

Lesson 2

Imaam al-Barbahaaree *rahimahullaah* said:

All praise is for Allaah who guided us to Islaam and favoured us with it and who brought us out within the best nation so we ask Him for success in attaining that which He loves and is pleased with and for preservation from that which He detests and which He is angry with.

The Explanation:

This is the opening address of the book so he began with *al-hamdulillaah* (all praise is for Allaah) acting in accordance with the Sunnah. So the Prophet *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* used to praise Allaah and extol Him in his letters and in his addresses, and likewise the *Salafus-Saalih* (the Pious Predecessors) and the People of Knowledge. They would begin their books with *bismillaahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem* following the example of the Mighty Book (the Qur~aan), and with *al-hamdulillaahi rabbil `aalameen* (all praise is for Allaah the Lord of the whole of creation) following the action of the Prophet *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam*, since when he wanted to give an address or to speak or to draw attention to something he would praise Allaah and extol Him (repeat words of praise upon Him)¹. Then he would explain whatever he wanted to

¹ Just as occurs in the story of the Islaam of the *Dimaad* al-Azdee *radhiyAllaahu `anhu*.

Translator's side point: This is a long hadeeth which they quote a part of here in the footnote, the story of how the noble companion *Dimaad* from the tribe of Azd became Muslim. It occurs in *Saheeh* Muslim in the book of *Jumu`ah* from a *hadeeth* of ibn `Abbaas *radhiyAllaahu `anhumaa*.

To mention something briefly from the story then it was that whilst Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* was still in Makkah there used to be a man called *Dimaad* who used to perform ruqyah (recite something) upon people who had been afflicted by the *jinn*, so then the story reached him that Allaah's Messengers *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* is such a person that he's saying these new things and the people claim things about him, that he's been afflicted by jinn or the like. So *Dimaad* said I will go and I will see what is with this man. So he came to Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* and asked him to speak to him. When he came he presented that to Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* that if you have some jinn then I can recite over you and bring a remedy about for you. So Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* said to him,

explain, *`alayhis-salaatu wassalaam*, (may Allaah extol him and grant him peace and security). So the author (Imaam al-Barbahaaree) followed this methodology, following the example of those who came before, of the *Salaf* and it is beginning with *al-hamdulillaah* (all praise is for Allaah).

And the meaning of *al-hamdulillaah*, all praise is for Allaah, is that it means, all types of praise are for Allaah the Mighty and Majestic; and *al-hamd* (praise) means to praise and extol the one that you are praising. So Allaah, the Majestic and Most High, is praised for His Self (His Thaat) and He is to be praised for His Names and His Attributes and He, the Perfect, is praised for His Actions, so all types of praise are for Him, because all blessings are from Him, He the Perfect; and as for other than Him, then he is only praised in accordance with the level of his fine treatment. However unrestricted, complete and perfect and comprehensive (covering all types of) praise is for Allaah the Mighty and Majestic. So therefore it is not permissible for you to say, "*Al-hamdu to so and so*" (all praise is to such and such person) with the meaning of it being all-embracing. This is not permissible except for Allaah; just as occurs in the Qur~aan:

"Innal-hamdalillaah nahmaduhu wa nasta`enuhu man yahdihillaahu falaa mudilla lah wa man yudlil falaa haadeeya lah. Ash-hadu an laa ilaaha illAllaah wahadahu laa shareeka lah, wa anna Muḥammadan `abduhu wa rasooluhu amma b`ad."

All praise is for Allaah we praise Him and we seek His aid, whomever Allaah guides then no-one can misguide him and whomever He misguides then no-one can guide him and I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah alone with no partner for Him and that Muḥammad is His slave and His Messenger to proceed.

So when Dimaad heard these words he asked Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* to repeat and Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* repeated these words three times over; each time he was listening and reflecting. And then Dimaad said, "I have heard the speech of the soothsayers and I have heard the speech of the sorcerers and I have heard the speech of the poets and this is none of them, so give me your hand that I will give you the pledge upon Islaam." So Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* asked him, "Is it just for you or is it for your people as well?" So he said, "Rather it is for my people as well." So he accepted Islaam and the narration mentions later on that Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* sent out a detachment of an army that passed his people by, so someone in the army mentioned, "Did you take anything from those people as you passed them by?" So they said, "Yes this pot for purifying." So they said "Return it to them because that is the people of Dimaad and he accepted Islaam on behalf of himself and his people."

The hadeeth is reported by Muslim, hadeeth number 868.

﴿ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴾

All praise is for Allaah the Lord of the whole of creation, the Extremely Merciful One, the Bestower of Mercy

(Sooratul-Faatihah (1), *aayahs* 2 and 3)

﴿ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ ﴾

All praise is for Allaah, He who created the heavens and the earth and who made the darkness and the light.

(Sooratul-An`aam (6), *aayah* 1)

﴿ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ﴾

All praise is for Allaah, the One who created the heavens and the earth.

(Soorah Faatir (35), *aayah* 1)

As for your saying, "I thank so and so," or, "I praise so and so for such and such a thing," meaning for that specific thing on account of which you are praising him or thanking him, then there is no harm. But as for your saying, "*al-hamdu*, (all praise, unrestricted praise) is for so and so," then this is not permissible except with regard to Allaah the Perfect and Most High.

And 'Allaah' is a name from His names, He the Most High, and its meaning is *al-ma-looh al-ma`bood*, the One who is venerated, the One who is worshipped because *uluhiyyah* means `ubudiyyah (worship).

And it (Allaah) is a name that cannot be used except for Allaah and no-one besides Allaah can ever have it as his name. So even the tyrants and the disbelievers and the atheists, none of them called himself 'Allaah'. The Pharaoh did not say, "I am Allaah," rather he said:

﴿ أَنَا رَبُّكُمْ الْأَعْلَى ﴾

I am your highest Lord

(Sooratun-Naazi`aat (79), aayah 24)

So this is a name specific to Allaah the Mighty and Majestic.

And *rabbil-`aalameen* - *Ar-Rabb* means the owner who has the right to control, and *al-`aalameen* is the plural of *`alam* and it is all of the created things; and Allaah, He is their Lord (*Rabb*) and their Creator and their Controller and the One whom they worship and He is their God.

His saying, "All praise is for Allaah who guided us to Islaam" - Islaam is the greatest blessing. He the Most High said:

﴿ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ

﴿ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ﴾

This day have I perfected your religion for you, and completed My favour upon you, and am pleased with Islaam as your religion.

(Sooratul-Maa'idah (5), aayah 3)

So through Islaam the favour was perfected upon the Muslims; and Allaah the Majestic and Most High says:

﴿ قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا ﴾

Say, Let them rejoice at the Bounty of Allaah and at His Mercy

(Soorah Yunus (10), *aayah* 58)

The 'Bounty of Allaah' (here) is Islaam and the 'Mercy' (referred to in the *aayah*) is the Qur~aan so therefore let the people rejoice at Islaam and the Qur~aan².

And this ('All praise is for Allaah who guided us to Islaam and favoured us with it') contains acknowledgement from you that the bounty/favour is from Allaah in His guiding you to Islaam and His directing you to it and making you firm upon it. This is a favour/bounty from Allaah. It has not come about through your effort, nor through your ability, rather it is success given by Allaah, the Perfect and Most High, so He is the One who guided you; and therefore the people of Paradise will say when they enter Paradise on the Day of Resurrection:

﴿ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ ﴾

All praise is for Allaah the One who guided us to this and we would not have been guided had Allaah not guided us.

(Sooratul-A`raaf (7), *aayah* 43)

His saying, "And He favoured us with it" - Islaam is a *minnah*, a favour from Allaah, the Perfect and Most High, since nothing is obligatory upon Allaah towards anyone, rather He just favours His servants with Islaam and with blessings and with well-being and with provision.

² Translator's side point: This explanation was reported by Imaam Muḥammad ibn Jareer at-Ṭabaree in his *tafseer* from some of the *taabi`een*, from Qataadah and from... (recording cuts off)... just the same way as Shaykh al-Fowzaan explained it here.

His saying, **“And he brought us out in the best nation”** - taken from His Saying He the Most High:

﴿ كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ ﴾

You are the best nation brought out for mankind

(Soorah Aale `Imraan (3), *aayah* 110)

So his saying ‘*kuntum*’ ‘you are’ (as Imaam al-Baghawee and others explained it) this is an address to the Muslims. ‘The best nation’ meaning the best of the nations, and *al-ummah*, nation, what it means is a group of people. ‘The best nation brought out for mankind’ - consider His Saying ‘for mankind’. So the best of this nation do not restrict themselves to themselves rather they transmit benefit to mankind in calling them (giving them *da`wah*) and in *jihad* and in teaching and in guiding. It is not sufficient that a person learns himself and acts in himself and abandons the rest of the people; rather he must spread the call, propagate the knowledge and propagate the good and call to Allaah, and command the good and forbid the evil so that he is an active participant in the society of the Muslims. So his saying, “brought out for mankind” its meaning is, *they were not brought out just for themselves alone, but rather Allaah brought them out for mankind.*³

³ Translator’s side point: In explanation of this *aayah* (*kuntum khayra ummatin ukhrijat lin-naas*), *aayah* 110 of Soorah Aale `Imraan, then Imaam at-Tirmidhee reports in his Jaami’ in his Sunan, in the Book of Tafseer, with a chain of narration declared *hasan* and *hadeeth* declared *hasan* by Shaykh al-Albaanee, from Bahaz ibn Hakeem from his father from his grandfather that he heard the Prophet *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* say with regard to His Saying ‘*kuntum khayra ummatin ukhrijat lin-naas*’ he said, **“You are the completion of 70 nations; you are the best of them and the most honourable of them with Allaah.”**

Al-Bukhaaree also brings a narration from Aboo Hurayrah *radhiyAllaahu `anhu* that he said with regard to this *aayah*, “You are the best of the people for the people. You bring them with chains around their necks until they enter into Islaam.” (Meaning you capture them and bring them, and then they see the beauty of Islaam and then enter into Islaam). Shaykh al-Albaanee points out in his abridgement of al-Bukhaaree that Aboo Hurayrah also reports a similar narration directly from Allaah’s Messenger

His saying “**So we ask Him for success in attaining that which He loves and is pleased with**” - a person should ask Allaah for firmness even though he knows the truth and acts upon it and holds it as his belief, then still he should not feel secure that he will not deviate or be put to trial, such that trials and tribulations come to him and overcome him so that he strays away from the path of Allaah, and therefore, he sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam said:

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ

Ya Muqallib al-quloob thabbit qalbee `alaa deenik

O Turner of the hearts, make my heart firm upon your religion⁴

And *al-Khaleel*, the especially beloved one, (the Prophet Ibraaheem) *alayhis-salaatu was-salaam* said in his supplication:

﴿ وَأَجْنِبْنِي وَبَنِيَّ أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَصْنَامَ ﴾ رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ أَضَلَّلَنِي كَثِيرًا مِّن

النَّاسِ ﴿٣٥﴾

And keep me and my sons far removed from worshipping the idols. O my Lord they have caused the misguidance of many of the people.

(Soorah Ibraaheem (14), *aayahs* 35 and 36)

sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam but he doesn't mention *tafseer* of the *aayah*, he just mentions that your Lord is amazed at people who enter Paradise in chains.

⁴ Reported by Imaam Aḥmad in al-Musnad and Ibn Maajah in his Sunan and an-Nasaa-ee in as-Sunan al-Kubraa and Ibn Hibaan in his Saḥeeḥ and al-Haakim in al-Mustadrak `alaa-Saḥeeḥayn, and he declared it authentic to the standard of Muslim and ath-Thahabee agreed. And al-Buṣayree said in Miṣbaaḥuz-Zujaajah (his checking of Ibn Maajah), “Its chain of narration is saḥeeḥ.”

Translator's side point Shaykh al-Albaanee *rahimahullaah* likewise declared this hadeeth saḥeeḥ.

He feared for himself and likewise the stronger a person's *eemaan* in Allaah is then the more he will fear and not feel secure with regards to trials and tribulations and he will not commend himself (declare himself pure, good, fine and so forth) rather he will always and continually ask Allaah for firmness and for a fine conclusion to his life and he will fear having an evil conclusion and he will fear trials and tribulations and he will fear deviation and misguidance and the callers to evil.

His saying “**And for preservation from that which He detests and is angry with**” - so that He guides us and grants us that which He loves and is pleased with, with regard to actions and sayings and beliefs and that He keeps us away from whatever angers Him from sayings and actions and beliefs, since He is the One who guides, He the Perfect and Most High, and He is the One who grants success in attaining correctness and He is the One who shows the correct way and the One who guides the people to it.

Ittiḥaaful-Qaaree bit-Ta'leeqaat `alaa Sharḥis-Sunnah

by Shaykh Saalih ibn Fowzaan al-Fowzaan *hafizahullaah*

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Points discussed by Shaykh Saalih al-Fowzaan *hafizahullaah* in this excerpt include:

- praising Allaah
- Allaah's favour in guiding us to Islaam

- the meaning of 'the best nation'
- we should not feel secure that we will not deviate
- two *du`aas* (supplications) made by two Messengers *`alayhimas-salaatu was-salaam*