

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Class Notes – Lesson 35

**[تُبُوتُ النُّزُولِ الإِلَهِيِّ إِلَى سَمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى مَا يَلِيقُ بِجَلَالِهِ]**

**مِثْلُ قَوْلِهِ ﷺ:** «يَنْزِلُ رَبُّنَا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ حِينَ يَبْقَى ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الآخِرِ، فَيَقُولُ: مَنْ يَدْعُونِي فَأَسْتَجِيبَ لَهُ؟ مَنْ يَسْأَلُنِي فَأُعْطِيهِ؟ مَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُنِي فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ؟». **[مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ]**

**[AFFIRMING THE DIVINE DESCENT TO THE EARTHLY HEAVEN AS IT BEFITS ALLAH'S MAJESTY]**

**Like his ﷺ saying:** *Every night, when the last third of the night remains, our Lord descends to the lowest heaven and says: 'Is there anyone invoking Me that I may respond? Is there anyone asking of Me that I may give it to him? Is there anyone asking for My forgiveness that I may forgive him?'. [Bukhari, Muslim]*

**[تُبُوتُ النُّزُولِ الإِلَهِيِّ إِلَى سَمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى مَا يَلِيقُ بِجَلَالِهِ]**

**[AFFIRMING THE DIVINE DESCENT TO THE EARTHLY HEAVEN AS IT BEFITS ALLAH'S MAJESTY]**

- In this part of his treatise, the Sheikh mentions a single *hadith* from the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ which affirms the Divine Descent (*Nuzool*) of Allah. His Divine Descent to the earthly heaven in the last third of the night is from His Attributes that are related to His actions (*Af'aal*), which He does whenever He wills and however He wills, in a manner befitting His Majesty. It is obligatory to establish His *Nuzool* it in its real sense (*haqeeqah*) because Allah has affirmed and established it for Himself.
- This *hadith* contains a refutation of those who misinterpret His Descent to mean the descent of His Mercy or the descent of His Command. This is because this misinterpretation goes against the apparent meaning (*dhaahir*) of the *hadith* without evidence. Also, it is not conceivable that His Mercy or Command would say: 'Is there anyone invoking Me that I may respond.'

**مِثْلُ قَوْلِهِ ﷺ:** «يَنْزِلُ رَبُّنَا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ حِينَ يَبْقَى ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الآخِرِ، فَيَقُولُ: مَنْ يَدْعُونِي فَأَسْتَجِيبَ لَهُ؟ مَنْ يَسْأَلُنِي فَأُعْطِيهِ؟ مَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُنِي فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ؟». **[مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ]**

**Like his ﷺ saying:** *Every night, when the last third of the night remains, our Lord descends to the lowest heaven and says: 'Is there anyone invoking Me that I may respond? Is there anyone asking of Me that I may give it to him? Is there anyone asking for My forgiveness that I may forgive him?'. [Bukhari, Muslim]*

- (يُنزِلُ رَبُّنَا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا) – **‘When the last third of the night remains, our Lord descends’**. His descent is real (*haqeeqi*); therefore, it is obligatory upon us to believe in it and to affirm it. He descends to the lowest heaven, which is the closest to the earth. The heavens are seven in number.

He descends in this part of the night to draw nearer to His servants, just as He draws nearer to them on the evening of the Day of *Arafah*, when He boasts to the Angels of those standing at *Arafah*.

- (كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ) – **‘Every night’**. This is general and includes every single night of the year.
- (حِينَ يَبْقَى ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الْآخِرِ) – **‘When the last third of the night remains.’** The scholars agreed that the night commences with the setting of the sun, however they disagreed regarding when it ends. Is it at the break of dawn or the rising of the sun? The most correct opinion is that the night in the *shar’i* sense ends with the break of dawn (*Fajr* time), while astronomically it ends with the rising of the sun. Allah descends in this specific time, when the last third of the night remains.
- (مَنْ يَدْعُونِي فَاسْتَجِبْ لَهُ) – **‘Is there anyone invoking Me that I may respond’**. This is a question meant to express motivation (*tashweeq*). They invoke Allah at this time of night saying: ‘O My Lord.’
- (مَنْ يَسْأَلُنِي فَأَعْطِيهِ) – **‘Is there anyone asking of Me that I may give it to him’**. Meaning, they ask Allah for the good of this world and the good of the Hereafter.
- (مَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُنِي فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ) – **‘Is there anyone asking for forgiveness that I may forgive him’**. By saying: ‘O Allah forgive me’ or ‘O Allah I seek Your forgiveness.’ Forgiveness is the act of covering up the sin and overlooking it.
- There are some who deny the descent of Allah to the lowest heaven. Some of their false arguments and their refutations are as follows.

- They say: If Allah descends, then what about His ‘*Uluw* (Transcendancy) and what about His *Istiwa’* (Ascendancy) above the Throne? Does His descent not negate them?

This is a false argument, as none of what is said prevents the descent of Allah in reality (*haqeeqa*). The *Sahabah* never asked these questions. Rather, they said: ‘We hear we believe, we accept, and we testify.’

Ibn Taymiyya concisely refuted this false argument by saying: ‘*The Throne is not vacated by Him, because the evidences for His Istiwa’ above the Throne are Muhkamah (decisive), and this Hadith is also Muhkam (decisive). And Allah is such that His Attributes cannot be compared to the attributes of His creations. Therefore, it is obligatory upon us to leave the evidences concerning His Istiwa’ upon their decisiveness (ihkaam) and the evidence concerning His descent upon its decisiveness. And we say: He is Mustawin (ascended) above His Throne, while descending to the lowest heaven, and Allah knows best the how of that, and our intellects are too short, too base, and too insignificant to be able to encompass Allah, the Mighty and Sublime.*’

In summary: Allah descends in reality while maintaining His ‘*Uluwu* in reality and while being ascendant on His Throne in reality. Nothing is like Allah.

- They say: If the earth rotates, and the last third of the night differs from one region of the earth to another, does this mean that Allah is forever descending?

Firstly, believe that Allah descends at this particular time. If you believe, there is nothing compulsory upon you besides that. If you question how, then you have fallen into *al-takyeef* (likening). Allah descends in a manner befitting His Majesty when the last third of the night remains, wherever this last third may be. His Descent is unlike that of His creation.

- The points of benefit that can be derived from this *hadith*.
  1. Affirming the ‘*Uluwu* (Transcendancy) of Allah.

2. Affirming Allah's Attributes relating to His Actions.
  3. Affirming Allah's Speech.
  4. Affirming Allah's great *Karam* (generosity) whereby He invites His servants to invoke Him and responds to their invocation.
- From the behavioural benefits of this *hadith* as stated by Sheikh Ibn Uthaymeen: *'And from the behavioural benefits of this hadith: That it is befitting for every person to seize the opportunity of this part of the night, to ask Allah to call upon Him, and to seek His forgiveness.'*

*As long as the Lord is saying: 'Who is he that will call upon Me?' 'Who is he that will seek My forgiveness?.' The word 'who' (mann) is used to express motivation. You must then seize this opportunity, because nothing is for you in your lifetime except what you spend in obedience to Allah. The days will soon pass you by. Once death catches up with you, it will be as if you were just born at that time; all that has passed will be nothing!'*

#### **Review questions**

1. Is Allah's Attribute of *Nuzool* related to His Actions or to His Essence? What is the correct methodology of establishing it?
2. How do we refute those who misinterpret Allah's Descent to mean the descent of His Mercy or the descent of His Command?
3. What are the three matters that Allah invites His servants to ask of Him in the last third of the night when He Descends?
4. How do we refute those who claim that Allah's Descent negates His '*Uluw* (Transcendancy) and His *Istiwa'a*' (Ascendency) on His Throne?
5. What is the main behavioural benefit that we can derive from this great *hadith*?