



## The Path is One

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Know - may Allaah have mercy upon you - that the path which will guarantee the bounty of Islaam for you is one, not numerous paths; because Allaah has written success for one party (*hizb*) only. So He said,

**“These are the Party of Allaah. Indeed, the Party of Allaah is successful.”** [Sooratul-Mujaadilah 58:22]

And He has written victory for this party alone, so He said,

**“And whosoever takes Allaah, His Messenger and the Believers as protectors, then verily the Party of Allaah is successful.”** [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:56]

So regardless of how much you search in the Book of Allaah and in the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), you will not find anything permitting splitting the *Ummah* up into *jamaa'at* (groups), and splitting it up into *ahzaab* (parties) and blocs, except that it is blameworthy. Allaah the Exalted said,

**“And do not be from amongst the disbelievers, those who split up their Religion and became sects; every party being pleased with what is with it.”** [Sooratur-Room 30:31-32]

And how could our Lord the Mighty and Majestic affirm division for the *Ummah* after He had safeguarded it with His Rope and freed His Prophet from it when it became like that; and after He had threatened it by saying,

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<sup>1</sup> The following is taken from *Sittu Durar min Usool Ahlil-Athar* (p. 51-61) of Shaykh 'Abdul-Maalik Ramadaanee al-Jazaa'iree.

**“Verily, those who split up their Religion and become sects, you have nothing to do with them in the very least. Verily, their affair is only with Allaah, they shall be informed of what they used to do.”** [Sooratul-An'aam 6:159]

From Mu'aawiyah Ibn Abee Sufyaan (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) who said, 'Indeed, the Messenger of Allaah stood amongst us and said, 'Verily, before you, the People of the Book split up into seventy-two sects, and verily this Religion shall split up into seventy-three sects. Seventy-two of them will be in the Fire and one will be in Paradise, and it is the *Jamaa'ah*.”<sup>2</sup>

So alAmeer as-Sam'aanee said - *rahimahullaah* - said, "Mentioning the number (in the *hadeeth*) does not fully describe those who are destroyed, it only expounds upon the wide range of misguided paths and their offshoots, in comparison to the one true path. That is what the Scholars of *Tafseer* (explanation of the *Qur'aan*) have mentioned in regards to the statements of Allaah,

**“And do not follow the other paths, since they will separate you from His Paths.”** [Sooratul-An'aam 6:153]

So He gathered together all of the prohibited paths along with their followers in order to explain the abundance of the paths to misguidance and their wide range, and He singled out the path to guidance and the truth and its lack of plurality.”<sup>3</sup> From Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) who said, 'The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) drew a line for us, then he said, 'This is the Path of Allaah,' then he drew lines branching off from its right and its left. Then he said, 'These are (other) paths, and upon each one of them is a devil calling to them.' Then he recited,

**“And verily this is My Straight Path, so follow it, and do not follow other paths, since they will separate you from His Path.”** [Sooratul-An'aam 6:153]<sup>4</sup>

So this *hadeeth* proves through its text that the path is one. Ibnul-Qayyim (d.751H) said, "And this is because the path that takes one to Allaah is one, and it is what He sent His Messengers and revealed His Books with, and nothing can take one to Allaah, except this one path. And even if the people were to come from every path, and they entered through every door, then all of these paths would be obstructed for them and all of those doors would be closed for them, except this one path; since it is the one that takes one to Allaah.”<sup>5</sup> I say however, that the one who is unstable upon it will encounter doubt and febleness. And the one who deviates only deviates to the sect due to numbers and fears

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<sup>2</sup> **Saheeh:** Related by Ahmad (4/102), Aboo Daawood (no. 4597), ad-Daarimee (2/241), at-Tabaraanee (9/376, 884885) and al-Haakim (1/28). It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *Silsilatul-Ahaadeethus-Saheehah* (no. 203).

<sup>3</sup> Refer to *Hadeeth Iftiraaqul-Ummah ilaa Nayyif wa Sab'een Firqah* (p. 67-68).

<sup>4</sup> **Saheeh:** Related by an-Nisaa'ee (no. 184) and Ahmad (1/435) and this wording is by him. It is also related by ad-Daarimee (1/67-68) and at-Tabaree in *Jaami'ul-Bayaan* (8/65).

<sup>5</sup> Refer to *at-Tafseerul-Qayyim* (p. 14-15).

being alone and hastily proceeds to the destination and cowers away from the long trip. Ibnul-Qayyim - *rahimahullaah* - said, "Whoever makes the path long, his walk will become weak."<sup>6</sup> And Allaah is the One from Whom aid is sought.

#### KNOWING THE PATH:

From the speech of Ibnul-Qayyim, the path is first explained and the intended meaning of path here, is the second pillar from the pillars of *Tawheed*. So after the testimony that there is no deity worthy of worship besides Allaah, comes the testimony that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah. And this is also the second pillar from the pillars of action and acceptance. Therefore, an action is not accepted - as is known - except by the fulfillment of two conditions:

[1]: Making the Religion sincerely for Allaah;

[2]: Placing the Messenger of Allaah as an example to be followed;

And I will not focus upon the derivation of this great principle right now, because the goal of this section is to explain the Prophetic path without which, it is not possible to reach Allaah. So, 'ignorance of the path and its signs and the intended goal, necessitates much toil for little benefit.'<sup>7</sup> So it should be clear that this path is one. It does not exceed the advices of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) by callers to the Path of Allaah, being as numerous as the souls of the human beings and other them, from that which is known to falsified by the Religion of Allaah which came to unite its people, not to divide them. Indeed, Allaah the Exalted said,

**"And hold onto the Rope of Allaah altogether and do not be divided. And remember the bounty of Allaah upon you when you were enemies. So He united your hearts, so you became brothers through His Blessing."** [Soorah Aali-'Imraan 3:103]

Indeed, this trustworthy rope which has gathered the Muslims together has been explained as being the Book of Allaah. Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said, "This path is inhabited, the devils occupy it calling out, 'O servant of Allaah, come on! This is the Path,' in order to discourage them from the Path of Allaah."<sup>8</sup> So they hold firmly to the Path of Allaah, so the Path of Allaah is the Book of Allaah." So there are two benefits found in this narration:

**Firstly**, that the path is one, and the devils only surround it for the purpose of dividing the people away from it. So they do not find a better way to divide them, than calling them to

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<sup>6</sup> Refer to *al-Fawaa'id* (p. 90) of Ibnul-Qayyim.

<sup>7</sup> Refer to *al-Fawaa'id* (p. 223) of Ibnul-Qayyim.

<sup>8</sup> **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo 'Ubayd in *Fadaa'ilul-Qur'aan* (p. 75), ad-Daarimee (2/433), *asSunnah* (no. 22) of Ibn Nasr, *Fadaa'ilul-Qur'aan* (p. 74) of Ibn Darees, and Ibn Jareer in his *Tafseer* (no. 7566), at-Tabaraanee (9/9031), *ash-Sharee'ah* (no. 16) of al-Aajurree, *al-Ibaanah* (no. 135) of Ibn Battah.

increasing the number of the path! So whoever wishes to misguide the people by claiming that the truth is not contained entirely in one path, then he is surely a devil. Indeed, Allaah the Exalted said,

**“So what is after the truth except falsehood?”** [Soorah Yoonus 10:32]

**Secondly**, the Path of Allaah – which it is obligatory upon all of the Muslims to hold onto – is explained as the Book of Allaah. And this does not contradict the statement of Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), “The Straight Path is what the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) left us upon.”<sup>9</sup> And that is because the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) left them upon the Book and the *Sunnah*, as he himself, “I have left you upon that which, if you hold firmly to it, you will never go astray after me; the Book of Allaah and my *Sunnah*.”<sup>10</sup> This is so, because the *Sunnah* is like the Book of Allaah in its nature, it is revelation, then it is an explanation of the Book of Allaah. Rather, the best person to explain the Speech of Allaah from His creation is the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), as Allaah the Glorified said,

**“And We have revealed to you the Remembrance, so that you may explain to the people what has been revealed to them.”** [Sooratur-Nahl 16: 44]

And 'Aa'ishah (*radiyallaahu 'anhaa*) said, “His character was the *Qur'aan*.”<sup>11</sup> So due to this, the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) commanded his *Ummah* to hold firmly to his *Sunnah* when division creeps into it, so he said, “And whomsoever from amongst you lives, then he shall see much differing. So adhere strictly to my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the Rightly Guided Caliphs after me. Hold onto it with your molar teeth and beware of newly invented affairs, since every newly invented affair is an innovation...”<sup>12</sup> Ibn Battah (d.387H) - *rahimahullaah* - said in explanation of the unity of the word of the *Salaf* upon one creed, “So the first generation did not cease to be upon this, their hearts were united as well as their *madhaahib*; the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of al-Mustafaa was their guide. They did not act upon opinions, nor did they rush towards desires. So the people will not cease to remain upon that and the hearts will be safeguarded and protected by their master, and the souls will remain protected from their desires, along with their concern being focused.”<sup>13</sup> So he – may Allaah bestow mercy upon him – has spoken truthfully, since the Religion of Allaah is one, not variant. Allaah the Glorified said,

**“And if it was from other than Allaah, you would have seen in it much differing.”** [Sooratur-Nisaa' 4:82]

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<sup>9</sup> **Saheeh:** Related by at-Tabaraanee (10/10454), al-Bayhaqee in *ash-Shu'ab* (4/1487). And the likes of it has been related by Ibn Jareer in his *Tafseer* (8/88-89).

<sup>10</sup> **Hasan:** Related by Ibn Nasr in *as-Sunnah* (no. 69), Ibnul-Waddaah in *al-Bida'* (no. 76), al-Haakim (1/93), and al-Albaanee declared it authentic in his notes to *al-Mishkaat* (no. 186).

<sup>11</sup> Related by Muslim (no. 746) and Ahmad (6/91, 163)

<sup>12</sup> **Saheeh:** Related by Aboo Daawood (no. 4607) and at-Tirmidhee (no. 2676)

<sup>13</sup> Refer to *al-Ibaanah* (1/237) of Ibn Battah al-'Ukbaree.

So this is the path which we call the people to, it is the clearest, fully explained, most sufficient and most complete of paths. So from al-'Irbaad Ibn Saariyah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) who said, 'The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, 'Indeed, I have left you upon a clear white path, its night is like its day. No one deviates from it after me, except that he is destroyed."<sup>14</sup> So when a person changes or alters it with something that the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and his Companions did not do, then this only brings about splitting into various paths. Rather, it leads to the valley of destruction, and this is what the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) called, 'the misguided innovation.' So due to this, the *Salaf* were extreme in their opposition to the one who increases something into the Religion, or the one who intrudes upon it with his opinion. 'Umar Ibnul-Khattaab (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said, "Beware of sitting with the people of opinion, since they are the enemies of the *Sunnah*. They retain the *Sunnah* in order to memorize it, and they forget [And in a narration, "...and it slips away from them..."] the *ahaadeeth* that they have memorized. So they are asked about that which they do not know, and they are shy to say, 'We do not know.' So they give rulings by their opinions, so they go astray and they lead many others astray. So they go astray from the Straight Path. Verily, Allaah did not take your Prophet until the Revelation had left no room for opinion. If the opinion took precedence over the *Sunnah*, then wiping over the bottom of the socks would take precedence over the tops."<sup>15</sup> That is because the Religion is built upon following (*ittibaa'*), not invention and opinion in most cases; because the intellect alone cannot guide one to most of the affairs of the Religion, especially since the intellects contrast in their perceptions and realizations, and the opinion has already been mentioned."<sup>16</sup>

And Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said, "Follow and do not innovate, for indeed you have been sufficed with. Hold onto the old affair."<sup>17</sup> And 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Umar (*radiyallaahu 'anhuma*) said, "Every innovation is misguidance, even if the people see it as something good."<sup>18</sup> So as long as I am mentioning the effects of innovation in cutting off the way to the Straight Path for the seeker, then verily I must mention the narration of Ibn 'Abbaas concerning that. It shows the vast knowledge of the Companions. So from 'Uthmaan Ibn Haadir who said, 'I entered upon Ibn 'Abbaas, so I said, 'Will you advise

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<sup>14</sup> **Saheeh:** Related by Ahmad (4/126), Ibn Maajah (no. 5, 43), *as-Sunnah* (no. 48-49) of Ibn Abee 'Aasim and al-Haakim (1/96). It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *Dhilaalul-Jannah fee Takhreejis-Sunnah* (1/27).

<sup>15</sup> Related by Ibn Zamneen in *Usoolul-Sunnah* (no. 8) and al-Laalikaa'ee in *Sharh Usoolul-I'tiqaad* (no. 201), al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee in *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (p. 476-480), *Jaami' Bayaanul-'Ilm wa Fadlihi* (no. 2001, 2003-2005), Ibn Hazm in *al-Ihkaam* (6/4243), and al-Bayhaqee in *al-Madkhal* (no. 213) and *Qawaamus-Sunnah* (1/205).

<sup>16</sup> For a detailed explanation of this, refer to *Ilaamul-Muwaqqi'een* (1/63) of Ibnul-Qayyim.

<sup>17</sup> **Saheeh:** Related by Wakee' in *az-Zuhd* (no. 315), 'Abdur-Razzaaq (no. 20456), Aboo Khaythamah in *al-'Ilm* (no. 54), Ahmad in *az-Zuhd* (p. 62), ad-Daarimee (1/69), Ibnul-Waddaah in *al-Bida'* (no. 60), Ibn Nasr in *as-Sunnah* (no. 78, 85), at-Tabaraanee (9/8770, 8845), Ibn Battah in *al-Ibaanah* (no. 168-169), al-Laalikaa'ee in *Sharh Usoolul-I'tiqaad* (no. 104-108), al-Bayhaqee in *al-Madkhal* (no. 387-388), al-Khateeb in *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (1/43). It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *Kitaabul-'Ilm* of Abee Khaythamah.

<sup>18</sup> **Saheeh:** Related by Ibn Nasr in *as-Sunnah* (no. 82), al-Laalikaa'ee in *Sharh Usoolul-I'tiqaad* (no. 126) and al-Bayhaqee in *al-Madkhal* (no. 191).

me?’ So he said, ‘Yes! Adhere strictly to the fear of Allaah and steadfastness and the narration. Follow and do not innovate.’<sup>19</sup> So reflect upon this, he gathered two affairs in it, they are:

[i]: The *taqwaa* (fear, reverence) of Allaah, and it means *ikhlaas* (sincerity) here, because it is attached to *ittibaa'* (following).

[ii]: And *al-ittibaa'* which refers to the Straight Path, as has preceded.

Then he warned him against that which opposes that, which is innovation. So this is how the Speech of the *Salaf* used to be; collective in meaning, yet concise. Indeed, the *Salafus-Saalih* were extremely harsh in pushing forth the statements of men in order to shove aside the rulings of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), regardless of whatever high status or nobility these men may have. There is no problem in having good manners with the people of knowledge and loving them and giving precedence to them over others and being doubtful of a person who places his own opinion along with theirs in a matter of great importance. However, this is one thing, and giving precedence to the text from the two forms of Revelation is another thing. 'Urwah said to Ibn 'Abbaas, “Woe to you! Do you misguide the people? You have permitted 'Umrah in the first ten days (of *Muharram*), yet there is no 'Umrah in them!” So he said, “O 'Urwah! Verily, Abaa Bakr and 'Umar do not say that, yet they are more knowledgeable and better in following the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) than you.” So he said, “From there you have come! We come with the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), and you come with Abee Bakr and 'Umar!?” [And in a narration, “Woe to you! Are the two of them to be related from, according to you, or what is found in the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) for his Companions and his *Ummah!*”] And in a narration, “I see that they will be destroyed. I say, ‘The Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said,’ and it is said, ‘Aboo Bakr and 'Umar forbade.”<sup>20</sup>

Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Hasan (d.1258H) - *rahimahullaah* - said after quoting this narration, “And in the speech of Ibn 'Abbaas is that which proves that *taqleed* (blind-following) towards an *imaam* is not to be done by the one whom the proof has reached. So it is obligatory to oppose him severely due to his opposition to the proof.”<sup>21</sup> He also said, “Indeed, it has become a general necessity with this evil, especially from the one who ascribes himself to knowledge, that they have set up obstacles to obstruct taking from the

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<sup>19</sup> Related by ad-Daarimee (1/53), Ibn Waddaah in *al-Bida'* (no. 61), Ibn Nasr in *as-Sunnah* (no. 83), Ibn Battah in *al-Ibaanah* (no. 200-206), and al-Khateeb in *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (1/83).

<sup>20</sup> **Hasan:** Related by Ishaq Ibn Raahwayh, as is found in *al-Matlabul'Aaliyah* (no. 1306), Ibn Abee Shaybah (4/103) and by at-Tabaraanee (24/92) by way of him. And it is related by Ahmad (1/252, 323, 337) and by at-Tabaraanee also in *al-Awsat* (1/42) and by al-Khateeb al-Baghaadee in *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (no. 379-380) and by Ibn 'Abdul-Barr in *Jaami'* (no. 2378-2381). It was authenticated by Ibn Hajar in *al-Matlab*, and it was declared *hasan* by al-Haythamee in *al-Majma'* (3/234) and by Ibn Muflih in *al-Aadaabush-Shar'iyyah* (2/66).

<sup>21</sup> Refer to *Fathul-Majeed Sharh Kitaabut-Tawheed* (p. 338) of 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Hasan.

Book and the *Sunnah* and they have prevented the following of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) along with the exaltation of his command and prohibition. So from that is their statement, 'The Book and the *Sunnah* cannot be used as a proof, except by the *mujtahid* (one who is qualified extract rulings from the Revelation), and *ijtihaad* has already been closed off.' And they say, 'This is a case in which the one whom you are making *taqleed* of is more knowledgeable than you about *hadeeth* and its abrogating and abrogated.'

So the likes of these statements, whose goal is to leave off following the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), who does not speak from his own desire, and to place reliance upon one who could be mistaken. And other than him from the Scholars may oppose him and prohibit his statement with proof. So there is no scholar, except that he has some knowledge, but not all of it. So it is obligatory upon everyone under obligation, that if the proof reaches him from the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). So the (correct) understanding is that he must act upon it, even though he will be opposing whoever he will be opposing, as Allaah the Exalted said,

**"Follow that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and do not follow protectors other than Him; yet you remember little."** [Sooratul-A'raaf 7:3]

And He said,

**"Is it not sufficient for them that We revealed to you the Book, which is recited to them? Verily, in it is a mercy and a reminder for a people who believe."** [Sooratul-'Ankaboot 29:51]

Indeed, an *ijmaa'* (consensus) has already been mentioned concerning that, and it has been explained that the *muqallid* (blind-follower) is not from the people of knowledge. Indeed, a consensus has already been mentioned concerning that by Aboo 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul-Barr and other than him."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Refer to *Fathul-Majeed* (p. 339-340) of 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ibn Hasan.