

# Al-Istiqaamah

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## Fleeing from Fitnah

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"All praise is for Allaah who, in every age and intervals between the Prophets, raises up a group from the People of Knowledge, who call the misguided to guidance and patiently bearing ill-treatment and harm. With the Book of Allaah they give life to the dead, and by Allaah's Light they sight to the blind. How many a person killed by *Iblees* have they revived. How many people astray and wondering have they guided. How beautiful their effect has been upon the people, and how vile people have been towards them. They expel from the Book of Allaah the alterations of those going beyond bounds, the false claims of the liars and the false interpretations of the ignorant-ones - those who uphold the banner of innovation and who unleash *fitnah* (trial and discord), who differ about the Book oppose the Book and agree to oppose the Book. Those who speak about Allaah and His Book without knowledge, and who argue about what is ambiguous in the Book, and deceive the ignorant with such ambiguities. So we seek refuge in Allaah from the *fitnahs* (trials and discord) of the misguided-ones."2 And I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, alone, having no partner and that Muhammad *sallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* is His trustworthy Slave and Messenger. And may Allaah extol and send His blessings of peace upon him, his family and his companions.

To proceed:

### FORBIDDANCE OF BEING HASTY AND IMPATIENT

From the very nature of *fitnah* (trial and discord) is that matters become confused, mistakes increase, and minds and intellects begin to swerve. Protection and safety from this - in such times - lies in the *Jamaa'ah*; at the head of which are the scholars. So it is obligatory upon the people - those leading and those being led - to take hold of the sayings of the Scholars and to act upon them. Since the general masses being pre-occupied with issues of *fitnah*, wherein they begin to express their own opinions, only leads to an increase in the *fitnah* and further splits the Ummah. So the *umoorul-'aammah* (affairs pertaining to public benefit and welfare) - from the matters related to peace, security and fear - should be referred back to those who possess sound knowledge and understanding, as Allaah - the Most High - has said:

**"When there comes to them some matter related to public welfare of security or fear, they make it known amongst the people. If they had referred it back to the Messenger *sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, or to those in authority amongst them, then the proper people would have investigated and evaluated the matter from them. Were it not for the Grace and Mercy of Allaah upon you, you would have indeed followed Shaytaan - except for a few of you."** [Soorah an-Nisaa 4:83].

Imaam as-Sa'dee (d.1376H) - *rahimahullaah* - said:

"This is the disciplinary admonition from Allaah to His Servants with regards to their unbecoming action. And that it is a must for them, that when there comes to them some news concerning important issues - such as issues connected to public welfare and safety of the Believers, or those that are related to breach of security, or fear of a calamity befalling them - that they should first verify such news and not be hasty in spreading it. Rather, they should refer such issues back to the Messenger *sallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and to the people in authority; those who possess knowledge, understanding, sound advice, intellect, maturity and composure; those who understand the affairs and have knowledge of the associated benefits and harms. If they see that in broadcasting it there is a benefit and a cause of happiness for the Believers, and a means of protection from their enemies, then they should do so. This is why Allaah said: **"Then the proper people would have investigated and evaluated the matter from them."** Meaning: That they would evaluate it with their sound understanding and their firm and correct knowledge. So in this is an evidence for an important principle which is: If there arises a need to investigate a particular issue, then it is obligatory that it is left to

those who are qualified for it, and no one should precede them in this - and this is close to what is correct, and safer from error. And in this is also a prohibition of being hasty and impatient in spreading the news as soon as they hear it. Likewise there is a command to reflect and consider before speaking, so he looks into it to see if there is a benefit in doing so, if so he embarks upon it, and if not, he abstains from it."3

### THE SCHOLARS AND THE AFFAIRS OF THE UMMAH

In the issues of *fitnah* and other detailed issues, and issues connected to matters of public welfare of the Ummah - such as affairs related to *siyaasatush-shar'iyah* (politics of the *Sharee'ah*), and the wide-spread evils, and their like - people are in need of having sound knowledge and understanding of the *maslahah* and *mafsadah* (related benefits and harms). Since these issues, most of the time, are the cause for *fitnahs* to occur, and they are not like the issues related to purification, Prayer, Hajj and their like; which it is possible for a young student of knowledge - or in some cases, even the layman - to speak about, and to prefer one saying over another. And this is because: "Understanding the objectives and goals of the *Sharee'ah* (Islaamic Law) is not possible, except by thoroughly studying the texts and studying the detailed workings of the *Sharee'ah*. Since *fiqhul-maqaasid* (the science of understanding the objectives and goals of the *Sharee'ah*) is indeed a great and mighty science which cannot be gained by just anyone. Rather, it can only be gained by one who has reached a high level of knowledge, has examined the state of affairs and is well acquainted with them, and who has looked into the various possible outcomes that may occur. And weighing between the benefits and harms is dependant upon understanding the *Sharee'ah* and its objectives, and having understanding of the state of affairs, and the various degrees of benefits and harms. So none of this is possible, except for the Scholars."4

Imaam an-Nawawee (d.676H) - *rahimahullaah* - said:

"The one ordering the good or forbidding the evil must be knowledgeable about what is being ordered or prohibited. And the level of knowledge required for this will vary in accordance with what is being ordered or prohibited. This, if it is an issue concerning clear-cut obligations and well known prohibitions - such as Prayer, Fasting, fornication or drinking intoxicants - then every Muslim is a scholar with regards to such issues. **However, if the issue involves detailed matters, or matters connected to *ijtihaad* (the Science of extracting rulings from the Revelation), then the general body of Muslims cannot enter into it, nor is it for them to order or prohibit. Rather, this is only for the Scholars.**"5

And the subjects that we have mentioned (i.e. that which is related to affairs of public benefit and interest of the Ummah; such as matters connected to *Sharee'ah* politics, weighing the affairs, correcting the widespread evil, *takfeer* (declaring Muslims to be unbelievers) and rebelling against the rulers) are from the most important subjects which have touched the Islaamic awakening in these days, and about which there is plenty of discussion, controversy and argumentation between those Muslim youths who are firm in clinging to the Religion and who earnestly desire good. So these subjects are of an extremely important nature, and likewise, deviating from the correct path with regards to them is extremely dangerous!

Due to this, I wanted to gather some of the statements from our noble contemporary scholars on this subject - may Allaah protect them and look after them, and continue making them of benefit to the Ummah for the remainder of their time - those who are the Scholars of the Religion and the inheritors of the Prophets, those who concentrated on understanding the formulating principles regarding the *halaal* (lawful) and the *haraam* (prohibited). Shaykh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - *rahimahullaah* - said: "And whosoever from this Ummah, is known for having truthfulness, whereby he has been praised and commended by the majority of the various groups of people from this Ummah, then those are the leaders of guidance and the beacons in the darkness."6

So they are the Rabbaanee Scholars;7 those who teach the people the Book and the wisdom, and who cultivate the people upon it. And they are the people of deep understanding and wisdom, whom Allaah commanded us to ask, by His saying:

**"Ask the People of Knowledge if you do not know."** [Soorah al-Anbiyaa 21:30]

So returning to them, being around them, and asking them, is the way out from the *fitnahs* - as we have previously explained - especially when there are a great number of differences and a great number of people differing, and many differing paths ahead of the traveller.

## CLINGING TO THE JAMAA'AH

The Scholars are the leaders of the Jamaa'ah that we have been commanded to cling to; and which we have been warned against separating from - as occurs in the hadeeth of 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood *radiallaahu 'anhu* who related that Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "*The blood of a Muslim who testifies that none has the right to be worshipped, except Allaah; and that I am the Messenger of Allaah, is not lawful, except in one of three cases: the one who commits adultery, a life for a life, or the one who abandons his Religion and splits from the Jamaa'ah.*"<sup>8</sup>

'Umar ibn al-Khattab *radiallaahu 'anhu* relates that Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "*Cling to the Jamaa'ah and beware of splitting! For indeed Shaytaan is with the individual person but is further away from the two people. And whosoever desires the centre of Paradise, then let him cling to the Jamaa'ah. And whosoever is pleased by his good deeds and saddened by his bad deeds, then he is a Believer.*"<sup>9</sup>

Thus, whosoever clings to the *Jamaa'ah* - not separating from it - will be the successful one. But whosoever splits from the *Jamaa'ah* and is amazed with his own opinion and knowledge, and the large number who follow him - then he is one who is destroyed.

Imaam Abu Bakr al-Aajurree (d.360H), after recording various Aayat (verses) and ahadeeth that order clinging to the Jamaa'ah, then said: "The sign for whosoever Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - intends goodness for, is that he traverses this path: Clinging to the Book of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, to the Sunnah of Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and to the path of his Companions *radiallaahu 'anhum*; and all those who followed them in correctness and goodness, may Allaah have mercy upon them all; and also to what the Scholars of the Muslims were upon in the various lands - such as al-Awzaa'ee (d.157H), Sufyan ath-Thawree (d.164H), Maalik ibn Anas (d.179H), ash-Shafi'ee (d.204H), Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d.241H), al-Qaasim ibn Salaam (d.235H), and all those who were upon a path similar to theirs, avoiding taking any path which those scholars did not take."<sup>10</sup>

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1. Taken from *Al-Furqaan Magazine* (no.61/pp.44-46)

2. *Ar-Radd 'alal-Jahmiyyah waz-Zanaadiqah* (p.2) of Imaam Ahmad ibn Hanbal

3. *Tayseerul-Kareemur-Rahmaan* (2/54-55). Refer also to *Qawaa'id fee Ta'aamul ma'il-'Ulemaa* (p.121).

4. *Qawaa'id fee Ta'aamul ma'il-'Ulemaa* (p.119) of Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahmaan al-Luwayhiq.

5. *Sharh Saheeh Muslim* (2/23).

6. *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (11/43).

7. The *Rabaanee* Scholar is the one possessing deep knowledge and who acts according to his knowledge and teaches it to others in accordance with their level. Refer to *Fathul-Baaree* (1/214) of Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr.

8. Related by al-Bukhaaree (9/6) and Muslim (3/1302).

9. **Saheeh**: Related by Ahmad (1/18) and at-Tirmidhee (no.2254). It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *Dhilaalul-Jannah* (no.87).

10. *Ash-Sharee'ah* (no.14) of Imaam al-Aajurree.

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