The Beautiful And Lofty Names Of Allāh
Compiled and Taught By: Shaykh Abū Ḥakīm Bilāl Davis (حفظه الله)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

Class 3 | 20th Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1446 | 18th May 2025

The Greatest Name of Allāh is 'Allāh':

Even though we have a number of aḥādīth that indicate that the greatest name of Allāh (عز وجل) is present in certain ayāt or narrations, or found in certain duʿāʾ, **the most correct statement (qawl aṣ-ṣaḥīḥ) is that the greatest name of Allāh is Allāh.** This is the position of Imām ibnul Qayyim and others from the Muḥaqqiqūn who hold that the greatest name of Allāh is Allāh. Ultimately, **all of the names of Allāh return to the name Allāh,** which indicates and affirms His attributes, divinity and worship. These are all attributes that free Allāh (عز وجل) from any likeness to His creation and from any deficiency. The Messenger (ﷺ) himself said in the ḥadīth of ʿĀʾishah,

"**لاَ أُحْصِي ثَنَاءً عَلَيْكَ أَنْتَ كَمَا أَثْنَيْتَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ - I cannot fully praise You, for You are as You have praised Yourself**." [Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 486].

So in this name, Allāh (عز وجل) comprises every form of perfection, praise, glory, beauty and generousity that He has affirmed for Himself. This name is not mentioned upon anything except that it has an effect on the creation, either by:

- removing fear
- relieving from misfortune
- alleviating anxiety

- bringing ease to difficulty
- bringing strength to the weak
- bringing honour to those who are humiliated
- enriching the poor
- bringing comfort to the one who feels uneasy and estranged
- bringing aid and victory to the one who's overcome
- bringing refuge to the fugitive
- causing good deeds to be brought closer etc. etc.

Indeed, the heavens and the earth were created with this name. Through this name, the wretched and the victorious are divided. Those who establish the name and glorify Allāh and worship Him alone, are no doubt of the victorious and are from the party of Allāh.

The Origin of The Name Allāh:

The scholars differ over the linguistic origin and derivative of the name. Is it derived from something linguistically or is it a name that Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has established for Himself?

1. First position – the name is derived from 'Al' and 'ʾIlāh':

From the people of knowledge are those who hold that the name is derived from al (ال) and ʾilāh (إله). Al meaning 'the' and ʾilāh meaning 'deity'. When the alif from ʾilāh is removed, they come together to make Allāh. There is idghām (bringing together) between the alif of 'al' and the lām of ʾilāh. **So, al and ʾilāh come together to make Allāh. Allāh is Al-ʾIlāh - The Only True Diety Worthy of Worship.**

2. Second position – the name is not derived from anything:

Other people of knowledge hold that the name Allāh is not derived from anything but that (ال) at the beginning of the name is from the origin of the word itself. It is not the alif and lām that make an indefinite article or an indefinite noun, definite. Therefore, for this linguistic reason, it is permissible to use (يا) 'Yā' with Allāh. Linguistically, any word that has alif and lām at its beginning, then the 'yā of nidā (يَاءُ النِّدَاء)' cannot be used with it.

E.g. al-mudarris (the teacher) – (المدرس). If you wish to call upon him you wouldn't say 'yā al-mudarris!' (!يا المدرس). Instead, you would remove ال and you would say, 'yā mudarris!'

(!يا مدرس). E.g. as- sāʾiq (the driver). You wouldn't say, "yā as-sāʾiq! (!يا السائق). Rather it is "yā sāʾiq! (!يا سائق).

The fact that one can call upon Allāh with yā of nidā - "Yā Allāh!" indicates that (ال) at the beginning is not the ال of at-taʿrīf (definition) but that it is from the origin of the construction of the word itself and of the name itself. **The correct position is that of Imām ibn Al-Qayyim and others which is the first position, that it is derived from Al-ʾIlāh.**

<u>All of Allāh's Names Return to The Name 'Allāh':</u>

Imām al-Qurṭubī (رحمه الله) mentioned that it is the greatest and most comprehensive of His names to the extent that some of the scholars have said that it is the greatest name of Allāh that no one but He Himself has named Himself with it and for that reason, it has not been given a dual, nor a plural. There is only one Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) and this is one of the meanings of the statement of Allāh,

﴿...هَلۡ تَعۡلَمُ لَهُۥ سَمِيّٗا﴾

"Do you know any similar to Him?"

[Sūrah Maryam; 19:65]

He is the true deity that is described with characteristics of lordship and He is the one that is truly unique as seen in His name Al-Aḥad (The Unique). **All of His names return to the name Allāh:** Ar-Raḥmān, Ar-Raḥīm, Al-Quddūs, As-Salām, Al-Muʾmin etc. Imām Ibn Al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) mentions that this is why Allāh says,

﴿وَلِلَّهِ ٱلۡأَسۡمَآءُ ٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ فَٱدۡعُوهُ بِهَا﴾

"And the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allāh so call upon Him by them…"

[Sūrah Maryam; 19:65]

Ar-Raḥmān, Ar-Raḥīm, Al-Quddūs, As-Salām, Al-ʿAzīz, Al-Hakīm are all from the names of Allāh and not the other way around. It is not said that Allāh is from the name Ar- Raḥmān or that Allāh is from the name Al-ʿAzīz. Rather, all of the beautiful names of

Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) return to the name Allāh. Therefore, **the one who calls upon Allāh, should combine supplicating with the name Allāh with those names and attributes that are specific to one's need.**

<u>Allāh Follows Up The Name 'Allāh' With Other Names:</u>

There are numerous verses in the Qurʾān that indicate that Allāh (عز وجل) refers to Himself by Allāh and then follows that up with mention of His other names. For example, Allāh says,

﴿ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ۖ هُوَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ۝ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْمَلِكُ ٱلْقُدُّوسُ ٱلسَّلَٰمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُ ٱلْمُهَيْمِنُ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْجَبَّارُ ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴾

"He is Allāh, beside Whom lā ʾilāha ʾillā huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but Him) The All-Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful. He is Allāh, beside Whom lā ʾilāha ʾillā huwa, The King, The Holy, The Flawless, The Giver of Security, the Watcher over His creatures, the All-Mighty, the Compeller, the Supreme. Glory be to Allāh! (High is He) above all that they associate as partners with Him."

[Sūrah Al-Ḥashr; 59:22-23]

Here, Allāh began with the name Allāh and then He follows it up with other names:

- **ʿĀlim al-Ghayb (The Knower of the Unseen)**
- **Ash-Shahādah (The Witness)**
- **Ar-Raḥmān (The Most Merciful)**
- **Ar-Raḥīm (The Bestower of Mercy)**
- **Al-Mālik (The King)**
- **Al-Quddūs (The Holy)**
- **As-Salām (The Flawless)**
- **Al-Muʾmin (The Giver of Security)**
- **Al-Muhaymin (The Ever Watchful)**
- **Al-ʿAzīz (The All-Mighty)**
- **Al-Jabbār (The Compeller)**
- **Al-Mutakabbir (The Supreme)**

All of the attributes of majesty, mercy, beauty etc are found in the name Allāh. This is an indication that the greatest name of Allāh is Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى).

The Dhikr Of Allāh Brings Tranquility To The Heart:

Prior to Allāh blessing you with guidance, even if you were living a comfortable life, you were, in actuality, lost and misguided. Imagine that this khair and barakah of knowing Allāh (عز وجل) is stripped from you and you return to the darkness that you were in. This is indeed the greatest calamity that can befall any individual, so one should glorify Allāh by way of His great name Allāh. He is the only one to whom the servant should turn to and seek refuge from and there is no true protector and helper except Him.

For those suffering from anxiety and stress, increase in the dhikr of Allāh and draw closer to Him. Stress is related to an affair from the dunya and it is only Allāh (عز وجل) Who can alleviate these psychological issues of the dunya. Allāh says,

﴿ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ ٱلْقُلُوبُ ﴾

"Verily in the rememberance of Allāh do the hearts find tranquility."

[Sūrah Ar-Raʿd; 13:28]

The true servant of Allāh submits to Him and in periods of ghafla (heedlessness), when their desires overpower them, then they seek the good pleasure of Allāh and turn quickly in repentance to Him. They recognise their error and return to Allāh fearing His displeasure. They would find that the dhikr of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) would quickly replace the distress and disturbance to their tranquility that they were undergoing.

Therefore, the meaning then of this term Al-ʾIlāh is that Allāh is the only One Who is worthy of worship, as Shaykh Al-Islām ibn Taymiyyah and others have mentioned. **He is the object of worship – Al-Maʾlūh.** Allāh says,

﴿ وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴾

“And I created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).”

[Sūrah Al-Dhāriyāt; 51:56]

When we say, “Ash-hadu an lā ʾilāha ʾill Allāh - I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh”, this statement is not just declaring that we accept that Allāh is the Creator, but **it is declaring that this statement encompasses every single religion and every single form of being of Islām that was brought by the prophets and the messengers of the past.** It is the greatest statement ever revealed by Allāh and as we mentioned earlier, due to it, people are divided into believer and disbeliever, wretched and victorious, righteous and wicked, and it affirms Allāh 's exclusive right to be worshipped.

<u>Passages From The ʿUlamāʾ Regarding The Name Allāh:</u>

Note that you will find these statements repeating themselves in numerous works among the people of knowledge.

1. Shaykh ʿAbdillāh ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Nāṣir as-Saʿdī (رحمه الله) mentions that Allāh is the one who is worshipped, the possessor of divinity and the lord over all of creation. Due to the divine attributes of perfection that He embodies, He has declared himself to be Allāh, the one to whom all meanings of divinity belong. The name Allāh encompasses all of the beautiful names and the mighty attributes of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى).

2. **Imām Ibn Al-Qayyim (رحمه الله)** mentions that the term ʾilāh refers to the one who is worshipped with love, devotion, reverence and honor. There may be gods who are worshipped, but their shirk is magnified when they worship those idols. He additionally mentions that the term al-ʾIlāh encompasses all attributes of perfection, majesty, and thus includes all of the beautiful names of Allāh. He mentioned that the name Al-ʾIlāh encompasses the one who is deserving of all praise and how much more when it is combined with His kindness, blessings, forbearance, forgiveness, goodness and mercy.

3. **Imām al-Qurṭubī (رحمه الله)** mentions that Allāh is the greatest and most comprehensive of all of His names. If we were to say for example that the greatest

name of Allāh is Al-Ḥayy Al-Qayyūm, then Allāh encompasses and comprises Al-Ḥayy Al Qayyūm. The name Allāh is the greatest and most comprehensive of all of His names and it is not pluralised or dualised grammatically. This is one of the interpretations of the verse,

﴿لِعِبَٰدَتِهِۦ ۚ هَلۡ تَعۡلَمُ لَهُۥ سَمِيّٗا ﴾

“There is nothing similar to Him.”

[Sūrah Maryam; 19:65]

Evidence Recap For The Greatest Name Of Allāh:

1. The ḥadīth where the Prophet (ﷺ) heard a man supplicating, saying,

"اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِأَنِّي أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ أَنْتَ اللهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، الأَحَدُ الصَّمَدُ، الَّذِي لَمْ يَلِدْ، وَلَمْ يُولَدْ، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ"

“O Allāh, I ask you by my testimony that You are Allāh, there is no God but You, the One, the Eternal Refuge, who does not give birth and was not born, and to whom no one is equal,” (Sūrah Al-Ikhlās). The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “**By the One in whose hand is my soul, he has asked Allāh by His greatest name, for which He answers when called upon and He gives when asked**.”

So he began the duʿāʾ with Allāh. This is the evidence of those who hold that Al-Aḥad (The Unique) and Aṣ-Ṣamad (The Self-Sufficient) are from the name combinations that indicate the greatest name of Allāh (عز وجل). Allāh says,

﴿ قُلۡ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدٌ

“Say: "He is Allâh The One.

ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّمَدُ

Allāh the Self-Sufficient.

لَمۡ يَلِدۡ وَلَمۡ يُولَدۡ

He begets not, nor was He begotten.

وَلَمۡ يَكُن لَّهُۥ كُفُوًا أَحَدُۢ﴾

And there is none equal or comparable unto Him.”

[Sūrah Al-Ikhlās; 112]

The Common Denominator Among Allāh 's Names Is The Name Allāh:

You will notice with these names: Al-Ḥayy and Al-Qayyūm, and Al-Aḥad and Aṣ-Ṣamad, that they are always mentioned alongside the name Allāh. Even though different names are mentioned across the texts based on specific circumstances or based on the Prophet (ﷺ) being accompanied by different companions, **the one common denominator in all of these narrations is the name Allāh. Allāh is the name that is commonly mentioned in all of these texts.** Therefore, from the most correct and strongest of the positions, is that it is the greatest name of Allāh (عز وجل).

Including The Name Allāh With Other Names Increases Duʿāʾ Being Answered:

When supplicating, one should supplicate with a name that is specific to one's circumstance and combine that with the name Allāh. This will no doubt increase the likelihood of one's duʿāʾ being answered. Other instances that will increase chances of being answered are: while rain is falling, during a journey and the last hour of Jumuʿah. Allāh is not only His greatest name but it is His main title. When Allāh addressed Mūsá (عليه السلام), He referred to Himself as Allāh. He said,

﴿ إِنَّنِيٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعۡبُدۡنِي وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ لِذِكۡرِيٓ ﴾

"Verily! I am Allāh! lā ʾilāha ʾillā anā (none has the right to be worshipped but I), so worship Me, and perform Aṣ-Ṣalāt for My Remembrance."

[Sūrah Ṭā Há; 20:14]

When Allāh acquainted Mūsá (عليه السلام) with the fact that he was going to be sent as a messenger, the first thing that He mentioned to him is, "Indeed I am Allāh!" One of the benefits drawn is that the name of Allāh has an effect upon the believer. When a person understands clearly that Allāh is the name that comprises all of the names of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى), then it goes without saying that all of the effects of every name upon īmān is present within the name Allāh and it isn't restricted to a certain number of effects.

The Effect Of The Names Upon The Creation:

1. Increasing in love for Allāh:

Certain names instill great love in the heart of the believer for his Lord. His love for Allāh surpasses love for himself, his family or the entire dunya because he knows that Allāh (عز وجل) is the only true deity deserving of worship; the bestower of blessings. This no doubt instills within his heart love and it goes without saying that it should cause the believer to love whatever Allāh loves, e.g. the affair of al-walāʾ wal barāʾ (loving and hating for the sake of Allāh) - he loves what Allāh (عز وجل) loves he hates what Allāh (عز وجل) hates and he has allegiance and loyalty for His sake and enmity against falsehood.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

ثَلاَثٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ وَجَدَ حَلاَوَةَ الإِيمَانِ أَنْ يَكُونَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا سِوَاهُمَا، وَأَنْ يُحِبَّ الْمَرْءَ لاَ يُحِبُّهُ إِلاَّ لِلَّهِ، وَأَنْ يَكْرَهَ أَنْ يَعُودَ فِي الْكُفْرِ كَمَا يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يُقْذَفَ فِي النَّارِ

“There are three traits, whoever possesses them will taste the sweetness of īmān:

1. That Allāh and His Messenger are more beloved to him than anything else.
2. That he loves a person only for the sake of Allāh.
3. That he hates to return to disbelief after Allāh has saved him from it, just as he would hate to be thrown into the Fire.” [Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī #16]

Imagine if a human being was limited in ability or perfection but he shows kindness, then the people would in turn be inclined towards him because he was known to be a kind and generous individual. For e.g. if you found yourself to be in a situation of need and then someone helped you, you in turn praise his generousity, and then this good deed of his spreads to people who do not even know this persom, the more you hear about his generousity the more you cannot help but love this individual. Farless for Allāh whose bounties are limitless and unceasing in every moment, at every time and in every place. When you consider that everything around you (nice car and house) is a blessing from Allāh from His generosity, then great is your love for Him. Now condider if He didn’t bless you, will you begrudge Him? Every favour from Allāh upon His creation is an indication why we should love Allāh (عز وجل).

2. Increasing in Reliance on Allāh:

Likewise, from the effect of the name upon īmān is that one relies upon Allāh. When one is in a situation and he calls upon Allāh and pours his heart and soul out to Allāh, he knows as the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

" إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَيِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ يَسْتَحِي إِذَا رَفَعَ الرَّجُلُ إِلَيْهِ يَدَيْهِ أَنْ يَرُدَّهُمَا صِفْرًا خَائِبَتَيْنِ "

“Verily, Allāh, is Hayy, Generous, when a man raises his hands to Him, He feels too shy to return them to him empty and rejected.” [Sunan al-Tirmidhī 3556]

When a servant turns to Allāh and relies upon him, he increases in rajāʾ (hope) in Allāh knowing that He is Al-Mujīb (The One Who Responds to Duʿāʾ) and Al-Waqīl (The Disposer of Affairs). He knows that all amn (security) is with Allāh. Likewise, he knows that ṭumāʾnīnah (contentment) of the heart is in relying upon the one who is Al-Qayyūm (The Sustaining).

3. Increases in Loyalty to Allāh:

Another effect of the name upon īmān is an increase in loyalty and devotion to Allāh. The servant recognizes that all ulūhiyah is to Allāh alone. Therefore, it is not just ulūhiyah that we turn to Him with but we should turn to Him in devotion and loyalty. This is just as if we have a loyal friend, we feel bound to be loyal to him/her because of the years and situations shared and experienced. If this relates to someone in the dunya, then farless for Allāh, when He answers you and relieves your hardship and replaces with that which is better for you. He gave you parents, a family, education, guided you to the Sunnah and to Salafiyyah, then how can one not have loyalty to Him? It should be imbreded within us to prioritise Allāh’s pleasure over one's personal desires.

Of course shayṭān is constantly working on the believer more than he works upon the kuffār because the kuffār does exactly as he pleases. His work is upon the believer. The stronger the īmān, the stronger he works upon that individual. And so it may well be that if he is not able to overcome by his whispers, he sends a human shayṭān to work on him and to overpower him or to attempt to do so at least. Therefore, the believer should constantly return to Allāh (عز وجل), even if he is overcome by a period of heedlessness, he should quickly return to Allāh. Such is the nature of the believer throughout his life.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ مُؤْمِنٍ إِلَّا وَلَهُ ذَنْبٌ يَعْتَادُهُ الْفَيْنَةَ بَعْدَ الْفَيْنَةِ أَوْ ذَنْبٌ هُوَ مُقِيمٌ عَلَيْهِ لَا يُفَارِقُهُ حَتَّى يُفَارِقَ الدنيا إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ خُلِقَ مُفْتَنًا تَوَّابًا نَسِيًّا إِذَا ذُكِّرَ ذَكَرَ

"**There is no believing servant but that he has a sin he habitually commits from time to time, or a sin entrenched in him that he does not abandon until he departs the world. Verily, the believer was created to be tested, both repenting and forgetful. If he is reminded, he will remember.**"

<u>The Believer Submits To Allāh From His Knowledge Of Him:</u>

The believer strives to constantly prioritize the pleasure of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) and flee from His displeasure to the best of his ability. **He is not physically compelled to submit to Allāh, but his knowledge is what compels him to submit – his understanding and his recognition of who Allāh is.** This knowledge of course is coupled with love and reverence for Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى). This affair is something that is made clear by a beautiful statement of Ibn al-qayyim who said, **"The heart cannot truly live except by loving Allāh."**

If you consider the fact that prior to being tadayyin (guided to the Sunnah) the heart was beating but it was not alive. There is a difference between it beating and it being alive. **The true life of the heart occurs with loving Allāh, turning towards Him and finding peace in His remembrance** and that is no doubt the statement of Allāh,

﴿ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ ٱلْقُلُوبُ ﴾

"Verily in the rememberance of Allāh do the hearts find tranquility."

[Sūrah Ar-Raʿd; 13:28]

Absolute taʿẓīm (extolment) of Allāh is the goal of the believer. He strives throughout his life to rely upon Allāh, to extol Him, to trust in Him, to have fear of Him, to hope in Him (balancing between fear and hope), to supplicate to Him etc.

<u>True Honour Is Reliance In Allāh Alone:</u>

Likewise, from the fruits of believing in Allāh is that a person finds true honour in depending upon Allāh (عز وجل). Depending upon anyone within the creation is in actuality humiliation. Of course there may be situations where a person has to return to someone within the creation, **but the greater a person's dependence is upon Allāh alone, the greater a person recognises that everything else is just a means or an instrument through which Allāh has decreed to reach Him.** When he truly has that, then he has true ʿizzah (honour). Just as He's the only one that creates, provides and controls, so too He is the only one that grants ʿizzah. Everything else is temporary and everyone else is powerless.

Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) mentions that indescribable delight and bliss lie in knowing Allāh, affirming His oneness and opening one's heart to divine truths. He said that a righteous scholar once said that if the people of paradise are in this state, then they are truly living well. **The heart does not find complete joy except in loving Allāh and drawing near to Him through what He loves.**

وصلى الله علي نبينا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم