

The Salafi Da'wah with Respect to Other Groups

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I will say a true word after which no Muslim can argue after the truth appears to him. Firstly, the Salafee da'wah is an ascription to what? 'Salafee' is an ascription to the 'Salaf' (pious predecessors), so we have to know who the Salaf are and then what this ascription means and its importance as regards its meaning and implication.

The Salaf are the people of the first three generations whom the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) declared to be good in the authentic and mutawaatir hadeeth recorded in al-Bukhaaree and Muslim and others from a group of the Companions that he said: "The best of people is my generation, then those who come after them, then those who come after them.", i.e the first three generations. So the Salafees attach themselves to the Salaf, and if we know the meaning of 'Salaf' and 'Salafee' then we should bear two things in mind.

That this attachment is not to a single person or persons, as is the case with other Jamaa'ahs present in the Muslim world. This is not an attachment to a person or even tens of people, but to that which will not err, since it is impossible that the Salaf would unite upon error, as opposed to the people of later times, since the later generations, with regard to text speaking in their favour, rather, in general, there is no ill of in the end of the they are spoken previous hadeeth: "Then there will come a people who give witness and their witness is not asked for...", and in other ahaadeeth there occurs: "A group of my Ummah will not cease to be upon the truth..."

Haafidh Ibn Katheer said in explanation to verse no 71 of Soorah Bane Israaeel ("And remember) the Day when We shall call together all human beings with their (respective) Imaam" "Some of the Salaf have said this is the greatest virtue of the Ashaabul-Hadeeth (ie the people of Hadeeth) that their Imaam will be Prophet (ﷺ)" (Tafseer Ibn Katheer 4/164)

So this is a praise for them but a censure of the rest since the praise is for a particular small group. Linguistically, 'Taa'ifah' is used to refer to a single person or more.

Thus if we understand this meaning of the 'Salafees' and that they attach themselves to the Salaf- and that if the Muslim clings to that which the Salaf were upon - then here we come to the second matter:

That after this is understood, it is not possible for any Muslim but to be a Salafee, since we have understood that in attaching oneself to the Salaf one has attached himself to that which cannot err. This is taken from the hadeeth: "My Ummah will not unite upon error,"

and it is not correct to refer this to the people of later ages; those present today.

In addition to that is the ahaadeeth referring to what happened to the previous peoples - the Jews and the Christians - and what will befall the Muslims, regarding splitting into sects, saying: *“The Jews split into seventy-one sects and the Christians into seventy-two, and my Ummah will split into seventy-three sects. All of them are in the Fire except one.”* The Companions said, *“Who are they, O Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ)?”* He (ﷺ) replied *“They are the Jamaa’ah.”* This shows who is meant in the previous hadeeth *“My Ummah will not unite upon error”* since they are the saved sect, along with those who have their outlook and follow them.

Those Salafus-Saaliheen are those whom Allaah has warned us against opposing them or against following a way other than theirs, saying:

If anyone contend with the Messenger even after guidance has been plainly conveyed to him, and follows a path other than that becoming to men of faith, We shall leave him in the path he has chosen, and land him in Hell - what an evil refuge! [Sooratu-Nisaa aayah 115]

I have many times pointed out to our brothers the wisdom of our Lord’s attaching in this aayah ‘the following of a way other than that of the believers’ to ‘the opposing of the Messenger’, what is the wisdom in that, since even if the aayah did not contain the part about following a way other than that of the believers, then the first part about opposing the Messenger (ﷺ) would have been enough to earn the person the evil end mentioned. However, it is not possible that the second part has no relevance, and we seek Allaah’s refuge from such a thing. Its wisdom is shown by Imaam ash-Shaafi’ee’s using it as a proof of Ijmaa’ - meaning: ‘He who takes a way other than that of the Companions’ - who are unerring - and they and those who follow them are the Jamaa’ah whom the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) declared to be the saved sect.

Imaam Qutaibah Ibn Saeed said, “When I see someone loving the Ahlul Hadeeth then he is on the Sunnah” (Sharf Ashaabul Hadeeth no.143 and it’s chain is authentic)

They are those whom it is not permissible to oppose - for one who wishes to be saved from Allaah’s punishment on the Day of Resurrection. Therefore the Muslims have to be aware today, who are the Muslims mentioned in this aayah? And then, what is the wisdom in Allaah’s intending the Salafus-Saalih and those who follow them? The answer has preceded and is, in brief, that they are the Companions who were present when the revelation came down, and who took it direct from the mouth of the Messenger (ﷺ). They saw the Messenger (ﷺ) living among them following the revealed rulings of the Qur’aan, many of whom were explained by his (ﷺ) sayings.

However, the later peoples do not have this excellence - that they heard the Qur’aan and the Sunnah direct from his mouth - nor did they see how he (ﷺ) followed the texts of the Qur’aan and the Sunnah his practice, and from the wisdom is his (ﷺ) saying: *“Being informed is not like seeing for yourself.”*

So those who did not see him are not like his Companions who saw him and heard his words directly and saw how he acted. Today there is a very nice saying which some people are distinguished by - but it would be nicer if put into practice. They say in their speeches and lectures, “that it is upon us to make Islaam take practical shape upon the earth.” However, if we do not understand Islaam, and understand it according to the understanding of the Salafus-Saalih, then we cannot put this saying into practice. But those who were able to do that were the Companions of the Messenger (ﷺ) due to the two reasons that we have mentioned:

- a) That they heard his words directly and therefore their retention of it is better than ours;
- b) Then there are affairs which need explanation through his (S) action, and they saw that.

I will give you a very clear example. There are some verses in the Qur’aan which a Muslim cannot understand unless he knows the Sunnah, which explains the Noble Qur’aan, as Allaah ta’aalaa says:

“We have revealed the Reminder to you in order that you may explain to the people what has been revealed to them...” (Soorah an-Nahl 16:43)

Allaah ta’aala’s saying:

“The male and the female thief: Cut off their hands” (Soorah

Imaam Ismaaeel bin Muhammad bin Fadhal al-Asbaabaneesaid, “Mention the Ahlul Hadeeth as they are the group upon the truth until the hour is established.” (al-Hujjah Fee Bayaan al-Muhajjah Wa Sharh Aqeedah Ahlus Sunnah 1/246)

al-Ma’idah 5:38)

Let us produce the scholar of the ‘Arabic of this age and let him explain

Seebawaih (a great language of early times) this aayah. Language

wise he will not be able to define the ‘saariq’ (thief) nor the ‘yad’ (hand). Who is the thief whose ‘yad’ is to be cut? What is the ‘yad’ that should be cut? He cannot answer! In the language anyone who steals even an egg is a thief, and the ‘yad’ goes right up to the shoulder. The answer lies in the aayah mentioned previously: **We have revealed the Reminder to you.** The answer is found in the explanation of the Messenger (ﷺ) for the Qur’aan. That explanation is found in the practice - for this and for many other aayaahs. He who reads the ‘science of Usool’ finds that there is ‘General and Particular’, ‘Unrestricted and Restricted’ and ‘Abrogating and Abrogated’ texts - comprehensive words under which come tens if not hundreds of texts, general texts restricted by the Sunnah - and I will not prolong this further in order to answer the rest of the questions.

The Way of The People of Hadeeth and Their Being Closest to the Truth

Perhaps some of the people find it unusual that these scholars have explained the “Taa’ifah Al-Mansoorah” (Victorious Party) and the “Firqah An-Naajiyah” (Saved Group) as being the scholars of Hadith. But there is no strangeness in that sharh if we recall the following:

One: The scholars of Hadith are without exception the most knowledgeable of the Sunnah of the Prophet, his guidance, manners, battles, etc. (may peace and blessings be upon him.) This is due to their particular study of the Sunnah and whatever is connected to it from knowing the biographies of the narrators and stories behind the Hadith.

Two: The nation has divided into groups and schools of thought that are not found in the first Muslim generation. For all of these mathaahib (schools of thought) are separate principles, branches, and certain ahadith that that specific mathab (school of thought) uses as daleel (proof) and depends on. The one who follows one particular school of thought is fanatically engaged in it, and holds tightly to it without taking a look at the other schools of thought. Although he should look because perhaps he will find in them what he does not find in his own.

What is confirmed with the scholars is that in every mathab exists information of the Sunnah that is not found in other mathaahib.

Imaam Bukhaari said concerning the victorious group, "ie they are the Ahlul Hadeeth." Masalah al-Ihtijaaj Baa ash-Shaafi'ee Lil-Khateeb (pg.47), The chain is authentic, al- Hujjab Fee Bayaan al-Mubajjab (1/246)

Thus, the one who holds on to only one mathab will be ignorant of a magnificent other side of the Sunnah that is preserved in other madhaahib. But the

scholars of hadeeth are not upon this. For they take any hadith that has been authentically confirmed on the Prophet through an authentic chain of narrators regardless of the madhab it was reported by. They accept it from the person regardless of what group he was a part of so long that he is a trustworthy Muslim that can be depended on for narrations of hadith. Additionally, authentic Hadeeths cannot be rejected from someone even if he was a communist, Qadari, or Khaariji, so how much more so from someone who considered himself a Hanafi (person who particularly follows the school of thought of Imam Abu Haneefah) or Maaliki (person who particularly follows the school of thought of Imam Malik) or other than that. Indeed Imaam Ash-Shafiee made this clear, may Allah be pleased with him, when he spoke with Imaam Ahmad and said: "You are more knowledgeable of the ahadith than me. So if the authentic hadith comes to you, inform me of it so that it would be my position, regardless if the reporter is from al-Hijaz, Koofah, or Misr."

Thus, Ahlul Hadeeth (People of Hadith), may Allaah gather us with them, do not fanatically blind follow the statement of one person no matter how high this person was. This method is contrary to other than them from those who do not associate themselves or their actions with the Hadeeth. Indeed those people fanatically blind follow the statement of the scholars when the scholars themselves warn them of that. Those people blind follow these statements to the same degree the people of Hadeeth are zealous in accepting the statement of their Prophet. So there is no amazement after this clear explanation that the People of Hadeeth are the Victorious Party and the Saved Sect, rather, they are the middle-grounded nation, and the witnesses over the creation.