

الإيمان مُيسراً - الجزء السادس

PART
6
SIX

Īmān – MADE EASY

الإيمان بـ
القضاء والقدر



BELIEVING IN
QADAR
ALLĀH'S DECREE

محمد الجبالي

Muhammad al-Jibaly

مَشُورَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ

Al-Kitaab & as-Sunnah Publishing

***Imān* Made Easy - Part 6**
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QADAR

مُحَمَّدُ الْجِبَالِي

MUHAMMAD AL-JIBĀLĪ

مَنْشُورَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ

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PREFACE

Opening Sermon

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا
وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.

Al-ḥamdu lillāh. Indeed, all praise is due to Allāh. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allāh from our souls' evils and our wrong doings. He whom Allāh guides, no one can misguide; and he whom He misguides, no one can guide.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ. وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

I bear witness that there is no (true) god except Allāh — alone without any partners. And I bear witness that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is His 'abd (servant) and messenger.¹

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ،

وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ آل عمران ١٠٢

«O you who believe! Revere Allāh the right reverence, and do not die except as Muslims.»²

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، وَخَلَقَ

1 The above two paragraphs, together with the following three portions of Qur'ān, are called *Khuṭbat ul-Hājah* (the Sermon of Need) with which Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) often started his speeches. The *ḥadīths* in this regard are recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others from Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Abbās, and other companions (رضي الله عنهم). A full discussion of the various reports of this sermon is provided in al-Albānī's "*Khuṭbat ul-Hājah*", published by al-Maktab ul-Islāmī, Beirut.

2 *Āl 'Imrān* 3:102.

مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا، وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً، وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾ النساء ١

«O people! Revere your Lord who has created you from a single soul, created from it its mate, and dispersed from both of them many men and women. Revere Allāh through whom you demand things from one another, and (cherish the ties of) the wombs. Indeed, Allāh is ever-Watchful over you.»¹

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ، وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ، وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾﴾ الأحزاب ٧٠-٧١

«O you who believe! Revere Allāh and say just words. He will then rectify your deeds and forgive your sins. He who obeys Allāh and His Messenger has certainly achieved a great victory.»²

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ،
وَحَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ (ﷺ)، وَشَرَّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا،
وَكُلُّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.

Verily, the best speech is Allāh's (ﷻ) speech; the best guidance is Muḥammad's (ﷺ) guidance; and the worst matters (in creed or worship) are those innovated (by the people), for every innovated matter is a *bid'ah* (prohibited innovation), and every *bid'ah* is an act of misguidance leading (those who start it) into the Fire.³

1 An-Nisā' 4:1.

2 Al-Ahzāb 33:70-71.

3 Muslim and others have recorded from Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to start his speeches with this paragraph.

Our Mission

Our goal in our works is propagating the true *Da'wah* that derives from Allāh's (ﷻ) Book and His Messenger's (ﷺ) *Sunnah*. This is a duty that every Muslim should cherish. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾ آل عمران ١٠٤

«Let there arise from you a group of people inviting to the good, enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong. Those will be the successful.»¹

This *Da'wah* has two fundamental components:

- (a) *Taṣfiyah*: Cleansing and purifying the Islāmic beliefs and practices.
- (b) *Tarbiyah*: Guiding and educating the people according to the purified teachings.

Allāh (ﷻ) indicates that this was the Prophet's (ﷺ) message:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ، يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ،
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ، وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ، وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي
ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ﴾ الجمعة ٢

«It is He who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from themselves reciting to them His *āyāt*, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and Wisdom — although they were before in clear deviation.»²

1 *Āl 'Imrān* 3:104.

2 *Al-Jumu'ah* 62:2.

This is also an obligation on every Muslim according to his ability, as Allāh (ﷻ) commands:

«وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ، وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ» المائدة ٢

«Help one another in righteousness and piety; and do not help one another in sinning and transgression.»¹

Our mission is then to propagate the Islāmic teachings in various areas as follows:

1. CORRECTING OUR BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

We should revere, study, comprehend, and implement the noble Qur'ān and the Prophet's authentic Sunnah in accordance with the understanding and practice of the righteous *salaf*: the *ṣahābah* and their true followers, who are described in the following:

«وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ أُولَئِكَ مِنِ الْمُهَجِّرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ
بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا، ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ» التوبة ١٠٠

«The first to embrace Islām among the *Muhājirūn* and the *Anṣār*, and also those who followed them in the best way, Allāh is pleased with them and they with Him. He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, and in which they will abide eternally. This is the supreme success.»²

Thus, the guidance of the *salaf* is the only true guidance. Furthermore, the beliefs of the *ṣahābah* are the only acceptable beliefs:

«فَإِنْ ءَامَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا ءَامَنْتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ أَهْتَدُوا» البقرة ١٣٧

1 Al-Mā'idah 5:2.

2 At-Tawbah 9:100.

«So if they believe as you believe ¹, they are indeed truly guided.» ²

Allāh warns against following any guidance other than the Messenger's (ﷺ) and his companions' (رضي الله عنهم):

﴿وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ،
وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، نُؤَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ، وَنُصَلِّهِ جَهَنَّمَ،
وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا﴾ النساء ١١٥

«Whoever opposes the Messenger, after guidance has become clear to him, and follows other than the way of the believers ³, We will give him what he has chosen and admit him into Hell — what an evil destination!» ⁴

2. INVITING TO THE TRUE *DĪN*

We should contribute to educating and guiding the Muslims to adopt the true *Dīn*, act according to its teachings, and adorn themselves with its virtues and ethics.

We should also contribute to inviting the non-Muslims to the unadulterated truth of *Islām*.

This is the only way for any person to attain Allāh's acceptance and achieve happiness and success. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَالْعَصْرِ ﴿١﴾
إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِفِي خُسْرٍ ﴿٢﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ﴿٣﴾﴾
العصر ١-٣

«By time, the human being is surely in loss, except for those who believe, do righteous deeds, enjoin upon one another the keeping to truth, and enjoin upon one another patience (in

1 The address here is to the *ṣaḥābah* (رضي الله عنهم).

2 *Al-Baqarah* 2:137.

3 The description "believers" here applies primarily to the *ṣaḥābah* (رضي الله عنهم).

4 *An-Nisā'* 4:115.

adversity).»¹

3. WARNING AGAINST DEVIATION

We should caution the Muslims and exhort them against any beliefs or practices alien to the pure teachings of Islām, such as *shirk* and *bid'ahs*.

4. PURIFYING THE SUNNAH

We should contribute to cleansing the Sunnah of weak and fabricated narrations. Wrong beliefs and practices deriving from weak reports have marred the beauty of Islām and prevented the Muslims' advancement.

The duty of purifying the Sunnah is so vital that the Messenger (ﷺ) praised those who perform it by saying:

«يحمل هذا العلم من كل خلف عدوله، ينفون عنه

تحريف الغالين، وانتحال المبطلين، وتأويل الجاهلين.»

«This knowledge will be carried by the trustworthy ones of every generation — they will expel from it the alterations made by those going beyond bounds, the false claims of the liars, and the false interpretations of the ignorant.»²

5. LIBERATING THE ISLĀMIC THOUGHT

Guided by the Islāmic principles, we should contribute to reviving the unobstructed Islāmic thought and opposing stubborn adherence to *mathhabs* and prejudiced loyalty to

1 Al-'Aṣr 103:1-3.

2 Recorded by Ibn 'Adiyy, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Ibn 'Asākir, and others. It is reported from a number of *ṣaḥābah* including Abū Hurayrah, Ibn Mas'ūd, and Anas (رضي الله عنه). All of its reports have various levels of weakness, but they add up collectively to make this *ḥadīth ḥasan*, as is indicated by al-Albānī in *Mishkāt ul-Maṣābīḥ* (no. 248), and as expressed by al-Ḥalabī in *al-Ḥiṭṭah* (p. 70).

parties. Neglecting this in the past has caused rust to dwell on the hearts and minds of Muslims, diverting them from the pure original sources of Islām, and causing them to deviate from the honest Islāmic brotherhood called to by Allāh (ﷻ):

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا﴾ آل عمران ١٠٣

«And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allāh, and be not divided among yourselves.»¹

And by His Messenger (ﷺ):

«وكونوا، عبادَ الله، إخواناً»

«Be, worshipers of Allāh, brothers.»²

6. PRESENTING THE ISLĀMIC SOLUTION

We should contribute to providing realistic Islāmic solutions to contemporary problems, and strive toward living a true Islāmic life and establishing an Islāmic society governed by Allāh's law. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَأَنْ أَحْكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ﴾ المائدة ٤٩

«Hence, judge between them in accordance with what Allāh has revealed, and do not follow their errant views.»³

We call upon all the Muslims to support us in carrying out this noble trust. This will surely elevate and honor us and spread the eternal message of Islām all over the earth, as Allāh promises:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ،

عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ﴾ الص ٩

1 *Āl 'Imrān* 3:103.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

3 *Al-Mā'idah* 5:49.

«It is He who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, in order to make it prevail over all (false) religion, however hateful this may be to the pagans.»¹

CONCLUSION

This work is, therefore, a humble response to our realization of a great responsibility: the responsibility to help bring forth before the English-speaking public writings that refine Islām and present it pure and simple, as close as possible to the way it was understood and practiced by its early righteous pioneers — the *salaf*.

A Word to Parents and Educators

THE GOALS OF TRUE EDUCATION

True Education is that which improves a person's knowledge and understanding of his *dīn*, making him aware of the purpose of his creation and his role in life. It builds in his heart strong *īmān* that enables him to distinguish between right and wrong, compelling him to abide by the right and refrain from the wrong.

True education is a social necessity. It is a prerequisite for attaining the kind of success and dignity that were enjoyed by the first Muslim generations.

FAULTS IN CURRENT ISLĀMIC CURRICULA

Education, with the above goals, has largely vanished from among the Muslims. Many of those who took its lead lack in clear Islāmīc knowledge and vision. They attempt to fill this lack with numerous imported educational theories, causing a severe distortion to the Islāmīc identity.

Indeed, a review of the available Islāmīc curricula and reading material for the youth exposes an obvious problem:

1 *Aṣ-Ṣaff* 61:9.

There is serious confusion in determining the information to present and the right approach for presenting it.

We find that the themes of many Islāmic books for youth revolve around magic and superstition, deviant beliefs and practices, historical falsehoods and slanders, offensive thought, or disguised invitations to religious or ideological beliefs that contradict Islām.

OUR ROLE

All of this has prompted us to write for our beloved youth books aiming to help in filling the current gaps and mending the current rifts.

True to our above-outlined mission, we base these books on the authentic sources: Allāh's Book and His Messenger's (ﷺ) Sunnah, guided in this by the understanding of the true scholars of Islām.

In these books, we mostly use easy language and simplified concepts — without compromising the accuracy or completeness of coverage, which makes these books ideal as textbooks for various school levels. In addition, their attractive presentation and numerous exercises make them useful sources of both knowledge and entertainment.

***Īmān* Made Easy**

The "*Īmān Made Easy*" series covers the Six Pillars of Faith and other related topics. The material is founded on authentic texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah, with explanations from the *ṣaḥābah* and other great scholars of Islām. This series consists of six book:

1. Knowing Allāh
2. Knowing the Angels
3. Knowing Allāh's Books & the Qur'ān
4. Knowing Allāh's Prophets & Messengers
5. Knowing the Last Day
6. Believing in Allāh's Decree, *Qadar*

Each book is structured into chapters, sections, and subsections to organize learning and facilitate grasping the concepts. Furthermore, each chapter includes exercises to emphasize, review, and reinforce the concepts.

Books 1 through 5 employ easy language and simplified concepts, making them suitable for students in lower school levels and readers with limited vocabulary.

Book 6, however, is aimed toward high school students and regular readers. It employs standard language and conceptual approach, and is supplemented with many diagrams and tables, making it an excellent reference for understanding the intricate issues of *Qadar*.

Technicalities

TRANSLITERATION

We make a serious attempt to limit the use of transliterated Arabic terms to the following two situations:

- a) There is no English expression that can reflect the same meaning as the original term.
- b) The Arabic term is of such importance that it is essential to familiarize the readers with it.

At the end of this book, we have included a glossary defining common Arabic terms that fulfill the above criteria. In addition, we have included an index of the Arabic terms that are more pertinent to this current work, indicating the page on which they have been defined.

Except for proper nouns, transliterated Arabic terms are *italicized*. In general, the rules of English pronunciation can be applied. The following table includes additional symbols employed in this book to help pronounce the Arabic terms.

Symbol	Stands for	English Equivalent Sounds
ā, Ā	(ا) <i>Alif</i> (long vowel a)	Mostly: <u>Ma</u> n, <u>sa</u> d. At times: Fa <u>th</u> er, ha <u>rd</u> , go <u>d</u> .
ū, Ū	(و) <i>Wāw</i> (long vowel u)	<u>Ro</u> ot, <u>so</u> up, <u>flu</u> te.
ī, Ī	(ي) <i>Yā'</i> (long vowel i)	<u>Se</u> ed, <u>lea</u> n, <u>pie</u> ce, <u>recei</u> ve.
'	(ء) <i>Hamzah</i>	The first consonant vocal sound uttered when saying: <u>a</u> t, <u>i</u> t or <u>o</u> h.
Th, th	(ث) <i>Thā'</i>	<u>Th</u> ree, mo <u>th</u> .
H, h	(ح) <i>Hā'</i>	No equivalent. Produced in the lower throat, below "h". Resembles the sound produced after swallowing.
Kh, kh	(خ) <i>Khā'</i>	No equivalent. Produced in the back of the mouth and top of the throat.
<u>Th</u> , <u>th</u>	(ذ) <i>Thāl</i>	<u>Th</u> ere, mo <u>th</u> er.
Ṣ, ṣ	(ص) <i>Ṣād</i>	A deeper "s" sound. Somewhat close to the "sc" in "mus <u>cl</u> e".
D, d	(ض) <i>Dād</i>	Sounds deeper than a "d". Produced by touching the tongue to the mouth's roof.
T, t	(ط) <i>Tah</i>	Similar but deeper than a "t".
Z, z	(ظ) <i>Zah</i>	A deeper <i>thāl</i> , produced by touching the tip of the tongue to the back of the front teeth.
'	(ع) <i>'Ayn</i>	Produced in the bottom of the throat, underneath "h".

Symbol	Stands for	English Equivalent Sounds
Gh, gh	(غ) <i>Ghayn</i>	A gurgling sound produced in the back of the mouth, just above the <i>khā</i> . Similar to the "R" in some French accents.
Q, q	(ق) <i>Qāf</i>	Somewhat similar to the "c" in "coffee".

TRANSLATING AND REFERENCING QUR'ĀN AND ḤADĪTH











The Qur'ān contains Allāh's exact words that cannot be precisely translated into other languages because of possible misinterpretations and limited human understanding. One can at best translate the meanings as understood by the Muslim scholars. This is what is attempted here. When citing Qur'ānic *āyah(s)*, the Arabic text is presented, followed, between double angle quotation marks («»), by the English meaning in **boldface**. This is then followed by a footnote specifying the *sūrah*'s name and number, and the number(s) of the *āyah(s)* cited.

Similarly, when citing a *ḥadīth*, the Arabic text for the Prophet's (ﷺ) words is presented, followed by its meaning, in **boldface**, between single angle quotation marks (‹›). If the *ḥadīth* contains a supplication or exaltation, we generally also include a full transliteration of its text. This is then followed by a footnote specifying the *ḥadīth*'s location in the compilations of *ḥadīths*. A *ḥadīth* recorded by al-Bukhārī or Muslim is automatically considered authentic. Otherwise, the footnote would usually indicate its degree of authenticity as verified by al-Albānī (رحمته الله), and a reference to the works where he made such a verification.

NOTABLE UTTERANCES

Out of love, appreciation, gratitude and other noble feelings, a Muslim is encouraged to utter certain phrases at the mention of Allāh, His messengers, the angels, the *ṣaḥābah*, or other righteous Muslims. We present these phrases in condensed Arabic

calligraphy as follows:

Phrase	Mentioned with	Transliteration	Meaning
	Allāh's Name	<i>Subhānahū wa ta'ālā.</i>	He is exalted above weakness and indignity.
	Allāh's Name	<i>'Azza wa-jal.</i>	He is exalted and glorified.
	Allāh's Name	<i>Jalla jalāluh.</i>	Exalted is His glory.
	Muḥammad and other prophets	<i>Ṣalla 'llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam</i> ¹ .	May Allāh's peace and praise be on him.
	Prophets and angels	<i>'Alayh is-Salām.</i>	Peace be on him.
	A male companion	<i>Raḍiya 'llāhu 'anhu.</i>	May Allāh be pleased with him.
	A female companion	<i>Raḍiya 'llāhu 'anhā.</i>	May Allāh be pleased with her.
	Two companion	<i>Raḍiya 'llāhu 'anhumā.</i>	May Allāh be pleased with them.
	More than two companions	<i>Raḍiya 'llāhu 'anhum.</i>	May Allāh be pleased with them.
	A past scholar or righteous Muslim.	<i>Raḥimahu 'llāh.</i>	May Allāh have mercy on him.

When coming across any of these symbols, the reader is

1 Uttering this is sometimes described as, "saying *ṣalāh* upon the Messenger".

advised to utter the complete phrase in order to obtain the reward of saying the appropriate *thikr* or *du'ā'*.

Acknowledgements

All praise and thanks are due to our Lord (ﷻ) who facilitated the completion of this work. May He further reward all the Muslims who helped and supported this effort in various ways. In particular, may Allāh (ﷻ) reward my daughters Ālā', Arwā, and Bushrā for proofreading the manuscript.

We ask Allāh (ﷻ) to make this humble effort helpful and fruitful to the Muslims, forgive our shortcomings, purify our work from hypocrisy and conceit, and accept it from us.

Our Lord, forgive us and all of the believers, and bestow Your peace and praise upon our Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).

Muhammad al-Jibati
11 Shawwāl 1425
23 November 2004

CHAPTER 1

THE SIXTH PILLAR

Introduction

A famous *ḥadīth*, known as Jibrīl's *Ḥadīth*, describes the angel Jibrīl (ﷺ) visiting the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions (رضي الله عنهم) in the form of a stranger to teach them important elements of their Religion ¹. In this *ḥadīth*, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الإيمانُ أن تؤمنَ باللهِ وملائكتهِ وكتبهِ ورسلهِ
واليومِ الآخرِ، وتؤمنَ بالقدرِ خيره وشره.»

«*Īmān* is that you believe in Allāh, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and *Qadar*—whether good or bad ^{2, 3}»

This *ḥadīth*, then, mentions the Six Pillars of *Īmān* (Faith):

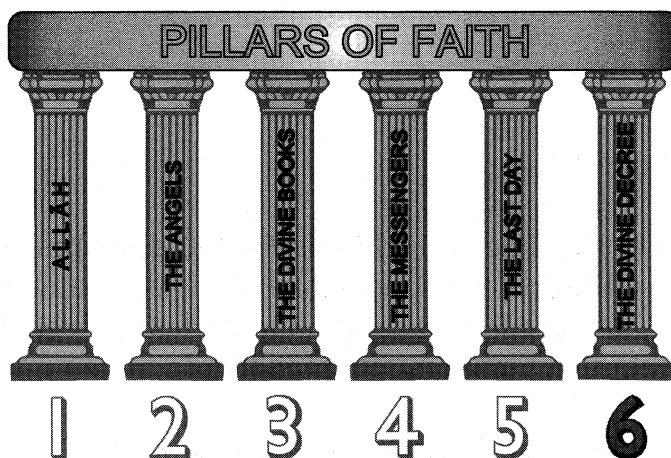
- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. Belief in Allāh | 4. Belief in the messengers |
| 2. Belief in the angels | 5. Belief in the Last Day |
| 3. Belief in the books | 6. Belief in <i>Qadar</i> (the Decree). |

1 We discussed this *ḥadīth* in detail in “Knowing Allāh”, which is the first part of this series (*Īmān Made Easy*).

2 We explain later in this book that the “good” and “bad or evil” mentioned in this *ḥadīth* are only relative good and evil according to what people feel. In reality, however, all of what Allāh (ﷻ) creates is absolutely good.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others from ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه).

This book is about the sixth pillar, *Qadar*.



We must believe in all of these pillars ¹. Rejecting any of the pillars from two to six is equivalent to rejecting the belief in Allāh (ﷻ) Himself. We say this because each of these pillars reflects aspects of Allāh's (ﷻ) supremacy and sovereignty, and rejecting it amounts to rejecting some of His supreme qualities. For example, rejecting the belief in the Last Day amounts to rejecting Allāh's perfect wisdom in creating us and His perfect justice toward us.

Similarly, *Qadar* represents some of Allāh's (ﷻ) very important qualities. We will see this below, and will understand that believing correctly in *Qadar* is intertwined with believing truly in Allāh (ﷻ).

Importance of Believing in *Qadar*

BELIEF IN *QADAR* IS ESSENTIAL FOR *ĪMĀN*

A person is not considered a believer until he has the correct

¹ We discussed the first five pillars in the previous books of this series (*Īmān Made Easy*).

belief in *Qadar*. ‘Alī (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

« لا يُؤْمِنُ عَبْدٌ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَ بِأَرْبَعٍ: يَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ بَعَثَنِي بِالْحَقِّ، وَيُؤْمِنُ بِالْبَعْثِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَيُؤْمِنُ بِالْقَدَرِ كُلِّهِ. »

«A person will not truly believe unless he fulfills four things:

- (1) He testifies that there is no (true) god except Allāh.
- (2) He testifies that I am Allāh’s Messenger and Allāh sent me with the true message.
- (3) He believes that there will be resurrection after death.
- (4) He believes in all of *Qadar*.»¹

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

« لا يُؤْمِنُ عَبْدٌ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ، حَتَّى يَعْلَمَ أَنَّ مَا أَصَابَهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَهُ، وَأَنَّ مَا أَخْطَأَهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَهُ. »

«A person is not a believer until he believes in *Qadar*, whether good or bad — so that he would know that whatever happens to him could not have missed him, and whatever misses him could not have happened to him.»²

Zayd Bin Thābit, Ubayy Bin Ka’b, and others (ﷺ) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

« لَوْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَذَّبَ أَهْلَ سَمَاوَاتِهِ وَأَهْلَ أَرْضِهِ، عَذَّبَهُمْ وَهُوَ غَيْرُ ظَالِمٍ »

1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 100, and *as-Sunnah* no. 130).

2 Recorded by at-Tirmithī and Ibn ‘Adiyy. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2439).

لَهُمْ. وَلَوْ رَجِمَهُمْ كَانَتْ رَحْمَتُهُ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ. وَلَوْ أَنْفَقْتَ مِثْلَ
أَحَدِ ذَهَبًا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، مَا قَبَلَهُ مِنْكَ حَتَّى تَتُومَنَ بِالْقَدْرِ، وَتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ
مَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ، وَأَنْ مَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيَصِيبَكَ. وَلَوْ
مِتَّ عَلَى غَيْرِ هَذَا دَخَلْتَ النَّارَ.»

«If Allāh were to punish the people of His heavens and earth, He would not then be unfair to them. And if He was to show mercy to them, His mercy would surely exceed their deeds. And if you were to spend gold as much as the mountain of Uḥud for Allāh's cause, He would not accept it from you until you believe in *Qadar*, and until you realize that whatever happens to you could not have missed you, and whatever misses you could not have happened to you.»¹

THERE IS A GREAT PUNISHMENT FOR DENYING QADAR

Denying *Qadar* is a grave act of disbelief that leads to punishment in both lives.

As for this life, 'Abdullāh Bin 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«يَكُونُ فِي أُمَّتِي خَسْفٌ وَمَسْحٌ، وَذَلِكَ فِي الْمَكْذِبِينَ بِالْقَدْرِ.»

«My *Ummah* will witness earthquakes and transmutation (into animals) befalling those who deny *Qadar*.»²

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 111 and *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2439).

2 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 102).

Furthermore, a severe punishment in the next life awaits those who deny *Qadar*. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the pagans of the Quraysh disputed with the Prophet (ﷺ) about *Qadar*, so Allāh revealed the following:

﴿يَوْمَ يُسْجَبُونَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ، ذُوقُوا مَسَّ سَقَرَ﴾¹
 إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ ﴿٤٨﴾ القمر ٤٨-٤٩

«The Day they (the wrongdoers) will be dragged into the Fire on their faces (and will be told), "Taste the touch of the Burner." Indeed, We created all things with *Qadar* (predestination).»^{1, 2}

Defining *Qadā'* and *Qadar*

Allāh's decree is usually described with two terms: *Qadā'* and *Qadar*. In this section, we discuss the meanings and relationship of these two terms.

THE WORD "*QADĀ'*"

The word "*qadā'*", together with its derivatives, appears more than sixty times in the Qur'ān. It has various meanings that are mostly of the following forms:

1. Ruling, ordainment, or legislation. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ، وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا.﴾ الإسراء ٢٣

«And your Lord has ruled that you do not worship except Him, and that you render good

1 *Al-Qamar* 54:48-49.

2 This *ḥadīth* by Abū Hurayrah is recorded by Muslim, at-Tirmithī, and others.

treatment to both parents.»¹

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا لِمُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ﴾ الأَحْزَاب ٣٦

«It is not for a believing man or woman, when Allāh and His Messenger have ruled in a matter, that they should (thereafter) have any choice about their decision.»²

2. Conclusion, completion, or finishing (including finishing off). For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ الْعَمَامِ، وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ، وَفُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ؟ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ﴾ البقرة ٢١٠

«Do they await but that Allāh should come to them in covers of clouds, together with the angels, and the matter is then concluded? And to Allāh all affairs are returned.»³

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَوَكَزَهُ مُوسَى فَقَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ﴾ القصص ١٥

«So Mūsā punched him, thereby finishing him.»⁴

3. Creation or making. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

1 Al-Isrā' 17:23.

2 Al-Aḥzāb 33:36.

3 Al-Baqarah 2:210.

4 Al-Qaṣaṣ 28:15.

﴿فَقَضَاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ﴾ فصلت ١٢

«Then (after rising above the heavens) He made them seven heavens within two days.»¹

4. Allāh's decision or decree in accordance with His prior knowledge. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿بَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ:

”كُن.“ فَيَكُونُ﴾ البقرة ١١٧

«He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, “Be,” and it is.»²

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا﴾ مريم ٢١

«“And it (Īsā's conception) is a matter already decreed.”»³

All of the above meanings are related to each other, but the last one is most relevant to our discussion.

THE WORD “QADAR”

The word “*qadar*”, together with its derivatives, appears more than a hundred times in the Qur'ān. It has various meanings that are mostly of the following forms:

1. Measure or amount. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

1 *Fuṣṣulat* 41:12.

2 *Al-Baqarah* 2:117.

3 *Maryam* 19:21.

﴿وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِنْدَنَا خَزَائِنُهُ، وَمَا نُنزِلُهُ، إِلَّا بِقَدَرٍ مَعْلُومٍ﴾ الحجر ٢١

«There is not a thing but that with Us are its supplies, and We do not send it down except according to a well-defined amount.»¹

2. Value or esteem. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ﴾ الزمر ٦٧

«They have not esteemed Allāh the true esteem.»²

3. Allāh's capability and power, as is demonstrated by His name al-Qadīr (al-Qadīr — the Capable). For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ البقرة ٢٠

«Indeed, Allāh is Capable of everything.»³

Imām Aḥmad (ﷺ) said:

“Qadar is Allāh's *qudrah* (capability).”⁴

4. Allāh's predestination of everything for His creation in accordance with His prior knowledge. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ﴾ القمر ٤٩

«Indeed, We created all things with pre-destination (or with measure).»⁵

1 Al-Hijr 15:21.

2 Az-Zumar 39:67.

3 Al-Baqarah 2:20.

4 Ibn Hāni's Questions to Imām Aḥmad, vol. 2, p. 155.

5 Al-Qamar 54:49.

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قَدَرًا مَّفْعُورًا﴾ الأحراب ٣٨

«And ever is Allāh's command a decreed destiny.»¹

Again, all of the above meanings are related to each other, but the last one is most relevant to our discussion.

THE WORD "QADR"

The word "*qadr*" usually has similar meanings to *qadar*²: it means amount, decree, or ordainment. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ﴾

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ﴾ القدر ٣-١

«Indeed, We sent this (Qur'ān) down in the Night of *Qadr*. And what will make you know what is the Night of *Qadr*? The Night of *Qadr* is better than one thousand months.»³

The Night of *Qadr* is then the night on which Allāh (ﷻ) sends down His annual decree and decides the amounts of all things relating to His creation.

CONCLUSION

From the above examples, we see that *Qadā'* and *Qadar* are interrelated in meaning, and each of them leads to the other.

Qadar leads to the meaning of *Qadā'* because Allāh's (ﷻ)

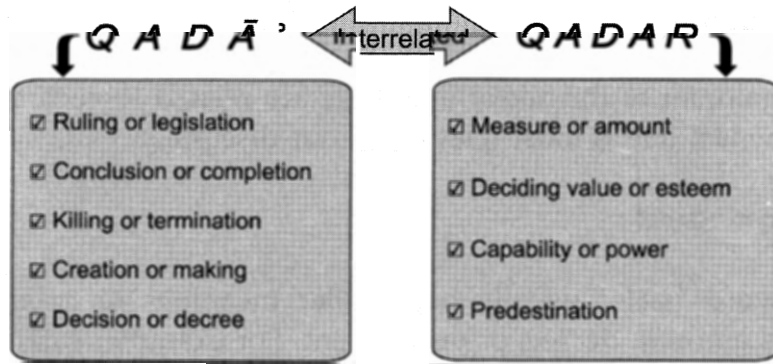
1 *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:38.

2 See *Lisān ul-Arab*.

3 *Al-Qadr* 97:1-3.

Qadar (predestination) results in His *Qaḍā'* (i.e., decree or creation).

Likewise, *Qaḍā'* leads to the meaning of *Qadar* because a *Qaḍā'* (decree) from Allāh (ﷻ) must have been preceded by His *Qadar* (predestination).



Qaḍā' and *Qadar* are then Allāh's decree and destination in accordance with His prior knowledge. They are a demonstration of His ownership and control over His creation. They reflect that Allāh (ﷻ) is the Lord who is not to be questioned about what He does.

In this book, we will mostly use the term *Qadar* (or Allāh's decree) to refer to both terms and meanings.

Guidelines for Understanding *Qadar*

In understanding *Qadar*, we should keep in mind the following important principles:

1. KNOWLEDGE OF *GHAYB*

Ghayb refers to all knowledge that is beyond the reach of human perception.¹ We can only learn about matters of *ghayb* from Allāh (ﷻ) Himself, as He revealed in His Book or in His

¹ We will learn more about *ghayb* in the next chapter.

Messenger's (ﷺ) Sunnah. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ.﴾ الأنعام ٥٩

«With Him (Allāh) are the keys of *ghayb*: none knows them except Him.»¹

The knowledge of *ghayb* includes the knowledge about Allāh (ﷻ), His angels, the heavens, *Jannah*, Hell, *jinns*, events from the remote past or future, and so on.

In dealing with issues of *ghayb*, we should apply the following important rules:

- a) Matters of *ghayb* that are mentioned in the Qur'ān and Sunnah should be fully accepted and believed in.
- b) The texts concerning *ghayb* have real meanings that are within human reason. Otherwise, Allāh would not have mentioned them to us. For example, the texts about *Jannah* describe trees, fruits, rivers, jewelry, clothing, and other things that are known to us. This gives us a general idea about what to expect there, even though we know that there is no comparison between the everlasting splendor of *Jannah* and the temporary glitter of this life.
- c) Unless there is authentic evidence to the contrary, *ghayb* issues should be understood and interpreted in accordance with the apparent meaning of the texts.
- d) Our reason is based on our experience in our physical world. Since *ghayb* relates to a world different from ours, our physical laws do not govern it. Therefore, we should not attempt to subject *ghayb* issues to such laws.

1 Al-An'ām 6:59.

2. BELIEVING IN ALLĀH'S ATTRIBUTES

We must hold the correct belief about Allāh's names and attributes that are mentioned in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. This belief should be subject to the following important rules:

- a) We must accept all of Allāh's names and attributes.
- b) All of Allāh's names and attributes have real meanings.
- c) Allāh's attributes are all attributes of perfection.
- d) Allāh's names and attributes are not like those of any member of His creation.
- e) Since Allāh's names and attributes are part of the knowledge of *ghayb*, they should be accepted without "kayf" — without imposing our limited knowledge in attempt to interpret (or misinterpret) them.

Some of Allāh's attributes that are very relevant to our discussion of *Qadar* are the following:

- * Knowledge, represented by His name **العليم** (al-'Alīm — the All-Knowing).
- * Justice, represented by His name **الديان** (ad-Dayyān — the Supreme Judge and Ruler).
- * Wisdom, represented by His name **الحكيم** (al-Ḥakīm — the Wise).
- * Capability, represented by His name **القدير** (al-Qadīr — the Capable).

3. ACKNOWLEDGING OUR INTELLECTUAL LIMITATION

We should neither question our Lord's (ﷺ) actions, nor overestimate our intellectual ability. It is Allāh who has the full right to question us — His subjects. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ، وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ﴾ الأنبياء ٢٣

«He cannot be questioned as to what He does,
while they (the people) will be questioned.»¹

When we are faced with an issue that exhausts our wits and excels our intelligence, we should be ready to declare defeat and submit fully to Allāh's guidance. This is especially true when we deal with issues relating to *Qadar* that have once and again challenged human intellect.

Knowing our limits in issues of faith does not reflect ignorance; rather, it reflects true knowledge. According to Abū Ja'far at-Ṭaḥāwī (رحمته الله), religious knowledge is two types:

- a. Knowledge that is granted to people through revelation. Rejecting this knowledge is a denial of Allāh's teachings.
- b. Knowledge that was never given to people. Presuming this knowledge or delving into it is a clear transgression.²

4. AVOIDING DISPUTES OVER *QADAR*

Qadar is a subject of pure faith, and much of its secrets have not been revealed to us. Therefore, we should avoid getting into arguments about its obscure issues. Such arguments are bound to lead to error in an area where error is not to be taken lightly.

ʿAbdullāh Bin Masʿūd reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1 *Al-Anbiyā'* 21:23.

2 *Sharḥ ut-Ṭaḥāwīyyah* p. 262.

«إِذَا ذُكِرَ أَصْحَابِي فَأَمْسِكُوا، وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ النَّجُومُ فَأَمْسِكُوا،

وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ الْقَدْرُ فَأَمْسِكُوا.»

«When my companions are mentioned (with blame), hold back; when the stars are mentioned (for fortunetelling), hold back; and when *Qadar* is mentioned (without knowledge), hold back.»¹

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that once the Prophet (ﷺ) entered the *Masjid* to find his companions arguing about *Qadar*. The Prophet (ﷺ) became angry, his face turning red as if pomegranate juice had been smeared over his cheeks, and he (ﷺ) said:

«أَبْهَذَا أُمِرْتُمْ، أَمْ بِهَذَا أُرْسِلْتُ إِلَيْكُمْ؟ إِنَّمَا هَلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ

حِينَ تَنَازَعُوا فِي هَذَا الْأَمْرِ. عَزَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تَنَازَعُوا فِيهِ.»

«Is this (arguing) something that you have been commanded to do, or is it part of my message to you? Indeed, those before you fell to destruction when they started arguing in this matter (of *Qadar*). I command you not to argue about it.»²

Reporting the same incident, ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) mentioned that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَا لَكُمْ تَضْرِبُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ بَعْضَهُ بِبَعْضٍ؟ أَلِهَذَا خُلِقْتُمْ،

أَمْ بِهَذَا أُمِرْتُمْ؟ بِهَذَا هَلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ.»

«Why are you making parts of Allāh’s Book contradict one another? Have you been created

1 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī, Abū Nu‘aym, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 34).

2 Recorded by at-Tirmithī. Verified to be *ḥaṣan* by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāṭ* no. 95).

for this or commanded to do this? This is how those before you fell to destruction.»¹

Aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī (رضي الله عنه) said:

“*Qadar* is Allāh’s secret among His creation. He did not reveal it to an angel near to Him, nor to a prophet sent by Him. Delving deep into it leads to failure, loss, and excessiveness.”²

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that some of the *ṣaḥābah* said to the Prophet (ﷺ):

«إِنَّا نَجِدُ فِي أَنْفُسِنَا مَا يَتَعَاطَمُ أَحَدُنَا أَنْ يَتَكَلَّمَ بِهِ.»

“Some thoughts come to us that we find too tremendous to even mention.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) inquired, «وقد وجدتموه؟» ‘Have you truly felt this way?’ They responded, “Yes!” So the Prophet (ﷺ) concluded:

«ذلك صريحُ الإيمان.»

‘This is a clear proof of *Īmān* (faith).»³

In this *ḥadīth*, the Prophet (ﷺ) considered his companions’ reluctance to discuss delicate issues of *Qadar* a clear proof of their faith. This should also be our attitude.

1 Recorded by Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 95 and *as-Sunnah* no. 406).

2 *Sharḥ uṭ-Ṭaḥāwīyyah* p. 249.

3 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others.

Questions and Exercises (Use extra sheets as needed)

1. Mention and briefly explain the six pillars of faith. (6 points)

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

2. Is it permissible to reject one of the pillars of faith? Justify your answer. (3 points)

--

3. Mention and discuss two issues that show the importance of believing in *Qadar*. (4 points)

1	
2	

4. Mention four meanings of the word "*qadā'*" and demonstrate each meaning with an example from the Qur'ān. (8 points)

1
2
3
4

5. Mention five meanings of the word "*qadar*" and demonstrate each meaning with an example from the Qur'ān. (10 points)

1
2
3
4
5

6. Mention and briefly explain four important guidelines for understanding *Qadar*. (8 points)

1
2
3
4

7. Discuss four important rules that should control our understanding of issues of *ghayb*. (8 points)

1
2
3
4

8. Mention six examples of matters of *ghayb*. (6 points)

1	4
2	5
3	6

9. Discuss five important rules that should govern our understanding of Allāh's attributes. (10 points)

1
2
3
4
5

10. Mention four of Allāh's names and attributes that are relevant to the discussion of *Qadar*. (8 points)

Attribute	Arabic Name	Meaning
1		
2		
3		
4		

11. Mention and explain the two types of religious knowledge. (4 points)

1
2

12. Mention and explain three topics that may only be approached with proper knowledge and true caution. (6 points)

1
2
3

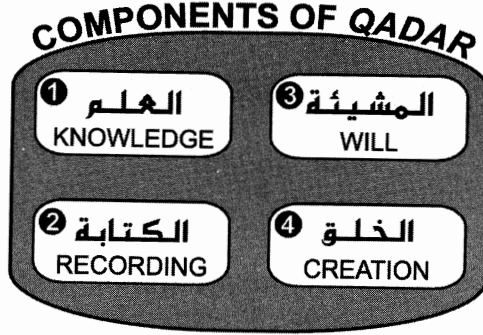
CHAPTER 2

COMPONENTS OF THE BELIEF IN QADAR

Introduction

Belief in *Qadar* simply means that:

1. Before creating the creation, Allāh knew everything about it.
2. Before creating the creation, Allāh (ﷻ) recorded everything that was going to happen to it.



Anything that Allāh creates is preceded by His knowledge and will, and is pre-recorded in the Preserved Slate

3. Nothing happens in the creation but according to what Allāh wills.
4. Everything in the universe is created by Allāh alone.

In what follows, we discuss these four components in detail.

1. Allāh's Encompassing Knowledge

Allāh (ﷻ) has full knowledge of the past and the future. He even has full knowledge of the hypothetical, i.e., how non-existing things would be if they came into existence.

ABSOLUTE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE CREATION

Allāh (ﷻ) is the Creator of everything in the world. His creation is a clear testimony of His complete and encompassing knowledge.

Allāh (ﷻ) created planets and stars, mountains and oceans, animals and insects, atoms and nuclei — **all in a most intricate and perfect order.** Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿مَا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَوتٍ﴾ الملك ٣

«You do not see in the creation of the Most Merciful any inconsistency.»¹

Allāh (ﷻ) fashioned us in the best form; He (ﷻ) says:

﴿لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ﴾ التين ٤

«We have certainly created the human being in the best form.»²

Animals and insects have some level of knowledge; humans have more knowledge, and some of them have been blessed with a vast amount of knowledge that excels the average person's. But all knowledge among the creation is granted by Allāh (ﷻ), and is minute compared to His knowledge. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ؟﴾ الملك ١٤

«Does He who created all not know, while He is the Subtle, the Acquainted?»³

Before creating the people, and even before creating the

1 Al-Mulk 67:3.

2 At-Tīm 95:4.

3 Al-Mulk 67:14.

heavens and the earth, Allāh (ﷻ) knew all details about what was going to happen to His creation. Subsequently, all His creation's qualities and actions agree with His prior knowledge.

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿لَتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ، وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ

قَدَّ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا﴾ ﴿الطلاق ١٢﴾

«(Allāh's commands descend to you) so that you may come to know that Allāh has power over all things and that Allāh encompasses all things with His knowledge.»¹

Allāh's prior knowledge does not miss a thing. It included the tiny and the large, the hidden and the perceptible. He (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ، وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبُرِّ

وَالْبَحْرِ. وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا، وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظِلْمَةٍ

الْأَرْضِ، وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ﴾ ﴿الأنعام ٥٩﴾

«With Him are the keys of *ghayb*: none knows them except Him, and He knows what is on the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but that He knows it, and no grain is there within the darkness of the earth and no moist or dry thing but that are all included in a clear Register.»²

Allāh's (ﷻ) prior knowledge includes every creature's full condition, life-span, sustenance, and so on. It includes every human's acts of obedience and of disobedience, his states of success and failure, his thoughts and movements, and so on. Allāh (ﷻ) knows exactly who will enter *Jannah* and who will

1 *Aṭ-Ṭalāq* 65:12.

2 *Al-An'ām* 6:59.

abide in Hell. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ، وَإِذْ أَنْتُمْ أَجِنَّةٌ فِي بُطُونِ
أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ، فَلَا تُزَكُّوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ، هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ أَنْتَقَى﴾ النجم ٣٢

«He is fully aware of you when He brings you into being out of dust, and when you are still hidden (as fetuses) in your mothers' wombs. So do not praise yourselves, because He alone knows who has *taqwā* (fear and devotion to Him).»¹

KNOWLEDGE OF *GHAYB*

Allāh has full knowledge of the world of *ghayb* — all that is hidden to our human abilities and perception. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ.﴾ الأنعام ٥٩

«With Him (Allāh) are the keys of *ghayb*: none knows them except Him.»²

Whether they are matters that we can partially perceive with our senses and abilities, or matters that are completely beyond our perception, Allāh has complete, encompassing, and detailed knowledge about them. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ، عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ،
هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾ الحشر ٢٢

«It is He, Allāh, that there is no (true) god except Him, Knower of the *ghayb* and the witnessed³,

1 An-Najm 53:32.

2 Al-An'ām 6:59.

He is the Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy.»¹

KNOWLEDGE OF THE HYPOTHETICAL

When we want to make a toy or a piece of equipment, we plan it and try to predict how it will operate. Most often, our prediction falls short of reality, and we have to modify what we made. Not so for Allāh (ﷻ)!

Allāh (ﷻ) knows exactly how non-existent things would be, were He to create them.

For example, the disbelievers in the next life will claim that they would behave better if they are given a second chance in this life. But Allāh (ﷻ) knows that they are lying, and that if they were to be sent back to this life, they would return to their disbelief and corruption. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿بَلْ بَدَأَ لَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُحِبُّونَ مِنْ قَبْلُ، وَلَوْ رُدُّوا لَعَادُوا﴾

﴿لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ﴾ ﴿الأنعام ٢٨﴾

«But what they concealed before has (now, on Resurrection Day) appeared to them. And if they were brought back (to life), they would certainly return to the very thing which was forbidden to them, and indeed, they are liars.»²

As another example, Allāh (ﷻ) knows the disbelievers' possible reaction to hearing the Guidance:

﴿وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لَأَسْمَعَهُمْ، وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّوْا﴾

﴿وَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ﴾ ﴿الأنفال ٢٣﴾

3 Knowledge that is within the reach of human perception.

1 *Al-Hashr* 59:22.

2 *Al-An'am* 6:28.

«For, if Allāh had known that there is any good in them, He would certainly have made them hear (the truth). But (as it is), even if He had made them hear, they would surely have turned away in their obstinacy.»¹

2. Allāh's Complete Register

The second necessary component for understanding *Qadar* is believing that Allāh recorded in *al-Lawh ul-Mahfūz* (the Preserved Slate) everything that will ever occur until Judgment Day.

THE PRESERVED SLATE

“*Al-Lawh ul-Mahfūz*” is a great register of knowledge in the heavens. Allāh (ﷻ) recorded in it all things that would ever happen in the universe, in addition to all the books that He would reveal to His prophets.

Is *al-Lawh ul-Mahfūz* made of silver, gold, jewelry, or some other precious substance? We have no right to answer such a question because we have not been given this information in an authentic text.

“*Lawh*” means slate or tablet, and “*mahfūz*” means preserved. Therefore, *al-Lawh ul-Mahfūz* is the slate that is securely preserved with Allāh (ﷻ). It is mentioned in the Qurʾān with various names:

1. *Al-Lawh ul-Mahfūz* (the Preserved Slate). Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿بَلْ هُوَ قُرْآنٌ مَّجِيدٌ ﴿٢١﴾ فِي لَوْحٍ مَّحْفُوظٍ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾ البروج ٢٢-٢١

«But this (Qurʾān) is a grand Speech, (inscribed)

¹ *Al-Anfāl* 8:23.

in a Preserved Slate.»¹

2. *Al-Kitāb* (the Book or Register). Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ؟ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ فِي كِتَابٍ، إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ﴾ الحج ٧٠

«Do you not know that Allāh knows what is in the heaven and on earth? Indeed, it is all in a Register, and it is indeed easy for Allāh.»²

3. *Imāmun Mubīn* (Clear Register). Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَءَاتَاهُمْ، وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾ يس ١٢

«Indeed, We record what they have put forth and what they left behind, and We have taken account of all things in a Clear Register.»³

4. *Kitābun Masṭūr* (Inscribed Book or Register). Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَالطُّورِ ۖ وَكِتَابٍ مَّسْطُورٍ ۖ فِي رَقٍ مَّنشُورٍ﴾ الطور ١-٣

«(I swear to the truth of the hereafter) by the Mount (of Sinai), and by the Inscribed Book, in an unrolled parchment.»⁴

5. *Umm ul-Kitāb* (the Mother of the Book). Allāh (ﷻ) says about the Qur'ān:

1 *Al-Burūj* 85:21- 22.

2 *Al-Hajj* 22:70.

3 *Yā-sīn* 36:12.

4 *Aṭ-Ṭūr* 52:1- 3.

﴿وَإِنَّهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلِيَّ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾ الزخرف ٤

«And indeed, it is with Us in the Mother of the Book, surely exalted and full of wisdom.»¹

6. *Ath-Thikr* (the Supreme Reference). Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ

يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾﴾ الأنبياء ١٠٥

«We have surely written in the Zabūr, in accordance with the Supreme Reference, that the Land will be inherited by My righteous servants.»²

In the rest of this book, we will use “the Preserved Slate” to refer to *al-Lawḥ ul-Mahfūz*.

THE CREATION OF AL-QALAM (THE PEN)

Allāh (ﷻ), by His knowledge, willed the measures of His creation — their conditions, qualities, and all big and small matters relating to them. Allāh (ﷻ) then wrote in the Preserved Slate all that He willed.

How did Allāh (ﷻ) write things in the Preserved Slate? He created a great pen — *al-Qalam* (the Pen). Holding it in His right hand, Allāh (ﷻ) commanded it to write everything.

‘Ubādah Bin aṣ-Ṣāmit (رضي الله عنه) reported that he heard the Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ الْقَلَمَ، فَقَالَ: “اُكْتُبْ.” قَالَ: “مَا أُكْتُبُ؟”

قَالَ: “اُكْتُبِ الْقَدْرَ، مَا كَانَ، وَمَا هُوَ كَائِنٌ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ.”»

1 *Az-Zukhruf* 43:4.

2 *Al-Anbiya'* 21:105.

«Indeed, the first thing that Allāh created was the Pen. Then He commanded it, "Write." The Pen asked, "What shall I write?" Allāh said, "Write *Qadar*: all what has (already) happened, and all that will happen until eternity."»¹

Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ أَوَّلَ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ اللَّهُ ﷻ الْقَلَمَ، فَأَخَذَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ - وَكَلَّمَا يَدَيْهِ يَمِينٍ - فَكَتَبَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا يَكُونُ فِيهَا مِنْ عَمَلٍ مَعْمُولٍ، بَرًّا أَوْ فَجُورًا، رَطْبًا أَوْ يَابَسًا، فَأَحْصَاهُ عِنْدَهُ فِي الذِّكْرِ. اقْرَأُوا إِنْ شِئْتُمْ: «هَذَا كِتَابُنَا يَنْطِقُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ، إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنْسِخُ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ الْجاثية ٢٩
فَهَلْ تَكُونُ النُّسْخَةُ إِلَّا مِنْ أَمْرٍ قَدْ فُرِعَ مِنْهُ؟»

«Indeed, the first thing that Allāh (ﷻ) created was the Pen. He held it with His right hand — and both of His hands are right hands — and He recorded the worldly life and all deeds that will be done in it, whether righteous or evil, and all moist (i.e., living) and dry (i.e., lifeless) things. He registered all of that with Him in the Supreme Register. Recite, if you will:

«This is Our Register speaking about you in truth. Indeed, We have been replicating (from the Supreme Register) whatever you do.»²

Can replication be done, then, except for a matter that has already been settled?»³

1 Recorded by Ahmad and at-Tirmithī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 91). A similar *ḥadīth* is recorded by al-Bayhaqī and others from Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) and verified authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 133 and *as-Sunnah* no. 108).

2 *Al-Jāthiyah* 45:29.

3 Recorded by al-Ājurrī (in *ash-Sharīah*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كتب الله مقادير الخلائق كلها قبل أن يخلق السموات والأرضَ بخمسين ألف سنة، وكان عرشه على الماء.»

«Allāh (ﷻ) recorded the measures of all His creation fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth. His Throne was then over water.»¹

This *ḥadīth* indicates that Allāh (ﷻ) had already created the Throne before recording all events in *al-Lawḥ ul-Maḥfūz*. It does not mean, however, that the Throne was created before the Pen. Rather, it is clear from the above *ḥadīth* of ‘Ubādah (رضي الله عنه) that the Pen was created first, and that, at the time of recording, the Pen wrote future events, as well as some events that had already happened. From these *ḥadīths* together, we understand that Allāh (ﷻ) created the Pen first; then He created the Throne, water, the Preserved Slate, and possibly other things. After that, He wrote *Qadar* on the Slate using the Pen. Allāh knows best.

Subsequently, everything happens in the universe according to what has been recorded in the Slate. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا، إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ» ﴿الحديد ٢٢﴾

«No disaster can ever befall the earth or your own selves but that it is inscribed in a Register before We bring it into existence. That is surely easy for Allāh.»²

(*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 3136).

1 Recorded by Muslim and at-Tirmithī.

2 *Al-Ḥadīd* 57:22.

COMPLETE AND SPECIFIC REGISTERS

We saw above that the Preserved Slate contains the destiny of all things. It is like a gigantic volume of books — a magnificent library that contains all writings, speeches, and actions that are to happen within the creation until the Last Day. Even though it is only a single register, it is immeasurably larger than all libraries of the world put together, from the beginning to the end of time.

From this complete register arise numerous smaller registers that relate to the creation, with their information coming from the complete one. In particular, we show in what follows that there are three types of specific registers (or decrees) that are linked to certain sequential events in this life.

1. The Lifetime Register precedes the birth of every human being and contains his (or her) detailed destiny.

Before the soul is blown into a human, Allāh (ﷻ) sends the Angel of Wombs to transcribe that human's records from the Preserved Slate to another register that remains with the angels. Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن خلق أحدكم يُجمعُ في بطنِ أمِّه أربعين يوماً نطفَةً، ثم يكونُ علقَةً مثلَ ذلك، ثم يكونُ مضغَةً مثلَ ذلك، ثم يبعثُ إليه ملكاً، فينفخُ فيه الروحَ، ويؤمرُ بأربعِ كلماتٍ: بكتبَ رزقَهُ وأجلَهُ وعملَهُ وشقيُّ أم سعيدٍ. وإنَّ الرجلَ ليعملُ بعملِ أهلِ النارِ، حتى ما يكونُ بينَهُ وبينَهَا إلا ذراعٌ، فيسبقُ عليه الكتابُ، فيعملُ بعملِ أهلِ الجنَّةِ، فيدخلُهَا. وإنَّ الرجلَ ليعملُ بعملِ أهلِ الجنَّةِ حتى ما يكونُ بينَهُ وبينَهَا إلا ذراعٌ، فيسبقُ عليه الكتابُ، فيعملُ بعملِ أهلِ النارِ، فيدخلُهَا.»

‹The mold of each of you is gathered in his mother’s womb for forty days as a seed, then as a clot for as long, then as a lump (of flesh) for as long. Allāh then sends an angel who is commanded to blow the soul into him and write down four things: his sustenance, life-span, deeds, and whether he will be miserable or happy (in the hereafter).

Indeed, a man would (apparently ¹) do deeds of the people of the Fire, until he is only a cubit ² away from it. His register would then take precedence, so he would do the deeds of the people of *Jannah* and would enter it.

And (on the other hand), a man would (apparently) do deeds of the people of *Jannah*, until he is only a cubit away from it. His register would then take precedence, so he would do the deeds of the people of Fire and would enter it. ³

This *ḥadīth* mentions four things that are written in a person’s register. Other reports, however, indicate that every detail in a person’s future life is also recorded. For example, Ibn ‘Umar and Ḥuṭhayfah Bin Usayd al-Anṣārī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«قال ملك الأرحام: ”أي رب، أذكر أم أنثى؟..“»

‹The Angel of Wombs asks, “O my Lord, will this be male or female? ...” ⁴

Furthermore, things written in this register happen exactly as

1 This is explicitly mentioned in some related narrations, such as that on p. 116.

2 A cubit (or arm-length) is about 50 cm. or 20 in.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

4 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others. Various reports of this *ḥadīth* are recorded in *as-Sunnah* nos. 177-187.

written and can never be changed. In the same report of Ibn 'Umar and Ḥathayfah, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«ثم تُطوى تلك الصحيفة فلا تُمسُّ إلى يوم القيامة.»

«This register is then folded and is never touched until Resurrection Day.»

2. The Annual Register is conducted by the angels on the Night of *Qadr*. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ تَنزَلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ» ﴿القدر ١-٥﴾

«Indeed, We sent this (Qur'ān) down during the Night of *Qadr*. And what will make you know what is the Night of *Qadr*? The Night of *Qadr* is better than one thousand months. The angels and the Spirit (i.e. Jibrīl) descend therein by permission of their Lord with every decree. Peace it is until the emergence of dawn.»¹

These *āyāt* indicate that the whole Qur'ān was sent down² from the Preserved Slate during *Laylat ul-Qadr*³. They also indicate that every year the angels bring down Allāh's decrees

1 *Al-Qadr* 97:1-5.

2 The Qur'ān was sent down as a whole from the Preserved Slate to the lowest heaven during one of the *Laylat ul-Qadr* nights. After that, it was delivered to the Prophet (ﷺ) in small chunks for the duration of his prophethood. This is discussed further in our book, "Knowing Allāh's Books & the Qur'ān".

3 *Laylat ul-Qadr* falls every year on one of the last ten nights of the month of *Ramaḍān*. A detailed discussion of this is provided in our book, "The Night Prayers, *Qiyām* and *Tarāwīḥ*".

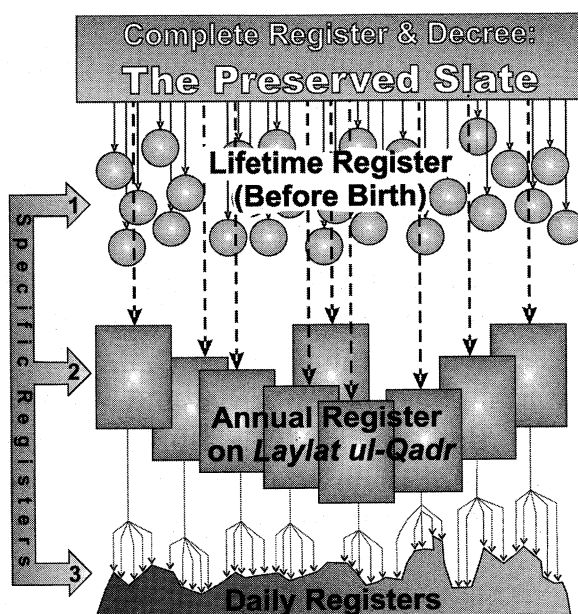
during this night. Similarly, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ، إِنَّا كُنَّا مُنذِرِينَ ﴿٥﴾ فِيهَا يُفْرَقُ
كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ ﴿٣﴾ أَمْراً مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا.﴾ الدخان ٥-٣

«Indeed, We sent it down during a Blessed Night; and indeed, We are ever warning (the people). During it is registered every wise decree — decree proceeding from Us.»¹

Therefore, every year during *Laylat ul-Qadr*, the angels bring down Allāh's commands and decrees for the whole year and record them in specific registers that they hold.

3. The Daily Registers contain the decrees pertaining to all events of a particular day; and these registers follow precisely what is in the Preserved Slate. Allāh (ﷻ) says:



﴿يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ ﴿٢٩﴾﴾ الرحمن

«All those who are in the heavens and earth beseech Him; and every day He is administering various affairs.»²

1 *Ad-Dukhān* 44:3-5.

2 *Ar-Rahmān* 55:29.

3. Allāh's Prevailing Will

ALLĀH WILLS EVERYTHING IN HIS CREATION

What Allāh (ﷻ) wills must happen, and whatever He does not will can never happen. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ: "كُنْ." فَيَكُونُ﴾ يس ٨٢

«Indeed, when He wills a thing, His Command is only to say to it, "Be," and it is!»¹

Undoubtedly, whatever Allāh (ﷻ) wills comes into existence by His power, and whatever He does not will cannot come into existence. Its nonexistence is because Allāh did not will it to exist, not because of any incapability in Allāh.

ALLĀH WILLS NATURAL PHENOMENA

Natural phenomena such as planet orbiting, clouds and rain, vegetation and animals, the human body, and natural disasters, are all completely subject to Allāh's will. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ الظِّلَّ، وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَجَعَلَهُ سَاكِنًا؟﴾ الفرقان ٤٥

«Have you not considered how your Lord lengthens the shadow (toward the night) and that, had He willed so, He could indeed have made it still?»²

Allāh (ﷻ) is the sole Creator and Lord of all beings in the heavens and earth. Likewise, Allāh (ﷻ) is the sole Creator of any motion or lack of motion in the heavens and earth.

1 *Yā-sīn* 36:82.

2 *Al-Furqān* 25:45.

ALLĀH WILLS SOCIAL PHENOMENA

People's social phenomena, such as war and peace, love and hate, unity and disunity, etc., are also completely subject to Allāh's will.

For instance, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَفْتَتَلُوا، وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ﴾ البقرة ٢٥٣

«If Allāh had so willed, they would not have fought each other, but Allāh does what He wills.»¹

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً﴾ المائدة ٤٨

«If Allāh had so willed, He would have made you a single nation.»²

ALLĀH WILLS GUIDANCE AND MISGUIDANCE

Allāh's will prevails even in matters of guidance and misguidance. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ التكوير ٢٩

«But you cannot will (to be righteous) unless Allāh, the Lord of the creation, so wills.»³

This *āyah* indicates that our will is encompassed by Allāh's will and is subject to it.

Allāh (ﷻ) also says:

1 *Al-Baqarah* 2:253.

2 *Al-Mā'idah* 5:48.

3 *At-Takwīr* 81:29.

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّا نَزَّلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ، وَكَلَّمَهُمُ الْمَوْتَىٰ، وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ قُبُلًا مَّا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ، وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ

يَجْهَلُونَ ﴿١١١﴾ الأنعام

«Even if We had sent down to them angels and the dead spoke to them and We gathered together everything (they requested) before their very eyes, they would not believe unless Allāh should will. But most of them are ignorant (of this).»¹

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا صُمٌّ وَبُكْمٌ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ. مَنْ يَشَاءِ اللَّهُ يُضِلِّهِ، وَمَنْ يَشَاءُ يَجْعَلْهُ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٩﴾ الأنعام

«But those who deny Our messages are deaf and dumb within darkness. Whomever Allāh wills, He lets stray; and whomever He wills, He places upon a straight path.»²

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكُوا.﴾ الأنعام ١٠٧

«If Allāh had so willed, they would not have joined partners with Him.»³

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مِنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ جَمِيعًا.﴾ يونس ٩٩

1 Al-An'ām 6:111.

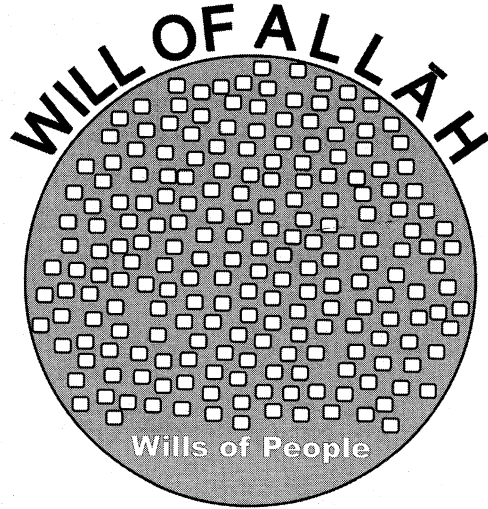
2 Al-An'ām 6:39.

3 Al-An'ām 6:107.

«And had your Lord so willed, entirely all those on earth would surely have believed.»¹

Therefore, all of a person's actions, whether of obedience or disobedience, occur according to this general will of Allāh.

This does not mean that Allāh forces us to obey or disobey Him, or that we are deprived from choice. Such an assumption is rejected by our reason and experience, and by the texts of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. If we were without choice, there would be no meaning to commands and prohibitions, or to sending messengers and calling to religion. We discuss this further in Chapter 5.



Allāh's Will Encompasses the Wills of People

4. Allāh Is the Creator of All Things

Allāh (ﷻ) created all things, and there is no other creator besides Him. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿اللَّهُ خَلِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ، وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ﴾ الزمر ٦٢

«Allāh is the Creator of all things, and He is in charge of all things.»²

1 Yūnus 10:99.

2 Az-Zumar 39:62.

THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE

Allāh (ﷻ) created the heavens and earth and all that they contain. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ، وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ.» ﴿الأنعام ١

«Praised is Allāh, who created the heavens and the earth and made the darkness and the light.» ¹

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«أَوَلَيْسَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِقَدِيرٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَخْلُقَ

مِثْلَهُمْ؟ بَلَىٰ، وَهُوَ الْخَلَّاقُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿يس ٨١

«Is not He who created the heavens and the earth Able to create the likes of them? Yes indeed, and He is the Knowing Creator.» ²

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ،

كُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ ﴿الأنبياء ٣٣

«It is He who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon, all of them floating in an orbit.» ³

THE PEOPLE

Allāh (ﷻ) is our only Creator and Lord. He created all of us

1 *Al-An'ām* 6:1.

2 *Yā-sīn* 36:81.

3 *Al-Anbiyā'* 21:33.

from a single person, Ādam (ﷺ). Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ

مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا، وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً.» النساء ١

«O people, revere your Lord who created you from a single soul, created from it its mate, and dispersed from both a multitude of men and women.»¹

PEOPLE'S QUALIFICATIONS AND DEEDS

In addition to our bodies, Allāh (ﷻ) is the Creator of our faculties and abilities, our intelligence, and everything pertaining to us. ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كلُّ شيءٍ بقَدَرٍ، حتى العجزُ والكَيْسُ.»

«Everything happens according to a *qadar* (prescribed measure) — even inaptitude and cleverness.»²

Furthermore, Allāh (ﷻ) is the sole creator of all what we make and all our actions, good and bad. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ» الصافات ٩٦

«Allāh created you and all that you do.»³

Huthayfah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَالِقُ كُلِّ صَانِعٍ وَصَنَعَتِهِ.»

1 An-Nisā’ 4:1.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 Aṣ-Ṣaffāt 37:96.

«Indeed, Allāh is the Creator of every craftsman,
and of what he crafts.»¹

PEOPLE'S LEVELS AND DIFFERENCES

Every day, Allāh (ﷻ) decrees and creates the relative levels of all people, raising some and lowering others. This means that He is the One who decides how all people will vary in each quality during that day. For example, He decides who will be the wealthiest, the next in wealth, the next, and so on — down to the poorest. He decides who will be the most healthy, the next, the next, and so on. He decides who will be the most beautiful, the next, and so on. He decides who will be most knowledgeable, the next, and so on.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«يَدُ اللَّهِ مَلَأَى، لَا تَغِيضُهَا نَفَقَةٌ، سَحَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارَ. أَرَأَيْتُمْ
مَا أَنْفَقَ مُذْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَغِيضْ مَا فِي يَدِهِ.
وَيَبْدَهُ الْآخَرَى الْمِيزَانَ، يَخْفِضُ وَيَرْفَعُ.»

«Allāh's hand is ever-full, and is never reduced by giving. It abounds night and day. Consider all what He spent since He created the heaven and earth: indeed, all of that did not reduce what is in His hand. In His other hand are the Scales (of *Qadar*), lowering (some people) and raising (others).»²

Similarly, Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the

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- 1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (in *Khalqu Af'āl il-'Ibād*), Ibn Abī 'Āṣim (in *as-Sunnah*), and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1637 and *as-Sunnah* no. 357).
 - 2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others. The meanings in the translation are derived from *Faṭḥ ul-Bārī* no. 7411.

Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن الله لا ينام، ولا ينبغي له أن ينام. يخفضُ القسطَ ويرفعُهُ، يُرفَعُ إليه عملُ الليلِ قبلَ عملِ النهارِ، وعملُ النهارِ قبلَ عملِ الليلِ.»

«Indeed, Allāh does not sleep, and it is not appropriate for Him to sleep. He lowers (with) justice (some people) and raises (others). The night's deeds (of people) are raised to Him before the day's, and (then) the day's before the (following) night's.»¹

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

Questions and Exercises (Use extra sheets as needed)

1. Mention and briefly explain the four basic components of *Qadar*. (8 points)

1
2
3
4

2. Explain four aspects of Allāh's absolute knowledge about the creation. Support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān. (8 points)

1
2
3
4

3. Explain Allāh's knowledge of *ghayb*. Support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān. (4 points)

--

4. Explain Allāh's knowledge of the hypothetical. Support your answer with two texts from the Qur'ān. (6 points)

Explanation
Text 1
Text 2

5. Define *al-Lawḥ ul-Maḥfūz* (the Preserved Slate). (4 points)

--

6. Mention and demonstrate from the Qur'an six names of the Preserved Slate. (12 points)

Name	Proof
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

7. Mention four of Allāh's (ﷻ) earliest created things. (4 points)

1	3
2	4

8. Briefly discuss whether the Pen or the Throne was created first. (4 points)

--

9. Answer the following questions about the *Qalam* (Pen). (6 points)

a. What things did the Pen write into the Preserved Slate?
b. How did Allāh write with the Pen?
c. When did this writing take place?

10. Explain the relationship between the Complete Register of *Qadar* and the numerous specific registers. (4 points)

--

11. Explain the three most important types of specific registers of *Qadar*. Support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah. (6 points)

1
2
3

12. Show how Allāh's will precedes all creation. Support your answer with a text from the Qur'ān. (2 points)

--

13. Mention three areas where Allāh's will clearly prevails. Support your answer with examples from the Qur'ān. (6 points)

1
2
3

14. Discuss the fact that Allāh is the Creator of all things. Support your answer with a text from the Qur'ān. (2 points)

--

15. Discuss the fact that Allāh is the Creator of the whole universe. Support your answer with examples from the Qur'ān. (4 points)

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16. Mention three examples of Allāh's creation relating to people. Support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah (6 points).

1
2
3

CHAPTER 3

CREATION OF EVIL

Introduction

DEFINING GOOD AND EVIL

In our discussion of good and evil in this book, we should understand that they are defined as follows:

- a) Good: Whatever agrees with human nature, so it would cause people pleasure and happiness.
- b) Evil: Whatever conflicts with human nature, so it would cause people displeasure or harm.

We have shown that Allāh (ﷻ) is the Creator of all things. This includes the evil that many of Allāh's created beings commit. Does this mean that Allāh (ﷻ), who is absolutely good and sublime, creates evil? In this chapter, we deal with this important question that has confused many people and led them away from the straight path.

WRONG VIEWS

Many people have wrong views about the creation of evil. Their views are mostly of the following types:

1. One group reasons that Allāh (ﷻ) could not have created evil. This means that evil must have been created by other than Allāh, which is plain *shirk* (joining partners with Allāh), because it presumes dual creators, one for good and another

for evil.

2. Another group reasons that Allāh (ﷻ) created the world and left it to run unattended. Any evil that came up afterwards is not of Allāh's doing. This group is similar to the first one in presuming dual creators, but it adds another deviation: that Allāh (ﷻ) ceased caring for His creation.
3. A third group reasons that Allāh (ﷻ) creates both good and evil because He has free will to create whatever He wants, and He should not be questioned about what He does. This is false as well, because Allāh (ﷻ) is exalted above creating pure evil.

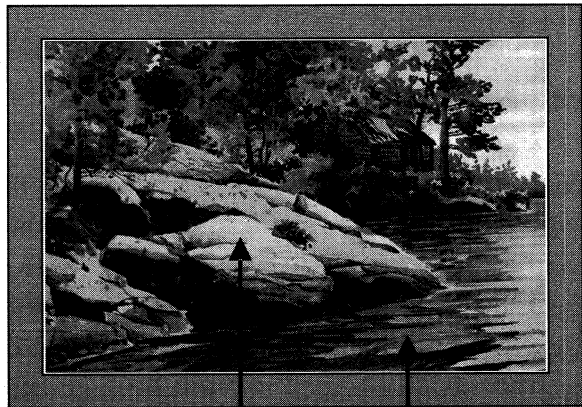
Correct Understanding

In this section, we will establish the correct understanding of this critical matter through a sequence of subsections. But before that, let us look at the following example.

EXAMPLE OF A PAINTING

Let us imagine a painting made by a master painter. Looking at it from a distance, we find it most beautiful and flawless. We are overwhelmed by its splendor, and are impressed by the way its various colors match together. We say that it is "globally" (i.e., at the large-scale) beautiful.

Globally Beautiful: Waterfront Scene



Locally Ugly:
Cracked Rocks

Locally Ugly:
Muddy Water

A short-sighted person looks closely at the painting and objects, "Why did the painter draw dark colors here, and a cracked rock there? A master only draws bright colors and perfect objects!"

This short-sighted person only sees the "local" (i.e., small-scale) ugliness, but fails to see how it adds to the global beauty. He does not realize that dark colors emphasize bright colors, and that imperfect objects may be necessary to make a perfect painting. Therefore, the painting as a whole is neither gloomy nor ugly, but is rather cheerful and attractive — but only to those who can appreciate the whole picture and not just a small part of it.

If we understand this example, we will understand the following discussion about the existence of evil in Allāh's creation.

1. ALLĀH IS THE ONLY CREATOR

We have previously discussed (p. 38) that Allāh (ﷻ) is the only Creator. Anything that was created or will ever be created is His sole making, and there is no other creator besides Him. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿اللَّهُ خَلِقُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ، وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ﴾ الزمر ٦٢

«Allāh is the Creator of all things, and He is in charge of all things.»¹

Even disasters happen by Allāh's will and permission. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ، وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنِ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ،
وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾ التغابن ١١

1 Az-Zumar 39:62.

«No disaster strikes except by Allāh's permission, and whosoever believes in Allāh, He guides his heart. Allāh is the Knower of all things.»¹

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ، ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يَوْمَ السَّابِعِ. وَخَلَقَ التُّرْبَةَ يَوْمَ السَّبْتِ، وَالْجِبَالَ يَوْمَ الْأَحَدِ، وَالشَّجَرَ يَوْمَ الْإِثْنَيْنِ، وَالشَّرَّ (الْمَكْرُوهَ) يَوْمَ الثَّلَاثَاءِ، وَالنُّورَ يَوْمَ الْأَرْبَعَاءِ، وَالذُّوَابَ يَوْمَ الْخَمِيسِ، وَآدَمَ يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ فِي آخِرِ سَاعَةٍ مِنَ النَّهَارِ بَعْدَ الْعَصْرِ، خَلَقَهُ مِنْ أَدِيمِ الْأَرْضِ، بِأَحْمَرِهَا وَأَسْوَدِهَا، وَطَيِّبِهَا وَخَبِيثِهَا. مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ آدَمَ الطَّيِّبَ وَالْخَبِيثَ.»

«Indeed, Allāh created the heavens, the earth, and what is in between them in six days. Then He rose above the Throne on the seventh day. (As for the earth,) He created the soil on Saturday, the mountains on Sunday, vegetation on Monday, evil (or hateful) things on Tuesday, light on Wednesday, animals on Thursday, and Ādam on Friday — at the last hour of the day after 'asr. He created him from the soil of earth, red and black, good and filthy. Because of this, Allāh brought out from Ādam both good and evil (descendants).»²

Similar to what we explained in the beginning of this

1 At-Taghābun 64:11.

2 Recorded by Muslim, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Some scholars of *Ḥadīth* considered it weak, but al-Albānī (رضي الله عنه) refuted this and verified it to be authentic (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1833, *Mukhtaṣar ul-'Uluww* no. 71, and *al-Mishkāt* no. 5666).

chapter, "hateful or evil things" in this *ḥadīth* refers to disasters, harmful beings, and other wickedness that people hate and consider evil.

2. THERE IS WISDOM BEHIND THE CREATION

There is wisdom behind everything that Allāh (ﷻ) creates. He does not create anything futilely or incorrectly. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لِعِبْنٍ ۖ مَا خَلَقْنَاهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ﴾
الدخان ٣٨-٣٩

«We did not create the heavens and earth and all that is between them in play. We did not create them except in truth.»¹

A creator who creates things without a purpose or without proper planning is not worthy of our respect or worship. Allāh (ﷻ) is exalted above such nonsense, as He says:

﴿أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ؟ ۖ فَتَعَلَىٰ اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ﴾
المؤمنون ١١٥-١١٦

«Did you then think that We created you pointlessly and that you will not be brought back to Us (for account)? Exalted is Allāh, the True Sovereign! There is no (true) god but Him, the Lord of the Noble Throne.»²

Allāh (ﷻ) did not make a mistake, nor did He forget anything when He created the creation. Everything was planned in the best way, completely recorded in *al-Lawḥ ul-Maḥfūz*, and

1 *Ad-Dukhān* 44:38-39.

2 *Soorat al-Mu'minoon* 23:115-116.

precisely created as planned. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَّمٌ
أَمْثَلُكُمْ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ﴾ ﴿الأنعام ٣٨﴾

«There are not creatures (that walk) on the earth, nor birds that fly with two wings, but are communities like you. Not a thing have We neglected from the Register.»¹

3. ALL THAT ALLĀH CREATES IS GOOD

All of Allāh's creation is purposeful and good. Nothing of what He creates can be PURELY evil. Allāh (ﷻ) describes Himself as:

﴿الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ﴾ السجدة ٧

«(Allāh is) He who perfected everything that He created.»²

For example, if an individual is physically different from the norm, this does not mean that there is a flaw in his creation; rather, it means that Allāh (ﷻ) chose to create him like that for a wisdom and benefit that Allāh alone encompasses.

Ash-Sharīd (ﷺ) reported that once a man complained to the Prophet (ﷺ), "My legs are so bent that my knees touch each other." The Prophet (ﷺ) explained to him:

﴿إِنْ كُلُّ خَلْقٍ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ حَسَنٌ.﴾

«All of Allāh's creation is good.»³

1 Al-An'ām 6:38.

2 As-Sajdah 32:7.

3 Recorded by Aḥmad and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah no. 1441).

In addition, what people commonly consider “handicap” can bring great blessings to the afflicted person and to others around him — blessings that greatly outweigh the handicap, such as the following:

1. The handicap may make the afflicted person realize his weakness and dependence on Allāh (ﷻ), which should lead him to submit to Allāh and seek His rewards for being patient.
2. Other people may realize Allāh’s blessing in sparing them from this handicap, and that He is capable of afflicting them with this or other handicaps. This should make them grateful to Allāh (ﷻ), humble before Him, and keen to obey Him.
3. Handicaps bring into communities awareness of the physical differences among people, which should result in an attitude of mutual help and compassion among their members.

In the next chapter, we discuss additional benefits that arise from afflictions.

4. THERE IS EVIL AMONG THE CREATION

We cannot deny that there is a great amount of evil among Allāh’s creation. We witness around us an unending list of wickedness, harm, lying, disloyalty, deceit, backbiting, robbery, murder, *ribā* (usury), *zinā* (adultery), and so on. In fact, Allāh (ﷻ) indicates that wrongdoing is a clear tendency in human beings:

﴿إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا﴾ الأَحْزَابُ ٧٣

«Indeed, he (the human) has ever been wrongdoer and ignorant.»¹

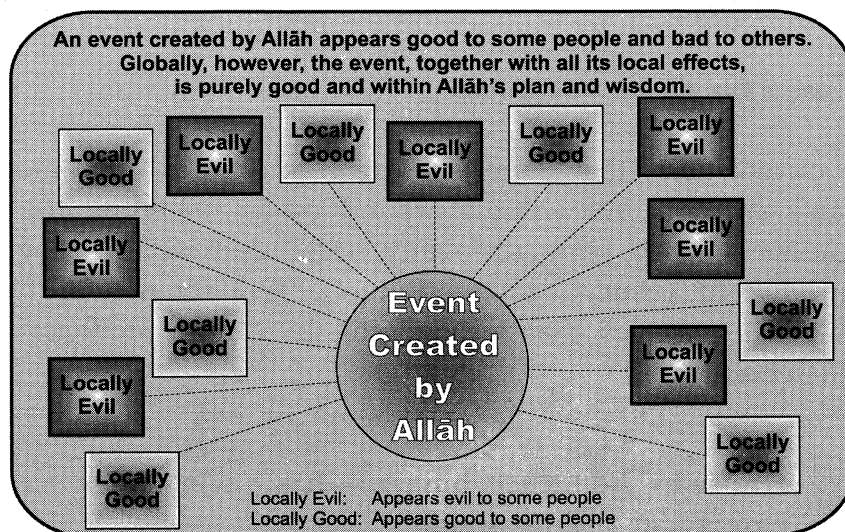
1 *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:73.

Does this contradict our previous assertion that all of Allāh's creation is good? Not at all.

We have seen above some examples and will see below some more demonstrating how evil often brings good. A person's evil action may harm him and a few others around him, but it may benefit many other people, over an extended duration, and to varying degrees. This full interaction of an evil action with everything that it reaches is only known to Allāh (ﷻ) and fully calculated by Him. It is the complete outcome of all these interactions that can only be good, regardless of how bad the original action itself may be.

5. THERE IS NO ABSOLUTE EVIL

From the above discussion, we conclude that there is wisdom even in the created things that are apparently evil or bad. This is clear to those whom Allāh endowed with true faith and vision: They observe a panoramic picture of the interaction and outcome of various created things, thereby appreciating the wisdom in every little and big thing of Allāh's creation.



The evil that we see in the world is not absolute. Rather, it is "local" because it may appear evil or wrong to only a segment

of Allāh's creation. At the same time, it is "globally" good because it fully conforms with Allāh's wisdom and justice in the creation.

Example: Wars. There is no doubt that wars are major disasters that result in the killing of numerous people and the destruction of enormous properties. Yet, Allāh (ﷻ) permits them to happen because they fulfill part of His wisdom and plan, such as controlling the population, punishing evil nations, trying the believers, protecting houses of worship, and other reasons that we may not know. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«وَلَوْلَا دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضُهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَهَدَمَتْ صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ
وَصَلَوَاتٌ وَمَسَاجِدُ يُذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا. وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ
اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ» ﴿الحج ٤٠﴾

«Were it not that Allāh restrains some people by means of others (in wars), many monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques — in which Allāh's name is abundantly mentioned — would have been demolished. Allāh will surely support those who support Him (i.e. His cause). Indeed, Allāh is Powerful and Mighty.»¹

Therefore, Allāh (ﷻ) offsets the "evil" of wars by their important advantages.

Example: Corruption over Earth. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«ظَهَرَ الْفُسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ،
لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا، لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ» ﴿الروم ٤١﴾

1 Al-Hajj 22:40.

«Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea because of what the people's hands have earned, so He (i.e. Allāh) may let them taste part of (the consequence of) what they did — that perhaps they will return (to the right path).»¹

Here Allāh (ﷻ) expresses that the evil of corruption is an outcome of people's wrongdoing. But this evil has a good outcome, which is that people may return to the right path.

Example: Sinning. Allāh (ﷻ) loves for us to sin and then seek His forgiveness. He (ﷻ) makes this a means of purifying us and increasing our rewards. Abū Ayyūb, Ibn 'Abbās, and other companions (رضي الله عنهم) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لو لم تُذنبوا لجاء الله بقوم يُذنبون ليغفر لهم.»

«If you did not commit sins, Allāh would have brought (instead of you) people who sin (and seek forgiveness so as to forgive them).»²

Example: Satan. And among the best examples in this regard is the creation of the most evil being: Satan, master teacher and administrator of all wickedness.

We show in the next section that a great amount of good resulted from the creation of Satan.

6. EVIL MAY NOT BE ATTRIBUTED TO ALLĀH

Since Allāh (ﷻ) does not do anything evil, it is wrong to attribute evil to Him. Evil is only done by His creation, as Allāh (ﷻ) says:

1 Ar-Rūm 30:41.

2 Recorded by Muslim and others. Several narrations of this *ḥadīth* have been discussed by al-Albānī in *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* nos. 967-970.

﴿قُلْ: "أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ﴿١﴾ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ﴿٢﴾﴾ الفلق ١-٢

«Say, "I seek refuge with the Lord of daybreak from the evil of that which He created."»¹

And even when attributing to Allāh (ﷻ) the creation of an evil committed by some of His creatures, we should be clear that this cannot be pure evil, because Allāh would not have then permitted it to happen.

‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to say in the beginning of his prayer:

«لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَسَعْدِيكَ، وَالْخَيْرُ كُلُّهُ فِي يَدَيْكَ، وَالشَّرُّ لَيْسَ إِلَيْكَ.
أَنَا بَكَ وَإِلَيْكَ، تَبَارَكْتَ وَتَعَالَيْتَ، أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ.»

«I am at Your service, O Allāh, and ready to please You. All good is in Your hands, and evil is not attributed to You. I (stand) by You, and (will return) to You. Blessed and exalted are You. I seek Your forgiveness and repent to You.»²

Commenting on this *ḥadīth*, al-Albānī (رحمته الله) said:

"This means that evil may not be attributed to Allāh (ﷻ) because there is no evil in His actions. Rather, His actions revolve between justice, benevolence, and wisdom, all of which are good and devoid of evil."³

Furthermore, we should try to avoid directly attributing "local" evil to Allāh (ﷻ). Instead of saying, "Allāh created

1 *Al-Falaq* 113:1-2.

2 This is part of one of the supplications of *istiftāḥ* (opening) of the prayer. It is recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

3 *Sifat uṣ-Ṣalāh* p. 92.

crime, disbelief, sinning, etc,” we may say, “Allāh created the will and ability of those who commit these atrocities;” or, “Allāh allowed these atrocities for a greater benefit and wisdom.”

For example, Allāh (ﷻ) tells us that Ibrāhīm (ﷺ) said to his people:

﴿”الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ ﴿۷۸﴾ وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ ﴿۷۹﴾ وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ ﴿۸۰﴾ وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ ﴿۸۱﴾﴾

الشعراء ٧٨-٨١

«(Allāh it is) who created me and who guides me, and who feeds me and gives me drink, and — when I am ill — who cures me, and who will cause me to die and then will bring me back to life.»¹

Here, Ibrāhīm attributed to Allāh (ﷻ) several natural acts that happen to people. However, when he mentioned illness, though it is also from Allāh’s creation, Ibrāhīm did not attribute it directly to Him by saying, for example, “And who makes me ill.” Rather, he politely omitted the actual doer from that part of his statement.

Related to the above meanings, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿قُلْ: ”اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكِ الْمُلْكِ، تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ، وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ، وَتُعْزِزُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ، وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ، بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ، إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.“﴾ آل عمران ٢٦

«Say, “O Allāh, Owner of all Dominion! You grant dominion to whom You will and remove dominion from whom You will. You honor

1 Ash-Shu’arā’ 26:78-81.

whom You will and degrade whom You will. In Your hand is all good and, indeed, You are capable of all things.”»¹

In this *āyah*, Allāh (ﷻ) gives examples of what people usually consider good (granting dominion, honoring), and of what they consider evil (removing dominion, degrading). He concludes this by expressing that all GOOD is in His hand, which means that both the local good and local evil are globally good.

Commenting on this *āyah*, Ibn ul-Qayyim (رحمته) said:

“Allāh (ﷻ) has sole sovereignty and authority over the world. He honors whomever He wills and humiliates whomever He wills, and He is capable of everything.

Taking away the possessions of whomever He wills and humiliating whomever He wills are good acts, even if they would appear evil to the loser and the humiliated.

Allāh’s actions range between justice and grace, and between wisdom and interest. All of these are good acts for which He should be appreciated and praised — just as He is appreciated and praised by exalting Him above evil. Evil may not be attributed to Him, as is recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to say, «والشرُّ ليس إليك.» **«Evil is not attributed to You.»**

Evil exists in some of Allāh’s created beings, but not in His making or action. His creation, action, decree, and measure, are all good.

Injustice and evil are to place things at other than their appropriate place, and Allāh is exalted above this.”²

1 *Āl ‘Imrān* 3:26.

2 Paraphrased from *Shifā’ ul-‘Alīl* pp. 509-510.

Ibn ul-Qayyim (رحمته) also said:

“Allāh’s excellent names prevent attributing any evil, wrong, or injustice to Him, even though He (رحمته) is the Creator of everything. He is the Creator of the people and their actions, movements, and sayings. A person would be doing evil and wrong by committing a loathsome or prohibited act, but the Lord (رحمته) is the One who enabled him to do it. This enabling is an act of justice, wisdom, and correctness. In other words, making the person capable of doing (evil) is good, but the person’s doing is evil and loathsome. By enabling this, Allāh (رحمته) has placed a thing in its appropriate place, because of the great and praiseworthy underlying wisdom. This (from Allāh) constitutes goodness, wisdom, and benefit, even though its occurrence from the person is abuse, incompetence, and evil.

It is possible to understand this in daily life. For example, an experienced builder may place a bent piece of wood, a broken rock, or an incomplete brick, in a suitable location (of a wall). His action would then be considered proper, right, and praiseworthy — even though the parts that he used have blameworthy deficiencies. Similarly, putting filth in its appropriate place is wise, right, and proper, whereas putting it in an unsuitable place is foolish and wrong. Putting the shoe on the foot and the trash in a trash pile is appropriate, and does not constitute injustice to the shoe or the trash, because this is where they should be.”¹

1 *Shifā’ ul-‘Alīl* p. 512.

SUMMARY

We summarize the above discussion in the following table:

1	Allāh is the only Creator.
2	There is wisdom in everything that Allāh (ﷻ) creates.
3	All that Allāh creates is good.
4	There is evil among the creation.
5	There is no absolute evil.
6	Evil may not be attributed to Allāh.

Wisdom Behind Creating Satan

A very important example relating to the above discussion is the creation of Satan. Satan is the most wicked being that was ever created. He corrupts people's religion, deeds, beliefs, and intentions. He is the cause for people's deviation from Allāh's path. So, why did Allāh (ﷻ) create him in the first place?

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لو أراد الله أن لا يعصى ما خلق إبليس.»

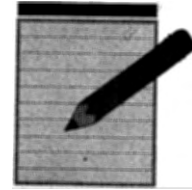
«If Allāh did not want to be disobeyed, He would not have created Satan.»¹

We deduce from the above discussion that, despite his great harm to people, Satan's creation has more overall benefit than harm. Allāh (ﷻ) alone can encompass the full wisdom behind creating Satan, but we can view some of it in the following:

1 Recorded by al-Bazzār, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1642).

1. Satan's existence conforms with the reason of people's creation: to be tried by Allāh (ﷻ), and to demonstrate true servitude to Him. Striving hard for Allāh's cause is the most beloved type of worship to Allāh (ﷻ). If all people were believers, there would be no need for this, or other related types of worship, such as commanding good and forbidding evil, patience, suppressing desire, repentance, seeking forgiveness, asking Allāh for shelter against this enemy, and many other benefits that the mind can never totally encompass.
2. The creation of Satan shows Allāh's ability to create opposite beings: He created this being who is ultimately evil, just as He created Jibrīl who is most good and pure. Similarly, Allāh (ﷻ) created day and night, disease and cure, life and death, and many other opposites. This demonstrates Allāh's full power and control over His creation.
3. The creation of Satan resulted in the existence of evil and disobedience, which made it possible for many of Allāh's excellent names and attributes to come into effect: on the one hand, attributes of mercy, tolerance, compassion, forgiveness, benevolence, and generosity; on the other hand, attributes of dominance, overpowering, subjugation, revenge, and punishment.
4. If it was not for Satan's evil, we would not have been able to differentiate between righteousness and sin, between morality and corruption, or between a prophet and a devil. If it was not for his evil, we would never have known the best of Allāh's creation: Muḥammad (ﷺ) and the other prophets.

Questions and Exercises (Use extra sheets as needed)



1. Define "good" and "evil" in relationship to our discussion of *Qadar*. (2 points)

Good:
Evil:

2. In the following table, describe three wrong views about the creation of evil. (9 points)

	Claim	Resulting Wrong Belief about Allāh
1		
2		
3		

3. Use the example of a painting to explain the meaning of "global" and "local" views. (2 points)

Good:
Evil:

4. Briefly discuss the points that help in understanding the issue of the creation of evil. (12 points)

1
2
3
4
5
6

5. Explain that Allāh is the only Creator of everything, including what may appear evil to some people. Support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah. (6 points)

--

6. Discuss that disasters only happen by Allāh's permission. Support your answer with a text from the Qur'ān. (3 points)

7. Explain that there is wisdom behind everything that Allāh creates. Support your answer with Qur'ānic texts. (6 points)

8. Explain that all of Allāh's creation is good. Support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān. (6 points)

9. Discuss three blessings that arise from handicaps. (6 points)

1
2
3

10. Discuss that there is evil among Allāh's creation. Support your answer with Qur'ānic texts and real life examples. (6 points)

--

11. Explain how a person's evil may benefit some people. (3 points)

--

12. Explain why there is no absolute evil in Allāh's creation. Provide three examples for this, and support your answer with examples from the Qur'ān. (8 points)

1
2
3

13. "Evil may not be attributed to Allāh." Provide three criteria for applying this rule, and support your answer with examples from the Qur'ān. (6 points)

1
2
3

14. Using Ibn ul-Qayyim's earlier quotations, discuss *Āl 'Imrān* 3:26 and derive some relevant conclusions. (6 points)

--

15. Discuss four benefits that resulted from the creation of Satan. (12 points)

1	
2	
3	
4	

CHAPTER 4

GOOD RESULTING FROM EVIL

We have no doubt that the local or relative evil in this life is all for a good wisdom and purpose. Allāh (ﷻ) alone encompasses the full wisdom behind a particular evil or disaster, but we can see some of it — especially when we are guided by Allāh's Book and His Messenger's (ﷺ) Sunnah.

This World Is Made for Trying People

Allāh (ﷻ) created the heavens and earth, and death and life, all for one purpose: to try us and distinguish between the good and the bad among us. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ، وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ، لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا﴾ ٧

«He is the One Who created the heavens and earth in six days — and His throne was over water — so He may test you as to which of you is better in deeds.»¹

And He (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا﴾ ٧ الكهف

«Indeed, We have made that which is on the earth adornment for it — so We may test them as

1 Hud 11:7.

to which one is better in deed.»¹

And He (ﷺ) says:

«الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا،
وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ ﴿٢﴾ الْمَلِكُ ٢

«He is the One who created death and life so as to test you as to which of you is best in deed. Indeed, He is the Mighty and the Forgiver.»²

And He (ﷺ) says:

«وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً، وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ الْأَنْبِيَاءُ ٣٥

«We try you with both evil and good, and to Us you will be returned.»³

No one can escape from trials in this life. A believer's trials are light and temporal. Because of his faith, Allāh protects him, lightens his load, and grants him patience and submission that ease his affliction. On the other hand, the trials and affliction are hard and prolonged for a disbeliever.

Insignificance of the World's Pleasures and Pains

Both pleasures and pains of this life are nothing but a passing illusion that will soon be replaced by the eternality of the hereafter. Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«يُؤْتَى بِأَنْعَمِ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، فَيُصْبَغُ فِي

1 Al-Kahf 18:7.

2 Al-Mulk 67:2.

3 Al-Anbiya' 21:35.

جهنم صبغة، ثم يُقال له: "يا ابن آدم، هل رأيت خيراً قط؟ هل مر بك نعيم قط؟" فيقول: "لا والله يا رب، وعزتك، ما رأيت خيراً قط، ولا قرّة عين قط." ويؤتى بأشد الناس بلاءً في الدنيا من أهل الجنة، فيصبع في الجنة صبغة، فيقال له: "يا ابن آدم، هل رأيت بؤساً قط؟ هل مر بك شدة قط؟" فيقول: "لا والله يا رب. ما مر بي بؤس قط، ولا رأيت شدة قط."

«On the Day of Resurrection, he who deserves the hellfire and had lived most luxuriously in the first life will be brought (before Allāh). He will be given a taste of Hell, and will then be asked, "O son of Ādam, have you ever witnessed good or enjoyed pleasure?" He will reply, "No, by Your glory my Lord! I have never witnessed good or enjoyed satisfaction!"

And he who deserves *Jannah* and had been most afflicted in the first life will be brought (before Allāh). He will be given a taste of *Jannah*, and will then be asked, "O son of Ādam, have you ever witnessed misery or suffered from affliction?" He will reply, "No, by Your glory my Lord! I have never suffered from misery or witnessed affliction!"¹

Affliction Benefits the Believers

To the short-sighted, affliction is an evil that should not happen on earth; above all, it should not strike the believers who are supposedly close to Allāh and qualified for special protection

1 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others.

from Him.

Those who voice such an argument, however, do not realize that affliction benefits a believer in many ways. We mention a few of them in the following subsections.

1. PURIFICATION FROM SINS

Affliction purifies a believer from sins. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

« لا يزال البلاء بالمؤمن والمؤمنة، في نفسه وماله وولده،
حتى يلقى الله تعالى وما عليه خطيئة. »

«Affliction continues to befall believing men and women in their body, family, and property, until they meet Allāh (ﷻ), burdened with no sins.»¹

Abū Saīd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

« ما يصيبُ المؤمنَ من نصبٍ ولا وصبٍ، ولا همٍ ولا حزنٍ، ولا أذىٍ
ولا غمٍ، حتى الشوكة يُشاكها، إلا كفرَّ اللهُ بها من خطاياها. »

«When a Muslim is afflicted with hardship, sickness, worry, sadness, harm, or depression — even if it is something as trivial as a thorn's prick, Allāh expiates some of his sins by it.»²

2. TRYING THOSE WHOM ALLĀH LOVES

Affliction is a means of trying those whom Allāh (ﷻ) loves.

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2280 and *al-Mishkāt* no. 1567).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others. A similar *ḥadīth* is also recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim from 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها).

After passing the trial, they become even more beloved and closer to Him. 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ الصَّالِحِينَ يُشَدَّدُ عَلَيْهِمْ.»

«Indeed, affliction is intensified for the righteous.»¹

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ عِظَمَ الْجَزَاءِ مَعَ عِظَمِ الْبَلَاءِ. وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى إِذَا أَحَبَّ قَوْمًا ابْتَلَاهُمْ، فَمَنْ رَضِيَ فَلَهُ الرِّضَى، وَمَنْ سَخِطَ فَلَهُ السَّخَطُ.»

«A reward's magnitude is according to an affliction's magnitude. When Allāh (ﷻ) loves some people, He afflicts them. He who is content (with Allāh's decree) will achieve (Allāh's) acceptance, and he who is discontent will attain (Allāh's) anger.»²

Sa'd Bin Abī Waqqāṣ (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ بَلَاءً الْأَنْبِيَاءُ، ثُمَّ الْأَمْثَلُ فِالْأَمْثَلِ. يُبْتَلَى الرَّجُلُ عَلَى حَسَبِ دِينِهِ، فَإِنْ كَانَ دِينُهُ صُلْبًا أَشَدَّ بَلَاؤَهُ، وَإِنْ كَانَ فِي دِينِهِ رِقَّةٌ ضَعُفَ بَلَاؤُهُ. فَمَا يَبْرَحُ الْبَلَاءُ بِالْعَبْدِ حَتَّى يَمْشِيَ فِي النَّاسِ وَمَا عَلَيْهِ خَطِيئَةٌ.»

«The most afflicted among the people are the prophets, then the best, then the (next) best. A

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 1660 & 1935 and *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1610).

2 Recorded by at-Tirmithī and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 146).

person is afflicted in accordance with his faith. If his faith is firm, his affliction is intense. And if his faith is weak, his affliction is light. Indeed, a servant (of Allāh) continues to be subjected to adversity until he walks among the people free of sins.»¹

3. EXPEDITING THE PUNISHMENT

Affliction is a means of punishing a believer with the lesser suffering in this life instead of the greater suffering of the hereafter. Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أراد الله بعبده الخير، عجل له العقوبة في الدنيا. وإذا أراد الله بعبده الشر، أمسك عنه بذنبه، حتى يوافيه به يوم القيامة.»

«When Allāh wills good for one of His servant, He expedites his punishment in this life. And when Allāh wills retribution for a servant of His, He retains his sins to judge him by them on the Day of Resurrection.»²

4. MULTIPLICATION OF REWARDS AND ELEVATION OF STATUS

When an afflicted believer shows contentment, his rewards are multiplied and his status is elevated among the believers. Ṣuhayb (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«عجباً لأمر المؤمن، إن أمره كله له خيرٌ، وليس ذلك لأحدٍ إلا للمؤمن. إن أصابته سراءٌ شكرَ فكان خيراً له، وإن أصابته ضراءٌ صبرَ فكان خيراً له.»

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 993 and *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Targhīb wat-Tarhīb* no. 3402).

2 Recorded by at-Tirmithī and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 308 and *al-Mishkāt* no. 1565).

«Indeed, amazing is a believer's affair! It is always for his good, and this merit is for no one except a believer. If he is granted ease of living, he shows gratitude (to Allāh), and this is best for him. And if he is afflicted with hardship, he perseveres, and this is best for him.»¹

According to Ibn ul-Qayyim:

“For a believer, an affliction is like medicine: it removes from him diseases that, were they to remain, would destroy him or lower his status of *īmān*. Affliction extracts such diseases and prepares the believer for receiving full rewards and a high status ... Therefore, affliction and trials are required for a believer so as to achieve victory, honor, and well-being.”²

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ يُرِدِ اللهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُصِبْ مِنْهُ.»

«When Allāh wills good for a person, He subjects him to adversity.»³

5. ATTAINING THE STATUS OF MARTYRDOM

Allāh (ﷻ) makes many types of disasters the means for granting some believers the status of martyrdom — even though they do not die on the battlefield.

Jābir Bin ‘Atīk (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الشهداء سبعة سوى القتل في سبيل الله: المطعون شهيداً، والغرقُ

1 Recorded by Muslim.

2 Paraphrased from *Zād ul-Ma‘ād*, vol. 3, pp. 198-199.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

شهيدٌ، وصاحبُ ذاتِ الجنبِ شهيدٌ، والمبطونُ شهيدٌ، والحرقُ شهيدٌ،
والذي يموت تحت الهدمِ شهيدٌ، والمرأةُ تموتُ بجمعِ شهيدةٍ.»

«In addition to being killed in the way of Allāh, *shahīds* are seven types: he who dies from plague is a *shahīd*, he who dies from drowning is a *shahīd*, he who dies from pleurisy is a *shahīd*, he who dies from abdominal illness is a *shahīd*, he who dies from burning is a *shahīd*, he who dies under a collapsed building is a *shahīd*, and a woman who dies with a child in her womb is a *shahīdah*.»¹

6. RECTIFICATION THROUGH STRIVING AND PATIENCE

Subjecting the believers to disasters and affliction is a test that purifies and rectifies them. This is similar to rectifying gold with extreme heat. During the battle of Uḥud, the believers suffered great harm, but Allāh (ﷻ) indicates the great wisdom behind allowing this to happen:

«وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزِنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ إِنْ يَمَسُّنَا
قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهُ، وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ، وَلِيَعْلَمَ
اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ، وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾
وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا، وَيَمْحَقَ الْكُفْرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا
الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾»

آل عمران ١٣٩-١٤٢

«Do not falter nor grieve, since you are superior

1 Recorded by Mālik, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Hākim, ath-Thahabī, and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 55).

(to your enemy) if you are (true) believers. If a sore should afflict you, similar sores have afflicted the (opposing) folk. We alternate such days (of victory) among the people, so that Allāh may know those who believe, and may accept martyrs from among you — Allāh does not love the wrongdoers — and so that Allāh may purify the believers and wipe out the disbelievers. Or did you think that you would enter *Jannah* before Allāh knows those among you who strive (in His way) and those who are steadfast?»¹

Commenting on these *āyāt*, Ibn ul-Qayyim (رحمته) said:

“Allāh (ﷻ) alternates the days of victory among the people, each group getting its appointed share. He ordained this defeat for the believers for the following possible reasons:

- a. **Manifesting the truthfulness of their faith** into actual existence.
- b. Allowing some of the believers to **attain the rank of martyrdom** that is beloved to Him and beneficent to them.
- c. Rectifying and **purifying them from sins** through their repenting to Him and seeking His forgiveness for the sins that made their enemy’s victory possible.
- d. **Destroying the disbelievers** (eventually) for their oppression and tyranny.
- e. Giving the believers chances to demonstrate **striving and patience** in adversity, which would not be possible if they were always victorious so that no one would fight them.”²

1 *Āl ‘Imrān* 3:139-142.

2 Paraphrased from *Zād ul-Ma‘ād*, vol. 3, pp. 199-201.

7. PRESERVING HOPE AND SUBMISSION TO ALLĀH

If people are never afflicted, they would develop pride and disdain. Disasters restrain their ego and put a limit to their pride. At the same time, disasters make them realize Allāh's great power and maintain hope in His mercy and help. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ، وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿٢٣﴾ الحديد ٢٢-٢٣

«No disaster can ever befall the earth or your own selves but that it is inscribed in a Register before We bring it into existence. That is surely easy for Allāh. (Know this) in order not to despair over what has eluded you, nor exult (in pride) over what He has given you. And Allāh does not love any conceited and boastful person.»¹

Allāh (ﷻ) praises His submissive servants who remember Him in calamities:

«وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ البقرة ١٥٥-١٥٧

«Give glad news to the patient — those who,

1 Al-Hadīd 57:22-23.

when disaster befalls them, say, "Indeed, unto Allāh do we belong and, indeed, to Him we will return." It is they upon whom their Lord's blessings and mercy are bestowed, and it is they who are truly guided.»¹

With every affliction, a believer submits to Allāh and bows his head to His decree. A nonbeliever, on the other hand, remains arrogant and unyielding, which leads to his eventual destruction.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) and Ka'b Bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِ كَمَثَلِ الْخَامَةِ مِنَ الزَّرْعِ، تُفَيِّئُهَا الرِّيحُ، تَصْرَعُهَا
مَرَّةً وَتَعْدِلُهَا أُخْرَى، وَلَا يَزَالُ الْمُؤْمِنُ يَصِيبُهُ بَلَاءٌ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَهُ
أَجَلُهُ. وَمَثَلُ الْكَافِرِ كَمَثَلِ الْأَرْزَةِ الْمُجْدِيَةِ عَلَى أَصْلِهَا، لَا
يُصِيبُهَا شَيْءٌ حَتَّى يَكُونَ انْجِعَافُهَا مَرَّةً وَاحِدَةً.»

«A believer's parable is like that of a fresh and moist plant; the wind tilts it this way and that way. Such is a believer: he continues to be subjected to affliction, until he reaches his appointed term of death. And a *kāfir's* parable is like that of a firm cedar tree; it does not shake — until it is uprooted all at once.»²

Allāh (ﷻ) also points to this by saying:

«وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ابْتِغَاءِ الْقَوْمِ؛ إِنْ تَكُونُوا تَأْمُونًا، فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْمُونُونَ
كَمَا تَأْمُونُونَ، وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ.» النساء ١٠٤

1 *Al-Baqarah* 2:155-157.

2 This is a combined narration recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

«Do not falter in pursuing the (opposing) folk. If you should be suffering, they too are suffering like you, but you expect from Allāh that which they do not.»¹

8. DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN BELIEVERS AND NONBELIEVERS

We saw from the *āyāt* of *Āl 'Imrān* (p. 78) that affliction is a means of distinguishing between believers and nonbelievers. Similarly, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّىٰ نَعْلَمَ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ مِنكُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ،
وَنَبْلُواْ أَخْبَارَكُمْ﴾ محمد ٣١

«We will surely test you until We make evident the strivers among you and the patient, and We will test your affairs.»²

And He (ﷻ) says:

﴿أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ؟
وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ، فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا
وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكٰذِبِينَ﴾ العنكبوت ٢-٣

«Do the people think that they will be left to say, “We believe,” without being tried? We have surely tried those before them. Indeed, Allāh will make evident the truthful, and He will make evident the liars.»³

1 *An-Nisā* 4:104.

2 *Muḥammad* 47:31.

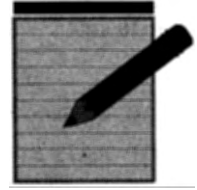
3 *Al-'Ankabūt* 29:2-3.

SUMMARY

The following table summarizes the points discussed in the previous subsections:

Benefits of Affliction for the Believers

1	Purification from sins.
2	Trying those whom Allāh loves.
3	Expediting the punishment.
4	Multiplication of rewards and elevation of status.
5	Attaining the status of martyrdom.
6	Rectification through striving and patience.
7	Preserving hope in Allāh and submission to Him.
8	Differentiation between believers and nonbelievers.

Questions and Exercises (Use extra sheets as needed)

1. Discuss how this world is created for trying people. Support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān. (6 points)

2. Discuss that this world's pleasures and pains are insignificant compared to what is in the hereafter. Support your answer with a text from the Sunnah. (4 points)

3. Discuss eight benefits that believers harvest from affliction. Support your answer with texts from the Qur'an and Sunnah. (24 points)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

4. List the five benefits that Ibn ul-Qayyim derived from the *āyāt* referring to the believers' defeat in Uḥud. (24 points)

1
2
3
7
8

5. Mention eight types of people who are granted the status of martyrdom. (8 points)

1	5
2	6
3	7
4	8

CHAPTER 5

HUMAN WILL VS. DIVINE WILL

Allāh Decreed All What Happens to Us

INTRODUCTION

We have seen that all things relating to us — whether they are our own doing or are beyond our control — have already been decreed, registered in the Preserved Slate, and registered again by the Angel of Wombs prior to our birth.

Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن خلقَ أحدِكُم يُجمَعُ في بطنِ أمِّه أربعينَ يوماً نطفَةً، ثم يكونُ علقَةً مثلَ ذلك، ثم يكونُ مضغَةً مثلَ ذلك، ثم يبعثُ إليه ملكاً، فينفخُ فيه الروحَ، ويؤمِّرُ بأربعِ كلماتٍ: بكتبَ رزقَهُ وأجلَهُ وعملَهُ وشقيُّ أم سعيدٍ.»

«The creation of each of you is brought together in his mother's womb for forty days as a seed, then as a clot for as long, then as a lump (of flesh) for as long. Allāh then sends an angel who is commanded to blow the soul into him and write down four things: his sustenance, life-span, deeds, and whether he will be miserable or happy (in the hereafter).»¹

In this section, we view and discuss additional texts

¹ Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

expressing that Allāh has already decreed various types of actions relating to us.

EVENTS NOT WITHIN OUR CONTROL

We have seen in Ibn Mas'ūd's above *ḥadīth* that, prior to our birth, an angel records what wealth we will gather in this life, and what will be our life-span. Both of these matters are out of our control, and we have no say or choice in their regard.

Allāh (ﷻ) has also decreed what other people will do to us, whether good or bad, and whether it will benefit or harm us. Everything that Allāh decreed for us will surely happen, and anything that He did not decree will never reach us.

Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that once the Prophet (ﷺ) had him sit behind him on his riding animal. Along the way, the Prophet (ﷺ) told him:

«يا غلام! إني أعلمك كلمات: احفظ الله يحفظك، احفظ الله تجده
 تجاهك. إذا سألت فاسأل الله، وإذا استعنت فاستعن بالله. وأعلم
 أن الأمة لو اجتمعت على أن ينفعوك بشيء، لم ينفعوك إلا بشيء
 قد كتبه الله لك. وإن اجتمعوا على أن يضروك بشيء، لم يضروك
 إلا بشيء قد كتبه الله عليك. رفعت الأقلام وجفت الصحف.»

«Young man! I will teach you a few important things: Be mindful of Allāh, and Allāh will protect you. Be mindful of Allāh, and you will find Him in front of you. When you ask, ask of Allāh; and when you seek help, seek help of Allāh. Know that if people were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would only benefit you with something that Allāh had already prescribed for you; and if they were to gather together to harm you with

anything, they would only harm you with something that Allāh had already prescribed for you. The pens have been lifted and the sheets have dried.»

In another report of this *ḥadīth*, the Prophet (ﷺ) said to Ibn ‘Abbās:

«يا غلام! إني أعلمك كلمات: احفظ الله يحفظك، احفظ الله تجده أمامك. تعرف إلى الله في الرخاء يعرفك في الشدة، وأعلم أن ما أخطأك لم يكن ليصيبك، وما أصابك لم يكن ليخطئك، وأعلم أن النصر مع الصبر، وأن الفرج مع الكرب، وأن مع العسر يسراً.»

«O boy, I will teach you some important words: Be mindful of Allāh, and Allāh will protect you. Be mindful of Allāh, you will find Him in front of you. Get to know Allāh in prosperity and He will know you in adversity. Know that whatever missed you could never have befell you, and whatever befell you could never have missed you. And know that victory comes with patience, relief comes with affliction, and ease comes with hardship.»¹

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) told him:

«يا أبا هريرة، قد جفَّ القلمُ بما أنت لاق.»

«O Abū Hurayrah, the Pen is dry (i.e., has finished writing) regarding what will happen to you.»²

1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī (the first report), Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi‘* no. 7957 and *al-Mishkāt* no. 5232).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and an-Nasā‘ī.

The above *ḥadīths* indicate that whatever will happen to us has already been decided and is not possible for anyone to change.

As another example, Allāh (ﷻ) is the One who decides where each one of us will die. Maṭar Bin ‘Ukāmis (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

« إذا قضى الله لعبد أن يموت بأرض جعل له إليها حاجة. »

«When Allāh ordains for a person to die in a certain land, he makes him need to go to it.»¹

OUR VOLUNTARY ACTIONS

We have seen in Ibn Mas‘ūd’s above *ḥadīth* (p. 87) that, prior to our birth, an angel records our “voluntary” actions in this life. To many people, this appears contradictory. They argue, “If our deeds are voluntary, they cannot be predestined; and if they are predestined, they cannot be voluntary.”

We clarify this in the rest of this chapter, and discuss it again in subsequent chapters.

Abū al-Aswad ad-Dī‘ālī (رضي الله عنه), one of the *tābi‘īn*, reported that he met the *ṣaḥābī* ‘Imrān Bin Ḥuṣayn (رضي الله عنه) who asked him:

“Have people’s actions and striving already been ordained in the preceding *Qadar*, or are they decreed as they happen, following their Prophet’s warnings, in order to establish the evidence against them?”

Abū al-Aswad replied, “Rather, it is something that has already been ordained for them.” ‘Imrān asked him, “Would this not, then, be injustice?” On hearing this, Abū al-Aswad was terrified

1 Recorded by Ibn ‘Adiyy, Abū Nu‘aym, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 106 and *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1221).

and said:

“All things are Allāh’s creation and are owned by Him. So He may not be questioned about what He does, but THEY will be questioned.”

‘Imrān then said, “May Allāh show you mercy! Indeed, I only asked to test your understanding. And indeed, once two men from the tribe of Muzaynah came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and asked him (what I asked you):

”يا رسولَ اللهِ! أَرَأَيْتَ ما يَعْمَلُ الناسُ اليَوْمَ وَيَكْدِحُونَ فِيهِ، أَشَيْءٌ
فُضِيَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَضَى فِيهِمْ مِنْ قَدَرٍ سَبَقَ، أَمْ فِيمَا يُسْتَقْبَلُونَ؟“

“Have people’s actions and striving already been ordained in the preceding *Qadar*, or are they decreed as they happen?”

The Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

«لا، بل شيءٌ فُضِيَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَضَى فِيهِمْ، وَتَصْدِيقُ ذَلِكَ فِي كِتَابِ
اللهِ ﷻ: ﴿وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا ﴿۱﴾ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ﴿۲﴾ قَدْ
أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ﴿۳﴾ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ﴿۴﴾﴾ الشمس ۷-۱۰»

«Rather, it is something that has already been ordained for them. This is confirmed in Allāh’s (ﷻ) book:

«And I swear by the soul and He who proportioned it and inspired it its wickedness and its righteousness. Successful is he who purifies it, and lost is he who instills it with corruption.»^{1, 2}

1 Ash-Shams 91:7-10.

There are many lessons in this *ḥadīth* and *āyah*, among which are the following:

1. It is permissible to discuss issues of *Qadar* for the purpose of teaching or learning, but not for the purpose of casting doubts on our beliefs or on Allāh's Book.
2. Everything pertaining to us has already been decreed by Allāh (ﷻ). Our actions and deeds are all part of *Qadar* that Allāh (ﷻ) recorded in the Preserved Slate before He created the heavens and earth.
3. Allāh (ﷻ) is the Creator of our souls and faculties.
4. Allāh (ﷻ) enabled us to differentiate between wickedness and righteousness.
5. We have the choice of purifying ourselves to attain success, or of corrupting and ruining them.

OUR SINS

Our sins, which are part of our voluntary actions, are decreed by Allāh (ﷻ) as well. For example, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كتب على ابنِ آدمَ حَظُّهُ من الزنا، مدركٌ ذلك لا مَحالة، فزنا العينِ النَّظَر، وزنا الأذنِ الاستماع، وزنا اللسانِ النَّطْق، وزنا الفمِ القُبْل، وزنا اليدِ البَطْش، وزنا الرَّجْلِ الحِطَا، والنَّفْسُ تُمَنِّي ذلك وتشتهي، والفرج يصدق ذلك أو يكذبه.»

«A son of Ādam's share of *zinā* has been

predestined for him, and he will inevitably attain it: The eye commits *zinā* by looking, the ear commits *zinā* by listening, the tongue commits *zinā* by speaking, the mouth commits *zinā* by kissing, the hand commits *zinā* by acting (or touching), the foot commits *zinā* by walking (toward the sin), the soul (or heart) wishes and desires (the sin), and the private parts confirm this or reject it.¹

From this *ḥadīth*, we learn that:

1. *Zinā* (or adultery) is of different levels. The worst level is the ultimate action of the private parts. The lesser levels are committed by other body-parts, such as the eye and the ear. Furthermore, these lesser forms of *zinā* are channels that lead to the major sin of *zinā*.
2. All forms of *zinā* that a person would ever commit have already been decreed and recorded in his register, and he would surely commit them as decreed.
3. Other sins follow the same principle: they have all been predestined for every person, and he will surely commit them as predestined.

OUR FINAL ABODE

We have also seen in Ibn Mas‘ūd’s earlier *ḥadīth* (p. 87) that, prior to our birth, an angel records whether we will be miserable (in Hell) or happy (in *Jannah*). This is part of Allāh’s knowledge about the creation that He (ﷻ) initially recorded in the Preserved Slate.

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) once

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

entered the *Masjid* holding a book in each hand. Pointing at the book in his right hand, he said:

«هذا كتابٌ من ربِّ العالمين، فيه أسماء أهل الجنة، وأسماء آبائهم
وقبائلهم، ثمَّ أُجْمِلَ على آخرهم، فلا يُزادُ فيهم ولا يُنقصُ منهم أبداً»

«This is a book from the Lord of the worlds. It contains the names of the people of *Jannah* and the names of their fathers and tribes. All of them are included, until the very last of them, and they will never be increased or decreased.»

Then the Prophet (ﷺ) pointed at the book in his left hand and said:

«هذا كتابٌ من ربِّ العالمين، فيه أسماء أهل النار، وأسماء آبائهم
وقبائلهم، ثمَّ أُجْمِلَ على آخرهم، فلا يُزادُ فيهم ولا يُنقصُ منهم أبداً»

«This is a book from the Lord of the worlds. It contains the names of the people of the Fire and the names of their fathers and tribes. All of them are included, until the very last of them, and they will never be increased or decreased.»

The *ṣahābah* (رضي الله عنهم) then asked, “Why then should we work (for *Jannah*) if the matter has already been decided?” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

«سدّدوا وقاربوا، فإنَّ صاحبَ الجنةِ يُختمُ له بعملِ أهلِ الجنة،
وإن عملَ أيِّ عملٍ. وإنَّ صاحبَ النارِ يُختمُ له بعملِ أهلِ النارِ،
النارِ، وإن عملَ أيِّ عملٍ.»

«Act righteously and strive to reach your goal (of *Jannah*), for, indeed, a person of *Jannah* will end

up doing deeds of the people of *Jannah*, even if he (previously) did various deeds. And indeed, a person of Hell will end up doing deeds of the people of Hell, even if he (previously) did various deeds.»

Then, with a motion of his hands, the Prophet (ﷺ) dismissed the two books and concluded:

«فرع ربكم من العباد، (فريق في الجنة وفريق في السعير) الشورى ٧.»

«You Lord is finished in regard to (predestining for) the creation: «A portion of them will be in *Jannah*, and a portion in Hell.»^{1, 2}

Some may ask, “How did the Prophet (ﷺ) get the two books? How did they look like? From what were they made? What happened to them after he (ﷺ) showed them to his companions? Etc ...”

We respond to these questions by saying that we do not know any additional information about the two books beyond what is mentioned in this *ḥadīth*. Conjecturing about them without evidence is neither beneficial nor acceptable.

A similar meaning to this *ḥadīth* is reported by ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن الله خلق للجنة أهلاً، خلقهم لها وهم في أصلاب آبائهم،

وخلق للنار أهلاً، خلقهم لها وهم في أصلاب آبائهم.»

«Indeed, Allāh created the dwellers of *Jannah*, and He designated them for it while they were still in their forefathers’ backbones. And He

1 *Ash-Shūrā* 42:7.

2 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 848 and *al-Mishkāt* no. 93).

created the dwellers of the Fire and designated them for it while they were still in their forefathers' backbones.»¹

Also, 'Abdullāh Bin Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الشقي من شقي في بطن أمه، والسعيد من وعظ بغيره.»

«A truly miserable person is he who has been (decreed) miserable from the time when he was in his mother's womb. And a truly happy person is he who takes lesson from (the mistakes of) others.»²

And Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said;

«خلق الله يحيى بن زكريا في بطن أمه مؤمناً، وخلق فرعون في بطن أمه كافراً.»

«Allāh created Yaḥyā Bin Zakariyyā a believer, even while he was in his mother's womb. And He created Pharaoh a disbeliever, even while he was in his mother's womb.»³

Allāh's Forceful and Optional Wills

TWO MEANINGS FOR "WILL"

Allāh's "will" and some other synonymous terms are used in the Qur'ān and Sunnah in two different senses. In one case, they refer to Allāh's forceful will that must prevail. For example,

1 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

2 Recorded by Muslim, Ibn Abī 'Āṣim (in *as-Sunnah*) and others.

3 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1831).

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ: "كُنْ." فَيَكُونُ﴾ يس ٨٢

«Indeed, when He wills a thing, His Command is only to say to it, "Be," and it is!»¹

In the other case, they refer to what Allāh (ﷻ) recommends for us to do. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمْ الْعُسْرَ﴾ البقرة ١٨٥

«Allāh intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship.»²

Obviously, even though Allāh intends ease for us, we may choose difficulty for ourselves.

CAN WE VIOLATE ALLĀH'S WILL?

An important source of confusion for some people is mixing between these two cases. They argue:

"If Allāh is capable of doing everything that He wills, why then, when He wills for us to do something we sometimes do not do it, thereby breaking His will? Likewise, if Allāh (ﷻ) hates disbelief and sinning, why does He allow them to happen among His creation?"

From what we stated above, we can see that the answer to this is that:

1. The word "will" and its synonyms in the following table

1 *Yā-sīn* 36:82.

2 *Al-Baqarah* 2:185.

sometimes mean Allāh's forceful will. This type is usually described by the 'ulamā' as the "*qadarī* (forceful) will" or the "*kawnī* (creational) will", because it pertains to what Allāh wills to be — i.e., what He creates, regardless of whether He loves or hates it.

2. In other instances, the word "will" and its synonyms mean a command or recommendation from Allāh to us, leaving us a choice to obey or reject. This type is usually described by the 'ulamā' as the "*shar'ī* (or legislative) will", because it pertains to what Allāh ordains as a religious obligation that He loves, regardless of whether He makes it happen or not.
3. If we disobey or reject a command or recommendation from Allāh (ﷻ), this does not mean that we broke Allāh's will. Rather, it means that Allāh (ﷻ) willed for us to do so, which is then in agreement with His overlaying plan and wisdom.
4. Allāh (ﷻ) wills the existence of certain things that He does not love. On the other hand, He does not will the existence of certain things that He loves. For instance, He does not love Satan and his allies, yet He has willed their existence because of a far-reaching and overlaying wisdom. On the other hand, He loves for the disbelievers to accept faith, but He does not will it to be. This is explained further in the rest of this section.

OPTIONAL STATUS VS. FORCEFUL STATUS

The following table presents terms that are sometimes used in the Qur'ān to refer to Allāh's (optional) legislation, other times they refer to His (forceful) creation.

Term	Optional Status	Forceful Status
Decree (القضاء)	Allāh decrees the laws that we either obey or reject	Allāh decrees everything in His creation
Rule (الحكم)	Allāh rules (i.e. legislates) for us	Allāh's rule passes over the creation
Prescription (الكتابة)	Allāh prescribes the laws for us	Allāh prescribed all what happens in His creation
Will / intention (المشيئة والإرادة)	Allāh intends ease for us if we obey Him	Everything happens as Allāh wills
Love / acceptance (الحب والرضى)	Allāh loves good deeds and accepts them	Allāh loves good, so He creates it
Hate (الكراهية)	Allāh hates sins and the sinful	Allāh hates absolute evil, so He does not create it
Command / Permission (الأمر والإذن)	Allāh commands and permits us to do good	Allāh creates things by His command and permission
Prohibition (التحريم)	Allāh prohibits sinning	Allāh prohibits what He does not want to happen
Giving (الإيتاء)	Allāh gives us His teachings that we either obey or reject	Allāh gives of His favors to whomever He wills

We should note the following:

1. Items in the "Optional Status" column simply mean that Allāh (ﷻ) is the only true Legislator (i.e., the One who makes the laws and issues the commands).
2. Items in the "Forceful Status" column simply mean that Allāh (ﷻ) is the only Creator.
3. Most confusion regarding *Qadar* arises from mixing between

the two meanings.

4. In one extreme, some people apply the "Forceful Status" to both of Allāh's creation and legislation. This amounts to:
 - a. Denying that Allāh is the Legislator who must be fully obeyed.
 - b. Claiming that people have absolutely no will or choice.
5. In the other extreme, some people apply the "Optional Status" to both of Allāh's creation and legislation. This amounts to:
 - a. Denying that Allāh is the only Creator.
 - b. Claim that Allāh has no say whatsoever in regard to what we do.
6. The correct Islāmic belief is a middle path between these two extremes. We discuss this further in Chapter 6.

WHY DOES ALLĀH PERMIT WHAT HE HATES?

When Allāh (ﷻ) commands people to do a certain thing, He gives them the choice of either obeying or disobeying Him. Since Allāh's command reflects something that Allāh loves, some people object by saying, "When Allāh (ﷻ) commands us to do something that He loves, He should force us to do it. Furthermore, He should not will or create something that He does not accept or love."

The response to this is as follows:

1. Allāh (ﷻ) does not benefit when we perform one of His commands, nor is He harmed when we do not.

2. We are the ones who benefit from performing Allāh's commands.
3. Allāh (ﷻ) may decide to prevent us from performing some of His commands. When He does, this prevention may harm us, but it will surely have a more important overall benefit and wisdom.
4. There are things, such as belief, good manners, and so on, that Allāh loves, wills, and creates because they are in themselves good.
5. On the other hand, there are things that Allāh (ﷻ) does not love in themselves, but He approves their indirect outcome. Therefore, He wills and creates them because of the indirect benefit that results from them.

For example, if the believers violate some of Allāh's (ﷻ) commands, He may punish them with a defeat from His enemies. Even though He loves for the believers to win and for His enemies to lose, there may be a greater overall benefit to the religion and to the believers in their defeat. In this case, the believers' well-being is directly beloved to Allāh. Their defeat is hated by Him, but He approves its indirect outcome because it leads to a greater benefit for the believers. We have discussed this example in detail in the last chapter.

The following table summarizes the above discussion:

	Optional Will	Forceful Will
Good Deeds	Allāh loves them	Allāh creates either type, as His wisdom dictates
Bad Deeds	Allāh hates them	

SUBMITTING TO ALLĀH'S DECREE

As true believers, we must love what Allāh (ﷻ) loves and hate what He hates. Therefore, we see from the above discussion that we must hate evil and try our best to change it. At the same time, however, we should accept it as being decreed by Allāh (ﷻ) for a definite wisdom.

Our attitude toward an event decreed by Allāh, therefore, should have two intertwined aspects:

- a. Being Allāh's (ﷻ) decree and creation, we should accept it with full satisfaction.
- b. Being part of the natural or human phenomena, we should apply the religious guidelines to know whether to like it or oppose it.

For example, if a person disbelieves in Allāh, we accept the fact that Allāh decreed this for a wisdom that we may or may not know. At the same time, we hate and oppose this act of disbelief and ingratitude from the person who committed it.

Similarly, when a murder is committed, we accept it because Allāh (ﷻ) decreed and willed it and made it a means of terminating a person's life. At the same time, we hate and oppose it for being wilfully committed by the murderer, causing harm and damage to human life and safety.

Our Will and Choice**WE HAVE A FREE WILL TO ACT**

Allāh (ﷻ) granted us a free will to choose and act. Based on this will, He will judge us on Resurrection Day. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا﴾ الإنسان ٢٩

«Whoever, then, so wills, may follow a Path to his Lord.»¹

And He (ﷻ) says:

﴿لَمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَسْتَقِيمَ ۖ﴾ التكوير ٢٨

«(This reminder is) for everyone among you who wills to be upright (upon Islām).»²

A person normally performs a deed by first willing it and then executing his will. He does not feel compelled by a hidden force to act or refrain. Thus, we find in the Qur'an and Sunnah that a person's acts of obedience and disobedience are considered his own doing. He is praised and rewarded for his righteous deeds, and is blamed and punished for his evil deeds. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَالْعَصْرِ ۖ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۖ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ﴾ العصر ١-٣

«By time, humans are surely in loss, except for those who believe, do righteous deeds, and mutually enjoin truth and patience.»³

Here, Allāh describes the believers as actual doers of good deeds. This is further confirmed by common sense and experience.

1 *Al-Insān* 76:29.

2 *At-Takwīr* 81:28-29.

3 *Al-'Asr* 103:1-3.

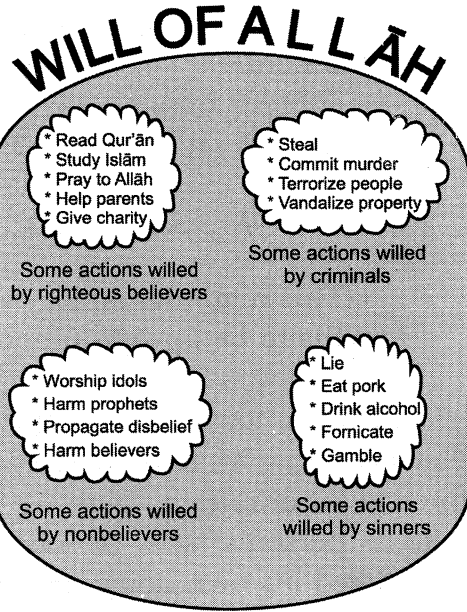
ALLĀH'S WILL ENCOMPASSES OURS

We have seen that we have a free will to choose and act.

At the same time, we must realize that Allāh (ﷻ) is the owner and controller of the creation, and nothing can take place in His dominion against His will.

Therefore, Allāh's will surrounds and encompasses our will, making our will subject to our Lord's (ﷻ).

Allāh (ﷻ) refers to both wills in the following:



Allāh's Will Encompasses All Human Wills, Whether Good or Bad

﴿فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا ۗ وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ ۗ اللَّهُ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا﴾ الإنسان ٢٩-٣٠

«Whoever, then, so wills may follow the Path to his Lord. But you cannot will it unless Allāh wills. Indeed, Allāh is ever Knowing and Wise.»¹

This *āyah* indicates that a person's guidance is subject to Allāh's will. Similarly, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿لَمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَسْتَقِيمَ ۗ وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ التكوير ٢٨-٢٩

«(This reminder is) for everyone among you who wills to be upright (upon Islām). But you cannot

1 Al-Insān 76:29-30.

will it unless Allāh, the Lord of the creation, so wills.»¹

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مِنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ جَمِيعًا﴾. يونس ٩٩

«And had your Lord so willed, entirely all those on earth would surely have believed.»²

The will of Allāh also encompasses a person's choice of misguidance. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكُوا﴾. الأنعام ١٠٧

«If Allāh had so willed, they would not have joined partners with Him.»³

This and the previous *āyah* indicate that, had Allāh so willed, He could have removed the people's choice and forced them all to be believers. However, His wisdom has decreed to maintain their choice of belief and action.

Therefore, Allāh's will, though encompassing our will and prevailing over it, does not block our freedom of choice. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا: "لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا، وَلَا ءَابَاؤُنَا، وَلَا

حَرَمْنَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ." كَذَلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ ذَاقُوا بِأَسَنَّا.

قُلْ: "هَلْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِّنْ عِلْمٍ فَتُخْرِجُوهُ لَنَا؟ إِنْ تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ، وَإِنْ

أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا تَخْرُصُونَ."﴾ الأنعام ١٤٨

1 *At-Takwīr* 81:28-29.

2 *Yūnus* 10:99.

3 *Al-An'ām* 6:107.

«The pagans will say, "If Allāh had willed, we would not have joined partners with Him, nor would our parents have, and we would not have prohibited anything (without His permission)." Thus have those before them lied until they tasted Our punishment. Say, "Do you have any knowledge (about this) that you can produce for us? You only follow doubts, and you only create falsehood."»¹

In this *āyah*, Allāh (ﷻ) promises to inflict punishment on those who commit *shirk* and then justify their *shirk* with *Qadar*. This clearly shows that *Qadar* is not an acceptable justification in this case.

Even though there is common wording between this and the previous *āyah* (*al-An'ām* 6:107), there is an obvious difference in meaning: in the first *āyah* Allāh (ﷻ) emphasizes the people's choice, whereas in the second *āyah* He rejects their claim that they have no choice.

Commenting on this *āyah*, Ṣālīḥ al-Fawzān said:

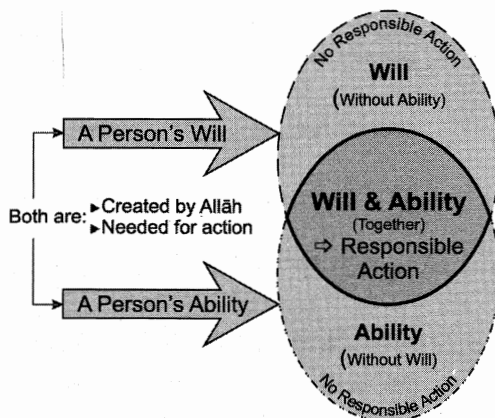
"Some people make a grievous mistake by justifying their sins and shortcomings with *Qada'* and *Qadar*. This is a wrong understanding of *Qadar*. It may not be used to justify sins and disobedience but, rather, to explain affliction and disasters. Using *Qadar* to justify sinning is wrong because it makes a person abandon repentance and insist on wrongdoing, whereas using it to explain disasters is good because it leads to patience and *ihtisāb* (seeking Allāh's reward)."²

1 *Al-An'ām* 6:148.

2 *Al-Irshād* p. 277.

Some may ask, "How can actions arise from the will of the individual and yet fall under the Divine decree? And how does the Divine will encompass them?"

In answer to this, we note that Allāh (ﷻ) is the Creator of our deeds because He is the Creator of both our will and ability. Therefore, He is the ultimate Creator of our actions. From experience, as well as Islāmic principles, we know very well that this does not conflict with the fact that we are the actual doers of our deeds.



Example:
Three Candidates for Giving Charity →

	1	2	3
Allāh granted them will to give charity?	Yes	No	Yes
Allāh granted them ability to give charity?	No	Yes	Yes
They gave charity?	No	No	Yes

GUIDANCE AND MISGUIDANCE ARE FROM ALLĀH

We have seen above that the people’s will of being guided or misguided is encompassed by Allāh’s will. This leads us to the conclusion that both guidance and misguidance are ultimately from Allāh (ﷻ).

Ibn Mas‘ūd and other companions (رضي الله عنهم) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) often said in the beginning of his speeches:

« مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضِلَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ. »

«He whom Allāh guides, no one can misguide; and he whom He misguides, no one can guide.» ¹

Therefore, it is recommended to supplicate to Allāh asking

¹ Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

Him for guidance. Al-Ḥasan Bin ‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) taught him to say in his *qunūt* ¹:

«اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ، وَعَافِنِي فِيمَنْ عَافَيْتَ، وَتَوَلَّنِي
فِيمَنْ تَوَلَّيْتَ، وَبَارِكْ لِي فِيمَا أَعْطَيْتَ، وَقِنِي شَرَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ،
فَإِنَّكَ تَقْضِي وَلَا يُقْضَى عَلَيْكَ، وَإِنَّهُ لَا يَذِلُّ مَنْ وَالَيْتَ، وَلَا يَعْزُزُّ
مَنْ عَادَيْتَ، تَبَارَكَ رَبَّنَا وَتَعَالَيْتَ، لَا مَنَجَا مِنْكَ إِلَّا إِلَيْكَ»

«O Allāh, guide me with those whom You guide, protect me with those whom You protect, support me with those whom You support, bless for me what You have given me, and shelter me from the evil of what You have decreed. Indeed, You decree, and none can decree against You. He whom You support cannot be humiliated, nor can Your enemy be honored. Blessed and exalted are You, Our Lord. There is no refuge from You except with You.» ²

ALLĀH GUIDES THOSE WHO DESERVE GUIDANCE

The above texts can be clarified when we note that Allāh (ﷻ) guides those who deserve guidance and make an effort for it. On the other hand, He only misguides those who choose to be misguided.

A parable may be used to illustrate this. Let us imagine a man who needs to climb out of a perilous pit, and another man at the top of the pit trying to help him with a rope and telling him, “If I find you seriously trying to climb up, I will help you by pulling the rope up for you. But if I find you reluctant to do

1 A supplication said at the end of the voluntary night prayers.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣifat uṣ-Ṣalāh*).

anything for yourself, preferring to stay in the bottom of the pit, and even trying to cut the rope that is your only means out, I will not help you.” If the man in the pit decides to stay in his place or go deeper into the pit, can we then blame the other man for not pulling him out? Of course, to Allāh (ﷻ) belong the most supreme parables.

Indeed, Allāh (ﷻ) guides those who deserve to be guided, and misguides those who deserve to be misguided. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَىٰ وَاتَّقَىٰ ۖ وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ،
لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ۖ وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَىٰ ۖ وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ
فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ، لِلْعُسْرَىٰ﴾ الليل ٥-١٠

«As for him who gives (charity), has *taqwā* (piety), and believes in the best reward (of *Jannah*), We will ease him toward the Ease (of *Jannah*). But as for him who withholds (his money), turns away (from Allāh), and denies the best reward, We will ease him toward the Difficulty (of Hell).»^{1, 2}

And He (ﷻ) says:

﴿فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ، وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ﴾ الصف ٥

«When they deviated, Allāh caused their heart to deviate, for Allāh does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.»³

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

1 *Al-Layl* 92:5-10.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 *Aṣ-Ṣaff* 61:5.

﴿قُلْ: "مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ مَدًّا."﴾ مريم ٧٥

«Say, "Whoever is in misguidance, let the Most Merciful greatly extend for him (means of misguidance).»¹

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَيَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى.﴾ مريم ٧٦

«And Allāh increases those who are guided with more guidance.»²

OUR DEEDS CANNOT EQUAL THE PRIZE OF JANNAH

Allāh (ﷻ) does not show the least injustice to any of his creation. When people do good, He gives them a fair recompensation, as He says:

﴿وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا يَخَافُ ظُلْمًا

وَلَا هَضْمًا﴾ طه ١١٢

«As for him who does righteous deeds while he is a believer, he should neither fear injustice nor underpayment.»³

On the other hand, when people do wrong, Allāh (ﷻ) either punishes them for it, or forgives them. Allāh says:

﴿وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ،

وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ كَثِيرٍ﴾ الشورى ٣٠

1 Maryam 19:75.

2 Maryam 19:76.

3 Taha 20:112.

«Whatever misfortune strikes you, it is for what your hands have earned. And yet, He pardons much.»¹

This shows Allāh's mercy in that He forgives a great deal of our shortcomings. In addition, He admits the righteous to *Jannah* even though their deeds are not sufficient for that. People's good deeds, regardless of how great they are, can never be a fair trade for the prize of *Jannah*. Allāh (ﷻ), out of His great mercy, multiplies these deeds and makes them a suitable cause for entering *Jannah*.

Zayd Bin Thābit and other companions (رضي الله عنهم) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لو أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَذَّبَ أَهْلَ سَمَاوَاتِهِ وَأَهْلَ أَرْضِهِ، عَذَّبَهُمْ وَهُوَ غَيْرُ ظَالِمٍ لَهُمْ. وَلَوْ رَحِمَهُمْ كَانَتْ رَحْمَتُهُ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ.»

«If Allāh were to punish the people of His heavens and earth, He would not then be unfair to them. And if He were to show mercy to them, His mercy would surely exceed their deeds.»²

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَنْ يُنَجِّيَ أَحَدًا مِنْكُمْ عَمَلُهُ.»

«None among you will be saved (on Judgment Day) merely by his deeds.»

Some of the *ṣaḥābah* were surprised to hear this, so they asked, "Not even you, O Allāh's Messenger?" He replied:

1 *Ash-Shūrā* 42:30.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 111 and *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2439).

«ولا أنا، إلا أن يتغمّدني الله برحمته منه وفضل»

«Not even I, unless Allāh would engulf me with His mercy and favor.»¹

Similarly, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

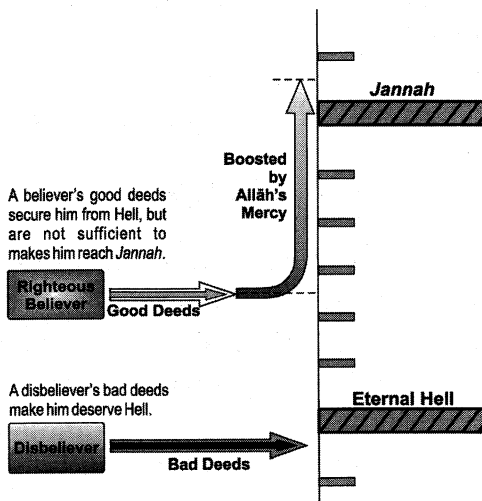
«لو أن الله يؤاخذني وعيسى بذنوبنا لعذبنا ولم يظلمنا شيئاً.»

«If Allāh would condemn me and Īsā for our sins, He would punish us, and would not then be unjust to us in the least.»²

Allāh (ﷻ) is Most Great and Sublime, and His favors upon us are so countless that He deserves from us total obedience, constant remembrance, and perpetual gratitude. But no human can maintain this without slackening. Therefore, no person's deeds can be sufficient to save him from Hell and admit him to *Jannah*.

If Allāh (ﷻ) were to treat us only by His justice, He would then punish us all without being unfair to us. However, Allāh (ﷻ) decided to treat us with His mercy and favors, granting forgiveness to those who repent from their sins.³

The above discussion makes it possible to understand the meaning of the following two *āyāt*:



1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by Ibn Hibbān, Abū Nu'aym, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 3200).

3 This paragraph is paraphrased from *Sharḥ ut-Tahāwīyyah* as in *al-Minḥat ul-Ilāhiyyah* p. 319.

«وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا: "هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ." وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ
 سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا: "هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ." قُلْ: "كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ، فَمَالِ
 هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا؟" ﴿٧٨﴾ مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ
 حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ، وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنَ نَفْسِكَ. وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ
 لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا، وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٧٩﴾ النساء ٧٨-٧٩

«If good comes to them, they say, "This is from Allāh." And if evil befalls them, they say, "This is from you (O Muḥammad)." Say, "All things are from Allāh." So what is the matter with those people that they can hardly understand any statement? What comes to you of good is from Allāh, but what comes to you of evil is from yourself. And We have sent you as a messenger to people, and sufficient is Allāh as Witness.»¹

In the first *āyah*, Allāh (ﷻ) expresses that both good and evil come from Him. This refers to things like victory and defeat, strength and weakness, fertility and drought, and so on. All of these arise from Allāh's will and creation. In the second *āyah*, "good" refers to Allāh's (ﷻ) favors on us, whereas "evil" refers to the evil outcome of our sins, which we have discussed above.

WE ARE ONLY RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT WE CAN DO

It is impossible that Allāh (ﷻ) would require from us acts that we cannot do and then punish us for our failure. This would contradict His justice and mercy.

Rather, Allāh (ﷻ) only holds us accountable for things that are within our capability. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

1 *An-Nisā* 4:78-79.

﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا﴾ البقرة ٢٨٦

«Allāh does not burden a person beyond his capacity.»¹

Religious obligations are meant to facilitate rather than complicate our life. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ﴾ البقرة ١٨٥

«Allāh intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship.»²

And Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿هُوَ أَحَبَّابِكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ﴾ الحج ٧٨

«He has chosen you (O Muslims) and has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty.»³

A responsible person may sometimes be in a situation that involuntarily prevents him from fulfilling his responsibility. In such a situation, Allāh (ﷻ) does not hold him accountable either.

‘Alī and Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنهما) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«رُفِعَ الْقَلَمُ عَنْ ثَلَاثَةٍ: عَنِ النَّائِمِ حَتَّى يَسْتَيْقِظَ، وَعَنِ

الصَّبِيِّ حَتَّى يَشِبَّ، وَعَنِ الْمَعْتُوهِ حَتَّى يَعْقِلَ.»

«The pen (of accountability) is held off three individuals:

- a) a sleeping person — until he wakes up,
- b) a youngster — until he reaches adulthood (or

1 Al-Baqarah 2:286.

2 Al-Baqarah 2:185.

3 Al-Hajj 22:78.

- puberty),
 c) and an insane person — until he regains his
 sanity.> ¹

Ibn ‘Abbās and Thawbān (رضي الله عنهما) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَجَاوَزَ عَنْ أُمَّتِي: الْخَطَأَ، وَالنَّسْيَانَ، وَمَا أَسْتُكْرَهُوا عَلَيْهِ.»

«Indeed, Allāh overlooks for my *Ummah* their (involuntary) errors, forgetting, and whatever they are forced to do.> ²

Therefore, Allāh’s (ﷻ) commands and prohibitions apply only to what we can really do. A person who disobeys Allāh while in a state of ignorance, forgetfulness, or compulsion, is not blameworthy or accountable for that.

DEEDS ARE BY THEIR CONCLUSION

We should always strive to do good and avoid evil. If we do this with sincerity and submission to Allāh (ﷻ), we hope that our life will be concluded with good deeds that will, *in shā’a ‘Llāh*, qualify us to enter *Jannah*.

Sahl Bin Sa’d as-Sā’idī (رضي الله عنه) reported that in one of the Muslims’ battles against the pagans, a particular member of the Muslim army fought so well that some of the *ṣaḥābah* said to the Prophet (ﷺ), “None of us has accomplished as much as did so-and-so today!” But they were shocked to hear the Prophet (ﷺ) say, «أما إنه من أهل النار.» «Indeed, he is one of the people of the Fire.> Some of the *ṣaḥābah* thought, “Who among us can then go to *Jannah* if this man went to the Fire?” One of them decided to

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Irwā’ ul-Ghalīl* no. 297 and *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi’* no. 3512-3514).

2 Recorded by Ibn Mājah, al-Bayhaqī, and aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*). Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Irwā’ ul-Ghalīl* no. 82, *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi’* no. 3515, and *al-Mishkāt* no. 6248).

watch that man closely in the subsequent fighting. So he followed him and saw him get wounded, after which the man killed himself with his own sword. The *ṣahābī* went back to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him of what he saw. The other *ṣahābah* were amazed and relieved to hear this, and the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن الرجل ليعمل الزمن الطويل بعمل أهل الجنة، فيما يبدو للناس،

وهو من أهل النار، وإن الرجل ليعمل الزمن الطويل بعمل أهل النار،

فيما يبدو للناس، وهو من أهل الجنة. وإنما الأعمال بالخواتيم.»

«Indeed, for a long time, a man would do the deeds of the people of *Jannah* —as it appears to the people— but he is (ultimately) from the people of the Fire. And indeed, for a long time, a man would do the deeds of the people of the Fire —as it appears to the people— but he is from the people of *Jannah*. Indeed, deeds are only by their conclusion.»¹

This *hadīth* indicates that sincerity is vital for our deeds to be acceptable. A person may appear to people to be good and righteous while he lacks the sincerity needed to save him from Hell. On the other hand, a person may live sinfully most of his life, but his heart may house the sincerity and repentance to Allāh that are needed to save him. The final abode of both types of individuals may be revealed at the conclusion of their life.

SUMMARY

From the above discussion, we conclude that:

1. We are accountable for our voluntary deeds.

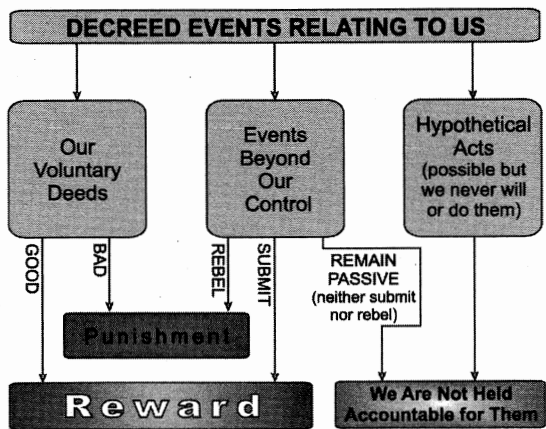
¹ Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2. We are accountable for the way we react to events that occur to us beyond our control:

a) We are rewardable if we accept them with submission to Allāh's will and expectation of His rewards.

b) We are liable to punishment if we object to Allāh's decree and rebel against His will.

c) We are liable to neither punishment nor reward if we neither rebel nor seek reward for such events.



3. We are not accountable for hypothetical deeds, which are deeds that are theoretically possible to do, but we never do them.

Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

Questions and Exercises (Use extra sheets as needed)

1. Discuss four types of things relating to people that Allāh (ﷻ) decrees and creates. Support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah. (12 points)

1
2
3
4

2. Explain the two meanings of Allāh's "Will". Support your answer with examples from the Qur'ān. (6 points)

1
2

3. Explain why it is not possible to violate Allāh's will. (3 points)

--

4. Discuss six benefits that we derive from the table comparing between Allāh's "optional" legislation and "forceful" creation. (12 points)

1
2
3
4
5
6

5. Briefly explain why Allāh permits what He hates. (5 points)

--

6. Discuss how should our attitude be toward the events, good or bad, that Allāh (ﷻ) creates. (4 points)

1
2

7. "We have a free will to act." Discuss this statement and support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān. (4 points)

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8. "Allāh's will encompasses our will." Discuss this statement and support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān. (4 points)

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9. Explain the apparent conflict between *al-An'ām* 107 and *al-An'ām* 148. (4 points)

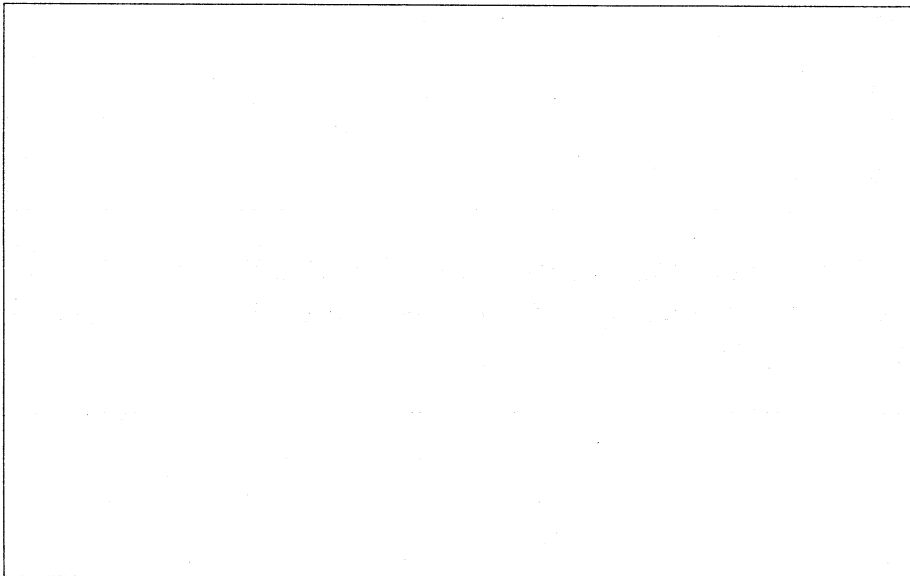
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10. May we use *Qadar* to explain disasters, and may we use it to justify sinning? (4 points)

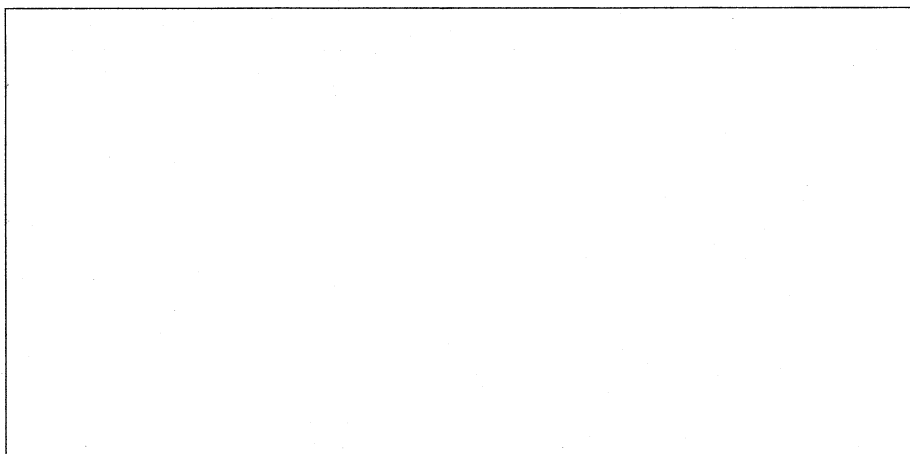
11. Referring to the discussion of will and ability, explain how there is no conflict between our freedom of choice and Allāh's decree. (4 points)

12. "Allāh guides those who deserve guidance, and misguides those who do not." Explain this statement and support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān. (4 points)

13. "Our deeds cannot equal the prize of *Jannah*." Explain this statement and support your answer with a diagram and with texts from the Qur'ān an Sunnah. (6 points)



14. Looking back at *an-Nisā'* 78-79, explain how, in one case, Allāh (ﷻ) expresses that both good and evil are from Him, and in the other case that good is from Him and evil is from us. (4 points)



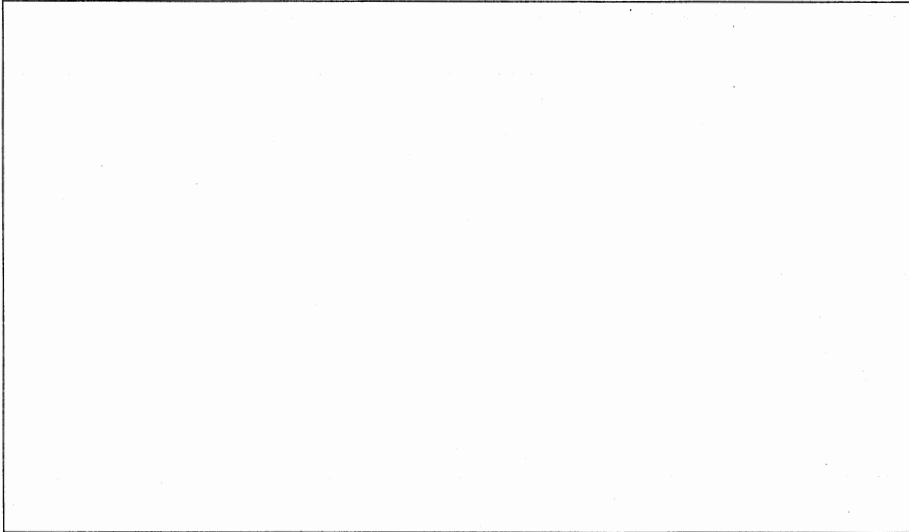
15. "We are only responsible for what we CAN do." Referring back to our discussion of this principle, mention the three states in which we are not responsible for our actions. Support your answer with a text from the Sunnah. (6 points)

1
2
3

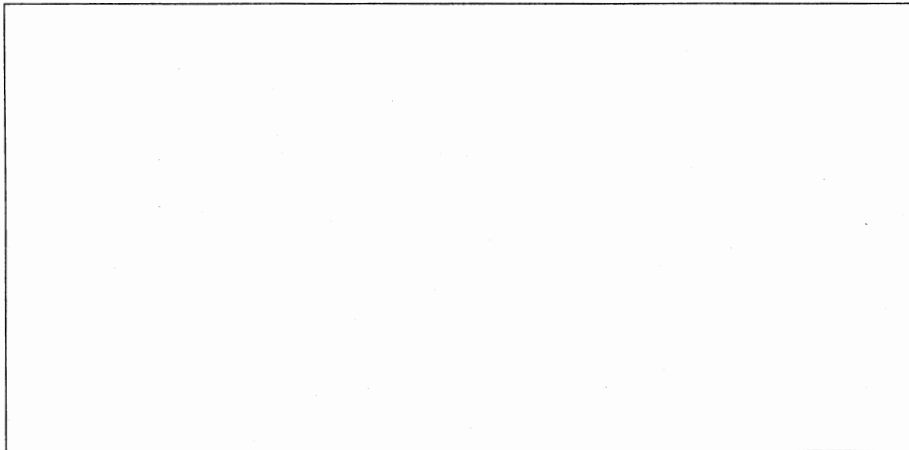
16. Using the statement in Question 15, refutes the claim that Allāh (ﷻ) forces us to disobey Him. (4 points)

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17. Why would the brave fighter in the *ḥadīth* on page 116 be in the Fire? (4 points)



18. How is it possible to get a reward out of events that are beyond our control? (4 points)



CHAPTER 6

DEVIATIONS

Introduction

DEVIATIONS ARE PART OF ALLĀH'S PLAN

Allāh (ﷻ) ordained that there will always be deviations from His right Path — deviations that corrupt people's beliefs and practices.

Allāh's Path is well-illuminated, clear, easy, and straight — leading directly to *Jannah*.

Deviating paths, on the other hand, are crooked, obscure, and dead-ended. They usually start from the correct Path. Yet, they deflect away from it and follow an extreme direction. They are promoted and adorned by numerous human and *jinn* devils, claiming that they lead to prosperity and happiness. In reality, however, they lead to nothing but destruction and loss.

Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh and 'Abullāh Bin Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) once drew a long straight line on the ground and said to his companions, « هذا سبيل الله. » **«This is Allāh's Path.»** The Prophet (ﷺ) then drew short and crooked lines on both sides of the first line and said:

« هذه سُبُلٌ، على كل سبيل منها شيطانٌ يدعو إليه. »

«These are other paths, each path having a devil that invites (people) to it.»

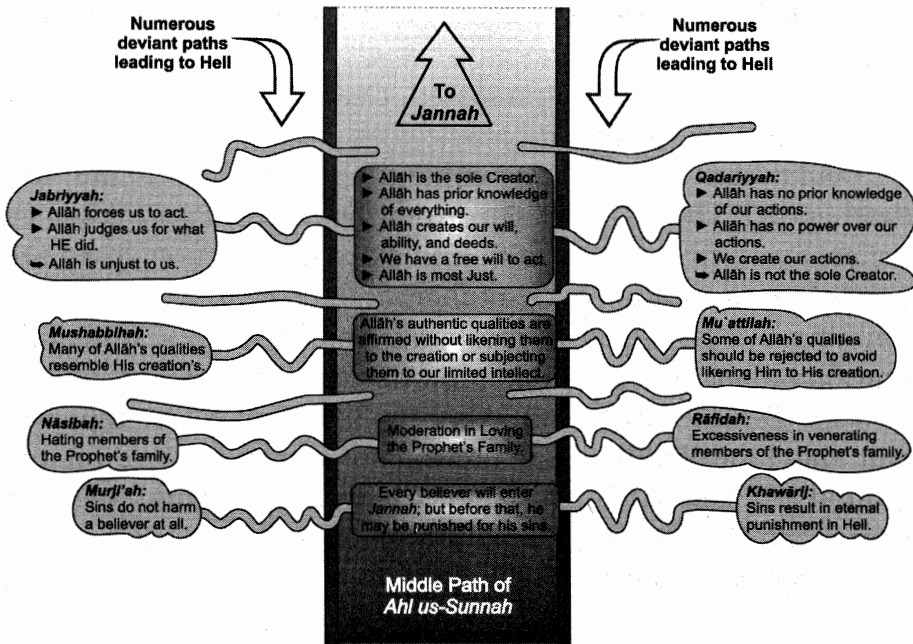
The Prophet (ﷺ) then recited:

«وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ، وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ

بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ. ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾ الأنعام

«(Among your Lord's commands is that,) "This is My Path, straight: follow it, and do not follow others paths, lest they lead you astray from His Path." Thus has He instructed you that you may achieve *taqwā*.»^{1, 2}

In the following diagram, we portray the above *ḥadīth* and include a few specific examples of dogmatic deviations.



DEVIATIONS IN THE CREED OF QADAR

Among the extreme paths of deviation that we present in the above diagram are those relating to the belief in *Qadar*. In this

1 *Al-An'ām* 6:153.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*as-Sunnah* nos. 16, 17, and *at-Ta'liqat ul-Ḥisān* no. 6).

chapter, we briefly discuss the two major groups that deviated from the correct belief in *Qadar*: *Qadariyyah* and *Jabriyyah*.

These two groups started in the early centuries of Islām. But this does not mean that their beliefs are now extinct. To the contrary, some of them are still held by many Muslims today — though not labeled by *Qadariyyah* and *Jabriyyah*! This makes it imperative to understand and refute those beliefs.

In the following two sections, we present a description of *Qadariyyah* and *Jabriyyah*. From this description, it should become clear how to refute their doctrines by the earlier discussions in this book. Yet, we find it helpful here to present brief and summarized refutations for the sake of completeness.

Qadariyyah

DESCRIPTION

Qadariyyah is a deviant group that rejected Allāh's *Qadar*, especially in relation to people's wills and actions. The name "*Qadariyyah*" means "those who relate to *Qadar*". This name could be thought to mean "the supporters of the belief in *Qadar*", which is the opposite of their truth. A more descriptive name that the 'ulamā' apply to them is "*al-Qadariyyat un-Nufāt*" (Group that Denies *Qadar*).

Qadariyyah arrived at their false beliefs by mixing right with wrong while reasoning along the following lines:

1. Humans have full power over their actions and complete freedom of choice.
2. If Allāh is the Creator of everything, including human actions, humans cannot be accountable for their actions. In other words, it is not possible to reconcile between the humans' freedom of choice and that they are accountable for their deeds that Allāh created.

3. Texts indicating Allāh's general and all-embracing will and creation must then be restricted to exclude human actions. Allāh cannot have prior will, choice, or creation in regard to people's actions.
4. Therefore, a person has independent will and ability in what he does, and Allāh's will and ability have no effect on him. In other words, people are independent in creating their own actions!

OUTCOME OF QADARIYYAH'S BELIEFS

From the above description, we see that *Qadariyyah*, in effect, attribute weakness and incompetence to Allāh (ﷻ). Their belief that He does not create people's deeds implies that there must be other creators besides Him! Thus, in their wrong attempt to exalt Allāh (ﷻ) above injustice, they end up ascribing to him what is worse.

Furthermore, some of the extreme *Qadariyyah* openly say that Allāh (ﷻ) does not know what people do except after they do it, and that He did not write their deeds in the Preserved Slate, nor did He know who was going to obey or disobey Him.

THE PROPHET'S WARNING

Since *Qadariyyah* believe that Allāh (ﷻ) does not create our actions, there must be another creator of those actions — whether it is ourselves or someone else. Therefore, they set up partners besides Allāh in His creation. Because of this, the Prophet (ﷺ) called them the *Majūs* (Magians) of the Muslim *Ummah*. 'Abdullāh Bin 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«القدرية مجوس هذه الأمة. إن مرضوا فلا تعودوهم،

وإن ماتوا فلا تشهدوهم.»

«The rejecters of *Qadar* are the Magians of this (Muslim) *Ummah*. Do not visit them when they are sick, and do not witness their funerals.»¹

Believing that Allāh does not create the people's deeds made them resemble the Magians who believed in dual gods: one creating good and the other creating evil.

This denial of *Qadar* was one of the first ideological deviations that appeared among the Muslims. Whether it was the influence of alien dogmas and philosophies, or the intricate nature of this pillar of faith, it produced a serious havoc in the Muslim *Ummah* — even while some of the Prophet's (ﷺ) companions were still alive.

The Prophet (ﷺ) foretold that soon there were to be those who deny *Qadar* among the Muslims. Anas and others (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أخاف على أمتي من بعدي تكذيباً بالقدَر، وتصديقاً بالنُّجوم.»

«I fear for my *Ummah* after me the denial of *Qadar* and belief in the stars.»²

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أُخِّرَ الكلامُ في القَدَرِ لِشِرَارِ أمتي في آخِرِ الزمان.»

«Speaking (falsely) about *Qadar* is postponed now, and will be done by the worst people of my *Ummah* in the late generations.»³

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 103).

2 Recorded by Abū Ya'lā, Ibn 'Asākir (from Abū Miḥjan), and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1127 and *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* nos. 214, 215).

3 Recorded by al-Bazzār, Ibn Abī 'Āṣim, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1124 and *as-Sunnah* no. 350).

As we discussed early in this book, denying *Qadar* is no slight act of disbelief. Rather, it is equivalent to rejecting the whole faith. Therefore, it deserves a great punishment in this life, in addition to the punishment of the hereafter. ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«يَكُونُ فِي أُمَّتِي خَسْفٌ وَمَسْحٌ، وَذَلِكَ فِي الْمُكَذِّبِينَ بِالْقَدَرِ.»

«My *Ummah* will witness earthquakes and transmutation (into animals) befalling those who deny *Qadar*.»¹

REFUTATION BY SHAF (RELIGIOUS TEXTS)

In this subsection, we refute *Qadariyyah's* misconceptions by clear texts from the Qur’ān and Sunnah.

1. Allāh (ﷻ) clearly indicates that He is the Creator of everything, including people’s deeds. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«اللَّهُ خَلِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ» الزمر ٦٢

«Allāh is the Creator of all things.»²

2. All things in the world, including people’s deeds, happen by Allāh’s will. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says about fighting:

«وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَفْتَتَلُوا، وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ» البقرة ٢٥٣

«If Allāh had so willed, they would not have fought each other, but Allāh does what He wills.»³

1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be *hasan* by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 102).

2 *Az-Zumar* 39:62.

3 *Al-Baqarah* 2:253.

And Allāh (ﷻ) says about guidance:

«وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَأَتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدًى لَهَا، وَلَكِنْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ مِنِّي:
”لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ.“ ﴿السجدة ١٣﴾»

«If We had willed, We could have granted guidance to every soul. However, My decree will come to pass, “I will surely fill Hell with *jinn*s and people all together.”»¹

REFUTATION BY COMMON SENSE

In this subsection, we refute *Qadariyyah*'s misconceptions by simple common-sense principles.

1. The whole universe is owned by Allāh (ﷻ). Since the people are part of the universe, they are owned by Allāh (ﷻ) as well. An owned slave has no right to act in his owner's dominion without his permission and will.
2. There is no contradiction between a human's free will and choice and that he is constrained in various ways. For example, a driver on a highway may be constrained by the sides of the road, spacing of exits, construction areas, etc. Yet, he is responsible to follow the traffic signs and regulations, and will be liable to punishment if he does not.

Jabriyyah

DESCRIPTION

Jabriyyah (the Compulsionists) derive their name from the word “*Jabr*”, which means compulsion. *Jabriyyah* went to the opposite

1 *As-Sajdah* 32:13.

extreme of *Qadariyyah* by over-affirming *Qadar* to the extent of denying human will and choice and claiming that we are compelled by Allāh (ﷻ) to obey or disobey Him. A more descriptive name that the ‘*ulamā*’ apply to them is “*al-Qadariyyat ul-Muthbitah*” (Group that Over-Affirms *Qadar*).

Jabriyyah arrived at their false beliefs by mixing right with wrong while reasoning along the following lines:

1. Allāh is the Creator of everything, including people’s deeds.
2. There is no distinction between people’s actions that happen by their choice (such as eating) and their involuntary actions (such as shivering). They are all part of Allāh’s irresistible *Qadar*.
3. People have no choice or power over the actions they do. They are controlled without choice, like a helpless straw floating on water or a tree blown by the wind.
4. In reality, people do not perform their deeds, and ascribing actions to them is only symbolic. Saying, “he prayed”, “he fasted”, “he murdered”, or “he stole” is similar to saying “the sun rose”, “air moved”, or “rain fell”.
5. Allāh (ﷻ) is the only doer of everything in the universe. Therefore, any evil act or atrocity is truly and solely done by Him (ﷻ).
6. Allāh (ﷻ) holds people responsible for that over which they have no control, power, or choice.
7. Allāh (ﷻ) causes unnecessary trouble to humanity. He goes through the unnecessary task of trying and judging them for actions that they do not really perform and are beyond their control.

OUTCOME OF JABRIYYAH'S BELIEFS

From the above, we see that, in reality, *Jabriyyah* attribute injustice to their Lord (ﷻ). They accuse Him (ﷻ) of doing things in vain and without purpose. Consequently, they claim that the commands and prohibitions of the Most Wise are without wisdom. This totally demolishes the religion by undermining the purpose of revealing the books, sending the messengers, and calling to Allāh's Path!

REFUTATION BY SHAR (RELIGIOUS TEXTS)

In this subsection, we refute the *Jabriyyah's* misconceptions by clear texts from the Qur'an and Sunnah.

1. Allāh (ﷻ) affirms that people have a will and ability by which they act. For example, Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ.» آل عمران ١٥٢

«Among you are those who desire the worldly life and those who desire the hereafter.» ¹

And He (ﷻ) says:

«وَقُلْ: "الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ، فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ."» الكهف ٢٩

«Say, "This is the truth from your Lord, so whoever wills, let him believe; and whoever wills; let him disbelieve."» ²

2. Allāh (ﷻ) attributes the people's deeds to them (and not to Himself). For example, He (ﷻ) says:

1 *Āl 'Imrān* 3:152.

2 *Al-Kahf* 18:29.

«مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ، وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا،

وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٤٦﴾ فصلت ٤٦

«Whoever does good, it is for himself; and whoever does wrong, it is against himself. And your Lord never does the least wrong to His creatures.» ¹

3. Allāh (ﷻ) indicates that His messengers came with messages that established the evidence against people:

﴿رُسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ، لِّئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ

بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ، وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٦٥﴾ النساء ١٦٥

«The messengers bring glad news (to the righteous) and warn (the disobedient), leaving for people no argument against Allāh after the messengers. Allāh is ever Mighty and Wise.» ²

This clearly prevents justifying disobedience with *Qadar* — which is equivalent to saying that Allāh's messengers have no effect because guidance and misguidance are already decreed.

4. Allāh (ﷻ) indicates in numerous *āyāt* that He will punish the disobedient. This would be unfair or untrue if disobedience could be justified with *Qadar*.

5. Allāh (ﷻ) indicates that He only requires from us what is within our capacity. For example, He (ﷻ) says:

﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا﴾ البقرة ٢٨٦

1 *Fuṣṣilat* 41:46.

2 *An-Nisā'* 4:165.

«Allāh does not burden a person beyond his capacity.»¹

If we were responsible for actions that we are forced to do, we would be burdened beyond our capacity. This would then question Allāh's truthfulness or His justice — exalted be He above such fallacies.

REFUTATION BY COMMON SENSE

In this subsection, we refute the *Jabriyyah's* misconceptions by simple common-sense principles.

1. We know that we have a will and ability by which we act or refrain from acting. We can distinguish between our voluntary deeds, such as eating, drinking, walking, buying, and selling, and our involuntary acts such as shivering, sneezing, tripping, etc.

2. Our will to act, which always precedes our action, can never rely on knowing Allāh's *Qadar*, because *Qadar* is a hidden secret that no person knows before it happens. Therefore, we cannot justify our actions by *Qadar* because we do not know it.

3. When we have to choose between two options in our worldly affairs, we are keen to choose that which is more pleasant and agreeable to us. We never choose what is less agreeable under the pretext of *Qadar*. How, then, could we choose in our religious affairs what is disagreeable (Hell) over what is agreeable (*Jannah*) under the pretext of *Qadar*?

As an example, imagine standing before two roads, one leading to a peaceful land of security and good living, and the other leading to a perilous land of disorder and fear. Which of the two roads would we take? We would certainly take the road

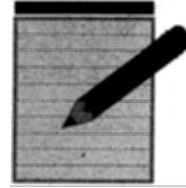
1 *Al-Baqarah* 2:286.

leading to the peaceful land.

Similarly, a sick person chooses to take a medicine that he does not desire, and avoids foods that he desires, in pursuit of health and cure. He does not refuse to take the medicine, nor does he insist on eating the harmful food under the pretext of *Qadar*.

4. We would never accept the excuse of *Qadar* from those who overstep our boundaries and harm us. How then could we justify overstepping Allāh's boundaries by *Qadar*?

As an example, imagine a criminal attacking us, inflicting harm on our family and property, and then justifying his atrocity by *Qadar*. Instead of accepting his excuse, we would surely try to have him punished most severely. But if we believed as the *Jabriyyah* do, we would do absolutely nothing because, after all, we would say that the poor fellow had no choice in what he did!

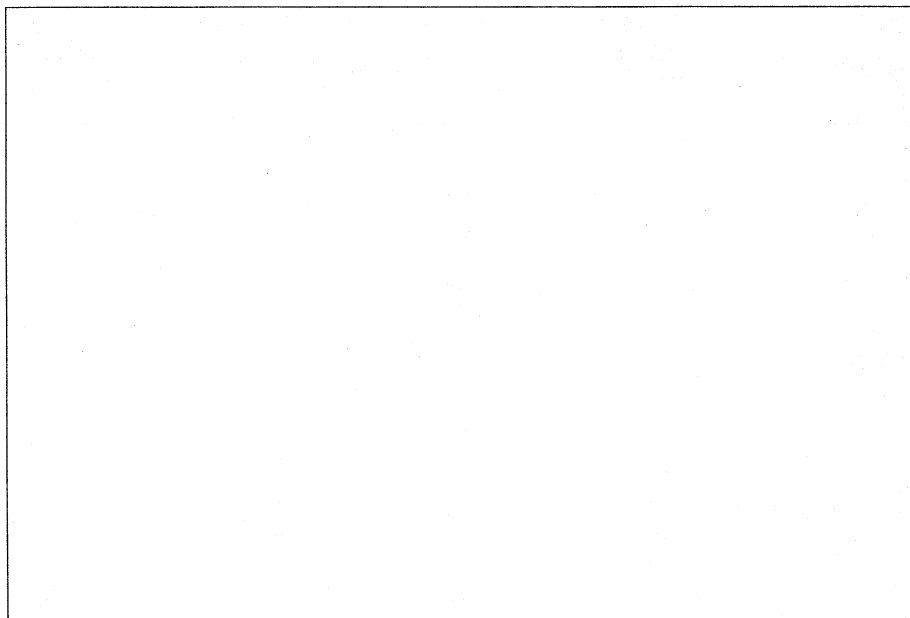
Questions and Exercises (Use extra sheets as needed)

1. Referring back to the *ḥadīth* on page 125, recreate the picture that the Prophet (ﷺ) drew on the ground as described in the *ḥadīth*. (2 points)

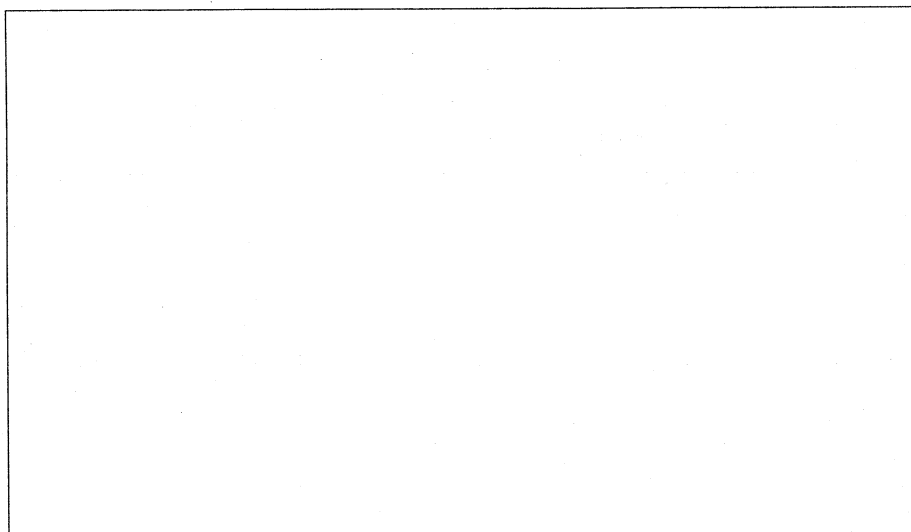
2. In the following table, briefly describe the Middle Path of Islām and two deviant paths in regard to three issues. (2 points)

Middle Path	Extreme Path 1	Extreme Path 2
1		
2		
3		

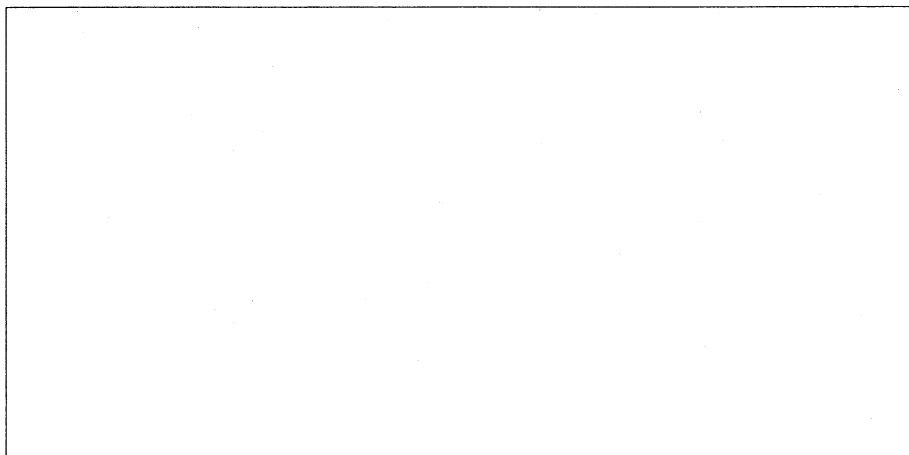
3. Define *Qadariyyah* and describe how they arrived at their wrong belief in *Qadar*. (6 points)



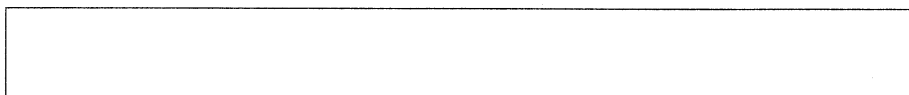
4. Discuss some of the ugly outcome of *Qadariyyah's* wrong belief in *Qadar*. (4 points)



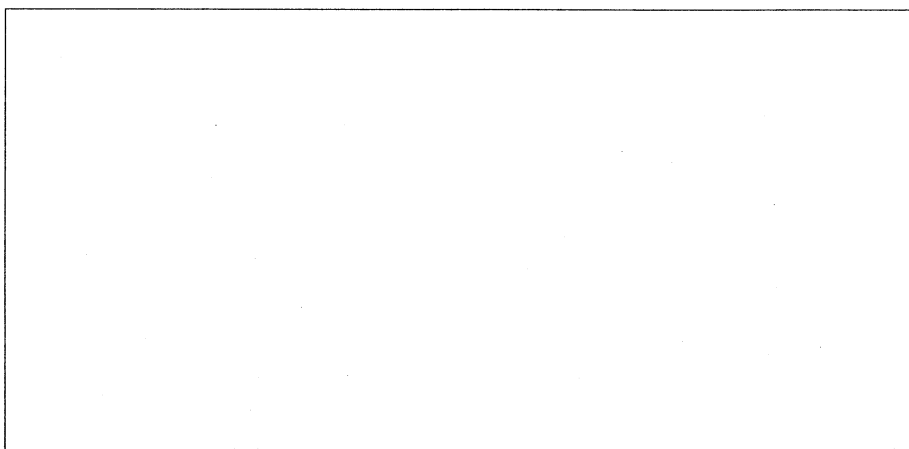
5. Discuss the Prophet's (ﷺ) warnings against those who deny *Qadar*. (6 points)



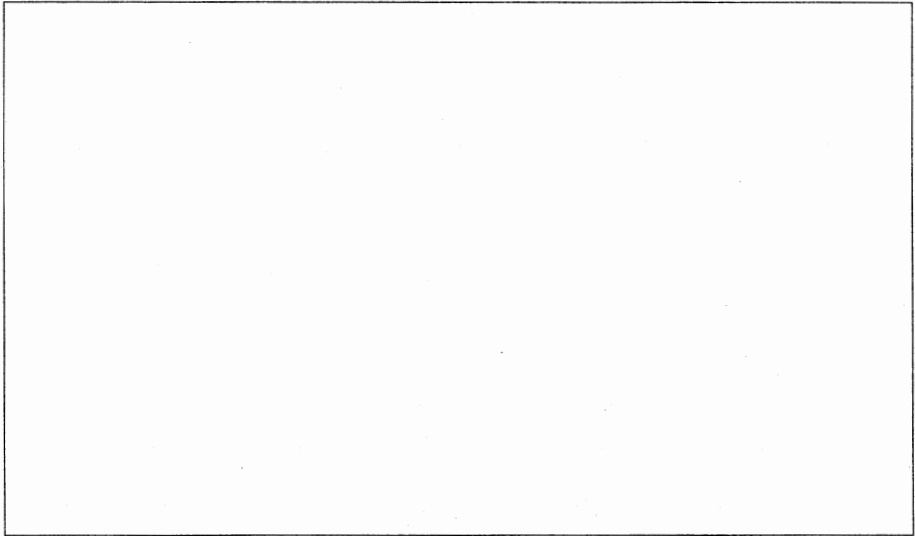
6. The Prophet's (ﷺ) likened those who deny *Qadar* to Magians. What is the similarity between the two? (2 points)



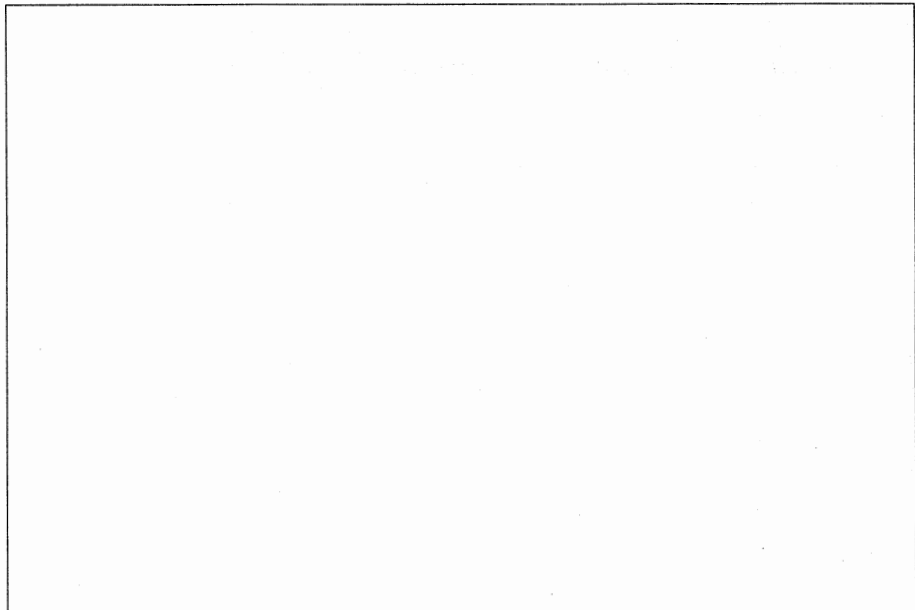
7. Present a refutation of *Qadariyyah* based on texts from the Qur'ān. (6 points)



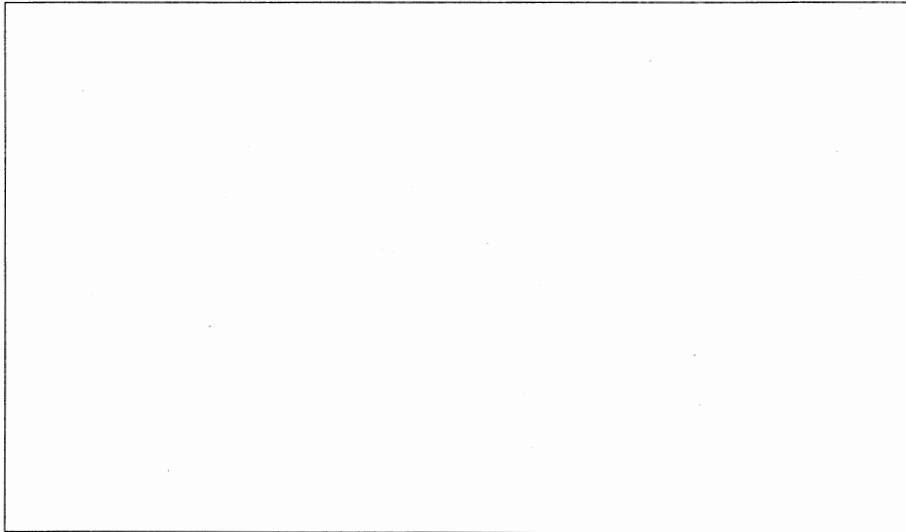
8. Present a refutation of *Qadariyyah* based on common sense.
(6 points)



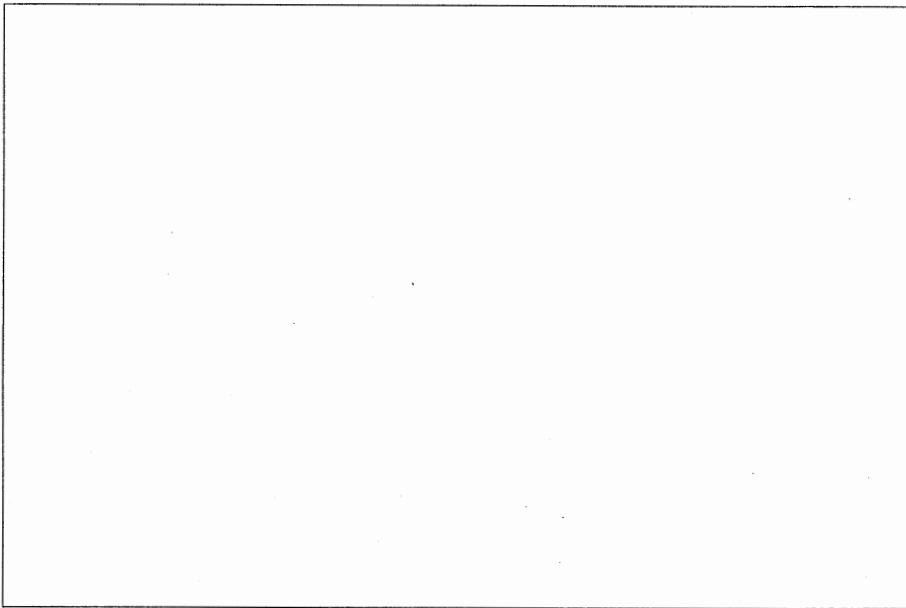
9. Define *Jabriyyah* and describe how they arrived at their wrong belief in *Qadar*. (6 points)



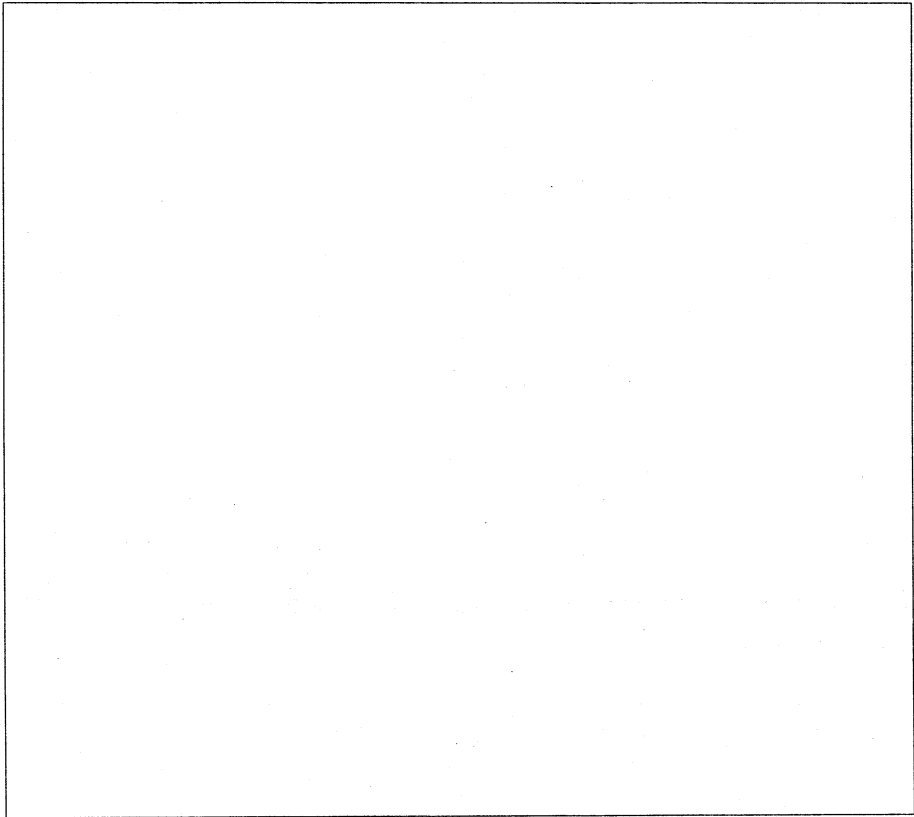
10. Discuss some of the ugly outcome of *Jabriyyah*'s wrong belief in *Qadar*. (4 points)



11. Present a refutation of *Jabriyyah* based on texts from the Qur'ān. (6 points)



12. Present a refutation of *Jabriyyah* based on common sense.
(6 points)



CHAPTER 7

CLARIFYING MISCONCEPTIONS

In this chapter, we answer questions relating to some issues of *Qadar* that are often misunderstood or misinterpreted. A good part of the following discussion can be concluded from our earlier discussions of *Qadar*, but we repeat it here for easy reference and completeness.

I. Argument Between Two Prophets

A famous *ḥadīth* often referenced by *Jabriyyah* is that of the argument between Ādam (ﷺ) and Mūsā (ﷺ). In this section, we show that this *ḥadīth*, when properly understood, conforms well with the correct creed of *Qadar* that we explained earlier.

TEXT OF THE ḤADĪTH

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«احتج آدم وموسى عند ربهما، فحج آدم موسى. قال موسى: "أنت آدم الذي خلقك الله بيده، ونفخ فيك من روحه، وأسجد لك ملائكته، وأسكنك في جنّته، ثم أهبطت الناس بخطيئتك إلى الأرض؟" فقال آدم: "أنت موسى الذي أصطفاك الله برسالته وبكلامه، وأعطاك الألواح فيها تبيان كل شيء، وقرّبك نجياً، فبكم وجدت الله كتب التوراة قبل أن أخلق؟" قال موسى: "بأربعين عاماً." قال آدم: "فهل وجدت فيها: ﴿وَعَصَى آدَمُ رَبَّهُ، فَغَوَى﴾ طه ١٢١؟" قال: "نعم." قال: "أفتلومني

على أن عملتُ عملاً كتبهُ اللهُ عليَّ أن أعمَلهُ قبلَ أن يخلُقني بأربعين سنة؟“ فحجَّ آدمُ موسى - صلوات اللهُ عليهما. «

«When Ādam (ﷺ) and Mūsā (ﷺ) were with their Lord ¹, they had an argument that Ādam won. Mūsā said to Ādam, “Is it not you, Ādam, whom Allāh created with His hand, blew life into you with His Spirit (Jibrīl), made His angels prostrate to you, and gave you residence in His Garden? Why, then, did you sin and cause the people to descend to earth?” Ādam replied, “Is it not you, Mūsā, whom Allāh favored with His message and words, gave you the tablets that contained a clarification of all things, and brought you near to Him to confide to you? From what you learnt, how long before my creation did Allāh write the Tawrāh (Torah)?” Mūsā replied, “Forty years.” Ādam asked, “Did you find written in it, «And thus Ādam disobeyed his Lord and erred» ²?” He replied, “Yes.” Ādam said, “Do you then blame me for a deed that Allāh prescribed for me to do forty years before my creation?” Thus Ādam defeated Mūsā (in argument).» ³

EXPLANATION

From a first look at this *ḥadīth*, some people may think that Ādam justifies his sin by *Qadar*. However, it is impossible for a noble prophet like him to use the argument of ignorant people. We show the correct understanding of this argument through the following points:

- 1 This means that this argument possibly took place after both noble prophets died and their souls were with their Lord in the heavens.
- 2 *Ṭahā* 20:121.
- 3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

1. Ādam (ﷺ) disobeyed Allāh (ﷻ) by eating from the prohibited tree.
2. Ādam's disobedience was the reason that prompted the descendance of humans from Paradise to earth.
3. Ādam repented to Allāh, and Allāh (ﷻ) accepted his repentance and forgave him.
4. Mūsā knew all the above three facts and, therefore, cannot be blaming Ādam for a sin that Allāh forgave.
5. Ādam also knew that Allāh (ﷻ) forgave him, so he cannot be justifying his sin by that it was decreed before his birth.
6. Therefore, Mūsā must be blaming Ādam for the disaster that resulted from his sin, which is the descendance to earth.
7. As for Ādam, his response is to remind Mūsā that disasters are out of people's hand and should be accepted without objection to Allāh's decree. ¹

II. Is *Qadar* Changeable?

QUESTION

Some texts in the Qur'an and Sunnah suggest that Allāh's decree may be changeable. For example, Salmān al-Fārisī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

« لا يردُّ القضاءَ إلاَّ الدعاءُ، ولا يزيدُ في العمرِ إلاَّ البرُّ. »

1 We arrive at this understanding through many great 'ulamā', especially Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله عليه), and Ibn ul-Qayyim (رحمته الله عليه) in his book, "*Shifā' ul-'Atīl*."

«Nothing deflects the Decree like supplication, and nothing extends the life-span like kindness (to parents).»¹

If *Qadar* has already been decided and recorded, how can supplication change it? And if our life-span has been decided before our birth, how can it be extended?

ANSWER

The answer to this and other similar issues is as follows:

1. *Qadar* that is recorded in the Preserved Slate is fixed. It never changes, and nothing can override it or compete against it. Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

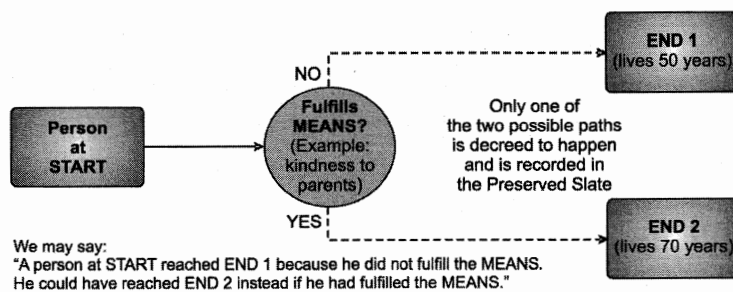
«العينُ حق. فلو كان شيءٌ سابقٌ القدرَ سبقتهُ العينُ.»

«The evil eye is true. If anything were to compete against *Qadar*, it would be the evil eye.»²

2. There are things that Allāh (ﷻ) made means (or causes) for other things. If the means are satisfied, the ends (or results) follow. And Allāh’s *Qadar* includes both means and ends: It specifies that an end will happen because its means will be fulfilled, or that it will not happen because its means will not be fulfilled.
4. When a means is fulfilled, it only changes what Allāh (ﷻ) would otherwise have decreed without the presence of the means. This is depicted, together with an example, in the following diagram.

1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī at-Ṭaḥāwī, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 154).

2 Recorded by Muslim.



5. According to some *'ulamā'*¹, Allāh does not tell the angels all what will happen. So their records may initially contain information that will later change to agree with what is in the Preserved Slate. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿يَمْحُوا اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّتُ، وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾ الرعد ٣٩

«Allāh erases what He wills or confirms, and with Him is the Mother of the Book.»²

Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (رحمته) said:

“Whatever is part of Allāh’s preceding knowledge cannot change. What is possible to change or alter is what appears of a person’s actions. It is possible that this relates to part of the knowledge of the guardian angels who are in charge of a human — erasing or reconfirming may happen to this knowledge, such as increasing or decreasing the life-span. But it is not possible to erase or reconfirm what is in Allāh’s knowledge.”³

1 See, for example, Ibn Taymiyyah’s *Majmū’ ul-Fatāwā* vol. 8, pp. 517, 540.

2 *Ar-Ra’d* 13:39.

3 *Fath ul-Bārī* 11:488.

EXAMPLES

1. A particular person's life-span may be fifty years under normal conditions. If he is kind to his parents, his life span may be increased to seventy years. Thus the "means" of kindness to parents causes the "possible" life span to increase to the "recorded" life span.
2. A particular person may be subject to a certain calamity under normal conditions. If he supplicates to Allāh, he may be spared from that calamity. Thus the "means" of supplication causes the "possible" calamity to be deflected in the "recorded" *qadar*.
3. A more common example is that eating is a means to survival. If a person cannot find anything to eat, he starves to death. Thus the "means" of eating causes the "possible" *qadar* of starvation to be replaced by the "recorded" *qadar* of survival.
4. Just as Allāh (ﷻ) has ordained sickness, He ordained the cure for it, and both are part of Allāh's *Qadar*. Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الدواء من القَدَر، وهو يَنْفَعُ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى.»

«Medication is part of *Qadar*; it benefits with Allāh's permission.»¹

Commenting on this and other similar texts, Ibn ul-Qayyim (رحمته الله) said:

“Some people think that seeking treatment does not benefit a person because it has already been destined whether or not he will be cured. Since

1 Recorded by at-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*), Abū Nu'aym, and Ibn us-Sunnī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 3415, 3416).

sickness happens by Allāh's decree, they think that it cannot be thwarted or stopped. The Prophet (ﷺ) refuted this most convincingly by indicating that medications, *ruqyahs* ¹, and preventive measures are all part of Allāh's *Qadar*, and none of them violates it. Rather, His *Qadar* can be thwarted by His *Qadar*." ²

5. The above discussion should now make it easy to understand many texts of the Qur'ān and Sunnah that are obscure to some people. For example, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

صَدَقَةُ السَّرِّ تُطْفِئُ غَضَبَ الرَّبِّ، وَصَلَةُ الرَّحِمِ تَزِيدُ فِي الْعُمُرِ،
وَفِعْلُ الْمَعْرُوفِ يَبْقِي مَصَارِعَ السُّوءِ.»

«A secret *ṣadaqah* (charity) extinguishes the Lord's anger. Preserving kinship ties (by kindness) increases life-span. And rendering good to people protects from evil fatalities.» ³

‘UMAR’S UNDERSTANDING

A clear understanding of this issue is demonstrated by the great *ṣaḥābī* and Commander of the Believers, ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) once traveled to Shām. When he reached Sargh ⁴, Abū ‘Ubaydah Bin al-Jarrāḥ and other army commanders met him and warned him that a plague had

1 *Ruqyahs* are supplications or prayers that are said for protection or cure. A detailed discussion of this is available in our book: "Sickness, Regulations and Exhortations".

2 *Zād ul-Ma‘ād* vol. 4, pp. 14-15.

3 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī, Ibn ‘Asākir, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1908 and *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi‘* no. 3760).

4 A village in the southern part of Palestine near Ḥijāz.

befallen Shām. On hearing this, ‘Umar consulted with the early *muhājirūn* and *anṣār* who accompanied him. Both groups were divided in opinion between proceeding to Shām or returning to al-Madīnah. He then consulted with the elders of the Quraysh, and they all agreed that he should turn back and avoid exposing himself and those with him to the plague. Approving this opinion, ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) commanded the people to get ready for departure the following morning. Abū ‘Ubaydah (رضي الله عنه) approached ‘Umar and said, “Are you running away from Allāh’s decree?” ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) replied, “I wish that someone other than you had said this, O Abū ‘Ubaydah!” Then he added:

”نعم نفرُّ من قدرِ اللهِ إلى قدرِ اللهِ. أَرَأَيْتَ لو كانت لك إبلٌ، فهبطت
واديّاً له عُدوتان، إحداهما حَصْبَةٌ، والأخرى جَدْبَةٌ، أليس إن رعىتَ
الخصبةَ رعىتها بقدرِ اللهِ، إن رعىتَ الجدبةَ رعىتها بقدرِ اللهِ؟“

“Yes indeed, we run away from Allāh’s decree to Allāh’s decree. Imagine taking your camels into a valley with two sides: a fertile side and a dry one. Is it not that whether you have them graze on the fertile side or the dry side, all would be by Allāh’s decree?”¹

III. The Human *Fitrah*

Q1: WHY DOESN'T *FITRAH* GUARANTEE *JANNAH*?

Abū Hurayrah and al-Aswad Bin Sarī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كل مولود يولد على الفطرة حتى يُعرب عن لسانه.»

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

فأبواه يهودانه أو ينصرّانه أو يمجّسانه أو يمشركانه.»

«Every child is born in the pure *fiṭrah*¹ — until he is able to express himself. It is his parents who then make him Jew, Christian, Magian, or pagan.»

The Prophet (ﷺ) then recited:

﴿فَطَرَتِ اللَّهُ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا، لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ﴾ الروم ٣٠

«The pure nature according to which Allāh has created the people: There is no change in Allāh's creation.»^{2, 3}

Based on these texts, some people have the following misconception:

“If every human is born in a pure and clean nature, why is it decreed that some people will later enter Hell?”

ANSWER

The answer to this is as follows:

1. Allāh (ﷻ) creates a person free from wrong beliefs and inclinations, and receptive to good beliefs and inclinations. His *fiṭrah* is like a clean sheet of paper with preliminary good writing, ready to be filled either with more good or else with bad writing.⁴

1 *Fiṭrah* is the pure and clean nature according to which all people are born before they are influenced by their societies and upbringing.

2 *Ar-Rūm* 30:30.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

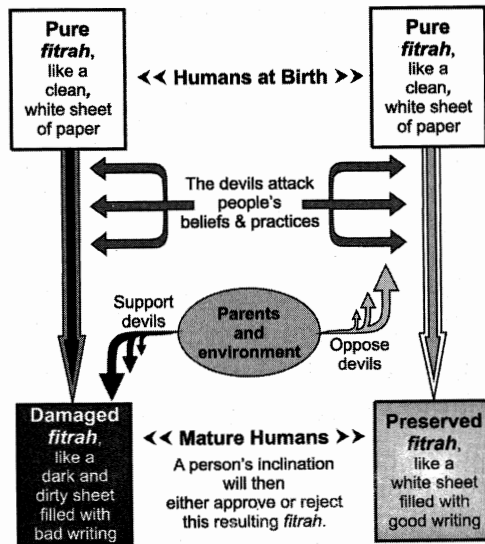
4 This comparison was approved by Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله), as reported by his

2. As a person starts growing, devils (of humans and *jinn*s) attack him to change his *fiṭrah*. This is expressed in the above *ḥadīth*, as well as the *ḥadīth* of ‘Iyāḍ Bin Ḥimār al-Mujāshī‘ī (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said that Allāh (ﷻ) told him:

”وَإِنِّي خَلَقْتُ عِبَادِي حُنَفَاءَ كُلَّهُمْ، وَإِنَّهُمْ أَتَتْهُمُ الشَّيَاطِينُ،
فَأَجْتَالَتْهُمُ عَنْ دِينِهِمْ، وَحَرَمْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا أَحَلَلْتُ لَهُمْ،
وَأَمَرْتُهُمْ أَنْ يُشْرِكُوا بِي مَا لَمْ أَنْزِلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا.“

“Indeed, I created my servants with pure natures, all of them. But indeed, the devils came to them, displaced them from their religion, prohibited for them what I made permissible, and commanded them to join with Me what I did not authorize.”¹

The following diagram depicts this meaning of *fiṭrah*:



student Ibn ul-Qayyim (رضي الله عنه) in *Shifa' ul-'Alil*, chap. 30, pp. 816-817.

1 Recorded by by Muslim.

3. The result is that some people reach maturity with a good *fiṭrah*. Their personal inclination toward good or evil will then either enhance their good *fiṭrah* or deform it.
4. Other people reach maturity with a deformed *fiṭrah* because of the bad influence of their environment and the attack of devils. Their personal inclination toward good or evil will then either clean their bad *fiṭrah* or deform it further.
5. Allāh (ﷻ) knows who among the misguided people are unwilling victims of their environment, and who among them have wicked natures that welcome corruption.
6. Allāh (ﷻ) will judge among the people with complete knowledge, wisdom, and justice.

Q2: WHAT IS THE FATE OF DECEASED CHILDREN?

We previously discussed (p. 25) that Allāh (ﷻ) knows the hypothetical. Part of this is His knowledge of what those who die in their childhood would have done had they lived to maturity. People often inquire:

“What is fate of these children? Will Allāh (ﷻ):

- a. Judge them according to His knowledge of their hypothetical actions,
- b. Admit them all to *Jannah* because they died on pure *fiṭrah*,
- c. Try them on Judgment Day,
- d. Or differentiate between Muslims’ children and pagans’ children?”

ANSWER

We answer the above question along the following points:

1. Allāh knows how every person would act in any given situation. In particular, He knows this with regard to children who die before reaching the age of accountability.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked about the fate of pagans' children who died before puberty. He replied:

«الله أعلم بما كانوا عاملين.»

«Allāh knows best what they would have done (had they lived).»¹

This, of course, is also true about Muslims' children who die before puberty. 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that after Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) once prayed *janāzah* (funeral prayer) for one of the *Anṣār's* children, she exclaimed:

«طوبى لهذا، عصفورٌ من عصافير الجنة، لم يعمل سوءاً.»

“Goodness awaits this child: He will be one of the birds of *Jannah* because he never committed a sin.”

Disapproving her conclusive statement, the Messenger (ﷺ) replied:

«أَوْغَيْرَ ذَلِكَ يَا عَائِشَةُ؟ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ الْجَنَّةَ وَخَلَقَ النَّارَ، فَخَلَقَ

لهذه أهلاً ولهذه أهلاً، خلقهم لهما وهم في أصلاب آبائهم.»

«Should you not have said other than this, O 'Ā'ishah? Indeed, Allāh (ﷻ) created *Jannah* and the Fire, and created the dwellers of each of them, designating them while they were still in

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

their forefathers' backbones.> ¹

As for the reason that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) admonished 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها), an-Nawawī (رحمته الله) said:

"There is a consensus among all worthy 'ulamā' that the Muslims' children who die (before puberty) will be in *Jannah* ². The interpretation of this *ḥadīth* is that he (ﷺ) prevented her from making a hasty judgment without evidence, or that he possibly said this before he knew that the Muslims' children will be in *Jannah*." ³

And as-Sindī said:

"He (ﷺ) admonished her for affirming that a specific child will enter *Jannah*, because the truth of its parents' *īmān* is a matter of *ghayb* known with certitude only by Allāh (ﷻ)." ⁴

2. Allāh does not show injustice to anyone. He **will not judge any person**, whether he died as a child or adult, **by His mere knowledge of that person's inclination**. Allāh (ﷻ) gives every human a fair chance to act and prove or disprove himself.

As for those who do not get their fair chance in the first life, Allāh (ﷻ) will give them an alternative chance in the next life. On Judgment Day, Allāh will try them, allowing them to act freely in a way that will conform with His knowledge, and that will make them deserve their appropriate abodes.

Anas, Aboo Sa'eed, and others (رضي الله عنهم) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by Muslims, an-Nasā'ī, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

2 We discuss this further below.

3 *Sharḥu Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.

4 Commentary on *an-Nasā'ī*.

«يُؤْتَى بِأَرْبَعَةٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ: بِالْمَوْلُودِ، وَبِالْمَعْتُوهِ، وَبِمَن مَاتَ فِي الْفِتْرَةِ، وَالشَّيْخِ الْفَانِي، كُلُّهُمْ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِحُجَّتِهِ. فَيَقُولُ الرَّبُّ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى لِعُنُقِ مِنَ النَّارِ: "أَبْرُزْ". فَيَقُولُ لَهُمْ: "إِنِّي كُنْتُ أُبْعَثُ إِلَى عِبَادِي رُسُلًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ، وَإِنِّي رَسُولُ نَفْسِي إِلَيْكُمْ. أَدْخُلُوا هَذِهِ." فَيَقُولُ مَنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِ الشَّقَاءُ: "يَا رَبِّ! أَيْنَ نَدْخُلُهَا وَمِنْهَا كُنَّا نَفِرُّ؟" فَيَقُولُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى: "أَنْتُمْ لِرُسُلِي أَشَدُّ تَكْذِيبًا وَمَعْصِيَةً." وَمَنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِ السَّعَادَةُ يَمْضِي فَيَقْتَحِمُ فِيهَا مُسْرِعًا. فَيَدْخُلُ هَوْلَاءِ الْجَنَّةِ، وَهَوْلَاءِ النَّارِ.»

◀On Resurrection Day, four types of individuals will be brought forward (before Allāh), each presenting his argument (of not receiving the full message): a child (who died before puberty), an insane person, a person to whom no messenger came, and a very old man (who could not understand the message). The Lord (ﷻ) will command a tongue of Fire to come out. He (ﷻ) will then tell them, "I used to send to people messengers from among themselves and, indeed, I am now My own messenger to you. Enter this fire." As for those who will be destined to misery, they will say, "O our Lord, why should we enter this from which we always used to run away?" Allāh will tell them, "(If you dare to disobey Me now) you would then show even more denial and disobedience to My messengers." And as for those who will be destined to happiness, they will go forth and rush to enter that fire. Thus, they will enter *Jannah*, whereas the others will enter Hell.▶¹

1 Recorded by Aboo Ya'lā, al-Baghawee, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānee (*as-Saheehah* nos. 1434, 2468).

3. **Children from Muslim parents will be in *Jannah*.** We saw above that an-Nawawī (رحمته) declared a consensus about this among the ‘*ulamā*’. This understanding is based on a number of *ḥadīths*. For example, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that he heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«صغارهم دعاميص الجنة. يتلقى أحدهم أباه فيأخذ بناحية ثوبه أو يده،
كما آخذُ أنا بصِنْفَةِ ثوبِكَ هذا، فلا يتناهى حتى يُدْخِلَهُ اللهُ وأباهُ الجنة.»

‘Their (i.e., the Muslims’) young ones (who die) are the free roamers of *Jannah*. When one of them meets its parent, it holds on to the edge of his (or her) garment like I hold your garment, and does not desist until Allāh admits it with its parent into *Jannah*.’¹

Therefore, the children of Muslims will not be tried with those who will be tried during Judgment Day as in the previous *ḥadīth*. What is it that gives the Muslim children this special merit? It is possible that Allāh (ﷻ), with His absolute wisdom and knowledge, designated that only children who are inclined toward goodness would be born to Muslim parents and would then die before puberty — Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

4. **During the *Barzakh*² period, all children who die before puberty will be in a “temporary” garden.**

Samurah Bin Jundub (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) once told his companions a dream³ that he saw. In that dream, the angels Jibrīl and Mikā’īl came to him and

1 Recorded by Muslim and Aḥmad.

2 Life in *Barzakh* is the intermediate life that we all live from the moment we die until we are resurrected. Samarah’s *ḥadīth* is quite long, and we present it fully in our book, “Life in *al-Barzakh*”.

3 The dreams of prophets are all truthful. Satan cannot approach the prophets even while they sleep.

showed him various events of *Barzakh*. In the part relevant to our discussion, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«فانطلقنا، فأتينا على روضةٍ معتممةٍ، فيها من كلِّ لون الربيع، وإذا بين ظهري الروضة رجلٌ طويلٌ لا أكادُ أرى رأسه طويلاً في السماء، وإذا حول الرجلِ من أكثر ولدانٍ رأيتهُم قطّ. قلت لهما: "ما هذا، وما هؤلاء؟" قالوا: "انطلق، انطلق." . . . قالوا لي: "أما إنا سنخبرك . . . وأما الرجلُ الطويلُ الذي في الروضة، فإنه إبراهيمُ. وأما الولدانُ الذين حولَه، فكلُّ مولود مات على الفِطرة."»

<... We proceeded until we came upon a garden dense with plantation, with all sorts of spring flowers. In its center stood a very tall man — so tall that I could hardly see his head in the sky. Around him was the greatest number of children I ever saw. I asked my two companions, "Who is this (man), and who are these (children)?" They said, "Come on, come on!" ...

(At the end they told me,) "Now we will explain to you what you saw: ... As for the tall man that you saw in the garden, he is Ibrāhīm. The children around him are all children who have died upon *fiṭrah*.>

At this point, some of the companions interjected, "O Messenger of Allāh, the pagans' children (are there) as well?" And he (ﷺ) affirmed, «*«وأولادُ المُشركين.*» <The pagans' children as well!>¹

This indicates that all children who die before puberty will be allowed to dwell in a temporary garden during *Barzakh*. On

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

Judgment day, the Muslims' children will enter *Jannah*, whereas other children will be tried to determine their final abode.

Q3: WHY DID AL-KHAḌIR KILL THE BOY?

We have seen above that Allāh's (ﷻ) encompassing knowledge includes the hypothetical: He knows what would happen if things start differently from what they do. Normally, this knowledge does not translate to decree and, therefore, may not have direct bearing on our life. But there are situations where a Divine decree is based on this knowledge.

A common example in this regard is that of the boy that al-Khaḍir (ﷺ) killed. In one part of the story of Mūsā's (ﷺ) journey with al-Khaḍir, as is mentioned in the Qur'ān¹, al-Khaḍir killed a boy, and Mūsā strongly objected to this action. Al-Khaḍir, however, explained to him that He did this by Allāh's command, and that the boy was designated to grow into a disbeliever who would cause great grief to his loving parents. So Allāh (ﷻ) wanted to rid them of him and replace him with a righteous child.

Ubayy Bin Ka'b (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الغلام الذي قتله الخضر طبع كافرًا، ولو عاش لأرهق أبويه طغيانًا وكُفْرًا.»

«The boy that al-Khaḍir killed was designated to be a disbeliever. Had he lived to adulthood, he would have burdened both of his parents with abuse and ingratitude.»²

Some people may have the following question:

“Why did al-Khaḍir kill the boy who never reached puberty and, therefore, had not done

1 *Al-Kahf* 18:60-82.

2 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

anything that would make him deserve to be killed? And because the boy was born to Muslim parents, will he enter *Jannah*, or will he be tried by Allāh (ﷻ) on Judgment Day to make him reveal what Allāh knows about his true nature, thereby entering Hell?"

ANSWER

The answer to this is as follows:

1. Al-Khaḍir (عليه السلام), a messenger of Allāh, merely acted by Allāh's command. It is not permissible for anyone else to deal with a person in such a way under presumption that he will end up as a *kāfir*. Such knowledge of *ghayb* only belongs to Allāh (ﷻ).
2. Al-Khaḍir acted as a means of fulfilling Allāh's decree. The means could have been a thunderbolt, a straying arrow, a wild horse's kick, etc. In all such cases we cannot question Allāh's decree and say, "Why did He kill the poor child?"
3. Killing by itself is not a punishment to the boy for a sin that he never committed.
4. The *'ulamā'* hold divided views in regard to the boy's future abode in the hereafter. The difference comes from the difficulty in applying the texts of the previous question (about the fate of deceased children) to this particular case.
5. It is possible that the Muslims' children will definitely enter *Jannah* only if they are from the followers of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) — as a special merit for this *Ummah*. As for children from previous nations, they will all be tried on Judgment Day. If this is the case, the boy will be tried and will then enter Hell.

6. We do not need to take any particular side in regard to this issue. What is most important for us to know is that Allāh (ﷻ) will surely deal with the boy justly, and will not judge him merely based on what He knows of the boy's inclination. Indeed, He (ﷻ) is All-Wise and All-Just.

IV. Ancient Events

Q1: WHAT IS THE VALUE OF THE ANCIENT COVENANT?

There are texts indicating that, shortly after creating Ādam (ﷺ), Allāh (ﷻ) extracted from his back all his descendants and made them testify to Allāh's oneness. After that, Allāh (ﷻ) put them to a state of death (or oblivion) until the time that each of them would be normally born. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ، وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ: "أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ؟" قَالُوا: "بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا." أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ: "إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ." أَوْ تَقُولُوا: "إِنَّمَا أَشْرَكَ آبَاؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ، وَكُنَّا ذُرِّيَّةً مِّنْ بَعْدِهِمْ، أَفَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ؟"﴾ الأعراف ١٧٢-١٧٣

«And (mention) when your Lord brought forth from *Banī Ādam*¹ — from their backbones — their offspring and called upon them (i.e. all offspring) to bear witness about themselves, "Am I not your Lord?" They answered, "Yes indeed, we do bear witness to this." (Of this We remind you,) lest you should say on Resurrection Day,

1 "Banū Ādam" means Ādam's offspring or the human race. Here in particular, it means Ādam himself as is explained in the following *ḥadīth*.

“Indeed, we were unaware of this.” Or lest you say, “Indeed, it was only our forefathers who, prior to us, joined partners with Allāh, and we were but their late offspring. Would You then destroy us for the doings of those deviants?”¹

In explaining these *āyāt*, Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أَخَذَ اللهُ المِثَاقَ مِنْ ظَهْرِ آدَمَ، فَأَخْرَجَ مِنْ صُلْبِهِ كُلَّ ذُرِّيَّةٍ ذَرَأَاهَا، فَنَشَرَهُمْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ كَالذَّرِّ، ثُمَّ كَلَّمَهُمْ قُبُلًا، قَالَ: «أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ؟»...» (الأعراف ١٧٢-١٧٣)

«Allāh took the (people’s) Covenant from the back of Ādam. He brought out from Ādam’s backbone every descendent that He was to create. He spread them between His hands like small ants, and then spoke directly to them saying, «Am I not your Lord? ...»^{2, 3}

This Covenant that Allāh (ﷻ) took from us when we were still in Ādam’s back — when Ādam was the only human alive, is mentioned in other authentic *hadīths*. For example, Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«يقول اللهُ لأهلِ النارِ عذاباً يومَ القيامة: ”يا ابنَ آدَمَ، كيفَ وجدتَ مضجعَكَ؟“ فيقول: ”شراً مضجعاً.“ فيقالُ لَهُ: ”لو كانت لك الدنيا وما فيها، أكنتَ مُفتدياً بها؟“ فيقول:

1 Al-A‘rāf 7:172-173.

2 Al-A‘rāf 7:172-173.

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Jarīr, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāṭ* no. 117 and *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1623).

”نعم.“ فيقول: ”كذبت! قد أردت منك أهونَ من هذا وأنت في صلبِ آدم: أن لا تُشركَ بي شيئاً، ولا أدخلك النار، فأبيت إلاَّ الشرك.“ فيؤمرُ به إلى النار.»

«Allāh will ask the person who will have the least punishment on Judgment Day, “O son of Ādam, how did you find your abode (in *Barzakh*)?” He will answer, “The worst abode.” He will be asked, “If you had possessed the whole world and what was in it, would you have used it to ransom yourself (from Hell)?” He will answer, “Yes.” So Allāh will tell him, “You are lying, because I required from you what is much easier than this when you were still in Ādam’s back: I required that you do not join any partners with me and I would not then admit you into the Fire, but you insisted on *shirk*.” The command will then be issued to take him to the Fire.» ¹

Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī (رحمته الله) cited an explanation by al-Fakhr ar-Rāzī (رحمته الله) ² regarding the above texts. Al-Qārī then added:

“Some scholars say that since Ādam’s offspring are from his back, all those that come out from their backs until the Last Day are those whom Allāh (رحمته الله) extracted initially from Ādam’s back and took from them the ancient Covenant ... Thus the Prophet (ﷺ) wanted to tell his *Ummah* that, prior to the current covenant that they can perceive with their reason, there is an ancient testimonial Covenant.” ³

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 *Tafsīr ar-Rāzī* 4:323.

3 *Mirqāt ul-Mafātīh* 1:140-141.

The above texts refer to an event that happened during Ādam's lifetime. Relating to this, some people have the following misconception:

“What is the value of such a covenant that was taken from humans in a previous life? Since none of us remembers that event, how can we be held accountable for it on Judgment Day?”

ANSWER

The answer to this question is as follows:

1. In this life, our voluntary actions are not based on the ancient Covenant. Therefore, we cannot claim that we are unable to act because we do not remember it.
2. Making this Covenant a well-remembered event by all people in this life would amount to exposing *Qadar* to us, which would then eliminate our free-will and choice.
3. This Covenant will become vivid in our minds on Judgment Day. At that time, Allāh (ﷻ) will question us regarding it — just as He will question us regarding the other covenant that is established through our reason: by observing His creation and listening to His messengers.
4. A small remnant of the ancient Covenant is present at birth in the *fiṭrah* of every human being. Al-Albānī (ﷺ) said

“Indeed, what appears to me is that, even though we cannot remember the Divine Covenant for reasons explained by the ‘*ulamā*’, the *fiṭrah* upon which Allāh created the people, and which testifies indeed that Allāh is the sole Lord without

partners, is only the trace of that Covenant.”¹

Q2: WHY WERE THERE TWO HANDFULS?

Related to the above texts about the ancient Covenant, there are *hadīths* indicating that when Allāh (ﷻ) created Ādam and extracted his offspring from his back, He divided them into two groups: the people of *Jannah* and the people of Hell.

Abū ad-Dardā’ (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«خلق الله آدم حين خلقه، فضرب كتفه اليمنى، فأخرج ذريةً
بيضاء كأنهم الذرُّ، وضرب كتفه اليسرى، فأخرج ذريةً سوداءً
كأنهم الحمم، فقال للذي في يمينه: ”إلى الجنة، ولا أبالي.“
وقال للذي في كتفه اليسرى: ”إلى النار، ولا أبالي.“»

«When Allāh created Ādam, He struck his right shoulder and brought out white offspring like small ants. Then He struck his left shoulder and brought out black offspring like burnt coal. He then said about those from the right shoulder, “They will go to *Jannah*, and I am not disturbed by this.” And He said about those from the left shoulder, “They will go to the Fire, and I am not disturbed by this.”»²

Similarly, Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن الله عزَّ وجلَّ قبضَ قبضةً، فقال: ”في الجنةِ برحمتي.“
وقبضَ قبضةً، فقال: ”في النارِ ولا أبالي.“»

1 *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* vol. 4, p. 163.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarānī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 115 and *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 49).

«Indeed, Allāh (ﷻ) took a handful¹ and said, “These will be in *Jannah* by My Mercy.” Then He took another handful and said, “These will be in the Fire, and I am not disturbed.”»²

And ‘Abd ur-Raḥmān Bin Qutādah as-Sulamī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن الله خلق آدم، ثم أخذ الخلقَ من ظهره، وقال:
”هُؤُلَاءِ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَلَا أَبَالِي، وَهُؤُلَاءِ إِلَى النَّارِ وَلَا أَبَالِي.“»

«Indeed, after Allāh created Ādam, He extracted the people from his back and said, “These will be in *Jannah*, and I am not disturbed; and these will be in the Fire, and I am not disturbed.”»

One of the companions asked, “O Allāh’s Messenger, how then can we act?” He (ﷺ) replied, «على مواقع القدر.» «You act according to the rulings of *Qadar*.»³

In the above three reports, Allāh’s saying that He is not disturbed has the following possible meanings:

1. He is not disturbed by determining who are the people of *Jannah* and who are the people of Hell, because it is all easy for Him (ﷻ).
2. It does not disturb Him that large numbers of people will

1 Some reports of this *ḥadīth* indicate that Allāh (ﷻ) took the first handful in His right hand, and the second in His other hand, and that both of His hands are right.

2 Recorded by Abū Ya’lā, Ibn ‘Adiyy, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 47).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Sa’d, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 48).

enter *Jannah* and Hell, because *Jannah* and Hell will be able to accommodate both.

3. It does not disturb Him that so many people will enter Hell, because they deserve it.

A misconception held by some people is as follows:

“A believer is destined to *Jannah* because he happened to be in the *Jannah*'s handful, and a disbeliever is destined to Hell because he happened to be in the Hell's handful. Is this fair?”

ANSWER

The answer to this is that Allāh's handfuls are not like ours. When we grab a handful of sand, for example, we cannot be sure if it contains other materials such as flour, dirt, or metal filings. As for Allāh (ﷻ), He has perfect knowledge about His creation, and He makes no mistake in any of His actions. When He took the handful of Hell-destined people, there is absolutely no chance that He added or missed anyone who did not deserve to be in that handful.

Al-Albānī (رحمته) said:

“Many people imagine that these and other similar *hadīths* indicate that a person is forced to do his 'voluntary deed' because it has been anciently decreed that he will be in *Jannah* or in the Fire.

Others may imagine that this is a matter of chaos or chance, so whoever happened to fall into the right handful would be among the happy, and whoever happened to be in the other handful would be among the miserable.

They should all realize that nothing resembles Allāh (ﷻ) in His self or qualities. When He takes

a handful, it is according to His knowledge, justice, and wisdom. He (ﷺ) took in His right hand those whom He knew will obey Him when they are commanded to obey, and He took in the other hand those whom He knew will disobey Him when they are commanded to obey. It is impossible for Allāh's justice that He would take in His right hand those who deserve to be in the other hand, or vice versa." ¹

Q3: WHY DID THE LIGHT MISS SOME PEOPLE?

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ الْخَلْقَ فِي ظُلْمَةٍ، فَأَلْقَى عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ نُورِهِ، فَمَنْ أَصَابَهُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ النُّورِ اهْتَدَى، وَمَنْ أَخْطَاهُ ضَلَّ. فَلِذَلِكَ أَقُولُ:
جَفَّ الْقَلَمُ عَلَى عِلْمِ اللَّهِ.»

‘Indeed, Allāh created the people in darkness. Then He cast from His light on them. Anyone who was hit by that light will be guided, and anyone who was missed will be misguided. Because of this I say, “The Pen is dry in regard to Allāh’s knowledge (of *Qadar*).”’ ²

This *ḥadīth* describes another event that happened in ancient times, either prior to the creation of Ādam, or shortly after that. A misconception similar to the previous one is as follows:

“A person who happened to be hit by Allāh’s light is destined to eternal happiness, and a person who

1 *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* vol. 1, part 1, pp. 115-116.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1076 and *al-Mishkāt* no. 97).

happened to be missed by Allāh's light is destined to eternal misery. Is it fair that a person's eternal happiness or misery is based on mere chance?"

ANSWER

The answer to this is similar to the previous answer: Allāh is most Wise, Knowing, and Just. His light was not directed in a chaotic or uncontrolled manner. Rather, He (ﷻ) directed His light toward those whom He knew to be worthy of it, and He deprived from it those whom He knew to be unworthy.

Q4: WHY WERE PEOPLE MADE DIFFERENTLY?

Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

« إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ آدَمَ مِنْ قَبْضَةٍ قَبْضَهَا مِنْ جَمِيعِ الْأَرْضِ، فَجَاءَ بَنُو آدَمَ عَلَى قَدَرِ الْأَرْضِ: جَاءَ مِنْهُمْ الْأَحْمَرُ وَالْأَبْيَضُ وَالْأَسْوَدُ، وَبَيْنَ ذَلِكَ، وَالسَّهْلُ وَالْحَزْنُ، وَالْخَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ، وَبَيْنَ ذَلِكَ. »

«Indeed, Allāh created Ādam from one handful that He picked from all over the earth. Thus, Ādam's offspring came according to the earth: among them the red, the white, the black, and those in between; and among them the easy, the cruel, the filthy, the good, and those in between.»¹

This *ḥadīth*² indicates that Allāh (ﷻ) made people using varying amounts of earth-ingredients: those made out of filthy

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1630 and *al-Mishkāt* no. 96).

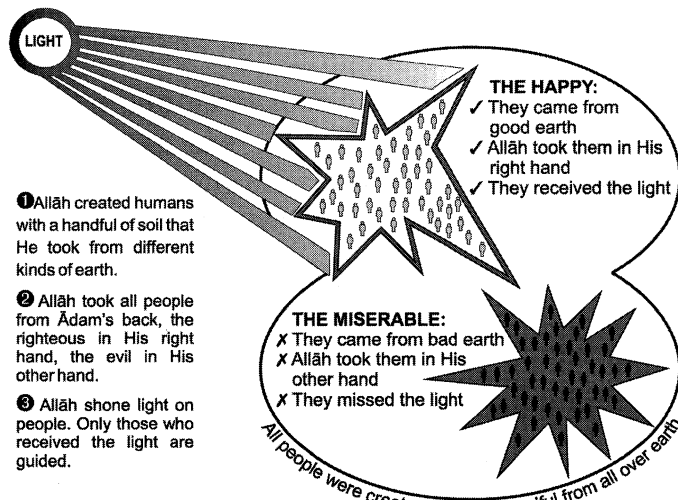
2 See also Abū Hurayrah's *ḥadīth* on page 52.

earth are filthy, those made of better earth are better, and so on. A misconception regarding this *ḥadīth* is as follows:

“What sin did a particular person “X” initially commit that Allāh (ﷻ) chose to form him from filthy ingredients so as to deserve eternal misery? And what was the initial virtue of a particular person “Y” that Allāh (ﷻ) chose to form him from good ingredients so as to deserve eternal happiness?”

ANSWER

The answer to this is similar to the answers in the previous two subsections: Allāh is most Wise, Knowing, and Just. The handful that He took from the earth was not chaotic or random. Rather, He (ﷻ) took it based on knowledge, wisdom, and justice. He knew those who deserved to come from good earth and those who did not.



V. The Ultimate Question

QUESTION

We have answered many misconceptions about *Qadar*, and we have learned that:

1. Allāh, with His perfect knowledge, knew and registered everything that will happen in His creation.
2. Allāh gives us the choice to do good or bad, and He will reward or punish us based on our own choice and action.

There still is, however, one question that is not easy to understand, which is as follows:

“Since Allāh (ﷻ) is the Creator of our body and soul, He must have created the people such that some of them are liable to disbelief and sinning, and others are liable to belief and righteousness. Even though He subsequently gives us the choice of being good or bad, our initial creation has already determined what our end will be. Thus, in a way, Allāh (ﷻ) is the One who made us the way we are. How, then, will He punish us for doing things that He prepared us to do?”

ANSWER

We can consider this the ultimate question about *Qadar*, and we answer it as follows:

1. We have deep-rooted and well-proven understanding of Allāh’s (ﷻ) excellent names and attributes. We have full trust in Allāh’s knowledge, wisdom, and justice, and we know that He never directs the least amount of injustice

toward anyone.

2. We know that we have a free will and choice.
3. We know that Allāh (ﷻ) is the Creator of our will and inclinations.
4. In the above *ḥadīth* of Abū Mūsā (p. 169), we saw that when Allāh wanted to create the people, He took a handful of soil from different parts of earth, and each individual is then inclined according to the type of soil from which he was made.
5. Other than this *ḥadīth*, we do not know what initially determined whether a person will be righteous or evil.
6. The knowledge of the soul, how it was created, and what determines its tendencies, is the backbone in our discussion of *Qadar*. However, Allāh (ﷻ) tells us ¹ that this knowledge is one of the secrets that He did not reveal to us because of our intellectual limitations.
7. Referring whatever we do not know about Allāh to what we know, we conclude that both types must all conform with His knowledge, wisdom, and justice. This is the meaning of the belief in *Qadar*, and this is what makes true belief in *Qadar* a vital article of faith. This is where we should stop without delving deeper into an area that we do not have the knowledge or ability to explore.
8. Some people propose a view that may shed a little further light on this issue. They say that Allāh's ultimate justice dictates that a particular individual's eventual fate is only fair when it conforms with the type of soil from which he

1 As in *Surat al-Isrā'* 17:85.

was originally made. But is this the sole factor that determines a person's personality and soul? It is impossible for us to say this with any level of certitude, Therefore, with full confidence and satisfaction, we conclude: Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

VI. Other Misconceptions

Q1: WHY DOES ALLĀH NOT GUIDE ALL PEOPLE?

Related to the previous question, some people ask the following:

“Why did Allāh (ﷻ) instill in people desires, and will then punish them for the outcome of these desires? Why did He decree that some people will be happy and others will be miserable? Why did He not decree that everyone will be happy in *Jannah*?”

ANSWER

1. We should not question Allāh for what He does. He is the absolute Ruler and Commander. He may not be questioned; rather, it is He who questions us.
2. Everything that Allāh does is done with ultimate knowledge, wisdom, and justice.
3. The desires that Allāh instilled in us, and the temptations that surround us, are all for great wisdom and benefit.
4. It is unjust to place in *Jannah* those who do not deserve it or to remove from it those who deserve it.

Q2: ARE WE COMPELLED TO SIN?

“Before our creation, Allāh (ﷻ) knew those who will end up in *Jannah* and those who will end up in Hell. Does not this mean that we are forced to act in a way that leads to our eventual destiny?”

ANSWER

We answer this question through a number of examples:

1. When an experienced teacher deals with a class for a long time, he becomes well acquainted with every student's personality and ability. From the beginning of the school year, he may be able to predict with accuracy the final results of each of his students. If the results of the final examination come in agreement with the teacher's prediction, can we say that the teacher forced the students to pass or fail?
2. If an experienced physician examines a patient and predicts that the patient will die in a few days, and if the patient dies according to the doctor's prediction, can we say that the doctor killed the patient?
3. The answer to the above two question should be the same as the answer to the question, “Since Allāh (ﷻ) knew all along what we will do in our life and what will be our final abode, does this mean that He forces us to live in a way that conforms with His prior knowledge?” The answer is, “Certainly not!”
4. Contrary to the limited knowledge of an experienced teacher or doctor, Allāh's (ﷻ) knowledge is complete and encompassing. He knows every small detail about our thoughts and actions.

5. Allāh (ﷻ) fully knows our level of intelligence, the amount of effort we are able to exert in our studies, the amount of time we will waste, the various distractions that we will face during the school year, and so on. He is the Creator of all this, and He knows it without the least uncertainty. Therefore, He precisely knows our result at the end of the school year.
6. Allāh knows all about every cell in our body. He knows the status of every limb and organ at every second of our life. He does not need a meter to measure our blood pressure, blood-sugar level, or heart beats. He is the Creator of all this, and He knows it without the least uncertainty. Therefore, He precisely knows our health status and when we will die.
7. Similarly, Allāh (ﷻ) knows the trials that we will face in our life and how we will react to them: when we will be righteous and when we will be sinful, when we will purify ourselves and when we will degrade them, when we will put up a fight against temptations and when we will surrender to them, when we will repent to Him and when we will insist on disobedience. He is the Creator of all these actions, and He knows them without the least uncertainty. Therefore, He precisely knows our final *īmān* situation at the close of our life, and hence our final abode.
8. Just as we said that the teacher did not force a student to fail, and the doctor did not force a patient to die, we say that Allāh (ﷻ), the All-Wise and Knowing, does not force us to be evil or righteous.

Q3: ARE THE SINFUL BLAMEWORTHY?

“Why should we blame a person if misguidance and misery have already been decreed for him?”

ANSWER

A wrongdoer often relies on this kind of *Jabriyyah* reasoning to justify his sins. Denying having a free will, he claims, "I committed the sin because it was decreed upon me, and I had no choice about my action." This is similar to the approach of Satan who disobeyed Allāh (ﷻ) and then blamed Him for it. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿قَالَ: رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ.﴾ الحجر ٣٩

«He (Satan) said, "My Lord, because You have caused me to stray, I will surely adorn the path of error for them (the people) on earth."»¹

We showed earlier that this reasoning is inconsistent for many reasons. In what follows, we repeat some of the earlier points:

1. A human has reason that enables him to differentiate between right and wrong. A person is only accountable within the limits of his reason. Thus, insane people and children are not accountable.
2. A human has the ability to choose. He chooses to sit or stand, come or go, eat or fast, and so on. Similarly, he chooses to sin or abstain, obey or disobey.
3. A sinner may not say, "I will obey when Allāh guides me," because we can then tell him, "Guidance and sustenance are both ordained by Allāh. Why don't you stay at home and wait for Allāh's sustenance to come to you?"
4. Allāh (ﷻ) tells us that He does not require from us anything

¹ *Al-Hijr* 15:39.

beyond our ability. If we were forced to sin, and are then held accountable for our sins, this would mean that Allāh's promise is untrue — exalted be He above this.

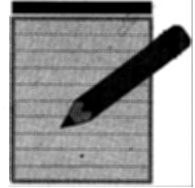
Q4: WHY IS QADAR KEPT AS A SECRET?

“Why did Allāh (ﷻ) choose to keep *Qadar* as a secret? Why did He not reveal it to us so as to remove all doubts from our heads?”

ANSWER

1. We again emphasize that Allāh (ﷻ) may not be questioned about His actions.
2. We also re-emphasize that everything that Allāh (ﷻ) does is for wisdom that many people may not see or understand.
3. Hiding *Qadar* is similar to hiding the Last Hour. Revealing either of them to people would make their trials and efforts pointless.
4. This question is similar to some students asking in the beginning of the school year, “Why does not the school administration reveal to us from the beginning the questions of our final examination? Why does the administration hide the questions and force us to prepare for them throughout the year?” They may not realize that the questions are hidden so that they would have to exert the necessary effort to learn the material needed for their growth. If the questions were revealed, the examination would lose its value. Similarly, this life is a place of examination that differentiates between the righteous and the evil.

Indeed, Allāh (ﷻ) knows best, and from Him alone we seek guidance.

Questions and Exercises (Use extra sheets as needed)

1. Present the correct understanding for the argument between Ādam and Mūsā. (6 points)

2. Using a simple sketch, present the correct understanding for texts that seem to indicate that *Qadar* is changeable. (6 points)

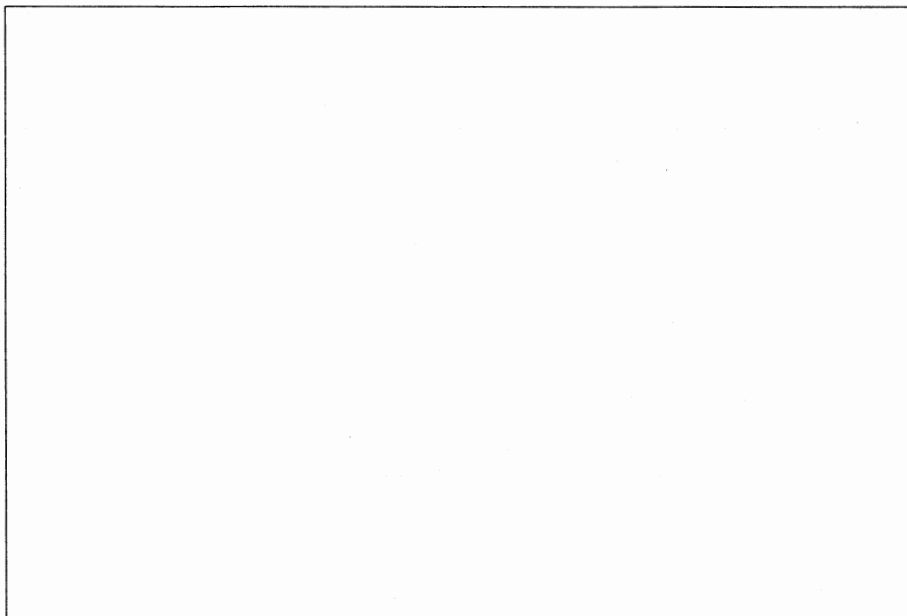
3. Provide and discuss five examples to show that *Qadar* is not really changeable. (10 points)

1
2
3
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5

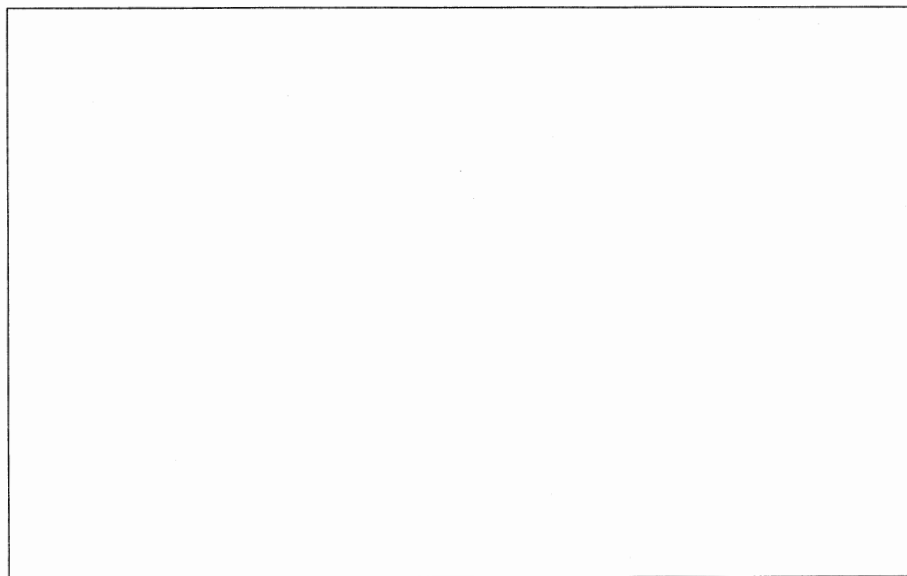
4. Discuss 'Umar's story with Abū 'Ubaydah, and explain how this showed 'Umar's correct understanding of *Qadar*. (6 points)

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5. Explain why *fiṭrah* alone cannot guarantee *Jannah*. Support your answer with texts from the Qurʾān and Sunnah. (6 points)



6. Draw a sketch depicting the meaning of *fiṭrah*. (3 points)



7. Summarize our discussion regarding the fate of deceased children. (8 points)

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8. Mention four types of people that Allāh (ﷻ) will test on Judgment Day. (4 points)

1	3
2	4

9. Put a check mark (✓) in the appropriate boxes. (4 points)

	Children dying before puberty from:	
	Muslim Parents	non-Muslim Parents
Will definitely enter <i>Jannah</i>		
Will definitely enter Hell		
Fate will be decide on Judgment Day		

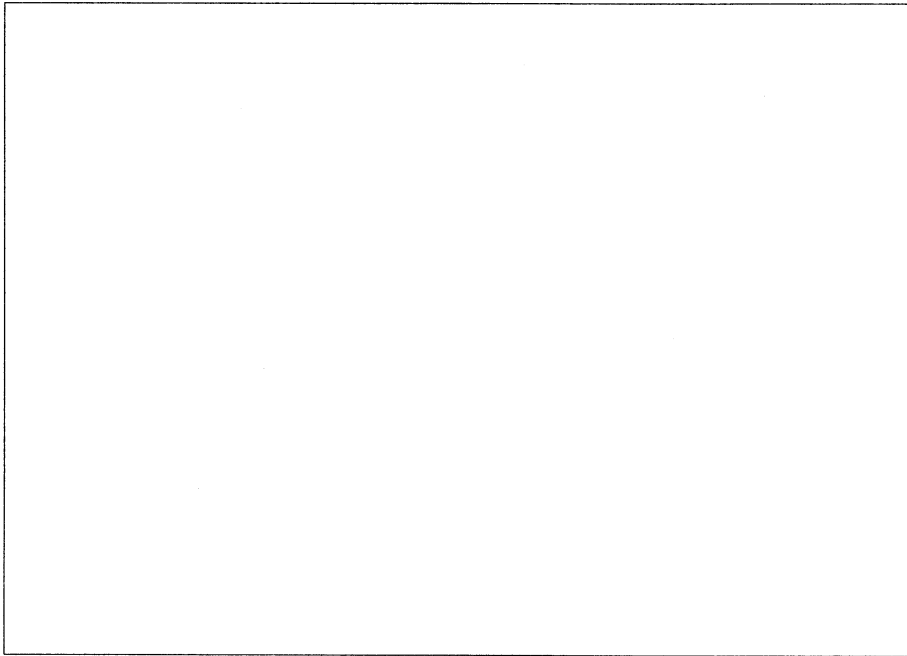
10. Discuss the correct understanding of why al-Khaḍīr killed the young boy. (6 points)

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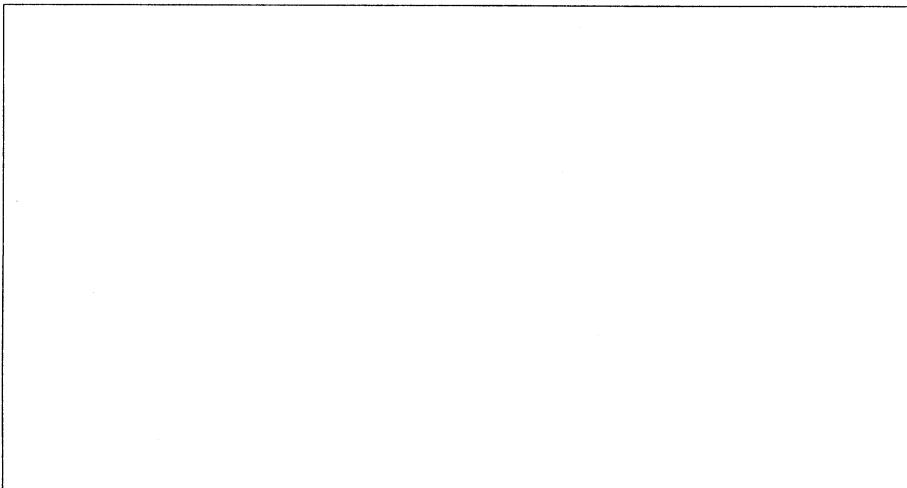
11. Answer the following questions regarding the ancient events that took place during and after the creation of Ādam. (8 points)

1. What is the value of the ancient covenant?
2. Why were there two handfuls of people?
3. Why did the light miss some people?
4. Why were people made differently?

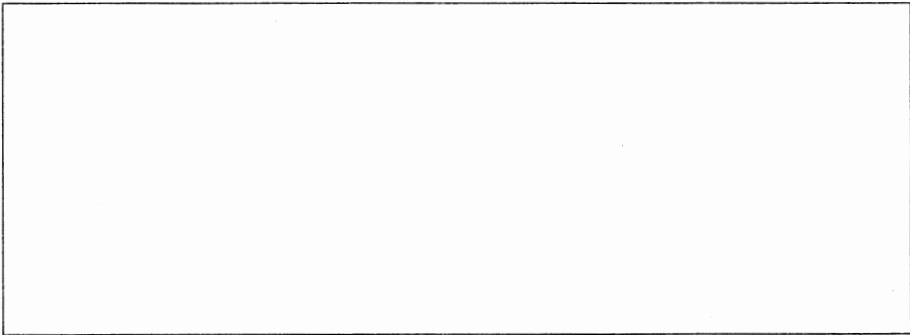
12. Discuss and provide the correct understanding for the ultimate question on *Qadar*. (6 points)



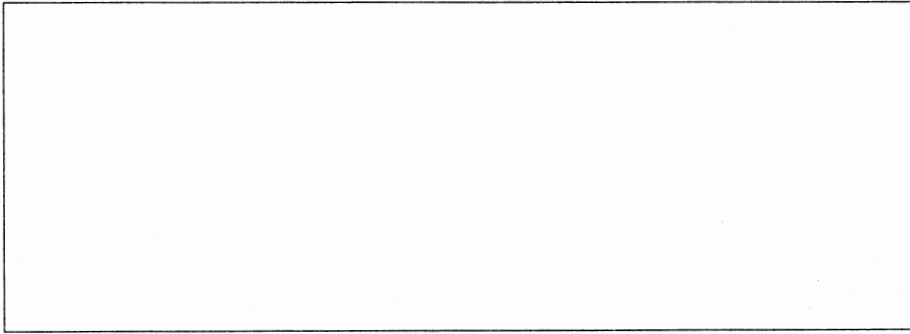
13. Explain why Allāh did not guide all people. (4 points)



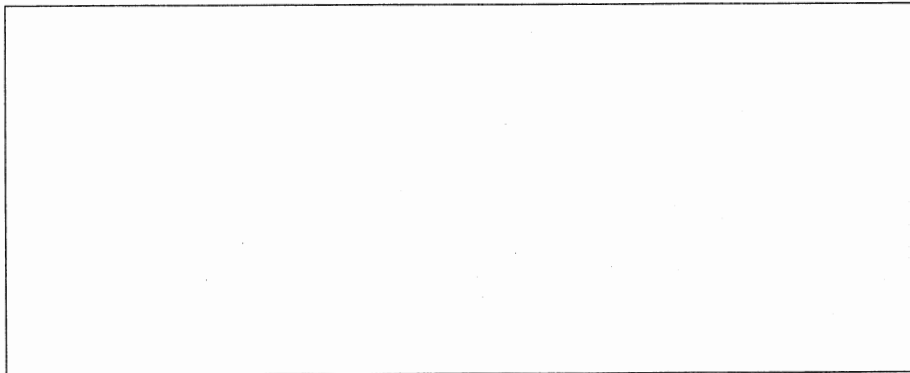
14. Explain that Allāh does not compel us to sin. (4 points)



15. Explain why sinful people are blameworthy. (4 points)



16. Discuss why Allāh kept *Qadar* as a secret. (4 points)



CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

Importance of the Belief in *Qadar*

We have shown that believing in *Qadar* is a major pillar of the Islāmic faith. A person with wrong belief in *Qadar* rejects some of Allāh's obvious qualities, such as justice and wisdom, and describes Him with injustice and ignorance — exalted be He above this.

'Abd ul-Wāḥid Bin Sulaym ¹ reported that he visited 'Aṭā' Bin Rabāḥ ² (رضي الله عنه) in Makkah and complained to him that the people of Baṣrah (in 'Irāq) questioned *Qadar*. 'Aṭā' asked him, "My son, do you memorize the Qur'ān?" He replied, "Yes." He said, "Recite *Sūrat uz-Zukhruf*." So he recited up to:

﴿وَإِنَّهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلِيَّ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾ الزخرف ٤

«And indeed, it (i.e., the Qur'ān) is in the Mother of the Book, with Us, surely exalted and full of wisdom.» ³

'Aṭā' then asked him, "Do you know what is the 'Mother of the Book'?" He replied, "Allāh knows best." 'Aṭā' explained:

"It is the Book that Allāh wrote before creating the heavens and before creating the earth. It is written in it that Pharaoh is from the people of Hell ⁴, and

1 A weak narrator of *ḥadīth*, but his report here is strengthened by others.

2 One of the *imāms* of *tābi'īn*. Died in 114 H.

3 *Az-Zukhruf* 43:4.

4 As, for example, in *Hūd* 11:98.

that Abū Lahab and his hand are doomed ¹.”

‘Aṭā’ then informed him that he once met al-Walīd, the son of ‘Ubādah Bin aṣ-Ṣāmiṭ (رضي الله عنه), and al-Walīd told him that his father advised him at his time of death ²:

“O my son, maintain *taqwā* (fear and reverence) of Allāh. And know well that you will not achieve *taqwā* of Allāh until you believe in *Qadar* entirely, whether good or bad. If you do not die upon this belief, you will enter the Fire. Indeed, I heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say,

«إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ الْقَلَمَ، فَقَالَ: “أَكْتُبْ.” قَالَ: “مَا أَكْتُبُ؟”
قَالَ: “أَكْتُبُ الْقَدْرَ، مَا هُوَ كَائِنٌ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ.”»

◁Indeed, the first thing that Allāh created was the Pen. Then He commanded it, ‘Write.’ The Pen asked, ‘What shall I write?’ Allāh said, ‘Write *Qadar*: all what will happen until eternity.’▷” ³

According to al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥakamī:

“Belief in *Qadar* is tied to yielding to *Shar‘* (Allāh’s law), and yielding to *Shar‘* is tied to belief in *Qadar*. It is impossible for these two to be disengaged.

Indeed, acknowledging *Qadar* to justify disobeying and violating *Shar‘* amounts to objecting to Allāh’s (ﷻ) commands, legislation, promises, warnings, rewards, and punishments: it

1 As in *al-Masad* 111:1.

2 ‘Ubādah (رضي الله عنه) died in 34 H.

3 Recorded by at-Tirmithī and aṭ-Ṭayālisī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*at-Tirmithī* no. 2155, and *as-Sunnah* nos. 104, 105, 111).

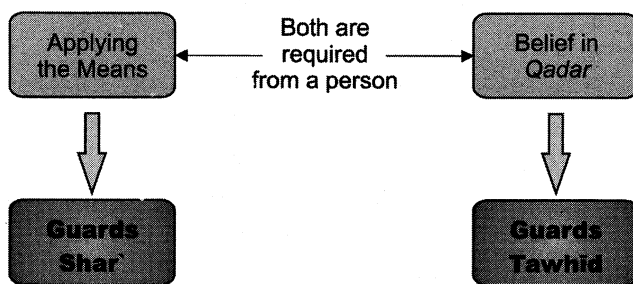
implies condemning Him for sending messengers, revealing scriptures, creating *Jannah* for His believing allies, and creating Hell for His disbelieving enemies. It also amounts to challenging Allāh's wisdom and justice: it implies accusing Him of futile actions and injustice when He (ﷻ) is the Most Wise in creation and legislation, and the Most Just in action and decree.

On the other hand, acknowledging *Shar'* while denying *Qadar* by excluding people's actions from being under the Creator's power and considering them independent of Him and in no need of Him — this amounts to rejecting Allāh's lordship and dominion, accusing Him of deficiency, and attributing to Him descriptions that make Him unworthy and unqualified for divinity, such as that He cannot create or recreate, or that He cannot help us in any way — may our Lord be greatly exalted and hallowed above what the disbelieving, denying, and transgressing people say.

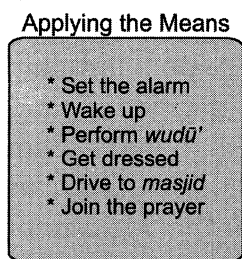
Therefore, true belief in *Qadar*, whether good or evil, holds together the structure of *Tawhīd*. And performing deeds that lead to *Qadar's* good and protect from its evil — while seeking Allāh's help in this — holds together the structure of *Shar'.*"¹

In other words, a person cannot have a true believer unless he holds a correct belief in *Qadar*; and he cannot be a true Muslim unless his belief in *Qadar* propels him to abide by Allāh's law. Some of these meanings are depicted in the following diagram:

1 *Ma'ārij ul-Qabūl*, vol. 3, pp. 1121-1122.

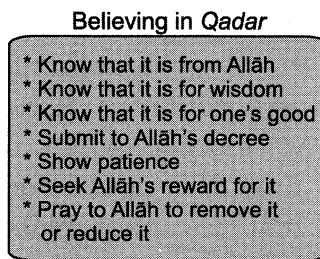


Example:
Praying *Fajr* in *Jamā`ah*



↓
This *Shar`* obligation
(prayer) is guarded

Example:
Car Accident



↓
One's belief in Allāh
is guarded

Summary of the Belief in *Qadar*

The correct belief in *Qadar* is that:

1. Allāh (ﷻ) is the Creator of all things. His creation is preceded by His will.
2. Whatever Allāh creates, it is in accordance with His ancient, eternal knowledge, and it is as it has been recorded in the Preserved Slate.
3. Allāh (ﷻ) is the Creator of the creatures, their qualities, and

their actions.

4. Before creating the people, Allāh (ﷻ) knew, recorded, and willed all their sayings and actions.
5. Allāh's (ﷻ) will encompasses the entire universe. Whatever occurs in it, it occurs because of this Divine will.
6. Human beings are endowed with power over their actions, and with a will through which they perform their actions. By virtue of their wills they are the true actors of their deeds. Therefore, they deserve reward and praise, or chastisement and humiliation.
7. Ascribing actions to human beings does not contradict attributing their creation to Allāh, because He is the ultimate Creator of all causes leading to the performance of actions.

Fruits of the Belief in *Qadar*

The true concept of *Qadar* has many fruits that are vital for the well-being of Muslims as individuals and as a nation. In what follows, we discuss some of these fruits.

1. COMPLETION OF ĪMĀN

Since *Qadar* is one of the pillars of faith, a person's faith is not correct and complete unless he holds a true belief in *Qadar*.

Furthermore, since *Qadar* is a clear demonstration of Allāh's ownership and control over the creation, a person's faith in Allāh's lordship is not correct and complete unless he holds a true belief in *Qadar*.

2. SECURITY FROM SHIRK

Many people establish erroneous beliefs in order to avoid attributing evil to Allāh (ﷻ). We have seen that non-Muslims and some deviant Muslims claim that Allāh is not the creator of the evil that we witness in this world. This clear *shirk* results from wrong belief in *Qadar*.

Our belief in Allāh (ﷻ) is not complete until we acknowledge that He is the only Creator of all that is in the world. Whatever He wills happens, and whatever He does not will cannot happen. True belief in *Qadar*, therefore, is a dividing line between *shirk* and *tawhīd* (belief in Allāh's oneness).

3. TRUE RELIANCE ON ALLĀH

A correct belief in *Qadar* results in true reliance on Allāh (ﷻ). Since Allāh (ﷻ) is the Creator of the means and causes, our faith must be in Him rather than the causes that He creates, because they all follow His decree.

Allāh (ﷻ) tells us that Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) said to his people:

﴿فَأِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِي، إِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ ﴿٧٨﴾ وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ ﴿٨١﴾﴾ الشعراء ٧٧-٨١

«Indeed, they (the idols) are enemies to me — except for the Lord of the worlds. It is He who created me, and it is He who guides me. It is He who feeds me and gives me drink. When I am ill, it is He who cures me. And it is He who will cause me to die and then will bring me back to life.»¹

Since Allāh (ﷻ) is the Creator of causes and effects, He has the

1 Ash-Shu'arā' 26:77-81.

ability to stop or change the effect of a particular cause. For example, He stopped the burning effect of the fire into which Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) was thrown. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿قُلْنَا: "يَنَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ."﴾ الأنبياء ٦٩

«We said, “O fire, be coolness and peace for Ibrāhīm.”»¹

Therefore, when we take medicine as a means of cure, we put our trust in Allāh and not in the medicine itself. Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الدواء من القَدَر، وقد يَنفَعُ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى.»

«Medication is part of *Qadar*; it may benefit with Allāh’s permission.»²

4. SHOWING GRATITUDE TO ALLĀH

When we have true belief in *Qadar*, we realize that any favor that people render to us is ultimately from Allāh. Therefore, when we express gratitude to those who are good to us, we remember to show even more gratitude to the true giver — Allāh (ﷻ).

5. WITNESSING ALLĀH’S WISDOM

With true belief in *Qadar*, we view many of the puzzling events in the world as a clear demonstration of Allāh’s wisdom in His creation.

6. AVOIDING LAZINESS

A true belief in *Qadar* opposes the passiveness and inaction that many

1 *Al-Anbiyā* 21:69.

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*) and Abū Nu‘aym. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi* no. 3415).

Muslims practice in the name of *Qadar*, such as refusing to work and saying, “Allāh has already decided our sustenance.” This laziness is actually an outcome of deviating from the correct belief in *Qadar* or misunderstanding it. ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لو أنكم تتوكلون على الله حقَّ توكلِهِ، لَرَزَقَكُم
كَمَا يَرزُقُ الطَّيْرَ، تَغدُو خِمَاصًا وَتَرُوحُ بِطَانًا.»

«If you have true reliance on Allāh, He will give you sustenance like He gives birds: they leave in the morning with empty bellies and return in the evening with full bellies.»¹

Some people may take this *ḥadīth* as an excuse for their laziness, but we know that birds go early to search for their sustenance. We too must do the same: we must utilize the means that Allāh (ﷻ) created for us. At the same time, we should rely on Allāh (ﷻ) and implore Him to make our means successful in reaching good ends.

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) also reported that he asked the Prophet (ﷺ):

”يا رسولَ اللهِ! أَرَأَيْتَ عَمَلْنَا هَذَا، عَلَى أَمْرٍ
قَدْ فُرِعَ مِنْهُ، أَمْ عَلَى أَمْرٍ نَسْتَقْبِلُهُ؟“

“O Allāh’s Messenger, in regard to our current action, is it a matter that has already been ordained, or is it a matter that will be ordained as we go?”

The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, «بل على أمر قد فُرِعَ مِنْهُ.» **Rather, it is a matter that has already been ordained.** ‘Umar then asked, “Why should we then work?” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

«كَلَّا، لَا يُنَالُ إِلَّا بِالْعَمَلِ.»

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 310).

«No! It (i.e., the good) cannot be attained except by working.»

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) then said, “إِذَا نَجْتَهُدُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ.” “We will then exert out best, O Allāh’s Messenger.”¹

Similarly, ‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا وَقَدْ كُتِبَ مَقْعَدُهُ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَقْعَدُهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ.»

«None of you but that his place has already been recorded, whether in the Fire or in *Jannah*.»

On hearing this, some people asked, “O Allāh’s Messenger, should we not then rely on what has been written for us and stop doing any deeds?” He replied:

«لَا، اْعْمَلُوا، فَكُلُّ مَيْسَرٍ لَمَّا خُلِقَ لَهُ. أَمَّا مَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ السَّعَادَةِ، فَسَيُسَّرُ لِعَمَلِ السَّعَادَةِ، وَأَمَّا مَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الشَّقَاوَةِ، فَسَيُسَّرُ لِعَمَلِ الشَّقَاوَةِ.»

«No, act, for each person will be eased toward that for which he was created. If he is from the people of happiness, he will be guided to the deeds of happiness. And if he is from the people of misery, he will be guided to the deeds of misery.»

The Prophet (ﷺ) then recited:

«فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطِيَ وَاتَّقَىٰ ◊ وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ◊ فَسَيُسَّرُهُ،
لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ◊ وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَىٰ ◊ وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ◊

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*as-Sunnah* nos. 161-166).

فَسَنِّيَسِّرُهُ، لِلْعُسْرَى ﴿٥-١٠﴾ الليل

«As for him who gives (charity), has *taqwā* (piety), and believes in the best reward (of *Jannah*), We will ease him toward the Ease (i.e., *Jannah*). But as for him who withholds (his money), turns away (from Allāh), and denies the best reward, We will ease him toward the Difficulty (i.e., Hell).»^{1, 2}

7. MAINTAINING CAUTION AND ALERTNESS

A true believer in *Qadar* knows that he is always subject to tests from Allāh in this life. So he maintains caution and alertness, fearing Allāh and revering Him — even when Allāh (ﷻ) showers him with favors. Only a loser would turn to carelessness and irresponsibility at times of ease. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللَّهِ؟ فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ﴾ الأعراف ٩٩

«Can they, then, ever feel secure from Allāh's planning? But no one feels secure from Allāh's planning except losers.»³

We should always be ready to deal with consecutive trials, knowing that our hearts can easily oscillate and shift under the attack of trials. ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن قلوب بني آدم كُلُّهَا بين إصبعين من أصابع الرحمن،
كقلب واحدٍ يُصَرِّفُهُ كيف شاء.»

«Indeed, all hearts of Ādam's children are between two of the Most Merciful's fingers: they are (to Him)

1 *Al-Layl* 92:5-10.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 *Al-A'raf* 7: 99.

like a single heart that he turns about as He will.>

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr added that the Prophet (ﷺ) frequently said:

«اللَّهُمَّ مُصَرِّفَ الْقُلُوبِ، صَرِّفْ قُلُوبَنَا عَلَى طَاعَتِكَ.»

<O Allāh, You who turns the hearts about, turn our hearts toward obeying You.>¹

And Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَثَلُ الْقَلْبِ كَرِيشَةٍ مُلْقَاةٍ بِأَرْضِ فَلَاحٍ، تُقَلَّبُهَا الرِّيحُ ظَهْرًا لِبَطْنٍ.»

<A heart’s example is like that of a feather cast in a desert, with winds flipping it up and down.>²

And al-Muqḍād Bin al-Aswad (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لِقَلْبِ ابْنِ آدَمَ أَسْرَعُ تَقَلُّبًا مِنَ الْقَدْرِ إِذَا اسْتَجْمَعَتْ غَلِيَانًا.»

<A human being’s heart surely turns over (or fluctuates) more than a strongly boiling pot (of water).>³

Therefore, we should always be cautious of what may lead us astray, and fearful of meeting an evil end. This should drive us to struggle persistently to achieve firmness upon the right course, increasing in good deeds, and avoiding disobedience and sinning.

At the same time, our heart should remain attached to our Creator: calling upon Him, hoping for His Mercy, beseeching His Help, and imploring Him to guide us to the truth and keep us firm upon it.

1 Recorded by Muslim.

2 Recorded by Ibn Mājah, al-Baghawī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*al-Mishkāt* no. 99 and *Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi’* no. 5833).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1772).

8. FACING DANGERS WITH A FIRM HEART

When we believe that whatever happens to us is preordained, and that sustenance and death are in Allāh's hands, we would then face perilous situations with dignity and a firm heart. We would be ready to stand for the truth without fearing the blame or threats of others.

In Ibn 'Abbās's (رضي الله عنه) *ḥadīth* that we cited earlier, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ الْأُمَّةَ لَوْ اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَى أَنْ يَنْفَعُوكَ بِشَيْءٍ، لَمْ يَنْفَعُوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ لَكَ. وَإِنْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى أَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ بِشَيْءٍ، لَمْ يَضُرُّوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ. وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَكَ، وَمَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ.»

<Know that if the people were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would only benefit you with something that Allāh had already prescribed for you; and if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would only harm you with something Allāh had already prescribed for you. And know that whatever missed you could never have befallen you, and whatever befallen you could never have missed you.>¹

When we hold this belief, we would also enter the battlefield without fear, seeking martyrdom² in dangerous fights.

1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 7957 and *al-Mishkāt* no. 5232).

2 Correct fighting in Islām may only be under leadership of a fully recognized ruler of the Muslims (i.e., *khalīfah*), and not haphazardly like many Muslims ignorantly do nowadays. Only then would martyrdom be hoped for those who truly die for Allāh's cause.

9. SPIRITUAL SECURITY AND STABILITY

A human being is normally deficient and weak. The alternation of trials makes him fluctuate between fear and arrogance, unable to maintain a steady course. Allāh says:

﴿إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا ﴿١٩﴾ إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا
مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا ﴿٢١﴾ إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾ المعارج ١٩-٢٢

«Indeed, a human being is created with an anxious nature. Fearful when evil touches him, and niggardly when good reaches him. Not so, however, are those who are consistent in praying (to Allāh) ...»¹

This fluctuating human nature does not apply to the righteous believers who are consistent and sincere in performing their religious duties. Their true belief in the various tenets of faith, including Allāh's decree, awards them emotional and behavioral stability.

When good reaches them, they know that it is not merely a result of their intelligence and good planning, but because Allāh (ﷻ) facilitated the means leading to it. Therefore, instead of becoming arrogant and boastful, they show submission and gratitude to Allāh who granted it to them.

On the other hand, when they are afflicted with a hardship or disaster, they turn to Allāh alone to relieve them from it. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَمَا بِكُمْ مِّن نُّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ، ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ
فَأِلَيْهِ تَجْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾﴾ النحل ٥٣

«Whatever favor you enjoy is from Allāh. And when adversity touches you, to Him you cry for help.»²

1 Al-Ma'ārij 70:19-22.

2 An-Nahl 16:53.

Furthermore, the believers view the affliction as a bountiful trial decreed by their Lord, Allāh (ﷻ). Instead of being terrified or hopeless of Allāh's mercy, their heart becomes filled with contentment and tranquility. They endure with patience, and submit to Allāh with acceptance and hope: accepting His decree and hoping for His reward.

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِّن قَبْلٍ
أَن نَّبْرَأَهَا إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا
تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ، وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾ الحديد ٢٢-٢٣

«No disaster can ever befall the earth or your own selves but that it is inscribed in a Register before We bring it into existence. That is surely easy for Allāh. (Know this) in order not to despair over what has eluded you, nor exult (in pride) over what He has given you. And Allāh does not love any conceited and boastful person.»¹

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ، وَمَنْ يُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ قَلْبَهُ،
وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾﴾ التغابن ١١

«No disaster strikes except by Allāh's permission, and whosoever believes in Allāh, He guides his heart. Allāh is the Knower of all things.»²

Commenting on this *āyah*, Ṣālīḥ al-Fawzān said:

“This means that when a person who is afflicted with a

1 Al-Ḥadīd 57:22-23.

2 At-Taghābun 64:11.

calamity realizes that it is from Allāh's *Qadar*, perseveres, hopes for Allāh's reward for it, and submits to Allāh's decree, Allāh guides his heart and replaces for him the lost worldly possessions with guidance in his heart and true conviction. Furthermore, Allāh may give him back what he lost or grant him what is better.”¹

With this attitude, a believer is elevated with every trial, whether good or bad. Ṣuḥayb (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«عجباً لأمر المؤمن، إن أمره كله له خيرٌ، وليس ذلك لأحدٍ إلا للمؤمن.
إن أصابته سراءٌ شكرَ فكان خيراً له، وإن أصابته ضراءٌ صبرَ فكان خيراً له.»

«Indeed, amazing is a believer's affair! It is always for his good, and this merit is for no one except a believer. If he is granted ease of living, he shows gratitude (to Allāh), and this is best for him. And if he is afflicted with hardship, he perseveres, and this is best for him.»²

10. SUBMISSION TO ALLĀH'S DECREE

We saw above that we can be elevated with every trial that we face. Affliction should bring into our heart a feeling of full submission to Allāh, remembering that it is part of His decree. We should push away any protesting thoughts, because they open a door for Satan to enter our heart and cast doubts on to our faith.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«المؤمنُ القويُّ خيرٌ وأحبُّ إلى اللهِ من المؤمنِ الضعيفِ، وفي كلِّ خيرٍ إحرصْ على ما ينفعُكَ، واستعن بالله ولا تعجزْ. وإن

1 *Al-Irshād* p. 277.

2 Recorded by Muslim.

أصَابَكَ شَيْءٌ فَلَا تَقُلْ: "لَوْ أَنِّي فَعَلْتُ كَذَا وَكَذَا." وَلَكِنْ
قُلْ: "قَدَرَ اللَّهُ وَمَا شَاءَ فَعَلَ." فَإِنَّ "لَوْ" تَفْتَحُ عَمَلَ الشَّيْطَانِ.

«A strong believer is better and more beloved to Allāh than a weak one, and good is in both of them. Hold tight to what benefits you. Ask Allāh for help, and do not fail. If you are afflicted with a mishap, do not say, "Had I done such-and-such, such-and-such would have happened instead." Rather say, "Allāh willed, and He does as He wills." For "Had I done such-and such" opens the way for the work of Satan.»¹

We should, therefore, frequently remind ourselves that all giving and taking is in Allāh's hands, as the Prophet (ﷺ) used to say after *rukū'*² and after finishing his prayer³:

«اللَّهُمَّ لَا مَانِعَ لِمَا أَعْطَيْتَ، وَلَا مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ،
وَلَا يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْجَدِّ مِنْكَ الْجَدُّ.»

«O Allāh, no one can prevent what You give, no one can give what You prevent, and an influential person's power cannot protect him from You.»

11. ASKING ALLĀH TO CHOOSE FOR US

With a correct belief in *Qadar*, we would turn to Allāh (ﷻ) for guidance (ﷻ) and sincerely ask Him to choose for us what is in our best interest. This is part of the true reliance on Allāh (ﷻ) that we discussed above.

Counting on Allāh's perfect knowledge and His full control of

1 Recorded by Muslim.

2 Recorded by Muslim and Abū Dāwūd from Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه).

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim from al-Mughīrah Bin Shu'bah (رضي الله عنه).

Qadar, we cannot go wrong when we invoke His choice for us. This process is called *istikhārah*.

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to teach his companions to perform *istikhārah* in all of their affairs — just as he would teach them a *sūrah* from the Qur’ān. He told them:

«إذا هم أحدكم بالأمر، فليركع ركعتين من غير الفريضة، ثم ليقل:
 ”اللهم إني أستخيرك بعلمك، وأستقدرُك بقدرتك، وأسألك من
 فضلك العظيم، فإنك تقدرُ ولا أقدرُ، وتعلمُ ولا أعلمُ، وأنت علامُ
 الغيوب. اللهم إن كنتَ تعلمُ أن هذا الأمرَ (وُسَمِيه بِأَسْمِه) هو
 خيرٌ لي في ديني ومعاشي، وعاقبةَ أمري وعاجلِهِ وآجلِهِ، فأقدرُهُ
 لي، ويسرَّهُ لي، ثم بارك لي فيه. وإن كنتَ تعلمُ أن هذا الأمرَ شرٌّ
 لي في ديني ومعاشي، وعاقبةَ أمري وعاجلِهِ وآجلِهِ، فأصرفهُ عني،
 وأصرفني عنه، وأقدرُ لي الخيرَ حيثُ كان، ثم رَضِّنِي بِهِ. ” وما
 ندِمُ من أستخار الخالقَ، وشاور المخلوقين، وثبتت في أمره. »

◁When one of you is about to do something (important), let him pray two non-obligatory *rak‘āt* and then say:

“*Allāhumma innī astakhīruka bi-‘ilmika, wa-astaqdiruka bi-qudratika, wa-as’aluka min fadlik al-azīm, fa-‘innaka taqdiru wa-lā aqdir, wa-ta‘lamu wa-lā a‘lam, wa-‘anta ‘allām ul-ghuyūb. Allāhumma in kunta ta‘lamu anna hāthā ‘l-‘amra* (and he names his intended affair) *huwa khayrun lī fī dīnī wa-ma‘āshī, wa-‘āqibati amrī wa-‘ājilihī wa-‘ājilihī, fa-qdurhu lī, wa-yassirhu lī, thumma bārik lī fih. Wa-in kunta ta‘lamu anna hāthā ‘l-‘amra huwa sharrun lī fī dīnī wa-ma‘āshī, wa-‘āqibati amrī wa-‘ājilihī wa-*

'ājilihī, fa-ṣrifhu 'annī wa-ṣrifnī 'anhu, wa-qdur liy-
al-khayra ḥaythu kān, thumma raḍḍinī bih —

O Allāh, I ask You to choose for me with Your knowledge, and decree for me with Your might; and I ask You of Your great favors. Indeed, You decree and I do not, and You know and I do not; You surely are the Knower of all that is hidden. O Allāh, if You know that this affair (and he names it) is good for me in regard to my religion, my living, and its outcome — both immediate and postponed, then decree it for me, facilitate it for me, and then bless it for me. And if You know that this affair is harmful for me in regard to my religion, my living, and its outcome — both immediate and postponed, then divert it from me and divert me from it, and decree for me the good wherever it may be, and then make me content by it.”

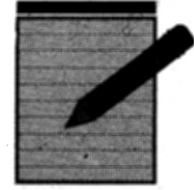
And indeed, never would he regret who asks the Creator to choose for him, and consults with the creation, and ascertains his actions.> ¹

We should note that some people think that one of the important requirements of *istikhārah* is to perform it before going to sleep so as to see dreams indicating the result. Others think that, as a result of the *istikhārah*, one should feel in his heart an inclination toward the correct choice.

There is no basis for either of these two assumptions. To the contrary, this *ḥadīth* indicates that the outcome may be opposite to what a person prefers, and this is why he should ask Allāh to grant him contentment.

May Allāh (ﷻ) guide us to what pleases Him, choose for us what is best in all our affairs, forgive our shortcomings, accept our good deeds, and admit us into the Highest Paradise ... āmīn.

¹ Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

Questions and Exercises (Use extra sheets as needed)

1. Discuss the importance of having the correct belief in *Qadar*. Demonstrate your answer by explaining ‘Aṭā’³’s narration and by summarizing al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥakamī’s quotation in the beginning of this chapter. (8 points)

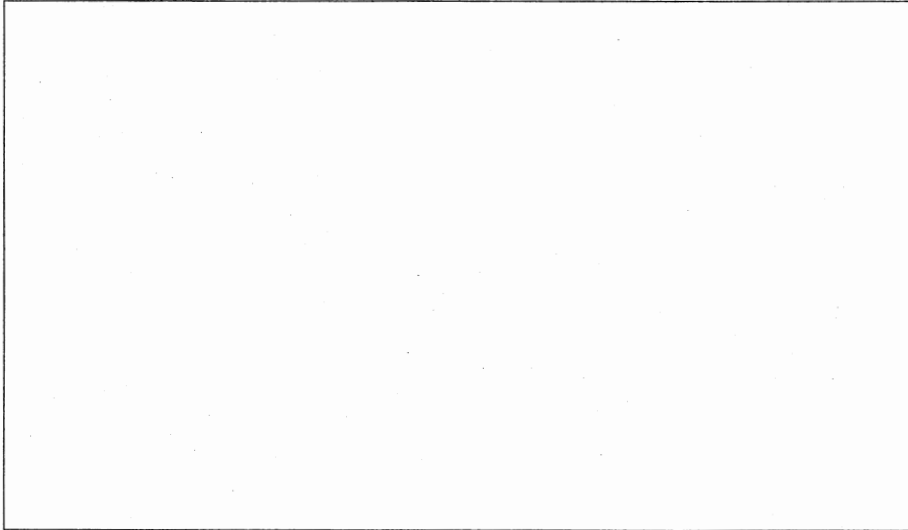
2. Give a summary of the correct belief in *Qadar*. (7 points)

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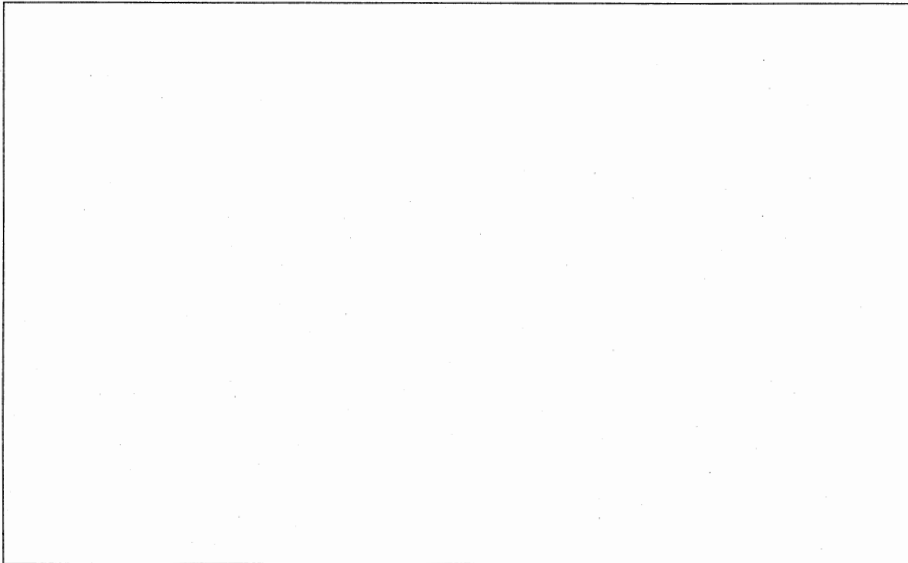
3. List eleven important fruits of true belief in *Qadar*. (11 points)

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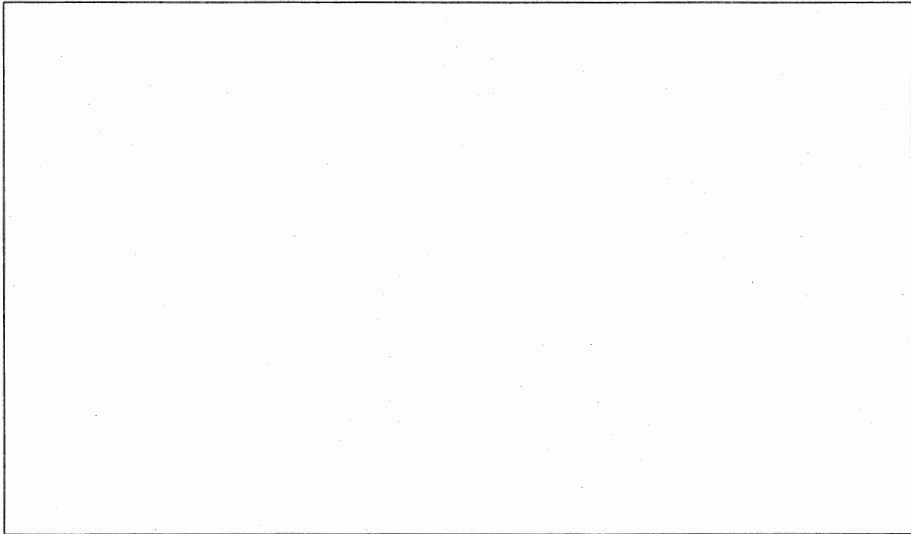
4. Explain how correct belief in *Qadar* results in true reliance on Allāh. Support your answer with texts from the Qurʾān and Sunnah. (6 points)



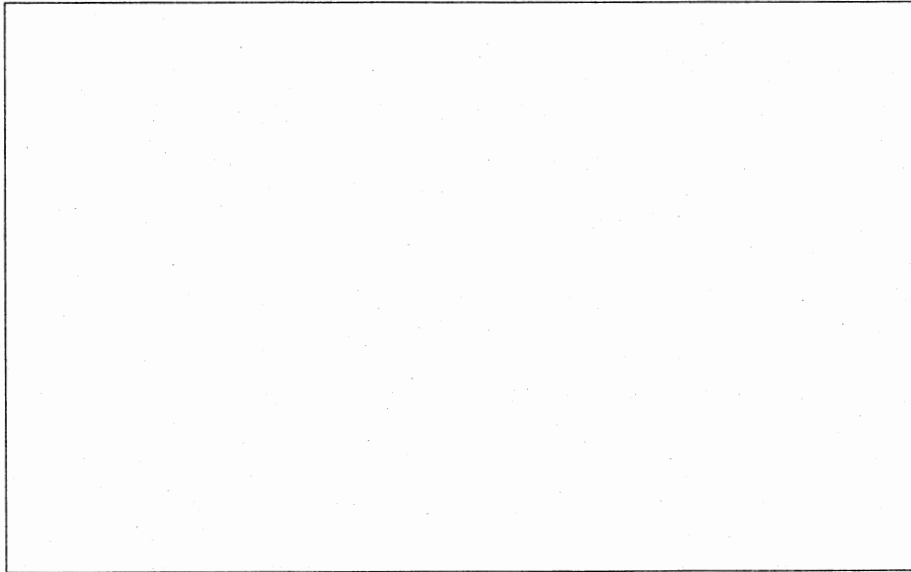
5. Explain how correct belief in *Qadar* protects against laziness. Support your answer with texts from the Qurʾān and Sunnah. (6 points)



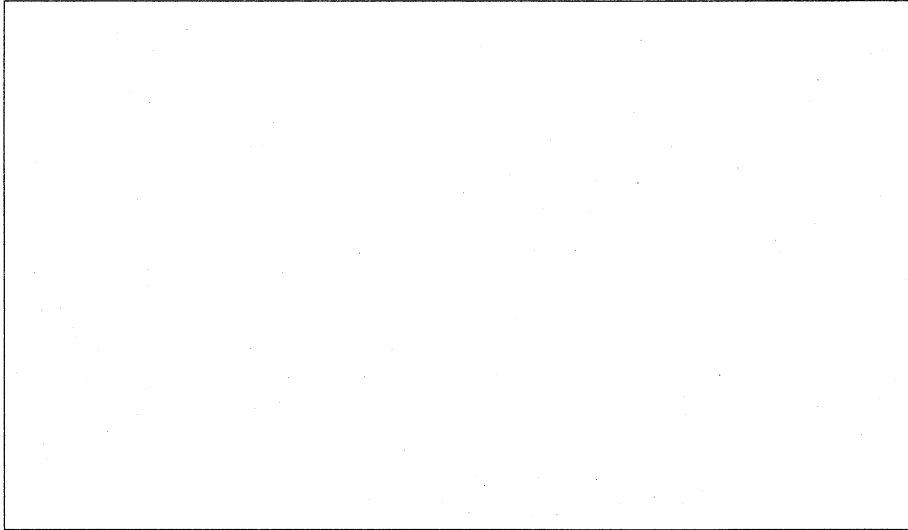
6. Explain how correct belief in *Qadar* makes a believer alert and cautious. Support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah. (6 points)



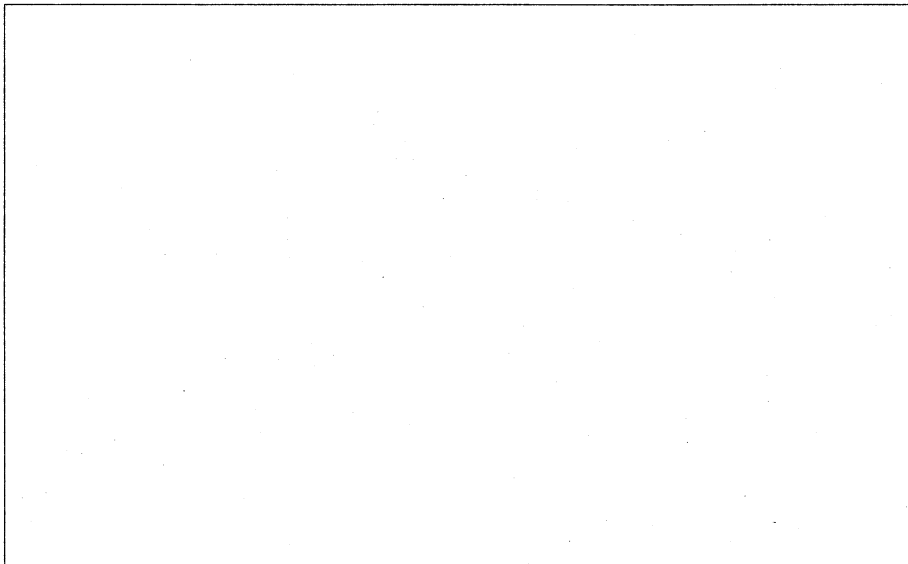
7. Explain how correct belief in *Qadar* brings courage and firmness of heart. Support your answer with a text from the Sunnah. (6 points)



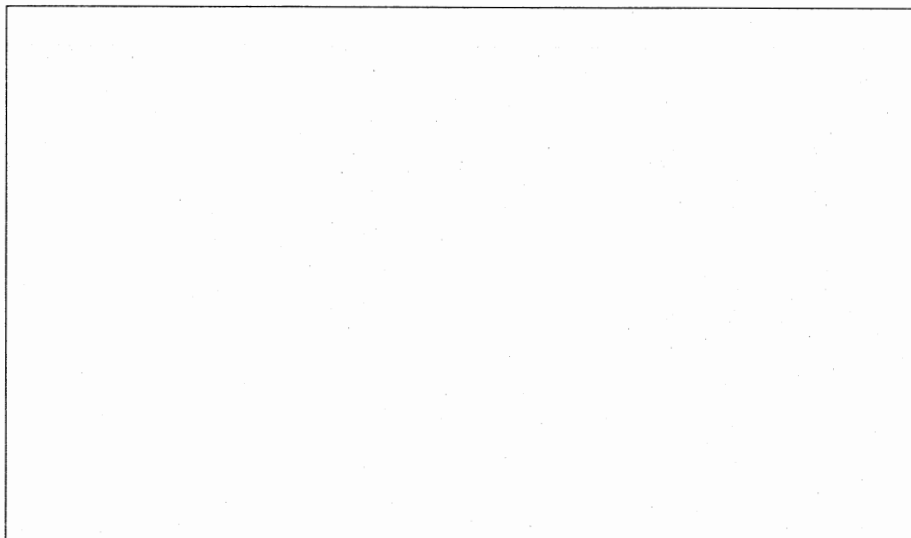
8. Explain how correct belief in *Qadar* results in spiritual security and stability. Support your answer with texts from the Qur'ān and Sunnah. (6 points)



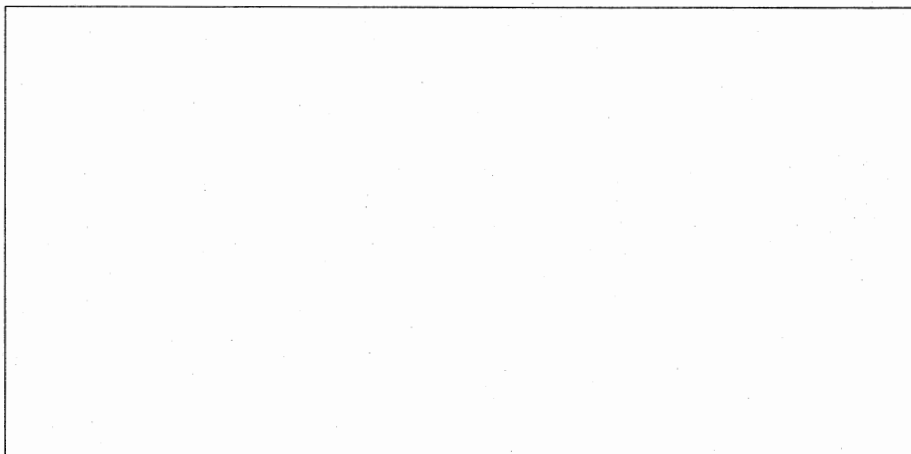
9. Explain how correct belief in *Qadar* results in true submission to Allāh. Support your answer with texts from the Sunnah. (6 points)



10. Explain how *istikhārah* is linked to correct belief in *Qadar*. (4 points)



11. Discuss two misconceptions that some people have about performing *istikhārah*. (4 points)



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ARABIC TERMS

A number of Arabic terms are frequently used in Islāmic discussions, and seem to constitute a basic vocabulary that needs to be available to the readers of most books on Islām. We attempt to provide such terms, together with their definitions, in the following “Glossary” section. Other terms pertinent to the current book are included in the “Index” section, together with a page-reference indicating where they are defined in this book.

A: Glossary of Common Terms

Term	Definition
<i>‘Abd</i>	Slave or servant. In reference to Allāh (ﷻ), it usually means a devout worshiper (as in ‘Abd Ullāh). But it frequently refers to a “human being” because every human being is subdued by Allāh (ﷻ) whether one admits it or not. Plural: <i>‘ibād</i> or <i>‘abīd</i> .
<i>Adab</i>	Good characters or manners; etiquettes. Plural: <i>Ādāb</i> .
<i>Al-Fātiḥah</i>	The first chapter of the Qur’ān.
<i>‘Ālim</i>	A scholar or learned man in Islām.
<i>‘Allāmah</i>	Exaggerated form of “ <i>‘ālim</i> ”.
<i>Āmīn</i>	Means, “O Allāh, answer my supplication.”
<i>Anṣār</i>	“The Supporters”: the residents of al-Madīnah who supported the Prophet (ﷺ) and the <i>muhājirūn</i> .

Term	Definition
‘ <i>Aṣr</i>	Afternoon. It is usually applied to the third daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from when the shadows are as long as the objects, until sunset.
<i>Athān</i>	Call to the prayer.
‘ <i>Awrah</i>	A weakness that needs covering or protection. In <i>fiqh</i> : the body-parts that must be covered from others.
<i>Āyah</i>	Literally means a miracle and a sign. The Qur’ān is a miracle in itself, and so is any portion of it. The smallest subdivision of the Qur’ānic text is thus called an <i>āyah</i> . An <i>āyah</i> is usually one sentence in length, but is sometimes longer or shorter than a complete sentence. The plural of <i>āyah</i> is <i>āyāt</i> .
<i>Āyāt</i>	Plural of <i>āyah</i> .
<i>Biḍāh</i>	Innovation in the creed or in acts of worship.
<i>Dā’wah</i>	Call or mission.
<i>Dīn</i>	Religion. It is usually used in reference to the religion of Islām.
<i>Dīnār</i>	A valuable old currency that was made of gold.
<i>Dirham</i>	A low-value old currency that was made of silver or copper.
<i>Du‘ā</i>	Supplication.
<i>Fajr</i>	Dawn. It usually applies to the first daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from dawn until sunrise.
<i>Farḍ</i>	Obligation.

Term	Definition
<i>Fard Kifāyah</i>	A communal obligation: if some Muslims perform it, the obligation is considered fulfilled by all; and if none does, all Muslims are considered sinful.
<i>Fard ‘Ayn</i>	An individual obligation, i.e., an obligation that each individual must fulfill.
<i>Fatwā</i>	A religious verdict; plural: <i>fatāwā</i> or <i>fatāwī</i> .
<i>Fiqh</i>	The ability to understand and derive conclusions from the available evidence. It is often applied to the subject of “Islāmic jurisprudence” that deals with the practical regulations in Islām.
<i>Fitnah</i>	Trial, test, temptation, or affliction.
<i>Ghayb</i>	All knowledge that is beyond the reach of human perception.
<i>Ghusl</i>	A ritual bath required after intercourse, ejaculation, or after a woman becomes clean from her menses.
<i>Ḥadīth</i>	Reports of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) sayings, actions, and approvals.
<i>Ḥajj</i>	Pilgrimage to Makkah.
<i>Ḥalāl</i>	Permissible.
<i>Ḥalqah</i>	A circle or ring. It normally refers to a study circle.
<i>Ḥarām</i>	Prohibited.
<i>Ḥasan</i>	Good or acceptable. This is usually mentioned when indicating the degree of authenticity of some reports.
<i>Hijāb</i>	Cover. It usually refers to a woman’s clothing that covers all of her body except her face and hands.

Term	Definition
<i>Hijrah</i>	Migration. It usually refers to migration from Makkah to al-Madīnah.
‘ <i>Īd</i>	A day of celebration in Islām. There are two annual ‘ <i>īds</i> (<i>al-fiṭr</i> and <i>al-Adḥā</i>) and one weekly ‘ <i>īd</i> (the day of <i>Jumū‘ah</i>).
<i>Ijmā‘</i>	Consensus of the scholars.
<i>Ijtihād</i>	Exerting <i>juhd</i> (maximum possible effort) to reach the right conclusion based on the available evidence.
<i>Imām</i>	A leader or distinguished Islāmīc scholar. It is often applied to the leader of prayer.
<i>Īmān</i>	Belief or conviction.
‘ <i>Ishā‘</i>	Night. It is usually applied to the fifth and last daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from the disappearance of the red light in the horizon until the middle of the night (which is half way between sunset and dawn).
<i>Isnād</i>	Chain of narrators of a <i>ḥadīth</i> .
<i>Jāhiliyyah</i>	The era of extreme ignorance (<i>jahl</i>) and disbelief that preceded the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).
<i>Jamā‘ah</i>	A Muslim congregation or gathering. It is often applied to the congregational prayers. <i>Al-Jamā‘ah</i> (the <i>Jamā‘ah</i>) refers to the original community of the <i>ṣaḥābah</i> and their true followers through the ages.
<i>Janāzah</i>	A funeral or a deceased’s prepared body.
<i>Jannah</i>	The Garden (of paradise).
<i>Jihād</i>	Striving or fighting for Allāh’s cause.

Term	Definition
<i>Jinn</i>	An invisible creation that Allāh (ﷻ) made from fire and smoke, sometimes translated as “demon”. Satan is one of the <i>jinns</i> .
<i>Jumu‘ah</i>	Friday. It also applies to the Friday prayer.
<i>Kāfir</i>	A person who practices <i>kufr</i> . Plural: “ <i>kuffār</i> ”.
<i>Khalīfah</i>	Derives from <i>khalafa</i> , which means “succeeded” or “followed”. It commonly refers to a Muslim ruler who succeeded the Prophet (ﷺ) in leading the Muslims. Plural: <i>khulafā’</i> .
<i>Khamr</i>	Alcoholic beverages.
<i>Khilāfah</i>	Successorship. It usually refers to the period of rule of a <i>khalīfah</i> .
<i>Kufr</i>	Disbelief or rejection of faith.
<i>Khuṭbah</i>	Speech or sermon.
<i>Maghrib</i>	Sunset. It is usually applied to the fourth daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from sunset until the red light disappears from the horizon.
<i>Makrūh</i>	An act that is disapproved in Islām.
<i>Maḥram</i>	A person who is closely related to another in such a way as to be permanently prohibited from marrying him or her. This relationship results from blood, suckling, or marriage ties. A woman’s <i>maḥrams</i> are: her father, grandfather, sons, grandsons, brothers, immediate paternal and maternal uncles, father-in-law, sons-in-law, suckling sons, suckling brothers, etc. Examples of non- <i>maḥrams</i> : first cousins, step brothers, brothers-in-law, etc.

Term	Definition
<i>Masjid</i>	A place designated for <i>sujūd</i> . It usually refers to a mosque.
<i>Mathhab</i>	Way or approach. It usually refers to one of the four Islāmic schools of <i>fiqh</i> established by the Four <i>Imāms</i> : Abū Ḥanīfah an-Nu'mān Bin Thābit, Mālik Bin Anas, Muḥammad Bin Idrīs ash-Shāfi'ī, and Aḥmad Bin Ḥanbal — May Allāh bestow His mercy on them all.
<i>Minbar</i>	Steps (normally three) mounted by an <i>imām</i> in a <i>masjid</i> for delivering a <i>khuṭbah</i> .
<i>Muhājir</i>	A migrator — one who undertakes <i>hijrah</i> . Plural: <i>muhājirūn</i> or <i>muhājirīn</i> . It usually refers to a <i>ṣaḥābī</i> who migrated from Makkah to al-Madīnah.
<i>Mujāhid</i>	A person who performs <i>jihād</i> . Plural: <i>mujāhidūn</i> or <i>mujāhidīn</i> .
<i>Munkar</i>	Disapproved; rejected.
<i>Muṣallā</i>	A place designated for <i>ṣalāh</i> . Most commonly, it applies to the grounds where the prayers of 'īd and <i>janāzah</i> are performed.
<i>Mushrik</i>	A person who practices <i>shirk</i> .
<i>Nafl</i>	Extra, voluntary, or supererogatory deeds.
<i>Qadar</i>	Allāh's decree and measure.
<i>Qiblah</i>	The direction of al-Ka'bah in Makkah.
<i>Qudusī</i>	Holy. A <i>qudusī ḥadīth</i> is a <i>ḥadīth</i> that the Prophet (ﷺ) quoted from his Lord (ﷻ).
<i>Rak'ah</i>	A full prayer unit, containing one <i>rukū'</i> . Plural: <i>rak'āt</i> .

Term	Definition
<i>Ramaḍān</i>	The month of fasting. It is the ninth month of the Islāmic lunar calendar.
<i>Rukūʿ</i>	The act of bowing in the prayer. It derives from the verb <i>rakaʿa</i> which means “bowed down”.
<i>Ṣadaqah</i>	Charity.
<i>Ṣaḥābah</i>	The Prophet's companions; singular: <i>ṣaḥābī</i> .
<i>Ṣaḥīḥ</i>	True or authentic.
<i>Salaf</i>	The early righteous pioneers and scholars of Islām—the <i>ṣaḥābah</i> and their true followers.
<i>Ṣalāh</i>	The prayer.
<i>Salām</i>	Peace. It also means the greeting with peace (<i>as-salāmu ʿalaykum</i>) among the Muslims.
<i>Sanad</i>	Same as <i>isnād</i> .
<i>Shahādah</i>	Testimony; it is mostly applied to the testimony of Islām: “There is no true deity but Allāh, and Muḥammad is Allāh’s Messenger.” Also, it is often applied to the most truthful form of physical testimony, which is martyrdom in Allāh’s (ﷺ) cause.
<i>Shahīd</i>	A person martyred for Allāh’s cause. Feminine: <i>Shahīdah</i> .
<i>Shām</i>	General Middle-East area of Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, including the major cities of Jerusalem and Damascus.

Term	Definition
<i>Sharʿ</i> or <i>Sharīʿah</i>	Derive from <i>sharaʿa</i> , which means “legislated”. They are usually used in reference to the Islāmic Law. “ <i>Sharʿī</i> ” means a legislated or permissible matter in Islām. And “ <i>ash-Shāri</i> ” is the Legislator: Allāh (ﷻ).
<i>Shaykh</i>	Literally means an old man. It is commonly used as a title of respect for a man of better Islāmic knowledge. It is also used in some Arab countries as a title of authority similar to “prince”.
<i>Shayṭān</i>	Satan.
<i>Shirk</i>	Polytheism, ascribing divinity to other than Allāh, or joining partners with Him in worship. A pagan or a person who practices <i>shirk</i> is a <i>mushrik</i> .
<i>Ṣiyām</i>	Fasting.
<i>Sujūd</i>	The act of prostration in the prayer.
Sunnah	Way, guidance, or teachings. Most commonly, it refers to the Prophet’s (ﷺ) way and guidance.
<i>Sūrah</i>	Qurʿānic chapter.
<i>Tābiʿī</i>	Literally, follower. It normally refers to a disciple of the <i>ṣaḥābah</i> . Plural: <i>tābiʿūn</i> or <i>tābiʿīn</i> .
<i>Tafsīr</i>	Qurʿānic commentaries and interpretations.
<i>Takbīr</i>	Saying, “ <i>Allāhu Akbar</i> — Allāh is the greatest.”
<i>Tahlīl</i>	Saying, “ <i>Lā ilāha illallāh</i> — There is no true god except Allāh.”
<i>Taqlīd</i>	Imitation, especially without knowledge.
<i>Taqwā</i>	Fearing and revering Allāh.

Term	Definition
<i>Tasbīh</i>	Saying, “ <i>Subhān Allāh</i> — Exalted is Allāh.”
<i>Tashahhud</i>	Pronouncing the <i>Shahādah</i> . It is mostly applied to the part of the prayer where one sits, pronounces the <i>Shahādah</i> , invokes <i>ṣalāh</i> upon the Messenger, and supplicates.
<i>Tayammum</i>	A symbolic ablution performed by wiping clean dust, instead of water, over the hands (to the wrists) and face.
<i>Taslīm</i>	Saying <i>salām</i> , especially to conclude the prayer.
<i>Tawhīd</i>	Belief in Allāh’s oneness — that He is the only Creator and Lord of the creation, He is the only God who deserves to be worshiped, and He possesses the most excellent and perfect attributes.
<i>Thikr</i>	Remembering Allāh and mentioning Him.
‘ <i>Ulamā</i> ’	Plural of “ <i>‘ālim</i> ”.
<i>Ummah</i>	Community, nation, or followers.
<i>Wahy</i>	Revelation or inspiration.
<i>Wājib</i>	Obligatory or required.
<i>Witr</i>	Odd numbered. The entire night prayer is sometimes called <i>witr</i> because the total number of its <i>rak‘āt</i> is odd.
<i>Wuḍū</i>	Ablution for the prayer. It consists of rinsing the mouth, blowing the nose, washing the face, washing the forearms to the elbows, wiping over the head (including the ears), and washing the feet up to the ankles.
<i>Zakāh</i>	Obligatory charity.
<i>Zinā</i>	Adultery or fornication.

Term	Definition
<i>Zuhr</i>	Noon. It is usually applied to the second daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from the sun's crossing the zenith until the time when the shadows are as long as the objects.

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