

Permissibility of acquiring the Names and Attributes of Allaah that He likes His servants to acquire

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

From `Abdul-`Azeez ibn `Abdullah ibn Baaz to the honourable brother, may Allaah protect you.

May Allaah's Peace, Mercy and Blessings be upon you.

In reference to your letter, dated 23/3/1386 A.H., may Allaah guide you, and the question it included about what a preacher mentioned in a Friday Khutbah (sermon), about exhorting people to acquire Allaah's Attributes and Qualities, and whether anyone had said this before.

Our answer is that this remark is improper, even though it has a true meaning, that is, to urge people to acquire the Names and Attributes of Allaah that befit people, not those particular to Allaah such as the Creator, the Sustainer, the God, and so on. These attributes cannot exist in creatures, and it is impermissible for them to claim having such attributes. The same applies to similar Names of Allaah (Glorified be He). What is meant here are the Attributes that Allaah likes His servants to acquire, such as knowledge, power, mercy, patience, generosity, forgiveness, and so on. He (Glorified be He) is Knowledgeable and He likes knowledgeable people; He is Powerful and He likes powerful people more than weak ones; He is Generous and He likes generous people; He is Merciful and He likes merciful people; He is Forgiving and He likes forgiving people, etc. However, Allaah's Attributes are incomparable. They are far greater and more perfect than those acquired by people, as there is nothing equal to Him (Glorified be He) in His Attributes, Actions, or Being. A person can only have a share of the meaning of these Attributes that befits them in a Shar'eh (Islaamic legal) way.

If someone becomes too generous, they will be spendthrifts. If they become too merciful, they will hinder the execution of Hudood (prescribed penalties) and Ta`zir (discretionary punishments). If they become too forgiving, they will show forgiveness in an irrelevant situation. Great scholar Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allaah be merciful to him) stated this in his books entitled `Iddat al-Sabirin and Al-Wabil al-Sayyib. He also might have mentioned it in other books, such as Madarij al-Salikin, Zad al-Ma`ad and others. Below are excerpts from `Iddah Al-Sabirin and Al-Wabil al-Sayyib. In `Iddah al-Sabirin, page 310, he said: "As Allaah (Glorified be He) is the Thankful One in truth, the most beloved to Him among His creatures are the

thankful ones, and the most hated to Him are the ones who acquire the opposite traits, such as a Kaafir (disbeliever), an oppressor, an ignorant person, a cruel person, a miser, a coward, a humiliating person or a mean person. He (Glorified be He) is Graceful and He loves grace; He is Knowledgeable and He loves knowledge; He is Merciful and He loves mercy; He is Bountiful and He loves Bounty; He conceals the faults and He loves those who conceal the faults of others; He is Powerful and He hates weakness, for a strong Mu'min (believer) is nearer to Him than a weak one; He is Forgiving and He loves forgiveness; and He is Odd (One) and He loves odd numbers. Anything He loves is one of His Names and Traits; and anything He hates is their opposite."

In Al-Wabil al-Sayyib, page 43, he said: "Generosity is one of the traits of Allaah (Exalted be He). He gives and does not take; He feeds and is not fed; and He is the Most Generous One. The most beloved to Him is the one who acquires the same traits; He is Generous and He loves the Generous people; He is Knowledgeable and He loves the knowledgeable people; He is Powerful and He loves the courageous people; and He is Graceful and He loves grace."

I hope what we have mentioned is sufficient. May Allaah guide us all to understanding His Religion and fulfilling His Rights. He is All-Hearer, Ever Near. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allaah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you).