

The Pre-Decree.

“Allah does whatever He wills. Nothing occurs except by His will and nothing is excluded from His will and decree.”

وأومن بأن الله فعّالٌ لما يريدُ، ولا يكون شيءٌ إلا بإرادته، ولا يخرجُ شيءٌ عن مشيئته، وليس شيءٌ في العالم يخرج عن تقديره، ولا يصدرُ إلا عن تدبيره

Shaikh Al-Islām Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhāb رَحِمَهُ اللهُ stated: **“I believe that Allah does whatever He wills, and nothing occurs except by His will. Nothing is excluded from His will and decree. There is no occurrence in the creation that is outside of His will. And there is nothing that happens except by His control.”**¹

This from our belief (īmān) in the actions of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. He has names, attributes, actions, intent (irādah), will (mashī'ah) and He does whatever He wills. He creates, He provides sustenance, He gives life, He gives death

¹ See *Sharhu 'Aqeedatil-Imām Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhāb* of Shaikh Sālih Al-Fawzān, 55-58.

and He controls everything. These are the actions of Allah عَلَّ وَعَلَّ, and they are by His intent (irādah) and His will (mash'ah). Allah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى stated:

فَعَالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ

“He does what He wants.”²

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ

“Verily! Allah does what He wills.”³

وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ

“But Allah does what He likes.”⁴

So, Allah does whatever He wills, whatever He intends and whatever He wants or likes. Everything that occurs in the worlds and in the universe is due to Him creating it. He made it by His will and His intent. Nothing can occur in any part of the creation except by His will and Him creating it — and there is no one who creates besides Him.

This is the belief of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah and it is a rebuttal of the Mu'tazilah⁵ who are the Qadariyyah, the

² Al-Burūj 85:16

³ Al-Hajj 22:18

⁴ Al-Baqarah 2:253

⁵ A misguided sect that arose in the second century of Islam who subjected the Qur'an and Sunnah to their own intellect, giving their innovated principles and ideas precedence over the Revelation which led them to reject much of the beliefs of Islam. They survive till this day.

deniers of the pre-decree. They say: **“A person creates his own actions and Allah does not create the actions of the servant. People are the ones who make their actions independently of Allah. Allah has nothing to do with their actions, He has no will or intent over their actions.”**

However, Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā’ah believe that the deeds of the people are created by Allah and are carried out by the people. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** stated:

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

“And it is Allah who created you and that which you do.”⁶ Allah created them and their deeds.

Nothing in the creation is excluded or outside of His will — and everything besides Allah is His creation. It is not possible for anything to occur, whether it is disbelief (kufr), or polytheism (shirk), or faith (īmān), or obedience, or disobedience, or richness, or poverty, or life, or death, or provision except by His will. It is an all-encompassing will and intent. So, it is not as the Mu’tazilah say, that the people themselves create their own actions independently and Allah has nothing at all to do with it. They describe Allah with deficiency and inability, and they negate from Him the ability to create and act. In essence, they set up alongside Allah another creator because they believe that people create or make their own actions, not Allah.

⁶ As-Sāffāt 37:96

On the opposite extreme are the Jabriyyah (who are the Jahmiyyah), who believe that the people are compelled with no free will of their own. This sect stated: **“A person has no actions of his own, they are merely actions of Allah. He moves the people to do acts just like a utensil is moved around. The people have no will or intent of their own.”** So, the Jabriyyah went overboard and exaggerated in affirming the actions of Allah to the point that they negated the actions of the people and responsibility for the deeds they do.

As for **Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā’ah**, they believe: It is Allah who creates, provides sustenance and controls all of creation as He wills and as He intends. And the servants have will, they have intent and they have choices endowed on them from Allah. They do their actions by their own choice, will and desire. So a person has free-will and has choices that he can make. So it is not as the Jabriyyah say, that a person has no free-will of his own and has no choice in his actions.

Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā’ah also stated in refuting the Mu’tazilah, that will of a person is not independent of Allah. So, a person has a will and a choice, but it as Allah عزَّوَجَلَّ has stated:

لِمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَسْتَقِيمَ
وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“For whoever wills among you to take a right course. So, you do not will except that Allah wills, Lord of the

creation.⁷ So, in the first verse, there a refutation of the Jabriyyah⁸ who negate free-will because Allah stated:

لِمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ i.e. “for whoever **wills** among you.” So this is affirmation of free-will for a servant.

And Allah affirms that again and confines it to His will:

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ i.e. “And you do not will **except** that Allah wills.”

And this is a refutation of the Mu'tazilah-Qadariyyah⁹ because it proves that the servant does not have a free-will that independent of Allah or outside the will of Allah. Allah stated: “And you do not will **except** that Allah wills.” This verse refutes the Mu'tazilah-Qadariyyah who deny that Allah has will and intent as does the saying of Allah:

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

“But you cannot will unless Allah wills. Verily, Allah is ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.”¹⁰ These āyahs affirm the belief of Ahlus-Sunnah that people are given a free-will to choose between right and wrong, whether they should live in one town or another, take one employment over another, to eat food or to fast, to pray or not to pray, to

⁷ At-Takwīr 81:28-29

⁸ i.e. the Jahmiyyah.

⁹ They negate the Qadr (Pre-Decree) and the will of Allah.

¹⁰ Al-Insān 76:30

obey or disobey Allah, to marry or remain unmarried and so on. Alongside this, Ahlus-Sunnah affirm that a person's wishes and wants will only take place if Allah wills them.

That is why the Muslim should ask Allah through invocations to grant him what he seeks. He should supplicate to Allah for guidance, true īmān, the best of this world and the Hereafter, to make him obedient, to forgive him, to make his children righteous and guide them, and so on. Besides this, **it is a must that a person works**, exerts effort to gain what he seeks. So he prays, goes to the Masjid, sits in the gatherings of knowledge, applies for jobs, seeks marriage, provides for his wife and children and so on. So these are the means that a servant must take and he places his trust in Allah. And, for certain, what was written for him will come to him, and Allah is able to grant whatever He wants.

The punishments and rewards are established upon the deeds of the servants, those which they carry out with their own intent, their own will and with their own choice. They are punished due to their sins because they committed them by their own volition and choice. They had the ability to refrain from evils deeds and to abandon them and flee from them. They were explicitly commanded by Allah to abandon sins, but they proceeded to commit them by their own choice and they will be punished on that basis.

And it is due to this understanding that the one who has no choice, no free-will to decide is not held accountable such as the insane, the child, the one who is unconscious or asleep and the one who is compelled,

because these people have no free-will to choice on their own. But as for the sane adult who is control of his faculties, then he is taken to account because he has the ability to act or to withhold. And it is Allah who give the ability to do one thing or the other. So if a person refrains from fornication and establishes the Prayer, Allah rewards him. But if he commits fornication and abandons the Prayer, then Allah will punish him because they are his actions that he did by his own free-will and choice.

And there is nothing in the creation that is outside of His will and decree. And there is nothing that happens except by His control. Allah stated:

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ ۗ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ ۗ مَا مِنْ شَفِيعٍ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ إِذْنِهِ ۗ ذَٰلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ ۗ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

“Surely, your Lord is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days and then ascended over the Throne, controlling and arranging the affairs of all things. No intercessor can plead with Him except after His permission. That is Allah, your Lord! So worship Him alone. Then, will you not remember?”¹¹

We ask Allah to grant us knowledge of His Religion and its understanding. To grant us success in worshipping Him, and to obey Him as He deserves. We ask Him to forgive us and shower upon us His mercy, and to cure

¹¹ Yūnus 10:3

our afflicted, for He is the Healer. And enter us in to the eternal Gardens of Paradise and protect us from His punishment.

And all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. And may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon the Messenger, his family, his Companions and followers.