

THE ROAD TO FALAH LET'S GO BACK

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IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

Alhamdulillah. Indeed, all praise is due to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from our soul's evils and our wrongdoings. He whom Allah guides, no one can misguide; and he whom He leaves astray, no one can guide.

I bear witness that there is no (true) god except Allah-alone without a partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad (pbuh) is His servant and messenger.

"O you who believe! Revere Allah with right reverence, and do not die except as Muslims." (Al Qur'an 3:102)

"O people! Revere your Lord who has created you from a single soul, and dispersed from both of them many men and women. Revere Allah through whom you demand things from one another, and (honour the ties of) the wombs. Indeed, Allah is ever-Watcher over you." (Al Qur'an 4:1)

"O you who believe! Revere Allah and say just words. He will then rectify your deeds and forgive your sins. He who obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly achieved a great victory." (Al Qur'an 33:70-71)

Indeed, the best speech is Allah's Book and the best guidance is Muhammad's (pbuh) guidance. The worst affairs (of religion) are those innovated (by people), for every such innovation is an act of misguidance leading to the Fire.

INTRODUCTION

"If I am to remain silent how would the ignorant masses know truth from falsehood."

Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal

"Nothing will benefit the later generation of this Ummah except that which benefited the early generation of this Ummah."

Imaam Maalik

Readers will recall that my earlier book "The Road to Falah" had talked about various verses of the Quran and teachings of Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) which if adhered to would lead the Muslims to success not only in this world but also hereafter.

"The Road to Falah: Let's Go Back," as a sequel to my earlier book, takes the study on the subject further and dwells deeper into the ways and means to achieve this grand success.

I am sure Many people will read this work with raised eyebrows...from where did I get these strange ideas... are these part of Islam...

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"Islam began as something strange, and it shall return to being something strange. So give glad tidings to the strangers."* when asked who these graceful strangers might be, the Prophet (pbuh) answered: *"They are a small group of people among a large, evil population. Those who oppose them are more than those who follow them."* (Sahih Muslim, vol. 1, Hadith no. 270)

Over the centuries, Muslims have largely drifted away from the magnificent path of correct Islamic beliefs and practices which has prevented the Muslims advancement. *Aqeedah* (Belief) of the Muslim masses has become contaminated with dogmas coming from sources alien to Islam. Therefore, it is necessary to purify our beliefs and practices so that they are only based on authentic texts from the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*, in compliance with the beliefs and practices of the *Sahaabah*, and clean from any type of *bidah*, *kufir* and *shirk*.

It's an obligation on every Muslim to educate and guide/encourage other Muslims towards the straight path - Islam, to implement its teachings and revel in its virtues and ethics.

We should also invite non- Muslims to the unadulterated truth of Islam.
Allah says;

"Let there arise from you, a nation inviting to (all that is) good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, for those are the successful." (Al Qur'an 3:104)

I have tried to just touch upon some issues of significance which are plaguing the Muslim *Ummah* in the first chapter itself and some issues in brief which otherwise demand at least a volume each, for which the *Ummah* has little time. Nevertheless it becomes incumbent upon every Muslim to love for his brother, what he loves for himself as the Prophet (pbuh) has commanded us to. Moreover, Allah (swt) and His Messenger (pbuh) have warned us with severe warning to exhort each other towards the right path, failing which..., let's see the warnings from the Almighty and His Messenger in their own words, Allah (swt) says:

"They used not to prevent one another from wrongdoing that they did. How wretched was that which they were doing." (Al Qur'an 5:79) and

"And do not incline toward those who do wrong, lest you be touched by the Fire, and you would not have other than Allah any protectors; then you would not be helped." (Al Qur'an 11:113)

The Messenger (pbuh) said, *"Verily when the people see evil and they do not change it, it is likely that Allah will cover them all with His torment."* (Abu Dawud, vol.3, Hadith no. 4338)

All the good that you find in this book is from Allah (swt), and the shortcomings if any are surely mine.



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ISSUES PLAGUING ISLAM

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"Whoever among you sees an evil action, let him change it with his hand (by taking action); if he cannot, then with his tongue (by speaking out); and if he cannot, then with his heart (by hating it and feeling that it is wrong) – and that is the weakest of faith."* (Sahih Muslim, vol.1, Hadith no.79) And

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"Beware, for fear of people should not stop a man from speaking out the truth he knows."* (Ibn Majah, vol.5, Hadith no.4007)

In this chapter I have touched upon some issues which seems rather minor to many of us but the consequences of which could be devastating. As Anas bin Malik (r.a.) said, *"You people do things today that you regard as less significant than a strand of hair, whereas we, during the time of the Prophet – peace and blessings be upon him – used to consider them destructive sins."* (He addressed the next best generation after the Prophet (pbuh)'s generation in these words more than fourteen centuries back, imagine what he would have said today.)

Following are some of the corrupt beliefs/practices plaguing this Ummah that needs to be addressed

To start with, *deen* has been bracketed under the rituals of 'Salaam alaikum' and 'Allah Hafiz'- the morning starts not with the recitation of the Glorious Qur'an but with the

'enticing and soothing' noise of music, the 'melody' of the *shaytaan*. Hence today one can hardly find a home which is not affected by lack of happiness, fulfillment and tranquility...

Ibn Taymiyah (r.a.) explains that *"happiness and fulfillment can only be attained by being true slaves of Allah. Feelings of unhappiness, misery and dissatisfaction come from being alienated and far away from Allah and not because of the lack of some of our material needs and wants. Thus the Islamic concept of happiness and fulfillment is diametrically opposed to the materialistic concept which says that happiness can be achieved through material means. The materialistic view says that mental problem or mental illness is the result of material deprivation, lack of sexual fulfillment and so on. Islam on the other hand says that these problems stem from being away from Allah and ignoring the basic purpose of life, which is to be his true slave."*

BRINGING UP CHILDREN

The Prophet (pbuh) said: *"Children are the cause of grief, cowardice, ignorance and miserliness."* (Reported by al-Tabaraani in al-Kabeer, 24/241; Saheeh al-Jaami', 1990). When he (pbuh) said that they are the cause of miserliness, he (pbuh) meant that if a man wants to spend for the sake of Allah, the *Shaytaan* reminds him of his children, so he thinks, *"My children deserve the money, I will leave it for them when I die, so he is miserly in the sense that he refrains from spending it for the sake of Allah. When he (pbuh) said that children are the cause of cowardliness, he (pbuh) meant that when a man wants to fight in Jihad for the sake of Allah, the Shaytaan comes to him and says, "You will be killed and will die, and your children will become orphans, lost and alone," so he stays home and does not go out for Jihad. When he (pbuh) said that children are the cause of ignorance, he (pbuh) meant that they distract a father from seeking knowledge and trying to acquire learning by attending gatherings and reading books. When (pbuh) he*

said that children are the cause of grief, he (pbuh) meant that when a child gets sick, the parent feels grief; if the child asks for something that the father cannot provide, this grieves the father; and if the child grows up and rebels against his father, this is a cause of ongoing grief and distress. (*Weakness of Faith*, By Sheikh Saalih Al-Munajjid).

There are some who out of blind and infectious love for this world give satanic advice to their children, don't fast (in the month of *Ramadaan*) as it will make you weak, and don't offer *salaah* as it will take away your precious time, which will affect your exams subsequently, not even *Jumu'ah salaah*, although Allah (swt) has made it obligatory with these Words in His Book,

"O you who believe! When the call is proclaimed for the salat (prayer) on Friday (Jumu'ah prayer), come to the remembrance of Allah and leave off business (and every other thing)..." (Al Qur'an 62:9) (The mosques are devoid of children, except those poor ones who cannot afford to attend schools). While on the other hand the Messenger (pbuh) has commanded us to discipline our children in these words,

Narrated Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-'As: The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, *"Command your children to pray when they attain the age of seven, and beat them for it (if they don't pray) when they are ten years old; and arrange their beds (to sleep) separately."* (Abu Dawud, vol.1, Hadith no.495) and Allah (swt) says,

"Let not your wealth and children divert you from the remembrance of Allah, Whoever does that are losers." (Al Qur'an 63:9)

A story reflecting the state of Muslim *Ummah*. In his book *Tammaslal fid-deen wal-Hayat* (reflections on religion and life) *Imaam* Ghazali mentioned a story that he found to be wholly expressing the state of Muslims. *"There was a rich man who had a son who was practically blind. Despite all the*

efforts of many doctors, his son was only able to perceive some shapes and colors. The father sat down one day with his friends and said that he had decided to give his son for the cause of Allah and he will enter Al-Azhar- the renowned Islamic University, as soon as he memorizes the Qur'an. Soon, thereafter, his son started memorizing the Qur'an, entered Al-Azhar under the guidance of a blind scholar, known for his skill in recitation. Indeed, as fate would have it, as each day passed, the boy's sight improved incredibly. The father was amazed and began to doubt his decision of sacrificing his son in the way of Allah- a decision he had taken based on the fact that his son was nearly blind! This story illustrates the idea that, we want what is best for us in this world: "They assign to Allah that, which they dislike (for themselves)." (Al Qur'an 16:62). Faced with the sudden change of events, the father drove the blind scholar from his home and decided to send his son to a technical school. One can gather the lack of importance that Muslims give to the quality of the individual who studies in the path of Allah. Muslims donate the blind, the sick, or the weak. Those that are blessed with beautiful faces, sharp minds, and healthy bodies are not sent to join Allah's ranks. I fear that the level of health amongst our nation will improve to such an extent that we will not find anyone who will study Islam."

Some of these parents name their children after the name of such giants like Hamza, Umar, Ali, Khalid (r.a.a.) – not even aware of their status and achievements- leave aside the will, to exhort them to follow on their footsteps... No doubt the nation, that doesn't learn from its history, is doomed...

Do they ever wonder/think what or how they will respond when and if Allah (swt) will punish their wards (if they are not forgiven) and the wards will blame their loving and doting parents for their misfortune. And when these "religiously brought up" children grow up they repay their ageing and ailing parents by flying off to "greener pastures" thus leaving them to spend the rest of their miserable life

in loneliness, here it is contextual to add that parents who proudly boast around that their children are living in US or UK should know that it is not allowed for a Muslim to reside in a non-Muslim country just for the sake of comfort and money, especially in countries that are destroying Muslims. **(The scholars are unanimous on this issue.)**

And there was this shocking incident where the mother after celebrating the birthday party (**Birthdays, New Year and other such celebrations are not allowed in Islam**) of her small girl (in which the girl was asked to dance on a vulgar song) was heard proudly boasting around how the people (who had attended the party) had appreciated her daughter's **display**. How appropriately the Messenger (pbuh) had prophesied that *"You will follow the ways of those nations who were before you, span by span and cubit by cubit (i.e., inch by inch) so much so that even if they entered a hole of a lizard, you would follow them."* It was asked *"O Allah's Apostle! (Do you mean) the Jews and the Christians?"* He said, *"Whom else?"* (Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 9, Hadith no. 421)

And since people generally follow and imitate those whom they love, in this context a Hadith of the Prophet (pbuh) serves as a warning. The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"... (In the hereafter) you will be with those whom you love"* (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 5, Hadith. no. 37)

No doubt these people fail to realize that they themselves are pushing their children towards destruction. They are encouraging their children to a lifestyle that will become a real cause of worry for them, but by the time they realize, it will be too late for them, because as the saying goes, **"as you sow, so shall you reap."**

HIJAAB AND MARRIAGE

When the time for marriage comes, it starts with many un-Islamic practices, like for example the 'ring ceremony' before the marriage, where the boy and the girl exchange

rings. They put gold rings (generally) on each other's fingers, despite the fact that wearing gold rings etc. being *haraam* for Muslim men. They are then formally recognized as future husband and wife (even if the marriage has been fixed two years later) giving them license to have regular late night chats on phone and internet. The parents religiously teasing the girl if the call is delayed. More 'concerned' parents even go further than this and encourage their wards to go on dates and lovingly enquire how did it go?

One also finds that some parents marry off their daughters to people who are working as officers in banks (interest based) and other un-Islamic positions and feel proud of their achievements. They in other words reassure them that what if Allah has declared it *haraam*, 'I don't think so, you don't have to worry about Allah's wrath, I am with you'. Don't they know that the blood and flesh made from *haraam* earning will not enter *Jannah*?

It's also noteworthy that many parents when looking for their daughter's future match, the first thing they enquire is 'which company is the prospective groom working', 'how much salary he draws', 'has a house of his own or not', etc., etc., but **never ever** enquire about his *deen* i.e. 'whether he offers *salaah* or not', what is his *aqeedah*', etc. They should know that if he is not in the habit of offering *salaah* then according to the Prophet (pbuh): *"The difference between a man (Muslim) and shirk and kufr is the abandoning of salaah."* (Sahih Muslim, vol.1, Hadith no.147)

Moreover, if his *aqeedah* is not right then he could be involved in *shirk*, in either case will the *nikaah* be considered valid if it ever takes place? (Or will a good Muslim father prefer such a groom for his daughter?) It's worth pondering, that do they really love their children? Think it over.

Many parents don't ask their daughters to follow the criteria of *hijaab* before marriage (displaying their beauty to

attract future match). However once married, they regain their lost memory on the obligation of *hijaab*... and clad them in one with renewed faith. MISSION ACCOMPLISHED.

Same case of regaining memory loss is witnessed among women who fed/displayed their beauty in their younger days to the starving eyes, and when become unattractive, go on *hajj*, come back, put on designer/ attractive *hijaab*, (many to cover their bloated, out of shape body and grey hair). They trample the very concept of *hijaab*, (which is to cover the attractiveness and not otherwise) and become 'Islamically' ATTRACTIVE AGAIN, though this is the age when Allah (swt) has give them concession. All those *qawwamun* (protector and maintainer/guardians) of their women who do not implement the command of Allah (swt) and His Messenger (pbuh) in this context are branded as *daiyyus* by the Messenger (pbuh), who will not even smell the aroma of *Jannah* (paradise). These guardians have no misgivings about allowing their womenfolk to go out in revealing clothes but have strong reservations in sending them to Mosques, in spite of clear instruction from the Prophet (pbuh), who said, "*Do not prevent your women from visiting the Mosque...*" (Sahih Muslim, vol.1, Hadith No.886)

There are also women, who go out fully decked up, but when asked for whom they have made up, they have a readymade reply - "for their husband" ,but if that is the case then why don't they have the same enthusiasm, when they are home, with their husband... sheer hypocrisy. Allah says in his book,

"And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers or their

brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or the slaves whom their right hands possess, or male servants free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. And O you Believers! turn you all together towards Allah, that you may attain Bliss." (Al Qur'an 24:31)

There are some who have converted *hijaab* into a cultural dress - when abroad not in *hijaab* - when back into Islamic or familiar surroundings, they get into one.

Another evil that has become widespread and commonly witnessed is many young girls in *hijaab* (most often to hide their identity) date around, thus bringing shame to the entire Muslim community.

And then there are those who have given an entirely new definition to the concept of *hijaab* by just covering their hair with a piece of attractive cloth over their glamorous dress thus doing away with the very ethics of *hijaab*.

Some even go the extent of doing their hair in such a way that it looks like the hump of a camel about whom the Prophet (pbuh) had prophesied that they are the dwellers of hellfire. (Sahih Muslim, vol.3 Hadith no.5310)

To fulfill the obligation of *Hijab* there are six criteria that are to be met as the Scholars have mentioned. They are the following,

1. Whole body should be covered except the face and hands up to the wrist, some Scholars say even that should be covered.
2. The dress should not be so tight that it reveals the figure.
3. It should not be so glamorous that it attracts the opposite sex.
4. It should not resemble the dress of other religion.
5. It should not be of opposite sex.
6. It should not be so thin that one can see through.

All these criteria can be easily met if one puts on a loose gown and a large headscarf.

CLAIM OF LOVE FOR THE PROPHET (PBH)

There are some who claim that they love the Messenger (pbh) so much so that they celebrate his (pbh) birthday etc., and out of love they claim that the Messenger (pbh) has the knowledge of the unseen (*alim ul ghayb*), whereas Allah (swt) says,

"Say, (O Muhammad (pbh)) "I hold not for myself (the power of) benefit or harm, except what Allah has willed. And if I knew the unseen, I could have acquired much wealth, and no harm would have touched me. I am not except a warner and a bringer of good tidings to a people who believe." (Al Qur'an, 7:188)

"Say, (O Muhammad (pbh)) none in the heavens and earth knows the unseen except Allah, and they do not perceive when they will be resurrected." (Al Qur'an, 27:65) And the Messenger (pbh) himself denied it in the following hadith,

Narrated Ar-Rubai bint Muauwidh, *"The Prophet came to me after consummating his marriage with me and sat down on my bed as you (the sub-narrator) are sitting now, and small girls were beating the tambourine and singing in lamentation of my father who had been killed on the day of the battle of Badr." Then one of the girls said, "There is a Prophet amongst us who knows what will happen tomorrow." The Prophet said (to her), "Do not say this, but go on saying what you have spoken before." (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 5, Hadith no. 336)*

As for the claims of those who say that the prophet (pbh) knows everything even about future (*alim ul ghayb*), here is a refutation...

Raafi 'ibn Khadeej reported, *"that Allah's Messenger (pbh) came to Madinah and found the people grafting their date-palm trees. He asked them what they were doing and they informed*

him they were artificially pollinating the trees. He then said, "Perhaps it would be better if you did not do that". When they abandoned the practice, the yield of the date-palm became less. So they informed him and he said, "I am a human being. So when I tell you something from my personal opinion, keep in mind that I am a human being". Anas reported that he added, you have better knowledge (of technical skills) in the affairs of this world". (Sahih Muslim, vol. 4, Hadith no. 5831-5832). And,

Aisha (r.a) says, *"And whoever tells you that the Prophet (pbh) knows what is going to happen tomorrow, is a liar." She then recited the verse, No soul can know what it will earn tomorrow." (Sahih Bukhari, vol.6, Hadith no.378)*

The Prophet (pbh) further informed his followers that even in the case of legal judgments with regard to disputes brought before him, he could unintentionally rule incorrectly, as some of such decisions were based on his opinion.

Umm Salamah reported that Allah's Messenger (pbh) said, *"I am only a human being, and you bring your disputes to me. Perhaps some of you are more eloquent in their plea than others, and I judge in their favour according to what I hear from them. So whatever I rule in anyone's favour which belongs to his brother, he should not take any of it, because I have only granted him a piece of hell." (Abu Dawud vol.3, Hadith no. 3576). These evidences clearly show that he (pbh) didn't have knowledge of the unseen.*

Out of love they also claim that the Messenger (pbh) is ever living (that he (pbh) is alive) whereas this *hadith* of Abu Bakr (r.a) rejects this notion,

Narrated 'Aisha (r.a), *"Allah's Messenger died while Abu Bakr was at a place called As-Sunah (Al-'Aliya) 'Umar stood up and said, "By Allah! Allah's Messenger is not dead!" 'Umar (later on) said, "By Allah! Nothing occurred to my mind except that." He said, "Verily! Allah will resurrect him and he will cut the hands and legs of some men." Then Abu Bakr came and uncovered*

the face of Allah's Messenger, kissed him and said, "Let my mother and father be sacrificed for you, (O Allah's Messenger), you are good in life and in death. By Allah in Whose Hands my life is, Allah will never make you taste death twice." Then he went out and said, "O oath-taker! Don't be hasty." When Abu Bakr spoke, 'Umar sat down. Abu Bakr praised and glorified Allah and said, No doubt! Whoever worshipped Muhammad, then Muhammad is dead, but whoever worshipped Allah, then Allah is Alive and shall never die." Then he recited Allah's Statement,

"(O Muhammad) Verily you will die and they also will die." (Al Qur'an, 39:30) He also recited,

"Muhammad (pbuh) is no more than a Messenger and indeed (many) Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels (as disbelievers)? And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah, and Allah will give reward to those who are grateful." (Al Qur'an, 3:144) (Sahih Bukhari, vol.5, Hadith no. 19) These evidences prove that the Prophet (pbuh) is not alive.

They fail to comprehend/acknowledge this simple fact that the relationship of love demands, especially in the case of the Messenger (pbuh) that you obey him whom you love and not disobey him, and loving the Prophet (pbuh) means following the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*. Love and obedience to the Prophet (pbuh) is demonstrated in the following *ahadith*,

Abdullah Ibn Masood narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said,

"Allah curses those ladies who practice tattooing and those who get themselves tattooed, and those ladies who get their hair removed from their eyebrows and faces except beard or moustache, and those who make artificial spaces between their teeth for beautification, whereby they change Allah's creation."

His saying reached a lady from Banu Asad who came to him and said, *"I have come to know that you have cursed such-and-such ladies?"*

He replied, *"Why should I not curse those whom the Prophet (pbuh) has cursed and who are (cursed) in Allah's book."* the lady said, *"I have read the whole Qur'an but I didn't find in it what you said."*

He said, *"Verily if you have read it (i.e. the Qur'an) you must have found it. Didn't you read,*

"And whatsoever the Messenger gives you take it and whatsoever he forbids, abstain (from it)." (Al Qur'an, 59:7)

She replied, *"Yes I did."* He said, *"verily Allah's Messenger forbade such things."* She said, *"But I see your wife doing these things."* He said, *"Go and watch her."* She went and watched her but could not see anything in support of her statement. On that he said, *"If my wife was as you thought, I would not keep her in my company"* (i.e. I would divorce her). (Sahih Bukhari, vol.6, Hadith no.408) and

Abdullah ibn Abbas reported, *"The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) saw a person wearing a gold ring in his hand. He (pbuh) pulled it off and threw it away, saying: One of you is wishing live coal from Hell, and putting it on his hand. It was said to the person after Allah's Messenger (pbuh) had left: Take your ring (of gold) and derive benefit out of it, whereupon he said: No, by Allah, I would never take it when Allah's Messenger (pbuh) has thrown it away."* (Sahih Muslim, vol.3, Hadith no. 5209), the above mentioned *ahadith* demonstrates how the *sahaabah* knew and understood the meaning of love and obedience for the Prophet (pbuh) as is expressed in the following *ahadith* of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh),

Narrated Anas (r.a), that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said, *"By Him in whose hands my life is, none of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father and his children and all mankind."* (Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol. 1, Hadith no. 14)

Narrated Abu Huraira (r.a), that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said, *"All my followers will enter paradise except those who refuse." They said, "O Allah's Messenger! Who will refuse?" He said, "Whoever obeys me will enter paradise, and whoever disobeys me is the one who refuses (to enter it)."* (Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol. 9, Hadith no. 384)

The Prophet (pbuh) also said, *"There is nothing that will take you closer to paradise but that I have enjoined it upon you, and there is nothing that will take you closer to hell but that I have warned you from it."* (Al Mu'jam Al Kabeer, Al Tabraani vol. 2 Page 156, Hadith no. 1647 & Silsilah Al Saheehah vol. 4, Hadith no. 1803)

They also seek Allah's Blessings through the Prophet (pbuh) whereas the *sahaaba*, who were the most knowledgeable in matters of *deen*, never did so (after him). In fact we cannot find a single *sahih hadith* that supports this claim. On the contrary we see that during the period of the second caliph Umar (r.a.) when there was a drought, the *sahaaba* didn't seek Allah's mercy through the Prophet (pbuh), instead they sought Abbas (r.a),

Narrated Anas (r.a) *"Whenever drought threatened them, 'Umar bin Al-Khattab, used to ask Al-Abbas bin 'Abdul Muttalib to invoke Allah for rain. He used to say, "O Allah! We used to ask our Prophet to invoke You for rain, and You would bless us with rain, and now we ask his uncle to invoke You for rain. O Allah! Bless us with rain." And so it would rain."* (Sahih Bukhari, vol.2 Hadith no.123) Thus proving intercession is not allowed when the person through whom the Blessing of Allah is sought is not alive. If such is the case with the Prophet (pbuh) then how about others? In other words it is not allowed to seek a dead person's intercession, however pious he might have been when he was alive.

The Prophet (pbuh) has warned, *"Do not exaggerate in praising me as the Christians praised the Messiah, the son of*

Maryam. Indeed I am only a slave. So say slave of Allah and His Messenger." (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 4, Hadith no. 654).

The Prophet (pbuh) also used to criticize anyone who did not keep to this manner of address with regard to him, as he (pbuh) replied to a person who said, *" whatever Allah and yourself have willed"*, by saying. *"Have you made me a rival for Allah! Rather say, whatever Allah alone has willed."* (Al-Bukhari in Adab ul mufrad, no.783)

PROHIBITION OF BID'AH

Some also say that *"Talking about innovations (bid'ah) divides the rank of the Muslims"* hence make *ijtihad*, knowing pretty well that it is not allowed when there is a clear text of the *Qur'an/sunnah* available. In this context the following *ahadith* of the Prophet (pbuh) clearly contradicts their opinion.

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"Indeed he among you who lives after me will see much discord/conflict, so keep to my sunnah and that of the rightly guided caliphs. Bite on it with your molars. And beware of newly innovated matter, for they are heresy (bid'ah) and heresy is misguidance which leads to Hellfire."* (Abu Dawud, vol.3, Hadith no.4590) and the Prophet (pbuh) also said , *"whoever introduces into this matter of ours that which is not from it, then it is rejected."* (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 3, Hadith no. 861)

Another point in this context is that there is a section of Muslims, who look for hidden meaning in the *Qur'an* in violation of the command of Allah and His Messenger,

Narrated Aisha (r.a), *"Allah's Messenger (pbuh) recited the Verse: **"It is He Who sent down upon you the Book, in it are verses that are entirely clear, they are the foundation of the Book, and others not entirely clear. Those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow which is not entirely clear thereof seeking Al- Fitnah (polytheism and trials), and seeking for its hidden meanings, and its***

right meaning is known to Allah alone. And those of firm knowledge say, 'We believed in it, all is from our Lord and none receive admonition save men of understanding'. (Al Qur'an 3:7) Then Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said, "If you see those who follow thereof that is not entirely clear, then they are those whom Allah has named [as having deviation (from the Truth)] 'SO BEWARE OF THEM'". (Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 6, Hadith no. 70)

BEING JUST

There are some people who have two sets of glasses, one set through which they see and judge those who are from their family (and dear ones) and another set through which they see and judge others who are outside their family. They forget the words of Allah (swt) ...

"O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a Better Protector to both (than you). So follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you may avoid justice, and if you distort your witness or refuse to give it, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do." (Al Qur'an 4:135)
And

"You will not find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day having affection for those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even if they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred." (Al Qur'an 58:22)

And the following *hadith* of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh),

Narrated Aisha (r.a), "Osama approached the Prophet on behalf of a woman (who had committed theft). The Prophet said, "The people before you were destroyed because they used to inflict the legal punishments on the poor and forgive the rich. By Him in Whose Hand my soul is! If Fatima (the daughter of the Prophet

(pbuh)) did that (i.e. stole), I would cut off her hand." (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 8, Hadith no.778)

They overlook the fact that in Islam love and affection is based on the basis of *deen* and not on blood relation. The biggest proof is the battle of *Badr* where on opposite sides were closest of blood relation.

UN-ISLAMIC MEANS OF PROMOTING BUSINESS

Some people 'promote' their business, through un-islamic means like using semi clad models, wishing happy Christmas, happy diwali, etc., etc., hence endorsing beliefs and practices contrary to Islam and prohibited by *Shari'ah*.

All these are bracketed as success stories of the 'enlightened', 'modern', 'educated', 'mainstream', Muslim *ummah*...

But then the barometer for success too has changed. Gone are the days when pious and religious people were respected for their religiosity, their company was sought and were given high status in the society. Today status is accorded to those who have wealth irrespective of how they have earned it - through *halaal* or *haram* means.

The Prophet (pbuh) said, "A time will come when one will not care how one gains one's money, legally or illegally." (Sahih Bukhari, vol.3, Hadith no.275)

The Prophet (pbuh) also said, "Two hungry wolves let loose among sheep are not more harmful than a person's craving after wealth and status is to his *deen*." (Tirmidhi, Hadith no. 2373, al-Albani in Sahih al-Jami', Hadith no. 5620)

GLAMOURISATION OF ISLAMIC CHANNELS

Even popular Islamic channels have gone 'glamorised' throwing austerity to the winds and arguing in same breath about its justification by claiming that the Prophet (pbuh) used the best means available to propagate the religion. They miss the point that best does not always have to be expensive or extravagant, e.g. (in cases of speakers/scholars invited

for public lectures) facilitating five star accommodation to the speakers can be switched to four star or three star, as many of the facilities available in five star (star is given according to facilities) are not for people with religious orientation. Moreover there is hardly any difference in comfort level between the two considering the savings that can be made.

These popular channels also exhibit clean shaven models and women with glamorous *hijab* and plucked eyebrows, for their "Islamic advertisements", and also have scholars with shadow beard, hence giving license to common Muslims to copy them. They have justification for these too, that they too are part of the society - true- but then they are not the 'best means available'. Do they ever wonder that this display is doing more harm than good?

EDUCATED IGNORANTS AND THEIR DISTORTED NOTIONS

And then there are those who are educated with at least 18 to 20 years of educational background and with the experience of reading hundreds if not thousands of books from cover to cover, when asked, have they read the Qur'an with meaning from cover to cover? The answer is NO. But in spite of their failure to comprehend the basics of Islam they form opinions about scholars as to who is right and who is wrong- Ali (r.a)'s statement is quite appropriate in this context that "*Truth is not to be followed on the basis of authorities, first know the truth and then you will know who the truthful ones are.*" Some don't even offer *salaah*, but can give *fatwa* about whose 'way of *salaah*' is correct.

There are also 'learned' Muslims who are 'well versed' in the '*fatawa*' legitimizing usury/interest, and that which denies the obligation of beard etc... although not even aware how many *surah* are there in the Glorious Qur'an. They make it (*Riba*/interest) permissible in times of 'dire necessity' like,

for expansion of business or to build a house, buy a car, etc., etc. or if one is living in '*Darul harb*' and base their opinion on the mistaken notion that Allah (swt) has made *haraam* (prohibited) things *halaal* (permissible) in such situations or circumstances. Whereas in Islamic *Shari'ah*, 'dire necessity' is defined in terms of 'fear of loss of life or limbs', in which case *haraam* becomes *halaal*, while there is no such apprehension in case of business or house. As for the case of '*darul harb*' the question arises, is there any Prophet who conveyed the message regarding the prohibition of interest was born in *darul Islam*?

On the other hand there are those, who are very particular about their beard and trousers above the ankle, but lenient and soft on the prohibition of usury/interest though the gravity of its consequences can be measured in the statement of Allah (swt) who has warned those who transact in *riba* (interest) in such harsh terms that has no parallel in the rest of the Qur'an, He says,

"O you who believe! Be afraid of Allah and give up what remains (due to you) from Riba, if you are (really) believers. And if you do not, then be informed of a war (against you) from Allah and His Messenger." (Al Qur'an, 2:278-9)

'Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn 'Abbas has said about this verse of the Qur'an, "*Whoever kept dealing with riba and did not refrain from it, then the Muslim leader should require him to repent. If he still did not refrain from riba, the Muslim leader should cut off his head.*" (At-Tabari, vol.2 p.312)

Thus, anyone who refuses to give up transactions involving interest is classified as an open enemy of Allah and His Messenger (pbuh). Allah says,

"And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger after guidance has become clear to him and follows other than the way of the believers - We will give him what he has taken and drive him into Hell, and evil it is as a

destination.” (Al Qur’an, 4:115) and as for their charity it is not acceptable, the Prophet (pbuh) said, “Allah is pure and accepts only pure” (Sahih Muslim, vol.2, Hadith no. 2214)

It is about these types of people that Allah says in the Qur’an,

“Among human beings are those who say ‘We believe in Allah and the Last day;’ but they are not among the Momins.” (Al Qur’an, 2:8) and they are also indifferent in establishing the *deen* in their own household.

SCHOLARS WITH TWO FACES

There are also some scholars who don’t practice what they preach from the pulpit (*Mimbar*), although well aware that it is equally applicable to them, that which they are addressing the *Ummah* about, thus setting aside the admonition of Allah (swt) which is manifested in the following verses of the *Qur’an*,

“Enjoin you Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and each and every act of obedience to Allah) on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture. Have you then no sense?” (Al Qur’an, 2:44).

“Most hateful it is with Allah that you say that which you do not do.” (Al Qur’an, 61:3).

A glaring example of this contradiction was witnessed in the marriage (*Nikah*) ceremony of a reputed scholar’s son, where the clean shaven son was displayed for public viewing in shameless/wanton display of pomp and show...some wiseman said, “The one who will suffer the greatest regret is the scholar whose actions contradict his knowledge.”

All this happens because of following one’s desires which leads to love for this world and love for this world leads to love for wealth and status, and from love for wealth and status comes making lawful that which is forbidden.

INSENSITIVE UMMAH

This *Ummah* has become so insensitive that it pains to see on one side where we have glittering 100-200 storied buildings owned by Muslims with enormous bellies, proving correct the prophecy of the Prophet (pbuh) that “*there will come a time, when shepherds will be vying to construct tall buildings.*” (Sahih Muslim, vol.1, Hadith no.4) “*And people will be fat.*” (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 8, Hadith no. 686), while on the other side Muslims living in sub-human conditions with empty stomach. The living examples are Palestine and Syria. Don’t these ungrateful souls ever think that they are accountable for their indifference towards these brothers and sisters surviving in pathetic conditions? Haven’t they gone through these verses of the Qur’an? Allah (swt) says,

“The believers are but brothers...” (Al Qura’an, 49:10)

“And what is wrong with you that you fight not in the Cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women, and children, whose cry is: “Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help.” (Al Quran 4:75), and the hadith of the Prophet (pbuh),

The Prophet (pbuh) said, “*You see the believers as regards their being merciful among themselves and showing love among themselves and being kind, resembling one body, so that, if any part of the body is not well then the whole body shares the sleeplessness and fever with it.*” (Sahih Bukhari, vol.8, Hadith no. 40)

Or do they think that they will manage/overcome the perils of the hereafter as they do with the worldly affairs (with the power of money). Do they ever think that this is sheer luck that they are on this side (with affluence and comfort) of the glittering world, what if they were on the other side? In this context another evil that has become widespread in this *Ummah* is that many Muslims go on

vacations/tour to non-Muslim countries (**the scholars are unanimous that it is *haraam* to do so**) and spend large amount of money on fun and frolic while our less fortunate Muslim brothers and sisters are living in miserable conditions for the lack of it.

CONCLUSION

History is witness that when the Muslims practiced Islam in its true sense (purity), as commanded by Allah (swt) and his Prophet (pbuh) they were successful in every walk of life. The Muslim *Ummah* was the master of the world. Muslims had power and authority, wherever they went success kissed their feet, because they lived according to the basic principles of Islam taught by the Prophet (pbuh). Glittering and exemplary episodes of the *Khulafa-Ar Rashideen* (Rightly guided caliphs) and other companions of the Prophet (pbuh) are many if not exhaustive. When Muslims diluted and adulterated the Commands of Allah (swt) and His Messenger (pbuh) and started giving their own alien interpretations and meanings to the *deen*, the favour and grace of Allah (swt) also ended. Power, authority and dignity synonymous with the Muslim *Ummah*, shifted to others.

We live in a time when orators among us are many, scholars few, a time when our words are abundant, and our actions few. Just like the accursed Jews, unfortunately the Muslims in general have become used to the idea that simply because they are known to be Muslims, somehow they are guaranteed deliverance from the Hell fire and like the straying Christians, they fumble around in the ignorance of darkness setting up their own ideas, values and practices, in the destructively mistaken hope that they are better than the *Mushriks* (polytheists) and the *Munafiqs* (hypocrites). This is because the common Muslim is hardly bothered to learn and take his *deen* from the sources i.e. the Qur'an and the

authentic *Sunnah*, instead he contents himself by absorbing all that is given out by the ignorant, wicked, deviated, corrupt, self-seeking so-called *Ulama* who happen to form the bulk of the people who are recognized to be our scholars.

All these *fitnah* are manifestation of opposing/disobeying/neglecting the commands of the Messenger (pbuh). Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an,

“And let those who oppose the Messenger’s commandment (i.e. his *Sunnah* legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements, etc.) beware, lest some *Fitnah* (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, overpowered by a tyrant, etc.) befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them” (Al Qur’an, 24:63)

Scholars while commenting on the explanation of this verse (24:63) have given several interpretation to the word *fitnah* used in it, like disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killings, overpowered by a tyrant etc. If Muslims disobey the commands of the Messenger (pbuh) they will be subjected to one or all of these manifestations of *fitnah*.



2

IMPORTANCE AND ETIQUETTES OF MOSQUE

"The best place is Masjid"

The Prophet (pbuh)

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"Whoever Builds a Masjid for Allah, Allah builds a house for him in the Paradise."* (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 1, Hadith no.441)

All institutions of significance have their rules and regulations, their do's and don'ts then how about the Mosque about which our beloved Prophet (pbuh) said is the best place. Following are some of the rules and regulations which we should sincerely and religiously follow.

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"whenever you enter a Masjid, pray two rakah (units) before you sit down."* (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 1, Hadith no.435)

The importance of this can be assessed from the fact that the Prophet (pbuh) emphasized that it must be offered (before sitting) even if the Imaam is delivering the *khutba* (lecture) (on Friday) (Sahih Muslim, vol. 2, Hadith no. 1897)

Allah says; **"Wear your best clothes to Masjid"** (Al Qur'an, 7:31) whereas many come to the mosque in their shabby/dirty/foul smelling clothes... In the time of the Prophet (pbuh) when people from the desert came to the Masjid in such state, they were reprimanded from doing so.

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"Whoever ate garlic or onions, let him stay away from our place of prayer and sit in his house."*

For verily angels are bothered by that which bother the children of Adam" (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 1, Hadith no. 812). Until, one uses something that will remove the bad smell. Induced in this is whoever has a bothersome body odor.

The Prophet (pbuh) ordered the building of *Masjids* in the *Duwr* and that they be cleaned, scented and made nice. (Ahmad, 6:279) The word '*Duwr*' here means among the tribes in the neighborhoods and similar place.

The Prophet (pbuh) strictly prohibited **overstepping the shoulders** of others in order to occupy front rows in the *Masjid*. (Abu Dawud, vol. 1, Hadith no. 1113)

The Prophet (pbuh) has prohibited to talk about **business transactions** in the *Masjid*. (At-Tirmidhi, vol.1, Hadith no. 1066)

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"The best row for the men is the front row, and the best row for the women is the back row in the Masjid."* (Sahih Muslim, vol.1, Hadith no. 881)

One should remain quiet when the Imaam is delivering the *khutba*... (Abu Dawud vol.1, Hadith no. 343)

If a group of people were going to present themselves before an important figure such as a president or a governor, they would take great care to have an orderly appearance. So why should we not take greater care when we present ourselves before the Creator of all the worlds? It's a shame that we cannot even make a line straight, when we stand to offer *salaah*, what can be expected of a community that does not even know how to stand properly? In fact, not keeping the lines for *Salah* straight is a minor but important step towards the disunity of the *Ummah*... people stand apart, even the Imaams of the mosques hardly exhort them to do otherwise- in spite of strict commands of the Prophet (pbuh).

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"Straighten your rows as the straightening of rows is essential for a perfect and correct prayer..."* (Sahih Bukhari, vol.1, Hadith no. 690)

On another occasion the Prophet (pbuh) said to his companions, *"Should you not make lines as the angels make their lines in the Presence of their Lord?"* The companions asked:

“And how do the angels make their lines?” The Prophet (pbuh) replied: “They complete the first line, and make the lines straight, and stand close together.” (Sahih Muslim, vol.1, Hadith no. 864)

The Prophet (pbuh) said, “**Indeed, straightening of the lines is part of Salah.**” (Sahih Muslim, vol. 1, Hadith no. 871)

Umar bin Khattab (r.a) used to assign someone to make sure all the lines were straight before he would begin the *salah*. All these *ahadith* show that it is a *fard* (obligatory) to straighten the lines. That’s the reason many scholars such as Al- Bukhari, Ibn Hazm, Ibn Khuzaymah, Ibn Taymiah, Ibn Hajr, Ash-Shawkani, claim that not straightening the lines is sinful.

As for how we should keep our lines orderly,

Narrated Anas bin Malik (r.a), “that at the time of the Prophet (pbuh) the companions would stand with their shoulders and feet touching.” (Sahih Bukhari, vol.1, Hadith no.692). And this can happen by correcting this common mistake that one makes, when one spreads his feet in the shape of ‘V’ in such a way that the people on his right and left are unable to touch their shoulders. More over instead of paying lip service, the *Imaams* of the Mosques should take extra care to enforce this command of the Prophet (pbuh). It is contextual to mention that in most of the Mosques the *Imaams* have limited their roles to leading the *Salaah* and Friday *khutbah*, least concerned with the responsibilities their position demands i.e. leading the *Ummah* from the front, they should use this Blessing of Allah (swt) that they get a gathering of hundreds of people without spending a penny. They should exhort the people towards their role for a better society, like asking them to keep the neighbourhood clean, solving their petty disputes, visiting those in need of advice etc, etc.



3

BID’AH

“What was not deen at the time of the Messenger (pbuh), cannot be part of deen today.”

Imaam Malik

Bid’ah (linguistically from *al badah*) means to make up something new without a set example for it.

Today we find a lot of views and opinions that are contradictory to the Quran and Sunnah, but people take them as genuine and true religion, which are otherwise a deviation, and this is the biggest catastrophe which Islam and the Muslim *Ummah* are facing today.

Narrated, Irbad bin Saariyah “One day Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) gave us a lengthy exhortation after the fajr prayer which brought tears to the eye, terror to the heart. A man said, ‘O Allah’s Messenger (pbuh)! It seems as if it was a farewell exhortation, then what injunction do you give us?’ He (pbuh) then said: “I enjoin you to fear Allah, and to hear and obey even if it be an Abyssinian slave, for those of you who live after me will see great disagreement. You must then follow my Sunnah and that of the rightly guided Caliphs. Hold fast to it: Avoid novelties, for they are error.” (Abu Dawood, vol. 3, Hadith no. 4590)

Strange beliefs and fallacious customs and creeds (grave worship, circumambulation of the graves, making supplication to them, seeking blessings from the dead,

celebrating *Mawlid* (milad), etc...) entered the Muslim community with those who believed in them before entering the sanctuary of Islam. They accepted Islam but they did not abandon their previous habits, customs and beliefs completely and with the passage of time these evils penetrated the Muslim population and when Islamic conquest was in progress and innumerable multitudes of people embraced Islam, there were many among those whose faith was no more than a verbal utterance.

Transfer of these highly infectious and diseased ideas into the Islamic community is also a heinous deed of hypocrites who took shelter in the sanctuary of Islam, because they had no other way to save themselves. The progress of Islam was intolerable to them so under the cover of Islam, these enemies of Islam injected the poison of false beliefs into the pristine purity of Islam. They worked slowly and secretly to sabotage the purity of Islamic faith, until they succeeded. They polluted the Islamic faith with un-Islamic view points. (Abdullah bin saba is one such example). Practical life force withered away from *Islam*. Victorious advancement of Islam came to a standstill. Practice of the commands of the glorious *Quran* was discontinued. Recitation of the *Quran* was limited to special occasions only.

Any innovation in religion that is not found in the *Quran* or in the *Sahih* (authentic) texts of the *Sunnah* is not a part of *Islam* – no matter who is suggesting it or doing it. Allah does not love such innovation, so it cannot be counted as a righteous deed or a good deed, just as actions that are not permitted – such as immorality or wrongdoing or oppression – cannot be counted as a righteous deeds or good deeds. Al- Fudayl ibn Ayyad said,

"If the deed is sincere but is not correct, it is not acceptable. If the deed is correct but is not sincere, it is not acceptable either. (It is not acceptable) unless it is both sincere and correct. Sincerity means that it should be for Allah, and correctness means that it

should be in accordance with the Sunnah". In any case for the acceptance of any form of *ibadah* it is mandatory to meet two conditions, first it has to be done for the sake of Allah (swt) and second it should be in accordance with the way of the Prophet (pbuh).

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"There is nothing that will take you closer to paradise but that I have enjoined it upon you, and there is nothing that will take you closer to hell but that I have warned you from it."* (Al Mu'jam Al Kabeer, Al Tabraani vol.2 Hadith no. 1647 & Silsilah Al Saheehah vol. 4, Hadith no. 1803)

Innovation in '*deen*' in other words means that the religion which Allah (swt) chose as the only acceptable religion (*deen*), has some "*Lacunae*" and it needs correction, hence the Word of Allah (swt) **"that I have completed this '*deen*' for you"** (Al Qur'an, 5:3), is Allah forgive==, not true, it also means that the *sahaabah* were not very particular about their religion..., Some people often point to the statement of Umar (r.a) when talking about the *tarawih* prayer in Ramadan, *"What a good bid'ah this is."* They conveniently overlook the fact that Umar (r.a) simply revived the praying of *tarawih* and it was not something which he did which was not done by the Messenger (pbuh). We cannot do something in Islam which contradicts the way of the Prophet (pbuh) and the *sahaabah*. There is a severe warning for the people of *bidah* in the following *hadith*,

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, *"Verily I shall precede you to the Fountain (Al-Kawthar). Whosoever will pass by me shall drink (from it) and never get thirsty. People whom I know and who will know me will certainly come to me for drink but there will be a barrier between them and me. Then I will say, Verily they are of me. It will be said, You certainly do not know what bid'ah (innovation) they made after you. Then I shall say, be off those who made bid'ah after me."* (Sahih Bukhari, vol.8, Hadith no. 585-6)

THE SAHAABAH'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS INNOVATIONS

An outstanding characteristic of the *Sahaabah* is their absolute adherence to the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh) and their absolute disapproval of *bid'ah* (innovation). Some *Sahaabah* narrated the following story:

"We used to sit in front of Abdullah ibn Masud's house before the Fajr prayer waiting to go with him to the Masjid. Abu Musa al-Ash'aarie came and asked us: 'Did Abu Abdurrahman (i.e. Abdullah ibn Masud) leave yet?' We answered: 'No.' So Abu Musa Al-Ash'aarie sat with us waiting for him. When he came out, we all stood up. Abu Musa told him: 'Oh, Abu Abdurrahman! I recently saw something in the Masjid which I did not approve.' Ibn Masud then asked: 'What was it?' Abu Musa said: 'You will see it if you stay alive...In the Masjid, I saw a group of people sitting in circles waiting for the Salah. Each circle is led by a person. And every person in these circles carries small stones.

The leader of a circle would say: 'Say 'Allah-u Akbar' a hundred times,' they will say Allah-u Akbar a hundred times; then he says 'Say 'La ilaha ill Allah', a hundred times" they will say La ilaha ill Allah a hundred times; he then says: 'Say 'Subhan Allah', a hundred times, they will say Subhana Allah a hundred times.

Then Ibn Masud said: "What did you tell them?" He said: "I didn't say anything; I wanted to wait for your opinion." Abdullah ibn Masud said: "Could you not order them to count their sins, and assured them of getting their rewards." Then Abdullah ibn Masud went ahead and we accompanied him. As he approached one of the circles, he said: "What is this that you are doing?" They said: "Oh! Abu Abdurrahman, these are pebbles to count the number of times we say Allah-u Akbar, La ilaha ill Allah, and Subhana Allah." He said: "Count your own sins and I assure you that you are not going to lose anything of your rewards. Woe unto you, people of Muhammad (pbuh), how fast you will be

*doomed. Those are your Prophet's companions available, these are his clothes not worn out yet, and his pots are not broken yet. I swear by Him in Whose Hands my soul is that **you are either following a religion that is better than the Prophet's religion or you are opening a door of aberration.**" They said: "We swear by Allah, Oh, Abu Abdurrahman, that we had no intention other than doing good deeds." He said: "So what? How many people wanted to do good deeds but never got to do them? The Prophet of Allah has told us about people who recited the Qur'an with no effect on them other than the Qur'an passing through their throats. I swear by Allah, I am almost sure that most of you are from that type of people." Then he left them. Amr Ibn Salamah said: "We saw most of the people of those circles fighting us with the Khawarij in the battle of An-Nahrawan." (Silsilatul ahadith sahiha lil albani, Hadith no.2005)*

Hudhayfa (r.a) said, "Do not perform any act of worship that was not performed by the companions of the Messenger (pbuh)."

*It is ultimately dangerous to seek closeness to Allah (swt) without following the Quran, the Sunnah, and the rightly guided caliphs as well as the pious predecessors. Also not following them shows, defiance, carelessness, and transgression against Allah's set limits. If one is comfortable with stealing a small amount he will be equally pleased/ comfortable with stealing a large amount, same is the case with *bid'ah* (innovations), one small *bid'ah* will lead to another, then to another greater one, and finally to *kufr* and *shirk*. All because one has turned away from the *sunnah*, and every application of *bid'ah* destroys a *sunnah*. Finally the truth of one's claim to Islam is the adherence to the *sunnah* and its opposite is proved by the practice of innovations (*bid'ah*).*

WHY ARE PEOPLE MISGUIDED?

The main reason why anyone is misguided is because he gives precedence to his own opinion over the guidance revealed from Allah, and he prefers to follow his own whims rather than the Commands of Allah.

The people of faith have their tastes and emotions, based on the *Quran* and *Sunnah* as the Prophet (pbuh) explained in the following *hadith*:

"There are three things, whoever has them has discovered the sweetness of faith: When Allah and His Messenger are more beloved to him than anyone else, when he loves another only for the sake of Allah, and when he would hate to return to Kufr after Allah has saved him from it, just as he would hate to be thrown into fire." (Sahih Bukhari, vol.1 Hadith no.15)

But in the case of the people of *Kufr*, *bid'ah* (innovation), their tastes and emotions are in accordance with their own desire, wants, likes. These are the people who follow their own inclinations and emotions, with no consideration for the *Quran* and *Sunnah*, or the way of the first and best generations of this *Ummah*. These people are easily swayed; they seek guidance from those who are themselves misguided, instead of Allah and His Messenger – Whose guidance is the best guidance. Allah says about them in His book:

"Have you (O Muhammad(pbuh)) seen him who has taken as his ilah (god) his own vain desire?" (Al- Qur'an, 25:43)

"And of mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allah as rivals (to Allah). They love them as they love Allah. But those who believe, love Allah more (than anything else)...." (Al-Qur'an, 2:165) And,

"And who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts, devoid of guidance from Allah? (Al- Qur'an, 28:50)

"They follow nothing but conjecture and what their own souls desire! – even though there has already come to them Guidance from their Lord!" (Al Qur'an, 53:23)

The one who goes against the Message with which the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was sent, which is to worship Allah alone, and to obey Him and His Messenger (pbuh), can never be a true follower of the religion prescribed by Allah, as Allah says:

"Then we put you on the (right) Way of religion: So follow that (way), and follow not the desires of those who know not.

They will be of no use to you in the sight of Allah: it is only wrongdoers (that stand as) protectors, one to another: but Allah is the Protector of the righteous."(Al- Quran, 45:18-19)

Indeed, they are following their own desires, not the guidance of Allah, as He (swt) says:

"Or have they partners with Allah (false gods), who have instituted for them a religion which Allah has not allowed?"(Al- Quran, 42:21)

In fact they exert to do things which neither the Prophet (pbuh) nor his companions (*sahaabah*) did, i.e they are not *sunnah*, which is a way to attain salvation, as al-Zuhri said:

"Those who passed away before us of the Salaf (predecessors) used to say: Adherence to the sunnah is salvation."

This is because the *sunnah*, as Imaam Malik(may Allah have mercy on him) said,

"Is like Noah's Ark: Whoever boards it will be saved and whoever stays behind will be doomed."



4

BEARD : DEFINITION AND RULING

The Arabic word for beard is *Liḥyah*. It derives from *Lahy* (Jaw) and *Lahyan* (the two jaws). Thus beard is defined as the hair that grows on the cheeks and jaws. It includes the hair that grows on the temples, underneath the lower lip, the hair of the chin, and the hair that grows on the lower side of the jaws.

Abu Huraira (r.a) reported, *"The ruler of Yemen appointed by the Persian Emperor Kisra, sent two envoys to the Messenger (pbuh). When they came into his presence, he noticed that they had shaved their beards and had grown large moustaches. Disliking their appearance the Prophet (pbuh) turned his face away from them and said, "Woe to you, who told you to do so?" They replied, "Our master did! The Prophet (pbuh) responded, "But My Master (Allah) has commanded me to spare my beard and trim my moustache." (Recorded by Ibn Jarir at Tabari Ibn Sad, verified to be ḥasan (good) by Al-Albani) (Fiqh us-Sirah by al-Ghazali p. 359)]*

The Messenger (pbuh) commanded\ordered us (men) to spare their beards in many authentic *ahadith*, like in the *hadith* below:

Narrated Ibn Umar (r.a) that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said, *"Closely trim the moustache, and spare the beard."* (Sahih Bukhari vol. 7, Hadith no. 780)

And since obeying the Messenger (pbuh) in any of his commands is equivalent to obeying Allah Himself, as Allah says:

"He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah..." (Al-Quran 4:80) it is incumbent upon all Muslims to follow the Messenger's guidance, as the Prophet (pbuh) has himself emphasized this,

Narrated Jabir (r.a), that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said: *"Verily the best guidance is Muhammad's guidance."* (Sahih Muslim, vol. 2, Hadith no.1885)

The best example about whom Allah has himself vouched in the Quran is the Prophet (pbuh), Allah says in his book:

"Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much." (Al Qur'an, 33:21)

Sparing the beard, therefore, exhibits adherence to the Prophet's (pbuh) appearance and guidance. All of the Prophets (peace be upon them all), the *Sahaabah* (r.a.a), great scholars (*ulama*) and righteous Muslims of the past spared their beard. There is no report of a single one of them selectively shaving his beard. At the time of Umar-bin Abdul Aziz (may Allah have mercy on him) a shaved man's testimony was not accepted neither was he allowed to lead the prayers.

All the *Ulama* of *as- salaf us- salih* (the righteous early Muslims), including the four *Imaams*, agreed that sparing the beard is obligatory.

THE SCHOLARS ARE UNANIMOUS ON THE PROHIBITION OF SHAVING THE BEARD

THE HANAFIS

Al-Kasani said: *"Shaving the beard is a form of mutilation."*

Al-Kamal Bin al-Human said: *"Sparing the beard means avoiding cutting most or all of it ...It is prohibited for a man to cut his beard shorter than a fist length."*

THE MALIKIS

According to the Malikis, shaving the beard is prohibited, as is cutting so short as to clearly change one's appearance. But if it becomes oversized, and if cutting it would not appear as a mutilation, then it may be cut; but that would be disliked and contrary to that which is better.

THE SHAFIS

Ibn Rufah said: *"Imam ash-shafii expressed in 'al-Umm' that it is prohibited to shave the beard."* So did az-Zarkashi and al-Halimi in *Shuab ul-Iman*.

THE HANBALIS

The Hanbalis are also unanimous that it is prohibited to shave the beard.

Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) stated: *"It is prohibited to shave the beard."*

As-Saffarini said: *"Our madhhab adopts the prohibition of shaving the beard."*

The permanent committee of *Fatwa* in Saudi Arabia, when it was led by Ibn Baaz and Abdur Razzaq Afifi, gave the following *Fatwa*:

"It is prohibited to shave the beard because of what Ahmad, al-Bukhari and Muslim reported... And insisting to shave it is a major sin..."

Despite clear texts from the *ahadith* and the consensus of the great *Ulama* of Islam, we find the majority of the Muslim men in our time do not grow their beards. This is one of many indications that most of the Muslims do not follow the teachings of their *deen*, and are guided by people/guides who either cannot distinguish between right and wrong, or who do not want to tell the truth. It has also become fashionable these days to imitate the celebrities/film stars, by keeping very short (shadow beard), those who do this would be committing another sin – imitating the non believers – in addition to rejecting the Prophet's (pbuh) commands and practice.

And then there is the excuse of pleasing their parents and wives which many Muslims offer for the non-compliance of the Prophet's (pbuh) commands. Some say that their wives prefer them without a beard. Others claim that their parents or relatives prefer to see them with a clean-shaven face. But whom are we supposed to please the most? One should fear Allah and remember that our course in this life must be to abide by the commands of Allah and this Messenger (pbuh), and not to follow the deformed inclinations of wives, parents, friends etc. There is no obedience in disobedience to Allah. Allah says in his book:

"Do not follow the whims of those who have no knowledge of Islam." (Al-Quran 45:18) And Ali (r.a) reported Allah's Messenger said: *"Obedience may not be offered to a human being if it involves disobeying Allah. Obedience should only be in good things"* (Sahih Bukhari, vol.9, Hadith no. 363) and finally a stern warning from Allah (swt),

"And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger after the right path has been shown clearly to him, and follows other than the believers' way. We shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell - what an evil destination." (Al-Qur'an, 4:115)

CONCLUSION

Shaving is prohibited.

Trimming or cutting what extends beyond a fist-length, as was done by some *Sahaabah* (Ibn Umar, Abu-Huraira, Ibn - Abbas) *Salaf* (Malik and Ahmad) is allowed, here it is important to warn against an extremely weak *hadith*, narrated by Abdullah bin Umar (r.a) *"The Prophet (pbuh) used to cut from the width and length of his beard."* (Recorded by Tirmidhi, Ibn Adilly and others. Verified to be fabricated by Al-Albani (Ad-Daifah) no.288)

It is contextual to note a very important point that the Prophet (pbuh) strictly prohibited us to use black dye.



5

IMPORTANCE OF THE QUR'AN AND ITS OBLIGATION

The Messenger (pbuh) said, *"The best of you is he who learns the Qur'an and teaches it to others."* (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 6, Hadith no. 445)

He (pbuh) personally controlled every detail of organization, judged every case and was accessible to every suppliant. In those ten years (that he (pbuh) was in *Madinah*) destroyed idolatry in Arabia; raised woman from the status of chattel to complete legal equality with man; effectually stopped drunkenness and immorality which had till then disgraced the Arabs; made men to live faith, sincerity and honest dealing; transformed tribes who had been for centuries content with ignorance into a people with the greatest thirst for knowledge; and for the first time in history made universal brotherhood a fact and principle of common law. And his (pbuh) support and guide in all that work was **THE QUR'AN**.

Qur'an says that our Prophet (pbuh) will complain to Allah:

"O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Qur'an (neither listened to it nor acted on its laws and teachings). (Al Qur'an, 25:30)

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"... if you were not to be ruling by the Book of Allah, Allah will send down as a punishment between*

them i.e., make them split and fight each other." (Ibn majah, vol. 5, Hadith no. 4019) as is evident in the Muslim world today...

The scholars say there are at least five obligation of the Qur'an on every Muslim...

- To believe in it, i.e., it's a word of Allah,
- To recite it,
- To understand it,
- To act Upon it,
- And to convey it.

Muadh bin Jabal (r.a.) said, *"The Qur'an is the criterion to judge others and not the other way round."*

Allah (swt) has also called the Qur'an a reminder-hence it should be within reach so that we are guided by it, in all aspects of our life...since Qur'an is not merely a legal code, but also seeks to instruct, educate, admonish and exhort. Allah says,

"This is the Book about which there is no doubt, guidance for those conscious of Allah." (Al Qur'an, 2:2)

Our righteous ancestors (*salaf e saleheen*) were firm in their belief that the glorious Qur'an was a communication from Allah (swt) to His slaves on earth hence gave the Qur'an utmost care (understanding it, memorizing it, and acting upon it). In this they were following our Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), whose life revolved around the Qur'an and whose character was patterned after it.

Generations of scholars have stressed the importance on its reflection and obligation.

The renowned Hasan al Basri said, *"Only the true followers of the Qur'an reflect on its verses."*

The noted *muffassir* Imaam al-Tabari said, *"Tadabbur of the Qur'an is to reflect on the arguments and prescriptions of Allah included therein with a mind to take heed of their warnings and to act upon them."*

Ibn al- Qayyim quoted one of the *salaf* as saying, *" The Qur'an was sent down to regulate the conduct of Allah's servants,*

so make your recitation of it an avenue to act upon it, for the real companions of the Qur'an are those who act upon it, even if they do not commit it to memory.

As for those who memorise the Qur'an but comprehend it not and do not heed its admonitions, they are not of the companions of the Qur'an, no matter how good they are at its recitation."

It is reported from many companions including Uthman bin Affan (r.a), Adullah ibn Masud (r.a), and Ubay ibn Kab (r.a) that they would take ten verses of the Qur'an and study them intensely, with the goal of trying their best to bring their conduct in line with whatever dictates those verses might contain.

Nafi narrated that Abdullah ibn Umar (r.a) said, "It took Umar ibn al-Khattab twelve years to learn Surat Al-Baqarah. When he had finished his lengthy study of the surah, Umar celebrated with a gathering for which a number of camels were slaughtered." (Al-Bayhaqi in his shu'ab al-Iman, 3:346)

This methodical and unhurried study of the Qur'an was not limited to Umar ibn al-Khattab (r.a). It was common to most of the celebrated companions of the Prophet (pbuh).

Abdullah ibn Umar (r.a) remarked, "Most of the well known companions of the Prophet (pbuh) memorized no more than a surah or two of the Qur'an. They were busy acting upon the teaching contained in the surahs. Yet shall a time come when countless Muslims will commit the whole Qur'an to memory, but they shall heed not its guidance."

The purpose of revelation is not just to recite and memorise it, but to also act on its directives, and until and unless we do not act on its directives, we won't do justice to it.



6

AT A GLANCE

SOME AHADITH THAT HAVE BEEN CONVENIENTLY FORGOTTEN

- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "From among my followers there will be some people who will consider illegal sexual intercourse, the wearing of silk, the drinking of alcoholic drinks and the use of musical instruments, as lawful... and He will transform ... them into monkeys and pigs and they will remain so till the Day of Resurrection." (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol. 7, Hadith no. 494)
- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Gift for the state employees is theft" (Tanzil Aamaal, vol.6 p.56)
- Bilal bin Abdullah (r.a) said: "That his father Abdullah ibn Umar (r.a) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh), said, "Do not forbid your women from their regular visit to the mosque". I replied, "I shall not allow my wife, and he who wishes may permit his wife". On hearing my words my father turned to me and said. "Curse of Allah be upon you! I am telling you, this is the order of the Prophet (pbuh) and you dare to refuse it", "While saying these words he stood up in rage." (Sahih Muslim, vol.1, Hadith no. 885)
- The Prophet (pbuh) said. "If any of you makes Sajood, he should not kneel as the camel does. Let him place his hands (on the ground) before his knees." (Sunan Abu Dawud vol.1., Hadith no. 839)

- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "A person is on the religion of his companions, so each one should consider whom he makes his companion." (Sunnan Abu Dawud, vol. 5, Hadith no.4833)
- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "If you deal in usury (riba) and hang onto the tails of cows, being satisfied with cultivation and ceasing to take part in Jihad, Allah will inflict a humiliation upon you which will not be removed until you return to your religion." (Abu Dawud, vol. 2, Hadith no. 3455) the Scholars of Islam say: 'to return to your religion' means to return to Jihad.
- Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said, "Wearing silk and gold is allowed to the women of my Ummah. But (they are) forbidden for men." (Tirmidhi, vol. 2, Hadith no. 1720)
- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Religion is sincerity." We asked: "To whom, O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "To Allah, His Book, His Messenger, and the leaders of the Muslims and to the common Muslim." (Sahih Muslim, vol. 1, Hadith no. 98)
- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not of me..." (Sahih Bukhari, vol.7, Hadith no. 1)
- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Whoever wears an amulet has committed shirk." (Collected by Ahmad and authenticated in Saheeh al- Jaami as-Sagheer, vol.2, no.6394)
- The Prophet (pbuh) said: "People are like a hundred camels amongst which you hardly find one fit for riding." (Sahih Muslim, vol. 4, Hadith no. 6179)
- Abu Hurairah reported that whilst the Prophet (pbuh), was talking, a Bedouin came to him and asked: "When will the hour come to pass?" He replied: "Wait for the hour when trust will be destroyed." He asked, how it would be destroyed, and he said: "Wait for the hour when the rule will be entrusted to those who don't deserve it." (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 1, Hadith no. 56)
- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "If anyone takes a bath on a Friday, puts on his best clothes, applies a touch of perfume if he has any, then goes to the congregational prayer (in the mosque), and takes care not to step over people, then prays what Allah has prescribed for him, then keeps silent from the time his Imaam comes out until he finishes his prayer, it will atone for his sins

during the previous week." (Abu Dawud vol. 1, book 1, no. 343)

- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Allah will not accept the excuse of any person whose instant of death is delayed till he is sixty years of age." (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 8, Hadith no. 428)

[When a person reaches sixty years of age, he has no right to ask Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) for a new lease of life to make up for his past shortcomings, for Allah (*subhana wa ta'ala*) says: **"Did We not give you lives long enough, so that whoever would receive admonition – could receive it? And the Warner (of Allah) came to you..." (Quran 35:37)]**

- The Prophet (pbuh) said: "The child of Adam fills no vessel worse than his stomach. Sufficient for the child of Adam are a few morsels to keep his back straight. If he must eat more, then a third should be for his food, a third for his drink, and a third left for air." [Sunan al-Tirmidhi (2380) and Musnad Ahmad (17186) and authenticated by al-Albani in *Sahih al-Jami*]
- Abu Dhar said, "I was in the presence of the Prophet (pbuh) one day and I heard him saying, "There is something more I fear for my Ummah than the Dajjal. It was then that I became afraid, so I said, O Rasoolullah! Which thing is it that you fear for your Ummah more than the Dajjal? He (the Prophet) said, "misguided and astray scholars." (Musnad Ahmad, Hadith no. 20335)
- The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "There are seventy forms of usury, the least of which is equivalent to a man having intercourse with his mother." (Ibn Majah, vol.3, Hadith no.2274)
- The Prophet (pbuh) said: "The most blessed marriage (nikah) is the one with the least expenses." (Abu Dawud Hadith no.2112)
- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "I command you with five things that Allah commanded me with: (Sticking to) the Jama'ah, hearing, obeying, Hijrah (migration) and Jihad in the Way of Allah." (At-Tirmidhee no.2863, Musnad Ahmad , no. 17170)
- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "I am not responsible for any Muslim who stays among polytheists. They asked: 'Why, Apostle of Allah?' He said: 'Their fires should not be visible to

one another.', and he said, "Who joins the polytheists and lives with them then he is like them" and he said: "Migration will not end until repentance ends, and repentance will not end until the sun rises in the west." (Abu Dawud, Kitab al-Jihad, vol.3/7, Hadith 2479)

- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "The siyaahah (tourism) of my ummah is Jihad for the sake of Allah." (Abu Dawood, Hadith, 2486 classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood)

- Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said, "At the end of time there will be people who will use this black dye like the crops of birds; they will not experience the fragrance of Paradise." (Sunan Abu Dawood, vol.3 Chapter 1569, Hadith No.4200)

- The Prophet (pbuh) said, "The world is a prison-house for a believer and Paradise for a non-believer." (Sahih Muslim, Book 42, Hadith No. 7058)

- Salamah bin Nufail Al-Kindi said, "I was sitting with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) when a man said: 'O Messenger of Allah! The people have insulted the horses and put down their weapons, and they say there is no Jihad, and that war has ended.' The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) turned to face him and said: 'They are lying, now the time for fighting has arrived. There will always be a group among my Ummah who will fight for the truth, for whom Allah will cause some people to deviate, and grant them provision from them, until the Hour begins and until the promise of Allah comes. Goodness is tied to the forelocks of horses until the Day of Resurrection. It has been revealed to me that I am going to die and will not stay long, and you will follow me group after group, striking one another's necks. And the place for the believers will be in Ash-Sham.'" (Sunan an-Nasai Volume 4, Book 28, Hadith 3591)

WORDS OF WISDOM

- Umar (r.a) said, "The people will be honest with their ruler so long as the ruler is honest with Allah and if the ruler is dishonest the people will be dishonest."

- Umar (r.a) said, "No man is a scholar until he does not envy those who are above him and does not despise those who are beneath him, and does not take any payment for his work."

- Umar (r.a) said, "Islam will be destroyed by the mistakes of scholars, the arguments of the hypocrites who misinterpret the Quran to support their views and misleading rulers."

- A man asked permission of Umar (r.a), to address the people, so he said to him, "I fear that if you address the people you will feel that you are better than them and so Allah will place you beneath their feet on the Day of Judgment."

- Umar (r.a) said: "The Sunnah is that which Allah approved and Allah's Messenger (pbuh) practiced. Do not make your false comprehensions a Sunnah for Ummah."

- Ibn Umar (r.a) said, "Do not let your words be in excess of your actions."

- Abdullah ibn Abbas (r.a) said, "A part of everyone's knowledge is acceptable and a part of it, may be rejected, except the knowledge of the Prophet (pbuh)."

- Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal said, "It is sufficient dishonesty on a man's part to remain with a dishonest person."

- Imaam Ahmad ibn Hanbal said, "People need knowledge more than they need food and drink, because they need food and drink two or three times a day, but they need knowledge all the time."

- Ibn Taymiyah said, "Allah causes the just state to prevail even if it is led by un-believers, but He does not allow an unjust state to prevail, even if it is led by believers... and by means of justice the best in men is brought out and wealth increases."

- Ibn Taymiyah said, "If I remained silent and you remained silent, then who will teach the ignorant."

- Abu al-Zaghl said, "Remember five instructions from me: let no servant hope for anything except from his Lord; let him not fear anything except his own sin; let no ignorant person feel ashamed to ask about what he knows not; let no knowledgeable person, if asked about what he knows not, feel ashamed to say Allah

knows best; and patience is in relation to belief like the head to the body, one has no belief if he has no patience."

- Ibn al-Jawzi's said, *"That when scholars have to bend to power and wealth, knowledge becomes corrupted. Hence, a scholar should not be in a situation where he is in need of money from other people. He should do his best to live as frugally and simply as he can, and if he needs to live in a more affluent way, then he should be willing to expend more of his own effort to seek his own wealth, even if it comes at the cost of some knowledge. In other words it is better to learn less but keep that knowledge dignified and uncorrupted, than to learn more knowledge and corrupt it or debase it. Of course, if someone can acquire more knowledge without it being corrupted, then all the better."*

IBN TAYMIYYAH (D. 728H) MADE TAKFIR ON THE WICKED SCHOLARS

- *"A scholar who abandons what he has learnt from the Qur'an and the Sunnah and follows a ruler who does not rule in accordance with the teaching of Allah and His Messenger, is an apostate and a disbeliever who deserves punishment in this world and in the hereafter."* (Al-Fataawa, vol.35/373)
- *"Whenever a person makes halaal what is haraam by consensus or makes haraam what is halal by consensus or replaces the Shari'ah that is agreed upon by consensus, then he is a Kaffir by the agreement of the scholars of Fiqh."* (Al-Fataawa, vol.3/267)

PINNACLE OF FAITH : JIHAD (FI-SABILILLAH)

Jihad means to do one's utmost, to do all that one possibly can, in Islamic context, to do that which Allah Loves and to repel that which He Hates, the best and most perfect of people, the highest and closest to Allah, the strongest and most rightly guided, are those whose servitude to Allah is most perfect in this regard. Allah (swt) says,

"The believers are only the ones who have believed in Allah and His Messenger and then doubt not but strive with their properties and their lives in the cause of Allah. It is those who are the truthful." (Al Qur'an, 49:15) and

"Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties (in exchange) for that they will have Paradise. They fight in the cause of Allah, so they kill and are killed." (Al Qur'an, 9:111).

There is no doubt that *Jihad* by one's person is superior to *Jihad* by one's wealth. Consequently, the rich in the time of the Prophet (saw), were not excused from participating with their persons, such as Uthman and Abdur Rahman Ibn Auf (r.a.a) because, the purification of the soul and the evolution of the spirit, is lifted to great heights in the midst of the battle. That is why the Prophet (pbuh) advised one of his companions in these words: *"...hold to Jihad, because it is the monasticism of Islam."*

And, when the Prophet (pbuh) was asked: *"Is a person (mujahid) put on trial in his grave?"* He said, *"The flashing of swords above his head is sufficient trial for him."* (reported by Nasa'i, verified to be authentic by al-Albani, Saheeh al-Jaami', 4/164)

Nevertheless a component of true belief is *Jihad* with one's wealth in Allah's path. Wealth is only a temporary loan from Allah (swt) and its value remains only if it is spent for His pleasure. The true believer willingly makes *Jihad* with his or her wealth in Allah's way. *Jihad* of wealth is not just limited to the charitable distribution of one's wealth, but it is also the sacrifice of wealth in the form of donations to those Muslims taking part in the physical *Jihad*.

The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"He who equips a fighter in Allah's path has taken part in the fighting, and he who looks after a fighter's family when he is away has taken part in the fighting."* (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 4, Hadith no.96) *Salah* (prayer) is part of the foundation of Islam, the bare minimum requirement for being

considered a Muslim; however, the pinnacle of Islam is Jihad. Hence, the Prophet (pbuh) said,

"He who engages in Jihad in Allah's path is like one who fasts, steadfastly and prays continuously until he who is engaged in Jihad in Allah's path returns." (Sahih Bukhari, vol.4, Hadith no.46)

He (pbuh) also said, *"That the head of all affairs is Islam, its spine is Salah and the top of its hump is Jihad in Allah's path."* (Collected by at- Tirmidhi and authenticated by al-Albani in Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhi, vol.2, no.2110).

In fact, according to the Prophet (pbuh) even *Imaan* (faith) is not true without at least a desire to make *Jihad*. He (pbuh) also said, *"He who dies without having fought (participated in Jihad) or having desired to do so will die guilty of a type of hypocrisy."* (Sahih Muslim, vol.3, Hadith no.4696)

To conclude, *Ummah's* strength does not lie in money, natural resources or numbers, we have all of these in abundances today, where as the *Ummah* at the time of the Messenger (pbuh) and the *Sahaabah* had very little of any of them, yet they had dominance and respect. The source of the *Ummah's* strength lies in Islam, and it's adherence to the way of the Quran and *Sunnah*. Having tried all the "ISMS" and ideologies of the last century or two, which have all failed and have led only to an increase in the human misery of the *Ummah*, it is time to recognize that we have no choice but to return to Islam and take it seriously, as the *Sahaabah* did. Allah says,

"... you will have dominance and power if you are (true) believers." (Al Qur'an, 3:139)

And finally, if Muslims want to regain the lost glory they have to put into practice the following verse of the Qur'an, which describes the law for change:

"Verily, that Allah does not change the condition of a people unless they bring about change in their own selves." (Al Qur'an, 13:11)

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