

Differentiation between invoking the Attribute and invoking by the Attribute

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: His eminence Shaykh Ibn Baaz Said: “Invoking the Attribute [of Allaah] is unanimously not permissible for Ahl As-Sunnah (people of the Sunnah). How to reconcile between this saying and the hadeeth where the Messenger (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) says:

“O the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists, by Your mercy I ask Your help.”¹

Shaykh Aboo `Abd-al-Mu`iz `Alee Farkous al-Qoobee (*May Allaah the Most High preserve him*): All praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon whom Allaah sent as a mercy to the Worlds, upon his Family, his Companions and his Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.

In fact, there is a difference between invoking the Attribute of Allaah and invoking Allaah by the Attribute.

Invoking the Attribute of Allaah means that the Attribute used for invocation implies something separated and independent from the divine being, which hears invocation and answers it such as saying, “O mercy of Allaah, be merciful with me.” or “O strength of Allaah, strengthen me.” or “O power of Allaah, give me power.” or any other expressions which are not mentioned in the known invocations at all.

Therefore, whoever believes that the Attribute separated from the divine being forgives, has mercy, enriches or strengthens...would make the Attribute a worshiped divinity, which scholars consider unanimously disbelief, because the Attributes of Allaah are inherent to Him and can never dissociate from him. In fact, Allaah is One, with all His Attributes. His Names and Attributes are included in His Name “Allaah”. So it is not permissible to call an Attribute a divinity, a creator, a sustainer...etc.

¹ Reported by At-Tirmidhee, chapter of “Invocations” (hadeeth 3524), on the authority of Anas رضي الله عنه. This hadeeth is judged authentic by Al-Albaanee in As-Silsilah As-Saheehah (1/449).

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Ibn Taymeeyah (*May Allaah have mercy on him*), reported the unanimity of the scholars as regards the invocation of the Attributes and the Words of Allaah and said that it is disbelief. He said, "As for invoking His Attributes and Words, this is disbelief as agreed by all the Muslims. Would a Muslim say: O Word of Allaah forgive me, be merciful with me, protect me or help me? Or would he say: O knowledge of Allaah, O power of Allaah, O strength of Allaah or O greatness of Allaah...etc.? Was it heard from a Muslim or even from a disbeliever invoking by such Attributes of Allaah or the attributes of others, to ask the Attribute to bring him benefit or to push evil away from him, to ask for help, support or any other thing from it?"²

This is what Ibn Baaz (*May Allaah have mercy on him*), meant by establishing the unanimity of the scholars as regards the interdiction of invoking the Attribute of Allaah.

As for the invocation by the Attribute, or the fact of imploring Allaah by His Names and Attributes, this is permissible. It is a sort of the permissible imploration. In fact, it is authentically stated in the known invocations what proves that it is permissible to implore Allaah (*The Most High*) by the Attribute of mercy, as mentioned in the hadeeth above in the question,

"...by Your mercy I ask Your help."³,

which means, "I ask you, O Allaah by Your mercy". There is also the imploration by the Attribute such as in the hadeeth where the Messenger (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) says,

"I ask protection by the perfect Words of Allaah from His evil creatures."⁴

Or the hadeeth where the Messenger (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) says,

"I ask protection by the strength of Allaah and His power from the evil I am subject to and from what I apprehend."⁵

Or also the hadeeth where the Messenger (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) says,

"I ask protection by Your satisfaction from Your anger, by Your preservation from Your punishment and by You from You."⁶

² See Talkhees Al-Istighaatha [Ar-Rad `Ala al-Bakree by Ibn Taymeeyah] of Ibn Katheer (1/181).

³ Previously reported, see footnote 1.

⁴ Reported by Muslim, chapter of "Evocation and invocation" (2/1246) (hadeeth 2708), on the authority of Khawla Bint Hakeem (*May Allaah the Most High be pleased with her*) (hadeeth 2709) on the authority of Aboo Hurairah (*May Allaah the Most High be pleased with him*).

⁵ Reported by Aboo Daawood, chapter of "Medicine" (hadeeth 3891), concerning the way we make exorcisms, on the authority of `Uthmaan Ibn Abee Al-`Aas (*May Allaah the Most High be pleased with him*). This hadeeth is judged authentic by Al-Albaanee in *As-Silsilah as-Saheehah* (3/404). It is also reported by Muslim (hadeeth 2202) as follows, "I ask protection by Allaah and by power from the evil I am subject to and from what I apprehend."

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Or offering the consultation prayer by the Attribute such as in the hadeeth where the Messenger (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) says,

“O my Lord, indeed I consult You by Your Knowledge and ask You by your strength to grant me strength.”⁷

Therefore, if the difference becomes clear between the two kinds of invocation, there will not be a contradiction between the two sayings, because each one will be understood according to its correct meaning.

The perfect knowledge belongs to Allaah (*Mighty and Majestic is He*). Our last prayer is all praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon our Prophet, his Family, his Companions and Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.

Algiers, Shawwâl 20th, 1431H.

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⁶ Reported by Muslim, chapter of “Prayer” (1/223) (hadeeth 486), on the authority of `Aa’ishah (*May Allaah the Most High be pleased with her*).

⁷ Reported by Al-Bukhaaree, chapter of “The different sorts of supererogatory acts” (1/278), concerning what is reported about the supererogatory prayer by accomplishing it two Rak`as (two units of prayer) then two...etc. on the authority of Jaabir Ibn `Abdullaah (*May Allaah the Most High be pleased with both of them*).