

هَدْي الصَّعَابَةِ فِي مَعَامِلَةِ أَهْلِ الْبِدْعَةِ

THE GUIDANCE OF THE COMPANIONS
WITH REGARDS TO
**THE PEOPLE OF
INNOVATION**

BENEFITS FROM THE HADITH OF
ABDULLAH BIN MAS'UD AND
THE PEOPLE IN DHIKR CIRCLES

فوائد من حديث عبد الله بن مسعود وأصحابه العلق

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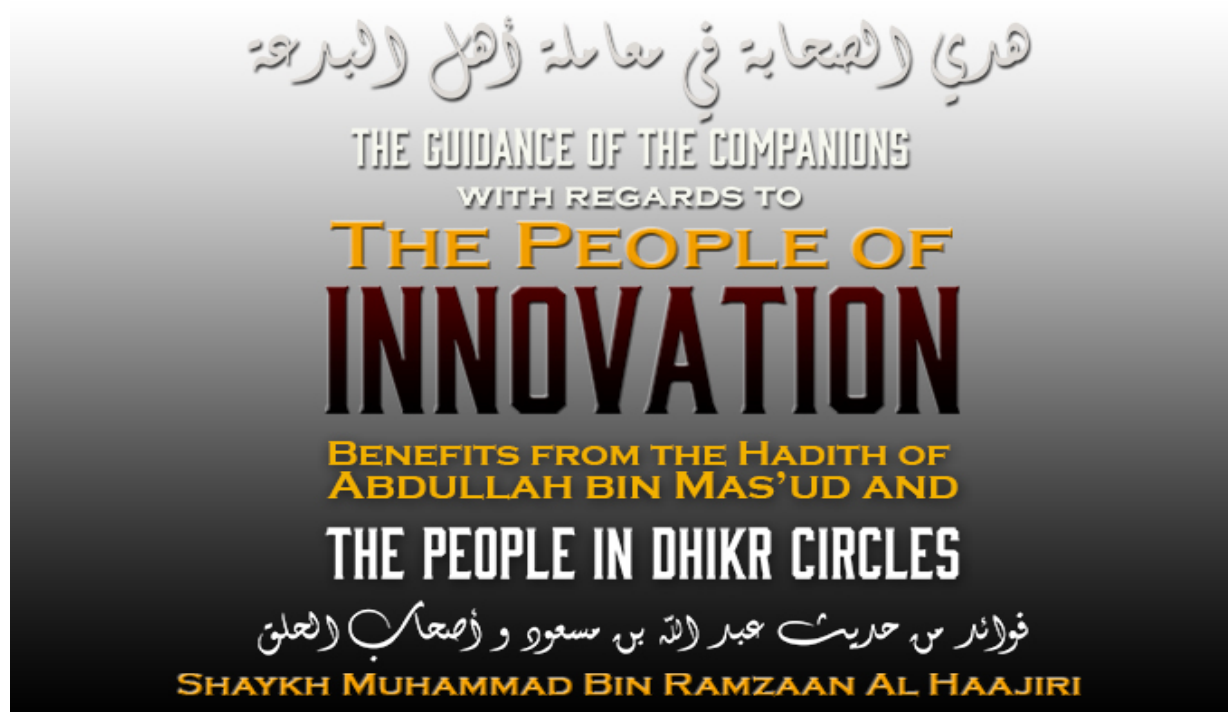
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هدي الصحابة في معاملة أهل البدعة

فوائد من حديث عبد الله بن مسعود وأصحاب الحلق

للشيخ محمد بن رمضان الهاجري حفظه الله

The Guidance of the Companions regarding the People of Innovation
Benefits from the *Hadith* of ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud (رضي الله عنه) and The Groups in *Dhikr* Circles
explained by Shaykh Muhammad Bin Ramzaan Al Haajiri (حفظه الله)
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Text of The Hadith of ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud

Ad-Daarimi¹ said that Al-Haakim Ibn Al-Mubaarak (رحمه الله) informed us that ‘Amr Ibn Yahya told them that he heard his father narrate from his father, who said, “We were sitting at the door of ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud (رضي الله عنه) before the *Fajr* Prayer so that when he came out we could walk with him to the *masjid*. Then Abu Musaa Al-Ash’ari (رضي الله عنه) approached us and said, “*Has Abu ‘Abdur Rahmaan come out yet?*” We replied, “No”. He then sat with us and when ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud came out, Abu Musaa said, “O Abu ‘Abdur Rahmaan! Verily I saw an affair in the *masjid* that I disapproved of and I, Alhamdulillah, did not see except good.” ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud asked, “What was it?” He said, “If you live, you will see it.” Then he continued, “I saw people sitting in circles in the *masjid* waiting for the prayer. In every circle, there was a man, and the people had pebbles in their hands. So the man who was leading them would say, ‘Say ‘Allahu Akbar’ (*takbeer*: Allah is the Most Great) 100 times’, so the people would say ‘Allahu Akbar’ 100times. Then the man would say, ‘Say ‘Laa ilaaha illa Allah’ (*tahleel*: there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allah) 100 times,’ then the people would say ‘Laa ilaaha illa

¹ Reported in Ad-Daarimi’s *As-Sunan* (Volume 1, Page 68-69, Number 204). Imaam Muhammad Naasiruddeen Al-Albaani (رحمه الله) said in his *Silsilat as-Saheehah* (Volume 5, page 11): This is an authentic chain of narration. He is ‘Amr Ibn Yahya Ibn ‘Amr Ibn Salamah Ibn Al-Haarith Al-Hamdaani. This is what Ibn Abee Haatim noted in his book, “*Al Jarh wa Ta’deel*” (3/1/269), and he mentioned a group of the reliable narrators who reported from him, from them was Ibn ‘Uyaynah and it is reported from Ibn Ma’een that he said about him: “*Saalih* (Upright)”.



Allah’ 100 times. The man would say, ‘Say ‘Subhaan Allah’ (tasbeeh: Far removed is Allah from any imperfection) 100 times’, so the people would say ‘Subhaan Allah’ 100 times. Then Ibn Mas’ud asked, “What did you say to them?” Abu Musaa replied, “I did not say anything to them. I am waiting for your affair or your command”. Ibn Mas’ud said, “Why didn’t you command them to count their sins and that none of their good deeds would be lost if they did that instead?” He then proceeded until he came to one of the circles and said, “What is this (action) which you are doing?” They replied to him, “O Aba ‘Abdur Rahmaan! These are stones which we are using to count the takbeer, tahleel and tasbeeh of Allah.” He then said, “Count your sins, for I guarantee you that nothing will be lost of your good deeds (if you do this). Woe unto you O Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ)! How quick you are to your destruction! Here the Companions of your Prophet (ﷺ) are still in great abundance (i.e. still alive). Here are his clothes, which have not yet withered away (are still intact); here are his utensils that are not yet broken. By Him in Whose Hands is my soul, either you are upon a religion that is more rightly guided than the religion of Muhammad (ﷺ) or you are opening a door of misguidance.” They replied, “By Allah, O Aba ‘Abdur Rahman, we only intended good”. He replied, ‘How many people intend good but do not attain it.’ Verily the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) told us, “There will be a people who recite the Qur’aan but it will not pass their throats.” By Allah, most of them will probably be from you.” Amr Ibn Salamah (the narrator of the hadith) stated, ‘We saw most of those people fighting us with their swords on the Day of Nahrawan on the side of the Khawaarij’.”²

²This is proof for Imaam Al-Barbahaari’s statement, “Beware of small innovations, verily small innovations reappear until they become big. Likewise is the case with every innovation introduced into this Ummah. Its beginning was small and resembled the truth, and then it deceived whoever entered it, to the extent that the individual could not exit it. It becomes enormous and practiced like the religion, until the individual opposes the straight path and leaves Islam.” [Sharh us-Sunnah (point no.7)] In this narration, their bid’ah began as dhikr

and ended with the majority of them following alongside the *khawaarij* whilst fighting the *Sahabah* as narrated by ‘Amr Ibn Salamah.

Shaykh Saalih Al-Fawzaan (حفظه الله) in his explanation of *Sharhus-Sunnah*, states regarding this point (pg.60), “Al-Barbahaari is saying do not be lenient with anything from *bid’ah* because it will increase and other things will be added to it which illustrates the danger of *bid’ah*; because if the door of *bid’ah* is opened, *bid’ah* will increase. Do not be lenient regarding *bid’ah* to the extent that it is said, ‘this is a small *bid’ah* which does not harm.’ *Bid’ah* is like a simmering coal, even though it may be small, it will increase in size/strength until it eventually burns the house or the shop or the entire locality. Most fires are from small sparks.

Therefore, *bid’ah* is not to be taken lightly, rather the door to *bid’ah* is to be closed permanently. Indeed, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “*And beware of innovated matters (in the religion).*” This phrase used by the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is a warning from *bid’ah* in the absolute (unrestricted) sense, whether it is a small *bi’dah* or large *bid’ah*. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not make exceptions for any type of *bid’ah* whatsoever. The prohibition in this *hadith* is general and absolute regarding every type of *bid’ah*. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) also said, “*The most evil of matters are the newly invented matters (in the religion).*”

One definition of *bid’ah* explained several times during *Shaykh Muhammad Ramzaan’s* (حفظه الله) lessons, is, “*An invented methodology in the religion which vies with the Shari’ah and has no proof for it with regards to its foundation or its specific manifestation or characteristics.*”

Another definition of *Bid’ah* is that provided by *Imaam Ash-Shaatibi* [*Al-‘Itisaam* (pg. 51, Vol.1)] is, “*An invented methodology in the religion which vies with the Shari’ah. The one who traverses it intends exaggeration and excessiveness in worship by doing so.*”

He further explains the two types of *bid’ah*: *Bid’ah Al-Haqeeqiyah* (true *bid’ah*) which he defines as a *bid’ah* that has no legislative proof or evidence for it whatsoever from the *Qur’aan*, *Sunnah* or *Ijma’a* (consensus) nor has it been evidenced for by using legitimate proofs as deemed by the scholars. Not in regards to its general sense or its specific manifestation. Examples would be the *mawlid*, castration, etc.

The second type is *Bid’ah Al-Idhaafiyyah* which consists of two parts: One aspect has religious evidence supporting it; so from this angle (strictly considering its basis or foundation) it is not a *bid’ah*, however it is coupled with another aspect that has no proof or evidence and in this regard it is like *Bid’ah Al-Haqeeqiyah*. With respect to its underlying basis, it has proof, but in regards to how it is manifested or the conditions surrounding it or its specific qualities, there is no proof for its establishment and hence it is therefore considered a *bid’ah*. Examples would be: calling the *adhaan* for the two ‘Eids, saying peace and salutations upon the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) after the *adhaan* with the same voice (as the *adhaan*) and expressing it as if it is a part of the *adhaan*, making *istighfaar* or *dhikr* aloud in unison after the congregational prayer, making a vow to fast forever, *dhikr* circles, etc. The basis for these abovementioned actions (*adhaan*, salutations on the prophet, *dhikr*, etc.) has its



foundations from the religion in the general sense, however its specific manifestation or a characteristic associated with it makes it a *bid’ah*.

It is a fundamental principle of *Ahl Sunnah* to leave innovating and innovations in the religion

Allah says in the *Qur’aan*, {**Or have they partners with Allah, who have legislated for them a religion which Allah has not allowed**} [Soorah Ash-Shooraa 42:21].

It has been authentically narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Whoever innovates in this affair of ours (Islam) that which is not from it, then it is rejected.” (Al-Bukhaari and Muslim) and in the narration of Muslim, “Whoever does an action which does not have our command, then it is rejected.” Also, in the last part of the *hadeeth* of ‘Ibbaadh Ibn Saariyah, “And beware of innovated matters, for verily every innovation is a *bid’ah* and every *bid’ah* is misguidance.” [Related by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (17,272), (17,274), Abu Dawood, (4,607), At-Tirmidhi (2,676) who declared it *hasan saheeh*]

In addition, it has authentically been narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Verily, Allah has covered repentance from every person of *bid’ah* until he leaves his *bid’ah*.” Munthiri (رحمه الله) stated, “It has been narrated by At-Tabaraani and its chain of narration is good like what is mentioned in *At-Targheeb wa At-Tarheeb*” (pg.65, v.1) and *Shaykh* Al-Albaani (رحمه الله) declared it *saheeh* in *Saheeh At-Targheeb* (pg.52).

In his book entitled *As-Sunnah*, Muhammad Ibn Nasr Al-Marwazi (رحمه الله) (pg.82), states on the authority of ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنهما), “Every *bid’ah* is misguidance, even if the people see it as being good.”

Ash-Shaatibi (رحمه الله) mentions in his book *Al-‘Itisaam* that Ibn Al-Majishoon (رحمه الله) stated, “I heard Malik (a reference to Imaam Malik) say, ‘Whoever has innovated in the religion and sees it as being good, then he has made the claim that Muhammad (ﷺ) has deceived the message (of which was revealed to him as a prophet) because Allah has stated, {**And today I have perfected for you your religion**}, so whatever was not part of the Deen (religion) that day, is not part of the Deen today’.”



The Explanation of The Hadith – The Methodology of The Salaf in Dealing With The People of Innovation

Some Manners in Dealing With Those in Authority, Leaders, Scholars or Elderly People

All praise is due to Allah, peace and blessings upon the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), his Family and Companions.

To begin, this narration explains the principles of the *Salaf* regarding how to deal with those who are in opposition to the Prophet’s (ﷺ) guidance. This narration is considered to be an understanding of the practical application in dealing with the people of innovation, or (one could say) the methodology of the *Salaf* and Companions in dealing with the people of innovation.

Ad-Daarimi (رحمه الله) is the well-known author of the famous book of *Hadith*, ‘*As-Sunnan*’ and this narration is authentic.

He said, “We were sitting at the door of ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud.”

The narrator is the grandfather of ‘Amr Ibn Yahya. ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud was the *Mufti* of al-Koofa and a teacher, and Abu Musaa was the leader or *Ameer* of al-Koofa.

Salaat al-Ghadaa (mentioned in the Arabic text) is the Morning Prayer.

“When he (‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud) comes out we could walk with him to the masjid.”

This is evidence for the permissibility of waiting for the leader or the ruler and walking to the *masjid* as a group. This is also proof for waiting for the scholar, ruler, an elderly person, the father, or anyone worthy of or in a position of authority.

Additionally, sitting at his doorstep is not to be considered as them belittling themselves; rather it is considered from good manners and a gesture of respect.

“When he (‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud) comes out, we would be able to walk with him to the masjid. Then Abu Musaa Al-Ash’ari approached us and asked, ‘Has Abu ‘Abdir Rahmaan come out yet?’”

Shaykh Muhammad (حفظه الله): He (Abu Musaa Al-Ash’ari) asked about him (Ibn Mas’ud) using his *kunyah* (to refer to someone as *Abu-so* and so or *Umm- so* and so). This is also considered to be from good manners and appropriate interactions with those in authority and is from the etiquettes of the *Sahabah*, which illustrates how they dealt with each other.

They replied, “No”, which is another proof of their good manners because they all responded (to the questioner) with ‘no’.

So what did Abu Musaa do? He (the narrator) said “He (Abu Musaa) sat down with us” until he (Ibn Mas’ud) came out of the house.

When he (Abu Musaa) sat with them, he did not inform them about what he witnessed in the *masjid* because these types of affairs should initially be directed to those in authority (either the ‘*ulamaa*’ or rulers).

Consequently, when Ibn Mas’ud came out, they all stood for him. This kind of standing is not out of exaltation to someone (rather it was from good manners).

Returning The Major Affairs to The Scholars

He (Abu Musaa) said, “O Abu ‘Abdur Rahmaan! Indeed I saw an affair in the masjid that I disapproved of and I, Alhamdulillah, did not see it except as good.”

There was a dilemma and Abu Musaa did not know what to do. For this reason, he came to ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud to inform him because he was a scholar³ and Ibn Mas’ud was more knowledgeable than Abu Musaa. ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud was from the scholars of the *Sahabah* and Abu Musaa is also considered to be from the scholars of the *Sahabah*, but ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud was

³The proof for this is Allah’s statement in the *Qur’aan* in Soorah Al-Anbiyaa’ [21: 7] {**So ask the people of the knowledge, if you do not know**}.

Shaykh Abdur Rahmaan As-Se’dee (رحمه الله) mentioned in his *Tafseer* of Allah’s statement, {**When there comes to them some matter touching public safety or fear , they make it known amongst the people, if only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those in charged with authority among them, those suitable to investigate (the issue) would have understood it from them (directly)**} [An-Nisaa 4: 83]

“This is an admonishment from Allah the Most High towards His servants as this action was unbecoming. It is imperative that if they are faced with an affair of importance that is of benefit to the general populous, related to security, the happiness of the *Muslims*, fear or a calamity that may befall them, then they are to verify the issue and not act in haste by spreading its news. Rather, they are to refer it to the Messenger (صلى الله عليه و سلم) and those in charge of their affairs (scholars and rulers), the people of sound opinion, the people of knowledge and advice, the people of sound thinking and composure; those who know the affairs and know what is beneficial and what is not.”

more knowledgeable. This is proof that a person should ask those who are more knowledgeable than he is.

The Virtue of The Gathering of The People of Sunnah In The Masaajid Versus The Gathering of The People of Innovation

Abu Musaa stated that he saw an affair, which he reproached within himself, and did not agree with i.e. the way or manner⁴ that they were making *dhikr*. He further said that he did not see it as being anything other than good. (His saying ‘good’ is because) the foundational (الأصل) principle is that coming together in the *masjid* has legitimate *Islaamic* proof for it. It is found in the *hadith* of the Prophet (ﷺ) from Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), ⁵“No group of people gather together in the *masjid* except that ... (until the end of the *hadith*)”. In terms of its foundation or basic ruling, this is a good affair. However, it is deemed an evil affair that needs to be censured due to the specific expression or manner in which they were performing this action (because it was not in conformity with the

⁴*Shaykh* Ibn Al-‘Uthaymeen (رحمه الله) states in the explanation of *Mandhoomatu Usool Al Fiqh* that an action of worship must be in accordance with the *Sunnah* in regards to six things in order to deem it as being from the *Sunnah*: 1) Its reason, 2) *Jins* (category/type), 3) *Al-Qadar* (how much/many), 4) How the action is preformed and in what manner, 5) The location of the action and 6) The time.

⁵This *hadith* is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) who said that the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said, “No group of people gathers together in one of the houses of Allah (*Masjid*) reading the *Qur’aan* and studying it amongst each other, except that tranquility descends upon them, mercy encompasses them, the angels encircle them and Allah mentions them in His company.” [Narrated by Muslim (*hadith* no. 2,699)]

guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ); it is for this reason that Abu Musaa did not sit with them. Likewise, if the people of *bid’ah* are sitting together and engaging in *bid’ah*, we are not to sit with them. This also pertains to sitting with them even if it (the *bid’ah*) is done in the *masjid*.

We do not sit with them because these types of gatherings are from those in which the Angels do not gather with the people therein (because they are engaging in *bid’ah*) as there is no good in them⁶. And (a sitting of *bid’ah*) it is not encompassed in the *hadith* that we previously mentioned

⁶This is a well-established principle amongst the *Salaf*, which is derived from the *Qur’aan*, *Sunnah* and the consensus of the scholars of *Ahlu Sunnah*. Allah says, {**And it has already been revealed to you in the Book that when you hear the verses of Allah being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them.**} [An-Nisaa 4: 140]

Imaam Ash-Shawkaani (رحمه الله) stated in regards to this *ayah* and the *ayah* in Al-Anfaal 8:68, “The general meaning of this *ayah* is proof for leaving every place where the people are engaged in that which diminishes or mocks religious evidences. In this verse, there is a strong admonishment for the one who allows sitting with the people of *bid’ah* who distort the speech of Allah and play with the Book and the *Sunnah*. Indeed, if he does not rebuke what they are engaging in or changes it, then the least he could do is leave the gathering.” He also said, “Whoever knows this pure *Sunnah* in the manner which it deserves to be known, then he would know that sitting with the people of *bid’ah* is misguidance and the negative consequences of these sittings are more than tenfold when compared to the negative consequences resulting from sitting with individuals who engage in disobedience to Allah by committing some type of prohibited action.” [Tafseer Fath Al-Qadir (p. 160)]

Forbidding of *bid’ah* or censuring it is considered a form of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil. It has been narrated in the *hadith* of Abu Sa’eed Al Khudri (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Whoever sees an evil should remove it with his hands, or with his tongue and if he cannot, he should make *inkaar* (censure) with his heart and that is the weakest of faith.” (Muslim) Shaykh Muhammad Taqi-ud-Deen Al-Hilaali Al-Maghribi (رحمه الله) mentions in his explanation of the above *hadith* in An Nawawi’s 40 *hadith* collection, “*Al-Munkar* is that which Allah has prohibited from being done or said and *bid’ah* is included in this because it is more severe than sins and more of a danger as has been explained by Imaam Ash-Shaatibi (رحمه الله) in the book, ‘*Al-Itisaam*’ (pg. 84)

A glimpse at some of the narrations from the *Salaf* in regards to dealing with the people of *bid’ah*.

On the authority of Sulaymaan Ibn Yasaar, “A man who was called Subaaygh came to Madeenah and began to ask about the ‘unclear’ (*mutashaabiha*) verses of the *Qur’aan*, so ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) prepared several palm branches and then asked him, “Who are you?” Subaaygh replied, “I am the servant of Allah, Subaaygh.” ‘Umar took the branches and beat him and said, “I am the servant of Allah, ‘Umar,” and beat him until he bled from his head. Subaaygh said, “Oh, Ameer-ul-Mu’mineen, enough! Whatever was in my head is now gone!” [*Sunan Ad-Daarimi* (pg.66, v.1)]

Al-Fudhayl Ibn ‘Eyaadh (رحمه الله) said, “Whoever sits with the person of *bid’ah* has not been given *hikmah* (wisdom).” He also said, “Do not sit with the person of *bid’ah*, because I fear that a curse (from Allah) will be sent down upon you.” [*Al-Ibaanah* (pg. 460, v.2)]

Imaam Ahmad (رحمه الله) said, “As with regards to *ahlul bid’ah*; it is not befitting for anyone to sit with them nor mix with them nor find comfort with them.”

Imaam Ash Shaafi’e (رحمه الله) stated with regards to the people of *Al Kalam* (speech and rhetoric), “My ruling regarding the people of *kalam* is that they be beat with palm branches and walked with and displayed amongst the people and tribes as this is the recompense for those who leave the Book and the *Sunnah* for *kalam*.” [*Jaam’i Bayyan Al ‘Ilm wa Fadhlilihi*, no. 1086]

Ibraheem An-Nakha’ee (رحمه الله) stated, “Do not sit with the people of desires because verily sitting with them takes away the light of faith from the hearts.” [*Al-Ibaanah* (pg. 439, v. 2)]

Imaam Al-Ajurri (رحمه الله) stated in his colossal book ‘*Ash-Shari’ah*’, “It is necessary that whoever adheres to what we have explained in our book (as *Shari’ah*), to leave all of the people of desires (another name for the people of *bid’ah*) from the *Khawaarij*, the *Qadariyyah*, the *Murji’ah*, the *Jahmiyyah*, all those who attribute themselves to the *Mu’tazilah*, all of the *Rawaafidh*, all of the *Nawaasib*, and whomsoever the Imaams of the Muslims have declared to be a person of misguided *bid’ah* by way of a narration (of a particular Imaam declaring a person to be of *bid’ah*) which is authentic. Therefore, it is not befitting that he (the person of *bid’ah*) is spoken to, given the *salaam*, sat with, prayed behind, be married to or be married into his family, shared with, dealt with, debated with, rather he is to be humiliated with that which debases him.” [*Ash-Shari’ah* (pg. 574, v.3)]

Imaam Al-Barbahaari (رحمه الله) stated, “The example of the people of *bid’ah* is like a scorpion. They stick their heads and bodies in the ground, but their (venomous) tails are exposed. If they are able, they will sting. Likewise are the people of *bid’ah*; they are concealed amongst the people and if they are able, they will deliver (from their *bid’ah*) what they can.” [*Tabaqaat al-Hanabilah* (2/44)]

Narrations from the *Salaf* concerning gathering with the people of *bid’ah*

Not sitting in the company of the people of *bid’ah* is from the principles of *Ahlus Sunnah* as Imaam Ahmad stated in *Usool-us-Sunnah*, (From the foundations of *Sunnah* is) “to leave arguing and sitting with the people of desires.”



In his explanation of *Usool-us-Sunnah*, *Ash-Shaykh* Zayd Al-Madkhalee (حفظه الله) stated, “The gatherings of *Ahlus Sunnah* with the people of *bid’ah* for the sake of debating are exclusively for explaining to the (the truth), establishing the burden of proof upon them, refuting their *bid’ah* and misguidance, warning from them and this is what is sufficient. Therefore, (historically) there were not numerous gatherings with the people of desires and misguidance, rather (the people of *Sunnah*) advise by explaining the *Sunnah* and adhering to it, explaining *bid’ah* and its various forms and warning from *bid’ah*. They do this by doing what is adequate for this intent, whether it be by speech, by means of audio visual apparatus, or publications like that from the methodology of those who have preceded us from the people of knowledge.” (pg. 21)

Ibraheem An-Nakha’ee (رحمه الله) stated, “Do not sit with the people of *bid’ah* nor speak to them, for indeed I fear that your hearts will doubt.” [*Al Bid’ahwa An-nahy ‘anha*(56) and *Al-I’tisaam* (v.1, pg.172)]

Abu Qalaaba (رحمه الله) stated, “Oh, Ayyub –*As-Sikhtiyaani*- Do not give the person of *bid’ah* your hearing,” (Meaning do not listen to him). [*Al-Laalakaeee* (v.1, 134)]

The position of not sitting with the people of *bid’ah* also refers to not reading their books or listening to their lectures, etc. *Shaykh* Saalih Al-Fawzaan (حفظه الله) was asked, “What is the correct position with regards to reading the books of the people of *bid’ah* or listening to their tapes?” He responded, “It is not permissible to listen to the books of the people of *bid’ah* or to listen to their tapes except for the individual who wants to refute them and explain the misguidance therein. As for the beginner or student of knowledge, layman, and the individual who is just reading for leisure and not for the purpose of refuting or explaining their condition, then it is not permissible to read these books because they will affect his heart. (Taken from *Al-Fawaa’id al ‘Aqaa’idiyah wal Qawaa’id al-Minhajiyyah*, pg. 50; with reference to the book *Al-Ajwibah al-Mufeedah* from *Shaykh* Saalih Al-Fawzaan.)

Refuting the person who opposes the *Sunnah* is a principle from the religion

Ibn Rajab Al Hanbali (رحمه الله) mentioned, “With regards to *Ahlul bid’ah* and misguidance, and those who pose like scholars but are not, then it is permissible to explain their ignorance and expose their faults so as to warn others from following them.” [*Al-Farq Bayna An-Naseehah wa At-Ta’yeer* (p.36)]

Yahya Bin Saeed Al Qatan (رحمه الله) said, “I asked Shu’ba, Sufyan Bin Saeed, Sufyan Bin ‘Uyayna, and Malik Bin Anas about the individual who does not memorize and has been accused with regards to hadith. They all replied, “*Explain his affair.*” (Related by *Al Faswi* in *Al Ma’rifa* and *At Taarikh*, pg. 231, v.1; and *Al Jawzajani* in *Ahwaal Ar Rijaal* (pg. 36) and *Al Baihaqi* in *Dala’il An Nabuwa*, pg. 45, v. 1)

about the group of people who come together in the *masjid* and what the Prophet (ﷺ) said in terms of gathering in the *masjid*. This does not apply to the people of *bid’ah* because the Angels do not attend these gatherings of misguidance or falsehood owing to the fact that they are innovated gatherings and the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Every innovated matter is misguidance.”⁷

Al Hasan Bin Al Rabee’ (رحمه الله) related that Ibn Al Mubaarak said, “(Regarding) Al Ma’laa Bin Hilal, if it concerns hadith, then he lies.’ Some soofiya said to him, ‘Oh! Aba Abdur Rahmaan, you backbite?’ To which he replied, ‘Be quiet! If we do not explain, how will the truth be known from falsehood?’ Or something similar to this statement. (Narrated by Al Khateeb in *Al Kifaya*, pg. 45)

Ibn Abi Zamanain Al Maaliki (رحمه الله) mentioned in his treatise *Usool As Sunnah*, “*Ahlu Sunnah continue to disparage the people of desires and misguidance; they prohibit sitting with them, they warn the people regarding their fitnah, they explain their reality and they do not consider this backbiting them nor slandering them.*” (*Usool As Sunnah*, pg. 293)

Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned, “*Explaining their (the people who oppose the Sunnah) condition and warning the Ummah from them is compulsory and the ‘ulamaa’ are in agreement concerning this. It was even said to Imam Ahmad, ‘An individual fasts, prays and makes ‘itikaaf; is this better according to you or is his speaking about the people of bid’ah?’ Ahmad replied, ‘If he fasted, prayed, or made ‘itikaaf; Then, indeed this is only for him. However, if he spoke about the people of bid’ah, then this is for the general populous of the Muslims and this is better.’* (Majmoo’ Al Fatawaa, pg. 231-233, v. 28).

As Shaykh Ibn Al ‘Uthaymeen (رحمه الله) mentioned in *Liqaa Bab Al Maftooh* 8/120, “*Speaking regarding the people of Bid’ah and those who have sick ideologies or methodologies which are not upright; this is considered naseeha (advice) and not backbiting. Rather, it is from naseeha for Allah, His Book, His messenger and for the Muslims. If we see a person of bid’ah spreading his bid’ah, then we explain that he is a person of bid’ah.*”

In one of our lessons with Shaykh Abdul Qaadir Al Junaid (حفظه الله تعالى), he mentioned that Ibn Abi Zamanain Al Maaliki, Abu ‘Uthmaan As Saabooni, and Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمهم الله تعالى) and other scholars all mentioned the fact that there is agreement amongst the scholars of *Sunnah* that disparaging the people of *bid’ah* and exposing their mistakes and misguidance is not considered backbiting, nor does it fall under the prohibition of mentioning your brother with that which he does not like.

⁷ The *hadith* of the Prophet (ﷺ) of the *Khutbat al-Haajah* found in *Al-Musnad* of Al-Imaam Ahmad (v.1, 392), Abu Dawood (no. 2,117), At-Tirmidhi (no. 1,105), Ibn Majah (no. 1,982) and other than them from the chain of narration of Ibn Mas’ud.



The people who sit in a true religious gathering, once they stand up, their sins are forgiven⁸. These people mentioned in the *hadith*, who when they stand up they are forgiven, are from *Ahlu Sunnah* and this reward does not apply to the gatherings of the people of *bid’ah*, even if they were to come together in the *masjid*; this *hadith* does not encompass them. It does not include the people of *bid’ah* because Allah is not pleased with their gatherings or sittings, given that the Prophet (ﷺ) described them as being misguided⁹. They are not the people of truth; rather they are the people of falsehood and misguidance as per the *ayah*¹⁰, “There is nothing after the truth, except misguidance,” [Yunus: 32] : { فَمَا ذَا بَعْدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالَةُ فَأَنْزَلْنَاهُمْ فِيهِمْ فَوْهُنَ } . Therefore, (the *Sunni* is to) be cautious. Abu Musaa did not sit with them; rather he reprimanded them.

The Affair of Innovation Is Fair Seeming and Deceptive

Text: ‘*Abdullah Bin Mas’ud asked Abu Musaa what he saw. To which he replied, “If you live, you will see it.”*

⁸Reference to the *hadith* on the authority of Sahl Ibn Handhalah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “No people sit in a gathering in which they remember Allah, except that when they stand up, it is said to them, ‘Stand up. Allah has forgiven you for your sins and changed your bad actions into good actions’.” (Mu’jamul Kabeer, no. 6,039) Shaykh Al-Albaani declared it *saheeh* in *Saheeh Al-Jam’i* (no. 5,610)

⁹This is because the Prophet (ﷺ) described every innovated matter as misguidance.

¹⁰Soorah Yunus [10:32]



Shaykh Muhammad (حفظه الله): Meaning, you will see it if you remain alive. Abu Musaa’s response to ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud shows the *Sahabah’s* connection to the afterlife (*Aakhirah*)¹¹ and how they used to remember and fear death in all instances. Then, Abu Musaa began to describe what he witnessed. He said, “*I saw a group of people in the masjid sitting down in circles as they were waiting for the next salaah. Upon every circle, there was a man. They had pebbles in their hands.*”

So there was a place, there was a group, they had a specific method, they had a particular organization, they had different groups in circles, they had some sort of responsibility or a specific duty to carry out; and for each specific job or duty, there was a person responsible for it. Furthermore, they were engaging in specific actions by using stones to make/pronounce *takbeer*, *tahleel* and *tasbeeh*. For each statement, they would pronounce it a specific number of times via an explicit way or methodology and they had a leader who would instruct them with what to do and how to do it. These are all things that we need to pay attention to and be aware of. What if we were to find them in our *masjids* today? Some people would say, ‘*Mashaa Allah*’, these people are doing something excellent!’ This is the affair of *bid’ah* (it deceives).

Subsequently, Abu Musaa described to ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud exactly what he saw. A correct characterization or description of something gives a solid picture or conceptualization of that thing. Therefore, the resultant (*Islaamic*) ruling that issues from this description is directly applied to a situation, people, action, etc. that fit the description. When Abu Musaa described to ‘Abdullah Bin

¹¹The *hadith* of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) in Al-Bukhaari related by Abu Musaa Al-Ash’ari that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said, “*Al-Jannah is closer to one of you than the strap of his sandal and the hellfire is likewise.*”



Mas’ud precisely what he saw and who was involved, ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud asked him, “*So what did you say to them?*” Abu Musaa replied, “*I did not say anything*¹².”

In essence, he was saying – “*You are more knowledgeable than I am and I did not say anything as I was awaiting your response/ or command.*”(Why did he wait?) He waited for his opinion because of the status of ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud due to his knowledge. ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud’s initial response to Abu Musaa was that it would have been better for him or good for him to instruct them to count their bad deeds. By doing this, he would have guaranteed that they would not have lost anything from their good deeds. It may be that the person who counts his bad deeds is doing a form of

¹²This illustrates the knowledge of the *Sahabah* in being patient by not responding immediately, but rather taking those questionable affairs to the more learned scholars thereby avoiding the repercussions of acting in haste. This is taken from Allah’s statement {**When there comes to them some matter touching (public) safety or fear, they make it known (among the people), if only they had referred it to the Messenger or those charged with authority among them, those suitable to investigate (the issue) would have understood it from them (directly).**} [An-Nisaa 4:83]

Imaam Baghawi states in his *tafseer* of this verse that the ‘*those charged in authority among them*’ refers to the people of sound discernment like Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmaan and ‘Ali (رضي الله عنهم). In addition, Ibn Katheer (رحمه الله) mentions in his *tafseer* of this verse that the description of the people in this *ayah* denotes censure of those who rush to affairs before properly investigating them and those who spread the news of these affairs even though it may not be true. It is also mentioned in the introduction to *Saheeh* Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said, “*It is sufficient for the individual to be considered as having lied, if he spreads everything he hears*”.

Shaykh ‘Ubayd Al Jaabiri (حفظه الله) mentions in his explanation of *Sharh As Sunnah* of *Imaam* Al Muzani (رحمه الله), “The people of honor and righteousness and *taqwa* used to refer to the major scholars if they had been afflicted with a calamity or some sort of problem and asked them questions (regarding these issues) and sought sufficient answers. This has been a *sunnah* since the time of the *Sahabah*, the imams of the *tabi’een* and those after them from the people of knowledge, honor, religion and faith. And what is more beautiful than the statement of Ibn Mas’ud (رضي الله عنه), “The people are still upright and adhering (to the religion) as long as knowledge comes from the companions of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم), and their seniors. If knowledge comes to them from the youth, then they are destroyed.”(pg. 19, *At Tayyib Al Jani ‘ala Sharh As Sunnah li Imaam Al Muzani*)



repentance, or he may (actually) be repenting. However, if the person is counting his good deeds, then this is something that should be hidden and kept between him and Allah and not done in front of the people.

The Judge Investigates An Affair Thoroughly

He said that he and the Companions who were with him went to the *masjid* at once. Once ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud was informed about the affair, his response was to immediately handle the problem. When he arrived at the *masjid*, he found the affair to be exactly as it was described to him and thus proceeded to one of the circles from amongst the circles (which the individuals had been sitting in). This is evidence that ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud asked them directly in order to ascertain exactly what they were engaged in. He already had a conceptualization of what was taking place since it was described to him. So here (we see that), he personally asked them.

The judge, ruler, or person in charge, should investigate affairs for himself. Then, he stood in front of them and enquired about what they were doing. He did not sit with them because the people of *bid’ah* are not to be sat with¹³.

He stood in front of them or above them and asked, “*What is this that I see you doing?*”

¹³This is understood from the *hadith* of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم), “*And the evil companion is like the one who works as a blacksmith, (keeping) his company will either lead to burning your garments or (your) smelling a foul smell from him.*” [Narrated in Al-Bukhaari (no. 5,534) and Muslim (no. 146)]

Since the context of this situation was problematic, he questioned them about what they were engaged in. With this questioning, his witnessing the actual affair (himself), and (hearing) the rationale as to why they were doing what they were doing, the affair then became undeniably clear. By probing the matter, the one making a legislative ruling on an affair will be correct because he has a clear conceptualization and he seeks clarification by asking the parties involved about what exactly it is they were involved in. Because of the situation they were in, he made an inference and this is why he asked (for clarification and affirmation) since it was a problem that required questioning.

What was their response? They called him by his *kunyah*. They said, “O Father of ‘Abdur Rahmaan! (Yaa Abaa ‘Abdir Rahmaan)!”

The people of *bid’ah*, when they call someone by his *kunyah*, they want to lure/draw that individual in. However, ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud, being who he is, in terms of his status and knowledge (did not concede to their affectionate call).

The man replied, “Pebbles.” Of course, ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud sees them and he knows that they are using pebbles. The man said, “With these pebbles we count the takbeer (Allahu Akbar), tahleel (laa ilaaha illa Allah), and tasbeeh (Subhaan Allah).”

‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud responded, “Count your sins because I guarantee you (that by doing this) nothing will be lost of your good deeds.”

Remember, ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud asked Abu Musaa earlier why he did not say to them the same statement he himself made upon meeting them. When Ibn Mas’ud went to this group, he said the exact statement he advised that Abu Musaa should have said to them directly. This illustrates that he

did not advise Abu Musaa to say one thing and then acted contrary to his advice upon actually being in their presence. Rather, he said and did exactly what he advised Abu Musaa to do. This is because their affair (the *Sahabah*) and their speech were very clear; their speech was one. Their stance and position towards the affair of the people of *bid’ah* was one.

Innovation in The Religion Leads To The Destruction of The Religion

Then what did he say to them? Certainly, the reality of their affair had become clear. ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud said, “*Woe unto you O Ummah (or followers) of Muhammad (ﷺ)!*” Now he is executing the ruling or the resultant outcome of what he saw and how to rectify it. “*How quick you are to your destruction! O Ummah (or followers) of Muhammad (ﷺ)!*”

Why did he use such strong language? This is a form of censure, saying to someone (that their action) is in reality their loss and destruction. This action of yours leads to the destruction of *Islaam* very quickly¹⁴. Their response was, “*We are just counting pebbles*”; how could it lead to our destruction? Pebbles are trivial; it is not a major issue.

¹⁴*Bid’ah* leads to destruction of the religion because the Prophet (ﷺ) described them as being the worst of affairs and that they are in the hell fire. The Prophet (ﷺ) used to mention this statement during the Friday *Khutbah* to the *Sahabah* who had not witnessed any form of *bid’ah* during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ). Yet, the Prophet (ﷺ) warned them of *bid’ah* on a regular basis (every Friday prayer) and described them as being the worst of affairs. Does it make sense that the Prophet (ﷺ) would make such an effort to remind the *Sahabah* of the dangers of *bid’ah*, considering the fact that *bid’ah* was nonexistent at his (ﷺ) time, except to demonstrate the magnitude of the dangers imposed upon the *Ummah* by *bid’ah*?

However, the opinion/position of ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud regarding this issue was extremely clear. Why? Because he looked at the affair in terms of what it would lead to and result in. Though what they were engaging in could be considered as something minor, it will eventually lead to evil, and this is a very dangerous sign or indication. It indicates that there is an impending dangerous issue or affair as this is the beginning of misguidance or going astray.

One of the dangers of *bid’ah* is that adopting it and engaging in it necessitates leaving the *Sunnah*. Imaam Al Barbahaari (رحمه الله) mentions this point in *Sharh As Sunnah* (pt.6), “And know that the people have not invented a *bid’ah* except that they have left its equivalent from the *Sunnah*. Therefore, be warned of all innovations. Verily, every innovation is a *bid’ah* and every *bid’ah* is misguidance and misguidance and its people are in the hellfire.”

In his explanation of the above point, *Shaykh Al ‘Allaama Rabee’ Ibn Hadi Al Madkhali* (حفظه الله) quotes a statement from *Shaykh Al Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah* (رحمه الله) illustrating this point, “And likewise are the people of *bid’ah*. You do not find an individual who has left some of the *Sunnah*, of which is obligatory to believe in and act upon, except that he has fallen into *bid’ah*; nor do you find the person of *bid’ah* except that he has left something from the *Sunnah*. This is like what has come in the *hadith*, ‘A people have not innovated a *bid’ah* (in the religion) except that they have left its equivalent from the *Sunnah*’, narrated by Ahmad. [‘Aun Al Bari, pg. 67]

An example of the *fiqh* of the *Sahabah* with regards to the dangers of *bid’ah* is illustrated by the narration of Hudhayfah Ibn Al-Yamaan (رضي الله عنه) and what he said to his companions and students when he took two rocks and placed one on top of the other and asked them, “Do you see any light between these two rocks? They replied, “No, Oh Aba ‘Abdullah, we do not see any light between them except for a very small amount.” He told them, “I swear by Him whose Hand my soul is in, *bid’ah* will appear until you do not see from the truth except that which is equivalent to the amount of light you see between these two rocks. I swear by Allah, that *bid’ah* will spread so much so that if a person leaves it, it will be said about him that he left the *Sunnah*.” [Narrated by Ibn Waddaah in *al-Bid’ah* (pg. 21)]

Ash-Shaykh Zayd Al-Madkhalee (حفظه الله) mentions in his explanation of *Usool us-Sunnah* (pg. 23), “The individual is to not belittle anything from *bid’ah*, nor is he to ever take anything from *bid’ah* lightly. Nor is he to take sinning (disobedience to Allah) lightly either, whether they be major or minor sins and this is due to what this sinning incurs from the anger of our Lord and how it causes one to expose himself to punishment, either in this life or the hereafter.”



After this ruling, he mentioned to them certain things that were missing in that particular gathering – indications of when misguidance or going astray begins. Alternatively (it could be said he gave them) the reasons why people leave the truth, or the reasons for entering into falsehood and misguidance and practicing those things which contradict what the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded.

Signs of The Manifestation of Innovation in The Religion

The First Sign: Leaving Off The Scholars

When does *bid’ah* manifest itself? What are the reasons for the appearance *bid’ah*¹⁵? We can use many different titles to describe the scenario.

The first sign: ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud (رضي الله عنه) said, “*Here are the Companions of the Prophet (صلينا لله عليه وسلم) (they are) numerous or they are in abundance.*” What does this mean? It means that he went to them and reproached them, as there were no Companions present with these individuals as

¹⁵Shaykh Saalih Al-Fawzaan (حفظه الله) mentions, “The reasons which lead to the manifestation of *bid’ah* in the religion are summarized in these reasons: 1) Ignorance with regards to the rulings or *ahkaam* of the religion 2) Following desires 3) Excessiveness concerning opinions and individuals and 4) Imitating the *kuffaar*. [‘*Aqeedah At-Tawheed* (pg. 168-70)]



they engaged in what they were doing. Nor was there anyone from amongst the Companions who sanctioned what they were doing. Without a doubt, the Companions were the scholars during their time¹⁶. One of the reasons for the manifestations of *bid’ah* is when the people abandon taking their

¹⁶**This point is a reference to a foundational principle in understanding, which is the fact that the religion is understood and practiced according to the understanding of the *Salaf*.**

The proof for this principle is established in the Book of Allah, the *Sunnah* and the *Ijmaa’* of the Companions, *Tabi’een*, and illustrious *Imaams* of this *Ummah*.

Allah says in the *Qur’aan*, {**And whoever opposes the Messenger after the path has been clearly shown to him and follows a way other than the believers (the *Sahabah* are the best of the believers). We shall keep him in the path he has chosen and burn him in Hell, and what an evil destination it is.**} . [Soorah An-Nisaa 4:105]

Also, Allah says in Soorah At-Tawbah [9: 100], {**and the first to embrace *Islaam* from the *Muhajireen* and the *Ansaar* and those who followed them in righteousness. Allah is well pleased with them, as they are well pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.**}

The Prophet (ﷺ) said in an authentic *hadith* related on the authority of ‘Imraan Ibn Husayn (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “*The best of the people is my generation, then those who come after them, and then those who come after them.*” ‘Imraan Ibn Husayn stated, “And I do not know if he said, ‘then those who come after them two times or three times.’” [Related by Al-Bukhaari (no. 3,650) and Muslim(no. 2,535)]

Also, the Prophet (ﷺ) said in an authentic *hadith* related by ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه): “*Verily, Bani Israaeel split into seventy two sects and this Ummah will split into seventy three sects, all of them being in the hellfire except one.*” They asked, “*And who are they O Messenger of Allah?*” He (ﷺ) replied, “*That which I and my companions are upon.*” [At-Tirmidhi (no. 2, 64)] *Shaykh-ul-Isaam* Ibn Taymiyyah declared it *saheeh* in his *Fataawa* and *Shaykh* Al-Albaani declared it *hasan*.

Also, in the famous *hadith* of ‘Irbaad Ibn Saariyah where he (ﷺ) said, “*I advise you with hearing and obeying (the ruler) even if a slave was appointed over you. Whoever lives (after me) verily he will witness many differences, so adhere to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided caliphs after me. Cling to it (my Sunnah and their Sunnah) with your molars. And beware of innovated matters, for verily every innovated matter (in the religion) is misguidance.*” [Related by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (no. 17,272), (no. 17,274), Abu Dawood, (no. 4,607), At-Tirmidhi (no. 2,676) who declared it *hasan saheeh*]

In addition, Abu Isma’eel Al Harari (رحمه الله) mentioned concerning the *hadith* of ‘Irbaad in his book *Dham Al Kalam*, (v.3, pg.122), “This is from the most authentic *hadith* of the people of Sham and best of them.” Al Haakim said in *Al Mustadrik* (v.1, pg. 9), “And this *hadith* is authentic, *al hamdulillah*.”

Along with these proofs and others, the ‘*Ulamaa*’ have ceaselessly, generation after generation, encouraged *Muslims* to adhere to the understanding and practice of the *Salaf* with regards to belief, worship, manners and interactions with others.

Ibn Mas’ud said, “*Whoever from amongst you follows someone, then he is to follow the companions of Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و سلم) because they have the most righteous hearts of this Ummah, they have the deepest knowledge, they are the least prone to going to excess, they are the most upright with regards to their guidance to the best of affairs. They are the people whom Allah chose for companionship with the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه و سلم). So know their favor and follow their narrations because indeed they were upon the righteous guidance.*” [Related by Ibn Abd Al Barr in *Jaam’I Bayaan Al ‘Ilm* (pg. 97, V.2)]

In *Sunan Ad-Daarimi* (no.142) it is related by Ibn Sireen (رحمه الله) that he said, “*They used to see an individual as being upon the (straight) path as long as he was upon narrations (from the Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم and his Companions).*”

In the book *As-Sunnah* by Muhammad Ibn Nasr Al-Marwazi (رحمه الله) (pg. 80) on the authority of ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud (رضي الله عنه) that he said, “*Today you are upon the fitrah. Indeed (there will be a time) where you will introduce and things will be introduced (in the religion) by others. If you see any innovation, then it is obligatory upon you (to follow) the first guidance*” (A reference to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) and his Companions).

In the same book (pg. 100) on the authority of Abi Ad-Dardaa (رضي الله عنه) that he said, “*Being moderate with regards to the Sunnah is better than exerting oneself in bid’ah. Your following (the Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم and his Companions) is better than you innovating and you will not stray off the path as long as you follow the narrations (authentically related by the Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم and the first three generations).*”

Imaam Ahmad (رحمه الله) began his treatise entitled ‘*Usoolus-Sunnah*’ with the phrase, “*The foundations of the Sunnah with us are the adherence to that which the Companions were upon and following them whilst leaving off bid’ah.*”

Imaam Abu Hanifah (رحمه الله), said, “*It is obligatory upon you to follow the athar and the path of the Salaf and beware of any innovated matter, for verily it is a bid’ah.*” (*Dham Al-Kalaam wa Ahlihi* (v. 213, pg. 4)]

Imaam Malik (رحمه الله) is quoted as saying, “*Nothing will rectify the last of this Ummah except that which rectified the first of this Ummah.*” [*As Shifaa*, Al Qaadi ‘Eyaadh, (pg. 88, v.2)]

Imaam Al-Auzaa’ee (رحمه الله) is reported as saying, “It is obligatory upon you to follow the narrations from the Salaf and beware of the opinions of men, even if they beautify them with their speech. The affair will become clear when it becomes clear and you will be upon the straight path.” [Ash-Shari’ah(p. 63), Jaam’ Ibayaan Al-‘Ilm(pg.391)]

Imaam Ibn Abi Zayd Al-Qayrawani stated in his treatise explaining the creed of *Ahl us Sunnah*, “And (from the ‘Aqeedah of *Ahlus Sunnah* is, “the following of the Salaf As-Saalih and traversing their path and requesting from (Allah) to forgive them. And leaving off arguing and disputing in the religion and rejecting innovations introduced (into the religion) by the innovators.”

Shaykhul Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) mentioned in his *Fataawa* (v.4, pg.155), “Know that the banner of the people of *bid’ah* is (the fact of their) not traversing the methodology of following the salaf.”

Following the first three generations is not an innovation in the religion, rather it is an obligation established by the *Qur’aan*, the *Sunnah* and *Ijmaa’*.

The word ‘*salaf*’ linguistically means the one or those that have preceded you from your ancestors or those who are older than you and because of this, the first generations of the *Muslims* are called *As-Salaf as-Saalih*. As the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said to his daughter Faatimah, ‘Verily, I am the best one preceding (*salaf*) you.” [Mukhtaar As-Sihaah (pg. 130)]

Ibn Mandhur states, “And the word *salaf*, *saleef* and *salafah* mean: the group of people who have preceded one.” [Lisaaan Al-Arab (pg. 330, v.6)]

In regards to its specific meaning as it relates to the religion, As-Safareeni states, “What is intended by the term: *Madhhab as-Salaf* (the way of the *Salaf*): It means that which the *Sahabah* were upon and the illustrious *Tabi’een* who followed them in the best manner, and those who came after them. In addition, the *Imaams* of the religion who have been regarded as *Imaams* and whose lofty status are well known. Those whose statements have been accepted from generation to generation whilst excluding those who were accused of *bid’ah* or were known by a title which was not pleasing like the *Khawaarij*, or *Rawaafidh*, or *al-Qadariyyah*, *al-Murji’ah*, *al-Jahmiyyah*, *al-Mu’tazilah*, *al-Karaamiyyah* or groups like those mentioned.” (Lawaami’ Al-Anwaar (pg. 20, v.1)]

Shaykh Al-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) mentioned, “There is no fault attributed to the one who openly exhibits the *madhhab* of the *Salaf* and attributes himself to it, and claims it. Rather it is agreed upon that it is obligatory to accept this from him, because the *Madhhab as-Salaf* is nothing but the truth.” [Majmoo’ Al Fataawa (pg. 149, v.4)]

Ash-Shaykh Saalih Al-Fawzaan (حفظه الله) mentions in *Al-Ajwiba Al-Mufeedah ‘an Asilati Al-Manaahij Al-Jadeedah* (pg.256), “The *Jamaat as-Salafiyyah* is the one that is upon the truth and it is the one which is obligatory to follow, work with and attribute one’s self to. And other groups other than the *Salafis*, then (with regards to them) it is obligatory to not consider them *daw’ah* groups because they oppose (the *Sunnah*)...”



Ash-Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Saalih Al-‘Uthaymeen (رحمه الله) stated, “*Ahl us Sunnah wal Jama’ah, they are the Salaf with regards to their beliefs even if an individual came after them until the Day of Judgment. If he is on the methodology of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) and his Companions, then he is Salafi.*” [Sharh Al-‘Aqeedah Al-Waseetiyah (pg. 54, v.1)]

Is labeling oneself ‘Salafi’ a bid’ah or something blameworthy and does it give the connotation that a person is praising himself?

Numerous scholars, both past and present have used the word ‘salafi’ and it was never considered to be an innovation or as something blameworthy.

Imaam Adh-Dhahabi (رحمه الله) stated, “And what the *Haafidh* needs to have is to be Allah fearing, intelligent, a grammarian, pure, shy, and be a *Salafi*.” [Seer ‘Alaam An-Nubalaa (pg.380, v. 13)]

Imaam Adh-Dhahabi (رحمه الله) also said in his description of Imaam Ad-Daraqutni (رحمه الله), “He never entered into ‘ilm al-kalaam, nor debating, nor was he immersed in these things, rather he was *Salafi*.” [Seer ‘Alaam An-Nubalaa (pg. 457, v. 16)]

In addition, whilst describing the scholar Abu Taahir As-Silafi, he mentioned, “And *As-Silafi* (a reference to Abu Taahir’s name) is from the word *As-Salafi* (with two fathas) which means one who is upon the madhhab of the *Salaf*.” [Seer ‘Alaam An-Nubalaa (pg. 21, v.6)]

Shaykh ‘Abdul Azeez Ibn Baaz (رحمه الله) was asked about the one who calls himself ‘*As-Salafi*’ and ‘*Al-Athari*’ and is this *tazkiyah* (praising oneself) to which he replied, “If he is true with regards to him being ‘*Al-Athari*’ or him being ‘*As-Salafi*’, then there is no harm. Just like the *Salaf* used to say, ‘so and so is *Salafi*, so and so is *Athari*’, this is a *tazkiyah* that one must do, this is an obligation!” [(Al-Ajwibah Al-Mufeedah ‘An Al-Manaahij Al-Jadeedah (pg. 17)]

Shaykh Al-Albaani (رحمه الله) was asked the question, “Is labeling oneself with the name *As-Salafiyyah* to be considered *tazkiyah an-nafs*?” To which he replied, “This individual does not understand the meaning of *As-Salafiyyah* by his saying that it necessitates *tazkiyah*. *As-Salafiyyah* means the correct *Islaam*. So the one who says, ‘I am *Muslim* or my religion is *Islaam* is like the one who says, ‘I am *Salafi*.’ [From tape 725, *Silsilah Huda wa Nur*, taken from the book *Ad-Durar Adh-Dhabyah fi Usool wa Minhaj Ad-Da’wah As-Salafiyyah* (pg. 22)]

Shaykh Saalih Al-Fawzaan (حفظه الله) stated, “How can traversing the path of the *Salaf* be a *bid’ah*? Following their path is an obligation established from the *Qur’aan* and the *Sunnah*. It is truth and guidance. Allah says, {and the first to embrace **Islaam from the Muhajireen and the Ansaar and those who followed them in righteousness. Allah is well pleased with them as they are well pleased with Him**} and the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said, “It is incumbent upon you



religion from the scholars and there is an increase in the gatherings of the ignorant. Consequently, the ignorant people get together to remind and teach each other. What is the result? The result is misguidance and going astray. Hence, to reiterate, one of the reasons for misguidance is leaving the scholars or the people of knowledge¹⁷.

The Second Sign: The Emergence of Innovations in The Religion Starts Small

The second sign: ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud said, “*The clothes of the Prophet (ﷺ) are still around and they have not been ruined or worn away. Also, the Prophet’s (ﷺ) eating and drinking utensils have not been broken.*” This is evidence that the period they were in was close to the time of the Prophet (ﷺ). The clothes that he used to wear were still in his house and the utensils that he used to eat and drink from were still intact; the Prophet’s (ﷺ) era was extremely close. In essence, he is asking them why they left the Prophet’s (ﷺ) guidance, his *Sunnah*, and his Companions. This is proof that we have been

to follow my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided khalifahs.” Therefore, following the *madhhab* of the *Salaf* is the *Sunnah* and not a *bid’ah*, rather *bid’ah* is following other than their methodology.” [Al Bayyan (pg. 116)]

¹⁷It was related on the authority of ‘Abdullah Ibn Al-‘Aas (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said, “*Verily Allah does not remove knowledge by snatching it from the servants, rather he removes knowledge by taking the ‘Ulamaa’.* To the extent that if there is no scholar left, the people will take ignorant individuals as their (religious) leaders. They will ask them, (and those ignorant people) will answer and they will misguide just as they themselves are misguided.” [Related by Al-Bukhaari (no.100) and Muslim (no. 2,673)]

It is also narrated from him (‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud) that he said, “The people are still upon good as long as they take their knowledge from their elders, the trust worthy ones, and their scholars. If they take their knowledge from their youth and the evil ones, they will be ruined. [Related by Al-Lalaka’ee in *Sharh Usool Al-‘Itiqaad* (no.89), Abu Na’eem in *Al-Hilyah* (pg.49,v.8) and Al-Bayhaqee in *Al-Madkhal* (207)]

commanded to follow the Companions because their guidance is correct¹⁸. Another indication of misguidance is the abandoning of the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the understanding of the Companions in the way they practiced the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Then ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud (رضي الله عنه) swore “by Him Whose Hand my soul is in” meaning he swore by Allah Ta’aala – “by doing this action it is as if you see yourselves as being on a path or way more rightly guided than the path of the Prophet (ﷺ)”. What he means is, ‘Do you think you are better than the Prophet (ﷺ)?’ Either that is the case or you are opening the door of misguidance. This is proof that by engaging in this affair, they were not on the path of the Prophet (ﷺ). To this question posed by ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud, they could have responded with either one of two answers. They could have said, “Yes, we are more rightly guided than the Prophet (ﷺ)” or the second choice for them was to say, “No we are not on the path of the Prophet (ﷺ); rather we are opening the door to misguidance.” The Arabic word used by ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud was “مفتتحو - muftatih” which means they were slightly opening and not fully opening (like a small crack in the door); he said this because on the surface, it appeared to be a small action. In other words, ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud was saying, “You all are opening the doors to misguidance.”

¹⁸ The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said, “I advise you to have taqwaa of Allah and to hear and to obey, even if a slave becomes your leader. Those of you who live long after me will see many differences, so adhere to my *Sunnah* and to the *Sunnah* of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs after me. Cling to it tightly with your molar teeth and beware of newly-invented matters, for every newly invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is misguidance.” [Related by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (no. 17,272), (no. 17,274) Abu Daawood (no. 4607), At-Tirmidhi (no. 2676)]

When a person notices misguidance or going astray, the person should remove himself far from it¹⁹. He should not try to experiment with misguidance or test himself with it. A person may say to himself, “*I will open the door a little bit.*” However, the one who opens the door will enter it, even if it is a small opening, even if it is a small opening, even if it is a small opening! In addition, if anyone who is upon the *Da’wah* of *Salafiyyah* opens the door to some form of *bid’ah* and they increase in this; they will eventually end up falling into *bid’ah*. This may happen regardless of whether they realize it or not; with the passage of time, they would have entered wholeheartedly into *bid’ah*. If they were to look back they would see that the door that was opened is very distant from them, meaning that because it is so far, it is very difficult for them to return and they cannot come back and repent (as they see it as good) because of what they are encompassed in with these affairs (*bid’ah*).

The person of *bid’ah* enters into it easily and makes it seem like something pleasing or good until he sees it as being part of the religion.

The Person of Innovation in The Religion is Not Granted The Success To Repent

Can a person of *bid’ah* come back? (The answer is) he sees himself as being upon the truth and the correct position, and believes that he is getting closer to Allah by practicing these forms of *bid’ah*. For this reason, the person of *bid’ah* is not granted success to make repentance²⁰. Why is this?²¹ This

¹⁹Allah says in Soorah Ash-Shuraa [42:21]{**Or do they have partners with Allah, who have legislated for them a religion which Allah has not allowed.**}

²⁰From the *hadith* of Anas Ibn Malik (رضي الله عنه) and classified as *saheeh* by Shaykh Al-Albaani in *As-Saheehah* (no.1, 620)



is because he does not consider himself as being wrong in the first place, unlike the person who engages in sins. Because the latter, even while he is engaging in sins or acts of disobedience, he knows within himself that he is doing something wrong, he wants to make repentance. However, the person who is upon *bid’ah* believes that he is doing a righteous action (bringing him closer to Allah), so how can he make repentance?

‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud gave them two choices – the sweeter of the two being sour. Why? Because the two choices were, either they consider themselves as being more rightly guided than the Prophet (ﷺ) or that they were opening the door to misguidance. Why did he give them these two choices? This is because they were in opposition to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) and fell into *bid’ah*. What is the ruling regarding this *bid’ah*? It is misguidance, which the Prophet (ﷺ) alluded to in the *hadith* that every innovated matter is *bid’ah* and every *bid’ah* is misguidance²². ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud essentially told them that *they* were the doors to misguidance.

²¹ *Shaykh-ul-Islam* Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) stated, “*Bid’ah* is more beloved to *Iblees* than sinning (disobedience to Allah). Verily, sinning is repented from, but *bid’ah* is not repented from.” He further explains this point, “Indeed, the person of *bid’ah* who takes this *bid’ah* as a religion which Allah has not legislated nor has His Messenger (ﷺ) legislated, has had his actions beautified for him to the extent that he sees them as being good deeds. Therefore, he does not make repentance from these actions as long as he sees them as being good actions. The first aspect of *tawbah* (repentance) is having the knowledge that a particular action is evil so that the individual can repent from it; or having knowledge that the individual has left an action which he has been commanded to do, so (upon having knowledge of this) he makes *tawbah* and then begins doing the action. Therefore, as long as he sees his action as being good when in actuality it is an evil action, he does not repent from it. [*Majmoo’ Al Fatwa* (9/10) taken from the explanation of *Fadl Islaam* by Hanaan Al Yamaany forwarded by *Shaykh Saalih Al Fawzaan* (pg. 155)]

²² The *hadith* of ‘Irbaad Ibn Saariyah where he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “Adhere to my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the rightly guided caliphs after me. Cling to it (my *Sunnah* and their *Sunnah*) with your molars. And beware of innovated matters, for verily every innovated matter (in the religion) is misguidance.” [Related by Ahmad in his *Musnad* (n. 17,272), (n. 17,274), Abu Dawood, (n. 4,607), At-Tirmidhi (n. 2,676) who declared it *hasan saheeh*]

The Typical Response of The People of Innovation in The Religion In Defense of Their Innovation

What was the response of the representative (for this group engaging in *dhikr*)? He began his response by swearing by Allah and calling ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud by his *kunyah* saying, “O *Aba ‘Abdur Rahmaan!* We did not want anything except good.” What was his proof? He tried to affirm sincerity for himself (and those with him); this is the common affair with the people of *bid’ah*. This is how they justify their actions – ‘*they have sincerity*’²³. For example, the *raafidhee* (*Shi’a*) when he beats himself,

²³Sincerity is not enough for actions to be accepted; rather any action of worship must meet two conditions. It must be done sincerely for Allah alone (الإخلاص) (the proof of this point is the *hadith* of ‘Umar in Al Bukhaari where the Prophet said, “*Verily, actions are by intentions*”) and it must be in adherence to the Prophet’s (صلى الله عليه و سلم) *Sunnah* (المتابعة). This second point is derived from the *hadith* of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) related by ‘Aa’ishah (رضي الله عنها), “*Whoever innovates in this affair of ours (the religion) that which is not from it, then it is rejected.*” This *hadeeth* was related by Al-Bukhaari and the narration of Saheeh Muslim is, “*Whoever does an action which is not in accordance with our affair, then it is rejected.*”

Al-Fudhayl Ibn ‘Eyaad (رحمه الله) as narrated by Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) was reported as saying with regards to the *tafseer* of Allah’s statement in Soorah Al-Mulk **{(It is Allah) Who has created death and life, that He may test you which of you is best in deeds}**. The best deeds are, “The most sincere and the most correct.” Then he was asked, “And what are the most sincere and most correct? He replied, “*If an action is sincerely for Allah, but it is not correct then it is not accepted. It is not accepted until it is sincere and correct. That which is sincere is for Allah (alone) and that which is correct is what is in accordance with the Sunnah.*” [Al-Fataawa (pg. 173, v.10)]

On the authority of Anas Ibn Malik (رضي الله عنه) that it was mentioned to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) that some individuals said, “As for me, I will not eat meat.” Another said, “I will pray the entire night and will not sleep.” The third one said, “As for me, I will not marry women.” The last one said, “As for me, I will fast and not break my fast.” To which the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) replied, “*However, I pray at night and I sleep, I fast and I break my fast, I marry women, and I eat meat. Whoever rejects my Sunnah is not from me.*” (Related by Al-Bukhaari (no.5, 063) and Muslim (no. 1,401)] In this *hadith*, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) described these individuals’ actions as being a rejection of his *Sunnah* because they were not in conformity to his *Sunnah* (in terms of how they carried out these actions) despite the fact that these individuals all intended getting closer to Allah with their respective actions. This fact illustrates the reality that merely having a good intention is not enough for actions to be accepted.



he (sincerely) wants Paradise. The *khaarijee*, when he blows himself up, he (sincerely) wants Paradise. When the *sufi* is whirling his head in stupor, he (sincerely) wants Paradise. The people who were in those circles engaging in *bid’ah*, what did they want? They wanted good. When this person of *bid’ah* gave the justification, he gave only one of the conditions for the acceptance of good deeds, which was sincerity.

The Response of The People of Sunnah To The Feeble Excuses of The People of Innovation in The Religion

What was ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud’s response? His response was the refutation that the scholars of *Sunnah* have used until today in their refutations of the people of *bid’ah*. When those individuals justified what they were doing by claiming sincerity (*ikhlaas*), ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud refuted them with the second condition for the acceptance of good deeds which is following the Prophet (ﷺ) or *mutaaba’ah* (المتابعة). What was ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud’s response? His response was, “How many people intend good but do not attain it!” Therefore, it is not sufficient to use sincerity alone as a proof to legitimize an action of worship. The correct position is that a person’s actions must be sincere (sincerely for Allah) and in accordance with the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) in order for them to be accepted. For this reason, the justification for what they were doing was incorrect, and it was not sufficient for them to claim sincerity alone as a proof or legitimization of their action.

The Manner In Which The People of Innovation in The Religion Debate With The People of The Sunnah

What was their response? The individual speaking on behalf of the group responded with, “*We did not come together except that we intended good (by doing so).*” This is not sufficient; this is misguidance and ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud clarified that they were opening the door to misguidance. “*Do you think you are better than Prophet (ﷺ) or it is that you are misguided?*” Moreover, your action – the thing that you are doing – is not correct. Therefore, anybody who uses the justification of sincerity as proof for what they are doing, they need to also legitimize it by following the Prophet (ﷺ); by verifying and determining if a particular action is in accordance to the Prophet’s (ﷺ) *Sunnah* or not.

Look at how the debate or the argument unfolded; this debate, this give and take, this conversation – the affair was not certain and it led to a problem. So what happened? ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud asked a question, and then the reality of the situation became clear. Finally, based upon this clarification, he issued the ruling. After issuing the ruling, he warned them. Then, when they tried to argue and justify what they were doing, ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud said, “*You all are opening the door to misguidance*” and their response was that they only wanted good. Do you think that ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud did not know what good was so that the individual simply responding, “*We only wanted good*” was sufficient? The person saying this – is he more knowledgeable or is ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud more knowledgeable? This is the manner in which the people of *bid’ah* debate with the scholars of the *Sunnah*.

‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud told them that they were opening the door to misguidance, and what did this *dajjaal* (liar) say? He said they “*only wanted good*”, which in reality is equivalent to him saying, “‘*Abdullah Bin Mas’ud you do not know what good is.*” Because of this fact, ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud gave them a lesson; he taught them manners. He said, “*Your wanting of good is not sufficient. You did not reach the good that you wanted, rather you are misguided.*” Therefore, he established upon them another ruling. Additionally, this manner or style of argumentation (of the individual speaking to Ibn Mas’ud) is not that of the *Sunni* or the person who wants to follow the path of the Prophet (ﷺ). The *Sunni*, if you give him clear evidence, he leaves it (whatever wrong or misguidance he is engaging in) —the evidence suffices him. However, the person of desires, he wants to argue and debate. If you give him proof and evidences he argues, “*You do not know. I am the one who knows and this is what I say.*”

What was ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud’s response? He replied that their affair is one of two things: either you think of yourselves as being more rightly guided than the Prophet (ﷺ) or you are opening the door to misguidance. This individual’s response essentially meant, “*Abdullah Bin Mas’ud you do not know good, in fact we only want good*”. Even if this was the case, this path is incorrect because they only had one of two choices as given to them by ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud: either opening the door of misguidance or being on a path more rightly guided than that of the Messenger (ﷺ).

The Evidence That The Small Innovations in The Religion Leads To Final Destruction of The Innovator

‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud advised them and even while he was giving them advice, they wanted to argue and debate. This style of argumentation is not the methodology of a *Sunni* and because of that, ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud issued another definite and detailed warning, with clear insight and precise discernment. He said, “*The Prophet (ﷺ) informed us of a people, who would appear, who would recite the Qur’aan, but it will not pass their throats.*” ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud then swore by Allah, saying that most of them (the persons in the circles of *dhikr*) will probably be from those individuals whom the Prophet (ﷺ) informed about. Meaning, most of the people that the Prophet (ﷺ) warned against in that *hadith* would be from them. Consequently, he left them because this type of argumentation is the way of the *khawarij*.

The narrator of the *hadith* – ‘Amr Ibn Salamah, what did he say at the end of the narration? What was the outcome of these people? Remember the example of the door – a small opening. Remember it began as a minute crack in the door. The narrator said, “*We saw most of those people striking at us with their swords on the Day of Nahrawan alongside the Khawarij.*” They were trying to kill the Companions with their swords. This is proof that even if *bid’ah* begins as something small, it is the gateway to entering into enormous misguidance. Look at this affair: it began with pebbles and it resulted in them actually raising their swords in battle, attempting to kill the Companions.

A person should not deem this as something strange. Why is that? Because ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud said, “*You are opening the door to misguidance*” and the individual persisted in debating by saying, “*We*

only wanted good” to which ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud replied, “*Not everybody who wants good reaches it.*” Then, ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud warned them by mentioning the *khawaarij* and illustrated to them the path of the *khawaarij*²⁴. He said, “*I think that most of you are from them*”. The affair then ultimately resulted in exactly what ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud mentioned.

After some discussion and debate, ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud issued a ruling which they contested with their doubts about the affair, to which ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud refuted with clear evidence. Then ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ud reminded and warned them about those people who are in opposition to the *Sunnah* and the consequences of such opposition. He warned them against their methodology and way of argumentation whilst proving the illicit nature of what they were doing and informed them that this was the way of the *khawaarij*. Despite this, they remained steadfast in what they were upon until they eventually sided with the *khawaarij* in fighting against the Companions.

²⁴One recognizable attribute of the *Khawaarij*, both past and present, is that they do not follow the Companions of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) or the ‘*Ulamaa*’ and this is something scholars, past and present, noted as a reason and proof of their deviations.

The Conclusion: The Decisive Manner In Which The Sahabah Dealt With The People of Innovation in The Religion

Look at the language of the *Sahabah* whilst dealing with these kinds of people. Also, pay attention to the way in which the *Sahabah* invited towards good and gave people advice. Look at those who were in opposition to the *Sunnah*, what was their affair? What was the result of this perceivably trivial matter they were engaging in? When we contemplate on the example of what transpired and the present day *khawaarij*, we do not see any of the *khawaarij* being from the major scholars (*kibaar ‘ulamaa’*)²⁵ nor do we know of anybody from amongst the people of knowledge or those who are unwavering upon the *Sunnah* to be with them. It is the same path; the *khawaarij* see themselves as being upon good and view themselves as being better (than everyone else).

To this day, they remain upon (the falsehood) that the *Khawaarij* of old were upon. This is because the Prophet (ﷺ) said that in each era or period, their horn will manifest itself and then it will be

²⁵During one of our classes (13/11/2008) with *Shaykh* Muhammad Bin Ramzaan Al-Haajiri (حفظه الله) in the book *Ash-Shari’ah* by *Imaam* Al-Aajoori *hadith* numbers (49,50,51) (of which *Shaykh* Al-Albaani considered similar *hadith saheeh* in the *Sunnah* of Ibn Abi ‘Aasim (no. 938) which all revolve around the *hadith* of the young man who entered into the *masjid* and saw himself as being better than everyone else present including the Prophet (ﷺ), Abu Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Ali to the extent that the Prophet (ﷺ) asked him, “I ask you by Allah, did you not say to yourself when you appeared before us, ‘There is no one here better than me?’ to which he replied, “Allaahumma yes!” One salient feature of this narration is that no one from amongst the *Sahabah*, including the Prophet (ﷺ), knew him, to which *Shaykh* Muhammad commented, “This is a characteristic of the *khawaarij* because they do not sit with the ‘*Ulamaa*’ just like this *khaariji* did not sit to learn from the Prophet (ﷺ) or his Companions.”



severed. The *Dajjaal* will appear from amongst them and they will be from amongst the army of the *Dajjaal*²⁶. In addition, all of them are *dajjaals* in their own way.

May Allah grant us beneficial knowledge and righteous actions.

This is the explanation of what is contained in this *hadith*. With Allah is our success and peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad.

The Summary of The Benefits Contained in The Hadith in Point Form

Benefits contained in this *hadith*

- This *hadith* is considered a foundation of the *Salaf* concerning dealing with the people of *bid'ah* and those is opposition to the Prophetic *Sunnah*.
- Waiting for the *Ameer*, elder or scholar in a group is a gesture of respect.
- Sitting and waiting at the door of a scholar is not considered humiliating one's self; rather it is a gesture of good manners and respect.
- Calling someone by his *kunyah* is respectful and was practiced by the *Sahabah*.
- If a person witnesses an innovated action, he must notify those in authority.

²⁶ On the authority of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattaab (رضي الله عنه) that he heard the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) say, “Every time their horn appears, it is cut, more than twenty times, until the Dajjal appears from their army.” [Shaykh Al-Albaani declared it *saheeh* in *Silsilah As-Saheehah* (no. 2,455)]

- Standing for scholars, rulers, parents, etc. is not considered blameworthy or going to excess in respecting them.
- The individual must ask those who are more knowledgeable than he is concerning issues he has no knowledge of or is unsure of.
- The basic principle is that there is proof for gathering in the *masjid* (to read, study, etc.) but if what one is engaging in is not in accordance to the *Sunnah*, it becomes a reprehensible action (*bid'ah*) despite the fact that there may be proof for it in the broad general sense. This is why Abu Musaa did not sit with those individuals. Likewise, an individual is not to sit with the people of *bid'ah* even if it is in the *masjid*, as the Angels do not attend these gatherings of *bid'ah*.
- The narration concerning those who gather for the remembrance of Allah (studying, reciting *Qur'aan*, etc.) pertain to the gatherings of the people of *Ahlus Sunnah* and not the gatherings of the people of *bid'ah*.
- The *Sahabah* would remember the reality and closeness of death and remind each other of this fact.
- One of the reasons for the appearance of *bid'ah* is leaving off taking knowledge from the scholars.
- The guidance of the Companions is correct and is *the* example for *Muslims* to follow; leaving what the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions were upon is indicative of impending danger.
- The person of *bid'ah* judges his actions as being good and something bringing him closer to Allah; therefore, he does not repent from these evil acts.

- Ibn Mas’ud refuted the *bid’ah* of this group and their claim that they sought to get closer to Allah with their sincerity by explaining the importance of following the Prophet’s (ﷺ) guidance and that following the *Sunnah* is the second condition that must be fulfilled in order for an act of worship to be accepted.
- The response of the individual from this group was not that of the *Sunni* who upon hearing the proofs and evidences, submits to them and follows the correct guidance without being obstinate.
- The outcome of this group was that they fought alongside of the *khawaarij*, trying to kill the Companions thus illustrating the fact that *bid’ah* begins as something small and escalates to the extent that an individual may even leave the religion.
- The present day *khawaarij* are just like their predecessors in that they are not known for knowledge or having studied with the people of knowledge and they are not considered to be from amongst the major scholars who are referred to in issues of religious knowledge.