

Tab 1

Collection of Translations, Writings, and Teaching Materials
prepared by two students of Islaam
Aboo Shaybah & Umm Ilyaa
(may Allaah pardon their shortcomings)

An English Presentation of the Book

فِقْهُ الْأَدْعِيَةِ وَالْأَذْكَارِ

Understanding Du‘aa’ (Supplicating Allaah) and Thikr (Mentioning Allaah)

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[Episode] 15: The Virtue of Aayatul-Kursee,
as Well as the Virtue of Sooratul-Ikhlaas and Other Chapters of the Qur’aan

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[1] In this episode, we will continue our discussion about particular Chapters and Aayaat in the Qur’aan being superior to others. [In Episode 14], discussion preceded concerning some of the texts of Islaam that show the virtue of Sooratul-Faatihah, which is the most virtuous and magnificent Chapter of the Qur’aan in an absolute sense.

[2] In addition to that, it was authentically narrated from the Prophet (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) that the most virtuous Aayah in the Honourable Qur’aan is Aayatul-Kursee [i.e. 2:255]. In Saheeh Muslim, there is a Hadeeth narrated by Ubayy ibn Ka’b (may Allaah be pleased with him) who stated that Allaah’s Messenger (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) said to him, “Abul-Munthir, among all of the Aayaat that you have memorized from the Book of Allaah, do you know which one of them is the most magnificent?” Ubayy continued: I said, “Allaah and His Messenger have best knowledge about that.” The Prophet (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) asked again, “Abul-Munthir, among all of the Aayaat that you have memorized from the Book of Allaah, do you know which one of them is the most magnificent?” Ubayy continued: I said, اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ “((With respect to Allaah, none has the right to be worshipped except Him: the Ever-Living, the Self-Sufficient Sustainer of all)) [2:255].” Ubayy continued: The Prophet patted me on the chest¹ and remarked, “I swear by Allaah that it is a must for knowledge to be made easy for you, Abul-Munthir.”² In other words: it is a must for knowledge to come to you without difficulty.³

[3] This remarkable Aayah holds such an esteemed rank only due to the magnificence of what it contains in terms of affirming Allaah’s uniqueness, glorifying Him, repeating praise for Him in the best way, and mentioning attributes that describe His absolute majesty and perfection. It contains five names of Allaah, and it contains over twenty attributes of our One Supreme Lord (the Owner of Limitless Blessings and the Most Exalted). Therefore, when it comes to the names and attributes of Allaah, this Aayah contains what no other Aayah in the Qur’aan contains. Shaykh al-Islaam ibn Taymiyyah (may Allaah have mercy upon him) remarked, “In the Qur’aan, no other single Aayah contains what Aayatul-Kursee contains. In the only other similar places—at the beginning of Sooratul-Hadeed and at the end of Sooratul-Hashr—Allaah mentioned several Aayaat, not one single Aayah.”⁴

[4] Based on the preceding, it can be readily understood why one of the virtues of this Honourable Aayah is that if a person recites it at night, there will remain over that person a guard sent by Allaah, and no Shaytaan (i.e. jinn who is rebelliously disobedient towards Allaah) will come close to that person until he reaches the morning. This virtue can be found in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, as part of a long Hadeeth that was narrated by Aboo Hurayrah (may

¹ [Scholars have explained that this was done in a loving manner, as an indication that his chest and heart had been filled with knowledge and wisdom. See Mirqaatul-Mafaateeh, no. 2122; ath-Thajjaaj 16/396].

² Saheeh Muslim, no. 810.

³ [Scholars mentioned that the meaning conveyed by this statement is a supplication for Ubayy; and it is also commendation for him, as well as a testament to the knowledge that Allaah endowed him with, which was reflected by his correct answer. See Mirqaatul-Mafaateeh, no. 2122; ath-Thajjaaj 16/396].

⁴ Jawaab Ahl al-‘Ilm wal-Eemaan, p. 133.

Allaah be pleased with him).⁵

[5] Also among the virtues of Aayatul-Kursee is what was authentically collected in Sunan an-Nasaa'ee and other books, from Aboo Umaamah (may Allaah be pleased with him). He narrated that the Prophet (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) said, "If a person recites Aayatul-Kursee at the end of every obligatory prayer, nothing will prevent him from entering Paradise except him dying⁶." In other words: nothing stands between him and entering Paradise except death. Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allaah have mercy upon him) had remarked, "It reached me that our esteemed teacher, Abul-'Abbaas ibn Taymiyyah (may Allaah bless and purify his soul⁸) had said: "I have not failed to say it after every prayer."⁹

[6] Something else authentically narrated from the Prophet (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) is the superiority of Sooratul-Ikhlaas, and the fact that it is equivalent to a third of the Qur'aan. In Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, there is a Hadeeth narrated by Aboo Sa'eed al-Khudree (may Allaah be pleased with him) in which he said that one man heard another man repeatedly recite قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ((Messenger of Allaah, say, "He is Allaah, the only One who is completely unique)) [112:1] [until the end of the Soorah while praying at night]. When morning came, the man who heard the recitation went to Allaah's Messenger (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) and told him what happened, and it was as though that man thought that the short Soorah recited was relatively little in comparison to longer Chapters in the Qur'aan¹⁰. In response, Allaah's Messenger (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) said, "I swear by the One in whose Hand my soul lies that the Soorah is most certainly equivalent to a third of the Qur'aan."¹¹

[7] al-Bukhaaree also collected a Hadeeth from Aboo Sa'eed (may Allaah be pleased with him) who stated: The Prophet (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) told his Companions, "Is there any one of you who is unable to read one third of the Qur'aan in a single night?" They considered that something difficult to do, and they said, "Which one of us would be able to do that, Messenger of Allaah?" He said in response, "[The Soorah that mentions Allaah being الْوَاحِدُ (the Unique), الصَّمَدُ (the Self-Sufficient Supreme Master whom all creatures need), is equivalent to a third of the Qur'aan."¹²

[8] Scholars have mentioned numerous perspectives concerning how this Soorah is equivalent to a third of the Qur'aan, and the best of them—according to Shaykh al-Islaam ibn Taymiyyah (may Allaah have mercy upon him)—is the perspective that was quoted from Abul-'Abbaas ibn Surayj. According to him, what is meant is that the Qur'aan was sent down containing three general categories: one is rulings [pertaining to actions]; another is promises of reward for obedience, and threats of punishment for disobedience; and the other is Allaah's

⁵ Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, no. 2311.

⁶ [See Fayd al-Qadeer 6/197].

⁷ as-Sunan al-Kubraa by an-Nasaa'ee 6/no. 9928. Graded authentic at the level of Saheeh by al-Albaanee in Silsilatul-Ahaadeeth as-Saheehah, no. 972.

⁸ [See Taaj al-Aroos 16/359; Darj ad-Durar 1/355n (edition published by Majallatul-Hikmah).]

⁹ Zaad al-Ma'aad 1/304.

¹⁰ [See Thakheeratul-Uqbaa 12/553].

¹¹ Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, no. 5013.

¹² Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, no. 5015; and similar in Saheeh Muslim, no. 811, narrated by Abud-Dardaa' (may Allaah be pleased with him).

names and attributes; and this Soorah gathers together the names and attributes of Allaah.¹³

[9] Shaykh al-Islam [ibn Taymiyyah] (may Allaah have mercy upon him) had said, “Although [the Chapter of the Qur’aan beginning with] قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ is equivalent to a third of the Qur’aan, that does not mean that the Chapter is more virtuous than Sooratul-Faatihah, nor does it mean that reading the Chapter three times can be used as a replacement for reading the entire Qur’aan. In fact, the Salaf (foremost generations of Islaam) held that it was discouraged to read it more than once when reading the entire Qur’aan; and they held that it should be read only once, just as it is written only once in the Mus-haf (written copy of the Qur’aan). This is because the Qur’aan is to be read the way it is written in the Mus-haf, without addition or omission... However, if reading [the Chapter of the Qur’aan beginning with] قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ on its own (i.e. not as part of reading the entire Qur’aan), that Chapter can be read three times or even more; and when a person reads it, he would attain a reward that is equivalent to the reward for reading a third of the Qur’aan. That being said, it should also be kept in mind that the ‘equivalent’ of something is of a different nature than the thing itself.”¹⁴ End of remark [from ibn Taymiyyah (may Allaah have mercy upon him)].

[10] In addition, there are many Ahaadeeth that contain mention of virtues related to Chapters of the Qur’aan, and the rewards that can be attained by a person who reads them. Some of those Ahaadeeth are inauthentic; in fact, some of them are fabrications that have been attributed to Allaah’s Messenger (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection). In light of that, it is very important that a Muslim endeavour to know which of those Ahaadeeth are authentic. That can be done by asking the people who have sound knowledge, and by discussing the topic with those who are specialized in that field. Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allaah have mercy upon him) made the following comment in his book al-Manaar al-Muneef fi-Saheeh wad-Da’eef: “Among [the fabricated Ahaadeeth] are those that mention various virtues of Chapters of the Qur’aan—and mention that if a person reads such-and-such Chapter, he would attain such-and-such reward—from the beginning of the Qur’aan until its end. ath-Tha‘labee and al-Waahidee cited such Ahaadeeth at the beginning of every Chapter [in their explanations of the Qur’aan’s meanings], and az-Zamakhsharee cited them at the end of every Chapter [in his explanation of the Qur’aan’s meanings]. ‘Abdullaah ibn al-Mubaarak had said, ‘I consider it the case that they were fabricated by individuals who display Islaam outwardly while they reject it within themselves’¹⁵.”

[11] Ahaadeeth that were authentically transmitted concerning the virtues of various Chapters of the Qur’aan include: the Hadeeth about nothing like Sooratul-Faatihah being sent down in the Tawraah, nor in the Injeel, nor in the Zaboor; the Hadeeth about Sooratul-Baqarah and Soorah Aali ‘Imraan being sources of immense light¹⁶; the Hadeeth about Aayatul-Kursee being the most prominent among all Aayaat throughout the Qur’aan; the Hadeeth about if a person reads the last two Aayaat of Sooratul-Baqarah at night, they would suffice him; the Hadeeth mentioning that if Sooratul-Baqarah is read within a dwelling, no Shaytaan (i.e. jinns who are rebelliously disobedient towards Allaah) would come near that dwelling; the Hadeeth mentioning that if a person reads the first ten Aayaat of Sooratul-Kahf, he would be protected against the trials that come with the Dajjaal; the Hadeeth about [the Chapter beginning with] قُلْ

¹³ Jawaab Ahl al-‘Ilm wal-Eemaan, p. 113.

¹⁴ Jawaab Ahl al-‘Ilm wal-Eemaan, pp. 133-134.

¹⁵ [Mu‘jam Mustalahaat al-‘Uloom ash-Shar‘iyyah, p. 870].

¹⁶ [See Mirqaatul-Mafaateeh, no. 2120; at-Tanweer 2/606].

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ being equivalent to a third of the Qur’aan, keeping in mind as well that no other Soorah has authentic Aḥaadeeth about its virtues like this one does; and the Hadeeth about الْمُعَوِّذَتَانِ (the Two Chapters Used for Seeking Refuge), which mentions that no people who seek refuge with Allaah have sought refuge with Him by way of anything else like these two Chapters, as well as the Prophet (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) saying, ‘Some Aayaat were sent down to me. Nothing else like them has been seen’, and he then read [Sooratul-Falaq and Sooratun-Naas].

[12] There are other Aḥaadeeth as well, though at a lower level of authenticity than the preceding. They include: the Hadeeth about [the Chapter that begins with] إِذَا زُلْزِلَتْ being equivalent to half of the Qur’aan, the Hadeeth about [the Chapter that begins with] قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ being equivalent to a quarter of the Qur’aan, and the Hadeeth about [the Chapter that begins with] تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ being the source of protection against punishment in the grave. All other Aḥaadeeth after those—such as ones saying that whoever reads such-and-such Soorah will attain such-and-such reward—are fabrications ascribed to Allaah’s Messenger (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection). Furthermore, the person who fabricated them admitted doing so, and had said, ‘My aim was to shift people’s focus to the Qur’aan so that they would be preoccupied with it rather than other things.’ Furthermore, among the ignorant individuals who had fabricated Aḥaadeeth of this type, there were those who had said, ‘We lie in favour of Allaah’s Messenger (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection), and we do not lie against him.’ Ignorant individuals of this nature did not grasp that when they attribute things to him that he did not actually say [or do], they have lied against him in reality, and they expose themselves to a very serious threat of punishment.” End of remark from ibn al-Qayyim (may Allaah have mercy upon him).¹⁷

[13] A related concept to also be understood well is that the extent to which people attain the virtues brought about by reading these and other Chapters of the Qur’aan varies in accordance with the state of the people themselves when they read them. Reading with contemplation is more virtuous than reading without contemplation, and when some individuals read some Chapters of the Qur’aan [that do not have specific virtues related to them], those individuals might maintain a state of humility towards Allaah with focus¹⁸, contemplation of what they read, comprehension of Allaah’s speech, and genuine resolve to act in compliance. Thus, the state of such individuals while reading is better and more virtuous than the state of others who are not like that, even though the others may be reading Chapters of the Qur’aan that do have particular virtues related to them. Not only that, the state of a single individual can vary at different times, and with respect to a particular deed that has relatively few virtues, that individual might perform that deed in a way that reaches the highest level of completion, which would render that instance of what he does even better for him than other deeds he performs [at a lesser degree of completion] even though they may have relatively more virtues related to them.

[14] Shaykh al-Islam ibn Taymiyyah (may Allaah have mercy upon him) commented, “Among the people of knowledge was an individual who would use [the Chapter beginning with] قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ as a Ruqyah (set of words that can be read as a remedy for illness), and it

¹⁷ al-Manaar al-Muneef, pp. 115-117.

¹⁸ [See ath-Thajjaaj 6/138; Sharḥ Ma’aanis-Salaah, by Maahir al-Faḥl, pp. 54-55.

would bring about remarkable blessings. However, when others would do so, the same did not take place. As a result, he said that not every person who reads **قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ** is able to benefit every single individual whom he reads it for.”¹⁹

[15] The difference in the effect of those two readings, even though the Chapter being read was one and the same, is indeed only due to the differences in the extent of what lies in the readers’ hearts in terms of being true to Allaah, devoting all worship purely to Allaah, contemplating what is being read, remaining certain about the truth from Allaah, desiring the good that lies with Allaah, and maintaining humility towards Allaah with focus.

[16] Allaah alone is the One whom we hope will grant us the special assistance that we require in order to actualize those qualities and to fulfil what they require in the best way. Allaah alone (the Owner of Limitless Blessings and the Most Exalted) is the One who grants people the special assistance that they require to accomplish all good things.

¹⁹ Jawaab Ahl al-‘Ilm wal-Eemaan, p. 141.

Discussion and Review

Q1 What is the most virtuous Soorah (Chapter) in the Qur'aan?

Q2 What is the most virtuous Aayah in the Qur'aan?

Q3 Which Companion did the Prophet (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) ask about the most magnificent Aayah in the Qur'aan?

Q4 (Answer not in handout) What have scholars mentioned regarding the reason behind that Companion giving a certain answer initially, and then giving a different answer when asked again?

Q5 What did the Prophet (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) say and do when he heard that Companion's response, and what did each of those imply?

Q6 What are some reasons for why that particular Aayah holds such an esteemed rank?

Q7 How many names of Allaah does that Aayah contain?

Q8 How many attributes of Allaah does that Aayah contain?

Q9 What remark was cited from ibn Taymiyyah about the content of that Aayah with respect to all other Aayaat in the Qur'aan?

Q10 What two other virtues of that Aayah were mentioned?

Q11 Who recounted something about a practice of ibn Taymiyyah related to that Aayah, and what was that practice?

Q12 What basic meaning was authentically narrated from the Prophet (may Allaah mention him with commendation and grant him protection) regarding the superiority of Sooratul-Ikhlaas?

Q13 What was cited as the best perspective that scholars have mentioned concerning how to understand that meaning?

Q14 What other perspective can be understood from the statement of ibn Taymiyyah that was cited regarding reading this Soorah?

Q15 Why is it important that a Muslim endeavour to know which of the Ahaadeeth that contain mention of virtues related to Chapters of the Qur'aan are authentic, and how can that be done?

Q16 What did ibn al-Qayyim say regarding the grading of the Ahaadeeth found in some books of Tafseer that mention "if a person reads such-and-such Chapter, he would attain such-and-such reward" for every Soorah of the Qur'aan from its beginning to its end?

Q17 How did ibn al-Qayyim categorize the Ahaadeeth that were transmitted concerning the virtues of various Chapters in the Qur'aan?

Q18 What justification was used by some who fabricated Ahaadeeth concerning the virtues of various Chapters in the Qur'aan, and is that a valid one?

Q19 What basic factor can cause a variation in the extent to which different individuals attain the virtues brought about by reading various Chapters of the Qur'aan?

Q20 What are some elements of that basic factor that were cited?

Q21 How did we choose to express the meaning of the Arabic term "Ruqyah"?

Q22 What remark was cited from ibn Taymiyyah about something that was done and said regarding Sooratul-Ikhlaas?

Q23 What comment was made about the state of a person for whom reading Sooratul-Ikhlaas as a Ruqyah would be effective by Allaah's permission?