

No, to The Worship of Men

Written by
Shaykh Mohammad Othman AlAnjari

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The Prophet ﷺ warned his nation against falling into worshipping other than Allah, the Most High. And from that, is blind following and complete submission to the statements and opinions of men, as is in the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: ((So that is their worship of them)), as the answer to the question of ‘Adee ibn Haatim.

‘Adee ibn Haatim رضى الله عنه said: “I came to the Prophet ﷺ while I was wearing a golden cross on my neck, so the Prophet ﷺ said to me: ((Oh son of Haatim, get rid of this idol from your neck)). So I threw it away, and then the Prophet ﷺ began to recite the beginning of Surah Al-Baraa’ah. He recited until he reached the saying of the Most High [that means]: {They have taken their priests and monks as lords along with Allah}1. So I said: “Oh Messenger of Allah, we did not used to worship them.” So the Prophet ﷺ said: ((Didn’t they used to make the prohibited to be permissible, so you followed them in that, and make the permissible to be prohibited upon you, and you followed them in that?)) So I said: “Yes, indeed.” So the Prophet ﷺ said: ((So that is their worshipping of them.))2

So in this hadeeth is a clarification of the danger of blind following and complete submission, like the person who abandons the proofs from the Quraan and Sunnah and instead takes the statement of an imaam, without any clear evidence. A scholar, a shaykh, an imaam, cannot be trusted to never make a mistake, as the Prophet ﷺ said: ((All of the children of Aadam make mistakes))3. So blind following and complete submission is the worshipping of men.

Indeed Huthaifah رضى الله عنه was asked about this verse [that means]: {They have taken their priests and monks as lords along with Allah}. It was said to Huthaifah رضى الله عنه: “Did they used to pray to them?” So Huthaifah رضى الله عنه answered: “No, but they used to make permissible what Allah had prohibited them from, and they followed them in that. And they prohibited

1 Surah At-Tawbah:31

2 Graded Hasan by Shaykh Al-Albaani in Silsalah Saheehah #3293

3 Graded Hasan by Shaykh Al-Albaani in the checking of Mishkaatul-Masaabeeh #2341

them from what Allah made permissible for them, so they followed them in that; so in that they became lords to them.”⁴

Rabee’ ibn Anas narrated from Abul-’Aaliyah about the saying of Allah [that means]: {They have taken their priests and monks as lords along with Allah}. Rabee’ said to Abul-’Aaliyah: “How was the lordship that was with Bani Israaeel?” Abul-’Aaliyah said: “Whatever they ordered us with, we complied with their order, and whatever they prohibited us from, we complied with their prohibition. Even though they found in the Book of Allah what they were ordered with and what they were prohibited from, they sought the guidance of men and threw the Book of Allah behind their backs.”⁵

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said: “Allah said [what means]: {They have taken their priests and monks as lords along with Allah, and the Maseeh Ibn Maryam. But they were only ordered to worship one god; there is none worthy of worship except Him; He is glorified above those who are associated with Him in worship}... The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم explained it to ‘Adee ibn Haatim رضي الله عنه that they made the prohibited to be permissible, and they followed them, and they made the permissible to be prohibited upon them, so they followed them in that. Many followers of those they enslave themselves to, obey some of those they consider to be great, in everything they order, even if it includes permitting the prohibited or the prohibition of what is permissible.”⁶

Indeed the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم clarified the reality of this danger in different places. From those examples is his statement صلى الله عليه وسلم: ((If ten of the Yahood believed in me, there would not have remained on the earth any Yahoodi, except that he would have accepted Islam.))⁷ Al-Bukhaari and Muslim conveyed it in their books in a summarized form: ((... all the Yahood would have believed in me))⁸. Meaning, the Yahood were blind-followers who only believed in what the ten greatest of them believed in, like how Shaykhul-Islaam explained: “All of the Yahood and Nasaaraa are blind-followers in a blameworthy way”⁹.

⁴ Graded Hasan by Shaykh Al-Albaani in Silsalah Saheehah #3293

⁵ Tafsir Ibn Jarir 11/420

⁶ Iqtidaah As-Siraatul-Mustaqeem 1/89

⁷ Shaykh Al-Albaani in Silsalah Saheehah #2162 & a similar version in Saheeh Muslim #2793

⁸ Saheeh Al-Bukhaari #3941

⁹ Majmoo’ Fataawa of Ibn Taymiyyah 4/197

Prophet ﷺ warned Hiraqal [the ruler of Rome]: ((Indeed if you turn away, then upon you is the blame of the Areesiyyeen)). The Areesiyyoon were blind-followers, like the Yahood. So if Hiraqal, who they most respected, believed, then they would have believed also. This is what is in the the letter of the Prophet ﷺ to Hiraqal: ((In the name of Allah, Ar-Rahmaan, Ar-Raheem. From Muhammad, the slave of Allah and His Messenger, to Hiraqal, the great one of Rome. Peace upon who follows the guidance. To proceed: Indeed I invite you to the invitation of Islam, accept and you will be safe. Allah will give you your reward twice. But if you turn away, then upon you is the sin of those Areesiyyeen [who follow you]. {Say: Oh People of the Book, come to a word we can agree upon, that we only worship Allah and we do not associate any partners with him in worship. And we do not take each other as lords along with Allah. And if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we are Muslims. }¹⁰))¹¹

The methodology of a Muslim in this life is following the Book and the Sunnah upon the understanding of the Noble Companions, like Allah said [what means]: {Say: Oh mankind, indeed I am the Messenger of Allah to all of you. The one who owns everything in the heavens and the earth. There is none worthy of worship except Him; He gives life and causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the illiterate Prophet who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him so that you may be guided}¹².

The Prophet ﷺ established the meaning of following the Truth, with anyone who has the truth with him. Like in what came in the hadeeth of Abu Sa’eed Al-Khudry, when a bedouin came to the Prophet ﷺ to recover a debt he was owed. So the bedouin was so harsh upon the Prophet ﷺ to the point that he said to him: “I will embarrass you if you do not pay me back.” So the Companions scolded the bedouin and said to him: “Woe to you! Do you know who you are speaking to?!” So the bedouin said: “Indeed I am seeking my right!” So then the Prophet ﷺ said to his companions: ((Would you not be with the one who has the right?)) Then the Prophet ﷺ sent to Khawlah bint Qais and said to her: ((If you have dates, then loan them to me, until my dates come and I will repay you.)) So Khawlah said: “Yes of course Oh Messenger of Allah.” So she gave the loan to the Prophet ﷺ so he paid back the

¹⁰ Surah Aali-Imraan:64

¹¹ Agreed upon in Saheeh Al-Bukhaari #7, 2940, 4553 & Muslim #1773

¹² Surah Al-‘Araaf:158

bedouin and fed him. So the bedouin said: “You have fulfilled your debt, may Allah fulfill for you.”¹³

So this is a clear foundational stance from the Prophet ﷺ with his companions when they scolded the Bedouin, as in what came in the hadeeth: So the Companions scolded the bedouin and said to him: “Woe to you! Do you know who you are speaking to?!” The companions wanted good (may Allah be pleased with all of them) and that was to defend the honor of the Prophet ﷺ. However, the Prophet ﷺ was NOT pleased with that defense, and he said to them: ((Would you not be with the one who is in the right?)). The wording of the Prophet ﷺ indicates encouragement and ordering to take a stance with the one who is in the right, no matter who they are. This is laying the foundation for the methodology of a Muslim that he goes with the truth wherever it is and whoever it is with.

We benefit from this hadeeth that if a Sunni Scholar opposes a proof with his statement, opinion, or action, then it’s obligatory upon the Muslim to be with the truth, and not with the scholar. The Muslim is with the truth wherever it is. Meaning, if a Sunni scholar makes an error, it’s not permissible to aid his error and agree with it - like how some of the blind-followers, and the callers to the way of blind-following do.

So following the proof is the methodology of life. The guidance of the Prophet ﷺ was clear - even with the harshness of the bedouin’s request, and proclaiming it in front of the crowd, and saying رضي الله عنه: “I will embarrass you”. There was nothing from the Prophet ﷺ except aiding the truth. That was different than how some people oppose the Sunnah by rejecting the truth, using their statement as an excuse: “You aren’t qualified to say a scholar made a mistake”, or “Indeed you have emboldened the younger ones by your pointing out of a scholar’s mistake”. So standing by an error with these futile excuses is an opposition to the clear Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ: ((Would you not be with the one who is in the right?))

Yes, a scholar could oppose the truth due to misinterpretation and thus his statement agrees with the statement of some of the sects, like the khawaarij or those who distort Allah’s names and attributes, as did Al-Haafith Ibn Hajar رحمه الله when he agreed with the people of rhetoric in some issues. And Al-

¹³ Graded Saheeh by Shaykh Al-Albaani in Saheeh At-Targheeb wa At-Tarheeb #1818

Albaani commented on that by saying: “They want a scholar without any flaw, [like the line of poetry:]

*You want a friend without fault *** and does wood burn without smoke?*

This is impossible. Al-Haafith was Al-Haafith [the memorizer of hadeeth and its sciences], whether they like it or not. The fact that he misinterpreted some verses, hadeeth, or attributes of Allah, does not take away that title in regards to the characteristics he has [of memorizing hadeeth]. So it’s sufficient for us to acknowledge him for his knowledge and virtue. Not only in hadeeth, but in hadeeth, linguistics, poetry, knowing the opinions of the scholars: the scholars of rhetoric, scholars of fiqh, and the sects, until the end of the list. What is correct is that he has some deviation, but not complete deviation from the methodology of the Salaf.” - end of Shaykh Al-Albaani’s statement.¹⁴

That is keeping in mind that to expose the mistake of a Sunni scholar does not mean declaring him to be an innovator. ((All of the children of Aadam make many mistakes))¹⁵. A scholar is not without fault, while we recognize the status of a Sunni scholar, his right, and preserving his good status. But the real problem is with those who have been affected by the disease of blind-following and fanaticism - even if he’s Sunni. He agrees with the correct methodology, theoretically (notice with me, he *theoretically* agrees). So he will say to you: “Everyone’s statement is accepted or rejected, except the Prophet ﷺ”¹⁶. However, in practical application, and in reality, he is not pleased with this correct methodology. Instead, you find him fanatical, and he will say to you like what they say in the Arabian peninsula: “It’s a goat, even if it flies.” [Meaning, even if they see the truth with evidence, they refuse to acknowledge the reality.]

Indeed the scholars of the Sunnah have clarified this practical meaning, by being specific:

Like what Al-Allaamah Al-Albaani رحمه الله said regarding Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah in a statement without any stuttering: “Why is it that we’re

¹⁴ Silsilah Al-Hudaa wa An-Noor; tape #285

¹⁵ Graded Hasan by Shaykh Al-Albaani in the checking of Mishkaatul-Masaabeeh #2341

¹⁶ Narrated from many of the Salaf; from them: Ibn Abbaas, Mujaahid when he said: “Everyone after the Prophet has his statements accepted and rejected, except the Prophet ﷺ”, Al-Hakam ibn Utaybah, Ahmed, Maalik

taking Ibn Taymiyyah as a prophet?!... he’s a scholar from among the scholars who is sometimes wrong and sometimes right”¹⁷. - end of quote.

Likewise Al-Allaamah Ibn Baaz رحمه الله clarified with his statement: “Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله, Ibnul-Qayyim, Imaam Ash-Shaafiee, Imaam Maalik, Imaam Abu Haneefah, Imaam Ahmed, Imaam Ath-Thawri, Imaam Ishaq ibn Rahwuyah, Imaam Al-Awzaa’ee, and other than them from the imaams, all have tremendous status among us, the People of Sunnah. They know their virtue, striving, and knowledge; there’s no doubt in this. But the fact that we consider them great and recognize their status, does not necessitate that we agree with what mistakes could have been made by some of them. This is because every imaam has some mistakes and errors. Every imaam has his statements accepted and rejected, except the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, because indeed his statement is the truth.”¹⁸ - end of quote.

Al-Haafith Ibn Katheer also said about his teacher, Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله: “He was from the great scholars, and from those who err and are correct. But his mistakes in comparison to what he was correct about, is like a drop in a sea.”¹⁹

Indeed Al-Albaani رحمه الله clarified the meaning of following, for whoever wants to follow the truth, with clear language, in his statement رحمه الله: “The stance of a Muslim in affairs of difference of opinion is: First: that you hear the proof from each of the differing parties and free yourself from following your desires. Then, think about the proof from both sides, and follow what the proof points you towards. And do not say: “This is a shaykh and that is a shaykh; this is a scholar and that is a scholar”, and then you take from whoever most fits your desires! It is necessary to have sincerity whenever the scholars differ about an issue. Second: That you take from the principle <leave what you doubt and take what you don’t have doubt about>. And if the issue doesn’t allow you to stay on the safe side, then the statement of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is applied: ((Ask your own heart, even if the people who give fataawaa give you a fatwaa)). The kind of heart mentioned here is the heart of a believer in Allah, who recognizes that Allah is watching over him.”²⁰ - end of quote, summarized.

¹⁷ Silsilah Al-Hudaa wa An-Noor; tape #73

¹⁸ Fataawaa Noor ‘Alaad-Darb 14/208

¹⁹ Al-Bidaayah wa An-Nihaayah 14/160

²⁰ Silsilah Al-Hudaa wa An-Noor; tape #19

After this clear, rectifying statement from Al-Allaamah Al-Albaani for the meaning of following the truth, you will find that those sick with the disease of blind-following, from among their different types, will find fault in the statement of who said: “Indeed the Sunni scholar so-and-so - specifically mentioning his name - had indeed gone astray from the truth in this issue and agreed with the khawaarij in this part”. This is similar to when the Prophet ﷺ refuted the action of Khalid ibn Al-Waleed رضي الله عنه, when the Prophet ﷺ said: ((Oh Allah indeed I free myself from what Khalid has done.))²¹

The statement of the Prophet ﷺ ((indeed I free myself from what Khalid has done)), is a freeing of himself partially, for his specific action only; not that he was freeing himself from Khalid. Meaning, “Oh Allah, indeed I don’t agree with Khalid رضي الله عنه in this action of his and this mistake of his.” The Prophet ﷺ said this openly in front of the people, even though he knew Khalid ibn Al-Waleed رضي الله عنه did not intend to make the mistake. Meaning, Khalid did not intend to kill them after they entered Islam; rather he tried to come to a decision on the battlefield and was wrong because he did not know their intent when they said: “we apostatize from our previous religion” [in their native dialect]. So Khalid رضي الله عنه did not understand that they had entered Islam. So, due to that, the Prophet ﷺ excused Khalid and did not obligate anything upon him, he did not even remove him from his leadership role. As for freeing oneself from someone completely, then that means removing the person from the religion, like in the statement of Ibraheem عليه السلام: {I am free from you and from what you worship along with Allah}²². So there is a difference between freeing oneself from someone or something completely and between freeing oneself from someone or something partially. Freeing oneself partially means from only a specific action or statement, not from the individual. So when a Muslim frees himself from the mistake of someone who made a mistake, like how the Prophet ﷺ freed himself from what Khalid رضي الله عنه did, then this is a Sunni thing to do. And in it is reviving the Sunnah and killing off bidah and error.

So if someone says: “Shaykh Ibn Uthaymeen رحمه الله made a mistake in this issue”, or “Shaykh Abdul-Muhsin Al-Abbaad حفظه الله made a mistake in his statement”, or “Shaykh Rabee حفظه الله made a mistake in his statement”, this specific mentioning of a shaykh by name does NOT mean the shaykh is being

²¹ Saheeh Al-Bukhaari #4339, 7189

²² Surah Al-Mumtahinah:4

considered an innovator or removed from the circle of Ahlus-Sunnah - like how the Haddaadiyyah sect and those upon their way do. Rather, the Sunni scholar has their honor preserved and their right recognized. The Sunni believes that the Sunni scholar is not infallible; sometimes he makes mistakes and sometimes he is correct. And the Prophet ﷺ ordered us to: ((Ask your own heart, even if the people who give fataawaa give you a fatwaa)).

And it's upon the Muslim to follow the order of the Prophet ﷺ in the hadeeth of Waabisah رضي الله عنه, when The Prophet ﷺ said: ((Come closer oh Waabisah)) “So I came closer to him until my knee touched his knee.” The Prophet ﷺ said: ((You came to ask about righteousness and sin.)) I said: “Yes.” So the Prophet ﷺ put three of his fingers together and began tapping them on my chest, and said: ((Oh Waabisah, ask your own heart; righteousness is what you feel at ease with and your heart feels at ease with, and sin is what makes your heart uncomfortable and confuses your chest; even if the people give you fataawaa and seek fataawaa from you.))²³

This is the methodology of following the proof, and with it, the bindings of blind-following are broken, and likewise, the control over the slave with the sword of blind-following. All praise is for Allah that the Muslims have emerged from the times of blind-following and darkness. Indeed it was that a shaykh, scholar, or student in those times would be restricted to the fiqh of Abu Haneefah, Malik, Ash-Shaafiee, or Ahmed, and the truth was restricted by them. The people made the principles of the mathhab the only way to study the practical issues. They prevented the student of knowledge from returning to the Book and the Sunnah. It was an open dawah to stick with blind-following and locking the door of following the proof and authentic narrations. This is an innovated methodology. This way did not exist during the time of the Companions رضي الله عنهم, nor during the time of the Taabieen nor the time of the followers of the Taabieen. Keeping in mind that these generations had their knowledge-based status in the legislation, like how the the Prophet ﷺ said: ((The best of my ummah is the generation in which I was sent, then those who come after them, then those who come after them, then after them will be a people who love being obese, they will offer their testimony before they are asked for it.))²⁴

²³ Graded authentic by Shaykh Al-Albaani in Saheeh Al-Jaami As-Sagheer #948

²⁴ Saheeh Muslim #2534

The scholars have indeed spoken about this reality from the Shariah, like what was conveyed by Ash-Sh'abee: "I have not seen a people with more knowledge, nor more kind, nor withholding from the affairs of this worldly life, than the companions of Abdullah [ibn Mas'ood رضي الله عنه], and if it were not that the Sahaabah preceded them, we would not have given anyone precedence over them."²⁵

In general, blind-following is a bidah and sin, and if a person believes that a scholar has the right to legislate in the religion, or the right to make something halaal or haraam, then that would be major disbelief. So the difference is in the belief: Whoever believes that the man's speech is part of the religion and he worships based on it, and he has the right of issuing a ruling, and that he must be followed unrestrictedly, like the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, then this is major disbelief. As for sticking to the statement of a scholar who he believes is not infallible, but he still sticks to his statements because of blind-following, then this is a bidah and haraam. It could happen that a Muslim must turn to blind-following out of dire necessity, similar to when someone was forced to eat a dead animal or drinking alcohol out of necessity. Meaning that this situation is an exception and should not be used in comparison. So the foundational principal with a Muslim is following the evidence and proof, not complete submission and blind-following of men.

The Muslim is a follower of the proof and firm upon the narrations. Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked: "Which people are the best?" So the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: ((Me and those with me, then those who are upon their narrations, then those who are upon their narrations)), then it is as if he صلى الله عليه وسلم refused to mention who comes after.²⁶

So the narrations are our path to the correct understanding. An example of this is the hadeeth of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq رضي الله عنه when he explained a dream with his own opinion and understanding, while he was with the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. As-Siddeeq asked: "Am I correct oh Messenger of Allah, or am I mistaken?" So the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: ((You were correct in some of it, and wrong in some of it.))²⁷

²⁵ Al-M'arifah wa At-Taarikh 2/577

²⁶ Graded Hasan by Shaykh Al-Albaani in Silsalah Saheehah #1839

²⁷ Agreed upon in Saheeh Al-Bukhaari #7046 & Saheeh Muslim #2269

So there is nothing to prevent describing the statement of a Companion رضي الله عنه as being mistaken, as long as it is not in a blaming or embarrassing way. An example of that is if a Companion opposes the opinion of the majority of the Companions that is based on the proof and evidence.

Indeed the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم clarified that Muaath رضي الله عنه had made a mistake, while he was a scholar, faqeeh, and teacher of the Quraan. And the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم clarified the correctness of the youth رضي الله عنه who had only memorized from the Quraan Suratul-Faatihah. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم approved of that youth's understanding and action when he backed out of the congregational prayer and prayed by himself. This was in the hadeeth of Jaabir ibn Abdullah رضي الله عنهما; he said: "Muaath used to pray Ishaah with the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, then return back to pray with his companions afterwards. So one day, Muaath came back and lead them. There was a youth from his people praying behind him in the congregation. When Muaath prayed for too long for the youth, he prayed and left, grabbed the harness of his camel, and went. Once Muaath finished praying, he was informed of what happened, so he said: "Indeed this is hypocrisy; I will inform the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم." So Muaath informed the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about what the youth did, and then the youth explained: "Oh Messenger of Allah, Muaath stays with you a long time, and then he comes back and leads us in prayer for a long time." So the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: ((Are you a causer of fitnah oh Muaath?!)) And the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to the youth: ((Oh my nephew, what do you do when you pray?)) So the youth answered: "I recite Suratul-Faatihah, I ask Allah for Jannah, and I seek refuge in Allah from the Hellfire. And indeed I don't understand your muttering, nor the muttering of Muaath." So the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied: ((Indeed me and Muaath speak of these two topics, or thereabout.)) The youth said: "Muaath will know [that I'm not a hypocrite] when the enemy advances." Indeed they knew that the enemy was getting closer; the enemy did advance, and the youth was martyred. So afterwards the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to Muaath: ((What did our opponent do?)) Muaath replied: "Oh Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, he was true to Allah, and I spoke inaccurately; he was martyred."²⁸

The Muslim who is hopeful for salvation and success in Paradise makes justice, fairness, and abandoning desires his way and what he wants to be

²⁸ Shaykh Al-Albaani said the chain is good in Sifatus-Salaat p.106; the basis of the hadeeth is in Saheeh Al-Bukhaari & Saheeh Muslim

upon. He does this to achieve the pleasure of Allah the Most High by following the legislated proofs.

Ibn Abdul-Hakam said: “My eye has never seen anyone like Ash-Shaafiee. I arrived to Medinah and I saw the companions of Abdul-Melik ibn Al-Maajashoon, and they were extreme about their companion. They said: “Our companion is the one who cutoff Ash-Shaafiee.” So I met Abdul-Melik and asked him about an issue, and he answered me. So I asked: “What is the evidence?” He replied: “Because Maalik said such and such.” So I said silently to myself: “What is this?! I ask you for the evidence, and you say: “My teacher said!” Indeed the evidence is against you and your teacher.”²⁹

Ishaaq Al-Kousaj said: “Abu Wahb informed me that Ibn Al-Mubarak said: “The people of Koofa argued with me about [drinking] intoxicants, so I told them: It is Haraam. So, they denied this, and they named from the Tabi’een as men who they follow [in this affair], such as Ibraheem and his counterparts, and they said: [Are you claiming] “Did they meet Allah The Most High while drinking what is forbidden?!” In response to them, I told them: “Do not name your men to me while establishing an argument. If you refuse, then what do you say about [the views of] Ataa’ and Tawoos and their counterparts from Al-Hijaaz? They said: “They are from the best of people”. So, I said: “What do you say about [earning] dirhams from dirhams [meaning Riba-interest]?” They said: “Haraam”. I said to them: [Are you claiming] “They met Allah the Most High while they eat from Haraam?!” “Leave off naming men while establishing an argument.”³⁰

And it was said to Ahmed ibn Hanbal رحمه الله that Ibnul-Mubarak said such and such. So Ahmed said “He did not descend from heaven”. And it was said to him: Ibrahim bin Adham said, so he said: “You have brought me the minor structures of the road, adhere to the foundations.”³¹

I say: If the methodology of the scholars of the past, the recent times, and the present, is to know the legislated rights of a scholar. We respect their diligence and their scholarly standing, as The Prophet ﷺ said: ((And he knows the rights of our scholar)).³²

²⁹ Manaaqib As-Shafi’ee, by Al-Bayhaqee(208/1)

³⁰ Masail of Imaam Ahmed and Ishaaq ibn Rahawaih, by Al-Kawsaj #3537

³¹ Ibn Al-Jawzee in Talbees Iblees p.126

³² Graded Hasan, Saheeh Ul-Jaami’ Al-Sagheer of Al-Albanee #5443

And the meaning of the hadeeth was clarified to us by Shaykhul-Islam, with his saying: “After having allegiance to Allah and His Messenger, Muslims must also have allegiance to the believers, as it is mentioned in the Quraan. And especially, allegiance to the scholars who are the inheritors of the Prophets, whom Allah has made to the level of stars to guide the Muslims in the darkness of the land and the sea; the Muslims have agreed upon their guidance and knowledge. Every nation before Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, its scholars were the worst of them. As for the Muslims, their scholars are the best of them, they are the successors of the Messenger ﷺ in his Ummah. They are those who revive what has died from his Sunnah, and through them, the Qur’an stood firm and they stood firm with the Qur’an, and through them the Qur’an was spoken and they spoke with it [calling to its correct teachings and meanings]”³³

And Imaam Al-Aajurree said of the scholars, in the introduction to his book “The Manners of the Scholars”: “Allah The Mighty and Majestic, and may His Names be glorified, chose from His creation whom He loves and guided them to Eemaan. He then chose from among all the believers whom he loves and preferred them, so He taught them the Book and wisdom, and gave them understanding in the religion, and gave them knowledge of interpretation and favored them over all other believers. In every time and era, He raised them with knowledge and adorned them with gentleness. Through them, halal was known from that which is haraam, and the truth from falsehood, the harmful from the beneficial, the good from the ugly. Their virtues are great, and the risk of harm to them is tremendous, they are the inheritors of the Prophets, and they are the coolness to the eyes of the Awliyaa’. The fish in the seas seek forgiveness for them, and the angels lower their wings to them [out of respect]”³⁴

But this does not mean that we blindly follow them, or agree with them in their slip-ups or their mistakes. This is from what Allah hates. While we know their due right, we do not agree with any of them in their errors.

Al-Shaatibee said: “Indeed, using men as the source of rulings, without paying attention to the fact that they are only a means to reach the legislated ruling, is misguidance.”³⁵

³³ Raful-Malam by Ibn-Taymiyyah p.8

³⁴ Ahlaqul-‘Ulama by Al-Aajurree p.15

³⁵ Al-‘Itisaam by Al-Shaatibee 2/872

Ibnul-Qayyim said: “The compilers of the Sunnah coupled together the corruption of taqleed and their nullifying it, and explaining the slip-ups of the scholars, to show the corruption of blind-following.”³⁶

This is what the scholars of the Sunnah were upon throughout the ages regarding the Sunni scholar who made a mistake and slipped-up.

Look at the words of Shaykh Ibn Baz and his clear position on the mistake of his teacher, Shaykh Ibn Ibraheem, رحمهما الله, when they said to Shaykh Ibn Baz - as is in the tape “Al-Dama’ Al-Baziyya” [It was asked to Shaykh Ibn Baz]: Shaykh Ibn-Ibraheem does not differentiate between someone who rules by other than what Allah has revealed, believing it is permissible, and the one does that while not believing it is permissible. This is the distinction in the affair of istihlaal [making something permissible that Allah has forbidden], that is well known to the scholars.

So, Shaykh Ibn-Baz replied with the following: “Shaykh Muhammed Ibn Ibraheem is not infallible. A Scholar can be wrong or he can be correct, a scholar is not a Prophet nor a Messenger, he errs at times and other times he is correct. Shaykhul-Islam Ibn-Taymiyyah is the same, and so is Ibnul-Qayyim, and Ibn-Katheer, and other than them from the scholars. All of the four Imaams were wrong at times and were correct at times. We take from their statements that which is in accordance to the truth, and that which is in opposition to the truth, the speaker is refuted even he is great in status.” [End of quote from the tape “Al-Dama’ Al-Baziyya”]

Shaykh Ibn-‘Uthaymeen said that likewise from Al-Hafith Ibn Hajar and Al-Hafith Al-Nawawee, رحمهما الله, that there is something in their words that corresponds to the words of the people of innovation. He said: “There are people who belong to a certain sect whose banner is innovation, like the mu’tazilah for example. And from them is Al-Zamakhsharee. So, Al-Zamakhsharee is a mua’tazilee. He describes those who affirm Allah’s lofty attributes as hashawiyah mujassimah [describing Allah with metaphysical properties] and accusing them of deviation. So, he is a mua’tazilee. Therefore, anyone who reads his book ‘Al-Kaashif’ in explanation of the Qur’an, must be cautious about his words in the topic of the Attributes of Allah. However, in terms of linguistic connotations, his book is very useful in that regard. But it is dangerous for a person who does not know anything with regards to the names and attributes of Allah.

³⁶ ‘Ilaam Al-Muwaqi’een by Ibnul-Qayyim 2/132

But there are also well-known scholars who do not ascribe to a certain sect of the people of innovation, but there is something in their speech from the speech of the people innovation such as Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalanee and Al-Nawawee, رَحِمَهُمَا اللهُ. So, some foolish people have completely slandered them from every angle so much so that it was said to me that some of the people say: “Fathul-Baari must be burnt, because Ibn Hajar is Ash'aree!” This is not true, because I do not know today of anyone who has done what these two men did in what they put forward for Islaam in the topic of the Messenger’s ahadeeth, as they presented it. This indicates that Allah the Glorified and Most High with his power and strength - and I do not claim to know what Allah wanted – [but it is as if He] accepted them: what their compilations have had of acceptance with the people, among the students of knowledge, and even for the general public. Now, the book ‘Riyadh As-Saaliheen’ is read in every sitting of knowledge and read in every masjid, and people benefit greatly from it. And I wish that Allah would make for me a book like this book, that all could benefit from in their houses and in their masaajid. So, how can it be said about these two: that they are deviant innovators, that it is not permissible to say to have mercy on them, that it is not permissible to read from their books, and it is necessary to burn ‘Fath Al-Bari’ and ‘Sharh Saheeh Muslim’?! Glory be to Allah! I say to these with my own voice and in my writing:

blame them less, or stop at the place that they stopped

Who could have put forward to Islaam and the Muslims what these two men did, except if Allah willed? I say: Allah forgive al-Nawawi, Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalaanee, and those who are similar to them, whom Allah has benefited Islaam and the Muslims by way of them. Say “aameen” to that.”³⁷ – end of quote.

It is also necessary that I say: Do not bring people out from the blind-following of Maalik to the blind-following of Shafee’, or from the blind-following of Shafee’ to the blind-following of Ahmed, or from the blind-following of this Shaykh to the blind-following of that Shaykh. Instead, we want to invite the Muslims to follow the noble Companions in their correct understanding of the evidences of the Qur’an and the authentic Sunnah, as Imaam Ahmed said: “Indeed it is following and the abandonment of desires.”³⁸

³⁷ Tape: Silsilatul Liqa’at Al-Babul Maftooh #43

³⁸ Usool Us Sunnah of Imaam Ahmed Ibn Hanbal p.17

And our knowledge of the rights of the Sunni scholars, is as in his saying صلى الله عليه وسلم : ((He knows the right of our scholars)). I say: The rights of the scholars are known and understood from the guidance of the Companions. Like as it has come from ‘Ammar bin Abi ‘Ammar that Zaid bin Thaabit rode one day, so Ibn-Abbas took hold of his mount [in a helpful way]. So, he said, Don’t [do that] Oh cousin of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم. So, Ibn Abbas responded: “This is how we have been commanded to be with our scholars and our elders.”³⁹

So, the standard and the measuring scale for knowing (the rights of the scholar) is in referring to the guidance of the Companions رضي الله عنهم أجمعين with their scholars; it is the way to know the limits of the rights of the scholars by Islamic law. And we are not to follow the way of Sufism and the people of innovation and Islamic political parties in how they treat their scholars. And refuge is sought in Allah.

And to further clarify to you even more from the guidance of the Companions: Look at the Scholar of the Ummah [Ibn Abbas], and how he was with Zaid, رضي الله عنهم, to highlight the rights of the scholar. On the other hand, see what Ibn Abbaas said himself in another situation, in what was reported from Ibn Abi Mulaikah, that ‘Urawh said to Ibn Abbaas: “Woe to you; you have gone astray! You order us to do ‘Umrah in the ten days [of Thul-Hijjah], but there is no ‘Umrah then.” So Ibn Abbaas said: “Oh ‘Uray [a nickname for ‘Urwah], ask your mother [Asmaa bint Abu Bakr].” Then ‘Urwah said: “Indeed Abu Bakr and ‘Umar did not say to do ‘Umrah then, and they were more knowledgeable about the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم than you, and more close in following it.” So Ibn Abbaas replied: “From this point, people are thrown off course [make a mistake]; I come to you with the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, and you come with Abu Bakr and ‘Umar?!”⁴⁰

And the Allaamah Ibn-Uthaymeen, رحمه الله, said: “It is not permissible for any of the people to oppose the speech of the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم by any other speech. Not by the words of Abu Bakr who is the best nation after his Prophet, nor by the words of ‘Umar, who is the second best of this nation after its Prophet, nor by the words of ‘Uthmaan who is the third best of this the nation after its Prophet, nor the words of ‘Ali who is the fourth best of this nation after its Prophet, nor the words of anyone else. This is because Allah the Most High

³⁹ Graded Saheeh by Ibn-Hajr in Al-Isaabah fee Tamayeez Al-Sahaabah 2/491

⁴⁰ Its narrators are from the narrators of Al-Bukhaari & Muslim, and its chain of narration is Saheeh

said what means: {So, let those who oppose the Prophet's command beware that they may be afflicted by a fitnah or a painful punishment} 41”42

And we have an example from Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما, as was reported by Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn-Taymiyyah رحمه الله, who said: “Abdur-Razzaq narrated from M’amar, from Az-Zuhree, from Saalim who said: Ibn ‘Umar was asked about Hajj Tamattu’, and he ordered with it. So, it was said to him: “Indeed you oppose your father’s view in this.” So, he said: “My father did not say what you say, rather he said: “Separate the ‘Umrah from the Hajj”. Meaning Umrah is not to be performed in the months of Hajj except with a sacrificial animal. He wanted to visit the Ka’bah in other than the months of Hajj, so you made it Haraam [forbidden] and penalized people upon it, and Allah The Mighty and Majestic had made it permissible, and Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم acted upon that.” So, when the people increased in their argument against Ibn Umar, he said, “Doesn’t the book of Allah have more right to be followed than Umar?!”43

Al-Maymoonee44 reported that he asked Imaam Ahmed, رحمه الله, about wiping over the back of the neck [during wudoo]. So Ahmed answered: “There is nothing from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم regarding this, but it is the opinion of Abu Moosa45, and I refrain from it.”46

When `Umar رضي الله عنه was injured, Suhaib came in weeping and saying, "O my brother, O my friend!". On this `Umar said to him, "Oh Suhaib! Are you weeping for me while the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: ((The dead person is punished by some of the weeping of his relatives))?" Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما added, "When `Umar died, I told all this to Aaishah رضي الله عنها and she said: “May Allah have mercy upon `Umar. By Allah, Allah's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم did not say that a believer is punished by the weeping of his relatives. But he صلى الله عليه وسلم said: ((Allah increases the punishment of a non-believer because of the weeping of his relatives.)) Aaishah further added: "The Qur'an is sufficient for you [to

41 Surah Al-Nur: 63

42 Al-Ibda’ fee Bayan Kamaal Ash-Shar’ of Ibn Uthaymeen p.15

43 Sharh Al-‘Umdat, Kitaab-UIHajj of Ibn-Taymiyyah 1/530

44 He is Abdul-Malek bin Abdul-Hameed bin Mahran Al-Maimoonee Abul-Hasan Ar-Raqee (d. 274 AH), one of the companions of Imaam Ahmed.

45 Meaning Abu Moosa Al-Ash’aree رضي الله عنه

46 Al-‘Iddah fee Usool Al-Fiqh of Abi Ya’laa

clear up this point] [as Allah said what means]: {No burdened soul will bear the burden of someone else}”.⁴⁷⁴⁸

I say what Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn-Taymiyyah رحمه الله, said: “We seek refuge in Allah, the Glorified, from that which leads to the attacking of the Imaams[scholars], or the disparagement of one of them, or lack of recognizing their status and virtues, or striving against them, not having love for them, and not being allies with them. And we hope Allah the Glorified makes us to be among those who love and have allegiance with them[the Imaams], and to know their rights and virtues which most followers do not know, and that our share of that be larger and greater. And there is no power or strength except with Allah.”⁴⁹

And Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn-Taymiyyah, رحمه الله, also said: “No one from Ahlus-Sunnah said: The consensus of the Four Imaams is an infallible Hujjah[proof]. Nor did they say: The truth is limited to what the Four Imaams agreed upon. Rather, if a mujtahid who was not a follower of those Four Imaams, had a statement that contradicts the statement of the Four Imaams, then that disputed issue would be returned to Allah and His Messenger. The most correct statement is the one that is supported by the evidence.”⁵⁰

It was said to Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما: “If only you left speaking [about issues of the religion] these days. So you do not order [with good] nor do you forbid [the evil]”. So Ibn Umar said: “Indeed The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم told us: ((Those of you who were present must inform those who were absent)), and we were present, so we are obligated to inform you [what we learned from the

⁴⁷ Saheeh Al-Buhkhaari #1286 & Saheeh Muslim #928

⁴⁸ Shaykh Ibn Uthaymeen رحمه الله was asked: “What’s the meaning of the meaning of the hadeeth: ((The dead person is punished by some of the weeping of his relatives))?” So he answered: It means that if the dead person’s family cries over his death, then he will know about it and feel pain. This does not mean that Allah is punishing him, because Allah said what means: {No burdened soul will bear the burden of someone else}”. And if something is painful, that does not necessitate that it is a punishment, like in the statement of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم: ((Indeed travel is a piece of hardship)). Travel is not a punishment, but a person is worn out by it and tires from it. Likewise, the dead person is harmed and afflicted, even though this is not a punishment from Allah the Mighty and Majestic. This explanation for the hadeeth is clear, apparent, and does not cause doubts. – end quote. From Majmoo’ Fataawa Ibn Uthaymeen 17/408. I believe this speech is a summary of the speech of Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله

⁴⁹ Bayan Ad-Daleel fee Butlaan At-Tahleel p.177

⁵⁰ Minhaj-Us-Sunnah of Ibn-Taymiyyah 3/412

Prophet ﷺ], and a time will come when the truth is spoken but it will not be accepted.”⁵¹

This is the methodology of Ahlus-Sunnah, as Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said: “The companions of Ahmed, like: Abu Daawood As-Sijistaani, Ibraahim Al-Harbi, Uthmaan ibn Sa’eed Ad-Daarimi, Abu Zur’ah, Abu Haatim, Al-Bukhaari, Muslim, Baqi ibn Mekhled, Abu Bakr Al-Athram, his two sons, Abdullah and Saalih, Abdullah ibn Abdur-Rahmaan Ad-Daarimi, Muhammad ibn Maslam ibn Waarah, and other than these from the great ones of the people of knowledge, understanding and religion. All of them do not accept the speech of Ahmed (Imaam of Ahlus-Sunnah), nor the speech of other than him, except with strong evidence that they clarify for them.”⁵²

Ibnul-Qayyim said in a very clear way: “If Ahmed and other than him from the Imaams of hadeeth differ regarding a hadeeth, Ahmed’s statement is not a proof against them. Just like if someone else differed with him about a fiqh issue, his statement would not be a proof against who opposes him. Instead, the differentiating proof is only the evidence.”⁵³

This is likewise what the great Imams of our time were upon. The Muhaddith, the Imaam, Al-Albaani said: “The truth is recognized by the people of fairness, due to its light and its evidence, not based on who the person is conveying it or speaking it - as opposed to the [way of the] people of fanaticism and oppression.”⁵⁴

In closing:

I remind myself and you with the statement of Allah that means: {Oh you who believe, if you have Taqwaa of Allah, He will give you Furqaan [clear distinction between truth and falsehood], wipe away your sins, and forgive you; and Allah is the owner of tremendous virtue}⁵⁵. I ask Allah to grant us all success and to be upon what is correct, and to hold tightly to what the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ were upon. And we ask Allah the Most High

⁵¹ Ibn-Jareer in At-Tafseer 9/44 on Ibn Umar, and the part from the Prophet ﷺ is in Al-Bukhaari from Ibn Abbaas that he said: “By the One whose hand my soul is in, indeed it is the admonition of the Prophet ﷺ to his ummah ((Those of you who were present must inform those who were absent)).”

⁵² Majmoo’ Fataawa of Ibn Taymiyyah 6/216

⁵³ Al-Farooosiyah Al-Muhammadiyah p.187

⁵⁴ Fiqhul-Waaqi’ p. 4

⁵⁵ Surah Al-Anfaal: 29

to aid us with His virtue and blessing and to make our intentions sincerely for His sake, The Most High. Likewise we ask Allah the Most High to keep us firm upon that, till the day we meet Him, Allahumaa aameen.

Written by:

Mohammad Othman AlAnjari

on 30/8/1441 hijri, corresponding with 23/4/2020 ⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Translated by: Nabil Chogle and Abu Remlah Aadam