

Questions and Answers Concerning Muslim Unity

Al-'Allaamah Saalih Ibn Fawzaan al-Fawzaan

Translation by Maaz Qureshi¹

Version 1.0

[Q.1]: "There are some who are lenient in regards to the importance of 'aqeedah (creed), and they hold that having faith (*eemaan*) is sufficient. Can you explain the importance of 'aqeedah (creed) for the Muslim and how it reflects upon him in his day to day life, and its connection to his person, his community, and the non-Muslims?"

[A.1]: "We begin with the Name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy. The praise is for Allaah, Lord of the Worlds, and may the Prayers and Peace be upon our Messenger Muhammad, and upon his Family, and his Companions. To proceed:

So verily the soundness of the 'aqeedah (creed) is the primary basis, because testifying that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, is the first pillar of Islaam. So the first thing that the Prophets called their peoples to was the soundness (*islaah*) of the 'aqeedah, due to the fact that all of the deeds, acts of worship, and movements are built upon that, and without the correct 'aqeedah, there is no benefit in any actions. Allaah the Exalted said,

"But if they had associated partners with Allaah, whatever they were doing would have become worthless for them." [Sooratul-An'aam 6:88]

That is to say, that their actions would have become nullified. Allaah the Glorified and Exalted said,

"Verily whoever associates others with Allaah, then indeed Allaah has prohibited Paradise upon him, and his dwelling place shall be the Fire. And the transgressors will not have any helpers." [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:72]

Allaah the Exalted said,

¹ The following is a series of questions and answers that appeared in *ash-Sharqul-Awsat* (issue no. 64-65, 5466), dated 13-15/11/1993CE, as appears in *Muraaji'at fee Fiqhil-Waaqi'is-Siyaasee wal-Fikree* (p. 42-59) of Dr. 'Abdullaah Ibn Muhammad ar-Rifaa'ee. The footnotes were added by the translator.

“And indeed we revealed to you, and to those before you, that if you committed Shirk, then your actions would have become worthless, and you would be from the losers.”

[Sooratuz-Zumar 39:65]

It becomes clear from these texts and other than them, that the soundness of *'aqeedah* is the most important matter in Revelation, and it is the utmost priority in *da'wah* (calling to Allaah). So the first thing that must be established in the *da'wah* is the correct *'aqeedah*. So indeed the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) remained in Makkatul-Mukarramah for thirteen years after being sent, calling the people to the rectification of the *'aqeedah* and to *Tawheed*, and the obligatory duties were not revealed to him, except in al-Madeenah. Yes, the Prayer was revealed to him in Makkah before the *hijrah* (migration to al-Madeenah), according to that which proves that actions are not to be pursued except after having attained the correct *'aqeedah*. So this person who says that it is sufficient for him to have *eemaan* (faith), without giving attention to *'aqeedah*, then this statement is self-contradictory, because *eemaan* cannot truly be *eemaan*, except with the correct *'aqeedah*. If you are not upon the correct *'aqeedah*, then there is no *eemaan* (faith), nor Religion.”

[Q.2]: ‘How is the *'aqeedah* connected to the day to day life of the Muslim and his actions?’

[A.2]: “As I have explained, when the *'aqeedah* is correct, the deeds will become righteous, because the correct *'aqeedah* directs the Muslim to do righteous deeds, and it directs him towards goodness and praiseworthy actions. This is because when he testifies that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah, it is a testification built upon knowledge and *yaqeen* (certainty of faith), and recognition of its meaning. It directs him to righteous deeds, because the testification that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah is not merely a statement uttered upon the tongue. Rather, it is an open proclamation of belief and action, and this testification will not be correct, nor beneficial, until it is followed up by righteous deeds. So carrying out the pillars of *eemaan* (faith), and whatever is an increase upon that from the commandments of the Religion and its duties, and the sum total of its supererogatory deeds.”

[Q.3]: ‘Noble Shaykh, that which has led to further deterioration in the condition of the *Ummah* of Islaam is the turbulent condition of its ideology, especially in that which is connected to the Religion. So indeed there are a large number of Islaamic parties and groups who say that their *manhaj* (methodology) is the correct Islaamic *manhaj* that it is obligatory to follow, to the extent that the Muslim becomes confused as to which one must be followed, and which one is upon the truth.’

[A.3]: “Splitting up (*tafarruq*) is not from the Religion, because the Religion commands us with unity, and to be one *jamaa'ah* (community), and one *Ummah* upon the *'aqeedah* of *Tawheed*, and upon following the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). Allaah the Exalted says,

“Verily this Ummah of yours is one Ummah, and I am your Lord, so worship Me.”
[Sooratul-Anbiyaa’ 21:92]

Allaah the Exalted says,

“And hold onto the Rope of Allaah altogether, and do not be divided.” [Soorah Aali-
'Imraan 3:104]

And Allaah the Glorified and Exalted said,

“Verily those who split up their Religion and became sects, you have nothing to do with them in the least. Their affair is only for Allaah, then He will inform them of what they used to do.” [Sooratul-An'aam 6:159]

And this is a severe threat against division (*tafarruq*) and differing. Allaah the Exalted said:
“And do not be like those who divided and differed after the clear proofs came to them. And they will receive a severe punishment.” [Soorah Aali-'Imraan 3:105]

So our Religion is a Religion of union and a Religion of agreement and unity. Division is not from our Religion, so this multiplicity of groups is not from our Religion, because the Religion commands us to be one community. And the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “The Muslim to the Muslim is like one structure, both supporting each other.”² And he said, “The likeness of the Believers in regards to their compassion, mercy, and kindness is like one body.”³ So it is known that a building or a single body is something solid, they do not have any division in them. Since if a building had any division in its structure, it would fall. Likewise, if the body had any division in it, it would lose life. So there is no escape from being united and being one community whose foundation is *Tawheed*, and whose methodology is the *da'wah* (call) of the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), and whose path is the Religion of Islaam.⁴ Allaah the Exalted said,

“And verily this is My Straight Path, so follow it. And do not follow the other paths, because they will separate you from His Path.” [Sooratul-An'aam 6:153]

So these groups and this division which has come out onto the field today is not acceptable to the Religion of Islaam. Rather, Islaam has prohibited this with a severe prohibition, and

² Related by al-Bukhaaree (no. 6026) and Muslim (no. 2565) from Abee Moosaa al-Ash'aree (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*).

³ Related by al-Bukhaaree (no. 6011) and Muslim (no. 2586) from an-Nu'maan Ibn Basheer (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*).

⁴ Al-Haafidh al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee said: “When the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) passed away, the Muslims were upon one way in regards to the fundamentals of the Religion and its details, except those who outwardly displayed agreement, but concealed hypocrisy.” Refer to *al-Farq baynal-Firaq* (p. 14).

it has commanded unity upon the *'aqeedah* of *Tawheed*. And upon the methodology of Islaam as one community and one *Ummah* because that is what Allaah the Glorified and Exalted commanded us with.⁵ So the division and multiplicity of groups is only from the traps of the devils from the *jinn* and the mankind for this *Ummah*. So the disbelievers and hypocrites since the old times have not ceased to plot conspiracies to divide the Muslims. The Jews of old said,

“Believe in what was revealed to the Believers at the beginning of the day and reject it at its end, that perhaps they will turn back (from their Religion).” [Soorah Aali-'Imraan 3:72] That is to say, so that the Muslims may turn back from their Religion if they see you turn back from it. And the hypocrites said,

“Do not spend upon those who are with the Messenger of Allaah until they disband.” [Sooratul-Munaafiqoon 63:7]

“And those who took for themselves a mosque in order to cause harm, disbelief and division amongst the Believers.” [Sooratut-Tawbah 9:107]”

[Q.4]: 'Noble Shaykh, from those matters in which the people have become careless is the *bay'ah* (oath of allegiance). So there are those who deem it permissible to take the *bay'ah* from a *Jamaa'ah* from the *jamaa'aat* (parties), despite another *bay'ah* being present. Then these multiple oaths of allegiance may not be widely known due to reasons of secrecy; what is the ruling upon this? Then, does the ruling differ in the lands of the disbelievers, or in those lands that do not rule by what Allaah revealed?

[A.4]: “The *bay'ah* cannot be for anyone except the ruler of the Muslims, and these multiple *bay'ahs* are innovations, and they are from the consequences of differing. The obligation of the Muslims who are under one sovereign rule, and in one kingdom, is that their *bay'ah* (oath of allegiance) be to one ruler. It is not permissible to have multiple *bay'ahs*, rather, these are only consequences of differing in this age, and they have come about due to ignorance of the Religion. Indeed the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) forbade splitting up through multiple *bay'ahs*, and having multiple *bay'ahs*, and he said, “Whoever comes to you whilst you are united under one person, wanting to divide you, then strike his neck.”⁶ If there is one that disrupts the sovereignty of the ruler, and wishes to revolt and to split up the community, then indeed the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa*

⁵ Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah said in *al-Fataawal-Islaamiyyah* (p. 100-101): “And it is not for anyone to set up a person for the *Ummah*, and to call to his way, and to form allegiance and enmity based upon that, except for the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). Nor is any speech to be set up for them based upon which they form alliance and enmity, except for the Speech of Allaah and that of His Messenger, and upon that which the *Ummah* has consensus. Rather, this is the practice of the people of innovation, those who set up a person or a statement with which they cause splits in the *Ummah* forming alliance and enmity based upon that statement or ascription.”

⁶ Related by Muslim (6/23) and Ahmad (4/130)

sallam) commanded the ruler to command the Muslims who are with him to fight this rebel. Allaah the Exalted said,

“And if two groups from amongst the Believers fight each other, then make peace between them. However, if one of them transgresses over the other, then fight the one that has transgressed until it returns to the Command of Allaah.” [Sooratul-Hujuraat 49:9]

Indeed the Leader of the Believers, 'Alee Ibn Abee Taalib and the major Companions who were with him fought the *Khawaarij* and the rebels until they gained victory over them and abated their uprising, and calmed the Muslims down from their evil. So this is from the *Sunnah* of the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), he commanded fighting against the rebels and fighting the *Khawaarij* who revolted, and that was done to preserve the community of the Muslims, and to shelter the Muslims from division and differing.”

[Q.5]: ‘What is the ruling upon one who ascribes themselves to one of these groups, especially those that are established upon secrecy⁷ and the *bay'ah*?’

[A.5]: “The Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) informed us that division would come about, and he commanded us, that when this happens, we should become united upon what the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was upon, and his Companions. The Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “The Jews split up into seventy-one sects, and the Christians split up into seventy two sects, and this *Ummah* shall split up into seventy-three sects all of them being in the Fire, except one.” They said, ‘Which one is that, O Messenger of Allaah?’ He said, “The one that is upon the likeness of what I am upon today and my Companions.”⁸ When his Companions sought advice from him, the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “I advise you to fear Allaah, and to listen and obey, even if a servant is put in command over you. So whoever from amongst you lives, then he will see much differing. Adhere strictly to my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the Rightly Guided Caliphs after me, hold firmly onto it with your molar teeth.”⁹ So this is the *manhaj* (methodology) that it is obligatory for the Muslims to follow until the Day of Judgement, despite the presence of differing. So they must return to what the *Salaf* of this *Ummah* were upon in terms of *manhaj*, and the Religion, and the *bay'ah* and other than that.”

⁷ Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal relates in *az-Zuhd* (p. 48), and ad-Daarimee in *as-Sunan* (1/91): From 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez that he said: “If you see a people discussing anything of their Religion in secrecy, to the exclusion of the people in general, then know that they are upon the foundation of misguidance.” Ibnul-Jawzee said in *Talbees Iblees* (p. 89): “So our Religion, all praise being for Allaah, is clear and manifest, containing nothing hidden, nor anything concealed, suppressed, nor secret. So whatever the people of partisanship employ from that, then it is the door to misguidance, and refuge is sought from Allaah.”

⁸ **Hasan:** Related by Aboo Daawood (no. 4596), at-Tirmidhee (no. 2640), Ibn Maajah (no. 3991), Ahmad (2/332) and al-Haakim (1/61). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (no. 1083).

⁹ **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo Daawood (5/13), at-Tirmidhee (5/44), Ahmad (4/126-127), Ibn Maajah (6/42-43) and ad-Daarimee (1/43). It was authenticated by Shaykh Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee (no. 2455).

[Q.6]: 'There are some who feel that setting up these parties is necessary for the establishment of the call to Allaah, especially in those communities where the Religion is not apparent.'

[A.6]: "The call to Allaah is required and obligatory. Allaah the Glorified and Exalted said,

"Call to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and a good admonition." [Sooratun-Nahl 16:135]

However, it is not from the *manhaj* (methodology) of *da'wah* to split up the Muslims and for every group to claim that it is upon the truth, and that everyone else is not upon the truth, as is the reality with these parties today. So it is obligatory upon the Muslim who has the knowledge and capability, that he calls to Allaah upon sure knowledge, and that he co-operates with others upon this. There cannot be a specific methodology for each group, such that it is in opposition to another group. Rather, it is obligatory upon the Muslims to have one methodology, and that all of them co-operate and consult with each other. There is no need for the presence of numerous *jamaa'at* (parties), nor for differing and diverse methodologies, because this destroys the unity of the Muslims and the word of the Muslims, and it is a cause for differing and quarrelling amongst the people, as is the state of affairs today with these *jamaa'at* in the Islaamic countries and other than them. So it is not from the necessities of *da'wah* that there be a *jamaa'ah*. It is only from the necessities of *da'wah* that the caller have the knowledge, wisdom and insight to call to Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, even if he is one person.¹⁰ So it is obligatory upon the callers to be upon one methodology upon the truth, even if they have different scopes of knowledge, and even if they are located in different lands."

[Q.7]: 'Noble Shaykh, from that which has become noticeable today is the emergence of *ghuloo* (extremism), and the common-folk comply with this extremism, what are the pathways to this deviation, and who is responsible?'

[A.7]: "The Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) warned his *Ummah* from extremism, he said, "Beware of extremism, since those before you were only destroyed by extremism."¹¹ And he said, "The extremists (*mutanatti'oon*) are destroyed, the extremists are destroyed, the

¹⁰ Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, "Indeed the people of the truth and the *Sunnah* do not follow anyone, except the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) – the one who does not speak from his desires – it is only revelation revealed to him. They hold that belief in all that he narrated is obligatory, as is obedience in all that he commanded. This rank is not given to anyone other than him from the *imaams*. Rather, statements of every individual are taken or left, except the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). So whoever makes other than the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) a criterion, such that whoever loves him and stands by him becomes from *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*, and whoever opposes him becomes from the people of innovation, and differing – as is found in the groups following the leaders of *kalaam* (theological rhetoric) with regards to the Religion – then he is from the people of innovation, misguidance and division!"

¹¹ Related by Muslim (no. 2670)

extremists are destroyed,"¹² saying it three times. And the *mutanatti'oon* are those who are extreme and fanatical in their Religion. Allaah the Glorified and Exalted said,

“O people of the Book Do not be extreme in your Religion, and do not speak about Allaah, except that which is true.” [Sooratun-Nisaa' 4:171]

And Allaah the Exalted said,

“Say: O people of the Book! Do not go to excesses in your Religion without due right.” [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:77]

So the obligation is to be steadfast without extremism, nor negligence. Allaah the Exalted said to His Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and to those who follow him,

“So be steadfast as you were commanded, and those who turned back with you, and do not transgress.” [Soorah Hood 11:112]

Meaning, do not exceed the limits, and do not be extreme, so it is incumbent upon the Muslims to have *al-Istiqaamah* (steadfastness), and that is striking the balance between negligence and extremism. This is the methodology of Islaam, and it is the methodology of all the Prophets, and it is *al-Istiqaamah* upon the Religion of Allaah the Glorified and Exalted without extremism, nor fanaticism, nor excesses, nor over leniency and negligence.”

[Q.8]: ‘From that which is apparent from the Islaamic upbringing today, is that it has become corrupted by something from the ideology of the misguided sects like the *Khawaarij* and the *Mu'tazilah*. So amongst some of them, we see *takfeer* upon the societies and the individuals, and that they are justified in harshly opposing the sinners and the disobedient ones, so what is your opinion?’

[A.8]: “This is an incorrect methodology, because Islaam prohibits harshness in *da'wah* (calling to Islaam), Allaah the Exalted said,

“Call to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and a good admonition, and debate with them in a manner that is good.” [Sooratun-Nahl 16:135]

And Allaah said to His Prophets Moosaa and Haaron (*'alayhimas-salaam*) when they were going to Fir'awn,

“So say to him a kind word, perhaps he will remember or fear.” [Soorah Taa Haa 21:44]

¹² Related by Muslim (no. 2670)

So harshness will only be met by reciprocal harshness, it does not benefit, rather, it causes a defensive reaction, and it has adverse effects upon the Muslims. So what is required is to give *da'wah* with wisdom, and with good manners, and to use kindness with those who are being called. As for using harshness, severity and abuse with those who are being called, then this is not from the Religion of Islaam. So the obligation upon the Muslims is to proceed in *da'wah* upon the methodology of the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), and upon the directions of the noble *Qur'aan*.

As for *takfeer*, then it has *Sharee'ah* fundamentals. So whoever perpetrates something from the invalidators of Islaam that the scholars of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* have mentioned with the ruling of disbelief after the proof is established upon him. Whoever perpetrates something from these invalidators, then he is not a disbeliever, even if he commits some of the major sins that are lesser *Shirk*.”

[Q.9]: ‘There are those who apply the term, ‘*al-jaahiliyyah*’ upon the Muslim societies, since they have some corruption, and you know the results of this term. So is this application correct, O noble Shaykh?’

[A.9]: “The general *jaahiliyyah* (pre-Islaamic times of ignorance) ended when the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was sent, and the praise is for Allaah. And Islaam, knowledge and light came, and these shall remain continuous until the Day of Judgement. So there is no longer any general *jaahiliyyah* after the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) has been sent. However, some things from *jaahiliyyah* can remain, but this is a partial *jaahiliyyah*, and it is *jaahiliyyah* only for the one who does it. As for the general *jaahiliyyah*, then indeed it ended when the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was sent, and it will never return until the Hour is established.¹³ As for the presence of *jaahiliyyah* amongst some of the individuals or groups in some societies, then this is a matter that holds true today, but it is a specific type of *jaahiliyyah* for those amongst whom it is found, it is not general. So it is not permissible to use the term *jaahiliyyah* in a general sense as Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah has explained in *al-Iqtidaa'us-Siraatil-Mustaqeem*.

[Q.10]: ‘It is apparent from those who use this term upon the Islaamic societies, that they mean by it *takfeer* upon those societies, and to follow that up with revolt against them.’

¹³ Despite this, we see Sayyid Qutb saying in *Fee Dthilaalil-Qur'aan* (2/1057): “And mankind has apostatized (by turning) to the worship of the servants (of Allaah) and to the oppression of the religions. And they have turned away from ‘*Laa ilaaha illallaah*’ (the declaration) – even if a small party from them remain repeating ‘*Laa ilaaha illallaah*’ upon the minarets without actually understanding its meaning and intending its meaning, yet he repeats it without rejecting the legislative *Haakimiyyah* that the servants have claimed for themselves.” And he says further, “Except that mankind has returned to the *jaahiliyyah* (of the first times) and it has apostatized from ‘*Laa ilaaha illallaah*’, having given to those servants the specific characteristics of *Uloohiyyah* and has not considered the *Tawheed* of Allaah and has not given exclusive loyalty to Him.” And then he follows this with, “The whole of mankind, including those who repeat from the minarets, in the eastern and western parts of the world, the words ‘*Laa ilaaha illallaah*’, without any (consideration of) meaning or reality, then they are the most sinful of people and will be the most severely punished on the day of Judgement because they have apostatized by turning to the worship of the servants (of Allaah).”

[A.10]: “No one has the right to apply *takfeer*, nor to speak with *takfeer* upon the groups, nor upon the individuals. *Takfeer* has *Sharee'ah* fundamentals. So whoever perpetrates an invalidator from the invalidators of Islaam, then he is to be judged with disbelief in it, and the invalidators of Islaam are known; the greatest of them is *Shirk* with Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, and claiming to know the knowledge of the Unseen, and ruling by other than what Allaah revealed. Allaah the Exalted said,

“And those who do not rule by what Allaah revealed, then those are the disbelievers.”
[Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:44]

So *takfeer* is dangerous, and it is not for everyone to pronounce it without due right. Verily, it can only be applied by the *Sharee'ah* judge, or by the scholars who are firmly grounded in knowledge, who know Islaam, and who know the invalidators of Islaam, and who know the situations, and who study the state of affairs of the people and the societies. So these are the people who can make the ruling of *takfeer* and other than it. As for the ignoramuses and the individual people and the half-educated, then these people do not have any right to perform *takfeer* upon the personalities, nor upon the groups, nor upon the states, because they are not from the people who can make this ruling.”

[Q.11]: ‘Noble Shaykh, unfortunately, there are those who attempt to revolt against the governments without the *Sharee'ah* fundamentals, what is our *manhaj* in dealing with the Muslim or non-Muslim ruler?’

[A.11]: “Our methodology in dealing with the Muslim ruler is to listen and to obey. Allaah the Glorified and Exalted says,

“O you who believe! Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger, and those in authority over you. And if you differ in anything, then return it to Allaah and His Messenger if you are believers in Allaah and the Last Day. That is best for final determination.”
[Sooratun-Nisaa' 4:59]

And the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) – as has preceded – in a *hadeeth*, “I advise you to fear Allaah and to listen and obey, even if a slave is appointed over you. So whoever from amongst you lives, then he will see much differing. So hold onto my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of my Rightly Guided Caliphs after me.”¹⁴ This *hadeeth* agrees completely with the previous *aayah*, the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “Whoever obeys my appointed leader (*ameer*), then he indeed obeys me. And whoever disobeys my appointed leader, then he indeed disobeys me.”¹⁵ And there are other than this from the well-known *ahaadeeth* that encourage listening and obeying, and the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “Listen and obey, even if the ruler seizes you and beats your back.”¹⁶ So it is

¹⁴ **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo Daawood (5/13), at-Tirmidhee (5/44), Ahmad (4/126-127), Ibn Maaajah (6/42-43) and ad-Daarimee (1/43). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *al-Irwaa'ul-Ghaleel* (no. 2455).

¹⁵ Related by Muslim (6/13)

¹⁶ Related by Muslim (6/19)

obligatory to obey the ruler of the Muslims in obedience to Allaah, but if he commands disobedience (to Allaah), then he is not to be obeyed in this command, meaning: in the command of disobedience. However, he is still to be obeyed in other than that, from that which does not involve sin. As for dealing with the disbelieving (*kaafir*) ruler, then this differs depending upon the various situations. So if the Muslims have the power and capability to fight him, and to remove him from rule, and a Muslim ruler is present, then that is obligatory upon them, and this is from *Jihaad* in the Path of Allaah. As for when they are not capable of opposing him, then it is not permissible for them to instigate anything by oppression and disbelief, because this will result in harm and affliction upon the Muslims. The Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) stayed in Makkah for thirteen years and the government there was a disbelieving government. Despite this, whoever accepted Islaam from his Companions did not fight against the disbelievers. Rather, they were prohibited from fighting the disbelievers for this extremely long period of time, except after the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) migrated and a state was established and a community arose making them capable of fighting the disbelievers, this is the methodology of Islaam.

So when the Muslims are under a *kaafir* government, and they are not capable of removing it, then they must hold firmly onto Islaam and their *'aqeedah*. However, they should not endanger themselves by endeavouring to oppose the disbelievers, because that will only result in the destruction and annihilation of the *da'wah* (call). As for when they have power (*quwwah*) making them capable of *Jihaad*, then they should perform *jihad* in the Path of Allaah upon the known *Sharee'ah* fundamentals.”

[Q.12]: ‘Is the meaning of ‘*quwwah*’ here definite power, or estimated power?’

[A.12]: “Power is known, so if you can carry out an action, and the Muslims start to become capable of establishing *jihad* in the Path of Allaah, then *jihad* has been legislated for them against the disbelievers. As for when their power is estimated, and not fully certain, then it is not permissible to endanger the Muslims, nor to urge them towards danger; thus taking them towards and end that is not praiseworthy. And the *seerah* (biographical account) of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) in Makkah and al-Madeenah is an excellent witness to this.”

[Q.13]: ‘Noble Shaykh, the Religion is advice, and advice is a foundation from the foundations of the Religion. Despite this, we find some difficulty in what is connected to advice to the rulers, and its limits. So how do we strive and advance with it? And from the most prominent of these difficulties is that which is connected to bringing about change with the hand, so can you clarify this issue?’

[A.13]: “The Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) clarified this when he said, “The Religion is *naseehah* (advice, sincerity).” We said, “To whom?” He said, “To Allaah, and to His Book, and to His Messenger, and to the leaders of the Muslims and their common-

folk.”¹⁷ Advising the rulers is done by obeying them in that which is good, and supplicating for them, and explaining the correct path to them, and explaining to them the errors that they may have fallen into, so that they may avoid them. Advise to them is to be given in secret between them and the advisor. It is also to be done by establishing the duties that they have entrusted to their officials and to those who are under their authority, so as to fulfill the trusts, and thus be sincere. Likewise, the Prophet (*sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “Whoever amongst you sees an evil, then let him change it with his hand. So if it is not possible, then with his tongue, so if he is not able, then in his heart.”¹⁸ So the meaning of that is that the Muslims are of three types: The first type are those who have knowledge and authority, so these ones can change the evil with their hand. This is like the rulers, and like men on the committees, and those who have been appointed by the ruler to command the good and prohibit the evil. These are the ones who change with their hands in a wise and *Sharee'ah* legislated manner. Then there are those who have knowledge, but have not been given authority, so these ones change with their tongues by clarifying to the people what is lawful and unlawful, and good and evil. So they enjoin and prohibit and guide and admonish, so this category advises by prohibiting with the tongue. Then there are those who do not have knowledge, nor do they have authority, but they are Muslims. So it is upon this person to oppose the evil in his heart by hating the evil and the people of evil, and by distancing himself from the gatherings of evil, so that he is not affected by them. These are the levels of commanding the good and prohibiting from evil.”

[Q.14]: ‘Are the means of *da'wah* restricted by specific fundamentals?’

[A.14]: “Allaah the Glorified and Exalted said,

“Call to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and a good admonition, and debate with them in manners that are good.” [Sooratu-Nahl 16:135]

Since the one who falls into evil is either ignorant, in which case it is sufficient to give him *da'wah* with wisdom, such as explaining his errors to him. So when his errors have been explained to him, he returns to the correct position. Then there is the one who when his errors are clarified to him, he does not turn away from them, and it could be that he is lazy because his desires oppose him, and his soul opposes him. So this person is in need of an admonition so that he may fear Allaah the Glorified and Exalted, and one needs to explain to him how he will end up if he continues in his sin after receiving knowledge of it. Then there is the third kind of person who when he comes to know of the ruling, then he argues by using falsehood, and he quarrels about what he is upon from evil, and he seeks to justify what he is upon from error. So this person is in need of debate, however, it must be a debate with that which is good, it must not be with harshness, nor should it be for fame and repute. It should be done with that which is good, and to bring proof against proof until the truth is clarified and the falsehood is done away with. So these are the levels that

¹⁷ **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo Daawood (5/13), at-Tirmidhee (5/44), Ahmad (4/126-127), Ibn Maajah (6/42-43) and ad-Daarimee (1/43). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *al-Irwaa'ul-Ghaleel* (no. 2455).

¹⁸ Related in *ash-Shifaa'* of al-Qaadee 'Iyaad (2/676)

Allaah the Glorified and Exalted has mentioned in the previous *aayah*. So using wisdom is the first level, and admonishment is the second level and arguing with that which is good is the third level, and these levels differ with the various types of people being called.”

[Q.15]: ‘What is our *manhaj* in enjoining the good and prohibiting the evil?’

[A.15]: “It is the same as that of our *Salaf*. So if commanding the good and prohibiting the evil takes place in a Muslim country like our country, then such matters have been institutionalized, and the praise is for Allaah, because mankind becomes established by advice, reminder and good admonition. If the matters needs to be taken to the authorities, so that the transgressor may be seized, then it is to be referred to the ruler and conveyed to them. However, if it is not in need of being taken to the authorities, then an excuse should be sought for the sinful person if it is seen from him that he is receptive to correction and accepts the *da'wah*, and that he leaves what he was previously upon from errors. So an excuse is to be sought for the likes of these people, and it is sufficient to aid them in helping themselves out of corruption to correctness as much as possible. If it is found that this transgressor is not receptive, nor does he accept advice, then his affair is to be taken to the ruler. So if he is taken to the ruler of the Muslims, then the advisor is free from blame, because his duty of prohibition has now ended. As for those who are in non-Muslim societies, then it is upon them to call to Allaah with wisdom and a good admonition, and to avert that greater *fitnah* (trial, tribulation) which is the harm that would come upon the Muslims. So there can be no harshness over there, nor can there be any opposition because the opposition against them is much greater than them. So they must only spread Islaam with wisdom and a good admonition and provide advice for those who are receptive to it. Whoever does not accept, then his affair is for Allaah the Glorified and Exalted.”

[Q.16]: ‘Some people claim that the *manhaj* (methodology) of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* is no longer suitable for this era. They say that the *Sharee'ah* fundamentals that *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* hold onto are not possible to implement today.’

[A.16]: “Those who feel that the methodology of the *Salafus-Saalih* is no longer suitable for this age, this is a misguided and misleading implication, because the *manhaj* of the *Salafus-Saalih* is the *manhaj* that Allaah commanded us to follow until the Hour is established. The Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), “So whoever from amongst you lives, then he shall see much differing. So adhere strictly to my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the Rightly Guided Caliphs after me. Hold onto it with your molar teeth.”¹⁹ So this is a sermon for the *Ummah* until the Hour is established. So this proves that there is no escape from traversing the *manhaj* of the *Salaf*, and that the *manhaj* of the *Salafus-Saalih* is suitable for every time and place. Allaah the Glorified and Exalted says,

¹⁹ **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo Daawood (5/13), at-Tirmidhee (5/44), Ahmad (4/126-127), Ibn Maajah (6/42-43) and ad-Daarimee (1/43). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *al-Irwaa'ul-Ghaleel* (no. 2455).

“And those who have proceeded from the Muhaajiroon (emigrants) and the Ansaar (helpers), and those who follow them in goodness, Allaah is pleased with them and they are pleased with him.” [Sooratut-Tawbah 9:100]

This covers all of the *Ummah* until the Hour is established. So the obligation upon them is to follow those who proceeded from the *muhaajireen* and the *ansaar*. And Imaam Maalik Ibn Anas used to say, “The latter part of this *Ummah* will not be corrected, except by that which corrected its first part.”²⁰ So those who wish to separate this *Ummah* from its predecessors, and who wish to separate this *Ummah* from its *Salafus-Saalih* only wish evil for the Muslims. And they wish to alter this Islaam and to invent innovations into it and contradictions. And it is obligatory to reject this and to cut-off its proponent and to warn against its evil, because there is no escape from holding onto the *manhaj* (methodology) of the *Salaf*, and to take the *Salaf* as an example, and there is no escape from travelling upon the path of the *Salaf*. This is found in the Book of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic and in the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) as we have mentioned. So those who wish to cut off the latter part of this *Ummah* from its *Salaf*, it is obligatory to refuse and reject their statement, and to warn against them, and those who know of an evil statement from them should not repeat it.”

[Q.17]: ‘From those things that we find today unfortunately, is the zealouslyness of some to divide the people, and to pay attention to others doing this.’

[A.17]: “It is not permissible for the Muslim to pre-occupy himself with speaking about the people, and to divide the word of the Muslims, and to pronounce rulings upon the people without knowledge, because this causes harm. Allaah the Exalted said,

“And do not follow that which you have no knowledge of. Verily you will be questioned about the hearing, sight and heart.” [Sooratul-Israa’ 17:36]

So the obligation upon the Muslims is to strive to rectify and unite the word, and to strive to unite the ranks upon the truth, not to cause division amongst *AhluS-Sunnah*, nor to turn them into parties, nor to divide them into other than that. Rather, what is required of him, is that when he sees some deficiency amongst the Muslims, then he should strive to rectify it. So when he sees division, he strives to unite the word of the Muslims. This is what is required from the Muslim; that he calls to the unification of the word of the Muslims and eliminates the causes for division, because this is from the greatest of advice that can be given to the leaders of the Muslims and their common-folk.”

[Q.18]: ‘There have arisen some students of knowledge who are careless when it comes to applying the word, ‘*riddah*’ (apostasy) upon the Muslims. Rather, they ask the Muslims to delegate those whom they see fit to carry out the prescribed punishment of apostasy from amongst the common-folk themselves, if the ruler does not do it.’

²⁰ Related in *ash-Shifaa’* of al-Qaadee ‘Iyaad (2/676)

[A.18]: “Establishing the Islaamic punishments is from the duties of the ruler of the Muslims, it is not for everyone to carry out the punishments, because this will undoubtedly result in chaos and corruption, and it will undoubtedly result in the fragmentation of the society; and in the outbreak of rebellions and tribulations. So the prescribed punishments (*hudood*) are from the duties of the Muslim ruler. The Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, “Pardon the punishments amongst yourselves, but if the issue of punishment is taken to the ruler, then the curse of Allaah is upon the intercessor and the interceded.”²¹ And from the tasks of the ruler in Islaam and from his duties is to establish the *hudood* (prescribed punishments) after the ruling has been made by the *Sharee'ah* court upon the one who has fallen into a crime such as the punishment of apostasy, or the punishment of theft.

So carrying out the prescribed punishments is from the duties of the ruler. However, if the Muslims in a place do not have a ruler, then there is enjoining the good and prohibiting the evil and calling to Allaah the Mighty and Majestic with wisdom and a good admonition and debating with that which is good. So it is not permissible for the individuals to carry out the prescribed punishments, because this – as has been explained previously – only brings about chaos, and it results in rebellions and tribulations, and its evil is much greater than its benefit. And from the indisputable *Sharee'ah* fundamentals is that: repelling the evil takes precedence over bringing about good.”

[Q.19]: ‘Noble Shaykh, we hope for the punishment of the one who clearly apostates, but what about the ruling of apostasy upon the one about whom there is doubt?’

[A.19]: “The ruling of apostasy and expelling from the Religion is for the scholars who are firmly grounded in knowledge, and they are the judges in the *Sharee'ah* courts, and the respected *muftees* (those capable of pronouncing Islaamic verdicts). So this affair is for them to judge, and it is not from the rights of those who are barely educated, nor those who attach themselves to knowledge but are deficient understanding of the Religion; it is not from their duties to pronounce the judgement of apostasy. Rather, this will only bring about harm, since making a judgement upon a Muslim that he is an apostate, or to perform *takfeer* upon a Muslim who has not perpetrated an invalidator from the invalidators of Islaam, there is a great danger in doing this. And whoever says to his brother, ‘O disbeliever,’ or, ‘O disobedient one,’ whilst he is not like that, then the statement backfires upon the speaker. So those who make the judgement of apostasy, they are the *Sharee'ah* judges, and knowledgeable *muftees*, and those who carry out this judgement are the leaders of the Muslims, and anything other than this is chaos.”

²¹ **Hasan:** Refer to *al-Irwaa'* (no. 2355) and *ad-Da'eefah* (no. 2196)