

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**With the Name of Allaah the Extremely Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy**

The introduction of the one who has done the notes, the explanation to the book, the noble Shaykh Saalih al-Fowzaan.

All praise is for Allaah the Lord of the whole of creation and may Allaah extol (make mention of and praise) and may He send peace and security upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his true followers and upon all of his Companions.

This book was authored by al-Barbahaaree and his name was: al-Ḥasan ibn (the son of) `Alee ibn (the son of) Khalaf al-Barbahaaree, an ascription to *barbahaar* which was a type of medicines which perhaps he used to work with or he used to sell them and then he became ascribed to them. And he was one of the major Ḥanbalee scholars. He took knowledge from those who took from Imaam Aḥmad; he took directly from the students of Imaam Aḥmad such as al-Marrooth<sup>1</sup> and others. And he acquired a huge amount of knowledge. He took *`aqeedah* (creed and belief) and he took *fiqh* and he took knowledge from the major Imaams.

And the name of the book is Sharḥus-Sunnah, an explanation of the Sunnah. What is meant by 'the Sunnah' here is: the way of the Messenger, *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam*. It does not mean the technical usage applied by the scholars of ḥadeeth that it is whatever is established from the Prophet *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* with regard to sayings or actions or tacit approvals. Rather its meaning is that which is wider and more general and it is: the way of the Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* and the way of his Companions and the way of the *Salafus-Saalih*, the pious predecessors. This is the *Sunnatul-ma-thoorah*, the Sunnah as found in the narrations.

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Marrooth<sup>1</sup>: He was Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥajjaaj ibn `Abdil-`Azeez Aboo Bakr al-Marrooth<sup>1</sup>. Ibn Abee Ya`laa said concerning him, "His mother was Marrooth<sup>1</sup>iyah (a woman from Marrooth<sup>1</sup>) and his father was from Khawaarizm and he was the one who had precedence amongst the student of Imaam Aḥmad because of his piety and his **excellence**, and our Imaam used to enjoy his company and used to be at ease with him, And he was the one who closed the eyes of the Imaam when he died and he washed his body and he reported many matters of knowledge from him." He died in the year 275AH. *Tabaqaat al-Hanaabilah* (Volume 1, page 56) and *Siyar A`laamin-Nubalaa* (Volume 13, page 173).

Whether it be in the matter of *i'tiqaad* (creed and belief) or in the matter of *'ibaadah*, (worship) or in the matter of *fiqh*, or in *aadaab* and *akhlaaq* (the matter of manners and behaviour), all of this is called as-Sunnah in the general sense.

So he sometimes mentions matters of *fiqh*, such as wiping upon the socks and the matter of *mut'ah* marriages, in order to rebut the deviated sects who disagree concerning these matters. And he sometimes repeats matters for emphasis or for a reason for the thing to be mentioned again or in order to add further clarification or for other than that from the knowledge-based objectives. So in summary it is a book containing benefit.

And its importance lies in its being an early book. So it is one of the books of the earlier *Salaf*, those who lived in the time of the major Imaams and took from them, and who reported their pure *'aqeedah* (creed and belief), so may Allaah have mercy upon him, the great Imaam.

And the meaning of *sharḥ* is *bayaan*, an explanation. It does not mean that he clarifies the meaning of a particular book or he is explaining a particular book; rather it means he was clarifying the way of the Sunnah. This is the meaning of *Sharḥus-Sunnah*.

The earlier scholars used to call the books of *'aqeedah*, 'as-Sunnah', such as this book, *Sharḥus-Sunnah* and such as the book 'as-Sunnah' of Imaam Aḥmad and the book 'as-Sunnah' of his son 'Abdullaah and 'as-Sunnah' of al-Athram and 'Sharḥ Uṣool I'tiqaad Ahlis-Sunnah' of al-Laalikaa-ee.

Likewise they would call them, 'al-Eemaan' so some of them would place within books a book called 'Kitaabul-Eemaan', the 'Book of True Faith', just as is present in the book of the Saḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree and Muslim. So they would put a book and call it the 'Book of Eemaan' and within it they would bring whatever was particular to *'aqeedah* (creed and belief) with regard to *eemaan*, (true faith) in Allaah and His angels and His Books and His Messengers and the Last Day, and Predecree, the good of it and the bad of it, and they would call that *al-Eemaan*.

And likewise they would call it 'ash-Sharee'ah', such as the book 'ash-Sharee'ah' of Imaam al-Aajurree ash-Shaafi'ee. And they sometimes would call it 'at-Towḥeed' such as the book 'at-Towḥeed' of Ibn Khuzaymah, and the well-known books of *towḥeed*. And they would also be called 'al-'Aqeedah'. And *al-'aqeedah* it means that

which is held as belief by the heart and that which it holds as religion and that which the person has certainty upon.

And all of these names there is no disagreement between them, for they are multiple names for one and the same thing. So these are different words used for the same meaning and there is to be no arguing about the names if the meaning is known. So this is not a case of differing, rather it is just a case of using different terms and each terminology has a correct aspect of meaning so there is no disagreement between them in that regard, even though the words differ, the meaning is one.

As for those people who criticise this and say “`Aqeedah and towḥeed, this is a terminology which has no proof. It is not found in the Qur-aan nor in the Sunnah.” So this is just trying to provoke doubts. What they intend by doing that is to uproot and remove this `aqeedah. So therefore they came with this speech in order that no distinction will be made between the deviant sects and the upright group - this is what angers them - and so that the people of falsehood will no longer be refuted.

This is the intent of those of them who have some learning, and as for the rabble and the riffraff (the ignorant followers), those who just take up from the rubbish-tip of ideas, then they just repeat these sayings that they have heard, as is found in some of the newspapers and some of what they call publications. So it is not permissible to turn any attention to the like of these doubts that are raised and to these matters.

So this (correct belief that the scholars have written from earlier times upon with these books) is something which the *Ummah* has proceeded upon and given attention to in order to distinguish between the Truth and falsehood, and between Guidance and misguidance, however those people have their own purpose in doing this. They want to merge all of the people together and that there would not be anything to differentiate between an atheist and an evil heretic, and a person who is upright, or one who is an innovator, rather they want all the people to remain beneath the umbrella of the name of Islaam so that the Muslims will remain united, they claim!

So we say to them, the Muslims will not be united except upon correct `aqeedah (creed and belief). `Aqeedah is what united the Companions when they had been divided. Just as He the Most High said:

﴿وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءَ فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ﴾

(Explanation)

**And remember the favour of Allaah upon you, that previously you were enemies  
and He joined your hearts together**

(Soorah Aale `Imraan (3), *aaayah* 103)

What is it that united the Companions after this separation and after this fighting each other except this *`aqeedah* (creed and belief) which is the meaning of *Laa ilaaha illAllaah, Muḥammadun rasoolullaah*, 'None has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allaah'?

So nothing will unite the people except for the correct belief, but if the people differ and disagree in their *`aqeedah* (creed and belief) then they will never unite.

As for differing in matters of *fiqh*, involving *ijtihaad*, matters that can be understood from an evidence one way or another, then this will not affect the matter and it will not necessarily produce separation nor enmity because this is *ijtihaad* which can be permitted however differing in *`aqeedah* (creed and belief) is not permitted and those who differ concerning it (creed and belief) will never unite, ever. Those who differ in *`aqeedah* will never unite, no matter what attempts there are to bring it about because this person intends to unite those things which are opposites to each other, and it will not be possible to unite opposites and things which contradict each other.

So if those people do actually desire the unity of the Muslims then what is upon them first of all **is to correct** the *`aqeedah* that the Messengers, from the first of them to the last of them, used to give importance to and which they used to begin with. It is upon them to unify this first, so if they unify the *`aqeedah* then the *Ummah* will be united. This is if they are actually serious and sincere in their call, however they mock the person who speaks about *`aqeedah* and who calls to the correct *`aqeedah* and they say, "This person declares the people to be *kaafirs*<sup>2</sup>, he just wants to split up the Muslims; he actually wants such and such," to the end of what they say.

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<sup>2</sup> Transcriber's note: meaning disbelievers

So we say to them, you will never be able to gather the Muslims upon something other than the correct `aqeedah, for if the `aqeedah (creed and belief) were united then the people would unite easily.

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي آتَاكَ بِنَصْرِهِ وَبِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ ٦٢ ﴿وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ لَوْ أَنفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾ ٦٣ ﴿

(Explanation)

Allaah is the One who strengthened you with His aid and through the believers and He united their hearts. If you had spent all that is upon the Earth you could not have united their hearts. However Allaah united them. He is the All-Mighty the All-Wise.

(Sooratul-Anfaal (8), aayahs 62-63)

﴿وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ﴾ ١٠٣ ﴿

(Explanation)

And remember Allaah's favour upon you that you were previously enemies and He united your hearts, so that you became by His favour brothers, and previously you were on the edge of the pit of the Fire about to fall into it (on account of your

**disbelief) and He saved you from it. Likewise Allaah makes clear His signs to you that you may be guided.<sup>3</sup>**

Aale `Imraan (3), *aayah* 103

So nothing will ever unite the people except the correct *`aqeedah*, that which the Messengers from the first of them to the last of them, Muḥammad *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam*, came with.

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا

فَاعْبُدُونِ﴾

(Explanation)

**And We did not send any Messenger before you except that we revealed to him that none has the right to be worshipped except Me (Allaah) so worship Me alone.**

(Sooratul-Anbiyaa (21), *aayah* 25)

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<sup>3</sup> Translator's side point: Tafseer from Tafseer at-Ṭabaree with a good chain of narration from Qataadah ibn Di'aamah, a *taabi'ee* famous for giving *tafseer*, he said with regard to the situation of the Anṣaar (the Aws and the Khazraj) before Islaam and then after Islaam:

"This group of the Arabs used to be the most down-trodden of the people and the ones who were most wretched in life, those who were most clearly upon misguidance, and the most naked (having the least amount of clothing) and the ones who were the most hungry. They were as if they were biting upon a rock out of hunger whilst lying in between two lions, the lion of Persia and the lion of the Byzantines. No, by Allaah, they had nothing in their lands at that time for which they could be envied. Whoever amongst them lived, lived in a state of wretchedness and whoever died was thrown down into the Hell Fire. They would be devoured by others but did not themselves have anything to eat. By Allaah, we do not know of any tribe of people upon the Earth who at that time had a smaller portion, nor who were less in status than them, until Allaah the Mighty and Majestic brought Islaam and through it He gave you the Book as an inheritance and He made lawful for you the land of *jihad* and through it He gave you provision and by means of it He made you kings over the necks of the rest of the people. And through Islaam Allaah gave you that which you can see. So give thanks for His favours for indeed your Lord is One who bestows favours and He loves those who give thanks, and those who give thanks receive increase from Allaah, so Supreme and Exalted is our Lord."

﴿ وَإِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاتَّقُونِ ﴾

(Explanation)

**And this Religion of yours is a single religion and I am your Lord so fear and be dutiful to Me**

(Sooratul-Mu·minoona (23), *aayah* 52)

And in the other *aayah* there occurs:

﴿ إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُونِ ﴾

(Explanation)

**This Religion of yours is a single religion and I am your Lord, therefore worship Me alone**

(Sooratul-Anbiyaa· (21), *aayah* 92)

They will not be united except upon the worship of the single Lord and He is Allaah the Perfect and Most High, because He is the true Lord and others besides Him are false and futile.

﴿ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَبَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ هُوَ

الْبَاطِلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴾

(Explanation)

**That is because He (Allaah) is the One who is truly worshipped and whatever is called upon besides Him is falsehood and Allaah, He is the Most High the Most Great.**

(Sooratul-Ḥajj (22), *aaayah* 62)

So this is the arena for uniting the Muslims if they are true and sincere, so let them correct the *`aqeedah*, and expel deviation and introduced impurities from it, so that it can be as it was when Muḥammad *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* came with it so that the Muslims can unite upon it.

This is what the *Salaf* such as al-Barbahaaree and others intended when they authored these works and these books to explain the correct *`aqeedah*.

When trials and tribulations and splits occurred and misguidance, they wrote these books of *`aqeedah* explaining the Sunnah with them, that which Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* was upon and his Companions and **the most excellent** generations, that which is such that whoever adheres to it will be saved and whoever deviates from it will be destroyed. That concerning that which Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* said,

*"I have left you upon a clear white way. Its night is just the same (just as clear) as its day."*<sup>4</sup>

Allaah the Majestic and Most High said:

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<sup>4</sup> Reported by Imaam Aḥmad and Ibn Maajah and Ibn Abee `Aasim and Aboo Nu`aym and al-Ḥaakim and others from a ḥadeeth of al-**Irbaad** ibn Saariyah *radiyAllaahu `anhu*. Aboo Nu`aym said: This ḥadeeth is a good ḥadeeth from the authentic narrations of the people of Shaam, and al-Ḥaakim said: This ḥadeeth is authentic and al-Munthiree said in his book at-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb, "Its chain of narration is *ḥasan*."

Translators note: Shaykh al-Albaanee *rahimahullaah* declared this ḥadeeth to be authentic.



﴿الْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ  
أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾

(Explanation)

**This day have those who disbelieved given up all hope of your Religion, so do not fear them but rather fear Me. This day have I perfected for you your Religion and completed My favour upon you and am pleased with Islaam as your religion.**

(Sooratul-Maa-idah (5), aayah 3)

This is the point which is the necessary condition for unity and for uniting to occur but as for it being said that we will gather together upon what we agree about and as for what we disagree about then we'll just pardon each other - this is something impossible if it refers to differing in *`aqeedah*. However if it is differing in the matter of *fiqh* and matters of questions of *fiqh* which are possible can be this way or that way, then that *may* be allowable, even though even there what is still obligatory is following the evidence even in matters of *fiqh*.<sup>5</sup> He the Most High said:

﴿فَإِنْ نَنزَعْنَاهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ﴾

(Explanation)

**So if you differ about anything then refer it back to Allaah and to the Messenger**

(Sooratun-Nisaa· (4), aayah 59)

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<sup>5</sup> Translator's side point: Ibnul-Qayyim mentions in *Ilaamul-Muwaqi'een* the famous saying of Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee that, "The people are agreed that a person to whom the Sunnah of Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* becomes clear, then it is not permissible for him to follow the saying of anyone else besides him."

However differing in a matter of *fiqh* which could possibly be correct, have an aspect, will not bring about division between the Muslims. And therefore the People of the Sunnah contain within them the Hanafee and they contain within them the Maalikee and they contain within them the Shaafi`ee and they contain within them the Hanbalee and they did not differ with each other, and all praise for Allaah, and they did not separate, because these were matters of *ijtihaad* (personal deduction) in matters of *fiqh* which had aspects of correctness and all had angles of possibly being correct from the evidences but as for `aqeedah, then their `aqeedah was one, the Hanbalees and the Shaafi`ees and the Maalikees and the Hanafees, their `aqeedah was one. However amongst their later followers there were those who contradicted them in `aqeedah. This is found amongst the Hanbalees and it's found amongst the Hanafees and it's found amongst the Shaafi`ees and it's found amongst the Maalikees, there is to be found amongst them those who contradict the Imaams in their `aqeedah.

So they are only ascribed to them in *fiqh* alone, but as for `aqeedah then he contradicts them in it. So those people cannot be truly counted as being followers of the Imaams, because they only follow them in one thing but they contradict them in something which is more important. So they are not counted as being the followers of the Imaams when they contradict them in `aqeedah.

This is what led the scholars such as al-Barbahaaree and others to detail the correct way, taken from the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger and the way of the *Salaf* in order that Muslims could proceed upon it and this is *naṣeeḥah* (sincerity) for Allaah and for His Messenger and for His Book and for the rulers of the Muslims and for the general folk.

But as for if the matter were kept hidden and not made clear and these books were not written, then many people would go astray. So these works were therefore, and all praise is for Allaah, a favour from Allaah the Mighty and Majestic and a proof from Him upon His creation.

﴿لِيَهْلِكَ مَنْ هَلَكَ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ وَيَحْيَىٰ مَنْ حَيَّ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ﴾

(Explanation)

**So that whoever dies and goes to destruction (whoever disbelieves)<sup>6</sup> can go to destruction having clear proof and whoever lives can live upon clear evidence.**

(Sooratul-Anfaal (8), *aayah* 42)

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**Ithaaful-Qaaree bit-Ta'leeqaat `alaa Sharḥis-Sunnah**

**by Shaykh Saalih ibn Fowzaan al-Fowzaan *hafizahullaah***

**Volume 1, Pages 39-48**

**Translated by Aboo Talḥah Daawood Burbank, *rahimahullaah*, on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2009**

Transcribed by Umm Safiyyah Madeehah Aḥmad

Transcriber's note:

A few words which were cut off on the recording but appear in the Arabic book have been inserted in red.

A few phrases mentioned by the translator to clarify the speech of the author have been included in brackets. Please note that most of these additional phrases have not been included in the transcript. Please refer to the audio of the lesson for full benefit.

As mentioned in a previous lesson the *aayahs* of the Qur-aan are translated used the explanation found in Tafseer at-Ṭabaree.

Points discussed by Shaykh Saalih al-Fowzaan *hafizahullaah* in this excerpt include:

- a mention of the author, Imaam al-Barbahaaree *rahimahullaah*
- about the book and the meaning of its title Sharḥus-Sunnah
- different names that have been give to books of *`aqeedah*
- those who (falsely) claim to unite the Muslims
- what will actually unite the Muslims

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<sup>6</sup> Translator's note: in some of the explanations

- differing in matters of *fiqh* will not bring about division amongst Muslims
- even in matters of *fiqh* it is obligatory to return to the evidences
- the People of the Sunnah contain within them those from all four *Math.habs*