

ascent to felicity maraqi l saadat a on islamic creed and hanafi jurisprudence

Ascent to Felicity Maraqi al-Sa'adat: An Overview of Islamic Creed and Hanafi Jurisprudence

Ascent to Felicity, known as Maraqi al-Sa'adat, is a significant work in Islamic scholarship that encapsulates the core tenets of Islamic creed (Aqidah) and the Hanafi school of jurisprudence (Fiqh). Authored by the esteemed scholar, Shaykh Ali al-Qari, this text serves as a guide for students and practitioners of the faith, providing them with a structured understanding of their beliefs and legal rulings. This comprehensive article delves into the primary themes of Maraqi al-Sa'adat, exploring its theological foundations, its jurisprudential principles, and its relevance in contemporary Islamic practice.

Understanding Maraqi al-Sa'adat

Maraqī al-Sa'adat translates to "The Steps to Happiness," and it is designed as a manual for both theological and legal education within the framework of Sunni Islam. The work is divided into two main sections: the first focusing on the essentials of Islamic creed, and the second addressing the principles of Hanafi jurisprudence.

The Author: Shaykh Ali al-Qari

Shaykh Ali al-Qari was a renowned Islamic scholar of the 10th century AH (16th century CE), recognized for his contributions to hadith, jurisprudence, and Sufism. His efforts to synthesize Islamic thought have made his works essential in many Islamic educational institutions. He aimed to simplify complex theological and legal concepts for the average Muslim, ensuring that they can navigate their faith with clarity and confidence.

The Islamic Creed in Maraqi al-Sa'adat

The first part of Maraqi al-Sa'adat delves into the Islamic creed, outlining the fundamental beliefs that every Muslim is required to hold. These beliefs are often summarized in the six articles of faith.

1. Belief in Allah

- Oneness of Allah (Tawhid): The text emphasizes the absolute oneness of Allah and the rejection of any form of polytheism (shirk).
- Attributes of Allah: Shaykh Ali al-Qari discusses the essential attributes of Allah, such as His mercy, knowledge, and power, urging believers to develop a personal relationship with their Creator.

2. Belief in Angels

- Nature of Angels: The work outlines the creation of angels from light, their inability to disobey Allah, and their roles as messengers and guardians of human beings.

3. Belief in the Divine Books

- Revelation: The author provides insights into the significance of the divine scriptures, including the Quran, Torah, Psalms, and Gospel, emphasizing that the Quran is the final and unaltered message.

4. Belief in the Prophets

- Seal of Prophethood: Shaykh Ali highlights the importance of the Prophets, culminating in the finality of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the last messenger.

5. Belief in the Day of Judgment

- Accountability: The text stresses the reality of the Day of Judgment, where every individual will be held accountable for their actions in this life.

6. Belief in Divine Decree (Qadar)

- Predestination: The author explains the concept of predestination, affirming that Allah's knowledge encompasses all events, yet human beings retain free will to choose their paths.

Hanafi Jurisprudence in Maraqi al-Sa'adat

The second part of Maraqi al-Sa'adat focuses on Hanafi jurisprudence, which is one of the four major Sunni schools of Islamic law. This section provides a comprehensive understanding of legal rulings and their applications in daily life.

Principles of Hanafi Jurisprudence

The Hanafi school is known for its flexibility and rational approach to legal issues. The following are key principles derived from Maraqi al-Sa'adat:

- Sources of Law: The primary sources of law in Hanafi jurisprudence include:
 1. Quran: The holy book and the ultimate authority.
 2. Sunnah: The practices and sayings of Prophet Muhammad.

3. Ijma': Consensus among scholars.

4. Qiyas: Analogical reasoning.

- Flexibility in Jurisprudence: The Hanafi school is characterized by its adaptability to varying contexts and circumstances, which is evident in its rulings on different social and cultural practices.

Legal Rulings in Daily Life

Maraqi al-Sa'adat presents various legal issues that Muslims encounter in their daily lives, structured under key categories:

- Acts of Worship (Ibadah):
 - Prayer (Salah): The significance of the five daily prayers and the conditions for their validity.
 - Fasting (Sawm): Rules governing fasting during Ramadan and exceptions for specific individuals.
 - Charity (Zakat): The obligation of giving and its impact on community welfare.
- Social Transactions (Mu'amalat):
 - Marriage: Guidelines for contracts, rights of spouses, and the importance of mutual consent.
 - Business Ethics: Principles of honesty, fairness, and prohibition of usury (riba).
- Criminal Law (Hudud):
 - Punishments: The framework for dealing with offenses, emphasizing justice and mercy.

Importance of Maraqi al-Sa'adat in Contemporary Islamic Thought

Maraqi al-Sa'adat remains a vital text in the curriculum of many Islamic educational institutions. Its relevance can be understood through the following points:

- Educational Tool: The text is widely used as a reference for students learning about Islamic creed and Hanafi jurisprudence, providing a clear and structured approach to complex subjects.
- Bridge Between Theory and Practice: By connecting theological beliefs with legal rulings, the work helps Muslims understand how their beliefs shape their daily actions and interactions with others.
- Adaptability to Modern Issues: The principles outlined in Maraqi al-Sa'adat allow scholars and students to engage with contemporary issues while remaining grounded in traditional Islamic teachings.

Conclusion

Maraqi al-Sa'adat serves as an essential resource for Muslims seeking to deepen their understanding of Islamic creed and Hanafi jurisprudence. Through its comprehensive approach, it provides guidance for individuals navigating the complexities of faith and law in a modern context. As Islamic scholarship

continues to evolve, the teachings of Shaykh Ali al-Qari remain a beacon of knowledge, illuminating the path toward a balanced and fulfilled life in accordance with Islamic principles.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main focus of 'Ascent to Felicity' in the context of Islamic creed?

'Ascent to Felicity' primarily focuses on the fundamentals of Islamic belief (aqeedah) and the importance of adhering to the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah.

How does 'Ascent to Felicity' relate to Hanafi jurisprudence?

'Ascent to Felicity' provides a framework for understanding Islamic beliefs which can inform the application of Hanafi jurisprudence, illustrating how faith and legal rulings intertwine.

What are the key tenets of Islamic creed discussed in 'Ascent to Felicity'?

The key tenets include the belief in the oneness of Allah, the prophethood of Muhammad, the angels, the holy books, the Day of Judgment, and divine predestination.

Who is the author of 'Ascent to Felicity' and what is their significance?

The author is Shah Waliullah al-Dihlawi, a prominent Islamic scholar known for his contributions to Islamic thought, especially in the Hanafi school and Sufism.

What role does spirituality play in 'Ascent to Felicity'?

Spirituality is emphasized as a means to achieve closeness to Allah, suggesting that understanding creed and jurisprudence should also encompass spiritual development.

Can 'Ascent to Felicity' be utilized for modern Islamic education?

Yes, 'Ascent to Felicity' can serve as a foundational text for modern Islamic education, providing insights into both creed and law that are relevant to contemporary issues.

What challenges does 'Ascent to Felicity' address regarding Islamic belief?

'Ascent to Felicity' addresses challenges such as misconceptions about faith, the importance of authentic knowledge, and the need for unity among Muslims in understanding their beliefs.

How does 'Ascent to Felicity' contribute to inter-sectarian dialogue?

By presenting a clear outline of Hanafi beliefs and practices, 'Ascent to Felicity' encourages respectful dialogue among different Islamic sects by emphasizing shared core beliefs.

What is the significance of adhering to the Hanafi school of thought as discussed in 'Ascent to Felicity'?

Adhering to the Hanafi school is significant as it provides a structured approach to Islamic jurisprudence, promoting a balance between strict adherence to law and the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances.

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