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**ABSTRACT**

**An Explanation of the Science of Principles**

*شرح الأصول من علم الأصول*

Muhammed Salih al-‘Uthaymin was one of Saudi Arabia’s most distinguished sheikhs. He taught at Maʼhad al ʼIlmi in Unayza and occupied numerous key posts, such as head of the Al Aqida department of Ibn Saud Islamic University.

In the introduction, researcher Abu Yaqoub indicates that when compiling this book he relied on audio recordings by al-‘Uthaymin. He emphasises that he practised caution throughout the transcribing process and that textual additions and omissions occurred only when necessary, such as when al-‘Uthaymin used colloquial terms or repeated points that were dealt with elsewhere.

Yaqoub also indicates that he has extrapolated hadiths (prophetic traditions) cited in the explanation of *Al Usul min ’ilm al Usul*, in line with the book’s objectives, and that he added comments where necessary. He has also corroborated al-‘Uthaymin’s arguments by citing some of his other sources, and attributed quotations to their original sources wherever possible. The preface is followed by a biography of al-‘Uthaymin.

The book deals with topics that include *usul al fiqh* (the fundamentals of Islamic jurisprudence), *ahkam* (Islamic laws, legal and declaratory) *kalam* (speech or words), *ʻamr* (order), *nahi* (prohibition), *al ʼaam* (the general), *al khas* (the specific), *al mutlaq wal muqayyad* (absolute and limited meanings), *al mujmal wal mubin* (ambivalent and decisive texts), *zahir wal mu’ul* (unambiguous and ambiguous texts), *naskh* (abrogation), *al ʻahkbar* (news), *ijma’* (consensus), *qiyas* (analogical reasoning), *taʼaruḍ* (conflict of evidences), *Mufti wal Mustafti* (the one who provides a religious ruling and the inquirer who seeks a religious ruling), *ijtihad* (interpretation) and *taqlid* (imitation).

A major shortcoming is that the book does not divide the topics into sections or chapters, so the reader may find it difficult to locate particular sections. The book also does not have a bibliography.

Dahlia Sabry

Translated by Karima Sbitri