

In The Name of Allaah, The Most Merciful, The Bestower of Mercy.

Al-Allaamah Abdur Rahmaan Bin Yahyah al-Mu'allimee [may Allaah have mercy upon him] said: "It is well known that a person is born knowing nothing, but rather he is accompanied with the physical ability to feel pain and the like. I mean for example that if he is pinched, he feels the pain due to that pinch. This has accompanied him since the time the soul was placed in him **(a)**; but this is not considered knowledge. And with him is the innate disposition by way of which he latches on the mother's breast and suckles. Allaah [The Mighty and Majestic] said:

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ ۗ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

And Allah has brought you out from the wombs of your mothers while you know nothing. And He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts that you might give thanks (to Allah). [Surah An-Nahl. Verse 78]

Then, after birth, he begins to perceive the tangible things through his senses and this gradually increases through analogy (or comparing one thing or situation to another). It becomes the norm (or customary) that his mother lifts him from his cradle when she wants to breastfeed him; so when this is repeated, he realises - by way of analogy -that she will breastfeed him if she lifts him from his cradle. You see him cry when he is hungry, silent when you take him from his cradle and returns to crying if a moment passes and you do not breastfeed him. This is how his general knowledge is developed through perceiving tangible things and analogy, and the analogy itself is strengthened through repetition, and this - itself - is Istiqraa [examination, scrutiny and extrapolation]. Then by way of Ihsaas (perceiving tangible things through the senses) and Qiyaas (analogy), the underlying causes become engraved in mind and heart, such as the fact that existence and non-existence are not combined together, and that a thing is greater than its part, and that an event must have one to bring it into existence. What is meant (or intended in this discussion) is that he perceives either by his senses or by way of analogy what he perceives by his senses. The fact of the matter is that the intellect acts on or (reacts to) the tangible things and the analogies, and judges as to whether "Such and such affair is definitely correct or preponderant, whether it is wrong, and whether this other affair is possible". This stays with a person for the duration of his life, but the more he grows, learns, reasons and reflects, the more his knowledge widens with the many tangible things that can be perceived through the senses, the greater ability to analogize and the strength of the intellect.

If there is a person with you in the house, you realize his presence by either

seeing him or by hearing his voice, either through perception or by touching him, or smelling his body odour. And through your previous extrapolation, you realize (or understand) that he is a human being - that such and such shape, or that voice, or the tangible object you've had contact with or smell is a human being. And through another extrapolation, you realize that he is such and such person- that the shape, voice, the tangible object you've had contact with and smell are that of such and such specific person.

You may exit your room and leave none in there; then you return shortly and find that an incident has taken place in there; so you know from your previous extrapolation and making a judgement by way of your intellect that something caused it. If you wanted to know the reason, you looked into that incident by using your previous extrapolation. It maybe that a paper shifted from its position and the cause may be the wind. It may be that there was a book on an unstable place and you've seen that it has fallen; so you think about it - that its instability for a while was due to its heavy weight and its inability to remain stable led it to lean in the direction from which it fell - little by little - until it completely fell at that time. And if something was attached to a weak string (or cord) and then it snapped, you reflected and saw that due to the heavy weight of the thing that was on the string (or cord), its strength weakened and snapped bit by bit until it snapped (completely). And if a vessel containing food was in a stable place, but then you came and it had fallen, you would think (or suspect) that a mouse, a cat or the like jumped forcefully on it and it fell. If a vessel containing light food was taken from above a table and placed on another table far from it, and there was a monkey in the house or its vicinity that might have entered that room, it is possible to say that the monkey was responsible. And if it was a heavy box and was placed on the ground, but it was moved from its place to another place, you would hold the view that a person entered and did so, and you'll also know that the person is alive and has the ability to do such an action. If several things that were in the room were diverted from their places and arranged in a better and more perfect arrangement than before, then you would know that such a person is wise to the extent of what was required to carry out their arrangement. If the room was sealed from the inside, then you came and stood close to the door, and you know that no human could enter after you; but then you returned and found that the luggage had been diverted from their places and arranged in another arrangement that was more creative and perfect than what was before; then you would establish one of two possibilities: either he is a person with ability that is beyond what is known to be the norm, so he entered the room from where it was not customary for a person to enter; or he is present, alive, knowledgeable, able and wise beyond that of a human being and other species that you've seen before. So with this, you realized his existence by analogy with the existence of tangible things that can be perceived by the

senses, and also what you realise (or understand) regarding his attributes (or qualities)". (1)

Intellect is a Gift From Allaah- By Imaam Al-Barbahaaree

[may Allaah have mercy upon him]

Imaam al-Barbahaaree [may Allaah have mercy upon him] said, "Intellect is inborn". Al-Allaamah Ahmad Bin Yahyah An-Najmee [may Allaah have mercy upon him] stated, "Meaning, it [i.e. intellect] is brought forth together with the person, and it develops and increases as he (the person) grows. So, the intellect starts as something small, then become greater together with its possessor. There is no doubt that the intellects vary based on that which Allaah bestowed on every person. And indeed in the Qur'aan Allaah [The Mighty and Majestic] praised the people of (sound) intellect". (2)

Intellect Must Not Oppose The Divine Revelation

Ahmad Ibn Aasim Al-Antaakiy [may Allaah have mercy upon him] said, "The most beneficial intellect is the one that makes you acknowledge the blessings Allaah; aids you in being grateful and oppose (evil) desires". (3)

Imaam Ibnul Qayyim [may Allaah have mercy upon him] said, "Everyone with a bit of (sound) intellect knows that the corruption of the world and its ruin occurs due to giving precedence to opinion over the divine revelation and (evil) desires over sound intellect. These two corrupt motives are not entrenched in a heart except that its destruction becomes inevitable nor in a nation except that its affairs are completely corrupted". (4)

Imaam Ibnul Qayyim [may Allaah have mercy upon him] stated, "It has been stated that the reason behind Iblees being distanced [from the mercy of Allaah] is because of false interpretation, for indeed he made an analogy with the text and gave precedence to the analogy over the text. He made a false interpretation about himself and that [his so called] rational analogy takes precedence over the command to prostrate. [Allaah informed us that Iblees said]: [أنا خير منه – I am better than him [i.e. Aadam], and that a virtuous one cannot humble himself to one who has been given virtue over him; therefore he quickly said [as Allaah informed us that Iblees said]: [خلقتني من نار وخلقته من طين – You created me from fire, and him you created from clay].

Therefore, he thought that this rational analogy that resembles truth- even though it is false – will benefit him in his false interpretation. So, that which happened him happened and he became the leader of everyone- until the day of judgement- who

which intellect should we follow? Are the intellects of the people combined in the intellect of one man or do they differ? There are intellects of the philosophers, the atheists, the heretics, the people of evil desires and those who confound truth with falsehood; and due to this one of the Salaf said, "Had the desires been one, it would have been considered to be the [basis of] truth"; therefore, we say, "Had the intellects been one, it would have been considered to be the [basis of] truth". (7)

Question to Imaam Abdul Azeez Bin Baaz [may Allaah have mercy upon him]

Shaikh, are the ones who depend on their intellects in understanding many of the affairs of the religion considered to be from those who are mistaken?

Answer: Yes; it is obligated on him not to depend on his intellect, rather he studies the texts and relies on the divine texts from the speech of Allaah and that of Allaah's Messenger [sallal laahu alayhiwa wasallam], because there is guidance in it and direction towards good. As for the intellect, it can be right or wrong. The sects that oppose Ahlus sunnah were destroyed due to their intellects. They thought that they had good intellects and that their intellects arrived at what is correct and thus they opposed the texts by way of their stagnant intellects which they thought were sound. What was that which made the Jahmiyyah negate the Perfect Names and Attributes of Allaah, except due to their corrupt intellects?!

What was it that led the Mutazilah to negate the attributes of Allaah and declared that the sinners [i.e. those who die whilst committing the major sins that are lesser than major kufr and major shirk] will remain in the fire forever, except due to their corrupt intellects?! Likewise, is the case of their followers who utter this same speech.

What led the Khawaarij to excommunicate the people due to committing sins – that the sinner is a disbeliever and that he will remain in the fire forever, except due to their corrupt intellects. Likewise, this is the case regarding other than them amongst the proponents of Bidah. The intellects which they depend upon is that which destroy them, because they think that their intellects are safe, sound, good and infallible, whereas that is not the case; rather it is not infallible – commits mistakes a lot; however they hold a good suspicion regarding their intellects and an evil suspicion regarding the texts and thus they are destroyed.

It is obligatory to harbour a good suspicion regarding the texts and an evil suspicion regarding the intellect, and to submit the intellects to the texts. The texts are infallible if their chain of transmission are established to be authentic. As for the intellects, they are fallible. A person susceptible to mistakes, shortcoming and desires. As for the Messenger [peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him], what he conveyed from Allaah is infallible.

and likewise the Qur'aan is infallible- the speech of Allaah. Therefore, it is obligatory that the Qur'aan and Sunnah passes a judgement on your intellect and that you give precedence to the Qur'aan and Sunnah over your intellect- over the intellect of the Shaikh, the Mashaayikh, your forefathers, ancestors and all the people. The texts are given precedence over all the intellects. (8)

The Perils of Conjecture

Allaah [The Exalted] said: **إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنْفُسُ** - They follow but a guess and that which they themselves desire]. [Surah An-Najm. Verse 23]

There is a tremendous benefit derived from this, because the one deprived of sound Eemaan and the sound creed sent down as revelation by Allaah- The Lord of the entire creation, then his affair is one of two: Corruption in Knowledge or Corruption in his Intent- corruption in knowledge occurs as a result of following conjecture and corruption in one's intent occurs as a result of following desires, or the person may combine both of them. Another benefit derived from this is that the rectification or well-being of a person cannot be attained except by way of two affairs: Upright Knowledge and Upright Intent. This is why Imaam Ibnul Qayyim [may have mercy upon him] said in Miftaah Daarus Sa'aadah that a person is in need of two things- sound knowledge by way of which he is guided and lofty aspiration by way of which he is urged towards that (sound aspiration). That is because it maybe that a person has beneficial knowledge but not sound intent and aspiration. Therefore, one cannot be upright except by way of upright knowledge and intent. Sound knowledge is corrupted through following conjecture and sound intent is corrupted through following the desires of one's soul. Allaah [The Exalted] stated about the Messenger [peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him]:

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَى - Your companion (Muhammad) has neither gone astray nor has erred]. That is because the Daal [misguided person] is one whose knowledge is corrupted and the Ghaawiy [astray one] is the one whose intent is corrupted. Also, the Prophet [peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him] described his four khulafaa [Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthmaan and Ali (may Allaah be pleased with them)] with the words 'Raashideen and Mahdiyyeen', because the Raashid [i.e. The one who is steadfast upon the right path and is firmly established upon it] is the opposite of the Ghaawiy [The one who strays from the right path or conduct], and the Mahdee [The one guided to the path of truth and yeilds obediently to it] is the opposite of the Daalun [the misguided one, especially in knowledge and creed]. (9)

"When reporting a difference of opinion on a matter, one should accommodate

the statements (or arguments or views) in that context- clarify what is sound and what is false, mention the beneficial points in that difference of opinion and its fruitful outcomes so that the disagreement and differing is not prolonged in that which has no benefit and thus one is preoccupied with other than what is more important. As for the one who transmits difference of opinion, but does not accommodate the statements of the scholars, he has fallen short because it maybe that what is correct is found in that which he left out, or he transmits difference of opinion but neither establish its proofs nor clarifies the correct statements, then he has also fallen short. If he deliberately portrays something wrong as something correct, then he had lied deliberately, and he is mistake if it was based on ignorance. Also, the one who transmits difference of opinion in that which there is no benefit or merely transmits the wording of a number of statements (views) and then summarises them in one or two statements in meaning, then indeed he has wasted a long time and prolonged engagement in that which is not correct". (10)

Allaah [The Exalted] said:

سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَاثَةٌ رَّابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ ۗ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَثَامِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ قُل رَّبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعِدَّتِهِمْ مَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ۗ فَلَا تُمَارِ فِيهِمْ إِلَّا مِرَاءً ظَهْرًا وَلَا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا

[Some] say they were three, the dog being the fourth among them; (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth, guessing at the unseen; (yet others) say they were seven, the dog being the eighth. Say (O Muhammad): "My Lord knows best their number; none knows them but a few." So debate not (about their number, etc.) except with the clear proof (which We have revealed to you). And consult not any of them (people of the Scripture) about (the affair of) the people of the Cave. [Surah Al-Kahf. Verse 22]

Allaah informed (us) of the differing between the people of the scripture regarding the number of the people of the cave- a differing that [occurred] out of guessing at the unseen, forging statements and speaking about that which they have no knowledge. Some of them said that the people of the cave were three in number and their dog was the fourth, and others said that the people of the cave were five in number and their dog was the sixth. Allaah said that these two statements are tantamount to guessing at the unseen, so this indicates that they are false. And amongst them were those who said that the people of the cave were seven in number and their dog was the eighth. This statement-and Allaah knows best- is what is correct because Allaah declared the first two statements false but did not declare this third one to be false, so this indicates that it is correct. This differing is one that neither carries any benefit nor are the people benefited by knowing the number of the people of the cave. It contains neither a benefit related to religion nor the worldly affairs and that is why

Allaah stated: **[Say (O Muhammad): My Lord knows best their number; none knows them but a few]**; and they are those who know what is correct and known for being upon what is correct. **[So debate not (about their number, etc.) except with the clear proof (which We have revealed to you)]** based upon knowledge, certainty and about that which contains benefit. As for debating based on ignorance and guessing at the unseen or about that which has no benefit- either the debater being obstinate or the affair being debated having no benefit- neither any religious nor [praiseworthy] worldly benefit, such as the number of the people of the cave and what is similar to it- then too much debate about it and continuous research regarding it is a waste of time, and it makes the hearts have a strong love for that which has no benefit. **[And consult not any of them (people of the Scripture, Jews and Christians) about (the affair of) the people of the Cave]** because their speech regarding it is based on guessing at the unseen and conjecture can be of no avail against the truth.

This [i.e. verse 22 Surah Kahf] proves that it is not permissible for a person to issue a verdict when he is not worthy of it- either due to his inability to issue a verdict in that affair or due to fact that he does not care what he says about the affair because he does not possess that fear of Allaah that will stop him from speaking about affairs that are unclear to him, which may harm him in the afterlife. So when it is the case that he has been forbidden from giving verdicts in the likes of this affair, then prohibiting him from giving verdicts [in general] is of a greater prohibition. Also this ayah proves that a person maybe prohibited from giving a verdict in some affair but not in other affairs, so he gives a verdict in that which he is worthy of giving a verdict and not in other affairs because Allaah has not prohibited him from giving a verdict completely; rather they were prohibited from giving a verdict regarding the affair of the people of the cave and what is similar to it. (11)

Footnote: a: Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood [may Allaah be pleased with him] reported that Allaah's Messenger [peace and blessings be upon him] said, "Verily, the creation of each one of you is brought together in his mother's womb for forty days as a drop, then he is a clot for a similar period, then a morsel for a similar period, **then there is sent to him the angel who blows the soul into him (i.e. after 120 days)...**". **[Saheeh Al-Bukhaari. Number 7454]**

[Ref 1: Aathaar Ash-Shaikh Al-Allaamah Abdur Rahmaan Bin Yahyah Al-Mu'allimee. Vol 5 pages 7-11. slightly paraphrased. (Section titled: **يسر العقيدة الاسلامية**)]

[Ref 2: Irshaad As-Saaree Fee Sharh as-Sunnah Lil-Barbahaaree. 155. Daarul Minhaaj

1430AH (2009)]

[Ref 3: Seerah As-Salaf As-Saaliheen. 1/1073. Chapter: A mention of the At'baa At-Taabi'een]

[Ref 4: A'laam Al-Muwaqqi'een 1/67-69]

[Ref 5: An Excerpt from 'As-Sawaa'iq Al-Mursalah 1/371-372'. Slightly paraphrased]

[Ref 6. Dar Ta'arud Al-Aql Wan-Naql: 9/17-18];

[Ref 7. Muqaddimah Fee Diraasah At-Tawheed' by Shaikh Abdur-Razzaaq Al-Badr (may Allaah preserve him) Lesson: 3]

[Ref8: <https://binbaz.org.sa/fatwas/28730/%D9%8A%D8%AC%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7-%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%B9%D9%82%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%A8%D9%84-%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%B5%D9%88%D8%B5>. Paraphrased]

[Ref 9: An Excerpt from Sharh Kitaab At-Tawheed. Lesson 4. By Shaikh Abdur Razzaaq Al-Badr. Slightly paraphrased]

[Ref 10: Manhajul Bah'thil Ilmi Wa Kitaabah Fee Uloom Ash-Sharee'ah. 21- 22]

[Ref 11: An Excerpt from Tayseer Al-Kareem Ar-Rahmaan Fee Tafseer Kalaam al-Mannaan'. slightly paraphrased]