Introduction to al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah

A Classical Work Clarifying the Orthodox Islamic Belief Concerning Allah’s Names and Attributes and a Critique of those who Distort and Deny them and Bewile the Understanding of the Salaf
Shaykhul Islām Ibn Taymiyyah’s

Introduction to
al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah

A Classical Work Clarifying the Orthodox Islāmic Belief Concerning Allāh’s Names and Attributes and a Critique of those who Distort and Deny them and Revile the Understanding of the Salaf

Compiled and translated by Anwar Wright
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# Transliteration Table

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The Mighty and Majestic.

The Sublime and Exalted.

May Allāh make good mention of His Prophet in the highest company and grant him safety in this life and the next.

May Allāh be pleased with him.

May Allāh show mercy to him.

Peace be upon him.
Foreword

“...As to proceed; Indeed, Allah (سُبْحَانَاهُ وَتَمَلَّكَ مَا فِي السَّلَāمُ) sent Muhammad (صَلَّى الله عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم) with guidance and the religion of truth as a mercy for all creation, as an example for those who perform righteous deeds, and as an authority over all of mankind. He carried out the task which he was entrusted with, conveyed the message, gave sincere advice to the Ummah, and thoroughly explained to the people everything that they are in need of, whether it be in the foundations or branches of the religion. There was no good except that he clarified and called to it, and no evil except that he warned the Ummah from it, up until he left them upon a clear white plain, its night is like its day. His Companions treded upon it, [as it was] radiant and luminous, and the praiseworthy generations took it from them. [This matter remained as such] until times became overcast with the darkness of various innovations in which those who brought them used to plot against Islam and its people, to the extent individuals began to wander blindly [in those innovations] and built their belief system upon a flimsy premise.

However, Allah (سُبْحَانَاهُ وَتَمَلَّكَ مَا فِي السَّلَāمُ) protects His religion by way of His close allies (awliya’i) upon whom He bestowed imān, knowledge, and wisdom through which they are able to hinder these enemies and flip their plots back upon them. Therefore, no one has ever brought about an innovation except that Allah decrees from among Ahlus Sunnah [one] who will demolish and refute that innovation, and to Him belongs all praise. At the forefront of those who repressed these innovators was Shaykh al-Islām Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām Ibn Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī, al-Dimishqī, who was born in Ḥarrān on Monday, the 10th of Rabī‘ al-Awwal,
661H, and died in the year 728H in the month of Dhū al-Qi‘dah, while unjustly incarcerated in the Citadel of Damascus, may Allāh have mercy upon him.

He has numerous works in clarification of the Sunnah and cementing its foundations, and demolishing innovations.

From his works in this regard is the treatise “al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah” which he wrote in the year 698H in response to a question that was posed to him from Hamā, a town in Shām. In it he was asked about the statements of the jurists and Imāms of the religion concerning the verses and aḥādīth of [Allāh’s] Attributes. He answered in a response of about eighty-three pages, and because of it he was put through trials and tribulations. May Allāh (سُبْحānَاهُ وَتَعالَاهُ) reward him on behalf of Islām and the Muslims with the best reward.”¹

Indeed, the treatise “al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah” is a tremendous gem for the person of Sunnah and Salafi creed, as it relates to the orthodox belief of the Muslims regarding the Names and Attributes of Allāh, just as it is a critique of those who went astray in this subject. This work is relevant and extremely important today, as we find the pupils and offshoots of the Jahmiyyah, such as the Ashā’irah (i.e. Ash’aris) and Ahbāsh² (i.e. Ḥabashis) very active in the English speaking world, spreading their erroneous beliefs by denying and distorting the Attributes of Allāh, especially Allāh’s Attribute of al-‘Uluw (His Highness above His creation), al-İstiwā (rising over His

¹ Fath Rabb al-Bariyyah bi Talkhis al-Ḥamawiyyah (p. 5-6) by Shaykh al-Ṭahāyymīn (تَحْتِيْمِيْن).
² (TN): Because of these circulating doubts, we previously translated the beneficial Fatwā from the Permanent Committee of Scholars in Saudi Arabia entitled: “The Misguidance of the Habashi Sect” and it is in print, and all praise is for Allāh.
throne), al-Kalām (His speech), and other Attributes. Rather, over the centuries, the two Attributes of Allāh, al-ʿUluw and al-Kalām, have always been a matter of contention between the followers of the Salaf and between the people of innovation. Shaykh Muḥammad Amān al-Jāmī stated in his explanation of al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah: “Why did Shaykh al-Islām begin with the Attribute of al-ʿUluw? Because this Attribute, along with [Allāh’s] Attribute of Kalām, has always been the subject of dispute between the Khalaf and the followers of the Salaf. The majority of confusion and doubt of the Khalaf is concerning these two Attributes—al-ʿUluw and al-Kalām—although their confusion and doubt concerning the Attribute of al-ʿUluw is more. Perhaps they may even declare a disbeliever the one who affirms that Allāh is above. In some of the books of the Ashāʿirah, it is asserted that whoever points [towards the sky] and believes that Allāh is above in His essence is a disbeliever, and whoever points [towards the sky] without holding that belief is a fāsiq (rebellious sinner)…”

Hence, if Allāh wills this introduction will serve as a guide for the person of Sunnah and Salafi creed to understand the methodology of the Salaf in this subject, and refute and repel the doubts of the people of innovation and misguidance.

1 (TN): The Salaf are the Companions [of the Prophet], the successors of the Companions (Tābiʿīn), and those who follow them in goodness until the Day of Judgment from among those who the Ummah have agreed upon their integrity and righteousness, and have not been labelled with innovation that constitutes sin (fisq) or disbelief (kufr). See al-Tuhfah al-Siniyyah fi Bayān Maqāsīd al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah (p. 113).

2 (TN): The Khalaf are those who opposed the path of the Prophet (ṣallīllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallīma) and his Companions in matters of creed (ʿaqidah), and everyone who came after the praiseworthy generations, treading the path of the innovators. See al-Tuhfah al-Siniyyah fi Bayān Maqāsīd al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah (p. 158).

3 (1/88–89).
As a prelude to this introduction we will mention what is meant by the *Tawḥīd* of Allāh’s Names and Attributes, five ways a person deviates (*iḥād*) concerning them, and also some beneficial questions and answers regarding the book *al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah* in order that the reader can become familiarized with it. Then we will mention the importance of this book and some of the most prevalent components that the text entails. This will be followed by the English text of the introduction of *Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah*, along with brief commentary from the explanations of two eminent scholars. The ‘Allāmah, Shaykh Śāliḥ al-Fawzān حفظه الله, from his book *al-Taʿlīqāt al-Tawḍīḥiyyah* ‘alā al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah—represented by the initials (SF)—and the explanation of the ‘Allāmah, Shaykh Muḥammad Amān al-Jamī (رَحْمَتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ), represented by the initials (MA). Finally, we will conclude by mentioning its English text again without commentary followed by the Arabic text for those who wish to memorize it.

All footnotes labelled (TN) are from myself, the translator, and footnotes labelled (Al) are from our noble brother, Ustādh Abu Iyad Amjad Rafiql.

I ask Allāh, al-‘Alī al-‘Aẓīm (The Most High, The Most Great), al-Samīʿ, al-Mujīb (The All-Hearer, The One who answers supplications), al-Hādī, (The One who Guides) to make this work a source of clarity and guidance for the Muslims and to keep us firm upon the Qur’ān, Sunnah, and the way of the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ until we meet our Lord.

و صلى الله و سلم على نبينا محمد و على آله و صحبه و سلم

Written by Anwar Wright
8th night of Dhū al-Ḥijjah, 1440H, corresponding with August 8th 2019CE
Thanks and Gratitude

After thanking Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَ) for facilitating this translation and compilation, I then would like to thank the following people:

➢ Abu al-Hasan Mālik al-Akhdar who reviewed the translation of the text of al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah in its beginning stages and gave me priceless pointers and suggestions.

➢ Abu Iyad Amjad Rafiq who reviewed the entire book towards its end stages and offered many important suggestions, corrections, and brief footnotes.

➢ Abu Aasiyah Herrerah and his family for taking out of their busy schedules to edit the book.

➢ Maaz Qureshi who took from his valuable time to typeset the book, have a final review of the translation, and finally, print the book.

➢ My beloved wife and children who patiently endure my taking from their time in order to compile such works.

I ask Allāh to reward them all abundantly and to give them the good of this life and the Hereafter. Ṣmīn.
Meaning of the Tawḥīd of Allāh’s Names and Attributes (al-Asmā‘ wa al-Šifāt)

It is to believe that Allāh is One with complete perfection from every aspect, [possessing] lofty, exalted, and beautiful Attributes. This [belief is actualized] by affirming the Names and Attributes He affirmed for Himself, or what His Messenger affirmed for Him, including their meanings and rulings that have been reported in the Book and Sunnah. Some examples are affirming that Allāh is All-Knowledgeable of all things (al-‘Alīm), that He is All-Capable of doing all things (al-Qadīr), that He is the All Living, Self-Sustainer (al-Ḥayy, al-Qayyūm) who does not sleep nor slumber. Also, that He has a Will which will surely come to pass, [He has the] utmost divine Wisdom, He rose above His Throne (Istawā‘), and is with His servants wherever they are [through His Knowledge]. This [belief is held with the affirmation] that there is nothing similar to Him in His Essence, neither in His Attributes, nor in His Actions.

This type of Tawḥīd is the greatest thing one can have awareness of, as it entails having knowledge of Allāh through His Names and Attributes, and with this knowledge acts of worship are established. If the servant does not know his Lord, then how can he worship Him? How can one worship a Lord that they do not know? For this reason, the proofs and evidences that mention Him and laud Him [by way of His Names and Attributes] are plentiful, because the more important a matter is, the more one will find its clarification and explanation present.

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1 Al-Tuhfah al-Siniyyah fi Bayān Maqāṣid al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah (p. 39) by Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Khumayyis.

12
Matters that Violate Belief in Allāh's Names and Attributes

Five things violate and desecrate this [category] of Tawhīd, and all of them are types of ilhād (deviation) regarding [Allāh's] Names; a matter which Allāh rebuked along with those who do it. He said:

وَلَلَّهِ الْأَكْثَرُ الْأَسَمَّاءُ الْحَسَنَةُ فَأْسَمَّوْهُ يَهُوَآ وَذُوْرُوا أَلْلَهِ يَلْعَجُدُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

"And all the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allāh, so call on Him by them, and leave the company of those who belie, or deny or utter impious speech against His Names. They will be requited for what they used to do."

[Sūrah al-‘A‘rāf 7:180]

These things that violate [Allāh’s Names and Attributes] are resembling Him [to His creation] (Tashbīh), denying them [Ta‘īl], and naming and describing Him with that which does not befit Him. Ibn al-Qayyim said: al-ilhād regarding the Names of Allāh is of different types:

One: Naming idols with [His] Names, such as those who named al-Lāt from al-Ilāh (The One True God), and al-‘Uzzā from al-‘Azīz (the All-Mighty), and to call any idol ilāh (God).

1 Al-Tuhfah al-Simiyah fi Bayān Maqāsid al-Fatwā al-Hamawiyyah (p. 40), and the origin of this speech is summarized from Ibn al-Qayyim’s speech in Badā‘i al-Fawā‘id.
Two: Naming Him what does not befit His Majesty, such as how the Christians call Him Father, and how the Philosophers call Him: “The One whose essence makes the existence of the universe necessary (Mūjib bi dhātihi)”¹ and “the Efficient Cause (‘illatun fā’īlah).”²

Three: Describing Him with deficiencies which He is high and far above, such as the statement of those evil ones among the Jews who said that He is poor, their statement that He rested after creating the creation, and that Allāh’s Hand is tied up, etc.

Four: Stripping [His] Names of their [true] meanings and rejecting their realities, such as the statement of some of the Jahmiyyah and their followers that [His Names] are meaningless nouns which do not point to Attributes or [true] meanings.

Fifth: Resembling His Attributes to those of the creation. Glorified and Exalted is He above what the Mushabbihūn (i.e. Those who resemble Him to the creation) say.

١(Al) This label is used by those such as Ibn Sīnā who claim the universe is eternal because its existence is necessitated by Allāh’s existence.

٢(Al) This refers to the being or the reason behind the existence of a thing.
Questions and Answers about the Book
al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah

[Q1]: Why has this treatise been named *al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah*?

[A1]: *al-Ḥamawiyyah* is an ascription to the town of the questioner which is Ḥamā, a city in Shām in the middle of Syria, north of Homs. It is known that the Shaykh did not initiate authoring this book, however it was an answer to a question that came to him from a student of knowledge who was confused about an issue regarding [Allāh’s] Attributes, and in particular the Attributes which cannot be known except by way of the texts (i.e. *al-ṣifāt al-khabariyyah*). The

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2. (TN): “The Attributes which are not possible to affirm except by way of the texts [of Qur’an and Sunnah] are known as *al-ṣifāt al-khabariyyah*, and they are also known as “*al-khabariyyah al-mahdāh*” (i.e. Attributes solely known by way of texts). As for the Attributes which can be affirmed by way of intellectual-proofs, along with affirming them by way of the texts, they sometimes may be called *al-ṣifāt al-‘aqliyyah*. However, it is better that it be said of them: *ṣifāt khabariyyah ‘aqliyyah*, together. What is meant [by these Attributes] is that they are not solely known by way of texts. If [the word] *al-Khabariyyah* is used in an unrestricted sense, what is meant is those Attributes solely known by way of the texts, such as *al-Istiwā*. If no texts have been reported from Allāh or His Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) that Allāh rose (Istawā) above His throne, there would be no way for the intellect to know this Attribute. For this reason, they are known as *al-ṣifāt al-khabariyyah*. Likewise, *al-Majīr* – Allāh coming on the Day of Resurrection in order for the reckoning to begin, and *al-Nuzūl* – the Lord descending to the lowest heaven; all of these are known as *ṣifāt fihāyyah khabariyyah mahdāh* (i.e. Attributes related to Allāh’s actions which can only be known by way of the texts). There is also what is known as *ṣifāt khabariyyah dhātiyyah* (i.e. Attributes related to Allāh’s Essence which only can be known by way of texts), such as affirming the attribute of *al-Wajh* (Allāh’s Face), *al-Yadayn* (Allāh’s two Hands), *al-Qadam* (Allāh’s Foot), and *Aṣābi’* (Allāh’s Fingers). These are known as *khabariyyah dhātiyyah*. Therefore, the *ṣifāt al-*
questioner was from the city of Ḥamā, thus the book took on this name, being attributed to the city of the questioner.

**[Q2]**: When did Shaykh al-Islām author al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah?

**[A2]**: Shaykh al-Islām authored this treatise when he was less than forty years of age, in the beginning of the month of Rabī‘ al-Awwal in the year 698H, between the Dhuhr and ‘Asr prayers.

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_khabariyyah_ are of two categories: _khabariyyah fi‘liyyah_ (i.e. Attributes only known by way of the texts that relate to Allāh’s actions), such as _al-Istiwā‘, al-Nuzūl, al-Majū‘_, and [the second is] _khabariyyah dhātiyyah_ (i.e. Attributes only known by way of the texts that relate to Allāh’s Essence), such as _al-Wajh, al-Yadain, al-Qadam, al-Aṣābi‘, al-‘Ayn_, and _al-Nafs_. These are some of the Attributes which are _khabariyyah dhātiyyah_ and can only be known by way of the texts. As for affirming, for example, the Attributes of _al-Sam‘_ (Hearing), and _al-Baṣr_ (Seeing), _Ahl al-Kalām_ who affirm these Attributes, meaning the _Ashā‘irah_ [in particular] call [these Attributes] _al-sifāt al-aqliyyah_ (i.e. Attributes which can be known by way of intellect), and they are the _al-sifāt al-Ma‘ānī_ which are well known among them. However, we [Ahlus Sunnah] call them conjointly: _al-sifāt al-khabariyyah al-aqliyyah_. Meaning, if no texts have been reported that Allah is _al-Qādir_ (the All Capable), and that He is _al-Murid_ (He has a Will and Want), and that He is All Hearing, and All Seeing, and the He is All Knowing, and All Wise, the intellect would still point to them by using the universal-signs [of Allah] as evidence, and likewise [what we witness from] this extraordinary precision [in the universe]. The fact that things come into existence and are removed from existence shows the Attribute of _al-Qudrah_ (Allah’s ability), as well as the Attribute of _‘ilm_ (His knowledge), and _al-Ḥayāt_ (His Perfect life). And the fact that certain things are specified [in particular ways], this shows both the Attributes of _‘ilm_ (Allah’s Knowledge) and _Irādah_ (Allah’s Will and Want). Further, this marvelous origination of creation [we see] not being preceded by anything similar - because Allah is the Originator of the Heavens and Earth- shows that [He has] the utmost divine Wisdom (al-Hikmah), and remarkable capability (al-Qudrah). Therefore, these are called conjointly: _al-sifāt al-khabariyyah al-aqliyyah...”_ Refer to _Sharḥ al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah_ (1/305-306) by Shaykh Muḥammad Amān al-Jāmī.
[Q3]: What is the subject of the book?

[A3]: The subject of the book is:

1- To affirm the Attributes [of Allāh] that were reported in the Book and the Sunnah, and in particular the ṣifāt al-khabariyyah.

2- To establish what the methodology of the Salaf is regarding [Allāh’s] Attributes and mentioning their speech [regarding that]. Shaykh al-Islām stated, “The purpose behind this answer is to mention the sayings of some of the Imāms [of the religion] who have conveyed the methodology of the Salaf in this subject.”

3- To refute the methodology of the opposers from among those who ascribe to the Sunnah, but at the same time they deny the ṣifāt al-khabariyyah, such as the Ashā'īrah, the Māturīdiyyah, and others who claim that the way of the Salaf is safer while the way of the Khalaf is more knowledgeable and more precise.

[Q4]: Speak about the importance of the treatise “al-Ḥamawiyyah.”

[A4]: The importance of al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah goes back to the following matters:

1- [It shows] the importance of the issue that has been inquired about, which is the Attributes [of Allāh], and in particular the ṣifāt al-khabariyyah.

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1 (TN): A sect of Ahl al-Kalām and is an ascription to Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī (d.333H)
2- [It clarifies] the great number of people who have become immersed in this issue with false speech from among Ahl al-Kalām¹ and others.

3- [It brings to light] the great number of doubts which the opposition raised in this subject, which resulted in them falling into various types of misguidance.

4- It is a refutation against Ahl al-Kalām and the deviant sects [who have strayed] in this subject from the people who ascribe ignorance to the Salaf (Ahl al-Tajhil), and the people who reinterpret the Attributes of Allah with false interpretations (Ahl al-Ta’wil).

5- It refutes the claim of the Ashā’irah and Ahl al-Kalām that the way of the Khalaf is more knowledgeable and more precise than the way of the Salaf.

[Q5]: What is the objective of the treatise “al-Ḥamawiyyah” and what are the benefits obtained [from studying it]?

[A5]: The objective and benefits obtained from al-Ḥamawiyyah are the following:

¹ (TN): They are those who relied upon speculative theology (‘ilm al-kalām) and claimed that the evidences for belief in Allah and affirmation or negation of His Names and Attributes return to the intellect and principles of logic. They hold these “evidences” and principles to be certainties, while they hold knowledge of the Book and the Sunnah to be based upon speculative evidences. Due to this, they give precedence to their intellects over the texts of the Book and Sunnah. Their statements began to appear during the end of the era of the Tābi’in, and then became widespread after the three [praiseworthy] generations. After the books of the Romans and Greeks were translated into the Arabic language, the tribulations that occurred because of ‘ilm al-kalām became even worse. See Sharh Fath Rabb al-Bariyyah bi Talkhis al-Ḥamawiyyah (p. 533-534) by Shaykh al-‘Uthaymin (رحمه الله).
1- It destroys the methodology of the Khalaf and clarifies its falsehood; this is because they treaded two paths:

a- The path of Tafwîd [treaded by] Ahl al-Tajhîl, and this occurred by them ascribing ignorance to the Companions and the Salaf.

b- The path of reinterpreting [Allâh’s Attributes] (Ta‘wîl) and this is by distorting them [from their true meanings]. Due to this they have stated: “The way of the Salaf is safer, while the way of the Khalaf is more knowledgeable and more precise.” The author has refuted this false claim at length.

2- It shows the correctness of the way of the Salaf, that it is safer, more knowledgeable, and more precise.

[Q6]: Mention some of the explanations of al-Fatwâ al-Ḥamawiyyah.

[A6]: al-Fatwâ al-Ḥamawiyyah has a few concise explanations which are:

1- al-Kawākib al-Durriyyah, which is the commentary of al-‘Allâmah ‘Abd al-‘Azîz Ibn Bâz (رحمه الله) on al-Ḥamawiyyah.

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1 See previous question.

**[Q7]**: Is the treatise “*al-Ḥamawiyyah*” a book written to explain the matters of *ʿAqīdah* or is it a book which entails a refutation upon the way of the people of opposition?

**[A7]**: 1- It is a book written to explain the *ʿAqīdah* of the *Salaf* in the subject of [Allāh’s] Attributes and in particular the *ṣifāt* *al-khabariyyah*. [Shaykh al-Islām] presented that by mentioning evidences from the Book and *Sunnah*, as well as by presenting the statements of some of the Imāms [of the religion] who conveyed the methodology of the *Salaf* and their unanimous agreement [in this subject].

2- It is also a book that entails a refutation upon the way of the opposers, such as the *Ashā'irah* and others. For this reason, he refuted them by mentioning the statements of *Ahl al-Kalām* themselves from among the *Ashā'irah* who affirm [Allāh’s] Attributes, like Abū al-Hasan al-Ashʿarī, Abū Māʿālī al-Juwaynī, or those who were affected by them such as al-Bayhaqī and Abū Yaʿlā. He also mentioned those who ascribe to the *Ṣufi* path [who affirm these Attributes], such as ʿUmar Ibn Ḥamd al-Asbāḥānī, Amr Ibn ʿUthmān al-Makkī, al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī, Muḥammad Ibn Khāṣīf, Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Ẓilānī, and others.

**[Q8]**: What is the difference between *al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah* and *al-Wāsitīyyah*?

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1 *(TN)*: There is another explanation of *al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah* recently printed from the lessons of al-ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Amān al-Jāmī (رحمه الله), and we have included some of its commentary.
[A8]: There is a great difference between al-Ḥamawiyyah and al-Wāṣitiyyah as it relates to the names and the subject matter. The clarification is as follows:

1- As for the title, al-Wāṣitiyyah is an ascription to the town of the questioner which is Wāṣīt, in Irāq. al-Ḥamawiyyah is an ascription to the town of the questioner, Ḥamā in Shām (Syria).

2- As far as it relates to the subject matter, then al-Wāṣitiyyah is a book that explains the 'Aqīdah of the saved, victorious sect up until the hour is established, Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, in matters of belief such as īmān, resurrection (ba'ith), divine decree (al-Qadar), Attributes (al-Ṣifāt), miracles of the awliyā (al-Karāmāt), [the correct belief] regarding the Companions, and other matters.

As for the subject of al-Ḥamawiyyah, it is regarding [Allāh’s] attributes [only], especially the sifāt al-khabariyyah, and it refutes the way of the opposers [in this matter].

3- As for the manner in which the author explained [these books] and the methodology that he traversed upon, then al-Ḥamawiyyah is distinguished by mentioning evidences from the Book and the Sunnah while mentioning a myriad of quotes from the scholars of the Salaf, Ahl al-Kalām from among the Ashā’irah, as well as the people of Taṣawwuf (i.e. Sufis). [The author did this] in order to compel the opposition to accept the truth (i.e. as even some from those groups affirmed the Attributes of Allāh in a manner befitting His Majesty).

As for al-Wāṣitiyyah, the author sufficed with presenting the foundations of Ahl al-Sunnah along with mentioning the evidences from the Book and Sunnah.
[Q9]: What was the stance of the opposition towards al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah?

[A9]: This Fatwā resulted in many rebuttals, and Shaykh al-Īslām was put through great tribulations as a result of it. The stances of the opposition manifested in the following:

1- Defaming the Shaykh, degrading him, tarnishing his reputation, and accusing him of matters he was innocent of, which is the norm of the people of innovation in every time.

2- Going to the judges and governors so they can prevent the Shaykh [from speaking], and so they may rule that his 'Aqīdah is false. He was summoned to the courts; however, Allāh kept him firm and aided him over his enemies.

3- Some books and treatises were authored in response to this Fatwā in order to refute what was mentioned in it, to cast doubts surrounding it, and to cast doubts within the people concerning it.

[Q11]: Mention some books that give importance to transmitting the methodology of the Salaf?¹

[A11]: The books that give importance to transmitting the methodology of the Salaf are many and various, the most important being:

1- Sharḥ Uṣūl al-Ītiqād Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah by Imām al-Lālika’ī (d.418H)
2- al-Ibānāh by Ibn al-Baṭṭah (d.378H)
3- al-Sunnah by al-Khallāl (d.311H)

¹ Al-Tuhfah al-Simiyyah fī Bayān Maqāṣid al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah (p. 121).
4- *al-Tawhid* by Ibn Khuzaymah (d.311H)
5- *al-Raddu `alā al-Jahmiyyah* by al-Dārimī (d.280H)
6- *al-Sunnah* by `Abdullāh Ibn al-Imām Aḥmad (d.290H)
7- *al-Sunnah* by Abū Bakr Ibn Abū Ṭāsim (d.287H)
8- *Khalq Ashā `al-`Ibād* by Abū `Abdullāh al-Bukhārī (d.256H)
9- *al-Radd `alā al-Jahmiyyah* by Imām Aḥmad (d.241H)
10- *al-Sharīah* by al-Ājurrī (d.360H)

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The Importance of this Introduction

Shaykh Muḥammad Amān al-Jāmī (رحمه الله) said regarding this introduction: “It is flames of fire against the Mu’aṭṭilah¹…”

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān says: “I chose to suffice with spreading the introduction because of the tremendous principles it entails, and because of [Ibn Taymiyyah’s] statement: ‘I only began with this introduction because the one who firmly understands it will know where the path of guidance lies in this subject, and other than it…²’

“He began with this introduction which is called Muqaddimah al-Ḥamawiyyah. It is a tremendous introduction which the students of knowledge would memorize and give importance to due to it entailing clear principles by which the student of knowledge benefits from. Likewise, it clearly distinguishes between the knowledge of the Salaf and the knowledge of the Khalaf. Verily, the path of guidance is what the Salaf of this ummah were upon, and the path of misguidance is what the majority of the Khalaf were upon.”³

“And this introduction entails many important matters, the most notable are the following:

One: What is obligatory towards [Allāh’s] Names and Attributes is to tread upon the way of the Salaf from the Companions, the Tābi’in

¹ Sharḥ al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah al Kubrā (1/84).
² al-Ta’liqāt al-Tawdīḥīyyah ‘alā al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah (p. 18).
³ al-Ta’liqāt al-Tawdīḥīyyah ‘alā al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah (p. 78).
and the Imāms [of guidance] who came after them, and this is by affirming them just as they have been reported [to us] without distorting them (tahrīf), negating them (taʿīl), asking how they occur (takyīf), and without resembling them [to the creation] (tamthīl).

**Two:** The way of the Salaf is safer, more knowledgeable, and more precise than the way of the Khalaf.

**Three:** The Salaf [themselves] are more knowledgeable than the Khalaf.

**Four:** There are some from among the Khalaf who recanted and retracted, then adhered to the way of the Salaf once the falsehood that they were upon became apparent to them, while others from them remained in their state of confusion.

**Fifth:** The way of the Khalaf entails ascribing ignorance to the Salaf, or deeming them as misguided, [just as it entails] explaining the texts away from their proper meaning (taʿwil).

**Sixth:** The way of the Salaf is taken from the Messenger of Allāh, while the way of the Khalaf is taken from the Jahmiyyah, and the Jahmiyyah took [their way] from the Jews.

**Seventh:** The Salaf use the Book and Sunnah as evidence and they give precedence to the text over the intellect, while the Khalaf use principles of philosophical-logic and speculative theology as evidence, and they give precedence to the intellect over the text.

**Eighth:** The sound unpolluted intellect does not contradict sound authentic text.
Ninth: The Bāṭīniyyah heretics have argued [in refutation] against those who explain the Attributes [of Allāh] away from their apparent meanings, that [their metaphorical-interpretation of] the prayer, zakāt, and the affairs of the Hereafter [away from their apparent meanings] is similar to how the Muʿāṭṭilaḥ reinterpret the Attributes [of Allāh], or even less severe. So why do [the Muʿāṭṭilaḥ] reject the interpretation of the Bāṭīniyyah, when they are worse than them [in regards to their false interpretation]?

Tenth: The followers of the Salafī methodology are in agreement as it relates to the Names and Attributes because they followed the Book and Sunnah. As for the followers of the Khalaf, they are disunited among themselves because they follow speculative theology and principles of philosophical-logic.

Eleventh: The calamity that occurred [in the Ummah] as it relates to the `aqidah stemmed from the translation of the books of the Romans into Arabic during the era of al-Maʿmūn al-ʿAbbāsī. At the same time, he was affected by evil advisors in his circle such as Bishr Ibn Ghiyāth al-Mirrīsī and Ibn Abī Duʿād.”

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1 (TN): They were called Bāṭīniyyah (i.e. Bāṭīniyyah) because they claim that the Islamic text (i.e. Qurʿān and Sunnah) has an outward apparent meaning (Dhāhir), as well as an inner hidden meaning (Bāṭīn). They claim that the outward meaning of the text is intended for the layman, but as for those who attain the level of having knowledge of the “hidden meanings” [of the text], they are then absolved from performing all obligations... See footnote of al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah (p. 273), checking of Ḥamad al-Tuwajirī.

2 al-Taʿliqāt al-Tawḍīhiyyah 'alā al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah (p. 18-19).
The English Text of the
Introduction to al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah
With Commentary

In the year 698H, the great scholar Shaykh al-Īlām Taqī al-Dīn
Abū al-‘Abbās ʿAḥmad Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Ibn ʿAbd al-Salām Ibn
Taymiyyah was asked [this question], and because of [his] answer,

1 (SF): “The [questioner] asked him about the verses and aḥādīth reported
concerning [Allāh’s] Names and Attributes, as people began to talk, dispute
and have doubt regarding them. From them were those who negated all [of Allāh’s]
Names and Attributes, such as the Jahmiyyah, and others negated [only] the
Attributes, such as the Muʿtazilah. There were also those who negated most of
the Attributes, and others distorted their meanings by explaining them away
from their true meanings. This is because when they saw that they were unable
to outright deny the texts, they resorted to negating their meanings and then
added to them false interpretations. Others have stated that [His Attributes] are
from the unclear texts (Mutashābīh) and only Allāh knows their meanings.
[They said] we read the words, but we do not explain them, rather we consider
them to be from the unclear verses. These people are known as the
Muṣawwīdah, and those [mentioned] before them are known as the
Muʿawwillah (i.e. those who distort the Names and Attributes), and the
Muʿattīlah (i.e. those who deny the Names and Attributes). There is another
group who exaggerated in affirming the [Attributes] to the extent that they
resembled them to the Attributes of the creation, and they are known as the
Mumathhīlah and the Mushabbīlah. As for Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah, they
affirmed them [the Names and Attributes] as well as their meanings in their
correct context. They did not distort them nor explain them away [from their
proper meanings], neither did they say that they are from the unclear text. They
say that they are from the unambiguous, clear texts which meanings are
known; however, the exact nature of how they occur (al-kayfiyyah) is
unknown…Further, they did not say that they resemble the Attributes of the
creation, but rather they said they are [Attributes] befitting Allāh. This is what
the Companions, the Tābi‘īn, and those who followed them in goodness were
upon. This was also the methodology of the leading [scholars] who came after
them…” (p. 20–21)
matters [of hearings, judgments] and tribulations transpired.\textsuperscript{1} It is an answer containing tremendous benefit.

The questioner asked:

What is the statement of the pre-eminent Scholars, the Imams of the Religion, regarding the verses containing the Attributes (\textit{ṣifāt}) [of Allāh], such as His statement (عَبْدُ الْعَزَّ)

\textit{\textit{الرَّحْمَنُ ٱلْعَزِيزِ}}

\textit{“The Most Beneficent (Allāh) rose over (\textit{Istawlā}) the throne,” [Sūrah Tā Ḥā 20:5]}

And His statement (عَبْدُ الْعَزَّ)

\textit{\textit{لَكَ أَسْتَوْىٰ إِلَىَّ الْمَحْمَدُ وَلَهُُ ٌذَٰلِكُ}}

\textit{“Then He rose over (\textit{Istawlā}) towards the heavens when it was smoke,” [Sūrah al-Fuṣṣilat 41:11]\textsuperscript{2}}

\textsuperscript{1} (SF): “After this answer appeared, tribulations took place and the Shaykh was tried because of it and was summoned to court. When they could not overcome him by way of knowledge, they resorted to imprisoning him... However, all praise is for Allāh, they did not achieve what they wanted. They only gained humiliation and lowliness and the truth prevailed, though they hated it...” (p. 21)

\textsuperscript{2} (SF): “Among the verses containing [Allāh’s] Attributes which were misunderstood [by some] is the issue of [Allāh’s] \textit{Istiwā} over His throne. Allāh informed of Himself that He \textit{Ist iwā} (rose) over the throne in seven places in His Book, all of them saying, “He rose over (\textit{Istawlā}) the throne.” This proves that this \textit{Isti wā} is real. It does not mean \textit{Istilā} (i.e conquered) as was stated by
And other verses and *ahādīth* containing [His Attributes, such as his saying (سُورَةُ الْبَقَرَةُ)](4:101), “Verily the hearts of the children of Ādām are between two Fingers from the Fingers of the Most Merciful,” and his saying, “Al-‘Jabbār” [i.e. Allāh] will place His Foot in the Hell-Fire…,” and similar *ahādīth* [of this sort], and what do the scholars say [regarding them]? [Please] give a detailed answer regarding that, and may you be rewarded, if Allāh wills.3

[Shaykh al-Islām] answered:

the people of innovation. They say that “He rose (Istawā) over the throne” means that He conquered (Istawlā) the throne. They added the letter “Lām” in the Book of Allāh from their own selves, just as the Jews added a Nūn in the Torah. When it was said to [the Jews],


“Say ḥiṭṭah…” [Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:58]

Meaning, remove from us our sins, instead they said ḥinṭa, adding the letter Nūn. Their intent was food (i.e. as hinṭa is a type of wheat) and not to seek forgiveness. So the Jews added the letter Nūn in the Book of Allāh, and these [Mu‘āwila] added a Lām in the Book of Allāh. They said Istawā means Istawlā, [however] there has not been reported in the Qur‘ān even one verse with the word Istawlā. This proves that this interpretation is false and rejected.” (p. 22–23)

1 (TN): The Compeller
2 (SF): “This affirms a Foot for Allāh, according to what befits His majesty…We affirm this hadith just as it has come to us and we do not try to involve our limited comprehension and intellects, thus we negate for Allāh what He has affirmed for Himself.” (p. 24)
3 (MA): “The word In Shā’ Allāh (if Allāh wills) is not used when supplicating except if a person desires emphasis. The origin is that In Shā’ Allāh is used [to show that a matter] is contingent [upon the will of Allāh]. It also can be used for emphasis, and this is what is intended here.” (1/29)
All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all creation. Our statement regarding [those texts containing Allāh’s Attributes] is what Allāh and His Messenger have stated, as well as what was stated by the early Muslims who embraced Islām from the Muhājirūn, the Anṣār, and those who followed them in goodness, and the rightly guided Imāms after them; those whom the Muslims agree were rightly guided and possessed correct understanding. This is what is incumbent upon all people as it relates to this subject and other than it.¹

Indeed, Allāh sent Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) with guidance and the true Religion, in order to remove mankind from [layers of] darkness into light, by the permission of their Lord, to the path of the All-Mighty, One Full of Praise. [Allāh] testified that He sent him as a

¹ (SF): “This is what is obligatory upon you as it relates to all affairs of the religion, and especially pertaining to the verses and aḥādīth of [Allāh’s] Attributes. You say what Allāh said, what His Messenger said, and what was said by the Muhājirūn, the Anṣār, and those who followed them in exactness. Whoever opposes this is from the people of misguidance, deviation and they are astray. Therefore, it is incumbent upon you in the subject of [Allāh’s] Names and Attributes, in the subject of Tawḥīd and ‘aqidah, and in the religion in general that you follow this foundation, which is the methodology of the pious predecessors from among the saḥābah, the Tābi‘īn, and the rightly guided Imāms. Do not stray from this [path] or claim that you have been given something which they have not attained, or that your understanding is better than theirs. Some people come with things from their own selves which the Salaf never said, nor the people of knowledge. They come with explanations and independent deductions (ijtihādāt) from their own selves regarding the foundation of Tawḥīd, which does not allow independent deductions. You have only been ordered with following (al-ittibā‘). You say what the Salaf said and you refrain from what they refrained from, because they were more knowledgeable than you, and more grounded than you. Therefore, it suffices that you be one who follows them…” (p. 29)
caller to [his Lord] by His permission, and [sent him] as an illuminating lamp. He commanded him to say,

قُلْ هَذَا دِينِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَن آتَعَنِي

“This is my path. I call to Allâh upon certain knowledge, I and whosoever follows me.”

[Sûrah Yûsuf 12:108]

Therefore, it is impossible intellectually and religiously that this illuminating lamp (i.e. Muḥammad) whom Allâh sent in order to remove the people from [layers of] darkness into light, and revealed to him the Book (i.e. Qur’ân) in order to judge between the people in which they differ, just as He commanded the people to return disputes in their religion back to the Book and Wisdom (hikmah) which he was sent with, along with [the Prophet] calling to Allâh and to His path upon certain knowledge, by [Allâh’s] permission, and He informed that He completed for him and his Ummah their religion, and perfected His favor upon them; it is impossible alongside this and other [considerations] that [the Prophet] left the subject of belief in Allâh and of knowledge regarding Him confusing and ambiguous,¹ not having distinguished between what is incumbent for Allâh of beautiful Names and lofty Attributes, what is permitted for Him [of actions], and what is impossible for Him².

¹ (MA): “This is logically impossible, and Islâmically impermissible. Had this been the case, he could not be [described] as one who had completely conveyed [the message].” (1/41)

² (MA): “We must understand these three headings; [What is incumbent for Allah]: That Allâh possesses complete perfection as it relates to [His] Names and Attributes. [What is impossible for Him]: [Meaning], those things which are impossible for him, [which are] the opposites of these Attributes [of
perfection]; Attributes opposite to knowledge, or hearing, or seeing, or Highness. These matters are impossible [for Allāh]. Also, such as [Him having] a partner, a wife, one who He is affectionately adores, or a helper; these matters are impossible for Allāh. [And what is permitted for Him (of actions)]: Meaning, what is permissible concerning Allāh, such as bringing matters into and out of existence, and giving and withholding. There is nothing obligatory upon Allāh. Allāh gives out of His benevolence and withholds out of [His] Justice, bestows guidance out of His grace and misguides due to [His justice]. He withholds, gives, raises [some] and lowers [others]; [He does] all of that. The servants constantly revolve between Allāh’s grace and His justice. Therefore, there is nothing obligatory upon Allāh, and it cannot be imagined regarding Allāh that He is oppressive, ever. However, [matters] always revolve between [His] justice and [His] benevolence.” (1/37-38).

(AI): In explanation of what is “wājiḥ” (incumbent) for Allāh, Shaykh Muḥammad Amān clarified that with respect to His essence, Names and Attributes, perfections are incumbent for Him. Thus, knowledge, power, hearing, seeing and all other Attributes of perfection are incumbent for Allāh, and their opposites (ignorance, incapacity etc.), as well as deficiencies are impossible for Him. However, with respect to Allāh’s actions, we cannot say anything is incumbent upon Him except what He made incumbent upon Himself, such as mercy, or made unlawful upon Himself such as oppression. This opposes the claim of the Muʿtazilah who say that it is incumbent upon Allāh to do whatever is in the best interests of the servants, a doctrine known as “as-ṣāliḥ wa al-ṣālāh.” This is not true because Allāh misguides people and also punishes people, and neither of these are in their best interests. Rather, Allāh acts out of His justice (ʿadl) or His bounty (fādil), and nothing is obligatory upon Him except what He makes obligatory upon Himself. Shaykh Muhammad Amān alluded to this by saying that no one can make anything obligatory upon Allāh with respect to His actions. Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said: “As for making something incumbent upon Him, the Sublime and Exalted, and making something unlawful for Him, by analogizing [for Him] with His creation, then this is the saying of the Qadariyyah and it is an innovated statement which opposes authentic reports and sound reason. Ahl al-Sunnah are agreed that He, the Sublime, is the Creator, Lord and Master of everything and that whatever He wills occurs and whatever He does not will does not occur. And that the servants cannot obligate anything upon Him. And as for those from Ahl al-Sunnah who did speak of (things being) obligatory
Surely, knowledge of [these matters] is the foundation of the religion and the basis of guidance.\(^1\) It is also the best thing the hearts can acquire, what the souls can achieve, and what the intellects can comprehend. Therefore, how can that Book (i.e. Qur‘ān), that Messenger (i.e. Muḥammad), and the best of mankind after the Prophets (i.e. the Companions) not completely master this subject in respect to belief and statement?\(^2\) It is also impossible that the Prophet (ﷺ) taught his Ummah everything, even the

upon Him, they said: ‘He prescribed mercy upon Himself and made oppression unlawful upon Himself\(^6\) [on the basis of texts], and not [from the angle] that the servant deserves anything from Allāh [as if He is obligated to do something for His servants], similar to when one from the creation has a right over another.” \textit{Iqtīda’} \textit{Sirāt al-Mustaqim} (2/310). Thus, we can speak of perfections being incumbent (wājid) for Allāh in His Names and Attributes but we cannot speak of actions being incumbent upon Allāh, except what He made incumbent upon Himself. Allāh is not obligated with anything, and all of His actions are either from His justice or His benevolence. Through this, the two senses in which the word “wājid” has been used should be clear.

\(^1\) (SF): “Knowledge of the ‘aqīdah is the foundation of the religion, so whoever is deficient in it is deficient in the religion itself. This is because if the foundation of a matter is weak, what is built upon it will not be stable. For example, if the foundation of a building becomes weak it will collapse, but if it is strong the building will stand upright... Therefore, how could the Messenger not give importance to the ‘aqīdah which is the foundation of the religion, and [not] explain and clarify it to the people?” (p. 41)

\(^2\) (SF): “What preceded was a prelude and this is the result of the Shaykh’s speech... how could the Book and Sunnah not clarify the correct ‘aqīdah? And how could [the Companions] not know the subject of [Allāh’s] Names and Attributes by way of belief, statement, and action? This is a refutation against those who accuse the Companions of not knowing the meanings of these Names and Attributes, while Jahm Ibn Ṣafwān and those like him were the only ones who knew their meanings and clarified them. Before they were ambiguous [as they claim], and not known by the people, and those who came [before] only uttered words that they did not understand. Free is Allāh from all imperfections.” (p. 44-45)
etiquettes of cleaning themselves [after using the bathroom]—and
said: “I have left you upon a clear white plain, its night is like its day,
no one strays from it except that he is destroyed.” There occurs in
another authentic report, “Allāh never sent a Messenger except it
was a duty upon him to point his Ummah to every good that he
knew for them, and to warn them from every evil that he knew
would harm them.” And Abū Dharr (رضي الله عنه) said, “The Messenger
of Allāh (سالمه لله) passed away, and there was not even a bird who
flaps its wings in the sky except that he mentioned to us some
knowledge concerning it,” and ‘Umar Ḥn Khattāb (رضي الله عنه) said:
“The Messenger of Allāh (سالمه لله) stood among us [one day] and
mentioned the matters of the very beginning of creation all the way
until the people of Paradise enter their dwellings, and the people of
the Hell-Fire enter their dwellings. Those who memorized it did so,

1 **(SF):** “How could he (سالمه لله) leave the subject of ‘aqīdah not clarified to
the people while it is the most important thing? The Messenger did not leave
anything that was a benefit for the people in their religion except that he
clarified it. Those who knew it did, and those who did not know it, simply did
not. The Messenger (سالمه لله) did not pass away until the religion and the
clarification were complete. The perfected legislation came from Allāh and the
complete clarification came from the Messenger (سالمه لله). As for the fact that
some people did not come across it, did not know about it, or did not want to
know about it is not proof, because total clarification has taken place. How
could it be the case that the Messenger clarified to his Ummah everything, even
the etiquettes of using the bathroom, but did not clarify to them the ‘aqīdah,
but these [Khalaf] came later on and explained it?” (p. 45-46)

2 **(MA):** “The supreme good he knew for us was knowledge of Allāh, and he
led us to knowing Him through His Names and Attributes. The worse of what
he knew would harm us was being ignorant of Allāh, associating partners with
Him, and taking on a methodology other than what he left us upon. The
methodology [he left us upon] is manifested in his statement: ‘I left you upon
a clear white plain’… this is the methodology of the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ. If you are
asked what the methodology of the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ is, then you say this is it; that
white clear plain whose night is similar to its day (i.e. having no obscurity).”
(1/44)
and those who forgot it did so.” Reported by al-Bukhārī—so it is impossible, after him teaching them everything that would benefit them in the religion, even precise and subtle matters [like the etiquettes of using the bathroom], that he would leave off teaching them what to utter with their tongues and believe with their hearts concerning their Lord, the One whom they worship, Lord of all creation.¹ This is because awareness of Him is the pinnacle of knowledge, worshipping Him is the greatest objective, and reaching Him is the peak of what one desires. Rather, this is the essence of the Prophetic call and the main theme of the Divine Scripture.

So, how can one who has an inkling of faith and wisdom presume that the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not clarify this subject in the best and most complete manner; and since this did occur, it would be impossible that the best of his Ummah and the best of its generations were careless regarding this subject, either adding to it, or taking away from it.² It is likewise impossible that the praiseworthy generations—the generation in which the Prophet was sent, then

¹ (SF): “The Shaykh is clarifying to them that it is impossible that the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not explain this matter which is the foundation of the religion, and likewise it is impossible that the Companions remained silent about it and did not convey this clarification to the people. Therefore, the argument of the opposition revolves around one of two matters:
1- Either the Messenger concealed the truth and did not clarify it to the people, [and to say this] is disbelief because it is accusing the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) [of that which he is innocent of].
2- Or he did clarify it, but the Companions concealed it and did not clarify it [to those after them], and this is accusing the Companions of concealing the truth and not conveying it to the people…” (p. 48)
² (MA): “It is impossible that any of this could have transpired from the [Companions]. Not because they are infallible, but because the Messenger of Allāh testified that they are the best of people. They did not become the best of people except through knowledge; complete knowledge of what the Messenger of Allāh came with, acting by it, and calling to it.” (1/48)
those who followed them, then those who followed them—were not aware and did not profess the manifest truth in this subject, because the opposite of this would mean that they lacked this knowledge and did not speak on it, or they held a belief contrary to the truth and spoke with what opposes it, and both these scenarios are impossible as it relates to them.

As for the first, anyone who has the least amount of life in their heart, or [desire] to seek knowledge or to worship, then investigating this subject, inquiring about it, and [wanting] to know the truth regarding it would be his greatest goal and ultimate objective. What I mean is clarification of the correct belief one must hold, [not meaning] seeking to know the exact nature (i.e. al-kayfiyyah) of the Lord and His Attributes. Pure souls desire nothing more than to have knowledge of this matter, as is known by way of the natural-disposition (fitrah) and one’s instinct. So, because this is [naturally]

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1 (SF): “[The claim] that the Companions and the Ṭabī‘īn did not know this subject raises two possibilities: Either they were ignorant, [which is impossible] because they were the most knowledgeable of generations after the Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), or either they concealed it. This would mean that they knew of it and did not clarify it, nor did they convey it to the people, nor did [the Ṭabī‘īn] convey to [the people] what reached them from the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam). These virtuous generations are innocent of both these claims.” (p. 52)

2 (SF): “The souls do not yearn for anything more than to know Allāh’s Names, Attributes, His Oneness, and the correct creed which they must believe regarding their Lord (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), and knowing Allāh, His Greatness, His Majesty, and the worship that is due to Him alone. This is the greatest matter in which the soul finds pleasure, because if you know your Lord you will love Him, worship Him, and seek to draw near to Him. If you know His Greatness, His Ability, His Exaltedness, and His Mercy, and likewise His severe retribution and His anger, you will draw near to Him through what He loves and stay away from what He hates. So the souls do not yearn for anything more as they do for this. How can you worship your Lord without knowing Him by way of His Names and Attributes? Such a Lord will be unknown. However,
present [within those with pure souls]—which is considered from the strongest proofs—how can one imagine that this can be absent among those elite individuals during their generations as a whole?\(^1\) This can almost never occur from the most dull-witted person and most obstinate one who turns away from Allāh, and the most eager of those who seek the worldly life, heedless of the remembrance of Allāh,\(^2\) so how can it ever occur with them (i.e. the praiseworthy generations)?

if you know Him by way of His Names, Attributes, His signs, and His creation, it will show you His greatness and that He is deserving of all worship. If you were to look at the creation of the heavens and the earth and its wonders, you will say just as the believers say,

\[\text{وَإِنَّا مَا خَلَقْنَاهَا إِلَّا لِتَبْلِيَانَا فِيهَا عَدَداً مِّيَأَوَاتٍ} \]

“Our Lord, you have not created all this without purpose, glory be to You! Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire.” [Sūrah Āl ʿImrān 3:191]

You will know Allāh and His greatness when you ponder over His creation. The one who is Able to create all of these remarkable, marvelous creations points to His Greatness, His Ability, His Knowledge, and Wisdom (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَ). Therefore, you know your Lord by way of His signs and Attributes (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَ).

(p. 53)

\(^1\) (MA): “[Meaning], the generation of the Companions, the Tābiʿīn, and the generation after the Tābiʿīn.” (1/50)

\(^2\) (MA): “No matter how dull-witted a person is, or obstinate, turning away from Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَ), it is a must that they have some type of desire to know Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَ) by His Names and Attributes. And no matter how eager a person is in seeking out the worldly affairs, this would not prevent him from learning something in this subject. Hence, those elite individuals (i.e. the Companions) whom have dedicated all their time in gaining knowledge of Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَ) and knowing what the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى الَّذِي يُصَلُّونَ لَهُ) came with, how can they be accused of deficiency in their knowledge of this matter?” (1/50)

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And as for [the Salaf] holding a belief regarding [Allāh’s Attributes] that contradicts the truth, or professing [other than it], then no Muslim or one with intellect who knew their condition would ever believe that. Further, their speech on this subject is too much to even possibly try to mention in this Fatwā, or in a larger work. Anyone who researches and looks into it would know this. Also, it is impossible that latecomers could be more knowledgeable than the early predecessors, as some fools who have not given the Salaf their due respect have stated: “The way of the Salaf is safer, while the way of the Khalaf is more knowledgeable and more precise.” But rather [it is they who] do not know Allāh, His Messenger, and those who believe in Him with the true required knowledge.

These innovators who prefer the way of the Khalaf over the way of the Salaf were deluded due to believing that the way of the Salaf is merely belief in the wordings of the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth without understanding. Just like the illiterate people whom Allāh said regarding,

وَمَنْهُمْ أَفْتَثَنَّ لاَ يَتَّفَرَّجُونَ اِلَّا أَمَّنْ وَإِنْ هُمْ لَا يَفْتَثُونَ

1 (SF): “The Shaykh is going to refute this statement, just as others have refuted it, because this [statement] is misguidance and ascribes misguidance and ignorance to the Salaf…due to their stupidity they say that the way of the Salaf is safer while the way of the Khalaf is more knowledgeable and more precise. This is contradiction. Safety does not come about except with knowledge, and there is no safety with ignorance. Further, could it be possible that the Khalaf be more knowledgeable than the Salaf who learned directly from the Messenger (ṣallīAllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam), and also from the Companions? Is it possible that the generations which came later be more knowledgeable than the Salaf, when the Prophet (ṣallīAllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam) said: ‘The best of you are my generation, then those who follow them then those who follow them.’” (p. 56-57)
“And there are among the (Jews) illiterates who know not the Book, but they trust upon false desires.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:78]\(^1\)

[And they believed] that the way of the Khalāf is extracting the understanding of the texts which are altered from their realities by using different types of metaphors (majāzāt) and uncommon lexical-terminologies.

Therefore, that corrupt belief—which entails throwing Islam behind one’s back—is what brought about that [false] statement.\(^2\) No doubt they have lied upon the way of the Salaf and are misguided in

\(^1\)(SF): “Can these philosophers be compared to Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān, ʿAlī, and the rest of the Companions, and the Muhājirūn and Anṣār? Can they be compared to the Tābiʿīn, the followers of the Tābiʿīn, and the praiseworthy generations, when their sole knowledge is that of philosophy, logic, and debate, which was taken from the Greek philosophers? The Salaf took [their knowledge] from the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and held on to the Book and Sunnah. How can one compare between those who took knowledge from the Book and Sunnah and those who only learned the sciences of philosophy, logic, debate, and speculative theology which was brought by the disbelieving Greek philosophers who were ignorant of the [Islamic] legislation?” (p. 59)

\(^2\)(MA): “If the Salaf did not understand the Book and the Sunnah, then from where did we understand it, and from where did the Khalaf understand it? These innovators have lied on the way of the Salaf by describing them as being simply those who read the text [without understanding], and they are also misguided due to ascribing correctness to the way of the Khalaf by claiming that it is more precise and more knowledgeable. Hence, they combined between being ignorant of the way of the Salaf by lying on them and claiming that they have the similitude of an illiterate people, and between foolishness and misguidance by ascribing correctness to the way of the Khalaf. Therefore, what is the correct way? The correct way is to believe that the Salaf of this Ummah were more knowledgeable, more precise, safer, and possessed more understanding than those who came after them. Furthermore, there is no safety for those who come after them unless they tread their path...” (1/56)
ascribing correctness to the way of the Khalaf. Thus, they have combined between being ignorant of the way of the Salaf by lying upon them, and between foolishness along with misguidance by ascribing correctness to the way of the Khalaf.\footnote{SF: “They lied upon the Salaf by attributing ignorance to them and tafsīr, and they went astray by praising the way of the Khalaf, which is explaining the texts [of the Attributes] with other than their proper meanings. Therefore, they combined between lying upon the Salaf; and misguidance by giving preference to the Khalaf.” (p. 61)}

And the reason behind this is their belief that these texts (i.e. the Qurʾān and Sunnah) do not point to [the reality] of any Attribute, based upon corrupt doubts which they share with their brethren from the disbelievers.\footnote{MA: “Who are their brethren from the disbelievers? The philosophers, because this 'aqīdah was introduced to them by way of the philosophers. The philosophers are the teachers of the Ḥanafiyyah and Muʿtazilah…” (1/61)}\footnote{SF: “These are their doubts which led them astray:

**The First Doubt:** They thought that the Salaf did not comprehend the meanings of the texts.

**The Second Doubt:** They thought that Allāh did not possess Attributes, that these texts do not point to Allāh’s Attributes, and that the [texts] should not be understood by their apparent meanings. Therefore, it was a must to reinterpret those texts and distort them from their apparent wordings, because [as they claim] they do not point to [true] Attributes. This is the reason for their misguidance...The reason for their misguidance was making taʾīl—which means to reject and strip Allāh (سُنْنَةُ الْعَزَّةِ) of all Attributes—due to them believing that Allāh did not have any [true] Attributes, and that He is a mere Essence that cannot be described with Attributes. However, because the texts are manifestly clear in affirming Attributes for Allāh, what could they do? It was not possible that they could reject the texts outright, so they resorted to distorting them [from their apparent meanings]. Instead of rejecting the texts, they distorted their meanings and twisted them in order to escape the first blunder that they fell into, but they inevitably fell into one greater than that.” (p. 61–62)}
meaning, they wavered between having belief (imān) in the Attribute and [claiming to] entrust [the knowledge of its] meaning [to Allāh] (tafwiḍ)—which they [erroneously] claimed to be the way of the Salaf—1—and between distorting the Attribute to other

1 (MA): “The Mu‘awwidhah (i.e. those who distort Allāh’s Attributes) all unite upon one factor when they distort [Allāh’s Attributes]; meaning when they distort the text containing Attributes [of Allāh]; It is only one factor [they unite upon] nothing more, and that is [their claim that affirming these Attributes] is logically impossible. It is logically impossible that Allāh (سُلَيْمَانَ) can be described with Istiwā (Rising) above His throne, al-Nuzūl (descending), al-Majī (Coming forth), al-Parāh (Happiness), al-Riḍā (Being pleased), al-Mahabbah (Love), and other sifāt khabarîyyah. Their factor in uniting is one thing, which is that these texts are logically impossible. Therefore, [as they claim], if you come across any of these texts you must do one of two things: either you distort the meaning of [the Attribute] and say that this tafwiḍ (distortion) is the way of the Khalaf—which they claimed to be more knowledgeable— or you make tafwiḍ of those texts by saying ‘I do not know the meaning of Istawā (to rise), or Nazala (to descend), or Jā‘a(to come).’ Is it possible for an Arab to claim that he does not know the meaning of Jā‘a, or Atā (i.e. to come), or Istawā? If so he is feigning ignorance; he is feigning to be ignorant of the meanings of these texts and thus claims to make tafwiḍ (entrusting) the knowledge of their meanings to Allāh. They call this absolute tafwiḍ, and this is incorrect. What is correct is that tafwiḍ is of two types: (1) Absolute tafwiḍ as regards to the meanings, how, and the reality [of these texts]. This is the way of the ignorant Mu‘awwidhah and is not the way of the Salaf. (2) Making tafwiḍ [i.e. entrusting] of the “how” (al-kaṣîfîyyah) and the reality [of these texts to Allāh], while maintaining the fact that the [linguistic] meanings are known. So the general-meanings of the texts are known due to them being in the plain Arabic language. This is what Imām Mālik alluded to in his statement: ‘Al-Istiwa‘ā is known.’ If the verb Istawā is used with the particle “alā”, it means highness (al-‘uluw),

الرَّحْمَٰنُ عَلَيْ الْعَرْشِ أَسْتَوَىٰ

“The Most Beneficent rose over (Istawā) the throne.”

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[meanings] using somewhat burdensome [methods], and this is what they call the way of the Khalaf.\(^1\) As a result, this falsehood became a mixture of corrupt reasoning along with negation of the texts. This is because in their negation [of Allāh’s Attributes] they relied upon intellectual-[arguments] which they thought to be manifest proofs, but in reality, were only doubts, and at the same time they distorted the verses of the [Qur’ān] from their proper context.

Hence, because they based their affair upon these two disbelieving premises,\(^2\) the end result was ascribing ignorance and foolishness to

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The meaning of the word Istawā is known. [Imām Mālik said,] ‘and the kayf [i.e. how it occurs] is unknown.’ How Allāh (سُمَّىِ) rose above His throne is unknown to us, and out of the realms of our comprehension. ‘Belief [Imān] in al-Istiwā is obligatory,’ in order to deem truthful what Allāh informed of, ‘And asking how al-Istiwā occurs is an innovation…’ The point is, the tafwīd made by the Salaf is regarding the ‘how’ and reality [of the texts containing Allāh’s Attributes], not tafwīd of their meanings and removing them from their apparent linguistic context…” (1/63)

\(^1\) (SF): “Because they believed Allāh does not possess Attributes, although the Qur’ān and Sunnah has affirmed Attributes for Allāh in many verses - which is something they cannot deny - they broke down into two categories:

**The First:** Those who reinterpreted the meanings and distorted them. They are known as the Mu‘āththilah.

**The Second:** Those who stopped, and [claimed] to leave its knowledge to Allāh, and they are known as the Mufawwidāh. They say: “We do not explain [the Attributes], rather we leave their explanation to Allāh. [They say], as for [the word itself], it does not point to an attribute, and we do not know its meaning. This is what they claimed to be the [the way of] the Salaf; that [the Salaf] affirmed the wordings but denied knowledge of their meanings. So they attributed their disease and sickness to the Salaf, however it is them who are truly Mufawwidāh, not the Salaf.” (p. 63)

\(^2\) (MA): “[He called these disbelieving premises] because they are attributed and return back to the disbelievers; the chain of the Jahmiyyah goes back to the Jew
[the Salaf], and belief that they were an illiterate people; nothing more than righteous laymen\(^1\) who had not gained deep insight into the realities of awareness of Allāh, and did not comprehend the intricacies of divine revelation. Rather, it was the “virtuous” Khalaf who obtained prominence in all of this.\(^2\)

Further, if a person was to ponder over this statement, they would find that it is the pinnacle of ignorance—nay the pinnacle of misguidance. \(^3\) How can these later generations [be more knowledgeable than the Salaf]—especially when those referred to here as “Khalaf” are a party of Ahl al-Kalām whom are confused in matters of the Religion and are blindfolded from having [true] knowledge of Allāh.

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\(^1\) (SF): “They based their madhhab on two premises: 
One: That the Salaf did not understand the Qurān whereas the Khalaf do.  
Two: That the proofs of the Qurān and Sunnah are speculative, whereas the proofs of the [science of] logic are definitive. The result of these two premises which are based upon ascribing ignorance and heedlessness to the Salaf and deeming them as mere righteous laymen – at the same time ascribing intelligence to the Khalaf and giving them precedence in knowledge – the end result was that they deemed the Salaf to be ignorant and illiterate people who memorized but had no understanding. They merely memorized words and were clueless of their meanings. (p. 64–65)

\(^2\) (MA): “Here, [Shaykh al-Islām] mocks them [by calling them virtuous], and they are deserving of this sarcasm.” (1/65)

\(^3\) (SF): “If we abandon the Salaf and say that they were ignorant, or people who were heedless, not having any knowledge, then where will we take our religion from? From Jahm Ibn Ṣafwān, Wāsil Ibn ‘Atā, et al.? If we were to leave off Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī and the Companions, and the Tābi‘īn, do we then take knowledge from the Jahmiyyah, Mu’tazilah and their off shoots? This is the pinnacle of misguidance.” (p. 65–66)
And one who observed the furthermost limits (of speculative theology) informed about the end point of the aspirations (of the theologians) when he said:

“Verily, I have travelled to all the institutions [of the logicians], and I moved about frequently among those places. But I only saw people rubbing their chin in confusion or grinding their teeth out of regret.”

Rather some of them have acknowledged this against their own selves from their statements, citing others, or what they mentioned in their own authored works, such as the statement of one of their leaders:

1 (SF): “This person went to all of their scholars and their schools seeking the truth, but did not attain it. Each of them pointed him to a different path. He found that some of them were either confused or regretful because they knew that they were misguided and became sorrowful. This is their outcome due to them not relying upon the Book of Allāh and Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), and upon the guidance of the pious predecessors, which direct to the correct path…” (p. 67)

(TN): These lines of poetry were mentioned by Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Shahristānī in the beginning of his book “Nihāyah al-Iṣlām Fi ʿIlm al-Kalām” without being attributed to anyone, and some scholars have attributed these lines to al-Shahristānī himself.

And how excellent is the reply of al-Amīr al-Ṣaḥābī to those lines of poetry, when he said:

لَعَلَّكَ أَهْمَلْتَ الطَّوْفَافَ يَمِّعَهُد
وَلَمْتَ تَرَاهُ قَارِعًا بِسِنَّ نَادِمٍ
فَمَا حَارَ مَنْ يَهْتَدِي بِحَذِيفٍ مَتَّعِمٍ

“Perhaps you were heedless in visiting the learning place of the Messenger, and that of the scholars who met him (i.e. the Companions). No one who sought guidance with the guidance of Muḥammad has become confused, nor do you see them grinding their teeth in regret.”

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"The end result of pushing the intellect [past its limits] is deadlock,\(^1\) and most striving done by [the logicians] is misguidance. Our souls within our bodies have feelings of loneliness,\(^2\) and the result of our worldly life is only harm and evil consequence. Throughout our lifetime we have not benefitted from our research, except gathering hearsay.\(^3\) I have pondered over the methods of speculative theology and that of the philosophers, and I found that they do not amount to any benefit whatsoever. And I found that the soundest way is the way of the Qur`ān. I read in affirmation,

\[
\text{الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعُرْشِ أَسْتَوَى}
\]

"The Most Beneficent rose over (Istawā) the throne,"

And,

\[
\text{إِلَيْهِ يُصَاعِدُ الْكَبْرِ أَلِيْلَبِ}
\]

\(^1\) (MA): "No matter how much the intellect seeks advancement, especially as it relates to studies concerning the Lord (i.e. His Essence, Names and Attributes, Actions etc.) the end result will be deadlock, [as the intellect has limits]." (1/71)

\(^2\) (MA): "Their souls lacked nourishment, and the nourishment of the souls is revelation; the Speech of Allāh, and the remembrance of Allāh. They turned away from Allāh, His Speech, and what His Messenger came with, thus they became in a state of separation and loneliness." (1/71)

\(^3\) (MA): "Aristotle said this, Ibn Sīnā said that, al-Fārābī said this; [i.e. the top logicians]. They were not given success to say Allāh said and His Messenger said (صَلَّى الله عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم)..." (1/72)

(SF): "This statement is from one of their leaders, Abū 'Abdullāh al-Rāzī, author of the Tafsīr. He repented to Allāh (عَزَّوْ جَلَّ) at the end of his life, as he mentioned in these lines of poetry." (p. 68)
“To Him ascends all good words.”
[Sūrah al-Fāṭir 35:10]

And I read in negation,

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ الْسُّمُعُ الْبَصِيرُ

“There is nothing similar to Him and He is All-Hearer, All Seer,” [Sūrah al-Shūrā 42:11]

[And,]

وَلَأَعْلَمُ مَعْلُومَةً

“They will never encompass anything of His knowledge.” [Sūrah Tā Hā 20:110]

So, whoever experienced the things that I have, will know exactly as I have come to know.”¹

Another from among them stated: “I have entered the vast ocean [of speculative theology], and left off the people of Islām and their knowledge.² I’ve indulged in what [the Scholars] have forbade me from,³ and now if my Lord does not grant me His Mercy, then woe

¹ (SF): “This is a testimony in favor of the people of the Sunnah. This person did not find a safer and more righteous path than theirs, nor [a way] more correct than using the Qur’ān as evidence…” (p. 69)
² (MA): “The sciences of the people of Islām is that which is taken from the Qur’ān and Sunnah.” (1/73)
³ (MA): “Meaning, speculative theology.” (1/74)
to fulān (i.e. himself). And here I am, dying upon the ‘aqīdah of my mother.”¹

Also, another one stated, “Those having the most doubt at the time of death are the people of speculative theology.”²

¹ (MA): “What was the ‘aqīdah of his mother? It was the fitrah [natural-disposition to believe in Allāh and His Highness above His creation]. After all this rhetoric, he returned to the ‘aqīdah of an old woman. The ‘aqīdah of the fitrah which the slave girl was upon, who some latecomers tried to defame and claim she was unstable. The slave girl whom the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) asked, ‘Where is Allāh?’ She replied, ‘Above the heavens.’ He then asked her, ‘Who am I?’ She replied, ‘You are the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم).’ So the [the Prophet’s] response was, ‘Free her for indeed she is a believer (Mūminah).’ This [‘aqīdah] is the ‘aqīdah of old women [from the Muslims], likewise the ‘aqīdah of the mother of al-Juwaynī which he stated he was dying upon and abandoning speculative rhetoric. All of this transpired after the people of his land named him ‘Imām al-Haramayn’ (i.e. Imām of the two holy precincts, Makkah and al-Madinah), although he never once led a prayer in either masjid…” (1/74)

² (SF): “These words are attributed to Abū al-Maʿālī al-Juwaynī who was from their Imāms and prominent figures...he went with Ahl al-Kalām and wasted his entire life in the science of theological-debate and did not seek understanding of the Book and Sunnah, although the Salaf had forewarned about speculative theology and debate. They said it does not lead to anything except confusion and incertitude. So, this is what al-Juwaynī said at his time of death, and this is his recanting and his acknowledgement that these paths are erroneous.” (p. 70)

² (SF): “This is one of their testimonies regarding the falsehood of the way of the logicians. They have doubt in their ‘aqīdah at the time of death because they never learned what will cause them to be saved when it approaches.” (p. 70)

(TN): This statement is attributed to Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī. Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah stated, “Their leaders do not cease to inform that their way is lacking proofs and guidance, as we mentioned about the statement of Abū Ḥāmid and others. To the extent Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī said, ‘Those having the most doubt at the time of death are the people of speculative theology.’ See Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (4/24).
Moreover, these logicians who oppose the Salaf, if they are investigated [and tested,]¹ you would not find with them any true knowledge of Allāh or factual-awareness of Him. They cannot comprehend it if was in front of them, nor would they realize it after it has passed them². So how can these blinded, deficient, reckless, confused, latecomers be more knowledgeable about Allāh and His Names and Attributes, and more precise concerning His verses and His Essence, than the foremost [to embrace Islām] from the Muhājirūn, the Anṣār, and those who followed them in goodness, from the heirs of the Prophets and successors of the Messengers; the signposts of guidance, and the guiding lamps [through] darkness. Those who recited, implemented, and spread the Book (i.e. Qur’ān), and because of it they were granted aid and victory; [those] whom the Book spoke of [in praise] and they spoke with the Book; those whom Allāh granted knowledge and wisdom to the extent they stood out over the rest of the followers of the Prophets, let alone the rest of the nations who have no book. They possessed the most sound, deep, and precise knowledge, to the point if the philosophies of every [nation] besides them were gathered next to [theirs], one would be shy to attempt to make a comparison.

Furthermore, how can the best of generations (i.e. the Salaf) be less in knowledge and wisdom than these youths—in comparison to

¹ (MA): “If they were to be tested regarding what they studied or learned regarding knowledge of Allāh, or what relates to the Prophets, or the affairs of the unseen such as matters of the Hereafter…” (1/77)
² (MA): “Meaning, they have nothing whatsoever, rather they are ignoramuses. For this reason, if Shaykh al-Islām would debate them and they would remain persistent upon their beliefs, he would say to them: ‘If I was in your place, I would have ruled myself to be a disbeliever, however you all are ignoramuses,’ although they saw themselves to be the most knowledgeable of people...” (1/77–78)
them—especially relating to knowledge of Allāh and the rulings regarding His verses and Names? Or how can the descendants of the philosophers and the followers of [the people] of Hind and the Greeks and their heirs from the Magians, polytheists, and the misguided Jews, Christians, and Sabians and those similar to them, be more knowledgeable than the heirs of the Prophets and the people of Qur'ān and īmān (faith)?

Hence, I only began with this introduction, because the one who has it firmly established will know where true guidance lies in this subject and other than it. Just as one will know that misguidance and confusion have only prevailed over many of the latecomers due to them tossing the Book of Allāh behind their backs and turning away from the clear evidences and guidance that Allāh sent Muḥammad (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam) with. Also, them leaving off searching for the path of the early predecessors and Tābi‘īn, and [instead] seeking knowledge of Allāh from those who did not know Him based upon their own acknowledgement, the testimony of the Ummah, and countless other proofs. Further, my objective is not [to discuss] one [person in particular], however I will give descriptions of each accordingly...

End of Introduction to *al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawīyyah*

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1 (MA): “Meaning this can never be the case. He presented a rhetorical-question meant to rebuke them...” (1/79)
2 (MA): “As it relates to Allāh’s Names and Attributes, and other areas [of knowledge],” (1/84)
3 (MA): “Whereas they did not seek guidance from the Book of Allāh, but rather sought guidance from other than the Book of Allāh, so Allāh led them astray.” (1/84)
4 (MA): “They have ruled upon their own selves as being ignorant, so how can knowledge be sought from their likes? From the books of al-Rāzī, al-Shahrastānī, al-Ghazālī, al-Juwaynī, when they all have ruled upon themselves as being ignorant and having regret for what they indulged in...” (1/86)
The English Text of the Introduction to al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawīyyah Without Commentary

In the year 698H, the great scholar Shaykh al-Islām Taqī al-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥalim Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām Ibn Taymiyyah was asked [this question], and because of [his] answer, matters [of hearings, judgments] and tribulations transpired. It is an answer containing tremendous benefit.

The questioner asked:

What is the statement of the pre-eminent Scholars, the Imams of the Religion, regarding the verses containing the Attributes (ṣifāt) [of Allāh], such as His statement (عَلَىۡ السَّمَاءَ ﺑُرُخَةٍ ﻊَزِيزٍ)

الرحمن عَلَى َالْعُرْشَ أَسْتَوَىَ

“The Most Beneficent (Allāh) rose over (Istawā) the throne.” [Sūrah Tā Hā 20:5]

And His statement (عَزِيزٍ)

َتَصُبُّ مَعْرُوفًا إِلَى َالْأَلْسَنةِ وَهَيْنِ دَخَانٌ

“Then He rose over (Istawā) towards the heavens when it was smoke.” [Sūrah al-Fuṣṣilat 41:11]
And other verses and *ahādīth* containing [His] Attributes, such as his saying (ﷺ), “Verily the hearts of the children of Ādām are between two Fingers from the Fingers of the Most Merciful,” and his saying, “al-Jabbār [i.e. Allāh] will place His Foot in the Hell-Fire…” and similar *ahādīth* of this sort, and what do the scholars say [regarding them]? [Please] give a detailed answer regarding that, and may you be rewarded, if Allāh wills.

[Shaykh al-Islām] answered:

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all creation. Our statement regarding [those texts containing Allāh’s Attributes] is what Allāh and His Messenger have stated, as well as what was stated by the early Muslims who embraced Islām from the Muhājirūn, the Anṣār, and those who followed them in goodness, and the rightly guided Imāms after them; those whom the Muslims agree were rightly guided and possessed correct understanding. This is what is incumbent upon all people as it relates to this subject and other than it.

Indeed, Allāh sent Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) with guidance and the true Religion, in order to remove mankind from [layers of] darkness into light, by the permission of their Lord, to the path of the All-Mighty, One Full of Praise. [Allāh] testified that He sent him as a caller to [his Lord] by His permission, and [sent him] as an illuminating lamp. He commanded him to say,

1 Reported by Muslim no. 2654 from the *hādīth* of ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ (رضي الله عنه).

2 Reported by Bukhārī with a similar wording (no. 4849), and Muslim (no. 2848), from the *hādīth* of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه).
"This is my path. I call to Allāh upon certain knowledge, I and whosoever follows me."

[Sūrah Yūsuf 12:108]

Therefore, it is impossible intellectually and religiously that this illuminating lamp (i.e. Muḥammad) whom Allāh sent in order to remove the people from [layers of] darkness into light, and revealed to him the Book (i.e. Qur'ān) in order to judge between the people in which they differ, just as He commanded the people to return disputes in their religion back to the Book and Wisdom (ḥikmah) which he was sent with, along with [the Prophet] calling to Allāh and to His path upon certain knowledge, by [Allāh’s] permission, and He informed that He completed for him and his Ummah their religion, and perfected His favor upon them; it is impossible alongside this and other [considerations] that [the Prophet] left the subject of belief in Allāh and of knowledge regarding Him confusing and ambiguous, not having distinguished between what is incumbent for Allāh of beautiful Names and lofty Attributes, what is permitted for Him [of actions], and what is impossible for Him.

Surely, knowledge of [these matters] is the foundation of the religion and the basis of guidance. It is also the best thing the hearts can acquire, what the souls can achieve, and what the intellects can comprehend. Therefore, how can that Book (i.e. Qur'ān), that Messenger (i.e. Muḥammad), and the best of mankind after the Prophets (i.e. the Companions) not completely master this subject in respect to belief and statement? It is also impossible that the Prophet (ṣallā Allāhu 'alaihi wa sallam) taught his Ummah everything, even the
etiquettes of cleaning themselves [after using the bathroom]—and said: “I have left you upon a clear white plain, its night is like its day, no one strays from it except that he is destroyed.” There occurs in another authentic report, “Allāh never sent a Messenger except it was a duty upon him to point his Ummah to every good that he knew for them, and to warn them from every evil that he knew would harm them.” And Abū Dharr (رضي الله عنه) said, “The Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) passed away, and there was not even a bird who flaps its wings in the sky except that he mentioned to us some knowledge concerning it.” And 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) said: “The Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) stood among us [one day] and mentioned the matters of the very beginning of creation all the way until the people of Paradise enter their dwellings, and the people of the Hell-Fire enter their dwellings. Those who memorized it did so, and those who forgot it did so.” Reported by al-Bukhārī—so it is impossible, after him teaching them everything that would benefit them in the religion, even precise and subtle matters [like the etiquettes of using the bathroom], that he would leave off teaching them what to utter with their tongues and believe with their hearts concerning their Lord, the One whom they worship, Lord of all creation. This is because awareness of Him is the pinnacle of knowledge, worshipping Him is the greatest objective, and reaching
Him is the peak of what one desires. Rather, this is the essence of the Prophetic call and the main theme of the Divine Scripture.

So, how can one who has an inkling of faith and wisdom presume that the Messenger (ﷺ) did not clarify this subject in the best and most complete manner; and since this did occur, it would be impossible that the best of his Ummah and the best of its generations were careless regarding this subject, either adding to it, or taking away from it. It is likewise impossible that the praiseworthy generations—the generation in which the Prophet was sent, then those who followed them, then those who followed them—were not aware and did not profess the manifest truth in this subject, because the opposite of this would mean that they lacked this knowledge and did not speak on it, or they held a belief contrary to the truth and spoke with what opposes it, and both these scenarios are impossible as it relates to them.

As for the first, anyone who has the least amount of life in their heart, or [desire] to seek knowledge or to worship, then investigating this subject, inquiring about it, and [wanting] to know the truth regarding it would be his greatest goal and ultimate objective. What I mean is clarification of the correct belief one must hold, [not meaning] seeking to know the exact nature (i.e. al-kayfiyyah) of the Lord and His Attributes. Pure souls desire nothing more than to have knowledge of this matter, as is known by way of the natural-disposition (fitrah) and one’s instinct. So, because this is [naturally] present [within those with pure souls]—which is considered from the strongest proofs—how can one imagine that this can be absent among those elite individuals during their generations as a whole? This can almost never occur from the most dull-witted person and most obstinate one who turns away from Allāh, and the most eager of those who seek the worldly life, heedless of the remembrance of
Allāh, so how can it ever occur with them (i.e. the praiseworthy generations)?

And as for [the Salaf] holding a belief regarding [Allāh’s Attributes] that contradicts the truth, or professing [other than it], then no Muslim or one with intellect who knew their condition would ever believe that. Further, their speech on this subject is too much to even possibly try to mention in this Fatwā, or in a larger work. Anyone who researches and looks into it would know this. Also, it is impossible that latecomers could be more knowledgeable than the early predecessors, as some fools who have not given the Salaf their due respect have stated: “The way of the Salaf is safer, while the way of the Khalaf is more knowledgeable and more precise.” But rather [it is they who] do not know Allāh, His Messenger, and those who believe in Him with the true required knowledge.

These innovators who prefer the way of the Khalaf over the way of the Salaf were deluded due to believing that the way of the Salaf is merely belief in the wordings of the Qurān and Hadith without understanding. Just like the illiterate people whom Allāh said regarding:

\[\text{وَمَنْ مِنْهُمْ أَلْمَىْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ} \]
\[\text{إِلَّآ أَمَانِيَّ وَإِنْ هُمُّ لَا يَطْلُبُونَ} \]

“And there are among the (Jews) illiterates who know not the Book, but they trust upon false desires.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:78]

[And they believed] that the way of the Khalaf is extracting the understanding of the texts which are altered from their realities by
using different types of metaphors (majāzāt) and uncommon lexical-terminologies.

Therefore, that corrupt belief—which entails throwing Islām behind one’s back—is what brought about that [false] statement. No doubt they have lied upon the way of the Salaf and are misguided in ascribing correctness to the way of the Khalaf. Thus, they have combined between being ignorant of the way of the Salaf by lying upon them, and between foolishness along with misguidance by ascribing correctness to the way of the Khalaf.

And the reason behind this is their belief that these texts (i.e. the Qurān and Sunnah) do not point to [the reality] of any Attribute, based upon corrupt doubts which they share with their brethren from the disbelievers. So because they believed [Allāh’s] Attributes to be non-existent, along with the fact that these texts must carry a meaning, they wavered between having belief (īmān) in the Attribute and [claiming to] entrust [the knowledge of its] meaning [to Allāh] (tafwīd)—which they [erroneously] claimed to be the way of the Salaf—and between distorting the Attribute to other [meanings] using somewhat burdensome [methods], and this is what they call the way of the Khalaf. As a result, this falsehood became a mixture of corrupt reasoning along with negation of the texts. This is because in their negation [of Allāh’s Attributes] they relied upon intellectual-[arguments] which they thought to be manifest proofs, but in reality, were only doubts, and at the same time they distorted the verses of the [Qurān] from their proper context.

Hence, because they based their affair upon these two disbelieving premises, the end result was ascribing ignorance and foolishness to [the Salaf], and belief that they were an illiterate people; nothing more than righteous laymen who had not gained deep insight into
the realities of awareness of Allāh, and did not comprehend the intricacies of divine revelation. Rather it was the “virtuous” Khalaf who obtained prominence in all of this.

Further, if a person was to ponder over this statement, they would find that it is the pinnacle of ignorance—nay the pinnacle of misguidance. How can these later generations [be more knowledgeable than the Salaf]—especially when those referred to here as “Khalaf” are a party of Ahl al-Kalām whom are confused in matters of the religion and are blindfolded from having [true] knowledge of Allāh.

And one who observed the furthermost limits (of speculative theology) informed about the end point of the aspirations (of the theologians) when he said:

“Verily I have travelled to all the institutions [of the logicians], and I moved about frequently among those places. But I only saw people rubbing their chin in confusion or grinding their teeth out of regret.”

Rather, some of them have acknowledged this against their own selves from their statements, citing others, or what they mentioned in their own authored works, such as the statement of one of their leaders:

“The end result of pushing the intellect [past it limits] is deadlock, and most striving done by [the logicians] is misguidance. Our souls within our bodies have feelings of loneliness, and the result of our worldly life is only harm and evil consequence. Throughout our lifetime we have not benefitted from our research, except gathering hearsay. I have pondered over the methods of speculative theology and that of the philosophers, and I found that they do not amount
to any benefit whatsoever. And I found that the soundest way is the way of the Qur'an. I read in affirmation,

"The Most Beneficent rose over (Istawā) the Throne."

And,

"To Him ascends all good words." [Sūrah al-Fātīr 35:10]

And I read in negation,

"There is nothing similar to Him and He is All-Hearer, All Seer." [Sūrah al-Shūrā 42:11]

[And],

"They will never encompass anything of His knowledge." [Sūrah Tā Hā 20:110]
So, whoever experienced the things that I have, will know exactly as I have come to know.”

Another from among them stated, “I have entered the vast ocean [of speculative theology], and left off the people of Islām and their knowledge. I’ve indulged in what [the Scholars] have forbade me from, and now if my Lord does not grant me His Mercy, then woe to fulān (i.e. himself). And here I am, dying upon the ‘aqīdah of my mother.”

Also, another one stated, “Those having the most doubt at the time of death are the people of speculative theology.”

Moreover, these logicians who oppose the Salaf, if they are investigated [and tested], [you would not find] with them any true knowledge of Allāh or factual-awareness of Him. They cannot comprehend it if was in front of them, nor would they realize it after it has passed them. So how can these blinded, deficient, reckless, confused, latecomers be more knowledgeable about Allāh and His Names and Attributes, and more precise concerning His verses and His Essence, than the foremost [to embrace Islām] from the Muhājirūn, the Ansār, and those who followed them in goodness, from the heirs of the Prophets and successors of the Messengers; the signposts of guidance, and the guiding lamps [through] darkness. Those who recited, implemented, and spread the Book (i.e. Qur‘ān), and because of it they were granted aid and victory; [those] whom the Book spoke of [in praise] and they spoke with the Book; those whom Allāh granted knowledge and wisdom to the extent they stood out over the rest of the followers of the Prophets, let alone the rest of the nations who have no book. They possessed the most sound, deep, and precise knowledge, to the point if the philosophies of every [nation] besides them were gathered next to [theirs], one would be shy to attempt to make a comparison.
Furthermore, how can the best of generations (i.e. the Salaf) be less in knowledge and wisdom than these youths—in comparison to them—especially relating to knowledge of Allāh and the rulings regarding His verses and Names? Or how can the descendants of the philosophers and the followers of [the people] of Hind and the Greeks and their heirs from the Magians, polytheists, and the misguided Jews, Christians, and Sabians and those similar to them, be more knowledgeable than the heirs of the Prophets and the people of Qur’ān and īmān (faith)?

Hence, I only began with this introduction because the one who has it firmly established will know where true guidance lies in this subject and other than it. Just as one will know that misguidance and confusion have only prevailed over many of the latecomers due to them tossing the Book of Allāh behind their backs and turning away from the clear evidences and guidance that Allāh sent Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) with. Also, them leaving off searching for the path of the early predecessors and Tābi‘īn, and [instead] seeking knowledge of Allāh from those who did not know Him based upon their own acknowledgement, the testimony of the Ummah, and countless other proofs. Further, my objective is not [to discuss] one [person in particular], however I will give descriptions of each accordingly...

End of Introduction to al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah

diamonds
Summary of What is Entailed in the Introduction of al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah

1- Allāh has completed the religion [of Islām] and perfected His favor upon the Messenger (ṣallīllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallīmah) and upon his Ummah.

2- The Prophet (ṣallīllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallīmah) left his Ummah upon a clear white plain, its night is like its day.

3- The methodology of the Prophet (ṣallīllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallīmah) in calling to the religion and belief, is that he called to Allāh upon clarity, knowledge, guidance, and a light from Allāh.

4- The Prophet (ṣallīllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallīmah) was the most aware of mankind concerning his Lord, and the most knowledgeable of them regarding His religion. Therefore, he was the most knowledgeable of mankind regarding his Lord, and possessed the most awe, and fear of Him. Additionally, he was one who was merciful to the believers.

5- The Messenger (ṣallīllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallīmah) taught his ummah matters of belief (ʿirāqād) in specific, and matters of the religion in general; even the etiquettes of relieving one's self. Therefore, it is impossible that the Messenger (ṣallīllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallīmah) left his Ummah without teaching them [all] the affairs of their religion.

6- The Messenger (ṣallīllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallīmah) conveyed what was entrusted to him in a clear, complete fashion. Therefore, it is impossible that he could have left his Ummah in a state of confusion as it relates to belief [in Allah], and especially regarding [His] Attributes.

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1 Al-Tuhfah al-Siniyyah fi Bayān Maqāṣid al-Fatwā al-Ḥamawiyyah (p. 109-110).
7- The testimony of the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) that the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) taught them the affairs of their religion, and did not leave anything that the people were in need of except that he clarified it to them.

8- The obligation of following the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and accepting *everything* that he came with.

9- In times of dispute between the *Ummah* of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), it is a must to return [that differing] back to the Book of Allah and to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his legislation, as the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) judged between the people in that which they differed.

10- The Companions (رضي الله عنهم) were upon the straight path in matters of the religion in general, and in the subject of belief (*ʻitiqād*) in specific. Therefore, it is impossible that the Companions and those who followed them in goodness were ignorant concerning the matter of belief [in Allah and His Names and Attributes.]

11- The Companions (رضي الله عنهم) were the most knowledgeable of the people regarding Allah and His Names and Attributes. They were not a people who spoke with falsehood, because speaking with falsehood occurs due to two reasons: a) Being ignorant of the truth. b) Wanting to mislead the people, and both of these possibilities are false as it relates to the Companions (رضي الله عنهم). Furthermore, they were not silent about the truth because remaining silent occurs due to two reasons: a) Being ignorant of the truth. b) Wanting to conceal knowledge, and both of these possibilities are false as it relates to the Companions (رضي الله عنهم). Therefore, the only possibilities left is that they were those who spoke with the truth and were the most knowledgeable of people concerning it.
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

سُمِّئِلَ شَهِيدُ الإسلام العالم الرباني تقلي الدين أبو العباس أحمد بن عبد الحليم بن عبد السلام بن تميمة رحمه الله تعالى، وذاك في سنة ثمانم وتسعين وستان، وجزى بسبي هذا الجواب أمور ومحن، وهو جواب عظيم النفع جدا، فقال السائل:

ما قول السعادة العالم أئمة الدين في آيات الصفات كفلؤه تعالى: { الرحمن على العرش استوى } وقوله: { ثم استوى على العرش } وقوله: { ثم استوى إلى السما وعليه دخان } إلى غير ذلك من آيات الصفات و أحاديث الصفات كفلؤه:

صلى الله عليه وسلم { إن فلوب بني آدم بين أصبغين من أصبغ الزحمين } وقوله: { يضع الجباز قدمة في التأر } إلى غير ذلك وما قالت العالماء فيه وانضموا القول في ذلك مأجورين إن شاء الله تعالى.
فأجاب:

الحمد لله رب العالمين. قولنا فيها ما قالت الله ورسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم والشافعية
الأولون: من المهاجرين والأنصار والذين أتبعوه بإحسانًا؛ وما قالت آخرون أنهما بعث
هؤلاء الذين أجمع المسلمون على هدايتهم ودرائهم وهذا هو الواجب على جميع
الخلق في هذاباب وعيره؛ فإن الله سعبحانه وتعالى بقت محمدا صلى الله عليه
وسلم بالهدى ودين الحق؛ ليخرج الناس من الظلمات إلى النور بإذن ربه إلى
صراط العزيز الحميد وشهد الله بعثته داعيًا إليه بإذنه وسراجًا مثيرًا وأمره أن يقول

{ قل هذه سبيلي أدعوك إلى الله على بصيرة أنا ومن اتبعني. }

فإن المحال في العقل والدين أن يكون السبيل المثير الذي أخرج الله عليه الناس من
الظلمات إلى النور وأنزل ملكه الكتاب بالحق ليحكم بين الناس فيها اختلقوا فيه وأمر
الناس أن يقضوا ما تنزلوا فيه من أمر دينهم إلى ما بعث به من الكتاب والحكم.
وهو يدعو إلى الله و إلى شبيه بإذنه على بصيرة وقد أعرب الله بأنه أكر الله ولأميته
ديمهم وأمام عليهم يغتمره - محال مع هذا وعيره: أن يكون قد تركت باب الإيمان لله
والعلم به مظلمًا مظلمة فلا يميز بين ما يجيب الله من الأشياء الحسناء والصفات
العليا وما يجوز عليه وما يعتن عليه. فإن معرفة هذا أصل الدين وأساس العهدة

65
وأفضل وأوجب ما أكتملته القلوب وخصائص النحو وأدراك العقول فكيف يكون ذلك الكتاب وذلك الرسول وأفضل خلق الله بعد النبيين لم يكروا هذا الباب اعتقادا وقولا ومن المحال أيضا أن يكون النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قد علم أئته كل شيء حتى الخراقة،

وقال صل الله عليه وسلم:

{ تركتكم على المهجرة البيضاء ليلها كبارها لا يبلغ عنها بعدي إلا هاليك}

وقال فيها صح عنه أيضا: {ما بعث الله من نبي إلا كان حقا عليه أن يذل أئته على خير ما يعلمه لهم ويتبعهم عن شر ما يعلمه لهم}. وقيل أبو ذر: لقد توقّف رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وما من طائر يقلب جناحيه في السماء إلا ذكر لذا بمنه علماء.

وقال عمر بن الخطاب: {قام فينا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مقاتما فذكر بدء الحققي حتى دخل أهله أجته منازلهم وأهل النار منازلهم خفظ ذلك من خفظة وئسية من نسمة} رواة البخاري.

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ومجال مع تعلهم كل شيء له فنه منشأة في الدين - وإن دقت أن يدرك تعلهم ما يقولونه بالبكلمهم ويعتقدونه يعلعونه في رسم ومعرفتهم زرب العالمين الذي معرفته

غاية المعارف وعبادته أشرف الالباص ووصول إليه غاية المطالب.

بل هذا خلاصة الدعوة النبوية وزيدت نزلة الدعوة الأجلية فكيف يتوجه من في قلبه أدنى مشكاة من إيمان وحكمة أن لا يكون بيان هذا الباب قد وقع من الرسول علية غاية التمام ثم إذا كان قد وقع ذلك بعده: فمن المجال أن يكون خير أمه وأفضل قروه.

فقررا في هذا الباب زائدين فيه أو تأصين عنده.

ثم من المجال أيضا أن تكون النزول الفاضلة - القرن الذي بعث فيهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ثم الذين يلوهم ثم الذين يلونهم - كانوا غير علميين وغير قليلين في هذا الباب بالإثقال المبين لأن ضع ذلك إما عدم العلم والقول وإما اعتقاد تفاضل الحق وقول خلاف الصدقي وكلاهما ممتنع.

أما الأول: فلن من في قلبه أدنى خيال وطلب للعلم أو نهبة في العبادة يكون البحث عن هذا الباب والسؤال عنه ومعرفة الحق فيه أكثر مقاصده وأعظم مطالبه.

أعني بيان ما ينبغي اعتقاده لا معرفة كيفية الزرب وصقائه. وأثبت النظور الصريحة إلى شيء أشوب منا إلى معرفة هذا الأمر. وهذا أمر معلوم بالأضلاع.
الوجهية: فكيف تتصور مع قيام هذا المُفتضي - الذي هو من أقوى المُفتضيات - أن يتحلّف عنه مُفتضاة في أوليائك السادة في مجموع عُصورهم؟ هذا لا يُكاد يقع من أهل الحلف وأشديهم إعراضاً على الله وأعظمهم إجباءاً على طلب الدين والغفلة عن ذكر الله تعالى؛ فكيف يقع في أوليائك؟

وأما كونهم كانوا معتقدين فيه غير الحق أو قايلةً: فهذا لا يعتقده مسلم ولا عاقل.

عرف خال القوم. ثم الكلام عليه في هذا الباب أكثر من أن يفهم سطرة في هذه الفتوى أو أصحابها يعرف ذلك من طلحه وتبثه ولا يجوز أيضًا أن يكون الحالون أعلم من السالين، كما ي📝عله بعض الأعيان معنًّ ممن لم يتذرُّ قدر السلف؛ بل ولا عرف الله ورسوله والمؤمنين بِه حقائق المعرفة المثلى بها، من أن "طريقة السلف أسلم وطريقة الحلف أعلم وأحكم". فإن هؤلاء المتعددة الذين يفضلون طريقة الحلف من المُتقدسة ومن هذا خذهم على طريقة السلف: إنما أنو من حيث ظلوا: أنَّ طريقة السلف هي مجرد الإبان بالقلط القرآن والحديث من غير فقوه لذلك يفضله الأديان الذين قال فهم: { وكم لم يُمثّلون الكتاب إلا آمنًا } وأَّن طريقة الحلف هي استنكار معاي النصوص المضروفة عن حقائقها بأتباع المجازات وعلم اللغات. فهذا الطلب القاسي أوجب يقال المقالة التي مضموها بناء الإسلام.
وزاء الظلم، وقد كتبوا على طريقه السلف وضلعوا في تصوير طريقه الخلف.

تجمعوا بين الجهيل بخطة السلف في الكذب عليهم، وبين الجهيل والصلالة يتصورون طريقه الخلف.

وسبب ذلك اعتقادهم أنه ليس في نفس الأمر صفة ذلت عليها هذه النصوص للشيءات القاسدة التي شاركوا فيها إخوانهم من الكافرين; فلما اعتقدها اتباع الصناديق في نفس الأمر وكان مع ذلك لا بد للنصوص من معنى بتقديم بين الإيمان بالنفس وتطويق المعنى - وهي التي يسمونها طريقه السلف - ودوس صرف النظر إلى معنى تطبع تكلف - وهي التي يسمونها طريقه الخلف - فصار هذا الباطل مركبا من سعاد الغفل والكفر بالسمع فإن النفي إلا إذا اعتمدوا فيه على أمر غليلة ظلوا يتناثرون وهم شبهات والسمع حروف في الكلام عن مواضعهم. فلما اتبعت أمرهم على هائين المتدافعين الذين كانوا نتيجة استيصالهم السامبين الأولين وأستبقاهما واعتقادهم أنهم كانوا قومًا أحدهم بنزلة الصالحين من العامة، لم يبئسوا في حقائق العلم بالله ولم يتقنوا إيقاف العلم الإلهي، وأن الحلف الفصلاء خارزاً قصص المشي في هذا كلهم. ثم هذا القول إذا تدبر الإنسان وجد في غاية الجهالة.

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كيف يكون هؤلاء المتأخرين - لا سيما والإشارة بالخلف إلى ضرّب من المتكلّفين
الذين أكثر في باب الذين اضطروابهم وعلم على معرفة الله جناحهم وأخبر الواقف
على نهاية إقدامهم بما انتهى إليه من مرامهم حيث يقول: لغزني لقد طلبت المعاينة
لها وسرّبت طريقي بين تلك المعالم فلم أر إلا واضعا كف خائر على ذقي أو قارعا
سنا تامًا. وأثروا على تؤوسهم بما قالوه متمثّلين له أو منشين له فيما صنفوه من
كثير كمؤلّ بعض روؤسائهم. نهاية إقدام العقول وأكثر سمعي العالمين ضلال
وزواجنا في وحشة من جسومنا وحاصلا ديناتنا أدى وورثنا ولم تستفد من جذبتنا
طويل عمرنا سوؤ أن جمعنا فيه قبل وقالوا. لقد تأملت الطرق الكلامية والمتاجج
الفلسفيّة؛ فما زادتها تشغفي غليالاً ولا زوّري غليالاً وزأبّة أقرب الطرق طريقّة
القرآن. وأثروا في الإثبات: [الرحمن على العرش استثوى} [إني يضعد الكلم الطيب}
وأثروا في النفي: [ليس كثلى شيء} [ولأ يحتضن به علماً} ومن جرّب مثل تجريتي
عرف مثل معرفيه اهـ.
ويقول الآخر منهم: لقد خصصت البحر الخصّم وترك أهل الإسلام وعلمهم
وحصصت في الذي ينوي عنه والآن إن لم يتناكركي ربي يرحمه قالولي لفلان وها أنا
أموت على عقيدة أتيمى اهـ.
ويقول الآخر منهم: أكثر الناس شكاً عند الموت أصحاب الكلام. ثم هؤلاء المتكلمون
المحفوظون للسلف، إذا حظى عليهم الأمر: لم يوجد عندهم من حقيقة العلم بإله
وخلاصة المعرفة به خير ولم يقعوا من ذلك على غير ولا أثر كيف يكون هؤلاء
المحكومون المتوفون المسلمون الحاير المتهونون: أعلم بإله وآسأتيه وصقائه
وأحكم في باب ذائه وآياته من السلف الأهل من المهاجرين والأنصار والذين
ابتعواه بإحسان من ورثة الأئمة وخلفاء الرسول وأعلام الهدي ومصايب الدخ
الذين ظن قام الكتاب وله قاموا بهم نطق الكتاب وله نظموا الذين وهم الله من
العلم والحكمة ما برزوا به على سائر أتباع الأئمة فضلاً عن سائر الأمم الذين لا
كتاب لهم وناخاطوا من حقائق المعرفة وتوطين الحقائق بما أن جمعت حكمة عشيرهم
إليها ليستخنها من يطلب المقابلة ثم كيف يكون خير قربون الأمه أفضى في العلم
والحكمة لا سيما العلم بإله وأحكم أمهاته وأيامه - من هؤلاء الأصاغير بالنفسة
إليهم؟ هل كيف يكون أفراح المتقنسنة وأتباع الهند واليونان وورثة المجوس
والشريكان وسلال اليهود والنصارى والصابرين وشمائلهم وشباهم أعلم بإله من
ورثة الأئمة وأهل القرآن والإيمان. وإنما قدّمت هذه المقدمة لأن من استنفرت
هذا المقدمة عزدة عرف طريق الهداي أين هو في هذا الباب وعُبره وعلم أن الضلال
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والله إنما استغفرت لبايع كما من الذين يتبين كتاب الله وراء ظهورهم
واخرجوا منهم عمداً بعث الله به مُحفدًا صلى الله عليه وسلم من التبينات والهدى وتركهم
بتعين طريقة السلف والتابعين والتلاميذ وعَلَى مَعْرَفة الله مُعْرِف الله
بإقراره على نفسه وبشهادة الأمة على ذلك كله وبدالات كبيرة ولن يُرضي واحدًا
معيناً وإنما أصف نوع هؤلاء وتنوع هؤلاء.
Glossary

A

Āyah: (pl. āyāt) “sign,” a verse of the Qur'ān.
Āhād: a narration which has not reached the level of mutawātir.
Āhādīth: see hadīth.
'Alayhis-salām: “may Allāh (سُلَيْمَانُ بِيَدِهِ) protect and preserve him.” It is said after the name of a Prophet of Allāh or after the name of an Angel.
Anṣār: “helpers;” the Muslims of al-Madīnah who supported the Muslims who migrated from Makkah.
'Arsh: Throne of Allāh (جَلَّ جَلَالَهُ).
'Aṣr: the afternoon Prayer.
Awliyā‘: see Wālī.

B

Bid'ah: Heresy (any innovatory practice).
Burāq: An animal—bigger than a donkey and smaller than a horse on which the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) went for the Mi'rāj.

D

Dā'ī: one engaged in da'wah, caller.
Da'tīf: “weak,” unauthentic narration.
Da’wah: invitation, call to Allāh (عَزَّبِلَهُ).  
Dīn: a completed way of life prescribed by Allāh (بَارَمَهُ).  
Dhikr: (pl. adhkār) remembrance of Allāh (جَلَّ وَلَطَلَّ) with the heart, sayings of the tongue and actions of our limbs.

E

Īmān: faith, to affirm all that was revealed to the Prophet (صَلَّيْلِلَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم).

F

Fāhish: one who uses foul language.  
Fard Kifāyah: collective obligation – if fulfilled by a part of the community then the rest are not obligated.  
Fatwā: (pl. fatāwā) religious verdicts.  
Faqīh: A scholar who can give religious verdicts.  
Fiqh: Islāmic jurisprudence, understanding.  
Fitnāh: (pl. fītan) Trials, persecution, conflicts and strife.  
Fitrah: the natural-disposition that one is born upon.

G

Ghulū: going to an extreme.  
Ghusl: A ceremonial-bath necessary for the one who is in a state of Janābah.
**H**

**Hadīth:** (pl. ahādīh) the saying, actions and approvals narrated from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم).

**Halāl:** lawful.

**Hanīf:** pure Islamic Monotheism (worshipping Allāh alone and nothing else).

**Harām:** unlawful and forbidden.

**Hasan:** fine, good; a term used for an authentic hadīth, which does not reach the level of Sahīh.

**Harj:** killing.

**Al-Harūriyyah:** an especially un-orthodox religious sect that branched off from the Khawārij.

**Hijrah:** migration from the land of Shirk to the land of Islām.

**Hukm:** a judgment of legal-decision (especially of Allāh).

**I**

**'Ibādah:** worship, worship of Allāh.

**Ihsān:** worshipping Allāh as though you see Him. However, since you cannot see Him, then know that He sees you.

**IJmāʼ:** consensus, a unified opinion of Scholars regarding a certain issue.

**Ijtihād:** exertion of effort; the process of arriving at a reasoned decision by a Scholar on an issue.

**Imām:** leaders; leaders in Prayer, knowledge in fiqh, leader of a state.

**Isnād:** the chain of narrators linking the collector of the saying to the person quoted.
Istikhārah: a Prayer consisting of two units (rak‘ah) asking Allāh for guidance.
Istiwā: ascending; the ascending of Allāh above the Throne (in the manner that befits His Majesty).

J

Janābah: state of a person after having sexual-intercourse or sexual-discharge.
Janāzah: (pl. janā‘iz): Funeral.
Jihād: striving, struggling, fighting to make the Word of Allāh supreme.
Jum‘ah: Friday.
Jinn: invisible creation, created by Allāh from smokeless fire.
Junub: a person who is in the state of janābah.

K

Ka‘bah: a square stone building in al-Masjid-ul-Haram (the great mosque in Makkah which Muslims go to for pilgrimage and which all Muslims direct their face in Prayer).
Al-Kabā‘ir: the major sins.
Khārijī: (pl. Khawārij): those who declared that a Muslim becomes a disbeliever due to committing a major sin alone.
Khalīfah: (pl. khulafā‘): the head of the Islāmic government to whom the oath of allegiance is given.
Khilāfah: an Islāmic state.
Khutbah: (person khatīb), religious talk (sermon).
Kufr: (person kāfīr) act of disbelief in the Religion of Islām.
Madhhab: position or opinion of a Scholar; school of Islāmic Jurisprudence.
Makrūh: not approved of, undesirable from the point of view of Religion, although not punishable.
Manhaj: way; method; methodology.
Marfū': raised; a narration attributed to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).
Masjid: mosque.
Mawbiqāt: great destructive sins.
Mudallis: one who practisest talīs.
Muhājir: (pl. mukāhirūn, muhājirīn) one who migrated from the land of the disbelievers to the land of the Muslims for the sake of Allāh.
Muhaddith: scholar of the science of hadīth.
Muftī: one who gives fatāwā.
Mujāhid: (pl. mujāhidūn): a Muslim warrior in Jihād.
Mujtahid: one who is qualified to pass judgment using ijtiḥād.
Munkar: "rejected;" a narration which is un-authentic itself and contradicts and authentic narrations.
Muqallid: one who practices taqlīd.
Mushrik: (pl. mushrikūn) polytheists, pagans and disbelievers in the oneness of Allāh (عَلِيِّهِ الْخَلَقِ) and His Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم).
Mustahabb: recommended; an action if left it is not punishable and if done it is rewardable.
Muttaqūn: those who are pious.
**Mutawātir:** a *hadith* which is narrated by a very large number of narrators, such that it cannot be supported that they all agreed upon a lie.

**Muwahhid:** (pl. *muwahhidūn*) one who unifies all of his worship and directs it to Allāh alone.

**Mawdū':** fabricated; spurious; invented (narration).

**Mawqūf:** stopped; a narration from a Companion (not going back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)).

**Mawsūl:** “connected;” a continuous *isnād* (can be narrated back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)).


**N**

**Nāfilah:** (pl. *nawāfil*) Optional—practice of worship.

**Niyyah:** intention from the heart.

**Nusuk:** a sacrifice.


**Q**

**Qadar:** Divine pre-ordainment; that which Allāh has ordained for his creation.

**Qiblah:** the direction the Muslims face during Prayer.

**Qiyās:** analogical—deduction of Islāmic laws. New laws are deduced from old laws based upon similarity between their causes.

**Qunūt:** “devotion;” a special—supplication while standing in the Prayer.
**Quraysh:** one of the greatest tribes in Arabia in the pre-Islamic period of Ignorance. The Prophet (ﷺ) belonged to this tribe.

**R**

**Rāfidī:** the correct title for the extreme Shi‘ah. Those who bear malice and grudges against the noble Companions (رضي الله عنهم) to the extent that they declare them to be apostates. They also hold that the Qur‘ān which the Muslims have is neither complete nor preserved from corruption.

**Ramadān:** the ninth month of Islamic calendar, in which Muslims observe fasting.

**S**

**Sahābah:** Muslims who met the Prophet (ﷺ) believing in him and died believing in him.

**Sahīh:** authentic, the highest rank of classification of authentic ahādīth.

**Salaf/Salafus-Sālihīn:** pious predecessors; the Muslims of the first three generations: the Companions, the successors and their successors.

**Salafī:** one who ascribes oneself to the salaf and follows their way.

**Sirah:** the life story of the Prophet (ﷺ).

**Shari‘ah:** the divine code of law of Islam.

**Shawwāl:** the month after Ramadān.

**Shaytān:** Satan
Shi‘ah: (see Rāfidi) a collective name for various sects claiming love for Ahl al-Bayt.
Shirk: associating partners with Allāh directly or indirectly; compromising any aspects of Tawhīd.
Sūrah: a chapter of the Qur‘ān
Sunnah: "example, practice;" the way of life of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), consisting of his words, actions and silent approvals. The Sunnah is contained in various ahādīth.

Tābi‘īn: (pl. Tābi‘īn) the generation that came after the Companions of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).
Tafsīr: explanation of the Qur‘ān.
Tāghūt: anything worshiped other than the real-God (Allāh) (i.e. false deities).
Tahajjud: voluntary, recommended Prayer between the compulsory prayers of ‘Ishā’ and Fajr.
Takhrīj: to reference a hadīth to its sources and analyze its isnāds.
Taqlīd: blind following; to follow someone’s opinion (madhhab) without evidence.
Taqwā: acting in obedience to Allāh, hoping for His mercy upon light from Him and taqwā is leaving acts of disobedience, out of fear of Him, upon light from Him.
Tarjamaḥ: notes about a reporter of hadīth.
Tawwāf: the circumambulation of the Ka‘bah.
Tawhīd: Islāmic Monotheism. The Oneness of Allāh. Believing and acting upon His Lordship, His rights of Worship and Names and Attributes.
U

Uhud: A well known mountain in al-Madīnah. One of the greatest battles in Islāmic history came at its foot. This is called Ghazwah Uhud.

'Ulamā': (singular: 'ālim) scholars.

Umm: mother of, used as an identification.

Ummah [nation]: "nation", the Muslims as a whole.

'Umrah: a visit to Makkah during which one performs the tawwāf around the Ka'bah and the Sa'i between al-Safā and al-Marwah. It is called the lesser Hajj.

Usūl: the fundamentals.

W

Wahyī: the revelation or inspiration of Allāh to His Prophets.

Wahdatul-Wujūd: the belief that everything in existence is infact Allāh. This deviant belief is held by many Sūfīs.

Wakīl: disposer of affairs.

Witr: "odd;" the last Prayer at the night, which consists of odd number of raka'āt (units).

Walīmah: the wedding feast.

Wasīlah: the means of approach or achieving His closeness to Allāh by getting His favors.

Wudū': an ablution (ritual-washing) that is performed before Prayer and other kinds of worship.
Y

*Yaqīn:* perfect absolute faith.
*Yathrib:* one of the names of al-Madīnah.

Z

*Zakāt:* charity that is obligatory on everyone who has wealth over and above a certain limit over which a year has passed (2.5% of saved wealth).
*Zakātul-Fitr:* an obligatory charity by the Muslims to be given to the poor before the Prayer of *Īd al-Fitr.*
*Zamzam:* the sacred water inside the *haram* (the grand mosque) at Makkah.
*Zanādiqah:* atheists, heretics.
Our Call to the Ummah

[1]: We believe in Allāh and His Names and Attributes, as they were mentioned in the Book of Allāh and in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), without tahrīf (distortion), nor ta’wil (figurative interpretation), nor tamthīl (making a likeness), nor tashbīh (resemblance), nor taʿtil (denial).

[2]: We love the Companions (ṣaḥabah) of the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), and we hate those who speak against them. We believe that to speak ill of them is to speak ill of the Religion, because they are the ones who conveyed it to us. And we love the Family of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) with love that is permitted by the Sharī’ah. ʾĪmārān Ibn Ḥusayn (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said, “O people! Learn the knowledge of the Religion from us, if you do not do so, then you will certainly be misguided.”

[3]: We love the People of Ḥadīth and all of the Salaf of the Ummah from Ahl al-Sunnah. ʿImām al-Shāfiʿī (d.790H) - Radi Allāh ‘alayhi - said, “The Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ, the Companions, the tābiʿīn and their successors knew the Qurʾān, its sciences and its meanings the best.”

[4]: We despise ʿilm al-kalām (knowledge of theological-rhetoric), and we view it to be from amongst the greatest reasons for the division in the Ummah.

[5]: We do not accept anything from the books of fiqh (jurisprudence), nor from the books of tafsīr (explanation of the Qurʾān), nor from the ancient stories, nor from the Sīrah (biography) of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), except that which has been confirmed from Allāh or from His Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam). We do not mean that we have rejected them, nor do we claim that we are not in need
of them. Rather, we benefit from the discoveries of our Scholars and the jurists and other than them. However, we do not accept a ruling, except with an authentic proof.

[6]: We do not write in our books, nor do we cover in our lessons, nor do we give sermons with anything except the Qur'ān, or the authentic and authoritative hadīth. And we detest what emanates from many books and admonishers in terms of false stories and weak and fabricated ahādīth. ‘Abdullāh Ibn al-Mubārak (d.181H) – رحمه الله – said, “The authentic ahādīth are sufficient and the weak ahādīth are not needed.”

[7]: We do not perform takfīr upon any Muslim due to any sin, except Shirk with Allāh, or the abandonment of Prayer, or apostasy. We seek refuge in Allāh from that.

[8]: We believe that the Qur'ān is the Speech of Allāh, it is not created.

[9]: We hold that our ‘obligation is to co-operate with the group that traverses the methodology of the Book and the Sunnah, and what the Salaf of the Ummah were upon; in terms of calling to Allāh (سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى), and being sincere in worship of Him, and warning from Shirk, innovations, and disobedience, and to advise all of the groups that oppose this.’ ‘So co-operating upon righteousness and piety (taqwā) and mutual-advising necessitates warning against evil and not co-operating with the wicked.’

[10]: We do not deem it correct to revolt against the Muslim rulers as long as they are Muslims, nor do we feel that revolutions bring about reconciliation. Rather, they corrupt the community.
[11]: We hold that this multiplicity of present day parties is a reason for the division of the Muslims and their weakness. So therefore we set about 'freeing the minds from the fetters of blind-following and the darkness of sectarianism and party spirit.'

[12]: We restrict our understanding of the Book of Allāh and of the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to the understanding of the Salaf of the Ummah from the Scholars of ḥadīth, not the blind-followers of their individuals. Rather, we take the truth from wherever it comes. And we know that there are those who claim Salafiyyah, yet Salafiyyah is free from them, since they bring to the society what Allāh has prohibited. We believe in 'cultivating the young generation upon this Islām, purified from all that we have mentioned, giving to them a correct Islāmic education from the start - without any influence from the disbelieving western education.'

[13]: We believe that politics is a part of the Religion, and those who try to separate the Religion from politics are only attempting to destroy the Religion and to spread chaos.

[14]: We believe there will be no honour or victory for the Muslims until they return to the Book of Allāh and to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

[15]: We oppose those who divide the Religion into trivialities and important issues. And we know that this is a destructive da'wah.

[16]: We oppose those who put down the knowledge of the Sunnah, and say that this is not the time for it. Likewise, we oppose those who put down acting upon the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم).
[17]: Our da'wah and our 'aqīdah is more beloved to us than our own selves, our wealth and our offspring. So we are not prepared to part with it for gold, nor silver. We say this so that no one may have hope in buying out our da'wah, nor should he think that it is possible for him to purchase it from us for dinār or dirham.

[18]: We love the present day Scholars of the Sunnah and hope to benefit from them and regret the passing away of many of them. Imām Mālik said (d.179H) - رحمه الله, "The knowledge of hadīth is your flesh and blood and you will be asked concerning it on the Day of Judgement, so look who you are taking it from."

[19]: We do not accept a fatwā except from the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

These are glimpses into our 'aqīdah and our da'wah. So if one has any objection to this, then we are prepared to accept advice if it is truthful, and to refute it if it is erroneous, and to avoid it if it is stubborn rejection. And Allāh knows best.