

al-Bid'ah

Its General Rules and its
Evil Effect upon the *Ummah*

الْبِدْعَةُ

ضَوَابِطُهَا وَآثَرُهَا السَّيِّئَةُ فِي الْأُمَّةِ

بِقَلَمِ

أ. د. عَلِيِّ بْنِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ نَاصِرِ الْفَقِيهِ

أَسَازُ الْعَقِيدَةِ بَطَلِيَّةِ الرَّعْمَةِ وَأَصْرَلِ الرَّيِّ بِالْجَامِعَةِ الْإِسْلَامِيَّةِ بِالْمَدِينَةِ النَّبَوِيَّةِ

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Allāh (سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ) said,

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا﴾

**“And hold onto the Rope of Allāh altogether
and do not become divided.”**

[Sūrah Āli-Imrān 3:103]

‘Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Mahdī (d.198H) said: And ‘Abdullāh Ibn al-Mubārak (d.181H) informed us from al-Awzā’ī (d.157H): ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (d.101H) said,

“Whenever you see a people having a secret conversation with regards to an affair of their Religion, to the exclusion of the common-folk, then know that they are upon the foundation of misguidance.”

Refer to *Sīrah ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz* (p. 54) of Ibn al-Jawzī.

Al-Layth Ibn Sa’d (d.175H) and others said, ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) saying, “Write the entirety of knowledge to me!” So he wrote to him, ‘There is much to knowledge. However, if you are able to meet Allāh with:

- Taking provisions against spilling the blood of the people
- Keeping the stomach empty of their wealth
- Refraining the tongue from their honours
- Adhering to the affair of their united body (*Jamā’ah*)

Then do so.”

Refer to *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’* (3/222) of al-Dhahabī.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Forward

The praise is for Allāh who said,

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا﴾

“And hold onto the Rope of Allāh altogether and do not become divided.” [Sūrah Āli-‘Imrān 3:103]

And may peace and salutations be upon the best of creation and the noblest of the Messengers, the bringer of glad tidings, the warner, the guiding lamp who said, “I have left amongst you that which if you hold onto it, you will never become misguided after me: the Book of Allāh and my *Sunnah*.”¹

To proceed: So the Department of Educational Activity requested from me through the Dean of Student Affairs at the Islāmic University to participate in a lecture during the academic season in the year 1412H entitled, “*al-Bid’ah: Its General Rules and its Evil Effect upon the Ummah*.” Indeed, I delivered this lecture in the large auditorium on Wednesday evening, corresponding to the 26th of *Shawwāl*, 1412H.

Indeed, some of the brothers who were supervising the activity, and other than them, suggested the publishing of this lecture in order to spread benefit through it. So I complied with their request. And here I present it to the youth, the students of knowledge who are zealous in holding onto the Book and the *Sunnah*, those who traverse the path of *al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*, those who confine themselves to their *manhaj* in understanding the texts of the *Sharī‘ah* and explaining them.

¹ Related by Muslim (no. 1218), Abū Dāwūd (no. 1905), Ibn Mājah (no. 3074), al-Tirmidhī (no. 3787), Mālik in *al-Muwatta’* (3/560) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 11167).

Indeed, I divided the lecture into two sections, both containing important ancient and modern-day affairs. The reader will find their details within these pages, which can be read in one sitting. And the intention is for Allāh.



مَقَالَةٌ

Introduction

Indeed, the praise is for Allāh. We praise Him, we seek His aid and we ask for His forgiveness. And we seek refuge with Allāh from the evils of our selves and our evil deeds. Whosoever Allāh guides, then none can misguide him and whosoever Allāh misguides, then none can guide him. And I testify that none has the right to be worshipped besides Allāh alone without any associate and I testify that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾



“O you who have believed, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims in submission to Him.” [Sūrah Āli-Imrān 3:102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ﴾

﴿كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا﴾

“O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allāh, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed, Allāh is ever, over you, an Observer.”

[Sūrah al-Nisā' 4:1]

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ ءَعْمَلَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ ۗ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾﴾

“O you who have believed, fear Allāh and speak words of appropriate justice. He will then amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.” [Sūrah al-Aḥzāb 33:70-71]

The Command to Hold onto the Book and the *Sunnah*:

To proceed: So Allāh commanded His servants with unity and He prohibited them from splitting and disagreement. So Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۗ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِّنْهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَاتِهِ ۗ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٣﴾﴾

“And hold firmly to the rope of Allāh all together and do not become divided. And remember the favour of Allāh upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favour, brothers. And you were upon the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allāh make clear to you His verses (*āyāt*) that you may be guided.” [Sūrah Āli-‘Imrān 3:103]

Encouragement to Follow Whatever Allāh has revealed:

So in order to preserve this unity and holding onto the Rope of Allāh and refraining from disagreement, Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) commanded His servants with following whatever He revealed to His Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). So Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿الْمَصَّ ۝۱ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ فَلَا يَكُنْ فِي صَدْرِكَ حَرَجٌ مِّنْهُ لِتُنذِرَ بِهِ ۚ
وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝۲ أَتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا
مِن دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ۝۳﴾

“Alif, Lām, Mīm, Şād. This is a Book revealed to you, [O Muḥammad] - so let there not be in your breast distress therefrom - that you may warn thereby and as a reminder to the Believers. Follow, O mankind, what has been revealed to you from your Lord and do not follow other than Him any allies. Little do you remember.” [Sūrah al-A’rāf 7:1-3]

Likewise, Allāh prohibited following whatever the forefathers were found upon, as well as their likes from the *shuyūkh* and the people of innovation and desires, in affairs that oppose whatever has come in the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). So He said,

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا ۗ
أُولَٰئِكَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ۝۷۰﴾

“And when it is said to them, “Follow what Allāh has revealed,” they say, “Rather, we will follow that which we found our forefathers doing.” Even though their forefathers understood nothing, nor were they guided?” [Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:170]

And Allāh said,

﴿ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَدْعُهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾

“And when it is said to them, “Follow what Allāh has revealed,” they say, “Rather, we will follow that upon which we found our forefathers.” Even if Satan (*Shayṭān*) was inviting them to the punishment of the Blaze?”

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:21]

Likewise, there occurs in the Mighty Book of Allāh the command to follow whatever Allāh has revealed in His Book and the prohibition from following whatever the forefathers were found upon as well as the callers to desires and the *Shayṭān*, as occurs in the previous *āyah*,

﴿ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَدْعُهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴾

“Even if Satan (*Shayṭān*) was inviting them to the punishment of the Blaze?” [Sūrah Luqmān 31:21]

Clarification about the Perfection of the Religion:

So there occurs in the clear and authentic *aḥādīth* from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that he incited the *Ummah* to hold onto the Book and the *Sunnah*. And He (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) mentioned that salvation and infallibility is

found in these two, as he (عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ) said, “I have left amongst you that which if you stick to it, you will never become misguided: the Book of Allāh and my *Sunnah*.”¹

So the Prophet (عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ) associated holding onto the Book of Allāh and his *Sunnah* with guidance, salvation, avoiding misguidance which leads to destruction in this world and misery in the Hereafter.

And in contrast to that, he (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) prohibited innovating into the Religion of Allāh and he warned against *al-bid'ah* (innovation) and he clarified to his *Ummah* that every innovation in the Religion of Allāh is misguidance. So he (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) spoke in the *ḥadīth* of al-'Irbād Ibn Sāriyah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), which was related by Abū Dāwūd (d.275H) and al-Tirmidhī (d.274H) who said, “An acceptable authentic *ḥadīth*.”

He (i.e. al-'Irbād) said, “The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) admonished us with an eloquent admonition. The hearts trembled due to it and the eyes shed tears due to it. So we said, “O Messenger of Allāh! It is as if this is a farewell admonition, so advise us.” He said, “I advise you with the *taqwā* (fear, reverence) of Allāh. And listen and obey, even if the one who is appointed over you in authority is a slave. Indeed, whosoever from amongst you lives after me, then he shall see much differing. So stick to my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs after me. Hold onto it with your molar teeth and beware of newly invented matters, since every innovation is misguidance.”²

So this *ḥadīth* clarifies to us a magnificent aspect from the aspects of preserving the essence of the *Ummah* and acting with zeal to safeguard it from splitting, which leads to *fitnah* (trial, tribulation). And that occurs through inciting the *Ummah* to adhere to the *Jamā'ah* and holding onto the *Sunnah* and remaining far away from every newly invented matter in beliefs (*i'tiqād*), deeds, statements and methodologies which lead the *Ummah* to

¹ Related by Muslim (no. 1218), Abū Dāwūd (no. 1905), Ibn Mājah (no. 3074), al-Tirmidhī (no. 3787), Mālik in *al-Muwatta'a* (3/560) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 11167).

² **Ṣaḥīḥ:** Related by Abū Dāwūd (no. 4443), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2815), al-Dārimī in his *Sunan* (no. 96) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (4/126-127). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* (no. 2549).

disunity and dispute, which leads to disagreement and splitting, because the Messenger of guidance (ﷺ) did not depart from this world up until he had conveyed to his *Ummah* whatever Allāh revealed to him from the *Sharī'ah* of his Religion. So he (ﷺ) clarified to the *Ummah* everything that would rectify their religious and their worldly lives and he left them upon a clear white path whose night is like its day; no one deviates from it, except that he is destroyed. And Allāh (ﷻ) perfected the Religion for His Prophet (ﷺ) and completed His favour upon him. And Allāh is pleased with Islām as the Religion for all of mankind. So Allāh (ﷻ) said,

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَمَّمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ
الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾

“This day I have perfected for you your Religion and completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islām as a Religion.” [Sūrah al-Mā'idah 5:3]

And He said,

﴿وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ
الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾

“And whoever desires other than Islām as a Religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be amongst the losers.”

[Sūrah Āli-'Imrān 3:85]

So the Religion was declared perfect by the text of this noble *āyah* and the Messenger (ﷺ) conveyed it clearly, as 'Ā'ishah, the Mother of the Believers (رضي الله عنها), said to Masrūq - as occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, “And whosoever claims that Muḥammad (ﷺ) concealed something from that which Allāh revealed to him, then he has committed a great slander against Allāh, and Allāh says,

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتَ

رِسَالَتَهُ ﴾

“O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message.”

[Sūrah al-Mā'idah 5:67].”¹

So the Religion is perfect and complete and the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) conveyed it, as the previous *ḥadīth* has explained. Likewise, there occurred in the Farewell *Hajj* (pilgrimage) when the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) spoke to the people whilst he was conveying the *Sharī'ah* rulings and regulations of Islām to them and he was clarifying to them the *ḥalāl* (lawful) and the *ḥarām* (unlawful) and the inviolability of blood and honour and everything else that Allāh commanded and prohibited; then he said, “Have I not conveyed it?” So they replied, “Yes.” So he raised his hand towards the sky and then he lowered it towards them and he said, “O Allāh, witness! O Allāh, witness!”²

So if after that there comes to us an individual from amongst the people and he innovates for us something into the Religion of Allāh that does not exist in the Book of Allāh, nor in the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), nor in the *Sunnah* of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, regardless of whether this is a newly invented affair in belief, or in deed, or in statement, or *manhaj*, as long as it opposes the *manhaj* of the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and his *sīrah* (biography), then it is as if he is saying that the Religion is deficient, not complete. And this is refuted by the statement of Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى),

﴿ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ ﴾

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 7531) and Muslim (10/159).

² Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 1654), Muslim (no. 326), Abū Dāwūd (no. 1905), Ibn Mājah (no. 3055), al-Nisā'ī (no. 3182), al-Dārimī in his *Sunan* (no. 1850) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 479).

“This day I have perfected for you your Religion.”

[Sūrah al-Mā'idah 5:3]

Conversely, it is as if he is saying that the Religion is complete, but there is something left which the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) did not convey.

And this is refuted by the *hadīth* of 'Ā'ishah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا), which we mentioned previously. Likewise, he (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) conveyed the message fully to his *Ummah* during the Farewell *Hajj* where he said, “So let the one who is present inform the one who is absent. So perhaps the one to whom it is conveyed will retain it better in his memory.”¹ So this is the resultant condition of the innovator, or his statement.

So it is as if he is saying that the *Sharī'ah* is not complete and that there remains something that is obligatory (*wājib*) or supererogatory (*mustahabb*) to add on to it. This is because if he believed in the perfection of the *Sharī'ah* and its completeness from every angle, then he would not have innovated and he would not have added onto it. And the person who says and believes this is misguided from the Straight Path.

Ibn al-Mā'jishūn (d.164H)² said, ‘I heard Mālik (d.179H) saying, ‘Whosoever innovates an innovation into Islām and holds it to be something good, then he has alleged that Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) betrayed the trust of the message, because Allāh says,

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ﴾

“This day I have perfected for you your Religion.”

[Sūrah al-Mā'idah 5:3]

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 1654), Muslim (no. 326), Abū Dāwūd (no. 1905), Ibn Mājah (no. 3055), al-Nisā'ī (no. 3182), al-Dārimī in his *Sunan* (no. 1850) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 479).

² [TN]: He is 'Abd al-Malik Ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Abī Salamah Ibn al-Mā'jishūn al-Taymī al-Madanī al-Mālikī. He learnt the Religion from Imām Mālik and died in the year 164H.

So whatever was not Religion on that day, then it is not Religion now.”¹

The Innovator Places Himself upon the Level of Allāh:

And Imām al-Shāṭibī (d.790H)² says in his valuable book, *al-I’tiṣām* (1/49):

1. The innovator is in obstinate rejection of the *Sharī’ah* and he is separated from it, because Allāh has specified particular paths for the servant’s pursuit, in specific manners and He has confined the creation to that with His command and His prohibition and His promise and His threat. And Allāh has informed that goodness is in that path and evil is in exceeding it, because Allāh knows and we do not know and He only sent the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) as a mercy to all the worlds.

So the innovator rejects all of this, since he claims that there are other paths, not just the path that was restricted by Allāh and not just the path that was particularized by Allāh. It is as if Allāh knows and we also know. Rather, it may be understood from his adding onto the path specified by Allāh that he knows what Allāh does not know.

He said: So if this was the intended purpose behind the deed of the innovator, then he is a disbeliever. And if it was not the intended purpose, then he is still upon misguidance.

2. Thereafter, the innovator, with this deed of his, has placed himself upon the same level as Allāh, because Allāh is the One who legislates the *Sharī’ah* and He makes it binding upon the creation to proceed upon its traditions (*sunan*), and He alone is singled out with that

¹ Refer to *al-I’tiṣām* (1/49) of al-Shāṭibī.

² [TN]: He is Ibrāhīm Ibn Mūsā Ibn Muḥammad al-Lakhamī al-Gharnāṭī, commonly known as al-Shāṭibī. He was from the people of Grenada and he was from the *Mālikī* Scholars. He died in the year 790H. He has several important written works, from the most important of them are: *al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh* and *al-I’tiṣām*.

because He judges between the creation concerning that about which they differ.

So the *Sharī'ah* is not legislated from varying intellectual capacities such that every individual can legislate a *shar'* (religious law) from himself. And if the affair were as such, then there would be no need for sending Messengers to mankind.

So it is as if this innovator into the Religion of Allāh has made himself comparable and similar to Allāh when he has legislated a *shar'* similar to the *Sharī'ah* and he has opened up the door to disagreement and splitting.

3. Similarly, this deed from the innovator is also an instance of following desire and lusts, whereas Allāh says,

﴿وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بَغْيًا هَدَىٰ مِنَ اللَّهِ﴾

“And who is more astray than one who follows his desire without guidance from Allāh?”

[Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ 28:50]

The Innovator Follows His Own Desire:

So whoever does not follow the guidance of Allāh is following his own desire and there is no one more astray than him.

Indeed, there has come a dispraise in the Book of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) for this innovator in the Religion of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) who has placed himself as being similar to Allāh, because when an individual deviates, then Allāh deviates his heart. Therefore, the recompense is in accordance to the type of deed. So Allāh said,

﴿فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ﴾

“And when they deviated, Allāh caused their hearts to deviate.” [Sūrah al-Şaff 61:5]

And that was because they followed the unspecific *āyāt* from the *Qur’ān* and abandoned the specific ones and they sought the interpretation (*ta’wīl*) of those *āyāt*. That is, the distortion (*tahrif*) of them.

Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخْرُ
مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَبَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْوَسْنَةِ
وَأَبْغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ﴾

“It is He who has sent down to you, (O Muḥammad), the Book; in it are verses (*āyāt*) that are precise - they are the foundation of the Book - and others unspecific. As for those in whose hearts is deviation from truth, they will follow that of it which is unspecific, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation suitable to them.” [Sūrah Āli-‘Imrān 3:7]

So it has been authentically narrated from ‘Ā’ishah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا) that she said, ‘The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was asked about this *āyah*,

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ﴾

“It is He who has sent down to you, (O Muḥammad), the Book.” [Sūrah Āli-‘Imrān 3:7]

...Until the end of the *āyah*. So the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) replied, “When you see those who follow whatever is unclear from it, then those are the ones whom Allāh has named, so beware of them.”¹ And there occurs in another narration that he said, “So when you see those who argue about it, then they are the ones whom Allāh is referring to, so beware of them.”²

And Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيعًا لَسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ﴾

“Indeed, those who have divided their religion and become sects - you, (O Muḥammad), are not associated with them in anything.” [Sūrah al-An‘ām 6:159]

Ibn Kathīr (d.774H) - رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ - said, “That is, sects like the people of religions and creeds and desires and misguidance. So Allāh has exonerated the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) from whatever they possess.”³

And Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾﴾

“And, moreover, this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow other ways, for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you that you may become righteous.” [Sūrah al-An‘ām 6:153]

¹ Related by Muslim (no. 2665), Abū Dāwūd (no. 4598), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2994), al-Dārimī in his *Sunan* (no. 145) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 25665).

² **Ṣaḥīḥ**: Related by Ibn Mājah (no. 47) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 23690). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Ibn Mājah* (no. 44).

³ Refer to *Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān al-‘Azīm* (3/372) of Ibn Kathīr.

So the Straight Path (*al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*) is the path of Allāh, which He called to and it is the *Sunnah*, which the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) established and it is Islām and it is the *Qur'an*.¹

As for the dispersed paths, then they are the paths of the people of disagreement, those who have abandoned the Straight Path and they are the people of desires and those who innovate into the Religion.

And they are not the people of sins and disobedience, since they commit sins. So the disobedient sinner does not make that a path to be followed at all times in opposition to the *Sharī'ah* as the one who innovates into the Religion does.

Indeed, the intended purpose of the innovator into the Religion is demonstrated in the *ḥadīth* of 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ), which has been related by Imām Aḥmad (d.241H), al-Nisā'ī (d.303H), Ibn al-Mundhir and al-Ḥākim (d.405H) authenticated it. He said, 'The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) drew a line for us with his hand. Then he said, "This is the Straight Path of Allāh." Then he drew lines dispersed to the right and to the left of that line. Then he said, "And there is no path from amongst these

¹ [TN]: Imām Ḥammād Ibn Muḥammad al-Anṣārī (d.1418H) - رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ - said, "If you were to take the exegesis (*tafsīr*) of Ibn Jarīr (d.310H), or Ibn Kathīr (d.774H) or al-Baghawī (d.516H) - رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ - and you wanted to know the meaning of the Straight Path (*al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*), you would find an abundance of statements. However, these statements have no contradictory difference (*khilāf tuḍāḍ*) between them. Rather, all of that is a difference of diversity (*khilāf tanawwu'*). And there is no contradictory difference confirmed from the *Salaf* in *tafsīr*, nor in the *Sunnah*. Indeed, the philosophers, the people of *kalām* (theological rhetoric), the *Ṣūfiyyah*, the proponents of superstition and the bigoted partisans tried to find a contradictory difference from the *Salaf*, but they returned without obtaining their objective and found nothing. So it is not possible to confirm from the *Salaf* a disagreement about the *Qur'an*, nor about the *Sunnah*, except that it is a difference of diversity, or a difference in recitations." Refer to *Rasā'il fi al-'Aqīdah* (p. 50-51) of Ḥammād al-Anṣārī.

He further stated, "So the Straight Path (*al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*) is Islām and it is the *Qur'an* and it is following the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and so on. And there is no inconsistency between these statements. So Islām is the *Qur'an* and the *Qur'an* is Islām. And Islām is following the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). And this is called a disagreement of diversity (*ikhtilāf tanawwu'*)." Refer to *Rasā'il fi al-'Aqīdah* (p. 52) of Ḥammād al-Anṣārī.

paths, except that there is a devil (*shayṭān*) calling to it.” Then he recited this *āyah*,

﴿وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّيْنَاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾﴾

“And, moreover, this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow other ways, for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you that you may become righteous.” [Sūrah al-An‘ām 6:153].”¹

Bakr Ibn al-‘Alā’ said, “I believe he was referring to a devil (*shayṭān*) from mankind, and it is innovations.”²

And Mujāhid (d.104H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said, “And do not follow the paths. He said: innovations and desires.”³

Likewise, there has come a dispraise of the innovator and a clarification about the deviance in his heart in the Book of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ). So likewise, a dispraise of that has been mentioned in many *ahādīth* from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ); in them is a dispraise of the innovators and a clarification of their misguidance and their sins and a rejection of their deeds. So there occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim* from ‘Ā’ishah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا) who said, “The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, ‘Whosoever innovates into this affair of ours whatever is not from it, then it is rejected.’”⁴ And there occurs in the narration of *Muslim*, “Whosoever performs a deed that is not in accordance with this affair of ours, then it is rejected.”⁵

¹ **Ṣaḥīḥ**: Related by Ibn Mājah (no. 11), al-Dārimī in his *Sunan* (no. 202) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 479). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Ibn Mājah* (no. 11).

² Refer to *al-Iṭiṣām* (1/96) of al-Shātibī.

³ Refer to the *Sunan* (1/68) of al-Dārimī and *al-Madkhal* (no. 200) of al-Bayhaqī.

⁴ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 2550), *Muslim* (no. 1718), Abū Dāwūd (no. 4606) and Ibn Mājah (no. 14).

⁵ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 6918), *Muslim* (no. 3243) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 26406).

And Imām Muslim (d.261H) - رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ - narrates from Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, “Whosoever calls to guidance shall have the reward for it and the reward of those who followed him in it, without taking anything away from their reward. And whosoever calls to misguidance shall have upon his self the sin of that as well as the sins of those who follow him, without decreasing anything from their sin.”¹

And the *ḥadīth* of Ḥudhayfah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) is similar to this and we shall mention it in what follows. And after we have come to know the prohibition against innovation and the warning against it, then what is innovation (*bid'ah*)? And what is its general rule and the guideline by which it becomes known? And when does it occur?



¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (13/302) and Muslim (4/206).

THE FIRST STUDY: Definition of *al-Bid'ah*

Al-Bid'ah in the Arabic language is to invent something that does not have a precedent.¹ And from it is the statement of Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى),

﴿بَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾

¹ [TN]: Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said, "Innovation (*al-bid'ah*) is whatever opposes the Book and the *Sunnah*, or the consensus (*ijmā'*) of the *Salaf* of this *Ummah*, from beliefs and acts of worship." Refer to *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (18/346) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

And he - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said, "Innovation (*al-bid'ah*) in the Arabic language comprises everything that is done without precedent and without a previous example. And as for innovation (*al-bid'ah*) in the *Sharī'ah*, then it refers to whatever does not have evidence in the *Sharī'ah*." Refer to *Iqtidā' al-Ṣirāt al-Mustaqīm* (2/593) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

And al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī (d.795H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said, "And the intended meaning of *al-bid'ah* is: whatever is invented, not having an origin in the *Sharī'ah* to which it refers back. And as for whatever has an origin in the *Sharī'ah* to which it refers back, then it is not an innovation in the *Sharī'ah*, it is only an innovation in the Arabic language." Refer to *Jāmi' al-'Ulūm wa al-Hikam* (1/266) of Ibn Rajab.

And al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajr al-'Asqalānī (d.852H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said, "And *al-muḥdathāt* is the plural form of *al-muḥdathah* (newly invented affair). And the intended meaning of that is whatever has been invented whilst it does not have an origin in the *Sharī'ah* to which it refers back and it is called a *bid'ah* in the custom of the *Sharī'ah*. As for whatever has a basis in the *Sharī'ah* to which it refers back, then it is not a *bid'ah*. So *al-bid'ah* is blameworthy in the *Sharī'ah*, contrary to the Arabic language. So every newly invented affair that does not have a precedent is called a *bid'ah*, regardless of whether it is praiseworthy or blameworthy." Refer to *Fath al-Bārī* (13/266-267) of Ibn Ḥajr.

And Imām al-Hāfiẓ al-Ḥakamī (d.1377H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said, "And the meaning of *al-bid'ah* is: to legislate something for which Allāh has granted no permission, and which the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and his Companions did not command." Refer to *Ma'ārij al-Qubūl* (2/502) of al-Hāfiẓ al-Ḥakamī

Imām Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn (d.1421H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said, "It is whatever has been innovated into the Religion in opposition to what the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and his Companions were upon, whether it is a belief or a deed." Refer to *Sharḥ Lum'ah al-I'tiqād* (p. 24) of al-'Uthaymīn.

“He is Originator of the heavens and the earth.”

[Sūrah al-An‘ām 6:101]

That is, Allāh invented both of them in an unprecedented manner.

And it is said: So and so invented (ابتدع) an innovation. Meaning, he began a path that had no precedent or previous example. So this is a new and unprecedented way. This term is used for something new that is deemed good, which has no precedent in goodness. So with this meaning, innovation has been named *bid'ah* (بدعة).¹

So the derivative for traversing upon it is *al-ibtidā'* (الابتداع) and the form that it takes is *al-bid'ah* (البدعة). Indeed, the act that is undertaken in that manner is a *bid'ah*. So from this meaning, the deed that is performed without any evidence in the *Sharī'ah* is a *bid'ah*.

So *al-bid'ah* in the *Sharī'ah* is a path chosen in the Religion, which rivals the *Sharī'ah*. Traversing this path would involve exaggeration in the worship of Allāh (مُتَّبِعَانَهُ وَمَعَالَآ). And this definition comprises everything that is newly-invented into the Religion from whatever has no basis in the *Sharī'ah*.

Whatever has a Basis (*aṣl*) in the *Sharī'ah* is Not Called an Innovation:

So as for whatever does have a basis in the *Sharī'ah*, then it is not a *bid'ah* in the *Sharī'ah*, even if it is called a *bid'ah* in the Arabic language. And this is

¹ [TN]: Imām Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (d.1420H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said whilst speaking about *al-bid'ah*, “Every affair that is intended to bring one closer to Allāh and it has been prohibited by the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and every affair that it is impossible to legislate, except with a text or divine order and there is no text for it, then it is an innovation (*bid'ah*), except if it occurred from a Companion. And it is whatever is connected to worship from the customs of the disbelievers and whatever is mentioned as being supererogatory by the Scholars, especially the historians from amongst them, whilst there is no evidence for it, and every act of worship whose method has not come, except in a weak (*da'if*) or fabricated (*mawḍū'*) *ḥadīth*, and every act of worship where Allāh has confined the people to some limits, such as a place, or a time, or a description, or a specified number.” Refer to *Aḥkām al-Janā'iz* (p. 306) of al-Albānī, slightly adapted.

the meaning of that has been mentioned in the speech of some of the *Salaf* with regards to their statements about some innovations, ‘What an excellent innovation.’ For example, there is the statement of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) when he gathered the people together for the night Prayer in *Ramaḍān* behind one Imām in the mosque. So he came out and he saw them praying like that, so he said, “What an excellent innovation this is.” This is because the *Tarāwīḥ* Prayer in one congregation during *Ramaḍān* has a basis. Indeed, the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) prayed with the people for two or three nights in *Ramaḍān*, then he stopped out of fear that it would become compulsory upon the *Ummah* and they would be unable to establish it.¹

¹ [TN]: Imām al-Shāṭibī (d.790H) - رحمه الله - said, “So whoever calls it an innovation with this expression, then there is no dispute concerning the name. Along with that, it is not permissible to use it for the allowance of innovation with the meaning of Religion, because that is a type of distortion of the statement from its context.” Refer to *al-Iṭīṣām* (1/250) of al-Shāṭibī.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - رحمه الله - said, “There is much that has been mentioned with regards to ‘Umar referring to this as an excellent innovation, but this is a linguistic term, not a religious term. And that is because innovation (*bid’ah*) in the Arabic language refers to anything that is done without a precedent or a previous example. And as for innovation in the *Sharī’ah*, then it refers to anything that does not have a proof in the *Sharī’ah*.” Refer to *Iqtiḍā’ al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* (p. 276) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

And al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr (d.774H) - رحمه الله - said, “Innovation (*al-bid’ah*) is of two categories. Sometimes it is an innovation in the *Sharī’ah*, such as his (صلى الله عليه وسلم) statement, “So every newly invented affair is an innovation and every innovation is misguidance.” And sometimes, it is an innovation in the Arabic language, such as the statement of the Leader of the Believers, ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) when he gathered the Companions together for the *Tarāwīḥ* Prayer: What an excellent innovation this is.” Refer to *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm* (1/166) of Ibn Kathīr.

And al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab (d.795H) - رحمه الله - said, “So as for whatever occurs within the speech of the *Salaf* that appears to deem certain innovations good, then that is only referring to innovations in terms of the Arabic language, not innovations in the *Sharī’ah*. So from that is the statement of ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه), “What an excellent innovation this is.” And it means that this deed was not done in this manner before this time. However, it has an origin within the *Sharī’ah* to which it is referred back.” Refer to *Īqāz al-Himam* (p. 402).

The Deeds of the Rightly Guided Caliphs are *Sunnah*:

Likewise, it is not correct for anyone to use the actions of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) and the all of the Rightly Guided Caliphs (رضي الله عنهم) as a proof for the invention of innovations and declaring them good, such as the *Tarāwīḥ* Prayer in one congregation during *Ramaḍān*, and such as the gathering of the *Qur’ān* into one book. It was already written down during the time of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), but it was scattered and not compiled into one book. So it was gathered together in the time of Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه) when the Companions encountered heavy casualties amongst the reciters during the battle of al-Yamāmah against Musaylamah the liar.

Likewise, those pages were gathered together during the time of Abū Bakr and they remained during the time of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه). So ‘Uthmān gathered and placed them into one book. This was acceptable because the deeds of the Rightly Guided Caliphs are a *Sunnah* according to the text of the *ḥadīth*, which was related by Abū Dāwūd (d.275H) and al-Tirmidhī (d.274H) from the *ḥadīth* of al-‘Irbād Ibn Sāriyah (رضي الله عنه). In this *ḥadīth* is the statement of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to his Companions, “So whoever from amongst you lives after me shall see many disagreements. So adhere to my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the Rightly Guided Caliphs after me.”¹ So this is clear evidence that their deeds are a *Sunnah* and not an innovation.



¹ **Ṣaḥīḥ:** Related by Abū Dāwūd (no. 4443), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2815), al-Dārimī in his *Sunan* (no. 96) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (4/126-127). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’* (no. 2549).

THE SECOND STUDY: Categorization of *al-Bid'ah* into Genuine and Relative Innovations

B*id'ah* (innovation) is divided into two categories: [i]: *Bid'ah Ḥaqīqiyyah* (genuine innovation) and [ii]: *Bid'ah Idāfiyyah* (relative innovation).¹

The First Category: *al-Bid'ah al-Ḥaqīqiyyah*:

Bid'ah Ḥaqīqiyyah is that which has no proof in the *Sharī'ah*, not in the Book, nor in the *Sunnah*, nor in the consensus of the Muslim Scholars (*ijmā'*).

¹ [TN]: Imām al-Shāṭibī (d.790H) said, "The genuine innovation (*al-bid'ah al-ḥaqīqiyyah*) is that which has no evidence in the *Sharī'ah*, not in the Book, not in the *Sunnah*, not in the consensus of the Muslim Scholars (*ijmā'*), and not in any interpretations that have been given consideration by the people of knowledge, not in general, nor in specific.

And due to that, it is called innovation (*bid'ah*), because it is something invented without a previous example, even if the innovator refuses to admit that it is a departure from the *Sharī'ah*, because he claims that it is within the confines of what is derived through the interpretation of the proofs. However, that claim is not correct in and of itself, not just in the outward sense. As for the issue itself, then it is a rejection of the evidence. And as for the outward sense, then his evidences are doubts, they are not evidences with which justification can be sought. So the affair is clear.

As for relative innovation (*al-bid'ah al-idāfiyyah*), then it is that which has two blemishes: The first of them is that it has proofs connected to it, but the act is not performed in that manner.

And the second is that it does not have proofs connected to it, rather it resembles a genuine innovation (*al-bid'ah al-ḥaqīqiyyah*).

So when there is a deed that has these two blemishes, it falls into one of these two cases, then we call it a relative innovation (*al-bid'ah al-idāfiyyah*). That is, it is relative from two angles. It is a *Sunnah* from one angle, because it does have a proof upon which it relies, and with regards to the other angle, it is an innovation, because it actually relies upon a doubt, not a proof, or it does not rely upon anything really. And the difference between the two is from the angle of the meaning. Indeed, the proof for it is only from the angle of its origin upon which it is established. And with regards to the methods, or conditions or details, then it has no proof, even though it is in need of that, because it occurs mostly in acts of worship and not in mere customs." Refer to *al-I'tiṣām* (1/276) of al-Shāṭibī.

And from the examples of this category is declaring unlawful that which is lawful (*ḥalāl*) and declaring lawful that which is unlawful (*ḥarām*) through reliance upon a doubt (*shubḥah*) and without a *Sharī'ah* legislated excuse, or a sound purpose.

Indeed, al-Bukhārī (d.256H) - رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ - has related in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said, "We went out for a military expedition with the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and there were no women amongst us. So we said, "Should we not castrate ourselves?" So he prohibited us from that. So he conceded for us after that to marry a woman by giving her a garment. Then he recited,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُحَرِّمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ﴾

"O you who have believed, do not prohibit the good things which Allāh has made lawful to you."

[Sūrah al-Mā'idah 5:87]."¹

And al-Bukhārī related from Qays Ibn Abī Ḥāzim who said, 'Abū Bakr entered upon a woman from Aḥmas called Zaynab. So he saw that she would not speak. So he said, "What is with her that she does not speak?" They said, "She performed the Pilgrimage (*Ḥajj*) in silence." So he said to her, "Speak, since this is not lawful (*ḥalāl*). This is from the deeds of *al-Jāhiliyyah* (per-Islāmic times of ignorance)." So she spoke and she said, "Who are you?" He replied, 'A man from the *Muhājirīn* (emigrants)."²

And also from the examples of this category is inventing an act of worship for which Allāh has sent down no authority, such as praying the *Zuhr* Prayer for example with two bows (*rukū'*) in each unit (*rak'ah*), or praying without purification, or rejecting the authority of the *Sunnah*, or giving precedence to the intellect over the text and making it the primary basis and making the *Sharī'ah* a secondary source.

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 5071).

² Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 3834).

Another example is the statement that once an individual reaches a certain level of isolation, the obligatory duties have been lifted for him, even though he still has his intellect and the obligatory duties are still compulsory upon him. So they say that once he reaches this level, he is no longer bound to acts of obedience to Allāh and the *ḥarām* is no longer unlawful for him and his affair is now only in accordance to desire and cravings and gratification, as is alleged by some of the claimants to the *Ṣūfī* paths.

These are examples of genuine innovations (*Bid'ah Ḥaqīqiyyah*) whose proponents have invented it from their selves.

The Second Category: *al-Bid'ah al-Idāfiyyah*:

And as for relative innovation (*al-bid'ah al-idāfiyyah*), then it has two aspects:

The first is the aspect of the *Sharī'ah*. So the innovator enters into this aspect of the *Sharī'ah* affair from himself. So he removes this affair from the *Sharī'ah* basis by this deed of his and many of the innovations that are widespread amongst the people are of this category.

And from the examples of this category are fasting, remembrance (*dhikr*), purification (*tahārah*), perfecting the ablution (*wuḍū'*) against its nullifiers and Prayer (*ṣalāt*). These are *Sharī'ah* legislated acts of worship that Allāh has commanded and encouraged. So an individual could come and say, 'I fast whilst standing and I do not sit and I do not seek shade from the sun,' or he says, 'I fast for an extended period of time and I do not break the fast.'

The example with regards to remembrance (*dhikr*) is when people say, 'We adhere to certain methods and arrangements, so we remember Allāh through the method of reciting it in congregation with one voice,' or they adhere to specific acts of worship at appointed times, without this specification being found anywhere in the *Sharī'ah*, such as adherence to fasting at the middle of the month of *Sha'bān* and standing for Prayer during that night.

And the example with regards to purification (*tahārah*) is like when an individual possesses hot water and water that is extremely cold during the season of extreme cold. So he abandons the hot water and takes the path of

needless difficulty. So he takes the extremely cold water, even though this is severe upon his body. So he does not give his body its right.

And there is no evidence for him in the *ḥadīth* in which it is mentioned that perfecting the ablution (*wuḍūʿ*) against its nullifiers raises one's ranks. So this is for the one who does not find a way to heat the water. So he exerts his body and performs the ablution with cold water.¹

So these acts of worship: fasting, Prayer and purification are all *Sharī'ah* legislated acts of worship that Allāh has commanded and encouraged and incited. And He has explained the abundant rewards for these acts. However, there is no evidence or authority from Allāh for these methods and arrangements that they have entered into them. So no matter how an innovation is or what its description is, it is still an addition to the *Sharī'ah* and a fabrication upon it. And Allāh says,

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ
الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾

“This day I have perfected for you your Religion and completed My favour upon you and have approved for you Islam as a Religion.” [Sūrah al-Mā'idah 5:3]

So from 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) who saw a group of people performing *dhikr* in congregation, so he said to them, “Indeed, you have come with an oppressive innovation, or perhaps you deem yourselves better in knowledge than the Companions of Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), or you are holding onto a misguided sin.”²

¹ [TN]: From 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) who relates that the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “Completing the ablution (*wuḍūʿ*) when it is a hardship, and walking to the mosque, and waiting for the next Prayer after the previous one washes away the sins. Related by al-Ḥākim (1/132). It was declared authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*) by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* (no. 926).

² **Ṣaḥīḥ**: Related by al-Dārimī in his *Sunan* (no. 210), and al-Haythamī in *Majma' al-Zawā'id* (1/189). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in *Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (no. 2005).

And from this category is the innovation of the commemoration of the Prophet's birthday (*mawlid*). So loving the Prophet (ﷺ) is obligatory upon every Muslim and the faith (*īmān*) of a Muslim is not complete up until the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) is more beloved to him than himself and his progeny and his parents and all of the people, as occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.¹

However, one loves him through obedience to him and following him. That is, following his commands and refraining from his prohibitions. Indeed, he prohibited innovations and warned against them and he said, "Every newly-invented matter is an innovation."² And he said, "Whosoever performs a deed that is not in accordance with this affair of ours, then it is rejected."³ The *ḥadīth* is agreed upon.

And the act of celebrating the *mawlid* has not been confirmed from the Prophet (ﷺ), nor from his Caliphs, nor from the Companions (رضي الله عنهم), nor from the Scholars of the *Ummah* who are followed. This *mawlid* was only invented by the *Fāṭimiyyūn al-'Ubaydiyyūn*, the *Rāfiḍah* whose lineage goes back to the one who claims a *Fāṭimī* lineage - and he was a Jew from *Salamiyyah*.⁴

¹ [TN]: From Anas Ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه) who said, 'The Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'None of you truly believes until I am more beloved to him than his parents, his children and all of mankind.' Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 15) and Muslim (no. 44).

² *Ṣaḥīḥ*: Related by Abū Dāwūd (no. 4607), al-Dārimī (no. 95) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 16694). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in *Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (no. 2735).

³ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 6918), Muslim (no. 3243) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 26406).

⁴ [TN]: The Noble Scholar, al-'Allāmah Ṣāliḥ Ibn Sa'd al-Suḥaymī said, "Indeed, whomsoever studies the history of al-Islām will find that these celebrations did not exist amongst the early Muslims. Rather, they did not exist at all, up until the *Fāṭimī* state came, and it is that which has been attributed to *Fāṭimah* (رضي الله عنها) out of oppression and injustice. Rather, the researchers from amongst the historians held that they descended from a Jewish ancestry. They were called *al-'Ubaydiyyūn* and they were the sons of Maymūn Ibn Dayṣān, who was commonly known as al-Qadāḥ. It is said that he was a Jew and it is said that he was a Magian. Indeed, their state held authority over Egypt from 357H to 467H and the *Fāṭimiyyūn* used to celebrate four birthdays (*mawālid*): the birthday (*mawlid*) of the Prophet (ﷺ) and 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib and his two sons al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn (رضي الله عنهم). So they were the first ones to invent that, as has been mentioned by al-Maqrīzī (d.845H) and other than him. →

And they persisted in acting upon this innovation up until Badr al-Jamālī came. He was the first minister for the *Fāṭimī* Caliph al-Musta'li bi Allāh. And this minister was staunch in holding onto the *Sunnah*. So he issued a command to abolish these birthday celebrations and it was not up until Badr al-Jamālī passed away that the innovation returned anew.

And the affair continued upon this condition up until there came the time of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī, and he was also from amongst those who held onto the *Sunnah*. So he too abolished these celebrations and he completed the implementation of this abolishment throughout all regions of the *Ayyūbī* state. And no one opposed that, except for King al-Muẓaffar who was married to the sister of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn.

Indeed, the historians have mentioned that the birthday celebrations organized by King al-Muẓaffar were attended by the *Ṣūfis*, since the celebration lasted from the time of the *Zuhr* Prayer, up until *al-Fajr*. And the funds spent upon these celebrations exceeded three hundred thousand dinars.

And after that, these celebrations have continued up until this day of ours. Rather, they spare no expense in the celebration of these birthday celebrations, up until it comes to the minds of the common-folk that they must celebrate the birthday of every notable person, they even celebrate the birthdays of heretics with the argument that they are from the close allies (*awliyā'*) of Allāh. And the extent of the evils are not hidden from anyone and the grave sins committed in these birthday gatherings, from the drinking of intoxicants and merriment and gambling, and dancing and singing, which the women would perform in the gatherings of men and other than that from major sins. This went on to the extent that the term *mawlid* would invoke a likeness of chaos and foolhardiness in every instance. And a greater affront than all of this is the belief that these ignoramus possess that the Prophet (ﷺ) attends the *mawlid*. Due to this, they stand to welcome and greet him. Rather, some of them claim that he shakes their hand and this is from the greatest of falsehood. Rather, it is the furthest extent of ignorance and misguidance. So the Messenger (ﷺ) will not leave his grave before the Day of Judgement and he will not reach out to anyone." Refer to *Majallah al-Buḥūth al-Islāmiyyah* (issue 16/p. 159-160).

For the historical accounts mentioned, refer to *al-Khiṭā'* (1/490) of al-Maqrīzī, *Ṣabaj al-A'shā* (3/498-499) of al-Qalqashandī and *al-Rawḍatayn fī Akhbār al-Dawlatayn* (p. 200-202) of Abū Shāmah.

The Prohibition against Sitting With the People of Innovation

Indeed, there has come from a number of Scholars from amongst the *tābiʿīn* the prohibition against sitting with the people of innovation and desires. That was done out of the fear that the proponent of innovation would have an effect upon the one who sits with him, because the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) encouraged selecting a righteous companion and warned against the evil companion. And the example of these two types of companions is like the carrier or the seller of musk and the one who blows the blacksmith's bellows.

So the righteous companion is like the seller of musk; either you will buy some from him, or he will give some to you, or you will smell a pleasant fragrance from him. And as for the evil companion, then he is like the one who blows the blacksmith's bellows; he will either burn your clothes, or you will smell a detestable odour from him.¹

Such is the adherent to innovation: either he will cast his innovation into your heart and make you deem it good, or he will ail your heart and afflict it such that you no longer see his deeds, nor hear his statements as affairs that oppose the *Sharīʿah*.

Due to this, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d.110H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said, "Do not sit with a person of desire, since he will cast into your heart that which, if you follow it, you will be destroyed, or you will oppose it, but your heart will be

¹ [TN]: From Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "The example of the righteous companion and the evil companion is like that of the seller of musk and the one who blows the blacksmith's bellows. So as for the seller of musk, then either he will grant you some, or you will buy some from him, or at least you will enjoy a pleasant fragrance from him. As for the one who blows the blacksmith's bellows, then he will either burn your clothes, or you will get an offensive odour from him." Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 2101) and Muslim (no. 146).

diseased.”¹ And he said, “Do not sit with the person of innovation, since your heart will become diseased.”²

And from Abī Qilābah (d.104H) who said, “Do not sit with the people of desires and do not argue with them, since I do not feel safe that you will be submersed into their misguidance and they will deceive you with regards to what you used to know.”³ Abū Ayyūb said about Abī Qilābah, “By Allāh, he was from amongst the knowledgeable jurists (*fuqahā*).”⁴

And Abū Qilābah⁵ said, “Indeed, the people of desires are people of misguidance and I do not see that their way leads to anywhere else but the Fire.” And he said, “No individual invents an innovation, except that he declares use of the sword lawful (*ḥalāl*).”⁶

And from Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī (d.131H) who said, “The innovator does not increase in striving, except that he is increasing in distance from Allāh. And the people of innovation are called renegades (*khawārij*) and it is said that the *Khawārij*⁷ differed in their name, but they were united upon the use of the sword.”¹

¹ Refer to *Kitāb al-Bida' wa al-Nahī 'anhā* (no. 133) of Ibn Waḍḍāh.

² Refer to the *Sunan* (no. 401) of al-Dārimī, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-ʿItiqād* (no. 240) of al-Lālikāʿī, *al-Ibānah* (no. 458) of Ibn Baṭṭāh and *Dhamm al-Kalām* (no. 766) of al-Harawī.

³ Refer to the *Sunan* (no. 391) of al-Dārimī, *al-ʿItiqād* (p. 1115) of al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sharīʿah* (no. 114) of al-Ājurri, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-ʿItiqād* (no. 243-244) of al-Lālikāʿī, *al-Ibānah* (2/369-437) and *al-Sunnah* (no. 99) of ʿAbdullāh Ibn Aḥmad.

⁴ Refer to *Kitāb al-Bida' wa al-Nahī 'anhā* (no. 126) of Ibn Waḍḍāh.

⁵ [TN]: He is Abū Qilābah al-Jaramī, ʿAbdullāh Ibn Zayd Ibn ʿAmr al-Jaramī. He was a Scholar of jurisprudence and *aḥkām* (rules, regulations) and he was from the reliable narrators of *ḥadīth*. He died in Shām, in the year 104H. For his biography, refer to *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* (5/92) of al-Bukhārī and *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz* (1/94) and *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ* (4/88) of al-Dhahabī.

⁶ Refer to *al-ʿItisām* (1/83) of al-Shātibī.

⁷ **Khawārij**: They have been named *Khawārij* (renegades) due to their *khurūj* (rebellion) against ʿAlī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) during the battle at Ṣiffīn when he appointed an individual for arbitration between two sides that they disliked. So they said, “The judgement is only for Allāh,” as an allusion to revilement of ʿAlī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) and they revolted against his authority. Indeed, the *Khawārij* split up into a number of different sects, but they were united upon the statement of *takfīr* (excommunication) of ʿUthmān Ibn ʿAffān (رضي الله عنه), and *takfīr* upon every sect other than themselves, and *takfīr* →

And from Yaḥyā Ibn Abī Kathīr who said, “If you encounter an innovator upon a path, then take another path.”²

So it becomes clear to us from what has preceded from the statements of the Scholars that sitting with the people of innovation is different from calling them to goodness and clarifying the truth to them and debating them to nullify their doubts, because this is from the affair of enjoining the good and prohibiting the evil and that is a foundation (*aṣl*) from the foundations of the call to Allāh. Allāh commanded with it in His Book, so He said,

﴿وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ﴾

“And let there be arising from you a nation inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.” [Sūrah Āli-‘Imrān 3:104]

And the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said whilst directing a comprehensive affair to the Muslims, each in accordance to his ability, “Whosoever from amongst you sees an evil, then let him change it with his hand. So if he is not able to do so, then let him change it with his tongue. So if he is not able to do that, then let hate it in his heart. And that is the weakest of faith (*īmān*).”³

So when the prohibition has come from the Scholars against sitting with the people of innovation, then this does not mean that the Scholar of the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) cannot call those

upon the perpetrators of major sins and they held the view that it is correct and obligatory to rebel against the Muslim ruler if he opposes the *Sunnah*. Refer to *al-Burhān fī Ma’rifah ‘Aqā’id Ahl al-Adyān* (p. 9) of al-Saksakī, *al-Milal wa al-Nihal* (1/114) of al-Sharhastānī and *al-Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyin* (1/167) of Abu al-Ḥasan al-Ash’arī.

¹ Refer to *al-Itiḥām* (1/83) of al-Shāṭibī.

² Related by al-Ājurrī in *al-Sharī‘ah* (no. 135) and al-Lālikā’ī in *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-Itiḳād* (1/259).

³ Related by Muslim (no. 5071), Ibn Mājah (no. 4013) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 10689).

people to goodness. It does not mean that he cannot debate them and it does not mean that he cannot come near to their sittings for this objective. Indeed, the intended purpose of the Scholars was only for the one who is not able to disprove their doubts by himself, so his heart then becomes affected as has been mentioned previously in the statement of Abī Qilābah.



Repentance (*Tawbah*) of the Innovator

And as for the repentance (*tawbah*) of the innovator, then some of the Scholars of the *tābī'in* and those who came after them held that the innovator does not recant from an innovation, except to something more evil than it, because the recompense is in accordance to the type of deed. And Allāh says,

﴿فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ﴾

“And when they deviated, Allāh caused their hearts to deviate.” [Sūrah al-Ṣaff 61:5]

So from Yaḥyā Ibn Abī 'Umar al-Shaybānī who said, “It used to be said: Allāh refused repentance (*tawbah*) for the innovator and the innovator does not leave the innovation, except for something more evil than it.”¹

And due to this, al-'Awām Ibn al-Hawshab used to say to his son, “O 'Īsā, rectify your heart and keep your wealth in short supply.” And he used to say, “By Allāh, that I see 'Īsā in a gathering of lutes, tambourines, drinking and frivolity is more beloved to me than that I see him sitting with people of controversies.” Ibn Waḍḍāḥ said, “Meaning, the people of innovation.”²

And why did he say that? He said it because the innovator believes that what he is doing is part of the Religion. So he remains holding onto it in the manner that he holds onto his Religion. And when he leaves his innovation, he goes to another innovation that is more evil than the first one.

As for the people of sins and disobedience, such as the people of tambourines and lutes from the singers and the people of drinking, then they are people of lusts. And they know that these deeds are acts of disobedience which

¹ Refer to *Kitāb al-Bida' wa al-Nahī 'anhā* (no. 146) of Ibn Waḍḍāḥ.

² Refer to *Kitāb al-Bida' wa al-Nahī 'anhā* (no. 128) of Ibn Waḍḍāḥ.

their lusts and their souls that command with evil (*nafs al-ammārah bi al-sū'*) have led them to. So they will leave these acts one of these days due to their belief in the unlawfulness of them. So it is hoped for the disobedient sinner that he will repent and renounce his sins moreso than the innovator who believes that what he is doing is part of the Religion.

And it has become apparent that the meaning intended here is the innovator whose heart has become imbued with the innovation up until his heart has taken a large amount, until the heart reaches the point where it casts aside everything but the innovation, and up until it believes that there is insight in that act. So it begins to love for the sake of the innovation and does not renounce it. So it begins to love the innovation to the highest extent. And whosoever loves with this type of love, then he forms allegiances and has enmity based upon it and does not pay any attention to whom he encounters in its path, such as the ancient and modern-day people of innovation.

So the ancient ones are like the *Khawārij* who did not recant from their innovation and their desires, such as *takfīr* (excommunication) of the people who commit major sins. So whoever commits a major sin, then they judge him with the judgement of disbelief (*kufīr*) in this world and the Hereafter in opposition to the texts of the Book and the *Sunnah*, such as the statement of Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى),

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾

“Indeed, Allāh does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whomsoever He wills.” [Sūrah al-Nisā’ 4:48]

And the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said in the *ḥadīth* of Abī Dharr (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), which is related by al-Bukhārī, “Indeed, whosoever dies upon *Tawḥīd* shall enter Paradise, even if he commits *zinā* (adultery, fornication) and even if he

steals.”¹ He repeated this three times. Indeed, *Ahl al-Sunnah* speak with the position that comprises these texts, that the one who commits a major sin is under the Will (*mashīrah*) of Allāh. If He wants, He will pardon him and if He wants, He will punish him in accordance to his sin and his final destination will still be Paradise.

And there were others from the carriers of the banner of declaring the perpetrator of a major sin a disbeliever, such as Bishr, who opposed *Ahl al-Sunnah*.

An example of this are the modern day people of innovation, from amongst those who were born and raised in this country and studied through its curriculum for all the stages of education. Then you find that after all of that, this individual holds onto what his forefathers lived upon from innovations and superstitions that oppose the Book and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and the *Sunnah* of his Rightly Guided Caliphs. And from their well-known and modern day innovations, and that with which they attract the hearts of the people, are the proponents of good feelings. It is obligatory upon the caller to direct these hearts towards acting upon the *Sunnah* and following the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and obeying his commands and his prohibitions. Likewise, the caller must direct them towards following his (ﷺ) Rightly Guided Caliphs (رضي الله عنهم), because their deeds are *Sunnah*. However, they exchanged that for their claims of love for the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and they expressed that love by establishing the Prophet’s birthday (*mawlid*).

And it is well-known that loving the Prophet (ﷺ) is obligatory upon every Muslim and the faith (*īmān*) of a Muslim is not complete until up until the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) is more beloved to him than his own self, his parents, his progeny and all of mankind, as occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.²

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 5407), Muslim (no. 141), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2588), al-Nisā’ī in *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* (no. 10548), Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 216) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 20939).

² Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 14).

However, what is love for the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)? Indeed, it is expressed in a comprehensive manner: through obedience to him (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) in whatever he commands and refraining from whatever he prohibits and declares unlawful.

Innovation of the Prophet's (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) Birthday (Mawlid) - Its Origin and Who Innovated It:

So is the *mawlid*, which these people observe, an act of obedience to the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) or is it infringement upon his prohibition?

Indeed, establishing the *mawlid* is rebellion against the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and clear opposition to his prohibition. So he (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said in a *ḥadīth* that is agreed upon, "Every deed that is not in agreement with this affair of ours is rejected."¹ And he said in an authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*) *ḥadīth*, "Every newly invented affair is an innovation."²

So this *mawlid* is a newly invented affair that was not commemorated by the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), nor by his four Rightly Guided Caliphs, nor by anyone from amongst the Companions (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ), yet they were the most knowledgeable concerning his *Sunnah* and the most zealous in their admiration and reverence for the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).³ So this *mawlid* and other than it from the birthdays were only invented by other than the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), the *Fāṭimiyyūn* and the *Rāfiḍah*.

Imām Abū Ḥafṣ Tāj al-Dīn al-Fākihānī (d.734H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - stated in his treatise, *al-Mawrid fī 'Amal al-Mawlid*, "To proceed: Indeed, a question has been asked repeatedly by a group of blessed individuals about the gathering in which people participate in the month of *Rabi' al-Awwal* and they call it the *mawlid*. Does it have a basis in the Religion? And they desire a clear and

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 2550), Muslim (no. 1718), Abū Dāwūd (no. 4606) and Ibn Mājah (no. 14).

² Related by Muslim (no. 867) and al-Nisā'ī (3/188-189).

³ [TN]: Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Sakhāwī (d.902H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said, "Commemorating the noble *mawlid* has not been documented from any of the *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ* in the virtuous generations. It was only invented afterward." Refer to *Subul al-Hudā wa al-Rashād* (1/439) of al-Ṣāliḥī.

decisive answer about that. So I say, and the success is with Allāh: I do not know of any basis for this *mawlid* in the Book of Allāh, nor in the *Sunnah*, nor do I know of any statement from any of the Scholars of the *Ummah* who are an example to be followed in the Religion, who hold onto the narrations of the early ones. Rather, it is an innovation invented by those who are inactive in practicing the Religion and who are gluttonous in fulfilling their base desires.”¹

And Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ - said, “Likewise, there is what some of the people have invented, either to compete with the Christians in their birthday celebration of ‘Isā (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ), or out of love and veneration for the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)... Whosoever takes the *mawlid* of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) as a day of celebration, despite the disagreement of the people concerning it, then the *Salaf* did not do this... And if this had been purely good, or a correct position, then the *Salaf* would have had more right than us to celebrate it, since they loved the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) more than us and they venerated him more than us and they were more zealous upon goodness. So love and veneration of him is shown through obeying him, following his example and obeying his command and reviving his *Sunnah* inwardly and outwardly and spreading what he was sent with and striving upon that with the heart, the limbs and the tongue. So this was the path of the early forerunners from the *Muhājirīn* (emigrants) and the *Anṣār* (helpers) and those who followed them in goodness.”²

And as for the one whose heart has not consumed innovation and he only holds it to be something good and thinks that it brings him closer to Allāh (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ), then the proof in opposition to it becomes apparent to him and he comprehends it, then in most cases he will recant and repent.

¹ Refer to *al-Mawrid fi ‘Amal al-Mawlid* (p. 20-22) of al-Fākihānī.

² Refer to *Iqtidā‘ al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* (2/615), with the checking of Dr. Nāṣir al-‘Aql.

And the Scholars cite as an example for that the people who recanted from the *Khawārij* after Ibn ‘Abbās debated them¹ and the recantations of al-Muhtadī and al-Wāthiq from the innovated statement that the *Qur‘ān* is created.²



¹ Related by al-Dārimī in *al-Sunan* (1/68-69) and Baḥshal in *Tārīkh Wāsīt* (p. 198-199).

² Refer to *Sīyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’* (10/309) of al-Dhahabī.

Ruling upon the Innovator (*Mubtadi'*)

The innovator (*mubtadi'*) is the one who invents an innovation (*bid'ah*) and calls to it and forms allegiance and enmity based upon it. And the innovation can be one that expels the individual from the Religion (*mukaffarah*) and others that do not expel the individual from the Religion. Indeed, ruling upon the one whose Islām has been affirmed with a ruling of disobedience (*fisq*), or innovation (*tabdī'*) or *takfir* is from the affairs that Allāh has warned against. So it has been confirmed from the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) that he said, “Whosoever says to his brother, “O disbeliever (*kāfir*),” when the affair is not as such, then it returns back to him.”¹

Due to this, Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) said, “It is not for anyone to declare someone from amongst the Muslims a disbeliever, even if he errs and is incorrect, up until the evidence is established upon him and the proof is clarified to him. And whosoever’s Islām is confirmed with certainty (*yaqīn*), then it cannot be removed by a doubt. Rather, it cannot be removed, except after establishing the evidence and removing the doubt.”²

As for whoever leaves the guidance and the Religion of truth, such that you see him indulging in affairs that oppose the *Sharī'ah*, then he gets another ruling in accordance to what he commits from oppositions. So the ruling is either clear disbelief (*kufr ṣarīh*) or hypocrisy (*nifāq*).

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) said concerning the likes of these individuals, “Indeed, whosoever leaves the guidance and the Religion of truth from those who lead a devout life, the jurists, the worshippers, the ascetics, the theologians, the physicians and other than them, then whosoever from amongst these people leaves the truth, which the Messenger (ﷺ) was sent with and he does not affirm everything that Allāh informed about upon the tongue of His Messenger (ﷺ), and he does not declare unlawful everything that Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) declared unlawful (*ḥarām*), such as the one who believes that his teacher

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 5752), Muslim (no. 60) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 5878).

² Refer to *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (12/366) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

sustains him, or aids him, or guides him, or grants him salvation, or rescues him, or he worships his teacher, or he favours his teacher above the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) with an unrestricted favouring, or he favours his teacher in a restricted manner in something that brings one closer to Allāh, or that he and his teacher have no need to follow the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)...”

He said, “So all of these individuals are disbelievers if they make that apparent and hypocrites if they do not make it apparent.”¹

Then he mentioned that these types of people had grown large in number during his time because of the absence of callers to knowledge (*ilm*) and faith (*īmān*).

Then he went onto mention the second category of innovators and those for whom confirmation is required to issue a ruling upon them, because disbelief (*kufr*) can occur through a deed, or a belief. And both of these have a ruling in the *Sharī'ah*.

So he said, “And the basis (*aṣl*) of this is that the statement that is disbelief in the Book and the *Sunnah* and consensus (*ijmā'*) is a statement that is uttered once that is proven by *Sharī'ah* evidence. So faith (*īmān*) is from the rulings that are determined by Allāh and His Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and that is not for people to rule by their suspicions and desires.”

Then he said, “And it is obligatory to not rule upon an individual that he is a disbeliever up until that has been confirmed concerning him and the conditions of *takfīr* have been fulfilled and the obstacles have been removed.” Then he struck an example for that and said, “For example, there is the one who says that intoxicants and usury are lawful due to his being new to Islām, or because he grew up as a Bedouin far away from knowledge...”²

Indeed, he elaborated upon the issue of ruling upon the innovator and explained that there is no escape from establishing the proof upon him and removing the doubt from him. Then he mentioned the statement that the

¹ Refer to *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (10/329) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

² Refer to *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (3/354) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

Qur'ān is created and he mentioned what happened to Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (d.241H) with al-Ma'mūn and al-Mu'taṣim and that they had an excuse due to the existence of a doubt that they held and that Imām Aḥmad supplicated for them. And if he had believed that they were disbelievers, he would not have supplicated for them.¹

Innovation that Expels One from the Religion and Innovation that does not Expel One from the Religion:

And Shaykh Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥakamī (d.1377H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said, "Thereafter, innovations, with regards to their violating of the Religion, are of two categories: the ones that expel the individual to whom they are attributed from the Religion and the ones that do not expel one from the Religion. So the general principle concerning *al-bid'ah al-mukaffarah* is that whosoever denies an affair upon which there is consensus (*ijmā'*), and it has been related concurrently in the *Sharī'ah*, and it is known from the Religion by necessity, such as rejecting an obligation, or obligating something that has not been made obligatory, or declaring the *ḥalāl* unlawful, or declaring the *ḥarām* lawful, or belief in that from which Allāh has freed Himself from in His Book or His Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) has freed Him...

And the innovation that does not expel one from the Religion is that which does not require denial of the Book, nor denial of anything that the Messengers (عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ) were sent with." Then he struck an example of that, so he said, "For example, there are the *Bida' al-Marwāniyyah*. That is, the innovations invented by the rulers from the tribe of Marwān, which were opposed by nobles from amongst the Companions (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ). So the Companions did not affirm these innovations, and despite that, they did not declare them innovators due to any of that and they did not remove their hands from allegiance to those rulers due to that. These were innovations such as delaying some of the Prayers from their times and delivering the sermon before the 'Īd Prayer..."²

¹ Refer to *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (12/366) of Ibn Taymiyyah and what occurs after it. And the student of knowledge would do well to review it.

² Refer to *Ma'ārij al-Qubūl* (2/503-504) of Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥakamī.

Ruling upon the Individual Who Falls into an Error

The definition of the innovator (*mubtadi'*) has proceeded. And he is the one who invents the innovation and calls to it and forms allegiance and enmity based upon it. And the innovation (*al-bid'ah*) is divided into innovation that expels one from the Religion (*bid'ah mukaffarah*) and innovation that does not expel one from the Religion (*bid'ah ghayr mukaffarah*). And we have mentioned statements from the Scholars concerning the ruling upon the one who falls into them.

As for the one who errs in some of the issues, but his methodology (*manhaj*) is well known and his dealings are praiseworthy and he possesses *Sharī'ah* knowledge, then his error does not diminish his status and it does not decrease his status. So if he is still living and being sustained by Allāh, then it is obligatory to notify him of his error with wise behaviour, as is customary amongst the Scholars. And this notification is built upon co-operating upon righteousness and piety, because the Religion is sincere advice (*naṣīḥah*). So sincere advice must be presented to the student of knowledge in accordance to his status, with good manners and respectfulness and by clarifying the truth with evidence, without roughness and a sense of superiority. Rather, the advice must be delivered with wisdom and a good admonition, up until the objective of the advice has been reached. So after that, the word will remain as one and love and brotherhood for the sake of Allāh will remain. So the Believers are only brothers.

And if the individual who erred has already gone to meet his Lord, then supplication is made for him, because infallibility is for the Prophets alone. And the errors of such an individual must be clarified to the people up until no one remains to follow that individual in that error.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) said during his description of the Imāms of guidance and what emanated from them in terms of errors, “And whosoever is known for having a truthful tongue in the *Ummah*, such that they praise him and he is extolled amongst the majority of people in the

Ummah,¹ then such individuals are the Imāms of guidance and they are lamps that illuminate the darkness. And their errors are scarce in relation to their correct views, and most of their errors occur in places of *ijtihād* (independent reasoning), for which they are excused. And they are the ones who follow the knowledge and justice. So they are far from ignorance and following suspicion and whatever the souls desire.”²



¹ And this means that whosoever fits this description, then he is devoted to the statement of truth. So no one from amongst the people differs about him, even if he says that which opposes their desires. So the praise for this Scholar does not only come from those whose statement is in agreement about him and it is what they want and desire. Rather, it also comes from all of the people, regardless of their divergent schools of jurisprudence. Indeed, this meaning is proven in the *ḥadīth* that is related by al-Bukhārī (no. 5650), and it is, “Indeed, when Allāh loves a servant, He says to Jibrīl, ‘Indeed, I love so and so, so love him.’ So Jibrīl loves him. Then it is called out to the people in the heavens, ‘Indeed, Allāh loves so and so, so love him.’ So the people of the heavens love him. Then acceptance of him is placed in the earth.” He said, “And the case is likewise for hatred.”

I say: And I hope to apply this meaning in our present times upon the noble Shaykh: ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn ‘Abdullāh Ibn Bāz (d.1420H). May Allāh grant him success upon all goodness. *Āmīn*.

² Refer to *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā* (11/43) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

THE THIRD STUDY: Categories of *al-Bid'ah*

Division of *al-Bid'ah* into 'Amaliyyah, I'tiqādiyyah and Qawliyyah:

The categories of *al-bid'ah* are as follows:

1. Innovation in Deeds (*'amaliyyah*)
2. Innovation in Belief (*i'tiqādiyyah*)
3. Innovation in Statement (*qawliyyah*)

So the innovation in deeds occurs within outward actions, such as the Prayer in a manner that opposes what the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned and the likes of that from deeds which have been mentioned previously. So all of them enter into the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ), “Whosoever performs a deed that is not in accordance with this affair of ours, then it is rejected.”¹

And innovation in belief is when an individual believes in something contrary to what the Prophet (ﷺ) came with, such as the innovation of the *Khawārij* in their belief in *takfīr* of the sinners from amongst the Muslims. Rather, through their desires, they ended up believing in the disbelief of a number of the Companions.

Likewise, there are the *Mujassimah* and the *Mushabbihah* who liken Allāh to His creation. Allāh is far above that with a great exaltedness!

And innovation in statement is when there is an alteration of what is found in the Book of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) and in what has been confirmed from the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), such as the statements of the innovators from amongst the famous sects. And from that which is apparently in opposition to the Book and the *Sunnah* and evident in corruption and

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (13/302) and Muslim (4/206).

repugnance are the statements of the *Rāfiḍah*,¹ the *Khawārij*, the *Jahmiyyah*, the *Mu'tazilah*, the *Ash'ariyyah* and all of the sects that perform *ta'wil*. These sects have formed for themselves methodologies (*manāhij*) that oppose the *manhaj* of the Saved and Victorious Group that is apparent upon the truth up until the establishment of the Hour. They have been described as such by the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), as occurs in the *ḥadīth* of Abī Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), which is related by Abū Dāwūd (d.275H), al-Tirmidhī (d.274H) and Ibn Mājah (d.273H), that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Indeed, the Jews split up into seventy one sects and the Christians split up into seventy two sects. And this *Ummah* will split into seventy three sects, all of them will be in the Fire, except for one." So when he was asked about that one, he replied, "It that which I am upon and my Companions."²

¹ **Rāfiḍah:** Al-Saksakī said in his book, *Ma'rifah 'Aqā'id Ahl al-Adyān* (p. 36), "They came to be called the *Rāfiḍah* (rejectors) due to their rejection (*rafḍ*) of Abū Bakr and 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما). And it is said that their name was due to their rejection of Zayd Ibn 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) when he gave his allegiance to Abū Bakr and 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) and spoke with acceptance of their leadership. So Zayd said, "They (i.e. the *Rāfiḍah*) have rejected me (*rafaḍūnī*)." So they came to be called *al-Rāfiḍah*. And they came to be called *Shī'ah* (followers) when they said, "We are from the followers (*shī'ah*) of 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه)." However, some of them spoke other than the truth about him and they were the extremists. So some of them made him a deity whilst others considered him a prophet. Indeed, 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) fought some of them during his time and burned others. And the extremists from amongst them denied the Day of Reckoning." End of al-Saksakī's words.

And they are united upon the view that the Prophet (ﷺ) textually stipulated the succession of 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) by name and that the leadership is not obtained, except through a divine text and that their imāms are infallible against major and minor sins and the disavowal of Abū Bakr, 'Umar and many of the Companions, except for the sect known as the *Zaydiyyah*. Refer to *al-Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyin* (1/89) of Abu al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* (1/146) of al-Sharḥastānī and *al-Burhān fī Ma'rifah 'Aqā'id Ahl al-Adyān* (p. 36) of al-Saksakī.

Indeed, after the time of 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه), the *Rāfiḍah* split up into four groups, as has been mentioned by 'Abd al-Qāhir Ibn Ṭāhir al-Baghdādī: the *Zaydiyyah*, the *Imāmiyyah*, the *Kaysāniyyah* and the *Ghulāt*. Refer to *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* (p. 15) of al-Baghdādī. And al-Sharḥastānī added: the *Ismā'īliyyah*. Refer to *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* (1/147) of al-Sharḥastānī. Indeed, these groups split further into a number of other sects as well.

² **Ṣaḥīḥ:** Related by al-Tirmidhī (no. 2641), Abū Dāwūd (no. 4596), Ibn Abī 'Āṣim in *al-Sunnah* (no. 63-69), al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ* (8/22), al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* (1/219) and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (15/125). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in *Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (no. 203-204).

And there occurs in a narration of al-Bukhārī (d.256H) from the *ḥadīth* of al-Mughīrah Ibn Shu‘bah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) who said, “There shall not cease to be a group from amongst my *Ummah* apparent, up until the command of Allāh comes whilst they are apparent.”¹

Clarification about the Splitting of the *Ummah* into Seventy Three Sects:

Likewise, there is what occurs in the *ḥadīth* of Ḥudhayfah Ibn al-Yamān (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), wherein there is the statement of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to Ḥudhayfah about the splitting of the *Ummah* into those sects, “Adhere to the united body (*Jamā‘ah*) of the Muslims and their leader.”² And we shall mention the text of this *ḥadīth* in what follows. Due to this, we shall discuss the splitting of the *Ummah* into those sects to which the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) alluded. And that which caused the splitting into sects was that every sect innovated into the Religion of Allāh that for which Allāh and His Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) have granted no authority, from corrupt beliefs and false statements. So they created *manāḥij* with their intellects, which opposed the *manhaj* that was traversed by the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and the *manhaj* that his Companions (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) traversed. Then, they called the people by way of these *manāḥij* to corrupt beliefs and they made that the basis of allegiance and enmity (*al-walā’ wa al-barā’*). So whoever agreed with them upon these *manāḥij* and believed in these beliefs (*‘aqā’id*), then they accepted him, allied themselves with him and treated him generously.

And as for whosoever opposed them, then they declared him an innovator and a disobedient sinner and freed themselves from him. And if they had any authority in the land and the leaders were in their favour, they endangered him, imprisoned him and beat him. And sometimes they killed him. And the cause of all this were those sects and the multiplicity of their ideologies.

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 3640) and Muslim (no. 1921).

² Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 3411), Muslim (no. 1847).

And I shall mention to you - dear reader - in what follows: examples from the *manāhij* of these sects, just as they were mentioned by Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحْمَهُمَا اللَّهُ).

Then, I shall form after that a plain comparison between these *manāhij* and the dealings of their proponents with *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*,¹ the Saved Sect which traverses what the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and his Companions (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) were upon, as occurred in the previous *ḥadīth*, and between the *manāhij* of the modern-day groups and parties and how they deal with each other and with those who oppose them in their *manāhij*. I will do this in order to clarify by way of this comparison: Is there a difference between these modern-day groups and the sects of past in the truth of the matter, or is the difference only in name? And I have done that without mentioning the names of individuals, because the objective is only

¹ **Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah:** *Ahl al-Sunnah* are those who hold fast to whatever the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and his Caliphs (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) after him were upon. Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ - said in *al-'Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah* (p. 19-20) whilst clarifying the path of *Ahl al-Sunnah*, “From the path of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* is to follow the narrations of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) inwardly and outwardly. And they follow the path of those who have proceeded from the Emigrants (*al-Muhājirīn*) and the Helpers (*al-Anṣār*) and they follow the advice of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) when he said, “Hold onto my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the Rightly Guided Caliphs after me. Hold onto it and bite onto it with your molar teeth.” And they know that the most truthful of speech is the Speech of Allāh and the best of guidance is the guidance of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). And they give preference to the Speech of Allāh over the speech of all others from the types of people and they give precedence to the guidance of the Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) over the guidance of all others. Due to this, they are called the people of the Book and the *Sunnah*.”

And al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab (d.795H) - رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ - said whilst explaining the preceding *ḥadīth*, “In this *ḥadīth* is a command from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to hold onto his *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the Rightly Guided Caliphs after him during times of splitting and differing. And the *Sunnah* refers to a path that is traversed. So that comprises holding onto whatever he (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and his Rightly Guided Caliphs were upon from beliefs, deeds and statements. And this is the complete *Sunnah*. Due to this, the *Salaf* did not apply the term: *al-Sunnah*, except upon someone who embodied all of it and that meaning has been narrated from al-Ḥasan (d.110H), al-Awzā'ī (d.157H) and al-Fuḍayl Ibn 'Iyād (d.187H).” Then he said, “And many of the later Scholars specified the name: *al-Sunnah* to whatever was connected to belief (*i'tiqād*) because it is the basis of the Religion and the opponent of that is in grave danger.” Refer to *Jāmi' al-'Ulūm wa al-Ḥikam* (p. 249) of Ibn Rajab.

to bring attention to the errors, so that they are avoided, as occurred in the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ). Whenever he brought attention to an error that had occurred from individuals, he would say, “What is with people who say such and such,” without mentioning their names.

Then I shall mention after that the *manhaj* of the group or Saved Sect, as they were described by the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ).

Then I shall clarify whatever is connected to the minds of the youth from suggestions from some of the callers (*du'āt*) that this group and its adherents are just another party (*ḥizb*) from amongst the parties (*aḥzāb*) like the others.

And does this group that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) described as the Saved Sect exist in present times? And is it confined to a specific country? And does it have a leader leading it with the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (ﷺ)? Conversely, are we living in the times that were alluded to in the *ḥadīth* of Ḥudhayfah Ibn al-Yamān (رضي الله عنه), whose text is to come? So are we in a predicament where everyone must bite onto the root of a tree up until death reaches him whilst he is upon that?

The Splitting in the Religion that the Messenger (ﷺ) warned against has occurred:

So we say that whatever the Prophet (ﷺ) warned his *Ummah* about has come to pass. So the disagreement has emerged as he (ﷺ) informed. So his (ﷺ) *Ummah* has split up into sects who declare each other disbelievers, or disobedient sinners or innovators. Indeed, the beginning of the deviation can be traced to the emergence of ‘Abdullāh Ibn Saba’ al-Ḥumayrī, the Jew, who called to Islām out of hypocrisy and infiltrated heretical ideologies into this *Ummah*. So the riffraff from amongst the people accepted those ideologies that are far from the teachings of Islām. These ideologies led them to kill the Rightly Guided Caliph ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān (رضي الله عنه). And from his corrupt ideologies were the claim that the successorship was for ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) and his claim that the Companions opposed that successorship. Then they ruled against all of the Companions - as they alleged - that they opposed the successorship of the

Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). So they declared all of them disbelievers, except for three. Indeed, the Scholars clarified the falseness of this and its fabrication, its disbelief and its heresy. Additionally, there actually was no successorship, not for 'Alī and not for anyone else, according to the speech of 'Alī himself. There is no opportunity to elaborate upon that now, but the sects increased in abundance after that and their ideologies became widespread.

And the cause of that is what has been mentioned by al-Maqrīzī (d.845H) and other than him.

Al-Ṣafadī said, “Al-Ma‘mūn made a request to some of the Christian kings. He said: I believe it was the ruler of Cyprus. He requested from him a treasury of books about Greek logic. And they had a library of books for which no one had claimed ownership. So the king gathered his elite whose opinions he valued and sought consultation with them about that. So all of them alluded to not giving him the books, except for one archbishop who said: Give them to him. So these sciences do not enter upon a state ruled by the *Sharī'ah*, except that they corrupt it and sow the seeds of discord amongst its Scholars.”¹ And the affair was as such. So the corrupt ideologies became widespread and the first of these ideologies was the ideology of 'Abdullāh Ibn Saba'. So the *Rāfiḍah* emerged and their beliefs were established upon that intellectual foundation and following of desires, as was stated by Ibn al-Qayyim (d.751H) in *al-Ṣawā'iq* (1/118) about the groups that opposed *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*. So they founded these *madhāhib* upon those principles with their intellects.

Manhaj of the *Rāfiḍah*:

He said, “So the *Rāfiḍah* were founded upon having enmity towards the Companions, and based upon this foundation, they rejected everything that has come concerning their virtues and praise, or they explained it away.”

¹ Refer to *Lawāmi' al-Anwār* (1/9) of al-Safārīnī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'* (100/278) of al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh al-Khulafā'* (no. 327) and *al-Khiṭaṭ* (2/357) of al-Maqrīzī. Indeed, it was mentioned that al-Ma‘mūn sent Arabs to the land of Rome for books about philosophy. And that was mentioned by Ibn Khaldūn in *al-Muqaddimah* (no. 893).

Manhaj of the *Khawārij*:

Then the sect of the *Khawārij* emerged. And they were from amongst the followers of ‘Abdullāh Ibn Saba’. So they were the ones who killed ‘Uthmān (رضي الله عنه). Then they rebelled against ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) and declared him a disbeliever. And they declared all of the Companions disbelievers. Then they formed a principle for themselves, and it was that the individual who commits a major sin is a disbeliever in the life of this world and in the Hereafter. And they were ignoramuses who did not know the texts of the *Sharī‘ah*. So the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) described them as people who fought the people of Islām and abandoned the people of idolatry. Likewise, the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) described them with an absence of understanding (*fiqh*) in the Religion, despite being staunch in worship upon ignorance. So he said whilst describing them, “You will look upon your own Prayer with disdain in comparison to their Prayer and you will look upon your own recitation with disdain in comparison to their recitation.”¹ And there occurs in the narration of Muslim, “They are a people who will recite the *Qur‘ān* with their tongues, but it will not pass beyond their throats. They will pass through the Religion as an arrow passes through the game.”² And he encouraged killing them, so he said, “So if you encounter them, then fight them. Since, in fighting them there is a reward for the one who fights them with Allāh on the Day of Judgement.”³ Indeed, that renegade group fought against ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) and his companions, because instead of becoming students of the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) who were present for the Revelation and accompanied the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) in order to acquire understanding (*fiqh*) at their hands and taking the teachings of the *Sharī‘ah* of Islām and its rules and regulations, they declared the Companions disbelievers. And that was due to their ignorance, as was described by the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم). And they were from the followers of ‘Abdullāh Ibn Saba’ who revolted against ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān (رضي الله عنه) and they fought against him out of oppression and transgression.

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 6532), Muslim (no. 1765), Mālik in *al-Muwatta‘a* (no. 477) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 11185).

² Related by Muslim (no. 1064).

³ Related by Muslim (no. 1066), al-Nisā‘ī (no. 4102) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 1089).

Manhaj of the *Jahmiyyah*:

Then there emerged the *Jahmiyyah*.¹ They were the followers of al-Jahm Ibn Ṣafwān (k.128H). Indeed, the *Jahmiyyah* formed a principle, and it was that Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) did not speak, nor did anyone speak to Him and He will not be seen with the eyes in the Hereafter and He has not ascended above His Throne separate from His creation and He does not have an Attribute with which He is described. And built upon that, they either rejected or explained away (*ta'wīl*) everything that came in the Book of Allāh or in the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), which opposed their principle.

Manhaj of the *Mu'tazilah*:

And the *Mu'tazilah* formed a principle: the statement about carrying out the Threat of Allāh and that whosoever enters the Fire will never come out of it. And they rejected the Attributes and they held that they *Qur'ān* was created.

¹ **Jahmiyyah:** They are the followers of Jahm Ibn Ṣafwān (k.128H). His innovation emerged in Tirmidh and he was killed by Salim Ibn Aḥwaz al-Māzinī at Marw during the end of the Umayyad kingship. He agreed with the *Mu'tazilah* in denying the eternal Attributes (*al-Ṣifāt al-Azliyyah*) of Allāh and he denied the *ru'yah* (the Believers seeing Allāh in the Hereafter) and he affirmed that the Speech of Allāh is created. And he added some issues to the belief of the *Mu'tazilah*, from them: that it is not permissible to describe Allāh with an attribute that is used to describe the creation because that necessitates resemblance (*tashbīh*). So he denied that Allāh is *al-Hayy* (the Ever-Living), *al-'Ālim* (the All-Knowing) and he affirmed that Allāh is All-Capable, the Doer and the Creator. And he said that mankind are compelled to their deeds and have no self-control or free will and that Paradise and the Fire will come to an end. And he said that faith (*īmān*) is knowledge of Allāh and that *īmān* does not fluctuate. Refer to *al-Milal wa al-Niḥāl* (1/86-88) of al-Sharḥastānī and *al-Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* (1/15) of Abu al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī.

All of the Sects that Utilize *Ta'wīl*:

And the *Kullābiyyah*,¹ the *Ash'ariyyah* and the *Murji'ah*² were similar to them. And all of the groups that traversed the path of *al-ta'wīl* (figurative interpretation) concerning the Names and Attributes of Allāh rejected the texts in favour of the intellect. So they affirmed whatever their intellects accepted and they did not accept whatever their intellects rejected. And the intellect is not the standard measure because it rejects *Sharī'ah* texts from the Book and the *Sunnah*. This is because there are many different intellects. So whatever is accepted by the intellect of the *Jahmī* will not be accepted by the intellect of the *Rāfiḍī* and the *Mu'tazilī* and so forth.

¹ **Kullābiyyah:** This is an ascription to Abū Muḥammad 'Abdullāh Ibn Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān, commonly known as Ibn Kullāb (d.240H). In reality, he was the leader of the *Kullābiyyah* and al-Ash'arī and all of the *Ash'ariyyah*. He was the first founder of the *Ash'ariyyah* and perhaps his ideas infiltrated the *Ḥanafī Māturīdiyyah*, though we do not find that clearly outlined. And he was the first to innovate into Islām: *al-Kalām al-Nafsī* (belief that the Speech of Allāh is innate and not an action). Refer to *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (12/178) of Ibn Taymiyyah, *Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣawā'iq al-Mursalāh* (2/426-450) and *Ijtīmā' al-Juyūsh al-Islāmiyyah* (p. 272) of Ibn al-Qayyim. Ibn Fawrak described him (i.e. Ibn Kullāb), praised him and exaggerated in his praise and said, "Imām of the researchers, the first Shaykh, the preceding Imām, he paved the way for these principles and was the founder of these principles." Refer to *Dar' al-Ta'arūḍ al-'Aql wa al-Naql* (6/121-122) of Ibn Taymiyyah, from Ibn Fawrak.

And a large group have clarified that when al-Ash'arī recanted from the beliefs of the *Mu'tazilāh*, he chose the path of Ibn Kullāb. Refer to *al-Fiṣal* (5/77) of Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* (1/93) of al-Sharḥastānī and *Minḥāj al-Sunnah* (1/145) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

² **Murji'ah:** They were called *al-Murji'ah* because they spoke with *al-Irjā'* and the basis of *al-Irjā'* is to delay. Due to that, they say that faith (*īmān*) is belief in the heart only and they delay or put off affirmation with the tongue and the actions of the limbs. And due to the fact that they favour hope alone, they say that disobedience is of no harm in the presence of faith (*īmān*) and that obedience is likewise of no benefit in the presence of disbelief (*kufr*). And they are united upon the belief that the Fire will not touch anyone but the disbelievers. Refer to *al-Burhān fī Ma'rifaḥ 'Aqā'id Ahl al-Adyān* (p. 17) of al-Saksakī and *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* (1/139) of al-Sharḥastānī.

Indeed, al-Sharḥastānī mentioned that the *Murji'ah* consist of four groups: *Murji'ah al-Khawārij*, *al-Qadariyyah*, *al-Jabariyyah* and *al-Murji'ah al-Khālīṣah*. Refer to *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* (1/139) of al-Sharḥastānī and *al-Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* (1/213) of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī.

Allegiance and Enmity (*al-walā' wa al-barā'*) is formed upon the Basis of These *Manāhij*:

And they based *al-walā' wa al-barā'* (allegiance and enmity) upon those foundations and principles, which their intellects formed. So whoever agreed with them upon that, then they accepted him, allied themselves with him, appointed him to positions and treated him well.

And whosoever opposed them, then they declared him a disbeliever, displayed enmity towards him, imprisoned him, beat him and perhaps they killed him. And they would not accept his testimony and they would not rescue him from the clutches of the enemy.

Position of Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) Towards Those *Manāhij* and Their Adherents:

Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - spoke whilst he was discussing a clarification upon the issue of *al-takfīr*. So he mentioned the interaction of Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (d.241H) with the *Mu'tazilah*¹ and the way that they dealt with whosoever opposed them in the false belief ('*aqīdah*), upon which they based allegiance and enmity. And we shall compare between them and between the *manāhij* of the modern-day groups (*jamā'āt*) that are

¹ **Mu'tazilah:** This sect arose when Wāṣil Ibn 'Aṭā' manifested his innovation and alleged that the disobedient sinner (*fāsiq*) was upon a level between two levels and those two levels are disbelief (*kufīr*) and faith (*imān*). So al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d.110H) banished him from his gathering. So he isolated himself at a column from amongst the columns of the mosque in al-Baṣrah and his close friend 'Amr Ibn 'Ubayd would associate with him. So at that point, the people began to say about the two of them that they had isolated themselves (*i'tazalā*) from the statement of the *Ummah*. From that point on, their followers were called *Mu'tazilah*. This name comprised a number of sects, all of whom are united upon various innovations, from them: negating the Eternal Attributes (*al-Ṣifāt al-Azliyyah*) from Allāh (سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِعَالِيكَ), the belief that Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) will never be seen with the eyes, the statement that the Speech of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) is an occurrence and therefore created, and that the people are the sole creators of their own deeds and that Allāh has no pre-decree (*Qadr*). Due to this, they were also called *al-Qadariyyah*. And they also believed that the disobedient sinner (*fāsiq*) is upon a level between two levels. Refer to *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* (p. 93-98) of al-Baghḍādī and *al-Fiṣal fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal* (4/192) of Ibn Ḥazm.

found in the arena, in order to clarify whether there is a difference between them, or if the difference is only in names.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah says in *al-Fatāwā* (12/488), “So for example, Imām Aḥmad (d.241H) admonished the *Jahmiyyah* who called to the belief that the *Qur’ān* is created, and they denied the Attributes (*ṣifāt*) and put him and the rest of the Scholars of his time on trial. And they tried the believing men and women who did not agree with them upon *al-tajahhum* (beliefs of the *Jahmiyyah*) with beatings, imprisonment, fighting, exile from the nation states and economic sanctions and rejection of testimony and abandonment of liberating them from the clutches of the enemy. This was because many of the people in authority, from the rulers and the judges and others, were from the *Jahmiyyah*. They performed *takfīr* upon whosoever was not a *Jahmī* in agreement with them upon denial of the Attributes, such as the belief that the *Qur’ān* is created and they gave such people the ruling of a disbeliever (*kāfir*). So they did not offer such an individual any protection and they did not rescue him from the enemy and they did not give him anything from the treasury and they would not accept his testimony, nor his religious verdicts, nor his narrations. And they would test the people through the rulership and the testimony and release from prison and other than that.

So they ruled that whoever affirmed that the *Qur’ān* is created possessed faith (*īmān*). And whosoever did not affirm that, then they did not rule that he was from the people of *īmān*. And whosoever was a caller to other than *al-tajahhum*, then they fought him, or beat him, or imprisoned him.”

How *Ahl al-Sunnah* Dealt with Those Innovators:

Such was they way that these sects dealt with *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah*, with the group that followed whatever the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his Companions were upon, as was mentioned by Ibn Taymiyyah. So enmity and allegiance was based upon those false beliefs (*‘aqā’id*) and *manāhij*.

Is Mentioning the Views of the Sects and Their Widespread Beliefs Now an Excavation of What is beneath the soil?

Indeed, many of the modern day writers and those who are pre-occupied with *da'wah* and uniting the word of the Muslims believe that it is useless to encourage and direct the youth to give importance to the *uṣūl* (foundations of the Religion), which are the foundations for building the society, as al-Muṣṭafā (صلى الله عليه وسلم) traversed in rectifying the hearts of the people; they consider this useless. They say, 'Those who research into the issues of creed (*'aqīdah*) are only excavating whatever is below the soil.' Meaning, the discussion about the sects – as they claim – is research into affairs that have become extinct. And they do not realize that it is only the individuals that have become extinct. As for the ideologies (*afkār*) and the *manāhij* and the beliefs (*'aqā'id*), then they have remained widespread. So due to that, we shall formulate a comparison between the previous *manāhij* and the modern day *manāhij*.



Manāhij of the Modern Day Groups (*Jamā'āt*)

The *Ummah* of Islām is One *Ummah*:

Indeed, the Muslim *Ummah* is one *Ummah*, as Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿ إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُونِ ﴾ (٩٢)

“Indeed this, your Religion, is one Religion, and I am your Lord, so worship Me.” [Sūrah al-Anbiyā’ 21:92]

And its way and its path is one, as Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿ وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّيْنَاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴾ (١٥٣)

“And, moreover, this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow other ways, for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you that you may become righteous.” [Sūrah al-An‘ām 6:153]

Every Group has made a *Manhaj* for itself upon which it forms Allegiance and Enmity (*al-walā’ wa al-barā’*):

Indeed, we see a number of modern day groups and parties (*aḥzāb*) in the arena of Islām. Every group (*jamā’ah*) has made a name for itself and formed a *manhaj* for itself and it calls to its path, within its own rules, to Islām.

And at the same time, these groups and parties are split up and feuding, but they separate themselves and dispute attribution to those groups and sects of the past.

The Follower of a Specific Group does not View the Teachings of Islām, except through the *Manhaj* of this Group:

Moreover, these groups (*jamā'āt*) and parties (*aḥzāb*) form allegiances and enmity within the sphere of that *manhaj* that they have designed for their followers. And they make it binding upon the one who ascribes to that group to not leave its *manhaj*, so he is bound to it. So he does not take, nor does he give, except within those designated confines and under its banner, because in the sight of its leaders and supporters, Islām and all of its teachings are confined within that *manhaj* and the end result of that narrow field of vision, which is distant from the *manhaj* of the Victorious Group (*al-ṭā'ifah al-manṣūrah*), are many abhorrent innovations. We shall mention some of them.

Bigoted Partisanship (*al-ta'aṣṣub al-ḥizbī*) to the Ideas of Men is the End Result of that:

From these abhorrent innovations is bigoted partisanship (*al-ta'aṣṣub al-ḥizbī*) to ideologies, or to individuals, or to scholars (*shuyūkh*). The teachings of Islām have come to abolish this. So there is no bigoted allegiance to a party, or a tribe, or a country in Islām. That is only from the deeds of *al-Jāhiliyyah*. Indeed, these groups and parties have made allegiance and enmity (*al-walā' wa al-barā'*) based upon ascription to themselves. So based upon that, the member of the party or the group is honoured and revered and his affair is exalted. So the qualification for all of that is membership, not knowledge or righteousness (*taqwā*).

Membership to that Party (*ḥizb*) or Group (*Jamā'ah*) is the Measure

The end result of this is that the opponent of this group and this *manhaj*, which is not divinely revealed, even if he is upon the truth, then his value is reduced and it is spread about him that he has a narrow field of vision and lacks education and does not know the current state of the *Ummah* and the

dangers that surround it, up until the youth are driven away from him. So they do not benefit from his knowledge and his experience, even though he may be a Scholar whose age exceeds seventy years.

Explaining the *Sharī'ah* Measure for Assessing Individuals and Ideologies:

And it is well known that the *Sharī'ah* measure for assessing individuals is knowledge and righteousness (*taqwā*).

﴿إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْفَتَكُمْ﴾

“Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allāh is the most righteous of you.” [Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt 49:13]

So the point of consideration is not membership, or the absence of it.

And the measure of the ideologies and *manāhij* are the Book and the *Sunnah*.

﴿فَإِنْ نُنزِعْكُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ﴾

“So if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allāh and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allāh and the Last Day.” [Sūrah al-Nisā' 4:59]

And do not refer it back to the opinion of so and so, or the statement of so and so, or his *manhaj*.

From the Results of Party Spirit (*taḥazzub*) is Splitting and Controversy:

And from the end results of this partisanship (*taḥazzub*) is splitting and argumentation and enmity and constant disagreement and certain failure in the arena of *da'wah*.

As for the claim that all of the groups are working for Islām and that they will unite for the desired result, then this claim has been proven false by the prevalent disagreements between these groups. They disagree in their *manāḥij* and their goals and schisms have resulted between some of them. And I believe that these affairs do not require evidence due to their emergence in every place.

Is there a Real Difference between the *Manāḥij* of the Ancient Sects and the Modern Day Groups?

And based upon that, is there a true difference between the *manāḥij* of those previous sects, whose examples we mentioned in what Shaykh al-Islām mentioned about the *Mu'tazilah*, and between the modern day *manāḥij*, other than just the names? And the names do not change the realities.

Indeed, this is a confirmation of his (صلى الله عليه وسلم) statement about the splitting of the *Ummah* into these numerous sects based upon desires.

So are there those who co-operate upon righteousness and piety and hold onto the Rope of Allāh altogether, as Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ ؕ وَلَا تَمُونَا ۚ إِنَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

﴿١٠٢﴾ وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ وَأَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ

عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ

عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَاتِهِ

لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾﴾

“O you who have believed, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims in submission to Him. And hold firmly to the rope of Allāh all together and do not become divided. And remember the favour of Allāh upon you – when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favour, brothers. And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allāh make clear to you His āyāt that you may be guided.” [Sūrah Āli-‘Imrān 3:102-103]



The Saved Group (*al-Tā'ifah al-Nājiyah*)

Indeed, co-operation upon righteousness and piety and holding onto the Rope of Allāh altogether is whatever has come in the *manhaj* of the Saved Sect or Group. Indeed, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was asked about its description, so he replied, “They are upon what I am upon and my Companions.”¹ And there occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, in the Book of Holding onto the *Sunnah*, “There shall not cease to be a group from my *Ummah* apparent, up until the command of Allāh comes whilst they are apparent.”² And there occurs in the narration of Mu‘āwiyah that he said, ‘I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saying, ‘For whomsoever Allāh wants good, He grants him understanding (*fiqh*) of the Religion. And I am only a distributor and the grant is from Allāh. And the affair of this *Ummah* shall not cease to be upright, up until the Hour is established, or up until the command of Allāh comes.’³

So the question is: What is that which the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and his Companions were upon?

And is this group still present? And if this group is as was described by the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), then what is its *manhaj*? And where is it located? And does it have a leader leading it with the Book and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (ﷺ), as it occurs in the *ḥadīth* narrated by Ḥudhayfah (رضي الله عنه)?

We shall mention this *ḥadīth* in what follows. However, there occurs in it that Ḥudhayfah asked, “And what if they do not have a *Jamā'ah* (united body) and no leader?” He (ﷺ) replied, “Then abandon all of those

¹ **Ṣaḥīḥ:** Related by al-Tirmidhī (no. 2641), Abū Dāwūd (no. 4596), Ibn Abī 'Āṣim in *al-Sunnah* (no. 63-69), al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ* (8/22), al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* (1/219) and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (15/125). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in *Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (no. 203-204).

² Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 3640) and Muslim (no. 1921).

³ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 71), Muslim (no. 1721) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 27865).

sects, even if you have to bite onto the root of a tree until death reaches you whilst you are in that condition.”¹

So has that time come to pass and have we reached that condition, to the extent that each of us must bite onto the root of a tree up until death?

Dear brothers, we shall mention for all the world to see the answers to these questions.



¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 3411), Muslim (no. 1847).

The *Manhaj* of the Saved Sect (*al-Firqah al-Nājiyah*) is whatever the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and His Companions (رضي الله عنهم) were upon

The Saved and Victorious Group are the *Salaf*:

So as for what the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his Companions were upon, then it is holding onto whatever is in the Noble Book of Allāh, which falsehood cannot approach from the front, nor from the back, and holding onto the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), which clarifies and explains the Book of Allāh (عز وجل). So the *Sunnah* is the second Revelation (*al-wahyī al-thāmi*), as Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ﴾

“And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them.” [Sūrah al-Naḥl 16:44]

And Allāh said,

﴿وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۗ ۝۳ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ۗ ۝۴﴾

“Nor does he speak from his own inclination. It is not but a revelation revealed.” [Sūrah al-Najm 53:3-4]

The *Manhaj* of this Group:

So they traversed upon faith (*īmān*) in Allāh as a deity to be worshipped, there being no other deity besides Him and no Lord other than Him. So they directed all acts of worship, from beliefs, statements and deeds, inward and outward, to Him alone.

And they had *īmān* in His Names and His Attributes, as Allāh described Himself with in His Book and as His Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) described Him in his authentic *Sunnah*, without distortion (*tahrīf*),¹ nor denial (*ta'ṭīl*)² and without figurative interpretation (*ta'wīl*). Rather, they affirmed those Attributes for Allāh upon the foundation of His (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) statement,

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

¹ **Tahrīf:** Imām Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d.751H) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - said, "The *tahrīf* is of two types: [i] *tahrīf al-lafẓ* (distortion in wording) and [ii]: *tahrīf al-ma'nā* (distortion in meaning). So *tahrīf al-lafẓ* is to turn away from the actual word to something else: either by adding something, or by removing something, or by changing the diacritical vowels on the word itself, or by changing something else on the word itself. So it is of four types. Indeed, the *Jahmiyyah* and the *Rāfiḍah* have traversed this path. So they distort the texts of the *ḥadīth*, but they have not been able to do that with the wordings in the *Qur'ān*, even though the *Rāfiḍah* attempted to distort many of its wordings and then claimed that *Ahl al-Sunnah* had changed its context." Then he said, "As for *tahrīf al-ma'nā*, then this is what they have predominantly adopted, become obsessed with and taken great liberties in and they have called it *ta'wīl* (figurative interpretation). And this is a newly invented and corrupt term which was not used in the Arabic language in the past. And it is to remove the meaning from its context and its reality and to then give this word the meaning of another word in accordance to whatever is shared between the two words." Refer to *Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣawā'iq al-Mursalah* (2/147) of Ibn al-Qayyim.

² **Ta'ṭīl:** It is to reject the Attributes that have been mentioned in the noble *Qur'ān* and the authentic *Sunnah* and to negate them from Allāh (سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى). And the *Mu'aṭṭilūn* did not understand anything from the Names and Attributes of Allāh, except for that which is connected to the creation. So they began the negation as a result of this understanding. So they combined between *al-tamthīl* (resemblance) and *al-ta'ṭīl* (denial). So they resembled firstly and then negated secondly. Refer to *Lawāmi' al-Anwār al-Bahīyyah* (1/94) of al-Safārīnī.

“There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.” [Sūrah al-Shūrā 42:11]

And they ruled by whatever Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) revealed in His Book and whatever the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) legislated in his *Sunnah*, as Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿ فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ
ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴾



“So no, by your Lord, they will not truly believe until they make you, (O Muḥammad), judge concerning that over which they dispute amongst themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in full, willing submission.”

[Sūrah al-Nisā’ 4:65]

And they enjoined the good and prohibited the evil, as Allāh said to His Prophet,

﴿ قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴾

“Say: This is my way; I invite to Allāh with insight, I and those who follow me. And exalted is Allāh; and I am not of those who associate others with Him.”

[Sūrah Yūsuf 12:108]

And Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿ ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجِدِلْهُمْ
بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴾ (١٢٥)

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is rightly guided.” [Sūrah al-Naḥl 16:125]

So enjoining the good and prohibiting the evil occurs upon the foundation of these two *āyāt*: knowledge firstly and wisdom secondly. And giving *da'wah* upon this *manhaj* is comprehensive for all Muslims, it is for every individual in accordance to his ability and in his area where he specializes. Allāh does not burden a soul with more than it can bear. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, as occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, “Whomsoever from amongst you sees an evil, then him change it with his hand. So if he is not able to do that, then with his tongue. So if he is not able to do that, then let him hate it in his heart. And that is the weakest of faith (*īmān*).”¹

So changing with the hand is for the ruler and changing with the tongue is for every Muslim. So if he is not even able to say anything with his tongue, then it is binding upon him to hate this evil in his heart.

And striving (*Jihād*) in the Path of Allāh is for spreading this Religion and to deliver the servants from worship of the servants to the worship of the Lord of the servants.²

¹ Related by Muslim (no. 49), Ibn Mājah (no. 4013) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 10689).

² [TN]: Rabī Ibn ‘Amir (رضي الله عنه) said, “Allāh has sent us to deliver whomsoever chooses, from the worship of men, to the ‘*ubūdiyyah* (worship and servitude) of Allāh, and from the narrowness of this world, to the vastness of this world and the Hereafter, and from the oppression of the false religions, to the justice of Islām.” Refer to *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* (7/40) of Ibn Kathīr.

Allegiance and Enmity (*al-walā' wa al-barā'*) According to this Group:

Such are all the teachings of this Religion concerning the praiseworthy dealings and manners. So the Believers are merciful to each other, like a single body; if a single limb complains, the rest of the body is overcome with sleeplessness and fever. So the moral character of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was the *Qur'ān*, as was the character of his Companions. So allegiance and enmity (*al-walā' wa al-barā'*) is based upon the Book and the *Sunnah*.

So this was the *manhaj* of the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). And this is what the Saved Group (*al-ṭā'ifah al-nājiyah*) traverses upon whenever this *Ummah* splits up into these sects, to which the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) has alluded. It is what has come in the *ḥadīth* of al-Irbād Ibn Sāriyah (رضي الله عنه) when he (ﷺ) said, "Indeed, whomsoever from amongst you lives after me shall see many disagreements." Then he commanded the *Ummah* to hold onto his *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the Rightly Guided Caliphs during the emergence of this disagreement. And he commanded them to hold onto that with their molar teeth. Then he warned them against innovations and newly invented affairs and he clarified that every innovation is misguidance.

The Place where this Group Exists:

And what about the place wherein this group is found, and does it have a leader leading it with the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (ﷺ)?

So the answer is that the group, which traverses upon the *manhaj* to which we have previously alluded is all over the world. So it is not confined to one country to the exclusion of others.

And for the sake of completion, we shall address the second part of the question, and that is: Does this group have a leader leading it with the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (ﷺ)? So we shall mention

the *ḥadīth* of Ḥudhayfah Ibn al-Yamān (رضي الله عنه) to which we have previously alluded, and after mentioning it, we shall find the answer.

So al-Bukhārī (d.256H) narrated it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, in the Book of the Feats and Signs of Prophethood and in the Book of Tribulations, Chapter: What happens when there is no *Jamā'ah*?

And Muslim (d.261H) narrated it in the Book of Rulership, Chapter: The obligation to adhere to the united body (*Jamā'ah*) of the Muslims during the emergence of tribulations and in every other condition, and the prohibition of rebelling against obedience to the Muslim ruler and separating from the *Jamā'ah*.

From Ḥudhayfah Ibn al-Yamān (رضي الله عنه) who said, ‘The people used to ask the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) about the good and I used to ask him about the evil out of fear that it may reach me. So I said, “O Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم)! Indeed, we were in a state of *jāhiliyyah* (ignorance) and evil. So Allāh brought us this goodness. So is there any evil after this goodness?”

He replied, Yes.”

I said, “And is there any goodness after that evil?”

He replied, “Yes, but it will be tainted.”

I said, “And what is its taint?”

He replied, “There will be a people who will guide with other than my guidance. You will approve of some affairs from them and object to others.”

I said, “So will there be any evil after that goodness?”

He replied, “Yes, there will be callers at the gates of Hell. Whomsoever answers them, then they will throw him into it.”

I said, “O Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم)! Describe them to us.”

He replied, “They are our countrymen and they will speak our language.”

I said, “So what do you command me with if that should reach me?”

He replied, “Adhere to the united body (*Jamā'ah*) of the Muslims and their leader.”

I said, “So what if they do not have a *Jamā'ah*, nor a leader?”

He replied, “Then isolate yourself from all of those sects, even if you have to bite onto the root of a tree up until death reaches you whilst you are upon that.”¹

Imām al-Nawawī (d.676H) - رحمه الله - says in explanation of this *ḥadīth*, “With regards to the statement, “There will be callers at the gates of Hell. Whomsoever answers them, then they will throw him into it,” the Scholars have stated: These will be the rulers who call to an innovation or another form of misguidance, such as the *Khawārij*, or the *Qarāmiṭah*, or the people who put Imām Aḥmad (d.241H) to trial. And this *ḥadīth* comprises adherence to the *Jamā'ah* of the Muslims and their leader and the obligation to obey him, even if he sins and commits acts of disobedience.”²



¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 3411), Muslim (no. 1847).

² Refer to *Sharḥ Muslim* (12/237) of al-Nawawī.

The *Salaf* (ﷺ) and Their Followers are not a Party (*Ḥizb*)

So the Saved Group (*al-ṭā'ifah al-nājiyah*), which the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) has mentioned and described as being the one that is upon whatever he (ﷺ) was upon and his Companions. They are the *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*, then those who traverse upon their *manhaj*, as Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) said,

﴿وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ
بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي
تحتها الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

“And the first forerunners in the faith among the emigrants (*muhājirīn*) and the helpers (*anṣār*) and those who followed them with good conduct - Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment.” [Sūrah al-Tawbah 9:100]

So this group, with this *manhaj*, exists through out the entire world and it exists at every time and place. So it is not confined to one country, to the exclusion of others, nor to one place, to the exclusion of others. And they are the united body (*Jamā'ah*) of Muslims who traverse upon the truth and the guidance. They may have a leader leading them with the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (ﷺ), and in some situations and during the emergence of tribulations (*fitan*), they may not have a leader, as occurred in the *ḥadīth* of Ḥudhayfah (رضي الله عنه).

However, by the praise of Allāh, this group is present with the *manhaj* and the leader leading it with the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (ﷺ) within this country (i.e. Saudi Arabia). And we shall

mention that after quoting Imām Ismā'īl Ibn Muḥammad al-Aṣbahānī (d.535H), who was given the honorary title of custodian of the *Sunnah* (*Qawām al-Sunnah*), in order to clarify to us that the single united body (*Jamā'ah*) of Muslims that traverses upon whatever the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his Companions are upon, and they are the *Salaf* and their followers are the people of this *manhaj* and they are not a party (*ḥizb*), as we have heard from some of those who have not looked into their *manhaj* and their way. And when there is an individual who ascribes to the *manhaj* of the *Salaf*, then he commits an error, and they are not infallible, then his error is counted against him, not against the *manhaj*.

It is not Permissible to Drive the Youth Away from the Word *Salaf*:

And the people must not be driven away from the truth, not to mention the youth. So driving them away from the group of the *Salaf* or the *manhaj* of the *Salaf* is a heinous crime against the Muslim *Ummah*, since it cuts off the present ones of this *Ummah* from their predecessors. And this is an orientation that has circulated amongst the enemies of Islām and its suggestion is adopted by those who do not think about its outcomes and what its end results will be. Indeed, I took a quick look at pages from *Sharḥ al-Taḥāwīyyah*. So I found it repeating the word, *al-Salaf* more than twenty times and this proves the honour that is in this ascription. This is because the distinguishing characteristics of their *manhaj* include steadfastness upon the truth and being constant upon it, not being unsteady and wavering, and their agreement upon the affairs of creed (*ʿaqidah*) and they do not differ about that, even though they are in different times and places. This is contrary to the other groups who have turned their intellects into their *manāḥij*.

The custodian of the *Sunnah*, Imām al-Aṣḥābānī - رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ - said, “And from that which proves that the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*¹ are the people of truth is that if you were to peruse their written books, from the first of them to the last of them, their early ones and their latecomers, along with the fact that they lived in different countries and times and there were long distances in between them and each one of them lived in a region from amongst the regions, you will find them upon a single way and a single matter with regards to the clarification of the creed (*i’tiqād*). They led the way upon this path and did not deviate from it, nor swerve. Their statement concerning that was one and their text was one. You would not see amongst them any disagreement, nor any splitting in anything at all, even if it was small.”²

¹ **Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth, Ahl al-Ḥadīth:** The *Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth* are those who hold onto the Book of Allāh (سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ) and they follow the *Sunnah* of His Prophet Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Al-Shahrastānī said, “They were called *Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth* because they collected the *aḥādīth* and documented the narrations and they based the *aḥkām* (rules, regulations) upon the texts. And they did not refer back to apparent or hidden *qiyās* (analogical deduction) as long as they found a report or a narration.” Refer to *al-Mīlāl wa al-Niḥāl* (1/206) of al-Shahrastānī. So with this they opposed the people of opinion (*ra’yi*).

And Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) said whilst clarifying the meaning intended by the usage of the term, *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*, “We do not mean by *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* only those who listen to it, or write it or narrate it. Rather, we mean by them: everyone who is competent enough to memorize it, familiarize himself with it and understand it outwardly and inwardly.” And then he said whilst alluding to something from their excellence, “And the lowest trait they possess is their love for the *Qur’ān* and the *ḥadīth*, and researching about them and about their meanings, and acting upon what they have learnt from the obligations of the *Qur’ān* and the *ḥadīth*. The jurists (*fuqahā*) of *al-Ḥadīth* are more informed about the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) than the other *fuqahā*. And their ascetics are more obedient to the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) than the other ascetics. And their rulers are more qualified in Prophetic politics than other rulers and their common-folk are more qualified in having allegiance to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) than others.” Refer to *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā* (4/95) of Ibn Taymiyyah. And he mentioned in another place that the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* are the *Salaf* from the three earliest generations and whosoever follows their path from the *khalaf* (latecomers). Refer to *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā* (6/355) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

And Imām Abū Bakr al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d.463H) has a book called *Sharaf Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth*, in which he clarifies their excellence, their lofty status and their noble traits. Likewise, Imām Abū al-Qāsim al-Ṭabarī al-Lālikā’ī (d.418H) has valuable speech about the *Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth* in his revered work, *Sharḥ Uṣūl I’tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah*, in which he has clarified their lofty status and their excellence over the rest of the *Ummah*. Refer to *‘Aqīdah al-Salaf Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth* (1/22-26) of al-Ṣābūnī.

² Refer to *al-Intiṣār li Ahl al-Ḥadīth* (p. 45) of al-Sam’ānī.

I say: And from that which proves the truthfulness of his statement are the books of those Imāms: Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (d.241H) and al-Bukhārī (d.256H) and Muslim (d.261H) and al-Tirmidhī (d.274H) and Ibn Mājah (d.273H) and Ibn Khuzaymah (d.311H) and Ibn Qutaybah (d.276H) and Ibn Mandah (d.395H) and al-Lālikā'ī (d.418H) and other than them; despite their divergent times and places, you will find that their speech is one.

Does this Group Exist with a Leader, or are we in the Time mentioned in the *Ḥadīth* of Ḥudhayfah (رضي الله عنه):

And as for the question: what about this group (*Jamā'ah*) being present with its *manhaj* and its leader?

So it exists and is present, by the praise of Allāh, in this country if Allāh so wills. Indeed, the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) informed about that, as occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, “Indeed, faith (*īmān*) shall return and go back to al-Madīnah, just as a snake returns back to its hole.”¹ And there occurs in the narration of Muslim, “And *īmān* returns back between the two mosques, just as the snake returns back to its hole.”²

So I shall remind the forgetful one and inform the heedless one:

[I]: The education curriculum of this country is established upon the purity of *Tawḥīd* and repudiating innovations, superstitions and distortions. And it is established upon the study of *Sharī'ah* sciences, along with all of its subsidiary issues: beginning with the curriculae of the elementary grades and ending with the curriculae of the universities and higher studies in specialized fields such as, the department of creed (*'aqīdah*), the department of *al-Sunnah*, the department of jurisprudence (*fiqh*), the department of *uṣūl* (foundations of the Religion) and all of the *Sharī'ah* specializations and whatever supplements them. Added onto this are the modern day sciences, for which the society has need and which do not contradict the *Sharī'ah* of Islām.

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 1777), Muslim (no. 147), Ibn Mājah (no. 3111) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 10063).

² Related by Muslim (no. 232-233).

Rather, the Islāmic University of al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah was founded for the all the sons of the Muslim world, and it is attended by more than one hundred nationalities. It contains faculties that are specialized in topics such as: the *Qur'ān* and its sciences, the college of *Hadīth* and its sciences, the college of *Uṣūl al-Dīn* (foundations of the Religion), the college of *Sharī'ah*, the college of Arabic language and other than that from the universities and institutes.

Additionally, the males and the females are separated in their studies throughout all the grades.

[2]: The Office of Religious Verdicts, *Da'wah* and Guidance

[3]: The Committee of Enjoining the Good and Prohibiting the Evil

[4]: The *Sharī'ah* courts whose judges rule with the Book and the *Sunnah* and carry out the *Sharī'ah* legislated punishments upon the criminals, such as amputating the hand of the thief, retribution for the family of the one who is killed and flogging the adulterer and drunkard. And that is done within the regulations of the *Sharī'ah*.

So this is the *manhaj* that the united body (*Jamā'ah*) of Muslims has established within this country. And they have a leader who establishes the implementation of this *manhaj* and carries it out. And we hear from time to time about the establishment of the prescribed punishments upon the criminals. Indeed, this *manhaj* was established and there was a group that established it in this country and they had a leader, it was established by the Imām Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d.1206H) along with the Imām Muḥammad Ibn Sa'ūd from the year 1158H. And the affair has not ceased to be like that up until this present time of ours. Indeed, this nation state was founded from that time in history upon the 'aqīdah of *Tawḥīd*, purified from the blemishes of *Shirk*, innovations and *ta'wīl* (figurative interpretation). And it was established upon the implementation of the *Sharī'ah* of Islām with all of its rulings based upon the Book and the *Sunnah* and the understanding of the *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ* for the texts of the *Sharī'ah* of Islām. And we ask Allāh for steadfastness and being constant upon that in order to actualize within this country and within its people what the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said,

“Indeed, faith (*īmān*) shall return and go back to al-Madīnah, just as a snake returns back to its hole.”¹

Though, you may find disobedience and errors, but this is natural amongst all of mankind from the time of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and the Rightly Guided Caliphs. The people used to commit errors and acts of disobedience, and that occurred during the days of the Islāmic state after them. So the fault is not in the existence of disobedience, the fault is only in not establishing the prescribed punishments upon those who commit those acts of disobedience, if establishing the prescribed punishment upon that individual is obligatory.

The Obligation of Advising the Rulers and its Method:

And as for advising the rulers, then this is obligatory upon the Scholars of the *Ummah*. So there occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, “The Religion is sincere advice.” He stated this three times. We said this, “To whom O Messenger of Allāh?” He replied, “To Allāh and to His Book and to His Messenger and to the leaders of the Muslims and their common folk.”²

As for the method of presenting the advice to them, then we shall quote what was stated by al-‘Allāmah ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sa’dī (d.1376H) in his book, *al-Riyāḍ al-Nāḍirah wa al-Ḥadā’iq al-Nayyirah al-Zāhirah*, Chapter Eight: Concerning the obligation of sincere advice and its benefits. With regards to the explanation of the section, ‘He said, “The Religion is sincere advice,” three times. They said, “To whom O Messenger of Allāh?” He replied, ‘To Allāh and to His Book and to His Messenger and to the leaders of the Muslims and their common folk.’ The author stated on page 29, “And as for sincere advice to the Imāms of the Muslims, and they are their leaders, from the major ruler to the governor, to the judge, to all of those who have major or minor governance. So since the duties and obligations of these people are greater than others, it is obligatory to advise them in accordance

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 1777), Muslim (no. 147), Ibn Mājah (no. 3111) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 10063).

² Related by Muslim (no. 55), Abū Dāwūd (no. 4944), al-Tirmidhī (no. 1926), al-Nisā’ī (no. 4198), al-Dārimī in his *Sunan* (no. 2754) and Aḥmad *al-Musnad* (no. 3271).

to their level and their rank. And that is done by believing in their leadership and affirming their authority. And it is obligatory to obey them in the good and to not rebel against them. And it is likewise obligatory to encourage the subjects to obey the rulers and to adhere to their command, as long as it does not oppose the command of Allāh and His Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). And it is obligatory to strive in whatever the individual is capable of in terms of advising them and clarifying to them whatever was hidden from them, from whatever they have need in their patronage. Everyone must do this in accordance to his condition, and everyone must supplicate for their rectification and success. So if they are upright, then their subjects will be upright.”

He said, “And one must avoid cursing them, reviling them and spreading their faults. Since, that contains great evil, harm and corruption. So from advising them is to be cautious and to warn against those practices.”

Then he said, “And it is upon whomsoever sees from them whatever is not lawful (*ḥalāl*) to notify them secretly and not publicly and with gentleness. And consideration must be given to the status and the objective is achieved by that. So this is what is required with regards to every individual, especially with the rulers. So there is great goodness in notifying them in this manner and that is a sign of truthfulness and sincerity.”

He said, “So beware – O advisor in this praiseworthy manner – of corrupting your advice by seeking to be praised by the people, such that you say to them, “Indeed, I advised them and I said this and I said that.” So this is the epitome of *riyāʿ* (showing off) and it is a sign of weakness in sincerity and it contains other known harms.”

This is what was stated by the Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sa’dī - رَحْمَةُ اللهِ - concerning advice to the rulers, the main ruler and his governors.

Indeed, he mentioned that the advice occurs in private, not publicly. Then one must be gentle and consideration is given to the status. Likewise, he warned the one who advises them in this praiseworthy manner if he intends truthfulness and sincerity with this advice, that he must not corrupt that advice with seeking to be praised by the people such that he says, “Indeed, I

advised them and I said this and I said that.” So that demonstrates *al-riyāʿ* (showing off) and it is a sign of weakness in sincerity, as was stated by Shaykh al-Saʿdī.

So after mentioning the speech of Shaykh al-Saʿdī - رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ - and he is from the modern day Scholars, we hold it appropriate to mention examples from the speech of early Scholars.

Ibn Abī ʿĀṣim (d.287H) stated in *Kitāb al-Sunnah* (2/521), (no. 1096), “Chapter: How do the subjects give advice to the rulers?”

Indeed, he mentioned therein with his chain of narration (*isnād*) from Shurayḥ Ibn ʿUbayd who said: ʿIyād Ibn Ghunm said to Hishām Ibn Ḥakīm: Will you not listen to a statement from the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)? He said, “Whomsoever wishes to advise the ruler, then let him not do so publicly. However, he must take him by the hand in private. So if the ruler accepts his advice, then he has achieved his objective. And if not, then he has fulfilled the duty that was upon him.”¹ Al-Albānī (d.1420H) said, “Its *isnād* is authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*).”

This is the method employed by the Scholars of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah*, the Saved and Victorious Group (*al-ṭāʾifah al-mansūrah al-nājiyah*) in their advice to their rulers, because they wanted goodness and rectification for their *Ummah* and for the servants and the countries. And this is what we believe. Indeed, our Scholars in this present time are followers of the *manhaj* of the *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*, who delivered this advice to their rulers with the same manners that were mentioned by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Saʿdī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ). So they do not present their advice publicly, such that we may hear it, because they know that this method is not praiseworthy and it is not the *manhaj* of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah*.

Moreover, they do not corrupt those advices that they have presented by seeking to be praised by the people by saying, ‘We did such and such, and

¹ **Ṣaḥīḥ:** Related by Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (3/403-404), al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* (3/290) and al-Haythamī in *al-Majmaʿ* (5/229). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in *al-Sunnah* (1/187).

we did such and such and we said this and we said that,' because this contains showing off (*al-riyā'*) and an absence of sincerity as al-Sa'dī stated. And at the same time, this contains several harms.

As for witnessed faults from the rulers, that is whatever has been confirmed from that, then advice must be delivered to the rulers immediately during the emergence of opposition to the *Sunnah*, along with maintaining unity with them – that is, the Scholars and the rulers. And the intended purpose of the advice is rectification, not fame, as occurred in the story of Marwān the governor of al-Madīnah.

So there occurs in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, in the Book of *al-Īdayn* (no. 956): From Abī Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) who said, "The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would come out on the days of *al-Fiṭr* and *al-Adḥā* to the place of Prayer (*muṣallā*). So the first thing, with which he would start, would be the Prayer." He said, 'So the people did not cease to be upon that, up until Marwān came out – and he was the governor of al-Madīnah – during *al-Adḥā* or *al-Fiṭr*. So when we came to the *muṣallā*, the pulpit had been built by Kathīr Ibn al-Ṣalt. So when Marwān wanted to ascend before the Prayer, I got hold of his clothes and pulled them. So he ascended. So he delivered the sermon before the Prayer. So I said to him, "You have changed, by Allāh." So he replied, "Abā Sa'īd! Indeed, what you know has left." So I said, "Whatever I know is, by Allāh, better than whatever I do not know." So he replied, 'Indeed, the people do not sit for us after the Prayer. So we delivered the sermon before the Prayer.'

Ibn Ḥajr (d.852H) said, "And there occurs in the narration of 'Abd al-Razzāq from Dāwūd Ibn Qays who said, "And he – that is, Marwān – was between me and Abī Mas'ūd – meaning, 'Uqbah Ibn 'Amr al-Anṣārī." I say: And this proves the relationship of trust between the Scholars and the rulers."

And Ibn Ḥajr enumerated the benefits of this *ḥadīth*, during which he said, "And it shows that the Scholars raise an objection against the rulers if they commit an act that opposes the *Sunnah*. And in it is the permissibility for a Scholar to act in opposition to that which is preferable if he does not agree with the ruler upon what is preferable, because Abā Sa'īd attended the

sermon and did not leave. So this is used as a proof that beginning with the Prayer is not a condition for its validity. And Allāh knows best.”

Then he quoted the following from Ibn al-Munīr, “Abū Sa‘īd carried out the action of the Prophet (ﷺ) in its specified order and Marwān carried it out in the order of priority. And he sought as an excuse for abandoning the specified order the fact that the condition of the people had changed. So he held that the foundation (aṣl) of the *Sunnah* must be preserved and that was that listening to the sermon took precedence over preserving the specified order, which is not a condition for its validity. And Allāh knows best.”

And the likes of these incidents have been mentioned from ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه). So whatever is confirmed from that, then it is sincere advice to the governor or the ruler that is delivered verbally at the same time during which the opposition to the *Sunnah* occurs. It is not delivered in order to seek fame, or to revile the rulers and to spread their faults. So there is a great evil and harm and corruption in that, as was stated by Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn al-Sa‘dī, because the goal is rectification. And with this method, the rectification will be achieved if Allāh so wills.

And the last of our calls is that the praise is for Allāh, Lord of the worlds. And may the peace and salutations of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his Family and his Companions.



Glossary

A

Āyah: (pl. *āyāt*) “sign,” a verse of the *Qur’ān*.

Āhād: a narration which is narrated through one chain only.

Aḥādīth: see *ḥadīth*.

‘Alayhi al-salām: May Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) protect and preserve him. It is said after the name of a Prophet of Allāh or after the name of an Angel.

Anṣār: Helpers; the Muslims of al-Madīnah who supported the Muslims who migrated from Makkah.

‘Arsh: Throne of Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى).

‘Aṣr: the afternoon Prayer.

Awliyā’: see *Walī*.

B

Bid’ah: Heresy (any innovatory practice).

Burāq: An animal bigger than a donkey and smaller than a horse on which the Prophet (عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ) went for the *Mīrāj*.

D

Dā’ī: One engaged in *da’wah*, caller.

Ḍa’īf: A weak, unauthentic narration.

Da’wah: Invitation, call to Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى).

Dīn: a completed way of life prescribed by Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى).

Dhikr: (pl. *adhkār*) remembrance of Allāh (عَلَّامٌ لِّالْغُيُوبِ) with the heart, sayings of the tongue and actions of our limbs.

F

Fāḥish: One who speaks with evil or obscene speech.

Farḍ Kifāyah: A collective obligation - if fulfilled by a part of the community, then the rest are not obligated.

Fatwā: (pl. *fatāwā*) A religious verdict.

Faqīh: A Scholar who can give religious verdicts.

Fiqh: Islāmic jurisprudence, understanding.

Fitnah: (pl. *fitan*) Trials, persecution, conflicts and strifes among the Muslims.

Fitrah: the natural disposition that one is born upon.

G

Ghuluww: Going to an extreme.

Ghusl: A ceremonial bath necessary for the one who is in a state of *Janābah* (ritual sexual impurity).

H

Hadīth: (pl. *aḥādīth*) the saying, actions and approvals accurately narrated from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وسلم).

Ḥalāl: Lawful.

Ḥanīf: Pure Islāmic Monotheism (worshiping Allāh alone and nothing else).

Ḥarām: Unlawful and forbidden.

Ḥasan: fine, good; a term used for an authentic *ḥadīth*, which does not reach the level of *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

Ḥarj: Killing.

Al-Ḥarūriyyah: a special unorthodox 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

Tbādah: worship, worship of Allāh.

Ihsān: Worshipping Allāh as though you see Him. However, since you cannot see Him, then know that He sees you.

Ijmā': A 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: A leader; a leader in Prayer, knowledge in *fiqh*, leader of a state.

Īmān: faith, to affirm all that was revealed to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

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.

Istiwā: ascending; the ascending of Allāh above the Throne (in the manner that befits His Majesty).

J

Janābah: A state of a person after having sexual intercourse or sexual discharge.

Janāzah: (pl. *janaa'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.

Junub: a person who is in the state of *janābah*.

K

Ka'bah: a square stone building in al-Masjid al-Harām (the great mosque in Makkah which Muslims go to for pilgrimage and to 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.

Khuṭbah: (person *khaṭīb*), religious talk (sermon).

Kufr: (person *kāfir*) act of disbelief in the Religion of Islām.

M

Madhhab: The position, view or opinion of a Muslim Scholar or school of Islāmic Jurisprudence.

Makrūh: Something that is not approved of, undesirable from the point of view of Religion, although not punishable.

Manhaj: A way; method; methodology.

Marfū': A raised; a narration attributed to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وسلم).

Masjid: A mosque.

Mawbiqāt: great destructive sins.

Mudallis: one who practises *tadlis*.

Muhājir: (pl. *muhājiron*, *muhājirīn*) one who migrated from the land of the disbelievers to the land of the Muslims for the sake of Allāh.

Muḥaddith: scholar of the science of *ḥadīth*.

Muftī: one who gives *fatāwā*.

Mujāhid: (pl. *mujāhidūn*): a Muslim warrior in *Jihād*.

Mujtahid: Someone who is qualified to pass judgment using *ijtihād*.

Munkar: Rejected; a narration which is inauthentic itself and contradicts and authentic narrations.

Muqallid: one who practices *taqlīd*.

Mushrik: (pl. *mushrikūn*) polythesists, pagans and disbelievers in the oneness of Allaah (جَلَّ وَعَلَا) and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

Mustahabb: Recommended; an action if left not punishable and if done it is rewardable.

Muttaqūn: People who are pious.

Mutawātir: a *ḥadīth* which is narrated by a very large number of reporters, such that it cannot be supported that they all agreed upon a lie.

Muwahh̥id: (pl. *muwahh̥idūn*) one who unifies all of his worship and directs it to Allāh alone.

Mawḍūʿ: Fabricated; spurious; invented (narration).

Mawqūf: stopped; a narration from a Companion, which does not go back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

Mawṣūl: Connected; a continuous *isnād* that can be narrated back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

N

Nāfilah: (pl. *nawāfil*) Optional act of worship.

Niyah: An 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-Islāmic period of Ignorance. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) belonged to this tribe.

R

Rāfiḍī: This is the correct title for the extreme *Shīʿah*; those who bear malice and grudges against the noble Companions to the extent that they declare them to be apostates. They also hold that the *Qurʾān* which the Muslims have is neither complete nor preserved from corruption.

Ramaḍān: The ninth month of Islāmic calander, in which Muslims observe fasting.

S

Ṣaḥābah: Muslims who met the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) believing in him and died believing in him.

Ṣaḥīḥ: Authentic, the highest rank of classification of authentic *aḥādīth*.

Salaf, Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ: The 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 (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

Sharī'ah: The divine code of law in Islām.

Shawwāl: The month after *Ramaḍān*.

Shayṭān: Satan.

Shī'ah: (see *Rāfiḍī*) A collective name for the various sects claiming love for *Ahl al-Bayt*.

Shirk: Associating partners with Allāh directly or indirectly in worship; compromising any aspects of *Tawḥīd*.

Sūrah: A chapter of the *Qur'ān*.

Sunnah: Example, practice; the way of life of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), consisting of his words, actions and silent approvals. The *Sunnah* is contained in various *aḥādīth*.

T

Tābi'ī: (pl. *tābi'īn*) the generation after the Companions of the Prophet (عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَام).

Tafsīr: explanation of the *Qur'ān*.

Ṭāghūt: Anything that is worshipped other than the real God (Allāh) (i.e. false deities).

Tahajjud: Voluntary, recommended Prayer between the compulsory Prayers of *'Ishā'* and *Fajr*.

Takhrīj: It is to reference a *ḥadīth* to its sources and analyze its chains of narration.

Taqīd: 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*.

Ṭawāf: The circumambulation of the *ka'bah*.

Tawḥīd: Islāmic 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*.

ʿUlamā': (singular: *ʿālim*) scholars.

Umm: Mother of, used as an identification.

Ummah: Nation, the Muslims as a whole.

ʿUmrah: A visit to Makkah during which one performs the *ṭawāf* around the *Ka'bah* and the *Sa'ī* between *al-Ṣafā* and *al-Marwah*. It is called the lesser *Hajj*.

Uṣūl: The fundamentals.

W

Waḥyī: The revelation or inspiration of Allāh to His Prophets.

Waḥdah al-Wujūd: The belief that everything in existence is intact Allāh. This deviant belief is held by many *Ṣūfis*.

Wakīl: Disposer of affairs.

Witr: Odd; the last Prayer at the night, which consists of odd number of *raka'āt* (units).

Walimah: The wedding feast.

Waṣīlah: the means of approach or achieving His closeness to Allāh by getting His favours.

Wuḍū': An ablution (ritual washing) that is performed before Prayer and other kinds of worship.

Y

Yaqīn: Perfect and 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 (2.5% of saved wealth).

Zakāt al-Fiṭr: An obligatory charity by the Muslims to be given to the poor before the Prayer of *ʿĪd al-Fiṭr*.

Zamzam: The sacred water inside the *ḥaram* (the grand mosque) at Makkah.

Zanādiqah: An atheist, a heretic.

OUR CALL TO THE UMMAH¹

[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 (ﷺ), without *tahrīf* (distortion), nor *ta'wīl* (figurative interpretation), nor *tamthīl* (making a likeness), nor *tashbīh* (resemblance), nor *ta'ṭīl* (denial).

[2]: We love the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) of the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم), 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 (صلى الله عليه وسلم) with love that is permitted by the *Sharī'ah*. 'Imrān Ibn Ḥusayn (رضي الله عنه) said, "O people! Learn the knowledge of the Religion from us, if you do not do so, then you will certainly be misguided."²

[3]: We love the People of *Ḥadīth* and all of the *Salaf* of the *Ummah* from *Ahl al-Sunnah*. Imām al-Shāṭibī (d.790H) - رحمه الله - said, "The *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*, the Companions, the *tābī'in* and their successors knew the *Qur'ān*, its sciences and its meanings the best."³

[4]: We despise *'ilm al-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 (ﷺ), except that which has been confirmed from Allāh or from His Messenger (ﷺ). We do not mean that we have rejected them, nor do we claim that we are not in need of them. Rather, we benefit from the discoveries of

¹ This explanation of our call has been summarized from *Tarjumah Abī 'Abd al-Raḥmān Muqbil Ibn Hādī al-Wādī'i* (p. 135-142) of Muqbil Ibn Hādī with minor additions from other sources.

² Refer to *al-Kifāyah* (p. 15) of al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī.

³ Refer to *al-Muwāfiqāt* (2/79) of al-Shāṭibī.

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 *ḥadīth*. And we detest what emanates from many books and admonishers in terms of false stories and weak and fabricated *aḥādīth*. 'Abdullāh Ibn al-Mubārak (d.181H) - رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ - said, "The authentic *aḥādīth* are sufficient and the weak *aḥādīth* are not needed."¹

[7]: We do not perform *takfīr* upon any Muslim due to any sin, except *Shirk* with Allāh, 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, 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 (سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ), and being sincere in worship of Him, and warning from *Shirk*, innovations, and disobedience, and to advise all of the groups that oppose this.² 'So co-operating upon righteousness and piety (*taqwā*) and mutual advising necessitates warning against evil and not co-operating with the wicked.'³

[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.

[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

¹ Refer to *al-Jāmi' li-Akhlāq al-Rāwī* (2/159) of al-Suyūṭī.

² From a *fatwā* by the Committee of Major Scholars dated: 11/16/1417H, (no. 18870). It was signed by al-'Allāmah 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Bāz, Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn 'Abdullāh Āl al-Shaykh, Shaykh 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ghudayyān, Shaykh Bakr Ibn 'Abdullāh Abū Zayd, and Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Ibn Fawzān al-Fawzān.

³ From the words of Shaykh Ibn Bāz in *al-Furqān* magazine (issue no. 14, p. 15).

‘freeing the minds from the fetters of blind-following and the darkness of sectarianism and party spirit.’¹

[12]: We restrict our understanding of the Book of Allāh and of the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to the understanding of the *Salaf* of the *Ummah* from the Scholars of *ḥadīth*, 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 Allāh has prohibited. We believe in ‘cultivating the young generation upon this Islām, purified from all that we have mentioned, giving to them a correct Islāmic education from the start - without any influence from the disbelieving western education.’²

[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 Allaah and to the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

[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 Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

[17]: Our *da'wah* and our *‘aqīdah* 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 buying out our *da'wah*, nor should he think that it is possible for him to purchase it from us for *dīnār* or *dirham*.

¹ From *Fiqh al-Wāqī* (p. 49) of al-Albānī.

² From *Fiqh al-Wāqī* (p. 51) of al-Albānī.

[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) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ، “The knowledge of *ḥadīth* 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.”¹

[19]: We do not accept a *fatwā* except from the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

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.

¹ Refer to *al-Muḥaddith al-Fāṣil* (p. 416) and *al-Kifāyah* (p. 21) of al-Khaṭīb.

al-Bid'ah

Its General Rules and its
Evil Effect upon the *Ummah*

The Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited innovating into the Religion of Allāh and he warned against *al-bid'ah* (innovation) and he clarified to his *Ummah* that every innovation in the Religion of Allāh is misguidance. So he (ﷺ) spoke in the *ḥadīth* of al-'Irbāḍ Ibn Sāriyah (رضي الله عنه), which was related by Abū Dāwūd (d.275H) and al-Tirmidhī (d.274H) who said, “An acceptable authentic *ḥadīth*.”

He (i.e. al-'Irbāḍ) said, “The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) admonished us with an eloquent admonition. The hearts trembled due to it and the eyes shed tears due to it. So we said, “O Messenger of Allāh! It is as if this is a farewell admonition, so advise us.” He said, “I advise you with the *taqwā* (fear, reverence) of Allāh. And listen and obey, even if the one who is appointed over you in authority is a slave. Indeed, whosoever from amongst you lives after me, then he shall see much differing. So stick to my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs after me. Hold onto it with your molar teeth and beware of newly invented matters, since every innovation is misguidance.”

