

Ta'teel and Tashbeeh

Based on the works of Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan (حفظه الله)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

QUESTION: What are the errors regarding Allaah's Names and Attributes that people have fallen into?

ANSWER:

It is important to learn about what Islam teaches about the Creator – since in order to love and fear Allaah; a person has to know something about Him.

We will mention two of the errors that people – often Muslims themselves – have fallen into in the topic of what Islam teaches about the Names and Attributes of Allaah.

Why do we discuss these errors?

Errors - whether they be in maths, science, languages, car repairs or in fact in any area of life - are important to know about, so that a person can avoid them.

In the topic that we are discussing - namely, aspects of Islamic belief dealing with Allaah - errors can take different forms.

We will briefly mention two of them here.¹

Although these issues may seem rather academic, they are in fact quite straightforward to understand and also very important due to the prevalence of these ideas in the Muslim world today.

1) The first error is that some people reject some or all of the Names and Attributes of Allaah.

In Arabic, this is called **Ta'teel** (denial).

So a person who falls into this error denies some of the Names and Attributes which are clearly stated in the Qur'aan and the authentic statements of Muhammad (peace be upon him).

¹ Refer to *Sharh 'Aqeedat il Waasitiyyah* p72 and 81 of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al 'Uthaymeen for more information

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Why should people do this anyway?

The answer is that this error crept into Muslim cultures when ideas of philosophy and logic entered the Muslim lands. Ta'teel was found in some of the groups amongst the Muslims in the past who were influenced by philosophy and man-made ideas, and who tried to use their intellects to decide what Allaah was like.

Indeed it is still found nowadays in those Muslims who are influenced by these old groups.

2) The second error is when some people liken the Attributes of Allaah to the attributes of the Creation.

In Arabic, the likening of Allaah to His Creation is called **Tashbeeh**.

This is clearly something which is completely false and futile, as even a child can tell.

The Attributes of a Creator do not resemble the Attributes of human beings, or horses, or monkeys, or anything else from the Creation.

The Qur'aan mentions about Allaah:

There is nothing like Him, and He is the All Hearing, the All Seeing.

[Soorah ash Shooraa (the 42nd chapter) verse 11]