

Similar to this is the description found in the Qur'ān describing the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with pity and mercy when He (Allah) said: ﴿With the believers he (the Prophet) is full of pity and mercy.﴾ (al-Tawba: 128) And Allah ﷻ also described Himself with that in more than one place (in the Qur'ān), for He ﷻ is: ﴿Full of pity and mercy.﴾

It is well known that the second type of pity and mercy is not like the first (type). When Allah described His Prophet ﷺ with that description, he described him with it in a general fashion without any restriction or condition. This is because the one that is addressed is a believer in Divine oneness and a believer in Allah who knows the difference between the Creator and the creation. If it were not for that, He would have needed to say in His description of him: “Full of pity and merciful—of the type that is different from Our pity and mercy,” or to say: “Full of pity that is a special and distinct form of pity, and full of mercy that is a special distinct form of mercy,” or to say: “Full of pity that is a pity fit for humans and merciful that is a mercy fit for humans.” However, none of that occurred; He affirmed for him pity that is unrestricted, and mercy that is unrestricted, without any limit or condition. He said: ﴿Full of pity and mercy for the believers.﴾

LOGICAL METAPHOR AND ITS USE

There is no doubt that figurative speech is used in the Book and the Sunna. From that, are the words of the Exalted: ﴿And when our verses are recited to them, they increase them in faith.﴾ (al-Anfāl: 2) Linking the increase to the verses is figurative because (in reality) they are a cause for the increase. It is Allah alone who actually increases it (the faith).

Also, the statement of the Exalted: ﴿A day which shall turn young children grey haired.﴾ (al-Muzammil: 17) Linking (the word) “turn” to the day is figurative because the day is the place in which they will be made grey haired. So the “turning” mentioned here shall occur *on that day*, whereas the one who ‘turns’ in reality is Allah, the Exalted.

Also, the statement of the Exalted: ﴿Nor Yaghūth, Ya'ūq, or Nasr; they have certainly misguided many.﴾ (Nūḥ: 23–24) Linking misguidance to the idols is figurative because they were a means

for misguidance, whereas the one who guides and misguides (in reality) is Allah alone.

Also the statement of the Exalted, narrating the (story) of Pharaoh: ﴿“O Hamām! Build a tower for me.”﴾ (Ghāfir: 36) Linking the act of building to Hamām is figurative because he was a cause (for it) in that he was the one commanding (for it to be built) and not that he was building it himself. The builder was the one doing the action: in this case, it was the workers.

As for the Ḥadīth reports (containing figurative speech), they are many. They are known to those who have come across them and who know the difference between the linkage (of an act) to that which is literal and that which is figurative. There is no need to spend a long time quoting them.

The scholars have said: “The utterance of this linkage from a believer in the Divine oneness is sufficient in making it a figurative linkage because the correct belief is that the Creator of the servants and their actions is Allah alone. He is the Creator of the servants and their actions. There is no independent effect for anyone besides Him—be they dead or alive.”

This belief is the pure *tawhīd*, as opposed to one who believes other than this, which constitutes *shirk*.

THE NECESSITY OF PERCEIVING THE FIGURATIVE PORTION IN THE SCALES OF FAITH AND DISBELIEF

Certain factions of misguidance have held to the tail of a doubt based upon the outwardly apparent and literal expressions, without looking to the circumstantial elements [*qarā'in*] and intentions, and without seeking to reconcile and join (between the texts) in a way that does not lead to mutual contradiction, such as those who believe in the creation of the Qur'an, holding firm to the likes of Allah's statement: ﴿Indeed We have made it an Arabic Qur'an.﴾ (al-Zukhruf: 3) Similarly, those who believe in absolute free will, holding firm to Allah's statement: ﴿With what your hands have earned.﴾ (al-Shūrā: 30) and: ﴿And due to what you have done.﴾ (al-Mā'ida: 105) And like those who believed in absolute fatalism [*jabr*] holding firm to Allah's statement: “And Allah created you and that which you do.﴾ (al-Sāffāt: 96) and: