

Speaking about Allah without Knowledge

القول على الله بلا علم

[إنجليزي - English]

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Al-Qurtubee in his tafseer, he talks about such people who say when they read the Quraan, in my mind this comes to my mind, or my heart tells me this, and he concludes who reads the Quraan and says, "ask your heart" or "my heart tells me," and so forth, they are speaking about Allaah without knowledge (*'ilm*), which, as we will talk about, one of the greatest sins that we could commit, and that they are actually from zanaadiqa, those who have nothing to do with Islaam, and he said they should be killed as apostates (*murtadeen*).

When you go to the Quraan and you read a verse from the Quraan and you explain that verse without having the proper knowledge, without following the proper methodology, you might be and only Allaah *subhanaho wa ta'ala* ((swt)) knows, actually following your own hawaa, following your own desires, you might be following an inspiration from the *Shaytaan*, you might be following *dhann* (conjecture), which Allaah (swt) speaks about in many places in the Quraan, or it might actually be some kind of inspiration from Allaah (swt), but most likely it is not the last case. And why is it not the last case? Because as we will talk about it later, you did not follow the proper methodology of talking about the Quraan and if you did not follow a proper methodology of talking about the Quran, then you have committed a sin already. Just by talking about the Quraan, without proper knowledge, by giving interpretation of the Quraan, without proper knowledge, without proper background, without being qualified to do so, then you've already committed a sin. And since you are committing a sin, it is very unlikely in most cases that Allaah (swt) will bless

you through that sin to give you the right interpretation of the Quran.

When you say that Allaah (swt) means this or Allaah (swt) means that in a specific verse, you are actually speaking or saying something on behalf of Allaah (swt), you are actually speaking about Allaah (swt), and if you are speaking without knowledge, without 'ilm, this is one of the greatest sins that you could commit.

In fact, Ibnul Qayyim said that it is the greatest sin. Ibnul Qayyim said that speaking about Allaah (swt) without `ilm is the greatest sin that you could commit. He bases it on this verse:

"Say: The things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are *al-Fawaahish* (great evil sins, every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse, etc.), whether committed openly or secretly, sins (of all kinds), unrighteous oppression, joining partners (in worship) with Allaah for which He has given no authority and saying things about Allaah of which you have no knowledge." [Al-A'raaf: 33]

قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ ۖ وَالْإِثْمَ وَالنَّبْغَىٰ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَأَنْ }
{ تُشْرِكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Transliteration: *Qul innama harrama rabbiya alfawahisha ma thahara minha wama batana walithma walbaghya bighayri alhaqqi waan tushrikoo billahi ma lam yunazzil bihi sultana waan taqooloo Aala Allahi ma la taalmoon.*

In discussing this verse, he says, first of all there are some sins which are *haraam li-dhaatihi*, forbidden due to their own evil nature, and (others which are) *haraamli ghairihi*, which are forbidden because they lead to some evil or have some evil in them.

And he said with respect to this verse, all of these four, they are *haraamlidhaatihi*, they are *haraam* in their own essence, because of the evil in them. Continuing his discussion, he said that Allaah

(swt) first mentions *al-fawaahish*, and he says this is the least of the sins that He mentions, after that He mentions the sins of transgressing against the truth; this is a greater sin than the first one that Allaah mentioned.

And then He mentioned making shirk, and finally He mentioned saying things about Allaah (swt) of which you have no knowledge. He is saying that Allaah (swt) is going from the lesser to the greater. And the reason he says is that this last sin of saying about Allaah (swt) without 'ilm, which is actually what you do when you make tafseer without the proper background, without the proper methodology, he says it involves and it includes many things even more than what committing shirk involves. He says it involves and it includes:

- Ascribing something falsely to Allaah (swt).
- Changing or altering the religion of Allaah (swt).
- Denying what He has confirmed or confirming what He has denied,
- Affirming something declaring false or declaring something false as true, and it also includes supporting something that Allaah (swt) dislikes or opposes,
- Supporting something that Allaah (swt) dislikes or opposes, and liking something that Allaah (swt) dislikes.

In other words, when you are speaking without 'ilm, in the religion, in things which are related to the religion, then in fact you are changing the religion of Allaah (swt). And in fact, if you continue what he wrote - this is right from "Madaarij As-Saalikeen", 1:372-3 - you find that in fact speaking without 'ilm is actually the real source of all *kufir* and *shirk*.

He said, for example, the polytheists claim what they are

worshiping instead of Allaah (swt) was something to take them closer to Allaah (swt), so the cause of their *shirk* was saying something about Allaah (swt) without `ilm, something they did not know about Allaah (swt).

Similarly today, the greatest kufr that we have nowadays, among Muslims, but especially among non-Muslims, is secularism and the basis for that is saying that Allaah (swt) doesn't really care about what we do in worldly affairs, or hasn't really given us guidance for worldly affairs, or the *deen* that He sent is not meant for daily affairs; all of this is speaking about Allaah without knowledge.

So in fact, it is one of the greatest sins, and Ibnul Qayyim even included that it is in fact the greatest sin. And he also mentioned that every *bid'ah*, every innovation, also is based on some statement that has no support from the Quraan and Sunnah, in other words every *bid'ah* also is based on some statement which is actually made without `ilm.

To think about this point even further, about just going to the Quraan, and saying, I am a believer I am pious, I can go to the Quraan, and read the Quraan, and get its own meaning, if there was any people in the history of mankind who could have said that - maybe we could accept this from them - would be the Companions of the Prophet saws, for many reasons:

They witnessed the revelation of the Quraan itself, they witnessed the events it was referring to, they were living the events that it was referring to, the Quran was revealed in their language, the language of their time, Allaah (swt) chose them to be the Companions of the Prophet saws, and he described them as the best generation.

So if anyone could actually make that claim that he has such a pure heart and such a close relationship to Allaah (swt) or such a good understanding of Islaam, that he can go to the Quraan and interpret

the Quraan simply by what his heart tells him or what they used to call *ra'ee* (personal opinion) - after the Soofees it became "What the heart tells you," but originally it was called *ra'ee* or personal opinion, it would be the Sahaaba, but if we go to the Sahaaba we see that what they understood and what they learned from the Prophet saws in fact is the complete opposite. What they learned is that it is absolutely forbidden to speak about the Quraan without proper knowledge.

And they made such statements. For example, Aboo Bakr one time said, "What earth would give me place to live and what sky would shade me if I should speak about the Quraan with my opinion or by something I do not know." And `Umar Ibnul Khattaab, he also said, "Beware of using your opinion in religious matters." And Ibn `Abbaas, the one who the Prophet saws made *du`aa* for him to understand the Quraan, to get the understanding of the Deen, and to be given by Allaah (swt) the *ta`weel* or the understanding of the Quraan, he also said, "All that there is to follow and obey is the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. Whoever makes any statement after these two according to his opinion, then I do not know if you'll find among his good deeds or among his sins."

This is the style of Ibn `Abbaas that he made in many statements. Meaning that even if what you did was something good, looks like something good, you will find it among your sins. And at-Tirmidhee, in his Sunnah, he said it has been related from some of the people of `ilm, people of knowledge, the Sahaaba of the Prophet saws and others, that they that they were very strict when it came to speaking about the Quraan without `ilm.

Transcribed from tape "Usool at-Tafseer" (1/12)

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