of the Last Tashahud.
14. Reciting out loud in the Fajr prayer, Jum'ah, E'id, 'Asking for Rain', and the first two units of 'Ishaa and Maghrib.
15. Reciting quietly in Thuhr, 'Asr, third unit of Maghrib, and the last two units of 'Ishaa.
16. Reading ayah(s)/surah(s) after Al Faatihah. As well as all the other recommended actions narrated such as keeping the fingers spread on the knees while bowing.

Lesson Eleven: Nullifiers of the Prayer

They are eight:

1. Intentional speaking while remembering and knowing: Forgetting or not knowing does not invalidate the prayer
2. Laughing
3. Eating
4. Drinking
5. Exposing the private parts
6. Deviating a lot from the direction of the Qiblah
7. Continuous unnecessary movements while praying
8. Breaking Wudu

Lesson Twelve: Conditions of Ablution

They are ten:

1. Islam.
2. Sanity.
3. Age of Differentiation.
4. Intention.
5. Continuous intention so one does not intend discontinuing it until one completes the ablution.
6. The ceasing of the actions that nullify the ablution.
7. Cleaning the private parts after using the washroom with water or clean dry objects.
8. The water must be clean and permissible to use.
9. Removing from the skin anything which may prevent the water from reaching it.
10. The prayer time has entered; for the one who nullifies the ablution continuously.

Lesson Thirteen: Obligatory Acts of Ablution

They are six:

1. Washing the face, rinsing the mouth, cleaning the nose
2. Washing the arms from the finger tips to and including the elbows.
3. Wiping the entire head and the ears.
4. Washing the feet including the ankles.
5. Washing the parts in order.
6. Continuity.

It is recommended to wash the face, arms, feet, mouth, and nose three times. The obligation is one time. As for wiping the head then it is to be done only once as the authentic Hadith show.

Lesson Fourteen: Nullifiers of Ablution

They are six:

1. Whatever exits from the two private parts.
2. The exiting impure substances from other parts of the body.
3. Losing consciousness due to sleep or other than it.
4. Touching the private parts, front or back, without a barrier.
5. Eating camel's meat.
6. Leaving Islam.

Important Point:

As for washing a dead body: The correct opinion is that it does not nullify the ablution. This is the opinion of most of the scholars due to the lack of evidence to prove that. However, if the hand of the one who is washing the dead body accidentally touches the private part of the dead person without a barrier, it is a must to make ablution. Likewise, it is a must not to touch the private parts of the dead person except behind a barrier.

Moreover, touching a woman does not nullify the ablution whether it is with desire or without desire according to the correct opinion; as long as nothing comes out of his private part. This is since the Prophet ﷺ kissed some of his wives and prayed without making ablution. As for the saying of Allah: "or you have touched women" it means: had relations with them according to the correct opinion which is also the opinion of Ibn Abbas –may Allah be pleased with him- and other early and later scholars.

Lesson Fifteen: Adorning Oneself with Islamic Qualities

Such as truthfulness, honesty, abstinence, modesty, courage, generosity, loyalty, staying away from everything prohibited by Allah, being a good neighbour, helping those in need as much as possible, and other manners legislated by the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Lesson Sixteen: Practicing Islamic Etiquettes

Giving Salaam, being cheerful, eating and drinking with the right hand, saying "bismi-lah / I begin by seeking help and blessings with the names of Allah" before eating and drinking, saying "alhamdu lilah / all praise and thanks are for Allah" after eating or drinking, saying "alhamdu lilah" when sneezing saying "yarhamuk Allah / May Allah have mercy on you", when we hear a person sneeze and says "alhamdu lilah", visiting the sick, praying the funeral prayer and following the funeral. Likewise, practicing the Islamic etiquettes when entering and exiting the Masjid and the house, when traveling, with the parents, relatives, neighbors, with elders, youth, congratulating for a newborn, asking blessing for a married couple, offering condolences, and other Islamic etiquettes such as when wearing clothes, taking them off, etc.

Lesson Seventeen: Warning from Shirk and other Sins

The seven Destructive Sins: Shirk or Worshipping others beside Allah, magic, killing an innocent soul which Allah has prohibited to kill except with an Islamic excuse, interest, wrongfully consuming the wealth of the orphan, running away from the battlefield, accusing chaste believing women. Likewise; disobeying the parents, breaking the family ties, bearing false witness, taking false oaths, harming the neighbor, spilling people's blood, taking their wealth, violating their honor, taking intoxicants, gambling, backbiting, tale-carrying, and other major sins prohibited by Allah and His Messenger.

Lesson Eighteen: Preparing The Dead Body, Praying, And Burial

1. It is recommended for those present to remind the person dying to say "La ilaha ilaa Allah"; due to the saying of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم: "Instruct those dying to say La ilaha ilaa Allah". The meaning of the Hadith is to remind those upon whom the signs of death are apparent.

2. Once death is confirmed, the eyes should be closed and the beard tightened, as indicated in the Sunnah.
3. It is obligatory to wash the dead Muslim body, except the martyr who died in the battlefield; such as are not washed nor are they prayed upon, rather they are buried with their clothes on since the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not wash the martyrs of Uhud nor did he pray on them.
4. Description of washing the dead body: The private parts are covered. Then s/he is slightly raised, and the stomach squeezed gently. The one washing the body wraps a cloth to his own hand and washes the body with it. Then he makes wudoo for the dead person similar to the wudu of the prayer. Then his head and beard is washed with water and sidr or something similar to it. Then he washes his right side and then the left side three times; every time he passes his hand by his stomach. If anything comes out, he washes it. Then one blocks the passage with a piece of cotton or something similar. If it does not stop excrement from coming out, then with earth mixed with water or the contemporary clinical materials used such as plasters etc. Then he repeats his Wudu. If washing the body parts three times is not sufficient, he can wash them five or seven times each. Then the body is dried with a cloth. Scent is applied to the armpits, the bottom part of the thighs, and the parts one prostrates on. It is better if scent is applied to the entire body. Incense should also be applied to the shrouds. If the mustache and the nails are long, they could be shortened or left alone. The hair should not be let loose, around the private parts should not be shaved, nor should one be circumcised due to the lack of evidence to support that. The women's hair should be braided into three parts and should hang down behind her.
5. Shrouding the dead person: The best is to shroud the man in three pieces of white cloth; no shirt nor head turban, as the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was clothed. He should be wrapped on it gradually. It is fine if one is buried on a shirt, pants, and a sheet. The women should

be shrouded in five pieces of cloth; a long shirt, head cover, a waist wrapper, and two pieces of cloth that are wrapped around her. A small boy is shrouded in one to three piece of cloth and a small girl is shrouded in one long shirt and two pieces of cloth. The obligation for everyone is one piece of cloth that covers the entire body. However, if the deceased is in the state of Ihram, then he should be washed with water and sidr. He should be shrouded with the two pieces of cloth he has on or other than his. His head and face should not be covered, nor should scent be applied to him, since they will surely be resurrected on the Day of Judgment saying the Talbiyah; this has been narrated authentically from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. If the one in the state of Ihram is a woman is shrouded like others; however, scent should not be applied to her, her face should not be covered with the face veil, nor her hands with gloves. However, her face and hands should be covered with the shroud she is wrapped with as is described previously how to prepare the deceased women.

6. The most deserving of washing it, leading the prayer, and burying it: The one the deceased has appointed in the will, then the father, then the grandfather, then his closest relatives. This is regarding a man. The most deserving of washing the woman: The one she has appointed in her will, then the mother, the grandmother, then the closest female relatives. The spouses may wash one another; since the wife of Abu Bakr had washed him and Faatimah was washed by Ali –may Allah be pleased with them.
7. How to pray on the deceased person? Say "Allahu Akbar" and read Surah Al Faatihah. If one reads another Surah, verse, or two verses then that is acceptable due to the authentic Hadith narrated by Ibn Abbaas. Say "Allahu Akbar" the second time and supplicate for the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم similar to the supplication on Tashahud. Then say "Allahu Akbar" and say: “O Allah forgive our living and our dead, those present and those absent, our males and our females.

O Allah, whoever you allow to live from us, keep them alive as Muslims, and whoever You cause to die, allow them to die upon Emaan. O Allah, forgive him, have mercy on him, excuse him, pardon him, make his reception honorable, and expand his entry. Cleanse him with water, snow, and ice. Purify him of sin as a white robe is purified of filth. Exchange his home for a better home, his family for a better family, his spouse for a better spouse, admit him into the Garden, protect him from the punishment of the grave and the torment of the Fire. Make his grave spacious and bright. O Allah do not prevent us from his reward and do not misguide us after him". Then one says "Allahu Akbar" for the fourth time and gives one salaam to the right side. It is recommended to raise the hands every time one says "Allahu Akbar". If the deceased is a female, the pronoun in the supplication is changed to a feminine pronoun "O Allah forgive her...". If it is two, the dual form is used. If many, the plural form is used. If it is a child, instead of asking for forgiveness, we say "O Allah, make him a forerunner and a treasure for his parents and an accepted intercessor. O Allah, make their scales of good deeds heavy through him and magnify their reward. Make him join the righteous of the believers. Place him under the care of Ibrahim –may Allah praise and send him peace- and save him by Your mercy from the torment of Hell". It is from the Sunnah for the Imam to stand by the head of the body if it is a man, and in the middle if it is a woman. If there is more than one deceased person, the Imam should stand right behind the man and the woman should be closer to the Qiblah. If there is also children with the both of them, the boy should be before the woman and the girl after her. The head of the boy should be straight with the man's head, the girls head should be at the same level as the woman's head, and the woman's waist should be by the man's head. The people praying should all be behind the Imam; unless one person cannot find a place behind the Imam, then he can stand on his right side.

8. How to bury the deceased? The Sunnah is to dig the grave until the waist of the man, to have another opening inside the grave on the direction of the Qiblah, to put the deceased in this opening on the right side, and to untie the knots and leave them there. The face should not be exposed whether it is a male or a female. Then bricks should be put behind him to protect the body from the earth. If bricks cannot be found, anything else which will prevent the earth hitting the body directly such as stones, plates, or wood. It is recommended to say "Bismi-lah, wa 'alaa milati rrasuli-lah / In the Name of Allah and according to the way of the Messenger of Allah". The earth above the grave should be one hand span, small pebbles should be put on top of it, and it should be watered if possible. It is also recommended for those following the funeral to stand at the grave and supplicate for the dead person since the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to stand at the grave after burying the deceased and say: "Ask forgiveness for your brother and ask for him to remain firm, since now he will be questioned".
9. It is also allowed for the one who did not pray on it to pray on it after burying it since the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did that. That is if the period between the burial and the prayer is less than a month; otherwise, it is not allowed. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not pray for anyone after a month had passed by.
10. It is not allowed for the family of the deceased to make food for the people due to the saying of the noble companion Jareer ibn Abdilah Al Bajalee: "We would consider gathering at the deceased's family and making food after the burial from the prohibited mourning". As for making food for them or for their guests, then that is allowed. It is allowed for the relatives and the neighbors to make food for them since when the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم heard about the death of Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib in Shaam, ordered his family to make food for the family of Ja'far and said: "It has come to them that which will keep them busy". It is acceptable for the family of the deceased to

invite their neighbors or other than them to eat from the food that has been gifted to them. There is no specific time specified in the Islamic sources.

11. It is not allowed for the woman to mourn the deceased more than three days except for her husband; it is a must upon her to mourn him four months and ten days. However, if she is pregnant, then until she gives birth due to this being established authentically from the Sunnah of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The man is not allowed to mourn any of his relatives or other than them.
12. It is recommended for the men to visit the graveyard once in a while to supplicate for them, ask mercy for them, and to remember death and what comes after it due to the saying of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم: "Visit the graveyard as it will remind you the next life". He used to teach his noble companions to say when visiting the graves: "Peace be upon you O inhabitants of the graves from the Believers and the Muslims. We will surely join you. We ask Allah to excuse us and you. May Allah have mercy upon the first to come here and the later ones". It is not befitting for the women to visit the graves since the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم "cursed the women that frequently visit the graves". Moreover, it is feared that visiting the graves will be difficult upon them to remain patient. Likewise, it is not allowed for them to follow the funeral to the graveyard, since the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم ordered them not to do that. As for the prayer in the Masjid or the prayer place, then it is Islamically correct for both men and women.

This is the end; May Allah praise and send peace to our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and companions.