Fundamental Beliefs of a Muslim

The Noble Shaykh, al-‘Allāmah
Ṣāliḥ Ibn Fawzān Ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Fawzān
Fundamental
Beliefs
Of a
Muslim

Al-‘Allāmah Ṣāliḥ Ibn Fawzān
Ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Fawzān

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Introduction

In the Name of Allaah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allaah, Lord of all creation who guided us to Islām.

"Never could we have found guidance, was it not that Allaah had guided us." [Sūrah l-A’rāf 7:43]

We ask Him, who is free from all imperfections, to make us firm upon Islām until death. As Allaah (سَمِعْنَا مَا سَمِعْتُونَ) said,

"O you who believe! Fear Allaah as He should be feared; and die not except in a state of Islām with complete submission to Allaah." [Sūrah Āli-'Imrān 3:102]

[We ask Him] not to cause our hearts to deviate after He has guided us.
“Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate (from the truth) after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from You. Truly, You are the Bestower.” [Sūrah Āl-Imrān 3:8]

May the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our Prophet, our example and our beloved one, Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم), whom Allāh sent as a mercy to the whole of mankind.

And may Allāh be pleased with his devoted and virtuous companions, from the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār and those who follow them in goodness, for as long as the night and day alternate.

To proceed:

These are a few short words in clarification of the belief of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah. It was necessary to write them due to the separation and differing that the Islamic nation lives through today, which is represented by the abundance of contemporary sects and different groups.

Every one of them calls to their (own) creed and praises his (own) group, until the ignorant Muslim is confused as to whom he should follow and who he should imitate.

The disbeliever who desires to embrace Islām does not know what is the true Islām that he has read and heard about, the Islām which the Qur‘ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) has guided to, and the Islām that was portrayed in the life of the noble Companions (رضي الله عنهم) and practiced by the praiseworthy generations.

Rather, Islām is viewed predominantly as a name without the reality of the meaning as stated by one of the Orientalists when he said, “Islām is
veiled by its people.” Meaning, that they ascribe to this religion without possessing its true qualities.

We do not say that Islām is lost in totality because Allāh ( سبحانه وتعالى) has guarantéed its continuation through the preservation of His Book, as Allāh (بُعُودُوُتْمُنَا) said,

إِنَّا نَخْلُصُ نَزْلَا الْذِّكْرُ وَنَزْلَا الْقُرْآنَ

"Indeed, it is We Who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur‘ān) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption)."

[Sūrah al-Ḥijr 15:9]

He has also safeguarded Islām through the presence of a group of Muslims who will implement, preserve and defend the religion, as Allāh (بُعُودُوُتْمُنَا) said,

بِئِذَا الَّذِينَ ذَهَبُوا مِنْ يَدَيْهِمْ فَسَوَّفَ يَا فَلَيْتُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُغُورُ يَعِدَّهُم

وَبِئِذَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَمَرَّهُمْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أُعْمَرُوُّ الْكَفَّارِينَ يَجْهَدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَغْفِلُونَ لُومَةَ لَا يُؤْنِي ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيْهِ مِنْ بِشَاءِهِ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ عَلِيمًا

"O you who believe! Whosoever from amongst you turns back from his religion (i.e. Islām), Allāh will bring a people whom He will love and they will love Him; humble towards the Believers, stern towards the disbelievers, fighting in the Way of Allāh, and never afraid of the blame of the blamers.”

[Sūrah al-Mā’idah 5:54]
And Allāh (تعالى وتعالى) said,

"If you turn away (from Islām and the obedience of Allāh), He will exchange you for some other people, and they will not be your likes." [Sūrah Muḥammad 47:28]

Yes, this is the same group that the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said about,

لا تزال طائفة من أمتى على الحق ظاهرين لا يضرهم من خذهم ولا من خالفهم حتى يأتي أمر الله تبارك وتعالى وهم على ذلك

"There will not cease to be a group from my nation who are manifest upon the truth; they will not be harmed by those who forsake them nor by those who oppose them until the Command of Allāh comes whilst they are upon that (way).”

Therefore, at this point it is binding upon us to become acquainted with this blessed group that represents the true Islām – may Allāh make us from them. So that those who want to learn about the correct Islām can learn about it and so that they can become acquainted with its people, which will allow them to take them as an example and traverse in their footsteps.

This will also allow those who want to embrace Islām from the disbelievers to attach themselves to this group.

1 Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 7022), Muslim (no. 1037) and by Aḥmad in al-Musnad (4/93).
What is Intended by “The Saved Sect” (Otherwise Known as) “Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah”

The Muslims at the time of the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) were one nation, as Allāh (tabl. ‘alam) said,

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“Indeed, your nation is one nation, and I am your Lord so worship Me alone.” [Ṣūrah al-Anbiyā‘ 21:92]

On numerous occassions the Jews and hypocrites attempted to divide the Muslims during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) but they were never able.

The hypocrites said,

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“Spend not upon those who are with Allāh’s Messenger, until they desert him.” [Ṣūrah al-Munāfiqūn 63:7]

And Allāh refuted them with His saying,

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“And to Allāh belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites comprehend not.” [Ṣūrah al-Munāfiqūn 63:7]

The Jews endeavoured to divide the Muslims and turn them back from their religion,
“And a party of the people of the Scripture said: Believe in the morning in that which is revealed to the Believers (i.e. the Muslims), and reject it at the end of the day, so that they may turn back.”

[Sūrah Āl-‘Imrān 3:72]

However, their plan was unsuccessful because Allāh exposed and revealed it.

They made a second attempt to (divide the Muslims) and they took to mentioning the hostility and wars that had erupted between the Anṣār before Islām, and they began to mention war poems (to stir emotions).

Once again Allāh exposed their plans with His saying (بَلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تُطِيعُوا أَفْقَهَا مِنَ الْذِينَ آمَنُوا أَلْوَانَ الْكِتَابِ بَرَدُواٰ)

“O you who believe! If you obey a group of those who were given the Scripture (i.e. the Jews and Christians), they would indeed render you disbelievers after you have believed!” [Sūrah Āl-‘Imrān 3:100]

Until His saying,

(وَيَوْمَ نَبِيضُ وَجُوْهَةُ وَكُسُودُ وَجُوْهَةُ)

“On the day when some faces will become white and some faces will become black.” [Sūrah Āl-‘Imrān 3:106]
This led to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) visiting the Anṣār; he admonished and reminded them about the blessing of Islām and their state of unity after they were once divided.

This caused them to shake hands and embrace one another,¹ and yet again the plan of the Jews failed and the Muslims remained one nation.

And Allāh (تبارك وتعالَ) commanded them with unity upon the truth and forbade them from differing and separation. He said,

وَلَا تَكُونَوا كَأَيْلَاتِينَ طُغِّيَّانَةٍ وَأَخْتَلَفْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِ ما جَآءَنَا هُمْ أَصِيَّاتٌ

“And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them.”  
[Sūrah Āli-İmran 3:105]

And Allāh (تبارك وتعالَ) said,

وَأَعْصَمْنَاهُمْ مِنْ يَحْبَبِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا نَفَرِقُوا

“And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allāh (i.e. this Qur‘ān), and be not divided among yourselves.”  
[Sūrah Āli-İmran 3:103]

Indeed, Allāh (سَبِيلُ اللَّهِ) has legislated for them unity in the performance of certain acts of worship such as the Prayer, fasting, Ḥajj (pilgrimage) and seeking knowledge.

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) likewise used to encourage unity of the Muslims and forbid them from differing and separation. He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to say things that were understood to be an encouragement towards unity and a prohibition of separation.

¹ Refer to Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān al-‘Aẓīm (1/397) of Ibn Kathīr and Asbāb al-Nuzūl (p. 149-150) of al-Wāḥidī.
He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to inform them about the splitting that will occur within this nation, just like what happened to the previous nations when he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

فإنه من يعيش منكم فسیرى اختلافًا كثيرًا فعليكم بسنتى
وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين المهديين من بعدي

“For indeed those from amongst you who will live long will see much differing. So stick to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Caliphs after me.”

And the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

افترقت اليهود على إحدى وسبعين فرقة وافترقت النصارى
على اثنين وسبعين فرقة وستفترق هذه الأمة على ثلاث
وبعین فرقة كلها في النار إلا واحدة، قلنا: من هي يا رسول
الله؟ قال: من كان على مثل ما أنا عليه اليوم وأصحابي

“The Jews divided into seventy-one sects, the Christians divided into seventy-two sects and this nation will split into seventy-three sects, all of them in the Hell-fire except one. We said: ‘Who are they O Messenger of Allaah?’ He said: ‘They are those upon that which I and my companions are upon.’”

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1 ٓسَحِیۡه: Related by Abū Dāwūd (5/4608), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2676) who said the ḥadīth is ḥasan ٓسَحِیۡه, Ibn Mājah (no. 44), Ahmad in al-Musnad (4/126, 127) and al-Dārimī (no. 95). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in ٓسَحِیۡه Ibn Mājah (no. 3227).

That which he informed of certainly materialized, for this nation began to split towards the end of the era of the companions (رضي الله عنهم) but this division did not have a great effect on the essence of the (Muslim) nation throughout the era of the praiseworthy generations, those whom the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) praised with his saying,

خيركم قرني ، ثم الذين يلونهم ، ثم الذين يلونهم

“The best of you is my generation, then those who follow them, then those who follow them.”

1

The narrator (of this hadith) said, “I do not know whether he mentioned two or three generations after his generation.”

This (lack of division) was because there was an abundance of scholars at that time, from the Muhaddithin (scholars who specialized in hadith), Mufassirūn (scholars who specialized in interpreting the Qur’an), and the Fuqahā‘ (scholars who specialized in Islamic jurisprudence). In there midst were the scholars of the Tābi‘in, the Abā al-Tābi‘in, and the four Imāms and their students (رحمهم الله). This state of unity was also due to the strength of the Islamic state during those praiseworthy generations.

Thus, the misguided sects (that surfaced in this era) were met with a deterring punishment, by way of conquering proofs and a forceful hand.

After the passing of the praiseworthy generations, the Muslims began to mix with adherents of other religions and the sciences of the disbelievers were translated into Arabic.

The kings of Islām began taking some of the people of disbelief and misguidance as confidantes and some of them became consultants and ministers.

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1 Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 2508), Muslim (no. 2535) al-Tirmidhī (no. 2222), al-Nisā‘ī (no. 3809), Abū Dāwūd (no. 4657) and Aḥmad in al-Musnad (4/427).
So the differing intensified and the sects and creeds multiplied and false ways flourished. This has not ceased to continue up until this time of ours, and it will not cease up until Allāh wills.

Yet - and all praise is due to Allāh - the Saved Sect, Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah still remains, clinging to the true Islām, traversing upon it and calling to it.

And it does not cease to exist and will never cease to exist in conformation with what the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam) said when he stated that this group will remain and continuously be present and steadfast upon the truth- and this is a blessing from Allāh, who is free from all imperfections- in order to preserve the religion and establish the proof against the stubborn.

This blessed group epitomizes the belief, action and speech that the companions were upon (ṣahabah), at the time of the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam), as the Prophet (ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam) said,

هم من كان على مثل ما أنا عليه اليوم وأصحابي

"They are those upon that which I and my companions are upon today."”¹

Indeed, this group is the remnant of the righteous about whom Allāh has said,

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"If only there had been amongst the generations before you, persons having wisdom, prohibiting others from al-Fasād (disbelief, polytheism, and all kinds of crimes and sins) in the earth." [Sūrah Hūd 11:116]
Names of the ‘Saved Sect’ and Their Meaning

Due to the fact that this sect is immune from misguidance it is necessary to know its names and signs so that it can be recognized and followed.

It has great names by which it is distinguished from all the deviant sects. From the most important of these names and signs is that it is known as the ‘Saved Sect’, ‘The Victorious Group’ and ‘The People of the Sunnah and Congregation’.

The meanings of these names will follow (shortly).

It is:

1. **The Saved Sect**: meaning saved from the Hell-Fire whereby the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) excluded it (from this threat), when he mentioned the sects and said,

   كلها في النار إلا واحدة

   “All are in the Hell-Fire except one.”

   Meaning it is not in the Hell-Fire.

2. It holds firmly to the Book of Allaah and Sunnah of the His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and to that which the foremost in faith, the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār were upon, as the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said about it,

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They are those who are upon that which I and my companions are upon today.”

3. Its people are known as ‘The People of the Sunnah and the Congregation’. So they are distinguished by two great qualities:

The first quality is that they cling tightly to the Sunnah of the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) until they became a people (that are ascribed to it) as opposed to the rest of the deviant sects for they cling to their opinions, their desires and the sayings of their leaders.

Therefore, these deviant sects are not ascribed to the Sunnah; rather they are ascribed to their innovations and misguidance like the Qadariyyah and Murji’ah, or to their leaders like the Jahmiyyah, or to their vile acts like the Khawārij and Rāfiḍah.

The second distinguishing quality is that they are the people of the congregation (Jamā’ah), because of their congregation upon the truth and the absence of separation.

This is in opposition to the misguided sects who do not gather upon the truth but rather follow their desires, as there is no truth to unite them.

4. It is ‘The Victorious Group’ up until the hour is established because it aids the religion of Allāh and as a result Allāh gives it victory, as Allāh (تَّبَادَّ وَأَمَامُ) said,

“If you help (in the cause of) Allāh, He will help you, and make your foothold firm.” [Sūrah Muḥammad 47:7]

This is why the Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam) said about it,

لا يضرهم من خذلهم ولا من خالفهم حتى يأتي أمر الله
تبارك وتعالى وهم على ذلك

“They will not be harmed by those who abandon them, nor by those who oppose them until the command of Allāh is established and they are upon that (way).”

1 Related by Muslim (no. 1920).
The Fundamental Beliefs of ‘Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah’

‘Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah’ traverse upon textually established and clear fundamental principles with regards to creed, actions and mannerisms. These magnificent fundamental principles are derived from the Book of Allāh and Sunnah of His Messenger ( صلى الله عليه وسلم), and that which the rightly guided predecessors of this nation were upon, from the companions, their successors and those who followed them in goodness.

These fundamentals can be summarized with the following:
The First Fundamental Principle

Belief in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and the belief in the divine decree, the good of it and the evil of it.
Belief in Allāh

This means to affirm, believe and act upon the three categories of Tawḥīd, which are:

1. Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah (to single Allāh out alone with lordship)
2. Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah (to single Allāh out alone with all worship)
3. Tawḥīd al-Asmā’ wa al-Ṣifāt (to single Allāh out with His names and attributes).

Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah:

This is to single Allāh out alone with respect to His actions such as creating, sustaining, giving life or death, and (to believe) that He is the Lord and sovereign King of everything.

Tawḥīd Al-Ulūhiyyah:

This means that the servants must single out Allāh alone with all acts (of worship) that Allāh has legislated through which they seek to draw closer to Allāh such as supplication, fear, hope, love, sacrifice, seeking aid, rescue and refuge, Prayer, fasting, Hajj and spending in the path of Allāh.

Everything that Allāh has legislated and commanded, then they do not associate partners with Him in that, whether it is an Angel, a Prophet, a wali (close ally of Allāh) or other than them.

Tawḥīd al-Asmā’ wa al-Ṣifāt:

This is to affirm whatever names and attributes Allāh has affirmed for Himself or which His Messenger ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) has affirmed for Him and to negate the imperfections and deficiencies that Allāh has negated for Himself or which His Messenger negated for Him; without denial, distortion or metaphorical interpretation, and without likening or resembling them to [the attributes of] the creation, as Allāh ( بارکتُ علیه ) said,
"There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer." [Sūrah al-Shūrā 42:11]

And Allāh (سُبْحَانَاهُ وَتَعَالَ) said,

“And all the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allāh, so call upon Him by them.” [Sūrah al-ʾĀrāf 7:180]
Belief in the Angels

This is to believe in their existence and that they were created from light. Allāh created them to worship Him and execute His commands in the universe, as Allāh (ﷻ) said,

"They are but honoured slaves. They speak not until He has spoken, and they act on His Command."

[Sūrah al-Anbiyā’ 21:26-27]

"Who made the Angels Messengers with wings, - two or three or four. He increases in creation whatever He wills. Verily, Allāh is Able to do all things."

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:1]
Belief in the Books

This is to believe in them and the guidance and light they contain, and to believe that Allāh revealed these books to His Messengers as guidance for mankind.

The greatest of them are the three books: the Tawrāt, the Injil and the Qur‘ān, and the greatest of these three is the noble Qur‘ān; it is the greatest miracle.

Allāh (swt) said,

قَلْ لَيْنَ أَحْصَمُّ الْإِنْدِينَ وَلَبِينَ عَلَّمَ أَنْ يُأْتِوْا بِمَثَالِهِمْ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمَثَالِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانُوا بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضٌ عَلَى الْحَقِّ بِغَيْرِ ٨٨

“Say: If mankind and the Jinn were to come together to attempt to produce the like of this Qur‘ān, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another.” [Sūrah al-Isrā’ 17:88]

Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah believe that the Qur‘ān is the speech of Allāh that was sent down (as revelation) and that it is uncreated, both its letters and meaning.

This is contrary to the false beliefs of the Jahmiyyah and the Mu’tazilah who say that both the letters and meaning of the Qur‘ān are created. Similarly, it opposes the false beliefs of the Ash‘ārīyah and those who resemble them who believe that only the meaning is the Speech of Allāh but as for the letters then they are created. Both positions are false and rejected.

Allāh (swt) said,
"And if anyone of the Mushrikūn (polytheists) seeks your protection then grant him protection, so that he may hear the Word of Allāh (the Qur’ān)."

[Sūrah al-Tawbah 9:6]

“They want to change Allāh’s Words.”

[Sūrah al-Fath 48:15]

Thus, the Qur’ān is the Speech of Allāh and not the speech of other than Him.
Belief in the Messengers

This is to believe in all of them from the first to the last, those whom Allah named and those whom He did not, and to believe that the last and seal of the Messengers is our Prophet Muhammad -

The belief in the Messengers is a general belief, whereas the belief in our Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is an exhaustive and specific belief. It is to believe that Muhammad is the seal of the Messengers, and that there is no Prophet after him. Whoever does not believe this, then he is a disbeliever.

Belief in the Messengers also necessitates the absence of exaggeration and negligence with relation to their rights, as opposed to the Jews and the Christians who exaggerated and went to extremes concerning some Messengers until they held some of them to be children of Allah as He (تبارك وتعالى) said,

وقالت اليهود عزرا ابن الله وقالت النصارى المسيح

“And the Jews say: ‘Uzayr (Ezra) is the son of Allah, and the Christians say: the Messiah is the son of Allah.”

[Sūrah al-Tawbah 9:30]

The Ṣūfis and philosophers neglected and belittled the rights of the Messengers (عليهم السلام) and gave preference to their leaders over them; and the idolaters and atheists disbelieved in all the Messengers.

The Jews disbelieved in Īsā (Jesus) and Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and the Christians disbelieved in Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Whoever believes in some of the Messengers and disbelieves in others, then in reality he is a disbeliever in all of them.
Allāh (بُرَاءَةٌ وَطَعَالٌ) said,

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إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِآللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أن يُفْرَقَوْا بَيْنَ آللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ لَنَعَظُّ وَناَصِفُ وَيَبْعَضُ وَيَقُولُونَ "أَوْلَٰٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقَّاً وَآمَنُوا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَدَابًا مُّهِينًا (٥١)"
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"Verily, those who disbelieve in Allāh and His Messengers and wish to make distinction between Allāh and His Messengers (by believing in Allāh and disbelieving in His Messengers) saying, ‘We believe in some but reject others,’ and wish to adopt a way in between. They are in truth disbelievers. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating torment.”

[Sūrah al-Nisā' 4:150-151]

And Allāh (بُرَاءَةٌ وَطَعَالٌ) said,

```arabic
لاَ نَفْرَقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدِ مِن رَسُولِهِ (٥٢)
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"We make no distinction between any of His Messengers.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:285]
Belief in the Last Day

This is to believe in everything that Allāh and His Messenger have informed us that will occur after death, from the punishment and bliss of the grave, the resurrection from the graves, the assembly, the reckoning, the weighing of deeds, the giving of the books in the right or left hand, the Bridge, and Paradise and the Hellfire.

Preparation for this is through the performance of righteous actions, abstinence from evil deeds and repentance from them. The atheists and the polytheists disbelieve in the Day of Judgment and the Jews and Christians do not possess the correct belief that is required of them, even though they believe in its occurrence.

“And they say: None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:111]

“And they (Jews) say: The Fire (i.e. Hell-fire on the Day of Resurrection) shall not touch us but for a few numbered days.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:80]
Belief in the Pre-Decree

This is to believe that Allāh knows everything, all that was and all that will be, that He decreed all of this and recorded it in the Preserved Tablet; and that everything which occurs from good or evil, belief or disbelief, obedience or disobedience, then indeed Allāh has willed, decreed and created it. Allāh loves obedience and hates disobedience.

The servants have ability (qudrah) over their actions, a choice (ikhtiyār) and will (mashi’ah) in that which emanates from them from obedience or disobedience. However, this is in accordance to the Will and Intent (irādah) of Allāh.

This is in opposition to the false belief of the Jabariyyah who say that the servant is compelled to carry out his actions, having no choice or ability.

It is also contrary to the false belief of the Qadariyyah who say that the slave has a totally independent and unrestricted free will, and that he creates his own action; and that the will and intent of the servant is independent of the Will and Intent of Allāh.

Allāh refutes both of these sects with His saying,

\[ \text{"And you will not, unless Allāh wills it."} \]
[Sūrah al-Takwīr 81:29]

Allāh affirmed that the servant has a will (mashi’ah), which is a refutation upon the extreme Jabariyyah, and also that the servant’s actions occur in accordance to His Will, which is a refutation upon the Qadariyyah who deny the Divine Decree.
This belief in the divine decree causes the slave to be patient in the face of calamities, and to stay far away from sins and shameful acts, just as it encourages him to act and removes from him laziness, fear and incapacity.
The Second Fundamental Principle

From the fundamental principles of Ahl al-Sunnah (the people of the Sunnah) is that Iman (faith) comprises of speech, action and belief; it increases with the obedience (of Allah) and it decreases with disobedience.

Iman is not merely speech and action without belief, as this is the faith of the hypocrites.

Likewise, it is not only knowledge (of Allah) without speech and action because this is the faith of the disbelieving rejecters.

Allah (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَّ) said,

(وَبِحَدَّثُوا بِهَا وَأَسْتَيْقَنُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ظَلَّلُوا وَعَلَّموُا)

"And they belied them (those Ayat) wrongfully and arrogantly, though their own selves were convinced thereof.” [Sūrah al-Naml 27:14]

And Allah (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَّ) said,

(فَأَنْفَسُهُمْ لَا يُكْبِرُونَ وَلَكِنَّ الْأَطْلَالِينَ يَقَاتَلُونَ إِنَّهُمْ يَجْهَدُونَ)

"It is not you that they deny (O Muhammed), but it is the Ayat (the Qur'an) of Allah that the Zālimūn (polytheists and wrong-doers) deny.”

[Sūrah al-An'am 6:33]

Allah (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَّ) said,
“And people of ‘Ād and Thamūd! And indeed their destruction is clearly apparent to you from their ruined dwellings. Shayṭān (Satan) made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and turned them away from the Right Path, though they were intelligent.”

[Sūrah al-‘ Ankabūt 29:38]

Īmān is not only belief or speech and belief without actions because this is the faith of the Murjī‘ah. Allāh refers to actions as Īmān in many places (in the Qur‘ān).

Allāh (ta‘ālā) said,

“The Believers are only those who, when Allāh is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His āyāt are recited unto them, they increase their faith; and they put their trust in their Lord alone. They are those who perform the Prayer and spend out of that We have provided them. It is they who are the Believers in truth.” [Sūrah al-Anfāl 8:2-4]
And Allāh (ﷻ) said,

“And Allāh would never make your faith (Prayers) to be lost (i.e. your Prayers offered towards Jerusalem).”

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:143]

Meaning your Prayers observed towards Bayt al-Maqdis (in Jerusalem). So Allāh has termed the Prayer as Īmān (in this āyah).
The Third Fundamental Principle

From the fundamental principles of Ahl al-Sunnah (the people of the Sunnah) is that they do not declare any of the Muslims to be disbelievers unless they commit an action which is a nullifier from those things that nullify Islam.

As for the major sins that are lesser than Shirk and where there is no evidence to prove the disbelief of the one who commits them, such as abandoning the Prayer out of laziness (of which there is proof for its disbelief), then Ahl al-Sunnah do not declare the perpetrator of the major sins to be disbelievers. Rather they judge him to be sinful and deficient in faith.

If they do not repent then their affair lies with Allāh. If Allāh wills He will forgive them and if Allāh wills He will punish them but they will not remain in the Hell-fire forever.

Allāh (تاَبَارَاِنَّنَا عَلَيْهِ) said,

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إِنِّمَا أَنَّمَأْلًا لَا يُعْقِرُ أَنْ يُشَرِّكَ بِهِ وَيُعْقِرُ ماْ ذَلِكَ لَدَيْكُ عَلَى لَمْ يَكُنْ يَكَأَهُ
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"Indeed, Allāh forgives not that partners should be set up with him in worship, but He forgives anything else less than that to whomsoever He pleases.”

[Sūrah al-Nisā’ 4:48]

Thus, the belief of Ahl al-Sunnah (the people who adhere to the Sunnah) in this matter is the middle path between the belief of the Khawārij who declare anyone who commits a major sin even if it is lesser than Shirk to be a disbeliever, and the belief of the Murji’ah who say that the one who commits a major sin is a believer with perfect faith and they state that disobedience does not harm faith just like obedience does not benefit [in the presence] disbelief.
The Fourth Fundamental Principle

From the fundamental principles of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah (those who adhere to the Sunnah and the congregation) is the obligation of obeying the Muslim leaders as long as they do not command with something that involves disobedience (to Allāh). If they command with disobedience, then it is impermissible to obey them in this unlawful matter but it is still [compulsory] to obey them in other affairs which are lawful.

This is (their position), in accordance to the saying of Allāh (Ta‘āla),

بِثَبَتِكُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَجِبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَآدَمْتُوا الْحَرَامَ وَاتَّبَعْتُوا الرُّسُلَ وَأَوْلِيَاءَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ

“O you who believe! Obey Allāh and obey the Messenger, and those of you who are in authority.”

[Sūrah al-Nisā‘ 4:59]

And the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم) said,

أوصيكم بِتَقْوَيِ اللَّهِ وَالسَّمَعَ وَالتَّدَاةَ وَإِنْ تَأْمَرْ عَلَيكُم

عبّد

“I advise you with the fear of Allāh and to hear and obey even if a slave was in authority over you.”

1 Ahl al-Sunnah believe that disobeying the Muslim ruler is to disobey the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم), as he (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم) said,

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1 Şahîh: Related by Abū Dāwūd (5/4608), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2676) who said the ḥadīth is hasan şahîh, Ibn Mājah (no. 44), Ahmad in al-Musnad (4/126, 127) and al-Dārimî (no. 95). It was authenticated by al-Albānî in Şahîh Ibn Mâjah (no. 3227).
من يطع الأمير فقد أطاعني ومن عصى الأمير فقد عصاني

“Whoever obeys the ruler has obeyed me and whoever disobeys the ruler has disobeyed me.”\(^1\)

They hold that the Prayer is to be performed behind them, and that \(Jīhād\) be established along with them.

They supplicate for the well-being and uprightness of the Muslim leaders, and they sincerely advise them.

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\(^1\) Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 2797), Muslim (no. 1835), al-Nisā'ī (no. 4193), Ibn Mājah (no. 2859) and Aḥmad in \(al-Musnad\) (2/387).
The Fifth Fundamental Principle

From the fundamental principles of Ahl al-Sunnah is the impermissibility of rebelling against the Muslim leaders if they commit a wrongful act which is lesser than disbelief due to the Prophet’s command (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to obey them in that which is lawful, as long as they do not fall into clear disbelief.

This is in opposition to the belief of the Mu'tazilah who make it compulsory to rebel against the Muslim rulers if they commit any of the major sins, even if it is not disbelief. They consider this to be enjoining the good and forbidding the evil.

The truth of the matter is that this behaviour of the Mu'tazilah is from the greatest of evils as it ends in terrible perils, chaos, corruption, division and empowerment of the enemies.
The Sixth Fundamental Principle

From the fundamental principles of Ahl al-Sunnah is the purity of their hearts and tongues towards the companions of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم), just as Allāh has described them with His statement when He mentioned the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār and praised them.

Allāh (بِلَادَ الزَّوْجَةِ) said,

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوكُم بِعَفْوٍ مِّنْ بَعْضِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبِّنَا أَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْرَاجِنَا

الَّذِينَ سَبَقوْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَجَسَّلَ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غَلَابًا لَّيْدَيْنَ إِنَّا مَا سَمَوْا رَبِّنَا

"And those who came after them say: Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.” [Surah al-Ḥashr 59:10]

This is their stance as they act in accordance with his statement (صلى الله عليه وسلم),

لا تسبوا أصحابي فوالذي نفسي بيده لو أنفق أحدكم مثل

أحد ذهب ما بلغ مد أحدهم ولا نصيفه
"Do not curse my companions for by the One whose Hand my soul is in, if one of you were to give an amount of gold equal to Mount Uhud it would not reach a handful or half a handful of one of them."¹

This is in opposition to the Ṣafīḍah and Khāwarīj who abuse the companions and deny their virtues.

Ahl al-Sunnah believe that the Caliph after the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was Abū Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmān and then 'Alī (ʾAlī b. Abī Tālib Ṣiddīq). Whoever insults the caliphate of anyone of them is more astray than a domestic donkey, due to his opposition to the clear texts and the consensus upon the caliphate of all of these in this order.

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 3470), Muslim (no. 2541), Abū Dāwūd (no. 4658), Ibn Mājah (no. 161) and ʾĀhmad in al-Musnad (3/55).
The Seventh Fundamental Principle

Among the fundamentals principles of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah is that they love and show allegiance to the family of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم), acting upon the command of the Messenger of Allāh when he said about them,

أذكروكم الله في أهل بيتي

“I remind you of Allāh concerning my Family.”

From his Family are his (صلى الله عليه وسلم) wives, the Mothers of the Believers (أم المؤمنين), for indeed Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) has said [that they are from his family] after addressing them with His saying,

يرسلاً أنبيٍّ

“O wives of the Prophet!” [Sūrah al-Ahzāb 33:32]

He also directed pieces of advice to them and promised them a great reward, He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

إذما يردد الله ليذهب عنكم شجوه أهل البيت ويطهركم

“Allāh wishes only to remove al-Rijs (evil deeds and sins, etc.) from you, O members of the family (of the Prophet), and to purify you with a thorough purification.” [Sūrah Al-Ahzāb 33:33]

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1 Related by Muslim (no. 2407), al-Dārimī (no. 3316), Aḥmad in al-Musnad (4/366367) Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim in Kitāb al-Sunnah (no.1551).
Principally, the family of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) are those who are the close relatives of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and the intent here is specifically those who are righteous from amongst them.

As for his unrighteous relatives such as his uncle Abū Lahab and those similar to him, then they have no right.

Allāh (تعالى) said,

“Perish the two hands of Abū Lahab, and perish he!”
[Sūrah al-Masad 111:1]

So a mere ascription or relationship to the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) without an individual being righteous upon the religion of Islām will not benefit (that person) anything with Allāh.

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

يا معشر قريش اشترو أنفسكم لا أغني عنكم من الله شيطان. يا عباس عم رسول الله لا أغني عنك من الله شيطان. يا صفية عمة رسول الله لا أغني عنك من الله شيطان. يا فاطمة بنت محمد سلبتني من مالي ما شئت لا أغني عنك من الله شيطان.
“O assembly of Quraysh! Save yourselves (from the Hellfire), I will not benefit you anything with Allâh. O ‘Abbâs, uncle of the Messenger of Allâh, I will not benefit you anything with Allâh. O Șafîyyah, aunity of the Messenger of Allâh, I will not benefit you anything with Allâh. O Fâțimah, daughter of Muḥammad, ask for any of my wealth you desire, but I cannot benefit you with Allâh.”¹

The righteous relatives of the Prophet (ṣallallâhu ʿalayhi wa sallam) have the right to be respected, loved and honoured by us.

Alongside this, it is impermissible for us to exaggerate concerning them like seeking to draw closer to them with any form of worship or that we believe that they have the ability to harm or benefit besides Allâh, because Allâh (ṣallallâhu ʿalayhi wa sallam) said to His Prophet (ṣallallâhu ʿalayhi wa sallam),

أَلَوْلَأَتَأْسَمُ لَيْسِيُ لَنَفَسِي نَفَعًا وَلَا ضَرًا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اِنَّ اللَّهَ وَلَوْ كُنتَ أَلْعَبَمَ

قل لَوْلَأَتَأْسَمُ لَيْسِيُ لَنَفَسِي نَفَعًا وَلَا ضَرًا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اِنَّ اللَّهَ وَلَوْ كُنتَ أَلْعَبَمَ

“Say (O Muḥammad): It is not in my power to cause you harm, or to bring you to the Right Path.”

[Sûrah al-Jinn 72:21]

غَيْبَ لاَ أُسَمِّئُهُ مِنَ الْعُيُورِ وَلَا مَسْنُونِ أَلْعَبَمَ

غَيْبَ لاَ أُسَمِّئُهُ مِنَ الْعُيُورِ وَلَا مَسْنُونِ أَلْعَبَمَ

“Say (O Muḥammad): I possess no power of benefit or hurt to myself except as Allâh wills. If I had the knowledge of the Ghayb (Unseen), I should have secured for myself an abundance of wealth, and no evil should have touched me.” [Sûrah al-A‘râf 7:188]

¹ Related by al-Bukhari (no. 2602, 4771), Muslim (no. 262), al-Nisâ‘î (no. 3646), al-Dârimî (no. 2732) and Aḥmad in al-Musnad (2/350).
If this was the condition of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم), then what about other than him! This clearly shows that the belief of some of the people about those who are attributed to the Family of the Messenger is a false belief.
The Eighth Fundamental Principle

From the fundamental principles of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah is that they believe in the miracles of the Awliyā’ (close allies) of Allāh. These are the extraordinary events that Allāh causes to take place at the hands of some of the Awliyā’, as a means of honouring them as is established by the Qur’ān and the Sunnah.

The Muʿtazilah and the Jahmiyyah have rejected the occurrence of miracles, and this is a rejection of an affair that occurs and is a known fact.

However, it is obligatory upon us to (also) know that some people in our time have gone astray as it relates to the subject of miracles, and they have exaggerated about them to the extent that they have considered witchcraft and the acts of the magicians, devils and dajjālīn (arch-liars) to be examples of these miracles.

The difference between witchcraft and miracles is obvious. The miracles occur at the hands of the righteous slaves, whereas witchcraft occurs at the hands of the magicians, atheists and disbelievers in order to misguide the creation and swindle them out of their wealth. Miracles result from the obedience (of Allāh) and witchcraft results from disbelief and disobedience.
The Ninth Fundamental Principle

Among the fundamental principles of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah when presenting an argument is that they follow that which is found in the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), both inwardly and outwardly. They follow that which all of the companions were upon, the Muhājirūn and the Ansār, and they specifically follow whatever the Rightly Guided Caliphs (sallallāhu ‘alayhim wa sallam) were upon, as the Messenger advised with this in his (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) saying,

عليكم بسنتي وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين

“Stick to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Caliphs.”

They do not give any precedence to the speech of anyone over the Speech of Allāh and the speech of His Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), and that is why they have been called ‘The People of the Book and Sunnah.’

After the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam), they take that which the scholars of this Ummah have unanimously agreed upon; this is the third foundation that they rely upon after the first two foundations, which are the Book and the Sunnah.

Whatever the people differ concerning, then they return it back to the Book and the Sunnah, implementing the statement of Allāh,

فَإِنْ نَظَرْتُمْ فِي مَثَلٍ فَرَّدوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِن كُنْتُمْ نَظَرُونَ إِلَيْهِ وَاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ

الآخِرُ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ دَاءُوْلَا

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1 Šahīh: Related by Abū Dāwūd (5/4608), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2676) who said the hadīth is ḥasan Šahīh, Ibn Mājah (no. 44), Aḥmad in al-Musnad (4/126, 127) and al-Dārimī (no. 95). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in Šahīh Ibn Mājah (no. 3227).
“If you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allāh and His Messenger, if you believe in Allāh and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.” [Sūrah al-Nisā’ 4:59]

They do not believe that any individual other than the Messenger of Allāh (ṣallī Allāhu 'alayhī wa sallam) is infallible, and they are not bigoted to the opinion of anyone unless it is in accordance with the Book and the Sunnah.

They believe that the Mujtahid (a Scholar qualified to make ijtihād) can err and be correct, and they do not permit anyone to make Ijtihād unless they have fulfilled the conditions that are well known to the People of Knowledge.

In areas where ijtihād (independent reasoning) is permitted there should be no criticism, and differing in such issues of ijtihād should not cause enmity and boycotting to appear amongst them, as done by the bigoted blind followers and the people of innovation.

Rather, they should love, support and pray behind one another even though they differ in some subsidiary issues.

This is in opposition to the people of innovation for verily they show enmity, or declare to be astray or declare to be disbelievers those who oppose them in these matters.
Epilogue

In addition to these fundamental principles that have been mentioned, Ahl al-Sunnah adorn themselves with great characteristics, which are from those matters which constitute perfection of the creed.

From the greatest of these characteristics:

ONE:

They enjoin the good and forbid the evil in line with what is required by the Islamic legislation, acting in accordance with the statement of Allâh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى),

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ امَّةٍ أُخْرِجْتُ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ يَمْعَرُونَ وَتَنْهَوْنَ

عَنِ اللَّهِ وَتَوْمَمُونَ يَلُوُّهُ

“You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and you believe in Allâh.” [Sûrah Ali-'Imrân 3:110]

And in accordance with the Prophet’s (صلى الله عليه وسلم) saying,

من رأى منكم منكرًا فليغيره بيده. فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه
فإن لم يستطع فبلقلبه وذلك أضعف الإيمان
“Whoever from amongst you sees an evil then he should change it with his hand, and if he is not able then with his tongue, and if he is not able then with his heart and that is the lowest level of imān (faith).”

We have said, ‘in line with what is required by the Islāmic legislation,’ in opposition to the Mu’tazilah who depart from what the Islāmic legislation requires when enjoining the good and forbidding the evil.

They believe that enjoining the good and forbidding the evil is rebelling against the Muslim leaders if they commit an act of disobedience, even though it is lesser than disbelief.

Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah believe that the leaders should be advised [in such situations] without rebelling against them, in order to unify the ranks and to avoid splitting and differing.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - َّсталل - said,

“There is not a group known (throughout history) that rebelled against the one in authority except that their rebellion resulted in a greater evil than that which they set out to remove.”

Two:

From the characteristics of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah is that they preserve the performance of the Islāmic religious rites, such as the performance of the Jumu‘ah (Friday prayer) and the congregational Prayer, contrary to the innovators and hypocrites who do not establish Jumu‘ah or the congregational Prayers.

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1 Related by Muslim (no. 49), Abū Dāwūd (no. 1140), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2172), al-Nisā‘ī (no. 5009), Ibn Mājah (no. 4013) and Aḥmad in al-Musnad (3/10), from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (†).

2 Refer to Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (28/179-180) of Ibn Taymiyyah.
THREE:

From their characteristics is that they undertake the task of advising every Muslim, and cooperating with them upon righteousness and piety, acting upon the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ),

الدين النصيحة، قلنا لمن. قال الله ول كتابه ورسوله ولأئمة
المسلمين وعمتتهم

"The religion is sincerity of purpose." We said, 'To whom?' He replied, "To Allāh, His Book, His Messenger, to the Muslim leaders and the common people."¹

And implementing the Prophet’s (ﷺ) saying,

المؤمن للمؤمن كالبنيان يشد بعضه بعضًا

"The Believer to the Believer is like a building, they strengthen one another."²

FOURTH:

From the characteristics of Ahl al-Sunnah is that they are firm and resolute in times of distress, when they are tried and tested, and they demonstrate this by being patient in times of affliction, being thankful in times of ease and being happy and pleased with what has been decreed.

¹ Related by Muslim (no. 55), Abū Dāwūd (no. 4944), al-Nisā’ī (no. 4197-4198) and Aḥmad in al-Musnad (4/102) from Tamīm al-Dārī (تامین داری).
² Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 467), Muslim (no. 2585), al-Tirmīdī (no. 1928), al-Nisā’ī (no. 2560) and Aḥmad in al-Musnad (4/405).
FIFTH:

From their characteristics is that they adorn themselves with noble mannerisms and good deeds. They are dutiful to the parents, keep the family ties and treat their neighbours well.

They forbid pride, boasting, transgression, oppression and looking down upon people, acting upon the saying of Allaah (سَبِيلُ اللَّهِ وَالْزَّادُونَ بِالزَّادِ),

وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرَكُوا مَعَهُ شَيْئًا وَالْزَّادُونَ بِالْزَّادِ
الْقُرُونَ وَالْيَتَّنَمَّ وَالْمِسْكِينَ وَالْمَمْلاَكَ وَالْمَغْرِبِ
وَالْمُتَّاجِبِ بِالْمَطْلَبِ وَأَبْنَيْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْدِيَنَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ
لا يُحِبُّ مِنْ سُكَانِ مَحَارِيقٍ فَخَحَرُوا١

"Worship Allaah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the poor, the neighbour who is near of kin, the neighbour who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer you meet, and those whom your right hands possess. Verily, Allaah does not like such as are proud and boastful." [Surah al-Nisā’ 4:36]

And the saying of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم),

أَكْمَلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِيمَانًا أَحْسَنَمَا هُمْ خَلْقًا

"The most complete of the Believers in faith are those who are best in manners."¹

¹ Sahih: Related by Abu Dawud (no. 4672) and the wording is from him, al-Tirmidhi (no. 1162), al-Darimi (no. 2792), Ahmad in al-Musnad (2/250) and al-Haythami in Mawrid al-Zamân (no. 1311-1926). It was authenticated by al-Albâni in Silsilah al-Sahîhah (no. 284).
We ask Allāh (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) by His Blessings and Generosity to make us from them, and that He does not cause our hearts to deviate after He has guided us.

And may the peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, all of his family and companions.
Glossary

A

Āyah: (pl. āyāt) “sign,” a verse of the Qur‘ān.
Āhād: a narration which has not reached the level of mutawātir.
Ahādīth: see hadīth.
’Alayhis-salām: “may Allāh (سبحانه و تعالى) protect and preserve him.” It is said after the name of a Prophet of Allāh or after the name of an Angel.
Ansār: “helpers;” the Muslims of al-Madīnah who supported the Muslims who migrated from Makkah.
’Arsh: Throne of Allāh (جلاله)
’Asr: the afternoon Prayer.
Awliyā’: see Wali.

B

Bid’ah: Heresy (any innovatory practice).
Burāq: An animal bigger than a donkey and smaller than a horse on which the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) went for the Mi’rāj.

D

Dā‘ī: one engaged in da‘wah, caller.
Da‘īf: “weak,” unauthentic narration.
Da‘wah: invitation, call to Allāh (عَزَّزَلَهُ).
Dīn: a completed way of life prescribed by Allāh (بُرَاءَة و عُفُوَانِي).
Dhikr: (pl. adhkār) remembrance of Allāh (بُرَاءَة و عُفُوانِي) with the heart, sayings of the tongue and actions of our limbs.
F

Fāhish: one who uses foul language.
Fard Kifāyah: collective obligation - if fulfilled by a part of the community then the rest are not obligated.
Fatwā: (pl. fatāwā) religious verdicts.
Faqīh: A Scholar who can give religious verdicts.
Fiqh: Islamic jurisprudence, understanding.
Fitnah: (pl. fitan) Trials, persecution, conflicts and strifes.
Fitrah: the natural disposition that one is born upon.

G

Ghulū: going to an extreme.
Ghusl: A ceremonial bath necessary for the one who is in a state of Janābah.

H

Hadīth: (pl. ahādīh) the saying, actions and approvals narrated from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).
Halāl: lawful.
Hanīf: pure Islamic Monotheism (worshipping Allāh alone and nothing else).
Harām: unlawful and forbidden.
Hasan: fine, good; a term used for an authentic hadīth, which does not reach the level of Sahīh.
Harj: killing.
Al-Harūriyyah: an especially un-orthodox religious sect that branched off from the Khawārij.
Hijrah: migration from the land of Shirk to the land of Islām.
Hukm: a judgment of legal decision (especially of Allāh).
I

'Ibādah: worship, worship of Allāh.
Iḥsān: worshipped Allāh as though you see Him. However, since you cannot see Him, then know that He sees you.
Ijmā': consensus, a unified opinion of Scholars regarding a certain issue.
Ijtihād: exertion of effort; the process of arriving at a reasoned decision by a Scholar on an issue.
Imām: leaders; leaders in Prayer, knowledge in fiqh, leader of a state.
Īmān: faith, to affirm all that was revealed to the Prophet (ṣallīllāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam).
Isnād: the chain of narrators linking the collector of the saying to the person quoted.
Istikhārah: a Prayer consisting of two units (rak‘ah) asking Allāh for guidance.
Istiwä: ascending; the ascending of Allāh above the Throne (in the manner that befits His Majesty).

J

Janābah: state of a person after having sexual intercourse or sexual discharge.
Janāzah: (pl. janā‘iz): Funeral.
Jihād: striving, struggling, fighting to make the Word of Allāh supreme.
Jumu‘ah: Friday.
Jinn: invisible creation, created by Allāh from smokeless fire.
Junūb: a person who is in the state of janābah.

K

Ka‘bah: a square stone building in al-Masjidul-Haram (the great mosque in Makkah which Muslims go to for pilgrimage and which all Muslims direct their face in Prayer).
Al-Kabā‘ir: the major sins.
Khārijī: (pl. Khawārij): those who declared that a Muslim becomes a disbeliever due to committing a major sin alone.
Khalīfah: (pl. khulafā‘): the head of the Islāmic government to whom the oath of allegiance is given.
Khilāfah: an Islāmic state.
Khutbah: (person khatīb), religious talk (sermon).
Kufr: (person kāfir) act of disbelief in the Religion of Islām.

M

Madhhab: position or opinion of a Scholar; school of Islāmic Jurisprudence.
Makrūh: not approved of, undesirable from the point of view of Religion, although not punishable.
Manhaj: way; method; methodology.
Marfū‘: raised; a narration attributed to the Prophet (Sallāllāhu alayhi wasallām).
Masjīd: mosque.
Mawbiqāt: great destructive sins.
Mudallis: one who practises tādīs.
Muhājir: (pl. muhājurūn, muhājirīn) one who migrated from the land of the disbelievers to the land of the Muslims for the sake of Allāh.
Muhaddith: scholar of the science of hadīth.
Muftī: one who gives fatāwā.
Mujāhid: (pl. mujāhidūn): a Muslim warrior in jihād.
Mujtaḥid: one who is qualified to pass judgment using ijtihād.
Munkar: “rejected;” a narration which is un-authentic itself and contradicts and authentic narrations.
Muqallid: one who practices taqlīd.
Mushrik: (pl. mushrīkūn) polytheists, pagans and disbelievers in the oneness of Allāh (al-‘Ilm) and His Messenger (Sallāllāhu alayhi wasallām).
Mustahabb: recommended; an action if left it is not punishable and if done it is rewardable.
Muttaqūn: those who are pious.
Mutawātir: a hadīth which is narrated by a very large number of narrators, such that it cannot be supported that they all agreed upon a lie.
Muwāhhid: (pl. muwāhhidūn) one who unifies all of his worship and directs it to Allāh alone.
Mawdū‘: fabricated; spurious; invented (narration).
Mawqūf: stopped; a narration from a Companion (not going back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)).
Mawsūl: “connected;” a continuous isnād (can be narrated back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)).

N

Nāfilah: (pl. nawa'il) Optional practice of worship.
Niyyah: intention from the heart.
Nusuk: a sacrifice.

Q

Qadar: Divine pre-ordainment; that which Allāh has ordained for his creation.
Qiblah: the direction the Muslims face during Prayer.
Qiyās: analogical deduction of Islāmic laws. New laws are deduced from old laws based upon similarity between their causes.
Qunūt: “devotion;” a special supplication while standing in the Prayer.
Quraysh: one of the greatest tribes in Arabia in the pre-Islamic period of Ignorance. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) belonged to this tribe.

R

Rāfidi: the correct title for the extreme Shi‘ah. Those who bear malice and grudges against the noble Companions (رضى الله عنهم) to the extent that they declare them to be apostates. They also hold that the Qur‘ān which the Muslims have is neither complete nor preserved from corruption.
Ramadān: the ninth month of Islāmic calendar, in which Muslims observe fasting.
S

Sahābah: Muslims who met the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) believing in him and died believing in him.
Sahīh: authentic, the highest rank of classification of authentic ahādīth.
Salaf/Salafus-Sālihīn: pious predecessors; the Muslims of the first three generations: the Companions, the successors and their successors.
Salafī: one who ascribes oneself to the salaf and follows their way.
Sīrah: the life story of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).
Sharī'ah: the divine code of law of Islām.
Shawwāl: the month after Ramadān.
Shaytān: Satan
Shi’ah: (see Rāfidi) a collective name for various sects claiming love for Ahlul-Bayt.
Shirk: associating partners with Allāh directly or indirectly; compromising any aspects of Tawhīd.
Sūrah: a chapter of the Qur’ān
Sunnah: “example, practice;” the way of life of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), consisting of his words, actions and silent approvals. The Sunnah is contained in various ahādīth.

T

Tābi‘īn: (pl. tābi‘īn) the generation that came after the Companions of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).
Tafsīr: explanation of the Qur’ān.
Tāghūt: anything worshiped other than the real God (Allāh) (i.e. false deities).
Tahajjud: voluntary, recommended Prayer between the compulsory prayers of ’Ishā’ and Fajr.
Takhrīj: to reference a hadīth to its sources and analyze its isnāds.
Taqlīd: blind following; to follow someone’s opinion (madhhab) without evidence.
Taqwā: acting in obedience to Allāh, hoping for His mercy upon light from Him and taqwā is leaving acts of disobedience, out of fear of Him, upon light from Him.
Tarjamah: notes about a reporter of ḥadīth.
Tawwāf: the circumambulation of the ka’bah.
Tawḥīd: Islamic Monotheism. The Oneness of Allāh. Believing and acting upon His Lordship, His rights of Worship and Names and Attributes.

U

Uhud: A well known mountain in al-Madīnah. One of the greatest battles in Islāmic history came at its foot. This is called Ghazwah Uhud.
'Ulamā': (singular: 'ālim) scholars.
Umm: mother of, used as an identification.
Ummah: “nation”, the Muslims as a whole.
'Umrah: a visit to Makkah during which one performs the tawwāf around the Ka’bah and the Sa‘ī between as-Safā and al-Marwah. It is called the lesser Ḥajj.
Usūl: the fundamentals.

W

Wahyī: the revelation or inspiration of Allāh to His Prophets.
Wahdatul-Wujūd: the belief that everything in existence is infact Allāh. This deviant belief is held by many Sūfis.
Wakīl: disposer of affairs.
Witr: “odd;” the last Prayer at the night, which consists of odd number of raka‘āt (units).
Walīmah: the wedding feast.
Wasılah: the means of approach or achieving His closeness to Allāh by getting His favours.
Wudū‘: an ablution (ritual washing) that is performed before Prayer and other kinds of worship.
Y

Yaqīn: perfect absolute faith.
Yathrib: one of the names of al-Madīnah.

Z

Zakāt: charity that is obligatory on everyone who has wealth over and above a certain limit over which a year has passed (5% of saved wealth).
Zakātul-Fitr: an obligatory charity by the Muslims to be given to the poor before the Prayer of Ṭidul-Fitr.
Zamzam: the sacred water inside the haram (the grand mosque) at Makkah.
Zanādiqah: atheists, heretics.
Our Call to the Ummah

[1]: We believe in Allāh and His Names and Attributes, as they were mentioned in the Book of Allāh and in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم), without tahriż (distortion), nor ta‘wīl (figurative interpretation), nor tamthīl (making a likeness), nor tashbīh (resemblance), nor ta‘tīl (denial).

[2]: We love the Companions (ṣaḥābāt) of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم), and we hate those who speak against them. We believe that to speak ill of them is to speak ill of the Religion, because they are the ones who conveyed it to us. And we love the Family of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم) with love that is permitted by the Shari‘ah. ‘Imrān Ibn Husayn (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَمَّهُ) said, “O people! Learn the knowledge of the Religion from us, if you do not do so, then you will certainly be misguided.”

[3]: We love the People of Hadīth and all of the Salaf of the Ummah from Ahlus-Sunnah. Imām ash-Shāhibī (d.790H) - - said, “The Salafus-Sālih, the Companions, the tābi‘īn and their successors knew the Qur‘ān, its sciences and its meanings the best.”

[4]: We despise ‘ilmul-kalām (knowledge of theological rhetoric), and we view it to be from amongst the greatest reasons for the division in the Ummah.

[5]: We do not accept anything from the Books of fiqh (jurisprudence), nor from the Books of tafsīr (explanation of the Qur‘ān), nor from the ancient stories, nor from the Sīrah (biography) of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم), except that which has been confirmed from Allāh or from His Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّم). We do not mean that we have rejected them, nor do we claim that we are not in need of them. Rather, we

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1 This explanation of our call has been summarized from Tarjumah Abī ‘Abdur-Rahmān Muqbil Ibn Hādi al-Wādi‘ī (p. 135-142) of Muqbil Ibn Hādi with minor additions from other sources.
2 Refer to al-Kifāyah (p. 15) of al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī.
3 Refer to al-Muwāfiqāt (2/79) of ash-Shāhibī.
benefit from the discoveries of our Scholars and the jurists and other than them. However, we do not accept a ruling, except with an authentic proof.

[6]: We do not write in our Books, nor do we cover in our lessons, nor do we give sermons with anything except the Qur’ān, or the authentic and authoritative hadīth. And we detest what emanates from many Books and admonishers in terms of false stories and weak and fabricated ahādīth. 'Abdullāh ibnul-Mubārak (d.181H) - رضی الله عنه - said, “The authentic ahādīth are sufficient and the weak ahādīth are not needed.”

[7]: We do not perform takfīr upon any Muslim due to any sin, except Shirk with Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَجَلَّ), or the abandonment of Prayer, or apostasy. We seek refuge in Allāh from that.

[8]: We believe that the Qur’ān is the Speech of Allāh (الرَّحْمَانِ), it is not created.

[9]: We hold that our ‘obligation is to co-operate with the group that traverses the methodology of the Book and the Sunnah, and what the Salaf of the Ummah were upon; in terms of calling to Allāh (سُلَيْмَانِ), and being sincere in worship of Him, and warning from Shirk, innovations, and disobedience, and to advise all of the groups that oppose this. ‘So co-operating upon righteousness and piety (taqwā) and mutual advising necessitates warning against evil and not co-operating with the wicked.

[10]: We do not deem it correct to revolt against the Muslim rulers as long as they are Muslims, nor do we feel that revolutions bring about reconciliation. Rather, they corrupt the community.

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1 Refer to al-Jāmi’i’lí-Akhlaqī-Rāwī (2/159) of as-Suyūtī.


3 From the words of Ibn Bāz in al-Furqān magazine (issue no. 14, p. 15).
[11]: We hold that this multiplicity of present day parties is a reason for the division of the Muslims and their weakness. So therefore we set about ‘freeing the minds from the fetters of blind-following and the darkness of sectarianism and party spirit.’

[12]: We restrict our understanding of the Book of Allâh and of the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to the understanding of the Salaf of the Ummah from the Scholars of hadîth, not the blind-followers of their individuals. Rather, we take the truth from wherever it comes. And we know that there are those who claim Salafiyyah, yet Salafiyyah is free from them, since they bring to the society what Allâh has prohibited. We believe in ‘cultivating the young generation upon this Islâm, purified from all that we have mentioned, giving to them a correct Islamic education from the start - without any influence from the disbelieving western education.’

[13]: We believe that politics is a part of the Religion, and those who try to separate the Religion from politics are only attempting to destroy the Religion and to spread chaos.

[14]: We believe there will be no honour or victory for the Muslims until they return to the Book of Allâh and to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

[15]: We oppose those who divide the Religion into trivialities and important issues. And we know that this is a destructive da’wah.

[16]: We oppose those who put down the knowledge of the Sunnah, and say that this is not the time for it. Likewise, we oppose those who put down acting upon the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allâh (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

[17]: Our da’wah and our ’aqîdah is more beloved to us than our own selves, our wealth and our offspring. So we are not prepared to part with it for gold, nor silver. We say this so that no one may have hope in

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1 From Fiqhul-Wâqi’ (p. 49) of al-Albânî.
2 From Fiqhul-Wâqi’ (p. 51) of al-Albânî.
buying out our da’wah, nor should he think that it is possible for him to purchase it from us for dīnār or dirham.

[18]: We love the present day Scholars of the Sunnah and hope to benefit from them and regret the passing away of many of them. Imām Mālik said (d.179H) - رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ - , “The knowledge of hadīth is your flesh and blood and you will be asked concerning it on the Day of Judgement, so look who you are taking it from.”

[19]: We do not accept a fatwā except from the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

These are glimpses into our ‘aqīdah and our da’wah. So if one has any objection to this, then we are prepared to accept advice if it is truthful, and to refute it if it is erroneous, and to avoid it if it is stubborn rejection. And Allāh knows best.

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1 Refer to al-Muhaddithul-Fāsil (p. 416) and al-Kifāyah (p. 21) of al-Khatīb.
Fundamental Beliefs of a Muslim

These are a few short words in clarification of the belief of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʾah. It was necessary to write them due to the separation and differing that the Islamic nation lives through today, which is represented by the abundance of contemporary sects and different groups. Every one of them calls to their (own) creed and praises his (own) group, until the ignorant Muslim is confused as to whom he should follow and who he should imitate...

Therefore, at this point it is binding upon us to become acquainted with this blessed group that represents the true Islām – may Allāh make us from them. So that those who want to learn about the correct Islām can learn about it and so that they can become acquainted with its people, which will allow them to take them as an example and traverse in their footsteps. This will also allow those who want to embrace Islām from the disbelievers to attach themselves to this group.

- From the author's introduction

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