

# The Steadfastness of the *Salafī* Throughout the Many Trials

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## The Steadfastness of the *Salafī* throughout the Many Trials

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn Ramzān al-Hājirī

O noble readers! This is an advice to everyone about patience and *thabāt* (constancy, steadfastness) up until one's death upon the *manhaj* of the *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*. So the *Ummah* (nation) was united and together, then there crept into it the disease of the nations, and that is disagreement (*ikhtilāf*) and division (*tafarruq*). And there have emerged within the *Ummah* many sects and destructive groups, due to whom blood has been spilled and the word has become divided and the united body (*jamā'ah*) has become dispersed and the power has become weakened. So it has remained the practice of the people of truth to refute these ones who have fled from the way of truth and the correct path, in obedience to the statement of Allāh,

**“And hold onto the rope of Allāh altogether and do not become divided.”**

[Sūrah Āli-'Imrān 3:103]

So the one who answered this was guided and whosoever refused, then they warned against him in order to safeguard the society from his evil.

Indeed, the noble Companion: Ḥudhayfah (*raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*) spoke the truth and he was accurate in his advice. Abū Mas'ūd entered upon Ḥudhayfah and said, “Make a promise to me.” So he replied, “Has *al-yaqīn* (certainty) not come to you?” He said, “Of course, by the might of my Lord.” He said, “So know that the true misguidance is that you approve what you used to reject and that you reject what you used to approve. And beware of constantly changing positions, since the Religion of Allāh is one.”<sup>1</sup>

And here is another advice from 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd who said, “Indeed, you are living in a time whose *fuqahā'* (Scholars of jurisprudence) are many and whose *khuṭabā'* (speakers) are few. There are few who beg and many who give and the good deeds are given precedence over desires. And there shall come after you a time whose *fuqahā'* are few and whose *khuṭabā'* are many; those who beg therein will be many and those who give will be few. Desires will be given precedence over good deeds. Know that the best guidance during the last times will be better than some good deeds.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Related by 'Abd al-Razzāq in *al-Muṣannaf* (11/249), al-Bayhaqī in *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* (10/42), al-Lālikā'ī in *Sharh Uṣūl al-I'tiqād* (1/90) and Ibn Baṭṭah in *al-Ibānah* (1/189).

<sup>2</sup> Related by Mālik in *al-Muwatta'* (1/173), from Yaḥyā Ibn Sa'īd, that 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd said to a person, “Indeed, you are living in a time whose *fuqahā'* are many...” Then, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (d.463H) said, “And witnessing these times are a proof for the correctness of this meaning.”

This was during his time - *raḥimahullāh* – so what about these times of ours?!<sup>3</sup>

And from Muḥammad Ibn Sīrīn (d.110H) who said: 'Adī Ibn Ḥātim (*raḍiyallāhu 'anhu*) said, "Indeed, you will not cease to be upon goodness as long as you do not approve what you used to reject and reject what you used to approve and as long as your Scholars can speak amongst you without fear."<sup>4</sup>

And whatever has proceeded is confirmed by what the Prophet (*ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) informed about in his statement, "Indeed, Allāh does not take away knowledge by snatching it away from the servants. However, He takes away the knowledge by taking away the Scholars, up until no Scholar remains. So the people begin to take ignorant people as leaders. So they will ask these leaders and they will issue *fatwā* (religious verdicts). So they will judge without knowledge. So they will be misguided and they will misguide others."<sup>5</sup>

And Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) said, "Indeed, that which is with the common-folk of the Muslims and their Scholars, *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*, from knowledge, certainty, calmness, resoluteness upon the truth, a steadfast statement and

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<sup>3</sup> **BENEFIT – Do not be Saddened by the Scarcity of Those who Take Heed:** The Messenger of Allāh (*ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said, "No Prophet from amongst the Prophets will have as many followers as me. Indeed, there will be from amongst the Prophets he who had no one believing in him, except one man." Related by Muslim (1/130).

Imām Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (d.1420H) commented upon this *ḥadīth*, saying, "In this *ḥadīth* is a clear proof that the abundance of followers, or lack thereof is not the measuring standard that indicates whether the caller is upon truth or falsehood. So even though the *da'wah* of these Prophets – '*alayhim al-ṣalātu wa al-salām* – was one and their Religion was one, their varied with regards to the numbers of their followers. Some of them had many and some of them had a few, to the extent that some had no one to believe in them except one man. Rather, there was from amongst them he who had not a single follower!

So in this is a profound lesson for the callers and those who are being called in this age of ours. So it is obligatory upon the caller to remember this reality. He must remain for a long time in the path of calling to Allāh the Exalted, and he must not pay any attention to the scarcity of those who answer him, because there is nothing upon him, except to convey the message clearly. And he has the best example in the previous Prophets who did not have anyone with them other than one or two men!

So the one being called upon must not despair due to the scarcity of those who answer the caller, and he must not take that as a reason for doubting in the *da'wah* of truth and thus abandon *īmān* (faith) in it, let alone that he would take that as an indication of the falsity of the *da'wah* with the argument that no one is following this caller, or that only a few are following him. And if his *da'wah* were truthful, the majority of the people would not follow him! Allāh the Mighty and Majestic said,

**"And most of mankind will not believe, even if you desire it eagerly."** [Sūrah Yūsuf 12:103]. Refer to *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (no. 397) of al-Albānī.

Stated Imām 'Abdullāh Ibn al-Mubārak (d.110H), "Know that I consider death to be an honour for every Muslim who meets Allāh upon the *Sunnah*. Since, we do not complain about our strangeness, the disappearance of the brothers, the scarcity of helpers and the emergence of innovations. To Allāh do we complain about the great calamity that has befallen this *Ummah* of the disappearance of the Scholars, *Ahl al-Sunnah* and the emergence of innovations." Refer to *al-Bida' wa al-Nahī 'Anhā* (no. 39).

<sup>4</sup> Related by and Ibn Baṭṭah in *al-Ibānah* (1/190).

<sup>5</sup> Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 98), Muslim (no. 4828), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2576), Ibn Mājah (no. 51), al-Dārimī (no. 241) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 6222).

decisiveness in what they are upon, is an affair that no one disputes except someone whom Allāh has deprived of intellect and Religion.”<sup>6</sup>

And al-Aṣbahānī (d.430H) said, “And from that which proves that the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* are the people of truth is that if you were to read all of their written books, the old writings and the new ones, despite the difference in their lands, and the great distances between them and the fact that each of them lived in a different place, then you will find them in the explanation of the creed (*i’tiqād*) upon one method and one way. They traversed upon one path, not deviating from it nor swaying within it. Their statement concerning that is one and their proofs are one, you will not see any disagreement in that regard, nor any division in anything, no matter how small. Rather, if you were to gather together everything that is upon their tongues and to quote it from their *Salaf*, it would seem as if it all came from one heart and was uttered upon one tongue. And is there any clearer proof for the truth than this?”<sup>7</sup>

**In conclusion:** From Anas (*raḍiyallāhu ’anhu*) who said, ‘The Messenger of Allāh (*ṣallallāhu ’alayhi wa sallam*) would constantly say, “O Turner of the hearts! Establish my heart steadfastly upon Your Religion.” So I said, “O Messenger of Allāh! We believe in you and in what you have come with, so do you fear for us!?” He replied, ‘Yes! Indeed, the hearts are between two Fingers from the Fingers of Allāh. He turns them however He wills.’<sup>8</sup>

So – O Allāh, O Turner of the hearts! Establish my heart steadfastly upon Your Religion.

[End of Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn Ramzān al-Hājirī’s words]

## **BENEFIT – Certainty and Steadfastness are with *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* and Confusion and Changing Positions are with the People of Innovation:**

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah - *rahimahullāh* - said, “Indeed, you will find that the people of *kalām* (theological rhetoric) are the most abundant of the people in changing their positions from one statement to another and they are absolutely certain about a statement in one place, then they are absolutely certain in contradicting it and performing *takfīr* of the one who says it in another place. And this is proof for the lack of *yaqīn* (certainty), since *īmān* (faith) is as Abū Sufyān said when Caesar asked him about those who accepted Islām with the Prophet (*ṣallallāhu ’alayhi wa sallam*), so he asked, “Does anyone from amongst you apostate from his Religion due to discontent after he has entered into it?” Abū Sufyān said, “No.” He replied, “And such is *īmān*, whenever it mixes with the heart, no one is ever displeased with it.”<sup>9</sup> Due to this, some

<sup>6</sup> Refer to *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā* (4/48) of Ibn Taymiyyah.

<sup>7</sup> Refer to *al-Intiṣār li Ahl al-Ḥadīth* (p. 45) of al-Sam’ānī.

<sup>8</sup> **Ṣaḥīḥ:** Related by al-Tirmidhī (no. 2140), Ibn Mājah (no. 3834) and Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 11664). It was authenticated by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’* (no. 7987).

<sup>9</sup> Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 2941), Muslim (no. 1773), Abū Dāwūd (no. 5114), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2860), Aḥmad in his *Musnad* (no. 2369), Abd al-Razzāq in *al-Muṣannaf* (no. 9724) and al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr* (no. 7269).

of the *Salaf*, such as 'Umar Ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz (d.101H) and others, said, “Whosoever subjects his Religion to controversies will be constantly changing positions.”<sup>10</sup>

As for *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Ḥadīth*, then no one from their Scholars, nor the righteous from their common-folk were known to recant at all from his statement and his belief. Rather, they are the greatest of the people in being patient upon that, even when they are tried by various types of trials and tested by various types of tribulations. And this was the condition of the Prophets and their followers from the early ones, such as the inhabitants of the trenches and their likes. And the *Salaf* of this *Ummah*, from the Companions and the *tābi'īn* and the Imāms did the same, to the extent that Mālik - *rahimahullāh* – said, “Do not be envious of anyone who has not been afflicted by a calamity in this affair. Indeed, Allāh has said that He will test the Believer. So if he is patient, then Allāh will raise his rank, as Allāh the Exalted said,

**“Alif, Lām, Mīm. Do the people think that they will be left to say, “We believe,” and they will not be tested? Indeed, We have certainly tested those before them and Allāh will surely make evident those who are truthful, and He will surely make evident the liars.”** [Sūrah al-'Ankabūt 3:103]

Allāh the Exalted said,

**“And We made from amongst them leaders guiding by Our command when they were patient and when they were certain of Our signs.”** [Sūrah al-Sajdah 32:24]

Allāh the Exalted said,

**“By time. Indeed, mankind is in loss, except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience.”** [Sūrah al-'Aşr 103:1-3].<sup>11</sup>

And whosoever is patient upon his statement from the people of desires, then that is due to whatever he has from the truth, since it is inevitable that every group of innovation has a portion from the truth that the Messenger (*ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) came with. And *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Ḥadīth* agree with whatever it is obligatory to accept, but pure falsehood is not to be accepted in any condition.

And in conclusion, steadfastness and constancy are found in the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth wa al-Sunnah* in much more abundance than they are found with the people of *kalām* (i.e. theological rhetoric) and philosophy.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Refer to *al-Ibānah* (no. 578) of Ibn Baṭṭah, *Jāmi' Bayān al-'Ilm* (no. 1838) of Ibn 'Abd al-Barr and *Sharḥ Uşūl al-'Itiqād* (no. 293) of al-Lālikā'i.

<sup>11</sup> Refer to *Tartīb al-Madārik* (1/124-125) of al-Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ.

<sup>12</sup> Refer to *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (4/50) of Ibn Taymiyyah.