



NEW MUSLIM
ACADEMY

Allah

THE
Provider
AND
SUSTAINER



مكتبة العلم



Allah is Kind, Generous, Forgiving and Merciful. He is Perfect in every sense of the word. In Islam, it is not enough to simply acknowledge Allah's existence but we must also learn about Allah on His terms so that we can form a personal relationship of love, reverence and exclusive devotion to Him. To describe His perfection to us, and to teach us about Himself directly, Allah has informed us of His many noble names in the Quran and through the teachings of His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him). Each of the names of Allah explains to us certain attributes of Allah so that we may better know Him and in turn come closer to Him through knowledge and devotion.



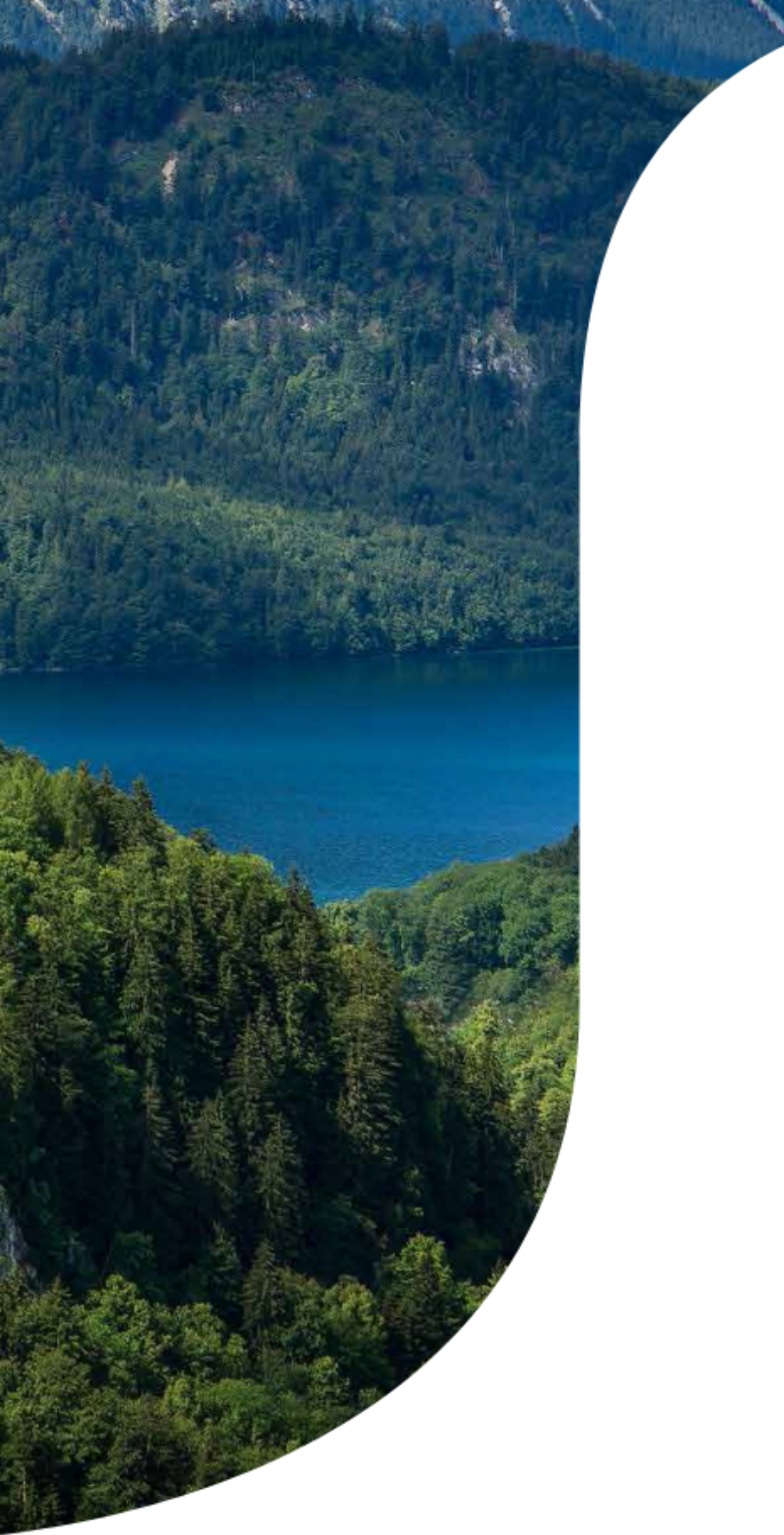
The Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) informed us that Allah has many names, and that whoever knows, understands and acts in accordance with these names will enter Paradise. As an example, Allah is the Most Forgiving. Out of His grace, He forgives all those who repent and turn back to Him. His grace and mercy precedes His anger. We can practically apply this name in our lives by seeking Allah's forgiveness when we err and sin and by forgiving others when they wrong us.

Another of these names of Allah is Ar Razzaq, the Provider and Sustainer. This noble name essentially points to the fact that Allah provides for all life in existence. He tells us in the Qur'an that "there is no creature in the heavens and earth except that He provides for it." [11:6] Allah often reminds us of this as since we, as humans, tend to forget where our provisions come from, instead attributing our wealth to our own genius, efforts, and abilities or to our employers. "It is Allah who spread out the earth for you and built the sky, who sent water down from it and with that water produced things for your sustenance." [2:22] It is only by His bounties and grace that we are able to accumulate wealth and provision.



As such, it is important to remember this principle both in times of prosperity and in times of financial difficulty. For this reason, We must always rely upon Allah first and foremost and then work hard to earn a lawful living. At the same time, it is also important to note that wealth is not a sign of Allah's love or and poverty is not a sign of the absence of Allah's love. Allah provides for all of His creation in different ways. Many messengers (peace be upon them) and righteous people were poor and many terrible people were rich. Wealth is not a measure of piety or righteousness and certainly it is not a measure of Allah's love. Wealth is a test from Allah and so is the lack of wealth. Each person is tested differently.

A Muslim is balanced in times of both, financial prosperity and difficulty. In terms of the former, we should thank Allah for His favours, use them in ways which are pleasing to Allah and try to extend a helpful hand to those around us; we must also ensure that these favours do not turn us towards pride and arrogance, whereby we look down on those less fortunate. In times of financial difficulty, we should trust in Allah and know that He is the Provider of all. We should not allow this hardship to lead us to despair; instead, we should work to improve our situation to the best of our ability, while supplicating to Allah and asking for His grace.



When a person turns to Allah and asks of His bounty with firm faith and trust in Him, Allah will provide for them or at the very least reward the action of supplicating and turning to Him in humility. Not only does a person benefit from this type of provision, even if limited, in their worldly life, but they are also rewarded for earning a lawful living and being patient and resilient even in the face of financial constriction. Lawful earned wealth when used in good ways is a source of blessing in the next life too. Provision is not confined only to wealth and money, but includes all things we receive and that we need and benefit from (our spouses, children, health, guidance, good deeds etc).

We should remember that the greatest of Allah's provision is the spiritual sustenance He grants to His beloved servants. It is the provision of guidance whereby we seek sustenance for our soul through the guidance of the Quran and teachings of the Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him). This is more important and a greater blessing than the provision of food, drink and wealth. That is why a person can be poor but still have a high status before Allah due to their faith, whereas at the same time, there are many who are wealthy but disliked by Allah due to their spiritual poverty.



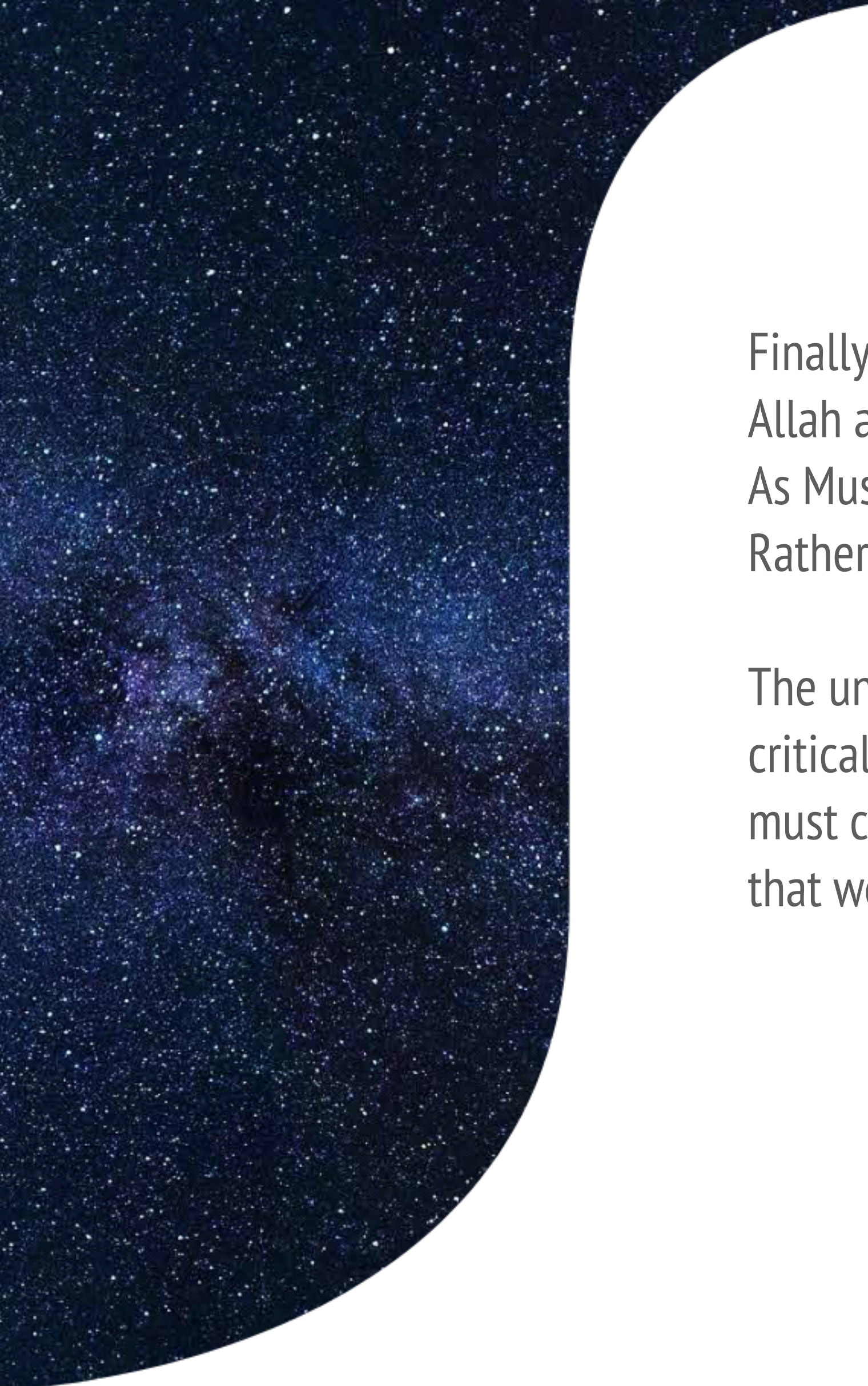
In order for us to internalise this name of Allah, we must firstly have firm belief in this name and what it stands for. We must believe in Allah as the Provider and Sustainer of the universe.

Secondly, we should supplicate to Allah using this name, especially for matters pertaining to wealth and sustenance. In Islam, it is recommended to call upon Allah using His divine names which are linked to the need we have. Here for example, Allah's name Ar Razzaq means The Sustainer and Provider and is therefore linked to our request for wealth. If we have the firm belief that Allah will provide for us and do what is expected of us by following Allah's commands and the example of His messenger (peace be upon him), it will be so.



The Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) told us that if we trusted in Allah as we truly should, He would provide for us as He does for the birds that leave their nests with empty stomachs in the morning and return satiated by the evening. These birds trust in Allah but also exert time and energy going out in search of food. It is this combination of trust and action which fulfils the Islamic concept of reliance on Allah and true trust in Him.

Thirdly, we need to show gratitude and give thanks to Allah for His provision, sustenance and blessings. The Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) would mention Allah in the morning by saying that all blessings upon him and others in the creation are indeed from Allah alone and would praise and glorify Allah for that.



Finally, this belief needs to be transformed into action. Part of believing in Allah as the Provider is to work for the sustenance that He has in store for us. As Muslims, we don't believe that wealth will simply fall into our laps. Rather, we should work hard in a way that is pleasing to Allah.

The understanding of this noble name of Allah and what it stands for is a critical and essential part of our work life foundation. As always in Islam, we must combine between the spiritual elements and good morals and ethics so that we may please Allah as well as live productive and happy lives.



Here are three things we can do to put the above into action:

Remember and mention the name of Allah, ArRazzaq and reflect on what it entails.

Supplicate to Allah for good and wholesome provision using this name.

Give thanks to Allah by praising Him, using the blessings in ways pleasing to Him and helping others.