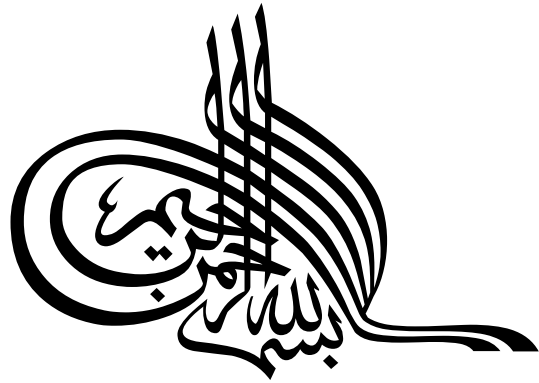


Rational Quranic Religion vs Wahabism

A refutation of Anthropomorphist Missionary Yaser Qadi's "The Theological Implications of the Story of Ibrahim & the Stars (Ibn Taymiyyah vs. the Mutakalimun)."

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Courtesy of:

Sunni Answers

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Introduction

Islam is a great religion, it does not need to attack reason or logic to hold. It has nothing to hide. It is not based on blind imitation, or blind acceptance. The argument for its correctness agrees with reason from beginning to end, as has been shown in the article "[Foundations of the Religion](#)". There is no argument based on valid premises and sound structure that can put a dent in it. This is what I believe, and any religion that does not meet this criteria is not the religion of Aļļaah.

Yaser Qadi is out to show otherwise in his [The Theological Implications of the Story of Ibrahim & the Stars \(Ibn Taymiyyah vs. the Mutakallimun\)](#). He now opposes the proof of the Creator's existence, not by showing that the premises do not hold or that the argument is false, but by saying in essence: "it is not mentioned in the Qur'aan, is complicated, was not used by the companions and there is no need, because everybody knows by the fiṭrah." Thus he implies that it is prohibited. Of course, it is all based on the talk of arch-anthropomorphist, Ibn Taymiyyah.

Circular reasoning is Quranic?!

Yaser argues that unlike what some scholars state, Prophet Ibrahim's proof is like that of the kalam scholars. I am not going to argue about whether this is true or not. This is a sidetrack. There is no need to discuss this, because it does not matter. Why? Because if the proof is based on valid premises, is soundly argued, and proves something stated in the Qur'aan, then it is in compliance with the religion. If you say that a proof, to be used, must be mentioned in the Qur'aan, then you will end up with circular reasoning as the basis for religious knowledge. This is illustrated as follows:

A says: A proof must be mentioned in the Qur'aan to be valid.

B says: If you can't know if a proof is valid or not unless it is stated in the Qur'aan, then how do you prove that the Qur'aan is true?

A says: The proof is stated in the Qur'aan.

B says: Fine, but when you want to establish the Qur'aan is correct, you will need to show a valid proof, and you are saying that valid proofs cannot be known except from the Qur'aan. This means there is no way of knowing that the Qur'aan is valid except by knowing that the Qur'aan is valid.

Someone might argue that they are only speaking of the proofs of Aļļaah's existence, and not other proofs. The answer to this is that this does not save us from circular reasoning, because if the sound mind cannot judge whether an argument necessarily holds or not, then this puts the mind itself in question. Once the mind is put in question, it loses its reliability in general, and we will be back to circular reasoning.

A says: A proof of the creator's existence must be mentioned in the Qur'aan to be valid.

B says: If you can't know if a proof of God's existence is valid or not unless it is stated in the Qur'aan, then how do you prove that the Qur'aan is true?

A says: The proof is stated in the Qur'aan.

B says: Fine, but when you want to establish the Qur'aan is correct, you will need to show a valid proof, and you are saying that some types of proofs cannot be known to be valid except from the Qur'aan. This means there is no way of knowing which ones, unless one establishes that the Qur'aan is valid, and that there is no way of knowing this except by knowing that the Qur'aan is valid.

In essence, as rational Muslims we must admit that if an argument is based on true premises, and the argument is properly structured, then the conclusion must be true. For example:

1. An Arab is someone who speaks Arabic.
2. All Arabs speak Arabic.
3. Omar is an Arab.

4. Therefore, Omar speaks Arabic.

If 1, 2, and 3 holds, then 4 must hold. We can't say here that we do not know, because it is not stated in the Qur'aan. If you want to question it, it needs to be based on the premises, such as "1. An Arab is someone who speaks Arabic." Alternatively, one might question the structure, such as if someone said:

1. Omar is an Arab.
2. Omar speaks Arabic.
3. Therefore, all Arabs speak Arabic.

This is not necessarily true, even if the premises 1 and 2 are true, because we have not shown that all Arabs are like Omar. In other words, we cannot draw conclusions about Arabs, just based on what we see in Omar. Note, as an anecdote, that this is the problem with empirical proofs, they are all basically fallacious, because they are based on drawing conclusions about a group of things, based on observing a few of them.

So even though at face value it might seem to be a nice idea that all proofs need to be validated by the Qur'aan, it is not a viable position. It is extremely narrow minded, and leads to circular reasoning, and circular reasoning is certainly not Quranic. In fact, the Qur'aan encourages sound reasoning in general, because it is the only means to know truth from falsehood.

Different times and different people need different types of proofs.

As time passes by, different groups of people appear, arguing in different ways for un-Islamic ideas. It is a communal obligation (farḍ kifayaah) to defend the religion from such deviations especially in the issues of belief, because Muslim narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

"مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ"

"Whoever among you sees something disapproved of by Allaah, let him change it by his hand. If unable, then let him do so by His tongue. If unable to do even that, let Him reject it in his heart, and that is the least (act) of faith." (Muslim No. 49).

The most effective way of dealing with deviants by the tongue, in accordance with this ḥadiith, is to show them their mistakes based on their own premises and ideas. That is why we need to use their terminology and ideas to clarify their wrongs definitively. Not only for them, but for the Muslims at large, who could have been misguided. In this process we might even use part of their argument to construct a new proof of our own and use it against them. This is something good, not something wrong, because the purpose is to defend and strengthen the religion with proofs. The development of this science of refuting deviants, was caused by the on-going process of refuting new deviations, or improving the way of refuting old ones. The early development of this science, the science of Sunni Kalam is outlined below.

The Imam ^AbdulQaahir on the Sunni scholars of the science of belief

^AbdulQaahir Al-Bagħdaadiyy At-Tamiimiyy¹, also known as “Abuu Manşuur”, said in his book Uşuulu-d-Diin:

“The first Sunni scholar of Kalaam among the companions was ^Aliyy ibn Abii Ṭaalib, as he debated the Khawaarijites on the issues of the promise and threat², and the Qadariyyah on predestination, will, and ability³. Then came ^Abdujlaah ibn ^Umar⁴ with his sayings against the Qadariyyah, and his declaration of wanting nothing to do with them or their leader known as Ma^bad Al-Juhaniyy. The Qadariyyah claimed that ^Aliyy was one of them, and that their leader Waaşil ibn ^Ataa' Al-Għazzaal took his sayings from Muħammad⁵ and ^Abdujlaah, the two sons of ^Aliyy – may Aļļaah reward him. This is one of their scandalous lies. It is among the strangest of things how they claim that ^Aliyy's two sons taught them the rejection of ^Aliyy's and Ṭalħah's⁶ testimonies and doubt in ^Aliyy's trustworthiness. Do you see them teaching him that the testimonies of Ṭalħah and the Prophet's brother in law are invalid?!”

The first Sunni of the generation following the companions to engage in Kalaam debates was ^Umar ibn ^Abdul^Aziiz⁷, he wrote an eloquent letter against the ideas of the Qadariyyah sect. After him came Zayd ibn ^Aliyy ibn Al-Ĥusayn ibn ^Aliyy ibn Abii Ṭaalib⁸. He wrote a book rejecting the Qadariyyah sect based on proofs

¹ ^AbdulQaahir ibn Ṭaahir Al-Bagħdaadiyy Al-Tamiimiyy, alias Abuu Manşuur, (?-429 AH/ ?-1037 AD) was the head of the scholars of his time. The historian Adħ-Dħahabiyy (673-748 AH/ 1274-1348 AD) described him in his book Siyar 'A^laam Al-Nubalaa' as: “the great, outstanding, and encyclopedic scholar” “He used to teach 17 different subjects and his brilliance became the source for proverbs.” Al-Dħahabiyy said that he would have like to write a separate, more complete article about him, and quoted Abuu ^Uthmaan Aş-Şaabuuniyy saying: Abuu Manşuur is by scholarly consensus counted among the heads of the scholars of belief and the methodology of jurisprudence, as well as a front figure of Islaam. Abuu ^Uthmaan Al-Şaabuuniyy, who said this, is one of the greatest scholars of Islaam and among Sunnis he is known as “Şaykh Al-Islaam” - the Şaykh of Islaam. Al-Subkiyy, in his “The Levels of the Şhaafi^iyy Scholars,” quotes a number of scholars praising Al-Şaabuuniyy, among them Al-Bayhaqiyy, who knew him and said, “Verily he is reality the Imaam of the Muslims and in truth the Şaykh of Islaam. All the people of his time are humbled by his state of religion, leadership, sound beliefs, amount of knowledge, and his commitment to the way of the Salaf generation (the first three generations, or first three centuries of Muslims).”

² He is referring to the Khawaarijites' claim that Aļļaah does not forgive big sins, such as drinking wine, even if the person believes it is a sin (Uşuulu-d-Diin, Al-Bazdawiyy, Al-Maktabah Al-Azhariyyah, P. 256.)

³ The Qadariyyah claimed that humans create their own actions, while Sunnis say that Aļļaah is the only creator, and that Humans only commit actions. The Sunni stance is unquestionably correct, because claiming that someone did something that Aļļaah has not willed, is equivalent to saying that He either did not know it or was unable to prevent it. This is clearly impossible.

The issues of predestination, will, and ability are the issues related to the Qadariyyah's blasphemous claim that humans create their own actions, because they ended up saying that humans are not predestined, that their will is independent of Aļļaah's, and that the human ability to act is an ability to create. The Muslims said that the human will is by Aļļaah's will, because he knows everything and cannot be overpowered. They also said that human ability does not include creating. Rather, the ability to act is an ability created by Aļļaah and it occurs at the moment of the act itself. The simplest proof of the truth of this, is that a human never knows with complete certainty that he is going to be able to do even a simple intended act, such as standing up after sitting. It could be, for example, that one suddenly fell ill.

⁴ The great scholar and companion of the Prophet, the son of ^Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭaab.

⁵ Muħammad ibn Al-Ĥanafiiyyah, the son of ^Aliyy, one of the greatest scholars of Islaam and famous for great physical strength.

⁶ Ṭalħah is one of the greatest companions of the Prophet, and is one of the famous ten that were promised Paradise by the Prophet. See the Biography of the Prophet ﷺ for more details.

⁷ The Khaliifah and great scholar. He is counted as the fifth righteous Khaliifah after the first four. He was born in 61 h. and died in 101 h. – may Aļļaah reward him. He became Khaliifah in 99 h., and during his short rule peace and justice quickly spread. He forbade cussing ^Aliyy ibn Abii Ṭaalib, which had become a habit of speakers in the Masjids of the day. It is said that he died from being poisoned. (Source: Al-A^laam.)

⁸ Zayd ibn ^Aliyy ibn Al-Ĥusayn ibn ^Aliyy ibn Abii Ṭaalib, the son of Zaynu-l-^Aabidiin. One of the greatest scholars of all time and grandson of Al-Ĥusayn, the Prophet's grandson. He rebelled against the Umawiyy king Hishaam ibn ^AbdilMalik, was killed, crucified, beheaded and burned. He was the one that named those Shiites that reject Abuu Bakr and ^Umar as “Al-Raafidah” - The Rejectors. They came to him offering their support in his rebellion if he would disavow Abuu Bakr and ^Umar, but he said, “Rather I ally

from the Qur'aan. Then came Al-Ĥasan Al-Baṣriyy⁹, whom the Qadariyyah claimed as one of them. How can that be right, however, when in fact he wrote a letter to ʿUmar ibn ʿAbdulʿAziiz showing their faults, and chased their leader Waṣīl away from his teaching sessions when he showed his deviations?

After him came Aṣh-Ṣhaʿbiyy, who was among the toughest opponents of the Qadariyyah, and then Al-Zuhriyy. The latter was the one that gave ʿAbdulMalik ibn Marwaan the fatwa that the blood of the Qadariyyah should be shed.

Following this generation came Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad Al-Ṣaadiq, who authored a book refuting the ideas of the Qadariyyah and another refuting those of the Khawaarijites. He also wrote an article against the extremists of the Shiites. He is the one that said, "The Muʿtazilites wanted to declare the Oneness of Aḷlaah, but committed apostasy. They also wanted to declare Aḷlaah just, but ended up attributing to Him stinginess."

The first Kalaam scholars among the jurists and the heads of the schools of jurisprudence were Abuu Ḥaniifah¹⁰, and Al-Ṣhaafiʿiyy. Abuu Ḥaniifah wrote a book against the Qadariyyah called "Al-Fiqh Al-Akbar," and he has an article that he dictated to champion the saying of the Sunnis that (real) ability comes at the point of action. He said, however, that the (presumed) ability applies to two opposites¹¹, and this is the saying of a number of our companions. The companion of Abuu Ḥaniifah, Abuu Yuusuf¹², said: "the Qadariyyah are apostates."

Al-Ṣhaafiʿiyy has two books in Kalaam science. One of them to prove and authenticate the existence of prophethood, against the claims of the Brahmins (the Hindus). The second was a refutation of deviant sects. He also mentioned some Kalaam issues in the book "Kitaab Al-Qiyaas". In it he pointed to having gone back on the saying of accepting the testimony of deviant sects.

As for Bisḥr Al-Mariisiyy¹³, who was among the Ḥanafiyys, he only agreed with the Muʿtazilite stance on the creation of the Qur'aan,¹⁴ but declared them blasphemers for saying that humans create their own actions.

myself with them and disavow those who disavow them." They responded, "Then we refuse you." From this came the name of the sect. (Source: Al-Waafii bi-l-Wafayaat.)

⁹ Al-Ĥasan Al-Baṣriyy is one of the greatest of the Taabiʿiin, the students of the Prophet's companions. He was the leader of the scholars in Baṣrah. He was eloquent, brave, ascetic and a master of fiqh. (Source: Al-Aʿlaam.)

¹⁰ Abuu Ḥaniifah, Al-Nuʿmaan ibn Thaabit (80 h. - 150 h.) is one of the four great Imams of Islam that founded the four schools of fiqh. He was the earliest of the four, and lived in Kuufah in Iraq. He was the head of the scholars there and also a rich textile trader. He died in prison for refusing his appointment as judge in Bagħdaad by the ruler at the time. He is known for his brilliance in proving his views to be the strongest, to the extent that Maalik, second of the four imams said about him, "If he claimed that this pillar is made of gold you would have no choice but to agree with him." Al-Ṣhaafiʿiyy, the third of the imams said: "All people are dependent on the fiqh of Abuu Ḥaniifah." (Source: Al-Aʿlaam.)

¹¹ What is meant here is not real ability, but presumed ability. Aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiiyy, who narrates the belief of Abu Ḥaniifah in his famous ʿaqiidah says: And the ability which deeds occur by, is simultaneous with the deeds. This ability is the one depending on Aḷlaah's creation of the ability to do good, which is forbidden to ascribe to creation. As for the ability that is associated with health, capability, mastery and defect free instruments; this (presumed ability) is before the deed, and this is the ability that accountability relates to.

¹² Yaʿquub ibn Ibraaḥim ibn Ḥabiib Al-Anṣaariyy (113 h. -182 h.) was the companion of Abuu Ḥaniifah and his student. He was also the first to spread the teachings of the school of Abuu Ḥaniifah. He was a great Faqiih, encyclopedic scholar, and a Ḥaafiṭh Ḥadiith scholar. He was the Judge of the ʿAbbaasiyy empire and the first to be called "the Judge of Judges in this world." (Source: Al-Aʿlaam.) As an anecdote, it was narrated by Ibraaḥim Al-Jarraaḥ that he visited Abuu Yuusuf while the latter was sick in bed with the sickness he died from. Ibraaḥim told what happened as follows: "Abuu Yuusuf opened his eyes and said, "Is throwing the pebbles (in Ḥajj pilgrimage) while riding better or while walking?" I said, "Walking." He said, "You are wrong." Then I said, "Riding." He said, "You are wrong." Then he said, "It is better to walk for all throwing that has standing <to supplicate> after it, while it is better to ride for throwing that does not have standing after it." After that I stood up and left, and I had not reached the gate of the building before I heard the cry that he had died. I was astonished by his craving for knowledge even in such a situation. (Source: Al-Mabsuūṭ, As-Sarkhasiyy).

¹³ A well known Muʿtazilite deviant, known for following the school of Abuu Ḥaniifah in fiqh, but had some Muʿtazilite beliefs.

After Al-Shāfiʿiyy came his students that mastered the sciences of both jurisprudence and Kalaam. Examples are Al-Ĥaarith ibn Asad Al-Muĥaasibiyy¹⁵, Abuu ʿAliyy Al-Karaabiisiyy¹⁶, Ĥarmalah¹⁷, Yuusuf Al-Buwayṭiyy¹⁸, and Daawuud Al-Aṣbahaaniyy.

The later scholars of Kalaam relied on Al-Karaabiisiyy for knowing the various sub-sects of the Khawarijites as well as all other sects. The jurist and ĥadiith scholars relied on him for knowing the conditions for authentication (acceptance as authentic) of ĥadiith along with the types of flaws, and evaluating narrators.

The books of Al-Ĥaarith ibn Asad Al-Muĥaasibiyy became the primary source for the Kalaam scholars of our associates¹⁹, both the jurists and the Sufis.

As for Daawuud, the leader of the literalists, he wrote a lot on belief along with his many writings on jurisprudence. His son, Abuu Bakr²⁰, was a scholar of jurisprudence, Kalaam <belief>, methodology, literature and poetry.

Abuu Al-ʿAbbaas Ibn Surayj²¹ the best of this group in these sciences, and he has a critique on the book of Al-Jaaruuḥ²² against those who claim equality of proofs²³ and it is more complete than the critique of Ibn Al-Raawandiyy²⁴ against them. As for his writings on jurisprudence – Aļļaah knows their number.

¹⁴ The statement “Qur’aan” has two meanings. One is the book of the Qur’aan, the other is the eternal and everlasting speech of Aļļaah that is not letters, not sound, not sequential and does not change. If someone declares that the “Qur’aan is created,” then it is not blasphemy if he meant the book. However, if he meant Aļļaah’s attribute, then it is blasphemy. Some of the Muʿtazilites meant the first meaning, but others meant the other.

¹⁵ Ĥaarith ibn Asad Al-Muĥaasibiyy, the great Ṣuufiyy and encyclopedic scholar of Islaam. He is the Shaykh of the famous Ṣuufiyy, encyclopedic scholar and judge: Al-Junayd. It is said that people named him “Al-Muĥaasibiyy,” which in Arabic means “the one who calls to account,” because he was constantly calling himself to account for his own deeds in light of the teachings of Islaam. (Source: Ṭabaqaat Al-Shāfiʿiyyah Al-Kubraa).

¹⁶ Al-Ĥusayn ibn ʿAliyy Yaziid Al-Karaabiisiyy, Abuu ʿAliyy, was one of the students of Al-Shāfiʿiyy. He was a great scholar of Fiqh, Ĥadiith and Kalaam. He narrated the old sayings of Al-Shāfiʿiyy from Bagĥdaad, and it is said that Al-Karaabiisiyy was that greatest of Al-Shāfiʿiyy’s students there. Al-Bukĥariyy used to narrate the saying of Al-Shāfiʿiyy through him, as mentioned in Ṭabaqaat Al-Shāfiʿiyyah.

¹⁷ Ĥarmalah ibn Yaĥyaa Al-Tujiibiyy, (166 h.-243 h.) was a great Ĥaafiṭh (master savant of Ĥadiith) and Faqiih (master savant of Fiqh) from Egypt. (Source: Al-ʿAʿlaam).

¹⁸ Yuusuf ibn Yaĥyaa Al-Buwayṭiyy, Abuu Yaʿquub (?- 231 h.) from Buwayṭ in the Ṣaʿiid area of Egypt. Al-Shāfiʿiyy said about him: “None of my companions are as knowledgeable as he.” He is the one that narrated the famous book of Al-Shāfiʿiyy called Al-Umm. (Source: Al-ʿAʿlaam).

¹⁹ By “our associates,” he means the scholars of the Shāfiʿiyy, Maalikiyy and Ĥanbaliyy schools of Fiqh (Islamic laws and practices) and the scholars that have similar methodology. They are referred to as “the People of Ĥadiith”. People of Ĥadiith” as opposed to the “People of Insight” are terms used by the scholars to refer respectively to the fiqh scholars that have a strong apparent focus on Ĥadiith, and those with a strong focus on deeper issues of meaning. It does not mean that the latter group ignores authentic ĥadiiths, both groups agree that authentic Ĥadiith without any flaws must be applied. It also does not mean that the former lack deep insight. It is rather a matter of how the two groups apparently differ in their ways. One finds the former speaking much like Ĥadiith specialists, while the latter focuses on long and intense debates on finer points of the meaning of ĥadiiths and the Qur’aan. The latter will often refuse to go by the apparent meaning of Ĥadiith due to a weakness related to its meaning, while the former will largely (but certainly not always) override such flaws based on the strength of the chain of narration. To fully understand the differences needs a lengthy study of Uṣuulu-l-Fiqh – the scholarly methodology for drawing judgments regarding Islamic laws and practices directly from the four sources: The Qur’aan, Ĥadiith, ijmaaʿ and analogy. An important note also is that the “People of Ĥadiith” in scholarly terminology of old has a different meaning than those that call themselves by this name today.

²⁰ Muĥammad ibn Daawuud ibn ʿAliyy ibn Kĥalaf Al-Ṭĥaahiriyy (255 h. - 297 h.) was an Imam and son of the Imam Daawuud Al-Ṭĥaahiriyy. He took over his father’s position as a Mufti and teacher after his father. (Source: Al-ʿAʿlaam).

²¹ In the manuscript it is written “Ibn Shurayĥ”, but it is likely a typographical error, and should be Ibn Surayj, because he was the head of the Sunnis at that time and wrote very many books, as indicated by Abuu Manṣuur:

Aĥmad ibn ʿUmar ibn Surayj Al-Bagĥdaadiyy, Abuu Al-ʿAbbaas (249 h. - 306 h.) the head of the Shāfiʿiyy of his time who wrote some 400 books and was a Judge in Shiiraaz (in today’s Iran). He fought deviant sects and had debates with Daawuud Al-Ṭĥaahiriyy. (Source: Al-ʿAʿlaam).

²² Al-Jaaruuḥ was a philosopher of the school of equality of proofs.

Another of the Kalaam scholars in the time of Al-Ma'muun is ²⁵ *ʿAbdujjaah ibn Saʿiid Al-Tamiimiyy*, who crushed the Muʿtazilah in the assembly of Al-Ma'muun, and scandalized them with his eloquent exposure and clarification of their faults. The remains of his clarifications are in his books. He is the brother of Yaḥyaa ibn Saʿiid Al-Qaṭṭaan²⁶, the inheritor of the knowledge of ḥadiith and the master of narrator criticism.

Among the students of *ʿAbdujjaah ibn Saʿiid* is *ʿAbduʿAziiz Al-Makkiyy Al-Kattaaniyy*²⁷, who scandalized the Muʿtazilah in Al-Ma'muun's assembly. Yet another Kalaam scholar was his student, Al-Ḥusayn ibn Al-Faḍl Al-Bajaliyy²⁸, the master of Kalaam, methodology, Quranic commentary and interpretation. Later scholars relied upon his notes and pointers in interpreting the Qur'aan. He is the one that *ʿAbduʿAziiz ibn Ṭaahir*, the governor of Khuraasaan <in North East Iran> brought with him to Khuraasaan, and as a result people said, "He took with him all the knowledge of Iraq to Khuraasaan."

Among the students of *ʿAbdujjaah ibn Saʿiid* is also Al-Junayd²⁹, the *Shaykh* of the Sufis and the Imam of the monotheists. He has an article that is written according to the requirements of the Kalaam scholars, but with Sufi expressions.

After this generation came the *Shaykh* of Insight, the Imam of the Horizons in debating and verification: Abu Al-Ḥasan *ʿAliyy ibn Ismaaʿil Al-Ashʿariyy*³⁰. He is the one that became a cut in the throats of the Qadariyyah, the Najjaariyyah, the Jahmiyyah, the anthropomorphists, the Shiites and the Khawaarij. He filled the world with his books. No Kalaam scholar has ever been bestowed with a following like the one he was endowed with. The rea-

²³ The claim of equality of proofs is when someone looks at the evidences presented by two opponents and then declares himself unable to decide who is right. The book of Al-Jaaruuuf, which defended the idea of equality of proofs, was written by a philosopher against Al-Jubbaa'iyy, who was a Muʿtazilite. This belief of equality of proofs is basically agnosticism, in the sense that they neither affirm nor deny, but its followers fall into three groups: First, those who question the existence of the Creator. Second, those who believe in the Creator, but doubt prophethood. Third, those who believe in the Creator and the prophethood of Muḥammad, but have doubts about other beliefs. (See Al-Fiṣal fi-l-Milal by Ibn Ḥazm).

²⁴ He seems to mean Abu Al-Ḥusayn Ibn Al-Raawandiyy (? h. - 298 h.), who was a philosopher accused of numerous heresies. (Source: Al-'A'laam).

²⁵ *ʿAbdujjaah ibn Saʿiid ibn Kullaab*, Abu Muḥammad Al-Qaṭṭaan (? - 245), was one of the greatest Kalaam scholars of his time. (Source: Al-'A'laam). He is also mentioned with the last name Al-Tamiimiyy by Al-Subkiyy in *Ṭabaqaat Al-Shaafi'iyyah Al-Kubraa*. In *Ṭabaqaat Al-Shaafi'iyyah* it is stated in the biography of *ʿAbdujjaah ibn Saʿiid ibn Kullaab* that Abu Ḥasan Al-Ashʿariyy was heavily influenced by him and by Ḥaarith ibn Asad Al-Muḥaasibiyy

²⁶ Yaḥyaa ibn Saʿiid Al-Qaṭṭaan Al-Tamiimiyy, Abu Saʿiid (120 h. - 198) one of the Imams of Ḥadiith science. He gave the Fatwas of Abu Ḥaniifah and is regarded as a highly trustworthy Ḥaafiṭh. (Source: Al-'A'laam).

²⁷ *ʿAbduʿAziiz ibn Yaḥyaa ibn ʿAbduʿAziiz Al-Kinaaniyy Al-Makkiyy* (? h. - 240) was among the students of Al-Shaafi'iyy and debated Bisḥr Al-Mariisiyy. (Source: Al-'A'laam).

²⁸ Al-Ḥusayn ibn Al-Faḍl ibn *ʿUmayr Al-Bajaliyy* (178 h. - 282 h.) was one of the leaders of the knowledge of the meanings in the Qur'aan. He was originally from Al-Kuufah, but the governor *ʿAbduʿAziiz ibn Ṭaahir* brought him to Naysaabuur where he bought a house for him. He stayed there teaching until he died.

²⁹ Al-Junayd ibn Muḥammad ibn Al-Junayd Al-Baghdaadiyy, Abu Al-Qaasim, Al-Kḥazzaaz (? - 297) was one of the greatest scholars of all time. One of his contemporaries said, "I have not laid my eyes on anyone like Al-Junayd. The scribes come to his lessons to learn from his words, the poets for his eloquence, and the Kalaam scholars for the meaning of what he says. The great scholars and historian Ibn Al-'Athiir said about Al-Junayd: "The top scholar in the world in his time." He is considered as one of the great imams of Sufism for his compliance to the sciences of Ḥadiith and Qur'aan along with leadership in *Ṣuufiyy* knowledge. He said, "Our way is controlled by the Qur'aan and Ḥadiith." (Source: Al-'A'laam).

³⁰ *ʿAliyy ibn Ismaaʿil ibn Isḥaaq*, Abu Al-Ḥasan, was among the descendants of the famous companion Abu Muusaa Al-Ashʿariyy. He is the founder of the Ashʿariyy school in beliefs and a Mujtahid scholar. He authored some 300 books. (Source: Al-'A'laam). He outlined the Sunni belief system in detail with explanations and proofs more than anyone else before him. For this reason, the Sunni scholars call themselves followers of the Ashʿariyy school.

son is that all the People of Ĥadiith follow his way, as do all the People of Insight³¹ that do not have Mu^ˆtazilite inclinations.

Among his famous students are: Abuu Al-Ĥasan Al-Baahiliyy³² and Abuu ^ˆAbduġġaah ibn Mujaahid³³, and these two are the ones that developed the students that are the shining suns of their time and the masters of their generations, such as:

Abuu Bakr Muĥammad ibn Al-Ṭayyib³⁴ (Abuu Bakr Al-Baaqillaaniy) the head of the judges of Iraq, the Arabian Peninsula, Faaris (Southwest Iran), Karmaan (Southeast Iran) and all the border areas belonging to these lands,

Abuu Bakr Muĥammad ibn Al-Ĥusayn ibn Fuurak³⁵ (Ibn Fuurak),

and Abuu Isĥaaq Ibraahiim ibn Muĥammad Al-Mihraaniyy³⁶ (Abuu Isĥaaq Al-Isfaraayiiniyy) .

Before these there was Abuu Al-Ĥasan ^ˆAliyy ibn Mahdiyy Al-Ṭabariyy³⁷, the master of jurisprudence, Kalaam, methodology, literature, grammar and Ĥadiith. Among his heritage is a student like Abuu ^ˆAbduġġaah Al-Ĥusayn ibn Muĥammad Al-Bazzaaziyy³⁸, the master debater and author of books on all aspect of Kalaam.

³¹ The people of insight are the followers of the Ĥanafiiyy school today. Their belief are identical to that of the Ash^ˆariyy school, although they are usually called Maaturiidiyy as opposed to Ash^ˆariyy. The differences between these two schools basically come down to semantics. For this reason, the label as an "Ash^ˆariyy" follower is applied to followers of both schools.

³² Abuu Al-Ĥasan Al-Baahiliyy Al-Baṣriyy was a direct student of Al-Ash^ˆariyy. The Ĥaafiṭh Ibn ^ˆAsaakir narrated from Abuu Bakr Al-Baaqillaaniy that he, Abuu Isĥaaq Al-Isfaraayiiniyy and Ibn Fuurak would have a lesson with Al-Baahiliyy once every week. Abuu Bakr said that he was so preoccupied with worship of Aġġaah that we had to remind him of the length of the lessons. He would also sit behind a curtain so that neither the three of them, nor the commoners that would attend could see him. When asked about this he answered, "You can see the commoners with your eyes, and they are people that tend to be negligent of religious concerns, and this way you will also look at me with the same eyes. Abuu Isĥaaq Al-Isfaraayiiniyy used to say, "I was like a drop in the ocean beside Abuu Al-Ĥasan Al-Baahiliyy." On the other hand, Al-Baahiliyy used to say, "Beside Abuu Al-Ĥasan Al-Ash^ˆariyy I was a like a drop beside the ocean." This was all mentioned by Ibn ^ˆAsaakir in Tabyiin Kadĥibi-l-Muftariyy under the biography of Al-Baahiliyy in the chapter listing the students of Al-Ash^ˆariyy.

³³ Muĥammad ibn Aĥmad ibn Muĥammad ibn Ya^ˆquub ibn Mujaahid (? - 370 h.) was a scholar of the Maalikiyy school a student of Al-Ash^ˆariyy, and the teacher of Abuu Bakr Al-Baaqillaaniy. (Source: Al-'A^ˆlaam).

³⁴ Muĥammad ibn Al-Ṭayyib ibn Muĥammad ibn Ja^ˆfar, Abuu Bakr Al-Baaqillaaniy, Al-Qaadii al-Baaqillaaniy (338 h. - 403 h.) was the head of the Ash^ˆariyy of his time. He wrote many books, some of which are in print. (Source: Al-'A^ˆlaam). Al-Dĥahabiyy in his "Taariikĥu-l-Islam" V. 28, P. 89 relates that Al-Baaqillaaniy was once sent by the Muslim ruler to debate the Christian scribes of the Roman Emperor. When he arrived to the emperors hall they had made the entrance to the emperor very low, to the extent that one had to bow down in order to enter. Al-Baaqillaaniy realized that it was a trick to make him bow to the emperor, so he turned and entered back end first. Once there, he turned to one of the monks and said, "How are the wife and kids?" Astonished, the emperor replied, "Do you not know that the monk elevates himself having a wife or kids?" Al-Baaqillaaniy closed his trap by quickly replying: "You consider him above this, but you do not consider Aġġaah to be clear of and above having a female companion and child?" He was also mockingly asked, "What happened to ^ˆAa'ishah?" They were referring to the time that she, the Prophet's wife, was accused by the hypocrites of having been unfaithful. They wanted to make him lose his temper by their insinuations. Al-Baaqillaaniy answered: "As what happened to Maryam. (They were both accused of adultery), then they were both declared innocent by Aġġaah, and Maryam brought a baby, while ^ˆAa'ishah did not." They could find no response to this, because he had shown them that permitting the slander of ^ˆAa'ishah would imply permitting ugly and heretical slander of Maryam even more.

³⁵ Muĥammad ibn Al-Ĥasan ibn Fuurak Al-Anṣaariyy Al-Aṣbahaaniyy (? - 406 h.) was among the greatest scholars of belief methodology, as well as Šĥaafi^ˆiiyy fiĥ (jurisprudence).

³⁶ Ibraahiim ibn Muĥammad ibn Ibraahiim ibn Mihraan, Abuu Isĥaaq Al-Isfaraayiiniyy (? - 418 h.) was a great scholar of beliefs, methodology and fiĥ. He used to be nicknamed "the pillar of the religion." He was also a reliable narrator of Ĥadiith. (Source: Al-'A^ˆlaam). He was one of the teachers of Abuu Maṣṣuur –the author himself.

³⁷ Abuu Al-Ĥasan ^ˆAliyy ibn Muĥammad ibn Mahdiyy Al-Ṭabariyy was a student of Al-Ash^ˆariyy in Al-Baṣrah. The meaning of one of his poems is: He is not lost who has a companion able to mend his ways. For the world is merely by its inhabitants and a person is by his companions.

³⁸ I was unable to find anyone of this name that is of Abuu Maṣṣuur's generation or earlier. The Al-Ĥusayn ibn Muĥammad Al-Bazzaaziyy mentioned in Al-Waafii bi-l-Wafayaat died in 495 h., which seems too late for being meant here.

Also before this generation was the Shaykh of the Sciences, Abuu ʿAliyy Al-Thaqafiyy³⁹. In his time the Imam of the Sunnis was Abuu Al-ʿAbbaas Al-Qalaanisiyy⁴⁰, who authored more than one hundred and fifty books in Kalaam. The books and critiques authored by Al-Thaqafiyy against deviant groups are more than one hundred.

In our time we have reached Abuu ʿAbdujjaah ibn Mujaahid and Muḥammad ibn Al-Ṭayyib (Abuu Bakr Al-Baaqillaaniy) the head of the judges, Muḥammad ibn Al-Ḥusayn ibn Fuurak, Ibraahiim ibn Muḥammad Al-Mihraaniyy (Abuu Ishaaq Al-Isfaraayiniyy) and Al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad Al-Bazzaaziyy. Our own teachers follow the same path of these that we have reached, which is to enliven the truth and put its enemies in chains." (Uṣuulu-d-Diin, 307-9)

Kalam scholars used terminology like those of the Aristotelians to show them wrong

According to the need to defend the religion, the Sunni scholars of Kalam used some of the concepts of the philosophers, because they needed to argue with them to show the flaws in their arguments, and this was the most effective method of defending the religion. The arguments are sometimes complicated, but it is obligatory in the religion to stop bad beliefs, as the Prophet ordered us to stop any sin by our hand, or tongue. There is no doubt that many beliefs of Aristotelian philosophers are bad and even kufr, so they must be stopped. The Sunni scholars did this by arguing against them, disproving them with a resounding finality and upholding the true religion. Just because there was agreement on some issues, or in terminology, does not mean that the kalam scholars adopted the beliefs of the philosophers, because not everything philosophers say is wrong.

Even the talk about whether they adopted Aristotelian beliefs is a sidetrack used by anthropomorphists. For at the end of the day, what really matters is your proof for what you believe, not who else believed it among non-prophets. That is why the Sunnis say:

"We know men based on their sayings, not sayings based on their men."

The principles of the proofs for the creators existence.

There are two fundamental ways of proving the Creator's existence:

The first is by arguing based on the need of creation for specification. For example, anything with a size needs to be specified in terms of its size and other characteristics, because there are infinite possibilities for how it is to be. This means that all the different bodies in the cosmos right now need to have been specified.

The second way is by arguing based on the need of anything with a beginning to be brought into existence, and that this bringing into existence cannot be from the world itself.

The aim in using both ways, is to show that this specification, and bringing into existence, cannot come from the cosmos itself, but from an Almighty Creator.

The Kalaam scholars call the first way, "arguing based on possibility" and the second "arguing based on existence after non-existence." These two ways are the fundamental bricks of absolutely all arguments to show that the world has a creator. This includes those used by Sunnis, as well as those used by the likes of Ibn Taymiyyah and Ad-Daarimiyy.

³⁹ Muḥammad ibn ʿAbduWahhaab ibn ʿAbdurRaḥmaan ibn ibn ʿAbduWahhaab, Abuu ʿAliyy Al-Thaqafiyy (244 h. - 328 h.) was among the greatest scholars of all time in fiqh, methodology and belief. He stayed in Naysaabuur. Ibn Khuzaymah told him one time: "It is not allowed for any of us to give fatwaa as long as you are alive." (Source: Siyar 'A'laam Al-Nubalaa').

⁴⁰ Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdurRaḥmaan ibn Khaalid Al-Qalaanisiyy Al-Raazii, was among the Sunni scholars that lived in the time of Al-Ashʿariyy and fought deviants. His appearance as a defender of the faith was earlier than that of Al-Ashʿariyy, and he was not among his students. (Source: Ibn ʿAsaakir in Tabyiin Kadhibi-l-Muftarii P. 293.)

An example of the first way was when Abuu Ḥaniifah pointed out to an atheist the absurdity in the latter's belief: "You cannot imagine one ship running without someone looking after its affairs. Yet you think that for this whole world, which runs exactly and precisely, there is no one who looks after it, and no one owns it?" This argument is based on the need for specification.

In a similar story, Ash-Shaafi`iyy said: "The leaves of Toot (berries) are all but one. Each leaf tastes exactly the same. Insects, honey bees, cows, goats, and deer live off of it. After eating these, the insects produce silk; bees produce honey; deer give musk (a special kind of scent), cows and goats deliver off-springs."

In yet another story, Maalik said it this way: "Difference in languages, difference in pitches of voice, difference in singing are proof that Alḥaah (subhanahu wa ta`ala) exists!"

All of these arguments have been quoted from Wahabi websites. In all of them the underlying theme is that the world needs a creator to specify it, because this order cannot come about without someone specifying it. Moreover, one cannot reasonably claim it is the way it is by logical necessity, because it could have been any other way in the mind's eye.

All advanced Kalam arguments are based on these same fundamentals, except that they are more developed and defined. This is because over time atheists and other philosophers, such as the Aristotelians, come up with ideas to try to refute the arguments, and the scholars stayed busy refuting them. This is why books of Kalam are sometimes very difficult and contains specialized terminology, just like any other science. After all, Kalam science is "a science by which one is able to verify the truth of religious beliefs bringing proofs and refuting misconceptions. (Mawaaqif, P. 7)."

About the so called proof of the existence of God through the proof of the createdness of "accidents"

First of all, I would not translate the word $\hat{a}ra\hat{d}$ as "accident." "Incident" would be a better choice, because the word accident implies coincidence or mistake, and this is certainly not meant by $\hat{a}ra\hat{d}$ in Kalam science. Let us not, however, get bogged down in terminology. The proof is simply based on the observation that the entire observable world around us consists of things with size that are either still, or moving, and that change in other ways. The scholars called the first "body," and the latter " $\hat{a}ra\hat{d}$ " (any characteristic of a body, anything that exists through a body, such as shape, color and movement). It is not more complicated than that: bodies and their attributes.

Why did they look at bodies in particular, and not, for example, just color, you might ask? The reason is that to prove the createdness of the world, you need at least to show that all of the observable world must have a creator, and that there is no alternative. Accordingly, we need to point out the characteristics that are essential to all the things observed in the world. The scholars did this by pointing out that it is all things that have size, and things that take place in things that have size. This takes care of anything observable, and anything of size that is not observable. If you can't prove that they need a creator, regardless of their nature, then you can't prove that the world as we know it needs a creator. It is that simple, and this is what "the proof of the createdness of accidents" is about.

This is not different from the arguments of the imams Abuu Ḥaniifah, Ash-Shaafi`iyy, Maalik and Aḥmad, because they all argued based on the need for specification of bodies (such as the bodies of the world as a whole, or parts of it such as flowers), or their characteristics (such as languages and voices.) An explicit example is the statement of Ibn Jariir Aṭ-Ṭabariyy in his world history:

لا شيء في العالم مشاهد إلا جسم أو قائم بجسم

"There is nothing in the observable world except bodies or what exist in bodies (Taariikh Al-Muluuk wa Ar-Rusul, V. 1/P. 28)." This is exactly what the Kalam scholars say when they say: bodies and $\hat{a}ra\hat{d}$, because an $\hat{a}ra\hat{d}$ is what exists in bodies.

In other words, if you want to prove that the world needs a creator, you must be able to show that all bodies and what exist in (or through) them, must have a creator. Moreover, since all the observable world is either a body or what exists in bodies, absolutely all proofs of Aļļaah's existence are based on bodies and their characteristics. Why? Because there is nothing else to be observed in the world and therefore nothing else to seek proofs in.

The proof of the creators existence is in compliance with the Qur'aan

Yaser Qadi says: "*Although the dalīl ("the proof of the createdness of accidents") was almost unanimously agreed upon by all the mutakallimūn, only a handful of them actually provided any Qurānic basis for it.... The Proof of the people of kalām, however, is meant to prove the createdness of man, whereas the Qurānic methodology is to take this for granted...."*

Actually, it is meant to prove the createdness of the entire world, and the encouragement to think of proofs of Aļļaah's existence and attributes are very many in the Quran, and they are not restricted to what is verbatim mentioned in the scriptures.

An example of such encouragement is in this ayah:

أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ

Meaning: "What, do they not consider how the camel was created?"

In light of the ayah, if you want me to restrict *how* I consider the camel, then you need to show me an explicit revealed text prohibiting me from considering the "how" of the camel. It does not matter if the consideration is simple or not, lucid or not. This is because the encouragement to *consider* is absolute in the ayah, and cannot be restricted without a scriptural text as proof.

As stated previously, the word *ʿaraḍ*, or incidents, refers simply to the different events and attributes bodies have. An example of an ayah from the Quran that encourages thinking about bodies (things with size) and accidents (attributes and events in things with size) is:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

Meaning: "Verily in the creation of the Skies and the Earth, and the differences of night and day there are signs for those who have perceptive minds." (Aal-ʿImraan, 190)

The Skies and the Earth and what is in them are all bodies, because they all have size. All that exists in these bodies are also created, such as the changes of night and day explicitly stated in the aayah. Clearly then, seeking proofs of Aļļaah's existence and attributes in the createdness of bodies and what exists by them is something Quranic of the highest order.

In fact, to forbid people from seeking proofs of Aļļaah's existence in bodies, and that which exist in them (ʿaraḍ) is to disbelieve in this aayah, and we all know the judgment of denying an aayah of the Qur'aan.

Implications of the proof of Aļļaah's existence for denying Aļļaah's resemblance to creation

Beware that if you prove that Aļļaah exists based on bodies and their attributes, then you are implicitly saying that Aļļaah is not like that. This is because you are already arguing that these bodies and their attributes need a creator.

For example, based on the aayah above, if you say that night and day are timed orderly, and that this shows that someone orders them, then you must also hold that Aljjaah is not something "timed". Otherwise you would end up saying that Aljjaah needs a creator according to your original argument.

Moreover, if you say that the skies and the earth are highly ordered structures, and that someone must have ordered them, then you must also hold that Aljjaah is not a structure. Otherwise you would end up saying that Aljjaah needs a creator according to your original argument.

You can now understand the meaning of Aljjaah's saying in the Qur'aan:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

Meaning: "Absolutely nothing resembles Him, and He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing." (Ash-Shuuraa, 11)

It must mean that Aljjaah is not something with size, nor something that exists in something with size, nor is He attributed with something that things with size are attributed with. This is because these are shared characteristics of all creation, the very characteristics that made us able to prove that the world needs a creator.

This is why the Sunni scholars insist that all scriptures that, on the surface only, seems to mean that Aljjaah is a body, or has shared characteristics with bodies, cannot be understood literally. In other words, they go by the absolute meaning of "nothing resembles Him," and understand any other revealed text in agreement with it. The anthropomorphists, on the other hand, consider texts that appear to mean that Aljjaah is a body above the ^Arsħ, to be absolute, and interpret everything else in agreement with it, including "nothing resembles Him." It is a question of which one you choose to consider absolute, it can't be both.

Accordingly, many anthropomorphists that believe Allaah is something physically located above the ^Arsħ, figuratively interpret literal understandings of certain scripture texts, such as: "He is the Light of the heavens and the earth" (An-Nuur, 35); and, "We are closer to him than his jugular vein" (Qaaf, 16); and, "He is with you wherever you are" (Al-Ĥadiid 57:4); and, "Wheresoever you turn, there is the Face of God" (Al-Baqarah, 115); and "When I love him (the worshipper), I am the hearing by which he hears, the sight by which he sees, the hand with which he grasps, and the foot with which he walks." (Al-Bukhaariyy # 6502)." They do not accept these literal understandings, and interpret them figuratively, because they are incompatible with being in a location above the ^Arsħ. After all, these literal understandings give the idea that Aljjaah is somewhere else. After Ibn Taymiyyah, however, many of them also believe that the body of their deity literally surrounds the world. Accordingly, they believe that whatever direction you point in, you are pointing at Aljjaah. Their belief is therefore that the creator has a limit that is adjacent to the outer surface of the world from all sides. That is why they will also accept to say that literally, "Wheresoever you turn, there is the Face of God."

Sunnis, like some anthropomorphists, also interpret these figuratively, but because Allaah is not like His creation, so He is not a body. He is therefore not in a place at all, not a particular place and not in every place, because place is only for bodies and their parts. Accordingly they might interpret the literal "Light" as "Creator of light;" "closer to him than" as "intimate knowledge;" "with you wherever you are" as "in knowledge;" "Face" as "God's ordered prayer direction," and the statement "I am the hearing by which he hears, etc." as meaning that these bodyparts will act in compliance with what Aljjaah accepts, or the like.

Then there are revealed texts which's literal understandings are rejected only by Sunnis, due their indication of body or place. For example those that appear to indicate aboveness, temporary relocation, changes, or bodyparts. Examples are those that mention "yad," which's literal meaning is "hand," or "qadam," which's literal meaning is "foot." These are generally not figuratively understood by anthropomorphists, as they are not incompatible with their deity being located above the ^Arsħ most of the time. At least at first thought, for their belief that Allaah is a body that moves to the lowest sky in the last third of the night actually necessitates it being there always. After all, it is always the last third of the night somewhere on earth.

The Sunni approach to these, when a particular non-literal interpretation is not obvious, is either to choose a particular interpretation as most likely meant, or to simply reject the literal interpretation, and avoid choosing a particular non-literal interpretation that befits AlJaaah. This will vary from scholar to scholar and from one scripture text to another. When Sunnis interpret such texts figuratively, the wahabis call this interpretation ta'wiil, while the interpretations they themselves make, they will call something else, like "tafsiir." Then they proceed to attack "ta'wiil" with every imaginable means. At the end of day however, what they call ta'wiil is simply a figurative interpretation that they don't like. They don't like it, because the literal meaning is not in conflict with their belief regarding physical location above the ^Arsħ.

Clearly, however, the Sunni approach is the only sensible one. This is because the anthropomorphist absolute of above-ness in place makes it impossible for them to show that the world needs a creator that is not created. That is, without also saying that AlJaaah would also need a creator, and this is in conflict with AlJaaah's saying in the Qur'aan:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

Meaning: "Absolutely nothing resembles Him, and He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing." (Asħ-Shuuraa, 11). Clearly this aayah means that AlJaaah does not have attributes that necessitate specification and being brought into existence, such as a size and shape. It does not mean, unlike what anthropomorphists believe, that Allaah is different from creation in the same way that created things differ, i.e. in size and shape and things that exist in what has size and shape.

A simple way of putting it is as follows: whenever we see something composed from parts, or with size, we say: "someone has put it there like that." For example, when you see a car, you know that this car has a beginning; someone put it where it is now. If this is true for a simple car, then what about the entire universe? If one accepts this argument, then one must also accept that God is free of the attributes that makes one say, "someone must have put there like that." These are attributes such as having weight, volume, length, width, shapes, limits, boundaries, composition, physical movement, physical distance and physical direction. In other words, you must accept that God does not resemble His creation. This is what Muslims mean when they say, "He has no equal," i.e. *nothing resembles Him*.

The anthropomorphist belief that AlJaaah is above the ^Arsħ is also impossible to reconcile with the following explicit statement of Prophet Muhammad, the most eloquent of creation, as narrated by Muslim and Al-Bayhaqiyy:

اللهم أنت الأول فليس قبلك شيء وأنت الآخر فليس بعدك شيء وأنت الظاهر فليس فوقك شيء وأنت الباطن فليس دونك شيء

"O AlJaaah, You are the First, so there is nothing before You, and You are the Last so there is nothing after You. You are Al-Ṭhaahir so there is nothing above You. And You are Al-Baaṭin, so there is nothing below you."

If there is nothing above Him and nothing below Him, then he is not a body or in a direction, and He does not have physical specification.

A more detailed way of showing that bodies must be created for one to prove that the world is created

First, note that whatever has a physical limit - a boundary for its size/body - is a creation, because such a limit must be specified in terms of size and shape. That is, it requires a Creator to exist. If one denies this, then one is no longer able to prove that physical limits require a Creator, such as those of the human body, or the celestial bodies. That is, the shape of the camel, or the skies, would no longer be proofs for AlJaaah's existence and Power, and this is in contradiction with the Quranic statements, such as:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ

Meaning: "Verily in the creation of the Skies and the Earth, and the differences of night and day there are signs for those who have perceptive minds." (Aal ^Imraan, 190)

أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبْلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ

Meaning: "What, do they not consider how the camel was created?" (Al-Ghashiyah, 17)

Can anyone ponder these aayahs without pondering the physical boundaries of the skies, earth and camel? Of course not, because without boundaries, there is no camel and there is no sky and no earth, as this is the reality of their existence. It is the limits of bodies that give us certainty that they are created and enable us to ponder upon them as signs of AlJaaah. In fact, the aayahs are requesting us to ponder the boundaries of the skies, the earth and the camel. Therefore, if someone claims that AlJaaah has a physical limit, then he is saying that physical limits do not necessarily need a creator, and have thereby invalidated these Quranic proofs.

This is true, because a physical limit is conceptually just a connection of dots forming a line or surface. Each dot is connected to the next at one of its sides. The choice of placement of a connected dot to another is for any available space at any angle and from any angle. That's it. The placement of connected dots form limits, and since the way the dots are placed next to each other needs specification in terms of 'where', it must be true that all limits need to be specified.

More simply put: anything that has a physical limit (or size), has a shape, because the limit has to have some shape. Anything that has a certain shape could have had any other shape, because any shape isn't intrinsically of higher priority than any other shape, so having a certain shape means that there must be someone who specified it and chose it among all other possibilities.

This means that any physical limit needs a creator and cannot be eternal, because its existence depends on prior specification, and all such limits are equal in this dependence. So if someone claims that one such limit does not require a creator, or to be specified, then He can no longer logically prove that another limit does need a creator. This means that he can no longer logically prove that shapes need someone to give them a form. To be able to do that, rather, he must hold on to the premise that all limits need a creator. He must hold that since AlJaaah is not specified or created, and is definitely eternal, it must be true that AlJaaah exists without physical limits.

Note that this also means that AlJaaah exists without being in a place. This is because if you say that AlJaaah is in a place/location over the [^]Arsh, then you are saying that He is a body, because being in a location necessitates borders for the thing in that place. This is because something in a location is either in all locations, or in some location(s). If it is in some location, but not others, it must be confined by a border and have a size and shape limiting it to that location i.e. it must be a body. If it is all places, on the other hand, then it would be shaped by all limits in creation. That is why it makes no sense to say that AlJaaah is in a place, but is not a body. It is not about the word body, but about its meaning. Or put in another way: we care about the word body, because of its meaning.

Al-Qurtubiy (the famous mufassir) said: "It is said to them [the anthropomorphists who believe AlJaaah is in a place or direction, etc.]: "If AlJaaah was specified by a specification, formed by a form, limited by a limit and end, existing in a specific direction, [or] changing by emergent [previously non existing] attributes in Himself, then He would have been emergent (having a beginning) and specified by whatever He was specified with in terms of quantity and form, and [thus] requiring a specifier [for the quantity and form], and if He required a specifier, then He would have been in need and emergent. And if this is invalid, then it is true that He is without a limit or an end, and that He is Self-existent in the sense that He does not need a place to confine Him or a body to be in, or something to hold Him, or another that He gets help from. His attributes of His self do not change by His actions or leaving them (Al-Asnaa, 2/21)."

Ibn Taymiyyah' arguments against the proof stating that bodies must have a creator

Yaser Qadi says: *Ibn Taymiyyah believed that man had ingrained in him a belief in God, and that this belief, embodied in the fitrah, or innate subconscious nature of man, was an integral part and parcel of the human conscience. And since the*

Prophet had stated that 'Every child is born upon the fiṭrah...', Ibn Taymiyyah felt there was no need to construct elaborate proofs for the existence of God.

Claiming that the fiṭrah includes the knowledge that Aḷlaah exists is an understanding that plainly contradicts the Qur'aan. In fact, we are born without knowledge:

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

Meaning: "Aḷlaah made you come out of the wombs of your mothers, and you did not know anything, and He made for you hearing, sight and hearts (to know by), so that you may know His grace upon you and be thankful." (An-Naḥl, 28)

This is not contradicted by the ḥadiith narrated by Muslim in which the Prophet said:

أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ كُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ تَلِدُهُ أُمُّهُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ وَأَبَوَاهُ بَعْدُ يَهُودَانِهِ وَيُنَصْرَانِهِ وَيَمَجْسَانِهِ فَإِنْ كَانَا مُسْلِمِينَ فَمُسْلِمٌ

Meaning: "Every human is born by his mother in the state of "fiṭrah", then after that, its parents make it a Jew, or a Christian or a Magi, and if they are Muslims, then he is a Muslim." (Muslim, V. 4, P. 2047, #2658)

The reason why there is no contradiction, is that the meaning of fiṭrah is simply "created state." One interpretation of fiṭrah in this ḥadiith then, is that one has an inborn ability to achieve knowledge. There are also other acceptable interpretations, but having knowledge of the Creator is not one of them, as it contradicts the aayah.

Moreover, we were ordered to use logical proofs to support our belief in Aḷlaah. Aḷlaah said:

فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

Meaning: "Know that there is no god but Aḷlaah." (Muḥammad, 19) This is an order to know, and knowledge of the Creator's existence can only be based on proof, because belief without proof would be merely parroting or opinion, and not knowledge. Moreover, if the knowledge was inborn, then ordering it would be an order to do something that is already done, which is absurd.

Not only that, it contradicts observable reality, how could one reasonably claim that a newborn infant knows the creator!?

Then Yaser goes on to say: *And it is for this reason (i.e. the supposed inborn knowledge) that the overwhelming majority of mankind, from all generations and in all places, acknowledged a belief in a supreme deity, and those who strayed from this belief are the exception rather than the rule.*

This is not an argument, because atheism is munkar – disapproved of by Aḷlaah, and we are ordered to stop munkar, however we are able, and regardless of the amount. Moreover, it is not even true. According to Harris Interactive reports on a survey of [Religious Views and Beliefs by Country](#), only 35% of Brits, 27% of Frenchmen believe in a god. In the United States, it shows 73%, but [in another report](#) that only 58 Percent are "Absolutely Certain". In other words, those who Harris reported as "Believer in any form of God or any type of supreme being," are not all of them "absolutely certain." So much for the knowledge of the Creator's existence being inborn in all humans.... Yaser Qadi and the Wahabi mob, however, are stuck in blind imitation of the die-hard anthropomorphism of a man in the Middle Ages.

Then Yaser goes on to say: *He (Ibn Taymiyyah) felt that the strongest proof, after the fiṭrah of man, was the proof from the ephemeral nature of creation itself, including the createdness of man. For man knows instinctively that he is created, just as he knows that the other animals, plants, minerals, clouds and objects around him are created. And every creation*

is in need of a Creator. Thus, the fact that man is a created object is evidence in and of itself of the existence of a Creator, and is itself not in need of evidence.

Note how he says first that next to the fiṭrah, which he believes is the innate knowledge that one has a creator, the strongest proof is that a man knows instinctively that he is created. So the strongest proof next to the fiṭrah is the fiṭrah in his view.... We ask Aḷḷaah for guidance.

He then says: *The Proof of the people of kalām, however, is meant to prove the createdness of man, whereas the Qurānic methodology is to take this for granted and use it to prove the existence of a Creator, as, for example, in 52: 35, "Were they created from nothing, or did they create themselves?"*

Yes, the Qur'aan itself only hints at the proofs, but that does not mean that we are not encouraged to do more than hint in our proofs. In fact, what is claimed here to be the Quranic methodology, is not what the Qur'aan encourages, as we have shown earlier under the heading "The proof of the creators existence is in compliance with the Qur'aan". In general the Qur'aan does not provide details even about jurisprudence, but broad guidelines and principles. The details are left for the Prophet to teach, i.e. in ḥadiith, and for the scholars to work out with qiyaas (analogy). The main exception in this is inheritance law. In fact, you cannot even know how to perform your daily prayers by merely reading the Qur'aan, and yet it is called the second pillar of Islam.

In fact, the aayah which Yaser translated as, "Were they created from nothing, or did they create themselves?" is such a broad guideline. It is better translated as "Were they created by nothing, or did they create themselves?!" because "by" fits the context of "or did they create themselves?!" After all, the idea of "created from nothing" is not the alternative to "did they create themselves." Rather the hypothetical alternative to "created from nothing" is "created from something." Likewise, the hypothetical alternative to being created "by themselves" is "by nothing," or "by something else."

This aayah teaches the principle that anything that has a beginning must be created. After all, its underlying premise is that something with a beginning, such as a human being, must have a creator. It also teaches that one can prove something by showing the invalidity of any suggested alternatives, such as not needing a creator, or something creating itself.

Yaser goes on to say: *"Another Qurānic proof of the existence of God, according to Ibn Taymiyyah, is the miracles of the prophets, such as the miracles given to Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad."*

This is true, but this proof is highly dependent on proving that all bodies, and any characteristic or event in them (ʿarāḍ) must be created by Aḷḷaah. This is because if it has not been proven first that all bodies and their characteristics must be created, and that there is no other creator than Aḷḷaah, then it has not been proven that any miracle would necessarily have been created by Aḷḷaah. After all, miracles are about what happens to bodies, which is ʿarāḍ. A miracle is an extraordinary event that happens in bodies, something that is contrary to what is normally possible, such as the splitting of the moon (a body). Such events are used by a prophet to show that he has Aḷḷaah's support for his claim to prophethood. Again, how does this depend on showing that all bodies and what exists in them are created? It depends on it, because to show that the miracle is created by Aḷḷaah, you need to show first that nothing can ever happen to bodies unless it is created by Him, and therefore the miracle has no other explanation than that it is a sign of Aḷḷaah's support.

He goes on to say: *"In light of these authentic, Qurānic evidences, Ibn Taymiyyah argues, there was no need to resort to methods which none of the prophets ever called to. For no one can argue that the prophets of God proclaimed to mankind that they should believe in 'substances' and 'accidents' and try to prove the existence of God through such means."*

We have shown that the Qur'aan encourages proving Aḷḷaah's existence. We have also shown that substances and accidents, simply mean things with size and what exists in or through them. We have also shown that all observable creation is one of those two, so preventing proofs based on them is to prevent absolutely all proofs. Ibn Taymiyyah is trying to hide this fact by using terminology that people don't understand to put them up against Sunni teachings - while posing

himself as a representative of the Sunnis. If a simple minded person does not understand the meaning of substances and accidents, he will be persuaded based on his ignorance. He will say, "I have never heard of such a thing! How can they claim we must believe in it!?" In reality however, according to the meaning of these terms, it is not possible to present any proof without speaking about substances (i.e. bodies) and *ʿaraḍ* (what exists in bodies.) You can also see how absurd it is to say, "*no one can argue that the prophets of God proclaimed to mankind that they should believe in substances and accidents.*" These things are not a matter of belief, because everybody can see them in front of their eyes; all things you perceive around you are either a substance or an *ʿaraḍ*. That is why no Kalam scholars would say, "you must believe in substances and accidents." You can see now how Ibn Taymiyyah uses rhetorical tricks to shun people away from the Islamic belief in the Creator, and win them over to worshipping a shape.

He goes on to say: "*Ibn Taymiyyah tried to prove, using other Qurānic verses, the Arabic language, history and common sense, that Ibrahīm was not searching for God⁴¹ nor was he using accidents to prove His existence, but rather was merely showing his people the foolishness of worshipping created objects that appear and disappear, instead of worshipping God alone, who is Ever-Present.*"

If you take a close look at this statement, it appears to say that he feels the proof is about the celestial objects disappearing. He seems to be implying that it is impossible that Alḥaah should be an object that disappears. Then he says that God is Ever-Present, i.e. unlike those objects. The problem here of course, is that the object (body) he believes to be Alḥaah, is in fact out of appearance, way out of sight, up above the sky. The claim that this object he calls Alḥaah is itself ever-present, unlike the moon, does not match his belief.

Of course, he would probably say that by ever-present he means, "in knowledge." Fine, but this is not what Ibrahim was speaking of, he was speaking of the bodily disappearance. Besides, if a body can be the creator of the universe in his view, then why not the moon or the sun, or any other body? What would be the point of Ibrahim's statement about these objects, "I don't like those who disappear," if he believed that the Creator is a body that can disappear from sight just like the moon? He did not say, "I don't like created things that disappear," he said it absolutely. In other words, it is the disappearance of those celestial bodies, i.e. the bodily disappearance that he dislikes, i.e. does not accept to be a divine attribute. How could it be otherwise, when everybody knows, regardless of belief, that Alḥaah Himself is not appearing to us?

This implication Yaser makes then, is actually just a trick to mislead those who might find it outrageous to say that Alḥaah is a body that can appear and disappear like the sun and the moon. I am saying this, because note how he says, "*created objects that appear and disappear*", the emphasis is on "created objects," i.e. unlike uncreated objects, because that is what he believes that Alḥaah is. He believes that just like the moon and the sun, Alḥaah is an object with size that appears and disappears, except that the latter mysteriously does not need a creator. After all, He believes that Alḥaah is a body that moves every night from the top of the *ʿArṣh* down to the sky of this world, and then back up.

The problem with this concept, of course, is that movement needs specification in terms of how and when, and to be brought into existence according to specification. Moreover, the object that moves will have spacial boundaries, because it is described as being in one place and then another. These boundaries must be there, because the location can only be specified by boundaries. These boundaries also need specification and to be brought into existence, as is the case with all things with size. Yaser Qadi then, worships what cannot be other than a creation, and calling it Alḥaah means that he does not know Alḥaah, because Alḥaah does not need a creator.

This brings us to his motivation for his article. He goes on to say: "*from the perspective of Ibn Taymiyyah, the mutakallimūn did not even spare God from the premises and intricacies of this Proof, and in their over-zealousness to ensure that God was not a 'body', denied 'accidents' (ʿaraḍ) as subsisting in Him.*" This is what really bothers Ibn Taymiyyah, and he tries every trick to fight against the proof of the Kalam scholars, as we shall see next.

⁴¹ This is true, prophets do not commit blasphemy, not even before puberty or any revelation.

The anthropomorphist dilemma; the motivation of Ibn Taymiyyah for attacking the proof of AlJaaah's existence based on the fact that the world consists of bodies and attributes.

One may ask: "why would you be against this proof showing that the creator exists?" The answer has already been stated: if one believes AlJaaah to be something with size that moves, or changes in other ways, then how would one prove that creation needs a creator - but not AlJaaah? After all, as we have shown above, all observable creation is either a body or the attributes of bodies, such as shape, movement and color. If you are going to prove that everything in the world needs a creator, then you must show that all bodies, regardless of their nature or shape, must be created. Otherwise your proof will be incomplete. One can not claim that Allah is a body even though all bodies need a creator.

This is the dilemma of anthropomorphist, who believe that AlJaaah is a body that changes, and that is why they are against proofs for the existence of the creator. After all, if you prove that all bodies, something with size, must be created, then you cannot say that AlJaaah is a body. Why? Because that would mean that He is created!

Accordingly, Ibn Taymiyyah opposed the proof based on bodies and their attributes that shows that the world has a creator. The reason being that he firmly believed that AlJaaah is a body, and that He moves from place to place and changes. For example, he said:

"This moderate saying among the three sayings of Al-Qaadii Abuu Ya'laa is the one that agrees with what Aĥmad says and others among the imaams. He [i.e. Aĥmad ibn Ĥanbal – and this is a lie, Aĥmad believed what Muslims believe, but that is another matter (Ed.)] has stated, "AlJaaah is in a particular direction, and He is not spread out in all directions. Rather, He is outside the world, distinct from His creation, separate from it, and He is not in every direction." This is what Aĥmad, may AlJaaah have mercy upon him, meant when he said, "He has a limit that only He knows." If Aĥmad had meant the direction towards the ^Arsh (Throne) only, then this would be known to AlJaaah's slaves, because they know that AlJaaah's limit from this direction is the ^Arsh, so we know then that the limit they do not know is unqualified, and is not specified for the direction of the ^Arsh⁴² (Bayaan Talbiis Al-Jahmiyyah, 1/438)."

Accordingly, Ibn Taymiyyah's saying was that AlJaaah has one limit which is known, and that is the ^Arsh, and that the other directions are also limited, but these are unknown to us. This is understood from his support to the expression "He is not spread out in all directions". This means he believed that AlJaaah is a three dimensional body, even if he does not say "body." He could not be more explicit.

Note how he has no problem with saying that AlJaaah has six limits without a single revealed text stating that. On the other hand, he is against proving that AlJaaah exists based on observing bodies and their attributes, because the proof is not in the Qur'aan in full detail!

Conclusion

The choice between Wahabism and Sunnism is a choice between a religion that cannot prove existence of a creator that is not created, and a religion that can. It is a choice between a religion that cannot face up to atheism and agnosticism with logically consistent proofs, and one that can. It is a choice between a religion that interprets Qur'aan in contradiction with the concept that bodies and their attributes need a creator, thus it ruins for itself the premise for proving that this world needs a creator that is not created. Which religion is more reasonable to believe in?

⁴² قال ابن تيمية: فهذا القول الوسط من أقوال القاضي الثلاثة هو المطابق لكلام أحمد وغيره من الأئمة وقد قال إنه تعالى في جهة مخصوصة وليس هو ذاهبا في الجهات بل هو خارج العالم متميز عن خلقه منفصل عنهم غير داخل في كل الجهات وهذا معنى قول أحمد "حد لا يعلمه إلا هو" ولو كان مراد أحمد رحمه الله الحد من جهة العرش فقط لكان ذلك معلوما لعباده فانهم قد عرفوا أن حده من هذه الجهة هو العرش فعلم أن الحد الذي لا يعلمونه مطلق لا يختص بجهة العرش (بيان تلبيس الجهمية، ج. ١ / ص ٤٣٨).

Last, but not least, it is a choice between blasphemy and belief. Aṭ-Ṭaḥaawiy stated {in brackets}: {This is a detailed remembrance of the belief of the People of the Sunnah} and following {the Jamaa^ah}. Later he stated, as part of this remembrance, {Aḷḷaah is above} the status of {having limits, extremes, corners, limbs or instruments.} {The six directions} up, down, front, back, left and right {do not contain Him} because that would make Him {like all created things}. He also agreed that believing that anything else is an insult to Islam, for he said in the same remembrance: {Whomsoever attributed to Aḷḷaah an attribute that has a meaning among the meanings that apply to humans has committed blasphemy.} Note that he said this after having already pointed out that the six directions apply to all created things, which includes humans. In other words, the Sunni belief is that attributing a limit to Aḷḷaah makes one a non-Muslim.