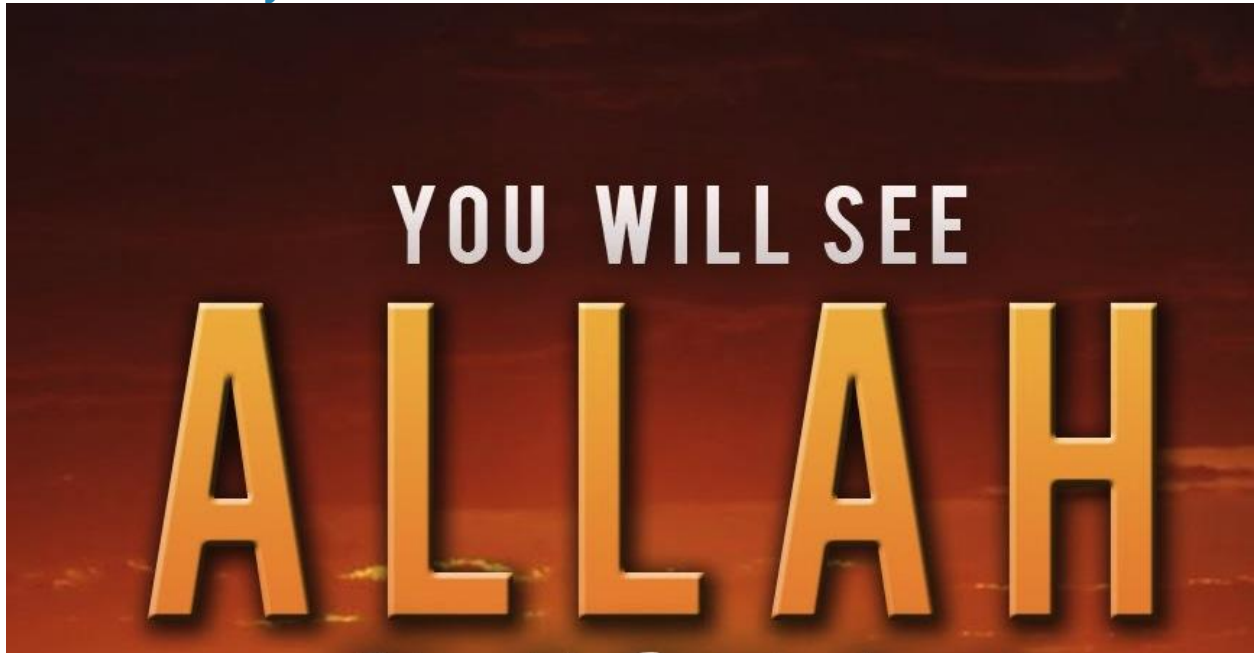


The Believers will see their Lord in the Hereafter Imam Ibn Uthaymīn



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

The Fifteenth Event

The Believers See Their Lord

تَاطَرَةٌ رَبِّهَا إِلَىٰ نَاصِرَةٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ وُجُوهُ

(Some) faces that day will be radiant, looking at their Lord. [Sūrah al-Qiyāmah, 75:22-23]

To explain the verse, "faces that day" means on the last day, the Day of Resurrection. "radiant" here includes beauty because the word used in the verse comes from the Arabic word نَصَارَةٌ (naḍārah) which means beauty. This meaning is also indicated in the statement of Allah (in which a similar form of the same word is used):

أَوْسُرُورًا نَضْرَةً وَلَقَّاهُمْ الْيَوْمَ ذَلِكَ شَرًّا اللَّهُ فَوْقَهُمْ

So Allah will protect them from the evil of that day and give them radiance and happiness. [Sūrah al-Insān, 76:11]

In other words: beauty in their faces and happiness in their hearts.

As for "looking at their Lord", it is real sight which occurs from the faces and by the eyes. This is different from insight that may occur within the heart (similar to the English usage, "I will look into it.")

which means thinking about or considering something. Here, however, the looking occurs from the faces and is directed toward the Lord (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) just as is explicitly indicated by "**at their Lord**".

This noble verse means that these radiant, beautiful faces will be looking directly at their Lord (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) and, consequently, will increase in beauty. Look at how these faces were prepared, made ready to look at Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) – they will have been made bright and beautiful in preparation to look upon the face of Allah.

This verse is a clear proof that Allah will actually be seen with actual eyes and this is the position of mainstream Muslims who follow the Sunnah (*Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah*).

They have proven this with the same verses mentioned herein and they also learn this from the numerous statements of the prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) transmitted to the companions and to their followers and so on. So these texts are explicitly clear as evidence confirming this (the believers seeing Allah in the hereafter) because they are within the book of Allah (تَعَالَى) and the Sunnah of his messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and they are reported by many different chains of narration.

So mainstream Muslims who follow the Sunnah hold the belief that the looking, the sight mentioned here, is real. It does not mean “perception” or “complete awareness” because Allah says:

الْأَبْصَارَ يُدْرِكُ وَهُوَ الْأَبْصَارُ تُدْرِكُهُ لَا

Vision does not perceive him. [Sūrah al-An'ām, 6:103]

Just as knowing with one's heart does not necessarily equate to perceiving his true reality. Allah (عِلَاعَت) says:

اعْلَمَ بِهِ يُحِيطُونَ وَلَا خَلَقَهُمْ وَمَا أَيْدِيهِمْ بَيْنَ مَا يَعْلَمُ

But they do not encompass him with knowledge. [Sūrah ṬāHā, 20:110]

We know our Lord with our hearts yet we still do not know exactly how he is. Similarly, on the Day of Resurrection we will see our Lord with our own eyes, yet our sight will still not completely perceive him.

The second verse indicating that believers will see their Lord is the statement of Allah:

يَنْظُرُونَ الْأَرَانِكِ عَلَيَّ

On thrones, looking. [Sūrah al-Muṭaffifīn, 83:23]

Allah did not mention in this verse specifically what they are looking at so it is general, including anything that is pleasing to look at. The greatest and most pleasing sight is to look upon Allah (عِلَاعَت) as he says in the very next verse:

النَّعِيمِ نَضْرَةً وَجُوهِهِمْ فِي تَعْرِفُ

You will recognize in their faces the radiance of pleasure. [Sūrah al-Muṭaffifīn, 83:24]

So the context of the verse is similar to the first one, "faces that day will be radiant, looking at their Lord" and they will be looking at everything that pleases them.

The third verse regarding the believers looking at Allah is:

وَزِيَادَةٌ الْحُسْنَىٰ أَحْسَنُ لِلَّذِينَ

For those who have done good is the best (reward) and even more. [Sūrah Yūnus, 10:26]

As for "the best", it is Paradise and "even more" is the believers looking at the face of Allah. This is how the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) explained this verse as is confirmed in the ḥadīth recorded by Muslim and others:

تُبَيِّضُ أَلْمَ : فَيَقُولُونَ ؟.أَزِيدُكُمْ شَيْئًا تُرِيدُونَ : وَتَعَالَى تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ يَقُولُ : قَالَ ، الْجَنَّةَ الْجَنَّةَ أَهْلُ دَخَلَ إِذَا النَّظَرَ مِنْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَحَبَّ شَيْئًا أُعْطُوا فَمَا الْحِجَابَ فَيَكْشِفُ : قَالَ ؟ النَّارِ مِنْ وَتُنَجِّنَا الْجَنَّةَ تُدْخِلُنَا أَلْمَ ؟ وَجُوهَنَا وَجَلَّ عَزَّ رَبُّهُمْ إِلَى

When the people of Paradise have entered Paradise, Allah (وَدَّ عَالِي) كُفْرَابِت) will ask, "Do you want me to give you something more?" They will say, "Have you not brightened our faces? Have you not already admitted us into Paradise and saved us from the fire?" He will then remove the covering and they will not have been given anything more beloved to them than looking at their Lord (وَجَلَّ عَزَّ) [Recorded by Muslim]

After saying that, the prophet (لِيهِ وَسَلَّمْ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) then recited the verse, "For those who have done good is the best (reward) and even more." So this verse is evidence of seeing Allah as the messenger (صلى الله عليه) (وَسَلَّمَ) has explained, and no doubt, he is the most knowledgeable person of the Quran's meanings. He explained that it means looking at the face of Allah and this is the "even more" reward the believers will be given in addition to the previous delights of Paradise.

Therefore, this blessing is not the same types of blessing as are well-known of Paradise. Many of the delights of Paradise are physical in nature: rivers to enjoy, physical rewards, fruits, pure spouses, etc. Then the blessings and pleasures of the heart follow. But looking at Allah is a direct delight pleasing to the heart. The people of Paradise will have never seen anything more enjoyable or satisfying than that. We ask Allah to make us those who see him.

This blessing is in no way comparable to anything else, not the fruits of Paradise, its rivers, or anything else. Because of this, Allah said "For those who have done good is the best (reward) and even more." because it is in addition to even the best rewards of Paradise.

The fourth verse is:

مَزِيدٌ وَلَدَيْنَا فِيهَا يَشَاءُونَ مَا لَهُمْ

There they will have all that they desire and with us is even more. [Sūrah Qāf, 50:35]

Many scholars have explained "but with us is even more" just how the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) explained it – that it is looking at the face of Allah.

So those are the four verses the author (Ibn Taymiyyah) mentions as proof of the believers seeing Allah. There is also a fifth verse from which Imam al-Shāfi'ī deduced that the believers will see Allah. It is the statement of Allah (عِلَاعَت) about the wicked sinners:

لَمَحْجُوبُونَ وَمَيِّدِي رَبِّهِمْ عَنْ إِيْتِهِمْ كَلًّا

No! Surely, they will be veiled from (seeing) their Lord that day. [Sūrah al-Muṭaffifin, 83:15]

The point he makes from the verse is that since such people will be veiled from Allah due to his anger with them, then it can be understood that those with whom he is pleased will not be veiled. So if the people who gain his anger are veiled from Allah then the people who gain his pleasure will see Him (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ)

This deduction of Imam al-Shāfi'ī is definitely very strong because if everyone was going to be veiled, prevented from seeing their Lord, then there would have been no reason to specifically mention only the wicked people in the verse.

We also believe that seeing Allah in this life is impossible. This is because the current nature and condition of humans is one that cannot bear looking at Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ). How could it when the prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) told us about his Lord:

خَلَقَهُ مِنْ بَصَرِهِ إِلَيْهِ انْتَهَى مَا وَجْهَهُ سُبْحَاتُ لَأَحْرَقَتْ كَشْفَهُ لَوْ ، الثُّورُ حِجَابُهُ

His veil is light. If he were to remove it, the splendor of his face would burn his creation, consuming it as far as his sight reaches.[Recorded by Muslim]

But as for seeing Allah in the hereafter, it is certainly possible because people that day will be in a different world. Their nature and condition will be different than they are in this life. And this is known from all the texts of the Quran and Sunnah that tell about how people will be, what they will experience during the events of the resurrection and of their final abode in either the home of bliss or Hell.

About the believers seeing their Lord, the prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was once with his companions on a night when the full moon was out. He looked up at the moon and said:

صَلَاةٍ عَلَى تَغْلِبُوا لَا أَنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ فَإِنْ ، رُؤْيِيهِ فِي تَضَامُونَ لَا ، الْقَمَرَ هَذَا تَرُونَ كَمَا رَبِّكُمْ سَتَرُونَ إِيْتَكُمْ أَفَاعَلُوا الشَّمْسِ غُرُوبٍ قَبْلَ وَصَلَاةِ الشَّمْسِ طُلُوعٍ قَبْلَ

You will certainly see your Lord just as you can see this moon; you will have no trouble in seeing him. So if you can avoid missing a prayer before the sun rises and a prayer before it sets, then do so. [Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

The statement, “You will certainly see your Lord” is addressed to the believers. As for “just as you can see this moon,” this is a real, actual seeing because when we see the moon, it is actual sight with our eyes. The comparison here is between the sight of the moon and the sight of Allah, and it is not a comparison between the moon and Allah because there is nothing like or comparable to Allah.

The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would sometimes try to bring the meaning of what he is talking about closer to people by mentioning what they understand of perceptible things.

For example, Abū Razīn al-‘Uqaylī, a companion of the messenger, once asked him, “Messenger of Allah, will each one of us see his Lord, individually on the Day of Resurrection? And what is a sign similar to that among his creation?” He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

بِه مَخْلِيَا الْبَدْرَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَمَرِ يَرَى كُلُّكُمْ أَلَيْسَ ، رَزِينُ أَبَا يَا

Abū Razīn, do you not each individually see the full moon?

Abū Razīn answered, “Yes.” The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) then told him:

وَأَعْظَمُ أَجَلٌ فَاللَّهُ ، اللَّهُ خَلَقَ مِنْ خَلْقٍ هُوَ فَإِنَّمَا ، أَعْظَمُ فَاللَّهُ

Allah is even greater. That (the moon) is only a single creation from Allah’s creation, but Allah is even more exalted and greater.

[Recorded by Imām Aḥmad (4/11) and Abū Dāwūd (no. 4731). al-Albānī said it is authentic in “Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd” (3957)]

As for “**you will have no trouble in seeing him**” in the earlier ḥadīth, different wordings have come in similar narrations, but the point is that no one will prevent another from seeing Allah due to crowding or anything else. Each person will see him (على اعتموه من احبس) while he is in the utmost state of tranquility and peace.

As for “**So if you can avoid missing a prayer before the sun rises and a prayer before it sets, then do so,**” the prayer before sunrise is Fajr, the morning prayer, and before sunset is ‘Aṣr, the afternoon prayer. ‘Aṣr is even better than Fajr because it is the middle prayer which Allah has specifically told us to safeguard after mentioning prayers in general.[167] But Fajr is better than ‘Aṣr from a different perspective in that it is the prayer that is specifically witnessed by the angels as Allah says:

أَمْشُهُودًا كَانَ الْفَجْرُ قُرْآنًا إِنَّ ُ الْفَجْرُ قُرْآنًا وَاللَّيْلُ غَسَقٌ إِلَى الشَّمْسِ لِذُلُوكِ الصَّلَاةِ أَقِيمِ

Keep up prayer from the declining of the sun till the darkness of night and the morning recitation; surely the morning recitation is witnessed. [Sūrah al-Isrā, 17:78]

There also occurs in an authentic ḥadīth:

الْجَنَّةَ دَخَلَ الْبَرْدَيْنِ صَلَّى مَنْ

Whoever prayers the two cool ones will enter Paradise.[Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

The two cool prayers are Fajr and ‘Aṣr.

What practical benefit do we gain from knowing these verses (and ḥadīth) about the believers seeing their Lord in Paradise? There is no greater effect on a person’s behavioral approach and direction in life than this. When anyone realizes that his main objective, the height of his reward is to look upon the face of his Lord, this life and everything in it then becomes almost worthless to him in comparison. Nothing else

would compare or be as precious to him as reaching that moment of seeing Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ). It is the goal of every seeker; it is the final achievement.

If you know that you will one day see your Lord with your own eyes, then by Allah this life would not mean a thing to you.

Everything of this world is nothing in comparison because the sight of Allah's face is the prize for which the competitors compete, the goal to which the racers race, and it is the greatest triumph of everything.

So if you know this, will you strive to reach it or not?

Footnotes:

[167] This occurs in Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:238:

قَانِتِينَ لِلَّهِ وَقَوْمُوا الْوُسْطَىٰ وَالصَّلَاةِ الصَّلَوَاتِ عَلَىٰ حَافِظُوا

Attend constantly to prayers and (in particular) to the middle prayer, and stand up truly obedient to Allah.

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