

# The Diversified Methodology Of Imam Al-Dhahabi In The Biographies Of The Ash'arites And Salafiyya In Siyar A`Lam Al-Nubala

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## Abstract

After the prophets, the scholars of the Ummah played a significant role in the elevation of the religion of Islam. The servants of these religions were adorned by historians in their books. Their biographies and their services were recorded in their books. The paper under review is also based on one of these historians, Allama Dhahabi, and one of his books, "Siyar a`lam al-nubala". There is an introduction to Allama Dhahabi and an introduction to his book, as well as some scholars about whom Allama Dhahabi has mentioned such statements that need to be researched. Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Hasan bin Fork (d. 406 AH), Abu Ishaq al-Asfaray'ini (d. 418 AH), Imam al-Haramayn Abu al-Ma'ali al-Juwayni (d. 419 AH), Imam Ghazali (d. 450 AH), Fakhr-ud-Din al-Razi (d. 606 AH), Uthman bin Saeed al-Darmi (d. 282 AH), Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Khuzayma (d. 311 AH), Shaykh Abu Abdullah bin Mandah (d. 311 AH). Allama Ibn Taymiyah (d. 728 AH) is included.

**Key Words:** Allama Dhahabi, Siyar a`lam al-nubala, Theologians.

## Introduction

Allama Dhahabi, whose full name is Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Uthman bin Qaymaz bin Abdullah al-Dhahabi, traveled to various areas for learning, among which Hims, Hamah, Tripoli, Al-Karak, Al-Mughrah, Basrah, Nabras, Ramallah, Quds, Tabūk, Palestine,

Egypt, Alexandria, and Hejaz are notable. After completion of education, he served Islam in such a way that the books of history were unable to give an example of it. Besides teaching, He wrote books in every field, whether it was the knowledge of Ilm-ul-Qirā'at or the Hadith, the theology and history or on the life of prophet Muhammad(PBUH) or biographies.

One of these many works is "Siyar a`lam al-nubala". In this book he mentioned the 6818 famous personalities from the era of the Prophet (Peace be Upon Him) to 743AH, and divided them in forty classes.

This book is a comprehensive collection of biographies of different scholars, kings, ministers, and poets. Among scholars, there are biographies of those as well who are famous in different schools of thought. That's why a number of research works are done on different aspects of this book.

This paper focuses on the theologians mentioned in the Siyar a`lam al-nubala and intends to find whether Allama Dhahabi has mentioned his fellow theologians and the theologians from the different sect in the same way or has set different standards for both? Because if he has mentioned both types of theologians in different ways, this book will not be useful regarding the biographies of the Islamic theologians.

### **Introduction to Imam Al-Dhahabi**

The full name of the great historian Allama Dhahabi is "Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Uthman al-Dhahabi". He was born on Rabi' al-Thani 673 AH / 1274 AD in Damascus, Syria. Imam Al-Dhahabi's father was Shahabuddin Ahmad (d. 697 AH) and his grandfather was Fakhruddin Abu Ahmad Uthman (d. 683 AH).<sup>1</sup>

Imam Al-Dhahabi recited the Holy Qur'an from Imam Mas'ud ibn 'Abd al-Salihi (d. 720 AH) in 682 AH<sup>2</sup>. He learned the knowledge of recitation of the Qur'an (Ilm-ul-Qira'at) from Shaykh Al-Qur'an Jamal al-Din Abu Ishaq al-Asqalani (d. 692 AH), Ali ibn Jibril al-Misri (d. 714 AH), and Abu Hafs Umar ibn al-Qawas (d. 698 AH)<sup>3</sup>. Similarly, Imam Al-Dhahabi also met shaykhs and shaykhath and heard many books of Ḥadīth and components of various Ḥadīth books from them.<sup>4</sup>

After completing his education, in 704 AH, he was appointed imam and khateeb of a mosque in Damascus, "Kufr Bina" and he wrote his first book "Tarikh-e-Islam"<sup>5</sup>. He served as a teacher of Hadith in various madaris i.e; Dar-ul-Hadith Nafisa, Dar-ul-Hadith al-Tanqiziya, Mashhad Urwah and Turbat Umm Saleh. His association with the noble profession of teaching remained till death. He performed the Hajj in 698 AH after the death of his father.<sup>6</sup> Imam Al-Dhahabi was blessed with three children, two sons, and a daughter.

Imam Al-Dhahabi died in 748 A.H. at Turbat Umm Salih and was buried in the tomb of Bab al-Saghir. Many well known scholars and shaykhs, including Salah-ud-Din al-Safadi (d. 764 AH) and Tajuddin al-Sabki (d. 771 AH)<sup>7</sup> attended his funeral. He left thousands of disciples and writings in his scholarly works.

### **Introduction to Siyar a`lam al-nubala**

Historians differ in the name of this book. Some have named this book "Tarikh al-Nubala"<sup>8</sup>, while others have referred to it as "Tarikh-ul-Ulama al-Nubala"<sup>9</sup>. While the manuscript of this book, copied from the original book in 739 AH-743 AH, present in the library of "Sultan Ahmad Al-thalith", mentions that its name is "Siyar a`lam al-nubala". He started writing this book in 732 AH and in 739 AH he completed it in fourteen volumes. In the first two volumes, he mentions the life of the Prophet (PBUH) and the four rightly guided Caliphs, while the remaining twelve volumes, include the rest of the famous personalities (mashāhīr) during this era. Siyar a`lam al-nubala is published by various publishers due to its immense value.

This book is unique from all the books of history because of the following characteristics:

1. He has mentioned 6818 famous personalities in this book and divided them into forty classes, in the division of classes neither place nor religion nor time has been taken into consideration.
2. In this, only the famous people, whether the Caliphs, the Nobles, the Sultans, ministers, Judges, Qurrā', Muḥaddithīn, the U`dabā, the literalists, theologians, and the philosophers, etc, have been collected.
3. He also mentions the family, the children and the parents with every personality.
4. The biography of each person consists on his name, title, surname, his teachers and shuyūkh, the disciples, works of the scholars.
5. At the end of each biography, He mentions their beliefs, and criticism, if any, in the light of the sayings of other scholars.
6. He sometimes express his own opinion shortly.
7. If someone has been accused and that person is of the same creed as Imam Al-Dhahabi, then Allama Dhahabi defends him as well.

During the study of "Siyar a`lam al-nubala", it was found that Allama Dhahabi has been a victim of prejudice in mentioning the biographies. This is the reason behind mentioning the biographies of Ash`ari scholars briefly and the biographies of Hanbali scholars in detail. For example, the biography of Imam Abu Hanifa has been mentioned on a few pages and the biography of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal has been mentioned on several hundred pages. Moreover, he has quoted such sayings about the Asha`ri theologians that require research. Below is a brief introduction to some of the Imams and the sayings attributed to them:

### **Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Hasan bin Fork (d. 406 AH)**

His full name is Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Hasan bin Fork<sup>10</sup>. He was born in Isfahan, Iran in 329 AH / 941 AD. He received his early education in his hometown of Isfahan and taught many students in Nishapur. He died in 406 AH / 1016 AD while he was on his way back from Ghazna.<sup>11</sup>

The scholars have praised him a lot, but Allama Dhahabi, after mentioning the short biography of Ibn Fork, mentions some of the sayings that need to be investigated, such as:

1. Hazrat Muhammad(PBUH) was the Messenger of Allah, today he is not a Messenger".<sup>12</sup>
2. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has lost his life and does not exist in Paradise.<sup>13</sup>

This first statement quoted by Allama Dhahabi is referred to Abu al-Walid al-Baji, while Salahuddin (d. 643 AH) and Tajuddin al-Sabki (d. 771 AH) have declared it wrong. The second statement quoted by Allama Dhahabi is referred to Ibn Hazm. In is worth mentioning that Ibn Hazm (d. 452 AH) is not a trustworthy (thiqah) according to Allmah Dhahabi because he has said about Ibn Hazm:

1. In some things, Ibn Hazm has not done justice.
2. Ibn Hazm opposed all kinds of speculation, thus he converted to al-Zāhirīyyah sect from al-Shafi'I sect.<sup>14</sup>

Moreover, Allama Dhahabi has admitted that Ibn Fork is better than Ibn Hazm in every respect.<sup>15</sup>

The above discussion summarizes that the statements that has been related to Ibn Fork does not seem to be based on reality.

### **Abu Ishaq al-AsfaraYa'ini (d.418 AH)**

His full name is “Abu Ishaq Ibrahim bin Muhammad al-Asfara'ini”. He was born in 337A.H / 949 A.D in Asfarayin.<sup>16</sup> He received his early education in his hometown Asfarayin, then traveled to Khurasan and Iraq.<sup>17</sup> After completing his education, he came to Nishapur where many scholars gained knowledge from him.<sup>18</sup> He passed away on the Day of Ashura 10<sup>th</sup> Muharram-ul-Haram 418 AH / 19<sup>th</sup> February 1027 AD at Yashapur<sup>19</sup>.

Though the scholars have praised him a lot, but Allama Dhahabi, after mentioning his brief biography, has mentioned some issues that need to be investigated, such as

1. Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri narrates that Abu Ishaq was a disbeliever of virtues of saints (Awliya).
2. Abu al-Qasim al-Faqih said: "Whenever my teacher Abu Ishaq talked about such issues, people used to say that Abu Ishaq is a pen-upped personality because he abuses, fights, and does similar things<sup>20</sup>.

The research revealed that Imam Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri has declared the statement of his Shaykh Abu Ishaq (RA) about the virtues of the saints as Rajih (more likely) in his book “al-Risalah al-Qushayriah”.

During research we were unable to find the statement of Abu al-Qasim in any book. Moreover, a person who fulfills all the terms and condition of imamath, how can he be guilty of such abuse? However, if Imam Al-Dhahabi considered (اوله سفسطة و اخره زندقه) “The first is sophistry and the last is heresy” as one abuse, then Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah was also guilty of abusiveness<sup>21</sup>.

From the above account, it seems that Imam Al-Dhahabi has not fulfilled the requirements of justice when he mentions the biography of Shaykh Abu Ishaq.

### **Imam al-Haramayn Abu al-Maali al-Jawini (d. 419AH)**

His full name is “Abdul Malik bin Abu Muhammad Abdullah bin Yusuf bin Abdullah bin Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Haywayh al-Juwayni”. He was born on Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> Muharram 419AH / 17<sup>th</sup> February 1028 in Juwayn, a village of Nishapur. <sup>22</sup> He received his early education and fiqh from his father Shaykh Abu Muhammad al-Juwayni (d. 439) and started the knowledge of Hadith at an incredibly young age<sup>23</sup>. He died on Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Thani 478 AH / 20<sup>th</sup> August 1085 AH in Juwayn. <sup>24</sup>

In his biography, Imam Al-Dhahabi (RA) mentions his full name, date of birth, and place of birth, his teachers and students, along with the scholars who have praised him. However, Allama Dhahabi has referred some quotes about him that require research, such as he says:

1. Imam al-Harameen did not know hadiths despite being such a great Imam<sup>25</sup>.
2. There is no throne for Allah.
3. Allah knows only the generalities and not the details. <sup>26</sup>

How can we believe that al-Juwayni has no knowledge of Ḥadīth while Shams-ud-Din al-Muzaffar (d. 654 AH) says that Imam al-Juwayni has heard hadiths from different shaykhs in different cities. <sup>27</sup> The second statement is narrated by Abu Ja’far al-Hamdani who is counted among ahl e ithbat (Salafiya).<sup>28</sup>

While about the third statement, it is worthy to disclose that it is agreed upon that if anyone says that Allah does not know the details of every thing such person is excluded from the circle of Islam<sup>29</sup> then how can such statements be referred to a famous personality of the Islamic world, who has been given the title of Imam al-Harameen and has a prominent position in theology and beliefs?

### **Imam Ghazali(d.450AH)**

His full name is “Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Ghazali”. Al-Ghazali was born in 450 AH / 1058 AD in Khurasan. <sup>30</sup> He received his early education in “Tus”. Then he learned from Shaykh Ahmad al-Razkani (d. 470 AH), Shaykh Abu al-Nasr al-Ismaili (d. 505 AH), and Imam al-Haramayn Abu al-Ma’ali al-Juwayni (d. 478 AH). Al-Ghazali passed away on Monday in his hometown “Tus” on December 19, 1111. <sup>31</sup>

Allama Dhahabi has also given brief praise after mentioning Imam Ghazali in Siyar a`lam al-nubala, but in some places, Imam Ghazali has also been severely criticized, such as:

1. At first Hazrat Umarra and other Companions were pleased with the Caliphate of Hazrat Ali (RA) but when they were dominated by desires and love of the state, they all opposed the Caliphate of Hazrat Ali (RA). <sup>32</sup>

2. The books of Imam Ghazali increase the doubts of the Ummah.<sup>33</sup>

The answer to the first statement is that the book "Ithaaf al-Sadat al-Muttaqeen" by Shaykh Muhammad Husayni al-Zubaydi (d. 1205 A.H.) was studied, in which he mentioned the works of al-Ghazali in detail alphabetically and there is no book named "Sirr al-Alamin" under the letter "Seen", but only one book "Al-Sirr al-Musawwaf" is mentioned and then the list of "Sheen" begins.

The answer to the second statement is that the Emir of the west, Abu al-Hasan Ali bin Tashfeen, had ordered to burn the books of al-Ghazali, not because his books were misleading in beliefs, but because the Maliki jurists so condemned about theology and philosophy that Ibn Tashqeen strongly opposed these sciences even anyone had learned theology and philosophy, he would have issued a fatwa of disbelief on him<sup>34</sup>. Therefore, it is not the fault of al-Ghazali's writings but the reason behind this order was condemnation of Maliki jurists.<sup>35</sup>

### **Fakhr-ud-Din al-Razi (d. 606 AH)**

Imam Fakhr-ud-Din Al-Razi's full name is "Muhammad bin Umar Hussain Al-Razi".<sup>36</sup> Al-Razi was born on 25<sup>th</sup> Ramadan 544 AH / 1149 A.H.<sup>37</sup> He received his early education from his father, followed by the rest from Shaykh al-Kamal al-Samani (d. 573 AH) and Shaykh Mujad-ud-Dawla al-Jeeli (611 AH). He left numerous famous students and writings in his academic career. Al-Razi passed away on Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> Shawwal 606 AH in Herat.<sup>38</sup>

Imam Al-Dhahabi mentioned Al-Razi in his book "Siyar a`lam al-nubala" and mentioned his full name, date of birth, and a brief acquisition of his knowledge. After this, he pointed out some issue with reference to Al-Razi which need research, such as:

1. The writings of Al-Razi have increased the magic and other problems in the society.<sup>39</sup>
2. Due to the writings of Al-Razi, the ratio of disobedience of Sunnah has been increased.<sup>40</sup>

The first statement is referred to Al-Razi due to a book "Al-Sirr al-Maktum fi Mukhtabah al-Najum". Al-Subaki (d. 771 AH) states that this book is written by Abul Hasan Ali Ahmad al-Maghrbi (d. 618 AH) not by Al-Razi.<sup>41</sup>

The second statement may be answered that it is because of his disputes with the Kiramiyyah community.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, if a person is declared as a deviant from Sunnah because of the sayings of Kiramiyyah community or any other falsehood sects, then the Ahl-al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah are deviants from the Sunnah.

The above discussion proves that the blame by Imam Al-Dhahabi to Al-Razi of being deviant from the Sunnah is not correct.

### **Uthman ibn Sa'id al-Darmi (d. 282 AH)**

His full name is "Uthman bin Saeed al-Darmi". Al-Darmi was born in 200 AH / 815 AD in Sajistan, Afghanistan. He received his early education from the scholars of his hometown and then traveled to different countries i.e; Haramayn Sharifayn, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, etc. for the

study of Ḥadīth and other fields of Islamic knowledge. Al-Darmi died in Herat in 282 AH / January 896.<sup>43</sup>

### **Opinions of scholars about 'Uthman ibn Sa'id al-Darmi**

Many of the scholars have blamed Al-Darmi of “Anthropomorphism” (التجسيم), due to some of his quotes. Some of them are as follows:

1. He moves whenever he wants<sup>44</sup>
2. He descends and rises whenever he wills, and systoles and simplifies, and gets up and sits whenever he wants<sup>45</sup>
3. Allah has no limit nor any end<sup>46</sup>

These are some examples from the books of Al-Darmi, apart from these, many other sayings indicate the attribution of human physical and mental features to Allah the Almighty.

Al-Dhahabi, while biographing Al-Darmi, started with titles such as Al-Imam Allama al-Hafiz al-Naqad and Shaykh Tilak al-Diyar. After this, only those sayings that have been quoted which attribute and praise Al-Darmi but he did not mention any of his misguided beliefs. However, Allama Dhahabi knew the beliefs of Al-Darmi.<sup>47</sup>

### **Muhammad ibn Ishaq bin Khuzaymah (d. 311 AH)**

His full name is “Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Khuzaymah bin Mughirah”. Ibn Khuzaymah was born in 223 A.H / 837 AD in Nishapur, Iran. He received his early education from the scholars of Nishapur. Then he received the rest of his education from Ishaq bin Rahwayh (d. 238 AH), Muhammad bin Mehran (d. 238 AH), and Musa bin Sahal al-Rami (d. 262 AH)<sup>48</sup>. He passed away on Saturday night 311 AH / March 9, 924.<sup>49</sup>

### **Opinions of Scholars about Ibn Khuzaymah**

Below are the sayings of ibn Khuzaim due to which scholars considered him in anthropomorphic sect:

1. Chapter: Mentioning Proving the Face of Allah Almighty in His Saying “And the Face of your Lord the Majesty and Honorable will remain), so God proved His Face to Himself.<sup>50</sup>
2. Chapter of mentioning the proof of the eye of Allah Almighty..... The Prophet, (Peace be Upon Him), shows that God has two eyes.<sup>51</sup>

Al-Dhahabi, has awarded him the title of Shaykh-ul-Islam and Imam al-A'imma in the biography of Ibn Khuzaymah. and did not mention any of the above statements of him, but he only mentions those which are based on his praise and glory. Few of them are as follows:

1. Allah has protected this city from disasters with the blessings of Ibn Khuzaima's house.
2. Ibn Khuzaymah memorized 70,000 ahadith.<sup>52</sup>

There is no doubt that Ibn Khuzaymah has rendered immense services to the Ḥadīth,

and as a human being, there must be some weakness in every person however, Al-Dhahabi has not mentioned any of his weaknesses but only his virtues.

### **Shaykh Abu Abdullah ibn Mandah(d. 395 AH)**

His full name is “Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ishaq al-Asfahani”.<sup>53</sup> Ibn Manda was born in Isfahan, Iran, in 310 AH / 922 AD.<sup>54</sup> He received his early education from his father and then traveled to different regions, including Mecca, Iraq, Syria, and Egypt. He died on the last Friday night of Dhul-Qa'dah 395 AH / 8 August 1005, in his native city, Isfahan.<sup>55</sup>

### **Opinions of scholars about Shaykh Ibn Mandah**

Few sayings are mentioned below from the books of Ibn Manda due to which the scholars have referred him to the anthropomorphism.

1. Allah Almighty descends to the heavens of the world, and in every heaven he has a chair, so when he descends to the heavens of the world, he sits on his chair, then stretches out his forearms and says, Who is that.....<sup>56</sup>
2. Indeed, Allah Almighty created Adam, with his hands.<sup>57</sup>

Al-Dhahabi did not mention any of the shortcomings of Ibn Manda in the book *Of Siyar a'lam al-nubala*. He begins with the titles such as Al-Imam, Al-Hafiz, and Muhaddith al-Islam in Ibn Manda's biography and adds only those sayings which were about his praise, even he defended him from the condemnables as Abu Nua'ym al-Asfahani had said about Ibn Manda that in his old ages he was confused. Al-Dhahabi said in his defense: "Abu Nua'ym al-Asfahani said this because of his enmity and we don't accept these words."<sup>58</sup>

On contrary, Al-Dhahabi has taken a strict approach while mentioning the biographies of the great scholars of asharieties such as Imam al-Haramayn and Al-Ghazali.

### **Sheikh Abu Isma'il al-Hirawi al-Ansari (d.481HA)**

His full name is “Abu Ismail Abdullah bin Muhammad Al-Hirawi”. Al-Hirawi was born on 24 Dhu'l Hajjah 396 AH in Herat, Afghanistan.<sup>59</sup> He recited Tafseer from ‘Ammar al-Sajzi (d. 422 AH) and Jami’ al-Tirmidhi from ‘Abd Al-Jabbar al-Jarahi (d. 412 AH). He studied tafseer, hadith, history, ansab, and Arabic language from various shaykhs of Harat. Al-Hirawi passed away on Friday, 24 Dhu'l Hajjah 481 AH.<sup>60</sup>

### **Scholars' opinions about Abu Isma'il al-Harawi**

Al-Dhahabi, has bestowed Al-Hirawi with titles such as Shaykh-ul-Islam Imaman Kamilan fi al-Tafseer and Hafiz-ul-Hadith, and he is the only who is given the title of Shaykh-ul-Islam instead of his name while the others full names are mentioned in the title as well.<sup>61</sup> He has not pointed out any of the beliefs and writings of Al-Harawi which are objectable, moreover, he



has also tried to defend them various times.

The opinion of Ibn Al-Qayyim regarding the beliefs and writings of Al-Hirawi and a quote from Al-Hirawi's own writing are given below:

1. Al-Hirawi said in his book *Al-Arba'un fi Dala'il al Sifat wal Tawheed*:  
"Chapter on affirmation of hands of Allah Almighty", "Chapter on affirmation of the fingers of Allah"<sup>62</sup>
2. Ibn Al-Qayyim (d. 751 AH) said: "Have mercy on Shaykh Abu Isma'il al-Hirawi for opening the doors of kufr and atheism for the "Jahamiyyah".<sup>63</sup>

Al-Dhahabi has not mentioned any of these words in his biography. That's why, it is also clearly mentioned in the margins of *Siyar a'lam al-nubala* that Al-Dhahabi has declared the innovations of Al-Hirawi and imams of similar faiths as Sunnah and he has taken a strict approach while mentioning the biographies of notable Ash'arities and Maturidiyyah scholars i.e; Imam al-Haramayn and Al-Ghazali.<sup>64</sup>

### **Ahmad bin 'Abd al-Haleem Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 AH)**

His full name is "Taqi al-Din Abu al-Abbas Ahmad bin 'Abd al Haleem bin Taymiyyah al-Harani al-Hanbali". He was born on 22 January 1263 in Harran, Syria. He memorized the Holy Qur'an at an early age and received education in Dar-ul-Hadath al-Sakariyyah as well as Madrasa Hanbaliyyah. Apart from these two Madrasahs, he learned from many Shaykhs. He Taymiyyah died on 20<sup>th</sup> Dhul Qa'da 728 A.H while he was imprisoned in Damascus.<sup>65</sup>

### **Allama Ibn Taymi's beliefs in the context of his writings**

1. Once Ibn Taymiyyah came down the stairs of the dice and said, "The revelation of Allah is the result of this revelation"<sup>66</sup>.
2. IbnTaymiyyah (d. 728 AH) said in his *Majmu' al-Fataawa*: "Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him) was made to sit with him on the throne by his Lord."<sup>67</sup>
3. IbnTaymiyyah (d. 728 AH) said: "The Lord who, by his power, if he wants can stay firm on the back of a mosquito, then how he cannot stay firm on the Throne, which is greater than the heavens and the earth"<sup>68</sup>.

Apart from these above, there are many other sayings due to which Ibn Taymiyyah has been considered among the anthropomorphic sect.<sup>69</sup>

Al-Dhahabi, after mentioning the full name of Ibn Taymiyyah, immediately awarded him titles such as Shaykh-ul-Islam, Al-Imam, Al-Haber, Al-Bahr, and Al-Ilm al-Fard. Though it is said about Ibn Taymiyyah that if he was asked about any art, he would have given such a satisfactory answer, it seems that Ibn Taymiyyah has acquired a lot of expertise in this art only." Ibn Taymiyyah had full command in tafsir, and when he used to speak on any issue, he would argue from the Qur'an.<sup>70</sup> However, Al-Dhahabi did not mention the differences and beliefs of Ibn Taymiyyah, and if these beliefs were of any of the Asharities, then Al-Dhahabi would have taken a strict account of it.

## Conclusions

For this article, the whole "Siyar A`lam al-Nubala" has been studied, and every effort has been made so that no aspect of the truth is left, and it concluded as follows:

- Al-Dhahabi has not applied the same style while mentioning the biographies of Asharities and anthropomorphic theologians. That's why, he mentions unassured opinion about the deficiencies of Asharities, on contrary, he avoids to mention every noticeable issue in the beliefs of the anthropomorphic theologians and if he mentions it, he has tried to defend it.
- It is worth mentioning that to judge the beliefs of a person, "Siyar a`lam al-nubala" is not the only book to be depended upon but other books of Tabaqat should also be considered.
- Al-Dhahabi has often mentioned the biography of his contemporaries and Hanabila scholars in detail, while he has mentioned the biographies of other scholars very briefly, i.e; biography of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal is mentioned in several hundred pages and while the biography of Imam Abu Hanifa is mentioned in a few pages.
- During mentioning the companions of the Prophet Al-Dhahabi has kept in mind whether these Companions were with Hazrat Ali (RA) or Hazrat Muawiyah (RA) during the Battle of Siffin.
- In Siyar A`lam al-Nubala', Al-Dhahabi has also mentioned the biographies and services of famous women besides men.
- Al-Dhahabi identified the sect of most of the personalities with whom he is related in the Karamiyyah, the Qadiriyyah, the Mu'tazilites, the Shiites, etc.

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