

## Characteristics of the saved group

**What are the most prominent characteristics of the saved group? If a person is lacking in any of these characteristics does that mean that he is not one of the saved group?**

Praise be to Allaah.

The most prominent characteristic of the saved group is adherence to the way of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in ‘aqeedah (belief), ‘ibaadah (worship), manners and attitude, and dealings with others. The saved group has distinct characteristics in these four areas.

In matters of ‘aqeedah you will find that they adhere to that which is indicated by the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), i.e., absolute Oneness (Tawheed) of the Divinity and Lordship of Allaah, and of His Names and Attributes.

In matters of worship, you will find that this group is distinguished by its total adherence to and application of that which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to do with regard to different kinds of acts of worship, how they are done, to what extent, where and when, and for what reasons. You will not find them introducing innovations into the religion of Allaah, rather they show the utmost respect towards Allaah and His Messenger, so they do not put themselves forward before Allaah and His Messenger (cf. al-Hujuraat 49:1) by suggesting any innovated act of worship for which He has not granted permission.

In matters of manners and attitude, you will also find that they differ from others by virtue of their good attitudes such as wishing the Muslims well, being content, having a cheerful countenance, speaking well, being generous, being courageous, and other noble and good characteristics.

In matters of dealings with others, you will find that

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they deal with others in an open and sincere manner. They are the ones to whom the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) referred when he said: “ The two parties (to a transaction) have the choice (of proceeding with the transaction

or cancelling it) until they separate. If they are sincere and open, their transaction will be blessed for them, and if they are lying or deceitful, the blessing will be lost. ”

If a person is lacking in any of these characteristics, then does not mean that he is not one of the saved group, but for all, there will be degrees according to that which they did (cf. al-Ahqaaf 46:19). Falling short in matters of Tawheed may put a person outside the saved group, such as lacking in ikhlaas (sincerity or purity of intention). The same applies to bid ' ah, as a person may do acts of bid ' ah which put him outside the saved group.

In matters of morals and dealings with others, defects in such matters do not put a person outside this group, although they may reduce him in status.

We

need to look in more detail at the matter of attitude and manners. One of the most important matters of attitude and manners is unity and uniting upon the truth. This is what Allaah urges us to do in the aayah (interpretation of the meaning):

“ He (Allaah) has ordained for you the same religion (Islamic Monotheism) which He ordained for Nooh (Noah), and that which We have revealed to you (O Muhammad), and that which We ordained for Ibraaheem (Abraham), Moosa (Moses) and ' Eesa (Jesus) saying you should establish religion (i.e. to do what it orders you to do practically) and make no divisions in it (religion) (i.e. various sects in religion) ” [al-Shoora 42:13]

Allaah tells us that those who divide their religion and break up into sects, Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) has nothing to do with them. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“ Verily, those who divide their religion and break

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up into sects (all kinds of religious sects), you (O Muhammad) have no concern in them in the least ” [al-An ‘ aam 6:159]

Unity and harmony are among the most prominent characteristics of the saved sect – Ahl al-Sunnah wa ‘ I-Jamaa ‘ ah. If any dispute arises among them, stemming from ijtihaad in matters where ijtihaad is permitted – they do not bear ill-will, enmity or grudges against one another. Rather they regard one another as brothers even though these differences arise between them. One of them will pray behind another even if he thinks that he does not have wudoo ‘ whilst the imaam thinks that he does have wudoo ‘ . For example, one of them may pray behind another who has eaten camel meat, and this imaam thinks that this does not break wudoo ‘ whereas the person praying behind him thinks that it does break wudoo ‘ . So he believes that his prayer behind this imaam is valid, but if he himself were to pray in that state on his own he would think that his prayer is not valid. All this is because they believe that differences which arise from ijtihaad in cases where ijtihaad is allowed, are not really differences, because each of them has followed evidence (daleel) as he is obliged to do, and which should not be ignored. So they believe that if their brother differs from them with regard to some action because he is following the evidence (daleel), then in effect he is agreeing with them, because they advocate following the evidence wherever it is. So although he differs from them, he is still following evidence from the Book of Allaah or the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). The scholars are not unaware of the differences of this nature that arose among the Sahaabah even during the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), but he did not rebuke them. When he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) came back from the campaign of al-Ahzaab, and Jibreel came to him and told him to go out to Bani Qurayzah, who had broken the treaty, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) told his companions, “ None of you should pray ‘ Asr until he reaches Bani Qurayzah. ” They set out from Madeenah to Bani Qurayzah, and they were worried about missing the ‘ Asr prayer. Some of them delayed the ‘ Asr prayer until they reached

Bani Qurayzah, and they prayed it after the time for the prayer had passed, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) had said, “ None of you should pray ‘ Asr until he reaches Bani Qurayzah. ” Others prayed ‘ Asr on time, saying that all the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) had meant was that they should hasten to go out (to Bani Qurayzah); he did not mean that they should delay the prayer. These are the ones who were correct, but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did not rebuke either of the two groups, and neither expressed enmity towards the other. The Muslims who claim to follow the Sunnah should be one ummah and not divide into groups, fighting one another verbally and arguing and hating one another for a matter in which it is allowed to have different opinions. There is no need to mention every group by name; the smart person will understand what I mean.

I think that Ahl al-Sunnah wa ‘ I-Jamaa ‘ ah should unite even though they differ in the ways in which they understand those texts which may be interpreted in different ways. That is a matter in which there is room for differences, may Allaah be praised. What matters is harmony and unity. No doubt the enemies of Islam want the Muslims to be divided, whether they are enemies who express their enmity openly or they are enemies who make an outward display of friendliness towards Muslims and Islam, but that is not real. We must be distinguished by this characteristic which is the characteristic of the saved group, i.e., being united.