



Followers of the Allegorical Verses¹

Imām al-Qurtubī ؒ

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Released by www.marifah.net 1429 H

The Exalted said: ***[But those in whose hearts is perversity] follow the part thereof that is allegorical, seeking discord, and searching for its hidden meanings.***

Our Shaykh, Abu al-‘Abbās (*rahmatullah ‘alayhi*) said:

Furthermore, the followers of the allegorical verses (*mutashābih*) are not free from:

- Following it and collecting it, seeking to raise doubts in the Qur’ān and (seeking to) misguide the laymen as done by the Zanādiqah (deviants), the Qarāmiṭah, and the refuters of the Qur’ān.
- Or, seeking to believe in the outward (*ẓawāhir*) meanings of the *mutashābih* as done by the anthropomorphists (deluded ones who give physical traits to Allah), those who collected from the Qur’ān and Sunnah whatever gave a physical meaning when taken literally (*ẓāhir*). To the extent that they believed that the Creator is a physical body and a fashioned form, possessing a face and other things: hand, eye, side and finger. Exalted is Allah from that, with the most Supreme Exaltation.
- Or they sought out these (*mutashābih*) with a view to manifest its interpretations and clarify its meanings.
- Or (they did) like Subaygh when he asked ‘Umar ؓ about them (the *mutashābih*) excessively.

So these are four categories:

- The First: there is no doubt about their disbelief (*kufr*) and that the judgment of Allah concerning them is execution without even asking them to repent.

¹ Extracted from al-Imām al-Qurtubī’s Tafsīr : Sūrah Āl-Imrān v. 7. It is repeated verbatim in al-Tidhkār fi Afḍal al-Adhkār, pg. 266.

- The Second: The most sound (opinion) is to make *takfīr* on them (to consider them to be *kāfīrs*), since there is no difference between them and worshippers of idols and images. And they should be asked to repent. Thereafter, either they'll repent, or if not, they should be executed as is done to an apostate (*murtad*).
- The Third: There is a difference of opinion concerning that (action) based upon the difference of opinion in the permissibility of (various) *ta'wīls* (interpretations) of the *mutashābih*. And it is known that the madhhab of the Salaf (pious predecessors) was to leave the undertaking of interpreting them while being certain that the literal meaning (*zawāhir*) was impossible. So they would say, "Let it pass as it came!" And some of them (the Salaf) took the madhhab of manifesting its interpretations by interpreting it with meanings consistent with the (Arabic) tongue without definitively confirming a specific possible meaning.
- The Fourth: The judgment for him is to be taught a profound lesson as Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Umar ibn al Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه did to Subaygh.²



² He took tree branches and beat him severely until he bled and told the Muslims not to talk to him or sit with him.