

# THE BOOK OF ASSISTANCE - A SPIRITUAL ASCENSION



Imam Khalid Latif

## SESSION 2

### The Book of Assistance – A Spiritual Ascension

- Last week, Imam Khalid Latif defined the word “spirituality” as a way to develop deeper meaning and purpose in the world around us. The first chapter in Imam Al-Haddad’s book is on certainty. He is giving us a roadmap with spiritual guidance to get closer to Allah SWT. These chapters are giving us information, but also telling us to apply it.

### Yaqeen, the Destination

- As mentioned last week, all of us have different starting points to get to certainty. There are different terms used within our religion that are all figurative of a path. The Sharia means a path to water. Bodies of water can be approached in a variety of ways, just as we have different opinions of sharia, known as fiqh. Seerah is typically referred to as the biography of the Prophet SAW, yet it also means path.

Tariqa means a spiritual pathway, as there are different pathways yielding to a shaykh.

- It is about moving along the path. In other words, taking action. Spirituality does not mean you stop feeling emotions, but rather you can maximize benefit in situations like quarantine. For example, even though you miss congregational taraweeh, your mindset allows you to take advantage of taraweeh at home, a different sunnah of the Prophet SAW.
- All the words mentioned have movement embedded in them. You have to understand movement is a part of the religion to truly take and act upon it. The three terms to describe the religion, imaan, ihsaan, and islam, are all gerant terms, meaning they are verbs talking about “doing” and “being” it. We have to be malleable and able to be molded.
- Again, it isn’t emotionless. At the end of the path, there is an opportunity for enhancement. We ask for a straight path (siratal mustaqeem). It is to conceptualize and move forward.
- The companions of the Prophet SAW all had a level of certitude in Allah SWT and His Messenger SWT. They knew full well in their hearts what was said was true. When the Prophet SAW made the Israa Mi’raj (Heavenly Ascent), he came back and told the people about it.

They started doubting he could make the trip to Jerusalem in one night when it normally takes days, however, Abu Bakr (RA) believed him immediately without doubt. That is certainty; that is the goal.

How do you get there?

- Certainty (yaqeen) is not a switch you can turn on neither is it something that comes with talking, it requires action. Just as imaan can go up and down, so can yaqeen. Similarly, if you want to be patient, you have to start being more patient. Just as in a hadith that the Prophet SAW tells us that sabr is half of faith, yaqeen is all of it. Although important, it is not just dua that enters your heart.
- Certainty is a path of growth and knowing one will make mistakes, but the understanding is that it is a net gain. The seat of yaqeen is the heart, so it is important to take care of it. Sometimes, yaqeen cannot enter the heart because there is no room, other things are in there.
- With yaqeen, the Unseen comes as if it is seen. It becomes a towering mountain.

Doubt and Certainty

- The idea behind this is to remove doubt, but doubt can also be a way certainty is strengthened.

After the first revelation, the Prophet SAW was left in a state of shock, scared in at the fact that he might be possessed. Khadjiah (RA) replied to him by saying that Allah SWT would not forsake him. Her certitude helped reassure him, thereby giving him more certainty (SAW). That doubt became the entry point of certitude.

- Ibrahim (AS) looked to the stars as someone who is searching, he was not chastised for doing so. He concluded Allah SWT created it. He then had a vision to sacrifice his son, which tested his certainty, but he went through with it.
- Doubt becomes a deepening measure to certainty. Questions are a necessary component for understanding. Having a curiosity is important for intellectual growth. This doubt has an intrinsic relationship to certainty.
- Doubt comes to us from shaytaan, and we should not take it on alone. Strength at times comes from communal experience. Hajar reinforced Ibrahim (AS) and Abu Bakr (RA) reinforced the Prophet SAW. The vulnerability comes when we are alone. In today's day and age, there are high levels of anxiety and depression. There needs to be an understanding that no one is beyond waswasa (whispers of shaytaan).

## How do you protect yourself from doubt?

- The practical solutions given to us are Ayatul Kursi, the Quls, the last few verses of Surah Al-Baqarah. Even hunger helps cut doubt off.
- Otherwise, it is important to have good companions, and also be a good companion yourself. It is to understand ourselves and see where shaytaan may be able to attack us. We can all fall into it.
- If you want certitude, read the Qur'an and read the hadith. Take the meanings and inspiration out of them. Islam was made as a way of life, a way to inform decisions and choices. It is a guidebook to take lessons from. Read the book of Allah SWT, and also be present. Seek strength, become empowered and calm because of it. The same goes with hadith: engage it, seek to understand, and move on.
- These are all vehicles to help understand who Allah SWT is. If you move towards certainty, you will be given it.

## In summary

- Look at your companions, what kind of companion you are, look at who shaytaan is and how he attacks you. Build a relationship with the Qur'an, from there look at the hadith, then start to look at the creation around you. Reflect in a meaningful way. Implement and move forward.

- The goal is not ihsaan in the form of perfection, rather our imperfection, our beauty, is what ihsaan is about. The goal is certitude. Try your best and be a source of upliftment.

## FAQs

- What is the linguistic meaning of Sharia?
- What does it mean to move along a path?
- How was Abu Bakr's (RA) certitude shown?
- How can doubt be a means to increase certainty
- Support comes from communal experience. Who reinforced Ibrahim (AS) and the Prophet SAW?
- What are practical solutions to protect ourselves from doubt?
- What are the different ways Imam Khalid mentions as a way to build yaqeen?