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The below document are notes provided for the 'Essential Tafsir' podcast. The notes are for the episode 'Tafsir of Surah Fatiha [Verses 1-2]'

A history on Alhamdulillah

The below hadith describes when Adam [Allah bless him] was created and then uttered the statement 'Alhamdulillah'.

Regarding the Hadith of Adam [Allah bless him] sneezing

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " لَمَّا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ
آدَمَ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ الرُّوحَ عَطَسَ فَقَالَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَحَمِدَ اللَّهُ بِإِذْنِهِ فَقَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ
يَرْحَمُكَ اللَّهُ يَا آدَمُ اذْهَبْ إِلَى أَوْلِيَاكَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ إِلَى مَلَأٍ مِنْهُمْ جُلُوسٍ فَقُلِ
السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ . قَالُوا وَعَلَيْكَ السَّلَامُ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ . ثُمَّ رَجَعَ إِلَى رَبِّهِ فَقَالَ إِنَّ
هَذِهِ تَحِيَّتُكَ وَتَحِيَّةُ بَنِيكَ بَيْنَهُمْ

Abu Hurairah [Allah bless him] narrated that the Messenger of Allah said:

“When Allah created Adam, He breathed the soul into him, then he sneezed and said: ‘All praise is due to Allah.’ So he praised Allah by His permission. Then His Lord said to him: ‘May Allah have mercy upon you O Adam. Go to those angels – to that gathering of them sitting – so say: ‘As-Salamu alaikum.’ They said ‘Wa Alaikas-Salamu Wa Rahmatullah’. Then he returned to his Lord, He said: ‘This is your greeting and the greeting of your children among each other.’ **[Sunan at-Tirmidhi: 3367]**

[Extracted from Tafsir al-Qurtubi]

[Saying Alhamdulillah whilst eating]

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيَرْضَى عَنِ الْعَبْدِ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ الْأَكْلَةَ فَيَحْمَدَهُ عَلَيْهَا أَوْ يَشْرَبَ الشَّرْبَةَ فَيَحْمَدَهُ عَلَيْهَا " .

Anas b. Malik reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

Allah is pleased with His servant who says: Al-Hamdu lillah while taking a morsel of food and while drinking.

[Sahih Muslim: 2734]

[Saying Alhamdulillah is better than the gift]

عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - " مَا أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى عَبْدٍ نِعْمَةً فَقَالَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ . إِلَّا كَانَ الَّذِي أَعْطَاهُ أَفْضَلَ مِمَّا أَخَذَ " .

It was narrated from Anas [Allah bless him] that :

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: 'Allah does not bestow a blessing upon any slave and he says: 'Al-hamdu Lillah (praise is to Allah),' except that what he gives (the praise) is better than what he received (the blessing).'

[Ibn Majah: 3805]

Regarding the Ambiya and others saying ‘Alhamdulillah’

Here we see both Dawud and Sulaiman [Allah bless them both] uttering the statement ‘Alhamdulillah’ due to the blessings of Almighty Allah upon them.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا ۖ وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝ ١٥

Surely We gave knowledge to Dāwūd and Sulaimān, and they said, “Praise belongs to Allah who made us excel many of His believing servants.

[Surah an-Naml 27:15]

The people of Jannah will also say this blessed phrase ‘Alhamdulillah’:

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزْنَ ۖ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ۝ ٣٤

And they will say, “Praise be to Allah who has removed all sorrow from us. Surely our Lord is Most-Forgiving, Very-Appreciative. [35:34]

Also:

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِّنْ غِلٍّ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ ۖ وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنَّ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ ۖ لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ ۖ وَنُودُوا أَن تِلْكَمُ الْجَنَّةُ أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۝ ٤٣

We will remove whatever amount of malice they had in their hearts. Rivers will flow beneath them, and they will say, “All praise is to Allah who has guided us to this. We would not have been able to find the way, had Allah not guided us. Surely, the messengers of our Lord came with the truth.” Then they will receive a call, “Here is the Paradise which you have been made to inherit because of the deeds you have been doing.” [7:43]

Ibrahim [Allah bless him] when he recalls the blessing of his children despite old age:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى الْكِبَرِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي
لَسَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ ۚ ٣٩

Praise be to Allah who, despite my old age, blessed me with Ismā'īl (Ishmael) and IsHāq (Isaac). Surely, my Lord is the One who listens to the prayer. [14:39]

Nuh [Allah bless him] when Allah saved him from the flood:

فَإِذَا أَسْتَوَيْتَ أَنْتَ وَمَنْ مَعَكَ عَلَى الْفُلِكِ فَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي نَجَّيْنَا مِنَ الْقَوْمِ
الظَّالِمِينَ ۚ ٢٨

Then when you and those with you have settled in the Ark, say, “All praise is for Allah, Who saved us from the wrongdoing people.” [23:28]

The last supplication in Jannah will be:

دَعْوَاهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ ۚ وَعَاخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ ۚ ١٠

Their call therein will be, "Pure are You, O Allah" and their greeting therein will be Salām. And the end of their call will be, "Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds."

[Extracted from Tafsir al-Qurtubi]

Statement of Jafar al-Sadiq [Allah bless him]

وَيُذَكِّرُ عَنْ جَعْفَرِ الصَّادِقِ فِي قَوْلِهِ "الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ": مَنْ حَمِدَهُ بِصِفَاتِهِ كَمَا وَصَفَ
نَفْسَهُ فَقَدْ حَمَدَ، لَانَ الْحَمْدُ جَاءَ وَمِيمٌ وَدَالٌ، فَالْحَاءُ مِنَ الْوَحْدَانِيَّةِ، وَالْمِيمُ مِنَ
الْمُلْكِ، وَالذَّالُ مِنَ الدَّيْمُومِيَّةِ، فَمَنْ عَرَفَهُ بِالْوَحْدَانِيَّةِ وَالذَّيْمُومِيَّةِ وَالْمُلْكِ فَقَدْ عَرَفَهُ،
وَهَذَا هُوَ حَقِيقَةُ الْحَمْدِ لِلَّهِ

A summary of what Imam Jafar al-Sadiq [Allah bless him] states:

Al-Hamd [الحمد] has 3 root letters:

1. ح which stands for الْوَحْدَانِيَّةِ [Oneness] signifying the oneness of Allah.
2. م which stands for الْمُلْكِ [Kingdom] signifying that sovereignty is for Allah
3. د which stands for الدَّيْمُومِيَّةِ [Eternal] signifying that Allah is ever living.

[Extracted from Tafsir al-Qurtubi]

The 3 conditions of al-Hamd [Praise]

وَقَالَ شَقِيقُ بِنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي تَفْسِيرِ "الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ" قَالَ: هُوَ عَلَى ثَلَاثَةِ أَوْجُهٍ: أَوَّلُهَا إِذَا
أَعْطَاكَ اللَّهُ شَيْئًا تَعْرِفُ مَنْ أَعْطَاكَ. وَالثَّانِي أَنْ تَرْضَى بِمَا أَعْطَاكَ. وَالثَّلَاثُ مَا
دَامَتْ قُوَّتُهُ فِي جَسَدِكَ إِلَّا تَعْصِيَهُ، فَهَذِهِ شُرَائطُ الْحَمْدِ.

The conditions of praise are 3:

1. When Allah bestows a favour upon you, you acknowledge this blessing is from Allah.
2. You are pleased with that which Allah has given you.
3. You abstain from that which Allah has prohibited

These are the conditions of al-Hamd [True praise and gratitude]

[Extracted from Tafsir al-Qurtubi]

The difference between [حَمْدٌ](#) and [مَدْحٌ](#)

الْحَمْدُ: هُوَ الثَّنَاءُ عَلَى الْجَمِيلِ الْإِخْتِيَارِيِّ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ أَوْ غَيْرِهَا، وَالْمَدْحُ: هُوَ الثَّنَاءُ
عَلَى الْجَمِيلِ مُطْلَقًا.

[Tafsir Baydawi]

Examples of The Ambiya saying Rabanna

Nabi Shuaib (عليه السلام) when his people rejected him:

رَبَّنَا أَفْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْفَاتِحِينَ ٨٩

Our Lord! Judge between us and our people with truth. You are the best of those who judge.” [7:89]

Nabi Musa (عليه السلام) regarding the people of the Pharaoh:

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ آتَيْتَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَأَهُ زِينَةً وَأَمْوَالًا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا رَبَّنَا لِيُضِلُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِكَ رَبَّنَا اطْمِسْ عَلَىٰ أَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاشْدُدْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوا حَتَّىٰ يَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ ٨٨

Moses prayed, “Our Lord! You have granted Pharaoh and his chiefs luxuries and riches in this worldly life, ‘which they abused’ to lead people astray from Your Way! Our Lord, destroy their riches and harden their hearts so that they will not believe until they see the painful punishment.” [10:88]

Ibrahim [Allah bless him] supplication for his offspring:

رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بُوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ فَاجْعَلْ أَفْئِدَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِمْ وَارْزُقْهُمْ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ
٣٧

Our Lord! I have settled some of my offspring in a barren valley, near Your Sacred House, our Lord, so that they may establish prayer. So make the hearts of 'believing' people incline towards them and provide them with fruits, so perhaps they will be thankful. [14:37]

Adam [Allah bless him] turning and supplicating to Allah

قَالَ رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ٢٣

They replied, "Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will certainly be losers." [7:23]

Ibrahim [Allah bless him] humble supplication of praying for acceptance:

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

١٢٧

And 'remember' when Abraham raised the foundation of the House with Ishmael, 'both praying,' "Our Lord! Accept 'this' from us. You are indeed the All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

[2:127]

There are other verses of The Ambiya [Allah bless them] supplicating to Allah with the word 'Rabana'. This is why some scholars have stated that al-Ismul al-Adham [The greatest name 'of Allah'] is Rabana.

[Tafsir Ibn Kathir]

Different meanings of 'Rabb'

There are various meanings of 'Rabb', such as:

1. Sayyid [Leader]

This is taken from the verse of the Quran:

وَقَالَ لِلَّذِي ظَنَّ أَنَّهُ نَاجٍ مِّنْهُمَا اذْكُرْنِي عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ فَأَنَسَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ ذِكْرَ رَبِّهِ ۖ فَلَبِثَ فِي السِّجْنِ بِضْعَ سِنِينَ ٤٢

Then he said to the one he knew would survive, "Mention me in the presence of your master." But Satan made him forget to mention Joseph to his master, so he remained in prison for several years.

[12:42]

Also from the Hadith [regarding the signs of the final hour]:

أَنَّ تِلْدَ الْأَمَةِ رَبَّتَهَا

'When the slave woman gives birth to her mistress'

[Sahih Muslim]

There are various explanations of this phrase, one of which is disobedience to parents, this is a major sin and will be more frequent towards the final hour.

2. One who attends to something and corrects it [Religious scholars]

We find in the Quran:

أُولَآ يَنْهَاهُمْ الرَّبَّانِيُونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَن قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتَ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا
يَصْنَعُونَ ٦٣

Why do their rabbis and scholars not forbid them from saying what is sinful and consuming what is unlawful? Evil indeed is their inaction!

The word 'Rabbi' is derived from 'Rabb' as their role is to correct and guide people.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " أَنَّ رَجُلًا زَارَ أَخًا لَهُ فِي قَرْيَةٍ
أُخْرَى فَأَرَادَ اللَّهُ لَهُ عَلَى مَدْرَجَتِهِ مَلَكًا فَلَمَّا أَتَى عَلَيْهِ قَالَ أَيْنَ تُرِيدُ قَالَ أُرِيدُ أَخًا
لِي فِي هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ . قَالَ هَلْ لَكَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ تَرُبُّهَا قَالَ لَا غَيْرَ أَنِّي أَحْبَبْتُهُ فِي
اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ . قَالَ فَإِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَبَّكَ كَمَا أَحْبَبْتَهُ فِيهِ " .

Abu Huraira [Allah bless him] reported Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) as saying:

A person visited his brother in another town and Allah deputed an Angel to wait for him on his way and when he came to him he said: Where do you intend to go? He said: I intend to go to my brother in this town. He said: Have you done any favour to him (the repayment of which you intend to get)? He said: No, excepting this that I love him for the sake of Allah, the Exalted and Glorious. Thereupon he said: I am a messenger to you from, Allah: (to inform you) that Allah loves you as you love him (for His sake).

[Sahih Muslim: 2567]

3. Tarbiyah

وَرَبَائِبُكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُمْ

[٢٣]

Your stepdaughters under your guardianship

[4:23]

The word 'Rabb' here is used for step daughters as they are under the care of their fosters.

4. Religious scholars

We find the word 'Rabb' used for religious scholars:

وَكَأَيِّن مِّن نَّبِيٍّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رِبِّيُونَ كَثِيرٌ ۖ ١٤٦

And how many a prophet [fought in battle and] with him fought many religious scholars. [3:146]

There are any explanations given for the above verse for the word 'Rabb'. Some have said it refers to 'the men of Allah' and others have said it refers to a large group. Allah knows best.