

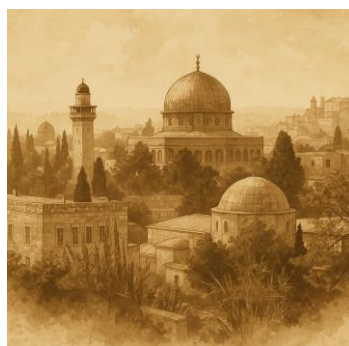
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

What is the Definition of ‘Aqidah?

The Linguistic Meaning

The word ‘Aqīdah comes from the Arabic root: ع-ق-د (‘A-Q-D) Which means: to tie firmly, knot, bind with certainty, or to be firmly settled upon something.

Ibn Fāris (d. 395H) said: “al-‘Ayn, al-Qāf, and al-Dāl indicate firmness and binding. It is said: ‘Aqadtu al-ḥabla’ - I tied the rope.”¹



Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711H) in Lisān al-‘Arab: “al-‘Aqd means binding something firmly. And from it is ‘al-‘Aqīdah’ — what a person holds with certainty in his heart.”²

The Shar‘ī/Technical Meaning

As defined by the Scholars: Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said: “‘Aqīdah is that which the heart firmly believes and holds as true, without doubt or wavering.”³

Imām aṣ-Ṣābūnī (d. 449H) titled his famous book: “‘Aqīdah as-Salaf Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth” Where he mentions: “Their hearts are united upon the ‘Aqīdah taken from the Book and the Sunnah.”⁴

¹ Maqāyīs al-Lughah, 4/276

² Lisān al-‘Arab, entry: ‘Aqd’

³ Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā 3/157

⁴ ‘Aqīdah aṣ-Ṣābūnī, 1/14

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān حفظه الله said: “‘Aqīdah in the Shar‘ī sense refers to belief in the six pillars of īmān, and everything that the heart must affirm with certainty, without hesitation, from the fundamentals of the religion.”⁵

Qur’anic Evidence

While the word ‘Aqīdah itself does not appear explicitly in the Qur’an or Sunnah, the meaning is clearly embedded in the concept of īmān, yaqīn, and ‘ilm that is firmly tied in the heart:

لَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ

“But Allāh has endeared to you faith (īmān) and has made it beautiful in your hearts.”⁶

وَلَمْ يَرْتَابُوا

“And they do not doubt...”⁷

This is a recurring phrase describing true believers and these verses indicate firm conviction tied to the heart — this is the essence of ‘Aqīdah.

Hadīth Evidence

The Prophet ﷺ described īmān as: “...That you believe in Allāh, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and that you believe in Qadar, both its good and bad.”⁸

These are the foundations of ‘Aqīdah, mentioned directly by the Prophet ﷺ as beliefs.

The Salaf’s Use of the Term / Concept

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241H) in Uṣūl as-Sunnah (a foundational treatise in ‘Aqīdah) begins with: “The foundation of the Sunnah with us is

⁵ Sharḥ Kitāb al-‘Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah

⁶ Surah al-Ḥujurāt 49:7

⁷ al-Ḥujurāt 49:15

⁸ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 8

clinging to what the Companions were upon...” Therefore, this was a statement of the correct ‘Aqīdah.

And his emphasizes in the belief in Allāh’s perfect Names and Attributes, Qadar, seeing Allāh, īmān, and not revolting against rulers — are all matters of ‘Aqīdah.

Imām al-Ājurrī (d. 360H) In ash-Sharī‘ah, he said: “You must hold firm to the ‘Aqīdah that has come in the Book and Sunnah...”

Imām al-Barbahārī (d. 329H) in Sharḥ al-Sunnah, said: “Know that the foundations of the Sunnah are to hold fast to what the Companions were upon...”

And this syncs with the Statement of Allah: If you believe as they believe...

And the word Sunnah here is synonymous with ‘Aqīdah, as was the usage of the Salaf.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله Repeatedly used the term ‘Aqīdah in: al-‘Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah, al-‘Aqīdah al-Ḥamawīyyah, al-‘Aqīdah at-Tadmuriyyah among other books and these were responses to people of innovation, especially the Jahmiyyah, Ash‘ariyyah, and others, defending the correct ‘Aqīdah of Ahlus-Sunnah.

Shaykh Ibn Bāz رحمه الله said: “The correct ‘Aqīdah is that which the Salaf of this Ummah were upon: belief in Allāh, His Names and Attributes, belief in the Angels, the Books, Messengers, The Last Day, and Qadar...”⁹

⁹ Majmū‘ Fatāwā Ibn Bāz 1/19

