



**Concepts to be put right for Understanding the
Sirah and Sunnah**

by:

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In the Name of Allah, the Origin of mercy, the Giver of mercy

**(So, accept whatever the Messenger gives you,
and abstain from whatever he forbids you)**

(59:07)

INTRODUCTION

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, and prayers and peace be upon the last of His Prophets and Messengers, our master Muhammad ibn Abdillah, and his righteous family and companions, and those who follow his guidance until the Day of Judgment.

Islam is a piece of gold that needs nothing more than removing the dust accumulated on it to restore its brightness. Precious metals neither corrode nor get damaged, regardless of the factors, repercussions, events and other accumulations of time.

There is no doubt that the Sirah and Sunnah of our Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) is a practical application and a theoretical explanation of many Ayas in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an. The scholars are unanimous that the Sunnah of the Prophet has explained, detailed, illustrated, complemented, and clarified Allah's Book (Glory be to Him).

Hence comes the importance of verifying the authenticity of what has been related to our master, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) on the one hand, and the necessity of properly understanding its purposes on the other, then striving for correcting the misconceptions ascribed to

the Sirah and the Sunnah. Our Prophet (PBUH) says: “This knowledge is carried in every generation by the competent scholars who clear it of the distortions of perverts, the falsehood of radicals, and interpretation by the ignorant”.

The issue of the days when the Prophet (PBUH) met his enemies, comes first of the topics that need to be verified. Those days were referred to in some books of history and Sirah by the word: “invasions”.

Here we must only quote the expression of the Ever-Glorious Qur’an, which named things with their most precise names. No mention is found in the Ever-Glorious Qur’an of the word ‘invasion’ to express the encounter of the Prophet (PBUH) with his enemies. The Qur’an used the word “day” to denote the victory of the Muslims on the “day of Badr”; it was named by Allah, Glory be to Him, in His Ever-Glorious Qur’an as “the Day of Decision” as He said: {Know that one-fifth of your battle gains belongs to Allah and the Messenger, to close relatives and orphans, to the needy and travelers, if you believe in Allah and the revelation We sent down to Our servant on *the day of decision*, the day when the two forces met. Allah has power over all things }{8:41}.

Likewise, the Ever-Glorious Qur’an spoke about *the day of Hunayn*, as He, Glory be to Him, said: { Allah has helped you (believers)

on many battlefields, even on *the day of Hunayn*. You were well pleased with your large numbers, but they were of no use to you: the earth seemed to close in on you despite its spaciousness, and you turned tail and fled. (25) Allah sent His calm down to His Messenger and the believers, and He sent down invisible forces. He punished the disbelievers – this is what the disbelievers deserve - but after all this Allah turns in His mercy to whoever He will. Allah is most forgiving and merciful} (9:25-27).

The wars of the Prophet (PBUH) were defensive, either for deterring aggression or attack, a response to betrayal or conspiracy, or for a covenant preached by the enemies. None of them was an assault on anyone. Islam has never been eager to shed blood, rather, it was a model in saving and preserving blood. So, it is appropriate and accurate to use the word “day” for it, not “invasion” which has been used by many writers who wrote about the days of the Arabs in pre-Islamic and Islamic eras.

The book also includes corrections of some misconceptions relating to extremely important issues, including: how the Prophet (PBUH) administered the state, the confusion between habits and recommended acts of worship, some issues of family and population,

the reality of asceticism, the concept of useful knowledge, and formal rigidity in applying some surface meanings of some Hadiths concerning optional and preferable acts of worship (sunnan and mustahabbat).

I hope I have contributed to lightening the way and opening the door for informed and enlightened reading of our changeable intellectual heritage, which should be based on sound understanding of the unchangeable text, considering the reality of the age and its substantial circumstances.

It is Allah Whom we seek to please, it is Whom we ask for help.

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The first treatise:

War in Islam

Invasions? Or days and deterring aggression?

Honorable Prophetic Sirah is the practical application of many aspects of our Prophet's Sunnah (PBUH), it is a light that guides us to the Day of Judgement. But most of the radical groups in our age have concentrated in their readings, writings, and teachings on the topic of invasions, and made it the only or - at least – the most prominent topic in the Prophetic Sirah, because they are good at manipulating it for irritating the feelings, and infuriating the enthusiasm of its elements and cadres; they actually exploit it for repetitively provoking the public.

The Ever-Glorious Qur'an named things by their most precise names, and in this connection, we found no mention in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an of the word 'invasion' for expressing the encounter of the Prophet (PBUH) with his enemies. Rather, it verbally used the word 'day' to express the victory of the Muslims on the day of Badr, which He called the day of the decision, He said: {Know that one-fifth of your battle gains belongs to Allah and the Messenger, to close relatives and orphans, to the needy and travelers, if you believe in Allah and the revelation We sent down to Our servant on *the day of decision*, the day when the two forces met. Allah has power over all things} (8:41).

Likewise, the Ever-Glorious Qur'an spoke about the day of Hunayn, as He, Glory be to Him, said: { Allah has helped you (believers) on many battlefields, even on *the day of Hunayn*. You were well pleased with your large numbers, but they were of no use to you: the earth seemed to close in on you despite its spaciousness, and you turned tail and fled. (25) Allah sent His calm down to His Messenger and the believers, and He sent down invisible forces. He punished the disbelievers – this is what the disbelievers deserve- but after all this Allah turns in His mercy to whoever He will. Allah is most forgiving and merciful} (9:25-27).

The wars of the Prophet (PBUH) were defensive, either for deterring aggression or attack, as response to betrayal or conspiracy, or for a covenant preached by the enemies; none of them was an assault on anyone. The Qur'an opted for the appropriate and accurate name i.e., 'day' not 'invasion', which is what we adopt for the sake of accurately expressing the meaning, and in order to put things on the right track and name them by the names the Ever-Glorious Qur'an chose and preferred to others. This is also what has been adopted by some writers and historians who accurately expressed it in their works under the title "Days of the Arabs in pre-Islamic and Islamic eras".

We affirm that war is neither an end nor a goal for any rational state or governance, nor is it a walk or picnic. Our Prophet (PBUH) used to say: "Do not wish for the enemy to meet (i.e. in war), and ask Allah that you may avoid it, so if you meet them, be patient".

However, war may be a necessity for defending oneself, honor, money, homes and countries, the entity and existence of states, or for protecting any of these from the dangers that threaten them.

From an Islamic perspective, war is a defensive means legislated for deterring aggression. It is restricted to this aim alone. Allah Almighty says: "Those who have been attacked are permitted to take up arms because they have been wronged- Allah has the power to help them". (22:39), and says: "Fight in Allah's cause against those who fight you, but do not overstep the limits; Allah does not love those who overstep the limits" (2:190), and says: "Do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque unless they fight you there. If they do fight you kill them – this is what such disbelievers deserve – but if they stop, then Allah is most forgiving and merciful. Fight them until there is no more persecution, and worship is devoted to Allah. If they cease hostilities, there can be no (further) hostility, except towards aggressors" (2: 191-193). We have been urged by Islam to be fair and just to all peaceful people, and to protect them if they should ask for protection. Allah says: "He does not

forbid you to deal kindly and justly with anyone who has not fought you for your faith or driven you out of your homes; Allah loves the just" (60:8), and says: "If any one of the idolaters should seek your protection, grant it to him so that he may hear the word of Allah, then take him to a place safe for him, for they are people who do not know" (9:6).

These quotations assert that Islam neither knows aggression nor wrongdoing. Fighting was legislated only to deter aggression. Therefore, Allah has permitted only those who were attacked to take up arms to defend themselves, provided that they do not overstep the limits, cheat, excessively shed blood, or overstep the limits prescribed to them for deterring aggression.

In this connection, we are forbidden to take as allies those who fight us or drive us out of our homes or help others against us. So, Allah Almighty says: "But Allah forbids you to take as allies those who have fought against you for your faith, driven you out of your homes, and helped others to drive you out: any of you who take them as allies will truly be wrongdoers" (60:9).

Even in war, which is only allowed for deterring aggression, Islam has explicitly forbidden destroying inhabited areas, or demolishing buildings. The Prophet's followers used, when mobilizing an army, to

order their army leaders not to cut a tree, burn plantations, destroy inhabited areas, or demolish buildings, unless the enemies took them as shelters, and the army couldn't find any other solution, they also ordered them not to harass farmers in their farms, monks in their hermitages, kill women, children, or elderly people unless they have actively engaged in fighting.

The Prophet (PBUH) and his followers stayed in Makkah thirteen years enduring the harm inflicted on them by the idolaters without being allowed to fight or even defend themselves for reasons; the most important of them are: To exhaust every peaceful means for conveying the Message which is based on wisdom and most favorite admonition, bring Muslims up on controlling themselves to the utmost point possible, bear any harm in Allah's cause, prove the opponent as erroneous, lack of equivalence in numbers and arms between the Muslims and their enemies at the time, hence, any confrontation will end in favor of the enemies according to human calculations, that is, heavy casualties on Muslim's part if they sought confrontation. Islam is very keen on saving blood, all bloods, let alone the blood of Muslims, who defend Islam and are ready to sacrifice everything they have for its sake. Among those reasons also: To draw our attention to the importance of being well prepared before engaging in any confrontation unless it was inevitable, as happened with the Prophet

(PBUH) in Badr, Uhud, and other battles. Emphasizing the necessity of good preparation, Allah Almighty says: "Prepare against them whatever forces you can muster, including warhorses, to frighten off enemies of Allah and of yours, and warn others unknown to you but known to Allah. Whatever you give in Allah's cause will be repaid to you in full, and you will not be wronged" (8:60).

This verse, however, aims at inhibiting the enemy from attacking us and deterring aggression without fighting, as it is the most noble and desired objective, so, Allah Almighty says about the battle of Joint Forces (Al-Ahzab): "Allah sent back the disbelievers along with their rage – they gained no benefit – and spared the believers from fighting. He is strong and mighty" (33:25). And says about the battle of Hudaibiyah as He reminds the believers of His grace on them when He saved them from killing and fighting: "In the valley of Makkah it was He who held their hands back from you and your hands back from them after He gave you advantage over them – Allah sees all what you do" (48:4). But after the Prophet (PBUH) and his honorable followers immigrated to Makkah, they had to defend the state and home, therefore, they were permitted to fight by Allah's saying: "Those who have been attacked are permitted to take up arms because they have been wronged - Allah has the power to help them" (22:39). However, we must consider the following:

- ١- Permission to fight is expressed in the passive form of the verb, to mean that this permission is to be measured by the degree of necessity, not to be used as an open permission, which may lead to excessive blood-shedding.
- ٢- Allah Almighty said: "Those who have been attacked", He has not said that the Muslims, believers, oppressed people, or even who were driven out of their homes have been allowed to take up arms, because these excuses do not qualify to taking up arms, they are only qualified to take up arms in case they are attacked, and such attack must be initiated by the enemy. Therefore, the Prophet (PBUH) and his orthodox caliphs used to admonish their army leaders not to initiate a fight and wait until the enemy initiates it, not to deceit anyone even if they knew that he wants to deceit them, as Allah says: "And if you learn of treachery on the part of any people, throw their treaty back at them, for Allah does not love the treacherous" (8:58), meaning that the Prophet (PBUH) or any Muslim leader should announce the treaty null and void before he starts fighting.
- ٣- The Qur'anic text justified permitting Muslims to fight by the fact that they have been wronged. That is, fighting was only permitted to repulse the aggression, hence comes the Divine promise "Allah has the power to help them". Being a little

minority does not deprive them of victory, as long as their aim is to rebuff the injustice practiced against them and to protect the state and home, not to transgress.

In this respect, the Prophet's (PBUH) biography shows us that he only gathered his followers when he knew of the arrival of the army of Quraysh to Badr and said to them: "O people! Give me your council". Abu-Bakr raised and said a favorite speech, then 'Umar raised and did the same, so did Ali. Then Al-Miqdad ibn 'Amr raised and said: "O Messenger of Allah! Go ahead to whatever Allah has directed you, we are with you, and we will not say to you what the children of Israel said to Moses: "So you and your Lord go and fight, and we will stay here", but we say to you: " Go you and your Lord and fight; we are with you". I swear to the One who sent you with the truth that if you lead us to the furthest place on earth, we will follow you till you reach to it". The Prophet (PBUH) praised what he said and invoked Allah for him.

The first three speakers were from the immigrants, but the Prophet (PBUH) wanted to know the Ansars' (Supporters) opinion, as the treaty of 'Aqaba which he signed with them did not oblige them to fight with him outside Madinah; they pledged to protect him inside Madinah against anything they protect themselves against, as long as he is with them inside Madinah. So, he repeated:

" O people! Give me your council", and repeated it more than once, until Sa'ad ibn Mu'adh the Ansars' leader got it, so, he said: "Do you mean us? The Prophet (PBUH) said: "Yes" He said: "We believed you, testified that your Message is the Truth, and gave you our pacts and treaties to listen and obey. So. Go ahead O! Messenger of Allah to whatever or wherever you want. I swear to the One who sent you with the Truth that if you headed to that sea to cross it, we would cross it with you, none of us will lag behind. We do not hate to face our enemy with you tomorrow, we are the best of fighters, and may Allah show you of us what pleases you, so, go ahead with Allah's blessings". The Prophet (PBUH) was pleased with Sa'ad's words, and said: "March, and get Allah's glad tidings, as He promised me one of two, I swear to Allah that I feel as if I am looking at the tombs of the enemy"¹.

For this and many other stances Sa'ad ibn Mu'adh was highly rewarded and got glad tidings; when he died the Prophet ﷺ said: "Allah's Throne was shaken for the death of Sa'ad ibn Mu'adh"².

The battle of Banu-Qainuqa', however, was launched due to the hatred and aversion the Jews felt against the Prophet (PBUH) and his followers having Allah conferred victory on them in the battle of

¹ - he Prophetic Sirah, Ibn Hisham, ٣/١٦٢, Darul-Jil, Beirut.

² - Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book of Manaqibul-Ansar, No. ٣٨٠٣

Badr, so, they said: "O Muhammad! Do not be deceived by killing some people of Quraish; they are ignorant of the tactics of fight, had you fought against us, you would have known that we are the fighters, and that you have not met fighters like us"³. One day, some of them harassed a Muslim woman in the market, when a Muslim tried to defend her, they gathered and killed him, so, it became incumbent on Muslims to get ready for fighting them. The Prophet (PBUH) mobilized an army which immediately besieged their forts for fifteen nights, until they had to surrender and accept his decision⁴.

The battle of 'Uhud was launched when Quraish came back to avenge their defeat in Badr. They came in myriads to eradicate Muhammad (PBUH) and his followers. So, the Prophet (PBUH) and his followers went out to meet them, but there was no fight.

The battle of Hamra'ul-Asad, which took place after the battle of 'Uhud, was launched because Abu-Sufiyan was determined to liquidate the Muslims. So, the Prophet (PBUH) called upon the Muslims to go out to meet him and said: " No one should go out with us except those who attended Uhud"⁵. They went with him although the wounds of some of them were still bleeding. Abu-

³ - Sunan Abu-Dawoud, Book of Kharaj, No. ٣٠٠١.

^٤ - Sirat ibn Hisham, ٢/٤٨.

^٥ 'Uyuni-Athar by: Muhammad ibn Sayyidun-Naas. ٢/٥٢. Darul-Qalam, Beirut.

Sufiyan and his followers feared that the Prophet (PBUH) may have mobilized a new army to them, so, they preferred to avoid meeting him in order that they may not lose the victory they won in 'Uhud. The Prophet (PBUH) and his followers stayed there for three days safe and secure. In this respect, Allah has revealed: "Those who responded to Allah and Messenger after suffering defeat, who do good and remain conscious of Allah, will have a great reward. Those whose faith only increased when people said to them, 'People have gathered against you, so fear them' and who replied, 'Allah is enough for us: He is the best protector. So, they returned with grace and bounty from Allah; no harm befell them. They pursued Allah's good pleasure. Allah's favor is great indeed" (3:172-174).

The battle of Banun-Nadeer broke out because the Jews breached their treaty with the Muslims and tried to assassinate the Prophet (PBUH).

The battle of Dawmatul-Jandal broke out because the infidel tribes were preparing to raid the Muslims' caravans in Madinah and attack Madinah.

The battle of Banil-Mustaliq broke out because their tribes were preparing for attacking Madinah, so the Prophet (PBUH) went out to deter them.

The battle of the Trench (Khandaq) broke out because all the infidel tribes massed from everywhere to besiege Madinah, so the Muslims had to fight to defend themselves, home, land, and honor. Allah has depicted this incident in the Qur'an by saying: "You who believe, remember Allah's goodness to you when mighty armies massed against you: We sent violent winds and invisible forces against them. Allah sees all that you do. They massed against you from above and below; your eyes rolled (with fear), your hearts rose into your throats, and you thought (ill) thoughts of Allah. There the believes were sorely tested and deeply shaken; the hypocrites and the sick at heart said: 'Allah and his Messenger promised us nothing but delusions!' Some of them said, 'People of Yathrib, you will not be able to withstand (the attack), so go back!' Some of them asked the Prophet's permission to leave, saying, 'Our houses are exposed', even though they were not – they just wanted to run away" (33:8-13).

Then Allah depicted the true believers by saying: "When the believers saw the joint forces, they said, 'This is what Allah and his Messenger promised us: the promise of Allah and his Messenger is true', and this only served to increase their faith and submission to Allah * There are men among the believers who honored their pledge to Allah: some of them have fulfilled it by death, and some

are still waiting. They have not changed in the least* (Such trials are ordained) so that Allah may reward the truthful for their honesty and punish the hypocrites, If He so wills, or He may relent towards them, for Allah is forgiving and merciful. Allah sent back the disbelievers along with their rage – they gained no benefit - and spared the believers from fighting. He is strong and mighty" (33:22-25).

The tribe of Bani-Lihyan was the immediate reason of the battle of Bani-Lihyan, as they betrayed ten of the Prophet's (PBUH) followers and exposed them to be killed and martyred.

On the Day of Dhi-Qarad or the Day of the jungle, a group of the Bedouins of Najd, of Bani-Fazarah attacked some of the Prophet's caravans and followers, killed their guard, kidnapped the guardian's wife, and fled towards Najd. They had to be deterred and punished.

On the Day of Khaibar, all the tribe of Khaibar massed against the Muslims, and instigated Bani-Quraidhah to betray the Muslims, then, they started to prompt the hypocrites, the tribes of Ghatafan, and the neighboring Bedouins against the Muslims. They themselves were preparing for the fight. So, the situation urged the Muslims to deter them.

The battle of Mu'atah was an answer to the murder of a noble follower of the Prophet (PBUH) "Al-Harith ibn 'Umair Al-Azdi" (may Allah be pleased with him). He was an envoy sent by the Prophet (PBUH) with a message to the King of Busra, in Sham. Shurahbil ibn 'Amr, the King's deputy tied up his hands, then killed him. Killing envoys was – and still – considered the most heinous crime. This incident grieved the Prophet (PBUH) and urged him to mobilize an army and send it to them.

Before the conquest of Makkah, Quraish broke their treaty with the Prophet (PBUH) and helped their allies of Bani-Bakr to kill Khuza'a; the Prophet's allies. So, they lurked and killed them near a water-spring called Al-Watir near Makkah. 'Amr ibn Salim Al-Khuza'iy came to the Prophet (PBUH) asking for help. The Prophet (PBUH) said to him: "O 'Amr ibn Salim! You have been granted victory". In a while, a cloud passed by and the Prophet said: This cloud is a glad tiding of the victory of Bani-Ka'ab.

However, when the victorious Prophet (PBUH) entered Makkah, he announced a public amnesty to all the inhabitants of Makkah and said his well-known saying: "O folk of Makkah! What do you think I am doing to you?" they said: "A noble brother and a son of a noble

brother" He said (PBUH): "Go, you are free"⁶. This public amnesty entailed saving a lot of souls.

The battle of Hunayn was launched when Malik ibn 'Awf, of the tribes of Huwazin and Thaqif, mobilized an army and headed towards Makkah; a matter that prompted the Muslims to face the assault and repel it.

The battle of Tabuk was launched as an attempt by the Muslims to repel the aggression of the Romans who strived to eliminate the Muslims. They saw the Muslims as a real threat to their power, so, they started attacking their frontiers, and prepared to assault them. The Prophet (PBUH) had to call on his followers to prepare themselves to go out, despite the fact that they were facing very hard times, but they could not wait until the Romans storm their city; the Muslim army forced the Romans to run away and withdraw without fighting. The Prophet (PBUH) did not like to chase them to save the blood of both armies and was content with this end.

Tracing the battles and expeditions led by the Prophet (PBUH) shows that they were restricted to deterring aggression and repelling assaults and conspiracies against him and his followers.

⁶ - Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir by At-Tabarani ١٧/٢٤٨, No. ١٩٤٨٢.

Among the most noble manners Islam has originated in the philosophy of war is the prohibition of killing civilians or non-fighters. He (PBUH) used to command his followers saying: "Go ahead in the name of Allah, and the manners of Allah's Messenger, do not kill an elderly person, a child, a young person, or a woman and do not cheat in the battle gains". In another narration: "And do not cheat in the battle gains, nor deceive, mutilate, or kill a newly-born children".

Abu-Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) advised one of his leaders: "I advise you of ten: Do not kill a woman, young boy, elderly people, cut fruitful trees, demolish inhabited places, slaughter a goat or a camel except for food, burn palm trees, or drawn it, cheat in the battle gains, nor act cowardly"⁷.

The Prophet (PBUH) has strongly emphasized the prohibition of killing children. Once he was told that some children have been found killed, he stood up shouting at his soldiers: "How come that some of you have stepped out of the limits to kill children? Do not kill children, do not kill children"⁸.

He also forbade killing peaceful people, especially women. When a woman was found killed, and he (PBUH) saw that she was too weak

⁷ - As-Sunan Al-Kubra by Al-Baihaqi, No. 18612.

⁸ - Musnad Ahmad, 24/306, No. 10089.

to fight, he strongly condemned it and said: "Who killed this woman? She does not seem to be able to fight". All these incidents stress the fact that it is strongly forbidden to kill someone for his religion, nor is it allowed to kill someone for being infidel, but fighting was only allowed for deterring aggression and repelling assault. Allah says: "If Allah did not repel some people by means of others, many monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, where Allah's name is much invoked, would have been destroyed. Allah is sure to help those who help his cause – Allah is strong and mighty" (22:40).

So, fighting in Islam is restricted to deterring aggression without overstepping the limits, Allah Almighty says: "Fight in Allah's cause against those who fight you, but do not overstep the limits – Allah does not love those who overstep the limits" (2:190), He also says: "So, if anyone commits aggression against you, attack him as he attacked you, but be mindful of Allah, and know that he is with those who are mindful of Him" (2:194).

Among the evidences that assert that war in Islam is only allowed for deterring aggression and rebelling assault is the way it ordained for treating war captives, a matter that reflects the concept of war in Islam. Allah has depicted in the Qur'an how Muslims treat their

captives in the verses: "They give food to the poor, the orphan, and the captive, though they love it themselves, saying: "We feed you for the sake of Allah alone, we seek neither recompense nor thanks from you. We fear the Day of our Lord – a woefully and grim Day. So, Allah will save them from the woes of that Day, give them radiance and gladness, and rewarded them, for their steadfastness, with a Garden and silk (robes). They will sit on couches, feeling neither scorching heat nor biting cold, with shady (branches) spread above them and clusters of fruit hanging close at hands" (76: 8-14).

Our Prophet (PBUH) called on his followers to be kind with captives, as he said: "I commend you to be kind with captives"⁹, and advised his followers on the Day of Badr to honor the captives, so, they gave them preference over themselves in food.

We have another example in the story of Thumamah ibn Athal when he was captured and tied to a post in the mosque, the Prophet (PBUH) went to him and asked him: "What do you have to tell me Thumamah? He said: "Good news Muhammad, if you kill me, you kill a man with blood, and if you set me free, you set a thankful man free, if you need money you can ask whatever you want. On the next day, the Prophet (PBUH) went to him and asked

⁹ - Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir by At-Tabrani, ١٦/٢٤٧, No. ١٨٤١٠.

him: "What do you have to tell me Thumamah? He replied: "What I have already told you, if you set me free, you set a thankful man free" So the Prophet (PBUH) came to him the next day, and Thumamah gave the same answer. The Prophet (PBUH) ordered his followers to set him free. The man headed to a water stream nearby the mosque, washed himself up, then came back to the mosque and said: "I witness that there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, O Muhammad! Your face was the most abominable face on earth to me, now your face is the most beloved face to me, your religion was the most abominable religion to me, now your religion is the most beloved religion to me, your town was the most abominable town to me, now your town is the most beloved town to me, your horsemen captured me while I was heading to make 'Umrah, so what do you order me to do? The Prophet ﷺ gave him glad tidings and ordered him to go to make 'Umrah. When he arrived at Makkah, a man asked him: Have you converted? He said: No, but I believed in Muhammad (PBUH), I swear to Allah, not even a grain of wheat will come to you from Yamamah without the Prophet's permission"¹⁰.

This way of treating war captives was depicted by the poet Al-Firazdaq as he said:

¹⁰ - Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book of discords, No, ٢٤٢٢, and Sahih Muslim, Book of Jihad, No. ٤٦٨٨.

We kill not war captives, but release them

If ransoms were beyond their reach.

But, if we were forced to fight, we never sell out our religion, nor do we hesitate to defend our lands, and sacrifice our souls for them. Our token for this is: We hope to gain one of the two best things: victory or martyrdom; Allah Almighty addressed the Muslims in the Day of Badr saying: "Remember how Allah promised you that one of the two enemy groups would fall to you: you wanted the unarmed group to be yours, but it was Allah's wish to establish the truth according to His Word and to finish off the disbelievers" (8:7), i.e., the infidel aggressors, who drove you out of your homes for no reason except that you believed in Allah and His Messenger. Allah says: "If you are suffering hardship, so are they, but you hope to receive something from Allah for which they cannot hope. Allah is all knowing and Wise" (4:104), and says: "If you have suffered a blow, they too have suffered one like it. We deal out such days among people in turn, for Allah to find out who truly believes, for him to choose martyrs from among you – Allah does not love evildoers" (2: 140), and says: "Allah helped you at Badr when you were very weak. Be mindful of Allah so that you may be grateful. Remember when you said to the believers, 'Will

you be satisfied if your Lord reinforces you by sending down three thousand angels? Well, if you are steadfast and mindful of Allah, your Lord will reinforce you with five thousand swooping angels if the enemy should suddenly attack you!' and Allah arranged it so as a message of hope for you to put your hearts at rest – help comes only from Allah, the Mighty, the Wise" (3:123-126), and says: "But if they incline towards peace, you (Prophet) must also incline towards it, and put your trust in Allah: He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing. If they intend to deceive you, Allah is enough for you: it was He who strengthened you with his help and with the believers, and brought their hearts together. Even if you had given away everything in the earth you could not have done this, but Allah brought them together: Allah is Mighty, and Wise" (8:61-63).

I wrote about these facts that stress that we are a people of peace as long as war was not imposed upon us. But in case it is imposed on us, then we are ready for it:

Whoever seeks peace, we ally with him,
But if he sought war, then we are its men,
We never transgress, nor accept submission,
Nobility is the meaning we know for it,

One of two things we'll get, nothing more,
Gaining victory or gaining martyrdom.

We are quite sure that the martyr's rank is the highest ever in Allah's order. Martyrs will join the Prophets, and those whom Allah has blessed. Allah Almighty says: (Whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger will be among those He has blessed: the Prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous – what excellent companions these are. That is Allah's favor. No one knows better than Him) (4:69-70), and says: (Allah has purchased the persons and possessions of the believers in return for the Garden – they fight in Allah's way: they kill and are killed – this is a true promise given by Him in the Torah, the Gospel, and the Qur'an. Who could be more faithful to his promise than Allah? So be happy with the bargain you have made: that is the supreme triumph) (9:111), and says: (Do not say that those who are killed in Allah's cause are dead: they are alive though you do not realize it) (2:154), and says: (Do not think of those who have been killed in Allah's way as dead. They are alive with their Lord, well provided for. Happy with what Allah has given them of His favor; rejoicing that for those they have left behind who have yet to join them there is no fear nor will they grieve) (3:169-170).

Verily, the true martyr is the one killed in the battlefield for the sake of his religion, country, honor, and the soil of his homeland seeking Allah's favor, not seeking any worldly gain, nor doing it for the sake of a radical group he follows. We have asserted and still assert that declaring war – mobilizing armies in recent terms, and Jihad in the Sharia scholars' terms – is not up to laymen but is the decision of rulers as stipulated in the law and constitution of each country. No one is entitled to go out to fight by himself outside the frame of law and constitution, otherwise, it would turn into an endless chaos.

True martyrdom includes those who were killed during their military service as organized by the state's institutions.

Accordingly, calling whoever died on his bed, at home, or anywhere else a martyr can only be understood as one of two things:

- He may be called as such by metaphor, meaning that he deserves a degree of martyrdom in his Lord's sight. The honorable Sunna stated that: "Martyrs are five: the stabbed, whoever died out of: Sickness in abdomen, drowning, dying under a demolished building, and in Allah's cause"¹¹.

¹¹ - Sahih Muslim, Book of defining martyrs, No. ٥٠٤٩

- It could be out of exaggeration, claiming, lying, trading by religion. Only those addicted to telling lies describe whoever died against his will as martyr out of lying, slandering, and trading by religion.

However, I assert that if humanity spent for the sake of peace, building, welfare, development, care for the weak and needy, and the forgotten people, one tenth of what they spend on wars and arms, and if those selfish people abandoned their selfishness, the world would have completely been reformed, and the whole world would have lived in peace and security.

It is incumbent on every rational, peace-loving person to be on the side of peace, building, and instruction, not on the side of launching wars and destruction. Whatever calls to peace, building, and instruction conforms to the true religion. On the other hand, whatever calls to killing, destruction and demolition contradicts all divine religions, all human morals, values, traditions, and international documents. So, we are all prompted to work together on establishing and consolidating all meanings of peace and stand against war mongers for maintaining happiness for all human beings and safeguarding their security and safety.

The second treatise:

Recommended Acts of Worship and Habitual Deeds

One of the grave mistakes is to confuse the recommended acts of worship with habitual deeds and vice versa. What is even worse is to accept and insist on stagnation and rejection of renewal without giving rational justification. Here we clearly state that the original ruling concerning *Al-A'mal Al-Masnunah* (recommended acts of worship) is that whoever does them shall be rewarded in return, and whoever does not do them will miss the reward. This is evidenced by the Hadith of the Prophet (PBUH) in which he (PBUH) was asked about Islam. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "There are five (obligatory) *Salat* during the day and the night." He said: "Am I obliged to perform any other (*Salat*) besides these?" The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "No, but whatever you observe voluntarily." He (PBUH) added, "There is the *Saum* of Ramadan." The inquirer asked: "Am I obliged to do anything besides this?" The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "No, but whatever you do out of your own free will. You may observe voluntary fasting." And the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) told him about the Zakat (obligatory charity). The inquirer asked: "Am I obliged to pay anything besides this?" The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "No, but whatever you pay voluntarily out of your own free will." That man turned back saying: "By Allah! I will neither make any addition to this nor will I

decrease anything from it." (Upon hearing this) the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) remarked, "He is successful if he proves truthful (to what he is saying)."¹² He (PBUH) is also reported to have said, "Guarantee for me six things and I will guarantee Paradise for you: tell the truth when you speak, fulfill your promises, be faithful when you are trusted, safeguard your private parts, lower your gaze, and withhold your hands (from harming others)."¹³ Furthermore, when he (PBUH) was asked concerning the deed which will be foremost to lead people to Paradise, he replied, "Being mindful of Allah, and the good conduct."¹⁴

In actuality, most of his (PBUH) answers to the questions of those people who used to ask him about the deeds that would lead man to be admitted into the Paradise revolved around the performance of religious duties, refraining from major sins, and maintaining of good conduct and doing what benefits all mankind. In this regard, when he (PBUH) was asked by a man to instruct him to a deed that will lead him to the Paradise, he replied, "Remove harm from people's roads."¹⁵ He (PBUH) also says: "... and the removal of harm from people's road is

¹² See Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, Book of Belief, Chapter: Zakat is from Islam; Hadith no. ٤٦.

¹³ See Ahmed, *Musnad*, vol. ٣٧, p. ٤١٧; Hadith no. ٢٢٧٠٧.

¹⁴ See Al-Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, Book of Al-Birr Wa Al-Silah, Chapter: *Ma Jaa' fi Husn Al-Khuluq*; Hadith no. ٢٠٠٤.

¹⁵ See Al-Bukhari, *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad* (Beirut: Dar Al-Basha'er Al-Islamiyyah), ed., Muhammad Fu'ad Abd Al-Baqi; Hadith no. ٨٩.

counted a charity."¹⁶ That is because the religion of Islam was mainly revealed to realize the interests of countries and people and to maintain all what secures security, social peace and humanity happiness at the same time.

Even though we stress the undeniable fact that we should adhere to the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) to attain reward, we should clearly distinguish between the recommended acts of worship and the habitual deeds. For example, when he (PBUH) urges us to fast during the day of 'Arafa or 'Ashura', this comes under the category of the recommended acts of worship, and so is the case when he (PBUH) starts his ablution with washing his hands, rinsing, and sniffing, for all of these come under the category of the recommended acts of worship. But, as for clothes, means of transportation, etc., they are under the category of habitual deeds considering what was available at his (PBUH) time.

Just as it is not conceivable for a man of sound judgment to say: "I will not travel by cars or planes, and I will travel by camels as the Prophet (PBUH) used to do, it is inconceivable to say that this garment or that is not in conformity to the purified Sunnah of the Prophet, as long as it conceals one's private parts.

¹⁶ See Muslim, *Sahih*, Book of Zakat, Chapter: *Bayan Ann Ism Al-Sadaqt Yaqu' A 'la Kull Anwa' Al-Ma'ruf*; Hadith no. 1009.

People's customs and traditions are based on norms, (the norms of society) and what people believe suitable for their age, environment, and work nature, as long as this is not against the purified Sharia.

We know that man's *A'wara* includes what is between his navel and his knees, so whatever conceals this part of the body is lawful and cannot be denied, whether he puts on a suit or a garment, for ruling on this point is based on the people's customs and traditions. Scholars of the Principles of Jurisprudence believe that "custom is a basis of judgment."

In truth, there is no harm at all if clergymen have their own garments that distinguish them from others, and so is the case for doctors, lawyers, army men, policemen, and judges. Yet, to declare wearing a particular garment as a religious action has nothing to do with the religion, nor is it accepted by any of the scholars.

Here we must know that some scholars made some rulings considering the customs of their people, time, and place. For example, Imam Al-Shaf'i, may Allah have mercy upon him, viewed man's turban as one of the requirements of sense of honor,¹⁷ because he considered the conditions of his environment and time. Accordingly, we in the past decades knew about some contemporary environments that did believe that not to cover one's head is something that compromises

¹⁷ See Abu Ishaq Al-Shirazi, *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad* (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah), vol. ۳, p. ۴۳۸.

one's sense of honor, in accordance with the customs of this particular group of people. Yet, to regard this as part of the religion or a sign proving one's righteousness and piety and accusing anyone who does not do that as disobedient, or to try to compel people to do that on grounds that it is a religious act, a recommended act, or an opinion of a jurist that must be carried out, this is actually the essence of ignorance and stagnation.

Stressing the fact that the entire matter has to do with customs, environment, and time, Imam Al-Shatibi, may Allah have mercy upon him, said in his *Muwafaqat*: "The ruling on man's unveiling of his head differed from one particular place to another. That is why people of eastern countries view it as something bad, while those of the western countries view it as something normal. As such, the Sharia ruling differed based on the customs of each region; that is to say that what may be reprehensible in the view of the people of the east may not be so in the view of the people of the west."¹⁸

There is no doubt that Imam Al-Shatibi, may Allah have mercy upon him, himself took into account the conditions of his time, not ours, a point upon which he laid emphasis "the original ruling on customs is based on knowing about the meanings. Depending on induction, we

¹⁸ See Al-Shatibi, *Al-Muwafaqat*, ٢/٤٨٩.

found that the Lawgiver intends to bring about the benefits of people, and that normal rulings are revolving around that wherever it is, to the extent that something may be declared prohibited because it does not entail an interest for people, yet when the interest is assured, then it is declared lawful."¹⁹

In the same connection, Imam Al-Qarafi, may Allah have mercy upon him, cast light on that point, saying: "Rulings based on people's customs must vary in case customs varied, otherwise they will be against *Ijma'* (consensus), and ignorance of religion. So, if we come out from this country to another of different customs, we shall judge among them based on their own customs, not paying any attention to those of the country we were in. Accordingly, if someone came to us from a country whose customs are against those of ours, we shall not judge him except on the customs of his own country, not ours."²⁰

Ibn Al-Qayyem, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: "Whoever makes legal verdicts to people based only on what is recorded in books, irrespective of their norms, customs, times, places, circumstances, and surroundings, he has gone far away from the Right Path and even caused others to get astray."²¹

¹⁹ Ibid., vol. ٢, p. ٥٠.

^{٢٠} See Al-Qarafi, *Al-Ihkam fi Tamiyz Al-Fatawa A'n Al-Ahkam*, p. ٢١٨.

^{٢١} See Ibn Al-Qayyem, *I'lam Al-Muwqqi'in*, vol. ٢, p. ١٦.

Ibn 'Abdin,²² may Allah have mercy upon him, said: "Jurisprudential issues are either proven by clear text or personal reasoning, and most of them are based on people's norms, to the extent that if new norms had been emerged, he would have to change his previous judgment accordingly. For this reason, they believe that one of the stipulations for *Ijtihad* is that: the *Mujtahid* must be fully aware of people's customs, and that is why most rulings differ from one time to another as a result of the change of the customs."²³

²² He is Muhammad Amin ibn U'mar ibn Abd Al-A'ziz Abdin Al-Dimishqi. He was the most prominent scholar in Al-Sham and the Imam of the Hanafi School of Law at his time. The list of his most important writings includes *Radd Al-Muhtra A'la Al-Durr Al-Mukhtar* known as *Hashyat Ibn Abdin* and *Rafa' Al-Anzar A'mma Awradahu Al-Halabi A'la Al-Durr Al-Mukhtar*, as well as a number of treatises. He died in 1202 A.H.

See Al-Zirikli, *Al-A'lam*, vol. 6, p. 42

²³ See Ibn Abdin, *Rasa'el Ibn Abdin: Risalat Al-Norms* (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah), vol. 2, p. 172.

The third Treaties:

The dangers of formal rigidity in applying surface meanings of some Hadiths concerning recommended and preferable acts of worship

There is no doubt that rigidity in applying the surface and literal meanings of texts, without understanding their underlying purposes reflects stagnation that leads to distress, agony, and self-isolation from, and maybe clash with, reality. However, if we deeply reflect on the general purposes of Sharia, and consider in depth the wisdom and easiness of the way the honorable Sunnah clarifies its objectives, we would have demonstrated the greatness of our noble religion and its clear and lenient essence, and corrected the negative image caused and propagated by misunderstandings and misinterpretations invoked by terrorist, radical, and fanatic groups, as well as the views of narrow-minded rigid and stagnated people alike. May Allah have mercy on Al-Hassan Al-Basry who said: "There exist some people who sought worship and abandoned knowledge, until they raised their swords against the followers of Muhammad (PBUH), had they sought knowledge, they would not have done that".

We need an enlightened religious discourse based on an understanding of the general purposes of the true Sharia.

Scholars, jurists and theologians have emphasized the importance of understanding the general purposes of the legislation, as it is the accurate scale with which the fatwa and the process of renewing religious discourse are controlled.

There is no doubt that we need a new reading of the purposes of Sunnah that keeps pace with the spirit and developments of the time, and brings the great prophetic Sunna closer to the people, instead of the readings and interpretations that alienate people from the Sunnah and the religion itself, and bar them from either.

Let us take two examples of understanding the purposes:

The first: Understanding the hadith of *Siwak*²⁴.

The second: Understanding the hadith of bed cleaning before sleep.

First Example

Understanding the Hadith of *Siwak*

Abu Hurayrah (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: “Had I not thought it difficult for my

²⁴ - Tooth cleanser.

Ummah, I would have commanded them to use the *Siwak* (tooth-stick) before every prayer."²⁵

Zayd ibn Khaled Al-Juhani (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) saying: "Had I not thought it difficult for my Ummah, I would have commanded them to use the *Siwak* (tooth-stick) before every prayer."²⁶

Abu Hurayrah (May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "Had I not thought it difficult for my Ummah, I would have commanded them to use the *Siwak* (tooth-stick) before every ablution."²⁷

Hudhyafah May (Allah be pleased with him) narrated: "Whenever the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) woke up, he brushes his teeth with *Siwak* (tooth-stick)."²⁸

Miqdam Ibn Shurayh narrated that his father (May Allah be pleased with him) said: "I asked A'isha what Allah's Messenger (PBUH) did first when he entered his house: He used to tooth-stick. She replied."²⁹

²⁵ See Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, Book of Friday; Chapter: *Al-Siwak Yawm Al-Jumua'*; Hadith no. (٨٨٧)

²⁶ See Abu Dawud, *Sunan*, Book of Purification; Chapter: *Al-Siwak*; Hadith No. (٤٦); see also Ibn Majah, *Sunan*, Book of Purification and Its Manners; Chapter on *Al-Siwak*; Hadith No. (٣٨٧).

²⁷ See Abu Dawud, *Sunan*, Book of Purification; Chapter: *Al-Siwak*.

²⁸ See Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, Book of Ablution; Chapter on *Al-Siwak*; Hadith No. (٣٤٥); see also Muslim, *Sahih*, Book of Purification; Chapter on *Al-Siwak*; Hadith No. (٣٥٥). The meaning of the Arabic sentence "*Yashus fahu*" is "rub it with the tooth-stick."

Amer Ibn Rabi'at said: "I saw the Prophet (PBUH) using a tooth-stick while he was fasting."³⁰

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) highlights the rationale why we should continually use the tooth-stick in his (PBUH) Hadith: "*Siwak* purifies the mouth and pleases the Lord."³¹

The ultimate objective behind the use of *Siwak* is to purify one's mouth, to keep it healthy and nice-smelling, in addition to removing any bad odor and protecting teeth and gum. This objective can be achieved by any means that gives the same effect, exactly as it is achieved by the *Siwak*. In other words, there is no blame if you attain the same effect by using the *Siwak* or any other material like toothpaste, or the toothbrush. In this connection, the detestable realization of stagnation and narrow-mindedness is clearly reflected in rigidly adhering to the surface meaning of the text, and sticking to the use of *Siwak*, believing that using it is a sign of righteousness and piety, thus placing two or three sticks in one's pocket in spite of the fact that they might be contaminated by dust and climatic pollutants. Nobody does this except those who do not properly understand the ultimate objective of the Sunnah. Our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions (May

³⁰ See Muslim, *Sahih*, Book of Purification; Chapter on *Al-Siwak*; Hadith No. (٢٥٣).

³¹ See Al-Bukhari, *Sahih*, Book of Fasting; Chapter: *Siwak Al-Ratb wa Al-Yabis Li Al-Sa'em*.

³² Ibid.

Allah be pleased with them) used whatever was available at their time, and had they lived in our time, they would have used the best, the latest, and the most useful of the scientific findings.

Second Example

Understanding the Hadith of Cleaning Beds before Sleep

It was narrated by Abu Hurayra (May Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: “When any one of you goes to bed, he should dust his bed with the inside of his lower garment. He does not know what might have come on it after he left it. He should lie down on his right side and say, 'In Your Name I have laid down on my side by You, and I raise it up by You. If You take my soul, then have mercy on it. If You release it, then preserve it the way You preserve your righteous servants.’”³²

It was narrated by Abu Hurayrah (May Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: “When one of you leaves his bed then returns to it, then let him brush it off with the edge of his garment three times, for he does not know what came into it after he left it. When he lies down, let him say: ‘In Your name, my Lord, I lay my side

³² See al-Bukhari, *Sahih*; Book of Supplications; Chapter on *Al-Ta'wudh wa Al-Qir'ah I'nd Al-Manam*; Hadith No. (٦٣٢٠); see also Muslim, *Sahih*, Book of Remembrance, Supplication, Repentance and Forgiveness; Chapter on *Ma Yaquul I'nd Al-Nawm Wa Akhdh Al-Ma'dja*; Hadith No. (٢٧١٤).

down, and in Your name I raise it. And if You take my soul, then have mercy upon it, and if You release it, then protect it the way You protect Your righteous servants. And when he awakens, let him say: All praise is due to Allah, who healed me in my body, and returned to me my soul, and permitted me to remember Him.”³³

The Arabic word mentioned in the Hadith “*Dakhelat Al-Izar*” means the inside of his garment, and “*Sanifat Al-Izar*” means its edge that has no frill. These Hadiths clearly indicate that it is recommended to brush one’s bed off before sleep so that he would not be afflicted by any harm.

Had we tried to apply the surface meaning of the text, how would a person who wears a garment with no edge act in such a situation?!

Yet, if we consider the ultimate objective of these Hadiths, i.e., cleansing one’s bed and ensuring that it is free from harm, we will realize that we can do it by using any modern means whereby we can achieve the purpose, for example, we can use a brush or duster. But the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) addressed his people to do what is available to them at that time, as if he (PBUH) was saying to them:

³³ See al-Bukhari, *Sahih*; Book of Monotheism; Chapter on *Al-Su’al Bi Asmaa’ Allah Ta’la Al-Hunsa Wa Al-Isti’adhat Biha*; Hadith No. (٧٣٩٣); see also Al-Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, Book of Supplications of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH); Hadith No. (٣٤٠١)

“clean your beds before you lie on them with anything even with the edge of your clothes.”

Some scholars believe that the reason the Prophet (PBUH) instructed the companions to do so with the edge of their clothes, is that their hands might be hurt with a sharp tool, pointed wood, dust, harmful being, a snake, a scorpion, or a small stick that might hurt them, etc.³⁴ This actually proves that our understanding of these Hadiths is right.

Yet, those who have the same way of life like the companions will not be blamed if they applied the surface meaning of the Hadiths and clean their beds with the edge of their garments. But any attempt to force people to do this is nothing but stagnation that only turns life into hardships.

However, those who believe that they are exclusively the only ones who correctly understand the Prophetic Hadiths, regardless of all the developments of our life, have certainly wronged the Sunna of our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In actuality, are far from understanding the ultimate purposes of the Sharia that urge the people to attain the highest levels of cleanliness and beauty, as long as it is permissible, based on the ruling: “Everything is permissible except for those

³⁴ See *Al-Nawawi, Sharh Al-Nawawi Ala Sahih Muslim* (Beirut: Dar Akhbar Al-Turath Al-Arabi), ١٧/٣٧; see also *Tuhfat Al-Ahwadhi Bi Sharh Jame' Al-Tirmidhi* (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah), ٩/٢٤٤; and Ibn Hubaiyrah, *Al-Ifsah A'n Manai Al-Sihah* (Dar Al-Watan), p. ٢٨١.

prohibited by text”. In this regard, Abu Tha’lbah Al-Khushaniy (May Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said: “The Prophet of Allah (PBUH) said: ‘Verily Allah Almighty has ordained religious obligations (*fara’id*), so do not neglect them; and He has set limits, so, do not overstep them; and He has forbidden some things, so, do not violate them; and He has remained silent about some things, out of compassion for you, not forgetfulness — so do not seek after them.”³⁵

Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with them both) is also reported to have said: “The people of pre-Islamic times used to eat some things and leave others considering them unclean. Then Allah sent His Prophet (PBUH) and sent down His Book, making some things lawful and others unlawful; so what He made lawful is lawful, what he made unlawful is unlawful, and what he forsook is allowable. And he recited: (Say: In all that has been revealed to me, I find nothing forbidden for people to eat)(6:145).

³⁵ See Al-Daraqutni, *Sunan*, Book of Nursing (Beirut: Mu’assast Al-Risalah), 2/320; Hadith No. (4396)

The Fourth Treatise

Understanding the reality of asceticism

It is related to Sahl ibn Sa'd that he said: A man came to the Prophet (PBUH) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, direct me to an act which, if I do it, (will cause) Allah and people to love me? Then the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "Renounce the world and Allah will love you, and renounce what people possess, and people will love you³⁶".

It is also narrated by 'Abdullahi ibn 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "Verily he is successful who has accepted Islam, and is provided with sufficient sustenance for his day's needs, and Allah made him content with what He has given him³⁷".

And it is related to 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) that he said: "The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) took me by the shoulder and said: "Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a wayfarer". And Ibn 'Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) used to say: "Do not expect (to live until) the morning if you are in the evening, neither expect (to live until) the evening if you are in the morning, and

³⁶ - Sunan ibn Majah: Book of asceticism, No. 4102.

³⁷ - Sahih Muslim: Book of Zakat, No. 1054.

take advantage of your health before times of sickness, and take advantage of your life before your death”³⁸.

And it is related to ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’oud (May Allah be pleased with him) that he said: “The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was sleeping on a mat, then he stood, and the mat had left marks on his side, so we said: O Messenger of Allah! We could get a bed for you! He said: “What do I have to do with this world? I am only in this world but as a rider seeking a shadow under a tree, then set off and left it”³⁹.

The first Hadith aims at establishing the meaning of continence, the second establishes the culture of asceticism, the third warns of negligence, and the fourth aims at deeply understanding the reality of this world.

So, asceticism is a matter of hearts, not a formal appearance. It neither means isolation from life, negligence of the reasons of solidarity, nor failure to build the universe and make life. However, some people may not understand the true face of asceticism, as it is related in some minds to nominal aspects that have nothing to do with its reality. So, they mistakenly assume that asceticism is the equivalent of poverty or even extreme poverty. This is due to the fact that the ascetic in the perception of some people is necessarily a poor,

³⁸ - Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book of Ar-Riqaq, No. ٤٢٦٤.

³⁹ - Sunan At-Termidhiy: Books of asceticism, Book no. ٤٤, Hadith No. ٢٣٧٧.

Alhamdu-lillah) is a charity, every *Tahlilah* (saying: La ilaha illa Allah) is a charity, to enjoin good action is a charity, to forbid an evil action is a charity, and in the sexual act of each of you there is a charity”, they said: O Messenger of Allah! When one of us fulfills his sexual desire, will he have some rewards for that? He said: “Do you not think that where he to act upon it unlawfully he would be sinning? Likewise, if he acted upon it lawfully, he will have a reward”⁴⁰. When the affluent raced with them in *Tsbih*, *Takbir*, and *Tahlil*, they talked to the Messenger of Allah about that, he said: “This is Allah’s favor, He gives it to whomever He wills”⁴¹.

How beautiful it is to combine religion and the world

And how ugly it is to combine disbelief and poverty in a man

There is no doubt that the erroneous view of asceticism led to negativity, dependency, unemployment, laziness, dependence and being dropped behind the nations, despite the fact that our religion is the religion of work, production, perfection and adopting the means of success; our Prophet (PBUH) says: “If you depend on Allah, with due reliance, He would certainly give you provision as He gives it to birds;

⁴⁰ - Sahih Muslim: Book of Zakat, No. ۲۳۷۶.

⁴¹ - Sahih Muslim: Book of Mosques, No. ۱۳۷۰.

who go forth hungry in the morning, and return with full belly at dusk”⁴², that is, they go out and go back for seeking providence.

The Ever-Glorious Qur’an has brought together those who seek for their livelihood and those who fight in His cause, so, He said: {He knows that some of you will be sick, some of you travelling through the land seeking Allah’s bounty, some of you fighting in Allah’s way, so, recite as much as is easy for you, keep up the prayers, pay the prescribed alms, and lend Allah a good loan. Whatever good you store up for yourselves you will find with Allah, better and with a greater reward. Ask Allah for his forgiveness, He is most forgiving, most merciful} (73:20). Our Prophet (PBUH) said: “Whoever provides for the widow and the needy, is as the Mujahid in the cause of Allah, or the one who prays most of the night, and fasts during the day”. When the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) saw a solid strong man, and were pleased with his endurance and activity, they said: “O Messenger of Allah, if this were (fighting) in the cause of Allah? Then the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: “If he is providing for his young children, he is in the cause of Allah, and if he is providing for two elderly parents, he is in the cause of Allah, and if he is providing for himself to keep himself from begging, he is in the cause of Allah, and if he is providing for his

⁴² - Sunan ibn Majah: Book of asceticism, No. 4264.

wife, he is in the cause of Allah, but if he is seeking pride, self-importance, and making money, he is in the cause of Satan”.

Islam is based on a balance between the need of the soul and the need of the body, Allah the Almighty says: {Believers! When the call to prayers is made on the day of congregation, hurry towards the reminder of Allah and leave off your trading – that is better for you, if only you knew,¹⁰ - then when the prayer has ended, disperse in the land and seek out Allah’s bounty. Remember Allah often so that you may prosper} (62:9-10). ‘Irak ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) used to head to the mosque’s door after finishing the Jum’a prayer and says: “Oh Allah, I answered your invitation, and I prayed your prayer, and dispersed as you commanded me, so bless me with your grace and you are the best provider”.

True asceticism is not the twin of poverty. Rather, it may be the twin of wealth. The asceticism of the rich is when a man possesses then renounces. Also, asceticism does not contradict resorting to causes, although resorting to causes is one thing and asceticism is another thing, they complement but not contradict each other. When the Prophet (PBUH) said: “ Will not enter the Paradise he who has a weight of an atom of arrogance in his heart”, a man said: O Messenger of Allah, a man likes to wear good clothes and good shows, so the Prophet

(PBUH) said: “Verily Allah is beautiful and loves beauty, arrogance is denying the truth, and underestimating the people”

* * *

The fifth Treatise

The System of Governance

The system of governance in Islam is based on securing the interest of the land and the people. Wherever exists the interest, Allah's Sharia exists. So, whatever achieves safety, security, and stability, and works on inhabiting the universe conforms with the purposes of religion. To the contrary, whatever leads to injustice, corruption, or backwardness has nothing to do with religion; it clearly contradicts the true religions and their purposes. However, Islam has not laid a specific absolute system for governance but laid some bases and criteria for ensuring a prudent system of governance that can be admitted by Islam. This system becomes defective by the same degree the bases and criteria are violated.

The main and most important label of any prudent regime is how far it is capable of achieving the people's interests, or at least how far it strives for securing their interests. So, any regime that endeavors for attaining the people's interests within the framework of justice, equality, and controlled freedom far from chaos, favoritism, or giving preference to loyalty rather than competence is an appreciated prudent regime.

Under this label comes many details that aim in general to achieve justice between all people in all its political, social, judicial aspects, far from discrimination based on color, race, or blood. It is determined that there is no compulsion in religion, and that no one must be forced to adopt it.

So, any regime that works on achieving this goal, and strives for providing for the main needs of society, i.e., food, drink, accommodation, and infrastructures of health, education, roads, and other indispensable needs is considered a prudent regime that is admitted by Allah and the people, except for those who are envious, hating, stubborn, or treacherous.

The people of knowledge assert that Allah Almighty gives victory to the just nation even if it were infidel, and deprives the unjust nation His victory even if it were a believing nation; that is, nations can continue with infidelity and justice, but cannot continue with faith and injustice. If true Islam prevails, neither injustice nor prejudice can be found.

Those who make the issue of Califate a cover for trading by religion and playing with the emotions of the laymen quote some texts that do not support their claims, and manipulate them by distorting their meanings to serve their purpose. They take it as a

fundamental criterion that distinguishes faith from infidelity. We reply to them by quoting what the grand Imam of Al-Azhar Prof. Dr. Ahmad At-Tayyib has asserted in the speech he delivered at the conference entitled: "Al-Azhar versus terrorism and radicalism": "Authentic scholars are unanimous that, in the 'Ashʿari doctrine, Caliphate is a complementary factor not a source of the Islamic Sharia", they take it as a branch not a primary element. His eminence quoted the book of "Sharh Al-Mawaqif" (*the explanation of stances*), which is a main reference in the "Ashʿari" doctrine, wherein the author said about Caliphate: "It is not a principle of our religion or our creed, but one of the branches". His eminence commented saying: "How has this issue, which is not a primary element in the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnati wal-Jamaʿa*, become a main criterion by those young men for distinguishing belief from disbelief, and an ordeal that led to blood-shedding, destruction, and defaming this upright religion, whereas it is nothing but a branch in the view of *Ahlu-Sunnati wal-Jamaʿa*?

When the Prophet (PBUH) talked about faith, Islam, and Sincerity, he has not made Caliphate a pillar of faith or Islam. 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab (RA) said: "While we were sitting with the Messenger of

Allah (PBUH), there came a man whose clothes were exceedingly white, and his hair was exceedingly black; no sign of journeying was seen on him and none of us knew him. He walked up and sat down by the Prophet (PBUH), resting his knees against his, and placing the palm of his hands on his thighs. He said: O Muhammad! Tell me about Islam. Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said: Islam is to testify that there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad (PBUH) is the Messenger of Allah, to perform the prayers, to pay the Zakat, to fast in Ramadan, and to make the pilgrim to the House if you are able to do so. He said: You have spoken rightly, and we were amazed at him asking him and saying that he has spoken rightly. He said: Then tell me about Iman (faith). He (PBUH) said: It is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day, and to believe in divine destiny, both the good and the evil thereof. He said: You have spoken rightly. He said: Then tell me about Ihsan (sincerity). He (PBUH) said: It is to worship Allah as though you are seeing Him, and while you see him not, yet truly He sees you. He said: Then tell me about the Hour. He (PBUH) said: The one questioned about it knows no better than the questioner. He said: Then tell me about its signs. He (PBUH) said: That the slave-girl will give birth to her mistress, and that you will see the barefooted, the naked, and destitute herdsmen comparing in constructing lofty

buildings. Then he took himself off and I stayed for a while, the Prophet (PBUH) said: O 'Umar! Do you know who the questioner was? I said: Allah and His Messenger know best. He (PBUH) said: It was Gabriel, who came to you to teach you your religion.

However, the hadiths that mention the Caliphate and pledging loyalty to the ruler, can be understood in general as necessitating the establishment of a just mindful regime led by a president and institutions that work on achieving justice to their people, and securing the interests of the people and state, making use of consulting the expertise and specialists in different walks of life. Names given to such regimes should not matter as long as the ends and the goals of Islam have materialized.

Legislating laws by some societies for regulating the people's life, achieving justice and equality, eliminating all kinds of crime, inhabiting the universe, and attaining security, stability, and welfare, is a major purpose that is required for building well-established nations and attaining stability. Such laws are indispensable for jurisdiction in cases where we lack a decisive divine text admitted by notable scholars. Novel and contemporary issues prompt jurisprudential and legislative diligence that suits the time and place in tight of the general purposes of Sharia.

Allah Almighty has not favored certain people with knowledge to another, nor a generation rather than another Likewise, He has not favored an age with reasoning to another. Therefore, the field of reasoning will be open for scholars till the end of the world. However, notable scholars assert that Fatwas are liable to change from time to time, and from place to place, in view of the situation of the Fatwa seeker. The Fatwa that was preponderant in one age, may not fit another due to change of circumstances if they conform to the principles and purposes of Sharia, and is issued by acknowledged jurists.

In this respect, we emphasize the following:

The most important factor that distinguishes rational regime in Islam is justice. Justice in case of contentment and anger, with the friend and the enemy, as Allah says: "Allah commands justice, doing good, and generosity towards relatives, and He forbids what is shameful, blameworthy, and oppressive. He teaches you so that you may take heed" (16: 90), and says: "Allah commands you to return things entrusted to you to their rightful owners, and if you judge between people, to do so with justice. Allah's instructions to you are excellent, for He hears and sees everything" (4:58), and says: "You who believe uphold justice and bear witness to Allah, even if it is against yourselves,

your parents, or your close relatives. Whatever the person is rich or poor, Allah can best take care of both. Refrain from following your own desire, so that you can act justly – if you distort or neglect justice, Allah is fully aware of what you do" (4:135), and says: "You who believe, be steadfast in your devotion to Allah and bear witness impartially: do not let hatred of others lead you away from justice, but adhere to justice, for that is closer to awareness of Allah. Be mindful of Allah: Allah is well aware of all that you do" (5:9). Our Prophet (PBUH) says: " Allah will give shade to seven (kinds of) people on a day when there will be no shade but His: a just ruler, a youth who grew up worshipping Allah, a man whose heart is attached to the mosques, two persons who love each another for the sake of Allah, they meet and part in Allah's cause only, a man who refuses the call of a charming woman of noble birth (for an illicit intercourse), but he said: I am mindful of Allah, a man who gave a charity so secretly that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given, and a man who mentioned Allah in seclusion and his eyes flooded with tears" (narrated by Al-Bukhari), and says: " The most beloved by Allah, and the nearest to Him on the Day of Resurrection is a just ruler, and the most detested and severely punished by Allah on the Day of Judgement is an unjust ruler" (narrated by Ahmad) and says: " Three (kinds of) people Allah does not reject their supplications: a just ruler, a fasting person until he breaks his fast,

and a wronged person; Allah elevates his supplication over the clouds and opens the Heaven's gates for it, and the Lord says: With my omnipotence and majesty I will help you even after a time" (narrated by Ibn Majah), and says: "Anyone takes the responsibility of ten people will come on the Day of Resurrection with his hands shackled to his neck, so, his good deeds will free him, or his bad deeds will annihilate him; its beginning (authority) is blameworthy, middle is regret, and shame in the end ", and says: "Just people are on minarets of light, on Allah's right hand; they are those who were just to their subjects, relatives, and whomever they ruled" (narrated by Muslim).

The same meaning was asserted by Abu-Bakr (RA) in the first speech he gave when he took over; he said: "O people! I have been installed on you, whereas I am not the best of you. So, If I did good then help me, but if I didn't, you must rectify me. Saying the truth is a duty and lying is treachery. The weak among you is strong until I bring back his right, and the strong is weak until I take the right from him Allah willing. Obey me as long as I have obeyed Allah and His Messenger, in case I disobeyed Allah and His Messenger you do not have to obey me". It was not enough for him to say that, but he acted accordingly.

'Umar (RA) followed the same track when he was installed as Caliph, and he repeated the same meanings in his first speech. These meanings

were depicted in the message he sent to Abu-Musa Al-Ashʿariy in which he said: "Judiciary is a prescribed obligation, and a maintained practice. So, fully understand the case in hand, as it is nonsensical to say what you can't understand. Treat all people as equal in your session, in order that no one may be excessively hopeful or hopeless. The evidence must be submitted by the plaintiff, and oath should be taken by the denier. Reconciliation between Muslims is a must, except for a reconciliation that turns the forbidden into lawful, or the lawful into forbidden. Do not refrain from correcting your judgement if you realized that it was wrong, that is, right is right and nothing should nullify it. Recursion to right is much better than persistence in doing wrong. Do your best to understand what is ambiguous. Do what you feel content with, and what is nearest to the right in your view. Give a fixed time to the plaintiff to submit his evidence, otherwise you should put him to trial, for this is nearer to making things clear, and leave no doubt in the minds. Muslims are just to each other, except for that who is punished for sinning, that who has given a false witness before, or that who expects a favor from the judge. Allah knows your inner thought and keep you from error by urging you to stick to clear evidence. Beware of getting bored, anxious, having hard feelings towards some people, or snubbing litigants who have the right. Whoever has a good relationship with Allah, Allah will rectify his

relationship with people, and whoever adorns himself with false adornments, Allah will put him to shame. Allah does not accept from His servants but that which has been done for Him alone. So, what do you think about Allah's reward, His sustenance, and treasure of mercy? Allah's peace and mercy be upon you".

One of the governors once wrote to 'Umar ibn Abdul-'Aziz saying that the thieves became so many in the city, 'Umar replied him; "Shield your city with justice". An eloquent scholar once wrote: Justice is Allah's scale which He set for His creation and prescribed for attaining the right. So, do not be against His scale, nor oppose Him in His authority. Seek help for attaining the right by two qualities: less greed and more piety.

Ibn Hazm used to say: The best merit Allah Has bestowed on man is ingraining justice in his soul and making him love it, and to be right.

2- Working on strengthening the national state is a religious national requirement. Whoever works on destabilizing the bases of the state, hindering its progress, destroying its infrastructures, or terrorizing peaceful people, is a criminal in the eyes of his religion and homeland.

٢- Authority in the views of radical groups and their ideologies has become an end not a means. The thought of these groups revolves around one meaning: to rule or to destroy, and

everything is allowed for reaching this end. So, any means that can contribute to attaining their goals is lawful and should be followed, even if it led to blood shedding, terrifying peaceful people, toppling regimes, disuniting countries or destroying them, or exposing those countries to dangers or risks. Therefore, we do not expect any good from those groups to their countries, to the contrary, they are evil and threat wherever they are. They do not believe but in themselves, and are ready to collaborate with the enemies, or with Satan himself and whoever entices them and helps them to reach power and authority. They do not consider such an act a treasury, but just temporary or strategic coalitions, as long as they will help them attain the authority about which they know nothing but materializing their dreams. They cover their intentions with religious covers and cheat the lay people. Religions are totally clear of what they do.

In order that they may attain their goals, they adopt some pretexts such as: the rulers do not apply Allah's legislations. But when you come to discuss them in this statement, you will be amazed by the fact that they know nothing about Allah's legislations. We have already expounded on this point in some other books, among them "Concepts to be put right" and "Refuting terrorist's fallacies", where we stressed the fact that committing oneself to Allah's rulings does not collide with

legislating some laws and applying them for the good of the nation, as long as they do not turn the lawful into unlawful, or the unlawful into lawful, nor contradict or distort the origins of Shariah.

The most important point of which we caution is the hatred they have against the society, and their diligence to topple the regimes in every way possible, be it direct destruction, or distortion of the facts for delaying the progress of the nation. They have their own ways, which cannot occur to the anyone's mind but these destructive groups, for attaining this aim. Some of them abandon the native product and buy the foreign product to impair the national industry, which leads to impairing the state. They think that this may give them access to power. May they get lost; Allah says: "They scheme and so does Allah: He is the best of schemers" (8:30).

We also caution of the distortion campaigns launched on social media, and some other media penetrated by those groups. We must make sure of and investigate their allegations, in order that we may not be trapped by those groups. Allah Almighty says: "Believers, if a troublemaker brings you news, check it first, in case you wrong others unwittingly and later regret that you have done" (49:6).

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The sixth Treatise:

Understanding some Hadiths

of marriage and having children

Our Prophet (PBUH) says: “O young men! Whoever among you can afford to get married, let him get married, it helps him lowering the gaze, and guarding one’s chastity, and whoever cannot afford it, let him fast, it helps him control his desire”⁴³.

And says (PBUH): “Marry the amicable procreative woman; for I shall vie with you in glory”⁴⁴

We notice in his saying (PBUH) “O young men! Whoever among you can afford to get married, let him get married” that he (PBUH) puts a condition, i.e., the ability to provide for the family, and to bear the responsibility of building a family. It is more relevant to be a condition for procreation, so, how would it be with multiple reproduction?! Did not the Prophet (PBUH) say: “It is a sufficient sin for a man to disattend those he sustains?”⁴⁵.

So, if the meant “ability” did not imply performing all the financial and social costs of marriage, he would not have said (PBUH) “And

⁴³ - Sahih Al-Bukhari: Book of marriage, No. ٥٠٦٥. And Muslim: Book of marriage, No. ٣٤٦٤.

⁴⁴ - Sunan An-Nasa’i, Book of marriage, No. ٣٢٢٧.

⁴⁵ - Sunan Abu-Dawoud, Book of Zakat, No. ١٦٩٤.

whoever cannot afford it, let him fast” that is, the physical strength is not meant per se, but the total and different meanings of “ability”.

The meaning of his saying (PBUH): “Marry the amicable procreative woman; for I shall vie with you in glory”, is directed to the valuable, productive and strong procreation, which our Master (PBUH) described by saying: “The strong believer is better and more loved by Allah than a weak believer, and there is goodness in each of them”⁴⁶ . The strength, which includes all aspects of strength - of thought, culture, faith, education, economy, and military, with devotion to Allah (the Almighty) in word and action - is the essence and core of vying.

But the multitude that inherits weakness, ignorance, or failure to embrace civilization, and which in itself is a heavy unbearable burden on the state’s resources, is the multitude that our Prophet (PBUH) described as the “flood scum” which yields neither benefit nor profit; it is a multitude that inflicts harm and does not help.

In this connection, child's rights to care and breastfeeding is ordained by Allah’s saying: {Mothers suckle their children for two whole years, if they wish to complete the term} (2:233). Suckling is a child’s right, so, some scholars called the milk that a child suckles from another

⁴⁶ - Sahih Muslim: Book of Destiny, No. 6940.

mother “the coerced milk”, as though the alien child has taken it by force.

Likewise, the right to proper education, food, dress, health is also guaranteed. Neglecting the child’s rights or unfulfilling his needs to proper education is an act of injustice to him. We have been held responsible by our Prophet for our children for whom we are entrusted, as he says: “It is a sufficient sin for a man to disattend those he sustains”⁴⁷. And says (PBUH): “Every one of you is a guardian and is responsible for what is in his custody. The ruler is a guardian of his subjects and is responsible for them; a husband is a guardian of his family and is responsible for it; a wife is a guardian of her husband’s house and is responsible for it; so all of you are guardians and responsible for whatever is under your care”⁴⁸

In addressing this case, we should not confine ourselves to the economic aspects only, but we have to include all other aspects such as health, psychological, family and social aspects, especially those which effects the life of children, parents, and family, then the society and the state. Uncontrolled overpopulation does not have negative effects on the individual or the family alone, rather, it could seriously harm countries that do not resort to science in addressing their population

⁴⁷ - Al-Mustadrak by Al-Hakim: No. ٨٥٢٦.

⁴⁸ - Sahih Al-Bukhari, No. ٢٢٧٨, and Sahih Muslim, No. ٤٨٢٨.

issues. However, we assert that the ability or inability in this regard cannot be measured on individual bases in isolation from the conditions and capabilities of the countries and the services they can provide in the fields of health, education, housing, roads, and public facilities that meet the needs of a steady population increase.

However, any judgement that may be made on this case must take into consideration the nature of time, place, situation and the circumstances of each country or society. So, we shouldn't make general judgements, for if some countries need labor and have employment opportunities, capabilities, space expansion, and the resources, procreation becomes a requirement, and multitude becomes a boastful merit. But in the case of countries which cannot afford the basic needs of health, education and infrastructures due to undisciplined overpopulation, then the priority must be given to the quality, not the quantity; a strong few is better a thousand times than a weak multitude.

The Seventh Treatise:

Understanding the Hadith

**(He who treads a path in search of knowledge,
Allah makes a path to Paradise easy for him)**

Our Prophet (PBUH) says: “He who treads a path in search of knowledge, Allah makes a path to Paradise easy for him. The angels lower their wings over the seeker of knowledge, being pleased with what he does. The inhabitants of the heavens and the earth and even the fish in the depth of the oceans seek forgiveness for him. The superiority of the learned man over the devout worshipper is like that of the full moon to the rest of the stars (i.e., in brightness). The learned are the heirs of the Prophets who bequeath neither dinar nor dirham but only that of knowledge; and he who acquires it, has in fact acquired an abundant portion”⁴⁹.

What is meant by “knowledge” is any useful knowledge, and not only the knowledge of Sharia. The word "knowledge" came as an indefinite noun to denote generality and comprehensiveness.

⁴⁹ - Sunan Abu-Dawoud, Book of Knowledge, No. ۳۶۴۱.

What is meant by useful knowledge is any knowledge that benefits the people in their religious and worldly affairs, be it knowledge of Sharia, Arabic language, medicine, pharmacology, physics, chemistry, astronomy, engineering mechanics, power, or any other kind of knowledge and information. I see that knowledge in Allah's saying: {Say, 'How can those who know be equal to those who do not know? Only those who have understanding will take heed} (39:9), and in His saying: {You (people) can ask those who have knowledge if you do not know} (16:43) are too comprehensive to be confined to any particular knowledge, or to the knowledge of Sharia alone. It is so wide to accommodate any useful knowledge, and what is meant by "those who know" is the specialists, each in his field.

The value of knowledge means to excel in all sciences that benefit people in their worldly and religious affairs. Therefore we see that Allah's saying: {It is those of His servants who have knowledge who stand in awe of Allah} (35:28) came in the context of talking about worldly sciences, as it came after His saying: {Have you (Prophet) not seen how Allah sends water down from the sky and that We produce with it fruits of varied colors; that there are in the mountains layers of white and red of various hues, and jet black; that there are various colors among human beings, wild animals, and livestock too? It is those of His servants who have knowledge who stand in awe of Allah. Allah is

almighty, most forgiving} (35:28), and says: {There truly are signs in the creation of the heavens and earth, and in the alteration of the night and day, for those with understanding, 191 who remember Allah standing, sitting, and lying down, who reflect on the creation of the heavens and earth: Our Lord! You have not created all of this without purpose – You are far above that! – so protect us from the torment of the Fire} (3:190-191).

Allah Almighty says: {From each community, a group should go out to gain understanding of the religion, so that they can teach their people when they return, and so that they can guard themselves against evil} (9:122). So, if a group from each community is prompted to go out to acquire the knowledge of religion, to show their people the wisdom and rulings of their religion, and to preach them so that they may take heed, the rest of the people of this community must also do their share in benefiting the country and other people. So, a group should avow to learn medicine, another to learn engineering, a third to work in agriculture, a fourth to work in industry, a fifth to engage in trade, and so on in other arts, crafts, and industries.

There is no doubt that we are in utter need to all of the sciences that help us inhabit our world and achieve our self-sufficiency in all spheres of life and achieve our mission in inhabiting the universe and

building civilizations. We also need the knowledge that strengthens our religion, and by which we can rid it of the falsehood and lies invoked by vagrant and deviant groups.

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Table of contents

Page number	Subject
3	Introduction
7	The first treatise: War in Islam: Invasions? Or days and deterring aggression?
31	The second treatise: Recommended Acts of Worship and Habitual Deeds
38	The third Treaties: The dangers of formal rigidity in applying surface meanings of some Hadiths concerning recommended and preferable acts of worship
46	The fourth Treatise: Understanding the reality of asceticism.
53	The fifth Treatise: The System of Governance.
65	The sixth Treatise: Understanding some Hadiths of marriage and having children.
69	The Seventh Treatise: Understanding the Hadith (He who treads a path in search of knowledge, Allah makes a path to Paradise easy for him)
73	Table of contents