

Tawheed Basics 13

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

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

People make a lot of errors with the Names and Attributes of Allaah.

1) The error of ta'teel is in which people deny the Names and Attributes of Allaah.

This is a consequence of people using ideas of philosophy and logic to decide what Allaah is like. If a Name or Attribute does not fit in with what the person thinks is right, then it is rejected.

This of course is a false position, since the issue of Allaah's Names and Attributes is not one that is based on logic and human reasoning – how can it be?

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

This error, known as tashbeeh, is also false and futile since the Creator cannot be like the Created:

The Qur'aan states:

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

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

3) A third error is to describe Allaah with something with which He did not describe Himself.

This is something that goes against the important idea in Islam of information about Allaah being only taken from texts (i.e. the Qur'aan and the authentic hadeeths) and not taken from our intellects.

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4) A fourth error is when people try to change the meanings of the Names and Attributes according to one's own whims and desires.

For example, a person may not 'like' the fact that Allaah describes Himself as having Hands. So the person says 'I think that when Allaah mentions that He has Hands, what He really means is...'

However Muslims and non Muslims accept that Allaah is different from us.

His Names and His Attributes are not like ours, even if they share the same wording – Hand, Face, Anger, Mercy, etc.

Muslims believe that this information about Allaah is to be taken literally unless there is some information in other texts in the revelation (i.e. from the Qur'aan or authentic hadeeths) to say otherwise.

But the 'default state' is to take the information literally.

So when Allaah states that He has a Face or a Hand (as indeed He does in many, many places in the Qur'aan and hadeeths) or any other Name or Attribute, then Muslims take that literally – i.e. He really does have a Face and a Hand, etc.