

THE SLANDERS OF THE AHL-E-BID'AH



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INTRODUCTION

Notorious for their slander, distortions and deliberate mutilation of the texts of kitaabs, the Qabar Pujaari (Grave-Worshipping) miscreants have accused great Ulama and Auliya of blasphemy.

Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, Hadhrat Maulana Qasim Nanotwi, Hadhrat Maulana Khaleel Ahmad Ambethwi and Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah alayhim) have been singled out in particular for the vilification and slander of the Qabar Pujaaris.

Grave worshippers leech and thrive on falsehood, hence they attribute their noxious slanders of blasphemy based on falsehood to these great and illustrious Stars of *Uloom* and *Taqwa*, who had adorned the firmament of Islam in recent times.

Since these noble Souls were in the front line of the fight against bid'ah and shirk, they became the natural targets for the abuse and slander of the Qabar Pujaaris.

This brief article responds to and refutes some of the slanders which the grave-worshippers have directed against these noble Ulama of Islam. May Allah Ta'ala bestow the loftiest mansions of Jannatul Firdaus to these Mujaddideen who had cleared the weeds and poison of Bid'ah and Shirk from the Fields and Body of Islam.

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SLANDERING HADHRAT MAULANA RASHID AHMAD GANGOHI (rahmatullah alayh)

The Barelvi allegation that Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) had declared: "*Allah can tell a lie.*", is blatant slander. Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayhi) never made such a vile statement nor is this statement recorded anywhere in any of his writings:

The *Istifta'* (Question) and the *Fatwa* (the verdict and answer) are recorded in *Fatawa Rashidiyya*. The translation is presented here:

ISTIFTA' (THE QUESTION)

What do the Ulama of the Deen say regarding the following question: Does the *Zaat* (Being) of Allah Ta'ala-Glorious is His Name- have the attribute of *kithb* (falsehood) or not? Does Allah speak lies or not? How shall a person who says that Allah speaks lies be described? Elaborate and you will be rewarded (by Allah Ta'ala).

THE ANSWER

The *Zaat* of Allah Ta'ala is pure and holy, far above being attributed with the quality of *kithb* (falsehood—lies). Ma-aathallaah! Never ever is there the slightest vestige of falsehood in His Words (Kalaam). Allah Ta'ala says (in the Qur'aan):

"And, who is more truthful than Allah in word?"

Whoever believes with regard to Allah Ta'ala or says verbally that Allah speaks lies, is an absolute *kaafir* and *mal'oon* (accursed). He is an opponent of the Qur'aan Hadith and the Ijma' (Consensus of the Ummah. Never is he a Mu'min.

"Allah Ta'ala is most high and above the (falsehood) which the transgressors speak."

However, it is the unanimous belief of all people of Imaan that, for example, while Fir'oun, Haamaan and Abu Lahab have been proclaimed by the Qur'aan to be absolute *Jahannami* (inmates of the Fire), nevertheless, Allah Ta'ala has the power to grant them Jannat although He will not do so. He has not been rendered impotent (by His promise). He says (in the Qur'aan):

"And, if we desire, we can give every person guidance, but from Me has gone forth the decree that, verily, I shall fill Jahannum with jinn and men."

It is evident from this verse that if Allah Ta'ala had willed, He would have made everyone Mu'min. But, what He has proclaimed already, He will not act in contradiction thereof. All this is by the volitional power of Allah, not by *idhtiraar* (i.e. He does not act under compulsion. Whatever He does is by His volitional power and will). He is the Independent Actor. He does as He pleases. This is the belief of all the Ulama of the Ummah. Hence, in the tafseer of Allah's statement, "*If You (O Allah!) forgive them....*", Baidhaawi writes:

"There being no forgiveness for shirk is the effect of the warning (wa-eed of Allah that He will not forgive shirk). Thus, with regard to forgiveness,

there is no impossibility in the *Zaat* of Allah Ta'ala. (i.e. Allah has the power to forgive even the mushrik, if He so wishes)."

The above Question and Answer appear in Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi's Fataawa Rashidiyya in Volume No.1. It was published more than a decade before the Barelvi's issued their fatwa of kufr against Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh).

From the aforementioned citation, the following facts will be abundantly clear to all seekers of the truth:

- * Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) **never** said that Allah Ta'ala speaks a lie or spoke a lie or will ever speak a lie.
- * Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), himself declared as kaafir and accursed a person who holds the view that Allah Ta'ala speaks lies or that the attribute of *kithb* is associated with Him.

It is the unanimous belief of the entire Ummah that while Allah Ta'ala will not act in conflict with any of His promises, nevertheless, it does not mean that He is impotent and that He no longer has the power to do anything in conflict with His promise, e.g. Jannat will endure everlastingly by virtue of the will and promise of Allah Ta'ala. But, this does not mean that Allah Ta'ala no longer possesses the power to annihilate Jannat. It is the belief of Islam that Allah Ta'ala has power over all things and that His promises do not render Him impotent from acting.

The Barelvis have distorted and deliberately misinterpreted this Fatwa of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) in an insidious attempt to mislead unwary and ignorant people. They have deliberately distorted this Fatwa so that people gain the impression that Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) claimed that Allah spoke a lie—Nauthubillaah! When Hadhrat Gangohi, himself proclaims as kaafir a person who holds such an evil belief or who utters such notoriety then it is an act of grave injustice and blatant slander to accuse him of having declared that "*Allah can speak a lie.*", implying thereby that Allah Ta'ala will speak lies, Nauthubillaah! May the curse of Allah Ta'ala descend on those who have slandered such an illustrious Soul of Islam.

SLANDERING HADHRAT MAULANA QAASIM NANOTWI (rahmatullah alayh)

Another false allegation made by the Barelvis against Hadhrat Maulana Qaasim Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh), is their claim. "Moulvi Qasim Nanotowi was condemned a kaafir because he declared that 'Prophets are superior only in terms of Knowledge. As far as action is concerned, apparently the Ummah (followers) become equal rather than lead.'" (The atrocious wording is that of the Barelvi's).

This statement which the Barelvis have placed in inverted commas to create the impression that, these are the exact words of Hadhrat Nanotwi, is a distorted version. Hadhrat Nantowi (rahmatullah alayh) did not make this claim stated in the statement which the Barelvis attribute to him.

How is it possible for Maulana Qaasim Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) to hold the belief that an Ummati is superior in *amal* (Deeni action) than Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi

wasallam) or any other Nabi when every follower of Hadhrat Nanotwi believes that "one *mudd* (a small measure) of wheat which a Sahaabi gives in charity exceeds a mountain of gold which a non-Sahaabi gives in charity"? Maulana Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) did not claim that an Ummati can become superior than Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in so far as righteousness is concerned as the deviate bid'atis claim and slander.

In his kitaab, *Tahzeerun Naas*, Maulana Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) says:

"In their Ummah, the Ambiya are outstanding in Knowledge. In so far as practical deeds are concerned, outwardly it will appear that frequently an Ummati is equal and even surpasses."

The statement does not claim that an Ummati can become superior than Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in action (i.e. in practical deeds). The Urdu term '*mumtaaz*' does not mean '*superior*' as the Barelvīs have attempted to show. An Ummati can never become superior to a Nabi by virtue of his righteous deeds even though his righteous acts may quantitatively surpass the deeds of a Nabi.

There is Islamically nothing wrong in stating the truth regarding this quantitative dimension of ibadat. After all, it is a known fact that Hadhrat Uthmaan (radiallahu anhu) contributed more in charity than Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). It is known that Khaalid Bin Walid (radhiallahu anhu) participated in more Jihaad campaigns than Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Many Sahaabah and non-Sahaabah made more tilawat of the Quraan than Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Many Sahaabah and Auliya kept more Nafl fasts than Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). But, such quantitative abundance of acts of Ibaadat does not make them superior to any Nabi. It is precisely for this reason that Hadhrat Maulana Nanotwi said that the equality in quantitative terms of practical deeds or even the rendition of more deeds quantitatively speaking, by an Ummati pertains to the external dimension of quantity. However such quantitative abundance in no way elevates a non-Nabi over a Nabi or even makes him the equal of a Nabi.

When it is Maulana Nanotwi's belief and the belief of the entire Ummah that the greatest Wali and all the Auliya combined can never attain the rank of the lowest Sahaabi—of even that Sahaabi who was stoned to death for adultery—how could it be conceivable that Hadhrat Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) had claimed that an Ummati can become superior to a Nabi?

The purport of Maulana Nanotwi's statement is simply to convey that the outstanding feature of a Nabi is not an abundance of supererogatory (Nafl) acts of ibadat, but Knowledge of Wahi. If deeds had to be fixed as the outstanding and conspicuous feature of Nubuwwat, many Auliya too will be associated in this feature since quantitatively speaking, many among them executed more deeds than even the Ambiya. Denial of this fact is the product of either ignorance or mischief.

But in so far as the Knowledge of Wahi and the loftiest rank of Divine Proximity are concerned no one other than a Nabi can lay claim to these celestial treasures. No one can be associated in this Knowledge. Thus, the Ambiya are outstanding (*mumtaaz*) in this respect. They are known as Ambiya on account of their Knowledge of Wahi, not on account of their deeds of piety which are associated with all Muslims.

Thus, it should be clear that Hadhrat Maulana Qaasim Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) had merely indicated the outstanding feature of a Nabi. He never attempted to show that an Ummati can reach a superior rank by virtue of his righteous deeds. A single raka't of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is superior to a lifetime of Salaat by the entire Ummah. A date given in charity by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is superior in quality by Allah Ta'ala than all the wealth which Hadhrat Uthmaan, all the Sahaabah and the entire Ummah gave and will give until the day of Qiyaamah in the Path of Allah Ta'ala even though the Sahaabah and others gave more charity than Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Abundance of pious acts does not necessarily mean superiority over another person who has rendered lesser acts in comparison. Qualitatively speaking, no non-Nabi can ever come on par with a Nabi in righteousness even though the non-Nabi's acts may be more quantitatively speaking.

The foregoing explanation is adequate to show that Maulana Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) committed no act of kufr. He simply stated an Islamic truth, viz., that a Nabi's outstanding feature is his Knowledge of Wahi and not his practical deeds of piety.

SLANDERING HADHRAT MAULANA KHALIL AHMAD AMBHETWI (rahmatullah alayh)

Among the slanderous charges made by the Barelvis is the following:

"Moulvi Khalil Ahmed Ambethvi was condemned as Kafir because he declared as regards Satan and Angel of Death, the depth of their knowledge stands proven from the definitive verse of the Holy Qur'an but there is nothing as such in the Holy Quran to prove that depth of knowledge of Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alhaihi wasallam)." In other words, the knowledge of Satan is much wider than the knowledge of our Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam."

This is a blatantly distorted version of the statement made by Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh). Refuting this slanderous accusation made against him by the Barelvis, Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) said:

"My Ustaadhs as well as I condemn as kaafir and accursed the one who says that the knowledge of shaitaan (on whom be la'nat), in fact of any creation, is more than the knowledge of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). This is a vile accusation and a blatant lie of Khaan Saheb Barelvi (i.e. Molvi Radha Ahmad of Barelvi), which he had attributed to me. Throughout my life, even such a *waswasah* (stray thought) did not cross my mind that shaitaan or even any wali or angel has knowledge equal to that of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), leave alone having more knowlege." (Fatawa Darul Uloom)

The statement of Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh), which has been distorted by the Barelvis, was in reply to certain claims made by them. To gain a better understanding of the context, it is best to elaborate on the actual circumstances of the statement.

In his book, *Al-Anwaaruus Saati'*, Molvi Abdus Sami', the Barelvi exponent, attempted to show that just as shaitaan has extensive knowledge and is able to be present everywhere, so too, is Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). He attempted to prove '*Ilm-e-Ghaib*' (Knowledge of the *Ghaib*) and omnipresence for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) on the basis of shaitaan's and the Angel of Death's abilities. Since this Barelvi Molvi could not adduce any proof from the Qur'aan and Hadith to substantiate *Ilmul Ghaib* and *Haazir Naazir* (omnipresence) for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), he (Molvi Abdus Sami') adopted the putrid and degenerate argument of basing the supposed *ilmul ghaib* and *haazir-naazir* on the abilities of shaitaan. This in itself is most despicable and extremely repugnant. If Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is '*Aalimul Ghaib*' and if he possessed the divine attribute of omnipresence, as the deviate grave-worshippers contend, there would not have been the need to cite shaitaan and the Angel of Death as the basis for this belief. Such a belief has to be substantiated on the basis of the Qur'aan and Hadith. Aqaa-id (Fundamental Beliefs) cannot be formulated and adopted on the basis of analogical reasoning, especially if in the basis of the logical syllogism the major premiss is the abilities of shaitaan.

To attribute such important divine attributes as *Ilmul Ghaib* and *Haazir-Naazir* to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), it is imperative to produce absolute Shar'i Proof, viz., Qur'aan and Ahadith-e-Mutawaatarah which are the highest category of Shar'i proofs. Fundamental beliefs cannot be structured by qiyaaas (reasoning).

In refutation of the baseless reasoning of the Barelvi Molvi who had made a miserable attempt to assert these divine attributes for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) on the basis of certain abilities and powers which Allah Ta'ala has bestowed to shaitaan, Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad Ambhetwi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

"To summarize:

To claim *ilm-e-Muheet* of the world (total and all-encompassing knowledge of every/detail of every aspect and atom in creation) for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) on the basis of the condition of shaitaan and Malakul Maut, in conflict with *Nusoos-e-Qat'iah* (Absolute Shar'i Proof), without any proof and merely by way of corrupt reasoning, is nothing but shirk. Of which 'imaan' does this constitute an article of faith? This extent (*wus'at*) of knowledge of shaitaan and Malakul Maut is confirmed by *Nass* (Shar'i proof such as the Qur'aan and Hadith). What is the '*Nass* for the *wus'at* of knowledge of Fakhr-e-Aalam (i.e. Rasulullah—sallallahu alayhi wasallam) by which all other *Nusoos* could be rejected and a shirk confirmed?"

The discussion does not pertain to 'depth' of knowledge as the Barelvis are attempting to convey. The discussion pertains to specific knowledge which Allah Ta'ala has bestowed to shaitaan and Malakul Maut. The knowledge of evil, mischief and the ability to execute these acts were bestowed to shaitaan by Allah Ta'ala to enable him to continue with his evil perpetrations until the Last Day. Similarly, the knowledge of soul-extraction, taking life and all the ways and methods necessary for this function were bestowed to Malakul Maut. While this is established on the basis of *Nusoos*, there are no *Nusoos* to confirm that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)

possessed *ilm muheet* (such knowledge which is all embracing like the knowledge of Allah Azza Wa jal).

The superiority of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is not dependent on him having shaitaani knowledge or the knowledge of taking souls or the knowledge which a shoemaker or a carpenter possesses. In fact, the *Nusoos* point to the opposite, viz., knowledge unconnected with Nubuwwat is not a requisite for a Nabi nor for his excellence and superiority. There are numerous proofs to substantiate this claim.

The *wus'at* (extent or expanse) of knowledge spoken of in this context by Maulana Khalil Ahmad refers to the specific knowledge which shaitaan and Malakul Maut possess to execute their respective functions. It is blatantly false to generalize this statement and then to take it out of its context and claim that Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) contended that the "knowledge of shaitaan has more depth than the knowledge of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)". It has already been mentioned earlier that Maulana Khalil Ahmad, himself vehemently, denied this allegation and himself brands as kaafir a person who believes or utters that shaitaan has greater knowledge than Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

It is quite simple for an unbiased and fair-minded person to understand the purport of Maulana Khalil Ahmad's statement. Simply, the argument is:

* The Bareilvi Molvi attempted to show that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) possessed *Ilmul Muheet* (total and encompassing knowledge of every atom in creation). *Ilmul Muheet* is the attribute exclusively of Allah Ta'ala.

* As his 'proof', Molvi Abdus Sami' of the Bareilvi sect, utilized the specific finite and extremely limited knowledge of shaitaan and that of Malakul Maut as his premiss. In other words, if shaitaan had such "extensive" knowledge to enable him to perpetrate his evil machinations on a world-wide scale in a highly systematic fashion, then Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) too must be having *Ilmul Muheet* or encompassing knowledge of the whole world. But, the Bareilvi Molvi failed to discern the ludicrousness of his reasoning. The knowledge and ability of shaitaan or of Malakul Maut are specific and restricted in scope to their respective duties and functions. In no way can such restricted knowledge, no matter how expansive it may appear, be utilized-as a basis to claim *Ilmul Muheet* for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). The basis tendered by the Bareilvi Molvi is both despicable and baseless. Such an attribute which is in fact a divine attribute, has necessarily to be substantiated on the basis of Absolute Shar'i proofs (*Nusoos-e-Qat'iyyah*).

• In refutation, Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) said that the extent of shaitaan's and Malakul Maut's knowledge pertaining to their respective functions is established on the basis of *Nusoos* while the claimed *Ilmul Muheet* for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is not only unsubstantiated by *Nusoos*, but is in actual fact in conflict with the *Nusoos* of the Qur'aan and Hadith.

• The term "**this**" with which Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) qualifies the "**extent of shaitaan's knowledge**" clearly indicates that the discussion pertained to a specific issue. This issue was the restricted knowledge which shaitaan and Malakul

Maut possess and for which there exists Shar'i proof. Such constricted knowledge of shaitaan need not be proved on the basis of any analogical reasoning as the Bareilvi Molvi had attempted to do with the claim of *Ilmul Muheet* attributed baselessly by the Bareilvis to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

The foregoing discussion will show that Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) never claimed that "shaitaan had greater depth in knowledge than Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)". The claim is a heinous slander against the illustrious Shaikhul Hadith, Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmed Ambethwi (rahmatullah alayh) who had made it clear that the slanderers will have to answer for their slander on the Day of Qiyaamah.

Where Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) mentions in his statement the "wus'at of Rasulullah's knowledge", the reference is to *Ilm-e-Zaati*, i.e. knowledge which he supposedly possessed without it having been bestowed to him by Allah Ta'ala. The *Ilmul Ghaib* and *Ilmul Muheet* concepts of the Bareilvis necessitate the belief that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) possesses total knowledge of every atom in the same way that Allah Ta'ala possesses. This is manifestly *baatil* (fallacious). It is unsubstantiated by Nusoos and in fact, it is in conflict with the Shariah. It is in fact a belief of shirk.

Thus, what in effect Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad was saying is this:

"Shaitaan's limited knowledge bestowed to him by Allah Ta'ala is confirmed by Nusoos while the *Ilmul Ghaib* which the deviate bid'atis attribute to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is not only unsubstantiated by Nusoos, but is violently in conflict with the Nusoos of the Qur'aan and Hadith. In spite of this conflict, the Bareilvis had attempted to substantiate this unfounded and fallacious belief on the basis of shaitaan's limited knowledge. This in itself is abominable. It is an insult to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to seek to prove an attribute for him by citing shaitaan's limited knowledge and ability as the primary premiss in the analogy.

SLANDERING HADHRAT MAULANA ASHRAF ALI THANVI (rahmatullah alayh)

Slandering Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh), the Bareilvis claim that Hadhrat Thanvi had likened the knowledge of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to the knowledge of beasts and insane persons. They brazenly assert that Hadhrat Thanvi stated this in his treatise, *Hifzul Imaan*.

Refuting this slanderous accusation levelled against him, Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) says in his booklet, *Bastul Bunaan*:

"I have never ever written this evil statement in any kitaab—this statement which is attributed to me in *Hussamul Haramain*, *Tamheed*, etc., that I have claimed that just as Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has knowledge of the things of the *ghaib*, so too, in the same way do every child, every insane person and

every animal and beast have the same knowledge of the *ghaib*. Never did such a thought ever cross my heart. I believe a person who holds such a belief or who makes such a statement explicitly or implies such a belief even though he does not believe it, to be outside the pale of Islam because he is rejecting the *Nusoos-e-Qat'iyyah*, and he is belittling Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)."

The context in which Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) made his statement was a discussion on *Ilmul Ghaib* which the Bareilvis claim for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Ghaib in terms of Islam refers to such knowledge which is not acquired from an external source nor can any proof be cited for it. For its comprehension there exists no method of acquisition. Such *zaati* (inherent) knowledge is exclusive with Allah Ta'ala. He does not acquire knowledge. Knowledge of every atom in creation is His Eternal Attribute. This is the Shar'i meaning of Knowledge of the *Ghaib*. No being other than Allah Ta'ala possesses such Knowledge.

Acquired knowledge or knowledge bestowed to a person by Allah Ta'ala is not the *zaati* knowledge conveyed by the concept of *Ghaib*. Whatever knowledge Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) possesses of the unseen realms has been bestowed to him by Allah Ta'ala. This is an irrefutable fact which only ignoramuses will deny. Thus, the knowledge which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) possessed was not the Knowledge of *Ghaib*, which is exclusive with Allah Azza Wa Jal, but was knowledge gifted to him by Allah Ta'ala.

It is an undeniable fact of Islamic belief that the Knowledge of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is the most superior in all creation. He had the greatest knowledge and the highest degree of knowledge. Notwithstanding the excellence and abundance of Rasulullah's knowledge, the fact remains that it was knowledge awarded to him by Allah Azza Wa Jal. Such bestowed knowledge is not termed *Ilmul Ghaib*. Regarding *Ilmul Ghaib*, the Qur'aan is emphatic that it belongs exclusively to Allah Ta'ala. Thus the Qur'aan Majeed says:

* ***"Say (O Muhammad!): None in the heavens and the earth knows the Ghaib, but Allah."*** (Surah Naml)

* ***"Thus, say: Verily, the Ghaib belongs only to Allah."*** (Surah Yunus)

* ***"(HE—Allah is) Aalimul Ghaib wash-Shahaadah (The Knower of the Ghaib and the Shahaadah (what can be seen))."***

"And, by Him are the keys of the Ghaib. None, but He knows it" (Surah An'aam)

Besides these Qur'aanic verses, there are other aayaat as well as ahaadith which conclusively and explicitly proclaim that the Knowledge of the *Ghaib* is only with Allah Ta'ala. Only He is *Aalimul Ghaib*.

As far as Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is concerned, he is ordered in the Qur'aan to say:

*** *"I do not know what will be done with me nor with you. I merely follow that which is being revealed to me..." (Surah Ahqaaf)***

*** *"If I had known the Ghaib, I would have derived goodness in abundance and no harm would have befallen me." (Surah A 'raaf)***

Numerous episodes in the ahaadith prove beyond doubt that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was not *Aalimul Ghaib*. He awaited direction and knowledge to come to him via the agency of Wahi. The Jews once posed three questions to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) regarding Khidhr, Zul Qarnain and the soul. Since Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was not aware of the answers, he told them to come tomorrow when Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) would arrive with the answers. This is but just one example of the many which prove conclusively that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was not *Aalimul Ghaib*. He relied solely on the bestowal of knowledge by Allah Ta'ala.

Nothing is unseen and hidden from Allah Ta'ala. Thus, *ghaib* meaning 'unseen' and 'hidden' does not apply to Allah Ta'ala. In this meaning it is related to created beings. Knowledge of unseen and hidden things such as Jannat, Jahannum, Barzakh, the Malaikah, etc., is bestowed to man by Allah Ta'ala, directly to the Ambiya by the agency of Wahi and to other people via the agency of the Ambiya.

Knowledge of unseen and hidden things is acquired by man in different ways. By means of information given by the Ambiya, by *kashf* and *ilhaam* (*inspiration*) of the Auliya, by jinn overhearing discussions of the Angels and by the creation of natural propensities in men and animals by Allah Ta'ala. A fortune-teller acquires some truth via the agency of the shayaateen and he passes this on in diluted and debased form to others by mingling numerous lies with one truth he had acquired from the jinn of the unseen things.

A duck possesses the natural ability and knowledge of swimming. The bird, Hud-Hud had gained knowledge of Queen Bilquis about whom Nabi Sulaiman (alayhis salaam) had no knowledge. In short, Allah Ta'ala has bestowed knowledge in varying degrees to all creatures—to man and animals. Thus, every created being has some degree of bestowed knowledge. Even though the knowledge of the Ambiya is of the highest category, it still remains knowledge bestowed to them by Allah Ta'ala. It is acquired knowledge. It is this bestowed knowledge which Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) and all Ulama of Islam deny being *Ilmul Ghaib* since it is not the uncreated, eternal attribute of any created being. Bestowed knowledge is thus common to all creation. Human beings, jinn, animals, etc. all have some degree of knowledge which they acquired from Allah Ta'ala in different ways.

The Ambiya too possess this bestowed knowledge although in the highest degree in relation to other created beings. If, therefore, we have to say that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is *Aalimul Ghaib* on account of his bestowed knowledge, then other human beings, jinn and animals too could be termed '*aalimul ghaib*', albeit in lesser

degree since they too have been bestowed with some knowledge by Allah Ta'ala in different ways. This is exactly the argument of Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh). The actual argument of Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) as it appears in *Hifzul Imaan* is as follows:

"If according to Zaid, it is correct to assert *Ilmul Ghaib* for the Holy Personage (of Rasulullah—sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then it is asked: By this *Ilmul Ghaib* is some *ghaib* or total *ghaib* intended? (Total *ghaib* is the knowledge of every atom in the universe such as the Knowledge of Allah Ta'ala). If some knowledge of *ghaib* is meant, then what is the speciality which is for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)? (In the event of only some *ilmul ghaib* being known to Rasulullah—sallallahu alayhi wasallam—it will not be any distinguishing feature because such *ilmul ghaib* as Zaid is contending for Rasulullah—sallallahu alayhi wasallam-- is common to Zaid and Amr, in fact to every child, insane person and all animals since every person knows something which another person is unaware of. Thus, according to this (interpretation of Zaid) everyone should be called *aalimul ghaib*."

Every sensible and unbiased person will understand that in this statement a comparison with Rasulullah's knowledge is not made, nor intended nor implied. The argument is simply in refutation of the claim of Zaid that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is *Aalimul Ghaib*.

It is quite manifest that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) cannot be *Aalimul Ghaib* in the same way as Allah Ta'ala because such a belief violently militates against the Nusoos of the Shariah while at the same time it is illogic and irrational since Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is not an eternal being. He is a creation of Allah Ta'ala. When everyone is constrained to accept that total and all-encompassing *Ilmul Ghaib* cannot be attributed to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then it will mean that those who believe him to be *Aalimul Ghaib*, must necessarily believe that his *Ilmul Ghaib* is partial or that he has knowledge of some *ghaib* regardless of how abundant that "some" is. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has been given the Knowledge of the *Awwaleen and Aakhirreen* (of earlier and later times). But, no matter how vast such knowledge is, it will be limited and finite and it was bestowed to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) by Allah Ta'ala.

Knowledge which has been bestowed is common to all creatures although there are great variations in the degrees of the knowledge bestowed to different people and different creatures. But, the irrefutable and obvious fact remains that everyone possesses some share of bestowed knowledge which according to Zaid is *Ilmul Ghaib*. If this has to be accepted, the logical conclusion will be that everyone and every creature is *aalimul ghaib* to some extent because all share in bestowed knowledge. Thus on the basis of Zaid's claim and conception of *Ilmul Ghaib*, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is not being awarded any distinguishing characteristic by calling him *Aalimul Ghaib*. In fact, Zaid's conception of *ilmul ghaib* extends to all creatures.

This is the fallacy which Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) points out in his statement. It should now be quite clear that the words "**such ilm of ghaib**" refers to the type of knowledge which Zaid (i.e. the Bareilvi claimant of *ilmul Ghaib*) has claimed

for Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Hence, there is absolutely no comparison between the vast knowledge which Allah Ta'ala bestowed to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the knowledge which He had bestowed to others in varying degrees.