# 84270 - Are al-Daarr (the causer of harm) and al-Naafi’ (the bringer of benefits) names of Allah?

**the question**

What is the meaning of the name of Allah al-Darr (the causer of harm)? May Allah reward you with good.

**Detailed answer**

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

There is no saheeh evidence that al-Daarr is one of the names of Allah, may He be exalted. Rather that is mentioned in the famous hadeeth which lists the most beautiful names, but it is a weak hadeeth, that was narrated by al-Tirmidhi and others.

What is established among the scholars is that the names and attributes of Allah are a tawqeefi matter, i.e., none of them can be proven except with saheeh evidence from the Quran and Sunnah.

If there is no proof for a name, but its meaning is valid, then it is permissible to say it when speaking of Allah, so one may say, “Allah is the causer of harm, the bringer of good” because speaking of Allah is broader than the divine names and attributes. But He should not be worshipped with this name, so one should not call a child ‘Abd al-Daarr or ‘Abd al-Naafi’, because they are not proven to be names of Allah.

With regard to the comments of some scholars who call Allah al-Daarr al-Naafi’, perhaps they based that on the hadeeth of al-Tirmidhi, which as we have stated above is a da’eef (weak) hadeeth. What counts is saheeh evidence from the Quran and Sunnah.

Secondly:

The meaning of al-Daarr (the causer of harm) is the one who decrees harm and causes it to reach whomever He will among His creation.

Good and evil comes from Allah, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“and We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good. And to Us you will be returned”

[al-Anbiya’ 21:35]

“And if Allah touches you with harm, none can remove it but He, and if He touches you with good, then He is Able to do all things”

[al-An’aam 6:17]

“And verily, if you ask them: ‘Who created the heavens and the earth?’ Surely, they will say: ‘Allah (has created them).’ Say: ‘Tell me then, the things that you invoke besides Allah if Allah intended some harm for me, could they remove His harm? Or if He (Allah) intended some mercy for me, could they withhold His Mercy?’ Say : ‘Sufficient for me is Allah; in Him those who trust (i.e. believers) must put their trust’”

[al-Zumar 39:38]

al-Tirmidhi (3388), Abu Dawood (5088) and Ibn Maajah (3869) narrated that ‘Uthmaan ibn ‘Affaan (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “There is no person who says, in the morning and evening of every day, Bismillaah illadhi laa yadurr ma’a ismihi shay’un fi’l-ard wa laa fi’l-samaa’ wa huwa al-samee’ al-‘aleem (In the name of Allah with Whose name nothing is harmed on earth or in heaven, and He is the All-Seeing, All-Knowing), three times, and is then harmed by anything.”

Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi.

And al-Tirmidhi (2516) narrated that Ibn ‘Abbaas said: I was behind the Messenger of Allah (peace

and blessings of Allah be upon him) one day and he said: “O boy, I shall teach you some words. Be mindful Allah and He will take care of you. Be mindful of Allah and He will protect you. If you ask then ask of Allah, and if you seek help then seek help from Allah. Know that if the nation were to gather together to benefit you in some way, they would not benefit you except in something that Allah has decreed for you, and if they were to gather together to harm you in some way, they would not harm you except in something that Allah has decreed for you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried.” Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi.

Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: This indicates that nothing can really bring benefit or cause harm but Allah.

Thirdly:

Because describing Allah as causing harm may imply some kind of imperfection, the scholars stated that this should not be mentioned unless it is accompanied by a statement that He also the bringer of benefit, may He be glorified and exalted. So one should say al-Daarr al-Naafi’, just as it is also said al-Qaabid al-Baasit (the Withholder the Bestower) and al-‘Afuw al-Muntaqim (the Forgiving the Vengeful).

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Some of His names may be used alone or in conjunction with others. This applies to most of His names, such as al-Qadeer (the All-Powerful), al-Samee’ (the All-hearing), al-Baseer (the All-Seeing), al-‘Azeez (the Almighty), and al-Hakeem the most Wise). One may call upon him with these names alone or in conjunction with others. So you may say: Yaa ‘Azeez, Yaa Haleem, Yaa Ghafoor, Yaa Raheem. Each name may be used on its own. Similarly when praising Him and speaking of Him, they may be used alone or together.

And there are some which may not be used alone, rather they must be used with others that carry an opposite meaning, such as al-Maani’, al-Darr and al-Muntaqim. It is not permissible to use these alone without their opposite meanings. They should be used in conjunction with the names al-Mu’ti, al-Naafi’ and al-‘Afuw. So He is al-Mu’ti al-Maani’ (the Giver, the Withholder), al-Daarr al-Naafi’ (the Causer of harm the Bringer of benefit), al-Muntaqim al-‘Afuw (the Vengeful the

Forgiving), al-Mu’izz al-Mudhill (the Honourer the Abaser), because perfection lies in each of these names being accompanied by its opposite: giving and withholding, benefiting and harming, forgiving and wreaking vengeance. What is meant here is that Allah alone is the Lord and has control over His creation. As for praising Him by mentioning withholding, vengeance and harm on their own, this is not right. These “twin” names are to be regarded as one name that cannot be separated. Hence they do not appear on their own and cannot be mentioned except in conjunction with their opposite. If you say: Yaa Mudhill, Yaa Daarr, Yaa Maani’ and you speak about that, you are not praising Him unless you also mention the opposite name. End quote from Badaa’i’ al-Fawaa’id (1/132)

See also question no. 20476

Fourthly:

It must be noted that what is required of a person with regard to this matter is to believe that Allah is alone in His Lordship over His creation, may He be glorified, and the power of creation and the command belong to Him alone, and there is none who can contend with Him in His sovereignty or repel His command or put back His Judgement.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The Lord, may He be glorified, is the Sovereign and Controller, the Giver and the Withholder, the Causer of harm and the Bringer of benefits, the One who lowers and the One Who raises, the Honourer and the Abaser. The one who testifies that the Giver, the Withholder, the Causer of harm, the Bringer of benefits, the One who lowers, the One Who raises, the Honourer, the Abaser, is anyone other than Him has associated someone else with Him in His Lordship (ruboobiyyah). But if he wants to rid himself of this shirk let him look at the First Giver, and thank Him for the blessings that He has bestowed upon him, then let him look at one who has done him a favour and reciprocate in kind, because all blessings come from Allah as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allah”

[al-Nahl 16:53]

“On each __ these as well as those __We bestow from the Bounties of your Lord”

[al-Isra’ 17:20]

So Allah is the true Giver, He is the One Who created provision, decreed it and caused it to reach whoever He wills of His slaves. The Giver is the One Who gave it to you and motivated others to give to you. He is the First and the Last. The same applies to everything that we have mentioned with regard to His Lordship (ruboobiyyah).

Whoever adopts this attitude will free himself from servitude to other creatures and from looking at them, and he will spare people from his blame and criticism of them. Tawheed will become established in his heart, his faith will become stronger and he will find peace of mind and enlightenment. Whoever puts his trust in Allah, He is sufficient for him.

Hence al-Fudayl ibn ‘Iyaad (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Whoever knows people as they really are will have peace of mind, meaning – and Allah knows best – that they can neither bring benefit nor cause harm.

And Allah knows best.