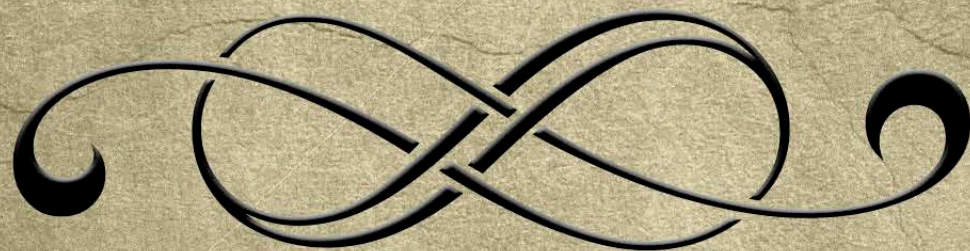




Advice
to

AhluSunnah



By, Shaykh Ibrahim Ibn A'mir Ar Ruhaylee, PhD. and Professor
at the Islamic University of Madinah and Lecturer at the Prophet's Masjid

Translated and Revised
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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

All Praise is for Allah. We praise Him, seek His assistance and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of our own souls and the evil of our deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides there is none to misguide and whomsoever He misguides there is none to guide him. I bear witness that none deserves to be worshiped except Allah alone without any partners and I bear witness that Muhammad (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) is His slave and final Messenger.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

“O you who believe fear Allah as He deserves to be feared and do not die except in a state of total submission to Him (i.e. as Muslims)”¹

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

“O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from a single soul and then created from him his wife, and from them both, spread many men and women. Fear Allah through whom you demand your mutual rights and do not sever ties with the wombs that bore you indeed Allah is a Watcher over you.”²

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا.

“O you who believe, fear Allah and always speak the truth, He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you of your sins. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger then indeed he has achieved a tremendous achievement.”

د

To Proceed:

The obligation of giving *Naseehah* (i.e. advice) has necessitated the compilation of this short treatise to advise the youth of Ahlus Sunnah in an effort to bring about understanding between them in light of the textual evidences that promote reconciliation. This effort was initiated due to the existence of discord and differing in the issues of *Aqeedah* (i.e. Islamic Creed) as well as the moral behavior (i.e. *Adaab*) and positions taken when dealing with those who oppose Ahlus Sunnah. This is something prevalent amongst the Muslim youth in various Islamic countries today, even amongst the Muslim minorities who reside in the lands of the Kufaar (i.e. disbelievers).

This has resulted in dissension, *Hajr* (i.e. boycotting), even transgression of the rights of one another amongst Ahlus Sunnah, which has intensified the *Fitnah* between them

¹ Found in Surah Al Imran (3:102)

² Found in Surah An Nisaa'a (4:1)

and increased its seriousness. This type of representation has affected the path that calling people to the Sunnah has taken (i.e. da'wah). It has even prevented many people in various countries and localities from embracing this da'wah after inclining towards it. Nonetheless, I will restrict this piece of advice to the following points, by which, I implore Allah to provide me with *Ikhlaas* (i.e. sincerity) in my intention, and grant me accuracy in my statements and allows any Muslim who reads it to benefit from it.

Written in 1424/10/08 corresponding to the year 2003

THE FIRST POINT

One of the widely recognized principles in the religion of Islam is that the Muslim should sincerely emphasize the reformation of his own self first. He should work diligently towards securing the success of his own soul first and distance himself from those things that will bring about his own destruction, before he concerns himself with others, as Allah says in the Qur'an:

والعصر إن الإنسان لفي خسر إلا الذين ءامنوا وعملوا الصالحات وتواصوا بالحق وتواصوا بالصبر.

“By Al Asr (the time). Verily man is in loss, except those who believe and do righteous actions and exhort one another to the truth and exhort one another to patience”³

Allah is informing us here of those who safeguard themselves from loss and ruin. They are the ones who actualize and adorn themselves with the characteristics mentioned therein, which are:

Firstly: Developing true Imaan (i.e. faith)

Secondly: Performing righteous actions themselves first and foremost

Thirdly: Calling and exhorting one another to the truth after exemplifying the same

Fourthly: Exhorting one another to tolerance and patience

Allah criticized Bani Israel (i.e. the Jews) for opposing this principle, as He said:

أ تأمرون الناس بالبر وتنسون أنفسكم وأنتم تألون الكتاب أفلا تعقلون.

“Do you enjoin al Birr (i.e. piety and righteousness) on the people and you forget to practice it yourselves, while you recite the Book (i.e. the Taurat), have you then no sense?”⁴

Thus it is important for the youth of Ahlus Sunnah to emphasize and concern themselves with their own reformation before they try to reform others. And when they become upright themselves, and combine the exemplification of the religion of Allah within themselves with calling others to it, then they will truly be upon the methodology and guidance of the *Salaf* (i.e. pious predecessors). Allah will bring about much benefit for the people by their hands and they will be considered *true* callers to the Sunnah in statement and action. By Allah, this is the highest level that one can attain and if given *Tawfeeq* (i.e. success) to follow it, they will be from the most honorable servants of Allah in status on the Day of Judgment, as Allah says:

Surah Al Asr (103:1-4)³

Found in Surah Al Baqrah (2:44)⁴

ومن أحسن قولاً ممن دعا إلى الله وعمل صالحاً و قال إني من المسلمين.

“And who is better in speech than he who says: “My Lord is Allah” and then stands firm on this and invites to the people to Allah’s (monotheism), does righteous deeds and says: “I am one of the Muslims.”⁵

THE SECOND POINT

It is essential to know that Ahlus Sunnah are the first ones to thoroughly exemplify the religion of Islam, whether in the issues of *Aqeedah* or *Sulook* (i.e. moral character). It is a restricted understanding to believe that the *Sunni* or the *Salafi* is one who *only* exemplifies the creed of Islam without emphasizing the appropriate Islamic manners, as well as discharging the rights that are due to every Muslim. Sheikh ul Islam Ibn Taymiyah (*Rahimahullah*) mentioned towards the end of his book *Al Aqeedah Al Waasitiyah*, after mentioning the principles of Ahlus Sunnah in relation to *Aqeedah*:

ثم هم مع هذه الأصول يأمرّون بالمعروف وينهون عن المنكر على ما توجبه الشريعة ويرون إقامة الحج والجهاد والجمع والأعياد مع الأمراء أبراراً كانوا أو فجاراً ويحافظون على الجماعات ويدينون بالنصيحة للأمة ويعتقدون معنى قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: المؤمن للمؤمن كالبنيان المرصوص يشد بعضه بعضاً. وشبك بين أصابعه، وقوله: مثل المؤمنين في توادهم وتراحمهم وتعاطفهم كمثل الجسد الواحد إذا اشتكى منه عضو تداعى له سائر الجسد بالحمى والسهر.

ويأمرّون بالصبر عند البلاء والشكر عند الرخاء والرضا بمر القضاء، ويدعون إلى مكارم الأخلاق ومحاسن الأعمال، ويعتقدون معنى قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: أكمل المؤمنين إيماناً أحسنهم أخلاقاً. ويندبون إلى أن تصل من قطعك وتعطي من حرمك ويعفو عن ظلمك، ويأمرّون ببر الوالدين وكذا يأمرّون بصلة الرحم، وحسن الجوار، وينهون عن الفخر والخيلاء والبغي والاستطالة على الخلق بحق أو بغير حق. ويأمرّون بمعالي الأخلاق وينهون عن سفا سفاها، وكل ما يقولونه ويفعلونه من هذا وغيره فإنما هم فيه متبعون للكتاب و السنة وطريقتهم هي دين الإسلام الذي بعث الله به محمداً صلى الله عليه وسلم.

“...And they (i.e. Ahlus Sunnah) along with these principles, enjoin good and forbid evil, based upon the legislative guidelines of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. They see the obligation of performing Hajj, Jihad, Jumu'ah and the E'id prayers alongside the Muslim ruler, whether they are righteous or rebellious and disobedient. They work diligently to preserve the Muslim community, they deem it part of the religion to give Naseehah (i.e. advice) to the Ummah and believe wholeheartedly in the statement of the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam):

⁵ Found in Surah Fussilat (41:33)

“The believer to another believer is like one solid structure, one part strengthening the other” then he interlocked his fingers to demonstrate.”⁶

And in the statement of the Messenger (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam):

“The example of the believers in their love, mercy and kindness towards one another is like one body. If one part aches then the rest of the body calls on each other with fervor and vigilance...”⁷

They exhort one another to be patient in times of trial and tribulation and with gratitude in times of ease and with being content with the bitter and unpleasant obstacles that are decreed for them (i.e. the Qadr). They call one another to exemplify good behavior in dealing with others and they believe in the statement of the Messenger (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam):

“The most complete of the believers in Imaan (i.e. faith) are those who have the best character.”⁸

They consider it praiseworthy to join relations with those that cut them off and to give to the one who withholds from giving to them and to pardon the one who transgressed against them. They command one another to be kind to their parents, to keep family ties and to be good neighbors. They caution against arrogance and speaking about people excessively, whether rightfully or without just cause. They command one another to have the most excellent character and manners and caution against the most hideous of them. They follow the Book and the Sunnah, their methodology is Islam, which Allah sent Muhammad with.”⁹

THE THIRD POINT

One the most important objectives that Islam encourages every Muslim to emphasize and to be diligent about fulfilling, is the guidance of mankind to the religion of Islam. When the Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) sent Ali Ibn Abi Talib (Radiyallahu anhu) to Khaybar he instructed him:

لأن يهدي الله بك رجلا واحدا خير لك من حمر النعم.

Collected in Sahih al Bukhari and Muslim ⁶

Collected in Sahih al Bukhari and Muslim ⁷

Collected in the Sunan of Abu Dawud, Jami' ut Tirmithi and the Musnad of Imam Ahmad. Sheikh al Baani (Rafimahullafi) declared it to be hassan (i.e. good). ⁸

Mentioned in Aqeedah Waasitiyah by Sheikh ul Islam Ibn Taymiyah (Rafimahullafi) ⁹

“...If Allah was to guide one person by your hands, it would be better for you than red camels”¹⁰

So it is imperative for the one whom Allah has favored by guiding him to the Sunnah, to be diligent and exert every effort possible in calling those who have either deviated from the Sunnah or have some level of negligence regarding it, back to its implementation. This should be done with gentleness and leniency in order to bring their hearts closer to accepting the *Haqq* (i.e. the truth), just as Allah said to Musa and Harun:

اذهبا إلى فرعون إنه طغى، فقلوا له قولا لينا لعله يتذكر أو يخشى.

“Go, both of you, to Fir'aun, verily he has transgressed all bounds in disbelief and disobedience. And speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept the admonition or develop some fear of Allah”¹¹

The meaning of **“Speak to him mildly...”** is; call him by the title he loves to be addressed by- that which is consistent with his rank and social status. The Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) wrote a letter to Hercules, the King of the Roman Empire, in which he said:

إلى هرقل عظيم الروم...

“This letter is to Hercules, the Exalted King of Rome...”¹²

Similarly he (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) used to address the chief of the Hypocrites, Abdullah Ibn Ubay as Salool, by his *Kunya*,¹³ which was Abu Hubaab. This also includes being patient with the rudeness and disinclination on the part of those whom you are calling and to combat their impudence with good manners, and not to be hasty regarding their acceptance of your da'wah, as Allah says:

فاصبر كما صبر أولى العزم من الرسل ولا تستعجل لهم...

“Therefore be patient (Muhammad) as did the messengers of strong will (i.e. Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa and Isa) and do not be in haste about them (i.e. the disbelievers accepting the truth)...”¹⁴

Collected in Sahih al Bukhari and Muslim in the *Chapter of War Expeditions* on the authority of ¹⁰ Sahl Ibn Sa'd As Sa'idi (Radhiyallahu anhu). Translators Note: Sheikh Uthaymeen (Rahimahullah) explained this point by saying: **The significance of red camels was because this was the most valuable and prized possession of the Arabs during that time...** look in his explanation of *Riyadh us Saliheen* Vol.1 P.664.

Found in Surah Ta-Ha (20:43-44) ¹¹

Collected in Sahih al Bukhari and Muslim, The *Chapter of War Expeditions* also in the Sunan of ¹² Abu Dawud.

Translator's Note: Any name that is preceded by *Umm* or *Abu* and it does not necessarily mean that ¹³ you have to have a child to be addressed in such manner, as A'isha (Radhiyallahu anha) did not have any children, but the prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) gave her the *Kunya* of Umm Abdullah, after her nephew Abdullah Ibn Az Zubayr, the son of her sister, Asmaa' bint Abi Bakr. The Hadeeth is collected in Sahih al Bukhari.

Found in Surah Al Ahqaf (46:35) ¹⁴

THE FOURTH POINT

It is extremely important- especially for the students of knowledge who are involved with giving da'wah- that they make a distinction between *Mudaarat* and *Mudaahanah*. The former pertains to leniency and gentleness in your approach towards people, which is highly recommended. It was mentioned in *Lisaan ul Arab*:

مداراة الناس ملايتهم وحسن صحبتهم واحتمالهم لئلا ينفروا منك.

“Mudaarat means to be lenient and friendly with people to keep them from feeling uncomfortable and thus running away from you.”¹⁵

However *mudaahanah*¹⁶ is criticized and contemptible due to the fact that it is specifically related to the religion, as Allah says:

ودوا لو تدهن فيدهنون...

“They wish that you should compromise your religion out of sympathy for them so they too could compromise their religion with you.”¹⁷

Hassan al Basree (Rahimahullah) explained this verse by saying:

ودوا لو تصانهم في دينك فيصانعون في دينهم.

“They desire for you to compromise your religion so they could compromise their religion.”¹⁸

So the *Mudaari* is lenient in his dealings with people without renouncing or compromising anything from his religion, but the *Mudaahin* strives to get close to people by compromising his religion. The Messenger (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) had the most excellent character and was the most merciful of this Ummah towards people, which

Found in *Lisaan ul Arab* Vol.13 P.255. *Lisaan ul Arab* is one of the most extensive dictionaries in ¹⁵ the Arabic Language written by Ibn Manthoor (Rahimahullah). Translator's Note: There are many examples in the Sunnah of the Messenger (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) where he practiced this particular etiquette and from them is the narration collected in Sahih al Bukhari on the authority of A'isha (Rad'iyallahu anha) that a man sought permission to enter upon the Messenger of Allah and so he said ***“what and evil brother he is and what and evil son he is to his family”*** so when he entered, the Messenger (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) was cordial with him and when he left I said ***“O Messenger of Allah you said about him what you said and then you behaved with him in that manner !?”*** So he said ***“O A'isha when have you known me to be imprudent?! The most evil of people are those who the people abandon them on account of their bad manners”*** The Chapter of Adab (i.e. manners).

Adulation and compromise in matters related to the religion. ¹⁶

Found in Surah Al Qalam (68:9) ¹⁷

Found in Tafseer ul Baghawee Vol.3 P.377 ¹⁸

exemplifies the point of gentleness and leniency being from his *Minhaj* (i.e. methodology).

He was also the strongest and the most firm in upholding the religion of Allah and he would not abandon or compromise anything from it no matter who they were, and this exemplifies the point of holding tightly to the religion without compromise and also nullifies practice of *Mudaahanah*.

It is necessary for the student of knowledge to recognize and carefully consider the difference between these two affairs, for there are some people who may consider being lenient and gentle with people a sign of weakness in his deen (i.e. religion) and a form of *Tamyee'a*.¹⁹ On the other hand, there may be a group that considers being gentle and lenient with people to mean that you condone their *Batil* (i.e. Falsehood) and that you are being silent concerning their mistakes and in all honesty, both of these paths are incorrect. So pay attention to this matter, for it is very dangerous and resemble treading on slippery ground that none will be saved from except he whom Allah has given success, guidance and direction.

THE FIFTH POINT

The da'ee (i.e. caller) who engages in calling people to this religion has two legislated paths that he can follow while doing so, and both are supported by evidences from the Qur'an and the Sunnah:

The First: *Maslak ut Ta'leef wal Targheeb*: The Path of leniency and Encouragement.

The Second: *Maslak ul Hajar wat Tarheeb*: The Path of Boycotting and Chasing people away.

The truth of the matter is that he is mistaken if he treads either path unconditionally with everyone, instead, what is appropriate is for him to chose the path- with everyone who opposes the truth- that will most likely bring about his acceptance of the truth and secure his return to what is correct. So if *Ta'leef* (i.e. leniency) is more beneficial for the one who is disobedient and more likely to bring about his reformation, then this is what is legislated. But if boycotting is better and more effective, then this is what is legislated.

If he takes the path of *Ta'leef* with the one who legislatively deserves to be boycotted, then he is considered to be negligent and remissful. And whoever adopts the path of *Hajr* (i.e. boycotting) with the one who deserves to be treated with kindness, then he

Translator's Note: Meaning one who dilutes his religion by compromise.¹⁹

is considered to be someone who is harsh, rigid and chases people away. Sheikh ul Islam Ibn Taymiyah (Rahimahullahi) said.

وهذا الهجر يختلف باختلاف الهاجرين في قوتهم وضعفهم و قلتهم و كثرتهم, فإن المقصود به زجر المهجور وتأديبه, و رجوع العامة عن مثل حاله, فإذا كانت المصلحة في ذلك راجحة بحيث يفضي هجره إلى ضعف الشر و خفيته كان مشروعاً وإن كان لا المهجور ولا غيره يرتدع بذلك, بل يزيد الشر والهاجر ضعيف بحيث يكون مفسدة ذلك راجحة على مصلحته لم يشرع الهجر, بل يكون التأليف لبعض الناس أنفع من الهجر, والهجر لبعض الناس أنفع من التأليف, ولهذا كان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يتألف أقواماً ويهجر أقواماً... وهذا كما أن المشروع في العدو القتال تارة و المهادنة تارة, وأخذ الجزية تارة كل ذلك بحسب أحوال والمصالح. و جواب الأئمة كأحمد وغيره في هذا الباب مبني على هذا الأصل.

“This type of boycotting varies depending on the strength and effectiveness of the ones employing the boycott, as well as their weakness and ineffectiveness in doing such. It also depends on their multitude or scarcity. Without a doubt, the objective of boycotting is to reprimand and discipline the one being boycotted, and to keep the laymen from following him. So if the benefit in this is preponderant and more likely to lessen the evil, then boycotting becomes recommended and admissible. However, if this is not the case, rather none is deterred from their disobedience- not the one being boycotted nor other than him- but it only intensifies the evil coupled with the weakness and ineffectiveness of the one employing the boycott, to the extent that harm outweighs the benefit, then at this point boycotting is not recommended.

Leniency is more beneficial and effective for some people than boycotting, and boycotting is more beneficial and effective for some people than leniency. Due to this, the Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) used to be lenient with some people and boycott others. Similarly it is legislatively recommended to go to war with the enemy sometimes and at other times to make a truce, and sometimes to take the Jizyah²⁰ from them. All of this is dependent upon the circumstances and benefits in doing so, and the response of the Imaams of Ahlus Sunnah like Imaam Ahmad and others in relation to this issue, which is founded upon this principle.”²¹

Sheikh ul Islam then clarifies the mistake of the one who applies boycotting and leniency absolutely in every situation without consideration of the principle mentioned previously:

فإن أقواماً جعلوا ذلك عاماً فاستعملوا من الهجر والإنكار ما لم يؤمروا به فلا يجب ولا يستحب, وربما تركوا به واجبات أو مستحبات وفعلوا به محرمات, وآخرون أعرضوا عن ذلك بالكلية فلم يهجروا من أمروا بهجره من السيئات البدعية.

“Indeed there are those who apply boycotting and leniency absolutely. They apply boycotting and reprimand at times in which they were not commanded to do so, and because they didn’t do what they were ordered to, they didn’t achieve the outcome they desired. Perhaps by applying hajr (i.e. boycotting) they have forfeited some of the Waajibaat (i.e. obligatory acts) as well as the Mustahabaat (i.e. recommended acts). Also, by doing so, they have embarked upon some of the Muharramaat (i.e.

²⁰ The land tax which the disbelievers, who reside in the land of the Muslims, pay for their safety and protection.

²¹ Found in Majmoo’ Fatawah by Sheikh ul Islam Ibn Taymiyah Vol.28 P.206

*forbidden acts), contrary to those who have abandoned boycotting altogether, for they don't boycott those whom they were commanded to, from those who indulge in evil innovated practices.*²²

THE SIXTH POINT:

It is appropriate for the one considering the use of *Hajr* (i.e. boycotting) to take into consideration the legislative guidelines the Imams of Ahlus Sunnah have mentioned. These guidelines, after careful examination, will clarify in a precise manner who is to be boycotted and who is not. And from these guidelines:

The First: Pertaining to the *Haajir* (i.e. the one applying the boycott):

It is recommended for him to be firm and effective to the degree that his boycott leads to the reprimand of the he who is in opposition, but if he is weak and ineffective then he will not achieve the recommended objective of boycotting, even if it is done with the correct intention. However, if the boycott is employed in light of benefiting the *Hajir* himself, in that he fears that sitting or associating with this individual will affect his deen, in this case, he has the right to boycott.

Respectively, boycotting is legislated for the benefit of the one applying it. He has the right to boycott anyone whom he feels, accompanying them or associating with them, will be detrimental to his religion. It is also legislated for the benefit of the one being boycotted, if it will bring about his reformation and rectification.

Boycotting is also legislated for the benefit of the Ummah, in that they abandon some of those who oppose the Qur'an, the Sunnah and the methodology of the pious predecessors (i.e. Salaf us Salih) in order to avoid actions similar to theirs and there are textual evidences to substantiate every point mentioned here.

The Second: Pertaining to the *Mahjoor* (i.e. the one being boycotted):

Boycotting him is admissible if it is anticipated that he will be affected by the boycott and eventually return to the truth. But if he doesn't benefit from the boycott, then it could push him further away and increase him in his rebellion, at which point, it is not recommended legislatively to boycott him. This is due to the fact that some people have a natural disposition of stubbornness, rebellion and a lack of humility to the truth even at the expense of his destruction. Individuals like this will not benefit from the discipline of boycotting, instead, it is possible that he would benefit more from leniency.

Found in *Majmoo' Fatawah* Vol. 28 P.213²²

Perhaps many of those who don't benefit from being boycotted is due to some external affairs like the fact that he is wealthy or someone of status and leadership. Generally these types people do not benefit from *Hajr* because they deem themselves self-sufficient from the one who is applying the boycott initially and as a result of this, the Prophet (*Sallallahu alaihi wa salam*) used to apply leniency to the leaders who were followed and obeyed by their subjects as well as the people of status like Abu Sufyaan, Uyaynah Ibn Husn and Al Aqra'a Ibn Habis (*Radiyallahu anhum*). Sheikh ul Islam said:

ولهذا كان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يتألف قوما ويهجر آخرين كما أن الثلاثة الذين خلفوا كانوا خيرا من أكثر المؤلفلة قلوبهم
لما كان أولئك كانوا سادة مطاعين في عشائهم...

“And because of this, the Prophet (*Sallallahu alaihi wa salam*) used to employ leniency and gentleness with some people and boycott others. Like the three who remained behind from the Battle of Tabuk.²³ These companions were better, by far, than those whom the Prophet used to be gentle with- in order to bring their hearts closer to Islam- due to the fact that they were the leaders and the most respected amongst their people...”

The Third: Pertaining to the type of infringement that necessitates Hajr:

There is no act of disobedience or opposition in Islam that it is safe to say absolutely, that anyone who does it deserves to be boycotted or that he doesn't deserve to be boycotted. Just as some believe that they should boycott every innovation and not the acts of disobedience to Allah, or they boycott the *Bid'ah tul Mukafirah*²⁴ without boycotting the other types of innovation, or they boycott the major sins instead of the minor ones.

Boycotting is legislated for every type of opposition and every act of disobedience, whether major or minor, as long as it is expected that the one being boycotted will benefit from it. So the determining factor in this issue is centered around the benefit of the one being boycotted and the lack thereof without looking at the degree or grade of opposition or infraction.

Based upon this, a virtuous man can be boycotted because of a minor infringement of the Sunnah, just as the Prophet (*Sallallahu alaihi wa salam*) boycotted some of his companions due to some minor infractions they committed. For example, he did not return the

This story is mentioned in the Qur'an Surah At Tawbah (9:118)²³

Translators note: The Ulama of Ahlus Sunnah have divided innovation (i.e. Bid'ah) into two²⁴ categories 1-*Bid'ah tul Makafirah* The type of innovation which removes one from the fold of Islam therefore considering him to be a *Kafir* (i.e. disbeliever), like the innovation of the *Jahmiyah*, those who disregarded and rejected all of the Beautiful Names and Lofty Attributes of Allah Ta'ala with out any exception, and considered the Qur'an to be created, which the Ulama of Ahlus Sunnah have unanimously agreed about their disbelief. 2- *Bid'ah tul Ghayrul Mukafirah*: The type of innovation which doesn't remove one from the fold of Islam like the *Ta'weel* (i.e. false interpretation) of the *Ashaa'irah* and others.

greeting of peace (i.e. As salamu alaikum) to Ammar Ibn Yasir because he was wearing yellow²⁵ and he boycotted the one who built a dome until he knocked it down.²⁶ At the same time, *Hajr* could be avoided altogether due to some major infractions by those who are less virtuous than those who were boycotted from the Sahabah (i.e. companions).

An example of this is found in the leniency and gentleness of the Messenger of Allah (Sallahu alaihi wa salam) with Al Aqra'a Ibn Habis and Uaynah Ibn Husn (Radiyallahu anhum). Rather, he was even lenient with some of the *Munaafiqoon* (i.e. Hypocrites) like Abdullah Ibn Ubay and others. All of this is viewed in light of the benefit that will result from boycotting and the lack thereof, along with careful consideration of the other guidelines pertinent to the issue of boycotting.

The Fourth: Pertaining to the time and place in which the infraction was committed:

We distinguish between the times and places wherein the infractions and opposition to the Qur'an, the Sunnah and the methodology of the Salaf are abundant and prevalent and those who engage in acts of disobedience therein are the majority, and those times and places where the infractions are few and those who indulge in them are weak and are the minority.

Thus if dominance in a particular time and place is for Ahlus Sunnah then boycotting is admissible, coupled with careful consideration of the other outlying principles and guidelines that are detailed in the works of the people of knowledge from Ahlus Sunnah. This is primarily because of the authority of Ahlus Sunnah and the frailty and overall disadvantage of those in opposition. For in this case the reprimand will be more effective, similar to what Allah said about Ka'b Ibn Malik and his two companions (Radiyallahu anhum):

...حتى إذا ضاقت عليهم الأرض بما رحبت وضاقت عليهم أنفسهم وظنوا أن لا ملجأ من الله إلا إليه...

“...Until the earth, as vast as it is, became restricted for them as did their own selves and they realized that there is no fleeing from Allah and no refuge from Him except with Him...”²⁷

Similar to the effectiveness of the chastisement of Umar (Radiyallahu anhu) and the rest of the Ummah when they boycotted Sabeegh Ibn Asl.²⁸ However, if the people who engage in disobedience and falsehood are superior and dominant in a particular place and time, then boycotting is neither admissible nor legislated, except under specific circumstances. This is because the objective of *Hajr*, which is reprimand and censure, can not be achieved in this type of situation. Rather the people of the truth may be harmed if they attempt to do so. Sheikh ul Islam said:

Mentioned in the Sunan of Abu Dawud Vol.5 P.8. ²⁵

Mentioned the Sunan of Abu Dawud Vol.5 P.402. ²⁶

Found in Surah At Tawbah (9:118) ²⁷

Found in the Tafseer of Surah Adh Dhariyat Ibn Katheer Vol7 P.414 and the original story is found ²⁸ in the Musnad of Bazaar Hadeeth #2259 on the authority of Sa'eed Ibn al Musayyib.

ولهذا يفرق بين الأماكن التي كثرت فيها البدع كما كثر القدر في البصرة والتنجيم بخرا سان والتشيع بالكوفة وبين ما ليس كذلك ويفرق بين الأئمة المطاعين وغيرهم وإذا عرف مقصود الشريعة سلك في حصوله أوصل الطرق إليه.

“...So as a result of this, those places wherein innovation is prevalent, like when speaking excessively about Qadr (i.e. Divine Decree) was prevalent in Basrah, and Tanjeem²⁹ was prevalent in Khurasaan, and Tashayu’a³⁰ was prevalent in Kufah. These places should be distinguished from those places where it is not prevalent. Also a distinction should be made between those leaders of high status, who are obeyed by their subjects, and other than them. Once these legislative objectives are acknowledged and understood, one can traverse a path that will be more effective and will more likely enable him to achieve these goals.”³¹

The Fifth: Pertaining to the duration of Hajr:

It is appropriate that the boycott be commensurate and befitting the state of everyone being boycotted, as well as dependant on the type and degree of his infraction or the level of his opposition. For there are people who will accept reprimand and refrain if he is boycotted for one or two days or a month or two and there are those who will stop and then continue.

However, if the objective of *Hajr* is achieved then it is mandatory to stop, and if not, then there will be despair and hopelessness on the part of the one being boycotted and he will not benefit. Ibn ul Qayim (*Rahimahullah*) commented on some of the benefits extracted from the fact that the Prophet (*Sallallahu alaihi wa salam*) boycotted Ka’b Ibn Malik and his two companions:

وفيه دليل على أن هجران الإمام والعالم والمطاع لمن فعل ما يستوجب العتب ويكون هجرانه له دواء بحيث لا يضعف عن حصول الشفاء ولا يزيد في الكمية و الكيفية فيهلكه إذا المراد تأديبه لا ائتلافه...

“In this is evidence that if the Imam, the Alim (i.e. scholar) or the one who is respected and obeyed by his followers, boycotts the one who deserves to be boycotted, this becomes a cure for him as long as he doesn’t exceed the limits of the dosage nor is he excessive in the quantity of it and the method in which he employs to cure him, in order that he avoids killing him. For the objective of Hajr is reprimand and education not to chase him away...”³²

²⁹ Meaning the practice of divination and astrology which is to believe that the stars bring some sort of benefit or harm to the creation, and to believe that they have a share in disposing the affairs of creation (i.e. Shirk)

³⁰ Concepts of the Shi’ite

³¹ *Majmoo’ Fatawah* Vol.28 P.206-207

³² *Zaad ul Ma’aad* by Ibn ul Qayim Vol.3 P.20

THE SEVENTH POINT:

Rebuke and refutation of the one in opposition is to be considered advice for and preservation of the ummah from falling in to his mistake. This is from the well-known and established principles of Ahlus Sunnah and considered to be one of the greatest forms of Jihad. But it is imperative to carefully consider the guidelines and conditions by which one can achieve his goal and from amongst them:

Firstly: The individual has to have sincerity to Allah (i.e. Ikhlas) and sincerity in his intention to aid the truth and absolutely restrict himself to this. Some of the requisites of Ikhlas are:

A- That you desire guidance for the one in opposition and for him to return to the truth.

B- That you take every path possible by which it is anticipated that his heart will draw closer to the truth without chasing him away.

C- In addition to these two, you should supplicate to Allah sincerely for his guidance, especially if he is from Ahlus Sunnah or part of the general body of the Muslims. For indeed the Prophet (*Sallallahu alaihi wa salam*) used to supplicate for the guidance of the *Kufaar* (i.e. disbelievers), so how much more should this be emphasized with the *Muwahid*³³ from the Muslims?!

Secondly: The refutation should be issued by a scholar whose foot is firmly embedded in the field of knowledge, in that he knows- in detail- all of the dynamics surrounding the issue at hand which necessitated the refutation initially. This can only be achieved by knowing the legislated textual evidences and rulings of the scholars related to the infraction or opposition. He should know the extent of the misconception that the individual may hold which prompted him to embark upon this infraction, the refutations of the scholars concerning it and how to benefit from them in the realm of refutation.

Likewise it is appropriate that the one in opposition be refuted with weighty evidences in order to establish the truth and to remove any doubt about the matter. This is done by using terms that are clear and precise in order that the intent of the one refuting does not become misconstrued or misunderstood, or to leave room for the one in opposition to feel as though it was not convincing enough such that he may misunderstand the objective. If this is not done it will result in tremendous damage like confrontation and resistance towards the one who neglected these prerequisites before embarking upon the refutation initially.

Thirdly: One should carefully consider while refuting the one in opposition that people vary in their levels of opposition, vary in their levels in the religion and vary in their worldly statuses. The motive for opposition essentially differs from one

One who actualizes the *Tawheed* (i.e. Islamic monotheism) of Allah with all of it's aspects, ³³
requisites and conditions

individual to the next. It could be the result of *Jahl* (i.e. ignorance), *Hawa* (i.e. following his desires) or just absolute innovation (i.e. *bid'ah*), or due to the fact that he is inarticulate and doesn't know how to express himself or it was just a mere slip of the tongue.

It could also be the case that he is affected by his sheikh or the environment in which he was raised, the way he interpreted his intent or other than this from the many reasons which lead to legislative infractions or opposition to the Qur'an, the Sunnah and methodology of the Salaf. Whoever neglects taking these things into consideration and fails to acknowledge their variations and differences when refuting, then perhaps he may fall into either excessiveness or transgression of the boundaries or just total negligence of the matter altogether, which would prevent the one being boycotted from taking full advantage of his admonition and diminish the benefits found therein.

Fourthly: One should carefully consider, while refuting the one in opposition that achieving the legislative objectives and benefits of refutation is the ultimate goal. For neglecting this will result in greater harm towards the one being refuted at which point refutation is not admissible nor recommended. In the Religion of Islam you don't combat harm with one that is greater than it, as Sheikh ul Islam Ibn Taymiyah said:

فلا يجوز دفع الفساد القليل بالفساد الكثير ولا دفع أخف الضررين بتحصيل أعظم الضررين فإن الشريعة جاءت بتحصيل المصالح
و تكميلها وتعطيل المفاسد وتقليلها بحسب الإمكان و مطلوبها ترجيح خير الخيرين إذا لم يمكن أن يجتمعا جميعا ودفع شر الشرين
إذا لم يتفقا جميعا.

It is not permissible to repel a minor evil with one that is greater than it nor to repel the lesser of the two evils by embarking upon the greater of the two. For indeed the legislation of Islam came to secure and perfect these benefits for the Ummah in addition to repelling and reducing the evil as much as possible. So the recommended thing is to give precedence to the better of the two goods, if it is not possible to achieve both of them and to repel the worst of the two evils, if it is not possible to rid ourselves of them all together.³⁴

Fifthly: What should also be emphasized here is that the refutation should be commensurate with the degree of propagation and prevalence of this particular infraction, if it has spread in a particular locality or community. It is not recommended to hasten with refutation whether by way of written compilation or cassette tapes, or any other means of propagation. This is especially true in a locality where people are not familiar with the fallacy or infraction being refuted.

In this case, circulating the refutation in an indirect manner is more preferable, because if it is direct, people may possibly come across it and the fallacy thereof is not convincing enough and it remains in their hearts. So leaving the people intact and free from hearing the falsehood to begin with is better than bringing it to their attention and then trying to refute it afterwards. The Salaf used to consider this point carefully in their refutations. In many of their books, which are specific to refutation,

Mentioned in *Masa'il al Mardiniyah* P.73-74 by Sheikh ul Islam Ibn Taymiyah ³⁴

they used the truth to refute falsehood without even mentioning the fallacy initially, which is from their profound understanding of the religion and its objectives, whereas some of those who came after them have become very negligent of this.

Just as it is said about spreading the refutation in a locality where the infraction has not been propagated, the same is said about not spreading it amongst a group of people who are unfamiliar with the infraction or mistake, even if it is in the same locality in which the mistake was made initially. In short, it is not appropriate to propagate the refutation by way of books or cassette tapes amongst the laymen who are oblivious to this mistake.

How many laymen have been tested with hearing this and as a result they begin to have doubts and suspicions about the fundamentals of the religion due to the fact that they read what was above their comprehension from the countless books of refutation, which none can enumerate except Allah. So it is incumbent upon those who hasten to spread these books amongst the laymen to fear Allah and to be cautious about being a source of *Fitnah* for the people in the religion of Allah.

The most startling thing I've heard in relation to this is what some of the students have resorted to in spreading these books of refutation amongst those who are new Muslims, those who have only been Muslim for a few days or a few months. The students encourage them to read these books of refutation. By Allah what they are doing is appalling!

Sixthly: Refutation of the one who fell into error or made a mistake is *Fardh ul Kifayah*.³⁵ Thus if some of the scholars shoulder the responsibility of cautioning the Ummah by way of refutation, by which, the legislative objectives are achieved, then the rest of the scholars are relieved of this obligation and free of blame. This is based upon widely recognized principles the scholars unanimously concur with, along with other communal obligations.

One of the most reprehensible and hideous mistakes that occur amongst the students of knowledge is that when a scholar refutes an individual who has made a mistake or when a fatwa (i.e. Islamic ruling) is issued by him warning against this individual or against a particular mistake, many students who ascribe to following the Sunnah and the scholars, request from others to make *Bayan* (i.e. clarification) of their position concerning this refutation or fatwa.

Rather this has reached such a degree that they even require from the younger students of knowledge, and even from the laymen, to state and clarify their positions regarding this refutation and the one being refuted. Then they conclude, in light of this, their positions of *Wala'a wal Baraa'a*,³⁶ then they proceed to boycott one another based upon this. Shameful enough, some of the students may even boycott and abandon some of their own scholars, whom they have benefited from for many

Communal obligation.³⁵

Allegiance to and dissociation which are two well-known principals in the religion of Islam, rather it³⁶ is the epitome of the statement *La Ilaha illallah*.

years in the field of Aqeedah (i.e. Islamic creed), due to this Fitnah. This *Fitnah* has even made its way into the homes of the believers, to the extent that a man would even boycott his own brother and a son would be disrespectful, rude and shun his own parents and perhaps a man may even divorce his own wife and separate himself from his own children due to this *Fitnah*.

When you look at the community you will find them divided into two or more groups, every group making accusations against the other and obligating *Hajr* on the other and the ironic thing is that all of the above is found with those who ascribe to following the Sunnah, those who, before the emergence of this differing, could not find anything derogatory to say about the other in relation to their *Aqeedah* or in the soundness of their Minhaj.

This is either the result of extreme ignorance of the Sunnah and the principles that were established by *Ahlus Sunnah* in the realm of reprimand or due to *Hawa* (i.e. following their desires), and we ask Allah for safety and preservation from this.

THE EIGHTH POINT:

It is imperative that the scholars of *Ahlus Sunnah*, those who are recognized for soundness in *Aqeedah* and *Ijtihaad* (i.e. academic diligence) in aiding the Sunnah, that their status be preserved and their prestige and rank be acknowledged. It is not permissible to belittle them or accuse them of being innovators, or accuse them of following their desires and being fanatical towards their opinions and/or positions, based upon a mistake they may have made in their *Ijtihaad*.³⁷ Sheikh ul Islam Ibn Taymiyah said:

ولا ريب أن الخطأ في دقيق العلم مغفور للأمة وإن كان ذلك في المسائل العلمية، ولو لا ذلك لهلك أكثر فضلاء الأمة، وإن كان الله يغفر لمن جهل تحريم الخمر لكونه نشأ بأرض جهل مع كونه لم يطلب العلم، فالفاضل المجتهد في طلب العلم بحسب ما أدركه في زمانه ومكانه إذا كان مقصوده متابعة الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم بحسب إمكانه، هو أحق أن يتقبل الله حسناته ويشبهه على اجتهداده ولا يؤاخذ بما أخطأ تحقيق لقوله: ربنا لا تؤاخذنا إن نسينا أو أخطأنا...

“There is no doubt that the mistakes made by this Ummah in some of the precise matters of knowledge are forgiven and pardoned, even in the issues of Aqeedah. If this wasn’t the case then many of the virtuous scholars would have been destroyed as a result. For Allah forgives the one who is ignorant of the impermissibility of alcohol due to the fact that he was raised in an ignorant environment, coupled with the fact that he himself is not a student of knowledge. So the virtuous scholar, the one who is diligent in seeking knowledge according to his ability, in his time and locality, if his intent is to follow the Messenger (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) as much as he can then he is more deserving that Allah should accept from him his Hasanaat (i.e. his efforts and good deeds) and reward him for his Ijtihadaat (pl. of Ijtihaad) and not punish him for his error, which is in fact, an actualization of the statement of Allah:

Personal interpretive judgment.³⁷

ربنا لا تؤاخذنا إن نسينا أو أخطأنا...

“Our Lord don't punish us if we forget or fall into error...”³⁸

He also said:

هذا قول السلف وأئمة الفتوى كأبي حنيفة والشافعي والثوري وداود بن علي وغيرهم, لا يؤثمون مجتهدا مخطئا في المسائل الأصولية ولا في الفرعية كما ذكر ذلك عنهم ابن حزم وغيره, وقالوا هذا هو القول المعروف عن الصحابة والتابعين لهم بإحسان وأئمة الدين أنهم لا يكفرون ولا يفسقون ولا يؤثمون أحدا من المجتهدين المخطئين لا في مسائل عملية ولا في مسائل علمية, قالوا والفرق بين مسائل الفروع والأصول إنما هو من أقوال أهل البدع من أهل الكلام والمعتزلة والجهمية ومن سلك سبيلهم.

“This is the opinion of the Salaf and those Imaams qualified to issue legal rulings (i.e. Fatawah) like Abu Haneefah, Ash Shafi'ee, Ath Thowry and Dawud Ibn Ali and others. They don't fault the Mujtahid who has erred in the fundamental issues (i.e. Aqeedah) of the religion nor the subsidiary matters (i.e. Fiqh), Ibn Hazm and others also mentioned this about them. They mentioned that this was a well known position amongst Sahabah and those who followed them in goodness (i.e. the Tabi'oon) and the well respected Imams of this religion. They don't make Takfeer³⁹ nor Tafseeq⁴⁰ nor fault anyone from the Mujtahidoon if they err, not in the matters of Aqeedah nor in the matters of Fiqh. And separation of the fundamental and subsidiary issues is only acknowledged by the people of innovation, the People of Rhetoric, the Mu'tazilah, the Jahmiyah and those who follow their methodology...”⁴¹

The establishment of this principle does not imply that the scholar should not be advised if he errs, rather it is obligatory for the one who recognizes his error to advise him. This, in fact, is considered reverence of him and seen as an act of good. But this advice should be done with leniency and gentleness and in a manner that is commensurate with his prestige and rank in knowledge and virtue. If he retracts from his mistake and returns to what is correct, then this is accepted from him and it is not permissible afterwards to talk about him or blame him for his mistake, and there should be no doubt about his return to the *Haqq*.

If he doesn't retract his mistake, based upon a particular understanding he holds or due to a misconception that has hindered him from understanding the truth of the matter, then the error itself should be considered. If in fact his error is something which is restricted to himself then he is free from blame due to the fact that he is responsible for his own self rectification. However if this error has spread amongst the people, then they are to be made aware of it and cautioned against it in addition to the preservation of the rank and status of that scholar. It is important here that we draw attention to two important principles:

Found in Surah Al Baqrah (2:286) and the statement of Sheikh ul Islam is found in *Majmoo'* ³⁸
Fatawah Vol.20 P.165)

To deem a Muslim to be a disbeliever ³⁹

To deem someone to be rebellious and disobedient to Allah i.e. major sinner ⁴⁰

Majmoo' Fatawah Vol.19 P.207 ⁴¹

The First: Dedicating oneself totally to the truth (i.e. haqq).

The Second: Preserving the status of the Ulamaa (i.e. scholars).

These two principles do not contradict one another as far as Ahlus Sunnah are concerned, and none should go to the extreme concerning one of them at the expense of the other. Indeed loving the Ulamaa and acknowledging their rank and status does not mean that you have to be silent about their mistakes or avoid cautioning the people against them.

Also devoting yourself totally to the truth coupled with cautioning the people against the mistakes of a scholar does not mean that you are belittling him or discrediting him, rather it is possible to combine the two, but only for the one whom Allah has granted *Tawfeeq* (i.e. success) to do so. The one who knows the methodology of the Ulamaa when it comes to highlighting some of their mistakes and cautioning against them without belittling them, has truly actualized this matter, and there are many examples of this in the speech of the Ulamaa.

THE NINTH POINT:

The people of innovation, who have opposed Ahlus Sunnah and their Minhaj when it comes to textual deduction, education, teaching and calling to Allah, follow their desires and do not establish their knowledge and principles by following the Ulamaa of Ahlus Sunnah. Rather they belittle and slander them and consider themselves to be more virtuous than them. These are the true people of bid'ah (i.e. innovation) and deviance and it is imperative that we combat them by drawing people's attention to their evil path and deviance from the Sunnah in order to refute their misconceptions, and to deal with them in the manner that is appropriate for the people of innovation to be dealt with in all circumstances. But this does not prevent them from being invited to the truth and for the Ulamaa to debate with them in ways that will produce the best results, if this will be more effective in their return to the Sunnah.

It is imperative though, not to confuse the Ulamaa of Ahlus Sunnah and how their mistakes should be dealt with- the clarification of which has already preceded- with the Ulamaa of Ahlul Bid'ah, those whom it is obligatory for us to separate from, boycott and warn against. This is due to the fact that the mistakes of the Ulamaa from Ahlus Sunnah are based upon their diligence in seeking the truth coupled with following the correct methodology and etiquettes when it comes to textual deductions, contrary to the mistakes of Ahlul Bid'ah which are founded upon and the result of following their desires and abandoning the correct methodology and the proper etiquettes as it relates to textual deductions and extractions. The distinction between the two has to be defined. This is the sole contrast between *Ahlus Sunnah* and *Ahlul Bid'ah*, and by this, it will become clear to the intelligent person, why some of the Imams from *Ahlus Sunnah* who have erred by agreeing with some of the opinions of the *People of Bid'ah* in a few specific issues, were not considered to be innovators.

THE TENTH POINT:

I will end this piece of advice with some precious benefits which I see, that by acting upon them, will result in a tremendous reward, merit and will raise one in the ranks of virtue with Allah. I call my brothers to carefully consider them and to act upon them, especially in these times in which *Fitnah* and *Hawa* have become widespread and ignorance has become dominant and prevalent except with those whom Allah has mercy on.

Firstly

My brothers on the Sunnah, Know! If you are truly from the people on the Sunnah then you will never be harmed by the plots of the people. None of their accusations of you being a *Mubtadi'a* (i.e. innovator), can remove you from the Sunnah. And if you are deviant and astray, and I ask Allah to give you refuge from being such, then none of the praises of the people will benefit you with Allah. Regardless of whether they consider you to be from the people of the Sunnah or they extol you, or attribute imitative and falsified nicknames to you, for indeed Allah knows your true reality just as well as you know it yourself. So I warn you against deceiving yourself and sufficient enough for you as an admonishment is the advice the Prophet (*Sallallahu alaihi wa salam*) gave to Ibn Abbas⁴² and the hadeeth of the three who will be the first to be burnt in the fire on the *Day of Judgment*.⁴³ May Allah give both, me and you, refuge from this.

Secondly

Know that the Ulamaa of Ahlus Sunnah, those who are firmly grounded in knowledge, did not reach the level of eminence and leadership in the religion except by the *Tawfeeq* (i.e. success) of Allah and by being patient while having true *Yaqeen* (i.e. certainty) about Allah, as He says:

وجعلنا منهم أئمة يهدون بأمرنا لما صبروا وكانوا بآياتنا يوقنون.

“And We made from amongst them leaders, giving guidance under Our command, when they were patient and used to believe in Our Ayaat with certainty.”⁴⁴

Translator's note: The sheikh here is referring to the famous hadeeth found in Sahih al Bukhaari ⁴² where the prophet told Ibn Abbas *"...know that if the whole nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would only benefit you with what Allah has already decreed for you and if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would only harm you with what Allah has already decreed for you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried..."*

Translator's note: The sheikh here is referring to the hadeeth of Abu Hurairah found in Sahih ⁴³ Muslim and in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad where the Prophet (*Sallallahu alaihi wa salam*) said ***“The first ones to be burnt in the fire are three...”*** he mentioned from those three, a scholar whom Allah had favored to memorize the Qur'an and to seek knowledge, and instead he used this favor to seek reputation and adulation in this life and Allah orders the Angels to drag him on his face into the Hell-Fire, and we seek refuge with Allah from this.

Found in Surah As Sajdah (32:24) ⁴⁴

And Sheikh ul Islam Ibn Taymiyah (Rahimahullah) said:

بالصبر واليقين تنال الإمامة في الدين

“With patience and certainty you will achieve leadership in the religion.”

In actuality, **Yaqeen** (i.e. Certainty) is strength and vigor in one's knowledge which is founded upon sound evidence and understanding of the texts from the Qur'an and the Sunnah. This, of course, is the exact opposite of what some of the students of knowledge today are pleased with for themselves. The reality of the matter is that the only share they have of knowledge is to blindly follow a particular scholar or a student of knowledge and then claim that the truth is with him absolutely, and no one understands the Sunnah except him!

Sabr (i.e. patience) is fortitude and endurance in seeking knowledge, in addition to acting upon the knowledge and occupying himself with it day and night. This is contrary to those who have a weak determination do so and they find themselves content with leisure and repose, by which, one gives into his own desires to the extent that he has no interest in seeking knowledge altogether or to exemplify it in his behavior.

Thirdly:

Know! That *Takfeer*, *Tabdee'a* and *Tafseeq* is the sole right of Allah.⁴⁵ So avoid categorizing a Muslim to be a disbeliever (i.e. *Takfeer*) or an innovator (i.e. *Tabdee'a*) or a rebellious disobedient sinner (i.e. *Tafseeq*), especially if he does not deserve to be categorized as such, even if he considers you to be a *Kafir*. For indeed Ahlus Sunnah do not combat oppression with oppression. Sheikh ul Islam Ibn Taymiyah (Rahimahullah) said:

والخوارج تكفر أهل الجماعة وكذلك المعتزلة يكفرون من خالفهم وكذلك الرافضة ومن لم يكفر فسق... وأهل السنة يتبعون الحق من ربه الذي جاء به الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم ولا يكفرون من خالفهم فيه، بل هم أعلم بالحق وأرحم بالخلق...

“The Khawaarij pronounce Takfeer on those who stick closely to the Jama'ah (i.e. Ahlus Sunnah) as do the Mu'tazilah. They deem anyone who oppose them to be disbelievers as do the Raafidha, and if they don't pronounce Takfeer on him then they deem him to be a Fasiq. However, Ahlus Sunnah follow the truth from their Lord which has come to them by way of the Messenger (Sallallahu alaihi wa salam) and they don't make Takfeer on the one who opposes them, rather they are the most knowledgeable of the people concerning the truth and the most merciful of people to creation.”⁴⁶

⁴⁵ The Sheikh explained this point by saying that *Takfeer*, *Tafseeq* and *Tabdee'a* is not based upon individual *ijtihaad* (i.e. academic diligence) and opinion, rather it is based upon the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (Sallahu alaihi wa salam)
⁴⁶ Found in his book Minhaj us Sunnah Vol.5 P.158

Fourthly:

Avoid boycotting the brother who boycotts you, especially if his *Hajr* of you is not admissible, instead hasten to give him the greeting, be gentle and lenient with him and remove from him the misconception by which he is boycotting you.

Sixthly:

The people who find fault with you and criticize you either by belittling you for who you are or by attributing some false accusations to you by using statements that oppose the Minhaj (i.e. methodology) of Ahlus Sunnah like saying, “He is astray.” or “He is a deviant.” or “He is ignorant.” or “He doesn’t have any understanding.” Don’t seek retribution for yourself or you will fall into self-praise and this is clearly a destructive path.

Ahlul Bid’ah (i.e. the people of innovation) used to describe Ahlus Sunnah with some of the most vile and hideous descriptions, but Ahlus Sunnah would never pay them any attention. Instead they would restrict their refutations of them to the errors made in the religion and advise the Ummah accordingly and indeed we have in them a beautiful example to follow.

However, if they accuse you falsely of something, for example, if they say: “so and so says such and such” and by such a statement he is accusing you of saying something that you didn’t say, then you have the right to negate this from yourself in order that you are not accused of falsehood. The Ulama have never ceased refuting and negating false statements that are attributed to them unjustly.

This is not considered self-praise, rather it advice to the Ummah. So there is a difference between this matter and the one mentioned previously. Therefore, hold tightly to the guidance of the Ulama in this regard and do not follow in the foot steps of the ignorant ones who, if someone criticizes him then he fills the Dunya with praise and extolment of himself, and we seek refuge with Allah from being abandoned (by Him).

Lastly:

Know! That people are honored and dignified based upon their actions, so if you are upon the Sunnah then everyday you will be honored therein for that, and only but a few days will pass except that you will eventually become an Imam (i.e. leader) as Allah says:

وجعلنا منهم أئمة يهدون بأمرنا لما صبروا وكانوا بآياتنا يوقنون.

“And We made from amongst them leaders, giving guidance under Our command when they were patient and used to believe in Our signs with certainty.”⁴⁷

Its reference has already preceded on P.18 ⁴⁷

And if you are upon Bid'ah (i.e. innovation) then everyday you will be honored therein for that -by those who follow you- and only but a few days will pass except that eventually you will become an Imam in that realm, as Allah said:

قل من كان في الضلالة فليمدد له الرحمن مدا...

“Say (O Muhammad) whoever is in error then The Most Gracious (i.e. Allah) will extend the rope for him...”⁴⁸

Allah said about Fir'oun and his people, after describing them with arrogance which they had no right to exercise:

وجعلناهم أئمة يدعون إلى النار...

“And We made them leaders calling to the fire...”⁴⁹

So choose for yourself, from your deeds today, what will define for you what type of Imam you will be tomorrow. This is what I wanted to present and Allah knows best, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon His Slave and Messenger Muhammad.

Written by: Ibrahim Ibn A'mir Ar Ruhaylee in the Prophet's city al Madinah the year 1424/10/8

Translated by: Abu Az Zubayr Shadeed Muhammad 11/15/1427H. corresponding to December 12th 2006 in the Prophet's city Al Madinah. Permission for this translation, distribution and publication was given by the Sheikh, May Allah reward him and place this effort in his scales of good on the Day when no wealth or children will be of any benefit only those who come to Allah with a pure heart.

This book was recently revised by the aforementioned translator on 10/1/1433H. corresponding to Monday December 5th 2011 in the City of Philadelphia. I would also like to take this opportunity to disclaim some of the accusations of a select few who would rather that this publication remain submerged in negligence and disregard instead of resurfacing to the benefit and advancement of the believers who, even in 2011/2012 continue to live the atrocities cited therein.

In October of 2006, when I began working on this translation, the condition of many brothers and sisters in the West and other places- who ascribed to the Minhaj of the Salaf (i.e. Salafiyah)- especially in Medina, where I was a student, was very much contemptible and intolerable. Without going into many redundant details, I found this very concise article, which was actually a lecture that Sheikh Ibrahim Ar Ruhaylee (may Allah preserve him) gave in 2003, transcribed by some of the students and made available by his permission to the general body of students in the Islamic University.

Fund in Surah Maryam (19:75) ⁴⁸

Found in Surah Al Qasas (28:41) ⁴⁹

During this time some of the brothers and sisters from America were on their way to Saudi for Hajj. I translated the book completely and took it to Shaykh Ibrahim Ar Ruhaylee. When I told the Shaykh I had finished the translation and I needed his permission to give it out for free to the brothers and sisters who were coming from America to make Hajj and to eventually make it a publication in America, he surprisingly said to me: “Can I have a copy?” I said: “Of course I have one for you right here.” and I gave him the copy that I set aside specifically for him. Then he asked me to sign the copy I gave him in English and date it, which I graciously did and he thanked me for translating it and for having enough concern about the brothers and sisters in my community to make it available to them.

The brothers and sisters from America made preparations to meet with Shaykh Ali At Tuwaijiri at his house. I along with other students met them there. I printed 100 copies which I passed out to the brothers and sisters after Shaykh Ali gave me permission to do so in his home. He also requested a copy from me for himself and praised Shaykh Ibrahim for his due diligence on the subject matter which-at that time as well as today- was timely and of dire importance.

Some of the brothers from Britain and their followers from America went to Shaykh Muhammad Ibn HadyAl Madkhali (may Allah preserve him) and told him that I translated the book and passed it out to the brothers and sisters. The brothers who went to Shaykh Muhammad were well aware of his sentiment and stance regarding what Shaykh Ibrahim wrote prior to me translating the book. Shaykh Muhammad reportedly said that I shouldn't have translated the book because there were mistakes therein, as I was told by brother Adam Lazaurus, post-facto, who was then a student in the College of Da'wah.

I went to Shaykh Ali Nasr Al Faqihi, who was/ is one of the eldest and most renowned scholars of Medina, and also one of the teachers of Shaykh Ibrahim Ar Ruhaylee when he was doing his undergraduate studies, and asked him was he familiar with the book. The Shaykh replied in the affirmative, so I asked him did he read the book, which he replied that he read it from cover to cover and praised Shaykh Ibrahim for embarking on such a tremendous task. I asked the Shaykh was he aware of any mistakes either in Aqeedah (i.e. Islamic Creed) or Minhaj (i.e. methodology of Ahlus Sunnah) in the book, to which he replied: “No.”

Then I went to see Shaykh Salih As Suhaymee (may Allah preserve him) and asked him the same and he said there were no mistakes in the book and anyone who makes such a claim, the onus of proof is on them. Just recently, in April of 2011, Shaykh Salih As Suhaymee said again to a questioner: “Read the book of Ibrahim Ar Ruhaylee entitled “Advice to the youth of Ahlus Sunnah”. Read it. This is a great book concerning the regulations of boycotting.” (courtesy of www.madeenah.com)

The reason I took the time to expound on this issue is because I know that when this book resurfaces there will be individuals who will say that Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Hady warned shadeed about this book or told him not to translate it “he is still going against the scholars!” etc.

Nonetheless Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Hady never told *me* not to translate it and furthermore, other scholars have read the book and praised the book and encouraged the people to read it and benefit from it. Therefore whoever chooses not to read it, then he is following the scholars and those who choose to read and benefit from it are likewise following the scholars. The Shaykh made some additions to the book recently that is currently being translated and will be made available very soon insha Allah. And We pray that Allah make us amongst:

الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ

“Those who listen to advice and follow the best thereof, such are those whom Allah has guided and such are men of understanding.” (39:18)

May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon His final Messenger, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah and upon his family and companions.