

Series of Questions Addressed to Eminent Scholar Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah,
Ameer of Hizb ut Tahrir through his Facebook Page (Ideological)

Answer to Question

Definition of the Islamic Aqeedah and the Mutakallimīn [Scholastics]

To: Ibn Mansoor

(Translated)

Question:

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,

May Allah bless you our honorable Sheikh, may Allah Almighty accept your deeds, and reward you best in this world and in the Hereafter.

I have two questions, and pardon me for troubling you with these two questions:

1. It came in the book, *The Islamic Personality* Volume 1, under the subject of the Islamic Aqeedah:

“The Islamic Aqeedah (creed) is Iman (positive belief) in Allah (swt), His Angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Day of Resurrection and in al-qada wa'l-qadar, the favorable and unfavorable being from Allah (swt)”.

And it came at the end of the chapter:

“The issue of Iman in al-qada wa'l-qadar by this name and with the referent that is a subject of controversy was never mentioned in a definitive text. Yet the referent of the term is part of the aqeedah (creed) and Iman in it is obligatory”.

And it is known that the evidence [dalīl] for the Islamic Aqeedah can be either rational [aqlī] or textual [naqlī: lit. transmitted].

It also came in this chapter: “As for al-qada wa'l-qadar its evidence is rational”, and I understood from what I studied in our culture that nothing can be part of the Aqeedah unless it is definite (qati). And I understood from our culture what is al-qada wa'l-qadar, and I understood that its evidence is definite (qati) and rational (aqli). However, this has posed a question about the groups who were opining on the freedom of the will and its compulsion. So how do we view those who opined about them? And although they were in confusion regarding the Aqeedah of al-qada wa'l-qadar, no one of their scholars claimed the Kufr of one another.

Please explain how to view them, because Iman in al-qada wa'l-qadar is part of the aqeedah (creed) and Iman in it is obligatory.

2. It came in the book, *The Islamic Personality* Volume 1 page 68 (Arabic edition):

“The Mu'tazilah's view of the justice of Allah (swt) was one of subliming Him (swt) above injustice.... Thus, they drew analogy between the unseen and the seen, comparing Allah (swt) to man. They subjected the laws of this world to Allah (swt) precisely as a group of the Greek philosophers had done.”

Sheikh Taqiuddin an-Nabhani, Rahimahu Allah, said that among the errors of the Mu'tazilah is that they made analogy between the unseen matters that are not sensorially perceived and the apparent matters that are sensorially perceivable.

After he, Rahimahu Allah, said this in this section, he explained the meaning of "Guidance and Misguidance" in the next section, stating that Allah created the guidance and misguidance (*hidāyah* and *dhalāl*) and the servant initiates guidance and misguidance. And he went on showing the legitimate indications (qara'in) that is, the Shari' and the rational indications, and explained the rational indication: (As for the rational indication, Allah (swt)

takes people to account: he rewards the one who is guided and punishes the misguided... For if the meaning of ascribing guidance and misguidance to Allah (swt) is that He (swt) initiates it, then His punishing the kāfir, munāfiq and disobedient would constitute injustice; Exalted is Allah far above such).

It seemed to me that this saying contradicts with his above saying about the errors of the Mu'tazilah in drawing analogy of the justice of Allah (swt), which is not sensorially perceived, with the justice of man. How can we rationally sense the justice of Allah (swt) without a Shari' evidence, and then say His punishing the kafir, munafiq and disobedient would constitute injustice?

Your brother,
Abu Zaid

Answer:

Wa Alaikum Assalam wa Rahmatu Allahi wa Barakatuh,

First: The Islamic Aqeedah that was known in the time of the Messenger (saw) and the Khulafaa Ar-Rashdeen is Iman (positive belief) in Allah (swt), His Angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Day of Resurrection and in al-Qada wa'l-Qadar, the favorable and unfavorable being from Allah (swt) as it came in the Noble Ayah: **﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا﴾** **“O you who believe! Believe in Allah and His Messenger and the Book which He has sent to His Messenger and the Book which He sent afore. And whosoever denies Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day, has gone far, far astray”** [An-Nisa: 136].

Also added to these five matters (al-qadar with the meaning of the knowledge of Allah and the writing in the Lawh al-Mahfūdh (the Preserved Tablet) ...) And all this was known in the reign of the Messenger of Allah (saw) as we explained in our books and I extract from them about al-Qadar what demonstrate this meaning:

1. From the Book of Allah (swt): The Almighty's saying: **﴿وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾** **“and He is the All-Knower of everything”** [Al-An'am: 101]. And His (swt) saying: **﴿قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا﴾** **“Say: ‘Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is our Mawla.’ Then in Allah let the believers put their trust”** [At-Tawba: 51].

2. From the Hadiths of the Messenger of Allah (saw): In addition to the five above mentioned matters, Muslim narrated in his Sahih from Abdullah ibn Umar who said: my father Umar ibn al-Khattab related to me that: While we were sitting one day with the Messenger of Allah (saw) there appeared before us a man dressed in extremely white clothes and with very black hair. No traces of journeying were visible on him, and none of us knew him. He sat down close by the Prophet (saw) rested his knees against the knees of the Prophet (saw) and placed his palms over his thighs, and said: "O Muhammad! Inform me about Islam." He said: "Inform me about Iman (faith)." He (the Prophet) answered, **﴿أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ، وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ، وَكُتُبِهِ، وَأَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ﴾** **“It is that you believe in Allah and His angels and His Books and His Messengers and in the Last Day, and in fate (qadar), both in its good and in its evil aspects.”** He said, "You have spoken the truth"....and then he (the Prophet) said: **﴿يَا عُمَرُ أَتَدْرِي مَنْ السَّائِلُ؟﴾** **“O Umar, do you know who that questioner was?”** I replied, "Allah and His Messenger know better." He said: **﴿فَأْتَهُ جِبْرِيْلُ أَتَاكُمْ يُعَلِّمُكُمْ دِينَكُمْ﴾**. **“That was Jibril. He came to teach you your religion.”**

And al-Qadar here means the knowledge of Allah and the writing in the Lawh al-Mahfūdh..., not in the technical [istilāhī] meaning of the word al-qada wa'l-qadar. This word (the term of al-Qada wa'l-Qadar with the meaning of creating and performing the actions and

creating the attributes of things and their formation from actions ... as explained in our books), this had not known in the era of the Prophet (saw) or the companions may Allah be pleased with them. Rather it became famous only in the era of the Tabi'een. It became known and became a subject of discussion since that time, and it was the Mutakallimūn who made it the subject of their discussions. Those who introduced it and made it a subject of discussion are the Mutakallimūn [Muslim Scholastics].

As for the evidence of the Aqeedah being qati (definite), this is true for all Muslims, and whoever denies it is considered a Kafir. However, this does not apply to the subject of (al-Qada wa'l-Qadar) in the technical [istilāhī] meaning, which was translated from the Greek philosophy, for it is a subject of controversy over its meaning:

* The one who understands it a true understanding and substantiates it with the definite evidence, he believes in it as we have shown in our books and included it in the subject of the Aqeedah...

* Those who were confused in their understanding, such as the Mu'tazilah and the Jabriyyah, and confused between the creation of acts and performing them and the reward and punishment... as the Mu'tazilah said man creates his acts by his own will, to receive the reward and punishment on them. The Jabriyyah said, indeed, Allah (swt) creates the actions of man, and that man is compelled to perform them, he is just like a feather in the wind. These and those have confused between performing the act and the creation of the act which is one of the attributes of Allah, for He is the Creator of all things. These and those have misunderstood the Issue, so they came up with wrong opinions, thus we do not they have disbelieved, rather they are Muslims who erred in this Issue.

In summation: it is not said about the Mu'tazilah and the Jabriyyah who disagreed in the understanding of ((al-qada wa'l-qadar in the technical [istilāhī] meaning) is not said that they were Kuffar, but we say that their opinion is wrong, as we see that our opinion is the definite (qati) and thus believe in the subject of al-qada wa'l-qadar as we have explained it in our books. And whoever understands it in a different understanding than which we have mentioned, we say that he erred and not that he disbelieved (Kafar)...

Secondly: As for your question about justice and injustice:

The Mu'tazilah made the intellect the arbitrator for the actions of Allah, by drawing analogy between the acts of Allah Almighty and the acts of man, and this is an utter mistake. This is because the Essence [dhat] of Allah (swt) and His actions are sensorially inaccessible, rather they are taken according to the Shariah texts from the Book of Allah (swt) and the Sunnah of His Messenger (saw). Therefore, when we studied this issue we first established the Shari' evidence regarding the actions of Allah (swt) then we mentioned the rational evidence that agreed with them. That is, the origin in proving or refuting is what the Shariah revealed, and then if there is rational evidence in some of its aspects, there is no objection to mention them due to their agreement with the Shari' evidence ...

Therefore, we said when discussing this issue in Guidance and Misguidance in the Islamic Personality Volume I:

(However, there are ayāt which indicate that hidāyah [guidance] and dhalāl [misguidance] should be imputed to Allah (swt). So, it is understood from them that hidāyah and dhalāl do not emanate from the servant but are from Allah (swt). There are other verses which indicate that hidāyah, dhalāl and idhlāl [causing someone to go astray] are to be ascribed to the servant. From them it is understood that hidāyah and dalāl are from the servant. These, and other verses, should be understood from a legislative understanding, meaning, that their legislative reality, for which they were legislated, should be understood. It is apparent, then, that the attribution of guidance and misguidance to Allah (swt) has a meaning other than the meaning of attributing guidance and misguidance to the servant. Each one is focused on an angle different from the angle on which the other is focused. In this manner the legislative meaning becomes most evident.

Indeed, the verses which attribute misguidance and guidance to Allah (swt) are explicit in that it is Allah (swt) who guides and it is He (swt) Who causes someone to go astray. He (swt) says, ﴿قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ أَنَابَ﴾ **“Say: ‘Verily, Allah sends astray whom He wills and guides unto Himself those who turn to Him in repentance’”** [Ar-Ra’d: 27].

And He (swt) says, ﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾ **“Verily! You guide not whom you like (O Muhammad), but Allah guides whom He wills.”** [Al-Qasas: 56]. Thus, in these verses there is a clear indication that the one who does the guiding and misguiding is Allah (swt) and not the servant. This means the servant does not find guidance by himself, rather when Allah (swt) guides him he is guided. And when Allah (swt) sends him astray he goes astray.

However, this wording has come with indications [*qarā'in*] which divert the meaning from one of considering the initiation of guidance and misguidance as being from Allah (swt), to another meaning, namely, that of the creation of guidance and misguidance as being from Allah (swt) and that the one who initiates the guidance, misguidance and the sending of someone astray is the servant.

As for these indications they are *shar'i* and rational indications. As for the *shar'i* indications, many *ayāt* have come attributing guidance, misguidance and the causing of misguidance to the servant. He (swt) says, ﴿مَنْ اهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا﴾ **“So whoever receives guidance, he does so for the good of his own self, and whoever goes astray, he does so to his own loss”** [Yunus: 108]. And, ﴿لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ﴾ **“If you follow the right guidance no hurt can come to you from those who are in error”** [Al-Ma'idah: 105]. And, ﴿فَمَنْ اهْتَدَىٰ فَلِنَفْسِهِ﴾ **“So whoever accepts the guidance, it is only for his own self”** [Az-Zumar: 41]. And, ﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَيَتَّبِعُ كُلَّ شَيْطَانٍ مَرِيدٍ * كَتَبَ﴾ **“And of the people is he who disputes about Allah without knowledge and follows every rebellious devil.* It has been decreed for every devil that whoever turns to him - he will misguide him and will lead him to the punishment of the Blaze.”** [Al-Hajj: 3-4]. And, ﴿وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ﴾ **“But Shaytān wishes to lead them astray”** [An-Nisa: 60].

So, in the wording of these verses there is a clear indication that the human being is the one who performs the act of guidance and misguidance, thus he sends himself astray and he sends others astray and the *Shaytān* also sends people astray. So guidance and misguidance has come to be attributed to man and *Shaytān* and that man guides himself and sends himself astray. This is an indication [*qarinah*] that the attribution of guidance and misguidance to Allah (swt) is not one of initiation [*mubāsharah*] but rather it is one of creation [*khalq*]. If you place the *ayāt* together and understand them in a legislative manner, then the departure of each verse from the direction of the other becomes clear.

Thus, the *ayah* says, ﴿قُلِ اللَّهُ يَهْدِي لِلْحَقِّ﴾ **“Say: ‘It is Allah Who guides to the truth’”** [Yunus: 35]. And the other *ayah* says, ﴿فَمَنْ اهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ﴾ **“So whoever receives guidance, he does so for the good of his own self”** [Yunus: 108].

The first *ayah* indicates that Allah (swt) is the one who guides and the second indicates that man is the one who guides himself. The guidance of Allah (swt) in the first verse is about creating the guidance in the human being, that is, creating the capacity for guidance. The second *ayah* indicates that the human being is the one who initiates what Allah has created in terms of the capacity for guidance and so he guides himself. That is why He (swt) says in another *ayah*, ﴿وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ﴾ **“And (have We not) shown him the two ways”** [Al-Balad: 10].

That is, the path of good and the path of evil, that is, we have given him the capacity for guidance and we have left him to initiate his own guidance. So, these *ayāt* which attribute *hidāyah* and *dhalāl* to man are a *shar'i* indication indicating upon the diverting of the initiation of guidance from Allah (swt) to the servant.

As for the rational indication, Allah (swt) takes people to account: he rewards the one who is guided and punishes the misguided, and He has set the reckoning according to the actions of human beings. He (swt) says, ﴿مَنْ عَمِلْ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ﴾ **“Whosoever does righteous deeds it is for (the benefit of) his own self, and whosoever does evil, it is against his own self, and your Lord is not at all unjust to (His) slaves”** [Fussilat: 46];

And, ﴿فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ * وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ﴾ **“So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom, shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom, shall see it”** [Al-Zalzalah: 7].

And, ﴿وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا يَخَافُ ظُلْمًا وَلَا هَضْمًا﴾ **“And he who works deeds of righteousness, while he is a believer, then he will have no fear of injustice, nor of any curtailment (of his reward)”** [TaHa: 112]

And He (swt) says, ﴿مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ﴾ **“Whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof”** [An-Nisa: 123]

And, ﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْكُفَّارَ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا﴾ **“Allah has promised the hypocrites, men and women, and the disbelievers, the Fire of Hell, therein shall they abide forever”** [At-Tawba: 68]

For if the meaning of ascribing guidance and misguidance to Allah (swt) is that He (swt) initiates it, then His punishing the *kāfir*, *munāfiq* and disobedient would constitute injustice; Exalted is Allah far above such. Thus, it is necessary to divert its meaning to something other than initiation, namely, (to) the creation of guidance from nothing. Harmony with this is maintained if the one who initiates guidance and misguidance is the servant, and therefore he is accounted for it.

This is with respect to the *ayāt* in which guidance and misguidance is ascribed to Allah (swt). As regards verses in which guidance and misguidance is linked to His Will, ﴿يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾ **“Verily, Allah sends astray whom He wills, and guides whom He wills”** [Fatir: 8]. The meaning of his will here is intention [*irādah*]. The meaning of these verses is that no one guides himself by force against Allah's Will and nor does anyone forcibly go astray against His Will. Rather the one who finds guidance is the one who finds guidance by the Volition and Will of Allah and the one who goes astray goes astray by the Volition and Will of Allah...

Whereas the Mu'tazilah have arbitrated the mind as the basic evidence for the issue, and this is what we mentioned in the same book:

(The *Mu'tazilah's* view of the justice of Allah (swt) was one of subliming Him (swt) above injustice. Regarding the issue of punishment and reward, they took a stance which was consistent with the subliming of Allah (swt) and with his Justice. They postulated that the justice of Allah (swt) would be meaningless without the affirmation of the freedom of the will of man and the affirmation that he creates his actions and that he is capable of doing or refraining from doing; thus, if he does (an action) voluntarily or refrains from doing (it) voluntarily, his punishment or reward will be understandable and just. But if Allah (swt) creates man and compels him to act in a certain way by compelling the obedient toward obedience and the disobedient toward disobedience and then punishes him and rewards him, this would not be just in the least. Thus, they drew analogy between the unseen and the seen, comparing Allah (swt) to man. They subjected the laws of this world to Allah □ precisely as a group of the Greek philosophers had done. Thus, they obligated justice upon Allah □ as it was envisaged by man.

The origin of the discussion is the punishment and reward from Allah (swt) for the servant's action. This is the subject matter of the discussion which was given the name '*al-qadā' wa'l-qadar*' or as '*al-jabr wa'l-ikhtiyār*' or '*hurriyat al-irādah*'....They also said that if

Allah (swt) had willed the *kufr* of the *kāfir* and the disobedience of the disobedient, he would not have prohibited them from *kufr* and disobedience, and how can it be thinkable that Allah (swt) willed for Abu Lahab that he be a *kāfir* and then ordered him to have *imān* and prohibited him from *kufr*? If any one of the creations did this, he certainly would be (deemed) foolish; Exalted is Allah (swt) high above such. Further, if the *kufr* of a *kāfir* and the disobedience of the disobedient were willed by Allah (swt), they would not be deserving the punishment...

As for the issue of the creation of acts, the *Mu'tazilah* said that the acts of the servants are created by them and are of their own doing not of Allah's (swt); it is in their power to do these acts or refrain from them without any intervention of the power of Allah (swt)...

They concluded with the opinion which they held regarding the issue of the creation of acts, namely the view that man creates his own actions by himself and that he is capable of doing an act or refraining from it. In pursuance of the methodology of inquiry of the *Mutakallimīn* in discussing the issue as well as its offshoots, one of the offshoots of the issue of the creation of acts was the issue of causality. After the *Mu'tazilah* had determined that the acts of man are created by him, a question arose from this: what about the acts that result from his action? Are they created by him as well? Or are they created by Allah (swt)? For example, the pain felt by a person who has been hit, the taste that a thing comes to have as a result of the action of man, the cutting that occurs from a knife, pleasure, health, lust, heat, cold, humidity, solidity, cowardice, courage, hunger, satisfaction, etc. They said that all these are part of the action of man because it is man who causes them when he performs his acts. Thus, they are ensuing from his act and as a result are created by him...)

Thus, the opinion of Muatazilah is based on the arbitration of mind in the actions of Allah (swt), though they do not comprehend the reality of these actions, for they may see them in other than their reality. And as stated in the same book they: (They missed the point that the sensorially accessible is comprehensible and that the Essence of Allah (swt) is incomprehensible, so it is not possible to draw analogy of one upon the other. They were inattentive to the fact that the Justice of Allah (swt) is incomparable to the justice of man, and that it is invalid to apply the laws of this world to Allah (swt), who is the Creator of this world and the one who regulates it according the laws he set for it. When we do see that the perspective of man is narrow, he understands matters in a given way and that once his perspective widens, his view of justice changes and his judgement changes as well; how then do we compare (to ourselves) the Lord of the worlds (swt) whose knowledge encompasses everything and give His (swt) justice the meaning of justice that we ourselves see to be justice?)

Accordingly, the mind cannot pass judgement on the actions of Allah Almighty, for the actions of Allah (swt) are outside the scope of the mind and its judgment. So, it is wrong to give the mind independent from Shar' the eligibility to pass judgement on the actions of Allah (swt).

This is what we mentioned in our books, we have established Shari' evidence on the actions of Allah Almighty and then mentioned the rational evidence that agree with them...

I hope that this clarification is sufficient, and Allah is the Most Wise and He Knows Best.

Your brother,

Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah

08th Jumada I 1443 AH

12/12/2021 CE

The link to the answer from the Ameer's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/HT.AtaabuAlrashtah/posts/3087147078197962>