

Tūmart was as close to the madhhab of the Shi'ah<sup>1258</sup> and the Mu'tazilah, as he was to the Ash'ariyyah. Prior to this period, the Muslims in North Africa and al-Andalūs were largely upon the Sunnah and did not know the Ash'arite creed. In al-Andalūs, in the year 503H, Ghazālī's books were ordered to be destroyed due to their opposition to the way of Ahl al-Sunnah, the Righteous Salaf.

**Ibn 'Asākir**<sup>1259</sup> (d. 571H) became known for defending the Ash'arite school with his book *Tabyīn Kadhib al-Muftarī*, containing a biography of al-Ash'arī and the ṭabaqāt (generations) of Ash'arite scholars. This book was written in response to Abū 'Alī al-Ḥasan bin 'Alī al-Ahwāzī<sup>1260</sup> (d. 446H), from the sect known as the Sālimiyyah,<sup>1261</sup> who had unjustified,

<sup>1258</sup> In the book *Akhbār Ibn Tūmart*, written by one of his students, Abū Bakrī bin 'Alī al-Ṣanhājī (published by Dār al-Manṣūr, Rabāṭ, 1971), he is referred to throughout the entire book as *al-Imām al-Ma'sūm* (the Infallible Imām).

<sup>1259</sup> He is Abū al-Qāsim 'Alī bin al-Ḥasan Hibat Allāh bin 'Abd Allāh bin 'Asākir born in 499H, the Hāfidh. He travelled extensively in the various lands such as Iraq, Khurasān, Baghdād, Makkah, Madīnah, Aṣbahān, Nīsabūr, Marw, Bayhaq, Herāt and others. He has many works the most famous of which is *Tārīkh Dimashq*. Ibn al-Jawzī said of him (*al-Muntadham*, 18/571), "He was very partisan towards Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī until he authored a book, calling it '*Tabyīn Kadhib al-Muftarī 'alā Abī al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī*'." Refer also to *Siyar A'lām al-Nubulā* (20/554) and *Wafiyāt al-A'yān* (3/309).

<sup>1260</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah said of al-Ahwāzī (*Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, 5/484):

For this reason Abū al-Qāsim bin 'Asākir refuted Abū 'Alī al-Ahwāzī when this one [al-Ahwāzī] authored [a work] on the defects of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī and this one [Ibn 'Asākir] on his virtues, and Abū 'Alī al-Ahwāzī was from the Sālimiyyah.

And he also said (*Majmū' 5/556*):

And when Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī recanted from I'tizāl, he traversed the way of Abū Muḥammad bin Kullāb, and then a faction ascribing themselves to the Sunnah and Ḥadīth from amongst the Sālimiyyah and others, such as Abū 'Alī al-Ahwāzī, began to mention regarding the defects of Abū al-Ḥasan such things that were from the fabrications of the Mu'tazilah and others, because al-Ash'arī had clarified the contradictions of the sayings of the Mu'tazilah and their corruption, in a manner that no one besides him had done.

<sup>1261</sup> The Sālimiyyah are a splinter sect of the Kullābiyyah who denied Allāh performs actions through His will and power. They held Allāh's speech comprises letters and voices which are eternal, necessary for Allāh's essence - just like the attributes of life (ḥayāt) - without this speech being connected to