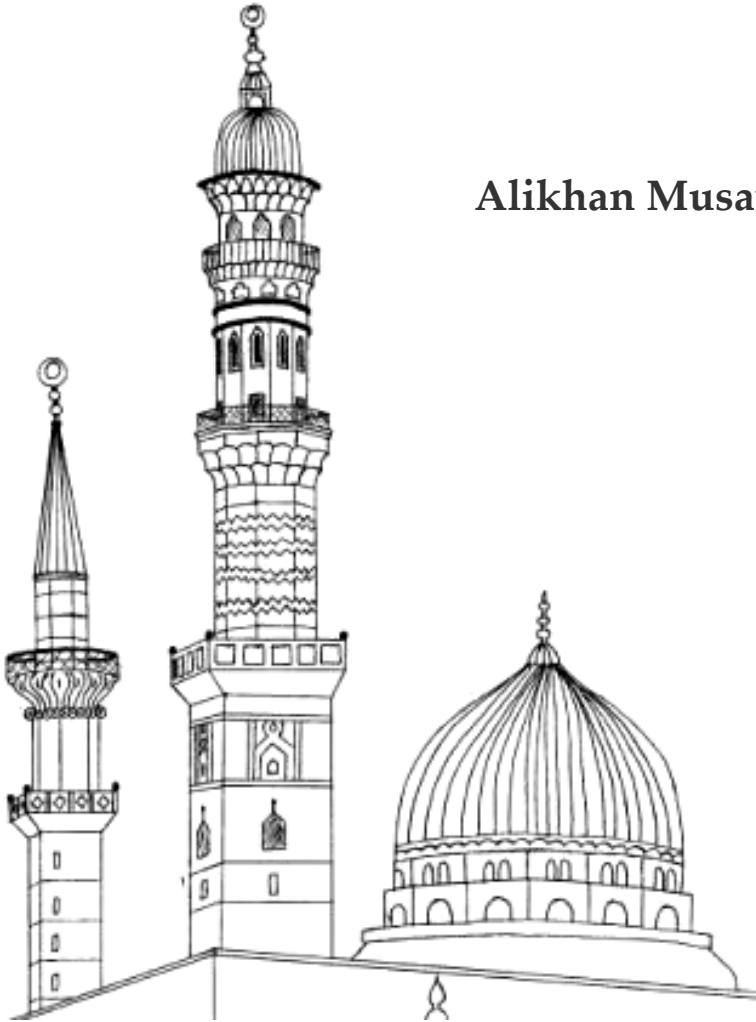


Alikhan Musayev



Salaf as-Salihin

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah,
The Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful



﴿وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ
بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

“And the foremost to embrace Islam of the Muhajirun and the Ansar and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). 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.”

Qur'an, Surah At-Tawbah, Ayah 100

Introduction

Verily all praise and thanks are due to Allah! We praise Him, seek His help, ask for His forgiveness, and pray for His guidance on the right path. We seek refuge in Him alone to be protected from the evil of our souls and our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, there is no one to lead them astray, and whoever He leads astray, no one can guide them. I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah; He is One, having no partner. And I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger.

Praise be to the Almighty Allah, who created us as Muslims, guided us to the right path, helped us live the Sunnah of our Prophet ﷺ. He is the Lord of the worlds and the Ruler on the Day of Reckoning!

Dear readers!

Our aim in writing this concise book is to clarify both the definition and the religious meaning of the word "salaf" which is widespread today and is often misunderstood by many people.

First of all, let's clarify that this word is not newly added to our language, as some might believe. Muslim writers have consistently used this term in their works.

We trust that our esteemed readers who go through this book will understand that Salafism is not a separate madhab or sect within our religion. Rather, every Muslim who considers the principles and rules of Islam as the criteria for his/her life, believes in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, performs the five daily prayers, fasts, performs Hajj and gives Zakat within their means,

regardless of their madhab (school of thought), will realize that they are one of the “salaf”.

It is very misguided for many people to deliberately portray Salafis as Khawarij or other similar heretical sects. We believe that this modest work of ours will assist our valued readers, who can always discern between truth and falsehood, in clarifying misunderstandings about this topic

We ask Allah to bless this book and make it beneficial. We beseech the Almighty Allah, the Lord of the Glorious Throne, by His beautiful names and lofty attributes, to grant us success in performing the righteous deeds that He loves and is pleased with, and to enable us to speak the truth. Indeed, Allah is the All-Hearer and the Acceptor of prayers. May Allah's blessings and peace be upon our Prophet ﷺ, his family, his companions, and their followers until the Day of Resurrection!

The meaning of the word "Salaf".

In the dictionary sense, a person whose activities came before or who lived prior to another in any field, work, or position is called a "salaf." In a narration conveying this meaning, it is reported that when the Prophet ﷺ was on his deathbed, he said to his daughter Fatimah عليها السلام:

((فَإِنَّهُ نِعْمَ السَّلْفُ أَنَا لَكَ))

"What a wonderful salaf I am for you!"¹

In this regard, it is stated in the Qur'an:

﴿فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ سَلَفًا وَمَثَلًا لِلْآخِرِينَ﴾

"And We made them a precedent (a salaf, as a lesson for those coming after them) and an example to later generations."²

In this Ayah, it is stated that Pharaoh and his adherents serve as a lesson for future generations.³

In religious sense, "salaf" refers to the Prophet ﷺ and his companions رضي الله عنهم, followed by the believers who adhere to their path.

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, 3624, 6285, 6286; Sahih Muslim, 2450; As-Sunan an-Nasai al-Kubra, 8368; Sunan Ibn Maja, 1621; Musnad imam Ahmad, 6/282.

² Surah "az-Zukhruf", 56. This book contains interpretations of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an in the English by Muhammad Muhsin Khan.

³ Tafsir Ibn Kathir, 7/232.

In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ said: “The people of my generation are the best, then those who follow them, and then those who follow the latter.”¹

It's worth noting that in this hadith (narration), the believers who lived during those times – the Sahabas (Companions) رضي الله عنهم, the Tabi'un (Followers), and the Atbaut-Tabi'in (Successors to the Followers) – are implied. However, alongside them, ahlul bid'ah groups like the Kharijites, Kadarits, Rafidhi, Mu'tazilites, and Jahmis also existed during those times. They are not regarded as pious predecessors or Salafs. Only those believers are regarded as righteous Salafs (predecessors or Salaf as-Salihin) whom Allah is pleased with and who are obedient to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. In this context, Almighty Allah says:

﴿ وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴾

“And the foremost to embrace Islam of the Muhajirun (those who migrated from Makkah to Al-Madinah) and the Ansar (the citizens of Al-Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muhajirun) and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, 2652; Sahih Muslim, 7/184-185; Sunan Ibn Majah, 2/63-64; Musnad imam Ahmad, 1/378.

(Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success."¹

It is clearly understood from this ayah that Allah is pleased with the Companions رضي الله عنهم and those who follow them until the Day of Resurrection. Hellfire awaits those who follow a different path. Almighty Allah says:

﴿وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بُيِّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصَلِّهِ ۖ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا﴾

“And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) after the right path has been shown clearly to him, and follows other than the believers' way, We shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell – what an evil destination!”²

When mu'mins (believers) رضي الله عنهم are mentioned in this ayah, the Companions رضي الله عنهم and those who follow their path are being impied. In this regard, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "Whoever lives after me will see many conflicts. As such, you must adhere to my Sunnah and that of the rightly guided Caliphs. Hold firmly to it as if biting with your molar teeth. Beware of newly invented matters in religion, for every new matter is an innovation and, every innovation is misguidance."³

In another hadith, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "My ummah will be divided into seventy-three sects, and all but one of them will enter the Fire." The Companions رضي الله عنهم asked: "Who are the

¹ Surah "at-Tawba", 100.

² Surah "an-Nisa", 115.

³ Sunan Abu Dawud, 4607; Sunan at-Tirmidhi, 266.

people of Paradise, O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet ﷺ said: **"They are the ones who follow my path and those of my companions."**¹

From this, it is clear that anyone who accepts the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet ﷺ, i.e. the authoritative ahadith as understood by the Companions رضي الله عنهم, and who fulfills what is commanded in the Qur'an and the Sunnah as they did, is considered one of those who follow the path of the righteous Salafs.

If the question is asked whether the scholars after the Companions رضي الله عنهم are considered "Salafi," we respond: "Yes, the scholars who followed the path of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رضي الله عنهم, including Abu Hanifa Numan ibn Thabit رضي الله عنه, Malik ibn Anas رضي الله عنه, Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i رضي الله عنه, Ahmad ibn Hanbal رضي الله عنه, and others, are considered the salafs of this ummah. The Hanafis, Malikis, Shafi'is, and Hanbalis, who refer to the Qur'an and Sunnah without sectarian fanaticism, are also considered Salafis who follow the path of the pious predecessors. Most of the opinions of these four madhab scholars in matters of faith and jurisprudence were the same. There is simply a difference of opinion between them on some religious issues, but this in no way diminishes their being counted among the Salafs. Thus, in any dispute between Islamic scholars, both sides are rewarded, whether their opinion is correct or incorrect.

In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ said: **"If the ruling scholar performs ijtiḥād at the time of ruling, and then the ruling is correct, he will receive two rewards. No, if he performs ijtiḥād when he gives a ruling, and then if his ruling is wrong, he will get a reward."**

¹ Sunan at-Tirmidhi, 2641; Sahih al-Jami, 5343.

In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ said: "If the ruling scholar (or a judge) performs *ijtihad*¹, meaning gives a verdict according to the best of his knowledge and his ruling is correct, he will receive a double reward, and if he gives a verdict according to the best of his knowledge and his verdict is wrong, even then he will get a reward"²

A person who is aware of this hadith and considers himself a Muslim should not hold a negative opinion of the righteous predecessors whom Allah has honored throughout the centuries, who were distinguished among people for their knowledge and who dedicated their lives to the spread of the Islamic religion. He should not criticize or despise them for any mistakes these scholars made as a result of *ijtihad*, nor should he insult them. On the contrary, he should think well of them, love them, and speak of their merits and the deeds they have accomplished. Moreover, for the religion of Islam, as stated in the Qur'an, he must always pray and say:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

"O our Lord! Forgive us and our believing brothers who came before us³, and put not in our hearts any hatred and

¹ An Islamic legal term referring to independent reasoning by an expert in Islamic law.

² Sahih al-Bukhari, 7352; Sahih Muslim, 4584.

³ When the term "our brothers" is mentioned in this ayah, it refers not only to men but also to women. In other words, by supplicating this way, we ask Allah for the forgiveness of believing men and believing women.

envy against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.”¹

If a believer sincerely prays to Allah with this supplication, Allah will not leave room in his heart for hatred or envy towards fellow believers, especially the scholars of this community. It is possible that a fatwa issued by a scholar based on ijihad may not correspond to an authentic hadith of the Prophet ﷺ. So, starting with the Companions رضي الله عنهم, none of the scholars considered themselves as infallible as the Prophet ﷺ. On the contrary, they acknowledged that their fatwas could contain errors. In this context, it would be fitting to present examples of what the four great scholars said:

1. Imam Abu Hanifa Nu'man ibn Thabit رحمته الله said: "Sahih (authentic) hadith is my madhab (school of thought)."²

He also said: "If I issue a fatwa against the Book of Allah and the ahadith of the Prophet ﷺ, do not accept that fatwa."

2. Imam Malik ibn Anas رحمته الله said: "I am just a human being. Some of the fatwas I have given are correct, and some are incorrect. Therefore, pay attention to my fatwas! Accept what aligns with the Book of Allah and the ahadith of His Prophet ﷺ, and disregard what does not."³

He also said: "The words of anyone, except the Prophet ﷺ, may be accepted today and abandoned tomorrow."⁴

3. Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i رحمته الله said: "Muslims are of the unanimous opinion that it is not halal for anyone to

¹ Surah "al-Hashr", 10.

² Ibn Abidin, al-Hashiya, 1/63; Fullani, Iqaz al-Himam, p: 62.

³ Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, al-Jami, 2/32; Ibn Hazm, Usul al-Ahkam, 6/149.

⁴ Ibn Abdulhadi, Irshadus-Salik, 1/227; Ibn Abdul-Barr, al-Jami, 2/91.

abandon the authentic hadith of the Prophet ﷺ because of someone's fatwa after he has become aware of it.¹

He also said: "If you find a fatwa in my book that contradicts the hadith of the Prophet ﷺ, follow the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and disregard my fatwa."²

He also stated: "A sahih hadith is my madhab."³

4. Ahmad ibn Hanbal رحمه الله said: "Do not make taqlid⁴ of me, (don't imitate)! Don't imitate Malik, Shafi'i, Awza'i, or Thawri! Cite the source they cite!"⁵

The term "Salafism" refers to those who follow the path of the scholars (Companions) of the early period in matters related to the foundations of faith, particularly the names and attributes of Allah. They are content with the apparent meanings of the statements in the ayahs and ahadith and accept them as they are, without likening Allah to a creature or considering Him to be a body (avoiding tashbih and tajsim (corporealism or anthropomorphism)). This term also defines the Ahli-Sunna wal-Jamaa, who do not reinterpret the names and attributes of Allah to have different meanings. The Salafi jama'ah (community), also described as "Ahl-i-Sunna Khassa," are those who follow the path taken by the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رضي الله عنهم in matters of faith.

¹ Fullani, Iqadh al-Himam, p: 68.

² Al-Harawi, Dham al-Kalam, 3/47/1; Nəvəvi, əl-Məcmu, 1/63.

³ Nawawi, al-Majmu, 1/57; Fullani, Iqadh al-Himam, p: 107.

⁴ Taqlid: imitating someone else's actions, manner of speaking, and other characteristics in an effort to be like them, effectively impersonating them.

⁵ Fullani, İqaz əl-Him Iqadh al-Himam, p.113; Ibn al-Qayyim, İlam al-Muwaqqi'in, 2/302.

Of course, the madhab imams, great mujtahids, and hadith scholars are considered Salafists. Imam Shafi'i, Malik, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and, according to some views, Abu Hanifa, along with ijtiḥad imams such as Awzai and Sufyan al-Thawri, as well as Muhaddithat (hadith scholars) like Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Darimi, Ibn Manda, Ibn Qutayba, and Bayhaqi, are all leading figures of the Salafi i'tiqaad (conviction). Great scholars like Tabari, Khatib al-Baghdadi, Tahawi, Ibn al-Jawzi, and Ibn Qudama are also considered prominent representatives of Salafism.

The most distinctive feature of the Salafist concept in the early period was the avoidance of relying on human reasoning in matters of faith, instead being content with the ayahs and ahadith as they were. They refrained from interpreting ayahs and ahadith with unclear meanings and left their interpretation to Allah, as only Allah knows their true meanings.¹ In summary, it is important for every believer to study the two main sources of Islam, the Qur'an and the Sunnah, in order to refer to them correctly. In this regard, the Qur'an says:

﴿مَنْ يُطِعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ﴾

“He who obeys the Messenger, has indeed obeyed Allah.”²

﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا

فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

¹ “İlmihal İman vâ İbadetler”, Volume 1, p.24, “Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları/323, Ankara 2006”.

² Surah “an-Nisa”, 80.

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad ﷺ) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.”¹

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا﴾

“It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed into a plain error.”²

﴿وَمَا آتَاكُمْ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا﴾

“And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it)!”³

﴿فَإِنْ تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا﴾

“(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.”⁴

¹ Surah “an-Nisa”, 65.

² Surah “al-Ahzaab”, 36.

³ Surah “al-Hashr”, 7.

⁴ Surah “an-Nisa”, 59.

Usage of the term “Salaf” throughout history

Dear readers!

It is important to acknowledge that all the prophets ﷺ sent by Allah and their followers were Muslims. In this regard, the Qur'an states:

﴿هُوَ سَمَّكُمْ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا﴾

“It is He (Allah) Who has named you Muslims both before and in this (the Qur'an).”¹

Prophet Nuh (Noah) ﷺ said to his people:

﴿وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

“I have been commanded to be of the Muslims (i.e. those who submit to Allah's Will)”²;

When Allah said to Ibrahim (Abraham) ﷺ:

﴿إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“Submit (i.e. be a Muslim)!” He said, “I have submitted myself (as a Muslim) to the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists).”³

¹ Surah “al-Hajj”, 78.

² Surah “Yunus”, 72.

³ Surah “al-Baqarah”, 131.

﴿وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَبْنَئِي إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ

إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

“And this (submission to Allah, Islam) was enjoined by Ibrahim (Abraham) upon his sons and by Ya'qub (Jacob) (saying), "O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the (true) religion, then die not except in the Faith of Islam (as Muslims – Islamic Monotheism)!”¹

Prophet Yusuf عليه السلام supplicated in this way:

﴿رَبِّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ ۚ فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ

وَالْأَرْضِ أَنْتَ وَلِيِّ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ﴾

"My Lord! You have indeed bestowed on me of the sovereignty, and taught me something of the interpretation of dreams – the (Only) Creator of the heavens and the earth! You are my Wali (Protector, Helper, Supporter, Guardian, God, Lord.) in this world and in the Hereafter. Cause me to die as a Muslim (the one submitting to Your Will), and join me with the righteous."²

And Musa (Moses) عليه السلام said:

﴿وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يُقَوْمُ إِن كُنْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ فَاعْلَمْتُمْ تَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُسْلِمِينَ﴾

¹ Surah "al-Baqarah", 132.

² Surah "Yusuf", 101.

"O my people! If you have believed in Allah, then put your trust in Him if you are Muslims (those who submit to Allah's Will)."¹

And Sulaiman (Solomon) عليه السلام said:

﴿وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ﴾

"Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we were submitted to Allah."²

Al-Hawariyyun (the disciples) said to 'Īsa (Jesus) عليه السلام:

﴿ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

"We believe in Allah, and bear witness that we are Muslims (i.e. we submit to Allah)."³

And Muhammad عليه السلام said:

﴿وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَأَنْ أَتْلُوَ الْقُرْآنَ﴾

"I am commanded to be from among the Muslims (those who submit to Allah in Islam)... and that I should recite the Qur'an."⁴

On the Day of Resurrection, Allah Almighty will remind some of His servants that they are Muslims and will admit

¹ Surah "Yunus", 84.

² Surah "an-Naml", 42.

³ Surah "Alee-Imran", 52.

⁴ Surah "an-Naml", 91-92.

them into Jannah (Paradise). On that day, it will be said to them:

﴿يَعْبَادِ لَا خَوْفَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ﴾

“My worshippers! No fear shall be on you this Day, nor shall you grieve. (You) who believed in Our Ayat (proofs, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and were Muslims (i.e. who submit totally to Allah’s Will, and believe in the Oneness of Allah). Enter Paradise, you and your wives, in happiness!”¹

During the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and then during the caliphates of Abu Bakr and Omar رضي الله عنهما, Muslims were united as a community, and at that time, everyone was content to simply say, "I am a Muslim." However, starting from the latter period of the caliphate of Osman ibn Affan رضي الله عنه, various sects began to emerge, such as the Khawarij, Qadariyyah (Kadarites), Mu'tazilites, Rafidah, and Jahmis. Scholars on the right path declared that these sects were misguided and emphasized that the true path is that of the Companions رضي الله عنهم. To distinguish themselves from these sects, they affirmed, "The right path is the path of the righteous / pious predecessors (Salaf as-Salihin)." Consequently, the scholars referred to the Companions رضي الله عنهم and their followers as the "Salaf as-Salihin". Over time, the term "salaf" has been preserved and has reached our modern era.

¹ Surah "az-Zukhruf", 68-70.

Unfortunately, some of those who call themselves Salafists in many countries today do not follow the path of the Salafs, as implied by Islamic scholars. They gather around them only Muslims who support their opinion, and they scowl at other Muslims, especially those who follow other madhabs. Even those who have gone to extremes among them harbor enmity towards other Muslims, refusing to fulfill the rights of a Muslim brother, such as greeting with “salam”, visiting when sick, participating in funerals, accepting invitations, and so on. And the strangest part is that they call this "Salafism." Such people choose one of their own as a "leader" and blindly imitate him, deny all the opinions that are against his opinion, and even consider those who are not liked by that leader as “ahlul-bid’ah” (people of (religious) innovation), thus they become a sect without realizing it. Pay attention, someone claims, “I do not follow any sect, I am a Salafist”, yet ironically, his stance becomes one of conformity.

However, the Salaf as-Salihin were always humble and respected the ijthihad opinions of the scholars who were on the path of the predecessors – Abu Hanifa Numan ibn Thabit رحمته الله, Malik ibn Anas رحمته الله, Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i رحمته الله, Ahmad ibn Hanbal رحمته الله and others. In this regard, let's take some examples from our righteous Salafs:

– Ibn Abu-Dunya narrates that once there was a dispute between Sa’d and Khalid رحمته الله. Someone reprimanded Khalid in the presence of Sa’d. Then Sa’d ordered him to be silent and said: "The disagreement between us has nothing to do with our religious brotherhood."¹

¹ Al-Samt Wa-Hifz Al-Lisan, p. 137.

– It is narrated that Yunus al-Saqafi said: "There was a difference of opinion between me and Shafi'i on one issue. One day we met on the road and he took my hand and said: "O Yunus, our difference of opinion cannot prevent us from being brothers!" Indeed, he was one of the smartest people I've ever met."¹

– It is recounted that in one of the gatherings, Ahmad ibn Hanbal رحمته الله specifically extolled the virtues and morals of Shafi'i رحمته الله, offering praise and supplication for him. Upon hearing this, some of those in the gathering told him that there were others present who did not like Shafi'i. In response, Ahmad ibn Hanbal رحمته الله said: "Be aware that when Almighty Allah grants knowledge to someone while withholding it from others, they envy and slander him. How bad is this trait among people of knowledge!"²

In another narration, it is reported that Ahmad ibn Hanbal رحمته الله praised Ishaq ibn Rahuya and said: "No scholar comparable to Ishaq has ever come to Khorasan. The difference in opinion between him and us is akin to the typical divergence that always exists among scholars."³

– Zahabi (al-Dhahabi) رحمته الله narrates that despite the differing opinions between Muhammad ibn Sallam رحمته الله and Abu Hafs al-Umayy رحمته الله, they loved each other very much, fostering a warm relationship between them.⁴

– According to reports, Wakiy ibn al-Jarrah رحمته الله, a scholar of Makkah, narrated a hadith concerning the Prophet's ﷺ demise. Some of the Hashemites did not like this hadith and

¹ Siyar A'lam al-Nubala', 10/16.

² Siyar A'lam al-Nubala', 10/45-58.

³ Siyar A'lam al-Nubala', 11/371.

⁴ Siyar A'lam al-Nubala', 10/630.

complained to the governor of Makkah, who imprisoned Waqiy ibn al-Jarrah. When Sufyan al-Thawri رحمته, who had his own disputes with Waqiy ibn al-Jarrah رحمته, came to the governor of Makkah and reminded him of Waqiy ibn al-Jarrah's رحمته standing among the people and requested his release. The governor fulfilled Sufyan al-Thawri's رحمته request and released him."¹

All these are among the hundreds of narrations that describe the warm relationships among the Salaf. To emulate their morality, we should read and study their way of life and adhere strictly to the Quran and Sunnah, just as they did. Malik ibn Anas رحمته has a wonderful advice in this regard: "The later generations can only be reformed² by what reformed³ the earliest people of this Ummah."

By the way, we want to emphasize that we follow the path of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf As-Salihin) and are therefore proud to be Salafists. I give many praises to my Lord for choosing us from among millions of people and guiding us to this path, as well as for giving us the opportunity to learn Islam and teach it to others. This is a great blessing. The Prophet ﷺ gave good tidings to those who achieved this blessing and said: **"Whoever Allah wants to bestow good upon, He gives them a correct understanding of the religion of Islam."**⁴

In another hadith, he said: **"The best among you (Muslims) are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it to others."**⁵

¹ Siyar A'lam al-Nubala', 9/159.

² Qaidatul-Jaliyya, p: 53-62.

³ That is, by following the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

⁴ Sahih al-Bukhari, 71.

⁵ Sahih al-Bukhari, 5027.

If anyone has gained even the slightest benefit from the Salafi dawa we have preached, and if future generations also derive good from it, then we are truly fortunate. For this, we praise Allah and ask that our actions be solely for His pleasure.

That's why we praise Allah and ask Allah that our actions are performed solely to gain His pleasure!

If any Muslim idolizes a personality by saying: "I only listen to such-and-such a scholar," or "I do not accept anyone except a student of such-and-such knowledge," then what is the difference between him and someone who blindly makes taqlid (*uncritical acceptance of a particular religious teacher*) of any scholar?! On the contrary, a person who engages in taqlid of a certain madhab scholar may be considered as following the path of someone more reliable and knowledgeable.

Of course, no student of knowledge can be compared to Abu Hanifa, Malik, Shafi'i, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and other such scholars. Therefore, in our dawah, we inform people that it is wrong to blindly follow one scholar while dismissing others. Every scholar who fears Allah acknowledges that the unanimous opinion of the community (*all scholars*) or the jumhur (*majority of scholars*) is superior to individual opinions. This is why Salafis consider the opinions of all scholars and refer to the consensus of the Islamic community or the majority of scholars. When a scholar following the path of the Salaf as-Salihin teaches the fiqh of any madhab, he does not adopt opinions that go against the consensus of the community. Instead, he advises people to adhere to the consensus.

Some scholars who referred to the Salaf as-Salihin as an example

The fact that ancient scholars mention the Salaf in their books refutes the notion held by some people that this term emerged in modern times and implies that the Salaf are not a separate sect. It's important to note that some ignorant people, due to their lack of knowledge, mistakenly equate the Salaf with the Khawarijs (Kharijites), and label them as a deviant sect akin to the Khawarijs, simply relying on hearsay to support their claims. In doing so, they unknowingly criticize and disrespect the Prophet ﷺ, his Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, and the scholars who follow their path.

Let's examine how some Islamic scholars cited the Salaf as an example:

– Hasan al-Basri رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ (died 110 A.H.) wrote in regards to the matter of Qadar (*divine predestination*) in his letter to Abdulmalik ibn Marwan (died 86 A.H.): "None of the Salaf¹ expressed the false opinion of the qadar deniers nor engaged in arguments about it. This is because they all held a unanimous belief concerning it"²

– Abu Hanifa Numan ibn Thabit (died 150 A.H.) رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said: "I met Ata ibn Abu Rabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in Makkah and asked him about a matter. He asked: "Who are you?". I answered: "I am from the people of Kufa." He said: "Are you from the land of those who divided their religion into sects?" I answered: "Yes!". He further

¹ When Hasan al-Basri رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ "salafis", he means the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ.

² Murtada, al-Maniyyə wal-Amal fi sharh Al-Milal wa an-Nahal, p:

asked: "Which jama'ah (*the consolidated majority of the community*) do you belong to?". I responded: "I am from the people who do not curse the Salaf, who believe in qadar and who do not consider the person who has a major sin as a disbeliever". Ata then said: 'It is clear, hold fast to this belief!'"¹

Also, it is narrated that when Abu Hanifa رحمته الله was asked, "What can you say about the concept of random creation and matter that some people talk about?". He replied: "These are the fabrications of philosophers. Cling to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and follow the path of the Salaf as Saleh. Stay away from innovations added to religion, because every innovation is bid'a."²

– Avzai رحمته الله (died 157 A.H.) said: "Even if people turn away from you, hold fast to the works narrated from the Salaf. Even if people try to beautify certain opinions of others (*that contradict those of the Salaf as-Salih*), you should not follow them by any means!"³

– Malik ibn Anas رحمته الله (died 179 A.H.) said: "Salafs taught their children to love Abu Bakr and Umar رحمتهما الله just as they taught Surahs from the Qur'an."⁴

– Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak رحمته الله (died 181 A.H.) said while admonishing the people: "Reject what Amr ibn Thabit said. Because he reviled the Salaf as-Salih."⁵

¹ Abu Nu'aym al-Asbahani, Musnad Abu Hanifa, 1/23; Baghdad History, 13/334.

² Abu Nu'aym al-Asbahani, al-Hujjah fi bayan al-Mahajjah, 1/104; Harawi, Zammul-Kalam, p: 255.

³ Ajurri, ash-Sharia, ph: 102; Mukhtasar Al 'Uluw, p: 138.

⁴ al-Lalaka'i, Sharh Usool I'tiqaad Ahlus-Sunnah, 7/1313.

⁵ Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Al-Ilal Wa-Marifat Al-Rijal, 3/486; Muqaddimah Muslim, 16.

– Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Shaybani رحمته (died 189 A.H.), while explaining the ayah from the Surah adh-Dhariyat: "**Your sustenance and what you are promised is in the sky**,"¹ said: "When the verse mentions "sustenance," it refers to the rain falling from the sky. Thanks to it, plants grow. Many of the Salafs referred to this as "rizq"."²

– Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i رحمته (died 204 A.H.) said: "It was narrated to us that Rasulullah ﷺ used to perform Eid³ prayers in Madinah outside the mosque in the musalla (*prayer ground*). Those who came after him, in Madinah and other places, performed the Eid prayers in the musalla, except for the Meccans. In the narrations transmitted to us, it is reported that each of the Salaf in Makkah offered the Eid prayer in jama'ah (*congregation / group of Muslims*) only in the mosque."⁴

He also said: "The hadith narrated by Ibn Thabit from the Salafs corresponds to the hadith narrated from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. In that hadith, it is reported that Jibreel (Gabriel) عليه السلام told the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to order his companions رضي الله عنهم to raise their voices while they were uttering the talibiyah (a prayer invoked by the pilgrims as a conviction that they intend to perform the Hajj only for the glory of Allah)."⁵

– Ahmad ibn Hanbal رحمته (died 241 A.H.) said: "Abdullah narrated to us on the authority of Walid ibn Shuja al-Sakkuni,

¹ Surah "Adh-Dhariyat", 22.

² Muhammad ibn Hasan ash-Shaybani, al-Kasb, 1/42.

³ That is, Eid al-Fitr (Ramadan) and Eid al-Adha.

⁴ Muhammad ibn Idris ash-Shafi'i, al-Umm, 1/267.

⁵ Previous source, 2/170.

who narrated from Kab Abu Ishaq al-Halabi, who narrated from Furat, who narrated from Abdulkarim, who narrated from Ikrima, who said: "I asked Asma رضي الله عنها, the daughter of Abu Bakr: "Did the Salaf faint from the fear of Allah?" Asma رضي الله عنها said: "No, but they would sob."¹

– Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari رحمته الله (died 256 A.H.) narrates that Rashid ibn Sa'd said: "The Salafs tried to be strong, as this made them more active and courageous."²

Imam Bukhari رحمته الله also said: "Chapter: The Salaf kept food, meat, and other provisions in their homes, and also took some of these provisions with them when they went on a journey."³

– Ibn Jarir al-Tabari رحمته الله (died 310 A.H.), while explaining the ayah from Surah Al-Baqarah: "...As-Safa and Al-Marwah (*two mountains in Makkah*) are of the Symbols of Allah. So it is not a sin on him who performs Hajj or 'Umrah (pilgrimage) of the House (*the Ka'bah at Makkah*) to perform the going (Tawaf) between them (*As-Safa and Al-Marwah*)⁴," said: "It is not a sin; on the contrary, he will be rewarded for this deed. Our interpretation of this ayah has been narrated from the Salafs – the Companions رضي الله عنهم and their tabi'in (followers)."⁵

¹ Ahmad ibn Hanbal, az-Zuhd, 1/176.

² Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari, 6/66. Ibn Hajar رحمته الله said that when "salafs" are mentioned in this narration, it refers to the Companions رضي الله عنهم. Rashid ibn Sa'd, being a Tabi'in, naturally refers to the generation before him as "salafs", meaning the Companions رضي الله عنهم.

³ Fath al-Bari, 9/552.

⁴ Surah "al-Baqarah", 158.

⁵ Jami' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, Tafsir al-Tabari, 2/713. Ibn Jarir al-Tabari رحمته الله mentioned the word "salaf" in about a hundred places in his "Tafsir."

He also said in the book "History": "It was narrated by many of the Salafs that there were ten centuries between Prophet Adam عليه السلام and Prophet Nuh عليه السلام (Noah). Throughout these centuries, people remained steadfast in monotheism."^{1/2}

– Abu Amr Yusuf ibn Abdullah رحمته الله, known as Ibn Abdul-Barr (died 463 A.H.), said in his book regarding the issue of deducting zakat from an orphan's property: "Many of the Salaf issued a fatwa that deducting zakat from an orphan's property is obligatory."³

– Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Sarkhasi رحمته الله (died 483 A.H.) said: "A woman's call to prayer is one of the innovations added to religion. The Salafs did not practice this. Every innovation is bid'a."⁴

¹ In the hadith narrated by Abu Umamah رضي الله عنه, it is reported that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, "O Messenger of Allah, was Adam عليه السلام a prophet?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Yes, he was a Prophet, and Allah spoke to him." The man asked, "How much time passed between him and Prophet Nuh (Noah) عليه السلام?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Ten centuries." (Sahih Ibn Hibban, 6190; Silsilah al-Ahadith al-Sahih, 2668)."

In another hadith, Abdullah ibn Abbas رضي الله عنهما said: "There was a period of ten centuries between Prophet Adam عليه السلام and Prophet Nuh عليه السلام. During these centuries, people remained steadfast on the haqq (true) religion (tawhid), and then fell into disagreement. Finally, Allah sent them messengers with good tidings and warnings" (Tafsir al-Tabari, 2/194; Tafsir Ibn Kathir, 1/250; Mustadrak al-Hakim, 2/546-547; Silsilah al-Ahadith al-Sahih, 7/854).

² Tarikh al-Rusul wal-Muluk, Tarikh al-Tabari, 1/178. Ibn Jarir al-Tabari رحمته الله mentioned the word "salaf" in about fifty places in this book.

³ Ibn Abdul-Barr, al-Tamhid lima fil-Muwatta minal-Maani wal-Asanid 1/105. Notably, Ibn Abdul-Barr رحمته الله, who belonged to the Maliki madhab (school of thought), mentioned the word "salaf" in about one hundred and fifty places in this book.

⁴ as-Sarkhasi, al-Mabsut, 1/138.

– Samani رحمته الله (died 562 A.H.) said: “When we say Salafi, we refer to believers who follow the path of the righteous Salaf.”¹

– Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Qurtubi رحمته الله (died 671 A.H.) while explaining the ayah “**Allah rose over (Istawa) the Throne**”² said: “None of the Salafs denied that Allah is exalted above the Throne in the true sense.”³

– Ibn Kathir رحمته الله (died 774 A.H.) while explaining the ayah from Surah al-A'raf: “And We appointed for Musa (Moses) thirty nights and added (to the period) ten (more)”⁴ said: “Among the Salafs, Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه, Masruq رحمته الله, Mujahid رحمته الله, and others said that these thirty days are the month of Dhul-Qa'dah, and the ten days are the ten days of Dhul-Hijjah.”⁵

– Badr al-Din al-Aini (died 855 A.H.) رحمته الله said: “Regarding the issue of *masah* (*wiping over*) the *ammama* (*a type of turban*), many of the Salaf, including Awzai, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Ishaq ibn Rahuyya, Abu Sawr, Dawood, and others, said that it is permissible.”⁶

– Ibn Taymiyyah رحمته الله (died 728 A.H.) said: “It is not considered wrong for a person to declare that he follows the path of the Salafs and is in their ranks. On the contrary, it is important to accept it from him, because the way of the Salafs is the right way.”⁷

¹ al-Ansab, 3/273.

² Surah “al-A'raaf”, 54.

³ Tafsir al-Qurtubi, 7/219.

⁴ Surah “al-A'raaf”, 142.

⁵ al-Bidaya wan-Nihaya, 1/283. Ibn Kathir رحمته الله mentioned the word “salaf” approximately twenty times in the book.

⁶ al-Binayah sharh al-Hidayah, 1/172.

⁷ Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 4/149.

– Shamsuddin al-Dhahabi (az-Zahabi) رحمته الله (died 748 A.H.) said: “O servant of Allah! If you want to be in a fair position, to understand the ayahs and ahadith, look at what the Companions رضي الله عنهم, Tabi'in and Tafsir scholars who explained them said, and the narrations they narrated from the Salafs. Either speak based on knowledge or be noble and keep silent!”¹

He also praised Daraqutni رحمته الله (one of the great muhaddiths), in his biography and said: "Daraqutni was neither one of the people of words, nor one of those who argued about religion, nor one of those who mocked religion. On the contrary, he was a Salafist .”²

– Burhanaddin Ibrahim ibn Ibrahim al-Laqqani رحمته الله (died 1041 A.H.) said:

*Every good is in following the Salafs,
Every evil is in following the Khalafs (successors).
Follow the righteous among the Salafs,
Stay away from the Khalafs and the innovators (the bid'a doers)!³*

¹ Adh-Dhahabi, al-Uluv lil-Aliyyil-Ghaffar, p: 16.

² Siyar A'lam an-Nubala, 16/457.

³ Burhanaddin al-Laqqani, Jowharatut-Tawhid, p.28, verses 137 and 139. 139. The original Arabic version of the verses we have translated is as follows:

فَكُلُّ خَيْرٍ فِي اتِّبَاعِ مَنْ سَلَفَ وَكُلُّ شَرٍّ فِي ابْتِدَاعِ مَنْ خَلَفَ
فَتَابِعِ الصَّالِحِ مِمَّنْ سَلَفَا وَجَانِبِ الْبِدْعَةِ بِمَنْ خَلَفَا

It should be noted that Burhanaddin al-Laqqani adhered to the Ash'ari aqidah. The fact that we quote his verses where necessary does not mean that we agree with all his beliefs. Quoting the instructive words of any well-known personality does not imply endorsement of their entire belief system. Our Prophet ﷺ sometimes quoted polytheists.

Note that, in the hadith narrated by Bukhari, Ikrimah رضي الله عنه said: "I asked Aisha رضي الله عنها: "Have you heard the Prophet ﷺ recite poetry?" She said: "When the Prophet ﷺ entered the house, he would sometimes say: "**The one who brings you news is someone you did not expect**" (Al-Adabul-Mufrad, 792; Shamailun-Nabi, 241).

In the hadith narrated by Imam Ahmad, Aisha رضي الله عنها said: "When the Prophet ﷺ was awaiting news from someone, he used to recite this poem by Tarfa" (Musnad, 6/31; Silsila al-Ahadith al-Sahihah, 2057). This piece of poetry is from the Diwan of Tarfa ibn Abd (See: Diwan, 96; Sharh al-Qasa'id al-Mash-hura, 1/94). Tarfa ibn Abd, who lived before the time of the Prophet ﷺ, was one of the poets of the Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic ignorance era).

In another hadith, it is reported that Sharid ibn Suwayd رضي الله عنه said: "Once when I was riding on horseback behind the Prophet ﷺ, he said to me, "**Do you know by heart the poems of Umayya ibn Abu Salt?**" I said: "Yes!" and recited a verse from Umayya's poems. The Prophet ﷺ said to me: "**Continue!**". Finally, I recited a hundred verses to him" (Bukhari, al-Adab al-Mufrad, 799; Sahih Muslim, 2255).

Umayya ibn Abu Salt al-Saqafi lived during the advent of Islam but did not accept it and died as a mushrik (polytheist) (Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya, 2/285).

Other names given to Salaf as-Salihin:

1. "Ahlus Sunnah Wal-Jamaah "

Translated from Arabic, "Ahlul-Sunnah wal-Jamaa" means a community that follows the Sunnah. The opposite of this, that is, those who deviate from the Sunnah, are called "Ahlul-bid'ati wal-furqah", that is, those who have committed bid'a and divided into sects. The name "Ahlul-Sunnah wal-Jamaa" given to believers who are on the right path, is taken from authentic hadiths. In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ said: "Verily he among you who lives long will see great controversy, so you must keep to my Sunnah and to the Sunnah of the Khulafa ar-Rashideen (the rightly-guided caliphs), those who guide to the right way (and cling stubbornly to it)."¹

In another hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said: "My ummah will be divided into seventy-three sects, and all but one of them will enter Hell". The Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ asked: "Who are the people of Jannah, O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet ﷺ replied: "It is Al-Jamaa'ah (main body of Muslims)."²

2. "Al-Firqah an-Najiya"

Translated from Arabic, "al-Firqah an-Najiya" means the saved firqah (group). In the aforementioned hadith, it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ stated that the Islamic Ummah would be divided into seventy-three sects, and only one of these

¹ Sunan Abu Dawud, 4607; Sunan at-Tirmizi, 266.

² Sunan Abu Dawud, 2/503-504; Musnad Imam Ahmad, 4/102; Silsila al-Ahadith as-Sahihah, 204.

groups would be saved from Hellfire. In other words, those who follow the path of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رضي الله عنهم will be saved on the Day of Judgment. Therefore, the Salaf who follow the Sunnah as a jama'ah (congregation / group of Muslims) are considered the "saved" firqa. In the Qur'an, Allah praises this sect as follows:

﴿ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُغْلِبُونَ ﴾

"And whosoever takes Allah, His Messenger, and those who have believed, as Protectors, then the party of Allah will be the victorious."¹

3. "At-Taifah al-Mansurah"

Translated from Arabic, "at-Taifah al-Mansurah" means the victorious group. This name is given to the believers who follow the path of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رضي الله عنهم, and it is derived from an authentic hadith. In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ said: "There will always be a group from my Ummah **who will remain triumphant** until the Day of Judgment, *in every epoch*. Those who wish to harm this group will not be able to harm them."²

In another hadith, he ﷺ said: "Until the Day of Resurrection, *in every age*, there will be a group of my Ummah who will remain steadfast on the right path. Those who want to harm this group will not be able to harm them."³

¹ Surah "al-Ma'idah", 56.

² Sunan at-Tirmidhi, 6778; Musnad Imam Ahmad, 3/436 və 5/35; Silsila al-Ahadith as-Sahihah, 403.

³ Sahih al-Bukhari, 7311; Sahih Muslim, 1920.

These believers, though few in number today, were described by the Prophet ﷺ as follows: **"Islam began as something strange and will go back to being strange, so glad tidings to the strangers who will live in that time!"**¹ The Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ asked: "Who are they, O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet ﷺ said: **"They are the ones who rectify what people have changed in the Sunnah that I left behind"**²

In another narration, it is said that when the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ asked the Prophet ﷺ: "Who are those strangers, O Messenger of Allah?", the Prophet ﷺ said: **"They are the people who are righteous among a larger group of people who are evil, those who obey them (righteous individuals) are less than those who disobey them."**³

¹ Sahih Muslim, 145.

² Sunan at-Tirmidhi, 2/104; Silsila al-Ahadith as-Sahiha, 1273.

³ Ibn Mubarak, az-Zuhd, 2/90; Silsila al-Ahadith as-Sahiha, 1619.

The main differences between the Salafis and the Khawarij (Kharijite)

	Salafis	Khawarij (Kharijite)
1	They obey the leaders of the Muslims and do not consider them kafirs (infidels).	They consider the leaders of Muslims to be infidels and view them as worse than non-Muslims.
2	They consider it important to obey the ulu'l-amr (holders of authority / rulers), except for obedience in sinful deeds, and they say that disobeying the ulu'l-amr in sinful deeds is not a reason to oppose them. On the contrary, it is necessary to advise them with wisdom and morals, as much as possible.	Generally, they do not recognize the authority of modern leaders and do not obey them. Instead, they view them as taghut and believe it is important to oppose them.
3	They consider it forbidden to shed the blood of those in authority (the ulu'l-amr).	They consider it halal to shed the blood of those in authority.
4	They do not consider the police, army and law enforcement bodies in Islamic countries infidels and believe that their lives and blood are inviolable.	They consider the police, army, and law enforcement bodies to be infidels and believe that shedding their blood is permissible (halal). According to their claims, this is considered obedience to Allah.
5	They believe that the battles waged by radical individuals in Muslim countries are not Sharia-compliant jihad, but rather fasad (corruption).	They believe that their struggle against the authorities and people in Islamic countries is jihad.


6	They regard it as Sunnah to pray for the leaders and wish them success in governing according to Shari'ah.	They only curse the leaders and consider them kafirs (infidels). In such cases, they do not deem it appropriate to pray for an unbeliever to judge according to Allah's law.
7	They do not participate in revolutions, coups, or rallies. The goal of the Salafs is to lead people from darkness to light, from worshipping created beings to worshipping Allah, and from the oppression of false religions to the justice of Islam. The way to achieve this is by praying for the leaders and their subordinates, inviting them to the path of Allah with wisdom and beautiful words, and engaging in respectful discourse if necessary. Their objective is not to gain votes or hold office.	They believe that making a revolution, changing the existing government, and participating in rallies is important from the point of view of Sharia. The calls of the Salaf to monotheism, Sunnah and protection of safety are murji'ah ¹ , demeaning, and sycophantic to the leader.
8	They encourage people to obey their leaders and not oppose them. According to their belief, a Sharia-compliant society is one that is united under the leadership of a Muslim leader. Opposing this community is considered a crime, an error, and an act of ignorance.	They order people to obey terrorist leaders and oppose leaders in Muslim countries. According to them, the Jama'ah are only those who follow them. Whoever leaves their jama'ah, his blood is halal.

¹ Murji'ah held the opinion that Allah alone has the right to judge whether or not a Muslim has become an apostate.

9	They believe that contemporary Muslim countries are still considered Islamic countries.	They believe that all Muslim countries nowadays are considered lands of kufr (disbelief).
10	They consider it forbidden to kill non-Muslims who have made a covenant with Muslims and have been granted protection.	They regard the blood of non-Muslims who have made a covenant with Muslims and have been granted protection as halal, and they consider it obligatory to kill them.
11	They treat the established laws from the perspective of Sharia. They consider it important to obey administrative laws that serve the interests of the people.	They regard the established laws as ignorant, erroneous, and a grave blasphemy, asserting that whoever rules by such laws commits great blasphemy.
12	They say that establishing relations between Muslim countries and non-Muslim countries in worldly affairs is not haram, except for agreements that contradict Sharia.	They say that it is haram (forbidden) to establish relations between Muslim countries and non-Muslim countries in worldly affairs, and they consider this to be friendship with mushreeks (polytheists) and kufr (blasphemy).
13	They believe it is permissible to do good to non-Muslims who do not fight against the religion of Islam and do not oppress them. In this regard, the Qur'an says: " Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion nor drove you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity. " ¹	They believe that under no circumstances is it permissible to show kindness to a non-Muslim, as well as to treat them fairly. The Khawarij brand the Salaf as infidels, alleging that they have apostatized and even threaten them with beheading.

¹ Surah "al-Mumtahana", 8.

14	They consider it one of the requirements of human life to keep up with society in matters that do not contradict Sharia.	They call to leave the society and to distance oneself from people.
15	They do not consider Muslims who call them kafirs to be infidels. Instead, they consider infidels only those whom Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have deemed so. They do not respond to error with another mistake, nor to takfir (an accusation of unbelief / excommunication from Islam) with the same. They counter bid'a with the Sunnah, falsehood with the truth, oppression with justice, and disobedience with humility. Even in relation to Muslims who are disobedient to Allah, they act out of fear of Allah.	The Khawarij consider the Salaf to be infidels, claim that they are murtads (apostates), and even threaten them with beheading.
16	The Salaf are a source of peace. They guide those who follow their desires and teach them how to serve Islam, doing so in accordance with the way of the prophets.	They are the source of confusion and turmoil, fostering immature, ignorant or simply stupid youth to spill blood, actually instructing them on how to lead Muslims astray from Islam, and subsequently killing them in accordance with Kharijite manhaj (manner, method) The Khawarijs damaged the authority of Muslims and created hatred of Islam among people.

17	They are grounded in the teachings of renowned and devout scholars.	They apply only to those who issue fatwas that benefit themselves.
18	They are a way of mercy and guidance for people. They are the ones who know the truth best and are the most merciful towards the creatures of Allah.	They are the ones who came to kill Muslims and treat them with the utmost severity.
19	The Salaf have benefited Muslims and decorated their hearts by endearing Islam to people.	The Khawarij have undermined the authority of Muslims and instilled hatred toward Islam among people.
20	They hold that not everyone who commits an act of disbelief is a kafir.	They believe that anyone who commits an act of kufr (disbelief) becomes a kafir (an infidel).
21	They exercise the utmost caution in labeling individuals as infidels and avoid "overstepping boundaries".	They have exceeded the limits regarding Takfir.
22	They are careful not to be excessive in their dawa activities, adhering to the methods derived from the Book of Allah and the Sahih Sunnah. This approach represents the middle path and the way of the Companions  .	Their dawa (invitation to Islam) has surpassed bounds, drawing from the manhaj (doctrines) of previous Khawarij and the works of those who have taken extremism to new levels.
23	The dawa they lead serves the religious and secular reformation of leaders and subjects.	Both religiously and secularly, they are involved in murder, destruction, and devastation.
24	Their objective is to introduce people to Allah, encourage them to worship Him, and to steer them away from committing Shirk (polytheism).	Their objective is to incite people against their leaders and mobilize them for confrontation

25 The path they follow is the path of knowledge and wisdom that serve to elevate Muslims and humiliate their enemies.

The path they follow is the most suitable for the humiliation of Muslims, while exalting mushrikun (polytheists) and infidels, eventually leading to the subjugation and enslavement of Muslim countries.

What should we do to become a cohesive community, as it was during the time of the Companions ﷺ?

Dear Muslims!

If we want to be a friendly community like in the time of our Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ, we must live the religion of Islam as they lived. That is to say, in religious matters, we should only be guided by the Qur'an and the Sunnah, accept the ayahs and hadiths as understood by the Companions ﷺ, consider the unanimous opinion of the scholars who succeeded them (the opinion of the community or the Consensus)¹ to be superior to individual opinions. At the same time, we must also respect individual opinions that differ from the majority view. We must not despise Muslims who refer to individual opinions, and we must do our best to prevent any evil that destroys the unity of Muslims. Otherwise, we will incur a great sin. In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Whoever innovates in Religion, or gives shelter to such an innovator will incur the curse of Allah, the angels, and all the people!"**²

If a person commits bid'ah and invites others to it, he will incur a sin equal to the sins they earn. In this regard, the Qur'an says:

¹ Ijma: the unanimous opinion (consensus) of all the scholars, while jumhur signifies the unanimous opinion of the majority of scholars.

² Sahih al-Bukhari, 1870; Sahih Muslim, 1366.

﴿لِيَحْمِلُوا أَوْزَارَهُمْ كَامِلَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمِنْ أَوْزَارِ الَّذِينَ يُضِلُّونَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ أَلِيسَاءَ مَا يَزُرُونَ﴾

“They may bear their own burdens in full on the Day of Resurrection, and also of the burdens of those whom they misled without knowledge. Evil indeed is that which they shall bear!”¹

Also, in the hadith, our Prophet ﷺ said: **“Whoever introduces something new to the religion of Islam and invites people to it, he will bear the punishment for the sin of doing so, as well as the sins of those who follow it.”²**

It's important to note that bid'ah is one of the main factors that divides the Islamic community. Therefore, it is impermissible for the people of the Sunnah to turn a blind eye to bid'ah. On the contrary, declaring bid'ah to the people is an important duty that every scholar is responsible for. It was after the emergence of bid'ah that Ahli-sunnah wal-jamaa was divided into sects. In the instructive hadith narrated regarding the harm caused to the relationship between brothers due to bid'ah, the Prophet ﷺ said: **“There are no two people who love each other for the sake of Allah without the bid'ah committed by one of them dividing them.”³**

Please take note! Ayah 153 of Surah al-Anam' states:

﴿وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ﴾

¹ Surah “an-Nahl”, 25.

² Sahih Muslim, 6975.

³ Musnad Imam Ahmad, 5/71.

"And verily, this is My Straight Path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path."

When "other paths" are mentioned in this ayah, it refers to paths that are contrary to the Sunnah, meaning the ways of the ahlul bid'ah (people of innovation).

In the hadiths, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"He who does not follow my tradition in religion, is not from me (not one of my followers)".¹

"If somebody innovates something which is not in harmony with the principles of our religion, that thing is rejected."²

"He who did any act for which there is no sanction from our behalf, that is to be rejected".³

The Companions رضي الله عنهم and those who followed their path strongly condemned bid'ah. The following narrations can be cited as examples:

Abdullah ibn Umar رضي الله عنه said: "Even if people consider bid'ah as a good deed, every bid'ah is misguidance."⁴

Abdullah ibn Masud رضي الله عنه said: "Follow the Sunnah; do not commit bid'ah. That is enough for you."⁵

He also said: "It is better to take a middle path in actions that are considered Sunnah than to be zealous in innovations that are not from religion."⁶

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, 5063.

² Sahih al-Bukhari, 2697; Sahih Muslim, 1718.

³ Sahih Muslim, 1718.

⁴ Sharh al-Itiqad, al-Lalakai, 126; Silsila al-Ahaadith as-Sahiha, 6/526.

⁵ Sunan al-Darimi, 205; Shu'ab al-Iman, 2024; Sharh as-Sunnah, 1/214; al-Ibanat al-Kubra, 174; Manasikul-Hajj wal-Umrah (al-Albani), p: 44.

⁶ Al-Mustadrak, 352; Sunan al-Beyhaqi al-Kubra, 4522; Silsila al-Ahaadith as-Sahiha, 5/11.

Omar ibn Abdulaziz رضي الله عنه said: "I advise you to fear Allah and be content with His commands. Also, I recommend following the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم orders and abandoning the innovations made by people after him."¹

In particular, it should be noted that even if the intention of a person who commits bid'ah (*an act that is not part of Islam*) is good, his act is not accepted. In the hadith narrated in this regard, it is reported that on Eid al-Adha (*the Day of Sacrifice*), the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave a khutba (sermon) to the Companions رضي الله عنهم after the Eid prayer and said: **"Whoever prays like us and sacrifices like us will slaughter the sacrificial animal according to the Shariah. Whoever slaughters a sacrificial animal before the Eid prayer has slaughtered an animal for himself before the prayer, and his sacrifice will not be accepted."** Abu Burda ibn Niyar رضي الله عنه said: "O Messenger of Allah, I slaughtered my sheep before the prayer. I knew that today was a day of eating and drinking, so I wanted my sheep to be the first sacrifice in my house. That is why, before coming to the prayer, I slaughtered my sheep and ate some of it." The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: **"Your sheep is just meat."**²

It turns clear from the hadith that even if the intention is good, if the deed is against the Sharia, it will be rejected. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would tell his companions رضي الله عنهم any command or prohibition once, and they would immediately carry out his command and refrain from what he forbade. But he would constantly remind them to stay away from bid'ah and to fear Allah, although none of them ever knowingly indulged in bid'ah. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did this to prevent the future generations of

¹ Hilyat al-Awliya', 5/338; al-Ibanat al-Kubra, 163.

² Sahih al-Bukhari, 955; Sahih Muslim, 1961.

the Islamic Ummah from falling into the heresy of bid'ah. In the hadith narrated by Imam Muslim رحمته, the Prophet ﷺ said: "It was the duty of every Prophet that has gone before me to guide his followers to what he knew was good for them and warn them against what he knew was bad for them; but this Ummah of yours has its days of peace and (security) in the beginning of its career, and in the last phase of its existence it will be afflicted with trials and with things disagreeable to you, which are against the Shariah (bid'ah). (In this phase of the Umma), there will be tremendous trials one after the other, each making the previous one dwindle into insignificance."¹

Our Prophet ﷺ did not state in any hadith that there is a deed called "beautiful bid'ah." On the contrary, he said in an authentic hadith that bid'ah is a delusion: **"The evilest matters in religion are those that are newly invented, for every newly invented matter is an bid'ah (innovation), every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Hellfire."**²

He made no exceptions. In no instance did our Prophet ﷺ say: **"All innovations in religion except such and such a beautiful innovation are misguidance."** In this regard, Malik ibn Anas رحمته said: 'Whoever says that there is a beautiful innovation in the religion of Islam is regarded as the one who claims that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ betrayed the religion of Allah". Thus, Almighty Allah says:

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾

¹ Sahih Muslim, 1844.

² Sunan an-Nasai, 1/243; Khutbatul-Haja, 1/25.

“This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.”¹

Imam Malik continues and says: “Whatever deed was considered part of the religion on that day, the very same deed is considered part of the religion today.² Imam Malik رحمته الله means that since Allah has perfected this religion, anyone who claims there is a defect in it is essentially claiming that the Prophet ﷺ did not fully convey the religion to the people.

Well, what should we do to remain a community in this period of bid’ah? The Prophet ﷺ provided the answer to this difficult question in advance. It is narrated that Huzaifa رضي الله عنه said: "One day I asked, “O Messenger of Allah, we were really living in ignorance and evil (*shirk / polytheism and kufr / disbelief*). Allah has blessed us with such a blessing (Islam). Can evil come after this good?” The Prophet ﷺ replied, **“Yes.”** I asked, “So, after this evil, will there be good again?” The Prophet ﷺ said, **“Yes, but this good will be stained with evil.”** I asked, “What stain is it, O Messenger of Allah?” The Prophet ﷺ said, **“There will be people who will not follow my path. As they do good deeds, they will also do bad deeds.”³** I asked, "Will evil come after this good?" He said, **“Yes, at that time there will be misguided people calling to Hell. Whoever accepts their call will be in Hellfire.”** I said, "O Messenger of Allah, describe them to us!" He said, **“They shall be of us, and shall**

¹ Surah “al-Ma’idah”, 3.

² Al-I'tisaam, ash-Shaatibee, 1/49.

³ This refers to the Kharijites, Qadarites, Rafidah, Mu'tazilites, Jahmis and other practitioners of bid’a who brought in the first innovations to Islam.

speak as we do." I asked, "What should I do if I live until then?" He said, "**Join the Muslim jama'ah (community / group of Muslims) and obey their imam (leader).**" I said, "What if there is neither a jama'ah nor an imam?" He said, "**Then turn away from all those sects even if you were to cling (bite) to the roots of a tree with your back teeth till death overtakes you while you are in that state.**"¹

That is, in order to be a jama'ah, it is necessary to stay away from all the people of bid'ah and be united with the People of the Ahli-Sunna wal Jama'ah. Muhammad ibn Sirin رحمته الله, one of the great tabi'ins, said: "Muslims did not ask questions about isnad. After the bid'ahs appeared, they began to say: "Tell us the names of your narrators." That's how attention was paid to the people of the Sunnah, and their hadiths were accepted, while attention was also paid to the ahlul bid'ah (people of innovation), and their hadiths were rejected."²

In other words, to be a jama'ah, it is important to distinguish authentic hadiths from fabricated ones, unite with the predecessors who refer to authentic hadiths, and stay away from ahlul-bid'ah who follow fabricated hadiths.

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, 3606 and 7084; Sahih Muslim, 1847.

² Muqaddimah Muslim, 27.

Explanation of some terms in the book

Jahmis: A misguided sect following the false beliefs of Jahm ibn Safwan. Jahm ibn Safwan lived in Khorasan in the second century of Hijri history. He claimed that the Qur'an is a creation and denied the attributes of Allah. Jahm ibn Safwan adopted these false beliefs from Jad ibn Dirham. It is said that Ja'd took this belief from Aban ibn Saman, who took it from Talut, and he from Labid ibn A'sam.¹

Ansar: Natives of Madinah who embraced Islam and became Companions رضي الله عنهم of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They provided shelter and financial support to the muhajirs (immigrants) from Makkah and other cities.

Atbaut-tabi'in: A person who met any tabi'in, accepted the religion of Islam, and died as a believer.

The Khawarij (Kharijites): "Khawarij" is the plural form of the word *kharij*, derived from the Arabic verb *kharaja* (خَرَجَ). The term "khawarij" refers to those who break away from the Muslim community, form their own groups or join such groups, declare people who commit major sins as kafir (disbelievers) without evidence, and possess other attributes contrary to the Sharia. This sect, founded by Dhu'l-Khuwaysirah, is one of the first sects to emerge among Muslims. They labeled as kafirs (infidels) and martyred two great Companions with whom Allah was pleased – Uthman ibn Affan رضي الله عنه and Ali ibn Abu Talib رضي الله عنه – who were always faithful to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, sacrificed their lives and property for the sake of Islam, and

¹ Fatawa al-Hamawiyya al-Kubra, p.24.

received the good tidings of Paradise. The Khawarij are a faction that considers Muslims who commit major sins as kafirs and views their blood as halal (permissible to shed). Describing the Khawarij, the Prophet ﷺ said: **“At the end of time, there will appear some young foolish people who will use (in their claim) the best speech of all people (i.e. the Qur'an) and they will abandon Islam as an arrow passes through its target. Their belief will not go beyond their throats (they will neither understand it nor act upon it)”.** **“They will leave the pagans and kill the Muslims.”**¹

Qadarites or Kadarites (Qadariyyah): Those who deny that Allah predestined everything. Yahya bin Ya'mar رحمته said: "The first person to speak about this kufr (heresy) was Ma'bad al-Juhani, who lived in Basra. At that time, Humaid bin Abdur-Rahman Al-Himyari رحمته and I went on Hajj (pilgrimage) and said: "I wish we could meet someone among the Companions رحمته of the Prophet ﷺ so we could ask him about what those people have innovated." Finally, when we arrived and entered the mosque, we saw Abdullah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattab رحمته and approached him. I said: "O Abu Abdur-Rahman! There is a group of people who recite the Qur'an and seek knowledge, and investigate issues not clearly explained. They claim there is no Al-Qadar (predestination), and that Allah only knows about all things as they happen (the affair is left to chance)." Ibn Umar رحمته said: "Whenever you meet those people, then tell them that I am not of them and they are not of me. By the One Whom Abdullah swears by! If one of them were to spend gold the like of Uhud (mountain) in charity, it would not be

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, 3611, 4351 and 6880.

accepted from him by Allah until he believes in Al-Qadar; the good of it and the bad of it.”¹

Ma'bad bin Khalid al-Juhani, whose name is mentioned in this hadith, brought innovation to the religion by denying what Allah had predetermined. As a result, the sect of the Qadarites was formed. They denied that the fate of everything was predetermined by Allah and claimed that Allah is not aware of events before they happen. The Prophet ﷺ said: The Qadariyyah are the Magians of this community. If they are ill, do not pay a sick visit to them, and if they die, do not attend their funerals!”²

Mu'tazilites: The Mu'tazilites first appeared in Basra after Wasil ibn Ata departed from his teacher Hasan al-Basri's ﷺ opinion on a matter of aqidah (*Islamic creed*). One day, someone came to the Basra mosque where Hasan al-Basri ﷺ was teaching and told him that the Khawarij called a man who had committed a major sin an infidel, while the Murji'ah called him a believer. This person asked Hasan al-Basri ﷺ to clarify the matter. Hasan al-Basri ﷺ said that such a person is a munafiq (hypocrite), meaning one who professes one thing with his tongue but believes something different in his heart, and whose faith and deeds do not match. At that time, Wasil ibn Ata, who was present at the gathering, asserted that the person who committed a major sin is neither a true believer nor a true kafir but occupies an intermediate state (*manzilah bayna al-manzilatayn*) between belief and disbelief. With this, Wasil rejected all the existing ideas in the Islamic world about

¹ Sahih Muslim, 8.

² Sunan Abu Dawud, 4691; Silsilah al-Ahaadith as-Sahihah, 2748.

the person who committed a major sin and introduced a new concept. Seeing this, Hasan al-Basri رضي الله عنه exclaimed in surprise: "*Qad itazala anna Wasil*" (Wasil has separated from us or left us). Following this incident, Wasil bin Ata left his master Hasan al-Basri's رضي الله عنه council for good. Later, his friend Amr bin Ubayd joined him. Thus, Wasil bin Ata and his followers were given the name "al-Mu'tazila," meaning "the ones who left" or "the ones who separated."

The Mu'tazilites oppose the Khawarij on one hand and the Murjis on the other regarding the nature of faith and the status of a person who has committed a major sin. The Khawarij considered faith inseparable from action. According to them, a person who affirms and professes Kalma-i Tawhid ("Word of Oneness") but does not fulfill one of the prescribed obligations of the Sharia, or who commits a major sin, is considered a kafir. The Murjis, however, viewed faith as an abstract belief. They claimed that deeds are not part of faith, so a person who has committed a major sin (other than shirk or kufr) does not lose his faith. The Mu'tazilites also opposed Islam by considering the Qur'an to be a created entity, thereby rejecting that the Qur'an is the eternal word of Allah.

The Muhajirs (the Muhajirun): Companions رضي الله عنهم of the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم who emigrated to Medina from other cities and provinces (this event is known in Islam as the Hijra) before the conquest of Mecca (Makkah).

Rafida: Rafida claim to love the family (Ahl al-Bayt) of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to an extreme degree, some consider Ali ibn Abu Talib رضي الله عنه better than the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, and some even claim that Ali ibn Abu Talib رضي الله عنه is the Lord. The word Rafida is a noun

derived from the well-known form of the Arabic verb (رَفَضَ). This word means denying, rejecting, not accepting.

The reason why they are called Rafida is that when they asked Zaid ibn Ali ibn Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abu Talib about Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه and Umar رضي الله عنه, Zayd praised both of them and said: "They were the closest associates of my grandfather (i.e. the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم)." And for this very reason, they left him and rejected him.¹

Sahabah: A person who saw or met the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad ibn Abdullah صلى الله عليه وسلم, believed in him, accepted the religion he invited to, and died as a mu'min (believer).

Tabi'i: A person who met any Companion, accepted Islam and left the world while being a mu'min.

¹ Majmu' Fatawa wa Rasail, 4/201.

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