

الْقَوَاعِدُ الْأَرْبَعُ

The Four Principles

Shaykh'ul Islâm
Muhammad bin Abd'il Wahhâb
Rahimahullâh

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Shaykh'ul Islâm Muhammad bin Abd'il Wahhâb Rahimahullâh said,

“When you recognize that Allâh has created you to worship Him, then also know that Ibâdah (worship) cannot be named Ibâdah except with Tawhîd (monotheism). Just as prayer is not called prayer without purity. Shirk (associating partners to Allâh) voids Ibâdah when it enters it, just like Hadath (filth; nullifiers of ablution etc.) when it enters purity. When you recognize that when Shirk is combined with Ibâdah it voids worship, destroys the deeds, and it dooms its owner to the eternal Hellfire; you will recognize that your most important duty is to recognize Shirk.”

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The Four Principles¹

Shaykh'ul Islâm Muhammad bin Abd'il Wahhâb
(1206 H)

Rahimahullâhu Taâlâ

In the name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

I ask Allâh the Generous, Lord of the Glorious Throne that He may protect you in this world and the Hereafter. That He makes you blessed wherever you are. That He makes you one of those who recognize His bounty when given, who remain patient in face of adversity, and who repents and seeks His forgiveness when they sin (Âmîn)!

These three are the epitome to happiness (in this life and in the next).

May Allâh cultivate you in His obedience, know that Hanîfiyyah (pure worship and monotheism) which is the Millah (religion) of Ibrâhîm Alayh'is Salâm, is that you worship Allâh alone while devoting religion sincerely to Him.² As Allâhu Taâlâ stated,

¹ Muallafât'ush Shaykh Muhammad bin Abd'il Wahhâb, 1/199-202; ad-Durar'us Saniyyah, 2/23-26; Majmû'at'ut Tawhîd, p. 152-155.

In Majmû'at'ut Tawhîd, the work is titled,

"Regarding the Four Principles in Religion That Differentiate Between the Believers and Polytheists".

² The following addition is found in ad-Durar'us Saniyyah,

"Allâhu Taâlâ commanded this to all humanity and created them for this reason."

"I have not created the jinn and human beings except that they worship Me." (adh-Dhâriyât 51/56)

When you recognize that Allâh has created you to worship Him, then also know that Ibâdah (worship) cannot be named Ibâdah except with Tawhîd (monotheism). Just as prayer is not called prayer without purity.

Shirk (associating partners to Allâh) voids Ibâdah when it enters it, just like Hadath (filth; nullifiers of ablution etc.) when it enters purity.³

When you recognize that when Shirk is combined with Ibâdah it voids worship, destroys the deeds, and it dooms its owner to the eternal Hellfire; you will recognize that your most important duty is to recognize Shirk.

I hope that Allâh saves you from this trap that is Shirk to Allâh which Allâhu Taâlâ stated concerning it,

"Indeed, Allâh does not forgive associating partners with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills." (an-Nisâ 4/48; an-Nisâ 4/116)

This is known through recognizing four principles mentioned by Allâhu Taâlâ in His Book.

The First Principle

To know⁴ that the Kuffâr (disbelievers) whom Rasûlullâh Sallallâhu Alayhi wa Sallam fought, did affirm that Allâhu Taâlâ is the Creator, [the Sustainer,

³ The following addition is found in ad-Durar'us Saniyyah,

"As Allâhu Taâlâ stated,

"It is not for the Mushrikûn to build up the mosques of Allâh while they are witnesses of their own infidelity. Those are the ones whose deeds have gone to waste; and in the Fire they shall remain forever." (at-Tawbah 9/17)

⁴ In ad-Durar'us Saniyyah, the sentence does not include the word "to know."

the Giver of Life and the Life Taker]⁵, [the Causer of Benefit and the Afflicter]⁶ the Disposer of [all]⁷ affairs and that this did not enter them into Islâm. The evidence is the statement by Allâhu Taâlâ,

"Say: Who is it that sustains you (in life) from the sky and from the earth? Or who is it that has power over hearing and sight? And who is it that brings out the living from the dead and the dead from the living? And who is it that rules and regulates all affairs? They will say: Allâh. Say: Will you not then show piety (to Him)?" (Yûnus 10/31)

The Second Principle

The Mushrikûn (polytheists) state: We do not invoke them and turn towards them except that we request nearness and intercession.⁸

The evidence for nearness (their worship of idols so that their idols bring them nearer to Allâh) is the statement by Allâhu Taâlâ,

"And those who take Awliyâ (pl. Walî; saints) besides Him (say): We only worship them that they may bring us near to Allâh. Verily, Allâh will judge between them concerning that wherein they differ. Truly, Allâh does not guide he who is a disbelieving liar." (az-Zumar 39/3)

The evidence for intercession (their worship of idols so that they earn the

⁵ This addition in parenthesis is mentioned in ad-Durar'us Saniyyah.

⁶ This addition in parenthesis is mentioned in Majmû'at'ut Tawhîd.

⁷ This addition in parenthesis is mentioned in ad-Durar'us Saniyyah and Majmû'at'ut Tawhîd.

⁸ This passage is recorded with the following addition in ad-Durar'us Saniyyah,

"We request from Allâh not from them, however through their intercession and nearness to Allâh through them."

right of intercession) is the statement by Allâhu Taâlâ,

"And they worship other than Allâh that which neither harms them nor benefits them, and they say: These are our intercessors with Allâh." (Yûnus 10/18)

Shafâ'ah (intercession) is of two types: Shafâ'ah Manfiyyah (illegitimate intercession) and Shafâ'ah Muthbatah (legitimate intercession).

1. Shafâ'ah Manfiyyah (Illegitimate Intercession)

When it comes to illegitimate intercession, it is the intercession sought from other than Allâh regarding matters that only Allâh is capable of doing.

The evidence is the statement by Allâhu Taâlâ,

"O you who believe! Spend from what We have given to you before a day comes when there will be no trading, no friendship and no intercession and it is the disbelievers who are the wrongdoers." (al-Baqarah 2/254)

2. Shafâ'ah Muthbatah (Legitimate Intercession)

When it comes to legitimate intercession, it is that which is sought from Allâh [concerning the matters that only Allâh is capable of]⁹. The intercessor is honoured with its intercession, and the interceded one is he whom Allâh is pleased with his words and deeds after he is given permission (for intercession by Allâh). As Allâhu Taâlâ stated,

"Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission?" (al-Baqarah 2/255)¹⁰

⁹ This addition is mentioned in ad-Durar'us Saniyyah.

¹⁰ This verse was recorded from its beginning in ad-Durar'us Saniyyah,

"Allâh -there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Self-Sustaining. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the

The Third Principle

The Prophet Sallallâhu Alayhi wa Sallam came to people that differentiated in their worship. Some worshipped the angels; some worshipped the prophets and the righteous; some worshipped trees and stones, and some worshipped the sun and the moon. Rasûlullâh Sallallâhu Alayhi wa Sallam fought all without distinction.

The evidence is the statement by (Allâhu) Taâlâ,

"And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (polytheism) and until all of the religion will be for Allâh Alone." (al-Anfâl 8/39)

a- The evidence for (the worship of) the sun and the moon is the statement by Allâhu Taâlâ,

"Among His signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate yourselves to the sun, or to the moon, but prostrate yourselves to Allâh who has created them, if it is Him whom you worship." (Fussilat 41/37)

b- The evidence for (the worship of) the angels is the statement by Allâhu Taâlâ,

"Nor could he order you to take the angels and prophets as lords." (Âli Imrân 3/80)¹¹

heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission?" (al-Baqarah 2/255)

¹¹ Instead of this verse the following has been recorded in ad-Durar'us Saniyyah,

"And (remember) the Day when He will gather them all together, and then will say to the angels: Was it you that these people used to worship? They (angels) will say: Glorified be You! You are our Walî (Lord) instead of them. Rather, but they used to worship the Jinn; most of them were believers in them." (Saba 34/40-41)

c- The evidence for (the worship of) the prophets is the statement by Allâhu Taâlâ,

"And when Allâh said: O Îsâ son of Maryam, did you say to the people: Take me and my mother as deities besides Allâh? He will say: Glory be to You! It was not for me to say that to which I have no right (to say). If I had said it, You would have known it. You know what is within myself, and I do not know what is within Yourself. Indeed, You are the All-Knower of the unseen." (al-Mâ'idah 5/116)¹²

d- The evidence for (the worship of) the righteous is the statement by Allâhu Taâlâ,

"Those whom they invoke seek means of access to their Lord, (striving as to) which of them would be nearest, and they hope for His mercy and fear His punishment." (al-Isrâ 17/57)

e- The evidence for (the worship of) the trees and the stones is the statement of Allâhu Taâlâ,

"So have you considered al-Lât and al-Uzzâ? And Manât, the third - the other one?" (an-Najm 53/19-20)¹³

And also the Hadîth of Abû Wâqid al-Laythî Radiyallâhu Anh who said:

¹² Parts of this verse is recorded in ad-Durar'us Saniyyah followed by the verse presented as evidence for the worship of the angels,

"Nor could he order you to take the angels and prophets as lords. Would he order you to disbelief after you had been Muslims?" (Âli Imrân 3/80)

¹³ The names mentioned here are the idols worshipped during the days of ignorance, some being stones like Lât and others trees like Uzzâ. For extensive information, refer to the chapter regarding seeking blessings from trees, stones and their likes in Kitâb'ut Tawhîd and its reliable explanations.

"We went out with the Prophet Sallallâhu Alayhi wa Sallam to (the Battle of) Hunayn, and we were close to the period of Kufr (disbelief). The polytheists had a lote-tree, which they would worship by and hang their weapons on. It was called Dhâtu Anwât. So we passed by a lote-tree and said: O Messenger of Allâh! Make for us a Dhâtu Anwât, just as they have a Dhâtu Anwât!"¹⁴

The Fourth Principle

The polytheist in our time are worse in shirk than those polytheists of the past (pre-Islâmic times). For, the ones of the past used to worship others besides Allâh only in prosperity and return to genuine faith in adversity, whereas the present-day polytheists are constant in their Shirk, regardless of prosperity or adversity.

The evidence for this is the statement by Allâhu Taâlâ,

¹⁴ In Mu'allafât'ush Shaykh, the Hadîth is quoted as such. Whereas in ad-Durar'us Saniyyah and Majmû'at'ut Tawhîd, the Hadîth is quoted in its entirety. Also contrary to ad-Durar'us Saniyyah, in Majmû'at'ut Tawhîd, the 140th verse of Sûrat'ul A'râf is also quoted. The rest of the Hadîth reads as follows,

"Thereafter, Rasûlullâh Sallallâhu Alayhi wa Sallam said: Allâhu Akbar (Allâh is Great)!.. Verily, it is the same path; by the One in Whose Hand is my soul! You have said similar to what Banû Isrâ'îl (the Children of Israel) said to Mûsâ Alayh'is Salâm,

"Make a deity for us just as they have deities! He said: You are really an ignorant people! Verily, these people will be destroyed for that which they are engaged in (idols-worship). And all that they are doing is in vain. He said: Shall I seek for you a deity other than Allâh while He has given you superiority over the worlds?" (al-A'râf 7/138-139)

(With similar wording: At-Tirmidhî Hadîth no. 2180; at-Tabarânî, al-Mu'jam'ul Kabîr, 3/243-244, Hadîth no. 3290-3294; al-Marwazî, as-Sunnah, 1/17, Hadîth no. 39; at-Tayâlisî, Musnad, 2/682, Hadîth no. 1443; Ibnu Abî Âsim, as-Sunnah, 1/37, Hadîth no. 76)

"So when they embark on a ship, they invoke Allâh, having their faith purely in Him. But when He saves them (and brings them) to the land, in no time they associate others with Him." (al-Ankabût 29/65)¹⁵

The treatise ends here. May the peace and blessings of Allâh be upon Muhammad, his family, and his companions. (Âmîn!)

¹⁵ Recorded in ad-Durar'us Saniyyah subsequent to this is the following,

"According to this the one who supplicates, is the one who worships. The evidence for this is the statement of Allâhu Taâlâ,

"Who is more astray than him who invokes, instead of Allâh, those who will not respond to him up to the Day of Judgement; and they are totally unaware of their prayers?" (al-Ahqâf 46/5)