

Allah is Attributed with Perfection

Allah does not dwell in the creations

He is not everywhere, He is not on the throne

He is not in the sky or in Paradise or contained in a place

He Subhanahu Wa-Ta'ala exists without beginning, and without a place

Bismillah-ir Rahman-ir Raheem

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, to Him belong the endowments and the befitting perfections and commendations. I ask Allah to raise the rank of Prophet Muhammad, sallallahu alayhi wa sallam, and to protect his nation from that which he fears for it, Thereafter:

The saying that Allah, ta'ala, exists without a place is the belief and the creed of the Messenger of Allah, sallallahu alayhi wa sallam, the Companions and the True Salaf and Khalaf, those who graciously followed them, and it shall be until the Day of Judgment. The proof of this precious statement is what Allah said in the Qur'an, in Surat ash-Shura, ayah 11 which means:

"There is nothing like Him and He has the attribute of Hearing and Seeing."

This ayah absolutely and totally clears Allah of resembling the creation. It comprises that Allah azzawajal is different from the creations in the Self, Attributes, and Actions. Hence, it shows that Allah azzawajal exists without a place, because the one who exists in a place would, by nature, be composed of atoms, i.e., he would be a body, occupying a space, and Allah ta'ala is clear of occupying spaces.

Imam Al-Bukhariyy, Imam al-Bayhaqiyy and Imam Ibn al Jarud rahmatullah alaihim related that the Messenger of Allah, sallallahu alayhi wa sallam, said which means:

"Allah existed eternally and there was nothing else." This hadith proves that

Allah was alone in al-'azal, (the status of existence without a beginning,) i.e., before creating any of the creation. There was nothing with Him: no place, no space, no sky, no light, and no darkness. It is determined in the rules of the Religion and the judgments of the sound mind that Allah, the Exalted, does not change. Hence, it is impossible that after having been existing without a place, He would

become in a place, because this is a development, and the development is a sign of needing others, and the one who needs others is not God.

Imam Abu Mansur al-Baghdadiyy related in his book, *Al-Farqu Bayn al Firaq*, that Imam Ali raziAllah anhu, the fourth of the caliphs, may Allah reward his deeds, said which means:

"Allah existed eternally and there was no place, and He now is as He was, i.e., without a place."

Imam Abu Hanifah, who is one of the authorities of as-Salaf, said in his book *Al-Fiqh al-Absat*:

"Allah existed eternally and there was no place. He existed before creating the creation. He existed, and there was no place, creation, or thing; and He is the Creator of everything."

Imam al-Hafidh al-Bayhaqiyy said in his book, *Al-Asma'u was-Sifat*, on page 400:

".... What was mentioned towards the end of the hadith is an indication of denying Allah has a place and denying the slave is alike to Allah, wherever he was in proximity or remoteness. Allah, the Exalted, is adh-Dhahir--hence, it is valid to know about Him by proofs. Allah is al-Batin--hence, it is invalid that He would be in a place."

He also said:

"Some of our companions used as a proof to refute the place to Allah the saying of the Prophet, sallallahu alayhi wa sallam : 'You are adh-Dhahir and there is nothing above You, and You are al-Batin and there is nothing underneath You.' Therefore, if there is nothing above Him and nothing underneath Him, He is not in a place."

Imam Ahmad Ibn Salamah, Abu Jafar at-Tahawiyy, who was born in the year 237 after Hijrah, and was one of the Heads of Great Salaf said in his book *Al-Aqidah at-Tahawiyyah*. :

"Allah is supremely clear of all boundaries, extremes, sides, organs and instruments. The six directions do not contain Him--these are attributed to all created things."

Such is the saying of Imam Abu Ja'far who is among the heads of as-Salaf. He explicitly stated that Allah is clear of being contained by the six directions. The six directions are above, below, in front of, behind, right, and left.

The linguist and scholar of hadith, Imam Muhammad Murtada az-Zabidiyy, narrated by a continuous chain from himself back to Imam Zayn al-Abidin Ali Ibn al-Husayn Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Talib, (who was among the first of as-Salaf, who earned the title of as-Sajjad, i.e., the one who prays a lot), that Zayn al-Abidin said in his treatise as-Sahifah as-Sajjadiyyah about Allah: which means:

"O Allah, You are clear of all imperfection. You are Allah, the One Who no place contains You." He also said which means: "O Allah, You are clear of all imperfection. You are Allah, the One Who is not in boundaries."

In the explanation of al-Bukhariyy in the chapter on Al-Jihad, Hafidh Ibn Hajar said:

"The fact that the two directions above and below are impossible to be attributes of Allah, does not necessitate that Allah would not be attributed with aboveness, because attributing aboveness to Allah is a matter of status and the impossibility lies in it being physical."

The scholar Imam Zayn ad-Din Ibn Nujaym, in his book Al-Bahr arRa'iq, on page 129 said:

"Whoever says it is possible that Allah would do a doing in which there is no wisdom commits blasphemy, and also he commits blasphemy by affirming a place to Allah, the Exalted."

Imam Muhammad Ibn Hibah al-Makkiyy said, in his book Hada'iq al-Fusul wa Jawahir al-Uqul (Jawahir al-uqul is also known as Al-Aqidat-as-Salahiyyah because he gave it as a gift to Sultan Salah-ad-Din al-Ayyubiyy who ordered that this book be taught to the children in schools and broadcast from the top of minarets)

"Allah existed eternally and there was no place, and the judgment about His existence now is that He is as He was, i.e., without a place."

The great true Salafi, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq said:

"He who claims that Allah is in something or on something or from something, commits ash-shirk. Because if He was in something, He would be contained, and if He was on something, He would be carried, and if He was from something, He would be a creature."

Shaykh Abdul-Ghaniy an-Nabulsiy said:

"He who believes that Allah fills the heavens and earth or that He is a body sitting above al-arsh (ceiling of Paradise; throne) is a kafir."

Imam Abul-Qasim Ali Ibnul-Hasan Ibn Hibatillah Ibn Asakir said in his Aqidah:

"Allah existed before the creation. He does not have a before or an after, an above or a below, a right or a left, an in front of or a behind, a whole or a part. It must not be said when was He, where was He, or how was He. He exists without a place."

Imam Abu Sulayman al-Khattabiyy said:

"What is obligatory upon us and upon every Muslim to know is that our Lord has no shape or form, because the shape has a 'how' and 'how' does not apply to Allah or His Attributes."

So, know beyond doubt that the question 'how' does not apply to Allah, because this is a question about shapes, bodies, places, depths and dimensions; Allah is clear of all of that. Also be firm that it is invalid to say about Allah "... but we do not know how", because in essence, it falsely indicates that Allah has a color, shape, dimensions, body, place, but one is ignorant of the 'how' of it.

Imam Ghazali said:

"Allah, the Exalted, existed eternally and there was no place. He is not a body, jawhar (atom), or property, and He is not on a place or in a place."

All of these sayings show that attributing the sensuous physical aboveness and place to Allah is contrary to the Qur'an, the Hadith, the Ijma (unanimous belief/decision of scholars and Muslims), and the intellectual proof. The intellectual proof that Allah exists without a place lies in the fact that the one who is in a place would have an area, and the one who has an area is in need of it, and the one who needs others is not God. Moreover, as the mind determines that Allah existed without a place before creating places, the mind determines that after Allah created the places He still exists without a place.

The scholars like Imam Ahmad arRifai, determined that lifting the hands and the faces towards the sky when performing du'a (supplication) is because the heavens are the qiblah of du'a just as the Ka'bah is the qiblah of Salaat. From the heavens, the mercies and blessings of Allah descend.

Hence, it is clear for the one who seeks the truth that the saying that Allah exists without a place is what complies with the Qur'an, the Hadith, the Ijma, and the criteria of the sound intellect. Be firm and certain that before creating places, Allah Who created everything (places and others), existed without a place, and after creating places, He still exists without a place.

Since we have determined that the creed of the Muslims is that Allah exists without a place and that the question 'how' does not apply to Allah, it is clear to us that al-arsh (the throne) which is the biggest of the creations of Allah and the ceiling of Paradise, is not a place for Allah, the Exalted.

Imam Abu Hanifah said in his book, al-Wasiyyah:

".. and He is the Preserver of al-arsh and other than al-arsh, without needing it, for had He been in need, He would not have the power to create the world and to manage and preserve it. Moreover, had He been in a place needing to sit and rest, before creating al-arsh, where was Allah?"

That is, the question 'where was Allah' would have applied to Him, which is impossible. Also, in his book, Al-Fiqh al-Absat, Imam Abu Hanifah said:

"Allah existed eternally and there was no place; He existed before creating the creation. He existed and there was not a place, a creation or a thing; and He is the Creator of everything. He who says 'I do not know if my Lord is in the heavens or on the earth,' is a kafir. Also is a kafir whoever says that 'He is on al-arsh, and I do not know whether al-arsh is in the heaven or on the earth'."

Consequently, the great True Salafi Scholar Imam Ahmad declared a kafir whomever says these last two phrases because they contain attributing a direction, boundary, and place to Allah. Everything which has a direction and boundary is by necessity in need of a Creator. Thus it is not the intention of Imam Abu Hanifah to prove that the heaven and al-[^]arsh are places for Allah, as those who liken Allah to the creation claim. This is by virtue of the aforementioned saying of the Imam: "Had He been in a place needing to sit and rest, then before creating al-arsh where was Allah?", which is clear in negating that Allah has a direction or a place.

In his book, Ihya'ul Ulum ad-Din, Imam al-Ghazali said:

"... places do not contain Him, nor do the directions, earth, or heavens. He is attributed with an istiwa' over al-arsh as He said in the Qur'an--with the meaning that He willed--and not as what people may delude. It is an istiwa' which is clear of touching, resting, holding, moving and containment. Al-arsh does not carry Him, but rather al-arsh and those that carry al-arsh are all carried by Allah with His Power and are subjugated to Him. He is above al-arsh and above the heavens and above everything--in status-- an aboveness that does not give Him proximity to al-arsh or the heavens as it does not give Him farness from earth. He is higher in status than everything: higher in status than al-arsh and the heavens, as He is higher in status than earth and the rest of the creation."

Shaykh Abdul-Ghaniyy an-Nabulsiyy said:

"He who believes that Allah filled the heavens and earth or that He is a body sitting above al-arsh, is a kafir."

Ayah 93 of Surat Maryam means:

"All those in the heavens and earth must come to Allah as a slave."

In his Tafsir (book of explaining or commentary of the Qur'an), Imam ar-Razi said:

"... and since it is affirmed by this ayah that everything that existed in the heavens and earth is a slave to Allah, and since it is obligatory that Allah is clear of being a slave, thus He is clear of being in a place or direction, or on al-[^]arsh or al-kursiyy."

Hence Surat Taha, ayah 5, in the Qur'an "Ar-RaHmanu alal-Arsh-istawa" clearly does not mean that Allah sits on the throne or that Allah is firmly established on the throne. In the Arabic language, the word istawa has fifteen (15) different meanings, among of which are to sit, to subjugate, to protect, to conquer, and to preserve. Based on what we have covered so far it is clear that it is blasphemous to apply the meaning 'to sit' to Allah. However the terms to preserve and to subjugate are in compliance with the Religion and the language. And those so-called translations of al-Quran that referred to the term "Istawa" to "Sits" or "Sat" or "Established himself firmly on the throne" contradict Arabic rules, and Islamic bases. Bewarned from such translations and such attribues, Allah is almighty clear from the sitting, movement, size, shape, form or change. Allah is great. In Conclusion to what has been mentioned, Allah's attributes are perfect. The scholars of Islam said that it is obligatory upon every mukallaf (Accountable preson) to know Attributes of Allah, among which 13 attributes that have been mentioned repeatedly in al-Quran. Allah is attributed with: Existence, Oneness, Eternity, Everlastingness, Non-neediness of others, Power, Will, Knowledge, Hearing, Sight, Life, Speech, and Non-resemblance to the creation.

Allah Ta'ala said:

"Laysa Kamithlihi Shay'un-Wahuwas-Sami ul-Basir"

which means: "Absolutely nothing resembles Allah, and He is attributed with hearing and sight".

And Allah Ta'ala knows best.