

Introduction To The Majestic Names of Allah

Table of Contents

A. How Many Names Allah Has?	1
B. The Two Kinds of Allah's Names	2
C. What is Shirk?	4
D. Worshiping Middle Gods and Their Implications:.....	5
E. Power of Divine Names in Seeking Specific Needs.....	7

This chapter explores the fundamental concepts of Allah's Names, Tawhid (monotheism), and Shirk (associating partners with Allah), shedding light on their significance and implications within Islamic theology.

A. How Many Names Allah Has?

In reality Allah has infinite number of Names, but the ones we are required to understand to go to Jannah are ninety-nine that are relevant to our existence and relationship with our creator. Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "Allah has ninety-nine Names, one-hundred less one; and the one who memorized them all by heart will enter Paradise.¹". Allah has ninety-nine names that describe His attributes. These names are not just words, but they reflect the essence and the qualities of Allah. They also show us how we should worship Him, love Him, trust Him, and obey Him. The benefit of this hadith is that whoever knows these names by heart, meaning that he memorizes them, understands their meanings, and acts according to their implications, will enter Paradise. This is because knowing the names of Allah increases one's faith, love, and reverence for Him. It also helps one to invoke Him with His beautiful names and ask Him for His favors and mercy. It also protects one from committing sins or associating partners with Him.

¹ The hadith is recorded in Sahih Al-Bukhari, which is one of the most authentic collections of hadiths in Islam. The hadith number is 7392, and it is in the book of Oneness, Uniqueness of Allah (Tawheed), chapter 12.

Allah has so many Names to cover all aspects of greatness and beauty. Allah's Names overlap but each one is unique in its own way. Names of containment come in pairs to express His infinite nature, such as Al-Awal and Al-Akhir. They come with Waw (and) in between. His Names are not limited to ninety-nine. The following Hadeeth shows that Allah has unlimited number of Names. The Prophet ﷺ used to make Dua'a (supplication) "O Allah, I ask You by every name belonging to You which You have named Yourself with, or revealed in Your Book, or You taught to any of Your creation, or You have preserved in the knowledge of the unseen with You, that You make the Quran the life of my heart and the light of my breast, and a departure for my sorrow and a release for my anxiety."²

B. The Two Kinds of Allah's Names

Allah's majestic Names can be categorized into two types: Names of Beauty and Names of Greatness. Allah wants believers to embody His Names of Beauty in their lives. Conversely, they should avoid behaviors and attitudes contrary to the Names of Greatness, aligning with Allah's attributes and qualities.

1. Names of Beauty:

Names of Beauty cover all aspects of beauty in our existence and he wants us to imitate them in our lives. He is the most kind and he wants us to be kind. He is the most generous and he wants us to be generous with one another. He is the most forgiving and he wants us to forgive one another. The most gracious, The most patient, The most provider, The most reliever, The most companionate, The most gentle, The most responsive, The most guide, The most just, The most director to the right way, the most Wise, the most loving, the Supreme protector...so forth.

2. Names of Greatness.

On the other hand, Allah wants us to practice His Names of Greatness by adopting their opposite in our life. In other words, act as if we are opposite to the Names of Greatness. He is [The Most High](#) we act as the most low to him, He is [The Most Large](#) and we act as the most small to him, He is [The Most Knowledgeable](#) and we act as the most little of knowledge compared to him, He is [The](#)

² Hadith narrated by Anas ibn Malik in Riyadh as-Salihin (The Gardens of the Righteous), Book 16, Hadith 2.

Supreme and we act as the most insignificant to him, he is [The Most Rich](#) and we act as the most needy to him, he is [The Infinite](#) and we act as the most limited, he is [The Supreme Witness](#) and we act fearful that he is watching us all the time, He is [The Most Observing](#) and we act as limited observers, He is [The Everlasting](#) and we act as the most temporary compared to him, He is [The Supreme Truth](#) and we act admitting that the truth of our existence is partial and dependent on his truth of existence, He is [The Lord of Resurrection](#) and we act fearful of the day of resurrection, He is [The Most Strong](#) and we act as the most weak to him, The Most Praise worthy and we he gets the full credit of every praise we get, [The Life Giver](#) and we are the product of his ability to give life and we are thankful to his favor of giving us life, He is [The Indivisible Unit](#) and we are made of a pair of body and soul, He is [The Flawless](#) and we are full of flaws, He is [The Most Secure](#) and we are the most needy to his security, He is [The Supreme Source of Security](#) and the security provided by all other earthly powers is limited and incomprehensive, He is [The First](#) before the beginning of time with no start and [The Last](#) after the end of time with no end and we are limited between birth and death, He is [The Most Exalted](#) and we act as the most low ranking to him, He is [The Lord of Sovereignty](#) and we are the governed, He is [The Master of Majesty and Honor](#) and we deserve no Majesty or Honor, He is [The King](#) and we are his slaves, He is [The Most Immune](#) and our immunity is limited and dependent on his immunity... so forth.

3. Names of Greatness Belong only to Allah.

Only Allah deserves the names of greatness, and we should not use them for anyone else. These names are exclusive to Allah and reflect His majesty and perfection. Some examples of these names are "Al-Jabbar," which means The Most Compeller, and "Al-Kareem," which means The Most Generous. We can recognize the names of greatness by the definite article "Al-" that precedes them. We should not use these names for anyone other than Allah, as this would be a form of disrespect and minor shirk (associating partners with Allah).

However, there are ways to make these names legal for human use, by modifying them slightly. One way is to remove the definite article "Al-" from the name, such as "Jabbar" or "Kareem". This makes the name general and not specific to Allah. Another way is to add the word "Abd" for males or "Amat" for females before the name, which means the slave or servant of. For example, "Abd Al-

Jabbar" or "Amat Al-Kareem". This shows that the person is a humble servant of Allah and not equal to Him.

There are also some names that are illegal because they imply servitude or worship to someone or something other than Allah. For example, "Abd Al-Nabi" means the slave of the Prophet ﷺ, which is prohibited because we should only be slaves of Allah. To make this name legal, we can add the word "Rub" after "Abd", which means the Lord of. For example, "Abd Rub Al-Nabi" means the slave of the Lord of the Prophet ﷺ, which is Allah. This shows that we respect and love the Prophet ﷺ, but we only worship and serve Allah. The phrase "Abd" cannot be used with other than Allah. For example, "Al-Sa'eed" (the happy) is not one of the names of Allah. So, "Abd Al-Sa'eed" would be an illegal name.

Swearing should also be done only in the Name of Allah. Swearing on something or someone other than Allah constitutes a form of minor Shirk. Allah has the right to swear by himself or by any of his creation but we are not allowed to swear by other than Allah.

C. What is Shirk?

Shirk is a term that means to associate others with Allah or to believe that someone or something else can do what only Allah can do or share the names of greatness with Him. It is the most serious sin in Islam, and the only one that Allah will not forgive without repentance. All other sins might be forgiven without repentance but not Shirk. One has to repent from Shirk to avoid eternal life in hell. Shirk is the opposite of Tawheed, which is the belief in the Oneness of Allah. Shirk can take many forms, such as:

- Worshipping idols, statues, stars, angels, saints, or prophets instead of or along with Allah.
- Asking for help, guidance, or protection from anyone or anything other than Allah. Note that there are things that you can't ask other than Allah for, such as rain for example.
- Believing that objects have special powers or good luck, such as charms, amulets, horoscopes, etc.
- Giving some or all of the names or attributes of Allah to someone or something else, such as calling someone "The Creator" or "The Merciful".

- Obeying or following someone or something more than Allah, such as laws, customs, traditions, desires, etc. It includes also following one's temptations and inclinations.

Shirk is a grave mistake and a major injustice that a person can do to Allah. It is to deny His Oneness and His rights. It is to worship someone or something else besides Him or along with Him. Shirk can lead a person to the anger and punishment of Allah in this world and the next. Shirk can also deprive a person of the true worship and love of Allah, which is the source of happiness and success in this life and the next.

D. Worshipping Middle Gods and Their Implications:

One of the worst forms of Shirk is to believe in and worship Middle Gods. These are false gods that some people think can act as intermediaries between them and Allah. They think that Allah is too far or too high to hear or care about them, or even be aware of their presence. So, they need someone or something else to convey their prayers or requests to Him. They think of middle gods as small enough to listen to them and large enough to get the attention of Allah. This is a wrong and ignorant belief, because Allah is closer to us than our jugular vein [Quran 50:16] and He responds to those who call upon Him [Quran 40:60]. He does not need any intermediaries, and He does not share His power, knowledge, will, or mercy with anyone or anything.

Worshipping Middle Gods is not only a great sin, but also a great harm. It harms the worshipper by depriving him of the true worship and love of Allah, which is the source of happiness and success in this world and the next. It also harms the worshipper by exposing him to the exploitation and manipulation of the custodians or priests of the Middle Gods. These are the people who claim to have a special connection or relationship with the Middle Gods. They claim to know what the Middle Gods want or need. They claim to be able to communicate with the Middle Gods or intercede for the people with them. They use these claims to exploit the people and make them do whatever they want. For example, they may ask the people to give money, food, animals, or even their own children as offerings or sacrifices to the Middle Gods. They may tell the people to do certain rituals or practices that are harmful or useless. They may forbid the people from doing certain things that are good or beneficial. They may mislead the people from the truth and prevent them from following the message of Allah and His messengers.

Worshipping Middle Gods also angers Allah and invites His punishment in this world and the next. Allah does not forgive Shirk unless one repents from it before he dies [Quran 4:48]. He will punish those who commit Shirk with a severe punishment in Hellfire, where they will abide forever [Quran 5:72]. One example of this punishment is what happened to Amru ibn Luhai, who was the first person to introduce idols as Middle Gods in Arabia and in the Ka'ba (the sacred house of Allah). He was cursed by Allah for his crime and was condemned to walk around Hellfire while dragging his entrails behind him [Bukhari 3879³].

Therefore, worshipping Middle Gods is a grave mistake and a major injustice that a person can do to Allah and himself. It is to deny His Oneness and His rights. It is to worship someone or something else besides Him or along with Him. It is to lose His love and mercy and gain His anger and wrath.

Allah said in Surat (Al-An'am, 6:136), the following: "And they assign to Allah from that which He created of crops and livestock a share and say, 'This is for Allah,' by their claim, 'and this is for our partners [associated with Him].' But what is for their 'partners' does not reach Allah, while what is for Allah - this reaches their 'partners' Evil is that which they rule". This Ayah explains the foolishness and injustice of the polytheists who used to divide their crops and livestock into two parts: one for Allah and one for their idols. They claimed that they were giving a share to Allah out of gratitude and devotion, but in reality, they were not sincere or consistent in their worship. They would sometimes give the share of Allah to their idols, or they would give the inferior or defective part to Allah and keep the best part for themselves or their idols. They would also make excuses and exceptions for their idols, such as saying that they could eat from the share of Allah, but Allah could not eat from the share of their idols. They would also say that if they were in need or in danger, they could take from the share of Allah, but they could not take from the share of their idols.

This Ayah shows how the polytheists were wrong and misguided in their beliefs and actions. They were wrong because they associated partners with Allah, who is the only Creator and Provider of everything. They had no right to give a share of His creation to anyone or anything else besides Him.

³ Bukhari Hadeeth Number 3879, Book Number 64 (Al-Maghaazi), Section Number 8.
Introduction To The Majestic Names of Allah

They were also wrong because they preferred their idols over Allah, who is the only One worthy of worship and obedience. They gave more respect and honor to their idols than to Allah, who is the only One who can help them and protect them.

This Ayah also shows how the polytheists were harming themselves and not benefiting anyone by their Shirk. They were harming themselves because they were disobeying Allah and earning His anger and punishment. They were also depriving themselves of His blessings and mercy. They were not benefiting anyone by their Shirk because whatever they gave to their idols did not reach Allah, nor did it benefit their idols. Their idols were nothing but lifeless objects that could not hear, see, or do anything. They could not appreciate or reward their worshippers, nor could they harm or protect them. Therefore, this Ayah teaches us about the importance of Tawheed (the Oneness of Allah) and the evil of Shirk. It teaches us that we should worship Allah alone and not associate any partners with Him in His Lordship, Worship, or Names and Attributes. It teaches us that we should give Allah His due rights and respect His limits. It teaches us that we should be grateful and sincere to Allah for all that He has given us and not share it with anyone or anything else besides Him. It teaches us that we should trust and rely on Allah alone and not seek help or protection from anyone or anything else besides Him.

E. Power of Divine Names in Seeking Specific Needs

In various cultures and belief systems, names hold significant importance, often reflecting the attributes, qualities, and characteristics associated with the entities they represent. In Islamic tradition, the majestic names of Allah, or the Asma-ul-Husna, are particularly revered and are believed to encompass the divine attributes and qualities of Allah. These names are not only recited in reverence and worship but are also invoked to seek specific needs and desires. The invocation of specific divine names is a powerful practice in Islamic tradition, allowing believers to seek various blessings and fulfill their needs. Whether it's seeking an increase in provision, mercy, healing, forgiveness, or even revenge, the names of Allah are believed to hold the key to divine intervention and assistance. These names are a source of solace and hope, providing believers with a sense of connection to the divine in their pursuit of life's many challenges and aspirations.

1. **Seeking an Increase in Provision:** When individuals seek an increase in their sustenance and livelihood, they may invoke divine names associated with abundance and sustenance. Al-Raziq and Al-Razaq, both meaning "The Provider" and "The Sustainer," are names that embody the idea of seeking a higher income or provision. Believers turn to these names, trusting that their sustenance will increase under the divine guidance. Example: A person facing financial difficulties may recite the names Al-Raziq and Al-Razaq in prayer to seek a raise or better job opportunities.
2. **Seeking Mercy:** The desire for mercy is a universal human longing, and in Islamic tradition, Allah's names associated with mercy are invoked for this purpose. Al-Rahman (The Most Gracious) and Al-Rahim (The Most Merciful) convey the idea of boundless compassion and benevolence. Believers turn to these names when seeking mercy, both from the divine and from others. Example: A person facing a difficult situation may recite the names Al-Rahman and Al-Rahim, asking for Allah's mercy to alleviate their suffering.
3. **Healing from Diseases or Grudges:** For healing from physical ailments or the release of emotional burdens such as grudges, believers may invoke divine names associated with healing and well-being. Al-Shafi (The Healer) and Al-3Afi (The Giver of Health) are names believed to hold the power to bring about physical and emotional healing. Example: Someone suffering from a chronic illness may recite the names Al-Shafi and Al-3Afi during their prayers, seeking divine intervention for recovery.
4. **Seeking Forgiveness and Repentance:** When seeking forgiveness and repentance for sins and transgressions, specific names of Allah are recited. Names like Al-Ghafar (The Forgiving), Al-Ghafoor (The Most Forgiving), and Al-Afuw (The Pardoner) are invoked to implore divine forgiveness. Example: A person burdened by guilt may recite these names during supplication, expressing their desire for Allah's forgiveness and a clean slate.
5. **Praying for Revenge from a Tyrant or Criminal:** While the concept of revenge may not align with the broader principles of forgiveness and compassion, in certain situations, individuals may invoke divine names associated with divine justice. Names like Al-Muntaqim (The Avenger), Al-Jabbar (The Compeller), and Al-Aziz Thu Intiqam (The Mighty in Revenge) may be invoked to seek justice and retribution against a tyrant or criminal. Example: Someone who has suffered unjustly

may recite these names in their prayers, asking for divine intervention and retribution against those who have wronged them.

6. **Seeking knowledge, wisdom, or guidance from Allah:** you can use the names of Allah that relate to His knowledge and wisdom, such as Al-Aleem (The All-Knowing), Al-Hakeem (The All-Wise), Al-Hadi (The Guide), etc. For example, you can say: "O Al-Aleem, teach me what I do not know. O Al-Hakeem, grant me wisdom and insight. O Al-Hadi, guide me to the straight path."
7. **Seeking protection, security, or peace from Allah:** You can use the names of Allah that relate to His protection and peace, such as Al-Muhaymin (The Protector), Al-Mu'min (The Giver of Security), As-Salam (The Source of Peace), etc. For example, you can say: "O Al-Muhaymin, protect me from all harm and evil. O Al-Mu'min, grant me security and tranquility. O As-Salam, fill my heart with peace and calmness."
8. **Seeking help, support, or assistance from Allah:** You can use the names of Allah that relate to His help and support, such as Al-Nasir (The Helper), Al-Wali (The Guardian), Al-Wakeel (The Trustee), etc. For example, you can say: "O Al-Nasir, help me in my difficulties and challenges. O Al-Wali, guard me from my enemies and foes. O Al-Wakeel, take care of my affairs and needs."
9. **Seeking honor, dignity, or respect from Allah:** You can use the names of Allah that relate to His honor and dignity, such as Al-Majid (The Glorious), Al-Karim (The Noble), Al-Mu'izz (The Giver of Honor), etc. For example, you can say: "O Al-Majid, make me among Your glorious servants. O Al-Karim, bestow upon me Your noble favors. O Al-Mu'izz, honor me with Your praise and approval."
10. **Seeking love, friendship, or companionship from Allah:** You can use the names of Allah that relate to His love and friendship, such as Al-Wadud (The Loving), Al-Rauf (The Kind), Al-Khaliq (The Creator), etc. For example, you can say: "O Al-Wadud, love me and make me love You. O Al-Rauf, be kind to me and make me kind to others. O Al-Khaliq, create for me good friends and companions."