



In Defence of the Sunnī Creed and Manhaj

**The Aqidah of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah in
Seeing Allah in the Hereafter – Opposing the
View of the People of Innovation; The
Jahmiyyah, The Mu'tazilah and the
Asha'irah**

By

Shaykh Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah al-Rajihi

Translated and Annotated
Abu Khuzaimah Ansari

Salafi Research Institute

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Contents Page

[Evidence from the Quran and Sunnah Affirming the Seeing of Allah]	6
Where Will the Believers See Allah	10
[The Disagreement of the Scholars Whether the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam Saw Allah on the Night Journey and There are Two Views]	10
The Correct View is what the Researchers (Scholars) are Upon - The Prophet did not see Allah on the Night Journey	12
Answering the Narrations Which Mention Seeing Allah with the Eyes	13
The Religious View of the People of Innovation in Seeing Allah	17

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‘Audhu Billāhi min ash-Shayṭān al-Rajīm
Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm

***Alḥamdullilāhi Rabbil ‘Alamīn, Waṣalatu Wassalām ‘Ala
Rasūlillahil Karīm, Wa ‘Ala Alihī Wa Aṣḥābīhi Wa Man
Tabiāhum Bi-Eḥsan Illa’ Yaum al-Dīn; Wa Ba’d***

*All Praise belongs and is directed to the Rabb of everything
that exists, Praise and Salutations be upon His
Final beloved Messenger, his revered family
and his noble Companions and upon
those who follow them in good
until the end of times,
To proceed,*

Shaykh Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah al-Rajihi said in his explanation of *Asal as-Sunnah wa I’tiqad ud-Din* wherein Imam Ibn Abi Hatim mentions from Imams Abu Hatim Razi and Abu Zur’ah ar-Razi,

[11] Allah, The Blessed and Exalted, will be seen in the Hereafter; the People of Jannah will see Him with their sights.

The believers will see their Rabb, The Exalted, as transmitted by texts from the Book of Allah and the Prophets Sunnah. So, Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama’ah affirm the believers will see Allah with their sight in the Hereafter.

Affirming the seeing of Allah on the Day of Resurrection is an attribute which is disputed between Ahlus Sunnah and the people of innovation. The same applies to the attribute of Kalam – Speech and the attribute of Uluww and Istiwa – Highness and rising over the Throne.

These three attributes are a distinguishing sign and a distinction between Ahlus Sunnah and Ahlul Bid'ah. So, whoever affirms these attributes is from Ahlus Sunnah and whoever rejects them is from Ahlul Bid'ah. Whoever affirms Allah's Istiwa – rising over The Throne and his Highness over his creation, and whoever affirms Allah's speech is with words [with] meaning, sound and letters and whoever affirms the seeing of Allah in the Hereafter is from Ahlus Sunnah.

The believer has the Aqidah that Allah will be seen in the Hereafter and the believers will see Allah with their eyesight. This is established and proven from the texts of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam.

[Evidence from the Quran and Sunnah Affirming the Seeing of Allah]

The Quran says,

1. "On that Day some faces will be bright, looking at their Lord." (Surah al-Qiyamah: 22-23)

He added they will be looking at his Face by the addition of “ila” denoting they will be looking at the Face of Allah, The Magnificent with the eye(s) of their face (i.e. head). So, the statement of Allah is free of any factors that oppose the true reality of this matter. This then proves the believers will see Allah with their eyesight.

2. Allah the Glorious said, “There they will have whatever they desire, and with Us is even more.” (Surah Qaf: 35)

The explanation of this ayah mentions, “**Mazid – Even more**” means looking at the face of Allah, The Benevolent.

3. Allah the Glorious said, “Those who do good will have the finest reward¹ and ‘even’ more.” (Surah Yunus: 26)

“**Ziyadah – even more**” means looking at the face of Allah, The Benevolent. This is proven and established from the explanation of this as mentioned in *Sahih Muslim* when the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam was asked about az-Ziyadah he said, “*Looking at their Rabb.*”¹

4. “Undoubtedly, they will be veiled from their Rabb on that Day.” (Surah al-Mutaffifin: 15)

¹ Transmitted by *Muslim*, Kitab ul-Iman (no.181)

Meaning the disbelievers.

Imam ash-Shafi'i used this ayah as evidence to affirm the believers will see Allah in the Hereafter. He said, *"When Allah veiled them in anger, then there is evidence in this that they will see Him in delight."*²

So, when the disbelievers were veiled, it proves the believers will see Allah. If they (the believers) do not see Allah, they and their detractors would be in a state of confusion regarding the veiling.

Likewise, and similarly, there are texts in the Mutawatir Sunnah that affirm the seeing of Allah. Allamah ibn al-Qayyim said, *"As for the ahadith from the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam and his Companions which evidence the seeing of Allah are mutawatir."*³ and he followed this up by transmitting 30 such reports in Hadi al-Arwah.⁴

From such reports are the following,

1. The hadith of Abu Hurayrah RadiAllahu Anhu when a group of Companions said, *"Oh Allah's Messenger Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam! Will we see our Rabb on the Day*

² *Tafsir ash-Shafi'i* (3/1429)

³ *Hadi al-Arwah* (p.296)

⁴ As mentioned by Hafiz Ibn Hajr in *Fath ul-Bari* (13/434)

of Resurrection?" The Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam said, "Do you have any difficulty seeing the Moon when it is a full moon?" They said, "No, Oh Allah's Messenger Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam." He said, "Do you have difficulty seeing the Sun when there are no clouds?" They said, "No, Oh Allah's Messenger Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam." He said, "So you will see Him in the same way..."⁵

2. The Hadith of Jarir bin Abdullah al-Bajali RadiAllahu Anhu when the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam saw the moon on the 14th night he said, *"Certainly you will see your Rabb as you see this moon and you will have no trouble in seeing Him."*⁶

3. The hadith of Abu Musa al-Ash'ari RadhiAllahu Anhu who narrates from the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam who said, *"(There will be) two Paradises of silver and all the utensils and whatever is therein; and two Paradises of gold, and its utensils and whatever therein, and there will be nothing to prevent the people from seeing their Rabb except the Cover of Majesty over His Face in the Paradise of Adan."*⁷

⁵ *al-Bukhari*, Kitab at-Tawhid, (no.7437), *Muslim*, Kitab ul-Iman (no.182)

⁶ *al-Bukhari*, Kitab al-Mawaqit as-Salah (no.554), *Muslim* Kitab ul-Masajid (no.633)

⁷ *al-Bukhari*, Kitab at-Tawhid (no.7444)

Where Will the Believers See Allah

Ahlu Sunnah affirm the believers will see Allah in the Hereafter. As for seeing Allah in this world, then no one holds this to be correct. Furthermore, there is no dispute among Ahlu Sunnah in this regard (that anyone can see Allah in this world) except concerning our Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam when he ascended on the Night Journey. Ahlu Sunnah agree that he (The Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) did not see Allah on earth, but they differed whether he saw Allah on the night of ascension and there are two views regarding this.

[The Disagreement of the Scholars Whether the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam Saw Allah on the Night Journey and There are Two Views]

The first view: He saw Allah with his normal eyes.

The second view: He saw Allah with the eyes of his heart. This is the correct view due to the following reasons.

1. The statement of Ai'shah RadhiAllahu Anha when Masruq asked her, *"Did Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam see Allah?"* She said, *"My hair stood up by what you said! Then she said, "Whoever says to you that Muhammad saw Allah, has indeed lied."*⁸

⁸ *al-Bukhari*, Kitab at-Tafsir (no.4855)

2. The hadith of Abu Dharr in *Sahih Muslim* when the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam was asked did you see your Rabb (Allah) he said, *"Nur is all that I saw."*⁹

Meaning, the Nur was his veiled barrier which prevented him from seeing him.

3. The hadith of Abu Musa RadhiAllahu Anhu from the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam who said, *"Allah, The Exalted and Mighty does not sleep, and it does not befit Him to sleep. He lowers and raises the scale. The deeds in the night are taken up to Him before the deeds of the day, and the deeds of the day before the deeds of the night. His veil is the Nur – light."* In another narration it mentions *"The Fire. If he withdraws it (the veil), the splendour of His countenance would consume His creation so far as His sight reaches."*¹⁰

And Allah's Messenger Sallallahu alayhi Wasallam is included in the generality of the creation of Allah, The Exalted.

⁹ *Muslim*, Kitab ul-Iman (no.178)

¹⁰ *Muslim*, Kitab ul-Iman (no.179)

The Correct View is what the Researchers (Scholars) are Upon

(they say) the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam did not see Allah on the Night of Ascension, but he heard the speech of Allah from behind the veiled barrier without an intermediary and he spoke with Allah as Musa spoke with Allah. Allah said, **“It is not given to any human being that Allah should speak to him unless (it be) by Revelation, or from behind a veil, or (that) He sends a Messenger to reveal what He wills by His Leave. Verily, He is Most High, Most Wise.”** (Surah ash-Shura: 51).

Some scholars reconciled these texts like Shaykh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah¹¹ so the scholars who held the view that the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam saw Allah based on the report of Ibn Abbas RadhiAllahu Anhuma who said, *“He Saw His Rabb (Allah) The Exalted.”*¹² and what is transmitted from Imam Ahmad that the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam saw Allah as well and including all the texts and reports which affirm the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam saw Allah, are taken and understood as seeing with the heart.

As for what has been transmitted by the way of texts and reports which negate seeing Allah, are to be taken and

¹¹ *Minhaj as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah* (5/383-387),

¹² *an-Nasa'i* in *al-Kubra*, Kitab ut-Tafsir (no.11473)

understood as the negation of seeing Allah with the eyes. In this way the evidence is reconciled, and it is not contradictory.

Those who held the view the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam saw Allah with his eyes include an-Nawawi, al-Qurtubi and a group of other scholars.¹³

Answering the Narrations Which Mention Seeing Allah with the Eyes¹⁴

1. As for what has been transmitted from Ibn Abbas RadhiAllahu Anhuma that he said, *"He saw His Rabb (Allah) The Exalted."* Then this is general and brief. It is also transmitted from him that he said, *"He saw with his heart."* So, the first narration is unrestricted which the second narration is restricted or confined and the restricted is taken over the unrestricted.

2. Similarly the same applies to what was transmitted from Imam Ahmad when he said, *"He saw (Allah)"* as it was

¹³ *Sharh an-Nawawi* of Muslim (3/5), *Tafsir al-Qurtubi* (17/92).

¹⁴ Shaykh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said, *"A report (affirming) this view has been transmitted from Ahmad bin Hanbal, then this is an incorrect transmission from Ibn Abbas and Ahmad."* (*al-Masa'il wal-Ajwibah* (1/122)

transmitted from him that he said, “He saw with his heart”, so the restricted is taken over the unrestricted.¹⁵

As for the seeing of Allah in this world, the scholars are agreed that no can see Allah, and no one differs with this except when our Prophet ascended on the night journey.

No consideration or importance is given to some of the people of innovation like the Sufis who say it is possible to see Allah. They engulf themselves in every danger when they believe it is possible to see Allah and this is the most futile of futilities.

Seeing (wanting to see) Allah in this world is permissible but also an impossible and not a reality. It might be possible rationally but invalid and unreal according to the Shari’ah. As for the Hereafter, it is rationally permissible, valid, and real according to the Shari’ah.

The evidence that supports the view that seeing Allah in this world is impossible is when Musa Alayhis Salam

¹⁵ Shaykh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said, “It is not affirmed from Ibn Abbas nor Imam Ahmad or others like them that they said the Prophet saw Allah with his eyes. Rather, it is established from them that they restricted the seeing of Allah with the heart. Furthermore, nothing is mentioned in the *ahadith* regarding the night ascension that affirms the Prophet saw Allah with his eyes.” (*Majmu’a ar-Rasail wal Masa’il* (1/99))

asked Allah to see Him. He said, **"Oh my Rabb! Show me (Yourself), that I may look at You."** So, if it was possible to see Allah Musa would not have asked, and so in order to see Allah he asked. However, he heard the speech of Allah and wanted more and wanted to see Allah. Allah said, **"You cannot see Me."** Meaning he did not have the capable power to see Allah due to the weakness of humans. So, when he said, **"Oh my Rabb! Show me (Yourself), that I may look at You."** Allah said, **"but look upon the mountain; if it stands still in its place then you shall see Me."** So, when Allah appeared to the mountain it was crushed to dust and Musa fell unconscious.¹⁶ As Allah said, **"So when his Lord appeared to the mountain, He made it collapse to dust, and Musa fell down unconscious. Then when he regained consciousness, he said: "Glory be to You, I turn to You in repentance and I am the first of the believers." (Surah al-A'raf: 143)**

Some of the Salaf said, *"He only appeared except the size of the tip of the little finger."*¹⁷ Allah knows best.

¹⁶ This has been reported in the hadith as, *"Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam recited this Ayah: "So when his Rabb appeared to the mountain, He made it collapse to dust (7:143) - Hammad said: "Like this." Sulayman held his thumb over the tip of his finger on the right hand (so that only the tip of one finger was protruding) - and he [the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam] said: "So the mountain fainted. 'And Musa fell down unconscious." (Tirmidhi, Kitab ut-Tafsir (no.3074).*

¹⁷ *Tafsir al-Baghawi (2/230), Tafsir Ibn Kathir (3/423)*

This is the Aqidah of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah regarding seeing Allah. As for the Day of Resurrection Allah will recreate the believers stronger and it would be possible for them to see Allah. A person decays when he dies, and he becomes dust except the tailbone.¹⁸ On the day of Resurrection Allah will send rain and the bodies of mankind will sprout. Allah restores human matter through transformation and thus recreates believers stronger which affirms the believers will see Allah. So, mankind is same of and in themselves, but their attributes have changed.

In Summary

No one can see Allah in this world, nor the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam or anyone else. Seeing Allah is eternal bliss for the people of Paradise, and it is the greatest pleasure given to the people of Paradise that they will see Allah, as Allah said, **"Those who do good will have the finest reward and even more."** (Surah Yunus: 26) and he said, **"and with Us is even more."** (Surah Qaf: 35)

¹⁸ As mentioned in the hadith, *"There is nothing of the human body that does not decay except one bone, which is the tailbone, from which the human body will be recreated on the Day of Resurrection."* (al-Bukhari, Kitab ut-Tafsir (no.4935))

So, when the believers see Allah in Paradise, they will forget the eternal bliss they are in.

The Religious View of the People of Innovation in Seeing Allah

So, concerning the people of innovation they deny the seeing of Allah in this world and in the Hereafter. This is the belief of the Jahmiyyah, the Mu'tazilah and Asha'irah

The Mu'tazilah: They explain away the seeing of Allah as knowledge. They say the meaning of the statement of Allah, *"So verily, you shall see your Rabb as you see the moon like on a night with a full moon."*¹⁹ Meaning you will see your Rabb is to have knowledge of it without difficulty and without any doubts just as one knows the moon is the moon just as Allah says, **"Have you not seen how your Rabb dealt with the owners of the Elephant?" (Surah al-Fil: 1)** So, the seeing of Allah here means [having] knowledge of it i.e. meaning to have knowledge of how the owner of the elephants dealt with them.

This explanation is absolutely futile and it renders the meaning invalid. The Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam said in a hadith. *"Like you see the Moon...like you see the*

¹⁹ *At-Tirmidhi*, Kitab Sifatun Jannah (no.2554)

Sun."²⁰ This is seeing with the eyes and not having the knowledge of seeing.

As for the Asha'irah they affirm the seeing of Allah, but they reject the direction in which they will see Allah. They say we will see Allah but not in a specific direction.

If you say to them: Will you see Allah above, you? They say: No

Will you see Him below you? They say: No

Will you see Him on your right? They say: No

Will you see Him on your left? They say: No

Will you see Him in front of you? They say: No

Will you see Him behind you? They say: No

So where will you see Him? They say: We will see him but not in any direction.

This is batil because whatever is seen must be facing opposite to what is seeing it. This is why the intelligent people laughed and mocked the position of Asha'irah: that we will see Allah but not in a specific direction.

So, with this approach they (the Asha'irah) wanted to be on the same position as the Mu'tazilah in rejecting Allah's Uluww and direction while wanting to be on the same

²⁰ This has been referenced previously. [TN] *al-Bukhari*, Kitab at-Tawhid, (no.7437), *Muslim*, Kitab ul-Iman (no.182)

position of Ahlus Sunnah in affirming seeing Allah. However, they were unable to do this and resorted to arguments of sophistry, they saw these are valid arguments when they were not at all. This is the reason why the Asha'irah are hermaphrodites (transgendered) as Shaykh ul-Islam, *"The Mu'tazilah transgendered into philosophers and the Asha'irah transgendered into the Mu'tazilah."*²¹

Meaning they are not with them or others in the issue of seeing of Allah and the same applies to many other issues.

The Mu'tazilah and the Jahmiyyah reject the seeing of Allah and the Asha'irah affirm the seeing of Allah but negate the direction in which He will be seen.

The correct and the true position is that of Ahlus Sunnah, that Allah will be seen on the Day of Resurrection while looking up and above. The hadith of Jabir RadhiAllahu Anhu in Sunan Ibn Majah which has some weakness to it. The Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam said,

"While the people of Paradise are enjoying their blessings, a light will shine upon them, and they will raise their heads, and they will see their Rabb looking upon them from above. He will say: "Peace be upon you, Oh people of Paradise." This is what Allah

²¹ *Ar-Risalah al-Madniyyah* (1/6)

*says in the ayah: "Salam (peace be upon you) - a Word from the Rabb (Allah), The Most Merciful." He will look at them, and they will look at Him, and they will not pay any attention to the delights (of Paradise) so long as they look at Him, until He will screen Himself from them. But His light and blessing will remain with them in their bodies."*²²

This affirms the seeing of Allah while He is up and above us and it also affirms Allah's speech.

[Taken from *Sharh Asal as-Sunnah wa I'tiqad ud-Din Li-Imamayn ar-Raziyan Abu Hatim wa Abi Zurah* p.73-81 of Shaykh Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah ar-Rajihi)

²² *Ibn Majah*, al-Muqaddimah, Chapter What the Jahmiyyah Denied, (no.184). al-Uqayli said in *adh-Dhu'afa*, "*Abu Asim al-Abdani is Munkar al-Hadith.*" (2/274)