

## A Systematic Arrangement of *al-`Aqida al-Tahawiyya*

IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE BENEFICENT, THE  
MERCIFUL

**P**RAISE BELONGS TO GOD ALONE, THE LORD OF THE WORLDS. The most learned scholar, the Proof of Islam, Abu Ja`far al-Warraq al-Tahawi (from Egypt), may God shower him with mercy, states that the following is an exposition of the creed of the People of the Prophetic Way and the Majority of Scholars (*ahl al-sunna wa al-jama`ah*) in accordance with the understanding of Muslims jurists such as Imam Abu Hanifa al-Nu`man b. Thabit al-Kufi, Abu Yusuf Ya`qub al-Ansari, and Abu `Abd Allah Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Shaybani. It includes their belief about the theological foundations of the religion upon which they base their worship of the Lord of the worlds.

We assert about the unity of God, as did Imam [Abu Hanifa] and the two aforementioned imams [Abu Yusuf and Muhammad b. al-Hasan]—may God have mercy on them—believing with providence, that:

# Divinity

## Belief in Allah

1. God is One, without partner.
10. Alive, He never dies; All-sustaining, He never sleeps.
5. He is pre-existent without origin, eternal without end.
6. He neither perishes nor ceases to exist.
13. Just as He was possessed of his attributes prior to His creation, so He remains with the same attributes without increasing in them as a result of His creation coming into being.
14. As He was before creation qualified with specific attributes, so He remains forever described by them.
15. It is not after creating the universe that He merits the name Creator, nor through originating His creatures that He merits the name Originator.
16. He possesses the quality of sovereignty with or without fief, and the quality of creativity with or without creation.
17. And while He is the resurrector of the Dead after He resurrects them, He merits the

same name before their actual resurrection. Likewise, He merits the name the Creator before their actual creation.

18. This is because He is Omnipotent. Everything is dependent upon Him, and every affair is effortless for Him. He needs nothing. 'And There is nothing like Him, yet He is the Hearing, the Seeing.'

3. Nothing debilitates Him.

4. No deity exists save Him.

11. He is the creator without need to create and a provider without any stores of provision.

12. He seizes life without fear and resurrects without any effort.

### Allah is Absolute and We Need Him

115. He possesses everything and nothing possesses Him.

19. He originated the creation with omniscience.

20. He measured out the lots [of all He created].

21. He determined the spans of their lives.

22. None of their actions were concealed from Him before he created them. He knew what they would do before He created them.

23. He commanded them to obey Him and proscribed them from disobeying Him.

24. All things are in accordance with His determination and will and His will is fulfilled.

25. His servants are without volition except what He wills for them. Thus, what He wills for them will be, and what He does not will for them will not be.

26. He guides, protects, and preserves whomever He wills by grace. And He misguides, forsakes, and afflicts whomever He wills by justice.

27 And all vacillate in His providence between His grace and His justice.

107. Human actions are God's creations but humanity's acquisitions.

Man's action is Allah's creation, but his acquisition

105. Welfare and affliction, good and evil, are determined for everyone.

106. The [Divine] enablement that an act requires – for example, an act of obedience – which cannot be attributed to a creature, occurs concurrent with the act. As for the [material] enablement that results from health, capacity, poise, and sound means, it precedes the act. In sacred law, it is upon the latter that legal and moral obligations hinge, just as God, the Sublime and Exalted, states, God obliges no soul more than it can its own capacity [Quran 2:286].

107. Human actions are God’s creations but humanity’s acquisitions.

### Human Capacity

108. God, the Sublime and Exalted, has only obliged human beings to do what they are capable of doing, and they are only capable of doing what He obliged them to do – hence the meaning of no strength or power exists save by means of God”. We assert that no one’s strategy, move, or change can avert anyone from any act of disobedience to God unless accompanied by God’s providence; nor has anyone the ability to initiate and fulfil duties to God save by the providence of God, the sublime and Exalted.

109. Everything is confluent with the Will of God, the Sublime and Exalted, and with His knowledge, judgment, and decree.

110. His Will supersede all other wills, just as His decree thwarts all ruses to avoid it.

111. God does what He wants yet is never iniquitous.

112. Holy is He beyond any evil or adversity, and transcendent is He above any blemishes or perversity. He is not questioned about what He does- it is they who will be questioned.

There is nothing like Him

28. He transcends having any opposites or peers.

29. None can thwart His decree, overrule His judgment, or override His command.

8. Imaginations cannot attain Him, comprehensions cannot perceive Him.

9. Creatures do not bear any similarity to Him.

47. He is transcendent beyond limits, ends, supports, component, or instruments. The six directions do not contain Him as they do contain created things.

117. God has wrath and pleasure, but not like that of any human.

38. Whoever ascribes any human qualities to God has blasphemed. So whoever perceives this takes heed and refrains from such statements of the disbelievers and knows that God, the Sublime and Exalted, in all of His attributes, is utterly unlike humanity.

45. Whoever does not guard against denying [God's attributes] and against anthropomorphism has erred and failed to acquire understanding of divine transcendence.

42. One's footing in Islam is not firm save on the ground of resignation and surrender.

43. Whoever covets knowledge that was batted from him, discontented with the limits of his understanding, shall be veiled from pure unity, unadulterated comprehension, and sound faith on the account of his covetousness. He will then vacillate between belief and disbelief, assertion and negation, and resolution and denial. Obsessive, aimless, sceptical, and deviant, he is neither an assertive believer nor a resolute denier.

## Prohibition of speculating about Allah

72. We do not speculate about God or dispute over God's religion.

73. We do not argue about the Quran. Rather, we testify that it is the Word of the Lord of the universe as revealed through the Trustworthy Spirit, who taught it to the paragon of the messengers, Muhammad. It is the Word of God, the Sublime and Exalted. No Mortal Speech compares to it, and we do not say it is created.

74. We do no dissent from the majority of Muslims.

38. Whoever ascribes any human qualities to God has blasphemed. So whoever perceives this takes heed and refrains from such statements of the disbelievers and knows that God, the Sublime and Exalted, in all of His attributes, is utterly unlike humanity.

## The Beatific Vision

39. The Beatific Vision is a reality for the people of Paradise without enclosure or modality, just as the Book of God pronounces, 'Some faces will be aglow that day, gazing at their Lord.' Its explanation is as God, the Sublime

and Exalted, knows it to be and as He intended.

40. All that came [to us] from the messenger in the authentic hadith is just as he said it was, and the meaning is as he intended. we do not interpret any of its to accord with our opinions, nor do we presume any of it to accord to our whims.

41. No one is secure in his religion unless he resigns himself to God, the Sublime and Exalted, and His Messenger and consigns whatever obscures his understanding to the One who knows its meaning.

44. Belief in the Beatific Vision of the denizens of Paradise is incorrect for anyone who surmises that it is imaginary or interprets it to be a type of comprehension. For the correct interpretation of the Beatific Vision – or any Quality annexed to Lordship – Lies in leaving interpretation and cleaving to resignation. Upon this are based the religion of the Muslims and the sacred laws of the prophets.

45. Whoever does not guard against denying [God's attributes] and against anthropomorphism has erred and failed to acquire understanding of divine transcendence.

46. For undoubtedly, our Lord, the Sublime and Exalted, is described with the attributes of

unity and uniqueness. No one in creation is in any way like Him.

### Belief in Allah's Knowledge

52. God has always known the total number of those who will enter Paradise and those who will enter the Fire. Nothing is added to or subtracted from that number.

53. His knowledge includes all of their actions, which He knew they would perform.

54. Each is facilitated to do that for which he was created.

### The Final Action

55. The judgement of one's deeds lies in one's final assertive act.

56. Those saved are ultimately saved by God's decision, just as those damned are ultimately damned by God's decision.

## Qada and Qadr

57. The essence of the divine decree is God's secret within creation. No intimate angel or prophetic emissary has even been privy to it.

58. Delving into the decree is a means to spiritual loss, as decent into deprivation, and a path towards transgression. So beware, and take every precaution against that, whether through perusal, ideation, or suggestion. God, the Sublime and Exalted, has concealed knowledge of the decree from His creatures and has prohibited them from desiring it. As the Sublime said in His Book, He is not questioned about what He does – it is they who will be questioned. Hence, anyone who asks, “why has He done this” has rejected the judgment of the Book. And whoever rejects the judgment of the Book is among the disbelievers.

## Lauh and Kalam

60. We believe in the Pen and the Tablet and in all that was inscribed.

61. Hence, if everyone united to remove from existence what God, the Sublime and Exalted, decreed would exist, they could not. Likewise, if they all united to introduce something into existence that God, the Sublime and Exalted,

did not decree they would be unable to do so. The Pen's work is done concerning what was, is and will be until the day of Resurrection.

62. Whatever misses a person could not have afflicted him. And whatever afflicts a person could not have missed him.

63. A servant of God is obliged to know that God's omniscience precedes everything in His creation. He then measured everything out exactly and decisively. There is none among His creatures either in the heaven or on the earth who can nullify, overrule, remove, deduct from, or add to His decree.

64. All of the aforementioned is part of the doctrine of faith, the principles of knowledge, and the assent of His unity and sovereignty as God, the Sublime and Exalted, said in His Book, And He created everything and determined its measure. And He, Sublime and Exalted, also said, and the command of God is an ordained decree.

65. So woe to whomever on account of decree becomes antagonistic with God, the Sublime and Exalted. In his desire to plumb its depths, he summons a morbid heart; in his delusion, he sees a secret concealed in the unseen, only to end up, in whatever he says concerning it, a wicked forger of lies.

59. The above epitomises what one with an illuminated heart among the protected of God needs. In addition, it is the rank of the deeply rooted in knowledge, given that knowledge is of two types: the humanly accessible and the humanly inaccessible. To either deny accessible knowledge or to claim the inaccessible knowledge is disbelief. Faith is not sound unless accessible knowledge is embraced and the pursuit of the inaccessible is abandoned.

# Prophecy

## Belief in the Prophecy of Muhammad

31. [We believe] Muhammad is His chosen one, His preeminent prophet, and His messenger, with whom He is well pleased.

32. He is the finality of the prophets, the paragon of the pious, the master of the messengers, and the beloved of the Lord of all worlds.

33. Any claim to prophecy after him is deviation and heresy.

## Isra and Mi`raj

48. The Ascension is true. The Prophet was taken by night and ascended in person and consciously to the heavenly realm, and from there to wherever God willed in the celestial heights. God honoured him with what He willed and revealed to him that which He revealed; His mind did not imagine what he saw. May God bless him and grant him peace in this and the final adobe

## Belief in the Divinely Revealed Books and Messengers

69. With faith, conviction and resignation, we assert that God befriended Abraham and addressed Moses.

## Belief in the Quran

35. The Quran is the Word of God that emanated from Him without modality in its expression. He sent it down to his messenger as a revelation. The believers accept it as such literally. They are certain it is, in reality, the Word of God, the Sublime and Exalted.

36. Unlike human speech, it is eternal and uncreated.

37. Whoever hears it and alleges it is human speech has disbelieved, for God has rebuked, censured, and promised such a one an agonising punishment, stating, I will roast him in the hellfire. Because God has threatened those who allege, This is merely human speech with an inferno of torment, we acknowledged and ascertained that it was the Word of the Creator of humanity, and does not resemble human speech.

## Eschatology

### Belief in the Angels

70. We believe in the angels, the prophets, and the books that were revealed to the messengers. And we bear witness that they were all following the manifest truth.

97. We believe in the noble, angelic scribes whom God has appointed as guardians over us.

98. We believe in the Angel of Death, who is entrusted with seizing the souls of all sentient life.

### Belief in the Punishment of the Grave

99. We believe in the punishment of the grave for all who warrant it. We believe in the interrogation by Munkar and Nakir of the deceased in his grave about his Lord, his religion, and his prophet, as conveyed in the narration of the Prophet and of his companions.

100. One's grave is either a meadow from the gardens of Paradise or a pit from the abyss of the Fire.

## Signs of Day of Judgement

125. We believe in the signs of the End of Times, including the appearance of the Anti-christ and the Descent of Jesus, the son of Mary, from the celestial realm. We also believe in the sun's rising in the west and the appearance of the Beast of the Earth from its appointed place.

## Yawm al-Qiyama

101. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, the recompense of deeds on the Day of Judgement, the review [of one's entire life], the reckoning, the recital of [one's own] book [of actions], the reward and punishment, the bridge over the Fire, and the scales [upon which one's actions are weighted].

## Hawd, Shafa`a and Mithaq

49. The Pool that God has honoured him with as solace for his community is real.

50. The [Prophet's] Intercession that God deferred from them is true, as narrated in the traditions.

## Iman in Paradise and Fire

102. Paradise and the Fire are both created; however, they neither perish nor terminate.

103. God, the Sublime and Exalted, created Paradise and the Fire before creating [the world]. He then created denizens for both adobes. He admits to Paradise whomever He wills by His grace and condemns to the Fire whomever He will by His justice.

104. All will act in accordance with their design and are moving inexorably towards the purpose for which they were created.

## Belief in `Arsh and Kursi

66. The arsh [the most immense of God's creation] and the Kursi [a vast luminous creation in the presence of the 'arsh] are both real.

67. Yet, God has no need of the arsh and whatever is beneath it.

68. He encompasses and transcends everything, and rendered His creation incapable of His encompassment.

## Definition of Iman

80. Faith entails assertion with the tongue and conviction in the heart.

## Matters pertaining to Ahl al-Sunna wa'l-Jama`a

84. Faith is belief in God, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, the resurrection after death, and the decree – the good and evil, sweetness and bitterness are all from God, the Sublime and Exalted.

51. The covenant that God made with Adam and his progeny is true.

85. We believe in all of the above. We do not distinguish among any of His messengers, and we affirm all that they brought.

79. A believer does not lose his faith except by denying that which made him a believer.

82. Faith is one reality, and the people of faith are essentially the same. Any disparity among them results from distinctions in knowledge, piety, struggle, and adherence to priorities.

83. All believers are the protected of the Beneficent. The noblest of them with God is the most obedient and most adherent to the Quran.

76. Nor do we opine that where there is faith, a sin does not harm the sinner.

77. As for the virtuous among the believers, we trust that God will pardon them and admit them into paradise by His grace. We do not, however, assume that about them, nor insist that they are in paradise. We pray for the forgiveness of the sinful among them. And while we fear for their salvation we never engender in them despair.

78. Assurance and despair both displace one from the congregation of Islam. For Muslims, the path of truth lies between them.

86. People of mortal sins among the community of Muhammad will not abide in the Fire forever, as long as they died monotheists. This includes even the unrepentant that, nonetheless, met God as knowing believers; They are in His judgment and decree. If He pleases, He forgives and pardons them by His grace, as He mentioned in his Book Surely, God does not forgive idolatry, but He forgives anything less of whomever He pleases. Or if He pleases, He punishes them in the Fire by His justice, and then removes them by His grace and through intercession of those so granted among his obedient servants. He then sends them to His paradise.

87. The above is such because God protects those who acknowledge Him. He will not treat them in either of the two abodes as HE treats His deniers who are destitute of His guidance and bereft of His protection. O God, Protector of Islam and its adherents, root us firmly in Islam until we meet you in that state.

88. We consider congregational prayer behind any of the people of qibla, both the virtuous and the sinful, to be valid. We also pray over those among them who died.

89. We do not specify anyone among them to be in either Paradise or the Fire. We also do not accuse any of them of disbelief, idolatry, or hypocrisy, as long as none of that manifests from them. We resign their inner states to God, the Sublime and Exalted.

71 We refer to the people who face our qibla as Muslims believers, as long as they acknowledge, confirm, and do not deny all that they Prophet brought, stated, and imparted.

90. We do not consider violence or coercive power against anyone from the community of Muhammad acceptable unless legislated [by sacred law, such as penal punishment or the suppression of rebellion].

91. We do not accept any rebellion against our leaders or the administrators of our public af-

fairs, even if they are oppressive. We also do not pray for evil to befall any one of them or withdraw our allegiance from them. We consider our civic duty to them concordant with our duty to God, the Sublime and Exalted, and legally bidding on us, unless they command us to the immoral. We pray for their probity, success, and welfare.

96. Hajj and jihad are perpetual obligations that are carried out under legitimate rulers – irrespective of their personal probity –until the End of Time. Nothing can nullify or rescind them.

92. We adhere to the Sunnah and the majority [of scholars] and we avoid isolated opinions, discord, and sectarianism.

127. We consider the mainstream to be true and correct, and schism to be deviant and destructive.

93. We love just and trustworthy people, and we loathe oppressive and treacherous people.

94. In inconclusive matters of knowledge, we asset, “God knows best”

95. We consider valid the dispensation of wiping over footcoverings while residing or traveling, as related in authentic reports.

113. In the supplication and charities of the living, there is benefit for the dead.

114. God, the Sublime and Exalted, answers prayers and fulfills needs.

126. We do not believe in diviners or soothsayers or anyone who claims anything that contradicts the Books, the Sunnah, or the consensus of Muslim scholars.

118. We love the companions of God's messenger. We are not, however, extreme in our love for any of them. Nor do we dissociate from any of them. We loathe those who loath them, and we only mention their merits. Loving them is essential to religion, faith, and spiritual excellence, and hating them amounts to infidelity, hypocrisy, and extremism.

119. We assert that the caliphate after the death of the Messenger was first for Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, due to his preeminence and precedence over entire community, and then for Umar b. al-Khattab, followed by Uthman b. Affan, and concluding with Ali b. Abi Talib. They are the Guiding Caliphs and Guided leaders.

120. We testify, as the Messenger of God, before us, that the ten whom he designated and assured of Paradise are indeed in Paradise. His pronouncement is true, and they are Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali, Talha, al-Zubayr, Sa'd,

Sa'id, Abd al-Rahman b. Awf, and Abu Ubaydah b. al-Jarrah, who is the "trustee of his community".

121. Whoever speaks well of the companions of the Messenger of God, his chaste wives, and his purified progeny is absolved of hypocrisy.

122. The pious scholars of past and those after them who follow their path – the people of goodness and tradition, of understanding and profound scholarship – should be mentioned only in the best manner. Anyone who speaks ill of them has deviated from the path.

123. We do not prefer any saint to any prophet. Indeed, we asset, "One prophet is better than all of the saints".

124. We believe in the miracles of the saints as conveyed and verified by trustworthy narrators.

30. We believe in all of that and are certain that all of it is from Him.

128. The religion of God, both in Heaven and on earth, is one. It is the religion of Islam. God, the Sublime and Exalted, say, 'Verily, the religion with God is submission.' The Sublime also states, 'If anyone seeks other than submission to God as a religion, it will not be accepted

from him.' Finally, the Sublime says, 'And I am pleased with Islam as a religion for you.'

129. Islam lies between the extreme of excess and neglect, immanence and transcendence, determinism and free will, and assurance of salvation and despair of God's grace.

## Conclusion

130. This is our religion and our creed in public and in private. We absolve ourselves before God of anyone who opposes what we have recounted and clarified here. We ask God for a firm foundation in faith, that He seal our lives with it, and that He protect and preserve us from any heresies, variant and baseless opinions, and corrupt doctrines, such as those of Anthropomorphist, Rationalists, Pantheists, Determinists, Dualists, and any other deviant sect that opposes the Sunnah and the majority of Muslim scholars and that ally themselves with misguidance. We are completely absolved from them. For us, they are astray and ruined. Ultimately, protection and success is from God alone.