The Creed of Imam Tahawi

The beliefs of "Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah"
In accordance to the
Methodology of the Jurists of Islam,
the Great Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Abu Yusuf, and
Imam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani,

Narrated By
Imam Abu Ja'far al-Tahawi al-Hanafi
Born 239 AH (853CE) - Died 321AH (933CE)

Translated by
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In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Imam Abu Ja'far al–Tahawi's creedal text, a representative of the viewpoint of "**Ahlus–Sunnah wal–Jama'ah**" has long been the most widely acclaimed and indeed indispensable reference work on Muslim beliefs, of which the text below is an English translation.

Imam al–Subki ﷺ (d. 771AH /1370 CE) the great Shafi'i scholar writes that the followers of the four schools of Law, the Hanafis, the Shafi'is, the Malikis and the Hanbalis are all one in creed:

"All of them follow the opinion of "**Ahlus–Sunnah wal–Jama'ah**", the People of the Prophetic Way and the Majority of the Scholars. They worship Allah in accordance with the creed of Abu al–Hasan al–Ash'ari ﷺ (and Abu Mansur al–Maturidi ﷺ). None of them deviates from it, save the riffraff among the Hanafis and the Shafi'is who adopted the rationalist creed (اعتــزال) and those among the Hanbalis who adopted anthropomorphism (تجســيم). However, Allah protected the Malikis from such things, for we have never seen a Maliki except that he was Ash'ari in creed.

In summation, **the creed of al–Ash'ari** ؓ **and Abu Mansor al–Maturidhi** ؒ **is what is contained in The Creed of Imam Abu Ja'far al–Tahawi**, which the scholars of the various legal schools have endorsed and are content with as a creed… So, say to those fanatics among the sects, "Take heed, leave your fanaticism, abandon your heresies, and defend the religion of Islam".[1]

Not to mention that the Creed of Imam Tahawi is one of the primary creedal texts of the "Maturidi" school of thought, as Imam Tahawi ﷛ narrates it from the main source of the "Maturidi Theological Methodology" the great Imam Abu Hanifa ﷛.

Imam Abu Ja'far Ahmad ibn Muhammad al–Azdi al–Tahawi was born in 239AH (853CE) and passed away in 321AH (933CE). He is known as Tahawi after his birthplace in Egypt. Imam Tahawi is among the most outstanding authorities of the Islamic world on Hadith and Jurisprudence (Fiqh). He lived at a time when both the direct and indirect disciples of the Four Imams of Islamic Law were teaching and practicing. This period was the greatest age of Hadith and Fiqh studies, and Imam Tahawi studied with most of the living authorities of the time.

Imam Al–Ayni ﷛ states that; when Imam Ahmad passed away, Tahawi was 12; when Imam Bukhari passed away, he was 27; when Imam Muslim passed away, he was 32; when Imam Ibn

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[1] The Creed of Imam al–Tahawi by Hamza Yusuf; Page 34

Majah passed away, he was 44; when Imam Abu Dawud passed away, he was 46; when Imam Tirmidhi passed away, he was 50; and when Imam Nisaa'i passed away, he was 74.

Imam Kawthari رحمه الله after relating this adds the consensus of the scholars that Imam Tahawi combined in himself the completion in the two sciences of Hadith and Fiqh, a consensus that included among others, Imam al–Ayni and al–Dhahabi.

Imam Tahawi رحمه الله began his studies with his maternal uncle Isma'il ibn Yahya al–Muzani, a leading disciple of Imam Shafi'i رحمه الله. However, Tahawi felt instinctively drawn to the corpus of Imam Abu Hanifa's works. Indeed, he had seen his uncle and teacher turning to the works of Hanafi scholars to resolve thorny issues of fiqh, drawing heavily on the writings of Imam Abu Hanifa's two leading companions, Imam Muhammad Ibn al–Hasan al–Shaybani رحمه الله and the first chief justice in the Islamic world, Imam Abu Yusuf رحمه الله who both had codified Hanafi Fiqh. This led him to devote his whole attention to studying the Hanafi works and he eventually joined the Hanafi School.

He now stands out not only as a prominent follower of the Hanafi school of Islamic Law but in view of his vast erudition and remarkable powers of assimilation as one of its leading scholars. His monumental scholarly works such as "**Sharh ma'ani al–Aathar**" and "**Mushkil al–Aathar**" are encyclopedic in scope and have long been

regarded as indispensable for training students of fiqh. He was in fact a ''Mujtahid'' across the board and was thoroughly familiar with the fiqh of all four schools of Law as stated by Allama Ibn Abd al–Barr ﷺ and related by Imam Kawthari ﷺ and as shown by Imam Tahawi's own work on comparative law entitled ''**Ikhtilaf al– Fuqahaa**''.

Some of the works of Imam Tahawi can be listed as below.

❀ كتاب فى النحل و احكامها و اجناسها و صفاتها و ما رُوِى فيها من خبر. (عقائد)

❀ شرح معانى الآثار. (حديث)

❀ مشكل الآثار. (حديث)

❀ التسوية بين حدثنا و اخبرنا. (حديث)

❀ المشكاة . (حديث)

❀ صحيح الآثار. (حديث)

❀ نقض كتاب المدلسين للكرابيسى. (حديث)

❀ الرد على ابى عبيدة فى كتاب النسب. (حديث)

❀ كتاب تفسير متشابه الاخبار. (حديث)

❀ المختصر الكبير فى الفقه. (فقه)

❀ المختصر الصغير. (فقه)

❀ اختلاف الفقهاء. (فقه)

❀ اختلاف العلماء. (فقه)

❀ شرح جامع الصغير لمحمد بن الحسن الشيبانى ﷺ. (فقه)

"**Tahawi's Creed**" {al–Aqida} though small in size, is a basic text for all times, listing what a Muslim must know, believe and comprehend. There is consensus among the Companions, the Successors and all the leading Islamic authorities such as the Four Imams and their authoritative followers on the doctrines enumerated in this work, which are entirely derived from the undisputed primary sources of Religion, the Holy Qur'an and the verified Hadiths, and the Ijmaa' the consensus of the Ummah.

Being a text on Islamic doctrine, this work sums up the arguments set forth in those three sources to define sound belief of "**Ahlus–Sunnah wal–Jama'ah**" the "Mainstream Islam" and likewise the arguments advanced in refuting the views of sects that have deviated from "**Ahlus–Sunnah wal–Jama'ah**".

As regards the sects mentioned in this work, familiarity with islamic history up to the time of Imam Tahawi would be quite helpful. More or less veiled references to sects such as the **Mu'tazila**, the **Jahmiyya**, the **Karramiyya**, the **Qadariyya**, and the **Jabariyya** are found in the work. It also contains allusions to other views considered unorthodox and deviant from the way of "**Ahlus–Sunnah wal–Jama'ah**".

While the permanent relevance of the statements of belief in this Creedal text are obvious, the historical weight and point of certain of these statements can be properly appreciated only if the work is used as a text for study under the guidance of some learned scholar able to elucidate its arguments fully with reference to the intellectual and historical background of the sects refuted in the work.

The present book is intended as one such aid towards understanding the details of Islamic Belief with clarity. It is hoped that this translation of Imam Tahawi's "Creed" the doctrine of "Ahlus–Sunnah wal–Jama'ah" will be of benefit to the readers.

May Allah grant us a true understanding of faith and count us among those described by the Prophet ﷺ as the Saved Group. Aamin.

Lastly it must be mentioned that this translation is heavily indebted to the works of Shaikh Hamza Yusuf and Iqbal Ahmad Azami. May Allah grant them peace and harmony in this world and Jannah in the Hereafter.

Mohammad Ibrahim Teymori
June 2013, Harrow, London, UK

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

This is a presentation narrated by Imam Abu Ja'far al–Tahawi (may Allah's mercies be upon him) on the exposition of the beliefs of "**Ahlus–Sunnah wal–Jama'ah**" [1] in accordance to the methodology of the **Jurists of this religion**, **Abu Hanifa**, Nu'man ibn Thabit al–Kufi, **Abu Yusuf** Ya'qub ibn Ibrahim al–Ansari and Abu Abdullah **Muhammad ibn al–Hasan** al–Shaybani, may Allah be pleased with them all. It includes their beliefs regarding the foundations of the religion[2] upon which they base their worship of the Lord of the worlds.

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[1] "**Ahlus–Sunnah wal–Jama'ah**" literally mean the people of the prophetic path and the majority of the scholars. This title refers to the Sunni Muslims consisting of the overwhelming majority of Muslims in the world today as well as in the past fourteen centuries. This title was adopted in the first and second century of Islam as a response to distinguish between "Sewaad al–Azam", the main body of the Muslim Ummah and the likes of Khawaarij, Rawafidh, Mo'tazelah, etc., some new sects that appeared among Muslim Ummat after the demise of the Holy Prophet PBUH.

[2] That branch of Islamic sciences that deals with Islamic theology is called the science of Usul–al–Deen, science of Tawheed and Sefaat, science of Aqaa'id, science of al–fiqh al–Akbar, and science of Kalaam.

Imam Abu Hanifa ﷺ stated and the other two aforementioned Imams, May Allah shower them all with his mercies, assert too in accordance to his statement that;

We say believing in Allah's oneness, by Allah's help that:

1. Allah is one, without any partners.

2. Nothing is like Him.

3. Nothing can debilitate Him.

4. There is no god other than Him.

5. He is the Pre–existent without a beginning.

6. He is Eternal without end.

7. Neither perishes, nor ceases to exist.

8. Nothing will be, except what He wills.

9. Imaginations cannot attain Him, and comprehensions cannot perceive Him.

10. And creations do not bear any similarity to Him.

11. Alive never dies; all– sustaining, never sleeps.

12 He is a creator without any need to create, and He is a provider for His creations without any effort.

13 He seizes life without fear and resurrects without difficulty.

14 Just as He was possessed of His attributes prior to His creation (the existence), so He remains with the same attributes, without any increase in His attributes as a result of His creations coming into being.

15 As He was before the creation, qualified with His attributes, so He remains forever described by them.

16 It is not after bringing the creation into existence that He merits the name **"the Creator"** nor through originating His creations, He gained the name **"the Originator"**.

17 He possesses the quality of sovereignty with or without fief, and the quality of creativity with or without creation.

18 And while He is **"the Resurrector of the Dead"** after He resurrects them, He merits the same name before He even resurrect them. Likewise, He merits the name **"the Creator"** before He even creates them.

19 This is because He is Omnipotent over everything. Everything is dependent upon Him, and every affair is effortless

for Him and He needs nothing, and "there is nothing like Him and He is the Hearer, the Seer." (al–Shura 42:11)

20 He created the creation with His knowledge.

21 He appointed measures for what He created.

22 He determined the span of their life.

23 Nothing of their actions was concealed from Him before He created them, and He knew what they would do before He created them.

24 He ordered them to obey Him and forbade them from disobeying Him.

25 All things happen in accordance with His determination and His will, and His will is fulfilled.

26 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. [3]

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[3] Therefore people are not forced to Islam. Those whom Allah knew in pre–existence that after coming to the world they will chose Islam, Allah willed that for them. Likewise those whom Allah knew in pre–existence that after coming to the world, they will chose Kufr upon Islam and will insist on it, Allah willed Kufr for them. Thus people are not forced to Islam or kufr.

27 He guides, protects and keeps safe from harm, whomever he wills by His grace; and He allows those He wills to go astray and abases them and afflicts them, by His justice.

28 All of them vacillate in His providence between His grace and His justice.

29 He transcends having opposites or equals.

30 None can ward off His decree or overrule His judgment or override His command.

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

32 And we believe that Muhammad ﷺ is His chosen Servant and preeminent Prophet and His Messenger with whom He is well pleased.

33 And we believe that he is the Final of the Prophets. [4]

34 And he is the paragon of all the god–fearing and the most

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[4] In regards to the finality of the prophet-hood, Qur'an declares that "Muhammad ﷺ is not a father of any of your men but he is a messenger of Allah and the last of the prophets'', 33:4. This is one of the reasons why the Qadianis and Bahaa'ies are disbelievers as they believe Mirza Qadiani and Bahaa to be prophets after the holy prophet Mohammad. ﷺ

honored of all the messengers and the "**Beloved**" of the Lord of all worlds.

35 Any claim to prophet–hood after him is falsehood and deviation.

36 He is the one who has been sent to all the jinn [5] and the whole of humanity with truth and guidance.

37 The Qur'an is the word of Allah. It emanated from Him without modality in expression. He sent it down to His Messenger as revelation.

38 The believers accept it from the Prophet, as absolute truth. They are certain that it is in reality, the word of Allah the Exalted. The word of Allah is not created as is the speech of human beings. [6]

39 Thus, anyone who hears it and alleges that it is human

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[5] Jinn or genie in English is a species of intelligent beings that are created out of smokeless fire and are undetectable by human eye.

[6] One of the greatest of Salaf-Saaliheen and the first Muslim scholar who wrote on the Islamic theology, Imam Abu Hanifa ﷺ states in his most famous book **al–Fiqh al–Akbar**,

"He ﷺ speaks unlike the way we speak… we speak by means of organs and letters, while Allah Most High speaks without organs or letters. Letters are created and the speech of Allah most High is uncreated".

Page 90 translated by M. Abdur–Rahman Ibn Yusuf.

speech has disbelieved.

40 For Allah has condemned, censures and promised him with an agonizing punishment, stating, exalted is He: "I will cast him into the Hell-Fire". (al-Muddaththir 74:26)

41 Because Allah threatened those who allege "This is just human speech" (74:25) with torment in the Hell-fire, we acknowledged and ascertained that it is the speech of the Creator of mankind and that it does not resemble the speech of mankind.

42 Whoever describes Allah even with a single human quality, has blasphemed. **7**

43 So whoever understands this, will take heed and refrain from such statements as those of disbelievers, and knows that Allah the Exalted in His attributes is utterly unlike human beings.

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7 "**Human qualities**" for example to beget or to be begotten or to have a body or to be consisted of matter, to have colour, width, length, or to sleep, forget, to have a stomach, back, body parts like hands, legs, chest, or to sit on something, or to occupy space or to be in a direction or to have a trajectory, or to be subject to time and space (or place).

These are qualities of humans. If someone describes Allah the Exalted with a single one of these qualities, he has blasphemed, because Allah the Exalted describes Himself لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ "There is nothing whatever like him". Qur'an: 42:11

44 The Beatific Vision of Allah by the inhabitants of the Paradise, without their vision being encompassing and without a modality of this vision, is true, as the Book of our Lord has stated: "Faces on that Day are radiant, gazing at their Lord." (al–Qiyama 75:22–23) [8]

45 The explanation of this (verse) is as Allah knows it to be, and as he intended.

46 All that have been narrated about this (issue) from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his Companions, May Allah be pleased with them all, in authentic Hadiths, is just as he ﷺ said and they mean as Allah intended.

47 We do not delve into (such verses / hadithes) trying to

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[8] The Great Imam Abu Hanifa ﷺ states in his book *al–Fiqh al–Akbar*:

"Allah Most High will be seen in the hereafter. The believers will see Him while in Paradise with their eyes without any comparison or modality. There will not be any distance between Him and His creation".

Page 67 English translation by M. Abdur–Rahman Ibn Yusuf.

The Great Imam Abu Hanifa ﷺ states in his other book *al–Fiqh al–Absat*:

"The beatific vision of Allah for the people of the Paradise without any modality or comparison or any direction is true". Page 5

This can be understood easier with an example. We know Allah through knowledge without any distance or direction or facing Him, so as we do know Him in this world without any modality or direction, tomorrow we will see Him in Paradise without any modality or direction.

interpret them in accord to our own opinions, nor do we let our imaginations fold them into their presumptions.

48 No one is safe in his religion unless he resigns himself completely to Allah the Exalted and Glorified, and to His Messenger ﷺ May Allah bless him and grant him peace, and consigns the knowledge of what which is ambiguous to him, to the one who knows its meaning. **9**

49 A man's footing in Islam is not firm unless it is based on submission and surrender.

50 Thus anyone who craves the knowledge of that which is barred from him, and who is discontented with the limits of his understanding will be veiled from a pure unity, clear comprehension and correct faith by his own covetousness, he will then sway between belief and disbelief, affirmation and denial, acceptance and rejection, doubtful and aimless, confused and deviant, being neither a submitting believer nor a resolute denier.

51 Belief of Beatific Vision of Allah by the People of Paradise is incorrect if he presumes it to be imaginary or interprets it to be a type of comprehension.

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9 "**The one who knows its meaning**" is Allah ﷻ as Imam Tahaawi رحمه الله himself explicitly clarifies: "**112**. In the matters that their knowledge is ambiguous to us, we assert that: "Allah knows best.""

52   Since the interpretation of this vision or indeed the meaning of all subtle phenomena which are annexed to the realm of Lordship is leaving its interpretations and strictly adhering to the submission. Upon this is based the religion of the Messengers, and the Sacred Laws of the prophets.

53   Whomsoever does not avoid negating or does not avoid likening ⟨the attributes of Allah to humans⟩ has deviated and has failed to acquire understanding of divine transcendence.

54   For indeed, undoubtedly, our Lord the Glorified and the Exalted, is only described with attributes of pure oneness and absolute uniqueness. No creation is in any way like Him.

55   He is transcendent beyond having limits, ends, organs, limbs or parts. [10]

56   The six directions [11] do not contain Him as they do created

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[10]   الحُدُود means limits of something. الغَايَاتِ means ends of something. الأَركَانِ means organs of a body without which one cannot survive, like head or chest. الاعضاء means limbs of a body like hand or leg. الأَدَوَاتِ means the smaller parts of a body, like tongue, lips, or tooth. It also means tools.

The above mentioned are made of or characteristic of a body and Allah the Exalted is transcendent of having a body.

[11] "**The six directions**" are: above, below, right, left, front and back.

Imam Ali Al–Qaari ﷺ in his **Sharh al–fiqh al–Akbar** page 35 states: "Allah the Exalted is not in any place or space, nor is He subject →

things. [12]

57 The "**Mi'raj**" (the ascension through the heavens and beyond) is true.

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to time, because both time and space are amongst His creations. He the Exalted was present in pre-existence and there was nothing of the creation with Him".

"And He is not occupied in any space, neither above nor beneath, or any other location. And He is not contained in time as the anthropomorphist, crypto-anthropomorphist and pantheists believe".

Sharh al-Fiqh al-Akbar page 35 – 36

[12] "**Created things**": this means that everything created has a direction and is occupied in a direction, but Allah the Most High as He says "There is nothing like Him", He the Exalted is without any direction or trajectory. The above statement of Imam Tahawi ﷻ clarifies that Allah the Most High is not occupied in one or multiple directions. Imam Tahaawi ﷻ by narrating this statement of **the "Jurists of Islam"** refutes the anthropomorphist's dogmas that imagine Allah to be occupied in one or multiple directions.

It should be mentioned that direction or trajectory is the characteristic quality of created things, therefore believing that Allah has a direction or trajectory means comparing and similarizing Allah the Most High to His creations. And here Imam Tahaawi's ﷻ statement should be remembered that:

"**42**. Whoever describes Allah even with a single human quality, has blasphemed".

May Allah the Exalted protect us from such heretic dogma.

58   The Prophet ﷺ was taken by night and ascended in person, while awake, to the heavens and from there to wherever Allah willed in celestial heights. Allah honored him with what he willed and revealed to him that which He revealed, "And his mind did not imagine what he saw" (al–Najm 53:11). May Allah bless him and grant him peace in this world and the next.

59   The "**Hawd**", the basin which Allah has honored His prophet with as a solace for his Followers, is true.

60   The "**Shafa'ah**", the prophet's intercession which Allah has allocated for them, is true, as related in the traditions.

61   The pledge that Allah took from Adam عليه السلام and his progeny is true.

62   Allah has always known the exact number of those who would enter the Paradise, and the exact number of those who would enter the Hellfire. Nothing is added to this number, none will be decreased.

63   Likewise His knowledge includes all their actions, which He knew they would do.

64   Every person is facilitated to do that for which he was created.[13]

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[13]   Its means will be provided for him and then he uses his ability and his free will to do that.

65 The judgment of one's actions will be dictated by one's final deed. **14**

66 Those that are saved are ultimately saved by Allah's decision, just as those who are damned, are ultimately damned by Allah's decision.

67 The essence of the divine decree is Allah's secret in His creation. No distinguished angel and no prophetic Messenger have been given knowledge of it.

68 Delving and pondering into divine decree is a means to loss and descent into deprivation and a path to rebellion.

69 So beware and take every precaution, not to ponder, ideate and doubt in this matter, because Allah the Exalted has concealed the knowledge of divine decree from His creations, and has forbidden them to desire it, as He the Exalted states in His Book, "He is not questioned about what He does, it is they who will be questioned". (al-Anbiya' 21: 23)
Therefore, whoever asks: "Why has He done that?" has rejected the judgment of the Book, and anyone who rejects the judgment of the Book is among unbelievers!

70 The above is a summary of what one with an illuminated

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14 If his demise is with Imaan, all his good actions will be fruitful, and if he dies disbelieving, all his deeds will be futile.

heart among those protected of Allah needs. And this is the rank of those deeply rooted in knowledge.

71 For there are two types of knowledge: knowledge which is accessible to the creation, and knowledge which is not accessible to the creation. Denying the accessible knowledge is disbelief, and claiming the inaccessible knowledge is disbelief. Belief is not correct unless accessible knowledge is embraced and pursuing inaccessible is abandoned. **15**

72 We believe in the "**Lawh & Qalam**" the Tablet and the Pen and in all that is inscribed on the Tablet. **16**

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15 "**Knowledge that is accessible to humans**", i.e., knowledge of the existence of the Paradise and Hellfire and knowledge of Sacred Law that comes through divine revelation to the prophets.

And the "**inaccessible knowledge**", i.e., knowledge of the unseen or knowledge of the divine decree or the arrival of the Last Hour etc., which are attributed only to Allah the Exalted. Denying the first category and claiming the second, is tantamount to disbelief.

16 The Great Imam Abu Hanifa ﷻ in his treatise *al–Waseeyah* states:

"We believe that Allah the exalted commanded the Pen to write. The Pen asked: what should I write, O my Lord? Allah the Exalted said: Write what is to be in existence up to the Day of Judgment. (Because) Allah the Exalted Himself has declared:

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وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَعَلُوهُ فِي الزُّبُرِ وَكُلُّ صَغِيرٍ وَكَبِيرٍ مُسْتَطَرٌ

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All that they do is recorded in the books (of deed) and everything small or big is written down". 54:52-53

73 If even all creations were to unite together to remove from existence what Allah has written to exist on the Tablet, they would not be able to do so. And if all creations were to unite together to bring something into existence which Allah had not written on it to exist, they would not be able to do so.

74 The Pen's work is done writing down all that was, is and will be until the Day of Judgment. **17**

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17 The Great Imam Abu Hanifa ﷺ in his book **al-Fiqh al-Akbar** states:

"His writing it (is) in the Preserved Tablet, yet His writing entails descriptions, not commands." Page 105

Imam Bayadhi ﷺ explains this: "It means that He wrote down that whatever a person does, he does it with his own choice".

Ishaarat al-Muraam, Page 56

Imam Ali al-Qari ﷺ further explains:

"It means that Allah the Exalted wrote about everything that they "will" happen such and such and He did not write that they "should" happen such and such." *Sharh al-Fiqh al-Akbar*: Page 41

This passage has been further explained by Imam Maghnisawi ﷺ. He writes:

"... everything is written in the Preserved Tablet in complete detail as regards its attributes, such as beauty, ugliness, width, breadth, smallness, largeness, paucity, abundance, will, power, acquisition, and other descriptions, conditions and characteristics. Nothing is written in it as merely a command to occur without description or cause. For example, "Let Zayd be a believer and Amr an unbeliever is not written in the Tablet as such. Had it been written that way, Zayd would have been involuntarily compelled to believe and Amr to disbelieve, because whatever Allah Most High commands necessarily transpires. "Allah →

75   Whatever has missed a person could not have afflicted him, and whatever afflicts him could not have missed him.

76   A servant of Allah is obliged to know that Allah's eternal knowledge preceded everything in His creation.

77   And He has determined their measures exactly and decisively. And there is none in His creation, either the heavens or the earth that can nullify it, overrule it, erase it, change it, detract it, add to it or subtract it in any way.

78   And nothing can come into existence but by His bringing it into existence. And this bringing into existence is not but beautiful and perfect.

79   The above mentioned is a fundamental part of doctrine of belief and a principal element of knowledge and profess of Allah's oneness and sovereignty, as Allah the Exalted has stated in His

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Most High commands and there is none to rescind (muaqqab) His command". Rather, it is written in the Tablet that Zayd will be a believer through his own choice and power, and he will desire true faith (imaan) and not unbelief; and Amr will be an unbeliever through his own choice and power, and he will desire unbelief and not true faith.

Therefore, the purpose of the Great Imam's statement "His writing entails descriptions not commands" is to deny compulsion in actions of servants and to refute the belief of the Jabbariyya".

Al-fiqh al-Akbar; Page 108 English translation by Mufti Abur-Rahman Ibn Yusuf.

Book: "and He has created everything and designed it in a perfect measure" (al–Furqan 25:2) And He has also said: "Allah's command is always an ordained decree." (al–Ahzab 33: 38)

80 So woe to anyone who on account of decree antagonizes with Allah and who in his desire to ponder in its depths, bringing forward a sick heart, delves into this matter. And in his delusional attempt to seek a secret which is concealed in the realm of unseen, ends up in whatever he utters concerning this matter, just a wicked fabricator of lies.

81 The "**Arsh** and the **Kursi**", the Throne and the Chair [18] are true.

82 Yet He the Exalted and Sublime has no need for the "**Throne**" and whatever is beneath it. [19]

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[18] "**Kursi**" is an immense creation of Allah that is smaller to the "**Arsh**"(Throne) and encircles the universe, and "**Arsh**"(Throne) is the most immense creation of Allah that encircles the entire creation including the Kursi. Wallahu A'lam.

[19] The Great Imam Abu Hanifa ﷺ in his treatise **al–Waseeyah** states:

"We believe Allah the Exalted did "istewaa" on the Throne without Him being in need of it and without sitting on it, in fact He is the preserver of the Throne and all that are beside the Throne. If He was in need of (**Arsh**), He would not have been able to bring the creation into existence and administrate its affairs, just as created beings cannot. And if He was in need of sitting and settling on it, then where was he before→

[the creation of] the Throne. Indeed pure and transcendent is He, immensely above that" [they say]. Page 3

The Great Imam Abu Hanifa ﷺ further elaborates in his book **Al–Fiqh al–Absat**:

"If it is said where is Allah? It will be said that Allah the Exalted **was** and "where" did not exist before He created the world, Allah the Exalted **was** and "place" and world and nothing existed, He is the creator of all of them". Page 21

The Great Imam Abu Hanifa ﷺ further states in his book **Al–Waseeyah**:

"Anyone who says I do not know whether my Lord is in the skies or in earth, he has disbelieved". Page 14

Imam Abu al–Laith Samarqandi ﷺ explains the reason behind this statement: "Because this man with such a statement indicates that Allah the Exalted has a location and this makes him a disbeliever."

Sharh al–Fiqh al–Absat. Page 25

Imam Bayadhi ﷺ explains this further: "[He disbelieves] because he has a believe that Allah the Exalted has a direction and a location".

Isharat al–Moraam: page 168

Imam Izzudin Ibn Abdus–Salaam ﷺ too in his book **Hal al–Romooz** explains the great Imam's statement. He writes:

"[that person disbelieves] because his statement signalizes that Allah the Exalted has a location, and anyone who imagines that Allah the Exalted has a location, is an anthropomorphist ".

Sharh al–Fiqh al–Akbar: page 115

The Great Imam Abu Hanifa ﷺ in his book **Al–Fiqh al–Absat** further states: →

"And similarly anyone who says the Lord is on the Throne, but I don't know whether the Throne is in the skies or in the earth", (he has disbelieved)

page 14.

Imam Bayadhi ﷺ explains the reason: "Because this statement too presupposes a belief that entails a direction, location and explicit deficiency for Allah the Most Exalted".

Isharaat al–Muraam: Page 16

The prophet himdelf ﷺ narrates the purity and transcendence of Allah the Most Exalted of having a location or being in a place from one of the angels who carry the Throne on their shoulders. Abu Huraira ﷺ reports in Sahih Hadeeth that the prophet ﷺ said:

"Let me narrate to you from an Angel that his feet are in the seventh earth and the Throne is on his shoulders, and he keeps saying; "O Lord, pure are you from being said where were you, and where are you".

This hadeeth is narrated by Abu Ya'la: 11/496 no 8619,

Hafiz ibn Hajar ﷺ has verified it as sahih; Al–Matalib al–Aliyah: 10/82 no 3530,

And further Allama Haithami ﷺ in Majma al–Zawa'id: 1/80 and 8/135,

Imam Su'uti ﷺ in al–Dur al–Manthor: 13/16,

Allama Aaloosi ﷺ in Rooh al–Ma'aani; 12/299,

and the annotator of Mosnad Abi Ya'la: 11/96 no 8819 have verified it as sahih.

above the "Throne". [20]

84 And He has rendered His creation incapable of His encompassment.

85 We assert with faith, conviction and resignation that Allah took "Ibrahim" ﷺ as an intimate friend and that He spoke to "Musa" ﷺ.

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[20] What is "above the Throne"? The "Lawh", the Preserved Tablet is situated above the "Throne" as stated in the famous hadith narrated in dozens of hadith books that "in pre-creation of the worlds when Allah the Exalted determined the decree of the creation, he wrote on a Book near Him situated above the "Throne" that my mercy precedes my anger."
Bukhari: 3194, 7404, 7422 & Muslim: 14-2751 & 16-2751

If so, then the "Almotah'haroon Angels" facilitate over the Throne too as mentioned in the holy Qur'an: "It is in the Book Well-guarded which no one touches it but the Almotah'haroon" angels. Alwaaqe'ah, 56: 78, 79 And Allah knows best.

The word "near him" in Quran and Hadith has been used in regards to certain objects to express their honour and veneration to Allah the Exalted. For example it has been used in Quran: 66:11 to show the veneration of Paradise. Quran says: Allah has cited for the believers the example of the wife of Fir'aun (Pharaoh) when she said "My Lord, build for me "near you" a house in the Paradise and deliver me from Fir'aun and his deeds and deliver me from the unjust people".

The prophet ﷺ too has used this word in the same meaning as narrated by Imam Bukhari: 7405 that the prophet ﷺ said: Allah the Most Exalted says: I am near to the thinking of my servant towards Me", meaning "I am just as My slave thinks I am".

86 We believe in the angels, and the Prophets, and the books which were revealed to the messengers, and we bear witness that they were all following the manifest Truth.

87 We term the people who face our "**Qibla**" as Muslim Believers as long as they acknowledge, confirm and do not refute what the Prophet ﷺ brought, stated and informed about.

88 We do not enter into speculations about Allah, nor do we allow any dispute about the religion of Allah.

89 We do not argue about the Qur'an, and we testify that it is the Word of the Lord of all Worlds which the Trustworthy Spirit (Jibreel) came down with, who taught it to the most honored of all the Messengers, Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family and all his companions and grant them peace.

90 It is the Word of Allah the Exalted and no speech of any creation is comparable to it. We do not say that it was created.

91 And we do not go contrary to the majority of the Muslims. [21]

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[21] "**The majority of Muslims**" means the consensus of the Mojtahideen of the "Ahlus–Sunna wal–Jamawah" the main body of Islam. Because the consensus of the Mohtahideen of this Ummat has been protected by Allah the Exalted, therefore anyone who dissents from it is a heretic.

Allah the Exalted states in the holy Qur'an :

92   We do not declare any of the people of our "**Qibla**" to be unbeliever for a sin he has committed, as long as he does not believe it to be lawful.

93   Nor do we say that the sin committed by a sinner does not harm him.

94   As for the virtuous among believers, we hope that Allah will pardon them and grant them entrance into Paradise by His grace. But we cannot be certain of this, nor can we testify that they will definitely be granted admittance into the Paradise. We pray for forgiveness of the sinful among the believers, and although we fear for their salvation, yet nevertheless we are not in despair about them.

95   Assurance and despair both displace a person from the fold of the religion, yet the path of truth for the believers lies between the two.

96   A person does not lose his faith except by rejecting that which brought him into it.

97   Faith is affirmation by the tongue and conviction in the heart.

"Whoever breaks away with the messenger after the right path → has become clear to him and follows what is not the Way of the Believers. We shall let him have what he chose and we shall admit him to Jahannam which is an evil place to return". 4:115

98 And whatever is revealed in the Qur'an and all that is verified from the Prophet ﷺ regarding the Sacred Law and its explanation is true.

99 Faith is one in reality and all the people of faith are the same in essence, yet the distinction of ranks among them is due to their level of the fear of Allah, opposition to desires and adherence to that which is most pleasing to Allah. [22]

100 All believers are Friends of the Beneficent and the noblest of them to Allah are those who are the most obedient and who are adherent most to the Qur'an.

101 Faith is belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, the resurrection after death, and belief that the Decree, it's good and evil, its sweetness and its bitterness all are from Allah, the Exalted.

102 We believe in all those said.

103 We do not distinguish between any of the messengers, and we acknowledge them all as true with whatever that they had brought.

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[22] This could be understood easier with an example:

Humanity is an essence and all individual humans are alike in the essence of humanity, i.e. being human, yet the distinction between them in their ranks is due to knowledge, intellect and etc.

104 Those of the Community of Muhammad ﷺ who have committed "Dire Sins" will not be in the Hellfire forever, as long as they died and meet Allah as knowing believers affirming His oneness, even if they had not repented.

105 They are subject to His will and judgment. If He pleases, He will forgive them and pardon them by His grace, as is mentioned in His Noble Qur'an when He says: "Surely, Allah does not forgive that a partner is ascribed to Him, and forgives anything short of that for whomsoever He wills"(al–Nisa 4: 116).

And if He pleases, He will punish them in the Hellfire by His justice and then bring them out of it by His mercy, and by the intercession of those who are granted so among His obedient servants, and then sends them to Paradise.

106 This is because Allah is the Protector of those who acknowledge Him. He will not treat them in both worlds the same as He treats those who deny Him, who are devoid of His guidance and have parted from His protection.

O Allah, the Protector of Islam and its people; make us firm in Islam until the day we meet You in that state.

107 We deem permissible the congregational prayer behind any of the People of the "**Qibla**" whether pious or sinful [23] and we

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[23] "The congregational prayer behind any Muslim whether pious or sinful is permissible, but it should be noted that because of his sinfulness, praying behind him is Makrooh, therefore people should choose a pious imam to lead their Salah.

pray over those amongst them who died.

108   We do not specify about any of them to be either in the Paradise or the Hellfire and do not accuse any of them of "**Kufr**, **Shirk** and **Nifaaq**" [24] as long as they have not openly demonstrated any of those.

We leave their inner states to Allah the Exalted.

109   We do not deem the "Capital Punishment" permissible against any of the Community of Muhammad ﷺ unless it is legislated upon him.

110   We do not permit rebellion against our leaders or those in charge of our public affairs even if they do injustice. We also do not pray for evil to befall them, nor do we withdraw allegiance from their obedience.

We hold that our civic duty to them is a part of our obedience to Allah the Exalted and therefore legally binding on us, as long as they do not order us to commit misdeed.

We pray for their righteousness and ask Allah for their pardon.

111   We follow the "**Sunnah**" and the Majority of the scholars.

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[24]   Kufr: disbelief, shirk: associating partners with Allah, nifaaq, hypocrisy.

We avoid isolated opinions, disharmony and sectarianism. [25]

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[25] "**Sunnah**" means the path that is moved on, in matters of religion. Here it refers to the path of the Prophet ﷺ, the path of his Companions, especially the path of the four great caliphs of Islam; Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman and Ali ﷺ May Allah be pleased with them all; the path of Tabe'een, the four Imams of Islam who have been followed by the majority of Muslims throughout the 14 centuries of Islamic history.

"**We avoid isolated opinions, disharmony and sectarianism**". It means to create and propagate an opinion contrary to the opinion of the consensus of the Imams of Ahlus–Sunnah wal–Jama'ah whether in matters of Creed or Law. For example; the consensus of the scholars of Ahlus–Sunnah wal–Jama'ah is that Paradise and Hellfire will never perish, the journey to visit the holy grave of the beloved prophet ﷺ is permissible, Mut'ah is forbidden, three divorces uttered in one word are three divorces and hence the wife will be Haram for the husband, following one of the four Imams of Islam, i.e., Imam Abu Hanifa ﷺ, Imam Malik ﷺ, Imam Shafe'i ﷺ, Imam Ahmad ﷺ is compulsory, the minimum Salah of Taraweeh is twenty Rak'at, etc.

Now if someone appears in these ages and produces an opinion contrary to the consensus of the scholars of Ahlus–Sunnah wal–Jama'ah that Paradise and Hellfire or one of them will perish, the journey to visit the holy grave of the beloved prophet ﷺ is forbidden, Mut'ah is permissible, three divorces is just one single divorce and the wife still is halal for the husband, following one of the abovementioned Imams of Islam is not compulsory, the Salah of Taraweeh is 8 or 12 Rak'ats etc., such opinions of his are deemed "isolated opinions" and as mentioned →

112 We love the people of justice and trustworthiness, and loathe those who are tyrant and treacherous.

113 In the matters that their knowledge is ambiguous to us, we assert that "Allah knows best."

114 We believe that wiping over leather foot-coverings (in ablution) whether residing or traveling is permissible, just as narrated in the (multiply-transmitted) hadiths.

115 Hajj and Jihad are continuous obligations under the leadership of legitimate Muslim rulers, whether they are pious or misdoer until the arrival of the Last Hour. Nothing can abolish or revoke them.

116 We believe in the noble angelic scribes whom Allah has appointed as guardians over us.

117 We believe in the Angel of Death who is in charge of seizing the souls of all in the world.

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above must be "avoided".

On the other hand if such an individual propagates his "isolated opinions" then his actions will be deemed as creating and instigating "disharmony and sectarianism" in Islam, which will have a severe penalty in the Hereafter and in a court of Islamic Law in an Islamic state too.

118   We believe in the punishment of the grave for those who earn it.

119   We believe in the questioning of the deceased in his grave by **"Munkar"** and **"Nakir"** about his Lord, his religion and his prophet, as narrated in the hadiths from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and from the Companions, May Allah be pleased with them all.

120   One's grave is either an orchard of the gardens of the Paradise, or a pit from the pits of the Hellfire.

121   We believe in the resurrection of the dead, the re–compensation of the deeds in the Day of Judgment, the presentation ₍of one's entire acts₎, the accountability, the recital of the Book ₍of one's records₎, the reward, the punishment, and the Bridge ₍over the Hellfire₎.

122   We believe in the **"Mizaan"**, the Scale upon which the deeds of the Muslims, good or evil, obedient and disobedient are weighed.

123   The Paradise and the Hellfire are created realms that will never perish, nor come to an end.

124   We believe that Allah the Exalted, created Paradise and Hellfire before other creations. He then created inhabitants for them both. He grants admittance in paradise to whomever He

wills by His grace, and He condemns whoever He wills to the Hellfire by His justice. **26**

125 Everybody acts in accordance with what he is destined for, and moves towards the purpose he is created for.

126 Good and evil have both been determined for people.

127 The ⟨divine⟩ enablement that an act requires to occur cannot be ascribed to a created being. This enablement is simultaneous with the act. As for the ⟨material⟩ capability that results to an act, like health, capacity, being in a position to act, and having the necessary means; this capability exists in a person before the action. It is this type of capability that legal and moral obligations are pending on, and this is what Allah the Exalted says: "Allah does not obligate a person beyond his capacity." ⟨al–Baqara 2: 286⟩

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26 The Great Imam Abu Hanifa ﷺ in his book *al–Fiqh al–Akbar* states:

"Allah Most High created all created beings free from unbelief and true faith. He then addressed them, commanded them and prohibited them [from certain acts]. Thereafter whoever disbelieved did so through his own doing by rejecting and repudiating the truth, Allah having forsaken him. And whoever believed did so through his own choosing by affirming [the truth] and being convinced [of it]. Allah having granted him divine guidance and assistance …

Allah does not compel anyone to unbelief or true faith. He does not create people believers or unbelievers, but created them as [pure] individuals. To believe or disbelieve is the action of the servants".

Al–Fiqh al–akbar, Page 115–116

128   People's actions are Allah's creation, yet people's acquisitions.**[27]**

129   Allah, the Exalted, has only obliged people with what they are capable to do, and people are only capable of doing what He has obliged them to do. This is the explanation of the phrase: "There is no power and no strength except by Allah."

130   We assert that no one can strategize, move, or avoid an act of disobedience to Allah except with Allah's providence, and we also assert that no one has the ability to initiate an act of obedience to Allah and be steadfast upon it, except by Allah's the Exalted providence.

131   Everything happens according to Allah's will, knowledge, decree and design.

132   His will supersedes all other wills and His decree overpowers all stratagems.

133   He does what He wills, yet He is never unjust.

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[27] This could be understood better with an example.

A person, who works or performs a job, earns money, yet he does not make them. It is the government that makes the money, so the worker because of his work is the earner (acquirer) of the money and the government because of its producing the money is the maker of it.

134 He is exalted in His purity beyond any evil or affliction; He is transcendent beyond any flaw or imperfection. "He is not questioned about what He does but it is they who will be questioned."(al–Anbiya' 21: 23)

135 In the prayers of the living and in their charitable giving for those who have died, there is benefit for the dead.

136 Allah the Exalted responds to the prayers and fulfills the needs.

137 He dominates everything and nothing dominates Him.

138 Nothing can be independent of Allah even for the blinking of an eye, and whoever imagines himself independent of Allah for the blinking of an eye, has blasphemed and has become among the dwellers of perdition.

139 Allah has wrath and pleasure but not like any creature.

140 We assert that we love the Companions of Allah's Messenger ﷺ. We do not however go to extreme in our love for anyone among them; nor do we disclaim from any of them. We loathe those who despise them. We only speak well of them. We behold loving them as a part of religion, faith and spiritual excellence. Likewise we hold hating them as blasphemy, damnation, hypocrisy and transgression.

141 We assert the caliphate after the demise of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, first for **"Abu Bakr al–Siddiq"** in accord with his preeminence and precedence over the entire Muslim Ummah; then for **"Omar ibn al–Khattab"**; then for **"Othman ibn Affaan"** and then for **"Ali ibn Abi Talib"**; may Allah be well pleased with all of them. They are the Guiding Caliphs and the Guided leaders who ruled with righteousness and by it established justice.

142 We testify that the ten whom Allah's Messenger ﷺ has named and designated to be in Paradise, are in Paradise, as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ whose word is truth, testified that they would be.

Those ten are:

Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman, Ali, Talha, Zubayr, Sa'd, Sa'id, Abdur–Rahman ibn Awf and Abu Ubayda ibn al–Jarraah whose title was the Trustee of this community, may Allah be pleased with all of them.

143 Anyone who speaks well of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his virtuous wives and purified descendents, is absolved of hypocrisy.

144 The pious scholars of the Predecessors, the Companions ﷺ and those who immediately followed them and those people who came after them; the people of spiritual excellence, the narrators of hadith, the paragons of jurisprudence, and the scholars of theology, they must be mentioned in the best manner

and anyone who speaks ill of them, is deviated from the right path.[28]

145   We do not prefer any of the saintly men over any of the Prophets, but we assert that one prophet is better than all the saints.

146   We believe in the miracles of the saints that have been conveyed and verified to us by trustworthy sources.

147   We believe in the signs of the End of Time, including the emergence of Dajjaal the Anti-christ, the descent of Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus) ﷺ from heavens, and we also believe in the rising of the sun from where it sets, and in the appearance of the Beast of Earth from its designated location.

148   We refute the words of soothsayers and the utterance of fortunetellers.

149   We also reject anyone who claims anything contrary to the Book, the Sunnah [29] and the consensus of the scholars of this

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[28] "**The right path**" refers to the "path of the believers" in the holy Qur'an that states: "And whoever follows a path other than the Path of the Believers, We will let him have what he chose and then throw him in the Hellfire, and that is an evil place to return". al-Nisaa, 4:115

[29] "**The Book**" means the holy Qur'an and the "**Sunnah**" means the path that is moved on, in matters of religion. Here it refers to the path of the Prophet ﷺ and his companions ﷺ. Especially the path of the four great caliphs of Islam, Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman and Ali, May Allah be pleased with them all. ﷺ

46

Ummah. [30]

150   We believe that "**mainstream body of Islam**" is right and correct and schism is deviation and a path to perdition.

151   The religion of Allah in the heavens and the earth is just one, and that is the religion of Islam (submission), as Allah the Exalted says: "Verily the only religion with Allah is Islam." (Al Imran 3: 19) And He the Exalted also states: "anyone who seeks a religion other that Islam, it will not be accepted from him". And finally He says: "I am pleased with Islam as a religion for you." (al–Ma'ida 5: 3)

152   Islam lies between extremism and negligence.

153   And lies between likening of Allah's attributes to creation

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[30] "**The consensus of the scholars of this Ummah**" refers to those rulings that the paragons of the Islamic jurisprudence have a unified opinion on them. For example, the prohibition of Mot'ah, the preferability of traveling to visit the grave of the holy Prophet ﷺ, the binding of three divorce uttered in one word, following one of the four Imams of Islam, i.e., Imam Abu Hanifa رحمه الله, Imam Malik رحمه الله, Imam Shafe'i رحمه الله, Imam Ahmad رحمه الله is compulsory, the minimum twenty Rak'ah of Salah of Taraawih during the month of Ramadan, all these and hundreds more have been established through "**the consensus of the scholars of this Ummah**", therefore anyone who dissents from them and makes a claim contrary to them, his words and his claim shall be rejected, as the words and claims of soothsayers and the utterance of fortunetellers are rejected.
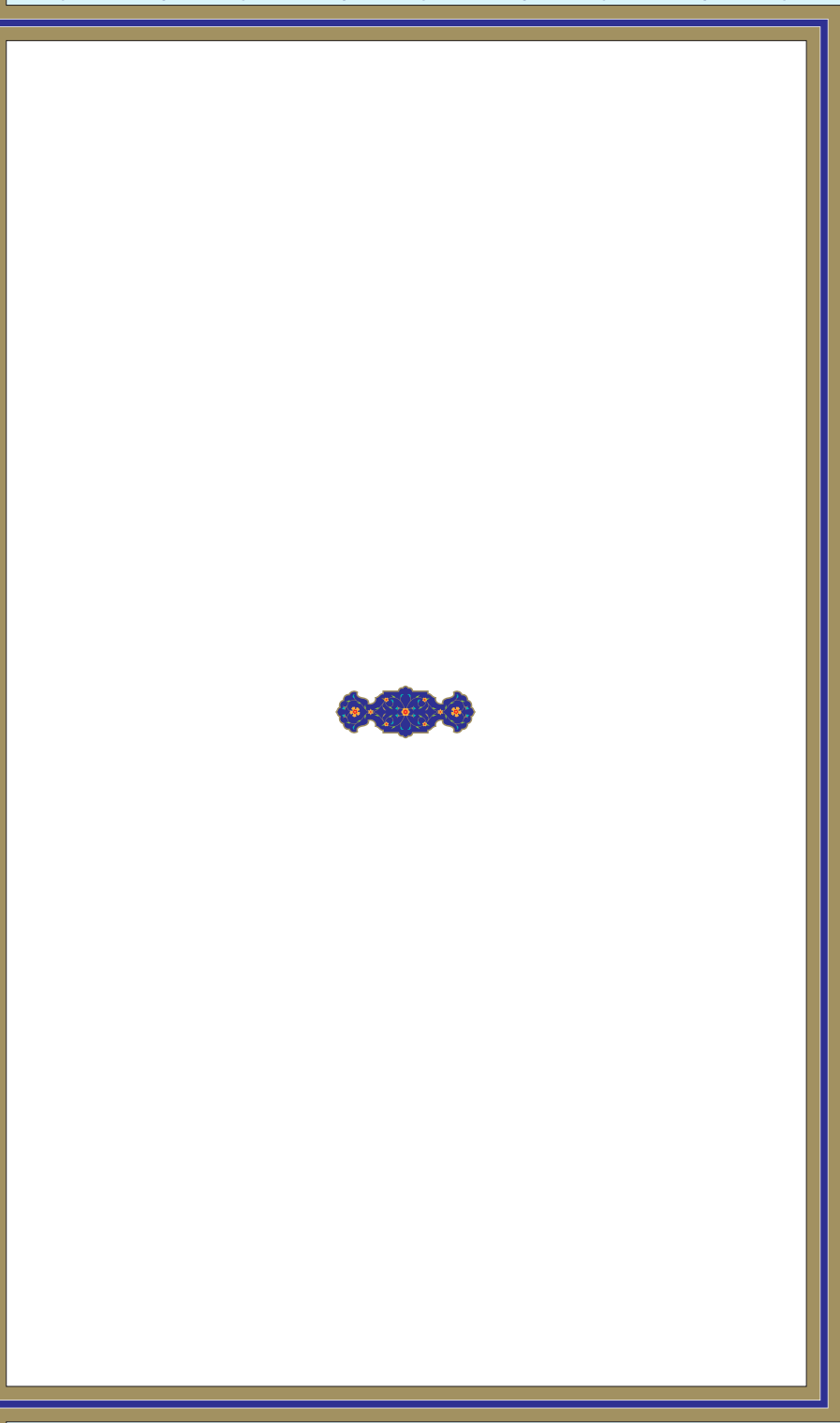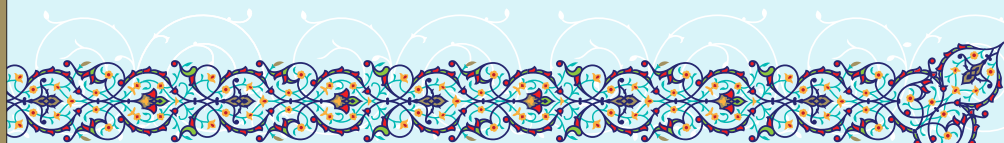
and divesting Allah of attributes.

154 And it is between determinism and freewill.

155 And it is between assurance of salvation, and despair from Allah's mercy.

156 This is our religion and our creed, both in public and private, and we absolve before Allah of anyone who opposes what we have mentioned and made clear.

157 We ask Allah to make us firm in our belief and seal our lives with it, and to protect and preserve us from heresies, scattering devious opinions and perverse doctrines such as those of the Mushabbiha, the Mu'tazila, the Jahmiyya, the Jabriyya, the Qadariyya [31] and others like them who opposed the "**Sunna and the Jama'ah**" and have allied themselves with deviation and misguidance. We renounce them. They in our opinion have gone astray and are on a path of destruction.

Allah knows best. To Him is our departure and final return.

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[31] Mushabbiha = the anthropomorphists, Mu'tazila = the rationalists or the dissenters, Jahmiyya = the pantheists, Jabriyya = the determinists or the fatalists, Qadariyya = the dualists or the libratarians.