

Prohibition of Disputation in Religion

Imam al-Barbahaaree

Sharh us-Sunnah
© 1995 Al-Haneef Publications

...If someone comes to debate with you, beware of him. For debating involves argumentation, disputing, seeking to overcome, wrangling and anger. You have been forbidden from all of this. It diverts you both away from the truth. It has not reached us that any of our scholars or people of knowledge argued, debated or disputed. Al-Hasan (al-Basree) said, "The wise man does not argue or seek to overcome with stratagem rather he propagates his wisdom. If it is accepted he praises Allaah and if it is rejected he praises Allaah."

[Reported by Abu Nu`aim ibn Hamaad in his Zawaa'id `alaz-Zuhd libnil Mubaarak (no. 30) and Ibn Battah in Ibaanatul-Kubraa (no. 611). Its isnaad is weak, since it contains an unnamed narrator.]

A man came to al-Hasan (al-Basree) and said, "I wish to debate with you about the Religion." Al-Hasan replied, "I know my Religion. If you have lost your Religion go out and look for it."

[Reported by al-Aajurree in ash-Sharee`ah (p. 57), al-Laalikaa'ee in as-Sunnah (no. 215) and Ibn Battah (no. 586) and it is saheeh.]

The Messenger of Allaah (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam) heard some people arguing outside his apartment, one of them saying, 'Did not Allaah say so and so?' and the other saying, 'Did not Allaah say so and so?' So he came out angry and said, "Is this what I have ordered you, or is this what I was sent with, that you should set one part of the Book of Allaah against some other parts?"

[Reported by Ahmad (2/178, 181 and 196), Ibn Maajah (no. 85), `Abdullaah ibn Ahmad in as-Sunnah (no. 86) and al-Baghawee in Sharhus-Sunnah (1/260). Al-Boosayree declared it saheeh in Zawaa'id Ibn Maajah (1/4) as did al-Albaanee in Sharh `Aqeedah at-Tahaawiyah (p. 218)] So he forbade them from argumentation.

Ibn `Umar used to hate disputation as did Maalik ibn Anas and those greater and lesser than him right up to this day.

The Sayings of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, is greater than the sayings of His creation. Allaah, the Most High says:

"None dispute in the Aayaat (signs, proofs) of Allaah except those who disbelieve." [Soorah Ghaafir (40):4]

A man asked `Umar ibn al-Khattaab: What is

"Those (angels) who gently take out (the souls of the believers)?" [Soorah an-Naazi`aat (79):2]

He said, "If your head were shaved, I would have beheaded you."

[Shaving his head was the sign of the Khawaarij. The man who asked `Umar was called Sabeegh. His story is well-known and authentic. It is reported by ad-Daarimee (1/51), Ibn Waddah in al-Bida`h (p.56), al-Aajurree in ash-Sharee`ah (p. 73), al-Laalikaa'ee in as-Sunnah (pp. 634-636) and Ibn Battah (1/414-415)

The Prophet (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam) said, "The Believer does not dispute and I will not intercede on the Day of Resurrection for those who dispute, so leave arguing for its lack of good."

[This hadeeth is very weak, as declared by al-Haithumee in Majma` uz-Zawaa'id (1/156, 725). Reported by at-Tabaraanee in al-Kabeer (8/178-179) and al-Aajurree in ash-Sharee`ah (pp. 55-56).