

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE REALITY OF THUNDER

﴿وَيُسَبِّحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ، وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ، وَيُرْسِلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُمْ

يُجَادِلُونَ فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ الْمِحَالِ﴾

[Meaning: And the thunder glorifies and praises Him, as do the Angels out of awe of Him. He sends the thunderbolts and strikes with them whomever He wills, yet still they dispute about Allaah. And He is the Mighty One, severe in punishment.] [Sooratur- Ra`d: (13): 13]

* al-Bazaar (3/54 no.2221:‘Kashful-Astaar’) mentions [and the following wording is his], & Aboo Ya`laa (6/87-88 no. 3341), Ibn Abee `Aasim in ‘as-Sunnah’, and others as a hadeeth of Anas - radiyallaahu `anhu - who said:

“Allaah’s Messenger ﷺ sent a man from his Companions to a chief of the people of Ignorance, calling him to Allaah-the Exalted and Most High. So he (the chief) responded:

‘What is this Lord of yours Whom you call me to? Is he made of iron, or bronze, or silver, or gold?’

So the man came back to the Prophet ﷺ and informed him, so the Prophet ﷺ sent him back for the second time, and he gave the same reply.

So the man came back to the Prophet ﷺ and informed him, so he sent him for the third time, and he gave the same reply.

So the man came back to the Prophet ﷺ and informed him.

Then Allaah -the Exalted and Most High- sent a thunderbolt upon him, and destroyed him.

So Allaah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

<< Allaah -the Exalted and Most High- has sent a thunderbolt upon your companion and destroyed him. >>

So this Aayah came down:

﴿وَيُرْسِلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُمْ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ الْمِحَالِ﴾

[[Meaning: **And He sends the thunderbolts and strikes with them whomever He wills, yet still they dispute about Allaah**”] [Sooratur- Ra`d: Aayah 13].”

Shaikh al- Albaanee mentioned in his checking of Ibn Abee `Aasim’s ‘as Sunnah’ ‘Zilaalul- Jannah’ (no. 692), that its chain of narration is ‘saheeh’.

* Also ‘Al Kalimut- Tayyib’ (no. 157) of Shaikhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, that Shaikh al-Albaanee declared authentic, from the practice of the Companion `Abdullaah ibn az-Zubayr, -radiyallaahu `anhumaa-, that he would quote what is indicated in the Aayah when it thundered. The narration is:

“ `Abdullaah ibn az-Zubayr, when he would hear thunder, would leave off talking, and he would say:

(**سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي يُسَبِّحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ**)

“Perfect is the One Whom the thunder glorifies and praises, and the Angels likewise from awe of Him.”

Shaikh al- Albaanee declared this authentic in its chain of narration, as a saying of the Companion.

Reported by Imaam Maalik (2/992) and from him by al-Bukhaaree in ‘Adabul- Mufrad’ (no.723), and they add in the narration that he would say: “This thunder is a severe threat for the people of the earth.”

* Shaikh al-Albaanee in ‘as-Saheehah’ (no. 1872) mentions:

An explanation of the saying “The thunder glorifies and praises Him.”

<<**The thunder is an Angel from the Angels who is entrusted with the clouds, [in his hand- or: in his two hands there is a rod of fire with which he strikes the cloud]; and the noise which is heard from it is his striking the cloud when he strikes, so that it goes where he has commanded it.**>>

Reported by at-Tirmidhee (4/129), Ahmad (1/274), Aboo Ishaq al-Harbee in ‘Ghareebul-Hadeeth’ (5/123/1-2), at-Tabaraanee in ‘al-Mu`jamul Kabeer’ (no. 12429), Ibn Bishraan in ‘al-Amaalee’, ad-Diyaa. al Maqdisee in ‘al-Ahaadeethul-Mukhtarah’ (206-207) from `Abdullaah bin al-Waleed al-`Ijlee from Bukayr bin Shihaab from Sa`eed ibn Jubayr from ibn `Abbaas, who said:

“Some Jews came to the Prophet ﷺ and said:

‘O Abul-Qaasim! We are going to ask you about some things, if you can respond to us about them we will follow you and attest to you and believe in you’

So he (the Prophet) ﷺ took from them the promise which Isra.aeel (Ya`qoob- `alaihis- Salaam) took upon himself, that they would say:

﴿اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ﴾

“Allaah is a trustee over what we say.” [Soorah Yoosuf (12): 66]

They said: “So what is the sign of a Prophet?”

He said: <<That his eyes sleep but his heart does not sleep.>>

Then they said: “Inform us, how is a woman turned into a woman, and how does a soul become a man?”

So he responded: <<The two waters are cast together; so if the fluid of the woman overcomes the fluid of the man it becomes a female, and if the fluid of the man overcomes the fluid of the woman it becomes a male.>>

They said: “You have spoken the truth, then inform us about the thunder, what is it?”

So he, the Prophet ﷺ responded with the previously mentioned hadeeth: “The thunder is an Angel from the Angels who is entrusted with the clouds, [in his hand (or in his two hands) there is a rod of fire with which he strikes the cloud], and the noise which is heard from it is his striking the cloud when he strikes so that it goes where he has commanded it.”

Shaykh al-Albaanee mentioned that this chain of narration is fully connected, and its narrators are famous and reliable, and that it was reported by an- Nasaa. in his ‘Sunanul- Kubraa’.

And Shaykh al-Albaanee mentions a further supporting narration, quoted by al-Haafiz Ibn Hajr in ‘Takhreejul-Kashshaaf’ (p. 91) as being reported by at-Tabaraanee in ‘al-Awsat’ as a narration of Jaabir: that Khuzaymah ibn Thaabit- who is not the Ansaaree- asked the Prophet ﷺ about the thunder, so he ﷺ responded:

<<It is an angel who has a rod in his hand, when he raises it the lightning occurs, and when it strikes it thunders, and when he has struck then the reverberation is heard.>>

Then Shaikh al-Albaanee said concerning the main hadeeth:

“And the hadeeth overall is ‘hasan’ at the very least, and there are other narrations, many of them, in this regard. as-Suyootee brought them in ‘ad-Durrul-Manthoor’, so whoever wishes may refer to them”.

[Translated by Aboo Talhah Daawood ibn Ronald Burbank -rahimahullaah-]