



The Jahmee Inquisition...

From as-Sawaa’iq al-Mursalah ‘alal-Jahmiyyah wal-Mu’attilah
Of Shaykh ul-Islam, Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah

Brought to you by SalafiPublications.Com

Chapter Three: Concerning the Fact that “Ta’weel” Is Informing About the [Actual and True] Intent [Behind the Words] of the Speaker and [that Ta’weel Is] Not Inventing or Devising [A (New, Ambiguous) Meaning And Claiming that This Is the Speaker’s Intent, and That This is What is Known as “Ta’weel”]¹

This is a topic in which many of the people err, in a very repugnant way. For the purpose (behind “ta’weel”) is to actually understand the intent (muraad) of the speaker behind his words². Hence, when it is said, “The meaning of the word is such and such”, then this is informing about that which the speaker desired and meant. And if this informing is not in agreement with that, then it is a lie upon the speaker.

And the intent of the speaker is known by numerous ways.

Amongst them is that he is explicit in his words that he intends that particular meaning.

And amongst them is that he uses the word that has an apparent, obvious meaning by conventional use, and then he does not make it clear with any additional pointer connected to his speech that he did not intend that particular meaning (i.e. the obvious, apparent meaning). So how then, when he actually surrounds his speech with what indicates that he does mean and desire [by the word] the reality of the meaning and that [meaning] for which it has been conventionally designated.

This is like His saying, “**And Allaah spoke to Moses directly**” (an-Nisaa 4:164)

¹ “As-Sawaa’iq al-Mursalah” (1/201-204) – and this is a brief, but amazing chapter, with an excellent insight into the Jahmi Mu’attil’s understanding of “Ta’weel”.

² And this is the actual and correct understanding of “Ta’weel” as has preceded in the previous two tribunals (of the Jahmi Inquisition).

And also, “And verily you will see your Lord, directly (with your eyes), just like you see the sun, during the midday, when there are no clouds” [SAHEEH: Bukhaaree], and also, “Allaah is more happy with the repentance of His servant than one of you who loses his riding-camel in a barren desert, whose water and crops have been destroyed. So he despairs, and sleeps. Then he awakes, and there he finds his riding beast in front of his head.” [SAHEEH: Bukhaaree (Fath ul-Baaree 11/102), Muslim (4/203)]. So Allaah is happier with the repentance of His servant, than this one is with (finding) his riding beast.

So the likes of this is what makes the intent of the speaker absolutely clear to the listener, hence when he (the listener) informs about the intent (of the speaker) with that which the reality of the word points to, that for which [the word] has been conventionally designated, alongside the other emphatic associated pointers (accompanying the speech, that emphasise the intended meaning), then he is truthful in his information.

But as for when he interpolates the speech with that [meaning] which is not indicated by the word, and there is not any associated pointer (that comes alongside the word) that would indicate this [meaning], then informing [others] that this is what is actually desired [by the speaker] is a lie upon him.

Thus, the saying of someone that “this word can also carry, bear such and such (meaning)”, then it is said to him: What do you mean by “carry, bear (a meaning)”?

Do you mean by this that the word has actually been devised and designated for this meaning (by convention)? Then this matter is found by mere transmission, and its place is found in the books of language (i.e. the written tradition of classical Arabic), but there is no transmitted narration for [the meaning] that you are making this word to carry (as its apparent and obvious meaning).

Or do you mean by “carry, bear (a meaning)” to refer to the belief that the speaker intended [by his words] that particular meaning which you have made it to carry? Then this is speaking about him (the speaker) without knowledge, and this is a lie that is fabricated if you do not bring any evidence to show that the speaker did in fact intend that meaning.

Or do you mean that you originated and devised a meaning (for this word), thus, when you actually heard it (come in the texts), you believed that that is its meaning. And this is the reality of your saying - even if you do not desire this.

For, “carrying [a word] upon (a meaning)” is either informing about the speaker, that he intended that particular meaning, and this information is either

truthful if that meaning is understood from the word of the speaker, or it is a lie if his word does not indicate that meaning.

Or it is originating and devising (something new) so that this word (that the speaker has used) can be employed for this meaning, and hence this (meaning) only occurs in the speech that you yourself have originated, not in that of others.

And the reality of the matter is that the saying of a person, “we shall carry it upon such and such (meaning)”, or that “we shall interpolate it with such and such (meaning)”, then it comes under the aspect of “rejecting that a word indicates that [meaning or thing] for which it was conventionally designated”. And this is because when the [Sunni affirmer] disputes this person and argues against him by this, and it is not possible for him (the negator) to reject the occurrence of this word (in the texts), then instead he rejects its meaning, and so he says, “I will carry it upon something that opposes its apparent, obvious (meaning)”.

And if it is said that “carrying [a word] upon (a meaning)”, has another meaning that you have not mentioned, and this is that when it is impossible for the reality (haqeeqah), and apparent, obvious (meaning) of a word to be intended (in the speech), and at the same time, it is not possible to negate (ta’teel) the word either, then we use the fact that it has been reported (in the texts) and that the apparent, obvious meaning has not been intended, as our evidence to show that the allegorical meaning is intended. Hence, we carry the word upon this [allegorical meaning] from the angle of “the indication (of a word to its meaning)”, not from the angle of “devising and originating (a new application of this word)”.³

³ [Translator’s Note]: Understand the sophistry of the Jahmite Negator here. Firstly, the actual action of all Jahmite Negators (whether the Jahmite, Mu’tazilite, or Ash’arite breed) is to reject the firmly established principle (to everyone, and in every language and in every nation, and in every time and in every place) that “words actually indicate and give evidence to those meanings or things (i.e. abstract or concrete) for which they have been conventionally designated –and hence words have apparent, obvious (dhaahir) meanings”. Thus, the variant breeds of Jahmism in all of their false ta’weel’s, then that which underlies their ta’weels is to actually reject this reality and this truth. Thus, when they cannot deny that these words are actually found in the Sharee’ah texts – and they know that they would oppose this established principle (that a word indicates the meaning for which it was designated by convention), then to avoid being caught in their fraud, they then try to say that they are not coming from the angle where they have devised new meanings for this word, but they are actually from the angle of this established principle – since, when it is impossible that a word be meant in its apparent and obvious sense, then of course it indicates the allegorical meaning of this word (which is also known and established for it) – and we have arrived at this by way of “a word indicates the meaning for which it has been designated”.

It is said (in reply) that this meaning, therefore, is informing about the speaker that he actually desired and intended this meaning - and this can either be true, or it can be a lie - as has preceded. And it is impossible for him (the speaker) to desire and intend what is opposed to its reality, and its apparent, obvious (meaning), and at the same time, not make clear to the listener, the meaning that he actually intends, and also at the same time, join to his words that which actually emphasises that he intended its reality (i.e. the apparent, obvious meaning for the word).

And we do not actually forbid (i.e. reject outright) that the speaker can sometimes intend by his words that which is opposed to the apparent and obvious, when he intends to mystify the listener (i.e. make his speech obscure to him), but it is rejected, to the extreme, that he intends by his speech that which is opposed to the reality, apparentness and obviousness (of it in meaning) while desiring by this speech of his to give clarity, explanation, and produce understanding of his intent [to those who are listening].

Since, addressing (people with speech, “khitaab”) is of two types: a type by which generalisation, vagueness and obscurity is intended [upon the listener]. And a type by which clarification, guidance, and direction is intended.

Hence, to use a word while intending other than its reality, and apparentness (in meaning), without any surrounding indicators (in the speech) that make clear the intended meaning, then this is of the first type (of khitaab), not the second. And Allaah knows best.

So this is the Jahmite sophistry, when the Sunni Muthabbit who venerates the texts of the Sharee’ah uncovers his fraud. And the reply to it comes in what follows from Ibn al-Qayyim.

Benefits and Lessons From This Tribunal

1. In the previous tribunal, it was established against the Jahmite in the stand, that what he falls into is false, corrupt ta’weel and not the sound ta’weel that is of the type that occurs in the Qur’aan or that occurs in the language of the Mufassiroon (with the meaning of tafseer and bayaan).

2. And this tribunal takes the evidence against the Jahmi Mu’attil a step further. This is because what is meant by ta’weel, is to arrive at the actual desired intent of the speaker, that which he actually desired and meant and intended by his speech. So this is ta’weel that is correct and true and this is what is meant by “ta’weel”. Hence, if someone is informing about the intent of someone’s words, then he can either be truthful in that, or lying in that.

3. Additionally, the speaker has many ways of making clear what he means by his words, and this can occur, by explicitly stating that he desires such a meaning, or by adding to his words, additional pointers and indicators in speech, that make it absolutely clear that he intends such a meaning. And this is what occurs in all of the texts that mention the Attributes of Allaah, such that there is no excuse and argument for the Jahmite in the stand, to lie upon the speaker and claim that his intent is such and such – despite the fact that the speaker has made it explicitly clear in his words, what he actually means.

4. Then the Jahmite attempts to swerve from this, and claim that words can plausibly bear and carry another meaning and in this the Jahmite only has three recourses:

- a) That he claims that it can be established that the word has actually been used for this meaning (that he is claiming) by convention – in other words it is known and established in the oral and written tradition of Arabic, that the word has been used for that meaning – by way of convention, by way of this meaning being what is apparent and obvious from the word itself. In this case the proof for this rests upon bringing a narration, or a transmission from the body of oral and written tradition to show that it has been used like this.
- b) That he claims that meaning intended by the speaker by the word is the one that he has interpolated (i.e. makes false ta’weel) for it. So in this case it is clear that the Jahmite is uncertain as to whether it is in truth the actual desired meaning or not, and the Jahmite knows that he is speaking without knowledge about the true and real intent of the speaker behind this word. Hence, unless he brings evidence (which he can’t), then he is a liar and a fabricator.

- c) That he has in reality devised a new convention for the word, such that he invents a new application of the word, so he applies it to a meaning, all of this coming from himself. Thus, when he hears this word being used in the texts, then he claims that what is meant by the word is the meaning that he originated in his own devised convention for the word.

5. However, whatever the case, the Jahmite cannot escape from these three situations:

- i) That he is truthful in his informing about the intent of the speaker behind a word that the speaker has used
- ii) That he is a liar in his informing about the intent of the speaker behind a word that the speaker has used or
- iii) That he has devised a new application for that word and hence, this is something that is unique to his own speech and understanding and not that of anyone else.

So regardless of what he may claim, he will not be except in any of these three situations.

6. In reality, the actual action of all Jahmite Negators (whether the Jahmite, Mu’tazilite, or Ash’arite breed) is to reject the firmly established principle (to everyone, and in every language and in every nation, and in every time and in every place) that “words actually indicate and give evidence to those meanings or things (i.e. abstract or concrete) for which they have been conventionally designated –and hence words have apparent, obvious (dhaahir) meanings”.

7. Thus, the variant breeds of Jahmites in all of their false ta’weel’s, then that which underlies their ta’weels is to actually reject this reality and this truth. Thus, when they cannot deny that these words are actually found in the Sharee’ah texts – and they know that they would oppose this established principle (that a word indicates the meaning for which it was designated by convention), then to avoid being caught in their fraud, they then try to say that they are not coming from the angle where they have devised new meanings or applications for this word, but they are still actually coming from the angle of this established principle – since, when it is impossible that a word be meant in its apparent and obvious sense, then of course it indicates the allegorical meaning of this word (which is also known and established for it) – and that they have, therefore, arrived at this by way of [the principle] that “a word indicates the meaning for which it has been designated”.

8. And in reply to this sophistry, then it is said that irrespective of how you explain from which angle you are coming or if you deny that you are inventing and devising a new application for the word – then you still only have two possibilities: that you are informing about the speaker that he intended this meaning and application of the word – and you are a) true and correct in that or b) you have lied and fabricated in that.

9. And when it is the case that that a speaker can only intend one of two things by his speech, either to create ambiguity, vagueness and obscurity upon the listener, or clarity, explanation, direction and guidance, and when it is also the case that the speaker has included in his speech, many other pointers and indicators which show conclusively that he intended a particular meaning – then for you to abandon that [meaning] that he intended then you have claimed one of two things a) that the speaker is not actually intending clarity, guidance, explanation and guidance, but rather obscurity, vagueness – and this is a lie against Allaah and His Messenger and the attribution of deficiency to them and to their words or b) or that the words the speaker has used do not indicate the actual meanings for which they were designated by convention – and then here you fall back into either i) lying upon the speaker or ii) devising and concocting a new meaning and application for the word.

10. And with this, the Jahmite in the stand, has no recourse but to judge to Allaah and His Messenger, and to acknowledge his guilt and crime, and to abandon the false Taaghoot to which he recurses for judgement, and to the false secular and devised laws that he has set up in order to erase the affairs of the deen, and to violate the sanctities of Islaam – and for him to acknowledge that “the people of ta’weel are the followers of at-taaghoot and the seekers of the hukm of jaahiliyyah and the takers of priests and rabbis as lords besides Allaah and the legislators of false judgements and laws that oppose the judgements and laws of Allaah” – as was established against the Jahmites in AQD120002.