

الصِّفَاتُ الإِلَهِيَّةُ

The Divine Attributes

Part 2

The Righteous Salaf vs. the Mu'aṭṭilah
and Mujassimah From the Heretical Kalām Schools and
the Mushabbihah Amongst the Early Rāfiḍah



بَيِّنَاتُ

نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ
فِي تَأْسِيسِ بَدْعِهِمُ الْكَلَامِيَّةِ

فِي تَأْسِيسِ بَدْعِهِمُ الْكَلَامِيَّةِ

An Explanation of the Deception of the Jahmites in the
Founding of Their Innovated Kalām Theology

Being a refutation of the attempts of Zameel ur-Raḥmān (Deobandī
Mātūrīdī) to argue in favour of the kalām-based theology of the
Jahmites whilst disguising it as the way of the Salaf.

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المكتبة السلفية

Part 2. How the Righteous Salaf Perceived the Revealed Texts and How the Aristotelian and neo-Platonic Kalāmists (Jahmiyyah, Mu‘tazilah, Ash‘ariyyah, Mātūrīdiyyah) Perceive the Revealed Texts.

All praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds and may He make good mention of His Messenger [in the highest company] and grant him, his family and his companions safety. To proceed:

Before we start looking in detail at the methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah towards the Divine Attribute from the statements of the Salaf themselves it is vital for us to look at the stance and positioning of each faction. This is fundamental to separating the way of the Salaf from the way of the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs and to bringing out the fraudulent nature of their claim into broad daylight.

At the very beginning, we must understand *how* each party arrived at where they are positioned right now. This unveils and exposes the fraud, the sophisticated confidence trick very quickly and efficiently. We need to investigate through which series of door(s) each party entered the building. We have been ordered to enter buildings from the front, in the right and appropriate way - and this is in relation to etiquette, in relation to manners with people, **“And it is not righteousness to enter houses from the back, but righteousness is [in] one who fears Allah. And enter houses from their doors. And fear Allah that you may succeed”** (2:189) and there is also an etiquette, a manner with Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), in knowing Him, His names, attributes and actions. Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah, the Righteous Salaf enter the building through the front door, they follow the corridor straight to the center of the building into the main hall, and make it clear this is the way they entered. They are dressed in clean, spotless, white thobes. The Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs - as we shall prove without any doubt - entered from the back where the stables and barns are located. Covered in mud and filth, they entered through the back and made their way secretly - through lots of twists and turns - into the same hall whilst attempting to conceal which direction they came from. We therefore have two parties, each in the same hall and each claiming to follow the way of the

Salaf, but one party is very open and clear as to how they made their entrance into the hall. The other party is operating upon deception and concealment. Before each party utters even a single word about what they believe to be the way of the Salaf we want to know the crucial question of **how** they arrived at where they are. It is here that the Aristotelian, Neo-Platonic Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah and Mātūrīdīyyah work great deception by way of omission and concealment. They are not clear about what routes and steps they went through *before* they decided to characterize the way of the Salaf as being *tafwīd* of both the meaning (*ma'nā*) and the how (*kayf*) - namely that the texts of the attributes (on the basis of which the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah waged war against the Salaf) were to the Salaf as if but a collection of foreign words, devoid of meanings, and as if their battle against the Jahmiyyah was merely about whether these words were in the Qur'ān or not (and **not** about meanings) and that when the Salaf looked at the verses of the attributes, it was as if they were seeing this (Тој се искачи погоре од престолот) or this (Wenyukela ngenhla sobukhosi) or this (Ён падняўся вышэй за трон) or this (他登基以上) and without knowing the meaning of these words, they allegedly said, *don't ask how and don't explain these words and sentences which are meaningless in the first place!*¹

¹ It is impossible to specify a how (*kayf*) or an explanation (*tafsīr*) in the absence of meaning. This statement of the people of kalām is a revilement of the Book of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), the Messenger (عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), the Companions, the Successors and the Salaf and is rendered futile when one gathers and compiles all the statements of the Salaf in their entirety - both general and specific - and puts them alongside their detailed refutations of the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah through which it will become clear that their battle with the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah was about meanings, not mere words, and the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah accused the Salaf of *tajsīm* and *tashbīh* because of the meanings of the words in the texts they affirmed and not because of the words. For this reason, the earlier Jahmites like Bishr al-Marīsī (d. 218H) were much more intelligent than the later Jahmites like the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs - for the earlier ones knew full well that their war against the Imāms of the Salaf was not about wordings, but the meanings they conveyed. The issue of meaning (*ma'nā*), how (*kayf*) and reality (*ḥaqīqah*) will be addressed in this series in detail inshā' Allāh.

They do not reveal what series of steps they took before they settled on this claim. They - the Ahl al-Kalām as a whole - took many strategies before this. They distinguished between *mutawātir* and *āḥād* to provide a justification for rejecting the ḥadīths of the attributes. Then they invented the idea of *majāz* and *ḥaqīqah* and corrupted the Arabic language through it so as to support their heretical theology founded on Greek conceptual baggage. This would allow them to distort any *mutawātir* text that could not be rejected on the grounds that it was not definitively established. Hence, the attributes in the Qur’ān and likewise in the *mutawātir* Sunnah could be rejected through this route. This idea was invented by the Mu’tazilah such as **al-Jāḥiẓ** (d. 255H) and inherited by the Ash’arīs such as **‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī** (d. 471H). Then they spoke about the texts of the attributes as *mutashābihāt* (ambiguous verses).² The point here is that before these people settled upon the claim of *tawfīd*, they passed through a disgraceful history which they conceal from the people. This history reveals where they are really coming from when they raise this banner today of “the *tawfīd* of the Salaf” and what their actual objective is.

So this is what we are going to elaborate upon and highlight in this paper inshā’Allāh, how each party got to where they are now. Once this is clearly understood and historical fact and reality is put on the table where the Ash’arīs and Mātūrīdīs hate for it to be seen, we can then move into looking in detail at the actual methodology of the Salaf towards the Divine Attributes by Allāh’s permission.

² None of the Salaf treated the verses of the attributes as being from the *mutashābihāt* whose meanings no one knows but Allāh alone. This is a *bid’ah* invented by the Ahl al-Kalām as another mechanism by which to fight the Imāms of the Salaf.

Two Routes to Knowledge

It is crucial to understand the following: There are two (conflicting) ways taken to acquire knowledge in this topic. **The first** is through the revealed Books and sent Messengers and the intellect (‘aql) is merely a faculty which is used to grasp and follow what comes through the Books and Messengers. As long as it is used correctly, it will never, ever clash with the revealed Books. The intellect has limits, it is unable to comprehend certain realities, the realities of the unseen. Hence, it is from intellect itself to allow revelation to guide and direct the intellect. It clashes with sound intellect itself to claim revelation does not provide guidance in this topic and to make it subservient to the intellect, a captive to it. **The second** is the way of the atheist Philosophers who claim that intellect (‘aql) is the primary starting point and is the definitive source of knowledge. With this intellect they study, analyze and classify what they call the “natural world” and make conjectures about the universe and its origins. They consider the intellect to be definitive (*qaṭ‘iyy*) in its indication (*dalālah*), meaning that certain knowledge lies in what is arrived at through the intellect, through observation and deduction. These philosophers do not believe in creation, resurrection or revelation.

The Salafīs are upon the first route of knowledge. The Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs are upon the second route of knowledge, they are followers of *the approach* of the Philosophers and by taking this approach they were forced to undermine the revelation and declare it to amount to speculative knowledge only and to comprise expressions of *tajsīm* and *kufr* appropriate only for the dumb commoners who are not intelligent enough to fathom the true knowledge - which can only be arrived at through the intellect. In the books of **Abū al-Mu‘alī al-Juwaynī** (d. 478H), **Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī** (d. 505H), **Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī** (d. 606H), **Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī** (d. 631H), **Sa’d al-Dīn al-Taftazānī** (d. 793H) and others you will find the following types of statements: That of al-Rāzī, “Revealed evidences are not definitive (*qaṭ‘iyyah*)”³ and that of al-Āmidī, “They are

³ Asās al-Taqdīs (Dar al-Fikr al-‘Arabī, 1413H, p. 113).

speculative (*dhanniyyah*) and conjectural opinion (*takhmīn*), they are not sufficient in affairs requiring certainty (*yaqīniyyāt*)”⁴ and that of al-Taftazānī, “It is impossible to make *taṣdīq* of the revelation (*naql*) when it necessitates rejection (*takdhīb*) of reason (*‘aql*) which is the foundation (*aṣl*), thus, revelation does not amount to knowledge (*lā yufīd ul-‘ilm*).”⁵ This is jus a small sample from their statements. Why they said these statements will become clear as we proceed through this series. It is because they took philosophy as the starting point and were then forced to look at the Qur’ān and the Prophetic Sunnah in a way similar to how atheists, philosophers and scientists look at revelation in general. They do not believe revelation amounts to knowledge, only the scientific method, only observation and analysis, only the senses coupled with reason can amount to definitive knowledge. This poisonous way of thinking is what these people carried into Islām. This poison is buried deep within their theological foundations and is rarely seen at the surface level because these types of statements are buried deep in their theological and polemical writings. Then they cover all this up through diversion and distraction by accusing Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā’ah of being Mushabbihah and Mujassimah as a means of validating their own theology. Their theology cannot stand on its own, the common person is averse to their theology due to *fiṭrah* and if and when he understands what it is really based upon, he will reject it outright and be prone to atheism.⁶ So they have to compensate for that - and this is done with sophisticated fraud.

It is crucial to keep this in mind because without it you will not understand history nor fully grasp how the reality of the Tawhīd of the Messengers is established, nor the basis of the dispute between the

⁴ *Abkār al-Afkār* (1424H, 2nd edition, 1/280).

⁵ *Sharḥ al-Maqāsid* (1419H, 2nd edition, 1/283).

⁶ As acknowledged by al-Ghazālī in his book *Ijām al-‘Awām ‘an ‘Ilm al-Kalām* wherein he states that the common person left with a belief in a creator that contains *tashbīh* is better than driving him to outright atheism and that all but one out of a thousand from the common people would become atheists if they were presented with a creed that says Allāh is not a *jism* (body), not an *‘araḍ* (accident), not in a *makān* (place) and so on.

followers of the Prophets (the Salafīs) and the followers of the conceptual and intellectual baggage of the Philosophers (Ash‘arīs, Mātūrīdīs). The straight path will not be clear to you and you may become prone to doubts and confusion and instead of holding a glass of pure, wholesome, fresh, satiating milk in your hand, you will be wallowing in the filth of blood, dung and puss (of *falsafah* and its disguised version, *kalām*) which you will have been made to believe is wholesome pure milk and it will disease you and corrupt your mind, heart and senses and you will start speaking lies, fabrications, distortions, nonsense and contradictions like Mawlānā Zameel al-Raḥmaan al-Mātūrīdī al-Deobandī al-Ḥanafī whose paper we are addressing and which we shall point out at the appropriate place in this series inshā‘Allāh.

The Standing of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah, Followers of Revealed Books and Sent Messengers

So lets start with Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah, the People of Ḥadīth and Āthār. They have three spokesmen in this instalment. These three spokesmen represent the approach of the Prophets, the Books, the final Messenger Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and His Companions and the Righteous Salaf and the Salafīs. The first is **Imām Hibatullāh bin al-Ḥasan bin Maṣṣūr al-Rāzī al-Ṭabarī al-Lālikāī** (d. 418H) (رحمته الله) and he is the author of *Sharḥ Uṣūl I'tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah Min al-Kitāb wal-Sunnah wa Ijmā' al-Ṣaḥābah wal-Tābi'īn wa man Ba'dihim* - a magnum opus on the creed of the Salaf. Just pay attention to the title as well - [An Explanation of the Foundations of the Belief of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah from the Book, the Sunnah and Consensus of the Companions, the Successors and Those After Them] - and this straight away tells you that al-Lālikāī came in through the front door and the Salafīs are behind him. And the second is **Imām 'Ubaydullāh bin Sa'īd Abū Naṣr al-Sijzī** (d. 444H) and he is the author of *Risālah ilā Ahli Zabīd* - a refutation of the Kullābiyyah and Ash'ariyyah who took hold of the relay flag from the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah on the issue of the speech of Allāh and the Qur'ān and ran with it. Then a short statement from **Abū al-Muzaffar al-Sam'ānī** (d. 489H). Notice that all of these three spokesmen for Ahl al-Sunnah were in the fourth and fifth century hijrah. Meaning after the first 300 years of Islām, and they are describing for us the way of the Salaf in the three centuries before them. Let us begin with the speech of al-Lālikāī (رحمته الله) first.

Imām al-Lālikāī's Defence and Veneration of Revelation as the Source of Definitive, Certain Knowledge Regarding Allāh

We are interested in the first chapter of the second volume (1411H) 2/193:

Chapter: Concensus about the Tawḥīd of Allāh (ﷻ), His Attributes and Names and that He is living (ḥayy), able (qādir), knowing (‘ālim), hearing (samī), seeing (baṣīr), speaking (mutakallim), desiring (murīd), everlasting (bāqī).

Now lets reflect on this title a little because there is so much in it. **First**, he (ﷻ) is going to mention a consensus about the Tawḥīd of Allāh's names and attributes and about **how** we come to acquire knowledge of Allāh (ﷻ) - pay attention to that. A Salafī says to a Jahmite: Our methodology of **how to acquire knowledge about Allāh** (pay attention to that) is proven by Qur'ān, Sunnāh and Ijmā' (consensus). The Ash'arī and Mātūrīdī cannot say this - he knows he would be a liar if he made this claim. Because there is no consensus regarding their innovated approach which shall be discussed in due course. There is no basis for it in the Sunnah. And whilst they attempt to justify it through the Qur'ān by making *tahṛīf* (distortion) of certain verses, their particular version of what they call *the evidence of reason* is not indicated by the Qur'ān either - rather it clashes from the Qur'ān and is taken from the Philosophers, not the Prophets and Messengers. So a Salafī who comes through the front door of the house, can say truthfully and honestly that his methodology of **how to acquire knowledge about Allāh** is based on Qur'ān, Sunnah and Ijmā'. **Secondly**, he mentions eight attributes which are the attributes affirmed by the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs, and this is for a very specific reason. They affirm these attributes through the evidence of reason ('aql) which they claim is definitive (qat'īyy) whereas Ahl al-Sunnah affirm these attributes through revelation (naql, waḥy) even if these particular attributes can be proven by both reason and revelation. However, we are contrasting **two fundamentally different approaches** which lead to **two fundamentally different perceptions towards revelation** (the texts of the Qur'ān and the authentic Sunnah which

relate to the attributes) and all of this is centered around how we acquire knowledge of Allāh, about His existence or His names, attributes and actions.

Al-Lālikāī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) then says in a subtitle:

Citation of what indicates from the Book of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) and what is related from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that the obligation of knowing Allāh the Exalted is through revelation (sam') and not reason ('aql).

We can now start to outline the difference between the two approaches. That of the Salafīs who are standing behind the revelations of Allāh, behind the Prophets, Messengers, the Companions, Successors and the Imāms of the Salaf and that of those who followed the *approach* of the Philosophers. Pay attention here, we did not say they followed the beliefs of the Philosophers because they tried to refute the beliefs of the Philosophers such as their belief that the universe is eternal. However, in doing so they followed the *approach* of the Philosophers in the matter of acquisition of knowledge and accepted this approach as the platform of debate. They said that reason, intellect ('aql) is the starting point of knowledge and its evidence is definitive, meaning there is no ambiguity in it, it is certain, definite. This notion is purely philosophical, it is taken from the wandering, straying misguided Philosophers and they, the people of kalām, under such an influence made the intellect to be the basis for the acquisition of knowledge about Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ). In fact, they gave it a superior status to revelation itself as we shall see, for when there is a conflict between reason and revelation, they put reason ahead, because they consider the evidence through reason to be definitive (qaṭ'iyy) and the evidence through revelation to be speculative (ẓannīyy).

So from the very foundation, they are not stood behind the revelation, behind the Prophets and Messengers as are the Salafīs, they are stood behind the conceptual baggage of Plato (d. 348BC) and Aristotle (d. 322BC), his writings such as *Categories*, his books such as *Physics* and

Metaphysics and their likes but with the intent to argue with Aristotle and whoever followed him such as Abū Naṣr al-Farābī (d. 339H) and Abū ‘Alī Ibn Sīnā (d. 429H) from those who ascribed to Islām and tried to merge it with the beliefs of the Greek philosophers - that the universe is eternal, resurrection of bodies is not true and prophethood is an acquired skill. They accepted this false principle that the evidence of reason (making deductions through analogies on the basis of data received through the five senses) is definitive and is the starting point of certain, definitive, non-speculative knowledge.

Here we have the first foundation of misguidance.⁷ They have not come through the front door, but they wandered and strayed, they left walking behind the Prophets, Messengers, revealed Books, the Companions, Successors and Imāms of the Salaf and tried to make an entrance through the back door after passing through the animal barns and fields of the Greek (Hellenic) Philosophers and of the Hellenized Jews, Christians and Ṣābeans. This caused them to be covered in mud and filth before they even reached the entrance to the house - the back entrance that is, not the front one. And this is what **al-Ja’d bin Dirham** did, he is the founder of this way in Islām. He took this approach from the Jews, Christians and Ṣabeans who were influenced by Plato and Aristotle. He made reason (*‘aql*) a starting point, to prove Allāh exists, using their language and terminology, and was led to disastrous conclusions. Allāh is not above His Throne, His speech, the Arabic Qur’ān is created, He will not be seen in the Hereafter and negation of

⁷ As for their doubt that before a person even knows the Messenger was truthful about being a messenger he requires the use of reason to determine this and hence reason comes first and is required to validate revelation and thus a rational argument has to be constructed to know the Messenger was truthful in his claim - this will be addressed in due course. It is sufficient to say at this stage that the argument these people thought was a rational argument is in fact a corrupt argument which proves the opposite of what they intended. This is why their scholars like al-Ghazālī and al-Rāzī got utterly confused after extensive debates with the Philosophers and after having had the chance to thoroughly evaluate the kalām arguments of their predecessors - a by-product of their debates with the Philosophers.

His attributes - so as to avoid rendering Him a body like the created bodies - this became their Tawhīd. This approach was taken from him by **al-Jahm bin Ṣafwān** who instituted what is commonly known today as the way of the **Jahmiyyah**. F. E Peters writes in his essay *The Origins of Islamic Platonism: The School Tradition*: “There were many varieties of Platonism in Islam. One of the earliest of the Muslim theologians, Jahm ibn Ṣafwān (d. 746), was promulgating a view of God remarkably different from that of his contemporaries and yet remarkably like the negative theology current in later Greek neo-Platonism.”⁸

The **Mu'tazilah** took it from the Jahmiyyah and refined this philosophy which became known as *kalām* or *ilm al-kalām*, it is really philosophy and clashes with the Book and the Sunnah in a fundamental way. Ibn Surayj al-Shāfi'i (d. 306H) stated, “The Tawhīd of the people of knowledge and the Jamā'ah of the Muslims is ‘I testify none is worthy of worship except Allāh (alone) and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh.’ And the Tawhīd of the people of falsehood is disputing about *ā'rād* (incidental attributes) and *ajṣām* (bodies) and the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was sent with the rejection of that.”⁹ This is the starting point of the way that was inherited by the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs. But as we said, they try to hide the fact that they have come in through the back door and that the roots of their theology lie in the sciences of the Philosophers, the Hellenized Jews, Christians, Ṣabeans and the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah of the second century hijrah.

We have seen one major departure so far, the assumption and approach of those Philosophers, that the evidence of reason (‘aql) is definitive and

⁸ In *Islamic Philosophical Theology* (ed. Parviz Morewedge, State University of New York Press, 1979), p. 14.

⁹ Abū Ismā'il al-Harawī with his isnād in *Dhamm ul-Kalām* (4/385-386) and Ibn Taymiyyah in *Bayān Talbīs al-Jahmiyyah*. And he means that the speech of the people of disbelief from the Philosophers and other than them regarding the creator was based upon the likes of these philosophical terms and discussions, and the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) came to guide people with the light of revelation and to reject such false and ignorant speech regarding belief in Allāh and the unseen.

comes before or is superior to revelation (naql). There are two other mistakes in fundamental areas. First, knowledge of Allāh’s existence is rooted in the innate disposition (fiṭrah) of every soul and does not need to be argued for in the case of the vast majority of mankind since it has not been disputed by them. However, these people - and they are referred to as **Mutakallimūn** (speculative theologians) they adopted this philosophical approach that was referred to as *‘ilm al-kalām* or *kalām* for short and so they are referred to as **Mutakallimūn** - they claimed that to prove Allāh’s existence is **the first obligation**. This is a huge, fundamental mistake that clashes with the Book, the Sunnah and consensus. Second, they claimed on the whole that Allāh’s existence can only be proven through one way and this is known as *ḥudūth al-aqsām* (origination of bodies) and they focused largely around this, we shall speak about this in detail in another instalment in this series. This is also incorrect, the rational evidences for Allāh’s existence are very many and are not restricted to just one or two or three ways.

So here we have three mistakes.

First, they made the assertion of the evidence of reason being definitive as the starting point, as a foundation. They took this from the atheist Philosophers who reject revelation and rely upon reason. The people of kalām took this approach towards knowledge of Allāh, so they agreed with the Philosophers in a foundational matter, that the source of definitive knowledge is the intellect and whereas the Philosophers applied to this to what they call the “natural world” the Mutakallimūn applied it to knowledge of Allāh and consequently they eliminated revelation from being *a starting point* and definitive source for acquisition of knowledge about Allāh (عَنْ مُحَمَّدٍ).

Second, they said the first obligation upon a person is to prove Allāh’s existence through observation (nadhar) and deduction (istidlāl) - in other words through the route of science, the scientific method, through philosophical reflection. This is *bāṭil*, false a lie against the dīn of Allāh (عَنْ مُحَمَّدٍ). This is the approach of the Philosophers, the Atheists, towards acquisition of knowledge of what they call the “natural

world”¹⁰ and this is what the Jahmiyyah brought to Islām with respect to acquisition of knowledge about Allāh and the Mu‘tazilah followed them in this, and then the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs took it from them. **Al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār** (d. 415H), he is from the heads of the Mu‘tazilah and he wrote extensively, laying down their foundations and his books are pillars for the Mu‘tazilī doctrine. He asserts in his various books such as *al-Muḥīt bil-Taklīf* and *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-Khamsah* that the first obligation is acquiring knowledge of Allāh through reflection - which really means a philosophical type of reflection.¹¹ He makes this *farḍ ‘ayn*, meaning it is obligatory upon each and every mukallaf (everyone obliged to abide by the legislation). He says, “Know that indication [to knowledge] is four [types]: The proof of reason (‘aql), the Book, the Sunnah and consensus, and the knowledge of Allāh, the Exalted, is not attained except through reason. If we were to seek evidence through anything from them [the revealed texts], we would be seeking evidence through the branch (far‘) of something for its foundation (aṣl), and that is not permissible.”¹² In other words, the intellect is the foundation and the revelation is the branch. And this way of thinking is taken from the atheist Philosophers who do not believe in revelation fundamentally. From the outset you can see the influence of *falsafah* in how it undermines and degrades revelation. This is in fact the necessary outcome of indulging in kalām - you will be forced, by necessity, to undermine revelation, you cannot escape it. It is similar to when you jump into water, you will get wet, there is no escaping from it. So when you indulge in this disguised

¹⁰ The scientific method is always tied to the initial assumptions made at the beginning of any inquiry and this is why of all the people, you will see the atheists and philosophers amongst the scientists to be the greatest in disagreement with each other about the “natural world” despite the fact that they are employing the same scientific method. And in turn, the people of kalām, because they adopted this speculative approach, you will see them to be in the greatest of disagreements with each other, despite the fact that they are using the same kalām. Thus, the Jahmite opposes the Mu‘tazilī and declares him a mujassim, kāfir. And the Mu‘tazilī opposes the Ash‘arī and declares him a mujassim, kāfir. Yet all of them are operating on the same underlying uṣūl (foundations).

¹¹ Refer to *al-Muḥīt bil-Taklīf* (p. 19).

¹² *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-Khamsah* (p. 88).

philosophy, you will be forced to migrate to an Aristotelian understanding of the cause behind the universe - your speech about Tawhīd will be founded upon a language alien to the revealed Books and sent Messengers, alien to the Salaf - and you will start to undermine revelation as a result of that. This will be demonstrated more clearly in future articles inshā‘Allāh.

Connected to this same issue is a question about what is it that obligates the use of the intellect for acquisition of knowledge, is it the intellect itself or is it revelation? Al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār explains it is the intellect that demonstrates to us the obligation of philosophical, intellectual reflection to acquire knowledge of Allāh.¹³ Meaning, that after reflecting and thinking about it rationally, it’s become clear to us that we must acquire our knowledge of Allāh through reflecting and thinking - that’s what the essence of it is. Now this approach was followed by the Ash‘arīs, they inherited this philosophy from the Mu‘tazilah, and so we can see their chain of narration and their positioning. In **Abu Bakr al-Bāqillānī’s** (d. 403H) book *al-Insāf Fīmā Yajibu I’tiqādihi wa Lā Yajūz al-Jahl Bihi* - and he is the most important historical figure in the Ash‘arī school after al-Ash‘arī - he says that the first obligation (*farḍ*) is to look into the signs of Allāh to prove His existence because Allāh is not known by necessity and nor witnessed through the senses and that He is only known through evidences (*barāhīn*) by which they mean philosophical evidence they laid down in their books.¹⁴

Now the difference is that the Mu‘tazilah say it is the intellect itself which obligates the knowledge of Allāh through the intellect, whereas the Ash‘arīs assert that **revelation** obligates knowledge of Allāh through intellect but **this is not** the view that they depend upon in their theology, fundamentally. They also say - as the Mu‘tazilah say - that **the intellect** also obligates knowledge of Allāh through the intellect and this

¹³ Refer to *al-Muḥīt bil-Taklīf* (p. 23).

¹⁴ Refer to *al-Insāf* (Maktabah al-Azhariyyah, p. 21).

is the basis upon which their theology is largely expounded.¹⁵ Now all of these claims are incorrect. This is because knowledge of Allāh is *fiṭriyy*, *ḍurūriyy* (innate, necessary), every child is born upon the *fiṭrah*, Allāh made every child inclined to worship Him alone (let alone affirming His existence).¹⁶ But the people of *kalām* at large do not affirm this because their perceptions are the perceptions of the Philosophers as it relates to acquisition of knowledge in that the intellect is the primary source of definitive knowledge. And here is where a person should be careful, because the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs are very adept at concealing their misguidance, they will say, “Our methodology is based upon the Qur‘ān” when it is not based upon the Qur‘ān. They started with false principles and then tried to justify them through the Qur‘ān - and this is a separate and detailed topic and this is not the place for it here. The reflection (*nadhār*, *tafakkur*) which is commanded in the Qur‘ān¹⁷ upon Allāh’s signs **is not** the philosophical, long-winded, speculation in the books of the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs. Their philosophical, rational speculation and its theoretical foundations are found in in Books III, IV and VII of Aristotle’s *Physics* and Book XII of his *Metaphysics* and his *Categories* with discussions of bodies, substances, accidents, events, time, change, place (*ajsām*, *jawāhir*, *a‘rāḍ*, *ḥawāḍith*, *zamān*, *taghayyur*, *makān*) and so on. So they lie and deceive the Muslims

¹⁵ This is explained by al-Juwaynī in *al-Shāmil fī Usūl al-Dīn* (p. 120) and mentioned by *Abū Maṣṣūr al-Baghḍādī* in *Uṣūl al-Dīn* (p. 256).

¹⁶ The evidences in the Sharī‘ah are many, refer to (7:172-173) which is a proof for prior knowledge of Allāh being ingrained within the souls, and (30:30) and the ḥadīth of every child born upon *fiṭrah* and the ḥadīth of the *mīthāq* (covenant) in which every soul was made to testify that Allāh is their Lord and what is similar to these texts and also the fact that when the Pagans were asked who is their creator and who created the heavens, Earth and what is in between and who regulates the creation, they said Allāh - as is mentioned in numerous verses of the Qur‘ān, (10:31) by way of example.

¹⁷ The reflection commanded in the Qur‘ān is that which indicates none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh alone, not that which proves Allāh exists - which is *fiṭriyy*, *ḍurūriyy* (innate, necessary). In any case, there are rational arguments in the Qur‘ān for Allāh’s existence but the argument used by the Ahl al-Kalām is a corrupt, innovated, philosophical one which clashes with the Qur‘ān and the Sunnah and invalidates what is in the Qur‘ān and the Sunnah of knowledge about Allāh, His names attributes and actions.

and then try to find evidence in the Qur’ān to justify this approach and try to claim that this is how Ibrāhīm (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ), for example, came to know his Lord. And this is futile, because Ibrāhīm received guidance from His Lord about His Lord through waḥy (revelation) as we shall see shortly in the evidences cited by al-Lālikāī. So the Aristotelian Jahmites bring *shubuhāt* (doubts) to justify their falsehood and **to conceal its true and real origins**. Where has it come from? From the philosophy, language and terminology of the wandering, straying idol and star worshippers, not from the Prophets and Messengers.

Here is what **Abū al-Mu’ālī al-Juwaynī** (d. 478H)¹⁸ - and he is a Mu’tazilī influenced Ash’arī - he says in his book *al-Shāmil*, “We do not hold on to affirming the obligation of reflection through the apparent texts of the Book and the Sunnah because the objective is to affirm definitive knowledge (‘ilmun maqṭū’un bihī). But the apparent texts are subject to interpretations (ta’wīlāt) which are not permitted for deriving evidence in definitive matters.”¹⁹ He is saying the very same thing as the Mu’tazilīh - the revealed texts do not provide definitive knowledge but the evidence of reason does. Now keep this in mind, because all of this is connected to how the Sunnī, Salafī, Atharī follower of the Prophets and Messengers perceives and views the revealed texts and whether they provide definitive knowledge or not and whether they contain guidance that suffices a believer or not - this is connected to understanding the misguidance of the Aristotelian Jahmites in all their varying factions and levels.

Do not be deceived just because some of them quote verses of the Qur’ān on the obligation to reflect and use the intellect, that does not

¹⁸ Al-Juwaynī was one in a series of scholars ascribing to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash’arī who departed from his way and took the school in the direction of the Mu’tazilīh. He was strongly influenced by Mu’tazilī ideas. Today’s Ash’arīs are not really following al-Ash’arī and the earliest of his students, but the later ones [al-Juwaynī, al-Ghazālī, al-Rāzī, al-Āmidī] who merged early Ash’arism with the views of the Mu’tazilīh, the innovated ṭaṣawwuf, gnosticism and mysticism of the Ṣūfīs and some of the ideas of the Philosophers themselves.

¹⁹ Al-Shāmil fī Usūl al-Dīn (p. 120).

prove and justify their bid'ah and justify their inheritance of the foundations of the Philosophers, the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah that the evidence of reason is definitive and that the first obligation is philosophical reflection. **Abu Bakr al-Bāqillānī** (d. 403H) says the same thing in his other book *al-Tamhīd*, in the introductory pages, and likewise **Muḥammad bin al-Ḥasan bin al-Fawrak** (d. 406H) - [and he is the one who affected and misguided **Abu Bakr al-Bayḥaqī** (d. 458H) with this kalām approach]²⁰ - as does **Abū Ishāq al-Isfarāyīnī** (d. 418H), the student of al-Bāqillānī, and '**Abd al-Qāhir Abū Manṣūr al-Baghdādī** (d. 429H) who is the student of al-Isfarāyīnī, he says that this type of philosophical rational reflection which kalām theology is founded upon is a condition for the validity (*sharṭ ṣiḥḥah*) of a servant's faith.²¹ Now reflect upon this, they started making this a condition for the very validity of a person's Islām and his Īmān, they made belief in Allāh and His Prophet to be dependent upon philosophy, upon what they claimed to be rational proofs²² - [and they are not rational proofs they are futile proofs which prove the opposite of what they set out to prove] - and not upon revelation itself.

Then when **Abū al-Mu'ālī al-Juwaynī** (d. 478H) came - and he was strongly affected by the Mu'tazilah - he began to say that anyone who did not enter into this philosophical demonstration and know its foundations whilst he had the ability and after he reached the age of maturity and then died, he is to be buried with the disbelievers! Look at what he says, "Observation, inspection (*al-nadhar*) and inference (al-

²⁰ Despite that influence, al-Bayḥaqī did not follow the way of those like Abū Manṣūr al-Baghdādī (d. 429H) and al-Juwaynī (d. 458H) who followed the way of the Mu'tazilah towards the *ṣifāt khabariyyah* such as face, hands and eyes and rejected them through ta'wīl. Al-Bayḥaqī cites from the book al-Ibānah of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'ārī in his works which explains that he did not abandon the affirmation these attributes unlike the others.

²¹ Refer to *Uṣūl al-Dīn* (p. 269).

²² Refer to *Uṣūl al-Dīn* (p. 14).

istidlāl) that lead to acquaintance of Allāh,²³ the Sublime, are two obligations ... And if time passed by - from the time that religious obligations applied to him - in which he had the capacity for *al-nadhar* (observation, inspection) leading [him] to knowledge, and he did not inspect, despite there being no preventive barriers and he passed away after the time in which this was possible for him, he is put alongside the disbelievers.”²⁴ Allāhu Akbar! Now you become a *kāfir* for not philosophically justifying your belief in Allāh. This is misguidance, and these are mistakes of these scholars, we ask Allāh to pardon them and excuse them. These were great affairs that entered the ummah and many righteous scholars got caught up in this. The religion is not destroyed except by the slips of scholars, as is related from ‘Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb, “*Islām is destroyed by three: The mistake of a scholar, the hypocrite arguing by the Qur’ān and misguided scholars.*”²⁵ So these scholars fell into mistakes and the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs followed them in this misguidance and they entered into bigotry and blind-following and invented polemics and slanders against Ahl al-Sunnah just to prop up and support this misguided way and its misguided conclusions. This misguidance was followed and is found in the books that came afterwards, such as *Umm al-Barāhīn* of **Muḥammad al-Sanūsī** (d. 895H) and *Tuḥfat ul-Murīd Sharh Jawharah al-Tawḥīd* of **Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī** (d. 1276H) and they state that it is *fard ‘ayn* (an individual obligation) upon every person to know the evidences - and they mean philosophical, rational evidences - for each matter of ‘aqīdah - which means a person is sinful for not knowing them. This is the mainstream majority view of the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs - and the same is found in the books of the Mātūrīdīs, such as those of **Abū Manṣūr al-Mātūrīdī** (d. 333H), in the opening pages of his book *al-Tawḥīd* for example, and in the works of **Abū Mu‘īn al-Nasafī** (d. 508H) and their various explanations. So these are their foundations, misguided foundations, and they ultimately

²³ And they mean something very specific by this, they mean through the proof of *hudūth al-ajsām* (demonstrating the origination of bodies) which they filled their books with.

²⁴ See *al-Shāmil Fī ‘Usūl ad-Dīn* (Alexandria, 1389H, pp. 122).

²⁵ Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr in *Jāmi‘ Bayān al-‘ilm* (2/223).

shape the way they look at the revealed texts which mention the attributes of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) - they will not see these texts in the same way as the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), the Companions, Successors and Imāms of the Salaf, but through a corrupt and tainted, evil perception, through a philosophical perception which glorifies the evidence of reason over and above the evidence of revelation and which asserts that guidance and definitive knowledge are not in these texts but in the conclusions made upon the philosophical considerations of their minds (intellects). Now these theoretical considerations and their implications are not really revealed to the average Ash'arī and Mātūrīdī, the average people who are brainwashed, they rarely understand what is really going on and through which doors they are being led.

As for the first obligation in the view of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah and by consensus, it is to bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh alone and Muḥammad is His Messenger - basically to utter the two testimonials of faith. And as for the foundation of knowledge of the Creator, it is innate, necessary (*fitriyy*, *ḍurūriyy*) in the hearts and souls and its details are known - by obligation - through revelation. But where doubts arise, reflection and rational proofs can be employed where necessary to alleviate those doubts. However, these rational proofs are many and varied and it is not the case that only one, two or three proofs exist. Further, the Qur'ān has indicated the simplest most powerful, most direct proofs which establish a *wujūd 'aynī* (an actual existence) for Allāh. As for the people of kalām, they claim rationally proving one's belief in a creator is the first obligation, and then the method they use which they call the evidence of reason is corrupt and false and does not prove what they claim it proves. Rather, it proves the opposite and it actually became ammunition for the Philosophers to argue for their position.

Third, upon their claim that the first obligation is to make philosophical reflection, they said the only way to prove Allāh's existence is to prove the universe is originated. This is untrue as knowledge of Allāh does not depend upon knowing the universe was originated *through reason*. Rather knowledge of the heavens and Earth having an origin has been

transmitted by the Prophets and Messengers and in the revealed Books. There is no obligation upon anyone to rationally prove the origination of the universe as a condition of his faith. And in any case, the proof they presented - and it was taken from the Hellenized Ṣabean Ḥarranian philosophers²⁶ - known as *ḥudūth al-aṣām* is *bāṭil*, it does not prove Allāh created the universe. Rather it proves the opposite, that the universe was *not created by an act of creation ascribed to Allāh's essence*. It is impossible for them to ascribe an act of creation to Allāh's essence because this would invalidate and demolish the proof they claimed that Islām itself depends upon and the proof about which they claimed that the Messenger's truthfulness itself depends upon - because upon the philosophy of the star-worshipping idolator, Aristotle, an act (event) can only be predicated to a body, if an act is performed, the one performing it has been subject to an event and has thus changed (*taghayyara*) and this is evidence that it is a body (*jism*). They see Allāh and His actions in the same way, if an actual act of creation is ascribed to Allāh, as an act of His essence, this would mean Allāh is like all the bodies which undergo change and which are originated. So the proof collapses if an act of creation is ascribed to Allāh's essence - and this is because it is a *bāṭil* (futile), corrupt, evil proof that eventually leads to confusion, bewilderment and to atheism itself, because no act of creation in reality took place, there is no **wilfully chosen act of creation** ascribed to Allāh's essence in their *kalām* theology and this allows every enemy of Islām from the atheists and philosophers to attack and undermine Islām and to argue that the universe and matter are eternal. In reality, their argument amounts to belief in a universe that came to be **without any act of creation ascribed to the creator** whose existence they were trying to prove - and this is where the Philosophers (*Mutafalsifah*) laughed at them and took their opportunity to undermine and attack Islām. This argument they relied upon can be used to prove that the

²⁶ There were remnants of the Ṣabean philosophers who believed the universe was originated and they outlined an argument on the basis of which they described the Ceator only through negations (negative theology) so as not to liken Him to the creation in any way whatsoever. We shall investigate this in a separate part in this series inshā'Allāh and demonstrate its connection to the *kalām* theology of the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs.

saying of the universe being eternal is sounder and more rational. So when the Mutakallimūn falsely claimed that Islām depends upon this argument and is validated by this argument, and the Atheists and Philosophers saw that it is corrupt and futile, they took their chance to undermine Islām, the resurrection and prophethood - and then these people, the Philosophers like Ibn Sīnā (d. 439H) they justified their approach towards the texts of creation and resurrection by the approach that the Ash'arīs took towards the texts of the attributes. They said if the texts pertaining to that which is greatest, Allāh Himself, are only allegorical and not indicative of actual realities, then this applies even more so to the texts of creation and resurrection. They said this to prove their position that matter is eternal and no creation took place. And likewise, the Bāṭiniyyah did the same, they said if the texts of the attributes are only metaphorical, then so are the texts of the rulings (aḥkām), so they began to make ta'wīl of the prayer, fasting, ḥajj, zakāh and other outward symbols of Islām and thus undermined the Sharī'ah. So the Philosophers undermined creation and resurrection and the Bāṭiniyyah undermined the Sharī'ah - and all of this was due to the misguidance of the people of kalām such as the Ash'arīs who undermined the texts of the attributes after considering them to provide nothing but presumptions of tajsīm and kufr in the minds of the people who read them upon what is ordinarily understood in the language of the Arabs.²⁷

So they (the Ahl al-Kalām) abandoned the Book and the Sunnah, used the approach of their disputants, the Philosophers, did not end up proving what they set out to prove, ended up defining Allāh through

²⁷ What deceives a lot of people is that in some respects the people of kalām did refute the Philosophers and the Bāṭiniyyah (but in a defective, incomplete way that got them into trouble) and naturally we support the people of Islām against those who oppose it. But what happened is that these people who dived into this ocean became poisoned by the ideas of those they were refuting. Both al-Ghazālī and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī were poisoned with the ideas of Ibn Sīnā and his likes, they entered into his books and could not come out, and that influence carried through into their writings and ideas and led them to great confusion.

the conceptual baggage of those same Philosophers and allowed Islām to be attacked and undermined through their stupidity. It is this stupidity and the theology built upon it that they are promoting - fraudulently - and claiming that *its conclusions* are what the Salaf were upon. It is through this very stupidity and misguidance that their ancestors, the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah accused the Salaf of *tajsīm* and *tashbīh*, and this legacy is continued by them today, the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs against the Salafis. In a future part in this series we will look in more detail at their alleged proof of *ḥudūth al-ajsām* (origination of bodies) and how when they tried to reconcile it with the Qur'ān and Sunnah, they found a contradiction. On the basis of this, they gave precedence to the evidence of reason (*'aql*) and then began to distort the speech of Allāh and His Messenger - following the way of the Jews and Christians before them - and they did so under the name of *ta'wīl*. And this is what the Jews and Christians did to the Tawrah and Injīl, from them **Philo Judaeus of Alexandria** (d. 50CE) and **Augustine of Hippo** (d. 430CE) and **Clement of Alexandria** (d. 213CE) and **Origen of Alexandria** (253H) and **St. John of Damascus** in the Islāmic era (d. 749CE) - all of them were affected by neo-Platonic and Aristotelian philosophies in theological matters and the language of *ajsām* and *a'rād* (bodies and accidents) was a foundation of their speech about the creator. This became the dīn of the Jahmites when it entered into Islām and on its basis did they assault the texts of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah and accuse the Salaf of *tajsīm* and *tashbīh*.²⁸

²⁸ The first Mujassimah and Mushabbihah in Islām were the Rāfiḍah Shi'ah who entered into the grossest of *tashbīh* - they inherited this *tashbīh* from the Jews - and from them are the Saba'iyyah, Muhktāriyyah, Bayāniyyah, Khaṭṭābiyyah, Jawāribiyyah, al-Hishāmiyyah and many others. The later Shi'ah - in late 2nd century hijrah onwards - took the way of the Mu'tazilah and combined between both *ta'tīl* and *tashbīh*. As for their *tashbīh*, it was to say that the attributes of Allāh are as (kā) the attributes of creation or like (mithl) the attributes of creation - as is clear from the speech of the Salaf who explained the *tashbīh* of the Mushabbihah. As for affirmation of the attributes without asking or specifying how, this is not *tashbīh* - but this is what the Ahl al-Kalām from the Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah and Mātūrīdiyyah falsely claim to be *tashbīh*. This will be elaborated upon later in this series inshā' Allāh.

And we can add a **fourth** mistake, which is that they thought this was the Tawḥid which the Messengers were sent with - to prove and establish Allāh's existence and creatorship - and this is plainly and blatantly false. Rather, the Tawḥid of the Prophets and Messengers is that *none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh alone* **not** that there is no creator and originator except Allāh. The earlier ones from the Ahl al-Kalām made this mistake at a time when *shirk* had not become widespread in the ummah. But when the later ones inherited this incorrect understanding of the meaning of *ilāh* and of Tawḥīd- and after the saint and grave-worship which originated with Bāṭinī Shī'ism in the 4th century entered into Ṣufism (*taṣawwuf*) and when the later Ash'arīs entered into *taṣawwuf* from the 6th century onwards, they departed from the Tawḥid of the Messengers more clearly, not just in the names and attributes, but in the issue of *ulūhiyyah*. And it is for this reason they say today in their misguidance that a person can call upon a saint, a dead person and ask him for needs and for rescue and so long as he does not believe that this saint or dead person creates, gives and takes life and controls benefit or harm, then this is not *shirk* but simply a way amongs the ways! In this, the pagans of Makkah were more knowledgeable of the reality of Tawḥid brought by the Messenger than these later ones who appeared and put the ummah to trial with their *tasawwuf* and *shirk*, on top of their *kalām* and *falsafah*.

Now, we need to come back to the speech of al-Lālikā'ī because we went into a lengthy diversion but which was necessary to show their misguidance in the very starting point of acquisition of knowledge about Allāh. And all of this is part and parcel of knowing the importance of observing how the Ash'arī and Mātūrīdī enters the house when he comes to debate and argue with a Salafī who is a follower of the revealed Books, sent Messengers, the Companions, Successors and the Imāms of the Salaf. Now lets return back to the speech of al-Lālikā'ī:

Citation of what indicates from the Book of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) and what is related from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that the obligation of knowing Allāh the Exalted is through revelation (sam') and not reason ('aql).

He is going to cite evidence for **the obligation** of knowing Allāh through His revelation and through what is related from the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and not through reason ('aql). So pay attention to what he is indicating, that it is **not obligatory** to come to know Allāh through reason, through philosophical speculation but **obligatory** to know Allāh through revelation. Allāh is already known through fiṭrah, before reason - and this is one of the clear points of misguidance of the Ash'arīs and Māturīdīs. It is true that fiṭrah can be corrupted, and if doubts arise, reason can be relied upon to demonstrate the existence of Allāh and the Tawḥīd of Allāh, but **it is not** the first obligation in the religion as claimed by those who took the approach of the Philosophers towards acquisition of knowledge in general - so pay attention to the differences here, do not be deceived. So al-Lālikāī brings evidences for this point, lets look at them:

Allāh, the Exalted said, addressing His Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) with wording that is specific but whose intent is general: **“Have knowledge that there is none worthy of worship but Allāh.”** (47:19) and He (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) said **“Follow, [O Muḥammad], what has been revealed to you from your Lord - there is no deity except Him - and turn away from those who associate others with Allah.”** (6:106) and He (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) said **“And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, ‘There is no deity except Me, so worship Me’.”** (21:25). So Allah informed His Prophet in this verse that it was through hearing and revelation that the Prophets before him came to know Tawḥīd. And Allāh, the Exalted, said, **“Say, ‘If I should err, I would only err against myself. But if I am guided, it is by what my Lord reveals to me. Indeed, He is Hearing and near’.”** (34:50). And Ibrāhīm sought evidence through the precise, skilfull actions of Allāh for His oneness, through [observing] the rising and setting of the sun, the appearance and disappearance of the moon and the appearance and fading away of the stars, [after which] he then said, **“Unless my Lord guides me, I**

will surely be among the people gone astray.” (6:77). It is known therefore, that guidance [for Ibrāhīm] took place by way of revelation (al-sam’).

What we take from this passage then is that Allāh commanded with the knowledge that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh alone (47:19) and made clear in His Book that this is obligatory **through revelation** (wahy) (6:106) and that every prior Messenger acquired knowledge of Allāh **through revelation** (21:25) and guidance is through what Allāh reveals (34:50) and that Ibrāhīm was guided - with respect to knowledge of his Lord - through revelation (6:77) after he despaired of guidance through observation alone. All of these evidences - and there are many more - show **the obligation of knowing Allāh through revelation**. So pay attention here to the difference between the followers of the Prophets, Messengers, revealed Books, the Companions, Successors and Imāms of the Sunnah and between the followers of the approach of the Philosophers in acquisition of knowledge. The atheistic naturalist Philosophers say that reason (‘aql) is the starting point of definitive knowledge of the “natural world” and the universe. The Mutakallimūn (Ahl al-Kalām) took that same starting point and simply applied it to knowledge about Allāh, claiming - as do the atheists - that the evidence of reason is definitive (qaṭ’iyy) and that the first obligation is philosophical reflection on the universe so as to arrive at knowledge of Allāh.

Next al-Lalikāī mentions evidences for the obligation of knowing the Messengers through revelation, he says, “And likewise, the obligation of knowing the Messengers through revelation (al-sam’)” and he cites a series of verses (7:158), (17:15), (4:165), (28:44-47), (20:133-134) and then he says, “So He showed that knowledge (ma’rifah) of Allāh and the Messengers is through revelation just as Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) informed. And this is the madhhab of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā’ah.” End quote. Our focus is upon knowledge of Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) primarily and as for the discussion about knowledge of the Messenger - as in knowing and proving he was a messenger - this is a separate topic that requires its own details and we are not going to discuss that in detail here. But pay attention to what

al-Lālikāī said after bringing evidences from the Qur’ān, he said, “**And this is the madhhab of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā’ah**” - this is their way, this is their methodology, that acquisition of knowledge of Allāh (and His Messengers) is obligatory **by** and **through** revelation. In other words it is **the revelation** that makes acquisition of knowledge about Allāh **through revelation** to be obligatory.²⁹ This is different to the direction of the various factions of the Jahmiyyah who generally tend to the view that it is **the intellect** that obligates knowledge of Allāh through the intellect and they built their whole theology around this foundation. So they have resembled the Philosophers in this regard who said that the intellect is the source and foundation of all knowledge.

Now this is a fundamental matter and it determines how each party views the revealed texts and how they acquire knowledge of Allāh (and of the truthfulness of His Messenger). Remember we are discussing here how the two parties - the Salafis on the one hand and the Ash’arīs, Mātūrīdīs on the other - how they view and look at the revealed texts. And we are speaking specifically about the texts pertaining to Allāh, His names, attributes and actions, not all of revelation, but specifically about knowing Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) and the verses of the Qur’an and statements of the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) pertaining to this field of knowledge. After this al-Lālikāī brings evidence from the Sunnah, we will summarize what he brought here:

Al-Lālikāī brings three narrations of one ḥadīth of a bedouin man coming from the desert and asking him. The bedouin said, “O Muḥammad, your messenger came to us and claimed to us that you claim Allāh sent you.” And the Messenger said, “He spoke truthfully.” (no. 326, 327, 328). Then al-Lālikāī brings another ḥadīth (no. 329) related by Ibn ‘Abbās (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) in which a man delegated by Banī Sa’d came to the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and asked him successive questions about who created the heaven and Earth and

²⁹ This of course does not mean that some limited knowledge about Allāh and His attributes cannot be gained through reason.

who fixed these mountains. The Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) answered “Allāh” each time. Then the man said, “Then by the One who created the heaven, created the Earth and fixed these mountains, did Allāh send you?” The Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said “Yes.” Then al-Lālikāī brings other variations of the same incident from different Companions. In the report of Anas (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) the man said, “I implore you by your Lord and the Lord of whoever came before you, did Allāh send you to all of the creation?” And in the ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Abbās, “Your message came to us and your messengers informed us that we should testify none deserves to be worshipped but Allāh alone and that we leave al-Lāt, al-‘Uzzā, so I implore you by Him, did He command you [with this]?” The Messenger said, “Yes.” Then the man proceeded to ask about the five prayers, fasting a month in the year, giving zakāh, making pilgrimage and after the Messenger confirmed all of these are obligations, the man said, “By Him who sent you with the truth, I shall not add anything to their [performance] nor take anything way from their [performance]. Then the Messenger said, “If he is truthful, he will enter Paradise.”³⁰

Let us pause here and identify the point of evidence. This man came to the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and enquired about the creator and whether he was the Messenger and what his message was. When He asked who created the heaven and Earth, the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) did not teach him a rational proof. He did not say you must know your Creator through reason. He did not say that the universe is made up of bodies and accidents (*ajsām, a’rāḍ*) and whatever has motion (*ḥarakah*) followed by rest (*sukūn*) or rest followed by motion or whatever separates after being combined or combines after being separated, or whatever

³⁰ The ḥadīth is related by al-Bukhārī through al-Layth bin Sa’d and Muslim through Anas and also Ibn ‘Abbās and it is also related by the compilers of the Sunan, Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasāī, Ibn Mājah, and also al-Tirmidhī and also Aḥmad in al-Musnad.

possesses incidental attributes or undergoes events and change is a body (*jism*) and all bodies are originated and so on. All of this this is philosophical babble. It is the speculative, theoretical language of philosophers and not the certain, definitive language of the Prophets of Allāh. What did he (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) say? He informed him - through revelation - that Allāh is his creator. This is already rooted in the *fiṭrah*, but the Messenger informed him through revelation. The revelation came to corroborate and perfect the *fiṭrah*. Likewise, when the man implored him to answer whether Allāh sent him and whether he was sent to all of creation, he (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said “Yes.” And when asked whether he was sent with the command to worship Allāh alone and shun all other gods, he said, “Yes.” So the man came to know Allāh, the Messenger and Tawḥīd through revelation because the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was the medium of revelation, the Messenger is only speaking through revelation.

So pay attention to what the Prophets and Messengers obligated and what the Ahl al-Kalām who followed the Philosophers, what they obligated upon the people. The people of kalām enjoin philosophical speculation upon all people and consider them sinful (or disbelievers) if they do not engage in it whilst having the ability to do so and having reached maturity. Where is the Qur’ān, Sunnah and Ijmā’ that establishes this? There isn’t. They don’t have it. Rather, it is with the Salafīs in their approach to knowing Allāh, it is with the Salaf. So an Ash’arī and Mātūrīdī knows he is a liar if he claims that his **approach** and **method** of knowing Allāh and speaking about Allāh is based upon Qur’ān, Sunnah and Ijmā’ - he knows he would be a liar and this is what establishes from the very outset that any Jahmite operating as an “Ash’arī” or “Mātūrīdī” today is not fundamentally following the way of the Salaf but wants to defraud the ummah with a sophisticated academic fraud which involves concealment and distortion of history. This is why the Ash’arīs and Mātūrīdīs flee from these types of discussions, like the one we are presenting in this paper, that which deal with substance, history and facts because this uncovers their fraud very clearly.

Now, another thing, many centuries later by the time we reach the time of **Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī** (d. 505H) and **Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī** (d. 606H), these people, even their scholars, they got **utterly, utterly confused and bewildered** - some of them got confused about the strength of evidence for the universe being originated or eternal, this is because the tools they used, the conceptual baggage and the nature of the proof, it was flawed, speculative, it incorporated false assumptions, and so they got confused and bewildered - and some of them started writing about how the common people should not delve into kalām. So from that period onwards they generally discouraged the common people to not go too deep in these issues and not to delve in to kalām - not because it is falsehood in their view, but because it is confusing, bewildering and would be a trial for the common folk and would lead them directly to atheism. And that is because if the arguments they relied upon are taken to their natural, logical, rational outcomes, they lead to pure atheism.³¹

This is why today, this bāṭil which their theology is founded upon is not taught openly and not revealed at the beginning to the common folk - so in the more recent works, you will not see the long-winded philosophical discussions that you will see in the very early works, with all the philosophical babble about bodies, accidents, motion, rest, combination, separation and so on and the minute details pertaining to all of that. But they still operate on the correctness of all of that, it is an assumed foundation on the basis of which everything else is propounded. So all the later books were authored upon the assumption that what preceded in the books of the earlier ones was correct and true. Now this makes it very difficult for even a learned Ash‘arī and Mātūrīdī, one who studies from the later works and who does not know history, to really see where all of this has come from, let alone the common folk amongst them. This is because they operate upon *taqlīd*,

³¹ Al-Ghazālī readily admits this in his book *Iljām al-‘Awām ‘an ‘ilm al-Kalām* that the common folk are averse to a theology founded upon philosophical language and they would turn to atheism very quickly if they were to encounter this type of theology.

they are taught *taqlīd*, they just blindly follow what is in the books and do not use their ‘aql because it has been compromised by the falsehood they have been taught and brainwashed with. And thereafter, as a result of this evil *tarbiyah*, they are nurtured to become enemies, to become assailants of Ahl al-Sunnah and attack Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah, the People of Ḥadīth and Āthār and accuse them with what they are free of, and they have been taught how to do that because they have also been fed with large bouts of intellectual terrorism against those “Evil Mujassimah” who have landed from Mars and are going to destroy everybody on Earth with *tajsīm* and *tashbīh* and they equip them with the *ta’wīl* gun and the *tafwīd* bazooka to zap those revealed texts that do not agree with ‘aql so that the speech of Allāh and His Messenger which contains the horrible stains of *tajsīm* and *tasbhīh* can be cleansed so that those evil Mujasasimah from Mars can be held at bay because the revelation they rely upon has been sanitized by the definitive judgement of ‘aql (intellect).

This is the evil perception of these people their propaganda rests upon it. What is this propaganda based upon? It is based upon the theoretical and metaphysical foundations of the Philosophers upon which they built their theology. And what are they warning against? Those who venerate the revealed texts and hold that these texts contain definitive knowledge in the loftiest fields of knowledge, the knowledge of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), so they affirm these texts whilst negating likeness and affirm that Allāh’s speech is most eloquent, most guiding - whereas they, the Mutakallimūn claim that Allāh’s speech, if left as it is upon its apparentness, invites to *tajsīm*, *tashbīh* and *kufr*.

Then al-Lālikāī brings the commentary of Ibn ‘Abbās upon the verse in Sūrah al-Nūr “**Allah is the Light of the heavens and the Earth.**” (24:35):

Allāh, the Sublime, is the guide (Hādī) of the people of the heaven and the people of the Earth. The example of his guidance in the heart of a believer is like the example of oil that has been lit and gives light before it is touched by fire. When it is touched by fire it increases in light on top of

its light. Likewise is the heart of the believer in which guidance is active before knowledge comes to it. When knowledge comes to it, it increases in guidance on top of guidance, and light on top of light. Just as Ibrāhīm (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) said, “This is my lord”³² when he saw the stars and before guidance came to him and anyone told him he had a lord. Then when Allāh informed him that He is his lord he increased in guidance upon guidance.

The point of evidence here is that Ibrāhīm already had something of guidance, he was already averse to the worship of the sun, moon and stars, but then revelation came to him with guidance and knowledge of his Lord, and Ibrāhīm had said, “**Unless my Lord guides me, I will surely be among the people gone astray**” (6:77). So Allāh guided him and granted him knowledge of Himself through revelation, and this was guidance upon guidance, as Ibrāhīm was already averse to false deities. This is also a refutation of the Jahmiyyah who try to claim that Ibrāhīm came to know Allāh through the route of their proof (*ḥudūth al-ajsām*), this is not true, but this is one of their doubts and it is a futile and flimsy doubt. They say that Ibrāhīm saw that the sun, moon and stars move and because motion is only the property of bodies, then the sun, moon and stars could not be his Lord, and this is a proof that Allāh is not a body! Look at how they bring their Aristotelian philosophy into interpreting the Book of Allāh. From where did they get this explanation? They invented and fabricated it. It is a revilement upon Ibrāhīm (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) because it implies he did not know that the sun, moon and stars did not create him (remember Tawḥīd to them is **only rubūbiyyah** and *ilāh* and *rabb* are *synonymous*) but when he saw their motion, he knew they were bodies, hence originated and could not be

³² Ibrāhīm (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) said this in the form of rejection and denial with the meaning “Is this supposed to be my lord according to my people?” Also when the word *rabb* is mentioned alone, it includes the meaning of *ilāh* and when *ilāh* is mentioned alone it includes the meaning of *rabb*. Whilst one includes the meaning of the other when used in isolation, the two terms are not synonymous - each has a unique meaning.

“creators.” All of this is falsehood, it is a revilement of this great Messenger and it clashes with the tafsīr of the Salaf. How can anyone possibly say that Ibrāhīm wrongly thought the sun, moon and stars were lords (creators) - because remember, that is what these people claim about the meaning of *ilāh*, that it means the ability to create (*al-qudrah ‘alā ikhtirā‘ al-a‘yān*), the ability to create entities, this is what they consider Tawhīd, so upon that, in their usage of this verse in this way, they are implying then that Ibrāhīm thought the sun creates, or the moon creates or the stars create and this is a revilement of a great messenger amongst the messengers and we seek refuge in such misguidance - but this is the end result of *falsafah* disguised through the word *kalām* - it sandpapers the intellect and leaves it in ruins.

Then al-Lālikāī brings the famous ḥadīth of Jibrīl (no. 332) in which Jibrīl came in the form of man in white clothing and asked about Islām, Īmān and Iḥsān, about the foundations of the religion, the uṣūl. The point of evidence in this ḥadīth is that knowledge of Allāh and His Messengers is through revelation and the Messenger did not start speaking with reason (‘aql) and about bodies (ajsām) and accidents (a‘rāḍ) and enjoin the likes of this upon anyone to know their Creator or the foundations of the religion. Then al-Lālikāī brings a narration through two routes (nos. 333, 334) that:

A man came to ‘Umar and said, “O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn, teach me the religion.” So he said, “That you testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh alone and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. That you establish the prayer, give the zakāh, make pilgrimage to the House and fast [the month of] Ramaḍān. Be open [in your affair] and beware of secrecy and everything that you would be ashamed of. And if you meet Allāh, then say, “Umar commanded me with this’.”

So the evidence here is the same as the evidence in the ḥadīth of Jibrīl, this man came to ‘Umar and asked him to teach him the dīn, so ‘Umar taught him the foundations, the uṣūl of the religion, the *shahādātān*, this

is the first obligation and he did so through revelation, he taught the man through what is in the revelation, through the Sunnah. He did not start teaching him a rational proof for Allāh's existence as the first obligation. This is the end of the section from Imām al-Lālikā'ī. Now let's move to Imām al-Sijzī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ).

Imām al-Sijzī's Defence and Veneration of Revelation as the Source of Definitive and Certain Knowledge About Allāh

Imām al-Sijzī (d. 444H) wrote in his book, *Risālah ilā Ahli Zabīd*,³³ mentioning the chapter heading for the first section of his book:

The First Section in Establishing the Evidence That the Definitive Evidence is that Which Comes Through the Revelation, Not Other Than it and that Intellect is A Faculty of Discernment Only.³⁴

In the view of the followers of the Prophets and revealed Books - those who follow the last and final Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and consider his speech to be the most guiding, the most certain, the most definitive - reason ('aql) is a faculty of discernment and comprehension and not *an independent evidence* in itself for knowledge about Allāh, even if it can arrive at some generalized knowledge of Allāh, as al-Sijzī will shortly mention. Al-Sijzī (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ) continues:

Allāh the Sublime said, **“Say, ‘I am only a man like you, to whom has been revealed that your god is [but] one God.’”** (18:110). So He (جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ) ordered His Prophet (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) to call to the affirmation of [His] Oneness through revelation (wahy). And He said, **“And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, ‘There is no deity except Me, so worship Me.’”** (21:25). So He made clear that the Messengers that preceded used to use revelation as a proof for [Allāh’s] Oneness and they were not commanded except with that. And He (جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ) said, **“And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allāh and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allāh and the Last Day. That is the best [way] and best in result.”** (4:59). And He said, **“And if you**

³³ Dār al-Rāyah, 1414H, 1st edition, pp. 91-95

³⁴ This title is taken from al-Sijzī’s introduction in which he mentions titles for eleven chapters into which he divided his book.

obey most of those upon the earth, they will mislead you from the way of Allāh. They follow not except assumption, and they do but lie [through conjecture].” (6:116).

All of the Prophets were ordered to invite through revelation, not reason. Within revelation there is evidence of reason too but **it is not** the alleged evidence of reason employed by the followers of the approach of the Philosophers. What they intend by reason (*‘aql*) and observation (*nadhār*) is something else. It is speech about bodies, accidents, motion, rest (*ajṣām, a’rāḍ, ḥarakah, sukūn*) and so on and using this to prove Allāh’s existence which hardly a nation from the nations of the Earth denied and which is rooted in the *fiṭrah* of all mankind. The above verses indicate that argument with, through and by revelation is the way of the Prophets. They were commanded with this way. They were ordered to preach that all disputes should be referred back to the Messenger and that most of those on the Earth follow conjecture, speculation and tell lies because they rely upon their reason and opinion and oppose revelation. As will become evident, this is the very way of the people of *kalām*, they make reason to be the foundation and end up with conjectures, contradictions, inconsistencies and end up lying against Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) and His Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Then al-Sijzī (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ) says:

And the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, “I have been commanded to fight the people until they say, ‘There is none worthy of worship but Allāh’ and when they say it, their blood and wealth is protected from me except in relation to a right [pertaining to this kalimah] and their reckoning is with Allāh.”³⁵ The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) did not call anyone to intellectual argument and nor did he command his ummah with that.

From this we know with absolute certainty that an Ash‘arī and Mātūrīdī can never, ever claim to be following the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah of the Messenger and the *Ijmā’* of the Salaf in the issue of the methodology

³⁵ Related by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

of the acquisition of knowledge of Allāh and the methodology of calling to Allāh. Al-Sijzī (رحمته الله) continues:

And ‘Umar [bin al-Khaṭṭāb] and Sahl bin Hunayf both said, “Suspect opinion with respect to the religion.”³⁶ None from the Companions opposed them, they used to make ijtihād in the branches (of the religion). Thus, it is known that by this [statement] they intended to prevent returning to the intellect in matters of belief.”

Meaning, that the Companions prohibited opinion in matters of belief specifically. As for the rulings (*aḥkām, furū*), they used to make ijtihād when a clear text was not present or known to them, and they may be right or wrong. But this approach is not permissible in beliefs, and this is the meaning of these types of statements from these Companions about opinion (*ra’i*) they mean matters of belief, at the head of which is knowledge of Allāh and His names, attributes and actions. This is opposed by the Philosophers, the Jahmiyyah and all their subsequent offshoots. Al-Sijzī (رحمته الله) continues:

And there is no difference amongst the jurists that it is not obligatory to argue with the disbelievers and atheists through rationalities and that the Muslims have been commanded to take what the Messenger has given them and to avoid what He prohibited them from and He warned them against a tribulation or a tormenting punishment that would afflict them if they opposed his command. Allāh, the Sublime, said, “**And take whatever the Messenger has given you and refrain from what he has forbidden you.**” (59:7) and the Exalted said, “**So let those beware who oppose the Prophet’s order, lest tribulation strike them or a painful punishment.**” (24:63). And ‘Umar (رحمته الله) - alongside his lofty position - disliked the treaty on the day of Ḥudaybiyyah, and he considered the returning of

³⁶ Related by Muslim in Kitāb al-Jihād, al-Ṭabarānī in al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr.

Muslims to the disbelievers to be something great. But this was through his intellect (‘aql) and the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said to him, ‘You have seen that I am pleased O ‘Umar yet you refuse.’ Then ‘Umar stopped and remained silent due to his knowledge that obedience to the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) has been made obligatory and because he does not speak from desire and that revelation is not to be countered with intellect.

When we look at the statements of the Ash‘arī and Mātūrīdī scholars in disdain of the revealed texts, belittling them and glorifying the intellect over and above revelation, you will see what will make you shake and shiver.³⁷ These affairs are not put on the table by the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs today because they operate on deception and concealment and they share some of the traits of the hypocrites in that what they show on the outside is not what is really on the inside.³⁸ We have already quoted some of their statements from **al-Rāzī** (d. 606H), **al-Āmidī** (d. 631H) and **al-Tafatazānī** (d. 793H) at the beginning of this paper to indicate the perception these people have towards revelation: Speculative, uncertain expressions creating presumptions of *tajsīm* and *kufr* in the minds of the listeners and unfit for providing definitive, certain knowledge. We seek refuge in Allāh. But the Ash‘arī and Mātūrīdī will not put this on the table. The Salafī puts his glass of fresh, clean, pure, wholesome milk on the table. The Ash‘arī and Mātūrīdī cannot do that because of his knowledge that dung, puss and blood does not appeal to any audience. Al-Sijzī (رحمة الله) continues:

³⁷ This does not in any way imply takfīr of these people or their scholars because they are operating on shubuhāt (misconceptions) whose futility they do not see and they never intended to wilfully and deliberately oppose revelation. But because they took an innovated, alien approach in this field, they were led to make calamitous statements which they thought were guidance and knowledge.

³⁸ This is observed about them by Imām al-Sijzī himself in this same work and also by Imām al-Dārimī (d. 280H) in his *al-Radd ‘alā al-Jahmiyyah*.

There is no difference between the Muslims that it is not permissible to reject the Book through the intellect. Rather, the intellect indicates the obligation of accepting it and taking it as one's leader, guide. Likewise, the saying of the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) when it is established as being from him, it is not permissible to reject it. That which is obligatory is to reject everything that opposes them both or one of them.

This is a matter of *ijmā'* (consensus) amongst the Companions and the Salaf as a whole. When you uncover the actual *uṣūl* (foundations) which are found buried in the books of the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs and not declared openly, it becomes clear they are opposers to revelation, to the Messenger, to the Companions and to the Salaf - and thus, it is from the greatest of deceptions and frauds for them to even attempt to make the claim that they are the followers of the Salaf. For they only arrived at their saying that the Salaf were upon *tawfīd* of both *ma'nā* (meaning) and *kayf* (how) after a long series of plots and stratagems to find ways to counter the revealed texts that do not agree with their desires. Thus, they sailed the oceans of *āḥād* and *mutawātir*, and then the issue of *majāz* and *ḥaqīqah* and then the issue of *mutashābihāt* - all of these affairs were used by their ancestors the **Mu'tazilah** and were inherited from them³⁹ and when the Imāms of the Sunnah refuted them on these issues and the people of *kalām* themselves got confused and disillusioned - they brought out the claim that the Salaf were upon *tawfīd* of both *ma'nā* (meaning) and *kayf* (how) and that they were unlettered people towards the texts of the attributes - which is a blatantly false claim and a fabrication against history. The point here is that al-Sijzī has cited a consensus from the Salaf about the evidence of revelation being the primary foundation, not the evidence of the intellect and the consensus

³⁹ The heads of the Mu'tazilah include: Wāṣil bin 'Aṭā' (d. 131H), 'Amr bin 'Ubayd (d. 144H), Abū al-Ḥudhayl al-'Allāf (d. 227H), Ibrāhīm bin Sayyār al-Nadhdhām (d. 231H), Abū 'Uthmān al-Jāhiz (d. 255H), Abū al-Ḥusayn 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-Khayyāṭ (d. 300H), Abū 'Alī al-Jubā'ī (d. 303H), Abū Hāshim al-Jubā'ī (d. 321H), al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415H), Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī (d. 436H).

that is found in the books of the Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah and Māturīdiyyah flatly contradicts this. Al-Sijzī (رحمة الله) continues:

And the Salaf were also agreed that knowledge of Allāh is possible through the route of intellect, but not obligatory and that the obligation [of acquiring knowledge] is through revelation (*sam'*) because the threat (of punishment) has been connected with that. Allāh, the Exalted said, **“And never would We punish until We sent a messenger.”** (17:15). Thus, when we know that intellect is present before the sending of a messenger [with revelation] and that punishment has been lifted [until after the sending of a messenger] and we find that whoever opposes the messengers and the texts deserves punishment, then it has become clear that the proof (*ḥujjah*) is in what comes through revelation, not other than it.

This is opposed by **Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī** (d. 333H) who writes in the opening passage to his Kitāb al-Tawḥīd that the proof of intellect is the returning point for establishing the foundation of the religion, “So whoever’s point of return in [the matter] of religion is to it [the intellect] through which it is validated, then this is the one who is correct.”⁴⁰ In other places in the same book he says that there is no other way to know Allāh except through proving the universe is originated [through the kalām route that is], which they refer to as *nadhar* and *istidlāl* (observation and deduction). In his other work, Ta’wīlāt Ahl al-Sunnah which is in reality Ta’wīlāt Ahl al-Bid’ah he interprets the verse, **“[We sent] messengers as bringers of good tidings and warners so that mankind will have no proof (ḥujjah) against Allah after the messengers. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise”** (4:165) by saying that the proof brought by the Messengers is in relation to acts of worship and legislations (ībādāt, sharā’i) which can only known through the sharī’ah and not through intellect, “But as for the religion, the path to its adherence is through intellect, and they do not

⁴⁰ Refer to p. 65 (taḥqīq by Bakr Awghalī and Muḥammad Ārūtshī, Dār Ṣādir).

have any proof against Allāh with respect to that.”⁴¹ He is speaking about the foundations of the religion, he means that the proof is already established even before the sending of the messengers because of the presence of the faculty of intellect, which means that the intellect is the foundation of the religion, not what the messengers bring.⁴² This meaning is repeated in many of the books of the Mātūrīdīs. This is the same view as al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār the Mu‘tazilī who says that reason cannot arrive at knowledge of the acts of worship and thus revelation is the basis for that, but as for the foundations of the religion, proving Allāh’s existence, then this is for the intellect.⁴³ As for Salaf, they follow that which is plain and apparent in the Qur’ān: That the punishment is lifted in the foundational matter of the religion - despite the presence of the faculty intellect - and is only justified after the Messengers have been sent and their message (through revelation) has been rejected.

It is a matter of agreement between the **Mu‘tazilah**, **Ash‘ariyyah** and **Mātūrīdiyyah** that the intellect takes the primary and most fundamental role in the foundations of the religion and knowledge of Allāh. The Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs took this from the Mu‘tazilah Jahmiyyah, not the Salaf, and made it the foundation of their religion, and the Mu‘tazilah took this from **the Philosophers**.⁴⁴ **Al-Jāhīz** the Mu‘tazilī (d. 255H) says, “Upon my life, the eyes do err, the senses do lie and definitive judgement is only for the mind and sound evidence is only for the intellect [to provide]...”⁴⁵ and **al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār** says, “When both the muḥkam and mutashābih [statements] are related

⁴¹ As in *Ta’wīlāt Ahl al-Sunnah*, Dār Kutub al-Miṣriyyah (1/444) through Aḥmad al-Ḥarbī in *al-Mātūrīdiyyah, Dirāsatan wa Taqwīman* (Dār al-‘Āshimāh, p. 141).

⁴² The implication of this statement and of the position of Ahl al-Kalām in general is that the sending of the Messengers was unnecessary for establishing the foundations of the religion. The foundations of the religion can be established by the intellect on its own.

⁴³ *Al-Mughnī Fī Bāb al-‘Adl wal-Tawḥīd* (p. 15, 27-28).

⁴⁴ Refer to Ḥanīf Āyish al-‘Utaybī’s work on the effect of the foundations of the Mū‘tazilah on the Ash‘arīs [*Athar al-Fikr al-I‘tizālī Fī Aqā‘id al-Ash‘irah*] from where the citations from the Mu‘tazilah have been taken.

⁴⁵ *Risālah al-Tarbī wal-Tadwīr* (p. 88).

concerning Tawḥid and ‘Adl (justice), then it is vital for them both to be founded upon evidences of the intellects.”⁴⁶ He means Tawḥid and ‘adl (justice)⁴⁷ by which they mean their particular doctrine in the matter of *qadar*, must be established through evidence of reason, not evidence of revelation. He also says “Know that indication [to knowledge] is four [types]: The proof of reason (‘aql), the Book, the Sunnah and consensus, and the knowledge of Allāh, the Exalted, is not attained except through reason. If we were to seek evidence through anything from them [the revealed texts], we would be seeking evidence through the branch (far‘) of something for its foundation (aṣl), and that is not permissible.”⁴⁸ The Ash‘arī scholar, ‘Abd al-Qāhir Abū Manṣūr al-Baghdādī (d. 429H) makes clear in his work, Uṣūl al-Dīn, that the validity of the revelation itself depends on the reason being able to prove Allāh’s existence.⁴⁹ The evidence of reason they refer to is the philosophical baggage of bodies, accidents, motion, rest, combination and separation (*ajṣām, a‘rāḍ, ḥarakah, sukūn, ijtimā‘, iftirāq*) which they took from the Mu‘tazilah who took it from the Greek Philosophers. And when this clashed with what came in the Qur’ān of attributes and actions for Allāh, they assaulted the Qur’anic texts with what their intellects demanded - distortion (*taḥrīf*) in the name of *ta’wīl*, which was the way of the Jahmiyyah Mū‘tazilah, and then later they fabricated *tafwīḍ* and ascribed it to the Salaf. As for the Sunnah, they rejected the *āḥād* ḥadīths and took the path of distortion (*taḥrīf*) towards the *mutawātir*. And in all of this, the Mu‘tazilah, Ash‘ariyyah and Mātūrīdiyyah are partners and allies

⁴⁶ *Mutashābih al-Qur’ān* (2/7).

⁴⁷ By “justice” they mean to say that man creates his own actions so that he can be judged with justice. If Allāh created man’s actions, then they Mu‘tazilah claim this would not be justice. How can Allāh decree and create man’s actions then punish him for them? So the term “justice” (‘adl) is used by them to refer to their rejection of al-Qadar. As for Ahl al-Sunnah, they say Allāh decrees and creates the actions of the servants, but the servants are given the faculties of *fiṭrah, ‘aql, irādah, qudrah* by which they are able to know, reflect, choose and act and then they are sent Books and Messengers through which the proof is established and reward and punishment is justified. There is no injustice in any of this.

⁴⁸ *Sharh Uṣūl al-Khamsah* (p. 88).

⁴⁹ Refer to pp. 14-15, 24-25, 202-203 (Istanbul, 1st edition, 1346H).

against the Salaf and their followers. So look with the vision of insight and do not let these modern-day Jahmite fraudsters posing as “Ash‘arīs” and “Mātūrīdīs” deceive you into thinking they venerate and follow the Salaf. The claim of the Salaf being upon *tafwīd* is only the last in a series of twists and turns, of running away from one disgrace to another until they found refuge in this final saying. Lets come back to al-Sijzī (رحمة الله) who continues:

And we are in agreement too that if a man was to say, ‘Intellect is not a proof in itself but the proof is known through it’⁵⁰ he would not become a disbeliever, nor a sinner. But if a man was to say, ‘The Book of Allāh, the Sublime, is not a proof for us in and of itself’ then is a disbeliever whose blood is lawful. We have therefore established that the definitive evidence is that which comes through revelation, not other than it.

This is precisely what the Atheist Philosophers say, they reject revelation is a *ḥujjah* (proof) fundamentally, because they do not believe

⁵⁰ Note: The Salafīs say that the intellect is not a proof in and of itself and is a faculty through which the actual proof - that of revelation - is known and understood. This is different to saying the intellect is the proof in and of itself, a consequence of which is that revelation becomes secondary and must conform to the intellect. This also helps us to explain the understanding of *taqlīd* with these people. Anyone who makes revelation primary and follows it as proof is a *muqallid* because he has not validated his proof rationally. In the books of the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs you will find discussions about the validity of the faith of a “*muqallid*” - meaning one who has not rationally proved Allāh exists and founded his faith upon this. You can see the clear philosophical influence in this and this is the kind of thing that atheists say to the people of faith, that they are blind followers who do not use reason. Then after prohibiting from what they refer to *taqlīd* (meaning to accept the saying of Allāh and His Messenger as proof in and of itself), it is mighty strange that the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs enjoin blind following of an *imām* in the branches of the religion! So “blindly following” the saying of Allāh and His Messenger as self-contained proof - in the field of the foundations of the religion - is unlawful and blindly-following an *imām* (whose saying is not proof in and of itself) in the foundations of the religion is *wājib* (obligatory)!

in it. The Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah and Mātūrīdiyyah followed them in making the intellect to be the foundation for definitive knowledge and demoted revelation to second place. Thus, the foundations of the religion (uṣūl al-dīn) are not established through revelation primarily, but through the intellect. So the Philosophers deny revelation fundamentally and make reason the starting point of all knowledge of the world, and the people of kalām took the idea from them and made reason the starting point for the foundations of the religion (which they call 'aqliyyāt, rational matters) and put the revelation behind their backs - except in matters of worship, rulings and the affairs of the hereafter (which they call sam'iyāt, revealed matters). So they threw a portion of the Book behind their backs and claimed it is speculative and not proof in and of itself. Al-Sijzī (رحمة الله) continues:

We find also that those who speak with intellect alone (as the foundation) and claim that it is the first of proofs differing with respect to it. Each one of them claims the truth is with him. There is no way for anyone to judge between them in any situation and there will only be continuous disputation [amongst them] which is prohibited [by the legislation]. We also find them speaking with a saying today, claiming it is required by reason, and then recanting from it the next day to another saying. And it is not obligatory that whatever is like this should be a proof in and of itself. We also find that it is not permissible for the revealed Book to be subject to abrogation [in the topic of beliefs]. It has become obligatory upon us to submit to it and enter under its judgement. Thus the proof lies in it, not in intellect alone.

This is clear evidence that the people of kalām are upon bāṭil. They claim the evidence of reason is definitive but then the reason of **Ibrāhīm al-Nadhdhām** the Mu'tazilī differs with that of **Ibn Kullāb** and that of Ibn Kullāb differs with that of **Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī**, the Mu'tazilī, and his reason differs with that of **Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī**, an early Ash'arī, and

his reason in turn differs with **Abū Manṣūr al-Baghdādī** and **Abū al-Mu‘ālī al-Juwaynī**, two Ash‘arīs who came after him, because he affirmed Allāh’s ‘uluww and ṣifāt khabariyyah without ta’wīl and tafwīd and they denied them. The reason of the later Ash‘arīs like **al-Shahrastānī** opposed the reason of the earlier Ash‘arīs. Then we have **al-Razī**, in one book he says one thing and then in another he says what contradicts it, and refutes himself with arguments weaker than the ones he used to demonstrate his other position. So this is the reality of these people, inconsistent, contradictory, divided, some of them making takfīr of others and each faction claiming definitive knowledge in what they profess. The Qur’an and Sunnah unite (that’s why the saying of Ahl al-Sunnah is uniform and consistent) and *kalām* and *falsafah* split and divide. At the end of their affair they bring out the fabrication of *tafwīd* and ascribe it to the Salaf as a blanket attempt to cover their history of disgraces and argue for their falsehood of *ta’ṭīl* and *taḥrīf* whose basis lies in the rhetoric of the Philosophers and not in any revealed Book or with any sent Messenger or with the Companions or the Salaf. Al-Sijzī (رحمه الله) continues:

The Book has come with a notification of the [granting] of intellect [to man] and its excellence and it has explained that whoever opposed the Book is from those who do not possess intellect because intellect requires the servant to accept from his Master and to abandon his own presumption for [the guidance of His Master] and to proceed towards His obedience and to judge that whatever is besides it is repugnant. With this much there is sufficiency inshā’Allāh. Alongside the fact that al-Ash‘arī claims that the intellect does not render something good or repugnant. And this, upon my life, is in clear opposition to intellect and the explanation of this will come in another chapter by the will of Allāh (عز وجل).

The Ash‘arīs hold it is only revelation which determines something to be good (ḥasan) or repugnant (qabīḥ), that things are not good or repugnant in and of themselves and hence, the goodness and

repugnance of a thing is not known through reason ('aql).⁵¹ By way of example, Abū al-Mu'ālī al-Juwaynī (d. 478H) says, "The intellect does not indicate the goodness (ḥusn) or repugnance (qubḥ) of a thing in any imposed ruling, rather judging something to be good and repugnant is only for the legislation and is necessitated by the revelation."⁵² This is the standard Ash'arī position and it means that the intellect does not know fornication, gambling and murder to be repugnant until and unless the legislation judges it to be so. In other words, all deeds are equivalent and neutral until the Sharī'ah comes and judges some to be good and others to be repugnant. Meaning, that righteousness to parents and fornication are equivalent as actions and that "goodness" or "repugnance" are attached to them by the Sharī'ah when it comes. This is falsehood and is refuted by the Qur'ān and Sunnah and we do not wish to digress into that.⁵³ The point here made by al-Sijzī is that the Ash'arīs believe the intellect is not capable of knowing or determining a thing from the entities and actions in the world to be good or repugnant yet they make this same deficient, incapable intellect to be the foundation for judging what Allāh can and cannot be described with and whether what Allāh described Himself with through revelation is good or repugnant! This itself is contrary to reason and indicates that these people do not operate upon reason in reality but act contrary to it and violate its most basic and elementary precepts. Al-Sijzī (رحمته الله) continues:

⁵¹ The Mu'tazilah on the other hand state that only the intellect determines things to be good or repugnant.

⁵² *Al-Irshād* (Maktabah al-Khānjī, 1369H, p. 258)

⁵³ For example, Allāh says, "**And he makes lawful for them the good things (tayyibāt) and makes unlawful for them the evil things (khabā'ith)**" (7:157) which indicates that things were already good before being made lawful and things were already evil before being made unlawful. In other words entities and actions have inherent properties of goodness or evil and this can be known prior to revelation. Thus, fornication, murder and theft is known to be evil and repugnant by reason, before revelation. But the Ash'arīs deny the inherent properties of things and all material causes and effects - as a result of which all people, atheists, philosophers, scientists and the Muslims whose physical senses, common sense and reason are still intact, laugh at them for their stupidity and irrationality.

So when [the truth of] what we have said is established, their controversial claim - that intellect demands [the position which] they speak with - is put to an end. This is because we do not give preference to following an intellect that opposes the revelation. We shall mention their lie that the intellect requires what they have tended to [of their statement] after this if Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) wills.

The great lie of the people of kalām is that because they have proven Allāh's existence through a philosophical method involving speech about bodies, accidents, motion, rest, combination and separation (*ajṣām, a'rāḍ, ḥarakah, sukūn, ijtimā', iftirāq*) and there is no other way to validate Islām but this, then Islām itself depends upon this method. Because it has been arrived at through the definitive evidence of reason as they claim, then the subsequent attitude and approach they take towards the revealed texts pertaining to the attributes has to be true. This is their reasoning. What is the driving force behind all of this? The intellect. So what is the foundation? The intellect. So in reality, if Allāh had not revealed any texts pertaining to His attributes it would have made no difference, because the revelation is not the foundation for this knowledge in any case. The intellect would have sufficed.

This is the end of the statement of our second spokesman in the hall facing the Jahmiyyah, and next we move to our third spokesman who is going to offer a short summary.

Abū al-Muẓaffar al-Sam‘ānī (d. 489H) Summarizes the Two Approaches

Abū al-Muẓaffar al-Sam‘ānī (رحمته الله) said, “Know that the separation of that which is between us and the Innovators is the issue of reason (*‘aql*), for they founded their religion upon rational understanding (*ma‘qūl*) and they made *ittibā’* [following of the Messenger] and that which is related [of reports] to follow [their] rational understanding. As for Ahl al-Sunnah, they said that the foundation is *ittibā’* and the intellects merely follow [it]. If the foundation of the religion was upon rational understanding, then the creation would not have been in need of revelation and [in need of] the Prophets (may the ṣalāt of Allāh be upon them all) and then the meaning of command and prohibition would have been invalidated and anyone who willed could have said whatever he willed.”⁵⁴

We have presented the Prophetic and Salafī, Atharī position through the speech of three Imāms of the fifth century hijrah. Now we need to explain how this affects the way a Sunnī, Salafī, Atharī looks towards the revealed texts, in particular towards the texts relating to Allāh, His names, attributes and actions. This will allow us to contrast clearly between those who are truly following the way of the Salaf in their approach from the academic fraudsters and liars who are not following the way of the Salaf at all, fundamentally, they are following the approach of the **Philosophers, Jahmiyyah** and **Mu‘tazilah** - and then trying to falsify history to make it appear that their saying is the saying of the Salaf. They did not come through the front door but are trying to pretend they did, and their lie is plain and obvious. They do not have the milk because they opted for dung, puss and blood and are trying to pretend that what they have is the milk which they do not possess and have never possessed. The tawfiḍ of the Salaf is affirmation of the words (*alfāz*) and meanings (*ma‘ānī*) with negation of knowledge of the realities

⁵⁴ *Al-Intṣār li Aṣhāb al-Ḥadīth* (p. 81-82) through Ṣawn al-Mantiq of al-Ṣuyūṭī and a longer passage of al-Sam‘ānī refuting the people of kalām on the matter of ḥadīth āhād is cited by Abū al-Qāsim al-Aṣbahānī (d. 535H) in *al-Ḥujjah Fī Bayān al-Maḥajjah* (2/214 onwards).

(*ḥaqā'iq*) upon the uniform consistent principle of *ithbāt* (affirmation) without *takyīf* (asking or specifying how) and *tamthīl* (likening). This view is constructed upon revelation and consensus. The word *tafwīḍ* itself was never used by the Salaf for the attributes.⁵⁵ The *tafwīḍ* fabricated by the Jahmiyyah is similar to a Chinese counterfeit brand. On the surface it appears to be identical to the real thing but on closer inspection the materials are suspect and the inferior quality is readily apparent. The raw materials came from Greece, from the minds and intellects of star-worshipping idolators. Numerous industrial processes were put in place, the *āḥād mutawātir* process, the *majāz ḥaqīqah* process, the *mutashābihāt* process, the *ambiguous words*⁵⁶ process and others. The final result is counterfeit merchandise aimed at replacing genuine merchandise. This similitude here of the Chinese counterfeit brand is the reality of what is taking place and this is what they intend when they say, “This is the *tafwīḍ* of the Salaf.” There are a number of statements from the Scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah after the Salaf who made use of the word *tafwīḍ* in one context or another and naturally the Jahmites rely upon these statements to add the stamp of authenticity to their counterfeit goods - but what they intended was not in the same direction as where the Jahmites desire to go.

⁵⁵ The Salaf prohibited explanations (*tafāsīr*), meanings (*ma'ānī*), definitions (*ḥudūd*) that were other than or in addition to the original meaning which the text came with. And their statements were directed towards the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah. As for the Mushabbihah, the Salaf prohibited that it be said that Allāh's attributes were as (*kā*) or like (*mithl*) those of the creation and the understanding of *tashbīh* with the Jahmiyyah is not the understanding of *tashbīh* with the Salaf.

⁵⁶ The use of philosophically loaded words which comprise a meaning of truth but numerous false meanings - such as *jism*, *ḥawādith*, *tarkīb* and so on.

The Salafī Perception of Revelation

So from what has preceded, we have established the obligation of knowing Allāh through His revelation, through His own speech about Himself and through the Messenger’s speech about Him. How does this affect the way of thinking of a Muslim, a person seeking guidance in this field? The Salafī who is upon what has preceded, he is anticipating knowledge from Allāh Himself, he is anticipating guidance, direction, light, he is awaiting knowledge about Allāh, His names, attributes and actions so that he can worship his Lord upon Tawhīd, so he can love, fear and hope in his Lord. So when He looks into the Book of Allāh, he is wanting guidance to the correct way of thinking, the correct approach, the correct way of acquiring knowledge from Allāh about Allāh himself. What does this imply? It implies that he venerates the Book of Allāh, that he knows that it is going to guide him and not confuse him, he knows that its evidence is certain and definitive and that he will receive satisfaction, guidance, light, illumination. Further, even the foundation for this whole attitude is in the Book of Allāh itself, so a believer has certainty:

First, that Allāh is most knowledgeable of His own self, “**Are you more knowing or is Allāh?**” (2:140), He is most truthful in speech, “**And who is more truthful than Allah in statement**” (4:87) and Allāh is most eloquent in speech. Likewise, the Messenger is the most knowledgeable of Allāh in the creation, “**He [Muḥammad] does not speak of his own desire, it is but revelation revealed to him.**” (53:3-4), and He is the most eloquent in the creation and he is the most eager and desirous to convey the guidance of Allāh to give the servants knowledge of Allāh. He never delayed imparting any knowledge from the time the Muslims (the Companions) were in need of knowing it. The Salafi perception is a wholesome, pure perception. But the Philosophical Jahmite perception of the Ash‘arī and Mātūrīdī is a filthy, vile perception. The Messenger used language of tajsīm and tashbīh, but never once clarified it. He spent twenty-three years, receiving language of tajsīm and tashbīh and conveying it to the ummah, but never once stopping and pausing and explaining this is not what is meant. The first anthropomorphist

(mushabbih) according to them - as Imām al-Dārimī (d. 280H) said in his refutation of Bishr al-Marīsī - is Allāh Himself. Then His Messenger, he is the second mushabbih. The reality of their entire position is that Allāh is not most knowledgeable of Himself or was unable to express correct knowledge about Himself or was not intending guidance for His creation. But the intellects of the Jahmiyyah are more knowledgeable of Allāh than Allāh or are able to express what Allāh was not able to express in the Arabic language of the Qur’ān or are greater in their desire to guide mankind than Allāh Himself. Likewise, what the Messenger brought in this field is not definitive guidance, rather guidance lies in the intellects of the Jahmiyyah. We seek refuge in Allāh, this is the evil perception of these people and their entire theological momentum against the Salafīs is driven by this evil perception which they are skilled at concealing from the masses.

Second, that the Messenger conveyed the message fully, completely, with integrity in the most eloquent and unambiguous of ways, and the greatest of what he conveyed was no doubt, knowledge of Allāh, “**O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message**” (5:67) and also, “**And there is not upon the Messenger except the [responsibility for] clear notification.**” (24:54). It is not possible that the Messenger conveyed every other aspect of the religion sufficiently and yet did not convey the greatest foundation, the greatest knowledge of all, the knowledge of Allāh, in a clear, unambiguous way (which leaves the seeker of guidance with actual guidance). Likewise, it is not possible that what he conveyed produces ambiguity, confusion and misguidance for the listener and seeker of guidance in this field. That is impossible - but that is the presumption of the Jahmites! This is really what is being said by the people of kalām - but they clothe all of it with sophistry so that the the common person or the one who studies with them does not grasp the reality of what they are saying and implying.

Third, that the certainty (yaqīn) arrived at through the evidence of revelation is multiple times more than the [alleged] certainty arrived at through the evidence of reason (‘aql). If one is presented knowledge of

Allāh through authentic text, it is far superior to claimed knowledge about Allāh through reason on its own.⁵⁷

Based on these few considerations, it is here that the Salafī lays down his methodological principles, they are clean, pure principles and they are all based on revelation and no one can find fault with them - they are as the likeness of fresh, pure satiating milk.

⁵⁷ This is stated by Ibn al-Qayyim in *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Mursalah* as part of his defence of revelation from the lies and fabrications of the Jahmites in all their levels and types.

The Methodology of the Salaf in Brief⁵⁸

Imām Aḥmad (d. 241H) said, “We worship Allāh by [affirmation of] His attributes which He described Himself with and we do not exceed the Qur’ān and the ḥadīth Thus, we say [only] as He said and we describe Him as He described Himself, we do not exceed that.”⁵⁹ Imām al-Dārimī (d. 280H) said, “We describe Him with what He described Himself with and what His Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) described Him with.”⁶⁰ Imām al-Ājurrī (d. 360H) said, “The people of truth describe Allāh (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) through what He described Himself with and through what His Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) described Him with and through what the Companions (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) described Him with. This is the way of the scholars who followed and did not innovate. It is not to be said, ‘How?’ Rather, it is merely [to make] submission and have faith in it.”⁶¹

Ibn Taymiyyah said, following the Salaf, “The foundation in this topic is that Allāh is described through what He described Himself with and what His Messengers described Him with, both in terms of affirmation (ithbāt) and negation (nafī). Thus, [one] affirms for Allāh what He affirmed for Himself and [one] negates from Allāh what He negated from Himself. And it is known that the way of the Salaf of the ummah and its leading imāms is affirmation of what He affirmed of attributes without takyīf (asking or specifying how) or tamthīl (likening) and without taḥrīf (distorting) or taṭīl (negating). Similarly, they negate from Him what He negated from His self whilst affirming the attributes He affirmed without making ilhād (deviation) therein.”⁶² This positioning is based on revelation and it is also from reason, the revelation guides to correct reason, and so this positioning is indicated

⁵⁸ Here we want to summarize the methodology as concisely as possible, but in a later part in this series we shall elaborate in more detail from the speech of the Salaf inshā’Allāh.

⁵⁹ Ibn Baṭṭāh in al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (3/326).

⁶⁰ Al-Radd ‘alā al-Jahmiyyah (Dār al-Salafiyyah, 1405H, p. 13).

⁶¹ Al-Sharīḥ (Mu’assasah al-Qurṭubah, 1416H), 2/52.

⁶² Refer to *Al-Tadmuriyyah* (ed. Muḥammad bin ‘Awdah al-Sa‘awī, Maktabah al-‘Ubaykān), pp. 6-7.

through the Qur'ān and reason completely agrees with it, because sound, uncorrupted reason will never disagree with revelation - this is a core fundamental principle in which the followers of the Prophets oppose the followers of the approach of the Philosophers from the Jahmites and their offshoots who assert a conflict - in fact they were forced to assert a conflict - between reason and revelation.

Now when a person reads this methodology, he cannot find fault with this approach, because this is based purely in revelation, this methodology is based upon the obligation of knowing Allāh through revelation - in other words, it is how Allah Himself has told us that this is how we are to speak of Him and know Him. No one can criticize or refute this, how is any Ash'arī or Mātūrīdī going to refute this and say it is the wrong methodology? They cannot touch it, it is flawless, it is a divinely revealed methodology. No one can find fault with this because it is the truth. This is why in their polemics, the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs keep the discussions away from these foundational matters and they keep them within a certain narrow scope which allows them to keep cloaks on the minds of the people, feed them with intellectual terrorism against the followers of the Prophets and Messengers and the Imāms of the Salaf and slander them with what they are free and innocent of. As for their methodology, it is bāṭil founded upon bāṭil and misguidance founded upon misguidance and darkness built upon darkness and confusion built upon confusion and contradiction built upon contradiction. But all of this is hidden to the average person who suffices with *taqlīd* (blind following) and does not use his 'aql in a praiseworthy way.

We can summarise the Sunni, Salafī, Atharī position in three core principles on the basis and framework of everything that has proceeded in this paper so far:⁶³

⁶³ Refer to Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Shanqīṭī's *Manhaj wa Dirāsāt li Āyāt al-Asmā' wal-Ṣifāt*.

One: Exonerating and freeing Allāh from that anything from His Attributes should resemble those of His creatures by textual evidence, “**There is nothing as a likeness unto Him**” (42:11) and “**So do not assert similarities to Allah**” (16:72) and “**Nor is there to Him any equivalent**” (112:4), this is called *tanzīh*. Allāh’s essence has a true and real existence outside of the mind and outside of creation and the attributes of His essence - all of them without exception and distinction - have a true and real existence, but the knowledge of how that existence is and how that reality is is not known and any likeness must be emphatically negated and denied. Similarity in wording *does not* mean similarity in the reality indicated by that wording, since such a reality is only in accordance with the reality specific to each essence. There is no likeness between the essence of Allāh and the essences of the creation and following on from this by rational necessity, there is no likeness between the realities of Allāh’s attributes and the realities of those of the creation. So this is a foundation and on the basis of this, it means there is absolutely no caution whatsoever in affirming what Allāh has informed about Himself of attributes and upon this is the next principle based.

Two: Faith and belief in whatever He described Himself with, because no one describes Allāh who is more knowledgeable of Allāh than Allāh Himself, as has preceded, “**Are you more knowing or is Allāh?**” (2:140). This is called *ithbāt*. This affirmation is not merely of collections of letters that make words which are to be believed in in the sense that one says “*I believe Allāh revealed this wording.*”⁶⁴ Rather, the affirmation

⁶⁴ This is from the deceptions of the Jahmites so beware. Their saying amounts to the claim that the war between the Salaf and the Jahmiyyah and Mu’tazilah was one of words, as to whether these words were revealed or not and whether they are in the Qur’an or not and whether the Messenger said them or not - and not about the meanings of these words. And all people of sound intellect know that this is complete falsehood. But this is where many of these Ash’arīs and Mātūrīdīs play out their *talbīs* (deception). So when you say, “Do you believe in *al-Istiwā’* for Allāh?” They will say, “Yes, I believe that verse is in the Qur’an” or words with that meaning. They don’t want to affirm a meaning for the verse. Yet, the Salaf, the Successors, they explained the meaning, they

being referred to is of that of the meanings indicated by those words and the existence of (unknown and unfathomable) realities indicated in turn by those meanings.⁶⁵ If this had not been the case, then it means that Allāh revealed no knowledge about Himself to His creation and that the loftiest of field of knowledge, that of His names, attributes and actions, cannot be known through His revelation. Here, the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs cannot give any sound criterion as to why they affirm some attributes **with their meanings** but deny others and this is not the place to elaborate upon this. The original Jahmites were consistent with the original philosophy which demanded from them to remove every label, name, attribute, action from Allāh, so as not to liken Him to anything in

made tafsīr, istawā means ‘alā (rise over, above) and irtafa‘ā (to rise above) - this is from Abū al-‘Āliyah and Mujāhid - so they don’t want to affirm this because it is kufr and tajsīm in their view - so they play games in the way they speak about what they believe.

⁶⁵ The Jahmite does not separate between generalized, universal meanings (which exist only in the mind) and the realities tied to those meanings in outward reality. The reality associated with a meaning is unique to each entity, even if there is a resemblance in the broad meaning. For example a man speaks and has speech - and he speaks through the instruments of lips, a tongue and vocal chord. But the soul, when it is separated from the body, is also able to speak and has speech, but how it takes place and its reality is unknown to us. Similarly, the Angels speak and the Jinn speak and their realities are unknown to us. The revealed texts also indicate that Hellfire speaks and that the skins of people will speak on the Day of Judgement. There is a broad, universal meaning that is understood in the mind about “speech” that is common to all these cases but then the realities differ depending upon which entity that meaning is ascribed to. Thus, the reality of the speech of man is different to the reality of the speech of the soul and the Jinn, the Angels. This applies to all attributes without distinction and those who affirm some attributes for Allāh and reject others have no sound, consistent principle through which they distinguish between what they affirm and what they reject. The so-called definitive evidence of reason that they make the foundation of their religion varies between the Jahmite, the Mu‘tazilī and the Ash‘arī and what amounts to tajsīm and kufr is different to the reason of each one of them. It is only the original Jahmite who is consistent and denies everything completely for fear of falling into tasbhīh, tajsīm and kufr in his misguided view. But the offshoots of the Jahmiyyah (Mu‘tazilah, Ash‘ariyyah, Mātūrīdiyyah) fall into contradiction by partially affirming something from the names or the attributes.

creation. But those after them, all of them, the Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah, Kullābiyyah, Mātūrīdiyyah, all of them fall into contradiction. This is because they did not take guidance from the Book of Allāh fundamentally, they did not make the Book and the authentic Sunnah to be the judge, criterion and foundation in this field, they made their intellects to be the foundation, and the intellects differ. Hence, the Jahmite says the Mu'tazilī is a mujassim, mushrik kāfir for affirming names for Allāh and declaring Him a body, and the Mu'tazilī says the Ash'arī is a mujassim, mushrik kāfir for affirming attributes for Allāh and rendering Him a composed body (*jism murakkab*). They have no sound criterion and yet all of them are operating on the same foundations - those which we outlined earlier in this paper. What greater proof of misguidance is this! **"If it had been from [any] other than Allah , they would have found within it much contradiction"** (4:82). The foundation of the dīn of the Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah and Mātūrīdiyyah is not from Allāh and His Messenger, rather, it originates in the *'aql* (intellect) of a star worshipping idolator by the name of Aristotle and his books on *Physics* and *Metaphysics* - that is the foundation for their language in theology and it came to them through the Hellenized Jews, Christians and Ṣabeans and through al-Ja'd bin Dirham and Jahm bin Ṣafwān, the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah. Then they broke into sects and began disputing each other, the Rāfiḍī Mujassimah Ḥishāmiyyah, the Kullābiyyah, the Ḥanafī Mujassimah Karrāmiyyah, the Ash'arīs, the Mātūrīdīs, the Sālīmīs - they all indulged in this kalām and they had many contradictory sayings. So this is the nature of misguidance. The evidence of reason was supposed to be definitive - how come we do not have one single uniform position amongst the Mutakallimūn then? Where is this definitive truth about Allāh? Isn't truth only one? But when you look at Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah, they have one consistent, uniform principle founded in revelation and their saying is one, no matter where they are on which era they live. Why is this? Here's the answer: **Abū al-Muẓaffar al-Sam'ānī** (d. 489H), "Allāh refused that the truth and the sound creed should be except with the people of ḥadīth because they took their religion and their doctrines from the Salaf through successive [transmission] over the generations, century after century with a

connected chain until they arrive at the Successors. The Successors took from the Companions of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). There is no path to knowing what the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) called the people to of the upright religion and straight path except this path which the people of ḥadīth traversed.”⁶⁶ As for the isnād of the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs it goes back to the heads of the Mu‘tazilah and Jahmiyyah - the enemies of the Salaf.

Three: To cut off all hope of ever knowing the how (*kayfiyyah*) and the reality (*ḥaqīqah*) as this is impossible, “**But they do not encompass Him in knowledge**” (20:110). This does not mean there is not a ḥaqīqah for Allāh’s essence and His attributes. To deny Allāh’s attributes have ḥaqā’iq (realities) is pure atheism. In that case there is no reality to any of His attributes. No reality to his life, hearing, seeing, power, wish, knowledge, speech, face, hands, mercy, love and so on. They do not exist if they have no realities. On the other hand to define their reality (*ḥaqīqah*) or to say that the how (*kayf*) is such and such is *tashbīh* and this was the *tashbīh* that the Salaf warned against. The *kayf* is *majhūl* (unknown), unintelligible (*ghayr ma‘qūl*) and to ask about it is a *bid‘ah* and pursuing the how will lead a person to misguidance, to exaggeration and into *tashbīh*. Whoever claims that the Salaf denied there were *ḥaqā’iq* and *kayfiyyāt* to Allāh’s attributes is the greatest of liars. Rather, they denied knowledge of these *ḥaqā’iq* and *kayfiyyāt* and condemned speculating about them and resembling them to the *ḥaqā’iq* and *kayfiyyāt* in the creation.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ *Al-Intiṣār li Ahl il-Ḥadīth*, (p. 44).

⁶⁷ This affair will be established and proven in a separate instalment in this series inshā’Allāh and the doubts of the Jahmites will be invalidated in this regard through the speech of the Salaf - for when one looks comprehensively at the sum of what has been related from the Salaf and their speech about the *kayf* and *kayfiyyah* it is clear that they are negating **knowledge** of the *kayf* and not negating that the *kayf* itself exists. The Jahmiyyah isolate certain generalized statements on the basis of which make it appear that the Salaf denied that any *kayf* exists for Allāh’s attributes.

We can add three more principles to make everything complete:⁶⁸

Four: The Righteous Salaf, Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah do not make any distinction between the Qur'ān and the Sunnah unlike the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs. This is from the greatest of what will prove the leaders of the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs are liars in their claim of following the Salaf. You should note that when they wish to focus on making the accusation of *tajsīm* and *tashbīh* against the Salafīs, they will rely upon certain attributes such as face, hands, eyes⁶⁹ for which their hearts have already made resemblance and likened to the faces, hands and eyes in the creation. The *tashbīh* originates in their heart, then they project the filth of their hearts upon the affirmation of the Salafīs and make binding upon them through *ilzām* what the Salafīs explicitly deny and reject - the Salafīs consider philosophy disguised as *kalām* to be illegitimate and hence you cannot say that according to our *kalām* *this view* necessitate *this conclusion* and then force that upon the Salafīs as being their saying - because the Salafīs explicitly reject such binding necessities are not operating within the field of *kalām* and *falsafah*. But this is how they make their false slanders against the Salafīs. So they rely upon these particular attributes of face, hands, eyes and what is similar, because they are the easiest with which to make the slander of *tajsīm* and *tashbīh* - the *tashbīh* which began in their hearts first because they only imagine face and hands which are flesh and limbs, and then they project their *tashbīh* on to the Salafīs. However, a large part of the war between the Salaf and the Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazilah was in relation to **the Prophetic narrations**, from them the ḥadīth of nuzūl (descent) for example. Now it becomes harder for the Ash'arītes to argue against the Salafīs on these types of affairs because the spuriousness of their claim to be following the Salaf becomes more plain and evident in these issues, because they make a distinction

⁶⁸ Refer to *al-Ṣifāt al-Ilāhiyyah* of Shaykh Muḥammad Āmān al-Jāmī (pp. 57-65).

⁶⁹ These attributes are related in the Qur'ān and were affirmed by the Kullābiyyah and the early Ash'arīs and they refuted the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah who accused them of *tashbīh* and *tajsīm* for affirming these attributes.

between the Qur'an and the Sunnah and do not treat them equally in this field. In the example of nuzūl (descent) the speech of the Salaf is **very specific** and their refutations of the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah are very detailed and so it becomes very difficult for the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs to use ambiguities and generalizations to deceive people into thinking their saying is the saying of the Salaf. Very quickly, it becomes known that they are contradicting the Salaf and they do not follow the narrations and are using the same sophistries used by the Jahmiyyah against the Salaf - the narrations are present and cannot be avoided.

The Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah fabricated a principle to contend against the Salaf and this was to say that the āḥād ḥadīths do not amount to certain definitive knowledge and with this principle they intended to undermine the ḥadīths of the attributes as a way to give technical support to their innovation of denying the ḥadīths they considered to be expressions of tajsīm and kufr. They said that the āḥād ḥadīths only amount to speculation. This was followed by the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs, they say this in their books - all these falsehoods, they inherited from their ancestors, the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah. And in all of this you can see the consequence of operating on the foundations of the Philosophers who do not believe in revelation. Its consequence is that you are going to end up operating upon principles that will force you to undermine revelation itself, despite claiming to argue in its favour. So the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs deliberately do not discuss certain specific areas of the attributes because its a difficult area for them to argue for their falsehood.

As for the Salafīs they have a single consistent uniform principle based on revelation itself, so all the texts are the same to them. Want to discuss face, hands and eyes? Then let us do so and we will slap you into oblivion through the speech of al-Ash'arī and al-Bāqillānī and send your slanderous accusation of tajsīm and tashbīh back on the dung-heap from where it came just through their speech alone, and they were refuting the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah! Want to take about 'uluww? Let's do so. Want to talk about nuzūl? Let's do so. Want to speak about life, knowledge, hearing and seeing? Let's do so. It is all one single topic,

upon a consistent principle with us. But that is not the case with you, the Aristotelian Kālāmists, you are upon a divided, contradictory word and despite operating on the same innovated kalām, you are divided in factions, all making takfīr of each other!

Five: The Righteous Salaf did not make ta'wīl of any attribute of Allāh to take it away from being an actual attribute of His and ta'wīl was not their methodology and they severely condemned it. There is not a single instance of a ta'wīl of a text of an attribute that invalidates the attribute which has been reported with an authentic chain of narration from any of the Salaf. This is also from the greatest of what proves the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs do not follow the way of the Salaf but of the Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazilah who invented *ta'wīl* as a defence mechanism for the proof of *ḥudūth al-qjsām* and of the scholars from the Khalaf who erred in this field and were poisoned by something of kalām. Then their deception also becomes apparent in that knowing that the Salaf did not perform ta'wīl and that they condemned the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah for it - they [the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs] make a point of saying that the later scholars adopted ta'wīl with the aim of justifying *ta'wīl* as a mechanism. Rather than saying that making ta'wīl of the attributes is a heretical methodology adopted by the Jahmiyyah and the Mu'tazilah and clashes with the way of the Salaf and should be abandoned and that those who came after the Salaf and became poisoned with something of kalām and fell into ta'wīl, that their saying should be abandoned and ignored, they make excuses for it because in reality, their hearts are inclined towards it because of the misguided foundations their religion is built upon.

Six: Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah put revelation (naql) ahead of reason ('aql) and this is also from the greatest of affairs which show that the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs are upon the way of the Philosophers, the Jahmiyyah and Mu'tazilah in making the evidence of reason definitive over the evidence of revelation. **Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī** (d. 606H) cemented this principle for every Jahmite after him and he called it *al-qānūn al-kullī* (the universal principle) in his book *Asās al-Taqdīs*. We shall elaborate upon this in more detail when we look further at the

positioning and stance of the Ash'arīs and Mātūrīdīs and how they got to where they are in the next instalment inshā'Allāh.

Summary

The methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah is plain, apparent and clear: It is rooted in revelation. The Salafīs enter the house through the front door in clean, white, spotless thobes and put their clean fresh milk straight on the table and say this is what we are drinking and this is what we are offering you. Their speech about Allāh is based upon what Allāh and His Messenger affirmed or negated for Allāh. This is because they see the texts of the attributes as guidance, light, truth and certainty, as definitive knowledge, and they affirm all of the attributes - whether in the Qur'ān or the Sunnah - upon a uniform consistent principle which is evidenced by the Qur'ān itself and that is affirmation (*ithbāt*) of meanings that afford knowledge to the hearts with negation of likeness (*tamthīl*) in their realities. They affirm realities for these attributes but deny knowledge of them. If you were to take their speech from the first of them to the last of them, in all of their books and works, you will find their words to be in agreement and this is a proof that their approach is correct. This is because the Book and the Sunnah unite and bring together. Because there is *a single uniform principle for all texts* there is no contradiction and consistency in what they are upon.

Benefit: There can only ever be two inherently coherent views, either rejection of everything or affirmation of everything. Anything in between is contradictory. For that reason, the first Jahmites who denied everything (names, attributes, actions) - even referring to Allāh as a *thing* (*shay'*) out of fear of likening Him to the creation - they were consistent and coherent in their falsehood. Their falsehood is coherent, they fully abided by what the *falsafah* disguised as *kalām* demanded from them. But those who came after them, they tried to mix truth with falsehood, the Mu'tazilah, the Kullābiyyah, the Ash'ariyyah, the Mātūrīdiyyah - they agreed on the foundation - but tried to mix truth with falsehood by affirming at least something - so they fell into blatant contradiction and then invented sophistries and word plays in order to argue for their contradictory, irrational falsehood. The Mu'tazilah: We affirm Allāh is knowing ('alīm) without possessing the attribute of knowledge! The Kullābiyyah: We believe the kalām nafsī is eternal but

the kalām lafdhī is created - a fabrication, an innovation, invented to defend falsehood. The later Ash‘arīs: We affirm attributes of hearing and seeing (which are not found in creation except as limbs in bodies) but we cannot affirm face and hands because we do not see them in what we observe except as limbs. Their contradictions abound, they are plentiful.

Now, the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs conceal the real and true basis of their theology because it is inherited directly from the Mu‘tazilah and Jahmiyyah. Their foundations are the same but they differ only on subsidiary matters. This approach itself was taken from the Hellenized Jews, Christians and Ṣabeans and it ultimately returns back to the conceptual baggage of the Greek Philosophers. The Philosophers rejected revelation and consider definitive knowledge to be that which is arrived at by the intellect. When the Jahmiyyah attempted to use this approach to argue for Islām and tried to prove the universe is originated through a rational argument, they used false, corrupt intellectual tools. Then they tried to reconcile this approach with the Book and the Sunnah and saw that the two clashed, that reason clashes with revelation. **They saw that the [corrupt, innovated, futile] way they were trying to prove Allāh’s existence, which they called the evidence of reason contradicted the Qur’ān.** And it is here where the evil perception of the Jahmiyyah, Mu‘tazilah, Ash‘ariyyah and Mātūrīdiyyah towards the texts of the attributes originates.

This is a key point here:

The conflict between their philosophical babble and the texts of the attributes ***is what shapes their entire attitude and perception towards the texts of the attributes***, and it is here where they began to undermine the revelation itself. They tried to prove revelation through pure reason (‘aql) - via rational arguments - and once they had done that (according to them) they proceeded to undermine the very revelation through the very same reason (‘aql) which they had used to prove it - why because revelation undermined and falsified the very argument they used to validate it! This is madness and stupidity. They said that the texts of the

attributes - if left as they are upon the clear Arabic tongue - amount to *tajsīm* and *tashbīh* and *kufṛ* if understood by the common people upon what would ordinarily be understood in the Arabic language! This would mean Allāh is a body, and this in turn would undermine their rational proof. This is a circus we are dealing with here. You use reason to prove a revelation that undermines and invalidates the very reason you used to prove it in the first place. That is the sum of their knowledge and that is what they have been doing for just over 1300 years ever since Jahm bin Ṣafwān surfaced in the ummah.

That is the sum of what you will find in all the heritage of the Mu‘tazilah, Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs. If you were to say, “Summarize the dīn of the Jahmiyyah and all their offshoots (Mu‘tazilah, Ash‘ariyyah, Mātūrīdiyyah) and save me from reading 1300 years of their authorship,” then this is what can be said, **“Reason proves revelation, but the revelation disproves the [particular implementation of] reason we used to prove it and hence reason necessitates we distort the revelation so it no longer disproves the reason we used to prove it.”** That is the dīn of the Jahmites! The sum whole of the dīn of the Jahmites in a sentence. For this, trees were chopped, paper was milled, rivers of ink were collected, then the paper was blackened - and the sum of it all is the sentence you have just read! Allāhu Akbar - this is the racket they are running with the minds and intellects of Muslims who sincerely want to know their Lord and get to Paradise and misguiding them into thinking that this is what the Prophets and Messengers came with, a great lie indeed. Then they come and try to say the way of the Salaf was admission of complete and utter ignorance of the texts for which they waged war against the Jahmiyyah and Mu‘tazilah.

So this is the reality of their approach to the revealed texts (*tahrīf* in the name *ta’wīl* and *tafwīd* so as to eliminate and iron out that conflict between reason and revelation where reason is given precedence). The leaders of this way of the Jahmiyyah and Mu‘tazilah and the inheritors are the Ash‘ariyyah and Mātūrīdiyyah but they conceal the origins of this heritage. When they committed this evil, disgraceful crime against the revelation, they opened the doors for the enemies of Islām such as

Ibn Sīna (d. 439H) to take exactly the same approach about the verses relating to the creation and resurrection and to claim that they are only metaphorical and that there was no creation and there will be no resurrection, all of this is just metaphor in the Qurʾān, just like to you (the Mutakallimūn), the texts of the attributes are metaphors. So they, the Ahl al-Kalām, brought great evil upon Islām and its texts and so **neither the Philosophers did they destroy and nor Islām did they aid** as it was said.

So all of this is from the misguidance of these people and these were the Ahl al-Bidʿah that the Salaf spoke about. Imām al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204H) said, “The people did not become ignorant and nor differ (with each other) except due to their abandonment of the language of the Arabs and their inclination to the language of Aristotle.”⁷⁰ And he also said, “My ruling regarding Ahl ul-Kalām is that they are to be beaten with palm-branches and shoes, carried upon camels and paraded amongst the kinsfolk, it being announced about them, 'This is the recompense of the one who abandoned the Book and the Sunnah and turned to *kalām*.’”⁷¹

Now in the next part in this series we are going to take up in more detail how these people view the revealed texts, how they look at the Qurʾān and Sunnah and how they treat them as amounting to only *speculative knowledge* in their indication to meanings and how they consider what they themselves have arrived at through their intellects on the basis of what is in the books of Aristotle about bodies, accidents, time, place, and so on to be definitive knowledge. And this shapes their entire attitude towards the speech of Allāh and His Messenger and in turn it determines their idea of *tashbīh* - their understanding of *tashbīh* is **not** the same understanding as the Salaf of *tashbīh*. In addition, we

⁷⁰ Al-Suyuti in *Ṣawn al-Mantiq* (1/47-48). This statement of al-Shāfiʿī is true both in the affairs of creed (ʿaqīdah) and in jurisprudence (fiqh). The ‘Categories’ of Aristotle (*al-Maqūlāt*) and the logic of Aristotle corrupted both of these disciplines for those who turned to his language.

⁷¹ *Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubulā* of al-Dhahabī, (10/29) and *Ṣawn al-Mantiq* of al-Suyūtī, (no. 65), *Manāqib al-Shāfiʿī* (1/462), and *Dhamm ul-Kalām wa Ahlihī* of Abū Ismāʿīl al-Harawī (4/294-295).

will look at how and why they came to this step of claiming that the Salaf were upon *tafwīd* and highlight that it is an evil and crooked path they traversed in order to arrive at this saying, that the way of the Salaf was *tafwīd* (of both the meaning and reality). May Allāh send ṣalāt and salām upon His Messenger, his family and his companions.

Abu 'Iyaad

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