

## **The Names And Attributes of Allaah**

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Version 1.0

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One of the key issues that divides Ahlus Sunnah from all other sects in Islaam is their belief in Allaah and their knowledge of Him, His Actions and His Attributes, their way being clearly distinct from the way of the Khwaarij, the Shee'a, the Mu'tazila, the Jahmiyyah, the later Ash'arees and other sects.

Know that one of the main purposes of Allaah sending down His revelation is so that mankind may come to know their Lord, and through this knowledge of their worship Him as He deserves to be worshipped. And He, Exalted is He, made it a duty upon our Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to convey this revelation and knowledge clearly, in such a way that no doubt would remain in the hearts of the People, and the Way to Allaah would become clear for both the learned and the ignorant to see.

Ibn Abee al-Izz says,

"Allaah says, 'the Messengers duty is only to convey' (24:54), and He said, 'are the Messengers charged with anything but to convey the Message clearly?' (16:54), and He said, 'and We sent not a Messenger except with the language of his people, in order that he might make (the Message) clear from them. Then Allaah misleads whom He Wills and guides whom He Wills.' (14:4), and He said, 'and there has come to you a Light and a Clear Book from Allaah' (5:15)....

So the command to have faith in Allaah and the Last Day was either spoken about by the Messenger (SAW) with that which would lead to the truth or not. And the second possibility is rejected. And if he were to speak about the truth with general words that were open to interpretation then he would not have conveyed the clear message, and the best of generations witnessed to his (clear) conveyance (of the message) and Allaah bore witness for them in the Greatest of Places. So the one who claims that he did not convey the message clearly with respect to the foundations of the religion (Usul ad-Deen) has lied against the Messenger (SAW)" [Sharh Aqueedah at-Tahaawiyah' (pg. 231)]

And all those who claim that it is necessary to make ta'weel of Allaah's Attributes, while admitting that the Prophet (SAW) and his Companions never delved into ta'weel [As admitted by a group of the Ash'arees, another group claim that the salaf did make ta'weel and discussion on this shall follow in it's proper place insha'allaah.] then they, knowingly or unknowingly, have claimed that the Messenger (SAW) did not convey his message clearly. Subhaanallaah! Consider this, the Ash'arees and their likes have written volumes

and volumes of works concerning the necessity of ta'weel claiming that taking the Attributes of Allaah upon their face value is tashbeeh and tajseem or in other words clear kufr! Yet nowhere in the Qur'aan does Allaah say: everything that We have described Ourselves with cannot be taken on it's face value because it is kufr. And the Messenger (SAW) never followed up his describing Allaah by warning from taking it upon it's face value. Is it Allaah and His Messenger (SAW) who are guilty of conveying the Message obscurely? What is the matter with you? How is it that you judge!

Imaam Alee bin al-Murtadaa al-Yamaanee said,

"The second matter is accusing the religion of deficiency by rejecting the texts and dhawaahir (literal meanings of the Attributes), and removing them from their real and literal meanings to metaphorical meanings without a clear and unequivocal proof which would indicate the establishment for the necessity of ta'weel, having only the blind following of some of the Ahl al-Kalaam in principles that they have not agreed upon. And the most vile of these is the madhhab of the Qaraamita, the Baatiniyyah, in their ta'weel of the Beautiful Names of Allaah, and their negation of them by way of absolving Allaah of anthropomorphism and hence actualising tawheed (in their eyes), and their claim that applying them (to Allaah) is tashbeeh, to the extent that they went to say that He is not present/existing and neither is He absent/non-existing..

And from the necessary matters (of this Religion) is to take the Beautiful Names of Allaah mentioned in His Book by way of glorification and supreme praise of Him - do you not see that ar-Rahmaan, ar-Raheem, for example, are recited in every prayer and mentioned in ever Muslim gathering, all of them being agreed that these two Names are the best ways of praising Allaah, the Exalted, and drawing close to Him by glorifying Him by them.....

And what is to prevent affirming the Attribute of Mercy (Rahma) and it's likes that have been affirmed by Allaah and His Messenger (SAW) in the same way along with negating the deficiencies that are associated with the attributes of the creation, and doing the same with every Attribute that the Lord is described with and the creation is also described with? For He, the Magnificent and Exalted, is described by them in the most perfect way removed from all defects. And the servant is described by them as befits him with the defects and weaknesses. In this way Ahlus Sunnah understood the negation of tashbeeh not by negating the Attributes as done by the Mu'attila.

And from the matters that indicate the futility of ta'weel is that the Mu'tazila dislike the ta'weel that the Ash'arees make of al-Hakeem (the Wise), and the Ash'arees dislike the ta'weel that some of the Mu'tazila make of the Hearing (as-Samee'), the Seeing (al-Baseer), and Ahlus Sunnah dislike the ta'weel that both parties make of ar-Rahmaan, ar-Raheem and their likes. And all the parties dislike the ta'weel made by the Qaraamita. So it is obligatory to affirm what Allaah affirmed for His Noble Self without ta'weel and ta'teel.

And the saying that (affirming the) literal meaning of these Names is disbelief and misguidance, and that the Companions and the righteous salaf did not understand their

meanings, or that they did understand them but did not carry out the obligation of advising mankind of their true meaning, is not permissible due to two matters:

1. The necessary and unequivocal reasoning that the nature (of man) necessitates that any matter of this kind would have had a warning against it arising from the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) and his Companions, and it would have been more frequent and greater than their warning from the Lying Dajjaal. And it is not possible due to their complete intellects and religion that they would leave their children, women, and their general masses listening to something, related to Allaah, whose literal meaning is disbelief and remain silent about it. And were they to leave this warning then certainly they would have left the warning from the Dajjaal, for the nullification of His Lordship is greater and more severe according to the intellect. Do you not see that when the Mutakallimeen came to believe in the repugnance of the literal meanings of these texts, their warning against them became frequent as did their ta'weel of them, and they wrote volumes concerning this, and they aroused the negligent, and they taught the ignorant, and they declared the disbelief of those that opposed them, and they made it wide spread amongst the Muslims, rather the whole world. But this would have been more rightfully the duty of the Master of the Messengers, and the Precedent of the Predecessors and the Helpers of the Religion (SAW), if this were true.

2. It is established that any addition in the Religion is forbidden, so it is not correct that the Sharee'ah be silent about something that is required from a text which is from the fundamentals of the Religion, and Islaam is to be followed not to be invented and this is why it declares anyone who rejects any of the pillars of the Religion to be a disbeliever, because they are known by necessity. So it is more deserving and proper that the Sharee'ah not come with something with which is repeatedly recited and (outwardly) false yet not caution us about it, especially since what is heard is false and is well-known in all of the Books of Allaah. So there is nothing that occurs that would oppose (the literal meanings of the texts) by way of the Sharee'ah or intellect and would necessitate ta'weel...

And al-Raazee acknowledged in his book 'al-Arba'een' - and he is from the greatest opponents of Ahlus Sunnah - that all of the Heavenly Books came with the mention of Allaah's Attributes - and Allaah did not mention a single text that He is to be absolved of the Attribute of Mercy, Forbearance, and Wisdom and their likes. So the matter is clear even though he may not accept it." ['Eethaar al-Haqq alaa al-Khalq' (pp. 219+) of al-Yamaanee with summary, as quoted in 'Sharh Kitaab at-Tawheed min Saheeh al-Bukhaaree' (1/86+) of Shaykh Adullaah al-Ghunaymaan.]

The position of the Salaf concerning the Attributes of Allaah:

al-Awzaa'ee (d. 157) said, "I asked az-Zuhree and Makhool about the Verses pertaining to the Attributes of Allaah, so they said, 'leave them as they are'" ['Sharh Usul I'tiqaad' (3/430) with a hasan isnaad]

- al-Waleed bin Muslim (d.194) said, "I asked Maalik, al-Awzaa'ee, Layth bin Sa'd and Sufyaan ath-Thawree, may Allaah have mercy upon them, concerning the reports related about the Attributes, so they all said: Leave them as they are without asking how" ['al-Asmaa was Sifaat' (pg.453) with a hasan isnaad]
- Rabee'a ar-Ra'ee (d.136) said, "al-Istawaa (Allaah Rising over His Throne) is not unknown, and how (it occurs) is not comprehensible, and from Allaah is the Message, and upon the Messenger is to convey, and upon us is to affirm." [ ibid. (pg.516). Ibn Taymiyyah said in 'al-Hamawiyah' (pg.80), "al-Khallaal narrated it with an isnaad all of whom are trustworthy."]
- Sufyaan bin Uyaynah said, "everything that Allaah described Himself with in His Book then it's recitation is it's explanation, without asking how or likening". [Related in 'Sharh Usul I'tiqaad' (pg.736), 'as-Sifaat' of ad-Daaruuqutnee (pg. 61), 'Dham at-Ta'weel' (pg. 17 no. 22) via a number of different routes.]
- It is also narrated from him about the ahaadeeth concerning the Attributes that he said, "we narrate them as they came without asking how" [as-Sifaat' (pg. 63) of ad-Daaruuqutnee, 'at-Tamheed' of ibn Abdul Barr (7/147) with a saheeh sanad.]
- Shareek bin Abdullaah said when told that some people rejected and abused the ahaadeeth concerning the Attributes, "the ones that came with these ahaadeeth are the ones that came with the Qur'aan, and that the prayers are five, and the Hajj to the House, and the Fast of Ramadaan. And we do not Allaah except by these ahaadeeth." ['as-Sunnah' (1/273) of Imaam Abdullaah bin Ahmad, 'ash-Sharee'ah' (pg.306) of al-Aajurree with a saheeh sanad.]
- Imaam Maalik said when replying to the one who asked, 'how did Allaah make Istawaa?', "al-Istawaa is Known, and how is unknown, to have faith in it is obligatory, and to question it is an innovation." Then he said to the questioner, "I do not think except that you are an innovator" and he ordered him to be expelled. ['al-Asmaa was Sifaat' (pg.516).]
- He also said, "The Most Merciful Ascended as He Himself described, and it is not to be asked 'How' since that is unknown." [ibid (pg.516). Ibn Hajr says in 'Fath' (13/406) that it's isnaad is hasan.]
- Imaam Abu Haneefah said, "He is something (shay'un) but not like other things, and the meaning of Shay'un is affirmed without affirming a body, limbs or organs. And He has no limit and no partner or opposite, and no similitude. And He has a Hand, a Face and a Self. As for what is mentioned in the Qur'aan: the Face, the Hand, the Self (Nafs) then these are His Attributes without asking how. And it is not said that His Hand is His Power (Qudra) or Favour (Ni'ma) [Alee al-Qaaree says, commenting on this statement, "i.e. by way of ta'weel which was the way of some of the khalaf in contravention to the way of the salaf."] because this contains nullification of the Attribute, and this is the saying of the People of Qadr (Jabariyyah) and the Mu'tazila. Rather His Hand is His Attribute without asking how,

and His Anger (Gadb) and Pleasure (Ridaa) are two Attributes without asking How." ['Fiqh al-Akhbar' (pp.36-37) with it's commentary by Mulla Alee al-Qaaree. This is a book which is attributed to Abu Haneefah, but it seems that the strongest opinion amongst the Scholars of Hadeeth is that it is not affirmed to be from him, but from one the students of his students. Allaah the Most High knows best.]

- Muhammad bin al-Hasan ash-Shaybaanee said "the Legal Jurists, from the east to the west, have all agreed to have faith in the Qur'aan and the Ahaadeeth that have come via trustworthy narrators from the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) concerning the Attributes without explanation [meaning the explanation of the Jahmiyyah who innovated explanations of the Attributes in opposition to that which the Sahaabah and the Taabi'een were upon in affirming them, as stated by ibn Taymiyyah in 'al-Hamawiyah' (pg. 115)] and without description and without tashbeeh. So whosoever explains anything from them has left that which the Prophet (SAW) was upon and has split off from the Jamaa'ah (for they did not deny or explain, rather they believed in what was in the Book and Sunnah and then remained silent, so the one who says the saying of Jahm has split off from the Jamaa'ah) because he described Him with descriptions that are empty." ['Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (no. 165), and the addition in brackets is from al-Laalikaa'ee.]

- Imaam Ahmad said, "these ahaadeeth should be left as they are....we affirm them and do not make any similitude for them. This is what has been agreed upon by the scholars." ['Munaaqib al-Ahmad' (pp155-156) of ibn al-Jawzee]

- Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee said, "to Allaah belong Names and Attributes that occur in His Book and His Prophet informed to the nation. It is not possible for anyone to refute/repel (radd) them. So the one who contradicts this after the evidence has been established against him then he is a kaafir, and as for before the establishment of the proof then he is excused due to ignorance, because the knowledge of that cannot be attained through the intellect. So we affirm these Attributes and we negate tashbeeh (likening Allaah to creation) as Allaah negated it by saying, 'there is nothing like Him'" ['Siyar A'laam an-Nubalaa' (10/80). adh-Dhahabee says, 'reported by al-Hakkaaree and others with a chain of narrators containing trustworthy narrators as in 'Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (pg. 177). He also said, "I say: the censure of Kalaam and it's people is common from ash-Shaafi'ee, and he was very stringent in following the narrations in usul and the furoo"]

- And he said, "the belief that I am upon, and I saw Our Companions, the Ashaabul Hadeeth - like Maalik and Sufyaan and others - to be upon is: affirming the testimony that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah. And that Allaah is Over His Throne, above His Heaven (alaa Arshihi fee Samaa'ih), He comes close to His Creation howsoever He Wills, and He Descends to the lowest heaven howsoever He Wills." ['Awn al-Ma'bood' (13/41), and ibn Abu Ya'la reports it in 'Tabaqaat al-Hanaabilaa' (1/283) with a chain of narration linked back to ash-Shaafi'ee.]

• Ishaq bin Raahawayah said, "indeed Allaah has described Himself in His Book with Attributes from which the creation is left in no need to describe Him with other than what He described Himself with. From amongst them, 'Allaah will Come to them in the shades of clouds' and His saying, 'And you see the angels around the Throne, hymning the praises of their Lord'" [al-Arba'een fee Sifaat Allaah' (no. 144) of adh-Dhahabee.]

• Imaam at-Tirmidhee (d.279) said, "It has been stated by more than one person from the People of Knowledge about such ahaadeeth, that there is no tashbeeh to the Attributes of Allaah, and our Lord - the Blessed and Most High - Descends to the lowest heaven every night. So they say: affirm these narrations, have faith in them, do not deny them or ask how. The likes of this has been related from Maalik bin Anas, Sufyaan ath-Thawree, Ibn Uyaynah and Abdullaah bin al-Mubaarak, who all said about such ahaadeeth, 'leave them as they are without asking how.' Such is the saying of the People of Knowledge from Ahlus-Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah. However the Jahmiyyah oppose these narrations and say: this is tashbeeh! However Allaah - the Most High - has mentioned in various places in His book, the Attribute of Hand (al-Yad), Hearing (as-Sam'), Seeing (al-Basr), but the Jahmiyyah make ta'weel of these Verses, explaining in a way, other than is explained by the People of Knowledge. They say: indeed Allaah did not create Aadam with His own Hand - they say that Hand means the Power of Allaah." [ 'Sunan at-Tirmidhee' (3/42)]

• And Abu Ja'far at-Tirmidhee (d.295), when asked as to How Allaah keeps His Attribute of being above the creation if He Descends to the Lowest Heaven in the last third of the night, replied, "The Nuzool (Descent) is understood, but the how/nature is unknown, and faith in it is obligatory, and to question about it (i.e. how) is a bid'ah." [ 'Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (pg. 231). Al-Albaanee declared the sanad saheeh. Abu Ja'far was from the greatest scholars of his day and died in the year 295.]

adh-Dhahabee says in his 'Arba'een fee Sifaat Allaah', "and it would be beyond ones ability to mention every Imaam who has words concerning the affirmation of Allaah's Attributes, and if the opponent is not guided by those whom we mentioned saying: there is a consensus upon affirming them without ta'weel, or he does not believe him in his quote then Allaah will not guide such a person. And by Allaah there is no good in the one who rejects the likes of az-Zuhree, Makhool, al-Awzaa'ee, ath-Thawree, Layth bin Sa'd, Maalik, ibn Uyaynah, ibn al-Mubaarak, Muhammad bin al-Hasan, ash-Shaafi'ee, al-Humaidee, Abu Ubaid, Ahmad bin Hanbal, Abu Eesaa at-Tirmidhee, ibn Suraij, ibn Jareer at-Tabaree, ibn Khuzaimah, Zakariyyah as-Saajee, Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'aree, or rejects saying the likes of their saying in acknowledging the consensus on this like al-Khattaabee, Abu Bakr al-Ismaa'eelee, Abu al-Qaasim at-Tabaraanee, Abu Ahmad al-Aasaal...and Abdul Qaadir al-Jeelaanee..."

Let us carefully consider the above narrations. Ibn Taymiyyah says,

"So the saying of Rabee' and Maalik, 'al-Istawaa is not unknown....' is in agreement to the saying of the others, 'they left them as they are, without asking how' for all they did was to negate the knowledge of the kayfiyyah, and they did not negate the actual Attribute. And if

the people had believed in the mere words without understanding their meanings as was befitting to Allaah, then they would not have said, 'the Istawaa is not unknown, and the how is not comprehensible' and they would not have said, 'they left them as they are without asking how' for indeed the Istawaa in this case would not be known, rather unknown just as the huroof al-Mu'jam (like Alif Laam Meem). So there would be no need to negate the kayfiyyah to something which was not known or understood, rather it would be necessary to negate the knowledge of the kayfiyyah only when the Attribute has been affirmed (and understood)...

Also their saying, 'they left them as they are' necessitates that (what the Attributes) indicated would remain as it were, and they came as words indicating a meaning, so if what they indicated was also to be negated then it would have been necessary to say, "they left the words (as they are) with the belief that the meaning was not known"..." [ 'al-Hamawiyah' (pg.109)]

So upon considering the above it becomes clear that if the Salaf had not understood the meaning of the Attributes, rather relegated the meanings to Allaah and just affirmed the wording (tafweed al-ma'naa) their would have been no conceivable need to negate the How/Nature (kayfiyyah) from the Attributes! Likewise the meaning of 'reciting them is their explanation' is that the clear meaning of what we recite is to be taken, and there is no need to delve into ta'weel or look for hidden and metaphorical meanings etc.

This understanding has also been endorsed by the great Shaafi'ee Imaam, al-Khattaabee (d.388) when he said,

"The madhhab (way) of the scholars of the Salaf and their legal jurists was to leave the likes of these ahaadeeth (concerning the Attributes) upon their literal (dhaahir) meanings, and not to twist their meanings (laa yureeghu lahaa al-Ma'aanee) and neither to make ta'weel of them due to their knowledge that their limited knowledge was incapable of understanding them.

Az-Za'faraanee reported from us from ibn Abee Khaythama from Abd al-Wahhaab bin Najda al-Hutee from Baqya from al-Awzaa'ee who said, 'Makhoor and az-Zuhree used to say: we leave these ahaadeeth as they came.'

I say: this is from the knowledge that we have been ordered to believe in literally without attempting to uncover it's hidden meanings, and it belongs to a host of the mutashaabiha (verses) that Allaah has mentioned in His Book, so He said, 'He is the One Who has sent to you the Book, in it are clear and unequivocal verses, and others are mutashaabiha (allegorical or open to a number of meanings)'. So from the clear and unequivocal verses arises a true understanding (of their content) and action, and from the mutashaabiha arises faith and knowledge in their literal meanings, and we leave the knowledge of it's hidden meaning to Allaah, the Most Perfect..." ['Mu'aalim as-Sunan' (4/304 - Daar al-Kutub al-Ilmee) of al-Khattaabee under the chapter, "From the chapter concerning the Seeing (of Allaah in the Hereafter)" when he discusses the hadeeth of Descent.]

ibn Taymiyyah also says,

"...as for the third group then they are the People of Ignorance and they are many from those who ascribe themselves to the Sunnah and following the salaf. They say: the Messenger (SAW) did not understand the meanings of what Allaah revealed to Him from the verses pertaining to the Sifaat, and neither did Jibreel or the Foremost Predecessors understand them. And they said the same thing for the Ahaadeeth concerning the Attributes - that nobody knew their meaning except Allaah....so these people think that they are following the verse "and none knows their explanation except Allaah".....but they have not distinguished between the meaning of the words and their explanation and the explanation that Allaah is Alone in knowing. And they thought that the ta'weel mentioned in this verse is the ta'weel mentioned in the words of the later generations and they erred in this...and the explanation of the Attributes whose reality Allaah is Alone in knowing is the knowledge of the kayfiyyah which is unknown to us. So (for example) the Istawaa is known, it's meaning is understood, and explained and translated in other languages, and this is the explanation that those firmly grounded in knowledge know, but as for the kayfiyyah of the Istawaa then this is the explanation that none but Allaah, the Exalted, knows." [ 'al-Hamawiyah' (pg. 24+)]

So when we come to realise that the Salaf understood the meanings of the Attributes and affirmed them it becomes necessary to also know that they did so while negating 4 matters:

- tashbeeh (likening Allaah to His Creation) and tajseem (likening Allaah to a body)
- taqyeef (enquiring into the how or nature of the Attribute)
- tahreef (distorting the meaning of the Attribute) and tagyeer (changing the meaning of the Attribute) and ta'weel (figuratively interpreting the meaning of the Attribute)
- ta'teel (denying the Attributes)

[ Consult: 'as-Sunnah' (1/264-307) of Imaam Abdullaah bin Ahmad bin Hanbal (d.290), 'ash-Sharh wal Ibaanah'(pg. 187-192) of ibn Battah(d.387), 'Aqueedah as-Salaf' (pp. 4-7) of as-Saaboonee(d.449), 'ar-Risaalah fee Ithbaat al-Istawaa' of al-Juwainee(d.438 - more on this later), 'Sharh Aqueedah at-Tahaawiyah' (pp. 162-366) of ibn Abee al-Izz al-Hanafee (d.792), 'at-Tadmuriyyah' of ibn Taymiyyah, 'Dhamm at-Ta'weel' of al-Maqdisee, 'Aqaaweel ath-Thiqaat fee Ta'weel al-Asmaa was Sifaat' of ibn Yusuf al-Karmee.]

### **The Position of the later Ahlus Sunnah on the Names and Attributes of Allaah**

Then later on when the bid'ah of ta'weel appeared and then became widespread by way of the Mu'tazila and then the Ash'arees, the scholars of Ahlus Sunnah began to say that 'we take the Attributes of Allaah literally', meaning we take them upon their face value without ta'weel, or tashbeeh, and these narrations shall follow. And they introduced the words 'alaa dhaahirihi' and 'alaa haqeeqatihi' (literally) or when talking about the Attribute of Istawaa

and others, 'bi dhaatihi' (in Person) which although were not used by the salaf, can clearly be understood from their words. So for example the statement of a group of the salaf, 'He is above His Throne, distinct from creation' has clearly the same meaning as 'He is above the Throne in Person' as used by the later Ahlus Sunnah.

al-Albaanee says,

"This wording, 'in Person' even though I believe it to be understood from meaning (of the statement istawaa alaa Arsh), there is no problem in mentioning it for the purpose of clarification, and as such it is like another word which commonly occurs in the belief of the salaf - 'distinct' - as in their saying, 'He, the Exalted, is above His creation, distinct from His creation' as you will see in this 'Mukhtasar' under the biographies of Abdullaah bin Abu Ja'far ar-Raazee, Hishaam bin Ubaid Allaah ar-Raazee, Sunaid bin Dawood Maseesee al-Haafidh, Ishaq bin Raahawayah the scholar of Khurasaan, ibn al-Mubaarak, Abu Zur'ah ar-Raazee, Abu Haatim ar-Raazee, and who reported it from scholars from all of the lands, Yahya bin Mu'aadh ar-Raazee, Uthmaan bin Sa'eed ad-Daarimee al-Haafidh, Abu Ja'far ibn Abee Shaybah, all of these being from the three generations whose excellence was testified to, then Hamaad al-Bushanjee al-Haafidh who reports it from the people of the lands, the Imaam of Imaams ibn Khuzaimah, Abu al-Qaasim at-Tabaraanee, ibn Battah, Abu Nu'aym al-Asbahaanee who refers it to the salaf, Mu'mar bin Ziyaad, the Faqeeh Nasr al-Maqdisee, Shaykh al-Islam al-Ansaaree, and ibn Mawhab.

I say: from this presentation it will become clear to you that these two words, 'in Person' and 'distinct' were not known in the time of the Sahaabah, may Allaah be pleased with them, but when al-Jahm and his followers innovated the saying that Allaah is everywhere, this made it necessary for these great Imaams to clarify the belief by mentioning the word 'distinct' without any one of them rejecting it.

And exactly the same case is their saying concerning the Noble Qur'aan that it is uncreated, for this wording was also not known to the Sahaabah for all they used to say was: 'the Speech of Allaah the Blessed and Exalted', not increasing upon this. And stopping at this extent would have been the desired course had not al-Jahm and his followers from the Mu'tazila said: 'it is created'. So when these people spread the falsehood it became obligatory upon the People of Truth to mention the truth even if it be with phrases and words that were not known before them. And it was to this reality that Imaam Ahmad pointed to when he was asked about the one who stopped - the one who did not say the 'Qur'aan is uncreated' and neither did he say 'the Qur'aan is created' - is there a leeway for a person to say 'the words of Allaah' and then remain silent? He replied, 'and why should he remain silent? If what the people had fallen into had not happened, silence would have been permissible, but since they pronounced what they pronounced, then why should they (i.e. Ahlus Sunnah) not speak?!' Abu Dawood heard this from him as mentioned in his 'Masaa'il' (pp. 263-264)" ['Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (pp. 17+)]

So below are the statements of the well-known and famous scholars of Ahlus Sunnah from all of the various schools of thought within Ahlus Sunnah:

• Imaam Abu al-Qaasim Sa'd bin Alee az-Zanjaanee (d.471) [He is the trustworthy Haafidh, knowledgeable of the Sunnah. His biography can be seen in 'Tadhkira al-Huffaadh' and others] said, "you have asked me, may Allaah help you, to explain what is correct according to me from the madhhab of the salaf and the righteous khalaf to do with the Attributes of Allaah. So I reply with the reply of the faqeeh Abu al-Abbaas Ahmad bin Umar Suraij [He is the Imaam of the Shaafi'iyyah of his time and was regarded greater than the greatest of the Companions of Shaafi'ee even al-Mazanee. (Mukhtasar al-Uluw (pg. 227))] - for he was asked about this... 'and it is authentic from all of the People of Religion (Diyaanah) and Sunnah till this day that it is obligatory upon all Muslims to have faith in all of the verses and authentic narrations from the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) as they occur, and that inquiring about their meanings is a bid'ah [ meaning those meanings other than their obvious meanings. This is the only way to understand this statement as it is the only way in which it conforms to what ibn Suraij writes at the end of his letter.] for example His saying, 'the Most Merciful rose over the Throne' ....our belief to do with the mutashaabiha (allegorical) verses is to accept them and not reject them. And neither to make ta'weel of [them with a differing explanation (to the clear meaning of the verse) or ta'weel of the opponents] (? Ta'weel al-Mukhaalifeen), and neither do we take them with the tashbeeh of the anthropomorphists...and we submit to the narration and verse literally as it was revealed. And we do not say (of them) with the ta'weel of the Mu'tazila, or the Asha'riyyah, or the Jahmiyyah, or the Mulahhida, or the Mujassima, or the Mushabbiha, or the Kiraamiyyah, or the Kayfiyyah. Rather we accept them without ta'weel, and we have faith in them without likening (Him to creation). And we say faith in them is obligatory, saying as they say is the Sunnah, and seeking ta'weel of them is a bid'ah." [ 'Ijtima' Juyush al-Islaamiyyah' (pp. 170-174) of ibn al-Qayyim. 'Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (pp. 226-227) of adh-Dhahabee, summarized and verified by al-Albaanee.]

• Abu Ja'far ibn Abee Shaybah (d. 297) said, "then the ahaadeeth abound that He created the Throne, then He rose above it in Person, the He created the earth and the heavens...and He is Above the Throne in Person." [ 'Kitaab al-Arsh' (pg. 51) of ibn Abee Shaybah.]

• al-Qayrawaane (d.386) said, "...and He is over His Glorious Throne in Person and His Knowledge is in every place..." [ 'al-Risaalah' of al-Qayrawaane (pg.5). He is the great Maalikee scholar credited with the title, 'The Small Maalik'.]

Al-Haafidh adh-Dhahabee says following up a similar statement from ibn Abee Zaid (one of the Imaams of the Maalikiyyah who died in the year 389H, quoting from his 'Risaalah' on the Maaliki madhab),

"and the likes of this phrase (i.e. 'in Person') has preceded from Abu Ja'far ibn Abee Shaybah and Uthmaan bin Sa'eed ad-Daarimee, and likewise Yahya bin Ammaar, the preacher of Sijistaan, used it in his 'Risaalah', ....and likewise ibn Abdul Barr as will follow, and likewise the phrase of Shaykh al-Islaam Abu Ismaa'eel al-Ansaaree who said, '...that Allaah is above the Throne in Person'. And likewise al-Hasan al-Karjee ash-Shaafi'ee who said in this poem, 'their belief is the Allaah is in Person over the Throne with His

Knowledge of the Unseen'. And upon this poem is written, in the handwriting of al-Allaamah Taqee ad-Deen bin Salaah, 'this is the belief of Ahlus Sunnah wal - Jamaa'ah.'

And likewise this phrase was used by Ahmad bin Thaabit at-Turkee, the haafidh. And Shaykh Abdul Qaadir al-Jeelee (or Jeelaanee), and the muftee Abd al-Azeez al-Qaheetee and a group (of scholars)...

And all ibn Abee Zayd and the others meant (by this) was to distinguish between His being with us and His Being above the Throne. So He is, as He said, with us in Knowledge, and that He is over the Throne, as he notified us when He said, "the Most Merciful Rose over the Throne". And a group (jamaa'ah) of the People of Knowledge spoke the aforementioned word (in Person)....." [ Mukhtasar al-Uluw (pg.255-256).]

- al-Khattaabee (d.388) said, "As for what you have asked me with regards to the Attributes of Allaah and that which has come in the Book and the authentic Sunnah with regards to them - then indeed the madhab of the salaf was to affirm them and take them upon their obvious and literal meanings (alaa dhaahirihaa), and to negate tashbeeh and kayfiyyah from them." ["al-Gunya an Kalaam wa Ahlihi" of al-Khattaabee as quoted in 'Mukhtasar al-Uluw'. Al-Khattaabee was one of the Shaafi'ee Imaams of his time, author of the famous commentary to Abu Dawood, 'Mu'aalam as-Sunan'.]

Adh-Dhahabee follows up this quote by saying, "and likewise this agreement of the salaf was quoted by al-Haafidh Abu Bakr al-Khateeb then al-Haafidh Abu al-Qaasim at-Taimee al-Asbahaanee and others."

- Abu al-Qaasim al-Asfahaanee said, "then indeed our madhhab and the madhhab of the salaf was to affirm them (the Attributes) and to take them literally, and to negate kayfiyyah and tashbeeh from them..." ['Ijtimaa al-Juyush al-Islaamiyyah' (pg. 77)]

- Abul Qaasim al-Andulisi (d.393) said, while commenting on the hadeeth of Descent, ".... And from the right of the words of Allaah is that they be taken upon their literal meaning ('alaa haqeeqatihi) until the ummah is agreed that what is meant is the metaphorical meaning when there is no way to follow what has been revealed to us from our Lord except in this way..." ['Ijtimaa al-Juyush al-Islaamiyyah' (pg. ) of ibn al-Qayyim. Abu al-Qaasim was one of the Maaliki Imaams of his time.]

- Yahya bin Ammaar said (d.422), "He is in Person above the Throne, and His Knowledge encompasses everything." ["Risaalah" of Yahya bin Ammaar as quoted in 'Mukhtasar al-Uluww' (pg. 263). He was one of the great scholars of his time from whom Shaykh al-Islam al-Ansaaree learnt hadeeth from.]

- Al-Qaadir Billaahi (d.466), Ameer al-Mu'mineen said, "and every Attribute that He described Himself by, or His Messenger described Him by is a literal Attribute not metaphorical, and the Speech of Allaah is uncreated which He revealed to His Messenger." ['Mukhtasar al-Uluww' (pg. 259, 263) and he quotes it also as the saying of Abu Ahmad al-

Qassaab (d.400) in his work on Aqueedah, upon which the people gathered, and any person who differed with it was ordered to repent. Al-Qaadir Billaah had a well known belief which was read in Baghdaad and witnessed by it's scholars and Imaams, and the above statement occurs in it. His rule as Khaleefah lasted 41 years and 3 months.]

Adh-Dhahabee after disagreeing with the usage of the word 'literal' says, "...despite the fact that this phrase has been used by a group (of scholars), and their intention by using it was that these Attributes are taken (as they come) and they are not to be subjected to tahreef or ta'weel just as they are not to be treated as metaphors. Allaah knows best."

- Qaadee Abdul Wahhab (d.422) said, "the greatest of Ahlus Sunnah, may Allaah have mercy upon them, have made it clear that Allaah rose over His Throne in person." ['Darran Ta'aarid al-Aqal bin Naql' (pg. 203) of ibn Taymiyyah, 'Sharh al-Asmaa al-Husna' (pg. 225+) of al-Qurtubi. Qaadee Abdul Wahhab was the Imaam of the Maalikees in Iraaq.]

- Abu Bakr Umar at-Talmankee (d.429) said, "The Muslims of Ahlus Sunnah have agreed that the meaning of His saying, "and He is with you wheresoever you are" and the likes of this in the Qur'aan mean His Knowledge, and that Allaah is above the Heavens in Person, having risen over the Throne as He wished. And Ahlus Sunnah said about His saying, "the Most Merciful Rose over the Throne": indeed the Istawaa of Allaah upon His Throne is taken literally, not metaphorically." ['al-Wusool ilaa Ma'rifatil Usool' of at-Talmankee. See 'Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (pg. 264). At-Talmankee was one of the great Maalikee Imaams and Huffaadh of his time in Andalus.]

- Abu Nasr as-Sijzee (d.444) said, "our Imaams like Sufyaan ath-Thawree, Maalik, Hammaad bin Salma, Hammaad bin Zayd, Sufyaan bin Uyayna, al-Fudail, ibn al-Mubaarak, Ahmad, and Ishaah are agreed that Allaah (SWT) is above the Throne in Person and His knowledge is in every place, and that He descends to the lowest heaven, and that He gets Angry, and is Pleased and Speaks with what He Wishes." ['al-Ibaanah' of as-Sijzee as quoted from in 'Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (pg. 266).]

Adh-Dhahabee goes on to say, "these (narrations) that he quotes from them are famous and preserved, except for the word 'in Person', for it is from him which he attributes to them in meaning."

- Ibn Abd al-Barr (d.463) said, "Ahlus Sunnah are agreed upon affirming the Attributes that occur in the Book and Sunnah, and to take them literally not metaphorically, except that they did not inquire into the nature (kayfiyyah) of any of them. However the Jahmiyyah and the Mu'tazila and the Khawaarij all deny them, and do not take them literally claiming that whosoever affirms them has made tashbeeh, and they claim that whosoever recites them (as they are) is a Mushabbih (one who does tashbeeh)." ['at-Tamheed' (7/145) of ibn Abdul Barr under the hadeeth of Nuzool. See also 'Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (pg. 268). Ibn Abdul Barr was from the greatest of Maaliki Imaams, given the title 'Bukhaaree of the West'. Adh-Dhahabee said, following up the above quote, "it is rare that the eyes should see the likes of him".]

- Al-Qaadee Abu Ya'laa(d.458) said, "it is not permissible to refute/reject these narrations, and neither to preoccupy oneself in making ta'weel of them. But it is obligatory to take them upon their obvious and literal meanings, and that they are Attributes of Allaah, Azza wa Jall, not resembling the attributes of the creation. ...And the fact that the Sahaabah and those after them took them upon their obvious meanings and did not abandon them for ta'weel indicates the invalidity of ta'weel. So if ta'weel was permissible then they would have been the first to do it, due to their being in it the removal of tashbeeh " i.e. if you take the argument of the People of Ta'weel that they do it so as to absolve Allaah of anthropomorphism.[ 'Ibtaal at-Ta'weel' the famous work of Abu Ya'laa refuting ta'weel. He is the famous Hanbalee Imaam, Haafidh, and Faqeeh.]

- Al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee (d.463) said, "as for the discussion concerning the Attributes then indeed the madhhab of the salaf pertaining to that which is reported in the authentic sunan, was to affirm them and leave them upon their literal meaning while negating the kayfiyyah and tashbeeh from them. And a group rejected them and nullified that which Allaah, the free from defect, had affirmed. And another group from those that affirmed them examined them and fell into a type of tashbeeh and takyeef, and the desired objective is to travel the middle path between these two matters for the religion of Allaah is between the two extremes.

And the basis of this is that the discussion concerning the Attributes is a branch of the discussion concerning the Person of Allaah (dhaat) taking an identical path in both of them. So when it is known that affirming the Lord of the Universes is only affirming the existence not affirming the kayfiyyah, then likewise affirming the Attributes is affirming their existence not affirming limitation or takyeef.

So when we say: Allaah, the Exalted has a Hand, and Hearing, and Seeing, then these are Attributes that Allaah has affirmed for Himself and we do not say: the meaning of hand is Power (Qudra) and neither do we say: the meaning of Hearing and Seeing is Knowledge and neither do we say that they are limbs/organs, and neither do we liken them to the hands, hearing, and seeing that are organs. Rather we say: what is obligatory is to affirm them because they are to be stopped at (in terms of kayfiyyah) and obligatory to negate tashbeeh from them due to the saying of Allaah, 'there is nothing like Him, He is the Seeing and the Hearing' and His saying, 'there is nothing like Him" [ 'Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (pg. 47+, pg. 272 for a more summarized quote) quoting from a work of al-Khateeb that is in manuscript 'al-Kalaam alaa as-Sifaat', see also 'at-Tadhkira' of adh-Dhahabee (3/1142) Al-Khateeb was the great Shaafi'ee Imaam known as the 'Second Daaruqutnee' and the likes of him was not seen after him in Baghdaad.]

Adh-Dhahabee follows up this quote by saying, "and the meaning of 'obvious and literal' (dhaahirihaa) is that there is no hidden meaning to the words of the Book and the Sunnah other than what has been placed for it, as Maalik and others said, 'al-Istawaa is known'. So likewise we say the same for Seeing, Hearing, Knowledge, Speech, Desire, Face etc. that these are things which are known, so they are not needing clarification or explanation, but the kayf (nature/how) of all of them is not known."

• Abu al-Qaasim at-Taimee (d.535) said, "the Madhab of Maalik, ath-Thawree, al-Awzaa'ee, ash-Shaafi'ee, Hamaad bin Salma, Hamaad bin Zayd, Ahmad, Yahya bin Sa'eed al-Qattaan, Abdurrahmaan bin al-Mahdee, and Ishaq bin Raahawayah was that the Attributes by which He described Himself, and His Messenger described Him with...are to be taken upon their well-known literal and obvious meanings without kayf or tashbeeh or ta'weel. Ibn Uyaynah said, 'everything that Allaah has described Himself with, then it's recitation is it's tafseer (explanation).' Meaning it is taken upon it's obvious meaning, it is not permissible to change it to a metaphorical meaning by way of a type of ta'weel." [ 'at-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb' of Abu al-Qaasim, see 'Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (pg. 282).]

• Al-Qurtobee (d.671) said, "and not a single person from the righteous salaf rejected that His Istawaa upon His Throne was literal, and He specified the Throne because it is from the greatest of His creation. And they were ignorant of the kayfiyyah of His Istawaa...and Imaam Maalik said, 'al-Istawaa is known' meaning in the language, 'and the nature is not known, and to ask about (how) is a bid'ah'" [ 'al-Jaami lil Ahkaam al-Qur'aan' of al-Qurtobee under the verse 'then He rose over His Throne', see 'Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (pg. 286).]

• as-Saabonee (d.448) said, "Indeed the Ashaabul Hadeeth - may Allaah protect their lives and shower mercy upon those that have died - bear witness to the tawheed of Allaah and to the Messengership and Prophethood of His Messenger (SAW). They know their Lord - Mighty and Majestic - by the Attributes which He has spoken of in His Revelation, and by what He sent down, or testified to, by His Messenger (SAW)...They affirm for Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - what He Affirms for Himself in His Book, or upon the tongue of His Messenger (ASW). They do not believe in resembling His Attributes to the attributes of the creation. They say: indeed, He Created Adam with His Own Hands, as He -the Most Perfect - textually stated, "O Iblees! What prevents you from prostrating to the one whom I created with My Own Hands." (38:75). So they do not distort the words from their context, by carrying the meaning of Two Hands to mean favour or Power - which is the tahreef of the Mu'tazila and the Jahmiyyah - may Allaah destroy them. They do not ask how the Attributes are, nor do they resemble them to His Creation...Allaah - the Most High - protected Ahlus Sunnah from such tahreef, takyeef and tashbeeh, and favoured them with knowledge and understanding." [ 'Aqueedah as-Salaf Ashaabul Hadeeth' (no.3) of as-Saabonee.]

• Ibn Qudaamah (d.620) said, "the way of the salaf is to have faith in the Names and Attributes of Allaah that He has described Himself with in His Revelation, or upon the tongue of His Messenger (SAW) without increasing nor decreasing upon it, nor exceeding the limits, nor explaining them (in the way of the Mu'tazila) nor making ta'weel of them in a way that opposes the literal meaning." [ 'Dhamm at-Ta'weel' (pg.11) of ibn Qudaamah al-Maqdisee,]

• Shaykh Abdul Qaadir al-Jeelaanee (d.561) said, "it is essential to carry the Attribute of al-Istawaa upon it's apparent sense - without ta'weel, and that He Ascended in Person over the Throne. Istawaa does not mean sitting or touching - as the Mujassima and Karraamiyyah

say. Nor does it mean grandeur and highness - as the Ash'ariyyah say. Nor does it mean conquering and dominating as the Mu'tazila say. None of this is related in the Sharee'ah. Neither has this been related by any one of the Salaf as-Saalih and the Taabi'een. Nor from the Ashaabul Hadeeth. Rather it is related from them that they carried the meaning of Istawaa with it's apparent meaning." ['Gunya at-Taalibeen' (1/50) of Abdul Qaadir al-Jeelaanee.]

- The Reviver of the Sunnah, Abu Muhammad al-Baghawee said, "...The Finger is an Attribute from amongst the Attributes of Allaah, and likewise everything of this nature that occurs in the Book and Sunnah, for example the Face (Wajh), Eye (Ayn), Hand (Yad), Leg (Rijl), Coming (Ityaan and Majee), and the Descent to the Lowest Heaven, His Rising over His Throne, Laughter (Dahk), Joy (Farh)...so these and their likes are Attributes of Allaah in which it is obligatory to have faith in, and to leave them upon their literal meanings turning away from ta'weel and distancing from tashbeeh, with the belief that none of the Attributes of the Creator resemble anything from the attributes of the creation, just as His Self does not resemble the selves of the creation. Allaah said, 'there is nothing like Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing' And it was upon this that the salaf of this nation, and the scholars of the Sunnah were upon, they accepted them all with faith and stayed away from tamtheel and ta'weel. And they relegated the knowledge (of their kayfiyyah) to Allaah..." ['al-Mu'jam al-Lateef' (no.66) of adh-Dhahabee who quotes from him with his own chain of narration. See also 'Sharh as-Sunnah' (1/168+) of al-Baghawee.]

- Imaam Abul Hasan al-Ash'aree said, "if it is asked: why do you deny that His saying, "Do they not see that We created for them what our Own Hands have created." (36:71) And His saying, "whom I created with My Own Hands" (38:75) are metaphorical? To him it is said: the ruling concerning the speech of Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - is that it is taken upon it's clear (dhaahir) and literal (haqeeqah) meaning. Nothing is removed from it's Dhaahir meaning to the metaphorical one, except with a proof....Likewise the saying of Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - : "Whom I created with My Own Hands" it's dhaahir and haqeeqah meaning is affirming Two Hands of Allaah. So it is not permissible to alter it from the dhaahir meaning of Yada'in to that which our opponents claim except with a proof....It is obligatory to affirm Two Hands for Allaah - the Most High - in it's haqeeqah (literal) meaning, not with the meaning of two bounties (ni'matayn of Allaah)." ['al-Ibaanah' (pg. 133) of al-Ash'aree.]

### **An Analysis of the Ash'aree claims against Ahlus Sunnah Concerning this Topic**

From the above quotes a number of points of discussion arise:

- 1) The falsehood of the claim of Nuh Keller, " 'literalism' has never been accepted as an Islamic School of thought, neither among the salaf - early Muslims - nor those who came later," talking about taking the attributes of Allaah literally (taken from his talk on 'Literalism and Allaah's Attributes'). As for what follows in his applying his particular definition of the Dhaahiree School of thought to the present day Sunni/Salafee scholars,

then this is just his vain thoughts. For it is sufficient to say, to refute his claims, that none of the salafee scholars have rejected Qiyaas as a valid source of law.

2) His claim, and the claim of the 'Ash'arees', that to take the Attributes of Allaah literally is anthropomorphism, and hence ascribes this to ibn Taymiyyah and his student ibn Qayyim. I say to him if this is the case, then I challenge you to declare all of the above scholars, including Abul Hasan al-Ash'aree and Abdul Qaadir al-Jeelaanee, and many more as being anthropomorphists, but justice is rare, and sectarianism is rife, and there is no movement or power except with Allaah! Also it becomes clear to the reader after reading the above quote from al-Ash'aree why Kabbani only rarely quotes from his book 'al-Ibaanah', we will see more quotes detailing the Aqueedah of al-Ash'aree later on.

3) The fallacy of the claim of the one that says that such beliefs were confined to a handful of Hanbalees.

4) The meaning of the term 'literally' has been explained clearly to mean that the Attributes of Allaah are to be taken as they come, without subjecting them to ta'weel or tahreef. Ibn Taymiyyah says while discussing the meaning of the word dhaahir (literal/obvious), "if the intended meaning of the word dhaahir is taken to mean an Attribute of Allaah then there is no doubt that this not what is meant. But if the intended meaning of the word dhaahir is (to take) the meanings which are clearly understood from the verses and ahaadeeth as they befit His Majesty and Greatness and not as they befit the creation, then there is no doubt that the salaf used to believe in this 'dhaahir' according to this definition. And the one who negates that the salaf believed in the meanings of the verses concerning the Attributes then he has erred or has depended upon lies because there is nothing transmitted from the salaf, neither textually or obviously (dhaahiran) except that which indicates that they used to believe that Allaah was above the Throne, and that He was Hearing and Seeing, and He had a Hand literally." [ al-Aqueedah al-Hamawiyyah' of ibn Taymiyyah]

5) There is no possibility of anthropomorphism in any of the claim of the above scholars, or any of the scholars of Ahlus Sunnah, as they all stated that the Attributes of Allaah were to be understood without likening to creation, and leaving the knowledge of the kayfiyyah to Allaah.

6) The claim of the one that says that Imaam Ahmad on some occasions made ta'weel and on others he, like the salaf, relegated the knowledge of the meanings of the Attributes of Allaah to Allaah (tafweed), can be seen to be false due to what has preceded, and will be seen to be so in ensuing postings.

7) That this was the madhab of Abul Hasan al-Ash'aree as testified to in the last book he wrote, 'al-Ibaanah' in the introduction of which he makes clear that this was the madhab of Imaam Ahmad. With this it becomes clear the hoax that is perpetrated by some people that they are following the madhhab of Imaam Abul Hasan al-Ash'aree. And that his belief allowed ta'weel and that he relegated the meanings of Allaah's Attributes (tafweed). With

this it becomes clear the hypocrisy of these people that they declare some scholars as being Mujassima because they stated that the Attributes were to be understood literally, yet they conveniently overlook these same words of the very Imaam they claim to be following!

8) The fallacy of the claim of these people that the Salafees have a primitive, anthropomorphic and innovated belief (such as Abdul Hakim Murad) and that they have weak and feeble understandings of the texts whereas they (the Ash'arees) have the true insights and in depth understandings of the Sharee'ah texts. In what has preceded, it is clear that they have difficulty in understanding the intended meanings behind relatively simple phrases not to speak of the finer points of the Sharee'ah!

9) The fallacy of the claim of Kabbani (pg. 108) that to use the term 'literally' is to force a kayfiyyah to the Attributes of Allaah.

10) The fallacy of the claim of Kabbani (pg. 109) that, "the correct position of Ahlus Sunnah never adds 'in person' or 'literally' which is to specify a modality....". So in these words O Kabbani you have ejected all the above scholars and many more from the fold of Ahlus Sunnah, including the Imaam you claim to follow! May Allaah lift the blindness from your heart.

11) The scholars of Ahlus Sunnah were divided into two groups over the use of the word 'literal' with reference to the Attributes of Allaah. Some of them saw no harm in employing it, as seen above. Yet others disagreed it's being employed, yet agreed with the intended meaning, this being the stance of adh-Dhahabee amongst others.

From the above quotes it will become clear to the reader that the madhhab of these early scholars, and the madhhab of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaa'ah was not to delve into ta'weel, rather they censured the one who did so. A final point that we have to point out is that ta'weel by it's very nature is not definite, and the person making ta'weel can never be certain that he has arrived at the truth, an indication of which has preceded in the words of al-Yamaanee.

ibn Attar the famous student of an-Nawawi said, "and the meaning of what they make ta'weel of is not established." [ See later on ibn al-Attar.]

Ibn Hajr al-Asqalaanee said, " the one who takes the path of the khalaf cannot be sure that that which he makes ta'weel of is the intended meaning, and it is not possible to be certain of the correctness of the ta'weel." [ 'Fath al-Baaree' of ibn Hajr (13/436)]

So we direct this question to the Ash'arees: you do not allow Aahaad narrations to be used in matters of belief, because in your eyes they are doubtful yet you allow ta'weel, which by it's nature is doubtful, in a matter as fundamental as the Names and Attributes of Allaah! Explain to us this inconsistency!

## Did The Salaf Practice Ta'weel?

Kabbani states on (pg. 31) that 'many of the pious Salaf, including the Four Imaams and the imams of hadeeth, such as Bukhari, to apply ta'weel in its proper place. This has been proven by scholars such as ibn al-Jawzi al-Hanbali in his 'Daf' Shubah at-Tashbeeh', Qadi Iyad al-Maliki in his commentary to Muslim, Ali al-Qari al-Hanafi in his commentary on Iyads 'al-Shifa', and Imam Nawawi ash-Shafi'i in his commentary on Muslim. What follows is a presentation of their views on some of the relevant texts."

As will become clear in the following pages neither was it the practice of the Salaf to delve into ta'weel or the practice of the 4 Imaams, and neither was it the practice of al-Ash'aree himself! The fact that some later scholars fell into this innovation is not a proof of the permissibility for ta'weel and can never be taken as such!

It is important however to make one thing clear: that any scholar, who is sincere and desiring the truth, when he exercises his ijtihaad and arrives at a wrong ruling, then even if that ruling is an innovation, the scholar is still rewarded for his ijtihaad and the label of innovator can never be applied to him.

Examples that the Asharees give to prove that the salaf delved into ta'weel.

As mentioned previously the Ash'arees not content to merely delve into ta'weel, ascribe it to the Salaf, may Allaah be pleased with them all, and quote narrations from them to do so.

A number of examples will be quoted below taken from the lectures of Nuh Haa Meem Keller, some of which can be found in the book of Kabbani.

Then while reading some of the refutations of the true traditional scholars to the footnotes of Hasan Saqqaaf to the work 'Daf' Shubah at-Tashbeeh' I found that Keller had merely quoted from this work. For Saqqaaf brings a section in his introduction wherein he tries to prove that the Salaf practiced ta'weel. Needless to say, he filled this introduction with semi-quotes, misquotes, fabrications, and distortions. And we could go through each and every example he brings and prove them false as done by some scholars, but we will suffice with mentioning only a few to show that not content with merely slandering the great scholars of Ahlus Sunnah he has to go on and put lies into the mouth of our Righteous Salaf!

- Over the verse in which Allaah addresses the unbelievers on the Day of Judgement, "Today We forget them (nansaahum) as they have forgotten the meeting of this Day of theirs"[7:51]

Keller states, "which the early Muslims used to interpret figuratively as reported by a scholar who was himself an early Muslim - salafee - and indeed the shaykh of the early Muslims in Qur'aanic exegesis, the hadeeth master....Haafidh ibn Jareer at-Tabaree, who died 310 years after the Hijra and who explains the above verse, 'today We forgotten them as they have

forgotten this Day of theirs', as meaning, "this Day, resurrection Day, we shall forget them, so as to say, we shall abandon them to their punishment" Now this is precisely ta'weel - or interpretation in other than the verses ostensive sense...." He goes on to say that this same 'ta'weel' was reported by ibn Abbaas and his student Mujaahid.

It is surprising, how a few eloquent words can fool the people, for in reality the meaning of the above words is empty. For all Keller does is betray his ignorance with regards to the Arabic Language for the word nansaakum, coming from the root verb nasiya, yansaa can mean, either to deliberately leave and abandon or to forget and fail to remember [See 'Lisaan al-Arab' for example]. Therefore the meaning of this verse is clear and that is 'Today we abandon them as they have abandoned this Day of theirs' and this is not taking the verse from it's clear and literal meaning as Keller claims.

This is the tafseer that at-Tabaree gives following ibn Abbaas and Mujaahid, "We will abandon them in the punishment which cuts them off, leaving them hungry and thirsty without any food or drink, just as they abandoned action for the Meeting on this Day, and they rejected preparation for it.... And we have explained clearly the meaning of His saying 'nansaahum' previously along with it's witnesses, so their is no need to repeat it."

Further the implication that Keller leaves is that the Salafees who take the verses literally must then believe that Allaah forgets, and this is evil and a lie against the Salafees, for no one has ever said this for the very reason mentioned above.

- Over the verse, 'And the sky with built bi Aydin, verily we outspread it'

Keller assumes that 'bi Aydin' means 'with Hands' and then states, following Saqqaaf, "at-Tabaree ascribes the figurative explanation - ta'weel - of 'with Hands' as meaning, quote, 'with Power', through five chains of transmission to ibn Abbaas...."

Again the argument is empty for the word Alif Yaa Daal, which is the root of 'bi Aydin' means 'Power', and not hands as Keller thinks, and can be found in any Arabic dictionary. So how can there be ta'weel here?!

Also this verse, even if taken to mean 'with Hands', does not link them to Allaah, i.e. as being the Hands of Allaah, so there is no proof in this verse for the ta'weel of the Ash'arees from any perspective! [See 'as-Sawaa'iq wa ash-Shuhab' of Shaykh Abu Wadaa'ah al-Atharee (pg. 40)]

So if one were to ask: but you Salafees take the Qur'aan upon it's literal meaning, so how can you use the argument above? The reply is: that the founding principle is that we take the Qur'aan and Sunnah as it was understood by the Salaf, so what they took literally we take literally, and where they departed from the literal meaning, we too depart from the literal meaning. This is what is indicated in the previous sayings of the scholars that it is from the rights of the Words of Allaah that they be taken literally unless an evidence indicate otherwise e.g. the understanding of the Salaf. What has happened here, as is

common, is that the Ash'arees have put arguments into the mouths of the Salafees that in reality do not exist and then go on to refute them so as to misguide the unaware listeners.

Shaykh Yusuf Muhammad Siddique said, "and the ta'weel of one who says: 'What is intended by Yad is power is not correct since it is not correct for the saying of Allaah: '...to one who I created with My Two Hands...' to mean: 'with My Power' when Hand has been mentioned in the dual. And if that had been correct then Iblees would have said: 'and You created me also with Your Power, so he (Adam) has no superiority over me in that.' However, Iblees, along with his disbelief, is more knowledgeable of his Lord than the Jahmiyyah." ['Daqaa'iq Aqueedah inda A'immatul Arba'ah' (pg. 11-12)]

Know also that the Mu'tazila used the very same verse above as a proof for ta'weel, saying, "the sky we built with Aydin'. Al-Aydee means power (quwwa), and hence it is necessary that the meaning of 'My Two Hands' be: My Two Powers"

Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'aree replied to this ta'weel saying, "it is said to them that this ta'weel is wrong (faasid) from many perspectives the last of which is that 'al-Aydee' is not the plural of yad (hand) because the plural of yad which is used to mean ni'ma (favour) is 'Ayaadee' and all that Allaah said was 'to the one who I created with My Two Hands (bi yaday)' so it is false that the meaning of His saying, 'with My Two Hands' be the meaning of His saying, 'we built it with Power'." ['al-Ibaanah' (pg.134)]

And there are many verses in the Qur'aan, many Ahaadeeth and the consensus of the Salaf that Allaah has Two Hands without asking how and likening them to the hands of the creation. Reading any early work on Aqeedah will establish this.

- Over the hadeeth, "Allaah the Most High Laughs about two men, one of whom kills the other, but both will enter Paradise. The one who fights in the way of Allaah and is killed and afterwards Allaah forgives the killer, then he fights in the path of Allaah and is martyred."

Keller claims, following Saqqaaf, "the hadeeth master al-Bayhaqee records that the scribe of Bukhaaree, Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Farabree, related that Imaam Bukhaaree said quote, "the meaning of Laughter is Mercy".

This statement of al-Bayhaqee occurs in his 'Asmaa was Sifaat' (pg. 470) but he quotes no chain of narration for it, and therefore it cannot be depended upon as indicated in the words of Abdullaah bin al-Mubaarak said,

"The isnaad is from the Deen, were it not for the isnaad, whosoever willed could say whatever he wished."

Imaam Bukhaaree, may Allaah have Mercy upon him, was clearly upon the way of the Salaf, meaning he affirmed the Attributes of Allaah as they befitted Him, and this is seen

in his work 'Saheeh al-Bukhaaree' and his work 'Khalq Af'aal al-Ebaad.' As for the above hadeeth, Bukhaaree mentions it in two places in his 'Saheeh':

1) Book of the merits of the Ansaar, chpt. 10

2) Book of Tafseer, chpt. 6

And nowhere does he mention the aforementioned ta'weel. In fact ibn Hajr says, after quoting the words of al-Bayhaqee, "I have not seen this in any of the manuscripts that we have come across." [al-Fath' (8/631)]

Adh-Dhahabee quotes from Abu Ubaid al-Qaasim bin Sallaam (d.224) that he said, while talking about the Laughter of Allaah, "These are authentic ahaadeeth, the Ashaabul Hadeeth and the Legal jurists have conveyed them, some from others, and they are the truth in which there is no doubt according to us. But if it was said, "how does He Laugh?" We say: we do not explain this, and we have not heard anyone explain it."

[‘Siyar’ (10/505). The statement of Abu Ubaid is also mentioned by ibn Abdul Barr in ‘at-Tamheed’ (7/149). Abu Ubaid is the faqeeh, linguist, and muhaddith. He studied under a group of the taabi’een like Sufyaan bin Uyaynah and Abdur Rahmaan bin Mahdee. Imaam Ahmad said about him, "Abu Ubaid is a teacher, every day he increases in good." And Yahya bin Ma’een said, "the people should ask Abu Ubaid".]

And adh-Dhahabee adds to this saying, "and the scholars of the Salaf explained the important and unimportant words (occurring in the Qur’aan and Sunnah)... and as for the verses and the ahaadeeth of the Attributes they never subjected them to ta’weel, and they are the most important in the religion, so if ta’weel was permissible than they would have undertaken it. So know with certainty that reciting them, and leaving them as they came is the truth, and there is no explanation for them other than this, so we believe in this, and we are silent following the Salaf, believing that they are the Attributes of Allaah...and that they do not resemble the attributes of creation"

So again the way of the Salaf was to take the Attribute of the Laughter of Allaah as it came without asking how, and likening it to creation. And the meaning of ‘reciting them’ is that the clear meaning is sufficient for us, and there is no need to delve into ta’weel, as has preceded.

[Refer to ‘As-Sawwa’iq wa ash-Shuhab’ (pg. 44+), ‘Rudood wat Ta’qubaat’ (pg.131+), ‘Ittihaaf Ahl al-Fadl’ (pg. 1/82+)]

- Over the verse, "And your Lord shall come" (wa jaa’a rubbuk)

Keller states, "the hadeeth master Haafidh ibn Katheer reports in his ‘Bidaayah wan Nihaayah’ that Imaam Bayhaqee related from al-Haakim: from Abu Umar ibn Samaaq: from Hanbal (ibn Ishaq), the son of the brother of Ahmad ibn Hanbal’s father, that

quote, 'Ahmad bin Hanbal figuratively interpreted the words of Allaah, Most High, "And your Lord shall come", as meaning: His recompense shall come." Al-Bayhaquee said, "this chain of narration has absolutely nothing wrong with it."

This taken from Hasan Saqqaaf from his introduction (no.4) who also mentions two further examples wherein Imaam Ahmad is supposed to have made ta'weel (no's 5,7) all from the narrations of Hanbal bin Ishaq, who is alone in reporting these narrations - and the scholars have discussed that it is common to find that what Hanbal is alone in narrating contradicts the famous and well-known stances of Imaam Ahmad, and therefore some of the Hanbalee scholars like al-Khallaal and others did not depend upon these type of narrations from him.

Imaam ibn al-Qayyim says, "indeed these narrations are erroneously attributed to Imaam Ahmad, for indeed Hanbal is alone in narrating them from him, and he has many narrations which he alone reports that contradict the famous stances in his madhab, so when he is alone in transmitting that which contradicts a famous stance of his (i.e. Ahmad) then al-Khallaal and his companion Abd al-Azeez do not consider these narrations to be established while Abu Abd Allaah bin Haamid and others considered these to be established.

And what is correct is that these narrations are irregular/odd (shaadh) contradicting the mainstream/essence of his madhhab."['Mukhtasar Sawaa'iq al-Mursilah' (2/452) of ibn al-Qayyim]

And this statement of ibn al-Qayyim is supported by what Qaadee Abu Ya'laa reports from Abu Ishaq bin Shaaqalaa after mentioning this narration from Imaam Ahmad, "...there is no doubt that this is an error from Hanbal', and Abu Ishaq meant that his (Ahmad's) madhhab was to take the verse upon it's clear and literal meaning i.e. the Coming of the Person (of Allaah), this is what is obvious from his words, and Allaah knows best." ['Ibtaal at-Ta'welaat' (1/132) of Abu Ya'laa]

Ibn Taymiyyah said, "and there is no doubt that mutawaatir narrations from Imaam Ahmad contradict this narration, and it becomes clear that he did not say: indeed the Lords' Command comes or descends, rather he rebuked the one who said this."['al-Fataawaa (5/401)]

And what is authentically related from Imaam Ahmad is what Qaadee Abu Ya'laa narrates, "Hanbal said: I asked Abu Abdullaah: 'Allaah the Mighty and Magnificent – Descends to the lowest heaven?' He said, 'yes.' I said, 'is His Descent by His Knowledge or what?' Then he said to me, 'be silent about this,' and he became very angry and said, 'leave the hadeeth as it came.' ['Ikhtilaaf ar-Riwaayatain' (1/250) of Abu Ya'laa and also 'Mukhtasar as-Sawaa'iq' (pg. 386)]

This narration is supported by what Imaam Abdullaah bin Ahmad reports in his book 'as-Sunnah', "I asked my father, 'Allaah Descends to the lowest heaven. How is His

Descending, is it His Knowledge or what? He said, 'be quiet or severe punishment shall afflict you, leave the hadeeth as they come.'

So as Jareer at-Tabaree says: Coming (Majee and al-Ityaan) are Attributes of the Lord, and it is not permissible for anyone to go beyond bounds in discussing this except with a narration from Allaah or from a Messenger who is sent. ['Tafseer ibn Jareer' (2/191)]

Imaam Abul Hasan al-Ash'aree said, "We say: That indeed Allaah, Azza wa Jall, will Come on the Day of Judgement as He said, 'and your Lord shall Come, and His angels - rank upon rank'."['al-Ibaanah' (pg.61), see also 'Tabyeen al-Kadhib al-Muftaree' of ibn Asaakir.]

In the same category falls the narration that Keller quotes from Imaam Ahmad, "we believe in them and consider them true without how and without meaning" for it is also singularly narrated by Hanbal bin Ishaq. And even if it were authentic then Shaykh Saalih al-Uthaymeen said, "the meaning that Imaam Ahmad negates in his words is the meaning that was initiated by the Mu'attila from the Jahmiyyah and others, by which they changed the texts of the Qur'aan and Sunnah from their literal meanings to meanings that contradicted them. And the fact that he negated the kayfiyyah and meaning, so that his words are taken to refute both parties: the Mu'attila and Mushabbiha, indicates (the truth of) what we have mentioned."['Talkhees al-Hamawiyah' (pg. 63) of ibn Uthaymeen. And the truth of his words can be seen in what has preceded, that if the meaning of the Attributes is negated then their would be no conceivable need to negate the kayfiyyah also.]

[ See 'as-Sawaa'iq wa ash-Shuhab' (pg. 42-44, 51+), 'Rudood wat-Ta'qubaat' (185+), 'Ittihaaf Ahl al-Fadl' (1/32+)]

So from what has preceded it becomes clear that Imaam Bayhaqee's, may Allaah have mercy upon him, authentication of the narration is erroneous, and this along with the earlier example lends weight to the truth of Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan's statement, "and mentioning al-Bayhaqee for this is not to be depended upon, because al-Bayhaqee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, had something of ta'weel of the Attributes. So his reporting of this subject is not to be trusted, because maybe he was lenient in his reporting."['at-Ta'qeebaat alaa Kitaab as-Salafiyah laysat madhaban' (pg. 33) of Saalih al-Fawzaan, his refutation of the book by al-Bootee.]

Likewise Shaykh Abdul Azeez bin Baaz said, "as for what occurs in the words of al-Bayhaqee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, in his book 'al-I'tiqaad' with regards to such things - then this is from what entered upon him from the speech of the Mutakallimeen and their false additions. This was passed to him and he believed in the correctness of this, whereas the truth is that it is from the words of the People of Innovation, not from the words of the People of the Sunnah." ['Tanbeehaat Haamah alaa maa katabahu ash-Shaykh Muhammad Alee as-Saaboonee fee Sifaat Allaah - Azza wa Jall' (pg.23)]

The truth of the above words can be ascertained when we come to know that from the teachers of al-Bayhaqee was Abu Bakr ibn Fawraq. Adh-Dhahabee described him as "the

Shaykh of the Mutakallimeen" and also, "he was Ash'aree, a head of the field of kalaam" and, "I say: he was taken in chains to Sheeraz for his beliefs. And Abdul Waleed related that the Sultaan Mahmood asked him about Allaah's Messenger (SAW) so he said: 'He was Allaah's Messenger, but as for us today then no,' so he ordered that he be killed with poison. Ibn Hazm said, 'he used to say that the soul of Allaah's Messenger has expired and passed away – and is not in Paradise.'" End of quote from adh-Dhahabee. ['as-Siyar' (17/214-216)]

Not only this but the isnaad of that al-Bayhaqee mentions includes Abu Amr ibn Samaak who is not known as stated by adh-Dhahabee in his 'Talkhees' (1/539) so it is not possible to be an isnaad having nothing wrong with it!

So in conclusion, 'Coming' (Majee') is an Attribute of Allaah and as such is to be taken without asking how or likening to creation. And as for those that claim that taking this Attribute literally necessitates that we believe Allaah to move from one place to another etc.

Then the reply to this is: only a person who resembles Allaah to His creation would believe this, and we do not, rather we say that it is an Attribute, which like all of His Attributes is to be taken without tashbeeh or takyeeef. And in fact your accusation in and of itself betrays the fact that it is you who liken Allaah to His creation, for this is what you have to do to accuse us in the first place! I.e. you and your likes only understand the Attributes as they would befit the creation, not as they befit Allaah as the Salaf did! Not only this but you have fallen into that which the Ummah is agreed upon is forbidden - you have started to discuss the kayfiyyah of the Attributes!

- Over the hadeeth of Nuzool (Allaah's Descending to the Lowest Heaven at the last third of the night)

Saqqaaaf states in his ta'leeq to 'Daf' Shubah at-Tashbeeh', "ta'weel of Imaam Maalik, may Allaah the Exalted have mercy upon him: al-Haafidh ibn Abdul Barr reports in 'at-Tamheed' (7/143), and al-Haafidh adh-Dhahabee mentioned in 'Siyar A'laam an-Nubulaa' (8/105) that Imaam Maalik, may Allaah the Exalted have mercy upon him, made ta'weel of the Nuzool (of Allaah) which occurs in the hadeeth to descent of His Command. And this is the text from 'Siyar',

'ibn Adee said: Muhammad bin Haroon bin Hissaan narrated to us from Saalih bin Ayyub from Habeeb bin Abu Habeeb that Maalik narrated to me: "Allaah the Exalted sends down His Command, as for He then He is Everlasting , still (Laa yazool)." Saalih said, "I mentioned this to Yahya bin Bakeer and he said, 'good by Allaah although I have not heard this from Maalik'"

I (Saqqaaaf) say: the narration of ibn Abdul Barr is via another route so be aware, and we have mentioned this from Imaam Maalik in the ta'leeq number 129."

This is what he said in number 129: "and from those that made ta'weel of the hadeeth of Nuzool by the descent of His Mercy was Imaam Maalik and he was from the Imaams of the salaf as is narrated...." And he mentioned what is in 'as-Siyar'.

In this book this person has blackened it's pages by abusing the Imaams of the past and by quoting phrases that betray only his lack of investigation and enmity and jealousy to the true scholars of Ahlus Sunnah, past and present, and showing a sectarianism that is blind to the truth.

For in the above quote he narrates only a portion of the statement of adh-Dhahabee, for adh-Dhahabee follows on by saying, "I say: I do not know Saalih, and Habeeb is mashhur (famous)!! And what is preserved from Imaam Maalik, may Allaah have mercy upon him, is the narration of Waleed bin Muslim that he asked him about the ahaadeeth to do with the Attributes of Allaah and he replied, 'we take them as they are, without explanation (tafseer).' So the Imaam would have two sayings on this if the narration of Habeeb is authentic."

The narration of Habeeb is not authentic, adh-Dhahabee says about him, "Ahmad said: he is not trustworthy. Ibn Ma'een said: he used to read to Maalik...(?)...and I was asked about him in Egypt and I replied, 'he is nothing'. Abu Dawood said: he is the most lying from amongst the people. Abu Haatim said: he narrated fabricated ahaadeeth from the son of the brother of az-Zuhree. Ibn Adee said: all of his ahaadeeth are fabrications. Ibn Hibbaan said: ...(?)...and he narrated fabrications from trustworthy narrators. He used to include in their ahaadeeth what they did not narrate." [al-Meezaan' (1/452)]

Ibn Adee said about him, "the scribe of Maalik, he fabricated ahaadeeth...and the ahaadeeth of this Habeeb are all fabricated, from Maalik and from other than him.... And frequently the hadeeth of Habeeb from Maalik are hadeeth that he fabricated against him..." [al-Kaamil' (2/818)]

So this is the state of Habeeb, and when we also consider that the isnaad also contains an unknown narrator then know that it is impossible to depend upon this chain of narration from any perspective! So how is it that this Saqqaaf overlooks all of this? Truly it is as is said: the innovators take what is for them and 'forget' what is against them.

As for what is narrated by ibn Abdul Barr then he said, "and Muhammad bin Alee al-Jiblee - who was one of the trustworthy Muslims of Qayrawaan - said that Jaami bin Sawaadah in Egypt narrated to us from Matraf from Maalik bin Anas that he was asked about the hadeeth, "indeed Allaah descends to the lowest heaven" so Maalik replied, 'He sends down His Command.' [at-Tamheed' (7/143)]

Then this isnaad is also da'eef for Jaami' was declared weak by ad-Daaruqutnee and he reported it in 'Gharaa'ib al-Maalik' with three other narrators between him and Maalik. And so it becomes clear that this ta'weel is not from Imaam Maalik and in fact what is affirmed from him contradicts this as has preceded.

And it seems clear that this ta'weel is from Habeeb himself as quoted from him in 'at-Tamheed' of ibn Abdul Barr (7/143), and the condition of Habeeb has preceded.

This is what scholarly research free from sectarianism dictates.

And it is the madhhab of the Righteous Salaf that they took the Attribute of Nuzool as it befitted the Majesty of Allaah without takyeef, tashbeeh and ta'weel.

[This discussion is taken from 'Rudood wat-Ta'qubaat' (pg. 93+) and 'as-Sawaa'iq was Shuhub' (pg. 45+). For a similar discussion see 'Mukhtasar as-Sawaa'iq' of ibn al-Qayyim.]

- Over the verse, "the Day when the Saaq (Shin) will be exposed."

Keller states, following Saqqaaf, "at-Tabaree says a number of exegetes of the Companions - and their students - held that, 'A Day when the Shin shall be exposed' means that, quote, "a dire matter shall be disclosed".....This was apparently lost upon later anthropomorphists who said that the verse proved, quote, "Allaah has a Shin," or according to others, "two Shins" as one would be unbecoming. At-Tabaree also relates from Muhamamd ibn Ubayd al-Muharabee who relates from ibn al-Mubaarak from Usama ibn Zayd, meaning al-Lythee, from Ikrimah, from ibn Abbaas, that the Shin in the above verse means, quote, "A Day of war and direness" all these narrators are those of the saheeh - except Usama ibn Zaid whose hadeeth are hasan."

This claim includes a number of misconceptions, unfounded allegations and distortions.

Firstly: the narrations that at-Tabaree reports from ibn Abbaas via a number of routes, regarding these Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaali says, "Summarizing what has been reported from ibn Abbaas on this issue: with this you will know, O beloved (reader) - may you learn the good - that the chains of narration that are reported from ibn Abbaas to do with his explanation of His saying, "the Day when the Shin will be exposed" cannot be used to establish a proof, because they are all da'eef.

So if it is said: can they be considered under the definition of hasan li ghayrihi (i.e. hasan due supporting each other)

I say (in reply): indeed the weakness of them is such that they cannot support one another...

Some of them are severely weak and cannot be used to support rather they make the matter worse. For example:

the route of Usama bin Zayd from Ikrimah from him (ibn Abbaas), and it is no. 1

the route of the Uofiyveen and it is no. 2

the 'masaa'il' of Naafi bin al-Azraq, and it is no. 8

Some of them have a single deficiency, and that is inqitaa (missing links in the chain), so when this is the case then they do not support or strengthen others, and they are:

the route of Alee bin Abee Talha from him and it is no.3

the route of Ibraaheem an-Nakha'i from him and it is no.6

the route of Dahhaak bin Mazaahim al-Hilaalee and it is no.7

Some of them cannot support others because they do not have the same meaning:

So in some of them he says, "distress and severity"

in some of them he says, "the matter will be exposed and the actions will be shown"

in some he says, "a severe matter"

in some he says, "the Day of Judgement and the Hour due to it's severity."

... And due to this we are certain that the narration is not authentic to ibn Abbaas (RA)."  
[al-Manhal ar-Raqraaq' (pg. 30) of Shaykh Saleem]

Secondly: We assume that the narration is authentic and accept that there are other authentic narrations from the Taabi'een that mention this explanation. In this case the interpretation of ibn Abbaas still cannot be considered to be a case of ta'weel of one of Allaahs attributes, for, as ibn Taymiyyah and others [For example the Shaafi'ee Imaam, ibn Mandah in his 'Radd alaa al-Jahmiyyah' (pg. 37)] point out, the salaf had two understandings of this verse:

1) Those who say that it was not a verse relating to an Attribute of Allaah, but rather a description of the Day of Judgement, since ALLAAH DOES NOT MENTION IT AS ONE OF HIS ATTRIBUTES IN THE ABOVE VERSE and therefore it can be used according to the Arabic Language to mean severity and distress, as reported by ibn Abbaas who explained this verse according to the Language. This is not therefore the case of the Ash'arees who make ta'weel of the Attributes of Allaah and therefore they have no proof in this verse.

2) Those that say that this verse does refer to an Attribute as was the opinion of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree and others, this due to the hadeeth that he narrates, "So Our Lord will uncover His shin, and every believing male and female will prostrate to Him, and only those will remain standing who prostrated in the world for show and repute." [Bukhaaree and in the hadeeth of Abu Hurayra the Prophet then recited the verse in question.] So it is possible that this hadeeth did not reach ibn Abbaas just as the ruling that grandmothers inherit did

not reach Abu Bakr (RA) and so on. And if it had reached him then he would have explained the Verse according to it. [al-Fataawaa' (6/394)]

Likewise Qaadee Abu Ya'laa said, "as for what is narrated from ibn Abbaas concerning the ta'weel of the Shin then ibn Mas'ud contradicted him and he understood the Shin as an Attribute of Allaah, and it is possible that the saying of ibn Abbaas be understood in the light of the linguistic definition of Shin: i.e. severity..." [Ibtaal at-Ta'weelaat' (1/58)]

And he likewise mentions that of the opinion of ibn Mas'ud were Abu Hurayra and Abu Sa'eed. [Ibid. (1/160)]

Thirdly: Consider another narration from ibn Mas'ud narrated from him by ibn Mandah that ibn Mas'ud recited the above verse "as His Two Shins" 'Radd alaa al-Jahmiyyah' (pg. 37)] so if this narration is authentic then the aforementioned tafseer of ibn Abbaas and others is seen to be incorrect because, the language only allows Shin to be interpreted as severity when used in the singular. Also the fallacy of what Keller states becomes clear, "or according to others 'Two Shins' as one would be unbecoming."

So in conclusion, the Shin is an Attribute of Allaah which is to be taken without takyeef and ta'weel and tashbeeh. And the attempts of the Ash'arees to show that the explanation of ibn Abbaas is ta'weel of Allaahs Attribute is seen to be false.

And Allaah the Most High Knows best, and He is the One who guides to attaining the truth.

### **al-Juwaynee (d.438) on the Names and Attributes of Allaah**

al-Juwaynee was one of the Imaams of the Ash'arees of his time, and the father of the famous Imaam al-Haramayn Abu Ma'aalee al-Juwaynee. But he, like a great deal of the Ash'arees after him, recanted from this madhhab and returned to the madhhab of Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah. He writes:

"Know that, for a short time, I was confused about three matters:

1. The matter of the Sifaat (Attributes of Allaah)
2. The matter of fawqiyah (Allaah being Above His creation)
3. The question of Words and Voice about the Qur'aan.

And I used to be confused about the different sayings found in the contemporary books with regards to these matters - whether ta'weel of the Attributes should be made and tahreef of them. Whether to take them as they are and halt at their meanings, or whether to affirm them without ta'weel or ta'teel or tashbeeh or tamtheel. But I found in the texts of the Book of Allaah, the Exalted, and the Sunnah of His Messenger (SAW) a great clarity

about the reality of these Attributes, and likewise affirming al-Uluww and al-Fawqiyah, and likewise with Words and Voice.

Then I found the later scholars from the People of Innovated Speech and Rhetoric's (Mutakallimeen) in their works making ta'weel of (Allaah's Attribute of) Istawaa by saying it meant Qahr (dominance) and Isteelaa (overcoming); and making ta'weel of Nuzool by saying it meant His Command descends; and making ta'weel of the Two Hands (of Allaah) to mean Power and Favour, and making ta'weel of the Foot (Qadam) to mean the foot of truth with their Lord; and the likes of this. Along with this, I found that they claimed that the Speech of Allaah, the Exalted, meant a speech existent in His Self (Qaa'imān bi adh-dhaat) with Words but without Voice. They claimed these Words were a mode of expression for that existent meaning!

And from those that took to these sayings, or some of them, were a group of people who had a (high) status in my heart. Like a group of the Ash'aree, Shaafi'ee jurists - and I am upon the madhhab of Imaam Shaafi'ee (RA) knowing the obligations of my religion and it's regulations. So I found these noble scholars adhering to the likes of such statements, and they were my teachers, and I had complete faith in them, their nobility and knowledge. However, despite all this, I found in my heart having hatred for such ta'weel, such that I could not find peace and tranquillity from it. It caused my chest to feel constricted, rather than causing it to expand...

And I used to fear affirming al-Uluww, Istawaa and Nuzool, fearing that it would imply circumscribing Allaah with His creation (hasr) and tashbeeh. Yet despite this, when I studied the texts of the Book of Allaah, and the Sunnah of His Messenger, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, I found in it texts pointing to the reality of these meanings. I found in the texts the Messenger, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, clarifying the Attributes, informing about His Lord, describing Him with them. And know with conviction that he, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, used to have present in his noble sittings the scholar and the ignorant one, the acute minded and the dim witted, the Arab and the non-Arab. However, I did not find anything by which he followed up these texts with which he used to describe his Lord with, neither with another text, nor with anything that would change their meanings from their literal (hageeqah) sense or cause ta'weel to be made of them. Such as the ta'weel of my sheikhs and jurists from the Mutakallimeen made, for example ta'weel of Istawaa to isteelaa; and ta'weel of Nuzool to mean His Command descends; and other than this. And I did not find that he, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, used to warn people from faith in what was obvious in his speech describing his Lord, whether it was concerning al-Fawqiyah and Two Hands and other such things. And there is nothing recorded from him that proves that these Attributes have another inward meaning, other than what is obvious from their meaning...

So when we came to know this and came to believe this, we were then preserved from the doubts of ta'weel, and the blindness of ta'teel, and the foolishness of tashbeeh and tamtheel. And we affirmed the Highness of our Lord, The Most Perfect, and His Fawqiyah and His Istawaa over His Throne in a manner that befits His Majesty and

Greatness. And the truth is clear in that, and the chest will readily accept this. For indeed tahreef is rejected by the correct and sound intellect, for example the tahreef of Istawaa to Isteelaa; and other than this. And likewise wuqoof (affirming the wordings of the Attributes, but halting at their meanings) is ignorance and blindness, since we know that our Lord described Himself with these descriptions so that we may know Him by them. So in our knowing Him - we do not halt at affirming the wordings of the Attributes, whilst negating what is intended from their meanings. Since He did not describe Himself to us by these Attributes, except that we may affirm what He has described Himself with for us, not so that we halt at them. And likewise tashbeeh and tamtheel are foolishness and ignorance. So the one whom Allaah, the Exalted, makes to agree upon affirming (the Attributes) without tahreef, takyeef, or wuqoof then he has agreed upon the intended matter, insha'allaah....

And Allaah has expanded my breast about the state of those scholars who made ta'weel of Istawaa to Isteelaa and....and it is my belief that they do not understand the Attributes of the Lord, the Exalted, except with what befits the creation. Thus they do not understand the Istawaa of Allaah as truly befits Him, and neither....so this is why they distorted the words from their proper context, and denied what Allaah described Himself with. And we shall mention the explanation of that insha'allaah.

And there is no doubt that we and them (i.e. Ash'arees) are in agreement upon affirming (the Attributes of) Life, Seeing, Hearing, Knowledge, Power, Desire and Speech of Allaah. And we, certainly do not understand the Attribute of Life to mean with the likes of these organs which is established in our bodies. And likewise we do not understand Hearing and Seeing of Allaah to imply that they are limbs. So just as they say: His Life is not like ours, nor is His Knowledge Seeing, rather these are Attributes in a way that is befitting to Him, not as they befit us. Then likewise we say: His Attribute of Life is known but the kayfiyyah is not. His Knowledge is known but the kayfiyyah is not, and likewise His Hearing and Seeing are known, and there is no implication of there being organs or bodily parts in any of this - rather all these Attributes are in a way that befit Him.

And Likewise is the case for His Eye, Fawqiyah, Istawaa, and Nuzool. So His Fawqiyah is known, established just like the reality of His Hearing and Seeing is established, for these two are known but the kayfiyyah is not....And His Istawaa is known, and the kayfiyyah is not explained by implying movement or transmission which befits the creation. Rather His Istawaa is in a manner that befits His Greatness. So His Attributes are known from the direction of sentence and affirmation, and not known from the direction of kayfiyyah and setting limits. So the believer is clear about the Attributes from one perspective and blind from the other. Clear from the perspective of affirmation and existence. Blind from the perspective of kayfiyyah and setting limits. So this is the way by affirming what Allaah, the Exalted, has described Himself with, and by negating tahreef, tashbeeh and wuqoof. This is what the Lord, Most Exalted, intended for us concerning His Attributes... that we recognise them, have faith in them being real/literal (haqeeqah) and negate any tashbeeh to them, not to deny His real Attributes by tahreef and ta'weel. And there is no difference between Istawaa and Hearing, or between Nuzool and Seeing for each occurs by a text.

So if they say to us about Istawaa: you have made tashbeeh! We say to them about Hearing: you have made tashbeeh, you have described your Lord with organs! So if they say: no organs, rather it is in a manner as befits Him. Then we say about Istawaa and Fawqiyah: there is no circumscribing or limitation, rather it is in a manner as befits Him. So whatever is necessary concerning the Attributes of Life, Hearing, Seeing and Knowledge and not making any tashbeeh of them, then such is also necessitated regarding Allaah's Attributes of Istawaa, Nuzool, Hand, Face, Foot, Laughing, and Amazement. So just as they do not imply for Him and organs, we do not imply for Him any limbs nor anything that befits the creation. And it is not from justice or fairness that they understand the Attributes of Istawaa, Nuzool, Face and Hand to imply resemblance to creation, and therefore they think that they must resort to ta'weel and tahreef (yet they do not do so for the other Attributes such as Life, Hearing and Seeing).

And the one who is just will understand what we have said and believe in it, and accept our advice, and will take as the Religion of Allaah, the affirmation all of His Attributes, and deny from all of them tashbeeh, ta'teel, ta'weel, and wuqoof. This is what Allaah intended from us concerning this. Because these Attributes (that they affirm) and these others (that they make ta'weel of) all come from a single place and that is the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. So when we affirm these without ta'weel, and make ta'weel and tahreef of these others, we are like those that believe in part of the Book and disbelieve in another part of it.

And in this is a clear and sufficient (discourse) insha'allaah."

[‘Risaalah Ithbaat al-Istawaa wal Fawqiyah’ of al-Juwaynee (pp. 176-183), abridged, which is part of ‘Majmoo’a ar-Rasaa’il an-Muneeriyah’.]

### **Imaam al-Haramayn al-Juwaynee on Ta’weel**

The famous Imaam al-Haramyan, Abu Ma’aanee al-Juwaynee, like his father before him, also left the way of ta’weel and declared it to be forbidden, this despite the fact that he rigorously defended it in his earlier life. But unlike his father, he left ta’weel and fell into another innovation - tafweed. May Allaah forgive him and us. He says,

"The ways of the scholars have differed over the texts concerning the Attributes (dhawaahir) that occur in the Book and Sunnah. And the People of Truth forbade delving into their meanings (fahwaahaa)... and the Imaams of the Salaf took to refraining from ta’weel, and leaving the dhawaahir upon their meanings, and relegating their meanings to the Lord, Most Perfect (tafweed).

And that which we are pleased with as our view and as our belief in Allaah is by following the salaf of this nation as following and complying, and leaving innovation is more deserving, and the textual evidence is unequivocal that the consensus of the nation is a sunnah that is to be followed... So if ta’weel of these dhawaahir was permissible or prescribed then without doubt their (the salaf’s) concern of them would be greater than

their concern with the subsidiary issues of the religion. So when their time, and the time of the taabi'een has passed by with their leaving ta'weel, it becomes certain that this is the way to be followed. Therefore it is necessary upon those possessing religion that they believe that the Lord is absolved from created attributes, and not to delve into ta'weel of the difficult texts and to relegate their meanings to Allaah." ['al-Aqueedah an-Nadhaamiyyah' (pp. 33+ - Egypt print) of al-Juwaynee.]

In the words of al-Juwaynee mentioned above is a great deal of truth, but also some self-contradiction for he states that the salaf 'left the dhawaahir upon their meanings' yet goes on to say, 'and relegated their meanings to their Lord.' This is a clear indication that although al-Juwaynee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, had moved much closer to the way of the salaf, he was still not fully conversant with it.

Again we say that it is clear in what has preceded that the madhhab of the salaf was not tafweed. ['as-Sifaat al-Ilaahiyyah bayna as-Salaf wa al-Khalaf' (pg. 51) of Shaykh Abd ar-Rahmaan al-Wakeel (RH).]

### **Concerning al-Haafidh Ibnul-Jawzee**

Kabbani and others quote this great scholar as a proof against the Hanbalees that their stance regarding the Names and Attributes of Allaah is in fact disbelief and open anthropomorphism (tajseem) by using his book 'Daf Shubah at-Tashbeeh', but what they conveniently overlook is that the Hanbalee scholars in general, and other scholars, rejected the stances of ibn al-Jawzee on this issue and took a severe stance against him.

Shaykh Mashur al-Salmaan said, "... I saw that it was necessary upon me to inform about the confusion of ibn al-Jawzee generally, and his errors concerning the Names and Attributes of Allaah specifically. For he has attributed in his book, 'Daf Shubah at-Tashbeeh', things to Imaam Ahmad which he is free of.

adh-Dhahabee states, 'woe to him, if only he had not delved into ta'weel and thereby opposed his Imaam'

And he said also, adding to the saying of Abdul Lateef about him, 'and there were many mistakes in what he wrote, for indeed he used to finish a book and not give it any consideration', 'I say: due to this he had many misinterpretations and different shades of neglecting examination. And he gained knowledge from writings...' ['Siyar' 2/368]

Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali said about him, 'a group of the scholars of our companions took a stand against him for his inclination towards ta'weel in his speech. And their rejection (of him) was severe in that. And there is no doubt that his speech in that (i.e. ta'weel) was confused and contradicting. So if he was cognisant of the ahaadeeth or narrations he would not consider lawful the doubts of the Mutakallimeen (People of Theological Rhetoric) and expose their corruptions. And he used to exalt Abu Wafaa ibn Aqueel and follow him in most of what he found in his words - although he refuted him in some

points - and ibn Aqueel was skilled in philosophy but he was not well acquainted with hadeeth and narration. And this is why ibn Aqueel was shaky/confused in this topic...and Abul Farj followed him in this hue (talawwun)'

Ibn Qudaama al-Maqdisi said, 'ibn al-Jawzee was the Imaam of his time except that we are not pleased with his writings on the Sunnah (in this context to mean belief/tawheed) nor his methodology in them' ['Dhail Tabaqaat al-Hanaabila' (1/415)]

Ibn Taymiyyah states, 'verily Abul Farj (ibn al-Jawzee) contradicted himself in this subject (i.e. the Names and Attributes of Allaah). And it is not established that he gave precedence to affirmation or negation. Rather he has speech in affirmation of (Allaahs Names and Attributes) and much speech scattered about in this work (i.e. 'Daf' Shubah at-Tashbeeh') that establishes that he negated (Allaahs Names and Attributes). And in this subject he is like many others, sometimes affirming and sometimes negating as is the state of Abu Wafaa' ibn Aqueel...' ['Fataawaa' (4/169)]

And it is not my purpose here to set forth examples, and to follow the occurrences of ta'weel, or tafweed or affirmation in the speech of ibn al-Jawzee. But the important point here to clarify is that it is not permissible for the researcher, who desires to attain the truth and what is correct, to depend on the likes of this work of ibn al-Jawzee....

And we shall mention here sections from a letter which the Shaykh, the Ascetic and Example, Ishaq bin Ahmad al-Ulthee sent to his contemporary Ibn al-Jawzee, '...and know that much rejection has occurred against you from the scholars and noble personalities, and outstanding people from distant lands, due to your corrupt stands....and they have ruled that you are in need of advice, for you have statements which do not befit the Sunnah which time does not allow to mention...then you objected to the Attributes of the Creator as if they (objections?) arose not from a heart which has the respect of the Exalted, the Great or a heart filled with fear and exaltation, rather from the occurrences of the glittering false souls. And you have claimed that a group of Ahlus Sunnah and noble personalities received your letters but did not understand them - and how far removed are they from this - rather they have controlled their mouths and tongues. Not due to disability - and all praise is due to Allaah - in debating and opposing, and neither' ['Dhail Tabaqaat al-Hanaabilaa' (2/209-211) for the full letter which goes on to refute ibn al-Jawzee in some detail.]

So this letter shows that the stances of ibn al-Jawzee were widely rejected in his time and after his time.

['Rudood wat Ta'qubaat alaa maa Waqa'a lil Imaam Nawawee fee Sharhi Saheeh Muslim min at-Ta'weel fee Sifaat' (pp.97+) of Shaykh Mashur Salmaan, his superb analysis of the position of Imaam Nawawee on ta'weel.]

**On Imaam an-Nawawee and His Student Ibnul-'Attaar:**

- Kabbani quotes (pg. 32) from Imaam Nawawee that ta'weel was the way of the Salaf in the case of necessity, and otherwise the way of the salaf was to relegate the meanings of the Attributes to Allaah (tafweed). In what has preceded it is clear to the reader that this is far from the truth and there is no need to repeat what we have already said.

An important point here to realize is that Imaam Nawawee was not a muhaqqiq (researching scholar) in this field. This is indicated by the fact that in his 'Sharh Saheeh Muslim,' whenever he discussed the Attributes of Allaah, he merely quotes from Qaadee Ayaadh or al-Maaziree, sometimes clearly stating that he is quoting from them, and at other times quoting from them but not stating that he has done so. This important fact is also indicated by the absence of his ever saying that the madhhab of the Salaf was to affirm the Attributes upon their face value, or even indicating that that this may have been the position of some of them, let alone all of them!

Was Imaam Nawawee Ash'aree? The answer to this question is no, for although he agreed with the Ash'arees with respect to the Names and Attributes of Allaah, he disagreed with a great deal of their other principles, and due to this we are able to say that Imaam Nawawee was from Ahlus Sunnah, although he contradicted the stance of Ahlus Sunnah concerning this topic.

Why did an-Nawawee fall into ta'weel? The reasons why a scholar makes errors are many, and the scholars have discussed these in depth. Amongst these reasons (which will be discussed later insha'allaah) are: if a scholar has studied under only one group of scholars, and has complete confidence in them as the case is likely to be, then he will follow the stances of this group. So in the case of an-Nawawee who studied under the scholars inclined to ta'weel, because at his time especially, such scholars had become many, it is only natural that he would incline to it.

The truth of what we say can be seen in the case of his student ibn al-Attaar. Ibn al-Attaar was one of the most beloved of people to Imaam an-Nawawee and vice-versa, so much so that ibn al-Attaar became known as 'Mukhtasar an-Nawawee' (the Summarized Nawawee), and it was to him that an-Nawawee entrusted the completion of his 'Sharh al-Muhadhdhab' were he to die before he himself was able to complete it. But despite this closeness to an-Nawawee, ibn Attar went on to contradict his shaykh in subject of the Names and Attributes of Allaah, this because he came across a totally different group of scholars from those that he had previously studied under (the students of ibn Taymiyyah like adh-Dhahabee and others). So we quote extracts from his work on belief,

"It is obligatory to believe that what Allaah has affirmed in His Book and upon the tongue of His Messenger (SAW) is the truth...." (pg.22)

"And when it is affirmed in the Great Book and the Prophetic Sunnah that He, Free from Imperfection and Exalted, created Adam with His Hand, and that He said to Iblees, 'what prevented you from prostrating to one who I created with My Two Hands?' And it is established in the Saheeh regarding the dispute between Moses and Adam, that Moses said

to him, 'Allaah created you with His Hand'. And he, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, said relating from his Lord, 'I do not make from the progeny of one who I created with my Two Hands like one to whom I said Be and it was.' [Reported by ad-Dailamee and it is da'eef as stated by Shaykh Mashur Salmaan in 'Rudood wat-Ta'qubaat' (pg.15 fn.1)]

And he, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, said, 'Allaah created Firdaus with His Hand, and the Gardens of Paradise with His Hand, and wrote the Taurah with His Hand,' and narrations other than these. It is obligatory upon us to believe that this is the truth, and forbidden upon us that we say: that Allaah has spoken to us with what we understand, and we do not understand hand except something possessing a palm and fingers and therefore liken it to the creation and arrive at tajseem. Allaah is Exalted above what the unjust say. Likewise it is forbidden that we say: the meaning is favour and power, because it is unfeasible to take it to mean the hand we understand, so it necessitates taking it to mean that fearing tashbeeh!

Such a stance is tahreef (distortion) containing ta'teel (negation), how is this possible when the consensus is that the Attributes are to be believed in exactly as revealed by the Sharee'ah (tawqeefiyyah). Furthermore the meaning of what they make ta'weel of is not established, and ta'weel is the way of the Mu'tazila and the Jahmiyyah, we seek refuge with Allaah from that. And it is necessary to absolve the Creator from tashbeeh and ta'teel by staying away from tahreef and takyeef and tamtheel, and by taking to His saying, 'there is nothing like Him, and He is the Hearing and Seeing'

May Allaah grant us understanding and cognisance upon the road of tawheed and eliminating anthropomorphism. And this is the saying on all that is affirmed from the Attributes. And Allaah knows that corrupt from those that purify." (pp.'s 24-26)

"So when the Book and authentic narrations affirm the Attributes of Hearing, Seeing, Eye, Face, Knowledge, Power, Strength, Greatness, Will, Desire, Words, Speech, Pleasure, Displeasure, Love, Hatred, Delight, Laughing - it is obligatory to believe in them literally without likening to the creation, and to stop at what Allaah said (about Himself), without adding, increasing, takyeef, tahreef, tabdeel and tagyeer (changing)..." (pp.'s 26-27)

"And some of them negated Nuzool (the descent of Allaah to the lowest heaven at the last third of the night), and weakened the ahaadeeth or made ta'weel fearing confinement of Allaah (tahayyuz), movement or transmission that would necessitate a body. But the researching scholars affirmed them and obligated faith in them as Allaah wills." (pg. 19)

"And all of the verses and ahaadeeth affirming the Attributes of Coming, Nuzool, Face and other than these, the scholars obligated faith in them, and leaving contemplation of them and depicting a form for them." (pg. 19) [Extracts from 'Itiqaad al-Khaalis' of ibn al-Attaar published with notes by Shaykh Alee Hasan]

Anybody familiar with the works of Imaam Nawawee will realize how radically different the position of his student is!

And due to all that has preceded we say, having good opinion of Imaam Nawawee, that had he come across the same group of scholars that his student had come across, he would have changed and accepted the truth, for we are in no doubt that Imaam Nawawee was amongst those scholars who were captives in the hands of the truth.

For a great deal more detail on Imaam an-Nawawee, read the superb book on him by Shaykh Mashur Salmaan, 'Rudood wat Ta'qubaat'.

### **On Kawthari, the One Who Reviled the Companions and the Scholars of Ahl us-Sunnah**

Al-Ghumaaree said in "Bida'i at-Tafaaseer" (pg. 180-181) unveiling the state of al-Kawtharee

"And we used to be amazed with al-Kawtharee, due to his knowledge and comprehensiveness of his investigation. As we used to dislike in his severe partisanship to the Hanafiyyah, a partisanship that exceeded the partisanship of az Zamaksharee for the Mu'tazila. Up to the point that our beloved friend, al-Haafidh Abu al-Faidh, used to say about him, 'crazy for Abu Haneefah (majnoon Abee Haneefah)'.

And when I was gifted with his book, "Ihqaq al-Haqq" to do with refuting the letter of Imaam al-Haramain over his choosing the Shaafi'ee madhhab, I found him culminating the genealogy of Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee, and he quoted as-Saajee on that. So I took him up over this calumny, and I said to him, 'indeed your abuse over this genealogy is not a scholarly refutation.' So he said to me, 'a sectarian refuting a sectarian'

And this is his statement, and he acknowledges his partisanship!

And I visited him one time in his house, I and the noble Sayyid Muhammad al-Baaqir al-Kattaanee, and there arose a discussion between us over scholarly issues. And al-Haafidh ibn Hajr was mentioned, so Sayyid Baaqir showed his amazement at ibn Hajrs memorisation and his commentary to Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, and I supported him in that. So he (Kawtharee) diminished the value of the aforementioned commentary. He said, 'ibn Hajr used to depend upon extremities (al-Atraaf or maybe obscure routes) in his gathering of the different routes of a hadeeth.'

And this is not correct.

And he mentioned that he - i.e. al-Haafidh ibn Hajr - used to follow women in the roads, and he used to flirt with them. And that he (one time) followed a woman thinking that she was beautiful, until she arrived at her house and he was behind her, and she removed her burqa, and she turned out to be an ugly black woman, so he returned, frustrated!

And the reason behind this attack, is that al-Haafidh used to attack some of the hanafiyyah in his books of biography. for example "Duraral Kaaminah" and "Raf' al-Israar". He said (for example) about al-Ainee al-Hanafee, "that he used to take the manuscript pages of "Fath al-

Baaree" from some of his (i.e. ibn Hajr) students, and use them in his Sharh. So when al-Haafidh came to know of this, he forbade giving these pages to his students.

And worse than this, al-Kawtharee accused Anas bin Maalik (RA), with senility and feeble-mindedness, because he related ahaadeeth that contradict the madhhab of Abu Haneefah!

And worse than this is that he tried to make a fabricated hadeeth authentic, because it implied the tidings of Abu Haneefah ....and our beloved friend wrote a refutation of him (and it is called "bayaan talbees al-Muftaree Muhammad Zaahid al-Kawtharee" as occurs in "Fath al-Mulk al-'Alee" [page 119] where it says, "the introduction was completed in one volume!!), in which he collected his scholarly errors, and his self-contradictions that arose from his hateful partisanship."

So know that this is a glimpse of the state of al-Kawtharee, upon whom the innovators heavily depend. But know that he cannot be depended upon due to his extreme partisanship and hatred of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah which led him to abuse more than three hundred scholars of the past, some of them sahaabah, and including the famous Imaams. This is all documented in the work by the great scholar al-Mu'allamee (RH) in his 'tankeel'.

### **More on al-Kawtharee and the Deception of Hassan Alee Saqqaaf**

He was of the Hanafi madhab and one of the leading proponents of the Asha'ree school of belief, and took a leading role and attacking, and abusing the belief, methodology and scholars of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah. He was known for his extreme sectarianism, and partisan attitude to his madhab, which led him to play around with the ahaadeeth of the Messenger (SAW), authenticating and weakening them at will, and abuse the great Imaams of the past for no greater reason than their differing with Abu Haneefah in fiqh issues!

Saqqaaf attacks al-Albaanee for declaring weak ahaadeeth of Bukhaaree and Muslim, but in these ahaadeeth al-Albaanee had precedents in the works of the likes of ibn Hazm, adh-Dhahabee, ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, and ibn Hajr al-Asqalaanee. What would Saqqaaf say about al-Kawthari who weakens ahaadeeth of Bukhaaree and Muslim, even those ahaadeeth that occur in both collections (and these are the most authentic type of ahaadeeth!), having none of the early Imaams agree with him in most cases?

Is this not a clear sign of sectarianism, that Saqqaaf attacks al-Albaanee for one thing, and yet overlooks that same thing in the shaikh of his shaikh?

al-Albaanee states in his introduction to his checking upon "Sharh Aqueedah at-Tahaawiyah" (pg.32), after defending himself against one of the students of al-Kawthari - Abu al-Gudda - who abused him for weakening a hadeeth in Bukhaaree:

"So what would he say about the criticism of his shaikh al-Kawthari upon tens of authentic ahaadeeth that are related by the two Shaikhs in their respective Saheehs or by one of

them, not to mention other ahaadeeth that are established according to the Ahlul Hadeeth? And this is found in his letters and ta'leeqs upon various works of the sunnah and others, and he has no precedents in his weakening for most of them! And there is no problem if on this occasion I mention what is easy for me (as examples)....:

- 1) The hadeeth 'Allaah created the dust...' related by Muslim - see his ta'leeq upon 'al-Asmaa was Sifaat' (pg. 26, 383)
- 2) The hadeeth in which Musa makes the Prophet (SAW) return (to Allaah) during the night of Israa over the issue of 50 prayers being made obligatory. Agreed upon (ie related by both Bukhaaree and Muslim!) - see the same work (pg. 189)
- 3) The hadeeth about the Sight of Allaah (on the Day of Judgement), and in it that Allaah will come to the Hypocrites in a form which is not His Form (Soorah). Related by Bukhaaree and Muslim - see the same work (pg.292)
- 4) The hadeeth that on the Day of Judgement the earth will be a white plane. Related by Bukhaaree and Muslim - see the same work (pg.320)
- 5) The hadeeth of his (SAW) laughing, thereby confirming what the Jew said. Related by Bukhaaree and Muslim - see the same work (pg.336)
- 6) The hadeeth about the resurrection/gathering and the Shin (of Allaah). Related by Bukharee and Muslim - (pg. 344)
- 7) The hadeeth of his saying, "Where is Allaah?" to the slave girl. Related by Muslim - (pg.421)
- 8) The hadeeth that the divorce with three statements (at the same time) was considered as one statement during the time of the Prophet (SAW), and Abu Bakr and the first two years of the khilaafah of Umar. Related by Muslim - see his 'al-Ishfaaq alaa Ahkaam at-Talaaq' (pg 52-56 - Ha Meem Saad edition)
- 9) The hadeeth of Alee (RA) in which the Prophet (SAW) ordered him to level to the ground all raised graves. Related by Muslim - see 'Maqaalaat al-Kawthari' (pg.159)
- 10) The hadeeth of Jaabir that the Prophet (SAW) prohibited the whitewashing of graves. Related by Muslim - 'Maqaalaat al-Kawthari' (pg.159)
- 11) The hadeeth of Maalik bin al-Huwairith about raising hands at ruku' and when raising from it. Related by Bukharee and Muslim - see his 'Ta'neeb al-Khateeb' (pg.83)
- 12) The hadeeth of Waa'il bin Hujr, also about raising the hands. Related by Muslim - see same work (pg.83)

13) The hadeeth of Anas (RA) about ....(?)....related by Bukhaaree and Muslim - see same work (pg.23)

14) The hadeeth of ibn Abbas that the Prophet (SAW).....(?)...related by Muslim - see the same work (pg.185)

All of these ahaadeeth are in the Two Saheehs or one of them as you have seen, and al-Kawthari declared all of them weak, along with the ahaadeeth like them, and if one of the People of Knowledge were to follow these up in his works they would make a volume! And as for the ahaadeeth which are not in the Two Saheehs...then you will find some examples of them in the refutation of him by Shaikh Abd ar-Rahmaan al-Mu'allamee al-Yamaanee (RH) in his startling book 'at-Tankeel bimaa fee Ta'neeb al-Kawthari min Abaateel'."

Then al-Albaanee states on (pg.45), "Zaahid al-Kawthari who was - and truth dictates - upon abundant knowledge of the Science of hadeeth and it's narrators, but, unfortunately, his knowledge became a proof against him and an affliction, because it did not increase him in guidance or light, not in the branches (of the religion) nor the foundations. For he is a Jahmee, denying the attributes of Allaah. A Hanafee, destroyed by his partisanship. Severe in his abuse against the Ahul Hadeeth, the early ones and the later ones.

And he, in aqeedah, labelled the Ahul Hadeeth with tashbeeh and tajseem, and he labelled them in the introduction to his 'Sayf as-Saqueel' as "Stupid Hashawiyah". And he said about 'Kitaab at-Tawheed' of ibn Khuzaimah, "that it is a book of shirk"! and he accused the Imaam himself of being a mujassim, being ignorant of the foundations of the religion!

And in fiqh he accused the Ahul Hadeeth as being inflexible/undurable and having little understanding. And that they are carriers of books (upon their backs, as in the Qur'anic parable).

And in hadeeth he abused the likes of 300 narrators most of them trustworthy and precise, and amongst them were about 80 haafidh, and a group of the Imaams, like Imaam Maalik, ash-Shaafi'ee and Ahmad. And he made clear that he did not consider trustworthy Abu ash-Shaikh ibn Hayaan, and neither al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee and the likes of these! And he declared Imaam Abdullaah bin al-Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal who was alone in narrating the Musnad (of Ahmad) to be a liar. And it is as if he does not consider it as one of the Musnads that should be referred to and depended upon as in 'al-Ishfaaq alaa Ahkaam at-Talaaq' (pg. 23+)....

Then he depicted al-Haafidh al-Aqueelee as 'a depraved sectarian'.....

And he declared weak, ahaadeeth that are agreed upon as being authentic, even if they were related by Bukhaaree and Muslim having no blameworthy defect. And the mention of some of them has preceded. Then on the other side of the coin, he authenticated ahaadeeth to support his partisanship to his madhab, which every person knowledgeable of

this science could bear witness to as being weak, nay fabricated. Like the hadeeth, 'Abu Haneefah is the lamp of this ummah'. And other matters of which it is not possible to list and expound upon now. And al-Allaama Abd -ar-Rahmaan al-Mu'allamee al-Yamaanee refuted him in a sound, scholarly manner, in his book 'Talee'at at-Tankeel' then in his important book, 'at-Tankeel bimaa fee Ta'neeb al-Kawtharee min al-Abaateel', so whosoever wishes to see the truth of what we have mentioned should refer to them, and he will find the matter more severe than what we have described."

### **A comparison of the Ta'weels of the Mu'tazilah to the Ta'weels of the Later Ash'arees**

#### 1) On the Issue of Istawaa (Allaah Rising Over His Throne)

The Mu'tazili Imaam, Abdul Jabbaar, says about Istawaa that it means "isteela (conquering), qahr (dominance), and ghalaba (victory)."

The Ash'aree Imaam, Abu Mansur al-Baghdaadee (d.429H) states in his 'Farq bayna al-Firaq' that,

"The majority go the way of saying that the meaning of "Istawaa" is establishing dominance (al-qahr) and victory (al ghalaba), that is, the Merciful vanquished the Throne (al-rahmanu ghalaba al-'arsh) and overcame it (wa qaharahu). He mentioned the Throne specifically because it is the greatest of created things (a'dhamu al-makhluqaat)."

There is no need to quote a great deal of the Ash'aree scholars on this as Kabbani endorses the above explanations in his book. But what is the position of the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah?

Imaam Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'aree says,

"We see all of the Muslims raising their hands in the direction of the sky, because Allaah has Risen over His Throne which is above the sky, and if Allaah were not over the Throne they would not raise their hands in the direction of the Throne just as they do not lower their hands when they make du'aa to face the earth.

Some people, from the Mu'tazila and Jahmiyyah and Hururiyya say, about the saying of Allaah, 'The Most Merciful rose upon His Throne', that He istawla (conquered), milak (owned), qahr (dominated), and that Allaah is in every place, and they denied Allaah being above His Throne, as the People of Truth say, and they took Istawaa to mean Power (Qudra).

And if what they mention were the case then there would be no difference between the Throne and the Seven Earths, for Allaah is Powerful over them and over all inanimate objects (hashwash) and all that is in the world. So if Allaah had made Istawaa upon His Throne with the meaning of Isteelaa (Conquering), and He, Azza wa Jall, has made istawaa (in this case) over all things, then He would have made Istawaa over the Throne, the earth,

the heaven, the inanimate objects and the filth because He is Powerful over all things, having made Istawaa over them. So when He is Powerful over all things it is not permissible for any Muslim to say: indeed Allaah has made istawaa (with the meaning of isteelaa) over the inanimate objects and space, it is not permissible to say that He made Istawaa upon His Throne with the meaning isteelaa which is general to all things, rather it is necessary that the meaning of Istawaa be something restricted to the Throne alone...

And what further cements the fact that Allaah has made Istawaa over His Throne specifically and not anything else is what the People of Narration report from the Messenger (SAW)...[isnaad omitted]...that he (SAW) said, 'Allaah Descends every night to the Lowest Heaven and says, 'is there one who is asking that I may give him, is there anyone asking forgiveness that I may forgive Him?'...[mentioning more ahaadeeth on the Descent]...

Another evidence: Allaah, Azza wa Jall, says, 'they fear they're Lord Above them' (Nahl:50), and He says, 'the Angels and the Spirit ascend to Him' (al-Ma'aarij:4), and He says, 'then He Rose Over the Heaven when it was smoke' (Fussilat:11), and He says, 'then ar-Rahmaan rose over the Throne so ask anyone informed concerning Him' (Furqaan:59), and He says, 'then He rose over the Throne you have no protector or intercessor besides Him' (Sajdah:4).

All of this indicates that He, the Exalted, is above the Heaven, having Risen over His Throne. And the Heaven is not the earth by consensus of the Muslims, so this indicates that Allaah is single in His Oneness (munfarid biwahdaniyyah) having Risen over His Throne. [He mentions a number of more evidences then he says]...

All of this proves that He is not in His creation, and neither is the creation in Him, and that He has Risen over the Throne without kayf and without istiqaar (settling), Exalted is Allaah above what the unjust say. And they (the Mu'tazila) have not affirmed something real in their description of Him, and their mention of Him does not necessitate the singling out of Allaah Alone (wahdaaniyyah) due to all of their words ending up (yu'awwilu) in ta'teel, and all of their descriptions (of Allaah) indicate negation, desiring by that their absolving Allaah from anthropomorphism (tanzeeh) and negation of tashbeeh! And we seek refuge with Allaah from a tanzeeh that necessitates negation and ta'teel....

And the scholars report that a man came to the Messenger (SAW) with a black slave-girl and said, 'O Messenger of Allaah! I wish to free her as an atonement' So the Prophet (SAW) said to her, 'Where is Allaah?' to which she replied, 'above (fee) the heaven'. He asked, 'who am I?' to which she replied, 'you are the Messenger of Allaah'. So he (SAW), 'free her for she is a believer'. So this proves that Allaah, Azza wa Jall, is over His Throne, above the heaven"

Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee says,

"The meaning of His, the Exalted, saying, 'then He made Istawaa upon the Throne' is that He Rose Above as is reported from the scholar of the nation, and the commentator of the Qur'aan, Abdullaah ibn Abbaas (RA), and from Mujaahid, and Abu Aaliyah as occurs in 'Saheeh Bukhaaree' (13/403 - of 'al-Fath') and in the tafseer of the Shaykh of the Qur'aanic commentators, Jareer at-Tabaree (1/150, 13/62) so understand this and hold firmly to it.

And the Mu'tazila along with those that traversed their path, said that the meaning of Istawaa was isteelaa, i.e. He conquered the Throne and thereby they changed the saying to other than what was told them. And this saying of theirs is necessarily known to be false from a number of perspective:

1.The language of the Arabs does not allow that the meaning of Istawaa be isteelaa, and this meaning is not quoted from any of the Imaams of the Language whose saying is to be depended upon, rather it is reported from them with authentic chains of narration that they totally rejected this meaning.

Ibn al-A'raabee, an Imaam in the language, said, 'ibn Abee Dawood wished that I seek out some of the phrases of the Arabs and their meanings. (So he said) "'the Most Merciful Istawaa upon the Throne' (Taa Haa:5) Istawaa meaning Istawlaa?" I said to him, 'by Allaah this does not mean this and I have never seen this.'

Al-Khaleel ibn Ahmad (RH) was asked: 'have you seen in the language Istawaa taken to mean Istawlaa?' to which he replied, 'this is not known to the Arab, and it is not possible in the language'

This is why ibn al-Jawzee says in 'Zaad al-Maseer' (3/213), "and this meaning is rejected according to the Linguists.'

Ibn Abdul Barr said in 'at-Tamheed' (7/131), "their saying in explanation of Istawaa that it means Isteelaa is not correct in the language."

2.This false meaning was mentioned by the later grammarians who took to the way of the Mu'tazila and the Jahmiyyah. Due to this they did not say this relying upon narrations, rather they said it as something new and dependant upon the saying of the poet, 'istawaa bishrun 'alaa iraaq' [see pg. 106 of Kabbani's book].

a.This line of poetry is not from the Arabic poems because it has not come via an authentic route that it is an Arabic poem, and it is not known in any of the collections of poetry of the Arabs and their poems that are referred to.

b.Their is no known origin in history for this line, and neither is their any indication in this line that would show that the sayer meant istawaa with the meaning of istawlaa such that it could be depended upon.

c.(It is possible that) this poem is distorted and it's correct phraseology is, 'bishrun qad istawlaa alaa iraaq'

d.Even if this poem is authentic and it is not distorted then it still is not a proof for them, rather it is against them because Bishr was the brother of the Khaleefah al-Amawee Abd al-Malik bin Marwaan, and he (Bishr) was the Ameer of Iraaq and he made Istawaa upon it as was the habit of the leaders that they sit above the throne of the kingdom, and this conforms to the meaning of this word as mentioned in His, the Exalted, saying, "that you may mount upon their backs (li tastawoo alaa dhuhoorihee)" (Zukhruf:14)

1.Isteelaa which is used to explain Istawaa is used to mean creation (Khalq), or Strength (Qahr), or Overcoming (Ghalba), or Owning (Milak), or Power (Qudra), and it is not correct to apply any of these meanings to His, the Exalted, saying, 'ar-Rahmaan Istawaa upon the Throne'(Taa Haa:5) due to the following reasons:

a.As for the (meaning of) creation then this claim implies that the Throne would need to be created after the heavens and the earth, and this contradicts the Book and Sunnah and consensus because Allaah informed of the creation of the heavens and the earth and all that was between them in six days then He Rose over the Throne. Likewise He informed that the Throne was upon the water before he created the heavens and the earth. Likewise it is reported in the hadeeth of Imraan bin Hussain (RA) that the Prophet (SAW) said, 'Allaah was and there was nothing before him, and His Throne was upon the water, and He wrote in the Book (dhikr) everything and then He created the heavens and the earth.'

So if the Throne existed before the creation of the heavens and the earth, and His Istawaa upon it was after the creation then how could His Istawaa upon it be His creation of it or His tending towards or intending to create it? This along with the fact that taking 'istawaa upon' or 'istawaa' to mean tending to or intending to is not known in the language at all, neither in it's literal or metaphorical expressions, or it's poetry and prose.

Istawlaa (conquer) is only said to one who has an opponent, and Allaah has no opponent. Dawood bin Alee said, 'we were with ibn al-A'raabee when a man came to him and said, "O Abu Abdullaah what is the meaning of His saying, 'ar-Rahmaan made Istawaa upon the Throne?' (Taa Haa:5)?" He said, "He is Over His Throne as He informed". So he said, "O Abu Abdullaah the meaning is istawlaa." So he said, "be silent! You do not say istawlaa upon something unless it has an opponent that may be overcome as was said by an-Naabigha:

Except for the likes of you or one who preceded you

The preceding of the horse when it conquered (istawlaa) al-Amad"

It is not said that someone conquered (istawlaa) something unless first it was not possible for him to do so and then later it became possible. So is there a creation from the creation of Allaah for which there was a time that Allaah had not conquered it? ...Let these people

whose desires play with them as a dog plays with its master know that Allaah has always been omnipotent over all things.

b. Allaah has made Istawlaa of all the creation so what is the meaning of mentioning the Throne specifically and mentioning it over and over again in His Book? So if it said: the Throne has been specified due to it's being the greatest of creation, and its highest and largest so specifically mentioning this is like informing of the rest of creation. We say: this opinion is rendered invalid because it is not permissible to say that Allaah made istawaa over the son of Aadam, the mountain, the sun and the moon.

c. The term Isteelaa is not applied except to one who was weak and then became able, and nothing can make Allaah weak."

- Kabbani states (pg. 106), "ibn Battal and Abu Mansur al-Baghdadi attribute the meaning of 20:5 as istawlaa chiefly to the Mu'tazila"

Here are the words of ibn Battaal, "as for the saying of the Mu'tazila (that istawaa means istawlaa) then it is false because He has always been omnipotent, and overpowering. And His saying, "then He made Istawaa" necessitates the commencement of this description after it did not exist..."

And Abu Mansur said, "the Mu'tazila thought that Istawaa meant Istawlaa"

So did ibn Battaal and Abu Mansur chiefly attribute this saying to the Mu'tazila, or only attribute it the Mu'tazila?!

- Kabbani states (pg. 107), 'to those that object to istawlaa on the grounds that it supposes prior opposition, Ibn Hajr remarked that this assumption is discarded by clinging to the verse....'

Ibn Hajr goes on to say, "but it is possible to refute some of these meanings for others as has preceded from ibn Battaal, and it is reported...[going on to quote the aforementioned narrations from ibn al-A'raabee]... The Reviver of the Sunnah, al-Baghawee quoted in his tafseer from ibn Abbaas and the majority of the commentators that it's meaning was to Rise Above, similar statements were said by Abu Ubaid and al-Faraa'...and al-Bayhaqi reported with a hasan sanad that al-Awzaa'ee said,

'We used to say, while the taabi'een were many, that indeed Allaah is over His Throne, and we believe in that which occurs in the sunnah concerning His Attributes'..."

So with the above it will become clear to the reader that the understanding of Istawaa according to Ahlus Sunnah is that Allaah is Above His Throne and outside of creation. This was the understanding of Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'aree (RH) and it was the position of the salaf.

## **The Position of the Salaf on Istawaa and Further Replies to Kabbani**

We now quote extracts from the book of Imaam al-Bukhaaree, 'Khalq Afaal Ebaad' concerning this topic. All the narrations are authentic according to the research done on this work by the great hadeeth scholar Badr al-Badr (RH), and are from the Sahaabah or those who came soon after:

"6) Wahb bin Jareer said, 'The Jahmiyyah are heretics, they think that He has not risen over His Throne.'

13) Ibn al-Mubaarak said, 'we do not say as the Jahmiyyah say that Allaah is on the earth, rather He has risen over His Throne.'

14) And it was said to him, 'how should we know our Lord?' He said, 'above the Heavens, over/upon ('alaa) His Throne'

29) Sufyaan ath-Thawree was asked about the verse, "and He is with you wheresoever you are". He said, 'His Knowledge.'

64) Sadqa said, 'I heard Sulaymaan at-Taimee saying, 'if I were asked, "where is Allaah?" I would say, "above (fee) the heaven". And if it said, "where was the Throne before the Heaven?" I would say, "over the water." And if it is said, "where was the Throne before the water?" I would say, "I do not know."'

Imaam Bukhaaree said, 'and that (i.e. his answer) was because of the saying of Allaah, "and they cannot encompass anything of His Knowledge except what He wills." i.e. except what He explains.'

66) Muhammad bin Yusuf said (one of the teachers of Bukhaaree), 'the one who says that Allaah is not over ('alaa) His Throne is a kaafir. And the one who thinks that Allaah did not speak to Moses is a kaafir.'

103) Ibn Mas'ud (RA) said about His saying, "then He rose over His Throne", - 'the Throne is over the water, and Allaah is above (fawqa) the Throne, and He knows what you are upon.'

104) Qataada said about His saying, "and He is Allaah in the Heaven and in the Earth" - 'the One Who is worshipped in the heaven and in the earth.'

Below are further points translated from 'Sharh Usul I'tiqaad Ahlus Sunnah' of al-Laalikaanee (d.414, pp396+ - tahqeeq Ahmad Hamdaan)

"660) Abdullaah bin Abbaas (RA) said, 'Verily Allaah was above His Throne before He created anything, then He created the creation and decreed what was to exist until the Day of Judgement.'

662) Bashr bin Umar said, 'I heard more than one of the Mufassir say about the verse, "The Most Merciful istawaa upon the Throne" - istiwaa means rose above.'

665) Rabee' (one of the teachers of Maalik) was asked about the verse, "The Most Merciful rose over His Throne" - 'how did He rise?' He replied, 'al-istiwaa (rising) is known, and the how is not comprehensible, and from Allaah is the message, and upon the Messenger is the preaching, and upon us is believing.'

670) Maqaatil bin Huyaan said about His saying, "and there is no secret discourse of 3 people except He is the fourth, or of 5 people and He is the sixth" - 'He is above His Throne, and nothing is hidden from His knowledge.'

673) Imaam Ahmad was asked, 'Allaah is above the seventh heaven, above His Throne, distinct from his creation, and His Power and Knowledge are in every place?' And he replied, 'yes, above the Throne and His Knowledge is in every place.'

675) Imaam Ahmad was asked about the verse, "and He is with you wheresoever you are", and the verse, "there is no secret discourse of 3 people except that he is the fourth.." - and he said, '(meaning) His Knowledge, He is the Knower of the seen and the unseen, His Knowledge encompasses everything, and our Lord is above the Throne without setting limits and giving description, and His Kursi is as the expanse of the heavens and the earth with His Knowledge.'

Imaam Abdullaah bin Ahmad quotes Abdullaah ibn Mubaarak as saying, "...I bear witness that You are above Your Throne above the seven heavens. And this is not as the enemies of Allaah say, the heretics."

He also quoted him as saying, "we know that our Lord is above the seven heavens over the Throne, and we do not say as the Jahmiyyah say that he is here," pointing with his hand to the earth.

Imaam Maalik said, "Allaah is Above the heaven, and His Knowledge is in every place, nothing is hidden from Him."

Abu Haneefah (RH) said, when asked of his opinion of the one who says, 'I do not know whether Allaah is above the heavens or on the earth.' - "He has disbelieved, because Allaah says, "The Most Merciful rose above the Throne.", and His Throne is above His seven heavens.' He was then asked, 'what if he said that Allaah is above His Throne but he does not know whether the Throne is in the heavens or on the earth?' He said, 'He has disbelieved, because He has denied that He is above the heavens, And whosoever denied that He is above the heavens has disbelieved.'

Al-Albaanee says following up this statement in 'Mukhtasar al-Uluw' (pg. 136),

"...So you see Abu Mansur (al-Maatureedee) making ta'weel of this statement of Abu Haneefah with a ta'weel that undermines the words of Abu Haneefah and ejects him from the group of the salaf in not performing ta'weel by saying in commentary to his saying, 'has disbelieved':

"The reason is that by such words he suggests a place for Allaah and this is idolatry".

And he did not consider the rest of words of Abu Haneefah which invalidate his ta'weel and that is his saying, may Allaah have mercy upon him, 'because Allaah says, "the Most Merciful rose above the Throne"'.

I say: This makes it clear that the reason for his disbelief is his rejection of what this verse clearly indicates in His Rising over His Throne, not that he suggests a place for Allaah, Exalted is Allaah from that. And what we have mentioned was also mentioned by the commentator of 'Aqueedah at-Tahaawiyah' (i.e. ibn Abee al-Izz) after mentioning this report...

'And do not pay attention to those that reject this (narration) from those that attribute themselves to the Madhhab of Abu Haneefah, for a group of the Mu'tazila and others who oppose a large number of his beliefs attribute themselves to him. And some people who oppose some of the beliefs of Maalik, ash-Shaafi'ee, and Ahmad, also attribute themselves to them. And the story of Abu Yusuf asking Bishr al-Mareesee to repent when he rejected that Allaah is above His Throne is well-known."

Ibn Khuzaimah (the Imaam of the muhadditheen of his time) said,

"Whosoever does not affirm that Allaah is above His heavens, over/upon ('alaa) His Throne, and He is distinct from His creation, must be forced to repent. if he does not repent, then he must be beheaded and then thrown in the garbage dump, so that the Muslims and thimmis (Jews and Christians living under the Islamic State) would not suffer from his stinking smell."

And the words of Abdul Qaadir al-Jeelaanee have preceded.

- Kabbani states (pg. 106), "among the least injurious and most befitting meanings of verse 20:5 – and Allaah knows best – is also 'subdue' (qahara) and 'conquer' (istawlaa)."

From the preceding discussion it is crystal clear that these meanings are in no way the 'least injurious' rather they are from the most evil sayings due to their departing from the belief and understanding of our righteous salaf, may Allaah be pleased with them all. We also now know the true sources of knowledge that Kabbani draws from, the Mu'tazila, even though he may deny it, and try to hide behind quoting some of the scholars of Ahlus Sunnah.

- Kabbani states (pg. 189) that both ibn Taymiyyah and ibn al-Qayyim believed that the Prophet (SAW) sits on the Throne with Allaah.

This claim will be dealt with separately under the section on ibn Taymiyyah insha'allaah.

- Kabbani quotes (pg. 190), 'Muhammad Saalih al-Uthaymin, a Saudi scholar, writes in his Aqidat al-muslim, translated as "The Muslims Belief": Allah's establishment on the throne means that He is sitting in person on His throne"

In the English translation of this work, this is how this statement is translated, but when one reads the original Arabic it quickly becomes clear that it is impossible to translate ibn Uthaymeen's statement as above, here is what ibn Uthaymeen says on pg.11 of the original Arabic,

"We believe that He 'created the Heavens and the earth in Six days than He made Istawaa upon the Throne, He manages everything.' His Istawaa means that He is in Person above the Throne in a way that befits His Majesty and Greatness. Nobody Knows how He made Istawaa,"

We have no idea how the translator of this work could have translated so badly! As for Kabbani then he falls into one of two possibilities:

- 1.He relied upon a translation of an Arabic work to accuse someone of disbelief
- 2.He was aware of the Arabic but deliberately chose to employ the translation

And the least of these possibilities is evil!

Unfortunately the matter is far more serious than either of the above two possibilities. Much of the information that is contained in the book of Kabbani was put up on the internet by his close followers as part of an internet debate that I was involved in. During the course of this debate the above quote was put up and those that put it up were corrected, then at a later date the same people put up the same quote again and were corrected again by myself. Now a lot of points that arose from this debate are to be found in Kabbani's book which indicates clearly that he was made aware of the contents of this debate, and that he was aware of the above misquote!

So what is the ruling of one who knows that he is misquoting, and knows that through his misquoting he is accusing another Muslim of disbelief! Is he to be trusted or not?

**Over the Hadeeth of Nuzool (Allaah Descending to the Lowest Heaven at the Last Third of the Night)**

Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'aree said, "the Mu'tazila said: the meaning of Allaah's Nuzool is the descent of His Verses, or the descent of His Angels or Command"

And the father of the Jahmiyyah and the Mu'tazila, Bashr al-Mareesee made ta'weel of Nuzool to the descent of His Command or Mercy.

It is well known that the vast majority of the Ash'aree scholars used the same ta'weels as mentioned above. But what is the position of the salaf and Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah?

Al-Laalikaa'ee brings a chapter heading, "what is related about the descent of the Lord, Blessed and Exalted, is He", stating that the ahaadeeth that Allaah descends to the lowest heaven have been reported by 20 companions and then he quotes,

"775) Fudail bin Ayaad said, 'when you hear the Jahmi say, "I disbelieve in a Lord that Descends"- say - "I believe in a Lord that does what He wills"'

776) Yahya bin Ma'een said, 'when you hear the Jahmi say, "I disbelieve in a Lord that Descends", then say, "I believe in a Lord that does what he desires."'

777) Imaam Ahmad said, 'He descends as He wills, according to His Knowledge and Power and Greatness. He encompasses everything with His Knowledge.'

Similar narrations to the above occur in "Khalq Afaal al-Ebaad" of Imaam al-Bukhaaree, and are also reported in 'al-Ghunya' of Abdul Qaadir al-Jeelaanee.

Hammad bin Salma said, "abuse whosoever you see rejecting this (i.e. the Nuzool)"

Ishaaq bin Raahawayah said in reply to the one who said, 'I disbelieve in a Lord that Descends from a heaven to a heaven', "I believe in a Lord that does what He Wishes"

Imaam Abul Hasan al-Ash'aree said,

"And we believe in all the narrations that the People of Narration have considered to be authentic concerning the Descent to the Lowest Heaven and that 'the Lord, Azza wa Jall, says, "is there one asking, is there one seeking forgiveness"' and the totality of what the quote and consider to be established, in opposition to the people of deviancy and misguidance."

Imaam al-Aajurree (d.360) said, under the chapter "to have faith and trust that Allaah descends to the lowest heaven every night,"

"Faith in this is obligatory, and it is not allowed for the intelligent Muslim to say , 'how does he descend?' - and none would answer this except the Mu'tazila [for example the saying of some, that His command descends, and the saying of others that His angels descend etc.] As for the People of Truth, then they say, 'faith in this is obligatory without

asking how. Because the narrations are authentic to the Messenger (SAW) - That Allaah descends to the lowest heaven every night and the ones who transmitted this narration to us are the ones that transmitted the rules of halaal and haraam, and the knowledge of salaah, and zakaah, and fasting, and hajj, and jihaad. So just as the scholars accepted these from them then like this, they accepted from them these sunan. And they said, the one who opposed these is horribly misguided. Warning him and warning against him."

Abdul Qaadir al-Jeelaanee said,

"And Allaah Descends every night to the Lowest Heaven howsoever He Wills, ...and the meaning is not the descent of His Mercy or Reward as claimed by the Mu'tazila and the Ash'arees due to what is reported from Ubaadah bin Saamit that the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) said....[mentioning the hadeeth of Descent]"

It is important to note here that when we believe that Allaah Descends to the Lowest Heaven, this does in any way negate the fact that He is Above His Throne just as it does not mean that He has become encompassed by His creation. Rather Ahlus Sunnah believed that He Descends to the Lowest Heaven and yet retains His Attribute of being Above the Throne, while negating the kayfiyyah from both these Attributes as has preceded in the words of Abu Ja'far at-Tirmidhee, who, when asked as to How Allaah keeps His Attribute of being Above the creation if He Descends to the Lowest Heaven in the last third of the night, replied,

"The Nuzool (Descent) is understood, but the how/nature is unknown, and faith in it is obligatory, and to question about it (i.e. how) is a bid'ah."

This is sufficient to refute all the empty accusations that Kabbani (pp. 160+) makes when he says that the belief in Allaah's Descent necessarily implies a spatial displacement. We say to you O Kabbani, the only way it would imply so is if we liken Allaah to His creation and discuss the kayfiyyah of His Attributes, and know that we do not do so. Rather, yet again it is you who betray your incapability of understanding the Attributes without tashbeeh by accusing us, and reading this into our statements!