

# Allah is my Lord

انجليزي

The importance of the  
knowledge of Allah's  
Names and Attributes 1

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# Know Allah by knowing His Names and Attributes

**Know Allah (mighty and majestic is He)**

**Become acquainted with Allah by knowing His Names and Attributes:**

Allah the Exalted says: {To Allah belong the Most Beautiful Names, so invoke Him by them; and leave (the company of) those who practice deviation concerning His Names. They will be recompensed for what they have been doing} [Al-A'raf: 180].

## **A. The meaning of "To Allah belong the Most Beautiful Names":**

All the Names and Attributes of Allah are praiseworthy. Allah describes them all as husna (the most beautiful). Allah says: {To Allah belong the Most Beautiful Names, so invoke Him by them; and leave (the company of) those who practice deviation concerning His Names. They will be recompensed for what they have been doing} [Al-A'raf: 180].

"To Allah belong the Most Beautiful Names, so invoke Him by them; and leave (the company of) those who practice deviation concerning His Names. They will be recompensed for what they have been doing" [Al-A'raf: 180].

They are not the Most Beautiful Names just because of the words themselves, but because they indicate His most Perfect Attributes. All Allah's Names are praiseworthy, laudable, meritable and deserve to be glorified, and that is the reason why they are the Most Beautiful Names. His Attributes are the Most Perfect, all His Descriptions are the Most Glorified, and all His Actions are carried out in complete wisdom, mercy, and justice.



A part of Iman is to believe in the Names and Attributes of Allah (mighty and majestic is He) as they are mentioned in His Book and in the authenticated Sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him), and Iman in His Names and Attributes is dependent on two principles:

**The First Principle:**

Affirming Allah's Names and Attributes in a manner appropriate to his glory without tahreef (changing/distorting any of them to other than their true meaning), ta'teel (denying some or all of them), takeef (questioning "how" Allah's Name or Attribute is performed, i.e. how He descends to the lower heavens, etc.), tamtheel (to claim there is a resemblance between Allah's Names and Attributes and those of His creation). Allah says: {There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing} [Ash-Shûra: 11].

**The Second Principle:**

To understand their meanings and to affirm the attributes which the Names stand for without trying to know how these attributes are actually carried out. Allah says: {Allah knows what is (presently) before them and what will be after them, but they do not encompass it in knowledge} (Tâ-Hâ: 110).

Allah (peace be upon him) explained the reason He informed His slaves of His Supreme Names and Attributes, and this is to worship Him by using them. Allah the Exalted says: {Say, 'Call upon Allah or call upon the Most Merciful. Whichever (name) you call - to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names' } [Al-Isrâ': 110].

Allah (mighty and majestic is He) says: {To Allah belong the Most Beautiful Names, so invoke Him by them; and leave (the company of) those who practice deviation concerning His names. They will be recompensed for what they have been doing} [Al-A'raf: 180]

**B. The meaning of "so call on Him by them":**

This includes supplicating Allah (invoking Allah) using His Most Beautiful Names and Attributes, and this incorporates both kinds of supplications: supplication of need, such as when the slave says: "O Merciful Allah, have mercy on me! O Beneficent Lord, grant me due to your beneficence!" The other kind of supplication is that of praise and worship in which a person glorifies Allah using His Most Beautiful Names and Attributes without actually asking for anything. This praise could be carried out with the heart or the tongue.

**C. The meaning of "Leave (the company of) those who practice deviation concerning His names":**

It refers to those who belie or deny (or utter impious speech against) Allah's (mighty and majestic is He) Names. This is to deny or belie any of His Names which are mentioned in His Book, or to liken His Attributes to any attributes of His creation, or to give Him a name or an attribute that does not befit His Majesty - those that have no evidence from the Words of Allah or the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him).



## The importance of having knowledge of Allah's Names and Attributes:

The importance of knowing the Most Beautiful Names, Attributes and the Supremacy of Allah is outlined in the following points:

### First Point:

The most honourable and dignified knowledge to possess is that which is related to Allah, and His Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes. The extent to which a slave knows Allah's Names and Attributes determine the extent of his slavery to Allah, his love for Him, and the pleasure that he finds in Allah's company. This knowledge is the reason why this slave seeks his Lord's pleasure, His Jannah and the bliss of beholding His Face in the Hereafter. But this desire will only be realized by the grace of Allah (mighty and majestic is He).

### Second Point:

The knowledge of Allah's Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes is the root of all other branches of knowledge and the root of Iman too. The basic ideas of this knowledge is also the first obligatory act the people have to fulfill, as if the people know their Lord, they will be able to worship Him properly. Allah the Exalted says: {So know (O Muhammad)} that there is no deity except Allah} [Muhammad: 19].

The honour of any branch of knowledge is derived from the subject of this knowledge, and there is nothing more honourable than the knowledge of Allah and His Most Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes.

Knowledge of Allah and His Most Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes is beneficial for the heart and perfects one's Iman.

### Third Point:

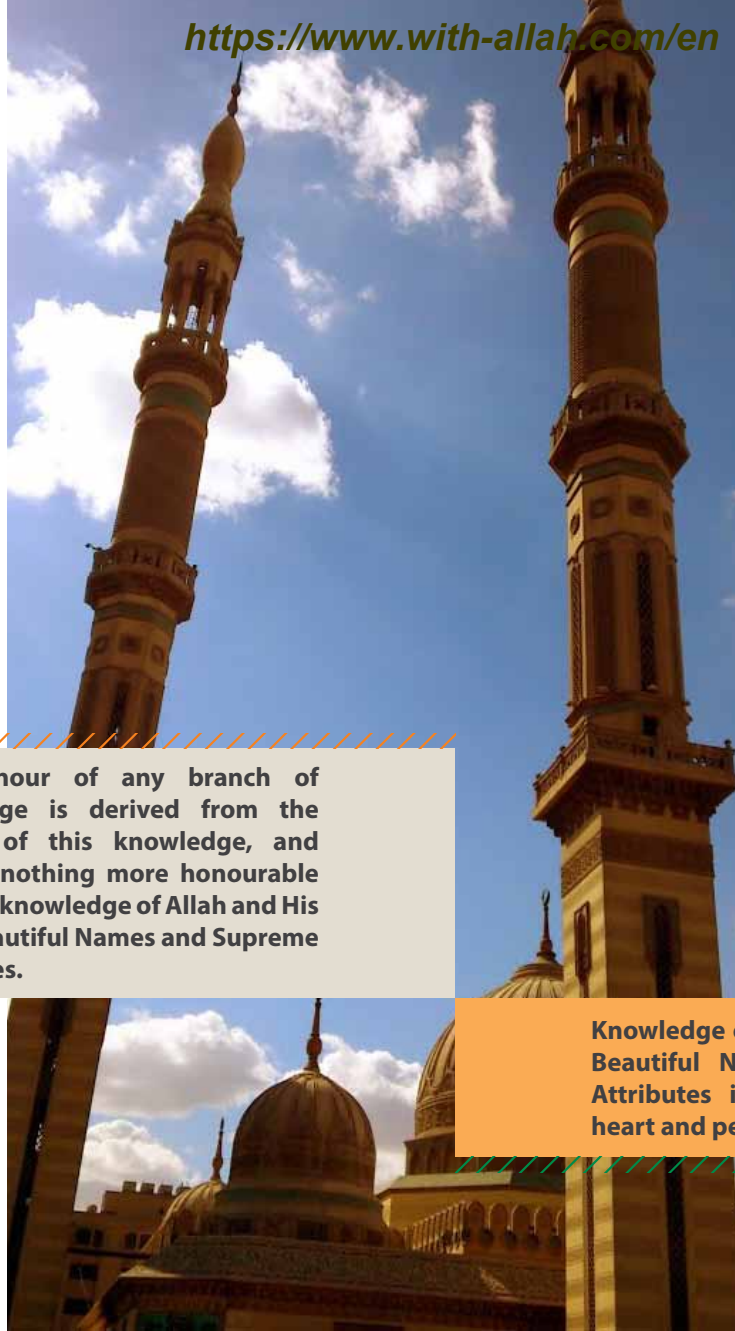
By gaining knowledge of Allah and His Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes, one's Iman and certitude increases, one also truly realizes Tawheed, and relishes the taste of slavery to Allah. This is the spirit of Iman and its basis and purpose. The best way to achieve this is to contemplate over Allah's Attributes and Names that are mentioned in the Qur'an. When Allah, may His Praise be exalted and His Names Sanctified, wants to honour His slave by making him know His Lord and completely filling his heart with love only of Him, He expands his breast to accept the meaning of His Supreme Attributes and to learn them from the divine revelation. As when the slave comes across any of Allah's Name or Attribute, he accepts their meaning, is pleased to know them, surrenders to them, and acts upon them, thus enlightening his heart with guidance.

A Mu'men's heart opens to such knowledge and this knowledge fills his heart with pleasure and love, making his soul feel joyful and satisfied, strengthening it with knowledge of Allah and making it feel comforted, and his heart is also put at ease. He roams in the branches of that knowledge and the eyes of his insight wanders in enjoyment in its gardens and orchards. He is certain that the honour of the knowledge depends on the subject of that knowledge, and that there is nothing greater than Allah, who encompasses those Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes. Moreover, it is honourable due

to the need for that knowledge, and the souls do not need anything more than they need to have knowledge of their Maker and Creator, and feel His love, be busy with His remembrance, rejoice in Him, request to know

the path to Him, and be near to Him. And the only way to achieve this is by knowing His Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes, for the more the slave has knowledge of them, the more he knows Allah and seeks His Face, and the closer he is to Him. However, the more ignorant a person is of those names

and attributes, the more ignorant he is of Allah, the less he knows Him and the further he is from Him. And as much as the slave is near to or far from Allah, Allah will be near or far from him.



**Fourth Point:**

He who is truly knowledgeable of Allah (mighty and majestic is He) draws on his knowledge of Allah's Most Beautiful Names and Attributes in order to be aware of Allah's laws that He has legislated, for He only acts according to His Names and Attributes and His actions are characterized by justice, beneficence and wisdom. Allah does not legislate any law except according to His praiseworthy characteristics, which include His justice, beneficence and wisdom. His Words are all truth and His commands and prohibitions are marked by justice, wisdom and mercy. It is not necessary to explain the importance of this knowledge as everyone knows how great and important it is.

**Fifth Point:**

There is a close relationship between Allah's Exalted Attributes and what is required of outward and inward acts of worship. Every attribute has a specific form of servitude connected to it. These are the results of this attribute and the results of possessing knowledge and correctly understanding the attribute. And this is the case for all forms of worship that are manifested in the heart and in one's actions. The knowledge of the servant that Allah alone is able to harm and benefit, grant and withhold, create, sustain, and give life and cause death, will produce the worship of tawakkul (depending on Allah) inside

the person (i.e. in the heart) and also the effects and fruits of tawakkul in its apparent form (i.e. in one's actions). If the slave realizes that Allah hears, sees and knows, and the fact that not a single atom in the heavens and earth escapes Him, that He knows the secret and the hidden, as well as what the treacherous eyes behold and what the breasts conceal, this will make him save his tongue, limbs, and the thoughts in his heart from anything which displeases Allah, and he will also make these limbs devoted to what Allah loves and is pleased with; bearing the fruit of inward shyness which will- in turn- lead the slave to avoid prohibited actions and doing wrong. If the slave knows that Allah is Rich, Generous, Kind, Merciful and Enormously Benevolent, this will make him have great hope in Allah, and this hope will give birth to many types of hidden and apparent servitude. Likewise, if he is aware of the Perfection and Beauty of Allah, this will make him love Him and have a great longing to meet Him; this will also produce several clear forms of servitude. All these inward feelings in turn give birth to outward forms of worship. In light of this, one sees that all forms of servitude to Him spring from knowledge of His Names and Attributes.

**Sixth Point:**

Performing worship to Allah by using His Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes has good effects

on the soundness of the hearts and of the manners and behaviour. Not performing such a form of worship, on the other hand, leads to being infected with diseases of the heart.

**Seventh Point:**

Knowledge of the Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes of Allah grants the Mu'min comfort when calamities, abominations and adversities befall him. If the slave is aware that his Lord is All-Knowing, Wise and Just, then that slave will feel contented and will exhibit patience. If he is aware that the abominations to which he is being exposed and the tribulations that are befalling him are beneficial to him in ways that he cannot grasp, and that they are the result of the knowledge and wisdom of Allah (mighty and majestic is He), the slave of Allah will become at peace with His Lord and leave all his affairs to Him.

**Eighth Point:**

Understanding the meaning of Allah's Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes causes a person to have the proper fear of Allah, love for Him, hope in His Mercy, reliance and dependence upon Him as well as other fruits that result from knowing His Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes.

**Ninth Point:**

Contemplation of the meanings of Allah's Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes helps the person, more than anything else, to contemplate Allah's Book, the Qur'an. Allah commanded us to contemplate over the Qur'an in the following ayah: *{(This is) a blessed Book which We have revealed to you (O Muhammad) that they might reflect upon its verses, and that those of understanding would be reminded}* [Sâd: 29].

Since the Qur'an mentions Allah's Supreme Attributes very frequently – the attribute that is stated being consistent with the meaning of the verse that contains it – it follows then that in reflecting upon them, there is a great opportunity to ponder over the Qur'an itself. When you reflect on the Qur'an, you become aware of an Everlasting King taking care of everything while on His mighty Throne which is above the heavens, managing each and every affair of all of His subjects, commanding and prohibiting, sending messengers and revealing scriptures, becoming pleased and becoming angered, rewarding and punishing, bestowing and preventing, honouring

and humiliating, lowering and raising, and seeing and hearing. He knows what is kept as a secret and what is done in public, and He does what He wills. He has the Most Perfect of Attributes, is Exalted from any defect, and no atom or anything bigger than that budges without His permission and no leave falls without His knowledge. Indeed, He is the Knower, the Most-Wise.

He who finds Allah will never lose anything! He who loses Allah will never find anything!

**Tenth Point:**

Knowing Allah's Beautiful Names cultivates politeness and a feeling of shyness towards Him in the slave's heart. Being polite towards Allah means to follow His religion of Islam and act as the religion dictates, both inwardly and outwardly. And being polite towards Allah can only be realized properly when the following three issues are grasped: knowing Allah's Most Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes, understanding His religion and laws and what He loves and what He hates, and having a supple, manageable and receptive soul that is immediately ready to accept the truth and to act upon it in every situation he may face.

**Eleventh Point:**

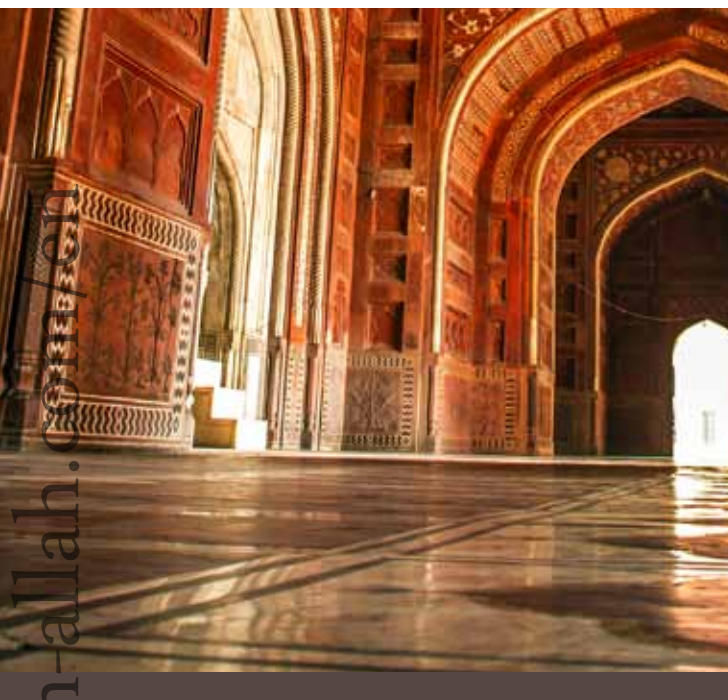
The knowledge of Allah and His Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes opens wide the slave's eyes to his own defects and spiritual ailments, thus diligently urging him to embark on rectifying them. The four corners of ingratitude are: arrogance, envy, anger and lust. The root of all four of them

is the slave's ignorance of his Lord and his ignorance of his own self. As if the slave knows his Lord through His Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes, and identifies his own defects and faults, he will not be arrogant nor feel anger; in fact, he will not envy anyone for what Allah has granted him.

**Twelfth Point:**

Allah's slave being ignorant of the Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes of Allah, not understanding them, and not worshipping Allah with them, on the other hand, leads to his misguidance and even more ignorance. What does a person know if he does not know Allah and His messengers?! What fact could a person be aware of if he does not know this basic fact?! What knowledge or work is achieved by those who do not know Allah and do not work for His pleasure or to know the path leading to it and what happens after reaching it? The life of man is represented by the life of the heart and the soul, and there is no life to the heart but by knowing its Creator, loving Him, worshipping only Him, turning to Him in repentance, gaining tranquility in His remembrance and being in His company. A person who does not have this kind of life does not have any kind of good, even if he has been compensated for this by whatever this worldly life can offer.





The knowledge of Allah the Exalted is beneficial to both the heart and the body.

#### Thirteenth Point:

Knowing the Names and Attributes of Allah leads to the purification of Tawheed and the perfection of Iman. Such knowledge fosters deeds of the heart such as devotion, love, fear, hope and trust in only Allah. But this topic is not considered and reflected on much, though it is a very important topic if one wants to fix his heart and purify it from its evil desires and ailments. When one contemplates the source of the Islamic legislation (the Qur'an), he will discover the connection between the acts of the body and those of the heart, and also discover that the acts of the body are no use without the acts of the heart. Actions of the heart are more obligatory for a slave than those of the body. Isn't it possible to distinguish a Mu'men from a hypocrite by what they hold in their hearts and by the different views and attitudes they have? And isn't it possible for one to embrace Islam with the deeds of his heart before he performs any physical form of worship? The servitude of the heart is also greater than that of the body, the amount of servitudes of the heart are more and (their effects) also endure longer. This servitude of the heart is the driving force of all the person's outward actions, and is, therefore, obligatory at all times (in order to encourage the person to do good and avoid evil all the time).



## The rules pertaining to understanding Allah's Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes

{There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing} [Ash-Shûra: 11].

1. All of Allah's Names and Attributes are husna (beautiful). Allah says: {To Allah belong the most beautiful names} [Al-A'râf: 180].

Allah introduced His Supreme self to us so that we can worship, glorify, love, fear and pray to him.

2. The Most Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes of Allah are authenticated from two major sources: the Book of Allah, the Qur'an, and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and nothing else beside them. So we attribute to Allah the names and attributes that Allah the Exalted and His Prophet (peace be upon him) attributed to Him, and we say that He does not possess the attributes which Allah and His Prophet told us He does not possess but at the same time affirm that the perfect form of its exact opposite is attributed Allah. As for any names or attributes of Allah which have not

been attributed to Him, or for which Allah or the Prophet did not state that He does not possess, it is compulsory to refrain from mentioning them - so we cannot attribute to Allah what has not been authentically attributed to Him, or state that He does not possess any attribute which has not been authentically stated that He does not possess. Pertaining to the meaning of each name and attribute which anybody has explained, it must be considered if the explanation is true and befits Allah (mighty and majestic is He). If it is found that the explanation is true and befits the majesty of Allah then it is accepted, but if not then it is rejected.

3. Any discussion about the Supreme Attributes of Allah has the same problem as a discussion about Him (mighty and majestic is He). This is because just as we do not know the nature of the Sacred Essence,

we do not know the true nature of the Supreme Attributes, but we still firmly believe and recognize them without distorting, nullifying, changing or likening them to His creation.

4. The Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes of Allah have literal and not metaphoric or ambiguous meanings. They indicate the Essence of Allah and His Attributes of Perfection, such as: Al-Qadr (the All-Capable), Al-'Aleem (the All-Knowing), Al-Hakeem (the All-Wise), Al-Samea' (the All-Hearing) and Al-Baseer (the All-Seeing). All of these names and attributes indicate the Essence of Allah and what that Essence contains regarding capability, knowledge, wisdom, hearing and sight.

5. When we deny that Allah (mighty and majestic is He) has any deficiencies, we do this without denying any of His Attributes. And denying that Allah has any deficiencies covers all types of deficiencies in general (without enumerating any particular defect), while affirming His perfection refers to the perfection in every detail of every Name and Attribute (and to affirming every single attribute). Allah the Exalted says: **{There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing}** [Ash-Shûra: 11].

6. Iman in Allah's Beautiful Names: Iman in Allah's Names and the Attributes included in the Names requires Iman in the effect that is related to each name. The Name of Allah Ar-Raheem (the Most Compassionate) includes the attribute of Rahma (compassion) which indicates that Allah is Raheem (Compassionate) towards His slaves.

**Here are some important observations that help us understand Allah's Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes:**

1. The names and attributes are not limited to a certain number. It is mentioned in the Hadeeth below that: **«I invoke you by every Name that You called Yourself by, sent down in Your Book, taught to any of Your creatures, or kept with You in the knowledge of the unseen that is with You»** (Narrated by Ahmad).

2. Some of the Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes of Allah are specifically related to Allah and are not shared by anyone or anything else (in any degree), and it is not permissible to use such names and attributes except with Allah, such as: Allah, Al-Rahman (the Most Merciful). Other names and attributes can be used to describe others- though of course when the names and attributes are ascribed to Allah they are complete and in the most perfect form, but when they are used to describe His creation they refer to them having the attribute to only a limited degree.

3. Attributes are derived from the Names of Allah. Each name includes an attribute, but no names are derived from the attributes. We can say, for instance, that Allah gets angry, but we cannot say that He is Al-Ghadoub (The Most Angry), Exalted and Glorified is He.

