

The Way to Salvation is Found in Holding to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah

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In the Name of Allaah, Ar-Rahmaan, Ar-Raheem...

Verily the praise is for Allaah, we praise Him, seek His Assistance and Forgiveness. And we seek refuge in Allaah from the evils of our own selves, and from the evil (outcomes) of our deeds. Whomever Allaah guides, there is no one to lead him astray; and whomever Allaah has left astray, there is no one who can guide him. And I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah alone without any partners, and I further testify that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger.

"O you who believe! Fear Allaah with the true fear He deserves, and do not die except as Muslims." [1]

"O Mankind! Fear your Lord, the One who created you from a single soul, and then created from that soul its mate, and then sent forth from the two of them multitudes of men and women. And fear Allaah the One through whom you seek (your mutual rights), and (take care of) the ties of kinship, for verily Allaah is a Watcher over you." [2]

"O you who believe! Fear Allaah and speak a word that is straight to the point. As a result, He will correct your actions and forgive your sins. And whoever obeys Allaah and His Messenger has indeed succeeded with a great victory." [3]

To proceed: Then verily the finest speech is the Speech of Allaah, and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam. And the worst affairs are the newly invented matters (in the Religion). For verily every newly invented matter (in the Religion) is an innovation; and every innovation is misguidance; and every kind of misguidance is in the Fire.

I welcome all of my children, brothers, and loved ones, to this good, blessed opportunity, that which we ask Allaah, the Blessed and Exalted, to bring benefit from, and that He makes us and all of you from those who listen to the statements (of Truth) and follow the finest of them.

In this introduction you have heard the statement of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam:

"Verily the finest speech is the Speech of Allaah, and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. And the worst affairs are the newly invented matters (in the Religion). For verily every newly invented matter (in the Religion) is an innovation; and every innovation is misguidance." [4]

The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, used to repeat this address often. It is from his jawaami' al-kalim (short, concise speech that carries extensive meanings), sallallaah 'alayhe wa sallam. It contains an incitement to hold fast to the Book of Allaah, since it is the best speech, an incitement to hold fast to the guidance of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, since it is the best guidance, and a caution against innovation, since it is the worst of all affairs.

So due to the importance of these blessed, all-inclusive, prophetic words, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, used to repeat it often so that his Companions that were listening would comprehend them and carry them to those who would come after them, following them in righteousness, so that these words would be understood by everyone that Allaah wants good for.

Based on this, I urge you to hold fast to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam; and I warn you against the newly invented matters, innovation and misguidance, as they are from the most evil of all affairs, and only with Allaah is the refuge. While, on the other hand, holding fast to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah is the best of all affairs. And this is a great principle, one guaranteed by the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam. It is a principle that was adopted by the Salaf, one that they called to, and one that they used to refute all of those who held positions contrary to what is found in the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam.

And Allaah, the Blessed and Exalted, says:

"And cling to the Rope of Allaah all together, and do not be divided." [5]

So when the entire Ummah comes together upon the Book of Allaah, they will rejoice in this life and in the Hereafter. And this took place amongst the best of generations, those whose goodness had been attested to by Allaah and His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam. For Allaah has attested to the goodness of the first generation, and furthermore He has attested to the goodness of those who followed them in righteousness from the generations that followed.

For verily those who succeeded from the second and third generations, were the best of all the generations. Why? Because they clung to the Rope of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, and held to it ever so firmly. They called to it and spread it to the furthest of lands, and thus Allaah guided the nations by way of them.

This goodness of theirs that Allaah has attested to is found in His Statement:

"The early ones, the first ones, from the Muhaajireen (those who migrated to Al-Madeenah) and the Ansaar (the residents of Al-Madeenah who received the Prophet and the Companions), and those who follow them in righteousness, Allaah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him. And for them He has prepared gardens with rivers flowing underneath." [6]

So Allaah has praised the early ones from the Muhaajireen and the Ansaar, and He has also praised those who follow them in righteousness. And it was the case that the majority of the second and third generations were upon the manhaj of the Companions, the Muhaajireen and the Ansaar, and they followed them in righteousness, and thus deserve this praise.

And the Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, said:

"The best of the people are my generation, then those who come after them, and then those who come after them." [7]

This is because they held firm to the Book of their Lord, that which is the best of all speech, and to the guidance of their Prophet, His Sunnah, that which is the best guidance...

[Read PART TWO of this article...]

FOOTNOTES (Abul-'Abbaas)

[1] Soorah Aali 'Imraan (3):102

[2] Soorah An-Nisaa' (4):1

[3] Soorah Al-Ahzaab (33):70-71

[4] Refer to the book, Khutbah Al-Haajah, by Imaam Muhammad Naasir Ad-Deen Al-Albaanee for the various wordings and routes of this hadeeth.

[5] Soorah Aali 'Imraan (3):103

[6] Soorah At-Tawbah (9):100

[7] An authentic hadeeth collected by Imaam Al-Bukhaaree (#2652) and Imaam Muslim (#6419) on the authority of 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him. ...So then it is incumbent upon all the Muslims in each and every time and place to understand these divine instructions and these prophetic directions, and they must clamp onto them firmly with their molar teeth, especially when the Ummah has become divided.

This division is something that Allaah has dispraised and warned against, something that was dispraised by His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, and something that he warned against, too.

There come a number of Verses related to the subject of holding fast to the Book and the Sunnah. They vary in their wordings, while the message is one - an order to establish oneself upon righteousness, an order to follow (the Messenger), an order to obey Allaah and His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam.

Similarly, there are a number of Verses that severely dispraise division and differing, like His Statement from these Verses mentioned:

"And do not be divided." [8]

And after this, from these Verses from Soorah Aali 'Imraan, comes His Statement:

"And do not become like those who split up and differed after the clear evidences came to them." [9]

Also, there come other Verses like Allaah's Statement, the Blessed and Exalted:

"Verily those who split up their Religion, becoming groups, then you (Muhammad) have nothing at all to do with them." [10]

They "split up their religion (far-raqoo)", and in one recitation, "Departed from their Religion (faaraqoo)." [11]

According to some of the scholars of tafseer, this Verse was revealed about the Jews and the Christians. Other scholars of tafseer, among them Aboo Hurayrah from the Companions, regarded it to have been revealed about the people of innovation and straying, those who split up their Religion, and thus deserve this severe blame from Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic. Furthermore, Allaah and His Messenger are free from them:

"You (Muhammad) have nothing at all to do with them." [10]

Meaning - You are free from them. And Allaah, the Blessed and Exalted, has declared His Allegiance to the truthful believers, and He has freed His Messenger from the people of innovation, those who cause division in this Ummah and break apart its affair. This is the case since this division carries such huge corruptive elements that harm both our religious and worldly affairs, in this life and in the Next. Thus, they deserve the Anger of Allaah, they deserve what Allaah threatens them with, and they deserve to be censured by Allaah; just as those who hold fast, follow, and obey Allaah and His Messenger deserve Allaah's great Statements of praise, a huge reward, and happiness and honor in this worldly life and in the Hereafter.

Therefore, this Book and this Sunnah are the very source of this Ummah's honor and happiness, if they hold fast to them both. And the source of misery, lowliness, and humiliation in this worldly life and in the Hereafter is in not holding fast to the Book and the Sunnah, not protecting oneself with them, and dividing the Ummah and splitting up the Religion, and "departing from it," according to some of the recitations. So they do not deserve anything from Allaah except His severe Threat, as found in the Qur'aan and in the Sunnah.

So it is upon the one who seeks (the reward from) Allaah and what is in the Next Abode to conform to these strong, forceful orders found in the Book of Allaah and in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah to hold fast to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah, and to comply with the orders and abstain from the prohibited matters, and to believe in the reports found in the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, the established authentic reports from the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam.

Furthermore, he must heed the severe warnings found in the Qur'aan and the Sunnah directed to those who disobey Allaah and disbelieve in Him. He must heed the warnings found in the texts, those promising the punishment of the Hellfire, a painful torment, for those who go against this Qur'aan and contradict Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam.

"So let those who contradict his order be warned, lest a calamity befall them, or a painful punishment." [12]

On the other hand:

"And whoever obeys Allaah and His Messenger, then they will be with those whom Allaah has bestowed blessings upon, from the Prophets, devoted believers, martyrs, and righteous. And what a good companionship they are! This is the bounty from Allaah, and Allaah is sufficient as One who knows." [13]

The former is the reward of the disobedient ones, and the latter is the reward of the obedient ones, that they will be in the company of the Prophets, devoted believers, martyrs, and righteous in gardens of delight. And Allaah's Refuge is sought from those who will be in the company of the devils that Day, freeing themselves from each other and cursing each other.

As for the believers, they will be leaning back on couches, looking at their Lord, enjoying the delights of Paradise.

So set your complete focus on being from the people of Paradise. And you will not be from its people unless you protect yourselves by following the Book of your Lord and the Sunnah of your Messenger. And I have warned you to take great caution not to contradict the Book of Allaah or the Sunnah of His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam. And I have mentioned the Verses and narrations that urge us to follow the Book of Allaah and

the Sunnah of His Messenger and to protect one's self with them. And the narrations and the Verses that warn us against not obeying Allaah, not following the Sunnah of His Messenger, and contradicting the orders of Allaah and the Messenger are many.

So upon you is to study the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah, and to gain understanding of them, in the subjects of beliefs, acts of worship, dealings, so that your life, all of it, will be based on the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam.

Our beliefs are based upon the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam. Our acts of worship are based upon the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam. Our dealings with the Muslims and non-Muslims come from the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam.

And with this, we must be from those who follow the noble Companions from the Muhaajireen and the Ansaar. We must follow them in righteousness, and thus we will deserve Allaah's Pleasure and Mercy. And whoever opposes this, then he deserves all the severe threats mentioned in the Qur'aan and the Sunnah:

"And whoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger, then verily for him is the Fire of Jahannam, he will reside therein forever." [14]

"And whoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger, and transgresses His set limits, then He will cause him to enter a Fire, and reside therein forever, and for him is a humiliating punishment." [15]

This is the threat facing the one who disobeys Allaah and His Messenger. And the Messenger has said:

"All of you will enter Paradise, except the one who refuses."

They said, "And who would refuse, O Messenger of Allaah?" He replied:

"Whoever obeys me, enters Paradise; And whoever disobeys me, then verily he has refused." [16]

The one who obeys the Messenger in what he has commanded, and abstains from what he has prohibited, by way of this obedience he has followed the Book and the Sunnah...

[Read PART THREE of this article...]

FOOTNOTES (Abul-'Abbaas)

[8] Soorah Aali 'Imraan (3):103

[9] Soorah Aali 'Imraan (3):105

[10] Soorah Al-An'aam (6):159

[11] According to the recitation of Hamzah, Al-Kassaa'ee, and Al-A'mash.

[12] Soorah An-Noor (24):63

[13] Soorah An-Nisaa' (4):69-70

[14] Soorah Al-Jinn (72):23

[15] Soorah An-Nisaa' (4):14

[16] An authentic hadeeth collected by Imaam Al-Bukhaaree (#7280), on the authority of Aboo Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him.

..And verily Allaah has informed His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, that this Ummah is going to split up and differ. So the noble Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, warned us from this painful outcome, saying:

"You are surely going to follow the ways of those who came before you, like one feather follows another on the end of an arrow, so much so that if one of them was to enter the hole of a lizard, you would also enter it." [17]

And in another hadeeth:

"You are surely going to follow the ways of those who came before you, handspan by handspan, arm's length by arm's length..." [18]

So these two texts contain a warning against following those who came before us, in one narration, they asked, "Do you mean the Jews and the Christians?" He said:

"Who else?" [19]

The Jews and the Christians are the enemies of Allaah. They perverted their religions, and began ascribing partners with Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic. The Jews said that 'Uzayr was the son of Allaah; And the Christians said that the Messiah was the son of Allaah, and that he is one of three, and, eventually, that he was Allaah Himself. With this, they became divided and differed over this affair:

"And do not be like those who split up and differed after the clear proofs came to them." [9]

And He, the Blessed and Exalted, has said:

"Those who disbelieved from the people of the Book (the Jews and Christians) and the polytheists had not split up until after the clear evidence came to them - A Messenger from Allaah reciting pure pages containing upright legislation. [20] And the people who were given the Book did not become divided until after the clear evidence came to them. And they were not ordered with anything except to worship Allaah, making the Religion sincerely for Him, purely for Him, and to establish the prayer, and to pay zakaah, and that is the upright Religion." [21]

And as is found in this Soorah:

" And the people who were given the Book did not become divided until after the clear evidence came to them." [22]

And as in Soorah Aali 'Imraan:

"...until after the clear evidences came to them." [9]

And so many of the Muslims have become divided after the greatest of clear evidences has come to them, the radiant Verses and the clear, authentic narrations. They have followed after the Jews and the Christians, splitting up, differing, and showing enmity and hatred, just like the people of the Book. And the hadeeth is applied to them:

"You are surely going to follow the ways of those who came before you, handspan by handspan, arm's length by arm's length..." [18]

So it is upon the insightful believer that he does not allow this painful reality to increase him in anything but insight and the strength of his grasp upon what the noble Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, has come with, and (he also increases) his holding fast to what the rightly guided successors were upon.

As found in the hadeeth of 'Irbaadh ibn Saariyah, may Allaah be pleased with him, "The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, had admonished us with an admonishment that struck fear in our hearts and caused our eyes to shed tears. So we said: O Messenger of Allaah! It is as if this is a farewell admonishment, so advise us (with some farewell advice). He said:

"I advise you to have consciousness of Allaah, and to hear and obey (your leaders). For verily, those of you who live long will witness much differing. So upon you is (to follow) my Sunnah, and the Sunnah of the rightly guided successors, clamp down onto it with your molars. And be aware of newly invented matters, for verily every innovation is misguidance." [23]

And in another hadeeth:

"...and every misguidance is in the Fire." [24]

[Read the final part of this article...]

FOOTNOTES (Abul-'Abbaas)

[17] I was not able to find this wording of the hadeeth.

[18] An authentic hadeeth collected by Imaam Al-Bukhaaree (#7320) and Imaam Muslim (#6723), on the authority of Aboo Sa'eed Al-Khudree, may Allaah be pleased with him.

[19] In the version collected by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim as mentioned previously.

[20] I have translated "kutubun qayyimah" from the Verse as "upright legislation" based on Al-Qurtubee's tafseer of the Verse.

[21] Soorah Al-Bayyinah (98):1-5

[22] Soorah Al-Bayyinah (98):4

[23] There are many different wordings of the hadeeth of Al-'Irbaadh ibn Saariyah, may Allaah have mercy on him. The closest one I found to what the shaykh mentioned here is the one collected by Imaam Ibn Maajah (#42). Its authenticity and numerous routes are discussed in Irwaa' Al-Ghaleel (#2455).

[24] From an authentic hadeeth collected by Imaam An-Nasaa'ee (#1578), on the authority of Jaabir ibn 'Abdillaah, may Allaah be pleased with him.

..So he has informed us about this splitting in this hadeeth and the one before it, and he has guided us to the way to escape from the ongoing cycle of differing and the fitnah of this differing and struggle, the way to escape from the midst of these contradictory sects. Every single group from them, and Allaah's Refuge is sought, rejoices over the falsehood and misguidance they have, as Allaah, the Blessed and Exalted, has said:

"Every group rejoicing with what it has." [25]

The Messenger of Allaah ordered us to withdraw from this and retreat to his Sunnah, his way and methodology, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, following the Book of Allaah and his Sunnah, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam. For verily he, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, was the most devoted of the people to this Book, and the most devoted of them in following his own statements, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam. When he ordered us with something, then he did not contradict that himself, just as when he prohibited us from things, he did not contradict his own prohibitions. Never could he have done that, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam. Thus his Sunnah was holding to the Book of his Lord and all that which Allaah inspired him with of his pure, prophetic Sunnah.

He also directed us to seek out the guidance of the rightly guided successors, those that the Messenger of Allaah had described them with "rashaad," as being upon guidance as opposed to ignorance, and called them "muhtadoon," meaning that they were rightly guided to the Truth, as opposed to being astray.

So whoever wants to be saved from ignorance and misguidance, then upon him is to hold fast to their way in the midst of all this differing that has ripped up this Ummah and caused its humiliation, and Allaah's Refuge is sought. It is due to this that Allaah has allowed the nations of disbelief, from the East and the West, to gain authority over the Ummah. Allaah has allowed them to have authority over this Ummah that has split up and differed after the clear evidences have reached it from Allaah, the Blessed and Exalted, and His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam.

So whoever wants to be saved from this dark reality, then it is upon him to hold fast to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Prophet, seeking to bring their light to this darkness, that which the people of desires and innovations are stumbling about it. For verily the one who holds to them proceeds upon guidance from Allaah, upon light and evidence from his Lord and from the Sunnah of His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam.

This is the way that leads to deliverance and salvation from the Vengeance of Allaah and His Anger, in both this world and in the Next Life. And this is the way to success in attaining His Pleasure and His Gardens that He has prepared for those who are mindful (of Him):

"A garden the width of the Heavens and the Earth, prepared for the muttaqeen. (They are) those who spend in times of ease and times of hardship, those who restrain their anger, those who excuse the people. And Allaah loves those who do good works." [26]

Why has Allaah described them with these attributes, with taqwaa, with these nice attributes? Because these attributes are taken from the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam. They (rightly guided successors) only attained these attributes by following the orders of Allaah and abstaining from things He prohibited.

These noble Verses and prophetic narrations urge us to have taqwaa and sincerity, as well as righteousness and generosity in spending in the way of Allaah. Furthermore, they urge us to be lenient and overlook (the mistakes of others), and they call for the Muslims to increase their brotherhood with other truthful Muslims, those who are holding fast to the Book of their Lord and the Sunnah of their Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam.

So be from these people who hold to the Book of their Lord, those who follow the guidance of their Prophet and the rightly guided successors, those who clamp down on this way firmly with their molar teeth, as our Messenger has advised us, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam.

And be warned against newly invented matters, those based upon the misguidance of the devil, those that the devils of Mankind and those of the Jinn call to, as the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, has informed us, when he recited Allaah's Statement:

"And verily this is My straight Path, so follow it, and do not follow the other paths, lest they separate you from My Path." [27]

The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, drew a straight line and said:

"This is the Path of Allaah."

And then he drew lines to the right and left of it, and said:

"These are other paths, there is a devil on each one of them calling to it." [28]

Allaah calls to the straight Path, and the Messengers, from them, Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, were callers to the straight Path of Allaah. And the devil and his army are the callers to these other paths. They are the ones who call to this misguidance and these stray paths, and Allaah's Refuge is sought.

The reality is that whoever holds tight to the Book of Allaah, then he is rightly guided and he traverses upon the straight Path. And the one who opposes the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, is deviant, astray, and misguided, and he traverses the path of the devil, or one of the paths that has a devil on it.

And may the Salaah of Allaah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam, the one who did not leave any good thing except that he directed us to it, nor did he leave any evil thing except that he warned us from it, sallallaahu 'alayhe wa sallam. So may Allaah reward him for his goodness to this Ummah with the best that He rewards one of His Prophets.

And may the Salaah and Salaam of Allaah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his family and Companions. Was-salaamu 'alaykum wa rahmatullaahi wa barakaatuh.

FOOTNOTES (Abul-'Abbaas)

[25] Soorah Ar-Room (30):32

[26] Soorah Aali 'Imraan (3:133-134)

[27] Soorah Al-An'aam (6):153

[28] An authentic hadeeth collected by Imaam Ibn Maajah (#11), on the authority of Jaabir ibn 'Abdillaah, may Allaah be pleased with him, and Imaam Ahmad (#4142), on the authority of 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him. Al-Albaanee declared it to be saheeh in Saheeh Sunan ibn Maajah (#11).