

# Tafseer Ayat Al-Kursi

By

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Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen**

(May Allah have Mercy Upon Him)

With Related Points of Benefit  
From the Shaykh's Commentary on  
Imam Ibn Taymeeyah's  
*Sharhul 'Aqeedatil-Waasitiyyah*

Prepared by  
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All Praise is due to Allah. We praise Him, and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah, Most High, from the evils of our own selves and from our wicked deeds. Whomever Allah guides cannot be misguided, and whomever He leads astray cannot be guided. I testify that there is no true God worthy of being worshipped except Allah, alone, without partner or associate. I further testify that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger. May Allah's *salaah* and *salaam* also be granted to the Prophet's pure family and to all of his noble companions.

**O you who believe! Fear Allah** [by doing all that He ordered and abstaining from all that He forbade] **as He should be feared** [obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always] **and die not except in a state of Islam.** [Qur'an, *Surat Aal-'Imraan* (3:102)].

**O mankind! Be dutiful to your Rabb<sup>1</sup>** [Allah], **Who created you from a single person** [Adam] **and from him** [Adam] **He created his wife** [Eve], **and from them both He created many men and women.** **And fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual** [rights] **and** [do not cut the relations of] **the wombs** [kinship]. **Surely, Allah is ever an All-Watcher over you.** [Qur'an, *Surat An-Nisaa'* (4:1)].

**O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak** [always] **the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has indeed achieved a great success.** [Qur'an, *Surat Al-Ahzaab* (33:70-71)].

It proceeds that the most truthful speech is that of Allah's Book [the Qur'an] and that the best of guidance is that of Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) The worst of evils are the *muhdathaat* (newly-invented matters [in the *deen*]<sup>2</sup>), and every innovated matter (in the *deen*) is a *bid'ah*; every *bid'ah* is a *dalaalah* (misguidance), and every *dalaalah* is in the Fire of Hell.

## INTRODUCTION

Know, O' Muslims, may Allah bestow upon us from His Mercy, that knowledge is the basis for the understanding and application of Islamic principles and laws. This is in accordance with the sayings of Allah, the Exalted:

**So know** [O' Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him)] **that la ilaaha illaAllah** [none has the right to be worshipped but Allah]. [Qur'an, *Surat Muhammad* (47:19)].

In a related context, the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) affirmed that:

<sup>1</sup> **Rabb:** Allah is **Ar-Rabb**. He is the One Who gave all things the power to grow, to move and to change, to Whom belongs the Creation and Commandment; the Master Who has no equal in His Sovereignty, Predominance, and Highness, The One Who Provides for and Sustains all that exists.

<sup>2</sup> **Deen:** The practical and doctrinal aspects of *deen* are more comprehensive than the Western concept of religion. The *deen* of Islam is the way of life prescribed by Allah.

**"He upon whom Allah intends goodness, He confers upon him a true understanding and keen insight into the deen,"** and [in the narration by Imam Al-Bukhaari], he (Peace and blessings be upon him) said: **"Truly knowledge is attained by learning."**<sup>3</sup>

Imam Al-Bukhaari commented: "So Allah stated that one should acquire knowledge first, and scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets (i.e. they inherit knowledge)." He added: "It is essential to know a thing first before saying or acting upon it."<sup>4</sup>

Imam ibnul Qayyim said: "The *salaf* did not generalize the name '*fiqh*' except on the knowledge which is associated with action." He further added: "*al-'ilm imaamul-'amal* (Knowledge is the Imam of actions) and its leader, and *al-'amal* is adherent to knowledge and is led by it. Every action which is not led by knowledge is of no benefit for the one who initiates it. On the contrary, it inflicts harm upon him, just as some of the *salaf* said "Whoever worships Allah without knowledge, the mischief he causes is more than the goodness he may bring about." He also stressed that: "Deeds vary with respect to their acceptance or rejection respectively depending upon their adherence or opposition to knowledge. Action which is in accordance with *'ilm* is an approved thing, and what opposes *al-'ilm* is repudiated. Knowledge, therefore, is the measure and is the test. Allah said:

[Blessed be Allah] **Who has created death that He may test you as to which of you is best in deeds, and He is al-'Azeez** [Who subdues everything by His Might; the Mighty in His Revenge; the Unapproachable, none will prevail against Him; none is like unto Him], **al-Ghafoor** [The One Who is Oft-Forgiving]. [Qur'an, *Surat Al-Mulk* 67:2].

Al-Fudail bin 'Iyaad explained that, "The best of deeds are those which are done with sincerity [seeking Allah's Face] and are upright." They said, "What is considered sincere and right of the deeds?" He replied, "Deeds which are sincere but not correct are not accepted, and if they are correct but not sincere then they are also not accepted, until they are sincere and right. In order to be sincere, they must be done for Allah alone, and for them to be correct, they must comply with the [authentic] *sunnah*. Indeed Allah, Most High, says:

**Whoever hopes for the meeting of his Rabb let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Rabb** [Allah]. [Qur'an, *Surat Al-Kahf* 18:110].

The doer will not be able to act in a way which comprises both qualities (sincerity and rightness) except by the way of knowledge. *For if he does not know what the Messenger* (Peace and blessings be upon him) *brought, he will not be able to follow him in the straight way. On the other hand, if he does not know of the One Who deserves to worshipped alone [Allah], he will be unable to seek Him solely.*"<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Reported by Al-Bukhaari, *Saheeh Al-Bukhaari* (Arabic/English), vol. 2, p. 59, and by Muslim in his *Saheeh* (English Translation), vol. 2, no. 2258.

<sup>4</sup> See *Saheeh Al-Bukhaari* (Arabic/English), vol. 2, chapter 11, p. 59.

<sup>5</sup> Imaam Ibnul Qayyim in his book *Muftaah Daarus Sa'aadah* [al-Khobar, Saudi Arabia: Daar Ibn 'Affaan (1st.ed; checked by Shaykh 'Ali Hasan 'Abdul Hameed al-Halabi al-Athari), 1416/1966], vol. 1, pp. 301-303.

In the absolute sense, what is meant by *al-'ilm* (knowledge) is the Islamic knowledge, based upon *kitaabullaah* [the Book of Allah, the Qur'an], and the authentic *sunnah* in accordance with the understanding and methodology (*manhaj*) of *as-salaf as-saalih* Shaykh 'Abdul 'Azeez bin Baaz (*hafithahullaah*: May Allah preserve him) explained: "When generalized, *al-'ilm*, pertains to the intended knowledge in the Book of Allah and the *sunnah* of His Messenger (Peace and blessings be upon him). It is knowledge of Allah, His Names and Attributes, knowledge of His rights over His creation, and what He (*subhaanahu wata'aala*: Far is He removed from every imperfection, the Most High) has prescribed for them. And it is the detailed knowledge of the path that leads to Allah; knowledge of the purpose of our creation, and the final outcome, in the Hereafter, which the *'ibaad*<sup>6[7]</sup> will ultimately wind up in...It is of the duty of *taalib al-'ilm* (the student seeking knowledge) to understand and study the *deen*, to learn and reflect upon what Allah has prescribed, to know the authentic *salafi 'aqeedah* which the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) was upon, his companions, and their follower in righteousness..."<sup>7</sup>

The greatest, most excellent "and most honorable knowledge is that of Allah, Most High, His Names, Attributes, and Actions, the knowledge of His *deen* and of His Messenger (Peace and blessings be upon him) with love and magnification, being pleased with it all."<sup>8</sup>

The ranks of people with respect to this knowledge varies to a great extent. "Some people know of Allah by virtue of His Generosity, Bounties, and Favors, others know of Him through His Forgiveness, Clemency, and Pardoning, others through His Knowledge and Wisdom, others recognize Him by His Might and Majesty, others by His Mercy, Goodness, Kindness, and Courtesy, others by His Subduing and Sovereignty, and others by the fact that He answers their supplications, and fulfills their needs, and relieves their grief.

The one who is most comprehensive in his knowledge of Allah, knows of Him by means of His own Words. He knows a *Rabb* to whom belongs the Most Majestic and Perfect Attributes. Far is He removed from having anything comparable to Him or any equal; free from all kinds of defects and imperfections; qualified with every beautiful Name and every perfect Attribute; Doer of what He

<sup>6</sup> *'Ibaad* (singular *'abd*, lit. "slave"). When generalized, *'ibaad* includes the believers and none-believers, the righteous and the wicked. This is the universal kind of *'uboodiyyah* (slavery) pertaining to the *ruboobiyyah* of Allah (He is the *Rabb* of all that exists). Accordingly, it is the submission to the what Allah has commanded and decreed in the creation, and this kind of submission is common to all creation, none is able to escape it. Allah (the Most High) said:

**There is none in the heavens and the earth will come to *ar-Rahmaan*** [The One Whose Mercy encompasses everything (Allah)] **on the Day of Resurrection as submissive slaves.** [Qur'an, *Surat Maryam* (19:93)].

The second kind of *'uboodiyyah* comprises the general obedience to Allah. It is specific to those who comply to the *sharee'ah* of Allah, He says:

**And the believing slaves of *ar-Rahmaan* are those who walk on the earth in humility and sedateness.** [Qur'an, *Surat Al-Furqaan* (25:63)].

The *'uboodiyyah* of the Messengers (*'alayhimu as-salaam*: May Allah protect them from all kinds of evil) is the very special slavery to Allah, Most High. None can compete with the Messengers' degree of *'uboodiyyah* to Allah.

<sup>7</sup> Bin Baaz, Shaykh 'Abdul 'Azeez *Al-'ilm Wa Akhlaaqu Ahlihi* [Riyaadh, Saudi Arabia: a special print compiled by Dr. Muhammad S. ash-Way'ir, 2d, ed. 1409/1988], pp. 302, 315. This important treatise was rendered into English by Br. 'Ahmar ibn Muhammad Iqbal and entitled *Knowledge* [Birmingham, U.K.: Al-Hidaayah Publishing & Distribution 1995].

<sup>8</sup> Ibnul Qayyim. See Ftn.6, vol. 1, pp. 291-292.

intends (wills); Above everything [*istawaa* (ascended) upon the ‘*arsh* above the seven heavens] and with everything [He encompasses everything with His Knowledge, Ability, Authority, and so forth from the meanings of His *ruboobiyyah*, while He is the Most High, above everything]; the One who is Able to do everything; the One Who manages the affairs of everything. He commands and forbids. He speaks the legislative (*deeniyyah*)<sup>9</sup> and universal (*kawniyyah*)<sup>10</sup> words. He is Greater than everything, and He is the Most Beautiful. The Most Merciful, the All-Able, the All-Wise.

Allah, Most High, sent down the Qur’an in order to inform His ‘*ibaad* about Himself, so that they know of Him, of the way that leads to Him, and of the status of travellers to Him after their arrival.”<sup>11</sup>

One of the great *suwar* [plural of *soorah* (chapter)] of the Qur’an that was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) is *Surat al-baqarah* (The second *soorah* of the Qur’an). In it is an *ayah* (verse) in which Allah, the Exalted, Speaks about Himself and His Attributes. This *ayah* is *ayatul-kursi*, which is highly distinguished because:

- (1) The Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) described as the greatest ayah in the Qur’an.
- (2) In it the Most Great Name of Allah (*ismullaahi al-’atham*) is mentioned.
- (3) It protects from the *shayateen* (sing. *shaytaan*).<sup>12</sup>
- (4) The believer who recites it following an obligatory *salaah* is under the Care and Protection of Allah until the commencement of the next prayer.<sup>13</sup>
- (5) **“The one who recites it after each of the obligatory prayers, then death will be the only thing [i.e. barrier] preventing him from entering al-Jannah.”**<sup>14</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *Deeniyyah*: Pertains to Allah’s *sharee’ah* (Commands and Prohibitions of the Islamic Code). It is also known as *al-iraaadah as-shar’iyyah* (Allah’s legislative Will).

<sup>10</sup> *Kawniyyah*: Relates to Allah’s Will in His creation. Everything He Wills is certain to pass, and everything He Wills not to pass, will never occur. None is able to escape Allah’s universal decree.

<sup>11</sup> Imaam ibnul Qayyim in his book *Al-Fawaa’id* [Dammaam, Saudi Arabia: Daar ibnul Jawzee (checked and reformatted by Shaykh ‘Ali Hasan ‘Abdul Hameed), 1417/1996], p. 396.

<sup>12</sup> As in the authentic and famous *hadeeth* reporting the encounter of Abu Hurayrah (May Allah be pleased with him) with the one of the *shayaateen*. See page 16.

<sup>13</sup> It is reported by at-Tabaraani that the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said: **“The one who recites *ayatul kursi* after the conclusion of an obligatory prayer, he is under the Care of Allah until the next prayer commences.”** See at-Tabaraani’s *At-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb* (2:435). Al-Haafith Al-Munthiri said, **“At-Tabaraani reported it with a good chain of narration.”** Al-Haythami stated the same conclusion (*Majma’ Az-Zawaa’id*, 10:109).

<sup>14</sup> This *hadeeth* is reported by At-Tabaraani, ibn as-Sunni, ibn Hibbaan, and others. Ibn Hibbaan graded it as *saheeh* in his book *As-Salaat*. Al-Haythami said: **“At-Tabaraani reported it in *Al-Kabeer* and *Al-Awsat* with different narrations, one of them is good.”** Al-Haafith ibn Hajar said, **“Its *isnaad* is *saheeh*...and ibnul Jawzee was inattentive when he reported it in his *Mawdoo’aat* (fabricated collection of *ahaadeeth*).”** Shaykh al-Albaani authenticated it in *As-Silsilah As-Saheehah* (vol.2, no.972) and said: **“Ibn Khatheer declared it as *saheeh* in his *tafseer* (exegesis).”** He noted that Shaykh-ul-Islam ibn Taymeeyah’s classification of this *hadeeth* as weak, as in his *Fatawaa* (22:508), **“Appears to be made at the stage when he was beginning to seek knowledge. In fact, his student Imaam ibnul Qayyim related that he (ibn Taymeeyah) was reported to have said, “I never relinquished [to recite] it after each [obligatory] *salaat*.”** After detailing the various reports regarding

Shaykh-ul-Islam ibn Taymeeyah said: “There is no single *ayah* in the Qur’an which includes that which is comprised in *aayatul-kursi*.”<sup>15</sup>

Because of the great importance of this *aayah*, I have decided, after making *istikhaarah*<sup>16</sup> to introduce the english-speaking Muslim communities to the *salaf’s tasfeer* of the Words of Allah in this noble *aayah*. In this regard, I found that an excellent summarized explanation of its meaning by Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy upon him) was published by Daar ibnul-Jawzi in Dammaam, KSA. I chose it because of the many major points of benefit it contains. Many other related beneficial points from the Shaykh’s discussions in other books or treatises<sup>17</sup> and from other discussions by the great *salafi* scholars are introduced.

I ask Allah, Most High, to make this effort sincerely for His Majestic Face, and that He grant the best reward to its author and the *salafi* scholars, and that He grants us a share of the reward for it, and that He makes it a benefit for all Muslims.

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this *hadeeth*, ibnul Qayyim commented, “It has its basis and it is not *mawdoo’* (fabricated).” [See ibnul Qayyim’s *Zaadul Ma’aad* (Beirut, Lebanon: Mu’assasatur-Risaalah (Checked by Shu’ayeb and ‘Abdul Qadir alArna’oot), 2d, ed. 1418/1997)], pp. 293-294.

<sup>15</sup> *Majmooi’ Al-Fatawaa*, vol. 17, p. 130.

<sup>16</sup> *Istikhaarah*: The special prayer composed of two *rak’ahs* followed by a specific *du’aa* (supplication) seeking Allah’s Guidance. The English meaning of this Prophetic *du’aa* is: “O my ilaah (Allah)! I ask your Guidance due to Your Knowledge, and appeal to You to help me [give me power] due to Your Ability, and ask You from Your Great Favor, for You are Able and I am not. You know and I do not know, and You know all hidden matters. O Allah! If You know that this matter [and you name it] is good for me in my deen [Islam], my livelihood, the aftermath of my matter [also said: for my life in the Hereafter], its short term, or its long term, then decree it for me, make it easy for me, and bestow blessing for me in it; and if You know that this matter [and you name it] is bad for me in my deen, my livelihood, the aftermath of my matter, its short term, and its long term, then keep it away for me, and turn me away from it, and decree for me the good where ever it is, and then content me with it.” A detailed reference on this great act of worship is found in *The Three Abandoned Prayers* by ‘Adnaan Aal ‘Ar’uoor.

<sup>17</sup> It is of paramount importance that the seekers of knowledge should try their best to review the scholarly works of the trusted *salafi ‘ulmaa’*. This helps to clarify what is generalized or not entirely clear in some of their statements. In addition it brings out points of benefit which otherwise may be missed. Unlike many so-called “scholars” whose books are filled with mystic terminology whose explanation, in the best cases, may contain truth and falsehood, the *‘ulamaa’* who follow the path of *as-salaf as-saalih* do not intend confusion for the *ummah*. However, they are human and may say and (or) write certain things which may need clarification or some detail. Often such clarifications and (or) details are present in other parts of their works and therefore should not be overlooked. It is also relevant that those working on translating the works of the *salafi* scholars give this issue the consideration it deserves. And Allah Knows best.



## The Words of Allah in Ayatul Kursi and the Translation of Their Meanings,

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي  
 السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ  
 مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ  
 وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ  
 الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٢٥٥﴾

**Allah!** [none has the right to be worshipped but He], **the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists. Neither slumber, nor sleep overtake Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His Permission? He knows what happens to them [His creatures] in this world, and what will happen to them in the Hereafter. And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills. His *kursi* extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, above everything, the Most Great.**

### Tafseer Ayatul Kursi

#### Prelude

All Praise is due to Allah, the *Rabb* of *al-'aalameen* (creation). I supplicate Allah to have His *salaah* and *salaam* upon our Prophet Muhammad, his household, and all of his companions.

It Proceeds that this [treatise] is the *tafseer* of *ayatul kursi* [Qur'an, *Surat Al-Baqarah* 2:255] presented together with points of benefit deduced from it in the course of establishing its explanation.

We ask Allah to make us benefit from the knowledge which He bestowed upon us, certainly He is *Al-Jawaad* (the One Who grants generously and loves generosity), *Al-Kareem* (the One Who is Bountiful and Gracious, and loves graciousness), *Al-Barr*,<sup>18</sup> *Ar-Raheem* (the One Who is Most Merciful

<sup>18</sup>

*al-Barr*: The One Who is Most Subtle, Kind, Courteous, and Generous; the One Who is ample in goodness and beneficence; Who gives manifold increase of reward to the righteous, and Who overlooks many of the faults of the wrongdoers with gracious forgiveness; whoever brings a good deed, Allah, *al-Barr*, rewards him ten times the like thereof to his credit, and whoever brings an evil deed He decrees for him only the recompense of the like thereof, and they will not be wronged. If somebody intends to do a good deed and he does not do it, then Allah, *al-Barr*, will write for him a full good deed in his account with Him; and if he intends to do a bad deed and he does not do it, then Allah will write a full good deed in his account with Him. He loves piety towards Him, goodness, justice, righteousness, honesty, truthfulness, benevolent regard or conduct to parents and others, as well as every incumbent duty.

Muhammad ibn Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen.

**[In the Name of Allah,<sup>19</sup> *ar-Rahmaan*<sup>20</sup> *ar-Raheem*<sup>21</sup>—I begin to write:]<sup>22</sup>**

## The Explanation of *Ayatul Kursi*

**[FIRST]: Allah's Saying:**

**“Allah, none has the right to be worshipped but He, The Ever-living, the One Who is established on His Own, Self-subsisting, by Whom all things subsist.”**

This *ayah* is the greatest *ayah* (verse) in the Book of Allah just as was ascertained in the response of Ubayy bin Ka'b (Abul-Munthir) to the Prophet's (Peace and blessings be upon him) question when he asked him: **“Which ayah in the Book of Allah is the greatest?”** He (Ubayy) replied: **“Aayatul-kursi.”**

<sup>19</sup>

Allah is the *'alam* (identifying name or title) of the majestic, sole, and true God. This noun which is the name of Allah applies to none other than Him. He, Most Majestic and High, has other names all of which follow on from His name Allah. The meaning of the name “Allah” is the *ma'looh* (that which is worshipped out of love, magnification, deification, and longing). [See Shaykh ibn 'Uthaymeen's *Sharhul 'Aqeedah Al-Waasityyah* (Dammaam, Saudi Arabia: Daar ibnul Jawzi, 2d ed. 1415/1994)], p. 38, and *Sharh Lum'at Al-'itiqaad* (Ismaa'eeliyyah, Egypt: Maktabat al-Imaam al-Bukhaari (checked by Ashraf Maqsood), 1412/1992)], p. 29.

<sup>20</sup>

*ar-Rahmaan* (The One Who is Most Merciful): This is one of Allah's particular names and which denotes the attribute of very great and extensive mercy which exists with Him. [See Imaam ibnul Qayyim's *Badaai' Al-Fawaa'id* (Beirut, Lebanon: Daarul Khayr, 1st ed. 1414/1994)], vol.1, pp.23-24, and Shaykh ibn 'Uthaymeen's *Sharhul 'Aqeedah Al-Waasityyah*, *ibid*.

<sup>21</sup>

*ar-Raheem* (The One Who Bestows Mercy): This name denotes that the attribute is related to the *marhoom* (i.e. the one whom Allah chooses to receive His *Rahmah* (Mercy)). So, the difference between *ar-Rahmaan* and *ar-Raheem* is that in the case of the former, *ar-Rahmah* is His attribute, and in the latter, *ar-Rahmah* is His act, meaning that He is the One Who bestows *ar-Rahmah* upon others. So, when both names come together [i.e. *ar-Rahmaan*, *ar-Raheem*], then the meaning in this context is that Allah's Mercy is very great and extensive, and that His Mercy reaches His creation. This is what is meant by those who say that *ar-Rahmaan* is the One Whose Mercy encompasses everything (general Mercy), and *ar-Raheem* is the One who has Mercy upon the believers (special Mercy). Since Allah's Mercy upon the *kaafir* is a special one in this life only, then it is as if they have no mercy upon them, because in the Hereafter when they will ask Allah to save them from Hell and admit being wrong, Allah will deal with them with His Justice, not His Mercy, Saying:

**“Remain you in it [Hell] with ignominy! And speak not to Me !”**

[Qur'an, *Soorat Al-Mu'minoon* 23:108]

The name *ar-Raheem* is applied to Allah and may be applied to others. Allah has described His Messenger Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) as *Raheem* (*Soorat At-Tawbah*, 9:128). Ibn Katheer said: **“Some of the names of Allah are restricted to Him only like the names: Allah, *ar-Rahmaan*, *al-Khaaliq*, *ar-Raaziq* and so forth. Some other names, however, may be applied to other than Him.”** [See *Badaai' Al-Fawaa'id*, p.24, *Sharhul 'Aqeedah Al-Waasityyah*, pp.38-39, *Lum'atul I'tiqaad*, p.29, *Tafseer ibn Katheer* (1:21), *Sharh Thalaathat Al-Usool* within Shaykh ibn 'Uthaymeen's *Majmoo Fatawaa* (Riyaadh, Saudi Arabia: Daar Ath-Thuraya, 1st ed. 1414/1993)], vol. 6, p. 11.

<sup>22</sup>

The author begins his treatise with the *basmalah* (*Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahmeem*) in adherence with the way of Allah in His Book and following the example of the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) who used to begin his letters with it. Given the aforementioned discussion of the meanings of the Names: Allah, *ar-Rahmaan*, and *ar-Raheem*, the meaning of the *basmalah* is: **“I begin [in this case “I begin to write”] seeking the help and the blessings of each and every name of the names of Allah whose very great and extensive mercy is His Attribute.”** [See *Lum'atul I'tiqaad*, p. 29.]



Thereupon he (Peace and blessings be upon him) struck him on his breast and said: **“May knowledge give you joy, O Abal-Munthir!”**<sup>23</sup>

That is why whoever recites it at night [before going to bed], Allah will appoint a guard for him and stay with him to protect him all night long, and no *shaytaan* will come near him till morning.<sup>24</sup> This *ayah* comprises ten sentences, each of which has a very great meaning. [In the beginning] Allah says:

**“Allah”**

The word **Allah** is the title particular to the Most High *thaat* (Essence), meaning the name particular to Allah, the Mighty and Magnificent, Himself.<sup>25</sup> This title applies to none other than Allah, whether in times of *jaahiliyyah* (pre-Islamic era) or times of Islam. For Allah is *Rabbul-aalameen* (The *Rabb* of all creation),<sup>26</sup> the Mighty and Majestic.

In the construct of the sentence, the term Allah is *mahatul-khabar* (the subject) of the rest of the sentence that follows or *mahatul-isnaad* (the term upon which the rest of the sentence is based). This word, the Majestic term “Allah” is the subject (*gram.*) and what comes after [from the attributes to the subject] is either the predicate (*gram.*) or its explicative apposition.

<sup>23</sup> The complete text in *Saheeh Muslim* is: Ubayy bin Ka’b (Abul-Munthir) said: “Allah’s Messenger (Peace and blessings be upon him) said: ‘**Ya Abal-Munthir! Do you know the ayah from the Book of Allah which, according to you, is the greatest?**’ I said: ‘Allah and His Messenger (Peace and blessings be upon him) know best. He again said: “**Ya Abal Munthir, do you know the verse from the Book of Allah which, according to you, is the greatest?**” I said: (Ayatul Kursi) Allah, none has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever-living, the One Who is established on His Own, Self-subsisting, by Whom all things subsist.’ Thereupon he struck me on my breast and said: **‘May knowledge give you joy, O Abal Munthir!’**” [See *Saheeh Muslim bi-Sharh Al-Imaam an-Nawawi* (Arabic) (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Ma’rifah, 1st ed. 1414/1994)], vol. 6, no. 1882, p. 334. This reference contains *Sahih Muslim* with a commentary by Imam an-Nawawi]

<sup>24</sup> This came in the famous *hadeeth* reported by al-Bukhaari in his *Saheeh* and which the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) assigned Abu Hurayrah to be in charge of the *Zakaat* revenue of the month of Ramadaan. Someone started to steal some of the foodstuff. When Abu Hurayrah took hold of him and threatened to take him to the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him), he said: “I am needy and have many dependents, and I am in great need.” Abu Hurayrah released him and told the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) of what happened. He (Peace and blessings be upon him) said, **“Indeed, he told you a lie and he will be coming again.”** Knowing that the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) says nothing but the truth, Abu Hurayrah waited for him watchfully. He caught him trying to steal again. He threatened him to take him to the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) but then released him when he complained of his great need and promised not to come again. The Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) told Abu Hurayrah, **“Verily, he told you a lie and he will return.”** He returned and was caught stealing for the third time. This time, however, he told Abu Hurayrah, “I will teach you some words with which Allah will benefit you.” I asked, “What are they?” He replied: “Whenever you go to bed, recite *ayatul-kursi* till you finish the whole verse. (If you do so), Allah will appoint a guard for you who will stay with you and no *shaytaan* will come near you till morning.” Upon telling the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) of this, he said: **“He really spoke the truth, although he is [absolutely] a liar. Do you know whom you were talking to, these three nights, O Abu Hurayrah?”** Abu Hurayrah said, “No.” He (Peace and blessings be upon him) said, **“It was a shaytaan.”** [See *Saheeh Al-Bukhaari* (Arabic/English), vol. 3, no. 504].

<sup>25</sup> The *thaat* is necessarily qualified with all of the superlative attributes of perfection.

<sup>26</sup> The One Who nurtures and sustains all the creation with His favors and blessings. He is the One Who created them, and He is the One Who possesses full and perfect sovereignty over them, He owns them and controls their affairs as He wishes and in accordance with His Knowledge, Wisdom, and Justice. Being the *Rabb* of all creation, He deserves, therefore, to be singled out for all worship. After all, He is the one who prepared them for that which they were created: To worship none but Him. He supported them with all of their needs, brought down for them the Revelation, and sent His Messengers to them so that they would be guided to His Path.

**The First *Hukm*** (judgment regarding a thing in relation to an attribute to its subject) in: Allah, *laa ilaaha illaa huwa*, is *laa ilaaha illa huwa*.

*Ilaah* means *ma'looh*, one who is worshipped out of love and magnification. None deserves this attribute except Allah, the One free of all imperfections and the Most High. All of the *aaliha*<sup>27</sup> (gods) besides Allah which are worshipped on earth or in the heavens, like the angels, do not deserve to be worshipped. They are called *aaliha* but they do not deserve the right which Allah, *Rabbul-'aalameen*, deserves.<sup>28</sup> [He said]:

**O Mankind! Single out your *Rabb* [Allah] with all worship; He Who created you and all those before you so that you may be of those attain *Taqwaa*;<sup>29</sup> He Who has made the earth a resting place for you, and the sky as a canopy, and sent down water [rain] from the sky and brought forth therewith fruits as a provision for you. Then do not set up rivals unto Allah [in worship] while you know [that He has no rival, and that He alone has the right to be worshipped].<sup>30</sup>** [Qur'an, *Surat Al-Baqarah*, 2:21-22].

The Word *ilaah* "that which is worshipped (*ma'bood*)," is a noun of [*laa*]. In this construct, *laa* is the negative which negates *jins*.<sup>31</sup> Here, it denotes the general and absolute negation of all sorts that fall under one kind. Itself being a text of generalization, then *laa ilaaha* is a pure, clear, and comprehensive negation of all sorts [of false gods].

And His saying: which means "Except Him," [grammatically] is a *badal* (substitute) for the omitted predict of which is a word understood in meaning but not stated in words, and which is necessary to complete the meaning; this word is *haqq* (truly and rightfully). Accordingly, the meaning by implication is:

[*laa ilaah illaa huwa*: None has the right to be worshipped (*laa ilaaha haqq*) except Allah (*illAllah*)].<sup>32</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *Aaliha* (sing. *ilaah*): Gods.

<sup>28</sup> Allah, Most High, said: **And invoke not any other *ilaah* (god) along with Allah, *laa ilaaha illaa huwa*** [none has the right to be worshipped but He]. **Everything will perish save His Face. His is the decision and to Him (all of) you shall be returned.** [Qur'an, *Surat Al-Qasas* (28:88)].

Ibn Taymeeyah in his *Fataawaa* (1:24) commented: "The one who worships other than Allah even though he loves [his deity] and seems to gain through it some kind of good relations and enjoyment in this life, it is certain that the harm inflicted upon him by this worship is greater than the harm resulting from the enjoyment of eating poisoned food."

<sup>29</sup> *Taqwaa*: Seeking to take protection from Allah's anger and punishment by doing whatever Allah commands and keeping away from whatever He forbids.

<sup>30</sup> Since He is the One Who created you and made available for you all kinds of provisions, then it is a necessary duty upon you that you should single Him out for all worship and set up no partners along with Him in worship.

<sup>31</sup> *Jins*: Kind, class, comprising under it several sorts.

<sup>32</sup> So, this omitted word *haqq* (truly and rightfully) makes it clear that, although there are other confirmed deities besides Allah these *aalihaa* [gods] which are worshipped besides Allah are false gods. They possess nothing of divinity, nor do they deserve any worship. [See Shaykh ibn 'Uthaymeen's *Majmoo' Fataawaa*, section on *Sharh Thalaathat Al-Usool* (Riyaadh, Saudi Arabia: Daar ath-Thurayya 1413)], vol.6, p. 66.

This great sentence: *Allahu laa ilaaha illa huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but Allah), signifies the emphatic and absolute negation of true divinity except to Allah alone.

### Regarding Allah's Saying:

#### “The Ever living, *al-Qayyoom*”

These are two of Allah's names which comprise the perfection of Attributes and Actions. The name: comprises the perfection of Attributes, and the perfection of Actions. The meaning is the one who possesses the perfect living. This is inferred from the <sup>33</sup> in which is grammatically used to denote [amongst other things]<sup>34</sup> the combination of all perfection [in properties and (or) applications in the term that it accompanies (*al-istighraaq*)].

This is also indicated in as far as existence and non-existence, and perfection and imperfection are concerned. In fact, if we consider man's life, we find it imperfect because it originates in 'adam (non-existence) and ends in 'adam.<sup>35</sup>

It is also imperfect as far as his attributes and actions are concerned. For his hearing, sight, sayings, and actions are all imperfect. As such, man's life is imperfect from all angles: in existence and 'adam, and with regard to the inseparable attributes of life itself. However, with respect to Allah, Most Mighty and Majestic, His life is perfect, neither preceded by 'adam nor coming to naught. Allah, Most High, says:

**And put your trust and reliance upon the One who is Ever Living, who does not die.**

[Qur'an, *Surat Al-Furqaan* 25:58]

He also said:

**Whatsoever is on it (the earth) will perish, and the Face of Your Rabb, full of Majesty and Honour, will abide forever.** [Qur'an, *Surat Ar-Rahmaan* 55:26-27]

That is why some of the *salaf* said: “The person should make a connection and not pause [when he recites the word perish in the above verse] because this signifies the right manner of perfection. The true aspect of Allah's perfection lies not only in the fact that creation will perish but also in the *baqaa'* (endless existence) of Allah, the Most Mighty and Most Majestic.

In addition, Allah's *hayaat* (Life) is one which is neither accompanied by annihilation nor by 'adam:

**Everything will perish save His Face.**

[Qur'an, *Surat al-Qasaa* 28:88]

<sup>33</sup> “*al*” is a particle of determination and specification.

<sup>34</sup><sup>[35]</sup> See Lane, E.W., *Arabic-English Lexicon* (Cambridge, England: Islamic Texts Society, 1984), vol. 1, p. 74.

<sup>35</sup> In the present world, otherwise man will end up in an eternal life in the Hereafter.

Indeed, to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, belongs the eternally- perfect Life.

Furthermore Allah's *hayaat* is characterized by the perfection of Attributes: hearing, sight, knowledge, ability, might and all qualities of perfection. That is why the particle which denotes *al-istighraaq* with regard to *baqaa'* (endless existence) and *al-kamaal* (perfection) was introduced.

**Regarding [Allah's] Saying: *al-Qayyoom***, its origin is the word *al-qiyaam*, and the measure of it is *fayy'ool* and it is a form of intensiveness. The name *al-Qayyoom* means the One Who is established on His Own, Self-subsisting, by Whom all things subsist.<sup>36</sup> Allah, the Most High, said:

**Is He (Allah) Who takes charge** (guards, maintains, provides, etc.) **of every person and know all that he has earned** (like any other deities who know nothing)? [Qur'an, *Surat Ar-Ra'd* 13:33].

Allah is established on His Own (*qaa'im bi-nafsihi*) as He, the Most High, says:

**And Allah is the Rich** (Free of all wants), **worthy of all praise**. [Qur'an, *Surat At-Taghaabun* 64:6]

So, Allah is absolutely free of any need from all creation. He is Self-subsisting. He needs not food nor drink, for He is the One Who feeds but is not fed. He needs not a supporter, nor a helper, nor a deputy, nor an advisor. He is established in perfection by Himself.

If someone says, "How do we reconcile the above meaning of *al-Qayyoom* with the saying of Allah, the Most High:

**O you who believe! If you "help Allah," He will help you.** [Qur'an, *Surat Muhammad* 47:7],

and His saying:

**Verily Allah will help those who "help Him"?**

[Qur'an, *Surat Al-Hajj* 22:40]

What is meant by His affirmation that He "is being helped"? The answer is that the intended meaning is help in the cause of Allah's *deen*, for He is the One Who is in full charge of all things. So, everything other than Allah is dependent upon Him in existence, preparation of affairs, and sustenance.

**[SECOND]: In His Saying: Neither slumber, nor sleep overtakes Him**, Allah did not say (what means): "He does not sleep," instead He said: (which means) "does not overtake Him" in order to comprise the sleep which overcomes and that arising by choice. If you say, "Does not sleep," it would imply that He does not sleep by choice. However, Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, does not sleep neither by *ghalabah* (overcoming) nor by choice, because sleep is an imperfect attribute which contradicts both the perfection of the Self and the perfection in relation to others.

<sup>36</sup>

He sustains, protects, prepares, and runs the affairs of all things as He wills in accordance with His Knowledge, Wisdom, and Justice.

The person who is given to sleep misses a lot of his work because of His sleeping. Consider, for example, the case of a person who has many people working for him and he sleeps a lot. He is unable to reckon with nor manage the business or other related matters. This is an imperfection with respect to others.

As regard to self-perfection, sleep is a deficiency because it indicates that the person's body got tired and thus he needed the sleep as a rest from what has passed, as well as a means to renew his activity to engage in what will come ahead. That is the why the people of *al-Jannah* do not sleep—because of the perfection of their lives and bodies. No illness or the like touches them.

If someone says, “*We know that the person who does not sleep is unable to do so because of some kind of sickness or a defect, while you say that the lack of sleep is a perfection? Explain.*”

We say, “This applies to the creature, and in this case perfection is a relative matter [with respect to Allah it is perfection]. There is no doubt that the person who does not sleep because of an illness has a defect, and that is why he stays always in a state of languor and exhaustion. Thus his welfare will not be established. This is evident from the saying of Allah, the Most High:

**And have made your sleep as a thing for rest**

[Qur'an, *Surat An-Naba'* 78:9]

Meaning that sleep is something that will discontinue the hardship and tiredness. If Allah would sleep, and far is He above such imperfection, then this would necessitate that He needs to rest. In addition, the creation will be ruined because they are in need of Him; even the sleeping person is in need of Allah. In fact, the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) used to invoke Allah at night when he was about to sleep:

“If you take my soul, bestow mercy on it [and forgive it, as in another narration], and if You release it then protect it as You protect your righteous slaves.”<sup>37</sup>

In short, it is impossible that Allah, the One free of all imperfections and the Most High, sleeps. The Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"Verily Allah does not sleep and it does not befit Him to sleep."<sup>38</sup>

The words [does not befit] when used in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* means “the thing which is absolutely impossible to be,” as Allah said:

**But it is not befitting for** (the Majesty of) *ar-Rahmaan* (Allah) **that He should beget a son** (or offspring or children). [Qur'an, *Surat Maryam* 19:92]

[It should be noted] that Allah's saying:

<sup>37</sup>[38] Reported by Al-Bukhaari, *Saheeh Al-Bukhaari* (Arabic/English), vol. 8, no. 332.

<sup>38</sup>[39] *Saheeh Muslim* (English Translation), vol. 1, no. 343.

### Neither slumber, nor sleep overtakes Him,

signifies *as-sifaat as-salbiyyah* (attributes of negation: negating any imperfection and implying perfection). The rule with respect to the Names and Attributes of Allah, the Most High, is that there is no such thing as a pure attribute of negation.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, when *as-sifaat as-salbiyyah* are mentioned, it is because they imply the perfection of the attributes which are in contradiction to those of negation.<sup>40</sup> So, because of the Perfection of Allah's Life and *qayyumiyyah*,<sup>41</sup> then neither slumber nor sleep overtake Him.<sup>42</sup>

[THIRD]: In the Third statement, Allah said:

**To Him belongs whatever (*maa*) is in the heavens<sup>43</sup> and whatever is on the earth.**

The name "*maa*" here is a conjunctive noun (gram. *ism mawsool*) taking a form of generalization. The term is used in this form in order to indicate that it comprises both the beings and their states. The meaning, therefore, is that Allah is the One Who masters the affairs of everything in existence in the heavens and the earth: creating, sovereignty-kingship, and management;

<sup>39</sup> This is because mere negation does not denote any attribute, and therefore it is not considered a praise. In addition, the attributes of negation are of two kinds:

1. General, and
2. Specific.

The meaning of generality in negation is that Allah, Most High, negates all imperfections implicitly denoting that all Perfection is His. For example: Allah, the Exalted, says: [which means], "**There is nothing like unto Him.**" So, there is nothing unto Him in His Knowledge, Ability, Hearing, Seeing, Might, Wisdom, Mercy, and so forth. In this general negation, Allah ﷻ did not specify the negation. Accordingly all imperfections are denied and all perfections are denoted, and it is stated that there is **nothing like unto Him** in all of His Perfection.

On the other hand, the specificity in negation is to negate specific allegations of imperfection. For example to deny that defects and drawbacks like forgetfulness, sleep, ignorance, havin son or partner, etc. are associated with Allah, the Exalted. Again, the Perfection is implied as against the negation. [See Shaykh ibn 'Uthaymeen's *Sharhul Waasitiyyah*], vol. 1, pp. 145-146.

<sup>40</sup> For example, the negation of ignorance stands for the affirmation of Allah's unlimited knowledge. The negation of death, which is in contradiction of life, implies the perfection of Allah's attribute of Life.

<sup>41</sup> *Qayyumiyyah*: The Attribute denoted by Allah's Name *al-Qayyoom*.

<sup>42</sup> The Perfection of His Life negates that Allah needs to sleep and the same is also due to the Perfection of His *qayyumiyyah*, as sleep is needed by the created living creatures due to their imperfection. Although sleeping and eating may be considered as attributes of perfection with respect to man, as a person who does not sleep or eat is considered ill, they are perfection from one angle and defects from another. They are perfection in the sense that they indicate that the body is sound and healthy, and are defects because the body needs them to function. In reality, therefore, they are defects. Accordingly, not every relative perfection in the creature is a perfection for the Creator, and not every Perfection associated with the Creator is a perfection in the created. Eating, drinking and sleeping are relative "perfection" with respect to the creature and negated defects with respect to Allah. That is why Allah, the Most High, said about Himself:

**And it is He (Allah) Who feeds and is not fed.**

[Qur'an, *Soorat Al-An'aam* (6:14)].

<sup>43</sup> From the angels, *jinn*, and all that which exists, including which we have no knowledge of.



The sentence, “**To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth,**” is a declarative clause in which the predicate (gram. *khobar*) “To Him” has preceded the subject (gram. *mubtada*) which is the conjunctive noun: “Whatever”. In this way, there is a grammatical state of *hasr* (exclusivity, restriction) which signifies that to Him (Allah) alone belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. Accordingly, since creating, sovereignty-kingship, and management of affairs belong to Allah alone, it is incumbent that we should surrender to Him alone because we are His slaves, and a slave must surrender to the One Who Owns and Masters him, Allah, the One free of all imperfection, the Most High.

In addition, we must stand persevere Allah’s pre-decree because we are His possession, and anything which is owned by Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, then it follows that is His right to administer its affairs as He Wills. This right is the same whether His pre-decree applies to the person himself, his family, wealth, friends, country, or the rest of mankind. The important thing is that since the dominion belongs to Allah, then it is His exclusive right to do whatever He Wills.

In the saying of Allah (which means), “**To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth,**” the term “heavens” came in the plural form<sup>44</sup> while the word “earth” was stated in the singular though what is meant is the plural. In this regard, the intended usage of the term “earth” refers to the *jins* (kind).

**[FOURTH]: In the fourth statement, Allah, the Most High, said:**

#### **Who is it that can interceded with Him except with His Permission?**

The word “Who” is an interrogative noun<sup>45</sup> and the intended use of the interrogation in the sentence is to assert the negation [that there is none who can intercede] as evident in the affirmation phrase which followed it: “**Except with His Permission.**” Whenever a negation takes the form of an interrogative construct, then the statement is infused with the meaning of challenge.

**The Intercession** (*Ash-Shafaa’ah*):

Regarding the saying of Allah, the Most High: “**Intercedes,**” know that:

- 1 . Linguistically, the term “*shafaa’ah*” means to make an odd number an even one.<sup>46[47]</sup>
- 2 . Traditionally, it refers to the laying of a petition (interceding, mediating) with someone in favor of another, in procuring a benefit or warding off a harm. Thus the *shafaa’ah* of the Prophet

<sup>44</sup> The Qur’an has stated that there are seven heavens:

**Say: Who is the *Rabb* of the seven heavens and the *Rabb* of the great ‘arsh?** [Qur’an, *Surat Al-Mu’minoos* 23:86]

<sup>45</sup> In the grammatical sense the Arabic pronoun “man” is the subject, and the term “*thaa*” is omitted for being redundant. The term “*he that*” is a relative pronoun standing as the predicate of the subject “*Who*”. [Author’s note]

<sup>46</sup> Allah said: [which means], **And by the *shaf’a* (even) and the *witr* (odd)** [of all the creations of Allah], [Qur’an *Surat Al-Fajr* 89:3]

(Peace and blessings be upon him) for *ahlul-mawqif*<sup>47</sup> after the worry and distress which befalls them and which they are unable to bear is an intercession to ward off a harm. On the other hand, the Prophet's *shafaa'ah* for *ahlul-Jannah*<sup>48</sup> to enter *al-Jannah* is aimed at procuring a benefit.

### 3. None can intercede except by Allah's Permission:

His Leave is *kawni*.<sup>49</sup> Even Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) who has the greatest rank with Allah cannot intercede except with the prior leave from Allah. He will be granted this permission after he (Peace and blessings be upon him) prostrates before Allah and praises Him with the great praises and glorifications which Allah guides him to it on that day. Then it will be said:

**“Raise your head and speak; you will be listened to, intercede and your intercession will be accepted.”**<sup>50</sup>

[It is known] that no one have a rank with Allah greater than that of the Messenger [Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him)], nevertheless, he (Peace and blessings be upon him) cannot intercede except with the prior leave of Allah. It is so because of Allah, Most Majestic and Most High's, perfection of Authority and *hayybah*.<sup>51</sup> The more a king's authority becomes fully established, the more reverent and respected he becomes. People would not even speak in his court unless he speaks. Consider the Prophet's (Peace and blessings be upon him) relation with his companions and which Quraysh's<sup>52</sup> emissary [‘Urwah bin Mas’oud] described [after finalizing the treaty of Al-Hudaybiyah]:

**“And when they spoke to him they would lower their voices.”**<sup>53</sup>

All of this is out of respect. You find that if a king is revered by his flock then no one can speak in his court and in his presence because of the might of his authority.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>47</sup> *Ahlul-Mawqif*: All human beings gathered on one plane on the Day of Resurrection awaiting their accounts to be taken by Allah. The Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said, **“The sun will come so close to the people that they will suffer such distress and trouble as they will not be able to tolerate it or to bear it.”** The Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) intercedes with Allah to pronounce His Judgment among the people of *al-mawqif*. They will be relieved from their long standing by virtue of his interceding with Allah on their behalf. [See *Saheeh Al-Bukhaari* (Arabic/English)], vol. 6, no. 236.

<sup>48</sup> *Ahlul-Jannah*: The believers who will be admitted to reside forever in *al-Jannah*.

<sup>49</sup> *Kawni*: Pertaining to the Universal Will of Allah, the Most Majestic and Most Magnificent, and which is in accordance with His Foreknowledge and Wisdom. Creation, provisions, life, death, permission to intercede, and so forth exist by the Will of Allah. Everything which Allah Wills is certain to occur. He Willed that *eemaan* (belief in Allah) and *kufir* (disbelief) occur, although He Loves *eemaan* and Hates *kufir*. On the other hand, the Legislative Decree (*al-hukm ash-shar'i*) comprises the Revealed Laws (*sharee'ah*) which the Messengers came with and what is stated in the Revealed Scriptures. Under this Decree, Allah Loves that mankind believe in Him (*eemaan*) and does not Love for them to commit *kufir*. Mankind, however, may or may not believe in Allah. In short, under His Universal Will, everything Allah Wills is certain to pass while under the Legislative Will, what is beloved to Allah may or may not take place.

<sup>50</sup> Part of a long and agreed upon *hadeeth*. [See *Saheeh Al-Bukhaari* (Arabic/ English)], vol. 6, no. 3 and no. 236.

<sup>51</sup> *Hayybah*: An attribute inspiring reverence, or veneration.

<sup>52</sup> Quraysh is the tribe of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him).

<sup>53</sup> This is part of a long *hadeeth* detailing the story of the treaty of Al-Hudaybiyah. [See *Saheeh Al-Bukhaari* (Arabic/English)], vol. 3, no. 891.

<sup>54</sup> Kings are in need of intercessors because of the imperfection of their knowledge, might and authority. Allah, Most Perfect in His Might, Knowledge, and Authority, is in no need for intercessors. That is why intercession with Allah takes place only if He permits it. With kings, however, intercession is permitted with or without a king's permission. Those close to the

**[The Conditions of Confirmed Intercession]:** <sup>55</sup>

Allah has made it clear that He does not permit intercession except for the one whom He approves of and whose word is acceptable to Him, and for the one He is pleased with and on whose behalf intercession shall be made. It is inevitable that Allah is pleased with *ash-shaafi'*, the intercessor, and *al-mashfoo'i lahu*, the one on whose behalf intercession is sought.<sup>56</sup> Consequently, the idols of the polytheists could not intercede on their behalf with Allah because Allah does not approve of them. The Prophets and the righteous do not intercede on behalf of the polytheists because the latter are not approved with Allah.

Accordingly, the conditions for the confirmed *shafaa'ah* are three:

1. Allah's permission of it.

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king, for example, may intercede without permission. [See Shaykh ibn 'Uthaymeen's *Al-Qawlul Mufeed 'Alaa Kitaabit-Tawheed* (Riyaadh, Saudi Arabia: Daarul 'Aasimah, 1st ed. 1415/1994)], vol. 1, p. 330, 332.

<sup>55</sup> The intercessions permitted by Allah are six. The Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) will have the privilege of making three of these intercessions. They are:

1. The Prophet's (Peace and blessings be upon him) intercession for *ahlul-mawqif*. This is known as the Prophet's greatest *shafaa'ah* and it is part of the highest station of praise and honour (*al-maqaam al-mahmood*) with which the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) is distinguished, and for which he will be praised by all creatures. It is mentioned in the Qur'an [17:78].

2. The Prophet's (Peace and blessings be upon him) intercession for *ahlul-Jannah* to enter *al-Jannah*.

3. The Prophet's (Peace and blessings be upon him) intercession with Allah to reduce the punishment of his uncle, Abu Taalib because of his protection and support of the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him). He will be placed in a shallow part of Hell-Fire.

The other intercessions are not restricted to the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him). They include:

4. The Prophet's intercession with Allah that He does not cast into Hell the one who deserves it.

5. His intercession of taking out from Hell those admitted to it as a result of their sins.

6. The intercession to raise the ranks of the believers. This is the *du'aa* of the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) to believers and by the believers for each other. [See (1) Shaykh 'Abdul 'Azeez bin Baaz's commentary on Shaykh-ul Islam ibn Taymeeyah's *Al-'Aqeedah Al-Waasitiyyah* which Shaykh 'Ali Hasan 'Abdul Hameed compiled in his verification of Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahmaan As-Sa'di's book *At-Tanbeehaat Al-lateefah 'Ala Al-Waasitiyyah* (Dammaam, Saudi Arabia: Daar ibnul Qayyim, 1409/1989), p. 73, and (2) Shaykh ibn 'Uthaymeen's *Al-Qawlul-Mufeed*, pp. 332-335].

The intercessions mentioned above are the ones which are approved by Allah. The annulled intercession is any intercession which is not approved by Allah.

<sup>56</sup> The conditions are stated in the following *aayaat*:

1. Allah says: **Who is he that will intercede with Him except by His permission.** [Qur'an, *Surat Al-Baqarah* (2:255)].

2. Allah says: **On that day no intercession shall avail, except the one for whom ar-Rahmaan has given permission and whose word is acceptable to Him.** [Qur'an, *Surat Taaha* (20:109)].

3. Allah says: **And they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased** [Qur'an, *Surat Al-Anbiyaa'* (21:28)].

2. Allah being pleased with the *shaafi'*.
3. His approval of the one on whose behalf intercession is sought (*al-mashfoo'i lahu*).<sup>57</sup>

**[Five]: Then Allah Said in the Fifth Statement:**

**And Allah Knows what happens to them (His creatures) in this world, and what will happen to them in the Hereafter.**

Knowledge, according to the scholars of *usool* (the fundamental principles of *deen*), is the definitive comprehension of a thing in conformity with its true nature. Thus, the lack of comprehension is ignorance, the indecisive comprehension is doubt, and the assertive comprehension which does not concur with reality is compounded ignorance.

For example, if you were asked, “When did the expedition of Badr<sup>58</sup> take place?” And you say, “I do not know,” then this is ignorance. If you were asked the same question and you said, “It happened in the second or the third year of *hijrah*,” then this is doubt.<sup>59</sup> And if your answer to the same question was, “The fifth year,” then this is compounded ignorance.<sup>60</sup> Allah, the Most Mighty and Most Majestic, knows things comprehensively and with perfection, on the whole and in detail. His knowledge is unlike the knowledge of *ibaad*. That is why He said:

**And Allah knows what happens to them [the creatures] in the future and what happened to them in the past.**<sup>61</sup> The conjunctive noun “maa” is a form of generalization (*gram.*) which comprises everything be it small or great, or whether it is from the actions of Allah or from the creatures’ deeds.

<sup>57</sup> The case of intercession on behalf of the Prophet’s uncle, Abu Taalib, is excluded and in a very limited sense from the ruling stated in Allah’s saying: **No intercession of intercessors will be of any use to them** [unbelievers, polytheists]. [Qur’an, *Surat Al-Muddathir*(74:48)]

Abu Taalib stood in support of the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) and protected him from his enemies of Quraysh. The intercession on behalf of Abu Taalib is special for the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him). Other than this special intercession, none is allowed to intercede for a *kaafir*. Even Abu Taalib is not saved from the Fire of Hell. Had it not been for the intercession of the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him), Abu Taalib “would have been in the bottom of the (Hell) Fire,” as the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said. “**Perhaps my intercession will be helpful to him on the Day of Resurrection so that he may be put in a shallow fire reaching only up to his ankles with which his brain will boil,**” he (Peace and blessings be upon him) added. [See *Sahih Al-Bukhaari*, vol. 5, no. 222 and no. 224, and Shaykh ibn ‘Uthaymeen’s *Al-Qawlul Mufeed*, vol. 1, p. 334].

<sup>58</sup> The Battle of Badr occurred between the army of the believers lead by Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) and the polytheists of Quarysh and it took place on the 17th of Ramadaan of the second year of Hijrah.

<sup>59</sup> Because you give another answer which you think has the same possibility of being the truth.

<sup>60</sup> This is known as *al-jahlul-murakkab*, which is to comprehend something in a way contrary to its true reality. [See Shaykh ibn ‘Uthaymeen’s *Sharh Thalaathat Al-Usool* (Birmingham, UK: Al-Hidaayah Publication, 1st ed. 1418/1997)], p. 37.

<sup>61</sup> This is one of the meanings of this great *ayah*. It signifies that Allah’s knowledge encompasses everything in the past, present, and the future; nothing escapes Allah’s knowledge.

Note: One of the Names of Allah is ***al-Aleem***: The One Who knows what has been and what will be; Who ever has known, and ever will know, what has been and what will be; His knowledge comprehends all things, the covert and the overt, the small thereof and the great, the possible and the impossible, the lofty and lower spheres, etc. in the most complete manner. Nothing is concealed from Him in the earth or in the heavens. [See Shaykh as -Sa’dee’s *Tayseer Al-Kareem Ar-Rahmaan fi Tafseeri Kalaamil-Mannaan* [‘Unayzah, Saudi Arabia: Saalih bin Saalih Center Publish. 1412/1992)], vol. 5, p. 299.

Knowing what happens to them in the future implies that Allah is not unaware of the future, and that His knowledge of the past necessitates that He does not forget the past. That is why when Fir'awn said to Musa:

**“What about the generations of the old?”**

[Qur'an, *Surat Taaha* (20:51)].

Musa replied:

**The knowledge thereof is with my *Rabb*, in a Record. My *Rabb* is neither unaware nor He forgets.**

[Qur'an, *Surat Taaha* (20:52)].

This means that Allah is neither unaware of the future nor does He forget the past.

**[Six]: In the sixth statement, Allah said:**

**And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills.**

The pronoun of the verb “compass” refers to either all that is in the heavens and the earth or to the letter *haa'* in Allah's saying: “what happens to them [the creatures] in the future and what happened to them in the past.” In the latter case, the meaning would be “Those who Allah knows what happens to them in the future and what happened to them in the past, will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He Wills.”

In this statement Allah makes clear the perfection of His knowledge and the imperfection of the creature's knowledge. And thus He compares His Attributes to that of His *'ibaad* in order that His perfection and the imperfection of the creatures become clearly evident. This is also clear in His saying:

**Whatever on it (the earth) will perish. And the Face of your *Rabb*, full of Majesty and Honour will abide forever.**

[Qur'an, *Surat Ar-Rahman* (55:26-27)].

As far as the word *'ilm* (knowledge) in His saying: “**His Knowledge**,” it is an infinitive (verbal noun) denoting either (a) the *'ilm* of His *thaat* (Essence) and *sifaat* (Attributes), or (b) His *ma'loom* (What Allah Knows). Accordingly, the meaning of the *aayah*:

**And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills**, means either (a) that we do not know anything about Allah, His *thaat*, and His *sifaat* except that which He willed for us to know, or (b) that we do not know of what Allah knows except that which He willed to be known. The *aayah* implies both meanings, and both are correct since we do not know of Allah's *thaat* or *sifaat* except that which He willed for us to know. Indeed, He is the One Who made it known to us that He ascended upon the *'arsh* (Throne); and He is the One Who taught us on the tongue of His Messenger [Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him)] that He descends to the lowest heaven [in the last third of the night]; and this is the case with the rest of His *sifaat*: We have no knowledge of them except that



He wills. Similarly what Allah knows regarding what is in the heavens and what is on the earth, our knowledge thereof is restricted to that which He willed for us to know. After all, He is the One Who informed us of the existence of the angels in the heavens and that there are seven heavens. So it is with respect to the rest of what Allah knows, we are aware of that which He willed for us to know. Even that which He has made known, many of us are unaware of it; the knowledge thereof are attained only if He wills. In the human being, there are many things which people [i.e. scientists] are not yet fully aware of. They gradually attained the knowledge which they knew not before.

So the *ayah* comprises both of the meanings discussed above. Thus we do not know anything of what Allah knows even that which concerns ourselves except that which He wills, and that we do not compass anything about Allah's *thaat* and *sifaat* except that which He wills. Therefore, whatever Allah wills for His creatures to know, whether in relation to His *thaat*, *sifaat*, *asmaa'* (Names), or Actions; or with respect to His creation or His legal ways which He revealed to His Messengers, then He will make it known for them.

**[Seven]: Then Allah, the Most High, said:**

**His *kursi* extends over the heavens and the earth encompassing them all, He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the most High, the Most Great.**

The *kursi* [literally: footstool] is *mawdi'ul qadamayn* (place of the Feet) of Allah, Most Mighty and Most Majestic, and it is before the '*arsh* like a front to it. This was authentically related by ibn 'Abbaas in a *mawqoof*<sup>62</sup> type of narration. This is agreed upon by the majority of *ahlus-sunnah wal jamaa'ah*. In fact this what is asserted by Shaykh-ul-Islam ibn Taymeeyah, [Imam] ibnul Qayyim, and others from the people of knowledge and from the verifying scholars.

Some have said that *al-kursi* is the '*arsh* itself. However, this is not true because the '*arsh* is greater, more spacious, and more profound in its extent of encompassing than *al-kursi*. It has also been narrated on the authority of ibn 'Abbaas that *al-kursi* represents Allah's Knowledge. But I do not think that this narration is authentic because this meaning (i.e. knowledge) is not the true meaning for the word *al-*

<sup>62</sup> *Mawqoof*: lit. "stopped". It is a narration from a companion only. The *hadeeth* attributed to the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) is called *marfoo'*. Shaykh ibn 'Uthaymeen (*hafithahullaah*) commented, "Had it not been that ibn 'Abbaas is one whom it is said that he takes from the Israelite transmissions (*israa'eeliyyaat*: narrations from the traditions of the People of the Book), we would have said that this transmission (regarding *al-kursi*) takes the form of *marfoo'* tradition, because it deals with knowledge of *al-ghayb* (the world of unperceived realities). When it comes to this kind of knowledge, there is no room for *ijtihaad* (scholarly deductions). When a *sahaabi* (companion) says or does something which is not within the scope of *ijtihaad*, then it takes the *marfoo'* type of tradition. The exception, however, is that if the narration from the *sahaabi* is of the form of *akhbaar* (news telling, relating information), then, if it is known that a *sahaabi* narrates from Bani Israa'eel, his transmission would not be *marfoo'* because of the possibility that its source may be from Bani Israa'eel (an Israelite transmission). Knowing that the scholars are scrupulous in their inspection of what is attributed to the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him), they do not rule that a particular transmission is *marfoo'* except when all of the possibilities that may hinder this ruling are ruled out." *Tafseer Aayat Al-Kursi*, pp. 19-20. Note: This report from ibn 'Abbaas is related by 'Abdullaah ibn al-Imaam Ahmad (*As-Sunnah*:586), ibn Abee Shaybah (*Al-'Arsh*:61), ibn Khuzaymah (*At-Tawheed*: 248), and by al-Haakim (*Al-Mustadrak*: 2:282) who said it is *saheeh* according to the conditions of al-Bukhaari and Muslim. Imaam ath-Thahabi agreed to the authentication of al-Haakim. Ad-Daaraqutni reported it in his book *As-Sifaat* (36) as *mawqoof* from ibn 'Abbaas. Shaykh al-Albaani said: "Its *isnaad* is *saheeh*, and its narrators are all reliable." (*Mukhtasar Al-'Uluw*: 45).



*kursi* in the classical Arabic language nor in the common (*'urfi*) language. In fact, it is very unlikely that this transmission from ibn 'Abbaas is an authentic one.<sup>63</sup> Hence, *al-kursi* is *mawdi'ul qadamayan*.

The greatness of *al-kursi* is clearly stated in the *hadeeth* in which the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said:

**“The seven heavens and the seven earths by the side of al-kursi are naught but as a ring thrown down in a desert land, and such is al-kursi with respect to al-'arsh (the Throne).”<sup>64</sup>**

This *hadeeth* indicates the vastness of these immense creations and which are, with respect to us, from the world of *al-ghayb*. That is why Allah says:

**Have they not looked at the heavens above them, how We have made it and adorned it, and there are no rifts in it.** [Qur'an, *Surat Qaaf* 50:6]

He did not say: “Have they not looked at *al-kursi* (or *al-'arsh*)...,” because this is something which is not seen by us. Had it not been that Allah had informed us about it (*al-kursi* or *al-'arsh*), we would not have known of it.

**Allah's saying:**

**His *kursi* extends over and encompasses the heavens and the earth**, supports the opinion held by Shaykh-ul-Islam ibn Taymeeyah and by other verifying scholars that the heavens and the earths all have a spherical shape, because this is a matter acknowledged by sensory perception, and through information, though the latter method may have been hidden from many of the preceding people. The proof for this from the Qur'an is in the saying of Allah, the Most High:

**When the heaven is split asunder [on the Day of Resurrection], and listens and obeys its *Rabb*,— and it must do so; And when the earth is stretched forth..**[Qur'an, *Surat Al-Inshiqaaq* 84:1-3].

Allah's saying: **And when the earth is stretched forth**, necessitates that it is now unstretched. In addition, the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said that on the Day of Resurrection, the earth will be stretched forth like stretched leather, the example of which is drawn for emphasis.<sup>65</sup> Another proof is the saying of Allah, the Most High:

<sup>63</sup> Shaykh-ul-Islam ibn Taymeeyah (*Al-Fataawa*, 6:584), and Shaykh al-Albaani (*Silsilat Al-Ahaadeeth As-Saheehah*, no. 109), stated the weakness of this narration from ibn 'Abbaas.

<sup>64</sup> Reported by ibn Abee Shaybah (*Al-'Arsh*, 58), and by al-Bayhaqi (*Al-Asmaa' Was-Sifaat*, 862) with both narrations being from the way of Abee Thar. Shaykh al-Albaani (*As-Silsilah As-Saheehah*, no. 109) stated that there is no single authentic *hadeeth* attributed to the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) regarding *al-kursi* except this one.

<sup>65</sup> Reported by ibn Jareer at-Tabari (*tafseer at-tabari*, 30:115-116) on the authority of 'Ali ibn al-Hussain. The transmission, however, is *mursal*. Note: A *hadeeth* is categorized as *mursal* when the link between the *taabi'ee* (successor of the *sahaabah*) and the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) is missing.

***Yukawwuru* the night around the day [making it to be a covering upon the day] and *Yukawwuru* the day around the night.**

[Qur'an, *Surat Az-Zumar* 39:5]

*Yukawwuru* means: “to wind round,”<sup>66</sup> like in our saying, “the *akwaar* (singl. *kawr*) of the turban,” meaning the turns of the turban upon the head.

We know that the day and night succeed each other upon earth and in doing so, this entails that the earth is spherical, because a thing would not be wound around in a round form except upon something ball-shaped. Nowadays, it is witnessed that the earth is spherical in form.

The fact that *al-kursi* extends over and encompasses the heavens and the earth is evidence that it is wound round in a round form.

Regarding *al-'arsh*, it has been reported that the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) described it as being like a dome above the heavens.<sup>67</sup> The dome-shape being round but neither fully spherical nor flat, and its middle is high like that of a tent.<sup>68</sup>

Then Allah, the Most High, said:

**And He [Allah] feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them [i.e. the heavens and the earths].**

This attribute of Allah [feeling no fatigue] is an Attribute of negation. So, what are the Attributes required for guarding and preserving [the heavens and the earths] such that we know that this negation [of fatigue] is in fact an affirmation of their perfection? It is essential that the guarding and preserving requires Life, Knowledge, Ability, Might, Mercy, and possibly other attributes. What is important is

<sup>66</sup> The infinitive noun is *takweer*, which means to round a thing in a round form.

<sup>67</sup> This has been reported in *Sunan Abee Daawood* (English Translation), no. 4708 and in the *Sunnah* by ibn Abee 'Aasim, no. 575, and by others. There is disagreement regarding the authenticity of its *isnaad*. Imaam ath-Thahabai and other scholars of *hadeeth* including al-Albaani graded its *isnaad* as weak. Imam ibnul Qayyim supported its authenticity. The text describing *al-'arsh* as a dome over the heavens is supported by the context of an authentic narration reported by Imaam Al-Bukhaari in his *Sahih* (Arabic/English), vol. 9, no. 519 and in which the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said: “There are one-hundred degrees in al-Jannah which Allah has prepared for those who carry on jihaad in His Cause. The distance between every two degrees is like the distance between the sky and the earth, so if you ask Allah for anything, ask Him for the Firdaws for it is the middle and highest part of al-Jannah and at its top is al-'arsh of ar-Rahmaan (Allah), and from it gush forth the rivers of al-Jannah.”

The *'arsh* being the roof of the *Firdaws*, which is the middle and highest part of *al-Jannah*, indicates that it has a dome-shape because a thing cannot be at the middle and at its heighest point (peak) unless it is round. [See Shaykh-ul-islam ibn Taymeeyah's *Al-Fataawaa*, vol. 5, pp. 150-155, and the book of *Al-'Arsh* by Muhammad ibn 'Uthmaan ibn Abee Shaybah (Riyaadh, Saudi Arabia: Maktabat ar-Rushd (checked by Dr. Muhammad ibn Khaleefah at-Tameemi), 1418/1998), p. 333].

<sup>68</sup> This is based upon additional explanation of the translated text which the author, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen, directly related to me on Wednesday the 16<sup>th</sup> of Safar 1419Hj, corresponding to the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 1998. He stated that this explanation fits with that of the *hadeeth* on the *Firdaws* as mentioned above. And Allah knows best.

that the negation implies the perfection of Allah's Knowledge, Ability, Might, and Mercy as well as the other related Attributes which are entailed by His preserving and guarding.

**Then Allah said:**

**And He [Allah] is the Most High, the Most Great.**

This sentence, with both of its boundaries defined, denotes exclusivity that He (Allah) **alone** is the Most High, meaning that He possesses the absolute Transcendence (*al-'uluw al-mutlaq*). The restricted or limited 'uluw (transcendence) is affirmed for the humans. Allah said:

**So do not become weak** (O you pious believers), **nor be sad, and you will be superior** (in victory).  
[Qur'an, Surat Aal-'Imraan 3: 139]

This superiority is restricted such as being above the *kuffaar* [in victory], not an absolute transcendence. The latter is exclusively restricted to Allah, for He, the One who is most High and free from all imperfection, is above everything.

Then it must be known that the attribute of Transcendence of Allah in the creed of *ahlu-sunnah wal jamaa'ah* is classified into two types:

- (a) The 'uluw of the *thaat*: The Transcendence of Allah's Essence.
- (b) The 'uluw of the *sifaat*: The Transcendence of Allah's Attributes.

The 'uluw of the *thaat* means that Allah in His Essence is above everything, and everything is below Him, Most Majestic and Mighty is He. Regarding the 'uluw of the *sifaat*, it means that Allah is qualified with the superlative qualities as He, the Most High, said:

**And for Allah is the Highest Description**

[Qur'an, Surat An-Naml 16:60]

Every Attribute which Allah qualified Himself with is an Attribute of Perfection and in every respect is free from any kind of imperfection.

If you ask: "What is the reason behind this kind of classification? Do you have a proof of it from the Qur'an or the *sunnah*? Did you find this in the sayings of the *sahaabah*?"

The answer is: "No! But I found it to be necessary when it has been determined that the people of negation (*an-nufaat*), who themselves are *ahlu-ta'teel* (those who deny the Attributes), restrict the 'uluw to the *sifaat* (qualities) only. They said that Allah's Transcendence is in His *sifaat* only not in Essence (*thaat*). The people of *ta'teel* (*ahlu-ta'teel*) themselves became divided regarding the 'uluw of the *thaat*, as discussed below.

What is important is that the Imams of *as-salaf-us-saalih* and the scholars who came after resorted to this classification out of necessity because they were tested by the people of *ta'teel* (who denied the 'uluw of the *thaat*), and thus they were obligated to affirm the Transcendence in this way. In fact, if we say only that, "Allah is the Most High," and if someone from the people of *ta'teel* says that, "the 'uluw relates to His Attributes," then what would the common Muslim understand? The only thing he will understand is that Allah is qualified with the 'uluw of the *sifaat* only. But if we say, "Allah is Most High in His *sifaat* as well as in His Essence," the common Muslims will understand this meaning. In fact, the first thing that is obvious to the common Muslim is that Allah's 'uluw concerns His Essence. Certainly the 'uluw of the *sifaat* is part of the meaning of the 'uluw but the strange thing is that the people of negation and *ta'teel* establish it while it is not obvious to many people.

In their denial of the 'uluw of Allah's *thaat* (Essence), the people of *ta'teel* ended up being divided into two groups:

**The first group:** They said that Allah, in His Essence, is everywhere, and if so then He, according to their claim, either occupies a *hayyiz*<sup>69</sup> or He does not. If He occupies a *hayyiz* then it is necessary that He would occupy the "places" and there would remain no single "place" present. And if He does not occupy a *hayyiz*, then He is *ma'doom* (none-existing).<sup>70</sup> They would not say that what does not occupy a *hayyiz* is like the "air" or the like thereof, because this would not be harmonious with their position.<sup>71</sup>

**The second group:** They said, "He is neither in 'uluw (loftiness) nor in *sufi* (opposite 'uluw: lowness); He is neither inside the world nor outside it; neither to the right nor to the left; neither joined nor separate.

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<sup>69</sup> *Hayyiz*: Linguistically the word *hayyiz* signifies:

- (a) Drawing, collecting, or gathering together.
- (b) To hold in one's possession.
- (c) To drive the camel gently to water.
- (d) To rise, turn away, or turn towards.
- (e) Remove, withdraw, or retire to a distance.
- (f) Draw back.
- (g) Leave a place to another.
- (h) Turn aside to a place or to a different company and
- (i) What is annexed to the house.

It is noticed that these linguistic meanings entail: change, moving or turning from place to a place or from a direction to another.

In addition, the term *hayyiz*, refers to an existing external thing which surrounds and contains something. The lateral portions (or outer surfaces) of the contained thing itself form an existing *hayyiz*. Anything which is surrounded by an existing *hayyiz* is called *mutahayyiz*. Accordingly, what is in between the heavens and the earth is *mutahayyiz*. [Refer to Appendix A for further important information.]

<sup>70</sup> They negate the 'uluw of Allah above the creation because they consider what is above the world is itself a *hayyiz*. Saying that Allah is above the world means to them that he is in a *hayyiz* although they acknowledge that it is *'adami* (none-existing)! It is clear that the way of the scholastic theologians is fallacious argumentation.

The fact is that above the world there is nothing except Allah, so could He be in something "none-existing"? Being "in it" is no more than being alone by Himself and that He is distinct and separate from creation, His *thaat* is not commixed with any part of His creation..

<sup>71</sup> Because the air does not occupy a *hayyiz*, yet it is existing. To Allah belongs the best example.

This position is absolute *ta'teel* (negation) because it is a description of *al-'adam* (none-existence). Some scholars said, "If we were asked to describe *al-'adam* we would not find a more comprehensive definition than this description [above]."

So contemplate as to how their negation of what has been affirmed by the way of *naql* (texts) and '*aql* (rational) led them to say what cannot be accepted neither by sensory perception (*hiss*), nor by *naql* or '*aql*.

We have explained earlier that the '*uluw* of Allah is proven by the way of the *kitaab* (the Book, i.e. the Qur'an), the *sunnah*, *ijmaa'* (general consensus of the *salaf*), '*aql*, and *fitrah*.<sup>72</sup> The proofs of the Book and *sunnah* are diverse:

- Some of which mention the '*uluw* like in the saying of Allah:

**And He [Allah] is the Most High, the Most Great.**

**And make *tasbeeh* [declaring that Allah is far removed above all imperfection] of your *Rabb*, the Most High, above everything.**

[Qur'an, *Surat Al-A'laa* 87:1]

- Others state the *fawqiyyah* [Allah being above creation], as in Allah's saying in the Qur'an:

**And He [Allah] is *al-Qaahir*<sup>73</sup> above His slaves.**

[Qur'an, *Surat Al-An'aam* 6:18]

- Some *aayaat* (verses) mention the *su'ood* (ascent) of things up to Him:

**To Him ascend [all] the goodly words, and the righteous deeds exalt it** [the goodly words, i.e. the goodly words are not accepted by Allah unless and until they are followed by good deeds].

[Qur'an, *Surat Faatir* 35:10]

**The angels and the *rooh* [Jibreel] ascend to Him.**

[Qur'an, *Surat Al-Ma'aarij* 70:4]

- Sometimes the Qur'an mentions the descent of things from Him:

<sup>72</sup> The Shaykh refers to his explanation of *Al-'Aqeedah Al-Wasitiyyah* of Shaykh-ul-Islam ibn Taymeeyah [Riyaadh, Saudi Arabia: Daar ibnul Jawzi, 1415/1994], vol. 1, pp. 373-400.

<sup>73</sup> Allah is *al-Qaahir*: The Most Mighty and the Magnificent, is dominant over all his slaves being Himself above creation, the Ever-living, the Mighty, and the All-Powerful. He is the One who subdued all of his creatures; everything in the upper and lower worlds is subservient to His Will, and Authority; whatever He willed to happen will certainly occur and as He wanted it to be, and whatever He willed not to occur will never take place; All creatures are in need of Him, they have no control of good or harm to themselves; nor can they control death nor life nor Resurrection. The most powerful creature is nothing before the domination and power of Allah, the All-Mighty; the creatures which people have taken as "gods" besides Allah, cannot protect themselves let alone to dominate others. Allah, the perfect is His domination deserves to be worshipped alone.

He [Allah] arranges [every] affair from the heavens to the earth. [Qur'an, *Surat As-Sajdah* (32:5)].

Verily We: It is We Who have sent down the *thikr* [the Qur'an].  
[Qur'an, *Surat Al-Hijr* 15:5]

- In the Book there is also the affirmation that Allah is above the heavens:

Do you feel secure that He, who is above the heaven [Allah], will not cause the earth to sink.  
[Qur'an, *Surat Al-Mulk* 67:16]

In addition to the above *ayaat*, there are many other references in the Qur'an which affirm the 'uluw of Allah. Similarly the *sunnah* affirms Allah's 'uluw in His Essence by the way of saying, action, and approval. The affirmation in the saying as in the statement of the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him):

**"Our Rabb is Allah Who is in the heaven..."**<sup>74</sup>

And in his action as when he (Peace and blessings be upon him) pointed towards the heavens when he said: **"O! Allah be witness [saying it thrice],"** before the greatest assembly of Muslims then.<sup>75</sup>

As to his approval, the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) asked a slave girl: **"Where is Allah?"** She replied: **"Above the heavens."** He (Peace and blessings be upon him) then ordered her master, **"Grant her freedom, because she is a believer."**<sup>76</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Reported by Abu Daawood, Ahmad, and others. It was declared *hasan* by ibn 'Adiyy (*Al-Kaamil* 3:1054) and by al-Bayhaqi (*Al-Asmaa' Was-Sifaat*, p. 892), ath-Thahabi (*Al-'Uluw*, p. 48), and ad-Daarimee (*Ar-Rad 'Ala Al-Jahmiyyah*, p.70). Other scholars of *hadeeth* considered it weak because of the weakness of one of its narrators, Ziyaadah bin Muhammad al-Ansaari. According to al-Bukhaari his *hadeeth* falls in the category of *munkar* which, according to him, is a strong state of criticism meaning "denounced". Other scholars of *hadeeth* sometimes consider the *munkar* to mean the absolutely singular (*al-fard al-mutlaq*) narration which is not supported by any follow up (*mutaaba'ah*). [See *Shifaa'ul-'Aleel bi-Alfaath wa Qawaa'id Al-Jarh Watta'deel* (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia: Maktabat al-'Ilm, 1411/1991), pp. 306-311, and Shaykh al-Albaani's *Da'eef Sunan Abee Daawood*, no. 839]. However, another *hadeeth* by Qataadah in which Bani Israa'eel have said: **"O Our Rabb!, You are in the heaven, and we are on the earth..."** is declared *hasan* by Shaykh al-Albaani. [See ath-Thahabi's *Al-'Uluw* (Beirut, Lebanon: al-Maktab al-Islami, 1412/1991; checked by Shaykh al-Albaani)], no. 107.

<sup>75</sup> As in the long *hadeeth* of Jaabir describing the Farewell Hajj of the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) which was reported by Muslim in his *Saheeh* (English Translation), vol. 2. pp. 611-617.

<sup>76</sup> This is a clear response to those who say that "Allah is everywhere." The Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) used the term **"Where,"** and the answer of the girl was **"Above."** Those who say that Allah is exalted above any particular direction are to be asked, "What do you mean by 'direction'?" If they deny that Allah is above the creation because it would mean that He is in a "particular direction," then they are wrong because there is no one from the creation who exalted Allah more than the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him), and yet he (Peace and blessings be upon him) affirmed that He (Allah) is above the heavens and pointed skyward because it is a direction of 'uluw. This direction of 'uluw does not limit, contain, or envelop Allah **The Most Great**. Nothing is above Him, the **Most High**. Are they more eloquent in speech than the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him)? Are they more sincere with respect to the teachings of this *deen* than the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him)? Certainly they are not. And the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) did not intend confusion to his followers. Had there been any false meaning necessitated by affirming the 'uluw of Allah the way the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) affirmed, he would have made it clear. The texts, however, do not necessitate the false conclusions made by those who deny the 'uluw of Allah in His Essence above the creation. Neither in the Qur'an nor in the authentic *sunnah*, does the affirmation of the 'uluw imply that Allah is contained



As for the *ijmaa*,<sup>77</sup> it is acknowledged that the *salaf* are in agreement that Allah is above His *'arsh*. No one among them had ever said that He is everywhere or that He is neither above the world nor below it, or that He is neither to the right nor to the left, or that He is neither separated from the world nor associated with it.

On the other hand, the proof of the *'aql* (intellect), has two angles to it:

1. The *'uluw* is an attribute of perfection and therefore being as such necessitates that it is an affirmed attribute of Allah because Allah is qualified with the attributes of perfection from every angle.
2. For the sake of argument, if we say that, "Allah is either above the world or under it or on its right or left," then which of these descriptions denote perfection? The answer is, "Allah is above the world," because if he is "under it" then He would be less perfect than the created! And if He is in the same place as the created, then Allah would be equal to him in perfection. Thus it is necessitated that Allah is above everything.

Finally, as far as the *fitrah* (natural inclination or disposition) is concerned, each person naturally acknowledges the fact that Allah is above the heavens. That is why whenever a person supplicates His *Rabb* (Allah) he (she) takes refuge towards the direction of the sky (i.e. upward).<sup>77</sup>

[In this regard it is noteworthy to mention] that because Abul Ma'aali al-Juwayyni,<sup>78</sup> may Allah bestow His mercy upon him and may He forgive him, denied the ascending of Allah above the *'arsh*

in a place or that he is a compounded body (*jism*), or "within limits," for He is above everything and that there is no creation above the world, there is only Allah above everything.

<sup>77</sup> People naturally raise their hands and seek the direction of *'uluw* (highness) in their hearts when they supplicate Allah, the Most High. This does not mean that they do so because the sky is the *qiblah* of invocation just as the *ka'bah* is the *qiblah* (direction) of the prayer as claimed by those who deny the *'uluw* of Allah is His Essence! There is no legal evidence that the sky is the *qiblah* of *du'aa*. Had this been one of the proven matters, it would have been known by the *salaf*. In addition, the *qiblah* of invocation is the *qiblah* of the prayer. It is praiseworthy that the Muslim face the *qiblah* while making *du'aa*. In fact the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) faced the *qiblah* many times and invoked Allah, the Most High. A *qiblah* is something which a person is face to face with, just like the positions in the prayer, invocation, *thikr*, sacrifice, etc. Had the sky been the *qiblah* of *du'aa* then it would have been permissible for the Muslim to invoke Allah turning his face up in its direction, something which is not legally approved. Linguistically, the upward position towards which the hands are raised is not called a *qiblah*. Directing the heart upward while in a state of *du'aa* is something ingrained in the *fitrah* and done by the Muslim, the *kaafir*, the learned and the ignorant, especially in times of distress. The one facing the *qiblah* knows well that Allah is not there, however, while in a state of *du'aa* the person turns to his Creator who is above the creation. He does not turn towards the sky seeking refuge in something created, but he seeks the Creator of the heavens and the earth who is High above the entire creation. Ask those in times of distress, "Do you turn towards the heavens or to Allah who is above the heavens?" Naturally they turn to Allah.

<sup>78</sup> Al-Juwayyni, 'Abdul Maalik ibn 'Abdullaah ibn Yusuf ibn Muhammad Abul Ma'aali (419/1028-478/1085), nicknamed *Imaamul haramayn* (the Imaam of the Two Sanctuaries i.e. Makkah and Madeenah) because he lived in Makkah for four years and then moved to Madeenah where he taught. Originally he was from Juwayyn (present-day Afghanistan). He was a *Shaafi'ee* scholar and an *Ash'arite*. It is important to remember that he is said to have been the first to resort to the figurative interpretation of the *sifaat*. He, however, retracted from this position, but like many of the late *ashaa'irah*, he resorted to *tafweed*: consigning the meaning of the *sifaat* to Allah claiming that the *thaahir* (obviously-understood meaning), is not the intended meaning, something which they erroneously attributed to the *salaf*. The truth, however, is that

(*istiwaa* 'ala al-'arsh) and the 'uluw of Allah in His Essence, he had decided that, "Allah was and there was nothing,<sup>79</sup> and He is now as He ever has been,"<sup>80</sup> denying the *istiwaa* 'ala al-'arsh. Abul 'Alaa al-Hamadaani,<sup>81</sup> may Allah bestow His mercy upon him, said, "Teacher! There is no need to mention the 'arsh.<sup>82</sup> Just tell us about this necessity which we find within ourselves: Whenever an 'aarif (one who knows of Allah) says: **O! Allah,**' he finds within his heart a compelling intent aspiring upward?<sup>83</sup> Al-Juwayyni slapped his hands against his head screaming, "Al-Hamadani rendered me perplexed. Al-Hamadaani rendered me perplexed." He was unable to respond because the matter is natural and cannot be denied.

The strange thing is that those who deny the Transcendence of Allah themselves raise their hands upward in the direction of the heavens when they invoke Allah. I do not know of the situation of the person who believes that Allah is everywhere in His Essence or that He is not inside the world nor outside it or He is neither above nor below, how is he going to face His *Rabb* on the Day of Resurrection?

**Then Allah said: The Most Great**, meaning the One Who possesses the absolutely perfect Greatness.

The great of a certain kind of things is the majestic whose qualities attained the utmost degree of perfection, as Allah has said about the throne of the Queen of Sabaa':

**And She has a great throne.**  
[Qur'an, *Surat An-Naml* (27:23)].

In this sense the great of a certain kind of things is that which is characterized by utmost importance and utmost degree of perfection in its qualities.

the *salaf*, affirm the obviously understood meaning of the Attributes of Allah, but they consign the manner (i.e. the "how") of the *sifaat* to Allah. For example, the obvious meaning of Pleasure is known. We affirm it to Allah as He has affirmed to Himself. The manner of Allah's Pleasure, however, is consigned to Allah. So the Pleasure of Allah is true and like all of His Attributes, nothing is like unto Him in His Pleasure. The *kayyfiyah* (specification, i.e. how is His Pleasure) is known only to Allah. Imam ath-Thahabi reported that before his death, al-Juwayyni denounced scholastic theology and fully supported the position of the *salaf*. (*Al-'Uluw*, p. 175, checked by Shaykh al-Albaani).

<sup>79</sup> Meaning that Allah was and there was no 'arsh as confirmed by the full report in ath-Thahabi's *Al-'Uluw* (p. 276, no. 337; checked by Shaykh al-Albaani).

<sup>80</sup> Meaning that He is not ascending above His 'arsh.

<sup>81</sup> Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Hasan ibn Muhammad al-Hamadaani (d. 531/1137).

<sup>82</sup> Because the proof for the 'arsh is *sam'ee*, meaning it is established by evidence from the Qur'an and (or) authentic *sunnah*. Had it not been established through this means, we would have not known of it.

<sup>83</sup> i.e. because of the Transcendence of Allah. In the detailed report, al-Hamadaani said: "Whenever an 'aarif says: 'O! Allah,' except that before his tongue starts moving, a compelling intention arises in his heart. It neither turns to the left nor to the right but heads for above. Do you have a way to avert this necessitated intention?" His saying "heads for above" affirms that it seeks Allah who is absolutely above the universe, it does not turn to the heavens nor to the 'arsh because these are created things.

## Points of Benefit Deduced from Ayatul Kursi

1. Affirming Five Names of the Names of Allah: Allah, *al-Hayy*, *al-Qayyoom*, *al-'Aliyy*, *al-'Atheem*.<sup>84</sup>

2. Affirming that Allah is singled out with all worship (*al-uloohiyyah*): He is the One Who alone has the right to be worshipped, or that He is the One who is worshipped rightfully and deservingly:

**None has the right to be worshipped but He [Allah].**

3. Refuting the claim of the polytheists who affirm other gods beside Allah.

4. Affirming the *sifah* (attribute) of *hayaat* (Life) for Allah, and that His life is one of perfection, neither preceded by *'adam* nor coming come to naught nor characterized by imperfection. On the contrary, our life originates in *'adam* and will come to an end, and it is accompanied by imperfection. In fact, all of our life is imperfect, and that is why Allah described it by *ad-dunya*.<sup>85</sup> The Life of Allah, however, is perfection from all angles because of His saying: The Living, where the particle is for *al-istighraaq*, which comprises all the meanings of the qualities of the perfect life, as if He says, "There is no one who is truly living except He." In fact, this is the case because there is none qualified with the life of perfection except Allah, the Most Mighty and most Majestic.

5. Affirming the *al-qayyumiyyah*<sup>86</sup> for Allah

Such a description does not apply to the human being. There is not any person who is established on his own nor is there anyone who takes full charge of others by whom they subsist, because there is no human being except that he is in need of others. We need workers, and they need us. We need [our] women and they need us. We need our sons and daughters and they need us. There is no one who is absolutely in full charge (giving them care, maintenance, providing for them, etc.) of others. I may be able to take charge of someone else, but in a limited sense. That is why Allah said:

**Is He [Allah] Who takes charge** (guards, maintains, provides, etc.) **of every person and knows all that he has earned** (like any other deities who know nothing)? [Qur'an, *Surat Ar-Ra'd* 13:33]

6. The *ayah* contains *ismullaahi al-aa'tham* (Allah's Most Great Name) affirmed in His saying:

**Allah, there is no god worthy of worship except He, the one who possesses the perfect living, and Who is established on His Own, Self-subsisting, and by Whom all things subsist.**<sup>87</sup>

<sup>84</sup> The Shaykh also stated that he is in doubt whether the word "Ilah" is a Name of Allah because it is an indefinite noun (gram. *nakirah*).

<sup>85</sup> *Ad-Dunya* (fem. of *adna*): Denoting what is low or inferior.

<sup>86</sup> *Qayyumiyyah*: One of Allah's Attributes implied in His Name *Al-Qayyoom*.

<sup>87</sup> Allah is the one who sustains, protects, prepares, and runs the affairs of all things as He wills in accordance with His Knowledge, Wisdom, and Justice.

These two Names were mentioned in three places in the Qur'an, in the two *surahs* known as *az-zahraawayn*<sup>88</sup> (*Al-Baqarah* and *Aal-'Imran*), and in *Surat Taha*.<sup>89</sup>

The people of 'ilm (*ahlul 'ilm*) said: The Most Great Name of Allah is only in these two Names since they comprise the Most Beautiful Names in their entirety, and hence the attribute of Perfection is implied in the Name and the attribute of *ihsaan* (beauty) is entailed in the Name

7. The perfection of Allah's Life and *qayyumiyyah* such that they are free from the slightest imperfection. The evidence is in His Saying:

**Neither slumber, nor sleep overtakes Him.**

Perfection may be generalized considering what is predominant or more numerous although it may be deficient in certain aspects. However, negation of imperfection means that the perfection is absolute and in every respect is free from deficiency. In this sense the negation occurred in His Saying:

**Neither slumber, nor sleep overtakes Him.**

8. Affirming *as-sifaat as-salbiyyah* for Allah because of His saying:

**Neither slumber, nor sleep overtakes Him,**

and His saying:

**He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them**

The *sifaat as-salbiyyah* are those attributes which Allah has denied for His Self and which imply affirming the perfection of their opposites.

9. Affirming that Sovereignty of Allah comprehends everything. The evidence is in His saying:

**To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth.**

<sup>88</sup> *Zahraawayn* (dual form of *zahra*): The bright ones. The Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Recite the Qur'an, for on the Day of Resurrection it will come as an intercessor for those who recite it. Recite the two bright ones, *Al-Baqarah* and *Surat Aal-'Imraan*, for on the Day of Resurrection they will come as two clouds or two shades, or two flocks of birds in ranks, pleading for those who recite them. Recite *Surat Al-Baqarah*, for to take recourse to it is a blessing and to give it up is a cause of grief, and the magicians cannot confront it." Reported in *Sahih Muslim* (English Translation), vol. 2, no. 1757.

<sup>89</sup> In *Al-Baqarah* (2:255), in *Aal-'Imraan* (3:2), and in *Taha* (20:111). Abu Umaamah reported that the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Allah's Most Great Name is in three surahs in the Qur'an, in *Soorat Al-Baqarah* and in *Aal-'Imraan* and in *Soorat Taha*." Al-Qaasim bin 'Abdur-Rahmaan, one of the narrators of this *hadeeth*, searched the Qur'an and found *Ayatul-Kursi* in *Surat Al-Baqarah* (2:255); and: in *Soorat Aal-'Imraan* (3:2); and: in *Soorat Taha* (20:111). Reported by al-Haakim, ibn Maajah, at-Tabaraani, at-Tahaawi, and others. Shaykh al-Albaani authenticated its *isnaad* (*Silsilat Al-Ahaadeeth As-Saheeha*), vol. 2, no. 746.

10. This Sovereignty is exclusively His. The evidence lies in the same *ayah*:

**To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth**, in which the predicate (gram. *khobar*) “To Him” has preceded the subject (gram. *mubtada*) which is the conjunctive noun “Whatever”. In this way, there is a grammatical state of *hasr* (exclusivity, restriction) which signifies that: “**To Him (Allah) alone belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth.**”

11. Affirming the heavens and the earth, as in His saying:

**To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth.**

The “**heavens**” is a number. They are seven in number and similarly is the number of the earths as proven from other texts.<sup>90</sup>

12. The Perfection of the Kingship of Allah, as evident in His saying:

**Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His Permission?**

This Kingship is not the same as His all-comprehensive Sovereignty. In fact, the power and perfection of kingship is more perfect than just all-comprehensive sovereignty.

13. Affirming the intercession which is approved by Allah as evident in His saying:

[None can intercede] **except by Allah’s Permission,**

otherwise the exception would not be correct. Hence, had the approved intercession been not affirmed, the exception would not be correct.

14. Affirming the “Permission” which is His Command:

[None can intercede] **except by Allah’s Permission,**

15. Affirming the *ilm* (Knowledge) for Allah and that His Knowledge comprehends the past, the present, and the future. The evidence is in His saying:

**And Allah Knows what happens to them (His creatures) in the future and what happened to them in the past.**

16. Refuting the claims of the extremists from the *Qadariyyah*<sup>91</sup> by affirming Allah’s all-encompassing Knowledge as in the statement. This constitutes a rebuttal of the extremist from the *Qadariyyah* who

<sup>90</sup> The Shaykh made the above statement in his explanation of *Surat Al-Kahf*, in the month of Rabee’ al-Awwal, 1419. Evidence from the Qur’an is in *Soorat At-Talaaq* (65:12) and from the *sunnah* as in the agreed upon *hadeeth*, “**Whoever usurps the land of somebody unjustly, his neck will be encircled with seven earths [on the Day of Resurrection].**” [See *Saheeh Al-Bukhaari* (Arabic/English)], vol. 3, no. 632.

say that Allah knows the actions of His slaves only after they are carried out, denying that Allah knowledge comprehends everything.

17. The rebuttal of the two sects, the *Khawaarij*<sup>92</sup> and the *Mu'tazilah*<sup>93</sup> by affirming the *shafaa'ah*. Both sects deny the general intercession approved for the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) and for others and which applies to the people who committed sin. This negation is based upon their doctrine that the person who commits a major sin and die without repenting from it will be punished in the Fire forever. The two sects differed, however, as to whether such a person is considered a *kaafir*, or neither a believer nor a *kaafir*.

The *Kharijites*, courageous against the truth and for it, said, "The one who commits a major sin is *kaafir* and no longer belongs to the fold of Islam." The *Mu'tazilites* were fearful to oppose the people of *ahlus-sunnah* and the *kharijites*. They took a cowardly position and said, "We will sit in the middle of the road and say that the one who has committed a grave sin is in a position somewhere between the two; we neither say he is a believer nor a *kaafir*!" Both sects, however, agreed that in the hereafter he will be in the Fire of Hell forever. That is why they denied the *shafaa'ah* (intercession). The generality of the *ayah* refutes the position held by both sects:

#### **Who is he that can interceded with Him except with His Permission?**

18. None will ever encompass anything of Allah's knowledge nor of His Hearing or His Sight:

#### **And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills.**

19. We comprehend no knowledge about Allah nor about His creation except that which He wills for us to know.<sup>94</sup>

20. Forbidding the *takyeef* (assigning a manner or a "how") to the Attributes of Allah, because He did not inform us of the how they are. So if we claim the knowledge of the *kayfiyyah* (i.e. the condition or the "how") of His Attributes, then we are lying.

21. Rebutting the *Mu'attilah*, due to His saying:

<sup>91</sup> Those who say that whatever man does it is entirely of his own ability and free will, and that Allah's *mashee'ah* (Will) and *qudrah* (Ability) have no influence whatsoever on what man does. They also claim that the knowledge of Allah does not comprehend the actions of the creation until after they are executed.

<sup>92</sup> *Kharijites* (Ar. *Khawaarij*, sing. *Khaariji*). See Appendix B.

<sup>93</sup> The *Mu'tazilah* (from *i'tazala*: "to remove oneself" or "to withdraw"). See Appendix C.

<sup>94</sup> See both interpretations of this *ayah* (which means): **And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills**, pp. 33-34.



**And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge.**

This is evidence against the *Mu'attilah* because they say, for example, that Allah has no real Hand. This necessitates that they encompass the negation of one of His Attributes. In this respect, both sects, the *Mu'attilah* and the people of *takyeeef* (*Mukayyifah*) lied because Allah affirmed this Attribute (i.e. the Hand) to Himself. Accordingly, their claim that the true and real Attributes like the Hand, the Face, the Eyes, and so forth do not befit Allah is false and void. The basis for this fact is that knowledge is of two kinds: (a) Affirmation, and (b) Negation.

Therefore, you cannot negate anything as being a quality of someone (something) except with knowledge, just like you cannot affirm anything for someone (something) except with knowledge. So if those sects would deny the realities of the aforementioned Attributes of Allah then they must bring forth their proofs, if they are truthful. For example, Allah did not negate that the Attribute of the Hand from His Self, not even in one single *aayah* in the Qur'an, nor did the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) negate this Attribute in any *hadeeth*, nor did the righteous predecessors (*as-salaf-us-saalih*). Those sects, however, utter the negation of Allah's true and real Hand.

22. Rebutting the position of the *Mumathilah* (those who liken Allah to His creation). Since the *aayah*:

**And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge.**

implies a rebuttal of the *Mukayyifah*, then by all reason it is a rebuttal of the *Mumathilah*.

23. Affirming the *mashee'ah* (Will) for Allah because of His saying:  
**Except that which he Wills.**

24. Rebutting the *Qadariyyah* and the *Mu'tazilah* who say that Allah, the Most High, does not Will anything as far as man is concerned.<sup>95</sup> This is evident in Allah's saying:

**And they will never compass...**

Knowing that man's compassing of something is from his qualities and his qualities are a creation of Allah, [and hence man's will is not independent from the Will of Allah].

25. The greatness of the *kursi*, for His saying:

**His *kursi* extends over and encompasses the heavens and the earth**

26. The Greatness of the Creator of the *kursi* because the greatness of the created implies the Greatness of the Creator.

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<sup>95</sup> Meaning that man has a totally independent free will and that Allah's Will and Power has no effect in this.

27. The *kufir* of the person who denies the heavens and the earth because this necessitates accusing Allah of lying. As far as the earth is concerned, I believe that no one denies it [its existence]. However, as regard to the heavens, there are those who deny them saying that what is above us is boundless and limitless space, and that there is only stars and diffused dust (*sadoom*) or the like. There is no doubt that the one who holds to this belief is a *kaafir*, whether he himself believes in this or he imitates those whom he reveres from the people who hold to this belief—while knowing the truth implied from the proofs of the Qur'an and the *sunnah*.

28. Affirming the Strength of Allah, and the proof is His saying:

**He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them**

29. Denying the *mashaqah* (fatigue) from Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, because of His saying:

**He feels no fatigue.**

This is one of the *sifaat as-salbiyyah* just like saying of Allah:

**And indeed We created the heavens and the earth and all between them in six Days and nothing of fatigue touched us.** [Qur'an, *Surat Qaaf* 50:38]

30. Affirming what is implied by the above statement:

**He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them,**

from the attributes of Knowledge, Ability, Life, Mercy, Wisdom, and Strength.

31. Affirming that the heavens and the earth are in need for someone who guards them, as stated in Allah's saying (which means): **He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them.** Had it not been for the guarding and preserving of Allah, they would have been ruined. Allah says:

**Had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and *masaajid* (mosques), wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely have been pulled down.** [Qur'an, *Surat Al-Hajj* 22:40]<sup>96</sup>

And His saying:

**He withholds the heavens from falling on the earth except by His Leave.**

[Qur'an, *Surat Al-Hajj* 22:65]

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<sup>96</sup> See Appendix D.

**Verily! Allah grasps the heavens and the earth lest they move away from their places, and if they were to move away from their places, there is not one that can grasp them after Him.** [Qur'an, *Surat Faatir* 35:41]

32. Affirming *al-'uluw ath-thaati* (the Transcendence of Allah in His Essence) and *al-'uluw as-sifaati* (the Transcendence of Allah's Attributes) because of His saying:

**And He [Allah] is the Most High, above everything.**

33. Rebutting both the *Hulooliyyah*<sup>97</sup> and the *Mu'atilah* who negate this Attribute of Allah. The *Hulooliyyah* say, "Allah is not above everything but rather He is everywhere." And the *Mu'atilah*, the people who deny Allah's Attributes, say, "He cannot be described as being High or low, to the left or the right, or as being separated from or associated with His creation."

34. Warning against transgression upon others because of His saying:

**And He is the Most High, above everything,  
and He is the Most Great.**

That is why Allah said in *Surat An-Nisaa'*:

**And if they [women] return to obedience [to their husbands], then seek not against them means [of annoyance]. Surely, Allah is ever Most High, above everything, Most Great.**  
[Qur'an, *Surat An-Nisaa'* 4:34]

So if you think proudly of yourself, then remember the Highness of Allah above everything, the Most Mighty and Majestic. And if you think of yourself as being great, then remember the Greatness of Allah.

35. Affirming the Greatness of Allah because of His saying:

**The Most Great.**

36. Affirming the Attribute of Perfection which is implied in the combined Attribute of Transcendence and Greatness.

37. Knowing that the *mulk* (Sovereignty) belongs to Allah then:

<sup>97</sup> *Hulooliyyah* [from *hulool* (lit. "settling," "alighting," "lodging," "descent," and by extension "incarnation"). The most common definition is that it refers to the doctrine of Divine incarnation in the human form. In mystic *sufism* it refers to the Divine incarnation in the *sufi* saints. Shaykh-ul-Islam ibn Taymeeyah classified the *Hulooliyyah* into two kinds. The first is the specific hulool like the claim of the Christians that Allah is incarnated in 'Eessa and like that of the extremist *raafidah* and *sufi* mystics who claim that Allah is incarnated in 'Ali ibn Abee Taalib and in special *sufi* saints, respectively. The second kind is the general hulool and it is the saying that "Allah, in His Essence, is everywhere." [See *Al-Fataawaa*], vol. 2, pp. 171-172.

- We must not behave or act in His kingdom except in accordance with that which He is pleased, because of His saying:

**To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth.**

- The judicial rulings and decreeing amongst the people must be based upon the Judgment of Allah. Indeed the reliance of man upon the judicial decrees laid by the created and the system of laws laid down by man is one kind of setting up rivals with Allah (*shirk billaah*),<sup>98</sup> the Most Mighty and Most Majestic.
- Contentment with the Pre-decree of Allah, the Most Mighty and Most Majestic, because if you know that the Sovereignty exclusively belongs to Allah then you would say, “This is the disposal of affairs by a Sovereign in His Kingdom, and He has the right to do whatever He wants.”

**He cannot be questioned as to what He does, while they [the creation] will be asked.** [Qur’an, *Surat Al-Anbiyaa’* 21:23]

Accordingly this understanding was part of the condolence of the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) to his daughter [following the death of her child] when he said:

“Whatever Allah takes belongs to Him, and to Him belongs what He grants, and everything with Him has an appointed fixed term [in this world].”<sup>99</sup>

- Man should not act conceitedly upon accomplishing something because this accomplishment is from Allah and the Sovereignty is exclusively His.

And Allah knows best. May the *salaah* and *salaam* of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon his family and all of his companions.

This work has been accomplished by the Will of Allah Who had bestowed upon me the ability to present it to the English-speaking community within the Muslim *ummah*. It was completed after *salaatul ‘asr* on Saturday, the 2nd of Rabbi’ al-Awwal of the year 1419 after the Hijrah of Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him).

I ask Allah, the Most High, who is above everything and to Whom belongs the Most Perfect Names and Most Exalted Attributes to make this effort sincerely done seeking His Face, and to make it beneficial for me and for the Muslims everywhere, and to forgive me my sins and those of my parents, my family, the scholars who passed away and those who are still alive, and the believers. I ask Him, to grant me and our brothers and sisters the sincerity in our sayings and deeds and to correct our deeds in

<sup>98</sup> It could be a major or a minor form of *shirk* depending upon the motive behind his reliance. *Al-Hamdullilaah*, the author, Shaykh Muhammad bin ‘Uthaymeen personally affirmed this explanation to me in Jamaada Al-Aakhirah, 1419Hj.

<sup>99</sup> An agreed upon *hadeeth*. [See *Sahih Al-Bukhaari* (Arabic/English)], vol .2, no .237.

accordance with the way of our Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him). I ask Him (The Most High) to save us from the Fire of Hell and to admit us to His *Firdaws* in *al-Jannah* by His Mercy. May Allah guide those who deviated from the path of the *salaf* to the truth, and those who are confused to His Light. May He bestow upon me and the Muslims the steadfastness on the path of *as-salaf as-saalih* in this life, at the time of death, and in the grave.

Ameen.

*Saleh As-Saleh,*  
‘Unayzah, KSA.