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## Narrations from the Salaf Concerning Judging One by His Companionship

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Version 1.0

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Stated Aboo Qilaabah (d.104H) – *rahimahullaah*, “May Allaah fight the poet who said,

‘Do not ask about a person, ask about his associate;  
Since every person follows his associate.’<sup>2</sup>

I say, it was as if Aboo Qilaabah admired the one who recited the poetry, that was ‘Adee Ibn Zayd al-‘Ibaadee. Stated al-Asma’ee, ‘I have never seen a piece of poetry resembling the *Sunnah*, more than this statement of ‘Adee.’<sup>3</sup>

From Aboo Hurayrah (*radiyallaahu ‘anhu*) who said, ‘The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) said, ‘A person is upon the Religion of his friend. So let each one of you look to whom he keeps as a friend.’<sup>4</sup>

Stated Ibn Mas’ood (*radiyallaahu ‘anhu*), “Know the people by their friends. The Muslim follows the Muslim and the disobedient one follows the disobedient one.”<sup>5</sup> And he also said, “Verily a man only walks and accompanies one whom he loves and who is like him.”<sup>6</sup> And he said as well, “Know the people by their friends, since a man only befriends one whom he admires and who is like him.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the *al-Asaalah* magazine (issue 28/p. 45-47), footnotes were added by the translator.

<sup>2</sup> **BENEFIT:** Said al-A’mash (d.148H) - *rahimahullaah*, “They (the *Salaf*) did not used to ask anything more about a person after having asked three affairs: whom he walks with, whom he enters upon, and whom he associates with amongst the people,” *al-Ibaanah* (2/478).

<sup>3</sup> Refer to *al-Ibaanah* (2/439).

<sup>4</sup> **Hasan:** Related by Ahmad (2/303), and Aboo Daawood (no. 4812), and at-Tirmidhee (no. 2484). It was authenticated by Shaykh Mashhoor Hasan Salmaan in his checking of *Aadaabul-Ishrah* (p. 10) of Imaam Badrud-Deen al-Ghazze (d.984H) - *rahimahullaah*. It was also authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee (d.1420H) – *rahimahullaah* - in *Silsilatul-Ahaadeethus-Saheehah* (no. 927).

<sup>5</sup> Related by Ibn Battah in *al-Ibaanatul-Kubraa* (2/477) and by al-Baghawee (d.516H) in *Sharhus-Sunnah* (13/70).

<sup>6</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (2/476)

<sup>7</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (2/477)

Said Abud-Dardaa' (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), "From the *fiqh* (understanding) of a person is whom he chooses to walk with, enter upon and sit with."<sup>8</sup>

From Yahyaa Ibn Abee Katheer (d.129H) – *rahimahullaah* - who said, 'Sulaymaan Ibn Daawood – '*alayhis salaam* – said, 'Do not make any judgement upon anyone, until you see whom he sits befriends."<sup>9</sup>

Said Aboo Haatim, 'And Moosaa Ibn 'Uqbah as-Sooree came to Baghdaad. So he was mentioned to Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d.241H). So he said, 'Look to whom he settles with and who he takes up residence with."<sup>10</sup>

Said Qataadah (d.104H) – *rahimahullaah*, "By Allaah, I have not seen a man accompanying anyone, except that he is like him and resembles him. So accompany the righteous from amongst the servants of Allaah, so that you may be with them and like them."<sup>11</sup>

Said Shu'bah (d.160H), 'You will find written with me, 'A man only accompanies one whom he loves."<sup>12</sup>

Said al-Awzaa'ee (d.157H) – *rahimahullaah*, "Whomsoever is able to hide his innovation from us, he cannot hide whom he befriends."<sup>13</sup>

Ayyoob as-Sakhtiyaanee (d.131H) – *rahimahullaah* – was called to perform the ritual bath upon a dead person. So he went out with the people. So when the face of the dead body was uncovered for him, he knew him. So he said, "Come before your companion. I will not bathe him, for I saw him walking with a person of innovation."<sup>14</sup>

Stated 'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), "The regions are known by their names and a person is known by his companion."<sup>15</sup> Stated Muhammad Ibn 'Ubaydullaah al-Ghulaabee, "The people of desires hide everything except friendship and companionship."<sup>16</sup> Said Mu'aadh Ibn Mu'aadh (d.196H) to Yahyaa Ibn Sa'eed (d.198H), "O Abaa Sa'eed! Even if a man can hide his opinion from us, he cannot hide that in his sons, nor his friends, nor those whom he sits with."<sup>17</sup>

Said 'Amr Ibn Qays al-Mulaa'ee, "If you see a youth with *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* when he begins to grow, then have hope for him. However, if you see him with the people of

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<sup>8</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (2/464)

<sup>9</sup> *al-baanah* (2/480)

<sup>10</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (2/480)

<sup>11</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (2/477)

<sup>12</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (2/452)

<sup>13</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (2/476)

<sup>14</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (2/478)

<sup>15</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (2/479)

<sup>16</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (1/205)

<sup>17</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (no. 518)

innovations, then fear for him, since the youth is according to his initial up-bringing.” And he also said, “Verily a youth begins to grow, so he is affected by sitting with the people of knowledge, thus he remains safe. And if he inclines towards other than them, he will be destroyed.”<sup>18</sup> Said Ibn 'Awn (d.150H) – *rahimahullaah*, “Whomsoever sits with the people of innovation is more severe upon us than the people of innovation themselves.”<sup>19</sup>

Yahyaa Ibn Sa'eed al-Qattaan (d.198H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, ‘When Sufyaan ath-Thawree came to Basrah, he was made to look at the affair of Rabe'eah Ibn Sabeeh and his position with the people. So he asked, ‘What is his *madhhab* (way)?’ They said, ‘He has no *madhhab*, except the *Sunnah*.’ He said, ‘With whom does he keep companionship?’ They said, ‘The people of *Qadar* (pre-Decree).’ He said, ‘Then he is *Qadaree*.’<sup>20</sup> Stated Ibn Battah (d.397H)

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<sup>18</sup> **BENEFIT:** Imaam al-Barbahaaree said, “Whosoever realizes what the Innovators have abandoned of the *Sunnah* and left behind and he clings to it, he is a person of the *Sunnah* and the *Jamaa'ah*. He should be followed, helped and protected. He is one whom the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) bequeathed should be looked after.” Refer to *Sharhus-Sunnah* (no. 108). Aboo Haatim said to his son, “If you see one who loves Ahmad, then know that he is a person of the *Sunnah*.” Refer to *Siyar A'laamun-Nubalaa'* (11/198).

Ja'far Ibn Muhammad said, “If you see a man loving the *Ahlul-Hadeeth*, such as Yahyaa Ibn Sa'eed and 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Mahdee and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and Ishaq Ibn Raahawayh,” and he mentioned some other, “then he is upon the *Sunnah*, and whoever opposes them, then he is an innovator.” Refer to *Sharah Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (2/35). Qutaybah Ibn Sa'eed said, “When you see a man loving *Ahlul-Hadeeth*, then know that he is upon the *Sunnah*, and whoever opposes this, then know that he is an innovator.” Refer to *Shi'aar Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (p. 7) of al-Haakim.

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

Ahmad Ibn Yoonus narrates from Sufyaan ath-Thawree who said, “Test the people of Mawsul by Mu'aafee Ibn 'Imraan.” Related by Ibn Hajar in *Tahdheebul-Tahdheeb* (10/180) Imaam al-Barbahaaree (d.329H) said, “To set up trials in Islaam is an innovation. As for today, people should be tested for the *Sunnah*, because of his statement, ‘This is the knowledge of the Religion, so to whom you take you Religion from...’” *Sharhus-Sunnah* (no. 152). Ahmad Ibn Zaheer said, “I heard Ahmad Ibn 'Abdullaah Ibn Yoonus saying, “Test the people of Mawsul with Mu'aafee Ibn 'Imraan. If they love him, then they are *Ahlus-Sunnah*, and if they hate him, then they are people of innovation – just as the people of Koofah are to be tested by Yahyaa.” Related by al-Laalikaa'ee (1/66)

<sup>19</sup> Refer to *al-Ibaanah* (2/273).

<sup>20</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (2/453). **BENEFIT:** The *Qadariyyah* are the followers of Ma'bad Ibnul-Juhanee, and from their false beliefs are: that Allaah does not have prior knowledge of anything until it comes into existence; that it is people – and not Allaah – who are the creators of their own actions, denying '*aqeedah* (belief) in the Punishment of the Grave, and denying that the authentic *hadeeth* is an evidence for the '*aqeedah*, unless it is related in *mutawaatir* (concurrent) form. Refer to *al-Milal wan-Nihal* (1/72) of ash-Shahrastaanee and *Sawnul-Mantaq wal-Kalaam* (p. 160) of as-Suyootee. Stated Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim (d.759H) – *rahimahullaah*, “The innovation of the *Qadariyyah* started at the end of the period of the Companions. So those that remained at that time, such as 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbaas and their like, opposed and refuted it. Then the innovation of the *Murji'ah* occurred, after the period of the Companions, so those of the major *taabi'een* who faced it, refuted it. Then came the innovation of the *Jahmiyyah* after the passing away of the *taabi'een*. Its evil reached alarming proportions and the matter had become dire during the age of the Imaams such as Ahmad

– *rahimahullaah*, “May Allaah have mercy upon Sufyaan ath-Thawree. Indeed, he spoke with wisdom, so he was truthful. And he spoke with knowledge that agrees with the Book and the *Sunnah* and whatever they obligate of wisdom. And the eyes can see it, and it is known to the people with insight. Allaah the Exalted,

**“O you who believe! Do not take those outside of your Religion as friends, since they will not fail to do their best to corrupt you.”** [Soorah Aali-'Imraan 3:118].”<sup>21</sup>

Said Aboo Daawood as-Sijistaanee (d.275H) – *rahimahullaah*, ‘I said to Abaa 'Abdullaah Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d.241H), ‘I saw a man from *Ahlu-Sunnah* with a man from the people of innovation. Should I abandon his speech?’ He said, ‘No, inform him that the man you saw him with is a person of innovation. So if he abandons his speech, then continue speaking with him. And if not then cut him off. Ibn Mas'ood said that a person is like his friends.”<sup>22</sup>

Stated Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) – *rahimahullaah*, “Whomsoever holds a good opinion of them and claims that he does not know their condition, the he knows their condition. So if he does not separate from them and make his rejection of them apparent, then he is to be considered with them.”<sup>23</sup> As for the one who says that their words

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(d.241H) and those with him. There appeared after this, the innovation of *hulool* (incarnation), this appeared with, and in the time of al-Hajjaaj. So whenever *Shaytaan* brought about an innovation from amongst these innovations, or from other than them, Allaah established those from His Party and Army, who refuted it and warned the Muslims against it – all of the sake of sincerity and sincere advice to Allaah, His Book, His Messenger and the people of Islaam.”

<sup>21</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (no. 421)

<sup>22</sup> *Tabaqaatul-Hanaabilah* (1/160)

<sup>23</sup> **BENEFIT – BACKBITING THE INNOVATORS:** Indeed, many fear ‘making their opposition to the people innovation apparent’ due to fear of backbiting. Sufyaan Ibn 'Uyaynah said, ‘Shu’bah used to say, ‘Let us come together so we can backbite for the sake of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic.’ Related by al-Laalikaa'ee (1/140). And al-A'mash relates from Ibraaheem (an-Nakha'ee), that he said, “There is no backbiting with respect to a person of innovation.” Related by al-Laalikaa'ee (1/140). And al-Hasan al-Basree (d.110H) said, “There is no backbiting in the case of an innovator, or concerning a person who openly commits sin.” Related by al-Laalikaa'ee (1/140).

Aboo Zayd al-Ansaaree an-Nahawee said, “Shu’bah came to us on a rainy day and said, ‘Today is not a day for *hadeeth*, today is a day of backbiting. Let us come together and backbite the liars.’ Related by al-Haafidh al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee in *al-Kifaayah* (no. 91). Makkee Ibn Ibraaheem – the teacher of al-Bukhaaree – said, ‘Shu’bah used to come to 'Imraan Ibn Hudayr and say, ‘O 'Imraan, come, let us backbite for an hour for the sake of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic,’ and they would mention the negative aspects of the narrators of *hadeeth*.’ Related by al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee in *al-Kifaayah* (no. 91)

Aboo Zur'ah ad-Dimashqee said, ‘I heard Aboo Musheer being asked about a man who would make mistakes and turn the words around in narrating *ahaadeeth*. So he said, ‘Make his condition known.’ So I said to Aboo Zur'ah, ‘Do you not consider that to be backbiting?’ He said, ‘No.’ Refer to *Sharh 'Ilalut-Tirmidhee* (1/249) and *al-Kifaayah* (no. 91-92) with a slightly different wording.

'Abdullaah Ibnul-Imaam Ahmad said, ‘Aboo Turaab an-Nakhshabee came to my father who began to say, ‘So and so is *da'eef* (weak) and so and so is *thiqah* (reliable).’ So Aboo Turaab said, ‘O Shaykh, do not backbite the Scholars.’ So my father turned to him and said, ‘Woe be to you, this is advice, this is not backbiting.’ Refer to *al-Kifaayah* (no. 92) and *Sharh 'Ilalut-Tirmidhee* (1/350).

have a *ta'weel* (interpretation) that is in agreement with the *Sharee'ah*, then he is actually amongst their leaders and heads. And if he is an intelligent, he will know that his own lie is in what he has stated."<sup>24</sup>

Stated 'Utbah Ibn Ghulaam, "Whomsoever is not with us, the he is against us."<sup>25</sup> The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "The souls are enlisted soldiers. So those who knew each other then will be in agreement, and those who differed then, will be divergent."<sup>26</sup> Stated al-Fudayl Ibn 'Iyaad (d.187H) after this *hadeeth*, "So it is not possible for a person of the *Sunnah* to incline towards a person of innovation, except out of hypocrisy."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (2/133). **BENEFIT – MAKING EXCUSES OF THE PEOPLE OF INNOVATION:** Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, "It is obligatory to punish everyone who ascribes himself to them – the People of Innovation – or whoever defends them, or whoever praises them, or whoever reveres their books, or who detests that they should be talked about, or who begins to make excuses for them by saying that he does not understand what these words mean, or by saying that this person authored another book and what is similar to these types of excuses, which are not made, except by an ignorant or a hypocrite. Rather, it is obligatory to punish everyone who knows of their condition and does not assist in repelling their evil, for repelling their evil is one of the greatest obligations." Refer to *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (2/133)

And the Noble Scholar, Shaykh Saalih Ibn Fawzaan al-Fawzaan was asked, "Whoever opposes the *usool* (foundations) of *Salafiyyah* from amongst those who are around us, and assists and supports other methodologies and their thinkers, is it obligatory to associate him with them in order that people may take caution from him and so that they do not become deceived by his *manhaj* (methodology)?" So he answered, "Whoever opposes the methodology of the *Salaf* and praises those who are upon it, then he is considered to be upon the actual opposing methodologies himself. It is necessary to advise him and to give him *da'wah*. So he must return to the truth, but if not, then he is to be abandoned and cut-off." Refer to *al-Ajwibatul-Mufeedah* (p. 105).

<sup>25</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (2/437)

<sup>26</sup> Related by al-Bukhaaree (no. 3158) and Muslim (no. 2638)

<sup>27</sup> Refer to the manuscript copy of *ar-Radd 'alal-Mubtadi'ah* of Ibnul-Banna. Indeed, some of those claiming to be upon *Sunnah* and *Salafiyyah* disassociate themselves from *AhluSunnah* saying that they have evil and despicable manners and character. **BENEFIT – THE EXCUSE THAT AHLUSUNNAH HAVE EVIL AND DESPICABLE MANNERS:** Yoonus Ibn 'Ubayd said to his son, "I forbid you from fornication (*zinaa*), stealing and drinking wine. However, that you meet Allaah with any of these sins is better to me than that you meet him with the view of 'Amr Ibn 'Ubayd and the associates of 'Amr (meaning, the *Mu'tazilah*)." *al-Ibaanah* (2/466). Sa'eed Ibn Jubayr (d.95H) said, "That my son accompanies a sinful and cunning scoundrel who is a *Sunnee* is more beloved to me than that he accompanies a highly devoted and given to worship innovator." *al-Ibaanah* (no. 89).

Imaam al-Barbahaaree (d.329H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, "However, if you see a person whose manner and opinion is despicable, he is wicked, sinful and oppressive, yet he is a person of the *Sunnah*, accompany him and sit with him, since his sin will not harm you. If you see a man who strives hard and long in worship, is abstemiousness, being continual in worship, except that he is a person of innovation, do not sit with him, do not listen to his words and do not walk along with him. Since, I do not feel safe that you will eventually come to be pleased with his way and go to destruction along with him." Refer to *Sharhus-Sunnah* (no. 149). Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d.204H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, "The graves of *AhluSunnah* from those who committed the major sins are like gardens. And the graves of the People of Innovation from amongst the abstemiousness pious ones are hollow and empty. The sinners of *AhluSunnah* are the *Awliyaa'* (close allies) of Allaah and the abstemious ones from the People of Innovation are the enemies of Allaah." Refer to *Tabaqaatul-Hanaabilah* (1/184).

Stated Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), "If a Believer were to enter a mosque containing one thousand people, there being in it only one Believer, he would come until he sat with him. And if a hypocrite entered a mosque containing one thousand people, there being in it only one hypocrite, he would come until he sat with him."

Said Hammaad Ibn Zayd, 'Yoonus said to me, 'O Hammaad! That I see a youth upon every evil condition, and I have no hope of any good for him, then I see him accompanying a person of innovation, then at that point I know that he is ruined." Said Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, 'If I see a youth when he begins to grow with *AhluSunnah walJamaa'ah*, then I have good hopes for him. And if I see a youth with the people of innovations, then I despair for him; since a youth is according to his initial up-ringing."<sup>28</sup>

Said Damarah Ibn Rabee'ah, 'From Ibn Shawdhab who said, 'Verily from the favour of Allaah upon a youth is that he finds a righteous person of the *Sunnah* to teach him."<sup>29</sup> From 'Abdullaah Ibn Shawdhab, from Ayyoob who said, "Verily from the happiness of a youth or a foreigner is that Allaah guides them to a Scholar from *AhluSunnah*."<sup>30</sup> This is what was easy for me to explain and the praise is for Allaah.

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<sup>28</sup> For the above narrations, refer to *al-Aadaabush-Shar'iiyah* (3/77).

<sup>29</sup> *al-Ibaanah* (1/205), *as-Sughraa* (no. 91) and *al-Laalikaa'ee* (1/60)

<sup>30</sup> Related by *al-Laalikaa'ee* (no. 30) in *Sharh Usoolul-I'tiqaad*