

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE SALAFI DA'WAH

SHAYKH 'ABDUS-SALAM BIN BURJIS



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CONTENTS

About the Author	7
Introduction	12
The First Foundation: The Importance of Seeking Legislative Knowledge and Gaining an Understanding in the Religion	18
The Second Foundation: Striving Hard to Implement Islam	24
The Third Foundation: Inviting People to Allah Upon Clarity	28
The Fourth Foundation: Giving Importance to the 'Aqīdah of the Salaf In Knowledge, Action, and Teaching	33
The Fifth Foundation: Giving Importance to the Prophetic Sunnah and Being Diligent About Applying and Calling to It	40
The Sixth Foundation: Keeping a Close Connection with the Scholars of the Sunnah	47
The Seventh Foundation: Staying Far Away from the Secret Islamic Organizations and Parties	50
The Eighth Foundation: Adhere to the Book, the Sunnah, and What the Salaf Agreed Upon in Dealing with Our Imāms and Rulers	53
The Ninth Foundation: Ostracizing the Innovators and Warning Against Them	57
The Tenth Foundation: We Adhere to the Book and the Sunnah In All Our Situations	62

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

HIS NAME AND LINEAGE:

He is the noble Shaykh, the Faqīh, the Scholar: Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān 'Abd al-Salām Ibn Burjis Ibn Nāṣir Āl 'Abd al-Karīm.

HIS BIRTH AND UPBRINGING:

He was born in Year 1387H in the city of Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, may Allah protect it and all the Muslim lands from every evil.

He was raised in a religious home of righteousness. In his youth, he was distinguished and known for his intelligence, determination, diligence and hard-working attitude.

HIS EARLY EDUCATION:

He memorized the Qur'ān and began seeking knowledge at the age of thirteen. His Scholars paid him special attention and concern after noticing he possessed extraordinary qualities. Since his youth, he was known for his intelligence, aptitude, and strong desire to seek and acquire knowledge. Thus, a wholesome environment was put in place, along with his strong desire for seeking knowledge. He was diligent and serious about seeking knowledge. He stayed awake at night and spent long days, and went forward, seeking nothing but knowledge. His only desire was the obtainment of knowledge such that his persistence upon his studies was indescribable. This is how someone obtains a tremendous portion of Islamic knowledge.


He persistently attended the lessons of the scholars such that he was able to obtain in his youth the amount of knowledge which others are not able to obtain over a long period of time. He was well-versed in many fields of knowledge and not just in one area. He was versed in ḥadīth, aqīdah, fiqh, uṣūl al-fiqh, muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth, and the Arabic language.

Some of those who knew the Shaykh mentioned that he memorized various texts by heart. Among them:

Bulūġ al-Marām by Ibn Ḥajr [d. 852H]

Zād al-Mustaqni' by al-Ḥajjāwī [d. 968H]

Al-Qaṣidah al-Nūniyyah by Ibn al-Qayyim [d. 751H]

Al-Al'fiyyah fī al-Naḥw by Ibn Mālik [d. 672H] – 

HIS STUDIES:

The Shaykh acquired his education in the city of Riyadh. After his primary level studies, he joined an educational institute under the auspices of Imām Muḥammad Ibn Sa'ūd University. Afterward, he moved on to the College of Sharī'ah at the same University and graduated in 1410H.

He then joined the Higher Institute for Judicial Education and completed his Masters there. The title of his Masters thesis was: al-Tawthīq bil 'Uqūd fil Fiqh al-Islāmī.

He obtained his Doctorate degree in 1422H. For his thesis, he participated with others in the verification of the book: al-Fawā'id Muntakhabāt Sharḥ Akhṣar al-Mukhtaṣarāt by Shaykh 'Uthmān Ibn Jāmi' [d. 1240H].

HIS TEACHERS:

1. The great scholar, the Imām of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah during his era: Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn 'Abd Allah Ibn Bāz [d. 1420H]. (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)
2. The scholar of Fiqh and Uṣūl, Muḥammad Ibn Ṣālīh Ibn 'Uthaymīn [d. 1421H]. (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)
3. The noble scholar: Shaykh Aḥmad Ibn Yaḥyā al-Najmī [d. 1429H]. (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)
4. The great scholar and Muḥaddith, 'Abd Allah Ibn Muḥammad al-Duwaysh [d. 1409H] (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ). He studied under him during his scheduled school breaks in Buraydah.
5. The noble scholar: Shaykh Ṣālīh Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Aṭram in the College of Shari'ah of the Imām Muḥammad Ibn Sa'ūd University.
6. The noble Shaykh Fahd al-Ḥumayn, (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ). He studied tawḥīd and fiqh with him.
7. The noble scholar of Fiqh and Uṣūl, 'Abd Allah Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥman Ibn Ġudayyān, whom he studied under while in the Higher Institute of Judicial Education.

HIS POSITIONS:

He was appointed a Judge in the Ministry of Justice, but he asked to be excused from this position. After much difficulty, he was finally granted his request. He was then nominated to work

in the Bureau of Complaints and Injustices in the city of Jeddah. However, he only remained in that position for one week as he wanted to absolve himself from it.

He returned to Riyadh as a lecturer for the Higher Institute of Judicial Education. He then became an assistant professor after receiving his Doctorate and he remained in this position until his passing. May Allāh have mercy upon him; and may Allah place all that he put forward on his scale of good deeds on the Day of Judgment.

SOME OF HIS WORKS:¹

1. Al-Ḥujjaj al-Qawwiyyah 'alā anna Wasā'il al-Da'wah Tawqīfiyyah (Strong Proofs that the Means of Da'wah are Based on Revelation).
2. Mu'āmalat al-Ḥukām fī Daw al-Kitāb wal-Sunnah (Interacting with Rulers in Light of the Qur'ān and Sunnah).
3. Minhāj Ahl al-Ḥaqq wal-Ittibā' (The Methodology of the People of Truth and the Followers of the Sunnah).
4. Al-Aḥādīth al-Nabawiyyah fī Thammi al-'Unṣūriyyah al-Jāhiliyyah (Prophetic Aḥādīth on the Censure of the Nationalism of the Days of Ignorance – introduction by Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān).
5. Al-I'lām bi ba'd Aḥkām al-Salām (A Notification of Some of the Rulings on Greeting with Salām (small booklet)).
6. Al-Amr bi Luzūm Jamā'ah al-Muslimīn wa Imāmihim wa al-Taḥthīr min Mufāraqatihim (The Obligation of Sticking to the

¹ Translator's note: This is a small list of the Shaykh's books taken from his website. The Shaykh wrote over thirty books and verified over twenty.

Unified Body of Muslims and Their Imām and a Warning against Splitting from Them).

7. 'Īqāf al-Nabīl 'alaa Ḥukm al-Tamthīl (Alerting the Noble Person on the Ruling of Plays)

HIS DEATH:

Shaykh 'Abd al-Salām Ibn Burjis (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) passed away at the age of 38, on Friday, the 12th of Ṣafar, 1425H (2004 CE). He was killed on his return from Riyadh when the car he was in hit a camel.

INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allāh. We praise Him, seek His assistance, and ask His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our own souls and the evil results of our misdeeds. Whoever Allāh has guided, none can misguide; and whoever is misguided none can guide.

I bear witness that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh alone, without any partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His worshipping servant and Messenger, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُوا إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

O you who believe! Fear Allāh (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except in a state of Islām [as Muslims (with complete submission to Allāh)].

-Ali Imraan 3:102

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١٠١﴾

O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allāh through Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allāh is Ever an All-Watcher over you.

-An-Nisaa 4:1

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ
 لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾

O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allāh 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 Allāh and His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and will be admitted to Paradise).

-Al-Ahzab 33:70-71

Indeed, the best speech is the Book of Allāh; the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad, صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ; and the worst of things are newly invented matters, and every newly invented matter is an innovation, and every such innovation is misguidance and every misguidance is in the Fire.

The Salafī Da'wah has been established upon some principles that differ from groups that have deviated from the straight path. Two matters have led me to gather these principles:

The first matter is that which I and others have seen from the various ḥizbī (partisan) Islamic organizations who are far from the Salafī manhaj utilizing this noble pure name. Or using names which carry the same meaning to ascribe to the pious predecessors – may Allāh be pleased with them all – those about whom the Prophet, صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, said:

خَيْرُ النَّاسِ قُرْنِي ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ، ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ.

*The best people are my generation, then those that follow them, then those that follow them.*²

These ḥizbī organizations publish their books and treatises using the name “Salafī” and “Ahl al-Sunnah.” By doing so, they secretly slip poison into honey. They hide behind this title in order to deceive others and misguide them. By Allāh – how many of these books and treatises oppose the Salafī methodology and instead aid the misguided sects such as the Khawārij, the Mu'tazilah, and Šūfīs?!

The second matter is the attachment that these organizations have with some individuals among Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah, in an effort to achieve a particular goal or motive which can only be achieved by attaching themselves to such individuals. While in reality, this individual is completely free from having any connections to them. And so, in order for this statement to be absolutely clear, I say: the Muslim Brotherhood has spread rumors concerning the efforts of Shaykh Muḥammad Ibrāhīm – رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ – surrounding the issue of what they call: “al-Ḥakimiyyah.”³ They present the efforts of the Shaykh in this field due to their assumption that his speech aids their falsehood, which in turn leads them to declare the country as a disbelieving state. Consequently, it becomes permissible in their view to rebel against the leaders of the country.

By Allah! They have lied against him. His position concerning the Islamic state is clear with no ambiguity. He spoke with good clear speech in a treatise entitled, “Naṣīḥah Muḥimmah fī Thalāth Qadāyā” (Important Advice Concerning Three Affairs). In this treatise, he mentioned his position towards the Muslim ruler, clearly stating it is obligatory to obey the Muslim ruler if it is not in disobedience to Allah, the Perfect and Most High.

² Related al-Bukhārī #6429 & Muslim #2533 from the ḥadīth of 'Abd Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd, رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

³ Translator's note: The obligation to rule by the laws sent down by Allāh.

This speech, which the Shaykh mentioned in his treatise along with similar speech, is the core of the Shaykh's efforts concerning the affair of al-Ḥākimiyyah. But these individuals resemble those who placed their fingers over the verses in the Torah that spoke of stoning the person who commits clear adultery, in order to cover and conceal it.⁴ We ask Allāh for safety and security.

The term "al-Ḥākimiyyah" has come from various sources and it has been examined by more than one writer and thinker. Dr. Muḥammad 'Imārah wrote: "It is a slogan foreign to our ancient heritage and taken from our modern-day deductive reasoning." Other writers, such as Muḥammad Sa'īd al-'Ashmāwī, Aḥmad Kamāl, and Ḥāfīdh Diyāb, have said that this is the exact slogan of the Khawārij, those who rebelled against 'Alī Ibn Abī Tālib, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. The slogan is: "There is no rule except the rule of Allāh."

I say: When I saw that this despicable act from these organizations had affected some of our youth, and that they had been deceived by some of these slogans, I wanted to mention the foundations of the Salafī Da'wah. It is through these foundations that the people of truth are distinguished from others, and that the true Salafī is distinguished from the false claimant.

⁴ 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates:

Jews came to Allāh's Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and mentioned to him that a man and a lady among them had committed illegal sexual intercourse. Allāh's Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to them: What do you find in the Torah regarding stoning?

They replied: "We only disgrace and flog them with stripes." 'Abd Allāh Ibn Salām said to them: "You have told a lie. The penalty of stoning is in the Torah." They brought the Torah and opened it. One of them put his hand over the verse of stoning and read what was before and after it. 'Abd Allāh Ibn Salām said to him: "Lift up your hand." Where he lifted it there appeared the verse of stoning. So, they said: "O Muḥammad! He has said the truth; the verse of stoning is in the Torah."

Allāh's Messenger then ordered that the two persons (guilty of illegal sexual intercourse) be stoned to death, and so they were stoned, and I saw the man bending over the woman so as to protect her from the stones.

Related by al-Bukhari #6841 and Muslim #1699.

For surely, a group of people mount Salafīyyah, while the Salafī Da'wah is free from them. The Ash'arī's claim that they are from Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah, but their claim is false. The Muslim Brotherhood claim that they are from Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah; yet there is a huge difference between Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah and the manhaj which they are upon.

These principles that I will soon mention have been agreed upon by callers to the Salafī methodology from old times until present-day. Before I mention and explain them clearly – in shā' Allāh – I say: the Salafī Da'wah which we call to is not similar to the other Islamic partisan groups which exist today. This is because Salafīyyah is the group of the Muslims. Thus, everyone who believes in the Salafī 'aqidah and actually adheres to it in his life is Salafī. We do not make a distinction between this person and that. We have no connection, except to those placed over our affairs to include the rulers and the scholars. We do not conceal any of our affairs, rather what we are upon is documented in books and heard in tapes. There are no secrets and no guidelines except those guidelines placed by those in charge of the affairs.

We believe that connecting with the scholars of the salaf is a necessary affair; and they are emulated in later generations by the imāms of the Salafī Da'wah in Najd – رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ – and those who were influenced by them during their time and those after them.

Today, we take from our scholars known for the Sunnah, those who are not soiled with the filth of innovation, nor do they cause deception with desire. The scholars are numerous – all praise is due to Allah. They include:

Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn 'Abd Allah Ibn Bāz [d. 1420H]

Shaykh Muḥammad Nāṣir Dīn al-Albānī [d. 1419H]

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn [d. 1421H]
Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Ibn Fawzān al-Fawzān
Shaykh 'Abd Allah Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġudayyān [d. 1431H]
Shaykh Ṣāliḥ 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Aṭram [d. 1428H]
Shaykh 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Abbād
Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn 'Abd Allah Āli Shaykh
Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Ibn Muḥammad al-Luḥaydān

And others from our brothers among the scholars; those upon their methodology. We do not believe them to be infallible, rather they are humans just like other men, who are subject to error and forgetfulness.

Our concern is knowledge. We busy ourselves with seeking knowledge from these scholars and other scholars upon their way. All praise is due to Allah – we read the books of ḥadīth, such as the six books of ḥadīth⁵ and their known explanations. We read the books of tafsīr, those by Ibn Jarīr, al-Baḡawī, Ibn Kathīr, and Ibn Sa'dī. We read the books of 'aqīdah from the salaf, such as the general books of the Sunnah, Kitāb al-Tawḥīd by Ibn Khuzaymah, Kitāb al-Tawḥīd by Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Waḥḥāb, and his other books, may Allāh have mercy upon him. We also read the books of Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn al-Qayyim. We give concern to the books of the Imāms of the Salafī Da'wah such as Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Waḥḥāb up until our present-day from the scholars of the Salafī Da'wah, just mentioned.

We read the books of Fiqh. We encourage others to memorize al-Zād⁶ with the condition that the evidences are known and followed.

5 Translator's note: Shaykh Ibn Bāz said that the six books of ḥadīth are: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Sunan al-Tirmithī, Sunan al-Nasā'ī, and Sunan Ibn Mājah.
6 Zād al-Mustaqnī, which is a summary of al-Muḡni by al-Ḥajjāwī.

We do not criticize those who memorized the texts from the books of Fiqh provided that they look at the evidences. We detest partisanship and completely reject it.

We give concern to Arabic grammar and morphology. We read the books of Arabic literature and poetry.

We invite the people to rectify themselves, their 'aqīdah, their manners, and to strive in worship. We encourage the people to follow the Sunnah and incite them to revive it. We believe that whoever tries to bring about a new Salafīyah upon the mode of the partisan groups has erred, and we disassociate ourselves from them.

This is what we are upon in general terms.

We ask Allāh to grant us firmness, to assist us, to benefit us, and to bring about benefit by way of us. Indeed, He is the Trustee for this affair and All-Capable over it.

We will now present the details of our principles.

I

THE FIRST FOUNDATION

THE IMPORTANCE OF SEEKING LEGISLATIVE KNOWLEDGE AND GAINING AN UNDERSTANDING IN THE RELIGION

Many of the Islamic groups today are detached from legislative knowledge, consequently those who follow these Islamic groups are detached from legislative knowledge. The Salafī Da'wah gives legislative knowledge the utmost importance because it is the primary foundation upon which life is built. The individual and community life cannot be established or rectified except through legislative knowledge. For this reason, Allāh, the Perfect and Most High, commanded His Prophet with knowledge before statement or action.

Allah, the Perfect and Most High, said:

قَاعَزْ أَللهُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لِدُنْيَاكَ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

*Know, that nothing has the right to be worshiped except Allāh.
Seek forgiveness for your sins and for the sins of the believing
men and the believing women.*

-Muhammad 47:19

We have only made knowledge the starting point for the foundation because the paths are numerous, and all of them are paths

of disarray except the path of the Messenger of Allāh, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.
Allah, سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, said:

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ.

Certainly, this is my Straight Path, so follow it, and do not follow other paths, for they will separate you away from His Path.

-Al-Anam 6:153

There is no way to tread the path of the Sunnah except by way of knowledge which reveals the truth and illuminates the path. For this reason, Allah, سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, said:

قُلْ هُدَىٰ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي

Say: this is my way; I invite unto Allāh with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me.

-Yusuf 12:108

His statement: “Say” means: “Say O Muḥammad.” His statement “sure knowledge,” means proofs and evidences, and both of them are beneficial knowledge.

Imām Aḥmad, رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, said:

النَّاسُ إِلَى تَعَلُّمِ الْعِلْمِ أَحْوَجُ مِنْهُمْ إِلَى الطَّعَامِ وَالشَّرَابِ؛ لِأَنَّ الرَّجُلَ يَخْتَارُ إِلَى الطَّعَامِ وَالشَّرَابِ فِي الْيَوْمِ مَرَّةً أَوْ مَرَّتَيْنِ، وَخَاجَتُهُ إِلَى الْعِلْمِ بَعْدَ أَنْفَاسِهِ.

People are in more need of studying knowledge than they are of food and drink, because a person needs food and drink once

*or twice a day, but he requires knowledge equivalent to the number of times he breathes.*⁷

It is necessary to know that seeking knowledge is of two categories:

- I. Knowledge which is incumbent upon each individual.
- II. Knowledge which is farḍ kifāyah (a communal obligation).⁸

The first type of knowledge is that which was mentioned by Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb in al-Uṣūl al-Thalāthah (The Three Fundamental Principals):

اعْلَمْ رَحِمَكَ اللهُ أَنَّهُ يَجِبُ عَلَيْنَا تَعَلُّمُ أَرْبَعِ مَسَائِلَ. الْأُولَى: الْعِلْمُ، وَهُوَ مَعْرِفَةُ اللهِ
وَمَعْرِفَةُ نَبِيِّهِ، وَمَعْرِفَةُ دِينِ الْإِسْلَامِ بِالْأَدِلَّةِ.

*Know, may Allāh have mercy upon you, it is obligatory upon us to learn four matters. The first is knowledge. And it is knowledge of Allāh, knowledge of His Prophet, and knowledge of the religion of Islam with the proofs.*⁹

Imām Aḥmad, رَحِمَهُ اللهُ، clarified that which the Muslim is obligated to learn. He said:

يَجِبُ أَنْ يَطَّلِبَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا يَقُومُ بِهِ دِينُهُ؛ قِيلَ لَهُ: مِثْلُ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ؟ قَالَ: الَّذِي لَا يَسْنَعُهُ جَهْلُهُ؛ صَلَاتُهُ، وَصِيَامُهُ... وَنَحْوُ ذَلِكَ.

A Muslim is obligated to study that knowledge which is necessary for him to establish his religion. It was said to him:

⁷ Ibn al-Qayyim, Madārij al-Sālikīn vol. 2 (Beruit: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1393H/1973CE), 470.

⁸ Translator's note: If it is established by some, the responsibility is removed from the others.

⁹ Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, al-Uṣūl al-Thalāthah wa Adillatīha wal-Qawā'id al-Arba'ah (Dār Ibn Khuzaymah, 1417H), 3.

"What is an example of this?" He responded: "That which the person cannot be ignorant of, such as his prayer, his fasting, and the like."¹⁰

Thus, the affairs which are obligatory upon the person to have knowledge of and implement are the foundations of faith, the laws of Islām, and those affairs which he must avoid (such as the impermissible matters); and that which he needs concerning interactions and the like.

Asking the people of knowledge is from knowledge. Therefore, whoever asks the people of knowledge, then he has sought enlightenment for his religion, and has implemented that which is obligatory upon him.

Allah, *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, says:

فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ

So, ask the people of knowledge if you do not know: With clear signs and Books (We sent the Messengers).

-An-Nahl 16:43-44

This is the category of seeking knowledge that is obligatory upon everyone. As for the second category, which is *farḍ kifāyah* (a communal obligation), then it is knowledge that is other than this. To busy oneself with this knowledge is more virtuous than to busy oneself with supererogatory acts of worship – according to the most correct statement of the scholars.

It has been narrated from Imām Aḥmad, *رَحِمَهُ اللهُ*, that he said:

¹⁰ Ibn Mufliḥ, *al-Mubḍī Sharḥ al-Muqni* vol. 3, (Riyadh: Dār 'Ālim al-Kitāb, 1432H/2003CE), 233.

تَعْلَمُ الْعِلْمَ وَتُعَلِّمُهُ أَفْضَلُ مِنَ الْجِهَادِ وَغَيْرِهِ، مِمَّا يُتَطَوَّعُ بِهِ

Seeking knowledge and teaching it is better than jihād and other than it from the supererogatory acts.¹¹

We have met some of the elders in this land of ours from the commoners who memorize some of the texts of 'aqīdah, such as al-Uṣūl al-Thalāthah, Kashf al-Shubuhāt, and Kitāb al-Tawhīd. They memorize Ādāb al-Mashī Ilā al-Ṣalāh (The Manners of Walking to the Prayer). All of this is from the effects and blessings of the Da'wah of Imām Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, may Allāh have mercy upon him.

Imām Sa'ūd Ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz (the First)¹² and Imām Faiṣal Ibn Turkī¹³ established the study of these books in every masjid in the country of Saudi Arabia. So, these books were memorized by the old and the young, the student and the commoner – and all praise is due to Allāh.

Many elders today have memorized these texts as well. This is one subtlety that has kept this land free from the filth of innovation. If the commoners do not have knowledge of their 'aqīdah, then matters of innovation and shirk would circulate among them. Knowledge is a strong fortress and a sturdy shield which protects the people from a great deal of evil.

As for the path to acquiring knowledge, then it is difficult to specify a particular path that everyone must follow. But the path we

¹¹ Ibn Mufliḥ, al-Furu wa Ma'āluh Taṣḥīḥ al-Furū lil-Mardāwī vol. 2, (First Edition, 1424H/2003CE), 339.

¹² Translator's note: He ruled the First Saudi State from 1803 to 1814 CE.

¹³ Translator's note: He ruled from 1834-1865 CE.

have seen is the path taken by our scholars, may Allāh have mercy upon them all.

Concerning this matter, Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Sa'dī, may Allāh have mercy upon him, wrote (as mentioned in his fatāwā):

Specific books the student should study varies based upon the situation and the location. But in our view, we say in general, the student of knowledge should strive to memorize the wording and repeat it often until the meanings become firm in his heart. He should then move on to the explanation of these foundational books. So, if the student memorized, for example: al-'Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah by Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah; Uṣūl al-Thalāthah and Kitāb al-Tawḥīd by Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb; and in jurisprudence, Dalīl al-Ṭālib and Zād al-Mustaqni'; and in ḥadīth literature, Bulūḡ al-Marām; in Arabic grammar, al-Ājrūmiyyah.

Thus, he strives to understand these texts and reviews the explanations or the books in this field. This is because if the student of knowledge memorizes these foundations, he will have gained complete mastery over understanding them. All of the subjects will be easy for him, including the minor and major subjects.

Whoever, is void of the foundations will not reach his goal. Whoever is diligent upon these beneficial sciences and seeks the aid of Allāh, he will be aided and blessed in his knowledge. But those who tread a path to seeking knowledge other than the beneficial path will waste their time and will only have obtained toil. This has been experienced and witnessed.

II

THE SECOND FOUNDATION

STRIVING HARD TO IMPLEMENT ISLAM

This includes being diligent upon performing the obligations of Islam, such as the five prayers, honoring one's parents, and the like. It includes diligence upon implementing the actions of the Sunnah and reviving it among the people as much as the Muslim is able to do so. This includes the supererogatory prayers, the witr prayer, the night prayer, and the optional acts of worship.

Abū ' Abd al-Raḥmān ' Abd al-Raḥmān al-Salamī, رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, said:

حَدَّثُونَا الَّذِينَ كَانُوا يُقْرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ - يَعْنِي: الصَّحَابَةُ - أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَسْتَقْرِءُونَ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَكَانُوا إِذَا تَعَلَّمُوا عَشْرَ آيَاتٍ لَمْ يُخَلِّفُوا حَتَّى يَتَعَلَّمُوا مَا فِيهَا مِنَ الْعَمَلِ، فَتَعَلَّمْنَا الْقُرْآنَ وَالْعَمَلَ جَمِيعًا.

It has been narrated to us, that those who used to recite the Qur'ān – meaning the companions – they used to study the recitation with the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. When they would study ten verses, they would not go beyond these verses until they had understood and worked by them. Consequently, they learned the recitation of the Qur'ān and applied it at the same time.¹⁴

14 Ibn Jarir, Jāmi' al-Bayān vol. 1 (Mu'assat al-Risālah, First Edition 1420H/2000CE), 80.

This is the methodology of the salaf, may Allāh have mercy upon all of them. They would bolster their knowledge by way of actions, because to apply knowledge is to be safe and secure from the severe threat set against those who abandon obligated deeds.

Allah, سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١﴾ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢﴾

You who have faith! Why do you say that which you do not do? Most hateful it is to Allāh that you say what you do not do.

-As-Saff 61:2-3

Applying knowledge is the opposite of the evil description Allāh gave the Jews in His Statement:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خُمِلُوا التَّوْرَةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أُنْفًا ثُمَّ يَسْتَكْبِرُ بِهَا وَاللَّهُ لَاجِدٍ لِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

The example of those who were entrusted with the Torah and then did not take it on is like that of a donkey who carries volumes [of books]. Wretched is the example of the people who deny the signs of Allāh. And Allāh does not guide the wrongdoing people.

-Al-Jumua 62:5

By applying knowledge, the person will achieve the desired goal. For this reason, Fudayl Ibn 'Iyāḍ said:

لَا يَزَالُ الْعَالِمُ جَاهِلًا بِمَا عِلْمٌ حَتَّى يَعْمَلَ بِهِ، فَإِذَا عَمِلَ بِهِ كَانَ عَالِمًا.

The scholar will remain ignorant until he works according to his knowledge. When he works according to knowledge, he becomes a scholar.¹⁵

The Salafī Da'wah gives great concern to this principle, while inciting the people to busy themselves with it. This is because to busy oneself with knowledge is better than to busy oneself with permissible speech which has no benefit.

If our youth – may Allāh grant them success – were to establish this principle in the correct manner, they would be safe from falling into many matters which do not concern them, and matters which waste their time. For example, following politics and calling the people to political discussions, and the like.

Politics are not the concern of the student of knowledge, rather they are the concern of the leaders and those who they entrusted to these affairs. When a group of young people delve into these matters and put themselves in the position of the rulers, they deviate and their ignorance of these affairs become manifest. This is because they have relied upon stories from foreign newspapers and the broadcasts of the disbelievers; and they trust these reports. And there is no might or power except with Allāh. They base their judgments upon these reports; this happened during the gulf war. Some of them relied upon these news stories and reports, and consequently, they diverted the Muslims and placed terror into their hearts and caused division where there was once unity.

Relying upon these foreign stories and news reports is the goal from what they call “the principles of current events.” When this new

¹⁵ Ibn Jarīr, Jāmi al-Bayān vol. 1 (Mu'assat al-Risālah, First Edition 1420H/2000CE), 80.

current unleashed upon us, knowledge and action was harmed. For this reason, weakness in knowledge and action began to appear among the youth of this 'Ummah. You will see youth understanding current events but not adhering to great matters of the Legislation.

Therefore, it is obligatory upon our youth to fear Allāh and busy themselves with what will bring about great benefit in both the religion and the worldly life. As for busying themselves with that which has no benefit, and rushing into matters that do not concern them; then this is a great calamity which causes a person to miss out on a great deal of good. So again, it is upon the youth to fear Allāh and apply what they learn, so that they may benefit in the religion and the worldly life.

III

THE THIRD FOUNDATION

INVITING PEOPLE TO ALLĀH UPON CLARITY

If Allāh favors the Muslim with knowledge and action, then it is upon him to rush to convey this good to the people upon the path of Da'wah, advice and guidance. This is the action of the Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Allāh, سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, said concerning His Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

Say: This is my way; I invite to Allāh with insight, I and those who follow me. Glorified and Exalted be Allāh; I am not of those who associate others with Him.

-Yusuf 12:108

Allāh, سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, raised the status of the caller higher than the status of others. Allāh, سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, said:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

Who is better in speech than the one who invites to Allāh and does righteousness and says: "Indeed, I am of the Muslims"?

-Fussilat 41:33

As for his reward, then it is a great one due to the great action. A person who invites to Allāh will receive the reward for those who follow him in good, without decreasing their reward at all.¹⁶

And 'Alī, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, narrated that the Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

لَأَنْ يَهْدِيَ اللهُ بِكَ رَجُلًا خَيْرٌ لَكَ مِنْ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَكَ حُمْرُ النَّعَمِ.

"If Allāh gives guidance to somebody through you, it is better for you than possessing red camels."^{17,18}

From that which is necessary to know, it is not a condition for the person who is a caller to Allāh to be familiar with all of the rulings of the Legislation; but it is obligatory that he has knowledge of what he is calling to. Meaning: he must have knowledge of the affair that he is conveying to the people; Islamic legislative knowledge.

The Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

بَلِّغُوا عَنِّي وَلَوْ آيَةً.

"Convey from me, even if it is one verse."¹⁹

If a Muslim knows a verse and understands its meaning based upon the understanding of the scholars and those who explain tafsīr, or if he knows a ḥadīth from Allāh's Messenger, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, or if he

¹⁶ Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates that the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

Whoever summons others to something good, his reward will be equivalent to that of those that follow him, without their rewards being diminished, and whoever summons others to an evil he will bear the sins of all of those that followed him without their sins being diminished in the least. Related by Muslim #2674.

¹⁷ Red camels were the most prized possession to the Arabs.

¹⁸ Related by al-Bukhārī #4210 and Muslim #2406.

¹⁹ Related by al-Bukhārī #3461 from a ḥadīth of 'Abd Allah Ibn 'Amr:

knows an Islamic ruling with the proper understanding of the scholars or their writings, then he should convey it to others; even if he is not knowledgeable concerning other verses, aḥādīth, or rulings.

In his notes on Kitāb al-Tawḥīd, the scholar Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Qāsim, رَحِمَهُ اللهُ، writes:

The caller who invites to Allāh must meet two conditions: (i) his actions must be sincerely for the Face of Allāh and (ii) in agreement with the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and he must have knowledge to that which he is calling to. If he does not fulfill the first condition, he is a person of shirk; and if he does not fulfill the second, he is a person of innovation.²⁰

Starting with the second condition that the Shaykh mentioned, we say: Da'wah is confined by the guidelines of the Book and the Sunnah. No one is able to invite to anything new which was not done by the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. For this reason, the salaf were severe in their criticism of the people of al-samā' (a Ṣūfī ceremony performed as dhikr). Although these gatherings were void of impermissible instruments and although this was beneficial to soften the hearts of some, it was still severely criticized because it has no basis in the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and the actions of the salaf of this 'Ummah, may Allāh be pleased with them.

In Majmū' al-Fatāwā vol. 11, Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, رَحِمَهُ اللهُ، writes:

As for the dhikr ceremonies for the purpose of rectifying the hearts which people gather for, they are either simple nashīd (meaning without any musical instruments), similar to singing,

²⁰ Hashiyat Kitāb al-Tawḥīd p. 55.

or they are clapping, or the likes. These ceremonies are newly invented matters in Islam. This was innovated after the three generations praised by the Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He said:

خَيْرُ أُمَّتِي الْقُرُونُ الَّذِينَ بَعُثْتُ فِيهِمْ ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ.

'The best of my 'Ummah is the generation I was sent among, then those that follow them, then those that follow them.'²¹

This action is despised by the notables of this 'Ummah and it was not attended by the major scholars.²²

The Shaykh, رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, went on to say:

In general, it is upon the believer to know that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not leave anything that would bring us closer to Paradise except that he mentioned it. He did not leave anything which would distance us from the fire except that he mentioned it. If these ceremonies of dhikr were beneficial it would have been legislated by Allāh and His Messenger. Allāh says:

أَلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

'This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.'

-Al-Maeda 5:3

Therefore, if it contains some benefit for the heart but has no basis from the Book or the Sunnah, then it is not given any

21 Related by al-Bukhārī #2652 and Muslim #2533 from a ḥadīth of 'Abd Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd.

22 Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmū' al-Fatāwā vol. 11 (Dār al-Wafā', Third Edition 1426H/2005CE), 591.

attention. Sahl Ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Tustarī said: 'Everything that has no basis in the Book and the Sunnah is falsehood.'

*Al-Dārānī said: 'My heart is afflicted with a stain from the stains of the people and nothing can clean it except two witnesses: the Book and the Sunnah.'*²³

His statement: "...therefore if it contains some benefit for the heart but has no basis from the Book or the Sunnah, then it is not given any attention" is a tremendous refutation upon those who allow plays and skits when giving Da'wah because it has a benefit and the hearts will soften upon hearing and watching them.

So, we say: it is obligatory for the Da'wah to be based upon the Book and the Sunnah. The methods of Da'wah must be based upon what the Prophet, ﷺ and his companions were upon.

²³ Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmū' al-Fatāwā vol. 11 (Dār al-Wafā', Third Edition 1426H/2005CE), 594-95.

IV

THE FOURTH FOUNDATION

GIVING IMPORTANCE TO THE 'AQĪDAH OF THE SALAF IN KNOWLEDGE, ACTION, AND TEACHING

From the unfortunate matters is that we now hear speech that warns against 'aqīdah and gives it no importance. There are groups who view the affairs of 'aqīdah as trivial matters of no consequence. Some of them even say: "What harm will it do us if we affirm that Allāh has a Hand, or if we do not affirm that He has a Hand?!"

This is one of the greatest calamities and tragedies. And the lofty status that 'aqīdah has in the religion is known by all. All of the creation was created for a great purpose which is the worship of Allāh, the Most High.

Allah, *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُونِ

I did not create jinn and mankind except to worship Me. I do not want any provision from them, nor do I want them to feed Me.

-Adh-Dhariyat 51:56-57

And Allāh did not send a Messenger nor send down a Book except to actualize tawḥīd and call the people to it. Allāh, *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, said:

يُرْسِلُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ بِالرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرُوا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاتَّقُونِ ﴿٢١﴾

He sends down the Angels with inspiration of His Command to whom of His slaves He pleases (saying): Warn mankind that none has the right to be worshiped but I, so fear Me.

-An-Nahl 16:2

Allah, *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, said:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ

We did not send any Messenger before you except that We revealed to him that: 'There is no deity except Me, so worship Me.'

-Al-Anbiya 21:25

Allah, *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, also said:

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الصُّلُوعَ

Indeed, We have sent among every nation a Messenger (proclaiming): Worship Allah alone and keep away from al-tāgūt (all false deities).

-An-Nahl 16:36)

The first command in the Noble Qur'ān is the statement of Allāh, *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اَعْبُدُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَاَلْدِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

Mankind! Worship your Lord, Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become righteous.

-Al Baqara 2:21

All of the Messengers began their call by calling their people to the worship of Allāh. Allāh narrates about them:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اَعْبُدُوْا اللّٰهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ اِلٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ

My people, worship Allāh! You have no other God but Him.

-Al-Araf 7:59

The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ gave Da'wah for twenty-three years; thirteen years were in Makkah, and ten of which he was establishing tawhīd, calling to it, fighting against shirk and warning against it. He spent the rest of his life cementing the 'aqīdah of tawhīd, making it firm, and explaining the other aspects of the Islamic Legislation.

All of this is clear proof for how important 'aqīdah is, to study it, learn it, apply it, and call to it. This is because if 'aqīdah is free of any defects, the person will be among the inhabitants of Paradise. There is no doubt about this. This is even if he committed major sins, because the affair of those who commit major sins is with Allāh. If He wills, He will punish them and later admit them into Paradise based upon their tawhīd. And if He wills, He will pardon them out of kindness and virtue from Him.

You are not likely to see anyone with sound 'aqīdah except that righteous actions and acts of obedience are easier for him to bear than carrying a feather. For this reason, giving importance to

rectifying the 'aqīdah is from the noblest of affairs and the greatest of actions.

Tawhīd has many virtues which are not hidden from the student of knowledge and the caller to Allāh. Among its virtues are:

- i. If a person has an atom's weight of tawhīd in his heart, it will prevent him from remaining in the Hellfire forever.
- ii. If a heart is filled with tawhīd, it will prevent a person from ever entering the Hellfire.
- iii. If tawhīd is actualized, it provides complete guidance and safety in this life and the next.
- iv. The most fortunate of people who are granted the Prophet's intercession صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ are those who say: 'Nothing has the right to be worshiped except for Allah' sincerely from their heart.²⁴
- v. The acceptability and completeness of deeds and statements – apparent and hidden – and the reward given for these actions, is based upon tawhīd. Each time tawhīd is strengthened, these matters are also strengthened.
- vi. It frees a person from slavery to created beings, from being attached to them, fearing them, hoping in them, and doing deeds for their sake. This is true power, might, and nobility.

²⁴ Related by al-Bukhārī #99.

There are many other benefits mentioned by Shaykh Ibn Sa' dī in his notes on Kitāb al-Tawhīd.²⁵

Therefore, it is obligatory upon the caller to give concern and importance to the affair of tawhīd. From that which pains the heart is to hear some people say: "Why is this importance given to tawhīd? Should we not give concern to the affairs and condition of the Muslims? The Muslims are being killed left and right, and we call them to destroy the shrines and to remove the masājid that have been built upon graves!"

A person who says this has forgotten, or pretends to have forgotten, the statement of the Imām of the Hunafā' Ibrāhīm, عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

وَأَجْتَنِبِي وَيَوْمَ أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَصْنَامَ ﴿٣٤﴾

And keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols.

-Ibrahim 14:34

The Khaleel of Allāh, the Imām of Tawhīd, the one whom Allāh made a nation by himself, the one about whom Allāh said:

وَأَبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِي وَفَّى ﴿٣٧﴾

And Ibrāhīm the one who fulfilled his obligations.

-An-Najm 53:37

Allāh commanded the Prophet Muḥammad, صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, to follow the tawhīd of Ibrāhīm, عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, and Allāh, سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, tested Ibrāhīm, عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, by commanding him to sacrifice his son, and he complied

²⁵ Ibn Sa' dī, al-Qawl al-Sadīd fī Maqāsid al-Tawhīd (Majmū'at al-Tuḥaf al-Nafā'i's al-Dawliyyah, Third Edition), 23-4.

with the command of Allāh. Ibrāhīm, عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, is the one who shamed the idols with his noble hand, and was severe in his criticism of the polytheists. Despite all of his virtues, he was afraid of falling into shirk. He was afraid of falling into idol worship, which is the greatest form of shirk. So, how about those who are less virtuous than him?

For this reason, Ibrāhīm al-Taymī, رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, said:

وَمَنْ يَأْمَنُ الشُّرْكَ بَعْدَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ!؟

*Who feels safe from shirk if Ibrāhīm did not feel safe from it?!*²⁶

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, said concerning the ḥadīth of Abu Sa'īd al-Khudrī, may Allāh be pleased with him: 'Mūsā said: My Lord! Teach me something I can mention You by and supplicate to You with.' He responded: 'O' Mūsā, say: 'Nothing has the right to be worshipped except Allah.'²⁷

²⁶ Ibn Jarīr, Jāmi' al-Bayān 17/17.

²⁷ Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, narrates that the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام said: 'My Lord! Teach me something by which I may remember You and call upon You.' He said: 'Say: Nothing has the right to be worshipped except for Allāh.' He said: 'My Lord, all Your slaves say that.' He said: 'Say: Nothing has the right to be worshipped except for Allāh.' He said: 'Nothing has the right to be worshipped except for Allāh, my Lord, but I wanted something that is only for me.' He said: 'O' Mūsā, if the seven heavens and all their inhabitants' and the seven earths, were (placed) in one pan (of the Balance) and lā ilāha illa Allāh was placed in the other pan, lā ilāha illa Allāh would outweigh them.'

Collected by Ibn Hibbān in his Ṣaḥīḥ #6218; and al-Ḥakīm in al-Mustadrak #1936. Al-Ḥakīm classed it as ṣaḥīḥ and al-Thahabī agreed with him. Al-Faḥr 11/208, al-Ḥafīdh writes: "It was narrated by al-Nasā'ī with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād."

In Kitāb al-Tawhīd, Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, رحمته الله, says concerning this ḥadīth: "The Prophets need to be reminded of the virtue of the statement: 'Nothing has the right to be worshiped except for Allāh.'"²⁸

Thus, it is obligatory upon us to give importance to this affair. If this affair is sound, then what comes after is much easier, and it will safeguard the actions which follow it. But if this affair is corrupt, then nothing will benefit nor be accepted.

²⁸ Ibn al-'Uthaymīn, *al-Qawl al-Mufīd alā Kitāb al-Tawhīd* (Saudi Arabia: Dār Ibn al-Jawzi, 1423H), 78-87.

V

THE FIFTH FOUNDATION

GIVING IMPORTANCE TO THE PROPHETIC SUNNAH AND BEING DILIGENT ABOUT APPLYING AND CALLING TO IT

The affair most deserving of the Muslim's attention is to follow the example given by the Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He must embody the Prophetic Sunnah in his life as much as he is able. This is because the primary purpose of the Muslim is to obtain guidance which will lead him to the abode of happiness.

Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said:

وَأَنِ تَطِيعُوا نَهْتَدُوا

If you obey him you will be rightly guided.

-Al-Noor 24:54

And He said:

وَأَتَّبِعُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

And follow him perhaps you may be rightly guided.

-Al-Araf 7:158

And He said:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Indeed, in the Messenger of Allāh you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allāh and the Last Day and remembers Allāh much.

-Al-Ahzab 33:21

These verses contain tremendous principles for following the example of the Messenger of Allāh, صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, in statement and actions, and in every aspect of the Muslims' life.

This example will only be followed by the one who desires the meeting with Allāh on the Last Day. His faith, fear of Allāh, hope for Allāh's reward, and fear of His punishment will incite him to follow the example of the Prophet, صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

The nobility and status of the Muslim is in accordance with the extent to which he follows the Prophet, صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The more he implements the Sunnah the higher he elevates.

Thus, the pious predecessors made the benchmark for taking knowledge from someone, his adherence to the Sunnah. Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī says:

كَانُوا إِذَا اتَّوَا الرَّجُلَ لِيَأْخُذُوا عَنْهُ نَظَرُوا إِلَى صَلَاتِهِ وَإِلَى سَمْتِهِ وَإِلَى هَيْبَتِهِ ثُمَّ يَأْخُذُونَ عَنْهُ

When they came to a man to acquire knowledge from him, they would look at his character, his prayer and his appearance;²⁹ then they would take knowledge from him.³⁰

The scholars mention that from the signs that a person loves Allāh is that he follows Allāh's beloved, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. So, he follows his manners, his actions, his commands, and his Sunnah. This benefit is taken from the Book of Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic.

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

Say (O Muhammad to mankind): If you (really) love Allāh, then follow me, Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

-Al-E-Imran 3:31

Al-Hasan al-Baṣrī said:

"Allāh has made the proof for loving Him following the Sunnah of His Messenger, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ."³¹

There are numerous narrations from the text of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, statements of the Companions, and those that followed them, inciting the Muslim to work according to the Sunnah, and inciting him to adhere to it.

From the most famous ḥadīth is the ḥadīth of al-'Irbād Ibn Sāriyyah, may Allāh be pleased with him. He said:

29 Translator's note: al-A'mash said: "They would study everything from the scholar, even his clothes and his sandals." al-Maḥdī, Ādāb al-Sharī ah.

30 Related by al-Dārimī in his Sunan 1/397, article 434 and 435.

31 Al-Lālikā'ī, I ṭiqād Ahl al-Sunnah vol. I (Riyadh: Dār al-Ṭayyibah, 1402H), 70.

وَعظنا رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَوْعِظَةً دُرِفَتْ مِنْهَا الْعُيُونُ وَوَجَلَتْ مِنْهَا الْقُلُوبُ فَقُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ إِنَّ هَذِهِ لَمَوْعِظَةٌ مُودَعٌ فَمَاذَا تَعْهَدُ لَنَا؟ قَالَ: قَدْ تَرَكْتُكُمْ عَلَى النِّيْضَاءِ لِئَلَّا كُنْهَارُهَا لَا يَزِيغُ عَنْهَا بَعْدِي إِلَّا هَالِكٌ مَنْ يَعِشْ مِنْكُمْ فَسِيرِي اِخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ عَصُوا عَلَيَّهَا بِالتَّوَاجِذِ.

*The Messenger of Allāh, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, delivered a moving speech to us which made our eyes flow with tears and made our hearts melt. We said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, this is a farewell speech. What do you enjoin upon us?' He said: 'I am leaving you upon a (path of) brightness whose night is like its day. No one will deviate from it after I am gone but one who is doomed. Whoever among you lives, will see great conflict. It is upon you to adhere to my Sunnah and the path of the rightly-guided Caliphs, and cling stubbornly to it.'*³²

The statement of the Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "It is upon you to adhere to my Sunnah," this means: my path which I am upon from the rulings which I have clarified for you; this includes belief and actions, the obligatory and recommended ones.

As for the definition that the scholars of Jurisprudence have given to 'al-Sunnah: "recommended acts which are not obligatory," then this is a new terminology that is used to distinguish between the obligatory and supererogatory acts of worship.

'Al-Sunnah,' technically, means: that which the Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, was upon, in his worship, interactions, manners, and every aspect of his life.

32 Related by Ibn Mājah #43. Al-Albānī authenticated it in Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Mājah #43.

'Urwah Ibn al-Zubayr, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, said:

السُّنَنُ السُّنَنُ، فَإِنَّ السُّنَنَ قِوَامُ الدِّينِ.

*“The Sunnah, the Sunnah, for surely the Sunnah is the foundation of the religion.”*³³

This means: adhere to the Sunnah, for surely the Sunnah is the foundation of the religion. Ibn 'Umar, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, used to follow the command and example of the Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and give importance to it such that they feared for his sanity.³⁴

Al-Zuhrī, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, said: “Our scholars from the past would say: ‘Adherence to the Sunnah is safety.’”³⁵

Adhering to the Sunnah has many benefits which cannot be enumerated. It is a cause for obtaining the love of Allāh. Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, said in a ḥadith qudsī:

وَمَا يَزَالُ عَبْدِي يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيَّ بِالنَّوَافِلِ حَتَّىٰ أُحِبَّهُ فَإِذَا أَحْبَبْتُهُ كُنْتُ سَمْعَهُ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ بِهِ
 وَبَصَرَهُ الَّذِي يُبْصِرُ بِهِ وَيَدَهُ الَّتِي يَنْطِشُ بِهَا وَرِجْلَهُ الَّتِي يَمْشِي بِهَا وَإِنْ سَأَلَنِي
 لِأَعْطِيَنَّهُ وَلَنْ أُسْأَلَنِي لِأَعْيُنُهُ.

My servant continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory works so that I shall love him. When I love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks.

33 Muhammad Ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī, al-Sunnah (Beirut: Mu'assat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyyah, 1408H), 34.

34 Abū Nu'aym Nāfi' said: "If you were to look at Ibn 'Umar, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, in the way he followed the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, you would say: 'This person is insane!' Related by Abū Nu'aym in al-Hilyah 1/310.

35 Related by al-Dārimī in his Sunan 1/230 article 97; and Abū Nu'aym in al-Hilyah 3/369.

*Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant it to him.*³⁶

Another benefit of adhering to the Sunnah is that it restores the obligatory acts of worship. This is based upon the statement of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

أَوَّلُ مَا يُحَاسَبُ النَّاسُ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمُ الصَّلَاةَ: قَالَ: يَقُولُ رَبُّنَا عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ: انظُرُوا فِي صَلَاةِ عَبْدِي أَمْ نَقَصَهَا، فَإِنْ كَانَتْ تَامَةً كُتِبَتْ لَهُ تَامَةً، وَإِنْ كَانَ انْتَقَصَ مِنْهَا شَيْئًا، قَالَ: انظُرُوا هَلْ لِعَبْدِي مِنْ تَطَوُّعٍ، فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُ تَطَوُّعٌ، قَالَ: أَتَمُّوا لِعَبْدِي فَرِيضَتَهُ مِنْ تَطَوُّعِهِ.

“The first thing for which people will be brought to account on the Day of Resurrection will be their prayer. Our Lord, may He be Glorified and Exalted, will say to His angels – although He knows best –: ‘Look at the prayer of My slave, whether it is complete or incomplete.’ If it is perfect, it will be recorded as perfect, and if something is lacking, He will say, ‘Look and see whether My slave did any voluntary prayers.’ If he did some voluntary prayers, [Allah] will say: ‘Complete the obligatory actions of My slave from his voluntary actions.’”³⁷

Adhering to the Sunnah during the last days carries a tremendous benefit. This is based upon the ḥadīth of 'Utbah Ibn Gazwān. The Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, said:

إِنَّ مِنْ وِرَائِكُمْ أَيَّامَ الصَّبْرِ لِلْمُتَمَسِّكِ فِيهِنَّ يُؤْمِنُ بِمَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرُ خَمْسِينَ مِنْكُمْ قَالُوا: يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ، أَوْ مِنْهُمْ؟! قَالَ: بَلْ مِنْكُمْ.

36 Related by al-Bukhārī #6502 from a ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah.

37 Related by Abū Dāwūd #864 and authenticated by al-Albānī in Ṣaḥīḥ wa Da'īf Abī Dāwūd.

“There will come a time when patience is required of the one who adheres (to Islam), and he will have the reward of fifty of you. They said: ‘Of them?’ He said: ‘No, of you.’”³⁸

The salaf were severe against abandoning some of the Sunnah, and they heavily criticized abandoning it completely, fearing one would come under the general statement of the Prophet ﷺ:

فَمَنْ رَغِبَ عَن سُنَّتِي فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي.

*Whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not from me.*³⁹

For this reason, Imām Aḥmad said:

مَنْ تَرَكَ الْوِتْرَ فَهُوَ رَجُلٌ سُوءٌ، وَلَا يَنْبَغِي أَنْ تُقْبَلَ لَهُ شَهَادَةٌ.

*Whoever leaves off the witr prayer, then he is an evil man and it is not befitting to accept his testimony.*⁴⁰

So, everything that is affirmed in the Sunnah, we strive hard to implement it and teach it to the people. Perhaps Allāh will grant us the reward of the one who revives a Sunnah.

³⁸ Related by Abū Dāwūd #4341 and authenticated by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ wa Da'īf Abī Dāwūd*.

³⁹ Related by al-Bukhārī #5063 and Muslim #1401 from a ḥadīth of Anas Ibn Mālik.

⁴⁰ Bahūtī, *al-Rawḍ al-Murba' (Dār al-Fikr)*, 84.

VI

THE SIXTH FOUNDATION

KEEPING A CLOSE CONNECTION WITH THE SCHOLARS OF THE SUNNAH

The virtue of the scholars and their position in the Islamic legislation is not hidden from anyone. Some people mistake inciting people to have a close connection with the scholars as having partisanship towards them and blind-following them. This is a huge mistake.

Having a close connection with the scholars is a means to benefit from them through their direction and guidance. Blind-following them in matters where the common Muslim is allowed to blind-follow them is for those who do not have the ability to distinguish knowledge-based affairs.

We have affirmed and clarified the benefits of this connection with the scholars, as well as the harms which result from distancing the people from them. When explaining Allāh's favor upon this country (i.e. Saudi Arabia), Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sa'dī, رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ، wrote:

"He has purified this land from innovation and polytheism and He has saved you from the means of polytheism and the paths of destruction due to means which Allāh has made easy. This is by giving you an imām established on the straight path. Your Imām, Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, was from the greatest

Imāms in conveying the Sunnah and the Book. By way of him, his companions, and those like him, the Sunni Muslim is distinct from the innovators, those from the various groups and sects.

Then Allāh established Shaykh al-Islām Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah. He fought against the disbelievers and hypocrites, and other deviants. He displayed the clear Sunnah and its sciences in a way that many before and many after him were not able to do. His students and scholars who followed him traversed his path, until the Shaykh and the Imām of the Arabian Peninsula, Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb came.

He established this affair in a complete manner, and he continued to make jihād against the enemies until pure tawḥīd and the unadulterated Sunnah was spread among the people. He suppressed polytheism and its means, and innovation and corruption; removing it from the Arabian Peninsula. All praise is due to Allah. This land is immersed with Sunnah and tawḥīd and it has been saved from polytheism by way of his appreciated efforts, the efforts of his students, his grandchildren, and helpers.

You will not find in this land – all praise is due to Allāh – a shrine on a grave, seeking help from the deceased, celebration of the Prophet’s birthday, or idol worship. Is this not the greatest favor of Allāh upon you and His Kindness towards you? He sent to you those noble leaders and by way of them, He protected the correct religion. It was actualized and spread until you, your fathers, and your children were raised drinking a pure drink from the source of this Legislation, scooped with the most excellent spoons.

This did not occur through any means from you, or due to your knowledge or intelligence. This only occurred due to the unlimited virtue of Allāh. And you see the other lands stuffed with clear shirk, kufr, and apostasy; filled with innovation, shrines over graves and repulsive manners. So, give thanks to your Lord for this blessing which you are unable to enumerate and show gratitude towards.

Therefore, if we attach to this blessed circle (Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, and Imām Aḥmad, رحمهم الله) with a strong connection, then Allāh will save us from falling into innovation, and keep us from being swept away in the currents of falsehood who wear the cloaks of Sunnah, while the Sunnah is completely free from them.

These faults did not enter upon us until the day we abandoned this manhaj and closed the book on it. We then began to use the methodologies given to us from Egypt, India and other places; while these methodologies are far removed from the methodology of the righteous predecessors.

VII

THE SEVENTH FOUNDATION

STAYING FAR AWAY FROM THE SECRET ISLAMIC ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTIES

We witness organizations break away from the legislated main body of the Muslims by way of their ideology. All of these organizations gather with one goal, which is their hatred of the legislative unity of the Muslim. They view this unity as a unity of ignorance. Among these organizations are the Muslim Brotherhood, Jamā'at al-Tablīg, and Hizb al-Taḥrīr.

I say: Unfortunately, there are people who consider Salafīyah to be a group similar to these groups. You find them striving hard to make Salafīyah like these groups. We turn to Allāh for exoneration from this accusation and we seek refuge in Allāh from this evil action.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allāh have mercy upon him, said:

That ascription which divides the Muslims and exits from the Jamā'ah and turns towards division and the paths of innovation and abandoning the Sunnah is the type of ascription which is

*prohibited. The one who does this is sinning and by way of this, he is disobeying Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ.*⁴¹

Allāh called us “Muslims” in His Book. And it has been affirmed in the Musnad of Imām Aḥmad that the Prophet, ﷺ, said:

*Whoever calls to the slogans of the pre-Islamic Days of Ignorance, then he will be from those who gather in the Hellfire. They said: 'Even if he fasts and prays O' Messenger of Allāh?' He said: 'Even if he fasts and prays. So, use the call of Allāh, He has named you Muslims, believers, slaves of Allāh.'*⁴²

This was the name given at the outset of Islam, the only ascription known was the ascription to Islam during that time. But when innovation appeared, desires became widespread, and innovators became distant from Islam, the pious predecessors had no other recourse except to present a legislative name which would distinguish them from the misguided. Therefore, they use names which appear in the texts, such as the Jamā'ah, al-Firqaq al-Nājiyyah (the Saved Sect), and al-Ṭā'ifah al-Manṣūrah (the Victorious Group). Likewise, they used names which apply to those who adhere to the Sunnah which others have dismissed, such as: Salaf, Ahl al-Ḥadīth, Ahl al-Athar, and Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah.

These Islamic organizations that are established upon principles far from the Book and the Sunnah, in reality, divide the Muslims, and their evil and harms outweigh their good by a great deal. Once they chose a path not associated with the Book and the Sunnah and not derived from the salaf of this 'Ummah, they began to err in this arena. So, beware of these dubious organizations. Do not become a victim like them, O' youth. By Allāh, this poison was never spit in a

41 Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmū' al-Fatāwā 11/514.

42 Related by Aḥmad in his Musnad 37/543 article 22910; and authenticated by al-Albānī in Saḥīḥ al-Jāmi' #2604.

land except that it caused separation, division, hatred and animosity to appear between our children.

If you want proof of this, then compare our condition when we were upon the manhaj of the Shaykh Imām Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb and our present condition. These organizations have caused a rift between the scholars and the youth, and a barrier has been placed between them.

We used to have a great deal of trust for our scholars before – all praise is due to Allāh for this favor – and we used to take from them. The effects of that were clearly distinct from our present condition. During that time, we were upon good and guidance. Today we have uprisings, protests, and the likes.

These organizations have also corrupted the ʿaqīdah of some of our youth. They tarnished the manhaj in their view and convinced them to make their alliance with or disassociation for these organizations. There is no doubt that some of these organizations will capitalize off their misguided followers by having them involve themselves in revolutions and fitnah. O' youth, do not think these impermissible incidents are far off from occurring. May Allāh protect the Muslims from everything hated and protect us from every calamity.

VIII

THE EIGHTH FOUNDATION

ADHERE TO THE BOOK, THE SUNNAH, AND WHAT THE SALAF AGREED UPON IN DEALING WITH OUR IMĀMS & RULERS

We hear and obey the rulers except in disobedience to Allāh.⁴³ We do not view it as permissible to rebel against the ruler regardless of his sins, and we do not get involved in any of their worldly affairs. We advise them according to the legislation with truthfulness and sincerity. The advice should be done in secret, especially in times of fitnah.

We supplicate to Allāh – secretly and openly – to rectify and grant them success, because in their success lies the success of the people and the countries. We hate that anyone should enter upon them except the advisor or the person with a complaint. We disapprove of those who insult or expose them due to the ill effects it has on their followers which could lead to one of two results; People may rebel against them or disobey them in the legislative commands.

Here, we will mention some statements of the Imāms of this Da'wah taken from al-Durar al-Sunniyyah. The scholar Shaykh 'Abd

43 Shaykh Burjis, رَجُلَانِ, has three precious books surrounding this issue: Mu'āmalat al-Hukām fi Daw al-Kitāb wa al-Sunnah (Interacting with the Rulers in Light of the Book and the Sunnah), 'Aqīdah Ahl al-Islām Fīmā Yajibū lil-Imām (The 'Aqīdah of Ahl al-Sunnah Concerning the Obligations Towards the Rulers), and al-Amr bi Luzūm Jamā'at al-Muslimīn wa Imānīhim wa al-Taḥthīr min Mufāraqatim (The Command to Adhere to the Main Body of the Muslims, Their Imām, and the Warning Against Separating From Them).

al-Laṭīf Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Ḥassan Ibn Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Waḥhāb, رَحِمَهُ اللهُ، said in a treatise directed towards one of his brothers who did not display a correct position during the fitnah (of the sons of Faisal, may Allāh have mercy upon them):

There is another issue here, which is extremely devious, by which shayṭān deceives many of the people, thus they begin to delve into matters which divide the Muslim community and causes division in the religion, and is blameworthy in the clear Book. It removes stability in the land and jihād in the cause of Allāh. It causes the people to refrain from paying zakat and it flares up the flames of fitnah and misguidance.

Shayṭān is subtle in tricking the people, causing them to fall into the trap. This begins by making the people believe it is not obligatory to obey the leaders when they command with the commands of Allāh and His Messenger; those commands which protect Islam and its estate. Thus, the synopsis of the plot is to convince the people it is not obligatory to obey the Muslim rulers nor is it legislated.

Then the Shaykh refuted this plot by saying:

These individuals who have been put to trial with this line of thinking are not aware that most of the leaders of the Muslim lands from the time of Yazīd Ibn Mu'āwīyah – with the exception of 'Umar 'Abd al-'Azīz and whom Allāh willed from the children of Banī 'Umayyah – fell into crimes and great incidents and corruption in their leadership over the Muslims. But despite that, the biography of the well-known great imāms did not remove their hands from the obedience of the leaders in their ordering the commands of Allāh and His Messenger from the legislation and obligations of Islam.

The Shaykh then gave some examples. He said:

I give you the examples of al-Ḥajjāj Ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī. He became famous in the 'Ummah for oppression, spilling a lot of blood, violating the sanctities of Allāh, and killing the notables of the 'Ummah such as Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr. He surrounded Ibn al-Zubayr, so he took refuge in the noble Ḥaram. He violated the sanctity and killed Ibn al-Zubayr, although Ibn al-Zubayr obeyed him. The general population of Makkah, al-Madīnah, Yemen, and most of the people in Iraq gave him the pledge of allegiance.

Al-Ḥajjāj was the assistant to Marwān and then to his son 'Abd al-Mālīk. None of the Khalīfahs commissioned Marwān, and no significant reputable decision-making person gave him the pledge; but despite this, no one from the scholars hesitated to obey him and comply with his commands concerning the pillars of Islam and its obligations.

Ibn 'Umar and the companions with him who encountered al-Ḥajjāj did not disobey him in the affairs that established Islam and complete faith. The same was true for those during his era from the tābi'īn, such as Ibn Musayyib, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Ibn Sirīn, Ibrāhīm al-Taymī, and their contemporaries from the nobles of the 'Ummah.

The affair continued to be practiced in similar by the scholars of this 'Ummah and its Imāms. They command the people to obey Allāh and His Messenger; to perform jihād with Muslim leaders, whether they be pious or wicked. This is known from the books of uṣūl al-dīn and the 'aḳīdah.

Banī al-'Abbās conquered the Muslim lands by force with the sword and none of the scholars assisted them. They killed many people and multitudes from Banī Umayyah and their leaders. They killed Ibn Hubayrah, the leader of Iraq. It has been narrated that the killers murdered eighty people from Banī

Umayyah in one day, then placed chairs over their corpses; sat on the chairs and called for food and drink.

Despite all of this, the history of how the scholars – like al-Awzā'ī, Mālik, al-Zuhrī, Layth Ibn Sa'd, and 'Aṭā Ibn Abī Rabāh – dealt with these kings is known to the people who have knowledge.

Another group of scholars like Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, Muḥammad Ibn Ismā'īl, Muhammad Ibn Idrīs, Aḥmad Ibn Naṣr, Ishaq Ibn Rahaway, and their brothers lived during an era where the kings fell into major innovation and denied the Attributes of Allāh. These kings called the people to believe in a similar fashion and put them to trial for this. Some of them like Aḥmad Ibn Naṣr were killed. But despite that, we do not know of even one from amongst them who removed his hand from the obedience of the rulers or viewed it as permissible to rebel against them.

The Shaykh, may Allāh have mercy upon him, went on to say:

If any of these doubts enter your heart, then increase your humility towards Allāh and seek nearness to Him with supplications that have come in the Sunnah. Read what is contained in Tārīkh Ibn Ġanām (The History of Ibn Ġanām) from the speech of Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb as he deals with these issues in his treatises.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Consult al-Durar al-Sunniyyah fi al-'Ajjwibah al-Najdiyyah 8/377-380.

IX

THE NINTH FOUNDATION

OSTRACIZING THE INNOVATORS AND WARNING AGAINST THEM

The scholars have agreed upon ostracizing the innovators and warning against them, as has been mentioned by al-Qāḍī Abū Ya' lā and others. Among the affairs which should be mentioned is that the innovators conceal themselves by wearing cloaks of the Sunnah and hide behind its name while they are engrossed in innovation.

This is clear to everyone who takes a close look at them and observes the ḥizbiyyah they try to conceal, such as rebelling against the Muslim ruler and violating the pledge of allegiance to him. This is the habit of the modern-day innovators and the innovators of old. This is how they spread their innovation and cement it in the hearts.

In al-'Ibānah, Ibn Baṭṭah, may Allāh have mercy upon him, narrates that Mufaḍḍal Ibn Muhalhal – a reliable man from the Sunnah – said:

If you sat with an innovator and he presented his innovation to you, you would be on guard against him and you would flee from him. But rather, he presents to you ḥadīth from the Sunnah during his initial sitting with you, then he enters his innovation into your heart; so, when will it leave your heart?⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Ibn Baṭṭah, al-'Ibānah vol. 2 (Riyadh: Dār al-Rāyah), 444.

Due to this important reason – the innovators placing innovation in your heart and it attaching to it – the salaf would not listen to the speech of the innovators. They were very diligent in avoiding the places where the innovators were speaking.

In al-'Ibānah, Ibn Baṭṭāh also narrates from al-Ma'mar that he said:

Ṭāwūs was sitting when a man from the Mu'tazilah came to speak to him. Ṭāwūs put two fingers in his ears and said to his son: 'My son, put your fingers in your ears. Push them in deep and do not listen to anything he says.' Ma'mar comments: This is because the hearts are weak.⁴⁶

In the aforementioned book, Ibn Baṭṭāh says about himself:

Ibrāhīm Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Abī Yahyā, one of the Mu'tazilah, said to me: 'I see there are a lot of Mu'tazilah among you.' I said: 'Yes, and they believe you are one of them.' He said: 'Will you enter this shop so I can speak with you?' I said: 'No.' He said: 'Why not?' I said: 'Because the hearts are weak, and the religion is not based on who wins the debate.'⁴⁷

Ibn Baṭṭāh relates a narration from Sa'īd Ibn Āmir who said:

Sallām Ibn Abī Muḥī' narrated to us that a man from the people of desires said to Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī: 'O' Abū Bakr, I want to ask you about a word. Ayyūb said while putting his fingers in ears: 'Not even half a word, not even half a word.'⁴⁸

46 Ibid., 446.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibn Baṭṭāh, al-'Ibānah vol. 2 (Riyadh: Dār al-Rāyah), 447.

This is how the salaf were, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. They would avoid listening to the innovators, rather they would also warn against listening to the innovators so nothing of their innovation would penetrate the heart and thus lead the person to destruction. By Allāh, how would their speech be for those who sit with the innovators and attend their lessons?! There is no doubt that their speech would be stronger and more severe.

When Sufyān al-Thawrī arrived in al-Baṣrā, he began to look at the affair of al-Rabī' Ibn Ṣabīḥ and his status amongst the people. So, he asked about his methodology. The people said: 'his methodology is only the Sunnah' (meaning: we only know him for the Sunnah). Sufyān said: 'Who are those in his entourage?' They replied: 'The Qadariyyah.' Sufyān said: 'He is from the Qadariyyah.'

In al-'Ibānah, Ibn Baṭṭāh commented on the statement of Sufyān:

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا نَتَّخِذُوا بِطَانَةً مِّن دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خِيَالًا وَدُوا مَا عَيْنَتْمْ

You who have faith! Take not your biṭānah (advisors, consultants, protectors) those outside your religion, since they will not fail to do their best to corrupt you.

-Al-E-Imran 3:118

Fuḍayl Ibn 'Iyād, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, said:

Souls are like conscripted soldiers; those whom they recognize, they get along with, and those whom they do not recognize, they will not get along with; it is not possible for a person of the Sunnah to incline towards an innovator except due to hypocrisy.

Ibn Baṭṭah commented: Fuḍayl Ibn 'Iyād spoke the truth, may Allāh have mercy upon him, for surely, I have seen that with my eyes.⁴⁹

From the warnings of the salaf against the innovators is the statement of Aḥmad Ibn Sinān who said:

It is more beloved to me to be neighbors with a drummer than an innovator. This is because I can prohibit him and break his drums; while the innovator corrupts the people, the neighbors, and the creation.⁵⁰

Ibn Baṭṭah, may Allāh have mercy upon him, commented:

Allāh! Allāh! O' Muslims, let none of you allow the good thoughts he has of himself and what he knows of his correct methodology to place himself in danger by sitting with the people of desires and say: 'I will enter upon him and debate with him, or I will remove him from his methodology.'

Innovators are more dangerous than the Dajjāl. Their speech sticks harder than scabies and burns the hearts more than firewood. I saw a group of people who used to curse and insult them, then they sat with them to refute them and (the innovators) entered upon them their hidden plots and subtle disbelief until those who used to insult them became from their beloved.⁵¹

We have surely witnessed those in our era saying: 'We will sit with the innovators to advise them and to see the secrets of their methodology, so we can later warn against them.' Then they were

49 Ibn Baṭṭah, al-Ibānah vol. 2 (Riyadh: Dār al-Rāyah), 459.

50 Ibid., 469.

51 Ibid., 470.

caught in their traps and became their helpers against Ahl al-Sunnah. May Allāh grant you and us safety from that.

This is what has been established by the salaf. It is up to the person to fear corruption and misguidance for himself. He must adhere to this manhaj. By Allāh, surely a group of people turned away from knowledge.

In Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq (The History of Damascus), al-Ḥāfidh Ibn 'Asākir said, when speaking about the biography of one of the scholars of the Sunnah, Aḥmad Ibn 'Awn:

Abū Ja'far Aḥmad Ibn 'Awn used to call the innovators to account. He was stern against them and would humiliate them. He would find out their infractions and his damage against them took a toll upon them. He dislodged them when they gained a foothold, and he did not conform to them. They were all afraid of him and on guard against him. He did not flatter any of them and none of them were safe in committing their evil. He exposed their deviance from the Sunnah, announced it publicly, and disavowed himself from them. He publicly rebuked them and his enmity towards them continued until he either destroyed them or they abandoned their evil methodology and 'aqīdah. He continued upon this way, seeking the Face of Allāh until he met Allāh (he died). The effect he had upon the deviants is well-known.⁵²

⁵² Ibn 'Asākir, Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq 5/118.

X

THE TENTH FOUNDATION

WE ADHERE TO THE BOOK AND THE SUNNAH IN ALL OUR SITUATIONS

We adhere to the Book and the Sunnah in all our situations. This is the core of all the principles. It is the governing principle. This is based upon the statement of Allāh, the Perfect and Most High:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَىٰ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٣٦﴾

It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allāh and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed in a plain error;

-Al-Ahzab 33:36

And the Statement of Allāh, the Most High:

إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَخَشِيَ اللَّهَ وَاتَّقَىٰ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ * وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِنْ أَمَرْتَهُمْ لَيَخْرُجُنَّ قُلْ لَا تُفْسِمُوا طَاعَةَ مَعْرُوفَةَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ قُلْ

أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْهِ مَا حُمِّلَ وَعَلَيْكُمْ مَا حُمِّلْتُمْ وَإِن تُطِيعُوهُ تَهْتَدُوا وَمَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَّغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿٥٤﴾

The only saying of the faithful believers, when they are called to Allāh (His Words, the Qur ān) and His Messenger, to judge between them, is that they say: "We hear and we obey." And such are the prosperous ones (who will live forever in Paradise).

And whosoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger, fears Allāh, and keeps his duty (to Him), such are the successful ones. They swear by Allāh their strongest oaths, that if only you would order them, they would leave (their homes for fighting in Allāh's Cause).

Say: 'Swear you not; (this) obedience (of yours) is known (to be false). Indeed, Allāh knows well what you do.' Say: 'Obey Allāh and obey the Messenger, but if you turn away, he (Messenger Muḥammad) is only responsible for the duty placed on him (i.e. to convey Allāh's Message) and you for that placed on you. If you obey him, you shall be on the right guidance. The Messenger's duty is only to convey (the message) in a clear way (i.e. to preach in a plain way).

-Al-Noor 24:51-54

The verses that encourage one to follow the Book and the Sunnah and command with it are extremely numerous. Likewise, the aḥādīth of the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ are numerous. Among those aḥādīth is what has been authenticated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said during his farewell pilgrimage:

وَقَدْ تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ مَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدَهُ إِنْ اعْتَصَمْتُمْ بِهِ، كِتَابُ اللَّهِ.

I have left behind you that which if you cling to it you will never go astray after that: the Book of Allah.⁵³

It has been authenticated from Abū Hurayrah, may Allāh be pleased with him, that the Prophet, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, said:

تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ شَيْئَيْنِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدَهُمَا مَا تَمَسَّكْتُمُ بِهِمَا: كِتَابُ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّتِي، وَلَنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْخَوْضَ.

I have left you with two things, you will not go astray after these two things if you adhere to them: the Book of Allāh and my Sunnah. These two will not separate until they return to me at the pond.⁵⁴

Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, said concerning the statement of Allāh, the Perfect and Most High:

فَمَنْ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَى

Whoever follows My Guidance shall neither go astray, nor fall into distress and misery.

-Ta-Ha 20:123

Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, has guaranteed for the one who recites the Qur'ān and follows what it entails that he will not go astray in this world, and he will not be miserable in the next.⁵⁵

Thus, adhering to the Book and the Sunnah is obligatory. It is obligatory upon those who call to Allāh, the Perfect and Most High,

53 Related by Muslim #1218 from a ḥadīth of Jābir Ibn 'Abd Allāh.

54 Related by al-Ḥākim in al-Mustadrak 1/172 article 319; and authenticated by al-Albānī in Saḥīh al-Jāmi' #5248.

55 Ibn Jarīr, Jāmi' al-Bayān 18/389.

to give this matter great importance and to place it at the forefront. There are some callers – unfortunately – who put their desires and opinions before the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. They call these desires ‘opinions’ to try to free themselves from blame, but the name they give it does not avail them in front of Allāh at all, because the name does not change the reality.

There are those who place the “interest of the Dawah” in conflict with the Book and the Sunnah, thus they put what they believe benefits the Dawah before the text of the Book and the Sunnah. They are those who have gone astray.

They invent lies and attach accusations against the scholars who oppose them and expose their falsehood, because in their estimation this benefits the Dawah.

They do not consider the statement of Allah, سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ:

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بَغَيْرِ مَا كَفَرُوا فَتَدْرَأُوا بِهِمْ وَأَمْثَلُهَا مَا كَفَرُوا ۗ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بَغَيْرِ مَا كَفَرُوا فَتَدْرَأُوا بِهِمْ وَأَمْثَلُهَا مَا كَفَرُوا ۗ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بَغَيْرِ مَا كَفَرُوا فَتَدْرَأُوا بِهِمْ وَأَمْثَلُهَا مَا كَفَرُوا ۗ

Those who annoy believing men and women undeservedly, bear on themselves the crime of slander and plain sin.

-Al-Ahzab 33:58

They do not give this verse any consideration, because in their estimation that which benefits the Da'wah is given precedence. This is a clear mistake and an obvious misguidance. Those who apply this deception must repent to Allāh, the Perfect and Most High, and return to Him in obedience, for surely that which they are upon is clear misguidance and an evil crime. This is what the salaf warned against. And this is propagating the people of desires who the salaf opposed. There is a war and a conflict between them and the salaf, until Allāh brings about His aid for Ahl al-Sunnah and refutes their falsehood. And all praise is due to Allāh for His virtue and favor.

Abū Hurayrah, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, narrated:

When it was revealed to the Messenger of Allāh, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: 'To Allāh belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the Earth, and whether you disclose what is in your own selves or conceal it, Allāh will call you to account for it,' the Companions of Messenger of Allāh, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, felt it hard and difficult. They came to the Messenger of Allah, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and sat down on their knees and said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, we were assigned some duties which were within our power to perform, such as prayer, fasting, jihād, and charity. Then this Verse was revealed to you and it is beyond our power to live up to it.'

The Messenger of Allāh, صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, said: 'Do you want to say what the people of the two Books (Jews and Christians) said before you: 'We hear and we disobey'? You should say: 'We hear and we obey, we seek forgiveness, our Lord and unto You is the return.' So, they said: 'We hear and we obey, we ask Your forgiveness, our Lord, and unto You is the return.'

When the people recited it and it smoothly flowed on their tongues, then Allāh revealed immediately afterwards: 'Allāh burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned.'⁵⁷

Thus, Allāh, سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, has made judging by the Book and the Sunnah a relief from every stress and an exit from every hardship.

And it is incumbent for those who criticize the governments for ruling by man-made laws to know that they also rule by other than what Allāh sent down in their interactions and dealings. I am not

⁵⁷ Related by Muslim #125 from a ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah.

saying they rule by other than what Allāh sent down in all their affairs, but I would not be exaggerating to say they do so in most of their affairs. Thus, fear Allah and take yourselves to account before you are taken to account.

And with Allāh lies all success. May Allāh raise the mention of our Prophet Muḥammad and bless him, his family, and his companions.



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