

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Class Notes – Lesson 45

[وَجُوبُ الْإِيمَانِ بِقُرْبِ اللَّهِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَأَنَّ ذَلِكَ لَا يُنَافِي عُلُوَّهُ وَفَوْقِيَّتَهُ]

وَقَدْ دَخَلَ فِي ذَلِكَ الْإِيمَانُ بِأَنَّهُ قَرِيبٌ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ مُجِيبٌ؛ كَمَا جَمَعَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ فِي قَوْلِهِ: ﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٦]. وَقَوْلِهِ ﷺ: «إِنَّ الَّذِي تَدْعُونَهُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيَّ أَحَدِكُمْ مِنْ عُنُقِ رَاحِلَتِهِ». [مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ]

وَمَا ذَكَرَ فِي الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ مِنْ قُرْبِهِ وَمَعِيَّتِهِ لَا يُنَافِي مَا ذَكَرَ مِنْ عُلُوِّهِ وَفَوْقِيَّتِهِ؛ فَإِنَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي جَمِيعِ نُعُوتِهِ، وَهُوَ عَلَيَّ فِي دُنُوهِ، قَرِيبٌ فِي عُلُوِّهِ .

[THE OBLIGATION OF BELIEF IN ALLAH'S NEARNESS TO HIS CREATION AND THAT IT DOES NOT CONTRADICT HIS BEING HIGH ABOVE AND OVER ALL THINGS]

Included in this is the belief that He is close to His creation and responds. He has mentioned both of these matters in His saying: 'If My slaves ask you about Me, I am near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me.' [al-Baqarah: 186]

And the Prophet ﷺ said: 'The One you are invoking is closer to one of you than the neck of his riding beast.' [Bukhari, Muslim]

What has been mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah of His Closeness and Withness (Ma'iyah) does not contradict His Highness ('Uluww) and Aboveness (Fawqiyah), because there is nothing like Him, Glorious is He, in all His descriptions. He is high in His Closeness and near in His Highness.

[وَجُوبُ الْإِيمَانِ بِقُرْبِ اللَّهِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَأَنَّ ذَلِكَ لَا يُنَافِي عُلُوَّهُ وَفَوْقِيَّتَهُ]

[THE OBLIGATION OF BELIEF IN ALLAH'S NEARNESS TO HIS CREATION AND THAT IT DOES NOT CONTRADICT HIS BEING HIGH ABOVE AND OVER ALL THINGS]

- After the Sheikh established the obligation of believing in Allah's Transcendence ('Uluww) over His creation and that He is Ascendant over His Throne, he noted in this section of the treatise that it is also obligatory to believe that Allah is close to His Creation.
- Similar to how there is no contradiction between Allah's 'Uluww and Ma'iyah, there is also no contradiction between His 'Uluww and between His Qurb (Nearness) to His creation.

وَقَدْ دَخَلَ فِي ذَلِكَ الْإِيمَانَ بِأَنَّهُ قَرِيبٌ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ مُجِيبٌ

Included in this is the belief that He is close to His creation and responds.

- (وَقَدْ دَخَلَ فِي ذَلِكَ) – **'Included in this.'** Meaning, included in the belief in Allah and what He has described Himself with.
- (الْإِيمَانَ بِأَنَّهُ قَرِيبٌ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ مُجِيبٌ) – **'Is the belief that He is closer to His creation and responds.'** Meaning, that Allah is close to His creation and responds to their invocation to Him when they call out to Him. Some scholars divided Allah's *Qurb* (Nearness) into two categories, like His *Ma'iyah*:
 1. General Nearness, which implies that Allah encompasses all things.
 2. Specific Nearness, which implies that Allah responds to the call of His servants and rewards them.
- Sheikhul Islam Ibn Taymiyya and his student Ibnul Qayyim are of the opinion that Allah's Nearness is only the specific type which implies the response to those who call upon Him. He is never close to the disbelievers and those who are disobedient. According to their opinion, the evidences used to establish Allah's general Nearness instead refer to the closeness of Allah's angels, not to Allah Himself. For example, Allah says:

﴿وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ﴾

And We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. [Qaaf:16]

﴿وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُبْصِرُونَ﴾

But we are nearer to him than you, but you do not see. [al-Waqiah:85]

كَمَا جَمَعَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ فِي قَوْلِهِ : ﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ

فَلَيْسَتْ جِيبُوا لِي وَلِيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ﴾ [البقرة: 186].

He has mentioned both of these matters in His saying: 'If My slaves ask you about Me, I am near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me.' [al-Baqarah: 186]

- (كَمَا جَمَعَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ) – **'He has mentioned both of these matters.'** Meaning, that Allah joined between the mention of His Nearness and His response to the supplicant. It has been narrated that the cause of revelation of this *ayah* was that a man asked the Prophet ﷺ:

أَقْرَبُ رَبُّنَا فَنُتَجَاوِئُهُ أَمْ بَعِيدٌ فَنُتَدَايُهُ

Is our Lord near so that we may invoke Him silently or far so that we may call out to Him? [Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim]

The Prophet ﷺ remained quiet after the question was asked, then Allah revealed this noble *ayah*.

وَقَوْلِهِ ﷻ: «إِنَّ الَّذِي تَدْعُونَهُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيَّ مِنْ عُنُقِ رَاحِلَتِهِ». [مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ]

And the Prophet ﷺ said: 'The One you are invoking is closer to one of you than the neck of his riding beast.' [Bukhari, Muslim]

- The Sheikh has previously mentioned this *hadith* in his treatise (Lesson 39) when he was citing the evidences from the *Sunnah* which prove Allah's *Ma'iyah* and that it does not contradict His *'Uluww*. In this part of his treatise, he cites the *hadith* again to prove that Allah joined between the mention of His *Qurb* (Nearness) and *Ijaba* (Response).

- There is no need to raise the voice when calling out to Allah as He is All-Hearing and All-Seeing. He is closer to the servant than the neck of their riding beast when they are riding it, yet He remains above the heavens over His Throne.
- The *hadith* establishes Allah's nearness to the one who calls Him. He hears the quiet voices as much as He hears the loud voices.

وَمَا ذُكِرَ فِي الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ مِنْ قُرْبِهِ وَمَعِيَّتِهِ لَا يُنَافِي مَا ذُكِرَ مِنْ عُلُوِّهِ وَفَوْقِيَّتِهِ؛ فَإِنَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ
لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي جَمِيعِ نُعُوتِهِ، وَهُوَ عَلِيٌّ فِي دُنُوِّهِ، قَرِيبٌ فِي عُلُوِّهِ .

What has been mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah of His Closeness and Withness (Ma'iyyah) does not contradict His Highness ('Uluww) and Aboveness (Fawqiyah), because there is nothing like Him, Glorious is He, in all His descriptions. He is high in His Closeness and near in His Highness.

- (وَمَا ذُكِرَ) – **'What has been mentioned'**. In the previously mentioned *ayah* and *hadith* there is clear evidence of Allah's Nearness to the servants and that He responds to their call when they call out to Him with their needs. Allah's Nearness does not contradict His Transcendence over His creation and that He is above them. The Sheikh explicitly mentions this in this part of his treatise. Both sets of evidences are *haqq* (the truth) and the *haqq* can never contradict itself.
- (فَإِنَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي جَمِيعِ نُعُوتِهِ) – **'Because there is nothing like Him, Glorious is He, in all His descriptions'**. The statement which is derived from *ayah* 11 of Surat al-Shura, represent a core principle in understanding the Names and Attributes of Allah.

Allah cannot be compared to His creation, because nothing of His creation is like Him. It should not be said: *'If Allah is above the creation, how can He be with them and near to them?'* This question arises from a mistaken premise of comparing Him to His creation, which is a false comparison because: *'There is nothing like unto Him'*. [al-Shura: 11] Therefore, Allah's Nearness and Transcendence are rightly attributed to Him in the same context without there being any contradiction.

- (وَهُوَ عَلِيٌّ فِي دُنُوِّهِ) – **'He is High in His Closeness'**. Meaning, He maintains His Transcendence over His creation while being Near to His servants.
- (قَرِيبٌ فِي عُلُوِّهِ) – **'And Near in His Highness'**. Meaning, He is near to His creation while being High above His Throne.

Review questions

1. What does the Sheikh look to establish in this part of his treatise?
2. Briefly explain the difference of opinion amongst the scholars regarding the classification of Allah's *Qurb* (Nearness).
3. *'And We are nearer to him than his jugular vein.'* [Qaaf:16] *'But we are nearer to him than you, but you do not see.'* [al-Waqiah:85] – What relevance do these two *ayaat* have in regards to Allah's Nearness (*Qurb*)?
4. What comparison did the Prophet ﷺ give to the Nearness of Allah to His servants?
5. *'Because there is nothing like Him in all His descriptions'* – From where is this principle derived and how is it applied in the context of Allah's *'Uluww* and *Qurb*?