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**QUESTION:** Does Islam teach that Allah has only 99 Names? <sup>1</sup>

**ANSWER:** This is a misconception which is held by very many Muslims, principally because of one particular hadeeth (statement of Muhammad (peace be upon him)) in which he said:

***Allah has 99 Names, whoever correctly preserves them and acts in accordance with them will enter Paradise.***

(Hadeeth found in the collections of two scholars of hadeeth in the past called al Bukhari and Muslim).

However this does not mean that Allah only has 99 Names.

Carefully looking at the hadeeth shows that of Allah's Names, there are 99 which, if correctly preserved and acted upon by a person, will take a person to Paradise.

This is similar to the situation where a man says: *I have a hundred dollars, I will give them to charity.*

This does not necessarily mean that the man only has 100 dollars in the whole world to his name. Rather he might have 20,000 dollars in his account - but he has specified 100 of them that he will give away.

The Islamic belief that Allah has more than 99 Names is confirmed by another hadeeth. Muhammad (peace be upon him) used to make a supplication to Allah which included the following words:

***"I ask You by every Name that You have, that You named Yourself with, or that You revealed in Your Book, or that You taught one of Your Creation, or that You kept with Yourself as knowledge of the Unseen..."***

(Hadeeth found in the collections of three famous scholars of hadeeth called Ahmad, Ibn Hibban, and al Hakim)

If you look at the last phrase of the supplication quoted here, it makes clear that there are some Names which Allah has chosen not to reveal to His Creation, and which instead He has, from His Tremendous Wisdom, kept with Himself.

There is however a hadeeth in which Muhammad (peace be upon him) specified and named all the 99 Names.

However this hadeeth is not authentic.

This means that the scholars of hadeeth have examined the text of the hadeeth and its chain of narration going all the way back to Muhammad (peace be upon him) and found that there is something in either of these two aspects of the hadeeth which mean that it cannot be reliably attributed back to Muhammad (peace be upon him) – i.e. there is no proof that he actually said it.

Therefore Muslims do not use or act upon this hadeeth.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to 'aqeedah ut tawheed p75 of Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan for more information

**QUESTION:** What are some examples of the Attributes of Allah which have been mentioned in the Book or in the Sunnah?

**ANSWER:** There are indeed many, many Attributes which are mentioned in the Quran and the Sunnah but we will mention a few here.

Life, Knowledge, Power, Hearing, Seeing, Mercy, Honour, Wisdom, Loftiness, Greatness, etc. All of these can be found in the Quraan or the Sunnah or both.

We will discuss the proofs for these and the correct way to understand these in future emails.

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## **NEXT TIME:**

What are the sources from which the Muslims take their knowledge of the Names and Attributes of Allah?