

The Incorrect Types of Analogy Used by the Mutakallimīn Regarding Allāh's Attributes

The Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah (and the later Ash'arīs) fell into error by making three three types of analogy for Allāh.

The first is *qiyās al-ghā'ib 'alā al-shāhid*, making an analogy for what which is unseen with the seen. Thus, they said that face is anything but a jism (body), and hand is anything but a limb, and likewise with *istiwā'* and *nuzūl*, these are nothing but movements of bodies, with the vacation of one space and occupation of another, and that these things must be the same for Allāh, the Most High, because what we cannot see and observe, from what we have been informed of, must follow the same way and reality as that which we see and observe. So they analogised for Allāh based upon what is observed and seen.

The second is *qiyās al-tamthīl*, making an analogy between two things on account of them sharing a universal meaning, and transferring the judgement of one of them upon the other. So the Mu'tazilah, such as al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār said that if Allāh had knowledge, it must be like our knowledge¹⁵³⁹, and likewise the saying of al-Rāzī, that if Allāh is described with al-'Uluww and al-Istiwā', He must be like all other things that occupy space if described with 'uluww and istiwā'.¹⁵⁴⁰ This is like saying that life (ḥayāt) as we know it requires a head, and a heart, and limbs, and internal organs, and vessels and so on. So if Allāh is also described with life (ḥayāt), then He must be composed of parts and organs. So this is analogy is prohibited for Allāh, and this is what the Mutakallimīn fall into when they deny Allāh's attributes. They have already made the analogy in their minds, and then they proceed to expel the repugnance of their own tamthīl by showing rejection against the attributes.

What indicates the falsehood of this approach is that it can be said: Everything that is a body (*jism*) will perish. Then it can be said that the inhabitants of Paradise all have bodies (*ajsām*). Therefore, through *qiyās al-tamthīl*, it can be said that the inhabitants of Paradise will perish. And this is falsehood, because the bodies of the people in Paradise are not like the bodies in this life. So when *qiyās al-tamthīl* is futile even when

¹⁵³⁹ See *Sharh al-Uṣūl al-Khamsah*, p. 201.

¹⁵⁴⁰ So he treated al-'uluww and al-istiwā' as being equal to spatial occupation. Refer to his book *Asās al-Taqdīs* (Maktabah al-Azhariyyah, Cairo, 1986) p. 33.

applied to created beings as in this particular example, then it is even greater falsehood that it be applied to Allāh, the Sublime and Exalted. And this is the reality of what the Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah fall into when they embark upon rejection of the attributes which don't agree with their intellects. Their rejection is preceded by false analogy and an evil thought concerning Allāh, the Exalted.

And the third type, *qiyās al-shumūl*, analogy through inclusion where every individual entity is given the same judgement. It is illustrated by their saying that movement (ḥarakah) and rest (sukūn) is admissible for everything that is said to be in direction, and everything that admits to movement and rest is originated, so if Allāh was said to be in a direction, then through analogy by inclusion, He too would be originated, thus it is established that He cannot be in a direction.¹⁵⁴¹ Hence, they included Allāh, through His attributes of 'uluww and istiwā', amongst those things in the creation about which it is said that if they are in a direction, they admit to movement and rest.¹⁵⁴²

To illustrate with another example, we can say that knowledge is acquired through much study and experience. Zayd is a scholar with knowledge. Therefore, through analogy by inclusion, Zayd acquired knowledge through much study and experience. However, if we apply this to Allāh, who is also 'Ālim (knowing), then did Allāh acquire knowledge through study? This is falsehood and impossible¹⁵⁴³ and it

¹⁵⁴¹ Refer to the book of Yūsuf al-Mukalātī (d. 1237H) *Lubāb al-'Uqūl*, (taḥqīq, Dr. Fawqiyah Hussain Maḥmūd, Dār al-Anṣār, Egypt, 1st edition, 1977), p. 2/181 where he presents this argument for the negation of Allāh's 'uluww.

¹⁵⁴² In other words, this type of analogy requires that Allāh be included and made equal in judgement with the genus of the things with which the analogy is made.

¹⁵⁴³ This is because Allāh's knowledge is unlike our knowledge and a valid analogy can only be made where the realities of things are clearly defined. And since defining (taḥdīd) Allāh's attributes is impossible, then such analogies for Him are invalid. The same applies to His attributes such as face, hands, eyes, and so on. And within this is an invalidation of the doctrine of the Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazilah and later Ash'ariyyah of the presumption of tashbīh for the revealed texts. To illustrate with another example, we can say that humans have two hands. But a dog and a squirrel also have two hands. So through analogy by inclusion, *qiyās al-shumūl*, we arrive at the result that the dog and squirrel are human, which is clearly an error because we did not agree upon definitions before making the analogy. And since definition (taḥdīd) for Allāh and His Attributes is impossible - because definition requires knowledge of the realities, either through direct observation, or through a report, and

shows the futility of applying such analogies to Āllah for Allāh is not analogised with the creation in His essence, nor His attributes, nor His actions.

The speech of the Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah regarding Allāh, the Exalted, is based upon these types of analogies, and it is the reason why they make the presumption of tashbīh in whatever Allāh affirmed for Himself in the revealed texts. The tashbīh originated in their hearts, and when their hearts felt its repugnance they were forced into ta'ṭīl, either through the route of ta'wīl, or through tafwīḍ.

both of these are denied for Allāh and His attributes - then such analogies are impossible, but this is what the Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazilah and Ash'ariyyah fall into, and it is the foundation of their presumption that the revealed texts contain tashbīh and tajsīm.