

The Introduction to the Explanation

In the Name of Allaah the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy.

All Praise is for Allaah the Lord of the whole of creation and may Allaah extol and grant peace and security to our prophet Muḥammad and to his true followers and to his companions, all of them.

And to Proceed:

So before us is this treatise – the treatise “The Three Fundamental Principles” - and it is a tremendous treatise which is brief, supported by evidences from the Book of Allaah and the sunnah of his Messenger *sallaahu‘alaihiwasallam*.

And this small treatise is about a tremendous fundamental matter from the fundamentals of Islaam and it is *al-‘aqeedah* – creed and belief. And the scholars give importance to these brief works, authoring them and exerting themselves to shorten them and refine them, then they would encourage their students to memorise them so that they should remain fundamental assets for them and a store of provision for them which they can derive benefit from, and bring benefit to others by means of them.

And beginning with these shorter works is the foundation for the students of knowledge, so the student of knowledge should begin by learning little by little, taking from the initial points of knowledge and its fundamentals and then proceed in stages through it.

So these brief works are the path leading on to the longer works. So it is not possible for the longer works to be understood except after the brief works have been understood and then the person has proceeded on from them in stages. And therefore they said about the meaning of His saying, He the Most High:

﴿وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّيْنَ عِنَّمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكُتُبَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ﴾ آل عمران: ٧٩

But rather be *rabbaaniyyoon* (wise scholars who cultivate the people) by your teaching them the Book and your studying it [3:79]

The word *rabbaaniyyoon* - they are those who begin with the small matters of knowledge before the greater ones. They cultivate themselves and their students beginning with the smaller matters and moving on to the larger matters, and this is something natural, because all things begin from their roots and their foundations and then they grow bigger and larger after that.

As for the person who pounces upon knowledge from its top, then this person will just tire himself out and will not attain anything. Whereas the one who begins with the fundamentals and proceeds in stages, this is the person, who by the permission of Allaah will be proceeding in the correct way and with sound direction.

He the Most High said:

﴿ يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلِ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَى وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا ﴾ البقرة: ١٨٩

They ask you about the crescent moons. Say: they are signs to mark periods of time for mankind and for the *hajj*. And righteousness is not that you enter the houses from their backs, but rather righteousness is the quality of the person who has *taqwa* (who fears and is dutiful to Allaah). And enter houses through their proper doors. [2:189]

Those people asked a question about the crescent moons: why does the crescent moon begin as something small and then grow larger until it becomes full, then it grows smaller until it is again a crescent? So Allaah rebukes them, and directed them towards asking about that which will benefit them, and that they should come to the houses of knowledge from their correct doors.

As for asking about the crescent moon and its conditions and its smallness and its largeness, then this has no benefit in it for them, rather benefit is that they ask about what they are in need of and that is awareness of the benefits of the crescent moon, and therefore He said:

﴿ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ ﴾

Say: they are signs to mark periods of time for mankind [2:189]

So He explained their benefits and that is that Allaah makes them signs marking periods of time for mankind by means of which they can become aware of acts of worship and dealings and timespans and other than that.

So He directed them to the benefits of the crescent moons and He did not respond to their question about the reality of the crescent moons, because there was no benefit for them in that, and so that He should direct them towards what is befitting for them to ask about and it is the doors to knowledge, not the back-doors of knowledge and the superfluous unnecessary matters which they have no need of. And if they do have some need of them, then it is only a slight need.

The Author's Introduction

قال رحمه الله: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

He, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: In the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy.¹

[1]:

He began, may Allaah have mercy upon him, this treatise with the *Basmalah*, following the example of the Book of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, since the first thing which you see in the *mus-haf* (the printed copy of the Qur'aan), and before every *soorah* of it is, "In the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy".

So therefore it is used to begin treatises, or letters and books and works following the example of the Book of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic. And likewise the Prophet *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam* used to write it at the start of his letters when he wrote to the governors and the chiefs and to those who were in the different regions of the earth, calling them to Islaam, he would begin his letter with, "In the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy".

And he *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam* used to begin his talks and his speech with, "In the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy", which shows that beginning with, "In the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy", is the sunnah of the Messenger *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam*, just as Sulaymaan *'alaibissalaam* when he wrote to Bilqees the Queen of Saba' he began his letter with, "In the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy":

﴿ قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أِنِّي الْآتِي إِلَى كِنْتِكُمْ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِنَّهُ مِنْ سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

﴿ لَا تَعْلَوْا عَلَيَّ وَأَتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾ النمل: ٢٩ - ٣١

She said: O chiefs, a noble letter has been delivered to me, it is from Sulaymaan, and it reads, "In the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy". Do not be haughty, and refuse what I call you to, but rather come to me in submission". [27:29-31]

So it is befitting to begin with, "In the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy", in every important affair and in every work which has importance and value, and in every letter.

So therefore those people who do not begin their works and their letters with, "In the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy", those people have left the Prophetic sunnah and left following the example of the Book of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic and perhaps because of that these books of theirs and these letters of theirs do not contain blessing and do not contain benefit, because they are deprived of, "In the

Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy”. So therefore, they are deprived of benefit.

Why did they abandon, “In the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy”? They abandoned it because it is a sunnah, and they flee away from the sunnah, or they blindly follow those people who flee away from the sunnah. So it is befitting that attention is given to the like of this.

So the meaning of, “In the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy”, is seeking aid through the Name of Allaah.

So his saying, “With the Name of Allaah”, this is a preposition, and a word which is governed by the preposition, connected to something which is left unmentioned, whose meaning is taken to be, “I seek aid through the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy”, or, “I begin with the Name of Allaah, the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy”, seeking blessings by means of it and seeking the aid of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic.

So therefore it is a tremendous preface for speech and for books and for letters, so a person seeks the aid of Allaah in its beginning and seeks blessing by means of His Name, He the Perfect and Most High.

The First Treatise: The Four Matters Which are Contained in Soorat-ul-'Asr

Knowledge

اعْلَمْ رَحِمَكَ اللَّهُ

Know! May Allaah have Mercy upon you²

[2]:

His saying, “Know!”, it is a word which indicates giving importance to the topic, so when he said, “Know!”, then its meaning is that the matter which he is going to put before you is a matter which is important. So this word, “Know!”, indicates the importance of the topic which he is beginning it with.

And the meaning of, “Know!”, Is that it is a command from, ‘knowledge’, meaning, ‘learn!’. And knowledge means: to comprehend something as it actually is, or, to perceive something in accordance with how it actually is.

To comprehend something in a manner which is contrary to how it actually is in reality, or to perceive something contrary to the reality of it, this is ignorance, and it is the opposite of knowledge.

His saying, “May Allaah have Mercy upon you”, this is a supplication for the seeker of knowledge, so the shaikh makes supplication for the student of knowledge, that Allaah has Mercy upon him, and that He the Perfect and Most High should place Mercy upon them. So this shows the kindness of the teacher towards the student, and that he should begin with good and fine speech, and with righteous supplication, so that this has an effect upon him and so that he turns attentively to his teacher.

As for if the teacher begins with stern words, and with speech which is not appropriate, then this will alienate (i.e. will cause the student to flee). So what is obligatory upon the teacher and upon whoever calls to Allaah and whoever commands the good and forbids the evil is to be kind and gentle with those he addresses with making supplication for him and complimenting him and speaking with mild speech, because this is more likely to bring about acceptance.

As for the obstinate opponent and the person who proudly refuses to accept, then there is a different way of addressing this person. Allaah the Perfect said:

﴿ وَلَا تُجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ وَقُولُوا آمَنَّا بِالَّذِي
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَهُنَا وَإِلَهُكُمْ وَوَحْدٌ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾ العنكبوت: ٤٦

And do not debate with the People of the Book except in a manner which is best, except those of them who transgress. And say we truly believe in what was sent

