

The Right Path Towards Gnosis of the Lord of Creation

By

Sayyid Allama Muhammad bin al-Hasan bin Imam al-Qāsim bin Muhammad

The Imam Rassi Society's translation of *Sab'ar-Rashid ila Ma'rifa Rabbil-'Ubad*:

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful...

Author's Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, and peace be upon His chosen slaves. All praise is due to Allah, the One in which there is no god but He—the All-Just, the All-Wise. He is the Most Truthful in that which He promises the believers of the Blessed Paradise, as well as that which He threatens the disobedient with of remaining in the fiery torment forever. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the All-Hearing, All-Knowing. I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and messenger, the one endowed with the Noble Qur'an and the guide to the right path. May Allah's blessings be upon him and his Progeny, those successors after him who uphold the religion of uprightness.

As to what follows—I was asked by some righteous brothers about the main issues concerning the foundations of the religion, as well as the freeing of the Lord of Creation from the statements of those of falsehood. I was also asked to gather all of that with clear proofs, so that one can become firmly established in good deeds, God willing. Therefore, I have replied to him concerning that which he sought as well as conveyed that which he desired and established for him those sure principles. I have gathered for him the most important issues of benefit—God willing—insomuch that the one who believes in it will be firmly established and guided towards the highest stations of confirmation. We do this hoping for reward from Allah, as well as for aid toward righteousness and God-wariness as is stated in His Revelation.

This desire is increased based upon the statement of the Exalted **{Cooperate in righteousness and God-wariness} (Q. 5:2)**, as well as from his statement, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny:

((One does not guide his Muslim brother to the good by means of a word of truth and then teach it to him except that Allah will increase him in guidance or deliver him from ruin. To Allah, it is similar to giving life to a soul. Whoever gives life to it is similar to one who gives life to all humanity)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said:

((O 'Ali. If Allah were to guide a man to the good by your hand, it would be better for you than anything that the sun shines on)).

There are many more examples from the well-known narrated traditions and statements. We ask Allah to increase us in illumination and appoint for us a victorious authority!

[Divine Oneness]

Know that the first obligation for the morally responsible person is the knowledge and gnosis of Allah, the Exalted, as well as knowledge of His Attributes. Verily, that is the head of knowledge that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, mentioned in his reply to the one who asked him to teach him the subtleties of knowledge. He said: ((How is it that you ask me about the subtleties before asking me about the head of knowledge?)) The man then asked: “What is the head of knowledge?” He replied : ((It is that you know Allah with true gnosis)). The man asked: “What is it to know Allah with true gnosis?” He replied:

((It is that you know that He is without likeness or resemblance. It is that you know that He is One God, the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden. There is no one like Him, and He has no likeness)).

[The obligation of contemplation and the importance of gnosis of Allah]

The path to the gnosis of Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—is what Allah related about His Messenger and Friend, Abraham—Allah’s peace and blessings be upon our Prophet, him and both their Progeny—when the Exalted said: **{...and thus did We show Abraham the dominion of the heavens and the earth, that he would be amongst those of certainty. When the night covered him, he saw a star. He said: “This is my Lord.” When it set, he said: “I love not those that set.” When he saw the moon rising, he said: “This is my Lord.” When it set, he said: “Unless my Lord guides me, I shall be amongst the astray folk.” When he saw the sun rising, he said: “This is my Lord. This one is the greatest!” When it set, he said: “O folk, I am indeed free from that which ye associate! Verily, I turn my face towards the One who created the heavens and earth...”}** (Q. 6:75-79).

That is contemplation and thought regarding the dominion of the heavens, earth, what’s between them and what’s in them. These are clear signs that are manifest and evident. They demonstrate order and having been created. There are different varieties of animals with various types, colours, shapes and sounds. They have different compositions as well as manifest and hidden feelings. They have the inspiration towards rectification—large and small. He begins their creation in the wombs as well as transitions them from phase to phase. Therefore, blessed be Allah, the Best of creators!

Whoever considers creation with truth using one’s intellect, as well as how it changes, is formed, created and joined, what transpires of excesses and deficiencies, movement and stillness, and its need for space and time, one knows with certainty that it was brought into existence by a Creator who began it, an Arranger who arranged it and an Owner who created and formed it. It is impossible that such One be a spatial-temporal creation like it—whether part or whole. This is something that a sound intellect guides one towards, and this is something that a right mind realises out of necessity.

Allah sent Messengers with miracles that decisively convinced others of their truth. He sent down with them scriptures that contained explanations of His rulings as well as the manner by which He is to be thanked for His blessings. **{If ye were to count the favour of Allah, ye could not reckon it}** (Q. 16:18). **{...lest the people may not have an argument against Allah after the Messengers}** (Q. 4:165). They are the guides for humankind towards the correct, established path.

He—Glorified be He—indicates by use of the intellect a gnosis by means of signs (or “verses”) that verify His Divine Attributes. He is specified by Dominion, Greatness, Pride and Oneness. The intellect takes one from the state of heedlessness to that of gnosis of the Lord of the Worlds. It removes the doubt caused by corrupt desires and fantasies as well as the blind adherence to the religion of one’s forefathers. One should contemplate the explicit verses of the Book of Allah, the Praiseworthy, as a guide towards the lights of guidance and Divine Oneness, as well as a director for the intellect towards that which is most important in the knowledge of Allah, His Justice and His Truth. **{It is not for thy Lord to commit injustice towards the slaves}** (Q. 41:46). **{Hast thou not contemplated upon the Qur’an or are there seals on the hearts?}** (Q. 47:24).

Allah—Glorified be He—says: **{Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of night and day, and the ships which run upon the sea with that which is of benefit to people, and the water which Allah sends down from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death, and dispersing all kinds of beasts therein, and the decree of the winds, and the clouds obedient between heaven and earth: are signs for people of intellect}** (Q. 2:164). He says, Glorified be He: **{Hast they not looked upon the camels—how they were created, the heaven—how it was raised, the mountains—how they were set up and the earth—how it was spread?}** (Q. 88:17-20).

He—Exalted be He—says: **{Man should consider from what he was created} (Q. 86:5). {And how many signs are there...?} (Q. 12:105).** The Qur'an is replete with such examples. It informs those with intellect of its way with contemplation that ennoble the wayfarer until such one comes to know of it with knowledge of certainty. **{He increases in belief those who believe} (Q. 74:31). {...who has made all things good which He created} (Q. 32:7). {Allah is the Creator of all things. He is the One, the Powerful} (Q. 13:16).**

You can never contemplate His Essence, nor can you have gnosis of Him except by means of contemplating His creation. The Appointee (*al-Waṣī*)—May Allah ennoble his face in Paradise—was asked about Divine Oneness. He replied: “Divine Oneness is not to imagine Him.” This is comprehensive wisdom. It is also narrated from him:

Whoever thinks about Allah attains godlessness (*alhad*). Whoever thinks about Allah's creation attains Oneness of Allah (*wahhad*).

The poet says: “In everything there is a sign that proves that He is One.”

It also appears in the reply of Moses, upon him be peace, when he was asked by Pharaoh, may Allah curse him: **{“What is thy Lord?”} (Q. 26:23).** That is to say, “What type of being is He?” He replied to him with what he knows. He replied: **{“The Lord of the heavens, the earth and what is between them, if thou art certain”} (Q. 26:24).** It is narrated that a man asked [i.e. the Prophet], peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, three times about the best of actions. He replied each time: ((Knowledge of Allah)). Then, the man said: “I asked you about actions and you responded with knowledge?” He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, replied:

((Woe unto you! Verily, with knowledge, actions benefit—whether small or great. However, with ignorance, actions do not benefit—whether small or great)).

It is narrated that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((If you were to know Allah with true gnosis, He would teach you with knowledge after which is no ignorance. If you were to learn about Allah with true knowledge, you would remain perpetually as the mountains)).

It is narrated that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Allah divided the intellect into three parts. Whoever possesses it is one of great intellect. Whoever does not possess it is not one of great intellect. They are excellent knowledge of Allah, excellent obedience to Allah and excellent patience with Allah)).

The meaning of the narration is that the one who does not act upon this has not acted with intellect.

[Proof of Allah's Divine Oneness]

When we come to know and contemplate over the verses of Qur'an utilising the intellect, we come to know that there is a Creator and Arranger. We come to realise, know, witness and believe that it is Allah, the One with whom is no partner or a second god with Him. **{Lo! Each god would have taken away what he created and some would have exalted themselves over others} (Q. 23:91), {...the heavens and earth would be ruined} (Q. 23:71)** due to conflicts. There would come to us additional messengers and scriptures.

He—Glorified be He—says: **{Allah—There is no god but He; the Ever Living, the Self-Existent} (Q. 2:255). {Verily, thy God is only Allah. There is no god but He} (Q. 18:98).**

It is narrated on the authority of Ubayy bin Ka'b that the idolaters said to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny: “Describe to us your Lord.” Then the verse was revealed: **{Say: He is Allah, the One, the Everlasting. He begets not nor is He begotten. There is no equal unto Him} (Q. 112).** It is narrated from the Appointee—May Allah ennoble his face in Paradise—that those that inquired were Jews and they said: “Describe your Lord to us in detail.” Then this chapter was revealed.

We know that He—Glorified be He—exists. This is because of renewal of created things, as well as the absence of the signs of non-existence. He—Exalted be He—says, and He is the Most Truthful: **{Hast thou not seen that Allah knoweth all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth? There is no intimate conversation amongst three except that He is the fourth of them. Nor are there five except that He is the sixth of them. No less than that or no more except that He is with them wherever they are; and afterward, on the Day of Resurrection, He shall inform them of what they did. Alas! Allah is the Knower of all things.} (Q. 58:7).**

We know that He is All-Powerful, All-Knowing and Ever-Living. His ability to enact an action proves His Power. His ability towards perfection proves His Knowledge. All of creation operates upon a

system, and this can only be possible by One who is All-Powerful and All-Knowing. One cannot be All-Powerful and All-Knowing unless He is Ever-Living.

He—Glorified be He—is Pre-Existent, not the first of His existents. If He is the One who brought into existence, it is necessary that He not be brought into existence. It would be a vicious cycle (*tasalsal*), and this is impossible. Allah is highly exalted above that!

He—Glorified be He—is Independent because He is without need. Need is a characteristic of bodies, and Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—is not a body or accident (*'arḍ*). Bodies and accidents are in need of space and place, and this is impossible in respects to Him.

He does not resemble His creation. It would mean that He has a partner in resemblance, and He has no partners. These attributes are firmly established and explicitly mentioned in the Book of Allah, which **{No falsehood can approach it from its front and back—revelation from One Most Wise and Praiseworthy} (Q. 41:42)**. By it, it speaks. The intellect is informed and agreed with. Sufficient for you are the verses of the Qur'an as a truth and evidence.

He—Glorified be He—says: **{Allah—There is no god but He; the Ever Living, the Self-Existent. He is not overtaken by slumber or sleep. Unto Him belong whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth. Who is the one that can intercede with Him save by His leave? He knows what is in front of them and behind them, while they encompass nothing of His knowledge save what He wills. His Chair encompasses the heavens and the earth, and He is never weary of preserving them. He is the Exalted, the Magnanimous} (Q. 2:255)**. **{He is the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden. He is the Knower of all things} (Q. 57:3)**. **{And with Him are the keys of the Unseen. None but He knows them. He knows what is in the land and the sea. Not a leaf falls but He knows it, not a grain amidst the darkness of the earth—wet or dry—but that it is in a clear book} (Q. 6:59)**. **{Even if thou were to speak aloud, He verily knows the secret and that which is more hidden} (Q. 20:7)**. **{And Allah has power over all things} (Q. 2:284)**. **{Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them? Certainly, He is! He is the All-Wise Creator} (Q. 36:81)**. **{...the Knower of the Unseen and seen, the Great and Highly Exalted} (Q. 13:9)**. **{There is nothing like unto Him. He is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing} (Q. 42:11)**. **{He is with thee wheresoever ye may be} (Q. 58:4)**. **{O people, Thou art dependent upon Allah, and Allah is the Independent and Praiseworthy} (Q. 35:15)**. **{Whosoever is ungrateful, Allah is Independent from the worlds} (Q. 3:97)**. **{Whosoever is stingy—such one is only stingy against himself. Allah is Independent and thou art dependent} (Q. 47:38)**. **{O people! Remember Allah's grace toward thee! Is there any Creator other than Allah who provides for thee from the heavens and earth? There is no God save Him. Whither then are ye turned?} (Q. 35:3)**. **{Their messengers said: “Is there doubt concerning Allah, the Creator of the heavens and earth? He calls thee that He may forgive thee thy sins and reprieve thee unto an appointed term.” They said: “Ye are but mortals like us, who would fain turn us away from what our fathers used to worship. Then bring some clear authority} (Q. 14:10)**. This is repeated throughout the Noble Qur'an.

Allah—Glorified be He—will not be seen—whether in this world or the Hereafter. This is because if He could be seen now, it necessitates that the possibility of His Vision remain perpetually. He says: **{Vision reaches Him not; rather, He reaches all vision. He is Most Subtle, Most Aware} (Q. 6:103)**. He—Glorified be He—says to Moses, upon him be peace: **{Thou shall never see Me} (Q. 7:143)**. He negates the Vision absolutely with the particle **{never (*lan*)}**, which denotes perpetuity. He restricted its possibility to an impossibility—namely the permanence of the mountain.

This question was only on behalf of his people though it was upon his tongue, upon him be peace. Due to the infallibility of the Prophets, he sought that and then repented to Allah for their request. By their question, they attributed to Allah that which is the greatest of the major sins. This is evident from His words—Exalted be He: **{They asked Moses for something greater than that, for they said: “Show us Allah clearly!” They were seized with thunder} (Q. 4:153)**.

It is narrated on the authority of A'isha that she was asked: 'Did Muhammad see his Lord?' She replied:

O you! My hair has stood up based upon what you said! Whoever told you these three things has lied. Whoever has said that Muhammad saw his Lord has lied. **{Vision reaches him not; rather, He reaches all vision. He is Most Subtle, Most Aware} (Q. 6:103)**. Whoever has said that Muhammad knows what will happen tomorrow has lied. **{No soul knows what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul knows in what land one will die. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware} (Q. 31:34)**. Whoever says that Muhammad concealed anything of inspiration has lied. **{O Messenger, convey what was**

revealed unto thee from thy Lord. If thou doeth it not, ye hath not conveyed His Message. Allah will protect thee from the people. Verily, Allah guides not the ungrateful (or “disbelieving”) people} (Q. 5:67).

It is not possible that Allah—Exalted be He—dies because nonexistence is a quality of a body and an accident. Allah is not a body or an accident. This is because it is necessary that He would be measured, and Allah is not a Being that can be measured. This is based on His statement: **{He is the First, the Last} (Q. 57:3). {There is nothing like unto Him} (Q. 42:11). {Everything shall perish except His Face} (Q. 28:88). {Everyone upon it shall perish, and the Face of thy Lord, the Possessor of Majesty and Nobility} (Q. 55:26-27).**

Allah is above begetting and being begotten. Begetting and incarnation do not befit Him because they are attributes of bodies. Allah—Exalted be He—is not a body. He—Exalted be He—says: **{He begets not nor is He begotten. There is no equal unto Him} (Q. 112:3-4).** He also says: **{Never did Allah take unto Himself a son or another god...} (Q. 23:91). {Say the Jews: “Ezra is the son of Allah.” Say the Christians: “Christ is the son of Allah.” That is their words uttered from their mouths—a word of those who disbelieved from before. May Allah destroy them! How they are deluded!} (Q. 9:30). {Say: “All praise is due to Allah who has not taken a son. There is no partner who shares in [His] dominion. He has no protector out of weakness”} (Q. 17:111).**

[Divine Justice (*al-‘Adl*)]

It is religiously obligatory for the morally responsible person to know that Allah—Exalted be He—is All-Just and All-Wise. There are no obscenities, oppression and jest in His actions. This is proven by the intellect and textual proof.

Regarding the intellectual proof, if He—Glorified be He—is most knowing of what is obscene. An obscenity is oppression and jest. He is independent of such and is most knowing of that which He is independent from. Since that is the case, He does not commit such actions. He does not desire it, He is not pleased with it and He does not command it. How could He be pleased with it Himself while He is All-Just and All-Wise?

Regarding the textual proof, Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—says: **{Verily, Allah is not unjust to people a bit. But, it is the people that are unjust to themselves} (Q. 10:44), {And thy Lord will not treat any of them unjustly} (Q. 18:49), {Dost thou think that We created thee in jest? Verily, to Us shall ye return} (Q. 23:115), {...and reflect upon the creation of the heavens and earth. “O our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain! Glorified be Thee, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire} (Q. 3:191).**

All of His actions—Glorified be He—as well as His commands and prohibitions are due to wisdom and rectification. It is explicitly stated in the verses of the Noble Book in many places. It repeats the words **{All-Wise}** and **{All-Knowing}** in a number of verses. It is obligatory to believe that. Even if the wisdom of some things is hidden from us, He knows it. Allah is highly Exalted above doing anything without wisdom! **{That is the assumption of those who disbelieve. Woe be unto those who disbelieve from the Fire!} (Q. 38:27).** ‘Ali—May Allah ennoble his face—was asked: “What is Divine Justice?” He replied: “It is that you don’t falsely accuse Him” This is comprehensive wisdom!

Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—does not recompense anyone except for their deeds. He does not punish anyone except for what they earn, and He does not reward anyone except for what they earn. This is because He is All-Just and the Truth. He—Exalted be He—says: **{Verily, Allah commands justice, goodness, and giving towards kin and forbids immorality, evil, and oppression. He exhorts thee that thou may remember} (Q. 16:90).** He does not command something except that He is pleased with it and desires it.

He—Exalted be He—says: **{...He shall recompense those who works evil by what they earned. He shall recompense those who do good with good} (Q. 53:31).** He—Exalted be He—says: **{Whoever does a good deed does so for his own soul. Whoever does an evil deed—it is against him. Thy Lord is not unjust to His slaves a bit} (Q. 41:46).** He—Exalted be He—says: **{How then, when We shall gather them on the Day in which is no doubt and every soul shall be recompensed for what it had earned? They shall not be wronged} (Q. 3:25).** He—Exalted be He—says: **{Verily, the Hour is coming—though I have hidden it—insomuch that every soul shall be recompensed for what it strove for} (Q. 20:15).** He—Exalted be He—says: **{No one shall bear the burdens of another} (Q. 6:164).**

[Concerning the actions of the slaves]

All actions of the slaves—whether good or bad, first or last—are not created in them. Rather, they [i.e. the slaves] are the sources of them by their choice. They are responsible for them, and they are to blame for them as proven by the intellect and textual evidence.

The attribution of an action always returns to the doer. Everyone with intellect knows that. Allah—Exalted be He—says: **{Whoever does an atom’s weight of good shall see it. Whoever does an atom’s weight of evil shall see it} (Q. 99:7-8).** **{...recompense for what they used to do} (Q. 56:24).** **{“Work, O Family of David, out of gratitude...”} (Q. 34:13).** **{...except those who believe and work righteous deeds...} (Q. 38:24).** **{Verily, those who distort Our verses...} (Q. 41:40).** **{...they preferred blindness rather than guidance...} (Q. 41:17).**

Allah describes them with strength and weakness. They differ in the application of such by means of their choice, as the one with intellect can attest. **{Then, whoever wills—let him believe, and whoever wills—let him disbelieve} (Q. 18:29).** **{Then, whoever works righteous deeds while he is a believer—he shall not be deprived of his effort. Verily, We are for him recorders} (Q. 21:94).** **{...and We record what they have brought forth and what they have left behind...} (Q. 36:12).** He attributes all of their actions to them.

In every predatory animal, there is ability specific to it. There are legs to run, claws to attack, eyes to see and ears to hear. If all of that is from Allah as those of falsehood say, why should we praise one who

He was asked: “O Messenger of Allah, is he a disbeliever?” He replied: ((No)). He was asked: “Is he believer?” He replied: ((No)). He was asked: “What is he?” He replied: ((A defiantly disobedient person)). This is an explicit statement regarding designation.

The hypocrite is a disbeliever, as Allah explicitly states. He warns regarding their disbelief. He makes the lowest level of Hell for them. It’s amazing that the Qur’an mentions in the beginning of *Al-Baqara* (Q. 2) that the believers are specified by their belief. Then it follows by explicitly mentioning the disbelievers and their disbelief. Afterwards, it mentions the hypocrites and spends almost thirteen verses downgrading their description, lying, jesting and opposition to Allah. They are likened to a calamity filled with darkness, thunder and lightning. Allah berates them in many verses, and they are wedged between the status of a believer and that of a disbeliever.

The chapter *Al-Munāfiqūn* (Q. 63) was revealed about them. Their affliction is made great by being mixed with the believers. They are belied, and their testimonies are suspect because what they utter from their tongues is not what’s in their hearts. Their oaths are acts of disobedience, insomuch that the chapter *At-Tawba* (Q. 9) ridicules them and describes them as humiliated. This is because their state of abomination is worse than that of the disbelievers and the disobedient. Showing-off is a part of hypocrisy.

It is narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((To Allah, the two-faced person has no face)). **{And Allah bears witness that the hypocrites are liars} (Q. 63:1). {Sufficient is Allah for a Witness} (Q. 4:79). {Verily, the hypocrites shall be in the lowest level of the Fire, and ye shall never find a helper for them} (Q. 4:145). {They are the enemy, so beware of them. May Allah destroy them! How deluded are they!} (Q. 63:4). {To Allah belongs the dignity, as well as to His Messenger and the believers. However, the hypocrites know not} (Q. 63:8).**

[Concerning repentance (*at-Tawba*)]

Repentance is obligatory upon all disobedient people based upon intellectual and textual proof. It removes harm from the soul. Its removal is obligatory similarly. The greatest harm to be removed is the punishment of Allah—Exalted be He—as well as the permanent stay in the Fire. Allah says: **{O ye who believe, repent to Allah with sincere repentance} (Q. 66:8)**. There are other explicit examples that have come similar to this.

It is religiously obligatory to constantly seek repentance due to consistency of disobedience. This is because the disobedient person is reminded of its necessity at every moment. If one does not do that, he will be condemned and would repeat other acts of disobedience.

It [i.e. repentance] is to regret an obscene action and the avoidance of an obligation as well as the determination to not return to the acts of disobedience as long as one lives. It is accepted with sincerity while in every time keeping in mind death and the presence of angels to take his spirit. It is as what has been narrated in the Prophetic tradition, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, when he was asked about the limit of repentance:

((Whoever repents a year before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents half a year before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents a month before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents a week before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents a day before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents an hour before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents before the approach of death, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. **{...then, they repent soon after. They are those whom Allah shall turn to, and Allah is All-Knowing and All-Wise} (Q. 4:17).**

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((That which is before death is **{soon after}**)).

Repentance will not be accepted from the one at the time that their souls are extracted. He—Glorified and Exalted be He—says: **{...the Day they shall see the angels. There shall be no glad tidings for the criminals. They shall say: “Denied and prevented!” (Q. 25:22)}**; that is, prevented and prohibited. And He—Glorified be He—says: **{Repentance shall not be for those who commit evil deeds up until the time of death approaches them and they say: “I repent now!” nor [shall it be for] those who die as disbelievers. They are those for whom We have prepared a painful punishment} (Q. 4:18)**. This applies to acts of disobedience absolutely by consensus. This is based upon the words of the Exalted: **{Verily, I am All-Forgiving of the one who repents, believes and works righteous deeds...}**; that is,

sincere repentance and not something that just resembles it. **{...Then, He guides him} (Q. 20:82)**; that is, He causes him to remain on it [i.e. guidance]. There are other verses similar to this.

Allah substitutes evil deeds for good deeds, as he—Exalted be He—says: **{...except the one who repents, believes and works righteous deeds. They are those for whom Allah will substitute their evil deeds for righteous deeds. Allah is All-Forgiving and All-Merciful} (Q. 25:70)**. One may ask: “How can evil deeds be substituted for good deeds?” It is said that the outward meaning is that the one with many sins who repents will have more good deeds than the one with few sins who repented. I say that this is not the correct interpretation. The intended meaning is that, by means of repentance, Allah will substitute them from the state of disbelief and disobedience to that of obedience, God-wariness and belief. This is the definitive meaning of **{righteous deeds}**. It is also said that the fornicator will be substituted for a righteous person, the one who kills an idolater will be substituted for one who kills a Muslim, and so forth.

Another condition for repentance is that it takes place for sins generally. This is based on the word of the Exalted: **{...he repents to Allah with accepted repentance} (Q. 25:71)**. It is a certain and great benefit for one’s repentance to be accepted. This means that He—Glorified be He—knows sincerity and He accepts it and is pleased with the repentant. **{Verily, Allah loves the repentant, and He loves those who purify themselves} (Q. 2:222)**.

One is to seek forgiveness completely. It is not sufficient for one to simply seek forgiveness only by words; rather, the heart is to precede the tongue. True determination is turning from it. **{Verily, He knows what is secret and hidden} (Q. 20:7)**. **{He knows what is hidden from the eyes and what is concealed in the chests} (Q. 40:19)**.

It is narrated in *Nahj al-Balāgha* that the Commander of the Believers and Master of the Appointees, ‘Ali bin Abi Tālib, upon him be peace, heard a man seeking forgiveness. He, upon him be peace, said:

May your mother be bereaved of you! Do you know what seeking forgiveness is? Seeking forgiveness is a degree of the people of high station. It is a phrase that means six things: First, it is the regret of the past sin. Second, it is the firm determination to avoid returning to it. Third, it is to return the rights to creation so that you meet Allah in a state of purity where none has any claim against you. Fourth, it is that you fulfil every duty that you neglected in order to complete your obligation in respect to it. Fifth, it is that you attend to the flesh that has flourished on unlawful nourishment so that it melts away as a result of grief and your skin adheres to your bones, after which new flesh grows in its place. Sixth, it is that your body taste the pain of obedience in the same way that it earlier tasted the pleasure of sins. It is only after then that you say: “O Allah, forgive me!”

I say that the meaning of his statement, upon him be peace, is that the repentance of the near friends of Allah is the highest level of repentance. Regret and the determination to not return to it are sufficient. Regarding the observance of rights, this is absolute. In that are many fine points, but this is not the place to go into details.

[Concerning the Intercession (*ash-Shaf‘a*)]

The Intercession of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, mentioned in the narrated traditions will not be for any except the believers. It will not be for the one who persists in major sins. This is explicit in the verses of the Qur’an. He—Glorified be He—says: **{But they who have earned evil deeds, the recompense of an evil deed is its equal. Humiliation will cover them. They will have no protector from Allah.} That is, they will not find anyone to prevent them from punishment. {It will be as though their faces are covered by pieces of the night; dark. They will be the Companions of the Fire, therein to abide forever} (Q. 10:27)**.

He—Exalted be He—says: **{For the unjust there shall be no friend or intercessor obeyed} (Q. 40:18)**; that is, they will be prevented from intercession. The disbeliever and disobedient person are both unjust. The proof for this is the statement of the Exalted: **{The disbelievers are unjust} (Q. 2:254)**, **{Whoever transgresses the boundaries of Allah, he is unjust to himself} (Q. 65:1)**. **{We were not unjust to them; rather, they are unjust to themselves} (Q. 11:101)**.

He—Exalted be He—says: **{For the unjust there shall be no helper} (Q. 2:270)**. **{Canst thou save one who is in the Fire?} (Q. 39:19)**. **{...no soul shall recompense for the other} (Q. 2:48)**. Then, the Exalted says: **{...nor shall it be benefitted by intercession, nor shall they be helped} (Q. 2:123)**. The meaning of **{they shall be helped}** is “he shall help them.” The words “soul” and “intercession” are indefinite nouns which means that it is general and applies to both disbeliever and disobedient.

He—Exalted be He—says: **{...and never shall they be removed from it} (Q. 82:16)**. If the intercession was for them, they will be removed from it. These explicit verses as well as others prove that the intercession will not be for the disbelievers or disobedient. This is because it would contradict the decisive verses of the Qur'an, and that is impermissible. There is no disagreement among the Muslims concerning that. If he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, were to intercede for any of the unjust and advocate for any of those of falsehood, this would belie the verses if he is obeyed or it would demote his role if he is not obeyed.

According to collective consensus, his intercession is accepted and the Praiseworthy Station (*al-maqām al-mahmūd*) that Allah promised him belongs to him. This is based on His words: **{Perhaps thy Lord shall raise thee to a Praiseworthy Station} (Q. 17:79)**.

The Intercession is for the believers. Those other than them will not receive the Intercession because the disobedient sinner is disqualified from such. Allah disassociates from such person, and He is an enemy of Allah. Allah negates belief from one who loves and associates with such person. The Exalted says: **{Ye shall not find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day having mutual affection for those who oppose Allah and His Messenger—even if it be their fathers, sons, brothers and tribes. They are those for whom Allah has decreed belief in their hearts, and He has supported them by a Spirit from Him. He shall enter them into Paradise under which rivers flow; therein to abide forever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. They are those who are the party of Allah. Is not the party of Allah the successful?} (Q. 58:22)**. **{O ye who believe, take not Mine enemies and thine enemies as associates—inclining to them with mutual affection} (Q. 60:1)**. **{Obey not the sinful amongst them, nor the ungrateful} (Q. 76:24)**. If he were to intercede for a disqualified person, it would mean that Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, is pleased with him as well as has affection and love for such person. It would imply the he loves someone who Allah has disqualified. Whoever assumes such about him has attributed a great sin.

If the Intercession is not for the unjust, it is for the believers. By means of the Prophet's intercession, Allah will increase their virtue as well as raise their stations. Allah will increase them as a virtue and grace from Him.

There are explicit verses that show that it will be the believers. Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—says: **{They cannot intercede for one unless He is pleased with him. They are—out of humility--apprehensive} (Q. 21:28)**. He negates the angels' intercession except for the ones He is pleased with. The Exalted says: **{...for Allah is not pleased with the disobedient folk} (Q. 9:96)**. Allah describes the Bearers of His Throne and those around Him in *Sūra al-Mu`minūn* because they glorify their Lord, praise Him and believe in Him. They seek forgiveness for those who believe. **{“Our Lord, Thy Mercy and Knowledge encompass all things! Therefore, forgive those who repent and turn towards Thy path. Protect them from the punishment of Hell! O Lord, enter them into the paradise of Eden that Thou hast promised them, as well as the righteous from their fathers, spouses and offspring. Verily, Thou art the Most Mighty, the All-Wise. Divert them from the evils, and whosoever is wary of the evils on that Day, He shall be merciful unto him. That is the Great Achievement!”} (Q. 40:7-9)**.

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((My intercession will be for three among my Community: a man who loves my Ahl al-Bayt with his heart and tongue, a man who fulfils their needs when they seek a need from him, a man who fights along with them with his sword)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Whoever abuses me concerning my Ahl al-Bayt, has abused Allah. Whoever assists their enemies in abusing them has made war against Allah and His Messenger. Such person will not receive my intercession)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((There are two groups from my Community that will not receive my intercession, and no one will intercede for them: an oppressive ruler and an extremist renegade in the religion)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((The closest to me on the Day of Judgment, as well as the most deserving of my intercession is the one who is most truthful in speech, best in character and faithful regarding trusts. Out of the people, they are the closest to me)).

It says in *Safīnat al-Hākim* on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās from 'Umar bin al-Khattāb that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Verily, I am the holder of your prevention from the Fire, and you will precede me towards the Fire. You will be gathered around it like the gathering of moths. I will be in a hurry to provide you prevention. I will await you at the Pool, and you will be turned from me exempted and dejected. I will recognise you by your names and signs just as a man recognises his camel from a group of camels. Some of you will be taken to the left. I will plead for you to the Lord of the Worlds: ‘O Lord, my group! O Lord, my community!’ And He will say: ‘O Muhammad, you do not know what they did after you! Verily, they regressed after you!’ One of you carrying a bleating sheep will recognise me on the Day of Judgment, and will call out: ‘O Muhammad, O Muhammad!’ I will say: ‘I am prevented by Allah from doing anything for you!’ One of you carrying a braying camel will recognise me on the Day of Judgment, and will call out: ‘O Muhammad, O Muhammad!’ I will say: ‘I am prevented by Allah from doing anything for you!’ One of you carrying a neighing horse will recognise me on the Day of Judgment, and will call out: ‘O Muhammad, O Muhammad!’ I will say: ‘I am prevented by Allah from doing anything for you!’ One of you carrying meagre dates will recognise me on the Day of Judgment, and will call out: ‘O Muhammad, O Muhammad!’ I will say: ‘I am prevented by Allah from doing anything for you!’)).

That proves that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, will not intercede except for the believers.

If you say that it makes more sense for the Intercession to be for those who deserve punishment, I say that logic dictates that the Intercession is unsuitable for the one who persists in sin, is involved with an oppressive ruler and kills children while not repenting for such.

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said: ((Migration will not discontinue as long as the enemies fight)). Allah excuses the weak amongst men, women and children. This includes the poor, elderly as well as those who cannot find a way.

[Punishment in the grave (*adhāb al-qabr*)]

The punishment of the grave is firmly established according to the majority of the Muhammadan Descendants as well as that of the mainstream of other than them. The proof of that is the statement of the Exalted: **{Our Lord, Thou caused us to die twice and caused us to live twice} (Q. 40:16)**. One cannot die twice except that he lived in the grave and died afterwards.

It has been narrated in the Prophetic *hadīth*:

((The grave is either a garden from the gardens of Paradise or a pit from the pits of Hellfire)).

It means that the believer is given the good news of Paradise in the grave and the disobedient is punished in it. It has also been related that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said when passing by two graves:

((There are two people being punished. They are punished for a big thing. One of them used to engage in tale-bearing (*namīma*) and the other did not free himself of urine)).

His statement ((for a big thing)) means according to them both. He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said:

((If I didn't fear that you would not bury anyone anymore, I would ask Allah to allow you to hear the punishment of the grave)).

It is also related in the *Nahj al-Balāgha* that the Commander of the Believers, 'Ali bin Abi Ṭālib—may Allah ennoble his face in Paradise—said:

Then he was wrapped in the shroud while quiet and submissive to others. Afterwards, he was placed on planks in a state beaten down by hardships and weak from sicknesses. Descendants and crowds of brothers carried him to his house of loneliness where his visitors are severed. Thereafter, those who accompanied him departed and the wailers returned. He was made to sit in his grave for fearful questioning and stumbling examination.

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, used to seek refuge in Allah from the punishment of the grave. O Allah, we seek refuge in you from the punishment of the grave and its affliction! O Most Merciful of the merciful!

[Concerning the Judgment]

The Judgment is that which Allah mentions in His Mighty Book. The name refers to the resurrection and revival. It is religiously obligatory to believe in it. It is the Last Day in which Allah reiterates and makes belief in it religiously obligatory. It is denied by the disbeliever. It is that which the morally responsible and deniers know as necessary knowledge regarding the truth of Allah's Threat and Promise. It is the Day of Division, the Day of Debt as well as the Day of Judgment and Justice. It is the Day of Accounting and the Day of Loss for the deniers and Victory for the God-wary. That is from the Justice and Wisdom of the Most Just. **{Then, didst thou think that We created thee out of jest and that to Us thou shalt not return?} (Q. 23:115)**. The Book of Allah is replete with this.

Allah will resurrect everyone in whom He blew the breath of spirit. This is based on the statement of the Exalted: **{There is not a beast on the earth or a bird that flies with wings except that they are communities like unto thee. We have not neglected in the Book anything. Then unto their Lord shall they be gathered} (Q. 6:38)**. Compensation is the reason for evacuation and justice for the oppressed. **{A Day in which every soul shall find what it did of good present and what it did of evil. It would desire that between it and that be a great distance. And Allah warns thee Himself. Allah is most relenting to the slaves} (Q. 3:30)**.

The Prophetic *hadīth* says:

((The people of Paradise will enter it as thirty-year olds—whether young or old. They will never grow older. The same is the case for the people of the Fire)).

Al-Murtaḏa Muhammad bin al-Hādī ila al-Haqq Yahya bin al-Hussein, upon them be peace, said:

As for the friends of Allah and those of His creation who did not disobey Him such as children, as well as the people of obedience, Allah will resurrect them as a perfect age.

They will be as forty year olds in their appearance. Allah will gather all the believers as thus—whether they were children or elders.

My father related to me that ‘Ali bin Abi Tālib, upon them be peace, said: “Allah will gather His friends on the Day of Judgment in perfected forms as they were in the life of this world. They will be forty years of age. Then, Allah will grant them that which He promised them of His reward and ample compensation.”

O Allah! Make us among those upon whom is Your blessings from the Prophets, truthful, martyrs and righteous! Make good for those who are Your friends! Gather us in their company and make us secure on the Day of Great Distress! Cause us to drink from the Pool of Your Pure Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, that drink which there’s no thirst after it! **{Our Lord, grant us good in this world and good in the Hereafter. Protect us from the punishment of the Fire!} (Q. 2:201)**. All praise is due to Allah for His blessings that cannot be encompassed! Prayers and peace be upon the Chosen Prophet as well as his Pure Progeny! There’s no power or strength except by Allah, the Most High and Most Great!