

القَوَاعِدُ الْمُثَلَّى
فِي

صِفَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأَسْمَاءِ الْحُسْنَى

Al-Qawaa`id al-Muthlaa

by *Shaykh Saalih al-Uthaymeen*

Ustaadh Moosaa Richardson

Class 04

Notes by Umm Sufyaan Faṭimah



All praise is due to Allaah. We praise Him, seek His aid and His Forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evils of our souls and the evils of our actions. Whomsoever Allaah guides there is none to misguide him and whomsoever Allaah misguides there is none to guide him. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah alone without any partners and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His Servant and Messenger.

* * *

THE SIXTH PRINCIPLE CONCERNING ALLAAH'S NAMES

1.6 - THEY ARE NOT LIMITED TO A SET NUMBER

Allaah's Names are not limited to any specific number, and this is understood from the statement of the Prophet (may Allaah raise his rank and grant him peace) in the well-known narration:

((...أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ،
أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ، أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ،
أَوْ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ...))

«...I ask You by every Name that You have,
those You named yourself with, those You revealed in Your Book,
those You taught one of Your created beings,
and those You kept with Yourself as knowledge of the Unseen...»

It was collected by Ahmad,¹ Ibn Hib-baan,² and al-Haakim,³ and it is *ṣaḥeeh* (authentic).⁴

The Messenger (*ṣallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*) classified the Names of Allaah into three categories from all the Names He Named Himself with:

[1] Those He has revealed in His Book,

e.g. *bismillaahir-Rahmaanir-Raḥeem* (In the Name of Allaah, *ar-Rahmaan*, *ar-Raḥeem*).

[2] Those He has taught one of His created beings

e.g. It is not in the Qur`aan, however, it has been taught by revelation to one of His Prophets. How can anyone be taught a Name of Allaah that is not in the Qur`aan unless he was a Prophet who received revelation? So, he is referring to the Names he learned about Allaah from the revelations that is not in the Qur`aan. An example of this would be *al-Witr*. Allaah is *al-Witr* (the Unique One). The Messenger (*ṣallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*) said:

((...إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَتَرِ يَحِبُّ الْوَتْرَ...))

¹ Collected by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (1/391, 452)

² Refer to *Ṣaḥeeh Ibn Hib-baan bi-Tarteeb Ibn Balbaan* (972)

³ Refer to *al-Mustadrak* (1929)

⁴ Refer to *Silsilatul-Aḥadeethis-Ṣaḥeeḥah* (199) of al-Albaanee and Muqbil ibn Haadee's comments on *Al-Mustadrak* (1/696). For further study, review the criticism mentioned in *Al-Ilal* of ad-Daarqutnee (5/199-201) and *Tahqeeq Musnad Ahmad* (6/247-250).

Allaah is *Witr*, and He loves *Witr*

So, reference to Allaah being *Witr* is not found in the Book of Allaah, rather, it comes from the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*).

[3] And those He has kept with Himself as knowledge of the Unseen.

e.g. We have no knowledge of this third category, because Allaah has chosen to keep some of these Names to Himself. So, we do not say, just because we know all the Names in the Qur`aan, and that we've gathered all the Names in the *Sunnah*, that we could have possibly gathered all of Allaah's Names. We have only been given a little knowledge with regards to His Names. How many Names are there that He has kept for Himself and not revealed to anyone? We do not know. Knowledge of that has not been given to us. We only know the Names that He has Named Himself with in His Book, and the Names His Messenger (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*) has conveyed to us. Beyond that, we do not know. We do know from this reference of the Messenger (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*) that there are other Names that He did not reveal to us, and that His Messenger (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*) did not even know about.

That being the case, we have another proof against those who name Allaah with Names other than those in the Book and the *Sunnah*; those who go against the *tawqeefiyyah* nature of Allaah's Names. They name Allaah with names like Vishnu, *al-Muhandis* and so on. They name Allaah with names that they feel are good in their meaning, but have no support in the Book or the *Sunnah*. This is not permissible based on this *hadeeth*. This *hadeeth* gives us three categories of Allaah's Names, and one of them is not good names that you deduce from your own intellect. Rather (we have been given a classification of) Names that Allaah has revealed in His Book, Names that He has taught one of His Prophets, or Names that He has kept for Himself. So this is a refutation and a further support for what was mentioned about Allaah's Names being *tawqeefiyyah*.

We have a clear indication from the Messenger (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*) that Allaah has Names we do not know of. This being the case, anyone who can mention the ninety-nine Names, we say: 'Those are from the Names that we have knowledge of and there are others we do not have knowledge of.' In fact, many of the scholars of the past made attempts to enumerate the Names of Allaah so that they may attain the reward from Allaah mentioned in this *hadeeth* we will discuss. They gathered ninety-nine, and they kept gathering because they needed a principle by which to extract the Names from the verses that would land them on ninety-nine. Some of the scholars had lengthy, lengthy lists of Allaah's Names that reached up to two hundred names while they were initially trying to gather the ninety-nine mentioned in the *hadeeth*. However, their principles led them to gather more. Some of them like Ibn Hazm could not count up to ninety-nine, they only got to eighty-some or seventy-some. So, they differed in the numbers of names they gathered, and they did not have the same number although they all tried to gather ninety-nine.

It is not possible for anyone to count or have complete knowledge of the Names that Allaah, the Exalted, has kept with Himself as knowledge of the Unseen.

As for the statement of the Prophet (may Allaah raise rank and grant him peace):

((إِنَّ لِلَّهِ تِسْعَةَ وَتِسْعِينَ اسْمًا، مِائَةٌ إِلَّا وَاحِدًا،

مَنْ أَحْصَاهَا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ .))

«Verily Allaah has ninety-nine Names, one shy of a hundred.
Whoever enumerates them will enter Paradise.»⁵

Then this does not prove that Allaah's Names are limited to only this number. If the intent of the *hadeeth* was to limit them, then the wording would have been, «Verily, the Names of Allaah are *only* ninety-nine; whoever enumerates them will enter Paradise,» or something similar to «Allaah has *no more* than ninety-nine names,» or some phrase in the Arabic language that denotes *hasr* and *qasr* - that it is limited or bound by a set number. This is not understood from the Arabic of this *hadeeth*. To say that Allaah has something does *not* mean He does not have anything beyond that. Therefore, the meaning of the *hadeeth* is that whoever enumerates this specific group of His Names will go to Paradise. There are ninety-nine of Allaah's Names that He has revealed and given us knowledge of, if you were to gather those ninety-nine Names intended by the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*), then there is a specific reward for doing it. This is the point of the *hadeeth*.

Thus, his statement (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*), «Whoever enumerates them,⁶ will enter Paradise,» completes the first part of the *hadeeth*, referring to the intended ninety-nine Names. It is not a separate statement referring to all of Allaah's Names. So you do not have to gather every single Name that is in the Book of Allaah and spoken by the Messenger (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*), but you are to gather those intended by the Messenger in this *hadeeth* of ninety-nine Names. This leads you to an idea that there must be certain principles (such as using *iDaafah*, or not, being *muqayyid* or *ghayr muqayyid*, etc) that would lead you to ninety-nine Names.

So, the similitude of this statement (the *hadeeth*) will be like your saying, "I have one hundred *dirhams* that I want to give as charity." This statement does mean that you have only that many *dirhams* and they are all reserved for charity. It only means that you have some number of *dirhams* reserved for charity, and it does not speak about what you have beyond that. Similarly, the Names of Allaah mentioned in this *hadeeth* are «Allaah has ninety-nine Names, whoever enumerates them will enter Paradise,» it does not negate more than ninety-nine.

Additionally, it has not been authentically established that the Prophet (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*) specified all of these ninety-nine Names. The *hadeeth* which has been reported about this is unauthentic:⁷

((إن لله تسعة وتسعين اسما مائة غير واحدة ، من أحصاها دخل الجنة . هو الله الذي لا إله إلا هو الرحمن ، الرحيم ، الملك ، القدوس ، السلام ، المؤمن ، المهيمن ، العزيز ، الجبار ، المتكبر ، الخالق ...))

⁵ Collected by al-Bukhaaree (7392) and Muslim (2677) on the authority of Aboo Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him).

⁶ The author commented here, saying: "Enumerating them means to memorize them and know their meanings. This is fulfilled when one worships Allaah based on their related meanings and rulings."

⁷ Refer to *Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmithi* (3507) of al-Albaanee.

This unauthentic hadeeth begins like the first hadeeth mentioned: «**Verily Allaah has ninety-nine Names, one shy of a hundred, whoever enumerates them will enter Paradise,**» but then, the mention of the Names begin, one after the other - as if they are part of the hadeeth. This is something that the scholars have classified as being *mudrajj/mudrajaat* (things that are inserted into something). Sometimes a narrator would narrate a hadeeth and then explain its meaning.

In this case, there's a prime opportunity for the narrator to explain the hadeeth. What are these ninety-nine Names? The narrator goes on to explain them, yet he does not make a distinction in his words, he does not clearly define when his explanation begins and when the words of the Messenger are over. So, the one who hears the narration gets confused and considers it to be part of the hadeeth. This is one of the ways that *mudrajj* happens. And sometimes the listener, who narrates the hadeeth, understands that this is not part of the hadeeth, yet the way he writes it in his book when he narrates the hadeeth from his *shaykh*, is not clearly understood by the one who takes it from him! He doesn't make a distinction between the end of the hadeeth and the beginning of the narrators' explanation.

When you look into the different chains of transmissions in this hadeeth, you find the ones that have the very, very long list of ninety-nine names are consistent with the narrator of these chains (namely, Waleed ibn Muslim), whereas the hadeeth narrated by other than him do not have these additions. This led the *'ulaama* of *'Ilal* (hidden defects of hadeeth) to be able to categorize it as the additional explanation of Waleed ibn Muslim or maybe the individual he got the hadeeth from.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The specification of them (the Names of Allaah) is not from the speech of the Prophet (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*), as agreed upon by the scholars of hadeeth."⁸

Here, Ibn Taymiyyah (*rahimabullaahu ta`ala*) is quoting *ijmaa`* (a census) from the scholars of hadeeth saying that the mention of the Names is not authentically related from the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*).

He also said, "Al-Waleed⁹ mentioned them (the names) as the explanation of the hadeeth by some one of his teachers from the *Shaam*,¹⁰ as is clarified in some of the narrations of his hadeeth."¹¹

Ibn Hajar¹² said, "The problem that the two *shaykhs* (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) had with it (the hadeeth) was not just that it only comes by way of al-Waleed, but that he (al-Waleed) has narrated it inconsistently¹³, his *tadlees*,^{14 15} and possibility of additional wordings added to the narration."¹⁶

⁸ Refer to *Majmoo` al-Fataawaa* (6/382).

⁹ Al-Waleed ibn Muslim, one of the narrators of the hadeeth.

¹⁰ *Shaam* is modern day Syria and Palestine and parts of their bordering countries.

¹¹ Refer to *Majmoo` al-Fataawaa* (6/379).

¹² The author of *Fat-hul-Baaree* and many works in hadeeth.

¹³ *Ustaadh* Moosaa Richardson (*hafidabullaah*): Meaning, there is some differing in the Names themselves! During one occasion, there is a list of ninety-nine names and during another occasion, when someone else narrates it from Waleed, there is a difference in the Names themselves. The ninety-nine names don't exactly match up. There are three or four different narrations of the hadeeth, all of them having a slight differences in the actual names. So, sometimes he would

Since the specification of the Names by the Prophet (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*) is not authentic, the *Salaf* differed over them, and thus a number of different opinions were held.

I (*Shaykh* ibn al-`Uthaymeen) have gathered the following ninety-nine Names from the Book of Allaah, the Exalted, and the *Sunnab* of His Messenger (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*):

From the Book of Allaah, the Exalted:

- [1] Allaah ﷻ
- [2] *al-Ahad* (the One)
- [3] *al-A`laa* (the Most High)
- [4] *al-Akram* (the Most Generous)
- [5] *al-Ilaab* (the Worshipped)
- [6] *al-Aw-wal* (the First)
- [7] *al-Aakhir* (the Last)
- [8] *ath-Thaahir* (the Knower of all apparent things)
- [9] *al-Baa'in* (the Knower of all hidden things)
- [10] *al-Baaree`* (the Commanding Ordainer)
- [11] *al-Barr* (the Beneficent One)
- [12] *al-Baseer* (the All-Seeing)
- [13] *at-Taw-waab* (the Acceptor of Repentance)
- [14] *al-Jab-baar* (the Compelling One)
- [15] *al-Haa'fith* (the Preserver)
- [16] *al-Haseeb* (the Preserver)
- [17] *al-Hafeeth* (the All-Protecting One)
- [18] *al-Hafee* (the Gracious One)
- [19] *al-Haqq* (the Truth)
- [20] *al-Mubeen* (the One who clarifies)
- [21] *al-Hakeem* (the All-Wise)
- [22] *al-Haleem* (the Gentle One)
- [23] *al-Hameed* (the Praiseworthy One)
- [24] *al-Hayy* (the Ever-Living)

add names that he didn't mention the first time, or he would not mention names. This inconsistency is another phrase from the sciences of *hadeeth* called *itiraab* (inconsistency in ones narration).

¹⁴ *Tadlees* (lit. deception); when a narrator habitually fails to mention the name of a narrator that is between him and his *shaykh*, using a wording like, "On the authority of my *shaykh*..." instead of, "My *shaykh* narrated to me..." Because of the likelihood of an unmentioned person in the chain who may not be reliable, the scholars of *hadeeth* consider this kind of narration unacceptable.

¹⁵ al-Waleed was also *mudallis*, one who narrated with the habit of saying, "On the authority of my *shaykh*" while it was a *hadeeth* he actually heard from another person who narrates from his *shaykh*. So, he would knock that person out of the chain and narrate directly from his *shaykh*. This is called *tadlees*, and the one who does it is a *mudallis*, and the *hadeeth* it is done to is called *mudallas*.

¹⁶ Refer to *Fat-hul-Baaree* (11/215)

- [25] *al-Qay-yoom* (the One who establishes and sustains)
 [26] *al-Khabeer* (the All-Informed One)
 [27] *al-Khaaliq* (the Creator)
 [28] *al-Khal-laaq* (the Ever-Creating)
 [29] *ar-Ra`oof* (the All-Kind)
 [30] *ar-Rahmaan* (the All-Merciful)
 [31] *ar-Rabeem* (the Ever Merciful)
 [32] *ar-Raz-zaaq* (the Ever-Providing)
 [33] *ar-Raqeeb* (the Ever-Watchful)
 [34] *as-Salaam* (the Flawless One)
 [35] *as-Samee`* (the All-Hearing)
 [36] *ash-Shaakir* (the Ever-Thankful)
 [37] *ash-Shaakoor* (the Ever-Thankful)
 [38] *ash-Shabeed* (the Witness)
 [39] *as-Samad* (the Eternal One)
 [40] *al-`Aalim* (the Knowledgeable One)
 [41] *al-`Azeez* (the All-Mighty)
 [42] *al-`Athheem* (the Great One)
 [43] *al-`Afiww* (the Pardoner)
 [44] *al-`Aleem* (the Lofty One)
 [46] *al-Ghaf-faar* (the Most Forgiving)
 [47] *al-Ghaffoor* (the Ever Forgiving)
 [48] *al-Ghane* (the One Free of Needs)
 [49] *al-Fat-taah* (the Deciding Judge)
 [50] *al-Qaadir* (the Capable One)
 [51] *al-Qaabir* (the Forceful One)
 [52] *al-Qud-doos* (the Holy One)
 [53] *al-Qadeer* (the Ever-Capable)
 [54] *al-Qareeb* (the Close One)
 [55] *al-Qawee* (the Strong One)
 [56] *al-Qab-haar* (the Ever-Dominating One)
 [57] *al-Kabeer* (the Great One)
 [58] *al-Kareem* (the Generous One)
 [59] *al-Lateef* (the Sublime One)
 [60] *al-Mu`min* (the Granter of Security)
 [61] *al-Muta`aalee* (the High and Exalted One)
 [62] *al-Mutakab-bir* (the Justly Proud)
 [63] *al-Mateen* (the Powerful)
 [64] *al-Mujeeb* (the Ever Responding One)
 [65] *al-Majeed* (the Majestic One)
 [66] *al-Muheet* (the All-Encompassing One)
 [67] *al-Muṣaw-wir* (the Bestower of forms and shapes)
 [68] *al-Muqtadir* (the All-Capable One)
 [69] *al-Muqteet* (the Protector)
 [70] *al-Malik* (the King)

- [71] *al-Maleek* (the Sovereign)
- [72] *al-Mowlaa* (the Guardian)
- [73] *al-Muhayim* (the Watchful Witness)
- [74] *an-Naseer* (the Ever-Helpful)
- [75] *al-Waabid* (the Only One)
- [76] *al-Waarith* (the Owner who all things return to)
- [77] *al-Waasi`* (the Encompassing One)
- [78] *al-Wadood* (the Loving)
- [79] *al-Wakeel* (the Guardian)
- [80] *al-Walee* (the Protector)
- [81] *al-Wab-haab* (the Ever-Giving)

And from the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*):

- [1] *al-Jameel* (the Beautiful One)
- [2] *al-Jaw-waad* (the Bestower of Goodness)
- [3] *al-Hakam* (the Ruler)
- [4] *al-Hay-jee* (the Shy One)
- [5] *ar-Rabb* (the Lord)
- [6] *ar-Rafeeq* (the Gentle One)
- [7] *as-Sub-booh* (the Justly Glorified One)
- [8] *as-Say-yid* (the Master)
- [9] *ash-Shaafee* (the Healer)
- [10] *at-Tay-yib* (the Pure One)
- [11] *al-Qaabidh* (the One who seizes)
- [12] *al-Baasit* (the One who grants increases)
- [13] *al-Muqad-dim* (the One who brings things forth)
- [14] *al-Mu`akhl-khbir* (the One who delays things wisely)
- [15] *al-Muhsin* (the One who does things perfectly)
- [16] *al-Mu`tee* (the Giver)
- [17] *al-Man-naan* (the Ever-Bestowing)
- [18] *al-Witr* (the One who is similar to none)

This is what we have chosen based on our research - eighty-one Names from the Book of Allaah, the Exalted, and eighteen from the *Sunnah* of the Messenger (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*). However, there remains some doubt about including *al-Hafee*, as it is only found in a restricted sense in His Statement, quoting Ibraaheem:¹⁷

﴿ إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِي حَفِيًّا ﴾ ﴿٤٧﴾ مريم: ٤٧

«Verily, He is *Hafee* (Gracious) to me.» [19:37]

¹⁷ *Ustaadh* Moosaa Richardson: This idea of Allaah being *Hafee* to Ibraaheem (*`alayhi ssalaam*) **specifically** is questionable - does it establish *al-Hafee* as a Name of Allaah or not? So, the *Shaykh* considered it as one of the Names of Allaah and included it in his list of ninety-nine names, yet he said that he was not entirely sure about that.

What we have listed here is based on our knowledge and understanding, while above each possessor of knowledge is someone more knowledgeable. Above all of them is the Knower of all hidden and apparent things, the One who knows everything.¹⁸

* * *

¹⁸ The author (may Allaah have mercy on him) commented here, saying:

And we have not mentioned any Names that come in the texts as *mudhaaf* (an Arabic construction that shows possession), like *Rabb al-`Aalameen* (the Lord of all the worlds), *`Aalim al-Ghaybi wash-Shahaadab* (the Knower of all hidden and apparent things), and *Badee` as-Samaawaati wal-Ardh* (the Originating Creator of the Heavens and the Earth). There are many examples of this. It was not clear to us that they were intended (from the *hadeeth*), and knowledge (of what is most correct) is only with Allaah, the Exalted.

[«And we have not mentioned any Names that come in the texts as *mudhaaf*...»]

Ustaadh Moosaa Richardson comments:

He (the *Shaykh*) begins to give you some insight into the guidelines he used when he looked at the texts of the Book and the *Sunnah* to derive these lists of Names. He tells you here, that he chose not to use the *mudhaaf* construction. The *mudhaaf* Arabic construction is when you say (for example): "This is the book of Mustafa," "This is the Book of Allaah" - it is the relationship between two things that generally denotes ownership, "the Messenger of Allaah," or "the pen of `Umar." So this *idaafah* construction like the "Master of the Day of Judgment," "the Lord of all the worlds," and so on, *Shaykh* ibn al-`Uthaymeen chose not to consider to be listed as Names.

THE SEVENTH PRINCIPLE CONCERNING ALLAAH'S NAMES

1.6 - THE KINDS OF DEVIATION FROM THE CORRECT BELIEF

Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta`aala*) says:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ ۚ﴾ الأعراف: ١٨٠

«And to Allaah belong the most beautiful Names, so call on Him using them. And abandon those who commit *ilh*aad regarding His Names.» [7:180]

*Ilh*aad¹⁹ with regards to the Names of Allaah, the Exalted, means to stray from the obligatory manner of believing in them.

So, when Allaah affirms for Himself that He has the Most Beautiful Names, He addresses you with two orders:

- [1] To call upon Him using those Names,
- [2] And abandon the people who commit *ilh*aad and deviation regarding the Names of Allaah.

*Ilh*aad takes many forms and manifestations which you must pay attention to:

ONE: To reject some of them, or some of the related Attributes or resulting rulings

An example of people²⁰ who do this are the people of *ta`teel* (rejection of the meanings of Allaah's Names and/or Attributes) from the *Jahmiyyah*²¹ and others.

The *Mu`at-tilab* (the people of *ta`teel*) are the ones who say that Allaah does not have a certain Name, or He has a Name but it doesn't have a meaning, for example, Allaah is *as-Samee`* (All-Hearing), but He does not have Hearing, or Allaah does not have a Hand, when Allaah says:

﴿تَبَرَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ الملك: ١

«Blessed is He in Whose Hand is the dominion, and He is Able to do all things.» [67:1]

¹⁹ The author (may Allaah have Mercy on him) is explaining the following Verse:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ ۚ﴾ الأعراف: ١٨٠

«And to Allaah belong the most beautiful Names, so call on Him using them. And abandon those who commit *ilh*aad regarding His Names.» [7:180]

²⁰ This is the first group of people we have to abandon by the order of Allaah.

²¹ *Shaykh* `Ubayd al-Jaabiree (may Allaah preserve him) explains here that the people of *ta`teel*, the *Mu`at-tilab*, are the *Mu`at-tilab*, the *Jahmiyyah* who came before them, and the *Ash`arees* who came after them.

They believe this verse is a discreet reference to something else. So, they deny the Attributes of Allaah (*subḥaanahu wa ta`aala*).

This is considered *ilhāad* because it is obligatory to believe in the Names and in the related rulings and Attributes that befit Allaah. To reject any of these things is a straying from the obligatory manner of believing in them.

TWO: To view them as Names that establish attributes similar to the attributes of the Creation

This is done by the people of *tashbeeh* (those who consider Allaah similar to His Creation).

The *Mushabiha* (the people of *tashbeeh*) are those who say that Allaah does have a Hand, but it is similar to the hand of the creation - Exalted is He high above what they say! They say that Allaah has the shape like the shape of the human beings, or that He has a Face like the Face of the human beings, or Allaah ascends and descends like the human beings ascend and descend. These are the *Mushabiha*. Since *tashbeeh* is falsehood, and it is not possible that any of the texts establish *tashbeeh*, rather they show the falsehood of such an idea, then such people have truly strayed from the obligatory manner of believing in the Names of Allaah.

﴿ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴾ الإخلاص : ٤

«And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him.» [112:4]

﴿ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ سَمِيًّا ﴾ مريم : ٦٥

«Do you know of any who is similar to Him? (of course none is similar or coequal or comparable to Him, and He has none as partner with Him). [There is nothing like unto Him and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer]» [19:65]

These texts that negate any type of equivalent or anything comparable to Allaah (*subḥaanahu wa ta`aala*) are clear in their nature, and they show the falsehood of such an idea, so we have to abandon these people.

THREE: To attribute a name to Allaah that He did not name Himself with

An example of this is how the Christians call Allaah *the father*, or how the philosophers call Him *the root cause of everything*.²² Since knowledge is *tanqeeḥiyyah* (restricted to textual evidence), attributing a name to Allaah that He did not name Himself with is a straying from the obligatory manner of believing in them. Furthermore, these names that they have attributed to Allaah are sheer falsehood that Allaah is far removed from.

²² In Arabic: (العلة الفاعلة) "*al-`Illatul-Faa`ilah*"

As mentioned earlier, there are those who say that Allaah is *al-Mubandis al-Akbar* (the Greatest Architect) or *Mubandis al-Kawn* (the Architect of the Universe), etc. They may sound good, but we say that Allaah (*ʿAzza wa Jal*) is the One who has named Himself with the Names that are befitting to Him. Since He has not named Himself with that name, we will refrain from naming Him with it.

FOUR: To derive names of idols from the linguistics base of His Names

An example of this is what the polytheists did when they derived the name *al-Uzzaa* from *al-ʿAzeez*, and *al-Laat* from *al-Ilaah*, according to one opinion. They named their idols with these names.

This is considered *ilh* because the Names of Allaah are specific to Him, due to His Statement:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا﴾ الأعراف: ١٨٠

«And to Allaah belong the most beautiful Names,
so call upon Him using them.» [7:180]

Allaah does not share His Names with the names of the idols, it is not permissible to derive from His names the names of idols that are worshipped beside Him.

﴿لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾ الحشر: ٢٤

«And for Him are the most beautiful Names,
everything in the heavens and on earth glorifies Him.» [59:24]

Just as acts of worship are specifically for Him, so are the most beautiful Names, as everything in the heavens and on earth glorifies Him. So to name others with His Names, in the way that Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, alone deserves, is a straying from the obligatory manner of believing in them.

Ilh in any form is forbidden. Allaah has threatened those who commit this with His saying:

﴿وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ سَيُجْرُونَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾ الأعراف: ١٨٠

«And abandon those who commit *ilh* regarding His names.
They shall be recompensed for what they have done.» [7:180]

Allaah has threatened them severely saying «they shall be recompensed for what they have done!» leaving it open like that. This is the kind of threat that is very scary, for Allaah - the One who is severe in Punishment, the One who created the Hell-Fire as a trial and punishment for the disbelievers and disobedient from His creation - He has issued a warning that He will give them a recompense for what they have done.

Some kinds of *ilh* may be crimes of *shirk* or *kufir* (while others are less than that), depending on the relative evidences and what they imply.

* * *

So, we have mentioned two kinds of deviation:

One extreme says, "If Allaah says that He has a Hand, and we know what a hand is, then we can think of a hand like that for Allaah." These are the *Mushabiha* (the people of *tashbeel*) who consider Allaah to be similar to His creation. They claim that Allaah has informed us of these things, and since we have these things in front of us, it must be like what we have seen.

This is easier of the two deviations, since it is simple ignorance that has led people to this position. They lack knowledge in all the texts that talk about Allaah's Names and Attributes, and they ignore the other texts that negate similitude. They have only taken texts that mention things that we know about, and they have forgotten the texts that negate any kind of similitude between the creation and Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta'aala*).

Then there are the *Mu`at-tilab*, those who negate the texts, or the meaning of the texts, or some of the meanings of the texts, or some of the meanings of some of the texts, and they have built upon the deviation of the first group. The first group have said: "Allaah is like the creation in some or all of His Attributes." The *Mu`at-tilab* have come and said: "Since having a hand must include that Allaah is similar to His creation, we must negate that Allaah has a hand. We must exonerate Allaah above such an idea." So, it is as if, it is a response to the first group, since the former says: "Allaah has a hand, so it must be like ours" and the other group says: "No! Allaah cannot have a hand like our hand, so there is no hand." They go to the other extreme. (Exalted be Allaah above what they claim).

Ablus-Sunnah, however, are in the middle. They say: Allaah has a hand that befits Him, we describe the details of the hand with what comes in the text only. If we reach the end of the details in the text, we stop speaking. "The Hand is not unknown, the details of it are incomprehensible, believing in it is obligatory, and questioning about it is an innovation!"

Ablus-Sunnah is the middle path, always between the two extremes. We affirm that Allaah has a Hand because He has affirmed that He has a Hand, and we stop where Allaah said He has a hand. We affirm it in all of His Majesty for Him, *tabaaraka wa ta'aala*. It is a complete and perfect Attribute that He has, denoting Attributes and Actions of Perfection with no deficiency, in any way, whatsoever. It is not similar in any way to the Hands of the created beings, but it is a true Hand that we affirm for Him. We have every *hadeeth* from the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam*) in our favor, and we have not violated any of the texts in our religion. This is the sign of the correctness of the belief of *Ablus-Sunnah*. And Allaah knows best.

* * *