

Abū Bakr al-Bayhaqī on the Sifāt Khabariyyah

Abū Bakr al-Bayhaqī (d. 458H) wrote in *al-I'tiqād*:⁸⁸¹

Chapter: A Mention of the Verses and Narrations Reported Concerning the Affirmation of the Attribute of Face, Two Hands and Eye. These attributes, the way to their affirmation is through revealed text (as-sam'). So we affirm them due to the truthful report having come regarding them, and we do not specify how they are⁸⁸². Allāh, the Blessed and Exalted said, "And the face of your Lord shall remain, full of majesty and honour" (55:27). So he annexed the face to the essence (dhāt), and he annexed the quality (na't) to the face, so He said, (ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ) "full of majesty and honour (meaning the face)". If the mention of "face" had been a relative clause, it would not have been an attribute for the essence, and He would have said (ذِي الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ), "full of majesty and honour (meaning His essence)", but since He said (ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ), we know that the quality (of possessing majesty and honour) is for the face which is an attribute of the essence.

And Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic said,

﴿مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإِيْدِي﴾

What prevented you from prostrating to he who I have created with (bi) my own two hands? (38:75)

With the tashdīd (doubling) of the (letter) yā denoting annexation (iḍāfah), and this establishes the dual form (for the word hand). And in this there is a prohibition of carrying it to mean ni'mah (favour) or qudrah (power) because there is not a correct meaning in the specification of duality in the favours of Allāh nor in His power, because His favours are more numerous than that they can be enumerated. Also because Ādam (alaihi salaam) would be no longer be specified and favoured over Iblīs. And carrying it to mean qudrah (power) or upon ni'mah (favour) removes the meaning of preference because both of them (Ādam and Iblīs) share in [being created through] both (Allāh's power and favour). And nor it is

⁸⁸¹ Al-I'tiqād (tahqīq, Aḥmad bin Ibrāhīm Abū al- 'Aynayn, Dar al-Faḍīlah, 1st Edition, 1999) pp.89-92.

⁸⁸² This is in perfect agreement with the way of the Salaf and likewise that of the early Kullābī Ash'arīs, affirmation without takyīf.