

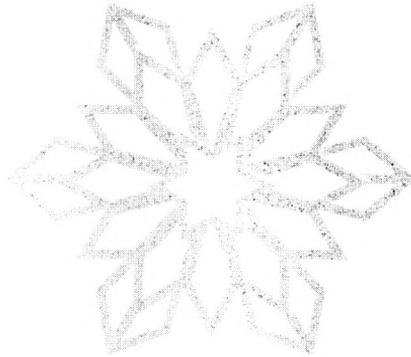


A TREATISE REGARDING THE

DIVINE DECREE
AND
FOREORDAINMENT



BY SHAYKH MUHAMMAD AL-UTHAYMIN



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INTRODUCTION

Indeed, the praise is for Allaah; we praise Him, we seek Him for forgiveness, and repent to Him. We seek refuge with Allaah from the evil of our souls and from our evil deeds. Whomever Allaah guides there is none to misguide and whomever Allaah causes to stray there is none to guide him aright. I testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allaah, Alone, having no partners and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. Allaah, the Exalted, sent him – before the Hour – as a bearer of glad tidings, a warner, a caller to Allaah by His permission, and a radiant lamp. He conveyed the message, discharged the trust, advised the Ummah, and struggled truthfully in the path of Allaah until the certainty (i.e., death) came to him. May blessings and peace be upon him, his family, his companions, and those who follow them in excellence until the Day of Recompense. To Proceed:

Noble brothers, within this gathering – in which we hope that Allaah bestows upon us some of His bounty and mercy and makes us to be from the rightly guided guides, and the leaders in rectification, and from those who listen and benefit – we will study an important affair which is of concern to every Muslim. It is none other than the Foreordainment of Allaah and His Divine Decree.

The affair, and for Allaah is the praise, is clear. And were it not for the fact that abundant questions have come; and were it not that the affair remains unclear to many people, and that many of the people delve into the topic, at times in truth and often times in falsehood and bearing in mind that desires have spread and become abundant; and the wicked person has come to seek to justify his wickedness by way of the foreordainment and divine decree; were it not for this and other reasons, we would not have spoken about this matter.

The foreordainment and divine decree continue to be a point of contention within the Ummah, of old and latter times. It is reported that the prophet ﷺ came out to his companions whilst they were debating regarding the Qadar and he prohibited them from doing so

and informed them that:

ما أهلك الذين من قبلكم إلا هذا الجدل

“Nothing destroyed those who were before you except this disputation.”¹

However, Allah has facilitated the affair for His believing slaves, the pious predecessors, who traversed upon the path of balance in that which they know and say; and it is that the foreordainment of Allah, the Exalted, and His divine decree is from His Lordship over His creation. Thus, it enters into one of the three aspects of Tawhid into which the people of knowledge have categorized the Tawhid of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic:

The First Aspect: Tawhid Al-Uluhiyah (Oneness of Allah’s Worship); and it is to single out Allah, the Exalted, with worship.

The Second Aspect: Tawhid Ar-Rububiyah (Oneness of Allah’s Lordship); and it is to single out Allah with creation, ownership, and management.

The Third Aspect: Tawhid Al-Asma was-Sifat (Oneness of Allah’s Names and Qualities).

Belief in the divine decree is from the lordship of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. Due to this Imam Ahmad, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: *“The divine decree is the power of Allah.”²*

This is because it is—without doubt—from His ability, and a component of it. It is also the secret of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, that has been hidden; and none knows (its reality) except Allah, the Glorified and High. It is written within the preserved tablet; in a safeguarded book which none can see. We do not know that which Allah has decreed for us or upon us. Nor do we know that which Allah has decreed within His creation except after it occurs or after being truthfully informed of it.

1 Reported by At-Tirmidhi within the Book of Qadar; Chapter: That which has Come regarding the Severity of Delving Deeply in Discussing the Qadar (no. 2133) and Ibn Majah in the introduction; Chapter: Regarding the Qadar (no. 85)

2 Masa’il Al-Imam Ahmad (2/155) by Ibn Hani’

GROUPS OF PEOPLE AS IT RELATES TO THE DIVINE DECREE

O brothers, the Islamic Ummah is divided into three categories with regards to the divine decree:

The First Category: Those who have gone to extremes in affirming the divine decree and they have stripped away from the servant any ability and choice in the matter. They say: *The servant has no ability nor any choice. Rather, he is compelled to move, having no choice; like a tree blowing within the wind.*

They make no distinction between the action of the servant which occurs by way of his own choice and that which he does and occurs without his choice. Without doubt these people are astray; because from that which is known by necessity within the religion and by way of sound intellect and custom is that there is a difference between that which one does by his own choice and that which he is compelled to do.

The Second Category: Those who have gone to extremes in affirming the ability and volition of the servant to the point that they have negated that Allah has a will or choice or creation in that which the servant does and they claim that the servant is distinct in his actions to the point that the extremists amongst them say: *Allah, the Exalted, does not know that which the slaves will do except after it has occurred from them.*

These people, as well, have gone to extremes and deviated greatly in affirmation of the ability and free will of the servant.

The Third Category: Those who believe—thus Allah has guided them to the truth and that which the people differ; and they are Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah, who traverse, in this, upon a balanced path being established upon the legislative evidences as well as intellectual evidences—they say: *The actions which Allah causes to occur in the universe are divided into two categories: The first category is that which Allah causes to occur from His actions within His creation. In this no one*

has any choice; such as the descending of rain, the growth of vegetation, life and death, sickness and health and other than this from the many affairs which are witnessed within the creation of Allah, the Exalted. In this, without doubt, no one has any choice, and no one has any volition. It is only by way of the Will of Allah the One the Ever Powerful.

The second category is that which the creation, who has free will, may do. These actions are done by way of the volition of the one who does them and by way of their will; because Allah the Exalted has given them this. As Allah has said:

لِمَن شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَن يَسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٢٨﴾

To whomsoever among you who wills to walk straight (At-Takwir 81:28)

Allah has also said:

مِنْكُمْ مَّن يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ

Among you are some that desire this world and some that desire the Hereafter. (Ali Imran 3:152)

Likewise, Allah has said:

فَمَن شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَن شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ

Then whosoever wills, let him believe, and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. (Al-Kahf 18:29)

The person knows the difference between that which occurs from him by his own choice and that which occurs from him by way of force or compulsion. A person may descend from a platform by way of the stairs by his own choice. He knows that he is choosing to do so. However, he may fall down from the platform and he knows that he did not choose to do so. Thus, one knows the difference between the two affairs and that the second was of compulsion and the first was one of choice and every individual knows this.

Similarly, a person knows that if he is afflicted with the illness of urinary incontinence the urine that comes out of him is not by his own choice and if he is healthy and free of this illness then the urine that comes out of him will be by his choice. Thus, he knows the difference between this and that; and no one would deny there being a difference between the two. Similarly, all of that which occurs from the servant, he knows the difference between that which occurs by way of his own choice and that which occurs by way of compulsion and force. Rather, indeed from the mercy of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, is that from the actions there is that which is done by the choice of the servant. However, it is not attributed to him. Such as, that which he does forgetfully while sleeping. Allah, the Exalted, mentioned regarding the story of the people of the cave:

وَنُقَلِّبُھُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ^ع

And We turned them on their right and on their left sides. (Al-Kahf 18:18)

And they are the ones who turned over. However, Allah attributed the action to Himself because a sleeping person has no choice in that which he does nor, will he be called to account for his action. Therefore, the action is attributed to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

من نسي وهو صائم فأكل أو شرب فليتم صومه؛ فإنما أطعمه الله وسقاه

“He who forgets while fasting and eats or drinks something let him complete his fast. For indeed it is Allah who fed him and gave him drink.”³

Therefore, he has attributed the feeding and the giving of drink to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. This is because the action has occurred from the servant unmindfully. Therefore, it is as if it is done without his choice.

3 Reported by Muslim in the Book of Fasting; Chapter: The Eating and Drinking or Intercourse of the Forgetful One Does Not Break His Fast (no. 1155)

All of us know the difference between when the servant feels pain, and that which he finds from weakness within himself at times without choice wherein he does not know the reason for it and that which he finds from pain that emulates from the action that he himself does; or happiness which is based upon an action he has done, himself. This affair, for Allah is the praise, is clear with there being no ambiguity to it.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE ERRONEOUS STATEMENTS

If we were to say the likes of the statement from the first group, who have gone to extremes in affirming the divine decree, the Sharee'ah would be invalidated at its foundation. This is because the statement that the action of the servant is such that he has no choice within it necessitates that he cannot be commended for a praiseworthy action nor can he be blamed for a blameworthy action; because, in reality – (according to their claim) – the action was done without any choice or volition from himself. Based upon this, the result is that Allah, the Glorified and High – and Allah is far removed from this – is an oppressor to the one who has disobeyed Him, because He punishes him and torments him for his disobedience; for He is punishing him for an affair that he had no choice but to do and it was not done by way of his volition. And this, without doubt, is in opposition to the Quran. Allah the Blessed and High has said:

وَقَالَ قَرِينُهُ هَذَا مَا لَدَىٰ عَتِيدٍ ﴿٢٣﴾ أَلْقِيَا فِي سَهْمٍ كُلٍّ كَمَا رَعَيْتُمَا ﴿٢٤﴾ مَنَاعَ لِلْخَبِيرِ مُعْتَدٍ مُّرِيبٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ الَّذِي جَعَلَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَالْقِيَاءُ فِي الْعَذَابِ الشَّدِيدِ ﴿٢٦﴾ قَالَ قَرِينُهُ رَبَّنَا مَا أَطْفَيْتَهُ وَلَكِنْ كَانَ فِي ضَلَالٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ قَالَ لَا تَخْضَعُوا لَدَىٰ وَقَدْ قَدَّمْتُمُ الْبَيْعَةَ بِالْوَعِيدِ ﴿٢٨﴾ مَا يُبَدَّلُ الْقَوْلُ لَدَىٰ وَمَا أَنَا بِظَالِمٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٢٩﴾

And his companion (angel) will say: "Here is (this Record) ready with me!" (And it will be said): "Both of you throw (Order from Allah to the two angels) into Hell, every stubborn disbeliever (in the Oneness of Allah, in His Messengers, etc.). Hinderer of good, transgressor, doubter, who set up another god with Allah, then (both of you) cast him in the severe torment." His companion (Satan) will say: "Our Lord! I did not push him to transgress, but he was himself in error far astray." Allah will say: "Dispute not in front of Me, I had already, in advance, sent you the threat. The Sentence that comes from Me cannot be changed, and I am not unjust (to the least) to the slaves." (Qaf 50:23-29)

So, Allah, the Glorified and High, has clarified that this punishment that emanates from Him is not oppression. Rather, it is complete justice. This is because He has given them a threat and has clarified to them the paths which lead to it. He has, likewise, clarified to them the truth and He has clarified to them falsehood. However, they

have chosen from themselves to traverse upon the path of falsehood. Therefore, there does not remain for them any argument against Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. If we were to say the likes of this false statement, then invalid would be the statement of Allah in which he said:

﴿رُسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ﴾

Messengers as bearers of good news as well as of warning in order that mankind should have no plea against Allah after the Messengers.

(An-Nisa 4:165)

For indeed Allah, the Blessed and High, has negated that mankind have any argument after the sending of the Messengers. This is because the proof is established against them by way of that. Therefore, if the divine decree is an argument for them then this argument would have been ongoing, even after the sending the Messengers. Because the divine decree of Allah, the Exalted, continues and will continue to be present before descending of the Messengers as well as after it. Therefore, this statement is proven false by way of the texts; and the reality, as we have mentioned in detail, likewise invalidates it. And we have previously mentioned the examples (which would make it clear).

As for the people of the second statement, they are refuted as well by way of the texts and the reality. This is because the texts are explicit in establishing that the person has a free will which is subsidiary to the will of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. Allah has said:

﴿وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

To whomsoever among you who wills to walk straight; and you will not, unless (it be) that Allah wills, the Lord of all that exists. (At-Takwir 81:29)

Likewise, Allah has said:

﴿وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ﴾

And your Lord creates whatsoever He wills and chooses. (Al-Qasas 28:68)

Likewise, Allah has said:

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

Allah calls to the home of peace (i.e. Paradise) and guides whom He wills to a Straight Path. (Yunus 10:25)

Those who say this statement are in reality negating an aspect from the aspect of Allah's Lordship. They also claim that within the dominion of Allah there is that which He does not will nor create. While, in reality, Allah, the Exalted and High, wills everything (that is) and He is the Creator of everything and He is the One who Decrees everything. They also are in opposition to that which is known by necessity; the fact that all of the creation is owned by Allah, the Mighty and Majestic; its individuals as well as their attributes. There is no separation between the attribute and the possessor of the attribute; nor between the title and the actual entity. All of this belongs to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, and it is not possible that there can occur within His dominion that which Allah, the Blessed and High, does not want to occur.

However, there remains the question: If the affair is connected to the will of Allah, the Blessed and High, and the entirety of affair is within His Hand then, what can a person do, therefore, and what alternative does the person have if Allah, the Exalted, has decreed for him that he deviate and that he not be guided?

We say in response to this that Allah, the Blessed and High, only guides those who deserve guidance and He causes to stray those who deserve deviation. Allah, the Blessed and High, has said:

﴿فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاعَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ﴾

So when they turned away Allah turned their hearts away (from the Right Path). (As-Saff 61:5)

And Allah the Exalted likewise says:

﴿فِيمَا نَقَضُوا مِيثَقَهُمْ لَعْنَتُهُمْ وَعَقَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِ﴾

So because of their breach of their covenant, We cursed them, and made their hearts grow hard. They change the words from their (right) places and have abandoned a good part of the Message that was sent to them. (Al-Ma’idah 5:13)

Allah, the Blessed and High, has clarified that the reasons for Him leaving to stray those who have gone astray is due to the servant, himself, and the servant—as we have previously mentioned—does not know that which Allah, the Exalted, has decreed for him because no one knows the divine decree until after that which decree occurs. Therefore, he does not know whether Allah decrees for him that he goes astray or that he be guided. So, how can he traverse upon the path of misguidance then use as evidence that Allah, the Exalted, wanted this for him? Why does he not traverse upon the path of guidance and say: *Allah has guided me to the straight path?* Or is it that he is a Jabbaree⁴ as it relates to misguidance and he is a Qadaree⁵ with regards to obedience? Rather, it is not befitting for the person that he be a Jabbaree with regards to misguidance and sin. Thus, if he goes astray and disobeys Allah, he says: *This affair was written for me and decreed for me and it is not possible for me to depart from that which Allah has decreed and foreordained.* And with regards to obedience, may Allah grant us success to obey him and to be guided, he claims that this affair is from himself. Then, he deems it to be a favor upon Allah and thus he says: *I have performed this action due to my own doing.* Hence, he is a Qadaree with regards to obedience and a Jabbaree with regards to disobedience, and this is not possible.

Therefore, the person, in reality, has ability and free will and the affair of guidance is not more hidden than the affair of provision or more hidden than the affairs of seeking knowledge. As is known to

4 The Jabbiriyah are those who believe that man has no free will and are compelled to do everything which they do.

5 The Qadariyah are those who deny the decree of Allah and say that man is independent of Allah in that which he wills.

everyone, the person is such that it has been decreed for them that which has been decreed from provision; and in spite of this he strives to seek after it, utilizing the means or seeking provision within his land as well as outside his land to the right and left. He does not sit within his home saying that my provision has been decreed for me. Rather, he goes out to pursue it. Rather, he exerts efforts in the means of bringing about provisions while the provision, itself, is connected to action; as is affirmed from the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ from the hadith of Ibn Mas'ood, may Allah be pleased with him, wherein he said:

إن أحدكم يجمع خلقه في بطن أمه أربعين يوماً نطفة، ثم يكون علقة مثل ذلك، ثم يكون مضغة مثل ذلك، ثم يرسل الله إليه الملك، فينفخ فيه الروح ويؤمر بأربع كلمات: بكتب رزقه وعمله وأجله وشقي أو سعيد

“Indeed, the creation of one of your is brought together within the womb of his mother for a period of 40 days as a Nutfah. Then, as a blood clot for a similar period. Then, as a lump of flesh for a similar period. Then, the angel is sent to him and commanded to write four things. He is commanded to write his provisions, his lifespan, his actions, and whether he will be wretched or blessed.”⁶

This provision is also written just as one's actions are written, whether righteous or wicked. So, what do you think regarding how one goes to the right or the left and travels the Earth seeking provisions of the Dunya, yet he does not do righteous actions in order to seek the provisions of the Hereafter and the success in the abode of bliss. Indeed, the two affairs are the same and there is no difference between them. Just as you exert efforts for your provisions and you exert efforts for your life to extend your lifespan such that when you become sick you go to the furthest recesses of the world seeking a proficient doctor who is able to treat your illness, in spite of the fact that you will have that which is decreed for you from lifespan and it will not be increased or decreased. Yet, you do not depend upon this and say: *I will remain in my home sick and afflicted and if Allah decrees for me an extension in my lifespan then, it will extend.* Rather, we find you exerting all within your power to search for the doctor who you deem to be the most probable person by way of which Allah will

6 Reported by Al-Bukhari in the Book of Beginning of Creation; Chapter: Mention of the Angels (no. 3208) and Muslim in the Book of Divine Decree; Chapter: How the Creation of the Human Being Takes Place in the Womb of His Mother (no. 2643)

decree treatment at his hand. Why then are not your actions in the path of the hereafter and righteous deeds similar to your path and working for the Dunya?

It was previously mentioned by us that the divine decree is the concealed secret and it is not possible for you to know it. Now you are between two paths. The path which will lead you to safety, success, happiness and ennoblement and the path that will lead you to destruction, regret, and torment. Now you are standing between them and you have a choice. There is nothing in front of you which prevents you from traversing upon the path to the right nor upon the path to the left. If you will you may take this path and if you will you may take that one. So why would traverse upon the path to the left then say: *This had been decreed for me?* Is it not proper for you to traverse upon the path to the right and then say: *This has been decreed for me?* For if you wanted to travel to a land and there are two paths, one of them is often travelled, short, and safe and the other is not often travelled and is long and there are dangers upon it then we find that you would choose the path that is often travelled, short, and safe. And you will not go towards the path which is not often travelled, not short, nor is it safe. This is with regards to the paths of this world.

Therefore, the spiritual path is similar to it and there is no difference between them. However, the souls and desires rule over you at times and they rule over the intellect and overpower one's mind. The believer is such that his intellect overrules his desires and if the intellect is predominant then the intellect (Al-'Aql), in its correct meaning, releases the person from that which is harmful to him and it enters him into that which is beneficial to him and will bring about his happiness. By way of this it is clear to us that the person traverses, in the action that he does by of his own volition, a path of choice and not a path of compulsion and that just as he traverses, in the actions of this dunya, a path of choice and if he wills he seeks this commodity or that business transaction, similarly, in his journey towards the hereafter he traverses upon a path of choice. Rather, the paths of the hereafter are clearer, many times over, than the paths of the dunya. This is because the one who has clarified the paths of the hereafter

is Allah, the Exalted, within His book and upon the tongue of His Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Therefore, it is inevitable that the paths of the hereafter be much clearer and greater in terms of the clarity than the paths of the dunya. Yet, in spite of this the person traverses within the path of the dunya, that which, the end results of it are not guaranteed, and he leaves off the paths of the hereafter the results are of which are guaranteed and well-known, because they are affirmed by way of the promise of Allah. And Allah the Blessed and High does not break His promise.

After this we say Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah affirms this and they have made their Aqeedah and methodology to be that the person acts by way of his own volition and that he speaks as he wishes. However, his volition and choice are subsidiary to the will and decree of Allah, the Blessed and High. Moreover, Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah believe that the will of Allah, the Exalted, is in accordance with His wisdom. And that He, Glorified and Exalted be He, is such that His will is not devoid of wisdom. However, it is in accordance with His wisdom. This is because from the Names of Allah the Exalted is Al-Hakeem (the All-Wise). Al-Hakeem is the wise judge or ruler who adjudicates affairs in the universe as well as the legislation and He rules upon them action in creation. Allah, the Exalted, by way of His wisdom decrees guidance for the one whom He wants guidance for; the one whom Allah knows that he wants guidance and that his heart is upon uprightness. And Allah decrees misguidance for the one whom is not like this; the one who turns away from Islam, thus his heart is constricted as if he is elevating high into the sky.

Indeed, the wisdom of Allah the Blessed and High is such that it is inconceivable for such a person to be from those who are guided unless Allah removes for him this resolve and he changes His will for that which is different. Allah, the Exalted, is able to do all things. However, the wisdom of Allah is such that is inconceivable for anything other than that the means are connected to that which they bring about.

THE LEVELS OF THE DIVINE DECREE & FOREORDAINMENT

The levels of the divine decree and fore ordainment according to Ah-lus-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah, are four. They are as follows:

The First Level: Al-‘Ilm العلم (knowledge) this is that the person believes affirms the belief that Allah, the Exalted, knows all things and that He knows that which is in the heavens and that which is in the Earth, in general and in detail; whether that be from His actions or the actions of His creation. And that there is nothing hidden from Allah within the Earth nor within the heavens.

The Second Level: Al-Kitaabah الكتابة (writing). This is that Allah, the Blessed and High, wrote within the preserved tablet the decree of everything. Allah has combined these two within his statement

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ فِي كِتَابٍ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٧﴾

Know you not that Allah knows all that is in heaven and on earth? Verily, it is (all) in the Book. Verily! That is easy for Allah. (Al-Hajj 22:70)

So, He Glorified be He began with the knowledge and He said that indeed that is within the Book; meaning, it is written in the preserved tablet, as is come within the hadith from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in which he said:

إن أول ما خلق الله القلم، فقال له اكتب فقال: رب ماذا أكتب؟ قال: اكتب ما هو كائن، فجرى في تلك الساعة بما هو كائن إلى يوم القيامة

“The first of that which Allah created was the pen and he said to it, ‘Write.’ It said, ‘My lord what shall I write?’ He said, ‘Write that which is to be.’ So it began to flow at that time writing that which will be until the day of Judgement.”⁷

Due to this, the Prophet ﷺ was asked regarding what we should do. Is the affair based upon that which is to come or is it

7 Reported by Abu Dawood within the book of Sunnah; Chapter: Regarding the Divine Decree (no. 4700) and At-Tirmidhi within the Book of The Divine Decree, (no. 2155)

something which has passed and has already been decided? He said:

إنه قد قضي وفرغ منه

"Indeed, it has passed and has already been decided."⁸

When he was asked: "Shall we leave off action and depend upon the original writing?" He said:

اعملوا، فكل ميسر لما خلق له

"Do actions. For each person will have facilitated for him that which he has been created for."⁹

Hence, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ commanded to do actions. Therefore, you as well are to do actions and you will have facilitated for you that which you have been created for. Then, he recited the statement of Allah, the Exalted:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَى وَانْفَكَّ ۖ وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ فَسَنِيَرُهُ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ﴿٦﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ﴿٩﴾ فَسَنِيَرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾

As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah and fears Him, and believes in Al-Husna, We will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness). But he who is greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient, and belies Al-Husna, We will make smooth for him the path for evil. (Al-Layl 92:5-10)

The Third Level: Al-Mashee'ah المشيئة (the Divine Will). It is that Allah, the Blessed and High, wills everything that is in existence or that is nonexistent within the heavens or within the Earth. Therefore, there is nothing in existence except that it is by way of the divine will of Allah, the Exalted, and that which is nonexistent is only such due to the divine will of Allah, the Exalted. This is clear within the noble

8 Reported by Ahmad (1/29) and At-Tirmidhi within the Book of Explanation of the Quran; Chapter: From Surah Hud (no. 3111)

9 Reported by Al-Bukhari in the Book of Funerals; Chapter the Admonition of One Speaking at the Grave (no. 1326) and Muslim within the Book of the Divine Decree; Chapter: How the Creation of the Human Being is Formed Within the Stomach of His Mother (no. 2647)

Quran. Allah has affirmed His will within His actions and His will in the actions of His servants. For Allah, the Exalted, has said:

﴿لَمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾﴾

To whomsoever among you who wills to walk straight. And you will not, unless (it be) that Allah wills, the Lord of all that exists.
(At-Takwir 81:28-29)

Likewise, Allah has said:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ ﴿١١٢﴾﴾

If your Lord had so willed, they would not have done it. (Al-An‘am 6:112)

Allah has also said:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَقْتَلْتُمْ وَلَكِنْ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿٢٥٣﴾﴾

If Allah had willed, they would not have fought against one another, but Allah does what He likes. (Al-Baqarah 2:253)

Thus, Allah, the Exalted, has clarified that the actions of the people are by way of His divine will and that His actions, Exalted be He are abundant. Allah the Exalted has said:

﴿وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدًى ﴿١٣﴾﴾

And if We had willed, surely! We would have given every person his guidance (As-Sajdah 32:13)

Likewise, Allah has said:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً ﴿١١٨﴾﴾

And if your Lord had so willed, He could surely have made mankind one nation. (Hud 11:118)

And there are many such verses establishing the divine will of Allah within His actions, Glorified and Exalted be He. Therefore, belief in the divine decree is not complete until we believe that the divine will of Allah is all encompassing of everything, whether it is existent or nonexistent. Therefore, there is no nonexistent thing except that Allah has willed that it does not exist and there is nothing in existence except that it exists by the will of Allah. And it is not possible for anything to occur within the heavens nor within the Earth except by the divine will of Allah, the Exalted.

The Fourth Level: Al-Khalq الخلق (creation). Meaning that we believe that Allah, the Exalted, is the Creator of everything. Therefore, there is nothing in existence, in the heavens and the Earth, except that Allah is its Creator. Even death was created by Allah, the Blessed and High, although, death is the departure of life. Allah, the Exalted, has said:

﴿ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ﴾

He Who has created death and life, that He may test you which of you is best in deed. (Al-Mulk 67:2)

Therefore, everything within the heavens and the Earth, Allah is its creator and there is no creator other than Allah the Blessed and High. We all know that whatever occurs of His actions, Glorified and Exalted be He is created by him. Therefore, the heavens and the earth; the mountains, the rivers, the sun, the moon, the stars, the wind, mankind, and animals are all creations of Allah.

Similarly, that which occurs within the creation from characteristics, and movements about and conditions are all created by Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. However, perhaps it is confusing to the person how it is correct for us to say that our action or statements that we make by our own volition are a creation of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. We say yes, it is correct for us to say this because our actions and our statements are the results of two affairs:

The First: Al-Qudrah (ability) The Second: Al-Iradah (will). Therefore, if the action of the servant is the result of his will and ability then the one who has created this will and has made the heart of the individual such that it possesses a will is Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. Likewise, the One who has created the ability within him is Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. He creates the cause and the effect; and we say indeed the Creator of the cause is likewise the Creator of the effect. Meaning, the Creator or the bringer about of the cause is likewise the creator of the effect.

Therefore, the means by way of which He is the creator of the action of a servant is that we say the action of the servant and his statement are the result of two affairs: Al-Iradah (the will) and the Qudrah (the ability.) Were it not for the will he would have not have done it and were it not for the ability then he would not have done it. This is because if he wills to do something, yet he is incapable of doing it then he will not do it due to the inability to do the action. And if he is able to do it but does not want to do it then he will not do it. Hence, since the action is the result of firm will and complete ability then the one who has created the will and the ability is Allah. By way of this we know how it is possible for us to say that Allah, the Exalted, is the Creator of the actions of the servant. Otherwise, the servant is the one who has done the action in reality. He is the one who performs the act of purification. He is the one who prays, he is the one who pays zakat, he is the one who fast, he is the one who performs hajj, and he is the one who performs umrah. He is likewise the one who sins and who is the one who obeys Allah. However, these actions are all present by way of the will to perform them and the ability to perform them, which have been created by Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. The affair is clear, and for Allah is the praise.

CONCLUSION

These four aforementioned levels must be affirmed for Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, and this does not negate attributing the action to the one that has performed it from those who possess will. Likewise, we say that a fire burns and the one who has created burning with it is Allah, the Exalted without doubt. It does not burn simply due to its nature. Rather, it burns due to Allah, the Exalted, making it burn. Due to this, the fire which Ibrahim was tossed into did not burn him, because Allah said to it:

قُلْنَا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴿٣٦﴾

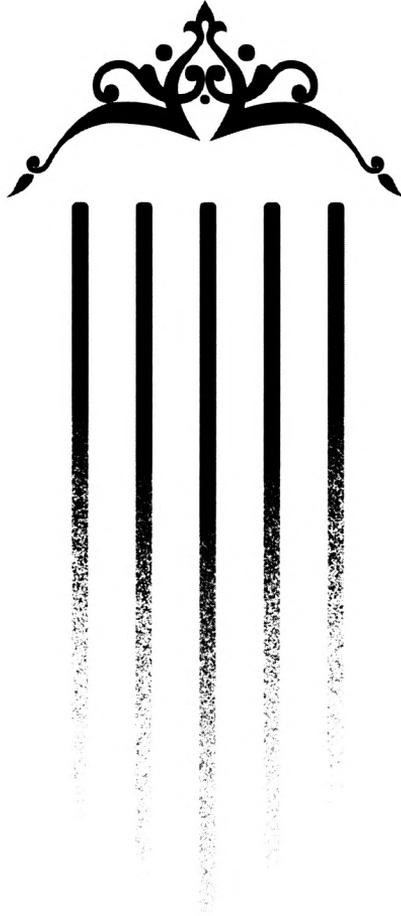
Be you coolness and safety for Ibrahim (Abraham)! (Al-Anbiya 21:69)

Therefore, it was cool and safe for Ibrahim. Hence, the fire in itself does not burn. However, Allah, the Exalted, created within it the strength to burn; and the strength to burn is similar to the actions of the servant. By way of the will and the ability the action takes place and by way of the ability to burn within the fire the burning takes place. Thus, there is no difference between the two. However, since the servant has will, feelings, and choice the action of the servant is thus attributed to him in reality and in the ruling. Thus, he will be held accountable for opposing the command of Allah and punished for doing so because he has done this action by way of his own choice or he has left off an action by way of his own choice.

Lastly, we say it is upon the believer to be pleased with Allah as his Lord and to have complete pleasure with the Lordship of Allah and that he believes in the foreordainment of Allah and His divine decree. He must, likewise, know that there is no difference in this between the action which he does and the provisions which he seeks after or his lifespan which he seeks to extend. Each of these are the same and each of these are written and each of them is decreed. Every person will have facilitated for him that which he has been created for.

I ask Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, to make us from those who for

whom it is facilitated to do the actions of the people of felicity and that He decrees for us righteousness within this life as well as in the Hereafter. And the praise is for Allah the lord of all that exists, and may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and his companions all together.



APPENDIX:

Does the Use of Ultrasound to Determine the Gender of the Negate Allah's Knowledge of the Unseen?¹⁰

Imām Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn

Question: May Allaah bless you. The listener named Majdee 'Abdul-Ghaneer from Iraq, in the Salahud-Deen Province has a question, O Shaykh Muhammad; we hope that you can shed additional light on it. His question says: To the Noble Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaymeen: We see within these latter times that which has spread regarding the actualization of determining the type of the child, male or female by way of the scholars of medicine in America and Japan doing works which determine that. Is this Haraam and what is the connection of the noble verse wherein Allaah says:

أَجَسَّابًا لِإِنْسَانٍ أَنْ يُبْرَكَ سُدًى ﴿٣٦﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ خَلَقْنَا مِنْ مَعْنَى ﴿٣٧﴾ ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقَ فَسَوَّى ﴿٣٨﴾ فَعَمَلَ مِنْهُ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى ﴿٣٩﴾ أَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ بِقَادِرٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾

Does man think that he will be left aimless? Was he not a Nutfah (mixed male and female discharge of semen) poured forth? Then he became an 'Alaqa (a clot); then (Allaah) shaped and fashioned (him) in due proportion. And made him in two sexes, male and female. Is not He (Allaah Who does that), Able to give life to the dead? (Yes! He is Able to do all things). (Al-Qiyamah 75:36-40)

Answer: This question which the questioner has mentioned, can be interpreted to be that he intends by his statement "determining the type" the male gender or the female gender. Meaning, having knowledge that this one is a male or (that one) is a female. It is also interpreted to be that his intent is determining the gender, male or female; by them making this Nutfah into a male or making it into a female.

As for the first; which is knowledge of the child in the womb being male or female, this – as the questioner has said – it has become well-

10 Source: Silsilah Fataawaa Noor 'Alaa Ad-Darb Tape no. 160

known that they know this. This knowledge does not negate that which has come within the texts from Allaah, the Glorified and High, knowing that which is within the wombs. For Allaah, the Exalted, knows that which is within the wombs, without doubt. His knowledge of that does not negate that one of His creation may know it. So Allaah knows it, likewise other than him knows it.

However, that which is known as it is related to the child within the womb is divided into two categories. A category which is tangible; it is possible for the creation to know it; such as being male or female; large or small; the color and the likes. This is known by Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, and it is known by those whom the knowledge has reached him by way of the modern day means. There is no contradiction between the two matters.

As for the second type of that which is known regarding the child in the womb, it is the knowledge which is not tangible or known. It is knowledge of what will be the fate of this child. Will it come out alive or dead? If it comes out alive will it remain for a long time within the Dunyaa or not? If it remains will its actions be righteous or evil? Also, if it remains, will its provisions be expansive or tight; and what resembles that from the hidden knowledge which is not tangible. This knowledge that is connected to the child, none knows it except Allaah. None is able to know it; and he who claims to know it is a liar. He who believes him in that has belied the statement of Allaah:

﴿قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾ (16)

Say: "None in the heavens and the earth knows the Ghayb (unseen) except Allaah" (An-Naml 27:65)

As for the second interpretation which the question of the questioner bears, that they have reached the point wherein they can make the male into a female or the female into a male, this is impossible. This is because it is connected to the creation of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic. He is the One in whose Hand is (making children) male or female. So it is not possible for one to make that which Allaah willed

to be male into a female and it is not possible for one to make that which Allaah willed to be female into a male. Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, says:

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ يَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ إِنثِيًا وَيَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ الذَّكَورَ ﴿٤٩﴾ أَوْ يُرْوِجُهُمْ ذَكَرًا
وَأُنثَىٰ وَبِجَعْلٍ مِّنْ يَشَاءُ عَاقِبًا إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ قَدِيرٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

To Allaah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He creates what He wills. He bestows female (offspring) upon whom He wills, and bestows male (offspring) upon whom He wills. Or He bestows both males and females, and He renders barren whom He wills. Verily, He is the All-Knower and is Able to do all things.

(Ash-Shura 42:49-50)

There is also the verse which the questioner quoted:

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى ﴿٣٦﴾ أَلَمْ يَكُنْ نَطْعَةً مِّنْ مَّيِّ يُمَيِّئُ ﴿٣٧﴾ ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ ﴿٣٨﴾ جَعَلَ مِنْهُ الزَّوْجَيْنِ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾
أَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ بِقَدِيرٍ عَلَيَّ أَنْ يُخَيَّرَ اللَّوْثُ ﴿٤٠﴾

Does man think that he will be left aimless? Was he not a Nutfah (mixed male and female discharge of semen) poured forth? Then he became an 'Alaqa (a clot); then (Allaah) shaped and fashioned (him) in due proportion. And made him in two sexes, male and female.

(Al-Qiyamah 75:36-40)

That which I say now is that this affair is not possible. Just as they are not able to make the one born a male into a (true) female and the one born a female into a (true) male, likewise, it is not possible to make the child in the womb that Allaah willed to be male to be a female or vice-versa. This is that which I believe regarding this issue.