

The People of the Sunnah Do Not Revile Their Scholars

Shaykh ‘Alī al-Ḥudhayfi

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds. I bear witness that there is no god (worthy of worship) but Allāh alone, without any partner, the Guardian of the righteous. I bear witness that our Prophet Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger, may Allāh make good mention of Him (in the highest company) and grant him safety. To proceed:

①. Ahl al-Sunnah do not revile the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah, due to their high status, their elevated ranks, and their virtues which are abundantly mentioned in the Qur’ān, the Sunnah, and the narrations of the Salaf. And (also) for their significant and immense efforts in spreading knowledge, calling to Allāh, and defending the religion. This is a foundational principle that remains unchanged among Ahl al-Sunnah.

② In relation to myself, I love the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah, defend them, spread their virtues, disseminate their knowledge, and encourage (the reading of) their books and fatāwā, adherence to their way, whether they are from the early scholars, or the middle, or the later ones. Among these later scholars are:

- his eminence Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Ibn Bāz,
- Shaykh al-Albanī,
- Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymīn,
- our shaykh, Shaykh Rabī‘ al-Madkhalī,
- Shaykh Ṣaliḥ al-Fawzān,
- our shaykh, Shaykh Muqbil al-Wādi‘ī,
- Shaykh Ṣaliḥ al-Luḥaydān,

—Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Āl al-Shaykh,

—Shaykh ‘Ubayd al-Jābirī,

and others from the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah, may Allāh have mercy on them all, forgive them, and raise their ranks.

③ For many long years, I have defended the Ahl al-Ḥadīth in general, and I have defended the scholars of Tawḥīd through speech and writing. I have defended a group of scholars through speech and writing, including Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and al-Hāfiḍh al-Nawawī, refuting those who make tabdī‘ (heresification) of him. I have also defended the reviver, Shaykh Muḥammad bin ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, and others.

I defended contemporary scholars, including Shaykh Ibn Baz (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ), Shaykh al-Albānī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ), Shaykh al-Jāmī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ), our Shaykh Rabī‘ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ), our Shaykh Muqbil al-Wādī‘ī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ), our Shaykh ‘Ubayd al-Jābirī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ), and our Shaykh al-Wasābī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ).

I defended them and other scholars, and some of them I defended many times. I have proceeded upon this methodology for over thirty years, praise be to Allāh. I ask Allāh the Exalted for steadfastness upon Tawḥīd, the Sunnah, and the methodology of the Righteous Salaf until I meet Him.

④ Those who oppose Ahl al-Sunnah, when they revile the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah, do so for several reasons:

—either they criticize them because they are conveyers of the Salafī methodology, upholding, explaining, supporting, and disseminating it,

—or because they have inherited hatred for the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah from other spiteful individuals, so they revile and belittle the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah,

—or because they criticize them because they consider them worthless,

—or for other reasons.

However, if someone contends with a scholar because he erred in a matter of knowledge, or asks the scholar to clarify some of his statements, or demands fairness in a particular issue, or something similar, it is not permissible to say that he is reviling the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah, because he is simply demanding his right (of receiving fairness and justice).

⑤ Disagreements have occurred between some scholars of Ahl al-Ḥadīth, and one example of this is the issue of peers, which is a well-known and widely discussed matter.

No one applied the narrations that condemn the revilement of the (scholars of) Ahl al-Ḥadīth to their disputants. Disagreements also occurred among some contemporary scholars. Shaykh al-Albānī refuted Shaykh Ibn Bāz regarding the issue of joining hands after bowing (*rukūʿ*), calling it, I believe, a “Hijazi innovation.” Shaykh al-Albānī also refuted the Council of Senior Scholars (Hayʾah Kibāt al-ʿUlamāʾ) during the Gulf War, using strong language. Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz bin Bāz said of his teacher, Shaykh Muḥammad bin Ibrahim Āl Shaykh, that he was a scholar, not a prophet. Shaykh al-Najmī refuted Shaykh al-ʿAbbād regarding the book *Be Gentle with the People of the Sunnah (Rifqan Ahl al-Sunnah bin Ahl al-Sunnah)*. Shaykh Muqbil al-Wadīʿī refuted Shaykh al-Albānī on the issue of elections, among other things. Shaykh al-Albānī refuted Shaykh al-Tuwaijri on several issues. Shaykh al-Jāmī refuted Shaykh al-Albānī during the second Gulf War regarding the issue of seeking help from non-Muslims. Shaykh al-Fawzān also refuted Shaykh al-Albānī, and he had some comments on that matter.

The examples are numerous, yet no one considered such (disagreements) to be attacks on scholars. May Allāh have mercy on all the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah, forgive them, and elevate their ranks.

Further, a scholar may err with respect to a common person, whether it be in buying, selling, renting, lending, guaranteeing, or similar dealings. The common person may then dislike the scholar and speak ill of him.

Should this common person be described as hating scholars or attacking them simply because he seeks his due right?

We have seen some shaykhs who have knowledge, commendations, and certifications in Qurʾān and Ḥadīth, yet they err in the rights of some common people. The common people then speak out and demand their right. When their due is granted, they become silent. Yet, no one claims that these common people are attacking the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah.

⑥ In conclusion, if a person demands a right from a shaykh, such as redressing an injustice that the shaykh is capable of rectifying, or clarifying matters—especially if people request clarification—then it is not permissible to consider someone who demands their right as attacking scholars.

⑦ Finally, I say: I do not revile any of the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah, as some people portray. Whoever falsely accuses me of reviling the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah, or spreads this fabrication, or disseminates it about me, or knows me (and my way) but fails to verify (the facts of the matter), I will not forgive him. He will be my adversary on the Day of Resurrection before Allāh. I remind him of the ḥadīth of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): “Whoever says about a believer what is not true of him, Allāh will give him to drink from corrupt fluid (from the pus of the people of Hell).”¹

I advise all brothers to read the book: *The Methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamāʿah in Critiquing Men, Books, and Sects* by our shaykh, Shaykh Rabīʿ bin Hādī (رَبِيعُ بْنُ هَادِيٍّ). It is a valuable and important book.

¹ Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd (no. 3597).

May Allāh make good mention of His Servant and Messenger
(in the highest company) and grant him safety and blessings.

‘Alī al-Ḥudhayfī al-‘Adanī,

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