

THE BOOK OF AL-IMĀM ABUL-HASAN AL-ASH‘ARĪ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ),
AL-IBĀNAH ‘AN USŪL AD-DIYĀNAH.

Chapter One: Exposition of the Belief of the People of Deviation and Innovation (*Ahluz-Zaygh wal-Bid‘ah*)

Al-Imām Abul-Hasan Al-Ash‘arī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said:

Many of those who have deviated from the truth among the *Mu‘tazilah* and *ahlul-Qadar*¹⁶⁷ were deviated by their desires into blindly following their leaders and those who preceded them. So, they interpreted the Qurān according to their opinions with interpretations for which Allāh gave no authority and for which He did not reveal any proof—and for which they do not cite anything from the Messenger of the Lord of all existence, nor from the early *Salaf*.

1. They oppose the reports of the *Sahābah* (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) concerning the Seeing of Allāh [on the Day of Resurrection] with one’s eyes (*ar-Ru’yah*) even though the narrations mentioning it are reported from numerous different sources—and they reach the level of *tawātur*, narrated by many narrators at every level of the chain of narration, followed up and supported by numerous reports.

2. They reject the intercession of Allāh’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) for the sinners [on the Day of Judgement] and they reject the narrations from the *Salaf* (Pious Predecessors) concerning it.

¹⁶⁷ *Ahlul-Qadar* (*al-Qadariyyah*) are the deniers of the Divine Pre-Decree, and they are the *Mu‘tazilah*.

3. They deny the punishment of the grave and that the *Kuffār* are being punished in their graves—even though the *Sahābah* (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) and their Successors (*at-Tābi‘īn*) agreed upon that.

3. They believe that the Qur’ān is created, similar to the saying of their brothers from the polytheists who said:

إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ

“This is nothing but the word of a human being!”¹⁶⁸

So, they claim that the Qur’ān is the saying of a human.

4. They affirmed and believed that the people create evil similar to the saying of the Magians (Zoroastrians) who hold that there are two creators: one that creates good and the other who creates evil. And the *Qadariyyah* claim that Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) creates good and the *Shaytān* creates evil.

5. And they claim that Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) wills what does not occur, and things occur which He did not will. This opposes the saying of Allāh:

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

“But you cannot will unless Allāh wills. Verily, Allāh is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.”¹⁶⁹

So Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) has stated that we do not will anything except that which Allāh has willed for us to will. And due to His saying:

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَفْتَتَلُوا

¹⁶⁸ Al-Mudaththir: 25.

¹⁶⁹ Al-Insān: 30.

“If Allāh had willed, they would not have fought against one another.”¹⁷⁰

And due to the saying of Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى):

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَكَاتَبْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدًى

“And if We had willed, surely We would have given every person his guidance.”¹⁷¹

And due to His (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) saying:

فَعَالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ

“He (Allāh) is the doer of whatsoever He intends.”¹⁷²

And due to His (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) saying where He stated that His Prophet Shu‘aib (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) had said:

وَمَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَنْ نَعُودَ فِيهَا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ

“And it is not for us to return to it unless Allāh, our Lord, should will.”¹⁷³

So it is for this reason, Allāh labelled them (the deniers of the Pre-Decree) as the Magians (*Majūs*) of the *Ummah* because they adopted the religion of the Magians. They have parallel sayings and claim that good and evil each have a creator just as the Magians claim—and that there are affairs of evil that Allāh did not will just as the Magians say.

¹⁷⁰ Al-Baqarah: 253.

¹⁷¹ As-Sajdah: 13.

¹⁷² Al-Burūj: 16.

¹⁷³ Al-A‘rāf: 89.

6. They claim that they have control, besides Allāh, over harm and benefit to themselves and this opposes the saying of Allāh to His Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ

“Say: I possess no power over benefit or harm to myself except as Allāh wills.”¹⁷⁴

So, they shun the Qur’ān and that which the people of Islam have agreed upon.

7. They believe that they have an independent ability over their actions without their Lord (عَزَّوَجَلَّ). So, they affirm for themselves freedom and self-sufficiency from Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ). They attribute to themselves ability in that which they do not attribute to Allāh of ability, just as the Magians, may Allāh’s curse be upon them, affirmed for Shaytān the ability over evil which they do not affirm for Allāh. So, they are the Fire-worshippers of this Ummah because they have adopted their beliefs and they hold fast to their fabrications, and they went astray into their deviations.

And [due to this misguidance] the people despaired from the mercy of Allāh and lost hope in His beneficence—and they judged that the sinners are in Hell forever in opposition to the saying of Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى):

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ

“And He forgives what is less than *shirk* (polytheism) for whomever He wills.”¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Al-A’rāf: 188.

¹⁷⁵ An-Nisā: 48.

8. And they claim that the one who enters the Fire does not leave it, in opposition to that which is narrated from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), “**Allāh will take out from the Fire a group after they have been burned in it and become ashes.**”¹⁷⁶

9. They reject that Allāh has a Face even though He (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) said:

وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَلِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

“**And the Face of your Lord full of Majesty and Honour will remain forever.**”¹⁷⁷

And they reject that Allāh has two Hands even though He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) said:

قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإِيْدِي

“**O Iblees! What prevents you from prostrating yourself to the one whom I have created with both my Hands.**”¹⁷⁸

10. And they reject that Allāh has two Eyes even though He (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) said:

¹⁷⁶ Al-Bukhari’s report has the wording: Abu Sā’id Al-Khudri (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) narrated that Allāh’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, “When the people of Paradise have entered Paradise, and the people of the Fire have entered the Fire, Allāh will say. ‘**Take out of the Fire whoever has *Imān* equal to a mustard seed in his heart.**’ They will come out, and by that time they would have burnt and become like ashes, and then they will be thrown into the river of Hayyāt (Life) and they will sprout just as a seed grows on the bank of a rain-water stream.” The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, “Do you not see that the germinating seed starts out yellow and twisted?” (Al-Bukhāri no. 6560, Muslim no. 184).

¹⁷⁷ Ar-Rahmān: 27.

¹⁷⁸ Şād: 75.

تَجْرَى بِأَعْيُنِنَا

“[The Ark of Noah] sailing under Our Eyes, a reward for him who had been rejected!”¹⁷⁹

And His saying:

وَلِيُضَنَّ عَلَى عَيْنِي

“And I bestowed upon you [O Mūsā] love from Me that you would be brought up under My Eye.”¹⁸⁰

11. And they denied that Allāh has Knowledge even though He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) said:

أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ

“He has sent it (Qurān) down with His knowledge.”¹⁸¹

12. And they denied that Allāh has Power even though He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ

“Verily, Allāh is the Provider, Possessor of Power, the Strong.”¹⁸²

13. And they negated that which was reported from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), “He descends to the nearest Heaven of this Earth every night.”¹⁸³—and other than that which has been narrated

¹⁷⁹ Al-Qamar: 14.

¹⁸⁰ Tāhā: 39.

¹⁸¹ An-Nisā: 166.

¹⁸² Adh-Dhāriyāt: 58

¹⁸³ Reported by Bukhāri no. 1145, Muslim no. 758.

through trustworthy narrators from Allāh’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).¹⁸⁴

14. Likewise, all of *ahlul-Bid‘ah* from among the *Jahmiyyah*, *Murji‘ah*, *Harūriyyah* (the *Khawārij*), and the people of deviation (*ahluz-Zaygh*) in whatever they have innovated and opposed the Book and Sunnah, contradicted that which the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and his Companions (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ) were upon—and differed from what the Ummah has united upon (*ijmā‘*)—such as the oppositions of the *Mu‘tazilah* and the *Qadariyyah*—then I will mention them chapter-by-chapter, point-by-point, by the permission of Allāh, with His help and support, and from Him is guidance and steadfastness.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ Al-Bukhāri reported from Abu Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) that Allāh’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

يُنزِلُ رَبُّنَا تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا حِينَ يَبْقَى ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الْآخِرِ يَقُولُ مَنْ يَدْعُونِي
فَأَسْتَجِيبَ لَهُ مَنْ يَسْأَلُنِي فَأُعْطِيهِ مَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُنِي فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ

“Our Lord, the Blessed and Most High, descends every night to the nearest Heaven of the Earth when the last third of the night remains, saying: ‘Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to his invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant him his request? Is there anyone seeking My forgiveness, so that I may forgive him?’” (no. 1145)

¹⁸⁵ With this concludes Chapter 1 of *Al-Ibānah ‘an Usūl ad-Diyānah*, pp. 10-13.