

Appendix A: The Four Fundamental Principles

In the name of Allāh; the Most Merciful; the Bestower of Mercy.

[KEYS TO HAPPINESS] [1]

I ask Allāh, the Most Generous; the Lord of the Great Throne, to make you from His Awliyā' [2] in this world and the Hereafter; that He makes you blessed wherever you are and makes you from those who:

- show **Shukr** (gratitude) [3] when bestowed with a blessing. [4]
- have **Ṣabr** (patience) when afflicted [with a calamity]. [5]
- make **Istighfār** (seek forgiveness) when committing a sin.

Indeed, these three [characteristics] are the keys of happiness.

[AL-HANĪFIYYAH]

Know - may Allāh guide you to His obedience - that al-Ḥanīfiyyah is the religion of Ibrāhīm (alayhi as-salaam): that you worship Allāh alone, making the religion sincerely for Him; as He (the Most High) said:

{I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me} [51:56]

When you have acknowledged that Allāh created you for His worship, then know that worship is not regarded as being worship unless it is accompanied by Tawḥīd, just as the Ṣalāh is not regarded as being a valid prayer unless it is accompanied by purification.

Similarly, if Shirk enters into worship it invalidates it, just like impurity [invalidates] purification when it enters into it.

When you have acknowledged that Shirk entering into worship invalidates it, negates all the actions and necessitates the person in it to eternal Hell-Fire, then you will realise the most important matter obligatory upon you is: to have knowledge regarding this, so that Allāh may save you from the abyss of committing Shirk with Him. Allāh said regarding this:

{Indeed Allāh does not forgive that partners should be set up with him, but He forgives everything else [apart from that] to whom He wills}

[04:116]

This knowledge comprises of four principles which Allāh (the Most High) has mentioned in His Book.

[THE FIRST PRINCIPLE] [6]

You should know that the disbelievers whom the Messenger of Allāh (sal Allāhu alayhi wa salaam) fought, they used to affirm that Allāh (the Most High) is the Creator and the One who controls all the affairs. However, this [mere belief] did not enter them into Islām.

The evidence of this is the saying of the Most High:

{Say (O Muḥammad): who provides for you from the Heavens and the earth? Who controls hearing and sight? Who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living? Who controls the affairs? They will say: Allāh. Say: "Then will you not fear Him?"}

[10:31]

[THE SECOND PRINCIPLE] [7]

The disbelievers say: ‘We do not call upon them (the idols and false gods) and turn towards them except to seek nearness and intercession [to Allāh].’

The evidence [of them claiming to seek] nearness, is His saying:

{Those who take protectors besides Him (say): ‘We only worship them so they may bring us near to Allāh.’ Verily, Allāh will judge between them concerning that wherein they differ. Truly, Allāh guides not him who is a liar, and a disbeliever} [39:03]

The evidence [of them claiming to seek] intercession is the saying of the Most High:

{They worship other than Allāh that which neither hurts them nor benefits them, and they say: "These are our intercessors with Allāh}

[10:18]

[THE TYPES OF INTERCESSION]

Shafā’ah (Intercession) [8] is two types: The prohibited intercession and the [correct] affirmed intercession.

The prohibited intercession is that which is sought from other than Allāh in which only Allāh is able to do. [9]

The evidence is the saying of the Most High:

{O you who believe, spend of that with which We have provided for you, before a Day comes when there will be no bargaining, friendship nor intercession. It is the disbelievers who are the oppressors} [2:254]

The [correct] affirmed intercession is that which is sought from Allāh. The one who intercedes is honoured with the intercession, and the one who is interceded for is he whose deeds and speech are pleasing to Allāh, after He gives Permission.

He (the Most High) said:

{Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His Permission?}
[02:255]

[THE THIRD PRINCIPLE] [10]

The Prophet (sal Allāhu alayhi wa sallam) came to people differing in their worship. From amongst them were people who worshipped the angels, some worshipped the prophets and the righteous people, some worshipped stones and trees whilst others worshipped the sun and the moon.

The Messenger of Allāh (sal Allāhu alayhi wa sallam) fought them all and did not differentiate between them.

The evidence is the saying of the Most High,

{Fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and polytheism) and all the religion is for Allāh (Alone)} [02:193]

The evidence [that they worshipped] the sun and the moon is the saying of the Most High:

{And from among His signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate to the sun or the moon} [41:37]

The evidence [that they worshipped] the angels is the saying of the Most High:

{Nor did He order you to take the angels and Prophets as lords} [03:80]

The evidence [that they worshipped] the Prophets is the saying of the Most High:

{When Allāh will say, ‘O ‘Īsā ibn Maryam, did you say to the people, ‘Worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allāh’.’ He will say, ‘May You be Glorified! It was not for me to say what I had no right (to do so). Had I said such a thing You would have surely known it. You know what is in myself and I do not know what is in Yours. Truly You are the All-Knower of all that is hidden} [05:116]

The evidence [that they worshipped] the righteous people is the saying of the Most High:

{Those whom they call upon desire (for themselves) means of access to their Lord (Allāh), as to which of them should be the nearest, they hope for His Mercy and fear His Torment} [17:57]

The evidence [that they worshipped] the stones and trees is the saying of the Most High:

{Have you considered al-Lāt and al-‘Uzzah and Manāt, the other third?} [53:19]

Also, the Ḥadīth of Abū Wāqid al-Laythī (may Allāh be pleased with him) who said: ‘We departed with the Prophet (sal Allāhu alayhi wa sallam) to Ḥunayn and we had recently left disbelief. The Mushrikūn (polytheists) used to have a lote-tree which they would take as a place of devotion and hang their weapons upon; it had been named: ‘Dhāt Anwāt’.

We passed by a lote-tree and said, “O Messenger of Allāh, appoint for us a Dhaat Anwaat like they have a Dhāt Anwāt...”

[THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE] [11]

The Mushrikūn (polytheists) of our time are worse in their Shirk than the Mushrikūn (polytheists) who came before. This is because those who came before, committed Shirk during times of ease whilst directing their worship sincerely to Allāh during times of difficulty and hardship.

However, the Shirk of the Mushrikūn (polytheists) of our time is constant, - during times of both ease and difficulty. The evidence is the saying of the Most High:

{When they embark on a ship they invoke Allāh making their faith pure for Him only, but when He brings them safely to land, behold, they give a share of their worship to others} [29:65]

May the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and his family and all his companions.

Important Notes on the Text

About this treatise

The Four Fundamental Principles (al-Qawā'id al-Arba') is a treatise authored by Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb as a summary of the author's more detailed book: Kashf ash-Shubahāt (A removal of the doubts), the author wrote these four principles in order to refute the common doubts of the people of Shirk.

[1] *Keys to happiness*

The author named the following three matters as being the keys to happiness, this is because a person's life revolves around them:

Gratitude (Shukr):

{But few of My slaves are grateful} [34:13]

Patience (Ṣabr):

{O you who believe! Seek help in patience and as-Ṣalāh} [02:153]

Seeking Forgiveness (Istighfār):

{It is He Who accepts repentance from His servants and pardons evil acts and knows what they do} [42:25]

[2] *"I ask Allāh, the Most Generous; the Lord of the Great Throne, to make you from His Awliyā"*

Who are the Awliyā' of Allāh?

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said: A Walī is a person who has Īmān and Taqwā. The evidence is:

{Indeed the Awliyā' of Allāh, no fear shall come to them, nor shall they grieve. They are those who believed, and maintained Taqwā} [10:62]

[3] *“To show Shukr (gratitude)...”*

We show Shukr (gratitude) to Allāh in three ways:

1. **Heart:** Appreciating the blessing and referring it back to Allāh alone
2. **Tongue:** by mentioning and praising Allāh upon the blessing:
{This is from the virtue of my Lord} [27:40]
{As for the blessings of your Lord, make a mention of them} [93:11]
3. **Limbs:** A person should use this blessing in a manner which pleases Allāh. This is according to the type of blessing. So the blessing of wealth should be used in aiding Islām and giving in charity. The blessing of knowledge is to teach this knowledge to others.

Before a person is blessed with something, his heart your be attached to his Creator and Provider.

[4] *“When bestowed with a blessing...”*

Blessings are not always a reward, sometimes a good blessing can also be an affliction and a test:

{We test you with evil and with good as trial} [21:35]

[5] *“You are patient when afflicted [with a calamity]...”*

The types of people in relation to afflictions and calamities

1. **Despondant and complaining:** This is Haraam (impermissible), a person can be despondant in his heart, with his tongue or in his actions.
2. **Patient:** This is an obligation when afflicted by any calamity.
3. **Pleased:** This is recommended, and a level higher than patience.
4. **Gratitude:** This is the highest level a person may achieve.

[6] *The First Principle*

Summary: The disbelievers at the time of the Prophet (sal Allāhu alayhi wa sallam) used to accept Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah. He called them and fought them, this is because they did not accept Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah.

[7] *The Second Principle*

Summary: The disbelievers at the time of the Prophet (sal Allāhu alayhi wa sallam) did not worship the idols, because they knew they cannot benefit nor harm, rather they used to worship them in order for the idols to bring them closer to Allāh and as a form of intercession.

[8] “*Shafā’ah (Intercession) is two types...*”

*Refer to the types of Shafā’ah on the next page.

Linguistic definition: To make one into two, an even number.

Islamic Shari‘ definition: Seeking intercession on behalf of another person in order to bring about some benefit or repel some harm.

[9] “*The prohibited intercession is that which is sought from other than Allāh in which only Allāh is able to do...*”

The ruling of seeking aid and intercession from people:

The base ruling is that help, aid and intercession is only asked from Allāh.

However, in worldly related matters, it is also permissible to ask from people.

The Prophet (sal Allāhu alayhi wa sallam) used to help, and seek the help of his companions.

Intercession (Shifa’a) is permitted with four conditions:

1. **Alive:** The person whose help and intercession is sought is alive, and not from the deceased.
2. **Ability:** The person must have the ability to help and intercede, his help should not be from matters that only Allāh has control over e.g. asking for paradise or forgiveness of sins etc.
3. **Present:** He should be present, and be able to be communicated to.
4. **Belief:** The person seeking the help and intercession should believe that the person whose help is sought is only a cause placed by Allāh, not that he himself controls the matter.

[10] *The Third Principle*

Summary: The Prophet (sal Allāhu alayhi wa sallam) came to a nation of people who worshipped different objects and deities, and he did not treat them differently.

[11] *The Fourth Principle*

Summary: The Mushrikūn of our time are more severe in the Shirk than the Mushrikūn of the earlier time.

Types of Intercession (Shafā'ah)

Negated & not permitted

It is intercession that is sought from other than Allāh.
It is requested in a matter that only Allāh can do
It has been negated by Quran
Its Ruling: Major Shirk

Correct & Affirmed in the Sharee'ah

Which is sought from Allah. Its Conditions are:

1. Allaah permits the intercession
2. He is pleased with the person interceding
3. and pleased with the person being interceded for.

{And how many angels there are in the heavens whose intercession will not avail at all except [only] after Allāh has permitted [it] to whom He wills and approves} [53:26]

Specific for the Prophet (sal Allaahu alayhi wa sallam)

The Great Intercession
Intercession for his uncle Abū Ṭālib, that his punishment is lessened
Intercession for the opening of the doors of Paradise

General from the Prophets, angels, righteous people and children

Intercession for the people of Tawḥīd, that their ranks is raised in Paradise
Intercession for the people of Tawḥīd not to enter into the Fire
Intercession for the people of Tawḥīd that have entered the Fire to be removed from it

Self-Test Questions

This exam is to test what you have understood from the study of The Four Fundamental Principles. The Prophet (sal Allāhu alayhi wa sallam) said, *“whoever cheats us, is not from us.”*

Mention the evidence from the Quran or Sunnah:

1. A good blessing can be a test.
2. The disbelievers used to affirm Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah.
3. The Mushrikūn used to worship idols seeking closeness to Allāh.
4. The negated type of intercession.
5. The Mushrikūn used to worship the sun and moon.
6. The Mushrikūn used to worship the angels.
7. The Mushrikūn used to worship the Prophets.
8. The Mushrikūn used to worship the righteous people.
9. Shirk is not permitted.
10. The Mushrikūn used to be sincere in times of difficulty and perform acts of Shirk in times of ease.

Introductions:

1. Why do we study and teach Tawḥīd?
2. Why do we study the Four Fundamental Principles?
3. What are the three sections of this treatise?
4. Mention the Four Fundamental Principles are a summary of which book?
5. Why do we not start by studying the book: Kashf ash-Subahāt?
6. What are the keys to happiness?
7. What is the definition of al-Ḥanīfiyyah?
8. How did Ibn Taymiyyah define the Awliyā’?
9. How do we show gratitude for a blessing?
10. Mention the four types of reactions to a calamity and their rulings.

Intercession (ash-Shafā‘ah):

1. Define ‘Shafā‘ah’ linguistically?
2. Define ‘Shafā‘ah’ according to the Shariah.
3. What are the two main types of ‘Shafā‘ah’?

4. What are the two types of Affirmed Intercession? Give examples for each type.

Summarise:

1. The first principle.
2. The second principle.
3. The third principle.
4. The fourth principle.
5. What is the ruling of Shirk becoming mixed with an action and what is the evidence?