

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Class Notes – Lesson 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا.
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ إِقْرَارًا بِهِ وَتَوْحِيدًا. وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا مَزِيدًا.

In the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful.

All praise belongs to Allah who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth that it may reign supreme over all religions, and sufficient is Allah as a witness.

I testify that there is none worthy of worship save Allah alone with no partner; fully acknowledging this and affirming this as Tawheed. I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, may ever increasing peace and blessings be upon him, his family and his companions.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful.

- (بِسْمِ اللَّهِ) – ‘*In the name of Allah*’. The author commenced his treatise with the *basmalah*, as this is the common practice of most authors. They follow the example set in the Quran, as every *Surah* begins with the *basmalah* with the exception of Baraa’a (al-Tawbah).

It is also in conformity with the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, whereby He sent a letter to Heracles the leader of the ruler of the Byzantine Empire inviting him to Islam. In it was written:

« بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى هِرَقْلَ عَظِيمِ الرُّومِ »

In the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful. This letter is from Muhammad, the Slave and Messenger of Allah to Heracles, the Ruler of the Byzantines. [Bukhari]

The (ب) in the *basmalah* is used to seek assistance (*istia’ana*). That is, I seek assistance in the name of Allah. It also has an unspoken part which is a verb and is required to complete the meaning. It is

known from the context of the sentence, which is why it is linguistically correct to remove. For example: *'In the name of Allah I write'* or *'I seek assistance in the name of Allah to write'*.

The original linguistic ruling is that the verb should come first in the sentence structure, however it is correct to delay the verb for two reasons:

1. To seek the *barakah* of beginning with the name of Allah.
 2. It is a way of expressing that it is the only reason for writing.
- (الله) – **'Allah'**. Allah is the name of the sole Lord who created and fashioned everything. Many scholars are of the opinion that it is Allah's great name, in which if He is called by it, He will respond, and if He is asked by it, He will give.

His name Allah is derived from the word *ilaaah*, which means a deity or an object of worship. Allah is the only *ilaaah* worthy of being worshipped, alone without partners.

His name Allah has special attributes specific to it which His other Beautiful Names do not have.

1. It is the singular name which all other Beautiful Names return to. For example, we say that Allah is al-Rahman al-Raheem, but not vice-versa.
 2. That when Allah is called by this name, the *alif* and *laam* at the beginning are not dropped unlike the other Names of Allah. For example, you say: *'Ya Rahman'*, as opposed to saying: *'Ya al-Rahman'*.
 3. It is the most mentioned name in the Quran, occurring more than 2200 times. There are 33 *ayaat* which begin with this name, from them *Ayatul Kursi*.
 4. That it is the only name which accompanies the authentic *adhkaar* (remembrances). For example, you say: *'Subhana Allah'*, *'Alhamdulillah'* and *'Allahu Akbar'*.
- (الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ) – **'The All-Merciful, the Most Merciful'**. His Name al-Rahman means the possessor of extensive Mercy. It is an attribute of Allah. His Name al-Raheem indicates the action of bestowing mercy. Together, His Names al-Rahman and al-Raheem imply that Allah's Mercy is extensive and that it reaches His creation. This is why some scholars have mentioned that His name al-Rahman refers to His general mercy which encompasses all the creation, while al-Raheem refers to the mercy that is specific to the believers.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا.

All praise belongs to Allah who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth that it may reign supreme over all religions, and sufficient is Allah as a witness.

- (الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ) – **'All praise belongs to Allah'**. Allah is praised for His Perfection and for His granting of favours. Therefore, we praise Him because He is perfect in His Attributes, and because He is perfect in granting favours and blessings.
- (الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ) – **'Who sent His Messenger'**. The greatest of all favours that Allah has bestowed upon His creation is that He sent the Messengers by which the people are guided to the truth.
- (بِالْهُدَىٰ) – **'With guidance'**. Meaning, beneficial knowledge. It is everything which the Prophet ﷺ came with from irrefutable news, orders and prohibitions and the remaining legislations of Islam.
- (وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ) – **'And the religion of truth'**. The term *deen* can refer to righteous actions, such as Allah's saying:

﴿ إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ﴾

Indeed, the deen in the sight of Allah is Islam. [aal-Imran: 19]

It can also be used to mean reward and recompense, such as Allah's saying:

﴿ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴾

And what will make you know what the Day of Recompense is? [al-Infitar: 17]

In the context of the introduction, the first meaning is being referenced. That is, the actions of Islam. The *deen* of Islam is *haqq* or the truth. The opposite of the truth is falsehood. Every religion besides Islam is falsehood.

- (لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ) – **'That it may reign supreme over all religions'**. So that it triumphs over its rivals amongst the people of the earth, with clear proofs and evidences and with *jihad*. It will reign supreme over the Arabs and non-Arabs, the people of a particular religion and the pagans and atheists who have no religion. This supremacy was realised when the Muslims strove in the path of Allah, until with His permission, Islam spread from the eastern parts of the world to the western parts.
- (وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا) – **'And sufficient is Allah as a witness'**. That is, sufficient is Allah as a witness that the Prophet ﷺ is His Messenger. Allah is aware of the actions of the Prophet ﷺ and aided and supported him over his enemies. This is a testimony from Allah that the Prophet ﷺ was truthful and came with the religion of truth. If he had been a false claimant, Allah would have hastened his punishment. [al-Haqqah: 44-46]

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ إِفْرَارًا بِهِ وَتَوْحِيدًا

I testify that there is none worthy of worship save Allah alone with no partner; fully acknowledging this and affirming this as Tawheed.

- (وَأَشْهَدُ) – **'I testify'**. Meaning, I affirm with my heart, then articulate on my tongue, because a testimony is a pronouncement and informing of what is in the heart.
- (أَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ) – **'That there is none worthy of worship save Allah'**. I testify that there is no true deity worthy of worship except Allah.
- (وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ) – **'Alone with no partners'**. These two statements are an emphasis of the two components of the *shahadah*, namely the rejection and affirmation. 'Alone' emphasizes the affirmation, and 'with no partners' emphasizes the rejection.
- (إِفْرَارًا بِهِ وَتَوْحِيدًا) – **'Fully acknowledging this and affirming this as Tawheed'**. These two statements also emphasize the *shahadah*. The acknowledgement of the *shahadah* is articulated on the tongue, and every act of worship which is performed in accordance to this *shahadah*, is sincerely done for the sake of Allah. This is the essence of *tawheed*.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

I testify that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger.

(عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ) – **'His servant and Messenger'**. Similarly, I also affirm with my heart and articulate upon my tongue that Allah has sent His servant Muhammad ﷺ to the entire mankind. Testifying that the Prophet ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah is connected to testifying to Allah's Oneness, because one would not suffice without the other.

- (عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ) – **'His servant and Messenger'**. This is a refutation to those who adopted the two ends of extremity regarding the Prophet ﷺ. Some raised him above the rank of servitude, while others rejected that he was a messenger. Testifying that he is Allah's servant refutes those who raised him above his status, while testifying that he is Allah's messenger refutes those who rejected him because it necessitates believing in him and following what he came with.

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا مَزِيدًا

May ever increasing peace and blessings be upon him, his family and his companions.

- (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ) – ‘**May Allah’s blessings be upon him**’. The most correct opinion as to what Allah’s *salaat* upon His Messenger constitutes is what al-Bukhari narrates in his Saheeh on the authority of Abul ‘Aaliyah: ‘Allah’s *salaat* upon His Messenger is His praising him in the highest-ranking assembly’.
- (وَأَلِيهِ وَصَحْبِهِ) – ‘**And his family and his companions**’. You are also asking Allah to praise them in the highest-ranking assembly. The most correct opinion regarding who the *Aal* of the Prophet ﷺ are, is that they are his followers until the Day of Judgement. This includes his family who believed and accepted his message.

Also included in his *Aal* are his companions. They were mentioned specifically to show their virtue and status as they are the best of all generations. The companions are those who met the Prophet ﷺ, believed in him, and died upon that.

- (وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا مَزِيدًا) – ‘**May ever increasing peace be upon him, his family and companions**’. *al-Salaam* represents a greeting whose essence is asking Allah to be freed from deficiencies, lowly things and harm. This *tasleem* is *mazeed* which is translated as abundant or ever increasing, but actually carries the meaning of extra or additional. That is, after the *du’aa* for *salaat*, make an additional *du’aa* for *salaam*. This combination of *salaat* and *salaam* is in compliance to the Quran:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

O you who believe, invoke Allah’s blessings upon him (salaat) and send him greetings of peace (salaam). [al-Ahzaab: 56]

Review Questions

1. Why did the author begin his treatise with the *basmalah*?
2. What are some of the special attributes which the name of Allah has that others of His Beautiful Names do not have?
3. Why is Allah praised, and how is this praise related to His sending of the Prophet ﷺ?
4. ‘*And sufficient is Allah as a witness*’. Explain how this is used in the context of the treatise.
5. What constitutes a *shahadah* (testimony), and why are the *shahadatayn* inseparable?
6. Who are the *Aal* of the Prophet ﷺ? Are his *sahabah* part of his *Aal*? Explain.