



The Ṭaḥāwī Creed

Al-‘Aqīda al-Ṭaḥāwiyya

By Imām Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭaḥāwī

Translated by

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In the name of Allāh, the Divinely-Compassionate, the Ever-Merciful

In representing the beliefs of the People of the Prophetic Way and the Majority Group (*Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jamā‘a*), according to the methodological school of the jurists of this religion, namely Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu‘mān b. Thābit al-Kūfī, Abū Yūsuf Ya‘qūb b. Ibrāhīm al-Anṣārī and Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī, may Allāh ﷻ be pleased with them all, and what they believe regarding the principles of the religion and their faith in the Lord of all the Worlds, Imām Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭaḥāwī, may Allāh ﷻ have mercy on him, said, as do the aforementioned Imāms – We say regarding the oneness of Allāh ﷻ, believing, by the grace of Allāh ﷻ, that:

1. Allāh ﷻ is One; He has no partner.
2. Nothing is like Him.
3. Nothing can overwhelm Him.

4. There is no god but He.
5. He is Pre-Eternal without a beginning, Perpetual without end.
6. He will never perish and He will never come to an end.
7. Nothing occurs but what He wills.
8. No imagination can conceive of Him and no understanding can fathom Him.
9. He does not resemble humankind.
10. He is living; He will never die. He is sustaining; He never sleeps.
11. He creates without His being in need to do so. He provides (for His creation) without any effort.
12. He causes death without any fear. He restores to life without any hardship.
13. He has always existed with His attributes even before His creating (the world) - which did not add anything to His attributes that were not already there. As He was Pre-eternal together with His attributes, so is He Perpetual together with them.
14. It was not only after the act of creation that He acquired the (attributive) name 'the Creator (*al-Khāliq*)' nor was it only by the act of origination that He could He acquired the (attributive) name 'the Originator (*al-Bāri*)'.
15. He always occupied the quality of Lordship even when there was nothing to be Lord of, and (He always) occupied the quality of being the Creator even when there was no creation.
16. In the same way that He is the 'Reviver of life to the Dead', after He has brought them to life the first time, and deserves this name before bringing them to life, so too does He deserve the name of 'the Creator' before He has created them.
17. This is because He has the power over all things, all things are dependent on Him and all affairs are easy for Him. He is not in need of anything. **'Nothing is like Him and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing'**¹.
18. He created the creation with His knowledge.
19. He organised destinies for them.
20. He allocated fixed life spans to them.
21. None of their activities were hidden from Him before He created them, and He knew everything that they would do before He even created them.
22. He has directed them to obey Him and He has forbidden them to disobey Him.
23. Everything transpires according to His judgement and will, and His will is unequivocally executed. There is no will for the servants but what He wills for them. So, whatever He wills for them occurs, and whatever He does not will does not transpire.

¹ Holy Qur'ān, Sūra al-Shūrā (42), Verse 11.

24. He guides whom He wills and He protects and keeps from harm whom He wills, out of (His) grace; and He misguides whom He wills and He disgraces them and afflicts (whom He wills) out of (His) justice.
25. All of them are subject to His will between either His grace or His justice.
26. He is above having opposites or equals.
27. There is none to reverse His decision, there is none to repel His command and there is none to quell His affairs.
28. We believe in all of this and we are certain that everything comes from Him.
29. And (we believe with certainty) that Muḥammad ﷺ is His chosen servant, His Prophet elect and His Messenger with whom He is well pleased.
30. And that he is the Seal of all the Prophets, the Leader of the god-wary, the Chief of all the Messengers and the Darling of (Allāh) the Lord of all the Worlds.
31. Every claim to prophethood after Him is untrue and self-ambition.
32. It is he who has been sent to all the jinn and to all of humankind with verity, guidance, light and illumination.
33. The Qur'ān is the Word of Allāh ﷻ. It originated from Him as speech in an unknown manner. He revealed it to His Messenger as an inspiration. The believers acknowledged it with absolute certainty. They are convinced that it is, verily, the Word of Allāh ﷻ. It is not created unlike the speech of humans, and anyone who hears it and

claims that it is human speech becomes a disbeliever - Allāh ﷻ censures him, denounces him and threatens him with Hell-Fire, when He says: **'I will burn him in the Fire (of Hell).'**²

When Allāh ﷻ threatens with the Fire whoever says: **'This is but human speech'**³ we know and firmly believe that it is the speech of the Creator of man and that it is totally unlike the speech of man.

34. Anyone who attributes to Allāh ﷻ something (exclusively) accredited to humans (and the rest of creation) becomes a disbeliever. He who comprehends this will take heed, he will refrain from saying things such as the disbelievers say, and he will recognise that Allāh ﷻ, in His attributes, is not like human beings.

² Holy Qur'ān, Sūra al-Muddaththir (74), Verse 26.

³ Holy Qur'ān, Sūra al-Muddaththir (74), Verse 25.

35. The Seeing (of Allāh ﷻ) by the People of Paradise is factual, though their vision is not all-encompassing and nor is its manner known. As the Book of our Lord expresses: **'Faces on that Day radiant, looking at their Lord.'**⁴

The exegesis of this is as Allāh ﷻ intends and knows. All of that which has reached (us) in this regard, through the authentic prophetic traditions (*ḥadīths*) of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and His Companions ﷺ, is as he said it and it means what he intended. We do not delve into that interpreting it according to our opinions, and nor imagining it according to our desires. Verily, no individual is safe in his religion unless he submits (completely) to Allāh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, and leaves the knowledge of whatever is ambiguous to the one who knows of it.

36. The foundation of Islam is not secure unless based on assent and submission (to Allāh ﷻ). Anyone who covets knowledge of that which has been prohibited for him and he is not satisfied by its mere understanding, his aspiration shall veil him from pure monotheism, clear cognizance and true faith. He sways between disbelief and disbelief, denial and affirmation, acceptance and rejection, being subject to delusions; confused, lost and full of doubt, neither an earnest believer and nor a denying rejecter.

37. The belief of a person in the seeing (of Allāh ﷻ) by the People of Paradise is not correct if he imagines what it may be like, or construes it according to his own understanding, since the analysis of this seeing or the meaning of anything that is attributed to the Lordship (of Allāh ﷻ), is by avoiding its interpretation and by strictly adhering to submission.

Upon this is the religion of the Messengers, and the tenets of the Prophets and the Muslims.

Anyone who does not protect himself against negating (the attributes of Allāh ﷻ), or assimilating (Allāh ﷻ to something else), has erred and has failed to glorify Allāh ﷻ properly. Verily, our Lord ﷻ, is qualified with the depictions of Oneness and the qualities of Uniqueness; none of the creation is in any way in that inference.

38. Allāh ﷻ is beyond all limits or parameters, or having constituents, limbs or instruments. The six directions do not contain Him, quite unlike all created things.

39. The Heavenly Ascension (*al-Mi'raj*) is factual. The Prophet ﷺ was taken on a journey to the heavens by night and raised up in his bodily form, while awake, to whatever heights Allāh ﷻ willed. Allāh ﷻ honoured him whatever He wanted, and He revealed to him

⁴ Holy Qur'ān, Sūra al-Qiyāma (75), Verses 22-23.

whatever He revealed to him, **‘and his heart did not falsify what it saw’**⁵. May Allāh ﷻ bless him and grant him peace in this world and the next.

40. The Fountain (*al-Hawd*), which Allāh ﷻ will grant the Prophet ﷺ as an honour to quench the thirst of his Community (on the Day of Judgement), is factual.

41. The Intercession (*al-Shafā’a*), which Allāh ﷻ has kept for the Muslims, is factual, as has been narrated in the Prophetic statements.

42. The covenant that Allāh ﷻ made with Ādam ﷺ and his offspring is factual.

43. Allāh ﷻ knows, from pre-eternity, the number of those who would enter Paradise and the number of those who would enter Hell-Fire. This number will neither be increased nor decreased.

44. And likewise, (He knows) all the actions done by people, which are done exactly as Allāh ﷻ knows they would be done. Everyone is eased to what he was created for. Actions are (dealt) by their conclusions. Those who are fortunate are fortunate by the decree of Allāh ﷻ, and those who are wretched are wretched by the decree of Allāh ﷻ.

45. The precise nature of the decree is Allāh’s secret in His creation, and no angel in proximity with the Throne, nor any Prophet sent with a message, has been made known of it. Delving into it and reflecting too much about it only leads to failure and to denial, and it results in rebelliousness. (It is imperative to adopt) extreme precaution (before) reflecting on or thinking about this matter or letting doubts to appear, because Allāh ﷻ

has withheld knowledge of the decree from his creatures, and He has forbidden them from enquiring about it, as He says in His Book, **‘He is not questioned about what He does but they are questioned.’**⁶

So, if anyone asks: ‘Why did Allāh do that?’, he goes against a judgement of the Book of Allāh ﷻ, and anyone who goes against a judgement of the Book of Allāh ﷻ becomes a disbeliever.

46. This is the sum of what those of Allāh’s friends with enlightened hearts need to know and it is the degree of those firm in knowledge, because knowledge is of two kinds: i. knowledge that is accessible to created beings, and ii. knowledge that is not accessible to created beings. Denying the accessible knowledge is disbelief, whereas claiming the

⁵ Holy Qur’ān, Sūra al-Najm (53), Verse 11.

⁶ Holy Qur’ān, Sūra al-Anbiyā’ (21), Verse 23.

inaccessible knowledge is (also) disbelief. Faith cannot be firm but by accepting accessible knowledge and abandoning to seek inaccessible knowledge.

47. We believe in the Tablet (*al-Lawḥ*) and the Pen (*al-Qalam*) and in everything written on it (i.e. the Tablet). If all the created beings were to unite together to prevent something from happening that Allāh ﷻ had decreed to occur, they would not be able to do so. And (likewise), if they all united together to make something happen that Allāh ﷻ had not decreed to occur it, they would not be able to do so; the Pen has dried (having written down) all that will occur until the Day of Judgement. Whatever a person has missed it would have never befallen him, and whatever befalls him it would have never missed him.

48. It is incumbent for the servant to know that Allāh ﷻ already has the knowledge of everything that is going to happen in His creation, and He has fixed the decree in a conclusive and irrevocable manner. There is nothing that He has created in His heavens or His earth that can contradict it, add to it, erase it, change it, increase it, convert it or decrease it in any way. This is a fundamental aspect of belief and a necessary. This is one of the radicals of faith and among the principles of gnosis, a recognition of Allāh's monotheism and His Lordship. As Allāh ﷻ says in His Book: **'He created everything and ordained it in due measure'**.⁷ And He also says: **'And Allāh's command is always a decided decree.'**⁸ So woe to anyone who contends with Allāh ﷻ concerning predestination and who starts delving into this matter with a sick heart, making a delusory attempt to investigate the Unseen, seeking a sealed secret, and ending up a sinner by telling baseless lies.

49. The Throne (*al-'Arsh*) and the Chair (*al-Kursī*) are factual.

50. He (i.e. Allāh ﷻ) is independent of the Throne and what is besides it.

51. He contains everything and whatever is above it, and what He has created is incapable of containing Him.

52. We say with belief, affirmation and submission: Verily, Allāh ﷻ took Ibrāhīm ؑ as an intimate friend and He spoke directly to Mūsā ؑ.

53. We believe in the angels, the Prophets, and the books revealed to the Messengers, and we bear witness that they were all on (the path of) the manifest truth.

54. We call the people of our *qiblah* Muslims and believers so long as they recognise what the Prophet ﷺ brought, and (so long as they) accept as true everything that he said and informed.

55. We do not enter into vain talk about Allāh ﷻ and nor do we dispute about the religion of Allāh ﷻ.

⁷ Holy Qur'ān, Sūra al-Furqān (25), Verse 2.

⁸ Holy Qur'ān, Sūra al-Aḥzāb (33), Verse 38.

56. We do not dispute about the Qur'an and we bear witness that it is the Word of the Lord of all the Worlds, which the Trustworthy Spirit brought down with and communicated to the most honoured of all the Messengers, Muḥammad – may Allāh ﷻ bless him, his family, and all his Companions. It is the Word of Allāh ﷻ; nothing of verbal kind of any created being is equivalent to it. We do not believe in creation of the Qur'an, and we do not oppose the (larger) Muslim community (in this regard).
57. We do not declare anyone of the people of our *qibla* to be a disbeliever for committing a sin, so long as he does not consider (that action) to be lawful.
58. And we do not say: The sin of someone who has belief does not harm him.
59. We hope, with regards to the righteous among the believers, that (Allāh ﷻ) will pardon them and admit them into Paradise through His mercy, but we cannot be certain about them, and nor can we ascertain Paradise for them, but we ask forgiveness for those among them who do wrong, although we fear for them, and we do not despair for them.
60. Certainty and despair both remove one from the religion of Islam, and the true path for the people of the *qibla* lies between the two.
61. A person does not step out of faith except by repudiating what brought him into it.
62. Faith is: avowal by the tongue and recognition in the heart.
63. All of what Allāh ﷻ revealed in the Qur'an, and all of what is proven from the Prophet ﷺ, regarding the Shari'ah and the explanation (of the Qur'an and of Islam), is factual.
64. Faith is one, and its adherents are (essentially) equal, but the mutual superiority between them is due to (their) fear (of Allāh ﷻ) and god-wariness, (their) opposition to (base) desires, and (their) pursuance of choosing what is best.
65. The believers, all of them, are friends of the Divinely-Compassionate (Allāh ﷻ), and the most noble of them in the sight of Allāh ﷻ are those who are the most obedient and who comply to the Qur'an the best of all.
66. Faith is: belief in Allāh ﷻ, His angels, His books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and the Predestination - both the good of it and the evil of it, the sweet of it and the bitter of it - is from Allāh ﷻ.
67. We believe in all of that. We do not differentiate between any of the Messengers of Allāh ﷻ, and we accept them as true based on what they brought.
68. Those of the Community of Muḥammad ﷺ, who commit grave sins and enter Hell-Fire, shall not (remain there) forever, provided they die as monotheists, even if they do not repent, and provided they meet Allāh ﷻ knowing Him. They are subject to His will and judgement. If He wants, He may forgive them and pardon them out of His grace, as He

has says in His Majestic Book: **‘Verily, Allāh does not forgive that anything should be associated with Him, but He forgives anything other than that to whomever He wills.’**⁹; if He wants, He shall punish them in Hell-Fire out of His justice and then bring them out of it through His mercy, and through the intercession of those who were obedient to Him, and send them to His Paradise.

This is because Allāh ﷻ is the Patron of those who recognize Him and (therefore) He will not treat them in (either of) the Two Worlds in the same way as He treats those who deny Him and who are bereft of His guidance and have failed to obtain His protection. ‘O Allāh, the Protector of Islam and its adherents; make us firm in Islam until we meet You’.

69. We believe in the validity of prayer behind any of the people of the *qibla*, be they righteous or sinful, as well as the funeral prayer over any of them when they die.

70. We do not place any of them in Paradise or Hell-Fire, and nor do we charge any of them with disbelief, polytheism, or hypocrisy, so long as none of those things are manifest in them. Moreover, we leave their secrets to Allāh ﷻ.

71. We do not agree with raising the sword against anyone of the Community of Muḥammad ﷺ, except against whom it is (legally) incumbent to fight.

72. We do not agree with rebelling against our leaders or those in charge of our affairs, even if they commit injustice, nor do we pray against them and nor do we hold back from obeying them. (In fact,) we believe that obedience to them is a part of obedience to Allāh ﷻ - obligatory, so long as they do not order anything as sin. We pray for them right guidance and for the pardoning (of their wrongs).

73. We follow the Sunnah (of the Prophet ﷺ) and the Majority Group (of the Muslims), and we avoid disparity, dissension and sectarianism.

74. We love those who are just and trustworthy, and we hate those who are unjust and treacherous.

75. We say: ‘Allāh ﷻ knows best’, when our knowledge about something is of doubt.

76. We believe in (the legality of) wiping over *khuffs* (in *wuḍūʿ*) whether travelling or in residence, as is mentioned in Prophetic statements.

77. *Ḥajj* and *Jihād* are two perpetual obligations under the Muslim authorities, the pious of them and the impious of them, until the Hour comes. Nothing can terminate them or abrogate them.

78. We believe in the honourable angels (who write down our actions) for Allāh ﷻ has appointed them as two guardians over us.

79. We believe in the Angel of Death, charged with taking the souls of all the servants.

⁹ Holy Qur’ān, Sūrat al-Nisā’ (4), Verses 48 and 116.

80. We believe in the punishment in the grave for those who deserve it, and in the questioning in his grave by Munkar and Nakīr about one's Lord, his religion and his Prophet, as has been reported to us via Prophetic traditions from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and His Companions – may Allāh ﷻ be pleased with them all.

81. (We believe that) the grave is either one of the meadows of Paradise or one of the pits of Hell-Fire.

82. We believe in the Resurrection after death and in due Recompense of Deeds on the Day of Judgement, in the Presentation (of Deeds) and the Accountability, the Reading of (our) Records, the (due) Reward and the (due) Punishment, (the Bridge of) *al-Şirāṭ* and the Balance; the deeds of Muslims, consisting of the good, the evil, obedience and disobedience, will be weighed on the Balance.

83. Paradise and Hell-Fire are created things that will never perish or come to an end. (We believe that) Allāh ﷻ created Paradise and Hell-Fire before (the rest of) creation and He (then) created those who are entitled to them. Of them, whomever He wills He admits into Paradise out of His grace, and whomever He wills He casts into Hell-Fire through His justice. Each individual does in accordance with what is chosen for him and he goes towards that which he is created for.

84. Good and evil have both been decreed for the servants.

85. It is not permitted for the capacity regarding doing something accordingly, which obligates an action, to be ascribed to a created being, (for this capacity) is integral with action, whereas the capacity of having the necessary health, potential, possibility, and the soundness of the instruments, exists before the action, to which the (legal) dictate refers. It is in accordance to what Allāh ﷻ says: **‘Allāh does not task a person except according to his potential.’**¹⁰

86. Actions of the servants are created by Allāh ﷻ, but acquired by the servants.

87. Allāh ﷻ has not tasked (the servants) but what they are able to do, and they are only capable of what Allāh ﷻ has tasked them with. This is the explanation to: ‘There is no power and no strength except in Allāh.’¹¹

We believe: there is no stratagem, movement or conversion by which anyone can avoid or escape disobedience to Allāh ﷻ other than with the help of Allāh ﷻ; nor does anyone have the strength to put into practice obedience to Allāh ﷻ and persevere in it, except by the favour of Allāh ﷻ.

¹⁰ Holy Qur’ān, Sūrat al-Baqarah (2), Verse 286.

¹¹ Agreed upon; al-Tirmidhī; Ibn Mājah; Abū Dāwūd; al-Nasā’ī; Muwaṭṭa’ Imām Mālik; etc.

88. Everything occurs according to the will of Allāh ﷻ, His knowledge, His predestination and His decree. His will overwhelms all other wills and His decree overwhelms all stratagems. He does what He wills and He is never unjust. He is exalted in His purity above any evil or perdition and He is perfect far beyond any fault or flaw. **‘He is not questioned about what He does but they are questioned.’**¹²
89. There is (indeed) benefit for the dead in the supplication and the charities offered by the living (on their behalf).
90. Allāh ﷻ responds to supplications and He fulfils needs.
91. (Allāh ﷻ) (completely) controls everything whereas nothing controls Him. Nothing can be independent of Allāh ﷻ even for an instant, and whoever considers himself independent of Allāh ﷻ even for an instant is guilty of unbelief and becomes of those in doom.
92. Allāh ﷻ becomes angry and pleased, but not like any of the creation.
93. We love (all) the Companions ﷺ of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, but we do not exceed in our love for any particular one among them nor do we disown any of them. We hate anyone who hates them or he does not speak well of them, whereas we do not speak of them but well. We believe that to love them is a part religion, a part of faith and a part of spiritual and moral excellence, while to hate them is disbelief, hypocrisy and dissent.
94. We uphold that the caliphate, after the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, is firstly for Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq ﷺ, based on his excellence and superiority over the rest of the (Muslim) Community; then for ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ; then for ‘Uthmān ﷺ; and then for ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib ﷺ. These are the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and well-directed leaders, who executed with integrity, in which they demonstrated justice.
95. We bear witness that the ten (Companions ﷺ) whom the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ named and promised Paradise, they shall certainly attain Paradise, as the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ bore witness for them, and his word is verity. They are: Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Ṭalḥa, Zubayr, Sa‘d, Sa‘īd, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Awf and Abū ‘Ubayda b. al-Jarrāḥ - who is the trustee of this (Muslim) Community, ﷺ.
96. He who speaks well of the Companions ﷺ of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, and his wives – pure of any blemish, and his progeny – free from any impurity, is surely free of hypocrisy.
97. The scholars of the initial elders, and those among the successors coming after them – of virtue, of Prophetic traditions, the jurists and the rationalists - they must not be mentioned but in the best manner, and whoever speaks ill of them is not on the correct path.

¹² Holy Qur’ān, Sūra al-Anbiyā’ (21), Verse 23.

98. We do not raise any of the saints among the (Muslim) Community over any of the Prophets (upon them be peace), but rather, we say: A single Prophet is superior to all the saints.

99. We believe in the wonders that proceeded from them and have been reported from authentic narrators about them.

100. We believe in the signs of the (Last) Hour, such as the emergence of the Dajjāl and the descent of ‘Īsā b. Maryam ﷺ from Heaven, and we believe in the rising of the sun from the place it sets and the emergence of the Beast of the Earth from its place.

101. We do not acknowledge the soothsayers and nor the fortune-tellers, and nor those who claim anything incompatible with the Book, the Sunnah and the consensus of the (Muslim) Community.

102. We believe that congregation is the true and correct path, and that division is deviation and torment.

103. The religion of Allāh ﷻ in the heavens and the earth is the same, and it is the religion of Islam, for Allāh ﷻ says: **‘Verily, the religion admissible with Allāh is Islam.’**¹³

He also says: **‘I am pleased with Islam as a religion for you’.**¹⁴

He also says: **‘And whoever desires a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him.’**¹⁵

104. (Islam) lies between going to excess and falling short, between anthropomorphism and denial, between fatalism and libertarianism, between confidence and despair.

105. Thus, this is our religion and it is our belief, both outwardly and inwardly, and we are independent, before Allāh ﷻ, from anyone who differs from what we have stated and elaborated.

We ask Allāh ﷻ to make us firm in faith and end us with it and protect us from erroneous ideas, variant opinions and heretical schools of thought, such as: the Mushabbiha (Anthropomorphists), the Mu‘tazila (Seceders), the Jahmiyya, the Jabariyya (Fatalists), the Qadariyya (Libertarians) and others like them who differed from the Prophetic Way and the Majority Group (Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jamā‘a), and connected with heresy and error. We are free from any link with them, for according to us, they are astray and doomed. (We beseech) the protection and grace of Allāh ﷻ.

And Allāh ﷻ knows best as to what is correct, and to Him is all return and with Him is all refuge.

¹³ Holy Qur’ān, Sūra Āl ‘Imrān (3), Verse 19.

¹⁴ Holy Qur’ān, Sūra al-Mā’idah (5), Verse 3.

¹⁵ Holy Qur’ān, Sūra Āl ‘Imrān (3), Verse 85.