

Foundations for the Islamic Awakening

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[Q]: What are the foundations that will enable the Islaamic world to arise again anew?

[A]: That which I believe, is what has been reported in the authentic hadeeth - which is a clear answer to this question, and to those questions similar to it which are asked in our present time - and that is the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam's saying:

"When you deal in 'eenah (a transaction involving usury), take hold of the tails of cows, become content with agriculture and abandon jihaad in the path of Allaah, then Allaah will permit your humiliation and He will not remove it from you, until you return to your Religion." [2]

Thus the foundation is to return to Islaam.

This very fact has been pointed out by Imaam Maalik (d.179H), rahimahullaah, in a statement transmitted from him, which is worthy of being written in gold ink: and that is his saying: "Whosoever introduces into Islaam an innovation, and holds it to be something good, has indeed alleged that Muhammad sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam has betrayed his message. Read the saying of Allaah - the Most Blessed - the Most High:

"This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you and I have chosen for you Islaam as your religion." [Soorah al-Maa'idah 5:3].

So that which was not part of the religion at that time, cannot be part of the religion today. And the last part of this Ummah cannot be rectified, except by that which rectified its first part." [3]

The last sentence is the essential part with regards to the answer to this question, since he said: "And the last part of this Ummah cannot be rectified, except by that which rectified its first part." So, just as the affair of the Arabs in jaahillyyah (pre-Islaamic ignorance) was not rectified, except by the advent of the Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam via Divine Revelation - which brought them happiness in this world and will bring them salvation in the Hereafter - then likewise, re-establishing a happy and successful Islaamic life cannot be

based upon anything other than returning to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah (the Prophetic guidance).

However, this matter is in need of some clarification, due to the presence of a multitude of Islaamic groups and parties in our midst today, each of them claiming to have set out the correct manhaj (methodology) which will bring about the Islaamic society and the rule of Islaam.

We know from the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam that the path to be taken in order to realise this objective (of bringing about the Islaamic society and the rule of Islaam) is a single path, and that is the one which Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - mentions in His saying:

"Indeed this is My Straight Path, so follow it, and do not follow other paths that will separate you from His Path." [Soorah al-An'aam 6:152].

And Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam explained this to his Companions, since:

One day he drew a straight line for them on the ground and then drew many short lines on both sides of it. He then recited the previous aayah (verse) whilst he was moving his noble finger over the straight line, and he said: "This is Allaah 's Path." He then pointed to the other lines and said: "These are other paths, and at the head of each one their is a devil calling towards it." [4]

Our Lord - the Mighty and Majestic - emphasised in another aayah this very same point which was mentioned in the previous aayah; along with the explanation of Allaah's Messenger sallullaahu 'alayhi wa sallam in the hadeeth. Allaah - the Most High - said:

"And whosoever opposes the Messenger, even after the guidance has been clearly conveyed to him, and follows a path other than that of the Believers, we shall leave him in the path he has chosen and land him in Hell, what an evil destination." [Soorah an-Nisaa 4:115].

This aayah (verse) contains a great wisdom, since He - the Most Perfect - placed the path of the Believers in conjunction with that which the Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam brought. And the fine point of this wisdom was also indicated by the Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam in the hadeeth of al-Iftiraaq (the authentic narration concerning the splitting-up of this Ummah into seventy-three sects), when he was asked about the Saved-Sect, so he replied:

"It is that which I and my Companions are upon today." [5]

So what is the wisdom in Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - mentioning the path of the Believers in the previous aayah' And what is the underlying point of Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam mentioning his Companions straight after mentioning himself, in the previous hadeeth?

The answer to this is: that these noble Companions are the very people who received the two Revelations (the Qur'aan and the Sunnah) from Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, who explained it to them directly - without an intermediary - and this is contrary to all those who came after them. And there is no doubt that the affair is as Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

"Indeed, the one present sees that which the absent one does not."[6]

This is why the eemaan (faith) of the Companions was greater than those who came after them, and this is what has been clearly indicated by the Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam in the authentic hadeeth:

"The best of mankind is my generation, then those who follow them, then those who follow them."[7]

Therefore, it is not possible for any Muslim to independently understand the Book and the Sunnah. Rather one must seek aid in understanding them by returning to the understanding of the noble Companions, who took their understanding from the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam; via his statements, his actions and his tacit approvals.

Thus, along with calling to the Book and the Sunnah, it is absolutely essential to attach to this the understanding and the practice of the Salafus-Saalih (the Pious Predecessors: the first three generations of Muslims whose excellence has been testified to in the above hadeeth); acting upon the preceding verses and hadeeth, which order clinging to the path of the Believers, which has been explained to be the path upon which the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, his Companions and those who followed them in beliefs and actions, were upon.

And here, a very important question arises, which many of the Islaamic groups and parties neglect; and that is: How does one obtain knowledge of the understanding and the practical application of the Sunnah that the Companions adhered to?

The answer to this is: that there is no way in obtaining this knowledge, except by returning to 'ilmul-hadeeth (the knowledge of hadeeth); 'ilm mustalahul-hadeeth (the science of hadeeth) and the science of al-jarh wat-ta'deel (the science of verifying the condition of the narrators) - applying its principles and its terms such that the Scholars are able to distinguish that which is authentic from the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, from that which is not.

So in ending the answer to the question, we say in the the dearest possible manner, to those who desire to bring back to Islaam its honour, strength, supremacy and rule, that you must actualise two matters:

Firstly: to bring back to the minds of the Muslims the knowledge of the Sharee'ah (Laws) of Islaam; purified from all the innovations that have entered into it, which was not part of it on the day when Allaah - the Most Blessed, the Most High - revealed His saying:

"This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you and I have chosen for you Islaam as your religion." [Soorah al-Maa'idah 5:3].

Accomplishing this matter requires a huge and tremendous effort on the part of the Muslim Scholars in all parts of the world.

Secondly: It is a must that this purified knowledge is coupled with constant and steadfast action.

Thus, the day the Muslims return to understanding their religion as the Companions of Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam understood it; and then act upon this purified Islaam in the correct manner, in all aspects of life, then that will be the day that the Muslims will rejoice at the help of Allaah and His victory. So this is what I am able to write in this short time. I ask Allaah that He grants us and all the Muslims the correct understanding of Islaam - in light of the Book, the authentic Sunnah (guidance) of His Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam and that which the Salafus-Saalih (Pious Predecessors) were upon - and that He grants us the ability to act in accordance with it. Indeed Allaah is the One who hears and responds.

Footnotes:

1. Taken from al-Asaalah magazine (11/84-87).
2. Saheeh: Related by Abu Daawood (no.3462) and al-Bayhaqee in as-Sunanul-Kubraa (5/316), from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar radiallaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by Ibn Taymiyyah in Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa (29/30).
3. Related by al-Qaadee 'Iyaadh in ash-Shifaa (2/676).
4. Hasan: Related by Ahmad (1/435) and an-Nasaa'ee (7/49), from Ibn Mas'ood radiallaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in Dhilaalul-Jannah fee Takhreejis-Sunnah (no.16).
5. Hasan: Related by at-Tirmidhee (no.2796) and al-Haakim (1/128), from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas radiallaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by al-Haafidh al-'Iraaqee in Takhreejul-Ihyaa (3/199).
6. Saheeh: Related by Ibn Sa'd in at-Tabaqaat (2/176), from 'Alee radiallaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by al-ALbaanee in Saheehul-Jaami' (no.1641).
7. Related by al-Bukhaae (5/199) and Muslim (7/184), from Ibn Mas'ood radiallaahu 'anhu.