

Muḥammad Ḥijāb: “Please, Please, Smack Me Again and Send me to Bed Without Supper”—On Ibn Ḥajar and the Bid‘ah of Ash‘arism

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



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I have a challenge for the Spubs - why don't you do tabdee3 of Ibn Hajar al Asqalani ? He was clearly an Ashari same goes with al-Nawwawi ? Is it because you benefit from their books too much?

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There is a condition known as **Stockholm Syndrome**. It is when a person who has been kidnapped or taken hostage develops **feelings of trust and even affection** towards the captor. Over the past few weeks, Ḥijāb has developed something similar, and since he loves to be famous, we are going to aid him by coining a name for his condition: The “**Ḥijāb Syndrome**”.

It is defined as:

“When a **Bid‘iyy** (innovator) develops such trust and affection in the **Sunnī** who has taken him captive, subdued him, choked him, beaten him and disciplined him for his bid‘ah, that he willingly, humbly and submissively comes back for more, knowing that his

captor only has his **best interests** at heart.” As you can see, this goes a little bit further than the Stockholm Syndrome and involves a **much higher degree of trust**. This degree of trust is high because it has been thoroughly beaten into him with efficiency. Naturally, HĪjāb has come begging for more and we must oblige.

This issue of Ibn Ḥajar (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) is very clear to Salafis, and it is a proof of their **moderation and justice**. They refuted the Ḥaddādī extremists who malign and abuse the likes of Ibn Ḥajar, al-Nawawī and al-Qurṭubī, because of the errors they fell into, whereas Salafis excuse them and invoke mercy upon them because of the reasons that are explained below.

IBN ḤAJAR AND ASH‘ARISM

This is a standard doubt brought by Ash‘arīs and we replied to this doubt exactly ten years ago, in a series of six articles.

The essence of it is as follows:

1. Background

The Ash‘arīs of today claim that Ibn Ḥajr al-‘Asqalānī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) was a subscriber to the Ash‘arī madhhab, and Ibn Ḥajr’s name is often mentioned in a long list of those whom they claim were Ash‘arīs.

The Ash‘arīs have **certain fundamental principles (uṣūl)** that characterize their school, and though Ibn Ḥajr fell into something of ta’wīl in relation to some of Allāh’s Attributes, that does not make him an Ash‘arī. There is a great difference between a person’s uṣūl (foundations) being Ash‘arī and a person agreeing with the Ash‘arīs in some affairs. Ibn Ḥajr was not upon the false uṣūl of the Ash‘arīs, those upon which they built their doctrine, rather, he, citing al-Qurṭubī, considered their foundation to be misguidance, as we will see shortly. He also opposed the Ash‘arīs in some of the main

foundations or views held by them as a faction such as the issue of the first obligation upon the servant, and likewise, the entrance into the affairs of speculative philosophy ('ilm l-kalām), and the issue of khabar al-wāhid, and also whether Allāh's speech is just of a single type (i.e. there being no difference between a command, a prohibition, a threat, a promise and so on) and this relates to the bid'ah of Ibn Kullāb and kalām nafsī and other affairs

2. Circumstances

The above is made clearer by looking at the circumstances that evolved during the 6th century and beyond. The Ash'arite creed became widespread on account of factors—outside the scope of this article—and many scholars were born, raised and acquired their knowledge in a such a setting. They were made to believe that what was widespread was, broadly speaking, inherited from the Salaf, and they did not have such acquaintance with the madhhab of the Salaf to come to know the errors in detail and nor to make taḥqīq of the madhhab of the Salaf. Hence, they ascribed things to the Salaf that were incorrect. However, because they were attached to the Qur'ān and the Sunnah and the sciences related to them both, by virtue of that, they were able to identify some of the errors of the Mutakallimīn. So while they may have fallen into something of ta'wīl, they were not upon the kalām foundations.

3. Ibn Ḥajar and the Ash'arite Sect

In numerous places in *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, Ibn Ḥajar (رحمة الله) refers to the Ash'arites as a sect, a doctrinal school among the schools. This clearly indicates he was not among them.

In *Kitāb al-Īmān*, regarding the first obligation upon a person, he mentions how the Ash'arīs inherited their view from the Mu'tazilah,

saying that it was: "...one of the issues of the Mu'tazilah that remained in the (Ash'ari) madhhab..." **and then he goes on to refute it through the Book and the Sunnah.**

In **Kitāb al-'Ilm**, relating to an issue pertaining to Qadar: "... and some of the speculative theologians (Mutakallimūn) of the **Ashā'irah**, have used as evidence from his saying..."

In **Kitāb al-Qadar**: "The difference regarding that (matter) between the **Ash'ariyyah** and the Ḥanafiyyah has become well-known, and the **Ashā'irah** have clung to the likes of this Ḥadīth and the Hanafiyyah have clung to the likes of His, the Most High's saying: **'Allāh erases whatever He wills and affirms (whatever He wills) (13:39)...**'

In **Kitāb al-Ṣawm**, he discusses an issue known as taklīf mā lā yuṭāq, can Allāh enjoin upon His servants what they are incapable of fulfilling: "...except with the one who permits taklīf mā lā yuṭāq, and they are the **Ashā'irah**, they permit it..."

In **Kitāb al-Tawhīd**, discussing the issue of the first obligation upon a person which Ibn Ḥajr refutes: "And Abū Ja'far as-Simnānī—**and he is one of the heads of the Ashā'irah**— has agreed with this, and he said: "Indeed this one of the issues of the Mu'tazilah that remained in the saying of al-Ash'ari and branching off from it is (the saying) that the obligation upon every person is to have knowledge of Allāh through the evidences that point to Him, and that taqlīd is not sufficient in this regard..."

These are just four examples, numerous others can be given and we have discussed this elsewhere, on Asharis.Com.

4. Bodies, Accidents—Misguidance

Regarding the foundation of the Ash'arites in proving the origination of the universe, through the route of kalām, through

discussions of ajsām and a'rāḍ, which they inherited from the Jahmiyyah through the Mu'tazilah and as a result of which they use the language that Hijāb uses, "Allāh is immaterial, incorporeal and so on", then Ibn Ḥajar quotes from **al-Qurṭubī** (رحمة الله) who declares it to be misguidance and a route to ilhād (deviation).

In **Kitāb al-Tawḥīd**, Ibn Ḥajr quotes al-Qurṭubī:

"And sufficient in deterring (anyone) from delving into the path of the Mutakallimīn (the speculative theologians) is what has been established from the preceding Imaams, such as 'Umar bin 'Abd al-Azīz, Mālik bin Anas and al-Shāfi'ī. And some of the leading scholars have categorically stated that the Companions never delved into jawhar and 'arad [substance and accident], and whatever is related to that in the investigative studies of the Mutakallimīn. And anyone who desires a path besides theirs, **then suffice it as misguidance for him...**"

And also:

"... And kalām (theological rhetoric) led many of its people to doubt, and some of them to deviation (ilhād) and some of them to be neglectful in the tasks of worship. The reason for that was their turning away from the texts of the legislator (i.e. Allāh) and their seeking (knowledge of) the realities of affairs from other than them. There is not in the strength of the intellect what allows it to grasp what is in the texts of the legislator of the ruling that He has kept in the knowledge with Himself. And many of their leading scholars turned back from their path, until it has come from Imām al-Ḥaramayn (al-Juwaynī) that he said, 'I have traversed the greatest ocean and in seeking the truth and fleeing from taqlēd I plunged myself into everything that the people of knowledge forbade. And now, I have returned (recanted) and believed the madhhab of the Salaf.' This is his speech or it's meaning. And also from him (al-

Juwaynī) that he said: ‘O our companions, do not get occupied with kalām, for if you knew it led me to what it led me, you would not become occupied with it...’”

Note that this is what Ḥijāb is engaged in, this kalām and falsafah. These quotes reveal some realities to us. It is clear that these latecomers acquired knowledge in a setting where **the conclusions** reached from the original kalām based foundations were taught as truths (for example, the necessity of making ta’wīl of certain texts), but without fully knowing the angle or route through which these conclusions were arrived at, which was through the very innovated terms of jawhar and ‘araḍ that al-Qurṭubī was criticising. And this is why it is clear that these scholars did not really know the madhhab of the Salaf in detail, because they never came across a great deal of their books, and they never knew the errors of the Mutakallimīn in detail either. But with the knowledge they acquired of the Book and the Sunnah—and in which they were perhaps more versed than the hardcore Ash‘arite kalāmists of centuries earlier—they were able to see the error in some of the uṣūl of the Ash‘arites. But they were unable to properly fathom what actually happened in history and how this deviation entered, and how it led to the acceptance of ta’wīl by which negation of the attributes was intended. So they did not have any firm standing in these areas, and had confusion with them.

This was not done in detail until Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمة الله) came along and who made taḥqīq (verification) of the madhhab of the Salaf through source materials.

5. Answering Ḥijāb’s Question

Coming back to the idiot child and his question: “So why don’t spubs make tabdī of Ibn Ḥajar?” The answer is clear from what has preceded. These scholars were righteous and acquired knowledge

through which they served the ummah, however they acquired this knowledge in a particular setting where they did not have the means or the sufficiency in source materials to make taḥqīq of the madhhab of the Salaf, and hence you see errors and inconsistencies in their writings, speaking with what they learned from their environment. And since the bid‘ah of AşĤarism, which is 3rd Wave Jahmism, was widespread at that time, then they were influenced by it.

So Ibn Ḥajar (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) was not an AşĤarī and his uşūl were not those of the AşĤarites, clearly. Rather, he was attached to Qur‘ān and Ḥadīth, and fell into some errors for which he is excused. The scholars explained those errors, Ibn Bāz (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) wrote some notes on Faṭḥ al-Bārī and pointed out the errors in ta‘wīl¹ as did others.

6. HĪJĀB’S INNOVATED KALĀM THEOLOGY

What has come out of this is very interesting, particularly the two quotes from al-Qurṭubī cited by Ibn Ḥajr, and they indicate the very sad state of affairs of HĪJĀB. This man’s ajā’ib (oddities) never seem to cease. HĪJĀB uses kalām and falsafah in matters of creed, and we have proven with empirical evidence that in using that innovated language of al-Jahm, al-Ja‘d, the Mu‘tazilah and others, that he has fallen into serious errors. Let alone the fact that the Tawḥīd he calls to is not the Tawḥīd of the Messengers. Rather it is limited to Rubūbiyyah. So while al-Qurṭubī declared this as misguidance, and Ibn Ḥajr agreeing with him by citing from him, then there is no doubt HĪJĀB is upon misguidance in the use of his dubious, ambiguous,

¹ Ta‘wīl is an innovated mechanism to deal with those “problematic texts” which clashed with the proof that the people of kalām were using to prove Allāh’s existence. This proof could not be reconciled with the affirmation of Allāh’s attributes and actions, so ta‘wīl was one of a number of mechanisms innovated to address this problem.

toxic terminology of “**immaterial, incorporeal, unlimited, not composite...**” and so on, which is the innovated language of the Mutakallimīn in negation and which brought deviations, trials and tribulations upon the ummah. It leads a man to stumble and err and fall into contradiction.

7. Conclusion

This is a brief treatment of this subject, much detail has been left out for the sake of brevity.

Hijāb, idiot-child, your smacking has been delivered, now get upstairs, get to bed, in hunger, and switch your light off.²

And all praise is due to Allāh and may Allāh send ṣalāt and ṣalām upon His Prophet, his family and companions.

Abu Iyaad

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² We stress again that in using this type of speech, we are only returning like for like. **Intellectual spastics** who try to mock Ahl al-Sunnah, denigrate them and try to be clever with their mockery, just because their errors were pointed out to them, then we can deliver the same medicine back to them. Except that it is upon truth and justice, is in its proper place and is conceptually correct. In contrast, haughty individuals like Hijāb can only bring lies, falsehoods and slanders when they try to mock Ahl al-Sunnah. So we do not initiate this type of language, and it is not the default. Rather, we treat decency with decency, dignity with dignity and gentleness with gentleness. But as for sick individuals like Hijāb who has exposed his filthy, arrogant, vindictive, self-centred character over the past few weeks, then we treat them in ways that they thoroughly deserve, and none of it is out of place, given the facts of the entire situation.