

AHaramain

ONLINE NEWSLETTER



Sound Knowledge Precedes Correct Action
Vol 1 Issue 1 June 1997

Peace Be Upon Those Who Follow Right Guidance



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Tell us what you think. All comments or suggestions are welcome!



A Word From The Editors

Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah and His blessings

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first issues of what we pray will be a regular feature of Alharamain Foundation's World Wide Web Site.

Our desire is to present a clear and accurate picture of the way of life claimed by over a billion people of this planet, Insha-Allah. We are not out to examine the wide range of cultures that exist across the Muslim nation nor every manifestation of Muslim practice. Rather, our presentation will be of the unifying common culture of every believer... Islam.

We plan to publish regular features of broad interest to all Muslims, and perhaps non-Muslims as well. Our policy is to provide evidence and references grounded within the most reliable and trustworthy foundations of Islam, most important being the Holy Book, the Qur'aan, and the collections of the most authentic statements, actions, and reports of the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam).

Crucial to understanding these two sources is knowing what the early generations of the Muslims understood regarding them, foremost being the generation of the Prophet himself (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and those who adhered to their creed in later generations.

All this has a basis in the Noble Qur'aan in the Chapter named An-Nisaa or the Women, in the 115th aayah or verse which is interpreted thusly: And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger after the path has been shown clearly to him and follows other the believer's way, We shall keep him in the path he has chosen and burn him in Hell, what an evil destination.

In this powerful and stark ayaah are several foundations. One: The necessity of adhering to the way of Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and those who first believed in him (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) This is not merely due to their physical proximity to the bringer of the Message, but moreso because they believed in the implemented what he brought. Two: That each person has choice to follow or not the correct path and that the correct path is clear and therefore the dire consequence of choosing the wrong path are made equally clear.

The core of our newsletter/magazine consists of articles in our Minhajus-Sunnah or Methodology of the Sunnah section; understanding of the Noble Qur'aan in the Understanding Al-Qur'aan section; beliefs and precepts of Islam in the Aqeedah or Beliefs section; proper implementation of Islam in the Fataawa or Islamic Rulings section.

Finally, topical areas will be dealt with in the Feature article. This first issue focuses on the foundations of each of these areas and their importance. We hope that the reader will perceive a continuity and consistency that can later be used as a source of reference.

We hope to make our publication as easy to use as possible along with being generally useful. We envision both positive growth and change with each issue beginning with this maiden offering and we hope that you grow along with us, Insha-Allah. You can assist us with your comments, suggestions, and requests via Alharamain's E-Mail address.

Our overall aims are namely, to take the message of Islam to as many people as possible and provide an impetus for Muslims to more strongly adhere to their faith through increasing their Islamic knowledge. The results of this adherence will be the further spread of the Islamic message, Insha-Allah.

May Allah bless and reward you all. We ask for your prayers as we undertake this journey on the information superhighway, that our small voice will heard loudly in the din of the traffic and that those who hear it are guided to the Right Direction.



Feature

» Upon Whose Shoulders Does the Islamic Call Rest?

This nation (Ummah) of yours is prolific, devoted, and giving. One which is fertile with youth and is capable, by the Will of Allah, to compensate for the shortcomings which befall it at all times.

Nations have changed and men have departed, projects and achievements have been demolished, yet the Muslim nation continues. The destiny of Islam is tied to the entire nation and not to any one particular individual, group, organization or state. Islam is greater than all that.

The mistake is to tie the future of Islam or the Islamic Call to the destiny of one or any distinct group (jama'ah) or to the extent of the efforts or philanthropy of one or any definite personality. Nor should it be tied to the continuity of activity which we believe to be positive and constructive. Yes, there are many organizations of clear influence in forwarding the call to Islam. There are distinctive events, prominent personalities and accomplishments. However, these are not all the means current.

An outstanding personality may die and yet the Ummah lives on. Perhaps Allah will substitute persons better than him. That people will tie the progress of da'wa in a particular country or nation with the progress of a personality or personalities, no matter how great or honored he is or they are in the sight of the masses, is somewhat upsetting.

A human being is of limited age, talent and capabilities. His reasoning is subject to these limitations and he may at any time be correct or mistaken. He is likely subject to do things without any particular reasoning. He is affected by that which surrounds him whether it be society, economics, politics, or psychology and he cannot escape any of these factors.

So many people put their hands upon their hearts, namely, withholding any commitment, fearing that one door will be blocked or another way prevented or that one or any other preacher will be banned from his pulpit or one or another writer from his pen.

And so, what then? There are so many preachers, writers and callers to the faith who are working for Allah and many more doors and causes of good. Yes, there is no sin upon you to feel sad if a door of good has been shut. However, the sin would be to consider that the progress and continuity of Da'wa is alone dependent upon any such matter.

People cannot be blamed if they are affected by the stifling of a voice or the absence of a strong, honest word. They should however, be blamed if they consider that the future of da'wah has been destroyed or is finished.

The Muslim nation is providing much and is prolific enough such that if one voice goes silent, there are a thousand like others and if a preacher dies there will come a thousand more each of whom being influential and follows the right way. If our attitude is pessimistic such as previously described, we will place upon people that which they cannot bear and we will be willingly or unwittingly burying every good planted in the Ummah. Who is it that alone owns and carries the future of the da'wa and can be considered indeed as *the* da'wa, the future, or the reality? Who?

What is fair is to put each person in his natural place and within his reasonable capacity. We don't deny to anyone his proper due. However, we also don't raise anyone above his ability nor do we place upon him a burden that is far beyond his ability to bear or handle. In times of weakness and decline, if there appears to the people someone in the forefront, they lay everything on him and instead of distributing the duties and responsibilities they easily throw the matter on the shoulders of the one in focus as we have pointed out.

For this reason, we find that many activists withdraw themselves from the spotlight and quietly do so from the field merely because they cannot handle the heavy burden and hardships placed upon them that were borne under the guise of da'wah, being aware themselves that they are considered the spokespersons and the articulators of the call to Islam.

Allah the Most High states: *Every person is a pledge for what he has earned. [At-Tur 21] And He, the One who is free from all imperfection says: Every person is a pledge for what he has earned. [Al-Mudathir 38] Also: Remember the Day when every person will come pleading for himself. [An-Nahl 111] And: And We have fastened every man's deeds to his neck. [Al-Israa' 13]*

What is the scriptural text used by some of the people today that says that whoever does something must be everything himself in order to lift the responsibility off their own necks and shoulders and declare themselves free of it?

In fact, the difference between you and the one who has borne the burden is that he has done the duty that you should have taken on yourself and may Allah reward him and bless him for his knowledge. The root responsibility is a single one that is shared by you both. It is not unlikely that you possess common sense, strong memory, broad intelligence and well-rounded personality that is not possessed by many other than you. So why then do you forget yourself, refrain from such a pursuit, bury your own talents and blame someone else who has taken the burden of da'wa upon himself to the best of his ability for being inadequate here or careless there?



Aqeedah

» Tawheed: The Backbone of Islamic Belief

WHAT IS TAWHEED?

Literally Tawheed means to make something one or to call it one. In English when something is made one it is deemed to be unified. However, in Islamic terminology Tawheed means to believe that Allah is the one and only God. It is sometimes referred to as monotheism, however in the purest sense in that no other entity can in any way have the attributes or be equivalent or even in competition with Allah. All acts of worship that a person does should be to Allah or for Allah Alone. For example, prayer should only be to Allah, religious animal sacrifice should only be done in Allah's name, and fighting to establish and protect religion (Jihad). Tawheed is therefore the central concept upon which all of Islam rests.

IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF TAWHEED:

- Tawheed is the essence of Islam and the mainspring of its strength. All other laws, beliefs and commands of Islam stand firm on this foundation. Take it away, and there is nothing left of Islam.
- Tawheed is the call of all the prophets to their people. And verily We have sent among every nation a Messenger proclaiming Worship Allah Alone and avoid all false deities. (Qur'an 16:36)

- Tawheed is the only reason for the world's creation. And I created not the Jinns and Men except that they should worship Me. (Qur'an 51:56) By declaring sincere belief in Tawheed, a disbeliever will become a Muslim. Conversely, a Muslim will become a disbeliever (kaafir) if he rejects any aspect of it.
- By Tawheed we achieve salvation from Eternal punishment in the Hereafter, right guidance in this world, and forgiveness for sins. Allah states in the Qur'an: Verily Allah does not forgive associating partners with Him (shirk) however He forgives all other sins as He pleases. (Qur'an 4:48). The Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said: The worshipper's right on Allah is that He will not punish those who worship none besides Him [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]
- Whoever fulfills Tawheed will be admitted to the Garden (Al-Jannah) in the Hereafter. The Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) has stated: Verily Allah has promised that whosoever does not commit shirk shall enter Al-Jannah (the Garden in the Heaven). [Al-Bukhari]
- It is the reason for solving peoples' sadness because true happiness will be achieved if persons realize Tawheed within their heart. They will also never feel psychologically enslaved even if physically captive.
- It is the only reason for Allah's pleasure and rewards. In another aayah (verse) in the Qur'an Allah says: If you reject faith then know that Allah is in no need of you and He does not accept disbelief from His slaves. (Qur'an 39:7) Disbelief is nothing but a manifestation of shirk which is the opposite of Tawheed.
- The acceptance of all of one's religious deeds is based upon Tawheed. Allah states: Whoever accepts a religion other than Islam it shall be rejected by Allah and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers. (Qur'an 3:85). Islam is nothing if not an embodiment of the belief in Tawheed.
- Tawheed prevents man from eternally remaining in the Hellfire. The Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) stated in an authentic report: Whoever dies and has so much as a mustard seed of faith in his heart shall enter Al-Jannah.

SOURCES OF ISLAMIC 'AQEEDAH

The Qur'aan is the Revelation which Allah sent down to His Apostle Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and has been passed forth to us both in form and in content in an uninterrupted transmission. Meaning, it can be verified as coming from the lips of the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) It is the last scripture to be revealed to mankind. As the actual word of Allah in its original form in the Arabic language it is the first and foremost source of Islamic 'aqeedah Allah says: And we did not send any Messenger before you but we inspired him (saying) none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah) so worship Me. (Qur'an 21:25).

Hadeeth in Arabic has the general meaning of speech whether pertaining to religion or not. Then it took a special sense (prophetic traditions), comprising all the Prophet Muhammad's (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) speech, deeds, or tacit decisions.

In this regard, the term hadeeth and sunnah are synonymous. The Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) being the fount from which both the Qur'an and the sunnah spring was the best to explain what each and every person should believe about Allah. The Prophet ('alaihi salaam wa sallaam) stated about himself: I am the most knowledgeable of Allah amongst you and the most fearful of him. And he also stated: Every child is born on Al-Fitra (true faith of Islamic Monotheism) but his parents convert him to Judaism, Christianity or Magianism.



Understanding Al-Quran

» The Qur'aan And What It Means To Muslims

The Qur'aan is Allah's speech, not a created thing that may perish nor is it an attribute of any created thing. It is an absolute fact that Allah Himself is not created but rather He is the Creator. One of His attributes which He has informed us about through His Book is that He speaks and speech is of course with words. It is precisely because the speech and words in the Qur'aan are from Allah that the Qur'aan itself is not created. One should not be confused between this and the fact that the Words of Allah can be expressed in writing and bound within the pages of a book that human beings can read and recite. Allah states: And if anyone of the mushrikeen (polytheists) seeks your protection, then grant him protection, so that he may hear the word of Allah (the Qur'aan). [Qur'aan 9:6]

The Qur'aan was brought down by Jibreel (Gabriel) to Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and over a period of 23 years it was revealed in portions and piecemeal as circumstances warranted. Allah states: And truly this (the Qur'aan) is a revelation from the Lord of the 'aalamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists) which the trustworthy Ruh (Gabriel) has brought down [Qur'aan 26: 192-193.] And He said: And those who disbelieved say: 'Why is not the Qur'aan revealed to him all at once?'. Thus (it is sent down in parts) that We may strengthen your heart thereby. And We have revealed it to you gradually, in stages. Qur'aan 25:32

The Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) would memorize the verses he received and recite them to the companions and ordered them to write them down immediately. Whatever those expert scribes and appointed recorders wrote was checked by the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) himself. The Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) had no formal schooling and he is referred to by Allah as being ummee or illiterate. This adds to the miraculous nature of the

Qur'aan and the Prophet's (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) own statements which could not have been uttered by one such as he without divine intervention.

The Qur'aan is the last of Allah's scriptures divided into 114 Suwar (chapters) of unequal length. It starts with Surah Al-Faatiha (The Opening) and ends with Surah An-Nas (Mankind). It is one of the fundamental sources of Islamic teachings. It guards the previous revelations and reinforces the eternal truth of monotheism. The Qur'aan stands today as it first came down and it always will be. To it there has never been any addition, from it there is no omission, and in it there has occurred no corruption. Allah said: Do they not then consider the Qur'aan carefully? Had it been from other than Allah they would surely have found therein much contradictions. [Qur'aan 4:82]



Methodology Of The Sunnah (Minhaajus-Sunnah)

» The Authority Of The Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam)

Is the scope of the authority of Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) limited only to the doctrinal affairs and the matter of worship, and not to worldly affairs? By some western circles, the function of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) is restricted to correct the doctrinal beliefs of the ummah and to teach them how to worship Allah. According to them, worldly affairs are not governed by the prophetic authority. Nevertheless, the authority of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) is clearly established by the Holy Qur'aan for all people and all times.

These worldly affairs include, in the view of those who would limit the scope of the Prophet's authority, all the economic, social and political affairs which should be settled according to the expediency at each relevant time, and the Prophetic authority has no concern with them. Even if the Holy Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) gives some directions in these fields, he does so in his private capacity, and not as a Messenger. So, it is not necessary for the ummah to comply with such directions.

A report which is often misquoted to support the above-mentioned fallacious view is as follows from Imam Muslim: The blessed Companion Talha (radiallahu 'anhu) says: "I passed along with the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) across some people who were on the tips of the palm-trees. The Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) asked, What are they doing? Some people said, "They are fecundating the tree. They insert the male into the female and the tree stands fecundated". The Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said, I do not think it will be of any use.

The people were informed about what the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said. So, they stopped this operation. Then the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) was informed about their withdrawal. On this, the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) says, If it is in fact useful to them, let them do it, because I had only made a guess. So, do not cling to me in my guess. But when I tell you something on behalf of Allah, take it firm, because I shall never tell a lie on behalf of Allah. Further, According to Anas (radiallahu 'anhu), the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) has also said on this occasion, You know more about your worldly affairs.

If the ummah was to take the above-mentioned hadith literally, Islam, like some other religions would only be restricted to doctrines and rituals, and having no concern with the day-to-day affairs of the human life. Once one has observed the prescribed doctrines and rituals, he is free to run his life in whatever way he likes, not hindered in any manner by the divine imperatives. However, it is an established fact that Islam, unlike some other religions which can coincide and co-exist with the secular concept of life, is not merely a set of doctrines and rituals. Islam is a complete way of life which deals with the political, economics and social problems as well as the theological issues. Allah states in the Holy Qur'aan: O those who believe, respond to the call of Allah and His Messenger when he calls you for what gives you life (8:24).

There are vast fields in our day-to-day worldly affairs which are not directly commented upon by the Qur'aan and Sunnah, where people have been allowed to proceed according to their needs and expedience on the basis of their knowledge and experience. However, for these worldly affairs that are not directly addressed by the Qur'aan and Sunnah, the Muslim must align his decision with existing principles laid down by both, to ensure that they are guided Islamically in the performance of that affair, and most importantly, avoiding the major sin of committing shirk.

For, if Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) are to call people towards life, the affairs of life must totally be within the jurisdiction of Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam). Otherwise, vital branches of human life will always fall prey to satanic desires leading the people toward disaster.

Furthermore, none who has studied the Qur'aan can endorse that its teachings are limited to worship and rituals only. There are specific injunctions in the Qur'aan about sales, purchase loans, mortgages, partnership, penal laws, inheritance, matrimonial relations, political, social and family affairs, problems of war and peace and other aspects of worldly relations. Likewise, the Sunnah of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) also deals with the economic, social, political and legal problems in such details that voluminous books have been written to compile them. The injunctions of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah in this field (worldly affairs) are so absolute, imperative, and of mandatory nature that they cannot be imagined to be personal advises lacking any legal (divine) reference.

Finally, there are numerous verses from the Qur'aan which enjoin the obedience of Allah and the authority of the Messenger (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) upon the believers, in particular Chapter 4 Aayat 65 which says: But no, by your Lord! They could not be believers, until they make you (Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them and find in their souls no resistance against

your decisions, but accept them fully with submission. Hence, to accept the fallacy that the Prophet's (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) authority does not encompass worldly affairs, is to denounce the second source of Islamic Law, the Sunnah. This authority of the Sunnah is based on the revelation the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) received from Allah. This obedience to the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) has nowhere been limited to some particular field. It is an all-embracing obedience which requires total submission from the believers, having no exception whatsoever, neither by limiting its tenure, nor by exempting the worldly affairs from its scope.

~ Compiled from The Authority of Sunnah, by Justice Muhammad Taqi Usmani.



Fataawa (Islamic Rulings)

» Introduction To Fataawa

In this space we hope to publish rulings or verdicts, called fataawa in Arabic, and commonly called fatwas. We do this as a much needed service to assist the Muslim community in properly understanding and carrying out their religion. We must however, clarify several points as a preface to publishing any rulings. There is a widespread misunderstanding as to the nature of fataawa, how they are derived, and who gives rulings.

One of the most dangerous and wide spread of these misconceptions is that Islamic rulings are made by scholars who are out of touch with the factualities of the "real" world daily problems of Muslims and that most of what they state is out-of-date and irrelevant. Also, there is the notion that Islamic scholars arbitrarily arrive at conclusions and almost always make rulings based upon prejudice toward a particular "school of thought" or madh-hab.

The fact is that almost none of this is true in relation to the true scholar or mufti or mujtahid (those qualified to make Islamic religious verdicts). No true scholar can remain aloof to the problems of the contemporary Muslim community. We must recognize the fact that historically, there have had existed elements whose interest is to undermine the confidence of the Muslims in their scholars. Whether from among the Orientalists or even mis-educated Muslims, what assists their unproven claims is a lack of knowledge of the fundamentals of Islamic jurisprudence and its principles among the people at-large and the tremendous role and position of the scholars of the ummah.

A scholar of today, as well as in any age, must be strongly rooted in the methodology applied by previous generations. Granted, it is difficult to find any single person who is knowledgeable in

every field of life and it is impossible to state that no one is mistaken or that they do not at times refer to a particular "school of thought" as a reference base. Also factual is that genuine differences of opinions occur among scholars.

One of the beauties of Islam is that there is a corpus of information to which the scholar can always refer. Namely, the Qur'aan and the authentic sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam). We intend to publish what is required of a scholar or mujtahid in the future in order to make this issue clearer in the minds of our readers. In the meantime, we at Alharamain would like to assure you that the fataawa we publish rely upon the most trusted classical and contemporary scholars whose knowledge, methodology and insight into the needs of the Muslim community are well known, and tested.



Arabic Terminology Glossary

This brief glossary is to assist the non-Arabic speaker or reader to become familiar with some terms and statements that are commonplace among Muslims. Transliteration into English phonetic spelling is only a guide and we shall use these forms in the articles within this publication. We shall expand it in the issues to come, in shaa Allah. Consult an Arabic speaker for correct pronunciation.

1. 'alaihi salaam - An invocation of security and sanctity said in behalf of the prophets and messengers of Allah and the angels when hearing their names mentioned. Sometimes rendered (as) pl.
2. in shaa Allah - 'If Allah wills' should be said by every Muslim before undertaking any action as it is a recognition that Allah is in fact in control.
3. maa shaa Allah - 'Allah has willed' Said after the occurrence of any event, again recognizing that it was due to Allah alone.
4. radiallahu 'anhu - Allah be pleased with him. Usually said in reference to the companions of the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam upon hearing their names mentioned in recognition of the favor that Allah has bestowed upon them as the forebearers of the Islamic message. Sometimes rendered (ra) or (raa) pl. 'anhum, fem. 'anhaa, du. 'anhumaa
5. rahimahullah - 'Allah have mercy upon him' Said when remembering a deceased Muslim. fem. rahimahallah also Allahu yarhamu
6. sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam - This is an invocation of blessing that should be said upon mentioning or hearing the name of the Prophet Muhammad. It is usually translated as simply

meaning 'Peace be upon him' or 'Peace and blessings be upon him' and at times signified with (pbuh) or (saaws). It is in fact a supplication that Allah mention Muhammad to the high angels and that the angels in turn praise Muhammad before Allah. This is a form of praise and blessing to Muhammad and a request that he suffers no harm and is given a sanctified station in the Hereafter. It also makes the one who mentions it worthy of praise and reward. It is allowed to mention it for other prophets and messengers of Allah. Also 'alaihi salaam wa salaam or salawaatullahi was salaamuhu 'alaih

