

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

We seek forgiveness from Allah

*We stand witness to Allah that there is no God but Him
That Mohammad (saaw) is his slave and messenger*

Introduction

Unity and the Rope of Allah

- Allah (swt) has stated in **Surah Al Imran 03:103**,

وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا

“Hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allah and do not get disunited.”

“Hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allah” gives a mental impression that a rope is hanging from the heaven so that those who are lying down on the ground (earth) may climb up, by holding it, in the presence of the Lord to seek His nearness.

- Abu Sa-id Khudri reports that he heard the Holy Prophet (saaw) saying:
*“I leave behind me, among you, two ropes. If my people hold fast to these two ropes, after me, they shall not go astray. They are **The Book of Allah**, hung from the heaven unto the earth, and **My Ahlul Bayt**. One of them is greater than the other. Be it known that these two shall never be separated from each other; and joined together, they shall meet me at the spring of Kawthar.”* [*Tafsir Kabir and Durr al Manthur*]

Interpretation of “Alhamdu lillahi Rabbil Aalameen”

Al Hamd

- We see that this verse begins by by praising Allah: *Alhamdu lillah*.
- The Holy Prophet (saaw) said:
“Any speech that does not begin with praising Allah is cut off.”
- In *Tafseer Nur Thaqaalayn*, the Holy Prophet (saaw) is recorded to have said:
*“Allah (swt) the majestic says that:
‘When my servant says Alhamdu lillahi rabbil aalameen, and he is aware that the bounties he receives are from me, and that the calamities that I have eliminated for him are from my grace, then I will join the blessings of this earth and the next for him, and I will eliminate the calamities of the hereafter just as I have eliminated the catastrophies of this world’ .”*

Classical Tafseer Class - Summary

Session 04

Friday, 20 May 2005

- Agha Mehdi Pooya Yazdi in his tafseer of this verse explains that the word *Alhamd* means that:
“(all) praise, thanks, gratitude, be to Allah alone, not to anyone else, from the beginning of the universe to its end, not under compulsion, but because He alone, and none else, deserves to be praised, not only for the fulfilment of his particular desires but also, mainly, for all the bounties and blessings made available to man in his existence.”
- Our Imam (as) have taught us that every time we praise Allah (swt), we ought to do so twice.
*The first praise is for the bounty that led us to praise him.
The second praise is for the taufiq or hidaya (guidance) from Allah (swt) that prompted us to praise him for the bounty received.*
- According to Imam Ali (as), through *Alhamdu lillah*, Allah teaches us how to praise him.
- In the Holy Qur’an, **Surah Al Fathir 35:15**,
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ
“Oh Mankind, it is you who stand in need of Allah, and Allah is Self-Sustaining and the Praised One.”
- Someone came to Imam Jafar As-Sadiq (as) and asked:
“Oh Imam (as) may be I be your sacrifice, teach me a comprehensive dua”.
The Imam (as) said: **الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ** (“Praise be to Allah”).
Then he said: “Every one who prays will pray for you, and Allah (swt) listens to the prayer of those who pray to him”.

Shukran lillah and al Madahu

Difference in meaning between the terms *Shukran lillah*, *Alhamdu lillah*, and *Al Madahu*.

- *Shukran lillah* is appropriate for use when the servant receives a bounty from his lord. It is interesting to note that the antonym (opposite) of *Shukr* is *Kufr*.
- *Alhamdu lillah* is appropriate for use in both situations; when the servant receives bounties from his lord, and when a calamity befalls him.
- *Al Madahu* is a kind of praise, but it is in the form of expression of one’s admiration. For e.g.: the various expressions of admiration for the Ahlul Bayt (as) by Imam Shafi’i
“O Ahlul Bayt Rasulillah, Your affection is incumbent from Allah thru His Holy Quran. It is suffice the greatness whom ever do not offer salutation to you, their shalat will not be accepted.” [Fulukunnajah pg 21]

Names of Our Holy Prophet (saaw): Muhammad and Ahmad

- The Holy Qur'an in **Surah Ash Shaff 61:6** quotes Prophet Isa (as) speaking of the Holy Prophet (saaw) as *Ahmad*,

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ
مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ

“And when Isa son of Marium said: O children of Israel! surely I am the apostle of Allah to you, verifying that which is before me of the Taurat and giving the good news of an Apostle who will come after me, his name being *Ahmad*”

- and in another verse, **Surah al Imran 3:144** refers to him as *Muhammad*,

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ

“And *Muhammad* is no more than an apostle”

- Relatedly, a representative from a delegation of Jews asked the Holy Prophet (saaw) why it was that he was called by each of these different names. The Holy Prophet (saaw) replied:
“I have been named *Muhammad* because I have been praised in this world and *Ahmad* because I have been praised in heaven.”

Salt and Pepper Side Story

The Holy Kaaba is commonly called *Bayt Allah*, and Allah (swt) himself calls it *My House* in **Surah al Baqarah 2:125**.

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَى
إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ

“And when We made the House a pilgrimage for men and a (place of) security, and: Appoint for yourselves a place of prayer on the standing-place of Ibrahim. And We enjoined Ibrahim and Ismail saying: Purify *My House* for those who visit (it) and those who abide (in it) for devotion and those who bow down (and) those who prostrate themselves.”

Arabic dictionaries agree that the word *bayt* in Arabic means a place where the night is spent.

It is interesting to reflect on who it is that spent the night in the Kaaba that led to Allah (swt) describing it as *My House*. A review of history shows that this has been none other than Imam Ali (as).

Mind Blowing Story

It is said that one day Bahlool went to Haroun, who was busy drinking wine. Haroun wanted to prove that he was safe from forbidden eating and drinking, so he asked Bohlool,

"Is it forbidden to eat grapes?"

"No!"

"What if after eating grapes, water is drunk over them?"

"There is no harm."

"After eating the grapes and drinking water, one sits for a while in the sun?"

"Even then there is no harm."

Then the Khalifa said,

"Then if grapes and water are placed in the sun for a time, how does it become forbidden?"

Bohlool said,

"If some dirt is put on one's head will it cause any harm?"

"No."

"Afterwards if water is poured on it, will it cause any pain?"

"No."

"If that dirt and water are mixed to make a brick, and thrown on a person's head, will it cause any pain?"

The Khalifa said, *"True, the brick will break a person's head."*

Bahlool said,

"The way dirt and water mixed together break the human's head and cause him pain; likewise, grapes and water mixed together become such a thing that the law of Shariah forbids it and states it as impure. Drinking wine causes man many troubles and it becomes obligatory to punish its drinker."

The Khalifa was distressed at Bahlool's answer, and ordered the wine stock to be removed.

Disclaimer:

In this Classical Tafseer Class, there might be shortcomings in imparting the knowledge of the tafseer. If there is any information that requires correction, please do not hesitate to let us know. Allah knows best.