

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Class Notes – Lesson 17

[إِنْبَاتُ الْوَجْهِ لِلَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ]

وَقَوْلُهُ: ﴿وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾ [الرحمن: ٢٧]

وَقَوْلُهُ: ﴿كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ﴾ [القصاص: ٨٨]

[AFFIRMATION OF ALLAH'S FACE]

And His saying: But the Face of your Lord will remain, Master of Majesty and Generosity.

[al-Rahman: 27]

And His saying: All things are passing except His Face. [al-Qasas: 88]

[إِنْبَاتُ الْوَجْهِ لِلَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ]

[AFFIRMATION OF ALLAH'S FACE]

- In this part of his treatise, the Sheikh mentions the evidences from the Quran which establish that from the Attributes of Allah is that He has a Face, befitting His Majesty.
- His Face is from His Attributes that are related to His Essence (*Dhaat*). It is obligatory to establish His Face in its real sense (*haqeeqah*), without misinterpreting it to mean His Essence, or His Reward or His Direction, as the rejectors of Allah's Attributes do.

وَقَوْلُهُ: ﴿وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٢٧﴾﴾ [الرحمن: ٢٧]

And His saying: But the Face of your Lord will remain, Master of Majesty and Generosity.

[al-Rahman: 27]

- This is preceded by Allah's statement:

﴿كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

Whatever is on it (the earth) will perish. [al-Rahman: 26]

Some of the *salaf* mentioned that these *ayaat* should always be read in conjunction so that the imperfection of the creation is clear, and the perfection of the Creator is clear. The former stands for extinction, while the latter stands for eternity.

- {وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ} – 'But the Face of your Lord will remain.' Meaning, that it will not perish. Linguistically, the term *wajh* (face) is known, but regarding Allah, the how (*kayf*) of His Face is

unknown. Like all His other Attributes, we do not know what Allah's Face looks like, however, we establish it and affirm it, because Allah has established it for Himself.

His Face is described as being full of Majesty (*Jalal*) and Honour (*Ikraam*). The Prophet ﷺ said of His Face:

حِجَابُهُ النُّورُ لَوْ كَشَفَهُ لَأَخْرَقَتْ سُبُحَاتُ وَجْهِهِ مَا أَنْتَهَى إِلَيْهِ بَصَرُهُ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ

His Screen is light, if He unveils it, the Sublimity of His Face will burn whatever His vision reaches of His creation. [Muslim]

The Sublimity of His Face refers to its Magnificence, Greatness, Honour and Light. Since His vision reaches everything, if He was to unveil the screen of Light from His Face, everything would be incinerated.

- {ذُو الْجَلَلِ} – **'Master of Majesty'**. The Majesty (*Jalal*) of Allah is His Grandeur and Glory. This is a description of the Face of Allah, and not a description of Allah the Lord. If it was a description of the Lord, Allah would have said:

﴿تَبَرَّكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِي الْجَلَلِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ﴾

Blessed be the Name of your Lord, the owner of Majesty and Honour. [al-Rahman:78]

- {وَالْإِكْرَامِ} – **'And Generosity'**. Meaning His Honour. Allah alone deserves to be honoured, and the manner of honouring Him is by obeying Him. Allah also honours those who are entitled to His honour from His righteous servants, with the rewards He has prepared for them. It is because of Allah's Majesty (*Jalal*) that He is deserving of Honour (*Ikraam*).

﴿وَقَوْلُهُ: ﴿كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ﴾ [القصاص: ٨٨]

And His saying: All things are passing except His Face. [al-Qasas: 88]

- {كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ} – **'All things are passing'**. Meaning everything will perish. This is like Allah's saying:

﴿كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ﴾

Whatever is on it (the earth) will perish. [al-Rahman: 26]

- {إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ} – **'Except His Face'**. This is like Allah's saying:

﴿وَبَيَّنِّي وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَلِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ﴾

But the Face of your Lord will remain, Master of Majesty and Generosity. [al-Rahman: 27]

Everything will become extinct and will perish except the Face of Allah which will remain forever. This does not mean that Allah will vanish except His Face as some deviant groups claim. It also does not mean that Allah's Face is His Essence, as those who deny Allah's Attributes claim. They make this false claim with the intention of refuting that Allah has a Face.

The correct way of interpreting the *ayah* is to say, that Allah mentioned His Face as a representation of His Essence. Therefore, everything will perish except Allah's Essence that is described as having a Face.

- Those who claim that His Face means His reward can be refuted as follows:
 1. That it is forbidden to say that Allah's reward is described as having Majesty and Honour.
 2. That their claim is irreconcilable with the *hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ where he mentioned that if Allah was to remove the screen from His Face, it would incinerate everything.
- Those who interpret His Face to mean His direction use the following *ayah* as evidence:

﴿وِلَّيَّةُ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ فَأَيُّمَا تُلُوهُمَا فَتَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ﴾

And to Allah belong the east and the west, so wherever you turn to face (in prayer) there is the Face of Allah. [al-Baqarah:115]

They misinterpret this *ayah* to mean Allah's direction with the intention of refuting that Allah has a Face. They can also be refuted by citing the *hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ whereby he said regarding the one who stands up to pray:

لَا يَبْصُقُ قِبَلَ وَجْهِهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ قِبَلَ وَجْهِهِ إِذَا صَلَّى

Do not spit in front of you when you are praying, because Allah is in front of you when you pray.

[Bukhari, Muslim]

Therefore, Allah is physically in front of the person when they pray, in a manner which is befitting His Majesty.

Review questions

1. Is Allah's Face an Attribute related to His Actions or to His Essence? What is the methodology in establishing this Attribute?
2. Allah describes His Face as having *Jalal* and *Ikraam*. Explain what these attributes mean.
3. How did the Prophet ﷺ describe the Sublimity of Allah's Face?
4. 'All things are passing except His Face.' [al-Ma'idah: 119] - What is the correct way of understanding this *ayah*? What is the incorrect way of understanding it?
5. Briefly explain how to refute those who claim that Allah's Face is His reward or His direction.