

Salafi Notifications on What Imam Abu Ja'far at-Tahawi was Criticized for in al-'Aqeedah at-Tahawiyyah

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَمَنْ
 وَآلِهِ أَمَّا بَعْدُ

Indeed the study of the correct creed is from the important matters and it is obligatory that it be from the first of what is learnt and taught. Due to its importance, the scholars have authored books in regards to the creed, both long and summarized books. From those books

are:

Kitab Ash Shari'ah of Al-Ajury, Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Al Husayn; Kitab As-Sunnah of Abdullah bin Imam Ahmad, Kitab Usool As-Sunnah of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, Kitab Al-Ibaanah 'An Usool Ad-Diyaanah of Ibn Battah Al-Ukbari, Kitab Al-Hujjah fi Bayaan Al-Mahajah of Al-Asfahaani, Kitab Khalq Afa'al Al-'Ibaad of Al-Bukhari, Kitab As-Sunnah of Al-Khalaal, Kitab Usool As-Sunnah of Ibn Abi Zamaneen and I have an explanation on it and all praise is due to Allah, Kitab I'tiqaad Ahlil-Hadeeth of Abu Bakr al-Ismaa'eeli, Kitab I'tiqaad Salaf Ashabul Hadeeth of As-Sabooni, Kitab As-Sunnah of Al-Marwazi, Kitab Sharh 'Itiqaad Usool Ahlus-Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah of Al-Laalakae, and Al-Aqeedahtut-Tahaawiyah of Abu Ja'afar at-Tahaawi. In terms of the inclusive books, then the greatest of them and most honourable is the book of Allah Aza Wa Jal, which falsehood cannot come to from before it or behind it (it is) sent down by the All wise worthy of all praise (Allah).

۳

Similarly that which is encompassed in Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim, the Masaaneed, the Sunan, the Musanafaat, and the Ma'aajim (different books of Hadeeth). All of this is by way of Allah Aza Wa Jal preserving His religion.

Thus, studying the Salafi creed which the Prophetic proofs from Muhammad () the best of the creation, and the relayed narrations from those who tread upon the pleasing path, is a required and desired matter. Indeed some of the noble [brothers], from those whom it a must that I answer their request, asked me regarding Aqeedah At-Tahawiyyah, and that which it is criticized for.

The book Aqeedah at-Tahawiyyah is a famous book which is spread amongst the students of knowledge and it is from the best of that which has been authored in regards to the creed, due to its summarized expressions and many matters (covered).

It is in need of some organization, especially in the chapter of Qadr whereas the speech regarding it is dispersed.

It also has many explanations. From the best of them is the explanation of Ibn Abil- Izz Al-Hanafi (may Allah have mercy upon him). He clarified its matters with proofs and followed up (the author) in regards to many of the mistakes (may Allah have mercy upon all of them).

It also has brief commentaries, from them the commentaries of Shaykh Ibn Baz, Al-Albani, and other

than them from the People of knowledge, (may Allah have mercy upon them).

A student going through it, while being aware of that which it has been criticized for, is a very important matter. From these matters which it has been criticized for are those which matters which oppose the belief of the Pious Predecessors, the Companions of Hadeeth.

From them are also those matters which if the author used other wordings, it would have been more befitting. Perhaps I will mention that which the author, may Allah have mercy upon him, was criticized for.

First: Him describing Allah with negation in the likes of his statement

وَلَا شَيْءٌ يُعْجِزُهُ

There is nothing that can overwhelm Him.”

And that which is in its chapter.

The origin is Allah be described with affirmation, negation is brought to repel any thoughts of deficiency, to refute that which the liars claim in regards to the right of Allah, and to clarify the general completeness of Allah Ta’alaa.

Ibn Abil- ‘Izz said in the explanation of At-Tahawiyah, with the verification of Al-Arna’oot (1/69):

“For this reason the affirmation of attributes in the book (Qur’an) come in detail, and negation in general. Unlike the way of the people of blameworthy philosophy, for



indeed they came with negation in detail and affirmation
in general.

They say He is not a body, nor a shape, nor an image, nor flesh, nor blood, nor an individual, nor an essence, nor is He accidental, nor one possessing colours, smell or taste, nor can He be touched, nor does He possess heat or cold, nor moisture or dryness, nor length or width, nor depth, nor gathered or divided, nor does He move nor is

He still, nor is He of (different) parts, He does not possess parts or limbs, nor does He have directions, nor does He possess a right or left, nor front or back, nor above or underneath, no place can encompass Him nor does time pass on Him, nor is touching permissible upon

Him or isolation, nor incarnated in places (i.e the creation), nor is He described with any thing from the attributes of the creation which indicate their coming into existence, nor is He described with being infinite, nor with distance, nor does He go in directions, nor is He confined, nor has He fathered anyone, nor is He begotten, nor do the extents encompass him, nor are the veils able to cover him, until the end of what Abul Hasan

Al-Ash'ari relayed from the Mu'atazilah!

In this sentence there is truth and falsehood, and that is made apparent to the one who knows the Book and the Sunnah.

This is mere negation without it possessing any praise in it. In it is bad manners. If you were to say to a ruler: “You are not a garbage collector, nor a cleaner, nor a

cupper, nor a weaver”, he would discipline you due to this description even if you are truthful. You would only be considered from those whom praise, if you made the negation general and you said: “You are not like anyone from your citizens, you are higher, and you are nobler and greater than them”. Thus if you were general in your negation you would have been beautiful/praiseworthy in your manners.

Expressing the truth with legislated Prophetic Divine words is the way of the Ahuls-Sunnah. Those who negate (the attributes of Allah) turn away from that which the Legislator mentioned from the Names and Attributes, they do not ponder its meaning, and they place that which they innovated as the meanings.”

Second: Naming Allah with the name The Eternal (القَدِيمُ) and the Enduring One (الدَّائِمُ) in his statement:

قَدِيمٌ بِلَا اِبْتِدَاءٍ دَائِمٌ بِلَا اَنْتِهَاءٍ

He is the eternal without a beginning and enduring without end.

) is not from His Beautiful Names and the Name الْقَدِيمُ (Al-Awal (He is the first nothing is before him) suffices from the need to use it.

Ibn Abil-'Izz said in Sharh At-Tahawiyah, with the verification of Al-Arna'oot, (1/77):

) into the names الْقَدِيمُ "Indeed the philosophers entered (of Allah Ta'ala while it is not from the Names which are) in the Arabic language, in which الْقَدِيمُ utmost in beauty. (the Qur'an descended in, means something which has) for that الْقَدِيمُ preceded other than it. It is said this is () for that which is new. الْحَدِيثُ which is ancient and this () except for that which الْقَدِيمُ They did not use this name (preceded other than it and not in regards to that which was not preceded by nonexistence.

As Allah Ta'ala said:

حَتَّىٰ عَادَ كَالْعُرْجُونِ الْقَدِيمِ ۝

Till it returns like the old dried curved date stalk [36:39]

The old dried curved date stalk is that which remains until the presence of the second date stalk.

If the second one is found, the first one is said to be (قَدِيمٌ).

Allah Ta'ala said:

وَإِذْ لَمْ يَهْتَدُوا بِهِ فَمَقُولُونَ هَذَا إِفْكٌ قَدِيمٌ

And when they have not let themselves be guided by it (this Qur'an), they say: "This is an ancient lie!" [46:11]

That is: preceded in time. End.



Third: It is as if he agrees with the philosophers in the affair of infinite regress. That an infinite chain of events in the future [is possible] and this is taken from his statement:

مَا زَالَ بِصِفَاتِهِ قَدِيمًا قَبْلَ خَلْقِهِ لَمْ يَزِدْ بِكَوْنِهِمْ شَيْئًا لَمْ يَكُنْ قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ صِفَتِهِ

He has always existed together with His attributes since before creation. Bringing creation into existence did not add anything to His attributes that was not already there.

Also that which is before it and after it (from his speech).

Ibn Abil-'Izz Al-Hanafī said in Sharh At Tahawiyah, with the verification of Al-Arna'oot, (1/109):

“His statement: ”He has always existed together with His attributes since before creation. Bringing creation into existence did not add anything to His attributes that was not already there”.

Explanation: The apparent speech of the Shaykh is that he prevents infinite regress in the past (may Allah have mercy upon him), and it will come in his speech that which indicates that he does not prevent it from occurring in the future, in his statement:

وَالْجَنَّةُ وَالنَّارُ مَخْلُوقَتَانِ لَا تَفْنَيَانِ أَبَدًا وَلَا تَبِيدَانِ ۝

Paradise and Hellfire are creations that never come to an end nor disappear

This is the opinion of the majority as has preceded (It being able to occur in the future).

There is no doubt in the corruption of the statement of he who prevents the occurrence of that in the past and the future due to that which will come from the evidences if Allah Ta'ala wills. Also that is the way of Jahm (bin Safwaan) and his followers whereas they said the Paradise and Hell fire will come to an end”.

That which is correct is that an infinite chain of events can occur in the past and the future for indeed Allah Azza Wa Jal was always the Creator and will always be, He was always the Provider and will always be. Similarly this goes for the rest of the beautiful Names (of Allah), for indeed every name includes an attribute as is known in the belief of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah. With that being said, Allah Azza Wa Jal is the First, nothing is before Him.

Fourth: His statement in regards to the right of the Prophet (ﷺ):

حَبِيبُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

The beloved of the Lord of creation

What is correct is that he is an intimate friend of the Lord of the creation as the textual evidences have affirmed.

) is the highest form of love and the **الخلّة** Intimate love (narration which has been reported in which is mentioned that Muhammad () is the beloved of the lord of the creation is weak!

Ibn Abil-'Izz said in Sharh At Tahawiyah, with the verification of Al-Arna'oot, (1/164):

“The highest form of love is affirmed for him () and that). As it has been affirmed from him **الخلّة** is intimate love (() that he () said: ”Allah has taken me as His intimate friend, as he took Ibrahim as His intimate friend.

And he () said: “If I were to choose amongst the people of earth someone as my intimate friend, I would have chosen the son of Abu Quhafa (Abu Bakr) as my intimate friend, but Allah has taken your companion as an intimate friend”.

These two narration are in the Saheeh and they falsify the) if **الخلّة** statement of the one who says that intimate love () is for Muhammad. **المحبة** for Ibraheem while love (Thus, they say Ibraheem is the intimate friend of Allah while Muhammad is the beloved one to Allah.

In the Saheeh as well it states: "I free myself of the friendship of every Khalil [intimate friend]"

While love has been affirmed for other than him.

Allah Ta'ala says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝

Allah loves the good doers [3:143]

Allah ta'Ala says:

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

Indeed Allah loves the pious (Allah fearing) [3:86]

Allah Ta'ala says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ ۝

Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves (by taking a bath and cleaning and washing thoroughly their private parts, bodies, for their prayers, etc.) [2:222]

Thus, the statement of those who specify intimate love (الخلوة) for Ibraheem and love for Muhammad has been

) is specific to both of **الخلّة** falsified. Rather intimate love (them and love is general.

The narration of Ibn Abbas reported by At Tirmithi in which it is mentioned:

“Indeed Ibraheem is the Khalil of Allah and I am the beloved one to Allah and I am not boasting” is not established.

Fifth: Describing Allah with ambiguous words which the proofs don't indicate, such as his statement:

وَتَعَالَى عَنِ الْحُدُودِ وَالْغَايَاتِ وَالْأَرْكَانِ وَالْأَعْضَاءِ وَالْأَدْوَاتِ لَا تَحْوِيهِ
الْجِهَاتُ السِّتُّ كَسَائِرِ الْمُبْتَدَعَاتِ

He is beyond having limits placed on Him or being restricted or having parts or limbs, nor is He contained by the six directions as all created things are.

These wordings carry truth and falsehood. The principle with the Ahlus-Sunnah is that which Allah and His Messenger affirmed (for Allah) we affirm, and that which Allah and his Messenger negated (from Allah), we negate it. That which no negation or affirmation has come in regards to it, then we neither negate nor affirm the word and we go into detail in regards to the meaning.

Ibn Abil-'Izz said in Sharh At Tahawiyah, with the verification of Al-Arna'oot, (1/260):

“Before I mention speech regarding the expression of the Shaykh, I will mention an introduction, it is that the people are in three categories when it comes to using these types of words. A group negates it, a group affirms it and a group goes into detail. They (those who go into detail) are the followers of the Salaf, they don't completely negate or affirm it except if it is made clear what is affirmed, then it is affirmed. Whatever is negated of it, then it is negated.

These wordings in the terminologies of those who came later have in them ambiguity and vagueness, like other than it from the technical terms.

All of them do not use it based upon its linguistic meaning. For that reason, those who negate these words negate by it truth and falsehood, and they mention about those who affirm it that which they did not say. Some of those who affirm them (these ambiguous words) enter into it a false meaning in opposition to the statement of the Salaf and that which the Book (the Qur'an) and Meezan (the balance justice) indicate, while no text in the Qur'an and Sunnah have come with its negation or affirmation.

It is not permissible for us to describe Allah Ta'ala with that which He has not described Himself with nor His Messenger ﷺ has described him with, neither by way of

negation or affirmation, we are only followers and not innovators.

Thus that which is obligatory is that one investigates this chapter, I mean the chapter of attributes.

That which Allah and His Messenger have affirmed then we affirm, and that which Allah and His Messenger have negated we negate. The wordings which have been affirmed or negated by a textual evidence is held on to.

Thus we affirm what Allah and His Messenger affirmed by way of words and meanings. As for the wordings which have not been relayed by way of being affirmed or denied, then we do not use it unrestrictedly until the intent of the one using it is examined. If the meaning is correct then it is accepted. However, it is befitting that it be expressed with wordings used in the textual evidences and not ambiguous words, except when there is a need whilst using associated factors which clarify the intent. The need is such as when speaking with one whom if he is not spoken to (with these specific terms) the intent wouldn't be completed/reached and similar to that.”

Sixth: His statement:

وَالْإِيمَانُ وَاحِدٌ ، وَأَهْلُهُ فِي أَصْلِهِ سَوَاءٌ

“Iman is one and its people are the same in its origin”.

This statement is falsehood and a clear mistake. For verily Imaan increases and decreases. So like that, from the Aqeedah of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah is: that Imaan increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience. Even if we agreed that attestation was the same for everyone; however, it would be one that varies.

Ibn Abi al-'Izz said in the Sharh of at-Tahawiyah, with the verification of Al-Arna'oot, (2/466):

“Likewise the intellect also. For verily it accepts variance, despite its people being the same, equal in that that they are sane and not insane. However, some of them are more intelligent than others. Likewise in regards to obligation and prohibition. So there are obligation less than other obligations and prohibitions less than other prohibitions. This is correct”.

Seventh: His statement:

وَنُسَمِّي أَهْلَ قِبَلَتِنَا مُسْلِمِينَ مُؤْمِنِينَ ، مَا دَامُوا بِمَا جَاءَ بِهِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُعْتَرِفِينَ ، وَلَهُ بِكُلِّ مَا قَالَهُ وَأَخْبَرَ مُصَدِّقِينَ

“And we call the people of our Qiblah Muslims, Believers as long as they acknowledge what the Prophet

came with and attest to everything he said and informed about”

In the statement is generality because the statement agrees with his mathhab in relation to the definition of Imaan, and limiting the meaning of Imaan to affirmation and awareness as will come. And Allah knows best.

Eighth: His statement:

وَالْإِيمَانُ : هُوَ الْإِقْرَارُ بِاللِّسَانِ ، وَالتَّصَدِيقُ بِالْجَنَانِ

“And Imaan: is affirmation on the tongue and attestation in the heart”.

This is the statement of the Murjiatul-Fuqahaa like Abu Hanifa and Hammad bin Abi Sulaymaan. According to Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah, Imaan is statement on the tongue, believe in the heart, and actions on the limbs. It increases due to obedience and decreases due to disobedience. al-Aajurri said in as-Shari’ah (2/639): “Khalf bin ‘Amr informed us also, who said: al-Humaydi narrated to us saying that Yahya bin Sulaym narrated to us who said: I asked Sufyan ath-Thawri about Imaan? He said: “Speech and action”. I asked Ibn al-Jurayj, he said: “Speech and action”. I asked Muhammad bin Abdillah bin ‘Amr bin Uthmaan who said: “Speech and action”. I asked Nafi’ bin Umar al-Jumahhi who said: “Speech and

action”. I asked Malik bin Anas who said: “Speech and action”. I asked Fudayl bin ‘Iyyad who said: “Speech and action”. I asked Suyfan bin ‘Uyaynah who said: “Speech and action”. He said: al-Humaydi said: I heard Waki’ saying: “Ahlus-Sunnah say: Imaan is speech and actions. The Murji’ah say: Imaan is speech and the Jahmiyyah say: Imaan is awareness”.

Shaikhul Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy upon him) said in the Wasaatiyyah: “From the foundations of the Saved Sect is that the religion and Imaan is: speech and actions. Speech: of the heart and tongue, actions: of the heart, the tongue, and limbs. And that Imaan increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience”.

In the definition of at-Tahawiyyah is the removal of actions from the meaning of Imaan and this is against the methodology of the Salaf and their path which they agreed to, as is affirmed in its place.

Ninth: His restriction of disbelief to denial despite the fact that disbelief can occur through the tongue, actions, and the heart or all of them. He said:

وَلَا يَخْرُجُ الْعَبْدُ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ إِلَّا بِجُحُودٍ مَا أَدْخَلَهُ فِيهِ

“A servant is not removed from Imaan except by denying what entered him into it”.

Shaikh Abdul Aziz bin Baz (may Allah have mercy upon him) said in his commentary to ‘Aqeedah at-Tahawiyyah: “This restriction is questionable for verily the disbeliever enters into Islam through the Two Testimonies, if he does not articulates them, if he articulates them then he enters into Islam by repentance from what necessitates his disbelief. He can leave Islam without denial due to many reasons which the People of Knowledge clarify in the chapter on the ruling of the apostate. From that is: defaming Islam or the Prophet (ﷺ) or mocking Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) or His Book or something of the Legislation. Allah, the Exalted said:

**قُلْ أِبَاهُ اللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِئُونَ - لَا تَعْتَدِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ
إِيمَانِكُمْ**

Say: "Was it at Allah, and His Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger that you were mocking?" Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed [9:65-66]

From that: His worshipping idols or statues or calling upon the dead or seeking help from them and seeking wealth and assistance and the like. This is because it nullifies the statement La ilaha illa Allah which indicates the worship is the right of Allah, alone. From them is: supplication [to other than Allah], seeking help, ruku, and sujud, and slaughtering and making vows and the like of that. Whoever gives something of that to other than Allah, towards idols, statues, Angels, Jinn, graves and other than that from the creation, then he has committed Shirk with Allah and he has not actualized: La illah illa Allah. These issues all remove one from Islam according to the consensus of the People of knowledge and they are not aspects of denial. Their evidences are well known in the Book and Sunnah. There are also many other issues which make a Muslim a disbeliever and they are not called denial. The Scholars mention them in the chapter of apostasy, so return to it if you wish. And with Allah is Tawfeeq”.

Tenth: His statement:

وَلَمْ يُكَلِّفَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى إِلَّا مَا يُطِيقُونَ ، وَلَا يُطِيقُونَ إِلَّا مَا كَلَّفَهُمْ

“They are not capable except what He has charged them to do”.

The reality is that Allah has obligated obligations and has established Sunnan and has made things easy for the servants out of mercy from Him. The servants are capable of more than that.

Ibn Abi al-'Izz said in Sharh at-Tahawiyah, with the verification of al-Arna'oot, (2/656): “However in the) should **التكليف** speech of the Shaikh there is an issue: (not be used with the meaning of capability. It is only used with the meaning of command and prohibition. He (the author) said: “He (Allah) did not charge them except what they are capable of doing and they are not capable of doing except what He charged them with”. What is apparent is that it returns to one meaning and that is not correct. This is because they are capable of more than what they were charged with; however, the Exalted wanted easiness for His servants and alleviation as Allah says:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمْ الْعُسْرَ

Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you [2:185]

And He says:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ

Allah wishes to lighten (the burden) for you [4:28]

And He says:

وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

And has not laid upon you in religion any hardship
[22:78]

So if He increased in what He charged us with, we would be able to do it. However, He has granted us bounty and had mercy upon us. He has not laid upon us in religion any hardship. So in the expression [of at-Tahawi] is unclarity, so reflect”.

Note: Along with that, it is necessary for the student of knowledge to study this book with the explanation of Ibn Abi al-'Izz or other than him. That is in order to know the correct mathhab and to know what opposes it. So that someone may not use as evidence against you that which is in this book, which has spread between Ahlus-Sunnah past and present, and is the first book of 'Aqeedah authored and the most popular of them”.

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