
A discussion concerning the difference of the Companions in Creed [‘Aqeedah]

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

باب الكلام حول خلاف الصحابة في العقيدة

Chapter being a discussion of the difference of the Companions in the Islamic Creed [‘Aqeedah]

Questioner: In the Name of Allaah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. [All] praise is [due] to Allaah, Lord of the worlds and may the peace and praise of Allaah be upon the Messenger of Allaah.

As for what follows:

The questioner says, ‘Noble Shaykh! You claim that creed is a matter which the Righteous Predecessors were united upon, yet along with that we find that there is difference between them in affirming an Eye or two Eyes.

Shaykh al-Albaanee (rahimahullaah)¹: Firstly, [what did you say], ‘You ...’ what?

Questioner: You claim.

Shaykh al-Albaanee (rahimahullaah): Claim, ok. Would that he worded it slightly more softly.

Questioner: ... that creed is a matter which the Salaf were united upon yet along with that we find that there is a difference [of opinion] amongst them in affirming an Eye, or two Eyes, and the Shin. For it has been reported from Ibn Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, that he interpreted the Saying of Allaah the Most High, “**The Day when the Shin shall be laid bare.**”² to mean hardship and the suffering [of that Day].

The same is said about the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)³ seeing his Lord, the Majestic and Most High. Whoever affirms it then it is obligatory upon him to believe that, and whoever negates it then it is obligatory upon him to believe that which the negation means.

So what should our stance be, may Allaah reward you with good?

Shaykh al-Albaanee (rahimahullaah): It was befitting that the question [be posed] without this warning, since I don’t think the questioner was relating my opinion and [thus] building the direction of his question upon that. That is because we are the ones who hold it to be religion that there is no difference between what is called usool and between what ... [part of the recording is lost here]

... that they should be in agreement and united when they are able to. As for when it is possible that that may not be the case in the *usool* let alone the *furoo* [subsidiary issues] then the affair goes back

¹ (rahimahullaah) (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) May Allaah have mercy on him

² Surah al-Qalam 68:42

³ (صلى الله عليه وسلم) May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him

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to the *mujtahid*: if he had striven to come to the Truth and was correct he has two rewards, and if he made a mistake then he has one. As we said there is no difference in that between the *usool* and the *furoo*.

As for the claim that there is unity in all of the *usool* in contrast to the subsidiary issues [*furoo*] then I do not believe that this is something which a scholar would say with absolute certainty.

The most we can say is that the Salaf agreed that the foundation regarding the Attributes of Allaah which occur in the Book or the Sunnah is that they be taken as they are without any *ta’weel*—this is what it is possible to say they were united upon ... but this does not negate the fact that some difference can occur in some of the issues connected to this methodology.

And it is true that difference occurred concerning the example which the questioner mentioned regarding the interpretation of the Shin.

But is there difference amongst these [people from the Salaf] who may have differed in some of those parts connected to creed or Tawheed; is there difference amongst them in the principle foundation [*al-asl*] of the rule? The answer is no.

And this is the difference between the followers of the Salaf and the followers of those who came later [the *Khalaf*]. For this is the rule with the Salaf, i.e., to believe in everything that has been reported from Allaah and His Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) without making *ta’weel* and without *ta’teel*.

As for the *Khalaf*, then the rule with them is *ta’weel* which is not submission/or the rule with them is not submission.

Shaykh al-Albaanee (rahimahullaah) continues, “And a group called the *mufowwidah* can be found which is between these two.

They [incorrectly] do not believe or accept the apparent meaning of the proofs from the Book and the Sunnah which are connected to the Attributes [of Allaah] while declaring Him free of any likeness to His creation and not ascribing the qualities of the creation to Him [*tanzeeh*]. They do not perform *ta’weel* as the *Khalaf* do about whom we spoke earlier and who are the ones who say, ‘Indeed the *madhhab* of the Salaf is safer, but the *madhhab* of the *Khalaf* has more knowledge and is more precise.’

So the disagreement [with these groups] is not in the [subsidiary] parts, it is not possible to escape that, but rather in the foundational principle.

What is the rule that the Salaf go by?

It is to have that faith in everything reported from Allaah and His Messenger which includes believing in the apparent, clear, linguistic meanings [of the words reported] in the texts while declaring Him free of any likeness to His creation and not ascribing the qualities of the creation to Him [*tanzeeh*], as occurs in the Most High’s Saying—and this is a proof which is often used, “**There is nothing like Him. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.**”⁴

So in this sentence our Lord the Mighty and Majestic firstly mentioned, “**There is nothing like Him ...**” declaring Himself free from having any likeness to His creation and then He followed this negation of likeness with an affirmation, which is His Saying, “**... And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.**”

⁴ Surah ash-Shooraa 42:12

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So now, when we want to tread upon the path of the Salaf, [we find that] they did not differ whatsoever in understanding [the meaning] of “... **the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.**” For the belief they held was that the attribute of Hearing is not like that of Seeing and that [in addition to this] both of the attributes are just like the rest of the Divine Attributes: we affirm them as they have been reported while differentiating between each one and while declaring Allaah, the Blessed and Most High, to be free of any likeness to anything from His creation [*tanzeeh*].

What is the stance of the Mu’tazilah, the ones who negate the Attributes? They take the first part of the aayah, “**There is nothing like Him ...**” [believing in it] declaring Allaah to be free of any likeness to His creation and not ascribing the qualities of the creation to Him [*tanzeeh*]—but they went to extremes in this *tanzeeh* and they [ended up] negating the meaning. So they said the meaning of, “... **And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer,**” is ‘The All-Knowledgeable.’

Thus they negated these two Attributes, because humans can hear and see and so they thought [that by affirming this it would mean that] they were the same [as Allaah]. And they thought that by fleeing from affirming these two Attributes they were performing *tanzeeh* without *ta’teel* [negation of the Attribute], but they didn’t notice that the thing which they thought they were fleeing from is what they fell into ...

So there is, as the Shaykh of Islaam Ibn Taymeeyah (rahimahullaah) said, “An association in the wording but no such real association [between Allaah and the creation] in the meaning.

The Attributes of Hearing and Seeing and the Eye, are three Attributes which our Lord, the Blessed and Most High, has been described with in the Qur’aan, just like [He has been described with] the other Attributes mentioned in the Qur’aan.

But that does not mean that a person’s hearing, seeing and knowledge is like the Hearing, Seeing and Knowledge of Allaah.

For this reason, when the Mu’tazilah fled to this incorrect interpretation of the Hearing, Seeing and Knowledge [of Allaah], it is said to them that they negated two true and real Attributes from the Attributes of Allaah, the Blessed and Most High.”