

The Position of Salafiyah Concerning Refutation and Criticism

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INTRODUCTION:

‘All praise is for Allaah, who in every age and interval between the Prophets, raises up a group from the People of Knowledge, who call the misguided to guidance and patiently bear ill-treatment and harm. With the Book of Allaah, they give life to the dead, and by the Light of Allaah, they give sight to the blind. How many a person killed by Iblees have they revived. How many people astray and wandering have they guided. How beautiful their effects have been upon the people, and how vile people have been towards them. They expel from the Book of Allaah the alterations of those going beyond bounds, the false claims of the liars and the false interpretations of the ignorant ones – those who uphold the banner of innovation and let loose the trials and discords, who differ about the Book, oppose the Book and agree to oppose the Book. Those who speak about Allaah and His Book without knowledge, argue about what is ambiguous in the Book, and deceive the ignorant with such ambiguities. We seek refuge in Allaah from the trials of the misguided ones.’

WHO DO YOU TAKE YOUR RELIGION FROM?

From Mu’aadh Ibn Jabal, from the Prophet (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) who said, “This knowledge will be carried by the trustworthy ones of every generation. They will remove from it the distortions of the transgressors and the false attributions of the fabricators and the false explanations of the ignorant.”¹

Muhammad Ibn Seereen (d.110H) said, “This knowledge is the Religion. So be careful as to whom you take your Religion from.”²

He also said, “They had not used to talk about the chain of narration, but when the *fitnah* occurred,³ they said, ‘Name to us your men!’ So as for the people of the *Sunnah*, then their

¹ **Saheeh:** Related by Ibnul-Wazeer al-Yamaanee in *ar-Rawdhun-Naas* (1/21-23). It was authenticated by Shaykh Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee in *Takhreejul-Mishkaat* (1/28-38/248).

² Related by Muslim (no. 114) and by Aboo Nu’aym in *al-Hilyatul-Awliyaa* (2/278)

³ The ‘*fitnah*’ here, is none other than the *fitnah* of al-Mukhtaar Ibn ’Ubayd ath-Thaqafee - the liar who claimed to receive revelation, and he offered large sums of money to the people to fabricate *ahaadeeth*. His

narrations are to be accepted, and as for the people of innovation, then their narrations are to be rejected.”⁴

’Abdullaah Ibnul-Mubaarak (d.181H) - *rahimahullaah* – said, “According to me, the *isnaad* is from the Religion. If it were not for the *isnaad*, whoever wished could have said whatever he wished.”

He also said, “The example of the one who studies his Religion without an *isnaad* is like the one who attempts to ascend a roof without a ladder.”⁵

Sufyaan ath-Thawree (d.161H) - *rahimahullaah* – said, “The *isnaad* is the weapon of the Believer. So if he does not have a weapon with him, what will he fight with?”⁶

Imaam Maalik Ibn Anas (d.157H) - *rahimahullaah* – said, “This knowledge is the Religion, so look to see from whom you take your Religion. I met seventy people who said: ‘The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) said...’ at the pillars of the mosque.” And he pointed to the Mosque of the Prophet (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*). Then he said, “But, I did not take from a single one of them...because they were not from the people of this affair.”⁷

OUR POSITION TOWARDS THE PEOPLE OF INNOVATIONS AND DESIRES:

Imaam al-Baghawee (d.516H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “Indeed the Prophet (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) informed about the division in this *Ummah*, and the manifestation of desires and innovations in it. And he designated salvation for those who follow his *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of his Companions, may Allaah be pleased with them. So it is upon the Muslim, that if he sees a man having something from innovations and desires in belief, or something neglected from the *Sunnah*, that he makes *Hijrah* (migration) from him, and he frees himself from him, and abandons him in life and death. So he must not greet him if he meets him, and he must not answer him if he (i.e. the innovator) begins the greeting, until he abandons his innovation and returns to the truth...So verily the *hijrah* from the people of desires and innovation continues until they repent.”⁸

appearance was foretold by the Prophet (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) in his statement, “There shall come amongst Thaqeef a great liar, and a great murderer.” Related by Muslim (no. 6176). He died in the year 67H.

⁴ Related by Muslim in the introduction to his *Saheeh* (1/15)

⁵ *Sharaf Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (1/15) of al-Haafidh al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee

⁶ *Sharaf Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (1/15)

⁷ Related by al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee in *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (2/98)

⁸ *Sharhus-Sunnah* (1/224)

Imaam al-Baghawee also said, "Indeed the Companions and the *taabi'een*, and those who followed them, and the scholars of the *Sunnah* were gathered and in agreement about this, about attacking the people of innovation and making *hijrah* from them."⁹

CHAPTERS FROM THE SALAF ABOUT INNOVATORS:

Aboo Daawood placed a chapter in his *Sunan* (4/197), called, "Chapter: Turning away from the innovators and having hatred for them."

Al-Haafidh al-Mundhree (d.656H) - *rahimahullaah* - placed a chapter in *at-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb* (3/14) called, "Deterrent against loving the people of innovation, since a person will be with those whom he loves."

Imaam an-Nawawee (d.676H) - *rahimahullaah* - says in *al-Adhkaar* (p.323), "Chapter: Disassociating from the people of innovation and sin."

Imaam al-Bayhaqee (d.458H) - *rahimahullaah* - said in *al-I'tiqaad* (p.236), "Chapter: The prohibition from sitting with the people of innovation."

THE PROHIBITION OF BEING WITH THE INNOVATORS:

Imaam Aboo 'Uthmaan as-Saaboonee (d.449H) - *rahimahullaah* - said about *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*, "They follow the *Salafus-Saalih*, the *Imaams*, and the scholars of the Muslims, they adhere strictly to the Religion that they adhered to, and to the clear truth. And they hate the people of innovation, those who innovate into the Religion that which is not from it. They do not love them, and they do not keep company with them. They do not listen to their statements, nor sit with them. Rather, they protect their ears from hearing their futility - things, which if they pass through the ears, and settle in the heart - will cause harm, and cause doubt and wicked things to appear. And concerning this, Allaah the Mighty and Majestic revealed,

"And when you see people engaged in vain discourse about our Signs (*aayaat*), then turn away from them, unless they turn to a different theme." [Sooratul-An'aam 6:68]¹⁰

Imaam ash-Shawkaanee (d.1255H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "And this *aayah* contains a severe reprimand for those who allow people to sit with the innovators, those who twist the Words of Allaah, play around with His Book, and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). And refer them back to their own misleading desires and wicked innovations. Since, if he is unable to reprimand them and change them from what they are upon, then at the very least, he should avoid sitting with them - and that is easy for him, not difficult. And the innovators may make use of his presence with them - even though he may be free from their mistakes - through a doubt by which they will beguile

⁹ *Sharhus-Sunnah* (1/227)

¹⁰ *Risaalah fee I'tiqaad Ahlu-Sunnah Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (p. 100)

the common people, in which case his presence will cause an extra evil, in addition to just listening to their evil.”¹¹

Asmaa’ Bint ’Ubayd said: Two of the people of vain desires and innovations entered upon Ibn Seereen (d.110H), and said, “O Abaa Bakr, may we speak with you?” So he said, “No!” They said, “May we recite an *aayah* from the Book of Allaah?” He said, “No, indeed either you must get up and leave me, or I will get up and leave.” So they left, so some of the people said, “O Abaa Bakr, what harm would it have done to you, for them to recite an *aayah* from the Book of Allaah?” He said, “I feared that they would read an *aayah* to me and distort it, and that would remain in my heart.”¹²

Ibn ’Awn (d.150H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, “Whosoever sits with an innovator is worse than him.”¹³

Aboo Daawood as-Sijistaanee (d.275H) – *rahimahullaah* – said: I said to Aboo ’Abdullaah Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, “If I see a man from the people of the *Sunnah* sitting with a man from the people of innovation, should I speak with him?” He said, “No, you should first inform him that the one whom you saw him with is a person of innovation. Either he will cease speaking to the innovator, so continue speaking with him, or if not, then consider him to be like him. Ibn Mas’ood said that a person is like his friend.”¹⁴

Mufaddal Ibn Muhalhal said, “If a person of innovation sits with you to relate his innovation to you, be warned of him and isolate yourself from him. Because he will relate *ahaadeeth* of the *Sunnah* to you in the beginning of his sitting, then he will enter his innovation upon you. So perhaps it will enter into your heart, then when will it leave from your heart?”¹⁵

Imaam al-Awzaa’ee said, “Do not give the person of innovation a chance to argue, for your hearts will be affected by his *fitnah* (doubt) as a result.”¹⁶

Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee says, “Indeed some of the people who ascribe themselves to the *Sunnah* and the *Salaf*, try to grab the stick from the middle, so you see them sitting with the people of the *Sunnah* and the people of innovation, to call them both to reconciliation and goodness. And this is an innovated methodology that is in opposition to what the scholars of the *Salaf* were upon.”¹⁷

¹¹ *Fathul-Qadeer* (2/128)

¹² Related by ad-Daarimee in his *Sunan* (1/109)

¹³ *al-Ibaanatul-Kubraa* (no. 446) of Ibn Battah

¹⁴ Related by Ibn Abee Ya’laa in *at-Tabaqaatul-Hanaabilah* (1/60), and by Ibn Muflih in *al-Aadaabush-Shar’iyyah* (1/263)

¹⁵ *al-Ibaanah* (no. 394)

¹⁶ *al-Bida’ wan-Nahee ’anhaa* (p. 53)

¹⁷ *al-Bid’ah* (p. 137)

Fudayl Ibn 'Iyaad said, "Whoever sits with a person of innovation, then warn against him. And whoever sits with a person of innovation has not been given wisdom. And I would love that there be between me and a person of innovation a fortress of iron."¹⁸

And he said, "Do not trust the innovator concerning your Religion, and do not seek his advice in your affairs, and do not sit with him since whoever sits with an innovator, Allaah will cause him to become blind."¹⁹

He also said, "Allaah has angels who seek out the gatherings of *dhikr* (remembrance) - so look to whose gathering you sit in - let it not be with the person of innovation since Allaah will not look to them, and the sign of hypocrisy is that a man gets up and sits with an innovator."²⁰

'Alee ibn Abee Khaalid said: I said to Ahmad, "This old man -referring to an old man who was present with us and was a neighbour of mine - I have warned him against a person, but he would like to hear your saying about him, al-Haarith al-Qaseer (meaning Haarith al-Muhaasibee) and you saw me with him many years ago and you said to me, 'Do not sit with him and do not speak to him.' I have not spoken to him from then until now, but this old man sits with him. What do you say about him (i.e. the innovator)?" I saw that Ahmad became red, his veins and his eyes swelled. I have never seen him like that before. Then he shuddered and said, "That is one to whom Allaah has done such and such. No one knows that except one who is fully acquainted with him. Alas! Alas! Alas! He is one not known, except to one fully acquainted with him. He was the one whom al-Maghaazilee sat with and Ya'qoob and so and so. He led them to having the views of Jahm. They were destroyed through him." So, the old man said, "O Aboo 'Abdullaah! He narrates *hadeeth*, displays dignity and fearfulness. He is such and such." Aboo 'Abdullaah became angry and said, "Do not be fooled by his fearfulness, nor his gentleness. Do not be fooled by how he droops his head. He is an evil person. This will not be known except by one well-acquainted with him. Do not sit with him, for there is no honour for him. Will you sit with everyone who narrated the *ahaadeeth* of Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and is an innovator?!"²¹

THE PROHIBITION OF LOOKING INTO THE BOOKS OF INNOVATION:

Ibn Qudaamah said, "The *Salaf* used to prohibit sitting with the people of innovation, and looking into their books, and listening to their words."²²

¹⁸ *Hilyatul-Awliyaa* (8/103)

¹⁹ *Sharh Usoolul-I'tiqaad* (no. 264)

²⁰ *Sharh Usool* (no. 265)

²¹ Related by al-Laalikaa'ee (no. 263) and Ibn Battah (no. 439).

²² *al-Aadaabush-Shar'iyyah* (1/263)

Ibn Jaweez Mindaad said: Maalik Ibn Anas (d.179H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "It is not permissible to look into anything from the books of desires, and innovations, and astrology."²³

Imaam adh-Dhahabee wrote in his biography of ar-Raywandee - the heretic, 'And he used to accompany the *Raafidah*, and the people of heresy. So when he was reprimanded for this, he said, 'I only wish to see what they are saying!'"²⁴

A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE: THE HARM OF THE INNOVATORS IS GREATER THAN THE HARM OF THE JEWS AND THE CHRISTIANS:

Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "Many of the people of innovation are Hypocrites of the greatest kind."²⁵

Shaykhul-Islaam also said in refutation of a *Soofee* extremist, "It is statements like these that are from the greatest forms of falsehood. As we already alerted to some of what is with it, so that their meanings would be known to be absolutely false. The obligation is its refutation. For verily the refutation of this contagious ill amongst many Muslims has more importance than the refutation of the religion of the Jews and Christians, which the Muslims are not misled by."²⁶

And Ibn Taymiyyah also said, "The harm of the people of innovations, of disbelief, or misguidance upon the Muslims is greater than the harm of the Jews and the Christians. For verily those innovators corrupt the hearts at its most base apprehensions. Whereas the Jews and the Christians and those who wage war against the Muslim lands, their corruption is of the heart but it is within reason."²⁷

Shaykh Aboo Anas Hamad al-'Uthmaan comments upon these statements saying, "The evil of the Jews and the Christians is open and clear to the common-folk of the Muslims; as for the people of innovation, then their harm is not clear to every person... This is why the scholars see that to refute the people of innovation takes precedence over refuting the Jews and the Christians."²⁸

Indeed Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d.241H) - *rahimahullaah* - viewed it permissible to take assistance from the Jews and the Christians, but not from the *Jahmiyyah*: Al-Marwazee said to Imaam Ahmad, "Can we seek assistance from the Jews and Christians and they are

²³ Related by Ibn 'Abdul-Barr in *al-Jaami'ul-Bayaanil-'Ilm* (2/117)

²⁴ *Siyar A'laamun-Nubalaa* (14/59)

²⁵ *Tareequl-Wusool* (p. 251)

²⁶ *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (2/359)

²⁷ *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (28/232)

²⁸ *Zajjarul-Mutahaawun* (p. 96)

polytheists (*mushrikoon*) and not seek assistance from the *Jahmiyyah*.” He answered, “O my dear son, the Muslims will not be deceived by them (the *Jahmiyyah*).”²⁹

Imaam Ibnul-Jawzee (d.597H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “Abul-Wafaa ’Alee Ibn ’Aqeel al-Faqeeh said: Our *shaykh*, Abul-Fadl al-Hamdaanee said, ‘The Innovators of Islaam, and the fabricators of *Hadeeth* are more harmful than the Non-Muslims (*mulhadeen*), because the Non-Muslims desire to corrupt the Religion from the outside, and these, they desire to corrupt it from within. They are like the people of a town who strive to corrupt it (from within), but the Non-Muslims are those who have surrounded it from the outside. So the ones who are inside open up the fortress, so they are more evil to Islaam than those who do not wear the cloak of Islaam.’”³⁰

BACKBITING THE INNOVATORS:

From Ibraaheem (an-Nakha’ee) who said, “There is no backbiting regarding an innovator.”³¹

From al-Hasan al-Basree, who said, “There are three who have no inviolability with regard to backbiting: one of them is the person of innovation who calls to his innovation.” [32]

From Katheer Aboo Sahl who said, “It is said that there is no inviolability for the people of innovated sects.” [33]

BUT HE HAS REPENTED!

Sallaam Ibn Abee Mutee’ said: A man said to Ayyoob as-Sakhtiyaanee, ‘O Aboo Bakr, ’Amr Ibn ’Ubayd has turned back from his opinion!!’ He said, “He has not turned back.” He said, ‘Indeed, O Aboo Bakr, he has turned back.’ Ayyoob said, “He has not turned back - (three times) - he has not turned back. Have you not heard his (*sallallaahu ’alayhi wa sallam*) saying, “They shoot out from the Religion just as the arrow shoots through the prey, then they do not return to it until the arrow returns to the bow - string”.” [34]

TAKING THE GOOD AND LEAVING THE EVIL?

We warn the Muslims from falling into the misconception that we can ‘take the good and leave the evil’, and thus we can attend the gatherings of those who may have some deviations or innovations, and we can leave their evil and take their good. Dear Muslim brother/sister, if you do this, then, whilst attending such gatherings, “you will only hear doubts upon doubts. The truth will be made doubtful by the falsehood in them (i.e. the gatherings of the people of innovation). So verily they place the clothing of truth upon the

²⁹ *al-Adaabush-Shar’iyyah* (1/256), refer to *Zajarul-Mutahaawun* for the complete discourse

³⁰ *al-Mawdoo’aat* (1/51) of Ibnul-Jawzee

³¹ *Sharh Usool* (no. 276)

body (*jism*) of falsehood. And many of the people follow this outward good, so they look at its outward clothing, and thus believe in its correctness.” [35]

Some of the scholars of the *Salaf* used to say, “Whosoever is not with us, then he is against us.” [36]

It was said to Imaam al-Awzaa’ee (d.157H) – *rahimahullaah* – that a man says: ‘I sit with the people of the *Sunnah* and I sit with the people of innovation.’ So al-Awzaa’ee said, “This man wants to equalize between the truth and the falsehood.” Ibn Battah (d.387H) commented on this statement of al-Awzaa’ee saying, “Al-Awzaa’ee has spoken truthfully. I say that this man does not know the truth from the falsehood, and he does not know *kufir* (disbelief) from *eemaan* (faith).” [37]

Ibnul-Qayyim narrates in his book *at-Turuqul-Hukmiyyah* (p. 282) about the burning of the books of deviance and their destruction, that al-Marwadhee said to Ahmad, “I borrowed a book, and in are a few evil things; do you think I should tear it up or burn it?” He said, “Yes; burn it.”

Ibnul-Qayyim continued saying, “The Prophet had seen in ‘Umar’s hand, a book transcribed from the *Tawraat*, and he was surprised how much it resembled the *Qur’aan*, so the Messenger’s chin dropped, so then ‘Umar went with it to the fire and threw it therein. The Prophet once ordered a man who wrote something from him other than the *Qur’aan* to erase it. Then he allowed the writing of his *Sunnah*, and did not allow other than that. So all of these books which contain deviance from the *Sunnah* are not permitted, rather it is permitted to erase them or tear them apart. Nor is there anything more harmful to the *Ummah* than these books. Not only that but even the Companions had burnt up all the versions of the *Mushaf* other than the *Mushaf* of ‘Uthmaan, for what they feared for the *Ummah* of the division that might arise. So how would it be if they saw the books, which have spread difference and division among the *Ummah*...”

Then he said, “The reason being because the books full of lies and innovations should be destroyed and done away with. The destruction of these books has greater precedence than the destruction of the games of amusement or musical instruments, and wine bottles. For the harm of these books is greater than the harm of those things. For there is no guarantee in them, just as there is no guarantee in the breaking of wine bottles, or the cutting open of the skins.”

He continued in explanation of the last *ayah* of the *Qur’aan*,

“Of Jinn and men.” [Sooratun-Naas 114:6]

He mentions the ways a person can guard himself from *Shaytaan*, he says, “The tenth way to guard from *Shaytaan* is abstaining from the useless looking, speech, food, and mixing with people, and they are four: [i] One who is like a meal, you cannot do without him in

the day and night. [ii] One who is like a remedy, you need him when you are sick. So as long as you remain healthy you are no need of him. [iii] One who is like the disease, and they are several. [iv] And last but not least, the one who is extremely deadly, and he is like ingesting poison.”

Then he says concerning this last type, “...and how many they are; may Allaah not allow more of them. They are the people of innovation and misguidance. The ones repelled from the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah, the propagators to other than it. Those who steer away from the way Allaah, and want to make it crooked. So they turn innovation into *Sunnah*, and *Sunnah* into innovation, and good (*ma'roof*) into evil (*munkar*), and evil into good.”

A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE: ENJOINING THE GOOD TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER ENJOINING THE GOOD:

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) – *rahimahullaah* – said, “When some people said to Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d.241H) that they felt uneasy about criticizing people, he replied, “If I were to remain silent, how would the ignorant masses know the truth from falsehood?”

Those who introduce heretical writings which oppose the *Qur'aan* and *Sunnah* and those who innovate in matters of worship, then it is obligatory that they be exposed and that the Muslims be warned against them – by unanimous agreement of the Muslim scholars. In fact, when Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal was asked about a man who fasted, prayed and secluded himself in the mosque for worship; if he was dearer to him than a person who spoke against the people of innovation (*Ahlul-Bid'ah*), he replied: “When he fasts and prays and secludes himself, then he does so for the benefit of his own self. However, when he speaks out against the innovators, he does so for the benefit of the Muslims in general, and this is more virtuous.” So it is clear that openly opposing the innovators is of general benefit to the Muslims and is considered one of the types of *jihaad* (struggle) in the path of Allaah. Since purifying the Religion of Allaah and defending it from their attacks is a collective obligation – as is agreed upon by the scholars. For if Allaah did not raise up some people to oppose the innovators, then the Religion would suffer harm, corruption and deviation.

Indeed this type of corruption is even greater than the corruption resulting from the corruption of the disbelievers conquering the Muslims. Since when the unbelievers conquer the Muslims, they do not corrupt their hearts, nor their Religion, except after some time. Whereas the innovators corrupt the hearts from the very beginning.” [38]

THOSE WHO REFUTE THE FALSEHOOD:

“Aboo 'Alee ad-Daqqaq said, ‘The one who is silent about the truth is a silent devil (*shaytaan*), and the one who talks with falsehood is a speaking devil.’ And the Prophet

(*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) warned of the division of this *Ummah* into seventy-three sects, and the salvation from this division is with one sect that is upon the *minhaaj* (methodology) of Prophethood.” [39]

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “Ordering with the *Sunnah* and prohibiting from the innovation is ordering the good and prohibiting from the evil. And it is the most virtuous of righteous actions.” [40]

Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d.751H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “And the scholars of the *Salaf* were severe in refuting the innovation and correcting its people in all sections of the earth. And they warned against their *fitnah* (trial, tribulation) with a harsh warning. And they would reach a state that they had not reached in opposing the evils and the oppression and the enemies.” [41]

Dr. Bakr Aboo Zayd says, “So if you see a man who has refuted a strange *fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) position, or an innovated statement, then thank him for his defending (the truth) in accordance with what was feasible for him. And do not forsake him with vile statements like, ‘Why do you not refute the Secularists!’ So the people have different strengths and talents, and refuting the falsehood is an important obligation.” [42]

THE OBLIGATION OF REFUTATION:

Muhammad Ibn Bundaar al-Jarjaanee said to Imaam Ahmad: ‘Verily it is hard for me to say: So and so is like this, and so and so is like that.’ So Ahmad said to him: “If I remained quiet and you remained quiet then when will the ignorant man come to know the *Saheeh* (authentic) from the *saqeem* (weak)?” [43]

Imaam al-Marwadhee (d.238H) - *rahimahullaah* - said: I said to Abee 'Abdullaah, meaning our *Imaam* (Ahmad Ibn Hanbal), “What if you see a man who is pre-occupied with fasting and Prayer, and he is silent when it comes to speaking about the people of innovation?” So his face changed, and he said: “If he fasts, and prays, and disassociates himself from the people, then isn't this only for the benefit of himself?” I said, “Yes.” He said, “So if he does this, then it is for the benefit of others, speaking is more excellent.” [44]

Qataadah said, “If a man innovates an innovation, it is befitting that you mention it until you become wary of it.” [45]

GUILTY BY ASSOCIATION:

From Aboo Hurayrah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) who said that 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 closely at whom he takes as a friend.” [46]

Imaam al-Awzaa'ee (d.157H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "Whosoever is able to hide his innovation from us, his friends cannot remain hidden from us." [47]

Mu'aadth Ibn Mu'aadth (d.196H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "If a man is able to conceal his opinion, then he will not be able to conceal it in his sons, nor in his friends, nor in those whom he sits with." [48]

Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee commented on these two statements saying, "So whosoever sits with the *hizbiyyeen* (people of party-spirit), and his *shaykhs* are the 'thinkers' and the 'activists' and his friends are those who discredit the scholars, then how can any intelligent person see him as being *Sunnee, Salafee!*" [49]

THE IMPORTANCE OF CLINGING TO THE PEOPLE OF THE SUNNAH AND THEIR SCHOLARS:

From Ayyoob as-Sakhtiyaanee who said, "Indeed from the good fortune of a youth, or a non-Arab is that Allaah should guide them to a scholar from the companions of the *Sunnah*." [50]

From Ibn Shawdhab who said, "Indeed from the blessings of Allaah upon a youth who seeks to worship Allaah is that he is granted as a brother, a companion of the *Sunnah* who encourages him upon it." [51]

Imaam al-Barbahaaree (d.329H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "So examine - may Allaah have mercy upon you - the speech of everyone you here from, particularly in your time. Do not act in haste, nor enter into anything from it, until you ask and see, did any of the Companions of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) speak about it, or any of the scholars? So if you find a narration from them about it, then cling to it. Do not go beyond it for anything, and do not give precedence to anything over it; and thus fall into the Fire." [52]

Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal said, "You should beware of speaking about an issue in which you are not preceded by a scholar." [53]

And clinging to the scholars of Islaam is what we have taken as our Religion before Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, and it is with this that we are ready to meet our Lord.