



The Creed of the *Imaam*, Sufyaan bin Sa'eed ath-Thawree (d. 161H)

Trans. Abu Iyaad Amjad Rafiq (from the book, I'tiqaad A'immatil-Hadeeth), taken from Mountains of Knowledge, (Salafi Publications 1997)

A Word about this Creed

This creed is mentioned by the *Imaam*, al-Laalikaa'ee in his remarkable book 'Sharh *Usool* I'tiqaad *Ahl us-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* (1/151-154) with his chain of narration leading back to Sufyaan ath-Thawree - may *Allaah* have mercy upon him.

And al-*Haafidh* adh-Dhahabee has also mentioned this belief in his *Tadhkirat ul-Huffaadh* and then said (1/206-207): "This is affirmed from Sufyaan and the *Shaikh*, al-Mukhallas is trustworthy, may *Allaah* have mercy upon them".

The *Isnaad* of this Creed

1. Muhammad Bin Abdur-Rahmaan bin al-'Abbaas bin Abdur-Rahmaan: Abu Taahir al-Baghdaadee al-Mukhallas. He is the *Shaikh*, the *Muhaddith*, the senior, the truthful. Al-Khateeb said: "He is trustworthy".

He was born in Shawwaal of the year 305H and died in Ramadaan of the year 393H. Refer to *Siyar A'laam an-Nubalaa* (16/478-480), *Taareekh Baghdaad* (2/322-323) and *Shadharaat udh-Dhahab* (3/144).

2. Shu'ayb bin Muhammad bin Raajiyaan. Adh-Dhahabee declared him trustworthy in his *Tadhkirah* (1/207)

3. Alee bin Harb al-Mawsilee, Abul-Hasan: The *Imaam*, the *muhaddith*, reliable and well-versed. He was born in the year 175H. Abu Haatim said: "Truthful". Ad-Daaraqutnee said: "Trustworthy".

He died in the year 265H. Refer to *Siyar A'laam an-Nubalaa* (12/251-253), *al-Jarh wat-Ta'deel* (6/183), *Taareekh Baghdaad* (11/418-420), *Tabaqaat al-Hanaabilah* (1/223) and *Shadharaat udh-Dhahab* (2/150)

4. Shu'ayb bin Harb: the *Imaam*, the fine-example, the worshipper, the *Shaikh* of *Islaam*, Abu Saalih al-Madaa'inee. An-Nisaa'ee said: "Trustworthy", and Ibn Ma'een and Abu Haatim said: "Trustworthy and reliable".

He died in the year 196H and it is also said in the year 197H, may the mercy of *Allaah* be upon him. Refer to as-Siyar (9/188-191), Tabaqaat Ibn Sa'd (7/320), al-Jarh (4/342) , al-Meezaan (2/275), Tahdheeb ut-Tahdheeb (4/350) and Shadharaat udh-Dhahab (1/349)

The Text of the Creed

Muhammad bin Abdur-Rahmaan bin al-'Abbaas informed us, saying: Abul-Fadl Shu'ayb bin Muhammad bin Raajiyaan narrated us saying: Alee bin Harb al-Mawsilee narrated to us - in the year 257H - saying: I heard Shu'ayb bin Harb saying: I said to Abu Abdullaah Sufyaan bin Sa'eed ath-Thawree: Narrate to me a *hadeeth* from the *Sunnah* by which *Allaah* - the Mighty and Majestic - will benefit me, so that when I stand in front of *Allaah* - the Blessed and Exalted - and He asks me concerning it, saying: "From where did you get take this?", I will say: "O my Lord, Sufyaan ath-Thawree narrated this *hadeeth* to me and I took it from him" - so that I am saved and (then) you are questioned for it.

So Sufyaan said: "O Shu'ayb, this is an assurance and what (other) assurance (can be better than this)? Write:

In the Name of *Allaah*, Most-Merciful Ever-Merciful (to His Believing Servants)

The *Qur'aan* is the Word of *Allaah*. It is not created¹. It originated from Him and to Him it will return. Whoever says other than this is a disbeliever.

¹ The *Qur'aan* is the speech of *Allaah* and His Revelation (tanzeel), it is not created in whichever manner it may be written or when it is recited, in whatever place it may be recited, whether it is found in the heaven or upon the earth, however it maybe preserved - whether written in the *Lawh il-Mahfoodh* (the Preserved Tablet) or in the copies of the children of the Quranic schools, or incscribed on a stone and written on paper or leaf, whether memorised in the heart, or spoken by the tongue. Whoever says other than this, or claims that the *Qur'aan* in the earth or in the heaven is other than the *Qur'aan* that which we recite with our tongues, and which we write in the *masaahif* (copies of the *Qur'aan*), or who believes this in his heart or who conceals such a belief in his heart, or who professes it with his tongue, then he is a disbeliever whose blood and wealth is lawful and who is free from *Allaah* and *Allaah* is free from him - as has been said by at-Tabaree in his Sareeh us-Sunnah p.24-25.

Ibn 'Abbaas (ra) said (about the verse): "**An Arabic Qur'ân, without any crookedness (therein)**" [Surah Zumar 39:28): "Not created". Sharh *Usool* ul-I'tiqaad (2/217)

And *eemaan* consists of speech, action and intention. It increases and decreases². It increases with acts of obedience and it decreases with acts of disobedience. No speech is accepted except with action, and no speech and action are accepted except with intention, and no speech, action and intention are accepted unless they agree with the *Sunnah*.

Shu'ayb said: I said: "O Abu Abdullaah, and what is agreement with the *Sunnah*?"

He said:

Al-Laalikaa'ee said: Sa'eed bin Naseer said: "I heard Ibn 'Uyainah saying: What does this *daweeh* - meaning Bishr al-Mareesee - say? They said: O Abu Muhammad bin Abu Imraan, (he says) the *Qur'aan* is created. So he replied: He has lied. *Allaah*, the Mighty and Majestic said:

...Surely, His is the Creation (*khalq*) and the Command (*amr*) [A'raaf 7:54]

So the 'creation' is the creation of *Allaah*, and the 'command' (*amr*) is the *Qur'aan*.

And *Imaam* Ahmad bin Hanbal and Nu'aym bin Hamaad, Muhammad bin Yahyaa ad-Dihlee, Abdus-Salaam bin Aasim ar-Raazee, Ahmad bin Sinaan al-Waasitee and Abu Haatim ar-Raazee said likewise. (Sharh *Usool I'tiqaad* 2/219).

Alee bin al-Hasan al-Haashimee said: "My uncle narrated to me: I heard Wakee' bin al-Jarraah said: "Whoever claimed that the *Qur'aan* is created then he has claimed that something of *Allaah* is created." So I said: O Abu Sufyaan, how do you say this? He said: "Because *Allaah*, the Blessed and Exalted says: "**...But the Word from Me took effect..**" [Sajdah 32:13] and nothing from *Allaah* is created. (Sharh *Usool I'tiqaad* 2/219).

Also refer to as-*Sunnah* of *Imaam* Abdullaah (2/18), Sharh *Usool il-I'tiqaad* (2/216, 3/378-385), Sareeh us-*Sunnah* of at-Tabaree (p.24-29), al-Hujjah of al-Asbahaanee (1/334-359, 2/198), ash-Sharee'ah of al-Aajurree (p.75-96), al-Bayhaqee in al-Asmaa was-Sifaat (1/299-422), and Sharh ut-Tahaawiyah (with the verification of Ahmad Shaakir - may *Allaah* have mercy upon him, p. 107-127)

² *Eemaan* consisting of speech and action and its decreasing and increasing is one of the matters upon which the *Ummah* has agreed upon. Refer to the evidences for this belief and refutation of the People of Desires and Innovations in Sareeh us-*Sunnah* of at-Tabaree (p.42-45), ash-Sharee'ah of al-Aajurree (p.103-118), as-*Sunnah* of Ibn Abee Aasim (p.449-451), Sharh *Usool ul-I'tiqaad* of al-Laalikaa'ee (4/830, 5/890-964) and al-I'tiqaad of al-Bayhaqee (p.174-185).

Giving precedence to the two *Shaikhs*: Abu Bakr and Umar - may *Allaah* be pleased with them both³. O Shu'ayb what you have written will not benefit you until you put Uthmaan and Alee ahead of those who come after them.

O Shu'ayb bin Harb, what you have written for yourself will not benefit you until you do not testify for anyone that he is in Paradise or Hellfire⁴ save the ten concerning whom the Messenger of *Allaah* (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) testified for - and all of them are from Quraysh⁵.

³ The word of the *Ummah* is united in that the most excellent of the Companions of *Allaah's* Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) is Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq, then al-Faarooq, Umar bin al-Khattaab, then Dhun-Noorain (the Possessor of Two Lights), Uthmaan bin Affaan, then the Chief of the Believers and *Imaam* of the Muttaqeen, Alee bin Abee Taalib - may *Allaah* be pleased with them all. Refer to Sareeh us-Sunnah (p.38-39)

And *Shaikh* ul-*Islaam* Ibn Taymiyyah - may *Allaah* have mercy upon him - said: "As for advancing Abu Bakr, then 'Umar, then Uthmaan and Alee then this is unanimously agreed upon amongst the scholars of the Muslims and amongst those well-known with leadership in knowledge and religion from amongst the Companions, the Successors and then their successors..." up until he said: "...and *Imaam* Maalik has quoted the *ijmaa'* (concensus) of the People of Madinah upon this matter saying: 'I have not met anyone amongst those by whom others guide themselves by who has doubts about advancing Abu Bakr and 'Umar.'" See al-Fataawaa (/421-428), Fath ul-Baaree (7/16) and Sharh *Usool* ul-I'tiqaad (7/1363-1372)

⁴ The explainer of Aqeedatut Tahaawiyyah, Ibn Abil-Izz (d. 792H) said: "We do not say about a specific individual from among the people of the *qiblah* that he is of the people of Paradise or of the people of Hellfire, except he about whom the truthful (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) has informed about, that he is among the people of Paradise, such as the ten who were giving tidings of Paradise - may *Allaah* be pleased with them. And if we say: That whomsoever *Allaah* wills to enter the Hellfire from among the people who commit the major sins will by necessity enter the Hellfire and that he will be brought out of the Hellfire on account of the intercession of those entitled to intercede, then we would refrain from [saying such a thing] about a specific individual. So we do not testify for him that He will enter Paradise, not that he will enter Hellfire except due to knowledge because the reality is hidden and what a person dies upon cannot be encompassed by us. However we do have hope for those who do good and we fear for those who do evil. And the *Salaf* have three sayings in this issue of testifying for Paradise for someone: The first: That Paradise is not testified for anyone except the Prophets, and this is quoted from Muhammad bin al-Hanafiyyah and al-Awzaa'ee. The second: That Paradise is testified for, for every Believer about whom a text has been mentioned - and this is the saying of many of the scholars and the people of *hadeeth*. The third: That Paradise is testified for, for (both) the above-mentioned and for the one whom the Believers testify for." (p.378).

⁵ And they are: Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmaan, Alee, Talhah bin 'Ubaidullaah, az-Zubair bin al-'Awwaam, Sa'd bin Abee Waqqaas, Sa'eed bin Zaid bin Amr bin Nufail, Abdur-Rahmaan bin Awf, Abu Ubaidah bin al-Jarraah - may *Allaah* be pleased with them all.

O Shu'ayb bin Harb, what you have written for yourself will not benefit you until you hold that wiping over the *khuffain*⁶ is better to you than taking them off when washing your feet⁷.

O Shu'ayb what you have written will not benefit you until saying '*Bismillaahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem*' silently in the prayer is more excellent to you than that you should say it out aloud⁸.

O Shu'ayb bin Harb, that which you have written will not benefit you until you have faith in the Divine Pre-determination (al-*Qadar*), its good and its evil, its sweetness and its bitterness. All of it is from *Allaah*, the Mighty and Majestic⁹.

⁶ Leather socks.

⁷ The *Sunnah* of wiping over the *khuffain* at the time of washing the feet (during *wudoo*) has come from the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) by overwhelming successive transmission (i.e. *mutawaatir*). The *Raafidah* oppose this *mutawaatir Sunnah*. It is therefore said to them: "Those who reported the *wudoo*' from the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) in speech and action and those who learnt the *wudoo*' from him, made *wudoo*' during his lifetime and he saw them and affirmed it for them. Then they reported that to those who came after them - in greater numbers than those who reported this verse, because all of the Muslims would perform *wudoo*' during his lifetime and they did not learn the *wudoo*' except from him - and this action was not binding upon them during the days of *Jaahiliyyah* - and they saw him perform *wudoo*' a number of times which none but *Allaah* the Exalted can enumerate. And they also reported from him the washing of the two feet in whatever *Allaah* willed amongst the *hadeeth*." Refer to Sharh ut-Tahaawiyah (p.386-387) for a further explanation of this matter.

⁸ The verifier of Sharh *Usool* ul-I'tiqaad, Ahmad Sa'd Hamdaan said (1/152): "This is one of the subsidiary matters of action and difference has arisen with respect to it amongst the scholars of the *Ummah*. This is due to the conflicting reports that exist concerning it. And even if the *isnaads* of saying '*Bismillaah*...' silently are more authentic, it still remains one of the matters which are not connected to '*aqeedah*'. Refer to Sharh us-*Sunnah* (3/54) and Fath ul-Baaree (2/226-229).

⁹ Al-*Qadr*: It is *Allaah's* preceding knowledge of what will occur from among the actions of the servants, what they will earn, and the emergence of such actions due to His ordainment, free is He from imperfection, and His creation of them, their good and their evil. Therefore, *qadr* is something for which four matters are confirmed:

The first: *Allaah's* knowledge - the Sublime and Mighty - of things before they occur.

The second: The writing of (that knowledge)

The third: That no matter occurs or comes into existence except due to His will, so whatever He wills occurs and whatever He does not will does not occur.

The fourth: *Allaah's* creation - free is He from imperfection - of the actions and His bringing them into existence.

O Shu'ayb bin Harb, by *Allaah* what the *Qadariyyah* say is not what *Allaah* says, or what the Angels say, or what the Prophets say, or what the People of Paradise say or what the People of Hellfire say or what their brother, Iblees - May *Allaah* curse him - says.

Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic said:

Have you seen him who takes his own lust (vain desires) as his ilaah (god), and *Allaah* knowing (him as such), left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a cover on his sight. Who then will guide him after *Allaah*? Will you not then remember?¹⁰

And the Exalted said:

And you will not, unless (it be) that *Allaah* wills.¹¹

And the Angels said:

“Glory be to You, we have no knowledge except what you have taught us. Verily, it is You, the All-Knower, the All-Wise.”¹²

And Moosaa - upon him be peace - said:

It is only Your Trial by which You lead astray whom You will, and keep guided whom You will.¹³

And Nooh - upon him be peace - said:

Refer to Sharh *Usool ul-I'tiqaad* (3/534), *al-I'tiqaad of al-Bayhaqee* (p.132), *ash-Sharee'ah of al-Aajurree* (p. 149-168), *Sareeh us-Sunnah* (p. 34-36), *ar-Radd alal-Jahmiyyah of al-Bukhaaree* (p.39-42), *Majmoo ul-Fataawaa* (2/152, 8/484-488) and *Sharh ut-Tahaawiyyah* (p.383-399).

¹⁰ Jaathiyah 45:23

¹¹ Takweer 81:29

¹² Baqarah 2:32

¹³ A'raaf 7:155

“And my advice will not profit you, even if I wish to give you good counsel, if *Allaah's Will* is to keep you astray. He is your Lord! and to Him you shall return.”¹⁴

And Shu'ayb - upon him be peace - said:

And it is not for us to return to it unless *Allaah*, our Lord, should will. Our Lord comprehends all things in His Knowledge.¹⁵

And the People of Paradise say:

“All the praises and thanks be to *Allaah*, Who has guided us to this, never could we have found guidance, were it not that *Allaah* had guided us!”¹⁶

And the People of Hellfire say:

Our wretchedness overcame us, and we were (an) erring people.¹⁷

And their brother, Iblees said:

“O my Lord! Because you misled me.”¹⁸

O Shu'ayb, what you have written will not benefit you until you :

- hold that prayer is to be performed behind every righteous or sinful person¹⁹

¹⁴ Hud 11:34

¹⁵ A'raaf 7:89

¹⁶ A'raaf 7:43

¹⁷ Mu'minoon 23:106

¹⁸ Hijr 15:39

¹⁹ *Imaam* at-Tahaawee said: “And we hold that prayer is to be performed behind every righteous and sinful person from the people of the *qiblah*, and also to perform prayer over those amongst them who die.” Then the explainer of this creed, Ibn Abee al-Izz said: “Know - may *Allaah* have mercy upon you - that it is permitted for a man to pray behind someone from whom no innovation nor rebellion (*fisq*) is known by unanimous agreement of the scholars. And it is not one of the conditions of following (the *Imaam*) that the follower knows the creed of his *Imaam*, and nor that he should investigate him so that he says: ‘What do you believe?’ Rather, he prays behind the one whose condition is unknown. And this (applies) even if he was to pray behind an innovator who calls and invites to his innovation or a *faasiq* who commits his sin openly and who is the fixed *Imaam*”

- hold that *Jihaad* is always operative until the Day of Judgement²⁰
- hold that patience is necessary under the flag (i.e. leadership) of the Ruler (*sultaan*) whether he is an oppressor or just²¹.

Shu'ayb said: "So I said to Sufyaan: O Abu Abdullaah, is that all of the prayers?"

He replied: "No, but the *Jumu'ah* prayer and the prayer of the two *Eids*. Pray these behind whomever you meet. But as for all of the prayers (i.e. the daily prayers) then you have a choice in that matter. Do not pray except behind one in whom you can place your trust and whom you know to be from *Ahl us-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*.

O Shu'ayb bin Harb, when you stand in front of *Allaah* - the Mighty and Majestic - and He asks you about this *hadeeth*, then say: O my Lord, Sufyaan bin Sa'eed ath-Thawree narrated this *hadeeth* to me, then create intimacy between me and my Lord - the Mighty and Majestic."

End of the treatise.

- it being not possible to perform prayer except behind him, such as the *Imaam* of the *Jumu'ah* prayer, of the two *Eids* and of the prayer during *Hajj* in Arafah and other such things. The follower performs prayer behind him and this is the view of the generality of the *Salaf* and of the *Khalaf* (later scholars). And whoever abandons performing *Jumu'ah* and the regular prayers behind the sinful *Imaam* is an innovator in the view of the majority of the scholars. And it is correct that he prays along with the *Imaam* and that he does not repeat them, for the Companions - may *Allaah* be pleased with them - used to pray *Jumu'ah* and the regular prayers behind sinful leaders and they did not used to repeat their prayers." Refer to this matter in Sharh ut-Tahaawiyah (p.373-377).

²⁰ He is pointing to a refutation of the *Raafidah* in that they say: "There is no *Jihaad* in the path of *Allaah* until the chosen one from the progeny of Muhammad appears and a caller from the heaven calls: 'Follow him'". And the falsity of this saying is more clear and apparent than needs to be explained with proof. Refer to Sharh ut-Tahaawiyah (p.387-388).

²¹ Refer to Sharh *Usool* ul-I'tiqaad (7/1229-1233), al-I'tiqaad of al-Bayhaqee (p.242-246) and as-*Sunnah* of Ibn Abee Aasim (p.508-511).