

## Al-Jahm bin Ṣafwān

The sect known as the Jahmiyyah is named after al-Jahm bin Ṣafwān,<sup>213</sup> even though al-Ja'd was the first to speak with much of their doctrines. He was from the land of Khurasān, originating from Balkh. He moved from there to Samarqand, then to Tirmidh, then to Kūfah, finally returning to Khurasān. Whilst in Kūfah he met his shaykh, al-Ja'd bin Dirham.

Imām al-Bukhārī said:

Qutaybah bin Sa'īd said: It has reached me that Jahm used to take kalām from al-Ja'd bin Dirham.<sup>214</sup>

Al-Jahm was not known for seeking knowledge, despite the period in which he lived being one in which the inherited knowledge of the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) was present amongst the senior Tabi'īn (Successors). He preferred 'ilm al-kalām, and philosophy over the knowledge of ḥadīth and sunnah.

He became known only when he manifested his repugnant doctrines and after he started fighting in rebellion against the Banī Umayyah, alongside al-Ḥārith bin Surayj.<sup>215</sup> Al-Jahm used to be judge, writer and orator for al-Ḥārith. In one of the battles between al-Ḥārith and Nasr bin Sayyār, the amīr of Khurāsān, al-Ḥārith was defeated and al-Jahm was taken captive and brought to Salam al-Aḥwaz, one of the ministers of Nasr bin Sayyār. Al-Jahm said to al-Aḥwaz, "I have assurance of protection from your father," so Salam said to him:

"It is not his right to offer you protection, and if he did, I would not grant you it, and even if stars filled these sheets, and 'Isā ibn Maryam descended, you still would not have survived. By Allāh, if you were in my stomach, I would have torn it open until I killed you," then he ordered him killed.<sup>216</sup>

---

<sup>213</sup> Biographical information for al-Jahm bin Safwān can be found in *Tarīkh at-Tabarī* (9/66-69), *al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah* (10/26-27), *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* (1/338), *al-Farq Bayn al-Firaq* (p. 211), *al-Milal wan-Nihal* (11/86-87), *Mizān al-I'tidāl* (1/426).

<sup>214</sup> *Khalq Afāl al-'Ibād* (Mu'assasah al-Risālah, 1990) p. 7.

<sup>215</sup> *Al-Farq Bayn al-Firaq* of al-Baghdādī (p.212).

<sup>216</sup> *Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah* (10/28) and *Lisān al-Mizān* (2/142).