



Thresholds of Submission

How do I Worship Allah

By

Dr. Aqeel bin Salem Alshammari

Faculty Member

University of Hafr Albatin, KSA

Translated by

Rashed Abdullah Alsubai

Introduction

Praise be to Allah who created us to worship Him, and with which honored His Prophet (ﷺ)

When the Prophet (ﷺ) was sent to convey the message to the people, Khadija, Abu Bakr, Ali bin Abi Talib, Bilal and Abu Thar (*May Allah be pleased with them*) accepted the message and believed in Allah. They were the first forerunners in the faith. At that time, no Sharia (teachings of Islam like daily Prayer, Fasting, Hajj or Dua'a) was revealed yet, only the beginning of Surat Al-Alaq, so how did they worship Allah throughout the day? And what did they spend their times on?

Allah Almighty had created us for His worship and submission, which is a comprehensive term for everything that pleases Allah, who made Submission His religion, and who is better than Allah in ordaining religion. Don't think that this is enough to complete the mental concept of submission as the question is still present: What is meant by submission as the religion? How does it come to be?

If Submission is submissiveness, then how is it done? Is it nodding the head and bending the neck, or lowering voice and eyesight?!

What comes to mind is that Submissiveness and Stand in Need of Allah require withdrawal and isolation, is this perception true? If that is true, then how do I practice my worship reclusively while in the middle of a busy life?

The hardest dilemma facing today's Muslim is not about his livelihood but in his misconception of the meaning of his Submission to Allah. This diminishes every other problem since life came to existence only for the worship of Allah.

Our repetition of these words: "We worship Allah and thus we are His worshipers" does not really mean that we fully comprehend its meaning as Sharia intended. Therefore; our attitudes toward submission are affected by this misconception. It is not possible for one to practice something that he does not fully comprehend. So, now the need surged to clarify the concept of submission, how it is practiced, and how submission becomes a state of mind and a way of life for the believer in his wake and sleep. How can our feeling when going to the Masjid for prayer be equated with that of being at home or office? Just as the Prophet Companions felt when they were at the Masjid or at their farms.

A symptom of this misconception is not being able to see the difference between a slave and a servant since we did not witness slavery in our present times. We can see the traits of servants because they are present with us, and when the Quran verses called us as "slaves of Allah", we tend to cast the servants' traits on this term while, in fact, a "slave of Allah" has wider and more elaborate meaning than a servant!

Today, the first question that comes to a believer's mind is: How do I submit to Allah?

The first step in answering this question is to have a better mental perception of the concept of worship.

With a blessing of Allah, I've studied the writings of Ibn Alqayem who often discussed the issue of submission and presented many examples about it. he mentioned the example of Master-Slave when explaining states of the hearts which caught my attention. Then I've read "*Reality of Submission*" by Majdi Alhelali, and it was a blessing from Allah.

Prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Mohammad (ﷺ).

Dr. Aqeel bin Salem Alshammari



An Imperative Question Remains...

There were three questions relating to worship that a believer, today, could answer two of them but the third one remains.

First question: Why did Allah create us?

The answer of this question is in this verse: ﴿And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me﴾ [Athariat-56]. For a believer, no confusion here.

Second question: What is Submission?

By the grace of Allah, Ibn Taimyah was able to state a good description of Submission as:
(A comprehensive term for everything that Allah loves and is pleased with from actions and statements; the apparent and hidden thereof.)¹

Third question: How do I Submit to Allah?

This is a persistent question, especially when a Muslim is asked to practice submission outside praying, reading the Quran or other ordained rituals. The confusion rises when one can't perceive the complete submission in some worship acts. For example, how to maintain Humility while fasting? Or maintain Submissiveness while giving a charity? Much less to maintain submission while eating, drinking and during his day or night!

I ask Allah for guidance to clarify some aspects of this concept.



¹ Ibn Taimyah. "Submission", P. 17

Enriching Questions

First question: When the Prophet (ﷺ) was sent to convey the message to the people, and Abu Bakr, Ali bin Abi Talib, Khadija and Waraqa bin Nawfal accepted the message and followed him, but no Sharia (teachings of Islam) was revealed yet, so how did they worship Allah throughout the day?

Second question: Why Abu Bakr was the most devoted worshiper among the Companions, even though some of them were making more efforts than him? For instance. Othman bin Affan recited the Quran more often than Abu Bakr, and Abdulrahman bin Ouf gave more for charity than Abu Bakr, and Abu Hurairah spent more times in Thikr than Abu Bakr.

In other words, why Abu Bakr was rewarded for his sleep, eating, coming and going, while some Companions were not?

Also, isn't it remarkable that an instant of time during which Abu Bakr slept, he is in a better state of Iman than another Companion praying? So, what is the secret behind that?

Third question: Isn't it strange that a Companion would leave the teaching circle of the Prophet (ﷺ) to go work in his farm or buy something from the market without feeling regret about leaving the Prophet (ﷺ) with fewer Companions around him? How could he miss such a great enlightening circle of knowledge?

What is even more surprising was the fact that the Companions were not staying with the Prophet (ﷺ) all the time even though he was receiving Revelations from Allah constantly. How did they manage to do that? Why were they unpretentious in their worship?

Fourth question: Why none of us can reach the level of Iman of the Companions even if he spent gold equal to Uhud (*a mountain in Madinah*) in Allah's Cause? What is the Companions' distinctive trait?

Is it a plenty of prayers? But some of their followers used to pray all night long, and fast all days! Is it because of their support and defense of the Prophet (ﷺ)? The believers who came afterwards also supported the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ)!

Is it because of their Jihad in the cause of Allah? Many lands were conquered by later generations!

Fifth question: Many non-Arabs accepted Islam later, and they were very devoted and dedicated to worshipping much and beyond what was reported about the Companions, however; they were

still below the Companions! Why?

Sixth question: A man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and affirmed that he will perform only what Allah has enjoined on him without any Nawafil (*Extra deeds*). Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "If he is saying the truth, he will succeed (or he will be granted Paradise)."

How could a man living at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) limit himself to performing only duties and nothing beyond that? How is that possible even though we had a mental picture of the Companions never leaving the Masjid or quitting Thikr of Allah and continuously learning the teachings of Islam!

Seventh question: It is narrated in Sahih Muslim that a prostitute saw a dog moving around a well on a hot day and hanging out its tongue because of thirst. She drew water for it in her shoe and she was pardoned (for this act of hers). How a simple righteous act-as providing water for a thirsty dog- can wipe out a big sin as committing adultery? Even though women usually show a compassion for all creatures!

Eighth question: Whenever Allah commended someone in the Quran, He would call him: A **slave** (*Submissive*). He commended his Prophet Soliman (عليه السلام) by saying: ﴿An excellent Slave [Submissive]﴾ [Sad-30]. He also, commended his Prophet Ayoub (Job) (عليه السلام) by saying: ﴿An excellent Slave [Submissive]﴾ [Sad-44]. He commended many other Prophets by saying: ﴿Indeed, he was of Our believing Slaves [Submissive].﴾ [As-Saffat-81], ﴿Indeed, they were of Our believing Slaves [Submissive].﴾ [As-Saffat-122], ﴿And remember Our Slaves [Submissive], Abraham, Isaac and Jacob﴾ [Sad-45].

He said about the Prophets Noah and Lot (عليه السلام): ﴿They were under two of Our righteous Slaves [Submissive]﴾ [At-Tahrim-10]. He said about the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): ﴿Exalted is He who took His Slave [Submissive]﴾ [Al-Isra-1]. And: ﴿All praise is due to Allah, who has sent down upon His Slave [Submissive]﴾ [Al-Kahf-1].

So, what is the secret of using the term "Submissive" to commend someone? What is the significance of recurrent use of this term for the Prophets (عليه السلام)? Why were they not commended by the term "Faithful"? Is Submission such a high degree?



A Dilemma in Comprehending the Concept of Submission

Today, Muslims have difficulty in grasping the wider meaning of Submission, as indicated by the following:

1. Lack of clarity of the term "Submission". To confirm this, compare between people's perception of these two terms: "Submission" and "Prayer", and you will find that prayer is perceived very clearly, but "Submitting to Allah" is perceived rather inadequately, and that is due to the difficulty in understanding worship.

2. The recurrent questions: What is my aim in life? What is my role in it? What is my role during crisis?

These questions indicate the absence of a clear understanding of submission since the aim, role and objective mean nothing else but worship. However; due to a weak perception of Submission, the mind is oblivious to it. This, again, refers back to the dilemma in comprehending the concept of Submission.

3. Some may think that a religious scholar, an Islamic subject teacher or an Imam of a Masjid can easily practice Submission because of their specialty, but it should be hard for a doctor, an engineer or those in scientific specialties (*far from Islamic teachings*) to practice Submission, and some of those who work in these specialties try to give a short Islamic talk or advice so they can feel less guilty about being in a far environment from Islamic teachings. This is all because of the dilemma in comprehending the concept of Submission.

4. This misconception about Submission has grown worse because the new generations who know worship and freedom by name only because they never experience them in reality. The widely circulated stories of masters and slaves don't project a good picture about the concept of a slave (*Submissive*). Today, even the word "slave" has a negative connotation, so how can we comprehend the true meaning of being a submissive slave of Allah?

5. The term "Humility" is a specific trait of a slave which the human mind is unable to visualize how to display to Allah. In order to recognize this crucial subject, try asking yourself: How can I show humility to Allah? You will find that your mind can only perceive no more than bending the neck, or lowering voice or slowing in motion. So, the term "Humility" is easily said but in reality, remains unclear to us.

This blurry in understanding the concept of submission when worshiping Allah may happen to any normal believer as it is narrated in Sahih Al-Bukhari that Anas bin Malik (*May Allah be pleased with him*) said:

"Three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) to inquire about the worship of the Prophet (ﷺ). When they were informed, they found it less than they expected and said: "Where are we in comparison with the Prophet (ﷺ) while Allah has forgiven his past sins and future sins".

These men did not see the Prophet (ﷺ) outside his house worshiping Allah in isolation or monasticism, so they tried to find out about his worship inside his house because they had a mental picture of him worshiping Allah in retreat. When they knew about his worship at home, they found it less than they expected, then blamed themselves for this thought and said: The Prophet (ﷺ) while Allah has forgiven all his sins, not like us. They tried to defend the mental picture that worship means retreating with prayers and fasting, so one of them said: "As for me, I shall offer Salat all night long." Another said: "I shall observe Siam (fasting) continuously and shall not break it". Another said: "I shall abstain from women and shall never marry". From this, it is clear that they viewed worship only more praying and more fasting in isolation. The Prophet (ﷺ) corrected their misconception later.

Later, during the times of the followers of Companions, it is narrated in Sahih Muslim that Saad bin Hisham Al-Ansari decided to participate in the expedition for the sake of Allah, so he came to Medina and he decided to dispose of his property there and buy arms and horses instead and fight against the Romans to the end of his life. When he came to Medina, he met the people of Medina. They dissuaded him to do such a thing, and informed him that a group of six men had decided to do so during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) forbade them to do it, and said: "Is there not for you a model pattern in me?" And when they narrated this to him (Saad bin Hisham), he returned to his wife, though he had divorced her.

This shows that misconception could occur during the time of the followers with a lesser degree during the time of Companions. However; the farther away from the Prophet time, the more misconceptions will occur.

Ashefa bint Abdullah (*one of the Companions*) saw few young men walking with humility and speaking softly, so she said: What is this? They said: Pious people. She replied: Omar bin Al-

Kattab was a pious, and he talked clear and walked fast.

Due the misconception in their minds about submission to Allah, these young men wanted to create that feeling using physical parts of their bodies. On the other hand, the Companions had a clear perception of the concept of submission to Allah. that is why Ashefa bint Abdullah did not tie submission to physical moves but recalled actions of Omar bin Al-Kattab to rectify the young men actions.

6. In later years, the dilemma in comprehending the concept of Submission has increased due to confusing the meaning of Submission with Worship, and hence, the true meaning of submission faded away because it is a deep-hearted feeling that may not be so clear in its Islamic meaning-*for various reasons implicitly revealed*-. So, people compensate for this flaw in the meaning of submission by increasingly performing acts of worship for self-assurance. When faced with two things, indistinguishable from each other, one will always choose the easier to perceive, and engages excessively in it to make up for missing the other. From this, people start competing in how many times they read the Quran or prayed or involved in Thikr of Allah. Of course, I am not making less of all that worship acts, but I meant to show that inability to comprehend the concept of Submission led to an abundance of submission appearances to fulfill the deficiency in grasping the true meaning of submission. Submission remains the essence and appearances are just that.
7. Another indication of misunderstanding the Submission concept are the types of questions often directed to Islamic scholars. Questions about appearances such as: Night prayers, Virtues of Thikr, optional Fasting, Number of times of performing Hajj and Umrah to Makkah, Pledges to Allah and Maintaining ties of kinship, etc. Very few questions regarding heart deeds such as: Apprehension and Fright and how to achieve it, Tawakul and its ills, Abstinence and its reality, Sincerity and its levels, and Yaqin with its truth. Also, it is unfair to consider these subjects admonitory rather than intellectual. A typical student in Islamic studies will plan well for pursuing all fields thoroughly and leaves only a marginal time for learning about hearts deeds. Eventually, that will produce a student with a decent background in Islamic subjects but with a limited ability to comprehend the true meaning of Submission and heart deeds.
8. A widely common example of misconception of Submission is the inability of a Muslim today to perceive that true submission to Allah can coexist with material richness! Also, a

widely held belief that Abstinence means being a poor individual. Whoever has wealth and richness can't be an Abstinent, and if he were, then he would give up all of his wealth. Regrettably, this is how a typical Muslim today understand Submission and standing in need of Allah in order to reach higher ranks with Allah.

In his book, "*Tariq Al-Hijratin*", Ibn Alqayem discussed the true meaning of Submission, he wrote: (If this submissive worshiper has money equal to all mountains on earth, it will not harm him.)¹

This actually was the case of some Prophets like: Dawood (*David*), Soliman (*Solomon*) and Yousef (*Joseph*) (ﷺ). Also, it was the case of some righteous people like Thul-Qarnayn, and some Companions like: Othman bin Affan and Abdulrahman bin Ouf (*may Allah be pleased with them*). The point here is to show the current misconception about the meaning of Submission and not the relationship of money with Submission.

The dilemma in comprehending the concept of Submission is part of the disparity between the apparent and the hidden. During the generation of the Companions, people were concerned about mending their inner hearts deeds more so than their apparent actions. When the inside is righteous, then it will show on the outside. This was reflected positively on their family and society relationships. This perfect balance continued until Iman (*Faith*) was disrupted in later generations, and more attention was given to appearances at the expense of the inner essence to an alarming degree.

For the reader, don't expect that misconception of Submission is an easy hurdle through which we can survive, but it actually means that we may not achieve the purpose for which we were created! See how we thought we covered more distance into the Submission to Allah while, in fact; we failed to grasp the true conception and understanding of it, let alone ascending through its ranks! The gap between us and the true understanding of the concept of Submission is similar to the spread between us and the ranks of the Companions. Don't be quick to consider that strange, for whoever understood the reality of Submission and followed the Companions' track will reach the ranks of the righteous by the grace of Allah. On the other hand, whoever was oblivious to the religion of Submission for which he was created, and clung to its appearances, he would be very far off the ranks of Companions.

I only say that to encourage all of us to pursue a clear understanding of our religion and

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Tariq Al-Hijratin*", 1/24

Submission to Allah, the Sovereign the Truth.



Submission is the Religion of Allah

When Allah mentioned, in the Quran, His Sharia (*Islamic Law*) that He revealed upon His Messengers: Ibrahim, Ismael, Isaac, Yacoub and the Descendants and what was given to Moses and Jesus, He said afterward: ﴿The coloring [Religion] of Allah And who is better than Allah in coloring [ordaining] religion﴾ [Al-Baqarah-138]. Which means that O, Muhammad, say to the Jews and Christians: Follow exclusively the way of Ibrahim inclining toward truth, the coloring (*Religion*) of Allah, which is the best of all colors (*Religions*), it is the Muslim way toward the truth, and refrain from associating others with Allah and going astray from the right path.¹

So, what is "coloring"? What is meant by using the word "coloring" in the Verse? Why is Religion called "coloring"? What is the intended descriptive inference in using this term?

Coloring is process of applying specific colors to clothes and other things using dye or paint. Color is also the tone of a skin.

In the Verse, the meaning of "color" is: The Religion of Allah, His Laws and the Faith in Him. It all means that the Religion of Allah has become a part of your nature so much so that it is like a permeant color of a cloth.²

Allah described His Religion and the Submission to Him a "Coloring". The reason for that is to have the Religion and Submission of the believer to Allah as inseparable from him as the color of a cloth or a tone of a skin. When entering a Masjid with the colors of your cloths and the tone of your skin, you'll definitely exit with the exact same colors. Your colors are your inseparable Iman and Submission to Allah, in your wake or sleep, in whatever you do and wherever you go. That is what Allah wants from you throughout your life. He does not want you to change your "colors" from case to case.

The intended descriptive inference is the uniformity of a cloth color (*inside and outside*) is like the consistency of Iman throughout the believer's body. His heart is full of Iman of Allah, His angels, His Revelations, His Messengers, the Hereafter and Destiny. His exterior exhibits adherence and compliance to Sharia and Islamic teachings. So, his inside and outside maintain the same color (*Religion and Submission to Allah*) all the time.

This reveals some of the states of Submission to Allah as it is a continuous feeling and

¹ "Tafseer At-Tabari", 3/17

² "Tafseer Al-Saadi", 68

inseparable from the believer. He is always submissive to Allah whether inside the Masjid or outside, in an Islamic study circle or in a shop, while asleep or awake, in his speech or silence and during all of his conditions.

The calm feeling, we experience when we head to the Masjid for Friday prayer, or while traveling for Haj and Umrah even though we run into crowds and feel tired but we feel serenity and bear it all patiently for Allah's sake. This feeling is a true submissive act to Allah, and this is what we ought to have and maintain throughout our lifetime if we claim that our living and our dying are for Allah.

The most delicate thing rectified by the term "color" is the concentration of the uniformity between inside and outside, the apparent and hidden of the believer. The discrepancy between the apparent and hidden is the riskiest thing that can happen to a believer. What is even more damaging is maintaining the apparent while neglecting the hidden. In this case, the "color" is flawed and it will be exposed with time. Therefore; Submission to Allah should be consistent inside and outside.

Since it is hard for one to mend the inside (i.e., maintains good heart deeds), he focused on the outside (*apparent*) form. He strives to perform acts of worship (even the optional) while neglecting the obligatory heart deeds. He starts blaming himself for a slip of a tongue, a stealthy glance of the eyes or a strike of the hands much more than blaming himself for the sicknesses in his heart. All of that because we have an incomplete perception of the concept of Submission in our minds. We ended up focusing on the apparent form at the expense of the hidden deeds of the heart.

What is notable is that split between what is apparent and what is hidden has reflected on our lives, like when we are unable to build a Masjid, then we make up for it by embellishing one. When we are unable to reflect upon the Qur'an, we make up for it by fast-listing, if it occurs. When we are unable to maintain humility in one prayer, we make up for it by increasing the number of prayers. And when we don't reflect on Tasbeeh, or Tahmeed or Hawqalah, then we make up for it by boosting the number of repetitions of these great Athkar. And so, this split between intended hidden heart deeds and the subordinate apparent physical actions continues to the point where we believe that Submission is nothing more than apparent worship acts. How very far from the true meaning of the Quranic verse and its "color"!

Indeed, this has clarified some of the meanings of Submission and its inferences that the outside (*apparent*) must comply with the inside (*hidden*). More attention should be directed to mending

the inside because the outside follow suit, so, make the "color" of Submission your lifetime pursuit.



Allah Likes to be Worshipped

No need to state all Quranic verses about Submissive worship, but I'll list the terms used:¹

﴿He Worshiped﴾, ﴿You [all] Worshiped﴾, ﴿We Worshiped﴾, ﴿We Worshiped them﴾, ﴿I Worship﴾, ﴿We Worship﴾, ﴿You are Worshiping﴾, ﴿You are [all] Worshiping﴾, ﴿We Worship them﴾, ﴿He Worships﴾, ﴿So they Worship me﴾, ﴿They are Worshiping me﴾, ﴿They are Worshiping it﴾, ﴿Worship me﴾, ﴿Worship Him﴾, ﴿You [all] Worship﴾, ﴿You [all] Worship Him﴾, ﴿You made them Worshiped you﴾, ﴿Worshiper﴾, ﴿Our Worshiper﴾, ﴿His Worshiper﴾, ﴿Two Worshipers﴾, ﴿Worshippers﴾, ﴿My Worshipers﴾, ﴿Your Worshipers﴾, ﴿Our Worshipers﴾, ﴿His Worshipers﴾, ﴿For the Worshipers﴾, ﴿Worshiper﴾, ﴿[Female] Worshipers﴾, ﴿Your Worship﴾, ﴿His Worship﴾, ﴿My Worship﴾,

Under each term, many Quranic verses emerge which indicates the importance of submissive worship and why it is favored by Allah. With its ample presence in the Quran, Submissive worship deserves to be a lifetime aim for all Muslims.

Whenever Allah commended someone in the Quran, He would call him: A **slave** (*Submissive*). He commended his Prophet Soliman (عليه السلام) by saying: ﴿An excellent Slave [Submissive]﴾ [Sad-30]. He also, commended his Prophet Ayoub (Job) (عليه السلام) by saying: ﴿An excellent Slave [Submissive]﴾ [Sad-44]. He commended many other Prophets by saying: ﴿Indeed, he was of Our believing Slaves [Submissive].﴾ [As-Saffat-81], ﴿Indeed, they were of Our believing Slaves [Submissive].﴾ [As-Saffat-122], ﴿And remember Our Slaves [Submissive], Abraham, Isaac and Jacob﴾ [Sad-45].

He said about the Prophets Noah and Lot (عليه السلام): ﴿They were under two of Our righteous Slaves [Submissive]﴾ [At-Tahrim-10]. He said about the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): ﴿Exalted is He who took His Slave [Submissive]﴾ [Al-Isra-1]. And: ﴿All praise is due to Allah, who has sent down upon His Slave [Submissive]﴾ [Al-Kahf-1].

Submission to Allah is not required from Humans and Jinn only, but all creatures were created for His subservience and exaltation. Allah loves to be praised, loves to be asked, loves to be hoped and loves to have all creations stand in need of Him because He is the only One entitled for all that. He created all things, and still creating what He wills, and these are the traits of a

¹ M. F. Abdulbaqi, "Quranic Terms"

king who is like no other king because there is nothing like unto Him.

In the Quran, Allah almighty mentioned the Submission and subservience of all creations to Him. For Angels In heavens, He said: ﴿Indeed, those who are near your Lord [i.e., the angels] are not prevented by arrogance from His worship, and they exalt Him, and to Him they prostrate.﴾ [Al-Araf-206].

Allah revealed the prostration of all creations in this verse: ﴿And to Allah prostrates whoever is within the heavens and the earth﴾ [Al-Rad-15].

He mentioned the creations' exaltation of Him: ﴿Do you not see that Allah is exalted by whomever is within the heavens and the earth and [by] the birds with wings spread [in flight], Each [of them] has known his [means of] prayer and exalting [Him]﴾ [Al-Rad-15].

He included everything: ﴿And there is not a thing except that it exalts [Allah] by His praise, but you do not understand their [way of] exalting﴾ [Al-Isra-44].

He said: ﴿Whatever is in the heavens and earth exalts Allah﴾ [Al-Hadid-1].

Also, He said: ﴿Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth exalts Allah﴾ [Al-Hashr-1].

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said about the ants: "a nation amongst the nations that exalt Allah."¹

The Prophet (ﷺ) said about all animals: "There is no animal except it has fear from Friday"²

Also, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "and the fish in the deep waters ask forgiveness for the learned man."³ And that is because the learned man (*scholar*) spreads knowledge among people about Allah. There are many inferences to this meaning in Quran and Sunnah, however; the aim is to show that Submission and subservience to Allah is the duty of all creations (*in heavens and earth*), and not only humans.

As a result, a submissive worshiper is in harmony with all the universe, and if he were to see or listen to all the sights and sounds of all creations exalting Allah around him, he would certainly feel ashamed of being the heedless one among all creations reverting to Allah.

This may reveal a part of the Submission concept, where all creatures submit and subserve to their Creator (Allah), rely on Him for their sustenance, do not ascribe power to themselves, do

¹ "Sahih Al-Bukhari", 3019

² "Sahih Ibn Khuzaimah", 3/14

³ "Sahih Sunan Abu Dawood", 3641

not show arrogance over others, attached only to Allah and manifesting submission and exaltation to Him. This earns them the love of Allah because He likes submission to Him because He is the only One entitled for all that.

All revealed Sharias, with its different methods, are united in showing submission to Allah according to their specific method prescribed by Allah, as He Said: ﴿To each of you We prescribed a law and a method﴾ [Al-Ma'idah-48].

Allah decreed upon all humans on earth to turn their hearts to Him by exhibiting Love, Fear, Raja and Tawakul on Him only, and He ordained for each nation a method of submission to Him, a method with which He is pleased and consenting to bring them closer to Him.



Humans Attributes Suit them for Submission

Allah had created mankind in a form that would suit them for Submission such as:

1. Origin of his father Adam (ﷺ):

The origin of our father Adam (ﷺ) is from dust, which is not a valuable material, therefore; satan (Iblis) showed arrogance over Adam because of his origin. In the Quran, as he Said: «**I am better than him You created me from fire and created him from clay**» [Sad-76]. Clay (*dust*) is a low and cheap material.

So, for one who came from dust and going back to it, shouldn't his worship and submission to his Creator be easy for him? what if the origin of Adam (ﷺ) were from gold and jewels, would worshiping Allah be easier for our tyrant souls?

2. Origin of Man Creation:

People are all created from a liquid disdained (*semen*), as described in the Quran: «**Did We not create you from a liquid disdained**» [Al-Mursalat-20]. The word (disdained) implies modest origin which enables humans to be submissive to no one but Allah, the Creator.

If we were created from a high-valued material, would our hearts be lenient and submissive to Allah? Nowadays, many souls, *which are made of dust*, rebel against submission, what would happen if it were made of a precious material?

In the Quran, Allah reminds an arrogant human of his origin and said: «**Does man not consider that We created him from a [mere] sperm-drop - then at once he is a he is flagrantly contentious**» [Yasin-77]. In Arabic language, the verse used a repudiating interrogative style which implies astonishment at a creature who was made of a tiny drop came to be a plain disputer.

A disgraced person will normally keep a low profile among people. Imagine your surprise when seeing him arguing and feuding contentiously with honorable wise people!

3. Human Size and Form:

The size of a man is negligible when compared to the mountains, earth, heavens and the universe. Allah said: «**The creation of the heavens and earth is greater than the creation of mankind**» [Ghafir-57]. Among other creatures, there are bigger, taller and even smarter than humans. Man will never tear the earth [apart] and will never reach the mountains in height! This will, also,

lead him to submit to his creator, and be subservient to Him alone, asking Him for all things.

If man were as big as a mountain, would he be inclined to be submissive, or he would be more likely to depend on his own toughness and power? Isn't his current size and form best suit him for worship and submission?

4. Human Knowledge and Possessions:

Man is oblivious to the unseen and completely ignorant of what is coming his way near or far, as said: ﴿And no soul perceives what it will earn tomorrow and no soul perceives in what land it will die﴾ [Luqman-34]. The near is what he will earn tomorrow, and the far is the land in which he will die.

As far as possessions, man doesn't really own anything, and everything he has is a temporary ownership as it is said in the Quran: ﴿Indeed it is We who will inherit the earth and whoever is on it and to Us they will be returned﴾ [Mariam-40].

Also, said: ﴿and to whom [belongs] all things And I am commanded to be of the Muslims [those who submit to Allah]﴾ [An-Naml-91]. The association between Him owning everything and His command of Islam is quite suitable, for Whoever owns all things, then it is an obligatory to submit to Him. One of Allah glorified Names is "The Inheritor", and everything else is perished.

Allah owns everything, as He said: ﴿And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth﴾ [An-Noor-42]. Isn't the owner of these great kingdoms entitled to have all of His creations submissive to Him?

Allah confirmed that no one but Him actually has a command on anything, as He said: ﴿Not for you [O Muhammad but for Allah] is the decision﴾ [Al-Imran-128].

There are Many weak Aspects in Humans:

Some of these weak aspects are man's growth, hunger, thirst, sickness, fear, sleep, worrisome and bewilderment. He is oblivious to his own good, and his senses are very limited. He is fragile against his own lustful desires, and frail to bear life hardships. He can't have everything he wants, and helpless to make all of his wishes come true. He doesn't know what is coming his way in life and what will happen to him in the near or far future. He can't change his destiny.

Now, all of that should make him suitable for submission to his Creator Allah, who Has everything and capable of changing everything. He has a single right choice which is turning his

heart to Allah with Raja (*hope for Allah's promise*) and Tawakul (*depending on Allah*).

Reflecting on these weaknesses, we conclude the following:

1. Man is, in fact, helpless and can't really benefit his own self.
2. Man is suited only for submission to Allah.
3. Submission to Allah is the single right choice for man, without which he can't continue through life.
4. A man wholeness is in his submission to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

Based on that, there is a harmony between man and the true nature (*Fitrah*) on which Allah had created him, so, when he submits to Allah, he doesn't really go against his nature. In fact; the one who, arrogantly, rebels against submission to Allah is indeed opposing his own nature (*Fitrah*).

From that, a new side of submission is exposed to us which is the fact that feeling in need of Allah is a necessity and indispensable to all humans.

It is clear that man is suited for submission to Allah based on his origin, his father's origin, his size, his knowledge and possessions. So, what about his nature (*Fitrah*)? Is submission compatible with his nature? Does his nature entail subservience, attachment, love for Allah and Raja of Him? Or does he have to constrain his nature to receive the reward for hardship?

This is what we will discuss under the following heading...



Human Nature (*Fitrah*) and Submission to Allah

Mujahid (*a prominent scholar of Tafseer*) explained the meaning of ﴿Color of Allah﴾ [Al-Baqarah-138], as the natural disposition in which Allah created people.¹

Ibn Zayd (*a prominent scholar of Tafseer*) explained the meaning of ﴿fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people﴾ [Ar-Roum-30], as Islam.² He means subservience of the heart to Allah.

Muath bin Jabal (رضي الله عنه), one of the Prophet Companions, explained the meaning of (Fitrah of Allah) as sincerity to Allah.³

By His blessing, Allah has made all of Man's deeds fall in harmony with his nature, such as: Man's love for Him, his dependence on Him, his submission to Him, his hope in His mercy, and his sincerity to Him alone. Man doesn't encounter difficulty in directing his heart to Allah, as in the verse: ﴿O mankind you are those in need of Allah while Allah is the Free of need the Praiseworthy﴾ [Fatir-15]. The Man's need of Allah is intrinsic and inseparable, while Allah independence is also intrinsic.⁴

The fact that Man is a creature is indicative of his need of an Independent Almighty on whom he pins his hopes and fulfilment of his needs, submits to and obeys Him. Man's need is essential, and Allah independence is also essential.

A believer of great faith, highly perceives his need of Allah and his absolute dependence on Him at all times. Whenever you have that feeling, you are, indeed, a submissive worshiper of Allah. Maintaining this feeling at all times represents the relationship of true submissive worshiper and Allah, as described in this Hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ): "O Allah, I hope for Your mercy, do not leave me to myself even for the blinking of an eye or less (i.e. a moment)."⁵

A believer who seeks to achieve true submission to Allah, subservience to Him, Love for Him, Yaqin (*great faith*) in Him, contentment with Him, Tawakul and entrust Him with all things and

¹ "Tafseer At-Tabari", 2/605

² Ibid, 18/493

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibn Alqayem, "Tariq Al-Hijratain", 1/12, (Note: Most of the discussion under this heading is from this reference)

⁵ "Musnad Ahmad", 20430

decisions = is manifesting his Fitrah from which devils tried to divert him.
Your journey to Allah is not really hard, just ask Him for guidance.



The Origin of Submission and its Foundation

The origin of submission is subservience.¹ The term "worshipping" indicates leniency and subservience.² In Arabic, there is a difference in the term "worship" when it is used for Allah and when it is used for something else. This, in fact; indicates the wide-ranging capacity of the Arabic language in handling words with negative connotation.

Ibn Taimyah asserted that the foundation of submission is bondage of heart,³ which is the subservience of heart to become in bondage. Ibn Taimyah added that anything enslaves the heart; then the heart will be in bondage to it. If wealth and money enslave the heart, then the heart will be in bondage to it. If love for a woman enslaves the heart, then the heart will be in bondage to it. If love for prominence enslaves the heart, then the heart will be in bondage to it, and so whoever wants to know whom he submits to or worships, then he should check who/what owns and controls his heart, and made him preoccupied about how to get to him/it. This is what he actually worships!

With submissiveness and subservience, comes greed and avidity. It is said that greed is a shackle in the neck and a chain around the foot, when the is removed from the neck, the foot will be free of chain.⁴ Greed is, in fact; a tool for enslaving hearts. When one covets something, desires it and pursues it, then his heart will be attached to it and becomes in need of anyone who can get it for him. This process applies for all desired things such as: Money, prominence, power and fame, etc. The more he desires something, the more he will become enslaved for it. Similarly, if he is attached to Allah's bounty, grace and the means to achieve them by abiding by them, he will be a submissive worshiper to Him. That is why it is imperative that a believer asks only Allah for his sustenance and everything he wishes for. His heart should be attached only to Allah to fulfill the true and complete submission to Him.

After submissiveness, subservience, bondage, greed and avidity, comes attachment and turning in which the heart is focusing immensely on something, and the result will be the same. When the heart is attached and turned toward something, and was busy waiting for it to happen, then

¹ "Lesan Al-Arab", 3/273

² *Mujam "Maqayes Al-Lughah"*, 4/205

³ Ibn Taimyah, "Submission", P. 60

⁴ Ibid, P. 61

it becomes in bondage to it, and this is worship.

In its pursuit of something, the heart moves to seek help from anyone who can get it. Hence, at this stage, the heart combines worship (*attachment*) and seeking help (*pursuit*). The relationship between worship and seeking help is so strong that it is mentioned in Surat Al-Fatiha in every prayer: ﴿It is You we worship and You we ask for help.﴾ [Al-Fatiha-5].

It is, now, clear that submissive worship is a function of the heart, and so is its freedom. It is important to recognize the essence of heart submissive worship, and the origin of its deeds.

The origin of these deeds is **submissiveness of the heart**. When the heart became submissive, it led to subservience, bondage, greed, avidity, attachment, turning (*immense focusing*) and dependance on worldly things.

The reason is that the heart was created with a weak status. It is always seeking to depend on or be attached to something else. Just like when Allah created the eye to see, and the ear to hear, He created the heart to know and love Him. Allah made the heart a weak organ to receive its strength and wholeness from Him. If the heart is not attached to Allah, then it becomes captive, and when it is attached to Him alone, it becomes free.

The origin of submission is subservience, you will not understand submission unless you know how to be subservient to Allah.

In addition, every religious (*Islamic*) duty or worship act contains, in its words, moves or form, subservience to Allah, which is intended by Him, as it will be explained under the next heading.



Even Patterns of Worship Acts Entail Submissiveness to Allah

The right understanding of Submission necessitates that every mandated Sharia duty leads to it. Of that, patterns of worship such as: Body cleansing before performing daily prayer (*meeting with the True King*) while reciting Thikr that includes repentance, represents an inside and outside purification, and showing reverence and subservience.

Ibn Alqayem asserted that a worshiper going to the Masjid is like a submissive slave heading back to his Master. While standing for prayer before Him, he displays humility and humbleness which evokes his Master's mercy and attention. When he starts the prayer by saying: Allah Akbar, that is greeting with humility and head down, focusing whole-heartedly toward his Master, not turning to his right or left but directing all attention to Him. This is submissiveness to Allah.¹

The same submissive attitude is displayed while fasting. Abstaining from all of his physical needs throughout the day for the pleasure of his Allah, similar to a submissive slave obeying his Master's wishes.

Giving Zakat (*financial obligation levied on wealth, given to poor*) is an example of submissiveness to Allah. Conforming to his Master's order with paying Zakat, every cent he spent, Allah will reward him by removing attachment to money and worldly things from his heart so that nothing may distract him from Allah.

The same submissive attitude is displayed while performing Hajj (*pilgrimage*). In Ihram, (*removing all of his clothes and is covered only with two garbs*), he conforms to his Master's order while abstaining from some of his physical needs throughout the Hajj days.

Reciting Athkar (*remembrance of Allah*) during the day brings humility to the worshiper. When he says: Allah Akbar (*Allah is the Greatest*), he sees everything else small. When he says: (*No God but Allah*), he declares that he is a submissive slave to Allah. When he says: (*Subhan Allah*), he glorifies Allah making him a submissive slave to Allah.

The same thing can be said about all other worship acts that the effect of any worship on the

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Mas'alat Al-Sama*", 93

heart afterward is a submissive feeling, and this is the essence of submission to Allah.

From the forementioned, it is concluded that every worship ordained to us by Allah is to manifest submission to Him. If one clearly comprehends the concept of submission to Allah, then he will definitely understand the aims of Sharia (*Islamic teachings and laws*) of which, at first, the purposes are not completely clear, however; when recognizing the concept of submissive worship, then all worships become evident, as you shall find under the next heading.



Comprehending Submission Entails Fiqh of Sharia Aims

Due to its reliability and high regard, scholars use the concept of Submission to Allah to assert many issues in Sharia (*Islamic teachings and laws*) and to rebut doubtful matters about Iman (*Faith*). This shows the clarity and authority of the concept of submission to Allah. For instance:

Topic: Preference between Standing and Prostrating (*in prayer*):

Scholars debated this issue: While performing a prayer, which is better Standing or Prostration? The scholars who favored Prostration argument was that Prostration indicates the essence of Submission to Allah. The ultimate act of submissiveness is Prostration.¹ So, you can see how scholars inferred a weighted choice from their understanding of Submission.

Topic: Possession of gold and silver ware:

It is prohibited to use gold or silver ware, however; scholars debated the possession without usage. Possession is owning gold or silver ware for ornament purposes or for selling. Most scholars concurred that possession without usage is also prohibited.² However; they debated the basis for prohibition. Many scholars saw the effects of using (*owning*) gold and silver on the heart is conflicting with the submission to Allah. The Prophet (ﷺ) validated this prohibition when he affirmed that it is for the non-believers in this life, since they don't bear in their hearts submission to Allah, so, submissive worshipers should not be using / owning gold or silver ware in this life. Only those who are non-believers (*disobedient*) will do such a thing.³

Due to its clarity, scholars inferred a weighted choice from their understanding of Submission.



¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Zad Al-Ma'ad*", 1/229

² Ibn Qudamah, "*Al-Muqn'e*", 1/144

³ Ibn Alqayem, "*Zad Al-Ma'ad*", 4/351

The Rationale Behind Shaving the Head in Pilgrimage

Scholars stated that the rationale behind shaving the head in pilgrimage is showing submission to Allah because head-shaving is usually considered an act of submissiveness and subservience. Head-shaving for the sake of someone other than Allah - as it was practiced by some innovative sects where they do it for their clergymen – is considered a heretical deviation (Bid'a) because it infringes on the attributes of Allah.¹

There are more than twenty-eight questions, mentioned by Ibn Alqayem, about our saying: "Asalam Alaikum" during Tashahud (*final sitting in prayer*). Each question with an answer which is tied to the submission to Allah. This attests to the clarity of the concept of submission in scholars' hearts, and that is why they correlate worships-purposes to it.

For more information on this subject, one can review it -even using current Internet searches- on this valuable book: Bada'i Al-Fawa'd.² It is all relating to the concept of Submission such as:

- During Tashahud (*final sitting in prayer*), what is the reason behind starting with saying "Salam" before saying "Salat" upon the Prophet (ﷺ)? Does this coincide with what is mentioned in the Quran?³
- During Tashahud (*final sitting in prayer*), what is the reason behind when saying Salam, we say: "Asalam Alaik" using direct speech to the Prophet (ﷺ), while when saying Salat, we say: "Allahum salli ala Muhammad" using indirect speech?⁴
- What is the reason behind saying "Asalam" at the end of the prayer, and not in the beginning?
- What do we say "Asalam Alaikum" using definite form, and not "Salam Alaikum" which is an indefinite form?

It is necessary for the believer to understand the concept of submission, worships acts and the practice of submissiveness and subservience so that he will grasp the Fiqh of Islamic teachings and rules.



¹ Ibn Alqayem, "Zad Al-Ma'ad", 4/147

² Ibn Alqayem, "Bada'i Al-Fawa'd", 2/130 and beyond.

³ Ibid, 2/188

⁴ Ibid, 2/191

Attributes of Hearts

In order to understand submission, you should be aware of heart attributes and true nature on which Allah has created. I'll state some attributes that are necessary to understand submission:

First: Turning over:

The heart is known for its turning over and unstable status. Almeqdad bin Alaswad (*one of the Companions*) said: I don't vouch for anyone until I witness his ending because I heard the Messenger (ﷺ) saying: "The heart of son of Adam is turning and rolling more than a boiling water in a pot."¹ Observing boiling water in a pot show that the upper and bottom contents shift places in a second.

This attribute is indicative of the fragility of heart, it is easily affected by a glimpse of an eye or a word of a mouth, so, keep the submissiveness in your heart safe from turning and rolling over. It is important to know the implications of this trait on heart submission through the following:

1. Since the heart is turning over all the time, then it is weak and in need and unreliable. It doesn't have the strength to stabilize itself, it needs assistance from Allah who Owns the hearts. If one realizes this weakness, then he is more likely to turn to Allah seeking His help and guidance for strength and steadiness of his heart.
2. Since the heart is unstable and rolling over all the time, then he should not feel secure about its condition, and refrains from degrading others, but advocating good and forbidding evil.
3. Heart's movement indicates quickness that should be put to a good use in turning to Allah.

Second: The heart has wants and demands:

The heart has insatiable wants and demands because of its weakness and need. If it doesn't seek goodness, it will go after evil. If it doesn't aim high in arrogance, it will choose humbleness and submissiveness. This trait is not all bad if one puts it for a good cause.

The good use of this inner energy on understanding submission is to direct it for the cause of Allah only.

¹ Musnad Ahmad, 23867

Third: The heart contains absolute love:

The heart has a strong propensity for love and attachment. It will move only by love, and this is set up by Allah so the heart will turn to Him. Allah has created the heart to love Him, and if it doesn't then it will fall for anything else like a tree branch swayed by a breeze.¹

This love of the heart is a big helping factor in understand submission to Allah, and use it for loving Allah. Try to envision that the heart doesn't love or put forth an effort with difficulty for love, then how are we going to have love for Allah? Submission to Allah is love and subservience to Him.

Parents should raise the love for Allah in their children's hearts early on in their lives so that they grow up with their hearts full of love for Allah. It is challenge for someone to grow up with a heart full of love for worldly thing, and then try have a love for Allah. It is hard but not impossible, considering the Companions who grew up before Islam, and their hearts were full of love for many worldly things such as: women, wealth, prominence, pride, and arrogance, however; when they accepted Iman (*faith*), their hearts turned completely toward Allah while all other loved things cleared out.



¹ Ibn Taimyah, "*Submission*", 104

People Need for Allah is Indispensable

The discussion about our need for Allah should be coupled with the Richness and Independence of Allah. He is indeed the All Praiseworthy.

Nowadays, the meaning of being rich with Allah is restricted to sustenance, specifically money, and no surprise here since we live in a world of materialistic values that overshadowed the true meaning of submission.

Among people, the most needful and worshipping to Allah is, in fact, the wealthiest by Him and most independent of all things except Allah. That is why Allah associated the people's need for Him and His glorified Name The Richest in this verse: ﴿O mankind you are those in need of Allah while Allah is the Free of need the Praiseworthy﴾ [Fatir-15].

When reflecting on one's extreme indigence, where, in reality; he doesn't own anything, it becomes clear that the extreme need in his heart can only be fulfilled by Allah.

Ibn Alqayem attributed this to the fact that Allah is the real Rich and no one else is. Being with Allah is winning the real richness, while missing this chance is foregoing the eternal wealth.

Submission to Allah means that the heart is content with Allah and in no need for anyone else. Everything the heart wishes for is with Allah who owns, benefits and controls it, so, what does the heart need someone else for? The sense of being rich with Allah (*most dependent on Him*) elevates the heart up to higher levels of submission which, in turn, reflects back on his good behaviors and calm manners.

One who is rich with Allah (*most dependent on Him*) will ask Allah only, and has fear of no one but Him, The most Independent. In worshipping Allah in light of His Name, The Rich (*Most Independent*) means the absolute reliance of heart on Him and never turning to anything else. The heart yields to Him, obeys His commands and rushes to please Him. This sentiment extends to abstaining from anything that displeases Allah. Being rich with Allah (*most dependent on Him*) unifies heart's emotions toward Allah only, clears the heart from other attachments, and brings self-contentment full of spirit, activism and good will. This continues until one's soul becomes serene, where it reached stability, joy and wholeness by foregoing everything but Allah.

If you need practical examples, then just read the biography of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his Companions and many men in the early virtuous centuries. You will see how their absolute dependence on Allah changed their lives. They never worried about living in poverty and got married numerous times to increase the Muslim population to make the Prophet (ﷺ) proud of them. They never feared their enemies at war even when they were outnumbered and out armed. On the day of Al-Ahzab battle, they experienced only the incidental fear felt by humans, but never doubted the promised victory from Allah. They didn't rely heavily on strong material causes and didn't despair when these causes were weak because their hearts were full of true dependence on Allah. Even when they adopted means to reach an end, they did it only because Allah ordered them to and they submitted to Him, and not forasmuch as they depended on them. They prepared well for everything and took every possible mean to help them reach their aims. They did not leave out any small detail because they wanted to close any gap through which doubts would enter their hearts about being inadequately prepared as Allah commanded them otherwise. They firmly believed in His saying: ﴿He governs [each] matter﴾ [As-Sajdah-5].

Read their biographies so you will know many examples of their true dependence on Allah where they were occupied with a single issue only which being steadfast on the straight path to Allah, glorifying Him and His commands. In contrast, look at those who lacked the true dependence on Allah, their lives were overcome by poverty, despair, fear and anxiety.

The aforementioned can be a trap in which the devil leads the readers to laziness, isolation and abandoning life, however; go back, again, to lives of the Companions to see if that devilish thought occurred? It could not and would not happen if the perception of dependence on Allah is right. The devil will keep trying to sway you away from understanding submission to Allah, so be alert!

We conclude this discussion about the being rich with Allah (*true dependence on Him*) by affirming that it manifest when witnessing (*by heart*) the great attributes of Allah, in particular He is **The First** (*The Beginning-less*) before anything else in existence. He is **The Last** (*The Endless*) and nothing else outlasts Him. So, He is before all causes and means since He created them all, and He is, also, outlasts all causes and means. When one realizes these facts, he will subserve and submit to Allah whether he is inside the Masjid or outside, while reading the Quran and afterward. The highest level of being rich with Allah is reached by Allah's Messengers and

their followers because they bear witness with their hearts to the truth of Oneness of Allah as The True One God of All things, and everything else is false. Sovereignty is His only, subservience is to Him only, submissiveness is to Him only and love is for Him only. All worlds calls and wishes are directed to Him, and that is an example of submission to Allah.



Why were Physical Worship Acts Ordained?

The essence of submission to Allah is **in the heart**. If the heart is good (reformed), the whole body becomes reformed, and if it is corrupt, then whole body becomes corrupt. The physical worshipping actions of the body such as: Daily prayer, Fasting, Zakat, Hajj, Supplication, Pledge, Thikr and the rest of worships are, in fact, dependents on submissiveness of the heart. The more submissive is the heart, the more substance these actions will have with Allah. Based on that, the questions become:

What is the benefit of practicing physical acts while the origin of worship is in the heart? How are these actions related to submission? Since its substance is in the heart, why are these actions important?

Raising these questions is important since it will help in understanding submission.

These apparent worship acts are like vessels on which our hearts display their submissiveness to Allah, love for Him, humility before Him, compliance with His commands, contentment with His determined decrees, dependence on Him, hope for His reward, fear of His retribution, conviction (*yaqin*) in His promise, seeking of His pleasure, glorification of His decrees, adhering to His rules, patience in obeying His ordained duties and thanks to His abundant blessings.

Just as if we confirm the submissiveness of our hearts to its Creator and other entailed heart worships. This, in fact; is the real understanding of submission to Allah when we strive to prove it by doing everything that pleases Him. Here are few examples of this validation so you may apply them to other worships:

In giving out Zakat by paying money to the needy, we prove to Allah that we our hearts love Him more than their love of money. Even with our love of money, we are willing to sacrifice it for the sake and pleasure of Allah, as if we say to Him: O Allah, please take what You decreed from our money which is all, in fact; Your money, and it is from You. You are more beloved to us than the money. Our trust in what You give us is far greater than it is in what we have. We have Tawakul and absolute dependence in you for our livelihood and sustenance that we give out Zakat and for charities without any anxiety or fear of being in poverty or hunger. We do all that because we believe in your ordained laws and comply with it, and have no exception or argument against it.

In performing Hajj, we show our submission to His commands, our love for His Holy Site (*Al-Kaaba*), our glorification of His sanctities and our follow the Prophet (ﷺ) lead. From this we understand Allah saying: ﴿**Their meat will not reach Allah nor will their blood but what reaches Him is piety from you**﴾ [Al-Hajj-37].

During Hajj, we offer sacrifices (*slaughter sheep*) for the sake of Allah to give to the needy and poor. The verse asserts that it is not the sacrificed meat or blood that matters to Allah but it is the piety in our hearts. This piety is demonstrated by buying the best sheep (*defects-free*), often at a high price, and being pleased doing that. Then we turn our hearts to Allah, sensing His greatness and bounty, mentioning His Name only at the slaughter, distributing the meat afterward and hoping that it is accepted by Him. All of that is done with humility and submissiveness to Allah, and this is what reaches Him (*the status of the heart while performing the action*).

Fasting for Allah is another manifest of our submission to Allah by placing His commands before our desires to eat or drink. We fight our internal cravings for eating, drinking and other pleasures to abstain from it all for the sake of the pleasure of Allah.

Reciting the Holy Quran is a sign of our love for Allah and His Words. We show our respect and reverence for the Quran by cleansing our mouths before starting, we face the Qiblah (*direction to Makkah*), we ask refuge with Allah from the cursed satan, we invoke the Holy Name of Allah (*The Most Gracious, Most Merciful*), with every verse we read in the Quran, we see that Allah is speaking with us by enticing at times and warning at other, we review the Holy Names and Glorified Attributes of Allah which increase in our hearts our love and submissiveness to Him, as explained in this verse: ﴿**and when His verses are recited to them it increases them in faith**﴾ [Al-Anfal-2]. What is remarkable in this verse is that the believers' state has changed after listening to the Quran and their faith is increased. The cause for that increase in faith is the fright, love and submissiveness they felt in their hearts when listening to the verses of the Quran.

We, now, realize that remembrance of Allah (*Thikr*) is a testament to what is in our hearts of glorification of Allah, and we express that by exalting Him with our tongues. We say: "Alhamdu liLLAH", which is a representation of the love and gratitude contained in our hearts, and every time we repeat it, we remember the many things He gave to us that we should be thankful for.

Every thanking one of us senses different things: Some are most thankful for home and family, others are most thankful for wealth, but the highest of the all are those who thank Allah for His revelations (*Islam and Quran*) and the fact that He guide them to accept His message.

Daily prayer is the light of hearts and testament to all good deeds of hearts. By putting our hand on our chests during prayer, we express the need in our hearts for Allah. With bowing, we show the glorification in our hearts of Allah. By prostration, we manifest the humility in our hearts to Allah. Indeed, the prayer is a clear act that is full of submission to Allah.

You can emulate the above examples in every worship action. It is also present in forbidden acts, where we refrain from things out of fear, exaltation, love and obeying Allah's commands.

So; worships, in fact, are expression of our submission to Allah, which warrant synergy between the heart and the body while performing the worship. This collaboration results in more love and submissiveness in the heart as this verse confirms: ﴿And they fall upon their faces weeping and the Qur'an increases them in humility﴾ [Al-Isra'-109]. This increase in humility strengthens and sustains their submission to Allah.

Worships also sustain submission throughout the day as the believer recites his Athkar (*remembrance of Allah*) from his awakening till he goes to sleep.

What remains for me to assert is that the value of worship to Allah depends on amount of heart submission through it. The more engaged is the heart with the worship, the higher the value and reward from Allah. Therefore; worshipers have different values for their acts based on submissiveness of their hearts. "Two men standing next to each other in prayer but the difference between their rewards is as the distance between heaven and earth."¹ This is similar to what is in this verse: ﴿Indeed Allah only accepts from the pious [who fear Him]﴾ [Al-Ma'idah-27].

Piety is the key for accepting worships, hence, for accepting worships, the verse did not specify Muslim but pious because heart piety is its submission which entails adhering to duties, refraining from the forbidden, loving Allah and hoping for His rewards. Once that settle in the heart, the worships are accepted.

All worshiping actions invoke humility, submissiveness and humbleness, and if had to choose

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Madarij As-Salekin*", 1/526

one word that combines the meanings of the rest, it will be: Submissiveness, and hence, it should be present at all times.

It is worth noting that when submissive worshiping and heart humility is fully understood, then everything you see will guide you to Allah. Earth, heavens, oceans, night, day, creatures and the great universe around you will remind you to submit to Allah because they all point to His Supreme Power over everything. When you reach this level of comprehension, then everything you hear like stories, news and life lessons, will also direct you toward Allah who oversees the world every day bringing about a matter.

Since worships actions are the fronts through which we reveal our love, fear, hope and Tawakul on Allah, can we improvise worship acts of our own? This will be discussed under the next heading.



Entrance Gates to Allah

A question for thought:

If people were created for worshiping and submitting to Allah, then why not let them choose the way to worship Him?

The answer is: Because they would never know the way leading them to Allah, nor they would know the worship action that pleases Him. This matter would then be chartered by extremists from two ends. By His grace and wisdom, Allah sent Messengers with simple and clear teachings to guide humanity to the straight path leading them to Him and to what He loves, as He said:

﴿If you should love Allah then follow me [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful﴾ [Al-Imran-31].

Rests assured that the ultimate objective behind our creation is heart submission to Allah and what it entails of love, fear, hope and entrust in Allah and other good feelings toward Him. All of which are shown through worship actions and refraining from the forbidden. By His mercy and wisdom, Allah Has permitted us to worship him only through specified forms of worships that are designated and ordained by Him. Our submission to Allah warrants that we don't bypass these forms of worship nor do we change them. The best and right way to Allah is the way of His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) only, any other way will wind up with the devils, as in this verse: ﴿like one whom the devils enticed [to wander] upon the earth confused﴾ [Al-An'am-71]. The lone road of submission and pleasing to Allah is that which is revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ), the Straight Path.

Behavioral scholars used examples, relevant to their times, for submission, heart and body deeds, so I'll do the same but relevant to my time:¹

Suppose you applying for a job and have to fill-out a special form for the position, and there are 3 candidates for the same position:

The first: Wrote all information on the form.

The second: Wrote all information on a separate paper.

The third: Did not write anything on the form.

¹ This example idea is adopted from "Reality of Submission" Majdi Al-Hilali,

Now, the **first** candidate did what he was instructed to do by filling out the form with complete information, so his form will be looked at and examined for acceptance or otherwise. The **second** candidate's external paper will not be looked at nor be considered for the position, regardless of the provided complete information since he did not use the assigned form for the position. The **third** candidate's form remains empty; therefore, no decision will be made for him even though he submitted the form.

This was an approximate example of physical worship acts in relation to heart deeds- *only a rough comparison*. As the heart has to be submissive and humble to Allah, the body, also, has to perform worship acts as ordained by Allah. If one performs well in the worshiping action but his heart is not submissive, then his worship is not considered nor accepted by Allah, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "There are those who fast and get nothing from their fast except hunger and thirst".¹

Conversely, if one invents a new way or form for worshiping Allah, and he conducts it with submissive heart and humility, then his worship is not considered nor accepted by Allah because he did not follow the right path to Him, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "He who does something contrary to our way (i.e., Islam) will have it rejected."² This person puts his own views ahead of Sharia duty.

Ibn Alqayem summarized this issue saying: (There is no doubt that the mere performance of a worship act without attendance and observance [*of the heart*], and without devotion to Allah is a big worthless effort in this life and the hereafter, it is like working without sincerity, no matter how ample, it is hard and futile which is a superficial action similar to the abundant useless leftover of siftings Bran. Allah rewards for the prayer only for which it is performed with attendance of heart).³

Iman (*faith*) is defined by Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'a as a Statement and a Deed. A statement by the heart and tongue, and a deed of the heart and a physical deed. This pairing of heart and physical deeds is imperative as the absence of one invalidates the other.

The deeds and submission of the heart are indeed very important for worship so as the physical deeds to manifest worshiping. However; it is helpful to know that heart deeds are more crucial

¹ "Sunan Ibn Majah", 1680

² "Sahih Al-Bukhari", 2499

³ Ibn Alqayem, "Madarij As-Salekin", 1/271

than physical deeds. This fact serves to induce us to focus on attaining good heart deeds by becoming aware of submissiveness, humility, love, hope, fear, reversion to Allah, Tawakul and entrust in Allah. All of these heart deeds are actually drivers of physical deeds, so it is unwise to pursue physical deeds while neglecting heart deeds. The increasement in performing prayers, number of times of reciting the Quran or more giving for charities don't go far enough without heart deeds (*submissiveness and humility*).

Performing physical deeds is much easier than maintaining a submissive heart. For instance, it is quick to say Athkar without feeling in your heart while it is difficult to do the opposite, and there are two reasons for this:

1. It is usually easy to control the apparent (*visible*) things, so one sees his body movements during prayer, hears his voice when reciting the Quran or reading Athkar, however; he can't see his heart prostrating, its humility or love, so he increases what he sees and remains oblivious to he doesn't see.
2. The devil knows that heart submissiveness is the key to pleasing Allah, so he stops at nothing to engage the believer's heart and block it from being attending or humble. The soul -as mentioned earlier- will compensate for its misunderstanding of heart submission by increasingly performing ample acts of worship while neglecting humility and submissiveness of the heart. It is wiser for someone to do the opposite which is few worship acts with more heart submissiveness.

However; don't let my words discourage you from practicing more worships, it is just that you pay more attention to heart submission.



Submission to Allah even during Trials and Tribulations

Allah created all creations for submitting to Him, and everything about humans is suited for submission, and all religious rites and worships are ordained for submission to Allah. Now, it is crucial to know that the wisdom behind facing hardships and trials in this life is to bring you back to submission to Allah who likes for you to engage in imploration, supplication and humbleness because all of that will be a cause for mercy and bounty by Him. He said:

﴿then We seized them with poverty and hardship that perhaps they might humble themselves [to Us]﴾ [Al-An'am-42]. This shows that the reason for hunger, poverty and diseases was to bring people to imploration and humbleness.¹

They were to blame because they didn't learn the lesson from hardship as said: ﴿Then why when Our punishment came to them did they not humble themselves﴾ [Al-An'am-43]. In Arabic, the verse starts with (*Lawla*) which implies the closeness of Allah's Mercy to them had they comprehended their predicament and returned to Allah in humbleness.

In another verse: ﴿And We had gripped them with suffering [as a warning] but they did not yield to their Lord nor did they humbly supplicate﴾ [Al-Mo'menoon-76]. Clearly humbleness and submissiveness to Allah protect people from His punishment.

Trials from Allah include many things that harm the believer. A disease will make him ill and weak to wake him from heedlessness and remind him of his mortality. Hunger will test his patience and contentment. Death in his family will get him to say: "Alhamdu lillah on everything".

Even at societies' level, where Allah will send down general tribulations due to their sins, so they will remember and revert back to submission to Him.

It should be clear that we don't advocate harmful situations in our societies, but rather try to comprehend Allah's Wisdom in allowing such trials, and not be of those whom He described:

﴿Do they not see that they are tried every year once or twice but then they do not repent nor do they remember﴾ [At-Tawbah-126]. We should differentiate between the wisdom and the cause of trials.

¹ "Tafseer At-Tabari", 9/242

Trials are calls from Allah to the people to bring them back to the honor of submission to Him, and to cease being arrogant and neglectful. Also, one of these tribulations is driving His enemies to attack His people to induce submissive worships from which they will benefit. When seeing nonbelievers daring to transgress the limits set by Allah, and His retribution on them, the believers hearts become more humble, submissive and full of love for Allah. They, now, know with great certainty that only Allah can save them from His punishment so they have great Tawakul, dependence, and hope in His Help and Bounty.¹ One of these submissive deeds in the heart can take the believer to higher levels on his way to Allah because he became knowledgeable.

Allah's Mercy on you is evident even in the time of trials and tribulations to get you back to the higher more suitable status for you which is submission to Him.

Whoever witnessed the abundance of distractions in life, the long periods of heedlessness, and the devilish diversions away from submission to Allah, realized the need for tribulations to revive the hearts, and this is how a pious believer will look at it. Then, what about an oblivious person, how will he look at trials and tribulations?

Whoever did not comprehend the concept of submission to Allah, he would not tolerate trials in his life and will remain discontent and resentful to His Lord as these tribulations drive him away from Allah until he is goes astray.

When examining the life of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), we find that he faced all hardships with patience, submissiveness, humility and hope for Allah's grace.

From experience, I can confirm that life is nothing but trials. Allah will try out His servants with prosperity as well as hardships, with victory as well as defeat and with success as well as failure. Allah destines all of that to keep His servant inside the circle of submission. The submissive believer will show gratitude in comfort, and patience with contentment in hardship. This is evident in the verse: ﴿[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed﴾ [Al-Mulk-2].

You are surrounded by everything that leads you to submission to Allah such as: the origin of your creation, your shape and your destinies, and that is because you are befitted to be a submissive

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Madarij As-Salekin*", 1/411

worshiper of Allah. The devil is persistent in diverting you from the straight path, and Allah keeps bringing you back to Him.

Two important words reoccurred throughout our discussion and they are: **Submissiveness** and **Humility**. We will discuss their meanings in more depth in the following chapter.



Do you Grasp the Real Meaning of Submissiveness?

Submissive worship is defined as: Fulfillment of Love, and fulfillment of Humility and Submissiveness. So submissive worship has two fundamentals:

1. **Love:** We will not discuss it because it not meant for this book.
2. **Submissiveness:** Many questions will be raised:

What is submissiveness? How can something be submissive? Can a believer be submissive when he is not praying? How can he be submissive while he is engaged in his family and social life?

Submissiveness and **Humility** are two words often mentioned by scholars when defining worship, and one will suffice for the other. The word Humility adds clarity to the meaning of submissiveness and extends it to include the deed of the heart. "Submissiveness may mean keeping low without fear, and Humility may mean unwillingly compliant."¹

I will limit the discussion on the word submissiveness in order to comprehend Submission and Worship.

Submissiveness and Humility are opposite of arrogance and showing off. Submissiveness is keeping low which is an attribute of a slave toward his master. If we assume that there is a master who has power, kindness, knowledge, wisdom, independence, richness, ability and other perfect attributes, and he wants to enslave someone, then the only requirement the master will ask of this slave is: **Submissiveness**. The master will not ask of his slave to be powerful or rich because the power and richness of the master are way more than the slave can achieve. The same thing will apply with the other attributes. Only submissiveness is required by the master of his slave. But, why submissiveness? Because it is the driving force for the slave to perform all things mandated by his master, hence, his service to his master is in direct proportion to his submissiveness to him. The master's wisdom is evident since he selected this trait for his slave.

Other examples, stated by Ibn Taimyah to clarify the idea of submissiveness: (whoever attached his heart to creatures, believing that they are able to help, sustain or guide him, then his heart

¹ Abu Hilal Al-Askari, "*Al-Forouq Al-Lugawieh*", 1/248

becomes surrendered to them and has as much submission as its dependance on them, even though on the outside this person could be their leader. An individual whose heart is attached to a woman, even if she is his wife, his heart will be a captive to her. She can do anything she wishes, even though on the outside, he is her husband, but in reality, he is her slave that she controls and abuses beyond reason, and there is no end in sight for him).¹

Therefore; submissiveness should be to the One Who subjugates and overpowers you with His overwhelming capability and greatness (none but Allah).

Presently, you can see how a citizen is submissive to the system of government under which he lives, and his awareness that he is under their control, and wherever he goes, he is reminded to follow the rules of law. That was an approximating example of submissiveness, however; submissiveness to Allah is religious worship.

Submissiveness is a state of stillness before someone who has powers and commands over you! That is why all creations are submissive to Allah since they exist within His kingdom and He Has absolute power over them.

Who doesn't surrender to death? Who doesn't succumb to disease? Who isn't overcome by catastrophes? Who isn't incapacitated by hunger? So in this way, all creatures are submissive, as He said: ﴿And to Allah prostrates whoever is within the heavens and the earth willingly or by compulsion﴾ [Ar-Ra'ad-15].

Submissiveness has levels, where a higher level is to bow before someone, and the highest level is to prostrate before him and cover your face with dust showing your humility and subservience. Some scholars define submissiveness as prostration because it is the clearest expression of submissiveness to Allah. Some scholars consider submissiveness as modesty to Allah, which they mean not disregarding His commands. Other scholars define submissiveness as keeping low, which is true as a submissive heart is low, and this is expressing submissiveness in tangible terms, as He said: ﴿If We will, We can send down from the sky a Sign before which they will bend down their necks in submission﴾ [As-Shua'ra-4]. Bending of necks is a submissive act occurs only when the heart is submissive.

¹ Ibn Taimyah, "Al-Fatawa Al-Kubra", 5/138

Everything in life submits to Allah in its own way. Earth's submissiveness is in its drought since when it is all green, it becomes bigger in size. Submissiveness in talking also exists as in this verse: ﴿**then do not be soft in speech [to men]**﴾ [Al-Ahzab-32]. Meaning: Don't make your speech soft when talking to men.¹ So, soft speech (*sweet talk*) is submissiveness.

A humble submissive heart to Allah: Is its awareness that it is in Allah's kingdom and under His Authority and Control. This feeling is continuous day and night, during happiness and sorrow, in his sleep and wake, in his home or at work. This awareness (*feeling*) doesn't prevent one from living his life, on the contrary, it is the true driver of life which makes it worth living as we will see later.

When submissiveness is settled in the heart, it becomes a gate to other good deeds such as:

Assertion: Whose heart is submissive to Allah will certainly believe everything revealed by Him: His Divinity and Deism, His words and commands.

Yielding: Whoever is submissive to Allah and feels that he is under His power and authority, he will certainly yield to Him and obey His commands and follow His guidance.

Compliance and Giving in: Whose heart is submissive to Allah will certainly adhere to His religion, Sharia, lawful and unlawful matters and His judgement.

Commitment and Resolve: Whose heart is submissive to Allah will certainly show in his commitment to His Sharia, and his resolve to implement everything that is required of him. We, now, know when their hearts were full of submission to Allah, how the Prophet's Companions scarified everything for the fulfillment of their beliefs.

Look how submissiveness- along with humility- had opened the heart for many good worshipping deeds.

After comprehending the submission concept, we realize that submission to Allah as Deity is not enough as pre-Islam polytheists believed that He is the Creator and the Sustainer, but they associated idols with Him in their worshipping, and never adhered to His commands. Also,

¹ "Tafseer At-Tabari", 19/94

submission to Allah during hardships only can be useful but it is not enough, as when they were on a ship in rough seas and it was about to capsize, they turned to Allah for help, and after He saved them, they went back to associate idols with Him. It is imperative to have a complete submissiveness, trailed by humility, yielding, compliance, resolve and other rights of Oneness to Allah.

It is important to recognize the link between submissiveness and the knowledge of Allah's glorified Attributes, the more a believer grasps and comprehends these attributes, the more submissive to Allah his heart becomes. Wondering about the Greatness of Allah and His overwhelming Authority over all creations will humble the heart and induce Tawakul, devotion and reversion to Him. Submissiveness to Allah is not hard, and its positive effects on the believer are immense. Moreover; Allah will always assist His servants in reaching out to Him, as He said: ﴿You alone do we worship and You alone do we turn for help﴾ [Al-Fatiha-5].

Also, sensing submissiveness differs from one worship to another. This feeling increases during prayer, especially in bowing, and more so in prostrating. When slaughtering a sacrifice while reciting the Name of Allah, the heart becomes humble and more submissive to Allah. That is why Allah combined these two worships in this verse: ﴿So pray to your Lord and sacrifice [to Him alone]﴾ [Al-Kawthar-2].

So, you can see that submissiveness can be practiced in daily life, and it doesn't necessitate isolation, a lowering of the neck or a slow walking. It doesn't prevent a laughter or any other permissible act. However; it contradicts with arrogance and showing off, and that is why Allah punished a person who walked with pride because of his (fine) mantles and well pleased with himself. Allah made him sink in the earth and he would go on sinking in that until the Day of Resurrection.¹

Being arrogant is a great violation of a slave submissiveness to Allah. Arrogance is not at all suitable for a submissive slave of Allah, and that is why the punishment was severe.

The above discussion covered the topic of submissiveness and humility which I hope it will motivate you to examine this important subject further and make it a life-time project.

¹ "Sahih Muslim", 2088

Now, if the heart is submissive to Allah, does that make a slave of Him?

The answer is no, because not every submissiveness is true submission. You can be submissive to someone you hate because of his power and control over you. That is why a full submission needed another pillar, with submissiveness, which is love.

In order to be a submissive slave to Allah, you have to have "submissiveness and humility" with "love". The absence of love will make the slave's service to his master incomplete because his service will be as much as his fear from his master, so he feels no pleasure in his service. In contrast, when submissiveness and love are present in the slave's heart, he will succeed and enjoy serving his master without feeling boredom or boastfulness. Combining submissiveness with love is necessary to reach the highest level of submission to Allah as He intended for His slaves.

Similarly, if submissiveness without love is not a true submission, then love alone without submissiveness is also not a true submission. A loving slave without submissiveness will often be less serious and irreverent in his service. Ibn Taimyah said: (whoever submitted to a person though he hates him, he is not considered a slave to him. Also, when he loves something but he is not submissive to it, he is not considered a slave to it, just like when he loves his child or his friend. That is why one of them "submissiveness or love" is not enough for true submission to Allah. It is imperative that a slave's love for Allah is more than anything else, and his glorification of Allah is more than anything else. In fact, only Allah is entitled of complete love and humility).¹

Allah is worth all the love for all reasons. He is the Most Beautiful, and the source of all beauty in the world. Allah is the Almighty and Most Powerful. Allah is the Richest and to Him belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth. And so, Allah has the ultimate representation of every noble trait you can imagine because He is The First (*The Beginning-less*) before anything else in existence, therefore He is the only One worthy of worship.

One more important trait that distinguishes Him from others is His Independence. Allah does not need nor benefit from your love, in fact, the benefits are all yours because when He loves you back, you will be a triumphant in this life and in the hereafter. Isn't Allah is worth all the love?

¹ Ibn Taimyah, "*Al-Fatawa Al-Kubra*", 5/158

As it was said before that your submissiveness is in direct proportion to your knowledge of the Traits of Allah, the same thing can be said about love. The more you know about His Nobleness, Generosity, Benevolence, His Deity and His Oneness, then your love for Him will surely increase. The Messengers of Allah were at the highest level of submission to Him for being the most knowledgeable about His Holy Names and Glorified Attributes. Consider the love of Allah a life-time project of yours, it is very much worth it.

Beware of the devil's deceptive suggestion that heart submissiveness is sufficient, as it was said by Murj'ah sect. Iman (*faith*) is defined by Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'a as a Statement and a Deed.



One's Soul Serenity is in Direct Proportion to his Submission

Now that the concept of Submission to Allah is, partially, clear to you, you should also be clear on soul Serenity which is described by Allah in the Quran: ﴿[To the righteous it will be said], "O serene soul, Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him]﴾ [Al-Fajr-27-28].

We have more questions here:

How did the soul, which is a persistent enjoiner of evil, come to be Serene? What is the meaning of Serenity? Is it going through life without troubles? Why did Allah call it a Serene at the time of its death? After answering these questions, we will see why the soul description (**well-pleased**) preceded (**pleasing [to Him]**)?

A slave, in service of his master, wants no more than to have a serene life without worries, so he can perform his duties and enjoy his life. Since serenity (*tranquility*) is very important in a believer's life, Allah Has blocked every possible cause for troubles to him. Allah Knows that Sustenance (*livelihood*) is of a great concern to the believer, so He guaranteed his sustenance, as the Prophet (ﷺ): "Then Allah sends an angel who is ordered to write four things. He is ordered to write down his livelihood."¹ Also, since the believer's needs occupies him, Allah Has opened a permanent gate to Him through Dua'a (*supplication*), and specified certain times at which Dua'a is more likely to be answered such as during the latter part of every night² and the latter hour of every Friday.³ Whoever reflects on Allah's Holy Names and Glorified Attributes comes to realize that each Name and Attribute closes out a distraction to the submission to Allah. For instance: Allah's Holy Name: Al-Ghani (*The Rich*), closes out fear of poverty and worries about the family future and well-being. Allah's Holy Name: Al-Wakeel (*The Maintainer*), closes out bewilderedness and hesitation. Allah's Holy Name: Al-Muqet (*The Nourisher*), closes out worries about sustenance and livelihood. The same goes for all Holy Names of Allah, and that is not the whole function of these Holy Names. I used these examples to explain the concept of submission. "Allah's Holy Names and Glorified Attributes are the foundation on which Tawhid (*monotheism*) stands."⁴

¹ "Sahih Al-Bukhari", 7454

² "Sahih Muslim", 757

³ "Sahih Muslim", 852

⁴ Ibn Alqayem, "Madarij As-Salekin", 2/402

Whoever absorbed the concept of submission to Allah would have a serene soul and a worry-free mind, and conversely, if he deviated from submitting to Allah, an unpleasant way of life would occur even if he owned everything else in this life. It is the heart what defines how he feels about life, and not his apparent possessions.

A perceptive worshiper converts all fears in life into a single fear of Allah, therefore; he is only afraid of the consequence of his own sins and nothing else. Observe how much fear is sieging most people about the future and what it holds for them and their children, to the point where they become afraid just for the fear itself. Having a great wealth is not the answer to fear because it is a misplaced fear. For a submissive worshiper, he only worries about his own sins to be forgiven, and his good deeds to be accepted. Other than that, he feels safe under the care and mercy of Allah. Fear of everything has become very common at present times because people drifted away from the true submission to Allah, and the serenity of a submissive worshiper as Allah said: ﴿Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allah there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve﴾ [Younus-62]. The first question that comes to mind: What are the credentials of the ally of Allah? The next verse answers the question: ﴿Those who believed and were fearing Allah﴾ [Younus-63]. Safety and jubilation are affirmed for those who believe and are pious through their submissiveness and humility to Allah. The word (*fearing*) indicates continuity of presence of piety in the heart because it is the result of submissiveness.

A submissive believer who believes that Allah governs all matters will never be exposed to fear, worries or discontent. If you grasped that, then you should seek a higher level of awareness which is making your submissiveness, love and hope as your paradise on earth. Ibn Alqayem said: (The love of Allah, knowing Him, the continuous remembrance of Him, finding contentment with Him, dedicating Him for love, fear, Tawakul and Raja (*hope*) so that the believer is absorbed by His presence at all times, is actually a feeling of paradise on earth and a knowledgeable person's life.)¹ Again, Ibn Alqayem repeated his words: (It is paradise on earth like no other).

Ibn Taimyah said: (whoever seeks eternal happiness let him persevere at the threshold of submission.)²

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Al-Wabil As-Sayyeb*", p. 49

² "*Madarij As-Salekin*", 1/429

Why should we be surprised at a believer who feels that he is within the hands of Allah, The Supreme King of heavens and earth and the great throne! Every believer had his share of this serenity, and surely, he lived through it and felt the great contentment, but soon after, heedlessness takes over and ruins it. We are not surprised by one who denies it, but by another who tasted it and then endured the loss of it!



Effect of Understanding Submission on Fiqh of Sins

When Allah gives a person a true understanding of the concept of submission, then many things in his life will change including his Fiqh (*perception*) of sins and faults. To realize this fact, think about your feeling when you invoke Dua'a (*supplicate Allah*) by saying: "O' Allah, forgive me my sins", and "O' Allah, I have greatly wronged myself ", and you know, deep down, that you had committed only minor faults, then you will feel unconcerned when uttering the word "forgive me", which brings this question: If ablution (*cleansing before prayers*) wipes out our evil deeds, and the daily five prayers do that too, and Friday (prayer) to the next Friday (prayer), and the fasting of Ramadan to the next Ramadan, is expiation of the sins committed in between them, as major sins are avoided. Also, performing Umrah and Hajj, fast of "Ashura" and "Arafa" days wipes out evil deeds, then what is left of our sins?!

This passive reaction (*unconcern*) is a result of a misunderstanding of the true submission to Allah who created us to be submissive to Him, worship and love Him. Let us presume that someone spends every minute of his lifetime in complete submissiveness, apparent and hidden, he still will never fulfill what is due to Allah. If one cannot possibly fulfill his father's rights, then how can he pay the rights of Allah? This was true for perfect and continuous submissive worshiping, now, you can imagine what he could accomplish with life full of heedlessness, ignorance, transgression, discontent and neglect! Also, whatever was offered in terms of good deeds were full of defects and flaws. Every moment passes without exercising submission is a transgression. Every inadequately performed good deed is a transgression. Every apparent or hidden breach of duties to Allah is a transgression. Belittling our sins is a transgression. Magnifying our good deeds is a transgression. So, in fact, you will need many atonements for your faults and transgressions instead of asking: What is left of my sins? This question in itself is a transgression because it is self-admiration.

I wonder about the Dua'a (*supplication*) chosen by the Prophet (ﷺ) to teach his Companion Abu Bakr: (O Allah, I have done great wrong to myself, and there is none to forgive the sins but you only, grant me pardon from you, have mercy upon me, for you are much Forgiving and Compassionate.)¹

¹ "Sahih Muslim", 2705

I ask: What is meant by doing wrong here? How did Abu Bakr do this wrong? How did this wrong become great?!

(Whoever knew Allah and what is properly due to Him of submission, his good deeds would fade away and become insignificant in his eyes. He, then, would realize that these deeds actually are not enough to save him from the punishment in the hereafter, and what is befitting of submission to Allah is something else.)¹

There is an effect of understanding submission on Fiqh (*comprehension*) of sins from another aspect. If regret, humility and feeling of great burden emerge after committing a sin, then forgiveness from Allah will be swift. If one repents, reverts to Allah and asks for His forgiveness, Allah will elevate him to a higher level than he was at before because he acted based on his submission to Allah and wore the garment of humility and submissiveness so Allah is the most forgiving and merciful.

If one admires and deems plenty his good deeds, then he will deserve the abhorrence of Allah because he stepped out of submissiveness to Allah and tried to act like a master rather than a slave.

Now you see how valuable is understanding the submission to Allah in viewing sins and how they are judged by Allah. When asking Allah for forgiveness of your sins, you are now fully aware of your ignorance and transgression. This is the way through which you proceed to Allah, so seek more of the knowledge of submission to Allah.



¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Madarij As-Salekin*", 1/276

Rebelling against Submission¹

Think with me about these Hadiths:

- The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "There was a person who used to walk with pride because of his thick hair and fine mantles. He was made to sink in the earth and he would go on sinking in the earth until the Last Hour would come."²

Do you wonder about the proportion between the sin and punishment? You probably think that the sin was less than its horrible punishment. The sin was his pride because of his clothes while the punishment was sinking into earth until the day of Judgment!

This person, in fact, decided to rebel against his slave status for which he was created. He wanted to raise himself above people whom he sees as lesser than him. He tried to wear the garment of supremacy and pride which is solely for Allah as in Hadith: "Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said: Glory is His lower garment and Majesty is His cloak and (Allah says,) He who contends with Me in regard to them I shall torment him."³

Now, you understand the crime of this man, he transgressed on the sole Traits of Allah.

Here is another Hadith, try to comprehend it in light of your understanding of submission:

- The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "A person said: Allah would not forgive such and such (person). Thereupon Allah the Exalted and Glorious, said: Who is he who adjures about Me that I would not grant pardon to so and so; I have granted pardon to so and so and blotted out his deeds.)"⁴

A person swore that Allah would never forgive another person because of his faults and shortcomings. Even though the first person swore based on suspicion and indication, his deeds were nullified! The difference between crime and punishment is big, however; in light of our understanding of submission, this person, in fact, decided to rebel against his slave status, and

¹ Majdi Al-Hilali, *"Reality of Submission"*

² *"Sahih Muslim"*, 2088

³ *"Sahih Muslim"*, 2620

⁴ *"Sahih Muslim"*, 2621

positioned himself as a judge on people's deeds, which is a Trait of Allah only, and deciding who would be forgiven and who would not. Infringing on the judgment of Allah is surely not a matter for slaves nor speaking for Allah, unless about things that He permits. Allah is a King like no other king. Here He punished the transgressor on His Limits, and forgave the other sinner who felt regrets for his wrongdoings which were committed out of human weakness and not a defiance of Allah's Authority.

Allah's Wrath has become severe on the people who were arrogant, and said: ﴿I will turn away from My signs those who are arrogant upon the earth without right﴾ [Al-A'araf-146]. Allah will gather the arrogant on the Day of Judgement resembling tiny particles¹

When rebelling against submission, Allah becomes angry at those who were created for submission but they chose to rebel. Man is suitable for submission to his Creator (Allah) because of his origin, shape, and nature.

An example of the rebellion against submission is following one's desires and egocentrism. Behavior scholars call it (self-glorification) where one sees himself as of a great importance, and boasts about his deeds. This self-obsessed attitude reflects on his way of talking, so he praises himself, his decisions and his accomplishments. Needless to say that this attitude profoundly contradicts the submissiveness status because submission entails humbleness, weakness and helplessness in your duties toward Allah, no matter what you think you had accomplished.

Ibn Alqayem said: (Scholars unanimously established that realizing the need for Allah while committing few offences is better than full compliance with self-conceit.)²

This saying comes from a prominent scholar (*Ibn Alqayem*) who was fully aware of the concept of submission, and relayed the unanimity of behavioral scholars that when one conceives his humility and need for Allah and commits few offences-but without persisting- is better than full compliance with self-conceit because conceitedness profoundly contradicts the submission status, while the former sinner was caused by a natural human weakness which can be wiped out with regret and repentance.

In order to preserve the human soul from egomania, self-glorification and rebellion against its

¹ "Jami` at-Tirmithi", 2492

² Ibn Alqayem, "Madarij As-Salekin", 2/412

submissive status, Sharia (*Islamic law and teachings*) prohibited praising someone to his face as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "When you see those who shower (undue) praise (upon others), throw dust upon their faces.)"¹ This harsh dealing with those who needlessly shower others with praise indicates the sensitivity toward anything that disrupts the submission to Allah in people's hearts and the need to protect it at all times. We should not arouse the attention of unmindful believers to focus on themselves since that will magnify their egos and lead them to the wrong way. (Human soul is inclined to emulate Deity, and if it can, it will say what the Pharoah said: "*I am your supreme lord*", because he could say it but other souls could not. The remedy for this emulation is the humility of submission.)²

It should be clear that regret, sorrow and remorse of the sinner have great substance and worth to Allah that He is pleased with the repentance of His servant when he turns penitently toward Him, and His forgiveness becomes swift.

A self-absorption person ascribes things to himself, and is heedless of attributing everything to Allah, even though the Holy Quran is full of verses accrediting everything to Allah. I will state words from Surat Saba' only of things that Allah attributed to Himself, so you will be aware that in fact Allah is the maintainer of everything in the universe while we have nothing, and therefore we should ascribe nothing to ourselves.

- ﴿That He may reward﴾ He is the only one who rewards for good deeds.
- ﴿guides﴾ He is the only one who guides humans to the straight path.
- ﴿We could cause the earth to swallow﴾ He is the only one who can do that.
- ﴿let fall upon them fragments from the sky﴾ He is the only one who can do that.
- ﴿We certainly gave﴾ He gave His Prophet David from His bounty.
- ﴿We made pliable for him iron﴾ He softened the iron for His Prophet David.
- ﴿We made flow for him a spring of [liquid] copper﴾ He liquified copper for His Prophet Solomon.
- ﴿We decreed﴾ He decreed for His Prophet Solomon death.
- ﴿We sent﴾ He sent upon people of Saba' the flood of the dam.
- ﴿We replaced﴾ He replaced their life conditions.

¹ "Sahih Muslim", 3002

² "Madarij As-Salekin", 1/224

- ﴿We paid back﴾ He punished them because they disbelieved.
- ﴿We placed﴾ He placed visible cities for them.
- ﴿We determined﴾ He determined distances between the cities.
- ﴿and dispersed﴾ He dispersed people of Saba'.
- ﴿Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth﴾ There is no other provider but Him.
- ﴿Our Lord will bring us together; then He will judge between us in truth﴾ He will bring all people on the day of Judgement and will judge between them in truth. He is the only one who can do that.
- ﴿And We have not sent you except comprehensively to mankind﴾ He is the one who sent His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) to all humans.
- ﴿Say, "Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills and restricts﴾ He extends sustenance for whom He wills and restrains resting on His infinite wisdom.
- ﴿Our verses﴾ Quranic verses and universal signs are all His.
- ﴿He will compensate it﴾ Allah will compensate whoever spent money in His cause.
- ﴿And [mention] the Day when He will gather them all﴾ Allah will gather all the people on the day of judgment.
- ﴿and We will say to those who wronged﴾ Allah will order the punishment of disbelievers.
- ﴿Indeed, my Lord projects the truth﴾ He projects the truth against falsehood.
- ﴿it is by what my Lord reveals to me﴾ Revelations of guidance and truth are all His.

In the Holy Quran, many words contain the pronoun (We) which affirm the real Doer (Allah), therefore; I did not state Allah's Holy Names and Glorified Attributes in even one Surah, let alone the whole Quran, so just to show you our shortfall in fulfilling the rights of Allah as opposed to magnifying our own.

The understanding of submission will be incomplete until we read these words that reveal our needs and weaknesses:

- ﴿allies not possessing [even] for themselves any benefit or any harm﴾ [Ar-Ra'd-16]. The idols' weakness reached a disability where they can't even benefit themselves.
- ﴿that which holds for you no [power of] harm or benefit﴾ [Al-Ma'ida-76]. Even the idols' ability to cause harm was negated, unless Allah permits.

- ﴿that which does not possess for them [the power of] provision from the heavens and the earth at all, and [in fact], they are unable﴾ [An-Nahl-73]. He negated the idols' ability to provide sustenance which is the main concern of all earth inhabitants.
- ﴿for they do not possess the [ability for] removal of adversity from you or [for its] transfer [to someone else]﴾ [Al-Isra-56]. He negated everyone's ability -but Him- to heal from diseases or eliminate afflictions.
- ﴿None will have [power of] intercession﴾ [Mariam-87]. He negated the power of anyone to intercede without His permission.
- ﴿create nothing, and they [themselves] are created﴾ [An-Nahl-20]. He negated the idols' ability to create, not even a fly.
- ﴿They do not possess an atom's weight [of ability] in the heavens or on the earth, and they do not have therein any partnership [with Him], nor is there for Him from among them any assistant﴾ [Saba-22]. Here, He negated an atom's weight of possession or power for those who are below Him, which is the ultimate helplessness.
- ﴿Say, Even though they do not possess [power over] anything, nor do they reason﴾ [Az-Zumar-43]. He negated any ownership for those who are worshiped with Allah except for what He had given to them.
- ﴿And they are unable to [give] them help, nor can they help themselves﴾ [Al-A'araf-192]. He negated the ability of these false deities to provide any help for the disbelievers.
- ﴿and they will not be able to repel it, nor will they be reprieved﴾ [Al-Anbiya-40]. He negated the disbelievers' ability to block any punishment from Allah.
- ﴿And they will not be able [to give] any instruction, nor to their people can they return﴾ [Ya-Seen-50]. He negated the ability of a dead person to give directives nor return back to his family.
- ﴿And my advice will not benefit you - although I wished to advise you - if Allah should intend to put you in error﴾ [Hud-34]. Guidance to the straight path is solely from Allah, no matter how sincere and eloquent His messenger was.
- ﴿while you know not﴾ [Al-Imran-66]. Allah is The All-Knowing, and He gives knowledge to mankind, and what they know is negligible in relation to what they don't.
- ﴿The Day when no relation will avail a relation at all﴾ [Ad-Dukhan-41]. On the day of Judgement, no defense nor benefit can be provided from one to another.

- ﴿The Day their plan will not avail them at all, nor will they be helped﴾ [At-Toor-46]. He negated any gain from their ploys.
- ﴿and you will never be able to﴾ [Al-Baqarah-24]. This is a challenge to the disbelievers to produce a statement like the Quran, and they will never be able to.
- The Prophet Ibrahim (عليه السلام) -with his distinguished status with Allah- said to his father: ﴿but I have not [power to do] for you anything against Allah﴾ [Al-Mumtahanah-4].

One of the most remarkable instances -you should read about- confirming that a servant of Allah is powerless and should not pass any judgment on others unless permitted by Allah, occurred when the disbelievers injured The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and he said: "How will these people attain salvation who have wounded their Prophet?"¹ Then Allah revealed this verse: ﴿Not for you, [O Muhammad, but for Allah], is the decision﴾ [Al-Imran-128].

Even His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ), Allah did not permit him to pass judgement of punishment on disbelievers. This is like Allah is telling His Prophet: You are only to convey my message to the people, and their destiny of being punished or forgiven in this life or in the hereafter is for me to decide and not you.² Remember that this meaning was conveyed to Muhammad (ﷺ), the most beloved Prophet to Allah.

The truth is that one can't stand alone, and he will always be in need for Allah in every aspect of his life, death and in the hereafter.

When tracing all these verses in the Quran, the true limits of man become evident, and the fact that he is powerless, vulnerable and in need of Allah for his livelihood and empowerment.

In order to increase our understanding of submission, let us re-read these words of the Quran where Allah Almighty informs us about Himself, reminds us of His Venerableness, and re-arranges our souls back to their suitable places under His Will. Allah is the real owner of our souls which are totally helpless without His grace. Therefor; we need to seek refuge with Him and humble ourselves before Him. Indeed, He is the only one worthy of worship and submission.

¹ "Sahih Muslim", 1791

² "Tafseer At-Tabari", 6/42

Self-glorification is one of the biggest hurdles along the way to achieving submission. Ibn Alqayem compared it to a mountain when he said: (Self-glorification is a big, hard and rough mountain along the road to Allah. Every traveler along this road has to climb that mountain, some travelers find it hard while others find it easy, and it is easy for one for whom Allah makes it easy).¹

Scholars on the subject of submission took a hard stand against the misuse of certain words such as: "I", "I possess", "Mine". Instead; they advised a good use of these words such as: "*I am the poor guilty slave of Allah*", "*Poverty and humility are mine*", "*Forgive my faults which I committed in seriousness or in fun deliberately or inadvertently, as I possess them all.*"²

It is evident that the subject of submission is a delicate one that it can't be scratched even by unintended words so the tongue always kept in check.

The more you accredit yourself with things happening in your life, the less likely you will appreciate the Bounty of Allah inadvertently. Constant remembrance of Allah and attributing everything in life back to His Bounty and Grace cleans out the soul from self-glorification, and glorifies the Greatness of Allah in the heart. Due to their understanding of the importance of submission, the Prophet's Companions attributed even the smallest things in their lives to the Grace of Allah, as the Prophet (ﷺ) himself repeated the words of Abdullah bin Rawaha (*one of his Companions*): "By Allah, without Allah we would not have been guided, neither would we have given in charity, nor would we have prayed"³

Modern living has increased self-glorification to the point where man considered himself the center of the universe! It promoted self-indulgence and regarded it as the objective of life, and made man's job is to strive to satisfy his desires and lusts, as described in the Quran: ﴿Have you seen he who has taken as his god his [own] desire﴾ [Al-Jathiyah-23]. He disregarded his mind that was created to guide him to the submission to Allah.

In conclusion, this great Hadith increases our understanding of submission. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said that Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said: "O My servants, all of you are astray except for those I have guided, so seek guidance of Me and I shall guide you, O My servants, all of

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Madarij As-Salekin*", 2/10

² Ibn Alqayem, "*Zad Al-Ma'ad*", 2/434

³ "*Sahih Al-Bukhari*", 4106

you are hungry except for those I have fed, so seek food of Me and I shall feed you. O My servants, all of you are naked except for those I have clothed, so seek clothing of Me and I shall clothe you."¹

Repeat the word "all of you" sincerely from the heart, and when you reflect on the deep meaning of this Hadith, you will realize how poor, powerless and helpless you are.

In the next section, we will discuss submissiveness of the heart.



¹ "*Sahih Muslim*", 2577

From where do Submissiveness and Humility begin?

Take this example:

"Visualize that you went to the market, entered a shop and met up a man who was shopping like you were, so you sat and chatted with him casually. In the middle of the chat, he introduced himself to you as a member of the Ministers Cabinet in your country! Will you continue to chat with him casually like before you knew who he was, or will you be more respectful and cautious?"¹ So, the manner of treating others is determined by how well you know them.

For one who seeks true submission to Allah, the first thing to begin with is: Knowing Allah, His Holy Names and Glorified Attributes that are stated in the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ). Allah said to His angles: "How it would have been if they saw Me?" The angels reply, 'If they saw You, they would worship You more devoutly and celebrate Your Glory more deeply, and declare Your freedom from any resemblance to anything more often.'²

The Holy Names of Allah are numerous, and whoever knows ninety-nine names of them will go to Paradise. We are oblivious to many of these ninety-nine Names and fall short of understanding them. Some of these Names have more than one meaning, and when we become familiar with one of them, we think we know them all which is a testament to our deep ignorance. Many of the Holy Names are deserted in our Dua'a (*supplication*), and once I tried to remember how many times, I made Dua'a using the Holy Name: Al-Muqeet (*The Nourisher*)? Well, may Allah forgive me for the answer.

In citing the Holy Name Al-Muqeet, some of us know its meaning but forget to use it in Dua'a. Others know only one meaning for it which is *The Nourisher* who provides nourishments for all, however; its meaning extends beyond to nourishing hearts with knowledge and Iman (*Faith*).³ Unknown to many of us is that the Holy Name Al-Muqeet has other meanings such as:⁴

1. Al-Muqtadir (*The Determiner*).
2. Al-Hafeeth (*The Preserver*).
3. Al-Shaheed (*The Witness*).

¹ Majdi Al-Hilali, "*Reality of Submission*", P. 30

² "*Sahih Al-Bukhari*", 6408

³ Saeed bin Wahf, "*Holy Names of Allah*", P.88

⁴ "*Tafseer At-Tabari*", 8/583

4. Al-Haseeb (*The One Who Counts*).

These are all true meanings, and are supported by Allah's Attributes and Actions. So, who, among us, asked Allah by His Name Al-Muqeet for nourishment and sustenance? Who asked Allah by His Name Al-Muqeet for knowledge and Iman? Who asked Allah by His Name Al-Muqeet for invoking the meaning of His Great Powers? All of these meanings are of just one name, try to envision the rest of His Holy Names!

This reveals our great and deep ignorance of Allah's Holy Names are the gate through which our submissiveness to Allah begins. Unless we know Him through His Names and Attributes of which He informed us, we will not come into submissiveness except in appearance. In this day and age, the ignorance of Allah's Names and Attributes is indeed the gravest ignorance of all, no matter how advanced is a person in scientific knowledge.

Every Holy Name is indispensable for the believer, and his life depends on them all. Each Holy Name has its effects on heart knowledge and submissiveness. The heart's deviates away from submissiveness when it doesn't recognize the true status of Allah. The Messenger Noah (عليه السلام) said: ﴿What is [the matter] with you that you do not attribute to Allah [due] grandeur﴾ [Noah-13]. Allah explained the reason for disbelievers in turning away from the truth: ﴿They have not recognized the true status of Allah﴾ [Al-Hajj-74].

A servant's Submissiveness to Allah begins with knowing Him, and increases as his knowledge does, this is a rule that has no exceptions. Our knowledge of the Holy Names of Allah does not end at our submissiveness to Him, but our continues humility, invoking the company of Allah and our observance of His Decrees are all affected by the strength of presence of His Holy Names in our hearts. Hence, one should not expect to reach Ihsan (*the highest level of Iman*) without comprehending the Holy Names of Allah. Also, each heedless instance of the heart is caused by missing a part of the meanings of Holy names. Heedlessness of the heart is in direct proportion to the ignorance of the Holy Names.

If submissiveness and humility begin with knowing the Holy Names and Attributes of Allah, then which Name is the core of all Names? Ibn Alqayem ascertained that whoever submitted to Allah by His Names: **Al-Awwal** (*The First, The Beginning-less*) and **Al-Akher** (*Ever-Lasting*,

The Endless), then he would achieve submissiveness, humility and need for Allah.¹ When he adds to his submission these Holy Names: **Al-Thaher** (*The Evident, Outer*) and **Al-Baten** (*The Hidden, Inner*), then he would reach a status that Ibn Alqayem called: (the knowledgeable acquirer of widespread submissive deeds both internally and externally).² The reader is perhaps wondering about the choices of Ibn Alqayem for these particular Holy Names on which I'll summarize his views as follows:

1. The meaning of the Holy Name: The First, the one who is preceded by nothing at all. Worshiping Allah using His Name The First, frees one from depending entirely on earthly causes. One of the biggest challenges in understanding submission today is the hearts attachment to earthly causes through which they believe they will achieve their aims. In this book, my approach was to simplify the information about submission, so, I ask Allah for guidance in clarifying the current issue of reliance on earthly causes in this point:
2. Materialistic nature of life today has drowned people in their attachment to earthly causes without them realizing. We became even more attached to causes due to our ignorance about true Tawakul (*Dependance on Allah*). All causes around us are part of Allah's creations. There are causes for healing from diseases, causes for our studies and graduations, causes for getting employment, causes for our livelihood, our knowledge, our deeds and the rest of our needs in life.
3. The weak understanding of the concept of submission, earthly causes have overwhelming effects on our hearts. Many people today *worship* the causes -without realizing- because of their strict attachment to it to the point where they become elated for its presence and very sad for its absence.
So, you find a person with solid causes feeling secure and at ease, while another with weak or no causes feeling upset and extremely tense. For instance: A person knows an influential director at an institution at which he is applying for a position feeling secure and at ease due to his connection. While another one a connection at this institution feeling at a loss and extremely tense. This example proves that the two applicants' hearts were fully attached to the causes and not to the creator of causes. If their hearts were truly attached to Allah, then

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Tariq Al-Hijratin*", 1/36

² Ibid.

they will remain unaffected by the strength or weakness of the causes. As was cited earlier in this book, Ibn Taimyah asserted that whoever is attached to something, he becomes enslaved by it.

4. Submitting to Allah by His Name: **Al-Awwal** (*The First, The Beginning-less*), since He, by His Grace, created mankind and brought them all to existence without any effort on their part. He Provided for them all means of support on earth, so, His Grace and favors preceded all means and earthly causes which He actually created, hence, when one reflects on these facts, he becomes submissive with humility to Allah.¹
5. Whoever realized the deep meaning of the Holy Name A-Awwal (*The First*), then his heart would be free from relying on earthly causes since he is a servant of The Lord of all means and earthly causes. Now, the discussion here is about denouncing the attachment and reliance on causes, and not the fact that one pursues them because that is an Islamic duty.
6. : **Al-Akher** (*Ever-Lasting, The Endless*), will also increase your submissiveness and humility before Allah since He is Endless who is outlasted by nothing. Everything will perish, including means and causes, but Allah is The Everlasting, so, attachment to causes is like holding on to a broken line while attachment to Allah The Ever-Living who does not die is secure. All means and earthly causes end with Allah, and only He Makes them useful when He Wills. Here the heart becomes more submissive to Allah, and indifferent to all causes and means.

Ibn Alqayem asserted that that many worshipers use Allah's Name: The First² since they know that Allah is the Creator who initiated their existence and sustenance, however; they are oblivious about His Name: The Ever-Lasting which entails making Him the ultimate aim of their love, attachment, submissiveness, fear and hope, all of which is the true submission to Allah.

Worshiping Allah by His Holy Names: **Al-Thaher** (*The Evident, Outer*) and **Al-Baten** (*The Hidden, Inner*) will take you to a more advanced level of submission. I will let you do further readings about this subject from Ibn Alqayem' book: "*Tariq Al-Hijratain*".³

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Tariq Al-Hijratain*", 1/37

² Ibid, 1/39

³ Ibid, 1/39 and beyond.

If you miss out on learning the Holy Names: A-Awwal, Al-Aker, Al-Thaher and Al-Baten, then don't miss the Holy Names: **Al-Hai** (*The Ever-Living*), **Al-Qayyum** (*The Sustainer, The Care Giver*) which encompass the meanings of all Holy Names and Glorified Attributes.¹ They also entail the base for heart submissiveness and humility for a person with guidance from Allah.

Allah's Holy Name: Al-Hai, entails absolute and complete life, He is the life-giving, He is immortal, He doesn't sleep nor He should. He grants a complete life to His submissive servant in this life and immortality in paradise in the hereafter.

Allah's Holy Name: Al-Qayyum, entails Self-Sustenance and independence. He is the Sustainer of all of His creations so that nothing and no one can stand on his own without Allah. Everything is within His Power and Control, so He is the one for whom everything ought to submit and humble.

Since Allah's life is Complete, all perfect and Glorious Attributes are His. And since Allah's Independence is Perfect, all Almighty and Superior Attributes are His. The Holy Name: Al-Hai resembles -in meaning- the Names: Al-Awwal and Al-Akher, while The Holy Name: Al-Qayyum resembles -in meaning- the Names: Al-Thaher and Al-Baten.

Comprehending the meanings of Allah's Holy Names has a great effect on the heart, inducing submissiveness, humility, attachment, hope, exalting and glorifying Allah. Ibn Taimyah was captivated by Allah's Names Al-Hai, Al-Qayyum, and he said to his student, *Ibn Alqayem*: These two Holy Names have a great effect on the life of the heart, as if he was inferring that they could be the **Great** Holy Name of Allah,² and they have an effect on answering Dua'a and alleviating afflictions.³

Allah Almighty is surrounding every event occurring in our lives and in the universe. He creates it, He owns it and He governs it. Let us entrust all things to Him by our hearts and tongues for He the King of all existence and we are His submissive worshipers.

Knowing Allah is in every believer's heart, and who doesn't? But to reach true submission, then

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Zad Al-Ma'ad*", 4/184

² Ibn Alqayem, "*Madarij As-Salekin*", 1/466

³ Ibn Alqayem, "*Zad Al-Ma'ad*", 4/184

you'll need the deep-rooted knowledge of Allah which increases with time. A weak knowledge of Allah leads to a weak submission which is affected by sermon but become heedless again. The source of knowledge about Allah is the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of His Prophet (ﷺ), so cling to them, learn and comprehend and you'll know Allah.¹

If you miss out on learning the meaning of the Holy Names: Al-Hai, Al-Qayyum, then don't miss learning the meaning of the most superior way of Istighfar (*seeking Allah's forgiveness*): "O Allah, You are my Lord. There is no god but You. You created me and I am Your slave, and I remain faithful to Your covenant and Your promise as much as I can. I seek refuge with You from the evil of what I have done. I acknowledge Your favors upon me, and I admit my sins. So, forgive me, for indeed none forgives sins except You."

This Hadith summarizes the understanding of submission because it combines for the believer his confession of Allah's Supremacy and Lordship, his submission to Allah, his pledge to be faithful to Allah's covenant and promise which is part of a slave's duties toward his Master, his admission of guilt and sins and seeking refuge from it all with Allah. Indeed, these all are the fundamentals of submission and humility to Allah.

Early, in this book, I mentioned that attachment to means and earthly causes is the main challenge toward understanding submission. What are the contemporary reasons that obstruct understanding of submissiveness to Allah? And why? This subject will be discussed in the next section.



¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Muftah Dar As-Sa'adah*", 2/90 and beyond: *Effects of Knowledge of Names of Allah on Submission*. I highly recommend this book: "*Al-Murtaba' Al-Asna Fe Riyadh Al-Sma' Al-Husna*" by Abdulazizi Dakhil Al-Mutairi.

A Blame on Adopting a Cause is a Flaw in Understanding Submission

A worshiper is surrounded by many causes which are ways to achieve his aims in life, and he doesn't worship Allah except through means ordained by Allah. The devil has many tricks on the subject of causes and means in order to deviate the hearts away from depending on Allah. In this day and age, many ways and causes are available for earning sustenance, for gaining fame and stardom, and even more for making an impression and charm, also, means for prominence and prestige, for pursuing knowledge and engaging in Da'wa (*Propagate Islam*), and for everything else in life. So, it is important to learn Fiqh of causes, and how to worship Allah by using them. Also, the believer should be cautious that his focus on causes doesn't turn him away from Tawakul (*Dependence on Allah*). The subject of causes is critical for many reasons: Intrinsic poverty in the heart which is a natural feeling of indigence. In addition, the ignorance of the meaning of submission and fierce competition for earthly things against which the Prophet (ﷺ) warned, and misconceptions about true Tawakul. Also, emulating the western way on how to approach causes and means. All these reasons will be more than sufficient to overcome the believer.

When the concept of submission is not sufficiently clear for one while he wants to pursue causes for his livelihood, he becomes worried, distressed, and unstable. He may not even be satisfied with the means and causes at hand, so he starts thinking about unlawful means such as: Cheating, dealing with bribery, deceiving and betrayal of trust. He doesn't think of faith acts except perhaps Dua'a, but due to his ignorance of true submission, he remains far from Yaqin (*Conviction*) that Tawakul is indeed the most powerful mean. Even when doing an act of faith, his heart is not as restful as when he has made an earthly cause. Besides, he tends to measure things relying on his intellect only, so more points mean success! More money means blessing! Spending money means its shortage or loss! All these attitudes indicate a flaw in understanding submission. The standing place for a submissive servant is to learn the causes denoted by his master, conforms to His commands showing his obedience and submissiveness to Him, then watches His grace in enabling him to reach his aim while his heart is relied on Him for blessing this aim, making it useful to others with sincerity.

The contemporary flaw in understanding submission, submissiveness and humility turned the

servant's heart away from his master and made him relied only on the strength of earthly causes and means. He becomes restless and discontent until he obtains what he wants, and if he doesn't, then he starts to feel resentment and bitterness which drive him away from the level of submission.

This is an example stated by Ibn Alqayem so that you know how a submissive loving servant deals with earthly causes, he said: (Causes are like a road used by a traveler to reach his destination. If he is told:

1. *Don't use this road.* Then his journey will end.
2. If he considers the road as his objective and travels without intending to reach any particular destination, then he ignored the objective and became engaged with the road.
3. If he is told: *Pay attention to the road, take notice of its landmarks, continue to travel while keeping your eyes on your objective and working your way towards it*, then this the truth).¹

Sharia (*Islamic Laws & teachings*) raised awareness about the importance of causes and means in the lives of people, linked causes to their effects, and established that Iman (*Faith*) is the affirmation of causes. People came to know the existence of Allah, worship and obey Him through causes and means. Allah had sent His Messengers and ordained His Sharia using causes and means. So, adopting causes in life and acknowledging their effects is an Islamic duty as well as a destined reality.² The Prophet (ﷺ) adopted causes and worked on them, for instance, he wore a chest armor and put on two coats of breastplate during the battle of Uhud as a double protection.³ He never showed up for a battle without chest protection. During Hijrah (*His migration from Makkah to Madinah*), he hired a clever guide who happened to be a polytheist.⁴ He stored for his family so much food as would cover their needs for a whole year.⁵ When he traveled for Battle, Hajj or Umrah, he would carry food, arms and necessary equipments.

A misconception about the importance of causes and their effects reflects a flaw in Tawakul and

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Madarij As-Salekin*", 3/462

² Ibid, 3/377

³ "*Sahih Sunan Abu Dawood*", 2950

⁴ "*Sahih Al-Bukhari*", 2264

⁵ "*Sahih Al-Bukhari*", 5357

seeking help from Allah. This verse affirms the adoption of causes and means: ﴿It is You we worship and You we ask for help﴾ [Al-Fatiha-5].

Today, the flaw in how a servant looks at causes came from self-admiration where his heart relied entirely on the causes and plans to achieve his aims. The devil plays a big role in turning the believer away from depending on Allah (*The Creator of causes*) to focus on the causes and means only.

Understanding submission to Allah provides you with a balance between two things: Allah's command to adopt causes while keeping the heart attached and dependent on Allah.

The devil has two ploys for disrupting that: The first is neglecting causes and means to foil the first part, and the other is focusing on causes and means only to foil the second part.

So, a servant exits the submission because if he neglects adopting the causes, then he disobeyed Allah's commands, and if he relies on causes only, then he depended on something other than Allah. In both cases his submission is flawed.

Ibn Alqayem stated that many people felt the joy of submission through Thikr (*Remembrance of Allah*) but did not feel it through Tawakul and seeking help from Allah.¹ Adopting a cause is a submissive act and Tawakul is another submissive act, and neglecting either one is a flaw.

If you say: What is the meaning of Tawakul and seeking help from Allah? I say: It is a state of the heart emanates from knowing Allah, and believing that He is the One who Creates and Governs, Grants and Withholds, Benefits and Afflicts. What Allah willed; it has occurred even if people didn't wish it, and what He did not will; it would not occur even if people wished it. This entails full dependence on Him, entrusting all matters to Him, feeling tranquil and Yaqin that all things are in His Care.²

If you ask: Is ignoring causes conforms to full submission to Allah? Ibn Alqayem answers this in details as follows:

1. **There is a mandatory prescribed observance:** Where one stands firmly at the boundaries

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Madarij As-Salekin*", 1/103

² Ibid, 1/103

prescribed by Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) on how to deal with means and causes without which true submission will not be attained. Adopting lawful causes and means for supporting the faith, pursuing knowledge and sustenance with diligence while keeping in mind and heart that Allah is the creator and operator of causes and means. It is imperative not to lose sight of the fact that if Allah wills; causes will work and aims will be achieved, and if He doesn't; nothing will materialize.

Whoever realized this important observance, knew that true submission entails that believing in causes and adopting them as lawful means is an outcome of his Iman (Faith) in Allah. Adopting causes is an act of obedience to Allah Who likes it and rewards for it. Neglecting the adoption of causes and means in life is a censure in sound mind, disposition and Sharia.

2. **There is a prohibited observance:** When one believes that causes and means are the influencer in achieving aims. Even though it is unlikely, this notion -partially- can be felt by a believer, especially when he depends heavily on causes and means, believing that it can benefit or harm him and becomes worried that he could not find better causes even though he did his best. All of this is happening because he is turned away from Allah, The Creator of means and causes. This section title meaning is that: (Heart's Dependence on Adopting a Cause is a Flaw in Understanding Submission) because dependance should be only on Allah.

Behavioral scholars stated a criterion that will help you understand the issue of causes and means: Your heart should not be restless when causes are foggy, and should not be at complete rest with causes.

Notice that scholars mean serenity of the heart where the faithful servant is trusting in Allah and not in his own efforts or means. The right combination that leads to the right understanding of submission is for the heart to focus on Allah for Tawakul and dependance, and to focus on causes for adoption and engaging.

Whoever understood submission and humility and the need for Allah will adopt causes while his heart is full of trust in Allah and in complete contentment with Him regardless of the outcome. Adopting causes and means doesn't contradict with Tawakul on Allah.

For Allah and With Allah:

Now that the features of submission are apparent, and becoming clearer with understanding the

Holy Names of Allah, and the position of causes with regard to submission, complete your understanding of submission by grasping these two words: **For Allah, With Allah.**

For Allah:

Allah is our utmost aim and we worship Him. The submissive servant cannot help but to have Allah as his utmost intended aim, so, he does everything for the sake of Allah because he is devoted to his Perfect Master as He said: ﴿**Unquestionably for Allah is the pure religion**﴾ [Az-Zumar-3]. The word (**religion**) here is submissiveness, the pure sincere submissiveness is for Allah because He is alone is entitled for submissiveness for all mastery attributes are His, and He commended His servants by saying: ﴿**We feed you only for the countenance of Allah**﴾ [Al-Insan-9]. These sincere servants of Allah have their sayings, deeds, giving, holding back, loving and disliking are all for the sake of Allah. Whatever Allah Likes, they do, and whatever He dislike, the don't. When they know of a situation at which Allah Likes them to speak, they do, and when at another at which He Likes them to refrain from speaking, they do. They move about and act in their family, social and employment aspects of lives according to what please Allah. Don't think they are rigid in their treatments with others, on the contrary, the observe the limits set by Allah in their dealings with families, friends and finance. They are not controlled by their disposition, so they don't show anger at situation where Allah doesn't want them to be. Even when they become angry, they don't transgress the limits set by Allah. When they are able, they will pardon others because Allah Likes to forgive, so they give precedence to what Allah likes over their own self-satisfaction. When they achieve victory in any situation, they don't do it to get even with their adversary but because Allah decreed to defeat transgression. Indeed, they attained the meaning of ﴿**It is You we worship**﴾, and their submissiveness is only for Allah.

With Allah:

It is with Allah we seek help for Allah is the one sought for help. Whatever we do, as weak servants, can only be possible with Allah's Help, and not by our own power. When we eat, we say: Bismillah (*In the name of Allah*), so we may receive His blessings and help. When we finish eating, we say: Alhamulillah (*Praise be to Allah*) who has fed us, given us drink, and provided it for us, though we were powerless ourselves. When we enter a place, we say: Bismillah (*In the name of Allah*), for only with His help we enter. When we go out, we say: Tawakalna Ala Allah (*We relied on Allah*), for only with His help we exit. When we lie down to sleep, we say: Bismika Allahuma wathatu janbi (*With Your Name, my Lord, I lay myself down*), for only with His help

we lie down and rise up. When we wake up, we say: *Alhamdu lillahi alathi ahyana (Praise is to Allah Who gives us life)*, for only He gives life. When we board anything, we say: *Subhana allathi sakhkhara lana hatha (Glory is to Him Who has provided this for us)*, for if it was not of Him, we couldn't board anything, nor a car or a plane would be invented. When we go on a travel, we say: *Allahuma anta as-sahibu fes-safar (O Allah! You are my companion in the journey)*, for when You Are with us, we shall be safe.

Even in laughter and in weep, as He said: ﴿**And that it is He who makes [one] laugh and weep**﴾ [Al-Najm-43]. He Knew our need for laughter and weep so He helped us. Also, when performing our basic needs in the bathroom, we ask for His protection and help. When we receive offerings, it is Allah Who caused it to happen and removed any obstacles along its way, so we thank Him before someone else. When we are precluded from something, it is Allah Who did that for a wisdom or because of our sins, hence, we should not blame others because no one -except Allah- has the power to preclude anyone from anything.

When the Ash'ariyyin (*relatives of the Companion Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari*) went to the Prophet (ﷺ) they asked him for mounts. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "By Allah, I will not mount you on anything; besides I do not have anything to mount you on" Then it became feasible to carry them, and they became uneasy about what they had done to have made the Messenger (ﷺ) forget his oath! He said, "I have not provided you with the mount, but Allah has done so. By Allah, I may take an oath to do something, but on finding something else which is better, I do that which is better and make the expiation for my oath."¹

See how many times does this situation reoccurs in our lives, when you say: Allah employed you, Allah made you successful, Allah gave you a salary raise, Allah made you speak fluently, then how many people will object and say: You don't need to say that because it is a known fact!

The Prophet (ﷺ) was adamant in asking help from Allah when facing enemy and used to say: "O Allah, You are my aider and helper; by Thee I move, by Thee I attack, and by Thee I fight."² So everything is with Allah, which is the proper submissiveness and humility.

Listen to what Allah said to the submissive Companions: ﴿**And it is He who withheld their hands from you**﴾ [Al-Fath-24]. Indeed, Allah had restrained their hands off of you so, don't rely

¹ "Sahih Al-Bukhari", 7555

² "Sahih Sunan Abu Dawood", 2632

on your cleverness by hiding your faith, caution or vigilance (*although these are important since Allah ordained them*) but in fact, the Grace of Allah had kept them away from you.

It is important to link everything in your life to Allah and have a deep sense of it because He Governs and facilitates everything. Some righteous forefathers used to say: (He who found Allah then he found everything, and whoever missed Allah then he missed everything).¹ Meaning that who finds Allah in the help he receives with everything in his life, then he found everything he wants. And who missed that and relied on his own power, then things wouldn't come easy for him.

Perhaps that is why when we recite Roqyah (*Remedial and healing invocation*) on our bodies, we don't notice any effect as we read in the Prophetic biography. Wasn't one of the Companions recited Roqyah by reading Surat al-Fatiha on a man who was stung by a scorpion and he became completely healed? Also, Surat al-Baqarah defeats the magicians but when one who is affected by magic reads it nothing changes! Al-Muawithatan (*Surat Al-Falaq and Surat An-Nas*) have a commanding power but we don't feel it as it was felt by the righteous ones who lived in the early centuries. Well, the power of Roqyah relies on what is in the heart: Submissiveness, seeking help from Allah and disavowal of own power. The Roqyah should be for Allah and with Allah. **For Allah** in its: Sincerity, truthfulness, yielding and adherence. **With Allah** in its: Seeking help from Allah, Tawakul, dependance and trust in Allah.

In conclusion of this section, the linkage between actions **for Allah** and that of **with Allah** is affirmed. Whoever sought help from Allah in everything, relied on Allah for everything and had Yaqin (conviction) that Allah has power over all things, then that would surely lead him to submissiveness to Allah and sincerity to Him.



¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Al-Wabil As-Sayyeb*", p. 64

Either a Submission to other than Allah or a Flawed Submission to Allah

Now that the concept of submission to Allah has been clarified, and the necessary submissiveness and humility which entail love, fear and hope for Allah are evident, let me remind you that all of our heart sicknesses can be summed in one of these two:

1. A submission to other than Allah.
2. A flawed submission to Allah

The submission to other than Allah:

As previously discussed, it doesn't mean praying or slaughtering animal for it or any other means of Shirk (*associating others with Allah*), but it is the attachment of heart to other than Allah. Ibn Taimyah asserted that the heart's longing and attachment to others for help, sustenance or guidance is considered as a form of submission to them, and it is in proportion to that attachment. So, you may want to probe your heart, now, for any attachment, a deep-rooted hope, a turn away or a yield to something or someone, and try to find who or what it is?

This necessitates that for one who understood submission is to clean up his heart from any attachment to other than Allah since it is a permanent source of torment. This torment is a punishment from Allah to anyone whose heart is attached to other than Him. The most tormented people in this life are those who are stuck on extreme love and devotion to others. Their torment is like no other.¹ And that is because they directed the most valuable heart deeds -such as love, hope, desire and will- to other than Allah, so as a consequence, Allah has turned their loved ones against them to become their source of torment. Now, that was the judgment on the loving, so what is the judgment on the loved one? If the loved one accepts and is satisfied with this love and attachment and pleased with turning hearts away from Allah, then he is also guilty for aiding this wrong. It is a form of submission to other than Allah because he liked to see his lover submissive with humility to him which satisfies a need in his heart. He should have rejected this type of submission to himself rather than to Allah. It is clear that both: The lover and the loved one have submitted to each other.

That was an example about one who was attached to a woman, nevertheless; the analysis applies to other situations such as: Attachment to prominence, rank, notability, prestige, wealth or any

¹ Ibn Taimyah, "*Submission*", p. 68

other desirable things in life, and there is an abundance of them today.

A flawed submission to Allah:

One of our contemporary hearts' sicknesses, which prevents full understanding of submission, is a flawed submission to Allah. Meaning that we have -in our hearts- submissiveness, humility and love for Allah, but it is not as complete as it should be, so it left a gap through which the devil slips. If our submissiveness was complete, then the devil could not enter our hearts except a touch, as Allah said: ﴿Indeed those who fear Allah, when an impulse touches them from Satan﴾ [Al-A'araf-201]. Allah called the relationship between satan and the hearts of believers who fear Him a "touch" to indicate instability of the devil in their hearts where he has no place there since their hearts have a complete submission to Allah. Whoever attached his heart to something, then there is a submission in his heart in proportion to its attachment. People's hearts have great disparities in their submission due to their different attachments.

This matter calls for immediate attention to find out about the attachments of the heart because it is exposed to all kinds of materialistic values and diversions, and hindered by lack of knowledge about true submission and scarcity of sincere mentors to overcome hurdles along the way. All of that can lead to deterioration of one's heart by submitting to other than Allah even though he keeps praying and fasting!

If you understand true submissiveness to Allah, and try to pursue it -after reading this book- then you have come a long way in comprehending submission, but you still need one last corner to have the perfect comprehension of submission. It in the next section.



Submissiveness with Love

In previous pages of this book, I've written extensively about submissiveness and humility because there is a big misconception about it and a deviation from its great meaning, nevertheless; complete submission to Allah is not being submissive only, but having love for Allah also. Allah Almighty is worthy of total submissiveness and complete love. Many people hearts -sometimes- may be submissive, even a non-believer's heart becomes submissive before the greatness of Allah when faced with health or livelihood difficulties. So, almost everyone is a slave from this aspect, however; the challenge facing a seeker of total submission is to have love for Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) in his heart more than anything else.

These are two linked actions. For when love for Allah increases in the heart, it becomes more submissive, and vice versa. This is a worthy life-time project for you to reach the highest point of love for Allah.

The question remains: How do I increase the love in my heart so I become knowledgeable in submission to Allah?

Well, it is achieved by three things:¹

1. Fulfilling the heart with love for Allah only.
2. Making your love for Allah sincere to Him.
3. Eliminating anything that disrupts your love for Allah.

These three things were combined in one Hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ): "Whoever possesses the following three qualities will have the sweetness (delight) of faith: The one whose love for Allah and His Messenger is more than anything else, Who loves a person and he loves him only for Allah's sake, Who hates to revert to Atheism (disbelief) as he hates to be thrown into the fire."²

The base for fulfilling the love is to have Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) become dearer to you than anything else, so it not sufficient -if you want to attain submission- to have the base of

¹ Ibn Taimyah, "Submission", p. 92

² "Sahih Al-Bukhari", 16

fulfilling love but also to love Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) more than anything else. So, you should probe your heart and measure this love: Do you love Allah? Or is He the most beloved to you? And find the difference between these two submissions.

Since Allah should be the most beloved to us, then we must take every opportunity to increase His love in our hearts. Many of us have love for Allah but He is yet to be the most beloved in our hearts because of our weakness and earthly desires.

In your pursuit of submission, you should be aware that the circle of love for Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) is wide open so don't constrain yourself. Every saying and action -you take- which is loved by Allah is part of your love for Allah. Ensure that your love for Allah -not your desire- is the motive to do anything. Allah likes knowledge so you do, Allah likes giving for charity so you do, Allah likes benevolence so you do, you love your parents since Allah likes that from you, you love your family and children since Allah likes that from you, you like Sharia and goodness because Allah likes that, you like to forgive because Allah likes it. So, the most complete level of Iman (*Faith*) is to have your desire go along with what pleases Allah, and this is a level at which Messengers and their followers are.

When you like something, then ask Allah to help you achieve it. The liking of something that is likeable to Allah is: ﴿It is You we worship﴾ [Al-Fatiha-5], and asking help from Him is: ﴿and You we ask for help﴾ [Al-Fatiha-5].

Ask only Allah for all of your wishes, and pursue them with whatever means He gave you. If He Grants you your wishes, then offer your gratitude and thanks to Him. If He withheld them from you, consent to that and don't feel resentful to keep your heart safe since your heart is more important than your wishes.

Needless to say that what Allah likes and doesn't like can be learned only through His revelation (The Holy Quran and Sunnah).

In his book, "*Madarij As-Salekin*", Ibn Alqayem had elaborated on the subject of love for Allah, meanings, levels and ranks, so I highly recommend it.



Does Submission to Allah Entail Inactivity and Isolation

There are two misconceptions about worship and submission to Allah: Isolation and Inactivity. Does submission entail the servant's inactivity, idleness and isolation from daily livings.

Some may even think that submission is not feasible while mixing with people! Therefore; those who misunderstood submission become distressed when they are around people, at work or when receiving guests because *-based on their misconception-* it interferes with their submission.

This fallacy is a result of unclarity of the concept of submission where one presumes that submission entails isolation, therefore; he imagines that everything around is a distraction from his submission to Allah.

After comprehending the concept of submission, the Companions of the Prophet increased their activities by conquering new lands and spreading knowledge of Islam.

When the heart become submissive and hoped only for Allah's Grace and promise, it shows on the seriousness and perfection of one's performance for the sake of Allah. Also, notice when the heart become submissive and feared Allah Almighty, it drives him away from prohibited actions and keeps him safe from Allah's punishment. The heart yielding to Allah and its responsiveness induce the initiation of many righteous deeds, and the same goes for all other heart's submissive acts.

Islamic history attests to the fact that all those who contributed to its glory and renaissance have submissive hearts to Allah only. They freed themselves from their own selfish wishes and made extraordinary marks on history.

The devil was satisfied with the isolation of some worshipers, and justified it *-to them-* as necessary due to corruption of times and the safety of their hearts. On the contrary, the Companions, their followers and the exemplary Imams have submissive hearts when mixing with people and when alone. They maintained strong Iman and submission to Allah without conditions throughout their lives.

Ibn Alqayem explained the right attitude of a worshiper when dealing with people: (Don't refrain from mixing with others so as to become isolated and thinking that mixing will disrupt your

serenity. Rather, be generous and give up some of your serenity to comfort your brothers of faith so they benefit from your knowledge and companionship. This is the gentle and decent thing to offer).¹

He also said: (It is best to mix with them in doing useful things which is better than being alone. And it is better to stay away in doing something useless which is better than mixing with them. So, the best in every situation is what pleases Allah).²

Ibn Taimyah pointed out the criterion for one's mixing and isolation which is: The existence of cooperation in righteousness and piety or its absence. If it is righteousness and piety, then mixing is better, but staying away if sin and aggression exist. There have to be times for a worshiper to engage in his *Athkar (Remembrance of Allah)* and keeping himself from committing wrongs.³ Look how this great Imam (*Ibn Taimyah*) made his judgement based on piety and goodness because a worshiper should be influential in his society and environment, taking his spiritual feed from his isolation and disseminating it when mixing with others, following the example of Prophets of Allah.

For a submissive worshiper, the best time for mixing with people is when his community needs him for reforming and spreading the goodness among people. Also, when seeing some who spread corruptive ideologies and bad moralities throughout society. A true submissive worshiper feels responsible for preserving people's hearts from being corrupted or invaded by devils, therefore, he steps in to defend society against corruption.

I'll cite few stories about the Companion Abdullah bin Masood who resided in Al-Kofa (*A city in Iraq*) where some *bid'a (Innovation in Islam)* surfaced and how he confronted it so we know how submissiveness to Allah has a power from Him to His worshiper.⁴

Once he pointed with his clothe to a man who came up with a *Bid'a (invention)* in the Masjid. In another incident, he was told about some men who made mistakes so he went and advised them. Once he saw some men making *Bid'a* while reciting *Thikr (Tasbeeh)* with small stones so he threw it at them. He used to give a sermon every Thursday calling for steadfastness with Sunnah and keeping away from *Bid'a*. His submission deserves further readings as an example to follow.

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Madarij As-Salekin*", 2/337

² Ibid, 1/89

³ Ibn Taimyah, "*Al-Fatawa Al-Kubra*", 2/163

⁴ Ibn Wadhah, "*Al-Bida'a*"

Submission, worship and humility have a wide meaning, and the most important issue in submission is having your objective to obey the King Almighty. When a guest arrives at your house, let your motivation for feeding him is implementing the order of Allah and your love for obeying Allah and seeking His pleasure. This is called (Pure intention for Allah). When that is done, then every nice talk and laughter you have with him are good deeds. Apply this worshiping of Allah example to your family, your relatives, in your job, in your trading and dealing with others and in every aspect of your life.



The Five Rules of Submission

I have gathered for you rules from statements by scholars who had great knowledge about Allah, and I selected the ones relating to understanding submission, and they are:

First Rule: To understand submission, have a need for Allah

The need for Allah is the essence and core of submission,¹ which is to deprive oneself from all desires and wants, and come wholly to Allah as He said: ﴿Say, Indeed my prayer my rites of sacrifice my living and my dying are for Allah Lord of the Worlds ❁ No partner has He﴾ [Al-Ana'am-162-3]. This is the necessity of submission, and for whoever claimed to be a slave of Allah, then he is obligated to have a need for Allah, and directs his reliance, hope, heart, fear, aspirations and seeking refuge with Him as the Prophet Moses (عليه السلام) said: ﴿My Lord, indeed I am, for whatever good You would send down to me, in need.﴾ [Al-Qasas-24]. These words - *from the Prophet Moses*- are full of submission and humility from these aspects:

He called upon his Lord to show humility, he mentioned "send down" to affirm the Highness of Allah, he cited "whatever good" to display his need and weakness, he said "in need" to stress his destitution, and the response from Allah was a job, a wife and a safe place to reside.

If you want to understand submission, show your need in your Dua'a (*supplication*) and gratitude, and show your need in your state and heart.

Second Rule: To be a true slave of Allah, have an attentive heart with Allah

Submission is a state of humility and love for Allah, and these two are the main heart deeds. Submissive worshiping directs all feelings of the heart toward Allah so that all soul traits become submissive and fearful of Allah. Submissive worshiping occur when hope is only for Allah, and contentment is only with Allah.

Comprehending submission means invoking the presence of Allah in every detail of your life. He Gives you and Withholds from you, Guides you and Misguides you, Drives you and Hold you. Everything is under His command because He is the King whom everything glorifies. The slave will continue to ascend through these levels of awareness until he reaches the highest level (*Al-Ihsan*) which is worshiping Allah as if he sees Him.

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Madarij As-Salekin*", 2/410

When Ibn Alqayem stated the levels of believers -The close ones to Allah, The righteous, The transgressors- he mentioned that the righteous pray Al-Dhuha (*Mid-morning prayer*), however; when mentioning the close ones to Allah (*who are higher than the righteous*) he said: (After sunrise, if he desires, he may pray two Rak'as or more for Al-Dhuha (*Mid-morning prayer*), or he may not pray it). Which brings about this question for someone who didn't understand submission: How is it that for someone with higher level of Iman leaves out Al-Dhuha prayer? The reason is that he completed his submission by doing what pleased Allah. For Allah, he acts, and for Him he stops. When a duty to Allah arrives, he performs it with a welcoming heart, so his attachment, love and devotion to Allah far exceeds the importance of Al-Dhuha prayer if he missed it. He only does things that pleases Allah, even ordinary acts are transformed into worshiping acts by his intention for seeking pleasure of Allah.¹

Third Rule: To exercise submission, remove all attachments from your heart

Attachments are all thing clinging to the heart other than Allah and His Messenger such as: Life lusts and desires, prominence and people relations.² Nowadays, these attachments have become more diverse and appealing which divert the heart away from its love, good deeds and devotion to Allah, and redirect the heart strength to earthly attachments. At present times, the views on right and wrong have been mostly unbalanced due to following own desires. The contemporary attachments are so strong that the heart wouldn't forgo easily unless it has a power of love for something higher such as Allah, His Sharia and religion. Keep in mind that it is impossible for the heart to be at standstill.

Be cautious about thinking that submission means abandoning life altogether, on the contrary, life is the farm in which you plant for the hereafter, as ordained by Sharia.

The right understanding of submission is to rid out love of life from your heart to replace it with the love of Allah. Take from life what bring you closer to Allah and turn your heart toward Him in order to achieve singling Allah with Tawhid (*Monotheism*), deeds and will.

You may ask yourself now: What are you attached to? Want it? Afraid of missing it? Pursuing it with your mind, heart and tongue?

These attachments are similar to idols but they are inside because you expend some of your heart deed for it. Calling them "idols" should not shock you because the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "May he

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Tariq Al-Hijratin*", 215

² Ibn Alqayem, "*Al-Fawa'd*", P. 154

be miserable, the worshipper of the dinar and dirham, and the worshipper of the striped silk cloak. If he is given anything, he is satisfied; but if not, he is unsatisfied, Let such a person perish and relapse, and if he is pierced with a thorn, let him not find anyone to take it out for him"¹ So. The Prophet (ﷺ) called him a slave worships money and silk cloak. Everything your heart desires is at the Hands of Allah so turn your heart only to Him, and this the true Tawhid.

Fourth Rule: Have a disregard to your own power and strength

The foundation of submission is to disregard your own power and strength, which means that your heart should no longer rely on your power, talents, skills and everything given to you by Allah. One of the biggest dilemmas is that our current age had induced self-conceited persons who think that they can accomplish anything with their own power, skills and talents. To say: "There is no might and no power except by Allah" is a treasure from Paradise, but now, we only say it at times of hardship. In fact, we need to say it at all times.

The treasure of a submissive worshiper is in admitting his own weakness and need for Allah, and that he derives strength from Him. Behavioral scholars assert that disregard of one's own strength and power is in proportion to his need for Allah. The more his need for Allah, the less is his reliance on his own strength.

Search your heart -not your tongue- to find out how much you rely on your power, strength, intelligence, ability, voice, wealth, prominence, rank in society, experience views and other means that can be utilized, and how the heart can be clear from relying on these means.

One's disregard of his own power and strength allows him to live and go about his things sensing that he is under a king and within His control. Allah can do anything with him, and all the slave should do is to turn his heart toward Allah to take care of him in every detail of his life. This is, indeed, the true submissive worshiper of Allah.

Fifth Rule: Two corners to fully comprehend submission

There are two corners which will increase your understanding of submission:

1. The realization of Greatness of Allah:

Don't be surprised if I told you that we are yet to realize or comprehend the true Greatness of

¹ "Sahih Al-Bukhari", 2215

Allah Almighty for He is Great beyond our grasp. Anyone who seek true submission to Allah should read, study and reflect on the verse of Al-Kursi (*The Seat*) at all times with Athkar of the day. The last two verses of Surat Al-Baqarah are very good addition for study and reflection in order to reach higher levels of understanding submission. Also, studying and reflecting upon every verse which speaks of Allah' Greatness in the Holy Quran will take you a long way ahead on the road to Allah.

2. Realization of our weakness:

When our conception of the Greatness of Allah is disrupted, then our relation to others become bigger. Our realization of Greatness of Allah is in proportion to our realization of weakness of others. This is because of the heart's need for attachment. It is narrated that for Fajr prayer on Friday, Imam should read Surat Al-Insan: ﴿**Was there a period of time when man was not even worthy of a mention**﴾ [Al-Insan-1].

Whoever reflects on these two corners, would put everything back to its rightful size and place. Allah is The Great, and a Man is weak no matter what he does or possess.



The Example of a Slave with his Master

In this final chapter, I'll give an example to aid in visualizing submission to Allah. In their discussion about submission, Ibn Alqayem and other behavioral scholars often mention the example of "Slave and Master". In fact, this is the Quran approach to the subject of submission. Allah said: ﴿Allah presents an example: a slave [who is] owned and unable to do a thing and he to whom We have provided from Us good provision, so he spends from it secretly and publicly. Can they be equal? Praise to Allah! But most of them do not know.﴾ [An-Nahl-75].

Allah also said: ﴿Allah presents an example: a man [i.e., slave] owned by quarreling partners and another belonging exclusively to one man - are they equal in comparison? Praise be to Allah! But most of them do not know.﴾ [Az-Zumar-29].

Allah said: ﴿And Allah presents an example of two men, one of them dumb and unable to do a thing, while he is a burden to his guardian. Wherever he directs him, he brings no good. Is he equal to one who commands justice, while he is on a straight path.﴾ [An-Nahl-76].

Whoever understood this example, and how a slave is submissive to his master with love for him, total dependance on him, keeping busy in serving him, always agreeable with him and defending him=who conceived all of that= then he would understand submission and humility to Allah. Also, the example of a father and his son brings nearer the concept of submission, and to affirm this example, I will quote few paragraphs from Ibn Alqayem writings:

First Quotation: Depicting a broken heart of a repentant

Ibn Alqayem said: "One of conditions of repentance is to have a distinct break in the heart like no other and it happens only to the guilty. No hunger, hardship or love can induce such a heartbreak. It is a full break of heart before Allah, which surrounded the heart from all sides, and brought it down fallen with humility before Him. Similar to a runaway guilty slave who was caught and brought before his master who knew every detail of his guilt. The slave had no way to save himself or escape, and knew that the only way to rescue himself from the inevitable punishment is for his Master to pardon him. All known and clear to him is his helplessness against his Master power, his need against his Master supremacy and also a love for his master.

From all that, a break, submissiveness and humility converge in his heart, and there is nothing more beloved to his Master than these feelings along with his Dua'a: O' Allah, I ask you by Your

Might and with my humility to have Your Mercy on me, I ask you by Your Power and with my weakness, by Your Supremacy and with my need. My lying sinning forelock is before You, Your slaves are countless, and I don't have a Lord but You, There is no shelter nor safety from your punishment except by reverting to You, I ask you as a destitute slave would, I plead to You as a humble subservient and call on You as a frightened blind..."¹

In the previous paragraph, Ibn Alqayem compared the break in the heart to the feeling of the guilty runaway slave who confessed to his master. A case of a sinner who repents and reverts to Allah with a humble broken heart that Allah Likes.

Second Quotation: The scene of breaking after doing wrong

Ibn Alqayem depicted a scene of a broken worshiper after committing a sin, so he said: "This person visualizes himself as man living under the wing of his father, enjoying the best life has to offer. His father takes a good care of him, and once he sent him on a mission, but he was captured by an enemy and was taken to his enemy land as a captive. His enemy mistreated him very badly which made him remember his past good life with his father and felt a great pain. His enemy decided to kill him, and while he was waiting for his fate, he turned his sight toward his father's land and saw his father, so he ran toward him throwing himself tearfully and saying: "Look what happened to me", In the meantime, his enemy caught up with him and stood there waiting to recapture him. In this case, would you say that his father would hand him over back to his enemy? Then what would you think about The One who is Most Merciful (Allah) than both his father and mother when his slave reverts back to Him with full regrets and repentance, crying and calling on Him: "O my Lord, have Mercy on one who will have none to help him, he has no shelter and no savior except You, he is Your poor and destitute slave asking, praying and pleading with You for safety and refuge."²

Ibn Alqayem clarified the submission concept with this father-son example and made it easy to relate to.

Third Quotation: Entrust all matters to Allah

Ibn Alqayem said: "He (*The slave*) threw himself before Allah, and yielded everything to Him since Allah Almighty Owns and Governs everything so the slave became worry-free because he

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Madarij As-Salekin*", 1/204

² Ibid, 1/428

turned over all of his needs and hopes to Allah. Allah, in return, bestowed upon him His Bounty, Grace and Benevolence without striving, effort or worrying from the slave since he focused all of the attention on his Lord (Allah). The slave's heart is full of peace and contentment, his lives in serenity and full of elation. However; once he chooses to take matters into his own hands, then Allah Will let go of him and he will end up in misery and worries."¹

Notice how Ibn Alqayem visualized a slave who entrusted all matters to Allah as a slave-master example to clarify the concept.

Fourth Quotation: Observing Favors of Allah and our shortcomings

In clarifying how a servant observes favors of Allah and his own shortcomings, Ibn Alqayem said: "This is a great scene with so many benefits, and secrets of submission lay beyond it, and words may not be sufficient in describing it. This comparison is for approximation: A slave was tied up to be executed by his master. His hands were tightly fastened and he was blindfolded. He lost hope in everything and everyone except for what he knew of his master's traits such as: Grace, Mercy, Benevolence and Generosity, so he started calling on his master with these traits because he saw no one else who could save him except his master so he was waiting and hoping for what his Merciful master would decide. This example is sufficient for anyone who believes and submits to Allah, for He is The Helper and Maintainer with all Powers are His"²

Tracing words of Ibn Alqayem about the slave-master examples was not the intention here, but rather knowing the state of the slave with his master and vice versa will help in understanding submission cases that have no parallel in reality. A believer is called a "*slave*" because the most distinctive trait of a slave is the submission for his master for which a man was created. Submission to a human master is intended for the master even after a slave performed all required duties of him, he is still submissive to his master. Allah is pleased when He Sees the submissive heart of his servant.

The slave-master analogy can be applied to Sharia duties and prohibitions. For instance, in daily prayers you can say:

- If a master said to his slave: I gave you a permission to enter my court five time a day after you wash and be clean. When you come in, I will make my close soldiers salute you and

¹ Ibn Alqayem, "*Al-Fawa'id*", P. 114

² Ibn Alqayem, "*Tariq Al-Hijratin*", 1/359 and beyond.

celebrate your presence.

What will be the feelings of a truthful slave after this permission?

In reading the Quran you can say:

- The master said to his slave: Read my words for it is your pleasant companion and a helper in all of your actions. In it, I have provided an account of people and events from the past, present and future. I have stated information about myself, my names and attributes.

How will the slave be reading this book after what was said about it?

Also, the slave-master analogy can be applied to prohibitions such as arrogance and its harmful consequences, you can say:

- After the master provided everything to ease the life of his slave, the slave decided to wear the clothe of arrogance which is not suitable for him, and he starts objecting to his master instructions and his way of governing his kingdom. How will be the wrath of his master on this slave? In this case, the slave was not a weak slave who happened to make a mistake and regret it, but rather an obstinate slave who had gone too far.

This was the example of a sinning slave and an arrogant slave.



Table of Contents

Introduction	2
An Imperative Question Remains... ..	4
Enriching Questions	5
A Dilemma in Comprehending the Concept of Submission.....	7
Submission is the Religion of Allah	12
Allah Likes to be Worshipped	15
Humans Attributes Suit them for Submission	18
Human Nature (<i>Fitrah</i>) and Submission to Allah	21
The Origin of Submission and its Foundation	23
Even Patterns of Worship Acts Entail Submissiveness to Allah	25
Comprehending Submission Entails Fiqh of Sharia Aims.....	27
The Rationale Behind Shaving the Head in Pilgrimage	28
Attributes of Hearts	29
People Need for Allah is Indispensable.....	31
Why were Physical Worship Acts Ordained?	34
Entrance Gates to Allah	38
Submission to Allah even during Trials and Tribulations.....	41
Do you Grasp the Real Meaning of Submissiveness?	44
One's Soul Serenity is in Direct Proportion to his Submission.....	50
Effect of Understanding Submission on Fiqh of Sins	53
Rebelling against Submission	55
From where do Submissiveness and Humility begin?	63
A Blame on Adopting a Cause is a Flaw in Understanding Submission	69
Either a Submission to other than Allah or a Flawed Submission to Allah	76
Submissiveness with Love.....	78
Does Submission to Allah Entail Inactivity and Isolation	80
The Five Rules of Submission	83
The Example of a Slave with his Master	87
Table of Contents	91