

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Tauheed and Sunnah

By Qazi Fazlullah

Tauheed and Sunnah are two terms used in Shariah very frequently. Both terms are important to believe in and follow as well as practice accordingly.

Tauheed

Tauheed in literal terms means oneness, to unite and unify. In technical terms it means belief in oneness and unification of God. Belief in Tauheed ultimately unites those who believe in it. In other words unity of the belief is meant as the ultimate result of this belief. If this unity and unification does not exist it is an indication of something being wrong either in belief, either in its understanding or practice.

Tauheed is the basic object of Shariah while Sunnah teaches the way as how to believe and practice. Muslims testify and bear witness to and declare these two in Kalima-E-Tauheed which says “there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah”. Such a belief gives stability, satisfaction and mental peace to an individual. It also provides and creates unity and unification amongst the believers while Sunnah gives them a simple and easy way of life. Tauheed is the basis of Islam and is the call and message of all the Messengers of Allah (SWT). As Allah (SWT) said; *“And we did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad (SAS) but we inspired in him (ordered him to say and call to) La Ilaha illa Ana (none has the right to be worshipped but me (Allah) so worship me (above)” (20:25)*

Even though people all through history had a concept of God, they believed in certain creations to be worshipped taking pledges that Allah (SWT) had either delegated His power and qualities to these entities and deities or these deities will bring them nearer to Allah as in chapter 39 verse 3. These people had adopted and

practiced the same ways for generations and they were instilled in their hearts and minds. This had become their faith just as any custom, usage and convention. Thus their reaction was very strong. The people of Prophet Nuh and Prophet Moses reacted and said; *“Never did we hear such a thing among our fathers of old”* (23:24 and 28:36).

When our Holy Prophet (SAS) gave the people of peninsula the same message, they reacted and their reaction was mentioned in Surah- Saad; *“And they wonder that a warner (Prophet) has come to them from among themselves and the disbelievers say he is a sorcerer and a liar. Has he made all the gods into one God? Verily this is a curious thing. And the leaders among them went about (saying): Go on and remain constant to your gods! Verily this is a thing designed (against you)! We have never heard (the like) of this among the people of other days. This is nothing but an invention”* (38:4-7)

Tauheed according to Imam Waliullah Dehlavi (ra) has four steps and degrees:

1. **Tauheed-Wujoobil Wujood:** It means;
 - a) That Allah (SWT) is since ever and forever
 - b) He is because of Himself
 - c) He needs none while all need him
2. **Tauheed ul Khalq:** It means that He is the sole creator of the entire universe.
3. **Tauheed-e Tadbeer:** It means (a) that He plans, arranges and looks after this entire system. Things happen according to His will, (b) He has created things for certain results and these results happen accordingly like food for nutrition and water to quench thirst.

4. **Tauheed ul Ibaadah:** It means that only Allah deserves to be worshipped. The people are ignorantly and unconsciously involved in acts of shirk(polytheism) therefore Allah (SWT) said *“And most of them believed not in Allah (SWT) but they are mushriks”* (12:106)

Some people worship other deities while others practice such acts in front of other things. While these acts and practices otherwise are solely confined to Allah (SWT). In the metaphysical world people ask other deities to grant them their needs or to remove their difficulties or they believe in these deities to have an inclusive knowledge of anything seen or unseen or possess powers to do anything while these are the sole attributes of Allah (SWT) alone. Some attribute sons and daughters to Allah (SWT). Allah (SWT) said: *“Say (O Muhammad) He is the only one. He is eternal/self sufficient master (He needs none and all need Him) neither He beget nor was He begotten and there is none co-equal/ comparable to Him”* (Surah Al-Ikhlās)

Also He said: *“He is Allah (SWT) there is none to be worshipped but He, the all knower of unseen and seen. He is the beneficent the merciful. He is Allah, there is none to be worshipped but He. King, holy, free from all defects, provider of security, the watcher, the all mighty, the compiler, the supreme, Glory be to Allah (High is He) above all that they associate as partner with Him. He is Allah the creator and inventor of all things, the bestower of forms. To Him belong the best names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorify Him and He is the all mighty the all wise”* (9:22-24)

When we express and pronounce Shahadah, we must make our concept clear regarding Allah (SWT) to believe in Him in the proper way as deeds and practices are getting its price and value from the right faith and belief. Without belief, every deed, even a good one is perished and ruined.

SUNNAH

Sunnah literally means “an ancient and traditional rule or way” while its technical meaning is “the way of life known through the saying and practices of Rasoolullah (SAS).” As Muslims, when we pronounce the “Kalima” we promise Allah (SWT) that believing in His Tauheed, we will follow His commandments and the Sunnah of His Prophet (SAS). Following the Prophet (SAS) is required by “Tauheedul Uloohiat”. In other words to follow Sunnah it means following the commandments of Allah (SWT) in the ways shown and practiced by the Holy Prophet (SAS). For example, “Ibadat” (worship): It means to humble yourself in front of Allah alone with complete and sincere love for Allah in ways shown by the Prophet (SAS). If the types of worship confined to Allah (SWT) are practiced in front of anyone else, it is called shirk. Similarly if this worship is done a fabricated or self created way neither expressed therein sunnah nor deduced from it, then this is called Bidat (innovation). The Prophet (SAS) said innovation in Deen is rejected totally and it will take the person concerned to the hell fire. As Allah (SWT) said; *I have completed your religion for you and perfected my favor upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.*” (Surah Al-Maida 3). Completion is related to its factors, ingredients and contents while perfection is regarding its qualities, so this is a complete Deen in quantity and perfect

in qualities. Now to add something new which is neither mentioned expressly nor deduced therefrom means defects or faults in Deen and we are going to remove or add something that was left by Allah has repeatedly said in many verses; *Do obey Allah and obey His messengers*, He also said; *And what so ever the messenger gave you take it and what so ever he forbade you abstain (from) it and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is severe in punishment. (59:7)*

The call of the messenger of Allah is actually the call of Allah so those who will not respond to the call of Allah, they will face the curse of Allah as He said; *Make not (treat not) the call of the messenger among you as your call of one another. Allah knows those of you who slip away under shelter (seeking excuses which are lame excuses). Let those who oppose the messenger's commandments (sunnah), Beware! Lest some Fitna (turmoil, disturbance, confusion ,dispute and conflict, trials, afflictions, earthquake, bloodshed, killing over powered by tyrant etc) befall then or a painful torment be conflicted on them.(24:63)* In Surah Al- Hujuraat Allah said; *O you who believe do not go forward from Allah and His messenger and fear Allah verily! Allah is all hearing and knowing.*

It means neither we are to violate their commandments nor make decisions contrary to their orders. In Surah Al Ahzab it is said; *it is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and his messenger have decided a matter (ordered therein) that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allah and His messenger, he is indeed strayed in plain error. (33:36)* In Surah Al Nisa Allah said; *Verily, those who disbelieve in Allah and His messenger and wish to make distinction between Allah and*

*His messenger (by believing in Allah's orders and not in His messenger's orders) saying we believe in some but disbelieve others and wish to adopt a way in between, they are in truth disbelievers and we have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating torment. (4:15.151) In Surah Al Ahzab Allah (SWT) has made it clear that the Prophet is prior to the believers than themselves (33:6). Sunnah is the practical explanation of the Holy Quran and proper belief in Tauheed. When the mother of the believers Aisha (RA) was asked about the character/behavior/practice of the Holy Prophet (SAS) she said his character/practice was the Holy Quran. It was his duty to interpret the Holy Quran as Allah said in Surah Al Nahl verse 43; *And we have also sent down unto you (Muhammad SAS the zikr (wahi e khafi; e.g. sayings and practice) that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them (Holy Quran) and that they may give thought. Also in verse 64 it is said; And we have not sent down the book to you (O Muhammad SAS) except that you may explain clearly on to them those things in which they differ and a guidance and a mercy for a folk who believe.**

Without Sunnah one cannot understand the Holy Book or the proper belief in Tauheed. In fact, Sunnah is the protective cover of faith and Iman just as skin is for the human body. If they skin is burnt, death is certain as the internal main organs will become vulnerable to virus and bacteria. Similarly, without Sunnah, Iman and faith are like organs vulnerable to Satan. May Allah (SWT) give all of us taufeeq (power) to follow the Holy Quran and the Sunnah properly and to believe in tauheed. Ameen

Holy Quran

The last and final message

Allah (SWT) the sole creator of the entire universe has blessed the mankind and honored them as they have been given the title of Khalifa (vicegerent) of Allah (SWT). Thus they exploit and utilize the universe and all the things therein. As vicegerents of Allah (SWT) they are bound to find out the orders and commandments of Allah (SWT) to be obeyed and the prohibitions and restrictions to abstain and restrain from. As the status is high so is the responsibility. To inform us of our responsibilities and duties Allah (SWT) sent Prophets, messengers, revealed books, scriptures and Shariah (rules and laws). The purpose was to guide us to be in touch with Allah(SWT) in the right manner, to live in peace in this world and to get prosperity in the hereafter. All the Prophets and messengers were given the same and the only religion (Deen) as Allah (SWT) said in Surah Shura verse 13; *He has ordained for you the same religion (Islam) which He ordained for Noah and that which we have inspired in you (O Muhammad SAS) and that which we ordained for Abraham, Moses and Jesus saying you should establish religion (practically) and make no divisions in it.*

The original branches of this religion are 4 in number:

1. **Beliefs-** Belief in Allah (SWT), His angels, His books, His Prophets and Messengers, the last day of this universe, the issue of Taqdeer (that everything whether good or bad is created and controlled by Allah (SWT), and in life after death.
2. **Noble Character-** This gives stability and piety to a person thus establishing a peaceful society where justice, goodness and forgiveness are well-known practices and customs.

3. **Good deeds-** There are two kinds of deeds:

- a. Related to our connection with Allah (SWT) also known as Ibadaat (worships).
- b. Related to our fellow human beings. These deeds are further divided into four branches;
 - i. Family rules: Cooperation and relations with family members to keep family structure intact and together.
 - ii. Social contacts: This relates to business and transaction rules.
 - iii. State and Government laws: Establishment of state and government on the basis of Quran and Sunnah so the society is protected from turmoil, mischief, disorder, bloodshed, brutality and other evils.
 - iv. Global relations: Establishing relations with other states and the extent of those relationships.

4. **Duties: These are of two kinds**

- i. **Dawah:** This means to convince others to accept this final message of Allah (SWT). Dawah is most effective if shown through practice to non Muslims. If Muslims do their work with full compassion, honesty, truth and no financial greed then dawah is done as there is no force or coercion to convert people to Islam. There is dawah for Muslims also, as some Muslims do not care about their religion (Deen). It is a Muslim's responsibility to remind other Muslims of their duties and obligations.
- ii. **Jihad:** It means to strive hard for the cause of Allah (SWT) as one can do to the best of his ability, talent, power and knowledge. This is a vast which

includes every field of life however its form depends on the circumstances. Jihad is to remove conspiracy against our religion (Deen) and to defend our lives, honor, property, wisdom, intellect and our faith and religion. This is a well known human right even in the charter of UNO.

This religion has been in process of completion, proceeding towards its perfection starting from Adam and continuing through Prophets and Messengers, finally completing in the life of Prophet Muhammad (SAS) as Allah (SWT) said; *this day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.* Surah Al- Maidah 5:3. Those who believed in their Prophets of their time were on the right path but when Muhammad (SAS) came then only he was supposed to be the Prophet of all time to the Day of Judgment. Therefore those who do not believe in Prophets after Moses or Jesus did not proceed to the final and actual Deen which is Muhammad (SAS) and Quran. As Islam means what Muhammad (SAS) has brought which is the Holy Book from Allah (SWT). Muhammad further explained it through his sayings and practices as Allah (SWT) inspired them. Allah (SWT) said; *And we have also sent down unto you (O Muhammad SAS) the Zikr (wisdom, reminder ,advice ,inspiration)that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them and that they may give it thought.* Surah Al-Nahl 16:44. Allah (SWT) also said in the said Surah verse 64; *and we have not sent down The Book except that you may explain clearly onto them those things in which they differ and a guidance and a mercy for a folk who believe.*

Mankind wants to have a peaceful life in this world and good in the hereafter so Allah (SWT) said; *Surely this Quran guides to that (path in this world) which is most just/straight/balanced and gives glad tidings to the believers who perform deeds of piety that they shall have a great reward (in the hereafter)* Surah Bani Israel verse 9.

For guidance in the lives of mankind in this world and the hereafter Allah (SWT) sent books and messengers as guides, demonstrators, teachers, instructors and practical role models as Allah (SWT) said; *O people of the scripture! Now has come to you our messenger (Muhammad SAS) explaining to you much of that which you used to hide from the Scripture and passing over much. Indeed there has come to you from Allah (SWT) a light (Prophet Muhammad SAS, Holy Quran) and a plain book. Wherewith Allah (SWT) guides all those who seek his good pleasure to ways of peace and he brings them out of darkness by his will unto light and guides them to a straight path. Surah Al –Maidah 5:16,17.* Unfortunately Muslims today ignore the actual purpose of their creation due to having materialistic desires as they set aside the commandments of Allah (SWT). They do not arrange time to learn the message of Allah (SWT) and seek excuses therein. Allah (SWT) said; *whoever desires the life of this world and its glitter, to them we shall pay in full (the wages of) their deeds therein and they will have no diminution therein. They are those for whom there is nothing in the hereafter but fire, and vain are the deeds they did therein and of no effect are that which they used to do.* Surah Hud 11: 15, 16. In Surah

Al- Kahf verses 103 and 104 it is said; *Say (O Muhammad SAS) shall we tell you the greatest losers in respect of their deeds. They are those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds.* This means that luxury of this world is the foremost priority of non Muslims and disbelievers while life in the hereafter is priority to Muslims. To rejoice ones wealth and status it is not liked by Allah (SWT), instead Allah (SWT) likes a person to be humble although he ordered Muslims to rejoice Imam and Quran. *O Mankind there has come to you a good advice from your Lord (Holy Quran) and a healing for (the diseases in) your hearts a guidance and a mercy for the believers. Say (O Muhammad SAS) in the bounty of Allah (SWT) and His mercy (Iman and Quran) therein let them rejoice and boast (they must be proud of) that is better than what they amass.* Surah Younus 10: 57, 58.