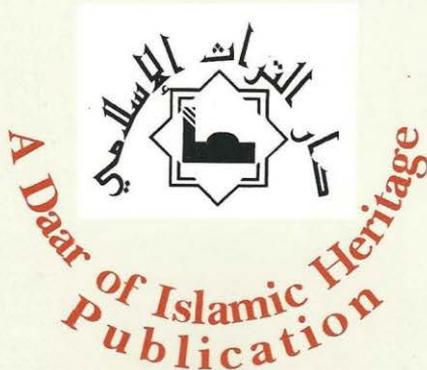


The Ever-Merciful Istawaa Upon the Throne

by
Sheikh Abdullah As-Sabt

الرسم على العرش (سنوي)

للشيخ عبدالله السبت



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah,
The Ever-Merciful,
The Bestower of Mercy



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System of Transliteration

Code	Arabic	Pronunciation
'	ع	Approximate with "a" as in "a stick".
'	أ	Approximate with "a" as in "a stick".
<i>ā</i>	آ	Pronounce like two a's in succession.
<i>h</i>	هـ	Pronounced as the "h" in "hill".
<i>ḥ</i>	ح	Approximate with "h" as in "heart".
<i>q</i>	ق	Approximate with "q".
<i>s</i>	س	Transliterated "s" should always be read as in "six", and should never be read as in "is".
<i>ṣ</i>	ص	Approximate with a heavy "s".
<i>sh</i>	ش	Pronounced as the "sh" as in "shine".
<i>ṭ</i>	ط	Approximate with a heavy "t".
<i>th</i>	ث	Pronounce as the "th" in "thin".
<i>ṭh</i>	ذ	Pronounce as the "th" in "this".

Author's Introduction

All thanks is to Allah, whom we seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from whatever evil our hearts conceal and from the consequences of our evil deeds. Whoever Allah grants guidance will never be led astray. Whoever He leads astray will never find guidance. I attest that none is worthy of worship except Allah, who has no partners, and that Mohammad is His slave and Messenger.

It is my pleasure to introduce this research to my brother readers. These few papers explain a matter of utmost importance and a part of *Tawḥeed* (monotheism). This matter is the recognition of the attribute of highness for Allah, the All-Mighty (*Al-'Uluw*). Many reasons were behind writing about such an important matter:

First: It is regrettable that many Islamic writers do not take care of purifying 'Aqidah (matters of belief) from whatever is mixed with it, of Shirk (polytheism) and misguidance. All what concerns them, in matters of 'Aqidah, is to provide evidence to the existence of Allah and proving His Might. This is a vital matter. However, we must study *Tawḥeed* as a whole. Disbelievers among earlier Arabs used to believe in Allah's existence and Might. Many of these writers of today keep considering only these matters as the correct *Tawḥeed*.

Allah said, what translated means: ﴿Say: "Who provides for you from the sky and from the earth? Or who owns hearing and sight? And who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living? And who manages the affairs." They will say: "Allah." Say: "Will you not then be afraid of Allah's punishment (for setting up rivals in worship with Him)?" Such is Allah, your Lord in truth. So after the truth, what else can there be, save error? How then are you turned away?﴾ [10:31-32].

﴿قل من يرزقكم من السماء والأرض أمن يملك السمع والأبصار ومن يخرج الحي من الميت ويخرج الميت من الحي ومن يدبر الأمر فسيقولون الله فقل أفلا تتقون . فذلکم الله ربکم الحق فماذا بعد الحق إلا الضلال فأنى تصرفون﴾ (يونس/31-32).

Some writers study another part of *Tawḥeed*, that is confirmation of Allah's Names and Attributes, belief in His Messengers, etc. Their studies are inadequate for the following reasons:

(a) Some wrote about these matters without distinguishing between what is right and what is false. They collected what earlier writers wrote about such matters, and introduced that to the public as the true *Tawḥeed*. All what they gathered was a collection of the sayings of philosophers and Sufis. Nothing could be further from *Tawḥeed*. The result was that readers of such material either disbelieved in the religion altogether or believed in something which leads them to misguidance. Ibn Taymiyah refuted these writers, especially in his two famous books, "*Al-'Iman*" (Belief) and "*Ar-Radd*

'Alā Al-Manṭiqiyyeen (Refuting Philosophers).” Sheikh ‘Abdur-Rahmān ‘Abdul-Khaliq also wrote about them in his book, “Al-Fikr Aṣ-Ṣufī Fī Dhaw’ Al-Kitāb Was-Sunnah” (Sufism in the Light of the *Qur’ān* and *Sunnah*).

Allah’s Grace led to the decrease of such misguided writers. Only a few still write, from behind closed doors, trying to revive earlier misguided writings.

(b) Another type of writers, more knowledgeable and less dangerous, are those who have read these earlier writings as well as the *Qur’ān* and the *’aḥādīth* (sayings) of the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ; whereupon, Allah enlightened the path for them. Their earlier culture and teachers still call them, however. Some of these writers Allah guides to rejecting what is in opposition to the *Qur’ān* and to the *Sunnah*. However, in other times their earlier tradition leads them to the neck of the hole. Abul-Ma‘ālī Al-Juwaynee talked about such confusion. He studied logic and philosophy. Before he died, he re-embraced the belief of *As-Salaf Aṣ-Ṣāliḥ* (our righteous ancestors). He mentioned his story in his book about believing in *Al-Istiwā’* (that Allah is upon the Throne) and *Al-Fawqīyyah* (that Allah is the Most-High).

This type of writers, mentioned above, is what are called “Al-Khalaf” (the descendants). They are a mixture of followers of Al-Jahm ibn Ṣafwan (who started the Jahmiyyah sect and who denied Allah’s Names and Attributes), and of Al-Ashā’irah and Al-Mu’tazilah (other misguided sects). Abul-Hasan Al-Ash‘ari, who started the Ashā’irah sect, later refuted and disowned the followers of his way, in his book, “Al-Ibānah.” What is amazing is that some still teach and

believe in a *mathhab* (school of thought) that its creator disowned!

This type of writers, mentioned above, studied *Tawḥeed*, and made their own minds as the judge and authority in this matter. They confirmed, of Allah's Names and Attributes, what they thought appropriate, and rejected what they thought wrong. They subjected their worshipped Lord's Names and Attributes to their own logic and understanding. Some of them approved of only seven Attributes and others were more generous to add six more. This led to their believing in Attributes of Allah that are not the same as in the *Qur'ān*. To those we say: "Do you know Allah more than Himself?" This type of writers subjected the *'āyāt* (verses of the *Qur'ān*) and the *aḥādēeth* of the Prophet, ﷺ, to their own minds, changing their meanings. They made their thoughts as the base and changed meanings of the *Qur'ān* to accommodate their own minds. They ignored the most basic rule of *Tawḥeed*, that is, to shape our thoughts and minds to accommodate the *Naṣ* (text of the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*), confirming what the *Naṣ* confirms and rejecting what it rejects. These writers did the opposite, they shaped the *Naṣ* to accommodate their minds and thoughts. They made their minds as the god they worship. They fell in what they sought to escape from. They worshipped themselves, when they claimed immunity from error for their minds. Worshipping is following and obeying, is it not?

It is amazing that what is being taught today in most Islamic universities and institutions, except whom Allah has granted mercy, is the belief of Al-Ashā'irah, or a mixture of Al-Ashā'irah and Al-Mu'tazilah belief. The majority of Islamic scholars and teachers hold beliefs that were disowned by their

founder, Abul-Hasan Al-Ash'ari, as he wrote in his book, "Al-Ibānah." This book was printed repeatedly in Egypt.

This short research is not sufficient to explain these misguided people's beliefs. That is not our goal here. Rather, we sought to explain that what is being taught today, in the name of *Tawḥeed*, is a mixture (of right and wrong). The types of writers, mentioned above, write in what they do not comprehend, like the lumberjack cutting trees at night! "Sharḥ Al-'Aqidah At-Tahāwiyah" (by *Imām At-Tahawi*), and most writings of ibn Taymiyah, especially "Ar-Risalah At-Tadmuriyyah," refute these misguided beliefs.

(c) When the Muslim public was still educated (in *Tawḥeed*), in earlier generations, they rejected such misguided beliefs. That public is nothing like today's public that is driven by desires, emotions, tears and weeping.

The righteous ancestors rejected misguided beliefs, fighting logic with logic, and *Bid'ah* (innovation in religion) with *Sunnah*. They rejected the human mind and desires as a judge, and adhered to the rulings of the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger. Those are the ones the *Ummah* (Muslim nation) calls: "*Ahlu-Sunnah Wal-Jamā'ah*." The *Ummah* considers whoever believes in what is in opposition to their beliefs, as an innovator and misguided. These (*Ahlu-Sunnah*) are the companions of the Messenger of Allah, *At-Tabi'een* (the second generation), their followers, like the four *Imāms*, and whoever followed their lead. These are who we call "*As-Salaf*." *Salafis* are followers of the righteous *Salaf*. There is many a fool who thinks that *Salafism* is a *mathhab* (school of thought) that was started by later generations. Some of the ignorant say that ibn Taymiyah started *Salafism*. Ibn

Taymiyah was but one of the *Salaf*, who are the good example and righteous ancestors of this *Ummah*. The *Salaf* followed strict rules as to how they understood their religion, especially concerning Allah's Names and Attributes.

Second: Some Islamists, who need to be taught correct Islam, spread the belief that purifying Islam from what is not of it and correcting belief is unimportant and improper, under the present conditions. They claim the *Ummah* is facing outright disbelief. Some say: "Should not we write about communist danger instead?" We say the following in reply:

1 -- A major reason of atheism and disbelief in Islam is these books, introduced as the correct Islam, while full of *Kufr* (disbelief). "*Naqd Al-Fikr Ad-Dini*", is one example. This book emphasizes the writings of ibn 'Arabi, a Sufi and a disbeliever, and introduces them as the correct religion.

There is no *Kufr* more than the *Kufr* of ibn 'Arabi, ibn Sab'in, ibn Al-Faridh, ibn Sina, Al-Hallaj, Al-Qummi and Al-Kileeni, to name a few. "*Sufism in the Light of the Qur'an and Sunnah*," exposes these beliefs. A true Muslim does not differentiate between clear and implied *Kufr*, all is *Kufr*. Whoever disagrees with the above needs to reexamine the meaning of his Islam.

2 -- Ignorance in religion is another major reason for people shunning it. They are ignorant of the true religion and see the corrupt belief, forced on them, as the correct belief. As a result, they disbelieved. Yet, when Islam was re-introduced to these people, in its correct form, they accepted it by large numbers. This is the reason behind the popularity of the

writings of *Salafi* scholars, like ibn Taymiyah and Mohammad ibn ‘Abdul-Wahhab. This popularity is a result of the need for the true and uncorrupted Islam.

3 -- Unity is a basic rule of war, otherwise defeat will befall all. Uniting Muslims on the correct belief in one united front, is a must. Then, fighting the enemy can be accomplished. To do the opposite will lead to certain defeat.

Due to all of the above, we believe that the best way is to **clear** Islam from what has been attributed to it, and is not of it; and to introduce correct Islam to Muslims, and **rear** them (raise them) upon it. This is what Sheikh Nasir Ad-Din Al-Albāni always calls “*At-Taṣfiyah Wat-Tarbiyah*.” “Clearing, and Rearing”.

We also believe that a major reason for the defeat of Islamic movements is due to shunning this righteous way. Some Islamic groups gathered groups of people under their flag. However, each of these people have different thoughts (and beliefs). This led to the failure of these groups.

Third: The writing about Allah’s ‘*Uluw* and *Istiwā*’ is primarily due to the claims of some Sufis. They, along with some propagators of Islam (*Du‘āt*), of today, claim that Allah is everywhere. They keep repeating this incorrect belief, till it is portrayed as undisputed and correct belief. This matter is explained, in great detail, in the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* and the sayings of Scholars of this *Ummah*. Therefore, to correct what was corrupted, to confirm and validate the truth and as an advice to Muslims, I wrote about this subject. I collected the ‘*āyāt*’ (*Qur’ānic* verses) and *aḥādēeth* (plural of *ḥadeeth*, sayings

of the Messenger) about this matter. To further prove the truth, I collected the sayings of the companions, and those who followed their lead. My purpose is to show that '*Uluw* and '*Istiwa'* is the belief of the Muslim nation. Whoever defies it is led astray from the belief of the *Ummah*.

We hope that this research, and the proofs it contains, is evidence enough to believe in *Al-'Uluw* (Allah's attribute of being high), and *Al-Istiwa'* (His settling, or rising upon His throne).

We ask Allah to make this work for His Sake and to hold its benefit till a Day, when no possessions or offspring can benefit one, except his righteous heart. I also ask Allah to gather us, and our brethren in *Tawheed*, in the company of His righteous slaves. And the last of our supplications is that *Al-ḥamdu lil-lāhi rabbil 'ālamīn* (all praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds).

Abdullah As-Sabt
Sha'ban, 1396 H.
August, 1976 G.

Chapter 1

Evidence from the *Quran*

Allah said, what translated means:

1 - *﴿Indeed your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then 'Istawā (ascendid) upon the Throne (in a manner befitting to His Majesty).﴾* [7:54].

﴿إن ربكم الله الذي خلق السموات والأرض فى ستة أيام ثم استوى على العرش﴾ (الأعراف/54).

2 - *﴿A revelation from Him (Allah) Who has created the earth and high heavens. The Ever-Merciful Istawā (rose, or settled) upon the Throne. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, and all that is under the soil﴾* [20:4-6].

﴿تنزيلاً ممن خلق الأرض والسموات العلى . الرحمنُ على العرش استوى . له ما فى السموات وما فى الأرض وما بينهما وما تحت الثرى﴾ (طه/4-6).

3 - *﴿Allah it is He Who has created the heavens and the Earth, and all that is between them in six days. Then He 'Istawā 'Alā (rose upon) the Throne. You (mankind) have none, besides Him, as a Wali (protector and helper etc.) or an intercessor. Will you not then remember (or be admonished)?*

He arranges the affair from the heavens to the earth, then it goes up to Him, in one day, the space whereof is a thousand years of your reckoning (i.e. reckoning of our present world's time). That is He, the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen, the All-Mighty, The Bestower of Mercy. ﴿ [32:4-6].

﴿الله الذي خلق السموات والأرض وما بينهما في ستة أيام ثم استوى على العرش ما لكم من دونه من ولي ولا شفيع أفلا تتذكرون . يدبر الأمر من السماء إلى الأرض ثم يعرج إليه في يوم كان مقداره ألف سنة مما تعدون . ذلك عالم الغيب والشهادة العزيز الرحيم﴾ (السجدة/4-6).

4 - ﴿And (remember) when Allah said: "O Jesus! I will take you and raise you to Myself.﴾ [3:55].

﴿إذ قال الله يا عيسى إني متوفيك ورافعك إلي﴾ (آل عمران/55).

5 - ﴿And He is The Subduer, above His slaves, and He is the All-Wise, Well Acquainted with all things﴾ [6:18].

﴿وهو القادر فوق عباده وهو الحكيم الخبير﴾ (الأنعام/18).

6 - ﴿They fear their Lord from above them, and they do what they are commanded﴾ [16:50].

﴿يخافون ربهم من فوقهم ويفعلون ما يؤمرون﴾ (النحل/50).

7 - ﴿To Him ascend (all) the goodly words, and the righteous deeds lift them (the goodly words).﴾ [35:10].

﴿إليه يصعد الكلم الطيب والعمل الصالح يرفعه﴾ (فاطر/10).

8 - ﴿From Allah, the Lord of the Places of Ascent. The angels and the Ruḥ (Gabriel) ascend to Him in a Day the measure whereof is fifty thousand years﴾ [70:3-4].

﴿من الله ذي المعارج . تخرج الملائكة والروح إليه في يوم كان مقداره خمسين ألف سنة﴾ (المعارج/3-4).

9 - ﴿Do you feel secure that He, Who is fis-samā'¹ (above the heavens), will not cause the earth to sink with you, then behold it shakes (as in an earthquake)? Or do you feel secure that He, who is fis-samā' (above the heavens), will not send against you a violent whirlwind? Then you shall know how (terrible) has been My warning?﴾ [67:16-17].

﴿أأمنتم من في السماء أن يخسف بكم الأرض فإذا هي تمور . أم أمنتم من في السماء أن يرسل عليكم حاصباً فستعلمون كيف نذير﴾ (الملك/16-17).

10 - ﴿Then He rose above towards the Samā' (the heavens) when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: "Come both of you willingly or unwillingly." They both said: "We come, willingly."﴾ [41:11].

﴿ثم استوى إلى السماء وهي دخان فقال لها وللأرض ائتيا طوعاً أو كرها قالتا أتينا طائعين﴾ (فصلت/11).

¹ The Arabic word *As-Samā'* means the *higher*, or *upper*, or *highest*, or *uppermost*, part of anything: (*The Muhkam*) – The meaning should not be confused with its predominant acceptation, a word of well-known meaning: The sky – the canopy of the earth (*Tāj Al-'Aroos*).

11 - ﴿And Pharaoh said: “O Hāmān! Build me a tower that I may arrive at the ways. The ways of the heavens, and I may look upon the God of Moses but verily, I think him to be a liar.”﴾ [40:36-37].

﴿وقال فرعون يا هامان ابن لي صرحا لعلي أبلغ الأسباب . أسباب السموات فأطلع إلى إله موسى وإني لأظنه كاذبا﴾ (غافر/36-37).

Al-Juwaini said in his book, “*Al-Istiwā’ Wa Ithbāt Al-Fawqiyah*”, about this ‘āyah: “This proves that Moses told him (Pharaoh) that his Lord is above the skies. This is why he (Pharaoh) said: ‘And I think him to be a liar.’”

Ad-Dārimi said in, “*Ar-Radd ‘Alā Al-Jahmiyyah*”, page 21: “This ‘āyah is proof and clear evidence that Moses called on Pharaoh to admit that Allah is above the skies, and that was the reason behind his (Pharaoh’s) call to build a tower so he can see Him.”

12 - ﴿All the praises and thanks be to Allah, who has sent down to His slave (Mohammad) the Book (the Qur’ān), and has not placed therein any crookedness.﴾ [18:1].

﴿الحمد لله الذي أنزل على عبده الكتاب ولم يجعل له عوجا﴾ (الكهف/1).

13 - ﴿It is He who has sent down the Book (the Qur’ān) to you (Mohammad) with truth, confirming what came before it. And He sent down the Torah and the Gospel. Aforetime, as a guidance to mankind, and He sent down the

Criterion (of judgment between right and wrong, i.e. the *Qur'ān*). ﴿ [3:3-4].

﴿نزل عليك الكتاب بالحق مصدقا لما بين يديه وأنزل التوراة والإنجيل من قبل هدى للناس وأنزل الفرقان﴾ (آل عمران/4-3).

14 - ﴿*Hā Meem. A revelation sent down from Allah, The Ever-Merciful, The Bestower of Mercy.*﴾ [41:1-2].

﴿هم . تنزيل من الرحمن الرحيم﴾ (فصلت/2-1).

15 - ﴿(It is the *Qur'ān*) sent down by the All-Wise, Worthy of all praise.﴾ [41:42].

﴿تنزيل من حكيم حميد﴾ (فصلت/42).

16 - ﴿*Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'ān) down in the Night of Al-Qadr (Decree).*﴾ [97:1].

﴿إنا أنزلناه في ليلة القدر﴾ (القدر/1).

17 - ﴿*We sent it (this Qur'ān) down on a blessed Night (Night of Al-Qadr), verily, We are ever warning (mankind of our Torment).*﴾ [44:3].

﴿إنا أنزلناه في ليلة مباركة إنا كنا منزلين﴾ (الدخان/3).

18 - ﴿(This is) *a surah* (chapter of the *Qur'ān*) which *We have sent down and which we have enjoined* [24:1].

﴿سورة أنزلناها وفرضناها وأنزلنا فيها آياتٍ بيناتٍ﴾ (النور/1).

19 - ﴿And we (angels) descend not except by the command of your Lord (O Mohammad).﴾ [19:64].

﴿وما ننزله إلا بأمر ربك﴾ (مريم/64).

20 - ﴿Which the trustworthy “Ruh” (Gabriel) has brought down (the Qur’ān).﴾ [26:193].

﴿نزل به الروح الأمين﴾ (الشعراء/193).

21 - ﴿Say (O Mohammad): “Ruh Ul-Qudus (Gabriel) has brought it (the Qur’ān) down from your lord with truth.”﴾ [16:102].

﴿قل نزله روح القدس من ربك بالحق﴾ (الحج/102).

The likes of these ‘āyāt are numerous. All the above is evidence that Allah, the Praised One, has sent down the Book (*Qur’ān*) from Him. If the claim of the misguided ones, that Allah is both under the earth, and upon the Throne above the heavens, were true, then He would have said: “We ascended it (the *Qur’ān*) to you,” or “We raised it to you.” Allah did not say: “The *Qur’ān* is what was raised from earth.”

The ‘āyāt, in which Allah mentions that He sent down the Book, are many. *Ruh Al-Qudus* (Gabriel) brought it down. Sending down is done from above, is it not?

Imām Ad-Dārimi said: “*What is the matter with you? Unanimity was from the companions, Tabi‘een* (the second

generation) and the Ummah, concerning Qur'ānic interpretation, rules of inheritance and general rules (of Islam). They say: 'Such and such āyah (verse) was sent down about such and such (matter). Such and such surah (chapter) was sent down about such and such (matters)'. You never hear any of them say that it (the āyah or surah) was raised from earth, or came from the front or behind. Rather, they all say: 'It was sent down.' Whoever is everywhere does not need to send down. Rather, it will be more of sending than sending down with Gabriel. Allah said (what translated means): ﴿Say (O Mohammad): "Ruḥ Ul-Qudus (Gabriel) has brought it (the Qur'ān) down from your Lord with truth."﴾ [16:102].

﴿قل نزلہ روح القدس من ربك بالحق﴾ (النحل/102).

You falsely claim that God is with him (Mohammad) in his house, yet Gabriel comes with revelation from outside (while Allah is inside his house!). It is evident that you have produced falsehood. Whoever does not seek, in his belief and worship, Allah who Istawā 'alā (rose upon) His Throne, above His heavens, and is not mixed with His creation, worships other than Allah, and does not know where Allah is." [Ar-Radd 'Alā Al-Jahmiyyah, page 33].

Chapter 2

Evidence From the *Sunnah*

22 -- Mu'āwiyāh Ibn Al-Ḥakam As-Sulmi Said: *"I had some sheep between (the areas) of Uḥud and Al-Juwaniyah. A servant of mine was taking care of them (the sheep). One day I checked on her and found that the wolf had eaten a sheep. I, being a human and offspring of Adam, became angry and smacked her. I went to the Prophet and mentioned to him what happened. He portrayed my action as being a major thing. I said: 'O Messenger of Allah, should I free her?' He said: 'Call her (to me).' So I called her. He said to her: 'Where is Allah?' She said: 'fis-samā' (above the heavens).' He said: 'Who am I?'" She said: 'The Messenger of Allah.' He said: 'Free her for she is a believer."* [Muslim, Abu Dāwood and An-Nasāii].

23 -- Jābir ibn 'Abdillāh said: "The Messenger of Allah said in his speech on the day of 'Arafah (Hajj day in Makkah): *'Did I convey (the Message).'*' They said: *'Yes.'* While raising his finger to the sky and then pointing at them, he said: *'O my Lord, be a witness.'*" [Muslim].

24 -- Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ said, what translated means: *"Angles take turns with you. (There are) angles for the night and angles for the day. They gather in the prayers of Fajr (dawn) and Asr (evening). Then, the ones who were with you overnight ascend to Him. He asks them, having perfect knowledge in them: 'How did you*

leave My slaves?’ They would say: ‘We came to them while they were praying and left them while they were praying.’ [Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]. Note that ascending can only be upward.

25 -- ‘Abdullāh ibn Amr ibn Al-‘Āṣ related that the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, said, what translated means: “*Allah grants mercy to the merciful. Be merciful to those who are on earth, (then) He Who is fis-samā’ (above the heavens) will be merciful to you.*” [Abu Dāwūd & At-Tirmithi].

26 -- Anas said that Zaynab bint Jaḥsh (the wife of the Prophet, ﷺ), used to proudly say to the Prophet, ﷺ’s wives: “*Your families gave you for marriage, but Allah gave me for marriage (to His Messenger) from above seven heavens.*” Also, she used to say: “*Allah gave me for marriage fis-samā’ (above the heavens).*” In another narration for this ḥadeeth, she said to the Prophet, ﷺ: “*Ar-Raḥman (The Ever-Merciful) gave me for marriage to you from above His Throne.*” [Al-Bukhāri].

27 -- Abu Sa‘eed said that the Messenger of Allah said, what translated means: “*Do you not trust me (?) when I am trusted by Him Who is fis-samā’ (above the heavens). Revelation comes to me day and night.*” [Al-Bukhāri & Muslim].

28 -- Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, said, what translated means: “*By Him in The Hands of Whom is my soul; there is not a man who calls his wife to his bed whereupon she refuses, except that He who is*

‘fis-samā’ (above the heavens) will be angry with her till her husband is pleased with her. [Muslim].

29 -- Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet, ﷺ, said, what translated means: ***“Angles are with the dying (man). If he was a righteous man they would say: ‘O righteous soul that was in the righteous body, get out (of the body). Bare the good news of Rawḥ (rest) and Rayḥān (provision) and a God who is not angry.’ This will be repeatedly said to the soul till it leaves (its body). Then, it will be ascended to heaven. Then, permission to enter will be asked on its behalf, a question will be asked: ‘Who is this?’ The answer will read: ‘So and so (name mentioned).’ It will be greeted with the saying: ‘Welcome, O pure soul.’ This will be repeated till it (the soul) reaches the heaven that Allah is above.”*** [Ahmad and Ibn Mājah].

30 -- Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger said, what translated means: ***“Whoever donates the equal of a date (type of fruit), from whatever was collected righteously, and only good is ascended to Allah, then, He will accept it (the charity) with his Right and raise it for its giver till it becomes like a mountain.”*** [Al-Bukhāri].

31 -- Abu Musa Al-Ash‘ari narrated that the Messenger said, what translated means: ***“Allah does not sleep and he ought not to. He descends the Qist (Justice) and raises it up. Deeds of the night are ascended to Him before the day. His veil is Light, if he unveils it, the light of His Face will burn everything that sight reaches.”*** [Muslim].

32 -- Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri said that the Messenger said, what translated means: "*Allah accepts the charity from the slave, providing it was collected from permissible means, and Allah does not accept but what is good. Nothing ascends to Him except good. He accepts the date (given for charity) and raises it till He makes it like a mountain.*" [Ath-Thahabee in *Al-'Uluw*].

33 -- Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Messenger, ﷺ, said, what translated means: "*Allah has Angles, travelers on earth, along with those who write (the deeds) for people. If they find people who are in remembrance of Allah (in a gathering), they (angles) will say to each other: 'Come to what you came looking for.' So, they would gather around them (those in the gathering). When they (in the gathering) disperse, they (angles) ascend to the heavens. Allah would say: 'What thing did you leave My slaves doing?' They would say: 'We left them while they were thanking, praising and remembering You.' He would say: 'Did they see Me?' They would say: 'No.' He, then, would say: 'How would it be if they saw Me?' They would say: 'Then, they would thank, praise, and remember you even more.' He would ask: 'What do they seek?' They would say: 'They seek Paradise.' He would say: 'And did they see it?' They would say: 'No.' Then He would say: 'What if they saw it (Paradise)?' Then, they would say: 'If they saw it, then they would seek it more, and be more eager for it.' Then, He would ask: 'What do they seek refuge from?' They would say: 'They seek refuge from the Fire (Hell).' He would say: 'And did they see it?' They would say: 'No.' Then He would ask: 'What if they saw it?' They would answer: 'If they saw it, they would be more escaping from it and seek refuge from it and fear it even*

more.’ Then He would say: ‘I bare you witness that I Forgave them.’ They would say: ‘So and so, the sinner, was with them only for something he needed.’ Then, He would say: ‘They are the company whom their audience is not miserable accompanying them’ (said that twice).” [Al-Bukhāri and Muslim].

34 -- Some of the companions of the Prophet, رضي الله عنه, told ibn Abbās that while they were sitting with the Prophet, صلى الله عليه وسلم, one night, they saw a blazing star falling . He asked them: “*What was it that you used to say if something like this fell?*” They said: “*We used to say that a great man either was born or died tonight.*” He said: “*They do not fall for the death or birth of anyone. Rather, when Allah decrees a matter, those (angles) who carry the Throne become full of praise. Those in the next heaven (down) praise (Allah) till praise spreads to the lowest heaven. Those who are closest to those who carry the Throne would ask: What did your Lord say?*” Then, they would tell them what He (Allah) has decreed. Those who are in lower heavens keep asking those in the next heaven (up), till it reaches the lowest heaven. Then, the Jinn hear what is being said and convey it to their loyalists (of humans). Therefore, whatever they (the Jinn) said and came to be true, is from the truth. But they distort and add (to the truth).” [Muslim].

35 -- Anas narrated that the Messenger of Allah used to loosen (clothes) and show his shoulders, when it rained and say, what translated means: “*It (the rain) has just come from its Lord.*” [Muslim].

36 -- A man said to ibn Abbās that he finds things in the *Qur'ān* that cause confusion to him. Ibn Abbās asked if it was rejection (of the *Qur'ān*). The man said: “No. I am just confused.” Ibn Abbās said: “Then tell about what caused your confusion.” The man said: “I hear that Allah said..., and he mentioned some 'āyāt till he reached the statement of Allah, (what translated means): ﴿Are you more difficult to create, or is the heaven that He constructed? He raised its height, and He has equally ordered it. Its night He covers with darkness, and its forenoon He brings out (with light). And after that He spread the earth.﴾ [79:27-30].”

﴿أأنتم أشد خلقا أم السماء بناها . رفع سمكها فسواها . وأغطش ليلاها
وأخرج ضحاها . والأرض بعد ذلك دحاها﴾ (النازعات/27-30).

The man said that this *āyah* mentioned creation of the heaven before the earth. Then he said that Allah said in another *āyah*: ﴿And measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers) in four days equal (i.e. all these four days equal in the length of time), for all those who ask (about its creation). Then He rose above towards the heaven when it was smoke.﴾ [41:10-11].

﴿وقدر فيها أقواتها في أربعة أيامٍ سواءٍ للسائلين . ثم استوى إلى السماء
وهي دخان...﴾ (فصلت/10-11).

So He mentioned the creation of the earth before the heavens. Then, ibn Abbās said: “As for His saying: ﴿Or is the heaven that He constructed? He raised its height, and he has equally ordered it.﴾, He created the earth in two days before the heavens. Then, He rose (*Istawa*) to the above and made it (seven heavens) in two more days. Then He descended to

earth and made it inhabitable, providing it with water and plants." [Al-Bukhāri].

37 -- Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, said, what translated means: "*Allah, all praise be to Him, said: 'I am as My slave thinks of Me, and I am with him (in knowledge) if he mentions Me. If he mentions Me to himself, I mention him to Myself. If he mentions Me in an assembly, I mention him in a better assembly. If he draws near to Me (in obedience) a hand's span, I draw near to him an arm's length. If he draws near to Me an arm's length, I draw near to him a fathom's length. If he would come to Me walking, I would come to him at speed.'*" [Al-Bukhāri].

38 -- Salmān Al-Farisi said that the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, said, what translated means: "*Your Lord is Shy and Most Generous. He is Shy if His slave raises his hands to Him, in supplication, that he returns them empty with nothing in them.*" [Abu Dāwood].

39 -- Qatādah ibn An-Nu'mān heard the Prophet, ﷺ, say: "*When Allah finished with the (job of) creation, He rose upon His Throne.*" [Abu Bakr Al-Khallal in *As-Sunnah*].

40 -- Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet, ﷺ, said, what translated means: "*Whoever believed in Allah, His Messenger, established prayer and fasted Ramadhan, will have a right on Allah to enter him into Paradise, whether he established Jihād (fought) in the cause of Allah or sat in his birthplace.*" They said: "*O Messenger of Allah should we convey these good tidings to people?*" He said: "*In Paradise,*

there are a hundred grades that Allah prepared for the Mujāhideen in His cause, (the distance) between each two grades is the like of what is between heavens and earth. If you ask Allah, ask Him for Al-Firdous, for it is in the middle of Paradise, in the uppermost of Paradise, above it is the Throne of The Ever-Merciful; and from it gush the rivers of Paradise.” [Al-Bukhāri].



Chapter 3

Sayings of the Companions and the *Imaams*

Sayings of the Companions

After we narrated the numerous evidences from the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*, we now mention the sayings of the companions, may Allah be pleased with them, concerning *Al-Istiwā'*. The companions understood the Book and the *Sunnah* in the best manner. We follow their righteous ways and ask Allah that He resurrects us in their company.

41 -- Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq said: "*Whoever worshipped Mohammad, Mohammad has died. Whoever worshipped Allah, Allah is Alive fis-samā' (above the heavens), and death does not touch Him.*" [Ad-Dārimi in *Ar-Radd 'Alal-Jahmiyyah*.]

42 -- 'Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭab visited Ash-Shām (Syria) riding on his camel. The companions said to him: "*O leader of the believers, wont you ride a Birthoun (a jade, a horse of mean, non Arabic, breed) so you may be intercepted by the great and noted people.*" 'Umar said: "*Do I not see you from here? Verily the matter comes from here*" (and pointed with his hand to the sky), [Ibn Al-Qayyim in *Ijtimā' Al-Joyush Al-Islāmiyyah*.]

43 -- ‘Adiy ibn ‘Āmeerah said that he emigrated to the Prophet, ﷺ, till he reached him and his companions. He found them *Sujood* (prostration) on their foreheads, attesting that their God is *fis-samā’* (above the heavens). ‘Adiy said: “*So I became a Muslim and followed him* (the Prophet, ﷺ).” [Same as 42.]

Sayings of At-Tabi‘een (the Second Generation of Islam)

44 -- Those who confirmed that Allah is *fis-samā’* (above the heavens) are so numerous that counting them will be difficult. We mention a few like Marwan, Qatādah, Sulaymān Al-Taymi and Muqātil. [*Al-‘Uluw* for Ath-Thahabee].

Al-Bayhaqi narrated that *Imām* Awzā‘i (of the third generation) said: “*We used to say, while At-Tabi‘een were still many, that Allah, all praise be to Him, is upon His Throne. We believe in what the Sunnah has told us of His Attributes.*” [*Al-‘Uluw* for Ath-Thahabee].

Sayings of the Imāms

45 - *Imām* Abu Ḥanifah said: “*Whoever says: ‘I do not know if my Lord is above the heavens or on earth’, is a disbeliever, because Allah said* (what translated means): ﴿*The Ever-Merciful Istawā* (rose) *upon the Throne*﴾ [20:5].

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى﴾ (طه/5).

His Throne is above the seven heavens.” Abu Muti‘ Al-Balkhi asked him: “What if he says that He is upon the Throne, but he does not know if the Throne is in the regions above or on earth?” He said: “He is a disbeliever, because he rejected that He is above the heavens, and that He is called (in supplication) to the above not downward.” [Ath-Thahabee in *Al-‘Uluw*].

46 - Ibn Wahb said that a man came to *Imām* Mālik and said: “O Abu ‘Abdillāh, ﴿The Ever-Merciful Istawā upon the Throne﴾; how did he Istawa?” Mālik looked down and (started to sweat) (out of anger). Then he raised his head and said: “Ar-Raḥmān (The Ever-Merciful) Istawa as He described Himself. How, is not valid here. How, is irrelevant about Him. You are an innovator, take him out.” [Ath-Thahabee in *Al-‘Uluw*.]

47 -- *Imām* Ash-Shafi‘ee said: “The Sunnah that we follow along with our companions, followers of ḥadeeth whom I met and took (knowledge) from, like Sufiān, Mālik and others, is that we believe that there is no god except Allah and that Mohammad is His Messenger. And that Allah, the Praised One, is upon His Throne *fis-samā’* (above the heavens). He comes close to His slaves as He wills. Allah descends to the lower heaven as He wills.” [*Al-‘Uluw* by Ath-Thahabee].

48 -- No other *Imām* has more sayings about *Istiawā’* than *Imām* of *As-Sunnah* Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. He wrote his famous book, *Ar-Radd ‘Ala Al-Jahmiyyah*. We mentioned in this booklet some of what he said while refuting the Jahmiyyah claim, that Allah is not upon His Throne. He mentioned many

proofs, and the majority of his followers still follow his righteous belief till today.

49 -- Ibn 'Uyaynah narrated that Rabi'ah ibn 'Abdur-Rahmān, *Imām* Māliks teacher, explained the *āyah*: ﴿The Ever-Merciful Istawa 'alā (ascended upon) the Throne﴾. He said: " 'Al-'Istiwā' (settling) is not unknown. The How, is not comprehensible. From Allah comes the Message. The Messenger only conveys (the message) and we must believe." [*Ijtimā' Al-Joyush Al-Islāmiyyah* by ibn Al-Qayyim].

50 -- 'Abdullāh ibn Al-Mubāarak said: "We know of our Lord that He is above the seven heavens, not mixed with His creation. We do not approve of what Al-Jahmiyyah say." [*Ar-Radd 'Ala Al-Jahmiyyah* by Ad-Dārimi].

51 - A man asked Mohammad ibn Ziad about ﴿The Ever-Merciful Istawa (rose, or settled) upon the Throne﴾. Mohammad ibn Ziad said: "He is upon the Throne as He said." The man said: "O Abu 'Abdullāh, it only means He Istawla (captured)." Ibn Ziad said: "Do not say this. You only say 'Istawlā about him who has an opposition (to overcome)." [*Fath Al-Bari* by ibn Hajar].

52 -- Ibn 'Abd Al-Barr said: "Ahlus-Sunnah are unanimous on confirming all Attributes (of Allah) mentioned in the Book and the Sunnah. They do not ask 'how' about any of them. Al-Jahmiyyah, Al-Mu'tazilah and Al-Khawārij claim that whoever affirms (the Attributes) is assimilating Allah (with His

creation). Therefore, those who affirm (the Attributes of Allah) call them (those who deny them) 'Mu'aḥḥilah.' [Same as 51].

53 - Ad-Dārimi said: "The aḥādeeth of the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, his companions, At-Tabi'een and their followers are so numerous, that this book cannot contain all of them. We chose of this evidence what can be a guidance to those of sane minds. This nation, and previous nations, had no doubts that they know of Allah that He is fis-samā' (above the heavens), not mixed with His creation. Only this misguided gang that defied the Book and all knowledge (refused this belief). Many disbelievers and tyrants confirmed this belief. Allah said (what translated means): ﴿And Pharaoh said: "O Hāmān! Build me a tower that I may arrive at the ways. The ways of the heavens, and I may look upon the God of Moses."﴾ [40:36-37].

﴿وقال فرعون يا هامان ابني لي صرحاً لعلي أبلغ الأسباب . أسباب السموات فأظلم إلى إله موسى﴾ (غافر/36-37).

The king that Prophet Abraham confronted used birds and eagles, trying to reach Allah who is fis-samā' (above the heavens). All their Prophets identified Allah (upon the Throne). The Children of Israel used to say: 'O! our Lord. You are above the heavens and we are on earth (translated back from the Arabic text of this book).' The examples to this are numerous, and we cannot accommodate all of them. The Qur'ān approves this belief, directly and indirectly. This belief is clear and cannot be distorted, but on the hands of a denying (arrogant), who refuses these evidences knowing that they are against him." [Ar-Radd 'Alā Al-Jahmiyyah by Ad-Dārimi].

54 -- It is of benefit to mention the sayings of Abul-Hasan Al-Ash'ari (about *Istiwā'*). He was unjustly accused of sayings which he later refuted and disowned, while adhering to the belief of the righteous group. We ask Allah to help us reprint his beneficial book "*Al-'Ibānah*". In this book, Al-Ash'ari disowned his previous beliefs and followed *Ahlu-Sunnah Wal-Jamā'ah*. What brings wonder, is that a *mathhab* (Al-Ashā'irah) was established, and books were written about it. The creator of this *mathhab* disowned it and confirmed that it was wrong.

He said in "*Al-'Ibānah*": "If one asked: 'What do you say about Al-Istiwā'?' We say to him: 'Allah Istawa 'Ala (rose upon) the Throne. Allah said (what translated means): ﴿The Ever-Merciful Istawa (rose, or settled) upon the Throne﴾.'" He also said: "Some of the Mu'tazilah, Al-Jahmiyyah and Al-Haroriyah (Khawārij) said about: ﴿The Ever-Merciful Istawā upon the Throne﴾, that it means that He captured, overpowered and owned (The Throne), and that Allah is everywhere; they denied the possibility that Allah be upon His Throne as the righteous people affirm Him to be; and they took 'the settling' ('Al-'Istiwā') to symbolize power. If it were as they asserted, there would be no difference between the Throne and the earth.

He then mentioned many evidences refuting the misguided beliefs. We will not be able to mention all of them, therefore we refer you to his book "*Al-'Ibānah*."

55 - Ibn Katheer said after he mentioned the verse about *Al-Istiwā'*: "There are numerous ways of interpreting this

āyah. This is not the place to mention them all. However, while explaining this āyah, we follow the way of As-Salaf (our righteous ancestors), like Mālik, Awzā‘i, Ath-Thawri, Al-Layth ibn Sa‘ad, Ash-Shafi‘ee, Aḥmad, Iṣḥāq bin Rāhawaih and other Imāms of Muslims of old and new. Their way is to affirm it as it is without interpretation, assimilation (to attributes of the creation), or distortion. The claim that the settling (Al-Istiwā’) is in resemblance to that of the creation, is rejected concerning Allah. Nothing is like unto Allah. Allah said (what translated means): ﴿There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer﴾ [42:11].

﴿ليس كمثله شيء وهو السميع البصير﴾ (الشورى/11).

We confirm what the Imāms, like Al-Bukhāri’s teacher, Na‘im ibn Hammad, said. He said: ‘Whoever assimilates Allah with His creation has committed Kufr (disbelief). Whoever denies Allah’s description of Himself has committed Kufr. Assimilation to (the creation) cannot be understood from the description of Allah by Allah, or His Messenger, ﷺ. Whoever confirms the Attributes, mentioned in the clear ‘āyāt (verses of the Qur’ān) and authentic ḥadeeths, believing that these Attributes are in a manner befitting to Allah’s Majesty, and denying all ill descriptions of Allah; he has followed the way of guidance.’ [Tafseer ibn Katheer].

56 - Al-Bukhāri’s teacher, ibn Al-Madini, was asked about the beliefs of *Ahlu-Sunnah Wal-Jamā‘ah*. He said: “*They believe in seeing (Allah), and that He speaks (if He will), and that Allah is above the skies, Mustawin ‘Alā (settled upon) the Throne.*” He was asked about the āyah: ﴿*There is no secret counsel of three, but He is their fourth*﴾ [58:7].

﴿ما يكون من نجوى ثلاثة إلا هو رابعهم﴾ (المجادلة/7).

He said: "Read what is before it: ﴿Have you not seen that Allah knows whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth?﴾ [58:7]."

﴿ألم تر أن الله يعلم ما فى السموات والأرض﴾ (المجادلة/7).

[Al-Fatawa by ibn Taymiyah].

57 -- At-Tirmithi said: "*He is above the Throne as He described in His book. His Knowledge, Power and Lordship is everywhere.*" [Same as 56].

58 -- Ibn Khuzaymah said: "*Whoever does not affirm that Allah is above His heavens, upon His Throne and that 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 a garbage dump, so that Ahlul-Qiblah (Muslims), and Ahluth-Thimmah (Christians and Jews living among Muslims) would not suffer from his stinking smell.*" [Al-Hākim in *Al-Ma'rifah*].

59 -- Sayings of *Imāms* and Scholars: All that was attributed to the companions and *At-Tabi'een* (the second generation of Muslims) confirms what we mentioned, never the opposite. Their belief was that Allah is *fis-samā'* (above the heavens), as we mentioned before supported by many quotations.

A large number of scholars of Islam said that Allah is *fis-samā'* (above the heavens). They include ibn Jurayj, Mufti (scholar) of Ḥijāz; Awzā'i; Muqātil ibn Ḥayyān; Sufiān Ath-Thawri; Al-Layth ibn Sa'ad, Mufti of Egypt; and Salām ibn

Muti', Mufti of Baṣra. We also mention Ḥammād ibn Salamah of Baṣra; 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Al-Mājshoon, Mufti of Madinah; Ḥammad ibn Zayd Al-Baṣri; and Kufah's judge, ibn Abi Layla. This list also includes judge Abu Yousuf; Yaḥyā Al-Qaṭṭān; Sufiān ibn 'Uyaynah; Waki' ibn Al-Jarrāḥ of Kufah; Al-Aṣma'ee; Al-Khalil ibn Ahmad and Al-Farra', both scholars of Arabic; Ash-Shafi'ee, Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal; ibn Khuzaymah; Yaḥyā ibn Yaḥyā; and Ali ibn Al-Madini, *Imām* of *Ḥadeeth*. Also, included are Yaḥyā ibn Ma'iin, Ishaq ibn Rāhawaih, Al-Bukhāri, Abu Zur'ah Ar-Razi, Abu Ḥātim Ar-Razi, Abul-Ḥasan Al Ash'ari and many others. *Imām* Ath-Thahabee, in his book "Al-'Uluw," and ibn Al-Qayyim, in his book "Ijtimā' Al-Joyush Al-Islāmiyyah," collected many of these *Imāms'* narrations and sayings.



Chapter 4

Meaning of *Al-Istiwaa'*

We mentioned irrefutable evidence, that Allah, all praise be to Him, *Istawa* (rose, or settled) upon His Throne. We supported that with sayings of *As-Salaf*, the companions and their followers, affirming Allah's '*Uluw* (that He the Most-High), above His creation. We now seek to explain the meaning of *Istiwa'*, so it can be understood the way *As-Salaf* understood it.

“*Istiwa'*” can be general or specific, in meaning:

(a) The general meaning implies perfection and full strength. Allah said, what translated means: ﴿*And when he attained his full strength and Istawa* (became perfect in manhood)...﴾ [28:14].

﴿*ولما بلغ أشده واستوى*﴾ (النصر/14).

Also one can ask if the food is done by saying: “Is the food done (*Istawa*)?”

b -- The specific meaning depends on the following cases:

1 -- When followed by “*ilā*”, which means “to”, or “towards”: Allah said, what translated means: ﴿*Then He Istawa ilā As-Samā'* (rose towards) the heavens.﴾ [41:11].

﴿ثم استوى إلى السماء﴾ (فطنت/11).

In this form, *Istawa* means to rise above.

Abul-‘Āliyah Ar-Riyāḥi said: “*Istawa to the skies means He rose above (them).*” Mujāhid said: “*Istawa means rose upon the Throne.*” For more information, one must read the greatest books of *At-Tafseer* (books explaining the *Qur’ān*), like *Tafseer ibn Katheer* and *Tafseer ibn Jareer At-Ṭabari*.

2 -- When followed by “‘*Alā*”, which means “on” or “upon”: Allah said, what translated means: ﴿Such that you may *Tastawu ‘alā* (mount firmly on) their backs.﴾ [43:13].

﴿انستوا على ظهوره﴾ (الزخرف/13).

And, ﴿The Ever-Merciful *Istawa upon* (‘*Alā*) the Throne﴾. As scholars of Arabic confirm, this use also means highness, to rise up, and to be or become even or right.

3 -- When *Istawa* is followed by “*wā*”, which means “and”: This form is used to compare things when they are equal in an attribute, like water *Istawa wā* (with) wood, in that wood rose to sea level.

In short, *Istawa* means rose, went up, ascended, and settled. *As-Salaf* only used these meanings for *Istawa*. When *Istawa* is followed by ‘*Alā* (upon), it can only mean rising or settling upon.

Chapter 5

Asking where Allah is

Some think that asking “Where is Allah?”, is wrong and an innovation that *As-Salaf* did not know. This is due to the general Muslim public ignoring and not studying the beliefs of our righteous ancestors and shunning and not taking belief from the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* only. We mentioned the *ḥadeeth* about the servant and we repeat it here again.

Mu’āwiyāh ibn Al-Ḥakam As-Sulmi said: *“I had some sheep between (the areas) of Uḥud and Al-Juwāniah. A servant of mine was taking care of them (the sheep). One day I checked on her and found that the wolf had eaten a sheep. I, being a human and an offspring of Adam, became angry and smacked her. I went to the Prophet and mentioned to him what happened. He portrayed my action as being a major thing. I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, should I free her?’ He said: ‘Call her (to me).’ So I called her. He said to her: ‘Where is Allah?’ She said: fis-samā’ (above the heavens).’ He said: ‘Who am I?’ She said: ‘The Messenger of Allah.’ He said: ‘Free her for she is a believer.”* [Muslim, Abu Dāwood and An-Nasāii].

We find that the servant said: *“fis-samā’ (above the heavens).”* Therefore, whoever denies these two matters, (Asking where Allah is, and saying that He is *fis-samā’ (above the heavens)*), is refuting none other than the Prophet, ﷺ, himself.

We say that whoever refutes a matter of the Prophet, ﷺ, must be more knowledgeable in matters of belief than him. Sheikh Ahmad ibn Hajar said: *The master of All Messengers, and the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds, asks a servant: 'Where is Allah?' Yet the Jahmi (follower of Al-Jahmiyyah) claims that this type of questions is impermissible. They regard this to be the same as asking: 'When did He begin?', or 'What is He like?' See how they confuse the truth with misguidance? It is a misguidance to say that we cannot ask where Allah is. It is true that one cannot ask about the nature of Allah or 'when did He begin?'. I do not know if these people think that they know Allah more than His Messenger, ﷺ, or did philosophy blind their sights and comprehension and lead them astray? They dare to refute the truth without the slightest shame or good behavior. What they say is a shameless challenge and a major mistake, and it can only mean that they think that they have more knowledge of Allah than His Prophet, ﷺ. It also means that they can produce rules in religion, saying what is permissible and what is impermissible, on their own. Allah is the One who gives commandments, and then His Messenger. These people attributed ignorance to the Messenger and claimed legislative powers for themselves, while this power is Allah's Alone. So, by your God, tell me how can belief in Allah and His Messenger coexist with refutation of the Prophet, ﷺ?*

They say that asking 'Where is Allah?' is im-permissible, knowing that the Messenger was the one who asked and that the answer was given to him, and that he confirmed that the servant was a believer. They deny all this. Allah is the One who grants power and sufficient means, for He is the Most-High, the Greatest. O our Lord, grant us patience

and do not lead our hearts to misguidance after having led us to light.

It is a great shock to hear this (misguidance) from Al-Jahmiyyah or Al-Mu'tazilah. However, it is a greater shock to hear it from those who claim to follow the Sunnah and write about Tafseer and Hadeeth, and then announce this misguidance. This misguidance is in opposition to all Scriptures, Qur'ān and all of As-Salaf who are comprised of the companions, At-Tabi'een and righteous Imāms.

If the above is true of anyone, how can the Jahmi claim to follow the Sunnah? These people have many sayings that refute the sayings of As-Salaf. May Allah lead them, and us, to the righteous way." [Al-Aqā'id As-Salafiyyah].

Ad-Dārimi said in "Ar-Radd 'Alā Al-Jahmiyyah", after he narrated the above *ḥadeeth* about Al-Jāriyah (the servant): "*This ḥadeeth of the Messenger is proof that if one does not know that Allah, all praise be to Him, is fis-samā' (above the heavens) , and not on earth (Fil-Ardh), then he is not a believer. If he is a slave, freeing him is not like freeing a believer slave. This is because he does not know that Allah is fis-samā' (above the heavens).*

Do you not agree that the Prophet, ﷺ, based his declaration of the servant's belief on her knowing where Allah is? Also, the Messenger's asking where Allah is, refutes the belief that He is everywhere, and refutes the claim of those who deny that one can ask where Allah is. One cannot ask: 'Where' about a thing that is everywhere. One can ask: 'Where' about one who is not everywhere. If what these misguided ones say is

true, then how can the Prophet, ﷺ, agree with what the servant said? She knew the answer and the Prophet, ﷺ, confirmed it and, furthermore, confirmed that she was a believer. If Allah is on earth, as He is *fis-samā'* (above the heavens), her belief would not be complete till she confirmed that He is on earth too.

Therefore, Allah is upon His Throne and not mixed with His creation. Whoever does not know this, does not know his Lord whom he worships. Allah's knowledge of His slaves, near or far, from above His Throne, is totally perfect. Nothing is far from His Knowledge. His Knowledge encompasses the weight of an atom, and less, let it be in the heavens or on earth. I declare Allah's remoteness from the Mu'aṭṭilahs description of Him."

Sheikh Mohammad Khalil Harras said, after he mentioned the ḥadeeth of Al-Jāriyah: "I say that this ḥadeeth is shining in truth and clarity. It is as lightening falling on the heads of Al-Mu'aṭṭilah. Here is a man who committed the mistake of hitting his slave. He wanted to repent from this sin by freeing her. The Messenger told him to wait till he examined her belief. The test of this belief was: 'Where is Allah?' When she answered that He is *fis-samā'* (above the heavens), he accepted this from her as proof of her belief. If you asked one of Al-Mu'aṭṭilah: 'Where is Allah?' He would grant you the verdict of your disbelief."

Ad-Dārimi narrated what ibn Al-Mubārak said in reply to "How can we know our Lord?" He said: "We know of our Lord that He is above the seventh heaven, upon His Throne and not mixed with His creation." After that Ad-Dārimi said:

“Proof for ibn Al-Mubārak’s statement is found in the Messenger’s questioning of the slavegirl with ‘Where is Allah?’, He wanted to examine her belief. When she said: ‘fis-samā’ (above the heavens)’ the Messenger of Allah, ﷺ, said: ‘Free her for she is a believer.’ ḥadeeths of the Prophet, ﷺ, about this matter are numerous. Evidence is overwhelming, and all praise is to Allah.”

Imām Al-Juwaynee said: “He (the Messenger, ﷺ,) asked the slave, in the authentic ḥadeeth, ‘Where is Allah?’ She said: ‘fis-samā’ (above the heavens)’, and his confirmation, in the presence of his companions, is to show that what she said is nothing but the truth. That is why he, ﷺ, said: ‘Free her for she is a believer.’ [Ar-Rasa’il Al-Muniriyah].

Al-Juwaynee also said: “I used to fear confirming Al-Istiwā’ and that Allah descends (if He will), to avoid limiting Allah, or assimilating Him (with the creation). However, when I read the evidence from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, I find that these evidences confirm these meanings (Al-Istiwā’ and descending). I find that the Prophet, ﷺ, unequivocally confirms them, when talking about his Lord and describing Him. I know for sure that his audience contained the knowledgeable and the ignorant, the smart and the slow and the Bedouin and the hard hearted. Yet, I find no quotations, clear or implied, from him, after describing Allah, that explain these meanings with what is not apparent, or what distorts these meaning as some of those philosophers did.” [Ar-Rasa’il Al-Muniriyah].

Look to what this *Imām* has written, in clear terms with power of proof.

From the above we reach the following summary of the sayings of *As-Salaf* about this matter (*Al-Istiwā*):

First: Asking where Allah is, is a valid question. Whoever asks it is a follower of the Messenger.

Second: The answer to the above question is that Allah is *fis-samā'* (above the heavens). The following is a consequence of this answer:

- (1) To believe that Allah is *fis-samā'* (above the heavens) upon the Throne is a must.
- (2) Whoever denies that Allah is *fis-samā'* (above the heavens) is a *Kāfir* (disbeliever).
- (3) Whoever refuses asking where Allah is, grants himself more knowledge than the Messenger of Allah, , or even Allah Himself.
- (4) Whoever does not affirm, in reply to the above question, that Allah is *fis-samā'* (above the heavens), is also a disbeliever.
- (5) Whoever thinks that “Where is Allah?” leads to assimilating (Allah with His creation), accuses the Messenger of ignorance.
- (6) Whoever believes that Allah is both *fis-samā'* (above the heavens) and on earth is a *Kāfir*.

(7) Whoever does not know where Allah is, does not worship Allah. Rather, he worships nothing.

All of the above points were proved to be true from what we mentioned of evidence and sayings of *As-Salaf*. So, our brothers, hurry to the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger and take truth from them and the truth alone do you obey.



Chapter 6

Some Doubts and Rebuttals

Dear reader, we introduced to you clear proof that Allah *Istawa upon* His Throne and that He is the Most-High. We introduced to you, also, sayings of *As-Salaf* about this matter. Some people raised some doubts, thinking that what they have raised is enough evidence to prove their falsehood. They mention some verses of the *Qur'ān* as evidence to their claim. To further clarify the matter, we mention here their claims and then refute and discredit their misguided claims.

First Claim:

They said about the *āyah*, when Allah said (what translated means): ﴿*There is no secret counsel of three but He is their fourth, nor of five but He is their sixth, not of less than that or more, but He is with them wheresoever they may be; and afterwards on the Day of Resurrection, He will inform them of what they did. Verily, Allah is the All-Knower of everything.*﴾ [58:7].

﴿ما يكون من نجوى ثلاثة إلا هو رابعهم ولا خمسة إلا هو سادسهم ولا أدنى من ذلك ولا أكثر إلا هو معهم أينما كانوا ثم ينبئهم بما عملوا يوم القيامة إن الله بكل شئٍ عليم﴾ (المجادلة/7).

They say that This *'āyah* means that Allah, Himself, is with the company of three or four, because that is what the *'āyah* directly implies.

We say to them: This *'āyah* is against you and supports our argument. This *'āyah* says that Allah is with His creation. His being “with” His creation either means that He is physically with them, or He is with them in terms of knowledge only. Those (who came after the time of *As-Salaf*), *Al-Khalaf*, say that Allah is physically with His slaves, everywhere.

As-Salaf, the companions and *At-Tabi'een*, say that His Presence with His slaves is in terms of Knowledge. He is *Mustawin 'Alā* (settled upon) His Throne and His Knowledge is with His slaves everywhere. He knows what they conceal and the secrets of their hearts. The misguided ones use this *'āyah* as evidence for what they say, but that is not what they will get. Allah's Words are true and do not contradict each other. This *'āyah* started with: ﴿Have you not seen that Allah knows whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth? There is no secret counsel ...﴾ [58:7].

﴿ألم تر أن الله يعلم ما فى السموات وما فى الأرض ما يكون من نجوى...﴾
(المجادلة/7).

And ended with: ﴿And afterwards on the Day of Resurrection He will inform them of what they did. Verily, Allah is the All-Knower of everything.﴾. Allah is with the company with His Knowledge, because the context of the *'āyah* says so. Those of knowledge in Arabic, along with some justice, comprehend the true meaning immediately. Some may disapprove, but we say that this is what the *'āyah* unequivocally means.

But let us suppose that the *'āyah* may mean that He, Himself, is with us, or that His being with us is only in terms of Knowledge. One must use other proofs to discredit one of these two meanings. When we go back to the beginning of our research, we find that the evidence supports one of these two meanings.

(1) Evidence from the *Qur'ān* confirms that Allah, the Praised One, is *fis-samā'* (above the heavens) upon the Throne.

(2) The *Sunnah* also confirms the above.

(3) The companions, *At-Tabi'een* and the majority of Scholars attest that Allah is *fis-samā'* (above the heavens).

All of the above testifies that Allah is above the skies. There is not any evidence to support that He is everywhere. Only the truth remains, and that is what *As-Salaf* said. They considered whoever believed that Allah is everywhere a *Kāfir*.

Following is what scholars of *Tafseer* (explanation of the *Qur'ān*) say about this *'āyah*:

1 -- Ibn Katheer said: “(The *'āyah*) means that He knows what they do, Hears what they say, Knows their secrets and what they reveal. His Angles, also, record what they say. Allah's Knowledge and Hearing of such matters are perfect. Allah said, what translated means: **Know they not that Allah**

knows their secret ideas, and their secret counsels, and that Allah is the All-Knower of the unseen? ﴿9:78﴾.

﴿ألم يعلموا أن الله يعلم سرهم ونجواتهم وأن الله علام الغيوب﴾
(التوبة/78).

Many scholars said that there is an unanimity (Ijma': collective agreement of scholars) that this 'āyah means His Knowledge, no doubt about that. Allah's Hearing encompasses them and His Sight reveals all secrets. He, the Praised One, Knows all things concerning His slaves and nothing is secret to His Knowledge."

2 -- Al-Qurtubi said: "(Allah) Knows and Hears their speech. The beginning of this 'āyah is proof to this. It started with His Knowledge and ended with His Knowledge."

3 -- Al-Qasimi said: "Their depending, for proof, on the 'āyah: ﴿There is no secret counsel...﴾, is not sufficient as proof. Scholars among the companions and At-Tabi'een, who mastered the Tafseer (explanation) of the Qur'ān, said that this 'āyah means that He is on the Throne, and that His Knowledge is everywhere. No credible opposition was recorded."

4 -- Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal said: "Allah said (what translated means): ﴿There is no secret counsel of three but He is their fourth﴾. Allah is talking about His Knowledge. He started the 'āyah talking about His Knowledge and ended it talking about His Knowledge." [*Ar-Radd 'Alā Az-Zanadiqah*].

Also, *Imām* Ahmad narrated that Adh-Dhahhāk said, about this 'āyah: "He is upon the Throne, yet with them with His Knowledge."

Second Claim:

Some of them used, as evidence, the 'āyah, when Allah said, what translated means: ﴿And He is Allah in the heavens and on the earth, He knows what you conceal and what you reveal, and He knows what you earn (good or bad).﴾ [6:3].

﴿وهو الله في السموات وفي الأرض يعلم سركم وجهركم ويعلم ما تكسبون﴾ (الأنعام/3).

This 'āyah is not proof that Allah is everywhere, as they claimed. It only means that Allah knows all that is secret, or revealed, in the heavens and earth. This is the only meaning that *As-Salaf* reported.

Ibn Katheer said: "Scholars of Tafseer differed on the meaning of this 'āyah, only after refuting *Al-Jahmiyyah's* claims that this 'āyah stipulates that Allah is everywhere. The most correct meaning is that He is the Worshipped One in heaven and earth. This means that those in the heavens and those on earth worship Him in monotheism. Except the *Kuffār* among mankind and Jinn, all other creation calls Him Allah (the Worshipped One) with fear and eagerness."

Also, ibn Jareer At-Ṭabari said that this 'āyah means that He is *fīs-samā'* (above the heavens), and that His Knowledge is everywhere.

Sheikh Rashid Ridha supported the *Salafi* belief and confirmed what ibn Katheer said. After he mentioned what ibn Katheer said, Rashid Ridha refuted the saying that Allah is both above the heavens and on earth. He said: "*Al-Jahmiyyah claimed that the meaning (of this 'āyah) is that Allah is both fīs-samā' (above the heavens) and on earth. This is why they say that Allah is everywhere. Allah is the Most-High and His Majesty is above what they describe of Him. He does not mix with His creation. The saying that Allah is Fis-Samā' does not mean that He is inside the heavens or mixed in them ("Fis-Samā'" can be translated to an incorrect meaning which is "in the heavens")². This 'āyah only means that He is the Most-High above His creation. There is nothing like unto Him. He surely is not mixed with the creation and does not resemble them. This is what As-Salaf said in refutation of what Al-Jahmiyyah claimed. No one of knowledge said that Allah, all praise be to Him, is everywhere.*"

Third Claim:

² To demonstrate the use of *fēe* to mean above rather than in, consider the hadeeth mentioned under point number 25 "*Allah grants mercy to the merciful. Be merciful to those who are fil-'ardh (on earth), (then) He Who is fīs-samā' (above the heavens) will be merciful to you*". In the same way that '*fil-'ardh*' should not be misunderstood as 'in the earth', '*fīs-samā'*' should not be understood as 'in the heavens'.

Some say that they have clear evidence that Allah is everywhere, when Allah said, what translated means: ﴿*And He is the 'ilāh (God) in the heavens and on the earth.*﴾ [43:84].

﴿*وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌ*﴾ (الزخرف/84).

Whoever knows Arabic does not claim the above. If one says that a person is the ruler of Makkah and Madinah, no one will understand that this person is physically present in both cities. All would understand that he rules Makkah and Madinah. *Ilāh* only means “the Worshipped One”. This *'āyah* means that Allah is the Worshipped One in the heavens and on earth. This is the way of the scholars of *Tafseer*, like At-Ṭabari, Al-Baghawi and ibn Katheer, among others. They all said, (with regards to this *'āyah*), that Allah is the Worshipped One in the heavens and on earth.

Only Muḥyi Ad-Din ibn 'Arabi said that Allah is mixed and united with the creation in “*Al-Futuḥāt*.” Al-Jahmiyyah, Al-Mu'tazilah and Al-Ashā'irah have no proof to their sayings. They try to distort the meaning of the *'āyah* to prove their misguidance. They will not be successful. They usually claim that they use logic to discuss their views, and we will refute even this claim.

Chapter 7

Logical Reasoning

Some say that they do not follow other people's views. They say: "Let us forget what others say. Produce to us clear evidence to refute our sayings." They may claim that they depended on evidence (mentioned before) to prove that Allah is both *fis-samā'* (above the heavens) and on earth. They may claim that they follow the belief of *As-Salaf*, which should be strictly adhered to. After having exposed this group's refutation of what the best generations of Islam believed in, we will now expose their logic.

The evidence mentioned in the previous chapter either indicates, or does not indicate that Allah is everywhere .

(a) If it does not indicate that Allah is everywhere, then they can no longer use it for argument.

(b) If it does indicate (that Allah is everywhere), then logical evidence, or discerned evidence (from *'āyāt* or *aḥādēeth*) will either immerge to indicate, or not to indicate the conspicuous falsness (of claiming that Allah is everywhere).

(c) If (a) is true, then this is our proof that their claim, that Allah is everywhere, is false.

(d) If (b) is true, then [we tell them]: you are, therefore, obliged to to say that Allah is everywhere; and you are further

obliged to say that Allah is in garbage dumps, people's stomachs, and in rest rooms. May Allah be highly exalted above that, and may Allah curse him who has drawn us to have to write this.

(e) If you say that Allah is not in these dirty places because He is praised from such, then we say: "Where is your proof?" If via the discerned evidence it becomes apparent to you that He is every place, and these dirty places are places, then He must be there. And you cannot exclude places without textual proof (discerned evidence), and that is not to be found; therefore, these texts must imply one meaning which is that it is *with His knowledge* that Allah is with us, wherever we are.

There are numerous evidences to prove our belief, (that Allah is upon the Throne). We end this discussion with what *Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal* said to a Jahmi: "*On the Day of Resurrection, Won't it be in Paradise, Hellfire, the Throne, or the Air?*" The Jahmi replied: "Yes." Ahmad said: "*Then where will our Lord be?*" The Jahmi replied: "*He will be everywhere and in everything as He was in this life ...*" Ahmad said: "*Then, according to you: that of Allah which was upon the Throne, will be upon the Throne, and that of Allah which was in Paradise, will be in Paradise, and that of Allah which was in Hellfire, will be in Hellfire, and that of Allah which was in the Air, will be in the Air?*" *It was at that point that their lying about Allah, whose praise is exalted, became clear.*" [*Ar-Radd 'Alā Az-Zanadiqah*].

This short research is enough proof for whoever has an open mind, clean heart and listens to the speech with care and attention.

Some DIH Publications

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- To warn Muslims of all types of *Shirk* (Association), and *Bida'* (Innovations) in religion, and fabricated weak *aḥādīth* which mar the beauty of Islam.
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