بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
[THE ANGEL] JIBRĪL ASKED THE PROPHET ABOUT ĪMĀN. HE REPLIED TO HIM,

“Īmān is to believe in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and to believe in Predestination - the good and bad of it.”

[BUKHĀRĪ AND MUSLIM]
The Correct Islāmic ʻAqīdah and that which Opposes it

With an Appendix about Allāh’s Names and Attributes

by ʻAbdul-ʻAzīz ibn ʻAbdullāh ibn Bāz

Translated by Abū ʻAbdis-Salām

DAAR US-SUNNAH PUBLISHERS
Second Edition Published in Great Britain September in 2008 / Ramaḍān 1428H by Daar us-Sunnah Publishers

DAAR US-SUNNAH PUBLISHERS
P.O. Box 9818, Birmingham, B11 4WA, United Kingdom
T/F: + 44 (0) 121 243 1772
W: www.daarussunnah.com
E: info@daarussunnah.com
E: daar-us-sunnah@mail.com

© Copyright 2008 by Daar us-Sunnah Publishers

All rights reserved Worldwide. No part of this publication may be reproduced including the cover design, utilized or transformed in any form or means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording of any information storage and retrieval system, now known or to be invented without the express permission in writing from the publisher, nor be otherwise circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

British Library Cataloguing in publication Data.
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Title: The Correct Islāmic al-‘Aqīdah and that which Opposes it
Author: ‘Abdul-‘Azīz ibn ṬAbdillāh ibn Bāz.
Translated from the original Arabic by Abū ‘Abdis-Salām

ISBN 1-904336-25-6
Paper-back

First Edition 1424AH/2003CE
Second Edition 1428AH/2008CE
Typeset by: Daar us-Sunnah Publishers

While every precaution has been taken in the preparation of this book neither the authors, translators, nor Daar us-Sunnah Publishers, shall have any liability with respect to any loss or damages caused nor do the views expressed in this book are necessarily held by the publisher directly or indirectly by the instructions or advice contained in this book.
CONTENTS

Translator's Introduction 4

About the Author 6

Introduction 10
Imān in Allāh 15
Imān in the Angels 31
Imān in the Books 33
Imān in the Messengers 36
Imān in the Last Day 38
Imān in Predestination 39
Other Points Concerning Imān 43

APPENDIX:
The Position of the Salaf Concerning Allāh's Attributes 55-64
All praise belongs to Allah alone, we praise Him, seek His aid and seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evils of our souls, and the evils of our actions.

Whoever Allah guides then there is none who can misguide him and whoever Allah leaves to stray then there is none who can guide him. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah alone, having no partners. And I bear witness that Muhammad is the slave and Messenger of Allah.

To Proceed:

This is a translation of what was originally a lecture given by our beloved Shaykh ‘Abdul-‘Aziz Ibn Baz rahimahullah. The lecture was then transcribed in the form of a book in Arabic and was entitled al-‘Aqidah as-Sahihah wa ma yudaduhuh (The Correct Islamic al-‘Aqidah and that which Opposes it).

After reading the book, I immediately decided to translate it as I saw a great need for this type of book to be available in the English language. It is true that books concerning the Islamic al-‘Aqidah are available, however I have found that many put across false concepts, especially in the area of the Names and Attributes of Allah.
The Shaykh, rahimahullāh, explains the basics of belief that every Muslim must know adorning it with proofs from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. Indeed, the Messenger of Allāh, sall Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallām, said, “The seeking of knowledge is compulsory upon every Muslim.”

I have tried to stick to a literal translation departing from this style where the meaning would be more clearly explained in another way.

I have also placed a number of quotes from the Salaf regarding their understanding of the Names and Attributes of Allāh, in the appendix. Other brothers had already translated these. The reason for including these quotes was due to the fact that in this age, the Ummah suffers from many deviated ideas and thoughts with regards to this subject. We find that many people have an incorrect understanding, and are propagating this understanding, such that a large proportion of Muslims are left confused as to what exactly is the correct position of the Salaf concerning Allāh’s Names and Attributes. Hence, I thought that such quotes would leave no room for doubt about the correct understanding, as Shaykh Ibn Bāz has explained in the relevant section.

Finally, I thank all those involved in the production of this work, and I ask Allāh to accept it from me, making it a means for my sins being forgiven. I ask that He aids me in making this work sincerely for His Sake, and also make it a source of goodness for the Shaykh ‘Abdul-‘Azīz Ibn Bāz rahimahullāh.

Abū ‘Abdis-Salām
13 Rajab 1420 AH
23 October 1999 CE
BIOGRAPHY

About the Author


HIS BIRTH: He was born in the year 1330H in the city of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He had normal sight in the beginning of his studies and was then afflicted with an illness in 1346H, which impaired his eyesight. He later became blind in 1350H when he was only 20 years old.

SEEKING KNOWLEDGE: He started upon the path of knowledge at a very young age and memorized the Qur’an before puberty. The Shaykh excelled in his knowledge of the various branches of Shari’ah and the Arabic language and was then appointed judge. This however, did not stop him from seeking knowledge until he died. The various offices he had held did not prevent him from teaching and engaging in research.

HIS TEACHERS:


---

1 Adapted from ‘Words of Advice Regarding Da’wah’ Published by Al-Hidaayah Publishing and Distribution.
Hasan Ibn Shaykh Muhammed Ibn 'Abdil-Wahhab, ra前者imullah.


3. Hamad Ibn Faris (Vice Chancellor of the Treasury at Riyadh).


5. Sa'ad Waqqas al-Bukhari, one of the scholars of Makkah who he learnt the science of Tajwid from in the year 1355H.

6. Shaykh Muhammed Ibn Ibrahem Ibn 'Abdil-Latif Al Ash-Shaykh. The (former) official expounder of law in Saudi Arabia. Shaykh Ibn Baz attended and adhered to his study circles for approximately ten years. He learnt all the branches of the Shari'ah from him from the year 1347H up until 1357H whereupon his teacher then nominated him for a post in the judiciary.

HIS VARIOUS POSTS AND POSITIONS HELD:

1. Judge in al-Kharaj district for a lengthy time, spanning approximately 14 years from 1357H until 1371H.

2. Teaching post in Riyadh at al-Mabhad Al-Immi in 1372H then to the college of Shari'ah from its inception in 1373H. He taught the sciences of Fiqh, Tawhid and Hadith. This continued for nine years up until 1380H.

3. He was appointed as vice-chancellor of the Islamic University of Madinah in the year 1381H and he remained the post until 1390H.

4. He became Chancellor of the University in 1390H upon the death of the then Chancellor Shaykh Muhammed Ibn Ibrahem Al As-Shaykh, ra前者imullah. He remained Chancellor until 1395H.
5. In 1413H, he was appointed as the official expounder of Law in Saudi Arabia in addition to presidency of the committee of senior scholars and presidency of the administration for scientific research and legal rulings.

He had also been a member of many other Islāmic Committees, such as:

1. President of the Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and Legal Rulings.
2. President and Member of the Constitucent assembly of the Muslim World League.
3. President of the Higher World League council.
4. President of the Islāmic Fiqh Assembly based at Makkah, which is a subsidiary council to the Muslim World League.
5. Member of the Higher Council of the Islāmic University of Madīnah.
6. Member of the Higher Committee for Islāmic Da’wah in Saudi Arabia.

HIS INFLUENCE: The Shaykh had influenced and effected many people and in many different ways. An important way was via the study circles and lectures he delivered until he died. These date back from the days he used to reside in the Al-Kharaj district, then in the various educational establishments he taught in whether in Riyadh or at the University or the Prophet’s Mosque in Madinah.

HIS DEATH: On Thursday 27 Muharram 1420 (May 13, 1999), Shaykh ‘Abdul-‘Azīz Ibn Bāz died - the end of a blessed life lasting eighty-nine years, one month and fifteen days.
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

All praise is for Allāh alone, and prayers and peace be upon the Prophet, his family and his Companions.

To Proceed:

The correct ‘Aqīdah\(^1\) is the foundation of Islām and the foundation stone of the Islāmic nation. It is known through evidences of the Shari‘ah\(^2\) from the Book\(^3\) and the Sunnah\(^4\), that one’s actions and statements can only be correct and acceptable to Allāh when they arise from a correct ‘Aqīdah. If, however, the ‘Aqīdah is not correct then the actions and statements that arise due to it are invalid. Allāh the Exalted says,

\(^1\) Translator’s note: ‘Aqīdah: Loosely translated as creed, a more precise definition would be ‘a firm and unwavering belief that is not open to any doubt with its beholder.’ [Shaykh Nāsir al-‘Aql in Muqma Usūl Aḥlīs-Sunnah wa-Jamā‘ah fiq- ‘Aqīdah, p.5].

\(^2\) Translator’s note: Shari‘ah: the divine code of law.

\(^3\) Translator’s note: The Qur‘ān.

\(^4\) Translator’s note: The Sunnah: The commands, prohibitions, sayings, actions, and silent approvals of the Messenger of Allāh sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām.
Whosoever rejects faith, then fruitless is his work and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers.\(^5\)

And indeed it has been revealed to you [O Muḥammad] as it was to those before you [saying]: 'If you join others in worship with Allāh [then] surely [all] your deeds will be in vain and you will certainly be amongst the losers.' \(^6\)

There are many verses with this meaning.

The evidences in the clear Book of Allāh and in the Sunnah of His truthful Messenger \textit{sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām} show the correct ‘\textit{Aqidah} in brief, to be: \textit{Īmān}\(^7\) in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and Predestination - the good and the bad of it. These six matters are the fundamentals of the correct ‘\textit{Aqidah} with which Allāh the Almighty revealed His Book and sent His Messenger Muḥammad \textit{sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām}.

\(^5\) Sūrah al-Mā‘idah (5):5
\(^6\) Sūrah al-Zumar (39):65
\(^7\) [Translator’s note]: \textit{Īmān} can be loosely translated to mean faith, but includes more specifically the belief of the heart, the sayings of the tongue and the actions of the limbs.
All issues concerning the unseen and all that we have been informed of from Allāh and His Messenger sall Allāhu `alayhi wa sallām stem from the above principles and we are obliged to believe in them. The evidence for these six pillars [of Faith] are in the Qur’ān and the Sunnah and are many. These include the sayings of Allāh,

الْبُيُّونَ عَزْبَةً وَجَاهِدُهُمْ فِي الْشَّرْقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكْنَ

al-būyūn ġazāb al-jāhiđūm fi al-sharqi wa al-māgrībi wa lākhn

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East or the West [in prayers] but righteous is he who believes in Allāh, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets.⁸

وَرَسَلُهُ لَانْفَرَقَ بِهِ وَأَحْدَمْ مِنْ رَسْلِهِ

wa rásiluhu l-annarf bihi wa āhadim min rásilih

The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from His Lord, as do the faithful believers. Each one believes in Allāh, His Angels, His Books and His Messengers. [They say:] We make no distinction between one and another of His Messengers.⁹

⁸ Sūrah al-Baqarah (2):177
⁹ Sūrah al-Baqarah (2):285
O you who believe! Believe in Allāh, His Messenger [Muḥammad], the Book [the Qurʾān] which He has sent down to His Messenger, and the Scripture which He sent down to those before [him]. Whosoever disbelieves in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day has strayed far away.\(^{10}\)

Do you not know that Allāh knows all that is in heaven and the earth? Verily it is [all] in a record. Verily, that is easy for Allāh.\(^{11}\)

There are also many authentic ṣaḥīḥ\(^{12}\) proving these fundamentals. Amongst them is the famous authentic ḥadīth narrated by Muslim in his Ṣaḥīḥ on the authority of the leader of the be-

---

\(^{10}\) Sūrah an-Nisāʾ (4):136

\(^{11}\) Sūrah al-Hajj (22):70

\(^{12}\) [Translator’s note]: Ḥadīth: plural of ḥadīth. A narration attributed to the Prophet via a chain of narration (īsnād), concerning that which he commanded, prohibited, said, did and silently approved.
lievers, ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu, that [the Angel] Jibrīl ‘alayhī-sallām asked the Prophet sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām about Īmān. He replied to him, “Īmān is to believe in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and to believe in Pre-destination - the good and bad of it.”¹³

All the obligatory matters of belief relating to Allāh, the Day of Judgement and other matters of the Unseen originate from these six principles.

¹³The ḥadīth is taken from the two Shaykhs [Bukhārī and Muslim] from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah and the ḥadīth of Ibn 'Umar in Sahīḥ Muslim.
CHAPTER TWO

Īmān in Allāh

Belief in Allāh, the One free from defect, includes believing that He is the [only] true deity deserving worship, as opposed to anything else that is worshipped. This is because He is the sole Creator of the slaves, the Granter of kindness and goodness to them, the One who takes charge of their provision and He is fully aware of both their secrets and that which they openly manifest. He is the One who rewards those who obey Him and punishes those who disobey Him. It is for this worship that Allāh created the humans and the jinn\(^{14}\) and He commanded them with it. He the Exalted says,

\[
\text{وَماَخْلَقَهُمَا إِلَّا لِتَبَيِّنَ أَنَّا أَعْلَمُ مَا لَهُمۡ مِنۡ عِلْمٍ}
\]

And I did not create the Jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me [Alone]. I seek no sustenance from them, nor do I ask that they

\(^{14}\) [Translator’s note]: Jinn. A creation aside from mankind, who are created from smokeless fire and have a free will as do mankind. They will be judged for their actions and comprise of Muslims and non-Muslims.
should feed Me. Verily Allāh is the Provider, Lord of Power, the Strong.\(^\text{15}\)

\[
\text{يَنَبِيِّكُمُ اللَّهُ مِن نَّاسٍ أَعْمَدَ وَأَرِيَمُ أَلْيَنَى خَلَقَهُمُ}
\text{وَاللَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَقُّونَ}
\text{وَالذِّي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ}
\text{الْأَرْضَ وَرَسَّا وَالسَّمَاوَاتَ بَيْنَاهُ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاوَاتِ مَا فَاتَحَجَّ}
\text{يَهُدِي مِنَ الْمُتَّمِئِرِينَ رَفِقًا لَّكُمْ فَلاَ تَجَسَّلُوا أَيْحَوْا أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمُ}
\text{تُعَمُّونَ}
\]

O mankind! Worship your Lord Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become pious. [The One] Who has made the earth a resting place for you and the sky as a canopy, sent down rain from the sky and brought forth fruits therewith as a provision for you. Then do not set up rivals unto Allāh while you know [that there is nothing similar to Him].\(^\text{16}\)

Indeed, Allāh sent the Messengers and He revealed the Books in order to explain this reality [of worshipping Allāh alone], to call to it and to warn against that which opposes it. He, the One free from defect says,

\[
\text{وَلَقَدْ بَعْثَنَا فِي كُلِّ مَلَكَةٍ سُورَةً}
\text{أَبُو أُعْبُدُ وَلَهُ}
\text{أَلْهَةَ}
\]

And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger [proclaiming]:

\(^{15}\text{Sūrah al-Dhāriyāt (51):56-58}\)

\(^{16}\text{Sūrah al-Baqarah (2):21-22}\)
Worship Allāh [Alone] and avoid Ṭāghūt.\(^{17,18}\)

وَمَا أُرْسِلْنَا بِفَرْقٍ مِّن رُسُولِ اللَّهِ نَوْيَةً إِلَّا لِّيُهْدِيَنَّ إِلَىِّ النَّافعِ إِلَّا مَا أُخْرِجَ عَنْ ذَٰلِكَ

And We did not send any messenger before you [O Muḥammad] except that We inspired him [saying]: Lā ilāha illā Ana (None has the right to be worshipped but I [Allāh]). So worship Me [Alone and none else]!\(^{19}\)

[This is] a Book whose verses are perfected [in every sphere of knowledge, etc] and then explained in detail by One [Allāh] Who is All-Wise and Well Acquainted [with all things]. [It says] worship none but Allāh. Verily, I [Muḥammad] am unto you one who warns and brings glad tidings from Him.\(^{20}\)

\(^{17}\) [Translator’s Note]: Imām Ibn ul-Qayyīm said that the meaning of Ṭāghūt is ‘everything whose limits the servant transgresses with regards to worshipping, obeying or following.’ An example of worshipping would be in worshipping idols, an example of obeying would be obeying scholars in matters exceeding the limits, and an example of following would be following a leader in matters exceeding the limits. Imām Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb defined it as ‘everything that is worshipped besides Allāh.’ - al-Qawl al-Mufid’ alā Kitāb-it-Tawḥīd [1/59-60] by Ibn ‘Uthaymīn.

\(^{18}\) Sūrah an-Nahl (16):36

\(^{19}\) Sūrah al-Anbiyā’ (21):25

The reality and essence of this worship is to single out Allāh, the One free from defect, in all of the actions of worship that are performed by the servant [of Allāh]. These acts include supplication, reverential fear, hope, prayers, fasting, sacrifice, making vows, and other than these from all the different types of worship, by way of submission, humility, fervent desire, awe and dread, along with complete love for Him and humility before His Greatness.

Most of the Noble Qurʾān was sent down for this great principle. Allāh the Most High says,

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ السُّبْحَانَ بِالْحَقِّ أَنْبِيَّ الَّذِينَ مُخْلِصُوا لِلَّهِ

So worship Allāh by doing religious deeds sincerely for His Sake alone, not showing off and not setting up rivals with Him in worship. Surely the religion [i.e. worship and obedience] is for Allāh only.21

وَقَضَى رَبُّكَ أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ لِنَفْسِكَ وَنَاسِكَ آيَةً

And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.22

فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هُمُ الْكَفَّارُ وَلَوْ كَفَرُوا أَلْكُفَّرُونَ

So worship Allāh, making the religion purely for Him, even though the unbelievers hate it.23

21 Sūrah al-Zumar (39):2-3
22 Sūrah al-İsrā (17):23
23 Sūrah al-Ghāfir (40):14
In the two Šahih24 on the authority of Muʿāḍh, raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu, who said that the Prophet sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām said, “Allāh’s right over the people is that they worship Him alone and do not associate any partners with Him.”

Belief in Allāh also includes the belief in all that He has made obligatory upon His slaves such as the five pillars of Islām. The five pillars are: Testifying that none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh and that Muḥammad sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām is the Messenger of Allāh; establishing the prayer (Ṣalāh); giving the charity (Zakāh); fasting in Ramadān; performing the Ḥajj to the House of Allāh for those who are able: and the other obligations that come in the pure Shariʿah.

The most important and greatest pillar is the testification that none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh and that Muhammad sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām is the Messenger of Allāh.

Testifying to Lā ilāha ill Allāh necessitates sincere and sole worship of Allāh Alone, negating the worship of anything else. Therefore, the meaning [of Lā ilāha ill Allāh] is that there is nothing that deserves to be worshipped except Allāh. Hence whatever is worshipped besides Allāh, whether it is a man, an angel, a jinn, or anything else is false and invalid. Indeed, the One Who truly and rightfully deserves to be worshipped is Allāh alone. He says,

```
ذَلِكَ يَأُبَيْنِكَ اللَّهُ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَا مَا يَكُونُ غَوْبَةً مِن
دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَيْلِ
```

24 Šahih al-Bukhārī and Šahih Muslim.
That is because Allāh - He is the Truth [the only True God of all that exists, Who has no partners or rivals with Him], and what they [the polytheists] invoke besides Him is falsehood.\(^{25}\)

It has been mentioned previously that Allāh the Exalted created the jinn and humans for this great purpose [of worshipping Allāh alone] and ordered them to stand by it. It for this reason that He sent His Messengers and revealed His Books. So consider this carefully and reflect upon it often so that it may become clear to you; and that you may realise [the fallacy] that many Muslims have fallen into due to their great ignorance with regards to this principle - to the point that they worship others besides Allāh! They have given others the rights particular to Allāh - and Allāh is the Source of Help!

Belief in Allāh also includes the belief that He is the sole Creator of the universe, the One who Regulates and Governs the affairs of His creation in accordance with His Knowledge and Power, as and how He Wills. He is the Master of the World and the Hereafter and the Lord of the entire universe. There is no creator other than Him, and there is no lord except Him. None shares with Him in any of these qualities.

[This belief further includes knowing that] He sent the Messengers and revealed the Books in order to correct and purify the slaves, to call them to that which would correct them and bestow upon them victory in this life and in the Hereafter. He the Most High says,

\(^{25}\)Sūrah al-Hājj (22):62
Allāh is the Creator of all things and He is the Wakīl (Trustee, Disposer of affairs, Guardian, etc) of all things.\textsuperscript{26}

Indeed, your Lord is Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then He Istawā (rose above) the Throne. He covers the night with the day, seeking it rapidly, and [He created] the sun, the moon, the stars subjected to His command. Surely, His is the creation and commandment. Blessed be Allāh, the Lord of the ‘Ālamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)!\textsuperscript{27}

Belief in Allāh also includes believing in His beautiful Names and lofty Attributes. They are mentioned in His Great Book and have been affirmed by His trustworthy Messenger \textit{sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām}. [We believe in these Names and Attributes without \textit{tāhir} (distorting the wording or the meaning), \textit{ta‘īl} (divesting or denying the attributes),\textsuperscript{28} \textit{takyif} (asking how) or \textit{tamthil} (re-}

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Sūrah az-Zumar (39):62}
\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Sūrah al-‘Ārəf (7):54}
\textsuperscript{28} [Translator’s note]: Whether this is by denying the wording or the meaning,
sembling Allâh to His creation). Rather it is obligatory to leave them as they came without enquiring into the nature of [His Attributes] or how they are, while believing in the meaning that they carry. These are descriptions of Allâh the Mighty and Majestic, and it is obligatory to describe Him with them in a way that befits Him without resembling Him to His creation in any of His Attributes.

Allâh the Most High says,


There is nothing like Him and He is the All-Hearer, the All-See.29


And do not put forward any similitude for Allâh. Indeed, Allâh Knows and you do not know.30

This is the ‘Aqidah of Abl-us-Sunnah wal-Jama’âb31 from the companions of the Messenger of Allâh sall Allâhu ‘alayhi wa sallâm and those who follow them in goodness. This is what has also been quoted by Imâm Abû’l-Hasân al-Ash’arî (d. 324H), rahimahullâh, in his book: ‘Al-Maqâlât ‘an As-hâbil-Hadîth wa Abl-is-Sunnah’. Many others from the People of Knowledge and eemaan have also stated this.

29 Sûrah ash-Shûrah (42):11
30 Sûrah an-Nahl (16):74
31 [Translator’s note]: Abl-us-Sunnah wal-Jama’âb -The people who follow the way of the Prophet sall Allâhu ‘alayhi wa sallâm and unite upon it.
Imám al-Awzā‘ī 32 (d. 157H), rahimahullah, said, “Az-Zuhrī (d. 124H) and Mak-hul were asked about the āyāt regarding the Attributes of Allāh and they replied, ‘Leave them as they are.’” 33

Al-Walid Ibn Muslim, rahimahullah, said, “Mālik 34 (d. 179H), al-Awzā‘ī, Layth Ibn Sa‘ad (d. 175H) and Sufyān ath-Thawrī (d. 167H), rahimahullah, were asked about the reports concerning the Attributes [of Allāh] and they all replied, ‘Leave them as they are without asking how.’” 35

Al-Awzā‘ī, rahimahullah, said, “We would say while the Tābi‘ūn 36 were many, ‘Indeed Allāh, the Most Perfect, is above His Throne and we have Īmān in what is related in the Sunnah concerning the Attributes [of Allāh].’” 37

32 [Translator’s note]: He is ’Abdur-Rahmān Ibn ‘Amr al-Awzā‘ī - the Scholar, devout worshipper and mujāhid. Al-Ḥākim said, “Al-Awzā‘ī was the Imám of the people of his time in general and he was the Imám of the people of Shām in particular.” He died in Beirut. Refer to at-Tadhkīrāt (1/178) and al-Ḥiyyāb (6/135) for his biography.

33 [Translator’s note]: Related by al-Ḥarawī in Dham-ul-Kalām (p.18) and Sharb Usūl ul-Wtqād (3/430) with a hasan isnād.

34 [Translator’s note]: He is Abū ‘Abdillāh Mālik Ibn Anas, the Imám from Madīnah and one of the scholars of Abu-us-Sunnah wa-Jama‘ab. Imám ash-Shāfī‘ī said: “When the scholars are mentioned, then Mālik is a dazzling star.” Refer to Siyār Aṭlam-un-Nubulā (7/366) by adḥ-Dhahābī for a complete biography.

35 [Translator’s note]: Related by al-Ājurī (d. 360H) in asb-Sharī‘ab (p.314), al-Bayhaqī in al-Asmā‘ was-Sīfāt (p.453) and also al-Wtqād (p.118) and the isnād is basān.

36 [Translator’s note]: Tābi‘īn - The successors to the companions of the Messenger of Allāh sallAllāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām.

37 [Translator’s note]: Related by al-Bayhaqī in al-Asmā‘ was-Sīfāt (p.408). The isnād is jayyid as al-Ḥāfiz Ibn Hajr said in Fath-ul-Bārī (13/406). Ibn Taymiyah said that its isnād was ṣahih in al-Ḥamawīyāb.
The Shaykh of Imām Mālik, Rabī'ah Ibn Abī 'Abdir-Raḥmān38 (d. 136H), rahimahullāh said, “Al-Istiwa”39 (Allāh’s ascending) is not unknown, and how is incomprehensible. From Allāh is the Message, upon the Messenger is to clearly convey it, and upon us is to affirm it!” 40

Imām Mālik41 (d. 179H), rahimahullāh, was asked about [how Allāh made] al-Istiwa to which he replied, “Al-Istiwa is known and how is unknown. To have faith in it is obligatory and to question [how] is an innovation.” Then he said to the questioner, “I do not think except that you are an evil man!” So he ordered him to be expelled.42

---

38 [Translator’s note]: He is Rabī’ah Ibn Abī ‘Abdir-Raḥmān - better known as Rabī’at-ur-Ra‘ī - one of the Ṭabi‘ūn from Madīnah. Al-Khaṭīb said: “He was a Faqīh, a Scholar and a Hāfīz in Fiqh and Hadīth.” Refer to Tārīkh Bagdād (8/420) and Hilyat-ul-Awliyā’ (3/259) for his biography.

39 [Translator’s note]: Allāh says in numerous places in the Qur’ān that He Iṣtiwā (Rose over) His Throne [in a way that befits His Majesty], for example: “Indeed, your Lord is He Who created the Heavens and the Earth in six days, then He Iṣtiwā (Rose over) the Throne.” [Sūrah al-‘Arāf (7):54.]

40 [Translator’s note]: Al-Asmā’ was-Sifāt (pg. 516). Ibn Taymiyyah said in al-Hamawīyāh (pg. 80), “al-Khālid narrated it with an isnād consisting of trustworthy and precise narrators.” Al-Allānī said that the isnād was Ṣaḥīḥ in Mukhtasar al-‘Ulwā (pg. 132).

41 See footnote no. 34.

42 [Translator’s note]: Related by al-Bayhaqī in al-Asmā’ was-Sifāt (p. 516) with the wording; “Al-Iṣtiwā is not unknown. To have Ḥiṣn in it is obligatory and to question it is an innovation.” Al-Allānī said that the narration was established in Mukhtasar al-‘Ulwā (p. 141). Al-Bayhaqī also relates (p.516), as does ad-Dārīmī in ar-Radd ‘al-Ẓabīyāh (p. 55) - with a Ḥaṣīd isnād, as Ibn Haṣr says in Fath-al-Baḥār (13/406) - that Imām Mālik said: “Ar-Raḥmān [Allāh] ascended as He Himself described, and it is not to be asked ‘How?’ as how is unknown.”
This has also been related from *Umm-ul-Mu‘minin*, Umm Salamah, *radiy Allāhu ‘anbā*.  

‘Abdullāh Ibn al-Mubārak (d. 181H), *rahimahullāh*, said, “We know that our Lord, the Most Perfect, is above the heavens, above His ‘Arsh (Throne), separate from His creation.”  

Indeed, there are many statements of the scholars about this matter and it is not possible to relate them all in such a short space. However, whosoever further desires to be acquainted with these narrations then let him turn to the books of the Scholars of the Sunnah concerning this subject, such as: *Kitāb-us-Sunnah* by ‘Abdullāh the son of Imām Aḥmad (d. 290H), *Kitāb-us-Tawḥīd* by the Great Imām, Muḥammad Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311H), *Kitāb-us-Sunnah* by Abū-Qāsim al-Lālikā’ī (d. 414) and *Kitāb-us-Sunnah* by

---

43 [Translator’s note]: *Umm-ul-Mu‘minin* - Mother of the Believers. This term was used for the Prophet’s wives.

44 [Translator’s note]: The isnād is dā’if. The Shaykh was correct in his using the term ‘rawiya’ thereby denoting that he considered the narration to be weak. Adh-Dhahābī said in al-‘Uluw (p. 82): ‘This saying has been preserved from a group such as Rabi‘at-ur-Ra‘î, Mālik and Abū Ja‘far at-Tirmidhī. However, the narration from Umm Salamah is not authentic - since Abū Kinānah is not reliable and Abū ‘Amīr is not known.’

45 [Translator’s note]: He is Abū ‘Abdir-Rahmān ‘Abdullāh Ibn al-Mubārak al-Marwāzī, the Imām from the Atbā‘-ut-Tābi‘īn, the Ḥāfiz, the Shaykh of Islām, an example for the people of Zubād and a leader of the Muḥāhidīn. Refer to Tārikh Baghdād (1/152) and at-Tadbirīrah (1/274) for his biography.

46 [Translator’s note]: Reported by Imām ‘Abdullāh bin Ahmad in his book as-Sunnah (no. 22), ad-Dārimī in Ar-Radd ‘alal-Jahmiyah (no. 23), and al-Bukhārī in Khalq Atf al-ul-Tabād.

47 [Translator’s note]: Please see the Appendix for further statements of the scholars concerning this matter.
Abū Bakr Ibn Abī ‘Āsim (d. 278H).

Refer also to the reply given by Shaykh-ul-Islām Ibn Taymīyah (d. 728H) to the people of Ḥamah (entitled al-‘Aqidah-ul-Ḥamawiyah) as it is a great reply, full of benefit. In it he, rahimahullāh, has made clear the ‘Aqidah of Abl-us-Sunnah quoting much of their words and the textual and intellectual evidences thereby proving the correctness of what Abl-us-Sunnah say and the futility of those who oppose them.

Likewise, refer to his book entitled al-‘Aqidah-ut-Tadmuriyah in which he established and explained the ‘Aqidah of Abl-us-Sunnah with both proofs from the texts [i.e. the sources of the Religion] and proofs from sound reasoning. In this treatise he has - for all those who read it with a righteous intention desiring to realise the truth - thoroughly refuted all opposition such that the truth is clarified and falsehood vanquished.

All those who oppose Abl-us-Sunnah in their ‘Aqidah concerning Allāh’s Names and Attributes will necessarily fall into opposing the textual evidences and sound reasoning and will fall into obvious self-contradiction concerning all that Allāh has affirmed or negated for Himself.

_Abl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah _affirm for Allāh the Most Perfect, what He has affirmed for Himself in His Noble Book or what has been affirmed for Him by His Messenger Muḥammad sall Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallām in the authentic Sunnah. [They affirm this] without _tambil_ (resembling), absolving Allāh the Most Perfect from any resemblance to His creation, whilst also rejecting and being free from _ta‘til_ (negation). By doing this they have secured themselves against falling into self-contradiction and have enacted all
of the evidences [as opposed to rejecting some and accepting others]. Indeed, this is the way of Allāh concerning the one who holds fast to the truth with which Allāh sent His Messengers and is sincere in his quest for it: He makes him conform to the truth and makes its evidences clear. Allāh the Most High says,

Nay! We hurl truth against falsehood so it destroys it; and behold, falsehood is vanquished...

And no example or similitude do they bring except that We reveal to you the truth and the best explanation thereof...

*Al-Hāfir* Ibn Kathīr (d. 774H), *rahimahullāh*, in his famous explanation [of the Qurʾān] whilst commenting upon the saying of Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic,

Indeed, your Lord is He Who created the Heavens and the Earth in six days, then He *Istiwā* (Rose over) the Throne

explained this issue in a most beautiful manner. I have quoted it here in its entirety due to its great benefit:

49. *Surah al-Furqān* (25):33
50. *Surah al-Aʾrāf* (7):54
The stances of the people concerning this issue are many. However, this is not the place to enter into a detailed discussion about it. Indeed, the path we traverse in this issue is to follow the way of the Pious Predecessors such as Mālik, al-Awzāʿī, ath-Thawrī, Layth Ibn Saʿad, ash-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad, Is-ḥāq Ibn Rāḥawayh and others from the Scholars of the Muslims, both past and present. Their way is to leave them [the Attributes of Allāh] as they are without takyīf (asking how), tashbih (resembling them to the attributes of the creation), or taʿtil (denying their wording or meaning). Indeed, Allāh does not resemble anything of His creation in any way,

لاَّ إِنَّ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فِي الْخَلْقِ شَيْءٌ مَّلَحْقٌ مِّنْهُ عَلَيْهِ البَشْرِ

There is nothing like Him, He is all-Hearing, all-Seeing.51

Rather, the matter is as the Scholars such as Nuʿaym Ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Khuzāʿī (d. 228H), the Shaykh of al-Bukhārī said, “Whosoever resembles (makes tashbih of) Allāh to His creation has committed kufr (disbelief) and whoever denies what Allāh has described Himself with has also committed kufr. Indeed, there is no tashbih at all in that which Allāh has described Himself with, or what His Messenger has described Him with.” 52 Whoever affirms for Allāh the Most High, what is related in the clear Ayāt and the authen-

51 Surah ash-Shūrah (42):11
52 [Translator’s note]: Related by Imām al-Dhahabī with his isnād in Mukhtasar al-ʿUlūm (pg. 184) and al-Albānī said that its isnād was Ṣāhib.
tic narrations in a way that befits Allāh’s Greatness and Majesty, whilst also denying and negating from Allāh the Most High any defects and imperfections; then such a person has truly traversed the path of Guidance.” 53

CHAPTER THREE

Īmān in the Angels

Belief in the angels is realised in a general and a specific sense.

The general sense of this belief is realised when the Muslim believes that Allāh has angels who He created to obey Him. He describes them as being revered slaves who give His Word sole precedence and do whatever He Commands.

He knows what is before them and what is behind them, they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased. They stand in awe of Him.\(^{54}\)

The angels are of many different varieties. Some of them are responsible for carrying the Throne, some guard the Paradise and the Hell-Fire and some of them are responsible for writing down people’s actions.

As for the specific sense of belief in the angels, then we be-

\(^{54}\text{Sūrah al-Anbiyā` (21): 28}\)
lieve in those angels who have been mentioned by name by Allāh and His Messenger sall Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallām. These include Jibrīl, Mīkā'il, Mālik the guardian of the Hell-Fire, and Isrāfīl the one responsible for blowing the trumpet, and he has been mentioned in authentic aḥādīth.

[We also believe] in that which has been established in the authentic narration of 'Ā'ishah, raḍiyyAllāhu 'anha, wherein the Prophet sall Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallām said, “The angels were created from light, the jinn were created from a smokeless flame of fire and Ādam was created from that which has been described to you [by Allāh in the Qur'ān].” ⁵⁵ Reported by Muslim in his Ṣaḥīḥ.

⁵⁵ [Translator’s note]: For example, the saying of Allāh, “And He created man from clay like [that of] pottery” - Sūrah ar-Raḥmān (55):14
CHAPTER FOUR

İmān in the Books

It is obligatory to have a general belief that Allāh, the One free from defect, sent down Books to His Prophets and Messengers in order that they may explain and clarify His right and to call to Him. He, the Most High, says,

لاقِدَ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُزُولَاتٍ وَأَنزَلْنَا مِثْلَ كُلِّ كِتَابٍ وَالْعِزَّةَ لِيَقُومُ النَّاسُ بِالْقَيْسِ

Indeed, We have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs and revealing with them the Book and the Balance (justice) that mankind may stand forth in justice. 56

وَكَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً واحِدَةً فِي عِبَادَتِنَا نَبِيٌّ مُبَشِّرٌ وَمُنذِرٌ وَأَنزَلْنَا مِثلَ كُلِّ كِتَابٍ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمُ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي مَا أَخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ

Mankind were one community and Allāh sent Prophets with glad tidings and warnings, and with them he sent the Book in truth to judge between

56 Sūrah al-Hadid (57): 25
people in matters wherein they differed.\textsuperscript{57}

Specifically, we believe in those Books which Allāh has mentioned by name, including the Tawrah, the Injīl, the Zabūr and the Qur'ān.

The Noble Qur'ān is the best and last of the Books. It is the Muhaymin\textsuperscript{58} of the other books and testifies to the truth that remains within them. It is obligatory upon everyone to follow it and to judge by it along with the authentic Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh, Muhammad sall Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallām. This is because Allāh, the One free from all defect, sent Muḥammad sall Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallām as a messenger to all of mankind and the jinn. He sent this Qur'ān so that it may be employed to judge between them. He made it a cure for what is in the hearts, He made it a clarification for everything and He made it guidance and a Mercy for the Believers. Allāh says,

\[
\text{وَبَعْثَنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تَبَيَّنًا لِكُلٍّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى}
\]

And We have sent down to you the Book [Qur'ān] as an exposition of everything and as guidance and a mercy, and glad tidings are for those who have surrendered [to Allāh, as Muslims].\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{57} Sūrah al-Baqarah (2):213

\textsuperscript{58} [Translator’s note]: Trustworthy and a witness over the old Books.

\textsuperscript{59} Sūrah al-Nahl (16):89
Say [O Muḥammad]: O Mankind! Verily I am Allāh’s Messenger to you all - to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, there is none Who has the right to be worshipped except He, and it is He that gives life and causes death. So believe in Allāh and His Messenger [Muḥammad], the Prophet who can neither read nor write, who believes in Allāh and His Words [this Qur’ān]; follow him so that you may be guided.⁶⁰

There are many verses carrying this meaning.

⁶⁰ Sūrah al-ʾAʿrāf (7):158
CHAPTER FIVE

Ímān in the Messengers

It is obligatory to believe in the Messengers generally, and specifically.

So we believe that Allāh, the One free from defect, sent Messengers to His slaves. They were sent to give glad tidings, to warn and to call to the Truth. Whoever responds to them will achieve happiness and whoever opposes them will remain in failure and regret.

The last and best of the Messengers is our Messenger, Muḥammad the son of ‘Abdullāh sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām. Allāh says,

وَلَقَدْ بَعَضَنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا اُبْتَدَأْتُ بِأَبِيِّنَا لَهُ مَن يُعْبِدُ إِلَّahuُ وَمُحَمَّدُ نَبِيُّ أَلَّا تَلَغُوا

And verily We have sent amongst every nation a Messenger [saying]: Worship Allāh [Alone] and avoid all false deities.\(^\text{61}\)

\(^{61}\text{Sūrah an-Nahl (16):36}\)
[We sent] Messengers as bearers of good news as well as of warning in order that mankind should have no plea against Allāh after the Messengers.\textsuperscript{62}

Specifically we believe in those Prophets and Messengers whom Allāh or His Messenger \textit{sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām} mentioned by name including Nūh, Ḥūd, Sāliḥ and Ibrāhīm, may Allāh’s Peace and Blessings be upon all of them.

\textsuperscript{62} \textit{Sūrah an-Nisā} (4):165
CHAPTER SIX

Īmān in the Last Day

Belief in the Last Day encompasses believing in all that Allāh and His Messenger sall Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallām have stated concerning it. This includes what will happen after death such as the trial of the grave, its punishment and its blessings; what will happen on the Day of Judgement including the trials, the hardships, the Bridge, the Balance, the Account, the recompense and the distribution of the books⁶³ amongst the people. Some will be receiving their book with their right hands, and others receiving their book in their left hands or behind their backs.

Belief [in the Last Day also] includes: The belief in the fountain (ḥawd) - the drinking place of our Prophet Muḥammad sall Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallām, the belief in the Paradise and the Hell-Fire, the believers seeing their Lord and His Speaking to them and other aspects and events revealed in the Noble Qur’ān and the authentic Sunnah of the Messenger Muḥammad sall Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallām.

It is obligatory to believe in all of this and to affirm it as being true exactly as has been narrated to us by Allāh and His Messenger sall Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallām.

---

⁶³ [Translator’s note]: The record of each person’s deeds.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Īmān in Predestination

Belief in Predestination consists of four matters:

Firstly, that Allāh knows all that has happened and all that will happen. He knows the conditions of His slaves. He knows their sustenance, their appointed times of death, their [good and bad] deeds and everything else to do with them. Nothing is hidden from Him as He the Most High says,

إنَّللهَيَكِنَّكُمْ شِئَاتٍ عَلَىٰهُم

Indeed, Allāh has knowledge of all things.\(^{64}\)

لَيُعَلِّمُكُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلَٰمَةً

That you may know that Allāh has power over all things and that Allāh surrounds [comprehends] all things in [His] knowledge.\(^{65}\)

Secondly, to believe that Allāh has written everything that He

\(^{64}\) Sūrah at-Tawbah (9):115

\(^{65}\) Sūrah at-Talāq (65):12
has Predestined or Preordained.\textsuperscript{66} Allāh says,

\begin{center}
\textit{Qad’umāna an-nāqṣ al-‘ard min hāmīm wa ‘udnā ‘akn̄ūb hifīz̄.}
\end{center}

We know that which the earth takes of them [their dead bodies], and with Us is a record that contains [everything].\textsuperscript{67}

\begin{center}
\textit{Wāli shi‘i ‘ahsīnāni fī ‘amā ‘umāni.}
\end{center}

And all things We have counted up [as a record] in a clear Book.\textsuperscript{68}

\begin{center}
\textit{Al-n̄āum ‘āt Allāh yu‘ālm ma‘īn al-samā‘a wa al-‘ard ‘in za‘āk.}
\end{center}

Are you not aware that Allāh knows all that is in the heaven and on the earth? Verily, it is [all] in a record. Verily, that is easy for Allāh.\textsuperscript{69}

Thirdly, to believe that His Will is continuously being implemented. So whatever He Wills happens and whatever He does not Will does not happen. Allāh, the One free from defect says,

\textsuperscript{66} [Translator’s note]: Arabic - \textit{Qadarahu wa Qadbahu}. \textit{Qadar} (Preordainment) refers to the Ability of Allāh, His Writing, Knowing, Willing and Creating all things. \textit{Qadbā} (Predestination) refers to the precise execution and accomplishment of all things predestined. When mentioned alone \textit{Qadar} includes the meaning of \textit{Qadbā} and vice-versa. ‘Fate in Islām’ (pp. 9-10) of Dr. Saleh as-Saleh.

\textsuperscript{67} \textit{Sūrah Qāf} (50):4

\textsuperscript{68} \textit{Sūrah Yā Sin} (36):12

\textsuperscript{69} \textit{Sūrah al-Hāj} (22):70
Verily, Allāh does what He Wills.⁷⁰

Verily His command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, 'Be' and it is!⁷¹

And you do not will unless Allāh Wills, the Lord of the worlds.⁷²

Fourthly, [belief in] His creating everything that exists [including actions]. There is no creator other than Him and no lord apart than Him. Allāh the Most High says,

Allāh is the Creator of all things and He is the Guardian over all things.⁷³

O mankind! Remember the grace of Allāh to you!

⁷⁰ Sūrah al-Hajj (22):18
⁷¹ Sūrah Ṭā Sin (36):82
⁷² Sūrah at-Takwīr (81):29
⁷³ Sūrah az-Zumar (39):62
duces for you from the sky and the earth? None has the right to be worshipped but He, how then are you turning away [from Him]?

Thus the belief in Predestination comprises of these four matters according to *Abd-al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah*, as opposed to those from the people of innovation who reject some of these subjects.

---

74 *Sūrah Fātir* (35):3
CHAPTER EIGHT

Other Points Concerning Īmān

Belief in Allāh includes the belief that Īmān is comprised of statement and action. It increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience. It is not allowed to declare any Muslim who commits a sin other than shirk (associating partners with Allāh) and disbelief, to be a non-believer. [Some examples of sins are] fornication, stealing, dealing with interest, consuming intoxicants, disobeying parents, and other such issues from the major sins. [One cannot call someone a disbeliever if he does any of these sins] provided that he does not consider them to be permissible [in which case he would be a disbeliever]. Allāh the Most High says,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يُغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشَرَّكَ يُعْفَرْ وَلَكِنْ يُنَبِّئُ يَدَاكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ

Indeed, Allāh will not forgive shirk, but will forgive anything less than this.\(^{75}\)

It is established from the Messenger of Allāh sall Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallām from abādīth mutawātīr\(^{76}\) that, Allāh will take all those who have a mustard seed’s weight of Īmān out of the Fire.

\(^{75}\)Surah an-Nisāʾ (4): 48

\(^{76}\) [Translator’s note]: Abādīth that have been transmitted by such a large number of people that the narrators cannot be expected to agree upon a lie - al-Mūqizāb (p. 40) by adh-Dhahabī
İmân in Allâh also includes loving for the sake of Allâh and hating for the sake of Allâh, having friendship for the sake of Allâh and having enmity for the sake of Allâh. So the believer loves the other believers and has allegiance to them while he hates the non-Muslims and has enmity towards them.

At the head of the believers from this [Muslim] nation (Ummah) are the companions (sahâbah) of the Messenger of Allâh sall Allâhu ‘alayhi wa sallâm. Abl-us-Sunnah wal-Jama‘ah love them and have allegiance to them. They believe that they are the best of people after the Prophets, as the Prophet sall Allâhu ‘alayhi wa sallâm said, “The best of generations is my generation, then those who follow them, and then those who follow them.”

They believe that the best of them is Abû Bakr as-Şiddîq,78 then ‘Umar al-Fârûq,79 then‘Uthmân Dhun-Nūrayn80 and then ‘Alî al-Murtadâ,81 radiy Allâhu ‘anhum. After them come the rest of the ten who were promised Paradise and then the rest of the companions of the Messenger of Allâh sall Allâhu ‘alayhi wa sallâm. [Abl-us-Sunnah wal-Jama‘ah] remain silent about the disputes that occurred between the companions and they believe that they each sincerely strove to reach a judgement [concerning the issue]. Whoever was correct will receive two rewards and whoever was incorrect will receive one reward [for his striving].

77 Agreed upon as regards its authenticity.
78 [Translator’s note]: The truthful one.
79 [Translator’s note]: The one who distinguishes between truth and falsehood.
80 [Translator’s note]: The possessor of the two lights (named so because he married two of the daughters of the Messenger of Allâh sall Allâhu ‘alayhi wa sallâm).
81 [Translator’s note]: The chosen one.
[Ahl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah] love the believers amongst the family of the Messenger of Allāh. They show allegiance to them as well as the wives of the Messenger of Allāh - the Mothers of the believers - and they are pleased with them all.

[Ahl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah] are free from the path of the Rawāfidh who show enmity towards the companions of the Messenger of Allāh sall Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallām and revile them, who over extol the Abl-ul-Bayt (the family of the Prophet sall Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallām) and raise them above the position that Allāh, the Most High, has given them. Likewise [Ahl-us-Sunnah] are free from the path of the Nawāsib who harmed the Abl-ul-Bayt by speech or by action.

All that we have mentioned in this brief discussion concerning the correct 'Aqīdah which Allāh sent His Messenger, Muḥammad sall Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallām with, is the 'Aqīdah of the saved sect, Abl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah. The Prophet sall Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallām said about them, “There will not cease to be a group from my [Muslim] nation being aided upon the Truth, not being harmed by those who oppose them until the command of Allāh, the One far from defect, is established.”

He sall Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallām also said, “The Jews split into seventy-one sects, the Christians split into seventy-two sects and this [Muslim] nation will split into seventy-three sects. All of them are in the Fire except one.” So his companions asked, “Who are they, oh Messenger of Allāh?” He replied, “Those who are upon what I and my companions are upon.”

82 [Translator's note]: Rawāfidh - A group from among the shī'ah.
83 [Translator's note]: Nawāsib - A sect who hated the family of the Prophet Muḥammad sall Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallām.
It is compulsory to cling to this ‘Aqidah, to be firm upon it and to warn against that which opposes it.

Those who have deviated from this ‘Aqidah and who remain on that which opposes it are of many types. From them are those who worship idols, angels, saints, the jinn, trees, and stones amongst other things. Therefore, such people have not responded to the call of the Messengers. Rather they have opposed them and have gone against them just as the Quraysh and the Arab tribes at the time of our Prophet sall Allâhu ‘alayhi wa sallâm did. They [the pagan Arabs] would ask their idols to fulfil their needs, to cure their sick and to grant them victory over their enemies. They would go to them sacrificing to them and taking oaths by them. Then, when the Prophet sall Allâhu ‘alayhi wa sallâm forbade them from this and commanded them to make their worship sincerely for Allâh alone, they considered this to be strange and rejected it. They said,

أَجَعَلَ الْأَرْزَاعَ إِلَىٰ هُذَا وَجَدَّ أَنَّ هَذَا رَعْبًا

Has he made all the gods into one god? Indeed, this is a strange thing! 84

However, the Prophet sall Allâhu ‘alayhi wa sallâm did not cease to call them to Allâh and warn them against associating partners with Allâh (shirk). He sall Allâhu ‘alayhi wa sallâm explained to them the reality of what he was calling them to, until whomever Allâh Willed to be guided was guided. Then after that, people entered the religion of Allâh in huge numbers. Hence the religion of Allâh was made triumphant over all other religions after

84 Sûrah Sâd (38): 5
the persistent calling and the long and arduous struggle of the Messenger of Allah sall Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallām and his companions, ṭadīy Allābu ʿanhum, and those who followed them in goodness.

Then [after the passing of time] the situation changed and ignorance prevailed over most of the creation to the point that most returned to the way of ignorance through their over-exalting the prophets and the pious. They would supplicate to them, ask them for aid and relief and commit other types of shirk! They did not know the meaning of Lā ilāha ill Allāh (nothing has the right to be worshipped except Allāh) while even the non-believing Arabs [at the time of the Prophet sall Allāhu ʿalayhi wa sallām] knew its meaning! Allāh is the source of Help!

This shirk continued to spread amongst the people until our time because of the predominance of ignorance and because of the long interval between our time and the time of Prophethood. The doubts of these later people are the same as those of the former peoples [the polytheists of Makkah]. They said, [as Allāh tells us in the Qur’ān],

\[
\text{ويَفُؤُورُونَ هَتْوَلُونَ شَفَعَتُونَ أَبْنَاءَ نَارِ}
\]

These are our intercessors with Allāh\(^{85}\)

\[
\text{مَنْ عَبَدْتُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقُرِّبُونَ إِلَيْنَا لِلَّهَ رُفِيعًا}
\]

We worship them only so that they may bring us closer to Allāh.\(^{86}\)

\(^{85}\) Sūrah Yūnus (10): 18

\(^{86}\) Sūrah aṣ-Ṣumār (39): 3
Allāh has refuted this doubt/error and has explained that whoever worships other than Him, no matter what it may be has indeed associated partners with Him and has disbelieved! Allāh the Most High says,

وَيَصَبُّوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لا يَضُرُّهُمُ وَلا يَنفَعُهُم
وَيَقُولُونَ هَؤُلاءُ شَفَعَاءُنَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

And they worship besides Allāh things that do not hurt them, nor profit them and they say: these are our intercessors with Allāh.\(^{87}\)

So Allāh the Most High replies to them by saying:

قُلِ أُنْبِئُوهُمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَعْلَمَ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِنْ عَلَّمَهُمْ قَدْ قَدَّرْتُهُمْ

Say: Do you inform Allāh about that which He does not know in the heavens or on earth? Glory be to Him! And He is far above [the partners] they associate [with Him].\(^{88}\)

In these verses, Allāh is explaining that to worship other than Him, such as the prophets, the pious, or other than them, is major shirk, even if the one who does it calls it something else. Allāh the Most High says,

\(^{87}\) **Sūrah Yūnus** (10):18

\(^{88}\) **Sūrah Yūnus** (10):18
And those who take protecting friends beside Him [say]: We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allāh.  

[Again], Allāh the Most High replies to them by saying:

Verily! Allāh will judge between them concerning that wherein they differ. Truly Allāh guides not him who is a liar and a disbeliever.

Allāh the Most High explains in these verses, that their worship of other than Him through their supplication [to them], their fear [of them], their hope [in them] and other such things is disbelief in Allāh, the One far from defect. Indeed, He declared them to be liars in their saying that these things they worship bring them closer to Allāh.

From those creeds of unbelief in opposition to the correct ‘Aqidah and that which the Messengers came with are:

What is believed by the atheists of this era from amongst the followers of Marx, Lenin and others who call to atheism and disbelief. This is regardless of whether they label it socialism,

89 Qur’an al-Zumar (39):3
90 Qur’an al-Zumar (39):3
communism, ba‘thism or other such names. For indeed, these foundations are all the same. From their principles are that there is no god and that life is only material. And from their principles: the rejection of the Resurrection, Paradise and Hell-Fire and in fact to disbelief in all the religions. Whosoever looks into their books and studies what they are upon will come to know with certainty that this belief is in opposition to all the revealed religions [in their original form] and leads its adherents to the worst of punishments in this life and the Hereafter.

From the ‘Aqīdah that opposes the true belief is that which some Bātiniyyah and Sūfis believe: they believe that some of those whom they call Awliyā’ have a share in regulating and controlling the affairs of the world with Allāh. They call them al-Aqtāb, al-Awtād, and al-Agbwāth amongst other names, all of which they have invented for their gods! This is the vilest form of shirk in the Lordship of Allāh and it is more evil than the shirk of before the advent of Islām! This is because these people [the non-believing Arabs] did not commit shirk in Allāh’s Lordship but rather they committed shirk in regards to their worship. Furthermore, they committed this type of shirk only in times of ease. When they were in times of distress and hardship, they would make their worship sincerely for Allāh alone. Allāh says,

فإذا ركَّبُوا في السَّكِّبِ دعُوا اللَّهَ خَالِصَةً مَّنْ خَلَصَهُمُ اللَّهُ فَقُلُّوا

تَبَيَّنُوهَا إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ

And when they embark on the ships, they invoke Allāh, making their faith pure for Him only. But when He brings them safely to land, behold, they
give a share of their worship to others.\(^91\)

As for Lordship, then they used to acknowledge that this is for Allah Alone, as He, the One free from defect says,

وَلَيْن سَأَلْتُم مِّنَ خَلَقِهِمْ لِيُفْلِي الْحَلَوَةَ

And when you ask them who created them, they will surely say Allah.\(^92\)

قُلْ مِّنْ يَزِرُّفَكُمْ

فِنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ أَمَّن يَمْلِكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ وَمَنْ يَحْيِي

الْحَيَّ وَمَنْ يَمْتِمُّ لَلْمَمْتِمِّينَ لَمْ يَقْدِرُوا أَمََٰرَهُ

فَسَيُقُولُونَ عَلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَفِي نَقْوَةٍ

Say: Who provides for you from the sky and from the earth? Or who owns hearing and sight? And who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living? And who rules and regulates all affairs? They will say Allah. Say: Will you not then be afraid [about setting up rivals in worship with Allah]?\(^93\)

There are many Ayat with this meaning.

As for those who commit shirk from amongst the later people, then these have exceeded the earlier ones from two perspectives:

\(^91\) Surah al-Ankabūt (29):65
\(^92\) Surah az-Zukhruf (43):87
\(^93\) Surah Yūnus (10):31
Firstly, some of them have committed *shirk* in Lordship.

Secondly, they commit *shirk* in times of distress as well! One who lives amongst them, examines their affairs, and sees what they do at the graves of Ḥusayn and Badawī and others in Egypt knows this. Of what they do at the graves of Aīdrūs in Eden, of Hādī in Yemen, of Ibn ʿArabī in Syria, of the Shaykh ‘Abdul-Qādir al-Jilānī in Iraq, and at other famous graves. In all such places the general masses have gone to extremes and have directed many of the rights of Allāh towards them. It is rare to find one who forbids them from what they are doing and explains to them the reality of the *Tawḥīd*[^94] that Allāh sent his Prophet *sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām* those prophets who came before him with. To Allāh we belong and to Him we return!

We ask Allāh to return them to guidance and to increase the callers to guidance amongst them. [We ask Him also] to grant the ability to the leaders of the Muslims and the scholars to combat this *shirk*. Indeed, He is the One Who Hears and is close.

From those beliefs that oppose the correct creed in the issue pertaining to Allāh’s Names and Attributes are the beliefs of the innovators such as the *Jahmiyyah*, the *Mu’tazilah* and those who traverse their path in negating the Attributes of Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, divesting Him of the Attributes of perfection, describing Him with attributes of non-existence (*ma’dūm*),[^95] inanimacy (*jamād*) and absurdity (*mustāhil*) - Exalted is Allāh, High above what they say about Him!

[^94]: [Translator’s note]: *Tawḥīd* - Singling out Allāh in all that is particular to Him, in our knowledge of Him and in our worship of Him.
Included amongst these people are those who negate some of Allāh’s Attributes whilst affirming others, such as the *Ash‘ariyyah*. Indeed, the same implications hold for those Attributes that they affirm as it does for those that they flee from and negate by figuratively explaining (*ta‘wil*) the evidences for them.

In doing so they oppose [both] the textual and intellectual proofs, as well as fall into clear self-contradiction.\(^{96}\)

As for *Ahl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah*, they affirm for Allāh, the Most Perfect, those Names and Attributes that He affirmed for Himself, or those that His Messenger Muhammad *sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām* affirmed for Him; affirming them in a complete and perfect manner. Likewise they negate for Him any resemblance to His creation, whilst [at the same time] absolving themselves from denying or divesting (*ta‘til*) Him of His Attributes. In doing so they act upon all of the proofs, without committing *tabrīf* (distortion) or *ta‘til*, as well as remaining free from the contradictions that others have fallen into; as has been previously explained.

This is the path of salvation and [the path of] happiness in this life and the Hereafter. This is the Straight Path that was traversed

\(^{95}\) [Translator’s note]: Such as their saying that He, the Most High, is neither above nor below the creation.

\(^{96}\) [Translator’s note]: This is because they give the reason for making *ta‘wil* (figurative explanation) of some of the Attributes of Allāh to be the fear that the general masses might fall into *tashkīb* (likening Allāh to His creation). However, this same reasoning holds true for those Attributes that they do affirm, yet upon which they do not perform *ta‘wil*. Hence, they contradict themselves and the only permissible course is to follow the way of the Pious Predecessors as has preceded in the words of Ibn Kathīr.
by the Salaf\textsuperscript{97} of this Ummah (nation), as well as their Imāms.

Indeed, the latter part of this nation will not be rectified except by that which rectified the former of them; and that is none other than following the Book and the Sunnah and abandoning all that opposes them.

\textsuperscript{97}[Translator's note]: Salaf - The pious predecessors. The first three generations of Islām and those who followed them in righteousness. We understand Islām as they understood it, due to the saying of the Messenger of Allāh, "The best of mankind is my generation, then those who follow them, and then those who follow them." [Ṣahīh al-Bukhārī]
APPENDIX

The Position of the *Salaf*
Concerning Allāh’s Attributes

[i] Al-Awzā’i (d. 157H) said: I asked az-Zuhrī (d. 124H) and Mak-hūl about the verses pertaining to the Attributes [of Allāh], so they said, “Leave them as they came!” ⁹⁸

[ii] Al-Walīd Ibn Muslim said: I asked Mālik (d. 179H), al-Awzā’i, Layth Ibn Sa’ād (d. 175H) and Sufyān ath-Thawrī (d. 167H) about the reports concerning the Attributes, so they all said, “Leave them as the came, without asking how!” ⁹⁹

*Imām* adh-Dhahabī (d. 748H), *raḥimahullāh*, said, “I say: Mālik in his time was the *Imām* of the people of al-Madīnah, ath-Thawrī was the *Imām* of Kūfah, al-Awzā’i was the *Imām* of the people of Damascus, and Layth was the *Imām* of the people of Egypt; and they were from the senior (*kibār*) *Athbā’ut-Tābi‘īn*. And this report is a consensus (*ijma‘*) upon this, with the absence of Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥasān [Ash-Shaybānī] (d. 189H) the scholar (*faqih*) of

---

⁹⁸ Related by al-Lālikā’i in *Sharh Usūl Abl-is-Sunnah* (no.735) with a *hasān* chain.
⁹⁹ Related by al-ʿĀjurrī in *ash-Shari‘ah* (p.314) and al-Bayhaqī in *al-Āsmā’ was-Sīfāt* (p.453) with a *Ṣahīḥ* chain, as *Shaykh* al-Albānī stated in *Mukhtasar al-Ulum* (p.142).
Iraq.”

[iii] Rabī‘ah Ibn Abī ‘Abdir-Rahmān (d. 136H), the Shaykh of Imām Mālik, said, “Istiwā’ is not unknown, how is incomprehensible, from Allāh is the Message, upon the Messenger is to convey it, and upon us is to accept it.”

(iv) Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyaynah (d. 198H), ṭahimahullāh, said, “Everything that Allāh described Himself with in His Book, then its recitation is its explanation without asking how or resembling.”

[v] Imām Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥasan Ash-Shaybānī (d. 189H), ṭahimahullāh, said, “The Scholars from the east and the west are all united upon having faith in the Qur’ān and in the ahādīth that are related by the precise, reliable narrators (thiqāt) from Allāh’s Messenger sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām, concerning Allāh’s Attributes, without explanation or resemblance. Whoever explains anything from them this day, has left that which the Prophet sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām was upon and has split from the Jamā‘ah. For they neither described nor explained, but rather they gave verdicts with what was in the Book and the Sunnah, then remained silent. Whoever speaks with the view of Jahm [Ibn Safwān] has split from the Jamā‘ah, because he described Him with attributes

100 al-Arba’in fee Sīfātillāh (180/Q.1-2)
101 Related by al-Lālīkā’ī in Sharh Usūl Abl-is-Sunnah (no.665) and al-Bayhaqī (p.516). Ibn Taymiyyah said in al-Hamawīyāh (p.45): “Al-Khallāl reported it with a chain of narrators who are all precise and reliable (thiqāt) scholars.”
102 Related by al-Lālīkā’ī in Sharh Usūl Abl-is-Sunnah (p.736) and ad-Dāraqūṭnī in as-Sīfāt (p.61). Its chain is Ṣāḥīḥ as Ibn Hajr stated in Fath-ul-Bārī (13/501).
that are nothing.”  

Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728H) said in *Majmū‘ah al-Fatāwā* (5/50), “Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥasan learnt from Abū Hanīfah (d. 150H), Mālik, and [other] scholars of their level. He related a consensus (*ijma‘*) and informed that the *Jahmiyyah* continuously, or preponderantly describe [Allāh] with matters of negativity. As for his saying: ‘without explanation’, then what is intended by this is the explanation of the *Jahmiyyah*; those who innovated an explanation concerning the Attributes, which was in opposition to that which the Companions and their followers were firmly established upon.”  

[vi] Imām Aḥmad bin Hanbal (d. 214H), *raḥimahullāh*, said about the *ḥadīth* of Allāh’s Descending (*Nuzūl*), “We have faith in it and we affirm it, without asking how, without explaining it, nor do we reject anything from it.”  

Ibn al-‘Uthaymīn said, “The explanation that Imām Aḥmad negated in his statement was the explanation that was forwarded by the people of *ta‘īl* (denial) from the *Jahmiyyah* and others. They turned the texts of the Book and the *Sunnah* away from their literal (*dhāhīr*) meanings to one that opposes this.”  

---


104 Related by Ibn al-Jawzī in *Manāqib-ul-Imām Ahmad* (p.156), Ibn Qudāmah in *Lum‘atul-Tīqād* (no.3) and Ibn al-Qaṣṣyīm in *as-Sawā‘iqul-Munazzilah* (1/265).

105 *Fath Rabb-il-Bariyyah* (p.63)
Imām ash-Shāfi‘ī (d. 204H) rahimahullāh said, “To Allāh belong Names and Attributes that occur in His Book and that His Prophet related to the nation. It is not possible for anyone to refute (radd) them. So the one who contradicts this after the evidence has been established against him then he is a kāfīr (non-Believer), and as for before the establishment of the proof then he is excused due to ignorance, because the knowledge of that cannot be attained through the intellect. So we affirm these Attributes and we negate tashbih (likening Allāh to creation) as Allāh negated it by saying, ‘there is nothing like Him.’”

He also said, “The belief that I am upon, and I saw our Companions, the As-hāb-ul Hadīth - like Mālik and Sufyān and others - to be upon is: affirming the testimony that none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh. And that Allāh is Over His Throne, above His Heaven (‘alā ‘Arshi fi Samā‘īhī), He comes close to His Creation howsoever He Wills, and He Descends to the lowest heaven howsoever He Wills.”

[ viii ] Nu‘aym Ibn Ḥammād, the Shaykh of al-Bukhārī, said, “Whoever resembles Allāh to His creation has committed kufr (unbelief). Whoever denies what Allāh has described Himself with has [also] committed unbelief. Whatever He has described

---

106 Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā (10/80). Adh-Dhahābī says, “Reported by al-Hakkārī and others with a chain of narrators containing trustworthy narrators as in Mukhtasar al-Ulūm (p. 177). He also said, “I say: the censure of Kalām (theological rhetoric) and its people is common from ash-Shāfi‘ī, and he was very stringent in following the narrations in the usūl (foundations) and the furū‘ (branches).”

107 Awn al-Ma‘būd (13/41), and Ibn Abī Ya‘la reports it in Tabaqāt al-Hanābilā (1/283) with a chain of narration linked back to ash-Shāfi‘ī.
Himself with, or His Messenger [described Him with], then there is no *tashbih* (resemblance) in it." 108

[ix] Is-hq bin Râhawayah, *rahimabullâh* said, "Indeed Allâh has described Himself in His Book with Attributes from which the creation is left in no need to describe Him with, other than what He described Himself with. From amongst them, ‘Allâh will Come to them in the shade of clouds’ and His saying, ‘And you see the angels around the Throne, hymning the praises of their Lord.” 109

[x] *Imâm* at-Tirmidhî (d. 274H), *rahimabullâh*, said, “It has been stated by more than one person from the people of knowledge regarding this *hadîth*, and about the likes of it from the narrations concerning the Attributes, and that Allâh, the Most Blessed, the Most High, Descends to the lowest heaven of this world every night. They said: Affirm the narrations concerning them; have faith (*Îmân*) in them; do not imagine them (*lâ yatawâbbamu*); nor ask how they are (*wa lâ yuqâlu kayf*). The likes of this has been reported from Mâlik Ibn Anas, Sufyân Ibn 'Uyaynah and 'Abdullâh Ibn al-Mubârak. They said concerning these *ahdîth*, ‘Leave them as they are, without asking how they are (*amîrrûhâ bilâ kayf*).’ This is the saying of the people of knowledge from *Abl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamâ'ab*. As for the *Jahmiyâh*, then they reject these narrations and say that this is resemblance (*tashbih*). However, Allâh the Most High has mentioned in various places in His Book [His Attribute of] Hand (*Al-Yad*); Hearing (*As-Sam*) and Seeing (*Al-Basr*), but the *Jahmiyâh* give a figurative interpretation (*ta`wil*) to these verses

---

108 Related by al-Lâlikî in *Sharh Usûl Abl-is-Sunnah* (no.936). Its chain of narration is *Sahîh* chain, as Shaykh al-Albâni stated in *Mukhtasar al-Ulum* (p.184).

109 *al-Arba`in fi Sifâtillâh* (no. 144) by adh-Dhahabi.
and explain it in a manner other than how it is explained by the people of knowledge. They say: Indeed, Allāh did not create Aadam with His Hand. They say: Indeed, the Hand [of Allāh] actually means His Power! Is-hāq Ibn Ibrāhīm said: Resemblance (tashbīh) is when someone says the Hand [of Allāh] is like my hand, or His Hearing is like my hearing. So if someone says this, then this is resemblance. But if someone says what Allāh says, Hand, Hearing, Seeing; and he does not ask how these [Attributes] are, nor does he say that Allāh’s Hearing is like my hearing, then this is not resemblance. Rather, it just like what Allāh the Most Blessed, the Most High, said in His Book,


gūdān dīn ʼalā mīrāj, qūlūb ãt hājār

There is none like Him; He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. 110,111

[xi] Abū Ja‘far at-Tirmidhī (d. 295H), when asked as to how Allāh keeps His Attribute of being above the creation if He Descends to the Lowest Heaven in the last third of the night, replied, “The Nuzūl (Descent of Allāh) is understood, but the how / nature is unknown, and faith in it is obligatory, and to question about [how] it is an innovation (bid’ah).” 112

[xii] Adh-Dhahabī says in his al-Arba‘in fī Sīfatillāh, “It would be beyond ones ability to mention every Imām who has words concerning the affirmation of Allāh’s Attributes. If the opponent is not guided by those whom we mentioned saying there is a con-

110 Sūrah ash-Shūrā (42):21
111 Sunan at-Tirmidhī (3/266-268)
112 Mukhtasar al‘Uluw (p. 231). Al-Albānī declared the chain Sahīh. Abū Ja‘far was from the greatest scholars of his day.
sensus upon affirming them without *ta'wil* (figurative interpretation), or he does not believe him in his quote, then Allāh will not guide such a person. By Allāh, there is no good in the one who rejects the likes of az-Zuhrī, Mak-hūl, al-Awzā‘ī, ath-Thawrī, Layth bin Sa‘ad, Mālik, Ibn Ḥūyaynah, Ibn al-Mubārak, Muḥammad bin al-Ḥāṣan, ash-Shāfi‘ī, al-Ḥumaydī, Abū ‘Ubayd, Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, Abū’Isā at-Tirmidhī, Ibn Surayj, Ibn Jarir at-Tabarī, Ibn Khuzaymah, Zakarīyah as-Sājī, Abūl-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī. Or rejects saying the likes of their saying in acknowledging the consensus on this like al-Khattābī, Abū Bakr al-Ismā‘īli, Abūl-Qāsim at-Tabarānī, Abū Aḥmad al-Āṣāl.... and ‘Abdul Qādir al-Jilānī...”

Let us carefully consider the above narrations. Ibn Taymīyah says, “So the saying of Rabī‘ah and Mālik ‘*Istiwā* is not unknown, how is incomprehensible, and faith in it is obligatory’ agrees with the saying of the rest, ‘Leave them as they are, without asking how.’ For all they did was to negate knowledge of the *kayfīyah* (how the Divine Attributes are), but did not negate the reality of the Attribute. Therefore, if the people had merely believed in its wording, without understanding its meaning - in a way befitting to Allāh - then why did they say, ‘*Istiwā* is not unknown, and how is incomprehensible.’ And why did they say, ‘Leave them as they came, without asking how.’ Indeed, in this case *Istiwa* would not be known, rather it would be unknown; just like the *Mu‘jam* letters [those compound letters that occur at the beginning of certain chapters of the *Qur‘ān*, such as: *Alif-Lām-Mim*, etc]. So there would be no need to negate knowledge of the *kayfīyah* (how the Attributes are) if the meaning of the word was not understood. It would only be necessary to negate knowledge of the *kayfīyah* if the [meanings of the] Attribute have been affirmed...”

---

113 Majmū‘ab al-Fatāwā (5/41-42)
Also their saying ‘they left them as they are’ necessitates that [what the Attributes] indicated would remain as it were, and they came as words indicating a meaning, so if what they indicated was also to be negated then it would have been necessary to say, ‘they left the words [as they are] with the belief that the meaning was not known’...” 114

So upon considering the above it becomes clear that if the Salaf had not understood the meaning of the Attributes, rather relegated the meanings to Allāh and just affirmed the wording (tafwiḍh al-ma‘nā) there would have been no conceivable need to negate the kayfiyāh of the Attributes! Likewise the meaning of ‘reciting them is their explanation’ is that the clear meaning of what we recite is to be taken, and there is no need to delve into figurative explanation (ta‘wil) or look for hidden and metaphorical meanings etc.

This understanding has also been endorsed by the great Shāfī‘ī Imām, al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 388H) when he said, “The madhhab (way) of the scholars of the Salaf and their legal jurists was to leave the likes of these āḥādīth [concerning the Attributes] upon their literal (dhāhir) meanings, not to twist their meanings (lā yurīghu labā al-Ma‘ānī) and neither to figuratively explain (ta‘wil) them due to their knowledge that their limited knowledge was incapable of understanding them.

Az-Za‘farānī reported from us from Ibn Abī Khaythama from ‘Abdul-Wahhab bin Najda al-Hutī from Baqya from al-Awzā’ī who said, “Mak-hūl and az-Zuhrī used to say: ‘We leave these āḥādīth as they came.’”

114 al-Hamawīyah (p.109)
I say: this is from the knowledge that we have been ordered to believe in literally without attempting to uncover it’s hidden meanings, and it belongs to a host of the mutashābiha (verses) that Allāh has mentioned in His Book, so He said, ‘He is the One Who has sent to you the Book. In it are clear and unequivocal verses, and others are mutashābibah (allegorical or open to a number of meanings).’

So from the clear and unequivocal verses arises a true understanding [of their content] and action, and from the mutashābiha arises faith and knowledge in their literal meanings, and we leave the knowledge of it’s hidden meaning to Allāh, the Most Perfect...”  

Ibn Taymīyah also says, “...as for the third group, then they are the People of Ignorance and they are many from those who ascribe themselves to the Sunnah and following the Salaf. They say: The Messenger sall Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallām did not understand the meanings of what Allaah revealed to Him from the verses pertaining to the Attributes [of Allāh], and neither did Jibrīl or the foremost Predecessors understand them. They said the same thing for the āḥādīth concerning the Attributes - that nobody knew their meaning except Allāh.... so these people think that they are following the verse “and none knows their explanation except Allāh” .....but they have not distinguished between the meaning of the words and their explanation and the explanation that Allāh Alone Knows. And they thought that the ta’wil (figurative explanation) mentioned in this verse is the ta’weel mentioned in the

---

115 Mu‘ālim as-Sunan (4/304 - Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmi) by al-Khaṭṭābī under the chapter, “From the chapter concerning the Seeing (of Allāh in the Hereafter)” when he discusses the hadīth of the Descent of Allāh.
words of the later generations and they erred in this... and the explanation of the Attributes whose reality Allāh alone Knows is the knowledge of the kayfīyah which is unknown to us. [For example] the Istiwa is known, it's meaning is understood, and explained and translated in other languages, and this is the explanation that those firmly grounded in knowledge know, but as for the kayfīyah (how/nature) of the Istiwa then this is the explanation that none but Allāh the Exalted knows.”

So when we come to realise that the Salaf understood the meanings of the Attributes and affirmed them it becomes necessary to also know that they did so while negating four matters:

[i]. Tashbih (likening Allāh to His Creation) and tajsim (likening Allāh to a body).

[ii]. Takyif (enquiring into the how or nature of the Attribute).

[iii]. Tabrīf (distorting the meaning of the Attribute) and taghyīr (changing the meaning of the Attribute) and ta‘wil (figuratively interpreting the meaning of the Attribute).

[iv]. Tā‘īl (denying the Attributes).

\[116\] al-Hamawīyah (pp. 24+)