



THE DAILY WIRD

The Names of Allah

Thirty-one days with Allah's Names and Attributes

Retold from the lessons of
Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf
Alfurqan Islamic Centre, Manchester

The Qur'an verified via quran.ai - A sadaqah jariyah, free for the ummah

The Names

A name a day, with the lesson it was drawn from

1	Allah	<i>The greatest name</i>
2	Ar-Rabb	<i>The Master and Nurturer</i>
3	Al-Hayy and Al-Qayyum	<i>The Living, the Maintainer</i>
4	Ar-Rahman and Ar-Raheem	<i>The Most Merciful</i>
5	Al-Ghaffar and Al-Ghafur	<i>The Forgiving</i>
6	Al-Malik and Maalik al-Mulk	<i>The King and the Owner</i>
7	Al-Aleem	<i>The All-Knowing</i>
8	Ar-Raqib	<i>The Watchful Protector</i>
9	Al-Qadeer	<i>The All-Powerful</i>
10	Al-Wali and An-Naseer	<i>The Protective Guardian and Helper</i>
11	Al-Khaliq and Al-Bari	<i>The Creator and Originator</i>
12	Al-Ghani and Al-Hamid	<i>The Independent</i>
13	Al-Azeez and Al-Hakeem	<i>The Undefeatable and the All-Wise</i>
14	Ar-Razzaq	<i>The Ultimate Provider</i>
15	Al-Lateef and Al-Khabeer	<i>The Subtle and All-Aware</i>
16	Al-Qawiyy and Al-Mateen	<i>The Powerful and Firm</i>
17	Al-Haqq	<i>The Real</i>
18	Al-Qareeb and Al-Mujeeb	<i>The Near and Responsive</i>

19	Al-Hadi	<i>The Guide</i>
20	Ash-Shakoor and Al-Haleem	<i>The Appreciative and the Forbearing</i>
21	Al-Wahhab and Al-Fattah	<i>The Gift-Giver and the Opener</i>
22	Al-Wasi	<i>The Limitless in Favour</i>
23	Al-Quddus and As-Salam	<i>The Perfect and the Source of Peace</i>
24	Al-Karim and Dhul-Jalali wal-Ikram	<i>The Generous, Honourable and Majestic</i>
25	Al-Wadud	<i>The Most Loving</i>
26	Al-Adheem and Al-Kabeer	<i>The Greatest</i>
27	Al-Aliyy and Al-Mutaali	<i>The Majestic and Most High</i>
28	Al-Jabbar	<i>The Compeller</i>
29	Al-Mu'min	<i>The Giver of Safety</i>
30	Al-Awwal, Al-Akhir, Al-Wahid and Al-Ahad	<i>The First, the Last, the One and Only</i>
31	Living with Allah's Names	<i>Living with Allah's Names</i>

Allah

The greatest name

الله

Allah

The One worthy of all worship; the One most intensely loved



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7LyoBs9SCYc>

Welcome to the start of a journey, thirty days walking through the names of the One who made you. There is no greater subject a human being could ever study. You can spend a life learning the trees and the planets and the languages of the world, but the reason you were given eyes and ears and a mind in the first place was to know the One behind it all. So we begin where everything begins, with the name above every other name: Allah.

Before any command, before any story, before a single ruling, Allah introduces Himself. Ustadh Hisham opens this whole series the same way the Qur'an does, by asking a question most of us have never stopped to answer: when you say the word Allah, do you actually know what you are saying?

The one thing worth knowing

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.

ADH-DHARIYAT 51:56

Start with the reason you are here at all. Allah tells you plainly that He created the jinn and mankind for one purpose, to worship Him, and at the heart of that worship is to know Him. He gave you a mind, eyes, and ears so that you could come to recognise your Maker. Sit with how strange it is, then, that we know so much about so little. We can name the plants and the planets and the price of everything, and yet if someone asked us to truly describe Allah, most of us would fall silent.

So much of life is lived on autopilot. You wake, you move through the noise and the rush of the day, you sleep, and somewhere in all of it the one question that gives the day its meaning never gets asked: what am I doing this all for. This series is an answer to that question. To know the One you are doing it for is to wake up from the sleep most people never notice they are in.

See what that knowledge can do. When Musa was sent, a single man told to stand before the tyrant of his age and the army at his back, the very first words Allah spoke to him at the burning tree were not a strategy or an army of his own. They were an introduction. I am Allah. That sentence alone was enough to make one frightened man stand firm against the most fearsome power on the earth, because he suddenly knew exactly who he was doing it for.

I am Allah

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

Indeed, I am Allah. There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance.

TAHA 20:14

Read that again slowly, because it is where this journey truly begins. Out of everything Allah could have said to a prophet on the edge of an impossible mission, He chose to say who He is. There is nothing in your times of difficulty worth running to except Me. Worship Me, and stand in prayer to remember Me. Everything in these thirty days is an unfolding of that one line.

And we will not feel the weight of it until we understand what the word Allah actually means. This is the work in front of us. The Prophet ﷺ made knowing Allah the very first thing he taught the people, and he taught it in a way that reached the heart. When a woman in Madinah lost her child and searched for days in a city with no police, no missing persons office, no way to call for help, and then finally found him and ran sobbing to gather him in her arms, the Prophet ﷺ turned to his weeping companions and asked, could you imagine this mother throwing her own child into a fire? They said never. He told them that Allah is more merciful to His servants than this mother is to her child. They already knew Allah was merciful. In that moment they felt it. That is the difference this knowledge is meant to make.

Ninety-nine names, and what they ask of you

The Prophet ﷺ said that Allah has ninety-nine names, one hundred less one, and that whoever takes them in is guaranteed Paradise. Here Ustadh Hisham clears away a misunderstanding many of us grew up with. The famous list set to the nasheeds we all know does not come from the strongest narrations, and the scholars differ over it. What the Prophet ﷺ gave us with certainty is the promise itself: that these names exist, that internalising them leads to Paradise, and that we are sent to seek them out, the way we are told that the night of power is in the last ten nights without being told its exact date.

Does ninety-nine mean Allah has only ninety-nine names? No. If a man tells you he has a hundred pounds in one pocket, he has not told you the thousand sitting in another account. The Prophet ﷺ himself used to call on Allah by every name He has named Himself with, and by names He taught to none of His creation, names kept hidden in the unseen. These ninety-nine are simply the ones held out to us as a path to the Garden.

Now the part that changes everything. To take these names in does not mean to memorise them. A child can recite all ninety-nine and it earns him nothing on

its own. The word the Prophet ﷺ used points to something far deeper: to grasp what each name means and then to let it reshape how you live. If you truly know that Allah is the Provider, will you cheat your neighbour for a little extra, or lie to claim what is not yours? You will not, because you trust the One who feeds you. That trust, lived out, is what carries a person to Paradise, not the recital.

Two ways to carry a name

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا

And to Allah belong the best names, so invoke Him by them.

AL-A'RAF 7:180

So how do you actually live with the names of Allah? Across this series you will carry each one in two hands. The first is this: every name is an invitation to take on a little of that quality yourself. When the Prophet ﷺ was asked whether dressing well and smelling good was a kind of arrogance, he answered that Allah is beautiful and loves beauty. That is the pattern for all of it. Because Allah is the Most Merciful, He loves to see you show mercy to the one who wronged you. Because He is the Most Patient, He loves to see you bear with the people who try you. Knowing a name is meant to leave a mark on your character.

The second hand is this verse: to Allah belong the best names, so call on Him by them. Calling on Allah well is a skill, and it can be learned. You would not ask the king for a favour by shouting hey, you. You would choose your words with care, and the right name opens the right door. When a servant of Allah asks Him for a gift no one else could give, he calls on the Giver of gifts. When he is drowning, he calls on the One who rescues. Match the name to the need, and your asking is answered more readily. So in every lesson to come we will pair the name with a supplication, drawn from the Prophet ﷺ and the Qur'an, that shows you how it was meant to be called upon.

A name, a description, and nothing like Him

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing.

ASH-SHURA 42:11

Before we step into the names one by one, hold three things in mind. First, there is a difference between a name of Allah, a description of Him, and an act He does. A man who drives a car once is not a driver; a driver is one who drives always. So a name of Allah names something constant, permanent, never absent from Him. When the Qur'an says they plotted and Allah plotted against them, that is an act He took in a moment, not a name He carries, and so He is not called by it. His names are the descriptions that are always true of Him.

Second, every name of Allah is itself a description. If you are told a man is named Ali, you learn nothing about him, not his height, not his face. But His names are not empty labels like ours. To call Him the All Hearing is to learn something real, that He hears every sound, down to the whisper that never leaves your mind. Each name opens a window onto who He is.

Third, and this is the one that saves hearts: there is nothing like Him. A person might show you mercy with a motive, kindness with a hidden hope of something in return. Allah needs nothing from you. His mercy carries no agenda, His provision is unlike a father's provision, and when He sends you hardship it is never because He turns away from you. People leave faith and grow bitter with Allah because they picture Him as a larger version of a human being who hurts them on purpose. If someone slashed your tyres, you would know they meant you harm. But Allah is not like that, and is not like us. The difficulty He sends is not contempt; very often it is love, if only we understood Him. Knowing this changes a life.

The name itself: what Allah means

Now to the name we have come to understand: Allah. Arabic is built like a goldsmith's shop. You see a ring, a bracelet, an earring, each its own shape, yet melt them down and they trace back to the same gold. Most Arabic words work

that way, pressed from a small set of root letters into many forms. A few words, though, are simply proper names with no root behind them, the way Manchester or Basra are just names and were never derived from anything. So the scholars asked: is Allah a pure proper name, or is it pressed from a deeper word?

The majority held that it comes from al-ilah, and here is one of the threads they followed. The Arabs were saying the name Allah long before the Qur'an came, and long before them the prophets called on God in other tongues, in words like the Aramaic and Hebrew names that echo al-ilah. The name is older than Arabic itself, which points back to a shared root meaning rather than a name invented in one place. So we melt the jewellery down to the gold and ask what ilah really means.

The plain translation, the one worthy of worship, is true but thin; it does not reach the depth of the word. Here Ustadh Hisham opens it into three. The first sense is awe: al-ilah is the One so overwhelming that knowing Him drops your jaw, fills you with wonder and reverence and a trembling kind of respect. The second is refuge: the very same root is used for the one who digs in for cover when the bombs fall, so al-ilah is the One you run to when the world squeezes and shoves and frightens you, your place of peace, your shelter, the One you reach for the moment everything turns hard. The Prophet ﷺ, when life pressed on him, would flee to prayer, because that was his cool water in the heat. The third sense is love, the most intense love a heart can hold, the kind that makes you forget everything beside it, the love a child holds for its mother. Put them together and al-ilah, which became Allah, is the One held in deepest awe, the One you flee to for refuge and calm, and the One most intensely loved, the only One truly deserving of worship.

The greatest name of all

The scholars say this is the greatest of all the names, al-ism al-a'zam, the supreme name. There is a saying of the Prophet ﷺ that Allah has a greatest name, that when He is called by it He answers, and when He is asked by it He gives. Many held that this very name, Allah, is that name, because every other name gathers underneath it and describes it. He is Ar-Rahman, the Most

Merciful, and Al-Quddus, the Most Holy, and Al-Aziz, the Almighty, and all of them are saying who Allah is.

To say Allah, then, with the full meaning awake in your heart, is to say that there is no one you hold in greater awe, no one you would rather run to when push comes to shove, no one you love above Him, and no one you will bow your head to but Him. People can set up rivals to Allah in their hearts without ever naming them so: a desire they run to instead of Him, a job or a wealth or a person they would break His law to please. To mean the word Allah is to let none of that sit above Him. When you weep, you weep to Allah. When the world drives you to your knees, it is to Him that you raise your hands.

There is a quiet comfort to close on. The Prophet ﷺ told us the Day of Judgement will not come while there is still someone on the earth saying Allah, Allah, and that Allah will not punish a people while they are still seeking His forgiveness. As long as hearts are still turning to Him and tongues are still remembering Him, the world holds. So let yours be one of them. Over these thirty days, may the name of your Maker move from your tongue into the depths of your heart.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

Allahumma a'inni 'ala dhikrika wa shukrika wa husni 'ibadatik

O Allah, help me to remember You, to thank You, and to worship You well.

How to begin this journey

- **Make knowing Allah the point.** You were created to know your Maker, and you were given eyes, ears, and a mind for exactly this. Step off autopilot. Let getting to know Him become the quiet purpose underneath everything else you do.
- **Internalise, do not just memorise.** The promise was never for the tongue that recites the names but for the heart that grasps them and the life that is changed by them. With every name you meet, ask one thing: how should knowing this make me live differently today?

- **Let each name shape your character.** Allah is beautiful and loves beauty; He is merciful and loves the merciful. Take on a little of every quality you learn. Knowledge of a name that leaves your behaviour untouched has not yet reached its purpose.
- **Call on Him by the right name.** Calling on Allah is a skill you can learn. Match the name to your need, the Provider when you are in want, the One who rescues when you are sinking, and your supplication is answered more readily.
- **Make Allah the One above all.** To mean the word is to hold no rival to Him in your heart, no desire or wealth or person you would disobey Him to please. When the world pushes you to your knees, raise your hands to Him alone.

Why we begin here

Of everything you could give your life to learning, nothing is greater than knowing the One who made you, and no name carries more than the one we begin with. Allah is the One held in deepest awe, the refuge you flee to when the world turns hard, the One most intensely loved, the only One worthy of worship, and every other name in this journey is gathered underneath it. To say Allah with the meaning awake in your heart is to wake from the autopilot most people never escape, and to remember, in the rush of the day, exactly what you are doing it all for.

O Allah, You are the One we hold in awe, the One we run to, the One we love above all. Teach us Your names over these days, write them into our hearts and not only onto our tongues, and let our remembrance of You be the thing that holds, until the Day we stand before You and find that we had come to truly know You.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Allah (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Ar-Rabb

The Master and Nurturer

رَبِّ

Ar-Rabb

The Lord: Master, Nurturer and Sustainer



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppmkzGH3aNY>

After the name Allah itself, there is one name woven through the Qur'an more than any other, and most of us have never once thought of it as a name at all. It opens the second verse of the Book, right after Allah's own name, and from the first page to the last you will struggle to find a single page that does not carry it. Ar-Rabb, the Lord: your Master, your Nurturer, the One who looks after every atom of your life.

Ustadh Hisham takes a deliberate path through the names of Allah, giving the most time to the names Allah Himself repeats the most. By that measure this name comes early and it comes loud, because Allah pressed it on us on nearly every page. So sit with it. Once you feel the weight of the word Rabb, you will never say 'my Lord' the same way again.

The name on almost every page

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds -

AL-FATIHAH 1:2

Open the Qur'an and look at where this name sits. Straight after Allah's own name, in the opening surah, before a single command or story: praise belongs to Allah, the Rabb of all the worlds. We are so used to reaching for names like Al-Alim, the All-Knowing, that we forget the name standing right here at the door. From the first page to the last, you would be hard pressed to find a page that does not mention it.

Here is why that matters. Ustadh Hisham's whole approach to these names is to ask, before anything else, how did Allah introduce Himself? Not every name is repeated equally. Some He mentions in passing a handful of times; others He lifts up again and again. Rabb is one of the loudest. So a name Allah returns to on nearly every page deserves more of our time, not less. We give weight to what He gave weight to.

English usually hands you two words for it: Lord, or Master. Hold them loosely. A translation is only ever a sad little attempt at a word this deep, a try, an interpretation. To really meet this name you have to go down into the Arabic, into the two living meanings packed inside three letters: ra, ba, ba.

The one who takes you from zero to a hundred

The first meaning is the one that will reframe your whole life. The root of Rabb carries the sense of nurturing something, looking after it, growing it until it reaches full maturity. You plant a seed and you keep watering it, feeding it, shielding it, until it stands as a tree. You receive a child at zero, knowing nothing, able to do nothing, and you carry every one of its needs until the day it can stand on its own. To be a Rabb, in this sense, is to take something from nothing to completeness and to bear the whole journey in between.

Think about who the Arabs gave a version of this word to: the parent and the teacher. And ask why. A parent receives a child with no neck muscles, no knowledge, no independence, fully dependent even in the womb for the blood in its veins, and pours years of exhaustion into raising it. A teacher receives a mind that knows nothing and feeds it letter by letter, alif then ba, patiently, until that mind can carry knowledge of its own. Both are doing the work of a rabb. Both are giving everything to one who, most of the time, has no idea how much is being given.

And notice the heart of it: this nurturing is brutally selfless. The one you raise shows little gratitude, rarely sees the cost, and offers nothing back. How often do we only understand our parents the day we become parents ourselves? That is the shape of the word. Now lift it from a tired mother and an underpaid teacher to the One who placed that instinct in them. If a created, limited rabb gives this much, what is the Rabb of the worlds, who has been carrying you from before you existed and has not stopped for a single breath since?

He manages everything you never think about

Once you hold that meaning, look up. A child in a home never has to cook, clean, or worry where the next meal comes from; the parent quietly handles the world on its behalf. That is your life under your Rabb, on a scale you cannot see. He holds up the ceiling by laws He wrote into the universe. He runs the water cycle so the sea does not leap on you as a wall but falls instead as a gentle patter on the roof. He darkens the sky each night, right when your body is spent, so your eyes can rest and you can recover by morning. None of this asks your permission. None of it waits for your thanks.

We tell ourselves a different story. We think the travel agent gets us the flight, the teacher educates the child, the pharmacist hands us our health, the boss provides our pay. So when one of them fails us, we break, because we had pinned our whole sense of safety on a human being. To truly know your Rabb is to see through that illusion: people are doors, but the One behind every door, the one who gives and withholds and tests and provides, is Allah. Your car breaks down on the motorway and you stop blaming the mechanic; you understand your Rabb has handed you this moment. That is what it means to see things as they really are.

He is looking after you even when it hurts

رَبِّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمَلِكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ فَاطِرَ
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنْتَ وَلِيِّي فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا
وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ

My Lord, You have given me [something] of sovereignty and taught me of the interpretation of dreams. Creator of the heavens and earth, You are my protector in this world and the Hereafter. Cause me to die a Muslim and join me with the righteous.

YUSUF 12:101

Here is the part you have to feel, because this is where the name does its real work. Yusuf was thrown into a well by his own brothers, sold, carried into a stranger's house, accused, and buried in an Egyptian prison for years. At the time, none of it made sense. In the moment you only feel the pain. But the day he finally stands as a minister with his parents bowing before him, his whole life crystallises, every up and every down falls into a pattern, and what does he call Allah? Rabbi. My Lord. The One who was looking after me the entire time, even in the dark of the well, even in the dungeon.

Read your own life through that. Look back and you will see the ups and the downs, and how little they made sense while you were inside them. But your Rabb was nurturing you through all of it. Every gift was Him looking after you, and every loss was Him looking after you too, shaping you for something you could not yet see. Yusuf sat in that prison with no idea his Rabb had already begun arranging his rise. You are sitting where you are with no idea what is being prepared for you right now.

It is the same confidence that let a handful of young believers, trapped in a cave with no food and no army, sleep safe while the sun was turned from their bodies and they were rolled from side to side. When they called on Allah, they called Him 'our Rabb, the Rabb of the heavens and the earth.' They knew their Lord would look after them. That knowledge is what let them stand fearless before a king who could have killed them on the spot.

The one who shows you the way when you are lost

قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ

[Moses] said, "No! Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will guide me."

ASH-SHU'ARA 26:62

There is a second thread tied tightly to this name in the Qur'an: guidance. It makes sense, because that is exactly what a nurturer does. A child comes confused and in pain, and the parent says, here is the way. A student comes lost, and the teacher says, look here, go this way. Your Rabb is the One who, in your most confused moment, shows you the next step.

When Pharaoh, who called himself the highest master, demanded of Musa, 'and what is this Lord of the worlds?', Musa answered with the Rabb who made everything from scratch and then guided it, the One who gave each thing its form and then showed it where to go. And when Musa stood crushed between Pharaoh's army at his back and an uncrossable sea in front, with his own people crying that they were finished, he did not flinch. He said it plainly: my Lord is with me, He will guide me. The Rabb who creates the obstacle is the same Rabb who shows you the way around it.

It runs through every story. When revelation paused and the Prophet ﷺ felt the ground fall away beneath him, Allah told him his Rabb had not abandoned him and did not hate him. So when you are standing at your own impossible sea, hooves closing in behind you and nowhere to go, this is the name to reach for. Your Rabb has not forgotten you, and He always shows the way.

Why we say 'my Lord' and almost nothing else

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي وَاسْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُنْ بِدُعَائِكَ
رَبِّ شَقِيًّا

He said, "My Lord, indeed my bones have weakened, and my head has filled with white, and never have I been in my supplication to You, my Lord, unhappy [i.e., disappointed]."

MARYAM 19:4

Now notice something easy to miss. This is the name the prophets reach for when they cry out to Allah, far more than any other. And it is almost the only name of Allah you are allowed to make personal. You will search the Qur'an and never find 'my Rahman' or 'my Malik,' my Most Merciful, my King. But 'my Rabb,' Rabbi, you will find on tongue after tongue, more than a hundred times. No other name of His is made personal like this, on page after page of the Book. Why? Because this is His most intimate name. He is yours: your caretaker, the one who provides when no one else will and stays when everyone else has gone. There is a closeness in 'my Lord' the way there is in 'my team,' my family, that a distant title can never hold.

And the Qur'an is so precise with it that it even drops a letter to match a heart. To say 'my Lord' in Arabic you would normally end the word with a long vowel, Rabbi, stretched out. But again and again, in the rawest moments, the prophets cut it short, Rabbi with the ending swallowed, no time to draw it out, the cry of someone who has run out of room. Zakariyya, after waiting nearly a lifetime for a child, his bones gone soft and his hair gone white, does not have the breath to linger; he just gasps, my Lord. Musa, alone in Madyan with no job, no home, no one, collapses into the shade and says only, my Lord, I am in desperate need of any good You send down to me. That clipped, urgent 'my Lord' is the 999 call of the soul, and your Rabb answers it.

This is the secret Ustadh Hisham keeps returning to: a relationship lives or dies by communication. The prophets were in constant conversation with their Rabb, in ease and in ruin, at every turn of their lives. If you truly knew who your

Rabb was, this word would rarely leave your lips, and you would never, in your whole life, feel completely alone.

A Master you serve out of love, not fear

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ
الْأَقْصَى الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing.

AL-ISRA 17:1

The second meaning of Rabb is Master, and as soon as you say Master, you have named the other side of the table: the servant, the abd. This is where many people flinch, and understandably. After centuries of a brutal slave trade, the word slave carries images of chains, beatings, a human owned and broken. So the thought of being anyone's slave feels ugly. But this is not our Rabb, and it is not our servitude.

In Islam, abd does not mean someone tied to a tree and whipped. It means someone who serves out of love. Look at your own home: your parents keep no handcuffs, yet you want to massage your mother's feet, slip your father some money, bring them gifts, do things for them they never demanded. Why? Out of love. Out of gratitude. That is the whole secret of the word abd. The Prophet ﷺ stood in prayer until his feet swelled, and when he was asked why, when his sins were already forgiven, he answered: should I not be a grateful servant? We long to put our heads on the floor not because a whip is raised over us, but because we cannot help it; the One we are bowing to is the One who gave us the very breath leaving our lips and the heartbeat moving blood through our bodies.

So this is a loving Master, a caring Master, and to be His abd is the highest honour, not the lowest. When Allah lifted the Prophet ﷺ on the greatest journey of his life, He did not call him by his titles; He called him 'His servant,' His abd. And when Allah issues His very first command in the order of the Book, He

does not bark it; He reasons with us: worship your Rabb, the One who created you and those before you. You were nothing, and He brought you into being. Does that not deserve some gratitude? Real servitude here is love that cannot keep still, the way kindness, as the poet said, makes people want to serve the one who showed it.

The Master who keeps the door open

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful."

AZ-ZUMAR 39:53

There is one more quiet wonder in this name. Listen to how His servants are taught to call on this name, and you will find that when the Qur'an turns to Rabb, it comes overwhelmingly wrapped in nurture: the prophets cry Rabbi and Rabbana in their hardest moments precisely because this name carries nurturing, mercy, and care. This Master does not want to break you.

And here is the proof at its most tender. Think of how much it takes for a parent to throw a child out of the house and say, I never want to see your face again. It takes a great crime, again and again, before that door is shut. Yet when we, who owe our Rabb everything, commit the gravest sins against ourselves, how does He call to us? Not 'get out.' He says: My servants, you who have wronged your own souls, do not despair of My mercy. You are still Mine. The door is still open. Come back. A Master who, even as you leave, keeps the door unlocked and waits for your return is the Rabb the Qur'an keeps showing us.

Ustadh Hisham closes on the dua the Prophet ﷺ taught for every morning and every evening, the one that holds this whole name in a single breath: O Living, O Sustainer of all, by Your mercy I seek help; set right all my affairs, and do not leave me to myself for even the blink of an eye. Because that is what it means

to have a Rabb. A true nurturer does not let the one in his care fend for himself for a single moment, and neither, ever, does yours.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ

Rabbi inni lima anzalta ilayya min khayrin faqir

My Lord, indeed I am, for whatever good You would send down to me, in need.

How to live this name

- **Keep the word on your lips.** The prophets stayed in constant conversation with their Rabb, in ease and in ruin. A relationship lives by communication. Say 'Rabbi, my Lord' through your days and your nights, and you will never feel completely alone.
- **Read your hardships as nurturing, not punishment.** Like Yusuf in the well and the prison, you often cannot see the pattern from inside the pain. Trust that the same Rabb is shaping you in the loss as much as in the gift, arranging what you cannot yet imagine.
- **See past the doors to the One behind them.** People are only doors. When the mechanic, the boss, or the friend lets you down, do not break on them. Your Rabb is the one who truly gives, withholds, and provides, often from where you never expected.
- **Serve out of love, not fear.** You are His abd the way you serve a parent you adore: freely, gratefully, with no whip raised over you. Let your worship flow from what He has already given you, not from dread.
- **Come back, however far you have gone.** Your Rabb is the name of nurture, not of threat. He calls even those who have wronged themselves badly: do not despair, you are still Mine. Turn back, and find the door still open.

Why this name stays with us

We say it without thinking, in every prayer, in every dua, on nearly every page we read: Rabbi, my Lord. Ar-Rabb is the Nurturer who took you from nothing and has not stopped tending you since, the Manager of laws and seas and nights you never notice, the One who guides you at the impossible sea and stays with you in the empty desert. And He is the Master you serve not in fear but in love, who even as you walk away keeps the door open and calls you back. To know this name is to stop feeling alone and to stop reading your life as a list of accidents, because every turn of it is your Rabb, looking after you.

O Allah, our Rabb, You are the One who nurtures us from nothing and never leaves us to ourselves. Keep this name on our tongues in ease and in hardship, let us serve You out of love and gratitude, and when we wrong our own souls, draw us back through the door You always leave open. Rabbi, for whatever good You send down to us, we are in need.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Ar-Rabb (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Hayy and Al-Qayyum

The Living, the Maintainer

الْحَيُّ

Al-Hayy

The Ever-Living

الْقَيُّومُ

Al-Qayyum

The Sustainer of all



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4L17YYmufCA>

There is a name of Allah that the Prophet ﷺ told us is His greatest, the name that, when He is called by it, He never turns the one asking away. He did not tell us which name it is, and the scholars have searched for it ever since. One of their strongest answers is not one name but two, joined together, sitting at the opening of the greatest verse in the whole Qur'an: Al-Hayy and Al-Qayyum, the Ever-Living and the Maintainer of all.

Once you sit with what these two names mean, you understand why. Every other name of Allah, that He hears, that He sees, that He gives, that He protects, depends on these two first. He acts because He is living, and creation stands because He is holding it. Ustadh Hisham opens this pair where the Qur'an opens it, in Ayat al-Kursi, and walks you into the quiet, world-changing truth hidden inside them.

The two names at the heart of the greatest verse

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

Allah - there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Self-Sustaining.

AL-BAQARAH 2:255

Begin with a promise. The Prophet ﷺ taught that there is a name of Allah so great that whoever calls on Him by it, with pure certainty and from the bottom of the heart, is never refused. He left the name unnamed, and the scholars offered many answers. One of the most compelling is that the greatest name is this pair held together, Al-Hayy and Al-Qayyum.

Here is part of why. The Prophet ﷺ once heard a man open his supplication by praising Allah through a string of His names, calling on the One who deserves all praise, who formed the heavens and the earth from nothing, the Ever-Living, the Caretaker who maintains everything. Seven names, just to begin the conversation. And the Prophet ﷺ said this man had called on Allah by His greatest name, the name by which, when He is asked, He gives, and when He is called, He answers.

It is enough that these two names sit in the opening of the single greatest verse in the Qur'an, Ayat al-Kursi. Before it speaks of His throne, His knowledge, His dominion over the heavens and the earth, it names Him: Al-Hayy, Al-Qayyum. The Living, who acts. The Maintainer, who holds. Everything else in the verse pours out of these two.

The One who lives and never dies

هُوَ الْحَيُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ

He is the Ever-Living; there is no deity except Him, so call upon Him, [being] sincere to Him in religion. [All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

GHAFIR 40:65

Al-Hayy comes from the root that means to be living. He is the Living, the Ever-Living, the One who never dies. You might think this is obvious, but it is not, and there was a day the closest people to the Prophet ﷺ needed to be reminded of it.

It was the day he ﷺ passed away. Human beings are alive, yes, but every one of us is heading toward an end, and that is hard to face. When you are young it may not land, but ask those who have lived long enough to watch their hair turn grey, and they will tell you how the nearness of death begins to press on the heart. The day the Prophet ﷺ died, most of the Companions were in shock and could not accept it. One of them, the most devoted, stood with his sword and swore he would strike the head off anyone who said Muhammad had died, so unbearable was the loss of the one they loved more than their own parents.

And then Abu Bakr stood and did not say that the Prophet ﷺ was only a man we no longer needed. He reminded them of something greater. Whoever used to worship Muhammad, know that Muhammad has died. But whoever worships Allah, know that Allah is Ever-Living and never dies. The grief was real, but it could not touch the One they truly leaned on. He is the Living who has no death, and when you build your whole life on Him, the ground never gives way beneath you.

A God who is active, not a God who walked away

يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ

Whoever is within the heavens and earth asks Him; every day He is in [i.e., bringing about] a matter.

AR-RAHMAN 55:29

To feel the weight of Al-Hayy, look at how the world quietly stopped believing. It did not happen overnight. The first move was subtle: people began saying that God exists, but He has nothing to do with us. He is like a manufacturer who built the phone, sent it out, and forgot about it. He is the sleeping partner who put money into the business but will not come to the shop, will not take the late call, has no hand in the daily running of things. Once you imagine Allah as passive, distant, switched off, it becomes very easy to stop asking Him, stop speaking to Him, stop seeing anything in your life as coming from Him at all.

But what does it mean to be living? Ask how you know someone is alive. Before machines and monitors, people would place a hand on the chest and feel for a heartbeat. Movement is life. Stillness, no action, no motion, is death. So Al-Hayy means the One who is endlessly active, and the Qur'an says it plainly: everyone in the heavens and the earth turns to Him in need, and every single day He is bringing about some matter. He is never idle.

And when Allah acts, He never repeats Himself the way a factory stamps out identical parts. Every snowflake is different. Every fingerprint is its own. Even identical twins are not truly identical, as anyone who is a twin will quietly tell you. Here Ustadh Hisham reaches for a famous experiment to clear away an illusion we all live under. A scientist named Pavlov rang a bell each time he fed a dog, and soon the dog began to salivate the moment the bell rang, certain the bell was bringing the food. But the bell and the food were never connected. One person was ringing, and the same person was deciding to feed. We do the very same thing. We see wood and a spark and call it fire. We watch an apple fall and call it gravity. We see the paycheck and call it the boss. But Allah is the One acting in every moment, linking cause to effect, applying the force to the falling book, not some lifeless law running on its own.

And because He is always living, He is always listening. Not like a friend who sleeps, who has his own needs, whom you hesitate to wake at two in the morning when your car breaks down on the motorway. Allah has no moment of drowsiness, no off-hours, no out of service. Think of the relief of finding a shop that never closes, a help line that is always open. Allah is available every hour of every night, and He is never, to borrow a human word, offline.

Rely on the One who does not die

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ ذُنُوبٍ عِبَادِهِ
خَيْرًا

And rely upon the Ever-Living who does not die, and exalt [Allah] with His praise. And sufficient is He to be, with the sins of His servants, [fully]

Aware -

AL-FURQAN 25:58

So Allah ties this name directly to your trust. If you are going to lean on anyone, lean on the One who is always living and never dies. People let you down. Companies let you down. Try to fix your broadband and you are left on hold, thirty-fourth in the queue, listening to music, wondering why you ever called. That is what depending on the created feels like, again and again.

Allah is not like that. In a hadith that shares this name's very root, the Prophet ﷺ taught that your Lord is Hayiy and Karim, Modest and Generous: He feels shy to let a servant raise his hands to Him and then send those hands back empty. Knowing Allah is always there, always awake, always able, the believer keeps turning to Him: relying on Him, trusting Him, asking Him for everything. Human beings will fail you. Al-Hayy never will.

Al-Qayyum: the One who holds everything up

Now the second name. Here Ustadh Hisham takes you on a short journey through the Arabic, because the whole meaning lives in the word. Al-Qayyum is built from qama, yaqumu, to stand. But it is not the standing of someone simply

on his feet. Picture the security guard who is seated versus the one who is up, walking, watching, alert. Picture the man who lent money and now has to stand over the borrower, asking again and again when the loan will come back, vigilant, never letting it slip. To stand in this sense is to guard, to maintain, to keep careful watch over something in your charge.

Then the language intensifies it. Arabic has forms that take a trait and stretch it to the limit, make it constant, make it tireless. The same root gives us the word for the one who stands fully responsible over a household, providing, protecting, taking care without a break. And Al-Qayyum is the most intense form of all: the One who never, not for a single instant, stops sustaining what is in His care. He needs nothing to hold Him up, He is the reason for His own existence, and everything else stands only because He is holding it. Take His attention away for one moment and all of it would collapse into dust. You exist because He keeps you in existence, breath by breath.

And the very next words of Ayat al-Kursi guard this meaning so you cannot miss it: neither drowsiness nor sleep ever overtakes Him. There is a precise word for that heavy moment when you are driving late and exhausted and your eyes begin to close on their own. That is the lighter drowsiness. Deep sleep is heavier still. A human guard, no matter how faithful, eventually drifts off; come to any building at one in the morning and you will likely find him fast asleep. Mothers tire, fathers tire, everyone who carries something long enough reaches the point of giving out. Allah never reaches it. Gravity does not take a break. If it paused in this room for one second, we would all be floating like astronauts. Your heartbeat does not pause. We imagine nature is minding all of this, but it is Al-Qayyum, holding every atom in place, every moment, without rest. This is why the Qur'an can say that everything in the heavens and the earth prostrates to Him, even those who refuse to bow with their bodies: every cell of them is held by Him, subservient to Him, kept in being by Him.

The names the Prophet ﷺ leaned on in his hardest hours

These two names were special to the Prophet ﷺ, and he reached for them when life pressed hardest. On the day of Badr, in the thick of the battle, a Companion came back from the fighting just to check on him, and found him in

prostration, repeating only this: Ya Hayyu, ya Qayyum, by Your mercy I seek relief. Not asking for anything in words, just calling on Allah by these two names. The Companion returned to the fighting, came back later, and the Prophet ﷺ was still in sujood, still saying the same words.

The same love for these names was carried by the scholars. Ibn al-Qayyim tells us that his teacher, Ibn Taymiyyah, would repeat ya Hayyu ya Qayyum forty times between the sunnah of Fajr and the Fajr prayer, and that he found from experience that whoever held to this in the morning, Allah would lift their distress. He offered it not as a hadith, but as something he had lived and tasted.

And here is the secret of why these two names may be the greatest. Al-Hayy holds all of His other names inside it. That He hears, that He sees, that He helps, that He gives, that He takes, that He protects, every one of these is an action, and there is no action without life. Allah maintains, He guards, He gives life and takes it, He forms the child and breathes the soul into it, and all of this activity flows out of His being the Living. So these two names together are almost a summary of who Allah is: the One who lives, and the One by whom all else is sustained. No wonder that in his moment of deepest need, the Prophet ﷺ simply said them.

Al-Qayyum and the truth that we are the needy

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

O mankind, you are those in need of Allah, while Allah is the Free of need, the Praiseworthy.

FATIR 35:15

If Allah is the One holding everything up, then the other side of that truth is this: we are completely, constantly in need of Him. The Qur'an says it without softening, that you are the poor ones, the needy, and Allah alone is the Rich, the Free of need. We forget this when we are healthy and comfortable, and remember it only when we fall ill or stand at the edge of loss. A drowning man clutching a piece of driftwood, screaming for Allah, is no more in need of Him than you are right now, sitting safely. He simply feels it, and we do not.

Picture a starting team of eleven. To be picked is to be needed; to be on the bench is to be replaceable, and there is a sinking feeling in the heart the moment your name is called off the pitch. We walk around feeling like the starting eleven, certain we earned our place, when countless of Allah's creatures sit on the bench. How many children never take a single breath of this world? You did. What made you deserve the chance to be alive when He could have chosen another in your place? Allah does not need your prayer, your fasting, your remembrance; if He wished, He could replace you entirely and it would cost Him nothing. We have to justify the gift of our existence, and we forget that it is a gift at all.

Illness is what usually wakes us. Think of the great boxer who called himself the greatest, until sickness took him out of the ring for months. When he came back he said, do not call me the greatest; God made me ill so I would know that He is the Greatest. We should not have to wait for the hospital bed to feel our need. The comforts we lean on could be lifted at any moment, and it is Al-Qayyum who keeps them in place.

Everything is on loan, so let go of the worry

فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا فِي الْفُلِّ دَعَوْا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ

And when they board a ship, they supplicate Allah, sincere to Him in religion. But when He delivers them to the land, at once they associate others with Him.

AL-ANKABUT 29:65

When the Prophet ﷺ lost his own child, he was found weeping, and when someone wondered at his tears, he said this is a mercy Allah places in the hearts of His servants. Then he said words that change how you hold everything you own: to Allah belongs what He took, and to Allah belongs what He gave. The child was never truly his. It was lent to him, and the One who lent it took it back. A mother can carry a child for nine months through all the sickness and exhaustion, taste the joy of holding it for a single moment, and have it

returned to its Owner at once. It is a hard lesson, and it is teaching her, and you, and me, that He gives and He takes, and it was His all along.

So learn to see your whole life as borrowed. The clothes on your back, the electricity in your home, the body you walk in, none of it is owned, all of it is on lease, and the Landlord can ask for it back whenever He wills. Strangely, this is where freedom is hidden. The one who thinks he owns everything by his own intelligence and effort is the one who lies awake in fear of losing it, and you can watch this play out in the famous and wealthy who have every material thing and still fall into despair, because they believe it all rests on them. True freedom, the kind that fills the heart with light and ease, is knowing that Allah is the One holding it all, that it is being taken care of, and that you do not have to carry the weight of the world alone.

A group once came to the Prophet ﷺ in real distress, having run out of food and income, only to have Allah send down a verse reminding them that there is no creature on the earth whose provision is not upon Allah, who knows where it rests and where it moves. The man who heard it said, then I do not need to ask, Allah is taking care of me. The Prophet ﷺ taught that if you truly relied on Allah as He deserves, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds, who leave in the morning with empty stomachs and return in the evening full. Do the work, then hand the outcome to Allah. We live in anxious times, prices climbing, futures uncertain, and the heart that knows Al-Qayyum can set the worry down. And do not be the one in the verse who calls on Allah with everything in him while the ship is tossed on the waves, then forgets Him the moment his feet touch dry land. Turn to Him in ease as you would in the storm.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ أَصْلِحْ لِيْ شَأْنِيْ كُلَّهُ وَلَا تَكِلْنِيْ إِلَى
نَفْسِيْ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ

Ya Hayyu ya Qayyum, bi-rahmatika astaghith, aslih li sha'ni kullahu, wa la takilni ila nafsi tarfata 'ayn

O Ever-Living, O Sustainer of all, by Your mercy I seek relief. Set right all my affairs, and do not leave me to myself for the blink of an eye.

How to live these names

- **Rely on the One who never dies.** People and companies will let you down, but Al-Hayy is always living, always listening, never offline. When you need to lean on something, lean on Him, and keep asking, because the Living One is too generous to send your hands back empty.
- **See His hand behind the causes.** Do not be the dog who thinks the bell brings the food. The boss is not your provider, the spark is not the fire. Al-Hayy is acting in every moment, linking each cause to its effect, so trace every blessing back to Him.
- **Hold everything as borrowed.** Your health, your wealth, the people you love, all of it is on lease from Al-Qayyum, who can ask for it back whenever He wills. Say with the Prophet ﷺ, to Allah belongs what He took and what He gave, and you will carry it with open hands instead of clenched fists.
- **Feel your need before illness reminds you.** You are the needy one and Allah is the Free of need. Do not wait for a hospital bed to discover it. Beg Him for every breath and every blessing now, the way a drowning man begs, while your feet are still on dry land.
- **Do the work, then hand over the outcome.** The birds leave hungry and return full because their provision rests with Al-Qayyum. Strive with your hands, then set down the worry. The One who never sleeps is already taking care of what you cannot control.

Why these names stay with us

Al-Hayy and Al-Qayyum are the two names the Qur'an places at the very head of its greatest verse, and once you understand them you cannot read your life the same way. He is the Living who never dies, so you have someone to lean on who will never give way. He is the Maintainer who never sleeps, so the world you stand on, the breath in your chest, the people you love, are all being held by Him, on loan, every single moment. To know these names is to stop pretending you are self-made and replaceable nature is in charge, and to start trusting the One who is awake when everyone else is asleep.

O Allah, Ya Hayyu, Ya Qayyum, You are the Living who does not die and the Maintainer of all that exists. By Your mercy we seek relief. Keep our hearts

turned to You in ease before hardship, let us hold every gift with open hands, set right all of our affairs, and do not leave us to ourselves for the blink of an eye.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Hayy and Al-Qayyum (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Ar-Rahman and Ar-Raheem

The Most Merciful

الرَّحْمَنُ

Ar-Rahman

The Most Compassionate

الرَّحِيمُ

Ar-Raheem

The Most Merciful



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0JxpvhMPas>

Of all the names you will meet on this journey, this is the pair many of us have been waiting for. They open the Qur'an, they open every chapter but one, and you say them under your breath before you eat, before you read, before you begin almost anything. Ar-Rahman and Ar-Raheem, the Most Compassionate and the Most Merciful.

Ustadh Hisham begins not in a mosque or a book, but in the one place every single one of us has already lived: the womb of a mother. That is where the meaning of these names is hidden, and once you see it, you will never read the basmala the same way again.

The name we open everything with

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

AL-FATIHAH 1:1

Look at how the Qur'an starts. Before a command, before a story, before a single ruling, Allah introduces Himself with mercy, twice. Pause on this. The very first line, the basmala, places these two names side by side, and then al-Fatihah lifts them again a few words later, so that within the opening breath of the Book you have met the Most Merciful before you have met anything else.

These two names are not random words. They are sisters, born from the same three Arabic letters: ra, ha, meem. Hold those three letters in mind, because the root they spell is going to unlock everything. In Arabic the language works like dough: one root can be pressed into many shapes, and each shape carries a slightly different flavour of the same idea. Ar-Rahman and Ar-Raheem are two shapes pressed from one root, the root of rahma, mercy.

The root hidden in the womb

Here is the part you will remember, and it is where Ustadh Hisham unlocks these names. That same root, ra-ha-meem, is the root of the Arabic word for the womb of a mother, the rahm. Sit with that for a moment. The name of God's mercy and the word for a mother's womb come from the very same letters. That is not a coincidence, it is an invitation to understand one through the other.

Think about what the womb actually is. A child lives there for nine months, from nothing to a fully formed human ready to enter the world. And while it is there, it receives what you could only call VIP service. The child does not chew, does not drink, does not go out searching for halal food. It does not even have to move. Everything it needs arrives before it could ever ask, and it simply floats, surrounded by warmth, in the safest place a human being will ever know.

This is why people curl up when they want to feel safe. The body remembers the position it held in the womb. You will not find, in your whole life, a place softer, safer, or more completely provided for than where you began. That feeling, of every need met before it is spoken, is the closest picture we have of what rahma means.

There is a second thing in the womb, and it is the heart of the matter. What the child receives there is utterly selfless. The mother gets nothing in return. In fact she gives at a cost to herself: she is tired, she is sick, she carries a heavy

weight everywhere she goes, she aches, and through all of it the child takes and takes and gives nothing back.

That is the shape of rahma. It is a love and a care where the one giving expects nothing in return. There is a receiver and there is a giver, and the giver simply pours. You are pouring, but you are not receiving. Ultimate rahma is an environment where everything is provided for and nothing is asked of the one being held.

Now lift your eyes from the womb to the One who made it. If a mother's mercy is this overwhelming, and a mother's mercy is only a created, limited thing, then what is the mercy of the One who placed that mercy in her? The womb is the small, visible sign. Ar-Rahman and Ar-Raheem are the boundless reality it was pointing to all along.

Two names, one root, two kinds of mercy

So why two names, if they come from one root? Because the two shapes carry two different flavours, and here Ustadh Hisham draws out the two kinds of mercy they name.

Ar-Rahman fits an Arabic pattern that means something intense, extreme, overflowing, but also something that can come in a surge. Picture a man described with this same pattern as ghadban, enraged: not merely annoyed, but filled with a fierce, towering anger, the kind that floods in and, a little later, drains away. So Ar-Rahman is mercy at its most intense and unlimited. It is the mercy that reaches every creature without exception: every human, every animal, every plant, every bee, every microscopic living thing, the trees and even the walls, all of them swimming in a mercy so vast the mind cannot begin to count it.

Ar-Raheem fits a different pattern, the pattern of a settled, consistent trait. Think of calling someone ameen, consistently trustworthy, or faqih, consistently and deeply knowledgeable, not in one subject and ignorant in the next, but reliably so, all the time. So Ar-Raheem is mercy that is steady, firm, ongoing, a mercy you can lean on because it never switches off. Ar-Rahman is the surge, unimaginable in its size. Ar-Raheem is the constant, unflinching in its presence.

Together they tell you His mercy is both wider than you can grasp and steadier than you can lose.

Mercy for everyone, a mercy kept for the believer

وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا

And ever is He, to the believers, Merciful.

AL-AHZAB 33:43

There is a second, beautiful layer. Some of the scholars explain that Ar-Rahman is Allah's general mercy, the mercy that every being tastes, believer and disbeliever alike. The one who rejects Allah, who curses Him, who insults His Prophet ﷺ, even burns the Qur'an, is still given air to breathe, food to eat, clothes to wear, a roof to sleep under. Allah provides for him while he abuses Him. That is Ar-Rahman: a mercy so extreme it does not even wait for you to believe.

Ar-Raheem, on this reading, is the special mercy reserved for those who believe. The Qur'an keeps marking it out: that with the believers, in particular, He is consistently and especially merciful. So you can hold the two together like this: Ar-Rahman, unlimited mercy poured over all creation, and Ar-Raheem, a particular and unfailing mercy kept for the hearts that turned to Him. We will see, before the end, exactly what that special mercy is.

Notice something easy to miss. There is a whole surah named Ar-Rahman. There is no surah named Al-Malik or Al-Quddus, but there is one carrying this name, and it opens by saying that the Most Merciful is the one who taught the Qur'an and created the human being. The name also sits in every prayer you pray, and it is woven into one of the most beloved names a Muslim child can carry, Abdur-Rahman, the servant of the Most Merciful.

There is a reason for all this repetition. The Arabs the Prophet ﷺ was sent to did not actually know this name. When they were commanded to prostrate to Ar-Rahman, they asked, who is Ar-Rahman? At the treaty of Hdaybiyah, when the Prophet ﷺ began to write the basmala, they objected that they did not know this Ar-Rahman. So in the Makkan years, Allah pressed this name on them again and again until it sank in. Here is a striking example: there is a verse

asking why people do not look at the birds held up in the sky, and it appears in two places with almost identical wording, except in one verse Allah uses the name Ar-Rahman, and in the other He uses the name Allah. The Makkan revelation kept lifting this name, surah after surah, until a people who once asked who is Ar-Rahman could not forget Him.

Be merciful, and you will be shown mercy

Knowing this name is meant to change how you treat people. Consider a tradition that has run unbroken for fourteen centuries: when a student first comes to learn the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ, the very first hadith the teacher passes on, the first words from a chain reaching all the way back, are about mercy. Those who show mercy to others, the Most Merciful will show mercy to them. Be merciful to those on the earth, and the One above the heavens will be merciful to you.

Why that hadith first? Because knowledge can go wrong in a heart. Sometimes people gather religious learning and it makes them harsh, divisive, quick to attack. But if the first thing you ever heard from your teacher was that the merciful are shown mercy, then the way you carry your knowledge, express it, and act on it changes completely. If your learning fills you with bitterness and contempt instead of mercy, then what you took was not the knowledge of Allah at all, and you need to go and find the real thing.

Stretch this mercy as wide as it will go. Even the fish in the sea pray for the one who seeks beneficial knowledge. So do not throw your rubbish on the road, because that plastic reaches the sea, and your care, or your carelessness, reaches the creatures in it. A heart shaped by Ar-Rahman wants this mercy to spread until it touches everything that lives.

When life hurts, where is His mercy?

وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

And [mention] Job, when he called to his Lord, "Indeed, adversity has touched me, and You are the most merciful of the merciful."

AL-ANBIYA 21:83

Then comes the hard question, and it does not get dodged. If Allah is the Most Merciful, what about my pain? What about the illness, the debt, the loss, the loneliness? Is He still Ar-Rahman in that moment too?

Look at how the Prophet Ayyub spoke. For years he was struck by a terrible illness, his body broken by it, and when he finally turned to Allah he did not say, why did You do this to me. He said, harm has touched me, and You are the most merciful of the merciful. Notice the care in his words. He does not attribute the harm to Allah. He simply says it has touched him, and in the same breath he calls on Allah by His mercy. It is not about the illness. It is about how you look at the illness. It is not about the debt, but how you look at the loan. It is not about the loss, but how you choose to see it.

Allah's mercy was not only in healing Ayyub. It was also in the illness itself, because it taught him the worth of the health he once had. When Allah takes something from you, it does not always mean He is being harsh. Very often it means He is teaching you to value what you would otherwise have walked past, and that, too, is a mercy you only see once you put on the right glasses.

Ustadh Hisham gives this its own name: seeing the glass half full. Take the story of Urwah ibn az-Zubayr, one of the great scholars of the generation after the Companions. On a single journey his leg became poisoned and had to be amputated, and one of his sons was killed in an accident. When the caliph offered him sympathy for losing a limb and a son just to make the trip, Urwah refused to see it that way. Allah gave me four limbs, he said, and took only one. Allah gave me seven sons, and took only one. That is the glass half full.

Compare two ways of seeing the same cup. You can look at a half-full glass and mourn that it is half empty, or you can look and thank Allah that it is half full. Picture a man, distressed that his property had fallen from three million to one

million pounds, certain Allah was punishing him, when countless people would weep with joy to own a fraction of it. We compare ourselves to yesterday, when we should compare ourselves to zero. Imagine you woke with nothing and Allah placed a million in your hands. You would feel rich beyond measure. The wealth is the same. Only the angle changed.

This is exactly the attitude the Prophet ﷺ taught. Whoever wakes up safe in his home, healthy in his body, with enough food for the day, it is as though the whole world has been given to him. You have shelter, health, and today's provision. What more are you really lacking? Tomorrow's provision is already written; it will come. The believer who learns to see this way is the one truly living.

Go and look for the traces of His mercy

فَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ آثَارِ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ كَيْفَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا

So observe the effects of the mercy of Allah - how He gives life to the earth after its lifelessness.

AR-RUM 30:50

Allah does not leave His mercy hidden. He commands you to go out and look for its traces in the world. Look at how He revives a dead earth and pulls living, fruiting plants from soil that does not move or breathe. Someone who understands Ar-Rahman simply does not look at the world like everyone else.

Here is a list to notice. Why are so many creatures born inside a shell, protected, instead of out in the open? Why was the human being formed in the safety of the womb? Why does dead soil bring out fruit in a hundred different colours and flavours, when Allah could have made every taste identical? Even the tea could have tasted the same everywhere, and instead there is sweet Somali tea in one place and spiced karak in another. Why are people made in so many shapes and temperaments, so that if you do not get along with one, you find ease with another? Every one of these is a quiet act of mercy from Ar-Rahman.

There is a hadith that weighs how much mercy this really is. Allah divided mercy into a hundred parts, kept ninety-nine with Himself, and sent down just one to this world. And that single part is the source of all the mercy you have ever

seen: every mother bending over her child, every animal tending its young, every kindness between strangers, all of it is one per cent. The other ninety-nine are kept for the Day of Judgement. So when you watch a mother weep with love over the very child who put her through months of pain, you are watching a trace of Ar-Rahman. It could have been otherwise. He made it this way.

The greatest mercy, and the treasure behind the wall

So what is that special mercy, the Ar-Raheem mercy, kept for the believer in this life? Not just existing, because the disbeliever exists too. The greatest mercy Allah gives the believer in this world is guidance. It is faith. It is the Qur'an and Islam itself.

Here is why it is the greatest. This guidance turns the world into something like a garden for the believing heart. You may be tired, hungry, in debt, alone, or in pain, and yet because of this light from the Qur'an you can still taste a kind of peace, even joy, in your life. Set that against those who have every material thing and no guidance, the famous and wealthy who are quietly miserable, because a life lived turned away from the remembrance of Allah is, as the Qur'an describes, a constricted life. Look at the sobering reality of our age: so many people, with everything the world can offer, still think of ending their lives, precisely because they were taught they do not need their Lord.

The Qur'an calls itself a healing and a mercy for the believers. That is the secret of the believer the Prophet ﷺ described: that his whole affair is good. When good reaches him he is grateful, and that is good for him; when hardship reaches him he is patient, and that too is good for him. He sees the glass half full no matter what fills it, and to live like that is to taste a piece of Paradise before Paradise. That is the special mercy of Ar-Raheem.

Ustadh Hisham closes with one of the most beautiful images in the Qur'an. When Khidr and Musa came upon two orphans in a town, Khidr rebuilt a leaning wall for no apparent reason. Beneath that wall, it turned out, lay a treasure their late father had left them, and Allah willed it stay hidden until they grew strong enough to claim it.

Read your own life through that wall. The wall is the test. The wall is the pain, the struggle, the long years without. But beneath the wall, always, there is treasure. The orphans lived years of loss and loneliness with no idea what was buried beneath their feet, and every part of that hardship was wrapped, from beginning to end, in the mercy of Allah. When you truly understand Ar-Rahman and Ar-Raheem, you stop reading your difficulties as punishment. You make peace with them, because you know that behind the wall, His mercy has hidden something for you. And a person who sees the world this way does not pass his pain on to others. He was held in mercy, so he holds others in mercy too.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

رَبِّ إِنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

Rabbi inni massaniya ad-durru wa anta arhamu ar-rahimin

My Lord, adversity has touched me, and You are the most merciful of the merciful.

How to live these names

- **Be the mercy you have received.** You were held, fed, and provided for in the womb before you could ask for a thing. Carry that forward. Show mercy to people, to animals, even to the earth, and the Most Merciful has promised to show mercy to you.
- **Pour without keeping score.** Real rahma expects nothing back. Give to your family, your neighbours, and strangers the way a mother gives to the child in her womb: quietly, at a cost to yourself, asking for no return.
- **Read your pain through His mercy.** Like Ayyub, do not attribute the harm to Allah and do not read every hardship as punishment. Behind the wall there is treasure. What was taken often teaches you the worth of what remains.
- **Count from zero, not from yesterday.** See the glass half full. Imagine you had nothing and Allah enriched you with everything you do have. Safe, healthy, and fed for today, you already hold what the Prophet ﷺ called the whole world.

- **Go and look for the traces.** Allah commands you to observe His mercy in the world. Watch a documentary, walk in nature, notice the hundred flavours and shapes He could have made identical. Each one is a sign of Ar-Rahman if you have eyes for it.

Why these names stay with us

We open almost everything we do with these two names, and most of us have never stopped to feel their weight. Ar-Rahman and Ar-Raheem are the mercy that held you in the womb before you could ask for anything, the mercy that feeds even those who turn away, the one per cent of His mercy spread through the whole world while ninety-nine are saved for the Day you meet Him. To understand them is to stop seeing your life as a list of things gone wrong, and to start seeing the traces of His care everywhere, even behind the walls.

O Allah, Ar-Rahman, Ar-Raheem, You are the most merciful of the merciful. Pour over us the mercy that asks nothing back, make us people who carry it to everyone we meet, let us see the treasure behind every wall, and gather us under the mercy You have saved for the Day we stand before You.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Ar-Rahman and Ar-Raheem (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Ghaffar and Al-Ghafur

The Forgiving

الْغَفَّارُ

Al-Ghaffar

The Ever-Forgiving

الْغَفُورُ

Al-Ghafur

The Most Forgiving



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k3pHcxYqQpA>

Last time you stood in the warmth of His mercy, the two names that open the Qur'an. Today that mercy keeps pouring, but it takes a new shape, the one many of us reach for in the dark: His forgiveness. Al-Ghaffar and Al-Ghafur, the Ever-Forgiving and the Most Forgiving.

There is a pattern hidden in the way Allah names Himself, and once you see it you cannot unsee it. When these names of forgiveness are mentioned, mercy is almost always standing right behind them. Ustadh Hisham starts there, with a question most of us never thought to ask: why does Allah's mercy always come last?

Why mercy always comes last

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ
حَسَنَاتٍ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful.

AL-FURQAN 25:70

Open the Qur'an and watch how these names travel. They rarely come alone. They come in pairs, two names set side by side, and there is an order to it that is easy to miss. The name of forgiveness goes first, and the name of mercy, Ar-Raheem, comes after it, again and again, like a signature at the end of a letter. Forgiving and Merciful. Forgiving and Merciful.

Sit with that order, because it is telling you something about God. The Prophet ﷺ taught us that Allah said His mercy overcomes His wrath. Everything Allah does flows out of that mercy: even His tests, even His punishment, are a form of it. So when He forgives you, when He accepts your apology and erases your sin, that forgiveness is not a separate thing standing on its own. It is rising up out of His mercy. He forgives because He is merciful. The forgiveness is the act; the mercy is the spring it pours from.

Here is how Ustadh Hisham puts it. A strong person can lift, can run, can carry, and all of it traces back to one thing: his strength. In the same way, Allah covers the sinner, pardons the criminal, and wipes the record clean, and all of it traces back to one thing: His mercy. That is why mercy gets the final word. Hold on to that, because every name we are about to meet is a different way that mercy reaches you when you have fallen.

The file you sent to the recycle bin

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful."

AZ-ZUMAR 39:53

Start with the word itself. At its root, to forgive in Arabic, ghafara, is to cover something over. When you take fresh food out of the oven and lay a cloth over it, you have done this: you have concealed it, sheltered it, sealed it from view. When a body is laid in the grave and the earth is gently drawn over it, that too is this word. So Al-Ghaffar and Al-Ghafur are the One who covers your sins, who consistently and constantly draws a veil across what you have done.

Ustadh Hisham gives this a picture you will never lose. Imagine a file on your computer you want gone. You click it, you press delete, and it slides into the recycle bin. Is it really gone? Not yet. It sits there for thirty days, and even after the bin is emptied, a specialist could open up your hard drive and find the trace of it: a log, a history, a record that on such a date a file by that name existed and was deleted. The thing is hidden, but it is not erased.

That is the first level of forgiveness, and it is breathtaking on its own. When Allah forgives your sin as Al-Ghaffar, He covers it. On the Day of Judgement you will not be punished for it, you will not be questioned about it, it will not be held against you. And yet, if you went to the angels who write on your right and your left, the record would still be there. The earth on which you sinned still witnessed it. The angels still know it happened. Allah has shielded you from every consequence, but the trace remains. This is the mercy that lets you walk into the Day of Judgement with your sins covered, when by rights they should have been on open display.

The plate so clean no one knows what was on it

فَأُولَئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَافِيًا غَفُورًا

For those it is expected that Allah will pardon them, and Allah is ever Pardoning and Forgiving.

AN-NISA 4:99

Now go one level higher. If covering the file leaves a history behind, what would it take to leave no trace at all? You would have to format the hard drive, scrub it down to nothing, until no specialist on earth could ever prove a file had been there. The machine is reborn. It is as if nothing was ever stored on it. That is a different name of Allah, Al-Afuww, the One who erases.

Picture it at a table. You bring a plate of baklava and pass it round, and when it comes back to you, you can still see the shape of what was there, the crumbs, the syrup, the gaps. That is forgiveness that covers. But then there are people who clean a plate so completely that when it returns you cannot tell what it ever held. No crumb, no smear, no clue. That is Al-Afuww. When Allah pardons you at this level, the angels themselves forget the deed. It is lifted clean out of your book. No earth remembers it, no record holds it, no one in all creation knows it happened except Allah, and you will never meet its consequences again. You stand as new as a newborn child.

This is why Ustadh Hisham urges you to be ambitious with Allah. Do not crawl to Him asking only that today's sins be covered. Ask for the whole plate cleaned. There is a du'a Allah Himself taught at the very close of Al-Baqarah, and notice how it climbs: pardon us, erase the sin and its every effect; and forgive us, conceal it from the eyes of people; and have mercy on us, keep being gentle with us despite all our history. Pardon, then cover, then mercy. The believer aims high, because the One being asked has no ceiling.

Forgiveness for everyone, refused only by one kind of heart

وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَىٰ

But indeed, I am the Perpetual Forgiver of whoever repents and believes and does righteousness and then continues in guidance.

TA-HA 20:82

There is a difference worth holding between His mercy and His forgiveness. His mercy reaches absolutely everyone: every Muslim and non-Muslim, every human, every animal, every plant, even the walls, all of creation swims in some portion of it. His forgiveness is just as vast, but it has a door, and you have to choose to walk through it.

Is there any sin so large He will not forgive it? Only one: that you make something equal to Him and meet Him still refusing to turn back. Short of that, His forgiveness is for everyone and for every deed. There is a sobering hadith that says all of this ummah will enter Paradise except the one who refuses. And who would ever refuse? The one who hears the way back and turns from it, who is shown the door and will not walk through. Forgiveness, in the end, comes to those who seek it and ask for it. It is poured out for the one who reaches for it, and only withheld from the hand that will not open.

So do not let the size of your record fool you into despair. Read that line again: do not despair of the mercy of Allah, for He forgives all sins, all of them. When you look at your own history and count the black marks and decide there is no hope for someone like you, that is exactly the lie this name was revealed to break. He calls Himself the Perpetual Forgiver of the one who turns and believes and walks on in guidance. The door is open. The only question is whether you will step through it.

Tawba is not an apology, it is a U-turn

فَتَلَقَّى آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

Then Adam received from his Lord [some] words, and He accepted his repentance. Indeed, it is He who is the Accepting of Repentance, the Merciful.

AL-BAQARAH 2:37

Alongside forgiveness, the Qur'an gives you a second movement to make: tawba. The word comes from a root that means to return. Imagine you are driving, sure of your road, and the map suddenly tells you that you took a wrong turn and must make a U-turn. You were going one way; now you swing the whole car around and head back the way you were meant to go. That is tawba. You were travelling away from Allah, lost in disobedience, and now you turn the car around and drive home to Him.

The very first U-turn in the Qur'an is our father Adam. He was told to keep away from one tree, and the enemy whispered until that one forbidden thing looked like the best thing on earth, and he slipped. Then he realised his mistake, and here is the tender part: no human had ever apologised before. Adam did not know how. So Allah taught him the words, and the moment he turned, Allah turned to him. And notice the name Allah chooses to seal that scene: At-Tawwab, the One who accepts the return, and right beside it, Ar-Raheem. Mercy, again, getting the final word.

There is a deeper meaning the scholars of the language draw out of At-Tawwab, and Ustadh Hisham lingers on it, because it will change how you read your own life. At-Tawwab does not only mean the One who accepts your turning. It means the One who inspires you to turn in the first place. You are drowning in something, a habit, a screen, a night you cannot climb out of, and one morning a feeling rises in your chest that says, I cannot live like this anymore. Where did that feeling come from? Who placed it there? That was Him, turning to you before you ever turned to Him. He even sends a little fear into the heart for this, so we do not grow complacent imagining everything is soft and nothing is at stake. The pull you feel toward Him is already His mercy, reaching for you first.

Tawba is to change: the man who ate his idol

Here is the part we most often miss. Tawba is not finished when you say sorry. To say to Allah, forgive me, I was wrong, is real, and it is the first level. But the highest tawba, the one that pulls the whole of His mercy into your life, is to change. Not only to feel remorse, but to become a different person.

Take the man we all love and revere, Umar ibn al-Khattab. Before Islam he was known for his temper, a fierce, hard man. He used to tell one story against himself with a laugh: he once set out on a journey and forgot his idol at home, so he shaped a new god out of dates, and later, when hunger struck, he ate it. A man who would mould a god from dates and then eat it. Now travel thirty years down his life. A man storms into his court to insult him to his face, telling the leader of the believers he is unjust and that Allah will punish him. Umar's face flushes red, his hand ready, and someone recites to him the verse that tells the Prophet ﷺ to take what is easy, command good, and turn away from the ignorant. And the same Umar who ate his idol begins to weep, and lets the man go.

What softened the most powerful man on earth? The words of Allah. That is tawba. The one who carved gods out of food became the one who would weep at a single verse and stand with the Qur'an deep into the night. He did not merely apologise for his past; he was transformed by it. And it is worth asking what set that transformation in motion. The first name of Allah that Umar ever heard recited from the Qur'an was Ar-Rahman. Mercy was the doorway he walked through, and forgiveness was the road he never left.

He does not just forgive, He exchanges

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا

And those who do not invoke with Allah another deity or kill the soul which Allah has forbidden [to be killed], except by right, and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse. And whoever should do that will meet a penalty.

AL-FURQAN 25:68

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful.

AL-FURQAN 25:70

Now watch the Qur'an do something almost unbelievable. It lists the heaviest sins a person can carry: associating others with Allah, taking a life unjustly, fornication. It promises that whoever does these will meet a doubled punishment on the Day of Judgement and remain in it, humiliated. You feel the weight of it, the fear of it, as you are meant to. And then the door swings open: except the one who makes the U-turn, and believes, and does righteous deeds.

Here Ustadh Hisham points to a promise Allah makes nowhere else in quite this way. We have already climbed two levels: He covers the sin as Al-Ghaffar, He erases it without trace as Al-Afuww. But there is something higher still. For the one who truly returns, Allah will not merely wipe the evil deeds away. He will swap them for good ones. The very sins become rewards. Imagine someone who took a hundred lives, who turns back to Allah and changes, and is granted the reward of having given life to a hundred souls. Imagine someone who had memorised every song of his age, who returns and changes, and is rewarded

as though he had memorised the whole Qur'an. He does not just clear the debt. He turns the debt into wealth.

But read the verse closely, because the change is the condition. It does not say repent and believe and do nothing more. It says repent, believe, and do righteous work. Returning to Allah is not only words; it is fixing yourself. You drop the cigarette and reach for the miswak. You close what you should not have been watching and open Surah Al-Furqan instead. You put down the music and let the Qur'an fill the silence. You replace. And when you replace, the exchange rate of Allah, unlike any currency on earth, never once disappoints you.

Come to Him running

إِذْ أَوَى الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا
مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا

[Mention] when the youths retreated to the cave and said, "Our Lord, grant us from Yourself mercy and prepare for us from our affair right guidance."

AL-KAHF 18:10

If His forgiveness is this limitless, why does it pour into one life and only trickle into another? Because of effort. The Prophet ﷺ conveyed to us that Allah said: if My servant draws near to Me a hand's span, I draw near to him an arm's length; if he comes to Me walking, I come to him running. The mercy is infinite, but the share you taste is measured by the steps you take toward it. Those who give the bare minimum receive the minimum. Those who come running find Him already running to meet them.

Look at the seven young men of the cave. They did not lie in their beds and mutter, grant us mercy, and roll over. They stood up before their king and declared they would never worship anything but Allah, they got up and fled, they searched out a safe cave, and only then, having moved, did they call on Him for mercy.

So if you want His forgiveness to flood your life, do not wait for it lying down. Stand the way they stood. Go and find your cave. Make the move, and then ask,

and watch His response arrive. There is no record so long that effort cannot meet it, because the One you are running to said that if your sins reached from the earth to the sky, and you came to Him seeking forgiveness without ever associating anything with Him, He would meet you with forgiveness as wide as all of it, and would not care.

Forgive, and you will be forgiven

وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

And let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.

AN-NUR 24:22

Here is where this name turns and looks straight at us. So many of us long for Allah's forgiveness while we refuse to give a drop of it to anyone else. The Prophet ﷺ was clear: the one who shows no mercy is shown none, and the one who does not forgive is not forgiven, and the one who will not overlook the faults of others will not have his own faults overlooked.

When the slander against our mother Aisha tore through Madinah, one of those repeating it was Mistah, a poor believer whose living expenses Abu Bakr himself was paying. Imagine paying a man's rent and then hearing him spread lies about your own daughter. Abu Bakr swore he would never spend on him again, and who could blame him. Then Allah revealed a verse to him directly: let the people of virtue and means among you not swear off giving to their relatives and the needy; let them pardon and overlook; do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Abu Bakr said, yes, by Allah, I love that He forgive me, and he restored every penny.

Look too at Yusuf at the height of his story, his family gathered, his parents bowing, the dream of his childhood come true. He raises his hands and recounts his whole life to Allah in gratitude, the prison, the reunion, the desert journey of his family. But there is one chapter he quietly leaves out: the well. The brothers who threw him into it are sitting right there, already forgiven, and he will not name their crime even before his Lord. That is what it looks like to

truly let go. We do the opposite. We lend a hundred and remind the borrower for six years. We make peace and then, six months on, drag up the very thing we forgave. Allah does not forget, but you and I can. So open a new page today, with just one person you have cut off, and forgive them in your heart. There was a man the Prophet ﷺ named among the people of Paradise, and his secret, when they searched for it, was small and enormous at once: he went to sleep each night having emptied his heart of every grudge.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

رَبَّنَا وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا

Rabbana wa'fu anna waghfir lana warhamna, anta mawlana

Our Lord, pardon us, and forgive us, and have mercy upon us. You are our protector.

How to live these names

- **Ask for the whole plate cleaned.** Do not crawl to Allah asking only that today's slips be covered. Ask Him to pardon, to erase, to leave no trace, the way the Prophet ﷺ taught: pardon me, forgive me, have mercy on me. The One you are asking has no ceiling, so aim high.
- **Never despair of His forgiveness.** However long your record, He forgives all sins for the one who turns to Him without shirk. The only sin too big is meeting Him still refusing to come back. Do not let the size of your past talk you out of the door.
- **Make a U-turn, then keep driving.** Tawba is not only saying sorry; it is changing. Drop the habit and replace it with a better one: the cigarette for the miswak, the song for the Qur'an. Returning to Allah means becoming someone new, the way Umar did.
- **Come to Him running.** His mercy is infinite, but your share is measured by your effort. Like the youths of the cave, do not ask lying down. Stand up, move, seek your safe ground, and then call on Him, and watch His answer arrive.

- **Forgive others to be forgiven.** The one who shows no mercy is shown none. Open your contacts, find one person you have cut off, and let it go, the way Abu Bakr restored Mistah and Yusuf left the well unmentioned. Empty your heart of grudges before you sleep.

Why these names stay with us

We carry sins we are sure cannot be undone, and we whisper for forgiveness without ever feeling how wide it runs. Al-Ghaffar and Al-Ghafur are the mercy that covers what you have done so it brings you no harm, and behind them stands a forgiveness that can erase a sin until no creature remembers it, and beyond even that, a generosity that trades your worst deeds for good ones. The only door that stays shut is the one you refuse to walk through. To know these names is to stop reading your past as a sentence, and to start running back to the One who is already running toward you.

O Allah, Al-Ghaffar, Al-Ghafur, pardon us and forgive us and have mercy on us. Cover the sins we cannot bear to be seen, erase what we long to leave behind, and exchange our worst for Your best. Make us people who forgive as we hope to be forgiven, and let us come to You running, until we meet You with a record You have already cleaned.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Ghaffar and Al-Ghafur (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Malik and Maalik al-Mulk

The King and the Owner

الْمَلِكُ

Al-Malik

The King, The Sovereign

مَالِكِ الْمَلِكِ

Maalik al-Mulk

Master of all dominion



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVxq43U9n1g>

This name is everywhere. It runs through the whole Qur'an, it crowns the Fatihah you recite in every prayer, and you meet it at the very close of the Book, in the surah you reach for whenever you seek refuge. Al-Malik, the King. And alongside it, almost the same word with one letter stretched, Maalik, the Owner.

Ustadh Hisham places these two names side by side on purpose, because the Qur'an itself recites them side by side. Once you can feel the difference between a king and an owner, and then realise Allah is both at once, you will start to hold everything you own a little more loosely, and you will sleep easier at night.

Two names the Qur'an recites side by side

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Sovereign of the Day of Recompense.

AL-FATIHAH 1:4

Begin where you begin every prayer. In the opening surah you praise the Lord of the worlds, the Most Merciful, and then this: the Master of the Day of Judgement. The Qur'an was sent down in more than one mode of recitation, and this single verse carries two of them. In one it is read *Maaliki yawm id-din*, the Owner of that Day. In another it is read *Maliki yawm id-din*, the King of that Day. Both are Qur'an, both are true, and together they tell you that Allah is at once the King and the Owner.

These two words are sisters from one root, the letters meem, laam, kaaf. Malik is a king, the one with authority over an entire kingdom. Maalik is an owner, the one who holds the title deed to a particular thing. Hold that distinction in your hand, because the whole lesson turns on it: a king and an owner are not the same, and Allah is both.

The difference between a king and an owner

Picture it plainly. An owner holds one specific thing and may do with it as he pleases. You own a phone, so you can sell it, gift it, lend it, or smash it, and in Islamic law it is yours to dispose of. A king is something else. A king has authority and responsibility over a whole kingdom, a vast and complicated thing, full of people rather than objects, and that authority comes with a duty to care for it.

Now notice the line that separates them, because Ustadh Hisham presses on it until it clicks. A king is not the owner of your phone. The king of your country cannot walk in tomorrow and announce that your house is his, or your car, or the jacket on your back. He reigns over the kingdom, but he does not own every object inside it. Anyone can become an owner. Very few ever become a king.

And here is the beauty. Allah is both at the same time. He is the King with authority over the whole of creation, and He is the Owner of every single thing within it, down to the last atom. There is one verse where He gathers both into a single breath, and it became a du'a believers have whispered for centuries.

Do we really own anything?

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكُ الْمَلِكِ تُؤْتِي الْمَلِكَ مِنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمَلِكَ مِنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ
مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Say, "O Allah, Owner of Sovereignty, You give sovereignty to whom You will and You take sovereignty away from whom You will. You honor whom You will and You humble whom You will. In Your hand is [all] good. Indeed, You are over all things competent.

AAL 'IMRAN 3:26

Start with the owner. People everywhere strive to become homeowners, and there is a real comfort in it. The renter whose boiler breaks calls the landlord and goes back to sleep; it is not his problem. The owner whose boiler breaks owns the problem too. Every cracked pipe, every fault, every small repair is now his to carry. To own a thing is to be responsible for its every detail.

But do we truly own anything here? Ask yourself what ownership actually grants. The reason your own phone feels different from a borrowed one is freedom: you can do with it whatever you wish. Yet try it at the edges. If a centre owned this building, could it burn the whole thing to the ground with no consequence? It could not. If you owned your phone outright, could you hurl it into the river and walk away clean? There are always strings, always consequences, always a court or a cost waiting. There is nothing on this earth you own so completely that you can do anything you like with it.

Only One can. Everything small and large in this world is the property of Allah, and an owner does as He wishes with what He owns. He gives and He withholds, He grants life and takes it, He sends the calm and He sends the storm, because it is all His. We struggle with this only when we forget it, when we let ourselves believe a thing was ours. Then He takes it back, and we are stunned, when the truth was simply returning to the surface: it was never ours to begin with.

Everything you hold is a library book

Here is the picture Ustadh Hisham leaves you with, and it changes how you carry every blessing. Think of a child carried for nine months, who becomes, in the mother's heart, mine. Then, at the very end, the doctor says the child did not live. The grief is crushing, and part of what makes it so heavy is the certainty she had built: this one belongs to me. The same shock visits us in smaller forms. The car we grew used to is written off in an accident, and we are floored, because somewhere we decided it was ours.

Now watch how the Prophet ﷺ carried it. When his daughter's little boy lay dying, he sent her words to sit with slowly: to Allah belongs what He took, and to Allah belongs what He gave, and everything with Him has an appointed term, so be patient and seek the reward. And when the small body was lifted into his hands, his own tears flowed. Read that twice. When Allah gives you something you call it yours, but He only lent it. Your father was a gift on loan; when the term was up, He took him back.

So picture a library book, the old kind, stamped on the front: due in two weeks. Every day of those two weeks you read it knowing it is not yours and the date is coming. Live like that with everything you hold. Imagine an expiry date written on the back of every person and every object you love, one you cannot see but know is there. You would treat them all so differently. If you knew your mother had three weeks left, you would hold those weeks like glass. Everything in this world is on a temporary basis, and the name Al-Malik is what teaches you to carry it that way.

Why loss comes, and what to say when it does

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ
وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ

And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient,

AL-BAQARAH 2:155

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return."

AL-BAQARAH 2:156

There is a pattern worth noticing across the Qur'an. Whenever Allah speaks of His Mulk, His dominion, He tends to set beside it His power to do exactly as He wills: He forgives whom He wills, He punishes whom He wills, He creates as He wills, and to Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. The King mentions, in the same breath, that He acts freely over all of it. That is hard for us, because we are attached to the feeling that we hold some power and own some things. So when He takes them, it is the one reminder strong enough to teach us they were never ours.

And He has told us plainly that the taking will come. He promises to test us with a touch of fear, a touch of hunger, and a thinning of wealth and lives and fruits. Fear is the loss of safety; hunger is the loss of food; and the rest is the loss of the people and provision we lean on. Why let us lose them at all? To break the quiet illusion that they belonged to us, and to turn us back to the One they always belonged to.

So when something is taken, the believer has a response ready, and the Qur'an names it in the very next breath: give glad tidings to the patient, those who, when calamity strikes, say we belong to Allah and to Him we return. Say it and mean it, not as a phrase copied into a group chat the moment someone dies, but as a truth you have understood: He owns me, He may take what He lent, and the loss was never really a loss. He gave it, and at its due time He took it back.

The King who comes down each night

If Allah is the Owner and we are His property, then something follows that we would rather not admit: we need Him, the way a house needs its landlord. When a pipe bursts, the first call is to the one who owns the place. When something breaks in your life, the first call should be to Al-Malik, because who else repairs what He owns and made? We tell ourselves we are self-sufficient, standing on

our own. In reality we are entirely dependent, and we only feel it when something we counted on is suddenly stripped away.

Here is how near this King keeps Himself, and it is one of the most moving things in the lesson. In the last third of every night, Allah descends in a way that befits His majesty, beyond how we can picture, and the first thing He says is: I am the King. Then He calls out, who is asking of Me, that I may give him; who is calling on Me, that I may answer him; who seeks My forgiveness, that I may forgive him, and He stays so until dawn. Sit with that. The King of all kings comes down to ask where His servants are. Be awake when He calls.

And unlike the kings of this world, His vaults never run dry. He tells us that if we possessed the very treasuries of His mercy, we would clutch them shut out of fear of spending, because the human being is tight by nature. He is not. In a sacred tradition He says that if the first and the last of mankind and jinn all stood in one place and each asked of Him everything they wished, and He gave it to every one, it would diminish what He has by no more than a needle dipped into the ocean takes from the sea. So never feel shy before Him. Be modest with people if you like, but with the King of all kings, ask for the impossible, because to Him it is nothing.

Lord, then King, then God

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ

Say, "I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind,

AN-NAS 114:1

مَلِكِ النَّاسِ

The Sovereign of mankind,

AN-NAS 114:2

The God of mankind,

AN-NAS 114:3

Look at the order in the surah of refuge. Allah names Himself first the Lord of mankind, then the King of mankind, then the God of mankind, and the sequence is not random. The Lord, the Rabb, is the one who nurtures and sustains and brings a thing from nothing to its full potential, the way parents, teachers, and farmers nurture in their small spheres. There are many such carers in a kingdom. But how many kings rule a single kingdom? One. And how many true gods are there over all of it? One alone.

So the Qur'an moves from the wide word to the narrow one. Rabb fits many; Malik fits far fewer; Ilah belongs to Allah alone. It climbs from the general to the most exclusive, saving the highest name for last, and even the King is a step on the way to the God of all. This is the eloquence of the Qur'an: every word set exactly where it carries the most weight.

And His kingship is not like theirs. The kings and queens of this world answer to parliaments and laws and louder powers behind the curtain; their authority is often a symbol, limited, on loan. Allah answers to no one. His dominion runs from this earth out to the furthest reaches of the heavens, every part of it under His control, with no force above Him to check or command Him. That is what it means that He, and He alone, is the King.

Stop worrying about who sits on the throne

قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ اسْتَعِينُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاصْبِرُوا ۗ إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ يُورِثُهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ۗ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

Said Moses to his people, "Seek help through Allah and be patient. Indeed, the earth belongs to Allah. He causes to inherit it whom He wills of His servants. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous."

AL-A'RAF 7:128

Once you know who truly owns the kingdom, you stop being shaken by the rise and fall of rulers. We watch kings and presidents and prime ministers come and go and our hearts lurch with the headlines, and some of us ache for the day a believing king will set everything right. The people of Musa felt exactly this. They had been crushed before he came and were still suffering after, and they grew impatient, because the rescue did not arrive overnight. There was no next-day delivery for an entire kingdom.

And Musa's answer to them is the answer to us: seek help through Allah and be patient, for the earth belongs to Allah, and He gives it to inherit to whichever of His servants He wills, and the good end is for those who are mindful of Him. Leadership over a patch of this earth is a test, not a trophy. There are seasons when the believers are tested from below, as servants and subjects, and seasons when they are tested from above, with power and wealth and fame, which is by far the harder test. History has handed us both. When Banu Israel were finally given leadership, many grew lazy and ungrateful rather than better. Power has spoiled more hearts than poverty ever did.

So read history the way it truly runs: in His hands. Every empire that rose, every one that fell, every king who swore his reign would never end, was on a short lease the whole time. The Owner of all kingship gives it to whom He wills and takes it from whom He wills, and there is wisdom under all of it. When you are weak, be patient; when you are strong, beware. Either way, the throne was never the point.

The King who never dies

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ

Everyone upon it [i.e., the earth] will perish,

AR-RAHMAN 55:26

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor.

AR-RAHMAN 55:27

Every human king shares one wish: that his reign would never end. It is the oldest pattern in power. The tyrant who takes the throne wants to die on it, and removes anyone who reaches for it after him. But every king has an end. Each one who let the taste of power rise to his throat and imagined he would savour it forever was, in time, shown by the King of all kings who the real King is. Everyone upon the earth will perish, and only the Face of your Lord remains, the Owner of Majesty and Honour.

There is a famous scene that strips a kingdom down to its true worth. The scholar Ibn as-Sammak came before the caliph Harun ar-Rashid, who had a basin of cool water brought to him, a real luxury in the heat of Baghdad. The scholar asked him: if you were dying of thirst and could not have this water unless you bought it, what would you pay? Half my kingdom, said the caliph. And once you had drunk it, the scholar asked, and your body could not release it, what would you give to be relieved? The other half, he answered. So the scholar told him plainly: a kingdom you would trade entirely for a drink of water and the ability to pass it is not a kingdom worth fighting over.

Set that beside the kingdom of Allah and every earthly crown looks like a toy. The kings of this world are jokers next to Him. He is alive and does not die; He does not rise and does not fall. Fuel prices climb and crash, currencies strengthen and weaken, governments turn over, and through all of it the One in control does not waver. When everything around you is uncertain, that is where your peace lives: the variables are in the hands of a King who is fixed, constant, and never overthrown.

A landlord who wants the best for you

وَاللَّهُ مَلِكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is over all things competent.

AAL 'IMRAN 3:189

There is one more turn, and it is the warmest. A human owner can want to harm what he owns; a human king can wish ruin on his own kingdom. Not this King. When human beings climb in wealth and status, they tend to tighten, growing more rigid and more grasping the more they hold. Allah is never like that. The more you see of His dominion, the more you see a King who is generous, who is never unjust to those under His care, and who actively wants their good.

That is why He did not leave us to guess. He sent the prophets, He gave the guidance, He laid down a way of life to protect our true interests, because this is a landlord who looks after His property with love. Any other lord you might fear; this one you can trust. And notice that the Qur'an says it two ways: sometimes that to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and sometimes, with one extra word, that to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. The added word presses the point home: not a single atom exists that is not His and not under His complete control.

So let that settle the heart. The boss who bullies you, the one who oppresses you, the person making your life hard, holds no real authority at all. Complain to the King, because He puts them in their place. The Prophet ﷺ in Madina faced empires with armies in their hundreds of thousands, and what did he truly have? He had Allah. Knowing Al-Malik is what lifts the anxiety: the prices and the powers may rise and fall, but the One who owns it all does not, and He has your best interest at heart.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكِ الْمَلِكِ تُؤْتِي الْمَلِكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمَلِكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ

Allahumma Maalik al-Mulk, tu'ti al-mulka man tasha'u wa tanzī'u al-mulka mimman tasha'

O Allah, Owner of Sovereignty, You give sovereignty to whom You will and You take sovereignty away from whom You will.

How to live these names

- **Hold everything on loan.** Treat each blessing like a library book stamped with a return date you cannot see. Your phone, your car, your health, the people you love: all given for a term. When the date comes, you will grieve, but you will not be shattered, because you always knew it was His.
- **Say it before the loss, not just after.** Learn the words 'we belong to Allah and to Him we return' as a truth, not a reflex. He may take back what He lent, and what looked like a loss was a return. Meet the test of fear, hunger, and loss with patience He has already promised to reward.
- **Call the landlord first.** When something breaks in your life, turn to Al-Malik before anyone else, the way you call the owner when a pipe bursts. You are His property, and the One who owns you is the One who repairs and provides for you.
- **Be awake when the King comes down.** In the last third of the night He descends and says, I am the King, who will call on Me. Try to be there. And when you ask, ask big: His treasuries do not shrink by a needle's drop, so never be shy before the King of all kings.
- **Stop letting the headlines move your heart.** Kings and governments rise and fall entirely within His control, all on a short lease. Do your part, be patient in weakness and careful in strength, and leave the throne of history to its true Owner. He is fixed while everything else trembles.

Why these names stay with us

We meet this King at the opening of every prayer and at the close of the Book, and most of us pass over Him without pausing. Al-Malik is the King with authority over all creation, and Maalik is the Owner of every atom within it, and to know them is to loosen your grip on everything you hold. The car, the wealth, the people, the very breath in your chest are library books on loan, each with a date you cannot read. When the date comes, the one who understood these names does not say it was stolen from him. He says it was returned, and he turns to the King who never dies and asks for more.

O Allah, You are Al-Malik, the King, and Maalik al-Mulk, the Owner of all sovereignty. Teach us to hold what You lend us with open hands, to call on You first when life breaks, and to find our peace in the One who does not rise or fall. Keep us awake when You descend in the last third of the night, and gather us, Your willing property, under the care of the most generous King.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Malik and Maalik al-Mulk (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Aleem

The All-Knowing

الْعَلِيمُ

Al-Aleem

The All-Knowing



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ZQT8HGEPu0>

A few years ago the world learned a quiet, uncomfortable truth. A man who had worked inside an intelligence agency revealed that governments were listening: that there were programs reaching into people's phones, their laptops, their messages, collecting data on ordinary people who had given no permission and suspected nothing. People were shocked. Something in us could not digest the idea that our every move, our every word, was being watched.

That reaction is the doorway into today's name. Because long before any agency built a single server, there was already One who knew your every move, your every word, and your every thought, and who never once looked away. He is Al-Aleem, the All-Knowing.

The One who was always watching

We are jolted when we discover we are being tracked. A famous app sat on millions of phones, a prayer-times and adhan app trusted by Muslims, and it turned out to be quietly harvesting people's movements and selling them on. When that broke, people were stunned, deleted it overnight, talked about data and privacy. And the strange thing is why it shocks us at all. The only new part

of the story is the hardware. For all of history there has been Someone who sees what you do behind a locked door, in an empty lift, in an incognito tab nobody can trace, in the dark when you are sure no one is near.

The hackers are recent. The cameras are recent. Al-Aleem is not. He knows what happened, He knows what is going to happen, He knows what will never happen, and He knows, if it were to happen, exactly how it would happen. This is the name that strips away the comfortable illusion that some corner of your life is unseen. There is no such corner. There never was.

Knowledge so deep it has its own family of names

Al-Aleem comes from the root that gives us the word for knowledge itself, 'ilm, and across the Qur'an Allah surrounds this name with a small family of others that all circle the same truth. He is As-Samee, the All-Hearing, the One who catches every sound. He is Al-Khabeer, the All-Aware, the One to whom every hidden report has already arrived. He is Al-Hakeem, the All-Wise, the One whose knowledge is matched by perfect timing and purpose. Watch how the Qur'an uses them and a pattern appears: again and again these names sit at the close of a verse, sealing it, like a signature.

Here Ustadh Hisham draws out a beautiful detail of the language. When Allah pairs As-Samee with Al-Aleem, As-Samee almost always comes first. Why hearing before knowing? Because to hear someone, you have to be near them. You cannot make out a whisper from across a hall. But to know something, you need no nearness at all: a report can reach you about a person ten years away whom you have never met. So when Allah leads with hearing, He is telling you something tender. He is not a distant knower watching from far off. He is near enough to hear the breath of your words, and then He knows, with a knowing that has no edge and no end.

The smallest thing in creation, and He brings it out

يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِنْ تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي
السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ

[And Luqman said], "O my son, indeed if it [i.e., a wrong] should be the weight of a mustard seed and should be within a rock or [anywhere] in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Indeed, Allah is Subtle and Aware.

LUQMAN 31:16

One of the most moving places this name appears is in the words of a father to his son. When the wise Luqman set out to teach his child, the very first thing he taught was who Allah is: that He is One, with no equal beside Him. And the second thing he taught him, before the boy could even read, was the reach of Allah's knowledge.

Picture the smallest thing your eye can find. When a beam of sunlight crosses a room, you see specks of dust hanging in the air, too fine to pick up between your fingers. Luqman tells his son that even if a deed were the weight of a single mustard seed, and even if it were buried inside a great boulder, or lost somewhere in the heavens, or hidden in the depths of the earth, Allah would bring it forth. Not merely know that it is there. Bring it out. There is no vault deep enough, no rock thick enough, no distance far enough to keep a thing from a Lord who is Lateef, so subtle nothing escapes Him, and Khabeer, aware of every hidden report. This is the first inheritance a wise father chose to leave his son.

The mask, and the One who knows the real you

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ
حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

And We have already created man and know what his soul whispers to him, and We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein.

QAF 50:16

It is the nature of human beings to wear a mask. We put forward our best face, adjusted carefully for whoever is watching. This is what so much of social media really is. A profile picture in a sharp suit, a feed full of fancy restaurants, trips to Turkey and Egypt, late nights studying for the exam, the perfect human being on a screen. Ring their mother and ask what they actually do all day, and you may find a very different person, one only the people who live with them ever see. We are all, to one degree or another, curating a persona.

Al-Aleem ends the performance. You can sell whatever image you like to the whole world, but Allah knows the real you, the one hidden from everybody else. He knows the sneaky glance you stole when you were certain no one saw. He knows the secret in the chest. And here is the part that should stop you: He knows what is more hidden than a secret. There is the secret two people share. There is the secret you keep even from your own spouse. And then there is the thought that drifts at the back of your mind, the motive you have not admitted, the whisper in your subconscious you have not even noticed yourself. Allah says He created the human being and knows what his soul whispers to him, and that He is closer to him than his own jugular vein. Closer than the vein in your neck. There is nothing in you, surfaced or buried, that is outside His knowledge.

He counted it, even if no one else did

Once you feel the weight of this name, it changes how you carry the small, unseen good you do. You smile at someone who needed it. You swallow an insult, take it in one ear and let it go out the other. You bite your tongue and obey your

parents when it costs you. These feel like nothing, like deeds too tiny to register. But to Al-Aleem they registered. He knew, and He recorded. Never belittle a small good. Nothing is too small in His sight to count, and He counted it.

And this is where Ustadh Hisham reaches the gentlest turn in the whole lesson. So often we pour ourselves out for others and the thought creeps in: nobody appreciates me. I hosted the dinner. I went and prayed. I gave that person a loan, I did so much, and not one of them noticed. Hear this clearly. People may never thank you, and in truth you should not be doing it for their thanks at all. But there is a reason Allah so often pairs His knowledge with His gratitude, naming Himself the One who knows and the One who appreciates. He is Ash-Shakoor, the Most Appreciative, precisely because people so rarely are. Whatever you did in the quiet, unseen and unthanked, was seen by the only One whose seeing finally matters, and He does not forget it.

Yusuf in the dark, holding onto two names

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَشْكُو بَثِّي وَحُزْنِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

He said, "I only complain of my suffering and my grief to Allah, and I know from Allah that which you do not know."

YUSUF 12:86

There is another side to this name, and it is pure reassurance. Think of Yusuf. Some of the scholars say he was a boy of seven or eight when he was torn from his father, and a man of around fifty before they met again. Across all those years, the last words his father had spoken to him were that Allah is Knowing and Wise, Aleemun Hakeem. It may be that these were almost the only names of Allah young Yusuf carried with him. And they were enough. They held him in the bottom of a well, in the house where a woman tried to seduce him, in a prison cell, in the seat of a minister, and on the day he finally embraced his parents again.

Sit with how that worked. Yusuf was thrown into prison not for a sin but for refusing one, framed, his name dragged through a city that whispered he was the guilty one. Year after year in a dark cell for a crime he never committed. What

carried him through each day was that Allah knew the truth of what those women had done, and that He would deal with it in His own time. And He did. When the king finally summoned him, Yusuf would not even leave until the record was set straight, and he said his Lord was fully aware of the schemes of those women. When his brothers later tested their old father Ya'qub all over again, the very man who had raised Yusuf answered with the same faith: I only complain of my grief to Allah, and I know from Allah what you do not know. That is what knowing Al-Aleem gives you. When the lie wins for a while, you are not crushed, because the One who matters already knows.

Why He is also Al-Hakeem

Notice that Allah did not only call Himself Aleem to Yusuf's father. He called Himself Aleem and Hakeem together, the Knowing and the Wise. Ustadh Hisham gives a sharp, modern picture of why both are needed. A country once appointed a finance minister with every qualification you could want: a doctorate from Cambridge, the most elite schooling, books written on economics, knowledge by the shelf-full. He lasted barely a month before the markets fell and he was gone. Knowledge alone, 'ilm without hikmah, was not enough. You also need wisdom: the practiced judgement that knows what to do, and when.

Now lift that to your Lord. Allah does not merely know everything about you, what helps you and what harms you, what you can carry and what would break you. He also knows the right moment. He knows which test will make you and which would shatter you, and when each one should come. So when you are stuck, in debt, exhausted, pushed into a corner you did not choose, hold both names at once. The One who placed you there knows you inside out, better than you know yourself, and He is perfectly wise. He did not put you there by mistake. There is a reason, even when the reason is sealed from you, exactly as it was sealed from Yusuf in his cell.

This knowledge is also a shelter. There was a man who saddled his horse and rode out after Badr intending to kill the Prophet ﷺ, telling himself he had only come to see his captured son. When he reached him, the Prophet ﷺ told him plainly why he had really come, the secret plan he had spoken to no one but a companion in the dark beside the Kaaba, until the man understood that this could only be a true messenger of Allah, and he accepted Islam on the spot.

Allah, who knew the plot before it left the city, had told His Prophet ﷺ that He was watching over him with His own care. That is the other face of Al-Aleem. The same knowledge that exposes the schemer is the knowledge that guards the one He loves. How many times has His awareness steered you clear of a harm you never even saw, the accident you missed, the door that closed and turned out to be a mercy.

The Maker knows His own making

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

Does He who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the Aware?

AL-MULK 67:14

There is one more place this name keeps surfacing, and it is easy to walk past. Go to the long verses of the Qur'an that lay down the rulings of life, on loans and debts, on marriage and divorce, on inheritance and wealth, and watch how they end. Again and again they close on the fact that Allah knows. The Maker of the human being is the One legislating for the human being, and a maker knows his making.

Think of buying something secondhand with no manual in the box. The day it breaks, you do not start yanking wires at random. You search for the manufacturer's instructions, because the one who built it knows it best. Allah asks exactly this about you: does the One who created not know? And He answers it Himself in the same breath, that He is Lateef, subtle beyond reach, and Khabeer, aware of all. So when a ruling lands and your first instinct is that it makes no sense, remember who wrote it. The system He revealed, from prayer to trade to family to government, comes from the One who knows the product down to its smallest part, and time and again what looked strange turns out, later, to have been the very thing we needed.

He is listening, so speak

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

And [mention] when Abraham was raising the foundations of the House and [with him] Ishmael, [saying], "Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed, You are the Hearing, the Knowing."

AL-BAQARAH 2:127

There is a last context where this name appears, and it is the most inviting of all. When Allah wants us to call on Him, He reminds us that He hears and He knows. When the wife of Imran was carrying her child, she lifted her hands and dedicated what was in her womb to Allah, and she sealed her prayer by calling Him the Hearing, the Knowing. When Ibrahim and his son Ismail were raising the very foundations of the Kaaba, lifting the heaviest, holiest building on earth brick by brick, they prayed that Allah would accept it from them, and they ended on the same two names: indeed You are the Hearing, the Knowing. They were saying: these stones are small, but our hope is enormous, and You hear us when no one else can.

That is the gift hidden inside a frightening name. Imagine someone picks up the phone and then says nothing, the line open while they get on with something else, and you are left listening to a car door and silence. Why call at all, if you are not going to speak? Al-Aleem is the opposite. He is actively listening, waiting for you to begin, and yet so often we call and fall silent, pouring our hearts out to people who turn us away while saying nothing to the One who never does. People will tell you it is too late, that they do not want to hear your story, to come back tomorrow. Allah hears you in the dead of night while the world sleeps, hears the whisper you can barely voice, and He never turns away. So it is time to speak. Say something, anything, because He is listening.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

Rabbana taqabbal minna innaka anta as-Samee al-Aleem

Our Lord, accept this from us. Indeed, You are the Hearing, the Knowing.

How to live this name

- **Live as the watched, not the unwatched.** The locked door, the empty lift, the incognito tab: Al-Aleem sees all of it. Let the quiet truth that you are never unobserved shape what you do when you think no one is looking, because there has always been Someone looking.
- **Drop the mask before Him.** You can sell any image you like to the world, but He knows the real you, down to the thought you have not admitted to yourself. Stop performing for Allah and simply be honest with the One who already knows what your soul whispers.
- **Never belittle a hidden good.** The swallowed insult, the small kindness, the obedience that cost you: He counted every one. Do good even when no one notices, and do not chase people's thanks, because Al-Aleem saw it and He is the One who appreciates.
- **Hold on when the lie is winning.** Like Yusuf in his cell, when you are wronged and no one believes you, take refuge in the fact that Allah knows the truth and is perfectly wise. He will deal with it in His time. Your only job is patience.
- **Speak to Him, out loud.** He is actively listening, waiting for you to begin. Do not call and stay silent. Pour out to Allah what you would tell no one else, in the dark of the night, because He hears the whisper and never turns away.

Why this name stays with us

We are unsettled to learn a stranger has been tracking our phone, and we never stop to feel that the One who made us has known us all along, more intimately than any agency could dream. Al-Aleem is the name that ends the per-

formance and ends the loneliness at once. He sees the mask and the face beneath it, He counted the good you thought no one noticed, He knows the truth when you are wronged and the world believes the lie, and He is listening, right now, for you to say a single word. To understand this name is to stop hiding and start speaking, and to walk through a hard life trusting that the One who placed you in it knows you better than you know yourself, and is wiser than you can see.

O Allah, Al-Aleem, You know what our souls whisper before we do, and You are nearer to us than our jugular vein. Make us honest before You when we are tempted to perform, let us never belittle a hidden good, comfort us with Your knowledge when we are wronged, and loosen our tongues to speak to You in the night, for indeed You are the Hearing, the Knowing.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Aleem (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Ar-Raqib

The Watchful Protector

الرَّقِيبُ

Ar-Raqib

The Ever-Watchful



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqcyMdMM71E>

There is a feeling everyone knows: someone has your back. Someone is watching out for you, ready to step in, refusing to let you fall. Now imagine that someone never blinks, never sleeps, and never misses a thing. That is Ar-Raqib, the Ever-Watchful, the One who watches over you to keep you safe.

Ustadh Hisham draws this name out of a single word the Prophet Isa speaks in the Qur'an, and once you hold its meaning, two things change at once: you stop feeling alone, and you start living as though you are seen. Both of those, it turns out, are a mercy.

With you, wherever you are

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ

And He is with you wherever you are.

AL-HADID 57:4

Start with a line that sounds almost too good to be true. Allah tells you, in the middle of a verse about the heavens and the earth and everything that slips into the ground or rises into the sky, that He is with you wherever you are. Read slowly. Not in one place. Not on the good days only. Wherever you are.

It is worth pausing to say what this does not mean, because people stumble here. It does not mean Allah is physically beside you, mixed into the room, or that He is, as some loosely put it, everywhere. The companions and the early generations were agreed: the verse speaks of His knowledge. His knowledge is with you wherever you are. There is no corner of your life, no hour of your night, no thought behind your eyes that falls outside it. And when His knowledge is that complete, His watching is too. That is where this name begins.

The one word that carries the name

فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتَ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنْتَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

But when You took me up, You were the Observer over them, and You are, over all things, Witness.

AL-MA'IDAH 5:117

The name itself, Ar-Raqib, comes from a single word on the lips of the Prophet Isa. On the Day of Judgement he is asked about his people, and he answers that while he was among them he watched over them, and then says to his Lord: when You took me, You were the Raqib over them. One word, and the whole meaning is inside it.

So what is a raqib? It is one who watches, who observes, who keeps something in sight. But here Ustadh Hisham makes the turn that unlocks the name. There are two completely different ways to watch a person. Picture a speeding camera by the road. It is not watching to see who is the most careful, most graceful driver. It is waiting for the one who slips, the one who crosses the line, so it can catch him out. That is one kind of watching, and it is not what this name means.

Now picture the invigilator who walks the exam hall, or the security guard standing at the door. They are watching too, just as closely, but for the opposite reason. They are there to keep you safe, to make sure nothing goes wrong

for you, to protect you. The Arabic uses the same family of words for both, and Allah's name lands squarely on the second. Ar-Raqib is not the camera waiting for your mistake. He is the One watching over you to protect you.

The One who always has your back

There is an English way of saying this that fits the name perfectly. When someone is always looking out for you, ready to defend you, you say that person has got your back. To live with Ar-Raqib is to know, in your bones, that Allah always has your back. He is watching, always, and He is watching to protect.

Think of how this carried the Prophet ﷺ. He was sent with a small band of believers against enemies who outnumbered him, outgunned him, held more land, more wealth, more alliances. On paper he should have been crushed. He had every reason to feel exposed and alone. And in exactly those moments, Allah comforts him by this very meaning: that He is enough for him, that He will suffice him against all of them. You may not have the numbers, you may not have the resources, but the One watching over you is enough.

The drop of blood on the open Qur'an

فَسَيَكْفِيكُمْ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

And Allah will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing.

AL-BAQARAH 2:137

Here Ustadh Hisham reaches for a moment from history so precise it stops you. The Caliph Uthman, the one who gathered the Qur'an into the book we hold today, was killed in his own home, the mushaf open in front of him, reading. Groups had come to take his life. As each man entered, he would say, between you and me is the Book of Allah, and one by one they would turn and leave, until finally he was struck down over the very pages he was reciting.

The histories record where his blood fell. It landed on this verse: Allah will be sufficient for you against them, and He is the Hearing, the Knowing. Sit with

that. Whoever was plotting in the shadows, Allah heard every word of it. Whoever was going to raise his hand that day, and where Uthman would go after, Allah knew it completely. The verse his life ended on was a promise that the One watching had missed nothing.

And that is exactly the comfort the name is meant to give. Allah is the Hearing, the Knowing, and so He is also the Watching. He hears even the words you have no strength left to say, and He sees what no human eye is near enough to catch. Knowing that, you are finally free to let go of everything outside your control: the economy, the weather, the people who hurt you, the one who will not speak to you, the one who scammed you. You cannot govern any of it. But you can sleep at peace, because the One who governs all of it is watching over you.

Seen in the crowd, seen when you are alone

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

Does He who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the Aware?

AL-MULK 67:14

Now the name turns and asks something of you. If Allah is truly watching, then who are you when no one else is? Be honest about the gap. Most of us are one person in public and another in private, and the size of that gap is the real measure of how deeply this name has reached us. The moment people can see us, our behaviour straightens. The moment we are alone, it loosens. Why? Because somewhere underneath, we are not quite sure He is watching.

The Qur'an presses the point with a question that should rearrange you: Does the One who created you not know? He is the Subtle, the Aware. Conceal your speech or shout it aloud, He knows what is in the chest either way. There is no privacy from Ar-Raqib. The version of you on a screen, the version your friends imagine, the version you perform, none of them are the one He is looking at. He is looking at the real you, the one only you have met, the one who surfaces when the door is shut.

Here is a test, and it is uncomfortably simple. You miss a prayer, or you do something you should not, and the first thing you do is glance around to check that nobody saw, and you feel relief that nobody did. That relief is the sign. It means, in that instant, the eyes you were worried about were human eyes, and the One who was actually watching had slipped out of your mind.

The mercy of feeling watched

أَلَمْ يَعْلَم بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَىٰ

Does he not know that Allah sees?

AL-ALAQ 96:14

It would be easy to hear all this as a threat. It is the opposite. Feeling watched by Ar-Raqib is what grows the most precious thing a heart can hold: haya, the tender shame and shyness before Allah that keeps a person decent when no one is looking. Lose that, and the Prophet ﷺ warned, you will do whatever you want.

Ustadh Hisham gives this a striking illustration from the historical record. In the mid-nineteenth century a man named Phineas Gage took an iron rod clean through his skull, in one side and out the other. He survived, he healed, and on the surface he seemed himself again. But something had changed: he began to curse, to behave crudely in company, to act in ways that were never his character before. The doctors studying him concluded that the part of him that was damaged governed restraint, the sense of being seen, the instinct to behave appropriately. Lose your haya, and it is as though you have lost a piece of your own brain. Your soul has been broken in the same place.

Notice that the people closest to Allah never lost it. The Prophet ﷺ would stand in prayer through the night until his feet swelled, and when asked why, when his sins past and future were already forgiven, he answered: should I not be a grateful servant? That is haya at its most beautiful, not fear of being caught, but a sweet embarrassment that says, no matter what I do, I can never repay the One who is always watching over me.

Worship Him as though you see Him

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

Indeed Allah is ever, over you, an Observer.

AN-NISA 4:1

All of this gathers into one word the Prophet ﷺ taught as the summit of the religion: ihsan. To worship Allah as though you see Him, and if you cannot reach that, then to worship Him knowing with certainty that He sees you. That is the whole of living with Ar-Raqib in a single line. Stop performing for an audience that cannot save you, and start living before the One who never looks away.

Watch what this did to the companions. A verse came down telling them not to raise their voices above the voice of the Prophet ﷺ, and from that day Umar, who could fill a room with his voice, would speak to him in barely a whisper, so conscious was he that Allah was watching how he carried himself in that presence. The same God who opens the chapter on the wombs and our shared origin closes the thought with a reminder we keep forgetting: indeed Allah is ever, over you, an Observer.

And there is a tenderness on the far side of this. When Allah loves a servant, the Prophet ﷺ taught, that servant reaches a place where if he asks, he is given, and if he seeks refuge, he is protected. Ar-Raqib watches you so closely that He answers what you never even said out loud. The Prophet ﷺ used to turn his face to the sky, longing to pray toward the Kaaba, never once putting it into words, and Allah told him: We see you turning your face about the heaven, and We will turn you to a direction that pleases you. That is the One watching over you. He knew the wish in your chest before it became a sentence, and He is moving, even now, to bring you ease.

The third in the cave

Bring it home to the place where you most need it, the moment the watching becomes everything. The Prophet ﷺ is hidden in the cave of Thawr, and above him stand men who have been hunting his head, close enough that a single glance at their feet would end it all. His companion Abu Bakr, terrified for him,

whispers: if one of them just looks down, they will see us. And the Prophet ﷺ answers, calm as still water, what do you think of two, when Allah is the third of them? Do not grieve. Allah is with us.

That is the difference Ar-Raqib makes when the whole world has ganged up against you and every voice tells you it is about to go wrong. You are never two. There is always a third, watching, with His hand over you. Ustadh Hisham points out that sometimes Allah lets the danger come right up close, brings death to within a hair of you and then pulls it away, for no reason except to make you feel it: I am here, I am watching, I have you. Anyone who has stood at the edge of a road and watched the truck miss them by an arm's length knows that feeling in the body.

So carry this name into your ordinary day. People exhaust themselves with the fear that some small, hidden group somewhere is secretly running everything, the markets, the banks, the world. Ar-Raqib quietly empties that fear of its power. However small or large, however mighty or fragile any hand on this earth, the One truly watching and truly in control is Allah. The oppressor who seems untouchable is only being given time. Allah is never unaware of what the wrongdoers do; He is simply letting a Day approach on which their eyes will tremble before Him. And until then, the One who has your back has not looked away from you for an instant.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ

Hasbiyallahu la ilaha illa huwa, alayhi tawakkaltu

Allah is sufficient for me; there is no deity except Him. On Him I have relied.

How to live this name

- **Read His watching as protection, not as a trap.** Ar-Raqib is not the speed camera waiting to catch you out. He is the guard at the door, watching over you to keep you safe. When you feel His eye on you, feel it the way you would feel a protector who has your back.

- **Close the gap between your two selves.** Notice the distance between who you are in public and who you are alone. The smaller that gap, the more this name has reached your heart. Live the private moments as though they are the public ones, because to Allah they always were.
- **Let the glance-around become a wake-up call.** If you slip and your first instinct is to check that no one saw, catch yourself there. The relief that no human noticed is the proof you forgot the One who did. Let that be the moment you turn back, not the moment you relax.
- **Guard your haya like a limb.** The shyness before Allah that keeps you decent in private is not weakness; it is a piece of your soul. Protect it. A heart that still blushes before its Lord is a heart still alive.
- **Hand back what you cannot control.** The people, the economy, the plots you cannot see: none of it is yours to govern. The One watching over you governs all of it. Do your part, then sleep at peace, because there is always a third in the cave.

Why this name stays with us

We spend so much of life managing how we look to people who cannot keep us safe, and forgetting the One who can. Ar-Raqib is the answer to both halves of that. He is the eye that never leaves you, so you are never truly alone, never unguarded, never the only one in the room when the danger comes. And He is the eye that sees the real you, so you are gently called to become, in private, the person you pretend to be in public. To know this name is to stop performing for an audience that cannot save you, and to start living, in the open and in secret, before the One who has your back.

O Allah, Ar-Raqib, You are with us wherever we are and You watch over us to keep us safe. Make us shy before You in our solitude as we are careful before people, fill our hearts with the haya that keeps us close to You, and let us feel, when the world closes in, that You are the third in the cave who never looks away. Hasbunallahu wa ni'mal-wakil.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Ar-Raqib (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Qadeer

The All-Powerful

قَدِيرٌ

Al-Qadeer

The All-Powerful, The Able



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=178ucuKlAnw>

When the Titanic was first launched they called it the ship that could never sink. You know how that story ends. It is a small parable of something larger that has happened to us. The more powerful our technology has grown, the more we have quietly thought of ourselves, and the less we have thought of Allah. And then something smaller than the eye can see, something a microscope can barely catch, arrives and shuts a whole world down, just to remind us how powerless we really are.

Today you meet the name that answers all of that pride: Al-Qadeer, the All-Powerful, the One who is able to do absolutely anything. And the strange, beautiful thing Ustadh Hisham shows you is that the road to feeling His power runs straight through feeling your own smallness.

The three shades of one name

Start with the word itself, because it carries more than you might expect. Al-Qadeer comes from the Arabic root qaf, dal, ra, and that root opens into three

connected meanings at once.

The first is ability: to be able to do a thing. The second is measure: to give something a precise size, shape, and amount, the way you would measure out a bottle and pour it to an exact line. The third is to grant power: to place ability inside someone or something. You can walk, run, lift, and eat, and every one of those is a small portion of power that Allah measured out and placed in you.

Hold all three together, because they are about to braid into one. Allah names Himself with this root in more than one shade. Al-Qadir is the One who is able. Al-Qadeer, the form you carry today, is that same ability raised to the absolute: unrestricted, with no ceiling on it at all. A human being can be qadir, able to do something within limits. Only Allah is Al-Qadeer, able to do everything, with nothing standing outside His reach. And here is the difference that matters: you build your ability slowly, going to the gym, training, straining to lift a little more. Allah does not develop His power. It was always complete.

Read the universe like a stranger's car

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ
لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا

It is Allah who has created seven heavens and of the earth, the like of them. [His] command descends among them so you may know that Allah is over all things competent and that Allah has encompassed all things in knowledge.

AT-TALAAQ 65:12

When the Qur'an wants you to feel this name, it almost always points the same way: outside, to the creation. Look at the verse above. Allah builds seven heavens and seven earths, and then tells you plainly why: so that you may know that He is able to do all things. The whole cosmos is built, in part, as evidence.

Here is the picture Ustadh Hisham uses to make it land. Imagine you walk out your front door one morning and a Bentley is sitting where your old Toyota should be. You know nothing about engines, so you start to investigate. You lift

the bonnet and stare at the machinery, you crouch underneath and trace the shafts and bearings, all of it fitting together with impossible precision. Now answer one question: what can you tell me about whoever built this? Two things, immediately. They must be powerful, because making this is no small feat. And they must be deeply knowledgeable, to know how every part marries every other part.

But notice something about that Bentley. Every Bentley off the line looks the same. Same factory, same template, a kind of blind, repeated manufacturing, like the tissue boxes on a shelf, each one cut to identical dimensions. That is the ceiling of human power. Now lift your eyes to the universe, which is more intricate, more beautiful, and more impossible to copy than any car. If a person who builds a Bentley is powerful and knowledgeable, then the One who built this must be limitless in both. Someone who truly understands Al-Qadeer simply cannot look at the world the way everyone else does.

When you doubt that He can

أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّىٰ يُحْيِي هَٰذِهِ
اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۗ فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ ۖ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ ۗ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ
يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ ۗ قَالَ بَل لَّبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ
لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ ۗ وَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ حِمَارِكَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِّلنَّاسِ ۗ وَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ الْعِظَامِ
كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا ۗ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Or [consider such an example] as the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin. He said, "How will Allah bring this to life after its death?" So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years; then He revived him. He said, "How long have you remained?" He [the man] said, "I have remained a day or part of a day." He said, "Rather, you have remained one hundred years. Look at your food and your drink; it has not changed with time. And look at your donkey; and We will make you a sign for the people. And look at the bones [of this donkey] - how We raise them and then We cover them with flesh." And when it became clear to him, he said, "I know that Allah is over all things competent."

AL-BAQARAH 2:259

There is a doubt that visits almost everyone, even if it only flickers. Can Allah really do this? You stand in front of something that looks finished, an illness with no cure, a situation with no exit, a loss that cannot be undone, and the heart whispers, how. The Qur'an does not scold that question. It answers it with a story.

A man passes a town that has been turned upside down, ruined, emptied of every living soul, and he wonders aloud how Allah could ever bring such a place back to life. So Allah lets him taste the answer. He makes the man die for a hundred years, then raises him. How long were you here? A day, the man guesses, or part of one. No, Allah tells him: a hundred years. Then look. Your

food and drink, untouched by a single century. Your donkey, watch its very bones lift and clothe themselves in flesh until it stands and breathes again. And the man, who had asked how, now says: I know that Allah is over all things able.

Sit inside his situation, because it is yours too. Maybe you are facing something that feels impossible to survive. Maybe you are looking at an illness and asking how He will cure it. Maybe you have lost someone and cannot imagine life re-assembling. Often it takes one moment, one time Allah makes the impossible happen right in front of you, before the name truly sinks in. Think back over your own life and find that moment, the one where He showed you His power, where He did the thing you were sure could not be done.

His power is closer than the weather

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبَيِّنَ لَهُم أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۗ أَوَلَمْ
يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness?

FUSSILAT 41:53

You do not have to travel to the edge of the cosmos for the evidence. Allah promises to show His signs both in the far horizons and inside you, in your own self. So look at your hands. Picture a room of forty people, four hundred fingers, and not one fingerprint repeated. Now widen the picture: eight billion people alive today, and untold billions before them back to the very first human, and every single fingerprint distinct. Every snowflake too, no two ever the same.

This is what Ustadh Hisham calls the *qudrah*, the sheer power of Allah, and the point of it is deliberate. He could have stamped us out identically, like the hundred thousand Toyotas rolling off a line, every one a copy. He could have made every fruit taste the same and every leaf the same shade. Instead He varied every fingerprint and every flake and every flavour, for no reason except to

show you that He can, that nothing constrains Him, that we could not reproduce even one per cent of it.

And His power runs quietly through your most ordinary day. Every night you sleep, your soul is taken; every morning you wake, it is returned. Ustadh Hisham puts it with a smile you will not forget: his laptop refused to shut down that very day, no matter how many times he pressed the button, a small lesson in how powerless we are. Yet when Allah wills to take your soul, He shuts you down without resistance, and when He wills, He reboots you in the morning. That is qudrah, working on you while you are not even watching.

Why nature has seasons

There is a reason, the Ustadh teaches, that Allah did not leave the leaves green all year. He gives you one season where everything blooms, fruit and blossom and birdsong, and then a season where it all browns and falls and dies, precisely so you watch Him do it: He gives life and He takes it, He colours the leaf and He drains it, He lifts it onto the branch and He lets it fall. The turning of the year is a slow, public demonstration that He is able to do all things.

And it is meant to humble us, because we forget our size the moment things go quiet. People think themselves powerful right up until a tsunami swallows half a coastline, a typhoon, an earthquake, a sandstorm. In one breath Allah shows us that for all our machines and forecasts, our power is borrowed and small. It is only when you finally see your own limits that you begin to taste His limitlessness.

So Ustadh Hisham's first counsel is almost startling in its simplicity: get off the screens and go stand in front of the creation. We cannot reflect on Allah's making anymore because the earphones go in the moment we leave the house, the notification pulls our eyes down, the drive becomes a phone call. Take your family to the mountains, to the lake, to the park. Cancel the streaming subscription, he says, and let the sky and the peaks and the lions be your subscription instead. The man in the story who learned Al-Qadeer was not scrolling. He was walking, looking, and thinking.

Qadeer also means He timed it perfectly

فَرَجَعْنَاكَ إِلَىٰ أُمِّكَ كَيْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ ۚ وَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا فَنَجَّيْنَاكَ مِنَ
الْغَمِّ وَفَتَنَّاكَ فُتُونًا ۚ فَلَبِثْتَ سِنِينَ فِي أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ ثُمَّ جِئْتَ عَلَيَّ قَدْرًا يَا
مُوسَىٰ

So We restored you to your mother that she might be content and not grieve. And you killed someone, but We saved you from retaliation and tried you with a [severe] trial. And you remained [some] years among the people of Madyan. Then you came [here] at the decreed time, O Moses.

TA-HA 20:40

وَاصْطَنَعْتُكَ لِنَفْسِي

And I produced you for Myself.

TA-HA 20:41

Now remember the second meaning hidden in the root: not just power, but measure. Al-Qadeer is also the One who places every event in exactly the right size, the right place, and the right moment. That includes the whole shape of your life, and there is no clearer window onto this than the story of Musa.

Think about what Musa carried before Allah called him at around forty. A speech difficulty on his tongue. A childhood raised inside the palace of the worst tyrant who ever lived, separated from his own mother, who could only come near him as a hired nurse. A man killed by mistake. Years as a fugitive, then a full decade away from his family, working as a servant in someone else's house, watering animals. Could you carry ten years torn from your parents? It is a crushing CV to bring to a prophet's calling.

And when Allah finally honours him with it, what does Musa feel? Fear. He is sure they will reject him, sure the stress will lock his tongue, and he begs Allah to send his brother with him. This is where the verses above melt the heart. Allah does not lecture him. He tells Musa his own life back to him, gently, from

the start. We returned you to your mother so her eyes would cool. We saved you after the killing. We tested you, and you waited those years in Madyan, and then, listen, you came at the decreed time, O Musa. You came exactly on schedule. The Arabic is from this same root, ala qadar, on a precise measure.

Then comes the line that undoes you: and I produced you for Myself. After every test, every exile, every year of waiting, Allah tells him the whole of it was Him shaping Musa for this. This is Ustadh Hisham's signature turn in the lesson: if you read your past as Allah being cruel to you, you will never have the confidence to serve Him. But the moment you understand why He took you through it, the wisdom folded into each trial, you become powerful beyond measure. When Allah wanted, Musa was in the river; when He wanted, in the palace; when He wanted, a fugitive; and when the time was exactly right, a prophet. All of it, His timing, to the second.

Throw away the stick

وَمَا تِلْكَ بِيَمِينِكَ يَا مُوسَىٰ

And what is that in your right hand, O Moses?

TA-HA 20:17

قَالَ هِيَ عَصَايَ أَتَوَكَّأُ عَلَيْهَا وَأَهُشُّ بِهَا عَلَىٰ غَنَمِي وَلِيَ فِيهَا مَآرِبُ
أُخْرَىٰ

He said, "It is my staff; I lean upon it, and I bring down leaves for my sheep and I have therein other uses."

TA-HA 20:18

قَالَ أَلْقِهَا يَا مُوسَىٰ

[Allah] said, "Throw it down, O Moses."

TA-HA 20:19

Musa is about to stand before Pharaoh, the most powerful man on earth. To face someone like that you need strength, and Allah gives it to him by teaching him the one truth that makes a person unbreakable: the power is not in you, and it is not in your resources. It is His.

Watch how the lesson is taught. Allah asks Musa what is in his right hand. Allah already knows, but He wants Musa to say it, to hear his own dependence out loud. It is my staff, Musa answers, I lean on it, I knock down leaves for my sheep, I need it for so many things. He is describing the thing he relies on. And Allah simply says: throw it down. You do not need it anymore. From today you have something greater than the stick.

We all have a stick. The gym, the protein shake, the salary, the connections, the spouse, the qualification, the thing we secretly believe is the real source of our strength. Al-Qadeer asks you to set it down and grasp the truth that nothing has any power except through Allah, and that He can put strength into a plain wooden staff until it splits a sea. Before Musa trusted Allah, that stick could only knock leaves from a tree. Once he leaned on Al-Qadeer instead, it parted an ocean. This is exactly why the Prophet ﷺ would say *la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah*, there is no might and no power except with Allah. Understand that phrase and it makes you fearless, because it means you are nothing on your own, and everything when He is behind you.

The strength of admitting you are nothing

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

O mankind, you are those in need of Allah, while Allah is the Free of need, the Praiseworthy.

FATIR 35:15

This is the heart of the name, and it sounds backwards until you live it. The more deeply you accept that you are powerless, the more of His power flows into you. Allah says it plainly: you are the ones in need of Him, and He is the only One free of all need.

Think about how it feels to need a person. Someone stops you in the street asking for spare change, and even when we are kind about it, something in us recoils, because no one wants to be the one in need. To ask another human being for help can feel humiliating, like you are nothing in front of them. With Allah it is the exact opposite. There, admitting that you are utterly needy is the doorway to strength. There is a beautiful counsel that a believer healthy and safe on dry land needs Allah no less than a man drowning in the open sea. Picture yourself swept out by the current off the coast, no shore in sight, going under. How would you call on Allah then? With everything in you, because you know you are finished unless He saves you. Ustadh Hisham's challenge is to carry that exact posture into an ordinary Tuesday: I am drowning, I am helpless, I am nothing, and He is the only one who can lift me.

Far from making you useless, this is what made Musa able to walk up to Pharaoh with a criminal record, a stammer, and no army, and not flinch. Whoever has Allah behind him, nothing can stand in front of him. Whoever does not will be toppled by the lightest breeze, because he leaned on the stick instead of the One who made it.

Ask Him for the impossible

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ
أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

And [mention] the man of the fish [i.e., Jonah], when he went off in anger and thought that We would not decree [anything] upon him. And he called out within the darknesses, "There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers."

AL-ANBIYA 21:87

Once you truly believe Allah is Al-Qadeer, your du'a changes, because no situation is too sealed for Him to open. So look at who in the Qur'an asked Him for the impossible and received it. Yunus, swallowed into the belly of the whale, in the dark of the sea, with no submarine and no rescue crew coming. What does he do first? One of the narrations says he prayed, and marvelled that he had

prayed to Allah in a place no one had ever prayed before. That is the mindset of a person who knows this name: it does not matter where you are trapped, in the belly of a whale, in a broken marriage, in a job that is crushing you, you know with certainty that Al-Qadeer can pull you out.

The Qur'an is full of these. The wife of Ibrahim, old and barren, told she would bear a child, and the angels telling her not to wonder at the decree of Allah. Hajar, alone in a waterless valley, running and calling on Allah until water burst from where no one would have looked. The young men of the cave, with no way out of a society that hunted their faith, raising their hands and asking Allah for mercy and a right path, and Allah bending the very laws of nature to keep them. Even prophets were stunned when Allah promised them what looked impossible. Zakariyya asked how he could possibly have a son, and the answer came back the same every time: Allah does as He wills. When He wants a thing, He need only say to it, be.

So make your du'a like someone who means it. The Prophet ﷺ taught that you should call on Allah while certain He will answer. Be firm in what you ask, not casual, not half-hoping, because once you know He is Al-Qadeer you know nothing you ask is beyond Him. Many of us have lived this already: we lost all hope in something, we made a sincere du'a, and Allah did it. He breaks the laws of physics for the ones who are certain of His power.

Whoever leans on Him is enough

وَيَرْزُقُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ ۗ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا

And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything a [decreed] extent.

AT-TALAQ 65:3

Notice how the verse ends, on the very root we have been tracing: Allah has set for everything a decreed measure, a qadr. Power and timing, woven together

one last time. And just before that, the promise: whoever leans his whole weight on Allah, Allah is enough for him.

This is the secret that built a civilisation. A handful of Bedouin from the middle of the desert, small in number, poor, outmatched, put their trust in the All-Powerful, and they opened the lands of the Romans and Spain and raised an empire no one could stand against. The moment their descendants began trusting their own horses and numbers instead, they lost. At Badr they were few and were taught that victory comes only from Allah; the day Muslims leaned on their own strength, that strength failed them.

And this is so often where we get stuck today. We believe that to be powerful we must first have the money, the title, the company, the connections, and so we never begin. Al-Qadeer tells you to let go of the stick and let Him split the sea. If you have every resource on earth but do not trust Him, nothing happens; if you have nothing at all but trust Him completely, He makes it happen. So do not think small. If you really believe Allah is all-powerful, then ask for the big thing, the open door, the changed heart, the way out, and lean on Him for it.

The whole universe in His hand

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ ۗ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

They have not appraised Allah with true appraisal, while the earth entirely will be [within] His grip on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His right hand. Exalted is He and high above what they associate with Him.

AZ-ZUMAR 39:67

Where did this lesson begin? With people not giving Allah the power and the status He deserves. Hear how the Qur'an answers that exact failure. On the Day of Judgement the whole earth will sit in His grip and the heavens will be folded up in His right hand. Not this planet, not our small solar system, but the entire universe, hundreds of millions of light years we cannot even map, all of it nothing in His hand.

Then picture yourself in that scene. Everyone who thought they had power, wealth, or status will stand there as a speck, an atom, nothing. In this world you had a bank account, a team, maybe a company or a country at your service. On that Day you will be utterly alone, no staff, no colleagues, no family, fleeing even from your brother and your parents and your own spouse and children, every soul consumed with itself. When you let that moment in, you finally feel how small you are, how powerless, and how completely you need Him, which is the whole purpose of carrying this name.

Hold the two ends of the lesson together. First, go and read His power off the face of the creation, the heavens, your own fingerprints, the turning seasons. Second, trust that He measures every event in your life with perfect precision and timing, so even your hardest chapters were placed exactly where they belong. Do both, and Al-Qadeer stops being a word and starts being the ground under your feet.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah

There is no might and no power except with Allah.

How to live this name

- **Read His power off the creation.** Get off the screens and go stand in front of what He made. The mountains, the seasons, your own fingerprints that no two humans share. Allah built the universe partly as evidence, so look at it like a stranger studying a Bentley and let it tell you how limitless its Maker is.
- **Trust that He timed your life perfectly.** Qadeer means measure as well as power. Like Musa, who came at the decreed moment after years of testing, your hardest chapters were placed with precision. Read your past as Allah shaping you, not punishing you, and you will find confidence instead of bitterness.
- **Throw away your stick.** Whatever you secretly believe is your real source of strength, the salary, the connections, the qualification, set it down. Nothing

has power except through Allah, and He can put strength into a plain staff until it splits a sea.

- **Ask Him for the impossible.** No situation is too sealed for Al-Qadeer to open. Make your du'a certain He will answer, the way Yunus called from the belly of the whale and Hajar called from a waterless valley. Do not think small. Believe He is all-powerful and ask for the big thing.
- **Say la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah.** Let this phrase live on your tongue. It means you are nothing on your own and everything when He is behind you. Admitting you are needy in front of Allah is not weakness; it is the doorway to a strength nothing can topple.

Why this name stays with us

We live in an age that believes its own press, that mistakes its machines for real power and quietly forgets the One who lent it every ability it has. Al-Qadeer is the cure for that forgetting. He is the power written across the seven heavens and folded into a single fingerprint, the precision that timed Musa's whole life to the exact moment, the One who can put strength into a wooden staff until it parts an ocean. To know this name is to stop leaning on the stick, to read your hardships as His shaping rather than His cruelty, and to ask Him, with certainty, for the things you had given up on.

O Allah, Al-Qadeer, You are able to do all things, and there is no might and no power except with You. Loosen our grip on every stick we cling to, let us read Your power in everything You have made, time our lives with Your perfect wisdom, and open for us the doors that look forever closed. Make us people who lean their whole weight on You, and find that You are enough.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Qadeer (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Wali and An-Naseer

The Protective Guardian and Helper

الْوَالِي

Al-Wali

The Protective Guardian, the close Ally

النَّصِيرُ

An-Naseer

The Helper, the Supporter



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xry5B7IWq3Q>

Some of Allah's names travel alone. These two almost never do. Across the Qur'an, more than a dozen times, they arrive side by side, like a pair you were always meant to read together: Al-Wali and An-Naseer, the Protective Guardian who is closest to you and the Helper who comes when you are out of options.

Ustadh Hisham opens by asking a question a stylist would understand. A good eye for colour will tell you brown and blue belong together, but never brown and yellow. Words are the same: some meanings match and some clash. So the question is not only what each of these names means on its own, but why Allah keeps placing them shoulder to shoulder. Answer that, and you understand something about how His care actually reaches you.

The name pressed close to the skin

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَائِكُمْ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ نَصِيرًا

And Allah is most knowing of your enemies; and sufficient is Allah as an ally, and sufficient is Allah as a helper.

AN-NISA 4:45

Start with Al-Wali, because the picture hidden inside it is unforgettable. This is an Arabic word, so to feel it you have to go where the Arabs first used it. They gave this word to the saddle laid on a horse, the seat fastened to a camel's back, because of one quality: it sits flush against the skin of the animal, with nothing in between. Hold that image. Something pressed so close to you that not even air separates the two of you.

From there the word stretched. It came to be used for anything tightly joined, for this page and the page that immediately follows it, and then for the closest human bonds. A parent is the wali of their child. A governor is the wali of the land he is responsible for. So two ideas are braided into this one word at once: nearness, and responsibility. The wali is not only the one standing close to you; he is the one whose job it is to look after you, to take charge of what concerns you. When we say Allah is Al-Wali, this is what we mean: the One who is nearest to you and has taken your affair upon Himself.

Then comes the second name, An-Naseer, the Helper. Nasr is to come to someone's aid, to rush in and support them. Picture a brother in the masjid being wrestled to the ground, and someone leaping in from behind to defend him. That rescuer is a naseer. He helped. And notice the verse Allah closes with both names at once: He knows your enemies better than you do, and He is enough for you, enough as a Wali and enough as a Naseer. Two names, one promise.

The lifeguard and the man on the edge

So why are they always together? Here Ustadh Hisham hands you the image that makes it click, and it happens at a swimming pool.

Imagine a pool with a lifeguard on duty. The lifeguard is not just there to pull someone out when they drown. He is responsible for the whole pool: the rules, the lanes, the children kept out of the deep end, the safety of every swimmer in it. The pool is his charge. That is a wali. It is his job to watch over you, and he never has to be asked.

Now imagine the lifeguard slips off for a cup of tea, and in that moment your child starts choking in the deep end. A stranger standing at the water's edge, fully clothed, sees it and jumps straight in to drag the child out. That person had no duty to help. They were just passing. But they rushed in when they saw danger. That is a naseer.

Sit with the order of the two. You do not call out for a helper first. As long as the lifeguard is there, you rely on the one whose responsibility you are. You only cry out for anyone, anyone at all, to help when the one in charge is absent. That is why, every time, Al-Wali comes first and An-Naseer comes second. Picture it on a motorway at night, a tyre blown, and your breakdown service does not pick up: no signal, no SOS phone. Only then do you stand at the roadside waving down strangers. Allah is both at once. He is the Wali whose charge you are and who never steps away, and He is the Naseer who answers when every other door has shut. He never takes a break, never naps, never goes for tea.

Out of the darkneses, into the light

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ
النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

Allah is the Ally of those who believe. He brings them out from darkneses into the light. And those who disbelieve - their allies are taghut. They take them out of the light into darkneses. Those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.

Who is it that Allah guards in this close way, and from what? The Qur'an answers with the language of light and darkness. He is the Wali of those who believe, the One who keeps pulling them out of the dark and into the light, while those who turn from Him are dragged the other way.

Imagine this room losing its power all at once, everyone in the dark, and a single phone with its torch still on. That one light is enough to find the door, the stairs, the way out. This is what it means for Allah to be your Wali. When He sees someone choosing faith, choosing certainty in Him, drowning in sin or suffocating in an environment they cannot escape, He shows them the light. He throws the lifeline. And in this very passage, a few verses earlier, He describes the one who holds on to Him as having grasped the most trustworthy handhold, one that will never come apart in your hand.

Read your own story this way. He is the one who pulled you out of the dark and set you here. The guidance you have, the pull you feel toward the masjid, the very fact that you are reading these words instead of being lost somewhere else: that is His walaya over you, His nearness, His help. If not for Him taking charge of you, you would be somewhere else entirely, still drowning.

The soldiers you cannot see

وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

And to Allah belong the soldiers of the heavens and the earth. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise.

AL-FATH 48:7

Here is where most of us slip. We reach instinctively for other guardians and let ourselves believe they are the ones keeping us safe. We lean on the police force, the emergency services, our medicine, our insurance, certain that if anything goes wrong, they will catch us. And there is nothing wrong with any of these. The danger is forgetting what they are. They are tools. They are means Allah set in your hands, and behind every one of them stands the One who made it work, who can lift it away in an instant or hold it in place when nothing else could.

Think of a flat-pack cupboard delivered to your door with all the wood and screws and a neat instruction manual, and then you realise you have no screwdriver. All the parts in the world will not build it. Never over-rely on the tool, because the tool can go missing or turn out to be the wrong one. Rely on the One who made the tools, because when the screwdriver is lost, it is the maker you turn to for another.

This is why the Qur'an tells you that to Allah belong the soldiers of the heavens and the earth. Every ambulance, every police officer, every ant and every spider is a soldier in His command. When He wills, He sends them to your aid; when He wills, He withdraws them. They are His troops, not yours, and not their own. The believer uses the means fully and trusts the One behind them completely.

Yusuf, and the help that does not always look like help

رَبِّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمَلِكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ فَاطِرَ
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنْتَ وَلِيِّي فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا
وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ

My Lord, You have given me [something] of sovereignty and taught me of the interpretation of dreams. Creator of the heavens and earth, You are my protector in this world and the Hereafter. Cause me to die a Muslim and join me with the righteous.

YUSUF 12:101

There is a deeper layer to being a wali, and Ustadh Hisham draws it out through the life of Yusuf. A lifeguard, if you were thrashing in the water, would never just watch you struggle. He would move at once. But a swimming instructor might let you struggle a while, because struggle is how you learn to swim. The instructor is not careless; he is developing you. Allah is your Wali in both senses. Sometimes He will let you fight the deep end, not because He has looked away, but because that is how you grow.

Now read Yusuf through that. A boy at the bottom of a dark well, thrown there not by a stranger but by his own brothers, which is a wound of a different order. Sold in a market for a few coins, as if he were worth nothing. Lifted into a palace, then ensnared and slandered, then locked in a prison for a crime he did not commit. And through every stage of it, Allah was watching, guarding, near. At the end, raised to the throne, Yusuf does not say he climbed there. He turns and says: You are my Wali, in this world and the next. You watched me in the well, in the slave market, in the prison, and in the palace, and it was all You.

Notice what the help looked like. We assume that if Allah is going to help us as our Wali, it arrives as comfort, as ease, as the thing we wanted. But the prison itself was the rescue. Allah was saving Yusuf from the palace, from the schemes that surrounded him there, and the way He saved him was to place him somewhere harder and quieter where he could remain whole. Is a palace worth a miserable life inside it? Is a prison too high a price for an honourable one? Sometimes the lifeline Allah throws does not look like a lifeline at all. Sometimes He guards you by leaving you in the deep end, and only later do you see He was looking after you the whole time, in this world and for the next.

The guardians who can never guard you

If Allah is the true Wali, the Qur'an is just as clear about the false ones, the allies we keep reaching for who can do nothing for us. Three keep coming up. The first is shaytan. You take him as a wali the moment you start trusting his promises over Allah's. He whispers that faith will cost you, that the time you give to the Qur'an will leave you behind your colleagues, that the prayer can wait until life is more settled, that the only way to get ahead is through a door Allah closed. The day you believe him and act on it, you have made your enemy your guardian, and there is no one worse to have placed your trust in on the Day you stand alone.

Picture the student told that fasting in Ramadan will ruin his exams, so he eats and drinks and stays up on coffee through the night, certain that this is what will carry him through, while his believing friend sits hungry and trusts that Allah will not abandon those who sacrifice for Him. The coffee was never the thing that grants success. Allah is. We chase the doubtful and the forbidden, in our work and our wealth, because shaytan promises that the honest road keeps

us poor. He is lying. There are clean paths; walk them, and let the One who actually grants provision be the One you rely on.

The second false ally is anyone whose approval we crave so badly that we lose our footing without it. Sometimes we will not feel sure of our own faith until an outsider confirms it for us, waiting for some figure we admire to call something in the Qur'an true before we believe it ourselves. That is seeking honour from other than Allah, and it leaves you forever insecure. And the third are those who plainly do not have your good at heart, whom the Qur'an warns you not to take as protectors in place of the believers. Honour was only ever His to give. Reach for it anywhere else and your hand closes on nothing.

When you are overpowered, call on the Helper

فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانْتَصِرْ

So he invoked his Lord, "Indeed, I am overpowered, so help."

AL-QAMAR 54:10

Now turn to the second name in full. An-Naseer is the One who helps when it seems no one else will, and He is the name you reach for in the worst case, when you have been backed into a corner with nowhere left to run.

Look at Nuh. Nine hundred and fifty years he called his people, quietly and openly, in private and in public, trying every door, and they mocked and insulted him through all of it. When at last he could carry it no longer, he did not despair. He turned to his Lord with the smallest, rawest words: I am overpowered, so help. That is the cry of someone who has reached the end of himself and remembers there is still One who answers. And Allah promises that if He helps you, no one can overcome you, while if He withholds His help, there is no one in all creation who can step in after Him.

This is the name for the moment your wife asks how the food was in front of everyone and you both know it was not good, the moment the teacher calls on you for the answer you do not have, the moment there is no exit left. There is no corner anyone can press you into where you cannot turn and ask An-Naseer.

The two in the cave

إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيًا إِثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَىٰ وَاللَّهُ الْوَكِيمُ
هِيَ الْعُلْيَا وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

If you do not aid him - Allah has already aided him when those who disbelieved had driven him out as one of two, when they were in the cave and he said to his companion, "Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us." And Allah sent down His tranquility upon him and supported him with soldiers you did not see and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowest, while the word of Allah - that is the highest. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.

AT-TAWBAH 9:40

There was one night when the whole future of this religion hung by a thread. The Prophet ﷺ and his companion were hidden in a cave, and a band of killers had tracked them to its mouth. He ﷺ knew that if one of them simply glanced down, it was over. Two men, no army, no weapons, no authority, and at the entrance an enemy that need only look.

What did the Prophet ﷺ say in that instant? Not a word of panic. He said to his companion: do not grieve, Allah is with us. And the Qur'an records what Allah, An-Naseer, did next. First He sent down sakina, a tranquillity, upon them. Think about how rare that is. Today people fly to the other side of the world and pay fortunes to therapists searching for peace of mind, and here is a peace dropped straight into the heart in the most terrifying situation imaginable: still water, no ripple, nothing to fear. Then He supported them with soldiers no one could see, and brought the word of the disbelievers low while His own word stood highest. The help was total, and most of it was invisible.

That is what it means to have An-Naseer. The aid is real even when you cannot see a single soldier of it moving on your behalf.

His help comes at His pace, not yours

There is one more thing you have to make peace with, and it is the hardest. The help of Allah is certain, but it does not come overnight. We are an impatient people, raised on same-day delivery and drive-throughs and fibre that loads in a blink, and we expect rescue on the same timetable. Nusrah does not work like that.

Remember Khabbab, tortured in Makkah, laid on burning coals until they seared through to the bone. He came to the Prophet ﷺ, who was resting in the shade of the Ka'bah, and asked, with everything in him: are you not going to ask Allah to help us? When will this end? The Prophet ﷺ answered calmly. Those before you were treated far worse, dug into the ground, sawn in half, raked with iron combs that stripped flesh from bone, and still they did not give up their faith. Then he made a promise: a day will come when a traveller will ride from one city to another fearing nothing but Allah. The relief was coming. It was simply not coming that afternoon.

Hold both ends of this. Nuh waited nine hundred and fifty years. Yusuf waited from the well to the throne, patient in the prison and patient on the palace floor, because had he begged to rule at ten it would never have come. Allah decides who rises and who is brought low, and He does it on His clock. So when you look at the state of the ummah, at the places where Muslims suffer, do not lose hope and do not rush Him. Be His when you are at the bottom and be His when you are at the top, and know that there is no corner anyone can place you in where you cannot ask Al-Wali to take charge of you and An-Naseer to come to your aid.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

أَنْتِ مَغْلُوبٌ فَانْتَصِرِي

Anni maghlubun fantasir

Indeed, I am overpowered, so help.

How to live these names

- **Let Allah be the Wali you lean on first.** Use the means fully, the doctor, the service, the plan, but never mistake the tool for the One who made it work. Behind every helper stands the One whose soldiers they are, who can lift them away or hold them in place. Trust Him, then act.
- **Read your hardship like Yusuf.** The well, the slander, the prison were never proof that Allah had looked away. Sometimes He guards you by leaving you in the deep end so you learn to swim, and sometimes the rescue arrives disguised as the very thing you would not have chosen.
- **Refuse the false guardians.** Shaytan promises that faith will cost you and that the forbidden road gets you ahead. He is your enemy, not your ally. Do not chase the approval of others to feel secure, and do not seek from anyone the honour that is Allah's alone to give.
- **When you are cornered, call An-Naseer.** Like Nuh, when you reach the end of yourself, turn with the rawest words: I am overpowered, so help. If Allah aids you no one can overcome you, and if He withholds it no one can step in after Him.
- **Wait at His pace.** His help is certain but rarely quick. Nuh waited centuries; Khabbab was told relief would come, just not that day. Be His when you are at the bottom and when you are at the top, and do not rush the One who decides when dawn breaks.

Why these names stay with us

We spend our lives reaching for guardians, the service that will catch us, the person whose approval will steady us, the shortcut that promises to get us ahead, and most of them can do nothing for us on the day it counts. Al-Wali and An-Naseer name the only One who truly can. He is the guardian pressed close, who took your affair upon Himself and pulled you out of the dark into the light, and He is the helper who answers when you are cornered with nowhere left to run. He was with Yusuf in the well and on the throne, with the two in the cave, with Nuh after the long centuries, and He is with you now, even when you cannot see a single soldier of His help moving on your behalf.

O Allah, You are our Wali, the closest to us, the One who has taken charge of us, and You are our Naseer, our Helper when every door has shut. Pull us out of every darkness into Your light, let us never trade You for a guardian who cannot save us, hold us when You leave us in the deep end, and when we are overpowered and have no one else, be enough for us, as You have always been enough.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Wali and An-Naseer (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Khaliq and Al-Bari

The Creator and Originator

الْخَالِقُ

Al-Khaliq

The Creator

الْبَارِيُّ

Al-Bari

The Originator, The
Maker

الْمُصَوِّرُ

Al-Musawwir

The Fashioner



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKOAqJNKANw>

There is a name of Allah you walk past every single day without seeing it. It is in the rain on your window, in the leaf that lets go of the branch, in the face of the stranger who looks nothing like the last one, in the bread you broke open this morning. Al-Khaliq, the Creator. Al-Bari, the Originator. The One who brings what was nothing into being.

Ustadh Hisham opens this lesson the way the Qur'an opens it: not with a definition, but with a command. Look. Allah does not merely invite you to notice His creation, He asks why on earth you are not already looking. And the moment you truly look, this name begins to change the way you see everything.

Why are you not looking

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ ثَمَرَاتٍ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهَا
وَمِنَ الْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌ بَيَضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ

Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky, and We produce thereby fruits of varying colors? And in the mountains are tracts, white and red of varying shades and [some] extremely black.

FATIR 35:27

Notice how the verse is phrased. Not have you considered, but do you not see, as though Allah is leaning in and asking how you could possibly miss it. Across the Qur'an, again and again, He calls you to look at the night and the day, at the rain falling from the sky, at the animals, at a child being born, at a single leaf drifting down from a tree. He does not ask you to look for its own sake. He asks you to look until you begin to realise the One behind it all.

That One is the name we live with today: Al-Khaliq, the Creator. It runs through the Qur'an in countless forms and countless contexts, and the whole of this lesson is really one long answer to a single question. What does it mean that Allah is the Creator, and how is His creating unlike anything you have ever called creation before?

Creating from nothing, and for a purpose

Start with the word itself. In Arabic, khalq is to take something from nothing and bring it into being. And not just to bring it into being, but to make it for a specific purpose, with a particular shape, a particular texture, a particular use.

Here is the image Ustadh Hisham reaches for, and it is one you meet before you are even fully awake. Think of a baker with a lump of dough. He presses it and folds it and shapes it until it becomes something with a definite form and a definite taste. So when you sit down in the morning to your injera, your chapati, your paratha, your naan, remember that this bread was once shapeless dough, squeezed and moulded into exactly the thing now in your hands. That is a kind of khalq.

But hold that picture, because it is about to show you the difference. The baker did not make the dough. The farmer did not make the wheat. We build phones, we carve wood, we pour steel, yet in every single case we are only rearranging what already exists. We cut it, we mould it, we move it about, we put pieces together and take them apart. A human being can shape creation. A human being cannot make a thing from nothing. And that one impossibility is the whole point. The only One who creates from nothing is Allah.

The first command in the whole Qur'an

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous -

AL-BAQARAH 2:21

This name rarely arrives alone. Almost everywhere it appears in the Qur'an, it comes attached to a request, a demand, a turning of the heart. And here Ustadh Hisham points to something quietly stunning: the very first command Allah gives to all of humanity in the order of the Book is built on it.

Open the Qur'an at the start, move past the opening praise, and the first instruction from Allah to us is this. O people, all of you, worship your Lord, the One who created you. Look at the logic folded inside it. The reason given for worship is creation itself. Once it lands in you that He created you, that you are His making from nothing, you are moved to worship Him. The command and its proof are the same breath.

And you already know this pull, even if you have never named it. The people the world cannot stop watching are the ones who create something new. When a visionary invents a thing no one has seen before, a following gathers around him almost on its own. People read his story, wear his name, queue through the night, pour out their money, devote themselves, and all of it for someone who only reshaped a little metal and glass into something clever. Allah placed that instinct in you on purpose. When you meet something made with such intelligence, such beauty, such evident purpose, your jaw drops and a kind of awe

rises in you. The Arabic for it carries both wonder and a trembling respect. So Ustadh Hisham turns the instinct back on you with the Qur'an's own challenge: if a phone in your palm can move you like that, why have you never once looked up at the sky?

The sky with no cracks

الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۗ مَا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَاقُوتٍ ۗ
فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ

[And] who created seven heavens in layers. You do not see in the creation of the Most Merciful any inconsistency. So return [your] vision [to the sky]; do you see any breaks?

AL-MULK 67:3

So look up. A roof held over your head with no pillars to hold it, beautified, and search it as hard as you like, you will not find a single crack. The ground beneath you was spread out flat so you could walk it and farm it and build on it. It is as though the whole house was finished and furnished before the guest arrived, and you were the guest, set down into a world made ready for you.

And yet, Allah says, you pass these signs by night and by day and nothing stirs in you. This, Ustadh Hisham warns, is the real danger of our moment. Centuries ago a person would look at this world and be overwhelmed into a single conclusion: this must have a Maker. Today we have fallen below even that, because we have stopped looking altogether.

What pulled us away from the sky

So ask the honest question. What is it that stops us from simply sitting and staring at the trees, the soil, the falling leaves, the animals, and being moved? It is the endless inventions, the hectic days, the sheer volume of distraction, and most of all the comfort. We have grown so comfortable that we never need to look up.

Consider how tightly the old life was stitched to the natural world. To know the time for Maghrib, people watched the sun slip toward the horizon. To know Fajr, they watched for the white thread of dawn separating from the black. They walked out in search of water, in search of wood and coal to make fire. Their days were laced through with the sky and the seasons. Then the Industrial Revolution moved people off the farms and into the factories, and it was precisely as societies were severed from nature that whole parts of the world began to declare that God does not exist.

Ustadh Hisham points to something you can still watch happening today. Drive out of the city into the quiet countryside, and you tend to find people who still pray, still believe, still thank God at the table. Crowd into the city, cut off from the living world, and faith thins out. It is not a hard rule, but it is a pattern worth trembling at, because the lesson underneath it is simple and severe: go blind to the creation of Allah, and you will go blind to Allah. You will grow ungrateful to Him, and distant, and slowly forget that He is the One who made it all.

Al-Musawwir, and the thing science cannot make

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

We have certainly created man in the best of stature;

AT-TIN 95:4

Allah describes His creating with more than one name, and another of them is Al-Musawwir, the Fashioner, from the root that means to give a thing its particular shape and form. When the Qur'an uses it, it often turns to the masterpiece of His making: you. He shaped you, and He shaped you in the most beautiful way. Sit ten brothers in a row and every nose is its own design, no two alike, each face fashioned and made lovely in a way all its own. Ustadh Hisham, who is himself a twin, born four minutes before a sister who looks nothing like him, says the same hand that gave him his features gave her hers, and not by accident.

But here is the question that pierces through. What truly sets this creation apart from everything else Allah made? Not only the mind, because an animal

has a brain too. Something deeper was placed in the human being: a soul. A soul that reaches for Allah, that aches to connect to Him, that no other creature carries. It is why you find no animal mosques, no animal temples, no animal universities, while human beings from the dawn of time until now have always reached for a Creator to worship.

And that soul is the proof. The Qur'an traces our making stage by stage, from a drop, to a clinging clot, to a lump of flesh, to bones clothed in flesh, and then it pauses on a mystery, because bones and flesh are exactly what a corpse is too. Something happened after the flesh and the bones. Allah breathed life into it, and that is the new creation no one can account for.

A new creation, and the best of creators

ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعُلُقَةَ مِضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا
فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ
الْخَالِقِينَ

Then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, and We made the clot into a lump [of flesh], and We made [from] the lump, bones, and We covered the bones with flesh; then We developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators.

AL-MU'MINUN 23:14

Then we developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators. That last line is the heart of it. Hand a scientist a heap of bones and flesh and tell him to make a human being from it, and he cannot. He cannot even manage a Frankenstein. The soul is the one creation Allah kept for Himself alone, and when the Qur'an speaks of it, it tells us plainly that we have been given only a little knowledge of it.

That is why it remains, to this day, the deepest puzzle for neuroscientists and psychologists. Why is there consciousness at all? Why does a human being have a soul? It does not reduce to chemistry, and no one can reproduce it. The modern world tries to read everything as material, so it tells the grieving and

the broken that their sorrow is only hormones to be balanced by morning, with no room for the deeper self that is suffering. But you are not merely bones and flesh. Something else was placed inside you, something no instrument has ever isolated. Ustadh Hisham offers this as one of the cleanest proofs of the Creator you can carry to a doubting friend: stand before the soul, the thing that cannot be built or explained or made from nothing, and ask honestly where it came from.

Al-Khallaq, the One who creates in every moment

There is a heavier form of this name, and it changes everything. Just as the One who forgives, Al-Ghafur, can be intensified into Al-Ghaffar, the One who forgives again and again and again, so the One who creates, Al-Khaliq, has its intensive shape too: the One who is creating constantly, in every passing moment, never having finished. He did not create once and walk away. He is creating right now.

Sit with what that undoes. We read our lives through cause and effect, the way the world trained us to. You strike a match, the wood catches, so you say the spark made the fire, and you forget that it is Allah who creates the fire in that instant. Ustadh Hisham reaches for the famous dog taught to expect food whenever a bell rings, until the bell alone sets it salivating. The dog has tied the bell to the food, never knowing that one hand rings the bell and another hand, unseen, brings the meal. We are forever doing the same. We light the match and credit the spark. We take the payslip and credit the boss, when it was Allah who created the boss and the wage alike. My wife cooked the food, we say, my husband fixed the car, and we lose sight of the One creating behind every cause. You did not throw when you threw, the Qur'an reminds us; it was Allah who threw.

This is part of what it means to truly affirm Him as One. The early Muslims spoke of looking past the long chain of people and means and causes until you see the single Cause behind them all. So when you are wronged, or scammed, or stuck in some petty quarrel, instead of pouring your anger onto the person in front of you, you lift your eyes and see that Allah is teaching you patience through them. You stop staring at the tool, and you finally see the Hand that moves it.

Al-Bari, and the U-turn back to Him

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجَلِ
فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارِيكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِنْدَ بَارِيكُمْ فَتَابَ
عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

And [recall] when Moses said to his people, "O my people, indeed you have wronged yourselves by your taking of the calf [for worship]. So repent to your Creator and kill yourselves [i.e., the guilty among you]. That is best for [all of] you in the sight of your Creator." Then He accepted your repentance; indeed, He is the Accepting of Repentance, the Merciful.

AL-BAQARAH 2:54

There is one more name in this family, and the Qur'an places it with exquisite care. Al-Bari is the One who makes a thing flawlessly, with no defect, no inconsistency, no crack in the design. And when Musa returned to find his people worshipping a calf, he told them to turn back in repentance, not to their Lord by just any name, but to their Bari, the One who made them without a single flaw.

Sit with why that name, of all His names, was chosen for that moment. Ustadh Hisham draws out the rebuke folded inside it. If the One who made you made you perfectly, with no defect at all, then how could you turn from Him to bow before a cow, a thing riddled with limitation and need and flaw? Come back, the name is saying. Come back to the One in whom there is no fault. And that is the very meaning of tawba: it is a U-turn. You wandered so far that you ended up worshipping a calf, so turn the car around and drive back to the Flawless One who originated you.

Knowledge that ends in awe

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالْدَّوَابِّ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ كَذَلِكَ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ

And among people and moving creatures and grazing livestock are various colors similarly. Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving.

FATIR 35:28

Ustadh Hisham closes where he began, back in Surah Fatir. After the colours of the fruits and the mountains and the creatures, after the dead soil pressed into a hundred flavours and shades when Allah could have made every taste identical, the verse names who, of all people, stands most in awe of Allah: the ones who have knowledge. And the knowledge meant here, the scholars of tafsir noted, is knowledge of His creation. To know what He has made is to fear Him, and love Him, and wonder at Him.

Which leaves us with no excuse. We can see more of His creation now than any generation in history. They had no telescope to reach the galaxies, no way to watch how the bees and the ants live and feed and build. The James Webb gazes into deep space; documentaries open the oceans and the forests for us at the touch of a screen. The more of His making we come to know, the more devoted and awestruck and in love with Him we should become. So take the children outside, to the hills and the parks, and when the weather turns, turn off the cartoons and put on the documentaries about the planet and the seas and the stars, and let them be amazed. And you, the tired adult who lost the gift of wonder somewhere between the work and the chores, you need it too.

Everyone needs a cave

Here is the practical heart of the lesson, and it is unexpectedly tender. Remember where the Prophet ﷺ was when the first revelation came to him. He was alone in a cave, reflecting. That cave sat roughly an hour's walk from his home, not on a smooth road but across the rough Makkan terrain, and still he

went, again and again, before a single word had been revealed, simply to sit and think.

Everyone, Ustadh Hisham says, needs some time in a cave. It does not have to be a real one. Put your phone on airplane mode and you have built yourself a cave. When the children are asleep, switch off the devices and step into the garden with a cup of green tea and look up at the sky, and that is your cave. You might be in a hospital waiting room, or sat waiting for your food in a restaurant, and if you can quiet the noise and the notifications and the crowd in your head long enough to say subhanallah, you have reached the cave wherever you are.

Because the truth running under this whole lesson is one line. If we are far from the creation of Allah, we are far from Allah. There are people in this city who gather with telescopes only to gaze up at the stars, and almost none of them are Muslims, while we sit eating, distracted, never once lifting our eyes to the sky Allah commanded us to behold. So find your cave. Step out of the noise, look up at what He has made, and let Al-Khaliq pull your heart back to Him.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

Allahumma anta Rabbi la ilaha illa anta, khalaqtani wa ana abduka

O Allah, You are my Lord, there is no god but You. You created me and I am Your servant.

How to live these names

- **Obey the command to look.** Do you not see is not a suggestion. Put time in your diary to walk among the trees, watch the rain, take the children to the hills or to a nature documentary. Look at His creation until you realise the One behind it.
- **See the Hand behind every cause.** He is not the Creator who finished and left. He creates in every moment. The wage did not come from your boss, the meal not from the cook. Trace each cause back to the One who created it, and your gratitude and your patience both change.
- **Let the soul be your proof.** No one can build a soul or explain it, not the scientist with all his bones and flesh. When a friend asks for evidence of

God, point to the one creation that cannot be made from nothing: the living, conscious self inside us.

- **When you fall, make a U-turn.** Tawba means to turn back. However far you have wandered, return to Al-Bari, the One who made you without a single flaw. He has no defect, so why stay bowed before things that do.
- **Find your cave.** Revelation came to the Prophet in a cave where he sat alone and reflected. Airplane mode is a cave. The garden at night with a cup of tea is a cave. Make a quiet space where it is just you, the sky, and Allah.

Why these names stay with us

We are surrounded, every waking hour, by the work of the Creator, and most of us have trained ourselves not to see it. Al-Khaliq brings what was nothing into being and for a purpose; Al-Bari makes it without a single flaw; Al-Musawwir fashions each thing into a shape all its own. To know these names is to stop reading your life as a chain of accidents and causes, and to start seeing one Hand creating behind it all, in this very moment, the One who made the sky without cracks and breathed into you a soul no instrument will ever explain.

O Allah, Al-Khaliq, Al-Bari, Al-Musawwir, You created us from nothing and fashioned us without flaw. Open our eyes to the traces of Your making, pull our hearts back from the noise to the wonder of what You have made, and let every cause we meet return us to You, the One who is creating still. You are our Lord; there is no god but You. You created us, and to You we belong.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Khaliq and Al-Bari (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Ghani and Al-Hamid

The Independent

الْغَنِيُّ

Al-Ghani

The Free of Need, The Independent

الْحَمِيدُ

Al-Hamid

The Praiseworthy

الصَّمَدُ

As-Samad

The Eternal Refuge, the One all creation turns to and needs



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7bubS0x8Zc>

Ask anyone on the street what it means to be ghani, rich, and they will point to the cars, the watches, the house, the pile of things a person owns. But the word does not start there. In the Arabic language, al-ghani does not mean to own a lot. It means to be free of need. The rich man earned the name not because of what is in his garage, but because he never has to knock on a door and ask. He is not dependent. He needs no one.

Hold that meaning, because it is about to turn into one of the names of Allah, Al-Ghani, the One who is utterly free of need, and it will quietly rearrange how you see your money, your prayer, your pain, and your own small place in the world.

The name that means free of need

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

O mankind, you are those in need of Allah, while Allah is the Free of need, the Praiseworthy.

FATIR 35:15

This is the verse to begin with, because in a single line it sets the whole relationship. There are two sides, and you are not the one who is full. You are al-fuqara, the needy, the poor. And Allah is Al-Ghani, the One who needs nothing and no one.

So when this name is given to Allah, it does not mean He owns the most, the way we crown the wealthiest person ghani. It means He is complete in Himself. He does not need your belief, your prayer, your money, your praise, or your existence. He was free of need before you were created, and He would be free of need if every creature vanished. Everything else in existence leans on something. He leans on nothing.

And there is a second half to the name that is easy to miss. Al-Ghani is not only free of need for Himself. He is the One whom everyone else needs. Every human, every animal, every atom, every object hangs on Him for its next moment. He needs nothing, and everything needs Him. Sit with how total that is.

Being rich is a state of the heart

If richness is really about being free of need, then it was never about the bank balance, and Ustadh Hisham anchors this in a moment from the life of the Prophet ﷺ. He asked his companions what it means to be rich. Is a person rich, he asked, because he owns a great deal? They said yes, of course. And he corrected them: real richness is not in possessions at all. It is richness of the soul. It is contentment, being so at peace with what you have that you no longer feel the pull to ask anyone for anything.

Read that again, because it flips the word inside out. You can own very little and be ghani, if your heart is full and you ask no one. And you can own a great

deal and be the poorest person alive, forever grasping, forever needing the next thing. Wealth, on this measure, is not counted in what you hold. It is counted in how little you need to hold.

This is the human echo of the divine name. Allah is Al-Ghani in the absolute, needing nothing whatsoever. And the closest a person comes to that quality is the heart that has made peace with its Lord and stopped begging the world.

The name we recite every day: As-Samad

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ

Allah, the Eternal Refuge.

AL-IKHLAS 112:2

There is a name very close to this one in meaning, and you say it every single day, often without pausing on it. In the surah you reach for again and again, Allah calls Himself As-Samad. The translation reaches for it as the Eternal Refuge, but Ustadh Hisham draws out the picture buried in the Arabic.

A samad, in the old language, is a hill, not as towering as a mountain, but a high place. Now imagine rain falling on hilly country. The water gathers at the summit and then trickles down to everything below. So when anyone is thirsty, where do they go? They climb. They make their way up to the source, because that is where the water is. The high ground gives, and everyone in need turns toward it and ascends to it.

That is As-Samad. Allah is the summit everyone climbs toward, the One every creature turns to when it needs, the source that all the thirsty seek, and He Himself needs nothing from any of them. He is above and beyond, free of need, and the whole of creation is below, reaching up. Al-Ghani and As-Samad are telling you the same truth from two angles: He needs no one, and everyone needs Him.

There is a small confession the Ustadh folds in here, and it is worth catching. As a boy of twelve or thirteen he had memorised a third of the Qur'an, and a visiting scholar sat the young huffaz down and asked them the meaning of

Surah Al-Ikhlās. Silence. Not one of them could answer. The scholar told them, gently and firmly, to go back and begin again, because to carry the words of the Qur'an without their meaning is to learn it the wrong way. The Companions took ten verses at a time from the Prophet ﷺ and would not move on until they had lived their meaning. So do not let As-Samad stay a sound on your tongue. Let it be a name you understand.

Free of need, and still worthy of all praise

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ ۖ
وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ

And We had certainly given Luqman wisdom [and said], "Be grateful to Allah." And whoever is grateful is grateful for [the benefit of] himself. And whoever denies [His favor] - then indeed, Allah is Free of need and Praiseworthy.

LUQMAN 31:12

Notice how the Qur'an almost never lets Al-Ghani stand alone. Again and again it arrives holding the hand of another name, Al-Hamid, the One worthy of all praise. The names are not meant to be read singly, so we should not understand them singly. Why are these two bound together so tightly?

Here is the trap the pairing closes. Al-Ghani tells you plainly: Allah does not need you. You can disbelieve, mock Him, be ungrateful, and none of it costs Him anything, because every command He gave was for your benefit, not His. Pray, and the gain is yours. Give charity, and the gain is yours. Be kind to your neighbour, and the gain is yours. So a clever heart might think: if He needs nothing from me, why bother at all?

Al-Hamid answers in the same breath. He may not need your praise, but He deserves it. Picture a man of immense wealth. Not every rich man is generous; in fact the wealthy are often the most tight-fisted of all. But when you meet a rich man who is also giving, kind, and warm with his wealth, your heart praises him without being asked. Allah is not merely free of need. He is the Giving, the Loving, the source of every blessing you have ever touched, and so He is wor-

thy of praise even though He could do entirely without it. Free of need, and still deserving everything. That is Al-Ghani Al-Hamid.

And so the Qur'an keeps repeating the lesson. If you and every soul on earth disbelieved, you would take nothing from Allah; whoever is grateful is grateful for his own sake, and whoever turns away leaves Allah exactly as He was, Free of need, Praiseworthy.

If He is the Independent, then you are the dependent

إِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنْكُمْ وَلَا يَرْضَىٰ لِعِبَادِهِ الْكُفْرَ وَإِنْ تَشْكُرُوا
يَرْضَاهُ لَكُمْ

If you disbelieve - indeed, Allah is Free from need of you. And He does not approve for His servants disbelief. And if you are grateful, He approves [i.e., likes] it for you.

AZ-ZUMAR 39:7

Turn the name around and it lands on you. If Allah is the One free of need, then you are the one full of need. If He has no needs, then you are need itself, from your first breath to your last. This is the mindset the name is meant to plant, and it is meant to correct something we all quietly feel.

Because sometimes we come to the mosque, give a little, fast a little, do a kindness, and a small voice says: look at me, I am doing Allah a favour. We glance in the mirror at the crisp thobe, the neat hijab, all that effort, and we feel owed, as if our worship has put Allah in our debt. The name dismantles this completely.

Imagine you visit the home of one of the richest people on earth, and you do not want to arrive empty-handed. What could you possibly bring to someone who could buy a country? You stop at a pound shop and pick up a cheap, unbranded bottle of perfume, and then you stand at the gate of their palace holding it out. You would feel small. You would feel that what you are offering means nothing to them. That, Ustadh Hisham says, is exactly how we should feel when we worship: like a poor man holding a tiny perfume bottle up to a bil-

lionaire. When you pray, when you serve the deen, when you give up sleep, when you massage your parents' feet, do not feel large. Feel that what you gave was small before the One who never needed it.

And feel, too, how replaceable you are. The Qur'an says it without flinching: if He willed, He could remove you and bring a new creation in your place. If we will not be grateful, an earthquake could empty this room, and a year from now fifty new faces would fill it. You are not indispensable. Neither am I. The only thing of worth in us is how much our hearts revere Him, and how little we imagine He needs us.

Everything is leaning on something

فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا فِي الْفُلِّ دَعَوْا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ
إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ

And when they board a ship, they supplicate Allah, sincere to Him in religion. But when He delivers them to the land, at once they associate others with Him.

AL-ANKABUT 29:65

We forget our need most when life is going well. As children we needed our parents for everything: to be fed, dressed, carried. But the older we grow the more the dependence seems to reverse. Children rely on us, ageing parents rely on us, a job and colleagues and a whole web of people rely on us, and slowly we start to feel like the one holding it all up, the boss, the pillar. It is precisely here that the name steps in to remind you: you are not independent, and everything that leans on you is not really leaning on you at all. It is leaning on Allah.

Look at how things actually hold together. A tablet rests on a stand, the stand on a metal bar, the bar on a strip of wood, the wood on a table, the table on the floor. Pull any link out and the whole thing collapses, because nothing in the chain stands on its own. Follow your own life back along that chain. You need food, the food needs rain, the rain needs the sky, and link after link, if you keep tracing, you arrive at the same place every time: Allah. Everything needs Him.

You need Him this very second. Your heart is beating right now, and what is keeping it beating? It could stop in an instant, as hearts do, in the young and the healthy and the perfectly fine, and there is nothing you could do.

But comfort makes us forgetful. The Qur'an paints the picture exactly: people caught in a storm at sea, helpless, calling on Allah alone with total sincerity, and the moment He brings them safely to dry land, they turn back to their old forgetting as if they never cried out. We do this. We feel we need our landlord, our boss, our family, and we forget that Allah is the One who placed every one of them there. This is why the Prophet ﷺ taught us to ask Allah for everything, even the strap of a sandal when it breaks, because asking is what keeps the heart from forgetting that it is poor and He is free of need.

The glasses that send every credit back to Allah

وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ

And He found you poor and made [you] self-sufficient.

AD-DUHA 93:8

Once you truly feel your own neediness, something beautiful happens to the way you carry success. You stop taking the credit. Here Ustadh Hisham tells a story, and it is the one that makes the whole name click into place. Imagine a brother with nothing suitable to wear to a wedding. One friend lends him a coat. A neighbour lends him matching trousers. Someone else irons him a crisp shirt. A fourth person hands him a belt. He walks in fully dressed, and the groom says, you look better than me. Can he take the credit? Of course not. Not one thread on him is his. He is wearing borrowed clothes from head to toe, so all he can do is look at the floor and say, I have generous neighbours.

That is your life. Everything you have was lent to you by Al-Ghani, the One who enriched you when you had nothing. When someone praises your recitation, you think, that was never mine, Allah gifted it. When someone admires your car, you think, it is not really mine, He just handed it to me. The Qur'an says it of the Prophet ﷺ himself: He found you poor and made you rich. So when the credits

roll on the film of your life, with its director and producer and cast, there is only one name on the whole reel, and it is not yours. Every credit goes back to Allah.

Ustadh Hisham calls this wearing the glasses of fadl, the glasses that let you see everything you own as a gift, a favour, never as something you earned and are owed. Watch what happens to the prophets when they are given something through these glasses. Yusuf, raised from a well to a kingdom, does not say I clawed my way here; he says, my Lord, You gave me of sovereignty and taught me to interpret dreams, You are my protector in this world and the next. Sulayman, who could hear an ant warn its colony, does not marvel at his own gift; he smiles and begs, my Lord, enable me to be grateful for the favour You have given me. The gift arrives and their first move is to hand the credit straight back.

Now see the opposite, and see how dangerous it is. When Qarun's treasures were laid out before him, he looked at it all and said, this was given to me only because of knowledge I have. This is my doing. This is my hard work. And the earth swallowed him and his wealth whole. We slip into his words so easily: I built this, I bought this house, this is my hard work. But the moment that thought takes root, you have taken off the glasses of fadl and put on the eyes of Qarun. Your skill was a gift. Your effort was a gift. Your very breath while you worked was a gift. To claim it as purely your own is to claim the borrowed suit was yours all along, and everyone can see it was not. The believer in Paradise is the one who gives from what he was given, the waiter who never confuses himself with the cook, the middleman who passes the gift along and keeps none of the credit for himself.

Give Him the best, not the leftovers

There is one more turn, and it is sharp. If Allah is free of need, you might think the quality of what you give Him hardly matters. The Qur'an goes the other way entirely: precisely because He needs nothing and still deserves everything, you are told to give Him not your scraps but the best of what you have. You will never attain righteousness, the Qur'an says, until you give from what you love. Not the worn-out coat headed for the charity bag. The thing you would actually miss.

Watch where this bites. When we give to charity, we reach for the clothes we no longer want, the things we were going to throw out anyway. But that worn shirt is not really going to the charity shop; it is being handed to Allah, and we are handing Him our leftovers. He does not need them. He asks for our best so that we can grow, not so that He can gain. And the same is true far beyond money. He even calls giving in His cause a loan to Him, the only loan with no fixed term and a guaranteed return, where you are paid back many times over: who will lend to Allah a goodly loan?

Now hold your day up to that standard. What slice of your time does Allah get? For most of us, the dregs. The leftover minutes after work, after the chores, after the children are down, when there are three brain cells left and we are too tired to even make du'a. We give Allah the worst of our attention and everyone else the best. So step it up. The greatest voluntary prayer is the one in the last third of the night, when the mind is at its sharpest, precisely because that is your best, offered before the day comes to snatch it away. And notice who really owns the best of us now: the phone. Four to six hours a day, the studies say, the freshest hours of our focus poured into an endless scroll that earns someone else money from our attention, while Allah asks for six undivided minutes and we cannot find them. Both will meet us on the Day we are shown our deeds: the six minutes we gave Him, and the six hours we gave the screen.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ

Rabbi awzi'ni an ashkura ni'matak allati an'amta alayya

My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favor which You have bestowed upon me.

How to live this name

- **Measure wealth by what you do not need.** Real richness is not the size of what you own but the contentment of your heart. Chase a soul so at peace with Allah's gift that it stops begging the world. That is the closest you come to the meaning of Al-Ghani.

- **Wear the glasses of fadl.** See everything you have, your skill, your wealth, your breath, as a gift lent to you, never as something you earned and are owed. When you are praised, hand the credit straight back to Allah, the way the prophets did.
- **Never speak the words of Qarun.** The moment you think 'this is my hard work, I built this,' you have taken off the glasses of fadl. Your effort itself was His gift. Catch that thought and replace it with gratitude before it takes root.
- **Ask Him for everything, even the small things.** Asking is what keeps the heart from forgetting it is poor and He is free of need. The Prophet ﷺ taught us to turn to Allah even for a broken sandal strap. Do not wait for the storm to remember you need Him.
- **Give Him your best, not your leftovers.** He needs nothing and still deserves everything, so give from what you love, not what you were going to throw out. Offer Him the sharpest part of your day, not the dregs. Guard your six minutes from the six hours.

Why this name stays with us

Al-Ghani turns the world the right way up. The One we lean on needs nothing from us, and we, who feel so self-made, are need itself from our first breath to our last. To know this name is to stop walking into Allah's presence as though our worship were a favour to Him, and to start walking in like the poor man with his small perfume bottle, grateful even to be allowed near. It is to wear the glasses of fadl, so that every gift, every skill, every breath sends its credit straight back to its Owner, and to keep asking Him for everything, because asking is how the heart remembers it is poor and He is free of need.

O Allah, You are Al-Ghani, the Free of need, and we are the fuqara, poor and in need of You. Al-Hamid, You deserve every praise even though You need none of it. Enable us to be grateful for Your favour, to give You our best and not our leftovers, to claim nothing as our own, and to return to You every credit for everything we have ever been given.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Ghani, Al-Hamid, and As-Samad (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Azeez and Al-Hakeem

The Undefeatable and the All-Wise

الْعَزِيزُ

Al-Azeez

The Almighty, The Undefeatable

الْحَكِيمُ

Al-Hakeem

The All-Wise



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=px75SrI9V04>

Until now this journey has walked you through the gentle names: the Merciful, the Loving, the Kind, the Provider who free of need still loves to give. This pair turns the page. Al-Azeez and Al-Hakeem, the Almighty who can never be beaten and the All-Wise who places everything exactly where it belongs.

It is one of the most frequent pairs in the whole Qur'an, and it answers a quiet fear of our age. The world around us has decided it no longer needs God, and it mistakes faster cars and taller towers for progress. These two names put that arrogance back in its place, and they hand you a dignity that no brand, no title, and no empire can give or take away.

The age that decided it did not need God

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

Is not Allah sufficient for His Servant?

AZ-ZUMAR 39:36

Start with a story that did happen. For most of human history people lived close to the soil. They farmed, they herded, they waited on the rain and the sun, and they knew in their bones that they were dependent on Something greater than themselves. Then came the machine. The steam engine pulled the human being off the land and into the factory, and standing there at the controls, building things with his own hands, he began to feel like the boss. Like the king. Like the one in charge.

From there it was a short walk to a new creed. We can make our own machines, so we can make our own rules. We can decide right and wrong ourselves, we do not need a church, we do not need a God to legislate for us. And when a theory arrived suggesting the whole of creation had assembled itself by accident, with no Maker and no purpose, it was the nail in the coffin. A civilisation convinced itself it had outgrown its Lord, and that conviction is now the unspoken religion of most of the world.

But every time the human being plants this flag, reality pulls it back down. They built a ship and called it the one that could never sink, and the sea swallowed it. They filled the earth with technology that all but drives itself, and then something far too small for the eye to see locked the entire planet inside its own homes. Allah keeps asking the question across the Qur'an: is He not enough for His servant? You may build whatever you like, but in the end every knee bends to His will. So the believer's slogan was never that we do not need Allah. It is that we do not need anything else besides Him.

Al-Azeez: the wall nothing can pass

Now meet the first name. To feel what Al-Azeez means, picture a piece of ground so packed and sealed that not a drop of rain can soak through it. The Arabs had a word for that kind of firm, impenetrable surface, and from that

same root comes this name. Or picture the door of the x-ray room at the hospital. Why is it lined with lead? Because lead is the one material the radiation cannot pass through. The waves hit it and stop. Everything that tries to get through gets caught at the wall.

That is Al-Azeez. The One who can never be penetrated, never be overcome, never be defeated, not for a moment and not for eternity. Every force that comes against Him breaks against Him like a wave on stone. And notice the shift here, because it matters: the names you have been learning showed you Allah's tenderness, and this one shows you His dominance. The same Lord who shapes a soft child in the dark of the womb is the One who sends the tornado that tears a city apart, the earthquake that rips the ground like tissue paper, and who will one day roll up the heavens themselves.

Some of His names invoke love and hope, and others invoke awe and fear, and the heart is meant to fly on both wings. Lean only on fear and you lose hope in Him. Lean only on love and you grow careless, telling yourself He will forgive whatever you do. Al-Azeez holds the balance. His command will come to pass whether you welcome it or resist it, because there is no power anywhere that can stand in its way.

The verse He recited until dawn

إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَبْدُكَ وَإِنْ تَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

If You should punish them - indeed they are Your servants; but if You forgive them - indeed it is You who is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.

AL-MA'IDAH 5:118

There is one night in the life of the Prophet ﷺ that Ustadh Hisham lingers over, and it shows you that this name of power is soaked in mercy. The Prophet ﷺ stood in prayer and came to a single verse, and he did not move past it. He recited it, and recited it again, and kept on reciting it, the same words over and over, until the night gave way to Fajr.

These are the words of Isa, pleading for his people: if You punish them, they are Your slaves and that is Yours to do, but if You forgive them, then You are Al-

Azeez, the Undefeatable, Al-Hakeem, the All-Wise. Sit with what the Prophet ﷺ was doing. Out of sheer love for his ummah, for you and me, he stood through the whole night holding this one ayah up to his Lord, asking again and again: You have the power to punish, but please, forgive them. The two names sit right there at the end of the plea. His might is real, and so is His wisdom, and the believer throws himself on both.

All honour is His to give

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا

Whoever desires honor [through power] - then to Allah belongs all honor.

FATIR 35:10

There is a second flavour inside this name. Al-Azeez is not only the Undefeatable, He is the Honoured and the Dignified, the One held high above all, and He is the source from which honour itself flows. So if you want status, if you want to be respected and to stand tall, the Qur'an tells you plainly where to go and get it: all honour, every last particle of it, belongs to Allah.

Notice how we usually chase it instead. A branded car. A watch with the right name on the dial. A job title, a famous surname, a powerful tribe, the restaurant we are seen eating in, the company we keep. We reach for these because we want to be looked at and counted as someone. And Allah says none of it touches your real worth. Your status is with Him. Stop performing for people and live for Him, and He will raise you on the Day that actually matters.

This is why we have to name the inferiority complex that has crept into so many of us. We look at the towers and the technology of others and we feel small, behind, slow, and a whisper begins: maybe their values are ahead of ours too, maybe we should copy not just their machines but their morals. A machine gun is advanced technology, and that says nothing about whether the hand holding it knows right from wrong. Look at what unrestrained freedom has cost: the family torn apart, commitment treated as a joke, hearts numbed by the screen. Material progress is not the same as progress. If your heart has gone backward, it does not matter how tall your building is.

Al-Hakeem: everything in its right place

Now turn to the second name. The popular translation is the Wise, but the name opens wider than that. Al-Hakeem carries the meaning of the Judge and the Ruler, the One who decides between His servants and sends down the verdict, who tells you this is how it is and this is how it is not. And it carries a second meaning that is worth holding onto: the One who puts everything in its right place.

That is what wisdom actually is. To say the right thing at the right time. To act at the right moment, to give when giving is right and to withhold when withholding is right, to be firm exactly when firmness is needed and gentle exactly when gentleness is needed. Nothing He does is random. Nothing is chaotic. Everything Allah does is exact, made with a precision so complete that there is not a single misplaced piece in all of creation.

So why are these two names forever bound together in the Qur'an? Here is the move at the centre of the whole lesson. Al-Azeez has all the power, and no one can resist His command. Al-Hakeem knows precisely where and when to use it. Power without wisdom is a catastrophe. Think of the tyrants, Ustadh Hisham says: Hitler was dominating, Stalin was dominating, Pharaoh was dominating. They had power, but did they know how to use it, on whom to use it, where to be gentle instead? Not every mighty one is wise. The younger generation has a phrase for exactly this: with great power comes great responsibility. Allah is Al-Azeez and Al-Hakeem together, perfect might married to perfect judgement, which is why His power is never abused and never misplaced.

One name lent to three others

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِالذِّكْرِ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّهُ لَكِتَابٌ عَزِيزٌ

*Indeed, those who disbelieve in the message after it has come to them...
And indeed, it is a mighty Book.*

FUSSILAT 41:41

Here is a detail that opens up how the name works. In the Qur'an, Allah lends the word azeez to a handful of His creation, and each one tells you something.

He calls the minister of Egypt the Azeez, because that man was a dominating ruler in his land. And then, in two places that should stop you in your tracks, He turns the word toward what you would least expect.

The first is this very Book. The Qur'an calls itself a mighty Book, a Book that is azeez, and the meaning is exactly what you would now expect. The message of the Qur'an dominates. Any ideology, any philosophy, any idea that sets itself against it is, in the end, broken upon it. That is why Ustadh Hisham insists we never water the message down to make it more palatable. We are not carrying something fragile that needs our protection. We are carrying something undefeatable, and our job is simply to deliver it as it is.

The second is the Prophet ﷺ himself. Allah describes him as one to whom your suffering is azeezun alayhi, grievous and heavy upon him. Your problems weigh on him, your pain is a big deal to him, he aches for your guidance because he is so deeply merciful and gentle with the believers. The same root that means undefeatable also means precious and weighty, and here it draws the Prophet's ﷺ love for you in a single word.

How Allah introduced Himself to Musa

يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنَّهُ أَنَا اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

O Moses, indeed it is I - Allah, the Exalted in Might, the Wise.

AN-NAML 27:9

Watch where these names land in a person's story, because the placement is never an accident. Take Musa at the fire. For forty years he had watched oppression and slaughter in Egypt, then he fled for ten years, and now he is walking back toward it when a fire calls him aside and his Lord speaks to him for the first time. And of all the ways Allah could have introduced Himself, He says: it is I, Allah, Al-Azeez, Al-Hakeem.

Sit with why those two. By Al-Hakeem, Allah is telling him that every hard turn of his life was placed with purpose: thrown into a river as a baby, raised in the palace of his enemy, a man killed by his hand in a single mistaken blow, the run into exile, the long years in the middle of nowhere. None of it was wasted. It

was the right time and the right place, all of it, to shape the man now standing at this fire. And by Al-Azeez, Allah reassures him for what comes next. Musa is being sent to the mightiest tyrant on earth, and his very next instruction is a command, to throw down his staff. He needs to know that the One sending him is the Undefeatable, the One whose order cannot be stopped, so that when he stands before Pharaoh he stands leaning on a power that nothing in Egypt can break.

The bridle that turns you for your good

فَأَمَّنَ لَهُ لُوطٌ وَقَالَ إِنِّي مُهَاجِرٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

And Lot believed him. [Abraham] said, "Indeed, I will emigrate to [the service of] my Lord. Indeed, He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise."

AL-ANKABUT 29:26

The same pattern lights up again with Ibrahim. As he sets out from his homeland, he does not even name where he is going. He says: I am emigrating to my Lord, He is Al-Azeez, Al-Hakeem. By Al-Hakeem, he leans on the truth that although he cannot see the road ahead, his Lord has a plan and is placing every step with wisdom. By Al-Azeez, he is comforted for the journey itself, alone in the open desert with no army and no weapon, where any bandit could end him. The Undefeatable is travelling with him, and the One no force can overcome will let nothing stop him until he arrives.

And this is where Al-Hakeem comes home to your daily life, because Al-Hakeem is the One whose rulings and laws govern how you live, and people today flinch at that. We are raised on the slogan of freedom: freedom of this, freedom of that, until the limits of Allah start to feel like a cage. But picture a road with no traffic lights and no rules, the way some streets already are, where people block junctions and inch along for half an hour and accidents pile up. Total freedom is not paradise. It is chaos.

Ustadh Hisham gives the law a beautiful picture. In Arabic, the strap that goes around a horse's mouth, the bridle that pulls its head left or right, is called a hakama, from this very name. It restrains the animal, yes, but it turns it for the

horse's own good and toward some benefit. That is exactly how Allah's rulings work. They are not there because He hates your freedom. They are there because not every freedom is good for you, and the One restraining you is the All-Wise. Think of buying a new washing machine and ignoring the manual, then pulling your clothes out ruined and pink: the Maker who built you knows what damages you and what helps you, and the Sharia is the manual He sent down with you.

Walk with the Qur'an and you walk as someone unbeatable

So gather the two names into how you actually live. To know Allah is Al-Azeez is to stop feeling small. The Muslim world looks at the skyscrapers and the gadgets and the speed of others and feels behind, and from that smallness comes the urge to copy them in everything, even in what we believe. Do not give in to it. The honour you are looking for is not in any of that. It is in what Allah revealed and gave to no one else.

Remember what this Qur'an once did. Hearts set alight by it brought down the Persian and Roman empires, the great powers of the age, not because their cars were faster but because they carried something undefeatable in their chests. The Qur'an is described as a light a person walks among the people with, brighter than any lamp, while the one without it stumbles in darkness upon darkness. When this Book lives in your heart and your limbs, you are azeez. You are a person of real honour and dignity, holding something the towers and the machines can never give.

That is the legacy the Companions understood. We were a humbled people, they said, and Allah gave us honour through Islam, so the moment we go looking for our honour anywhere else, He humbles us again. So do not let anyone make you feel you are behind. You are ahead, because you are walking with revelation, a light from Allah. And when, like Musa, you feel outnumbered and outgunned and afraid, hold onto what Allah told him: by My signs you will dominate. It is not about your numbers. It is about how close you stand to His words, and how deeply you have understood the wisdom inside them.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَبْدُكَ وَإِنْ تَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

In tu'adhdhibhum fa-innahum 'ibaduka, wa in taghfir lahum fa-innaka anta al-'Azizu al-Hakim

If You should punish them, indeed they are Your servants; but if You forgive them, indeed it is You who is the Exalted in Might, the Wise. (Qur'an 5:118)

How to live these names

- **Take your honour from Allah alone.** Stop performing for people through the car, the title, the surname, the company you keep. All honour belongs to Al-Azeez. Live for Him instead of the crowd, and He will raise your worth on the Day it counts.
- **Refuse to feel small.** When the towers and the technology of others make you feel behind, remember you are walking with revelation, a light brighter than any lamp. Do not copy their values to chase their machines. You carry something undefeatable.
- **Trust the wisdom behind the hard turns.** Like Musa, read the river, the exile, and the long empty years as placed on purpose, not wasted. Al-Hakeem puts everything in its right time and place, even the parts you cannot yet make sense of.
- **Receive the law as a bridle, not a cage.** The limits of Allah turn you toward your own good, the way a bridle turns a horse. The Maker who built you sent the manual with you. Not every freedom is good for you, and the One restraining you is the All-Wise.
- **Fear Allah and love Him on both wings.** Some names call you to hope, this pair calls you to awe. Lean only on fear and you despair; lean only on love and you grow careless. Hold His might and His mercy together, and fly straight.

Why these names stay with us

We live in an age that mistook taller towers and faster cars for greatness and quietly decided it no longer needed its Lord. Al-Azeez and Al-Hakeem answer that arrogance and heal it. The Undefeatable is the One every force breaks against, the source of an honour no title can buy, and the All-Wise is the One who places every piece of your life exactly where it belongs, and whose law turns you, like a bridle, toward your own good. Hold them together and the fear lifts: His might is total, His wisdom is perfect, and He is travelling with you on every road.

O Allah, Al-Azeez, Al-Hakeem, You are the Undefeatable whom nothing can overcome and the All-Wise who places all things in their right place. Make us take our honour from You alone, let us never feel small while we carry Your words, give us trust in Your wisdom through every hard turn, and let us walk with the light of this Qur'an until we meet You as people of real dignity.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Azeez and Al-Hakeem (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Ar-Razzaq

The Ultimate Provider

الرَّزَّاقُ

Ar-Razzaq

The Ultimate Provider



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4cHfJDjafs>

Open the headlines on any ordinary morning and you can feel the worry rising off the page. The biggest companies are laying people off. The price of bread, of oil, of petrol keeps climbing. People are being pushed out of their homes. You send out a hundred applications and the phone never rings. Times are tight, and that tightness has a way of creeping out of the news and into the chest, where it sits as stress and quiet fear.

This is the name for exactly that ache. Ar-Razzaq, the One who provides, the One whose giving never runs dry. And the moment you really understand what He provides, the grip of that fear begins to loosen, because you discover your provision was never in the hands you thought it was.

How a bird feeds its young

Start with the word itself. Rizq is usually translated as provision, sustenance, or what we are given to live on. But the Arabs had a precise picture in mind, and Ustadh Hisham draws it out: watch how a bird feeds its chicks. The mother re-

turns to the nest, the baby opens its mouth wide, and she places the food straight inside, beak to beak. The little bird did nothing to earn it. It simply opened up and received.

That is the heart of rizq. It is sustenance placed into you without you having to chase it down, and the original picture was specifically about food, because food is the basis of life. Without it we would all die. So rizq is what keeps you breathing, alive, and standing. From there the word widened to cover any good thing Allah hands you, but the root stays the same: something given, that gives you life.

Hold onto that image of the open beak. It is going to reshape what you think you are waiting on Allah for.

Rizq is so much wider than the food on your table

قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِن كُنْتُ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّي وَرَزَقَنِي مِنْهُ رِزْقًا حَسَنًا

He said, "O my people, have you considered: if I am upon clear evidence from my Lord and He has provided me with a good provision from Him...?"

HUD 11:88

Here is where most of us are too small in our thinking. We hear rizq and we picture food in the fridge and money in the bank, full stop. The Qur'an keeps prising that definition open.

Take Shu'ayb, calling his people away from their idols. He asks them to consider: what if he stands on clear proof from his Lord, and his Lord has given him a beautiful provision? They might assume he means his dinner. But scholars of tafsir say the beautiful provision he is talking about points beyond food: to prophethood, to guidance itself. That is what truly brought him to life, the way food keeps the body alive. Can there be a greater rizq than that?

Then widen it further. When the Prophet ﷺ spoke about his beloved wife Khadijah, he said Allah had granted him her love. So love can be a form of provision. And of those who left their homes for Allah and were then killed, the Qur'an promises that Allah will surely give them a good provision, and that He

is the best of providers. They are dead in this world, yet still being provided for. With what? With Paradise, a provision so vast the Qur'an leaves it open, beyond anything we could name. Rizq can be guidance, it can be love, it can be Jannah.

Why the richest people you know may own nothing

وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ قُتِلُوا أَوْ مَاتُوا لَيَرْزُقَنَّهُمُ اللَّهُ رِزْقًا
حَسَنًا ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ

And those who emigrated for the cause of Allah and then were killed or died - Allah will surely provide for them a good provision. And indeed, it is Allah who is the best of providers.

AL-HAJJ 22:58

Once you see rizq this way, a quiet revolution happens in how you measure people. We assume that low in the bank means low in provision: an empty fridge, an old car, a deprived street, a man Allah forgot. None of that follows.

There may be someone with very little money who is richer than all of us put together, because his wealth is not material. His real estate is in the next life. His riches are his faith and his connection to knowledge, and that is provision straight from Allah. So never read your bank balance as a verdict on your worth to your Lord. He gave you rizq. The very first thing He gave you is that you are sitting here, listening, being guided, and that is the greatest provision of all.

And why is guidance the greatest, greater than the best meal you can imagine? Because a plate of biryani is gone in a few hours, digested and finished, and you are hungry again. The guidance of Allah is the provision that never ends. Its benefit never stops working in you. Picture a plate you could eat from forever that never emptied. That is closer to what guidance is, and one day, by His mercy, the believers will gather around the real feast in Jannah.

The pattern of the name: always giving, and giving a lot

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ

Indeed, it is Allah who is the [continual] Provider, the firm possessor of strength.

ADH-DHARIYAT 51:58

Notice the shape of the name. Allah does not only call Himself the One who provides; He calls Himself Ar-Razzaq, and that form in Arabic carries weight. It is a pattern of frequency and abundance: the One who provides constantly, and provides in floods. This is simply His nature. He is always providing, not just food, but everything, and the greatest of all is guidance.

Can a human being be a provider too? In a smaller, borrowed way, yes. But Ustadh Hisham marks the gap carefully, and it is worth feeling the difference. When you provide for someone, you are never creating anything from nothing. You are only moving provision around that Allah handed you first. Your pay-check passes through your employer's hands, but he did not bring it into being; he is a channel, not a source.

And we provide as needy creatures ourselves. You need rizq just as much as the person you are giving to, so you calculate, you protect your own share, you weigh what you can spare. Worse, our giving so often comes with strings. A gift with a quiet motive behind it. Aid between nations that turns, when the moment comes, into leverage and demands. Allah needs nothing from anyone, so His giving has no strings at all. He can provide directly, without means, the instant He wills it.

Out-of-season fruit, and the prayer it unlocked

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا
دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكِ هَذَا
قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

So her Lord accepted her with good acceptance and caused her to grow in a good manner and put her in the care of Zechariah. Every time Zechariah entered upon her in the prayer chamber, he found with her provision. He said, "O Mary, from where is this [coming] to you?" She said, "It is from Allah. Indeed, Allah provides for whom He wills without account."

AL IMRAN 3:37

There is a story that shows this with no machinery in sight. Maryam, devoted to her worship, was cared for by the Prophet Zakariyya. And every time he entered her prayer chamber, he found fresh fruit beside her: winter fruit in the summer, summer fruit in the winter. There was no shop, no delivery, no season that explained it. When he asked her where it came from, she answered simply that it was from Allah, and that Allah provides whomever He wills without any account, without limit, without calculation.

Now sit with what that did to Zakariyya. He was an old man who had longed for a child for years and years, the kind of longing that eventually wears most of us down until we quietly give up. But standing there in front of fruit that arrived from nowhere, out of season, by no means at all, something turned over in him. He realised that a Lord who can do this can give him anything. If Allah can bring her fruit out of season from nowhere, can He not give an old man a son?

So right there, in that moment, he turned and asked: my Lord, grant me from Yourself a good offspring, indeed You are the Hearer of supplication. And the answer came immediately, the angels calling out to him while he still stood praying. We forget, again and again, that Allah can provide with no cause and no means. Sometimes you have to see it to remember it.

Allah writes a blank cheque

قُلْ لَوْ أَنَّكُمْ تَمْلِكُونَ خَزَائِنَ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّي إِذًا لَأَمْسَكْتُمْ خَشْيَةَ الْإِنْفَاقِ
وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ قَتُورًا

Say [to them], "If you possessed the depositories of the mercy of my Lord, then you would withhold out of fear of spending." And ever has man been stingy.

AL-ISRA 17:100

Watch how differently we give. Ask someone for help and the first thing that fires in the mind is the arithmetic: how much is in the account, can I afford this, what will be left. We budget the wedding gift down to the pound. There is even that table at the door of some weddings, a relative with a notepad writing down exactly what each guest gave, so that nobody is repaid a single pound more than they once handed over. That is us. The Qur'an says it plainly: if you owned the very treasuries of your Lord's mercy, you would clutch them tight, terrified of running out, because the human being is stingy by nature.

Allah does not count. There is a phrase that runs through the Qur'an again and again, that He provides without reckoning, without limit, without a worried glance at what remains. And in one of those places He speaks straight to you and me: those who are patient will be given their reward without account. Here Ustadh Hisham reaches for the image that lands it. A blank cheque. Not a fixed sum written in, but a cheque signed and handed to you with the amount left empty, to fill in whatever you need and cash whenever you wish.

That is how you should come to Ar-Razzaq. Stop asking timidly for the bare minimum. Beg Him, plead with Him, ask Him for the impossible, because the One you are asking has no shortage to fear, no calculation to make, and no hidden motive in giving. He only asks that you ask. As He says, when His servants ask about Him, He is near, and He answers the one who calls. You have to call first.

Four shifts this name works in the heart

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيَتْهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِنْدِي

He said, "I was only given it because of knowledge I have."

AL-QASAS 28:78

Knowing Ar-Razzaq is meant to change how you live, and Ustadh Hisham names the turns it works in you. The first is generosity. Once you truly grasp that what you hold was never yours, that you neither produced it nor pulled it out of the ground, giving gets easy. This water in my hand, I did nothing to create it; Allah passed it to me through means I cannot trace. So if someone beside me is thirsty, I am simply the channel He is using to provide for them, and I need not count what is left in the bottle, because it was never mine to begin with. I am living on borrowed provision, and the One who lent it will lend again.

The second is trust. We start to imagine our wealth flows from our own effort, our degree, our CV, our hustle. Look at Qarun, who said his fortune came only from knowledge he possessed, and whom Allah then caused the earth to swallow whole, with no party to defend him. He leaned entirely on himself and the ground opened beneath him. One of Ustadh Hisham's own teachers gave him a test for this: when you leave your house and turn the key, ask your heart, am I relying on this lock to keep my home safe, or on Allah? You could trust the lock, and the whole house could burn while the locked door stands there untouched. Trust the lock, the job, the paycheck, the alarm, and you will live anxious, because all of them are shaky and none of them are reliable. Trust Allah, and He always comes through. As the Prophet ﷺ said, if only you relied on Allah as He should be relied upon, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds: they go out hungry in the morning and come home full at night.

The third is ambition. Muslims so often aim painfully low; ask many of us our dream and the answer is a minimum-wage job. But the Prophet Sulayman asked Allah for a kingdom no one would have after him, and we are taught, when we ask, to ask for the highest place in Paradise, not the floor. So why beg for five pounds when the cheque is blank? Be ambitious in this world too, to build something, to benefit others, just never out of greed or showing off. The fourth is hope. Most people did not choose their place on the ladder; Allah ap-

portions provision as He wills, and wealth is no proof of His pleasure, just as poverty is no proof of His anger. Both are a test. So wherever you have been placed, do not sink into despair, because the One who decided your share is also the One who can change it the moment you turn to Him.

Provision from where you never expected

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ۚ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ

And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out and will provide for him from where he does not expect.

AT-TALAQ 65:2-3

The Qur'an makes a promise: whoever is conscious of Allah, He will open a way out for him and provide for him from where he never expected it. People often shrink this verse down to a paycheck, as if fearing Allah simply lands you a job by morning. But rizq was never only jobs and money. The provision from where you did not expect might be guidance. It might be His pleasure. It might be a righteous spouse, or being spared an accident, or love for the Messenger ﷺ placed in your heart, or even a death that ends you in Paradise. Do not bend the meaning down to cash in this world.

Someone once asked which du'a to recite to maximise his income, as though there were a spell to chant a hundred times that would triple his stocks by morning. It does not work like that. When you ask Ar-Razzaq for provision, He may answer with something you never thought to request, because His giving is wider than your imagination of it.

So let go of the budgeted, fearful way of asking. This is the antidote to the headlines you woke up to. The economy can be thrashed, the prices can climb, and still your provision is signed and waiting, because it sits with the One whose treasuries never empty.

The greatest provision of all

رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا
لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ فَاجْعَلْ أَفْئِدَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِمْ وَارْزُقْهُمْ مِنَ
الثَّمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ

Our Lord, I have settled some of my descendants in an uncultivated valley near Your sacred House, our Lord, that they may establish prayer. So make hearts among the people incline toward them and provide for them from the fruits that they might be grateful.

IBRAHIM 14:37

Ustadh Hisham closes where Ibrahim closes. Commanded to leave his family in a barren valley with nothing, no crops, no water, no people, Ibrahim turned to his Lord and asked. But notice the order of his asking, because it is the whole lesson in miniature. You would think the first cry in a desert would be for food and water to survive. It was not.

His very first request was that his family would be a people of prayer and praise, connected to Allah. Then he asked for community, for hearts drawn near so his family would not be alone. And only after that did he ask Allah to provide them with fruits. He put the connection first, the people second, and the food last.

That is the order of true provision. The greatest rizq Allah can give you is a connection to Him. You might have no money, no comfort, no crowd around you, but if you have Allah you have everything, and if you have everything but not Him, you have nothing at all. Read your own life that way, and the fear that came off the morning headlines simply has nowhere left to stand.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

اللَّهُمَّ يَا رَزَّاقُ ارْزُقْنِي مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا أَحْتَسِبُ

Allahumma ya Razzaq, urzuqni min haythu la ahtasib

O Allah, O Provider, provide for me from where I do not expect.

How to live this name

- **Widen what you call provision.** Stop reading rizq as only the food in the fridge and the money in the bank. Guidance, faith, love, knowledge, a sound heart, Paradise: these are provision too, and they are the provision that never runs out.
- **Give like a channel, not an owner.** What you hold passed through your hands from Allah; you never made it. So give without counting what is left, because the One who lent it to you will provide it again.
- **Rely on Allah, not the lock.** Trust your job, your savings, and your alarm, and you will live anxious, because they are all shaky. Tie your heart instead to Ar-Razzaq, who provides for the birds and always comes through.
- **Ask as if the cheque is blank.** Allah gives without counting and without limit. Do not beg Him for the bare minimum. Ask Him boldly, for this world and the next, because the One you are asking fears no shortage.
- **Put the connection first.** Like Ibrahim in the desert, ask for nearness to Allah before you ask for the fruit. The greatest provision is a heart connected to Him; everything else is built on top of that.

Why this name steadies us

We carry so much fear about provision: the bills, the job market, the prices that will not stop climbing. Ar-Razzaq answers that fear at the root. He is the One who feeds the bird at the nest and the believer at the grave, who brought Maryam fruit with no season and no shop, who signs the cheque and leaves the amount to you. And the provision He prizes most for you is not in the fridge or the bank at all. It is guidance, nearness, a heart tied to Him, the rizq that never

runs dry. Once you see that, you stop reading an empty account as a verdict, and you start trusting the Hand that was holding everything all along.

O Allah, Ar-Razzaq, You are the best of providers and Your treasuries never empty. Provide for us from where we do not expect, make us generous channels of Your giving, free our hearts from leaning on anything but You, and grant us the greatest provision of all, a true and lasting connection to You.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Ar-Razzaq (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Lateef and Al-Khabeer

The Subtle and All-Aware

اللَّطِيفُ

Al-Lateef

The Subtle, The Most Gentle

الْخَبِيرُ

Al-Khabeer

The All-Aware



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vk51iGT0ik>

Some of Allah's names tell you what He has. These two tell you how He works, so quietly that you usually miss it. Al-Lateef and Al-Khabeer, the Subtle and the All-Aware, are the pair you reach for on the days that do not make sense: the loss you did not choose, the door that slammed in your face, the prayer that seemed to go unanswered.

Picture a wise father, Luqman, sitting his son down to teach him about God. He starts with the heart of it, that Allah is One. Then he leans in with something almost tender: my son, if there were a deed as small as a mustard seed, buried inside a boulder, lost somewhere in the heavens or deep in the earth, Allah would bring it out. Indeed, Allah is Lateef, Khabeer. That is where this lesson begins, with a God so fine in His knowing that nothing, however small or however hidden, escapes Him.

The two names Luqman taught his son

يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِنْ تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي
السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ

[And Luqman said], "O my son, indeed if it [i.e., a wrong] should be the weight of a mustard seed and should be within a rock or [anywhere] in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Indeed, Allah is Subtle and Aware.

LUQMAN 31:16

When a parent first tries to teach a child about Allah, they hardly know where to start. How do you describe the One the mind cannot grasp, the One you call on in the dark of the night and hope in by day? In the Qur'an, Luqman shows you the order. First he plants the foundation, that Allah is One and nothing should ever be set up as His equal. Then he reaches for these two names to seal it: even a mustard seed of a deed, hidden in solid rock or somewhere out in the cosmos, Allah will bring it forth, because He is Lateef and Khabeer.

So what do they mean? Start with Al-Lateef. In Arabic the word lateef pulls in two directions at once. The first is gentleness, the soft, loving kindness you show when you bend down to stroke a stray cat on your way to the masjid, careful and tender. The second is fineness, something so small and subtle you cannot even detect it. Reach for the kitchen to make it land: it is the sliver of ginger hiding in a plate of biryani, the piece you mistake for potato until it lights up your whole mouth, the thing that was there all along, working away, while you never saw it coming.

Put the two together and you have the scholars' beautiful summary of this name. Al-Lateef is the One whose gentleness and love reach you in ways so hidden you do not even notice them. How often does Allah send what looks like a calamity, when it is actually a blessing in disguise? How often does He hand you a difficulty, a pain, and only later do you realise it was a benefit all along? That is Al-Lateef.

And Al-Khabeer? It comes from a word that means to be deeply informed about something, the way a spy is sent to uncover the secret that nobody else can see. You are only described as khabeer of a thing when that thing is hidden from plain view. So Al-Khabeer is the One who knows the secrets, the inner reality of every situation, the good that is folded inside what looks to you like nothing but loss. The two names travel together for a reason: His gentleness is hidden, and His knowledge of the hidden is total.

One pixel, and the full picture

Here is why these names matter so much right now. When something terrible happens to good people, the human mind rushes to a simple equation: hardship equals punishment. So when an earthquake strikes a land crowded with Muslims, refugees who had already lost their homes in war, people ask the painful question out loud. Why there? Why them? If catastrophe is punishment, then everyone under that rubble must have been a target.

Al-Lateef and Al-Khabeer come to dismantle that equation. They teach you to read Allah's actions differently, to stop assuming you understand what He is doing. As the scholars put it, when we look at events we are holding a single pixel, while Allah holds the entire picture. We see with tunnel vision, this much and no more. He sees all of it, hears all of it, knows exactly where every mustard seed of meaning is buried. The believer who has tasted these two names does not look at a calamity and read the cover as the whole book.

This is not a way of switching off your feelings or pretending pain does not hurt. It is a way of refusing to draw the cruelest possible conclusion from incomplete information. You do not know what Allah is weaving on the other side. He is Khabeer of a reality you cannot reach, and He is Lateef in how He brings His good out of it.

Yusuf, reading his whole life as gentleness

وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوا لَهُ سُجَّدًا ۗ وَقَالَ يَا أَبَتِ هَذَا تَأْوِيلُ
رُؤْيَايَ مِنْ قَبْلُ قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّي حَقًّا ۖ وَقَدْ أَحْسَنَ بِي إِذْ أَخْرَجَنِي مِنَ
السِّجْنِ وَجَاءَ بِكُمْ مِنَ الْبَدْوِ مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ نَزَعَ الشَّيْطَانُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ
إِخْوَتِي ۗ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَطِيفٌ لِمَا يَشَاءُ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

And he raised his parents upon the throne, and they bowed to him in prostration. And he said, "O my father, this is the explanation of my vision of before. My Lord has made it reality. And He was certainly good to me when He took me out of prison and brought you [here] from bedouin life after Satan had induced [estrangement] between me and my brothers. Indeed, my Lord is Subtle in what He wills. Indeed, it is He who is the Knowing, the Wise.

YUSUF 12:100

No life shows you Al-Lateef like the life of Yusuf. Walk through what he endured: the darkness of the well, the noise of the slave market in Egypt, a strange land far from everyone he loved, the plotting against him in the palace, the darkness of a prison among strangers, years cut off from his family, and after all of it the pressure of power and the burden of feeding a nation through years of famine. He could have read every chapter of that as a wound. Today many people do exactly that, building a whole identity around being a victim, taking the hard things they have been through as a licence to pour hardness back into the world.

Watch what Yusuf does instead. At the very end, when his dream finally comes true and his parents are raised before him, he gathers his life into a single sentence of gratitude, and Ustadh Hisham invites you to count the names of Allah packed into it: seven of them, working together in one breath. This is a man who knows his Lord intimately, who knows each name and how it differs from the next. And listen to what he says: my Lord was so gentle, so kind, when He took me out of prison and brought you to me from the desert, after Satan had

sown discord between me and my brothers. Indeed, my Lord is Lateef in whatever He wills.

Sit with the strangeness of that. He has just listed the worst things that ever happened to him, the prison, the betrayal, the long estrangement, and he calls all of it the gentleness of Allah. How? Because by taking him through every one of those dark places, Allah delivered him to a reunion he could never have imagined or engineered himself. Did the brothers dream that going to buy grain from the ministry would reunite them with the brother they threw away? Did Yusuf imagine the well would be a road to a palace, that prison would be a doorstep to power? When Allah plans, you cannot see the shape of it. That is Al-Lateef.

And notice his manners, because they are the lesson inside the lesson. When Yusuf speaks of the good, he hands it straight to Allah: Allah took me out, Allah brought you to me, Allah gave me all of this. But when he reaches the painful part, the rift with his brothers, he attributes the discord to Satan. Not because anything happens outside Allah's will, but because it is from beautiful adab, from a correct knowledge of God, to know that Allah never intends evil for you. Good and harm are rarely as simple as they look. You watch a World Cup and see nothing but joy on your screen, while for the hundreds of labourers who died building the stadium it was a catastrophe. No event is purely good or purely evil. Only Allah knows the true reality of each one, because He alone is Al-Khabeer.

It may be you hate a thing, and it is good for you

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَن تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
وَعَسَىٰ أَن تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Battle has been enjoined upon you while it is hateful to you. But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not.

AL-BAQARAH 2:216

The Qur'an states the principle plainly. It may be that you hate a thing, and it is good for you, and it may be that you love a thing, and it is bad for you. Allah knows, and you do not. This is Al-Lateef and Al-Khabeer turned into a way of living: when Allah gives you something you despise, something you struggle against, turn the coin over, because there is often something beautiful on the other side that you simply could not see from where you were standing.

Ustadh Hisham tells it on himself. He once travelled to a job interview alongside another candidate. He walked in through a set of double doors and they locked shut behind him, leaving the other man stranded outside in the rain. The poor man stood there as his suit soaked through, his notes ruined, his laptop dead, asking why on earth this was happening to him. Then the receptionist opened the door, and he had to give his presentation dripping wet, no notes, no slides, entirely from memory. The interviewers looked at this composed, soaking man delivering flawlessly with nothing in his hands and hired him on the spot, before he even left the building, while the Ustadh waited fourteen working days for an answer. The locked door, the rain, the ruined notes: every part of that humiliation was the very thing that won him the job. The gift was wrapped in the difficulty.

Living through hardship, he says, is like digging through a mine. Your face and hands get black with soot, you might be stuck down there for months, but you keep swinging the pickaxe because you know there is a diamond worth a fortune somewhere in the rock. The Qur'an promises the testing will come, with fear and hunger and loss, and then it congratulates the ones who, when calamity strikes, keep digging and say: we belong to Allah, and to Him we return. They do not yet see the diamond. They simply trust it is there.

The mercy hidden inside what He withholds

اللَّهُ لَطِيفٌ بِعِبَادِهِ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَهُوَ الْقَوِيُّ الْعَزِيزُ

Allah is Subtle with His servants; He gives provision to whom He wills. And He is the Powerful, the Exalted in Might.

ASH-SHURA 42:19

There is one verse where Allah ties this name directly to provision: Allah is Lateef with His servants, He provides for whoever He wills. What does His hidden gentleness have to do with rizq? Here Ustadh Hisham draws out the connection that is easy to miss. Sometimes the most gentle thing Allah can do for you is to withhold. Sometimes Him not giving you a thing is better for you than the thing itself.

He paints it with any parent who has taken small children to the shops. Every thirty seconds some kind stranger presses another sweet into their hands, the chocolate, the lollipop, the caramel, and the children glow at all these generous people, then turn on you, the parent quietly slipping every sweet into your bag. Why are you keeping them from us, look how kind everyone else is. But you know what an avalanche of sugar will do to them, so out of love you hold it back. The Qur'an says the same of Allah: if He poured out unlimited provision on His servants, some would only use it to transgress. So when Allah takes something away, or never hands it over, that withholding can itself be the gift. He is Lateef with His servants.

Stretch this far enough and even the hardest losses turn. He asks you to consider a child taken by the rubble of an earthquake: their life gone, their home gone, their food gone, lying still beneath the stone. What did Allah give them? Do not imagine those who die in His path are dead. They are alive with their Lord, provided for, content with what He gives them, in a hospitality you could not find if you searched every street on earth. Suddenly you do not pity that child in the way you did. You read the whole scene through Al-Lateef, and you stop judging the book by a cover of destruction, because you cannot see the mercy folded inside it.

The river becomes a red carpet

Once these names settle into you, you start reading the great rescues of the Qur'an in a new light. Think of baby Musa, placed by his own mother into the Nile, one of the longest and most dangerous rivers in the world, crocodiles in the water, certain death by every human calculation. Who would dream that this deadly river would become a red carpet gliding the child straight to a palace? Who would dream that the home of the tyrant hunting him, the most

terrifying address imaginable, would become a warm nursery for the very baby he wanted dead?

It is only Al-Lateef who turns a killing river into a red carpet, a tyrant into a stepfather, a house of terror into a cradle. When you look at things in their obvious, surface form, you lose your trust in Him. But when you trust Him through the surface, He shows you that what He planned was better than anything you had dared to hope for. Nobody knows the hidden beauty He has stored up as a reward for the patient.

The Prophet's own life is the proof. The man who lost his mother, his father, his beloved wife, his uncle, his children, who watched his family die in front of him, did he ever imagine he would be given a family that today numbers more than a billion? Bilal, the African slave once treated as the dust of the earth, did he imagine he would one day stand atop the Ka'bah? The man whose flesh was branded with hot iron, did he imagine Paradise waiting at the end of it? Never underestimate the plan of Al-Lateef. No spreadsheet you build, no forecast you run, no headline you read can see what He has hidden in the rock.

His restrictions are freedoms in disguise

وَأذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَىٰ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا
خَبِيرًا

And remember what is recited in your houses of the verses of Allah and wisdom. Indeed, Allah is ever Subtle and Aware.

AL-AHZAB 33:34

There is a place where Allah speaks to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, the mothers of the believers, gives them commands heavier than those laid on other women, and then seals the passage by naming Himself Lateef and Khabeer. Why close a list of extra duties with these two names? Because His gentleness is hidden inside what looks like restriction. The rules that feel like a tightening are, in truth, a liberation. They free you from your own ego, your own lower self, your own appetite.

We so easily misread the limit as a loss, the way a child misreads the bag of confiscated sweets. Ustadh Hisham remembers his own mother forbidding him every fizzy drink of his childhood until, at seventeen, a stray sip of one tasted so strange he wondered why anyone drinks it at all. What felt like deprivation then is, today, the reason his friends nurse their sugar and dental troubles while he reaches happily for water. The restriction was the kindness. He only saw it years later.

It is the same with the whole of Allah's law. People look at His commands from the outside and call them harsh, a cage. But if they understood that these limits come from the One who knows every hidden secret and is endlessly gentle with His servants, they would see them differently. Without the boundary around indecency, disease and the breakdown of the family would run unchecked. The limits are not bars on a window. They are the hand of Al-Lateef, holding back what would harm you, from a knowledge of you that you do not even have of yourself.

Patience, and a good opinion of Allah

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

Does He who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the Aware?

AL-MULK 67:14

Does the One who created not know? He is the Lateef, the Khabeer. The Maker of a thing knows its every hidden seam, and so these names hand you a whole posture for meeting hardship. You learn to be patient. You learn to interpret the difficult moments in the best possible light, in hope and not in fear, holding a good opinion of your Lord rather than rushing to pin something ugly on Him. When the loss comes, the debt, the illness, the job gone in a downturn, you do not look up at the sky and scream why me. You trust that the One who created you sees the seam of good running through the stone.

These names also soften how you treat everyone else. Since Allah works in ways you can never trace, you have no idea what the person in front of you is carrying. The one who came late, who never replied, who was short with you,

may be walking through something only Al-Khabeer can see. So you meet them with a little mercy instead of judgement, because you know that hidden weights are real, and that you cannot read another person's cover any more than you can read your own.

This is the believer the Prophet ﷺ described, whose whole affair is good: grateful in ease, which is good for him, and patient in hardship, which is also good for him. He keeps digging through the mine. He keeps the good opinion. He keeps turning the coin, because he knows the One holding the other side is gentle beyond his sight.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

إِنَّ رَبِّي لَطِيفٌ لِّمَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

Inna Rabbi Lateefun lima yasha', innahu huwa al-Aleem al-Hakeem

Indeed, my Lord is Subtle in what He wills. Indeed, it is He who is the Knowing, the Wise.

How to live these names

- **Stop reading the cover as the whole book.** You hold one pixel; Allah holds the full picture. When a calamity lands, refuse to leap to 'this is punishment.' He is Al-Khabeer, aware of a reality you cannot reach, and Al-Lateef, hiding His good inside it.
- **Turn the coin over.** It may be you hate a thing and it is good for you. Like Yusuf reading his prison as gentleness, look for the beautiful side of what you despise, even when you cannot see it yet. Keep digging through the mine.
- **Trust the withholding, not only the giving.** Sometimes the most gentle thing Allah does is to not give you a thing, the way a loving parent holds back the sweets. What He keeps from you can be a mercy as real as what He hands you.
- **Keep a good opinion of your Lord.** When loss comes, do not pin something ugly on Allah or scream 'why me.' Like Yusuf, hand the good to Him and

never imagine He intends evil for you. Be patient, and interpret the hard moment in the best light.

- **Be gentle with people whose burdens you cannot see.** If someone is late, short, or distant, remember that Al-Khabeer sees a hidden weight you do not. Meet them with mercy instead of judgement, because you cannot read their cover any better than your own.

Why these names stay with us

Al-Lateef and Al-Khabeer are the names for the days that do not add up. They tell you that the One who made you is gentle in ways too fine to detect, and aware of a reality far beneath the surface you can see. The well was a road to the palace. The locked door won the job. The river became a red carpet. Behind every hardship that knocks the breath out of you, there may be a diamond in the rock that you will only reach by trusting the One who buried it there.

O Allah, Al-Lateef, Al-Khabeer, You are gentle with Your servants in ways we cannot see, and aware of all that is hidden from us. Make us trust Your plan when the surface frightens us, let us read our hardships as Yusuf read his, keep our opinion of You beautiful, and bring out for us, from beneath every rock, the good You have hidden there. Indeed, our Lord is Subtle in whatever He wills.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Lateef and Al-Khabeer (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Qawiyy and Al-Mateen

The Powerful and Firm

القَوِيُّ

Al-Qawiyy

The All-Strong

المَتِينُ

Al-Mateen

The Firm, The Steadfast



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5KjwJxYx1k>

There is one word the whole world is chasing. Every nation wants it over its rival, every leader wants it over the people, and somewhere in every heart it is being quietly hunted: power. Political power, financial power, military power, the power simply to get your own way. We spend our lives reaching for it, and most of us never stop to ask where it actually comes from.

Al-Qawiyy and Al-Mateen are the answer. The All-Strong and the Firm. Not a strength among other strengths, but the source of every strength there has ever been, and the One who hands it out and takes it back. Once you truly believe in these two names, something changes in the way you stand, the way you speak, and the way you carry being a Muslim in a world that keeps telling you that you are small.

The word the whole world is hunting

Start with the Arabic, because the root tells you everything. Al-Qawiyy comes from a word that means strength, and the Arabs used it with precision. They

would call a person qawiyy in whatever faculty they were strong: a sharp mind, a high intelligence above the average, and they would say he is strong of mind. A body built in the gym, strength beyond the ordinary, and they would say he is strong of body.

But notice what strength really measures. It is the ability to do what you intend to do. A person wants to lift a piece of furniture, fully intends to lift it, and cannot, because their body fails them. That gap, between what you mean to do and what you are able to do, is weakness. Close the gap completely and you have strength, whether the task is physical, financial, or political.

Now stretch the word to its limit. Allah is Al-Qawiyy: there is no gap in Him at all, no intention He cannot carry out, no task beyond His reach. He is the greatest source of strength, and He is the strongest. And Al-Mateen, which the Qur'an places right beside it, adds the second half of the picture: this strength is firm, solid, unshakeable, a strength that never strains, never tires, and never gives way.

The two names the Qur'an sets side by side

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ

Indeed, it is Allah who is the [continual] Provider, the firm possessor of strength.

ADH-DHARIYAT 51:58

There is one verse where these two names sit together, and it is the heart of this lesson. Allah is the Provider, the One who owns all strength, the Firm. Read it slowly. His power and His firmness are named in the same breath as His giving, because a strength that could not also provide, protect, and hold steady would not be much of a strength at all.

Al-Qawiyy is strength itself: the raw, total, limitless power to do anything He wills. Al-Mateen is that strength made firm and enduring: power that holds, that does not waver, that you can lean the whole weight of your life against and never feel it shift. Hold the two together and you have a God whose strength is both absolute in its reach and immovable in its standing.

And here is the comfort hidden in the pairing. Human strength always frays. The strongest body ages, the sharpest mind dims, the mightiest empire eventually falls. His does not. Al-Mateen is the promise that the One holding you will never weaken, never wear out, and never be overpowered by anything He made.

The lone man before the emperor

Knowing this name was not a private comfort for the early Muslims. It changed how they stood in front of the whole world. Ustadh Hisham draws the picture through a man from one of the earliest generations who walked, alone, into the palace of Rustam, the commander of the Persian Empire, the most advanced and sophisticated civilisation human history had yet seen.

He had no army behind him, no fine clothes, no wealth. People entered that palace with their heads bowed low in submission to the king. He walked in with his head held high and refused to bow to anyone. The emperor began to mock him: what brought you Arabs, you who eat lizard meat, out to my grand civilisation? And the Bedouin answered, without flinching, that they had come to take people out from the worship of slaves and into the worship of the Lord of slaves, out from the narrowness of man-made religion into the justice and mercy of the religion of Allah.

Where does a single, unarmed man find the confidence to speak to power like that? He was standing on one thing only: the certainty that Allah, Al-Qawiyy, the source and the strongest of all power, was behind him. In his own mind there was a vast army at his back, because the One supporting him was beyond every empire on earth. That is what this name does to a heart. It lets you face power from a position of strength, never from a position of weakness, because the strength you trust is not in the room. It is the One who made the room.

Strength is praised, and it is shared

قَالَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا يَا أَبَتِ اسْتَأْجِرْهُ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ

One of the women said, "O my father, hire him. Indeed, the best one you can hire is the strong and the trustworthy."

AL-QASAS 28:26

Al-Qawiyy belongs to Allah alone in its absolute sense, yet the Qur'an uses the same word, qawiyy, to praise some of His creation, which tells you that strength itself is not a flaw to apologise for. It is a gift He hands out, and a good one. The daughter of the righteous man advised her father to hire Musa with exactly these two qualities: the strong and the trustworthy, because the best person you can rely on is one who has both the power to act and the integrity to be trusted with it.

The Qur'an scatters other examples of granted strength. One of the jinn in the army of Sulayman offers to fetch a throne and describes himself as strong and trustworthy. The angel Jibreel is described as one of mighty power. Every one of these is a created strength, on loan, pointing back to the One who lent it.

And the Prophet ﷺ made it plain that strength is to be desired, not despised: the strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak believer, though there is good in both. So this is not a lesson in making yourself small. It is a lesson in where real strength is plugged in. Be strong, be capable, build yourself, and trace every ounce of it back to Al-Qawiyy who gave it.

The fly that no one can outmatch

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَاستَمِعُوا لَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا ذَبَابًا وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا لَهُ وَإِنْ يَسْلُبْهُمُ الذُّبَابُ شَيْئًا لَا يَسْتَنْقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبُ وَالْمَطْلُوبُ

O people, an example is presented, so listen to it. Indeed, those you invoke besides Allah will never create [as much as] a fly, even if they gathered together for it. And if the fly should steal from them a [tiny] thing, they could not recover it from him. Weak are the pursuer and pursued.

AL-HAJJ 22:73

مَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

They have not appraised Allah with true appraisal. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might.

AL-HAJJ 22:74

To show you how weak everything beside Him really is, Allah picks the smallest, frailest thing He can: a fly. Everything you might call upon instead of Him, an idol, a machine, a company, a government, the living and the dead, could not create a single fly if they all gathered together to try. And it goes further. If a fly lands on your shoulder and takes a drop of your blood, then flies off, you cannot get it back. You might swat the fly, but the drop is gone. The pursuer is weak, and so is the thing pursued.

Then comes the verdict: they did not appraise Allah as He deserves, because Allah is Powerful, Exalted in Might. They thought too big of themselves and far too small of Him.

Bring it into our own age. A virus too small for the eye to see, not even fully alive, brought whole nations to their knees and emptied the streets of the world. That is a flicker of the power of Al-Qawiyy, deployed through the very smallest of His creation to humble us. Human beings always imagine they can

do everything, especially when they convince themselves there is no Creator. They built the Titanic and said it would never sink. They built machines and said they would never fail. And it all came crashing down. He brings the biggest tyrants low with the weakest of things, the histories say even a mosquito against a Nimrod, so that we never overestimate ourselves and never forget who actually holds the power.

So why are the Muslims weak?

Here is the question Ustadh Hisham refuses to dodge. If Allah is the All-Strong, and we worship Him, why are His believers so often the weakest people on the earth? Why are we not handed the thrones and the armies of the world?

Because Allah runs this world by laws. There are physical laws, gravity holding you to your chair, and there are laws of another kind, the patterns Allah has set for how history moves. One of those patterns is that there will always be a struggle between good and evil. The Qur'an even tells us that were it not for Allah causing people to push back against one another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in which His name is remembered would have been torn down. The opposition is not an accident. It is built in.

And there is a deeper mercy folded inside it. When Allah wills to revive His religion, He raises up enemies to it, because it is the threat that wakes the believers, makes them step up, defend their faith, and shine. It is no coincidence that in lands where Muslims feel completely safe the mosques can stand half empty, while a community that feels its faith is under pressure crowds the rows at Fajr. Comfort makes you drift. Pressure makes you commit. So weakness, in His wisdom, is sometimes the very thing being used to forge a stronger believer.

Allah may grant worldly power to a tyrant and withhold it from the righteous, and both are a test. He gave power to a Pharaoh, to a Napoleon whose soldiers defiled the mosques of Egypt. Power in the hand is not proof of His pleasure, and the lack of it is not proof of His abandonment. The real question is never how much strength you were handed, but what you did with the strength you had, and whose side you stood on.

The stick that split the sea

قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ

[Moses] said, "No! Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will guide me."

ASH-SHU'ARA 26:62

We tell ourselves that power lives in the tool. If we become engineers we will be strong, if we hold the weapons we will be strong, if we own the platforms we will be strong. But look at Musa. He stood at the very edge of the sea with the hooves of Pharaoh's army thundering behind him, dust rising, the greatest military on earth closing in to finish him, and his own people crying out that they were finished, trapped, done.

He did not have an army. He had a stick and a Lord. And he said: never; my Lord is with me, He will guide me. That trust is what split the sea, and that same trust is what drowned the mightiest army the world had ever seen. The power was never in the wood. It was in knowing that Al-Qawiyy is stronger than any enemy that could ever line up against you.

This is the same certainty that let the Prophet ﷺ refuse to compromise on a single letter. When the disbelievers came offering him wealth, women, leadership, anything, if he would only soften the message, he wanted none of it. He was not waiting for a handout from any government or a faction to take his side. He needed Allah on his side, and with that alone he transformed an entire peninsula. They did not do it with tools or wealth or titles. They did it on the strength of their certainty in the promise of Al-Qawiyy.

Take the revelation with strength

وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُ فِي الْأَلْوَابِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَوْعِظَةً وَتَفْصِيلًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَخُذْهَا
بِقُوَّةٍ وَأْمُرْ قَوْمَكَ يَأْخُذُوا بِأَحْسَنِهَا ۚ سَأُرِيكُمْ دَارَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

And We wrote for him on the tablets [something] of all things - instruction and explanation for all things, [saying], "Take them with determination and order your people to take the best of it. I will show you the home of the defiantly disobedient."

AL-A'RAF 7:145

Believing in Al-Qawiyy is meant to land somewhere very practical: in how you carry your own identity. So many of us make quiet compromises because we feel weak. We feel small beside a world that has more machines, more science, more industry, and out of that inferiority we begin to edit our own religion, tweaking it, hiding it, apologising for it, so that we might borrow a little approval from those who seem greater than us.

But notice how Allah speaks about His revelation. He tells Musa to take it with strength. He tells Yahya, while still a boy, to take the Book with strength. When you grasp that the One who gave you the Qur'an is Al-Qawiyy, then the way of life He handed you is the most powerful way of life imaginable, and there is nothing to shrink from. You should walk out of every encounter with the Book feeling intellectually firmer, not flimsier, than those who oppose you.

This is the real empowerment everyone is chasing. People want women empowered, the young empowered, the marginalised empowered, and they are right to want it, but true empowerment is to be empowered by Allah, a strength nothing else can match. So you do not hide. If someone asks where you went, you say you went to pray, not that you went for a walk. If your name is Muhammad, you do not shave it down to Mo because you are ashamed. You are Abd al-Qawiyy, the servant of the All-Strong. Where would weakness even come from? He is never hidden, His signs are everywhere, so stand in plain sight: this is who I am.

There is no power except with Allah

قَالَ لَوْ أَنَّ لِي بِكُمْ قُوَّةً أَوْ آوِي إِلَىٰ رُكْنٍ شَدِيدٍ

He said, "If only I had against you some power or could take refuge in a strong support."

HUD 11:80

But this strength is not free, and Ustadh Hisham is blunt about it. The help of Al-Qawiyy is not something you pick up cheaply off a shelf. Allah promises, with emphasis, that He will help those who serve Him, and the help is real, but it asks for effort, striving, sweat, and sometimes blood and tears. We will pay any price for our worldly ambitions and balk at giving an hour to Allah. We will pay thirty pounds an hour for exam tuition and argue over thirty pounds a month for our children's Qur'an. If we are not willing to sweat for Him, we should not be surprised when the help does not come. It is an expensive thing, and it has to be earned.

And when does that help arrive? Often at the very edge of despair. The Qur'an describes the messengers reaching the point where they had almost given up and thought they had been denied, and only then did the rescue come and the deniers were finished. We all have those low, dark moments, when the promise of Allah feels far away. Lut himself, with a violent mob at his door, cried out that he wished he had some power, or a strong support to lean on. He felt utterly alone, and within days Allah destroyed them all and saved his household. He had no army. He had Al-Qawiyy.

Which is why Ustadh Hisham ends on the supplication the Prophet ﷺ called a treasure from the treasures of Paradise: *la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah*. There is no changing from one state to another, and no power to do good or to repel evil, except by Allah. You say it in the adhan, before sleep, morning and evening, in moment after moment, because on any ordinary day you forget, and you need reminding that nothing you long to do, the interview, the marriage, the illness, the child coming home confused about his faith, will ever truly succeed except by the strength He gives. Say it slowly, from the depths, not in a rush. It is not about how many times. It is about how deeply you mean it.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah

There is no might and no power except with Allah.

How to live these names

- **Stand from strength, never from weakness.** Like the lone man before the emperor, walk into every room knowing Al-Qawiyy is behind you. Do not bow your identity to anyone who merely looks more powerful. The strength you trust is not in the room; it made the room.
- **Stop worshipping the tool.** Power is not in the degree, the weapon, or the platform. Musa split a sea with a stick and a Lord. Take the means, work hard, then put your certainty in Al-Qawiyy, not in the instrument in your hand.
- **Read your weakness as a forge, not a verdict.** Hardship and opposition are how Allah wakes a sleeping believer and makes the committed shine. Worldly power can be given to a tyrant and withheld from the righteous; both are a test. Ask not how much you were handed, but what you did with it.
- **Take the revelation with strength.** Never edit, hide, or apologise for your religion to borrow a stranger's approval. The One who gave you the Qur'an is the All-Strong, so His way of life is the strongest there is. Say you went to pray. Carry your name. Stand in plain sight.
- **Sweat for the help you ask for.** His strength is not free. Allah promises to help those who serve Him, but it asks for effort, time, and sacrifice. And anchor every day in the words the Prophet ﷺ taught: *la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah*, there is no power except with Allah.

Why these names stay with us

The whole world is hunting one word, and most of us never learn where it is kept. Al-Qawiyy and Al-Mateen are the source and the firmness of every strength there has ever been: the power that lets a lone man stand unbowed before an emperor, the power that makes a fly unmatchable and a tyrant frag-

ile, the power that split a sea for a man with nothing but a stick and a Lord. To believe in them is to stop feeling small in a world that keeps telling you that you are, to stop editing your faith for approval, and to lean the full weight of your life on a strength that will never weaken.

O Allah, Al-Qawiyy, Al-Mateen, Yours is all power and Yours is the strength that never gives way. Let us stand from a place of strength and never from weakness, make us people who serve You and sweat for Your help, and keep our hearts firm on the words You love: there is no might and no power except with You.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Qawiyy and Al-Mateen (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Haqq

The Real

الْحَقُّ

Al-Haqq

The Truth, The Real



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbJdApGJT7k>

Some names you can carry across into English in a single word. This is not one of them. Al-Haqq is a word so wide that you could spend three minutes hunting for the right translation and still leave it half said: the Truth, the Real, the Just, the One whose every promise comes true. It appears as a name of Allah around ten times in the Qur'an, and each time it asks you to look at your whole life differently.

Ustadh Hisham opens it the way the Arabs first heard it, by laying out what the word actually carries, and then he walks you to the one Day when this name stops being a definition and becomes the only thing left standing.

One word, three meanings

Start with the word itself, because the whole name lives inside it. In Arabic, al-haqq pulls together three ideas at once.

The first is truth, as the opposite of falsehood. When something is haqq it conforms to reality: hold it up against what is actually out there, and the two match

perfectly. Its opposite is batil, the false, the void, the thing that looks like something and turns out to be nothing.

The second is a right, a due, something owed. This is the haqq in the human rights, the rights of a husband, the rights of a wife, the rights of a child. But notice the weight in it. When something is your haqq it is not merely nice to have, it is owed to you, and it carries an obligation on the other side. A right that must be honoured.

The third is doing a thing properly, in the right way, at the right time, giving it everything it deserves. You prepared for something and gave it its full due, you did it justice. Truth, a right that is owed, and a thing done exactly as it should be: hold all three together, because the name of Allah, Al-Haqq, gathers every one of them.

The surah that opens and closes with His name

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّهُ يُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَأَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

That is because Allah is the True Reality and because He gives life to the dead and because He is over all things competent

AL-HAJJ 22:6

Here is the move that unlocks the name, and it is the heart of Ustadh Hisham's lesson. There is one surah where Allah names Himself Al-Haqq near the beginning and names Himself Al-Haqq again near the end, so that the whole chapter sits like a filling between two slices of the same bread. It is Surah Al-Hajj, and the verse at each end is almost word for word: that is because Allah, He is the Real.

The end of that sandwich adds the line that makes the name land. Allah is the Real, and everything they call upon besides Him is batil, false, and Allah is the Most High, the Grand.

So you have to ask what is packed between those two slices, because the filling explains the name. And most of Surah Al-Hajj, despite its title, is not about Hajj at all. It opens with the violent shaking of the Last Hour and turns, again

and again, to the Day of Judgement. Sit with that pairing. Why does a chapter that keeps returning to the Day of Judgement choose, of all the names, to seal itself with Al-Haqq?

The Day the truth comes out

لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ

[It will be said], "You were certainly in unmindfulness of this, and We have removed from you your cover, so your sight, this Day, is sharp."

QAF 50:22

Here is the answer. In this world there are a thousand things we are sure are real. People are certain that wealth will save them, that their children will carry them to Paradise, that the idol or the image they have built their life around is solid ground. When do they finally learn the truth about all of it? Only on the Day of Judgement. That Day strips back everything fake and brings life down to its core reality.

The Qur'an puts it as a covering pulled away. You lived heedless of this, running from the very idea of it, and now the veil is lifted and your sight today is sharp. In this life we did not see clearly. We did not see things as they truly were. On that Day, we will.

Bring it close. You have a husband or a wife you lean on completely, the one person you are sure will stand by you. On the Day of Judgement, where will they be? Running from you. Your brother running, your parents running, every soul too consumed by its own reckoning to spare you a glance. It is every person for themselves. All those bonds we trusted as solid turn out to have been a taste, a temporary thing, never the genuine article. Only one relationship survives that Day with any weight: your relationship with Allah. The Day of Judgement is simply the day Al-Haqq shows you what was real all along.

The mirage, and the counterfeit world

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ بِقِيَعَةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ الظَّمَانُ مَاءً حَتَّىٰ إِذَا
جَاءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْئًا وَوَجَدَ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ فَوَفَّاهُ حِسَابَهُ وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ
الْحِسَابِ

But those who disbelieved - their deeds are like a mirage in a lowland which a thirsty one thinks is water until, when he comes to it, he finds it is nothing but finds Allah before him, and He will pay him in full his due; and Allah is swift in account.

AN-NUR 24:39

So much of what we chase in this life is a mirage. You are parched in the desert, you see water shimmering ahead, you run, and when you arrive there is nothing there, only Allah waiting to settle your account. The deeds a person built their hopes on dissolve at the moment they reach for them, because they were never real to begin with.

We live surrounded by counterfeits. Almost everyone has bought a fake from some market: it has the logo, the colours, the smell of the real thing, and two months later it falls apart, because it was never the genuine article. Ustadh Hisham presses the point with the world we have built around ourselves. We strap on virtual reality goggles and live a second life. We chase a car that was sold to us as status and ease and emotional wellbeing, and two weeks in it is just a car that takes us from one place to another. Expectation versus reality. The holiday advertised as peace of mind that arrives with parking fines and unpaid bills following you onto the island. Everything in this world is sold to you as more than it is, and everything in this world, eventually, disappoints you.

Everything, that is, except One. When we say Allah is Al-Haqq, we mean He is the only thing with no fakeness in it at all, no counterfeit, no gap between what is promised and what is delivered. His love is the one love that is truly unconditional: you sin, you turn away, you ignore Him, and not for a single day has He stopped your heart from beating. His mercy is the one mercy with no conditions, His promise the one promise certain to come true. Every other promise in

this world can leave you waiting at a door for someone who never comes. Al-Haqq never does.

Where the real peace is

If this is true, it changes where you go looking. We pour our emotional investment into people, companies, governments, job titles, possessions, and then break when they fail to deliver, because we asked the counterfeit to do what only the Real can do. One in three marriages ends in divorce, and so often it is because two people walked in expecting a paradise on earth. But marriage is not paradise on earth. It has good days and hard days. Being a parent is not paradise on earth. Driving a car is not paradise on earth. Nothing here is, and the heart that demands it from any of them is setting itself up to be let down.

There is one place the promise actually holds. The Qur'an tells you the home Allah prepares is Dar as-Salam, the abode of peace, where no stress will chase you in. That is real peace, the genuine article. And the door to a taste of it is open already: it is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts find rest. Look for calm in family, in wealth, in status, and you will find a little disappointment folded into each one. Look for it in Him, and you have found the real therapy, the true coolness of the eyes, with no fakeness in it.

This is the meaning of Al-Haqq lived out. Everything else has a thread of illusion running through it. The love of Allah is the only fully real love, His mercy the only unconditional mercy, His promise the only one that always comes true.

What actually reaches Him

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا
لَكُمْ لِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Their meat will not reach Allah, nor will their blood, but what reaches Him is piety from you. Thus have We subjected them to you that you may glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you; and give good tidings to the doers of good.

AL-HAJJ 22:37

Now you can see why the surah is called Al-Hajj. The pilgrimage is a rehearsal for the Day of Judgement, a day spent practising what is real. You cannot wear your brands in ihram. You cannot tell the king from the farmer when everyone stands in the same two white cloths, because on the Day they meet Allah it will not matter either. You circle the Kaaba with no phone, no status, no lineage, nothing to lean on but your taqwa, and the tears come because for once you are seeing your true size.

One verse from that same surah says it without flinching. When you offer a sacrifice, the meat does not rise to Allah, and neither does the blood. What reaches Him is the taqwa in your heart. Everything around the act, the type of animal, whether it came from here or there, two years old or three, is beside the point. Only one thing is haqq in it: the God consciousness underneath. That is the truth of every deed. The shell of it is for show; the heart of it is what is real.

And so the Qur'an tells you where this all returns. On that Day people are given back to Allah, their true Master. In this world a hundred people seem to be looking after you: a boss who pays you, a spouse who runs the home, parents, relatives, neighbours. In reality it was always Allah caring for you through them, and when the Day comes and all of those middlemen fall away, the true mawla, the real One who was responsible for you the whole time, is the only one left.

His promise is the one that comes true

هٰنَاكَ الْوَلَايَةُ لِلَّهِ الْحَقِّ هُوَ خَيْرٌ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ عُقْبًا

There the authority is [completely] for Allah, the Truth. He is best in reward and best in outcome.

AL-KAHF 18:44

Hold on to one more shade of this name, the one you will read on a Friday without noticing. When everything collapses, the verse says, the protection, the wilaya, belongs to Allah, the Real. On that Day the security you hired, the insurance you bought, the alarm on your house, all of it is gone, and the only true protection is His. He is the One who, in the end, puts everything in its right place and gives every soul exactly its due.

There is a mercy in this for the days the ground shakes under you. Once, the believers were shaken so hard their faith itself trembled, surrounded on every side with nowhere to run. Sooner or later your life will hold an earthquake of its own: a job lost, a parent buried, a child taken in an accident. When it strikes, it is desperately tempting to reach for the loan with interest in it, or worse, because the rent is due and you cannot see a way. But where does provision actually come from? From Al-Haqq, who promised to provide and whose promise is true. The believers, when the world closed in, did not despair. They said this is exactly what Allah and His Messenger ﷺ promised us, and their faith only grew, because they knew that the promise of Al-Haqq is haqq.

This is the quiet strength of the name. People burn with frustration today because everyone is demanding their haqq, their right, in full, from another human being. The wife from the husband, the husband from the wife, the children, the parents, each one wanting to be given their complete due by someone who, being only human, will always fall a little short. Ask the whole of your haqq from a person and you will be disappointed every time. Ask it of Al-Haqq, and you are asking the only One who never fails to deliver.

Chase the real

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ
الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ

That is because Allah is the True Reality, and that which they call upon other than Him is falsehood, and because Allah is the Most High, the Grand.

AL-HAJJ 22:62

Everything in this world wears a timer. Every face in a room is slowly fading, every status dissolving, and only the Face of Allah remains. Yet we spend our money, our years, and our hearts chasing things that are a mirage: a promotion we hang our dignity on, the attention and approval of people, validation that turns to smoke the moment someone decides to be displeased with us. We are the rabbit running after the carrot, and one day we fall off the wheel and the carrot was never there.

So Ustadh Hisham leaves you with the obvious turn. If only the Real lasts, then be the one who chases the Real. Not the likes, not the followers, not the title, all of which vanish, but the One whom the Qur'an describes rolling up the heavens in His right hand and asking, on a day when no one is left to answer, whose is the kingdom today. It was always His. Al-Haqq is the Real, and everything beneath Him is batil, fading, imaginary, and He alone is true.

The Prophet ﷺ would stand in the depth of the night and say it back to Allah as though the unseen were laid bare in front of him: You are the Real, and Your promise is real, and the meeting with You is real, and Paradise is real, and the Fire is real, and the Hour is real. He prayed as if it were all already visible, weeping in the dark, because to him it was not an idea. It was simply the truth.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

Allahumma laka al-hamd, anta al-haqq, wa wa'duka al-haqq, wa liqa'uka al-haqq, wal-jannatu haqq, wan-naru haqq

O Allah, to You is all praise. You are the Real, and Your promise is real, and the meeting with You is real, and Paradise is real, and the Fire is real. (From the night supplication of the Prophet ﷺ, narrated in Bukhari and Muslim.)

How to live this name

- **Stop asking the counterfeit to be the Real.** Your spouse, your job, your home, your money will each carry a thread of disappointment, because they were never meant to be paradise on earth. Put your full weight on Al-Haqq, the only One who never lets you down, and let everything else be what it actually is.
- **Look for peace where it actually lives.** You can chase calm through wealth, status, and people and find a little fakeness folded into each. Real peace, the kind with no stress chasing it in, is found in the remembrance of Allah. That is the true coolness of the eyes.
- **Tend the heart of the deed, not the shell.** The meat and the blood do not reach Allah; the taqwa does. Before you polish how an act of worship looks, ask what is real underneath it. The God consciousness in your heart is the part that rises.
- **Read the earthquake as a promise kept.** When the ground shakes, a loss, a debt, a grief, do not reach for the forbidden way out. Provision comes from Al-Haqq, and His promise is true. Like the believers when the world closed in, let the test grow your certainty instead of breaking it.
- **Chase the real, not the carrot.** Likes, followers, titles, and the approval of people all vanish. Live for the One who outlasts the rolling up of the heavens. Whose opinion of you truly matters? His. Run toward what survives the Day everything else falls away.

Why this name stays with us

Al-Haqq is the name for the only thing in your life that is fully, finally real. Everything else, the love that has conditions, the wealth that turns to a mirage, the status that fades, the relationships that scatter on the Day of reckoning, carries a little fakeness in it. The Day of Judgement is simply the moment the covering is pulled away and we see, with sharp sight, what was true all along. To know Al-Haqq is to stop running after the carrot and to start building your life on the One who never disappoints, whose promise always comes, and who alone remains when the heavens are rolled up.

O Allah, You are Al-Haqq, the Real, and Your promise is real, and the meeting with You is real, and Paradise is real, and the Fire is real. Pull back our coverings before the Day they are pulled back for us, free our hearts from chasing what fades, and let us lean our whole weight on You, the only One who never lets us down.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Haqq (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Qareeb and Al-Mujeeb

The Near and Responsive

قَرِيبٌ

Al-Qareeb

The Ever-Near

مُجِيبٌ

Al-Mujeeb

The Responsive, The Answerer



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbaVjIVcvzE>

These two names belong to the moment you feel most alone. The night you cannot explain your situation to anyone, the call you are too ashamed to make, the trouble nobody else can fix. Right there, where you assume Allah is furthest, He tells you He is closest. Al-Qareeb, the Ever-Near, and Al-Mujeeb, the One who answers when you call.

Ustadh Hisham opens these names on the doorstep of Ramadan, with the one verse in the Qur'an where Allah does something He does nowhere else. Once you see what He removes from that verse, you will understand why your du'a was always meant to reach Him directly.

The verse where Allah cuts out the middleman

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ مُّجِيبٌ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ
فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided.

AL-BAQARAH 2:186

Look at where this verse sits. The Qur'an has just laid out the rulings of Ramadan, who fasts and who does not, what to do for a missed day, and then, in the middle of all that law, Allah pauses to say something that is not about fasting at all. He turns and speaks about Himself, and about you when you call on Him. This is the verse you want in your heart this month.

Now notice the pattern it breaks. There are more than ten places in the Qur'an that begin the same way: they ask you, O Muhammad, about this, so tell them. Someone brings a question, the Prophet ﷺ waits, and Allah sends down the answer for him to pass on. Every time, there is a middleman. The question travels from the people, to the Prophet ﷺ, to Allah, and the answer travels back down the same chain.

Here Ustadh Hisham draws out the detail that changes everything. In this one verse Allah does not say, they ask you about Me, so tell them I am near. He removes the messenger from the sentence entirely and answers in His own voice: I am near. As if to say, you do not need anyone to carry this message for you. On the question of how close I am, there is no one standing between us. Feel how intimate that is. He could not have shown you His nearness more perfectly than by speaking to you with no one in between.

And see who He is talking about. He does not say, if people ask you about Me. He says, if My servants ask. He attaches us to Himself. When someone is angry with a child they say, I want nothing to do with him. When they love someone they say the opposite: you are mine, you belong to me. So Allah says of us,

when My servants ask about Me, step aside, Muhammad, I will answer them Myself. Then He uses the language of calling three times over: I respond to the one who calls, when he calls, so let them call on Me. The whole verse leans toward you, waiting for you to speak.

What it means that He is near

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

And We have already created man and know what his soul whispers to him, and We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein.

QAF 50:16

Think about what makes a person close to you. Some people in your life are distant, the cousin of a cousin you would never phone. Others are close. What is the difference? You talk to them more. You trust them with your secrets. They have a place in your heart. And when something goes wrong, they are the ones you call. Picture the car accident: the person you ring without a second of embarrassment, who says, I will be there in five minutes. Those people are rare. That is the picture Allah is painting of Himself, except without the rarity and without the limits.

Here is the part that should steady you on your worst day. You may feel far from Allah, but Allah has not moved an inch from you. He says He created the human being and knows the very thing his soul whispers to him, the voice in your head that no one else can hear, and that He is nearer to you than your own jugular vein. Ask any doctor about that vein. Cut it and a person is gone in moments; it is that vital, that close to the centre of you. And Allah says He is nearer still, not in distance but in knowledge, in care, in how completely He is aware of you.

Sit with what that means. The darkest thought that ever crossed your mind, the one that would send people running if they heard it, Allah already knows, and He is still near, still waiting for you to turn to Him. He is not a distant bystander watching from far off. He knows the real you, the secrets and the surface both, and He stayed close anyway.

Near even when you feel furthest

أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَّرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ
أَلَيْهَ مَعَ اللَّهِ قَلِيلًا مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Is He [not best] who responds to the desperate one when he calls upon Him and removes evil and makes you inheritors of the earth? Is there a deity with Allah? Little do you remember.

AN-NAML 27:62

Walk to the edge of the sea with Musa. Behind him, a cloud of dust and the thunder of Pharaoh's horses, the clash of swords, the screaming. In front of him, water with no way across, and behind that water a whole people who have already given up: we are caught, we are finished, we are going to drown. In the one moment when Allah seems too far to help, Musa says the opposite. My Lord is with me. He will guide me. He calls, and the One who answers the desperate when they call answers him.

Ustadh Hisham gives this a picture you will not forget. Think of those police dramas where an agent is sent out alone into a dangerous street, wearing an earpiece. Far away in a control room, a team is watching every camera in the city, and into that earpiece they say: go left, someone is coming from the right, duck now, watch the next corner. The agent is alone on the street, but he is not alone at all. People with a full view of everything are in his ear, guiding every step, and so he feels safe. That is something of how it feels to know Allah is near. He is not a stranger to your situation. When you have nowhere to turn, He sees the whole map, and He is showing you the way through.

This is why the name brings such relief to anyone stuck in something hard. You may have a problem so tangled you cannot even explain it to a friend, a parent, a sibling. You start to say it and you stop, because they will not understand. You never have to explain it to Allah. He already knows. You only have to raise your hands. He sees all of it, He is protecting you through it, and He is pointing you toward the way out. Your part is to wait for His signal and keep calling.

How you draw near to the One who is near

If Allah is this close, the natural question is how you come close to Him in return. The Prophet ﷺ told us that Allah says: I am as My servant expects Me to be, and I am with him when he remembers Me. So think well of Allah. Expect Him to forgive, to keep His promise, to help, and watch how that expectation is met. And know that the instant you remember Him, He is with you. Better still: when you mention Him to yourself, He mentions you to Himself, and when you remember Him in a gathering, He remembers you in a gathering far greater than yours. We crave to hear our name read out at an awards night or printed in the front of a book; imagine your name spoken by Allah.

And He told us the direction of travel is generous beyond reason. Come to Him a hand's span and He comes to you an arm's length; come walking and He comes running. This is not about physical distance, the scholars say. It means that every step you make toward Him with your actions, He more than meets. You cannot clap with one hand. He will never be the one who fails to reach back; the only question is whether you will lift your hand at all.

Here Ustadh Hisham gives the practical heart of it, from a hadith where Allah declares war on whoever shows enmity to His close servants, then tells us exactly how to become one of them. The most beloved way to draw near, He says, is through the things He made obligatory. The prayer you treat as a chore, the fast you drag yourself to, those are the very best path to His nearness, if you do them with a willing soul instead of a heavy one. Then, on top of that, He keeps drawing near through the optional acts, the night prayer, the extra fast, the charity no one asked of you, until He loves His servant. And when He loves you, He becomes the hearing with which you hear and the sight with which you see; if you ask Him, He gives, and if you seek His protection, He protects you. That is what nearness to Allah finally buys.

He puts it plainly with an image from our own lives. When a man wants to win someone's love, he does not hand over a few coins from his back pocket and wonder why nothing grows. He brings flowers, then thoughtful gifts, then sacrifices his time and his sleep, putting real care into every gesture. Yet with Allah we often give the least of our thought and the briefest of our words, and then ask why we do not feel close to Him. We will write three heartfelt pages to a

person we love, and offer Allah a rushed line. Closeness was always going to cost us the better part of our attention.

He answers, but not the way Amazon does

Now the second name. Being close is not the whole of it. We all have people who are close to us and still do not come through, the best friend who reads your message and replies five working days later, the cousin who says, I am busy, call me next week, just when you needed a loan. Closeness without response is only half a comfort. Al-Mujeeb is the answer to that gap. From the root that means to respond and reply, this name tells you that Allah is not only near, He answers. He is the One who responds to the desperate the moment they call.

So why do we so often feel unanswered? Because, Ustadh Hisham says, we have started to treat du'a like shopping on Amazon. Add to basket: a phone, a car, a way out. Next-day delivery. Then we check the tracking and ask where our order is, as though a heartfelt conversation with our Lord were a transaction with a deadline. Du'a is not a basket of orders. It is the most personal conversation you will ever have. Treat any human being like a vending machine, speaking to them only when you need something on the table within the hour, and they will stop answering you too.

Look instead at how Zakariyya called on Allah, an old man with no child and no heir, asking for the one thing his body could no longer give.

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي وَاسْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُنْ بِدُعَائِكَ
رَبِّ شَقِيًّا

He said, "My Lord, indeed my bones have weakened, and my head has filled with white, and never have I been in my supplication to You, my Lord, unhappy [i.e., disappointed]."

MARYAM 19:4

He does not open with the order. He does not say, give me a son, three-day delivery. He says, my Lord, my bones have grown weak and my head is aflame

with grey hair. He breaks down in front of Allah. He is raw, he is real, he holds nothing back, and then he asks. So be raw with Allah. Do not hand Him a one-line command. Pour your heart out, beg, plead, and the response will be nothing like you imagined. The way you ask shapes the way He answers; the answer matches the calling. Ask Him with tears in the last third of the night and watch what comes back. And do not ask Him for crumbs. You are calling on the One whose stores never run dry; do not be shy or modest with such a King. Suleiman asked for a kingdom no one after him would have. Aim high, because nothing you ask is large to Him.

And when you raise your voice to call, you do not need to shout. A group of Companions once climbed a high place crying out to Allah at the top of their lungs, and the Prophet ﷺ told them to ease their voices, for the One they were calling is not deaf or absent, He is hearing and near. So say to Allah what you would never say to anyone else. Share with Him the secrets you would never share. When everyone has turned away, turn to Him. This is what Musa did at the sea, what Yunus did in the belly of the whale, what the Prophet ﷺ did in the dark of the cave: they called, and there is no impossible situation that the Near and the Responsive cannot open.

Near in mercy, and near in warning

قُلْ إِنْ ضَلَلْتُ فَإِنَّمَا أَضِلُّ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِي وَإِنِ اهْتَدَيْتُ فَبِمَا يُوحِي إِلَيَّ
رَبِّي إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ قَرِيبٌ

Say, "If I should err, I would only err against myself. But if I am guided, it is by what my Lord reveals to me. Indeed, He is Hearing and near."

SABA 34:50

There is a second face to this name, and Ustadh Hisham does not let us hide from it. For the one who turns to Allah, His nearness is pure reassurance: He is near, He responds, He is with you in your hardship. But the same nearness speaks differently to the one who looks at every sign of Allah and shrugs, who sees the reminders and says, I do not really need to pray, charity is not my thing. To them this verse says: my Lord is Hearing and near. He hears how you

answer His reminder, and He is close, close enough to bring everything crashing down if you reject it.

So hold both sides of it. Allah's help is near, His victory is near, His mercy is near, and His punishment can be near too. Do not assume that you and I are somehow beyond being called to account, too far away to be reached. It can come closer than we think, and at any moment: a crash, a loss, an illness, the job gone, the marriage gone, and only the heedless are caught off guard.

The mindset this builds is a healthy refusal to ever feel safe about yourself. Sit too long without moving and the body softens; stay a little worried about it and you keep moving, and you stay well. It is the same with the soul. Never feel secure about your own deeds. We book a seat for a flight and relax because the reservation is confirmed, but is your seat in Paradise confirmed in the same way? Better to keep looking at the shortfall in your record than to lean back and assume you have arrived. If you are not moving closer to Allah with your actions, ask honestly which direction you are moving in.

Always one step back to Him

وَالِىٰ تَمُوْدَ اٰخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا ۚ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ اِلٰهٍ غَيْرِهٖ
هُوَ اَنْشَاَكُمْ مِّنَ الْاَرْضِ وَاسْتَعْمَرَكُمْ فِيْهَا فَاسْتَغْفِرُوْهُ ثُمَّ تَوْبُوا اِلَيْهِ ۚ اِنَّ
رَبِّيۡ قَرِيْبٌ مُّجِيْبٌ

And to Thamud [We sent] their brother Salih. He said, "O my people, worship Allah; you have no deity other than Him. He has produced you from the earth and settled you in it, so ask forgiveness of Him and then repent to Him. Indeed, my Lord is near and responsive."

HUD 11:61

Watch how the prophets used these two names together. When Salih called his people back to Allah, he did not threaten them into the ground. He gave them the gentlest reason to return: ask His forgiveness and turn to Him, for my Lord is near and responsive. The two names stand side by side in a single breath, as

an open door. Whatever you have done, He is near enough to hear it and responsive enough to answer it.

This is the message the prophets carried to people drowning in their own pasts. The thing that holds so many of us back from praying at night, from climbing toward the closeness we say we want, is the quiet voice that says, look at me, look at what I have done, what is the point. Everyone has skeletons in the closet. No one can stand before Allah on the strength of their record alone and demand a place. But however far you have walked away, it is only ever one step back. Go a thousand steps from Allah and a single sincere step turns you around, because He was never the one who left.

Ustadh Hisham tells it through the men who once fought the Prophet ﷺ and plotted his death, whose names we now cannot say without adding, may Allah be pleased with them. One of them came to accept Islam and hesitated, his hand held back, and asked, what about everything I have done? And he was told that Islam wipes clean all that came before it, erased so completely there is no trace left behind. He remembered, too, a tattooed man who could barely speak the language, who he assumed had no chance of changing in three short days, and who he woke to find standing in prayer through the whole night, weeping, one day after entering Islam. The road to Allah is not long. It is one word, one moment of genuine return, and the One who is nearer to you than your jugular vein is already there to receive it.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ

Amman yujibu al-mudtarra idha da'ahu wa yakshifu as-su'

Ya Qareeb, Ya Mujeeb, You are the One who answers the desperate when he calls and removes the harm. You are nearer to me than my own jugular vein. I raise my hands to You with nothing rehearsed: hear me, and answer me, and show me the way through.

How to live these names

- **Go straight to Him.** In the one verse about His nearness, Allah removed the messenger and answered Himself. You need no one in between. When you have a need, take it directly to the One who is closer to you than your jugular vein.
- **Stop treating du'a like a delivery.** Du'a is a heartfelt conversation, not a basket of orders with a tracking number. Speak to Allah the way Zakariyya did: raw, broken, pouring your heart out before you ever name what you want.
- **Ask big, and ask in the night.** You are calling on the One whose stores never empty, so do not ask for crumbs. Aim high like Suleiman, ask with tears in the last third of the night, and trust that the answer will match the calling.
- **Draw near through what He asked of you.** The closest path to Allah is the obligations done with a willing heart, then the optional acts on top. Every step you take toward Him, He more than meets. You cannot clap with one hand.
- **Keep one healthy fear.** His mercy is near, and so is His reckoning. Never feel fully safe about your own deeds. Keep watching the shortfall in your record, the way you would keep moving to stay well, and keep turning back.

Why these names stay with us

We reach for these two names in the lowest moments, the ones we cannot explain to anyone and the calls we are too ashamed to make. Al-Qareeb and Al-Mujeeb meet us exactly there. In the one verse about His nearness Allah took the messenger out of the sentence and spoke to us directly, because He is closer to us than our jugular vein, aware of the very thing the soul whispers, and He answers the desperate the moment they call. To know these names is to stop carrying your trouble alone, to make du'a like a conversation instead of an order, and to remember that however far you have wandered, it is only ever one step back to Him.

O Allah, Al-Qareeb, Al-Mujeeb, You are nearer to us than our own jugular vein and You answer the one who calls. Make us people who turn to You first and not last, who pour out our hearts to You in the depth of the night, who ask You

for the highest things, and who never let go of the rope back to You. Hear us, answer us, and keep us close.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Qareeb and Al-Mujeeb (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Hadi

The Guide

هَادِيًّا

Al-Hadi

The Guide



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jf07u1nXfxw>

There is only one supplication in your whole day that you are obligated to repeat, again and again, no matter what else is happening to you. Not a prayer for wealth, not a prayer for health, not even a prayer for survival. Seventeen times a day, in every unit of every prayer, you are commanded to ask Allah for one thing: guidance. Guide us to the straight path.

Stop and feel how strange that is. Imagine you were stranded in the desert with nothing to eat or drink, or sinking beneath the sea with no air left in your lungs, and the time for prayer arrived. The one request Allah has made binding on your tongue in that moment is not food, not water, not rescue. It is hidayah. That alone tells you what this name is worth. Today we meet Al-Hadi, the One who guides, the One who shows the way.

The one du'a you are never allowed to stop making

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Guide us to the straight path -

AL-FATIHAH 1:6

In Ramadan the masjids fill up. Hearts that drifted all year lean back toward Allah, and you can feel the searching in the air: people looking for something, not always able to name it. What they are reaching for, underneath everything, is this. To be shown the way. And Allah placed the request for it at the very centre of the prayer He made obligatory, so that you cannot complete a single salah without asking to be guided.

Notice how much weight that gives the name. Of all the things a human being needs, Allah singled out guidance as the one petition you must bring Him every time you stand before Him. He is Al-Hadi, and the straight path is His to give. Elsewhere He tells His Messenger ﷺ that for every prophet He appointed enemies from among the wrongdoers, and then reassures him: enough is your Lord as a guide and a helper. When you have Al-Hadi guiding you, you are never truly lost, however many stand against you.

Guidance is not the same as knowledge

Here is the question Ustadh Hisham presses, and it changes everything: when you ask Allah to guide you, what exactly are you asking for? Is guidance just knowledge? If you know something, does that make you guided? When you say guide me, are you saying give me more information?

Sit with it, because the answer is no. We live in an age where every fact you could ever want is a search away, the good and the bad, all of it instantly available. And yet knowing the truth has never been the same as living by it. A person can carry a great deal of knowledge and benefit from none of it. Knowledge is a map. Guidance is actually walking the road.

The Qur'an gives you the proof in flesh and blood. The People of the Book were waiting for a prophet; they knew the signs, they recognised him when he came,

and the moment that knowledge arrived in front of them, some of them rejected it. Pharaoh knew, the instant he saw Musa, that this was the truth. It was not a shortage of knowledge that stopped him. So if the right knowledge can sit in a person and they still walk away from it, then guidance must be something else, something deeper than information.

Why the heart is the real obstacle

فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ ۖ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ
صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصْعَدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ ۚ كَذَلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ الرِّجْسَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

So whoever Allah wants to guide - He expands his breast to [contain] Islam; and whoever He wants to send astray - He makes his breast tight and constricted as though he were climbing into the sky. Thus does Allah place defilement upon those who do not believe.

AL-AN'AM 6:125

So what stopped Pharaoh, and the others who knew and refused? Arrogance. Envy. Pride. The sense of being too high to submit. And here Ustadh Hisham makes the move that reframes the whole lesson: ask yourself what those things actually are. Envy, jealousy, arrogance, pride, are these foods, are they books, are they chemicals? No. They are diseases of the heart. The obstacle that keeps guidance out of a person is never the mind. It is the heart.

That is why, whenever Allah speaks about guidance, He speaks about the heart. When He wants to guide someone, He opens up the chest to receive it, He expands it so faith can settle in. You have to be willing to be guided. Allah can lay every proof and every piece of evidence in front of you, but if the heart will not accept it, the truth meets a brick wall and nothing passes through. A heart too hard for the truth simply declines it, however it arrives, from whoever brings it.

Take this home with you, because it explains so much: people who have memorised the entire Qur'an and still fall into major sins, people who studied the reli-

gion deeply and then abandoned it. How? Because knowledge was never the thing that guides. Guidance comes from Al-Hadi, and it lands in a heart that is soft enough to hold it.

Three levels of guidance

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He is most knowing of the [rightly] guided.

AL-QASAS 28:56

وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا ۚ مَا كُنْتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا
الْإِيمَانُ وَلَكِن جَعَلْنَاهُ نُورًا نَّهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ نَّشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ۚ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي
إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

And thus We have revealed to you an inspiration of Our command. You did not know what is the Book or [what is] faith, but We have made it a light by which We guide whom We will of Our servants. And indeed, [O Muhammad], you guide to a straight path -

ASH-SHURA 42:52

Now for a hard question, one that looks at first like a contradiction in the Book itself. In one verse Allah tells His Prophet ﷺ plainly: you do not guide whom you love. In another He tells him: indeed, you guide to a straight path. So which is it? Can the Prophet ﷺ guide, or can he not? The answer is that there are different levels of guidance, and once you see them, the two verses fit together perfectly.

The first level is guidance as showing the way. Picture the motorway before anyone had GPS. You watch for the green signs, and they point you toward the right junction. Could you still take the wrong turn? Of course. But the sign has done its job; it showed you the road. What the sign cannot do is grow legs, climb down, and steer your car for you. This is the Prophet's role, and the role

of every teacher and parent and friend who ever wished good for someone. As the English saying goes, you can bring the horse to water, but you cannot make it drink. He shows; he cannot force.

The second level is the guidance of revelation itself, the Qur'an and the message, the clear instructions for where to go and how to live. And the first level is even built into your nature: Allah installed in every human being, like an app that cannot be uninstalled, a hunger to know Him. Why am I here? Where am I going? That restlessness in the chest is a compass pointing back to its Maker, and every person is born carrying it, whether or not revelation ever reaches them.

But there is a third level, and this is the heart of the name. This level no prophet can hand you and no human can claim. It belongs to Allah alone. You have the ability to quit the habit and you do not. You have the ability to put the screen down and you do not. What finally moves you is a light Allah places in the heart, the strength and the will to climb over the thing that was holding you down. The Messenger ﷺ shows the path; Allah grants the heart the power to walk it.

The sorrow of the one who can only point

Do not imagine the Prophet ﷺ was at peace with that limit. He was not. When he watched people refuse the road he was showing them, it broke him. He wept at night for his ummah. He grieved over their turning away so deeply that Allah had to console him, telling him his sorrow was so severe he might destroy himself over the fact that they would not believe. That is how much it weighs on the one who loves you to watch you walk the wrong way.

Bring this close with the story of Nuh and his son. Picture the flood rising, the rain pouring from the sky, and the prophet seeing his own child in the distance. He calls out to him with everything in him: my son, come aboard with us, do not drown with the deniers. And the boy answers that he will climb a mountain and the water will not reach him. His father pleads that nothing can save anyone today except the mercy of Allah, and then the wave comes between them, and he drowns. Imagine that father's grief, watching his child run the wrong way until the water took him.

How many parents know exactly this ache. A child on drugs, a child who will not pray, a child slipping away from Islam or sinking into despair. Mothers and fathers who say I told them, I begged them, I did everything, and still they went. The despair in a parent's voice over a child they cannot reach is a pain few other things touch. And the only comfort that holds is the truth of this name: even the Prophet ﷺ could not guide his own beloved uncle. He could only show the way. The walking was never in his hands, and it is not in yours. You nudge, you explain, you pray, and then you remember that Al-Hadi alone opens hearts.

Guidance has to be chased

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good.

AL-ANKABUT 29:69

Here is where the lesson turns toward you, and Ustadh Hisham will not let us off the hook. So many of us treat guidance as something random, a gift Allah drops out of the sky into a lucky heart. You meet the man smoking outside the masjid and invite him in; he says, when Allah guides me, I will stop. You see the couple who should not be together; when Allah guides me, they say. You find the uncle who never prays; when Allah guides me, then I will pray. As if hidayah were a parcel that simply has to arrive.

Then turn the question on its head, as he does. Why do we never treat wealth that way? Nobody sits on the sofa and says, when Allah makes me rich, I will start working. We sweat for our provision. We write the CV, we chase the job, we learn the skill, because we understand that money has means and you have to take them. So why do we imagine that guidance, of all things, comes while we put our feet up and wait? Guidance has its means too, its asbab, and Allah named them. He does not say you do not ask, you do not get for nothing.

And the strongest of those means carries an unsettling name. There is one verse, and only one, where Allah promises guidance with the heaviest emphasis the Arabic language has, a triple stress that means without any doubt, abso-

lutely, guaranteed. And the condition He attaches is jihad: those who strive for Us, We will surely guide them to Our ways. Not picking up arms; in the Qur'an the word most often means struggle, and the greatest enemy you will ever fight is yourself. You want to pray the night prayer, but at nine in the evening the screen calls and the series runs to midnight. To turn it off, to eat light, to set three alarms in three corners of the room, that is the struggle. Win that fight and Allah lets you taste the sweetness of standing before Him. No struggle, no reward. Whatever you want His help with, ask first what you have done to fight yourself for it. As hard as you fight, that is how much He smooths the way.

Trust Him, and keep turning back

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ^{سَقَطَ} وَمَنْ يُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart. And Allah is Knowing of all things.

AT-TAGHABUN 64:11

اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ

Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him].

ASH-SHURA 42:13

The third means is trust. We pour so much confidence into ourselves, into what we built and discovered and invented, that we forget how small we are. But the one who believes in Allah, He guides his heart. Think of driving with the sat nav: your son asks how you know the machine is telling you the right road, and the honest answer is that you do not, you are simply trusting it. To want the guidance of Allah is to trust Allah like that, only with infinitely more reason, because staying on the straight path means saying yes to Him and no to ten other things pulling at you. The easy money that is really someone else's money, the get-rich scheme, the deal that pays now and costs your soul, you say no, again and

again, and that not only holds if you trust that one pound of halal is better than a million of haram. Allah promised, and the promise will come, but you have to trust Him to keep it.

The fourth means is inaba: to keep turning back. In Arabic it is the U-turn, the lawful one, the moment you realise you are heading the wrong way and you come around. Allah says He guides to Himself whoever turns back to Him. And this is the mercy hidden in the whole lesson. Guidance was never a promise that you will walk a perfect line forever. Every one of us will take a wrong turn; every son of Adam is a sinner. So do not measure your guidance by how flawless you are. Measure it by how many times you fell and got back up. You stumbled, you rose; you broke, you took months, you came back. The sat nav loses signal in the dark and you have no idea where you are, and then it wakes and finds you a way home. The door to Allah only opens one direction: inward. However far you have wandered, it takes a single step to return, and a heart that breaks before Him like a lost child crying for its mother is a heart still being guided.

Give the credit back, and never look down

There is a mindset this name plants in you, and it is the opposite of pride. What brought you here, to the prayer, to the masjid, to this very moment of caring about Allah at all? Not your intelligence. Not your good character. Him. When the Prophet ﷺ dug the trench before the battle, he kept repeating a line: were it not for Allah, we would never have been guided, never have given charity, never have prayed. Carry that home and believe it all the way down. Were it not for Allah, you and I could right now be lost in the very things we look down on in others. Anything good in you came from Him, so thank Him for every small act of worship He lets you offer, because He could withdraw it.

And this is exactly where people go astray, the moment they start thinking I did this, I am the righteous one. Remember Qarun, who said all that he had came from his own knowledge, and the earth swallowed him: where is your intelligence now? So the humility cuts two ways. If everything good in you is a gift, then you are not above anyone. Never belittle another believer. Look at the one whose prayer seems clumsy, whose hijab slips, whose life is far from Allah, and do not look down, because Allah can guide that heart tomorrow and let yours

slip, and they may die in a better state than you. The roles can be swapped. One moment of contempt is not worth that risk.

He closes on the saddest scene and the secret inside it. The Prophet ﷺ watched his uncle Abu Talib die refusing the words, the same uncle who had shielded and fed and defended him when the whole world turned on him. And who sat beside Abu Talib at the end, reminding him to cling to the old way? Bad company. There is the secret of guidance, and its great danger. You may hunger for the straight path with everything in you, but if the people on your right and left are pulling the other way, that is one of the surest ways for guidance never to reach you. Ustadh Hisham's father once caught him with the wrong crowd, left him standing outside in the heat, and said only this: tell me who your friends are and I will tell you who you are. Choose the company that walks toward Allah, because you are never merely standing among people, you are either pulling them or being pulled.

The price of guidance, and the magicians who paid it

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
أَعْمَى

And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind.

TA-HA 20:124

A life turned away from the remembrance of Allah is, in the Qur'an's own word, a constricted life, however full it looks from outside. That is why the name matters so urgently: those who strive and sweat for the guidance of Allah are the ones He brings into the open, the ones whose chests He expands. Guidance is not free. The Prophet ﷺ taught that it is expensive, and the only question is whether you will pay what it costs.

Look at the magicians of Pharaoh to see the price paid in full. They were summoned to defeat Musa, and when his staff swallowed theirs, the knowledge hit them at once: this is no trick, this is the truth. But knowledge alone was not

what saved them. They did not merely nod and agree. They fell down in prostration: we believe in the Lord of the worlds, the Lord of Musa and Harun. And Pharaoh, who had promised them reward minutes earlier, now threatened to cut off their hands and feet and crucify them. They did not flinch. We are returning to our Lord, they said, hoping only that He would forgive their sins because they were the first to believe.

Think of how impossible that is, to surrender your ego, your standing, your very limbs, in a single breath. That strength was not their own. It was the gift Al-Hadi pours into the heart that takes one sincere step toward Him. The whole difference between Pharaoh and his magicians came down to one thing: what was inside the heart. Show Allah sincerity, and He will show you a certainty, a courage, and a faith you could never have manufactured on your own. But you have to take the step. The guidance is there, waiting; you have only to sweat for it.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Ihdina as-sirat al-mustaqim

Guide us to the straight path.

How to live this name

- **Ask, and keep asking.** Guidance is the one du'a Allah made obligatory, seventeen times a day, because you do not ask, you do not get. Mean it every time you say *ihdina as-sirat al-mustaqim*. All of us are lost except the ones He guides.
- **Stop waiting and start striving.** You chase your provision; chase your guidance the same way. The one verse where Allah guarantees guidance ties it to struggle. Fight the version of you that pulls toward the screen, the snooze, the sin, and watch Him smooth the path.
- **Trust Him enough to say no.** Staying on the straight path means saying no to ten things pulling at you. Trust that one pound of halal beats a million of

haram, that He keeps His promises, and He will guide your heart through every refusal.

- **Make the U-turn, every time.** He guides whoever turns back to Him. Do not measure your guidance by how perfect you are, but by how fast you get up after you fall. The door back to Allah is always open; it takes one step.
- **Give the credit back, and never look down.** Were it not for Allah, you would never have been guided at all. Thank Him for every act of worship, and never belittle another believer: He can guide their heart tomorrow, and they may die in a better state than you.

Why this name stays with us

We ask to be guided more than we ask Allah for anything else, seventeen times a day, and most of us have never stopped to feel the weight of it. Al-Hadi is the One who shows the way when knowledge alone cannot, who opens the chest to receive the truth, who places in a heart the light to walk a road no one could force it down. To know this name is to stop waiting for guidance like a parcel from the sky and to start chasing it the way we chase everything else we truly want: asking, striving, trusting, and turning back every time we fall. And it is to hold our heads low, because were it not for Him, we would never have been guided at all.

O Allah, Al-Hadi, guide us to the straight path. Open our chests to receive it, make us strive for it and never wait, give us the trust to say no for Your sake, and the strength to turn back to You every time we lose the way. Keep our hearts firm upon Your deen, and gather us among those You have guided, until we meet You.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Hadi (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Ash-Shakoor and Al-Haleem

The Appreciative and the Forbearing

الشَّكُورُ

Ash-Shakoor

The Most Appreciative

الْحَلِيمُ

Al-Haleem

The Forbearing, the Tolerant



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXqyDJ6C5dl>

These two names sit side by side in a single verse of the Qur'an, and between them they answer a worry most of us carry quietly: that what we offer Allah is too small to matter, and that what we have done wrong is too much to forgive. Ash-Shakoor and Al-Haleem, the Most Appreciative and the Most Forbearing.

One name tells you that He treasures the tiniest good you do and grows it beyond anything it deserved. The other tells you that when you fall short, He does not strike you down where you stand. He waits. Together they are the reason a person like you and me has any hope at all.

How can Allah be thankful?

Start with a question that stops you for a second. To be shakir in Arabic is to be thankful, to be grateful to someone. But you are only ever grateful to someone who has filled a need of yours, who did you a favour, who gave you something you lacked. And Allah needs nothing from anyone. No one does Him a favour. No one fills a gap in Him. So how can the Qur'an call Allah thankful?

Here is the careful answer. We do not say that Allah is grateful to us, as though we had done something for Him. We say that Allah appreciates. He values what we do, however little it is. That is the difference, and it changes the whole picture: shukr from us to Him is gratitude, and shukr from Him to us is appreciation, the appreciation of the One who owes us nothing yet treasures everything we bring.

The animal that grew fat on almost nothing

Ustadh Hisham reaches for the way the old Arabs first used this word, and it lands instantly. They would call an animal shakir when it grew plump and full even though its owner had fed it only a little. A sheep grazing on a thin patch of grass, a cow given a small measure of feed, and yet it fills out, it thrives, it gives back milk in abundance. The little it received showed on it many times over. That animal is shakir: it took something small and made the blessing visible.

So in the language, shukr carried two steps. First, to know there is a blessing, that someone has given you something. Then, to show that blessing, to let it appear on you and in what you do. That is why gratitude to Allah was never meant to stop at the tongue. Saying thank you is the start, not the whole of it. If He has given you blessings and you turn them to His service, now you are truly grateful. The Qur'an even ties the increase to it: be grateful, and He will give you more.

Now turn the word around and point it at Allah. When He is Ash-Shakoor, it means that you and I are like that grazing animal in reverse. The deeds we bring are tiny, almost weightless, honestly close to worthless next to His majesty. And He takes that little and gives it weight. He makes it show. He multiplies its value far past anything we put in. That is real appreciation: not from someone who needed our gift, but from the One who chose to treasure it anyway.

The neighbour and the box of soup

Picture a small kindness. You have made a little extra at home, a pot of soup, more than your family will eat, so you spoon some into a box, walk next door, and knock. Here, we had some spare. Your neighbour opens the door and lights up. Thank you so much, what would I have done, you have no idea what this

means. And you stand there thinking, it is only a box of soup, why the tears, why the joy.

Because you did not know they had nothing to break their fast with today. To you it was leftovers. To them it was everything. The size of their gratitude had nothing to do with the size of your gift and everything to do with how much they needed it and how fully they received it. That is the picture to hold when you read that Allah appreciates your deeds. He receives the small thing you almost forgot you did, and He answers it with a gratitude scaled to His own generosity, not to your effort.

And here is where two names branch from the one word, both used of Allah. Ash-Shakir is the One who appreciates: you smiled at someone today, you barely noticed it, and He has already given that smile weight on the Day you meet Him. Ash-Shakoor is that same quality taken to its extreme, intense and unrelenting: you did something so small you did not even register it, you helped an old man across a road and walked on, and on the Day of Judgement that one act stands like a mountain on your scale. Ash-Shakoor is the name for a God who emphatically, almost extravagantly, treasures the tiniest good you ever do.

The date seed that became a mountain

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ ۖ وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ

And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe.'

IBRAHIM 14:7

The Prophet ﷺ gave this appreciation a measure you can feel. Whoever gives in charity the equal of a single date, earned from honest, halal income, Allah takes it in His right hand and then He grows it, the way you would plant one seed in the soil and water it and watch it climb, until that one small good has swelled to the size of a mountain.

Set that against how the world handles your money. People chase investments endlessly, this scheme and that, always asking how to multiply what they earn, and the honest ones give you back three per cent, five per cent, maybe seven. Anything promising more is usually a trap, and the man who swore he would double your money by tomorrow has vanished by tomorrow. But here is the One who takes a deed you did not even notice yourself doing, a phone call to your mother, a salam, an I love you, and on the Day of Judgement you look at your scale and you do not see your Hajj or your fasting first, you see that one sentence, grown into a mountain because He is Ash-Shakoor.

Carry one mindset out of this and it will change you: never underestimate a good deed. Not the smile, not the half a sentence, not the small word you let drop without thinking. You do not get to decide what is heavy on His scale, He does, and the thing you dismissed may be the very thing that saves you. He sees the outside of the deed and He multiplies it, and He is also al-Aleem, the All-Knowing, who sees the inside of it, why you really did it. So the deed pours out generous reward, and the heart behind it is never hidden from Him.

Where Ash-Shakoor lives in the Qur'an

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ
وَمِنْهُمْ مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ
الْكَبِيرُ

Then We caused to inherit the Book those We have chosen of Our servants; and among them is he who wrongs himself [i.e., sins], and among them is he who is moderate, and among them is he who is foremost in good deeds by permission of Allah. That [inheritance] is what is the great bounty.

FATIR 35:32

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزْنَ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ

*And they will say, "Praise to Allah, who has removed from us [all] sorrow.
Indeed, our Lord is Forgiving and Appreciative -*

FATIR 35:34

This is where the lesson opens out, because the name Ash-Shakoor lands in only a handful of places, and twice it falls in a single surah, Surah Fatir, and the context is everything. Allah is not describing every Muslim here. He is describing a special group: the people of the Qur'an, the ones who do not just recite it but follow it, who live by its meanings.

And look how He sorts them. He says He gave the Book to be inherited by servants He chose, and then He splits them into three. There is the one who wrongs himself, who follows the Qur'an but still slips, still sins, still falls short. There is the one in the middle, roughly half and half, good days and bad. And there is the one out ahead, so moved by the Book that he races to act on it and leaves everyone behind. Three kinds of people, and the verse promises all three the gardens of Paradise by His grace.

Sit with that. We try to live by the Qur'an and we keep falling short. In private we do things we should not, we look at what we should not look at, we say what we should not say, and we tell ourselves He is not watching. Yet here He is, appreciating the little we manage so much that He still promises us the Garden. And when those people enter it, the first thing on their tongues is praise: all praise to Allah, who has lifted our grief from us, for our Lord is truly Forgiving and Appreciative. That pairing is the secret of the whole lesson. He is Ghafoor, forgiving of the many sins you committed, and Shakoor, appreciating the few good deeds you offered, and between His forgiveness and His appreciation He carries you in.

The loan you cannot lose

إِنْ تَقْرَضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يضاعِفْهُ لَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ شَكُورٌ
حَلِيمٌ

*If you loan Allah a goodly loan, He will multiply it for you and forgive you.
And Allah is [most] Appreciative and Forbearing,*

AT-TAGHABUN 64:17

There is one verse where Allah calls Himself Ash-Shakoor and asks something astonishing of you in the same breath: lend Me a loan. Not any loan, a qard hasan, the kind of loan you give a brother in need when he asks when he should repay you and you tell him, do not worry about it. A loan that is really a gift. That is what your charity is. He is not asking your money to vanish into nothing. He is saying, lend it to Me, and I will return it multiplied beyond counting.

Weigh the maths of it. Commit one sin and you earn one bad deed, no more. Do one good deed and the Prophet ﷺ told us it is multiplied at the very least ten times, and the upper limit is not even named, seven hundred and then more and more beyond that, a ceiling we are not given. This is a game you would have to be astonishingly bad to lose: every goal you score counts tenfold or more, and every goal scored against you counts only once. If our deeds truly mean so little in themselves, why does He pour such worth onto them? Out of His mercy. Even the Prophet ﷺ said that no one's deeds will earn them Paradise, not even his own, unless Allah wraps them in His mercy. We do not enter by the weight of what we did. We enter because He chose to treasure it.

And notice how the verse ends, because it is the hinge of this whole lesson. He multiplies your loan, He forgives you, and then He names Himself twice: Ash-Shakoor, the Appreciative, and Al-Haleem, the Forbearing. The same God who treasures your good is the One who is gentle with your wrong. Wherever two of His names come together, ask why they were placed side by side, because they are explaining each other.

Al-Haleem, and the heart that refused revenge

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُنِيبٌ

Indeed, Abraham was forbearing, grieving and [frequently] returning [to Allah].

HUD 11:75

To be haleem is to be forbearing, to hold back, to delay a punishment you have every right to give, to absorb harm from people without rushing to strike back. Allah describes Himself with this name, and beautifully, He describes His servants with it too, so we can see what it looks like in a human being.

He calls Ibrahim haleem. When the angels came to him with news, the joy of a son on the way, and also the warning that the people of Lut were about to be destroyed, Ibrahim did not say, good, finish them. He began to plead for more time for them, asking that the punishment be held back a little longer. Faced with a people deep in wrong, his instinct was to buy them mercy, not to call down ruin. That is forbearance.

Generations later, a descendant of his carried the same heart into the worst day of his life. On the day the Prophet ﷺ went to Ta'if, he had already lost his uncle and his beloved wife in the same year, he had no protection left, and he walked into that town hoping for help and was met with mockery and stones until the blood ran into his sandals. At that moment Allah sent the angel of the mountains, offering to crush the people of Ta'if between two mountains. And the Prophet ﷺ said no. Leave them, perhaps from their descendants will come those who worship Allah alone. Hold the weight of that: harmed to the point of bleeding, and still choosing to protect the future of the very people who bloodied him. Ustadh Hisham points out what hangs on that single choice. The man who first carried Islam to the subcontinent came generations later from the people of Ta'if. Whole nations of believers exist because, on his hardest day, the Prophet ﷺ chose forbearance over revenge.

The punishment He keeps delaying

وَلَوْ يُوَازِدُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِمَا كَسَبُوا مَا تَرَكَ عَلَىٰ ظَهْرِهَا مِن دَابَّةٍ وَلَكِن يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۖ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِ بَصِيرًا

And if Allah were to impose blame on the people for what they have earned, He would not leave upon it [i.e., the earth] any creature. But He defers them for a specified term. And when their time comes, then indeed Allah has ever been, of His servants, Seeing.

FATIR 35:45

Now turn the forbearance toward yourself, because this is where it touches your own life. If Allah were to seize people for what they have truly earned, the verse says, He would not leave a single creature walking on the face of the earth. Every time you and I disobey Him, we are in effect saying we do not care that He is watching, and by strict justice a bolt should fall from the sky and end us on the spot. That it does not, that He defers us to an appointed time, that He keeps giving us morning after morning to wake up and turn back, that is Al-Haleem.

Watch how patiently His mercy is layered. When you merely intend a sin and then hold back, He writes you a good deed for leaving it. When you do fall into a sin, He gives you your whole life to repent from it. When you repent, He does not just erase the wrong, He can exchange it for good in its place. He grants you every minute you breathe to come back, right down to your final breath, and if you say the words at that last moment He will still take you. And even after you are gone, your scale can keep rising, through the charity you left, the knowledge you passed on, the children praying for you. Layer upon layer, He holds back the reckoning you deserve and keeps the door open.

There is a striking proof of this gentleness in the Qur'an itself. In one of the earliest battles, when the believers were vastly outnumbered, a small group panicked and fled the field, and abandoning the battlefield is among the gravest of sins, with believers dying because of it. Yet the moment Allah mentions how

serious their sin was, He says in the same breath that He had already pardoned them. He did not wait for them to ask. To come and risk your life for Him at all was not easy, and He would not forget that, so a moment of fear, He forgave. That is the forbearance of the One who has nothing to gain from anyone's punishment.

Carry these two names into the world

مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ وَأَمَنْتُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا

What would Allah do with [i.e., gain from] your punishment if you are grateful and believe? And ever is Allah Appreciative and Knowing.

AN-NISA 4:147

The Qur'an asks it plainly: what would Allah gain by punishing you, if you are grateful and believe? He takes nothing from your pain. He would far rather appreciate the good in you, and He knows exactly what is there. Once you have seen Him as Ash-Shakoor and Al-Haleem, the question is no longer only what He is like. It is what you will now become, because we are taught these names so that we can carry a shade of them into how we treat people.

Be appreciative the way He is appreciative. Stop weighing your own deeds with contempt, and stop weighing other people's that way either. The person who fasted all Ramadan but slept through half their prayers still brought Allah something, and you do not know but that He accepts it and it outweighs their slips. So receive the small good in others. Thank the one who brought the box of soup as though it were a feast.

And be forbearing the way He is forbearing, because the moment you step out of the prayer hall the world is not gentle. People will wrong you, gossip about you, take your good and then speak ill of you behind your back. The test is whether you react, whether you set off the next earthquake over the smallest thing, or whether you give people time, remind them, let it go. The Prophet ﷺ told one of his companions that he carried two qualities Allah loves, gentleness and forbearance, and he taught that half of good character is simply tolerating people. Half of a marriage, the scholars say, is letting the small things slide, be-

cause if you account your spouse penny by penny no day will pass without a fight. The butcher gives you nine hundred and ninety-eight grams instead of a kilo, and you let the two grams go. Because honestly, if Allah accounted you for every gram of every deed, you would not stand a chance, and you know it.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

Ya Shakoor, ya Haleem, taqabbal minna qaleelana, wa'fu an katheerina, wa la tu'akhidhna bima kasabat aydina

O Most Appreciative, O Most Forbearing, accept from us the little we bring, pardon the much we have done, and do not hold us to account for what our own hands have earned.

How to live these names

- **Never underestimate a good deed.** A smile, a salam, a phone call to your mother, half a sentence of kindness. You do not decide what is heavy on the scale, He does, and Ash-Shakoor can grow the deed you barely noticed into the mountain that saves you. So do the small good, every time.
- **Lend Allah the loan you cannot lose.** Your charity is a qard hasan: He takes one date's worth of good and returns it ten times over, and beyond ten to a ceiling He never names. Give for His sake without keeping score, knowing the worst possible return is still multiplication.
- **Appreciate the little in others.** If He treasures your small deeds, treasure other people's. The one who fasted but slept through prayers still brought something. Thank the one who brought the soup as though it were a feast, and stop weighing people by what they lack.
- **Be forbearing when people wrong you.** Like Ibrahim and like the Prophet ﷺ at Ta'if, do not rush to revenge. Give people time, remind them, let the small harm go. Half of good character is simply tolerating people, and the One above the heavens loves gentleness.
- **Do not sweat the two grams.** In your home and your marriage, let the small things slide, because if you account people penny by penny no day will pass in peace. Remember that if Allah accounted you for every gram you earned,

you could not stand, and extend to others the forbearance you are begging from Him.

Why these names stay with us

Most of us live with two quiet fears, that our good is too small to count and our wrong is too much to forgive, and these two names answer both at once. Ash-Shakoor is the One who takes the deed you forgot you did and grows it like a seed into a mountain, who treasures the little you bring the way a starving neighbour treasures a box of soup. Al-Haleem is the One who has every right to end you the moment you disobey, and instead delays, and waits, and keeps the door open until your final breath. To know them is to stop despairing over how little your deeds weigh, and to start carrying the same appreciation and the same patience to everyone around you.

O Allah, Ash-Shakoor, Al-Haleem, accept from us the little we manage and grow it by Your grace, forgive us the much we have done, and be gentle with our shortcomings as You have always been. Make us people who treasure the small good in others and who hold our tongues and our tempers when we are wronged, and gather us among those who enter the Garden saying: all praise to Allah, who has lifted our grief from us, for our Lord is truly Forgiving and Appreciative.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Ash-Shakoor and Al-Haleem (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Wahhab and Al-Fattah

The Gift-Giver and the Opener

الْوَهَّابُ

Al-Wahhab

The Bestower, the Gift-Giver

الْفَتَّاحُ

Al-Fattah

The Opener



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLMdZm-X014>

There are two names of Allah that belong to the moments you most need Him. The night you are searching for, hands open, asking for everything you have ever hoped for. The morning you wake up against a wall you cannot get past. These are the names you reach for when you are asking, and they are Al-Wahhab and Al-Fattah, the Gift-Giver and the Opener.

Ustadh Hisham takes these two together for a reason. As the best ten nights of the year draw near, the nights of du'a, he wants you to learn how to ask Allah, and who you are really asking. Once you know what these two names mean, you will stop asking Him for so little.

The one transaction with nothing in return

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّكَ الْعَزِيزِ الْوَهَّابِ

Or do they have the depositories of the mercy of your Lord, the Exalted in Might, the Bestower?

SAD 38:9

Start with the word itself. In Arabic, the root behind Al-Wahhab, the letters waw, ha, ba, is the root of the word for a gift, a hiba. And a gift is unlike anything else we trade in. Every other exchange runs on currency: you buy, you sell, you pay with pounds or dollars or whatever sits in your hand, and something comes back the other way. A gift is the one transaction where you give and receive nothing in return.

Think about how gifts actually work, and you start to see why Allah chose this name. A gift arrives as a surprise. You do not phone someone and tell them to bring you a present at five o'clock tomorrow; that is not how it works. It comes wrapped, in a bag or a box, and you do not know what is inside. And it has nothing to do with who you are. People do not choose your gift by the house you live in or the car you drive. They give from the goodness of their own heart, not as a reflection of your rank. Surprise, mystery, and pure generosity: that is what the word carries.

Now look at the shape of the name. You could call a gift-giver wahib, simply one who gave a gift. But Allah calls Himself Al-Wahhab, and that form is an intensive: the constant Giver, the one who gives again and again and again, and whose gifts are themselves immense, extreme in value. So when you say Ya Wahhab, you are not calling on someone who gives the occasional present. You are calling on the One whose storehouses of mercy never run low, and who loves to give.

The gifts He names in the Qur'an

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
الْوَهَّابُ

Our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us and grant us from Yourself mercy. Indeed, You are the Bestower.

AAL-IMRAN 3:8

Allah does not scatter this name at random. There are particular blessings He singles out in the Qur'an and calls gifts, and the very first of them is the greatest gift of all. When the believers pray, do not let our hearts deviate after You

have guided us, and grant us mercy from Yourself, they close the plea on this name: You are Al-Wahhab. The gift they are begging for is iman, faith itself. And put plainly: without this one gift, you and I have no home in the next life but the Fire, so every other gift is smaller than this one. Guidance is the first and the greatest thing He gives.

Then there are children, the gift He mentions more than any other. There is a second layer on top of that: not only to be given a child, but for that child to become the coolness of your eyes, the family member you look at and feel peace. That is its own separate gift. And there is the gift of dominion and power, like the kingdom He gave Sulayman. And there is the gift of good character, a sound and ambitious judgement, a clean heart. Family, faith, power, character: these are the blessings Allah Himself wraps in the word gift.

Why call them gifts and not simply blessings? Because each one carries that same fingerprint: it cannot be bought, it cannot be earned outright, and it often arrives in a way you never saw coming. Which is exactly why the name matters when you ask.

Ask Him for the penthouse

قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَهَبْ لِي مُلْكًا لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ مِّنْ بَعْدِي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
الْوَهَّابُ

He said, "My Lord, forgive me and grant me a kingdom such as will not belong to anyone after me. Indeed, You are the Bestower."

SAD 38:35

Here is where the name becomes practical, and it is one of the most striking turns in Ustadh Hisham's lesson. Sulayman made a mistake. The scholars differ over exactly what it was, and there is no authentic report pinning it down, so leave the test aside and look at what he did afterwards. Picture yourself in that moment. You have slipped, you have wronged someone or fallen short, and you come back to Allah low, humbled, ashamed. Most of us, in that state, ask for almost nothing. We feel we have no right to.

Sulayman did the opposite. He said: my Lord, forgive me, and grant me a kingdom such as will belong to no one after me. He asked for forgiveness and, in the same breath, for the greatest kingdom in history, because he was calling on Al-Wahhab and he knew nothing is too big to ask the One who gives. And Allah gave him a kingdom no billionaire could ever rival: not in money, but in command over things no human being will ever control, the wind, the jinn, the speech of the ants.

Sit with what that teaches. You are dealing with the One whose generosity has no ceiling, and still we ask Him for tiny things, modest things, ten-thousand-pound things, and tell ourselves we will be happy with that. This is the attitude the Prophet ﷺ pressed on us: when you ask Allah for Paradise, ask for Al-Firdaws, the highest part. Do not ask for the basement; ask for the penthouse. Do not ask for the one-star room; ask for the very best of it. Al-Wahhab gives according to His means, not according to your imagination, so raise what you imagine.

Why children are always called a gift

هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ
الدُّعَاءِ

At that, Zechariah called upon his Lord, saying, "My Lord, grant me from Yourself a good offspring. Indeed, You are the Hearer of supplication."

AAL-IMRAN 3:38

Of all the blessings He frames this way, children come up the most, and there is a reason. A child is never guaranteed to anyone. Think of how many couples wait a year, three years, ten, moving through treatment after treatment with empty hands, and then one sincere, serious du'a to Al-Wahhab changes everything. Zakariyya waited the better part of a lifetime and still turned to Allah, grant me from Yourself a good offspring, You are the Hearer of supplication. Ibrahim waited almost a hundred years, asking, my Lord, grant me from among the righteous. When the angels finally came to announce the news, his wife

laughed in sheer disbelief, an old woman, infertile, and the answer came back: thus has said your Lord, and He is the Wise, the Knowing.

But there is a second thing, deeper than the first. Even when you are given a child, you are not given any guarantee of what that child will become. You can predict the outcome of almost anything else in life. Work hard at your wealth, your projects, your career, and you will usually see something for it. Children are the exception. A mother carries nine months of exhaustion, then parents pour fifteen, twenty years of sleeplessness and sacrifice into a child, and still that child can turn out the very opposite of everything they hoped. There is nothing in this world equal to the gift of a righteous child, precisely because no effort can purchase it. It only ever comes as a gift.

And the stakes are not shrinking. The Prophet ﷺ told us the times will only grow harder, the trials heavier, generation after generation. The world your children inherit will be more difficult than the one you know. So the greatest gift you can beg Allah for, for them, is that He keep them on the straight path. You can hold everything this world offers and not sleep at night if your child is struggling, because the test in our din is heavier than any test in our health or our wealth. Ask Al-Wahhab to surprise you with your family.

The One who opens what is shut

قُلْ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا رَبَّنَا ثُمَّ يَفْتَحُ بَيْنَنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَهُوَ الْفَتَّاحُ الْعَلِيمُ

Say, "Our Lord will bring us together; then He will judge between us in truth. And He is the Knowing Judge."

SABA 34:26

Now turn to the second name. Al-Fattah comes from the root fataha, to open, and in this form it means the One who opens, again and again, the doors that have closed on you, the One who relieves you when everything has shut up tight. The Qur'an names Him this way directly: He is Al-Fattah, the All-Knowing.

You know this feeling. A door closes in your life and will not move. A job, a marriage, peace of mind, stability, safety, whatever it is you are reaching for, and it simply does not happen. It is like beating your head against a brick wall, again

and again, and the wall is made of lead, with no way through to the other side. Ustadh Hisham gives one rule for that moment: when you find something shut against you, do not throw your whole weight at it, because if you try to force the door with your own hands, you may break it. Ask Al-Fattah to open it instead.

Look at how the prophets turned to this name when they reached the end of themselves. After they had tried everything to call their people, morning and night, in secret and in public, and the hearts stayed locked, they did not push harder on their own. They handed it back to Him: our Lord, decide between us and our people in truth, and You are the best of those who give decision. The One with the keys is the One you ask to open.

Gifts wrapped in what looks like a loss

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا

Indeed, We have given you, [O Muhammad], a clear conquest.

AL-FATH 48:1

There is a moment in the Prophet's ﷺ life that shows exactly how Al-Fattah works, and it is the heart of this lesson. The Muslims, around fourteen hundred of them, went out to make an agreement with the people of Makkah, the Treaty of Hdaybiyyah. On paper, every single line of it ran against them. Anyone who fled Makkah to join the Muslims had to be sent back; anyone who left the Muslims for Makkah could not be touched. They could not even write the terms the way they wanted. The companions walked away upset, deflated, certain they had been handed a bad deal.

And on the way back, Allah revealed: indeed, We have opened for you a clear opening. One companion was so distressed he asked aloud, where is the opening? I do not see it. From the outside it looked like nothing had opened at all. But watch what that treaty actually did. It bought the Muslims two years of safety, two years with no sword at the throat, free to trade, to travel, to invite people to Islam in peace. The fourteen hundred who signed that day had be-

come ten thousand within two years. A tenfold return, on a deal that looked like a defeat.

This is how He opens. Sometimes Allah opens the door and it does not look like a door opening at all; it arrives disguised as a difficulty, as something you were unhappy to accept, and only later do you see it was the way through the whole time. Ustadh Hisham says it in one line worth carrying: sometimes Allah sends you His gifts wrapped in His calamities. The name behind that is Al-Fattah, and the Qur'an promises that whatever door of mercy He opens for you, no one can shut, and whatever He withholds, no one can release.

He owns the keys, so ask Him first

قَالَ وَمَنْ يَقْنَطُ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّهِ إِلَّا الضَّالُّونَ

He said, "And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord except for those astray?"

AL-HIJR 15:56

Notice what Al-Fattah opens for different people. He gives each of us a different door. One person can memorise the Qur'an with ease while another sits over a single page for days; but that same second person may give charity no one can match, or pray through the night, or carry a kindness to relatives and the sick that leaves everyone behind. So when you see someone with a door shut that is open for you, do not look down on them. The one who left the optional prayer early to go and care for an ill parent is greater in the sight of Allah than the one who stayed for it. He opens a different door for every servant. If yours feels narrow, the long hours of hard work, the labour that leaves no room to recite, know that earning a halal income is itself a door He opened for you to worship Him. And if you want more doors, ask the One who opens them.

Here is the habit Al-Fattah is meant to break. So often, to get anything in this world, we look for a contact, a connection, someone who knows someone who can make it happen. We call the influential, the wealthy, the well-placed, and Allah is the last one we turn to, after ten others have failed. But who did Yusuf know in the bottom of the well, or locked away in the prison? Who did Musa

know, exiled and alone for ten years? When every door is shut and you know no one, you still know Al-Fattah. You can take the means, of course, but stop knocking only on the doors of those who do not even hold the keys. He owns the keys to every door and every treasure. Ask Him first, not last.

And if the answer is slow, do not read the delay as a refusal. You have not lost more hope than Zakariyya after a lifetime without a child, or Ayyub after decades of illness, or Ibrahim, thrown into the fire by his own people, who answered the angels: and who despairs of the mercy of his Lord except those who are astray? After every long wait and every long patience, Al-Fattah opened the door. Carry one sentence home from this lesson: His delay is not His denial.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

رَبَّنَا افْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْفَاتِحِينَ

Rabbana-ftah baynana wa bayna qawmina bil-haqqi wa anta khayru al-fatihin

Our Lord, decide between us and our people in truth, and You are the best of those who give decision.

How to live these names

- **Ask Him for the penthouse.** You are calling on Al-Wahhab, whose storehouses never run low. Like Sulayman after his mistake, do not be modest with what you ask. When you ask for Paradise, ask for Al-Firdaws. He gives according to His means, not according to your imagination, so raise what you imagine.
- **Beg hardest for faith and family.** The greatest gift is iman, and the gift He names most is righteous children who become the coolness of your eyes. No effort can buy them. Ask Al-Wahhab to keep your loved ones on the straight path in a world that is only getting harder.
- **When a door shuts, do not force it.** If you try to break a closed door with your own hands, you may break it. Hand it to Al-Fattah instead. Take the means, then ask the One who actually holds the key to open the way.

- **Trust the gift inside the difficulty.** Hidaybiyyah looked like a defeat and became a tenfold opening. Sometimes Allah sends His gifts wrapped in His calamities. When something arrives as a hardship you did not want, ask whether He is opening a door you cannot yet see.
- **Ask Allah first, not last.** Stop knocking only on the doors of people who do not hold the keys. Yusuf in the well, Musa in exile, they knew no one but Allah. And if the answer is slow, remember His delay is not His denial.

Why these names stay with us

We spend our du'a asking Allah for small things, and giving up on Him quickly, and these two names correct both. Al-Wahhab is the Giver whose gifts cannot be bought, who hands out faith and family and surprises no one saw coming, and who tells you to ask for the highest of Paradise, not the basement. Al-Fattah is the Opener who holds the keys to every locked door, who turned a treaty that looked like defeat into a tenfold opening, and who promises that what He opens, no one can shut. To know them is to ask Him first instead of last, and to ask Him for everything.

O Allah, Ya Wahhab, Ya Fattah, gift us faith that never deviates and families that are the coolness of our eyes, open for us every door of good that has closed, and let us see the gifts You have hidden inside our hardships. Make us of those who ask You boldly and never despair of Your mercy, and grant us, on the nights we seek You, the greatest of what You give.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Wahhab and Al-Fattah (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Wasi

The Limitless in Favour

الْوَاسِعُ

Al-Wasi

The All-Encompassing, the Limitless in giving

ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

Dhul-Fadl al-Adheem

The Possessor of Great Bounty



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWYrPWahPx0>

Picture a wide, open room: high ceilings, light pouring in, space to stretch out and breathe. Now picture its opposite: a cramped corner with no air and no room to move. The Arabic word for that openness is the root of today's Name. Al-Wasi, the Vast, the All-Encompassing, the One who is never tight, never narrow, never running low.

But the word can be pressed one step further. To say a person is generous still admits a ceiling: if a man gives ten pounds, it means ten pounds was all he had in his pocket. With Allah there is no pocket and no ceiling. His ability, His capacity, His giving has no limit at all. And once that truth settles in you, it quietly dismantles the one fear that runs underneath most of our worry: the fear that there will not be enough.

The Name that means there is no limit

Start with the word itself. In Arabic, wasi describes something that expands, something roomy and large. A wide mosque with space to spare is called wasi.

Its opposite is the tight, the narrow, the place where there is simply not enough room. So far that could describe any spacious thing. The leap Ustadh Hisham makes is to take the ceiling off entirely.

When we call a person generous, we are still measuring a limit. If someone gives ten pounds in charity, that ten pounds was his maximum, the whole of what he carried. Empty the pocket and the giving stops. But when we say Allah is Al-Wasi, we mean His ability and His capacity are beyond measure. There is no maximum, no last note in the wallet, no point at which He gives and is left with less. He is the One whose giving has no edge.

Hold that beside the way most of us actually live, and you will feel the gap. We move through the world as though there is a fixed amount of everything, and our job is to grab our share before someone else does. Al-Wasi is the Name that tells you the supply you are fighting over was never limited in the first place.

The fear under all our spending

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ
سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سُنْبُلَةٍ مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ
عَلِيمٌ

The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

AL-BAQARAH 2:261

The Name lands first where it hurts most: in our money. Think about how you feel the moment you give. You watch the number drop, a hundred minus ten, minus twenty, minus thirty, and the body reads it as loss. Spending is filed in the mind as a cost, a leak, a thing that leaves and does not come back. And underneath sits the real fear: if this money goes, it is gone for good.

Psychologists have a name for it, the scarcity mindset, and once you see it you cannot unsee it. It is the quiet belief that there is only so much to go around, so if someone else gains, you must have lost. A man runs a restaurant, and after years his best chef leaves and opens the same kind of place next door. The owner panics. In his head there are fifty customers in the world, and now twenty-five will walk to the rival. But trust that Allah is Al-Wasi and the arithmetic changes: maybe you keep your fifty and he gets his, or maybe two restaurants on one street draw a bigger crowd and you both double. This is the very thing that breeds jealousy and envy, hasad, the wish that someone else would lose so that there could be more for you. It all flows from one false premise: that life is a game of limited supply.

Now hear how Allah answers it. The one who spends in His path is like a single grain that sprouts seven ears, and in every ear a hundred grains. Look inside the stalk of wheat and there is always more than you put in. Your spending was never subtraction. You gave ten today, and tomorrow Allah granted you a child, or shielded you from an accident, and you never connected the two because you were only counting what left your hand. The promise is simple: when you truly know that Allah is Al-Wasi, you give for His sake knowing it comes back, in forms you did not ask for and cannot trace. But you have to have the nerve to trust Him first.

He gives the kingdom to whom He wills

قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ وَاللَّهُ
يُؤْتِي مَلَكُهُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

He said, "Indeed, Allah has chosen him over you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature. And Allah gives His sovereignty to whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing [in favor] and Knowing."

AL-BAQARAH 2:247

The same Name turns up in a story you know. When the Children of Israel were given Talut as their king, they bristled: how can he rule over us when we have more right to it, and he has not even been given wealth? The answer cuts

straight through their objection. Allah chose him, gave him depth in knowledge and strength of body, and He gives His kingdom to whomever He wills, for He is Wasi, limitless, and Alim, all-knowing.

Notice the two Names arriving together, the All-Encompassing and the All-Knowing, and notice why. People look at the one God raises and ask, why him? They asked it of the Prophet ﷺ himself: why did the Qur'an come to this man and not to one of the great chiefs with the bank account and the lineage? But it is not ours to decide where His favour falls. He is Wasi, so His giving is not rationed, and He is Alim, so He knows exactly whom to give it to and when.

There is a discipline hidden in this, and it is patience. When a tyrant sits in power and a whole people feel crushed beneath him, the temptation is to seize what they want by force, because in their eyes power is a fixed thing that someone is hoarding. But if Allah gives kingdom to whom He wills, then the One who handed it over can hand it elsewhere whenever He chooses. This is exactly what Musa told his people when they grew impatient with Pharaoh still on his throne: the earth belongs to Allah, He gives it to whom He wills, so do not be hungry for power, do not demand it before its time. He is Alim. He knows the hour. Be patient, and what is meant for you will come.

A Name for the young man afraid to marry

وَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَيَامَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَائِكُمْ ۚ إِن يَكُونُوا
فُقَرَاءَ يُغْنِهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

And marry the unmarried among you and the righteous among your male slaves and female slaves. If they should be poor, Allah will enrich them from His bounty, and Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

AN-NUR 24:32

Then the Name steps into the place where it makes young people nervous. Marry those among you who are single, Allah says, and here is the line to sit with: if they are poor, Allah will enrich them from His bounty, for He is Wasi, limitless. The fear that keeps a young man from marrying is almost always the same one: I do not have enough yet, and what if there is never enough.

Here Ustadh Hisham speaks from his own life, plainly. He married at eighteen and became a father at nineteen, and he still remembers praying his wife would not discover how little sat in his account. But knowing Allah is Al-Wasi, he is quick to add, does not mean you can sleep and watch money fall from the ceiling. His provision is not free, it is not handed to the idle. You have to work, you have to graft. What the Name gives you is not laziness but courage: the nerve to take the leap and trust that the One with no limit will meet you on the other side.

And he watched it happen with his own eyes. Each time, when he married, when his first child came, when the second came, Allah opened a door of income from somewhere he had not expected. That is the texture of trusting Al-Wasi. You do your part and forge ahead, and He surprises you from a direction you were not even watching.

A different Name for every season

وَإِنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِّنْ سَعَتِهِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيمًا

But if they separate [by divorce], Allah will enrich each [of them] from His abundance. And ever is Allah Encompassing and Wise.

AN-NISA 4:130

Here is something worth carrying for life: in every situation you pass through, there is a Name of Allah meant for that exact moment. Watch how the Qur'an uses this same Name to walk a marriage through its hardest stretch. When a wife first senses her husband pulling away, Allah tells the couple to make peace, to compromise, to meet in the middle, and warns that the thing most likely to wreck it is greed, each one clutching their rights and refusing to let go. So He reminds them that He is Khabir, the One who knows what is buried in the heart, who sees the ego you carry to the table even as you pretend to negotiate. Let it go. He knows.

If it worsens, and the two are barely managing civility, He lowers the bar from excellence to simply trying, and when they say things in the heat of it that they will regret, He reminds them that He is Ghafur and Rahim, forgiving and merci-

ful, so do not be hard on yourselves, just keep trying. And if it ends, if the marriage truly cannot continue, the deepest fear surfaces, especially for a woman who gave years to a home and never built a career: how will I survive? That terror can trap a person inside an abusive marriage, choosing torment over destitution. But Allah did not create marriage for torture, He created it for sakina, for peace. So to the one afraid to leave, He says it here: if you part, Allah will enrich each of you from His abundance, for He is Wasi, limitless, and Hakim, wise. This happened for a wisdom. Be patient.

Sit with what just happened across those verses. The same Lord, in three breaths, hands you Khabir when your ego flares, Ghafur and Rahim when you stumble, and Wasi when you are afraid of running out. This, Ustadh Hisham says, is how we are meant to live with the Names: not as a list to memorise, but as companions, each one stepping forward in the season that needs it most.

The God who always gives extra

مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

Neither those who disbelieve from the People of the Scripture [i.e., the Jews and Christians] nor the polytheists wish that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord. But Allah selects for His mercy whom He wills, and Allah is the possessor of great bounty.

AL-BAQARAH 2:105

Close beside Al-Wasi sits a second word the Qur'an returns to again and again: fadl, Allah's bounty. It does not name Him in the list of ninety-nine, yet He calls Himself Dhul-Fadl al-Adheem, the Possessor of Great Bounty, and the meaning is gorgeous. Fadl is the extra. It is the surplus beyond what was owed or asked.

Picture your salary after the rent, the council tax, the gas and the electric are paid, and a hundred pounds is left over: English calls it disposable income, the leftover. Or picture a guest holding out a glass, you pour, he says enough, and you keep pouring anyway. Or the village table in South India or Somalia or Kurdistan, where you reach for the food and a hand stops yours and piles your

plate higher than you would ever have dared. That overflow, the giving past the point of asking, is fadl. And Allah is the One who never simply gives you what you requested; He always adds extra on top.

See where the Qur'an reaches for this word. To pilgrims who once feared starving on a year-long walk to Makkah, with trade forbidden in the sacred season, Allah lifts the worry: there is no blame on you to seek the bounty of your Lord even as you make hajj. And the moment the Friday prayer ends, He does not leave you idle: disperse through the earth and seek the bounty of Allah. The instant your time for worship closes, your time for work opens, and whatever then comes to you is counted as His fadl, His bonus laid on top of your effort.

Do not wish for what He gave someone else

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا
اَكْتَسَبُوا ۚ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا اَكْتَسَبْنَ ۚ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

And do not wish for that by which Allah has made some of you exceed others. For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned. And ask Allah of His bounty. Indeed Allah is ever, of all things, Knowing.

AN-NISA 4:32

If Allah pours out His bounty unevenly, that raises the oldest ache in the human chest, and the Qur'an meets it head on: do not long for the favour Allah gave to someone else. Ask Him from His own bounty instead. Allah made society uneven on purpose. Some are rich and some are poor, some are quick and some are patient, one is built for knowledge and another for business, and every single person was handed a gift that is theirs and not yours.

So the instruction is not to envy the gift but to find your own door and worship Him through it. A born salesman who never read a book will only break himself trying to become a scholar; a scholar will flounder trying to be him. One serves Allah through charity, another through fasting, another through the night

prayer, another through tenderness to family. Stop trying to be them, and be you. That is the very gift He singled out for a woman that no man can touch: motherhood, the carrying of new life that He placed in her and not in us. Even in the most determinedly equal societies, the Nordic countries that strip every barrier between the sexes, women still flow overwhelmingly toward nursing and caring and teaching, and men toward the trades, because each was given something the other was not. To resent that is to resent the way He shared out His own fadl.

And there is a mercy in the command itself, because longing for what others have is a thief of peace. Two hundred years ago you never knew what your neighbour ate for dinner; today it is on your screen, the dessert, the holiday, the corner of Spain they flew to, and your mind drowns in the highlights of everyone else's life and aches to have them. But the man you envy may be aching for what you have. Ustadh Hisham tells of a friend, well off and unmarried at thirty, forever flying to Morocco and Spain, and of another stuck at home driving to Blackpool and back, sure that God had shortchanged him, until you ask him to picture a house where a wife and three children come running to the door, and he weeps, because that is the emptiness underneath all the travel. This is why the Prophet ﷺ taught us to look at those who have less, not those who have more, so that we never belittle what Allah has already laid in our hands.

The Name that makes you brave and open-handed

Knowing that Allah is Al-Wasi does something to the spine. It makes you daring. Most of us live tethered to the paycheck, terrified of the lower line in the overdraft, forever asking when I will hit zero, when the trouble will come. But someone who truly believes His provision has no limit does not live in that cage. He takes the careful, calculated risk and keeps moving forward, because he knows there is no red line beneath which God runs out.

It is no accident that the vast majority of the Prophet's companions earned their bread as traders and shepherds, people who woke each morning not knowing what the day would bring, who opened the shop with no guarantee of a single sale. The Prophet ﷺ himself travelled to trade. That is a life lived on a leap of faith, the daily trust that the One who is Al-Wasi will provide for the one who works and does not sit still. When the muhajirun reached Madinah having

left everything behind in Makkah, an Ansari brother offered Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf half of his wealth and his home. His answer was not to take the gift but to ask, where is the marketplace? Just show me the market. That is a man who knows his Lord. This Name is not a get-rich scheme; it is the thing that frees you from the golden handcuffs, from the desperate need for something guaranteed.

And the same certainty opens your hand to others. The one who knows Allah's supply is endless can give without flinching, because he knows it will be replaced. They said of the Prophet ﷺ that he was never asked for a thing except he gave it, never, to the point that people grew bold and even rude in their asking. A bedouin once seized the very cloak off his back, demanding he give from what Allah had given him, and he simply took it off and handed it over. Where does that come from? From a heart that knows the opportunities of Allah are endless and His provision has no floor. Give, and it returns to you. Spend, and you receive. Sacrifice, and He provides. Do not hold it to yourself.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

Allahumma ya Wasi, Dhal-Fadl al-Adheem, aghnina min fadlik

O Allah, the All-Encompassing, Possessor of great bounty, enrich us from Your bounty.

How to live this Name

- **Spend without fearing the dip.** The grain that gives becomes seven hundred. When you give for Allah's sake it is never a simple subtraction; the return comes in forms you cannot trace. Trust that Al-Wasi has no empty pocket, and give anyway.
- **Refuse the scarcity mindset.** Another person's gain is not your loss. There is no fixed number of customers, prizes, or blessings being fought over. The One who gives has enough for everyone and more, so let someone else's success be safe with you.
- **Take the leap, then graft.** Whether it is marriage or a livelihood, His provision is not handed to the idle. Knowing Allah is limitless is not an excuse

to sleep; it is the courage to step forward and work, trusting He will meet you from a direction you were not watching.

- **Meet each season with its Name.** When your ego flares, remember He is Khabir. When you stumble, He is Ghafur and Rahim. When you fear running out, He is Al-Wasi. Reach for the Name the moment is asking for.
- **Stop wishing for what He gave others.** Do not long for someone else's gift; ask Allah from His own bounty and find your own door to Him. Look at those who have less, not more, and you will be grateful for what is already in your hands.

Why this Name stays with us

We spend so much of our lives afraid there will not be enough: enough money to give, enough to marry on, enough to survive a loss, enough to go around if someone near us succeeds. Al-Wasi is the Name that quietly takes that fear apart. The One who provides has no pocket to empty and no floor to hit, and on top of all He gives, He is Dhul-Fadl al-Adheem, forever adding extra you never asked for. To know this Name is to stop clutching, to give and marry and work and forgive from a place of trust rather than terror, and to stop envying the gift in someone else's hands when your own are already full.

O Allah, Al-Wasi, You whose giving has no limit, Dhul-Fadl al-Adheem, Possessor of great bounty, free us from the fear that there is not enough. Make us brave enough to spend for Your sake and take the leap toward what You love, content with what You have shared out to us, open-handed because we trust You will replace it, and enrich us, every one of us, from Your boundless bounty.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Wasi and Dhul-Fadl al-Adheem (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Quddus and As-Salam

The Perfect and the Source of Peace

الْقُدُّوسُ

Al-Quddus

The Perfect, free of every flaw

السَّلَامُ

As-Salam

The Source of Peace



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7cNRXMKyC8>

Some names you meet for the first time on a journey like this, and these two may be among them. They arrive together, side by side in a single verse near the end of Surah Al-Hashr, where Allah strings His most beautiful names together like beads: the Sovereign, the Pure, the Source of Peace. Al-Quddus and As-Salam.

Here is the strange thing Ustadh Hisham draws out of them. These two names describe Allah as utterly perfect and as the only true peace there is, and yet we live in an age that is quietly drowning because it forgot both. We chase a perfection that was never asked of us, and we hunt for a peace in all the places it cannot be found. To know these names is to be set free from both.

Two names from one verse

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ
الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Perfection, the Grantor of Security, the Overseer, the Exalted in Might, the Compeller, the Superior. Exalted is Allah above whatever they associate with Him.

AL-HASHR 59:23

Look at where they sit. Near the close of Surah Al-Hashr, Allah gathers a run of His names in one breath, and right after Al-Malik, the Sovereign, come these two: Al-Quddus and As-Salam. The Pure, the one free of every flaw, and the one from whom all peace flows. They were placed together, so we will walk them together.

Both names hide a meaning inside their letters, and that is where the lesson lives. Al-Quddus is built from the root q-d-s, which carries the sense of purity, of being holy, clean, free of any defect. As-Salam is built from the root s-l-m, the root of peace itself, and of soundness, safety, and submission. Hold those two ideas, purity and peace, because everything below grows out of them.

The name that means free of every flaw

يَا قَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ
أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ

O my people, enter the blessed land [i.e., Palestine] which Allah has assigned to you and do not turn back [from fighting in Allah's cause] and [thus] become losers.

AL-MA'IDAH 5:21

To feel what Al-Quddus means, follow its root through the Qur'an. The same three letters describe a place: the holy land, the pure land, the land Allah calls al-ardha al-muqaddasah, free of impurity. That is how Palestine is named in the Book, and it tells you the flavour of the word: cleansed, set apart, free of any taint.

The same root appears on the tongues of the angels. When Allah told them He would place a successive authority on the earth, they answered that they glorify Him with praise and declare His perfection, nuqaddisu lak. Hear what they are saying: everything we put before You is pure, with no shirk in it, no sin, nothing soiled. The very word for how the angels keep themselves clean before Allah is the word folded inside His name Al-Quddus.

And the form of the name is rare. Ustadh Hisham points out that this verb-pattern is barely used in Arabic, and where it is used, it means something done to the utmost, a quality at its absolute peak. So Al-Quddus is not merely pure. It is purity at its ceiling. There is no imperfection in Allah, nothing lacking, nothing wrong, not the smallest blemish. He is the perfect, and He is perfect in a way the human mind strains even to picture, because we have never once met it in ourselves.

Only Allah is perfect, so you do not have to be

Now turn the name around and let it land on you. If Allah alone is perfect, then everything other than Allah is not. Every person, every thing, you and me included. Sit with that, because it quietly changes how you move through the world.

When someone wrongs you, it stings less, because you were never owed perfection from a creature in the first place. People will fail you, and that is simply what people do. And when you stand before Allah, you stand more humbly, because you know that everything beside Him is flawed and He alone is not. This is one of the deep meanings woven into tawhid. The reason all worship belongs to Allah alone, that He alone is called upon and turned to, flows from this: He is the one perfect being there is, and perfection alone deserves to be worshipped.

There is something in us that is helplessly drawn to perfection. A fine car slides past and your eyes follow it down the road. A painting hangs in a gallery and people stand frozen in front of it, unable to look away. The closer a thing comes to flawless, the more it pulls at us. That pull was placed in you for a reason. It was meant to find its rest in the only One who is actually flawless, the One whose beauty has no defect to look away from.

A perfect Lord, a perfect speech

الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۗ مَا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَوتٍ ۗ
فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ

[And] who created seven heavens in layers. You do not see in the creation of the Most Merciful any inconsistency. So return [your] vision [to the sky]; do you see any breaks?

AL-MULK 67:3

If the Maker is perfect, look at what that does to what He makes. Allah says of the heavens that you will not find a single flaw in His creation, no crack, no fault, however long you search. Run your eye over the universe again and again, and it will come back to you having found nothing out of place.

And His speech carries the same fingerprint. The Qur'an is the word of a perfect Lord, so it cannot be anything but perfect. This is why, when the classical Arabs first heard it, the very people who were the summit of Arabic poetry and eloquence, they could not lay a finger on its language. They bowed to it. The worst they could throw was an insult at the man who brought it, that he was a poet, a magician, possessed. Never once did they say there was a flaw in the words, a wrong spelling, a clumsy line. They could not, because the words were Allah's, and Allah is Al-Quddus. So when a verse reaches into you and moves you, understand what just touched you: a trace of the perfection of the One who spoke it.

The perfection we were never asked to carry

Here is where this ancient name walks straight into the wound of our age. We have taken the perfection that belongs to Allah alone and demanded it of ourselves, and it is quietly breaking us.

Ustadh Hisham tells of a class he once held for young women, more than a hundred of them, an open space to ask anything at all. He braced for deep questions about the Qur'an. Instead, the questions that came again and again, seven in ten, were about cosmetics. Makeup. Concealer, the powder used to cover a blemish or a mark on the face. When he gently asked why, one of them was honest enough to name it: we are always thinking about how we are seen. And it is not only the sisters. In the age of the filter and the edited image, everyone is holding up a mask that says, look, I am perfect, when behind it stands an ordinary, flawed human being like the rest of us.

The numbers are sobering, and he does not flinch from them. Among young people between fourteen and eighteen, by various studies, somewhere from a third to a half say they hate the way they look. They stand at the mirror and feel disgust. One in three young girls has harmed herself with something sharp, has made herself bleed, because she cannot bear her own reflection. How did a generation arrive here? By being shown, screen after screen, a single narrow image of beauty until they knew nothing else, and then catching their own face in the glass and failing to recognise it as beautiful at all.

Beauty is in the eye of the One who made you

He traces the wound back to a moment. When colour first came to the screen, one of the earliest faces broadcast across the whole earth, into every magazine and every home, was a single fair, slim woman, until men everywhere began to picture beauty as her and nothing else. The fruit of that is visible to this day: in some countries the most sold product in the pharmacy is a cream that promises to make your skin lighter, bought by people whose ancestors loved the colour of their own skin for a thousand years, until a borrowed image taught them to be ashamed of it.

Set against this is something the researchers themselves stumbled upon. Sociologists surveyed people across five countries, four in Europe and one

Muslim country, asking how they felt about their own beauty. The people most at peace with how they looked, by a clear margin, were in the Muslim country. The non-Muslim researchers concluded it had to be the hijab, the modesty that teaches you not to flaunt your beauty for every passing eye. When beauty is not for sale and not on display, it stops being a thing you are graded on, and the heart can breathe.

And here is the door out, and it is a saying of the Prophet ﷺ. A companion once worried that loving fine clothes and a good appearance might be arrogance, and the Prophet ﷺ answered that Allah is beautiful and loves beauty. The catch is that beauty lives in the eye of the one who looks, not in the thing being looked at. A husband and wife who have been together fifty years see in each other, old and tired and worn, the most beautiful face in the world. A mother carries her child to the king certain that hers is the loveliest there is, and every mother carries the same certainty, because love is what sees beauty. So everything Allah made carries beauty in it, in every blemish and every supposed flaw, but it waits on the right eye to see it. Part of truly knowing Al-Quddus is to stop demanding a perfection of yourself that was only ever His, and to make peace with being beautifully, humanly imperfect.

The name that is the source of peace

Now to the second name, and the second thirst of our time. As-Salam, the source of peace. From this root come several meanings at once, and they fit together.

There is peace itself: peace comes from Allah, He is the one who gives it, the one who plants it in a heart. There is soundness and safety: to be salim is to be whole, unharmed, with nothing wrong, so the name carries a sense of perfect wholeness too. There is submission, the same root as the word Islam: Allah is the one to whom all things submit, the believer willingly and the denier without even meaning to, the way a body that walks the earth is submitting every moment to the law of gravity Allah laid down. And there is security: when Allah is As-Salam, He is the one who makes you safe, who gives you a place of safety to stand. He is not merely at peace. He is the wellspring from which every peace there is comes pouring out.

This is the name we say to one another a hundred times a day without weighing it. Assalamu alaikum. Many of us think it only means may peace be upon you, but Ustadh Hisham passes on what the scholars say: that the salam in the greeting is this very name of Allah. You are not only wishing someone peace. You are saying, may Allah, the Source of Peace, be with you. Every greeting is a small prayer that the One who owns all peace would draw near to the person in front of you.

Where peace actually comes from

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

Those who have believed and whose hearts are assured by the remembrance of Allah. Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts are assured.

AR-RA'D 13:28

If Allah is the source of peace, then peace has an address, and it is not where most people are looking for it. Hearts settle, the Qur'an says, only in the remembrance of Allah. Not somewhere near it. Only there.

Watch how the world hunts for peace everywhere else. Someone books a holiday to a beach far away, sure that calm is waiting on the sand, and arrives to find the notifications never stopped and the mind never quieted. The market will sell you peace under a hundred labels, calm, freedom, serenity, a clearer mind. None of it holds, because you can buy every product on earth and not one of them is the source. If As-Salam does not place peace in your heart, nothing on this earth can. The most peaceful person in a loud and frightening world is simply the one walking through it remembering Allah.

There is a beautiful thread here that runs straight back to the Prophet ﷺ. The moment he finished the prayer, before anything else, he himself would say: O Allah, You are As-Salam, and from You comes all peace. The teachers of hadith made it a tradition: when they taught a student these words, they would first take his hand and say I love you, exactly as the Prophet ﷺ had. Notice the lesson hidden in the manner, not only the words. When someone holds your hand

and tells you they love you, whatever they say next goes straight into you. To believe that Allah is As-Salam is to be filled with love for His creation, and the very way this knowledge was passed down, hand to hand, heart to heart, was itself an act of that love.

The roads of peace, and the home of peace

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَىٰ دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

And Allah invites to the Home of Peace [i.e., Paradise] and guides whom He wills to a straight path.

YUNUS 10:25

Ustadh Hisham closes where the name is heading. Allah calls the next life Dar as-Salam, the home of peace, and that name tells you something about this life by contrast: here there will always be some lack of peace, some conflict, some headache, some argument that will not fully end. Perfect peace is not the address of this world.

But Allah also calls the paths that lead there subul as-salam, the roads of peace. So peace is not only the destination. It is the journey too, for the one who walks remembering Him. That is the secret behind the Prophet's words that the worldly life is a kind of paradise for the believer: not because anything here is finally perfect, but because a heart tied to As-Salam tastes a quiet calm, a sakina, that the people with everything and no remembrance never find. Look at the sorrow of our time, so many who own all the world can offer and still think of ending their lives, precisely because they were taught they do not need their Lord.

So walk the roads of peace by remembering Him, and they will carry you to the home of peace. And when the believer finally enters Paradise, the first thing Allah Himself will say to them is salam. You begin the day greeting people with the name As-Salam, you walk the roads of salam through a noisy world, and you arrive at last in the abode of salam, welcomed by the Source of Peace with the very word you have been saying your whole life.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

Allahumma anta as-Salamu wa minka as-salam, tabarakta ya Dhal-Jalali wal-Ikram

O Allah, You are the Source of Peace, and from You comes all peace. Blessed are You, O Owner of Majesty and Honour.

How to live these names

- **Stop demanding perfection from yourself.** Al-Quddus alone is perfect, which means you were never meant to be. Make peace with your blemishes and your limits. The pressure to be flawless is a weight Allah never placed on you.
- **Expect imperfection from people.** When someone wrongs or disappoints you, let it sting less. They were never owed perfection in the first place. Only Allah never lets you down, and knowing that keeps you both gentle with others and humble before Him.
- **Guard what your eyes consume.** You count your steps and your calories. Count what reaches your heart through your eyes too. Cut down the stream of edited, so-called perfect images, and instead look at the real creation of Allah until you can see its beauty again.
- **Look for peace in the one place it lives.** Not in a holiday, a purchase, or a product promising calm. Hearts settle only in the remembrance of Allah. When you feel the noise rising, return to His remembrance, because He is the source and there is no other.
- **Mean the greeting you give.** When you say assalamu alaikum, remember you are calling on a name of Allah over someone: may the Source of Peace be with you. Say it slowly, and let every greeting be a small prayer of love for the person in front of you.

Why these names stay with us

These two names sit together in one verse, and together they answer two of the quietest aches of our time. We exhaust ourselves chasing a perfection that was only ever Allah's, and we wander looking for a peace that lives in only one

place. Al-Quddus tells you to lay the burden of being flawless down, because He is the perfect and you were never meant to be. As-Salam tells you where the calm you keep searching for actually waits. To know them is to stop fighting your own reflection, and to stop hunting for peace in everything that cannot give it.

O Allah, Al-Quddus, As-Salam, You are the perfect and the source of all peace. Free us from chasing a perfection that is Yours alone, teach us to see the beauty You placed in Your creation, settle our hearts in Your remembrance, and let us walk the roads of peace until You greet us with salam in the home of peace.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Quddus and As-Salam (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Karim and Dhul-Jalali wal-Ikram

The Generous, Honourable and Majestic

الْكَرِيمُ

Al-Karim

The Most Generous

الْأَكْرَمُ

Al-Akram

The Most Generous (of all)

ذُو الْجَلَالِ
وَالْإِكْرَامِ

Dhul-Jalali wal-Ikram

Lord of Majesty and Honour



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWU0FMYOOnB4>

There is a verse in Surah Ar-Rahman that sits like a hinge in the middle of the chapter, and everything turns on it. Before it, Allah walks you through His creation: the sun and the moon, the stars, the seas, the ships, the very speech in your mouth. After it, He speaks of the life to come. And the verse itself tells you that all of it, every last thing on this earth, will one day be gone, and only one thing will remain: the Face of your Lord, the Owner of Majesty and Honour.

This is the lesson where two great descriptions of Allah meet. Dhul-Jalali wal-Ikram, the Lord of Majesty and Honour, who holds awe and generosity in the same hand. And Al-Karim, the Most Generous, a name that turns out to mean far more than simply giving. Ustadh Hisham opens it where the Qur'an opens it, at the moment the shop is about to close.

The verse the whole surah turns on

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ

Everyone upon it [i.e., the earth] will perish,

AR-RAHMAN 55:26

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor.

AR-RAHMAN 55:27

Listen to how Surah Ar-Rahman is built. In the first half, Allah lays His creation before you like a feast: the human being, the speech He taught us, the sun on its course, the stars, the trees, the sea, the ships running upon it. And He keeps pausing, asking again and again, so which of the favours of your Lord would you deny? He does not want you to rush past a single one. Stop. Notice it. Be grateful. Then move to the next.

Ustadh Hisham gives this an image you will not forget. Imagine someone takes you to a restaurant and orders the entire menu, thirty-three dishes, appetisers, mains, desserts, the tea at the end, and tells you to take one bite from each and savour it. You work your way through, amazed, the spice, the sweetness, the warmth, until you sit back and say this is the finest meal of my life. And then they lean over and say: wonderful, because tomorrow this restaurant closes forever. Your heart sinks. And in that sinking feeling a thought rises: surely there is something more than this, somewhere, something that does not close.

That is exactly what this verse does. Allah lets you taste everything in His creation, then tells you the shop is closing. All of it perishes. The only thing that remains is the Face of your Lord, Dhul-Jalali wal-Ikram. And the moment you feel that, the surah turns: from here on it speaks of the afterlife, the real life, the one we are actually living for. The blessings were never the destination. They were the menu pointing you toward the One who set the table.

Majesty in one hand, honour in the other

تَبَارَكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِي الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

Blessed is the name of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor.

AR-RAHMAN 55:78

This description appears only twice in the whole Qur'an, and both times in this one surah: once at its turning point, and once as its very last verse, sealing the chapter shut. Hold the two words apart for a moment. Jalal is majesty: might, power, awe, the kind of high status you cannot meet with a casual glance. It is how you would stand before a sovereign, eyes lowered, the air heavy with respect. Ikram is honour and generosity: softness, giving, nearness, the side of Allah that makes the heart melt.

And here is why both sit together in His name. One half of Allah's names carry majesty. Al-Jabbar, the One whose will cannot be overturned, the One who is severe in punishment, names that can keep you awake at night, that make you respect Him and never dare to cross Him. The other half carry tenderness: the Most Merciful, the Most Loving, the Most Generous, names that pull you in close. Dhul-Jalali wal-Ikram gathers both into a single breath, because this is who Allah is: awesome and generous at once, never one without the other.

Knowing both is what keeps a heart in balance, between hope and fear. Tip too far into hope alone and you grow lazy and complacent, certain every sin will simply be wiped away. Ustadh Hisham tells of a famous actor asked on television how he could call himself a Muslim while doing all manner of haram on screen, and the man answered that every chapter of the Qur'an opens with Allah's mercy, so surely he would be forgiven. A scholar sitting beside him replied at once: and Allah is severe in punishment too, my friend. Tip too far the other way, into fear alone, and you raise people who grow up believing Allah does not love them and has no mercy for them. Majesty and honour, held together, hold you steady.

His mercy outweighs His wrath

So if Allah has these two sides, which one weighs more? The answer runs all through the Qur'an and the Sunnah: His mercy. There is a hadith in which Allah declares that His mercy has gone ahead of, and outweighs, His anger. His mercy encompasses everything. This is why the very first thing Allah taught us about Himself, at the opening of His Book, was His mercy, not His might.

It changes how you carry this religion to others. When you teach a child, or a new Muslim, or anyone standing at the door of faith, you lead with the mercy and the generosity of Allah, not with fear and threat. Ustadh Hisham sat once beside a new Muslim, three weeks into Islam, listening to someone teach him that this religion had split into many sects and that all of them but one were bound for the Fire, that nearly every mosque in the city belonged to the lost majority. That new Muslim lasted six months and then left, walking back out of Islam, because the version he had been handed was so narrow and so hateful that disbelief felt like more room to breathe.

Against that, hold the way the Prophet ﷺ taught. A bedouin once relieved himself in a corner of the masjid, not knowing any better, and the Companions moved to seize him. The Prophet ﷺ told them to leave him, to simply pour a bucket of water over the spot, and then drew the man close and explained gently that this was the house of Allah. The bedouin raised his hands and prayed: O Allah, have mercy on me and on Muhammad, and on no one else. And the Prophet ﷺ answered him with words worth framing in gold: you have made something vast into something tight. Allah's mercy is not for the two of us alone. It is for everyone.

Giving with no strings attached

إِنَّمَا نَطْعِمُكُمْ لَوَجْهِهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا

[Saying], "We feed you only for the face [i.e., approval] of Allah. We wish not from you reward or gratitude.

AL-INSAN 76:9

Now to the name itself. Karam in Arabic carries two meanings, and the first is generosity, but not generosity as a quantity. We have already learned that Allah has endlessly much to give. Al-Karim is about the style of His giving. There is a way of giving that is pure, and a way that is not, and the difference is everything.

Picture a wealthy man who comes to the mosque in Ramadan with a stack of cash and hands it out after the prayer to whoever lines up. But from each person he expects a little ceremony: a bowed head, a my master, a please. And once he has given, he expects never to see them again. We do this in smaller ways all the time. We give with strings attached. I bought you dinner, I drove you there, I paid for your fuel, and now six weeks have passed and you have not even called. We give out of guilt, pressing a coin into a hand just to be rid of the person. We give out of obligation, grabbing the cheapest box of chocolates so we do not arrive empty-handed, resenting the whole errand. None of that is karam. That is giving that wants something back.

Al-Karim is the opposite. When Allah gives, He expects nothing in return, and He gives out of no need of His own. Think about it: the most hardened atheist on earth, who calls his Lord a fairy tale and lies against Him every single day, is still handed his oxygen each morning, his food, his working lungs, his beating heart, his whole functioning body, for free. That is karam. Allah pours, and asks for nothing back. And this is precisely the spirit He praises in His servants, the ones who feed others and say, we feed you for the face of Allah alone, we want no reward from you and not even your thanks. To give like that is to carry a trace of His own name.

The honour Allah hands to every human being

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ
وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا

And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference.

AL-ISRA 17:70

The second meaning of karam is to have a high status, to be honourable. This is why the Qur'an itself is called Karim: it is the most honourable, highest of all speech. When Allah describes the reward and the provision He keeps for His people, He calls those Karim too: the noblest reward, the noblest sustenance. So Al-Karim is not only the One who gives generously, He is the One who is highest in honour, and the One who bestows honour.

And He has bestowed it widely. Allah says He has honoured the children of Adam, all of them, carried them over land and sea, provided them good things, and raised them above so much of what He created. Every human being, Muslim or not, whether they share your values or trample them, carries a baseline of dignity that Allah Himself granted. So those who tell you that a disbeliever should be hated, spat at, abused, are teaching something the Prophet ﷺ never taught. We need not agree with someone, need not love them or befriend them, to owe them the basic respect Allah wrote into every child of Adam, long before any charter of human rights was ever drafted.

The leaderboard that flips

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ
لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَاكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Aware.

AL-HUJURAT 49:13

Beyond that shared dignity, there is a special honour Allah reserves for those who earn it, and He tells you exactly how it is measured. The most honoured of you in His sight is the most god-conscious of you. From the same root as Al-Karim: akramakum, the most honoured. And when this verse came down, Ustadh Hisham reminds us, it was nothing short of a revolution.

Take Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him. Before Islam he was an enslaved man whom people would not look at twice, treated like dust on the ground. Then this verse arrives and rewrites the whole ranking, and look what follows. The Prophet ﷺ came to that same Bilal and said: tell me the deed you do that I am most hopeful about, for I heard the sound of your footsteps in Paradise ahead of me. A man once counted as the lowest of the low, and the greatest of all messengers is telling him he heard his steps in Jannah. And what had he done? Only that after every wudu he would pray two units of prayer. A small deed, you might think, but the quality of it, the sincerity poured into it, made it heavier with Allah than mountains of gold.

Because with Allah there is a different leaderboard. The world ranks you by your degrees, your wealth, your looks, your followers, your lineage. But status belongs to Allah alone; He decides whom to honour and whom to humble. You might sit in last place in the eyes of people and stand in first place in the sight of your Lord. So never go chasing status from anyone else. Seek it through Islam, through what Allah honours, because if you try to buy it any other way, by schmoozing, by going viral, by performing for a crowd, the One who owns all

honour can humble you in an instant. Your rank with Him is the only one that lasts.

Your Lord is the Most Generous

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ

Recite in the name of your Lord who created,

AL-ALAQ 96:1

اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ

Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous,

AL-ALAQ 96:3

There is another shape of this name, and it sits in the very first words ever revealed to the Prophet ﷺ. Read, in the name of your Lord who created. Read, and your Lord is Al-Akram, the Most Generous of all. Al-Akram is the comparative form, the most, above every other generous thing. And the scholars notice something in these opening lines: there are two commands to read here, and each carries a different weight.

The first read is for the Prophet ﷺ himself, to learn and to grow, and so it leans on the word Rabb, your Lord who nurtures you and raises you from nothing to your full strength. The second read is a command to recite to others, to carry the message out, and there Allah names Himself Al-Akram, the Most Generous. Why pair the call to spread His word with His generosity in particular? Ustadh Hisham draws it out: when you go out to call others to Allah, people will try to lower you, to strip your standing away. So Allah reminds you, before you take a single step, that He is the Owner of honour. The status others deny you, He will give you Himself.

And that second task costs you. The first read is the fuel; the second is the journey. You sit with the Qur'an at night, you study, you learn, so that you have something to carry, and only then do you carry it. Allah ties this command to His generosity because it asks for your sacrifice: your sweat, your sleepless

nights, your effort. We strain that hard for a paycheck, a promotion, a watch, a car. How much more is it worth to strain when the reward promised is the generosity of Al-Akram Himself.

Speak to the Generous in your own words

Knowing Allah as Al-Karim changes how you raise your hands to Him. There is a moment when the Prophet ﷺ heard a man making du'a and stopped him, not to correct a mistake, but because that man's supplication had already been answered before he had even finished asking. He had been given, in effect, a blank cheque: ask for whatever you wish, it is coming. What had he done to earn it? He had called on Allah by His names. He knew exactly who he was speaking to. He did not treat Allah like a cash machine or a checkout screen; he came trembling, in love, in awe, pouring out his heart, and that is what opened the door.

So do not imagine du'a is a magic formula, a sentence you repeat ten thousand times in a corner and wait for the result to appear. Ustadh Hisham hears it constantly: give me the du'a for good grades, the du'a to find a spouse, as if there were a secret spell. He tells of a man beside him on a turbulent flight who raised his hands in fear and could manage only two letters of the Arabic alphabet, because he thought he needed special words and had none. He tells of someone who carried cancer for ten years and never once asked Allah, still waiting to be handed the right Arabic phrase.

You are not limited by language. You are not waiting on a formula. Allah understands every tongue and even the speech you never say aloud; He knows what is folded inside your heart. Speak to Him in your own words, in whatever language is yours, from the depth of you. The Prophet ﷺ once simply looked up to the sky, saying nothing, and Allah answered: I see you turning your face to the heaven, and turned the qibla for him. He had not opened his mouth. Call on the Generous, and call from the heart.

What deceived you about your generous Lord?

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّبَكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ

O mankind, what has deceived you concerning your Lord, the Generous,

AL-INFITAR 82:6

There is one verse where Allah turns and speaks to you directly, and it is almost unbearably tender. In the Arabic He does not call out O people, as He so often does. He says O human being, singular, as though He has drawn you aside on your own, and He asks: what deceived you about your Lord, the Generous? Who fooled you into thinking Al-Karim was anything other than generous? Who told you He was not merciful, not forgiving, not waiting for you to come back?

Ustadh Hisham was on the phone with a young woman who wanted to leave Islam. Someone had told her that if she missed a single prayer she was a disbeliever, and that her repentance would not be accepted unless she was certain her heart was sincere. She slept through one prayer, decided she was finished, and concluded that she could not believe in a Lord who would build a religion that hard and then punish her for failing it. He read her this verse, and she began to weep. What deceived you about your generous Lord? Because the truth is the opposite of what she had been sold. Al-Karim has room for you. There is always room.

Notice who this verse is even addressed to. It comes in a passage speaking to those who deny Allah and deny the Day of Judgement, and still He calls them with His generosity, reminding them that He created them, proportioned them, and balanced them, and asked for no payment in return. When a child wrongs a parent badly enough, the parent may say go, and never let me see your face again. But when His servant runs far from Him, Allah calls out, O human being, what deceived you about your generous Lord. So when you introduce Allah to someone who does not know Him, in a society where most people imagine God as angry, scary, and out to punish them, lead with this. Lead with His generosity. Allah is not only fire and might. He is Al-Karim, and there is always a way home.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

Ya Dhal-Jalali wal-Ikram

O Lord of Majesty and Honour.

How to live these names

- **Hold majesty and honour together.** Let your heart sit between hope and fear. Awe of Allah's might keeps you from growing careless; trust in His generosity keeps you from despair. Never carry one without the other, and never teach one without the other.
- **Give the way Al-Karim gives.** Pour without strings. Drop the running tally of what you are owed, the guilt-giving and the grudging gift. Feed and help for the face of Allah alone, wanting no reward back and not even the thanks.
- **Honour every human being.** Allah honoured all the children of Adam, so offer a baseline of respect to everyone, agree with them or not. Contempt for people, especially the ones who differ from you, is not from the Prophet ﷺ.
- **Chase the only leaderboard that lasts.** Status belongs to Allah, and the most honoured in His sight is the most god-conscious. Stop buying rank with wealth, looks, or followers. A small deed done with sincerity can outweigh mountains of gold.
- **Call on the Generous in your own words.** Du'a is not a magic formula in a borrowed language. Allah understands every tongue and the unspoken cry inside you. Raise your hands and speak to Al-Karim from the heart, and know there is always room to come back.

Why these names stay with us

Everything on this earth is a menu about to be cleared away, and only one thing remains: the Face of your Lord, Dhul-Jalali wal-Ikram, majestic and generous at once. To know Him as Al-Karim is to know a Lord who gives and asks for nothing, who honoured every child of Adam, who flips the world's leaderboard so that the lowest in people's eyes can be first in His, and who, when you have run

as far as you can run, leans in and asks not where have you been, but what deceived you about your generous Lord. There is always room. There is always a way home.

O Allah, Ya Dhal-Jalali wal-Ikram, O Most Generous, You give and ask nothing in return. Let our hearts hold awe of You and hope in You together, make us people who pour without keeping score, raise our status in Your sight by raising our hearts to You, and when we stray, draw us back by Your generosity, for there is always room with You.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Karim and Dhul-Jalali wal-Ikram (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Wadud

The Most Loving

الْوَدُودُ

Al-Wadud

The Most Loving



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECWjt4xwUcY>

This is a name Ustadh Hisham held back on purpose, delaying it week after week to keep the longing alive, because of all the names you will meet, this one is almost too tender to believe. Al-Wadud, the Most Loving. Not love as a passing kindness, but love as a yearning, a want, a desire to be near the one you love.

Pause on what that means before you read another line. The name says that Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the earth, may want to be in the company of you and me. That He may love His servant to the point of wishing to see them, of longing for them to join Him in the Gardens. That is the weight of Al-Wadud, and it changes everything about how you carry yourself before Him.

A love that yearns for you

Arabic has more than one word for love, and they are not interchangeable. The word at the heart of this name, wudd, is not the gentle, general affection you might feel for a meal or a morning. It is love with a pull in it, a love laced with hope and yearning, the kind of love that wants to be with the one it loves and aches at the distance. It is the word the Qur'an reaches for when it speaks of

the bond between a husband and a wife, a love that desires nearness and cannot rest while it is apart.

Now stretch that word until it can hold its Maker. Al-Wadud follows the intensive Arabic pattern, so it does not mean simply the One who loves, but the One whose love is overwhelming, who yearns for the ones He loves and longs for them to be near Him. Sit with that for a moment, because it is almost unbearable in its sweetness: that the Most High should miss His servant, should wish to see them, should want them in the company of His Paradise. Here Ustadh Hisham makes the move that runs through the whole lesson: this is not a soft, sentimental love spread thin over everyone. It is a particular, burning love, kept for a particular kind of person.

And that detail is the part that breaks some hearts open. Allah tells us plainly in the Qur'an that there are people He does not love: not the arrogant, not the treacherous, not the oppressors and the liars and the cheats. This is where the believer's understanding of God's love parts ways with the modern slogan that God loves everyone no matter what. Allah's love is real, and because it is real, it is earned and it is given to whom He chooses. There are levels to it, and at the very summit, reserved for the ones He loves most of all, sits this name: Al-Wadud.

The name that came only twice

وَأَسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ إِنَّ رَبِّي رَحِيمٌ وَدُودٌ

And ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. Indeed, my Lord is Merciful and Affectionate.

HUD 11:90

Here is something to notice and never forget. This name appears in the entire Qur'an only twice. Twice. For a love this immense, you might expect it on every page, and instead Allah sets it down like a rare jewel, in exactly two places, so that when you find it, you stop.

The first time, it comes wrapped in a call to return. The prophet Shu'ayb tells his people to seek their Lord's forgiveness and turn back to Him, then names

the Lord they are returning to: Merciful, and Wadud. The doorway to this yearning love is repentance. You come back, and you find Him not merely willing to forgive but loving, wanting you near.

The reason He uses it so sparingly is itself a teaching. Mercy is woven through almost every name of Allah, and a kind of love lives inside many of them, so He did not need to repeat this one. He saved Al-Wadud for its rarest, most exclusive meaning, the highest love for the most deserving people. Which leaves the real question of the lesson hanging in the air: who are those people, and what would it take for you to become one of them? The second place the name appears answers that, and we will come to it, because the answer is heavier than most of us are ready for.

The love that quietly takes Allah's place

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ
أَمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

And [yet], among the people are those who take other than Allah as equals [to Him]. They love them as they [should] love Allah. But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah.

AL-BAQARAH 2:165

Before you can climb toward this love, you have to see what stands in its way, and it is subtler than the idols of stone we imagine. The Qur'an warns of a kind of association most people never think to name: loving something the way you should love only Allah, setting it up beside Him in your heart as a rival.

This does not make a person a disbeliever, and it is not the worship of an idol. It is quieter and far more common. It is the heart that drifts until the love of wealth, or a person, or a career, or a thrill grows equal to its love of God. You meet someone, the messages start, the feelings rise, and soon the desire to be with them outweighs the desire to be with your Lord, so you step over a line you knew was there. Or the deal comes, and you know it is dubious, maybe outright forbidden, but the pull of the gold is stronger than the pull of the One who gave you everything, so you push your values aside and take it. That tin-

gling pleasure of being near the thing you crave starts to mean more to you than nearness to Allah, and in that moment, you have preferred it to Him.

The believer is marked by the opposite. Those who believe, the verse says, are stronger in their love for Allah, a love that eclipses everything else and that nothing in this world is allowed to come between. When something tries, they are the ones who push it aside, not Him.

Why we love anything at all

It helps to ask why the human heart loves in the first place, because once you see the mechanism, you can turn it toward Allah on purpose. We love what benefits us, what gives something back. We love what makes us feel happy, important, full of purpose. People who chase money rarely love the coins themselves; they love the status and respect the coins buy, so the real object of their love is the standing, not the silver. We love some things simply because they are forbidden, the way a child wants whatever you hide from them and tell them they cannot have. We love what we put effort into, what we grew up around, what we slowly developed a taste for over years.

But here is the ache at the centre of all of it. Every one of these loves, when you finally reach the thing, turns out to be short-lived. The happiness fades. You arrive, and the feeling thins. And the love of Allah carries a particular difficulty the others do not: you do not get to physically meet your Beloved in this life at all. You have to wait, carrying a love for Someone you will not see until the next world.

So what do you do if you search your own heart and find the love is not there? If your meetings come before your prayer, your homework before your prayer, your job before your prayer, and you have to admit that you love all of these more than you love to meet Allah? That is a real crisis, and it deserves an honest answer rather than a comfortable one. The answer is not to despair, because Allah has actually given us the recipe.

Fall in love with what He made

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُكِّ الَّتِي
تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ ... لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, and the [great] ships which sail through the sea with that which benefits people ... are signs for a people who use reason.

AL-BAQARAH 2:164

Look at where Allah places the recipe. Right before the verse about people who love others as they should love Him, He spends a whole verse on His creation: the heavens and the earth, the turning of night into day, the ships that ride the sea, the rain that wakes a dead earth, the creatures scattered across it, the winds and the clouds held between sky and ground. Signs, He calls them, for a people who think. Set the two verses side by side and the link lights up. If you want to love Allah more than anything, you begin by falling in love with His creation and by truly noticing what He has given you inside it.

We already know this is how love grows, because it is how we came to love our parents. Nobody did more for you than your mother, nobody poured out more unasked-for care, and the more you saw the traces of her love, the things she gave when you had requested nothing, the more your own love for her deepened. The love of Allah grows the very same way. You start to take account of His blessings, the small ones and the enormous ones, the ones you can see and the ones you cannot, until your gratitude has somewhere to stand.

And here Ustadh Hisham points to a forgotten sunnah he vows to keep urging until his dying day: the sunnah of reflecting on creation. Long before revelation came, the Prophet ﷺ spent his days as a shepherd, alone for stretches in the open country with a flock, the silence in his ears and the scent of the earth around him, watching the stars and the moon and the animals, turning over in his heart the handiwork of his Lord. That solitude was not empty. It was the soil this kind of love grows in.

Stop living like a zombie

The reason most of us do not love Allah this way is that we have gone numb. Every inch of you is a gift you have stopped seeing: the oxygen filling your lungs, the heart beating without your permission, the white blood cells fighting battles you will never feel, the eyes pouring colour into your mind. You drink a glass of water without a thought for the rain that fell, the clouds that gathered, the dam that held it, the long path it travelled to reach your hand, and you swallow it and never once say alhamdulillah. We have grown so used to the gift that we no longer recognise it as one.

Live like that and you live on autopilot, the way Ustadh Hisham puts it, like a zombie, present but not awake. The true lover of Allah is the opposite: someone with a quiet astonishment never far from their lips, look what He gave me, look how amazing my Creator is, I did not even deserve this. But that wakefulness needs something our age has quietly stolen from us: time alone. Generations before us had it without trying, waiting rooms, long journeys, hours with nothing but their own thoughts. Now the device never lets us be. The moment a gap opens, we fill it, and worse, we fill it with other people's highlight reels, scrolling past the car we do not own, the holiday we did not take, the life we were not given, so that instead of thanking Allah for what is ours, we resent Him for what is not. Put the phone down long enough to see your own blessings, and the love starts to return.

There is a beautiful sign that love has taken root: you start to follow the one you love. He drew a smile out of the room by asking a young boy in a Ronaldo shirt who he supports and who is on his back, because that is exactly it, you wear what your beloved wears, you walk how they walk, you copy them without being told. Love always leads to following. That is the secret behind the verse where Allah instructs the Prophet ﷺ to tell people that if they truly love Allah, they will find themselves following him, and then Allah will love them. It is not only a command. It is a description of how love behaves. Any love that does not move you to follow is not the real thing.

Love means loving the traces

There is one more fingerprint of true love, and the old Arabs captured it perfectly. Their greatest poems often open with a lover standing at the ruins of a house where his beloved once lived. She is gone, the walls are crumbling, and still he lingers there, remembering. One poet says he walks among the houses of Layla kissing their walls, then admits it is not the walls he loves, not the cement and the stone, but the one who once lived inside them. That is what love does. It spills out from the person onto everything they touched, every trace they left behind.

You see it in grief. When someone you love dies, you treasure the walk you used to take with them, the book they held, the small things that still carry their presence. Now ask the question that turns the whole lesson: when we love Allah, what has He left behind in this world for us to love? He is not here before our eyes, but He left His creation, and every single thing you see is a trace of Him. And He left something nearer still, the closest you can come to His company in this life: the Qur'an, His own speech. Imagine your parents passed and left you a box of letters, a lifetime of advice addressed to you by name. Would you bin them, or keep them somewhere safe and return to them whenever you missed their voice? The Qur'an is exactly that, a letter from Allah to you, and when you recite it, He is speaking to you. Whoever has no bond with His words cannot expect a bond with Him.

This is why the people who love Allah love His house. The long passage recited before this lesson speaks of Safa and Marwah, and of those who yearn to visit the Sacred House, because the moment a lover of Allah sees the Ka'bah is among the greatest moments of their life. Not because it is a structure of marble and stone, there is nothing in the stone itself, but because it is His, the house of the Beloved, the ground the prophets walked. So you see people at its walls weeping and clinging and kissing, undone by love. The one who loves Allah loves His creation, loves His Messenger ﷺ, loves His speech, and aches toward His house. That is the whole shape of it.

The second time, and the price of this love

قُتِلَ أَصْحَابُ الْأُخْدُودِ

Destroyed [i.e., cursed] were the companions of the trench

AL-BURUJ 85:4

وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الْوَدُودُ

And He is the Forgiving, the Affectionate,

AL-BURUJ 85:14

Now to the only other place this name appears, and it tells you precisely who earns the yearning love of Allah. The setting is Surah Al-Buruj, and it is harrowing. A people believed in Allah, and their society could not forgive them for it, so they dug a vast trench, filled it with fire, and threw the believers in to burn alive, while onlookers sat at the edge and watched as if it were entertainment. The believers had committed no crime. Their one offence, the Qur'an says, was that they believed in Allah, the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy.

Pause on what they were willing to lose. Their whole lives were misery and torment, and still they would not let go of their faith, and they gave their bodies to the flames rather than give up their Lord. The secret of how a human being does that is love. And it is precisely here, after this scene of unimaginable sacrifice, that Allah lays out a string of His names and calls Himself Al-Wadud, the Forgiving, the Most Loving. That is the answer to the question the lesson has been circling. The yearning love of Allah is for those who suffer and sacrifice for His sake.

It is sobering how easily we forget that this is still happening, and that we do not know a single one of their names. People slaughtered for wearing the hijab, packed into camps to have their faith reprogrammed, killed and tortured under occupation, whole lives of suffering ended in anonymity, and yet every one of them is held in this name. The surah is, in a sense, written about them.

Ustadh Hisham brings it close with a story from the news, the kind that repeats itself across the years: a young man needed a kidney, no donor could be found,

and his father, who had only one, gave it knowing it would cost him his own life, so that his son could live. Then he asks the room how many parents would do the same, take my kidney, take my heart, take whatever you need, and of course the hands go up, because that is what love is at its peak. The highest form love can reach is sacrifice.

What are you willing to give

قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّي أَرَىٰ فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَىٰ ۚ قَالَ يَا
أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ

He said, "O my son, indeed I have seen in a dream that I [must] sacrifice you, so see what you think." He said, "O my father, do as you are commanded."

AS-SAFFAT 37:102

This is why the man the Qur'an honours as the closest of all to Allah, named the father of the prophets, is Ibrahim. And what set his love apart was sacrifice. He left his newborn and his wife alone in a barren valley because Allah commanded it, surrendering the people most beloved to him. He sweated in the heat to raise the walls of the Ka'bah. And when he saw in a dream that he was to sacrifice his own son, he turned to the boy, and the boy, who had grown up watching his father give and give for the sake of Allah, answered without flinching: do as you are commanded, you will find me patient. A child says that because he loves Allah, and he loves Allah because he watched what love costs. There is a lesson here aimed straight at parents: if you want your children to love Allah, let them see you sacrifice for Him, sweat for Him, stay awake at night for Him. They will love Him the way they watched you love Him.

Allah even tells Musa the same truth in a single buried word. Recounting the hardships of Musa's life, being set adrift on the river, growing up in the house of a tyrant, fleeing after a death, the long desert road, the ten years labouring in another man's service, Allah folds in the reason for all of it: I did this because I loved you. Every trial was Allah preparing the one He loved to be able to struggle and sacrifice for His sake. If you cannot give up a single evening of comfort,

the lesson runs, how would you be ready to carry what the beloved of Allah are asked to carry?

So the Qur'an hands you a test to measure your own love, and it spares nobody. Allah names the eight things human hearts cling to hardest: your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your spouses, your wider family, the wealth you worked to earn, the business you fear losing, the home you delight in. Then He sets them against three: Allah, His Messenger ﷺ, and striving in His path. If the eight are dearer to you than the three, the verse says, then wait and see what comes. Read it honestly. It is not asking you to stop loving your family or your home. It is asking what wins when they pull against Him.

Whoever longs to meet Him, He longs to meet them

Hold all of this together and the tenderness of the name comes flooding back. The believers in the trench saw only pain in this life; they will see the love when they return to Him. The ones killed for His sake are not even to be thought of as dead, the Qur'an says, but alive with their Lord, provided for. And the Prophet ﷺ gave us the line that turns the whole name around to face us: whoever loves to meet Allah, Allah loves to meet them. Let that settle. Your longing for Him is met, from the other side, by His longing for you.

When a companion was asked what he had prepared for the Day of Judgement and answered only that he loved Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ gave him the most beautiful reply: you will be with the one you love. And when people ask the old, aching question, if Allah loves me, why does He test me, why not just give me ease, the answer is woven into everything above. The Prophet ﷺ told us the most severely tested of all people were the prophets, then the next best, and the next, because Allah tests the ones He loves. The test is not the absence of His love. It is how He raises their rank, forgives their sins, and brings them home to Him.

So measure your worth the way the lesson ends, not by what you own but by what you gave. When an animal was prepared in the Prophet's house and nearly all of it given away, and he was told only the shoulder remained, he answered that all of it remained except the shoulder, because what is truly yours is what you give for the sake of Allah. Your real net worth is not your houses or your

bank balance. It is what you let go of for Him. The ones who love Allah are the ones who sacrifice for Him, and Al-Wadud is waiting, longing, to meet them.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ إِنَّ رَبِّي رَحِيمٌ وَدُودٌ

Wastaghfiru rabbakum thumma tubu ilayh, inna rabbi rahimun wadud

And ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. Indeed, my Lord is Merciful and Affectionate.

How to live this name

- **Guard the throne of your heart.** Love your family, your work, your home, but never let any of them grow equal to your love of Allah. When something pulls against Him, be the one who pushes it aside, not Him.
- **Grow love by counting blessings.** You learn to love Allah the way you learned to love your mother: by seeing what He gives when you asked for nothing. Notice the breath, the heartbeat, the water in the glass, and let alhamdulillah return to your tongue.
- **Make time to be alone with Him.** Reflection on creation is a lost sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. Put the device down, step away from other people's highlight reels, and give yourself the silence in which awe and love can grow.
- **Love the traces He left behind.** He is not here before your eyes, but His creation is His fingerprint and the Qur'an is His letter to you. Sit with His words as you would sit with a letter from someone you ache to be near.
- **Measure your love by what you give.** The highest love is sacrifice. Ask honestly what you have given up, sweated for, stayed awake for, for the sake of Allah. Your real wealth is what you let go of for Him.

Why this name stays with us

Al-Wadud is the name that dares to say Allah may yearn for you. It is a love kept rare, set down only twice in the whole Qur'an, given to the ones who return to Him in repentance and to the ones who give everything for His sake. To under-

stand it is to stop drifting through your blessings half asleep, to start loving the traces He left behind in His creation and His speech, and to measure your life not by what you have gathered but by what you were willing to surrender for Him.

O Allah, Al-Wadud, the Most Loving, put the love of You above all else in our hearts, let no thing of this world take Your place, teach us to see Your blessings and follow Your Beloved ﷺ, make us of those who give for Your sake, and let us be among those who long to meet You and whom You long to meet.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Wadud (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Adheem and Al-Kabeer

The Greatest

الْعَظِيمُ

Al-Adheem

The Magnificent, The Greatest

الْكَبِيرُ

Al-Kabeer

The Great, The Grand



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOsjzgliiS4>

You say it more than almost any other word in your life. It opens the call to prayer. It opens your prayer itself, and it marks every bow and every prostration inside it. You raise it on the two Eids, on the days of Hajj, over the animal you sacrifice. Allahu Akbar. And yet, for a word so constantly on the tongue, how often do we stop and ask what it is actually doing to the heart?

Ustadh Hisham gathers the names of Allah's greatness here, Al-Adheem the Magnificent and Al-Kabeer the Great, and shows that the whole point of greatness is not to inflate God in your mind. It is to put you in your place. To know He is the Greatest is to feel, all the way down, how small you are, and to be set free by it.

Allah is greater (than anything you could name)

Most of us translate Allahu Akbar as 'Allah is the greatest.' Here Ustadh Hisham makes a small correction that opens up everything. Akbar is not the word for 'the greatest,' it is the word for 'greater.' It is a comparative. When you say a thing is greater, your mind instantly reaches for what it is greater than. Say this

bottle is larger, and you are already holding a smaller one beside it in your head.

So watch what Allah does. He says He is greater, and then He never tells you greater than what. He leaves the sentence open on purpose. Which means every single time you say Allahu Akbar, your mind quietly measures His greatness against everything else it can think of, and finds all of it smaller. Greater than your fear. Greater than your enemy. Greater than the empire, the illness, the debt, the deadline. Greater than anything you could ever finish the sentence with.

That is why this word sits at the door of the prayer and on every movement within it. It is not information about God. It is a posture for the soul. If Allah is great, then I am small, and the prayer is where a small servant comes to stand before the One who is greater than all of it.

Two names for one greatness

وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

And He is the Most High, the Most Great.

AL-BAQARAH 2:255

These names live in the verse many of the scholars call the greatest verse in the Qur'an, Ayat al-Kursi. Read how it ends: He is Al-Aliyy, the Most High, and Al-Adheem, the Most Great. Greatness and height, sealed together in the closing breath of the verse.

Al-Adheem is magnificence, grandeur that the mind cannot take the measure of. Al-Kabeer, from the root of the word kibar, bigness, is greatness that towers over everything beside it. And notice a pattern the Ustadh draws your eye to: when Allah names Himself Al-Kabeer, He keeps pairing it with Al-Aliyy, the Most High. The Great and the High, side by side, because these are the very words people once reserved for kings: your highness, your greatness, your eminence. The Qur'an takes that language back and gives it to the only One it ever truly fit.

And there is a reason height is woven into greatness. You feel it in your own body in the prayer. When you have lowered yourself as far as a human being can go, forehead on the floor, what do you say? Glory to my Lord, the Most High. At your lowest, you confess His highest. The smaller you make yourself, the greater He becomes in your eyes.

The cure for the oldest disease

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ آيَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَإِنْ يَرَوْا
كُلَّ آيَةٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا

I will turn away from My signs those who are arrogant upon the earth without right; and if they should see every sign, they will not believe in it.

AL-A'RAF 7:146

The root behind all of this, kibar, has a shadow side. In a human being it becomes kibr, arrogance: to carry a bigger picture of yourself in your head than the truth of who you are. You may be this small, and yet you walk and sit and speak as though you were this large. Stretch that further and it becomes takabbur, performing a greatness you do not have, and istikbar, the refusal to bow to anyone at all. Greatness, in a creature, curdles into pride.

And pride is the one disease that blinds you to every cure. Allah warns that those who walk the earth in arrogance will be turned away from His signs, so that even if they saw every proof, they would not believe. The ego whispers that you are amazing, you are invincible, you decide the rules, until a person can stand in front of miracle after miracle and see nothing, because the self has filled the whole horizon and left no room for God.

This is no small matter. The Prophet ﷺ warned that no one will enter Paradise who carries even an atom's weight of arrogance in his heart. So Al-Adheem and Al-Kabeer are not abstract theology. They are the medicine. Every Allahu Akbar is a dose taken against the oldest disease of the soul: the moment you declare Him greater, you quietly admit that you are not.

Every empire that called itself unsinkable

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا

Indeed, Allah is not timid to present an example - that of a mosquito or what is smaller than it.

AL-BAQARAH 2:26

Humanity keeps forgetting this, and keeps being reminded. When the Titanic was launched, they boasted that not even God could sink it, and the sea swallowed it. Generations later a small craft set out to visit its wreck and was lost in the same deep. Again and again a people decide that they are the great ones, the unbeatable ones, the authors of their own rules, and again and again something tiny is sent to bring them back down to size.

Allah is not shy, the Qur'an says, to draw a lesson from a mosquito or something smaller still. He does not need a flood to humble the proud. In our own lifetime a microscopic thing, too small to see, locked the whole world inside its homes and brought every confident civilisation to its knees. When the One who is truly great decides to remind you of your size, He does not reach for something grand. He reaches for a gnat, and it is enough.

So the world divides into two readings of the same events. One person sees a virus, a shipwreck, a market crash, and learns nothing. Another sees Al-Kabeer quietly setting the record straight, and learns to lower his head before he is made to.

The free man in the emperor's palace

Here is the strange gift hidden inside this name. When you truly believe that Allah alone is great, every other power in the world shrinks to its real size, and you are no longer afraid of any of it. The same conviction that humbles you before God straightens your back before everyone else.

Ustadh Hisham loves the scene of the Muslim envoy who walked into the court of Rostam, the commander of the armies of Persia, the grandest empire the world had then seen. A poor man in worn clothes, in a hall where every visitor

was made to bow his head, and he walked in with his head held high. When they mocked him as a desert lizard-eater and threatened to take his head, he was not shaken. He had come, he said, to free people from servitude to other human beings, and into the service of the Lord of all. Where does a man find that kind of dignity? From knowing that the emperor, for all his gold, is just another small creature standing under a great God.

It is the courage of Ibrahim before the fire, of Musa before Pharaoh, of the Prophet ﷺ before the might of the Quraysh. When Allah is Akbar in your heart, the tyrant in front of you becomes nothing. What is he going to fight you with, when you have the Greatest behind you? This name does not only make you humble. It makes you unafraid.

The greatest, until God reminded him

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ

They have not appraised Allah with true appraisal.

AZ-ZUMAR 39:67

There is a tenderness in how Allah humbles those He loves. He does not let them stay drunk on their own greatness. Ustadh Hisham tells the story of the boxer Muhammad Ali, who for years called himself 'the greatest,' until illness took him out of the ring and would not let him return. Asked, on his comeback, what had happened to the great man, he answered: I used to call myself the greatest, until God reminded me that He is the greatest.

The Qur'an puts our condition plainly: people have not appraised Allah with the appraisal He deserves. We shrink Him in our minds and inflate ourselves, when the truth is the reverse. So sometimes He lets us fall, a little, on purpose. The illness, the failure, the door that will not open, can be a mercy dressed as a setback, sent to deflate the small pharaoh that whispers in every chest.

And this is why, the Ustadh points out, we are commanded to say Allahu Akbar precisely at our moments of triumph. When you complete thirty days of fasting, when you finish the greatest ten days of the year, when you stand having achieved something real, the ego stirs and asks, who is as great as me? And

right there Allah teaches you to say: Allah is greater. Whatever I managed, He is greater than it. If not for Him I could not have done any of it. The takbir on Eid is a leash on the pride that good deeds can breed.

Three words on an eight-thousand-word page

Knowing His greatness reshapes how you weigh your own worship. Picture a student with an eight-thousand-word assignment due, who walks in and hands over a page with three words on it. He would want the ground to open and swallow him. That is closer to the honest truth of what we bring before Al-Adheem than we like to admit.

Whatever you have offered Him, your time, your money, your blood, sweat and tears, set it beside what He actually deserves and it is a single penny against a fortune. So saying Allahu Akbar after an act of worship is not false modesty. It is accuracy. He is greater than the little I put forward for Him. The Qur'an even describes the believers as people who give, and give generously, while their hearts tremble, unsure whether what they offered will even be accepted.

This is the spirit the early Muslims carried. A great Companion, a man Allah Himself had praised, once asked in private whether his own name was on the list of the hypocrites, because he so distrusted his own heart. They underestimated themselves and we overestimate ourselves. The believer who has tasted this name does not strut over his good deeds. He brings them with lowered eyes, knowing that any good in them was a trace of God's greatness shining through him, and never his own.

Close, and yet the Most High

وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمَلِكِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ
لَهُ وَلِيٌّ مِّنَ الذَّلِّ وَكَبَّرَهُ تَكْبِيرًا

And say, "Praise to Allah, who has not taken a son and has had no partner in [His] dominion and has no [need of a] protector out of weakness; and glorify Him with [great] glorification."

AL-ISRA 17:111

It would be a mistake to take this name on its own and walk away only with fear. Allah introduces Himself from two sides at once, and we are meant to hold both. Come back to Ayat al-Kursi and feel it. The verse opens up close and warm: Allah, the only true God, the Living, the Sustainer, the One near enough to lean on. And then, line by line, it pulls back and up, until it closes on the heights: He is the Most High, the Most Great. As if to say, when I tell you I am near, never forget that I am also vast, and beyond your grasp.

We know this balance from our own homes. Your parents love you, feed you, hold you. But mistake that love for weakness, raise your voice and your hand against them, and you may feel a flying slipper find your face and learn, in an instant, that mercy was never the same as helplessness. Love and might live together in the ones who raised you, and they live, infinitely greater, in the One who made you.

So the name carries a quiet warning against shrinking God down to a comfortable friend. He is close, yes, and He is also Al-Adheem. Surah al-Isra, the chapter of the night journey, the very journey in which the prayer was given to us, ends on this exact command: praise Him, and magnify Him with a full and fitting magnification. The prayer that was the gift of that night begins, fittingly, with Allahu Akbar.

Greatness is the leash on pride

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
أَعْمَى

And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed [i.e., difficult] life, and We will gather [i.e., raise] him on the Day of Resurrection blind.

TA-HA 20:124

Look at where pride has carried our age. People now elevate themselves to the place of God, declaring that they alone decide what is right and wrong, and then celebrate the very things their own forefathers would have wept over. When the human being decides he is the great one, the author of his own morality, he does not find freedom. He finds confusion, emptiness, and a constricted life, exactly as Allah promised for whoever turns away from His remembrance.

And so we watch a strange thing: a world that broke every old rule in the name of liberation, quietly drifting back toward those rules as it drowns. The record rates of anxiety, of loneliness, of despair, are the bill that comes due when a creature insists on being the greatest. The cure was never to be your own god. The cure is to put your forehead on the floor and let Someone greater carry the weight.

That is the freedom the Ustadh keeps pointing to: not the freedom to do whatever you want, but the freedom of the one who has bowed to Al-Kabeer and therefore bows to nothing else. He does not chase the world's approval, because he already stands before the only One whose approval is great. To live by Allahu Akbar is to be the lightest, freest, least frightened person in any room, because you have measured everything against Him and found it small.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ

Subhana Rabbiyal-Adheem

Glory to my Lord, the Most Great.

How to live these names

- **Mean it when you say Allahu Akbar.** It is not 'Allah is the greatest,' it is 'Allah is greater,' an open comparison your heart finishes against whatever you fear. Greater than the illness, the enemy, the bill, the deadline. Say it slowly enough to feel yourself shrink and Him grow.
- **Let greatness make you small.** The whole point of His grandeur is your humility. Pride is the one sin that bars Paradise to even an atom's weight of it. Each takbir is a dose of medicine against the ego, so take it on purpose, especially when you feel most impressive.
- **Stand tall before everyone but Him.** If Allah is the only great One, every tyrant and trend is just another small creature. Like the envoy in Rustam's palace, bow your head to God and keep it high before the world. Knowing the Greatest is behind you is the end of fear.
- **Weigh your worship honestly.** Whatever you offer Him is a penny against a fortune. Say Allahu Akbar after a good deed, not to boast but to confess: He is greater than the little I managed, and any good in it was His greatness, not mine.
- **Read your setbacks as mercy.** Like the great ones humbled by illness or loss, when a door closes on you it may be Allah deflating the small pharaoh in your chest. He humbles those He loves so they do not forget their size, and that is a kindness, not a punishment.

Why these names stay with us

We say Allahu Akbar more than we say almost anything, and most of us have never let it do its work. To know Al-Adheem and Al-Kabeer is to stop inflating ourselves and to feel, at last, our true size: small before a God who is greater

than every fear, every power, and every empire that ever called itself unsinkable. And the wonder is that this smallness sets you free. Bow to the Greatest and you will bow to nothing else. The tyrant shrinks, the ego quiets, the trembling stops, because you have measured the whole world against Him and found it light.

O Allah, Al-Adheem, Al-Kabeer, You are greater than anything we could name. Make Your greatness fill our hearts until our pride has nowhere left to stand. Humble us before You and lift us above our fear of everyone else. Let every Allahu Akbar we say put us in our place, and gather us among those who bowed their heads to You alone on the Day we stand before Your majesty.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Adheem and Al-Kabeer (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Aliyy and Al-Mutaali

The Majestic and Most High

الْعَلِيِّ

Al-Aliyy

The Most High

الْمُتَعَالِ

Al-Mutaali

The Supremely Exalted



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAanOftzW9s>

You meet the first of these names at the summit of the most exalted verse in the whole Qur'an: Ayat al-Kursi, the greatest ayah, climbs and climbs and then closes on it, and He is the Most High, the Most Great. Its sister name, Al-Mutaali, appears once in the whole Book, crowning a verse of Surah Ar-Ra'd. Al-Aliyy and Al-Mutaali, the Most High and the Supremely Exalted, the names that lift Allah above everything your mind could ever place above Him.

But there is a turn here you will not expect. These are not names you are meant to admire from a distance and walk away from. Ustadh Hisham shows that everywhere Allah raises this name in the Qur'an, He is reaching for one response from you, and it is the lowest your body can go: your forehead on the floor. The Most High is the name that bows you, and that bowing, strangely, is where you come closest to Him.

The name at the summit of the greatest verse

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَهُ مَا فِي
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ يَعْلَمُ مَا
بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۗ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ ۗ
وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۗ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ
الْعَظِيمُ

Allah - there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Self-Sustaining. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is [presently] before them and what will be after them, and they encompass not a thing of His knowledge except for what He wills. His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth, and their preservation tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.

AL-BAQARAH 2:255

Of all the places this name could have appeared, look where Allah set it. Al-Aliyy crowns the most famous ayah of all, the verse of the Throne, paired there with Al-Azim, the Most Great, while Al-Mutaali waits for us once, later in the Book, in Surah Ar-Ra'd. It is the greatest verse in the Book, and it ends, after naming His life, His knowledge, His dominion over the heavens and the earth, with this: and He is the Most High, the Most Great.

Sit with the placement. The verse rises like a staircase, each line lifting higher than the last, and at the very top, as the final word, Allah names Himself al-Aliyy, the Most High. Everything before it was leading here. He is not high among high things. He is the High, above and beyond every height the mind can reach.

We are near the end of this journey through His names now, and there is a reason these two land here, towards the close. Allah Himself placed them towards

the end of the greatest verse, so we follow the order He chose. The last thing the verse of the Throne wants you to feel, after all that majesty, is how high He is and how small you are beneath Him.

What 'high' really means

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا
وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

That home of the Hereafter We assign to those who do not desire exaltedness upon the earth or corruption. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous.

AL-QASAS 28:83

In Arabic, the word at the root of these names, uluw, first means to be in a physically high place. But the Qur'an uses it for something more than altitude. It is used for a person who is high in another sense: someone with power, with control, with so much say that whatever they decide simply happens, and often someone arrogant with it.

There is a man in the Qur'an described with exactly this word, and he is the warning. Pharaoh made himself high in the land. He climbed to the top and looked down. He had status, he had a commanding voice that no one dared cross, and he had pride, so he crushed the people beneath him and ground them under his feet. That is uluw turned poisonous: height that lifts itself by pushing others down.

And look how the same surah closes. The home of the Hereafter, Allah says, is given to those who do not want uluw in the land, who do not want to be high and mighty and proud, and who do not spread corruption. The opposite of wanting to be high is to be humble. So here is the lesson hidden in the language: there is one who is truly the Highest, and the moment you grasp that, you stop competing for a throne that was never yours. Al-Aliyy is His name. Wanting it for yourself is the disease that destroyed Pharaoh.

How the first Muslims met a name like this

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَىٰ

The Most Merciful [who is] above the Throne established.

TA-HA 20:5

A name like this can stir a restless question. If Allah is the High, the Exalted, the one above all, then where exactly is He? Is He inside His creation, mixed into it, somehow like the things He made? People have tied themselves in knots over this for centuries, and the answer is the one the earliest Muslims gave, carried in a story worth telling slowly.

A man came to Imam Malik, one of the great early scholars, and asked about the verse that Allah rose above the Throne. How, he demanded, did He rise? Imam Malik took the staff in his hands and turned it over and over, and the question pressed on him until he began to sweat. Then he lifted his head and gave the answer that has been passed down ever since. The word *istiwa*, to rise, is known in the Arabic language; we know what it means. But how Allah does it, we do not know. To believe it is an attribute of Allah is obligatory, because He described Himself with it. And to ask this particular question, prying into the how, is a wrongful innovation.

Then he had the man removed from the mosque, because Imam Malik could see this was no innocent seeker. This was a man who had walked in to start an argument, to stir up confusion in a debate already raging about the attributes of Allah. And that is the whole point. The Companions never asked how and where and why. They took what Allah revealed about Himself as it came, and they poured their energy into a different question entirely: now that we know this about Allah, what do we do? How does our life change? Spend an hour debating the mechanics of an attribute and the hour is lost. Spend that hour letting the name move your heart closer to Him, and you have gained everything. That is the spirit in which we walk through every one of these names.

High in status, and high in power

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْكَبِيرُ الْمُتَعَالِ

[He is] Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, the Grand, the Exalted.

AR-RA'D 13:9

Al-Aliyy travels through the Qur'an with a companion name, and the two together complete the picture. The key to it lies in a word the Arabs used for the most solid thing in the body: the bone. Bones are dense, heavy, the hard frame everything else is built upon. Skin tears and flesh cuts easily, but bone is the core that does not break. So the Arabs began to use this image for anyone weighty, anyone with real substance and power behind them. When the Prophet ﷺ wrote to the emperor of Rome, he addressed him as the great one of Rome, the man of weight, the most powerful person in the empire.

Now hold two things apart that we usually blur together: status and power. They are not the same. Think of a king today who has enormous status, whose title is a very big word, and yet who cannot make a single law, cannot declare a war, cannot dissolve a parliament. He is a symbol, high in standing but limited in power. Then think of the opposite: a gangster who runs the streets, who once held more force in his hands than the government itself, who could end lives with a word, and who walked around dressed like anyone else with no honour or standing at all. All power, no status.

The complete description is the one who has both: supreme in status and supreme in power, exalted above all and able to do whatever He wills. That is why al-Aliyy and al-Mutaali belong together. Al-Mutaali, the Supremely Exalted, appears in the Qur'an naming Allah as the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Grand, the Exalted. He is not a king with a crown and no command, and not a force without honour. He is high in every way a thing can be high, and there is nothing missing from His height.

The teacher who shows the class its place

وَاللَّهُ يَسْجُدُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَظِلَالُهُم بِالْغُدُوِّ
وَالْأَصَالِ

And to Allah prostrates whoever is within the heavens and the earth, willingly or by compulsion, and their shadows [as well] in the mornings and the afternoons.

AR-RA'D 13:15

Here is where the lesson opens its heart, and it is Ustadh Hisham's signature image for this name. Picture a new teacher walking in to a class of seven year olds. On the first day he wants to be loved, so he jumps on the table, tells stories, roars like a lion, hands out chocolates and stars, laughing and joking. I am your friend, the whole performance says, I am close to you. Then a pen flies from the back of the room and smacks him. One naughty boy has thrown it. And in an instant the smile is gone. The teacher hardens, takes the boy outside, looks him square in the eye and says: do you know who I am? I am your teacher, you are my student, you obey me, you do not step out of line, and here is what happens if you do. Now you respect me. Understood? They walk back in, and the whole class is silent, sitting straight, the pen nowhere in sight.

What did the teacher just do? He put the boy in his place. He showed his authority, not out of cruelty, but because the class needed to know who was who before anything good could happen there. And this is precisely how Allah uses His name al-Aliyy in the Qur'an: to inspire obedience by reminding you of your place. He does not force you to worship Him. There is no compulsion in faith. But He has authority, and authority does not need to compel. So He lifts up His height in front of the ones who think they are too big for Him.

Read where it lands. Allah describes His might, the mountains, the seas, the skies, and then some scoffer says He could never bring the dead back to life. So the tone shifts, the way the teacher's face shifted, and Allah unfolds His power: the thunder that glorifies Him, the lightning, the heavy clouds, the angels praising Him in fear. You think I cannot do this? Then look. And after all that majesty has struck fear into the heart, the verse arrives at the response He

was driving towards the whole time: to Allah prostrates everyone in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and even their shadows, morning and evening, lean down in prostration before Him.

Everyone is already bowing

Stop on that last image, because it is easy to miss how startling it is. The verse says everyone prostrates to Allah, willingly or unwillingly, and even their shadows bow. But there are people walking the earth right now who never put their head to the ground for Allah at all. So how can the Qur'an say everyone is prostrating?

Here is the answer that reframes the whole world. Every human being, whether they choose to or not, is submitting to Allah, because every human being is utterly subject to Him. Who is making your heart beat as you read this? Who holds you to the ground with gravity, who lets your limbs move, who keeps the breath cycling in and out without your permission? You are bowing to Him with your very existence, every second, whether you ever decide to or not. The only difference between people is the difference of choice. Some submit to Allah willingly, lowering themselves before Him on purpose. Some submit by force, ruled by Him whether they like it or not. Nobody is exempt. The believer simply chooses, freely, what the whole of creation is doing anyway.

This is why Allah ties this name, again and again, to the call to bow. He raises His height in front of the ones who puff themselves up, the ones who say He has no power, that He could never resurrect the dead, that there is no God and they are the gods now. And to every one of them His name answers: I am the Most High, I am the One with the power, so submit. Bow. Put your head down. You are not the authority here.

Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High

سَبِّحِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى

Exalt the name of your Lord, the Most High,

AL-A'LA 87:1

This is not abstract. It is in your prayer, more than thirty times a day if you are praying as you should. When the verse came down commanding you to exalt the name of your Lord the Most High, the Prophet ﷺ said: put this in your prostration. So when your forehead is on the floor, the lowest your body can be, your tongue is saying that your Lord is the Most High. The highest of His names meets the lowest point of your body, and that meeting is the heart of every sajdah.

Ustadh Hisham draws out the very word we say. To glorify Allah, we say subhan, and the root of that word carries the image of swimming. What does swimming have to do with declaring Allah's perfection? Imagine you push a swimmer down under the water and then let go. What happens? He shoots straight back up to the surface. He cannot be held down. That is the picture inside the word. When people insult Allah, when they sneer that God cannot do this or could never be that, trying to drag Him down, He simply rises back to where He always was, untouched, and it is they who have sunk in the attempt. To say subhan Allah is to declare that no one who tries to lower Him can lower Him by a hair.

So glorifying Him and knowing your place are one and the same act. There is a reason that when the great scholar of hadith closed the most rigorous collection ever gathered, after years and volumes of the Prophet's words ﷺ, the very last hadith he chose was about two phrases light on the tongue and heavy on the scale, beloved to the Most Merciful: subhan Allah and His praise, subhan Allah the Most Great. As if to tell every reader: do not walk away from all of this carrying only words. Walk away remembering Allah, glorifying Him, and knowing exactly where you stand beneath Him.

Why the proud cannot bow, and the bowing find their way out

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ
أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

And [mention] the man of the fish [i.e., Jonah], when he went off in anger and thought that We would not decree [anything] upon him. And he called out within the darknesses, "There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers."

AL-ANBIYA 21:87

So why do so many people, in our age more than ever, refuse to believe at all? Strip away the philosophies and the clever arguments and underneath, so often, is one thing: they cannot accept a higher power. They will not bow to anyone above them. It is the oldest refusal in existence. Shaytan could not stand that someone was higher than him. Pharaoh, told that there was one above him, ordered a tower built so he could climb up and mock the very idea. People who cannot accept a higher power will always have a quarrel with Allah, and they dress their pride up as logic, but at the root it is simply: I will not be beneath anyone.

Now set against that the prophet Yunus, peace be upon him, in the belly of the fish. He had left his people without permission, and Allah brought him to the place that would teach him his place: the dark depths inside the whale. And out of that darkness came one of the most powerful supplications in the Qur'an. There is no god but You, exalted are You, indeed I was among the wrongdoers. Look at what he does. He declares that there is none worthy of worship but Allah. He glorifies Him, subhanaka, exalted are You. And he names himself plainly: I was the one who wronged. He acknowledges Allah's place, and he acknowledges his own.

The Prophet ﷺ said that no one ever calls on Allah with this du'a of Yunus without being answered. And here is the mercy folded inside it for you. If Yunus had refused to recognise his place and the place of his Lord, he would have stayed

in that belly until the Day of Judgement. So when you find yourself in some dark depth of your own, a financial darkness, a broken marriage, a difficulty you can see no way out of, the door is the same one Yunus used. Know your place. Acknowledge His. Glorify the Most High and admit your own smallness, and He will bring you out of the whale. But sit in that dark place demanding why is this happening to me, I pray, I do everything, I deserve better than this, and you will only sink deeper into the belly.

The lowest point of your body, the closest you ever get

Now for the turn that changes everything, and it is where Ustadh Hisham ends. Across human history, in culture after culture, people have bowed to show their place: the student bows to the teacher in the martial arts hall, the visitor bows his neck before a king, the subject lowered himself before the emperor. And the meaning was always the same. Bowing says: I am low, you are high, I know my place and I know yours. So when you bow to Allah, you are saying exactly that. I am low, You are the Most High, and look, my head is on the ground to prove it.

But here is where Allah is utterly unlike every king and emperor and master who ever lived. When a king makes you bow before him, what is he telling you? Keep your distance. Stay far from me. That is your place, down there, and this is mine, up here. The bow is a wall between you. Yet the Prophet ﷺ taught that when you prostrate to Allah you are not being pushed away at all. The closest a servant ever is to his Lord is when he is in sajdah. The very moment you go lowest, the moment you press your forehead to the floor and own your smallness before the Most High, is the moment He draws you nearest.

Feel the difference. The king bows you to keep you out. Allah bows you to bring you in. The teacher who made the boy stand outside was guarding a professional distance: you are my student, do not put your arm around my shoulder, we are not close like that. Allah is the opposite. You have humbled yourself before Me, He says, so now ask Me for anything you want. You are My beloved. The road to the love of Allah runs straight through the floor. A companion once asked the Prophet ﷺ to be his companion in Paradise, and the answer he was given was simply this: then help me, by making much prostration. Make much sajdah. The Most High is not asking you to bow so He can stand over you. He is asking you to bow so He can pull you close.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

La ilaha illa anta, subhanaka, inni kuntu mina az-zalimin

There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers.

How to live these names

- **Do not reach for a height that is not yours.** The home of the Hereafter is promised to those who do not want uluw in the land. Wanting to be high and mighty over others is the disease that ruined Pharaoh. Knowing there is one true Most High frees you to stop competing for His throne and to be humble instead.
- **Let the name move you to action, not argument.** The Companions never debated the how and the where of Allah's attributes. They asked what to do now that they knew. An hour spent arguing the mechanics is an hour lost; an hour spent letting the name bring you closer is everything.
- **Make your sujud carry its meaning.** You bow more than thirty times a day. When your forehead is at its lowest, your tongue says your Lord is the Most High. Slow down in that moment. The highest of His names was placed in the lowest point of your body on purpose.
- **Use the du'a of Yunus when you are in the dark.** In financial darkness, a hard marriage, a difficulty with no visible exit, do what Yunus did from the belly of the fish: there is no god but You, exalted are You, I was among the wrongdoers. Acknowledge His place and your own, and He brings you out.
- **Bow to come close, not to keep distance.** A king makes you bow to keep you far. Allah asks you to bow to bring you near, for the closest you ever are to Him is in sajdah. The path to His love runs through the floor, so make much prostration.

Why these names stay with us

We meet Al-Aliyy and Al-Mutaali at the summit of the greatest verse in the Qur'an, and it would be easy to leave them there, admired and far away. But these are the names that bend you to the floor. The Most High lifts His height in front of every heart that thinks itself too big for Him, and asks for one thing in return: that you put your head down. And the secret folded inside that lowering is the most beautiful turn of all. Every king who makes you bow is keeping you distant. Allah, the Most High, bows you only to pull you close, because the nearest you will ever be to Him is the moment your forehead touches the ground.

O Allah, Al-Aliyy, Al-Mutaali, You are the Most High and the Supremely Exalted, and there is none above You. Teach us our place beneath You and keep us from reaching for a height that is not ours. Let every sajdah carry its meaning, draw us near each time we go low, and when we find ourselves in the dark, let us call on You as Yunus did, knowing Your place and our own, until You bring us out into Your light.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Aliyy and Al-Mutaali (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Jabbar

The Compeller

الْجَبَّارُ

Al-Jabbar

The Compeller, The Restorer of what is broken

الْقَهَّارُ

Al-Qahhar

The Prevailing, The Subduer



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXFI7VRxYwU>

After a long run of names that wrap you in mercy and love, we arrive at one that feels different in your chest. Al-Jabbar, the Compeller. It belongs to a family of names that speak of might and force and a power no one can stand in front of, and it sits beside its close companion in meaning, Al-Qahhar, the One who prevails over all. These are the names of Allah's strength.

But do not brace only for force. Hidden inside Al-Jabbar is one of the gentlest meanings in the whole of the Qur'an, and once Ustadh Hisham draws it out, you will understand why the same Name can compel a galaxy and mend a single broken heart.

The one Name Allah keeps for Himself

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ
الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Perfection, the Grantor of Security, the Overseer, the Exalted in Might, the Compeller, the Superior. Exalted is Allah above whatever they associate with Him.

AL-HASHR 59:23

Here is a fact worth pausing on. The word jabbar runs through the Qur'an again and again, but it is turned toward Allah only once, in this single verse, tucked between Al-Aziz and Al-Mutakabbir. Everywhere else the same word appears in human contexts as something blameworthy. Ustadh Hisham makes this his way in: count the verses, and you find Allah is Al-Jabbar in one place, while in every other place the word marks a fault in man: tyrants condemned for it, and prophets praised for being free of it.

When Musa told his people to enter the holy land, they shrank back and said it was full of jabbarin, overpowering people, so they would not go. The Qur'an speaks of every obstinate jabbar who followed the path of ruin. It warns that Allah seals the heart of every arrogant jabbar. The word, in human hands, is a stain. In Allah's hand alone it is a perfection. That gap, between the only true Compeller and the small men who play at it, is the whole lesson.

Two meanings inside one Name

In Arabic, jabr carries two faces, and this is where the Name opens. The first is the one you expect. To compel, to force, to bring something under your power with no choice left to it. If a child has homework and a parent says it will be done, it will be done. That is jabr: a will that simply happens.

The second meaning is the one almost no one expects, and it is where Ustadh Hisham slows down. Jabr also means to mend what is broken. Picture a gap in your teeth, and the dentist who fills it. Picture a bicycle left out in the rain until

the rust eats a screw away, and the mechanic who fits a new one and makes the whole thing sound again. Where there was a break, a weakness, a missing piece, jabr restores it and holds it together. The bonesetter who resets a fracture so it knits back stronger is doing jabr.

Hold both at once, because Allah holds both. Al-Jabbar is the One whose will overpowers everything, and Al-Jabbar is the One who mends every broken thing. The same Name that nothing in the heavens can resist is the Name you call on when your own life has cracked down the middle. He compels, and He restores, and He is the only one who does both without limit.

Why the tyrant is the truly broken one

Now put those two meanings together on a human being, and something quietly devastating appears. The scholars of the language say that the person called a jabbar, the tyrant, the one who has to dominate and humiliate and crush, is acting out of a gap inside himself. He is broken somewhere, and instead of letting Allah mend it, he tries to fill the hole by towering over everyone else.

Watch for it and you will see it everywhere. The one who talks over every room, who must control, who cannot bear another person's dignity, is almost always covering a wound. The forcefulness is not strength. It is a man trying to do his own jabr, his own self-repair, by taking power he was never given. He needed help. He needed mending. He chose to crush instead.

That is why this word damns a human and dignifies Allah. We have nothing to compensate for, so when we reach to dominate, it exposes the crack. Allah lacks nothing, so when He compels, it is pure majesty with no wound behind it. The next time someone's harshness presses on you, you can almost pity it. Underneath the jabbar is someone broken who forgot Who could have fixed him.

The One, and therefore the only true power

يَا صَاحِبِي السِّجْنِ الْأَرْبَابُ مُتَفَرِّقُونَ خَيْرٌ أَمْ اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

O [my] two companions of prison, are separate lords better or Allah, the One, the Prevailing?

YUSUF 12:39

Al-Jabbar's twin is Al-Qahhar, the One who subdues and prevails over all, and the Qur'an almost always pairs Al-Qahhar with another word: Al-Wahid, the One. That pairing is not decoration. It is an argument.

Yusuf, sitting in a prison cell, turns to the two men beside him and asks the deepest question gently: are scattered, separate lords better, or Allah, the One, the Prevailing? Sit with why power and oneness belong together. Imagine a weapon so total it could wipe out a nation at the press of a button. While only one hand holds it, that hand truly compels the world. But the moment a second nation builds the same weapon, and a third, and a tenth, the spell breaks. Now they cancel each other out. Now no one is special, because everyone has it. And that is the point: real, unanswerable power can only belong to One.

So when someone sneers that a single God sounds weaker than a crowded heaven of gods, the truth is the reverse. Many gods would mean many limits, each checking the other, each needing the others. One God who answers to no one, whom no rival can balance, is the only power with nothing standing in its way. Allah is Al-Wahid, and that is exactly why He is Al-Qahhar.

The day every power is unmasked

يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ

[It will be] on the Day the earth will be replaced by another earth, and the heavens [as well], and they [i.e., all creatures] will come out before Allah, the One, the Prevailing,

IBRAHIM 14:48

The Qur'an reaches for this Name in two settings above all. One is to declare that Allah is the One and only. The other is to speak of death and the Day of Judgement, and that second pairing is worth feeling.

Why does the Name of overwhelming power keep appearing at the graveside and on the Last Day? Because death is the one appointment no power on earth can break. You may command armies, hide behind security and concrete and every protocol the world can buy, and none of it delays the moment by a breath. When death arrives it paralyses you. The very hand you have moved at will your whole life suddenly will not lift, and you lie there commanding it and it does not obey, and in that helplessness you finally taste how powerless you always were before Allah.

Then the Day comes when the earth is swapped for another earth and the heavens are changed, and every creature is brought out before Allah, the One, the Prevailing. Every king, every president, every tyrant who once stood over the body of a believer thinking himself a god, dragged out exposed. Stand in that scene and ask the empty air: where are the rulers now, where are the armies now? On that Day there is one power and only one, and it answers to no one.

When the wronged ask why He waits

فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ مُخْلِيفَ وَعْدِهِ رُسُلَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انتِقَامٍ

So never think that Allah will fail in His promise to His messengers. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Owner of Retribution.

IBRAHIM 14:47

This is the part of the lesson that reaches anyone whose heart aches for a wronged people, anyone watching Syria, Palestine, Iraq, anyone living under a hand that crushes and seems to win. The Qur'an tells of those who plotted against the messengers, schemes so heavy the very mountains could have been moved by them, and threatened the prophets with prison and the breaking of bones and death. And then it answers the deepest worry: never think

Allah will fail the promise He made to His messengers. He is Exalted in Might, the Owner of retribution.

Do not read the delay as weakness. When you see a tyrant left in power, a boss who bullies, a spouse who oppresses, a regime that grinds its people down, and you cry out that surely Allah would have removed him by now if He could, you have misread the silence. Allah is not unaware and He is not unable. He is delaying, so that when the reckoning lands it lands in full. Every oppressor has an expiry date written against his name, and when his death comes there is nothing in his power that can move it.

Across history this is exactly how it ran. Whole Muslim lands were colonised by stronger, richer powers who came to compel: they changed the language of the schools, rewrote the laws, renamed the streets, and set out to erase Islam from the ground up. And still it did not leave. The prayer stayed, the Qur'an stayed, the Name of Allah stayed carved into the old walls of Spain where they wrote that there is no victor but Allah. Etched into those arches is the whole creed: no one overcomes, no one finally prevails, except Him.

He can lift it, and His wisdom chooses when

وَإِن يَمَسُّكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِن يَمَسُّكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

And if Allah should touch you with adversity, there is no remover of it except Him. And if He touches you with good - then He is over all things competent.

AL-AN'AM 6:17

Bring this Name home from the politics of nations to the weight on your own shoulders. If Allah touches you with hardship, no one can lift it but Him. The bill you cannot pay, the job that was taken, the marriage straining, the name of yours being dragged through the community: none of it is removed by any hand but His. And if He sends you good, He is able to do absolutely anything. He is Al-Jabbar. When He says a thing will happen, it happens.

Which raises the question everyone feels: if He can remove it that easily, why has He not removed mine? Here Ustadh Hisham pairs this Name with the wisdom of Allah, and the answer turns the lock. Allah does not act blindly. Where you see only something wrong, His wisdom has placed a benefit you cannot yet see, and sometimes what looks like a test has a gift folded up inside it. He is the One who knows precisely what to put where, and when.

Think of it as timing. In cricket, the ball is not sent far by brute strength but by the exact right moment of the swing, and the great players will tell you to stop trying to hit it hard and simply time it. The wisdom of Allah is timing. He knows the right moment to lift your stress and the right moment to let it sit, and the delay is not neglect. Ibrahim waited long years for a child. Ayyub bore his illness for years before it lifted. The Prophet himself ﷺ endured over twenty years before the promise arrived. We are an impatient people who want the answer yesterday, but the way of Allah moves on its own clock, and slowness is never proof that the Compeller has forgotten you.

Where real strength comes from

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلْ لَهُمْ

So be patient, [O Muhammad], as were those of determination among the messengers and do not be impatient for them.

AL-AHQAF 46:35

So how does a believer stand when the odds are stacked and the powerful are loud? Not by matching them weapon for weapon, but by knowing Whose hand the whole circus rests in. A heart truly attached to Al-Jabbar has nothing to fear from a jabbar of flesh and blood. It becomes only a question of time.

This is why Allah tells His Prophet ﷺ, after showing him how He destroyed the nations before, to be patient as the messengers of great resolve were patient, and not to rush. When the promise finally arrives, the long years of waiting will feel as brief as an hour of a single day. Remember Badr, the very first battle, where a small and outmatched band was helped by Allah against a force far greater. Strength was never in the numbers.

So redraw what winning even means. Winning is not the promotion, the bigger weapon, the upper hand in the world's game. The believers at one battle lost the field and yet won the war, because the war was never about arrows and swords. It was about whose remembrance you die upon. To leave this life with your heart fixed on Allah is the victory, even if by every worldly measure you lost. That is the success Al-Jabbar holds out to you, and no tyrant on earth can take it from your hands.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ

Rabbana afrigh alayna sabran wa thabbit aqdamana wansurna ala al-qawmi al-kafirin

Our Lord, pour upon us patience and plant firmly our feet and give us victory over the disbelieving people.

How to live this Name

- **Bring your broken places to the One who mends.** Jabr is not only force, it is repair. When something in your life has cracked, do not try to be your own bonesetter by grasping for control. Turn the fracture over to Al-Jabbar, the only One who restores what is broken, and let Him hold the pieces.
- **Read harshness as a wound, not a wall.** The one who must dominate and humiliate is almost always covering a gap inside. When someone's force presses on you, see the broken person under it. It loosens the fear, and it keeps you from becoming a jabbar yourself.
- **Do not mistake the delay for defeat.** When a tyrant seems to win or your own relief is slow in coming, remember He is not unaware and not unable. He is timing it. Every oppressor has an expiry date, and your hardship may have a gift folded inside it.
- **Anchor your strength in Allah, not in numbers.** Badr was won by a small, outmatched band because their strength came from Allah, not from arms or wealth. Attach your heart to Al-Jabbar and a tyrant of flesh and blood stops being something to fear. It is only a matter of time.

- **Measure winning by what you die upon.** Real victory is not the promotion or the upper hand in the world's game. It is to leave this life with your heart fixed on Allah. That success no power on earth can take from you, even if by every worldly measure you lost.

Why this Name steadies us

Al-Jabbar is the Name that holds both ends of your life at once. It is the unanswerable power that will unmask every tyrant and break every false throne on the Day the earth itself is changed, and it is the gentle hand that mends what is fractured in you when you finally stop trying to fix yourself by force. To know it is to fear no jabbar of flesh and blood, to read the world's delays as wisdom and not neglect, and to bring your broken places to the only One who can truly set them right.

O Allah, Al-Jabbar, You compel what You will and mend what is broken. Set right what has cracked in us, make us gentle where we are tempted to dominate, give us patience as You gave the messengers of resolve, and keep our hearts fixed on You until the day we are brought out before You, the One, the Prevailing.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Jabbar (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Mu'min

The Giver of Safety

المؤمن

Al-Mu'min

The Giver of Security



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6KpYgWAXPc>

This is one of the few names that stops you the first time you hear it called on Allah. Al-Mu'min. You already know this word, but you know it as a description of yourself: a believer, a mu'min, is someone who has faith. So how can a name we give to the lowliest worshipper be a name of the Lord of all worlds? The answer opens a door onto something every human being is quietly searching for: safety.

Al-Mu'min comes from the root a-m-n, which is the root of safety, security, and being free from fear. It appears as a name of Allah only once in the entire Qur'an, tucked into a single breathtaking verse near the end of Surah Al-Hashr. Ustadh Hisham takes that one mention and shows you that the One who calls Himself the Giver of Security has already written you more protection than any policy money could ever buy.

The name that appears only once

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيَّمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ
الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Perfection, the Grantor of Security, the Overseer, the Exalted in Might, the Compeller, the Superior. Exalted is Allah above whatever they associate with Him.

AL-HASHR 59:23

Read that verse slowly. It is a cascade of names, each one greater than the last, and right in the middle of it sits Al-Mu'min, the Giver of Security, followed at once by Al-Muhaymin, the One who watches over and protects. They come one after the other, and this is the only place in the whole Qur'an where Allah is named Al-Mu'min. A single mention, and yet it carries a world.

Here is the question everyone secretly has. The word mu'min is what we call a believer. How can the same word that names a humble Muslim also name the Most High? The two meet at the root. In Arabic the letters a-m-n carry the idea of safety: to be safe, to feel secure, to be free of fear. A believer is called a mu'min because faith makes the heart safe, and Allah is Al-Mu'min because He is the One who makes everything safe. Same root, two stations. The servant who finds safety, and the Lord who grants it.

Two meanings the early scholars drew out

When you want to know what one of Allah's names truly means, Ustadh Hisham points you to the oldest and most trustworthy wells, above all the great tafsir of Imam at-Tabari, who for every word gathers what the first generations of Islam understood and hands it to you with a chain of narration running all the way back. He is not a teller of tales. He is a master who shows you his sources, then weighs them with the language and the sciences of the Arabs.

On the name Al-Mu'min, at-Tabari records two meanings. The first, and the one the overwhelming majority of scholars hold, is the One who gives safety, who

grants security, who makes you feel secure. The second flows from the other shade of the root, the sense of confirming something as true: that Allah is the One who is true to His word, so that when He promises you something, it happens, without fail. Hold both in your hand. He keeps you safe, and He keeps His promises, and a Lord who never breaks a promise is the deepest safety of all.

Beside it stands Al-Muhaymin, the name that follows in the verse. To bring it close, picture an important place, say a royal palace, ringed by guards who leave no corner and no gate unwatched. That total, surrounding protection is the flavour of Al-Muhaymin: to encompass a thing from every side so that nothing reaches it. It is the same word the Qur'an uses of itself, as the final testament set over every scripture before it, guarding the truth and superseding all the rest. The two names lean on each other: He grants you security, and He surrounds you to keep it.

Why safety is the thing we are all chasing

Stop and notice how much of a human life is driven by a single feeling: fear. The psychologists say there are two ways to move any person, a child or an adult: the stick or the carrot, the thing you dread and the reward you long for. Both run on the same track. We chase what makes us feel safe and we flee what makes us afraid, and that engine never switches off.

This is why the whole Qur'an, at its core, works through hope and fear. It holds out a reward so beautiful you would do anything to reach it, and it warns of a danger so real you would do anything to escape it, and between the two your heart is drawn to worship. The Prophet ﷺ himself was sent as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner, good news in one hand and a warning in the other. So when Allah names Himself the Giver of Security, He is naming Himself the answer to the one ache underneath nearly everything you do.

Look at what a fearful world builds to feel safe. Unthinkable sums are spent every year on insurance, an idea that is only a few centuries old, born the moment people decided that life is uncertain and they must be financially shielded from every bad thing that could happen. Drive a car here and the law demands you insure it. And the line is plain: as Europe let go of God, the policies multiplied, health, life, building, liability, on and on, because when you stop believing

that Allah is your protection, you have to pay a fortune to protect yourself, and you still sit in fear.

The tightrope and the only backup plan

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ آمِنًا وَاجْنُبْنِي وَبَنِيَّ أَنْ نَعْبُدَ
الْأَصْنَامَ

And [mention, O Muhammad], when Abraham said, "My Lord, make this city [i.e., Makkah] secure and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols.

IBRAHIM 14:35

There is a strange truth about backup plans: the more you have, the less carefully you walk. Picture a man crossing a rope strung between two buildings. Stretch a safety net beneath him and he relaxes, grows careless, and is more likely to fall. Take the net away and he gives everything to his balance, because he knows there is nothing under him but the ground. The survival shows work the same way: a man alone in the deadliest jungle seems to have no rescue, though of course there are helicopters and cameras just out of frame. Real reliance is born in the heart that genuinely has no plan B.

Now look at Ibrahim. He brings his family to a barren valley, the bare ground where the Ka'bah would one day rise, and as he prepares to leave them there with nothing, the first thing he begs of Allah is safety: my Lord, make this place secure. He has no deposit, no fallback, no army, no second option. His entire insurance policy is Allah. That is where pure trust comes from, not from people with a thousand cushions, but from the heart that has stepped onto the rope with no net at all and knows that the One who holds it will not let it fall.

This is the quiet trade the modern world made and lost. The more you lean on the state, the savings, the cover for every imaginable disaster, the more your heart forgets who the real Protector is. The believer is not careless, but he knows that no policy on earth keeps him safe if the safety of Allah does not come, and that no danger can reach him while the Giver of Security stands guard.

The first policy: the safety of the Sacred Law

Here is the heart of the lesson, and it is the move that makes this name unforgettable. Ustadh Hisham says Allah, the Giver of Security, has already written you three layers of protection, three policies you did not have to buy. He calls them, with a smile, your three kinds of insurance, and the first and innermost is the Sacred Law itself.

Every community of human beings needs rules simply to live together without tearing itself apart. The greatest of these is the law that comes not from a committee but from the All-Wise Creator, the Shari'a, and far from caging you, it is one of the surest sources of safety you will ever have. It guards your mind from what would poison it, drink and drugs and intoxication. It guards you from yourself, from your own appetites and rage and envy. It guards families by building marriage, and even divorce is a mercy, an exit so that no one is trapped in a life of suffering. It guards a whole society from murder, betrayal, and the endless ways people harm one another.

So when people call the law restrictive, they have it backwards. It does not enslave you, it frees you: from being ruled by your desires, from being prey to the strong, from the chaos that swallows a people with no shared bounds. This is the first security the Giver of Security gave, a wall around your mind, your family, and your soul, and you were born inside its protection.

The second policy: the safety of the community

The second policy is the one the modern world has quietly cancelled, and it is the community, the jama'a. Think about when people reach for insurance: only when something has already gone wrong, the accident, the diagnosis, the lost job. In a living community, that is exactly the moment the people around you move. A brother loses his work and his face falls, and at once one knows a company that is hiring, another can fix his CV, a third lends him enough to cross the month. We do not live for ourselves. We carry each other, and the Prophet ﷺ promised that whoever eases another's hardship in this life, Allah will ease his own on the Day he needs it most.

This is why the very first thing the Prophet ﷺ did in Madinah was to pair the migrants with the helpers, brother to brother, so that no one would fall through.

The bond went so deep that men offered to split their wealth and even their homes with strangers they had just met. The neighbour has a claim so heavy that the Prophet ﷺ said the one who sleeps full while his neighbour beside him goes hungry has not truly believed. In a community like that, will anyone be left to drown alone? They will not, because the building holds itself up, every pillar bearing the next.

Then Ustadh Hisham tells a story that should break your heart. In a pharmacy queue he watched an old woman, past eighty, begin to shake and collapse from a seizure, and of the twelve people in line, only he and one other man moved to catch her so she would not shatter on the floor. The rest groaned, not for her, but because they were asked to leave and find another pharmacy. When she came round, her name was Margaret. She had children who did not speak to her, grandchildren she had never met, and a single friend too busy to come. This, he says, is the fruit of a society that abandoned its Lord: the greatest killer in Europe is not disease, it is loneliness, because they tore down the second policy and now lean their whole weight on the state to do what a community was made to do.

The third policy: safety on the Day you meet Him

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ

They who believe and do not mix their belief with injustice - those will have security, and they are [rightly] guided.

AL-AN'AM 6:82

The third policy is the greatest, the one that outlasts the grave: safety from the Fire on the Day of Judgement. This is the security the verse promises, that those who believe and do not stain their faith with wrongdoing are the ones who will have true safety, and they are the rightly guided. It is the conversation Ibrahim had with his people when they tried to frighten him with their idols. They told him to be afraid, and he turned it back on them: how can I fear lifeless things that hold no power, while you have set up partners beside Allah? Who has more right to feel safe, the one who clings to the Giver of Security, or the one who turned away from Him?

Allah answers that question Himself. The ones who had real certainty, who never mixed their faith with the worship of anything else, are the ones who hold true safety, in this world and the next. And on that Day their protection is total. The people of the Fire will cry out to the people of the Garden for so much as a splash of water, and it will be kept from them, while the believers are shielded so completely that no fear and no grief can reach them, after a whole life in which fear and grief were the very tests they endured and passed.

So hold the three together, because this is the whole picture. The Sacred Law guards your life here. The community guards you when you stumble. And faith guards your soul forever. Three policies, already written, by the One who calls Himself Al-Mu'min, and not one of them cost you a coin.

Tie the camel: safety is not an excuse to do nothing

Now comes the balance, and it matters as much as everything before it. If Allah is the Giver of Security, should you simply put your feet up and wait to be protected? Never. You do not abandon the camel and call it trust. You tie it, and then you trust. Knowing Allah keeps you safe is precisely what should send you to work harder, not what excuses you from working at all.

Look at how the Prophet ﷺ himself sought safety. In Makkah his protection came through his uncle Abu Talib, who never accepted Islam yet shielded him from the tribes. When Abu Talib died, the Prophet ﷺ travelled to Ta'if to seek an agreement with its leaders. When the believers could not practise their faith, he sent them to the Christian king of Abyssinia, who gave them refuge. He sought protection from a disbelieving uncle, a Christian king, and a foreign tribe, by every lawful means, because using the means is not a weakness of faith, it is the Sunnah of the one with the strongest faith of all.

Turn this on our own moment, and it carries some urgency. Across Europe the pressure on Muslims is rising, on the hijab, on the niqab, on the simple right to pray, and the community tends to wake only after a thing has become law, then rush to protest when it is already too late. For generations we pushed our children toward medicine and engineering and forgot the law and public policy, the very rooms where the rules that bind us are written. To protect the right of a worker to pray two minutes in a warehouse, you need someone in that room.

Trusting the Giver of Security does not mean sitting still. It means tying every camel you have, and then leaving the rest to Him.

Feel safe in your life, never in your faith

أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

Then, did they feel secure from the plan of Allah? But no one feels secure from the plan of Allah except the losing people.

AL-A'RAF 7:99

There is a final turn, and it is the most delicate of all. This name can make a person feel too safe, safe enough to grow lazy, to think they have done enough and need not strive, because Allah will protect them anyway. So the same Qur'an that calls Him the Giver of Security warns you, in the same breath, never to feel secure from His plan. Only the losing people imagine they are beyond all danger.

Even the greatest were not at ease about themselves. When Imam Ahmad lay dying, his students leaned in to prompt the testimony of faith, and instead heard him whisper, not yet, not yet. Alarmed, they pressed him, and when he came to he explained: Shaytan had appeared, gnawing his fingers in frustration, saying, Ahmad, you escaped me, you are saved. He wanted me to agree, to admire my own piety and rest in it, so I said: no, I am not safe from you until Allah takes my soul. At the very edge of a lifetime of worship, the danger was to feel safe. And Umar, of whom the Prophet ﷺ said that were there a prophet after him it would have been Umar, once went to the keeper of the secret and asked, not for the list of the hypocrites, but for one thing only: is my name on it? That is the fear that keeps a heart awake.

So you are left holding two truths at once. Feel safe in your worldly life, deeply safe, because the Giver of Security is your Protector and the One who keeps every promise. But never feel safe in your faith, because the test can come for any of us at any hour, and a person can spend a whole life believing and lose it in the final breath. Be at peace in your dunya, and stay wide awake over your deen.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

Ya Mu'min, anta as-salam, wa minka as-salam, ahyina rabbana bi-amanik

O Giver of Security, You are Peace, and from You comes peace. Keep us alive, our Lord, in Your safety.

How to live this name

- **Make Allah your first insurance, not your last.** Like Ibrahim, who left his family in a barren valley with no plan but the protection of Allah, put your reliance in the Giver of Security before you put it in savings, cover, or the state. Use the means, but let your heart rest on Him.
- **Live inside the law, and call it freedom.** The Sacred Law is your first policy. It guards your mind, your family, and your soul from the things that would destroy them. Stop reading its limits as a cage and start seeing the wall of safety they really are.
- **Be someone's community before they fall.** The second policy is each other. Notice the brother whose face has changed, lend before you are asked, carry the one who stumbled. In a society dying of loneliness, refusing to let anyone drown is an act of faith.
- **Tie the camel, then trust.** Knowing Allah protects you is not a reason to sit still. The Prophet ﷺ sought safety through every lawful means. Work, prepare, and enter the rooms where your rights are decided, then leave the outcome to Him.
- **Rest in your dunya, never in your deen.** Feel safe under His protection in this world, but never feel secure about your own faith. Like Imam Ahmad at the end, stay humble and awake, because the heart can change until the soul is taken.

Why this name stays with us

We spend our lives chasing a feeling we can never quite buy: the feeling of being safe. The world sells it back to us in policies and savings and a hundred kinds of cover, and still the heart sits in fear. Al-Mu'min is the answer underneath all of it. The Giver of Security has already written you three protections

no money could buy: a law that guards your life, a community that catches your fall, and a faith that secures your soul forever. To know this name is to stop leaning your whole weight on things that break, and to rest it on the One who never does.

O Allah, Al-Mu'min, You are the Giver of Security and the One who keeps every promise. Make us safe in our religion and our bodies and our world, gather us into a community that carries one another, keep us striving and awake, and let us never feel secure from You until we meet You in safety on the Day there is no fear and no grief.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Mu'min (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Al-Awwal, Al-Akhir, Al-Wahid and Al-Ahad

The First, the Last, the One and Only

الأوَّلُ

Al-Awwal

The First

الْآخِرُ

Al-Akhir

The Last

الْوَّاحِدُ

Al-Wahid

The One

أَحَدٌ

Al-Ahad

The Only, The
Unique



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73Pp_bHeoVI

This is the last set of names on the journey, and it gathers up everything that came before. Four names that fix the two ends of all existence and then ask you a single question about the middle: Al-Awwal and Al-Akhir, the First and the Last, and Al-Wahid and Al-Ahad, the One and the Only.

Most teachers hand you a name on its own, polished and alone. But Allah never revealed a name on its own. He set it inside a surah, a story, a run of verses, and where He places it is half the meaning. So we are not just going to define these names. We are going to stand where Allah stood them and ask why He put them there.

The two ends of everything

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ ۗ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

He is the First and the Last, the Ascendant and the Intimate, and He is, of all things, Knowing.

AL-HADID 57:3

Four names arrive here in one breath, one after the other, near the opening of Surah Al-Hadid: the First, the Last, the Ascendant, the Intimate. We will walk the two that bracket all of time, Al-Awwal and Al-Akhir, and let them carry the others.

Al-Awwal is the First. The First to exist, the One who was already there when nothing else was. Sit with that picture. Before time, before space, before a single creature, before the very idea of before, Allah was, and there was nothing alongside Him. The Prophet ﷺ put it as plainly as it can be put: Allah was, and nothing else was with Him.

Al-Akhir is the Last. Not last in a line, but the One who remains when the line is gone. Look all the way down the future to the moment this whole world wears out, the earth and the sky and every galaxy and star, all of it decaying into nothing. Ask what is left standing, and the answer is only Him.

Everything between is explained by the ends

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ

Everyone upon it [i.e., the earth] will perish,

AR-RAHMAN 55:26

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor.

AR-RAHMAN 55:27

Allah shows you both ends on purpose. In Surah Ar-Rahman He turns your face to the future and lets the whole scene empty out: everyone on the earth will perish, and what remains is the Face of your Lord, the Owner of Majesty and Honour. There is the start point, Allah and nothing else. There is the end point, Allah and nothing else. And the question hanging in the space between is the whole lesson.

If He alone was there at the beginning, and He alone will be there at the end, then what is He telling you about the middle, the part you are living in right now? He is telling you what actually matters in it. Everything that fills the in-between, the rise and fall of nations, every human life, every creature, the building and the breaking of the universe itself, all of it runs its course, and the only thing that carries any weight through the whole of it is Allah.

Hold that against your own days. The things you chase from morning to night, the things you sweat and worry and compete for, almost none of it will exist a little way down the road. It dissolves at both ends. Al-Awwal and Al-Akhir are Allah quietly resetting the scale, so you stop weighing your life by what is going to vanish.

Why these names open a surah about sacrifice

Now look at where these names sit, because the surah they open is not a gentle one. Surah Al-Hadid takes its name from iron, the metal Allah says He sent down, and it speaks to a community that has reached the point where it must defend itself: the swords and the shields, the armour and the cost. Conflict had become real, and the believers were being asked to step into it.

Underneath the iron is a far harder demand. War asks a person for the two things he guards most fiercely. It asks for his wealth, so the surah commands again and again to spend in the path of Allah. And in the end it asks for his life. Strip the surah down and it is saying to everyone who claims to believe: you say Allah matters to you, so here is the test. Will you give what is most precious to you, for His sake?

Many could not. People found reasons, the home, the family, the comfortable life, and stayed behind, and the surah names exactly what held them back. This worldly life, it says, is play and amusement, a competition to pile up trinkets

and status and money, a circus. There is something far greater you could be reaching for, and it is the pleasure of Allah. This is one of the rare places where Allah turns and corrects even the Companions, because by then they had grown comfortable, their hearts had begun to harden, and giving things up had started to feel heavy. So He asks them the question that still stops a heart cold: has the time not come for the hearts of the believers to soften at the remembrance of Allah?

And here is the move that makes the names so deliberate. Before Allah asks them to give everything up, He reminds them who He is. Ustadh Hisham draws the line out and it is the hinge of the whole lesson: you will never be able to give something up for the sake of Allah until you truly know the One you are giving it up for. We sacrifice for our parents, our children, our people, because we know exactly what they are worth to us. A man stands shaking before a judge because he knows the power in that seat. So before the command to sacrifice, Allah opens with His names, the First and the Last, as if to say: remember who this is for. Everything you are fighting for and clinging to is going to be gone. Only I remain.

Not just one, but the only One

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ

Say, "He is Allah, [who is] One,

AL-IKHLAS 112:1

This idea, that Allah is the only thing that finally matters, is sealed into one of His names in one of the shortest surahs in the Qur'an: Ahad. It looks like a small word and it carries an ocean.

In Arabic there is wahid, one, the first in a count that can go two, three, four. Allah is Al-Wahid, the One, and He is also Al-Ahad, and the difference is everything. Wahid can describe an object or a person. Ahad is used for a being, never a mere thing, and it does something wahid cannot: it shuts the door on any second. Say you do not have one pen, and you might still have several. Say there is not a single one, ahad, and the space is truly empty, no other any-

where. So Ahad is not one among others. It is the One and Only. Unique, with nothing of its kind beside it. When you read it of Allah, it means He is the one and only thing that ultimately matters to you.

Pair it with how He names Himself elsewhere, the One who has no rival in power at all:

One worry that swallows every worry

لَوْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا لَأَصْطَفَىٰ مِمَّا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ سُبْحَانَهُ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

If Allah had intended to take a son, He could have chosen from what He creates whatever He willed. Exalted is He; He is Allah, the One, the Prevailing.

AZ-ZUMAR 39:4

So what does it look like to actually live with a God who is Al-Ahad? There is a saying carried from the Prophet ﷺ whose meaning is sound: whoever gathers all his worries into one worry, the worry of Allah, Allah will take care of the rest of them for him. But whoever lets his worries scatter, so that a hundred things matter to him at once, will be pulled apart in every direction, and Allah will not mind in which valley of this world such a person is destroyed.

Read that as a diagnosis of now. They call it the attention economy, and it is built to splinter exactly this. Every minute you give to the feed, the scroll, the notification, someone somewhere is paid, because your attention has become the prize. The billboards, the screens, the endless pull, all of it competing for the one thing that was meant to point in a single direction. To say Allah is the One and Only is to gather your attention back and aim it at Him, and to watch everything else settle into its proper, smaller size.

It does not mean the worries vanish. The bills, the cost of living, the search for a spouse, the job, they stay real. But each of them can be turned into a road back to Allah instead of a road away from Him. Picture the weight of your concerns not as a boulder dumped on your back to crush you, but as a bulldozer

pressing against you, slowly, steadily pushing you somewhere. And where it is driving you, if you let it, is back to your Lord.

Bilal under the boulder

If you want to see this lived rather than defined, do not look in a textbook. Look at a man pinned under a rock in the desert. Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him, was laid out on the burning sand in the heat of Arabia, a massive boulder crushed down onto his chest, whipped and scorched and ordered to renounce the Lord of Muhammad ﷺ or be tortured until he died.

Think about how little breath you have under a weight like that. Barely enough to stay alive, let alone to argue. And out of those crushed lungs came a single word, again and again: Ahad. Ahad. The One. The Only. As if to say, you can do whatever you want to this body, but there is only One who matters to me, and you are not Him. I do not live for you. I live for Him.

Ustadh Hisham lingers here because this is the answer to a quiet mistake. A lot of us imagine tawhid is a thing you memorise, the categories, the types, the definitions you can recite on a test. There is a place for that. But the heart of tawhid is what escaped Bilal's lips under that stone: to live for Allah, to suffer for Allah, to hand your whole existence to Him and let nothing share the place that is His alone.

My prayer, my life, my death, for Him

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Say, "Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds.

AL-AN'AM 6:162

لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

No partner has He. And this I have been commanded, and I am the first [among you] of the Muslims."

AL-AN'AM 6:163

The Qur'an gives you a sentence to say that is the peak of this, a line that takes everything Bilal lived and puts it on your own tongue. My prayer, my acts of devotion, my living and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. He has no partner. With that I have been commanded, and I am the first of those who submit.

Notice what is being handed over: not only the prayer, but the whole of life and the whole of death, all of it folded into one direction. Nothing set beside Him, no rival sharing the weight. That is Al-Wahid and Al-Ahad as a way to breathe, not a word to recite. Everything I am, while I live and when I die, is His, and His alone.

What the Prophet ﷺ taught his own daughter

Watch these names land in an ordinary, exhausted household. Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ, was married to a man who could barely afford the dowry, and her days were hard labour: grinding wheat by hand, hauling water up from the well, pulling and pulling until her hands were cut and coarse and her back gave out. When she heard that some workers had come into her father's care, she went, more than once, to ask him for help in the home.

He did not give her the easy thing. One night he came to them as they lay down to sleep, sat between them so close she could feel the coolness of him beside her, and offered her something other than a servant. Before you sleep, he told them, say SubhanAllah, Alhamdulillah and Allahu Akbar, the well-known count on the fingers, and this will be better for you than what you asked for. It sounds, on the surface, like no solution at all. Her hands are wrecked and her body is spent, and the answer is words? The point he was pressing is the one running through this whole lesson: do not reach first for the shortcut of this world. Remembrance pours a strength into the heart that lets a tired person do

the work of many, because once you remember why a thing is being done, you can carry double the weight of it.

And when she came back still struggling, he taught her a du'a, and it is here that these four names come home. Ustadh Hisham reads it slowly, and so will we: O Allah, Lord of the seven heavens and Lord of the magnificent Throne, our Lord and the Lord of all things, You are Al-Awwal, the First, and there was nothing before You. You are Al-Akhir, the Last, and there is nothing after You. You are Az-Zahir, the Ascendant above all, and You are Al-Batin, nearer than all, and there is nothing closer than You. Settle our debt for us, and free us from poverty. Look at the shape of it. Almost the whole du'a is the praise of Allah by His names, and only the last breath is the asking. He was teaching his own daughter, do not come to me first because I am your father. Go to Allah first. Beg Him, praise Him, lean on Him, and what He gives you will be better than anything I could have placed in your hands.

Allah is enough, and the world grows small

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ
الْعَظِيمِ

But if they turn away, [O Muhammad], say, "Sufficient for me is Allah; there is no deity except Him. On Him I have relied, and He is the Lord of the Great Throne."

AT-TAWBAH 9:129

When all of this settles into a heart, it comes out as four words: Hasbiya Allah. Allah is enough for me. People will try to frighten you with everything smaller than Him, the recession, a hard marriage, the family trouble, the anxiety, the long fear that will not lift. To every one of them the believer answers, Allah is enough for me.

Words of the same family, hasbunallahu wa ni'mal-wakil, Allah is enough for us and the best of guardians, were on the lips of the one thrown into the fire who did not burn, and they hold the same power for any fire you are standing in. You may be burning in a money fire, a loneliness fire, a fear fire, but the moment it

truly settles in the depths of the heart that Allah is the only One you need and the only One who can lift you out, the fire turns cool. Not because the flames left, but because the heart filled with Allah, and a heart full of Him sees everything else shrink.

Ustadh Hisham leaves us with an image for that shrinking. Picture taking off in an aeroplane. The engines push, the ground falls away, and as you climb you look out and watch the world get smaller: the houses, the cars, the people, until they are specks, and then there is nothing but white. The more you know Allah, the more you remember Him, the more you ask of Him, the higher you rise toward Him, and from that height your job and your debts and your worries are still down there, only smaller, smaller, smaller, until the only thing left filling your view is Him.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

Hasbiya Allahu la ilaha illa huwa, alayhi tawakkaltu, wa huwa Rabbu al-Arshi al-Adheem

Sufficient for me is Allah; there is no deity except Him. On Him I have relied, and He is the Lord of the Great Throne.

How to live these names

- **Weigh your days by what remains.** He was there before everything and will be there after everything, so almost all you chase will be gone at both ends. Before you pour your life into a thing, ask whether it will still matter when only Allah is left. That one question quietly resets the scale.
- **Know who you are giving it up for.** You will never sacrifice your time, wealth, or comfort for Allah until you truly know Him. So learn His names first. The giving gets lighter the moment you remember the One you are giving it for is the First and the Last.
- **Gather your worries into one.** Make the worry of Allah your single concern, and He takes care of the rest. Let a hundred things rule you at once, and you

are pulled apart. In the age of the scroll, aim your attention back at the One and Only, and watch everything else find its smaller size.

- **Let the weight push you to Him.** Your stresses are not a boulder dropped on you to crush you, but a bulldozer pressing you somewhere. Turn each bill, each fear, each loss into a road back to Allah, the way Bilal turned a crushing stone into a single word: Ahad.
- **Go to Allah before the shortcut.** Like Fatima, beg your Lord first, before you reach for the easy hand. Praise Him by His names, lean your whole need on Him, and say Hasbiya Allah, Allah is enough for me. What He gives you will be better than what you would have settled for.

Why these names close the journey

We end where all of existence ends, with the only One still standing. Al-Awwal and Al-Akhir fix the two edges of everything, Allah before the first creature and Allah after the last, so that the whole story in between has only one thing in it worth holding: Him. And Al-Wahid and Al-Ahad press that home, that He is not one among many but the One and Only, the single concern that, once it fills the heart, makes every fear grow small. This is why the names were never meant to stay on the page. They are lived in the fire, in the debt, in the long night, under the boulder, and on the tongue before sleep and on waking.

O Allah, You are Al-Awwal, the First, and there was nothing before You. You are Al-Akhir, the Last, and there is nothing after You. You are the One and Only, and beside You there is no other. Gather our scattered worries into one worry of You, make us people who give for Your sake because we know who You are, and let our hearts grow so full of You that everything else in this world becomes small. Hasbuna Allah, Allah is enough for us.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's lesson on Al-Awwal, Al-Akhir, Al-Wahid and Al-Ahad (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.

Living with Allah's Names

Living with Allah's Names

الله

Allah

Allah



WATCH THE LESSON WITH USTADH HISHAM ABU YUSUF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBFip8eVrBw>

For thirty lessons you have been gathering names. The Most Merciful, the King, the Ever-Living, the Provider, the Forgiver, the Vast, the First and the Last. Close to ninety of them, each one a window opened onto your Lord. And now you reach the end, and the question that has been waiting all along finally arrives: what do you do with all of this?

Because the names of Allah were never meant to be a list you memorise and shelve. They are not empty labels or theory for the mind to file away. They are meant to revive the heart, to change the way you move through an ordinary Tuesday. So this last reflection is not about one more name. It is about how the prophets actually lived with all of them, and Ustadh Hisham draws it down to five ways. Five quiet actions, none of them done with the limbs, all of them done in the heart.

The names were never empty

Start with what these names are not. They are not boxes to tick, not a vocabulary test, not a subject you study and then leave behind when the class ends. Some people treat the names and attributes of Allah as theoretical, as categories to be debated and catalogued, and then their lives go on exactly as before. That is not what this journey was for.

The names of Allah are what bring the heart and the body back to life. They are what let you worship Allah as He deserves to be worshipped, because you cannot truly love and obey someone you have never really come to know. Over these thirty lessons the aim was never information. It was transformation. And the test of whether the journey worked is simple: does anything change tomorrow morning?

So here is the close of the whole series, gathered into five ways the prophets lived with the names of their Lord. Ustadh Hisham keeps returning to them, one after another, until they are impossible to forget. Take them not as notes to revise, but as muscles to start working.

One: see everything as an action of Allah

وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ

And you threw not, [O Muhammad], when you threw, but it was Allah who threw.

AL-ANFAL 8:17

The first way the prophets lived with the names is that they looked at the very same things you look at every day, the same events, the same setbacks, the same arrivals, and they saw something completely different. Where you see a cause, they saw the Author behind the cause. They saw everything as a direct action of Allah.

Look at Badr. The Prophet ﷺ stood the night before that battle, his small band outnumbered in every way, with no resources, no realistic chance if you counted by numbers alone, and he begged his Lord for victory. And when the victory

came, the Qur'an did something startling. It turned to the Prophet ﷺ in the heat of battle, the moment he threw, and said: you did not throw when you threw, it was Allah who threw. To your eyes the arrow leaves your hand. Allah is telling you it is He who carries it to its mark, He who made the arrow and the hand and everything in between.

Now bring that home. The salary that lands at the end of the month does not really come from your manager, it comes from Allah and merely passes through him. The job you lost, the marriage that is straining, the exam you could not pass, the door that opened when you least expected it: look past the means. Allah is giving, Allah is testing, Allah is withholding, Allah is opening. Here is the example Ustadh Hisham loves, and it is so ordinary you will smell the rain in it. In this country people complain about nothing more than the weather. But a heart shaped by these names does not see water falling from a grey sky. It sees the mercy of Allah coming down to touch the earth, which is exactly why the Prophet ﷺ would bare his skin to the rain, wanting that mercy to reach him.

The Qur'an itself points you outward to look: observe the effects of the mercy of Allah, how He revives the dead earth back to life. From the moment you wake and step into your car, to the moment you feed your children, to the moment you lie down, every instant of the day is a reason to remember a name of Allah, if only you would see it the way the Prophet ﷺ saw it. He warned us to beware the insight of the believer, the *firasa*, the sight that reads the world by the light of Allah. The believer is simply looking at life through a different lens.

Two: desire only the pleasure of Allah

The second way follows from the first. Once you truly know Allah, the Lord, the Forgiver, the Most Merciful, the One who is closer to you than anyone, a single desire begins to burn quietly in the heart every single day: I want Him to be pleased with me.

Most of us spend our lives as people-pleasers. We chase the approval of others, we ache when they are displeased, we shape our days around what they want. And here is the tragedy in it: people can never truly be pleased, no matter how much you give them. The rare soul, the one in whom these names have lit a fire, wakes up thinking something else entirely: if the whole world abandoned

me, I would still only want Allah to be pleased with me. That is freedom. The opinion of all creation stops being able to hold you hostage.

What this does is convert the most ordinary moments into worship. Your eating, your sleeping, your smile at a neighbour, your sip of water, all of it becomes a way to earn His pleasure once the intention is there. You sleep to recover the strength to worship Him. You eat to carry the nourishment that lets you stand for Him. You work hard and provide for your family because that, too, earns His pleasure. From morning to night the whole of life is quietly aimed anew at one target. Knowing the names is what rewires your intentions, so that nothing you do is wasted and everything is offered up.

Three: think the best of Allah

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَشْكُو بَثِّي وَحُزْنِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

He said, "I only complain of my suffering and my grief to Allah, and I know from Allah that which you do not know.

YUSUF 12:86

The third way is to think well of Allah, to hold the best expectation of Him no matter how the situation looks. Stand for a moment in the shoes of Yaqub. Years have passed, decades, since he lost Yusuf. He has gone blind from grief. And now his sons return to tell him the second son is gone too. By every human measure the game is over. In any country, a person missing this long is declared dead, the funeral is prayed. This is the exact moment a person's knowledge of Allah is put to the test.

People love to quote what he said next: I only complain of my grief and my sorrow to Allah. But the half they skip is the more important half. He goes on: and I know from Allah that which you do not know. There is the fuel. That is what carried his patience. He is saying, in effect, you do not know my Lord the way I know Him. My Creator, when He promises, keeps His promise. When He closes one door, He opens another. When He takes one son, He can return him. He showed me the dream. I trust Him. So every time the blow landed, his reaction

was the same: Allah will bring me the best, I think well of Him, I am optimistic about Him.

And this was not Yaqub's line alone. Another prophet says almost the same words in the Qur'an, warning his people: I know Allah and you do not. Do not imagine harm where He intends good. Set that against how so many of us speak today: the economy is finished, I am finished, everything is collapsing. That self-destructive pessimism was never the way of the prophets, because they knew their Lord, and knowing Him meant knowing He always brings about the best end, even when the road there is dark.

Four: trust Allah above everything else

قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ

[Moses] said, "No! Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will guide me."

ASH-SHU'ARA 26:62

The fourth way is tawakkul: to lean your whole weight on Allah and rely on Him over any created thing. Here is something worth noticing. Allah gave us only the highlights of each prophet's life, and the highlight is almost always a moment of pressure where his trust in Allah comes blazing out. Name a prophet, and you can find the moment.

Musa stands at the edge of the sea with Pharaoh's army closing in behind him, and his people cry out that they are caught, that this is the end. Watch his answer. No, he says, my Lord is with me, He will guide me. He has nothing in his hand, no plan, no escape route, only a certainty that the One who brought him here will not abandon him there. Ibrahim is hurled into the fire, and where physics says he must burn, he says hasbunallah, Allah is enough for me, so completely that he turns down help from anyone but his Lord. Yunus, swallowed into the darkness of the whale, has nothing left but to call upon Allah, and that calling is what brings him back.

This is a muscle in the heart, and like any muscle, if you have never flexed it you cannot lift the heaviest weight on the first day. You build it. You learn to trust Allah in the small things until you can trust Him in the things that break you.

Because the truth is we make trust decisions all day long, choosing who and what is reliable, and the single greatest mistake of a life is to place that trust in human beings while withholding it from Allah. That is where the deepest disappointment is born. The Prophet ﷺ taught us to trust Him, because no one else can deliver the outcome you are really hoping for.

Five: long to meet Him

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا ۗ وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ

Indeed, they used to hasten to good deeds and supplicate Us in hope and fear, and they were to Us humbly submissive.

AL-ANBIYA 21:90

The fifth and final way is the most tender of all: that you should look forward, every day of your life, to meeting Allah. If you truly know Him, you should be excited to meet Him. The Qur'an gathers the prophets together, Zakariyya and Yahya and Ibrahim and the rest, and describes them with one shared signature: they used to hasten to good deeds, and call upon their Lord in hope and fear, and they were humbly submissive to Him. They raced toward Him because they could not wait to arrive.

There is a du'a the Prophet ﷺ taught that holds this longing whole. In it he asks Allah for the sweetness of looking upon His face, and for the yearning to meet Him. Sit with how strange and beautiful that is. Think of the people we ache to meet in this life: a reciter we travel for, someone whose autograph we keep, a face we want to glimpse from across a crowd just once. We carry a real, burning desire to meet other human beings. And here is the disaster Ustadh Hisham names plainly: we yearn to meet everyone, and somehow not the One who made us. So the Prophet ﷺ asks for that very thing, to be given the desire to meet his Lord, and for the flame of it never to die.

And this is what carries you through the hardest passages of your life. The belly of the whale, the dark of the cave, the long illness, the loss of someone you loved, the moment people turn on you. What gets you to the other side is that

you want to meet Allah, so much that you would walk through fire if you had to, because you know what waits on the far side of it: your Lord, ready to give you better than you ever dared expect.

A life lived in the company of Allah

Look at what the five have in common. To see every moment as His action, to desire only His pleasure, to think the best of Him, to trust Him, to long to meet Him: not one of these is done with the hands. They are all actions of the heart. They are the spiritual muscles, and most of us have left them sitting unused. The whole point of the journey was to wake them up.

There is a saying Ustadh Hisham closes on, that when a person truly knows who Allah is, the effect of that knowing shows up in every moment of their life, and each moment only increases them in knowing Him further, until His names are present in their food and their drink, their sleeping and their waking, every small thing they do. That is what it means to live with the names of Allah. Not a list recited once, but a life lived in His company, in constant remembrance of Him, in constant trust, in constant conversation with Him.

That is the life worth living, and it is the one we have been building toward, name by name, for thirty days. The names were the doorway. Walking through it, into a daily life spent with Allah, was always the destination.

A DU'A THAT CALLS ON THIS NAME

Allahumma inni as'aluka ladhdhata an-nazari ila wajhik, wash-shawqa ila liqa'ik

O Allah, I ask You for the sweetness of looking upon Your face, and for the yearning to meet You.

How to live with the names

- **See His hand behind everything.** Look past the means. The salary, the setback, the rain on the window, the door that opened: read each one as a direct action of Allah, the way the Prophet ﷺ saw the arrow at Badr as thrown by his Lord.

- **Aim every moment at His pleasure.** Stop living for the approval of people, who can never be fully pleased. Eat, sleep, work, and smile with one intention underneath it all: that Allah would be pleased with you. It turns an ordinary day into worship.
- **Expect the best of Him.** Like Yaqub, who said 'I know from Allah that which you do not know,' refuse the pessimism of the age. When a door closes, trust that He is opening another. Knowing Allah means knowing He brings about the best end.
- **Lean your whole weight on Him.** Build the muscle of trust in small things before the storms come. Like Musa at the sea, say 'my Lord is with me, He will guide me,' and place your reliance in Allah rather than in people who will let you down.
- **Long to meet Him.** Let the desire to meet Allah burn brighter than your longing for anyone in this world. Ask Him, as the Prophet ﷺ did, for the yearning to meet Him. It is what carries you through every dark passage to the other side.

Where the journey leaves you

Thirty days, close to ninety names, and it was never about the count. Every name was a window, and every window was opening onto the same destination: a life lived in the company of Allah. So you leave this series not with a list to recite, but with five turns of the heart to carry. See His hand in everything. Want only His pleasure. Expect the best of Him. Trust Him over all else. And ache to meet Him. Work them like muscles, lift by lift, until His names live in your food and your drink, your sleeping and your waking, every ordinary moment of your days.

O Allah, You whose names we have spent these days learning, do not let us shelve what we have come to know of You. Make us see Your hand behind everything, make us desire only Your pleasure, fill our hearts with the best expectation of You, teach us to trust You above all that we can see, and grant us the sweetness of looking upon Your face and the yearning to meet You. Gather us in Your company on a Day when there is no shade but Yours.

Retold faithfully from Ustadh Hisham Abu Yusuf's finale lesson on living with Allah's Names (Names of Allah and His Attributes, Alfurqan Islamic Centre). Qur'an: Sahih International, verified via quran.ai. The reflection is the Ustadh's, the phrasing is The Daily Wird's.