

Lesson 9

Point Number 6

The author *rahimahullaah* said,

“And beware of small matters that have been newly introduced, because small innovations grow, until they become large. This is what happened with every innovation introduced into this nation. Initially it was something small, having resemblance to the Truth; so those who entered into it were misled by this. Then they were unable to depart from it; so it grew large and it became the religion which they followed. So the person diverged from the Straight Path and exited from Islaam.”

The Explanation:

His saying, **“And beware of small matters that have been newly introduced.”** He says do not be lax about anything from innovation *bid`ah*, even if it is something small because it will grow and other things will become added to it, and this is one of the evil results of innovations. Since if the door to innovations is opened they will increase; so do not be negligent and lax about them. And it said (some people say), **“This is a small innovation - it will not harm.”** Innovation is actually like a burning piece of coal, even if it is small, then the fire will grow until it burns down the whole house, or the shop, or indeed the whole town.

“And most fires come about on account of sparks which are thought little of”¹

So one should not be careless about them, rather totally close the door to innovation altogether. And the Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* said,

“Beware of newly introduced affairs.”²

¹ Translator’s note: a line of poetry

² This narration has preceded.

Translator’s side point: Reported by Imaam Aḥmad , Aboo Daawood, At Tirmithi and Ibn Maajah. From the famous ḥadeeth of al-Irbaad ibn Saariyah *radiyAllaahu `anhu*. Declared authentic by Shaykh Al-Albaanee.

(This word) *iyyaakum* “beware” is an unrestricted warning against newly introduced innovations, whether they be small newly introduced affairs or large newly introduced affairs. The Messenger *ṣallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* did not make any exception with regard to innovations. So his prohibition is general, referring to all innovations. And he said,

*“And the worst of affairs are the newly introduced matters”*³

His saying, **“And likewise every innovation that was introduced into this nation, it was something small initially having resemblance to the Truth so those who entered into it were fooled by that, then he (that person) was not able to depart from it.”**

Troubles, trials and tribulations, when they first occurred in this nation, they occurred on account on being lax with the people who cause corruption, until they spread corruption upon the earth. And they brainwashed the youth and the common people and they filled it (the earth) with evil to the extent that great tribulations occurred in Islaam and between the Muslims as is well-known.

All of this was on account of overlooking the people of evil and leaving them alone, until the affair became very serious. So therefore firm resolve must be shown and the door to this affair must be blocked. And nothing will safeguard against innovations, after Allaah the Majestic and Most High, except for beneficial knowledge. As for the person who does not have knowledge then he will be swept away with the innovations, and he will think that they are something fine because he does not understand innovations. So nothing will save a person from innovations except for that which the Messenger *ṣallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* commanded with in his saying,

*“So adhere to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly Guided Orthodox Khulafaa· (caliphs).”*⁴

³ The checking of this has preceded as a ḥadeeth of Jaabir *radīyAllaahu `anhū*.

Translator’s side point: This ḥadeeth was reported by an-Nasaa·ee, and by Ibn Khuzaymah and it was declared *ṣaḥeeḥ* by Shaykh Al-Albaanee – that, “Allaah’s Messenger *ṣallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* when he gave a *khutbah*, he used to say...” and they report the wording, and it contained this wording, **“and the worst of affairs are those that are newly introduced.”**

⁴ Editor’s note: Part of the same ḥadeeth mentioned in footnote 2 of this transcript.

This is what will safeguard from innovations, and this requires learning and acquiring knowledge and understanding of the Religion of Allaah. And therefore the *Salaf*, the Predecessors, were the people who had the greatest knowledge and understanding of the Religion from this nation, and they took the greatest precaution against innovations, and they were foremost in warning against innovations, because of the fact that they knew what they (innovations) lead to.

Trials and tribulations when they start to blaze, then they come upon whatever is fresh and dry⁵. They affect the old person and the young person; they come upon the scholars and others besides them; they come upon the whole of the people and they (the people) are not able to escape from them. And if they do manage to escape from them, then their families and their children do not escape from them and those who are round about them. **So they are like the fire when it blazes upon the dry stalks of firewood, it is difficult to extinguish.** However stopping them as soon as they begin is easy, but as for stopping them after they have grown large and become serious then that is difficult. So therefore it is obligatory to have firm resolve with regard to them, and not to be lax about them.

And the *Salaf* in the Most Excellent Generations, they used to block innovations and they would not permit anything from them. So the Most Excellent Generations were the purest generations of this nation. And therefore Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* praised them in his saying,

"The best of you is my generation, then those who come after them, then those who come after them."⁶

Because they had not used to be lax with innovations, rather they used to blockade them, and their people (people of innovation) used to have to hide themselves away, because of the strength of the people of the Truth. So then when the Most Excellent Generations passed away, then innovations and their people and evils became active. And trials and tribulations were set ablaze amongst the Muslims. However, Allaah the Majestic and Most High guaranteed that this Religion would be preserved. So the Religion is safeguarded and all praise is for Allaah. However destruction occurs for the people of this Religion, they are the ones who may be destroyed. As for the Religion then it is preserved, by Allaah the Mighty and

⁵ Translator's note: meaning everything

⁶ Reported by Al-Bukhaaree in his *Saḥeeḥ* (no. 3450) and by Muslim (no. 2535) as a *ḥadeeth* of `Imraan ibn al-Ḥusayn *radīyAllaahu `anhu*.

Majestic's preserving it. And Allaah brings for it those who aid it and establish it. He the Most High said:

﴿وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا أَمْثَلَكُمْ﴾

(Explanation)

And if you people turn away then Allaah will exchange another people in your place. Then they will not be the like of you.

(Soorah Muḥammad (47) *aayah* 38)

And He said:

﴿فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ﴾

(Explanation)

Then Allaah will soon bring a people whom He loves and who love Him

(Sooratul-Maa'idah (5), *aayah* 54)

So Allaah will not let His Religion become lost, however we are the people who may become lost, if we lose our Religion, and if we give assistance to the people of innovation and to the people who newly introduce affairs and we become lax with them. Then if that happens then we will become lost and perhaps trials and tribulations and fighting and the shedding of blood will occur on account of that, and we will not be able to free ourselves from that.⁷

⁷ Translator's side point: The explanation of Shaykh Ṣaaliḥ ibn Sa'd as-Suḥaymee *ḥafizahullaah* mentions with regard to this affair of innovations which start as something small, "In the story of 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood along with the people of these circles who gathered in circles in Baṣrah (reported by Daarimee and others) when Aboo Moosaa al-Ash'aree came to him and informed him

His saying, **“until it became large and it became the religion which the person followed”** - meaning that innovations if they are left then they become the religion later on. And his saying has already preceded, “The people never introduce an innovation except that its like is taken away from the Sunnah.” Until the innovations they become the religion (of those people), and the sunnahs are taken away and innovations become the religion with this society. And that does not mean the whole nation is like that; rather just the society which permits innovations to spread, then they becomes its religion. However that does not mean that the Religion altogether will pass away, rather there will be some other people in a different region or a different city who stand, whom Allaah brings for this Religion, those who will aid it and defend it and guard it.

And there occurs in the ḥadeeth that at the end of time the sunnahs will be taken to be innovations and innovations will be taken to be sunnahs to such an extent that if they are corrected it is said, “You have changed the Religion,” and if they are criticized, then people will say to you, “You are criticizing the Religion”!⁸

that there are some people gathering in circles. So in the beginning all they were doing was gathering in circles and repeating words of *thikr* (remembrance). This, it is possible to say that this is from the smaller innovations. So then the narrator of this report said, “But then I saw most of those who were in those circles fighting against us on the Day of Nahrawaan.” *SubḥaanAllaah!* What is meant by the Day of Nahrawaan? It is the day when `Alee *radīyAllaahu `anhu* fought against the Khawaarij.

“So those people of the circles what did they begin with? They began with a small innovation; it would not be counted as something major without a doubt, however their gathering in circles and the manner in which they were doing the *thikr*, this is the way in which it was an innovation. So *tasbeeh* (saying *subḥaanAllaah*) and *tahleel* (saying *laa ilaaha illAllaah*) is not an evil act, rather it is something legislated. So what was it that Ibn Mas`ood was criticizing from them? It was the manner in which they were doing *thikr*. So therefore afterwards when the major innovation appeared, the innovation of the Khawaarij those people went with whom? They went along with the Khawaarij. So therefore the narrator of this report said, “So I saw most of the people of those circles fighting against us (meaning the people who were with `Alee *radīyAllaahu `anhu*) on the Day of Nahrawaan.” So see, this is a witness that emphasizes for us what the author *rahimahullaah* is saying, that innovation if it is taken lightly, people justifying it, it will continue until it becomes something major and until maybe it will lead the person to exiting/shooting out from the Religion; and the best example of that is the Khawaarij and the extreme Raafidah Shee`ah and the Baatiniyyah and the ones who follow their path.”

⁸ From `Abdullaah ibn Mas`ood *radīyAllaahu `anhu* that he said, “How will you be when trials and tribulations overcome you to such an extent that the old person grows old upon it and the young person grows up upon it and the people take it as being Sunnah. And if it changed the people say, ‘You are changing the Sunnah.’” So the people said, “When will that occur O Aboo Abdur-Rahman?” He said, “When your recitors become many and your people with understanding of the Religion become few and your rulers become many and your trustworthy ones are few and this world is

His saying, “So the person diverged from the Straight Path and exited from Islaam.” - meaning that the person of innovation, the affair overtakes him to such an extent that his whole religion becomes innovations and he departs from Islaam, since nothing remains from his religion from the sunnahs.⁹

Itḥaaful-Qaaree bit-Ta'leeqaat `alaa Sharḥis-Sunnah

by Shaykh Ṣaaliḥ ibn Fowzaan al-Fowzaan ḥafizahullaah

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Transcribed by Umm `Abbaas Zaynab `Abdullah

sought after by means of actions which should be done for the Hereafter.” Reported by ad-Daarimee in his Sunan and al-Ḥaakim in al-Mustadrak `alas-Ṣaheehayn and Ibn `Abdil-Barr in Jaami` Bayaanil-`ilm wa Fadliḥ and al-Bayhaqee in al-Madkhal ilas-Sunanil-Kubraa and others. And it is a narration which is *mowqoof* (a statement of a Companion, `Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood), but it has the ruling of being *marfoo`* (having come from Allaah's Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam*).

Translator's side point: Shaykh Al-Albaanee *rahimahullaah* said about this report in his *Ṣaheehut-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb* (no. 111) that this report is *ṣaḥeeḥ* (authentic) because of supports. It is *mowqoof*, a statement of the Companion. And in his book *Tahreem Aalaatit-Tarb* where he mentions the forbiddance of musical instruments, page 16, Shaykh Al-Albaanee said about this report, “It is *mowqoof* (meaning it is a statement of the Companion), but it has the ruling of coming from the Messenger *sallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* because it is a matter related to the unseen (a matter of the future) which cannot be arrived at through opinion, especially when all that was predicted in it has occurred, and Allaah's aid is sought.”

⁹ Shaykh Ṣaaliḥ as-Suḥaymee *ḥafizahullaah* said in explanation of this point, “This does not mean that every innovation takes a person outside the fold of Islaam. Rather what he meant was that there were some innovations which cause a person to reach the level of *kufr*, disbelief, and an example of that is the innovation of the Baatiniyyah (those who say all the commands of Islaam have an outward aspect e.g. the prayer and the fasting, for the common people, then there is an inner meaning for the special elite) and the extreme Soofees, those who believe that commands and the prohibitions fall away from them (they're no longer bound by Islaamic commands and prohibitions) and they make lawful that which Allaah has forbidden and they declare forbidden that which Allaah has made lawful. And they worship individuals and cling and devote themselves to them besides Allaah, and they believe that they are infallible or they believe that they know the *ghayb* (hidden and the unseen) or the like of that. These are from the innovations which reach the level of exiting from the Religion, and Allaah's refuge is sought.”

Points discussed by Shaykh Ṣaaliḥ al-Fowzaan *ḥafīẓahullaah* in this excerpt include:

- small innovations grow large until they become difficult to stop
- the Messenger *ṣallAllaahu `alayhi wa sallam* warned against religious innovations unrestrictedly
- trials and tribulations first occurred due to being lax with the people of corruption
- adhering to the Sunnah is what will safeguard from innovations
- adhering to the Sunnah requires learning and acquiring knowledge and understanding
- the *Salaf* had the most knowledge yet took the greatest precautions against innovations
- Allaah has guaranteed that Islaam will be preserved
- people of Islaam may become destroyed
- bloodshed may result from aiding the people of innovation
- a narration mentions a time when sunnahs will be taken to be innovations and innovations taken to be sunnahs
- a person's whole religion may become innovations

Side points from Shaykh Ṣaaliḥ as-Suḥaymee *ḥafīẓahullaah* mention that:

- in the time of the Companions *radīyAllaahu `anhum* a group who performed *thikr* in an innovated way later fell into the major innovation of the Khawaarij and fought against `Alee *radīyAllaahu `anhu*
- some innovations cause the person who performs them to exit Islaam