

# Al-Istiqaamah

Shawwaal 1418H / February 1998

Issue No.8

## DIFFERING

### its permissible and prohibited

#### SETTING THE STANDARD

Shaykh Ibn Ibraaheem- rahimahullaah- (d. 1389H) said: "Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah [the Saved Sect] have an usool (set of fundamentals) which is firmly based upon proofs; and upon this are built the furoo' (subsidiary issues)."1

#### GUIDELINES REGARDING DIFFERENCES

Imaam as-Sa'dee (d. 1376H)- rahimahullaah - said: "Differences of opinions that occur between the [Scholars] of the Ummah are from two angles:- Firstly: Differences in the furoo' (subsidiary issues), and in issues of ijtihaad (qualified striving to reach the truth); such that when a person - whether it is a judge, mufti, writer, or teacher - strives to arrive at a ruling and is correct, he is rewarded two-fold. But if he strives and is mistaken, then he is rewarded once. Second: Differences in matters of usool (fundamentals); such as the issues related to Allaah's Attributes, al-Qadr (Predestination and Pre-Decree), Eemaan (faith), and their like. These cause those who oppose [such usool] to be regarded as deviants, because of them opposing the proofs from the Book and the Sunnah, and that which the Salafus-Saalih (Pious Predecessors) - the Companions and those who followed them in goodness - were agreed upon."2

#### THE PERMISSIBLE TYPE OF DIFFERING

Shaykh Ibn al-'Uthaymeen - hafidhahullaah - said: "This sect [i.e. the Saved-Sect] unites upon the truth, even if its people do have differences of opinion between themselves. However, these differences do not harm their [unity], nor cause them to declare each other as deviants. Rather, their hearts are still united, even when these difference of opinion occur in matters linked to the 'aqeedoh (beliefs); such as did the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam see his Lord with his eyes, or did he not see him [with his eyes]? Or is the punishment in the grave to the body and the soul, or just to the soul only? Or other such issues. This is because these issues are subsidiary issues connected with the usool, they are not in the actual usool itself. So they do not declare each other as being deviants when they differ in such matters - contrary to what the innovators do."3

#### THE PROHIBITED TYPE OF DIFFERING

Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - rahimahullaah - said:

"The Scholars - from the Companions, the Taabi'een, and those who came after them - when they differed in any matter, then they followed the command of Allaah - the Most High - in His saying: **"If you differ in anything amongst yourselves then refer it back to Allaah and His Messenger, if you do truly believe in Allaah and the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination."** [Soorah an-Nisaa 4:59]. So they would discuss concerning the issue; discuss, consult and sincerely advise. Sometimes they would differ in matters linked to the 'aqeedah, as well as issues linked to actions, yet along with such differences, they still preserved the unity and brotherhood. Yes, whosoever opposes the clear Book and the beneficial Sunnah, or that which the Pious Predecessors of this Ummah had Ijmaa' (consensus) upon, opposing it without a justifiable excuse, then such a person has acted with the action of the Innovators ... As regards differing in matters of rulings and actions, then the examples are too many to be recorded. So if every Muslim who differed in something were to be boycotted and abandoned, then no unity or brotherhood would ever remain. And Abu Bakr and 'Umar radiiallaahu 'anhuma - who were the best of the Muslims - used to differ in matters, but they did not intend except good. And the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said to his Companions on the day of [the expedition to] Banu Quraydhah: "Let none of you pray 'Asr except when you reach Bonu Quraydhah." So the time for the 'Asr Prayer came during the journey, so one group amongst them

said: We will not pray until we reach Banu Quraydhah; so they missed the actual time for 'Asr. The other group said: We will not miss it by delaying the Prayer; so they prayed along the way. And the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam did not criticise any of the two groups. This is related by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim, from Ibn 'Umar.<sup>4</sup> So this differing was in a matter related to rulings and actions, not in the important usool (fundamantels) itself." 5

---

1. Fataawaa lil-Lajnatud-Daa'imah lil-Buhoothul-'Ilmiyyah wal-Iftaa (no.830).
2. Tanbeehaatul-Lateefah (p.93).
3. Sharhul-'Aqeedatul-Waasitiyyah (1153).
4. Related by al-Bukhaaree (no. 946) and Muslim (no. 1770).
5. Majmoo' Fataawaa (241171-174), abridged.

## INDEX