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Names and Attributes 1

Based on the writings of Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan (حفظه الله)

Translated by Abu Abdirrahmaan Nasser ibn Najam

Checked by Aboo Talhah Daawood Burbank (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

QUESTION: Does Allaah have Names and Attributes? How do we understand these?

ANSWER:

There are three aspects of Tawheed: The Tawheed of ruboobeyah (Allaah's Oneness in His Lordship) and the Tawheed of Ulooheeyah (Allaah's Oneness in His Right to be worshipped) and the Tawheed of Allaah's Names (His Asmaa) and Attributes (His Sifaat).

Muslims believe that Allaah has given us certain restricted information about Himself. It would be of course difficult to worship, love and fear someone or something which we know nothing about.

Broadly speaking, this information which Allaah has told us about Himself can be divided into two categories: His Names and His Attributes.

We will discuss the Names first.

Allaah has Names which He has named Himself with and with which Muhammad (peace be upon him) has informed us of, after having this information revealed to him.

Many of these may be known to you already, such as:

Ar Rahman (the Extremely Merciful)

Ar Raheem (the Bestower of Mercy)

Al Razzaaq (the Great Provider)

And others.

Muslims believe that all of Allaah's Names are beautiful and perfect.

The Qur'aan states:

And to Allaah belong the most beautiful Names.

[Soorah al A'raaf (the 7th chapter) verse 180]

And the Qur'aan also says:

Allaah, none has the right to be worshipped except Him. To Him belong the most Perfect and Beautiful Names.

[Soorah TaHa (the 20th chapter) verse 8]

So what is the need to discuss this issue?

Unfortunately, we find that many, many people, both Muslims and non Muslims, have made serious errors in this aspect of Tawheed, contradicting what the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and the Companions of Muhammad (peace be upon him) said.

Errors with regards to this issue can be found in hundreds of books from the past and the present, and as we shall see, this has far reaching consequences on the beliefs and practices of the Muslims.

The Qur'aan warns the Muslims severely about this in the verse we quoted above when it was stated:

And to Allaah belong the most beautiful Names, so call on Him by them and leave the company of those people who belie or deny His Names. They will be recompensed for what they used to do.

[Soorah al A'raaf (7) aayah 180]

This is clearly then an important matter - one which the Qur'aan has specifically warned us to pay attention to - and one that needs to be gone through methodically using the texts from the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and the statements of the Companions and earliest scholars of Islam.

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