



The Jahmi Inquisition

The Great Debate Between A Sunni Affirmer and a Jahmi Denier – A Gift to Ahl us-Sunnah

Stated Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (rahimahullaah):

The Eighteenth Chapter: Concerning The Explanation (Of The Fact) That Alongside The Speaker's Perfect Knowledge, His Eloquence, Explanation, And Giving Of [Sincere] Advice, It Is Impossible That He Should Desire By His Speech Other Than Its Apparent Meaning, Its Reality And The Absence Of Explanation Of The Most Important Matters And Whatever Is In Dire Need Of Being Explained.

We will suffice in this chapter by mentioning a debate that took place between a Jahmi Negator and a Sunni Affirmer, the contents of which were narrated to me by our Shaikh, Abdullaah bin Taymiyyah¹ (rahimahullaah), that he met with some Jahmites in a gathering, so he said, "The texts of the Book and the Sunnah and the Aathaar are in concurrence (i.e. agreement) upon affirmation of attributes for Allaah, and the ways of indication (of these Attributes) has reached many types – all of which require having necessary knowledge concerning their affirmation, and the speaker's (i.e. Allaah or the Messenger) desiring (i.e. requesting) belief in what they indicate.

And the Qur'aan is full of the mention of Attributes, and the Sunnah likewise speaks with that which the Qur'an has spoken of, corroborating it, affirming it, containing even further affirmation.

So sometimes it is by way of mentioning the name which comprises an attribute, such as as-Samee' (the All-Hearer) or al-Baseer (the All-Seer), or al-'Aleem (the All-Knower), or al-Qadeer (the All-Powerful), or al-'Azeez (the Mighty), or al-Hakeem (the All-Wise), and sometimes by mentioning the masdar (the verbal noun), which is the description from which the attribute is derived from, such as His saying, **"He revealed it with His Knowledge (bi 'Ilmihi)"** (Nisaa 4:166), or His saying, **Indeed Allaah is the Provider (ar-Razzaaq), the possessor of Power (quwwah), the Most Strong (al-Mateen)"** (adh-Dhaariyaat 51:57), and His saying, **"He (Iblees) said, 'Then by Your Might ('Izzah), I will surely misguide them all'."** (Saad 38:82).

And his (sallallahu alaihi wasallam's) saying in the authentic hadeeth, "His veil is made of light. If it was to be uncovered, the radiances of His Face (Wajhihi) would cause everything

¹ He is 'Abdullaah bin 'Abdul-Haleem 'Abdus-Salaam bin Taymiyyah al-Harraanee ad-Dimashqee, the brother of Shaikh ul-Islaam. He was born in the year 666H in Harraan. He heard the Musnad, the two Saheehs and the books of Sunan, and also gained fiqh in the Hanbali madhhab. So he excelled and also gave fatwaa. He used to be devout, abstinent and fearful. He passed away, rahimahullaah, in 727H in Dimashq. Refer to Tabaqaat al-Hanaabilah 2/382.

that His Vision (basr) reached from the creation to be seared”², and his saying in the du’aa of Istikhaarah, “I seek counsel by Your knowledge (ilm) and I seek strength by Your power (qudrah)”³, and also his saying, “I ask you by way of your Knowledge of the Unseen, and your Power over the creation”⁴, and also his saying to Aa’isah, “All praise is due to Allaah whose hearing (sam’) encompasses all voices (i.e. sounds)”⁵ and what is similar to this.

And sometimes it can be mentioned by way of the judgement of that particular attribute⁶, such as His saying, “**Allaah has heard the statement of her who disputes...**” (Mujaadilah 58:1), or “**Indeed I am with you both, I hear and I see**” (Taahaa 20:46), and His saying, “**So We did measure and we are the best of those to measure**” (Mursalaat 77:23), and His saying, “**Allaah knows that you used to deceive yourselves**” (Baqarah 2:187).

And He explains his Highness (Fawqiyah) with its own unique wording⁷ and with the word “al-uluww”, and “istiwaa”, and that He is above the sky, and that He is “Dhul-Ma’aarij” (Lord of the Ways of Ascent), and that the Angels ascend to Him and descend from Him, and that He descends to the lowest Heaven [in a manner that befits His Majesty], and that the Believers will see Him with their sight, directly, while He is above them, to many multiples of multiples of that which if the texts and narrations were to be compiled, they would not fall short of reaching the (same level) of the texts of the rulings (ahkaam) and the narrations pertaining to them.

And it is from the most clearly impossible matters, and the most apparent misguidance to carry all of that upon what opposes its apparent meaning and its true reality. And the claim of allegory, or metaphor, or that the truth is actually in the saying of the Negaters, Deniers (of the Attributes) and that their ta’weels (false interpolations) are actually what is meant [by Allaah or His Messenger] by these texts, then one of three prohibited matters are necessitated by this – and there is no escaping from falling into them or any one of them, and they are:

1. Reviling the knowledge of the one who speaks with them [the Attributes]
2. Or [reviling] His discourse (bayaan)
3. Or [reviling] His advice [to the creation regarding them]

² Reported by Muslim 1/61, Ibn Maajah 1/70, Ahmad in the Musnad (4/401,405).

³ Reported by al-Bukhaaree (Fath ul-Baaree 3/48), at-Tirmidhi (Tuhfatul-Ahwadhee 2/591), Ibn Maajah 1/251,252, and Ahmad in the Musnad 3/344.

⁴ Reported by an-Nasaa’ee 3/54, Ahmad in the Musnad 4/264, and the basis of the hadeeth, without mention of this phrase is in al-Bukhaaree (Fath ul-Baaree 10,127), also reported by Muslim 4/2064 an at-Tirmidhi (Tuhfatul-Ahwaadhee 4/46, and also Abu Dawud (‘Awn al-Ma’bood 8/373).

⁵ Reported by Ibn Maajah 1/67, an-Nasaa’ee (6/168), al-Bukhaaree in mu’allaq form (Fath ul-Baaree 13/372) in Kitaab ut-Tawheed, also reported by Ibn Jareer 28/5,6 and al-Haakim 2/481 and adh-Dhahabi said “Saheeh”.

⁶ [Translators Note: That is, as it relates to the Creation]

⁷ [Translator’s Note: As Allaah says, “And He is the Irresistible, above His slaves (fawqa ‘ibaadihi), and He is the All-Wise, Well Acquainted with all things.” (Al-An’aam 6:18), and this occurs twice in this Surah.]

And the establishment of this is that it is said: Either the one who speaks with these texts (i.e. the Messenger) has knowledge that the truth is actually in the ta'weels (interpolations) of the Negators (Nufaath), the Deniers (Mu'attileen) or he does not know that.

So if he did not know that and that the truth is in these ta'weels, then this is a revilement, censure of his Knowledge.

And if he knew that the truth was in these ta'weels then he is either capable in expressing (these Attributes) by way of their expressions (i.e. of the Negators) which are tanzeeh of Allaah (i.e. freeing Him of defects) from tashbeeh (resemblance), tamtheel (likening) and tajseem (anthropomorphism), as they claim, and that the one who does not free Allaah from (these attributes) cannot really know Allaah, or he is not able to use these expressions.

So if he is not capable of using such expressions, then revilement and censure of him in his eloquence in speech is necessitated, and the Inheritors of the Sabeans, the brethren of the Philosophers and the impudent Mu'tazilites, Jahmites, and the students of the Atheists, are more eloquent than him, and better in explanation and expression of the truth.

And this is from that whose falsehood is known by necessity by his awliyaa (Friends) and his enemies, those who agree with him and those who disagree with him. For verily his opponents (i.e. the disbelievers) did not complain about the fact that he is the most eloquent of the creation, and the most able of them in correct and good expressions which are in concordance with the actually meaning, and in removing any ambiguities and difficulties from these expressions.

And if he was actually capable, but did not speak [with these expressions of ta'weel], and he always spoke with its opposite and what contradicts it, then that is a censure of his giving of advice (to the Ummah). Yet Allaah has described His Messengers with perfect, complete advice, and explanation. So He the Most High said, **"And We sent not a Messenger except with the language of his people, in order that he might make (the Message) clear for them."** (Ibraaheem 14:4).

And He informed about His Messengers that they are the most sincere of people in advising their respective nations. So alongside this giving of advice (a quality of the Messengers), explanation, and perfect cognisance, knowledge – how can the madhhab of the Negators, the Deniers, the people of distortion (tahreef) be correct, and the saying of the people of Ithbaat (affirmation), the followers of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, be falsehood?"

[Ibn al-Qayyim]: This is the content of the debate. So the Jahmite said to him, "Let us depart to a lower ground"⁸. So I said to him (to Abdullaah Ibn Taymiyyah), "What did he mean by that?" He said, "He meant that you are speaking to me from above and you faced me with status, power and position⁹, which I am not able to oppose, so come down from there and come instead to the investigations of the noble ones, and the principles of the theorists" or what is similar to this in speech..."

⁸ Al-Wataa', or al-Witaa', a type of depression in the earth between a protrusion and elevation, and the meaning here is "Debate with me in a manner that is easier than this".

⁹ And the meaning is "You are addressing me from above and you have reached a status and position that I am not able to oppose (i.e. refute)".

So never is Allaah one to gather together the Negators, the Deniers, the Distorters, and His Helpers, the Helpers of His Messenger and His Book, except as a gathering of tribulation and testing (for the Negators), just like the gathering of the Messengers and their enemies in the life of this world [to test them and try them with respect to belief and disbelief].” End quote.

Source: As-Sawaa’iq al-Mursalah ‘alal-Jahmiyyah wal-Mu’attilah (1/320-326).

Benefits and Lessons from the First Tribunal

From the aforementioned examination and tribulation of the Jahmites there are numerous benefits and lessons to be gained:

1. The Qu'ran, the Sunnah and the Aathaar of the Salaf are replete with affirmation and mention of Allaah's Attributes and they are mentioned from different perspectives and by different ways
 - a) by explicit mention of the name that comprises the attribute
 - b) by explicit mention of the attribute itself or
 - c) by mention of the way that attribute relates to the creation.

And this occurs frequently and abundantly and is too vast to be enumerated.

2. Hence, to claim that the sum total of that which has been mentioned is not to be taken apparently, in a manner that befits Allaah, then there are only three possibilities, with no fourth:
 - a) that the one who spoke of them was ignorant of what he was speaking of
 - b) or that he knew what he was speaking, but was not capable of interpolating and using expressions that would not indicate the apparent meanings, rather he, consistently and persistently, used expressions which indicate only the apparent meaning
 - c) that he knew what he was speaking, but chose instead, deliberately, to speak with its opposite and what contradicts it.

The first is a revilement of his knowledge, the second a revilement of his eloquence and clarity in speech and the third a revilement of his giving of advice to the Ummah.

3. The above necessitates a rejection of what Allaah has stated about the Messengers that they explain what has been revealed to them from Allaah, as it was intended by Allaah, and that they are the most sincere and correct in giving advice and direction to the Ummah.
4. When examining and putting a Jahmite to trial, it is necessary to tear out the foundations from under his feet by way of this type of discourse – as the Jahmite with whom Abdullaah Ibn Taymiyyah made his inquisitional debate, was refuted and humbled and forced to retreat, literally begging for relief – while knowing that the Jahmite Ancestry of old was more knowledgeable and intelligent than its inferior phenotype of the current times – may Allaah sever it – which makes more noise and clangour, than those who have preceded them.
5. Never is a Sunni Affirmer and a Jahmite Negator brought together in a gathering except it is a tribulation, examination, trial and inquisition for the Jahmite – so let this be the case O Sunni! Upon you is knowledge and understanding...