

## Unity, groups and parties

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

**Questioner:** What is the obligation upon the Muslim Scholars with regard to the large number of jam'iyaaat (societies) and jamaa'aat (groups) in many of the Islaamic lands and elsewhere, and with regard to the differences that exist between them, to the point that each group declares the others to be misguided. Do you not hold that it is fitting to enter into explaining the like of this matter, and to clarify the truth concerning their differences, for fear that these differences will increase and lead to evil consequences for the Muslims?

**Shaykh Abdul-Azeez ibn Baaz** (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)<sup>1</sup>: "Our Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam made clear to us a single way which it is obligatory upon the Muslims to follow and traverse, and that is Allaah's Straight Path and the methodology of His upright religion. Allaah – the Most High – said: **"And this is My Straight Path, so follow it and do not follow other paths that will separate you from His Path. This has He ordained for you, that you may become pious."**<sup>2</sup> Just as the Lord of Might and Majesty warned the Ummah (nation) of Muhammad sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam against splitting and disunity, since that is one of the greatest causes of failure and of the enemy taking control, as occurs in the saying of Allaah – the Mighty and Majestic's: **"And fold fast altogether to the rope of Allaah and do not be divided."**<sup>3</sup> And His – the Most High's – saying: **"He has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nooh, and that which We revealed to you, and that which We ordained for Ibraaheem, Moosaa and 'Eesaa 'alayhimus-salaam, saying: that you should establish the religion by doing that which you are ordered with, and make no divisions in it. Intolerable for the Pagans is that to which you call them."**<sup>4</sup> So this is a Divine call to unity and for hearts to be harmonised. And in any Islaamic land, if there are many groups for the purpose of good, aid, co-operating in righteousness and piety between the Muslims – without their being differences between the desires of the companions and followers – then this is good, is a blessing, and produces great benefit.

However, if each of them declare the others to be misguided and attack their actions, then this harm is very great and its evil consequences very serious. Then what is obligatory upon

<sup>1</sup> (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

<sup>2</sup> Soorah al-An'aam 6:153

<sup>3</sup> Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:101

<sup>4</sup> Soorah ash-Shooraa 42:13

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the Muslims is to clarify the true state of affairs and to discuss with each group and to sincerely advise all of them that they should proceed upon the way laid down by Allaah for His servants, and upon that which our Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam called to. Then those who ignore this, or continue in their stubbornness, due to personal benefit or goal – known only to Allaah – then what is obligatory upon those who know the reality is to make this known about them and to warn against them, so that the people may avoid their path, and that those who do not know the reality of their affair may not fall into it and be led astray, and that they are not turned away from the Straight Path which Allaah ordered that we follow, as occurs in His – the Mighty and Majestic’s – saying: **“And this is My Straight Path, so follow it and do not follow other paths that will separate you from His Path. This has He ordained for you, that you may become pious.”**<sup>5</sup> And from that which there is no doubt about is that the multitude of sects and groups in the Islaamic society is, firstly something desired by Shaytaan, and secondly something desired by the enemies of Islaam from amongst mankind. Since agreement and unification of the Muslims, and their being aware of the dangers which threaten them and their ‘Aqeedah (beliefs), will make them active in refuting and rebutting it, and acting in a unified manner for the benefit of the Muslims – thus repelling the danger from their religion, their lands and their brothers. And this is something which the enemies – from amongst mankind and jinn – are not pleased with. Therefore they are very eager to split-up the Muslims, destroy their unity and to sow the seeds of enmity and discord between them. We ask Allaah that He unites the Muslims upon the truth and that He removes from their society every type of misguidance and every cause of discord. Indeed He is the One Who is able to do that, and He is the One having full power over it.”<sup>6</sup>

**Questioner:** ... and the students of knowledge refer back to you and to the other major Scholars and ask them. So what do you advise them? Do you advise and approve of entering (i.e. joining) the likes of these groups; such as Jamaa’atul-Ikhwaan, Jamaa’atut-Tableegh, Jamaa’atul-Jihaad, and so on, or do you advise them to remain upon seeking knowledge with the students of knowledge from those who call to the way of the Salaf (the Pious Predecessors)?

**Shaykh Abdul-Azeez ibn Baaz** (رحمته الله): “All praise is for Allaah and may Allaah extol and send blessings of peace upon His Prophet. We advise them all to unite upon a single way and that is the way of seeking knowledge and attaining understanding of the Book and the Sunnah, and to proceed along the manhaj (methodology) of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa’ah. I advise them all that their goal should be to follow the Book and the Sunnah and to proceed upon the manhaj of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa’ah, and that they should all call themselves Ahlus-Sunnah or the followers of the Salafus-Saalih (Pious Predecessors). But as for tahazzub (bigoted partisanship) for the Ikhwaanul-Muslimeen, or Jamaa’atut-Tableegh, or so on, then

<sup>5</sup> Soorah al-An’aam 6:153

<sup>6</sup> Majmoo’ Fataawaa wa Maqaalaat Mutanawwi’ah (5/202-204).

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I do not advise that. That is a mistake. Rather we advise them that they should be together upon a single way, a single jamaa'ah, advising one another with the truth and having allegiance to Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah. This is the correct way to prevent differences. But if there are various groups upon that same way (i.e. of following the Salafus-Saalih) – a group in such and such a place, and another in such and such a place – but all of them are upon the Salafee<sup>7</sup> way, following the Book and the Sunnah, calling to Allaah and having allegiance to Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah – without tahazzub (partisanship) and without ta'assub (bigotted blind-following) – then that is not harmful – even if there are a number of groups – as long as their way and their goal is one.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Imaam as-Sam'aanee (d.562H) said in al-Insaab (3/273): “As-Salafee: this is an ascription to the Salaf and following their ways, in that which is related from them.” Ibn al-Atheer (d.630H) said in al-Lubaab fee Tahdheebul-Insaab (2/162), commenting upon the previous saying of as-Sam'aanee: “And a group were known by this ascription.” So the meaning is: that the term Salafee, and its ascription to them, was a matter known in the time of as-Sam'aanee – the sixth century – or before him.

<sup>8</sup> From a series of taped questions asked by Shaykh Abul-Hasan al-Misree in the house of the noble Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azeez bin Baaz – hafidhahullaah – on the 6th day of Dhul-Hijjah 1416H (equivalent to the 24th of April 1996CE).