

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Class Notes – Lesson 7

[الْجَمْعُ بَيْنَ النَّفْيِ وَالْإِثْبَاتِ فِي وَصْفِهِ تَعَالَى]

وَقَدْ دَخَلَ فِي هَذِهِ الْجُمْلَةِ مَا وَصَفَ اللَّهُ بِهِ نَفْسَهُ فِي سُورَةِ الْإِخْلَاصِ الَّتِي تَعْدِلُ ثُلُثَ الْقُرْآنِ، حَيْثُ يَقُولُ: ﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ۝﴾

[الإخلاص]

[COMBINING NEGATION AND AFFIRMATION REGARDING HIS ATTRIBUTES]

An expression of the above principles is found in what Allah described Himself with in Surat al-Ikhlaas, which equals a third of the Quran, where He says: 'Say He is Allah, the One. Allah, the Everlasting Sustainer of All. He has not given birth and was not born. There is none comparable to Him'. [al-Ikhlaas]

- (وَقَدْ دَخَلَ فِي هَذِهِ الْجُمْلَةِ مَا وَصَفَ اللَّهُ بِهِ نَفْسَهُ) – 'An expression of the above principles is found in what Allah described Himself with'. It is possible that this is referring to the author's previous statement: 'And He Glorious is He, has combined between negation and affirmation in what He described and named Himself with'. This is because the immediate examples he gives in Surat al-Ikhlaas and Ayatul Kursi combine between the affirmation and negation of Allah's Attributes.

It is also possible that he is referring to his previous statement that: 'Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah describe Allah with what He has described Himself with and what His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ described Him with.'

In either case, Surat-Ikhlaas and the evidences from the Quran and Sunnah which are mentioned after it, are proof that Allah combined between negation and affirmation regarding what He attributed and named Himself with, and which Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah completely believe in.

- (فِي سُورَةِ الْإِخْلَاصِ) – 'In Surat al-Ikhlaas'. A Surah is essentially several ayaat of the Quran which are separated from what precedes them and what comes after them. They are enclosed (musawarrah) like a building which is enclosed by a wall or fence.

There are a number of reasons why it was named Surat Ikhlaas:

1. Because Allah dedicated it (akhlasa) to making clear His pure tawheed. He did not mention any rulings (ahkaam) nor did He mention any news (akhbaar).

2. Because it is pure and clear (*khaalisa*) in describing Allah.
3. Because the one who recites it with understanding will dedicate their *tawheed* to Allah alone.
This is the essence of sincerity (*ikhlaas*).

Surat al-Ikhlaas was revealed in response to the polytheists who asked the Prophet ﷺ to describe his Lord to them. Allah sent down this Surah in response to them. Similarly, anyone who is asked to describe Allah can recite this Surah as evidence.

- (الَّتِي تَعْدِلُ ثُلُثَ الْقُرْآنِ) – ‘Which equals a third of the Quran’. The evidence for this is the *hadith* of Abu Sa’eed al-Khudri that the Prophet ﷺ said:

« أَيْعَجُزُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَقْرَأَ فِي لَيْلَةٍ ثُلُثَ الْقُرْآنِ؟ قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ يَعْدِلُ ثُلُثَ الْقُرْآنِ »

Would anyone of you be able to recite one-third of the Quran in one night? Allah is One, Allah is al-Samad, is equal to one third of the Quran. [Bukhari]

It is equivalent in reward but not equivalent in its ruling. For example, reciting it thrice does not replace the obligatory ruling of having to recite Surat al-Fatiha in every *raka’at* of prayer. However, reciting it thrice is equivalent in reward to reciting the whole Quran.

- {قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ} – ‘Say, He is Allah, the One’. The order is addressing the Prophet ﷺ. It is in response to the question of the disbelievers asking him to describe his Lord to them. The response is also applicable to his *ummah* if they were to be asked the same question.

Allah establishes that He is al-Ahad (The One, the Indivisible). He has no counterpart or equal in His Lordship (*Ruboobiyya*), Worship (*Uloohiyya*) and Names and Attributes (*al-Asma wal-Sifaat*). He is unparalleled in His Greatness and Splendour. Allah’s *Ahadiyya* is no doubt one of His Attributes of absolute perfection which is always established unconditionally.

His name *al-Ahad* is mentioned only once in the Quran in Surat al-Ikhlaas, however His name *al-Waahid* is mentioned many times. Some scholars are of the opinion that both names return to the same meaning, however others differentiated by saying:

- His name *al-Ahad* establishes the Oneness of Allah in His Essence and Attributes, as is the case in Surat al-Ikhlaas.
- His name *al-Waahid* is used to negate the existence of more than one deity besides Allah. For example, Allah says:

﴿وَاللَّهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾

And your Ilaah is one Ilaah. There is no deity worthy of worship except Him, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. [al-Baqarah: 163]

- {اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ} – ‘Allah, the Everlasting Sustainer’. The most comprehensive definition of this great Name of Allah is:

أَنَّهُ الْكَامِلُ فِي صِفَاتِهِ الَّتِي افْتَقَرَتْ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعُ مَخْلُوقَاتِهِ

The One who is complete and unique in His Attributes; all the creation is dependent on Him.

Allah is perfect and complete in His Attributes which necessitates that the creation turns to Him for all their needs, for only He can fulfill them. The comprehensive definition mentioned above combines these two meanings. Allah’s *Samadiyya* is also one of His Attributes of absolute perfection which is always established unconditionally.

- {لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ} – ‘He has not given birth and was not born’. Because of His Oneness and Perfection, Allah negates that He has an origin or a division. He is neither a parent nor was He a child, as both do not befit His Majesty.

Allah is not a parent because He has no equal, whereas a child is derived from their parent and have a resemblance to them. The Prophet ﷺ described his daughter Fatima by saying:

« إِنَّمَا فَاطِمَةُ بَضْعَةٌ مِنِّي يُؤْذِينِي مَا آذَاهَا »

Fatima is a part of me, it hurts me what hurts her. [Muslim]

Also, parents have a dependency on their children to help them with the hardship of this world, and as a means of continuing their lineage and progeny. Allah is far removed from having these dependencies, because He is *al-Ahad* and *al-Samad*.

Allah specifically mentions that He is far removed from having or needing a child, because to have a child requires a wife to give birth to them. Allah is exalted from this animal act. He is the Creator who has no equals or partners.

﴿ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةٌ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾

How could He have a son when He does not have a companion (wife) and He created all things?

And He is, of all things, Knowing. [al-An'aam: 101]

If He is the creator, then everything else is the creation. The Creator and the creation are separate and distinct from one another.

Allah also negates that He was ever a child that was once born. Allah says:

﴿ هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ ﴾

He is the First and the Last, the Apparent and the Intimate. [al-Hadid: 3]

He is the First; nothing existed before Him. He is the Last; nothing will exist after Him. He is the Apparent; He is evident through His creation and revelation. He is the Intimate; everything is near to Him by way of His knowledge.

That Allah gave birth or was born are both attributes of absolute imperfection which Allah negates from Himself. The perfection of their opposite is established, being that Allah is *al-Ahad* and *al-Samad*.

- {وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ} – ‘There is none comparable to Him’. There is none from His creation who is equal or comparable to Him, because He alone is *al-Ahad*. Linguistically, *al-kufu* refers to something which matches or equates to something else. There is nothing which matches or equals Allah, therefore, He cannot be compared to His creation. Allah does not have an equal in His:

1. Lordship (*Ruboobiyya*). None can create like Allah, and none can sustain like Allah. Similarly, none has full sovereignty of the Heavens and the Earth.
2. Worship (*Uloohiyya*). No one is deserving of worship besides Allah.
3. Names and Attributes (*Asmaa' wal-Sifaat*). None is deserving of the Names of Allah, nor can they be described with His Attributes.

That Allah has someone or something comparable to Him, is an attribute of absolute imperfection which Allah negates from Himself. The perfection of its opposite is established, being that Allah is *al-Ahad* and *al-Samad*.

There are three affirming attributes and three negating attributes in Surat al-Ikhlaas. The affirming attributes are: Allah, which establishes His Divinity (*Uloohiyya*), *al-Ahad* which establishes His Oneness

(*Ahadiyya*), and *al-Samad* which establishes His *Samadiyya* (Perfection). The negating attributes are that He is not a parent, nor was He a child, and He has no equal who He can be compared to.

Review questions

1. Why was Surat al-Ikhlaas given this name?
2. Explain how Surat al-Ikhlaas is equivalent to a third of the Quran.
3. How did some scholars differentiate between the meaning of Allah's Names *al-Ahad* and *al-Wahid*?
4. What is the most comprehensive definition of Allah's Name, *al-Samad*?
5. What are the three affirming Attributes of Allah in Surat al-Ikhlaas., and what are the three negating attributes?