

MODULE 1

Class Title: Ayat-al-Kursi- Part 1 of 2

Aim of the lesson: To understand the explanation of this verse

Category: Scripture

Lesson Format: Power point presentation with narration and discussion

Greeting to students) *Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

(*Ta'oodh*) *A'oodhubillahi min AsShaytanir Rajeem*

(*Tasmiyah*) *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*

(*Du'a*) *Rabbishrahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli* (Surah At Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

Slide 1:

For the next two classes we will, Insha Allah be learning about the beautiful *ayat* {verse} called *Ayat-al-Kursi*. Why am I not calling it a *surah* {chapter (of the *Qur'an*)}? Because it's not a *surah*; *Ayat-al-Kursi* is one long *ayat* – *ayat* 255 from *Surah Al-Baqarah*.

It's the longest *ayat* in the *Qur'an* and is an absolutely amazing verse. I'm sure a lot of you know it by heart and I want those of you who don't to make an extra effort to learn it. It probably won't take you more than two days to memorize it.

Ayat Al-Kursi has tremendous virtues associated with it, for the authentic Hadith describes it as 'the greatest Ayah in the Book of Allah.' Imam Ahmad recorded that `Ubayy bin Ka`b said that the Prophet (pbuh) asked him about the greatest Ayah in the Book of Allah, and `Ubayy answered, "Allah and His Messenger know better." When the Prophet repeated his question several times, `Ubayy said, "*Ayat Al-Kursi*." The Prophet commented,

Congratulations for having knowledge, O Abu Al-Mundhir! By He in Whose Hand is my soul! This Ayah has a tongue and two lips with which she praises the King (Allah) next to the leg of the Throne¹.

The Prophet (pbuh) also said: Everything has its pinnacle and the pinnacle of the *Qur'an* is *Surah al-Baqarah*. In it there is an ayah which is the greatest in the *Qur'an*: *Ayat al-Kursi*. [Tirmidhi]

Ayat-al-Kursi is an important *ayat*; it protects us from a lot of evil in this world and has many other benefits which we will be talking about.

Slide 2:

The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Whoever recites *Ayat Al-Kursi* immediately after each prescribed Prayer, there will be nothing standing between him and his entering Paradise except death."

(Nasa'i)

¹ This Hadith was also collected by Muslim, but he did not include the part that starts with, "By He in Whose Hand..."

Let's make an effort to do so from now on, and if you don't know it by heart, get a printed copy of the *ayat* and keep it with you so you can read it after every *salah*. Make it a habit to read it after every *fardh salah*.

Slide 3:

Another *hadith* tells us that when we recite *Ayat-al-Kursi* after *fardh salah*, we stay in Allah's (swt) protection until the next *salah* (Tabarani), so the *ayat* actually protects you throughout the day. What is the pre-requisite for this? Saying *salah* five times a day! If you don't say your *salah* regularly, if you keep missing your *salah*, obviously you won't have Allah's (swt) protection.

Slide 4:

The Prophet (pbuh) also said, "Jinn and *shaytan* {Satan} don't come close to the house in which *Ayat-al-Kursi* is recited." [Tirmidhi]

So, whenever you feel a little scared or you're alone, all you need to do is recite *Ayat-al-Kursi*.

Slide 5:

Let's listen to the recitation of this *ayat*.

(Play recitation)

Slides 6 & 7:

That was just beautiful.

Now, let's play a game: imagine that you are all parents who have cute little babies. Obviously, since they are your children, you have to protect your babies.

Slide 8:

I want you to think very hard as to what kind of weaknesses you could have, being humans, which might affect your ability to protect your baby for example, you may not have enough knowledge, you'll need sleep, you'll fall ill, you might lose your temper and take out your anger or frustration on the baby. However, as human beings in particular, a reason why we can't guarantee our children's safety is that we can die! So, we can never give complete, one hundred percent protection to anyone.

Slide 9:

However, when we recite the *Ayat-al-Kursi*, we are given one hundred percent protection; that one hundred percent protection which we all want. Our parents love us a lot; they would probably do anything for our safety, but since they are human beings, they can't protect us the way they want to; *Ayat-al-Kursi* does that for us.

Slide 10:

However, does this mean that, when we recite *Ayat-al-Kursi*, nothing will ever go wrong in our lives?

Let's say you're afraid of injections, but you have to go for a vaccination, so you recite *Ayat-al-Kursi* yet the injection still hurts; would you start thinking that even though you read the *ayat* you are still in pain, it didn't really protect you? What is wrong with thinking this way? The doctor is injecting you with vaccine in order to protect you. If Allah (swt) had decided not to protect you, you may not have gone to the doctor, could've found the clinic closed, or something else may have happened, resulting in your being unable to get the vaccine shot. That would've left you vulnerable to many illnesses that vaccines protect us from.

Slide 11:

The point is that we don't know what is good for us or bad for us. Things might happen that may appear to harm us; we may get hurt by such things. However, we should have complete trust that whatever experiences Allah (swt) puts us through are good for us. They could be good for us in this world or, even if we don't see any positive results in this world, they could be good for our *Akhirah* {Hereafter}, or they could be Allah's (swt) way of testing us. We should have complete faith that, if we have recited *Ayat-al-Kursi* and asked for Allah's (swt) protection, He will protect us.

Slide 12:

Let's read small parts of this *ayat* and understand what it's about.

This is how it starts: (*refer to slide for Arabic*).

“Allah! There is no god but He.”

This has two meanings; the literal meaning of this part of the *ayat* is that there is only Allah (swt) and not several gods. What did the idol worshippers do? They worshipped many gods, believing each to be responsible for specific aspects of our world; whereas Allah (swt) is one All Powerful God. While they did believe in Allah (swt), they also believed that many smaller, less powerful gods worked under His authority. Allah (swt) is negating that concept. The verse tells us that there isn't any other god but Him. That's the literal meaning.

Another meaning is that Allah (swt) is All Powerful and his power can't be compared with that of anyone else. Allah's (swt) right, therefore, must not be given to anyone else in this world. What is Allah's (swt) right? To be worshipped and obeyed exclusively.

Slide 13:

Who do we sometimes give Allah's (swt) right to?

Alhamdulillah, all of us here are Muslims; we aren't idol worshippers, we aren't like non-believers, so how, and to whom, do we give Allah's (swt) exclusive right?

Some people give this right of Allah (swt) to some Prophets or people who are considered to have been very pious. How do we give them Allah's (swt) rights? By visiting their graves and praying to them instead of Allah (swt).

Slide 14:

How about the people in our lives whom we love, like our friends? How can we give them Allah's (swt) right? By spending time with them at the cost of displeasing Allah (swt), for example, when you keep chatting away on the phone with your friend instead of praying at *maghrib* {obligatory evening prayer} time you're, obviously, giving Allah's (swt) right to your friend.

There is another, very important person that we tend to worship: ourselves. Our inner desires become gods for us because we give more importance to what we want rather than what Allah (swt) wants. Sometimes, instead of other people or things, you make yourself your god. By people I mean everyone: teachers, siblings, cousins etc. For example, your friends want to go somewhere that you know Allah (swt) doesn't like, yet you still go with them, what are you doing? When you give the rights of Allah (swt) to your friends, what are you doing? Shirk! That is one of the biggest sins which Allah (swt) won't forgive us for, unless we specifically repent and seek forgiveness for it.

Slides 15 and 16:

As *momineen* {faithful believers}, our top priorities should be Allah's (swt) rights, other people's rights and, lastly, our own personal rights.

Everything else revolves around Allah's (swt) consent. Everything in our lives, be it our studies, our friends, our priorities, our entertainment, our interests etc., has to revolve around Allah's (swt) consent. For example, some types of entertainment are wrong. Can watching a movie that has explicit scenes come under the category of shirk? Yes, because Allah (swt) doesn't want us to watch movies with indecent scenes or concepts, and if you still go ahead and watch them, you are neglecting Allah's (swt) pleasure for your own entertainment.

Slide 17:

What do we do when we go to *Makkah* and perform *tawaf* {circling the *Ka'bah*}? What does the *tawaf* signify? It is symbolic of the fact that the centre of all our activity is Allah (swt). That is what we try and portray when we do *tawaf*. We have to make sure that we are leading our lives according to what we portray.

Slide 18:

Next, the verse says: (*refer to slide for Arabic*).

Al-Haiy means The Living, and *Al-Qayyum* means The All-Sustaining.

Slide 19:

Let's talk about the example of a parent that I explained earlier; one of the reasons that parents can't fully protect their babies is that they can die. They are human. But Allah (swt) will never die. Who, in our world, can love us and protect us more than our mothers? No one! Allah (swt) protects us the most and, from amongst other people, our mothers protect us the most, but since they are human beings, their protection is limited. But Allah (swt) is Ever living and Everlasting.

There is absolutely no comparison between our lives and His being The Living. Let's examine some of the differences between our lives and His Living.

Slides 20 and 21:

Firstly, our lives are limited, whereas Allah's (swt) life is unlimited. Our lives are like tests for us, whereas Allah's (swt) life is not a test. The course of our lives is decided by Allah (swt) and no one makes decisions concerning Allah's (swt) life. We have relatives, friends, colleagues, siblings, but Allah (swt) needs nobody. We can have children; Allah (swt) has no need of them. We are imperfect; Allah (swt) is perfect. Allah (swt) has powers that we don't.

Slides 22 and 23:

Now, focusing on this worldly life, we aren't born out of our own will. Did you have any clue that you were going to be born on a particular date? We were born without knowing it or having any say in the situation. Similarly, we have no say in how or where we will die. Even if you commit suicide; if you decide to jump off this building today, only if Allah (swt) has decided that it is indeed the time for you to die, will you die. Otherwise you won't, because that is not the time of your death.

Likewise, if now is the time of your death, no matter what doctors, relatives or your friends try to do, you will die. There is a saying that the biggest protection against all the dangers in life is the time of death. No matter where you go or what you do, you won't die unless it is time for your death. If you do die, it was your time to die. This doesn't mean that you can do whatever you want to; you can't assume that you're not going to die and walk into the middle of a shooting or exploding bombs. Only a foolish person will try and test dying.

Slide 24:

Allah (swt) was neither born nor will He ever die.

Slides 25 – 27:

Another thing that we need to understand is that our life is borrowed. We weren't born according to our own choice, nor will we die according to our choice. Allah (swt) has lent us our lives for a few days.

For example, if a friend lets you borrow her book; can you change the cover of the book or write remarks in it? Can you tear away a few pages because you feel that they contain irrelevant stuff? You can, but you shouldn't. You have to take care of your friend's book. If I lend this marker to you, and I tell you to not write with it for at least ten minutes, then you shouldn't. You'll have to follow my instructions because it's my marker.

So, you must use it the way the lender tells you to. You should also be prepared that the lender can ask you to give it back anytime.

Allah (swt) can ask for this life that He has lent to us, anytime. If I lend you this marker and ask you to give it back after five minutes, should you get upset? No because its mine. Likewise, this life has been borrowed and Allah (swt) can take it back whenever He wants, and we should be prepared to give it back to Him whenever He asks for it. However, we're not prepared; we

behave as if it's ours, we enjoy it as if it's ours. We think we can do whatever we want with this life, but we can't because it's not ours.

Slide 28:

Sometimes we accept the fact that we are going to die but we get upset when our loved ones die and we feel that it's not fair and we get depressed and ask questions like, "Why did this happen to me?" Did any of you feel the pain when your grandparents or relatives died? What kind of an attitude should we adopt in such situations?

"*Inna lillaahi wa innaa ilayhi raje'oon.*" What does that mean? "To Allah we belong and to Him is our return." That's the right approach. If you complain about how unfair it is that you have to experience the death of a loved one, it means you are displeased with Allah's (swt) decision.

At such times, what sort of an attitude should we adopt? What do we need to remind ourselves? We should accept it as Allah's (swt) decision and do *Dua-e-Maghfirah* {invocations for the forgiveness of the dead} for the deceased. He knows better, He knows who should die when.

Slides 29 & 30:

Let's talk about the example of babies and their parents. Have you ever noticed how when parents visit their friends with their babies, their friends sometimes give the baby their own children's toys to play with? When it's time to leave, the baby starts crying because he or she doesn't want to give them back. The parents soothe the baby and try to explain that the toys are someone else's and have to be given back.

Likewise, when our loved ones leave this world, we need to remind ourselves that this life is not ours. Our lives and those of our loved ones, are temporary; we don't know for how long they are ours. On the other hand, Allah's (swt) life is His own; He hasn't borrowed it from anyone, unlike us.

Slide 31:

Let's look at another difference between our lives and Allah (swt) being The Living.

Our lives are limited, therefore they're weak; they can end anytime.

And, if some of our basic needs aren't fulfilled, our lives can end immediately. What are the things that our lives depend on? What are the things without which we would die instantly?

Slides 32-35:

Food, oxygen and water, to name a few.

So we are not self-sufficient, our lives depend on a lot of things which we can't live without.

Slide 36:

However, Allah (swt) doesn't have these weaknesses; He doesn't need food, water or air to survive. So, even though the word "alive" is used for Him as well as for us, His life and our lives are completely different.

Slide 37:

Another difference between our life and His is that Allah (swt) was present even when nothing else existed. Now, this is something that is very difficult to comprehend. Can you imagine nothingness? It's very difficult. If I ask you to name one thing that doesn't have a beginning, can you name it? We can't perceive any such thing because our minds are limited; we can't imagine anything before 'nothing'.

Slide 38:

This world came into being with a big bang, so even this world had a beginning. Allah (swt) was present even before that, when the world did not exist.

Slide 39:

He will continue to be alive even when everything stops existing. It's difficult for us to imagine a time when nothing will exist. Absolutely nothing! No angels, no *jinns*, no planets, no universe. So we need to accept that there are certain parts in this *ayat* {verse} that we can't comprehend. Instead of trying to delve into and understand the meaning of such parts, all we need to understand is that Allah (swt) has always been and will always be.

Slide 40:

We have understood *Al-Hayye*, now let's try to understand *Al-Qayyum*.

Everything is in Allah's (swt) control; He controls each and every thing in this universe. If we understand, and truly believe in this fact, more than half of our worries will disappear. Some things are very obviously in His control, for example, He controls life and death. He also controls calamities like accidents and illnesses. But there are certain other things that Allah (swt) controls as well. All the laws of science, like the laws we study in physics and chemistry, have also been set by Allah (swt).

Slide 41:

Hence, physical laws are also controlled by Allah (swt); so if the sky is dark and cloudy, you will know that it's probably going to rain soon. But just as Allah (swt) has made a law, He can break it too. Who has made the law, that if there are heavy and dark clouds in the sky, it's going to rain? Allah has made it. So, if Allah (swt) wants, the sky could be very dark and cloudy, but it still wouldn't rain.

Slide 42:

Similarly, fire burns things only because of Allah's (swt) laws. If you put your hand in fire, you know that it will get burnt, but that law was made by Allah (swt), and that's the reason why

somebody was thrown into fire once, but he didn't get burned. Who was he? Ibrahim (as). Allah (swt) decided to break His own law. So everything is in Allah's (swt) hand.

Slide 43:

Water can quench thirst only by Allah's (swt) will. We know that if we are thirsty, a glass of water will quench our thirst. But if our thirst is quenched, it's not because of the water, it's because Allah (swt) wanted our thirst to be quenched through water. Do you see how much Allah (swt) controls our lives?

Slides 44 and 45:

Just as we can easily make and break our Lego creations, Allah (swt) can break His laws in mere seconds. That's how much control He has over the universe. And that's why miracles happen; to show people that Allah (swt) isn't dependent on physical laws. He sometimes breaks His own laws because He wants us to know that, just as He made them, He can break them too. So, splitting the moon into two wasn't a big deal for Him, at all.

[Reference for teacher: Narrated Anas bin Malik (ra): The people of Mecca asked Allah's Apostle (pbuh) to show them a miracle. So he showed them the moon split in two halves between which they saw the Hira mountain . (Sahih Al-Bukhari Vol. 5).]

We'll stop here for now. Please try to memorize this *ayat*, with the meaning, by next week.

(Du'a for end of a gathering) *Subhana Rabbika Rabbul Izzati 'amma yasifun wa salamun 'alal mursaleen, walhamdulillahi Rabbil 'alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *Assalam alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*