



353034 - Manifestation and descent are divine attributes

the question

My daughter is asking: When Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, manifested Himself to the mountain, He made it crumble. Why does nothing happen to the universe when Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, descends in a manner that is befitting to His majesty every night?

Summary of answer

1.. There is nothing like unto Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, and nothing resembles Him. There is nothing like unto Him and the believer believes in the attributes of Allah, may He be glorified, but they cannot be likened to the attributes of created beings.

2.. There is a difference between manifesting and descending. Manifesting means appearing; what is meant is appearing to people's eyes. With regard to descending, we believe that Allah, may He be exalted, descends every night to the lowest heaven, during the last third of the night. This descending happens in a manner that is befitting to His majesty.

For more details, please see the long answer.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

We ask Allah to help us, you and all the Muslims to raise children in a manner that Allah loves and is pleased with, and to enable us to follow the path of the people of faith and righteousness, and to make all our offspring righteous.



Secondly:

The attributes of Allah do not resemble the attributes of created beings.

You must explain to your daughter that there is nothing like unto Allah, may He be glorified, and nothing resembles Him. There is nothing like unto Him and He is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing. You should tell her that the believer believes in the attributes of Allah, may He be glorified, but they cannot be likened to the attributes of created beings.

You should tell her that Allah, may He be exalted, is able to do things that humans are not able to do. Allah, may He be exalted, hears everything and sees everything, and He does whatever He wills, because He is the Almighty Creator.

As Allah, may He be exalted, has told us about His descending, the believer must believe that He descends, but this descending is not like the descending of people; rather His descending happens in a manner that we do not know, and humans cannot grasp it.

Thirdly:

The difference between manifesting and descending

You should explain to her that there is a difference between manifesting and descending.

Manifesting means appearing; what is meant is appearing to people's eyes.

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

{... he said: O my Lord, show Yourself to me, so that I may look upon You. Allah said: You cannot see Me. But look at the mountain; if it remains firm in its place, then you will see Me. But when his Lord appeared to the mountain, He caused it to crumble, and Musa fell down unconscious}

[al-A'raf 7:143].

Ar-Rabi' ibn Anas said: When his Lord appeared to the mountain, He caused it to crumble and



Musa fell down unconscious. That is because, when the concealment was lifted and the mountain saw the divine light, it crumbled. Some of the scholars said that what is meant is that He caused it to break up into small pieces.

Mujahid said regarding the phrase {But look at the mountain; if it remains firm in its place, then you will see Me}: [What is meant is:] it is bigger than you and is a stronger creation. But when his Lord manifested Himself to the mountain, Musa look at the mountain and saw that it was not able to withstand that, and it collapsed completely and broke into small pieces, so he fell down unconscious.

‘Ikrimah said: {He caused it to crumble} means: Allah looked at the mountain, and it was flattened and turned to dust.

End quote from *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* (3/47). See also: *Tafsir at-Tabari* (13/97 ff).

See also: *Sifat Allah ‘azza wa jalla al-Waridah fi’l-Kitab wa’s-Sunnah* by ‘Alawi as-Saqqaf (92).

With regard to descending, we believe that Allah, may He be exalted, descends every night to the lowest heaven, during the last third of the night, as is mentioned in mutawatir hadiths. This descending happens in a manner that is befitting to His majesty, and we cannot discuss how it is or try to depict it. It is not like the descending of created beings when they move from one place to another, so that there is something above them. Rather He descends to the lowest heaven when He is still above His Throne and above all of His creation, so there is nothing above Him.

This is different from the descending of created beings, so no one can imagine it or try to see it in his mind’s eye, for Allah Essence cannot be imagined or comprehended, as He says (interpretation of the meaning): {but they do not encompass Him with their knowledge} [Ta-Ha 20:110].

See also the answers to questions no. [12290](#) and [20081](#) .

And Allah knows best.