Paradigm Shift On Thought

Muslim Women`s Perspectives

Edited by:
Dr Solehah Yaacob

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CHAPTER 5

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AL-ASH'ARĪ'S ISTIḤSĀN AND AL-GHAZĀLĪ'S ILJĀM AL'AWĀM

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Abū al-Ḥassan 'Alī ibn Ismā'il al-Ash'arī was known as the founder of the orthodox philosophical theology, the school which defended the faith with arguments or reason. The school was named after him as *Ash'arism*. Al-Ghazālī (his full name was Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī) was one of the leading masters of *Ash'arite* school. Some of al-Ghazālī's theological methods showed a new approach from the traditional teachings of the *As'arite* School. This paper attempts to present the difference between *al-Ash'arī's* ideas in *Istiḥsān 'an khauḍ fī 'ilm al-kalām* and al-Ghazālī's work of *Iljām al 'awām 'an 'ilm al kalām*.

In *Istiḥsān*, al-Ash'arī deals with the objections raised by the extremely orthodox against the use of *kalām*, and the replies given by al-Ash'arī, justifying its use in matters of faith. Al-Ash'arī justifies theological discussions about matters of faith in three ways; first, he