

AL-QADAA wal QADAR IN BRIEF

(مختصر القضاء والقدر)

Based Upon the Original Book
"The Salaf's Understanding of *Al-Qadaa' wal Qadar* "

(Allah's General Pre-Decrees and Their Particular Executions)
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The belief in *al-Qadar* (general and particular decrees) is one of the main pillars of Islamic Faith. Most Muslims believe in this, however, a few really understand it. The aim of this article is to clarify this concept to the minds of the ordinary Muslim and to the revert. We ask Allah to benefit Muslims and hope that some questions pertaining to this matter are answered after the reader completes this article.

Let us first review or explain the meaning of *al-Qadar*. Al-Qadar is sometimes mentioned with *al-Qadaa'* in the same statement. If so then each has a distinct meaning. However, when they are mentioned separately, then either one comprises the other. So when they are stated together, then ***al-Qadar*** means that which Allah has eternally pre-ordained (in due measure) pertaining to His creation. On the other hand, ***al-Qadaa'*** means that which Allah has decreed for His creation from existence, annihilation, or change. In this sense, *al-Qadar* preceeds *al-Qadaa'* when combined in the same sentence.

The belief in *al-Qadar* is obligatory as Allah stated in several verses of the Glorious Qur'an:

"إنا كل شيء خلقناه بقدر" (القمر، ٤٩)

"Verily, We have created all things with Qadar." (Qur'an 54, 49)

An example of a Prophetic saying about *al-Qadar*:

"لا يؤمن عبد حتى يؤمن بالقدر خيره وشره من الله...." (صحيح الترمذي)

"No slave of Allah will (truly) believe until he believes in *Al-Qadar*, its good and bad, from Allah..." (Saheeh At-Tirmidhi)

Al-Qadar encompasses four themes:

- 1) Allah's Knowledge (*al-'ilm*),
- 2) Allah's Writing (*al-kitabah*),
- 3) Allah's Will (*al-mashee'ah*), and
- 4) Allah's Creation (*al-khalq*). Each of these themes is discussed below.

1) *Al-'ilm* (Allah's knowledge)

We believe that Allah's knowledge encompasses everything. He knew what had occurred, what will occur, and all that which did not occur. All things such as: life-spans, sayings, moves, deeds, secrets, all obedient and disobedient acts etc.

"إن الله بكل شيء عليم" (الأنفال، ٧٥)

"Verily Allah is the All-knowing of everything" (Qur'an 8, 75)

2) *Al-Kitabah* (Allah's writing)

This means that Allah (ﷻ) wrote everything about creation, their livelihood, provisions, ages, and deeds, etc. He wrote what He says and what He does, and all that comes to existence due to His actions and sayings. He also wrote what is entailed by His names and attributes. All these are written in *al-Lawhul Mahfoudh* (The preserved Tablet).

"وما من غائبة في السماء والأرض إلا في كتاب مبين" (النمل، ٧٥)

**"And there is nothing hidden in the heaven and earth, but in a clear book"
(Qur'an 27: 75)**

3) *Al-Mashee'ah* (The will of Allah)

It is the belief that Allah willed everything that goes on in this universe. His will and His preordaining power effectively covers everything. Whatever He wills, will occur, and whatever He does not will, will not take place. Example, Allah says:

"ولو شاء الله لجعلكم أمة واحدة ولكن ليبلوكم فيما آتاكم" (المائدة، ٤٨)

"If Allah willed, He would have made you one nation, but that (He) may test you in what He has given you." (Qur'an 5, 48)

The will of Allah (*Al-mashee'ah*) can be *Kawniyyah* (universal) or *Shar'iyyah* (legal or judicial). *Al-mashee'ah al-kawniyyah* means that whatever Allah permitted to exist [kuffir (unbelief), belief, obedience, and disobedience, etc.] is pertinent to his *mashee'ah*, whether He loves it or not. This is also called *al-iradah al-kawniyyah*. Therefore, Allah may decree, as necessitated by His wisdom, to pass things which He does not love and is not pleased with.

"ولا يرضى لعباده الكفر" (الزمر، ٧)

"And He likes not disobedience for His slaves." (Qur'an: 39, 7)

It is obvious from this verse that Allah does not like kuffr, yet it exists by His will, in harmony with His wisdom.

On the other hand, the judicial will is pertinent to Allah's legislation (Sharee'ah). Hence it is related to what Allah loves and likes, whether it takes place or not. It is also known as *al-iradah ash-shar'iyyah*. The acts of obedience from the angels, prophets, and the believers, when they take place, are loved by Allah and are passed by His universal will. However, it is not necessarily that His commands are always executed.

4) Al-Khalq (The Creation)

Allah (ﷻ) is the sole Creator of everything, including man's deeds. No single atom or higher, static or in motion, but Allah has created it. Nothing that takes place in this world except that Allah has created it (including evil):

"الله خالق كل شيء وهو على كل شيء وكيل" (الزمر، ٦٢)

"Verily Allah is the Creator of everything, and He is the *Wakil* (Disposer of Affairs, Trustee, etc.) over all things" (Qur'an 39: 62)

Commonly Asked Questions Pertaining to *Al-Qadar* and their Answers:

Q1-Does the slave of Allah have real ability, will, choice and action?

Man's ability to move (e.g. standing sitting etc.) and to believe are actions that are truly attributed to him. This is scientifically proven. However, these actions and movements are primarily created by Allah. In other words, man's will and actions are next to His (ﷻ). Allah (ﷻ) mentioned in the Qur'an:

"وما تشاءون إلا أن يشاء الله" (الإنسان، ٧٦)

"But you cannot will, unless Allah wills." (Qur'an76, 30)

This is the correct and medium way of relating the actions of Allah to those of His creation, and Allah knows best.

Many Muslim sects deviated from this line of thought. Some claimed that man has no will and no real action, and that he is just like a feather in the wind. This group is known as *Al-Jabriyyah* (from *Jabr* meaning compulsion). Others claimed, on the contrary, that man creates his actions by his ability and his will, thus "making" creators other than Allah! This group of people is called *Al-Qadariyyah*. The Prophet (ﷺ) called them the "Magians of this Ummah," because they claim that Satan "creates" evil and harmful things, making Satan a "creator" besides Allah.

Q2-Does Du'aa (supplication to Allah) change what is written by Allah?

There is no doubt that *du'aa* affects what had been written and ordained, but the change in what is already written, is, itself, written and ordained. So, the *du'aa* does not bring a new Qadaa' other than that which has already preceded. Allah, the one who ordained tests and trials, is the one who ordained warding them off by *du'aa* or by other means. So *al-Qadaa' wal Qadar* comprises them all. For example, Illnesses are pre-ordained. An ill person calls upon Allah to cure his illness. The illness is written; his invocation (supplication) is also written, and because of his invocation, Allah had ordained and written that he will be cured. So everything is linked to its causes, which are themselves created and written.

Q3-What is the correct response to someone who, when called to Allah's way, says: "Allah did not write or ordain guidance for me"!?

Simply, the response is:

"Did you happen to know the Unseen? Or did you have a covenant with Allah?" If he says: "Yes," then he commits kuffr. If he says "No," then this is in harmony with the fact that no one knows whether Allah wrote and preordained guidance for. He calls you for His guidance, so take it:

" يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَضَلُّوا " (النساء، ١٧٦)

"(Thus) does Allah makes clear to you (His Laws, and His Deen) lest you go astray." (Qur'an 4:176)

"يريد الله ليبين لكم ويهديكم سنن الذين من قبلكم ويتوب عليكم والله عليم حكيم" (النساء، ٢٦)

"Allah wishes to make clear to you and guide you into the ways of those before you, and accept your repentance, and Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise." (Qur'an 4: 26)

Q4- Since Allah created everything, is evil, then, attributable to Allah?

Allah, the exalted is High above evil and evil should not be attributed to Him because He is perfectly Wise, Just, and Merciful in all of His Actions. The Prophet (ﷺ) made it clear that evil is not attributable to Allah by saying:

"لبيك وسعديك والخير كله في يديك، والشر ليس إليك، أنا بك وإليك تباركت وتعاليت" (رواه مسلم)

"I respond to your call (O Allah!), and I am obedient to your orders, all Good is in your Hands, and the evil is not attributable to You, I am by You, and to You, Blessed are Thee and Exalted... "(Collected by Muslim)

Evil is not attributable to Allah but is in what is decreed in His creation (*Maqdoor*). Evil, is in Allah's creation, not in Himself, Attributes, Names, or Actions. *Al-Maqdoor* (what is

decreed to occur) is either good or apparently evil. Evil is not absolute in itself, and Allah created it for a wisdom which we do not often realize. For example Allah said:

"ظهر الفساد في البر والبحر بما كسبت أيدي الناس ليذيقهم بعض الذي عملوا لعلهم يرجعون" (الروم، ٤١)

"Evil (sins and disobedience to Allah, etc.) has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of men have earned (by oppression and evil deeds, etc.), that Allah may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return (by repenting to Allah, and begging His Pardon" (Qur'an 30:41)

The appearance of evil on land and sea is evil in itself, but there is also great wisdom and good behind it: in order that people may return to Allah. Cutting off the thief's hand or stoning the adulterer is an evil thing for the thief and the adulterer, but it is good for them in one respect because it is purification for them so that the punishment of this life and the Hereafter are not combined for them. It also protects the society from such evil deeds.

We ask Allah to benefit all Muslims from this article and make our efforts sincere towards Him.

For more detail on this subject, readers may refer to the original by Dr Saleh As-Saleh (Published by Daar Al-Bukhari, K.S.A, and audio discussion on the subject at www.understand-islam.net).

*Safar 13, 1427
March, 13, 2006*