145166 - Evidence which affirms the divine attribute of the Eye

the question

Does the commentary on the verse in which Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): {Does he not know that Allah sees} [al-‘Alaq 96:14] indicate that Allah has eyes? If that is not the case, then does Allah have eyes? Is there any proven evidence to that effect?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The way of Ahl as-Sunnah wa’l-Jama‘ah is to affirm the divine attribute of eyes in a manner that is befitting to Him, as He, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing} [ash-Shura 42:11].

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The view of Ahl as-Sunnah wa’l-Jama‘ah is that Allah has two eyes with which He sees in a real sense in a manner that is befitting to Him; this is one of the attributes of His Essence."(*Majmu‘ Fatawa Ibn ‘Uthyamin* 4/58).

Secondly:

The texts of the Qur’an and Sunnah affirm the divine attribute of eyes.

With regard to evidence from the Qur’an:

-1-

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And construct the ship under Our watchful eyes and Our inspiration} [Hud 11:37].

It was narrated from Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said regarding the verse {And construct the ship under Our watchful eyes and Our inspiration} [Hud 11:37]: This refers to the eye of Allah, may He blessed and exalted. This was narrated from him by al-Bayhaqi in *al-Asma’ wa’s-Sifat* (2/116).

Ibn Jarir at-Tabari (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The words {under Our watchful eyes} mean: under the eye of Allah and in accordance His revealed instructions to you. End quote.

-2-

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And I bestowed upon you love from Me that you would be brought up under My eye} [Ta-Ha 20:39].

-3-

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{Be patient with your Lord’s decree [O Muhammad], for verily you are under Our watchful eyes} [at-Tur 52:48].

Evidence from the Sunnah includes the report narrated by al-Bukhari (6858) from ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Allah is not unknown to you. Indeed Allah is not one-eyed” – and he pointed to his eye – “but the false messiah the Dajjal is one-eyed; his right eye is like a floating grape.”

Ibn Khuzaymah (may Allah have mercy on him) said, after mentioning the texts quoted above: It is obligatory for every believer to affirm for his Creator and Maker what the Creator and Maker affirmed for Himself of eyes. He is not a true believer who denies for Allah, may He be blessed and exalted, what He has affirmed for Himself in a clear text and was explained by the Prophet

(blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), to whom Allah gave the task of explaining His words, as He said (interpretation of the meaning):

{And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them} [an-Nahl 16:44].

So the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) explained that Allah has two eyes, and his explanation was in accordance with the revealed text, which you find in the pages of the Mushaf and it is recited by the imams in prayer and is taught to children in the schools."(*Kitab at-Tawhid* 1/64).

With regard to the verse in which Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): {Does he not know that Allah sees} [al-'Alaq 96:14], this does not prove the divine attribute of the eyes; rather it affirms the divine attribute of vision and sight. As for affirmation of His eyes, that is a separate issue concerning which you may refer to the texts which speak of it.

Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Did the one who forbids the guided to pray not know that Allah sees him and hears his words, and will requite him in full for his actions?"(*Tafsir Ibn Kathir* 4/646).

Al-Bayhaqi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The verse in which Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): {Does he not know that Allah sees} [al-'Alaq 96:14] is one of the verses which affirm His vision and sight."(A*l-Asma' wa's-Sifat* 1/461).

Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The eye of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, is a real eye. The evidence for that is the fact that Allah Himself has affirmed that in more than one place, and He has affirmed that He sees in more than one place, so He has affirmed one of them sometimes and the other one sometimes, which indicates that they are two different things. So His sight is one thing and His eye is something else. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And say, "Do [as you will], for Allah will see your deeds, and [so, will] His Messenger…"} [at-

Tawbah 9:105]

{Does he not know that Allah sees?} [al-‘Alaq 96:14].

These two verses are about His sight.

But the verses in which He says: {Sailing under Our watchful eyes} [al-Qamar 54:14] and {that you would be brought up under My eye} [Ta-Ha 20:39] are not about His sight; rather they affirm that He has eyes, as opposed to seeing. Hence we say that the eye is a real divine attribute."(*Sharh al-‘Aqidah as-Safariniyyah)*.

And Allah knows best.