

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## How Did the Salaf Understand Qadar (Divine Decree)?

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The Salaf — the earliest generations of Islam, particularly the Companions and their students — held a firm, balanced, and clear understanding of al-Qadar (Divine Decree), rooted in the Qur’ān, the Sunnah, and unanimous consensus. They



believed in it fully — without denial, distortion, speculation, or false analogies — and considered deviation in this matter a major cause of misguidance.

### **Definition of Qadar (Divine Decree):**

Qadar is Allāh’s eternal knowledge and will regarding everything that will ever happen, and His creation of all things accordingly.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said: “The belief in Qadar is that Allāh has knowledge of all things, has written them, has willed them, and has created them — this is what the Salaf agreed upon.”<sup>1</sup>

### **The Four Pillars of Belief in Qadar:**

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<sup>1</sup> Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā, 8/432

1. **al-‘Ilm (Knowledge):** Allāh knows everything — past, present, and future — including all actions and intentions. Allah said: "Indeed, Allah is Knowing of all things."<sup>2</sup>
2. **al-Kitābah (Writing):** All things are written in al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfūz. Allah said: "Indeed, We have written in the Preserved Tablet (al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfūz)..."<sup>3</sup>
3. **al-Mashī’ah (Will):** Nothing occurs except by Allāh’s will — His universal (kawnī) will. Allah said: "And you do not will except that Allāh wills..."<sup>4</sup>
4. **al-Khalq (Creation):** Allāh created everything, including the deeds of His slaves. Allah said: "Allāh created you and what you do."<sup>5</sup>

### Statements of the Salaf:

Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنهما said: “Qadar is Allāh’s secret. Do not seek to understand it by analogy or you’ll be destroyed.”<sup>6</sup>

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal رحمه الله said: “Qadar is the power of Allāh. We believe in it, and do not say: ‘Why?’ or ‘How?’”<sup>7</sup>

### The Salaf’s Refutation of the Denial of Qadar:

They refuted the Qadariyyah, who claimed that man creates his own actions and that Allāh has no will over them.

Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما said: “Tell them: I am free from them and they are free from me! If they were to give in charity gold equal to Mount Uḥud, it would not be accepted until they believe in Qadar.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Surah at-Tawbah 9:115

<sup>3</sup> Surah al-Burūj 85:22

<sup>4</sup> Surah al-Takwīr 81:29

<sup>5</sup> Surah al-Şāffāt 37:96

<sup>6</sup> al-Lālakā’ī in Sharḥ Uṣūl I’tiqād 4/722)

<sup>7</sup> Uṣūl as-Sunnah

<sup>8</sup> Şaḥīḥ Muslim, 93

Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim رضي الله عنهما records in al-Kitāb wa’s-Sunnah that Imām Mālik (d. 179H) stated: “Whoever denies Qadar — if he knows — is a disbeliever.”

### **Balance of the Salaf Regarding Qadar:**

They affirmed Allāh’s complete will and power, while also affirming that humans have responsibility for their choices within what Allāh has decreed.

They rejected the extremes of:

- **Jabariyyah** (who denied free will)
- **Qadariyyah** (who denied Allāh’s control)

The Salaf submitted to what was revealed without trying to comprehend its full reality with limited human reason.

Shaykh Ibn Bāz رحمه الله said: “The correct view is the one of Ahlus-Sunnah: that man acts by his will and choice, but within Allāh’s will, knowledge, and decree.”<sup>9</sup>

Shaykh al-‘Uthaymīn رحمه الله said: “To understand Qadar correctly, you must believe that Allāh knew and wrote all things, and that nothing happens except by His will — yet you are rewarded or punished for what you choose by your will.”<sup>10</sup>

### **Conclusion:**

The Salaf believed in Qadar in its entirety: that Allāh knows, wills, writes, and creates all things — including human actions — yet He gave humans will and choice within His divine decree. Denying or over-analyzing Qadar is misguidance. The correct path is submission with certainty, belief, and trust in Allāh.

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<sup>9</sup> Fatāwā Nūr ‘ala al-Darb

<sup>10</sup> Sharḥ al-‘Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah

