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## Explanation of The Book of Tawheed

### Class Notes – Chapter 29

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#### بَابُ مَا جَاءَ فِي التَّنْجِيمِ

#### **What has been mentioned regarding the study of the stars (al-Tanjeem).**

- **Relevance of the chapter to the book:** Some forms of studying the stars (namely astrology) entail:
  - The conviction that the knowledge of the unseen is shared by others besides Allah.
  - The attachment of the hearts to others besides Allah.
  - The belief that the celestial bodies have an influence on the earthly occurrences and human affairs.

For all these reasons, practicing astrology contradicts the pure *tawheed* of Allah. It was therefore appropriate for the author to dedicate a chapter which elaborates and makes clear the permissible and impermissible forms of studying the stars, so that a Muslim has insight into this matter and can differentiate between them.

- **(التَّنْجِيمِ)** – “The study of the stars”. It can be divided into two categories:
  1. (علم التأثير) – Knowledge of Influence (astrology). This can be further divided into three categories:
    - a. The belief that the celestial bodies have a direct influence on the universe. They are the ones that can create and can bring about good or evil. This is major *shirk* because creation and control of the universe is specific to Allah.
    - b. That the celestial bodies are used as a means to predict the future. This is major *shirk* because claiming knowledge of the unseen is specific to Allah.
    - c. That the celestial bodies are considered a cause (*sabab*) for the occurring of good and evil after it has occurred. This is minor *shirk* because it involves taking a cause which Allah did not legislate.
  2. (علم التسيير) – Knowledge of Guidance (astronomy). This can be further divided into two categories:
    - a. That the orbits and positions of the celestial bodies are used for the benefit of the *deen*. For example, using the stars to determine the *qiblah*, or using the moon to determine the months of the Hijri year. This is permissible and may be obligatory given the circumstances.
    - b. That the orbits and positions of the celestial bodies are used for the benefit of the worldly matters. For example, using the stars for navigation, or using the phases of the moon to determine the season or knowledge of the tides. This is also permissible.

قَالَ الْبُخَارِيُّ فِي صَحِيحِهِ: قَالَ قَتَادَةُ: خَلَقَ اللَّهُ هَذِهِ النُّجُومَ لِثَلَاثٍ: جَعَلَهَا زِينَةً لِلسَّمَاءِ وَرُجُومًا لِلشَّيَاطِينِ وَعَلَامَاتٍ يُهْتَدَى بِهَا. فَمَنْ تَأَوَّلَ فِيهَا غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ أَخْطَأَ وَأَضَاعَ نَصِيبَهُ وَتَكَلَّفَ مَا لَا عِلْمَ لَهُ بِهِ. انْتَهَى.

*Imam al-Bukhari recorded in his Sahih that Qatadah said: "Allah created these stars for three purposes: First, to adorn the heavens; second, as missiles against the devils and; third, as signs for the guidance of travellers. Whoever claims that they have a purpose other than these is mistaken. Such a person has lost their share, and takes upon himself that which is outside his knowledge."*

- **Takhreej:** This *athar* is narrated in the *ta'leeqat* (suspended narrations after the chapter headings) of al-Bukhari in his *sahih*. The *athar* is narrated in the Book of Beginning of Creation.
- (خَلَقَ اللَّهُ هَذِهِ النُّجُومَ لِثَلَاثٍ) – “Allah created these stars for three purposes”. These three purposes and objectives are derived from the Book of Allah.
- (زِينَةً لِلسَّمَاءِ) – “To adorn the heavens”. Allah says in Surat al-Mulk:

﴿وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ﴾

*And We have certainly beautified the nearest heaven with stars.* [al-Mulk: 5]

- (وَرُجُومًا لِلشَّيَاطِينِ) – “As missiles against the devils”. The devils of the *jinn* who are able to reach the heavens and eavesdrop on the divine news. They are pelted with the stars to repel them, as Allah says in the same *ayah* in Surat al-Mulk:

﴿وَجَعَلْنَاهَا رُجُومًا لِلشَّيَاطِينِ﴾

*And have made [from] them what is thrown at the devils.* [al-Mulk: 5]

- (وَعَلَامَاتٍ يُهْتَدَى بِهَا) – “As signs for the guidance of travellers”. Travellers are usually guided by the stars which give them basic directions. Allah says in Surat al-An'aam and Surat al-Nahl:

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجُومَ لِتَهْتَدُوا بِهَا فِي ظُلُمَاتِ اللَّيْلِ وَالْبَحْرِ﴾

*And it is He who placed for you the stars that you may be guided by them through the darkness of the land and sea.* [al-An'am: 97]

﴿وَعَلَامَاتٍ وَبِالنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ﴾

*And landmarks. And by the stars they are [also] guided.* [al-Nahl: 16]

- (فَمَنْ تَأَوَّلَ فِيهَا غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ أَخْطَأَ) – “Whoever claims that they have a purpose other than these is mistaken”. If, for example, they claim that through the stars they can foresee future events thus claiming knowledge of the unseen, then they are gravely mistaken.
- (وَأَضَاعَ نَصِيبَهُ) – “And have lost their share”. In this worldly life, by wasting their time and effort in deriving further benefits of the stars not mentioned in the *sharee'ah*.

They have also lost their share of reward in the Hereafter, because they have committed major *shirk* by claiming knowledge of the unseen or attributing creation to the stars.

- **General meaning of the *athar*:** Qatadah reveals the wisdoms behind the creation of the stars (as mentioned in the Quran) as a refutation to some of his contemporaries who wrongfully believed that the stars were created for more than what Allah maintained in His Noble Book.

Such people made these claims out of ignorance, and wasted their lives in seeking knowledge which would ultimately harm them. The same ruling applies to whoever seeks the truth from sources other than the *Quran* and *Sunnah*.

- **Relevance of the athar to the chapter:** The *athar* of Qatadah demonstrates the wisdom of the creation of the stars, as mentioned in the Quran. It also serves as a refutation against those who claim that the stars were created for reasons not mentioned in the Quran.

وَكُرِهَ قِتَادَةُ تَعَلُّمِ مَنَازِلِ الْقَمَرِ وَلَمْ يُرَخِّصْ فِيهِ ابْنُ عُيَيْنَةَ. ذَكَرَهُ حَرْبٌ عَنْهُمَا. وَرَخِّصَ فِي تَعَلُّمِ  
الْمَنَازِلِ أَحْمَدُ وَإِسْحَاقُ.

*Harb has reported that the learning of the lunar phases was discouraged by Qatadah, prohibited by Ibn 'Uyaynah and permitted by Ahmad and Ishaq.*

- **Qatadah:** He is Qatadah Ibn Dia'mah al-Sadusi.  
**Ibn 'Uyaynah:** He is Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyaynah the great *muhadith*.  
**Harb:** He is Harb al-Karmani. He was one of Imam Ahmad's greatest disciples.  
**Ishaq:** Ishaq Ibn Rahuwayh also a great *muhadith*.
- (مَنَازِلِ الْقَمَرِ) – “Lunar Phases”. There are twenty-eight phases or positions of the moon. It moves to a different phase each night of the month.
- **The objective of the athar:** The *athar* of Harb presents the difference of opinion among the scholars regarding the learning of the lunar phases which falls under the study of astronomy. Learning these phases may help in determining the *qiblah*, times of obligatory prayers and the four seasons. The correct opinion regarding learning astronomy, is that it is permissible.

If the scholars differed regarding this form of *tanjeem*, with some allowing it and some prohibiting it, then without a doubt they would all agree to the prohibition of learning astrology, since it entails a grave deviation from the straight path.

وَعَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ: مُدْمِنُ الْخَمْرِ، وَقَاطِعُ الرَّحِمِ، وَمُصَدِّقٌ  
بِالسَّحْرِ. رَوَاهُ أَحْمَدُ وَابْنُ حِبَّانَ فِي صَحِيحِهِ.

*Abu Musa narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: Three persons will not enter Paradise: The one who habitually drinks alcohol, the one who severs his ties of relationship, and the one who believes in magic (astrology among it). [Ahmad, and Ibn Hibban in his authentic book].*

- (لَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ) – “Will not enter Paradise”. Either initially or at all. Those who habitually drink alcohol and sever the ties of relationship, although their sins are great, they do not remove them from the fold of Islam. Therefore, what is negated is that they will enter Paradise initially. Rather, they may be punished first in the Hellfire, before being allowed to enter Paradise.  
As for the one who believes in magic (astrology) they will not enter Paradise at all as it constitutes major *shirk*. The threat of not being allowed to enter Paradise indicates that these actions are strictly prohibited.
- (مُدْمِنُ الْخَمْرِ) – “Habitual drinker of alcohol”. They habitually drink it until they die without having repented from this sin.
- (وَقَاطِعُ الرَّحِمِ) – “Severs his ties of kinship”. That is, they do not fulfill their obligations upon those who have rights upon them from their relatives.
- (وَمُصَدِّقٌ بِالسَّحْرِ) – “Believes in magic”. Astrology is a kind of magic as outlined in a previous chapter, whereby the Prophet ﷺ said:

« مَنْ أَتَبَسَ شُعْبَةً مِنَ النُّجُومِ فَقَدْ أَتَبَسَ شُعْبَةً مِنَ السِّحْرِ زَادَ مَا زَادَ »

**Whoever learns a part of astrology has learned a part of sorcery. Those who learn more are getting that much more (sin to their credit).** [Abu Dawud – Sahih]

- The Prophet ﷺ clearly stated that astrology is a type of magic. This is as per its linguistic definition whereby it relies on hidden meanings that are baseless.
- **General meaning of the hadith:** The Prophet ﷺ warns his *ummah* that there will be three types of people who will not be admitted to Paradises, either initially or at all. The first is the one who habitually drinks alcohol; the second is the one who does not observe the duties of kinship that Allah has commanded them to observe; and the third is the one who believes in sorcery and magic, which has many types, astrology being one of them.
- **Relevance of the hadith to the chapter:** The *hadith* is a clear threat to the one who believes in magic. This includes astrology which is a type of magic which is the topic of this chapter.
- **Important issues of the Chapter**
  1. **The wisdom of creating the stars.** As per the *ayaat* in Surat al-An'aam, Surat al-Nahl and Surat al-Mulk. They were created as adornments for the heavens, missiles against the devils, and as signs for the guidance of travellers.
  2. **The refutation of those who claim otherwise.** As per the statement of Qatadah: "Whoever claims that they have a purpose other than these is mistaken...". He is refuting those who claim that the stars influence the universe within themselves or that they can be used to claim knowledge of the unseen. As for those who learn astronomy (*tasyeer*), then the correct opinion is that this is not forbidden.
  3. **Mention of the difference of opinions regarding the study of the lunar phases.** As per the *athar* of Harb who mentions the opinions of the scholars from those who prohibited it (Ibn 'Uyayna), those who disliked it (Qadadah) and those who permitted it (Ahmed and Ishaq).
  4. **The punishment promised for those who believed in any aspect of sorcery though knowing fully well that sorcery is falsehood.** Whoever believes in astrology or any other form of magic is promised this punishment. This is as per the *hadith* of Abu Musa.