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HIS
MAJESTY
UNLOCKING THE NAMES OF ALLAH
USTADH AMMAR ALSHUKRY

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allah  the Lord of the universe. And peace and blessings be upon His beloved Messenger Muhammad  , his family, and his pious followers who follow his guidance.

By the grace and mercy of Allah  , we have compiled notes for Ustadh Ammar AlShukry’s class “His Majesty: Unlocking The Names of Allah.” These notes are student notes published by Qabeelat Wasat. They have not been approved by AlMaghrib Institute or Ustadh Ammar AlShukry. Therefore, we cannot attest to the complete accuracy of this material. Any Islamic ruling pertaining to your personal situation needs to be discussed with your local scholar. These notes are by no means a substitute for a personalized fatwa. Please note that the English translations of the Names of Allah are limited and do not fully encompass the deeper meaning one would derive in the Arabic language.

Any benefit you obtain from these notes are from Allah  while any shortcomings are from ourselves. Please be aware that these notes have Arabic verses of Qur’an. If you are to print these and then dispose of them, please do so appropriately. JazakamAllahu Khairan.
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Chapter 1: Entering upon His Majesty, the King
CHAPTER 1
Entering Upon His Majesty, the King

GOAL: TO ENTER INTO THE COURT OF THE KING OF KINGS
We want to be granted access to the King of Kings, to enter His court, and we can do this by studying the Beautiful Names of Allah ﷺ. This is a truly beautiful topic, even though some may think it is rather elementary. When you told your friends you signed up for “His Majesty” to learn about Asma Allah al-Husna, some may have asked, “Didn’t you learn that in 3rd grade Sunday school?”

But this is actually the greatest subject one can study, greater than studying anything else. Every subject’s importance is directly correlated to the subject of study. So, when you analyze the subject of study in regards to the Names of Allah, it is Allah ﷺ Himself. What is greater than that? We’ve learned the pillars of Islam. This subject is the first pillar of Islam—to believe in Allah. To believe in Allah, we must know who Allah is. It is the highest level of knowledge, and it is the most fruitful field of study. Your life will be more affected by studying the Names of Allah than studying anything else, and you will see that knowledge manifest itself every day in your life.

When Ustadh Ammar began studying this topic again, he felt incredibly humbled. He knew it was a topic he had belittled for a very long time. He was searching to study other topics such as fiqh; this topic is also very important, but he didn’t recognize the importance of studying the Names of Allah ﷺ, and he put it on the backburner.

STORY BEHIND THIS COURSE
A friend had once asked Ustadh Ammar at a conference if he had read a book called ﷺ (In the Company of God) by Shaykh Salman al-Oadah. So, Ustadh Ammar started reading this book as he delved into a world he had forgotten about for years. Later on, his friend asks him, “Did you read the book?” Ustadh Ammar responds, “I’m still reading it!” The Ustadh wanted other people to benefit from the knowledge as well, so he prepared to translate the content and teach it at his masjid. Then, Shaykh Waleed calls him one day and says, “You’re going to be an instructor, and you have to teach. What do you want your first class to be about?” Ustadh Ammar couldn’t think of a topic that was more fruitful and beautiful than the Names of Allah ﷺ.

Around the same time, Ustadh Ammar had given a presentation at a college about Jesus in Islam. Many Christian students attended, and one girl asked after the presentation, “What’s your favorite attribute of God?” Ustadh Ammar posed this question to the students, and their answers all revolved around three major concepts: God is Beautiful, God is Love, and God takes care of me/protects me. It was then Ustadh Ammar’s turn to discuss his favorite attribute of God. He explained that we have a name for God being loving: Al-Wadūd. We
have a name for God taking care of you: *Al-Rabb*. We have a name for God being Beautiful: *Al-Jamīl*. They were all bewildered, and asked, “What do you mean a Name?”

So, Ustadh Ammar listed a few of the Names—each Name gives us access to Allah ﷻ. Ustadh Ammar understood that we don’t have only three attributes, but rather, we have a more vivid description of Allah than anybody else. We are part of an *ummah* that has been given more information about Allah than any other *ummah*.

**THE UMMAH OF ALHAMDULILLAH**

The Prophet ﷺ said, “I am the master of the children of Adam on the Day of Judgement, and that is not out of arrogance. Adam and everyone after him are all under my banner on the Day of Judgment, and that banner is the banner of praise.”

Scholars have posed the question: what banner of praise? They said that because the Prophet ﷺ is the one who praises Allah ﷻ the most. Furthermore, his *ummah* is the one that praises Allah the most because they know Allah the most. We praise Allah during the good times and the difficult times. **We say alhamdulillah in every situation.**

When we truly know Allah, we don’t ever say during difficulty, “Why God, why?” There is no action that He does except that He is *Al-Ḥākim*. Nothing happens to us, including the loss of a loved one, except that He is *Al-Raḥmān*. *Al-Raḥmān* took that person or that thing away from us. There is mercy, wisdom, and justice in the *qadr* of Allah whether we see it or not. This is of the fruits of knowing Allah ﷻ.
THE QUR’AN DESCRIBES ALLAH

When analyzing the Qur’an, we will find that the greatest chapters and verses are the ones that describe Allah.

Ayat al-Kursi is the greatest ayah:

“Allah - there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of [all] existence. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is [presently] before them and what will be after them, and they encompass not a thing of His knowledge except for what He wills. His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth, and their preservation tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.”

Surah al-Baqarah, 2:255

Surah al-Fatihah is the greatest surah:

In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds -

The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful,
Sovereign of the Day of Recompense.

It is You we worship and You we ask for help.

Guide us to the straight path –

The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray.

Surah al-Fatihah, 1:1-7
Surah al-Ikhlas comprises 1/3 of the Qur’an:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{دَعُوَّاًٰ} & \text{ لِلَّهِ} \\
\text{قُلْ هُوَ أَحَدٌ} & \text{لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ} \\
\text{وَلَمْ يُولَدْ} & \text{وَلَمْ يُؤْلَدْ} \\
\text{وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ} & \text{كَفَّارٌ أَحَدٌ}
\end{align*}
\]

“Say, "He is Allah, [who is] One, Allah, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is born, Nor is there to Him any equivalent." Surah al-Ikhlas, 112:1-4

Some people came to the Prophet in Makkah, saying, “Describe to us your Lord, [is He] made out of gold or silver—this Lord of yours?” In Madinah, the Jews asked the Prophet to give the lineage of his Lord. Allah revealed Surah al-Ikhlas, which is equal to 1/3 of the Qur’an.

When we read Surah al-Ikhlas, do we really know what Al-Ṣamad means? We need to understand that the meaning encompasses much more than just “Eternal Refuge” or “The Self-Sufficient.” These are simply found in the translations. Al-Ṣamad entails the following: You are the one I need, and turn to You with all of my needs. Ironically, we often recite this surah in order to end the prayer quickly and tend to our needs, instead of turning to Allah for our needs. It’s almost as if we don’t know what we’re saying!

These verses talking about Allah are incredibly valuable. There is not a page of the mushaf except that one of the Names of Allah is mentioned! Many verses end with the Names of Allah, yet we often just pass over them. We don’t pay attention to the purpose of those specific Names being mentioned in the context of the verse. Ustadh Ammar poses the following challenge to us: with Ramadhan just a few months away, let us devote ourselves to reading the Qur’an while truly paying attention to the Names of Allah.
“It is Allah who has created seven heavens and of the earth, the like of them. [His] command descends among them so you may know that Allah is over all things competent and that Allah has encompassed all things in knowledge.” Surah al-Talaq, 65:12

Everything has been created so that we may know Allah and His Names and Attributes. Ibn Qayyim wrote a book called Madaarij al-Saalikeen, and he explains that if you reflect upon the Qur’an while avoiding changing the meanings of words, you can have a deep understanding in regards to the Attributes of Allah. You will be presented with a mighty King above the Heavens on His throne, deciding the affairs of his creation, commanding and prohibiting, sending messengers, revealing books, pleased at times, angry at others, rewarding and punishing, giving and withholding, honoring and debasing, raising and lowering. He sees from over seven heavens and hears. He knows that which is apparent and hidden. He does whatever He wishes. He is described with every attribute of perfection, exalted from every deficiency. Not an atom or anything larger moves except by His will.

PART 1

Introducing the Concept of the Beautiful Names of Allah

The first ayah mentioning al-Asma’ al-Husna:

“And to Allah belong the best names, so invoke Him by them. And leave [the company of] those who practice deviation concerning His names. They will be recompensed for what they have been doing.” Surah al-A’raf, 7:180

The Names of Allah are husna; they are the best and most beautiful. We are commanded to call upon Allah by His Beautiful Names. We have to ask ourselves, “How much do we interact with the Names of Allah in my du’a? When was the last time we called upon Allah by His Names Al-Razzâq or Al-Latif? Have we even invested time in learning how to call upon Allah by these Names? Do we call upon Allah at all? Is our du’a a routine thing—from my lips and not my heart?”
Ustadh Ammar knows a Shaykh who is surprisingly very financially stable. Most people who make a lot of money don’t have a lot of time. However, this Shaykh has all the time in the world! Ustadh Ammar once asked him, “What’s the secret to your success? Why is that everything you touch turns to gold?” The Shaykh replied, “Du’a.” Ustadh Ammar asked, “And after the du’a? Is it that you take action?” The Shaykh replied, “Du’a is an action!” He explained the most people don’t make du’a, and if they do, they do so half-heartedly.

Du’a is not like preparing for a job interview. This is the King of Kings you are about to enter upon! It can’t be without focus, without attention, or without belief that Allah is able to do all things. We learn the meanings of Allah’s Names in order to call upon Him by these Names. When we feel overwhelmed, we call upon Allah by Al-Qahhār (The Subduer). When we feel broken, we call upon Allah by Al-Jabbār (The Restorer- He fixes that which is broken). When we feel overwhelmed or without honor, we call upon Allah by Al-ʿAzīz (The Almighty- He gives ‘izza). Knowledge of Allah’s Names helps us properly approach du’a. If we believe in Allah as we truly should, we won’t feel worry or fear. Pray or worry, don’t do both!

The second ayah mentioning al-Asma’ al-Husna:

قُلِّ أَدْعُواَ اللَّهَ أَوْ أَدْعُواَ الرَّحْمَنَ أَيَا مَا تَدْعُواَ فَلَنْ يَجَهَّرَ بِصَلَائِكَ وَلَا تَخَافِتْ بِهَا وَابْنَعِي بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَيِّئًا

“Say, ‘Call upon Allah or call upon the Most Merciful. Whichever [name] you call - to Him belong the best names.’ And do not recite [too] loudly in your prayer or [too] quietly but seek between that an [intermediate] way.” Surah al-Isra, 17:110

Muqaatil and others scholars of tafseer said that a Muslim man was praying, and he said, ya Rahmān, ya Allah. The mushrikeen said, “Muhammad is saying that he only worships One God, so why is this person calling upon Al-Rahmān and Allah? So, Allah revealed this verse. The multitude of Names of Allah does not indicate the multitude of objects or deities. Allah has many Names. The mushrikeen didn’t understand this concept due to a weakness of intellect.
The first part of this *ayah* explains how we should call upon Allah ﷻ, and to Him belong the best Names. The next part of this *ayah* explains how we should not recite too loudly in prayer or too quietly. What is the relationship? The latter part of the *ayah* also ties in with belief in the Names of Allah: He is *Al-Samī’,* so I don’t have to yell in order for Him to hear me. There is belief tied to this command—even though the person next to me can’t hear what I’m saying during prayer, I know that Allah Hears me. He hears even the passing thoughts that come over my heart.

**THE SCHOLARS MENTION 6 POINTS:**

1.) In Sahih Bukhari, Ibn Abbas ﷺ explains that this *ayah* was revealed when the Prophet ﷺ was hiding in Makkah, as he felt overwhelmed and oppressed. The Prophet would pray in the courtyard of his house, and the Muslims would pray behind him. If he prayed too loud, the *mushriken* would hear and cause problems for the Muslims. And if he prayed too quietly, the Muslims could not hear him. So, Allah ﷻ commanded him to recite somewhere in the middle.

2.) ‘A’isha ﷺ said that this *ayah* was revealed about du’a; don’t make it not too loudly or too quietly, but somewhere in between.

3.) Ibn Sireen said that this *ayah* was revealed about Abu Bakr ﷺ and ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab ﷺ. Abu Bakr would pray quietly, saying, “My Lord, I am conversing with Him.” ‘Umar, on the other hand, would pray loudly, saying, “It is to harm Shaytan, and to wake up people.” So, this *ayah* is telling Abu Bakr to raise his voice a little bit, and it is telling ‘Umar to lower his voice a little bit.

4.) Another opinion states that this *ayah* was revealed about the *tashahhud*. Some of the Bedouins would recite the *tashahhud* loudly, so Allah ﷻ told them not to pray/recite too loudly in prayer (i.e. in the *tashahhud*). ‘Abdullah bin Mas‘ud ﷺ explained that the *tashahhud* should be made silently, according to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ.

5.) Al-Hasan al-Basri ﷺ and ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas ﷺ said that this *ayah* is referring to showing off. So, don’t recite loudly in public to beautify your prayer, while offering a quiet prayer without any energy in private.

6.) Ibn ‘Abbas ﷺ said that this *ayah* was revealed about the silent vs. out-loud prayers. So, don’t recite out loud for *Dhuhr* and ‘*Asr*. And don’t be silent for the night prayers: *Maghrib, Isha*, and *Fajr*. 
The third ayah mentioning al-Asma’ al-Husna:


tabla

“Allah - there is no deity except Him. To Him belong the best names.” Surah Taha, 20:8

In Arabian culture, the more names something has, the more value and honor it holds in society. For example, the Arabs valued wine, so wine had many names. They also valued the sword and the lion, so these possess many names.

This concept even exists in English. For example, money possess multiple names: mula, dough, cash, cha-ching, bread, Benjamins, wealth, dollars, paper, coins, change, bucks, scrilla, bank, cheese, bacon, bags, stacks, bills, currency, credit, green). Now let’s do the same thing for something random like a calculator. We only think of something like estimator and TI-83. It’s natural for something that holds more value in a society to possess multiple names.

Chicago has many names: Chi-Town, Chiraq, Chiberia, The Windy City, The Second City, and Smelly Onion. Compare this to a city such as Boise, Idaho.

The Prophet ﷺ had many names:

“I am Muhammad and I am Ahmad, and I am al-Mahi (the obliterator) by whom unbelief would be obliterated, and I am Hashir (the gatherer) at whose feet mankind will be gathered, and I am ’Aqib (the last to come, after whom there will be no Prophet).” [Sahih Muslim]
The Day of Judgment is the greatest day, so it has many names: Yawmul-Akhīr (Last Day), Yawmul-Qiyāmah (Day of Resurrection), As-Sā‘āh (The Hour), Al-Haqqah (The Reality), Al-Qari‘ah (The Striking Hour), Al-Waqi‘ah (The Event), Yawmut-Tanāad (The Day When There Will Be Mutual Calling). **Allah is the Greatest of everything!** Thus, He will have many Names. How many Names? We will discuss this insha‘Allah.

**The fourth ayah mentioning al-Asma’ al-Husna:**

> هوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَحَرَّجَ الْأَلِيمِينَ كَفَرَوْا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَأَوْلِي الْحَشْرِ

“He is Allah, the Creator, the Inventor, the Fashioner; to Him belong the best names. Whatever is in the heavens and earth is exalting Him. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.”

**Surah al-Hashr, 59:24**

The last three verses in this surah have the most Names of Allah mentioned anywhere in the Quran, in any collection of verses. What is the relationship between all of these Names mentioned in *Surah al-Hashr*? The beginning of this surah discusses a conflict:

> هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الْأَلِيمِينَ كَفَرَوْا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَأَوْلِي الْحَشْرِ

“It is He who expelled the ones who disbelieved among the People of the Scripture from their homes at the first gathering.” **Surah al-Hashr, 59:2**

So, there is a relationship between the conflict that the Muslims experienced in Madinah and the Beautiful Names of Allah. During times of conflict, trial, tribulation, and difficulty, we must access the Names of Allah in order to experience victory. **We are not going to win without Allah.**

**There is a beautiful equation mentioned in the Qur’an:**

> إِنَّ يَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ فَلَا غَالِبٌ لَّكُمْ وَإِن يُضْلِعُ نَفْسُكُمْ فَسَذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلَيْنَفَسُوْكُمْ آمِنُونَ

“If Allah should aid you, no one can overcome you; but if He should forsake you, who is there that can aid you after Him? And upon Allah let the believers rely.” **Surah Ali-‘Imran, 3:160**

We spend so much energy every day of our lives planning, organizing, and mobilizing. However, we need to understand that we will only win if Allah is on our side.
PART 2

The Greatest Knowledge is Knowledge of the Names of Allah

Narrated ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr that the Messenger of Allah said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَرَبَ وَجَلَّ خَلَقَهُ فِي ظُلُمَّةٍ فَأَلْقَى عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ نُورٍ فَمِنْ أَصَابَهُ مَنْ ذَلِكَ النُّورُ
اِمْتَدَى وَمِنْ أَخْطَأَةً صَلَّ فَذَلِكَ أَقْوَلُ جَفْرُ الْقُلْبِ عَلَى عَلَمِ الْحَقَّ

“Indeed Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, created His creation in darkness, then He cast His Light upon them, so whoever is touched by that light he is guided, and whoever is not, he goes astray. It is for this reason that I say that the pens have dried with Allah’s knowledge.”

[Tirmidhi]

Ibn al-Qayyim comments on this in his work Shifa al-Alil, saying, “When Allah expands the chest of His slave with His Light that He casts in their heart, He shows them in the illumination of that Light the realities of the Names and Attributes...and so He uncovers for the heart of the believer by the illumination of that Light the truths of the (Possessor of) Highest Description. Established on the throne of faith in the heart of the believing slave, and so they see with their heart a Lord that is Mighty, Overpowering, Able and Greater than everything in His Essence, His Attributes, and His Actions.”

So, according to Ibn al-Qayyim, the light that the Prophet spoke about refers to the knowledge of Allah’s Names and Attributes.

Al-‘Izz bin 'Abdu'l-Salam said seeking nearness through learning about Allah’s Names and Attributes is better than seeking nearness through learning his ahkaam (rulings). He also explained in Shajarat al-Ma’arif wa’l-Aqwal that it is of the greatest actions of the heart, saying, “Knowing the Beautiful Names of Allah and His Lofty Attributes is the greatest actions in its nobility and its fruits.”
PART 3
The Fruits of Knowing the Names of Allah

1.) It Brings About Love

وَمِرَّ أَلَّاَّسَ مَنْ بَنَّاَجَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا يَجْهَّبُونَهُ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَلَدَيْنِ إِنْ عَمِّنْوا
أَسْتَدْ حَبَّاً لَّهُ

“And of mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allah as rivals (to Allah). They love them as they love Allah. But those who believe, love Allah more (than anything else).” Surah al-Baqarah, 2:165

The Prophet ﷺ was once informed of a man leading a sariyyah (campaign) who would lead salah while concluding every rak’ah with Surah al-Ikhlas. The Sahaba asked the man about this issue who said he loves that surah and will lead the salah in that manner, or not lead at all. So, the Sahaba asked the Prophet ﷺ; he told them to ask the man why he does that. When they asked the man, he responded, “It is the description of Al-Rahmān, and I love it.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Tell him that Allah loves him.” This story in mentioned in Sahih Bukhari.

In another hadith, it describes how a man would lead salah in Masjid Qubā‘; he would begin with reciting Surah al-Ikhlas and then recite the next surah. The Sahaba asked the Prophet ﷺ about this issue, so the Prophet asked the man why he does that. The man responded, “Because I love this surah.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Your love of this surah has entered you into Paradise.”

This shows us the importance learning about Allah, loving the description of Allah, and reciting the description of Allah.

Ibn Al-Qayyim said, “And everyone who knows Allah cannot but love Him and worship Him sincerely and does not prefer anything of His creation over Him, for whoever prefers any of His creation over Him has a sick heart.” [Ighathāt al-Lahfān]

And he also said, “And the souls have no need for anything greater than their need to know their Lord and Creator which can only be done by knowing His Names and Attributes. For the more a servant knows about them the more they will know about Allah, and the more they will seek him, the closer they will be to Him. The more they are unfamiliar with them, the more they will be ignorant about Allah, the more they will be disliked by Him, the more they will be distant from Him. For the servant’s position with Allah is in accordance to Allah’s position with them. The affair of journeying to Allah through His Names and Attributes is incredible, and what it opens up is incredible.” [Tarīq al-Hijratayn]
2.) Every Name is a Means of Coming Close to Him

Ibn al-Qayyim said, “And whoever shares a characteristic that Allah possesses, then they are led by that characteristic to Him. They are granted access by it, brought nearby it to His Mercy, and made beloved by Him by it. For He – Exalted is He - is Merciful and Loves the merciful; Generous and Loves the generous; All Knowing and Loves the knowledgeable; Strong and Loves the strong believer – who is more beloved to Him than the weak believer - He even Loves the shy; Beautiful and Loves beauty, and is Witr (One) and Loves those who pray witr.”

[Al-Jawāb al-Kāfi]

You learn the characteristics of Allah so that you can share in those characteristics in whatever way you can; this will ultimately lead you to Allah 🌿. There is a statement that says, “Adorn yourself with the characteristics of God.”
3.) It Causes Longing
The Prophet ﷺ said in a long supplication:

“[Oh Allah, I ask You] for the sweetness of looking upon Your Face and a longing to meet You.”
[Nasa‘i]

The longing for Allah ﷻ only comes if we know who He is. When we lose a family member, death becomes slightly more bearable because we are waiting to see this person on the other side. When Mu‘adh bin Jabal ﷺ was passing away in his early 30s, he said, “Welcome to death.” He realized he is not here for this dunya, and he understood that Allah is on the other side.

A Bedouin was asked, “Are you afraid of death?” He said, “What’s on the other side of death?” They said, “Allah.” He said, “Then why would I be afraid of death?”

As Bilal ibn Rabah was passing away, and his crying family surrounded him, he said, “Don’t cry. Tomorrow I am going to meet the beloved, Muhammad ﷺ and his companions.” So, a feeling of longing arises when we love someone.

‘Uthman bin ‘Affan ﷺ was in his 80s, and he sees a dream the night before he dies. He sees the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr ﷺ, and ‘Umar ﷺ. The Prophet says to him in the dream, “Break your fast with us tomorrow oh ‘Uthman.” On the day ‘Uthman was killed, he was fasting.

4.) It Repels Sadness

“Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us.” Surah al-Tawbah, 9:40

If we know that Allah ﷻ is with us, we will not be affected by sadness. We will be hopeful since we recognize that after every ‘usr (difficulty), there are actually two yusr (ease):

“For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease. Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease.” Surah al-Sharh, 94:5-6
5.) It Brings About Fear of Allah

The taqwa of Allah is one the greatest gifts that someone can ever experience in his or her life. Allah says about Himself:

"It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allah." **Surah Fatir, 35:28**

The innama in this ayah indicates restriction. So, the only people who fear Allah from His servants are the people of knowledge. If people don’t fear Allah, they are not from the people of knowledge, no matter how much book information they possess. In order to be people of knowledge, they must fear Allah.

6.) It Dissolves Evil Thoughts About Allah

"While another faction worried about themselves, thinking of Allah other than the truth - the thought of ignorance." **Surah Ali-'Imran, 3:154**

This ayah is referring to a group of hypocrites who didn’t know who Allah is. They were deluded, thinking that the promises of Allah were not true.

In the Battle of the Trench, the munafiqueen said, “The Prophet is promising us the wealth of Kisra, and Rome, and one of us can’t even go to the bathroom safely! The only thing Allah and his Messenger have promised us is delusion.” So, these hypocrites harbored evil thoughts about Allah.

On the other hand, when the believers saw the ahzab of 10,000 soliders surrounding Madinah, they said, “This is what Allah and His Messenger have promised us, and Allah and His Messenger have spoken the truth.” **This terrifying scene only increased the believers in their faith and submission to Allah.**

A person who knows Allah will never think evil about Him. Allah says, “I am as my slave thinks I am.” To know Allah is to believe in goodness about Allah, and thus, you will find Him as such.

“And most people harbor thoughts about Allah other than the truth, evil thoughts, regarding themselves and what He does to other people. No one is saved from that except those who know Allah and know His Names and Attributes.”

[Ibn al- Qayyim, Zād al-Ma‘ād 3/206]
7.) It is of the Greatest of the Actions of the Hearts

Iman is comprised of belief of the heart, statements of the tongue, and actions of the limbs. Many times, we don’t give much concern to the actions of the heart. When we pray, we worry so much about the physical aspects of prayer such as placement of the hands and feet. But the more important aspect is the placement of the heart in regards to khushoo’ and concentration.

The definition of fasting is to stay away from that which breaks the fast. However, the ultimate goal of fasting is to attain taqwa. The essence of ‘Umrah and Hajj is the reverence of the symbols of God, not necessarily the physical fulfillment of the pillars. We focus on the outer aspect of ibadah, not the inner aspect.

Take the example of Abu Bakr ص. ه. He wasn’t poor like Bilal ص, nor was he martyred like Hamza ص, nor was he tortured in Makkah like the family of Yasir ص, but he was better than all these people. Munthir says that Abu Bakr wasn’t better because of extra siyam or salah, but rather because of the actions of his heart. Studying the Names of Allah gives us access to that. We have to monitor our hearts.

8.) It corrects character

A person cannot be good to Allah ﷺ and evil to His creation. One cannot refine his or her characteristics in regards to Allah while being wicked to the people. The way one interacts with the people is actually a manifestation of some of the Names of Allah.

Knowing the Names of Allah is not intended to bring about goodness to Allah without expanding it to His creation. Indeed, the one who does not exhibit good character to their fellow creation has not known their Lord.

9.) Encompassing Them is a Cause of Entering Paradise
Chapter 2: Access Granted, The Rules of the Court
CHAPTER 2
Access Granted: The Rules of the Court

THE HADITH INTRODUCING THE NUMBER OF NAMES

...the Prophet of Allah ﷺ said, “Allah has ninety-nine Names, one-hundred except for one; whoever encompasses them will enter Paradise.” [Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah]

THE MEANING OF “ENCOMPASSING”
The scholars defined ihsa (encompassing) to mean a number of things describing many levels. The first level is ascertaining the Names of Allah, figuring out what those Names are. A hadith with an extension of the famous list of Names is not from the Prophet ﷺ. That is an addition made by Waleed ibn Muslim, who is one of the narrators of this hadith.

When he narrated this hadith to his students, he added the names he believed to be the 99 Names of Allah. The words of the Prophet ﷺ end at “…will enter Paradise.” The additional words were what Waleed ibn Muslim thought the Names were. This is called mudraj – when the words of the teacher get mixed up with the words of the Prophet ﷺ. The students didn’t differentiate between the two texts. Scholars determined that this list is not from the Prophet ﷺ because none of the other narrators have this list. The Prophet ﷺ didn’t tell us what the Names of Allah are, but he said that Allah ﷺ has 99 Names. Therefore, we need to determine these names.

The second level is memorizing/learning the meanings of the Names of Allah. We need to comprehend Names such as Al-Jabbār and Al-Samī’.

The third level is invoking Allah through those Names. This process involves accessing and interacting with the Names of Allah.

The fourth level is living in accordance with these Names of Allah. Knowledge of His Names results in a change in our behavior and attitude because we know that Allah ﷺ is Al-Samī’ and Al-Qadīr. The Names of Allah are not necessarily easy to act upon, but the prize is Jannah. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The commodity of Allah is expensive.” It is because the prize is Jannah.
ARE THEY 99 EXACTLY OR MORE THAN THAT?
The scholars have differed on this issue, but Imam al-Nawawi explained that there is consensus that the Names of Allah are more than 99. But this is not correct because there were scholars who believe that there were only 99. One of the famous great Andalusian scholars Ibn Hazm held the opinion that there are only 99 Names because the Prophet ﷺ clearly said that.

Ibn Hazm collected the Names of Allah with such strict qualifications that he didn’t even reach 99 Names; he derived only about 80 or so names. His qualification held that the Name must come in the ism (name/proper noun) form in Qur’an and/or Sunnah.

Some proofs that there are more than 99 names, with the consensus of Imam Nawawi:
1.) The Prophet ﷺ narrated the du’a of anxiety and sorrow:

"O Allah, I am Your servant, son of Your servant, son of Your maidservant, my forelock is in Your hand, Your command over me is forever executed and Your decree over me is just. I ask You by every name belonging to You which You name Yourself with, or revealed in Your Book, or You taught to any of Your creation, or You have preserved in the knowledge of the unseen with You, that You make the Qur’an the life of my heart and the light of my breast, and a departure for my sorrow and a release for my anxiety.” [Ahmad]

This du’a indicates that there are some Names of Allah that He kept to Himself, some which He revealed in certain books and not others, and some He taught to some of His creatures.
2.) Hadith of al-Shafa’ah (intercession):
In this long hadith, it describes how mankind will ask some of the Prophets to start the Day of Judgment. They will ultimately go to the Prophet ﷺ who will bow at the Throne of Allah, and He will teach the Prophet praise that he does not know.

“Allah will teach the Prophet praises to address Him. The scholars have said that of the praises will be Names of Allah that even the Prophet ﷺ did not know in the dunya.”

3.) The Prophet ﷺ said in a supplication, “Oh Allah, I do not have the ability to praise You. You are as You praised yourself.”
The Prophet ﷺ is talking about his ability as a human being in regards to praising Allah. So, this is proof that there are more names that even the Prophet does not have access to.

4.) Logical proof:
The scholars say that Allah ﷻ has more than 99 Names considering all the Names collectively in the Qur’an and Sunnah. Imam al-Qurtubi collected more than 200 names in his collection. There are some who collected even more than 1000 names. These scholars were being incredibly lax in their qualification of the Names and had names like “The Fourth of three”, citing from ayat such as:

“مَا يَحْكَمُونَ بِمِن تَجْوَيْنِ ثلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا أَحَدُوهُ رَأَيْعُهُمْ
There is in no private conversation three but that He is the fourth of them.”
Surah Al-Mujadilah, 58:7

However, none of the scholars say one the Great Names of the 99 Names is Al-Musa’ir (The Price Setter) because it does not carry the same type of reaction as the other 99 Names.
It was narrated by Anas ibn Malik ﷺ: "Prices rose during the time of the Messenger of Allah محمد ﷺ, and they said: 'O Messenger of Allah, prices have risen, so fix the prices for us.' He said: 'Indeed Allah is the Musa’ir (The Price Setter), the Qabid, (Restrainer) the Basit, the Razzaq (Provider). And I am hopeful that I meet my Lord and none of you are seeking (recompense from) me for an injustice involving blood or wealth."

THE WAYS THE SCHOLARS CATEGORIZED THE NAMES

Scholars have tried to categorize the Names of Allah in different way. As Ibn Qayyim argues, there is no perfect way to categorize the Names of Allah. You will not find anyone who has tried to do so without facing criticism.

Imam al-Qurtubi divided the Names of Allah into five categories:

1.) **Names that establish His existence;**
   - E.g. Al-Haqq, Al-Awwal, Al-Ākhir, Al-Zāhir

2.) **Names that follow after His existence is established**
   - E.g. Al-ʿAli, Al-Witr, Al-Wāḥid

3.) **Names that negate likening creation to Allah**
   - E.g. Al-Kabīr, Al-Salām, Al-Ghaniyy, Al-Quddūs

4.) **Names that demonstrate Allah’s creation and innovation**
   - E.g. Al-Sayyid, Al-Hayy, Al-Mālik, Al-Jabbār

5.) **Names that demonstrate Allah’s design**
   - E.g. Al-Mudabbir, Al-Raḥmān, Al-Raḥīm, Al-Qayyūm.

This class will categorize the Names of Allah through the day of two fictional characters.

The first character is Jamal, a 22 year old, college senior in his final semester. He has a busy day with a job interview, running errands, and ending the day by proposing to a girl. We will follow Jamal through his day and discover how he unlocks the Names of Allah.
Chapter 3:
The Names of Allah
“He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, Knower of the unseen and the witnessed. He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Perfection, the Bestower of Faith, the Overseer, the Exalted in Might, the Compeller, the Superior. Exalted is Allah above whatever they associate with Him. He is Allah, the Creator, the Inventor, the Fashioner; to Him belong the best names. Whatever is in the heavens and earth is exalting Him. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.”

Surah al-Hashr, 59:22-24

Please clean your heart before entrance...
Jamal wakes up in the morning and unlocks the name *Al-Hayy* (The Ever Living). *Al-Hayy* is mentioned in the Qur’an 5 times. It is famously recited in *Ayat al-Kursi*:

> "Allah - there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of [all] existence. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep." *Surah al-Baqarah, 2:255*

Allah ﻓَوْلاَ يَحْيَىٰ، لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سَيْناً، وَلَا نُومٌ commands us to depend on Him, because He is *Al-Hayy* (The Ever-Living):

> "And rely upon the Ever-Living who does not die, and exalt [Allah] with His praise. And sufficient is He to be, with the sins of His servants, Acquainted." *Surah al-Furqan, 25:58*

Allah ﻓَوْلاَ يَحْيَىٰ، لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سَيْناً، وَلَا نُومٌ also commands us to call on Him because He is *Al-Hayy* (The Ever-Living):

> "He is the Ever-Living; there is no deity except Him, so call upon Him, [being] sincere to Him in religion. [All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds." *Surah Ghafir, 40:65*
MEANING OF AL-HAYY:
1.) To Allah belongs perfect life
It is life that is without any fatigue, slumber, or deficiency. Allah says is Ayat al-Kursi that drowsiness and sleep do not affect Him. A person should remember this Name as they experience sleep, the cousin of death. Upon waking in the morning, a person should recite:

\[ \text{All praise is for Allah who gave us life after having taken it from us and unto Him is the Resurrection.} \]

When waking up, one should remember that it is Allah who restored his or her life after the minor death. One should also remember the resurrection after the actual death.

Allah’s existence is perfect, without any deficiencies, such as sleep or death.

2.) Allah is the One who bestows life
He is the One who gives life in the \textit{dunya} and \textit{akhira}. And in the \textit{akhira}, He bestows eternal life. We call upon Al-Hayy because He bestows life.

FRUITS OF AL-HAYY:
1.) Dependence on Allah
Who is the person you depend on the most in your life? Your mom, dad, sibling, husband, wife, best friend? Your world would crash without them! However, the reality is that both you and they are going to die. You will live without them, or they will live without you. So, whom should you depend upon? Allah. He is Al-Ḥayy, the Ever-Living.

The Prophet lost two of the closest people to him: Khadijah and Abu Talib. They supported him and helped him during times of difficulty. Then, they passed away within months of each other – some even say they passed away within days of each other. Why would Allah cause the legs of the Prophet to be swept out from underneath him? Why would Allah give the Prophet ‘aam-ul-huzn (the Year of Sorrow)? To teach him to depend on Allah, not on Khadijah or Abu Talib.

The Companions of the Prophet also had to learn that they would one day lose the Prophet, who was everything to them. Anas bin Malik said, “I did not see a day brighter than the day the Prophet entered Madinah, and I did not see a day darker than the day he passed away.”
The day the Prophet ﷺ passed away, ‘Umar ﷺ was angry! Abu Bakr ﷺ walked into the masjid and tried to calm him down. Abu Bakr said, “Whoever worshipped Muhammad, Muhammad has died. Whoever worshipped Allah, then Allah is the Ever-Living.”

We must internalize this, and move our dependence from the people around us to Allah, and we must encourage others to do this as well.

2.) The Real Life is Coming, Focus on That

We should not make this world our major concern because Allah ﷻ has designated a life for us that is eternal – but it is not this one. He has filled this life with sickness, shortcomings, and loss. As children, we can’t wait to grow older. Then, as we get older, we realize that our parents are also growing older. This life was not meant to be perfect!

**AL-QAYYŪM**

(*The Maintainer*)

When Jamal wakes up in the morning, he also unlocks the Name Al-Qayyūm (The Self-Subsisting). Al-Qayyūm is the One who maintains every soul, and it is mentioned in the Qur’an 3 times. It is always paired with Al-Ḥayy.

*Qayyūm* = maintainer, always looking after something.

Someone who is a qayyim must be working on something 100%. Ibn Qayyim’s father was Qayyim al Jawziyyah, and he was the principal and maintainer of that school, always.

Allah ﷺ is the Qayyim of the heavens and the earth. He takes care of everything. Our hearts are beating and we are breathing because of Allah! We do not maintain ourselves, Allah ﷺ maintains us. Allah is the One who will take us from one stage to the next.

**WHY DOES ALLAH PAIR AL-HAYY AND AL-QAYYUM?**

Every pairing of Names gives birth to a third meaning, and takes it to another level.

*Al-Ḥayy* = The Ever-Living, no one is maintaining Allah, He is not in need of anyone or anything, perfection in His own essence

*Al-Qayyūm* = The Maintainer, He takes care of everything, perfection in how He Deals with His creation

Scholars say that every other Name comes from these two Names. Some, like Imam al-Nawawi, say that the Greatest Name of Allah ﷺ is the pairing of Al-Hayy and Al-Qayyūm.
“And [all] faces will be humbled before the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of existence. And he will have failed who carries injustice.” Surah Taha, 20:111

FRUITS OF AL-QAYYUM:
1.) Tawakkul

Ibn Abbas reported that the Prophet would supplicate, “Oh Allah, I have submitted to you, and have believed in you, and depend on You, and repent to you, and seek judgment from You, and seek refuge in Your power, there is no one worthy of worship except You, You are Al-Hayy (The One who does not die), and the jinn and human beings die.” [Bukhari, Muslim]

2.) The Prophet would use these Names of Allah to remove difficulty
Anas ibn Malik reported that the Prophet would say during times of difficulty:

َيَا بِحِي يَا ظَيْفُ يُقِيمُ بِحُمُسِّكَ أَسْتَغْفِيْتُ

“O Ever Living, O Self-Subsisting and Supporter of all, by Your mercy I seek assistance.”

He sought the removal of harm by Allah’s Mercy.

3.) Removal of Sins
The Prophet said, “He who says:

َاتَّسَغِفْ يَّاهِي الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ وَأَتْوَبْ إِلَيْهِ

‘I seek Allah’s forgiveness, besides whom, none has the right to be worshipped except He, The Ever Living, The Self-Subsisting and Supporter of all, I turn to Him in repentance,’ his sins will be forgiven even if he should have run away from the battlefield.” [Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi and al-Ḥakim - on conditions of Bukhāri and Muslim for accepting hadith]

Fleeing from battle is considered one of the seven mortal sins, but one can still seek Allah’s forgiveness nevertheless.
AL-MUJĪB
(The One Who Responds)

It's 8 am, and Jamal has a job interview! As he diligently prepares, he unlocks the Beautiful Name Al-Mujib (The One Who Responds). Allah has legislated that He is accessible at all times. He did not designate just one day of the year in which He will respond to our du’a. Otherwise, we would have worshipped Him like that.

In regards to the creation, the higher we get in life, the less likely we are to respond. For example, we do not expect a response from Bill Gates or Michael Jordan. Allah is in the highest position, and He is always there for us, always responding. Alhamdulillah ya Allah that You are as Your are! What an excellent master of a miserable slave!

فَأَسْتَغْفِرُوهُ تُمْ ثُوَّبًا إِلَيْهِ إِنَّ رَبِّي قَرِيبٌ مَّجِيبٌ

“So ask forgiveness of Him and then repent to Him. Indeed, my Lord is near and responsive.”
Surah Hud, 11:61

TWO MEANINGS:
1.) The One Who Responds to Du’a
2.) The One Who Inspires Du’a

Allah inspires us to make du’a so that He will respond to our du’a. None of us would ever made du’a without Allah inspiring us to do so.

‘Umar ibn al-Khattab said, “I do not concern myself with the response, but I concern myself with making supplication, for I know that the response will come with it!”

The problem is that we might go for a week or a month without making du’a! We ask others to make du’a for us, but we forget to make it for ourselves. Why would we allow anyone to come between us and our connection to Allah?
**FA VS. THUMMA**
These two words indicate sequence.

\( ف \) (Fa) indicates immediate sequence, and \( تُمَّ \) (thumma) describes delayed sequence.

In Surah al-Anbiyaa’, Allah mentions responding to the supplications of Nuh, Ayyub, Yunus, and Zakariyyah, all using the word ٍفَاسْتَجِبْنَا . He uses Fa each time! This means that He responded quickly/immediately!

**Al-Mujīb is considered a key that unlocks other Names** because we would not call on Allah by any of His Names without the inspiration of du’a in the first place and without believing that Allah responds to our du’a!

**EVERY HEART IS IN THE HANDS OF ALLAH**
Last year, Ustadh Ammar went for Umrah. While he was in Madinah, he visited a very beloved friend of his, Shaykh Muhammad Mana – who is now an AlMaghrib instructor – and he stayed with him for a couple of days. Sheikh Muhammad Mana asked Ustadh Ammar if he wanted to visit a very special shaykh of his, so they went to do so. This sheikh was very different. He would give the khutbah in his masjid, and then go to his office across the street. In his office, he would give a halaqah to 60-80 people each week. He had an Arab-style living room, which was huge, and he fed people as well! He fed them large trays of rice and meat. Shaykh Muhammad told Ustadh Ammar that this sheikh was not only going to give them information, but that he was also going to give them tarbiyah. He changes people; his nickname is Al-Murabbi (one who takes people from one stage to the next).

Ustadh Ammar walked into this living room with Arab-style seating and cushions. When he sat down, he was given a tray of coffee and dates. He looked for a napkin, and realized that there were slits in the cushions that had napkins in them! The Shaykh was giving his speech, and people were listening. He was building up his point– 15 minutes went by. Then, he said, “Everyone, I want you to write down this next point that I am going to make. If you can memorize it, then memorize it – otherwise, write it down.” People began taking out their phones. Ustadh Ammar forgot the first 15 minutes of this Shaykh’s talk, but he remembered this point that he was told to memorize. This gem was definitely worth the trip:

**Ibn Al-Qayyim said, “The heart of the one you turn to is in the Hand of the One you turn away from.”**

We wake up every single day and turn to other people for things that we need instead of turning to Allah  ﷺ !

When we have a job interview, we are willing to leave the house at 5:00 am in the morning, but for some reason, we are not willing to wake up 20 minutes before to pray two rak’ahs.
There was a brother who came into the masjid to speak with Shaykh Waleed Basyouni. This brother had an addiction, and he asked for help. The Shaykh said, “You do not need to talk to me. Everything that you are going to say to me, say to Allah.”

We are willing to pour our hearts out to an Imam for 20 minutes to get sympathy and empathy, but we do not turn to Allah! Why do we invest so much in other human beings when every heart is in the Hands of Allah?

On the authority of ‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbas who said: “One day, I was behind the Prophet [riding on the same mount] and he said, ‘O young man, I shall teach you some words [of advice]: Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, then ask Allah, and if you seek help, then seek help from Allah. And know that if the nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would not benefit you except with what Allah had already prescribed for you. And if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would not harm you except with what Allah had already prescribed against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried.” [Tirmidhi]

A couple of weeks ago, Ustadh Ammar was moving out of his apartment. Initially, he was very confident that he would finish by the end of the day. By 7:00 pm, he concluded that he was not going to be able to move out by 9:00 pm. He had not asked anyone for help, and how could he call someone this late? He realized that his plan was not going to work.

So he asked Allah for help. Shortly after he made du’a, he got a call from one of his closest friends. Ustadh Ammar told him that he was moving. His friend responded with a phrase that only Allah could have made him say. He said, “Excellent! I was hoping for some ajr!” Ustadh Ammar’s friend came over and helped him out. He asked Allah, and Allah was enough for him! Our habit should be to ask Allah first.
**AL-QARĪB**

*(The Near)*

Al-Qarīb is often paired with the Name Al-Mujīb in the Qur’an. There is something amazing about the following *ayah*, as it breaks away from the formatting that is consistent in other *ayat*:

> "And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided."

*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:186*

Whenever the Sahaba would ask the Prophet regarding an issue, Allah would answer with a specific format that starts with *yasalunaka an* (they ask you about), which would later be followed by *qul* (say). For example, this *ayah* in *Surah Al-Baqarah* reads as follows:

> "They ask you about wine and gambling. Say, ‘In them is great sin and [yet, some] benefit for people.’"

*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:219*

A similar formatting is seen in *Surah Al-Isra*:

> "And they ask you, [O Muhammad], about the soul. Say, ‘The soul is of the affair of my Lord. And mankind have not been given of knowledge except a little.’" *Surah Al-Isra, 17:85*
However, there is one *ayah* which breaks away from this specific formatting. The *Sahaba* asked the Prophet ﷺ “Is our Lord close that we converse privately with Him? Or is He far so that we call upon Him?” Allah ﷻ answers by revealing *ayah* 186 in *Surah Al-Baqarah*. There is no *qul* (say) in this *ayah*. Allah does not say, “Oh Prophet, say this.” Rather, when the *Sahaba* asked about Allah Himself, He responds directly with (indeed I am near). The ﬁn indicates immediate sequence. Allah refuses to have anyone between Himself and His slave. There is no secretary or gatekeeper, even if that person be the Prophet ﷺ. Allah ﷻ then says, “I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me.” So, Allah says that I’m here, available, and close. I respond to the *du’a*, so let them respond to Me.

Say that a guy is on the court playing basketball. He’s the best player on court, yet no one picks him. He thinks to himself, “I’m a pro! Just pick me!” It’s almost as if Allah ﷻ is asking, “Don’t you believe in Me? Let them believe in Me.” You believe in everyone else, and you’re so willing to call upon everyone else. Instead, you should call upon Allah, respond to Him, and believe in Him, so that you may be guided. Believe that Allah is ﷺ (near).

The second reason for the revelation of 2:186 was the following *ayah*:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ أَجْعَالُونِ فَأَسْتَجِبَ لَكُمْ

“And your Lord says, 'Call upon Me; I will respond to you.'” *Surah Ghafir, 40:60*

The *Sahaba* asked the Prophet ﷺ how and when should they call upon Allah ﷻ. The nearness of Allah is of two types. There is a general nearness, in which Allah is aware of everything we do, knowledgeable of everyone, and ever-present. Allah says the He is closer to the dying person than we are, but we are unaware:

وَهُمُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُبَصِّرُونَ

“And We are nearer to him than you, but you do not see.” *Surah Al-Waqi’ah, 56:85*

The general nearness refers to everyone. There is also a special kind of proximity that Allah has to those whom He loves. These are people who access Him and seek His nearness through His gentleness, care, and support of them. This was mentioned by Imam Al-Sa’idi.

Shaykh Ali Thantali was a Syrian scholar, and he mentions a story in one of his books about his uncles’ invitation. The Shaykh went to his uncle’s house, and while he was there, he felt like he was suffocating. Dinner had not even been served yet, but he felt like he needed to leave. So he excused himself from the family gathering while facing criticism from the
people. He was walking, yet he didn’t even know where he was going. He thought to hop on a tram and return to Damascus, but he found himself going another way. He was walking down a street when he sees a woman in the distance; she has a small child with her, and she is crying and making du’a. Shaykh Ali asked her why she is crying. She explained that her husband had kicked her out of her apartment and that she had nowhere to go. She couldn’t return to her husband’s house in Damascus, and her family was from Aleppo. The Shaykh told her to file a compliant against her husband in court. She explains that she is a woman with no family and that it will be difficult to take the case to court. The woman didn’t know that the man she was speaking to was the judge of Damascus. The Shaykh gave the woman his card, and he explained that Allah brought him out of his uncle’s house so that he could meet her on this street as a response to her du’a. Allah will mobilize everything for her because He is Al-Qarīb.

**KNOWING THAT ALLAH IS ALWAYS WITH YOU**

Ustadh Ammar once picked up Shaykh Salah Alsawy in Houston to give him a ride. During this 50-minute drive, Ustadh Ammar noticed how pleasant Shaykh Salah’s Arabic sounded as he recited verses of the Qur’an in addition to poetry. In the middle of his speech, Shaykh Salah would all of a sudden put his hands up and make passionate du’a for about 2 minutes, and then he would resume his conversation with Ustadh Ammar. The Shaykh would switch between the conversation and du’a.

Ustadh Ammar was picked up from the airport to come to this class in Chicago. He was sitting in the passenger seat while another individual was sitting in the backseat. When the Ustadh and driver would be speaking, the person in the back couldn’t really hear. So, in general, the people in the front will turn back every now and then to converse with the person sitting in the back. These two incidents crystallized a concept for Ustadh Ammar: Shaykh Salah realized that there is not a gathering except that Allah is the third.

**“Have you not considered that Allah knows what is in the heavens and what is on the earth? There is in no private conversation three but that He is the fourth of them, nor are there five but that He is the sixth of them - and no less than that and no more except that He is with them [in knowledge] wherever they are.”** Surah Al-Mujadila, 58:7
This concept also ties in with *ihsan*:

“...Then he (Jibril ﷺ) said, ‘Inform me about *ihsan.*’ He (the Messenger of Allah ﷺ) answered, ‘It is that you should worship Allah as though you could see Him, for though you cannot see Him, yet He sees you.’” [Muslim]

**HOW CAN A PERSON BE NEAR TO ALLAH ﷺ?**

1. **Preserve the obligatory prayers**
   
   Allah ﷺ says that My servants will not come closer to Me with anything that is more beloved to Me than the obligatory prayers. *Fajr* is more beloved to Allah than *Qiyam*. *Isha* is more beloved to Allah than *Taraweeh*. So, a person who is seriously seeking to journey to Allah must focus on perfecting his or her obligations. For example, Allah ﷺ has made *birr* to our parents obligatory, so we must be kind and obedient to them.

2. **Voluntary acts of worship**
   
   After perfecting the obligations, increase in voluntary actions such as fasting, giving charity, and extra prayer.

   “And My servant does not draw near to Me with anything more loved to Me than the religious duties I have obligated upon him. And My servant continues to draw near to Me with nafil (supererogatory) deeds until I love him.” [Bukhari]

Scholars say that a person’s reward is appropriate for the action that he or she does. The motivating factor differs between obligatory actions and voluntary actions. For example, a person may pray *Dhuhr* because he or she does not want to go to *Jahannam*; this obligatory act may be motivated by fear. But when a person prays all the *Sunna* of *Dhuhr* or 8 *rak’ahs* of *Qiyam*, there is no fear involved nor is there a threat of punishment; these voluntary actions are motivated by love.
3.) **Sujud**

> "But prostrate and draw near [to Allah]." *Surah Al-'Alaq, 96:19*

Prostration is one of the ways to come near to Allah ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The closest a slave is to his Lord is while he is in a state of prostration, so increase your supplications (therein).”

Someone once asked Ustadh Ammar how he can make his *salah* less robotic while increasing in his *khushoo’*. Ustadh Ammar explained that one of the easiest and most basic ways to do so is by varying the *salah*. Say that you have been driving on the same route for years on your commute. When you know the route like the back of your hand, you can easily have a conversation with someone on the phone. But when you become lost, you hang up the phone, telling the person you will call them back. You realize you can no longer multitask in unknown territory, and you really have to focus! Likewise, try to vary your *salah* to help you be more present and focused. For example, one can learn a new *surah* in addition to new supplications for the different positions of *salah* (e.g. during *ruku’,* rising from *ruku’,* during *sujud*). One can make a different *du’a* in every *sajda*, especially since the Prophet ﷺ encouraged us to make extra *du’a* in *sujud*. In a *salah* that is 4 *rak’ahs*, that’s 8 different opportunities for *du’a! One can be for the Prophet ﷺ, one for your parents, one for refugees, etc.

4.) **During the last 3rd of the night**

‘Amr ibn ‘Abasah said that he heard the Prophet ﷺ say, “The closest that the Lord is to His slave is in the last part of the night, so if you can be among those who remember Allah at that time, then do so.”

So, if you have the opportunity and the ability to wake up a little bit before *Fajr* and remember Allah ﷺ at that time, then be one of those people.
AL-LATĪF
(The Subtle)

The word *lutf* is translated as subtlety. However, we must realize that the Beautiful Names of Allah ﷺ cannot be translated into one English word. So, *Al-Latīf* is not just The Subtle, as there are many different layers and shades of meaning, and this holds true for the other Names of Allah as well. These Arabic Names are very compact and possess great depth of meaning.

Ibn Manzur authored the famous Arabic lexicomp *Lisaan Al-‘Arab*, and he said that *Al-Latīf* is a Name from His Names. He explained that it means *tawfeeq* (success), *isma* (protection), *rifq* (kindness, gentleness, subtlety, and guiding people to their masaalih – that which benefits them from what Allah ﷺ has decreed).

So, we understand that *Al-Latīf* positions people in ways that are beneficial to them even when that benefit is hidden. *Al-Latīf* is mentioned in the Qur’an 7 times.

> “Indeed, Allah is Subtle and Acquainted.” *Surah Al-Hajj, 22:63*

**AL-LATĪF IS A NAME THAT CARRIES A LOT OF MEANINGS:**

1.) *Forbearance*

He does not punish them immediately for their sins.

2.) *Facilitating some of His creation for others*

For example, facilitating parents for their children and vice verse.

> “Allah is Subtle with His servants; He gives provisions to whom He wills. And He is the Powerful, the Exalted in Might.” *Surah Al-Shuraa, 42:19*

3.) *Grace*

He bestows, guides, and gives. Hence, gifts are called *لطائف*. So, when Allah ﷺ bestows gifts upon us, they are *لطائف* coming from *Al-Latīf*. 
4.) Hiddenness/Subtly of Himself

He is not perceived by the senses though He is apparent by His signs in revelation and creation. Allah ﷺ is not seen nor is He heard. The same holds true for His angels.

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لا تُدَرِّيَحُكَ الْبَصَرُ وَهُوَ يُدَرِّيَكَ الْبَصَرُ وَهُوَ الْطِيفُ الحَبِير١٣

“Vision perceives Him not, but He perceives [all] vision; and He is the Subtle, the Acquainted.”

Surah Al-An’am, 6:103

So, vision cannot encompass Him although He encompasses everything. The Names of Allah ﷺ are not randomly placed at the end of ayat; rather, they appropriately placed based on the context of the ayat.

5.) Nothing is hidden from Him

Al-Latīf is the One who knows the subtly of all things whether they be microscopic physical things or emotions, thoughts, and intentions. Sometimes we don’t even know our own intention, but Al-Latīf is always fully aware. Luqman advises his son that Allah ﷺ will bring forth even the smallest and most insignificant actions:

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يَبْنَىَ إِنَّ هَا إِنَّ تُكَفَّارَ حَبَّةٌ مِنَ حَرَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي

الْسَمَوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتُهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعُ حَكِيمٍ١٦

“[And Luqman said], “O my son, indeed if wrong should be the weight of a mustard seed and should be within a rock or [anywhere] in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Indeed, Allah is Subtle and Acquainted.” Surah Luqman, 31:16

So, Allah will bring it all forth because He is aware of all things. This ayah ends with the Beautiful Names Al-Latīf and Al-Khabīr

6.) The Creator of subtle and sophisticated design in ourselves and all of creation

7.) The One whose goodness and ihsan is hidden

Not only is Allah ﷺ Himself hidden, but His goodness is also hidden. Allah has designated so much goodness for us, but we may not see it at the time. We complain and cry, but we look back and say, “That was the best thing that ever happened to me!”
Many books reference one particular Prophet when discussing the Name **Al-Latīf**, and that is Prophet **Yusuf** (sal). In his story, we see bad things happening to him again and again. It goes from bad to worse. One bad situation is following by another bad situation! But through it all, we see that Allah (swt) is guiding him to goodness.

**ANALYSIS OF THE STORY OF YUSUF (sal) IN REGARDS TO LUTF:**

a.) Yusuf sees a dream of 11 stars, the sun, and the moon prostrating to him. Initially, he has no idea what this dream signifies, but at the end, he understands.

- The very fact that Yusuf had a dream at the beginning is from Allah’s kindness and gentleness. Ya’qub (as) knew that the story of his son will not end and that the dream will be manifested one day. The entire time, Ya’qub wants to be reunited with Yusuf even though his other sons are saying that Yusuf is gone! Ya’qub knew that he was not gone, as he says:

  
  وَأَعْلَمُ مِنْ أَللَّهِ مَا لَا تُعْلَمُونَ

  
  “...and I know from Allah that which you do not know.” **Surah Yusuf, 12:86**

- A person who knows Allah and His Beautiful Names and Attributes will traverse through the most difficult situations in his or her life differently than one who does not know Allah.

b.) Being thrown into a well seems like a horrible thing, but it ultimately takes him on a great journey. It essentially removed him from a poisonous environment and the evil intentions of his brothers.

- By removing Yusuf from the care of his father, Allah teaches Yusuf to depend on Him Alone (especially as he is a slave in a foreign land).

c.) Allah (swt) removed Yusuf from the plotting of the seducing women by putting him in jail. Scholars say that one of the manifestations of Allah being **Al-Latīf** is His decision to put you in a position to avoid sin even though that sin is absolutely available around you.

- For example, a Muslim kid may live in Las Vegas. Allah protects him by guiding him to the **masjid** in order to memorize Qur’an.

- The women are calling Yusuf to sin, and he has no way to avoid that sin (he is a slave being commanded). So, he says:

  قال َرَبِ َالسَّجْنِ أَحْبَبْ إِلَيْهِ يَدْعُونِي إِلَيْهِ وَإِلَّا نَصْرَفْ عَيْنِي كَيْدَهُنَّ

  أَصْبِعُ إِلَيْهِ وَأَكُنْ مِنَ الْجَهَلِّينَ

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“He said, ‘My Lord, prison is more to my liking than that to which they invite me. And if You do not avert from me their plan, I might incline toward them and [thus] be of the ignorant.’”

*Surah Yusuf, 12:33*

d.) In jail, Yusuf has a chance to give *da’wah* to the other prisoners.

e.) Yusuf is placed in a position that will eventually help him meet the king and become the treasurer. Allah was subtle in His way of bringing him to a position of authority.

- Yusuf does not break out of prison through a lightning bolt. Rather, the king sees a dream and eventually summons Yusuf.

It would be truly beautiful if we could read the pages of our own stories, seeing if from the perspective of *Al-Latīf* guiding, protecting, and saving us throughout our lives.

**FRUITS OF AL-LATIF**

1.) Loving Allah

He is subtle and gentle with us. He doesn’t punish us immediately for our sins. Allah is always guides us to goodness, whether we know it or not.

2.) Depending on Allah

When we learn to depend on Allah, we increase in our *du’a* and *istikhara* as we constantly refer our affairs back to Him. He knows where the hidden benefit and goodness lie for us, while we do not. With that knowledge, we become content with His decree.

“...and it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you, and it may be that you love a thing while it is evil for you, and Allah knows, while you do not know.”

*Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:126*

3.) Monitoring our actions and statements

We recognize that every subtle thing is recorded by *Al-Latīf*. Therefore, we monitor our statements, passing thoughts, and actions, including actions of the heart. Even if it is seemingly small and insignificant, Allah is aware of it, and He may hold you accountable for it. This concept ties in with the advice that Luqman gave his son: Allah will bring forth even the smallest grain of sand anywhere on this earth or in the heavens.
It is 8:35 am, and Jamal is having breakfast. In this scenario, we unlock the Beautiful Name of Al-Razzāq. There are some Names that have slight variations, but they are still considered Names of Allah . So, there is Al-Razzāq, Al-Rāziq, and Khair ul-Rāziqīn.

Al-Razzāq is considered a Name of Allah by unanimous consensus because Allah describes Himself in the Qur’an, saying:

إنَّ Allahَ  هو الْرَّزَاقُ ذو الْفَوْقَةِ الْمَتَّى

“Indeed, it is Allah who is the [continual] Provider, the firm possessor of strength.”
Surah Al-Dhariyat, 51:58

As for Al-Rāziq, this is controversial; some scholars are not in agreement whether this is considered a Name of Allah or not. And as for Khair ul-Rāziqīn, this phrase appears 5 times in the Qur’an, but there is also controversy whether this is considered a Name of Allah or not.

أَمْ تَسْتَلُعُهُمْ خَيْرًا فَخَرَجَ رَبِّكَ خَيْرًا وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْرَّزَاقِينَ

“Or do you, [O Muhammad], ask them for payment? But the reward of your Lord is best, and He is the best of providers.” Surah Al-Mu’minun, 23:72

Allah creates the rizq, and He creates the person, and He creates the sabab (cause) of the acquisition of rizq.
TWO TYPES OF RIZQ

1.) General Rizq

And there is no creature on earth but that upon Allah is its provision...

Surah Hud, 11:6

So, Allah provides for every creature on this earth and beyond it, even the fish in the deepest parts of the oceans and even the worms and insects. Allah provides for both Muslims and non-Muslims. Ibrahim tried to restrict the rizq to those who believe in Allah and the Last Day (i.e. not anyone else), but Allah explains that everyone will receive rizq.

And [mention] when Abraham said, "My Lord, make this a secure city [i.e. Makkah] and provide its people with fruits - whoever of them believes in Allah and the Last Day." [Allah] said. "And whoever disbelieves - I will grant him enjoyment for a little; then I will force him to the punishment of the Fire, and wretched is the destination."

Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:126

2.) Specific Rizq

This is provision that Allah provides to his believing slaves. This includes the rizq of Iman, faith in Allah, belief in Him, knowledge of Him, and submission to Him.

Say, 'Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth? Say, 'Allah. And indeed, we or you are either upon guidance or in clear error.'"

Surah Saba, 34:24
When we contemplate upon the Name Al-Razzāq, we learn to depend on Allah completely.

"Or who is it that could provide for you if He withheld His provision? But they have persisted in insolence and aversion." Surah Al-Mulk, 67:21

The Prophet ﷺ would make the following du’a during his salah when rising from ruku’:

اللَّهُمَّ لَا مَانِعَ لَمَا أعْطَيْتَ وَلَا مُعْطِيَ لَمَا مَنْعَتْ وَلَا يَنْفُعُ ذَا الْحَدَّ مِنْكَ الْعَدَدُ

"O Allah, none can deny that which You bestow, and none can bestow that which You hold back; and the greatness of the great will be of no avail to them against You."

[Bukhari and Muslim]

So, this du’a emphasizes that Allah ﷺ is the One who provides for you. If He has written something for you, it will come. If He has not written it for you, it will not come. The people of influence and power have no authority over Allah. He is The Provider, so don’t depend on anyone else.

A HADITH TO BE WRITTEN IN GOLD

The Prophet ﷺ said, “The Holy Spirit cast into my essence that no soul shall pass until it completes its lifespan and provision, so fear Allah and seek it beautifully. And do not let the delay of provision cause you to seek it by disobeying Allah, for what is with Allah cannot be acquired except through obedience to Him.” [Abu Nu’aym in al-Hilya, authenticated by al-Albani]
Ustadh Ammar first heard this hadith when he was studying the field of transactions. The Shaykh was talking about business; don’t let Shaytan entice you with seeking wealth in haram ways during times of financial difficulty. Don’t sell that which is haram or get involved in haram transactions. Some people make money in an attempt to obtain respect, security, and happiness. But don’t we see people with all the money, yet they are still not safe or happy? The Prophet said, “For what is with Allah cannot be acquired except through obedience to Him.” Allah can give an individual more barakah in just $10 as opposed to someone with $1,000. And a person who has $1,000 can have more barakah, serenity, and respect with his peers than a person with a million bucks, because all of that is under Allah’s control.

Ustadh Ammar was really struck by the beauty of this hadith, and he related it to the concept of relationships as well. Another aspect of rizq, in addition to money, is the spouse. This is provision from Allah, and it is written for you. We are required to have taqwa of Allah, seeking provision beautifully. When your spouse comes, he/she can find you in a state of taqwa or in a state of sin. Maybe you were hasty and fell into the haram. Don’t let the delay push you to seek out rizq in ways that Allah has prohibited. We want happiness, serenity, and completion from a relationship; seek that rizq through obedience to Allah.

**REFLECT ON YOUR RIZQ**

*قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من أصبنا منكم آمنا في سنة معاقف في جنبه عنة فوت يؤمن فيه فكأنما حيضت له الدنيا*  

_The Messenger of Allah said, “Whoever among you wakes up in the morning secured in his dwelling, healthy in his body, having his food for the day, then it is as if the world has been gathered for him.”_ [Tirmidhi]

There a number of things that Allah has given us, yet we don’t appreciate them, even though they are equal to everything. We wake up secure in our dwelling if we have ability to get into our car and drive outside with no militia or drones. Fear is absent from our lives, and we don’t worry about our families being abused if we leave the house.

We are healthy in our bodies if we don’t need any help getting up. Arabs say that health is a crown that rests on the heads of the healthy; it is invisible except to those who are sick. We don’t see this crown of health on our heads, but the sick person does.

We have enough to feed and sustain ourselves if it will last us for the day. Not for our retirement, not 15 or 20 years down the line, not for the kids’ college funds, not for summer vacation. Enough for just the day!
If we have all three aspects, then it’s like the entire world has been rolled out for us! If any of these aspects were taken away from us, our world would be drastically different. There were some incredibly wealthy people living in Aleppo, yet their security was taken away from them. Some people may be very rich, but they are not healthy and may not be able to enjoy their wealth.

Hence, contentment is something beautiful, and we must reflect on the rizq that Allah ﷻ has given us. From the best of rizq is that which brings happiness and tranquility. The Prophet ﷺ said about Khadijah ﷺ, “Verily, I was provided the rizq of her love.” Scholars have explained this statement in two ways. One interpretation is that the Prophet ﷺ was given her love (i.e. she loves him). It can also refer to the Prophet’s love of her. In both ways, it is rizq. It is truly beautiful to direct rizq to someone who deserves it, such as Khadijah ﷺ. This is Al-Razzāq.

**AL-KARĪM**

**AL-AKRAM**

It is 9 am as Jamal has finished breakfast and is getting for his job interview. His family really needs him to join the workforce and secure an income for the household. Although his semester is not over yet, he is ready, willing, and able to work. He has a job interview, and he is hoping for the generosity of Allah ﷻ. At this time, we unlock the Beautiful Names of Al-Karīm and Al-Akram.

*Al-Karīm* translates into The Generous while *Al-Akram* translates into The Most Generous.
“O mankind, what has deceived you concerning your Lord, the Generous.”

Surah Al-Infitar, 82:6

“Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous.” Surah Al-‘Alaq, 96:3

So, Al-Akram is a Name of Allah because ال precedes Akram.

HOW IS A NAME DEFINED IN ARABIC?

1.) The phrase ال in front
Al-Karīm is definitely considered a Name of Allah because ال precedes Karīm.

Arabic is made up of 3 components: ism (name/proper noun), fi’l (verb), and harf (particle). Scholars say that one of the ways to determine if something is a Name of Allah is to see it in the ism form in the Qur’an or Sunnah. It can’t be a verb. This is one of the strictest opinions by Ibn Hazb.

2.) Al-jar (i.e. it has a kasra)
We don’t put a kasra on something that is a fi’l or harf.

3.) Al-Nida (i.e. calling out)
For example, you call out, ya Rahman!

4.) Tanween
For example, Hayyiyy is a Name based on the description of Allah as Hayyiyyun in a hadith that will be explained later on.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF KARAM?

If someone is karīm, he is generous. Linguistically, the word karīm indicates every attribute of perfection. And so in Islam, when we talk about beautiful character or lofty attributes, it is called makarim al-akhlaaq, referring to the perfection of character. In the Arabic language, karam can encompass courage, generosity, truthfulness, and nobility. The Sahaba asked the Prophet ﷺ, “Who is the most noble of people?” The Prophet responded, “Yusuf al-karīm, son of Ya’qub al-karīm, son of Ishaac al-karīm, son of Ibrahim al-khalil.” So, the Prophet ﷺ was not talking about the one who was most generous, but rather the one who has reached a level of perfection in qualities and nobility.
Allah ﷻ is Al-Karīm, so He is perfect in everything He does in addition to His Beautiful Attributes such as generosity, mercy, benevolence, and justice.

**THE MEANINGS AND MANIFESTATIONS OF AL-KARIM:**

1. **Al-Karīm is The Generous and Disposer of bounty**
   Someone is described as karīm when he is generous and loves to spend. Some people are very reluctant to give away their money. Others may not mind. And others will love to give. Allah is One of those who loves to give continuously.

2. **Al-Karīm is the One who bestows and then praises**
   Allah ﷻ praises some Prophets in the Qur’an. He praises one Prophet for his patience, another for his sincerity. It was ultimately Allah who gave these Prophets such attributes.
   
   “An excellent servant. Indeed, he was one repeatedly turning back [to Allah].”
   
   Surah Sad, 38:44

   Allah describes Prophet Ayub  in this ayah as being awaab (oft-returning), and He praises him for that quality. Allah bestows qualities upon His slaves, and then He praises the slave instead of praising Himself. So, Allah is praising His slave even though He designed him to be that way!

   Some people are generous with their wealth, and Allah ﷻ is undoubtedly generous with wealth. Some people are generous with their compliments, and Allah is undoubtedly generous with His compliments as well.

3. **Al-Karīm is The One who gives before He is asked**
   For some people, you must first approach them and ask for help. Other people will help without being asked. A man once came to Ali bin Abi Talib  at night to ask for help with an issue. Ali told his son to turn off the lights. Later on, the child asked, “Why did you ask me to turn off the lantern when you were with that man?” Ali explained that he didn’t want to see the level of embarrassment on the man’s face. Ali possessed a high level of sensitivity, as he understood the situation could be a bit awkward and difficult for the man.

   Once Ustadh Ammar was visiting his uncle’s house for Eid with his cousin who was 6 years old at the time. Ustadh Ammar realizes he hasn’t given his cousin an Eidie, so he reaches into his pocket and gives him $5. His cousin goes to his room and returns with $20 for Ustadh Ammar! This is generosity. Ustadh Ammar didn’t ask him for anything, but he wanted to give him something anyway.
Ustadh Ammar remembers that Shaykh Salah would make a *du’a* when sitting by himself, saying, “Oh Allah, You are the most merciful of those who are asked, and You are the most generous of those who give.” Allah’s doors are not closed, and He appreciates peoples’ circumstances. There is no one more generous than Allah جل جلاله. Allah is as He gives without even being asked.

4.) The One who does not reject an asker

In Tirmidhi, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Indeed, Allah, is Hayyiyun (shy), Kareemun (generous), when a man raises his hands to Him, He feels too shy to return them to him empty and rejected.” We learn that *Hayyiy* is one of the Names of Allah; even though there is no ﷺ, the *tanween* is present. We also understand that one of the etiquettes of making *du’a* is to raise your hands because Allah is too shy and too generous to allow those hands to go back down empty.

Ibn Abbas ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Verily Allah has recorded the good deeds and the evil deeds. Whosoever intends to do a good deed but does not do it, Allah records it with Himself as a complete good deed; but if he intends it and does it, Allah records it with Himself as ten good deeds, up to seven hundred times, or more than that. But if he intends to do an evil deed and does not do it, Allah records it with Himself as a complete good deed; but if he intends it and does it, Allah records it down as one single evil deed.” If one merely intends to do a sin, there is no evil deed written for him.

Abdullah bin Mas’ud commented on this issue, saying, “How can a person’s single actions outweigh their actions which are multiplied by ten?” So, no one is destroyed with Allah except for someone who is just intent on his or her own destruction. The Prophet ﷺ said that everyone will enter *Jannah* except those refuse.

**THE RULES OF UNDERSTANDING ALLAH’S NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES**

When one studies the Beautiful Names and Attributes of Allah, one is actually studying the rules pertaining to this topic. How do we approach the Names of Allah? What do we believe in with regard to the Names of Allah? What are the guidelines? How do we know if something is a Name? What Attributes can and can’t we contribute to Allah?

One of Ustadh Ammar’s teachers compared studying the rules of Allah’s Names and Attributes to studying a driver’s manual. One studies the manual and understands the meanings of various signs in order to learn how to drive. However, one may study this material yet never actually drive. When we study Names such as *Al-Jamil* and *Al-Ghaffūr*, we experience breathtaking views when we benefit in terms of our spirituality; that’s when the driving takes place. We study the rules of Allah’s Names and Attributes so that we can actually implement that knowledge.
Rule #1
All of Allah’s Names and Attributes are Names and Attributes of Majesty and Perfection, and no negative meaning can be derived from them.

All of Allah’s Names are husna. The default ruling states that any negative quality or name cannot be associated with Allah خلقت. His life is a life of perfection. So, we do not associate sleep or slumber with Allah. Even if He didn’t tell us this specific information, we should be able to understand that He does not sleep or slumber. Allah tells us that He is Al-ʿAzīz and Al-Qawi; He is not overwhelmed by one or a thousand. No one can harm or kill Allah. His knowledge is perfect as He does not forget, nor is He ignorant or unaware. Allah’s justice does not allow for any oppression. All of His Names are in the most complete and perfect form.

Allah describes His Names as being husna, and He describes His Attributes as being Al-ʿAlaa (the highest) in 2 ayat:

اللَّـهُ خَالِقُ الْحَيَاتِ الْعَالِٰمِيَّةِ وَالْخَلْقِ الْخَلْقِ الْكِبْرِيَّةِ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ

“For those who do not believe in the Hereafter is the description of evil; and for Allah is the highest attribute. And He is Exalted in Might, the Wise.” Surah Al-Nahl, 16:60

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدِعُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يَعْمِدْهُ وَهُوَ أَهْوَىٰ عَلَيْهِ وَلَهُ الْمَثْلُ الْأَعْلَىٰ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

“And it is He who begins creation; then He repeats it, and that is [even] easier for Him. To Him belongs the highest attribute in the heavens and earth. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.” Surah Ar-Rum, 30:27

All of Allah’s Attributes are praiseworthy Attributes of majesty and glory, as are all of His Names.
Objects and idols that have negative attributes are not at the highest level. Therefore, from a logical perspective, they are not worthy of worship.

“And who is more astray than he who invokes besides Allah those who will not respond to him until the Day of Resurrection, and they, of their invocation, are unaware.”

_Surah Al-Ahqaf, 46:5_

Allah criticizes people who worship idols because they are objects that cannot answer a person’s invocations. They have negative attributes because they cannot hear or respond. Thus, they are not worthy of worship. Allah is stating that He is worthy of worship; He hears and responds.

The Names of Allah are very restricted. Every Name of Allah indicates an Attribute, but not every Attribute indicates a Name. For example, Allah can become angry:

“...not of those who have evoked [Your] anger...” _Surah Al-Fatiha, 1:7_

However, we cannot call upon Allah, saying, “Oh Allah, you are The Angry One, The Punisher.” His anger is an Attribute, but it is not a Name. But with every Name, we can derive an Attribute. For example, one of the Names of Allah is _Al-Hayy_, so His Attribute is life. Another Name of Allah is _Al-‘Alīm_, so His Attribute is knowledge. He is _Al-‘Azīz_, so His attribute is might. Such a concept does not necessarily hold true for human beings. A person may be named Karīm, but he can be the stingiest person. Someone may be named Qawi, but he can be the weakest person.

We said that all of Allah’s Names and Attributes are Names and Attributes of Perfection with no negative meaning. So how do we explain the following _ayat_?

“And the disbelievers plot, but Allah plots. And Allah is the best of plotters.”

_Surah Ali-‘Imran, 3:54_
“Indeed, they are planning a plan (secretly and hiddenly). But I am planning a plan (secretly and hiddenly).” *Surah At-Tariq, 86:16*

Plotting and planning in secret are negative attributes; people don’t look for these qualities in friends. However, Allah is plotting against a people who are plotting. Allah is making a *kayd* (hidden plan) against those who make *kayd* against Him and the believers. In doing so, Allah’s Attribute of plotting becomes praiseworthy. When you outplot someone who is plotting against you, this is an attribute of perfection, and it is known as a reciprocal attribute. The plotting does not entail planning against someone who is sincere and kind to you, but rather to those designing a plan against you.

“So, because these people mock Allah, His Messenger , and the believers, Allah mocks them. Again, this is a reciprocated Attribute. However, even with regard to the reciprocated Attributes, there is a limit.

“But if they intend to betray you [O Muhammad] - then they have already betrayed Allah before, and He empowered [you] over them. And Allah is Knowing and Wise.” *Surah Al-Anfal, 8:71*

There is no reciprocated action here. *Khiyana* (breaking of trust) is never praiseworthy in any scenario. The *ayah* does not state that because of their treachery, Allah was treacherous with them. Rather, Allah responds to their *khiyana* by giving the Prophet power over.
Rule #2
*All of Allah’s Names and Attributes are taken from the Sacred Texts, unlike descriptions (khabar).*

One cannot just make up a Name of Allah. It must come from revelation (Qur’an or Sunnah). In fact, one of the greatest sins is to describe Allah, call upon Allah, or say about Allah that which he or she does not know.

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قُلْ إِنَّا حُرِّمْتُمْ رَبِّي أَلْفَاحْشَاء مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَاطُنَ وَالْإِنْتِمَاتُ وَلَبَغَى يَغُرُّ الْقُلُوبِ
وَأَنْ تَشْرُكُوا بِاللهِ مَا لَمْ يُنْزِلْهُ يَدَ سَلَطَةٍ وَأَنْ تَفْوَلُوا عَلَى اللهِ مَا لَمْ تَنَافُسُوا

“Say, ‘My Lord has only forbidden immoralities - what is apparent of them and what is concealed - and sin, and oppression without right, and that you associate with Allah that for which He has not sent down authority, and that you say about Allah that which you do not know.’” Surah Al-A’raf, 7:33
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Scholars say that in this *ayah* Allah is describing sins in magnitude. The sins are escalating, becoming higher and higher in severity. It first starts with forbidding shamelessness such as immodesty and zina. It then forbids sin and transgression against others. It then forbids *shirk* which is the worst sin! And even above that, Allah forbids us from saying about Him that which we do not know. So, we cannot describe Allah or say that He has legislated such and such when we have no knowledge of such things. This is one of the goals of al-Shaytan, as Allah says:

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يَتَأَيَّبُهَا الْأَشْتِيْطَانُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَتَّى تَطْبِّقُوا حُكْمَيْنِ
وِلَا تَأْبَعُوا خَطَّاتَكُمْ

الْشِّيْطَانُ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مَّهِيجٌ

إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِالسُّوءِ وَلِلْفَاحِشَةِ وَأَنْ تَفْوَلُوا عَلَى اللهِ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوهُ

“O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy. He only orders you to evil and immorality and to say about Allah what you do not know.” Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:168-169
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The *in* ayah 169 indicates that this is a restrictive clause (i.e. this and only this). The only things he calls you to are evil, shamelessness, and that you say about Allah that which you do not know. So, speaking about Allah without knowledge is *haram*. Therefore, when we do speak about Allah, it must be through knowledge obtained through the Qur’an or the *Sunnah* of the Prophet .
There is unanimous consensus among the scholars that the Names and Attributes of Allah can only be derived through the Qur’an and Sunnah. Imam Ahmad mentions this in his work.

In regards to descriptions of Allah, they are more general, and they do not need to come from the Qur’an and Sunnah. For example, the word “God” is not a Name of Allah, nor is it an Attribute. Rather, it serves as a description that we use to direct people towards Allah. The same holds true for the phrase “His Majesty”; it is neither a Name nor an Attribute of Allah, but rather a description of Allah. All of the translations fall under the category of description.

**Rule #3**

_Allah’s Names and Attributes are unknown in number, even though what we know of His Attributes are more than His Names._

Every Name is an Attribute, but not every Attribute is a Name. So, by default, there are more Attributes than Names. Does Allah have infinite Names and Attributes? Ustadh Ammar poses the following question in regards to this issue: if they were infinite, wouldn’t that require more and more Names and Attributes to be created? So, it would be never-ending. They would be continuous, which means they are not eternal. Thus, this mentality is not correct because it would require new Names and Attributes of Allah to be formed. Those Names and Attributes are therefore not eternal, and thus they are not the Names and Attributes of Allah. Thus, we state the number of Names and Attributes of Allah are unknown. This is the opinion of Ustadh Ammar.

**HOW ARE THE NAMES OF ALLAH DERIVED?**

Scholars approached this question in a number of different ways:

1.) The first group simply relied upon the hadith of Waleed ibn Muslim in which he states what the Names are.

2.) The second group only relied upon that which is mentioned in the Qur’an in the form of a Name, and this is the position of Ibn Hazm.
   - So, it has to have the ج, or tanween, or ya, or jarr.
   - If it comes in the ism form, we accept. Otherwise, we don’t accept.
   - This is the strictest position.

3.) The third group derived Names from every possible noun and verb.
   - Instead of coming up with maybe 70 or 80 Names, this group came up with 1000 Names.
   - This is the group that says Allah is “The Fourth of Three”, “The Sender of Winds”, and “The Bringer Down of Rain”.
   - They created a Name for everything that Allah says He does.
4.) The fourth group states that along with the mentioned Names, we derive proper Names from some other grammatical forms as well.

- So, this position falls in between positions 2 and 3, and Ustadh Ammar says that this is the correct position.
- So, in addition to the Names that Ibn Hazm derived, we also take some Names that come in certain grammatical forms.
- In this group, some Names are set while others are controversial.
- Imam ibn Taymiyyah tried to qualify the Names into 3 categories:
  a.) Names of Allah that He is called upon (i.e. in du’ā).
      - Thus, it must be a proper Name and respectful to Allah.
      - E.g. ya Allah, ya Raḥmān, ya Karīm, ya Ghāfir, etc.
      - We cannot use Names such as “The Angry One”.
  b.) Names that come in the Qur’an and Sunnah.
  c.) Names that comprise of only praise and reverence in and of themselves.
     - We reject the Name Al-Fa’al (The Doer) because it doesn’t comprise of praise. There is neither praise nor criticism involved.
     - Proper Names are Names without a doubt e.g. Al-Ghafoor, Al-Raḥmān (majority of Allah’s Names come in this kind of original form)
     - But what about Al-Bāqi? Allah never mentions this Name in the Qur’an. Rather, He says:

   وَيَبَقَّى وَجَهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَّالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

   “And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor.”
   Surah Ar-Rahman, 55:27

   - Yabqā is a verb. Some scholars say that Al-Bāqi is a Name of Allah while others disagree. Not everyone considers it a Name of Allah.

   - What about the Names Al-Mubdi’ and Al-Mu’īd? Some scholars consider them to be Names of Allah based on the ayah:

   إِنَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ وَتَأَمَّنَّهَا وَإِنَّهُ الَّذِي يَخَلِّفُ الْأُمُورِ

   “Indeed, it is He who originates [creation] and repeats.” Surah Al-Buruj, 85:13
Qabeelat Wasat
March 2017

His Majesty
Ustadh Ammar AlShukry

Some scholars also derive the Names of Allah from the concept of *mudhaf/mudhaf ilay* (possessives). Everyone considers *Al-Malik* to be a Name of Allah, but there remains controversy about the Name *Al-Mālik*. Some consider it to be a Name of Allah while others do not. Allah  ﷺ never calls Himself *Al-Mālik* in the Qur’an. This Name only comes in the form of being *mudhaf* as seen in the following *ayah*:

> مَلِكُ يُوْمَ الْيَمِينِ

> *“The Owner of the Day of Recompense.”* Surah Al-Fatiha, 1:4

Some scholars also use the concept of *muqayid* (restricted) when studying the Names of Allah. For example, Allah  ﷺ says:

> إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءِ حَفِيظٌ

> *“Indeed my Lord is, over all things, Guardian.”* Surah Hud, 11:57

Note that the *ayah* reads *Hafeedh* not *Hafidh*. *Hafeedh* refers to a Protector and Preserver. Ustadh Ammar believes it is a Name because *Hafeedh* has a *tanween*.

> إِنَّا مِنَ الْمَعْرِجِينَ مُنْقَحْمُونَ

> *“Indeed We, from the criminals, will take retribution.”* Surah As-Sajdah, 32:22

The word *muntaqimūn* refers to avengers. Is *Al-Muntaqim* (The Avenger) a Name of Allah? No, because it is *muqayid*, as it is restricted to these particular criminals.

Unless a Name is specifically mentioned in the Qur’an and Sunnah, we must do more research. We can look up reputable scholarship or ask trusted people of knowledge. We also have the option of becoming masters of this field ourselves! But in order to do so, we must master Arabic, aqeedah, and a number of different sciences. As lay people, we can simply ask the people of knowledge.

**WHY DIDN’T ALLAH SIMPLY TELL US WHAT HIS NAMES ARE?**

When something holds incredible value, Allah  ﷺ may not tell us all the specifics. For example, we do not know the exact night of *laylatul qadr*, nor do we know the exact hour on Friday in which our *du’a* is accepted. We are not told because there is reward in the journey and striving. One may ask, “What if I never make *ihsaa* of the Names of Allah?” We must remind ourselves that Allah  ﷺ is *Al-Raḥmān, Al-Raḥīm*, and *Al-Shakūr*. We will find our reward with Allah *bi idhn illah*. Say that a person tries to search for *laylatul qadr*, praying fervently in the night. He or she may have missed it, but from the effort, Allah will bless this individual.
**AL-FATTĀḤ**

(The Opener)

It is 10 am, and Jamal has a job interview with Belal Khan who has a poker face. Jamal makes *du’a* and unlocks the Name *Al-Fattāḥ* (The Opener) as Belal starts to warm up to Jamal.

In addition to *Al-Fattāḥ*, there is also *Khair ul-Fātihīn* (The Best of Those Who Open). *Allah* is the One who opens up every locked door. Whenever we find obstacles that seem unmovable or we think that certain opportunities are sealed, call upon *Al-Fattāḥ*. When it seems that something we want is locked, buried, or forgotten, call upon *Al-Fattāḥ*. *Ya Fattāḥ*, open this for me, unlock this for me, and facilitate this for me!

*Ya Fattāḥ*, open every locked door that benefits us, remove our hardships, ease our burdens, illuminate our path, forgive our sins, and open the doors of mercy, bounty, benevolence, you are the best of those who facilitate.

One of the meanings of *Al-Fattāḥ* is The Judge, The One who rules between two people.

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**THE MEANINGS/MANIFESTATIONS OF AL-FATTAH:**

1.) *The One who opens the hearts to guidance and Iman*

Al-Tufayl ibn Amr al-Dawsi was a man from the tribe of *Daws*. He came to Makkah and was swarmed by the *Quraysh* who warned him of a magician and soothsayer. So, Al-Tufayl puts cotton in his ears and makes *tawaf* around the *Ka’bah*. He sees a man praying in a peculiar way, and he decides to take out the cotton because he is a grown man who has no reason to be afraid. The Prophet ﷺ recited some Qur’ān to him, and Al-Tufayl immediately embraced Islam. Scholars say that Al-Tufayl had every reason to walk of Makkah, but *Al-Fattāḥ* opened up his heart to guidance.

A man once came to Ustadh Ammar in the *masjid* to ask several questions such as the killing of apostates, marriage to ‘A’ishah ﷺ, and tattoos. And then the man asks, “Is it true that a person’s sins will be forgiven when they accept Islam?” This incident reminded Ustadh Ammar about ‘Amr ibn al ‘Aas ﷺ who initially fought against the Prophet ﷺ.
When he came to accept Islam, ‘Amr extended his hand as did the Prophet. But ‘Amr pulled his hand back, saying that he will accept Islam on the condition that his sins be forgiven. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Didn’t you know oh ‘Amr, that Islam forgives everything from before?”

So, there is a process of fath in which Allah ﷻ transforms a person’s heart. Even people who are adversaries to Islam can experience Iman, like ‘Umar ibn al Khattab ﷺ. A man once said that the donkey of al Khattab will become Muslim before ‘Umar does! But he was wrong. One of the manifestations of Al-Fattāḥ is to believe that Allah unlocks hearts. So, if we have family members who are so far away from the religion, call upon Allah to open up their hearts. Don’t give up on praying for them.

2.) The One who relieves darkness from his slaves, eases their burdens, removes hardships and harm, envelops in Mercy, and opens the door of blessings

The Prophet ﷺ commanded us to say upon entering the masjid:

اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِي آبَوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ.

“O Allah, open the gates of Your mercy for me.” [Muslim]

3.) The one who opens for His slaves the doors of knowledge and wisdom, understanding and insight

One person may discuss a topic in a very basic and superficial manner. Another person may have so much more insight, depth, and understanding that is completely different. This is apparent in books of tafsir in which one scholar will explain an ayah in a very elementary manner, while another scholar will write pages upon pages about that same ayah.

We too can sometimes experience this; we may have a mind-opening realization about an ayah that we have recited almost 1000 times. Allah ﷻ opens the doors of understanding at that moment. Oh Allah, open for us the gates of understanding, reflection, and comprehension!

4.) Opens the gates of access to this world

Al-Fattāḥ does not only open for us the doors of religious knowledge and mercy, but He also opens for us the doors of this dunya.

We are instructed to say when leaving the masjid:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ

“Oh Allah, I ask You from Your Bounty.”
So, you enter the *masjid* seeking Allah’s Mercy, and you leave the *masjid* seeking Allah’s Grace and Bounty. **You want to seize the *dunya* by the throat!**

“So, you enter the *masjid* seeking Allah’s Mercy, and you leave the *masjid* seeking Allah’s Grace and Bounty. **You want to seize the *dunya* by the throat!**

> “And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allah.” Surah Al-Jumu’ah, 62:10

**5.) Opens up the lands to His righteous slaves**

You will always read that the conquests of Muslims are called *fatūḥāt*. Allah opened up the lands of the Islamic world as it expanded to Persia, Greater Syria, and North Africa. **But Islam conquered hearts before it conquered lands,** and it eventually formed a wide *ummah* of diverse communities.

> “And [Allah] brought together their hearts. If you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have brought their hearts together; but Allah brought them together. Indeed, He is Exalted in Might and Wise.” Surah Al-Anfal, 8:63

**6.) The One who judges between His slaves in the hereafter**

> “Our Lord, decide between us and our people in truth, and You are the best of those who give decision.” Surah Al-A’raf, 7:89

**HOW DO WE ACCESS AL-FATTAH?**

1.) **Have *taqwa***

> “Let Whosoever of you, men or women, sets about his work, be watchful against himself, that he may not be blamed from Allah, and that he may not be forced to bear the burden alone, and that he may not be driven on to falsehood and lies.” Surah Al-Maidah, 5:92
“And if only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the heaven and the earth; but they denied [the messengers], so We seized them for what they were earning.” Surah Al-A’raf, 7:96

2.) Call upon Him and ask Him
There is a beautiful du’a that the Prophet ﷺ taught us to make every morning:

‘\[ \text{إِنَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُم مِّن فَضْلٍ غَنِيُّهُ }\]
\[ \text{مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ لِيُّنَبِّئُكُمْ بِنَارٍ أَحْرَرُ }\]
\[ \text{مِنْ نَارٍ خَالِدٍ بَعْدِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ }\]
\[ \text{فَاتَّبِعُوا الْبِنَاتَ الْمَهْرَاءَ }\]
\[ \text{وَلاَ تَفْسَدُوا فِي الْأَمْوَالِ عَلَى مَنْ كَتَبَ لَهُمُ الْبَخْشُ }\]
\[ \text{وَلاَ تَفْسَدُوا فِي الْأَزْوَاجِ عَلَى مَنْ كَتَبَ لَهُمُ }\]
\[ \text{فِي هَذَا الْأَيُّانِ وَالْأَخِرَةِ }\]
\[ \text{فَاتَّبِعِ النَّافَعَةَ وَلَا الْفُسُوقَ }\]
\[ \text{وَاتَّبِعِ الْإِنْذَارَ وَلَا الْقَوْمِ الْكُفَارِ }\]

“We have reached the morning and at this very time all sovereignty belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds. O Allah, I as you for the good of this day, its victories, and its support, and its light, and its blessings, and its guidance, and I take refuge in You from the evil of this day and the evil that follows it.” [Abu Dawud]

3.) Being an unlocker yourself
The Prophet ﷺ said, “There are some people who are keys to goodness, seals of evil. They unlock every goodness, and they seal every evil. So glad tidings be to the one whom Allah made the keys of goodness on their hands, and woe be to the one whom Allah has made the keys of evil at their hands.”
AL-WAHHĀB
(The Bestower)

It is 10:45am, and Jamal if offered the job position! He says that he can start tomorrow, and Belal is under the impression that Jamal has already graduated (when in reality he hasn’t). Jamal is receiving texts from the girl he will be visiting tonight in order to meet her family. As Jamal hopes for a wife, he unlocks the Name Al-Wahhāb (The Bestower).

The word *hiba* means a gift that is free from any motives (i.e. no hidden agenda, no strings attached) and it is not in recompense for anything; it is a bestowal. So, *Al-Wahhāb* is the One who bestows.

Al-Wahhāb is different from Al-Wāhib, the latter not being one of Allah’s Names. The *shadda* in the middle indicates that the action is happening again and again. Allah doesn’t bestow just once, but rather, He bestows again and again. Likewise, Al-Razzāq gives you *rizq* every moment of your day, not just once.

WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AL-WAHHAB AND AL-RAZZAQ?

Scholars say that *rizq* is something that you work for.

“It is He who made the earth subservient for you - so walk among its slopes and eat of His provision - and to Him is the resurrection.” *Surah Al-Mulk, 67:15*
If this food falls into your mouth while you lie bed, this would be considered a *hiba*. Allah is telling is to go out and work for our *rizq*. So, a paycheck is *rizq*, while the bonus you weren’t expecting is a *hiba*. *Rizq* can become routine while a *hiba* almost sends a shock through your system. Most people don’t go into *sajdat al-shukr* when they receive their paycheck, but they would do so if they received a bonus! Allah sends us these shock waves in the form of gifts in order to extract from us gratitude and appreciation.

The phrase *hiba/hab* is used frequently in the Qur’an when asking Allah for children or spouses because you don’t really work for them. It is mentioned several times throughout *Surah Maryam*.

> قال إنما أنا رسول ربي لأحب لك علما رضي

“He [Jibril] said, ”I am only the messenger of your Lord to give you [Oh Maryam, news of] a pure boy.” *Surah Maryam, 19:19*

> وَإِنَّى جَفَتُ الْمَولِيَّةَ مِن وَرَاءِيَ وَسُكَانَتِ أَمْرَتِي عَافِقًا فَهَبَ لَيِنِّي لَدْنَاكَ وَإِيَّاكَ

“And indeed, I [Zakariyah] fear the successors after me, and my wife has been barren, so give me from Yourself an heir.” *Surah Maryam, 19:5*

> وَالَّذِين يَفْوُلُونَ رِبَاءَهُبْ لَنَا مِن أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّينَا قُرْسَةَ أَعْيُنٍ

“And those who say, ”Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us an example for the righteous.” *Surah Al-Furqan, 25:74*

So, Jamal unlocks the Name *Al-Wahhāb* while he reads the text, hoping that Allah will bestow upon him a spouse.

If we were to count the gifts that Allah has bestowed upon us, we would not be able to. We don’t even try! Let us analyze two *ayat* that are identical; one *ayah* describes the nature of Allah while the other describes the nature of man.
And He gave you from all you asked of Him. And if you should count the favor of Allah, you could not enumerate them. Indeed, mankind is [generally] most unjust and ungrateful.” Surah Ibrahim, 14:34

You are currently in a state that you made du’a for 5 or 10 years ago. For example, you have the spouse, child, and job that you had asked Allah for. Your spouse and child may bother you, but Allah gave you what you asked for! The ayah ends by stating how humans are oppressive and filled with ingratitude. This is in contrast to the following ayah:

“And if you should count the favors of Allah, you could not enumerate them. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” Surah An-Nahl, 16:18

HOW CAN ONE ACCESS AL-WAHHAB?

Reflect on the blessings that Allah bestows on you and your level of appreciation and thankfulness for such blessings. Know that Allah has a right on every blessing He gives you.

- The poor have a right regarding your wealth.
- The weak have a right regarding your strength.
- The unable have a right regarding your ability.
- The ignorant have a right regarding your knowledge.
- Those with less talent have a right to your talent.

Use the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon you in ways that are pleasing to Allah.

There are so many blessings that we are immersed in that we never think about, ranging from the amazing way our bodies work to family, passions, dreams, and relationships.

Action Item: What is a du’a that you can make in your life using the name Al-Wahhāb?

In addition to the previous du’as mentioned, one can also say:

“Our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us and grant us from Yourself mercy. Indeed, You are the Bestower.” Surah Ali ‘Imran, 3:8
SEEKING THE COUNSEL OF ALLAH

Jamal sends Sakina a text saying that his job interview went well. He will be going over to her house that night in order to meet her family. Sakina responds by saying that she’s really nervous and that she’s going to pray istikhaarah. This is the prayer of seeking guidance in forming a decision or choosing the proper course. Before, the Arabs would make decisions based on divination arrows or by seeking omens through birds. They would release a bird, and if it flew to the right, they would continue with the action. If the bird flew to the left, they would not follow through with the action. Allah ﷺ has blessed this ummah with salat ul-istikhaarah.

On the authority of Jaabir Ibn ‘Abdullah ﷺ he said: “The Prophet ﷺ would instruct us to pray for guidance in all of our concerns, just as he would teach us a chapter from the Qur’an.

He ﷺ would say, ‘If any of you intends to undertake a matter, then let him pray two supererogatory units (two rak‘ah naaﬁlah) of prayer and after which he should supplicate:’

“O Allah, I seek Your counsel by Your knowledge and by Your power I seek strength, and I ask You from Your immense favor, for verily You are able while I am not, and verily You know while I do not, and You are the Knower of the unseen. O Allah, if You know this affair - and here he mentions his need- to be good for me in relation to my religion, my life, and end, then decree and facilitate it for me, and bless me with it, and if You know this affair to be ill for me towards my religion, my life, and end, then remove it from me and remove me from it, and decree for me what is good wherever it be and make me satisfied with such.
The Prophet specified that *du'a of istikhaarah* must be done after 2 *rak'ahs naafilah*. So, it cannot be done after *Fajr, Dhuhr, 'Asr, Maghrib, or 'Isha*. It must be made after an optional *salah*. The Prophet then said, "*Thumma la yad'u* (then let them say)." (Thumma) indicates that there is a delayed sequence (i.e. after a while). Some people think that *du'a of istikhaarah* is made in the *salah*. Ustadh Ammar asked Shaykh Waleed about this issue who said that *du'a of istikhaarah* is made after *salah*. The proof is the ‏ة‏‬ which differs from ‏ف‏, the latter indicated an immediate sequence. ‏ث‏‬ involves a time of disengagement (i.e. you finish the *salah* and then make the *du'a of istikhaarah*). Shaykh Waleed says that it is permissible to make the *du'a in English* because it’s not during *salah* to begin with. However, it is better if a person can memorize it in Arabic because Jaabir explained that the Prophet would teach them the *du'a* like he would teach them a *surah* of the Qur’an. Another option would be to recite the Arabic as much as you can and then use English as necessary.

You can pray *istikhaarah* for issues such as buying certain shoes, choosing a major, attending a school, or marrying a person. The Prophet taught the Companions to make this *salah* so frequently that some of them would even pray *istikhaarah* when the strap of their shoe would break and they needed to replace it. So, they would ask Allah for success even in small matters.

*Salat ul-istikhaarah* is not only for issues in which you don’t know what is good or bad, but also for issues that are seemingly good. For example, someone should pray *istikhaarah* whether or not to become the Imam of a *masjid*. We know that this job is good in terms of the *dunya* and *akhira*, but there may be certain *fitnahs* that arrive in that particular community that are not good for you. Or perhaps, accepting that position will make the individual arrogant.

When Umm Salamah received the proposal from the Prophet, she prayed *istikhaarah*. There could be not greater candidate, but she still sought the help of Allah. She was trying to determine whether marrying the Prophet was good for *her* and whether she would be able to give that role its proper rights.
**AL-‘ALĪM**
*(The Knowing)*

We unlock two Names of Allah every time we pray *istikhaarah*, and they are *Al-‘Alīm* and *Al-Qadīr*. Imam Yassir Fazaga from SoCal once asked a pastor who had read the Qur’an from cover to cover, “What stood out to you the most?” The pastor replied, “How much God knows. God knows everything!” *Al-‘Alīm* is mentioned in the Qur’an 157 times. After the Name Allah, *Al-‘Alīm* is the Name that is mentioned the most in the Qur’an.

> “Allah is the one who created you from weakness, then made after weakness strength, then made after strength weakness and white hair. He creates what He wills, and He is the Knowing, the Competent.” *Surah Ar-Rum*, 30:54

*Al-‘Ālim* indicates the greatness, expertise, and depth of knowledge.

*Al-‘Ālim* is mentioned in the Qur’an 13 times.
And it is He who created the heavens and earth in truth. And the day He says, "Be," and it is, His word is the truth. And His is the dominion on the Day the Horn is blown. [He is] Knower of the unseen and the witnessed; and He is the Wise, the Acquainted.

Surah Al-An’am, 6:73

Al-‘Ālim is the most basic form, and it refers to a possessor of knowledge. A person with knowledge is called an ‘ālim. It refers more so to the depth of knowledge. Al-‘Ālim is always paired with al-ghayb (the unseen).

Al-‘Alām indicates plentifulness and the great variety/amount of knowledge. This Name comes in an exaggeratory form and refers to reaching the height of knowledge. Al-‘Alām is paired with al-ghuyub (plural of unseen).

A person who possesses knowledge like an encyclopedia is called an ‘alāma due to the breadth of knowledge he or she possesses. This individual has mastered a variety of topics and every science.
The knowledge of Allah ✪ vs. The Knowledge of creation

1.) Allah’s knowledge is encompassing.
   - His knowledge is comprehensive. He knows everything that is good for us and bad for us, even when we ourselves do not know.
     a.) Allah knows the past
     b.) Allah knows the future
     c.) Allah knows what didn’t happen, and what would happen if that event took place

The Knowledge of Allah ✪ is complete, nothing is hidden from Him

Allah knows what would happen if you didn’t marry that person, if your parents never met, if you were born the other gender, if you had picked a different major, etc. He knows how our lives would turn out with all the countless possibilities!

"And with Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him. And He knows what is on the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but that He knows it. And no grain is there within the darknesses of the earth and no moist or dry [thing] but that it is [written] in a clear record." Surah Al-An'am, 6:59

Allah’s knowledge is perfect in every way, not only with everything we do, but also with everything that didn’t happen.

Allah ✪ is the One who teaches us what we do not know

"And [Allah] said [to the angles], ‘Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful.’ They said, ‘Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise.’” Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:31-32
Our knowledge will never reach the level of encompassing Allah

"And they ask you, [O Muhammad], about the soul. Say, "The soul is of the affair of my Lord. And mankind have not been given of knowledge except a little." Surah Al-Isra, 17:85

The knowledge that we possess is so small, and none can encompass Allah. Musa ﷺ was asked, “Who knows the most?” He responded, “Me!” So, Allah sends Musa on a journey to meet Khidr who possessed knowledge that Musa did not have. The two look out into the ocean and see a bird dip its beak into the water. Khidr says to Musa, “Your knowledge and my knowledge compared to Allah’s knowledge is like that which the bird took in its beak from the ocean.”

There is some knowledge which is only with Allah:

"Indeed, Allah [alone] has knowledge of the Hour and sends down the rain and knows what is in the wombs. And no soul perceives what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul perceives in what land it will die. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.” Surah Luqman, 31:34

Al-Salām
The Flawless

Al-Saalim – Free from Defects and Deficiencies

As per Surah Al-Hashr, it is a Name of Allah ﷺ

Linguistic Definition:
“The One Who is Unblemished in Essence, Names, Attributes, and Actions”

He is free from shortcomings, and He is Al-Salām in what He gives and withholds

The One Who Spreads Salaam, Spreads Peace between His Creation

Allah ﷺ has created us as people who love peace – peace is the default! He is the One who grants security and safety to His believing slaves.
The Prophet ﷺ commanded us to spread salaam amongst each other: “Al-Salām is one of the names of Allah ﷺ, so spread it amongst yourselves.”

**Al-Ţayyib**
The Pure, Good, Wholesome

“The Pure, Good, Wholesome” – Surah Al-Baqarah

These two words here are synonyms, but when they are put together, there is a difference. Just because something is halal does not necessarily mean it is tayyib (good, wholesome, maybe even healthy). Some halal food may not be very healthy!

On the authority of Abu Hurayrah ﷺ who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Allah the Almighty is good and accepts only that which is good. And verily Allah ﷺ has commanded the believers to do that which He has commanded the Messengers. So the Almighty has said: “O (you) Messengers! Eat of the tayyibaat (good things), and perform righteous deeds” (23:51) and the Almighty has said: “O you who believe! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you” (2:172). Then he (peace be upon him) mentioned a man who, having journeyed far, is disheveled and dusty, and who spreads out his hands to the sky saying, “O Lord! O Lord!” while his food is haram, his drink is haram, his clothing is haram, and he has been nourished with haram, so how can [his supplication] be answered?” (Muslim)

**Action Item:**
If I want my duaa’ to be accepted, I need to make sure that my income, nourishment, and sustenance are pure. We should take making duaa’ very seriously in this way.

**Question:** Is it better to make general or specific duaas when asking for a spouse?
**Answer:** It is better to make it general, but one can make duaa’ for a specific person too.

**What is the proof of kayfa?**
The linguistic meanings of the Attributes are understood, but not the manner of their existence.

**Wajh:** face
The way that it exists, the kayfa, we do not understand.
Some groups try to deny understanding the linguistic meaning.

One time, a person was talking about the Hand of Allah ☪️. They said that when Allah ☪️ says yad, there are 14 different meanings of yad in the Arabic language. We do not know what it means in this ayah. When people make these claims, do not assume their claims are right.

Yad does not have 14 meanings, it barely has 2 meanings! According to Lisan al Arab, these two meanings are “hand” and “power”. Where did these 14 meanings come from?

We know what these words mean – the Qur’an is not a book of riddles or encrypted messages, it is clear communication from Allah ☪️.

Abdullah b. Wahb reported, “Once we were with Malik b. Anas when a man entered and said, “Allah ☪️ rose over the Throne. How did He rise?” Malik bowed his head down, and sweat appeared on his forehead. Then he raised his head and said, “As He has described Himself. And it is not asked “how” and [asking] “how” is lifted from Him. As for you, you are an evil person – a person of innovation. Get him out of here!” So the man was expelled [from the masjid].”

The Companions did not ask “how” and neither should we.

6:00 PM: The moment of truth – Jamal is at the door, and Sakinah opens it. He will access two Names: Al-Ghaniyy and Al-Wāsi’

**Al-Ghaniyy**

The Self-Sufficient

Not in a State of Need

When a person is rich, they are not in need; they are not in a state of poverty. However, richness has nothing to do with income, but it has everything to do with contentment. If someone is a millionaire, but feels like they need to make $10,000,000, they are not in a state of richnes, but they are in a state of poverty. Someone can make $40,000, and if they feel like they are great, and do not need anything more, then they are rich.

In Sudan, one of Ustadh Ammar’s family friends, a very rich man, came to his village, which was a very poor village. He came to town, and an old lady gave him salaam. He asked her, “Is there anything you need?” She said, I am ghaniyya (rich). This became so profound to that man that he would end up telling that same story. This man was looking for that kind of richness when he did not need anymore. “If you have a heart that is content, then you and the owner of the world are equivalent.”

The Prophet ☪️ said, “Have contentment, and you will be the wealthiest of the people.”

1.) Allah 不愿意 receive our worship or our praise

We do not worship Allah  to benefit Him at all.

On the authority of Abu Dharr Al-Ghafari, of the Prophet  is that among the sayings he relates from his Lord is that He said: “...O My servants, if the first of you and the last of you, and the humans of you and the jinn of you, were all as pious as the most heart of any individual amongst you, then this would not increase My Kingdom an iota. O My servants, if the first of you and the last of you, and the humans of you and the jinn of you, were all as wicked as the most wicked heart of any individual amongst you, then this would not decrease My Kingdom an iota. O My servants, if the first of you and the last of you, and the humans of you and the jinn of you, were all to stand together in one place and ask of Me, and I were to give everyone what he requested, then that would not decrease what I Possess, except what is decreased of the ocean when a needle is dipped into it...” (Muslim)

Surah Faatir, Verse 50: “Oh people, you are the ones who are need of Allah, Allah is Al-Ghaniyy, Al-Ḥamīd”

The ghina of human beings is relative. **Even in our most self-sufficient state, we are still in need of Allah!** We are never completely independent.

The ghina of Allah  is perfect ghina, and He is Self-Sufficient while being Al-Ḥakīm and Al-Shakūr.

When human beings become independent and self-sufficient, they begin to transgress. For example, children talk back to their father when they start making money. Or, they start talking back to their mother when they reach her height.

Human beings are humble when they are in need, but when they are no longer in need, they have a different face. **Seek richness with Allah  and self-sufficiency with Allah , and only ask Him.**

The Prophet  taught us this duaa’: “Oh Allah, make me sufficient with Your halal over Your haram, and give me ghina by Your Grace so I do not rely on anyone else."

**Al-Wāsi’**
The Boundless
The One Who Encompasses Everything with His Generosity, Benevolence, Knowledge, Ability, Developing, and Planning

Mentioned 9 times in the Qur’an
In Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 115, the tanween indicates that this is a Name of Allah  

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Abu Ubaydah Ma’mar b. Muthanna said, “Generous, He encompasses what is asked of Him” (Gharib al-Qur’an).

Allah ﷻ is Boundless, and beyond our ability to praise Him!

The Prophet ﷺ said, “I cannot encompass Your Praise, You are as You Praised Yourself” (Muslim). The best way to praise Allah ﷻ is how He Praised Himself! When people think of new ways, they think that they are doing Allah ﷻ justice, when even the Prophet ﷺ said that he does not have the ability to praise Allah ﷻ entirely! He admitted his own limitations when praising Allah ﷻ.

The famous poet, Al-Mutanabbi, said, “He is so beyond the reach of praise that it is like, When He is given the choicest of praise, it is an insult.” No matter how much we praise Allah ﷻ, it is still less than what He deserves!

The Manifestations of Al-Wāsi’

1.) The Vastness of His Creation

“And the heavens We created with ayd (power), and We are expanding it.”

2.) The Flexibility of His Religion

A man came to Imam Ahmad and told him that he had written a book on all of the differences of opinion within Islam. He asked, “Should I call it The Book of Ikhtilaaf (differences)?” Imam Ahmad said, “Call it The Book of Sa’ah (flexibility).”

Example: The Issue of the Saliva of a Dog Being Najs

3 of the madhaahib consider the saliva of a dog to be najs. Malikis do not believe it to be najs.

Living in America, it is very easy to encounter dogs. If you believe it is najs, you follow the opinion of 3 madhaahib.

The position of the Malikis (so strongly argue that the saliva of a dog is not najs) creates flexibility. It allows for a lifestyle that Muslims would not even imagine, (for example, a dog sitting next to you on a plane in small cage).

Jamal has an amazing evening with Sakinah’s family. He is charming her parents, and things are going great. He leaves the house feeling like he hit a home run, and he is excited about the prospect. He goes home, settles into bed, and thinks about when he should text Sakinah. Is she going to text? He hears the sound of his phone, dives for it, and sees a message. It is from Sakinah! She says that she is sorry, but this will not work out, and that she wishes him
the best. There is not even a smiley face at the end of the message. This is a knife stab to the heart for Jamal.

Al-Ḥakīm
The Wise

Al-Ḥakam – The Judge
Al-Ḥākim – The Ruler

“It is You who is the Knowing, the Wise” – Surah Al-Baqarah

Allah knows what is best for us. He is not just All-Knowing – He knows what will give us the best outcome. **There is a big difference between knowledge and wisdom, and Allah has both.**

Knowledge: Imagine that a person has $10,000. They are 18 years old, and they just got their driver’s license. They have been working for the past two years to save up $10,000 so that they can buy their first car. They go to their friend who has a lot of knowledge about cars, and ask about the best car they can purchase for $10,000. After they get an answer from their friend, they go and buy a car for $10,000. Two months later, because they are 18 years old, they total their new car after getting into an accident while speeding on the highway.

Wisdom: Had they gone to person who is wise, they would have advised them to spend $2,000 on a much simpler car, get their first accident out of their system, and replace their car down the line. There is a difference between knowledge and wisdom!

The Meanings of Al-Ḥakīm

1.) The Knowledgeable One Who Knows the realities of things, the Possessor of wisdom

2.) The Ruler who can distinguish between matters

3.) The One Who Places things in their appropriate places

The opposite: oppression – placing something where it does not deserve to be placed.

4.) The One Who Refrains from doing lewd things and Restrains Themselves

Allah is even Al-Ḥakīm when He creates something evil. **If you do not have evil, you cannot appreciate the good.**
Understanding this can increase the quality of our worship. For example, Allah commands us to lower our gaze. If everyone walked around in niqaab, what would be the point of this command? The quality of someone lowering their gaze in the Summer in Chicago cannot be compared to this! Another example of this is speaking the truth among people who lie. **These evils and difficulties allow us to do good.**

What appears to be evil at first can actually be good in the long run. We look at the this world as the end all be all, but Allah positions us to live forever in the hereafter.

Abu Bakr (R) said, “As for what follows, there is no good in any good that is followed by the Hell fire, and there is no evil in any evil that is followed by Paradise.”

The evils of torture, imprisonment, massacre, famine, and disaster show us the status of ourselves and our communities. They are points of reflection!

In difficult times, we come back to Allah. When things are good, we may forget Allah.

**Manifestations of Al-Ḥakīm**

1.) Allah did not create mankind in vain.

2.) We should seek hikmah (wisdom)!

Whoever has been given hikmah has been given an incredible amount of goodness. Some people are so wise, and in the most difficult of scenarios, they can help solve problems and reconcile between people. This is very valuable. We should ask Allah to grant us wisdom because it is better than silver and gold.

**Al-Ḥakīm and Al-ʿAzīz**

Izza = power

The natural state of human beings is a lot of power and not a lot of wisdom! For example, teenagers are filled with energy, but lack wisdom. As they progress, they peak in power. By age 50 or 60, their wisdom is just off the charts! However, their power has weakened. **There is an inverse relationship between hikmah and izza, but Allah’s Power is perfect and His Wisdom is perfect.**

When Allah Overpowers, He Knows what He is doing. He Places everything where it should be placed.
Dr. Anisa’s day starts at 2:00 am because her baby is wide-awake and she is up and holding her baby, while her husband is fast asleep. The feelings evoked when talking about a mother are that of love and rahma. This unlocks the following Names for us: Al-Raḥmān, Al-Raḥīm and Al-Ra’ūf.

Al-Raḥmān is mentioned 57 times in the Qur’an and Al-Raḥīm 114 times.

“And your god is one God. There is no deity [worthy of worship] except Him, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.” Surah al-Baqarah, 2:163

“And never would Allah have caused you to lose your faith. Indeed Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful.” Surah al-Baqarah, 2:143

Allah ﷻ says in Surah Al-Baqarah, ayah 143 that He will not make you lose out on your Iman (faith), and that Allah is Al-Ra’ūf and Al-Raḥīm. Ra’ūf and Raḥīm are mentioned together, but there must be some distinction between the two terms. There are many terms that are considered synonyms when mentioned separately, but are different when mentioned together. For example, Iman and Islam mean the same when mentioned separately. Or when the Prophet ﷺ mentions a Muslim and a Mu’min, he is talking about the same individual. However, when these words are put together in the same ayah or same hadith, that indicates distinction between the two.
ALLAH’S MERCY IS GREATER THAN HIS PUNISHMENT
The Mercy of Allah is of the greatest Attributes of our Lord. When a believer greets a fellow believer, he says, ‘Assalamu alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatu.” Allah has designed our greeting as an invocation of Allah’s peace, mercy and blessings upon the person that we meet. Allah has also designated (even in the Qur’an) that His mercy overcomes His wrath. He also legislated that His mercy encompasses everything.

Allah says in the above ayat, “Tell My slaves that I am indeed the Forgiving and the Merciful. And that My punishment is the severe punishment.” Scholars have noted here that even when Allah is mentioning His mercy and His punishment, there are indications that Allah’s mercy is greater than His punishment. When Allah is talking about forgiveness, He is naming Himself “The Forgiving.” Whereas when He talks about the punishment, He does not call Himself “The Punisher.” Punishment is distinctly different from Him, whereas rahma and forgiveness are Names of His.

Another indication that Allah’s mercy is greater than His punishment is in the fact that He says, “Tell My slaves,” and establishes a relationship between Himself and His servants. He does not just say, “Tell the Children of Adam” or, “Tell the people.”

Allah also puts emphasis on His mercy by saying, anni ana (Indeed I am) The Forgiving. He induces hope before mentioning punishment. This indicates that we have a chance to attain His forgiveness and mercy before punishment comes.

REMEMBER THAT ALLAH IS THE MOST MERCIFUL
One of Ustadh Ammar’s teachers told him about a time when he went to a Muslim high school and asked the students a simple question “how many of you feel that Allah is angry with you?” and more than half the kids raised their hands. There are so many (practicing and non-practicing) Muslims who do not know who Allah is. They think of themselves as a lost cause because of the way we treat them, we don’t have patience with them, we don’t show mercy to them, and we criticize them. Because we do all this to them, they feel that Allah feels the same way about them. But Allah is the Most Merciful! There are so many examples of that. Hence, Ali ibn Abi Talib ﷺ said, “If I was told on the Day of Judgment that I had the option of my parents judging me, I would still rather that Allah judges me because Allah is more merciful to me than my parents.” Even though our parents would be willing to overlook our shortcomings, for Allah to judge us is better than having our mother or father judge us.
ALLAH’S MERCY MANIFESTS IN EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES

Allah’s mercy can manifest itself through a parent’s mercy for their child, mercy between spouses and so on. Even when we don’t get what we want, it is a manifestation of His mercy. How so? It is Al-Raḥmān who can take that job opportunity away from you. It is Al-Raḥmān who can give you sickness. It is Al-Raḥmān who can cause your parents to pass away. It is Al-Raḥmān who can cause your child to pass away. This changes your perspective. The One who gives and the One who withholds is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

A person can spend his entire life away from Allah and not worship Him. He could be worshipping his own desires and even hating Him. And so, Allah sends an SOS to him by way of a disaster or sickness so that he may humble himself and return to the fold of those who worship Allāh. Therefore, even calamities can become causes of mercy.

THE MOST HOPEFUL AND THREATENING AYAT

The scholars debated on which ayah brings the most hope in the Qur’an and which ayah is the most threatening.

Human beings, as a species, have survived natural disasters, famine, plagues, invasions, holocaust, genocides and the most difficult circumstances. The human spirit is what pushes people to survive. The belief that no matter how dark the night is, the sun will shine the next day.

“So taste [the penalty], and never will We increase you except in torment.”

Surah al-Naba, 78:30

The above ayah mentions it will never get better for the people of Hellfire. Their tomorrow will always be worse than their today. The Hellfire is where the human spirit dies. That is the most threatening ayah.

As for the most hope-inducing ayah, the scholars debated.

“Allah does not forgive that shirk be done with Him, and He forgive everything that is less than that to whomever He wills” Surah An-Nisa, 4:48

Why is the above ayah hope-inducing? Because if you do not commit shirk, then you are in position for Allah to forgive you no matter what you have done. Some scholars said that is the most hope inducing ayah.
Ali ibn Abi Talib said beautifully, “As for us, the family of the Prophet, the most hope inducing ayah for us is the ayah in Surah al-Duhaa where Allāh says, ‘walasawfa yu’teeka rabbuka fatarda.’” Where Allāh promises that he is going to continue to give to the Prophet until he is pleased. Why is this the most hope-inducing ayah? This is a promise that should invoke love in our hearts for the Prophet. Because you are not going to have a better lawyer or arbitrator on the Day of Judgment than the Prophet. Allah has promised him that He won’t leave him unsatisfied and we know that the Prophet is not going to be satisfied until every person of his ummah enters Paradise.

However, Allah knows best, but it seems the most hope inducing ayah is the one below from Surah al-Zumar.

“Allah says He forgives all sins and He is warning us from despairing from His mercy. There is nothing that a person can do in their lifetime that they cannot repent from.

Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi was an incredibly vicious tyrant who killed some of the Sahaba and even some of the masters of the tabi’een, he killed many people. When he was on his deathbed, he said, “Oh Allah, they are saying that you will not forgive me, so forgive me.” That news reached Al-Hasan al-Basri, to which he said, “If he truly said that, then I hope that is the case.” We see circumstances in which people commit the most brutal of things, yet they can still say the shahada at the end. Allah is Al-Rahmān and Al-Rahīm. The best thing people can prioritize is introducing people to the mercy of Allah, that we make people conscious and aware that Allah is the most merciful. One should not introduce Allah as a vindictive, restrictive God.

“And give glad tidings to the believers that they have from Allāh incredible grace.” Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:47
We are the servants of a merciful, benevolent God. Allah created us sinful, not to burden each other with sin, but that we seek His forgiveness and find Him to be forgiving. That we may seek His mercy and find Him to be merciful. We are never going to be sinless, and even if we were, then the Prophet said that Allah would replace us with creation that would sin and seek His forgiveness and that He could forgive them.

**MANIFESTATIONS OF THE MERCY OF ALLAH**

1) *Mercy of Allah in the womb*

The Prophet said, “Whoever fulfills the ties of kinship, Allah will fulfill that person’s needs. And whoever breaks the ties of kinship, Allah will break them.” This is something that we falter with a lot. It gets difficult when a family is spread out overseas, it can be a burden to fulfill all the ties of kinship. However, maintaining ties of kinship is an act of worship.

2) *Mercy of Allah in His own forgiveness*

“Allah is Al-Ghaffūr, the possessor of mercy. If Allah were to take people by what they have done, Allah would have hastened their punishment. If Allah were to hold us accountable today, we would be destroyed, but Allah continues to have mercy and He continues to pardon.” *Surah Al-Kahf, 18:58*

3) *Mercy of Allah in sending the Prophet*

“Allah said the reason He sent the Prophet was not just a mercy to human beings, but a mercy to the worlds. The goodness of a Muslim should extend to everything and everyone. Do Muslims have something to say regarding the environment? Yes. Do Muslims have something to say about animal rights? Yes.

The Prophet had a camel called Al-Qaswaa. Al-Qaswaa was the fastest camel, but one day, it was not moving forward. The *Sahaba* said Al-Qaswaa has become disobedient, but the Prophet responded, “No, she is not and that is not her character. But the One who is restraining her is the same One who restrained the elephants.” The Prophet defended the honor of his camel.
The Prophet ﷺ said, “Everything makes astaghfar for the scholar, even the fish in the sea.” Because the goodness of the person who has learned the religion and teaches it to others is not going to extend just to humanity, rather it will even extend to the fish in the sea.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AL-RAHMAN AND AL-RAHIM

This is a very controversial and famous difference of opinion.

1) Some said Al-Raḥmān is talking about Allāh’s essence. And they said He is Al-Raḥīm in His actions.

It is said that you are not allowed to name anyone Al-Raḥmān because Allāh is Al-Raḥmān in His essence. Historically, Allāh punishes anyone who names himself Al-Raḥmān. Musaylimah al-Kazzab called himself, “Raḥmān ul-Yamamah” and we know what happened to him.

“To the believers, he is kind and merciful.” Surah At-Tawbah, 9:128

People can name themselves Raḥīm. Allah, in the above ayah, refers to the Prophet ﷺ as Raʿūf and Raḥīm.

2) Some scholars say Allah is Al-Raḥmān in the dunya and Al-Raḥīm in the akhira.

So, Allah is Al-Raḥmān for all the creation, the believer and the non-believer here in this dunya; everyone experiences Allāh’s mercy. However, on the Day of Judgment, Allāh’s mercy will only be for the mu’mineen. Those who disagree with this categorization, they quote the hadith in which the Prophet ﷺ would call upon Allah and he would say, “Oh Raḥmān of the dunya and the akhira and Raḥīm of both of them.” And so Allah is Al-Raḥmān and Al-Raḥīm in both realms.

3) Some said Al-Raḥmān indicates the depth of Allāh’s mercy, that He is filled with mercy. And Al-Raḥīm indicates the continuation of that mercy.

Allah is filled with mercy and He is continuously dispensing that mercy. This is the categorization that Ustadh Ammar is inclined to the most, and Allah knows best.

WAYS TO ACQUIRE THE MERCY OF ALLAH

1) By following the shari‘ah of Allah

“And this [Qur’an] is a Book We have revealed [which is] blessed, so follow it and fear Allāh that you may receive mercy.” Surah An’am, 6:155
2) **By being concerned with the Qur’an**

“So when the Qur’an is recited, then listen to it and pay attention that you may receive mercy.”

*Surah Al-A’raf, 7:204*

3) **By obeying Allah 👑 and the Prophet 📚**

“And obey Allah and the Messenger that you may obtain mercy.”

*Surah Ali ‘Imran, 3:132*

4) **By making istighfar**

“Why do you not seek forgiveness of Allāh that you may receive mercy?”

*Surah An-Naml, 27:46*

The Prophet used to seek forgiveness over 100 times a day. Al-Hasan Al-Basri used to say, “Make *istighfar* on your commutes, at your eating tables, at your work and in all circumstances because you don’t know when the mercy is going to descend.”

**THE STORY OF THE ARAB POET, ABU NAWAS**

This story shows you the difference between people who know Allah and those who don’t. In the past, even the transgressors of a society knew who Allah was, but the problem today is that people who are practicing and non-practicing don’t know who Allah is. They don’t even know how to approach or feel about Allah. There was an Arab poet named Abu Nawas. He was a masterful poet, but he wasn’t the greatest of Muslims. In fact, he had a fondness for alcohol.

Abu Nawas was seen in a dream and he was asked by someone, “What did your Lord do with you?” Abu Nawas responded, “My Lord forgave me because of some verses I had written and placed under my pillow.” These verses are, “My Lord, if my sins are great because of their number, I know that your forgiveness is greater. My Lord, I call upon you with subjugation and humility. If you repel my hand, then who will forgive me? If the only people who can have hope in you are the good guys, then who can the criminal have hope in? I have no path to you, except for hope. And your beautiful forgiveness, and that I am Muslim.” This is *Al-Raḥmān* and *Al-Raḥīm.*
Al-Ra'ūf is usually translated as “The Kind” or “The Gentle,” but that is not what it means. Al-Ra'ūf is described as the highest level of mercy, not wanting any hardship.

“Ra’fah is the most extreme form of mercy, its highest point. It is mercy and more.” (Ibn Mandhūr, Lisān al-'Arab)

The Difference Between Raḥmah and Ra’fah

Raḥmah is a mercy that encompasses difficulty. A person may go through difficulty even though it is a mercy for them. Ra’fah is a mercy that is a higher station and has no difficulty in it. Hence Allah says,

أَلْفَ وَأَلْفَ وَأَلْفَ فَأَجُلِّدُوَالْرَّبَةُ وَا لَا تَأْخُذُوْرَاهَا رَأْفَةً فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ

“The [unmarried] woman or [unmarried] man found guilty of sexual intercourse - lash each one of them with a hundred lashes, and do not be taken by pity for them in the religion of Allah” Surah An-Nur, 24:2

In the ayah above from Surah An-Nur, Allah describes the punishment prescribed for the person who committed fornication. And then He says, “Do not let ra’fah overtake you regarding the religion of Allah.” He didn’t say, “Do not let raḥmah overtake you.” Allah didn’t say to not have mercy, He said do not let that mercy stop you from applying the punishment. Raḥmah can involve pain, ra’fah cannot.

Imagine your mom is good at disciplining. She is merciful to you, but stern. When you do something wrong, she disciplines you. And your dad is a complete softy. His mercy doesn’t allow for him to cause you the slightest pain. He won’t put you in timeout, because you will start crying. That is ra’fah. Ra’fah is when you do not want the person to feel any pain. If your parent doesn’t allow you to take karate classes because they’re afraid you would get hurt, that is ra’fah.
“The Day every soul will find what it has done of good present [before it] and what it has done of evil, it will wish that between itself and that [evil] was a great distance. And Allāh warns you of Himself, and Allāh is Kind to [His] servants.” Surah Ali ‘Imran, 3:30

Allah says that He is, for the slaves, Ra’ūf. The scholars said one of the ways we can distinguish ra’fah from raḥmah is that ra’fah is before the sin and raḥmah is after the sin. Allah is Al-Ra’ūf before the sin, He is warning you to not sin because He doesn’t want you to go through the cleansing process that is to come after the sin. After a person commits a sin, they find Al-Raḥmān. Ra’fah is the prevention and raḥmah is the cure.
It is now 5:30AM for Dr. Anisa and she is praying Fajr. This unlocks for us all the Names that are in salah. Salah begins with “Allahu akbar,” which brings us to the Name of Allāh.

**Pronunciation:** A double L, exhale with love, Allaah.

Allah is the most oft repeated Name in the Qur’an and Sunnah. From the meanings of Allah is the One who is grandiose in His essence and attributes. He is the unimaginable, the incomparable, the incomprehensible. Allah is the Name that is the default, every other Name is a description of Allah, and Allah is not the description of every other Name. For example, Al-Raḥmān is a description of Allah, but Allah is not a Name of Al-Raḥmān.

**SOME OTHER MEANINGS OF THE NAME ALLAH**

- Some have said Allah means “The One who is worshipped.”
- Some have said Allah comes from “al-ilha,” which means al-ibadah, also meaning “worshipped.”
- Some have said the Name Allah has not been extracted from anything else and it is just a default Name that does not come from any other meanings.

**THE GREATEST NAME OF ALLAH**

The strongest opinion is that “Allāh” is the greatest Name of Allāh, but there is a discussion on the concept of the greatest Name of Allāh. Does Allāh have a Name that is greater than every other Name? It doesn’t come from the Qur’an, it comes of the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ.

*It was narrated that Al-Qasim said: The Greatest Name of Allāh, if He is called by which He will respond, is in three Surah: Al-Baqarah, Al ’Imran and Ta-Ha. (Hasan) Another chain for something similar from Al-Qasim, from Abu Umamah, from the Prophet. [Sunan Ibn Majah]*
Anas said that: The Prophet entered the Masjid and there was a man who had performed Salat and was supplicating. He was saying in his supplication: “O Allāh, none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh, You are the One Who gives blessings, Originator of the heavens and the earth, Possessor of glory and generosity (Allāhumma lā ilāha illā ant, al-Mannān, Badi’us-samāwātī wal-arḍ, Dhal-Jalāli wal Ikrām).” So the Prophet said: “Do you know what he has supplicated Allāh with? He has supplicated to Allāh by His Greatest Name, the one which if He Is called upon by it, He responds, and when He is asked by it, He gives.” [Jami`at-Tirmidhi]

It was narrated from Asma’ bint Yazid that: the Messenger of Allāh (saas) said: “The Greatest Name of Allāh is in these two Ayat: And your Ilah (God) is One Ilah (God - Allāh), La Ilaha Illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.” And at the beginning of Surah Al ’Imran. [Sunan Ibn Majah]

OPINIONS REGARDING THE NAMES OF ALLAH

1) They are all great Name, and there is no “greatest” Name. When the Prophet ﷺ says, “He has asked Allah by His greatest Name,” he is simply commenting that all these names are great. They are all the great Names of Allah, and there is no distinguishing notion between them. Some scholars attributed this position to Imam Malik. Of the contemporary scholar who held this position is Sh. Ibn Baz.

2) Only Allah knows for sure. There is one of them for sure, but we will never know because the Prophet ﷺ didn’t tell us. Like laylut ul qadr, where we’re not sure when that night is.

3) Those who held an actual position, and the majority said it is Allah. Because Allah is the Name mentioned in so many ahadith, and it is the most frequently mentioned name in Qur’an. Allah is the only name where you don’t take away the alif lam like you do for every other Name, and you say, “Ya Allah.” Allah is the default, everything else is a description of Allah.

However, Ibn Hajr mentioned 11 different opinions that scholars have in his Fath Al-Bari.

- The most popular opinion is that it is “Allāh”
- The second most popular opinion is that it is “Al-Ḥayy” and/or “Al-Qayyūm”
- Some held it to be “Al-Rabb.”
- Some held it to be “Al-Raḥmān” and/or “Al-Raḥīm”
- Others include “Al-Wahid,” “Al-Ahad,” “Al-Samad, Al-Mannan,” “Dhal-Jalāli wal Ikrām,” “Badi As-Samawati Wal-Ard.”

Did You Know?
Allah is the name that is made up of all light letters to be pronounced easily that can be pronounced by a person who is foreign to the Arabic tongue.
As Dr. Anisa is praying Fajr, she says “Allâhu Akbar.” “Kabîr” means “big.”

Al-Kabîr and Al-Mutakabbir are both Names of Allâh. Al-Mutakabbir is mentioned in Surah Al-Hashr, ayah 23. As for Al-Kabîr, it appears six times in the Qur’ân.

“Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allâh has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth. So righteous women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the husband’s] absence what Allâh would have them guard. But those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance - [first] advise them; [then if they persist], forsake them in bed; and [finally], strike them. But if they obey you [once more], seek no means against them. Indeed, Allâh is ever Exalted and Grand.” Surah An-Nisa, 4:34

This is the famous, controversial ayah where Allâh discusses the relationship of a man and woman and ways to bring about reconciliation. Allâh talks about marital discord and He says, “If they obey you, do not seek any sort of power over them.” And then the ayah ends with two Names of Allâh. This is the ayah where people use it to exercise authority and dominance over women, but Allâh calls Himself Al-Kabîr at the end of the ayah and reminds husbands to not get deluded with their strength and power that they may feel they have over their wives. Allâh reminds the husbands that He is bigger, stronger, higher, grander, mightier than the husbands.

Al-Mutakabbir is the One who is above all shortcomings and defects.

It was narrated from Ibn ʿAbbas that the Messenger of Allah said: Allah the Glorified, says: “Pride is My cloak and greatness My robe, and whoever competes with Me with regard to either of them, I shall throw him into Hell.” [Sunan Ibn Majah]
Kabīr comes from the word kibr, meaning grandioseness. Kibr is also translated as “arrogance.” Kibr is an attribute that when it comes to Allah, it is perfection and when it comes to human beings, it is a shortcoming. Feeling above others and the feeling of grandioseness is something that is only for Allah.

Can a person still practice a level of kibr?
One can feel kibr in that they can feel above any whispers of shaytan. Feeling above some sort of meager sin. The Prophet ﷺ was giving the baiyah (the pledge of allegiance) to women and when Hind accepted Islam, the Prophet took the pledge from her that she does not commit zina, she does not steal and so on. Hind made a comment, “You are telling me to take a pledge to not commit zina, would a free woman ever commit zina?” She implied that she is above zina and there is no way she would commit such an act. The same pledge was taken from all the women.

Having kibr in the context of being too proud for shaytan and feeling above falling into sin is fine, but when is kibr a problem? Kibr is rejection of the truth and belittling people (based on nationality, gender, age, etc.).

The Fruits of Al-Kabīr
Of the effects of this name, is to recognize that the strongest a person is when they seek the support of Allāh, and the greatest a person is when they humble themselves to Allāh. And that there is no one to overpower them if they are with Allāh, and He is the greatest source of support. And of the fruits of Al-Kabīr is to recognize no one is greater than Allāh. Do not bend your back, the back that you bow with in ruku’, to anyone other than Allāh.

The Quraysh did not have a problem with sujood, but they did have a problem with ruku’, because they did not want to bend their backs to anybody. They were the most difficult people ever, and they did not want to make ruku’ to Allāh. Dr. Martin Luther King said, “No one can ride your back unless you bend it.” We should not submit to anyone except Allāh. We as an ummah didn’t become ruled by tyrants until we submitted to them.

Al-Malik, Al-Mālik and Al-Malīk
Dr. Anisa is now reciting Surah Fatiha in Fajr prayer and unlocks three Names: Al-Malik, Al-Mālik and Al-Malīk.

“He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign,” Surah Al-Hashr, 59:23

Al-Malik is a Name from Surah Al-Hashr, and it appears five times in the Qur’ān.
Al-Mālik appears in Surah Fatiha. It also appears in Surah An-Nas, but it is mudhaaf (not pure form). Some scholars consider Al-Mālik to be a Name of Allah, and some do not.

Al-Malīk comes towards the end of Surah Al-Qamar.

“In a seat of honor near a Sovereign, Perfect in Ability.” Surah Al-Qamar, 54:55

These three Names are talking about the Kingship of Allāh. Al-Malik refers to The King, Al-Mālik refers to The Owner. Immediately, we recognize that people can be kings and people can be owners. However, the kingship of individuals is different from the kingship of Allāh and the ownership of individuals is different from the ownership of Allāh. Our kingship and ownership is tied to a time and a place, but Allāh’s kingship and ownership is not tied to a time and place and is absolute.

Ozymandias by Percy Shelley
In 1817, Percy Shelley wrote the poem “Ozymandias.” Shelley had heard news that the British museum had acquired a large fragment of a statue of the pharaoh Ramesses II from 13th century B.C. That inspired him to write this poem filled with wisdom.

I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said—“Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert... Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
My name is Ozymandias, king of kings;
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.”

[Percy Shelley]

Where is the pharaoh with his court, his power, and his slaves? These were pharaohs that when they travelled, a thousand people would travel with them. Yet his statue now lies in the desert, lifeless. This is the reality of not just kings and arrogant people, it is all reality. The land that you are in now, how long has it existed? There was a time when a completely different set of people was in the same place. People who were walking around here even 50 years ago were completely different people. They all looked up at the sun every morning and a breeze touched their skin. They all had hopes and dreams. But it all goes away.
Look at the pyramids. Who knows how many people and resources it took to put all the big bricks in place? At the end, it is just someone’s burial place. All you find there now is people taking pictures of themselves pretending to hold the pyramids in their hands. Imagine if these pharaohs saw what people were doing today with their pyramids. This is what happens. And there is nobody who will own the Earth like they did. There will never be circumstances where a person will be able to rule places and countries like these people ruled a thousand years ago. They were looked at as gods. The pharaoh says, “Doesn’t Egypt belong to me? Don’t these rivers flow beneath my feet? I don’t know of any god for you other than me.” These were looked at as absolute authorities, but where are they now? It shows us that Allāh is Al-Malik.

Abdullah b. 'Umar reported Allah’s Messenger saying: Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, would fold the Heavens on the Day of Judgment and then He would place them on His right hand and say: I am the Lord; where are the haughty and where are the proud (today)? He would fold the’ earth (placing it) on the left hand and say: I am the Lord; where are the haughty and where are the proud (today)? [Muslim]

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "The most awful (meanest) name in Allāh’s sight." Sufyan said more than once, "The most awful (meanest) name in Allāh’s sight is (that of) a man calling himself king of kings." Sufyan said, "Somebody else (i.e. other than Abu Az-Zinad, a sub-narrator) says: What is meant by 'The king of kings' is ‘Shahan Shah.,” [Bukhari and Muslim]
Allah is the true King and on the Day of Judgment, Allah is going to say, “I am the King” and there will be no challengers to Allah. Him being the King will be apparent that day to everyone. Calling yourself or someone else “king of kings” is absolutely haram. Only Allah is the King of Kings.

Manifestations of Allah being Al-Malik
You ask Allah for His resources and His access.

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلَّاكَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ تَوَلَّىَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ مِنْ تَشَاءَ وَتَضْرِيعَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ مِنْ تَشَاءَ
وُقِيَّرَ مِنْ تَشَاءَ وَتَبَذِّلَ مِنْ تَشَاءَ يُبِيدَ أَلْحَمَّرَ إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Say, “Oh Allah, The Owner of all dominion, You give the dominion to who You wish, and You seize it from who You wish. You give honor to whom You wish, and You debase whom You wish. You have, in Your Hands, all goodness.” Surah Ali ‘Imran, 3:26

Notice Allah says tanzi’ (that He “seizes” the dominion from whom He wishes), not takhuth (“takes” it). This gives us an insight into the nature of man. When man receives power, the default is that he doesn’t just give it up afterwards, it has to be seized from him and it has to be ripped away from him.

**AL-RABB**

"Development" in Arabic is “tarbiyyah,” coming from the word “Rabb.”

When you are accessing the Name Al-Rabb, know that He is the One who takes care of you, provides for you, looks after you, protects you.

*Al-Rabb* is usually translated as “The Lord,” but it is much more than that. The linguistic definition of Rabb, as Ibn Mandhur says in *Lisān al-‘Arab*, is “the King, the Master, the One who develops from one stage to the next, the One who plans and designs, the One who maintains, the One who disposes blessings.” Allāh is *Rabb-ul-‘alameen*. He is all of this for all the worlds.

**Did you know?**

When you are accessing the Name Al-Rabb, know that He is the One who takes care of you, provides for you, looks after you, protects you.
Two Types of Rububiyyah (Lordships)

General rububiyyah: Allah is the Lord of everything, He takes care of everyone, provides for everyone, He gives them all life and healing etc.

Specific rububiyyah: This is specifically for the believers. He nourishes them with faith, He heals their hearts, hence the name Al-Rabb is the name that the prophets used throughout the Qur’an to call upon Allah for their needs and the vast majority of Qur’anic prayers call out to Allah by His attribute of being the Rabb.

"Our Lord, give us in this world [that which is] good and in the Hereafter [that which is] good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire." Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:201

"Our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us and grant us from Yourself mercy. Indeed, You are the Bestower." Surah Ali ‘Imran, 3:8

"Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers." Surah Al-A’raf, 7:23

Allah’s Lordship of Forgiveness in the Qur’an

"A pure land and a forgiving Lord." Surah Saba, 34:15

"Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them, the Exalted in Might, the Perpetual Forgiver." Surah Sad, 38:66
Allah’s Lordship of Benevolence in the Qur’an

“O human beings, what has deluded you regarding your Lord, the Generous,” Surah Al-Infitar, 82:6

Allah’s Lordship of Mercy in the Qur’an

“Peace, a word from a Merciful Lord.” Surah Ya-Sin, 36:58

The Fruits of Al-Rabb

1) To be pleased with Allāh as your Rabb.

Narrated Al-Abbas bin Abdul-Muttalib ﷺ: that he heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say: “Whoever is pleased with Allāh as (his) Lord, and Islam as (his) religion, and Muhammad as (his) Prophet, then he has tasted the sweetness of faith.” [Jami` at-Tirmidhi]

2) Seek accessing Him by avoiding that which He has prohibited. This goes back to the hadith of Abu Hurayrah ﷺ in which the man was cut off in the desert and the Prophet thought that the man’s dua may not be accepted because of his food and nourishment being haram, even though he was calling upon Allāh by His attribute Al-Rabb.
Al-Ḥamīd, is a Name mentioned in salah (in tashahud) and it is mentioned in the Qur’an 17 times.

Ḥamd means “praise” and Allāh is Al-Ḥamīd, the One deserving of praise. We say “Innaka Hamīdun,” and the tanween indicates this is a Name of Allāh. He has the qualities of praise and He is deserving of praise. In fact, all of creation praises Allāh.

“And they resented them not except because they believed in Allāh, the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy,” Surah Al-Buruj, 85:8

“And whoever is grateful is grateful for [the benefit of] himself. And whoever denies [His favor] - then indeed, Allāh is Free of need and Praiseworthy.” Surah Luqman, 31:12

Why is Allāh pairing Ghaniyy with Hamīd in Surah Luqman? Because Allāh is Ghaniyy, self-sufficient and he does not need anything. Allāh doesn’t need your praise. None of us are benefitting Allāh by praising Him.

**Allāh is Al-Ḥamīd, He deserves praise in every form and manner.**
- He is praiseworthy in His essence, Names, attributes, and actions.
- He is praiseworthy in His religion and legislation.
- He is praiseworthy in His decree. We say, “Alhumdulillah” when something good happens to us and we say, “Alhumdulillah” when something bad happens to us. He is praiseworthy in all circumstances.

*Al-Hamd* is the first statement mentioned in the Qur’an and it is also the first thing that Adam said. When Allāh breathed the soul into Adam, he sneezed and said,
“Alhumdulillah.” And the first thing that Allāh said to Adam was, “Yarhamuk Allāh” and that beautifully symbolizes Allāh’s relationship with Adam and his progeny, “May Allāh have mercy on you.”

**The Name of the Prophet**
The name of our Prophet is “Muhammad,” it means “praiseworthy.” *Hamd* means “praise,” and *dham* means “blame.” The *mushrikeen* started calling the Prophet “Mudhammam” as an insult, meaning “blameworthy.”

![And his wife [as well] - the carrier of firewood. Around her neck is a rope of [twisted] fiber.](image)

*Surah Al-Masad, 111:4-5*

Umm Jameel, the wife of Abu Lahab, heard that *Surah Al-Masad* had been revealed. She picked up some stones and went looking for the Prophet. She finds Abu Bakr, and the Prophet was sitting next to Abu Bakr. However, Allāh had taken her sight away from the Prophet, so she did not see him. She said, “I heard that your friend has insulted me in poetry. Well, I write poetry too!” She then recited “Mudhammam, we have refused him. And his religion we hate. And his command we disobey” and then she left. The Prophet said, “Aren’t you amazed, that Allah has diverted Quraysh’s insults away from me? The one that they’re insulting is Mudhammam, and I am Muhammad.” The Prophet said that the one they are insulting isn’t even him. The Quraysh created a caricature and were insulting a caricature. This can be applied to the Danish cartoons controversy. When you look at those cartoons and read the actual description of the Prophet, you will realize that the cartoons don’t even look like the Prophet! The cartoons don’t even represent our Prophet. Even today, Allāh has diverted them away from the Prophet. Unfortunately, Muslims always take the bait after a cartoon is drawn and start flipping cars.
**AL-MAJĪD**

*(The Glorious)*

*Al-Majīd* is the last name mentioned in *salah*, in *tashahud*. *Majd* means “glory.”

“They said, ‘Are you amazed at the decree of Allāh? May the mercy of Allāh and His blessings be upon you, people of the house. Indeed, He is Praiseworthy and Honorable.’” *Surah Hud*, 11:73

*Do’Al’Arsh Al-Majīd*

“The Owner of the Throne, the Glorious” *Surah Al-Buruj*, 85:15

*Al-Majid* has been used to describe Allah, His Throne, and the Qur’an. Why is it used to describe the Throne of Allah? In the *ayah* from *Surah Al-Buruj* above, you see it is a description of Allah because there is a *thamma* on the word *Majīd*. That shows that Allah is the possessor of the Throne. There is also a recitation where there is a *kasra* on the word *Majid*, which makes it a description of the Throne itself.

*Majd* also means the perfection of knowledge, ability, wisdom, mercy, wealth, leadership, and power. *Majd* has been described as “perfection of perfection, the beautification of beauty, and the loftiness of loftiness.”

**The Fruits of Al-Majid**

1) Holding Allāh to be great and likewise that which He has declared to be great. That if Allah’s most beloved days are the 10 days of *dhul hijjah*, then you do not act in the 10 days of *dhul hijjah* like you would act on other days. That you exalt the places that Allah exalts. If Allah blesses you to go to the *Kabah, Makkah*, or *Madinah*, you should act in accordance to these things because you make *ta’theem* of Allah.
2) The Qur’an being Majīd, holding on to the Qur’an is a cause of Majd in the dunya and the akhira.

It was narrated that Nafi’ bin ’Abdul-Harith met ‘Umar bin Khattab in ’Usfan, when ‘Umar had appointed him as his governor in Makkah. ‘Umar asked: “Whom have you appointed as your deputy over the people of the valley?” He said: “I have appointed Ibn Abza over them.”‘Umar said: “Who is Ibn Abza?” Nafi’ said: “One of our freed slaves.” ‘Umar said: “Have you appointed a freed slave over them?” Nafi’ said: “He has great knowledge of the Book of Allah, is well ayahd in the rules of inheritance (Fara’id) and is a (good) judge.” ‘Umar said: “Did not your prophet say: ‘Allah raises some people (in status) because of this book and brings others low because of it?’” [Sunan Ibn Majah]

The Qur’an does in fact raise some people. Ustadh Ammar was at one of the biggest masjids in Texas, about to pray Isha. There were rows upon rows of people in congregation and a 12-year-old boy led salah. Is there any other scenario in human society in which a boy that age leads an entire community other than in salah? If only in salah, then how magnificent is the Qur’an! Allah raises some people by this book and lowers others.

**AL-ḤAFĪẒ**

*(The Preserver)*

It is now 8:00 am for Dr. Anisa and she is leaving for work. Her husband is carrying the baby, she is writing a to-do list, leaving the baby with daddy. What Names does this unlock for the mom? Al-Ḥafīẓ and Al-Wakīl.

Al-Ḥafīẓ is The Preserver.

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“Indeed my Lord is, over all things, Guardian.” Surah Hud, 11:57

Ḥafīẓ is an exaggerated form of Ḥāfīẓ, and Hifz is protecting something from disappearance or forgetfulness.
Two Types of Preservations

General preservation: Preservation that Allah has given everyone knowledge of that which benefits them, protects them, and preserves them. We call them instincts. You know how to take care of yourself and you know what will bring you harm. Creatures know how to protect themselves and what will bring them harm. This can also be called *hidayt al irshaad*, Instinctual guidance.

Specific preservation: Protection that Allah gives to His believing slaves. There are two kinds of specific preservations:

1) **Preservation in the *dunya***.

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**For each one are successive [angels] before and behind him who protect him by the decree of Allāh.** Surah Ar-Ra’d, 13:11
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Every human being has angels in front of them and behind them. When you see a YouTube video of a person who is about to step out of their car and gets back into the car, avoiding being hit by another car in the process. What caused that person to jump back into their car for a second? This is the concept of angels that guard a person, for both Muslims and non-Muslims. Allāh protects people in the *dunya* and not just in religious affairs.

2) **Allāh guards a person’s religion**. In the famous story of Ka’ab ibn Malik, he participated in every campaign with the Prophet except for *Badr* and *Tabuk*. He missed *Badr* because they weren’t expecting a battle. *Tabuk*, however, was a mandatory campaign. Ka’ab ibn Malik procrastinated until the Prophet and the Muslims left the city of *Madinah*. He continued to procrastinate because he was very wealthy and he thought that he could catch up. The Prophet reached *Tabuk* and there was no battle, so he turned around and went back to *Madinah*. Ka’ab is now thinking what he will say to the Prophet. There were 80 people in *Madinah* who did not go, they were hypocrites and they had no reason to not participate. When the Prophet got back, he sat in the *masjid* and listened to all 80 of them as to why they did not participate. All 80 people lied to the Prophet. Ka’ab ibn Malik was not a hypocrite and his family members told him to make an excuse and that the Prophet will make *istighfaar* for him and that *istighfaar* of the Prophet would wipe out that sin anyway. So Ka’ab was thinking of inventing a lie. When the Prophet arrived in *Madinah*, all those ideas vanished from his mind, and he concluded that only the truth is going to save me. Who made all those ideas vanish from his mind? It was Allah.

Throughout our lives, we need Allāh’s *tawfeeq*, we need His success. Do not assume that guidance comes from yourself. The Prophet said, “Hasten to do good deeds now before *fitan* touch down that will be like a dark night. A person will go to sleep a believer and wake up a disbeliever. A person will wake up a believer and go to sleep a disbeliever. They will sell their religion for a small portion of this world.” The Prophet commands us to invest in
doing good deeds now so that when the time of fitan comes, you are under the specific protection of Al-Ḥafīẓ.

**The Fruits of Al-Ḥafīẓ**
There is a hadith in At-Tirmidhi where the Prophet says to Ibn Abbas, “Preserve the commandments of Allāh, Allāh will preserve you. Preserve the commandments of Allāh, you will find Allāh with you.”

**AL-WAKİL**
(The Guardian)

“And they said, ‘Sufficient for us is Allāh, and [He is] the greatest Disposer of affairs.’” Surah Ali ‘Imran, 3:173

Al-Wakīl is the disposer of the affairs of His creation with His knowledge, His perfect ability, and His comprehensive wisdom.

**Qualities You Look for When You Dispose Your Affairs to Someone**
When you want to trust someone with something, what qualities are you looking for?

1) It must be someone you have confidence in.
2) It must be someone who has the ability/experience.
3) It must be someone who has loyalty and concern for you.

All the three categories above, Allah is the greatest at.

“And to Allah belong the unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth and to Him will be returned the matter, all of it, so worship Him and rely upon Him.” Surah Hud, 11:123
Allah reminds us that He is the Lord of the heavens and the earth and that we should rely on Him. This tells us that tawakkul is an act of worship.

"And We gave Moses the Scripture and made it a guidance for the Children of Israel that you not take other than Me as Disposer of affairs," Surah Al-Isra, 17:2

Allah prohibits that we take other than Allah as a source of dependence.

'Umar bin Al-Khattab narrated that the Messenger of Allāh said: "If you were to rely upon Allāh with the required reliance, then He would provide for you just as a bird is provided for, it goes out in the morning empty, and returns full." [Jami` at-Tirmidhi]

This hadith is a beautiful symbol of what dependence of Allah means. Just making dua is not enough! That is not the example the Prophet ﷺ gave. He gave the example of a bird depending on Allah, but it is making the effort of leaving its nest every morning, pecking at things trying to get food. It then comes back to its nest having been fulfilled. Tawakkul means that your hands are busy, but your heart is still. It means your hands are working, but your heart isn’t worried or fretting. Know that Allah is the One who will provide.
Anas  reported: Messenger of Allāh  said, "Whoever says (upon leaving his house): 'Bismillah, tawakkaltu ’alAllāh, wa la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah [I begin with the Name of Allāh; I trust in Allāh; there is no altering of conditions but by the Power of Allāh],’ it will be said to him: 'You are guided, defended and protected.' The devil will go far away from him".

Abu Dawud reported it with this addition: "One devil will say to another: 'How can you deal with a man who has been guided, defended and protected?' [Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and An- Nasa’i]

Whoever believes that Allah is the Disposer of all their affairs will depend on Him in all of them. They will entrust Him with everything and in doing so will actualize the perfection of Tawheed.

When Dr. Anisa is dropping off her baby with her husband, she is calling upon Allah by Al-Ḥafīẓ and Al-Wakīl. This is for the parent who is dropping off their child to school, for those whose child is going to college, or a traveler who is leaving his family for a period of time.

Al-Shakūr is mentioned four times in the Qur’an and Al-Shākir is mentioned twice.

"And they will say, 'Praise to Allāh, who has removed from us [all] sorrow. Indeed, our Lord is Forgiving and Appreciative’” Surah Fatir, 35:34

"And ever is Allāh Appreciative and Knowing.” Surah An-Nisa, 4:147
Ash-Shukr in Arabic means al-ziyada, meaning “increase.” Allah gives you more no matter what you offer Him. For example, if you were to give someone something, you wouldn’t be shakūr unless you give them more than they deserved or more than what their job requires.

In Arabic, they would call a livestock (a camel or cattle etc.) shakūr if it was an animal that would eat very little vegetation and give a surplus of milk. They would feed it a little and it would give a lot of fat or it becomes very giving in milk. They would call that animal shakūr if the input is a little and the output is a lot. Allah gives you very much for the very little that you offer.

Al-Shakūr accepts all deeds no matter how small, forgives sins no matter how great, multiplies the reward of good deeds, and whoever comes closer to Him a hand span, He comes closer to them a cubit.

**Difference Between Shākir and Shakūr**

Shākir is someone who appreciates. Shakūr is a higher form, it is someone who continuously appreciates.

> “Indeed, We guided him to the way, be he grateful or be he ungrateful.” Surah Al-Insan, 76:3

Allāh has divided all mankind into two camps. When you’re an average Muslim who submits to Allāh, you fall under the category of shākir. An average person who disbelieves isn’t showing a little bit of ingratitude, but a lot of ingratitude, and they fall under the category of kafūra.

> “And few of My servants are grateful.” Surah Saba, 34:13

As for the people who are shakūr (highest level of being grateful), they are very few.

The scholars have tried to divide the difference between shākir and shakūr. Shākir is someone who just does the obligations. They are showing the bare minimum of appreciation to Allāh. They fulfill the obligations and stay away from the prohibitions. However, the person who does more and more continues to ascend until they reach the level of being shakūr. The person who does voluntary actions is shakūr.
Narrated Aisha : The Prophet used to offer prayer at night (for such a long time) that his feet used to crack. I said, "O Allāh's Messenger! Why do you do it since Allāh has forgiven you your faults of the past and those to follow?" He said, "Shouldn't I love to be a thankful slave (of Allāh)?" When he became old, he prayed while sitting, but if he wanted to perform a bowing, he would get up, recite (some other ayat) and then perform the bowing. [Bukhari]

Notice how the Prophet said in the above hadith, “should I not be a slave that is shakūr?” And how can we not be shākir and shakūr when Allāh Himself is shākir and shakūr?

Context of Surah An-Nisa, 4:147

What would Allāh do with your punishment if you are grateful and believe? And ever is Allāh Appreciative and Knowing.” Surah An-Nisa, 4:147

The above ayah shows that it doesn’t benefit Allah by punishing you. It doesn’t benefit Allah that your skin is roasted and that the hypocrites are thrown into the Hellfire. If only humanity were to simply show gratitude and have faith. And why is it that so many in humanity are so proud that they can’t even do that, when Allah Himself is shākir and ‘ālim? Allah is appreciative and He knows everything.

The pairing of shākiran alīma is beautiful. Allah is appreciative and He is knowing. He knows it when you bit your tongue and He appreciates that feeling when could’ve said something that could really hurt that individual, but you just bit your tongue for the sake of Allah. Allah knows the sadness that you feel. Allah knows that salaam that you gave to somebody else. Allah knows everything that we go through.

And they give food in spite of love for it to the needy, the orphan, and the captive, [saying], ‘we feed you only for the countenance of Allāh. We wish not from you reward or gratitude.’” Surah Al-Insan, 76:8-9

The above ayat speak of a people who, even though they themselves need it, they give food to the needy, the orphan and the captive for the sake of Allah. Not to hear “thank you,” get a retweet, get a plaque or to be rewarded or appreciated by the people. These are the kinds of people who would hold the door for someone without expecting to hear “thank you,” because they did so for the sake of Allah. These are the people who do work to serve their
community, whether the community shows appreciation and thanks or not, it doesn’t matter to them because their audience is Allah.

“[And it will be said], ‘Indeed, this is for you a reward, and your effort has been appreciated.’”  
Surah Al-Insan, 76:22

Surah Al-Insan continues with a very beautiful and vivid description of Paradise and then says, “This is a reward for you and your journey is appreciated.” In the dunya, they didn’t want appreciation or reward from the people, Allah tells them that this is their reward. Allah is appreciating what they did.

If you depend on human beings to appreciate you, you will always be disappointed. We do not have the ability to appreciate anything perfectly. Look at how we treat each other. A person will do a lifetime of goodness, but then they make one mistake and are thrown to the lions. Allah is the opposite of that. Allah is willing to overlook a lifetime of sin, evil, and vice for a moment of goodness at the end of a person’s life.

Abu Huraira reported Allāh’s Messenger as saying: There was a dog moving around a well whom thirst would have killed. Suddenly a prostitute from the prostitutes of Bani Isra‘il happened to see it and she drew water in her shoe and made it drink, and she was pardoned because of this. [Muslim]

The Prophet told us that Allah forgave a prostitute because she gave water to a dog. If a thousand religious people (including us) were to be lined up and they were told what the sins of this prostitute are, but she has a good deed that she gave water to a dog. If we were the judges, we probably wouldn’t decide that she is forgiven. But Allah is Al-Shakūr, He forgives incredible sins for a moment of goodness. Allah rewards goodness with incredible grace and benevolence. This Name, Al-Shakūr, invokes in a person the feeling that even the smallest good deed should not be belittled. Because we don’t know how Allah is going to appreciate that deed, whether it’s giving water to a dog, or smiling at the face of your brother, or saying a good word, a word of encouragement. Why? Because Allah is Al-Shakūr and Allah appreciates everything that you do.

Abu Dharr reported: The Prophet said, "Do not belittle any good deed, even meeting your brother (Muslim) with a cheerful face". [Muslim]
Manifestation of Al-Shakūr
To be a person who shows gratitude to Allah. A lot of people at some point in their lives are incredibly active. They’re involved in MSA, they memorize Qur’an, attend AlMaghrib seminars, and they feel so spiritually high. Then they get a job, get married, have kids. Now they look back and feel as if their spirituality is nowhere near it was five or ten years ago. The Prophet ﷺ taught us how to resolve this.

Mu‘adh (bin Jabal) reported: Messenger of Allāh held my hand and said, "O Mu‘adh, By Allāh, I love you and advise you not to miss supplicating after every Salat (prayer) saying: ‘Allāhumma a’inni ‘ala dhikrika wa shukrika, wa husnī ‘ibadatika,’ (O Allāh, help me remember You, expressing gratitude to You and worship You in the best manner)”. [Abu Dawud and An-Nasa’i]

This is a famous du‘a. When you are at the height of spirituality, like now in AlMaghrib, or there is a period of life where you are doing amazing things, praying qiyam ul layl, and you feel so close to Allāh. The way to keep that going and make sure that it doesn’t decline is to show gratitude for it. Because Allāh says, “If you are thankful, I will increase you.” So if there is someone who was reading or memorizing Qur’an six years ago, but they weren’t showing gratitude, they probably haven’t read or memorized Qur’an ever since. They stopped having access to the book of Allāh because they didn’t show gratitude.

Gratitude is a fortress that protects your blessings. People are always worried about hasad. Hasad is to desire for blessings to be taken away. Not “I want a car like you,” but “I wish you didn’t have that car.” “I wish you didn’t have that job,” “I wish you didn’t marry that person,” “I wish you didn’t have that popularity,” “I wish you didn’t have that success.” If that is what the Hasid is invoking, Allah tells us that if we’re thankful, it will not go away, and that it will only increase. And so shukr becomes a fortress, that you be thankful to Allah, that you show gratitude.

How do you show gratitude? By acting in the way that Allah loves with that blessing. If Allah gave you strength, use that strength not to bully/harm people, but to protect people, to serve people. If Allah gave you beauty, then use that beauty in the way that Allah has legislated and not in the service of your own desires. If Allah gave you wealth, then spread that wealth and give and spend it in a way that Allah loves. That is how you show gratitude.
Narrated Abu Hurayrah ﺔ: The Prophet ﺔ said: He who does not thank the people is not thankful to Allāh. [Sunan Abi Dawud]

Even when people show goodness to you, you should be very appreciative to them. But a person will reach such a level of gratitude to Allāh that they will see in the actions of the people around them, they will always see Allāh behind that person.

In Surah An-Naml, Allāh tells the story of Suleiman ﺢ and the queen of Sheba. Suleiman is corresponding with the queen of Sheba, and at that time she was a disbelieving queen, her people are disbelievers, and Suleiman is calling them to Islam. He sends her a letter and she sends one back.

"[Solomon] said, 'O assembly [of jinn], which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?' A powerful one from among the jinn said, 'I will bring it to you before you rise from your place, and indeed, I am for this [task] strong and trustworthy.' Said one who had knowledge from the Scripture, 'I will bring it to you before your glance returns to you.' And when [Solomon] saw it placed before him, he said, 'This is from the favor of my Lord to test me whether I will be grateful or ungrateful. And whoever is grateful - his gratitude is only for [the benefit of] himself. And whoever is ungrateful - then indeed, my Lord is Free of need and Generous.'" Surah An-Naml, 27:38-39

Suleiman asks “which one of you will bring her throne to me before she comes to me in submission?” And one of the jinn responds “I will bring you her throne before you get up from your seat” even though her throne is in Yemen and he is in Jerusalem. One of the people in his court, who Allāh says had knowledge of the book, said “I am going to bring
you her throne before you blink.” And Suleiman suddenly sees the throne of the queen of
*Sheba* right in front of him. So what did Suleiman say? He did not say, “Oh my God, that was
amazing! How did you do that?!” He says right away, “This is from the grace of my Lord.” He
sees behind this person Allah. The next time you’re watching a basketball game and you see
a player do an amazing dunk, you should see behind him Allah and say “Allah Akbar, look at
the talent that Allah gave this individual. Allah is the One who gave Lebron James that
power, Allah is the One who gave Derrick Rose that talent.

And so Suleiman said, “This is from the grace of my Lord, he is testing me now to see if I will
show gratitude or am I going to be ungrateful. And whoever shows gratitude that is only
benefitting them, and whoever is showing ingratitude, then my Lord is *Al-Ghaniyy* (The Self
Sufficient).” Recognizing and seeing even your parents, even behind everything that you
experience of goodness, that you see Allah is behind that and that Allah is facilitating all of
this for you.

Dr. Anisa has given Salam to those ladies, and they have not paid attention to her. But Allah
is the one who sees and hears all things.

**AL-SAMĪ‘**
*(The Hearing)*

Mentioned 45 times in the Qur’an.

“And mention when Ibrahim was raising the foundations of the House and with him Ismail,
saying, ‘Our Lord, accept this from us. Indeed You are the Hearing, the Knowing.’”

*Surah al-Baqarah, 2:127*
According to Ibn Qayyim, there are 4 types of Sami’:

1. Sami’ of Encompassing (relating to sounds)

قد سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تَجِدَكَ فِي زُوجَهَا وَنَشَتْكِ
إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَسَمِعُ تَحَاورُكُمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعُ بِصِيَامِ

“Certainly has Allah heard the speech of the one who argues with you, Oh Muhammad, concerning her husband and directs her complaint to Allah. And Allah hears your dialogue; indeed, Allah is Hearing and Seeing.” Surah al-Mujadilah, 58:1

2. Sami’ of Understanding (relating to comprehension and meaning)

بَلْ أَنتُهَا الَّذِيَةُ أَمَنتُوا لَا تَقْفُلُوا رَعِينَكَ وَقُولُوا
أَنْظُرُوا وَآسَمَعُوا وَلَعَلَّكُمْ يَفْلِحُونَ عِندَ الْيَمِينِ

“Oh you who have believed, say not to Allah’s Messenger, ‘ra’ina’ but say, ‘unthurna’ and listen. And for the disbelievers is a painful punishment.” Surah al-Baqarah, 2:104

From this ayah, we learn to understand and comprehend what Allah has commanded us to do.

3. Sami’ of Response

When we get up from ruku, we say, sami Allahu liman hamidah, Allah accepts from those who praise Him.

4. Sami’ of Submission or Acceptance

Allah speaks of Bani Israel, saying, “they were people who blindly accepted lies, and they would consume forbidden wealth”.

سواء مَن كَيْر مِن أَسَرِ الْقُوْلِ وَمَن جَهَرَ بِهِ وَمَنْ
هُوَ مَسْتَخْفِفٌ بِأَلَّبِلِ وَسَارِبَ بِالْمَهْرِ
At the end of the day, we know that Allah hears all sounds, the loudest and the softest. “It is the same to Him concerning you whether one conceals his speech or one publicizes it and whether one is hidden by night or conspicuous among others by day.” Surah ar-Raad, 13:10

**Fruits of Allah 立面 being Al-Sami’:**
- A person monitors their speech because they know that Allah hears everything they say. Whether it is shouted or whispered, He hears and records it.
- Allah hears and accepts one's prayers when they ask of Him. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ used to seek refuge in Allah from a dua that is not accepted.

**AL-BAṢĪR**
*(The Seeing)*

Mentioned 42 times in the Quran

“Say, ’Shall I inform you of something better than that? For those who fear Allah will be gardens in the presence of their Lord beneath which rivers flow, wherein they abide eternally, and purified spouses and approval from Allah. And Allah is Seeing of His servants.”

Surah al-Imran, 3:15

*Al-Baṣīr* means that Allah 立面 is aware and knowledgeable of everything. There is nothing that is provided for, created, given life, given death, guided, misguided, given support, or forsaken, without His complete knowledge and awareness and sight. Nothing small or great escapes Him. He sees us even if no one is around. In that is consolation that Allah 立面 is always with us.
Allah says in Surah al-Shu'ara:

“And rely upon the Exalted in Might, the Merciful, Who sees you when you arise, And your movement among those who prostrate. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Knowing.”

Surah al-Shu’ara, 26:217-220

Here, Allah mentions that He is Al-Azīz, Al-Rahīm, Al-Samī’, and Al-Alîm. Even though Allah says in Surah al-Shu’ara has the most power, He is still merciful to His servants. No one can help you more than Allah and no one will be more merciful to you than Allah says in Surah al-Shu’ara. He sees you all the time and is completely aware of your situation. So, it is like you have protection from him 24/7, and the connection between you and Him is never lost or frayed.

Fruits of Allah being Al-Baṣīr:

- Similar to the fruits of Allah being Al-Samī’, one becomes incredibly aware and conscience of Allah’s presence around them.
- Ibn Qayyim says in his book, The Illness and the Cure, when a person closes the curtain to commit a sin privately, the closing of the curtain is worse than the sin itself. When you close the curtain, it shows that you are more concerned with others seeing your sin than Allah. There is a lack of concern that Allah is the one who sees you regardless. A person should constantly be aware of Allah’s presence.
- A few years ago, a shepherd was herding sheep, which he didn’t own. When someone offered him money for one of the sheep, he refused, stating that even though no one would know or notice that one of the sheep was missing, Allah would see him. He had that accountability and knew that Allah is Al-Baṣīr.
Rule #6: Quranic Methodology is Detailed Affirmation & Concise Negation

There are 3 main reasons why Allah ﷻ uses negation in the Quran.

1. Negation is done to affirm Allah's general perfection.

In the Quran, Allah affirms attributes of Himself more than He negates. The attributes that Allah ﷻ does negate about Himself are very few. For example, He doesn’t sleep, He is not oppressive, He does not eat, etc. However, some people will focus so much on what Allah ﷻ does not do, rather than looking at His affirmations and what He does do.

“فَإِذْ بَشَرْنَاهُ بِالْخَلْقِ وَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْكِتَابَ وَإِلَيْهِ الْجَلَالُ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْبَصِيرُ”

“He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. He has made for you from yourselves, mates, and among the cattle, mates; He multiplies you thereby. There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing.” Surah al-Shuraa, 42:11

Allah ﷻ’s negation here is very concise. He clearly states that there is nothing like Him.

He declares a similar sentiment in Surah Maryam.

“الرَّبُّ الْسَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَأَعْبَدُهُ وَأَصْطِبِرْ لِعَبْدَتِهِ هَلَّ تَعَلَّمَ لَهُ سَمِيَّا”

“Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them. So worship Him and have patience for His worship. Do you know of any similarity to Him?” Surah Maryam, 19:65

Here, Allah ﷻ negates that anyone is equal or similar to Him.

2. To negate what others have falsely attributed to Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ negates that He needed any rest on the seventh day after creating the heavens and the earth.
In Surah Nisa’a, Allah negates the Isa, was not the son of God, but rather a messenger.

“Oh People of the Book, do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, was but a messenger of Allah and His word which He directed to Mary and a soul, created at a command, from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers. And do not say, ‘three’; desist, it is better for you. Indeed, Allah is but one God. Exalted is He above having a son. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And sufficient is Allah as Disposer of affairs.” Surah al-Nisa’a, 4:171.

3. To negate a specific matter that relates to one of His actions.

Allah negates the lack or purpose and wisdom in his creations.
“And rely upon the Ever-Living who does not die, and exalt Allah with His praise. And sufficient is He to be, with the sins of His servants, Acquainted-“ Surah al-Furqan, 25:58

In Surah Furqan, Allah affirms that He is Ever-Living and negates His death.

A person’s focus when studying the names of Allah should not be from a position of philosophy, which spends time negating things about Allah instead of affirming qualities about Him. This is not where true iman lies. Iman lies in thinking about how Allah affirms many qualities about and to Himself. When Allah negates things from Himself, He will say subhana, which means to remove that is inappropriate and should not be associated with Allah.

We make tasbeeh when we come across something or someone that is far removed from Allah. For example, when traveling uphill or going upstairs, one says Allahu Akbar, signifying that no matter how high they go, Allah is still greater. When going downhill or downstairs, one says SubhanAllah, meaning that Allah is far above any kind of lowliness. Similarly, when we hear thunder, we say SubhanAllah. In the days of mythology, people used to make up reasons for thunder, stating that it was the voice of God, or that the Greek deities’ chariots were going across the heavens. We know that Allah is extremely removed from all these beliefs, which is why we say SubhanAllah upon hearing thunder. Thunder is creation of Allah, not His voice or an attribute of Him.
Al-Khāliq (الخالق), Al-Khallāq (الخلاق): The Creator

Mentioned 12 times in the Quran.

There are 3 names that come out of Al-Khāliq:
1. **Al-Khāliq:** The Creator

   "Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is, over all things, Disposer of affairs."
   Surah al-Zumar, 39:62

2. **Al-Khallāq:** The One who Continuously Creates (a higher form of Al-Khāliq)

   "Indeed, Your Lord – He is the Knowing Creator."
   Surah al-Hijr, 15:86

3. **Ahsan al-Khāliqīn:** The Best of Creators

   "Do you call upon Ba’l and leave the best of creators?"
   Surah al-Saffat, 37:125

Can a person be a Khāliq? According to the Quran, yes. Allah SWT says in Surah Ankabut:

"You only worship, besides Allah, idols, and you create a falsehood. Indeed, those you worship besides Allah do not possess for you [the power of] provision. So seek from Allah’s provisions and worship Him and be grateful to Him. To Him you will be returned."
   Surah al-Ankabut, 29:17
In this ayah, the word *takhluqoon* is used, which derives from *khāliq*, to create. So humans can possess the characteristic of *Khāliq*.

However, there is clearly a difference between Allah’s *khalq* and a person’s *khalq*. When Allah 

 crear something, He creates out of nothing with new materials, and He has full knowledge of what He has created, making no mistakes. Sometimes, when a person invents something, they don’t fully understand the spectrum of what their invention can do. Many of the best discoveries by human beings were completely by accident. Humans can merely fashion something by use of existing materials.

Allah 

 being *Ahsan al-Khāliqīn* means that creating from nothing is from Allah, but a person manufactures or makes something from materials that are in existence. That could be considered *khalq* for them or something that they design or plan.

Allah 

 says regarding everyone else and their creations:

"Say, [Oh Muhammad], ‘Have you considered that which you invoke besides Allah? Show me what they have created of the earth; or did they have partnership in [creation of] the heavens? Bring me a scripture revealed before this or a remaining trace of knowledge, if you should be truthful.’*" Surah al-Ahqaf, 46:4

From this ayah, we know that nothing that we create will ever come close to what Allah 

 can create. He is filled with power, ability, and knowledge in what He creates. Allah says in Surah Haqqah:

"So I swear by what you see, and what you do not see." *Surah al-Haqqah, 69:38-39*

One example of this is the Sama’ ad-dunya. The stars, the planets, the universe, and everything we know falls under the category of Sama’ ad-dunya. The Prophet 

 said that the Sama’ ad-dunya compared to the second Sama’ is like a ring thrown in the desert, the
second Sama’ compared to the third is like a ring thrown in the desert, and so on. This shows the vastness of Allah’s creation, the majority of which we have no knowledge.

**Fruits of Allah SWT being Al-Khāliq, Al-Khallāq, and Ahsan al-Khāliqīn:**

- Reflecting on the creation leads to iman in Allah.

> “Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding.” *Surah al-Imran, 3:190*

- A Bedouin Arab was asked how he came to know of the existence of his Lord. He said, “Droppings point to the existence of livestock, and footprints point to that of passers by. So constellations fill the sky, and earth is filled with valleys, and oceans filled with waves. Does that not point to *Al-Laṭīf, Al-Khabīr*?”

- We should only obey and worship the One who has created us.

> “Indeed, your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne. He covers the night with the day, another night chasing it rapidly; and He created the sun, the moon, and the stars, subjected by His command. Unquestionably, His is the creation and the command; blessed is Allah, Lord of the worlds.” *Surah al-A’raf, 7:54*
Al-巴基 (ألبارى): The One Who Creates with a Purpose

Al-Bāri’ is an extension of the name Al-Khāliq. While Al-Khāliq means ‘the one who creates’, Al-Bāri’ goes a step further, meaning ‘the one who initiates and creates in accordance to its purpose’. This is why the creation is called al-bariyyah, because every creation of Allah has a specified purpose.

“Indeed, they who have believed and done righteous deeds – those are the best of creatures.” 

Surah al-Bayyinah, 98:7

Al-Bāri’ can be summarized to the following:

1. **The one who brings something into existence.**
   - In this sense, Al-Bāri’ is similar to Al-Khāliq.
2. **The one who separates (fasl) some of the creation from the other.**
   - Allah SWT has created his creations with distinctive qualities. This comes from the root al-bar’, which means al-fasl.
3. **Indicates that humans were created from clay.**
   - One of the root words, turab, means dust.
4. **The one who created mankind with no inconsistency.**

In Surah Baqarah, Musa calls upon Allah as Al-Bāri’.

“And recall when Musa said to his people, ‘Oh my people, indeed you have wronged yourselves by taking of the calf [for worship]. So repent to your Creator and kill yourselves. That is the best for all of you in the sight of your Creator.’ Then He accepted your repentance; indeed, He is the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.” 

Surah al-Baqarah, 2:54
Al-Muṣawwir (المصور): The Fashioner

Al-Muṣawwir is again an extension of Al-Bāri’ and Al-Khāliq, meaning ‘the one who gives everything its shape’. Allah ﷺ is the one that fashions and perfects the inner and outer workings of each one of His creations.

During the time of Haroon ar-Rashid, there was a Muslim man who was trying to be romantic with his wife. He told her “you are divorced if you are not more beautiful than the moon”. His wife was a very pious woman and said, “I am not more beautiful than the moon, so I guess I am now divorced”. The man went to the Khalifah and explained the situation to him, trying to figure out whether his wife was truly divorced or not. The Khalifah brought this issue to the court of scholars, and, one by one, each went on to say that his wife was divorced since she is not more beautiful than the moon. Finally, one scholar declared that the man’s wife was not divorced since she is more beautiful than the moon, according to the Quran. In Surah Tin, Allah ﷺ says:

"We have certainly created man in the best of stature.” Surah al-Tin, 95:4

By way of this ayah, the scholar pointed out that from Allah’s creations, humans are the best and most beautiful form. Thus, the man’s wife is more beautiful than the moon, and is not divorced.

Allah has created us so to Him belongs the command. If our parents deserve respect and obedience for bringing us into this world, then think about how much Allah deserves for creating us.

―Oh Mankind, what has deceived you concerning your Lord, the Generous, Who created you, proportioned you, and balanced you?‖ Surah al-Infitar, 82:6-7

Think about why Allah ﷺ has created us in the first place. Allah says in the Quran:
Allah  is telling us the purpose of our existence and why we were created. We should strive to fulfill that purpose as best as we can.

At 2pm, Dr. Anisa has lunch in the break room. CNN is on with the headline, “Islam is ‘inconsistent’ with values of America”. Depending on the time or place, sometimes we get sad, afraid, apprehensive, or uncomfortable. These feelings cause us to unlock a lot of Allah’s names.

Al-‘Azīz (العزيل): The Mighty

Mentioned 92 times in the Quran, often times paired with another name.

- Al-‘Azīz Al-‘Alīm (al-An‘am, 6:96)
- Al-‘Azīz Al-Ghafūr (Fatir, 35:28)
- Al-‘Azīz Al-Ghaffār (Suad, 38:66)
- Al-‘Azīz Al-Ḥamīd (Ibrahim, 14:1)
- Al-‘Azīz Al-Ḥakīm (al-Baqarah, 2:129)
- Al-‘Azīz Al-Raḥīm (al-Shu‘ara, 26:9)
- Al-‘Azīz Al-Wahhāb (Suad, 38:9)

Al-‘Azīz means ‘the powerful, the overwhelming, the one who is able to do all things without ever being harmed by anyone else’.

In Hadith Qudsi, Allah  says, “Oh son of Adam, you will never reach the ability to harm me or benefit me”, meaning Allah is so powerful that He does not need us in any way, shape, or form.

Often times, Al-‘Azīz is paired with another name to show an attribute of Allah  that relates to His power. His power is not like our power in the way that one can be easily corrupted by it. Instead, with His power comes wisdom and justice. When Al-‘Azīz is paired with Al-Ḥakīm, it illustrates that Allah is powerful, but also wise. When Al-‘Azīz is paired with Al-Raḥīm, it demonstrates that Allah is powerful, yet merciful.

Fruits of Allah SWT being Al-‘Azīz:

- Allah is the One who gives power and might (‘izzah).
- In every time and place, there will always be hypocrites that think that if they deface Islam, Allah , and the Prophet Muhammad , they will get ‘izzah, but that is never true. Even during the time of the Prophet, as detailed in Surah Munafiqun, the hypocrites planned to get rid of the Prophet  and his companions. But today, thousands of people send Salam on the Prophet and his companions every minute. It is evident that in the end, the Muslims were the ones with real ‘izzah.
Allah calls the Quran Azīz, mighty and powerful. The Quran is proud in the sense that it will never open itself to someone who is not worthy. Just as only an earnest person could pull Excalibur out of the stone, one will not be able to fully approach the Quran without submission, humility, and a true desire for guidance.

- Asking Allah for something is ‘izz; there is no humiliation in it. However, asking people, whether they grant your request or not, is humiliation.
- A way to get ‘izzah is to forgive people and give charity. In Hadith Muslim, it is mentioned, “charity does not in any way decrease the wealth and the servant who forgives, Allah adds to his respect. And the one who shows humility, Allah elevates him in the estimation of the people.”

Al-Jabbâr (الجبار)

Al-Jabbâr is a characteristic that is negative when a person has it, meaning tyrant, severe, or harsh. But with Allah , it is a positive attribute.

In Surah Maryam, it is negated from Isa :

“And dutiful to his mother, and he was not a disobedient tyrant.” Surah Maryam, 19:14

The ayah indicates that the worst type of tyranny is a person who is jabbar to their parents. They are the people who are most deserving of your kindness and good manners.

There are 4 meaning of Al-Jabbâr in relation to Allah:

1. The One who Compels
   - Allah compels His creation as He wishes in how He fashions them, their shape, looks, characteristics, the actions of their bodies; their breaths and heart beats, their nerves, their blood, all under the control of Allah in their wakefulness and their sleep. Muhammad bin Ka‘b said, “He was called Al-Jabbâr because He compels His creation to what He wishes.” (Al-Bayhaqi, Asma wa’l-Sifat)
   - Even today in modern Arabic, people will use the word majboor to mean they were compelled to do something. Some groups of people, who believe that we are compelled to do everything and that we have no free will, are called al-jabbariyya.

2. He Fixes Brokenness
   - Allah conceals our mistakes and takes care of us. He fixes broken hearts, broken bodies, broken homes, and broken circumstances. Call out to Allah, Al-Jabbâr, to fix anything that you feel is broken in your life. He is the One who fixes.
- The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had a dua that he would make between the two sajdahs:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَارْحَمْنِي وَعَافِنِي وَأَهْدِنِي وَأَرْزَقْنِي

“Oh Allah! Forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, guard me against harm, and provide me with sustenance and salvation.” [Muslim]

3. The Overpowering
- Al-Qāhir, the overpowering, means that everything submits to and all of creation submits to His might and power.

4. The One Above Everything

5. Dhu’l-Jabarūt, the Possessor of Mulk (Dominion), ‘Athama (Greatness), and Majd (Glory)
- The Prophet ﷺ used to say in his ruku’ and sujud:

سبَحَانَ ذِي الْجَبَرُوتِ وَالْمُلْكَ وَالْكَبْرِ وَالْغَيْبِ وَالْعَظْمَةِ

“Glory be to the One who has all power, sovereignty, magnificence, and might.” [Al-Nasa’i]

A Moroccan scholar was once asked, “Is it allowed to beat children to teach them Quran?” He said, “Allah ﷺ said ‘Al-Raḥmān, the merciful, taught the Quran, not Al-Jabbār, the compeller taught the Quran.” From this we know that every word in the Quran is there for a purpose. There is a meaning behind every letter, word, and placement.

Practical steps in unlocking Al-Jabbār:
1. If you are someone who is oppressed, call upon Al-Jabbār
   - Dr. Anisa is a bit worried and concerned. She doesn't know how life will be for her and her family, so she should call on Al-Jabbār

2. If you are a jabbār, cease your actions and recognize that Allah ﷺ is above you
   - Often times, we think of tyrants as rulers of countries, but tyrants are not limited to that. If one is controlling or has a mean personality, such as our boss or an older sibling, they can be considered jabbār.

3. Ask Allah, Al-Jabbār, to fix your brokenness.
Al-Haqq (الحق): The Truth

Narrated Ibn ‘Abbas : Whenever the Prophet Muhammad offered the night (tahajjud) prayer, he used to say, “O Allāh! All the Praises are for You; You are the Light of the Heavens and the Earth. And all the Praises are for You; You are the Keeper of the Heavens and the Earth. All the Praises are for You; You are the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth and whatever is therein. You are the Truth, and Your Promise is the Truth, and Your Speech is the Truth, and meeting You is the Truth, and Paradise is the Truth and Hell (Fire) is the Truth and all the prophets are the Truth and the Truth and the Hour is the Truth. O Allāh! I surrender to You, and believe in You, and depend upon You, and repent to You, and in Your cause I fight and with Your orders I rule. So please forgive my past and future sins and those sins which I did in secret or in public. It is You whom I worship. None has the right to be worshipped except You.” [Bukhari]

These are the 8 truths that the Prophet would mention in his dua and they all follow on another in logic. If Allah is true, then His speech is true. If His speech is true, then consequently, His promise is true, and so on.

Interestingly enough, there was a deviation amongst the Muslims over the concept of Allah ’s promise being true. The khawarij, believing that once a Muslim commits a sin they leave the fold of Islam and enter the Hell-fire, asked a scholar to illustrate this point. They said, “Didn’t Allah promise that whoever kills a believer intentionally or eats up an orphan’s wealth unlawfully will enter the Hell-fire?” The scholar said, “Yes”. So they said, “If Allah promised that the killer will enter Hell-fire, then Allah’s promise is true. There is no way out of that.” The scholar then said, “Your problem is your lack of understanding of the Arabic language.”

In Arabic, there are 2 types of promises.

1. **Wa’đ: promise of reward**
   - Praiseworthy when a person fulfills it; blameworthy when it is not fulfilled

2. **Wa’ēed: promise of threat or punishment**
   - Can be praiseworthy when the punishment is not fulfilled

Let’s take the scenario of a boy and his father. At the beginning of the school year, the father tells his son that if he gets straight As, he will take the boy to Florida. But, if the son gets even one B, not only will they not get to go to Florida, the father will take away the son’s PlayStation. Here, there is a promise of reward and a threat of punishment. The boy works incredibly hard in school during that year.

Consider two outcomes from this situation:

1. The boy gets straight As. When he approaches his father, his father says, “Just kidding. Maybe we’ll go next year.” Here the father is accountable for fulfilling his promise, his Wa’đ.
2. The boy comes home with 3 As and 2 Bs, and it is still the highest grade he’s ever had. The agreement was his PlayStation should be taken away since he received 2 Bs. But, after his father sees how much effort he put in school this
year, he decides to let his son keep his PlayStation. The breaking of this type of promise, Wa’eed, is not blameworthy.

Similarly, when Allah makes a Wa’d, a promise of reward, He will fulfill it no matter what. However, when He makes a Wa’eed, a threat of punishment, it is up to His decree whether He will go through with His punishment or decide to forgive the person.

**Fruits of Allah being Al-Ḥaqq:**
- Do I live the truth?
- Do I love the truth?
- Always speak the truth. If there is just one action a person can take to correct their affairs, it would be to speak the truth. The thing that allows us to get away with bad behavior is lying. The Prophet said, “Lying leads to evil and evil leads to the Hellfire.”

**Al-Mu’min:** The Giver of Security

Al-Mu’min is a name that has layers.

1. **The One who believes and is trusted**
   - Allah always fulfills His promises.

   “Our Lord, surely You will gather the people for a Day about which there is no doubt. Indeed, Allah does not fail in His promise.” *Surah al-Imran, 3:9*

2. **The One who fulfills the expectations of his believing slaves**
   - We know that we can believe in Allah, depend on Him, and trust Him; He will not let us down.
   - If you expect Allah to be there for you and take care of you, you will find Him as such.

   The Prophet said, “Allah the Most High said, ‘I am as My servant thinks I am. I am with him when he mentions Me. If he mentions Me to himself, I mention him to Myself; and if he mentions Me in an assembly, I mention him in an assembly greater than it. If he draws near to Me a hand’s length, I draw near to him an arm’s length. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him at speed.’” *Bukhari*
3. The believer
   • He testifies to His oneness.

   شهِيدَ اللهُ أَنْتَوَلَّهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ عِلْمًا
   قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ إِلَّا هُوَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

   “Allah testifies that there is no God except Him, and so do the angels and those of knowledge –
   that He is maintaining creation in justice. There is no deity except Him, the Exalted in Might,
   the Wise.” Surah al-Imran, 3:18

4. The One who gives *amaan* (security) to his believing slaves

   فَأِلَّا يُنَظَّمْ نَفسُ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا

   “So today no soul will be wronged at all, and you will not be recompensed except for what you
   used to do.” Surah Yasin, 36:54

5. The One who spreads *amn* (safety and security)

   ﴿۱۰۶﴾

   “[Allah] has fed them, saving them from hunger and made them safe, saving them from fear.”
   Surah Quraysh, 106:4

**Fruits of Allah ٌِْ  being Al-Mu’min:**
   • Whenever you are afraid of something, call upon Allah by Al-Mu’min
   • He grants security to others
   • If we want *amn* from Allah ٌِْ , we must grant others *amn.*

   The Prophet  said, “By Allah, he does not believe! By Allah, he does not believe! By Allah, he
   does not believe!” It was said, “Who is that, Oh Allah’s Messenger?” He said, “That person
   whose neighbor does not feel safe from his evil.” [Bukhari]
4pm, Dr. Anisa talks to one of her patients about their healing process.

**Al-Shāfi (الشافي): The Healer**

وَإِذَا مَرَضَتْ فَحُوِيْيَشَفْيَيْنَ

“And when I am ill, it is He who cures me.” *Surah al-Shu’ara*, 26:80

This ayah is a quote from Ibrahim ، describing Allah ﷺ. It is important to note that something that is evil or bad is never attributed to Allah, even though it may be from Him. In fact, Ibrahim ﷺ says, “When I become sick”; he did not say, “When Allah gave me sickness”. Ibrahim ﷺ attributed the sickness to himself, even though sickness, health, and the healing process are all from Allah. This shows the adab when talking about Allah ﷺ.

Though the name *Al-Shāfi* is not directly found in the Quran, it is mentioned in the Sunnah.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, upon visiting a sick person, would say:

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ النَّاسِ أَدْهَبْ بَلَآبَسَ، أُشْفِهِ وَأَنتَالشَّافِيِّ، لَا شَفَافَ إِلَّا شَفَافُكُ، شَفَافًا لَا يَغَادِرُ سَقَمًا

“Oh Allah, the Lord of the people! Remove the trouble and heal the patient, for You are the Healer. No healing is of any avail but Yours; healing that will leave behind no ailment.”

[Bukhari]

For every sickness, Allah ﷺ has created a cure and a cause of healing. Abu Dawud reported:

“Make use of medical treatment, for Allah has not made an ailment without appointing a remedy for it, with the exception of one ailment, old age.” [Abu Dawud]

It is not against Islam to take medicine or go seek medical help when needed. When one practices medicine, they can automatically see and come to the conclusion that Allah ﷺ is *Al-Shāfi*, the healer. All of us have experienced a time in our lives when we needed this name of Allah. Remember, that the number of hours we spend “prostrating”, or waiting, in the courts and presence of doctors, we should spend the same amount of time prostrating in the court of *Al-Shāfi*. Ultimately, He is the only one who can heal the sick. When you spend as much time begging to *Al-Shāfi* as you do begging in the rooms of doctors, you will be healed.
It is important to note that we should not take our days of health for granted. One brother, who is paralyzed from the neck down, was asked about 3 wishes that he had. He said, “To make one sajdah to Allah and never get up from it, to turn one page of the Quran, and on the day of Eid, give my mother a hug”. We never know what Allah has stored for us in the future, so we should take advantage of these things while we have the chance.

**Al-Muhaymin (المهيمن): The One Who Watches Over**

Ibn Abbas said, “Al-Muhaymin is the Entrusted; the Quran is entrusted over every book that came before it.”

“And We have revealed to you, Oh Muhammad, the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and as a criterion over it. So judge between them by what Allah has revealed and do not follow their inclinations away from what has come to you of the truth.” *Surah al-Ma’idah, 5:48*

The Quran checks and judges all other books and previous revelations. We know that the Bible was sent to Bani’ Israel because the Quran confirms it. On the other hand, we do not believe that Isa is the son of God because we know the Quran negates this.

Similarly, Allah witnesses and is entrusted over His creation. He watches over us, protects us, and maintains us. We should call upon *Al-Muhaymin* to preserve and protect ourselves.
7pm, Dr. Anisa recites *Surah Ikhlas* as part of her evening adhkaar on her way home from work. *Surah Ikhlas* unlocks 3 names of Allah 

**Al-Wāḥid (الواحد): The One**

Mentioned in the Quran 12 times.

"Oh my two companions of prison, are separate lords better or Allah, the One, the Prevailing?"

*Surah Yusuf, 12:39*

**Al-Aḥad (الأحد): The One and Only**

Mentioned only in *Surah Ikhlas*.

"Say, 'He is Allah, who is One.'" *Surah al-Ikhlas, 112:1*

**Difference between Al-Wāḥid and Al-Aḥad:**

- *Al-Aḥad* is used to negate any number that comes after it. It is like using the term ‘no one’ in English. For example, when we say, “No one can overpower this person”, we mean that that person cannot be defeated by anyone no matter what.
- On the other hand, *Al-Wāḥid* means ‘the one’, like in the sentence, “One cannot overpower this person”. This indicates that 2 or 3 people could overpower the person together. But *Al-Wāḥid* also means ‘the one who there is nothing like’. In *Lisaan al-Arab*, Ibn Manzur says it signifies, “The One of the world; there is no one like him in the world.”

**Al-Ṣamad (الصمد): The Self-Sufficient**

Mentioned only in *Surah Ikhlas*.

"Allah, the Eternal Refuge." *Surah Ikhlas, 112:2*
There are 3 meanings of Al-Ṣamad:

1. The Self-Sufficient
   - Ibn Abbas translated Al-Ṣamad as ‘the one who has no internal organs’. Why do we have internal organs? We need a stomach to digest food. We need a heart to pump blood. We need lungs to breathe in oxygen.
   - Allah has no needs, he is self-sufficient.

2. The One who His creation needs
   - His creations refer back to Him for their needs.
   - He is not in need of anything or anyone, yet He is the One who everyone else is in need of and the One who everyone escalates their affairs to.

3. It also carries the meaning of Al-Rabb (the Lord), Al-Sayīd (the Master), and Al-Kāmil (the Perfect One who has complete attributes).

Fruits of Allah being Al-Ṣamad:
- The belief in these names should affect our disposition, attitude, and character.
- We all need each other, but a person should not humiliate himself in the dire need of anyone when they recognize that Allah is Al-Ṣamad.
- When Ibrahim was cast into the fire, Angel Jibreel came to him and asked, “Are you in need of anything?” Ibrahim responded, “From you, I have no need. But from Allah, yes.” Though this is a weak narration, it still exemplifies the powerful concept on relying solely on Allah.
- When a person calls upon Allah as Al-Ṣamad, they acknowledge that only He is the One who is able to assist them. What are we saying when we go for weeks and months without calling upon Allah and making dua?
- Over 40 companions narrated that the Prophet told them how Allah descends to the first heaven in the last part of the night asking, “Who is seeking forgiveness and wants something of me, so that I may grant it to him?” over and over again. Scholars say that when someone wants something, but cannot wake up before Fajr to ask for it, they must not really want it.

Al-Matīn: The Unbreakable Might

Al-Matīn means ‘the strong’, but a strength with firmness; a strength that does not waver.

“Indeed, it is Allah who is the continual Provider, the firm possessor of strength.”
Surah al-Dhariyat, 51:58
In this ayah, Al-Matīn is paired with the concept of rizq as a comfort to us. Don’t worry about Allah providing for us since he is filled with power and strength. This settles our hearts when depending on Allah.

**Al-ʿAdhīm (العظيم): The Great**

Mentioned 9 times in the Quran.

> "And He is the most High, the most Great." [Surah al-Baqarah, 2:255]

There are 4 meanings to Al-ʿAdhīm:

1. **Al-ʿAdhīm in His essence.**

2. **Al-ʿAdhīm in His attributes.**
   - Every attribute of perfection of His is His in its most perfect, great, and absolute form. For He is Great in everything: in His Mercy, His Ability, His Grace, His Benevolence, and His Bestowals. He is the Absolutely Great, and none of the greats come near Him.

> “They have no appraised Allah with true appraisal, while the earth entirely will be within His grip on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His right hand. Exalted is He and high above what they associate with Him.” [Surah al-Zumar, 39:67]

3. **Al-ʿAdhīm in His actions.**
4. He is magnified by His creation; the angels, the Prophets, and the universe.

“And there is not a thing except that it exalts Allah by His praise, but you do not understand their way of exalting.” Surah al-Isra, 17:44

Al-Jamīl (الجميل): The Beautiful
This name comes from the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

إن الله جميل يحب الجمال
“Verily Allah is Beautiful and He loves Beauty.” [Muslim]

Beauty is one of the purposes of Allah’s creation.

“And for you in them is the enjoyment of beauty when you bring them in for the evening and when you send them out to pasture.” Surah Nahl, 16:6

People find beauty in things to appreciate Allah ﷻ. It is one of the signs of Allah’s existence. The fact that humans can appreciate beauty while animals don’t proves that there is something different about us. We see the beauty in the function and creation of things. For example, stars were not only created to cast out the devils or for navigation, but also to adorn the sky.

“And We have certainly beautified the nearest heaven with stars and have made from them what is thrown at the devils and have prepared for them the punishment of the Blaze.” Surah Mulk, 67:5
How is Allah ﷻ Al-Jamīl?

1. Allah ﷻ is Al-Jamīl in all of His essence. In Jannah, there will nothing more beautiful or rewarding than being able to look at the face of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ would always make dua, “I ask for the delight and pleasure of seeing your noble face”.

2. Allah ﷻ is also Al-Jamīl in His names and attributes; he calls all of His names ‘husna’. All of Allah’s attributes are high, lofty, and beautiful.

3. In addition, Allah ﷻ is Al-Jamīl in His actions. All of His actions revolve around ihsan, benevolence, justice, and blessings.

4. Finally, Allah ﷻ is Al-Jamīl in His creation. Allah ﷻ could have created us to look like ogres or trolls, but He didn’t. Instead, He created us to be in the best of forms.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also loved the concept of beauty. When Ali ibn Abu Talib had his first son, he wanted to name him something that would reflect on himself. So, Ali ﷺ called his son ‘harb’ meaning ‘war’, so that he himself would ‘Abu Harb’. When Ali ﷺ presents this to the Prophet ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ said, “No, his name is al-Hassan, the beautiful.” When Ali had his second son, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ named him al-Husayn, the small beautiful one.

One of the blessings of Allah ﷻ is He made beauty subjective. One could think of something or someone being the most beautiful thing, but it does not mean that everyone thinks that. There is great wisdom in this. If it weren’t for the differences in taste that people had, commodity would be lost and we wouldn’t have markets, since everyone would want the exact same thing!

Al-Wadūd (الودود): The Loving

الودود

“And He is the Forgiving, the Loving.” Surah al-Buruj, 85:14

وَأَسْتَغْفِرْلَكُمْ رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ نُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ إِنَّ رَبِّي رَحِيمُ وَلَدُودٌ

“And ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. Indeed, my Lord is Merciful and Loving.” Surah Hud, 11:90

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**Al-Wadūd** is the Loving and the One who bestows love, as mentioned above in Surahs Buruj and Hud. In both scenarios, **Al-Wadūd** is tied to something: either forgiveness or mercy. Allah ﷺ has both love and mercy. If you love someone, you are more likely to forgive and have mercy on that person, and Allah ﷺ loves to forgive. This means that He definitely loves us.

When someone wrongs us, it is very hard to get back to the same position of love and friendship with them, though we might forgive them. It was even difficult for the Prophet ﷺ and his companions. When Wahshi, the slave who killed the Prophet’s uncle Hamzah ﷺ, accepted Islam, the Prophet ﷺ forgave him, but it was still hard for the Prophet to see Wahshi around without thinking about what he did to Hamzah ﷺ.

When Umar ﷺ was Khalifah, a man came to him. Umar asked him, “Are you the one who killed my brother Zayd?” The man said, “Yes.” Umar ﷺ told him that he accepted his Islam and has forgiven him, but he did not want to see him around. Umar had no love for this man because of what he had done to Umar ﷺ’s brother.

But, Allah ﷺ is different. He will forgive and love again, no matter how many times we wrong Him. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, “Allah laughs at 2 people; one kills the other and they will both enter paradise.” How is this possible? One killed the other when he was not yet Muslim, and then later accepted Islam. Allah will forgive the one who killed and they will both enter Jannah.

There is nothing a person can do in their life where they will be outside the opportunity to be loved by Allah ﷺ and be forgiven by Him. This is special and unique to **Al-Wadūd**.

*The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “One of Prophet Dawud’s supplications was: ‘Oh Allah! I ask You for Your Love, the love of those who love You, and deeds which will cause me to attain Your Love. Oh Allah! Make Your Love dearer to me than myself, my family, and cold water.’”*  
*[Tirmidhi]*

**How to access Allah ﷺ as **Al-Wadūd**:  
- Fard actions. Though the dutiful slave of Allah will continue to do the voluntary actions until Allah loves them, the most beloved actions to Allah ﷺ are the mandatory ones.  
- Loving and forgiving others. When we love and forgive others, Allah ﷺ will love and forgive us. It can be very dangerous to hate someone, since they could be someone whom Allah loves.
10pm, Dr. Anisa ends her day by reflecting on it and making istighfaar 100 times.

**Al-Ghaffūr (الغفور), Al-Ghaffār (الغفار), Al-Ghāfir (الغافر)**

**Al-Ghāfir:** The One who forgives
- Root name for the other 2 names

**Al-Ghaffār:** The Perpetual Forgiver
- Mentioned 5 times in the Quran
- One who continuously forgives

> “Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them, the Exalted in Might, the Perpetual Forgiver.” *Surah Sa‘ād, 38:66*

**Al-Ghaffūr:** Indication of the depth of Allah’s forgiveness
- Mentioned 91 times in the Quran

> “Oh Muhammad, inform My servants that it is I who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.” *Surah al-Hijr, 15:49*

- This name is often paired with other names of Allah
  - **Al-Ghaffūr Al-Raḥīm:** Forgiveness with Mercy
    - It is as though the cause and effect are paired together; forgiveness is the cause to experience the Mercy of Allah.
  - **Al-‘Azīz Al-Ghaffūr:** Forgiveness with Strength
    - Allah’s forgiveness is not out of weakness or inability to exact revenge, but with total capability and power.
  - **Al-Ghaffūr Al-Wadūd:** Forgiveness with Love
    - When Allah forgives, the effects of that sin disappear. Some forgive, but don’t forget, so there is still a distance or caution there.
      But Allah does not do that; He forgives and still loves.
The Secret of Imam al-Nawawi:

Imam al-Nawawi is someone who whatever he touched, turned to gold. Though he had a short life, almost all of his book are unanimously accepted and transcend every group and subsection within Islam. Whether it is the 40 Ahadith, Riyadh al-Salihin, or the Book of Adhkaar, his books are found in almost every masjid and home. Yet, in each and every one of his books, he always ended them with a chapter on istighfaar.

It is important to note that Allah does not just command us to make istighfaar after sins, but also after completing good deeds. After salah, we say astaghfirullah. Even on Hajj, during Arafah on the journey of a lifetime when our prayers ascend directly to the heavens, Allah asks us to make istighfaar. Allah even commanded the Prophet , after 23 years of preaching Islam, to seek Allah’s forgiveness in Surah Al-Nasr.

إِذَا أَجَاءَ نُصُرَّ أَلَّهُ وَأَفْسَحَ فَرَأَا الْيَتِمُّ الْمَسْتَغْفِرُ الْمُضْطَرُّ ۡيَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ أَلَّهِ أَفْوَجَا فَسَيَسْتَغْفِرُ رَبِّكَ وَأَسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَابًا

“When the victory of Allah has come and the conquest, And you see the people entering into the religion of Allah in multitudes, Then exalt Him with praise of your Lord and ask forgiveness of Him. Indeed, He is ever Accepting of repentance.” Surah al-Nasr, 110:1-3

When we offer acts of worship, it will always fall short of the rights of Allah . There is nothing that we will be able to do in our human capacity that will match up to the glory of God and what He deserves. Since there will always be deficiencies and distractions in our worship, Allah tells us to seek forgiveness for our mistakes. This is why Imam Nawawi places a chapter of istighfaar at the end of his books. It is as he was telling Allah, “This is what I can put together, so forgive me.” Though Allah knows best, it is generally known that the acceptance amongst the people is an indication of acceptance with Allah.

On the authority of Anas ibn Malik who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah say, “Allah the Almighty has said: ‘Oh Son of Adam, as long as you invoke Me and ask of Me, I shall forgive you for what you have done, and I shall not mind. Oh Son of Adam, were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky and you then asked forgiveness from Me, I would forgive you. Oh Son of Adam, were you to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the Earth, and were you then to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me, I would bring you forgiveness nearly as great as it [too].’” [Tirmidhi]
Al-Agharr al-Muzani said: The Messenger of Allah said, “Sometimes I perceive a veil over my heart, and I supplicate to Allah for forgiveness a hundred times in a day.” [Muslim]

Ways to obtain Allah’s forgiveness:

1. Goodness to Allah’s creation
   - When are good to the creation of Allah, Allah will be good to us.

   The Prophet said, “While a dog was going round a well and was about to die of thirst, a prostitute from the children of Israel saw it and took off her shoe and watered it. So Allah forgave her because of that good deed.” [Bukhari]

2. Forgiving others

   The Prophet said, “There was a merchant who used to lend the people, and whenever his debtor was in straitened circumstances, he would say to his employees, ‘Forgive him so that Allah may forgive us.’ So, Allah forgave him.” [Bukhari and Muslim]

   - Forgiving others does not just have to do with debt, but also for incidents where they have wronged us. We should ask ourselves, “If by forgiving this person, Allah will forgive me, then would I forgive them?” Of course, our answer should be yes! No forgiveness is too little or too great, and there is no anger that is worth the punishment of Allah.

   - Once, while Abdullah ibn Amr al-‘As was sitting with the Messenger of Allah, he mentioned that a man from the people of Paradise is about to enter. He was ordinary man from the Ansar and no one even mentions his name. A similar incident happened again. This time, Abdullah ibn Amr wanted to find out what was so special about his man. So, he made up an excuse so that he could stay at the man’s house and observe him for 3 days. In those 3 days, Abdullah ibn Amr does not see the man perform any special actions that would distinguish him as a person of Paradise. Abdullah ibn Amr tells the man the reason for his observation and the man tells him that every night before he goes to bed, he cleanses his heart from any animosity towards other Muslims.

   - It is important to forgive others. How can we expect Allah to forgive us when we continuously wrong Him if we don’t find it in ourselves to forgive others when they wrong us? In fact, one scholar mentioned that when people are amazed by you, they are actually amazed by how beautifully Allah has concealed our faults. We should try to cleanse our hearts each night in hopes that Allah will forgive us.
3. Doing good deeds

"And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember.”

Surah Hud, 11:114

This ayah was revealed after an incident of a man who had kissed a woman while her husband was away. The man came to the Prophet very bothered by what he had done and the Prophet was incredibly bothered by it as well. Allah then revealed this ayah to the Prophet. After receiving this revelation, the Prophet asked the man, “Have you prayed Fajr with us?” The man said he did. Then Prophet Muhammad recited this verse to the man. The man asked, “Has this verse been revealed just for me?” The Prophet said, “No, rather it was revealed for my entire ummah.” This is a reminder for us that performing good deeds can cancel out our bad deeds.

Ways that sins can be forgiven:

In the Dunya:
1. Istighfaar
2. Taubah (sincere repentance for that sin)
3. Good deeds that erase bad deeds (Umrah/Hajj, charity, salah, etc.)
4. Calamities that purify (sickness, losing money, pain, sadness, sorrow, etc.)

After a Person Passes Away:
1. Salat ul-Janaza
   - The Prophet said, “no man has 40 Muslims pray over him except that his sins are forgiven.”
2. Dua of a righteous child
3. Punishment of the grave (serves as a purification)

During the Day of Judgment and Hereafter (if they were still not purified in the Dunya and the Grave):
1. Terrors of the Day of Judgment (serves as purification)
2. Intercession of their family, the angels, and the Prophets
3. Forgiveness of Allah
If a person goes through all these stages and still has existing sins, they will be purified in the Hell-fire for whatever period of time that Allah decrees for them.

Take advantage of the 3 that we have in our control: istighfaar, Taubah, and doing good deeds.

**Al-‘Afuw (العفو): The Pardoner**

> إن نبد واحي أورتحفه أو تتعفو عن سوء فإن الله كان عفواً قديراً

“If [instead] you show some good or conceal it or pardon an offense – Indeed Allah is ever Pardoning and Competent.” *Surah al-Nisa’, 4:149*

*Afuw* means to erase the sin as if it was never there in the first place.

Allah ﷺ is *Al-‘Afuw* meaning that he will completely erase our sins and refrain from punishing them.

Aisha  reported: I asked, “Oh Messenger of Allah! If I realized Laylat’l-Qadr, (the Night of Decree), what should I supplicate in it?” He replied:

> اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفَا تَحْبُبُ الْعُفُو قَاعِفُ عَنْي

“Oh Allah, You are the Pardoner, and You love to pardon; so pardon me.”

**Fruits of Allah ﷺ being Al-‘Afuw:**

- Just like the fruits of *Al-Ghaffār, Al-Ghaffūr,* and *Al-Ghāfir,* we know that our Lord is forgiving and we can access His forgiveness at all times. There is no sin one can commit that is beyond His forgiveness.
- Prophet Muhammad ﷺ told us that Allah ﷺ extends His hand in forgiveness during the day for those who sinned during the night, and extends His hand during the night for those who sinned during the day.
- He has also told us that all of his ummah is forgiven, except for the muhajirun, those who uncover their faults in front of others. Allah ﷺ, out of His mercy, has concealed our faults for us, so we should make sure that we are not voluntarily uncovering them, especially with social media. It is from *iman* to conceal our sins so that others are not desensitized to the sin or encouraged to do the same.