

A RETURN TO THE SUNNAH

[UNCOVERING THE DECEPTIONS OF THE ENEMIES OF THE SUNNAH AND ITS PEOPLE]

[In Defense of the Sunnah Series, no. 1]

Stated Shaykhul-Islam Muhammad Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhaab (d.1206H) - *rahimahullaah* - in *ar-Rasaa'ilun-Najdiyyah* (4/124), "It is known that the *Ahlul-Hadeeth* are the greatest of the groups of the *Ummah* in research and knowledge of the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) ... And no one denies that, except an enemy of Allaah, His Messenger and His believing servants." He also said, "No one hates the Scholars of *Ahlul-Hadeeth*, except one who is from the people of innovations, fabrications and sinfulness," *ar-Rasaa'ilun-Najdiyyah* (4/75).

Stated al-'Allamah 'Abdul-Lateef Ibn 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Hasan (d.1295H) - *rahimahullaah* - in *ad-Durarus-Sunniyyah* (4/102), "*Ahlus-Sunnah wal Hadeeth* in every time and age have been a trial for the inhabitants of the earth. The people of *Sunnah* became distinguishable through their love and praise for them, and the people of innovations were exposed through their enmity and hatred for them."

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INTRODUCTION...

All Praise is due to Allaah, we praise Him, seek His aid and His Forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evils of our souls and the evils of our actions. Whomsoever Allaah guides there is none to misguide and whomsoever Allaah misguides there is none to guide. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah, alone, without any partners and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.

“O you who believe! Fear Allaah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islaam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allaah.” [Soorah Aali’Imraan 3:103]

“O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Aadam), and from him (Aadam) He created his wife [Hawwaa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allaah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allaah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.” [Sooratun-Nisaa’ 4:1]

“O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allaah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allaah and His Messenger, he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and made to enter Paradise).” [Sooratul-Ahzaab 33:70-71]

To proceed, verily the best speech is the Book of Allaah and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). And the worst of affairs are the newly invented matters, every newly-invented matter is an innovation, every innovation is misguidance and all misguidance is in the Hellfire.

BENEFIT - CONCERNING REVILEMENT OF THE HADEETH AND THE AHLUL-HADEETH WAL-ATHAR:

By Allaah, the people of innovations and desires - from the *Salaf* to the *Khalaf* - have not ceased to attack *Ahlus-Sunnah* with vile names and accusations. These vile names and wicked propaganda have only served to fool the weak hearted and dull witted ones who are too ignorant to recognize the truth. As for those knowledgeable and cognizant of their *manhaj* (methodology), then they remember what Aboo Haatim ar-Raazee said, "A sign of the people of innovation is that they fight the people of narrations (*ahlul-athar*)."¹ And it is individuals with this very trait that we shall be dealing with in this brief treatise we have prepared seeking only the Face of Allaah.

Know - O *Sunnee* - that you will see the people who are deluded by their own whims and desires charging *Ahlus-Sunnah* will all sorts of weak, pathetic and fabricated accusations. They will say that the youth of *Ahlus-Sunnah* are ignorant and not concerned with learning. We remind them of the statement, "*Ahlus-Sunnah* are the most merciful of the creation with the creation. And they are the most knowledgeable of the people with respect to the truth. And they are in between the sects of the Muslims, just as Islaam is in between the religions."²

At other times, we find them accusing the *Ahlus-Sunnah* of having evil and despicable manners. They will try to rescue their own leaders and figureheads who have received deathblows from the Scholars of *Ahlul-Hadeeth*, by using the excuse that we - the youth who transmit what the Scholars have said about these leaders and figureheads - do not show respect to our elders and those more superior to us in 'knowledge.'³

They further assault the sons of *Ahlul-Hadeeth wal-Athar* by saying that they have immersed themselves in the refutation of *Ahlul-Bid'ah wal-Ahwaa'*,⁴ thus drowning in the abyss of

¹ *Sharh Usoohul-I'tiqaad* (1/39) of Imaam al-Laalikaa'ee

² *as-Siraaj* (no. 62)

³ And we say 'knowledge' with all due caution, since knowledge of innovations, desires, *kalaam* and *Shirk* does not enter into the beneficial knowledge that one is rewarded for. Indeed, Imaam Sufyaan Ibn Sa'eed ath-Thawree (d. H) - *rahimahullaah* - repeated thrice in *Sharaf Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (p. 38), "This Religion is based upon narrations, not opinion. This Religion is based upon narrations, not opinion. This Religion is based upon narrations, not opinion." So how could we better present this position of ours, except by the famous poetry of Aboo Zayd al-Faqeeh, as is found in *Sharaf Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (2/37),

'Every speech after the *Qur'aan* is heresy,
Except for the *Hadeeth* and except for understanding (*fiqh*) in the Religion.
And knowledge emanates from "It was narrated to us." (*haddathanaa*)
And everything other than this is a whispering from the devils.'

⁴ Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d.751H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "And the scholars of the *Salaf* were severe in refuting the innovation and correcting its people in all sections of the earth. And they warned against their *fitnah* (trial, tribulation) with a harsh warning. And they would reach a state that they had not reached in opposing the evils and the oppression and the enemies." 'So if you see a man who has refuted a strange *fiqh*

harshness, hard-heartedness and a cold attitude towards the Muslims in general. All of this comes as a result of them (the People of Innovation) being unable to swallow and stomach the replies of *Ahlul-Hadeeth*, which are filled with, ‘Allaah said...’ and ‘His Messenger said...’ And this has been the case in the fight between the adherents to *Sunnah* and *Salafiyyah*, as opposed to the bigoted partisans to *Bid’ah* and *khuraafiyyah*. Said Aboo Mansoor Ibn Sallaam al-Faqeeh, “There is nothing heavier upon the people of heresy and more hated by them than listening to the *Hadeeth* and its narration with its *isnaad*,” *Sharaf Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (2/36). And remember – O *Sunnee* – that Baqiyah said, ‘Al-Awzaa’ee said to me, ‘O Abaa Yuhmad! What do you say about a people who hate the *Hadeeth*? I said, ‘They are an evil people.’ He said, ‘There is not a person of innovation upon whom a *hadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah is narrated which opposes his innovation, except that he hates the *Hadeeth*,” *Sharaf Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (2/36).

So when the innovators, along with their defenders and cohorts, find that their innovation and desire has been rightfully murdered by the Scholars and students of *Ahlul-Hadeeth*, they resort to spreading false propaganda against *Ahlus-Sunnah*, whether the means of this evil and wicked propaganda may be the internet, the pulpit at Friday, or merely amongst their own goons and mindless followers. So they search and look for any means of escape from the knowledge-based arguments and evidences of *Ahlul-Hadeeth* against them.⁵ So finally they come upon an excuse which they can sputter up to the ignorant masses to justify them not having to accept the proofs that *Ahlus-Sunnah* have brought against them: they say that the *Ahlul-Athar* use harshness and hostility.⁶

So read carefully – O adherent to the *aathaar* – the words of Shaykh ‘Abdul-Maalik Ramadaanee al-Jazaa’iree, as he explains vigilantly this ploy of *Ahlul-Bid’ah wal-Kalaam*, “Whoever finds in this research of mine anything from harshness, then let him not get carried away and say things like, “He speaks about his brothers and is silent about his

(Islaamic Jurisprudence) position, or an innovated statement, then thank him for his defending (the truth) in accordance with what was feasible for him. And do not forsake him with vile statements like, ‘Why do you not refute the Secularists!’ So the people have different strengths and talents, and refuting the falsehood is an important obligation,’ *ar-Radd ‘alal-Mukhaalif* (p. 77).

Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, “It is obligatory to punish everyone who ascribes himself to them – the People of Innovation – or whoever defends them, or whoever praises them, or whoever reveres their books, or who detests that they should be talked about, or who begins to make excuses for them by saying that he does not understand what these words mean, or by saying that this person authored another book and what is similar to these types of excuses, which are not made, except by an ignoramus or a hypocrite. Rather, it is obligatory to punish everyone who knows of their condition and does not assist in repelling their evil, for repelling their evil is one of the greatest obligations.” Refer to *Majmoo’ul-Fataawaa* (2/133).

⁵ These are the same ‘knowledge-based arguments and evidences’ that the blind-followers of these innovators cannot comprehend, because they have not had the opportunity to study anything of *manhaj*, but this is an issue that shall be dealt with beforehand.

⁶ Keep in mind – O traveler upon the clear white path – that ‘there is no good quality amongst *Ahlul-Bid’ah*, except that it is more abundant amongst *Ahlus-Sunnah*. And there is no evil quality in *Ahlus-Sunnah*, except that it is found more abundantly amongst *Ahlul-Bid’ah*. That is due to the blessing of the *Sunnah* upon its people.’ From *as-Siraaj* (no. 59)

enemies (i.e. the disbelievers).” So let it be known that the basic principle in enjoining the good and prohibiting the evil is gentleness and kindness, as Allaah the Exalted said,

“Call to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and a good admonition, and debate with them in a manner that is good.” [Sooratun-Nahl 16:125]

And He said to Moosaa and Haaron – may the Prayers and Peace of Allaah be upon them both,

“Go to Fir’awn, for verily he has transgressed. So speak to him a gentle word, perhaps he may remember or fear.” [Soorah Taa-Haa 20:43-44]

The Prophet (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) said, “Gentleness is not found in something, except that it beautifies it. And gentleness is not taken out of something, except that it disgraces it.”⁷ So if an evil cannot be averted, except with a type of roughness, then there is no problem in utilizing it, even if it be with Muslims. Do you not see that Allaah permitted fighting in that, and rudeness is not worse than fighting. So Allaah the Glorified said,

“And if two groups from the Believers fight, then reconcile between them. So if one of them oppresses the other, then fight the one that commits oppression until it returns to the Command of Allaah.” [Sooratul-Hujuraat 49:9]

So the Believer must be much more severe in the harshness towards his brother, than the enemies of his brother; do you not see that Moosaa (*alayhis-salaam*) was gentle with Fir’awn, and harsh upon his own brother, Haaron (*alayhis-salaam*), to the extent that Allaah the Exalted related about him,

“And he took his brother by the head, and pulled him towards him...” [Sooratul-A’raaf 7:150]

So can anyone dispute with him concerning *al-walaa’ wal-baraa’* (allegiance and enmity); accusing him of raising his hand and tongue against his brother and being nice to the *tawaagheet* (false gods)?! Never! Rather, the Prophet (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) was much more severe with the scholars from his Companions, than he was with other than them. Take as an example his statement to Mu’aadh, when he lengthened the Prayer with the people, “Are you a person who causes *fitnah* (trouble), O Mu’aadh?”⁸ And this comes along with his (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) gentleness to the Bedouin who urinated in the mosque, as is reported in *Saheehul-Bukhaaree* and others.⁹ And he (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) said to Usaamah Ibn Zayd (*radiyallaahu ’anh*u), when he was fighting a disbeliever in the battlefield who had just uttered the word of *Tawheed*, “O Usaamah! Do you fight him after he has said that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah?!” Usaamah said,

⁷ Related by Muslim (16/146)

⁸ Related by al-Bukhaaree (1/669)

⁹ Related by al-Bukhaaree (1/219)

“So I did not cease repeating it (i.e. the testification of faith), until I was no longer certain that I had accepted Islaam before that day.”¹⁰

Indeed Usaamah benefited from this harshness in advising, during the days of *fitnah* (trials, tribulations) that occurred after the murder of 'Uthmaan (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*). So he stayed away from spilling the blood of the Muslims. Imaam adh-Dhahabee (d.784H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, “So Usaamah benefited since that day with the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) when he said, “O Usaamah!” So he stopped his hand and remained in his house, and thus attained good.”¹¹

I say, how magnificent is the Prophetic education! And how wretched is the education of *hizbiyyah* (party-spirit) which has prohibited the principle of *ar-radd 'alal-mukhaalif* (censuring the opponent), and its proponents do not stay away from spilling the blood of the Muslims, rather, they take to spilling it in the name of *jihad*.¹² And the time of *fitnah* does

¹⁰ **Saheeh:** Related by at-Tiyaalisee and al-Bazaar; it was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (no. 7846).

¹¹ *Siyar A'laamun-Nubalaa* (2/500)

¹² Rather, the *jihad* (struggle) made by the student of knowledge is better than the *jihad* of such rabble. Indeed, the affair is as al-Imaam Ibn 'Abdul-Barr recited in his *Jaami'ul-Bayaan* (1/31),

‘And ink that comes from their pens;
Is purer and more virtuous than the blood of the martyrs.
O students of the knowledge of the Prophet Muhammad;
You are not without distinction.’

This was further explained by Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim (d.751H) – *rahimahullaah* – in *Miftaah Daarus-Sunnah* (1/70), “So the supporting pillars of the Religion are knowledge (*'ilm*) and *jihad*, and due to this, *jihad* is of two types: the *jihad* by the hand and the spear, and there is much participation in this. And secondly, there is the *jihad* with the proof and the clarification. This latter *jihad* is specifically the following of the Messengers, and it is the *jihad* of the *imaams*, and it is the most excellent of the two *jihad*s due to its tremendous benefit and great burden, and numerous enemies. Allaah the Exalted said in *Sooratul-Furqaan*, and it is a *maalikee soorah*,

“And if We wished, We could have sent a warner to every city. So do not obey the disbelievers and struggle against them with it (the *Qur'aan*) a great *jihad*.” [Sooratul-Furqaan 25:51-52]

So this *jihad* against them with the *Qur'aan* is the greater of the two *jihad*s, and it is additionally a *jihad* against the hypocrites. This is because the hypocrites do not fight the Muslims, rather, they are with them outwardly, but when they fight, they oppose them. So due to this, Allaah the Exalted said,

“O Prophet! Perform *Jihad* against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be harsh with them.” [Sooratu-Tawbah 9:73]

And it is known that the *jihad* against the hypocrites is to be carried out with the establishment of proof and the *Qur'aan*.”

Imaam 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Naasir asSa'dee (d.1376H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, “The *Jihad* is of two types: a *jihad* by which the rectification of the Muslims is intended, and their correctness in their beliefs and their manners, and all of their religious and worldly affairs, and in their knowledge and action related education. And this type is the basis of *jihad* and its foundation, and built upon it is the second type of *jihad*. It is the

not come, except that self-delusion is its fuel, or fireplace. This is the result of acting deceitfully towards each other, with the self-delusion of being pre-occupied with the disbelievers!! And due to that, Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "The Believer to the Believer is like two hands, one of them washing the other. And indeed the dirt cannot be removed, except by some form of coarseness. So cleanliness and softness only comes about by obligating that initial roughness."¹³

Therefore, this gentleness which is used by many of these Islaamic *jamaa'aat* (parties) with the individuals and groups, who are from the most light-headed of idiots - and the reason for gentleness towards many of them is not enmity towards the enemies of the Muslims - does not have anything to do with *walaa'* (allegiance), rather it drowns them further in their misguidance, due to them not realizing the greatness of their crime. Then verily the motive behind traversing a path of harshness with the Muslims sometimes, is to bestow a sense of honour (*gheerah*) upon them from the dolts who relate with rubbish, and to attempt to strengthen the rank, and to stop rifts in it; to the extent that none can come before it. And due to this, al-'Allaamah 'Abdul-'Azeez Ibn Baaz (d.1420H) said under the title, 'The Proofs Unveiled Concerning the Mistakes of Some Writers', "And there is no doubt that the perfect Islaamic *Sharee'ah* came with a warning against extremism (*ghuloo*) in the Religion, and it commands the Call (*da'wah*) to the path of the truth with wisdom and good admonition, and debating with that which is good. However, it does not overlook the aspect of roughness and harshness in its place when gentleness and debating with that which is good does not benefit; as Allaah the Glorified says,

"O Prophet! Fight the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be rough with them."
[Sooratut-Tawbah 9:73]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

"O you who believe! Fight those who are close to you from the disbelievers, and let them find harshness in you, and know that Allaah is with those who have taqwaa (fear, reverence)." [Sooratut-Tawbah 9:123]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

jihad by which the defense against the transgressors upon Islaam is intended, such as the disbelievers, and the hypocrites, and the atheists and all of the enemies of the Religion and their supporters," *Wujoobut-Ta'aawun baynal-Muslimeen* (p. 7-8). Nasr Ibn Yahyaa said, 'I heard Muhammad Ibn Yahyaa adh-Dhuhalee (d.258H) - *rahimahullaah* - saying, 'I heard Yahyaa Ibn Yahyaa saying, 'Defending the *Sunnah* is more virtuous than *jihad* in the Path of Allaah.'" Muhammad said, 'I said to Yahyaa, 'A man gives his wealth, burdens himself, and fights, but that is more virtuous than this?' So he said: "Yes, much better!" *Siyar A'laamun-Nubalaa'* (10/518). Based upon the above narration, Shaykh Aboo Anas Hamad Ibn Ibraaheem al-'Uthmaan said, "And it is upon this that our *imaams* proceeded us, so they held that the *jihad* against the innovator was the foundation, and that the *jihad* against the disbelievers was a branch from that foundation," *Zajarul-Mutahaawun* (p. 105).

¹³ *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (28/53-54)

“And do not debate with the people of the Book, except with that which is good, except those who transgress from amongst them.” [Sooratul-Ankaboot 29:46]

As for when the person of transgression, or disbelief, or corruption in his action is not benefited and progressed, and he does not give attention to the admonisher and the advisor, then verily it becomes necessary to take him by his hand, and to deal with him harshly, and to give him what he deserves from the establishment of punishment, or rebuke, or censure, or reproach; until his punishment is fulfilled, and his falsehood is driven away.”¹⁴

So it becomes apparent from the civility of the Islaamic parties (*jamaa'aat*) with the people of innovation, and their silence concerning their errors, that when they restrict the path of reclaiming the honour of the Muslims to a ballot box, they must complain about criticism (of Muslims). Because when they harmonize their voices with them, they also follow their footsteps in sin.”¹⁵

So along with this comes their second accusation that is used to fight against the *Salafiyyeen* and their carrying of Allaah's pristine Religion. You shall see - O *Atharee* - how the *Ahlul-Ahwaa'* begin to reel back from the refutations of *Ahlul-Hadeeth* and jealousy for the *Hadeeth* and it's people begins to overtake their persons. So they stand like those touched by devils as they expel the next excuse for rejecting the *aayaat* of Allaah: *Ahlus-Sunnah* believe they are the only ones upon the truth; they believe they have a monopoly upon the truth. And they follow this up by saying that the youth of *Ahlul-Hadeeth* are praising themselves with their ascription to the Scholars of the past.¹⁶

Lend ear - O *Sunnee* - once again to the following words, “The *Ahlul-Hadeeth* are the Victorious Group and the Saved Sect. All of these names refer to everyone who follows the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and who interprets the Book and the *Sunnah* with the understanding of the Companions (*radiyallaahu 'anhum*). And they (*Ahlus-Sunnah*) hold that Allaah the Mighty and Majestic gives victory to His Religion through the *Ahlul-Hadeeth* from the *Salaf* to the *Khalaf*. The realm of *Ahlul-Hadeeth* is not restricted to the Scholars who are engrossed with authentication and narration. Rather, it refers to everyone who takes the '*aqeedah* (creed) of *Ahlul-Hadeeth* as his Religion, and he refers back to their foundations (*usool*) and understanding in the affairs of '*aqeedah*, worship and other than that. So such a one is from amongst them, whether he is a soldier, businessman or a simple worker, whether he is an old man or a youth, whether he is a city person or a Bedouin, or other than that. However, the Scholars are still the ones that lead this group. And the rest of the ranks - those who take this as their Religion - are the followers of the

¹⁴ *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa wa Maqaalaatul-Mutnawwi'ah* (3/202-203)

¹⁵ This section was taken from *Madaarikun-Nadhr fis-Siyaasah* (p. 80-83) of 'Abdul-Maalik Ramadaanee.

¹⁶ This is because the innovators do not realize - or do not want to realize - that ascribing oneself to *Salafiyyah*, *Sunniyyah* or *Ahlul-Hadeeth* does not have anything to do with a persons individual *eemaan* or adherence to the *furoo'* (branches) of Islaam. Rather, it is an announcement of how this person understands his Religion. It is this very proclamation that distinguishes one from *Ahlul-Bid'ah*.

Scholars. So if the *Ahlul-Hadeeth* are not the *awliyyaa'* of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, then Allaah does not have a *walee* upon the earth."¹⁷

The final part of this section – O reader – must be dedicated to those foolish-minded, pre-pubescent (in Religion) ignoramuses who run behind their innovative figureheads and leaders, defending them and praising them with that for which Allaah the Mighty and Exalted has sent down no permission.¹⁸ You shall see them – O *Sunnee* – running behind their masters of innovation and drooling over the current fad that their master – whoever he may be – has unleashed as an innovation upon the Religion. This brand of ignorant groupies is the very section of the Islaamic society from whom the figureheads and leaders of innovation make their living; leeching off the beautiful Religion of Allaah for a worldly gain.

These ignorant goons often result to violence to defend the filthy ideas and evil whims of their leaders and figureheads. How many times have they – no matter which sect they belong to, or what time they live in, or what their intellectual and physical capacity might be – been known to raise the hand of violence against the youth of *Ahlus-Sunnah*. And doing this all because the sons of *Ahlul-Hadeeth* have come against them, or their place of congregation, or their teacher. Indeed, it is known to us that they only do this because they have no way to present a knowledge-based reply to decisive refutations of *Ahlul-Hadeeth wal-Athar* upon their leaders and figureheads. Rather, how could they possibly lash back at *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Hadeeth*, when they themselves have not been taught anything of *manhaj*, *Sunnah* and *Salafiyyah* by their leaders whom they revere so much. So the *manhaj*-void that their leaders and figureheads of innovation allow their goons to wallow in is the issue at hand here. This is why we find that when the Scholars or students of *Ahlul-Hadeeth* offer a *manhajee* reply to the innovators, the ignorant followers of these innovators are dumbfounded and incoherent as to how they must counteract the assault of *Ahlus-Sunnah* upon *Ahlul-Bid'ah*. And it is the desperation of this that leaves them to raise their fists and

¹⁷ *As-Siraaj* (no. 58)

¹⁸ It is the very love and praise for the heads of innovations that sets these people apart and closes off any possibility of them being associated with *Ahlul-Athar*. Rather, the followers of the *aathar* become easily distinguishable due to their love and respect for the Scholars of *Ahlus-Sunnah*. And this is a principle of *al-Walaa' wal-Baraa'* (allegiance and enmity), which has been apparent since the earliest of times. Ja'far Ibn Muhammad said, "If you see a man loving the *Ahlul-Hadeeth*, such as Yahyaa Ibn Sa'eed and 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Mahdee and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and Ishaq Ibn Raahawayh," and he mentioned some other, "then he is upon the *Sunnah*, and whoever opposes them, then he is an innovator." Refer to *Sharaf Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (2/35). Qutaybah Ibn Sa'eed said, "When you see a man loving *Ahlul-Hadeeth*, then know that he is upon the *Sunnah*, and whoever opposes this, then know that he is an innovator." Refer to *Shi'aar Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (p. 7) of al-Haakim.

'Alee Ibnul-Madeene said, 'I heard 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Mahdee say, 'Ibn 'Awn is a test for the people of al-Basrah. If you see a person loving him, then incline and be secure with him. For the people of Koofah, Maalik Ibn Mighwal and Zaa'idah Ibn Qudaamah are a test. If you see a man loving them, then seek his goodness. And for the people of Sham, al-Awazaa'ee and Aboo Ishaq al-Fazaaree are a test. And for the people of the *Hijaaz*, Maalik Ibn Anas." Related by al-Laalikaa'ee (1/62). And Ibn Mahdee said, "When you see a person from Shaam loving al-Awzaa'ee and Aboo Ishaq al-Fazaaree, then he is a person of the *Sunnah*." Related by al-Haakim in *al-Jarh wat-Ta'deel* (1/217).

then to bring them down: physically striking the upholders of the narrations in a blind rage.¹⁹

Stated Imaam 'Abdullaah Ibnul-Mubaarak (d.110H) – *rahimahullaah* – in this vein, “Know that I consider death to be an honour for every Muslim who meets Allaah upon the *Sunnah*. Since we do not complain of our strangeness, the disappearance of the brothers, the scarcity of helpers and the emergence of innovations. To Allaah do we complain of the great calamity that has befallen this *Ummah* of the disappearance of the Scholars, the People of the *Sunnah* and the emergence of innovations.”²⁰

¹⁹ **BENEFIT - THE PEOPLE OF INNOVATION ARE UNITED UPON THE SWORD:** Stated Aboo Qilaabah, “Never does a man introduce an innovation, except that he makes lawful the usage of the sword.” Related by ash-Shaatibee in *al-I'tisaam* (1/113) and ad-Daarimee (1/58). From Ayyoob as-Sakhtiyaanee who relates that Aboo Qilaabah said, “Indeed, their statements may differ, but they have united upon the sword, and I do not consider their destination to be but the Fire.” Related by ad-Daarimee (no. 100). Ayyoob as-Sakhtiyaanee would call all of the people of innovation: *Khawaarij*, and he would say, “Verily the *Khawaarij* differ in their names, but they are agreed upon the usage of the sword.” Related by ash-Shaatibee in *al-I'tisaam* (1/113).

²⁰ *Al-Bida' wan-Nahee 'anhaa* (no. 39)

BENEFIT - THE ISNAAD AND IT'S STATUS IN ISLAAM:

Realize - O *Sunnee* - that this is the second of the pre-requisitory points of benefit that you must keep in mind before we proceed with the text of this short treatise. So reflect carefully over the words of al-'Allaamah Ahmad Muhammad Shaakir (d.1377H) - *rahimahullaah* - as he explains briefly the history of the *isnaad* and the *hadeeth* in Islaam, "So here I would like to point out the benefit of this knowledge humbly called, *mustalahulhadeeth* (the science of *hadeeth*), and its effect upon the divinely-revealed, and historical sciences, and other than them from the various types of sciences which are established from the authentic texts, and which rely upon it.

So the Muslims - from the first generation - had a great concern for memorization of the chains of narration in their Revelation from the Book and the *Sunnah*, the like of which no nation from before them had. So they memorized the *Qur'aan*, and they reported from the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) frequently, sentence by sentence, and word by word, and letter by letter. They preserved it in their chests, and they confirmed it upon pages of their writings, and they authored books about it with exhaustive detail. They also memorized much about their Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), every one of his statements or actions or conditions. He was a teacher from his Lord, and an explainer of His Revelation, and a commander of the establishment of His Religion. All of his (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) statements and actions and conditions are an explanation of the *Qur'aan*. He is the infallible Messenger and the good example. Allaah the Exalted says in describing him,

"He does not speak from desire. Verily it is not but Revelation revealed to him."
[Sooratun-Najm 53:3-4]

Allaah says,

"And We revealed to you the Reminder for you to explain to the people what has been revealed to them, in the hopes that they may become thoughtful." [Sooratun-Nahl 16:44]

Allaah also says,

"Indeed there is a good example for you in the Messenger of Allaah." [Sooratul-Ahzaab 33:21]

'Abdullaah Ibn 'Amr Ibnul-'Aas used to write everything he heard from the Messenger of Allaah, so the Quraysh forbade him from that and it was mentioned to the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). So he said, "Write. So by the One in Whose Hand my soul is,

nothing emanates from me except truth.”²¹ The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded the Muslims in the farewell pilgrimage to teach about him as a general command. So he said, “So let the one who is present teach the one who is absent. So it may be that the one who is being taught may be more heedful than him.”²² He also said, “So let the one who is present teach the one who is absent, for the one who taught may be more heedful than the one who heard directly.”²³ So the Muslims understood that all this was obligatory upon them. They memorized everything about the Prophet (ﷺ) and they acted upon that, and they went to great lengths to fulfill this trust, and they related *hadeeths* from him; either as well known (*mashhoor*), or with authentically established chains of narrations. According to the scholars, this is named an authentic *hadeeth* (*hadeeth saheeh*) or a good *hadeeth* (*hadeeth hasan*).

The scholars of *hadeeth* took great care to make sure they collected everything that was narrated from him as a narration, even if it was not authentic. Then they strove to authenticate every *hadeeth*, and every letter narrated in a narration. So they criticized their conditions and their narrations and they took the most extreme care in quoting. So they would rule a *hadeeth* to be weak due to a little doubt in the biography of a narrator's character which affected his reliability according to the people of knowledge. So if they doubted in his truthfulness and they knew that he had lied about something in his statements, then they would discard his narrations and they would call his *hadeeth* fabricated (*mawdoos*) or lies (*makdhoob*), even if he was not particularly known for lying in narrating *hadeeths* and even though they knew the liar could have been telling the truth.

Likewise, they used to check the memorization of every narrator and read his narrations with other ones. So if they found many mistakes from him and his memorization was not good, they would declare his narrations weak, even if he had not been disparaged in his character or his truthfulness. It was feared that his memory might be unreliable in his narrations.

Indeed, they wrote and compiled the fundamental principles that were required for the acceptance of *hadeeth*, so these are the fundamental principles of this field of study. So they refined them with as close examination as humanly possible, so as to preserve their Religion. So the fundamental that they established became the soundest fundamentals for confirming historical accounts and the finest and the most delicate, even though it is despised - in these later times - by most of the people since they do not have adequate knowledge about it or clarification.

So the scholars of many different sciences followed them in this. So the scholars of language and the scholars of literature and the scholars of history and other than these imitated them. So they made efforts to relate everything of their sciences with a chain of

²¹ Related by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (no. 6510)(2/162) with an authentic chain of narrators. It is also related by Abu Daawood and al-Haakim and other than them in meaning.

²² Related in *Fathul-Baaree* (1/46) and others.

²³ Related in *Fathul-Baaree* (3/459)

narrators, as you will see in the older books. So the foundations of this knowledge were used with the intention of authenticating narrations in anything that involved narrating. So this knowledge is the basis for any narration-based science.

Along with this however, there were some people who innovated a vile innovation. They alleged that *hadeeths* could not be used as proofs because, in some conventions, it was called ‘uncertain affirmation’ (*dhanniyyatuth-thuboot*). This means that it was not affirmed with concurrency (*tawaatur*) requiring absoluteness in narrations. So they concluded that such narrations do not provide conclusive knowledge. This group did not realize that the term ‘definitive knowledge’ was just a convention among some scholars to be applied to some sciences only. In the case of *hadeeth* however, the most authentic reports were declared authentic by any scholar who had studied *hadeeth*, even if it was not concurrent (*mutawaatir*). If they were to reject every non-recurrent narration, then they should first eliminate every science that relies upon narration; including history. However, at that time, the group that went with such a bad opinion was small, overwhelmed, and they did not have any influence upon Islaamic sciences.

However, in this century, there has appeared a new group who alleged the same old allegations and more. They claim that all *hadeeths* are unauthentic and baseless, so it is not allowed to use them as proofs in matters of the Religion. Some even went to the point of rejecting all the rules and fundamental set for *hadeeth* checking; and started authenticating *hadeeths* according to desires and feelings, without any particular rule or proof. For these people, there is no cure except if they learn Islaamic knowledge and have respect for it, and Allaah guides whomever He wills.

So as for the attack upon authentic *hadeeths*, and the doubt in their attribution to the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), then this is nothing less than an announcement of war against the Muslims for those who do it despite knowledge. It is also due to ignorance and lack of study for those who blindly follow the first group. So the meaning of this doubt and attack is that all the reliable narrators from amongst the *Salafus-Saalih* were untrustworthy liars. It necessitates accusing them of either telling lies and misleading the people, or of ignorance and stupidity. Indeed, Allaah rescued them from these things, and they knew the reality of the statement of the Messenger of Allaah, “Whoever lies upon me deliberately, then let him take his seat in the Fire.”²⁴ He also said, “Whoever relates a *hadeeth* from me and thinks that it is a lie, then he is one of the liars.”²⁵

So the one who accuses them of lying has passed a judgement which is free of any good quality and which will cause him to dwell in the Fire. This is because lying is from the

²⁴ Shaykh al-Albaanee has declared it to be an authentic concurrent *hadeeth*, he records sixty three different routes for it. Refer to *Mukhtasar Saheeh Muslim* (no. 1861-1862), *Rawdun-Nadheer* (no. 707), and *Saheehul-Jaami'* (no. 6519).

²⁵ Related by Abud-Dardaa', reported by Ahmad, Muslim, and Ibn Maajah. Shaykh al-Albaanee has declared it authentic in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (no. 6199), and from Samoorah and Mugheerah (no. 1863), also see *ad-Da'ee'ah* (1/12).

greatest of major sins, then it is from the most evil of qualities and the worst of them. No nation shall succeed if lying is common among its people, even if it is in small matters. So what about telling lies in the Religion and about the best of the Messengers (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*)? Indeed the people of the first generation of Muslims - and in the first three generations - were the best of the people and the highest in character and they were the most fearful of Allaah. So due to that, Allaah aided them and gave them victory and opened many counties to them and they came to rule many nations in a few years. This was because of their Religion and beautiful character before it was due to their sword and spear.”²⁶

Stated 'Abdullaah Ibnul-Mubaarak (d.181H) - *rahimahullaah*, “The *isnaad* (chain of narrators for *hadeeth*) is from the Religion.” And through another chain of narration he said, “According to me, the *isnaad* is from the Religion. If it were not for the *isnaad*, whoever wished could have said whatever he said.” And he also said, “The example of the one who studies his Religion without an *isnaad* is like the one who attempts to ascend a roof without a ladder.”²⁷

Said Sufyaan ath-Thawree (d.167H) - *rahimahullaah*, “The *isnaad* is the weapon of the Believer. So if he does not have a weapon with him, what will he fight with?”²⁸

²⁶ This is taken from *al-Baa'ithul-Hatheeth Sharh Ikhtisaar 'Uloomul-Hadeeth* - Shaykh Ahmad Shaakir's commentary upon *Ikhtisaar 'Uloomul-Hadeeth* by al-Haafidh Ibn Katheer, (p. 13-16).

²⁷ *Sharaf Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (1/15)

²⁸ *Sharaf Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (1/15)

REASONS FOR WRITING THIS TREATISE:

Stated the Imaam of *Ahlu-Sunnah*, Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Hanbal (d.241H) – *rahimahullaah*, “All praise is for Allaah, who in every age and interval between the Prophets, raises up a group from the People of Knowledge, who call the misguided to guidance and patiently bear ill-treatment and harm. With the Book of Allaah, they give life to the dead, and by the Light of Allaah, they give sight to the blind. How many a person killed by Iblees have they revived. How many people astray and wandering have they guided. How beautiful their effects have been upon the people, and how vile people have been towards them. They expel from the Book of Allaah the alterations of those going beyond bounds, the false claims of the liars and the false interpretations of the ignorant ones – those who uphold the banner of innovation and let loose the trials and discords, who differ about the Book, oppose the Book and agree to oppose the Book. Those who speak about Allaah and His Book without knowledge, argue about what it ambiguous in the Book, and deceive the ignorant with such ambiguities. We seek refuge in Allaah from the trials of the misguided ones.”²⁹

What shall follow is a translation of the debate that took place between 'Alee Tantaawee, of al-Azhar and Imaam, al'Allaamah Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee concerning the issue of *taqleed* and the *madhaahib*. It resulted to due some remarks that at-Tantaawee made concerning the callers to the *Sunnah*. In translating this discussion, we found that claims similar to those of at-Tantaawee were made by a newly-arisen sprout in the *Ummah* named Shabbir Ally. In a recent *khutbah* he propounded views of a 'we are men and they are men' methodology with respect to affairs surrounding the four well-known *madhaahib*. This same *khutbah* included attacks upon the *Salafiyyeen*, rather it included attacks upon the *Da'watus-Salafiyyah* itself!

So seeing such an open announcement of war against the foundations of the *Salafee* methodology, mainly the foundation of *al-Ittibaa'* and respect for the Scholars, we embarked upon a decisive reply to this blustering speaker.

As for the attack of Shabbir Ally, then it closely resembles the rhetoric of the *ta'assub madhhabiyyah* (bigoted adherents to the *madhaahib*), most popularly represented in our times by the likes of Muhammad Sa'eed Ramadaan al-Bootee, Hasan 'Alee Saqqaaf and Nooh Haa Meem Keller.

Before proceeding – O *Sunnee* – we say, read carefully and contemplate upon what you are about to encounter. The article shall appear in the following fashion: each chapter begins with the words of Imaam al-Albaanee, since the article of the Imaam has been split up into chapters with subtitles for easier reading. After the speech of Shaykh Naasirud-Deen, each chapter will have a section called, 'Comments,' wherein we explain certain points that

²⁹ *ar-Radd 'alal-Jahmiyyah waz-Zanaadiqah* (p. 2) of Imaam Ahmad

require further explanation of proofs, or if points made by Shaykh Naasir were relevant to individuals in the west such as Shabbir Ally. So now let us proceed with earnest - O *Sunnee* - to the main text.

A RETURN TO THE SUNNAH - THE TEXT:

Began the Noble Scholar, the Imaam of *Hadeeth*, Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee³⁰ (d.1420H), *rahimahullaah*, “The noble teacher, our contemporary, Shaykh ‘Alee at-Tantaawee wrote an elaborate article under the title, ‘Problem.’ It was published in the *Jumaadal-Oolaa* issue of the *al-Muslimoon* magazine in the year 1315H. In it he began to describe individuals from amongst the Muslims, making them examples of those who call to Islaam, but do not act in accordance to it themselves. Then, he presented criticism of groups labeling them as ‘callers to Allaah who hope to give victory to Islaam and to return the Muslims to it.’ So he began by criticizing ‘those who hold Islaam as following a *madhhab* from the four *madhaahib*, and stopping wherever its later *fuqahaa*‘ have ordered.’ Then he proceeded to make a refutation upon ‘those who call for a return to the *Sunnah*,’ and he lets loose upon them a refutation that he did not let loose upon other than them!

Then the Shaykh closes his article with the following conclusion, “These callers are always differing, taking each other by the throats. They are always debating and quarrelling, hurling out refutations. Not only in Egypt, Shaam and al-Iraq, but in all of the Islaamic countries...And the Islaam that was brought by Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdullaah *ṣallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) is one. It has one understanding, so what is all this differing for?”

He continued, “I do not speak of uniting the understandings and prohibiting the *ikhtilaaf* (difference). So I do not think that this falls under,

“And if your Lord had wished, He could have made the people one nation.”

However, what I do say that it is obligatory to agree upon the means (*usloob*) through which we call to Islaam, and upon the picture of it we present to the students in the schools and to the common-folk in the mosques and to the *ajaanib* (non-Muslims) in the western countries; that we say to them that these are the foundations of Islaam and these are its pillars, and this is the path to enter into it, so as not to reject the arrival of anyone of these due to differing about problematic *aayaat*, nor about *ijtihaad* and *taqleed*, nor to start them off with the newly-invented affairs of *Soofiyyah* and the rules of their paths, nor do we make binding upon them the views of individuals which are not held by the majority.” He then said, “So what are the active means (*usloob ‘amalee*) that make it possible to attain this goal? Could they be found in a conference of Muslim Scholars, or is it attached to an institute from the institutes of knowledge, or can they be established by an individual from amongst the Muslims? What are means?” So it is in response to the question of the teacher that we put forth this article.

COMMENTS: Allaah the Exalted said in His Noble Book,

³⁰ For a brief biography of Imaam Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee, refer to, ‘Appendix I: A Glimpse into the Life of Imaam Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee,’ by his student ‘Alee Hasan al-Halabee al-Atharee

“Mankind were one community and Allaah sent Prophets with glad tidings and warnings and with them He sent the Book in truth, to judge between people in matters wherein they differed.” [Sooratul-Baqarah 2:213]

And Allaah the Mighty and Majestic said,

“We sent down the Book to you (O Muhammad) that you may make clear to them those things in which they differ and that it should be a guide and a mercy to those who believe.” [Sooratun-Nahl 16:64]

He also says,

“Then we put you (O Muhammad) on the (right) Way of Religion, so follow you that and follow not the desires of those who know not.” [Sooratul-Jaathiyah 45:18]

The Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) knew Allaah and obeyed his Lord. Allaah witnessed to that saying,

“Nor does he speak of his own desire. It is no less than revelation sent down to him.” [Sooratun-Najm 53:34]

From that which Allaah ordered his slave and His Messenger with, was that he should propagate and explain to the people that which was revealed to him by his Lord. He, the Most High, says,

“O Messenger! Proclaim that which has been sent to you from your Lord. If you did not, you would not have fulfilled and proclaimed His mission. Allaah will defend you from men (who mean mischief). For Allaah guides not those who reject faith.” [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:67]

The Messenger did indeed completely propagate all the revelation from his Lord without the slightest deficiency, Allaah bears witness to that and also the believers. Allaah says,

“This Day have I perfected your Religion for you, completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islaam as your Religion.” [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:3]

If He had left mankind to pass judgements upon actions and sayings themselves, then judgement would change from person to person and in different times and it is not possible for a human to pass a definite and unchanging ruling. Since that is the case, He has made it binding upon the servants to obey Him and to obey the Messenger and warned them against disobedience and placed the guidance in His Book and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet. He, the Most High, says,

“It is not fit for a believer, man or woman, when Allaah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. Whosoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger has indeed strayed in a plain manner.” [Sooratul-Ahzaab 33:36]

Allaah, the Most Perfect, says,

“He who obeys the Messenger has indeed obeyed Allaah...” [Sooratun-Nisaa‘ 4:80]

“Say: Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger, but if you turn away, he is only responsible for the duty placed on him and you for that placed upon you. If you obey him, you shall be on right guidance. The Messenger’s duty is only to convey in a clear way.” [Sooratun-Noor 24:54]

The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) said, “He who obeys me enters Paradise and he who disobeys me has refused.”³¹

The truthful and trustworthy Messenger also (*sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) said, “I have left amongst you two things. You will not go astray as long as you hold to them: The Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger.”³²

From what has preceded it becomes clear that it is obligatory to refer back in judgement to the Book and the *Sunnah*, if we desire the correct way. Allaah has ordered that matters be referred back to Him and His Messenger when there is a disagreement and difference, so that the final judgement is that of the Book and the *Sunnah*. He, the Mighty and Majestic, says,

“O you who believe! Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority. If you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allaah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allaah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.” [Sooratun-Nisaa‘ 4:59]

This *ayaah* explains that disputes and unknown matters are to be referred back to the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger so that the Muslims settle their disputes with them. This being a sign of truthfulness and the proof of *Eemaan*; while he who does not refer back in judgement to the Book and the *Sunnah* in disputes and take judgement from them then he is not a believer in Allaah and the Last Day. Perhaps the clearest proof of this great matter which is counted as the crux of *Eemaan* is His saying,

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions and accept (them) with full submission.” [Sooratun-Nisaa‘ 4:65]

³¹ Related by al-Bukhaaree (13/249)

³² Related by Maalik (2/899); it was authenticated in *al-Mishkaat* (1/66) of Shaykh al-Albaanee.

Commented al-Haafidh Ibn Katheer (d.774H) - *rahimahullaah* - commented upon this *aayah*, “Just this earth-rendering oath is sufficient to cause the mountains to fall to the ground and for the believer’s jugular vein to tremble in terror and his limbs to shake with fear and for the hearts to rise to the throats and the eyes to roll up in their sockets. The Most Just of all judges has sworn by Himself that no one believes until he makes the Messenger (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) judge in all affairs. So whatever judgement he has passed then it is obligatory to submit to it, outwardly and inwardly, since it is the truth and what is there besides the truth except misguidance.”³³

And the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) said, “I have not left anything which Allaah has ordered you with except that I have ordered you with it, nor have I left anything which He forbade you except that I have forbidden you from it.”³⁴

Said Imaam Muhammad Ibn Idrees ash-Shaafi’ee (d.204H) - *rahimahullaah*, “As for contradicting an established *Hadeeth* from Allaah’s Messenger, then I hope that we cannot be charged with that, if Allaah wills. And that contradicting an authentic *Hadeeth* is not allowed for anyone, but that one is ignorant of something from the *Sunnah* and may therefore hold a saying contrary to it, not knowingly opposing it and a person may also overlook and make mistakes in interpretation.”³⁵

³³ *Tafseerul-Qur’aanil’Adheem* (4/85-86)

³⁴ Related by ash-Shaafi’ee in his *Sunan* (1/14) and *ar-Risaalah* (p. 87, 93), al-Bayhaqee quotes it in his *Sunan* (7/76) from ash-Shaafi’ee. Related also by al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee in *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (1/93) and by at-Tabaraanee. It is declared *Saheeh* by Shaykh al-Albaanee due to its chains and by Shaykh Ahmad Shaakir in his notes in *ar-Risaalah*.

³⁵ *ar-Risaalah* (p. 219)

[1]: THERE CAN BE NO AGREEMENT UPON THE MEANS, BEFORE AGREEMENT UPON THE GOAL: ISLAAM:

Said Imaam Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee (d.1420H), “Indeed, the one who reads the article of the Shaykh with consideration and scrutiny, it will become apparent to him that the Shaykh left a gap without clarifying it. That is the fact that after clearly presenting the ‘Problem,’ he jumped into the call for devising the active means (*usloob ’amalee*) for *da’wah* to Islaam. And wisdom testifies that after presenting the problem, it is obligatory to speak about the path to solving it, or at least calling upon the Scholars to solve it. This is because it is obvious that the callers to Islaam will always continue to differ in the understanding of Islaam, and the difference that the Shaykh described is much more in reality! So it is not possible for these ones to agree upon the active means (*usloob ’amalee*). How could it be when they have not agreed upon the understanding of the goal: Islaam? If we make it binding upon them to agree upon the means, then we will not be able to allow them to call to ‘Islaam having one understanding.’ Rather, each one of them will be calling to what he understands as Islaam, or what he learnt from his fathers and teachers. Due to this, the problem will come back to as it was, without us benefiting anything from the means of *da’wah*, even if it was impossible to implement! Therefore, there is no escape from this “Problem,” so what is this problem? And where is it?” End of al-Albaanee’s words.

COMMENTS: The statement of Imaam al-Albaanee (d.1420H) – *rahimahullaah*, “So it is not possible for these ones to agree upon the active means (*usloob ’amalee*). How could it be when they have not agreed upon the understanding of the goal: Islaam?” This reflects what many of the callers of today have failed to understand, or even delve into. However, *Ahlu-Sunnah* – due to the wise effects of Allaah’s guidance upon those who adhere to it – have realized that our understanding of Islaam must be rectified before anything can be established, and that this is the way to correct the ‘Problem’ mentioned here by ‘Alee at-Tantaawee.

Aboo Daawood relates in his *Sunan* (no. 3426), ‘From ‘Abdullaah Ibn ‘Umar (*radiyallaahu ’anhumaa*) that he (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) said, ‘When you deal in *’eenah* (usury-based) transactions, hold onto the tails of cows, become satisfied with agriculture and leave off *Jihaad*, then Allaah will cover you with humiliation, and He will not remove this humiliation from you, until you return to your Religion.’³⁶

Thus the beginnings of a solution to the afore-stated ‘Problem’ will only be realized by “the Muslims returning to their Lord, correcting their *’aqeedah* (beliefs) and cultivating themselves and their families upon the correct Islaam - putting into effect the statement of Allaah - the Most High,

³⁶ **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo Daawood (no. 3462), it was authenticated by Shaykh Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee in *as-Saheehah* (no. 11).

“Never will Allaah change the condition of a people. Until they change themselves.”
[Sooratur-Ra’d 13:11]

The likes of this has been alluded to by one of the contemporary *du’aat* (callers to Islaam), by saying, ‘Establish the Islaamic state in your hearts, it will then be established upon your earth.’ So the way to salvation is not - as some people imagine - revolution and armed insurrection against the rulers and to carry out military coups! Such actions - in addition to being from amongst the present day *bid’ahs* (innovations) - also contradict the *Sharee’ah* texts; amongst which is the command to change ourselves. Thus, it is essential establish the foundations upon which the building can stand.”³⁷

Furthermore, “it should be known that those who stir up revolution serve only the enemies of Islaam. What is to be considered is not revolution and agitation, but what is according to wisdom. By wisdom, I do not mean remaining silent and ignoring their errors - rather correcting their errors in order to rectify the state of affairs. So the sincere one is the one who speaks to rectify the affairs, not merely to cause change [whether good or bad].”³⁸

Imaam al-Bukhaaree relates in his *Saheeh* (no. 6830), ‘From Ibn ‘Abbaas (*adiyallaahu ‘anhumaa*) who said: I used to teach (the *Qur’aan*) to some of the *Muhaajiroon*, amongst them whom was ‘Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn ‘Awf. Whilst I was in his house at Minaa and he was with ‘Umar Ibnul-Khattaab during the last *Hajj*, ‘Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn ‘Awf came to me and said, “Would that you had seen the man who came today to the Leader of the Believers (i.e. ‘Umar), saying, ‘O Leader of the Believers! What do you say about such and such a person who says: If ‘Umar should die, I will give the *bay’ah* (oath of allegiance) to such and such a person, for by Allaah, the *bay’ah* to Aboo Bakr was nothing but a reaction which became established afterwards.” So ‘Umar became angry and said, “If Allaah wills, I will stand before the people tonight, and I will warn the people against those who wish to deprive the people of their rights.” ‘Abdur-Rahmaan said, “So I said, ‘O Leader of the Believers, do not do this! For the season of *Hajj* gathers the *ra’aa* (common-folk) *ghawghaa’* (the common folk and those who incline towards evil), and it will be they who gather closest to you when you stand to address the people. I fear that you will rise and address them, but some of them will spread your words, but will not understand them, or that they will twist your words and take them out of context. So wait until you reach al-Madeenah - the Land of *Hijrah* (migration) and the *Sunnah* - where you will be amongst the people of Knowledge and understanding, and the noblest of people. So there you may say what you have to say with confidence, since the people of Knowledge will understand your words and put them in their correct context.” So ‘Umar said, “By Allaah! This is what I shall do in my first address to the people of al-Madeenah - if Allaah wills...”

So the path to solving the ‘Problem’ that is prevalent in the *Ummah* today - O one who seeks salvation - in but a single path. It was summed up by al-Muhaddithul’Asr,

³⁷ *al’Aqeedatut-Tahaawiyyah Sharh wat-Ta’leeq* (p.47) of Shaykh al-Albaanee

³⁸ *Huqooqur-Ra’ee war-Ra’iyyah* (p. 29-30) of Shaykh Ibnul-’Uthaymeen

Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee when he said, “Therefore, the key to a return of the glory of Islaam is: Implementation of beneficial knowledge and establishing righteous and correct actions, and this is a very great affair with the Muslims cannot reach, except through the methodology (*manhaj*) of *tasfiyah* (purification and correction) and *tarbiyah* (education and cultivation). These being two very great obligations. By the first of these (*tasfiyah*), the following is intended:

[1]: Purifying the Islaamic *'aqeedah* from that which is alien to it, such as *Shirk*, *ta'teel*, *ta'weel*, refusing authentic *ahaadeeth*, because they are connected to matters of *'aqeedah*, and their like.

[2]: Purifying the Islaamic *fiqh* from erroneous judgements which are contrary to the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah*, freeing the minds from the fetters of blind-following and the darkness of sectarianism and party spirit.

[3]: Purifying the books of *tafseer*, *fiqh* and *raqa'iq* (matters concerning the heart) and other than that from *ahaadeeth* that are weak and fabricated, or the unsupported narrations from the people of the Book, and the reprehensible narrations.

As regards the second obligation (*tarbiyah*), then by it I mean: cultivating the young generation upon this Islaam, purified from all that we have mentioned, giving to them a correct Islamic education from the start - without any influence from the disbelieving western education. There is no doubt that bringing these two obligations about requires huge efforts and sincere cooperation between all Muslims, individuals and groups, from all those who are truly concerned with establishing the desired Islamic society, each one working in his own field and specialty.”³⁹

³⁹ *Fiqhul-Waaqi'* (p. 49-51)

[2]: IS THERE A PROBLEM WITH RETURNING TO THE SUNNAH?

Continued Imaam al-Albaanee, “There is no doubt that it is binding upon the callers to Allaah the Exalted to be from amongst the most zealous of the people in obeying Allaah the Exalted and the swiftest of them in undertaking implementation of His rules and regulations. So if they are differing in the understanding of Islaam, then it is obligatory upon them to rule by what Allaah commanded in terms to returning to the *Sunnah*.⁴⁰ This is because it is that which explains and clarifies the *Qur’aan*, and explains its general points and specifies its absolute, as is pointed out in the statement of Allaah the Exalted,

“And We revealed to you the reminder, so that you may explain to the people what has been revealed to them.” [Sooratun-Nahl 16:44]

And there is the statement of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic,

“So if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, then refer it back to Allaah and His Messenger if you are indeed believers in Allaah and the Last Day. That is best for final determination.” [Sooratun-Nisaa’ 4:59]

So this noble *ayaah* clearly states that the one who is a true Believer must refer the issue of difference back to Allaah the Mighty and Majestic in His Book, and to the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) in his *Sunnah*, since referring back to these two will resolve the difference. So the text of this noble *ayaah* obligates the callers to refer back to the honourable *Sunnah*, so as to solve the difference between them. From that in which there is no doubt is that referring back to the *Sunnah* necessitates knowledge of it and knowing which of its narrations are authentic and which are not. With regards to this affair, the callers of today are in one of two situations:

[1]: Either they are able to refer back to the *Sunnah*; in which case the path is clear and easy, leaving them with no choice but to traverse it. So these ones – in most cases – do not think to traverse such a distant path. So here it is said, ‘How can one call to Islaam when he does establish the rule of Islaam upon himself?’

⁴⁰ The term ‘*Sunnah*’ here, refers to the principles and foundations of the correct Islaamic *’aqeedah* (belief) and *manhaj* (methodology), since the *Salafus-Saalih* (pious predecessors) would apply this term to matters of *’aqeedah* and *manhaj* – as can be seen from their books and writings – for example: [i] *Kitaabus-Sunnah* of Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d.241H); [ii] *as-Sunnah* of al-Athram (d.273H); [iii] *Kitaabus-Sunnah* of Aboo Daawood (d.275H) – being part of his *Sunan*. [iv] *Kitaabus-Sunnah* of Ibn Abee ’Aasim (d.287H); [v] *Kitaabus-Sunnah* of ’Abdullaah (d.290H), the son of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal; [vi] *as-Sunnah* of al-Marwazee (d.292H); [vii] *Sareehus-Sunnah* of Ibn Jareer at-Tabaree (d.310H); [viii] *as-Sunnah* of al-Khallaal (d.311H); [ix] *Sharhus-Sunnah* of al-Barbahaaree (d.329H); [x] *as-Sunnah* of al’Asaal (d.349H) and [xi] *as-Sunnah* of at-Tabaraanee (d.360H).

[2]: Or they are incapable of referring back to the Book and the *Sunnah* due to their ignorance of that. Such is the case, unfortunately, with the majority of the callers. So with this being their condition, it upon them to prepare to send out a group. Rather, there must be groups of Scholars teaching the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), extracting *fiqh* (understanding) from these two, and issuing *fataawaa*, just as the case was during the age of the *Salafus-Saalih*. So when this has been realized – and it is the reality if Allaah the Exalted wills – then we must traverse the Straight *Manhaj* in the issue of difference concerning the understanding of Islaam upon the depiction that Shaykh at-Tantaawee presented in the article, 'Problem.' By this it becomes possible to solve the 'Problem' which has served as an obstacle obstructing the path to agreement upon the means by which we call to Islaam." End of Shaykh al-Albaanee's words.

COMMENTS: So that which the people have a problem with here – O *Sunnee* – is a return to Islaam as it was revealed to Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). Since that which the callers to *Sunnah*, the *Salafiyyeen*, call to is the path of the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). 'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said, "Follow and do not innovate, for you have been given that which is sufficient [and every innovation is misguidance.]"⁴¹

From 'Amr Ibn Salamah: "We used to sit at the door of 'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood before the Morning Prayer, so that when he came out, we would be able to walk with him to the mosque. So Aboo Moosaa al-Ash'aree came to us, so he said, 'Has Aboo 'Abdur-Rahmaan come out yet?' So we said, 'No.' So he sat with us until he came out. So when he came out, all of us stood up with him. So Aboo Moosaa said to him, 'O Abaa 'Abdur-Rahmaan, verily I saw in the mosque a detestable action that I hated – but I did not see – and the praise is for Allaah – anything except good.' He said, 'So what was it?' He said, 'If you live, you will see it. I saw in the mosque, a people sitting in circles, waiting for the Prayer. There was a man in every circle, and in their hands were pebbles, so he would say: 'So *Allaahu Akbar* (Allaah is Greater) one hundred times,' so they would say it one hundred times. So he would say: 'Say *al-hamdulillaah* (the praise is for Allaah) one hundred times,' so they would say it one hundred times. And he would say: 'Say *subhaanallaah* (Free is Allaah from all imperfection) one hundred times,' so they would say it one hundred times.' He said, 'So what did you say to them?' He said, 'I did not say to them anything, I waited for your command.' He said, 'Would that you had ordered them to count up their evil deeds, and assured them that nothing from their evil deeds would be lost!' Then he went, and we went with him, until he came upon the circles of these people. So he stood over them and said, 'What is this that I see you doing?!' They said, 'O Abaa 'Abdur-Rahmaan, these are pebbles upon which we count the *takbeer*, *tahleel*, and *tasbeeh*.' He said, 'Then count up your evil deeds, and I assure you that nothing from your evil deeds will be lost. Woe to you O *Ummah* of Muhammad! How quickly you rush to destruction! These are the Companions of your Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) who are abundant. And

⁴¹ Related by Wakee' in *az-Zuhd* (no. 315) and Aboo Khaythamah in *Kitaabul'Ilm* (no. 54), where al-Albaanee authenticated it. The addition is related by at-Tabaraanee in *al-Kabeer* (9/154) and it is authentic.

these are his clothes that have not yet decayed, and his bowl that is still unbroken. By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, either you are upon the religion better guided than the *Ummah* of Muhammad, or you are opening the door to misguidance.’ They said, ‘By Allaah O Abaa ‘Abdur-Rahmaan, we did not intend anything except good.’ He said, ‘And how many people intend good yet do not achieve it? Verily the Messenger (*sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) informed us: “Verily there will be a people reciting the *Qur’aan*, yet it will not pass beyond their throats.”⁴² By Allaah I do not know, perhaps most of them are from amongst you.’ Then he left them. So ‘Amr Ibn Salamah said: We saw the great majority of these people fight against us upon the day of an-Nahrawaan along with the *Khawaarij*.⁴³

⁴² **Jayyid:** Related by Ahmad (1/404). **BENEFIT - LEARNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE QUR‘AAN:** ‘Abdullaah Ibn Mas’ood (*radiyallaahu ta’aala ‘anhumaa*) said, “We used to learn ten *aayahs*, not increasing upon them until we had implemented them.” Related by Ibn Jareer at-Tabaree with an authentic chain of narrators. See *Basaa’ir Dhush-Sharaf* (p. 138) of Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee. Aboo ‘Abdur Rahmaan as-Sulamee (*rahimahullaahu ta’aala ‘anhu*) said, “Verily we took this *Qur’aan* from a people about whom it was reported to us that if they learned ten *aayahs*, they would not move onto another ten until they had learned what was in them. So we used to learn the *Qur’aan* and implement it. Verily the *Qur’aan* will be inherited after us to a people who will retain it in a way that water is retained. It will not pass beyond their collar bones, rather it will not pass beyond here,” - and he put his hand upon his throat.” Related by Ibn Sa’d in *Tabaqaatul Kubraa* (6/172).

⁴³ Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee said, “It is related by ad-Daarimee in his *Sunan* 1/68-69) and by al-Bahshal in *Taareekh Waasit* (p. 198-199). It comes in two paths from ‘Amr Ibn Yahyaa ‘Amr and Ibn Salamah who said: I heard my father relating from his father...and he mentioned it. I say: this *isnaad* (chain of narrators) is *saheeh* (authentic), and its explanation follows below:

Firstly: ‘Amr Ibn Yahyaa. He was mentioned by Ibn Abee Haatim in *al-Jarh wat-Ta’deel* (6/269) and by al-Bukhaaree in *at-Taareekhul-Kabeer* (6/372). Ibn Abee Haatim relates his *tawtheeq* (declaration of trustworthiness) from Ibn Ma’een. Ibn ‘Adiyy mentions in *al-Kaamil* (5/1773), as does Ibn Hajar in *Lisaanul-Meezaan* (4/378), mentioning his leniency from Ibn Ma’een. I say: The *tawtheeq* here, takes precedence due to the following matters:

[1] Ibn Abee Haatim mentions him from Ibn Ma’een with a *saheeh* chain of narrators, whereas the *jarh* (disparagement) has not yet been confirmed through an authentic path.

[2] The *jarh* is not explicatory, so the *tawtheeq* (declaration of trustworthiness) takes precedence.

[3] He is mentioned by Ibn Hibbaan in *ath-Thiqaat* (8/480), and his *tawtheeq* is explicatory. Therefore, it is to be taken because it is the *tawtheeq* of an *imaam* from the *imaams* of *al-jarh wat-ta’deel*.

[4] Ibn Abee Haatim mentions that a group of trustworthy narrators narrates from him. And due to this, ‘Amr Ibn Yahyaa is trustworthy, and Allaah knows best.

And our Shaykh, may Allaah preserve him, in *ar-Radd ‘alat-Ta’aqqubil-Hadeeth* (p. 47) thought ‘Amr Ibn Yahyaa to be Ibn ‘Umaarah Ibn Abil-Hasan, so he authenticated the *isnaad* saying, “And its *isnaad* is *saheeh*, all of its men are trustworthy, they are the men that al-Bukhaaree accepted in his *Saheeh*, except for ‘Umaarah, but he is *thiqah* (trustworthy).” And I am absolutely certain that he is ‘Amr Ibn Yahyaa Ibn ‘Amr Ibn Salamah and not ‘Amr Ibn Yahyaa Ibn ‘Umaarah, due to the following points:

[1] Bahshal clearly brings that in *Taareekh Waasit*.

[2] Shaykh ad-Daarimee is al-Hakam Ibn Mubaarak and he is in the narration from ‘Amr Ibn Yahyaa Ibn ‘Amr Ibn Salamah, and not in the narration of ‘Amr Ibn Yahyaa Ibn ‘Umaarah, as occurs in *Tahdheebul-Kamaal* (7/132).

[3] That ad-Daarimee and Bahshal quote from the statement of ‘Amr Ibn Salamah - and he is the narrator of the story: ‘We saw the great majority of those people from the circles...’ And ‘Amr Ibn Salamah is the grandson of ‘Amr Ibn Yahyaa, and not the grandfather of ‘Amr Ibn Yahyaa Ibn ‘Umaarah. I say: Then it became clear to our Shaykh that there is doubt (*wahm*), so he returned from that in *Silsilatus-Saheehah* (5/12-13), so may Allaah reward him with goodness. Secondly, his father, Yahyaa Ibn ‘Amr Ibn Salamah is

Stated Shaykh Saleem Ibn 'Eed al-Hilaalee as-Salafee – *hafidhahullaah* – in explanation of this *athar*,⁴⁴ “So this excellent narration encompasses many great principles, which are not known except to those who follow the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), those who do not put anything before Allaah and His Messenger, but rather say, ‘We hear and we obey.’ So from the principles are:

Firstly: That the One who prescribed the ends, did not Forget to prescribe the means. So when Allaah prescribed For His servants the *dhikr* (remembrance of Allaah), He did not forget to prescribe the means and the way to do this. So Allaah’s Messenger (*sallallaahu*

mentioned by Ibn Abee Haatim in *al-Jarh wat-Ta'deel* (9/176) but he does not mention in it a *jarh* (disparagement) nor *ta'deel* (commendation). However, a group of trustworthy narrators reported from him. Our Shaykh – may Allaah preserve him – said in *as-Saheehah* (5/12), “And that Shu'bah narrates from him is enough of a *ta'deel* for him. So he was selected by those men who narrated from him, as is mentioned in his biography. And there was nothing to prevent him from being mentioned in *ath-Thiqaat* of Ibn Hibbaan. So indeed al'Ijlee mentioned him in his *Thiqaat* saying, “A reliable (*thiqah*) Koofee.” I say: his biography is not found in the published version of *ath-Thiqaat*. And he is not alone, rather, he is followed by Mujaalid Ibn Sa'eed from 'Amr Ibn Salamah. It is related by at-Tabaraanee in *al-Mu'jamul-Kabeer* (9/127). Al-Haythamee said in *Majma'uz-Zawaa'id* (1/181): “And it is Mujaalid Ibn Sa'eed and an-Nisaa'ee declared him *thiqah*, but he was declared weak by al-Bukhaaree, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and Yahyaa.” I say: Rather, this is befitting of him.

Thirdly: His grandfather, 'Amr Ibn Salamah is reliable (*thiqah*). He was declared reliable by Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Hibbaan and al'Ijlee. So with this it becomes clear that this story has been authentically confirmed, and Allaah knows best. There are other paths that increase it in power upon power, and they are presented below:

[1] By way of 'Ataa' Ibn Saa'ib from Abil-Bukhtaree from Ibn Mas'ood. It was related by 'Abdullaah Ibn Ahmad in *Zawaa'iduz-Zuhd* (p. 428) and by Aboo Nu'aym in *Hilyatul-Awliyaa'* (4/380-381) and by way of him from at-Tabaraanee in *al-Kabeer* (9/125-126) and 'Abdur-Razzaaq in *al-Musannaf* (no. 5409). Al-Haythamee said in *Majma'uz-Zawaa'id* (1/181), “In it is 'Ataa' Ibn Saa'ib and he is reliable, however, he mixes things up.” I say: As for the mixing up (*ikhhtilaat*) of 'Ataa' Ibn Saa'ib, then it occurred in the later stages of his life. So due to that, the scholars have divided between what he heard from him before the stage where he began to mix things up, and what he heard during his stage of mixing up. Indeed Hammaad Ibn Salamah narrated this story from him according to at-Tabaraanee in *al-Kabeer* (9/126), and he is from those who heard from him before his stage of mixing up, as occurs in *al-Kawaakibun-Neeraat* (p. 63). And with that, this problem is eliminated. As for the problem of *inqitaa'* (being cut off), then indeed Aboo 'Abdur-Rahmaan as-Sulamee follows Abal-Bukhtaree according to at-Tabaraanee in *al-Kabeer* (9/126), so this problem is also eliminated. So with that, this *isnaad* is confirmed and the praise – before and after – is for Allaah.

[2] By way of Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyaynah from Biyaan, from Qays Ibn Abee Haatim from him. It was related by 'Abdur-Razzaaq (no. 5408) and at-Tabaraanee in *al-Kabeer* (9/125) and it was authenticated by al-Haythamee in *Majma'uz-Zawaa'id* (1/181). I say: It is as he said, since its men are confirmed to be reliable.

[3] By way of Sufyaan from Salamah Ibn Kuhayl from Abee Zur'aa' from him. It was related by Aboo Nu'aym in *al-Hilyah* (4/381). I say: Aboo Zur'aaa' is 'Abdullaah Ibn Haanee' al-Akbar al-Koofee. And it is said about him that his *ahaadeeth* do not fall below the level of *hasan*. And the rest of its men are trustworthy, and the story has many paths, you will see them in *al-Kabeer* (9/128). And some of it was authenticated by al-Haythamee in *Majma'uz-Zawaa'id* (1/181), so refer to it.”

⁴⁴ The following section is taken from *al-Bid'ah wa Atharuhas-Sayyi'ah fil-Ummah* (pp.23-36) of Saleem al-Hilaalee as-Salafee.

'*alayhi wa sallam*) used to count the *tasbeeh* (glorification of Allaah) upon his right hand⁴⁵ and he said that they (i.e., the fingers) will be questioned and would speak.⁴⁶

Secondly: That *al-bid'atul-idaafiyyah* is misguidance. And *al-bid'atul-idaafiyyah* is that type of innovation which is based upon a proof with regards to its foundation, but it has no proof with regards to the manner or the form. That is why it is called *idaafiyyah* (something added on). And this type of innovation is, from one angle, directly against correct guidance, and from another angle, it is in agreement with it. So these people did not say something which is *kufir* (disbelief), nor did they do something which was in itself evil, rather they were remembering Allaah - and this is something which is prescribed by Revelation. However, the manner in which they performed this action went against the guidance laid down by Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), and so the Companions opposed them and told them to count this amongst their evil actions instead.

Thirdly: Allaah - the Most Perfect, the Most High - is not to be worshipped, except by what He prescribes. So He is not to be worshipped according to desires, customs or innovations.

Fourthly: That innovations kill off the *Sunnah*. So this group of people innovated a new way of performing *dhikr* (remembering Allaah), which was not reported from Allaah's Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). So in doing this, they killed off the guidance of Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). And this is a principle which, the *Salafus-Saalih* (Pious Predecessors) understood well, and they knew for certain that innovations and the *Sunnah* cannot unite together: Hassaan Ibn 'Atiyyah (d.120H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "No people introduce an innovation into their religion, except that its like from the *Sunnah* is ripped away from them."⁴⁷

Fifthly: That innovations are the cause for destruction, since it leads to abandoning the *Sunnah*, and this causes tremendous misguidance. The noble Companion 'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said, "If you were to abandon the *Sunnah* of your Prophet then you would go astray."⁴⁸ So if the *Ummah* goes astray then it is destroyed. Therefore 'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood said to that group, "O *Ummah* of Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*)! How quickly you head into destruction." So the particular relevance of Ibn Mas'ood's understanding is reflected in the context of the above narration. So Aboo Moosaa al-Ash'aree (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) did not criticize them, rather he waited for the view or the order of 'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*). And this stance was not merely taken out of love or out of displaying false affection to Ibn Umm 'Abd (i.e. to Ibn Mas'ood). Rather, Aboo Moosaa was pleased for himself with what Allaah's Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was pleased with for his *Ummah*, since he (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa*

⁴⁵ **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo Daawood in his *Sunan* (no. 1502), from 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Amr (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*). It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *Saheeh Sunan Abee Daawood* (1/280).

⁴⁶ **Hasan:** Related by Aboo Daawood in his *Sunan* (no.1501), from Yusayrah (*radiyallaahu 'anhaa*). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Saheeh Sunan Abee Daawood* (1/280).

⁴⁷ Related by ad-Daarimee (1/45) and it is authentic.

⁴⁸ Related by Muslim (5/156).

sallam) said, “I am pleased for my *Ummah* with what Ibn Umm ‘Abd is pleased with for it.”⁴⁹ Also in the narration is a proof that all of the Companions were agreed in opposing this action, since ‘Abdullaah Ibn Mas’ood (*radiyallaahu ‘anhu*) used as a proof the fact that the Companions (*radiyallaahu ‘anhum*) were wide spread (and therefore could easily be asked).

Sixthly: Innovations quickly lead to *kufir* (disbelief). This is because the innovator has set himself up as one who is able to legislate and prescribe things; and thus set himself up as a partner to Allaah, adding things to the rulings laid down by Allaah, thinking that he is on a religion of better guidance than the Religion of Muhammad (*sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*).

Seventhly: That innovations open the doors widely for disagreements to occur, and this is a door to misguidance. So whosoever lays down an evil way in Islaam, then he bears the sin of it and the sin of those who act upon it, until the Day of Judgement, without their sin being reduced by anything. And this is because the one who guides to an evil action is like the one who does it.

Eighthly: Not giving importance to the matter of shunning innovations, leads to evil and sins. Do you not see that these people came to be amongst the ranks of the deviated group called the *Khawaarij* on the day of Nahrawaan, fighting against the Companions (*radiyallaahu ‘anhum*), who were led by the Leader of the Believers ‘Alee (*radiyallaahu ‘anhu*), who cut-off this deviated group, on that memorable day. Imaam al-Barbahaaree (d.329H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “Beware of small innovations, because they grow and become large. This was the case with every innovation introduced into this *Ummah*. It started as something small, bearing a resemblance to the truth, which is why those who entered into it were misled, and then were unable to leave it. So it grew and it became the religion which, they followed, so they deviated from the Straight Path and thus left Islaam. May Allaah have mercy upon you! Examine carefully the speech of everyone you hear from, in your time particularly. So do not act in haste, nor enter into anything from it, until you ask and see: Did any of the Companions of the Prophet (*sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) speak about it, or any of the (early) Scholars? So if you find a narration from them about it, cling to it and do not go beyond it for anything, nor give precedence to anything over it and thus fall into the Fire.”⁵⁰

Ninthly: Righteous actions are only according to righteous intentions, and a good intention does not make something which is futile correct. This is because intentions alone cannot make an action correct, but rather complying with the *Sharee’ah* (Prescribed Laws) must be added to that.⁵¹

⁴⁹ **Saheeh:** Related by al-Haakim (3/317-318) and Ibn ‘Asaakir in *al-Majlis* (no. 350). It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *as-Saheehah* (no.1225).

⁵⁰ *Sharhus-Sunnah* (no. 8)

⁵¹ Refer to *Madaarijus-Saalikeen* (1/85) of Ibn al-Qayyim

Finally: Adding to something good is not good, because addition in good is evil, and this is something that is witnessed in everything. Thus, a matter, when it goes beyond its limits, changes to its opposite. So bravery, when it is added to, turns into rashness, and if it is decreased from, then it becomes cowardice. And generosity, if its limits are exceeded, then it becomes wastefulness, and if it is fallen short of, then it becomes miserliness. So the best of the affairs are the justly-balanced ones. And 'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) was not alone amongst the Companions in condemning innovations. So here we find 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Umar (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), who was one of severest from the Companions in condemning innovations and abandoning the innovators. So once he heard a man sneezing and saying, 'The praise is for Allaah and may the *salaah* and *salaam* (the praises of Allaah and blessings of peace) be upon Allaah's Messenger.' So he said to him, 'What is this? This is not what Allaah's Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) taught us, rather he said, "When one of you sneezes then let him praise Allaah." And he did not say: And also send *salaah* (blessings of peace) upon Allaah's Messenger."⁵² Likewise was the practice of the *taabi'een* (those who met the Companions and clung to their way). So in this regard there is what is reported from Sa'eed Ibnul-Musayyib (d.90H) - *rahimahullaah* - that he saw a man praying after the appearance of dawn, more than two *rak'ahs*, making many *rukoos* (bowings) and *sajdahs* (prostrations), so he forbade him from this. So the man said, 'O Aboo Muhammad (i.e. Ibn al-Musayyib)! Will Allaah punish me for my Prayer?' So he said, "No! But He will punish you for opposing the *Sunnah* (Prophetic guidance)."⁵³ And these narrations contain many good points of benefit, so from them:

[i] The Companions rebutting everyone who went against the authentic *Sunnah*, sometimes being very severe in their rebuttal, even if it was against their own fathers and sons.

[ii] That *bid'atut tarkiyyah* is misguidance: And this type of *bid'ah* (innovation) is one for which there is a proof to establish the action, except that the people deliberately leave the action, thinking that it is a part of the Religion, or something similar to it. For example, some of the *Soofees* who abandon marriage in order to emasculate themselves. The proof for this being misguidance is from Allaah - the Most High's - saying:

"O you who Believe! Do not make haraam (unlawful) the good things that Allaah has made halaal (lawful) to you, and do not transgress. Indeed Allaah does not love the transgressors. And eat of the things that Allaah has provided for you, lawful and good, and have taqwaa (fear and obedience) of Allaah in Whom you believe." [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:87-88]

So this *aayah* (verse) is concerned with a single meaning, which is: making forbidden that which Allaah has allowed from the good and pure things, and doing so as a matter of Religion. And Allaah has forbidden this, and considered it as going beyond the limits, since it is transgressing upon Allaah's right, in that He alone has the right to prescribe and

⁵² Related by at-Tirmidhee (no. 2738) and al-Mizzee in *Tahdheebul-Kamaal* (no. 552-553). The *isnaad* is good.

⁵³ Related by al-Bayhaqee in *as-Sunanul-Kubraa* (2/466) and the *isnaad* is authentic.

legislate. And Allaah does not love those who transgress the limits. Then Allaah affirmed the allowance of these things with an even greater emphasis by His saying,

“And eat of the things that Allaah has provided for you, lawful and good, and have taqwaa (fear and obedience) of Allaah in Whom you believe.” [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:87-88]

Then he ordered them to have *taqwaa* (piety and obedience to Him). So this shows that the forbiddance of what Allaah has made lawful, in any form, is outside the bounds of *taqwaa*. Therefore, the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said to those three men who came to the houses of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), asking about his worship and then on being informed about it, considered their own worship to be very little, so they said, 'What a great difference there is between us and the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), whose previous and latter sins have been forgiven by Allaah.' So one of them said, 'I will always pray during the night.' The other one said, 'I will always fast during the day and not break my fast.' And the third of them said, 'I will keep away from women and never get married.' Then Allaah's Messenger came to them and said, "Are you the people who said such and such? By Allaah! I am the one who is the most knowledgeable about Allaah amongst you, and the one who has the most *taqwaa* of Him. Yet I fast and break my fast, I pray and I sleep, and I marry women. So whosoever turns away from my *Sunnah* (guidance) is not from me."⁵⁴

So if the Companions (*radiyallaahu 'anhum*) left for us words of deep insight and which clearly enlighten the hearts, then men after them, who likewise attained the truth from this light, have also left for us words which are almost like the words of the Companions. And this is because they were those who very closely followed in the footsteps of the Companions - and the likes of their sayings have already preceded. However we add here a final example of their stance of truth:

Thus, a man came to Imaam Maalik (d.179H) - *rahimahullaah* - and said, 'O Aboo 'Abdullaah! Where shall I enter the state of *ihraam* (the dress for one intending to do Pilgrimage)?' So Imaam Maalik replied, "From Dhul-Hulayfah, where Allaah's Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) entered the state of *ihraam*." The man then said, 'But I wish to enter the state of *ihraam* at the mosque by his grave.' So Imaam Maalik said, "Do not do that, for I fear for you the *fitnah* (trial)." So the man said, 'What *fitnah* are you referring to, since it is only a few extra miles.' So Imaam Maalik said, "And what *fitnah* can be greater than for you to think that you have attained some virtue, which Allaah's Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) fell short of. Have you not heard the saying of Allaah,

“Let those beware who oppose the command of the Prophet, lest they are afflicted with fitnah (trial), or lest they are afflicted with a painful punishment.” [Sooratun-Noor 24:63].⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Related by al-Bukhaaree (9/104) and Muslim (9/175)

⁵⁵ Related by Imaam ash-Shaatibee in *al-I'tisaam* (1/132)

[3]: SHOULD THE CALLERS BE PLEASED WITH THIS SOLUTION?

Continued the *Muhaddith* of his era, “However, it will become apparent to the researcher that many of the callers today – with great regret – are willing to accept this solution as a *manhaj* for judging the difference. From that which we believe is that actualizing this agreement that the Shaykh calls to is far out of reach in the present age. How could this not be the case when we see him (at-Tantaawee) who is present – and we used to think that he was close to the *Sunnah* – and the uppermost in mutual understanding of it and calling to it. Yet we now see him blaming this ‘Problem’ of his upon the callers to the *Sunnah* and attributing every devastating characteristic to them and charging them with that which he does not even charge the proponents of *Wahdatul-Wujood!*⁵⁶

So this, in reality, is from the peculiarities of difference (*ikhtilaaf*). So since the callers to the *Sunnah* hold that the ‘Problem’ will not be solved except by them establishing their *da’wah* in truth, then some of these callers will supplicate for what is a cause for this ‘Problem!’

This comes with there being many errors and opinions in his refutation upon them, by which the readers will come to understand contrary to what the callers to the *Sunnah* are truly upon. I felt that there was no escape from clarifying that, in order to manifest the truth and to defend against the allegation, hoping from the noble Shaykh that he accepts what he did and that the correct view becomes apparent to him. And we hope that we have directed him to that which will clarify to him his error. I ask Allaah the Glorified and Exalted to make our actions sincere for His Face and in agreement with the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*.)” End of Shaykh al-Albaanee’s words.

⁵⁶ **BENEFIT- THE EVIL OF WAHDATUL-WUJOOD:** Stated Imaam Ibn Abil-’Izz al-Hanafee (d.792H) - *rahimahullaah* - in *Sharhul-’Aqeedatit-Tahaawiyyah* (p. 78-79), “So verily the deniers of Allaah’s Attributes enter the denial of the Attributes into the naming of *Tawheed*, such as Jahm Ibn Safwaan (k.128H) and his followers. For verily they say, “Affirming the Attributes necessitates that Allaah is numerous.” And this statement is known by necessity to be corrupt. For verily the affirmation of a thing in an abstract sense from all of the Attributes means one cannot picture it existing outside of that. And the mind will only be left thinking that it does not exist, and that is the most extreme form of *ta’teel* (denial). And this statement has led people to statements of Allaah being everywhere and in everything. And this is worse than the disbelief of the Christians. For verily the Christians specified it to the Messiah (Jesus), but these people use it universally on all of the creation. And from the implications of this kind of *Tawheed*: is the belief that Fir’awn and his people completed *eemaan*, knowing Allaah on the reality. And from its implications: is that the worshippers of idols are on truth and reward, and verily they only worship Allaah and not other than Him. And from its implications: is that there is no difference between forbiddance, and permissibility, between the mother, and the sister, and the strange woman. And there is no difference between water and intoxicants (*khamr*), and adultery and marriage. And it implies that everything is from one source. No, rather He is that one source. And from its implications: is that the prophets were oppressive to their nations. And Allaah is far above what they say, a great Highness!!”

COMMENTS: The fact of the matter is - O *Sunnee* - that even though the Muslims in general may be in much disagreement, the *Ahlul-Hadeeth wal-Athar* always remain victorious until the Day of Judgement. Contemplate upon the statement of Imaam Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shanqeetee (d.1393H) - *rahimahullaah*, "The researching scholars have divided the victory of the Prophets into two categories: the victory that comes due to the proof and clarification, and it is affirmed for all of them. And there is the victory that comes due to the sword and the spear, and it is for those select ones from amongst them who were commanded to fight in the Path of Allaah."⁵⁷

And Shaykh 'Abdul-Maalik Ramadaanee al-Jazaa'iree commented upon this statement above with, "So due to this, the scholars have affirmed that the Believers who are weak in their communities, who have not been commanded with fighting, they are given victory with the knowledge based proof which stamps out all falsehood and argument. As for those who have power and a leader, then they are commanded due to that, to give victory to the proof by the spear. So this victory of the knowledge-based proof occurs in every age, and the praise is due to Allaah for that.

The people of *Hadeeth* used to be the strongest of people because, they were the most knowledgeable about the *Qur'aan*, as 'Umar Ibnul-Khattaab (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said, "When the people argue with you using doubts from the *Qur'aan*, then answer them with the *Sunnah*, for verily the people of the *Sunnah* are the most knowledgeable concerning the Book of Allaah."⁵⁸

Since they were the most knowledgeable concerning the guidance of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), they used to follow the Book and the *Sunnah*. So it will not seem strange to the late-comer that the people of knowledge have gathered upon the explanation of the phrase '*at-Taa'ifatul-Mansoorah*' (the Victorious Group) to mean '*Ahlul-Hadeeth*' (the people of *hadeeth*). This is derived from the statement of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), "Whoever Allaah wants good for, He gives him understanding (*fiqh*) of the Religion."⁵⁹ And he (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "There will always remain a group from my *Ummah* apparent upon the truth..."⁶⁰ With that, it will not be hidden from the one who is endowed with sound judgement, that the understanding (*fiqh*) of the Religion is the victory of the *Taa'ifatul-Mansoorah* (Victorious Group), and that is the most comprehensive statement concerning it."⁶¹

⁵⁷ *Adwaa'ul-Bayaan* (1/353)

⁵⁸ Related by Imaam al-Aajurree in *ash-Sharee'ah* (p. 48).

⁵⁹ **Saheeh:** Related by al-Bukhaaree (no. 71) and Muslim (no. 1037), from Mu'aawiyah Ibn Abee Sufyaan.

⁶⁰ **Saheeh:** Related by Muslim (no. 1920).

⁶¹ *Madaarikun-Nadhr fis-Siyaasah* (p. 53-54) of 'Abdul-Maalik Ibnul-Mubaarak Ramadhaanee al-Jazaa'iree.

[4]: THE WORDS OF AT-TANTAAWEE:

Stated 'Alee at-Tantaawee, the head of al-Azhar, "And others hold Islaam to be abandonment of all of the *madhaahib*, and a return to the *Sunnah*. So *ijtihaad* becomes obligatory upon everyone who is capable of reading al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and *al-Majma'uz-Zawaa'id* and everyone who is able to name narrators in *at-Taqreeb* or *at-Tahdheeb* then *taqleed* is made *haraam* (unlawful) upon these ones. And they call this strange *fiqh*: the *fiqh* of the *Sunnah*. They do not know that sufficing with the *hadeeth*, its *isnaad* and the levels of authenticity is one thing and deriving rulings from them is another. They do not realize that the various fields of science such as pharmaceuticals, and the scientists such as the physicians and pharmacists. So the pharmacist knows the names of medicines, and he knows their various types to an extent that a physician does not even know. However, he is not capable of treating the sicknesses and curing the patients.

The Companions themselves only had a hundred amongst them who could pronounce *fataawaa*, yet there were one hundred thousand who had sought *fataawaa* from the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). These ones would have to refer back to those one hundred, since they could not perform *ijtihaad*. So if he does not hold a Scholar from the Scholars to take precedence over a *hadeeth* from the *ahaadeeth*, yet he follows his *madhhab*, he would have taken the views of these ancient generations. And they were too fearful of Allaah and too zealous of their Religion to oppose an authentic *hadeeth* for the statement of the Scholar or other than a Scholar. And the *madhaahib* do not take the *hadeeth* alone. Rather, they additionally take from what the Companions, the *taabi'een*, and whomsoever came after them said. So these successive explanations and understandings were recorded, then the ruling was derived from them. And whomsoever leaves off the *ijtihaadaat* of the Scholars is like the one who sees a bird, but he is unable to reach it after a prolonged period of struggle and continuous ascent. So he attempts to fly by making himself a pair of wings, as al-'Abbaas Ibn Farnaas did. So the calls that prohibit *taqleed* in the Religion are false calls, because every science has people who specialize in it, as well as people to whom it is foreign. So if one to whom it is foreign needs a ruling concerning it, he refers to its specialists, just as the layman needs treatments for his sickness, or a building as his house, or he needs to get his watch fixed. So he is not capable of doing these things, except by referring to the physician, the builder, or the watch repairman. So that which he performs *taqleed* of these people in is their *ijtihaad*." End of at-Tantaawee's words, *wa lillaahil-hamd*.

[5]: WHY DO THE CALLERS TO THE SUNNAH CALL FOR A RETURN TO THE SUNNAH?

Stated Imaam al-Albaanee, “So before I begin to clarify what is found in the words of at-Tantaawee in terms of errors, I felt it binding upon me to explain the reasons due to which the callers to the *Sunnah* propagate this *da’wah* and abandon every statement that opposes it. So I say:

FIRSTLY: The *Sunnah* is the sole reference point after the Noble *Qur’aan*. There are many well-known *aayaat* concerning this, and the *Ummah* has a consensus upon it.

SECONDLY: The *Sunnah* has been protected from falling into error and safeguarded from going astray, as the Prophet (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) said in the farewell sermon, “O people! Indeed, I have left amongst you two things. If you hold firmly to them, you will never go astray: the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*).”⁶² The same does not hold true for the opinions and *ijtihaadaat* of men. Due to this, Imaam Maalik (d.159H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, “I am only a human being. I err and I am correct. So look into my opinions. So everything that you find in agreement with the Book and the *Sunnah*, then take it. And everything you find that is not in agreement with the Book and the *Sunnah*, then leave it off.”⁶³ And Shurayh al-Qaadee said, “Verily the *Sunnah* takes precedence over your *qiyaas* (analogical deduction). So follow and do not innovate, since you will not be misguided by what you take of the *aathaar*.”⁶⁴

THIRDLY: The *Sunnah* is binding evidence by agreement of the Muslims, contrary to the opinions of men; since the *Salaf* and other than them from the researching Scholars did not consider them to be binding proofs.⁶⁵ Imaam Ahmad (d.241H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, “As for the opinions of al-Awzaa’ee, Maalik and Abee Haneefah, then all of that is merely opinion. The evidence is only found in the *aathaar*.”⁶⁶

FOURTHLY: It is not possible for the student of knowledge to know true *fiqh*, except by studying the *Sunnah*. It is the sole source after the *Qur’aan* that qualifies along with it, because it helps to deduct a correct *qiyaas* if the text is unclear. So the errors that occur here are more likely to occur with those who are ignorant of the *Sunnah*, such as the *qiyaas* of a subsidiary affair over a subsidiary affair, or opposing an opposite, or performing *qiyaas* despite the existence of a text. Due to this, Ibnul-Qayyim (d.759H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, “The most correct of the people in *qiyaas* are the *Ahlul-Hadeeth*. The closer a man is to the

⁶² Related by al-Haakim in *al-Mustadrak* (no. 93) and Ibn ’Abdul-Barr in *Jaami’ul-Bayaan* (2/24).

⁶³ *Jaami’ul-Bayaan* (2/32)

⁶⁴ *Jaami’ul-Bayaan* (2/34-35)

⁶⁵ Refer to *al-I’laamul-Muwaqqi’een* (1/75-77)

⁶⁶ *Jaami’ul-Bayaan* (2/149)

hadeeth, the more correct his *qiyaas* will be. And the farther he is from the *hadeeth*, the more corrupt his *qiyaas* will be.”⁶⁷

FIFTHLY: It is not possible to pass judgment against what has entered into the Muslims from innovations and desires, except by way of the *Sunnah*, just as the *Sunnah* is an obstruction in the path of the destructive *madhaahib* and strange opinions which their proponents beautify for the Muslims. So some of their callers, from amongst those who revival and rectification and the likes were raised upon this!

SIXTHLY: Indeed, the Muslims today know – despite their *madhaahib* and sects – that there is no platform for them to unite upon and resolve the difference; so that they may

⁶⁷ *I'laamul-Muwaqqi'een* (2/410). **BENEFIT – AHLULHADEETH IN COMPARISON WITH THE OTHER SCHOOLS OF ISLAAMIC LAW:** Stated Imaam Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee (d.1420H) in *Silsilatul-Ahaadeethus-Saheehah* (1/116), “Perhaps some of the people find it unusual that these scholars have explained the *Taa'ifatul-Mansoorah* (Victorious Group) and the *al-Firqatun-Naajiyah* (Saved Sect) as being the scholars of *Hadeeth*. But there is no strangeness in that explanation if we recall the following:

ONE: The scholars of *Hadeeth* are without exception the most knowledgeable of the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, his guidance, manners, battles, etc. (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) This is due to their particular study of the *Sunnah* and whatever is connected to it from knowing the biographies of the narrators and stories behind the *Hadeeth*.

TWO: The nation has divided into groups and schools of thought that are not found in the first Muslim generation. For all of these *madhaahib* (schools of thought) are separate principles, branches, and certain *ahaadeeth* that that specific *madhhab* (school of thought) uses as *daleel* (proof) and depends on. The one who follows one particular school of thought is fanatically engaged in it, and holds tightly to it without taking a look at the other schools of thought. Although he should look because perhaps he will find in them what he does not find in his own. What is confirmed with the scholars is that in every *madhhab* exists information of the *Sunnah* that is not found in other *madhaahib*.

Thus, the one who holds on to only one *madhhab* will be ignorant of a magnificent other side of the *Sunnah* that is preserved in other *madhaahib*. But the scholars of *hadeeth* are not upon this. For they take any *hadeeth* that has been authentically confirmed on the Prophet through an authentic chain of narrators regardless of the *madhhab* it was reported by. They accept it from the person regardless of what group he was a part of so long that he is a trustworthy Muslim that can be depended on for narrations of *hadeeth*. Additionally, authentic *ahaadeeth* cannot be rejected from someone even if he was a communist, *Qadaree*, or *Khaarjee*, so how much more so from someone who considered himself a *Hanafee* or *Maalikee* or other than that. Indeed, Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee (d.204H) – *rahimahullaah* - made this clear when he spoke with Imaam Ahmad and said, “You are more knowledgeable of the *ahaadeeth* than me. So if the authentic *hadeeth* comes to you, inform me of it so that it would be my position, regardless if the reporter is from al-Hijaz, Koofah, or Egypt.”

Thus, *Ahlul-Hadeeth*, may Allaah gather us with them, do not fanatically blind follow the statement of one person no matter how high this person was. This method is contrary to other than them from those who do not associate themselves or their actions with the *Hadeeth*. Indeed those people fanatically blind follow the statement of the scholars when the scholars themselves warn them of that. Those people blind follow these statements to the same degree the people of *Hadeeth* are zealous in accepting the statement of their Prophet. So there is no amazement after this clear explanation that the People of *Hadeeth* are the Victorious Group and the Saved Sect. Rather, they are the middle-grounded nation, and the witnesses over the creation.” End of Imaam al-Albaanee's words.

become capable of establishing one group to face their enemies. So this is not possible, except by referring back to the *Sunnah* due to what has proceeded in points (no. 1-3).

SEVENTHLY: The *Sunnah* combines between rulings that are difficult to apply, and those that are easy. These are the Prophetic methods and the spirit of legislation. From that which the people of the *Sunnah* find perplexing are the books of *fiqh* which are devoid of any evidence. This is an affair that has been testified to, I do not think that anyone, even bigots to *madhaahib*, would oppose it.

EIGHTHLY: The adherent to the *Sunnah*, in the rulings that he takes from it, is contrary to the blind-followers. So they go astray between the many contradicting statements which they find in their books, and they do not know the error from the correct position. Due to that, one of them would pass a *fatwaa* in an issue with two opposing statements. So for example, he will say, 'That was permissible according to Abee Haneefah, and impermissible according to his companions,' despite the clear authentic *Sunnah* being in agreement with one of the statements. However, due to his ignorance, he mentions an opposing statement without opposing anything from it, even if it was by way of indication! So due to this, the person receiving the *fatwaa* will be in confusion! Rather, some of them will make the two opposing statements two *Sharee'ah* rulings of which the Muslims could take whichever one they wished. Rather, some of the *Shaafi'iyyah* permitted themselves to take that statement which allowed for greater permissibility!

NINETHLY: The *Sunnah* obstructs the path of those who wish to take something unlawful and make it lawful for themselves in Islaam in the name of the *Madhaahibul-Fiqhiyyah*, and they take to fabrication in the name of benefit with whatever supports their view! They are not incapable of finding within any issue from amongst the issues whatever agrees with and supports their 'benefit' by opposing the *Sunnah*.⁶⁸

Due to this, they wage war against the thought of returning to the *Sunnah*, because it obstructs their path, as we said. It uncovers the deception behind the *madhaahib* that 'flexibility of the Islaamic *Sharee'ah* is due to the flexibility of the many statements and abundant *ijtihaadaat* and richness in *fiqh*, leaving very little room for any issue to be excluded.' And Allaah knows best about what they perceive.

So these are some of the reasons that are present right now, from what is carried by the servants of the *Sunnah* in calling to it and preferring it over whatever opposes it. So how can they not call the people to it when they are desirous of being guided by its guidance and take part in its light? Rather, how can they not sacrifice their souls in its path? So it is

⁶⁸ Due to this, Sulaymaan at-Tameemee - who is from amongst the trustworthy followers of the *taabi'een* - said, "If you take the concession (*rukhsah*) of every Scholar, you would have gathered within yourself every evil." Related by Ibn 'Abdul-Barr in *Jaami' Bayaanil-'Ilm* (2/91-92). Then he said, "There is an *ijmaa'* upon this, I do not know of any difference concerning this."

amazing to see one who wishes to avert them from it, and make them abandon it for bigotry to a *madhhab*. How preposterous!” End of al-Albaanee’s words

COMMENTS: A number of points must be understood here, in order for one to completely comprehend the *manhaj* (methodology) of the callers to *Sunnah*, the *Salafiyyeen*, the *Ahlul-Hadeeth wal-Athar*. And we shall summarize these points as follows:

[1]: The Religion of the *Ahlul-Hadeeth* consists of an unconditional conformity to the Revelation of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, namely His Book and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). And the knowledge based evidence for this basic principle comes as follows: Stated the Lord of the worlds, the Mighty and Sublime,

“O you who believe! Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger and those from amongst you who are in authority. So if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, then refer it back to Allaah and His Messenger if you truly believe in Allaah and the Last Day. That is best for final determination.” [Sooratun-Nisaa‘ 4:59]

And Allaah the Mighty and Sublime stated in His Noble Book which possesses no crookedness,

“But no! By your Lord, they will not truly have believed until they make you the judge in all disputes amongst them, and then find within themselves no resistance against your decision, and accept them with full submission.” [Sooratun-Nisaa‘ 4:65]

Stated Allaah the Majestic and Sublime,

“And whomever contradicts and opposes the Messenger after the guidance has been made clear to him, and follows a path other than the path of the Believers, We shall keep him in the path that he has chosen. And We shall roast him in Hell, what an evil destination!” [Sooratun-Nisaa‘ 4:115]

And Allaah the Mighty and Majestic said,

“And obey Allaah and His Messenger and do not differ, lest you lose courage and your strength departs. And be patient, since Allaah is with those who are patient.” [Sooratul-Anfaal 8:46]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

“So let those who oppose the commandments of the Messenger beware, lest some fitnah (trial, tribulation) befall them, or a grievous punishment.” [Sooratun-Noor 24:63]

And Allaah the Mighty and Sublime said,

“It is not for a believer, male or female, that when Allaah and His Messenger have decreed a matter, that they should have any choice in that affair. And whomsoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger, then he has indeed strayed plain.” [Sooratul-Ahzaab 33:36]

And Allaah the Glorified says,

“O you who believe! Do not put yourselves before Allaah and His Messenger. And fear Allaah, since Allaah is the Hearing, the All-Knowing.” [Sooratul-Hujuraat 49:1]

So the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “All of my *Ummah* shall enter Paradise, except for those who refuse.” They said, ‘O Messenger of Allaah, who will refuse?’ He said, “Whomsoever obeys me shall enter Paradise, and whomsoever disobeys me, then he has refused.”⁶⁹

And the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “Indeed, I have been granted the *Qur'aan* and something similar to it along with it. A time will come when a man will be reclining upon his couch saying, ‘Stick to this *Qur'aan*. So whatever you find within it as being lawful (*halaal*), then take it as being lawful. And whatever you find within it as being unlawful (*haraam*), then take it as being unlawful.’ Indeed, whatever the Messenger has declared unlawful is the same as what Allaah had declared unlawful.”⁷⁰

And the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “O people! Indeed, I have left amongst you two things which, if you hold firmly to them, then you will never become misguided: the Book of Allaah and my *Sunnah*.”⁷¹

Said Imaam ash-Shawkaanee (d.1250H) – *rahimahullaah*, “Know that it has been unanimously agreed by the people of knowledge that the unadulterated *Sunnah* is separate in the legislation of rulings...”⁷²

Said Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee (d.204H) – *rahimahullaah*, “I do not know anyone from amongst the Companions, nor from the *taabi'een*, that whenever something is related to him from the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), except that he readily accepted the narration and established the *Sunnah*.”⁷³

Said Imaam as-Suyootee (d.911H) – *rahimahullaah*, “Indeed, those who reject the *hadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), whether it is a statement or action, with the condition that it is known as an established proof in the *usool* (foundations of the Religion), then he has disbelieved and left the realm of Islaam. And he will be gathered

⁶⁹ Related al-Bukhaaree (no. 7280)

⁷⁰ **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo Daawood (no. 4605) and at-Tirmidhee (no. 2663).

⁷¹ Related by Maalik in his *Muwatta'* (no. 1619) and al-Bayhaqee (10/114).

⁷² *al-Irshaadul-Fuhoor* (p. 33) of ash-Shawkaanee

⁷³ *Miftaahul-Jannah fil-Ihtijaaj bis-Sunnah* (p. 20-21)

with the Jews and the Christians, or with those whom Allaah the Glorified and Exalted wants from the disbelieving sects.”⁷⁴

Stated al-Haafidh Ibn Hazm (d.465H) – *rahimahullaah*, “And if an individual says, ‘We will not accept anything other than what is found in the *Qur’aan*,’ then he would be a disbeliever according to the *ijmaa’* (consensus) of the *Ummah*.”⁷⁵

[2]: Secondly, understand – O *Sunnee* – that the texts of the Book and the *Sunnah* cannot be understood, except by the understanding of the *Salafus-Saalih*.

Allaah the Mighty and Sublime said,

“Likewise, we have made you a just nation, so that you may be witnesses over the people. And the Messenger is a witness over you.” [Sooratul-Baqarah 2:143]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

“And the first to embrace Islaam, from amongst the emigrants (*muhaajiroon*) and the Ansaar (*helpers*) and those who followed them in goodness, Allaah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them gardens underneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein forever. That is the highest achievement.” [Sooratut-Tawbah 9:100]

Said al-Haafidh Ibn Katheer (d.774H) – *rahimahullaah* – with respect to this *ayah*, “Woe unto those who disliked or rebuked them (the Companions) or some of them. Especially, the best and most virtuous of the Companions after the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) was AbooBakr Ibn Abee Quhaafah as-Siddeeq (*radiyallaahu ’anhu*). Since the dissident and deviated sect of the *Raafidah* hate and curse the best of the Companions, Aboo Bakr (*radiyallaahu ’anhu*). And refuge is sought with Allaah! This indicates that his understanding and intelligence are reversed and contrary and their hearts are inverted and upside-down. Therefore, where is there *eemaan* (faith) in the *Qur’aan*? They rebuke and curse those whom Allaah is pleased with!”⁷⁶

The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) said, “The best of people are my generation, then those who follow them, then those who follow them...”⁷⁷

And he said, “And this *Ummah* shall split up into seventy three sects, all of them being in the Fire except one.” It was said, “Which one is it O Messenger of Allaah?” He said, “The one that is upon what I am upon today and my Companions.”⁷⁸

⁷⁴ *Miftaahul-Jannah* (p. 3)

⁷⁵ *al-Ihkaam fee Usoolil-Ahkaam* (2/80) of Ibn Hazm

⁷⁶ *Tafseerul-Qur’aanil’Adheem* (4/142) of Ibn Katheer.

⁷⁷ Related by al-Bukhaaree (no. 3650)

⁷⁸ **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo Daawood (no. 4596) and at-Tirmidhee (no. 2640)

The Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “Hold firmly to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs after me. Adhere to it and cling firmly to it with the molar teeth. Beware of newly-invented matters, since all newly-invented matters are innovations and all innovations are misguidance.”⁷⁹

And he also said, “Emulate those who come after me: Abee Bakr and 'Umar. Be guided with the guidance of 'Ammar and hold fast to the son of the mother of 'Abd ('Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood).”⁸⁰

Said Imaam Aboo Haneefah (d.150H) – *rahimahullaah*, “Cling firmly to the narrations and the way of the *Salaf* and beware of the newly-invented affairs, for all of that is innovation.”⁸¹

Said Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d.241H) – *rahimahullaah*, “The foundations of the *Sunnah* with us are: Clinging firmly to what the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) were upon., taking them as examples to be followed, abandoning, since all innovations are misguidance.”⁸²

Said Imaam al-Awzaa'ee (d.179H) – *rahimahullaah*, “Patiently restrict yourself to the Sunnah and stop where the people stopped, say whatever they said and leave off whatever they left off. Hold firmly to the path of your *Salafus-Saalih*, since sufficient for you is what was sufficient for them.”⁸³

Said Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee (d.204H) – *rahimahullaah*, “When I see a man from amongst the *Ahlul-Hadeeth*, it is as if I have seen the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) living.”⁸⁴

Stated Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) – *rahimahullaah*, “From the methodology of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* is adherence to the narration of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) outwardly and inwardly and following those who first embraced Islaam from amongst the *Muhaajireen* (emigrants) and the *Ansaar* (helpers)...”⁸⁵

Said al-Haafidh Ibn 'Abdul-Haadee (d.748H) – *rahimahullaah*, “It is not permissible to invent an interpretation about a verse or a *Sunnah* which was not their in the time of the *Salaf* (the pious Predecessors), nor did they have any knowledge concerning it, nor explain it to the *Ummah*. Since this would imply that the *Salaf* were ignorant of the truth in this

⁷⁹ **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo Daawood (no. 4607) and Ibn Maaajah (no. 4443)

⁸⁰ **Hasan:** Related by at-Tirmidhee (no. 3708) and al-Haakim (3/75) and he authenticated it and adh-Dhahabee agreed. Shaykh al-Albaanee declared it *Hasan*.

⁸¹ *Sawnul-Mantaq wal-Kalaam* (p. 32) of Imaam asSuyootee

⁸² Related by al-Laalikaa'ee (1/156)

⁸³ Related by al-Laalikaa'ee in *Sharhus-Sunnah* (1/154)

⁸⁴ Related by al-Haafidh al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee in *Sharaf Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (p. 46)

⁸⁵ *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (3/157)

matter and failed to reach it. Whereas the late-coming opponent is somehow guided to the truth!”⁸⁶

Stated Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d.751H) – *rahimahullaah*, “Inventing an explanation with regards to the Book of Allaah – which the *Salaf* and scholars are in opposition to – necessitates one of two things: either the explanation itself is a mistake, or that the sayings of the *Salaf* – which differ with such a saying – are in error! And one who possesses even an ounce of intellect would doubt that the one whose saying is in opposition to that of the *Salaf*, then he is the one who is in error.”⁸⁷

’Umar Ibnul-Khattaab (radiyallaahu ’anhu) said to ’Abdullaah Ibn ’Abbaas (radiyallaahu ’anhumaa), “How can this *Ummah* differ whilst their Prophet is one and their *Qiblah* is one?” Replied ’Abdullaah Ibn ’Abbaas, “O Leader of the Believers, the *Qur’aan* was sent down upon us and we recite these *aayaat* knowing about whom they were revealed. Indeed, there will come a people after us who will recite the *Qur’aan* and they will not know about whom these *aayaat* were revealed. So they will form an opinion about the *Qur’aan*, and if they have an opinion about the *Qur’aan*, they will begin to differ, and if they begin to differ, they will fight each other...”⁸⁸

Stated ’Abdullaah Ibn ’Abbaas (radiyallaahu ’anhumaa) to the *Khawaarij*, “I come to you from amongst the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah, and as the cousin of the Messenger of Allaah whilst no Companions are in your midst. The *Qur’aan* was sent down to them and they are the most knowledgeable in its interpretation.”⁸⁹

⁸⁶ *as-Saarimul-Munkee* (p. 427)

⁸⁷ *Mukhtasarus-Sawaa’iqul-Mursalah* (2/128)

⁸⁸ Related by Aboo ’Ubayd al-Qaasim Ibn Sallaam al-Harawee in *Fadaa’ilul-Qur’aan* (p. 42)

⁸⁹ *Jaami’ Bayaanul’Ilm wa Fadlihi* (p. 347)

[6]: CLARIFYING THE ERRORS THAT ARE FOUND IN THE WORDS OF AT-TANTAAWEE:

Said Imaam Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee, “After this, we come back to mention what we began with from the errors found in the words of at-Tantaawee. So I say:

[1]: He said, “And others view Islaam to be abandonment of all of the *madhaahib* and a return to the *Sunnah*.” I say, as for returning to the *Sunnah*, then it is obligatory in reality. Indeed, an explanation of the reasons for that has proceeded in a previous section. I will add here, so I say that it is obligatory upon every Muslim to accept their *da’wah* in truth if he is a Believer in truth. Indeed, Allaah the Exalted said,

“Verily the statement of the Believers, when they are called to Allaah and His Messenger to judge amongst them, they say, ‘We hear and we obey.’ And these are the successful ones. And whoever obeys Allaah and the Messenger, then these are the high-achievers.”

And He said concerning the hypocrites,

“And when they are called to Allaah and His Messenger, to rule amongst them...”

And He said,

“And if it is said to them, ‘Come to what Allaah has revealed and His Messenger,’ you will see the hypocrites...”

And there are many other *aayaat* like that. They are well known and we only mentioned them as a reminder.

So there is no evidence for anyone to not accept this *da’wah* of theirs. So how can they be opposed for this? So since some people claim that the callers to the *Sunnah* are not from amongst the people of knowledge capable of establishing it, as was pointed out in the statement of the Shaykh in the preceding statement in the previous section, then this, if it is correct, cannot ever permit people to refute them, because it is still obligatory to accept the truth. So it is not permissible to reject him, regardless of what his condition is, and this is a clear issue which is not in need of any evidence (*daleel*).

Then, if they are truthful in that claim, then let them embark upon explaining that to the people by striking examples to clarify the ignorance of these callers to the *Sunnah* and their faulty understanding of it, until the people know about them, avoid them and are not deceived by their *da’wah* to the *Sunnah*! However, they have not done any of that, and perhaps they will not do any of it. And the reason is known to them, the people of knowledge and other than them!” End of al-Albaanee’s words

COMMENTS: Indeed, one of the primary causes of people not accepting the *da'wah* (call) of the Book and the *Sunnah* upon the understanding of the *Salafus-Saalih* is pride and stubbornness. This is the same haughty attitude that the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) faced when he began to call the pagan Arabs to Islaam.

Said Imaam 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Naasir as-Sa'dee (d.1376H) - *rahimahullaah* - said about this type of pride, "This is to reject the truth and not to accept it. So anyone who rejects the truth is proud and arrogant - in accordance with what he rejects of the truth. So it is obligatory upon everyone to humble themselves to the truth which Allaah sent His Messenger with, and which He sent down in His Book. As for those whose pride and arrogance prevents them from totally complying with the Messengers (i.e. having *eemaan* or faith in them and their message) - then they are *kuffaar* (unbelievers) who will dwell in the Hellfire for eternity. Since when the Truth comes to them via the Messengers, who explain to them the signs and clear proofs, they reject it and are prevented from accepting it, due to the *kibr* that they harbour in their hearts. Allaah - the Most High - said,

"Indeed those who argue about the Signs of Allaah without any authority having come to them, there is nothing in their hearts except *kibr* (pride). They will never accept the Prophet Muhammad as a Prophet." [Sooratul-Ghaafir 40:56]

As for those whose arrogance and pride prevent them from complying with parts of the truth - because it opposes their personal opinions of their whims and desires - then such people are not *kuffaar* (unbelievers), but such an action necessitates them being punished in accordance with what they have of *kibr*. This is why the Scholars have agreed that whenever the *Sunnah* (guidance and way) of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) has been explained to anyone, then it is not lawful for him to turn away from it to the saying of someone else, whoever and whatever status he may have.

So it is obligatory upon the seeker of knowledge to give complete and absolute precedence to the saying of Allaah and the saying of His Messenger over and above the saying of anyone else, and that he should make the basis to which he returns, and the foundation upon which he builds: following the guidance of the Prophet, striving hard to understand what is intended from it, and following this both inwardly and outwardly. When a person conforms to this great principal, then he has indeed reached goodness and excellence and all his errors will be forgiven to him; since his overall objective is to follow that which has been prescribed upon him. So his errors are excused due to his striving his best to recognize and comply with the truth - and this is humbling oneself to the truth."⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Refer to *Bahjatul-Quloobil-Abraar* (p. 156-158) of al-'Allaamah as-Sa'dee.

[7]: THE VIEW OF THE CALLERS TO THE SUNNAH CONCERNING THE MADHAAHIB:

Said Imaam Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee, “As for leaving off all of the *madhaahib*, then they attribute this to the callers of the *Sunnah*, but not without suspecting contrary to what they are upon. In defense of that, I viewed that it would be binding to explain their view of the *madhaahib* and their position concerning that. So I say, it is known amongst the Scholars that the views of the four *madhaahib* and other than them are not in agreement with every *Sharee’ah* ruling. Rather, they are divided into three categories:

[1]: A category from it is agreed upon, such as the prohibition of resembling the disbelievers for example.

[2]: And there is a category in which there is a difference. However, it is a difference of variety (*khtilaafut-tanawwu’*), not the difference of opposition (*khtilaafut-tudaad*), such as the opening supplications and the *tashahhud* (testimony of faith).

[3]: There is a category in which the difference is so extreme, that it is possible to reconcile between the varying opinions by using good reconciliation by the Scholars in any possible way. For example, a man invalidates his ablution by touching a woman. So there are three famous statements concerning it: invalidation and absence; then there is a difference whether the touch is one of sexual desire, then it invalidates it, if not, then no.

So since the affair is as we have divided it, then how can the Shaykh attribute to the callers of the *Sunnah* that ‘they hold abandonment of all the *madhaahib*!’ Additionally, this abandonment necessitates rejection of whatever is within them of truth!! Is this not from the many evidences against the Shaykh, that he does not seek the truth when he alleges in argumentation or opinion for them that they are free of?

So since the callers to the *Sunnah* know what has preceded of detail, they are obliged to search for the truth by looking into all of the *madhaahib*, not outside of them. It is not found in one *madhhab* only. So this research causes them to appreciate the excellence (*fadh*) of the Imaams of the *madhaahib*; their knowledge and the intricacies of their understandings of the Book and the *Sunnah*. For this reason, they have become aware of many of the intricate issues derived from the Book and the *Sunnah*. So they have benefited from the many sciences in a short amount of time, due to their acceptance of what they have reached. So may Allaah reward them with goodness.

Due to this, the callers to the *Sunnah* have come to know the knowledge and excellence of the Scholars by following them based upon evidence, as opposed to those who blindly follow them out of ignorance. And Allaah the Exalted said,

“Are those who know equal to those who do not know?”

So after research, it has become clear to the callers to the *Sunnah* that the difference mentioned in the third category is present in the *madhaahib*. So they do not allow themselves to stick to a specific *madhhab*, since they know that the correct view with respect to the aforementioned difference is not restricted to one particular *madhhab*. Rather, it is spread out amongst all of them. So the truth concerning one issue will be found in one *madhhab*, and the truth concerning another affair will be found in another *madhhab*, and the same goes for the rest of the issues. So if they stuck to one *madhhab* in all of that, then they would have lost much of the truth mentioned in the other *madhaahib*, and this is not permissible for a cognizant Muslim. So since there is no path to know the truth in that which the people differ about, except by returning to the *Sunnah* with what was previously explained, then the callers to the *Sunnah* have made it the foundation (*asl*) that they return to, and the basic principle upon which they base their opinions and ideas. So since the Scholars strove hard in the path of clarifying the *Sunnah*, bringing the people close to it and explaining the rulings possible to derive from them, then the callers to the *Sunnah* do not exceed the others, except by benefiting in knowledge and having their understanding supported by the Book and the *Sunnah*. So due to this, they combine between the foundation of the *Sunnah* and the status of the Scholars. All of this is from the legacy that the *Salaf* left for their followers. So 'Abdullaah Ibnul-Mubaarak (d.110H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “Let this be the affair you rely upon, and take from opinion whatever is explained to you by a *hadeeth*.”⁹¹

This is the view of the callers to the *Sunnah* concerning the *madhaahib*, and this is their position concerning the Scholars. So is there anything in this that the author could take as a rebuke or rejection of them? Or, is that what is appropriate for every Muslim who knows the difference between the infallible speech and other than it. Then, one must not forget the difference between the goal and the means.” End of al-Albaanee’s words.

COMMENTS: To further understand what Imaam al-Albaanee has explained here, we must initially understand what a ‘*madhhab*’ is. Stated Imaam Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (d.1421H) - *rahimahullaah*, defining a *madhhab*, “Technically, *madhhab* means: The evidence-based opinion of a *mujtahid* which he died upon. If (at any time) he changed his opinion, his final opinion is (considered as) his *madhhab*...And know that when the scholars say: The *madhhab* of such and such, then one of two things is intended by this: **Firstly:** The view of the individual (*mujtahid*). **Secondly:** The view of the juristic school of thought (i.e. the view of a body of scholars who ascribe themselves to a particular corpus of juristic rules and fundamentals, which has come to be representative of that school). It may even be that the *Imaam*, after whom the *madhhab* is named, actually holds a different opinion to the *madhhab* itself.”⁹²

⁹¹ *Jaami' Bayaanil'Ilm* (2/34-35)

⁹² *Sharhul-Mumti' 'alaa Zaadil-Mustaqni'* (1/14-15)

The next issue one must look at is: were these *madhaahib* existent in the initial period of Islaam? Stated al-Muhaddith, Shaah Waliyyullaah al-Dihlawee (d.1176H) - *rahimahullaah*, “Know that the people in the first and second century were not united upon the following a single particular *madhhab*. Aboo Taalib al-Makkee said, “These books and collections are a later development, as is speaking in accordance with views people have formulated; giving verdicts according to the *madhhab* of a single person; taking his sayings and quoting them in every affair and only gaining knowledge of *fiqh* in accordance with his *madhhab*. This was not what the previous people of the first and second generations were upon.”⁹³ Rather the people were of two levels: the scholars (*ulamaa*) and the lay people (*aammah*). In issues of agreement about which there was no difference between the Muslims, or between the majority of *mujtahids*, then the *aammah* would follow the conveyer of the *Sharee’ah* (i.e. the Prophet). They used to learn the manner of performing ablution, the ritual bath, the rules of Prayer, *zakaat* and its like, from their fathers, or from the scholars of their land and then act upon that. If something unusual occurred, then they sought the verdict for it from any *muftee* they found, without specifying any juristic school (*madhhab*). Ibnul-Hammaam said at the end of *at-Tahreer*: They would at one time ask one *muftee* and then at another time a different one, not clinging to any single *muftee*.⁹⁴

Said Imaam, al-Mufassir, Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shanqeetee (d.1393H) - *rahimahullaah*, “As for the type of *taqleed* about which the later scholars differ with the Companions and others from those generations whose excellence has been testified to, then it is the performing of *taqleed* of one particular scholar, to the exclusion of all other scholars. This type of *taqleed* is not proven by the texts of the Book and the *Sunnah*, nor was it the view of any of the Companions of Allaah’s Messenger (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) nor anyone else from the first three generations whose excellence has been testified to. Likewise, it opposes the saying of the four *Imaams* (*rahimahumullaah*) since none of them held the view that it was binding to adhere to the saying of a single person to the exclusion of others, from all of the scholars. Rather, the *taqleed* of one particular scholar is an innovation of the fourth century...”⁹⁵

Said Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - *rahimahullaah*, “It has been established in the Book, the *Sunnah* and the *ijmaa’* that Allaah the Most Perfect obligated upon the creation obedience to Him, and obedience to His Messenger (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*). It is not obligatory upon this *Ummah* to obey any one specific person in all that he may command and prohibit, except the Messenger (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*); to the extent that the most truthful of this *Ummah* and the most virtuous after its Prophet said, “Obey me in what is obedience to Allaah. But if I disobey Allaah, then there is no obedience to me upon you.”⁹⁶ They are all agreed that there is no single person who is infallible in all

⁹³ *Qootul-Quloob* (1/324)

⁹⁴ *al-Insaaf fee Bayaani Sababil-Ikhtilaaf* (p. 40) of Shaah Waliyyullaah ad-Dihlawee

⁹⁵ *Adwaa’ul-Bayaan* (7/319-320)

⁹⁶ **Saheeh:** The narration from Aboo Bakr (*radiyallaahu ’anhu*) was related by Ibn Katheer in *as-Seeratun-Nabawiyyah* (4/439) where he said, “Its chain of narration is authentic.”

that he may order or prohibit, except for Allaah's Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). That is why more than one of the scholars have said, "Every person's saying can be taken or left, except for Allaah's Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*)." ⁹⁷ And the four Imaams, may Allaah be pleased with them, all forbade the people from blindly following them in all that they may say; and this was an obligation upon them (to do). ⁹⁸

Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan - *hafidhahullaah* - was asked, 'Is it permitted for someone who adheres to a particular *madhhab* in his acts of worship to move away from it and stick to another *madhhab* whenever he wishes Or is it binding upon a Muslim to stick to only one particular *madhhab* until he dies? And are there any differences between the four *madhhabs* as to how the Prayer is to be performed? What is the manner of the Prayer that has been recorded from the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*)?'

The Shaykh responded by saying, "The issue of sticking to a *madhhab* has in it some detail. If a person has the ability to know the ruling from its proof and to deduce the ruling from its proof, then it is not permitted for him to cling rigidly to one particular *madhhab*, rather it is upon him to take the ruling from the evidence if he has the ability to do so. However, this is rare amongst the people, since this is a quality of the *mujtahids* from the people of knowledge; those that have reached the levels of *ijtihad*. As for one who is not like that, then he cannot take the rulings directly from the evidences; and this is the predominant case amongst the people, especially in these later times. So (in such a case) there is no harm in adopting one of the four *madhhabs* and making *taqleed* of one of them. However, he should not make blind *taqleed* such that he takes all that is in the *madhhab*, whether it is correct or incorrect. Rather, it is upon him to take from the *madhhab* that which, in his view, does not clearly oppose the evidence. As for those views in the *madhhab* which clearly oppose the evidence, then it is not permissible for the Muslim to take it. Rather it is upon him to adopt what is established by the proof, even if it is in another *madhhab*. So his leaving one *madhhab* for another *madhhab*, in order to follow the evidence, is something good. Rather it is obligatory, since following the evidence is an obligation. As for a person following one *madhhab* sometimes and following another *madhhab* at other times, then this (type of) shifting will open up the doors to the following of whims and desires and to the following of concessions, and this is not allowed.

What is meant here is that whatever agrees with his desires, from the views of the scholars, he adopts it; even though it may oppose an evidence; and that whatever does not accord with his desires, he rejects it; even though it may be proven by an evidence, then this is following desires - and Allaah's refuge is sought from this. So the shifting from one *madhhab* to another in order to seek ease or convenience, then this is not permitted. As for moving from one *madhhab* because of following a proof and because of leaving that view

⁹⁷ This is derived from a statement by Imaam Maalik (d.179H) - *rahimahullaah*, it was related by Ibn 'Abdul-Haadee in *Irshaadus-Saalik* (1/227), Ibn 'Abdul-Barr in *Jaami' Bayaanul-'Ilm* (2/91) and Ibn Hazm in *Usoolul-Ahkaam* (6/145, 179).

⁹⁸ *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (3/346-347)

which does not have a proof, or because of it being an error - then this is a matter that is encouraged and sought after from a Muslim. And Allaah knows best...”⁹⁹

Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan was also asked, ‘Is it permitted to have stringent allegiance to a school of thought (*at-ta’assubul-madhhabee*) such that a person follows it in each and every ruling, even if it opposes the truth? Or is it permissible to leave it and follow the correct view in certain situations? Also what is the ruling concerning the adherence to only one *madhhab*?’

The Shaykh responded by saying, “He who has the skill to perform *ijtihad*, then *taqleed* is not permitted to him. He who does not have the skills, then he should perform *taqleed* of one who is more knowledgeable than him...”¹⁰⁰

Shaykh Ibnul’Uthaymeen (d.1421H) - *rahimahullaah* - was asked, ‘You mentioned - may Allaah reward you with good - that to rely upon the saying of just one person is an error and is harmful to the student of knowledge. So is it to be understood from this that one should not adhere or turn to a particular *madhhab*, in that which is difficult from the rulings?’

So he answered by saying, “If what is intended by sticking to a *madhhab* is that a person sticks to a particular *madhhab* and turns away from everything else; whether the correct view lies in his *madhhab* or another *madhhab*, then this is not permissible and it is from the blameworthy and bigoted partisanship. But if a person ascribes to a particular *madhhab* in order to benefit from its principles and guidelines, but he refers it back to the Book and the *Sunnah*; (such that) if it becomes clear to him that the preferred view lies in another *madhhab* and so he adopts that view, then there is no problem with this. The verifying scholars, such as Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah and others were of this category; they were verifying scholars who ascribed to a *madhhab*, but did not oppose the evidences when it was made clear to them.”¹⁰¹

The Shaykh - *rahimahullaah* - was asked, ‘We desire from the noble Shaykh, may Allaah the Exalted protect you, a clarification of the correct methodology in seeking knowledge of the various Islaamic sciences? May Allaah reward you with goodness and grant you forgiveness.’ After explaining the correct methodology of how best to seek knowledge of the *Qur’aan* and its *tafseer*; the *Sunnah*; and the correct creed (*’aqeedah*), the Shaykh then mentioned,

“Knowledge of *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence): There is no doubt that it is essential for a person to focus upon a particular *madhhab*; memorizing it and memorizing its fundamentals and its principles. However, I do not mean by this that we should cling to what the *Imaam* of this *madhhab* said, in the same manner as we cling to what the Prophet (*ṣallallaahu ’alayhi wa*

⁹⁹ *Muntaqaa min Fataawaa* (5/365-366)

¹⁰⁰ *Muntaqaa min Fataawaa* (5/367-368)

¹⁰¹ *Sahwatul-Islamiyyah* (no. 50) compiled by Aboo Lawz

sallam) said. Rather, (knowledge of) *fiqh* should be built upon this, whilst adopting the view of other *madhhabs* when the proof has been established as to the correctness of doing so; which was the way of the scholars who followed *madhhabs*, such as Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, an-Nawawee and others. This is because, in my view, those who take *hadeeths* without returning to what the scholars have written concerning their *Sharee'ah* rulings, you will see from them many escapades, even if they are strong in (the knowledge) of *Hadeeth* and its understanding. However, you will see from them many escapades, because of them being far from what the jurists (*fuqahaa'*) have said."¹⁰²

The Shaykh - *hafidhahullaah* - was also asked, 'What is the obligation upon the *'aammee* who does not have the ability to seek knowledge?'

The Shaykh responded by saying, "It is obligatory upon one who does not possess knowledge, nor possess the ability to perform *ijtihaad*, to ask the people of knowledge; due to the saying of Allaah the Most High,

"Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know." [Sooratul-Anbiyaa' 21:7]

Indeed, Allaah the Exalted did not command that they be asked, except for the purpose of accepting their sayings; and this is *taqleed*. However, what is not allowed is the *taqleed* [whereby one] sticks to a particular *madhhab*; taking hold of it in every circumstance; believing this to be the path to Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic; and clinging to it even if it opposes the proof. As for the one who has the ability to perform *ijtihaad*; such as a student of knowledge who has acquired a huge portion of knowledge, then it is upon him to perform *ijtihaad* in weighing up the proofs and selecting what he deems to be correct, or what is closest to being correct. As for the *'aammee*, or the beginner student of knowledge, then they should strive in performing *taqleed* of whoever is deemed to be closest to the truth; due to their copious knowledge and strength of Religion and piety."¹⁰³

The view of Shaykh al-Albaanee - *hafidhahullaah* - has been given by Muhammad 'Eed al-'Abbaasee, who said whilst discussing the view of Shaah Waliyyullaah ad-Dihlawee,

"When we look at why ad-Dihlawee permitted *taqleed* of one *madhhab*, we see that he did so due to what had become prevalent in the later generations, with regards to blameworthy *taqleed*, prevalence of false desires and the severe weak resolve of the Muslims. So he - *rahimahullaah* - deemed that sticking to one of the four *madhhabs* entailed less harm and ignominy than the evils of leaving the people. He - *rahimahullaah* - said, "Indeed these four codified *madhhabs* which the *Ummah* - or at least those whose opinions are worth considering - are agreed upon performing *taqleed* of up until our time, then in it lie certain benefits that are not concealed; especially in these times in which people's resolve have become greatly deficient, souls have become drunk with desires and every person is

¹⁰² *Kitaabul-'Ilm* (p. 114-115) of al-'Allaamah Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-Uthaymeen

¹⁰³ *Kitaabul-'Ilm* (p. 219-220)

enamoured with his own opinion.” It is worth mentioning here, that this is the opinion of our teacher (Shaykh al-Albaanee) himself (*hafidahullaah*). Indeed, he has mentioned on more than one occasion that it is obligatory for the people in our time to begin learning *fiqh* by way of one of the four *madhhabs*; learning the Religion from its book. Then the next level in traversing the path of correct knowledge is to select a book from the books of the *madhhabs* that explains the evidences and clarifies the way of juristic inference (*istinbaat*); such as *al-Majmoo’* of an-Nawawee, with the *Shaafi’ees*, or *Fathul-Qadeer* of Ibnul-Hammaam, with the *Hanafees*, or other than these. Then any view which becomes apparent that it is based upon a weak proof, or is an error in inference, should be left. The third level is that the books of the other *madhhabs* that (also) discuss the evidences and expounds the ways (of juristic inference), should also be looked into; so whatever is deemed correct from these books is to be adopted. The view of our Shaykh is that this is the correct and firm path that should be traversed in these times.”¹⁰⁴

Shaykh ‘Abdul’Azeez Ibn Baaz (d.1420H) - *rahimahullaah* - was asked, ‘Does his eminence follow a (particular) juristic school of thought (*madhhab*) and what is your methodology concerning verdicts and proofs?’

The Shaykh responded by saying, “My *madhhab* in *fiqh* is the *madhhab* of Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal - *rahimahullaah*; not by way of *taqleed* but rather by way of following the fundamentals (*usool*) upon which he traversed. As for issues involving differences of opinion, then my methodology is to give preference to whatever the proofs necessitate and then give verdicts accordingly, whether this conforms to the *Hanbalee madhhab* or opposes it, since the truth is more deserving of being followed. Allaah the Mighty and Majestic said,

“O you who Believe. Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger and those in authority amongst you. If you differ in anything amongst yourselves, then refer it back to Allaah and His Messenger, if you truly believe in Allaah and the Last Day. This is better and more suitable for final judgement.” [Sooratu-Nisaa‘ 4:59].”¹⁰⁵

Similarly, Shaykh Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdul-Wahhaab (d.1205H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “If a person is learning *fiqh* from one of the four *madhhabs*, then he sees a *hadeeth* that opposes his *madhhab*; and so he follows it and leaves his *madhhab*, then this is recommended, rather it is obligatory upon him when the proof has been made clear to him. This would not be considered as opposing his *Imaam* that he follows, since they - Aboo Haneefah, Maalik, ash-Shaafi’ee and Ahmad - *radiyallaahu ‘anhum ajma’een* - were all agreed upon this fundamental principle ... As for the case whereby a person does not have any evidence which opposes the view of the scholars of the *madhhab*, then we hope that it is permissible to act upon it, since their opinions are better than our own opinions; they took their proofs from the sayings of the Companions and those who came after them. However, it is not essential to declare with absolute certainty that this is the Law prescribed by Allaah and

¹⁰⁴ *Bid’ah Ta’assubul-Madhhabee* (p. 112-113) of Muhammad ‘Eed al’Abbaasee

¹⁰⁵ *Majmoo’ul-Fataawaa wa Maqaalaat Mutanawwi’ah* (4/166) of Shaykh Ibn Baaz

His Messenger, until the proof that is not contradicted in this issue is made clear. This is the action of the *Salaf* of this *Ummah* and its scholars, both previous and present, as well as that which they criticized (which was): Bigoted adherence to particular schools of thought (*at-ta'assubul-madhaahib*) and leaving off following the proof."¹⁰⁶

Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "When a Muslim is faced with a new or unusual occurrence, then he seeks a verdict from whomsoever he believes can give him a verdict in accordance with what Allaah and His Messenger have prescribed; whatever *madhhab* he may be from. It is not obligatory upon any of the Muslims to make *taqleed* of all the views of any one particular individual from the scholars. Neither is it obligatory upon any of the Muslims to cling to the *madhhab* of a specific individual, in all that obligates or informs, except for that of the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). Rather, each person's saying can be taken or left, except for that of the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). Following a particular *madhhab* of a particular individual, due to an inability of knowing what is prescribed as Law, from other than this angle, is from that which is permitted to him. It is not something that is obligatory upon every person, if they have the ability to know what is prescribed without taking this path (of *taqleed*). Rather, it is upon each person to fear Allaah as much as he is able and to seek knowledge of what Allaah and His Messenger have commanded; doing what has been ordered and keeping away from what has been prohibited. And Allaah knows best."¹⁰⁷

Now pay close attention, O *Sunnee*, what happens to the laymen who lives in an area where there is no Scholar, except for one who follows a particular *madhhab*? Stated Imaam Shaah Waliyyullaah ad-Dihlawee - *rahimahullaah*, "Upon this it is essential to draw an analogy about the obligation of performing *taqleed* of one particular scholar, which at times is obligatory and other times is not obligatory. Thus, if there is an unlearned, ignorant person in the lands of India, or the lands across the river, and there is no *Shaafi'ee*, *Maalikee*, or *Hanbalee* scholar present there; nor any of the books of these *madhhabs* - then it is obligatory upon him to perform *taqleed* of Aboo Haneefah's *madhhab*. Indeed, it would be forbidden for him to leave it; since in this case he would be removing the yoke of the *Sharee'ah* from around his neck, remaining blocked and forsaken. This is contrary to if he was in the two Sanctuaries (*al-haramayn*)."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ *Durarus-Saniyyah* (4/7)

¹⁰⁷ *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (20/208-209)

¹⁰⁸ *al-Insaaf* (p. 49) of Shaah Waliyyullaah ad-Dihlawee

[8]: TANTAAWEE’S AGREEMENT WITH THE CALLERS TO THE SUNNAH IN ABANDONMENT OF THE MADHAAHIB IN ADHERENCE TO THE SUNNAH:

Stated Imaam Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee, “After this discourse, it becomes possible for me to say that the position of the colleague, at-Tantaawee with respect to the *madhaahib* does not differ greatly with the position of the callers to the *Sunnah*. That is because at-Tantaawee sees it permissible to leave a *madhhab* due to the presence of an evidence to oppose it. He stated in his article called ‘Problem’ that there are those who ‘view Islaam as following a *madhhab* from the four *madhaahib* and stopping at whatever their later *fuqahaa*‘ have ruled.’ This statement of his is supported by his statement in the introduction to *Qaanoonul-Ahwaalish-Shakhsiyyah* (p. 6), “And from the *Sharee’ah* politics is to open the door of mercy from the *Sharee’ah* to the people, and to take from other than the four *madhaahib* in terms of whatever brings about a general benefit, or repels a general harm.”¹⁰⁹ And it was these same politics that our colleague spoke in accordance with in another introduction. So in doing such, he opposed his own *Hanafee Madhhab* in many issues. I will suffice with mentioning two issues from that as examples:

[1]: The Shaykh said in the introduction (p. 5), “Indeed, *Sharee’ah* justice necessitates leaving the *Hanafee madhhab* which sets ten *dirhams* as a limit to how low a dowry can be, as opposed to the other three *madhaahib* which do not set any limit to how low it can be.”

[2]: Then he said (p. 6-7), “Also, the *Sharee’ah* text necessitates that pronouncing the divorce unrestrictedly once in the same as pronouncing it many times, and it is taken as Muslim relates in his *Saheeh* that, “Three statements of divorce were taken as one in the time of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*),” and this is the opinion of Ibn Taymiyyah.”

So the reality is that Shaykh at-Tantaawee agreed with the correct view in the positions he took concerning the two issues. Indeed, in the first issue he explained that he opposed the *Hanafee madhhab* and took the view of the other three *madhaahib*. As for the other issue, then his opposition there was severe, because none of the Imaams of the four *madhaahib* took the *hadeeth* of Muslim which he mentioned, even though it was accepted by other than them from the Scholars. And the positions that the Shaykh took in these two issues were already the positions of the callers to the *Sunnah* before the Shaykh wrote about the *Sharee’ah*.

And indeed, I saw in the second issue that he opposed all four of the Imaams in taking the *hadeeth* and the opinion of Ibn Taymiyyah. This is exactly what the callers to the *Sunnah* do, since they take the authentic *hadeeth*, their understanding relies upon it and upon some

¹⁰⁹ ‘As long as it does not oppose any of the *Sharee’ah* texts,’ a note by ‘Abdullaah ‘Alloosh.

of the Scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah and the Scholars of *hadeeth* and *fiqh* before him. So what caused the Shaykh to oppose them when he himself is with them in action!?

So the final word is that the callers to the *Sunnah* do not abandon all of the *madhaahib* generally and specifically. Rather, they display respect to them and their Scholars and they seek their aid to understand the Book and the *Sunnah*. Then, they leave off from their statements and opinions whatever is in opposition to the Book and the *Sunnah*. This is from the completeness of their exoneration and loyalty for them, as Abul-Hasanaat al-Laknaawee said in *al-Fawaa'idul-Bahiyyah fee Taraajimil-Hanafiyyah*, after mentioning 'Isaam Ibn Yoosuf al-Balkhee who was from the companions of Aboo Yoosuf and Muhammad, he used to raise his hands before and after the *rukoo'* (bowing). Also, Abul-Hasanaat said (p. 116), "It is known from him that is a *Hanafee* abandons the *Imaam* of his *madhhab* in an issue due to strong evidence opposing that, then he has not left the noose of following the *madhhab*. Rather, he has followed it by not following it in that issue. Did you not see 'Isaam Ibn Yoosuf leave the *madhhab* of Abee Haneefah in raising the hands, but despite that, he is counted from amongst the *Hanafiyyah*."

Then, Shaykh at-Tantaawee branches off from what he mentioned in the first part of his article about the callers to the *Sunnah*, "So everyone who is capable of reading al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and *al-Majma'uz-Zawaa'id* and he can name some narrators in *at-Taqreeb* and *at-Tahdheeb*, then *ijtihaad* is obligatory upon him, and *taqleed* is unlawful (*haram*). I say, this statement also alleges other than what the callers to the *Sunnah* are upon. And it is upon one to explain."

COMMENTS: Here we see one of the main hallmarks of the enemies of the *Sunnah*, in that they attribute to *AhluSunnah* that which they are free of, then they proceed to refute these false allegations, thus making it look as though they have refuted *AhluSunnah* themselves! So just as at-Tantaawee maligns *AhlulAthar* by stating that they completely disregard all of the *madhaahib* and their contributions to al-Islaam, then Nooh Keller does the same. Rather, Keller goes further and fabricates memories of his days of 'Salafism.' He states in his article, 'Would you advise individuals to study hadith from al-Bukhari and Muslim on their own? ©Nuh Ha Mim Keller 1995', "When I first came to Jordan in 1980, someone had impressed upon my mind that a Muslim needs nothing besides the Quran and sahih hadiths. After reading through the Arabic Quran with the aid of A.J. Arberry's *Koran Interpreted* and recording what I understood, I sat down with the Muhammad Muhsin Khan translation of Sahih al-Bukhari and went through all the hadiths, volume by volume, writing down everything they seemed to tell a Muslim to do. It was an effort to cut through the centuries of accretions to Islam that orientalist had taught me about at the University of Chicago, an effort to win through to pure Islam from the original sources themselves. My Salafism and my orientalism converged on this point."

At length, I produced a manuscript of selected hadiths of al-Bukhari, a sort of do-it-yourself *sharia* manual. I still use it as an index to hadiths in al-Bukhari, though the *fiqh* conclusions of my amateur *ijtihad*s are now rather embarrassing. When hadiths were mentioned that

seemed to contradict each other, I would simply choose whichever I wanted, or whichever was closer to my Western habits. After all, I said, the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) was never given a choice between two matters except that he chose the easier of the two (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, 4.230: 3560). For example, I had been told that it was not sunna to urinate while standing up, and had heard the hadith of Aisha that anyone who says the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) passed urine while standing up, do not believe him (*Musnad al-Imam Ahmad*. 6 vols. Cairo 1313/1895. Reprint. Beirut: Dar Sadir, n.d., 6.136). But then I read the hadith in al-Bukhari that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) once urinated while standing up (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, 1.66: 224), and decided that what I had first been told was a mistake, or that perhaps it did not matter much.”

So this ignoramus, not only did this outlandish deed by being arrogant enough to take himself as the scholarly specimen apt for such a heinous crime, but he continued to attribute it to the *Salafiyyeen*! Indeed, this is something that the *Salafiyyeen* are as free from as the east is free from the west. This is an error which even the most basic beginner in *Salafiyah* can identify as plain oversight, yet Keller was not that clever.

Look to the words of Imaam Muhammad Ibn Saalih al’Uthaymeen (d.1421H) – dear reader – as he explains the *Salafee* position concerning who is able to perform *ijtihad*, “Being a *mujtahid* has conditions, from them:

[1]: That he knows the *Sharee’ah* proofs which he needs in his *ijtihad* - such as the *aayaat* and *ahaadeeth* pertaining to rulings.

[2]: That he knows what relates to the authenticity or weakness of a *hadeeth*, such as having knowledge of the *isnaad* (chain of narration) and its narrators, and other than this.

[3]: That he knows *an-naasikh* (the abrogating) and *al-mansookh* (the abrogated), and the places where there is *ijmaa’* (consensus) - such that he does not give a ruling according to something that has been abrogated, nor give a ruling that opposes the (authentically related) *ijmaa’*.

[4]: That he knows from the proofs that which causes the rulings to vary, such as *takhsees* (particularization), or *taqyeed* (restriction), or it’s like. So he does not give a judgement which is contrary to this.

[5]: That he knows the Arabic language and *usoolul-fiqh* (fundamentals and principles of jurisprudence), and what relates to the meanings and indications of particular wordings - such as *al’aam* (the general), *al-khaass* (the particular), *al-mutlaq* (the absolute and unrestricted), *al-muqayyid* (the restricted), *al-mujmal* (the unclarified), and *al-mubayyin* (the clarified), and it’s like - in order that he gives rulings in accordance with what this demands.

[6]: That he has the ability to extract rulings from the evidences.

And *ijtihad* may be split up, such that it may be undertaken in one particular branch of knowledge, or in one particular issue.”

These conditions that the Noble Imaam has mentioned here are basically the same as what Nooh Keller and his contemporaries from amongst the people of innovation sought to establish. This is how they lie upon the *Ahlul-Athar* and refute their own filthy lies to make it look as though they have refuted what Allaah sent down to Muhammad (ﷺ).

[9]: AN INTRODUCTION TO TAQLEED AND A CLARIFICATION OF WHAT IS PROHIBITED AND WHAT IS OBLIGATORY FROM IT:

Continued Imaam al-Albaanee, “From that which is affirmed amongst the Scholars is to ‘take the statement of someone without knowing their proof.’ And the meaning of this is that *taqleed* is not done upon knowledge. Due to this, the Scholars are agreed in that the blind follower is not referred to as a knowledgeable person.¹¹⁰ Rather, an agreement concerning that has been quoted in *Jaami’ Bayaanil’Ilm* (2/36, 117), and by Ibnul-Qayyim in *I’laamul-Muwaqqi’een* (3/293) and as-Suyootee and other than them from the researching Scholars; to the extent that some of them said, ‘There is no difference between the cattle that are led and the people who blindly follow!’ And some of the *Hanafiyyah* applied the term ‘*jaahil*’ upon such a person!

So the author of *al-Hidaayah* said in relation to the affair of the *muqallid* (blind follower), “So as for the *taqleed* of the *jaahil*, then it is correct according to us, contrary to ash-Shaafi’ee.”¹¹¹ Due to this, they said, ‘It is not permissible for a *muqallid* to issue verdicts.’ So once this is known, then the reason why the *Salaf* hastened to rebuke *taqleed* and the *muqallideen*, as will become clear.¹¹² This is because *taqleed* helps its proponent to reject the Book and the *Sunnah* by way of adherence to the opinions of Scholars, blindly following them in it, as holds true for the *muqallideen* today, and this is well known from them. Rather, it is what some of the later *Hanafiyyah* have affirmed. So Shaykh al-Khudree said concerning the realm of *taqleed* and its people, “So it is not permissible for anyone from amongst them to make a statement in opposition to his *madhhab* in any issue from amongst the issues, as if the truth in its entirety was revealed to one *imaam*! This went to the extent that one of the *fuqahaa’* of *al-Hanafiyyah* said, and he is Abul-Hasan ‘Ubaydullaah al-

¹¹⁰ Refer to *al-Muwaafiqaat* (4/293) of ash-Shaatibee and *ar-Rawdul-Baseem fidh-Dhabb ‘an Sunnah Abil-Qaasim* (1/36-37) by the researching Scholar, Muhammad Ibn Ibraaheem al-Wazeer al-Yamaanee.

¹¹¹ And the great majority of the Scholars such as Maalik and Ahmad were with ash-Shaafi’ee. Said Ibnul-Hummaam in *Sharhul-Hidaayah* (5/456), “And their statement is a narration from our Scholars, where the basic principle is that it is not permissible for the *muqallid* to be a judge, but the case is different for the one who is able to choose (as to which view he shall follow).” Likewise, he said, “Is the one who is able to choose, yet he is not like the *mujtahid* Scholars – a *mujtahid* or *muqallid*? So if he is a *mujtahid*, then who is he and what is his evidence? And if he is a *muqallid*, then how is it permissible for him to abandon *taqleed* of the Scholars (and follow the proof), when such an action is in opposition to his *madhhab*?” Then, Ibnul-Humaam said, “And know that whatever is mentioned by the judge (*qaadee*) is mentioned by the *mujtahid*. So no one passes a *fatwaa*, except a *mujtahid*. Indeed, the *usooliyyeen* have affirmed that the *muftee* is a *mujtahid*. As for the non-*mujtahid* who has memorized the statements of the *mujtahid*, then he is not capable of issuing a *fatwaa*.”

¹¹² Indeed, al-Haafidh Ibn ‘Abdul-Barr dedicated a chapter to explaining the corruption and falsehood of this and the difference between *taqleed* and *al-Ittibaa’*. I would have quoted it, had I not feared lengthening the article. So whomever wills may refer back to it in *Jaami’ Bayaanil’Ilm* (2/109-120) and to Ibnul-Qayyim’s speech in *al-I’laam*.

Karkhee, he said, "Every *aayah* that contradicts what our companions are upon, then it is abrogated, or has an alternative explanation, and every *hadeeth* is likewise; so it is either abrogated or has an explanation." This is how they ruled upon those below them by closing the door to choice."¹¹³

Indeed, this erroneous idea captured the hearts of many blind followers, not to mention the late-comers of our age, since it is well-known that they reject the authentic *Sunan* out of obedience to a *madhhab*. So when it is said to them, 'This issue that you have mentioned is in opposition to the *Sunnah*,' they answer you with, 'Are you more knowledgeable about the *Sunnah* than the Scholars of the *Sunnah*? It is not permissible to act upon a *hadeeth* without a *mujtahid*!' This is how all of them answer, there being no difference between their layperson and their Scholar!

So when they reply to you with this answer, which could not possibly emanate from one who knows the status and etiquette of the *hadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). They are either ignorant or feigning ignorance of the fact that whatever was not taken by their *madhhab* was already taken by another *madhhab* or *Imaam* who was not without their own *madhhab* or *Imaam*. So the one who takes the *hadeeth* as applied and taken from a *madhhab* which acts upon it, whereas his opponent has only taken from a *madhhab*! Indeed, it is said that a *madhhab* must have evidence, yet we do not need to know it. So we say, if what you say is true, then how is it permissible for the Muslim to leave off evidence that he is aware of, or a *hadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) for evidence that he does not know? Indeed, if he were to use *qiyaas* (analogical deduction) or *istinbaat* (derivation) from the universal and absolute affairs of the *Sharee'ah*, whatever he had would not overtake the *hadeeth*, since there is no *ijtihaad* in the presence of a text. So when the *athar* is mentioned, it solves the problem. So when the reproach of Allaah comes,, it nullifies the reproach of the intellect.

This is the *taqleed* that rejects the *hadeeth* in giving victory to the *madhhab*. The likes of this is prohibited by the callers to the *Sunnah*, and they call all of the Muslims to avoid that by returning to conformity to the *Sunnah* wherever it may be and regardless of which *madhhab* it may be found in. As for one making *taqleed* of one who is more knowledgeable than him when he himself does not find a text from Allaah and His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), or when he himself is incapable of understanding these texts, then this is not what we are discussing. Rather, it is inconceivable for a Muslim to say that this was prohibited, because his situation is a necessity. And the necessities make the prohibitions permissible. And if it were not like that, then the entire Religion would have been following desires, and refuge is sought with Allaah. Due to this, the Scholars have mentioned, "*Taqleed* is only permissible for one under necessity. As for the one who refrains from the Book and the *Sunnah* and the statements of the Companions and from knowing the truth with the evidence, despite having the capability of doing that and resorts to *taqleed*, then he is like one who goes to a dead body despite the presence of someone living. Then, the basic

¹¹³ *Taareekhut-Tashree'il-Islaamee* (p. 338)

principle is that a statement is not accepted without evidence, except due to a necessity.”¹¹⁴
End of al-Albaanee’s words

COMMENTS: To better understand what has been said here, O *Sunnee*, one must first understand the detailed definition of *taqleed*. So “*taqleed* is to accept the saying of someone without a proof.”¹¹⁵ Said Imaam Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shanqeetee (d.1393H) - *rahimahullaah*, “As for *taqleed* in the terminology of the jurists, it is: To adopt the view of someone without knowing the evidence.”¹¹⁶

The Standing Committee of Senior Scholars - presided over by Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez Ibn Baaz - said, “The scholars specializing in the fundamentals of jurisprudence (*al-usooliyyoon*) have mentioned (various) definitions clarifying the true meaning and essence of *taqleed*. From them is the saying of some that, “*Taqleed* is to accept the saying of someone without knowing its evidence.” Others held the view that *taqleed* is: “To accept the saying of someone without a proof.” Aboo Ma'aalee al-Juwaynee preferred the definition of *taqleed* that it is: “The following of someone, the following of whom is not based upon a proof, nor does it rely upon knowledge.” And these definitions of the *usooliyyoon* are all close in their meaning, but have in them differences [in wording] which originate in the skill of enunciation. However, the point here is to clarify the essence of *taqleed* by means of approximation.”¹¹⁷

Imaam ash-Shawkaanee - *rahimahullaah* - said, (d.902H) - *rahimahullaah*, “Technically *taqleed* means: To act upon the saying of someone without a proof. Excluded from this (definition) is: Acting upon the saying of Allaah’s Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa aalihi wa sallam*); acting upon the scholarly consensus; the layman (*aammee*) referring back to the *muftee*; and the judge accepting the testimony of trustworthy people - since there is proof to establish all of this.”¹¹⁸

And do not be mistaken, O *Sunnee*, since there is a type of *taqleed* which is permissible within Islaam under certain circumstances. Said Imaam ash-Shanqeetee - *rahimahullaah*, “Examination shows that from *taqleed* is (a type) which is permissible, from it is that which is not permissible, and from it is that about which the later scholars differed with the earlier ones; the Companions and the others from the first three excellent generations.”¹¹⁹

Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan - *hafidhahullaah* - said, “As for the permissible form of imitation (*at-taqleedul-mubaah*), then it is that the layman who, if he does not follow the people of knowledge, then he will stray from the path. Allaah the Mighty and Majestic said,

¹¹⁴ From the words of Ibnul-Qayyim in *al-I'laamil-Muwaqqi'een* (2/344)

¹¹⁵ *al-Mustasfaa* (2/385)

¹¹⁶ *Adwaa'ul-Bayaan* (7/317)

¹¹⁷ *Fataawaa al-Lajnatud-Daa'imah lil-Buhoothul-'Ilmiyyah wal-Iftaa'* (5/123)

¹¹⁸ *Irshaadul-Fuhood* (p. 265)

¹¹⁹ *Adwaa'ul-Bayaan* (7/318) of Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shanqeetee

“Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.” [Sooratun-Nahl 16:43]

And *taqleed* is not done of just anyone. Rather, it is done to one who is accredited with knowledge and piety and he is known to the people for this.”¹²⁰

Imaam Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shanqeetee said, “Investigation shows that there is from *taqleed* that which is permissible, that which is not permissible and that about which the later scholars differ with the earlier ones; the Companions and the others from the first three excellent generations. As for the permitted form of *taqleed*, about which no one from the Muslims differ, it is that the layman performs *taqleed* of a scholar who is from those who can give verdicts (*fataawaa*) concerning the various situations that occur. This type of *taqleed* was in vogue during the time of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), and there is no difference about it. So the layman asked whomsoever he wished from the Companions of Allaah’s Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), about the ruling for a particular situation; when a verdict was given, he acted upon it. If another situation arouse, he was not bound to the first Companion who had given him a verdict, rather he asked whomsoever he wished from the Companions of Allaah’s Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and acted upon that verdict ... Some of the scholars have said that the type of *taqleed* that has just been mentioned, whereby the layman makes *taqleed* of a scholar and acts upon his verdict, is actually *ittibaa'* and not *taqleed*. What is correct is that it is the prescribed form of *taqleed*, about which there is an agreement as to its being legislated.”¹²¹

Imaam Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee (d.1420H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “*Taqleed* is permitted to one who is incapable of knowing the evidence: Someone may say: Not everyone has the ability to become a scholar with this meaning. So we say: Indeed, this is so. However, no one disputes this; and Allaah the Mighty and Majestic said,

“Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.” [Sooratun-Nahl 16:43]

And He said,

“So ask the knowledgeable about it.” [Sooratul-Furqaan 25:59]

And the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said to the one who gave a verdict without due knowledge: “Would that they had asked when they do not know. For indeed, the cure for ignorance is in the asking.” But our discussion was not to define who has the ability [to be a scholar] and who does not. Rather, the discussion was for attribute themselves to the elite (*khaassah*); those who think that they are from the people of knowledge and about whom it is thought that they have the ability to know proofs, at least in some matters ...So the question is not really relevant, especially since I mentioned at the start of this chapter the fundamental rule which benefits us with two important matters:

¹²⁰ *Muntaqaa min Fataawaa* (5/363)

¹²¹ *Adwaa'ul-Bayaan* (7/318-319)

Firstly: That *taqleed* is not beneficial knowledge; and this has been sufficiently clarified, if Allaah wills.

The Second Matter: That *taqleed* is the responsibility of the unlearned layman. The scholar who is able to understand proofs is excluded from it, they are the ones whose responsibility it is to perform *ijtihad*.

So I say: Ibn 'Abdul-Barr said at the end of what was previously quoted from him: "This is all for other than the lay people (*'aammah*). As for the lay people, then they must perform *taqleed* of their scholars in those situations that require it, since they are not able to understand proofs or knowledge, due to their lack of comprehension. This is because knowledge is of levels, and there is no way to reach the top level, except by (first) acquiring what is lower than it. This is the barrier between the lay people and the seeker of proofs and evidences; and Allaah knows best. And the scholars do not differ over the fact that the lay people must perform *taqleed* of their scholars, who are the ones intended in the saying of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic,

"Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know." [Sooratun-Nahl 16:43]

They are in agreement that a blind person must emulate (*taqleed*) someone whom he considers trustworthy in order to ascertain the direction of the Prayer (*qiblah*), if it becomes difficult for him to do so by himself. Similarly, whoever does not possess knowledge of the meanings of what he has been ordered to submit with, then he is required to perform *taqleed* of a scholar. Likewise, scholars have no disagreement about the fact that it is not permissible for the lay people to give religious verdicts."¹²²

Further issues need to be considered here, firstly, it is necessary for a layman who asks a question to a Scholar, to ask for the evidence? Said al-Haafidh al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee (d.468H) - *rahimahullaah*, "As for one to whom *taqleed* is permissible, then it is for the layman who does not know the path [to arrive at] the *Sharee'ah* rulings. So it is permitted for him to do *taqleed* of a scholar and act upon his saying ... And it has been stated by some of the *Mu'tazilah* who said: It is not permissible for the layman to act upon the saying of a scholar, until he knows the effective cause (*'illah*) for the ruling. So when he asks a scholar, he should ask him so that he knows how the ruling came about. So when he knows and grasps this, then he should act upon it. (Al-Khateeb said,) This is wrong, since there is no way for a layman to know and grasp this, except after gaining knowledge and understanding for many years and mixing with the scholars for long periods of time..."¹²³

Shaykh al-Albaanee - *rahimahullaah* - said, "...so you see a layman, who does not understand anything, yet when he asks a scholar about the ruling concerning a particular

¹²² *Jaami' Bayaanul'Ilm* (2/140) of Ibn 'Abdul-Barr

¹²³ *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (2/68-69)

matter, then even if the answer is a prohibition, he quickly asks, 'What is the proof?' And sometimes it is not possible for that scholar to establish a proof, especially if the proof is something arrived at by way of deduction and extraction; not being textually stated as such in the Book and the *Sunnah* so that the proof can be quoted. So in the likes of this situation the one asking the question should not try to delve into the matter by saying: What is the proof? Rather, he must realize his own state: Is he from those who (understand) proofs or not? Does he have any knowledge concerning the general (*'aamm*) and the specific (*khaass*), the unrestricted (*mutlaq*) and the restricted (*muqayyad*), or the abrogating (*naasikh*) and the abrogated (*mansookh*)? Yet he does not have any understanding of that, so will his asking, 'What is the proof,' or 'What is it based upon,' be of any benefit to him? ... Thus we sometimes say, 'It is not always the case that a question will have a detailed proof which will be understood by every Muslim; regardless of whether he is an unlearned layman, or a student of knowledge, this will not be the case in every matter.' Therefore, Allaah the Exalted said,

"Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know." [Sooratul-Anbiyaa' 21:7]

So from the immoderate behaviour which I have just indicated - and because of which the most ignorant of people refuse the proof - is that many of those who ascribe to the call to the Book and the *Sunnah*, give the false impression that when a scholar is asked about a matter, that he has to add to his answer, 'Allaah said such and such, and His Messenger said such and such.' However, I say, this is not an obligation, and this is one of the benefits of being attached to the way and methodology of the Pious Predecessors (*as-Salafus-Saalih*), may Allaah be pleased with them all; and their religious verdicts are a practical proof of what I have said. Therefore mentioning the proof is obligatory when the situation requires it. However, it is not obligatory that whenever the scholar is asked a question that he should reply: Allaah's Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said such and such, particularly if the question is a difficult fiqh question about which there is a difference of opinion. And the saying of Allaah the Exalted, **"Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know,"** is first of all, unrestricted, so it is upon you to ask one whom you think is from the people of knowledge. So when you hear the reply, then it is upon you to follow, unless you have a doubt which you have heard from another scholar; in which case there is no harm in mentioning it. What is then obligatory upon the scholar, is that he should put forward whatever knowledge he has in order to remove the doubt which was mentioned by the questioner."¹²⁴

Now the question must be asked, what should a layman do when faced with two or more differing verdicts for the same issue?

Said al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee (d.468H) - *rahimahullaah*, "If someone says: What do you say concerning the one seeking a scholarly verdict (*al-mustaftee*) from the lay people

¹²⁴ From the words of the Shaykh, as occurs in *al-Asaalah* magazine (no. 8, pp. 76-78; *Jumaadal-Aakhar* 1414H).

(*'aammah*), when he is given conflicting verdicts by two people. Which one of them should he do *taqleed* of? It is said to him, if Allaah wills, (the reply) is from two angles: **Firstly:** If the *'aammee* possess a firm intellect and strong comprehension; such that when he applies his intellect, he understands and when he applies his comprehension, he comprehends, then it is upon him to inquire into the proofs of the two variant views and to accept that which is the most strongest in his view. But if he has deficient intellect, or does not possess firm comprehension, then he should perform *taqleed* of whom he deems to be the best of the two.”¹²⁵

Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “As for the *mustaftee*, then that which the four Imaams, as well as the rest of the scholars are upon, is that it is not prescribed upon anyone to cling solely to the saying of one particular individual in all that he may declare obligatory, prohibited or permissible, except to Allaah’s Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). However from the scholars are those who say, ‘It is upon the *mustaftee* to perform *taqleed* of the one whom he considers to be the most knowledge and most pious in the issue.’ From them are those who say, ‘Rather, he should choose from any of the *muftees*.’ It is also said, ‘He should follow whatever view he thinks is more preferable, in accordance with his ability to discern this.’ Indeed this is more preferable to just choosing without qualified restriction. It is also said, ‘He should not exert himself to ascertain the ruling, unless he is from the people of *ijtihad*.’ However, the previous view is more preferable, which is that the *mustaftee* gives preference to one of the views; either by preferring the evidences of one of the views, in accordance with his ability to discern this, or because of preferring the view of the one deemed to be the more knowledgeable and pious of them. This is what is upon him, even if it opposes his school of thought (*madhhab*).”¹²⁶

Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim (d.751H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “If two or more *muftees* differ, then what view should be adopted? Should it be the severest one; or the more lenient one; or is there a choice; or should it be the view of the one who is most knowledgeable and most pious; or should another *muftee* be turned to and then see which of the views he agrees to, then act upon that; or is it obligatory to research into what is the strongest view in accordance with ones ability? These are the seven views; and the seventh one is the most strongest and preferable.”¹²⁷

Imaam ash-Shaatibee (d.790H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “Conflicting scholarly verdicts (to the *'aammee*) is like conflicting evidences to the *mujtahid*. So just as the *mujtahid* is not permitted - due to the duty of following the proofs - to merely follow any one of the evidences, without first engaging in *ijtihad* in order to ascertain what is the strongest

¹²⁵ *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (2/204) of al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee

¹²⁶ *Majmoo'Fataawaa* (33/168) of Ibn Taymiyyah

¹²⁷ *I'laamul-Muwaqqi'een* (4/264)

evidence; then likewise, it is not permitted for the 'aammee to merely follow any of the *fatwaas* without first striving to ascertain what is the most correct of them."¹²⁸

Imaam Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen (d.1421H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "With regards to the *mustaftee*, in the case where there are two conflicting verdicts from two scholars, then he follows whoever he deems to be closer to what is correct; either due to deeming one to have more knowledge, or due to having more piety. This is just like the case of a person who is ill and two doctors differ (over the remedy), then he takes what he deems to be closer to what is correct. If he is unable to prefer one scholar over another, due to them being equal in his view, then he selects whichever he chooses, or whatever view provides greater tranquility to his soul."¹²⁹

The final point to be taken into consideration is that just as *mujtahids* have varying levels and abilities, then so do the lay people ('aammah). Due to this, some scholars classify the 'aammah into two categories: the emulator (*muqallid*), and the follower of evidences (*muttabi'*).

Muhammad 'Eed al'Abbaasee said, "However, the people are of differing types with regards to understanding and comprehension. So from them is the un-learned one who does not understand the meanings of the Glorious Book and the noble Hadeeth, nor does he have the ability to deduce (rulings) from them, nor can he comprehend what is sought from them. From them is the scholar who has understanding (*fiqh*) of the verses and the *ahaadeeth* and is aware of what rulings can be derived from them; he has the ability to deal with the apparent differences between them and he understands the Arabic language and its ways. And from them are those that are (at a level) between this. They are not ignorant, but nor do they have the knowledge to derive rulings, nor do they have the ability to understand what is being indicated to by the text; rather, they have some knowledge, awareness, understanding and contemplation. However, they do not reach the level of the scholar and the one who has penetrating insight into the Book and the *Sunnah*. So these are the levels of the people; and between them there are many varying grades. The scholars call the first type of people *muqallid*, the second type are technically referred to as *mujtahid*, and the third type are technically referred to as *muttabi'*. The obligation upon the people of the first type is to perform *taqleed* any scholar of the Book and the *Sunnah* who is reliable in his knowledge and Religion. The obligation upon the second type of people is to perform *ijtihaad* in understanding what is indicated by (the texts of) the Book and the *Sunnah*, and then to follow it and to direct the people upon it. The obligation upon the third type is to follow (*ittibaa'*) those *Sharee'ah* evidences that they are aware of from the scholars. So whoever has the ability to perform *ijtihaad*, then *taqleed* and *ittibaa'* of others is not lawful to him, except in cases of necessity...Whoever has the ability to perform *ittibaa'* then *taqleed* and *ijtihaad* are not lawful for him. Whoever does not have the ability to perform *ijtihaad* nor *ittibaa'* then *taqleed* is obligatory upon him. The proof for this is that the basic rule

¹²⁸ *al-Muwaafaqaat* (4/131)

¹²⁹ *Kitaabul'Ilm* (p. 215) of Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen

upon everyone is to follow (*ittibaa'*) the Book and the *Sunnah* if they have the ability, just as Allaah, the Most Perfect, said,

“Follow what has been sent down from your Lord, and do not make *ittibaa'* of friends and protectors other than Him.” [Sooratul-A'raaf 7:3]

“Take what the Messenger gives you, and abstain from that which he prohibits you.” [Sooratul-Hash 59:7]

So if the Muslim does not have the ability to understand the Book and the *Sunnah*, nor to deduce rulings from them, then he descends to the level of *ittibaa'*. If he does not have the ability to do this, then he descends to the lowest level, which is *taqleed*; and this is when he enters into Allaah, the Exalted's, saying,

“Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.” [Sooratun-Nahl 16:43].¹³⁰

¹³⁰ *Bid'ah Ta'assubul-Madhhabee* (p. 13-14)

[10]: THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TAQLEED AND AL-ITTIBAA’:

Concluded Imaam Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee, “So it is not appropriate for the one who is intelligent and open minded towards his Religion to understand from what has preceded from the explanation of the unlawfulness of *taqleed*, that *ijtihad* is obligatory upon every Muslim regardless of what his level of knowledge, and understanding might be, since this is clear error. It is clear from what has preceded that this is what the Shaykh understood with respect to the *taqleed* that is declared unlawful by the callers to the *Sunnah*. So in his view, it then becomes binding that they obligate *ijtihad* upon every Muslim, regardless of his level of knowledge. That is clear from his words in this section. Specifically, there is his statement ‘*ijtihad* is made obligatory upon him and *taqleed* is prohibited for him.’ So he made *ijtihad* the only alternative to *taqleed*! This is a clear error according to us, because the alternative to the prohibited *taqleed* is the obligatory *ittibaa’* (conformity based upon evidence) upon every Muslim, and there is a clear difference between the two. Said Aboo ‘Abdullaah Ibn Jaweez Mindaad al-Basree al-Maalikee, “The meaning of *taqleed* in the *Sharee’ah* refers to one whose statement is not a proof. He is prohibited from that (statement) by the *Sharee’ah*, and *al-Ittibaa’* is what is affirmed by evidence.” And he said in another place, “Everyone whose statement you follow without there being an evidence to obligate that for you, then you are his *muqallid* (blind-follower). And *taqleed* is not correct in the Religion of Allaah. And everyone whose statement you are obligated to follow with evidence, then you are his *muttabi’* (follower based upon evidence). And *al-Ittibaa’* is correct in the Religion, whilst *taqleed* is prohibited.”¹³¹

As for *al-Ijtihad*, then from what is known, it is ‘striving hard to arrive at a ruling from the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger.’ And there is no doubt that a collective obligation (*fard kifaa’ee*) is not obligatory upon every Muslim. Rather, he is only capable of carrying out a few affairs from amongst them. However, the *mujtahideen* today have been a reason for *taqleed* overtaking the Scholars and fetters being placed upon the *mujtahid*. It is from the oddities of those who place this as a condition throughout the world, the *mujtahid* amongst them is from the blind followers who only take as their Religion what their Imaam said! So in reality, they have fallen short, they have prohibited *al-Ijtihad* and have obligated *taqleed*. Then, they claim that they are performing *ijtihad* and not blindly following. If only they performed *ijtihad* they would have reached the truth and not erred! We would have lengthened the affair if we were to mention the proofs relating to that, so I will suffice with one example.

¹³¹ Refer to *Jaami’ Bayaanil-’Ilm* of Ibn ‘Abdul-Barr (2/117) and *al-’Laamul-Muwaqqi’een* (3/299) of Ibnul-Qayyim.

So what which he sees as *ijtihad* is not difficult as some think. Rather, it is easy for one with aptitude for speech, and who understands which proofs from the proofs of the Book and the *Sunnah* he is in need of. And from another angle, it is easy for the one who has an aptitude for understanding the books of the *madhaahib* and their expressions, not to mention what the latecomers are upon since it sometimes resembles a puzzle. It is possible to understand the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) since they are without a doubt clearer and more obvious than any other speech, especially when they receive aid from the people of knowledge in their books of *tafseer*, explanation of *hadeeth* and the expansive works of *fiqh* which present the differing proofs such as *al-Majmoo'* of an-Nawawee, *Fathul-Qadeer* of Ibnul-Hummaam, *Naylul-Awtaar* of ash-Shawkaanee and the likes. And from the most beneficial of such books is *Bidaayatul-Mujtahid wa Nihaayatul-Muqtasid* of al-'Allaamah Ibn Rushd, since he wrote it for a number of students of knowledge so that they may attain the level of *ijtihad*, as is clear from the book itself.¹³²

And the conclusive statement is that the callers to the *Sunnah* do not obligate *ijtihad* except for one who has the aptitude for it. They obligate *al-Ittibaa'* upon every Muslim and they prohibit – in following the *Salaf* – *taqleed*, except for one who is under necessity and cannot reach the *Sunnah*. So whomsoever attributes to them other than this, then this is transgression and exceeding the bounds, and whomsoever attacks them, then this is only an attack upon the *Salaf* – and from amongst them are the four Imaams – even if he claims to be *Salafee!* Since, *as-Salafiyyah* is nothing except understanding what the *Salafus-Saalih* were upon, then traversing upon that and not leaving it.

And from what has preceded, the error of at-Tantaawee in the fourth section will be clear to the noble reader, “The *muhadditheen* are like the pharmacists, jurists and doctors. So the pharmacist knows the names of the medicines...” So this statement unrestrictedly excludes the *muhadditheen* from the science of *fiqh* and understanding what they carry of the *hadeeth* of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), just as it also excludes the *fuqahaa'* (jurists) from knowledge and perusal of his (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) *hadeeth*. So it will not remain hidden that this is an attack upon both factions together. I do not deny that there may be from amongst the jurists one who has more understanding than some of the *muhadditheen*. In fact, how could I when this has been pointed out in his (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) famous statement, “May Allaah make radiant the face of the one who hears a *hadeeth* from us and conveys it to others. Since perhaps one who carries *fiqh* is not a *faqeeh* himself, or perhaps one may carry *fiqh* to one who has better understanding.”¹³³

However, this does not mean that it is correct for us to describe the *muhadditheen* with an absence of *fiqh* unrestrictedly, as the Shaykh has done. Since the aforementioned *hadeeth* is

¹³² Said Ibn Rushd (2/160-161), “So we have written this book so that the *mujtahid* may reach the level of *ijtihad* by it once he has acquired what is obligatory for him to attain before it from grammar, language...”

¹³³ **Saheeh:** Related by Ahmad (5/183), ad-Daarimee (1/75) and others, from Zayd Ibn Thaabit (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*).

clear in its rejection of that when it states, “Perhaps (*rubba*) the carrier of *fiqh* is not a *faqeeh*...” So this points out the rarity of that amongst the *muhadditheen*, because the basic principle concerning ‘*rubba*’ is that it represents rarity. And how could what we have said about the *muhadditheen* not be the case when they are those whom the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) was referring to in his statement, “There shall always remain a group from amongst my *Ummah* apparent upon the truth. Those who forsake them will not be able to harm them, until the Command of Allaah comes and they are like that.”¹³⁴ Said Ibnul-Madeeneh, “They are the people of *Hadeeth*, those who guard the *madhhab* of the Messenger (*sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) and defend it with knowledge. If it were not for them, the people would have been destroyed through the *Mu’tazilah*, the *Raafidah*,¹³⁵ the *Jahmiyyah*¹³⁶ and the people of *al-Irjaa*¹³⁷ and opinion.”¹³⁸

Then, there is a benefit that becomes apparent from differentiating between the knowledge of *hadeeth* and from the derivation of rulings from them and differentiating between the *muhaddith* and the *faqeeh* in an issue that the two sides differ about and the proof for both of them stems from the other. Yet the difference occurs with respect to its understanding and application. So in this circumstance, it is possible for the view of the *faqeeh* to be preponderant over the view of the *muhaddith*. Whatever the case may be, the issue of preponderance does not affect the *muqallid* because he has no knowledge. As it relates to the *muttabi*, then the preponderant view to him is that of the *muhaddith* over the view of the *faqeeh* due to the clarity of the direct evidence.

¹³⁴ Related by Muslim (6/52-53) from Thawbaan and al-Bukhaaree (no. 3641) from Mu’aawiyah. And it was related al-Haakim in *Ma’rifah ‘Uloomul-Hadeeth* (p. 2) with a *Saheeh* chain of narrators. Likewise, al-Haafidh said in *al-Fath* (11/250) from Imaam Ahmad (d.241H) – *rahimahullaah* – who said concerning the meaning of this *hadeeth*, “If this Victorious Group is not the People of *Hadeeth*, then I do not know who they are.” And at-Tirmidhee and others relate from Ibnul-Madeeneh that he said, “They are the People of *Hadeeth*.” And this is what al-Bukhaaree believed as is found in *al-Fath* (1/134).

¹³⁵ The *Raafidah* (the rejecters) are an extreme sect of the *Shee’ah* who reject Zayd Ibn ‘Alee Ibnul-Husayn due to his refusal to condemn Aboo Bakr and ‘Umar (*radiyallaahu ‘anhumaa*). They rapidly deteriorated in *‘aqeedah*, morals and Religion – until the present day – where their beliefs are those represented by the *Ithnaa ‘Ashariyyah Shee’ah* of ‘Iraq. From their false beliefs are: declaring all but three or five of the Companions to be disbelievers, the belief that their imaams have knowledge of the Unseen, past, present and future, considering the *imaamah* to be one of the main pillars of *eemaan* (faith) and the incompleteness of the *Qur’aan*. Refer to *al-Maqaalaatul-Islaamiyyeen* (1/65), *al-Farq baynal-Firaq* (no. 21) of ‘Abdul-Qaahir al-Baghdaadee and *Talbees Iblees* (p. 94-100) of Ibnul-Jawzee.

¹³⁶ The *Jahmiyyah* are the followers of Jahm Ibn Safwaan, who unleashed upon this *Ummah* the horrific innovation of *ta’teel* (denial of Allaah’s Attributes) – either directly, or by twisting the meanings: such as twisting the meaning of the Hand of Allaah to mean: His Power and Generosity. They also deny that Allaah is above His creation, above His Throne, as well as holding the belief that Paradise and Hellfire are not everlasting. Refer to *ar-Radd ‘alal-Jahmiyyah* of Imaam Ahmad and also ad-Daarimee and *al-Ibaanah* (p. 141) of Abul-Hasan al-Ash’aree.

¹³⁷ The *Murji’ah* are those who reject that actions are a part of *eemaan* (faith), and they say that *eemaan* is affirmation of the heart and statement of the tongue only. The extreme from amongst them limit *eemaan* to belief in the heart only. They also deny that *eemaan* increases and decreases. Refer to *al-Maqaalaat* (1/214) and *al-Farq baynal-Firaq* (p. 202).

¹³⁸ Related by Nasr al-Maqdisee in *al-Hujjah ‘alaa Taarikul-Mahajjah*, as is found in *MiftaahulJannah fil-Ihtijaaj bis-Sunnah* (p. 48) of as-Suyootee.

As for when the source of difference between the two factions is a difference of proof, such that one of them seeks evidence with the *hadeeth*, and the other has an opinion or *qiyaas* (analogical deduction) or with a *da'eef* (weak) *hadeeth*. So here there is no apparent benefit in the division that the Shaykh mentioned. Rather, the end result is other than what the Shaykh - *hafidhahullaahu ta'aalaa* - intended. So let us clarify this with an example:

A man was forgetful, so he prayed *Dhuhr* as five units. So the *Hanafiyyah* say that this Prayer is nullified if he has not prostrated and performed *tashahhud* in the fifth unit, but he has not sat in the fourth unit and performed the *tashahhud*, then the *Dhuhr* is complete and the fifth unit is supererogatory. And it is upon him to double a *rak'ah* (unit), then he must perform *tashahhud* and prostrate for forgetfulness. So this clearly opposes the *hadeeth* of the *Shaykhayn* from Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anh*) who said, "The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) prayed *Dhuhr* as five units. So it was said to him, 'Has the Prayer been increased?' He said, "And what was that?" He said, "You prayed five units." So he prostrated two prostrations and performed the salutations thereafter. So what the *Hanafiyyah* speak of from doubling the *rak'ah* to six in number is not found in the *hadeeth*. And the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) had not sat in the fourth unit. So due to this, the majority of the Scholars have gone to the apparent meaning of this *hadeeth*. So they have said that whomsoever prays *Dhuhr* as five, then the prostration for forgetfulness is sufficient for him, even though he may not have sat in the fourth unit.

So here we ask the noble Shaykh: does the difference that you have mentioned take effect in this issue and its likes? Meaning, it is permissible for the *muhaddith* who has been brought up upon the *Hanafee madhhab* to take this *hadeeth*, even though it contradicts his *madhhab*; or do you say that it is obligatory upon him to hold onto the *madhhab*, even though it opposes the *hadeeth*, based upon your statement, "The *muhadditheen*, like the pharmacists and jurists are like doctors?" So if you spoke of the first case, then you have indeed agreed with the callers to the *Sunnah*, since it is that which they call the people to. And if you spoke of the second case - which Allaah has not permitted - then it is in opposition to the Book and the *Sunnah* and it is outside of your *Imaam* who commanded you to give precedence to the *hadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) over his own statement! Likewise, it has become binding upon you to describe the majority of the Scholars who take the apparent meaning of the *hadeeth* as pharmacists and those who oppose them as doctors!!

Dear friend, the understanding of the Religion is not limited one group and not another. So it is not necessary that a certain group of people specializing in *fiqh* be correct in everything they derive from the *Sharee'ah*. Likewise, it is not necessary that another group specializing in the knowledge of *hadeeth* be wrong in everything that they derive from it. So the reference point therefore is the evidence. So whoever takes the evidence and comes to know the truth by it concerning that which the people differ about, then he is the one with understanding, whether he is known for *hadeeth* or *fiqh*. Due to this, it would have been

more appropriate for you to refute the callers to the *Sunnah* in some issues in which you saw them err with respect to the truth upon what conforms to the *Sharee'ah* evidences, it was not appropriate to oppose them from the narrowness of *madhhabiyyah*. If you were to do that, then it would become apparent which of the two groups were upon the guided path, and this would help the Muslims traverse this knowledge based *manhaj*, which concentrates upon unveiling the truths and it brings the Muslims closer to ending these disputes which have endured for so long.

Then the Shaykh said, "And the Companions themselves did not have amongst them except a hundred who could issue *fataawaa*. And the other hundred thousand Muslims in front of whom the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) died used to refer back to these one hundred. And they did not perform *ijtihaad* by themselves." I say, this is an error from the Shaykh - *hafidhahullaah* - from where did he derive that the Companions did not have anyone beyond that number of *muftes*?! We say that there were many more than this, because this issue is connected to their excellence and companionship for the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). It is not possible for us to limit their number, except by presenting the statement of one whose saying amounts to evidence. Rather, it is confirmed that everyone that confirmed that everyone who had the noble experience of accompanying him (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and agreeing with his knowledge, then he can issue *fataawaa* for the people. So al-Imaam Ibn Hazm said, "And everyone who met the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and took from him can issue *fataawaa* for his family, neighbours and people. This is an affair that is known by necessity. Then, the issuance of *fataawaa* has not been related except from one hundred and thirty odd people from amongst them."¹³⁹

COMMENTS: Said the Imaam of *Ahlul-Hadeeth* in his time, Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee, "so you see a layman, who does not understand anything, yet when he asks a scholar about the ruling concerning a particular matter, then even if the answer is a prohibition, he quickly asks: What is the proof? And sometimes it is not possible for that scholar to establish a proof, especially if the proof is something arrived at by way of deduction and extraction; not being textually stated as such in the Book and the Sunnah so that the proof can be quoted. So in the likes of this situation the one asking the question should not try to delve into the matter by saying: What is the proof? Rather, he must realize his own state: Is he from those who (understand) proofs or not? Does he have any knowledge concerning the general (*'aamm*) and the specific (*khaass*), the unrestricted (*mutlaq*) and the restricted (*muqayyad*), or the abrogating (*haasikh*) and the abrogated (*mansookh*)? Yet he does not have any understanding of that, so will his asking: 'What is the proof,' or 'What is it based upon,' be of any benefit to him? ... Thus we sometimes say: It is not always the case that a question will have a detailed proof which will be understood by

¹³⁹ Refer to *al-Ahkaam fee Usoolil-Ahkaam* (5/91-92). And this number has been affirmed by the researching Scholar, Ibnul-Qayyim - *rahimahullaah* - in *Ilaamul-Muwaqqi'een*. Indeed, he mentioned the names of these Scholars of the Companions in detail. So let those who wish, refer to it.

every Muslim; regardless of whether he is an unlearned layman, or a student of knowledge, this will not be the case in every matter. Therefore, Allaah the Exalted said,

“Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.” [Sooratul-Anbiyaa‘ 21:7]

So from the immoderate behaviour which I have just indicated - and because of which the most ignorant of people refuse the proof - is that many of those who ascribe to the call to the Book and the *Sunnah*, give the false impression that when a scholar is asked about a matter, that he has to add to his answer: Allaah said such and such, and His Messenger said such and such. However, I say: This is not an obligation, and this is one of the benefits of being attached to the way and methodology of the Pious Predecessors (*as-Salafus-Saalih*), may Allaah be pleased with them all; and their religious verdicts are a practical proof of what I have said. Therefore mentioning the proof is obligatory when the situation requires it. However, it is not obligatory that whenever the scholar is asked a question that he should reply: Allaah’s Messenger (*sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) said such and such, particularly if the question is a difficult *fiqh* question about which there is a difference of opinion. And the saying of Allaah the Exalted, **“Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know,”** is first of all, unrestricted, so it is upon you to ask one whom you think is from the people of knowledge. So when you hear the reply, then it is upon you to follow, unless you have a doubt which you have heard from another scholar; in which case there is no harm in mentioning it. What is then obligatory upon the scholar, is that he should put forward whatever knowledge he has in order to remove the doubt which was mentioned by the questioner.”¹⁴⁰

Said Muhammad ‘Eed al’Abbaasee, ‘However, the people are of differing types with regards to understanding and comprehension. So from them is the unlearned one who does not understand the meanings of the Glorious Book and the noble *Hadeeth*, nor does he have the ability to deduce (rulings) from them, nor can he comprehend what is sought from them. From them is the scholar who has understanding (*fiqh*) of the verses and the *ahaadeeth* and is aware of what rulings can be derived from them; he has the ability to deal with the apparent differences between them and he understands the Arabic language and its ways. And from them are those that are (at a level) between this. They are not ignorant, but nor do they have the knowledge to derive rulings, nor do they have the ability to understand what is being indicated to by the text; rather, they have some knowledge, awareness, understanding and contemplation. However, they do not reach the level of the scholar and the one who has penetrating insight into the Book and the *Sunnah*. So these are the levels of the people; and between them there are many varying grades. The scholars call the first type of people *muqallid*, the second type are technically referred to as *mujtahid*, and the third type are technically referred to as *muttabi*’. The obligation upon the people of the first type is to perform *taqleed* any scholar of the Book and the *Sunnah* who is reliable in his knowledge and Religion. The obligation upon the second type of people is to perform

¹⁴⁰ From the words of the Shaykh, as occurs in *al-Asaalah* magazine (no. 8, pp. 76-78; *Jumaadal-Aakhar* 1414H).

ijtihad in understanding what is indicated by (the texts of) the Book and the *Sunnah*, and [then] to follow it and to direct the people upon it. The obligation upon the third type is to follow (*ittibaa'*) those *Sharee'ah* evidences that they are aware of from the scholars. So whoever has the ability to perform *ijtihad*, then *taqleed* and *ittibaa'* of others is not lawful to him, except in cases of necessity...Whoever has the ability to perform *ittibaa'* then *taqleed* and *ijtihad* are not lawful for him. Whoever does not have the ability to perform *ijtihad* nor *ittibaa'* then *taqleed* is obligatory upon him. The proof for this is that the basic rule upon everyone is to follow (*ittibaa'*) the Book and the *Sunnah* if they have the ability, just as Allaah, the Most Perfect, said,

“Follow what has been sent down from your Lord, and do not make *ittibaa'* of friends and protectors other than Him.” [Sooratul-A'raaf 7:3]

“Take what the Messenger gives you, and abstain from that which he prohibits you.” [Sooratul-Hash 59:7]

So if the Muslim does not have the ability to understand the Book and the *Sunnah*, nor to deduce rulings from them, then he descends to the level of *ittibaa'*. If he does not have the ability to do this, then he descends to the lowest level, which is *taqleed*; and this is when he enters into Allaah, the Exalted's, saying,

“Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.” [Sooratun-Nahl 16:43].”¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ *Bid'ah Ta'assubul-Madhhabee* (p. 13-14)

[11]: THE REPLY OF AT-TANTAAWEE:

[1]: Firstly, I am not from amongst those who experience pain or hate to be refuted and whose retraction is publicized, and whose error is made manifest. It comes as easily to me as drinking water.

[2]: Indeed, I read the refutation of Shaykh Naasir, waiting to see something that would make my error apparent to me. So I did not see any refutation in it. Rather, I found that its conclusion was the same as my view.¹⁴²

[3]: And I say, and I announced this in a lecture, which was published in the year 1350H, that we only worship Allaah with the Book and the *Sunnah*. And *al-Ijtihad* is an *asl* (basic principle) and *taqleed* is a necessity. And not everything that the *fuqahaa'* say is to be taken at the same level. So whatever is supported with a text, then it is a binding statement. And

¹⁴² Commented Muhammad Ibn 'Eed al'Abbaasee, "I say that there is a great problem here, since the Shaykh clarified the error of at-Tantaawee - may Allaah bestow mercy upon them both - in many affairs which were demonstrated by his words, and he corrected many of the issues concerning which he accused the callers to the *Sunnah*. If the reader were to refer back to the text of the speech of the two Shaykhs, it would become clear to him that this was the case. And as a reminder, I shall summarize this in what follows:

Firstly: at-Tantaawee mentioned that the callers to the *Sunnah*, or the *Salafiyyeen*, are of the view that all of the *madhaahib* must be left off and rejected. So al-Albaanee clarified to him that they respect the Scholars of the *madhaahib* and do not reject their views. Rather, they benefit from the texts and come to know what can be derived from them as regulations. However, they distinguish between what agrees with the texts, so they take it, and whatever opposes the texts, then they reject it. This is because the basic principle concerning them is the Book and the *Sunnah*, contrary to those who have bigoted partisanship to the *madhaahib*, those who place the *madhhab* as the basis, so they make it binding to follow it. As for the texts of the Book and the *Sunnah*, if they agree with the *madhhab* in an issue, then they rush to it and act upon it. And if the texts oppose it in an issue, then they resort to claiming that it is weak, or they give it an inaccurate explanation, or they claim that it is abrogated without evidence.

Secondly: It is understood from the speech of at-Tantaawee that the people according to him are either *mujtahideen* or *muqallideen*. And in his opinion, the *Salafiyyeen* oppose *taqleed*, so he derived from this that they obligate *ijtihad* upon everyone. So al-Albaanee clarified to him that the *Salafiyyeen* see an intermediate level here between *ijtihad* and *taqleed*. It is *al-Ittibaa'*, and from its adherents are those who have knowledge of the language and *Sharee'ah* and they are capable of understanding what is being said. However, they have not reached the level of *ijtihad*. So it is upon them to look into the views of the *mujtahideen* and take the one that has the strongest evidence. And this group consists of the majority of the *Ummah*.

Thirdly: at-Tantaawee claims that the source whom it is obligatory to refer back to are the jurists (*fuqahaa'*), and that the *muhadditheen* are only referred back to for clarifying the grades and explanations of *ahaadeeth*. So the *muhadditheen* are like pharmacists and the *fuqahaa'* are like physicians. So al-Albaanee clarified to him that the basis is understanding the texts and deriving rulings from them, which is something that both the *muhadditheen* and the *fuqahaa'* participate in. However, the proper understanding is not limited to the *fuqahaa'*. Rather, the *muhaddith* is more capable of attaining *fiqh* than the *faqeeh* due to his knowledge of the *Sunnah*." End of al'Abbaasee's words.

whatever is contrary to *ijtihad*, then it is said about this that the times change but the rulings do not change.

[4]: However, the issue is: can every Muslim, even the illiterate *jaahil* (ignorant person) derive rulings primarily from the Book and the *Sunnah*, or are there conditions for *al-ijtihad*?¹⁴³ There are conditions, and perusing the chains of *ahaadeeth* and reviewing the

¹⁴³ From this question, it is clear that either at-Tantaawee never read the clarification of al-Albaanee, or he never understood a word from it. Since, neither al-Albaanee nor any of the *Salafiyyeen* have ever claimed to make *al-ijtihad* obligatory upon every Muslim. Rather, the *Salafiyyeen* see an intermediate level that every many Muslims are upon. Meaning, they are not complete ignoramuses incapable of understanding the *Sharee'ah* evidences, nor are they Scholars capable of *ijtihad*. So this group is capable of understanding *Sharee'ah* evidences and reading books and understanding explanations. So the *Salafiyyeen* make it binding upon this group - which comprises the majority of the *Ummah* - to go with the evidences that are clear to them, and to avoid blind bigoted adherence to a single *madhhab* or Scholar.

Stated Muhammad 'Eed al'Abbaasee, "Our view is that it is upon every Muslim to follow that which Allaah, the Most Perfect, commanded in His Book and in the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). This is the purity of Islaam and the true reality of faith. No Muslim can ever be displeased with following what comes from Allaah and His Messenger; as He, the Most Perfect, said,

"The only saying of the Believers, when they are called to Allaah and His Messenger to judge between them, is: We hear and we obey. They are the ones that are successful." [Sooratun-Noor 24:51]

And Allaah said concerning the Hypocrites,

"And when it is said to them, 'Come to what Allaah has revealed and to the Messenger;' you see the Hypocrites turn away from you in aversion." [Sooratun-Nisaa' 4:61]

As well as other *aayaat* like this. So following the Book and the *Sunnah* is obligatory, and it should be made the fundamental goal for every Muslim; this is the path that should be traversed. However, the people are of differing types with regards to understanding and comprehension. So from them is the ignorant one (*jaahil*) who does not understand the meanings of the Glorious Book and the noble *hadeeth*; nor does he have the ability to deduce rulings from them; nor can he comprehend what is sought from them. From them is the scholar who has understanding (*fiqh*) of the *aayaat* and the *hadeeth* and is aware of what rulings can be deduced from them; he has the ability to deal with the apparent differences between them; and he understands the Arabic language and its ways. And from them are those that are at a level between this. They are not ignorant; nor do they have the understanding to derive rulings; nor do they have the ability to understand what is being indicated to by the text; rather, they have some knowledge, awareness, understanding and contemplation. However, they do not reach the level of the scholar and the one who has penetrating insight of the Book and the *Sunnah*. So these are the levels of the people; and between them there are many varying grades. The Scholars call the first type of people *muqallidoon*, the second type are technically referred to as *mujtahidoon*, and the third type are technically referred to as *muttabi'oon*. The obligation upon the people of the first type is to make *taqleed* of any scholar of the Book and the *Sunnah*, who is reliable in his knowledge and Religion. The obligation upon the second type of people is to make *ijtihad* in understanding what is indicated by the texts of the Book and the *Sunnah*, and then to follow it and to direct the people upon it. The obligation upon the third type is to make *ittibaa'* (follow) of the *Sharee'ah* evidences that they are aware of, from the statements of the scholars. And whoever has the ability to perform *ijtihad*, then *taqleed* and *ittibaa'* of others is not lawful to him, except in cases of necessity. Whoever has the ability to perform *ittibaa'* then *taqleed* and *ijtihad* are not lawful for him. Whoever does not have the ability to perform *ijtihad* nor

conditions of the narrators (and this is what the Shaykh affirmed) are not sufficient for *ijtihaad*. Rather, it is inevitable that one must additionally study *fiqh*, the knowledge of dealing with differences, he must have proficiency in Arabic, he must study the reasons for the revelation for *aayaat* (*asbaabun-nuzool*), the circumstances behind the occurrences of *ahaadeeth* and so on.

[5]: So if Shaykh Naasir is capable of performing *ijtihaad*, then he is most welcome to do so. However, this cannot occur in the acts of worship only, since there are many texts concerning these issues. And someone before him will have already brought whatever he is going to bring. However, let him go ahead and utilize the law of al-Madeenah, which we have been regretfully put to trial by. And let him explain the ruling the ruling to us with evidences from the Book and the *Sunnah*.

[6]: In any case, I thank my brother for his diligence in preparing this research, *was-salaam 'alaykum wa rahmatullaah*.

ittibaa' then *taqleed* is obligatory upon him. The proof for this is that the basic principle (*asl*) upon everyone is to make *ittibaa'* of the Book and the *Sunnah*, if they have the ability; just as Allaah, the Most Perfect, said,

“Make *ittibaa'* of what has been sent down from your Lord, and do not make *ittibaa'* of friends and protectors other than Him.” [Sooratul-A'raaf 7:3]

“Take what the Messenger gives you, and abstain from that which he prohibits you.” [Sooratul-Hash 59:9]

So if the Muslim does not have the ability to understand the Book and the *Sunnah* and to deduce rulings from them, then he descends to the level of *ittibaa'*. If he does not have the ability for this, then he descends to the lowest level, which is *taqleed*; and this is when he enters into Allaah, the Exalted, saying,

“Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.” [Sooratun-Nahl 16:43].” End of al'Abbaasee's words.

APPENDIX I: A GLIMPSE INTO THE LIFE OF IMAAM MUHAMMAD NAASIRUD-DEEN AL-ALBAANEE:¹⁴⁴

In adding to this introduction to our Shaykh – may Allaah shelter him with His mercy – and this announcement of his influence, and this presentation of something from his rights and in guarding the *Ummah* through its Scholars, I felt it necessary to write this brief glimpse into his life. So I say whilst seeking aid from Allaah:

He is Muhammad Naasirud-Deen Ibn Nooh Ibn Aadam an-Najaatee. He was born in Ashkodera, the capital of Albania, in the year 1332H/1914CE. And it is to there that he is attributed. He was a *muhaddith* (scholar of *hadeeth*) and a *faqeeh* (scholar of jurisprudence) and a caller to the Book and the *Sunnah*, and he was upon the methodology of the *Salafus-Saalih* and a precise writer and a Scholar capable of issuing *fataawaa*. His father, al-Haaj Nooh was from the major scholars of the *Hanafiyyah* in his country. Then came the era of the rule of the destroyed secularist, Ahmad Zooghoo¹⁴⁵ of Albania. Hence, there was extreme oppression upon the Muslims, so al-Haaj Nooh migrated for this reason, along with all of his children and from them was Muhammad Naasirud-Deen. He fled for the sake of his Religion to the land of Shaam due to what had been mentioned about it from virtues and outstanding traits in the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). So he settled over there with them. After approximately fifteen years, the Shaykh migrated from there to 'Ammann, the capital of Jordan. And it is there that he resided for the rest of his life, as a Scholar, teacher, *faqeeh* (jurist) and educator.

He received his foundational studies in Damascus, the capital of Syria, an asylum of the knowledge of bygone generations. He benefited from a number of Scholars and people of knowledge, such as his father, al-Haaj Nooh, Shaykh Sa'eed al-Burhaanee¹⁴⁶ and other than them. Allaah the Glorified made the science of Prophetic *Hadeeth* beloved to him in the early part of his life and during his youth. And that was when he read the knowledge-based articles of Shaykh Muhammad Rasheed Ridaa in the *al-Manaar* magazine, in refutation of the baseless narrations that Aboo Haamid al-Ghazzaalee (d.550H) quoted in his book, *Ihya' 'Uloomud-Deen*.

He received an *ijaazah* (letter of permission) from Shaykh Muhammad Raaghib at-Tabbaakh – the historian and *muhaddith* of Aleppo – to narrate the narrations found in his collection called, *al-Anwaarul-Jaliyyah fee Mukhtasari-Ithbaatil-Halabiyyah*. That was when he

¹⁴⁴ Taken from *Ma'a Shaykhunaa Naasirus-Sunnah* (p. 5-11) by Shaykh 'Alee Hasan al-Halabee – the Ibnul-Qayyim of our time, as al-'Allamah Muhammad Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhaab al-Bannaa has aptly called him.

¹⁴⁵ I heard our Shaykh – *rahimahullaah* – saying, 'The one whose heart was (*azaaghah*) deviated by Allaah.' For a biography of Ahmad Zooghoo, refer to *al-Mawsoo'atul-'Arabiyyatil-Muyassirah* (1/733).

¹⁴⁶ So this is a refutation upon the one who says that 'al-Albaanee had no teachers,' or that 'he studied by himself.'

saw his exceptional talent, sagacity and his brilliant mind and understanding¹⁴⁷ and his ardent desire to attain the Islaamic sciences and the knowledge of *hadeeth*. He began to write in his early twenties. So the first of his writings was built upon *fiqh* (jurisprudence), recognition of evidence and comparative *fiqh*, it was the book, *Tahdheer-us-Saajid min Ittikhaadhil-Quboor Masaajid*. It has been published a number of times. And from the first of his writings concerning history and the methodology of *hadeeth* was the book, *ar-Rawdatun-Nadeer fee Tarteeb wa Takhreej Mu'jamit-Tabaraaniyyil-Kabeer*, and it remains in unpublished form.¹⁴⁸

He was called upon from many directions by Islaamic universities and institutes of education and learning, so as to take of high-ranking positions in them. However, he respectfully excused himself due to his many knowledge-related activities. He was appointed a teacher in the Department of Prophetic *Hadeeth* at the Islaamic University of al-Madeenatul-Munawwarah at the time of its opening. He was there for a period of three years, beginning from the year 1381H. From that which occurred as a result of him was the beginning of a large revival in the knowledge of *hadeeth*, which became widespread, reaching all of the areas of the earth. And it also enjoyed a resurgence upon a conventional level when the universities gave general importance to it by introducing hundreds of textbooks specializing in the science of *hadeeth*. And it enjoyed a resurgence as a field of study when a large number of students of knowledge turned their attention towards the study of the knowledge of *hadeeth* and became specialized in it. And there was other than this from that which occurred after him, through his influence. And the greatest evidence for this is that so many books of *hadeeth* have been checked, and so many indexes have been written for *hadeeth* from that which was practically unknown prior to him. So this particular influence – due to its greatness and clearness – cannot be denied by anyone, not even the opponents of our Shaykh who oppose him in his *manhaj* (methodology).

The major Scholars and knowledgeable people of our age have praised him, asked him, received him, issued rulings for him and written to him. If we were to count them – may Allaah preserve the living from amongst them and bestow mercy upon the dead from amongst them – we would not be able to number them. And at the head of them is the Noble Shaykh, al-'Allaamah 'Abdul-'Azeez Ibn 'Abdullaah Ibn Baaz (d.1420H); so he was held in high esteem and admiration by him – may Allaah the Exalted bestow mercy upon them both.¹⁴⁹ And the students of the Shaykh, whether they received knowledge from him in the university, or in his circles of study, or merely from reading his writings – many of

¹⁴⁷ Then, in these days, there have come people led astray by desire who say about our Shaykh from every direction, that 'he has a foreign understanding and he is not a *faqeeh*!' So the likes of this transgression only comes from an insignificant idiot and ignoramus!

¹⁴⁸ **Translator's Note:** This is because Shaykh al-Albaanee wrote the following upon it, "The author does not desire for this book to be published, because it is from his early works. Naasir."

¹⁴⁹ The brother, Dr. Muhammad Lutfee as-Sabbaagh – may Allaah grant him success – quoted Shaykh Ibn Baaz – after hearing him directly – saying about our Shaykh, "I do not know of anyone under the sky more knowledgeable about the *Hadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) than Shaykh Naasir." Refer to *ad-Dustoorul-Urduniyyah* (8/10/1999).

which have been published and the praise is for Allaah – are found in all areas of the earth spreading authentic knowledge and calling to the purified *manhaj* with strength and steadfastness.

The Shaykh – *rahimahullaahu ta’aalaa* – remained a caller to Allaah the Exalted upon *baseerah* (insight) for the entirety of his life. His call was founded upon the methodology of *at-Tasfiyah wat-Tarbiyah* (purification and education). It was built upon knowledge and cultivation as a noble teacher and a truthful educator.¹⁵⁰ By Allaah, he taught us many things with his *manhaj*, positions, manners, lofty morals and character and a soft heart.

The Shaykh – *rahimahullaahu ta’aalaa* – had many praiseworthy characteristics, from the clearest and most apparent of them were: his precision, seriousness, zeal, perseverance and steadfastness in reaching the truth and returning to the correct position.¹⁵¹ And he was patient with the hardship that came along with knowledge and *da’wah* (calling to Islaam), and he endured suffering in that path, being patient and hoping for reward all the while. From amongst the greatest things that distinguish the Shaykh – *rahimahullaah* – over his brothers from amongst the people of knowledge was his service for the *Sunnah* and its people,¹⁵² and his refutations upon the deviants with clear explanations and anecdotes with respect to their variant levels.

Indeed, the righteous Muslims all around the world wrote about the *Shaykh – rahimahullaah* – with great acceptance and wide and spacious and spacious fame was presented to him in all areas of the world, though he never sought it, nor did he go to it. Rather, he would flee and try to escape it. And he would continuously say, ‘The love to be seen breaks one’s back,’ – *rahimahullaahu ta’aalaa*. And there has not been anyone from amongst the creation of Allaah upon whom He bestowed excellence and he has not been benevolent in any affair from the affairs of the world. So his knowledge was his vehicle, and his patience was his guiding principle; so he became distinguished due to his own merits, patient perseverance, hard work, brilliance and intelligence. So the Shaykh – *rahimahullaah* – never

¹⁵⁰ As for those who quote from him – *rahimahullaah* – that he said, ‘I learnt, but I did not teach,’ then he only said it out of humility and to oppress his soul. So is it anything other than knowledge that he taught? Was it merely words and sentiments, or was it just violent fanaticism?!

¹⁵¹ There is no contradiction between the two as will become clear with careful consideration. By Allaah, how many times have we seen our Shaykh listening to one below him – out of humility – in his sittings. Rather, he would ask his younger students and question them about whatever troubles him from research in knowledge. And he would accept the truth with gratefulness when he was in a debate and the result was not in his favour. He felt no pride, nor superiority. O Allaah, rectify our hearts and grant us refuge from the evils of our own souls.

¹⁵² So indeed he presented to me, with his own hand, in his own handwriting, his introduction to the book *Madaarikun-Nadhr fis-Siyaasah baynat-Tatbeeqaatish-Shar’iyyah wal-Infi’aalaatil-Hamaasiyyah*, by the brother, Shaykh ‘Abdul-Maalik Ramadaanee, in order to give it to him. He supported what was in it as being correct, aiding what was in it from clear truth. Despite that, we heard some people doubting in the introduction of the Shaykh, or they say that he wrote it before the book was completed, but how can this be?! So the book is the same (as it was before), without a doubt, nor any distortion; and whatever is connected to it has supports for its origin, there are no additions to it. So verily warning against this book and belittling it is in opposition to the correct path, and in contradiction to what our elder Scholars and Shaykhs are upon.

ceased to go after knowledge, patient upon writing, attaining it diligently until he became eighty six years of age. He did not stop authoring, writing and checking until the last two months of his life, due to loss of strength - despite his heart still being attached to that - until he left to meet Allaah the Glorified shortly before the sun set on Saturday with eight days remaining in *Jumaadal-Aakhirah* of the year 1420H, corresponding to 10/2/1999C.E.

Indeed, the people prayed over the Shaykh in the evening of the same day upon which he died; they numbered over five thousand. Despite this, his preparation, Prayer and burial was completed in the shortest amount of time possible, in accordance to his will in which he stressed conformity to the Prophetic *Sunnah* and implementation of it. Indeed, the Scholars, students of knowledge and the common-folk were affected by his passing. So he was mentioned and praised by the distinguished people of knowledge upon reaching the place of his death; from them were his eminence, Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez Ibn 'Abdullaah aalush-Shaykh - the grand *mufti* of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - and the Noble Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Saalih al'Uthaymeen, and the Noble Shaykh 'Abdullaah Ibn Jibreen and the Noble Shaykh Saalih Ibn 'Abdul'Azeez Ibn Muhammad aalush-Shaykh and other than them.

APPENDIX II: THE LIES OF SA'EEED RAMADAAN AL-BOOTEE UPON AL-ALBAANEE, AS PLAGIARIZED BY NOOH HAA MEEM KELLER:

A few years back, the straying *Soofee*, *madhhabee* innovator named Nooh translated a work which he named, 'Al-Buti versus a leading Salafi Teacher.' Being another attempt at downplaying the *Salafee* position concerning *taqleed* and the *madhaahib*, this tract abhorrently exaggerates the position of the 'Salafee teacher' with respect to the positions of al-Bootee. This is not surprising when emanating from the likes of al-Bootee, who is otherwise known for his gross errors in attempting to nullify the *Salafee* methodology in bulk within the pages of his book *as-Salafiyyah Marhalah Dhahabiyyah*. In this particular debate however, al-Bootee has the 'Salafee teacher' taking outrageous stances, such that even a beginner in *Salafiyyah* would not take. So this tract has been translated by Nooh Keller from the book *Laa Madhhabiyyah* of Sa'eed Ramadaan al-Bootee. It presents a debate between the 'Salafee teacher' and al-Bootee, and the strange thing is how al-Bootee can recall the entire debate and the various stances of the 'Salafee teacher' without any audiotape or notes! Despite this, Nooh Keller - in his injustice towards the *Salafee manhaj* - decided to propel this as a blow to the *Salafiyyeen*. The body of this fabrication-filled debate epitomizes the ultimate wet dream of *madhhabiyyah* like al-Bootee and Nooh Keller.

So herein - O *Sunnee* - we have uncovered this dastardly plot. The 'debate' that al-Bootee misquoted and Nooh Keller translated is in reality a debate which took place between al-Bootee and Muhammad 'Eed al-'Abbaasee. So first, we shall compare what al-Bootee wrote, with respect to the actual stances that Muhammad 'Eed al-'Abbaasee took. The second part of this appendix will give you - O *Sunnee* - a true account of the debate that took place between al-Bootee and the Imaam of Ahlus-Sunnah, Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee.

THE LIES OF AL-BOOTEE:

Indeed, al-Bootee concluded *Laa Madhhabiyyah* by narrating a specific debate that occurred between myself and him claiming that this section was more important than all of the previous sections of his book because it clearly showed a sectarianism that would not be found in any intelligent person. Then he narrated this debate in a distorted fashion and a way that was far removed from what actually occurred.

THE FIRST LIE:

Al-Bootee wrote as translated by Keller, "Buti: I dropped the question and said, "all right. Is it obligatory upon every Muslim to examine the evidences for the positions of the Imams and adopt the closest of them to the Qur'aan and Sunnah?" Salafi [i.e. al-'Abbaasee]: "yes."

Muhammad 'Eed al-'Abbaasee says, "I bring Allaah, the Mighty and Magnificent, to witness that this quote is a complete and utter lie, totally concocted! For I never answered in this fashion and neither is it conceivable that I would give this answer! Rather I said to him what he quoted from me after the next sentence, "the people are divided into three categories - the *Muqallid*, the *Muttabi'* and the *Mujtahid*..."

Furthermore this second quote he brings goes to show the fallacy of his first quote for it in no way conforms to it. Again I bring Allaah to witness that I repeatedly mentioned to him that I agreed with him in that the one incapable of investigating and studying in a scholarly fashion must perform *taqleed* and that this was not the topic of our discussion. The difference occurred in the case of the one who was capable of studying and investigating from those who were included in the level of *Mujtahid* and *Muttabi'*, however he kept on returning to the case of the one who was incapable of investigation. Then after all of this he lies and writes in his book this fabricated response from me. Indeed Allaah will bring him to account!

THE SECOND LIE:

Al-Bootee wrote as translated by Keller, "Buti: "That is something else, and is true without a doubt and without any disagreement among the scholars. But is there any problem with him following a particular mujtahid, knowing that Allaah has not obliged him to do that?"

Salafi: "There is no problem."

Buti: [Al-Khajnadee's] al-Karras, which you teach from, contradicts you. It says that this is unlawful, in some places actually asserting that someone who adheres to a particular Imam and no other is an unbeliever (*kafir*)."

Salafi: He said, "where?" and began looking at the Karras, considering its texts and expressions, reflecting on the words of the author "Whoever follows one of them in particular in all questions is a blind, imitating, mistaken bigot and is "among those who have divided their religion and are parties" [Qur`an 30:32]. He said, "By follows, he means someone who believes it legally obligatory for him to do so. The wording is a little incomplete."

Buti: I said, "What evidence is there that that's what he meant? Why don't you just say the author was mistaken?"

Salafi: He insisted that the expression was correct, that it should be understood as containing an unexpressed condition and he exonerated the reader from any mistake in it."

Let us read what really happened. Muhammad 'Eed writes, "Al-Bootee asked me about my opinion concerning the words of al-Ma'soomee in his book, that whosoever clings firmly to

a specific *madhhab* in every issue is a partisan and mistaken, performing *taqleed* in a blind fashion.

My reply to him was, “What I understand from this book (as a whole), in the light of various evidences, that al-Ma’soomee meant that whosoever follows a specific *madhhab* in every issue while believing that Allaah had obligated this upon him then he is a partisan... One part of his book explains the other and as a whole it shows that he is attacking partisanship to a particular *madhhab* and rejecting the condition of those who have come across that which contradicts the Book and *Sunnah* in their *madhhab* and they are from those people who have the ability to investigate and study in a scholarly fashion yet despite this they turn away from the Book and *Sunnah* and stick to the stance of their *madhhab*.” Even after all of this I said to him, “It would have been upon al-Ma’soomee to further clarify this for in this sentence of his there is some deficiency.”

However this is what he quoted from me, “there is some deficiency in this sentence” and said after this, “but the man persisted in claiming that the sentence was correct and that it was to be understood in the sense that the governing words had been omitted and that al-Ma’soomee was free of any error in it.”

I bring Allaah to witness that this is a complete lie and I do not know how his contradictory quotes from me could ever stand in the mind of an intelligent person, especially when they are only two lines apart! Does al-Bootee not give any respect to the minds of the intelligent who would clearly see this contradictory quote and reject it?! Is it possible that a Muslim would say that anyone other than the Messengers and Prophets were free of any error?!

THE THIRD LIE:

Al-Bootee writes as quoted by Keller, “Buti: “A young man, newly religious, without any Islamic education, reads the word of Allaah Most High, “To Allah belongs the place where the sun rises and where it sets: wherever you turn there is the countenance of Allah. Verily Allah is the All-encompassing, the All-knowing.” [Qur`an 2:115] and gathers from it that a Muslim may face any direction he wishes in his prescribed prayers as the ostensive purport of the verse implies. But he has heard that the four Imams unanimously concur upon the necessity of his facing the Kaba, and he knows that they have evidences for it that he is unaware of. What should he do when he wants to pray? Should he follow the Imams who unanimously concur on the contrary of what he understood?”

Salafi: “He should follow his conviction.”

Buti: “And pray towards the east for example. And his prayer would be legally valid?”

Salafi: "Yes. He is morally responsible for following his personal conviction."

....

Buti: "I intend to publish these remarks of yours. They are dangerous and strange."

Salafi: "Publish whatever you want. I'm not afraid."

Buti: "How should you be afraid of me when you are not afraid of Allah Mighty and Majestic, utterly discarding by these words the word of Allah Might and Majestic 'Ask those who recall if you know not.' [Qur`an 16:43]"

Let us see what really was said. Muhammad 'Eed writes, "The example that al-Bootee brought, in which he exaggerated and shouted, was to consider the case of a youth who recited the saying of Allaah, "To Allaah belongs the East and West so wherever you turn there is the Face of Allaah." He distorted the discussion, omitted part of it and deliberately distorted the understanding of my answer such that he totally altered the context of this discussion.

To explain, he asked me about the ruling of the one who heard the above mentioned verse and understood from it that he could face any direction in prayer. It reached him that the Four Imaams had said that it was obligatory to face the *Qiblah* only, however their evidence for this did not reach him. Then he stood to pray - where should he face?

I asked: "Does this youth understand Arabic well?" He [al-Buti] said: "yes, like yourself."

I said: then let him look just a little after this verse for he will find His saying,

"So turn your face in the direction of the Holy Mosque."

He said: "Let us assume that he has only heard this verse and he does not have the *Mushaf* with him."

I said: "Let him ask a scholar for the evidences and to reconcile what he has read with the opinion of the Four *Madhaahib*."

He said: "Lets assume he is in the desert, there is no scholar or jurist with him."

I said: "This is an imaginary example that would not occur in reality so there is no need to busy ourselves with it."

He said: "Let it be an imaginary circumstance, what is the ruling?"

I said: He should follow what seems more obvious to him arising from his personal *ijtihad*. If I was in his place I would have followed the verse and were I later to find that I was in error then my belief is that Allaah would not bring me to account for this because I did all

that I could in that situation and fulfilled my obligation. However the youth can also follow the opinion of the Four *madhaahib* that has reached him and I see no harm in this if this is what he decides to be the stronger course. However the best course is to follow the verse because it is the Speech of Allaah and constitutes evidence in and of itself and should not be left for doubt or error. The Four Imaams on the other hand are men and it is possible that they err even if their errors occur rarely.

At this point al-Bootee began to rant and rave, raising his voice, fuming with rage and exclaimed, "There is no harm in your view that he prays in a direction other than the *Qiblah*, leaves the saying of the Four Imaams and you consider his prayer to be valid?!"

I said: Yes, because the circumstances that you put him in (in this example) and imagined do not allow him to come to know the *Sharee'ah* ruling with certainty and therefore he has to exert himself in trying to ascertain it to his utmost ability. He believes that the noble verse shows that he can pray in any direction and that this is the stronger course because the *Qur'aan* constitutes proof in and of itself. On the other hand he has the mere saying of these Imaams and their proof has not reached him and therefore [under these circumstances] it constitutes only opinion. Evidence takes precedence over opinion in the eyes of all the People of Knowledge. Imaam Ahmad, may Allaah have mercy upon him said, 'The opinion of al-Awzaa'ee, Maalik, Abu Haneefah is only opinion and it is all the same to me. The proof lies with the *hadeeth*.'

The debate on this point continued for some time and al-Bootee was unable to bring a single evidence that would prove that the prayer of this youth was invalid in these circumstances. All he did was to shout and exaggerate, threatening to publish my words to the people in order to frighten me. I said to him, 'Spread my words as you like for I do not fear your publishing what I believe to be correct and the truth.' His reply was vile and I have no doubt that Allaah will bring him to a painful account for it. He said, "You do not fear Allaah so how can you fear me?"

The meaning of this is that he has accused me of that which resembles disbelief for I do not believe that you will find a Muslim who does not fear Allaah, the Mighty and Magnificent. I reminded him of the danger of this accusation and the severity of its sin in the Sight of Allaah, the Mighty and Magnificent. I reminded him of the *hadeeth* of the *hadeeth* of Usaamah Ibn Zayd wherein the anger of the Prophet (ﷺ) was severe when he learned of his killing the disbeliever even after he had uttered the *Shahaadatayn*. Usaamah tried to excuse himself saying that he only said out of fear for his life. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'Did you split open his heart?'

Instead of retracting after hearing this *hadeeth*, al-Bootee only increased in arrogance and repeated the last sentence 'Did you split open his heart,' in a vile fashion. He mockingly repeated it, mimicking my voice such that even those who were listening objected! Then I said to him, 'Allaah will call you to account for this.' He said, 'Let Him take me to

account!' These are the manners of al-Bootee O noble reader!"¹⁵³ Then follows some emphatic advice to al-Bootee to correct his manners and know his standing.

Now we move on - O *Sunnee* - to another debate that took place between the caller to bigoted taqleed: Muhammad Sa'eed Ramadaan al-Bootee and the Imaam of Ahlul-Hadeeth: Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee.

SHAYKH AL-ALBAANEE VERSUS AL-BOOTEE:

First some of the history behind this debate must be mentioned. Soon after Sa'eed Ramadaan al-Bootee had written his *Fiqhus-Seerah* in which he accused *Ahlus-Sunnah*, the *Salafiyyeen*, of that which they are free of, Shaykh Naasir [al-Albaanee] asked to open a discussion with al-Bootee. The topic was to be these accusations and some more specific ones leveled at Shaykh Naasir himself.

However, for various reasons this discussion never occurred. Then when al-Bootee wrote his book *Laa Madhhabiyyah* in which he launched even more attacks against *Ahlus-Sunnah*, Shaykh Naasir renewed his efforts to open a discussion with al-Bootee, writing a letter to him which commenced with *Sooratul'Asr*.

This meeting did take place and took more than three hours. The following is a summarized transcript of this meeting reproduced in the book *Bid'atut-Ta'assubil-Madhhabee* of 'Eed al'Abbaasee who states that he would soon, if Allaah so wills, produce a separate booklet with the transcript to the whole discussion. He states, "This is (the discussion) O brother reader, I have quoted it truthfully and sincerely, highlighting its important points. If you wish to ascertain this for yourself then listen to the tapes which [you will find] in the possession of either party."

THE FIRST ISSUE:

Shaykh Naasir mentioned what occurred in some of the Mosques wherein a number of congregational prayers were held for the same prayer and the blind-followers of one *madhhab* preventing them from praying behind a blind-follower of another *madhhab*. This led him to declare the point to be incorrect that al-Bootee made (in his *Laa Madhhabiyyah*) that there was a consensus that the prayer of a blind-follower of one School behind a blind-follower of another School was valid. The reality is that there is a great deal of difference over this issue and in fact the weightiest opinion in the *Hanafee* and *Shaafi'ee* Schools is that it is disliked to pray behind an adherent to another *madhhab*. He asked al-Bootee to prove the correctness of his quote and assertion. Al-Bootee objected to the words of Shaykh Naasir by saying, 'the dislike of a thing does not negate its validity.'

¹⁵³ The above three lies were taken from *Bid'atut-Ta'assubil-Madhhabee* (p. 291 onwards).

Shaykh Naasir refuted this by saying that it was established in the Books of *Shaafi'ee Fiqh* that if a *Shaafi'ee* follower comes to know that his *Hanafee Imaam* has touched an *ajnaabee* woman and that *Hanafee* led the prayer without performing *wudoo'* then the Prayer of the [*Shaafi'ee*] follower is invalid.

Al-Bootee replied by saying that this was not what he intended by his words. What he meant was that the prayer was valid behind an *Imaam* with the condition that the *Imaam* being followed had not done something that invalidated the *wudoo'* or prayer according to the *madhhab* of the follower.

Shaykh Naasir objected to this by saying (that this could not be understood from his words in his book) because his words were general and hence would remain upon their generality until some (text) occurred that restricted their meaning.

At this juncture there arose a discussion concerning *usool* in which the meaning of general and restricted was discussed wherein al-Bootee fruitlessly tried to avoid the point that Shaykh Naasir made. His father [who was also present] aided him in this even though he admitted that the words of Shaykh Naasir spoke the truth and his son had no idea how to respond!

The discussion concluded with it being agreed that it would have been upon Dr. al-Bootee to bring some form of restriction to his words by saying: The scholars have agreed that the prayer of a *Shaafi'ee* behind a *Hanafee* and vice-versa is valid with the condition that the follower not know of anything the *Imaam* may have done that invalidated the *wudoo'* or prayer according to the *madhhab* of the follower.

THE SECOND ISSUE:

Shaykh Naasir asked Dr. Bootee to furnish him with the evidence that would justify the correctness of the title of his book that the *Laa Madhhabiyyah* (Anti-Madhhabees) were the most dangerous innovation destroying the Islamic *Sharee'ah*.

Al-Bootee replied by saying that the evidence lay in his book in that the Companions used to stick to the *madhaahib* of their scholars. Likewise, those who followed them, then those who followed them until this day of ours.

This astonished Shaykh Naasir who said: It becomes clear to me that you (he refers to al-Bootee in the plural) intend by the word *madhhabiyyah* a meaning other than what commonly crosses one's mind. For the understood meaning of it is that the Muslim sticks to one specific *Imaam* for the entirety of his life in all of the matters related to his religion. This was never present amongst the Companions, for they were never divided into different groups wherein each group followed its specific *Mujtahid* from amongst the *Mujtahid* Companions.

Dr. Bootee replied by saying: Amongst the Companions were the *muqallid* and the *mujtahid*. The *Muqallid* Companions used to follow one of the *Mujtahid* Companions whose ruling he felt comfortable with.

Shaykh Naasir replied: The *Muqallid* Companions used to adhere to the opinion of every *Mujtahid* amongst them and did not restrict themselves to just one (i.e. they asked any *Mujtahid* they found easy to go to at the time they needed a ruling). So sometimes if they found it easy to go to Aboo Bakr they would take to his legal verdict without then clinging to him (in all matters of the Religion). Similarly if they found it easy to go to 'Umar they would take to his legal verdict and so on. There was never this clinging to one *Imaam* present amongst them, however you claim there is so I ask you to furnish me with evidence.

At this juncture al-Bootee tried to escape the strong point that Shaykh Naasir made and rejected that he had ever made such a statement, and then gave a whole new definition to *al-Madhhabiyyah*.

He said: *al-Madhhabiyyah* is that one person who has not reached the level of *ijtihad* follow an *Imaam* from amongst the *Imaams*, regardless of whether this *Imaam* changes or the number (of *Imaams* asked) be more than one or he does not change and there not be a number of (*Imaams* being asked). As for the *Laa Madhhabee* then he does not go to a single *Imaam* for a legal verdict and neither does he go to a number of *Imaams* (i.e. neither does he not stick to just one). Hence such a person is from the most dangerous of innovators.

At this Shaykh Naasir expressed his utter astonishment and said: upon this definition you will not find a Muslim on the face of this earth except that he is a *madhhabee*! So who are you refuting in your book? And why did you not make clear what you meant by *al-Madhhabiyyah* so that the people could understand?

The Discussion Now Digressed into talking about al-Ma'soomee's book [translated into English as 'The Blind Following of Madhhabs' - this book was the initial reason behind al-Bootee authoring 'Laa Madhhabiyyah'].

Al-Bootee understood from this book that the author took it upon every Muslim to perform *Ijtihad* and to take (directly) from the Book and *Sunnah*. Shaykh Naasir asked him to furnish evidence from the book that would justify his understanding. So al-Bootee quoted some sentences that mentioned that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was sinless (*ma'soom*), that the *Madhaahib* were an innovated matter, that *Imaams* were not sinless, that the *Madhaahib* consisted of the opinions of some of the *Mujtahids* in some issues, and that neither Allaah or His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) had obligated following them.

Shaykh Naasir stated that these statements were restricted (and to be understood in the light of) other statements that (al-Ma'soomee) made in his book, such statements that al-

Bootee had overlooked and had not indicated to in the slightest way. Al-Bootee asked Shaykh Naasir to quotes some of these.

Shaykh Naasir mentioned some of them, for example on (p. 29) where al-Ma'soomee said, "know that taking to the opinions of the Scholars and their analogies is like performing *tayammum*. One only does it when one cannot find water. In the case that a text from the Book, *Sunnah* or statements of the Companions are found then taking to them is obligatory and one should not then turn to the opinions of the Scholars."

(The meaning of the words of al-Ma'soomee can be found articulated by ash-Shaafi'ee in his *Risaalah* (p. 599 - *tahqeeq* Ahmad Shaakir). It is strange that al-Bootee, who claims to be a follower of ash-Shaafi'ee refutes these words (of al-Ma'soomee) understanding them in this strange way that they necessitate that everyone must perform *ijtihad*. For sure if these words were to have been quoted to him as the words of ash-Shaafi'ee then he would have directed them towards their correct meaning (with no problem)!] Shaykh Naasir asked al-Bootee: Do these words not restrict the generality of his words (that you quote?)

Al-Bootee replied that al-Ma'soomee had mixed truth with falsehood. For if these words of his are compared to what he states on (p. 40) that 'understanding the Book and *Sunnah* is easy and does not require more than the Six Books of *Hadeeth*,' then his words are contradictory.

Shaykh Naasir remarked that al-Bootee had not fully quoted the words of al-Ma'soomee and asked him to read from beginning of al-Ma'soomee's words that said, "O Muslim! When you delve and excel in knowledge and your strength of resolve increases through *taqwaa* then strive in understanding the clear (texts) of the Book and the clear *Sunnah* and the actions/understanding of the majority of the People of Knowledge..."

So Shaykh Naasir asked al-Bootee: So did al-Ma'soomee require every Muslim to understand the Book and *Sunnah* or did he restrict it to a specific group of Muslims? Again al-Bootee tried to avoid Shaykh Naasir's point and claimed that al-Ma'soomee (began by) addressing all the Muslims with those words.

Shaykh Naasir then said: however he has set two conditions "when you delve and excel in knowledge and your strength of resolve increases through *taqwaa*," so is he addressing those who have no knowledge or those who have no *taqwaa*? Al-Bootee did not reply, instead he quoted again from Ma'soomee claiming that his words required every Muslim, including the ignorant, to perform *ijtihad*. He quoted from (p. 5) where al-Ma'soomee quotes some *ahaadeeth* proving the ease of Islaam and the ease of understanding it such as the *hadeeth* of Jibreel and the *hadeeth* of Ibn 'Umar concerning the five pillars.

Shaykh Naasir replied by saying: It is necessary to understand these *hadeeth* in their correct context for the author did not intend by quoting these two *hadeeth* what al-Bootee understood from them. This is because al-Ma'soomee mentions in his introduction the

reason why he wrote this book. This being that some Japanese Muslims had written a letter to him mentioning that some Japanese desired to enter Islaam in the year 1357H. This was presented to the *Jam'iyyah* of Muslims in Tokyo and some of these Muslims asked these Japanese to become *Hanafee* and others asked them to become *Shaafi'ee*. This confused the Japanese and became the cause for them not to enter into Islaam! So the people who wrote al-Ma'soomee the letter asked him to clarify his views on this issue. So al-Ma'soomee wrote them this book explaining that entering into Islaam was easy, by articulating the *Shahaadah* and establishing the remaining four pillars and that it was not necessary to follow a specific *madhhab*.

Al-Bootee objected to this by quoting al-Ma'soomee on (p. 6) as saying, "as for the *mahaahib* then they consist of the opinions and the understanding of the People of Knowledge in some issues and neither Allaah or His Messenger have obligated anyone to follow them." Shaykh Naasir explained that al-Ma'soomee had restricted the meaning of his words when he said, "in some issues" and it is known that there are some opinions that are purely *ijtihaadee* (not having any text to support them) and it is these that al-Ma'soomee intended. At this point al-Bootee accused al-Ma'soomee of having a bad convention in writing.

Shaykh Naasir replied by saying that al-Ma'soomee was to be excused for this because he was a non-Arab, a Turk, and that the important point was to take note of the meaning of his words and not the sentence construction. Indeed that which was to be understood from the book of al-Ma'soomee was the opposite to what al-Bootee understood.

The Discussion now digressed to Ijtihad:

At this point the father of al-Bootee interjected saying that the analogy that al-Ma'soomee made to water and *tayammum* was correct. However this was for the *Mujtahid* scholar who fulfilled the well-known and many conditions. He stated that the *Hanafee*, *Shaafi'ee* and *Maalikee madhaahib* are agreed that the door to *ijtihaad* closed after the fifth century to the extent that they considered an-Nawawee and ar-Raafi'ee to scholars who merely decided what the strongest opinion (of already existing opinions) was.

Dr. Bootee, realizing that this was a point of difference between himself and his father tried to change the subject. However Shaykh Naasir mentioned that Dr. Bootee differed with him on this issue and that he endorsed the fact that the door to *ijtihaad* remained open. The father thought this was to be very strange. Dr. Bootee again interjected trying to return the discussion back to the book of al-Ma'soomee claiming that the analogy of water and *tayammum* meant that al-Ma'soomee required everyone to perform *ijtihaad* because it required everyone to leave the words of the scholars except in those issues for which there was no text.

Shaykh Naasir refuted him by saying that this was an erroneous understanding and he mentioned other texts from the book endorsing this in which al-Ma'soomee explained the

obligation of *taqleed* upon the ignorant. Then al-Bootee found no further room for arguing except through claiming that the words of al-Ma'soomee were self-contradictory.

The Discussion now Digressed to Whether one could call the Religion of Muhammad a Madhhab:

Both al-Bootee and his father rejected this. Shaykh Naasir stated that from a linguistic point of view there was nothing preventing this however he agreed to their stance.

The Discussion then Digressed to whether an incorrect *ijtihad* could be called or taken as Religion:

Shaykh Naasir was of the opinion that to do so was erroneous, however al-Bootee and his father were of the opinion that to do so was correct. After some discussion they conceded to Shaykh Naasir's stance.

The Discussion digressed to the issue of *Ittibaa'* (following) and whether or not it was an independent level that a person could reach:

Shaykh Naasir was of the opinion that it was an independent station falling between the station of *taqleed* and *ijtihad* because its (state) differs from the (state) of the other two. Dr. Bootee was of the opinion that it falls within *taqleed*. A number of those present agreed with Shaykh Naasir because he quoted a number of the People of Knowledge in their affirming the station of *ittibaa'*. The discussion on this went on for a long time ending with both sticking to their opinion. However there was a weakening in al-Bootee's stance for he stated that this was an issue over which there was a difference of opinion.

The Discussion ended with a Vile word from al-Bootee:

Finally Shaykh Naasir asked al-Bootee for another sitting but he refused and so Shaykh Naasir asked permission to leave. He stood and moved towards the door. Al-Bootee realizing that he had been defeated (in a number of his stances) then called out, "By Allaah! Shaykh Naasir you state what is not in your heart." Shaykh Naasir rejected this vile accusation, as did those who were present and then the discussion was over.

APPENDIX III: THE CONTENTIONS OF SHABBIR ALLY CONCERNING THE FOUR MADHAAHIB:

Recently, Shabbir Ally - gave a sermon at his centre, the International Islamic Information Centre - entitled 'The Four Madhhabs' where he made numerous comments against the *Sunnah* and attacks upon *Salafiyyah* and he also candidly vomited upon the issues of the *ahaadeethul-aahaad* and the status of various issues in the Religion. Below are selected points derived from Shabbir's disastrous sermon:

Shabbir says, "First, we should not use the minor detail of Islaam as platform for doctrinal division... Somebody comes and prays in the *Masjid* here, but because he was praying in a way he was taught in his country. A couple of young men who learned something about a *hadeeth* are laughing with each other concerning this Muslim, like 'Look how he is praying,' and then the brother reports to me that he goes out and can not find his shoes. They've hidden his shoes, at least he thinks they hidden his shoes, you see there is kind of suspicion, and there is kind of distance between the brothers, because of these doctrinal issues. Now, this is just a small example of the much bigger problem we have in the entire *Ummah*. Muslim can not get along with each other, because we have in the *Masjid* (i.e. Bible Centre) like this one, not a single body of Muslim from anyone ethnic, or linguistic, or geographic origin. We have *Hanafees* here from Indo-Pak continents, we have *Maalikees* here from North Africa, we have *Shaafi'ees* here from Egypt, we have *Hanbalees* from Saudi Arabia, we have Muslims from all over the world, unless we appreciate and understand each other, our little doctrinal dispute will lead to major factions and divisions."

Leaving aside the issue of immature people to whom some of the blame for this mishap is being placed upon, we continue on with the Shabbir's belittlement of the affair of joining the rows in Prayer. It seems Shabbir either does not realize the greatness of their affair due to his preponderant ignorance, or he does not give much weight to such an affair. We remind Shabbir that the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "Establish your lines straight, for indeed the angels pray in lines. Align your shoulders, close the gaps, yield your hands to your brothers, and do not leave any gaps for *Shaytaan*. Whoever connects a line, Allaah maintains him, and whoever breaks a line, Allaah cuts him off."¹⁵⁴

So we oppose Shabbir in him wanting for the Muslims to remain cut off from Allaah by not connecting the rows properly, as Shabbir himself says, "And this is why you find that when I call people to stand for the *Salaat* I say 'Stand close to each other,' I do not say 'put your heels together,' because I know some people do not put there heels together. And that's ok for them." And we seek refuge in Allaah from such belittlement of the *Sunnah*. Rather, this is action which Shabbir is attacking is what was done by the Companions of the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), as an-Nu'maan Ibn Basheer (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*)

¹⁵⁴ **Saheeh:** Related by Ahmad, Aboo Daawood, an-Nisaa'ee and others. Refer to *SaheehulJaami'* (no. 1187) of Imaam al-Albaanee.

said, “So I saw a man clinging his shoulder to his companion’s shoulder, and his foot to his foot, and his ankle to his ankle.”¹⁵⁵ These are the narrations of the Companions that Shabbir is belittling. As for us, then we are upon the methodology of Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and the rest of the Scholars of the *Ummah*, which is embodied in Imaam Ahmad’s opening words of his treatise, *Usoolus-Sunnah*, where he says, “And the foundations of the *Sunnah* according to us are holding firmly to what the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) were upon, and to take them as examples.”¹⁵⁶

Continues Shabbir, “No! We practice Islaam, concentrating on the core of Islaam and not differing over the peel, over the minor issues.” This is a filthy utterance which emerged from the foul-mouthed Shabbir concerning issues like those discussed above, such as joining the rows in Prayer.

The Noble Scholar, the *Muftee* of Jaazaan, al’Allaamah Ahmad Ibn Yahyaa an-Najmee - *hafidhahullaah* - was asked, “What is your opinion - Noble Shaykh - concerning the one who says that the Religion of Islaam consists of the foundations (*usool*) and branches (*furoo’*), a core and a peel?”

So the Noble *Muftee* answered, “The Religion of Islaam consists of the foundations, they are called beliefs (*aqaa’id*), and it consists of things which are branches, these are the *ahkaam* (rules and regulations) of *fiqh* in worship, dealings (*nu’aamalaat*) or whatever resembles that. So this is permissible. However, as regards the one who says that Islaam is a peel and a core, then this is one who has fallen into corrupt error, and we seek refuge with Allaah. So all of Islaam is a core, not having any peel to it, and all of it is the truth, not having any falsehood in it, and all of Islaam is serious, not having any comedy in it. So whomever alleges that Islaam is a peel and a core, then this is oppression, and it is to be feared for him, and he is to be judged as an apostate due to this statement.”¹⁵⁷

Sufficient is this as an answer to Shabbir’s rantings about the ‘peel and the core.’ Then, Shabbir continues, “First of all, I want to clarify that Islaam is very broad, much broader than some people think. Some people think Islaam is as narrow as a bicycle path. Something narrower, like a mountain path, when two goats meet in the mountain path sometimes they end up what’s called “The Impact” no one can pass until they lock horns together and one knocks the other over, then he could make room for himself to pass. Some people think Islaam is like this, in order one group of Muslims to flourish, they must knock down every other group. That’s not how Islaam is. I see it Islaam more like a multi-way highway, they are many lanes, and these four schools of thought we are speaking about are four lanes within that multi-lanes highway. Now, that doesn’t mean of course, that the lanes are so wide that it includes everything, because certainly in the multi-lane highway they are some lane clearly which will take you out the path, they are some exit which takes you to a different direction. And they are some exit which do not take you to a different

¹⁵⁵ Related by al-Bukhaaree

¹⁵⁶ Related by al-Laalikaa’ee in *Sharh Usoolul’Itiqaad* (1/154)

¹⁵⁷ *al-Fataawaa al-Jaliyyah ’anil-Manaahijil-Jadeedah* (p. 31) of al’Allaamah Ahmad Ibn Yahyaa an-Najmee.

direction, but it just gets you in the side-road which will just make you...just make ah... take you a little bit longer for what your doing, while basically your still heading in the same direction.”

From 'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) who said, 'The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) drew a line for us, then he said, 'This is the Path of Allaah.' Then he drew lines from its right and its left, then he said, 'These are scattered lines, upon each of them is a devil calling to it.' Then he read,

“And verily this is My Straight Path, so follow it and do not follow the other paths because they will separate you from His Path.” [Sooratul-An'aam 8:153].¹⁵⁸

So the path of Islaam is not as narrow as a bicycle path, as Shabbir would have us believe, but it is as narrow as the line the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) drew for his Companions. And we are of the view of Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim, when he said in explanation of this *hadeeth*, “And this is because the path that takes one to Allaah is one, and it is what He sent His Messengers and revealed His Books with, and nothing can take one to Allaah, except this one path. And even if the people were to come from every path, and they entered through every door, then all of these paths would be obstructed for them and all of those doors would be closed for them, except this one path; since it is the one that takes one to Allaah.”¹⁵⁹ I say however, that the one who is unstable upon it will encounter doubt and feebleness. And the one who deviates only deviates to the sect due to numbers and fears being alone and hastily proceeds to the destination and cowers away from the long trip. Ibnul-Qayyim said, “Whoever makes the path long, his walk will become weak.”¹⁶⁰

As for Shabbir, then he is trying to claim that when the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) drew this line for the Companions, what he really meant to draw was a 'multi-lane highway!!!' Indeed, this is evidence of Shabbir forcing his own limited understanding upon the purified Religion of Islaam. And this is despite him not knowing how to follow the 'path' that the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) outlined for his Companions, and 'ignorance of the path and its signs and the intended goal, necessitates much toil for little benefit.’¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ **Saheeh:** Related by an-Nisaa'ee (no. 184) and Ahmad (1/435) and this wording is by him. It is also related by ad-Daarimee (1/67-68) and Ibn 'Abdul-Barr in *Jaami'ul Bayaan* (8/65), it was authenticated by Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee in *Basaa'ir Dhush-Sharaf* (p. 82).

¹⁵⁹ *at-Tafseerul-Qayyim* (p. 14-15)

¹⁶⁰ *al-Fawaa'id* (p. 90)

¹⁶¹ *al-Fawaa'id* (p. 223)

And 'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood said in explanation of the same preceding *hadeeth*, "This path is inhabited, the devils occupy it calling out, 'O servant of Allaah, come on! This is the Path,' in order to discourage them from the Path of Allaah."¹⁶²

So this is what the Messenger of Allaah described, and this is how his Companions understood it, and there is no room in Islaam for Shabbir's 'multi-lane highway.' So we follow the Book of Allaah and the Messenger of Allaah, not leaving room for anyone to make statements in front of Allaah and His Messenger. 'Urwah said to Ibn 'Abbaas, "Woe to you! Do you misguide the people? You have permitted 'Umrah in the first ten days (of *Muharram*), yet there is no 'Umrah in them!" So he said, "O 'Urwah! Verily Abaa Bakr and 'Umar do not say that, yet they are more knowledgeable and better in following the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) than you." So he said, "From there you have come! We come with the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), and you come with Abee Bakr and 'Umar?!" [And in a narration, "Woe to you! Are the two of them to be related from, according to you, or what is found in the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) for his Companions and his *Ummah*?!"] And in a narration, "I see that they will be destroyed. I say, 'The Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said,' and it is said, 'Aboo Bakr and 'Umar forbade."¹⁶³

Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Hasan (d.1258H) - *rahimahullaah* - said after quoting this narration, "And in the speech of Ibn 'Abbaas is that which proves that *taqleed* (blind-following) towards an *imaam* is not to be done by the one whom the proof has reached. So it is obligatory to oppose him severely due to his opposition to the proof."¹⁶⁴

He also said, "Indeed it has become a general necessity with this evil, especially from the one who ascribes himself to knowledge, that they have set up obstacles to obstruct taking from the Book and the *Sunnah* and they have prevented the following of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) along with the exaltation of his command and prohibition. So from that is their statement, 'The Book and the *Sunnah* cannot be used as a proof, except by the *mujtahid* (one who is qualified extract rulings from the Revelation), and *ijtihad* has already been closed off.' And they say, 'This is a case in which the one whom you are making *taqleed* of is more knowledgeable than you about *hadeeth* and its abrogater and abrogated.'

¹⁶² **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo 'Ubayd in *Fadaa'ilul-Qur'aan* (p. 75), ad-Daarimee (2/433), *as-Sunnah* (no. 22) of Ibn Nasr, *Fadaa'ilul-Qur'aan* (p. 74) of Ibn Darees, and Ibn Jareer in his *Tafseer* (no. 7566), at-Tabaraanee (9/9031), *ash-Sharee'ah* (no. 16) of al-Aajurree, *al-Ibaanah* (no. 135) of Ibn Battah.

¹⁶³ **Hasan:** Related by Ishaq Ibn Raahawayh, as is found in *al-Matlabul'Aaliyah* (no. 1306), Ibn Abee Shaybah (4/103) and by at-Tabaraanee (24/92) by way of him. And it is related by Ahmad (1/252, 323, 337) and by at-Tabaraanee also in *al-Awsat* (1/42) and by al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee in *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (no. 379-380) and by Ibn 'Abdul-Barr in *Jaami'* (no. 2378-2381). It was authenticated by Ibn Hajar in *al-Matlab*, and it was declared *hasan* by al-Haythamee in *al-Majma'* (3/234) and by Ibn Muflih in *al-Aadaabush-Shar'iyyah* (2/66).

¹⁶⁴ *Fathul-Majeed Sharh Kitaabut-Tawheed* (p. 338)

So the likes of these statements, whose goal is to leave off following the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), who does not speak from his own desire, and to place reliance upon one who could be mistaken. And other than him from the Scholars may oppose him and prohibit his statement with proof. So there is no scholar, except that he has some knowledge, but not all of it. So it is obligatory upon everyone under obligation, that if the proof reaches him from the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). So the (correct) understanding is that he must act upon it, even though he will be opposing whoever he will be opposing, as Allaah the Exalted said,

“Follow that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and do not follow protectors other than Him; yet you remember little.” [Sooratul-A'raaf 7:3]

And He said,

“Is it not sufficient for them that We revealed to you the Book, which is recited to them? Verily in it is a mercy and a reminder for a people who believe.” [Sooratul-'Ankaboot 29:51]

Indeed an *ijmaa'* (consensus) has already been mentioned concerning that, and it has been explained that the *muqallid* (blind-follower) is not from the people of knowledge. Indeed a consensus has already been mentioned concerning that by Aboo 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul-Barr and other than him.”¹⁶⁵

Said Shabbir Ally, “Ahmad Ibn Hanbal now, he is living in a time of more multiplicity of opinions, In order to get rid of all these opinions again Ahmad Ibn Hanbal wants to rely on the *hadeeths* of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), but the *Saheeh hadeeth* went so far was even made more. So for him, it is ok to go to the *hadeeth* which is not *saheeh* but weak. It's better to go by a statement, which claim to be by the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) than to go by the opinion of men which are so multiple and vary, we do not which one to rely on. We are on a postage of time goings people are looking back more towards what the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) such that even if the *hadeeth* are not dependable refer to go by the *hadeeth* than to go by an opinion of people. Than there you have it four different highways!”

Here Shabbir demonstrates his excessive ignorance with respect to the science of *hadeeth*, when he claims that Imaam Ahmad used weak (*da'eef*) *ahaadeeth* over the use of opinion. For intelligent person, this signifies casting doubt over the validity of *hadeeth* as a whole. This comes due to Shabbir entering into a science about which he has no knowledge, much like his entering into the arena of speech about the Religion of Allaah. As for his claim against Imaam Ahmad, then it is merely a figment of Shabbir's imagination, since in the time of Imaam Ahmad, *ahaadeeth* were only divided into two categories, *Saheeh* (authentic) and *Da'eef* (weak). Of those *ahaadeeth* that were *da'eef*, some were at the level of

¹⁶⁵ *Fathul-Majeed* (p. 339-340)

what is now known is *Hasan* (acceptable). So it cannot be said, as Shabbir would like to believe, that Imaam Ahmad used weak and unauthentic *ahaadeeth* as religious proofs. The Scholars of the *Hanaabilah* have explained this issue for centuries, if Shabbir only knew.

Said Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) – *rahimahullaah*, “As for our statement that the weak (*da’eef*) *hadeeth* is better than the opinion, then we are not referring to the ‘*da’eef*’ that must be abandoned (*matrook*). Rather, the meaning here is ‘*Hasan*’ (acceptable). That is because the division of *hadeeth* into *Saheeh*, *Hasan* and *Da’eef* did not occur until a later time.”¹⁶⁶

Said al’Allaamah Ibnul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d.751H) – *rahimahullaah*, “The meaning of ‘*da’eef*’ according to him – meaning Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal – is not the *baatil* (false), nor the *munkar* (evil), nor that in whose narration there is a doubt, where it is not correct to act upon the narration. Rather, the ‘*da’eef*’ *hadeeth* according to him is a category of the *Saheeh*, and a category from amongst the categories of the ‘*hasan*.’ At that time, the *hadeeth* was not divided into the categories of *Saheeh*, *Hasan* and *Da’eef*. Rather, there was only *Saheeh* and *Da’eef*. And there were levels for the *da’eef*, so when there was no narration to be found for an issue, nor any statement of a Companion, nor any *ijmaa’* (consensus) concerning it, then *qiyaas* (analogical deduction) took precedence. There is no one from amongst the Scholars, except that he has agreed with this in principle and in general. So there was no one from amongst them, except that he gave precedence to the ‘*da’eef*’ *hadeeth* over the *qiyaas*.”¹⁶⁷

He – *rahimahullaahu ta’aalaa* - also said, “So giving precedence to the *da’eef* *hadeeth* and the *aathaar* of the Companions over *qiyaas* and opinion is the view of Imaam Abee Haneefah, and Imaam Ahmad. And the intended meaning behind ‘*da’eef*’ *hadeeth*’ in the technical usage of the *Salaf* is not the ‘*da’eef*’ *hadeeth*’ in the technical usage of the late comers. Rather, it is that which the late comers call *Hasan*. In the previous times, it was called: *da’eef*.”¹⁶⁸

So we pray that Shabbir can correct this tremendous oversight on his part with respect to the science of *hadeeth* and the position of Imaam Ahmad.

Shabbir continues, “I do not say ‘put your heels together’, because I know some people do not put their heels together. And that’s ok for them. ‘No! Everybody must put their heels together!’ Why!!! Just because one school says it, or just because you have one *hadeeth* that says it...”

So we have already covered the issues of joining the rows and the issue of Shabbir’s ‘peel and core’ methodology. Now we look at his latest statement, “...or just because you have

¹⁶⁶ *Manaaqibul-Imaam Ahmad* (p. 153) and *Minhaajus-Sunnatin-Nabawiyyah* (2/119)

¹⁶⁷ *I’laamul-Muwaqqi’een* (1/31)

¹⁶⁸ *I’laamul-Muwaqqi’een* (1/77)

one *hadeeth* that says it...” This is something which frighteningly resembles the rhetoric of the people who deny the *hadeeth aahaad* (singular narration). And this is how these same people would belittle the *Sunnah*!

Qaadee Aboo Ya’laa (d.345H) related from Aboo Bakr al-Marroodhee who said, “I said to Aboo ’Abdullaah - meaning Imaam Ahmad - that there is a man here who says that the narration obligates action but does not obligate knowledge. So he rejected that and said: I do not know what this is.”¹⁶⁹ Aboo Ya’laa said, “What is apparent from this is that he made both knowledge and action the same in this regard.”¹⁷⁰

Imaam ash-Shaafi’ee (d.204H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “If a reliable person relates from another reliable person, all the way back to Allaah’s Messenger (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*), then it is *thaabit* (established) from Allaah’s Messenger (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*).”¹⁷¹

Ibnul-Qayyim quoted from him, “And what is reported from a single person to another single person, then we indeed know that the Prophet (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) said it - due to the truthfulness of the narrators with us.”¹⁷²

And there is much more we could bring from the Imaams of Islaam by way of evidences, but we hope that this will suffice Shabbir for now.

Then he continues in his very same lecture, “So what we need today, first of all, is to realize we should not differ in the minor issues of Islaam. If Allaah (*subhaanahu wa ta’alaa*) wanted to make these minor issues about any greater importance he would of put it in his Book.”

This statement is hinting at Shabbir’s real creed and methodology which encompasses rejection of the *Sunnah* and catapulting the intellect to the level of in *ilaah* (deity).¹⁷³ So here Shabbir holds the view that if something is only found in the *Sunnah*, then it is not a ‘major issue.’ This is why we find Shabbir belittling the issue of connecting the rows in Prayer, and other issues as well which we shall cover in upcoming papers.

How accurately the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) described Shabbir when he said, “I have been given the *Qur’aan* and something similar to it besides it. Yet a time will come when a man leaning on his couch will say ‘Follow the *Qur’aan* only; what you find in it permissible, take as permissible, and what you find as forbidden, take as

¹⁶⁹ *al’Uddah fee UsoolilFiqh* (3/899) of Aboo Ya’laa

¹⁷⁰ *al’Uddah fee UsoolilFiqh* (3/899)

¹⁷¹ *al’Umm* (7/177)

¹⁷² *Mukhtasarus-Sawaa’iq* (2/365-366)

¹⁷³ As we will show from his various lectures and sermons in the second part of this treatise, ‘Doubts Surrounding the Sunnah’ based upon the works of Imaam ’Abdur-Razzaaq ’Afeefee, if Allaah so wills.

forbidden.’ However, what the Messenger of Allaah has forbidden is like what Allaah has forbidden.”¹⁷⁴

And we warn Shabbir of the Fire, by narrating that statement of the Prophet (*sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*), “All of my *Ummah* shall enter Paradise, except for those who refuse.” They said, ‘O Messenger of Allaah, who will refuse?’ He said, “Whomsoever obeys me shall enter Paradise and whomsoever disobeys me has refused.”¹⁷⁵

Said Imaam Muhammad Ibn Nasr al-Marwazee concerning the one who rejects the Sunnah of wiping over the socks, “Whomever rejected that, then he has rejected everything that we have mentioned from the Sunan and other than from what we have mentioned. And this constitutes expulsion from the main body of the people of Islaam.”¹⁷⁶

This is what we shall suffice with for now in the case of this poor and unfortunate soul named Shabbir Ally.

¹⁷⁴ Related by Aboo Daawood (no. 4605) and at-Tirmidhee (no. 2663).

¹⁷⁵ Related by al-Bukhaaree (no. 7820)

¹⁷⁶ *as-Sunnah* (p. 104)

CONCLUSION: THE RIGHTEOUS ACTION:

Imaam Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee (d.1420H)¹⁷⁷ - *rahimahullaahu ta'aalaa* - spoke of the conditions needed for ones actions to be acceptable to Allaah. We deemed it fitting to conclude with these words, since what is at the centre of the discussion of *taqleed* and the *madhaahib* is the Muslims concern for his acts of worship being accepted by Allaah. So we conclude with the following:

WHAT BENEFITS THE DEAD:

Aboo Hurayrah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, 'The likeness of wealth, family and the actions of the son of Aadam is of a man who has three companions. One of the man's companions says, 'I am with you as long as you live; when you die, you have taken your share of yourself and you have taken your share of me - this is his wealth.' The second companion says, 'I am with you until you reach that tree; you have had your share of yourself and your share of me - this is his family.' The third companion says, 'I am with you in life and in death.'¹⁷⁸

The above authentic *hadeeth* is in fact like the following *hadeeth* in meaning and in subject matter. Anas (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "The dead person is followed (to his grave) by three: His family, his wealth and his actions. Two of them return and only one remains. His family and wealth return, but his actions remain."¹⁷⁹

These two *ahaadeeth* show that actions alone endure and enter the grave with their doers. Both these *ahaadeeth* also affirm the fact that anything other than actions - such as wealth, servants or relatives - are of no benefit at all. Rather, they all return (to this world). His wealth becomes the property of his inheritor, whilst his relatives and family do not grant him anything from Allaah.

These *ahaadeeth* intend to direct Muslims to be concerned with actions which will stay with them forever; and not to strive for wealth and position for the sake of relatives, family and servants. Apparently, the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) wanted to show us the value of good actions when he related these *ahaadeeth* to us, (which can be found) in the books of *Zuhd* (renouncement of the world). He pointed out to us that because actions will last rather than wealth, you have to make your actions righteous. Part of making ones actions righteous is through good wealth that is earned lawfully and spent in a good manner. Then one gains the rewards of '*amalus-saalih* (a righteous action).

¹⁷⁷ Taken from *al-Hijra* magazine (vol. 4 no. 2) Shawwaal 1411/August 1990.

¹⁷⁸ **Saheeh:** Related by al-Bazaar and al-Albaanee authenticated it.

¹⁷⁹ Related by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

THE ACCEPTABLE ACTION:

Therefore, in these *ahaadeeth*, the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) encouraged us to make our actions righteous, whether gaining wealth or other things. However, we must remember a certain fact about this action, a fact that many people neglect. The explanation of this fact should actually be a complete lesson in itself; and it is that only a righteous action is beneficial, not just any action.

So what are the conditions that a Muslim must fulfill in order for the action to be righteous? This is shown in the statement of Allaah - the Exalted and Sublime,

“Say (O Muhammad): Verily I am only a man like yourselves, but revelation has been revealed to me that the One whom you should worship is only One Deity. And whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous actions; and in the worship of your Lord, do not associate anyone along with Him.” [Sooratul-Kahf 18:110]

TWO IMPORTANT CONDITIONS:

The Scholars of *Tafseer* have said that the end of this verse is an indication that there are two conditions for an action to be righteous and acceptable:¹⁸⁰

Firstly: That the action must be in accordance with the *Sunnah*. Therefore, if the action is done as an act of worship, but is not in accordance with the *Sunnah*, it is not a righteous action. The reason is that compliance with the *Sunnah* is one of the conditions for the action's righteousness. The proofs of this are many, but it is enough to state one: The *hadeeth* of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) in which he said, “Whoever innovates in this matter of ours what is not upon it, it shall be rejected.”¹⁸¹

Therefore, any action that was not part of Islaam when Allaah revealed it upon the heart of the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) is not a righteous action. About this, Allaah - the Most High - says,

“This day I have perfected your Religion for you and completed My favour upon you and I have chosen Islaam as your Religion.” [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:3]¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ Ibn Katheer says in *Tafseer Qur'aanul'Adheem* (3/114), “Thus, for an action to be acceptable it has to fulfill two conditions. **Firstly:** It must be sincere for Allaah alone. **Second:** It must be correct and in accordance with the *Sharee'ah*. So if the action is sincere, but not correct, it will not be accepted.”

¹⁸¹ Related by al-Bukhaaree (5/301) and Muslim (no.1718) - from 'Aa'ishah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*).

¹⁸² Imaam ash-Shaatibee relates in *al-I'tisaam* (1/49), “Imaam Maalik - *rahimahullaah* - said, “Whosoever introduces into Islaam an innovation has lied against the message of Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). Since Allaah has said, **“This day have I completed your Religion for you.”** So whatever was not Religion that day, cannot be considered as part of the Religion today.”

It must be remembered that *Bid'ah* (innovation)¹⁸³ is not divided into five categories, as some Scholars say. A proof for this is that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "Every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Hellfire."¹⁸⁴

Secondly: That after being in accordance with the *Sunnah*, the action has to be sincere, purely seeking the Face of Allaah - the Most High - because Allaah says at the end of the aforementioned verse,

"And in the worship of your Lord, do not associate anyone along with Him."

This means that the person seeks, by his righteous action, only the Face of Allaah - the Exalted and Sublime. However, if he seeks other than Allaah, then he has setup partners with Allaah (made *Shirk* with Allaah), therefore his action is rejected.

This is confirmed by Allaah in an authentic *hadeeth Qudsee*, "I am so self-sufficient that I am in no need of having any partners. Thus, whosoever does an action for the sake of someone else as well as Me, will have that action rejected by Me, to him whom he associated with Me."¹⁸⁵

Consequently, if the action is righteous but not sincere for the sake of Allaah's Face, it is rejected. Moreover, if the action is purely for the sake of Allaah's Face, but not in accordance with the *Sunnah*, it is likewise not accepted.

THE WORTHLESS SINFUL ACTION:

So these are the two conditions for every action to be a righteous action. If one of these conditions is not present, the action does not become a righteous action, rather, it becomes an evil one. Had the person not done this action, it would have been better for him.

If a man prays two *raka'at* of Prayer at night, while others sleep, then even if he prays them according to the *Sunnah* - without addition or deletion - but he does this so that people may talk about him and say, "This person is a righteous man. He prays at night when the people are asleep," then his action becomes *baatil* (null and void), since he did not sincerely seek the Face of Allaah alone, but rather he sought the praises of people, thus becoming sinful by associating partners with Allaah in his action.

¹⁸³ Said ash-Shaatibee in *al-I'tisaam* (1/37) about the *Sharee'ah* definition of *Bid'ah*, "A newly invented way in the Religion, in imitation of, or corresponding to the *Sharee'ah*, through which nearness to Allaah is sought. This action not being supported by any authentic proof - neither the action itself, nor the way in which it is performed."

¹⁸⁴ **Saheeh:** Related by Muslim (6/153) from Jaabir Ibn 'Abdullaah. The additional wording "and all that misguides, misguides to the Fire," is related by an-Nisaa'ee (1/224) with a *Saheeh isnaad* - as Ibn Taymiyyah has mentioned in *al-Fataawaa* (3/58).

¹⁸⁵ Related by Muslim (no. 2985) and Ibn Maajah (no. 4202); from Aboo Hurayrah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*).

However, if his action only became null and void, then the following *hadeeth* would apply to him; and he would not be punished for this action, “How many fasting people obtain nothing from their fasting except hunger and thirst. And how many people who stay up at night (praying), obtain nothing from their being awake except sleeplessness and tiredness.”¹⁸⁶

But this is not the case, for this person’s action has changed into a sin. The two *raka’aat* that this person performed without intending to seek only the Face of Allaah - the Exalted and Sublime - are the same as if he had disobeyed Him, that is to say: He will be punished for these two *raka’aat* because he associated others along with Allaah - the Exalted and Sublime - in his action.

If a man prays eleven *raka’aat* at night with the intention, in this worship, that his brothers would say about him, “This man is correctly following the Prophet; he does not add to the *Sunnah*,” his action becomes null and void; and his action changes to a sin against him. Rather, he must pray according to the *Sunnah* but sincerely seeking only the Face of Allaah - the Most High. He must be absolutely free of seeking the pleasure of others along with Him in this worship.

This has been but a summary about the action that does not leave the person but enters the grave with him - whether the action was good or bad - and that what is of benefit is the person’s righteous action. What is a righteous action and what are its conditions? The two conditions are: *Muwaafaqah* (compliance) with the *Sunnah*; and *Ikhlâas* (sincerity and purity of intention) to Allaah. Therefore, one must remember these two conditions and act upon them so that one may become righteous and pious.

SAFEGUARDING AGAINST INSECURITY:

Many people unfortunately neglect the first condition (complying with the *Sunnah*) because they are astray and believe that *bid’ah* (innovation) is good in the Religion.¹⁸⁷ But there are those upon whom Allaah has granted His favour, by guiding them to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*). They are those who know the reality of this condition and adhere to it the best they can. Yet they must pay attention to the second condition, which either group may fail to fulfill, and that is *riyaa’* (insincerity and showing-off). No one is exempt from *riyaa’* and all people are susceptible to it in their actions.

This matter is a very serious one and must be stressed here, so that we may know that we are in need of making our actions correct and purely for the Face of Allaah - the Exalted

¹⁸⁶ **Saheeh:** Related by Ibn Maajah (1/539) and Ahmad (2/441); from Ibn ’Umar (*radiyallaahu ’anhu*).

¹⁸⁷ The evidence to refute the notion of *Bid’ah Hasanah* (good innovations) are many. However, for the sake of brevity, only one will be mentioned: The Companion, ’Abdullaah Ibn ’Umar (*radiyallaahu ’anhu*) said - as is related by ad-Daarimee in *al-Madhkal ilas-Sunan* (no. 191) with a *Saheeh isnaad*, “Every innovation is misguidance, even if the people regard it as something good.”

and Sublime. Part of this is that we are tested even while making *da'wah* to the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah*, for trials are not only in evil matters, but also in the good matters,

“And We test you with evil and good, by way of fitnah (trial).” [Sooratul-Anbiyaa' 21:35]

This *da'wah* has been neglected by Muslims throughout the world so that the *du'aat* (the callers) have become strangers. Not only are they strangers in foreign countries, but they are strangers even in their own countries; amongst their relatives and brothers. This makes them praiseworthy, but they must not stand up to be praised for this *da'wah*. This is the reality, for the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “Verily Islaam started as something strange and it will return as something strange, so *Toobaa* is for the Strangers.”¹⁸⁸

TOOBAA AND THE STRANGERS:

The meaning of *Toobaa* in the Arabic language is, “Praise and thanks.” The meaning according to the *Sharee'ah* refers to a tree in Paradise, which would take a rider a hundred years to traverse its shade.¹⁸⁹ This *hadeeth* gives glad tidings to the newcomers of Paradise in which there is, “What no eye has never seen, no ear has ever heard, and no heart has ever imagined.”¹⁹⁰ This tree is mentioned in the *Qur'aan* in the statement of Allaah,

“Toobaa is for them, and the best abode.” [Sooratur-Ra'd 13:29]

Therefore, *Toobaa* is for the *Ghurabaa'* (the Strangers), but who are they? The answer to this is in the reply of the Prophet, “Those who correct (themselves and others), when the people have become corrupt.”¹⁹¹

THE NEED FOR CARE:

These Strangers call the people to the revival of the *Sunnah* and eradication of all that differs from it. However, they must still pay attention to the second condition of the righteous action: To be sincere in their *da'wah*. They must neither seek fame, pride, nor arguments from their *da'wah*.

They must not seek anything that *an-Nafsul-Ammaarata bis-Soo'* (the soul that calls them to evil) orders them to do. Whatever they call to is as a result of Allaah - the Most High -

¹⁸⁸ Related by Muslim (2/175-176) and Ibn Maajah (2/320); from Aboo Hurayah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*).

¹⁸⁹ **Saheeh:** Related by Ahmad (3/71) and authenticated by al-Albaanee in *as-Saheehah* (no. 1241) that the Prophet was asked, ‘What is *Toobaa*?’ So he (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “A tree in Paradise, which would take one hundred years to traverse. The clothes of the people of Paradise are taken from it.”

¹⁹⁰ Part of a *hadeeth Qudsee* - related by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim from Aboo Hurayah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) in which the Prophet said that Allaah said, “I have prepared for my righteous slaves what no eye...”

¹⁹¹ **Saheeh:** Related by al-Aajurree in *al-Ghurabaa'* (p. 15-16) from Ibn Mas'ood. The *isnaad* is *Saheeh* as al-Albaanee states in *as-Saheehah* (no. 1273).

having ordered them to make *da'wah* to the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah* and to make *da'wah* to what the Muslims have neglected. They must take care of this *da'wah*. However, they stand in danger. It can happen that one may say a word seeking only to have fingers of praise pointed at him, not sincerely advising the people and desiring to guide them. Rather, to do that for fame.

Here we mention a saying of some *Soofiyyah*, who have some wise sayings that cannot be denied, "The love of fame breaks backs." Therefore, I insist, that we who make *da'wah* to the *Sunnah* be sincere in our actions so that when our actions enter the grave with us, it will help us to answer correctly when we are asked, "Who is your Lord? Who is your Prophet? What is your Religion?" If the deed is evil, when the person enters the grave, he will deny it. His deed will come to him in the worst of forms. He will ask it, "Who are you?" It will say, "I am your deed."

WEALTH – ITS REALITY AND PURPOSE:

The next *hadeeth* is also authentic. Aboo Hurayrah said that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "The servant says, 'My wealth! My wealth!' However, he gets from his wealth three things: What he eats and finishes. What he wears and makes shabby; and what he gives away and pleases others with. Whatever else is besides this, goes and is left for the people."¹⁹²

This *Hadeeth* also emphasizes the subject of the previous *ahaadeeth*. It shows us the care taken by people in amassing wealth. Allaah pointed this out in the *Qur'aan* by His statement,

"And for the love of good he is strong." [Sooratut-Tawbah 100:8]

The Prophet depicted the nature of mankind for us in his saying, "The servant says: My wealth! My wealth!" Nevertheless, what is the amount that remains left over for him from his wealth? Is all his wealth for him? No! He gains from his wealth only the examples that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) specified. The first is defined by the Prophet's statement, "What he eats and finishes." From his wealth is that which is necessary for him to survive and that which enables him to accomplish the rights of Allaah. These rights are the rights of His *Tawheed* (singling out Allaah alone for worship), as Allaah said,

"And I have not created the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." [Sooratudh-Dhaariyaat 51:56]

The second is what a person wears until it becomes shabby. Add to this that which he volunteers and does good with, which is mentioned in the statement of the Prophet, "Or what he gives away and pleases others with." He got rid of his wealth by giving it away to

¹⁹² Related by Ahmad and Muslim; from Aboo Hurayrah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*).

another in charity. Therefore, the wealth that is for the servant is the amount that he eats and the amount that he wears in order to survive. However this is not an end in itself. Rather, one exists solely to accomplish the obligation of worship, as we pointed out previously.

The third kind of wealth that returns with a benefit is not only the obligatory charity, but it also includes non-obligatory charities. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) explained what is left after these categories. He said, “And other than that is gone, and is left, for the people.”

The relation of this *Hadeeth* with the previous one is: Why do people exhaust themselves in amassing wealth, when this is the reality of wealth? They do not benefit from their wealth except the amount that they eat, drink and with which they help other people. All else will be left and it will remain for the people who inherit it.

The following *Hadeeth* is also *Saheeh* (authentic). 'Abdullaah Ibn ash-Shikhkheer said, 'I came to the Prophet whilst he was reciting,

“Seeking increase diverted you.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “The sons of Aadam say My wealth! My wealth! What do you obtain, O son of Aadam, from your wealth except that which you eat and consume, or wear until it becomes shabby, or what you give as charity and accomplish.”

This *hadeeth* is also similar in meaning to the previous one, though some of its words are different; and was recorded by Muslim, at-Tirmidhee and an-Nisaa'ee. This *hadeeth* is clear in its wording, however, the statement of the Prophet at the end of the *hadeeth*, “or what you give as charity and accomplish,” may not be clear to some people.

GENEROSITY AND MISERLINESS:

This statement aims at drawing one's attention to the fact that what is intended for charity is that which he actually gives away. It is not sufficient that a person should just make out a will, that he should give such and such to the poor, or such and such for a specific mosque. However, the Prophet calls our attention to the fact that benefit is in that wealth which a person actually gave away during his lifetime, since he did not really know what would happen with his wealth after he died, if he had made a will.

With this word, the Prophet points to a *hadeeth* in the *Saheeh* of al-Bukhaaree - the meaning of which is that the miser is one who when death comes to him makes a will and says, “Give so and so such amount and for so and so such and such amount.” The Prophet said, “This was already for so and so and so and so.”

What the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) meant was that the deceased did not own anything anymore. He had left this *dunyaa* (life of this world) and had entered into the *Aakhirah* (the Hereafter) and his inheritance will remain for those people who are still alive. Then should not the person have made his will earlier? Should he not have given charity whilst he was strong, hoping to be rich and fearing poverty?

This is the nature of the people today, they say, “Hoard your white *Dirham* for your black day.” They hoard this money for themselves for when they become old. They are covetous of this wealth. The generous person is the one who gives away his own wealth when his own soul is attached to it.

As for the one who is on the brink of death and who says, “Give so and so such and such amount,” he is a miser and is not generous. Rather, a truly generous person is one who gives charity whilst he holds onto his life and also whilst he loves this wealth very much.

THE INSIGNIFICANCE OF THIS WORLD:

The next hadeeth is narrated by Jaabir Ibn 'Abdullaah, ‘The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) passed by the market place coming from the direction of 'Aaliyah and people were around him. He passed by a dead kid goat which had very short ears. He held it by its ears and said, “Who amongst you would like to have this for a *dirham*?” They (the Companions) said, ‘We would not want it even for less than that! What can we do with it?’ He said, “Do you wish to have it (for any price)?” They said, ‘By Allaah, even if it were alive it (we would not want it), as it has very short ears, let alone now when it is also dead!’ The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “By Allaah, this world is more insignificant to Allaah than this (goat) is to you all.”¹⁹³

Let us return to the *hadeeth*. He passed by the market place “and the people were around him.” Here I would like to pause a little in order to remind people about some of the guidance of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) that most of the Shaykhs of today have neglected.

The Shaykhs of today walk with their students behind them. This was not the way of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). The *ahaadeeth* describing this are many and the following is from them, “He used to walk side by side with Aboo Bakr and side by side with Aboo Hurayrah; and they all walked with each other.”

Moreover, it is authentically proven that the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) used to say to his Companions (*radiyallaahu 'anhum*), when he used to walk with them, “Walk in front of me and leave my back for the angels.”¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ Related by Muslim and Ahmad

¹⁹⁴ **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo Nu'aym in *Hilyatul-Awliyaa'* (7/117) from Jaabir (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*). It was authenticated in *as-Saheehah* (no. 1557).

Here he highlights two matters from one saying. People do not see angels, they see only people. Therefore, if anyone saw the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) walking, they would only see people walking in front of him. The Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said in the authentic *hadeeth*, “He who humbles himself for the sake of Allaah, Allaah will raise him.”¹⁹⁵ His humbleness raised him to a degree whereby the angels walked behind him. Therefore, is a noble person one behind whom people - good or bad - walk; or is he the one who is followed by those described by Allaah in the following verse,

“They do not disobey what Allaah ordered them to do and do precisely what they are commanded.”

The nobility of the Prophet manifested itself in a visible and an invisible side. The visible side is that the Companions used to walk in front of the Prophet and not behind him. The invisible side is that the angels walked behind him.

Of course, the first phenomenon is the one in which we are ordered not to act proudly with our companions and our brothers in faith, even those who may be less than us in knowledge, morals, worship and righteousness. This is enough for us, because Allaah says,

“Do not sanctify yourself. He knows best the ones who are pious.” [Sooratun-Najm 53:32]

It is sufficient for us at least, to walk with people side by side. Whosoever intentionally goes against this *Sunnah*, without doubt, does not truly love the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). This is because one's degree of love from him, is based upon following him. This is established in the *Qur'aan* by the statement of Allaah,

“Say (O Muhammad): If you do love Allaah then follow me; Allaah will love you and forgive you your sins.” [Soorah Aali-'Imraan 3:31]

So, if this was the case with the Prophet who was infallible and protected from the whispering of the *Shaytaan* and this was an indication of the level with his Companions, then what can we say about ourselves? We are not infallible and are not protected from the *Shaytaan*. We must adhere to this *Sunnah* as if it were obligatory. It is better for us to walk with people around us than to walk looking with our eyes at the backs of their shoulders. The statement of the Prophet, at the end of the *hadeeth*, “By Allaah, this world is more insignificant to Allaah than this (goat) is to you all,” is to be reflected upon by people of intellect!

The next authentic *hadeeth* is similar to the previous *hadeeth*. Ibn 'Abbaas said, ‘The Prophet passed by a dead goat that had been thrown away by its owners. He said, ‘By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, this world is more insignificant to Allaah than this is to its owner.’”

¹⁹⁵ Related by Muslim (16/141), ad-Daarimee (1/396) and others; from Aboo Hurayrah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*).

Sahl Ibn Sa'd (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said that the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "If this world was worth as much to Allaah as the wing of a mosquito, He would not have given a disbeliever even a sip of water."¹⁹⁶

Salmaan said, 'Some people came to the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and he asked them, "Do you have food?" They said, 'Yes.' He asked, "Do you have drink?" They said, 'Yes.' He said, "Verily their outcome is like the outcome of this world, one of you stands behind his house holding his nose from their bad smell." This is the similitude of this world. What is the eventual outcome of food and drink? They change to stool and urine. Therefore, a person hates the smell for himself. This is the similitude of the outcome of this World.

The following *hadeeth* has the same meaning. 'Ubayy Ibn Ka'b said that the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "Indeed the food of the son of Aadam is like the example of the world. Even if he puts spices and season into it, see what becomes of it."¹⁹⁷ What is the eventual outcome of spices and seasoning in his food? Look at what it becomes! Likewise, this world becomes a similar thing except that which is for Allaah. The next *hadeeth* explains this.

Aboo Hurayrah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "The world and all that it contains is cursed, except for the remembrance of Allaah and what supports it; or a Scholar and a student."¹⁹⁸

IN CONCLUSION:

This is the reality of this world in the *Sharee'ah*, it has no value. The similitude of this world is like good food and drink: its outcome is decay. The exceptions are those things which are done for Allaah whether remembrance of Allaah, knowledge or even food because it helps to support the worship of Allaah. These things are among the deeds of man that endure in this fleeting life. The goal behind these *ahaadeeth* is that a person should not be overly concerned about this world, except with which is sufficient to keep him alive and strong; and sufficient enough to be able to accomplish the worship of his Lord. For if his wealth is greater than this, it will only benefit him by the amount of good that he does by helping others; otherwise, he is going to leave this wealth behind and it will not benefit him at all. However, what will benefit him are the righteous actions that he has done. We ask Allaah not to put love of this world in our hearts, but to guide us to earn in this life what helps us to worship and obey Him. And all praise is for Allaah, Lord of the Worlds.

¹⁹⁶ **Saheeh:** Related by at-Tirmidhee (no. 2436) and al-Uqaylee in *ad-Du'afaa'* (no. 250) and it was authenticated in *as-Saheehah* (no. 943).

¹⁹⁷ **Hasan:** Related by Ibn Hibbaan in his *Saheeh* (no. 2489) and at-Tabaraanee in *al-Kabeer* (1/27/2) and authenticated in *as-Saheehah* (no. 382).

¹⁹⁸ **Hasan:** Related by Ibn Maajah (no. 4112) and authenticated in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (no. 3414).