

Tawheed Class #1

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CLASS ONE

INTRODUCTION

As we promised, this is the start of the explanation on the Usool Ath-Thalaathah (the three fundamental principles). As you all know, it is a booklet, not a book, a booklet on Tawheed, and we have mentioned it many times. It is very small in words but has some great, great meanings. These meanings, no one can be ignorant of. Scholars have always discussed this book and taught it among the first that is taught in Tawheed. If you really look into the three principles and what he means about those principles, they are in reality the matters you are going to be asked about in your grave. So you need to know those three principles, really as best as one knows, and you need to apply them so when you are asked about them in the grave, you quickly go through them Inshaa Allah Ta'aala.

KNOWLEDGE IN ISLAM IS TO BE TAKEN GRADUALLY

We start gradually because knowledge in Islam is to be taken gradually. You do not wake up overnight an 'Aalim or a Shaykh. Ibn Abdil-Barr in his book Al-Jaami' said az-Zuhri said:

من رام العلم جملة ذهب عنه جملة ، إنما يطلب العلم على مر الأيام
والليالي

Whoever seeks to get knowledge in a lump sum overnight, it (knowledge) ends up leaving him in a lump sum. Knowledge is to be attained slowly, over days and nights.

Knowledge needs patience and it needs persistence. It is a step by step process. You do not go for example to some in depth 'Aqeedah books and then you end up getting frustrated, facing complex matters you cannot break down, which you would have been able to do had you went in a step by step process. Some brothers tell me they are studying 'Aqeedah and Tawheed books that 'Ulamaa have had a hard time breaking down. The bigger problem is they are studying it on their own and to top that off, they are not even studying it in the language of the author. So explain to me how you can understand it like that? If you are unable to get to a teacher, which many are, especially in this day and age, that is a whole different story but you still have to at least know how to start.

Now this is a starter book on Tawheed. You can sit and read this book right now and before I even finish this introduction, you can probably be done reading it. It still needs to be broken down (sentence by sentence) so the student of knowledge understands the deep meaning

of what the book really entails. If you start in the step by step process and you find it difficult (which you may), never ever give up. This simple book that you have before your hand, I studied it cover to cover with eleven different Shuyookh. Portions of it I studied with even more than that, but the entire booklet with eleven different Shuyookh.

Al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadi in his book al-Jaami' narrated that a student of knowledge went to the Shuyookh of Hadith to learn. He found knowledge of Hadith is very difficult, he got frustrated and he said this is not for me. One day he was walking and he saw water dripping on a stone, maybe a spring. If you have ever seen a spring, especially where water has been dripping on a stone for years and years, or even if you look at a fountain that has been dripping on a stone or even cement, the water dents the cement or the rock over the years. He said to himself wow, look at that. Water as light as it is, Lateef (لطيف) (soft and mild), it affected the stone as hard as it is. He said knowledge is softer and lighter than water, and my heart and my mind are not as hard as a rock. He went back to studying Hadith and became a very reputable, famous scholar of Hadith.

Start gradually and as you go on, move forward patiently. This is the start of the classical study we mentioned and it is to create, I am not going to say students of knowledge, Inshaa Allah it is to create 'Ulamaa. The other lectures we did and we will continue to do, like the University of Yusuf, The Ultimate Pleasure, The Love and Fear Series, the question and answers. They are informative and inspirational, there is definitely knowledge in them but that is not what makes an 'Aalim. Those kind of lectures are not what can make an 'Aalim. If you hear a lecture here, attend a two day seminar, an event and trailer here and there, that is good. But if that is what makes an 'Aalim then the whole Ummah are 'Ulamaa because your fathers have been attending Jumu'ah for about fifty or sixty years, and they have been attending lectures between Maghrib and Isha' for a similar time. There is a structured study to becoming a student of knowledge and an 'Aalim. There are an uncountable number of benefits in studying Islam in the classical way. This is a step by step process that will encompass the Madinah program Inshaa Allah and even more than that Bi'ithnihi Ta'aala, if Allah blesses us to continue.

The next issue, many people from all over the world want to come and study with us and I really say it with no exaggeration Alhamdulillah. Especially from UK, Europe, parts of the US and even some Arab countries. As you know, we do not have resources and a very well established place to accommodate such number of students yet. My father has taught me never to charge or take anything for Da'wah and has done so throughout his career, whether it may be a marriage, seminars, lectures, classes like this or even more than that. So you can study with us through the internet until Allah finds us a way out. I mention this because many ask if it is the same as studying with you.

THE THREE LEVELS OF STUDYING

Back in the day, the students of knowledge had three levels of studying. The first one is As-Samaa' al-Mubaashir (السماع المباشر), immediately learning from a Shaykh. Those who are attending, that is as-Samaa' al-Mubaashir. That is the best and the reward for that in itself is immense. The next one is al-Waasitah (الواسطة), between you and the Shaykh is a mediator. So if one of you goes and conveys this whole message to another person, that is Waasitah. You were the mediator between me and that person you taught. Some used to do that, especially business men or farmers, they would take turns in learning and teaching each other. The third one is Wijaadah (وجادة), to find a book written by a Shaykh and study from it.

Now where does learning for example, from a Shaykh on Youtube come in? In my opinion, it is a little higher than number two because you are not learning through a mediator, you are learning from the Shaykh but you are learning possibly through the internet. And it is definitely not Wijaadah, it is not taking a book and studying from it. So it is really between the number one and number two. Through the internet one can even interact these days through emails or he can call the Shaykh that he is learning from, so in reality it has become a notch under as-Samaa' al-Mubaashir. That is not to minimise going to a Shaykh. One should not resort to Wijaadah, Waasitah or any other means if he can find a direct Shaykh. If you find a righteous Shaykh and he is in the end of the world, you pack your bags and go if you are able to go and learn from him. If Allah blesses us in the future and we can accommodate, we would love for everyone Inshaa Allah to join us.

Learning from a Shaykh in person has its benefits, like you see his private life, his manners, his attitude, his Ibaadah and you see how he reacts to things. Outside of the regular Madinah curriculum, my father made sure to contact the major Shuyookh of our time (many of them who are now dead) and made sure that I studied with them. The last one for example was Shaykh Muqbil and I always used to make Du'aa to learn from him but I was not able to go to Yemen. He was kicked out of Sa'oodiyyah in the late seventies, and I was not able to go to Yemen. Then Subhan Allah in the year 2000, he came to Los Angeles in California to get medical treatment. I immediately headed there and stayed with him in his house. Then suddenly in the middle of the treatment, it was Dhul-Hijjah so he decided to go to Makkah to make Hajj and return. When he went to Makkah, an article broke out in some newspaper in California, that Shaykh Muqbil who is a radical is in the United States and how did they let him in. So immediately, the embassy in Sa'oodiyyah revoked his visa. I say Inshaa Allah that was possibly from my Du'aa because a few weeks later he died, Rahmatullahi 'Alayhi. I always think of it and say Alhamdulillah, it might have been my Du'aa that he came all the way from Yemen to LA for medical treatment, I learned from him, then he went back and shortly thereafter he died. So if you can pursue a reputable, righteous Shaykh who fears Allah and is not a lowlife, deluded, sell out modernist or a promoter for

the Kufr or Kuffaar, or those who work for governments, if you can find that then surely go ahead and learn from him and follow him even if he is in the end of the globe.

The Salaf used to consider it a negative characteristic for one to study from books alone. They said:

من كان شيخه كتابه كان خطؤه أكثر من صوابه

If your Shaykh is your book, your mistakes are more than your correctness. When Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen was asked about one who studies through audio tape, he encouraged it but he said learning directly is better because you can discuss and ask. You can apply that factor today because you can ask us, you can email us and you can call us by phone to ask, and those who are in the classical study with us will get precedence in answering their questions Inshaa Allah Ta'aala.

WRITING IS THE TREND OF THE SALAF

Those of you who attended here without pen and paper, you have to go and get your pen and paper. Invest in some pen and paper and write, or you can take notes on your laptop or phone like some here are doing. Whatever method you use, you should document down your knowledge. You should try your best to possibly even type verbatim, and that is your back up. Jotting down notes on your laptop is great. One time I was in North Carolina and a brother was on his phone. Back then I was just recently getting into the technology, and I sort of scolded him for using the phone. After the lecture, he came respectfully to me and showed me his phone, he said look Shaykh, these are all the notes from your lecture. I said Subhan Allah because back then I did not know they also use phones to take notes. So one needs to write down his knowledge.

When I was seven years old I was in Madinah and my father was a student. An Iraqi student with my father, he was from Saamarraa' Rahmatullahi 'Alayhi (he got killed in 1980 in Iraq), he came to me and told me your father is a lion, in class he writes every single word down. And then I used to notice my father in the Haram, in his classes outside the university where I saw him, he would write everything down and always record every single lecture and we still have the tapes until today. So I took it upon myself to do the same, I never ever sat before a Shaykh where I did not write every single thing he said. There are some exceptional things you do not write or that you miss, but I tried my best to write everything verbatim. In fact, I always refer to my notes that I took from Shuyookh.

Writing is the trend of the Salaf. Abdullah Ibn 'Amr used to write the Hadith of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam until Quraysh deterred him from that. Then the Prophet

sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said proceed and write, the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam encouraged him to write the Hadith.

In Sunan ad-Daarimi, Mu'aawiyah Ibn Qurrah Ibn Abi Iyyaas said:

مَنْ لَمْ يَكْتُبْ عِلْمَهُ لَمْ يُعَدَّ عِلْمُهُ عِلْمًا

If you do not write knowledge, your knowledge is not considered anything. Those who do not write knowledge, their knowledge is not considered anything. They may have possibly meant Hadith but even if they did mean that, it still applies to this kind of study that we are doing today. Sa'eed Ibn Jubayr used to write what he hears in sand if he does not have anything to write it down, and when daylight breaks or he finds something to write it down, he goes and writes it down. Similar things about writing are narrated by al-Muwardi, al-Khaleel Ibn Ahmad and others. They either documented or encouraged knowledge to be documented.

AL-USOOL ATH-THALAATHAH

We will start slow and pick up speed as time goes by. Like I said, this is the first of our classical study Inshaa Allah. Everyone should have a copy of this book and these days Alhamdulillah you do not have to go out and buy it, you can go ahead on the internet and print it. I think it is about five pages or so in English or close to that. Before I start, to avoid confusion, the author starts with an introduction of four matters before he gets to the three matters. Then he goes and talks about the three matters (which is the core book) and then there is an ending and a conclusion at the end of the book that we will talk about Inshaa Allah Ta'aala.

Like I said, the book is no more than five pages but it has great, immense benefits. We will take it line by line, possibly even word by word. Today we are only going to take Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem, I do not think we are even going to finish Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem, so we will probably only take Bismillah. He starts off with Bismillah, the Basmalah (بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ) (Bismillah is called the Basmalah). The author starts with Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem and we are going to break that down point by point. As students of knowledge, your understanding to do Bismillah is not like any regular person. There are 1.5 or 1.8 Billion Muslims that are outside and if you ask them why they are saying Bismillah to matters, many may not even know that. As a student of knowledge, you are supposed to get the entire perspective as to why you are saying Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem to everything. Now you should come out with a different understanding as to why you say Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BASMALAH

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

TAWHEED IN BISMILLAHIR-RAHMAANIR-RAHEEM

TAWHEED AL-ULOOHIYYAH

When you say Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem, you are exerting your entire Tawheed to Allah in that matter that you are saying Bismillah to. It has all aspects of Tawheed in it. When you say Bismillah, you are saying Bismillah, Allah permits me to do this, Athinallahu Lee (أذن الله لي). And if Allah did not permit me, I would not do it. So when you are saying Bismillah, you are saying I am doing it for the sake of Allah because Allah permitted me to do this. Allah allowed me to do this, Athinallahu Lee. I am doing it for Your sake Yaa Allah because You permitted and allowed me to do this. That is why you do not say Bismillah when you are committing a sin, may Allah guard us and protect us from that. If someone is drinking alcohol, Laa Samahallah (لا سمح الله), they do not say Bismillah. You do not say Bismillah because if you say Bismillah, you are actually getting two sins. You are saying that Allah permitted you and Allah never permitted that, and you are getting the actual sin for drinking the alcohol. So you are getting two sins if you do say Bismillah, even though believe it or not it is a trend in some Muslim countries that they say Bismillah before drinking alcohol.

That is Tawheed al-Uloohiyyah (توحيد الألوهية). Bismillah, Allah permitted me to do this, I am doing this for the sake of Allah. We are doing this by the permission of Allah, this is Tawheed al-Uloohiyyah.

TAWHEED AR-RUBUBIYYAH

When you write down, who gave you the power to write? Allah gave you the power to write. So when you say Bismillah, you are saying I could not have done this without the power Allah has given me. Bismillah, I do this by the power Allah has given me. Bismillah I eat, because Allah has given me this provision and because had it not been for the power Allah has given me, I would not be able to chew it. Bismillah I write, because if it was not for

Allah giving me the power, my hand would not be able to move (it would be paralysed).

That is like saying Laa Hawla wa Laa Quwwata Illah Billah (لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله). If it was not for the power that Allah has given me to do this act, I would not have done this act.

That is why Allah says:

وَمَا بِكُمْ مِّنْ نُّعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ... ﴿النحل: ٥٣﴾

And whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allah. (Surat an-Nahl: 53)

Every provision you have is from Allah. So that is the second aspect, that is Tawheed ar-Rububiyah (توحيد الربوبية).

TAWHEED AL-ASMAA' WAS-SIFAAT

You are seeking blessing by the name of Allah. Bismillah, you are using the name of Allah to bless whatever you are doing. When you are using the name of Allah and then following with Ar-Rahmaan and Ar-Raheem, those are names, qualities and attributes of Allah that we will discuss Inshaa Allah. You are using the name of Allah to bless the act you are doing, so that is Tawheed al-Asmaa' was-Sifaat (توحيد الأسماء والصفات). That applies to any matter that you say Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem (Basmalah) to.

When I say Bismillah to eat or to sit an exam for example, I say Bismillah to bless that matter (that is Asmaa' was-Sifaat). Allah gave me the power to eat or to write, that is Rububiyah. I do this for the sake of Allah, by the permission of Allah, He permitted me to do this and it is Halaal so I am doing it, that is Tawheed al-Uloohiyah. And likewise, take it for everything else. When you say Bismillah, now you are going to get a different perspective of why you are saying Bismillah. Sometimes you are saying it because you read a Hadith to say it, now you understand why you are saying it.

LINGUISTIC RULES IN BISMILLAHIR-RAHMAANIR-RAHEEM

THE FIRST RULE

The Baa in Bismillah is Isti'aana (إستعان) and Tawakkul (توكل), to seek help and dependence on Allah. The grammatical rule in Arabic is al-Jaar wal-Majroor fil-Basmalah Muta'alliqun Bi-

الجار و المجرور في البسمة متعلق (Mahthoof Taqdeeruhu Fi'lun Laa'iqun bil-Maqaam (بمحوذوف، تقديره فعل لائق بالمقام).

When you say Bismillah in Arabic, it automatically implies you are saying Bismillah I eat, Bismillah I drink or Bismillah I write. You do not have to say the act that you are saying Bismillah to, you do not have to specify I eat, I drink or I write. The Arabic language eliminates the need to mention the act you are saying Bismillah to, it is automatically implied. You do not have to say the word I eat, you do not have to say the word I drink, it is automatically implied in Bismillah. That is among the beauties of the Arabic language.

When you eat and you say Bismillah, it is like saying Bismillah I eat even though you do not tag on the word I eat. I want you to understand this fully. If you are writing and you say Bismillah, it automatically means Bismillah I write. Al-Jaar wal-Majroor fil-Basmalah Muta'alliqun Bi-Mahthoof Taqdeeruhu Fi'lun Laa'iqun bil-Maqaam, that is the grammatical Arabic rule. Now we established that rule, every time I say Bismillah, it automatically means Bismillah I eat, Bismillah I drink if I am drinking, Bismillah I am riding in my car.

It always comes after the name of Allah, note I always said Bismillah I eat, I never said I eat Bismillah. There is a big difference. Why is it Bismillah I eat, not I eat Bismillah?

THE SECOND RULE

The scholars of Nahuw said for two reasons. First of all, the name of Allah comes first in the sentence to bless it.

Secondly, that slight change makes a huge difference because when you delay naming the act in Arabic grammar (by saying Bismillah I eat instead of I eat Bismillah), in essence it limits your action solely for the sake of Allah. The grammatical rule is Ta'kheer al-'Aamil Yufeed al-Hasr (تأخير العامل يفيد الحصر). Bismillah I eat, I do not eat by any name other than Your name. You limit it for the sake of Allah, that is the difference between saying Bismillah I eat and I eat Bismillah. Only for you Yaa Allah I write, only for You Yaa Allah I drink, for Your sake.

PROOFS FOR BEGINNING WITH THE BASMALAH

Why does he start with Bismillah? This is a matter of Ibaadah and when you do Ibaadah, the burden of proof is on you. You have to bring proof when you are doing an Ibaadah, the burden is on the one doing the Ibaadah to bring proof.

IT IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE QUR'AN

The Qur'an starts with Bismillah, he is starting with Bismillah to bless his work.

There are a hundred and fourteen Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem in the Qur'an. There are a hundred and thirteen at the start of the Surahs because Tawbah does not have Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem, but in Surat an-Naml:

إِنَّهُ مِنْ سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿النمل: ٣٠﴾

Verily! It is from Sulaymaan and verily! It (reads): In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. (Surat an-Naml: 30)

This compensates for the one missing in Surat at-Tawbah. Ibn Abbaas said the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam did not know the beginning and end of Surahs except by Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem.

THE PROPHET BEGAN HIS LETTERS WITH BISMILLAHIR-RAHMAANIR-RAHEEM

In Bukhari and Muslim, from Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam to Heraclius, he started that letter with Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem and then he said be peace be upon those who believe:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ، مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى هِرَقْلَ عَظِيمِ
الرُّومِ، السَّلَامَ عَلَى مَنْ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَى ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ

In Sulh al-Hudaybiyyah (صلح الحديبية) when the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam made a treaty with Quraysh, Suhayl Ibn 'Amr came to do the treaty with the Prophet between him and Quraysh. He told Ali:

اُكْتُبْ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Start and write, and say Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem.

Az-Zuhri narrated a similar Hadith like that. Ibn Hajr said it is the trend of the scholars and that which is settled upon, that they always start their works with Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem. Abu Bakr did the same when he sent Anas Ibn Maalik to Bahrain. He sent a letter with him about Sadaqah and he started it with Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem.

THERE IS AN ALLEGED HADITH ABOUT THE BASMALAH

There is an alleged Hadith that any important matter which does not start with Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem is cut off from all good. Aqta' (أقطع), and in another narration Abtar (أبتر). The Hadith is narrated in Ibn Hibbaan and other books and it is weak. It is weakened by Ibn Hajr, as-Suyooti, al-Albaani and other scholars. Some tried hard to authenticate but it is weak. Had that direct Hadith on starting with Bismillah been authentic, we would not have had to mention the other proofs. That Hadith would have been sufficient but because that Hadith is weak, we cannot use it as proof so we resorted to other proof to establish that saying Bismillah on matters like writing books is permissible. Like I said, some scholars tried very hard to authenticate the Hadith, but it is really a weak Hadith and it cannot be authenticated for many reasons that we do not want to get into right now. In fact there is an entire booklet on how the Hadith is weak, Al-Aqaawel Al-Mufassalah Li-Bayaan Hadith Al-Ibtidaa' Bil-Basmalah (الأقاويل المفصلة لبيان حديث الابتداء بالبسملة), from Shaykh al-Kittaani (a famous scholar of Hadith from Maghrib who died around eighty years ago) Rahmatullahi 'Alayhi.

THE BLESSING IN THE BASMALAH

We say Bismillah to bless whatever we say Bismillah on. Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem, to bless whatever act you are doing. Islam encourages Bismillah in everything, every situation that you are in.

When you are riding, Bismillah. Nooh told his people:

...ارْكَبُوا فِيهَا بِسْمِ اللَّهِ... ﴿هُود: ٤١﴾

“Embark therein, in the Name of Allah.” (Surat al-Hud: 41)

When sacrificing:

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ... ﴿الأنعام: ١١٨﴾

Eat from what which the name of Allah has been mentioned on. (Surat al-An'aam: 118)

When eating and drinking. In Bukhari and Muslim, Umar Ibn Abi Salamah said that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam told him:

سَمَّ اللَّهُ وَكُلْ بِيَمِينِكَ ، وَكُلْ مِمَّا يَلِيكَ

Even in relationship with your wife (with your spouse):

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ اللَّهُمَّ جَنِّبْنَا الشَّيْطَانَ وَجَنِّبِ الشَّيْطَانَ مَا رَزَقْتَنَا

When you are turning the lights off, when you are closing a bottle. Jaabir Ibn Abdullah in Bukhari and Muslim said the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said close your bottle with the name of Allah, turn your light off with the name of Allah (with Bismillah).

Get used to mentioning the name of Allah in everything for Barakah in your life. That is one of the reasons Barakah (blessing) has been taken out of our lives. When they resort to materialistic means, we resort to Allah for our Barakah. Bismillah is your means to get Barakah from Allah in everything you do, if you say Bismillah. If you get Allah on your side for Barakah, what else do you need?

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ
وَالْأَرْضِ... ﴿الأعراف: ٩٦﴾

And if the people of the towns had believed and had the Taqwa (piety), certainly, We should have opened for them blessings from the Heaven and the earth. (Surat al-A'raaf: 96)

Allah will open for you blessings from the Heaven and earth, just say Bismillah. Barakah is the blessing from Allah. If you ever wonder why there is no blessing in our time these days, or in our food, our sleep or our recitation of the Qur'an, ask yourself have you been saying the name of Allah and have you been saying it from your heart knowing its meaning? After you listen to this glimpse today, you are coming with an entirely different perspective on Basmalah Inshaa Allah.