

# Ilm Essentials

## Aqīdah Lesson 4

# Allah and His Attributes

# Allah's Attributes are Eternal

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- Allah was, and will forever be, possessed of His attributes
  - ▣ This means, for example, that Allah was the Creator even before He created anything
  - ▣ Allah was the Provider before He provided
  - ▣ Allah had sight, before there was anything to be seen
- Allah does not change from one state to another like man does
  - ▣ He does not become strong or knowledgeable or powerful
    - What is the problem with saying Allah's knowledge increased

# Allah's Attributes

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- Some of Allah's attributes
  - ▣ Beginninglessness
  - ▣ Endlessness
  - ▣ Life
  - ▣ Knowledge
  - ▣ Power
  - ▣ Hearing, sight and speech
  - ▣ Creating
  - ▣ Sustaining

# Allah's Attributes are Unique

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- Every attribute of His is unlike any attribute of creation
  - ▣ Allah is powerful unlike the way we are powerful
  - ▣ Allah sees unlike the way we see
  - ▣ Allah speaks unlike the way we speak
  - ▣ Allah knows unlike the way we know

# Understanding Allah's Attributes

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- Take the example of a doctor
  - ▣ A doctor is knowledgeable and possesses the attribute of knowledge
    - When he enters a room
      - We do not say “knowledge entered the room”
- But the man and his knowledge are inter-connected, such that we would not say “the doctor entered the room, and then his knowledge followed”
  - ▣ So they are both connected, and yet disconnected
    - It is not part of his true nature
      - Because he was not born with it
    - But while he possesses it, it cannot be separated

# Allah's Attributes are Not Created

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- Attribute of knowledge - Allah is All-Knowing
  - ▣ If we say Allah's attributes are created
    - When were they created
  - ▣ Means that before Allah created the attribute of knowledge
    - Allah Himself did not know what was happening
- Attribute of creating - Allah is the Creator
  - ▣ If Allah did not always have the ability to create, and His attribute of creating was itself created
    - How did any attribute ever get created

# The Quran is the Speech of Allah

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- The word Quran itself literally means “gathering” and “joining,” and also “reading”
  - ▣ Therefore a Quran is that which gathers the chapters together and joins them
- The Quran is the speech of Allah Most High
  - ▣ Revealed upon the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)

# The Quran is the Speech of Allah

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- Because speech is an attribute of Allah, and His attributes are uncreated, the Quran is also uncreated
  - ▣ But our recitation of the Quran is created
    - Because it is from our action
  - ▣ The letters, paper and writing themselves are also created
- If we say the Quran is the “created speech of Allah”
  - ▣ Means Allah’s speech was incomplete until He created the Quran

# The Attributes of Creating, Knowledge and Predestination, and His Writing in the Preserved Tablet with the Pen

# Allah's Attribute of Creating

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- Allah created all things from nothing
  - ▣ Allah extracted the progeny of Prophet Ādam from Ādam's loins
    - And endowed them with intelligence
  - ▣ He then addressed them, extolling them to believe and avoid disbelief, after which they affirmed His lordship
    - “Am I not your Lord? They said, ‘Yes, indeed! We do so bear witness’” (Quran 7:172)

# Allah's Attribute of Creating

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- Thus, everyone is born on this natural faith
  - ▣ “Every newborn is born upon the natural faith (fitrah). Thereafter, his parents either turn him to Judaism, Christianity or Magianism” (Bukhāri)
  - We are not born as “clean slates”
    - Otherwise the hadīth would also mention “Islām”
- Thereafter, whoever disbelieved did so through his own doing by rejecting the truth
- Whoever believed did so through his own choosing by affirming the truth, through the tawfīq (divine assistance) of Allah

# Allah's Attribute of Knowledge

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- There is nothing in this world, nor the next, except through Allah's will, knowledge and decree
  - ▣ All of this is in accordance with His writing it in the Preserved Tablet
    - “The first thing Allah created was the Pen, after which He commanded it to write. The Pen asked its Lord what it should write. Allah said, ‘Write all that is to occur until the Day of Resurrection’” (Tirmidhī)
      - Happened 50,000 years before creation

# Allah's Attribute of Knowledge

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- Allah's knowledge is perfect and complete
  - ▣ He has knowledge of all things even before they occur
- Allah's knowledge does not have a beginning or end
  - ▣ Allah does not come to know of things
    - He has always known of everything

# The Preserved Tablet

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- Allah's writing in the Preserved Tablet contains detailed descriptions of everything
  - ▣ Every last detail about everything to happen until the Day of Resurrection has been written
    - Although Allah's knowledge goes beyond that day
- Does not contain commands
  - ▣ Meaning it does not say "Let Zayd be a believer"
    - Because then Zayd would have been involuntarily compelled to believe
      - It might contain, for example, "that Zayd will be a believer through his own choice and actions"

# Allah's Attribute of Knowledge

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- Allah created us, and knows everything about us, so He also knows the choices and decisions we will make
  - ▣ Imagine an extremely pious Muslim, given the choice between *halāl* and *harām* food
    - We know he will choose the *halāl*
      - But he still has the free will to choose the *harām*
- However, free will is limited
  - ▣ We cannot choose when we will be born
  - ▣ We cannot choose when we will die or how

# The Decree of Allah

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- Allah does not compel anyone to unbelief or true faith
  - ▣ This is why true faith is beloved to the believer, while unbelief is detestable
    - Just as unbelief is beloved to the disbeliever
      - If we were forced against our will
        - Everyone would love belief
- To believe or disbelieve is the action of the servant

# The Decree of Allah

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- Delving into the decree is a means of spiritual loss
  - ▣ A descent into deprivation and a path toward transgression
- Allah has concealed knowledge of the decree from His creatures and has prohibited them from desiring it

# Questions and Discussion

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