

Concerning the Affirmation and Negation of *al-Hadd*

Also from the talbīs of the Jahmiyyah is their deceiving the people regarding the words *ḥadd*, and *taḥdīd*, and the manner in which they have been used by the Scholars in various contexts and situations - all in order to support their Jahmite creed of negating their is a Lord above the Throne.

The word *ḥadd* means: The [defining] separator (al-ḥājiz) between two things that distinguishes between them so that one of them does not mix (*yakhtaliṭ*) into the other, or so that one of them does not extend into the other. And it is taken from *ḥadda ash-shay'* 'an *ghayrihī*, *yaḥudduhū ḥaddan*, *idhaa mayyazahū*, meaning he demarcated a thing from what is besides it, he demarcates it with a demarcation, when he distinguished it (from what is besides it).¹³⁸⁵ And Shaykh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, "*Al-Ḥadd* is that by which a thing is distinguished from what is besides it in terms of its *sifah* (description, quality) and *qadr* (existent reality)."¹³⁸⁶

The Jahmiyyah (and Mu'tazilah) who arose after 100H began to deny Allāh's 'uluww and claim Allāh is in all things and is here upon the Earth, in the filth, in the lavatories, in the bellies of men, cattle, dogs and swine, and in the most repugnant of places.

The Affirmation of al-Ḥadd

Then the likes of Ayub al-Sakhtiyānī (d. 131H)¹³⁸⁷, and al-Awzā'ī (d. 157H), Hammād bin Zayd (d. 179H), 'Abd Allāh bin al-Mubārak (d.

¹³⁸⁵ This is the definition as found in *al-Sihāh* of al-Jawharī (2/462), and *Lisān al-'Arab* (3/140). Refer also to *Tahdhīb al-Lughah* of al-Azharī under the entry of *ḥadd*, and al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīt of al-Fayrozābādī and Tāj al-'Arūs of al-Zubaydī under the entry of *al-ḥadd*.

¹³⁸⁶ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Naqd Ta'sīs al-Jahmiyyah* (1/443), the two volume print of *Bayān Talbīs al-Jahmiyyah*.

¹³⁸⁷ And Abū al-Qasim Sulaymān bin Ahmad at-Tabarānī brings in *Kitāb us-Sunnah*, as does al-Dhahabi in *al-Uluww* from al-'Abbās bin Fudayl al-Asfātī from Sulaymān bin Harb who said: I heard Hammād bin Zayd (b. 98H, d. 179H) (saying): I heard Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī (d. 131H), the Mu'tazilah were mentioned, so he said: "The central axis of the Mu'tazilah is that they want to say there is nothing above the heaven." Al-Dhahabī said: "This isnād is like the sun in its clarity and like a pillar in its affirmation from the head and scholar of the people of Basrah (i.e. Hammād bin Zayd)."

181H), 'Abbād bin al'Awwām (d. 186H), Jarīr ad-Dabbī (d. 188H)¹³⁸⁸ recognized that the Jahmites were attempting to deny there is a deity above the heaven and a Lord above the Throne, but in an indirect way from the outset. So a great war commenced (which has never ceased to rage until this day of ours). This war was between the followers of the revealed Books and the sent Messengers and between the followers of the language of the Greeks, Jews, Sabean Harranians, such as al-Ja'd bin Dirham, al-Jahm bin Safwān and others who considered their intellects to be decisive and definitive over the revealed texts. In the course of this war, the great Imāms of this period, such as 'Abd Allāh bin al-Mubārak (and after him, Ishāq bin Rāhūyah, Imām Ahmad and Imām ad-Dārimī), began to state that Allāh is above His Throne, with a *hadd*. Al-Khallāl reports with his isnād from Muhammad bin Ibrāhīm al-Qaysī, who said:

I said to Ahmad bin Hanbal, 'It is narrated about Ibn al-Mubārak that it was said to him, 'How do we know our Lord?' and he replied, 'Above (fi) the seventh heaven, upon His Throne with a demarcation (*bi haddin*)'. So Ahmad said, 'This is how it is with us'.¹³⁸⁹

So 'Abd Allāh bin al-Mubārak, clarified through the affirmation of this term that Allāh is not in union with this creation, nor is He merged with it, rather He is separate and distinct from it. And whoever does not affirm this particular meaning, whether the word *hadd* is used to express it or not, then he is certainly in the ranks of the Jahmites. The Salaf used expressions in their appropriate contexts, with their correct and true meanings according to the language of the Arabs. And the

¹³⁸⁸ See all of their statements in this regard which are in an earlier section.

¹³⁸⁹ Ad-Dārimī reported it in *al-Radd 'alal-Marīsī* (p.34) and in *al-Radd 'alal-Jahmiyyah* (162) and 'Abd Allāh bin Ahmad in *al-Sunnah* (1/175) and al-Bayhaqī in *al-Asmā' wal-Sifāt* (p.427) from the route of 'Alī bin al-Hasan bin Shaqīq who said, "I asked 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak, I said, 'How do we know our Lord?' He replied, 'Above (fi) the seventh heaven, upon His Throne.' I said, 'But the Jahmiyyah say He is like this!' He replied, 'We do not say as the Jahmiyyah say, we say He is as He is.' I said, 'With a limit (*bi haddin*)?' He replied, 'Yes, by Allaah, with a limit (*bi haddin*).'" And Imām al-Dhahabī said in *al-'Uluww*, "This is saheeh (authentic) from Ibn al-Mubārak and Ahmad, may Allāh be pleased with him." And Shaikh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said in *al-Hamawiyyah* (5/184 of Majmū' ul-Fatāwā), "This is well-known from Ibn al-Mubārak, established from him from more than one aspect and it is also affirmed from Ahmad bin Hanbal, Ishāq bin Rāhūyah and from more than one of the Imāms."

usage of the word *hadd* here is not the affirmation of an attribute called *al-hadd*, just like there are attributes of hearing (*as-sam'*), seeing (*al-basr*), face (*al-wajh*) hand (*al-yad*) and the likes, but rather an indication that there is between that which is created and uncreated a *hadd* that makes one distinct and separate from the other. And Shaykh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah mocked the intelligence of the one who claimed that Allāh has an attribute called *al-hadd*! He said:

These words that he mentioned¹³⁹⁰ would be applicable if they had said, 'Allāh has an attribute of *al-hadd*', just as this refuter has suspected them of saying. But no one has ever said this, and no sensible person says this. There are no reality to these words, since there is not amongst the attributes by which He is described, any specific attribute which is called *al-hadd* - as He is described with *al-yad* (hand) or *al-'ilm* (knowledge) - for (*al-hadd*) is that by which a thing is distinguished from what is besides it in terms of its description (*sifah*) and existent reality (*qadr*), as is well known regarding the *hadd* for the definition of things. So it is said, 'the *hadd* (definition) of man' and 'the *hadd* (definition) of such and such' and this refers to the attributes that distinguish something (from others)...¹³⁹¹

And Ibn Taymiyyah explained the angle from which Imaam Ibn al-Mubārak used this phrase:

And when the Jahmiyyah used to speak with such words whose meanings comprise the sense that the Creator is not distinguished (separate) from the creation, then they deny His attributes by which He is distinguished, and they deny his existent reality (*qadr*) such that when the Mu'tazilah come to know that He is al-Hayy (Ever-Living), al-'Alīm (All-Knowing), al-Qadīr (All-Powerful), they say, 'We already know His reality (*haqīqah*) and His quiddity (*māhiyah*)', and they say, 'He is not separate and distinguished (*bā'in*) from those besides Him'. In fact, either they should describe Him with the attribute of non-existence so that they say, 'He is neither inside the world, not outside it and nor this and nor that', or they should make Him merged with the created things or with the existence of the created things.

¹³⁹⁰ Ibn Taymiyyah is addressing the speech of al Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 388H), and author of *al-Ghunyah 'anil-Kalām wa Ahlihī* (The Dispensation of Kalām and Its People).

¹³⁹¹ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Naqḍ Ta'sīs al-Jahmiyyah* (1/442-443) and in the ten volume edition (2006) 3/42 onwards.

So Ibn al-Mubārak explained that the Lord, free from all imperfections and the Most High, is upon His Throne, distinct from His creation, separate from them and he mentioned *al-hadd* because the Jahmiyyah used to say, 'He has no *hadd*', but whatever has no *hadd* is not separate and distinct from the creation and cannot be above the world because all of this is necessitated by (the meaning of) *al-hadd*.

So when they asked Amīr ul-Mu'minīn 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak, 'How should we know Him?', he said, 'That He is above His heavens, upon His Throne, separate and distinct from His creation', then they mentioned the imperative of that which the Jahmiyyah denied, and by their denial of it, they also deny what it requires and necessitates - the (very) existence of He who is above the Throne, the Sublime, and His distinction and separation from the creation, so they said to him, 'With a demarcation (*bi haddin*)', and he said, 'With a demarcation'. And this is something which is understood by everyone who knows what difference there is between the saying of the believers of Ahl us-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah and the heretical Jahmites.¹³⁹²

And Ibn Abil-'Izz al-Ḥanafī wrote:

And it is known that *al-hadd* is said regarding what a thing is separated from and distinguished by from what is besides it. And Allāh, the Exalted is not fused with [any of] His creation, and nor is His existence established with them, rather He is al-Qayyūm (Self-Sustaining), *al-qā'imū bi nafsihī* (established by His own self), one who sustains what is besides Him. Thus, it is not permitted that there should be any dispute regarding *al-hadd* with this meaning at all, since there is nothing behind its negation, except a negation of the existence of the Lord, and a negation of His reality.¹³⁹³

This was from the angle of refuting the Jahmites and affirming that Allāh is separate and distinct from the creation.

The Negation of al-Ḥadd and Taḥdīd

However, the Salaf also negated the word *ḥadd*, and this also has its place, and is in a sense other than the sense discussed above. And this is narrated from Imām Ahmad in the following narrations:

¹³⁹² Ibid, (1/443 onwards).

¹³⁹³ Sharḥ al-'Aqīdah al-Taḥāwīyyah (taḥqīq, al-Turkī and Arna'ūt), p. 263.

Hanbal said: I said to Abū 'Abd Allāh: What is the meaning of "**And He is with you...**", "**There is no secret counsel of three, except that He is the fourth...**"? He said: "His knowledge encompasses everything, and our Lord is above the Throne, without a *hadd* (definition) or *sifah* (description)."¹³⁹⁴

And in the Risālah of al-Istikhrī, Imām Ahmad said:

And Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic is above His Throne, and the Throne has carriers which carry it and Allāh the Mighty and Majestic is above His Throne, there is no *hadd* for Him, and Allāh knows best of his own *hadd*.¹³⁹⁵

And the negation of *hadd* here is from the angle of *ihaatah* (encompassment) in knowledge and *idraak* (comprehension), and being able to define His reality, and this is an agreed upon matter between Ahl us-Sunnah that Allāh is not able to be encompassed or comprehended, for the creation is incapable of that. Because of this they are not able to define the Creator, or give an estimation for Him, or to reach the reality of His description through speech and words. Thus, the negation of *hadd* with this meaning is sound and correct. And thus no one is able to make *tahdīd* of Allāh, the Most High or His Attributes, and this means to describe and define the true reality, exactly as it is. This is not possible for the creation, for they do not possess that knowledge, nor can they encompass this knowledge with respect to Allāh, the Exalted. And this is what is meant by those from Ahl us-Sunnah who deny *hadd*, *hudūd*, *tahdīd*, they mean it in this sense, with the meaning of *ta'rif* (definition). And this is the meaning of the statement of Imām Ahmad, "without a *hadd* (definition) or *sifah* (description)", he means that they are not able to define His reality, or describe Him precisely and exactly how He is, unless it is with what He Himself has revealed, but anything beyond that is impossible.

Shaykh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah wrote:

And his (Ahmad's) saying, "without a *hadd* (definition) or *sifah* (description)", he negated the creation encompassing Him in

¹³⁹⁴ Reported by al-Lālikā'ī (3/402), Ibn Qudāmah in *Sifat al-'Uluww* (p. 116), al-Dhahabī in *al-'Uluww* (p. 130), Ibn Taymiyyah in *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (5/496), Ibn al-Qayyim in *Ijtimā' Juyūsh al-Islāmiyyah*, from al-Lālikā'ī.

¹³⁹⁵ *Tabaqāt al-Hanābilah* of Ibn Abī Ya'lā (published 1419H, Riyādh) 1/61.

knowledge, and that they are able to define Him or describe Him with (the reality) that He is upon, except by what He informed about Himself in order to make clear that the intellects of the creation cannot encompass His attributes, as has been said by ash-Shāfi'ī, in the opening sermon of *al-Risālah*, "All praise is due to the One who is as He has described Himself, and above what His creation describe Him with." For this reason Ahmad said, "The eyes cannot encompass Him with a *hadd* or with a *ghāyah*", so He denied that Allāh can be encompassed with a *hadd* or *ghāyah*.¹³⁹⁶

And he also said:

The people of intelligence are more incapable of defining Him (*yahuddūhu*), or specifying (*yukayyifūhu*) [His reality] than they are of defining the soul or specifying [its reality].¹³⁹⁷

In further explanation of this matter, the term *hadd* is used to refer to either a) the reality (*haqīqah*) of a thing in itself, or b) the existence (of a thing) in the mind or outward reality. And all of this cannot be attained with respect to Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, for none knows the reality of His existence, and thus it is impossible to conceive in the mind, and thus, impossible to define in words and expressions.¹³⁹⁸

And Ibn Abil-'Izz al-Ḥanafī wrote:

As for al-ḥadd with the meaning of knowledge (al-'ilm) and speech (al-qawl), which is that the slaves [try to] define Him¹³⁹⁹, this is negated without dispute between Ahl al-Sunnah.¹⁴⁰⁰

From what has preceded there is no contradiction between the affirmation and negation that is found amongst the Imāms of the Salaf in relation to the term *al-hadd*. Today's Jahmites who conceal themselves under the cloak of al-Ash'ariyyah, employ those statements of Imām Ahmad in which he negates *al-hadd*, whilst knowing full well

¹³⁹⁶ *Dar at-Ta'ārud al-'Aql wal-Naql*, (2/33).

¹³⁹⁷ *At-Tadmuriyyah* (p. 179). Just like we are incapable of defining the reality of the soul, even though its existence is true and real, then likewise we are unable to define Allāh's being above His Throne, even though this is firmly established, true and real.

¹³⁹⁸ See *Dar at-Ta'ārud al-'Aql wal-Naql*, (2/30-32).

¹³⁹⁹ And what is meant is that the slaves try to define Him with something above and beyond what He revealed to them, and this is not possible.

¹⁴⁰⁰ Sharḥ al-'Aqīdah al-Taḥāwiyyah (taḥqīq, al-Turkī and Arna'ūt), p. 263.

that in complete opposition to them, Imām Ahmad affirms Allāh to be above the Throne, with His essence, separate and distinct from the creation. Imām Ahmad's negation of *hadd* for Allāh follows on from affirmation of His 'Uluww over His creation and above His Throne. And what Imām Ahmad means is that the ability to conceive in the mind or define the reality of how Allāh exists above His Throne is denied, thus, there is no *hadd* or *sifah* in that regard. Thus it is not possible for them to make use of these statements of Imām Ahmad, unless they accept the underlying creed which these statements emanate from and to which they relate to, which is the affirmation of Allāh's 'uluww with His essence, over His Throne, separate and distinct from His creation. However, integrity and truthfulness was never a trait of the Jahmites of old, there is no great reason why it should be expected of their descendants.

Some of the ignorant Jahmiyyah from Philadelphia, US, tried to excuse and explain away Ibn al-Mubārak's usage of this term as being a necessity of the time against the Jahmites¹⁴⁰¹ and simply an instance of the permitted kalām, and they mean by this deception, to justify their particular 'ilm al-kalām, which is the use of the language of Aristotle bin Nicomachus (d. 322BC) pertaining to *jawāhir* (bodies) and *a'rād* (incidental, non-permanent attributes) to devise a corrupt rational proof for demonstrating the universe is created, as a result of which they, to varying degrees, denied Allāh's Names, Attributes and Actions, and for which the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah pioneered ta'wil, and the later Ash'arites, tafwīd, as a means of addressing those problematic revealed texts (āyāt and āhādīth), that clashed with their proof.

And this is from the greatest of deception which is attempted by those whose hearts have drunk bātil, are nourished by it and do not understand the meaning of academic and intellectual honesty. For all of the Salaf condemned not the kalām (discussion, speech, discourse) which is the use of Sharīah evidences and sound reason that does not clash with revelation to establish the truth, but the kalām that is the

¹⁴⁰¹ This was after they attacked Ibn Taymiyyah claiming that he innovated and used these terms such as "*bi haddin*". Then when the *hujjah* (proof) was established upon them regarding the origin of these phrases, and they were refuted and exposed and it was demonstrated that those who spoke of it first were the likes of Ibn al-Mubārak, along with Imām Ahmad and Ishāq bin Rāhūyah, then they issued a document titled, "*Subduing the Subduer*" in which they made plain their academic dishonesty and intellectual bankruptcy. Refer to Asharis.Com for details.

use of the proof of hudūth al-ajsām requiring the use of the terms *ajsām*, *jawāhir* and *a'rād*, and what is similar to them which the Mutakallimūn filled their books with, in particular the Mu'tazilah and the Ash'ariyyah. Ibn al-Mubārak is exonerated and free and innocent of that blameworthy kalām, rather he was addressing the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah who used this condemned kalām to arrive at their denial of Allāh's 'uluww. Ibn al-Mubārak's use of this word *al-hadd* is simply representative of a meaning that is found in the Qur'ān by inclusion (*taḍammun*) or through binding necessity (*iltizām*) and is simply an expression of the Qur'ānic truth.

In addition to this, the underlying reason behind Imam 'Abd Allāh bin al-Mūbarak's usage of the phrase *bi haddin* never disappeared for there has never ceased to remain, right until this day of ours, hordes of Jahmites upon the disbelief (*kufr*) of claiming Allāh is in all things and in all places. From them are the Ittihādī and Hulūlī Sūfīs who claim divine union and indwelling for Allāh with His creation, lofty and exalted is He from that with a lofty exaltation.

For this reason, anyone who rejects the use of the term *al-hadd* in the same manner in which it has been reported from Ibn al-Mubārak and others against the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah, or who mocks the usage of this word in this context, then he is an opponent of the Salaf and of the early Kullābiyyah Ash'ariyyah who conveyed the same meaning but with a different expression. There is to be found in their words what is equivalent to the usage of Ibn al-Mubārak of *al-hadd*. For when they affirmed Allāh's 'uluww over the Throne, they stated (in refutation of the Karrāmiyyah Mujassimah), 'without touch, contact (*mumāssah*)', and by this, they intended the same meaning as Imām Ibn al-Mubārak in his use of the word *al-hadd*, save that they were simply addressing a different group of misguided strayers. For the saying of Ibn al-Mubārak, "Above the seventh heaven, over His Throne with a *hadd*" is similar to the saying of Ibn Kullāb, al-Qalānisī, al-Bāqillānī and others that "Allāh is above His Throne, without contact, touch (*mumāssah*)."

This matter is another one where the intellectual confusion of today's Jahmiyyah posing as Ash'arites fall into. They utilize the sayings of the early Kullābiyyah Ash'ariyyah, "without contact, touch"¹⁴⁰² as part of

¹⁴⁰² A phrase whose meaning they fail to realise implies and necessitates that Allāh Himself is above His Throne, with His essence. The early Kullābiyyah Ash'ariyyah used this phrase to rebut the Karrāmiyyah who also affirmed

their polemics to deny Allāh Himself is above the Throne, and then they criticize the use of the word ḥadd, which was affirmed by Ibn al-Mubārak, Imām Aḥmad and Ishāq bin Rāhūyah in refutation of the Jahmiyyah.

Allāh is above His Throne, with His essence, but held Allāh is a jism (body) and entered into speech that entails a *kaifiyyah* for Allāh, such as saying that Allāh touches the Throne and the Throne becomes full of Him and the likes.