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THE CHAPTER ON
QADAR
(PREDESTINATION)

FROM

*A'laam as-Sunnah al-
Manshoorah*

BY

Haafiz Ibn Ahmad Al-Hakamee
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Commentary by

Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips

Module EIGHT

Questions 153-154

Question 153

Do the creatures have the ability and will to do their actions?

Certainly, they do. The creatures do have the ability, wish and will to do their actions, and their actions are actually attributed to them.¹ It is on that basis that they are held accountable for their actions. Thus, they are rewarded and punished because of their actions. Furthermore, Allaah has not made them responsible for that which they cannot handle.² Allaah has affirmed that in the Scripture³ and the Sunnah⁴ and described them in that way. However, they are only able to do what

¹ This statement of the author is in refutation of those Jabrites who claim that the attribution of human deeds to themselves is only metaphorical and not real.

² The actions done by a mature person are based on his free will. He has a will and he has an ability to implement his will. If human beings had no free will, punishment for disobedience would be unjust. Similarly, obedience would be meaningless. Thus, humans have a choice, but their actions are pre-ordained by Allaah. However, He does not compel them to act. If humans were compelled, they would have no will or ability to act. However, since human will and ability are a part of the human being and the human being is a creation of Allaah, then human choices cannot escape the perfection of Allaah's *ruboobiyyah*: Nothing occurs in the heavens or on earth without Allaah's will and permission. There are certain things that happen without human will or choice. For example, death, illness, accidents, and so on. Such incidents are not attributed to humans and are purely attributed to *Qadar*. (*Fate in Islam*, p. 106)

³ Allaah said:

﴿ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ﴾

“Allaah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity.” (*Soorah al-Baqarah*, 2:)

⁴ Sa'd reported that he asked the Prophet (ﷺ) who among mankind had the most trials and he replied, “*The prophets, then those most like them and then those most like them. Man is tested according to the level of his faith. If his faith is firm, his trials increase in severity, and if there is weakness in his faith, he will be tried accordingly.*” (Collected by at-Tirmidhi and Sunan Ibn-i-Majah and authenticated in *Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhi*, vol.2, p.286, no. 1956.)

‘Alee and Ibn ‘Umar reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

Allaah has made them capable of doing, and they can only will what Allaah Wills.⁵ They can only do what He made them able to do, as was previously mentioned in the texts related to the Divine Will, Wish and the Creation. Thus, just as they have not created themselves, they did not create their own actions, abilities, wills and wishes. Human actions depend on Allaah's Abilities, Wishes and Actions, since He is their Creator, the Creator of their abilities, their wills and their actions. Furthermore, their wills, wishes, abilities and actions are not Allaah's Wills, Wishes, Abilities and Actions, just as they are not He - far removed is Allaah from that. Instead, their actions which Allaah creates are done by them, they are befitting of them and they are literally attributed to them. Thus, Allaah is actually the Doer and the creature is actually the one who carries out the action⁶ and Allaah is actually the Guide and the creature is the one who is actually guided. Consequently, Allaah attributed His action to Himself and the creature's

((رُفِعَ الْقَلَمُ عَنْ ثَلَاثَةٍ : عَنِ النَّائِمِ حَتَّى يَسْتَيْقِظَ، وَعَنِ الصَّبِيِّ حَتَّى يَشِبَّ، وَعَنِ الْمَعْتُوهِ حَتَّى يَعْقِلَ))

“The pen is raised from the record of three: a sleeping person until he awakes, a child until he matures, and an insane person until he regains his sanity.” (Musnad Ahmad and Sunan at-Tirmitheh, and authenticated in *Saheeh al-Jaami' as-Sagheer*, no. 3512-3514)

Ibn 'Abbaas and Thawbaan also related that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

((إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَجَاوَزَ عَنْ أُمَّتِي الْخَطَأَ، وَالنَّسْيَانَ، وَمَا اسْتَكْرَهُوا عَلَيْهِ))

“Indeed, Allaah overlooks the inadvertent mistakes and forgetfulness of my nation and what they are forced to do.” (Sunan Ibn-i-Majah and authenticated in *Saheeh al-Jaami' as-Sagheer*, no. 3515)

⁵ Allaah said:

﴿وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا﴾

“You cannot will except as Allaah wills.” (Soorah al-Insaan, 76: 30)

When a human being wants to do something and he is able to accomplish it, then Allaah wished that it be done.

⁶ Allaah said:

﴿فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ وَمَا رَمَيْتُمْ إِذْ رَمَيْتُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَى﴾

“You all did not kill them, but Allaah killed them. You (Muhammad) did not throw when you threw, but Allaah threw.” (Soorah al-Anfaal, 8: 17)

action to it. He, the Most High, said,

﴿ مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ ۗ ﴾^ط

“He whom Allaah Guides, he is the rightly guided.” (Soorah al-Kahf, 18: 17)

Thus, the attribution Guidance to Allaah is real, and attribution of being guided to the creature is real. As a result, just as the Guide is not the same as the one guided, likewise guidance is not the same as being guided. Similarly, He misguides whom He Wishes and that creature is then truly misguided. This is the same for all of Allaah’s actions in His creatures. Consequently, whoever attributes the creation of the action and its doing to the creature⁷ is a disbeliever; and whoever attributes the creation of the action and its doing to Allaah⁸, is also a disbeliever. The true believer is the one who attributes the creation of the action to Allaah and doing the act to His creatures.

⁷ This is the position of the Qadarites who claim that human free-will means that humans create their own actions and implement them themselves.

⁸ This represents the position of the Jabrites who claim that humans have no free-will. Their choices only appear to them as choices but in reality are Allaah’s choices and they have no choice in the matter at all.

Question 154

Is Allaah not able to make His slaves obedient, rightly-guided believers while liking that from them according to the Legislated Decree⁹?

Yes, He is Able to do that, as He, the Most High, has said,

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً﴾

“And had Allaah Willed, He could have made you all one nation.”

(*Soorahs al-Maa'idah*, 5: 48 & *an-Nahl*, 16: 93)

And He, the Most High, also said:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ جَمِيعًا﴾

“And had your Lord Willed, everyone on earth would have all believed.”

(*Soorah Yunus*, 10: 99)

And there are many other similar verses.

However, whatever He does with His creatures is necessitated by His Wisdom and obligated by His Dominion (*Ruboobiyyah*), His Divinity (*Uloohiyyah*) and His Names and Attributes (*Asmaa wa Sifaat*). So the question, “Why are some of

⁹ The actual question was: **How can we answer the one who says, “Is Allaah not able to make all His slaves obedient, rightly-guided believers while liking that from them according to the Legislated Decree?”** In other words, why did Allaah not make everyone obedient, rightly-guided believers, which is what He likes them to be?

His creatures obedient and some disobedient?” is similar to the question, “Why does Allaah have Names such as the Harmful (*ad-Daar*) and the Beneficial (*an-Naafi*), the Giver (*al-Mu'tee*) and the Withholder (*al-Maani*), the Humiliater (*al-Khaafid*) and the Elevator (*ar-Raafi*), the Blessor (*al-Mun'im*) and the Avenger (*al-Muntaqim*), and so on?” For, the Actions of Allaah are the manifestations of His Names and the embodiment of His Attributes. Thus, rejection of His Actions is the same as rejection of His Names and Attributes. Furthermore, it is rejection of His Divinity and His Dominion.

﴿ فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

“Glorified is Allaah, the Lord of the Throne. He is high above all that they associate with Him! He cannot be questioned about what He does, while they will be questioned.” (Soorah al-Ambiyaa, 21: 22-23)¹⁰

¹⁰ Allaah has already made creatures who are obedient, rightly-guided believers, the angels. Why did He not stop there is a question human beings do not have the right to ask. He is the Creator and variety in creation is an expression of His greatness as a Creator. Why did He not make all human beings alike with the same qualities, why did He not make women like men, or why He did not make men pregnant and deliver babies instead of women, and so on and so forth, are all queries which question the Ultimate Wisdom of Allaah in His creative acts and that level of questioning requires knowledge equal to His to ask.

Another way of looking at this question is: Why did Allaah create what He dislikes? The answer is that Allaah may dislike something in itself but want it due to its connection to something else which He likes. In all His actions, Allaah has Perfect Wisdom. Humans may recognize some aspects of His Wisdom, but not its complete details. There is wisdom behind the creation of calamities, sufferings and hardships that speak about the Favors of Allaah, His Justice and His Mercy. For example, some of this wisdom includes:

1. Tests for the believers to strengthen their faith.
2. Evidence for the weakness of humans and their need for their Lord.
3. A means to expiate sins and elevate one's spiritual status. The Prophet () said, “*There is nothing which afflicts the believer, even the prick of a thorn, except that Allaah records a good deed for him or erases one of his sins.*” (Sahih Muslim, vol. 4, p. , no. 6241)
4. A means for those who visit the ill to earn rewards.
5. Witnessing the occurrence of favors and blessings after calamities and hardships has a more profound effect in appreciating Allaah's Power, Wisdom, Mercy and Justice.
6. An appreciation of good health and well-being of one's self.

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7. A reminder about what is more devastating, Hell. A lesson to build up eagerness for Paradise. (*The Belief in Al-Qadaa wal-Qadar*, pp. 85-9)

Ibn al-Qayyim said, "If Allaah puts a person under certain tests and trials and the person recognizes that he must resort to Allaah alone seeking His help, then this is a good sign for him; the trials turn to purification and mercy. If on the other hand, he rejects, complains, and turns away from Allaah and seeks help from human beings like himself, then this is a bad sign for him; the trials turn to punishment and misery for him." (*Tareequl-Hijratayn*, fn. 103, p. 259)