Study Notes: Taqrib al-Tadmuriyyah

Introduction

Taqrib al-Tadmuriyyah
By Shaykh Muhammad ibn Salih al-Uthaymeen
(1929-2001 C.E., 1347-1421 A.H.) May Allah have mercy on him.
Making al-Tadmuriyyah Easier to Understand.
Based on al-Aqidah al-Tadmuriyyah by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah.
Main subjects: Allah's Names and Attributes + Shariah and Qadar.
Goal: understand Tawheed correctly, worship Allah correctly and stay balanced between opposite errors.

Why At-Tadmuriyyah Was Written

People asked Ibn Taymiyyah to write principles they had heard concerning Tawheed, Allah's Attributes, Shariah and Qadar. These matters had become confusing because people mixed truth and falsehood. The principles help students separate truth from falsehood instead of memorizing isolated answers.

First Main Foundation	Second Main Foundation
Tawheed and Allah's Names and Attributes	Shariah and Qadar
How revelation describes Allah	Allah's commands and prohibitions
How the Attribute texts are understood	Decree, human choice, causes, worship, reliance, repentance and patience

Review of the Three Categories of Tawheed

Tawheed ar-Rububiyyah	Tawheed al-Uluhiyyah	Tawheed al-Asma was-Sifat
Allah alone is Creator, Owner, Provider and Controller.	Every act of worship is for Allah alone.	Affirm the Names and Attributes in a way suitable for Allah.
Evidence: Az-Zumar 39:62	Rububiyyah alone is not enough.	Evidence: Al-Araf 7:180
Evidence: Yunus 10:31	Evidence: An-Nahl 16:36; Adh-Dhariyat 51:56; Al-Fatihah 1:5	Evidence: Ash-Shura 42:11

How Language Is Used in the Texts of Tawheed

Shared Word Does Not Mean Identical Reality
A word can have a general understood meaning while its complete reality differs according to who is described. Example: knowledge can describe Allah and a human being. Allah's Knowledge is perfect, complete and uncreated. Human knowledge is created, limited and can be lost. The same principle applies to hearing and seeing. Evidence: Al-Baqarah 2:235; Al-Mumtahanah 60:10; Al-Insan 76:2; Ash-Shura 42:11.

Affirmed and Negated Attributes

Affirmation	Negation
Affirm perfect Attributes Allah affirmed. Examples: Life, Knowledge, Power, Hearing, Seeing, Mercy and Wisdom.	Deny imperfection Allah denied. Examples: sleep, tiredness, injustice and having an equal. The denial teaches the opposite perfection.

Evidence

Al-Baqarah 2:255 - no drowsiness or sleep -> perfect Life and complete control.

Qaf 50:38 - no tiredness -> perfect Power.

An-Nisa 4:40 - no injustice -> perfect Justice.

The Method of the Salaf With the Attribute Texts

Balanced Method

Accept the Quran and authentic Sunnah as revelation.

Affirm the revealed meanings without changing them, denying them, comparing Allah to creation or describing exactly how the Attributes are.

Ash-Shura 42:11 combines both sides: nothing is like Allah and He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.

Tahrif	Tatil	Takyif	Tamthil
Changing the wording or correct meaning.	Denying all or some affirmed Names and Attributes.	Trying to describe exactly how an Attribute is.	Making Allah or His Attributes like creation.

Why the Method of Ahlus-Sunnah Is Correct

Revelation Comes First

It combines all the evidence instead of rejecting one text to accept another.

Allah knows Himself better than creation.

The Messenger ﷺ truthfully conveyed revelation.

Evidence: An-Nisa 4:87 and 4:122.

The Quran gives detailed affirmation of perfection and often short, comprehensive negation.

Error: Tamthil	Error: Tatil	Balanced Position
Affirms texts but understands Allah's Attributes like created attributes. Rejected because Allah denies likeness.	Denies Attributes or empties them of their real meanings because of fear of resemblance. Rejected because revelation affirms Attributes while denying resemblance.	Do not solve Tamthil by falling into Tatil. Affirm without comparison and deny imperfection without denying what Allah affirmed.

The Shared Meaning and the Distinguishing Reality

General Meaning + Different Reality
Existence, life, knowledge, hearing and seeing can be used for Creator and creation.
The shared general meaning does not make the complete realities equal.
This removes the doubt that affirming an Attribute automatically means comparing Allah to creation.

The Two Great Foundations Concerning the Attributes

First Great Foundation
Speaking about some Attributes is like speaking about the others.
If Knowledge, Power and Will can be affirmed without comparison, the same method applies to Love, Pleasure, Anger and other authentic Attributes.
The Attributes have different meanings: Knowledge is not Power, Hearing is not Seeing and Love is not Will.

Second Great Foundation
Speaking about the Attributes is like speaking about Allah's Essence.
Allah truly exists but creation does not know exactly how His Essence is.
Likewise, the meaning of an Attribute is understood while its exact manner is unknown.
This applies to Istiwa, Hearing, Seeing, Speech, Love, descent and other authentic Attributes.

Two Examples

Example 1 - This World and Paradise
Paradise has familiar names such as water, milk, honey, fruit and homes.
The names are familiar but the realities are far greater and different.
The point is not to compare Allah to Paradise. It proves that sharing a name does not force identical reality.

Example 2 - The Human Soul
The soul is real and has real descriptions but people do not know its exact reality.
Evidence: Al-Isra 17:85; Al-Fajr 89:27-30.
Not knowing the exact manner of Allah's Attributes is therefore not a reason to deny them.

Seven Comprehensive Rules

Rule 1 - Revelation Controls Affirmation and Negation
Affirm what Allah and His Messenger ﷺ affirmed and deny what they denied.
Do not invent descriptions of Allah.
Negation establishes perfection.
Detailed affirmation increases knowledge, love and worship.
Evidence: Al-Hashr 59:22-24; Ash-Shura 42:11.

Rule 2 - Use Revelation's Words and Ask About New Technical Words
Accept Quran and Sunnah words according to their correct meanings.
Do not immediately accept or reject later technical words.
First ask what is intended. Accept a true meaning supported by revelation and reject a false meaning.
Examples discussed: Jihah and Hayyiz.

Rule 3 - The Apparent Meaning Is What Suits Allah
The proper apparent meaning is not a human image.
Understand the Arabic meaning, remember that nothing is like Allah and affirm the Attribute in a way suitable for Him.
Evidence: Ash-Shura 42:11.

Rule 4 - Tamthil Followed by Denial Is a Double Error
First error: imagining Allah like creation.
Second error: changing or denying revelation because of that false imagination.
Correct method: no Tamthil and no Tatil.

Rule 5 - Meaning Known, Exact Reality Unknown
Knowledge, Hearing, Seeing, Mercy and Istiwa have understandable meanings.
The exact manner is unknown to creation.
Muhkam: clear and precise guidance.
Mutashabih: what may be less clear to a person is returned to the clear foundations.
Evidence: Aal Imran 3:7.

Rule 6 - Correct Negation Contains Perfection
Allah does not sleep -> perfect Life and sustaining of creation.
Allah is not tired -> perfect Power.
Allah does not wrong -> perfect Justice.
Every true perfection suitable for Allah is affirmed in the highest way without defect.
Reasoning remains under revelation and is not used to invent Names for Allah.

Rule 7 - Sound Reason Supports Revelation
Authentic revelation and sound reason do not contradict.
Creation points to a capable Creator. Order, wisdom and differences in creation point to Knowledge, Will and Wisdom.
If a supposed rational argument contradicts clear revelation, the argument is unsound or the text has been misunderstood.
Revelation guides reason and sound reason recognizes revelation.

Why Some Philosophical Approaches Caused Confusion

Human Reason Must Not Be Placed Above Revelation
Some people gave philosophical arguments and human reasoning priority over the Quran and Sunnah.
When they thought Allah's Names and Attributes did not agree with those arguments, they changed meanings or denied Attributes.
This caused disagreement about what should be affirmed.
Sound reasoning does not contradict the Quran and authentic Sunnah.

The Reality of Tawheed

Rububiyyah Must Lead to Uluhiyyah
True Tawheed is not only admitting that Allah created the world.
The Messengers called people to worship Allah alone.
Knowing Allah as Creator should lead to worshipping Him alone.
Evidence: Al-Fatihah 1:5; An-Nahl 16:36.

The Second Major Foundation – Bringing Shariah and Qadar Together

Both Truths Are Accepted
Allah decreed everything and He also commanded and prohibited.
Qadar does not cancel Shariah.
Shariah does not mean events happen outside Allah's decree.
The believer obeys Allah, uses lawful means, asks Allah for help and is patient with what Allah decrees.

The Four Levels of Qadar

1. Knowledge	2. Writing	3. Will	4. Creation
Allah has always known everything. Evidence: At-Talaq 65:12.	Allah wrote the decrees of creation. Hadith: decrees written fifty thousand years before the heavens and earth - Sahih Muslim.	Whatever Allah wills happens and what He does not will does not happen. Evidence: At-Takwir 81:29.	Allah created everything, including people and their abilities. Evidence: Az-Zumar 39:62; As-Saffat 37:96.

Human Ability and Choice

Real Choice Under Allah's Will
People truly have ability, will and choice.
These are created by Allah and remain under His Will.
At-Takwir 81:28-29 affirms human will then places it under Allah's Will.
A chosen action is different from something forced upon a person.
Real choice gives meaning to commands, prohibitions, reward and accountability.

Different Errors Concerning Qadar

Human Independence	Compulsion	Using Qadar Against Shariah
Gives people an independent will outside Allah's Will and creation. Weakens belief in Allah's complete decree.	Removes real human choice and treats people as forced in all actions. Weakens commands, prohibitions and responsibility.	A person sins then claims the decree makes the sin acceptable. Correct position: complete decree + real responsibility.

Causes and Results

Allah Created Causes and Their Results
Using a lawful cause does not oppose Tawakkul.
Worldly example: food is a cause for nourishment.
Religious example: obedience is a cause for reward.

Error 1	Error 2	Balanced Position
Denying causes have any real effect.	Believing causes produce results independently from Allah.	Causes have effects because Allah created them that way but they never operate independently from Him.

Good, Evil, Wisdom and Allah's Actions

Wisdom, Justice and Revelation
Allah is perfectly Wise and Just.
Human reason can recognize many good and harmful things.
Revelation is the final authority for what Allah commands, prohibits, rewards and punishes.
A painful decree may contain greater wisdom, justice or mercy that a person does not fully see.
Allah's decree is between His Justice and Mercy.
Evil is not attributed to Allah as an independent imperfection in His Essence or Actions.

Fanaa – Three Meanings

1. Correct Meaning	2. Overwhelming Feeling	3. False Meaning
Leaving the desire to worship other than Allah. The heart becomes sincere to Allah. This does not mean creation stops existing. Evidence: Al-Bayyinah 98:5.	Awareness of other things may become weak because of overwhelming fear, love or another feeling. This can occur but it is not the highest level of worship. The Prophets and strongest believers remained knowledgeable, balanced and obedient.	Claiming that only Allah exists. Allah is the Creator and everything else is His creation. Creator and creation are distinct. Evidence: Az-Zumar 39:62.

Evidence That the Shariah Must Be Followed

Qadar Never Cancels Obedience

Messengers were sent with commands and prohibitions.

Evidence: An-Nisa 4:165.

Evidence: Al-Anam 6:148-149 - using Allah's Will as an excuse for Shirk was rejected.

When the Companions asked whether they should stop acting because each person's place is written, the Prophet ﷺ commanded them to act.

Repentance Is Always Required

Sin -> Repentance, Not an Excuse

When a person sins, the correct response is repentance.

A believer also seeks forgiveness after acts of worship because worship is never performed with the perfection Allah deserves.

Evidence: Adh-Dhariyat 51:17-18.

Evidence: An-Nasr 110:3.

Knowing worship is only possible through Allah's favour protects against being impressed with one's deeds.

Four Principles That Bring Shariah and Qadar Together

1. Obey	2. Repent	3. Seek Allah's Help	4. Be Patient
Work hard to carry out commands and avoid prohibitions. Belief in Qadar is not laziness.	Seek forgiveness for shortcomings even after good deeds. Do not become self-satisfied.	Dua, Tawakkul and asking Allah for assistance are part of worship. Evidence: Al-Fatihah 1:5.	Be patient with hardship and seek reward from Allah. What reached you could not have missed you.

Simple Rule

Command -> obedience.

Sin -> repentance.

Calamity -> patience.

Adam and Musa عليهما السلام

How the Hadith Is Understood

Adam عليه السلام was not using Qadar to make sin acceptable or remove the need for repentance.

He had repented.

The discussion concerned the calamity that followed his mistake.

Qadar may be mentioned when accepting a calamity after repentance.

Qadar is an explanation for calamities, not an excuse for sins.

Shariah and Qadar Agree in Revelation

Accept Both Sets of Texts

The Quran and Sunnah do not truly contradict.

Revelation commands people to act while teaching that everything occurs under Allah's Will.

Evidence: At-Takwir 81:28-29 - human will is affirmed under Allah's Will.

Evidence: Al-Fatihah 1:5 - the servant worships and seeks Allah's help.

Two Conditions for Accepted Worship

1. Sincerity to Allah
The act must be for Allah alone.
Showing off or directing worship to someone besides Allah does not meet sincerity.
Evidence: Al-Bayyinah 98:5.

2. Following the Messenger ﷺ
The act must agree with the guidance of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.
A sincere intention does not make an invented religious practice correct.
Hadith in Sahih Muslim: an action not in accordance with his command is rejected.

Worship Is Not Complete Without Seeking Allah's Help

Effort + Reliance
The servant cannot become independent from Allah.
Even obedience needs Allah's guidance, ability and help.
Al-Fatihah joins worship with seeking help.
Effort without reliance can lead to pride.
Talking about Qadar while abandoning effort weakens obedience.
The believer combines effort with Tawakkul.

Comparing the Main Positions on Shariah and Qadar

Extreme 1	Extreme 2	Other Error	Ahlus-Sunnah
Overemphasizes human independence. Weakens Allah's complete decree.	Overemphasizes compulsion. Weakens human choice, commands and prohibitions.	Uses spiritual language about Qadar in a way that can weaken the difference between obedience and sin.	Allah decrees and creates. The servant really wills and acts. Allah commands and prohibits. The servant is responsible.

Balanced Person
Understands the decree.
Follows the Shariah.
Seeks Allah's help.
Repents from mistakes.
Is patient with hardship.

Iman, Obedience and Taqwa

True Superiority Is Through Taqwa
Complete praise for Iman is connected to fulfilling its branches.
Iman is not a reason to ignore commands and actions.
People are not better before Allah because of race, family or worldly status.
Evidence: Al-Hujurat 49:13.

Final Whole-Book Diagram

Taqrib al-Tadmuriyyah - One View
Tawheed -> Rububiyyah + Uluhiyyah + Names and Attributes.
Names and Attributes -> Revelation first -> affirm without Tahrif, Tatil, Takyif or Tamthil.
Shared words -> shared general meaning does not mean identical reality.
Two Great Foundations -> treat all authentic Attributes consistently + meaning known, exact manner unknown.
Two Examples -> Paradise + human soul.
Seven Rules -> a complete method for reading the Attribute texts and answering doubts.
Shariah + Qadar -> Allah commands and prohibits while everything remains under His decree.
Qadar -> Knowledge + Writing + Will + Creation.
Human beings -> real will, ability and action under Allah's Will.
Causes -> real created effects but never independent from Allah.
Sin -> repentance. Calamity -> patience. Command -> obedience.
Accepted worship -> sincerity to Allah + following the Messenger ﷺ.
Daily life -> obey Allah, use lawful means, seek His help, rely upon Him and be patient.