

## Lesson 5

## أَنْوَاعُ «أَلْ»

Special  
Extract*Source:*

Selections from the Glorious Qur'aan

With Lexical and Grammatical Notes

With DVDs and Audio CD

An Advanced Course for Those Who Have Completed the 3 Madinah Books (or attained Arabic equivalent to it)

Written and Personally Taught by the Shaykh Dr. V. Abdur Rahim.

**DVD 1 Parts A2-A3:**Explaining أَلْ in الْحَمْدُ from *suuratu l-faatiHah*,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

the Shaykh first expounds the different types of أَلْ.

*Quote:*

## The First Type of اَلْ

«اَلْ» الْعَهْدِيَّةُ:

Now with regard to اَلْ we have learnt in the book that it is the definite article.

But there are three kinds of اَلْ which I will explain now.

The one that we have only learnt is called:

*alif laam al-"ahdiyyah*

«اَلْ» الْعَهْدِيَّةُ.

اَلْعَهْدُ means:

reference

previous knowledge

acquaintance.

So *alif laam* اَلْعَهْدِيَّةُ refers to the thing that is already known to you and known to your listeners or readers - if you are reading a book.

When I speak to a man and say,

جَاءَ الرَّجُلُ

The man came

that means you already know him.

And your listener also knows him.

Otherwise if you say,

جَاءَ الرَّجُلُ

you will get confused and ask, 'Whom do you mean?'

So «أَلْ» الْعَهْدِيَّةُ means the thing is known to you and known to your listeners and readers.

## Three Sources of This Common Knowledge

Now this knowledge, common to you and to your readers and listeners, the source of this knowledge is one of three things.

### Number 1: الْعَهْدُ الْحُضُورِيُّ

The thing is right in front of you.

So you and your listener know this.

Suppose there is a book here and I tell my listener,

هَاتِ الْكِتَابَ.

Give me the book.

He knows what you mean because it is right in front of you.

There is a man maybe very close to you or maybe a little further away but you say,

نَادِ الرَّجُلَ.

Call the man.

نَادَى يُنَادِي، الأَمْرُ : نَادِ.

نَادِ الرَّجُلَ.

Call the man.

Your listener will understand because he is seeing this man.

This is called الْعَهْدُ الْحُضُورِيُّ.

الْحُضُورِيُّ means 'presence'.

You know him because he is present right in front of you, either the man, or the book or whatever it is.

So الْعَهْدُ الْحُضُورِيُّ is one source of common knowledge between you and the listener.

## Number 2: الْعَهْدُ الذِّكْرِيُّ

The second type is الْعَهْدُ الذِّكْرِيُّ.

The object, or the man, or the person has been mentioned before either by you or by the listener.

For example you say:

جَاءَنِي رَجُلٌ،

A man came to me,

Now here he is unknown to you.

Then the second sentence you say,

... وَكَانَ الرَّجُلُ غَضَبَانً.

... and *the man* was angry.

He has already been mentioned so you know him.

So it is called الْعَهْدُ الذِّكْرِيُّ.

It is knowledge gained by his being mentioned before.

اشْتَرَيْتُ كِتَابًا،

I bought a book,

... وَالْكِتَابُ مُفِيدٌ جَدًّا.

... and *the book* is very useful.

So you have already mentioned [the book].

And the second time you say, . وَالْكِتَابُ

### Number 3: الْعَهْدُ الذِّهْنِيُّ

The third type, the common knowledge is based on context.

So when you tell your friend,

'I'm going to the office'

he knows which office you mean because he knows that you work in a particular office.

If you say,

'I'll ask the friend'

you'll know which friend is meant from the context.

Suppose in grammar class there is a question in grammar.

So one of the students says,

نَسْأَلُ الشَّيْخَ

We'll ask the teacher.

That means the grammar teacher not the Qur'aan teacher because the context determines what you mean.

But if in the Qur'aan class you say,

نَسْأَلُ الشَّيْخَ

that means the Qur'aan teacher.

If you say:

نَلْتَقِي فِي الْمَسْجِدِ

We'll meet in the mosque

you'll know in which mosque you'll both meet. So you need not explain.

When somebody else says:

نَلْتَقِي فِي الْمَسْجِدِ

- it's a different mosque, not the same mosque.

So it depends upon the context.

So that is called الْعَهْدُ الذِّهْنِيُّ.

ذِهْنِي : mental.

So this is one type.

[Here the respected Shaykh writes on the board]

(١) اَلْاَعْهَدِيَّةُ

أ ( اَلْاَعْهَدُ الْحُضُورِيُّ

ب ( اَلْاَعْهَدُ الذِّكْرِيُّ

ج ( اَلْاَعْهَدُ الذِّهْنِيُّ



## Summary

So all these three types are *alif laam* الْعَهْدِيَّةُ - referential *alif laam*, whether the knowledge is based on:

- 1) الْعَهْدُ الْحُضُورِيُّ the presence of the thing, or
- 2) الْعَهْدُ الذِّكْرِيُّ because it has been mentioned before, or
- 3) الْعَهْدُ الذِّهْنِيُّ the context determines it.



## The Second Type of أَلْ

: «أَلْ» الْجِنْسِيَّةُ

الْجِنْسُ means 'genus'.

It is the same word, a Latin word, 'genus'.

Genus, generic.

This type of *alif laam* has nothing to do with previous knowledge.

It refers to the genus.

For example you say,

الْبَنُّ مُفِيدٌ.

Milk is useful.

الْعَنْبُ أَغْلَى مِنَ التُّفَّاحِ.

The grapes are more expensive than the apples.

It means the genus, not a particular thing which I know and you know.

It means what is known as عَنْبٌ ; what is known as تَفَّاحٌ .

This also has two types.

## 1. «أَل» الْجِنْسِيَّةُ لِاسْتِغْرَاقِ الْجِنْسِ

One type is known as *alif laam* الْجِنْسِيَّةُ لِاسْتِغْرَاقِ الْجِنْسِ

I'll explain it to you.

When you say,

الرَّجُلُ

Man

it means *every* member of the genus.

Sometimes not always.

For example you say,

الْإِنْسَانُ يَمُوتُ.

Man dies.

Does it mean every human being? Yes of course.

الْإِنْسَانُ يَمُوتُ.

So here *alif laam* is الْجِنْسِيَّةُ لِاسْتِغْرَاقِ الْجِنْسِ, to comprehend all the members of the genus.

In the Qur'aan:

﴿وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا﴾

Man was created weak (النساء : 28).

It is *every* man however strong he may be.

If he has a stroke he's finished.

If he has a heart-attack he's finished. He can't walk.

So every man has been created weak.

[Here the Shaykh writes on the board]

(٢) الِ الْجَنَسِيَّةُ  
أ ( لَاسْتِغْرَاقِ الْجِنْسِ



اسْتِغْرَاقِ which *baab* is this?

*baab* اسْتَفْعَلَ, *baab* 10th.

غَرَقَ means to drown, to get drowned.

اسْتَغْرَقَ means to be completely covered.

لَا سِتْفَرَاقَ الْجِنْسِ

For example as I told you:

الْإِنْسَانُ يَمُوتُ.

Man dies.

It means every man dies.

All human beings die.



## 2. «أَلْ» الْجِنْسِيَّةُ لِبَيَانِ الْحَقِيقَةِ

The second one is لِبَيَانِ الْحَقِيقَةِ.

It points only to the fact.

It doesn't incorporate all the members.

For example,

الرِّجَالُ أَقْوَى مِنَ النِّسَاءِ.

Men are stronger than women.

Does it include *a//*men and *a//*women? No.

Some women are stronger than men.

So it is to state the fact generally, as a rule.

But it doesn't refer to every member of the genus.

[The Shaykh writes on the board]



(٢) الِجَنَسِيَّةُ

أ ( لاسْتِغْرَاقِ الْجِنْسِ

ب ( لِبَيَانِ الْحَقِيقَةِ

(٢) الِجَنَسِيَّةُ

أ ( لاسْتِغْرَاقِ الْجِنْسِ : الْإِنْسَانُ يَمُوتُ.

ب ( لِبَيَانِ الْحَقِيقَةِ : الرِّجَالُ أَقْوَى مِنَ النِّسَاءِ.

## Review

Is it clear now?

لَا سِتْفِرَاقِ الْجِنْسِ means you can use the word *every* كُلٌّ, instead of أَلْ.

✓ كُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ يَمُوتُ.

Every man dies.

If you say it like that it will be correct.

But in the other example you can't say:

✗ كُلُّ الرِّجَالِ أَقْوَى مِنَ النِّسَاءِ.

All men are stronger than women.

You can't say [it like that].



## The Third Type of أَلْ

: «أَلْ» الزَّائِدَةُ

Now we come to the third type which is called:

«أَلْ» الزَّائِدَةُ

Extra أَلْ .

This means that certain Arabic words have أَلْ which cannot be separated.

They don't mean anything.

For example you say,

الَّذِي

You've got أَلْ there.

الَّذِي، الَّتِي، اللَّذَانِ

There is أَلْ .

In the same way you have,

القَاهِرَةُ

Cairo which has got *al-qaahiratu*.

Now Pakistan some Arabs say,

بَاكِسْتَانُ

And some Arabs say,

الْبَاكِسْتَانُ

So they add *alif laam*.

But certain [names of] countries there is a consensus:

الْبَرَاذِيلُ

Al-Baraaziilu

الْيَابَانُ

Al-Yaabaanu

They don't remove أَلْ from الْيَابَانُ.

الْهِنْدُ،

الْهِنْدُ is very old, ancient.

From the pre-Islaamic times they have said الْهِنْدُ.

So these are extra *alif laam*.

You can't remove them.

They don't have a special meaning.

They don't add to the meaning - as we have seen.

But there is one type which may add to the meaning and that is with names of human beings.

You may add *alif laam* to *suggest* that he has a quality which is contained in the name.

For example there is a proper name,

أَسَد

'Asad

What does it mean?

Lion.

Some say - it's very common - they say:

الْأَسَدُ،

جَاءَ الْأَسَدُ.

You use **الْأَسَدُ** if you want to suggest he has got the qualities of a lion.

فَضْلٌ is favour.

You also say,

أَفْضَلُ

to show that he has got this quality.

عَبَّاسٌ،

What does عَبَّاسٌ mean?

Frowning; always with a frowning face.

It is اسْمُ الْمُبَالَغَةِ.

عَبَسَ يَعْبِسُ،

﴿عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى﴾ (عبس : 1).

عَبُوسٌ is also one who is always frowning.

In the Qur'aan the Day of Judgement is referred to as

﴿...يَوْمًا عَبُوسًا قَمْطَرِيرًا﴾ (الدھر : 10)

... a frowning Day.

عَبَّاسٌ - one of the Uncles of the Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

عَبَّاسُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ.

You say,

جَاءَ **الْ**عَبَّاسُ

if you want to suggest that he is frowning, he is angry.

So this is one of the types of extra **al/-** which has some meaning.

But here also, one does not have a choice to always use it.

It is limited to the Arab usage of this **al/-**.

For example we don't say:

جَاءَ الْمُحَمَّدُ

We never say this.

But,

الْعَبَّاسُ، الْفَضْلُ، الْأَسَدُ.

Mostly when you want to refer to the qualities that the word suggests, then you can add **al/-**.

## Returning to the *Aayah* in سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

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﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ (الفاتحة: 2)

Now in الْحَمْدُ if you see the Urdu translations or even some of the English translations it will say,

الْحَمْدُ means all types of praise.

أَلْ : This is the generic الْحَمْدُ

This is *alif laam* لَاِسْتِغْرَاقِ الْجِنْسِ

So الْحَمْدُ means:

All types of praise.

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*End extract*