

The difference between the Aqeedah and the Manhaj – Sheikh Saalih Ibn Fawzaan & Imaam al-Albaani

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Sheikh Saalih Ibn Fawzaan & Imaam al-Albaani & Shaykh Taraheeb ad-Dosri

Question [35] :

Is there a difference between the Aqeedah and the Manhaj?

Answer [35]

The Manhaaj is more general [and or broader] than the Aqeedah;

- The Manhaaj is in the Aqeedah [beliefs] and in the Sulook [mannerism] and in the Akhlaaq [morals] and in the Mu'a3malaat [mutual relations and business transactions] in the life of every Muslim and in every field in which the Muslim traverses is called the Manhaj.
- As for Aqeedah, then what is intended by it, is the foundation of Imaan [what the Muslim believes] and the meaning of the Shahadatain [Testification] and that which it comprises of and this is what is meant by Aqeedah.

Ajweebatul Mufeedah Anil As'ilati Al-Manaahij Al-Jadeedah [pg.75]
Sheikh Saalih Ibn Fawzaan Ibn Abdillaah Al-Fawzaan {Hafidhahullaah}

Distinguishing Between Aqeedah and Manhaj

Imaam al-Albaani was asked,

"Some of the youth differentiate between the aqidah of the Salaf and the manhaj of the Salaf so you see some of them upon the aqidah of the Salaf yet they allow themselves to work with some of the methodologies that exist today, even though there maybe what opposes the manhaj of the Salaf within them in terms of practice. So is there a binding link between the aqidah and manhaj of the Salaf in the practical implementation of the Salafi manhaj?"

The Shaikh replied in powerful and revealing words:

That which I believe and worship Allaah with is that there are both generalities (in similarity) and specific (aspects) between the Salafi manhaj and aqidah. Aqidah is more specific than manhaj as all of you know. Aqidah has a link with what is called in the view of many of the Jurists the "knowledge of tawhid", and this is the chief and fundamental aspect of Islaam. However, manhaj is more vast than aqidah or tawhid.

As for those who claim that the differentiation that has come in this question (between aqidah and manhaj), then they desire by this to make it permissible for themselves to adopt ways and means in their dawah to Islaam which the Salaf us-Salih were not upon. To say this in a different way, they consider that they have the liberty to adopt whatever ways and means they think will help them to convey (and actualise) Islaam, and you are aware of the examples of this type or these types of means.

For example, open demonstrations and rallies in order to force the rulers to turn their attention to what the society complains about and similar matters. So we say that what has come in the Book and the Sunnah and

what the Salaf us-Salih were upon with respect to objectives, goals and ways and means are sufficient for the Ummah. However, the reason which leads some of the people to permit themselves to adopt these ways and means, in fact it is correct for me to say that they permit themselves to blindly-follow the disbelievers in the ways that they have adopted in order to actualise what they call either democracy or social justice and other such words which have no reality to them. So they I mean these Muslims permit themselves to blindly follow the disbelievers in these ways and means.

We say, our Lord, the Mighty and Majestic has made removed us from having any need, by our Shariah, of this separation which has been explained (i.e. between aqidah and manhaj) and that we should be needy of the disbelievers and that we should take from their ways and means, which might be good for them, (but) only because they have no Shariah by which they guide themselves. It is for this reason that we say that manhaj is more vast than aqidah and tawhid, hence it is necessary to adhere to what the Salaf us-Salih were upon with respect to both these affairs; the one that is vast (manhaj) first and foremost and the one that is more narrow (tawhid), meaning aqidah. (Al-Asalah Magazine, Vol 22).

Shaykh Taraheeb ad-Dosri hafidhahullah was asked,

"How should we respond to one who says, "As long as our Aqeedah is the same(muslims), we should unite and work together without being on the same Manhaj."

The Shaykh said that this is an incorrect matter.

The Aqeedah and the Manhaj are one thing. He whose Manhaj is correct then his Aqeedah is correct. He said for example; There is the position of the people of Sunnah regarding how they affirm the names and qualities of Allaah. There is also the issue that they do not declare someone to be a disbeliever by a sin they commit. So these are issues that are both Aqeedah and Manhaj. They both have a onnection. So it doesnt go for one to say that his Aqeedah is sound and that it is according to the Qur'an and Sunnah. For instance, in his methodology he says that he is a Sufee and worshipping Allah with that which Allaah does not legislate. If he is Sunni then he can not be Sufee. If he is Sufee he can not be Sunni.