

Belief in Destiny (*Qadar*)



In the Name of Allāh, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Essentiality of the belief in destiny

The **sixth pillar of faith** is to believe in **destiny**, that the good of it and the bad of it is all from Allāh. Allāh, the Exalted, is the creator, Lord and sustainer of everything in existence. Neither good nor evil comes into being without His will and knowledge. We do not say, as some religions do, that Allāh is Lord of good, but Satan is in charge of the evil. Exalted is Allāh above all partners! "Say : Praise be to Allāh Who has not taken a son, nor has He any partner in sovereignty." [Qur'ān (17) Al-Isrā, 111] "Blessed is He in Whose Hand is sovereignty, and He has power over all things." [Qur'ān (67) Al-Mulk, 1]

Belief in destiny is a necessary consequence of belief in Allāh, for it follows directly from the belief that Allāh's knowledge is perfect and unchanging.

The well-known **Jibrīl ḥadīth**, which describes **Islām**, **Imān** and **Iḥsān**, states quite clearly that belief in destiny (**al-qadar**) is a part of faith. Similarly, the Qur'anic texts are quite unambiguous over this concept, and hence one **who denies Destiny falls outside the pale of Islām**. This is in controversion to and in spite of the fact that disbelievers will often use destiny as a pretext to not believe.

This argument is not by any means a new one; it is a ploy which was used by the stubborn rejectors of **yore**, and has merely been perpetuated by their contemporary successors. Allāh mentions such people in the Qur'ān, "The pagans will say, 'If Allāh had willed, we would not have worshipped anything besides Him, nor would our fathers, nor would we have forbidden [to ourselves] anything.' Thus did those before them give lie to the truth until they tasted Our might. Say : Do you have any knowledge [that Allāh actually approves of your conduct], so that you might bring it forth for us? You follow only conjecture, and you are only lying. Say : For Allāh's is the decisive argument, for had He willed, He would have guided you all." [Qur'ān (6) Al-An'ām, 148-149]

So, some pagans claimed that since Allāh had allowed them to commit disbelief and practice polytheism, He must approve it, and thus they attempted to shield their misdeeds behind Destiny.

Others may claim that there is no sense in their believing and doing good if Allāh already knows their outcomes. These and similar arguments are, as we shall see, baseless and false, and therefore rejectors cannot take refuge behind them.

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal *raḥimahullāh* has narrated that the pagans came to the Rasūlullāh (ﷺ), disputing with him over Destiny. Thereupon, Allāh revealed some verses of Sūrah al-Qamar as a decisive rebuttal to them: “Indeed, the guilty ones are in error and frenzy. The day when they shall be dragged into the Fire on their faces, [it will said to them] ‘Taste the touch of **Saqar** [i.e. Hell]’. Indeed, We have created everything according to a Decree (**qadar**).” [Qur’ān (54) Al-Qamar, 47-49]

So, it is as if He is telling them : You disbelievers should be warned of a horrific punishment in the hereafter, and although you argue over Destiny, I have indeed created everything according to a measure and proportion, and in accordance with My pre-eternal knowledge. So, rather than persisting upon barren disputation, you should rather accept the reality and prepare for it.

This incident establishes clearly the essentiality of belief in Destiny. It also contains a valuable lesson for us related to propagating Islām, and that is that we cannot compromise on the fundamentals of Islām merely to please people or to try to increase the number of Muslims. The **Christians** succumbed to this folly, and introduced numerous polytheistic rites and beliefs into their religion, which played a significant role in the distortion of the pure message taught by Jesus (ﷺ). — “Say : the truth is from your Lord, so let whoever wishes believe, and let whoever wishes disbelieve.” [Qur’ān (18) Al-Kahf, 29] The truth is whatever Allāh has decreed it to be, and it is not our right to modify it to suit people’s desires. Of course, this is not to say that we be blunt and short **when making da’wah**; we should always attempt to present the truth with wisdom and insight, so as to facilitate the understanding of the listener.

The Pre-ordination of things

We are required to believe that **Allāh has always known everything** that was ever going to happen. “Indeed, Allāh knows all things.” [Qur’ān (8) Al-Anfāl, 75] “He knows what is ahead of them and what is behind them, and they do not encompass any of His knowledge, except what He wills.” [Qur’ān (2) Al-Baqarah, 255] Furthermore, before bringing creation into existence, Allāh wrote on a **Tablet** all things which were to come. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Allāh wrote the measures of creation 50,000 years before the creation of the heavens and earth.” [Muslim] According to another ḥadīth narrated by Imām Aḥmad *raḥimahullāh*, the first thing that Allāh created was the **Pen**, and He ordered it to write everything that

would occur until the Day of Judgement. This information is thus inscribed in what is called, **'The Preserved Tablet' (Al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfūẓ)**. "And all things have We recorded in a clear record." [Qur'ān (36) Yā Sīn, 12] "Nay, it is a glorious Qur'ān in a Preserved Tablet." [Qur'ān (85) Al-Burūj, 21-22] This tablet is also referred to in the ḥadīth narrated by Bukhārī and Muslim, **"When Allāh created creation, He wrote a book, which is with Him above the Throne, (it says), 'My mercy overcomes My wrath.'"** Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥājar al-'Asqalānī mentions, in his commentary on Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, that this book is the **Preserved Tablet**.

Al-Walīd ibn 'Ubādah (one of the salaf) entered upon his father, 'Ubādah while the latter was on his death-bed, and asked him for advice. 'Ubādah said, "Help me to sit up." They did so, and then he said, "My son! You will never taste faith, nor reach the true reality of knowing Allāh, until you believe in **Qadar**, the good of it and the bad of it." His son said, "O father! How am I to know what is the good of Destiny and [what is] the evil of it?" He said, **"You should know that whatever missed you could never have befallen you, and whatever befell you could never have missed you O son! If you died without being [certain] on this, you would enter the Fire."** [Narrated by Aḥmad]

A **synopsis of the belief in Destiny** is given by the following paragraph by Imām Abū Ja'far **al-Taḥāwī**, a renowned scholar of the fourth Islāmic century, whose statement of the doctrine (from which the extract is taken) has been unanimously accepted by **Ahlu's-Sunnah wa'l-Jamā'ah**. He says, "Allāh created the creation with His knowledge. He appointed measures for them and laid out lifespans. Nothing was hidden from Him before He created them, and He knew what they would do before He created them. He commanded them to obey Him and forbade them from disobeying Him. Everything runs according to His decree and will, and His will becomes effective. The servants have no will except that which Allāh wills them to have, for whatever Allāh wills is, and whatever He does not will is not. [Allāh] guides whom He wills and grants him protection and well-being out of His grace. And He leaves to stray whom He wills, and forsakes him and puts him to trial out of justice. Mankind acts in whatever way he wills, between His grace and justice. [Allāh] is exalted above partners and rivals. There is no repeller of His decree, nor any postponer of His command, nor any predominator of His order. We believe in all of this, and are certain that all is from Him."**[18-28]**

Allāh knows all

We have already established that Allāh knows all, be it past, present or future. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, **"There is not any one of you whose places in Hell and Heaven have not been written."** The Companions asked, "O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ)! Shall we then not rely [on this]?" He said, "Act, and each shall be eased [to that to which he was created]." Then, he recited the verses meaning, "So, whoever gives [in charity] and is pious, and affirms the Good [i.e. Islām], We

shall ease him to ease. And, whoever is miserly and considers himself free of need, and denies the Good [i.e. Islām], We shall ease him to adversity." [Qur'ān (92) Al-Layl, 5-10]

So, **although Allāh already knows** who is going to Heaven and who is going to Hell, **He does not compel us to act the way we do**. What we do is based on our own choice and free-will granted to us by Allāh, but He already knows what choices we will make. Nor is Allāh's guidance and leading astray arbitrary. He guides those who are sincere and honest and who seek guidance. **"Those who strive in Our way, We shall guide them to Our paths."** [Qur'ān (29) Al-'Ankabūt, 69] And He leaves to stray those who consciously and stubbornly reject the truth. "And they say, 'Our hearts are in a covering from that to which you call us, and in our ears is a deafness, and between us and you is a barrier, so act [in your way], we [also] are acting [in our way].'" [Qur'ān (41) Fussilat, 4] It is about such people that Allāh tells us that "If Allāh had known of [any] good in them, He would have made them hear, but even if He had made them hear, they would have turned away, averse." [Qur'ān (8) Al-Anfāl, 23]

Difference between Will and Pleasure

To conclude first part of our lesson, let us point out the important difference between Allāh's will and His pleasure. Anything that occurs does so by the will of Allāh. The Prophet (ﷺ) used to teach his Household and Companions, that "Whatever Allāh wills is, and whatever He has not willed is not." [Bayhaqī]

So, **if something occurs**, we know then that **Allāh willed it**, while we know also that anything that did not occur was not willed by Allāh to occur. This does not by any means imply that Allāh is pleased by all that occurs. Although He wills and allows many different things to occur, He is pleased by some of them and displeased by others. This is the point which the pagans neglected when they claimed, as we have referred to before, "If [Allāh] the Most Gracious had willed, we would not have worshipped them [(other gods)]." [Qur'ān (43) Al-Zukhruf, 20] So, for example, **Allāh is pleased by Islām and good deeds** done by Muslims, but **He is displeased by disbelief and sin**. And, finally, it should be pointed out that although Allāh is the creator of the good and the bad, we should not single out the bad and attribute it to Allāh, as a matter of respect and etiquette (adāb).

PART II

Accepting Destiny with submission

Last lesson, we discussed the essentiality of the belief in **Qadar**, and that this belief is intertwined with the fact that everything which occurs does so by the will of Allāh (but not necessarily His approval/pleasure) and within His pre-eternal knowledge. **Mankind acts within this destiny by his own free will. We should**

not try to ponder excessively over the issue of Destiny, for its precise reality is not accessible to our minds.

A man once asked **Imām Ḥasan al-Basrī** *rahmatullāhi 'alayh* (one of the great imāms of the Tabi'īn), "Has Allāh forced servants to do their deeds?" Imām Ḥasan al-Basrī *rahmatullāhi 'alayh* replied, "He is more just than that!" "Did He leave things up to them [entirely] then?" the man asked. Imām Ḥasan al-Basrī *rahmatullāhi 'alayh* said, "He is mightier than that! If He had forced them, He would not punish them, but if He had left things up to them, the order [to obey] would have had no meaning. In fact, the truth is somewhere between the two, and Allāh has kept it hidden, so you cannot understand it."

This is **a crucial point** to keep in mind : that we are incapable of grasping the full reality of Destiny. **It has been kept hidden** from even the most pious Muslims, the Prophets and the angels. This concept should not be difficult to accept, for even in thermodynamics and computer science, there are problems which are proven to have no solution. Hence, we should beware of pronouncing personal opinions or becoming pre-occupied with the issue, for that is **a fruitless pursuit**. In fact, one who treads that path deprives himself of the benefits of other, more productive endeavors, such as doing good deeds or using his mind to solve practical problems. He is at his own peril, and, moreover, runs the additional risk of uttering lies against Allāh, in an attempt to try to master the reality of Destiny. Eventually, his frustration may even lead him to protest Allāh's decree, saying, "Why did Allāh decree such and such?" and to challenge Allāh's decree is disbelief. **"He may not be questioned regarding that which He does, but they will be questioned [about their deeds]."** [Qur'ān (21) Al-Anbiyā', 23]

Justice

Believing in the **justice of Allāh** is **related to the belief in Destiny**. **"Allāh does not do injustice of the weight of an atom. And, if it is a good deed, He multiplies it, and gives from Himself a good reward."** [Qur'ān (4) Al-Nisā', 40] **"Nor am I the least unjust to My servants."** [Qur'ān (50) Qāf, 29] Allāh does not punish anyone for the deeds of another, nor for other things absolutely beyond his capability. **He rewards the righteous by His Grace**, and **punishes the evil out of justice**. Allāh is the absolute sovereign, Who has full authority over and ownership of all, and is therefore free to do whatever He wills. **He is never unjust**. Anyone **who attributes injustice to Allāh is a disbeliever**. We should be careful not to complain about Allāh in times of misfortune.

Deeds

Our deeds are created by Allāh, for Allāh is the Creator of all things. **"Allāh creates you and what you do."** [Qur'ān (37), Al-Şaffāt, 97] We merely earn the deeds, such that whenever we make the intention and effort to do something, Allāh will

usually create the deed for us at that time. However, the **responsibility for the deed is ours**, since **we chose to do it**. If we try our utmost to do something, but the deed is not created for us, then the reward or sin we get is the same as if we had actually done the deed. This is why for example, those who stay back from jihād due to genuine, serious illness get the same reward as the mujāhidīn, and also why Hell is deserved by a Muslim who is killed by another Muslim while the two are engaged in unjustified mortal combat.

There is **no strength to maintain piety and uprightness without the assistance and grace of Allāh**, nor is there any power to keep away from evil and sin other than that granted by Allāh. The most one human being can do for another's guidance is to present the truth to him and remind him, and to pray to Allāh for the other's guidance.

Heretic Sects

- The **Qadariyyah** denied Destiny.

In their pre-occupation with trying to reduce the issue to full comprehension, they claimed that Allāh does not know the future before it occurs, and they thereby became disbelievers.

They also claimed that **Allāh does not will evil**, thus implying that He is not the creator of all.

The Companions and **Tabi'īn** who were alive at the time of emergence of the Qadariyyah were, justifiedly, very **harsh against them**. They used to warn people not greet the Qadariyyah with salām, not to visit their ill nor to pray over their dead.

- The **Jabriyyah** went to the other extreme - **fatalism**.

They claimed that human beings are under compulsion and have no free will. This is also disbelief, and such people are in fact even denying the experienced reality of free will. This is reminiscent of the disbelievers' argument that it is Allāh's will that they disbelieve, and that therefore they will let it be. If such people are sincere in their claim, they should abandon making effort for their worldly needs just as they ignore their Hereafter.

Practical Applications of the Belief in Destiny

1. Thankfulness in times of prosperity and well-being

The Muslim should always be thankful to Allāh, for he owes all his favors to Him. We should be thankful in the good times such that we do not become arrogant and conceited. We should realize that any success we attain is from Allāh, Who could withdraw it whenever He wills. We should not, therefore, be like **Qārūn**, the evil kinsman of Prophet Moses (عليه السلام), who had been given immense wealth,

but claimed the credit for himself. "He said, 'I have only been given it only because of knowledge which I possess.' Did he not know that Allāh has destroyed before him generations who were mightier than him in power, and greater in number?" [Qur'ān (28) Al-Qaṣaṣ, 78]

Qārūn attributed his wealth to knowledge : either religious knowledge - for it is said that he had memorized the Torah - or worldly knowledge, such as that of trade and commerce. He thus failed the test, for even if the wealth were a partial reward for piety, then in order to remain in the favor of Allāh, he should have been thankful to Him and spent the money in good causes such as feeding the poor and helping the mujāhidīn. And, even if he had obtained the money through some worldly business expertise, he overlooked the fact that that was only a means, and that in fact the means themselves could not have been obtained, maintained and exercised without the will and grace of Allāh. **"Then, when affliction smites man, he cries out to Us, then when We have removed it, as a favor from Us, he says, 'I have only been given it based on knowledge.' Nay! It is a test, but most of them do not know. Those before them said [the same], but all they earned did not avail them [aught]."** [Qur'ān (39) Al-Zumar, 49-50]

2. Patience in times of calamity

Similarly, we should bear patiently any calamities or misfortunes which come our way. We should realize that this misfortune could not possibly have been avoided, for it was part of the Decree (**al-Qadar**). **"No misfortune strikes, upon the earth or in your own selves, except that it is in a record before We create it. Indeed, that is easy for Allāh. [It is] in order that you do not despair over that which passed you by, nor exult in that which He has given you."** [Qur'ān (57) Al-Ḥadīd, 22-23]

At the same time, if the misfortune was brought about by some misdeed on our part, we should try to correct ourselves so as not to repeat the same mistake; we should not try to attribute our faults to Destiny. If the misfortune was a consequence of some sins, then although it is a punishment, it can be a means for obtaining forgiveness for those sins. Allāh will not punish a believer twice for the same sin, and the punishment of this world is far lighter than that of the Hereafter.

"We shall surely test you with something [in the way] of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, life and produce. And give glad tidings to the patient ones. Those who, when a calamity afflicts them, say, 'To Allāh We belong, and to Him we return. They are those upon whom there are blessings from their Lord, and mercy, and they are the rightly-guided ones." [Qur'ān (2) Al-Baqarah, 155] The Prophet (ﷺ) has said, "How wonderful is the case of the believer! All of his matters are good for him, and this is not [the case] for any other than the believer. If prosperity comes his way, he gives thanks [to Allāh], and so it is good for him. And, if adversity afflicts him, he is patient, and so it is good for

him.” [Muslim] If we are not patient, however, and instead complain and are dissatisfied, then rather than obtaining forgiveness and/or raising of ranks in the Hereafter, we may only be adding to our troubles.

3. Submission to the orders of Allāh

Since we believe that everything is pre-known to Allāh, and that He is the Wise, we realize that it is always to our benefit to obey Allāh. We do not, therefore, compromise on the fundamentals of our religion merely to earn a living, for we know that our sustenance is in the control of Allāh. It is up to us whether we obtain what is written for us through lawful means or unlawful.

Similarly, we realize that the **time of our death** is already written, and if we break the orders of Allāh in trying to escape death, then we are bound to fail. “Say : Fleeing will never benefit you if you are fleeing from death or killing, and in that case you will be reprieved only for a short while.” [Qur’ān (33) Al-Ahzāb, 33] And the Prophet (ﷺ) has said, “Indeed, the Holy Spirit [i.e. Angel Gabriel (ﷺ)] has inspired me [with the fact] that **a soul shall not die until it has depleted its lifespan and sustenance (rizq)**.” [Ibn Hibbān]

Hence, we see the folly of the stance of the hypocrites, and take steps to distance ourselves from it. Allāh describes them, in a time of war, as, “A group, whom their own souls had rendered anxious, thinking vain thoughts about Allāh, thoughts of ignorance. [They were] saying, ‘Is any of the matter up to us?’ Say, ‘Indeed, the matter is all Allāh’s.’ They hide within themselves what they do not expose to you. They say, ‘If any of the matter had been up to us, we should not have been killed here.’ Say : Even if you were in your homes, those for whom killing had been written would have come forth to their lying places [to lie down and die]. [It is] in order that Allāh might test that [sincerity] which is in your hearts, and that He might purify what is in your breasts. Indeed, Allāh knows what the hearts contain.” [Qur’ān (3) Āl-‘Imrān, 154] So, the choice is the Muslim’s -whether he dies fighting in the path of Allāh and thereby attains martyrdom, or holds back out of fear, in which case death comes to him at the same time anyway.

4. Using means and precautions, such as medicines and supplications

The use of these does not violate the belief in Destiny. The Companions asked the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), “O Messenger of Allāh! Have you considered medicines with which we heal ourselves, curing invocations (**ruqyah**) which we recite over ourselves, and [various] precautions that we take; do they turn away any of the Destiny of Allāh?” He said, “It is [part] of the Destiny of Allāh.” [Bayhaqī in *a/-tiqād*] So, if we are cured through using medicine, it is Allāh that cured us by means of it, and Allāh knew that we were going to take that medicine, although He could have cured us even without the medicine. Yet, **we are, in all aspects of life, required to take certain precautions and to adopt certain means**, and then to leave the results to Allāh.

NAWAWĪ ON AL-QADAR

by **Imām al-Nawawī**

- taken from his "Commentary on the Forty Hadiths," Hadith #2.

The way of the People of Truth (**ahlu'l-Ḥaqq**) is to firmly believe in Allāh's Foreordained Destiny. The meaning of this is that Allāh has foreordained matters from pre-eternity and that He knows that they shall take place at times known to Him and at places known to Him; and they do occur exactly according to what He has decreed.

Know that there are four kinds of destiny:

1 — Destiny in the Divine Foreknowledge.

It is said concerning it: Care (**'ināyah**) before friendship (**wilāyah**), pleasure before childbirth, and continual harvest from first-fruits. Allāh the Exalted said: "He is made to turn away from it who has been made to turn away" (Q 51:9). In other words, one is turned away from hearing the Qur'ān and from believing in this life who was driven from them in pre-eternity. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Allāh does not destroy except one who is already destroyed."¹

2 — Destiny in the Preserved Tablet.

Such Destiny may be changed. Allāh said: "Allāh erases what He will, and He consolidates what He will, and with Him is the Mother of the Book" (Q 13:39). We know that 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar raḍiyallāhu 'anhumā used to say in his supplications: "O Allāh, if You have foreordained hardship for me, erase it and write felicity for me."

3 — Destiny in the womb concerning which the angel is ordered to foreordain one's sustenance, term of life, and whether he shall be unfortunate (**shaqī**) or prosperous (**sa'īd**).

4 — Destiny which consists in joining **specific forewritten matters** to the appointed times in which they are to befall. For Allāh the Exalted has created both good and evil and has ordained that they should befall His servant at times appointed by Him.

The evidence that Allāh Almighty created both good and evil is His saying: "The guilty are in error and madness. On the day they are dragged to the fire on their faces, they will be told: 'Taste the touch of hell.' Lo! We created every thing with

proportion and measure (**qadar**)” (Q 54:47-49). That verse was revealed concerning the proponents of absolute free will or Qadariyyah who were thus told: “That belief of yours is in hellfire.”

As further evidence of what has been decreed the Exalted said: “Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the Cleaving from the evil of what He has created” (Q 113:1). The reading of that oath at the time something good befalls Allāh’s servant will repel foreordained evil before it reaches him. There is also in the ḥadīth that good deeds and upholding family ties repel a bad death and eventually turn it into a good one.² Also, “Supplication (**al-du‘ā’**) and affliction (**al-balā’**) are suspended between heaven and earth, vying, and supplication repels affliction before the latter is able to come down.”³

The **Mu’tazilah** claimed that Allāh the Exalted has not foreordained matters, that His knowledge does not precede them, that they begin to exist only when they occur and that He knows them only at that time. They lied concerning Allāh. Exalted is He above their falsehoods, and higher yet. They went into oblivion.

Now the latter-day Qadariyyah say that the good is from Allāh while the bad is from other than Him. Allāh is also Exalted high above such a statement. In a sound ḥadīth the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The Qadariyyah are the Zoroastrians of this Community.”⁴ He named them Zoroastrians because their school of thought resembles that of Zoroastrian **dualism**. The **Dualists** claim that good is effected by light and evil by darkness, and thus earned their name. Similarly the proponents of free will ascribe the good to Allāh and the bad to other than Him, whereas He is the creator of both good and evil.

The Imām of the Two Sanctuaries [Ibn **al-Juwaynī**] said in his *Kitāb al-Irshād* that some of the Qadariyyah said: “It is not we but you (**Ahl al-Sunnah**) who are the Qadariyyah because of your belief in so-called Foreordained Destiny.”⁵ [Ibn] **al-Juwaynī** answered these ignoramus that they had ascribed the power of decree to themselves, and whoever claimed, for example, the power of evil and ascribed it to himself, he has earned its label, rather than one who ascribes it to other than himself and denies any authorship of it.

NOTES

¹ Narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās and Abū Hurayra raḍiyallāhu ‘anhumā by Bukhārī and Muslim: “None perishes with Allāh except he who is bound for destruction.” Ibn Ḥajar said in *Fath al-Bārī* (book of Riḳāq, Chapter 31 #6491): “That is, he who is adamant in clinging to evil in his resolve, his speech, and his deed, and avoids good by design, speech, and deed.”

² The following ḥadīths are related from the Prophet (ﷺ): “Truly charity (al-ṣadaqah) certainly extinguishes the Lord’s anger and repels a bad death.” Narrated from Anas (رضي الله عنه) with a weak chain by Tirmidhī, who said it is a single-narrated (**gharīb**) ḥadīth as he related it. Also: “Verily, because of charity and keeping uterine family

ties Allāh increases life, repels a bad death, and repels all kinds of evils.” Narrated from by Abū Ya’lā al-Mawṣilī in his *Musnad*. Also: “Keeping family ties and good manners builds up one’s house and increases life.” Narrated from ‘A’isha raḍiyallāhu ‘anhā by Aḥmad in his *Musnad*.

³ Something similar is authentically related from the Prophet (ﷺ) by the following: Ibn Mājah in the introduction to his *Sunan* (Muqaddimah #10, ḥadīth on qadar from Thawbān) and the book of *Fitan* (#66); Tirmidhī in his *Sunan* (Witr #21, Qadar #6); Aḥmad, with three chains in the *Musnad*; and Ibn Ḥibban in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

⁴ A nearly-mass-narrated (maṣḥḥūr) ḥadīth narrated from eight Companions by al-Tirmidhī (ḥasan), Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah, al-Ṭabarānī, al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* (1:85), Aḥmad in the *Musnad*, Bayhaqī, al-Bazzār, Bukhārī in his *Tārīkh*, al-Lalikā’i, Ibn ‘Asākir, and others. Also established as authentic is the longer version narrated from Ibn ‘Umar (ra) whereby the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Every Community has its Zoroastrians, and the Zoroastrians of my Community are those who say there is no Foreordained Destiny (qadar). If they fall sick do not visit them, and if they die do not pray over them.” Molla ‘Ali Al-Qāri cited five others ḥadīths against them in his commentary of Abū Ḥanīfa’s *Musnad*. The chain of this ḥadīth to Ibn ‘Umar (ra) as narrated in the *Sunan* and by al-Hakim is declared ḥasan by Ibn Ḥajar in his *Ajwiba ‘ala al-Qazwinī* published in the 1994 edition of al-Qari’s *Mirqāt* (1:540). As for the similar ḥadīth on the Murji’ah and Qadariyyah, Ibn Ḥajar reads it as a comparison, not an identification.

⁵ See Ibn al-Juwayni’s *al-Irshād ila Qawati’ al-Adilla fi Uṣūl al-I’tiqād* (“The Guidance to the Definitive Proofs Concerning the Foundations of Belief”), chapter entitled “The Blame of the Qadariyyah” (p. 224-225)

Further reading on the Sects in relation to Destiny

THE QADARIYYAH AND MU’TAZILAH

Al-Suyutī succinctly defined Qadarī doctrine as “the claim that evil is created by human beings.” Ibn Abi Ya’la relates the following description of the Qadariyyah: “They are those who claim that they possess in full the capacity to act (**al-istiṭā’ah**), free will (**al-mashīah**), and effective power (**al-qudrah**). They consider that they hold in their grasp the ability to do good and evil, avoid harm and obtain benefit, obey and disobey, and be guided or misguided. They claim that human beings retain full initiative, without any priority in Allāh’s will for their acts, nor even in His knowledge of them. Their doctrine is similar to that of Zoroastrians and Christians. That is the very root of heresy.”

The **Qadariyyah** or “**Libertarians**” are little different from the “**Rationalists**” known as the **Mu'tazilah** or “Isolationists” and both are traced back to the same founder, `Amr ibn `Ubayd Abū `Uthman al-Basrī (d. ~144), who walked out of the teaching circle of Imām al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and “isolated” himself. Al-Dhahabi introduces him [ʿAmr ibn `Ubayd] as “the ascetic (al-zāhid), the devout (al-ʿābid), the Qadarī, the elder of the Mu'tazilah and the first of them.” He returned onto the Ahl al-Sunnah the label of Qadariyyah—in the opposite sense of those who over-emphasize Allāh's Decree—in a book entitled *al-Radd `ala al-Qadariyyah*.

The status of Qadarīs in the eyes of Ahl al-Sunnah varied. Al-Subkī spoke of “a difference of opinion concerning the apostasy (**takfīr**) of the Qadariyyah.” Ibn Abī Ḥātim in the introduction to his *al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil* (1:373) relates that Ibn al-Mubārak stopped narrating from `Amr ibn `Ubayd because “**he used to propagate the doctrine of absolute free will.**” Al-Dhahabi refuses to call `Amr a disbeliever, although some early sources such as Ibn Abi `Asim's (d. 287) *al-Sunna*, al-Ajurri's (d. 360) *al-Sharī'ah* and Ibn Baṭṭa's (d. 387) *al-Ibānah* relate that the **Qadariyyah** were held so by Ibn `Abbas, Mujāhid, `Umar ibn `Abd al-ʿAzīz, Mālik ibn Anas, Ibn al-Mubārak, Sufyān al-Thawrī, and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal among others.

The fact is that Sufyān al-Thawrī, Ibn al-Mubārak, and Aḥmad all narrated from Qadarīs, such as Thawr ibn Yazīd, Dāwūd ibn al-Ḥusayn, Zakariyya ibn Ishāq, Dāwūd al-Dastuwā'ī and others, all of which are also among Bukhārī and Muslim's narrators as shown by Suyutī's list of Qadarīs in the two books of Saḥīḥ in his *Tadrib* (1:389). These narrators could never have been retained if the imāms had considered them disbelievers. However, the **verdict of apostasy** is true from Imām Mālik who did not narrate from a single Qadarī in his **Muwatta'**. Mālik held that they should be killed unless they repented, and the narrations reporting his position of **takfīr** of the Qadariyyah are sound.