

THE MEANING AND CONDITIONS OF LAA ILAAHA ILLALLAAH

Based upon the work of Imaam Haafidh al-Hakamee (d.1377H) and others

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THE HEAD OF ISLAAM:

Stated Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) – *rahimahullaah*, "So the absolute head of Islaam is the testimony that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah (*laa ilaaha illallaah*). And this is what all of the Messengers were sent with, as Allaah the Exalted said,

"Indeed, We sent amongst every nation a Messenger proclaiming: Worship Allaah and remain far away from the false deities." [Sooratun-Nahl 16:36]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

"And We did not send before you a Messenger, except that We revealed to him that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Me. So worship Me." [Sooratul-Anbiyaa' 21:25]."¹

Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah elaborated further, "Due to this, the head of Islaam is the testimony that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah (*laa ilaaha illallaah*). So it comprises the worship of Allaah alone and the abandonment of worshipping anything besides Him. It is Islaam in the general sense. And Allaah will not accept any other religion besides Islaam from the early generations as well as the latecomers, as Allaah the Exalted said,

"And whosoever seeks other than Islaam as a Religion, then it will never be accepted from him. And in the Hereafter he will be from amongst the losers." [Soorah Aali-'Imraan 3:85]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

¹ Refer to Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa (3/94) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

"Allaah has testified that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Him, as do the Angels and the people of knowledge, that Allaah is maintaining the creation in justice. There is no deity worthy of worship besides Him, He is the all-Mighty, the all-Wise. Indeed, the Religion with Allaah is Islaam." [Soorah Aali-'Imraan 3:18-19]."²

THE MEANING OF LAA ILAAHA ILLALLAAH:

Stated Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) – *rahimahullaah*, "Al-Ilaah (the deity) is al-Ma'looh (the one who is deified). And al-Ma'looh is the one who is deserving of worship."³

Stated Imaam al-Qurtubee (d.671H) – *rahimahullaah*, "Laa ilaaha illallaah: That is, there is none worthy of worship besides Allaah."⁴

Stated Imaam Haafidh al-Hakamee⁵ (d.1377H) – *rahimahullaah*, "So the meaning of *laa ilaaha illallaah* is: There is no deity worthy of worship in truth, besides Allaah (*laa ma'bood bi haqq illallaah*)."⁶

Stated Imaam 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Hasan aalush-Shaykh (d.1285H) – *rahimahullaah*, "And the meaning of *laa ilaaha illallaah* is: There is no deity worthy of worship in truth, besides Allaah (*laa ma'bood bi haqq illallaah*)."⁷

And al'Allaamah Muhammad Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhaab al-Wassaabee added onto these two latter definitions the following, "And if other than Allaah is worshipped, then it is in falsehood." Then he stated, "Allaah the Exalted said,

"That is because Allaah is the Truth, and whatever they call upon besides Him, then it is false. Indeed, Allaah is the Most High, the Great." [Sooratul-Hajj 22:62]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

"So know that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah." [Soorah Muhammad 47:19]."⁸

⁶ Refer to Ma'aarijul-Qubool (2/416) of Haafidh al-Hakamee.

² Refer to Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa (10/15).

³ Refer to Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa (10/249) and (13/200) and Iqtidaa'us-Siraatil-Mustaqeem (p. 461).

⁴ Refer to the *Tafseer* (2/291) of al-Qurtubee.

⁵ He is the Shaykh, al-'Allaamah Haafidh Ibn Ahmad al-Hakamee. He was a *Salafee* Scholar from the province of Tihaamah. He was born in the year 1342H in the city of as-Salaam near Jeezaan. He was a sign in terms of brilliance and he was quick in memorization and understanding. He studied under the noble Shaykh, 'Abdullaah al-Qar'aawee. He died in the year 1377H and his age was only 35 years. For his biography, refer to his son's introduction to his book *Ma'aarijulQubool*.

⁷ Refer to Fathul-Majeed (p. 52) of 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Hasan aalush-Shaykh.

THE CONDITIONS OF LAA ILAAHA ILLALLAAH:

Stated Imaam Haafidh al-Hakamee (d.1377H) – *rahimahullaah*, "The intended meaning of these conditions is not to merely enumerate them and memorize them. So how many a common person has gathered them together and stuck to them, but when he is asked to enumerate them, he is not able to do that. And how many a person has memorized them in terms of wordings passes through them with the speed of an arrow. And you see him committed many things that negate them. And guidance is in the Hand of Allaah."⁹

Indeed, Wahb Ibn Munabbih¹⁰ (d.110H) was asked, "Is not *Laa ilaaha illallaah* the key to Paradise?" He replied, "Of course. However, there is no key, except that it has teeth. So if you approach it with the correct key, then it will be opened for you. And if not, then it will not be opened for you."¹¹

So the teeth of this key are as follows:

The First Condition: Knowledge (*al-'llm*) of its intended meaning, which consists of negation (*nafee*) and affirmation (*ithbaat*). This is what negates ignorance (*jahl*). Allaah the Exalted said,

"So know that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah." [Soorah Muhammad 47:19]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

"Except for those who testify to the truth and they know." [Sooratuz-Zukhruf 43:86]

That is, they testify that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah, and they know about they have knowledge of their statement, which they utter with their tongues. And Allaah the Exalted said,

"Allaah has testified that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Him, as do the Angels and the people of knowledge, that Allaah is maintaining the creation in justice. There is no deity worthy of worship besides Him, He is the all-Mighty, the all-Wise. Indeed, the Religion with Allaah is Islaam." [Soorah Aali-'Imraan 3:18-19]

⁸ Refer to al-Qawlul-Mufeed (p. 19) of Muhammad Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhaab al-Wassaabee.

⁹ Refer to Ma'aarijul-Qubool (1/377) of Haafidh al-Hakamee.

¹⁰ He is Wahb Ibn Munabbih Ibn Kaamil al-Yamaanee as-San'aanee. He related from Abee Hurayrah, Abee Sa'eed, Ibn 'Abbaas, Ibn 'Umar and other than them. Stated al'Ijlee, "He is a reliable *taabi'ee*, and he was part of the judiciary of San'aa'. And he was also declared reliable by Aboo Zur'ah, an-Nisaa'ee and Ibn Hibbaan. He was born in the year 34H and he died in the year 110H." Refer to *Tahdheebut-Tahdheeb* (11/167).

¹¹ Related by al-Bukhaaree (3/109).

And there occurs in the Saheeh from 'Uthmaan (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) who said, 'The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "Whosoever dies whilst he knows that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah enters Paradise."^{12 13}

The Second Condition: Certainty (*al-Yaqeen*), which negates doubt (*shakk*). The meaning of this is that the speaker must be certain about the meaning of these words with an unwavering certainty. So *eemaan* (faith) is not sufficient, except with certain knowledge, not assumptive knowledge.¹⁴ Allaah the Exalted said,

"The Believers are only the ones who have believed in Allaah and His Messenger and then do not doubt. And they strive with their properties and their lives in the cause of Allaah. It is those who are truthful." [Sooratul-Hujuraat 49:15]

And there occurs in the Saheeh from the hadeeth of Abee Hurayrah (radiyallaahu 'anhu) who said, 'The Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, 'I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah, and that I am the Messenger of Allaah. There is no servant who meets Allaah without doubt in these two testimonies, except that he enters Paradise."¹⁵ And there occurs in another narration, "There is no servant who meets Allaah without doubt in these two testimonies is made obligatory upon him." And there is also a long hadeeth from Abee Hurayrah (radiyallaahu 'anhu), "Whosoever meets behind this wall whilst testifying that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah with certainty in his heart, then give him glad tidings of Paradise."¹⁶

Stated Imaam al-Qurtubee (d.671H) in *al-Mufhim 'alaa Saheeh Muslim*, "So merely uttering the *shahaadatayn* (two testimonies) is not sufficient. Rather, it is inevitable that there must be certainty in the heart. So this explanation takes note of the corruption found in the *madhhab* of the extremist *Murji'ah* who say that uttering the *shahaadatayn* is sufficient for *eemaan*. And the *ahaadeeth* concerning this topic are proof of this corruption. Rather, it is a *madhhab* whose corruption is well known by the *Sharee'ah* for the one who understands it. So this would necessitate acceptance of hypocrisy and judging the hypocrite to have sound *eemaan*. So this is absolute falsehood."¹⁷

The Third Condition: Acceptance (*alQubool*) of that which is required by this word with one's heart and tongue. Indeed, Allaah the Mighty and Majestic related to us news about the salvation that was previously granted to those who accepted *laa ilaaha illallaah* and the torment of those who rejected and refused it, as Allaah the Exalted said,

 $^{^{\}rm 12}$ Related by Muslim (1/55).

¹³ This section was taken from Ma'aarijulQubool (1/378), and refer to al-Jaami'ulFareed (p. 356).

¹⁴ This section was taken from Ma'aarijul Qubool (1/378).

¹⁵ Related by Muslim (1/56).

 $^{^{16}}$ Related by Muslim (1/60).

¹⁷ Refer to Fathul-Majeed (p. 36) of 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Hasan.

"And similarly, We did not send before you any warner into a city, except that its affluent said, "Indeed, we found our forefathers upon a religion, and we are following in their footsteps." He said, "Even if I brought you better guidance than that upon which you found your fathers?" They said, "Indeed, we are disbelievers in that which you have said." So We took retribution from them; then see how was the end of the deniers." [Sooratuz-Zukhruf 43:23-25]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

"Then We will save our Messengers and those who have believed. Thus, it is an obligation upon Us that We save the Believers." [Soorah Yoonus 10:103]

And Allaah the Exalted says,

"Indeed, when it was said to them, "There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah," they were arrogant. And they were saying, "Are we going to leave our gods for a mad poet?"" [Sooratus Saaffaat 37:35-36]¹⁸

The Fourth Condition: Submission (*alInqiyaad*) to whatever is meant by it, which negates abandonment of that. Allaah the Exalted said,

"And turn repentantly to your Lord and surrender to Him." [Sooratuz Zumar 39:54]

And Allaah said,

"And who is bettering in Religion than the one who submits himself to Allaah and is a doer of good?" [Sooratun-Nisaa' 4:125]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

"And whosoever submits his face to Allaah, whilst he is a doer of good, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold." [Soorah Luqmaan 31:22]

That is, he has grasped *laa illalaaha illallaah*. And there occurs in the *hadeeth*, "None of you truly believes, until his desire is in submission to what I have come with."¹⁹ This is the utmost limit of complete submission. And Allaah the Exalted said,

¹⁸ Refer to Ma'aarijul-Qubool (1/380).

¹⁹ Related by Muslim (no. 38), refer to Sharh Saheeh Muslim (1/213) of an-Nawawee.

"So no! By your Lord, they have not truly believed until they make you (O Muhammad) judge between whatever disputes occur amongst them, thereafter not finding any hesitation towards what you have ruled, but they submit to that with a full submission." [Sooratun-Nisaa' 4:65]²⁰

Stated al-Haafidh Ibn Katheer (d.774H) – *rahimahullaah* – in explanation of this *aayah*, "Allaah the Exalted swears by His noble and sanctified Self that no one has truly believed until they make the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) judge in all of the affairs. So whatever he (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) rules, then that is the truth, which it is obligatory to submit to, inwardly and outwardly. Due to this, Allaah said, "**not finding any hesitation towards what you have ruled, but they submit to that with a full submission.**" That is, when you – O Muhammad – make a judgement, they must follow you inwardly. So they must not find any hesitation within themselves with regards to whatever you have judged. They must submit to that outwardly and inwardly. So they must submit to that outwardly and inwardly. So they must submit to that outwardly and inwardly. So they must submit to that outwardly and inwardly. So they must submit to that outwardly and inwardly. So they must submit to that outwardly and inwardly. So they must submit to that outwardly and inwardly. So they must submit to that outwardly and inwardly. So they must submit to that outwardly and inwardly. So they must submit to that with a full submission, without any resistance, defensiveness or disagreement. This is in accordance to what is mentioned in the *hadeeth*, "By Allaah in whose Hand my soul is, none of you has truly believed until his desire is in agreement with what I have come with.""²¹

The Fifth Condition: Truthfulness (*as-Sidq*), which negates lying (*kadhib*). This means that the person must state it truthfully from his heart. His heart must be in agreement with his tongue. Allaah the Exalted said,

"Alif. Laam. Meem. Do the people think that they will be left to say, 'We believe,' and they will not be tested? Indeed, We have certainly tried those before them, and Allaah will surely make evident those who are truthful, and He will surely make evident the liars." [Sooratul-'Ankaboot 29:1-3]²²

And Allaah the Exalted said,

"And from amongst the people are those who say, "We believe in Allaah and the Last Day." However, they are not believers. They think to deceive Allaah and those who believe, but they deceive not except themselves and perceive it not." [Sooratul-Baqarah 2:8-9]

And there occurs in the Saheehayn from Mu'aadh Ibn Jabal (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), from the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), "There is no one who testifies that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah, and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger with truthfulness form his heart, except that Allaah makes him unlawful for the Fire."²³

²⁰ Refer to Ma'aarijul-Qubool (1/381) and al-Kalimaatun-Naafi'ah (p. 73) of Muhammad Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhaab.

²¹ Refer to Tafseerul-Qur'aanil'Adheem (2/306) of Ibn Katheer.

²² Refer to Ma'aarijul-Qubool (1/381).

 $^{^{23}}$ Related by al-Bukhaaree (1/226).

Stated Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim (d.751H) – *rahimahullaah*, "So attesting to the truthfulness of *laa ilaaha illallaah* requires obedience and affirmation of its rights. They are the *sharaa'i'* (legislative rules) of Islaam, which are a *tafseel* (completeness of detail) for this word. So it is required to attest to the truthfulness of all of its reports, to act upon its commands and to remain far away from all of its prohibitions... So the one who attests to the truthfulness of this in reality, he is the one who comes with all of that. And it is well known that unrestricted preservation of property and blood cannot be obtained, except with acting upon these requirements and establishing them in truth. Likewise, unrestricted salvation from the punishment cannot be obtained except by fulfilling these requirements and their rights."²⁴

And there occurs in the *hadeeth*, that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "My intercession is for the one who testifies that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah sincerely, his heart declaring the truthfulness of that upon his tongue, and his tongue declaring the truthfulness of that from his heart."²⁵

Stated al-Haafidh Ibn Rajab (d.795H) – *rahimahullaah*, "As for the one who says *laa ilaaha illallaah* with his tongue, then he obeys *Shaytaan* and his own desire in disobedience and opposition to Allaah, then his action has betrayed his statement. And it has caused a deficiency in the completeness of his *Tawheed*, in accordance to the gravity of the act of disobedience to Allaah in obedience to *Shaytaan* and his own desire.

"And who is more misguided than the one who follows his own desire instead of guidance from Allaah." [Sooratul-Qasas 28:50]

"And do not follow desire, since it will misguide you from the path of Allaah." [Soorah Saad 38:26]."²⁶

The Sixth Condition: Sincerity (*al-Ikhlaas*). It is to purify the action with a good intention, away from all of the blemishes of *Shirk*.²⁷ Allaah the Exalted said,

"Indeed, for Allaah is the pure Religion." [Sooratuz-Zumar 39:3]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

"And they were not commanded, except to worship Allaah, being sincere in Religion to Him, inclining to the truth." [Sooratul-Bayyinah 98:5]

²⁴ Refer to at-Tibyaan fee Aqsaamil Qur'aan (p. 43) of Ibnul-Qayyim.

²⁵ Saheeh: Related by al-Haakim in *al-Mustadrak* (1/70).

²⁶ Refer to Kalimatul-Ikhlaas (p. 28) of Ibn Rajab.

²⁷ Refer to Ma'aarijul-Qubool (1/382) and al-Jaami'ul-Fareed (p. 356).

And there occurs in the Saheeh from Abee Hurayrah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), from the Prophet (*sallalaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), "The happiest of the people with my intercession will be the one who says 'laa ilaaha illallaah' sincerely from his heart."²⁸

And there occurs in the Saheeh from 'Utbaan Ibn Maalik²⁹ (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), from the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) who said, "Indeed, Allaah has made unlawful for the Fire the one who says, '*laa ilaaha illallaah*' seeking thereby the Face of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic."³⁰

And there occurs from an-Nisaa'ee (d.303H) in *al-Yawm wal-Laylah*, from the *hadeeth* of two men from amongst the Companions, from the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), "Whosoever says, 'There is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah alone. He has no associates, and the dominion is for Him and the praise is for Him. And he is capable over all things' with a sincere heart, attesting to the truth of that with his tongue, then Allaah will surely tear open the sky until He looks at the person from amongst the people of the earth who said it. And the right of the servant whom Allaah looks at is that He grants him whatever he has asked for."³¹

Said Fudayl Ibn 'Iyaad (d.187H) – *rahimahullaah*, "Indeed, if an action is done sincerely, but it is not correct, it will not be accepted. And if the action is done correctly, but it is not done with sincerity, then it is not accepted, until it is done sincerely and correctly. So sincerity means that it must be done for Allaah and correct means that it must be in accordance to the *Sunnah*."³²

Indeed, Allaah the Glorified has struck a clear example in the Magnificent *Qur'aan* for the *mukhlis* (sincere one) with regards to his *Tawheed* and a clear example of the *mushrik* (one who commits *Shirk*). Allaah the Exalted said,

"Allaah strikes an example: a man owned by quarrelling partners and another belonging exclusively to one man – are they equal in comparison? The praise is for Allaah! Rather, most of them do not know." [Sooratuz Zumar 39:29]

And al'Allaamah Jamaalud-Deen al-Qaasimee (d.1332H) – *rahimahullaah* – commented, "Indeed, the intended purpose is the *Tawheed* of the One who is worshipped (*ma'bood*) with a *Tawheed* of intention and the removal of division, as Allaah the Exalted said,

 $^{^{28}}$ Related by al-Bukhaaree (1/193).

²⁹ He is 'Utbaan Ibn Maalik Ibnul'Ajlaan al-Khazrajee as-Saalimee al-Ansaaree, Badree according to the majority. He was the Imaam of his people, the tribe of Saalim. And Ibn Sa'd mentioned that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) joined the ties of brotherhood between him and 'Umar. Indeed, he died during the caliphate of Mu'aawiyah. Refer to *al-Isaabah* (2/452).

 $^{^{30}}$ Related by Muslim (1/456).

³¹ Saheeh: The hadeeth is mentioned by Ibn Rajab in Kalimatul-Ikhlaas (p. 61), and refer to alJaami'ul-Kabeer (1/477/2).

³² Refer to Iqtidaa'us-Siraatil-Mustaqeem fee Mukhaalafah AshaabilJaheem (p. 451) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

"Are separate lords better, or is Allaah, the One, the Prevailing?" [Soorah Yoosuf 12:39]."³³

Stated Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) – *rahimahullaah*, "Indeed, in Islaam there is no escape from *al-istislaam* (surrender) to Allaah alone and to abandon *istislaam* to anything else besides Him. So this is the reality of *laa ilaaha illallaah*. So whoever surrenders to Allaah and to other than Allaah as well, then he is a *mushrik* (one who commits *Shirk*). And Allaah does not forgive that someone commits *Shirk* with Him. And whoever does not surrender to Allaah, then he is *mustakbir* (haughty, proud) from worshipping Allaah. Indeed Allaah the Exalted,

"Indeed, those who are too proud to worship Me, I shall enter them into the Fire rendered contemptible." [Soorah Ghaafir 40:60]."³⁴

The Seventh Condition: Love (*al-Mahabbah*) for this word and whatever it requires and means, and love for its people who act upon it, sticking to its conditions and who hate whatever causes a deficiency in that. Allaah the Exalted said,

"And there are from amongst the people those who take to calling upon others besides Allaah. They love them as they should love Allaah. And those who believe are stronger in love for Allaah." [Sooratul-Baqarah 2:165]³⁵

And Allaah the Exalted said,

"O you who believe! Whosoever from amongst you should revert from his Religion, Allaah will bring forth in place of them a people whom He will love and who will love Him. They will be humble towards the Believers and powerful against the disbelievers. They will strive for the sake of Allaah and they will not fear the blame of a critic." [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:54]

And there occurs in the *hadeeth*, "There are three things, the possessor of whom will find the sweetness of *eemaan*: [i] that Allaah and His Messenger are more beloved to him than anything else; [ii] when he loves a person, he does not love him, except for the sake of Allaah; [iii] and he hates to return back to the disbelief after Allaah saved him from it, just as he hates to be thrown into the Fire."³⁶

³³ Taken from Mahaasinut-Ta'weel (14/5138) of Muhammad Jamaalud-Deen al-Qaasimee, and refer to at-Tafseerul-Qayyim (p. 423) of Ibnul-Qayyim.

³⁴ Refer to Iqtidaa'us-Siraatil Mustaqeem (p. 454) and at-Tuhfatul 'Iraaqiyyah (p. 41) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

³⁵ Taken from A'laamus-Sunnatil-Manshoorah (p. 14), Ma'aarijulQubool (1/383) and alJaami'ul Fareed (p. 356) of Haafidh al-Hakamee.

 $^{^{36}}$ Related by al-Bukhaaree (1/60) and Muslim (1/66).

THE DISTINGUISHING SIGN OF LOVE FOR ALLAAH:

Stated Imaam Haafidh Ibn Ahmad al-Hakamee – *rahimahullaah*, "So the sign of the servant's love for his Lord is that he gives precedence to his Beloved over his own desire. And he hates whatever his Lord hates, even though his own desire may incline towards it. And he allies himself with whosoever allies themselves with Allaah and His Messenger and he displays enmity towards whosoever displays enmity towards them. And he follows His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), imitates his actions and accepts his guidance."³⁷

Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim - rahimahullaah - recited the following verses of poetry,

"The condition of love is that one must agree with whoever he loves; He does this out of love for him, without disobedience. So if you claim love for him, But you differ with what he loves, then you are a liar. Do you love the enemies of your beloved whilst claiming love for him? That is not possible. Likewise, you show obstinate enmity to those whom he loves; Where is the love O brother of Shaytaan? Worship is not other than oneness of love; Along with submission of the heart and the limbs."

Up until he said,

"Indeed, we have seen a sect claiming Islaam; But they are upon a clear illustration of Shirk. They have made for Allaah associates and they are deluded; Into loving them equally along with Him without any authority."³⁸

³⁷ Refer to Ma'aarijul-Qubool (1/383).

³⁸ Refer to an-Nooniyyah (p. 158) of Ibnul-Qayyim.