أصول السنة  
Usûlus-Sunnah

The Imâm of Ablûs-Sunnah wal-Jamâ’îb
Imâm Ahmad ibn Hanbal (164-241H) rahimullâh
[عَقِيَّةِ الَّذِيْمَٔاً ابْنِ عَلَّدِ اللّٮٔٞ الْأَحْدَٔبِ بِنِ مُحَمَّدٍ حَنَبَلٍ - ٢٤١ هـ -]
Edited By Aboo Ibrahim

قال الشيخ الإمام أبو المظفر عبد الملك بن علي بن محمد الهمداني: حدثنا الشيخ أبو عبد الله يحيى بن أبي الحسن بن الباينة، قال: أخبرنا والدي أبو علي الحسن بن أحمد بن الباينة، قال أخبرنا أبو الحسين علي بن محمد بن عبد الله بن بشيران المعبد، قال: أخبرنا عثمان بن أحمد بن السماك، قال: حدثنا أبو محمد الحسن بن عبد الوهاب أبو الغفر قراءة عليه من كتابه في شهر ربيع الأول من سنة ثلاث وتسعين ومائتين، قال: حدثنا أبو جعفر محمد بن سليمان المنقري البصري - بنيس - قال: حدثني عدوس بن مالك العطار، قال: سمعت أبا عبد الله أحمد بن محمد بن حنبل - رضي الله عنه - يقول:


أصول السنة عندنا: 

The Fundamental Principles of the Sunnah with us are:

التمسك بما كان عليه أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم،

Holding fast to what the Sahaabah (Companions) of the Messenger of Allah were upon.

والإقتداء بهم،

Taking them [and their way] as a model to be followed.

وترك البدع،

The abandonment of al-Bid’ah (innovations),

وكل بدعة فهي ضلال،

and every Bid’ah is misguidance.

وترك الخصومات،

The abandonment of al-Khusoomaât (controversies).

والجلوس مع أصحاب الأهواء،
The abandonment of sitting with the people of al-Ahwaa (desires)

وترك المراء والجدال والخصومات في الدين.

And the abandonment of al-Miraa’ (quarrelling), al-Jidaal (argumentation) and al-Khusoomaat (controversy) in the religion.

والسنة عندنا آثار رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

And the Sunnah with us are the Aathaar (narrations) of the Messenger of Allah…

And the Sunnah Tufassir (explains and clarifies) the Qur’aan

وهي دلائل القرآن،

And it is the Dalaa’il (guide) to the Qur’aan [containing evidences and indications as to its meanings and correct interpretations].

 وليس في السنة قياس،

There is no Qiyaas (reasoning by analogy) in the Sunnah,

ولا تضرب لها الأمثال،

and al-Amthaal (examples and likenesses) are not to be made for it.

ولا تدرك بالعقول ولا الأهواء،

Nor is it grasped and comprehended by al-‘Uqool (the intellect) or al-Ahwaa’ (desires).

إنما هو الابتاع وترك الهاوى.

Rather it consists of al-Ittibaa’ (following) [and depending upon] it, and abandoning al-Hawaa (desires).

ومن السنة اللازمة التي من ترك منها خصيلة - لم يقبلها ويؤمن بها - لم يكن من أهلها:

And from as-Sunnah al-Laazimah (the binding and necessary Sunnah), [that Sunnah] which whoever leaves a single matter from it, has not accepted it [in its totality] and has not believed in it - he will not be of its people:

الإيمان بالقدر خيره وشره،

To have faith in al-Qadar [the Divine Pre-decree], both its good and its evil.

والالتزام بالأحاديث فيه، والإيمان بها، لا يقول لم ولا كيف، إنما هو التصديق والإيمان بها،

To affirm the abaadeeth related to it and to have faith in them. It is not to be said: Lima (Why)? Or Kaif (How)? It is [but] attestation [to the truthfulness of such abaadeeth] and having faith in them.

ومن لم يعرف تفسير الحديث ويلبّسه عقله فقد كفي ذلك وأحكم لّه، فعله الإيمان به والتسليم له،

مثل حديث "الصادق المصدق" ومثل ما كان مثله في القدر،

And whoever does not know the explanation of a hadeeth, and (whose) intellect [does not have the capacity] to make him understand it, then that would be sufficient [i.e. to just merely affirm the abaadeeth and have faith in them] since [everything from the religion] has been perfected for him. And it is necessary for him to have faith (Emaan) in it and to submit (Tasleem) to it, like the hadeeth of as-Saadiq (the truthful), al-Masdoop (the believed), and whatever is similar to it in the matter of al-Qadar

ومثل أحاديث الروية كلها، وان نأت عن الأسماع واستوحش منها المستمع،
And also like the ahaadeeth regarding the Ru’yah (the believer’s seeing Allah, in the Hereafter), all of them, even if they disagree with people’s hearing and even if the one who is listening to them feels repelled by, and is averse to, them.

وإنما عليه الإيمان بها، وأن لا يرد منها حرفًا واحدًا، وغیرها من الأحاديث المأثورات عن النّقات

Certainly, it is obligatory upon him to have faith in them and not to reject a single word from them nor from other (such) ahaadeeth, which have been reported by ath-Thiqaat (reliable, trustworthy narrators).

And that he does not argue with anyone, nor dispute, and nor should he learn (about how to make) al-Jidaal (argumentation) (in such matters).

For indeed, (indulging in) al-Kalaam (theological rhetoric) in the matter of Qadar (Divine Pre-Decree), the Ru’yah (Seeing Allah), the Qur’an and other such issues are among the ways that are Makrooh (detested) and which are Manheey (forbidden).

The one who does so, even if he reaches the truth with his words, is not from Ahlus-Sunnah, until he abandons (using) this mode of argumentation, (and until he) submits and believes in the Aathaar (the Prophetic Narrations and those of the Companions).

والقرآن كلام الله وليس بمخلوق، ولا يضعف أن يقول: ليس بمخلوق، فإن كلام الله ليس بائن منه، وليس منه شيء مخلوق، وإذا ومنظورة من أحدث فيه، ومن قال باللفظ وغيره، ومن وقف فيه، فقال: لا أدرى مخلوق أو ليس بمخلوق، وإنما هو كلام الله فهذا صاحب بدعة مثل من قال: (هو مخلوق)، وإنما هو كلام الله وليس بمخلوق.

al-Qur’an Kalaamu-llah (The Qur’an is the Word of Allah). Wa laisa bi-Makhlooq (And it is not created). And he should not be too weak to declare it is not created. Indeed, the Word of Allah is not [something] distinct and separate from Him [i.e., an entity in itself], and nothing of Him is created [i.e. none of Allah’s characteristics, qualities or actions are created].

And beware of argumentation with the one who innovates in this matter and says that his recitation (al-Lafdh) of the Qur’an is Makhlooq (created), and other such claims.

And whoever hesitates in this matter and says: ‘I do not know whether it is created or not created. It is but the Word of Allah.’ Then, he is a person of innovation and he is just like the one who says: ‘It is created.’ [The truth is that] Indeed, it is the Word of Allah and it is not created.

وإنما عليه الإيمان بالرؤية يوم القيامة، كما روي عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم من الأحاديث الصحاح.

To have faith in the Ru’yah (that Allah will be seen) on the Day of Judgement, as has been reported from the Prophet in the authentic abaaadeeth.
And that the Prophet saw his Lord, since this has been transmitted from the Messenger of Allah authentically. It has been reported by Qataadah from ‘Ikrimah from Ibn ‘Abbass; and al-Hakam ibn Abaan reported it from ‘Ikrimah from Ibn ‘Abbass; also Alee ibn Zaid reported it from Yoosuf ibn Mahraan from Ibn ‘Abbass.

The Hadith is to be taken by its apparent meaning ['alaa dhaahiri-ha], as it has come from the Prophet. And indulging in Kalaam (Theological Rhetoric) with respect to it is Bid’ah (innovation). But, we have faith in it as it came, upon its apparent meaning, and we do not dispute with anyone regarding it.

And having faith in al-Meezaan (the Balance, i.e. the Weighing) on the Day of Judgement, just as it has come [to us in the Hadith], “A servant will be weighed on the Day of Judgement and he will not be equal in weight to the wing of a fly.” [al-Bukhaaree, Muslim]

And the A’maal (actions) of the servants will be weighed, just as has been reported in the narration. To have faith in it, and to attest to its truthfulness, and to turn away from whoever rejects that and to abandon argumentation with him.

And that Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, will Speak to the servants (Yukallimu al-'Ibaad) on the Day of Judgement, without there being a translator (Tarjumaan) between Him and them; to have faith in this and to attest to its truthfulness.

And the Imam by the pond will come to it (to drink) and its width is equal to the distance traveled in a month. Its drinking vessels equaling the number of stars in the sky [and this is] in accordance with the narrations that are authentic in this regard, from more than one chain (of narrators).

And that Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, has sent His Messenger to be a light for mankind, and a guidance and a Good News for all those who believe.

And that the Prophet saw his Lord, since this has been transmitted from the Messenger of Allah authentically. It has been reported by Qataadah from ‘Ikrimah from Ibn ‘Abbass; and al-Hakam ibn Abaan reported it from ‘Ikrimah from Ibn ‘Abbass; also Alee ibn Zaid reported it from Yoosuf ibn Mahraan from Ibn ‘Abbass.
To have faith in ‘Adhaab al-Qabr (Punishment of the Grave) and that this Ummah will be put to trial in their graves and will be questioned about Emaan and Islaam. About who is his Lord? Who is his Prophet?

وياتيه منكر ونكر، كيف شاء الله عزوجل، وكيف أراد، والإيمان والإملاء والتصديق به.

And that Munkar and Nakeer will come to him, [all of that] in whatever way Allaah wills and in whatever way He desires. To have faith in that and to attest to its truthfulness.

و والإيمان بشفاعة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، ويقوم يخرجون من النار بعد ما احترقوا وصاروا فحما، فيؤمر بهم إلى نهر على باب الجنة كما جاء في الآخر، كيف شاء الله، وكما شاء، إنه هو الإيمان به، والتصديق به.

To have faith in Ash-Shafa’ah (the Intercession) of the Prophet, and [to have faith] that some people will be brought out of the Fire after they have been burnt therein and reduced to charcoal. [That] it will be ordered for them to be placed in a river by the door of Paradise, as has been reported in the narration, [all of that] however Allaah wills and in whatever way Allaah wills. Indeed, it is to have faith in it and to attest to its truthfulness.

و والإيمان أن المسيح الدجال خارج، مكتوب بين عينيه كافر، والأحاديث التي جاءت فيه، والإيمان بأنه ذلك كائن، وأن عينى ابن مريم عليه السلام ينزل فيقلله باب الله.

To have faith that Maseeh ad-Dajjaal (Anti-Christ) is to come, there being written between his eyes, ‘Kaafir.’ And [to have faith] in the Ahaadeeth which have come [to us] regarding him. And to have faith that this will happen.

And [to have faith] that ‘Isaa [ibn Maryam] will descend and will kill him (ad-Dajjaal) at the gate of Ludd.

و والإيمان قول وعمل، يزيد وينقص، كما جاء في الخبر: ((أكمل المؤمنين إيماناً أحسنهم خلقا’)).

And that Emaan (Faith) consists of [both] Qawl (speech) and ‘Amal (action), it Yazeed (increases) and Yanqus (decreases) as has been reported in the narration, “The most complete of the believers with respect to Imaan (Faith) is the best of them in his Khuluq (character, manners).”

ومن ترك الصلاة فقد كفر، وليس من الأعمال شيء تركه كفر إلا الصلاة، من تركوها فهو كافر، وقد أحل الله قتله.

And whoever abandons the prayer, then he has disbelieved. There is nothing from among the actions, the abandonment of which constitutes disbelief, except for the prayer. Whoever abandons it is a disbeliever and Allaah has made killing him permissible.

وخير هذه الأمة بعد نبيها أبو بكر الصديق، ثم عمر بن الخطاب، ثم عثمان بن عفان،

And the best of this Ummah after its Prophet is Aboo Bakr as-Siddeeq, then ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab, then ‘Uthmaan ibn ‘Affaan.

نَقِمُ هؤلاء الثلاثة كما قدمهم أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم،

We give precedence to those three just as the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah gave precedence to them. They [the Companions] never differed in that.
Then after those three, (the Five Companions of the Shooraa): ‘Alee ibn Abu Taalib, az-Zubair, Talhah, Abdur-Rahmaan ibn ‘Awf and Sa’d ibn Abee Waqqaas, each of them was fitting and appropriate for khilaaafah and each for them was an Imaam [leader].

In this regard we take the badeeth of Ibn ‘Umar, ‘We used to consider, while the Messenger of Allaah was alive and his Companions widespread: Aboo Bakr [to be first], then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmaan – and then we remained quiet.’

... Then after those three, (the Five Companions of the Shooraa), are the people who fought in Badr from among the Muhaajiroon. And then those who fought in Badr from among the Ansaar, from among the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah [each one’s rank is] according to his Hijrah (migration) and Saabiqah (precedence) [in entering Islam].

Then, after Ashaab ash-Shoorah (the Five Companions of the Shoora Council), are the people who fought in Badr from among the Muhajiroon. And then those who fought in Badr from among the Ansaar, from among the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah [each one’s rank is] according to his Hijrah (migration) and Saabiqah (precedence) [in entering Islam].

Then, the most superior of mankind after these: the Sahaabah (other Companions) of the Messenger of Allaah, the generation in which he was sent.

Everyone who accompanied him, whether for a year, a month, a day, an hour or [just merely] saw him, then he is from among his Companions. His companionship is according to the extent to which he accompanied him, [and to the extent to which] he had precedence in being with him, heard from him and looked at him.

So the least of them in as-Suhbah (companionship) to him are more excellent than the generation which did not see him, even if they met Allaah with all the [good] actions; despite that, those who accompanied the Prophet, saw him and heard from him [are superior].

And whoever saw him with his eyes, and believed in him, even if for an hour, is more excellent, on account of this companionship [with the Prophet], than the Taabi’een, even if they [the Taabi’een] did every action of goodness.
And hearing and obeying the leaders [A’immah] and the Ameerul-Mu’mineen, whether Barr (righteous) or Faajir (sinful), from among those who come into power with the Khilaafah (governing authority) and with respect to whom the people have agreed and united themselves and are pleased with him.

And also [hearing and obeying the one] who fought against the people with the sword [i.e. conquered them] until he became the Khaleefah and was named the Ameerul-Mu’mineen.

Participation in battles along with the leaders [Umaraa’], be they righteous or sinful, is an everlasting affair up [i.e. always operative] until the Day of Judgement.

It is never to be abandoned. [Likewise] the division of the spoils of war and appointing the rulers [A’immah] to establish the prescribed punishments [Hudood] are [both] everlasting. It is not permissible for anyone to defame/discredit them or to challenge them [i.e. the ruler’s authority].

Also, handing over the charity to them [the Rulers] is permissible and always operative [in effect]. Whoever gives the charity to them then that will suffice him [i.e. his obligation will have been fulfilled], whether righteous of sinful.

And performing the Jumu’ah prayer behind him [the Ruler] and behind whomever he appoints is a permissible and perfect [act] and [consists of] two rak’ahs. Whoever repeats them [after praying behind him] is a Mubtadi’ (innovator), one who abandons the narrations and an opposer of the Sunnah. He receives nothing [of reward] from the excellence of his [attendance of] the Jumu’ah prayer, if he does not accept and hold that prayer is to be observed behind the leaders, whomever they may be, the righteous amongst them and the sinful amongst them.

So the Sunnah is that he prays two rak’ahs with them. [Whoever repeats them is an innovator], and that he acknowledges that they are perfect and complete, not having any doubt in his heart regarding that.
And whoever revolts (al-Khurooj) against a leader from among the leaders of the Muslims, after the people had agreed upon him and united themselves behind him, after they had affirmed the khilaafah (governing authority) for him, in whatever way this khilaafah may have been, by ar-Ridaa (their pleasure and acceptance) or by Al-Ghalaba (his force and domination) [over them], then this revoler has divided the Muslims, and has contradicted the narrations of the Messenger of Allah. And if the one who revolted against the ruler died he would have died the Death of Ignorance (Meetatan Jaahileeyatan).

And Qitaal as-Sultaan (fighting the one in power) is not lawful, and nor is it permissible for anyone amongst the people al-Khurooj (revolting) against him. Whoever does that is an innovator, [and is] not upon the Sunnah and the Tareeq (correct) path.

Fighting against the thieves (Lusoos) and the revolters (Khawaarij) is permissible. That is, when they set upon a man with respect to his person and his wealth. It is then permissible for him to fight [and defend] himself and his property and to repel [the thieves and the revolters] from them both [i.e. himself and his property] with everything that is within his capacity.

But it is not permissible for him, when they depart from him or abandon him, that he seeks them [i.e. to find them]. Nor should he follow their tracks and this is not [permissible] for anyone other than the Imaam (leader) or those charged with authority over the Muslims.

It is only for him to defend himself in his own place and he should intend, by his striving against them, that he will not kill anyone. But if he kills him whilst defending himself in the battle, then Allaah will make the one killed far removed [from Himself and from any goodness]. And if he himself is killed in that state, whilst he is defending himself and his property, then I hope that it is martyrdom for him, as occurred in the hadeeth.
And all of the narrations in this regard have ordered with fighting him, but did not order killing him, nor pursuing him and nor finishing him off should he fall to the ground or become wounded.

And we do not testify for anyone from among the people of the Qiblah on account of an action that he has done, that he is in Paradise or in Hell-Fire. We have hope for the righteous one and we fear for him and we fear for the evil and sinful person and we hope for the mercy of Allaah for him.

And whoever meets Allaah with a sin, which would necessitate the Fire for him, having repented, not returning back to it and [not] being insistent upon it then Allaah, [the Mighty and Magnificent] will turn to him (in forgiveness). And Allaah accepts repentance from His servants and forgives the evil actions.

And whoever meets Him after having had the prescribed punishment meted out to him for that [particular] sin in this world, then that would be its expiation as occurs in the narration from the Messenger of Allaah.

And whoever meets him having persisted upon (sin), and not repented from the sins which necessitate punishment, then his affair is with Allaah [the Mighty and Magnificent] if He wills He will punish Him and if He wills He will forgive Him.

And whoever meets Him as a disbeliever, He will punish him and will not forgive him.

And ar-Rajm (stoning to death) [which is true and correct] is the rightful due of the one who has fortified [himself/herself] with marriage and commits Zina.
(illegal sexual intercourse), either when he/she confesses [to this act] or when the evidence is established against him/her.

And whoever Intaqasa (disparages and degrades) a single one of the Ashaabu Rasooli-llah (Companions of the Messenger of Allah) or Abghada (dislikes) him on account of something that occurred from him, or mentions his Masaawi’a (shortcomings), then he is and Mubtadi’ (innovator)

[He remains as such] until he asks for Allaah’s mercy (Rahmah) for them, all of them and [until] his heart is Saleem (sincere and free of evil) towards them.

And his saying, “In whomsoever there are three [characteristics] he is a hypocrite…” is at-Taghleedh (intensification) [in expression]. We report it as it has come and we do not explain it.

And [likewise] his saying. “Do not become disbelievers after me, [astray], striking the necks of each other.

And, “When two Muslims meet with their swords then [both] the killer and the killed are in the Fire

And, “Cursing a Muslim is wickedness and fighting against him is disbelief

And, “Whoever says to his brother, ‘O Disbeliever,’ then it returns back to one of them.

And, “It is disbelief in Allaah, the one who denies his kinship, even if [he thinks] it is insignificant

We submit to it, even if we do not know its explanation. We do not talk about it. We do not argue about it. And we do not explain these abaadeeth except with the like of what they [the abaadeeth] have come with [i.e. similar Hadith which
clarify these]. We do not reject them except with that which has more right [to
be followed] than these.

And Paradise and Hell-Fire are two created things. They have [already] been created as has come from the Messenger [in the badeeth],
“I entered Paradise and I saw a castle…”
And, “I saw (the river) al-Kawthar…”
And, “I looked into Hell-Fire and I saw that most of its inhabitants were women.”
And, “I looked into the Fire and I saw such and such…”

So whoever claims that they [Paradise and Hell-Fire] are not created, then he is Mukadh-dhibun bi-l-Qur’aan (a denier of the Qur’aan) and the abaadeeth of the Messenger of Allaah, and I do not consider that he believes in Paradise and Hell-Fire.

And whoever dies as a Muwahhid [establishing Tawheed: testifying to the uniqueness of Allaah in His Rububiyyah (Lordship), His Ubudiyyah (right of worship) and in His Asmaa’ wa Sifaat (Names and Attributes)] from among Ahlu-l-Qiblah (the Muslims) then prayer [Salatu-l-Janaazah] is performed over him and forgiveness (al-Istighfaar) is sought for him.

Seeking forgiveness (al-Istighfaar) is not to be withheld from him [i.e. it should not be abandoned for him] and we do not abandon praying (Salatu-l-Janaazah) over him on account of a Dhanb (sin) which he committed, regardless of whether it is a small or a big sin. His affair is with Allaah, the Most High