

## Explanation of The Book of Tawheed

### Class Notes – Chapter 40

#### بَابُ مَنْ جَحَدَ شَيْئًا مِنَ الْأَسْمَاءِ وَالصِّفَاتِ

#### **Whoever denies any of the Names and Attributes of Allah.**

- **Relevance of the chapter to the book:** The *tawheed* of Allah consists of three major elements, which without any one of them, Iman cannot be attained.

1. **Tawheed al-Ruboobiyya** (The Oneness of Allah's Lordship).
2. **Tawheed al-Uloohiyya** (The Oneness of Allah's Worship)
3. **Tawheed al-Asmaa wal-Sifaat** (The Oneness of Allah's Names and Attributes).

In this chapter, the author addresses the third element of *tawheed*, namely, maintaining the Oneness of Allah's Names and Attributes, and that denying or rejecting any of them constitutes disbelief which completely removes a person from the fold of Islam.

- (مَنْ جَحَدَ) – “Whoever denies”. Denial of Allah's Names and Attributes is of two types:
  1. **إِنْكَارٍ تَكْذِيبٍ - Denial of rejection:** Whereby they outrightly reject that Allah has a particular Name or Attribute. For example, they reject that Allah has a Hand, or that He ascended on His Throne. Without a doubt, this is major *kufr*, because they have rejected what is explicitly stated in the Quran and Sunnah.
  2. **إِنْكَارٍ تَأْوِيلٍ - Denial of interpretation:** Whereby they do not outrightly reject a Name or Attribute, but they misinterpret it to an unknown or unestablished meaning. This has two further situations:
    - (a) If there is a justifying factor (such as the Arabic language or a weak *hadith* or incorrect *ijtihad*) then they have fallen into a *bid'a* (innovation) which does not necessitate their *kufr*.
    - (b) If there is no justifying factor then they have fallen into major *kufr*.

For example, Allah says in Surat al-Ma'idah:

﴿بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ يُنفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ﴾

**Rather both his hands are extended, giving freely as He pleases.** [al-Ma'idah: 64]

Those who claim that Allah's Hands in the *ayah* represent the Heavens and the Earth have fallen into *kufr*, because there is no justifying evidence to their claim. If, however, they say that His hands represent his *ni'ma* (bounties and blessings) then they have fallen into a *bid'a*, because there is evidence in the Arabic language that the word *yad* (hand) can mean bounties.

- (مِنَ الْأَسْمَاءِ وَالصِّفَاتِ) – “Of the Names and Attributes of Allah”. Every Name of Allah comprises an Attribute, but not every Attribute comprises a Name. Allah's names are not restricted to a particular number (ninety-nine or otherwise). In the authentic *hadith*:

« أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ أَوْ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ »

*I ask you with every name you have named yourself with, revealed in Your Book, taught any of Your creation, or kept to Yourself in the knowledge of the unseen that is with you.*

[Ahmad – Sahih]

وقول الله تعالى: ﴿وَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالرَّحْمَنِ قُلْ هُوَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ مَتَابِ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾  
**Allah the Almighty said: ... and they disbelieve in al-Rahman (Allah) Say: 'He is my Lord! None has the right to be worshipped but He! In Him is my trust, and to Him will be my return with repentance'. [al-Ra'd: 30]**

- {وَهُمْ} – “And they...”. That is the disbelieving pagans of Quraysh.
- {يَكْفُرُونَ بِالرَّحْمَنِ} – “Disbelieve in al-Rahman”. That is, they deny and reject this name, although they still believe in Allah’s Lordship. al-Rahman is from the names of Allah, and *al-Rahma* is from his great attributes.
- {قُلْ هُوَ رَبِّي} – “Say, He is my Lord”. That is, al-Rahman is my Lord despite your denial of His Name.
- {لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ} – “None has the right to be worshipped but He”. Disbelief in one of Allah’s Names or Attribute compromises the *shahadah* since they are mentioned in the same context.
- {وَإِلَيْهِ مَتَابِ} – “And to Him I shall return in repentance”. If I have fallen into sin, then my return is only to Allah to have those sins forgiven.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** Allah criticises the disbelievers of Quraysh for rejecting His Name al-Rahman. This incident occurred when it was proposed that the Treaty of Hudaibiyah commence with the *basamalah*. The disbelievers of Quraysh rejected this proposal on the basis that they did not acknowledge Allah’s name al-Rahman.

Allah further commanded His Messenger to disprove the rejection and confirm his belief in Allah, His Names and Attributes, and that He is the only One worthy of Worship.

This firm belief necessitates firm reliance on Allah and to always return to Him in repentance.

- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** That anyone who rejects one or more of Allah’s Names or Attributes has fallen into *kufr*. This is because they have rejected what is explicitly stated in the Quran and Sunnah.

وَفِي صَحِيحِ الْبُخَارِيِّ: قَالَ عَلِيٌّ: حَدِّثُوا النَّاسَ بِمَا يَعْرِفُونَ، أَلْتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُكَذَّبَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ؟!

**Ali narrated: 'You should preach to the people in a way that they can easily understand. Would you like that Allah and His Messenger ﷺ be denied?' [Bukhari]**

- **Takhreej:** This *athar* of Ali is narrated in Sahih al-Bukhari. He narrated it as a *mu'laq* (suspended) *hadith* as opposed to a *musnad* (uninterrupted) *hadith*.
- **General meaning of the athar:** During the caliphate of Ali Ibn Abi Talib, he commanded the people of knowledge to guide others by speaking to them in a manner suited to their intellects and not to engage them in speech above their level of comprehension, in order that they understand the message and not be misled.

This includes lengthy and involved explanations of Allah’s Names and Attributes, for this might lead to misunderstanding and cause people to deny something from the Quran and Sunnah thus causing them to be destroyed without even knowing.

For example, explaining to the people that Allah descends to the lowest heaven in the last third of the night. If their understanding of Allah is limited to Him being the Most High, and that if He descends to the lowest heaven then this necessitates that the heavens are higher than Him and that His Throne now sits empty, then it is sufficient to explain to them the virtue of this time without explaining Allah's descent as it may cause them to reject it.

- **Relevance of the athar to the chapter:** It is forbidden to talk to people in a manner which they do not understand. This includes long and complex explanations of Allah's Names and Attributes, for that might cause them to reject something of His Names and Attributes which would lead to disbelief.

وَرَوَى عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ عَنْ مَعْمَرٍ عَنْ ابْنِ طَاوُوسٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ: أَنَّهُ رَأَى رَجُلًا انْتَفَضَ لَمَّا سَمِعَ حَدِيثًا عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ فِي الصِّفَاتِ اسْتِنكَارًا لِدَلِيلِكَ فَقَالَ: مَا فَرَّقَ هَؤُلَاءِ؟ يَجِدُونَ رِقَّةً عِنْدَ مُحْكَمِهِ وَيَهْلِكُونَ عِنْدَ مُتَشَابِهِهِ. انْتَهَى.

*Ma'mar reported from Ibn Tawus from his father that Ibn Abbas saw a man shivering in disapproval when he heard a hadith from the Prophet ﷺ regarding the Divine Attributes of Allah. Thereupon Ibn Abbas said: 'These people do not differentiate. They find acceptance in the clear verses and are brought to ruin by those verses which are not entirely clear (in which they seek deviant interpretations).'* [Abdul Razaq]

- **Takhreej:** This *athar* was narrated in the *Musannaf* of Abdul Razaq with an authentic chain of narration.
- **Abdul Razaq:** Ibn Hamman al-San'ani. A *hafith* who had many compilations. He died in the year 211 A.H, may Allah have mercy on him.
- (انْتَفَضَ) – “Shivering in disapproval”. At what he heard from the Attributes of Allah which he did not understand and thus rejected.
- (مُحْكَمِهِ) – “What is precise in meaning”. The evidences from the Quran which are clear and understood by all.
- (مُتَشَابِهِهِ) – “Which are not entirely clear”. The evidences from the Quran which only those of knowledge know the meaning of. Those ignorant of their meanings may reject them or misinterpret them.
- **General meaning of the athar:** Ibn Abbas informs us in this *athar*, that he saw a man react in anger and disbelief when he heard a *hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ concerning Allah's Divine Attributes. Ibn Abbas rejected the man's reaction and refuted him by asked why such people do not differentiate. They accept the clear and unambiguous evidences, yet they do not fear to reject the evidences which are not entirely clear, giving them deviant misinterpretations due to their limited knowledge. Such people reject the obligation of believing in the Quranic *ayaat* whose meaning is unknown to them.
- **Relevance of the athar to the chapter:** That it is obligatory to believe in all of Allah's Names and Attributes. This is an essential part of *tawheed* as it maintains the Oneness of Allah's Names and Attributes. Not doing so necessitates destruction and ruin (*halaak*).

وَلَمَّا سَمِعَتْ قُرَيْشُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَذْكُرُ الرَّحْمَنَ أَنْكَرُوا ذَلِكَ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ: ﴿وَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالرَّحْمَنِ﴾  
*When the tribe of Quraysh heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ mentioning al-Rahman, they denied this Attribute. It was on this occasion that Allah the Almighty revealed the ayah: 'And they disbelieve in al-Rahman (Allah)'. [al-Ra'd:30]*

- **Takhreej:** This *athar* is narrated by Mujahid in the *tafseer* of Ibn Jareer with a weak chain of narration.

- **General meaning of the athar:** When the Prophet ﷺ wished to include Allah's name al-Rahman in the treaty of Hudaibiyah, the pagans of Quraysh rejected it saying that they did not know this name. Allah then revealed *ayah* 30 in Surat al-Ra'd regarding this incident.

It was also said that the pagans of Quraysh heard the Prophet ﷺ invoking Allah in his prostration by saying: 'Ya Rahman, Ya Raheem'. They responded by accusing him of invoking two deities (al-Rahman and Al-Raheem) rather than the one he claimed.

This is another reason for revelation (*sabab al-nuzoul*) for the *ayah* in Surat Al-Ra'd. It is possible to have more than one reason for one *ayah*.

- **Relevance of the athar to the chapter:** It shares the same relevance as the *ayah* in Surat al-Ra'd.
- **Important issues of the Chapter**
  1. **The denial of any of the Names or Attributes of Allah casts one out of Iman.** As per the *ayah* in Surat al-Ra'd. A *kaafir* is devoid of all Iman.
  2. **Explanation of the ayah in Surat al-Ra'd. (13:30).** As explained above.
  3. **Avoid speaking in a manner which the listener cannot understand clearly.** As per the *athar* of Ali.
  4. **Mentioning the reasons which leads to the denial of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ even unintentionally.** As per the *athar* of Ali. The main reason is that a lack of understanding and comprehension causes the rejection of the Quran and Sunnah.
  5. **Warning of Ibn Abbas to the effect that whoever denies any of the Attributes of Allah, they will be ruined.** As per the *athar* of Ibn Abbas. Disbelief (*kufr*) no doubt causes ruin in both this world and in the Hereafter.