

## The Harmonization of *Naqlī* And '*Aqlī* Approaches In Affirming The Islamic Creed In Dāwūd Al-Faṭānī's *Ward Al-Zawāhir*

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### Abstract

*This paper offers an examination of the scholarship of Dāwūd al-Faṭānī in dealing with the revealed sources (naqlī) and qualified scholarship in the exercise of the intellect ('aqlī) in affirming the Islamic creed. The author emphasizes the determination of Dāwūd al-Faṭānī on the need to refer to the authority of naqlī and 'aqlī so as to guard against deviation and exceeding the proper limits of methodological practices towards theological goal of knowing God (ma'rifat Allāh). A qualitative methodology in which the textual analysis and comparative study was employed to analyse textual materials related to Dāwūd al-Faṭānī especially his writing, the Ward al-Zawāhir. Findings indicate that Dāwūd al-Faṭānī attempted to integrate the naqlī and 'aqlī approaches, and harmonize such distinctions in dealing with theological approaches especially that of Salaf and Khalaf's.*

Keywords: *Naqlī*, '*Aqlī*, *Hadīth*, Dāwūd al-Faṭānī, Sunnism.

### Introduction

Shaykh Dāwūd bin 'Abd Allāh al-Faṭānī<sup>1</sup> (d. 1263 H/1847 CE) is one of the most influential and prolific Malay scholars of the nineteenth century whose treatises are considered among the most important works of the Islamic sciences in the Malay Archipelago. He has written substantially in diverse disciplines yet his main contributions are in the Islamic creed, Islamic jurisprudence, and Sufism. He authored at least sixty-nine books and treatises of which the most well-known are *Munyat al-Muṣallī* (1242 H), *Furū' al-Masā'il* (1257 H), *al-Durr al-Thamīn* (1232 H), *Minhāj al-'Ābidīn* (1240 H), and *Sullam al-Mubtadī* (1252 H).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Shaykh Dāwūd bin 'Abd Allāh al-Faṭānī is later referred to as Dāwūd al-Faṭānī

<sup>2</sup> Francis R. Bradley, "Syeikh Daud bin Abdullah al-Faṭānī's writings contained in the National Library of Malaysia," *Jurnal Filologi Melayu*, vol. 15 (2007): 121; Wan

*Al-Durr al-Thamīn*, which was completed in 1232 H, is a theological work which is still widely used in traditional schools (*pondok*) and mosques today. However, the most significant work on Islamic creed is *Ward al-Zawāhir li ḥall al-fāz 'Iqd al-Jawāhir ('ilm al-Tawḥīd Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah)* (1245 H).<sup>1</sup> In fact, *Ward al-Zawāhir* deals with the authority of the *naqlī* and '*aqlī* approaches in the sense of complementary being in order to eliminate blind imitation (*taqlīd*) towards knowing God (*ma'rifat Allāh*). Dāwūd al-Faṭānī was consistent with his attitude of middle course in dealing with different schools of thought based on such authority in the sense the revelation is superior to the intellect and never contradictory. Thus, his attempt to harmonize the dispute of the theological issues demonstrates his treatment of the use of the *naqlī* and '*aqlī* in approaching the Islamic creed is strongly significant.

### **Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's Attitude towards *Naqlī* and '*Aqlī***

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī signified the optimal use of the revealed sources (*naqlī*) indicating that the proofs must come from reliable sources. In this respect, he explicitly applied stringent conditions for the *naqlī* where he strictly accepted only the authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*) and fair (*ḥasan*) *ḥadīth*, while the weak *ḥadīth* (*ḍa'īf*) is applicable in the branches of religious practices (*furū'*) and the merit of certain deeds (*faḍā'il al-a'māl*). He stated:

The *sam'iyah* (*naqlī*) consists of the proofs that come from the Qur'ān, *Sunnah* that is authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*) or fair (*ḥasan*), and consensus (*ijmā'*) are applicable in the Islamic creed. In contrast, the weak *ḥadīth* (*ḍa'īf*) and analogy (*qiyās*) which are only applicable for practical means of the branches (*furū'* '*amaliyyah*) except those of very weak *ḥadīth* due to the chains of transmissions (*isnād* or *ṭuruq*) of the liars (*kādhīb*) or supposed liars (*ittihām bi al-kādhīb*). The role of *qiyās* concerning the practical of the branches goes as the *ijmā'*.<sup>2</sup>

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's methodology of the authority of the *Ḥadīth*

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Mohd Shaghir bin Abdullah, "Pengarang manuskrip kitab di Alam Melayu: suatu tinjauan awal," *Jurnal Filologi Melayu*, vol. 3 (1994): 87.

<sup>1</sup> Dāwūd bin 'Abd Allāh al-Faṭānī, *Ward al-Zawāhir li ḥall al-fāz 'Iqd al-Jawāhir ('ilm al-Tawḥīd Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah)*, edited by Wan Mohd Shaghir bin Abdullah, (Kuala Lumpur: Khazānat al-Faṭāniyyah, 2000). The work is later referred to as *Ward al-Zawāhir*.

<sup>2</sup> Dāwūd al-Faṭānī, *Ward al-Zawāhir*, 63.

clearly shows that it must come from the authentic (*Ṣaḥīḥ*) and fair (*ḥasan*) *Ḥadīth* along with the consensus (*ijmā'*). In this respect, his methodology of the authority of the *Ḥadīth* -i.e. the *ṣaḥīḥ* and *ḥasan*-of the solitary *ḥadīth* (*aḥād*) seems consistent with the methodology of *ḥadīth* scholars (*muḥaddithūn*) of the *Ahl al-Sunnah*.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, the authority of the recurrent *ḥadīth* (*mutawātir*), which is accepted without critical evaluation of the chains of transmitters (*isnād*) due to the large numbers of transmitters of all levels of the *isnād*, constitute undisputable authority. Otherwise, the Mu'tazilite's attitude towards *ḥadīth aḥād* totally differs abjectly from *Ahl al-Sunnah* in that they reject *ḥadīth aḥād* in matters of theology, and accepting only the *mutawātir* ones.<sup>2</sup>

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's view is in line with that of the majority of scholars (*jumhūr*) of the *Ahl al-Sunnah* who accept the *Ḥadīth aḥād* in argument of theology, in which its usage is extensive because most of the *aḥādīth* come in this form compared to the *mutawātir*.<sup>3</sup>

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's methodology of *aḥādīth* indicates that the weak *ḥadīth* (*ḍa'īf*) is applicable in the branches of religious practices (*furū'*) and the merit of certain deeds (*faḍā'il al-a'māl*) as well as religious advice (*al-wa'z*). His *Ward al-Zawāhir* consistently indicated that *ḥadīth ḍa'īf* could be applied provided it is not the one categorized as very weak *ḥadīth* from unreliable or liar transmitters (*isnād kādhib*), or supposed liars (*matrūk*), or dishonour (*munkar*).<sup>4</sup>

Based on his attitude towards *ḥadīth ḍa'īf*, Dāwūd al-Faṭānī, like the *fuqahā'*, employed *ḥadīth ḍa'īf* within its limitation, with priority on the authority of the *ḥadīth Ṣaḥīḥ*, and *ḥasan*. In this respect, he is consistent with his methodology on theological issues in dealing with the *ḥadīth ḍa'īf*, even signifying that it is more reliable compared to the other words and views, which seem more likely to follow Abū Dāwūd (d.899 CE) and Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal's (d. 855 CE) view.<sup>5</sup> His *Jam' al-Fawā'id* said:

Some pious (*ṣāliḥīn*) said: I have seen (in my dream) the Prophet

<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad 'Ajāj al-Khaṭīb, *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth*, (Bayrūt: Dār al-Fikr, 1981), 302.

<sup>2</sup> Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Qāsimī, *Qawā'id al-taḥdīth min funūn muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth*, (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1979), 148.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, Aḥmad ibn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad, *al-Nukat 'alā nuzhat al-nazar fī tawḍīḥ Nukhbat al-Fikar*, (al-Riyāḍ: Dār Ibn Jawzī, 2003), 61-62.

<sup>4</sup> Dāwūd al-Faṭānī, *Ward al-Zawāhir*, 63.

<sup>5</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abū Bakr al-Suyūṭī, *Tadrīb al-Rāwī fī sharḥ Taqrīb al-Nawawī*, (al-Madīnah: Maktabat al-'Ilmiyyah, 1972), vol. 1, 299.

(P.B.U.H) beside the Ka'bah, so I said: "O Messenger you have said: "Whoever listens to my tradition, I promise him with a reward and when he practices it desiring the reward he would be rewarded." Although the *ḥadīth* is weak.<sup>1</sup>

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's attempt to employ the *ḥadīth ḍa'īf* concerning the branches of religious practices (*furū'*) and the merit of certain deeds (*faḍā'il al-a'māl*) in his works to get closer to Allah (for reward and pleasure) is evidently significant. He asserted that *Ḥadīth ḍa'īf* greatly contributes towards knowing God (*ma'rifat Allāh*) that may be achieved through the Islamic activism -to approach God (*taqarrub*)- especially that of virtuous deeds and *faḍā'il al-a'māl* as long as it does not contradict with the fundamental principles of the *shar'*. For that, his *Ward al-Zawāhir* employed the use of *ḥadīth ḍa'īf* altogether with the Qur'anic verses and the authorized *al'ādīth*. In fact, he consistently considered that the use of *ḥadīth ḍa'īf* is to support the Qur'anic verses as well as the authentic *ḥadīth*.

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's criticism of the *ḥadīth ḍa'īf* clearly demonstrates his consistent methodology concerning the authority of *ḥadīth*. In fact, he sometimes distinguished the authentic *aḥādīth* from the *ḍa'īf* ones. For instance, he refused to accept the transmissions of the *isnād* from innovators (*mubtadi'ah*) such as the Mu'tazilite. He said:

The Mu'tazilite asserts the role of Izrā'il (Angel of Death) who only takes the soul of *al-thaqalayn* (i.e. people and jinn). This opinion is not valid when it refers to the *ḥadīth (ḍa'īf)* reported by Abū al-Shaykh, al-'Uqaylī, and al-Daylamī of Anas that (said): "The death of animals (*bahā'im*) and creatures on earth such as insects (in the jungle), harvest mite, dog lice, locusts, animals such as cattle and others (their souls) will be taken away by God instead of *malak al-mawt* (Izrā'il). This would happen after they glorified (*tasbīḥ*) Him." In fact, the above *ḥadīth* is weak (*ḍa'īf*)...<sup>2</sup>

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's *Ward al-Zawāhir* treated the authority of the *ḥadīth ḍa'īf* either through his justifications (critics) of the chains of transmitters (*isnād*) or through transmission of the *ḥadīth*. Regarding *ḥadīth ḍa'īf*, he found justification as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Dāwūd al-Faṭānī, *Jam' al-Fawā'id*, 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 254.

Among Allah's Blessing (to His servants) in resurrection day, He would reward the pious people according their deeds, which differs (*tafāwut*) one another, as quoted from the weak *ḥadīth* (*ḍa'īf*): "Those who recite "*subhānallāh*" will be rewarded for it a hundred thousand times (rewards) and he will be rewarded based on the deeds by God."<sup>1</sup>

Based on Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's treatment of the authority, it may derived that the *ṣaḥīḥ* and *ḥasan* are accepted along with the use of *ḥadīth ḍa'īf* which is to support either the stronger or similar ones. He strongly emphasized the authority of the revealed sources. Thus, he clearly retained his methodology in dealing with the use of the *naqlī* especially the authority of *ḥadīth* on his deliberation of theology in *Ward al-Zawāhir*. However, further detailed studies are required to arrive at a definite assessment of his consistency on his approaches to theology regarding the use of *naqlī* in *Ward al-Zawāhir*.

Regarding his attitude towards 'aqlī, Dāwūd al-Faṭānī asserted that his theological methodology concerning 'aqlī is to follow al-Ash'arī in demonstrating a significant role to intellect ('aql) especially in *kalām*. In *Ward al-Zawāhir*, he consistently applied such methodology with regard to his indirect response to the religious milieu in Mecca as well as in the Malay Archipelago.

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's approach on theology is obviously in line with al-Ash'arī and al-Ghazālī (Ash'arite) who took the middle course with sufficient use of the revealed sources (*naqlī*) as well as intellect ('aqlī) in dealing with the traditionalists and rationalists. Al-Ash'arī's approach follows Ibn Ḥanbal's methodology in glorifying the use of the *naqlī* after he left the Mu'tazilites, whose approach transgresses to glorify the 'aqlī as a measurement of the human actions either good or bad (*al-ḥasan wa al-qabḥ*). Nevertheless, at the same time, he did not deny the role of the 'aqlī as of the *mutakallimūn* of the *Ahl al-Sunnah*.<sup>2</sup>

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī emphasis on the use of 'aqlī's approach in *Ward al-Zawāhir* is significant as he referred to the opinions of leading Ash'arite scholars such as al-Bāqillānī (d.1013), al-Isfīraynī (d.1027), al-Baghdādī (d.1071), Imām al-Ḥaramayn al-Juwaynī (d.1085), al-Ghazālī

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 305.

<sup>2</sup> George Makdisi, "Ash'arī and the Ash'arites in Islamic Religious History," in *Islamic philosophy and theology*, edited by Ian Richard Netton, (New York: Routledge, 2007), vol. 2, 356, 280.

(d.1111), al-Shahrastānī (d.1153), al-Rāzī (d.1210), al-Subkī (d.1370), al-Sanūsī (d.1490), and al-Laqqānī (d.1631). In respect of *Ward al-Zawāhir* commentary, he referred to al-Laqqānī's *Jawharat al-Tawhīd* and its commentaries on works. These sources obviously indicate his connection with the mainstream Ash'arite's dealing with *'aqlī*. In fact, his attempt to attach the views of Jawharī al-Bukhārī's *kalām* in his *Ward al-Zawāhir* illustrates his treatment of *kalām* in his writings.<sup>1</sup>

However, despite being in line with the Ash'arite's approaches, Dāwūd al-Faṭānī was not only rigid with certain sectarian school of thought stands but rather employed other relevant approaches towards the theological goal of *ma'rifat Allāh*. He accepted the *Salaf* along with *Khalaf* approaches in dealing with *naqlī* and *'aqlī* in the light of harmonization and integration (*tawfiq*) approaches particularly in dealing with the dispute of anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*).<sup>2</sup> This attempt is not strange to Dāwūd al-Faṭānī since he used to the exposure to the religious doctrinal climate in Hijāz, especially the polemics between Wahhabism and Sufism. Additionally, his broad exposure to al-Ghazālī's works, whose thought employs the middle course accepting both; the approaches of the *Salaf* and *Khalaf* which were illustrated in *al-Iqtisād fī al-I'tiqād* and *Ijām al-'Awwām*, has influenced his stand on theology towards *Salaf* and *Khalaf*. Al-Ghazālī sometimes accepted the employment of *kalām* as portrayed in his *al-Iqtisād fī al-I'tiqād* and in other times was inclined to the *Salaf* with the emphasis on *naqlī* to elevate from blind imitation (*taqlīd*) to certitude (*yaqīn*). In this regard, al-Ghazālī stated:

*Kalām* was not sufficient in my case, nor was it a remedy for the malady of which I was complaining. To be sure, when the discipline of *kalām* acquired some status and had been engaged in for some length of time, the *mutakallimūn* showed an earnest desire for attempting to defend orthodoxy through study of the true natures of things. They plunged into the study of substances and accidents and their principles. But since that was the aim of their own science, their discussion on the subject was not the aim of their own science, their discussion on the subject was not thoroughgoing; therefore it did not provide an effective means of dispelling entirely the darkness due to the bewilderment about the

<sup>1</sup> Abdul Rahman bin Haji Abdullah, *Pemikiran umat Islam di Nusantara*, (Kuala Lumpur: Dean Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1990), 106-107.

<sup>2</sup> Dāwūd al-Faṭānī, *Ward al-Zawāhir*, 65-66.

differences dividing man.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Ghazālī preferred the approach of the *Salaf* on their use of *naqlī* prior to ‘*aqlī*, which is more accurate with Allah’s injunction without neglecting the role of reason in Islamic creed. However, his priority inclined to the science of unveiling (*kashf*) of Sufism (*taṣawwuf*), which is, according to him, approachable in knowing God. He explained:

From the very beginning of the way of unveiling divine mysteries (*al-mukāshafah*) and visions (*al-mushāhadah*), even when awakened, the Sufis see angels and spirits of the prophets and hear voices coming from them and learn useful things from them. Then their “state” ascends from the vision of forms and likenesses to stages beyond the narrow range or words: so if anyone tries to express them, his word contains evident errors against which he cannot guard himself.<sup>2</sup>

In this respect, Dāwūd al-Faṭānī’s and al-Ghazālī’s treatment of *kalām* and Sufism (*kashf*) are significant, but his attempts demonstrated the complementary use of both vis-a-vis *ma’rifat Allāh* rather than al-Ghazālī’s *kashf*. His ‘*aqlī* approaches could be observed in his usage of *kalām* and intellectual authority of the consensus (*ijmā’*), analogy (*qiyās*), Qur’anic interpretation based opinion (*tafsīr bi al-ra’y*) including *ta’wīl* and *ijtihād* along with the use of *naqlī*, which was in line with al-Ash‘arī’s *Istiḥsān al-khawḍ fī ‘Ilm al-Kalām* and *al-Luma’*.<sup>3</sup> Both *naqlī* and ‘*aqlī* are capable of eliminating blind imitation (*taqlīd*) to certainty (*taḥqīq*) regardless of the distinctions between the scholars and even between the *Salaf* and *Khalaf*. Instead, he attempted to harmonize and integrate such distinctions. As such, his approach distinguishes *Ward al-Zawāhir* from other classical *jawi* treatises. He stated:

Al-Ash‘arī (leader of *Ahl al-Sunnah*) asserts that the *ma’rifat* is achieved through the mandatory use of *shar’* (i.e. revelation), which provides certainty (*taḥqīq*) towards it, instead of the

<sup>1</sup> Abū Hāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl*. (Dimashq: Dār al-Ḥikmah, 1994), 49.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 84.

<sup>3</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī, *Istiḥsān al-khawḍ fī ‘Ilm al-Kalām*, 91; Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī, *al-Luma’*, (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2000), 85.

intellect ('*aql*). Nevertheless, *nazar* (using the intellect) also leads to *ma'rifat*. Therefore, *nazar* is mandatory as long as it serves the attainment of *ma'rifat* which is obligatory on every *mukallaf*.<sup>1</sup>

Based on Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's approach above, his treatment of *naqlī* was significant in the sense that reputable scholars deserve to deal with intellect towards *ma'rifat Allāh* regardless of their school of thought sentiments. These efforts would support to achieve the objective of strengthening the Islamic creed.

### ***Ward Al-Zawāhir's Harmonization in Dealing with The Naqlī And 'Aqlī***

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's approaches on theology to affirm the Islamic creed in his *jawi* treatise as reflected in *Ward al-Zawāhir* could be observed in his attempt to utilize the optimal use of the authority of the *naqlī* and '*aqlī* argument. Interestingly, he dealt with both in the sense of complementary manner based on its authority and either way, it is supposed to harmonize such a dispute in a proper manner. In dealing with the harmonization of the theological arguments, Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's *Ward al-Zawāhir* justified its usage based on authority and relevancy case by case.

### **The Preference (*Tarjīh*) between *Ta'wīl* and *Tafwīd***

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's harmonization between the different views of scholars is among his approaches on theology as long as it comes from the authority regardless of school of thought sentiments. In respect of anthropomorphism, he sought to harmonize between the literal understanding without its modality (*tafwīd*) of the *Salaf* and the interpretive (figurative) way (*ta'wīl*) of the *Khalaf* pertaining to the disputes of the anthropomorphic verses (*mutashābihāt*). For him, both have authority to do their own interpretation (*ta'wīl* or *tafwīd*) based on authoritative arguments, which are attainable towards the theological goal of knowing God (*ma'rifat Allāh*). Sometimes he inclined to the

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<sup>1</sup> Dāwūd al-Faṭānī, *Ward al-Zawāhir*, 19.



*Khalaf's ta'wīl*, which is relevant particularly to ignorant people, innovators, and unbelievers, justifying that *tafwīd* causes misunderstanding, and *ta'wīl* would provide proper understanding and avoid confusion. He stated:

The preference (*tarjīh*) of the scholars (people) for the *Khalaf* with the figurative way (*ta'wīl*) over *tafwīd* (i.e. accept the revealed text without interpreting its modality) is because of some factors. This justifies if *tafwīd* is sufficient to the rights of a religious people (*'ālim*), but it is insufficient neither for the ignorant layman (*'āmī*) nor those of the innovators (*mubtadi'ah*), nor the disbeliever and those who practice blind imitation (*taqlīd*). For those who accept the sacred verses with its modality of anthropomorphic verses (*tajsīm*), the *tafwīd* is not applicable to them, which is against the Qur'ān, Allah says: "Here is a plain statement to men, a guidance and instruction to those who fear Allah," and "O mankind! There has now come unto you an admonition from your Sustainer, and a cure for all (the ill) that may be in men's hearts," and "Now there has come unto you from God a light, and a clear divine writ."<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the above, his *Ward al-Zawāhir*'s approach was in line with the view of the use of authority of the *naqlī* and *'aqlī* arguments in serving the arguments on theology regardless of the school of thought sentiments, seen in how he preferred (*tarjīh*) the *Khalaf*, and also the *Salaf*, based on its relevance. Thus, his attempt indicates that the *'aqlī* argument would serve to be in line with the true understanding of authorized revealed sources (*naqlī*). Dāwūd al-Faṭānī like the Ash'arite (*Khalaf*) attempted to *ta'wīl* the *mutashābihāt* to avoid confusion, but he also did not deny the need to *tafwīd*, so that it does not deviate from the real meaning intended by Allah as required by the *Salaf*. For instance, he sometimes justified the relevance of the *tafwīd* as he said:

The *Salaf* is preferred (*rājīh*) and stronger because *ta'wīl* needs more knowledge and wisdom in order to facilitate *ta'wīl* in line with the text (*naqlī*) and its meaning. Those amongst them are the scholars (*a'immah*) of the four sects (*madhāhib al-arba'ah*). Such methodology (*tafwīd*) is more genuine (peaceful) because

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 64.

we are afraid that we determined the meaning, which is not intended by Allah.<sup>1</sup>

In this regard, it clearly shows that his attitude to the anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*) was accepting both *ta'wīl* and *tafwīd* based on its relevance and the ability of the individuals who deal with it. Thus, his approach on theology seems not rigid to the Ash'arite alone, instead his harmonization and integration between the dispute of the *Salaf* and *Khalaf* seemed more relevant particularly in dealing with *ta'wīl* and *tafwīd*.

Dāwūd al-Fatānī's *Ward al-Zawāhir* frequently reconciled between the different opinions depending on the authority of the *naqlī* and '*aqlī*. His attempt of reconciling applied to the agreement points of the disputes, or looking at the predominant side (*tarjīh*) of one another, or accepting both (or more) of them in different contexts of understanding or one of them is more specific and the other is more general, or perhaps one abrogates another. For instance, he clarified the consensus (*ijmā'*) between *Salaf* and *Khalaf* in regard to *ta'wīl* and *tafwīd* after explaining the differences and its justifications between them. In fact, his attempt to harmonize between the *Salaf* and *Khalaf* in regard to anthropomorphic verses but not to extent of the perennial polemic between both, as each party shares the same goal, i.e. *ma'rifat Allāh*. He asserted:

*Salaf* and *Khalaf* are in consensus pertaining to the obligation of glorifying Him against any meaning that causes ambiguous (*wahm*) impossibility of the attributes of Allah (*mustahīl*). They surrender to the reality of knowledge that needs clarification, and believe that all the revealed text came from Allah. Thus, the matter should be left to Him as He says: "And those who have knowledge say we believe."<sup>2</sup>

The above statement clearly indicates that he observed the distinction and consensus as well as the reason that lies behind the difference due to different interpretations of the Qur'anic verses. However, this regard only relates to the independent religious interpretation (*ijtihādiyyah*) that allows differences among the scholars and not the fundamental

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 66.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 67.

principles in which consensus is mandatory.

As for the relevance of authority of the *naqlī* of the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, his *Ward al-Zawāhir* eventually inclined to the *Salaf's* approach towards the priority of the *naqlī* in approaching Islamic creed. This is due to his attitude that revelation is superior to intellect. He stated:

The definite truth (*ṣawāb*) in God's creatures (including humans) is by following the way (*maslak*) of the *Salaf* in the creed and holding on to what Allah has revealed (of *naqlī*) and was brought by the Prophet without any long discussion and too detail but in trying to increase the devotion as it should be (i.e. *taqwā*).<sup>1</sup>

In fact, the harmonization (*tawfīq*) of the *Salaf* and *Khalaf* approaches pertaining to the *ta'wīl* and *tafwīd* had also existed in the Malay scholars works of *jawi* treatises. However, his merit was due to his detailed explanation with its application of harmonization dealing with the theological dispute compared to the other Malay scholars who merely indicates their acceptance of both concept of *ta'wīl* and *tafwīd* without further application.

### **The Integrated Argumentations**

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's *Ward al-Zawāhir* sometimes attempted to integrate between disputes regardless of the literal textual contradictions, but rather to interpret such differences in different ways by focusing on the agreement points among them. For instance, regarding the dispute of the Ash'arite and Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī on happiness, Ash'arite indicated that happiness is for those who escape punishment by death as a Muslim, as determined by God by pre-determined (*azalī*).<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile al-Māturīdī indicated that happiness exists in worldly life and it could change because of wretched Muslims who commit apostasy (*kufr*) and real Muslims who live in happiness. This is because he voluntarily chooses Islam as a way of life which guarantees happiness in both this

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 429.

<sup>2</sup> Abd al-Qāhir ibn Ṭāhir al-Tamīmī al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-Dīn*, (Istanbul: Matba'at al-Dawlah, 1928), 53.

world and the hereafter, there is no such pre-determination.<sup>1</sup> Thus, Dāwūd al-Faṭānī compromised such distinctions by looking at the agreement points of both, that is that happiness is attainable through death as a Muslim based on the interpretation of the authentic arguments in this regard.<sup>2</sup>

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī sometimes employed the same proof from different points of view. In respect of expiation (*kaffārah*) of small sins, he demonstrated the usage of definite proof (*adillat qaṭ'īyyah*) as well as indefinite ones (*adillat ḡanniyyah*) in dealing with *mutakallimūn*'s interpretive approach versus *muḥaddithūn*'s literal approach. For that, he quoted:

The scholars' dispute on expiation of small sins is applicable through refraining from committing the great sin (*al-kabā'ir*) whether it is based on definite proof (*adillat qaṭ'īyyah*) as well as indefinite ones (*adillat ḡanniyyah*). In fact, they agree (*ittifāq*) that avoiding great sins would expiate the small ones.<sup>3</sup>

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī justified the *mutakallimūn*'s interpretive understanding of textual revealed sources (*naqlī*) which indicates that Allah's Will is absolute on whether to expiate such sins or not.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, the *muḥaddithūn*, jurists (*fuqahā'*), and Mu'tazilite strictly employ the literal text of *naqlī* as a definite argument (*qaṭ'ī*) that avoiding the great sin would indicate expiation. In this regard, he was therefore inclined to the *mutakallimūn*'s view but at the same time, he accepted the view of *muḥaddithūn* and others with the condition that the *kaffārah* is compliance with performing obligatory acts and avoiding great sins. Thus, there are no contradictions between the disputes except only in technical aspects with respect to Allah's Will (absolute free Will).

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's integration went even further as his integration is between not only the *Salaf* and *Khalaf* of the *Ahl al-Sunnah*, but also between the Ash'arite and Mu'tazilite that is in line with the *Ahl al-Sunnah*'s thinking. In respect of the acts of servant (*af'āl al-'ibād*), he indicated that the integration of the *Ahl al-Sunnah*

<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*, (al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Jāmi'āt al-Miṣriyyah, n.d), 325.

<sup>2</sup> Dāwūd al-Faṭānī, *Ward al-Zawāhir*, 85-86.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

(Ash‘arite) and Mu‘tazilite was based on authentic arguments of the *naqlī* that is in line with the *Ahl al-Sunnah*’s doctrine. Regarding the agreement point between *Ahl al-Sunnah* and Mu‘tazilite, he said:

The involuntary act of servants (*af‘āl idtirāriyyah*) is like human body’s reflection because of shock (which is happened without control) and is strictly subservient to Allah’s Will (which is determined by His power and knowledge) as agreed among the scholars of the *Ahl al-Sunnah* and others. Thus, all deeds are under Allah’s control (consent) even though such deeds are associated with human body such as “white” (colour) of the body (human) which actually is Allah’s creation. This view has been agreed upon (*muwāfaqah*) between *Ahl al-Sunnah* and Mu‘tazilite which indicates that action comes from the human (body), not from colour (white) - even though Allah has created the body and colour but human determines his action- based on his own (voluntarily) choice...<sup>1</sup>

The above showed the agreement point between the *Ahl al-Sunnah* and Mu‘tazilite that one is answerable of his deeds based on his own free choice after rejecting Mu‘tazilite doctrine of human’s free actions that is not associated with Allah’s Will. In fact, his rejection and integration is based on the justification of Qur’anic arguments of such matter. Thus, the authorized arguments based on *naqlī* as well as *‘aqlī* were among his consideration of dealing within the *Ahl al-Sunnah* or with the other parties, which eventually indicate his consistency with authority and harmonious dealing.

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī’s dealing with the conflict of two contradictory arguments was consistent as he was stick to to integrate both as complementary being in which one constitutes general (*‘ām*) and other specific (*khāṣṣ*), as both are accepted and practiced in different contexts. For example, in respect of disbelief (*kufr*) and faith (*īmān*) to the impossible attributes (*mustahīl*) of God, he indicated:

Regarding belief (*īmān*) and disbelief (*kufr*) from religious (*shar‘*) and intellectual perspective (*naẓar ‘aqlī*), both revelation and intellect should be viewed from distinctive dimensions as the first (*shar‘*) remains in general and the other is specific. In

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 82-83.

respect of polytheism (*kufr*) for believers (*mu'minūn*), generally both *shar'* and '*aqlī* prohibit them to commit apostasy (*kufr*). In contrast, in regard of *kufr* for the unbelievers, the *shar'* does not order or prohibit, otherwise the logic ('*aqlī*) specifically prohibits *kufr* since Allah orders belief (*īmān*) but He Wills otherwise.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the possibility of *īmān* and *kufr*, he attempted to integrate the religious view (*shar'*) based on literal text (*naqlī*) and the interpretive understanding ('*aqlī*), however he inclined to specify it according to the logical interpretation of *naqlī*.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, his attempt to integrate different opinions regarding the fact of soul was based on broad and specific arguments.<sup>3</sup>

In fact, Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's integration was consistent with his approaches on theology of authoritative propositions in harmonious dealing among disputes as reflected in his *Ward al-Zawāhir*. Thus, he shared same methodology with the majority of scholars (*jumhūr*) of the *muḥaddithūn*, *mutakallimūn*, and *fuqahā'* in dealing with dispute on theology. Apart from that, his *Ward al-Zawāhir* frequently stating "as stated in or according to *naqlī* and '*aqlī*" while presenting his arguments indicated his special treatment of his approaches on theology towards its goal (*ma'rifat Allāh*). As such, these contribute to affirm the Islamic creed as in *Ward al-Zawāhir*.

### The Abrogation (*Mansūkh*)

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's *Ward al-Zawāhir* described the abrogation (*mansūkh*) and its categories without detailed explanations especially pertaining to its application on theological issues. Otherwise, he sought to demonstrate the role of *mansūkh* in dealing with disputable arguments concerning the usage of the Qur'anic verses and *aḥādīth*.<sup>4</sup>

However, he indicated the theological purpose of abrogation (is to oppose the Jews and Christians who accuse that Islamic Law (Muhammadan's Law) does not abrogate the previous laws (sacred laws). The *mansūkh* is prescribed from revealed sources (*naqlī*),

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 261.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 150-153.

consensus (*ijmā'*), and intellect (*'aqlī*).

In describing divisions and types of *mansūkh*, Dāwūd al-Faṭānī for instance, stated that the *Sunnah* abrogates another *Sunnah* which literally seems contradictory as in the case of visiting tombs based on the *Ḥadīth*, he said: "I have prohibited you from visiting tombs, and now you may be (allowed) to visit them." In this regard, he merely demonstrated an example of abrogation of *Sunnah* with *Sunnah*, but at least this becomes part of his harmonious approach in dealing with different arguments without any contradictions. In this regard, the proper interpretation is in line with the text, so it could be interpreted from various dimensions.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, his effort to be in line with the harmonization and integration approaches was consistent as he frequently presented the optimal use of arguments on theology of the *naqlī* and *'aqlī* together based on its authority. For that, the popular words illustrating his attitude say: "It has been proven from *naqlī* (revealed sources) and *'aqlī* (intellect),"<sup>2</sup> if it involves both forms of the arguments and otherwise, he stated such a constraint.

## Conclusion

Dāwūd al-Faṭānī's attitude in dealing with the authority of *naqlī* and *'aqlī* is significant and consistent in the sense of complementary manner. He signified the use of *'aqlī* to approach the Islamic creed and to get rid from blind imitation (*taqlīd*) to certitude (*yaqīn*) towards knowing God (*ma'rifat Allāh*) within its limitation that indicates *naqlī* is to be superior to *'aqlī*. For that, he frequently asserted the superiority of *naqlī* over *'aqlī* throughout his writings, particularly on matters that could not be proven or it has become irrelevant through intellect and senses such as unseen matters (*al-ghaybiyyāt*). As such, the *'aqlī* approaches must be in line with principles of *shar'* to avoid the infiltration of foreign elements and therefore become capable of eliminating blind imitation (*taqlīd*) towards *ma'rifat Allāh*.

<sup>1</sup> Dāwūd al-Faṭānī divided the *mansūkh* into three categories which are: (1) the abrogation of law (*ḥukm*) only, (2) the verse (*lafẓ*) only, and (3) law and verse (*ḥukm* and *lafẓ*) altogether. Meanwhile there are three types of *mansūkh* which consist of (1) the abrogation of the Qur'ān with the Qur'ān, (2) the Qur'ān with the *Sunnah*, and (3) the *Sunnah* with the *Sunnah*. See Dāwūd al-Faṭānī, *Ward al-Zawāhir*, 151.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

Thus, based on the authority, he sought to integrate and harmonize any theological distinctions by looking at the agreement points rather than distinctive ones particularly in dealing with the polemic of anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*) between the *Salaf* and *Khalaf*. His harmonization of the disputed arguments could be viewed from various angles that justify each other whether by the preference way (*tarjīh*), or integration between the general and specific arguments, or to reconcile the understanding of the arguments in different contexts. The same goes with respect to the abrogation (*mansūkh*) discourse. This would indicate his treatment of the '*aqlī* approaches based on the authoritative arguments in his *Ward al-Zawāhir* is relevant and significant towards knowing God (*ma'rifat Allāh*).

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