



Nur al-Sunna (Light of the Sunna): State-Sanctioned Extremism in the Bahrain Defence Force *Analysis and Translation of a Bahraini Military Religious Manual*

I. Introduction

Bahraini activists have long reported that the kingdom's armed services engage in deliberate religious discrimination, with Nabeel Rajab, the country's leading human rights defender, even prosecuted for describing the security apparatus as an "incubator" for violent extremism due to the rate of defections to militant groups like the Islamic State (also known as ISIS, ISIL, and Daesh).¹ This reporting has been increasingly borne out in recent scholarship, with analysts finding evidence of acute anti-Shia Muslim hiring bias;² "religious advising services ... to make sectarian divides more salient;"³ and "'mental advisors' within [security units] who gave hateful speeches against Shiites."⁴ Members of the Bahraini military have stated in interviews that, in addition to religious supervisors, the government embeds "intelligence personnel within each BDF unit"⁵ to monitor perceived dissent and enforce ideological conformity.⁶ Still, there has been little primary documentation made available about the training or religious materials disseminated throughout Bahrain's secretive security establishment, which refuses to publicly release detailed information about its structure, budget, or even its size.



Cover of *Nur al-Sunna*

Working with local activists, however, ADHRB has been able to obtain one of these documents: *Nur al-Sunna (Light of the Sunna)*, a religious pamphlet published by the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) through its Department of Religious Education, at the expense of the military's High Command. It is distributed for free at BDF facilities, including mosques, where preachers are reported to recommend literature to attending military personnel. ADHRB has reviewed *Nur al-Sunna* in its original Arabic, finding direct evidence to corroborate the reports of extremist religious instruction officially sanctioned by Bahraini security institutions: it is a religious text ostensibly intended to influence the behavior of military personnel and it contains explicit sectarian language, up to and including justifications for violence against non-Sunni sects of Islam. The production and propagation of such material – with the apparent approval of senior

¹ "Bahrain's Prominent Human Rights Activist Arrested for Criticizing Police Defectors Who Joined ISIS," Global Voices, 1 October 2014, <https://globalvoices.org/2014/10/01/bahrain-prominent-human-rights-activist-arrested-for-criticizing-police-defectors-who-joined-isis/>

² Justin Gengler, *Group Conflict and Political Mobilization in Bahrain and the Arab Gulf: Rethinking the Rentier State*, Indiana University Press: 2015, Print.

³ Dorothy Ohl, "Bahrain's 'Cohesive' Military and Regime Stability amid Unrest," in Eds. Holger Albrecht, Aurel Croissant, and Fred H. Lawson, *Armies and Insurgencies in the Arab Spring*, (2016), Print, 145-167.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "The regime appears to have put in place coercion mechanisms to formally monitor soldier behavior and in doing so deter insubordination. A former BDF officer related in an interview that there are intelligence personnel within each BDF unit. These individuals are Bahraini, Syrian, and Jordanian, and there are perhaps nine to fifteen per unit. According to the former officer, these intelligence officials can check a soldier's phone and mail as well as who he talks to, what he says, and more. Intelligence officials are responsible for writing weekly or monthly reports about what they find. If a military member expresses antiregime [sic] ideas and intelligence officials have evidence, that member can be imprisoned. Worse yet, the BDF have torture facilities on its premises. If intelligence officers do not have sufficient evidence, they will make a note of the suspected behavior so they can put pressure on the security member in the future... It is reported that the regime uses family networks to indirectly coerce security force members into subordination." Ibid.

⁶ "The BDF's own Military Intelligence (MI) corps, notwithstanding its name, is a 'full-service' spy organization: it is involved both in domestic and foreign intelligence operations. Naturally, one of the MI's key responsibilities is to ensure that the BDF is free of major dissent and remains loyal to the monarchy. Intelligence officers are embedded in BDF units and their surveillance of all aspects of the soldiers' lives are said to be thorough. Of all Bahraini law enforcement agencies, the MI has the most fearsome reputation." Zoltan Barany, *The Bahrain Defence Force: The Monarchy's Second-to-Last Line of Defense*, Center for Strategic International Studies, 9 December 2016, https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/161214_Bahrain_Defence_Force.pdf

military leadership – is particularly alarming as the authorities move to further incorporate the BDF into civil governance, with a 2017 constitutional amendment authorizing military courts to try civilians accused of crimes related to national security.⁷ Presented below is ADHRB’s brief summary of *Nur al-Sunna*’s contents, as well as an unofficial English translation.

II. Summary and Analysis

Written by Dr. Saeed bin Ali bin Wahaf al-Qahtani, *Nur al-Sunna* is organized into two parts based on the description of the Sunna as “*nur*,” or light, and heresy as “darkness.” In the first part, “The Light of Sunna,” Dr. al-Qahtani provides an interpretation of the Sunna (the tradition of Prophet Mohammed and his companions). In the second part, “The Darkness of Heresy,” he argues that anyone who disagrees with the previous chapters – or anyone who does not commit to following this interpretation of the Sunna – is a heretic or apostate. The author provides a description of heresy and thereby denounces several sects of Islam as heretical. As Dr. al-Qahtani notes, the designation ‘non-believer/heretic/apostate’ can warrant abandonment/exile or even execution.

Dr. al-Qahtani cites a number of Shia religious practices as heretical, including the Prayer of Raghaeb, fasting on Mid-Sha’aban, and celebrating the birth of the Prophet Mohammed. He describes the purported reasoning behind these practices and asserts that they are based in “ignorance” and other “forms of heresy.” According to the argument, these deviations from the Sunna harm the Muslim community and presuppose that the religion is somehow incomplete; therefore, those who continue to propagate and engage in these practices are ostensibly challenging the authority of Allah.

On page 48, in the sixth section, on the “Religious Verdict of Heresy,” Dr. al-Qahtani defines heresy as coming in three forms of “evilness”: major sins, minor sins, and *Kufr* (disbelief). He suggests that many groups that claim to be Muslim are, in fact, disbelievers and sinners, as they fail to adhere to the Sunna. In the previous section, he explicitly names “al-Qadiyaniya, al-Bahaeya, and all the Batiniyya groups such as Ismailia, Nasiriya, Durooz, and Rafidah [a pejorative term for Shia]” as “misguided sects” that engage in heresy.

In the seventh section, on “Types of Heresy Near Graves,” Dr. al-Qahtani also describes certain Shia burial and worship practices as “shirk (believing in another God besides Allah).”⁸ He goes on to write on page 50 that all those “who commit such acts should repent or else they must be killed.” In the eighth section, entitled “Contemporary Acts of Heresy,” Dr. al-Qahtani describes Shia as “Majoos/Zoroastrians” and states that the practices of “al-Rafidah...go against the Sunna of the prophet Mohammed.” A “rational person” could not turn away from the Sunna to “imitate al-Rafidah,” he concludes.

Ultimately, *Nur al-Sunna (Light of the Sunna)* emphasizes three key points:

- Sunnism is the pure or true form of Islam.
- Any practice that is not found in the Sunna is heresy. Other sects of Islam – insofar as they are committed to these other practices – engage in different levels of heretical behavior.
- Heretical groups harm society and therefore – according to the author’s interpretation of the Sunna – acts of discrimination and possibly even violence targeting them can be justified.

A note on translation: the following represents an unofficial translation of *Nur al-Sunna* from its original Arabic into English. It is not an official or exact translation, and it is presented in order to provide an English approximation of its contents. It is annotated by page number corresponding to the physical document. ADHRB is able to provide the original Arabic upon request.

⁷ “Bahrain’s king approves military trials for civilians,” BBC, April 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39478101>

⁸ This is a religious concept referring to idolatry, or religious belief verging on polytheism. The Oxford Dictionary of Islam defines shirk as a “theological term referring to the association of someone or something with God, that is, putting someone or something in the place of God, thus deviating from monotheism.” See: “Shirk,” *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, edited by John L. Esposito. *Oxford Islamic Studies Online*, <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e2195>

Translation of Nur al-Sunna

(Cover)

Printed at the expense of the High Command of the Bahrain Defence Force

*The Radiance of the Sunna [i.e the body of Sunnī traditions] and the Darkness of Heresy in Light of the
Book and the Sunna*

Composed by that poor man unto God, may He be exalted,
Dr. Sa'īd bin 'Alī bin Wahaf al-Qaḥṭānī

(p. 1-3)

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

Introduction

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him, ask Him for forgiveness, call upon Him for assistance, and seek refuge in Him from our evils and bad deeds.

Whomever Allah guides can never be misled. Whomever Allah misleads, can never be guided. I bear witness that there is no God except Allah, He alone with no partners. And I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. Peace and blessings be upon him and upon his companions and their followers until the Day of Reckoning.

In this brief letter (The Light of Sunna and Darkness of Heresy) I clarify the meaning of Sunna, the names of the people of Sunna, and that the Sunna is the absolute grace.

I also show the level of Sunna, the level of the people of Sunna as well as their signs. And I show the level of the heresy and the level of the heretics. I explain the meaning of heresy, conditions of heresy, and heretical deeds. I include criticism of heresy by Islam, causes of heresy, types of heresy (such as the heresies committed next to graves), contemporary heresies, repentance of heretics, and dangers of heresy.

There is no doubt that Sunna is the grace of life and the light of people. Sunna makes people stronger even if they are weakened by their deeds.

(p. 4)

Allah says: '[some] faces will turn white and [some] faces will turn black.'

Ibn Abbas said: 'The faces of Sunnis are the ones that will turn white, while the faces of the people of heresy are the ones that will turn black.'

The heart of the one who follows the Sunna is alive and enlightened; it has followed the commands of Allah and the prophet in public and private life.

However, the heart of the one who does not follow the Sunna is a dead and dark heart. People of heresy are taken up by darkness, their hearts are dark, and their states are dark. If one is destined to happiness, one will be taken out of this darkness to the lights of Sunna.

I have divided this research into two parts; and under each part, I have put a number of sections as follows:

Part One: The Light of Sunna

1. The concept of Sunna
2. Names of People of Sunna
3. Sunna is an absolute grace
4. Level of Sunna
5. Level of Sunnites and Level of heretics

Part Two: The Darkness of Heresy

1. The concept of heresy.
2. Conditions of accepting deeds.
3. Criticism of heresy
4. Causes of heresy
5. Types of heresy
6. Religious verdict of heresy
7. Types of heresy near graves
8. Contemporary heresies
9. Repentance of heretics
10. Implications and dangers of heresies

I ask Allah to bless this work, make it purely for His sake, make it benefit me in my life and after my death and make it benefit all those who refer to it, for Allah is the best one to be counted on, and the most generous one to be asked. He is the one we rely on. No strength parallels The Great's. May Allah send blessings and peace to His servant, messenger and the best of His creation, Prophet Mohamad and to his family, companions, and their followers until the Day of Reckoning.

The Author

**Written on Wednesday night
17/ 10 [Shawwal]/ 1419
[February 4, 1999]**

(p. 6)

Part One: The Light of Sunna

First Section: The concept of Sunna

Sunna has its own people and they have a doctrine and consensus on the truth. It is therefore suitable that I include the definition of these words: 'The doctrine of the people of Sunna and Jama'a.'

1: 'Aqida' 'Doctrine' Linguistically and Idiomatically

Understanding 'Aqida' linguistically

The literal meaning of 'Aqida' (Arabic for faith/doctrine): the word 'Aqida' is derived from the verb 'Aqad' which means 'contracts'.

Understanding 'Aqida'/doctrine idiomatically

'Aqida' is used to describe the absolute faith, and the undoubted judgment. It is what one's heart and conscience believes and chooses as a path and religion. So if that absolute faith and undoubted judgment is true, then the 'Aqida' is true such as the 'Aqida' of Sunni Muslims. And if it is wrong, then the 'Aqida' is wrong.

2: The concept of ‘the people of Sunna’

‘Sunna’ in Arabic means ‘the way and the reputation,’ whether a good or bad one.

For Islamic faith scholars, it means the traditions of Mohammed and his companions; their knowledge, beliefs, sayings, and practices. It is the way that should be followed. Those who follow it should be honored and those who don’t should be disrespected. And to say that one is from the people of Sunna is to say one is from the people of the righteous way.

(p. 7)

Al-Hafid bin Rajab (may Allah grant him mercy) said: ‘Sunna is the chosen way, this includes commitment to what the prophet and his companions used to do, including beliefs, deeds, and sayings. This is the complete Sunna.’

Ibn Taymiyya (may Allah grant him mercy) said: ‘Sunna is [the ground] upon which Sharia proof is based. [Sunna includes the acts of] obedience to Allah and His messenger, whether the prophet has done these acts or they were done in his time. [It also includes turning away from] the acts that he did not do and were not done in his time either because such acts were not necessary at that time, or because there was a restraint.

This means that Sunna is: ‘Following the prophet internally and externally, and following the path of initial Muslims of the Emigrants [Muhajirun] and the Helpers [Ansar]’

3: Understanding the ‘Jama’a’ ‘people of the consensus’

The word ‘Jama’a’ or ‘Community’ revolves around closeness of believers. The Sunni community values consensus and stands against separation of believers.

(p. 8)

People of Consensus (Jama’a) in the Islamic doctrine refers to the Salafis of Umma, including the companions of Mohammed, the successors and whoever follows them until the Day of Judgment – those who were brought together by the explicit truth from the Quran and Sunna.

‘Abdallah ibn Masud stated: “the Community (people of consensus) is whoever that agrees with the truth, even if it is you alone.”

Nuaim bin Hammad said: “If the community is corrupted, then do what the community used to do before it gets corrupted, and if you are alone, then you are the community.”

Second Section: Names and Attributes of People of Sunna

1. The People of the Sunna and Consensus: They include the prophet, his companions, their successors and the scholars of guidance. They are the people who are committed to following the Sharia and they are the people who have turned away from heresy everywhere and anywhere.

They will remain victorious until the Day of Judgment. They are called ‘the people of Sunna’ because they belong to the followers of the Sunna of Muhammed and they come together to adhere to the Sunna internally and externally, in their sayings, deeds, and beliefs.

(p. 9)

On the authority of A'waf bin Malik, the prophet said: "Jews were split into 71 sects, one of them is in paradise and 70 are in hell. Christians, as well, were split into 72 sects, 71 of them are in hell and only one is in paradise. I swear by Him, in whose hands my soul is, my Umma will split into 73 sects, one is in paradise and 72 are in hell" Then someone said: 'Oh Messenger of Allah, which one is it that will be in paradise?' And the prophet answered: 'The people of consensus.'

And in another source, Abdullah bin Amr said that the people asked: 'Which one is it that will be in paradise?' And the prophet answered: '[Those who follow] what my companions and I do.'

2. The Surviving Sect: The Sunni sect will survive and will not be put into hell because the prophet excluded it when he mentioned all other sects and said, 'All are in hell except for one'.

3. The Victorious Sect: On the authority of Mouawiya: The Prophet once stated: "a group of my ummah will continue victoriously adhering to the command of Allah; they will not be harmed by those who oppose them, until the command of Allah comes [Death/Day of Judgment]."

(p.10)

4. Those that hold firmly to the book of Allah and the Sunna of Mohammed as well as the companions: The initial Muslims of the Emigrants [Muhajirun] and the Helpers [Ansar]. For that reason, the prophet has said [what my companions and I do], meaning those people who follow what my companions and I do.

5. They are the righteous pattern that lead to the truth and abide by it: Ayyub Al-Stakhtayani (may Allah grant him mercy) said: 'It is of the happiness of the young people to accompany a scholar of Sunna.'

Alfudhail bin Ayyadh (may Allah grant him mercy): "Allah has servants, through whom He brings lands to life, those are the people of Sunna, and those who are aware of what enters their bodies belong to the party of Allah"

(p.11)

6. Sunnites are the kindest of people; they forbid heresy.

Someone asked Abi Bakr bin al-Ayyash: Who is the Sunnite? He answered: "The one who does not lose one's mind when desires are mentioned."

Ibn Taymiyya mentioned: "People of Sunna are the kindest of all; they are the moderate ones who walk on the straight path: the path of truth and moderation."

7. Sunnites are the lonely/strange ones when people are corrupted.

On the authority of Abu Huraiara: The prophet once said: 'Islam *began as something strange* and will revert to being strange as it began so give glad tidings to the strangers.'

In another source, the prophet was asked: 'Who are the strangers?' He answered: 'Righteous people surrounded by a lot of bad groups.'

In another source the prophet said: they are the ones who remain righteous even when people are corrupted.'

So the Sunnites are strangers between the people of heresy, desires, and sects.

(p. 12)

8. Sunnis are the ones who carry on knowledge: The people of Sunna carry on the religious knowledge; they deny distortion (of faith). Ibn Sirin argues that the Sunni community did not previously care about the textual integrity, so when 'Fitna' ('Disorder') has occurred, the people of Sunna were asked to identify themselves so that people could rely on their texts and disregard the texts of the heretics.

9. The Sunnites' absence leaves people saddened: Al-Sakhtiani stated that he feels like one of his body's organs was cut out whenever a Sunni passes away. He also stated that those who wish the death of Sunni people actually 'want to extinguish the light of God with their mouths but God will perfect His light, although the disbelievers dislike it' [Quranic Verse].

Third Section: Sunnism is an Absolute Grace

God's grace has two types; the absolute one and the restricted one. The absolute one is the one that is related to the eternal happiness and it is the grace of Islam and Sunna. Certainly, the happiness of this life and the afterlife is based on three principles; Islam, Sunna, and the wellbeing of life and afterlife. The grace of Islam and Sunna is the grace that we should ask God for in our prayers.

(p. 13)

The Sunni people are the chosen ones by Allah; He made them the highest companions.

Allah says: "And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger - those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favor of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions."

Those four types of people are the people of the absolute grace who are meant by the verse: "This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion."

Allah says: "Say, 'In the bounty of Allah and in His mercy' - in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate."

The sayings of Salaf show that the bounty and mercy of Allah is: 'Islam and Sunna.'

(p. 14)

Restricted grace is not too dissimilar from the grace of health, wealth, wellness of the body, extension of prestige, wealth in children, the righteous wife, and the like thereof. For this grace is given to the pious and the hypocrite, believers and disbelievers. So it is valid to say that God blesses the disbeliever. Restricted grace is given to the hypocrites and the disbelievers. However, Allah will set discord and punishment upon them and never provide them with absolute grace.

Fourth Section: Level of Sunna

Sunna is God's invulnerable fort; whoever goes inside it feels safe. Sunna is the greatest gate to Allah; whoever enters it reaches Him. Sunna honors its people even if their deeds lower them. The light of Sunnites remains in their hands even if the heretics try to extinguish it. Allah said in His book that on the Day of Judgment some people will have their faces whitened and some will have their faces blackened. Accordingly, Ibn Abbas said that the Sunnites will have the whitened faces and the heretics will have the blackened faces.

Sunna is the life and light through which the servant of Allah attains happiness, guidance, and victory.

Allah says: ‘And is one who was dead and We gave him life and made for him light by which to walk among the people like one who is in darkness, never to emerge therefrom? Thus it has been made pleasing to the disbelievers that which they were doing.’

(p. 15)

Fifth Section: The Position of the Sunnite and the Position of the Heretic

First: The Position of the Sunnite:

Those who adhere to Sunnism are alive and enlightened in their hearts.

Allah has mentioned the ‘life’ and ‘light’ in his book and made them the attributes of the believers. So, the enlightened heart is the one that is knowledgeable about Allah and is submissive to Tawhid and Sunna.

The Prophet asked Allah to grant him the light and what invites (metaphorically in virtue or piety) it to his (or one’s) life, to bring it to his heart, eyes, ears, tongue, to bring it from above and from below, from his left and his right, from his back and his front. The prophet asked Allah to grant him a light and turn his essence into a light, and bring light to his skin, bones, and blood. The prophet asked for light in his whole, and his parts, for his external and internal senses and for his six directions, the prophet asked for that because the true believer’s presence and absence, sayings and practices, are all lights. As that light shows up on the Day of Judgment as strong as it was in this life; some will have the sun’s light, some will have a star’s light, some will have a long palm tree’s light and some will have a standing man’s light.

(p. 16)

Second: The Signs of the Sunnites:

There are many signs of the Sunnites. They are noticeable among rational men and some of them are:

1. Adhering to the Quran, Hadith, and Sunna.
2. Referring to the Quran and Sunna.
3. Loving the people of Sunna and hating the heretics.
4. Going on the path of truth even if their company is very few.
5. Honesty in words and in actions by applying correctly what is part of the Quran and Sunna.
6. Following the traditions of Muhammad who has embodied the morals of Quran.

Third: The Position of the Heretic:

Heretics have dead hearts. The dead heart of a sinner (or misguided person) has no knowledge of Allah. As Allah describes this kind of people as alive but not alive, they are in the darkness and they cannot come out of it. Darkness is surrounding them; their hearts are so dark that they see right as wrong and wrong as right.

(p. 17)

Their practices are dark, their sayings are dark, their states are dark, and their graves are dark. When the lights are distributed on the Day of Judgment before the bridge in order to determine who passes and who does not, those heretics remain in the darkness, and their gate to Hell is dark. This darkness is where the creation was firstly at; the ones who God has written happiness for, are brought to light, and the ones who God has written misery for, are left in darkness.

(p. 18)

Part Two: The Darkness of Heresy

First Section: The Concept of Heresy

Heresy includes changes in the religion of Islam after its completion. It also includes all the practices of Muslims that Mohammed did not do.

Heresy, according to Sharia, has different definitions:

1. As Ibn Taymiyya said, heresy is any act that wasn't commanded by God and His messenger. It is any act that isn't obligatory or supererogatory in the Islamic tradition.

It has two types; the first is the heresy of sayings and beliefs and the second is the heresy of acts of worship. They feed each other.

(p.19)

Ahmed ibn Hanbal said that practices include acts of worship and traditions; when it comes to the acts of worship, they are valid if they have been commanded by God, and as for the traditions, they are valid if they haven't been disregarded by God.

He also said that heresy is what goes against the holy book and the Sunna, or what goes against the consensus of the Salafs of the Umma; such as the beliefs and practices of Khawarij, Rawafid [referring to Shia Muslims], Qadriya, Jahmiyya, and those who consider dancing and singing in mosques as acts of worship [referring to Sufi Muslims], and those who consider shaving as an act of worship and those who use drugs claiming that this will make them reach God.

2. Shatiby has said that heresy is an invented way of religion that emulates the Sharia way; it is an exaggerated way of worshipping.

This is based on the opinion of those who don't consider traditions as a form of heresy. As for those who do; heresy is any invented way of religion that has the same ends as Sharia.

Shatiby has said that normal traditions are not considered heresy but whenever they're used to worship Allah, they become so. The normal traditions that are essentially acts of worship include trade, marriage, and divorce.

(p. 20)

Omar has gathered a group of people standing behind an Imam in a mosque, left them, and came back to find them praying. Omar has then said that this is a good form of heresy. What he meant is that this practice wasn't in that form before but has roots in the Islamic law that justifies it.

Also, Prophet Mohammed was encouraging people to pray frequently during the month of Ramadan. During his times, many people used to pray in the mosque either in groups or individually and he had once

prayed with his companions during Ramadan and then stopped doing it, claiming that he was afraid that they would get used to praying collectively with him and then would not pray individually.

(p. 21)

Moreover, Prophet Mohamed has commanded the Muslim community to follow the traditions of his companions who are known as the 'Righteous Caliphs' and that is also a form of a good heresy/good invention that has roots in the Islamic law.

Heresy has two types; the first turns the Muslim into a disbeliever and the second turns the Muslim into a sinner.

Second Section: Conditions of Accepting Deeds

Acts of worship are not accepted unless they meet these two conditions.

The first condition is to purify the acts by doing them solely for the sake of Allah as 'deeds are only with intentions and every person will have only what they intended.'

The second condition is to follow the prophet's traditions exactly as the prophet said; 'if one commits something we haven't done, one becomes an apostate.'

(p.22)

When the deeds are purified to be solely for the sake of Allah, then they are going to be accepted by Allah. When the deeds lack sincerity and commitment to the prophet's Sunna, then the deeds are not going to be accepted by Allah.

One who lacks one of the two is addressed in this verse: 'And We will regard what they have done of deeds and make them as dust dispersed.'

One who has the two is addressed in this verse: 'And who is better in religion than one who submits himself to Allah while being a doer of good?!'

And also in this verse: 'whoever submits his face in Islam to Allah while being a doer of good will have his reward with his Lord. And no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve.'

Moreover, the Hadith of Omar: 'Actions are according to intentions' is the standard for the internal deeds. In addition, the Hadith of Aisha, 'if one commits something that we haven't done, one becomes an apostate,' is the standard for the external deeds.

These two Hadiths are great; they address all of religion: its essentials, its branches, its internal and external aspects as well as the religious sayings and deeds.

(p. 23)

Third Section: Criticism of Heresy

There are a lot of religious texts that are about criticizing and condemning heresy. Moreover, a lot of the prophet's companions and successors have warned of falling into heresies.

First: From the Quran

1. Allah says: “He it is who has bestowed upon thee from on high this divine writ, containing messages that are clear in and by themselves - and these are the essence of the divine writ- as well as others that are allegorical. Now, those whose hearts are given to swerving from the truth go after that part of the divine writ which has been expressed in allegory, seeking out [what is bound to create] confusion, and seeking [to arrive at] its final meaning [in an arbitrary manner]; but none save God knows its final meaning.”

Shatibi (may God grant him mercy) has established that this verse addresses those who argue about the Quran and the Khawarij as well as whoever agrees with them.

2. Allah says: “And this is my path, straight, so follow it and do not follow other ways for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you so that you may become righteous.” So, ‘the straight path’ is the path to God and it is the Sunna, while the ‘other ways’ are the ways of any other group, the ways of the heretics and this verse forbids all the ways that the heretics have.

(p.24)

3. Allah says: “And upon Allah is the direction of the [right] way, and among the various paths are those deviating. And if He willed, He could have guided you all.’ So, the path is the path of truth, any other path is strayed from the truth and by that we mean the path of heresies and misguidance.

4. Allah says: “Indeed, those who have divided their religion and become sects - you, [O Muhammad], are not [associated] with them in anything. Their affair is only [left] to Allah; then He will inform them about what they used to do.” And those are the people who follow their own desires and come up with heresies.

5. Allah also says: “Do not be of those who associate others with Allah, of those who have divided their religion and become sects, every faction rejoicing in what it has.”

6. Allah says: “so let those beware who dissent from the Prophet's order, lest ‘fitnah’ strike them or a painful punishment befall them.”

7. Allah says: “Say, ‘He is the [one] Able to send upon you affliction from above you or from beneath your feet or to confuse you [so you become] sects.’”

(p.25)

8. Allah says: “they will not cease to differ, except for whom your lord has given mercy.”

Second: From the Prophetic Sunna:

There are a lot of Hadiths that address heresy, criticize it, and warn of it. Those include the following:

1. The sayings of Aisha: “if one commits something we haven’t done, one becomes an apostate’

2. Jabar bin Abdullah mentioned that the prophet used to say during his sermons: “The best word is the word of Allah, the best of guidance is the guidance of Mohammed, and the worst of acts are the invented heretic acts and all the invented heretic acts are acts of misguidance.”

3. In the writings of Al-Nasa’I, the prophet used say in his sermons after praising Allah: “Whoever Allah guides cannot be misguided. And whoever Allah misguides cannot be guided. Verily, the truest of words

is the word of Allah and the most righteous guidance is the guidance of Mohamed. Anything new (or updated, changed, added) is heresy – heresy is misguidance, and misguidance leads to the hellfire.”

(p.26)

4. On the authority of Abu Huraira, the prophet said: “Whoever calls for virtue, receives the same rewards as all of his followers, without them losing anything of their rewards. Whoever calls for error receives as much sins as all of his followers with them losing any of their sins.”

5. As narrated by Jarir bin Abdullah, ‘Whoever makes up a good tradition in Islam, receives its reward and the reward of those following it, without them losing any of the reward and whoever makes up a bad tradition in Islam, receives its punishment and the punishment of those doing it, without them having their punishment reduced.’

6. As narrated by al-‘Arbad bin Sariah, ‘We have once wept and felt very anxious while the prophet was preaching. So we said, ‘Oh messenger of Allah, this sounds like a farewell preach, so what would you advise us?’ Then he said, ‘I advise you to be pious, to listen and obey as those who will be alive after I die, will witness how Muslims will be separated, so keep my Sunna (tradition) and the Sunna of the righteous caliphs, and beware of innovations and heresies because all innovations and heresies are misguidances’

(p.27)

7. As narrated by Hudhaifah, ‘People were asking the prophet about ‘goodness’ and I was asking him about ‘evil’ fearing that I’ll ever become evil. So I said, ‘Oh messenger of Allah, we were in sheer ignorance and evil and then Allah has blessed us with this ‘goodness’ so, will we witness evil after this goodness? And the prophet said, ‘Yes, you will’. I then asked, ‘Will there be goodness after that evil?’ And the prophet said, ‘Yes there will be, but it will have effects.’ I then asked, ‘What are the effects?’ And the prophet said, ‘You will see people adopting a Sunna that isn’t mine, and referring to a guide that isn’t me.’ So I asked, ‘Will we see evil after that goodness?’ And the prophet said, ‘Yes you will see people calling at the gates of Hell, and whoever answers them, gets thrown into Hell.’ I asked him to describe them and he said, ‘They are a group of people that belongs to us, and speaks our language.’ So I said, ‘What should I do if I witness this?’ And the prophet said, ‘Stay loyal to the Muslim community and their leader.’ I then asked, ‘What if Muslims didn’t have a community or a leader?’ And he said, ‘Then stay away from all of these groups.’

Imam Nawawi explained that ‘the guidance’ is the conduct and the way, and that those ‘who call at the gates of hell’ are the leaders that call for heresy and misguidance like the Khawarij, the Qarmatians, and the people of Mihna.

(p.28)

8. As mentioned in the sayings of Zayd bin Arqum, the prophet once said: “Oh people, I am only a human being and I am about to receive a messenger (Angel of death) from my lord, I am leaving amongst you two weighty things; one of which is the Book of Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, and that is the rope of Allah. He who holds it fast would be on right guidance and he who abandons it would be in error.” So, the prophet is encouraging his followers to always refer to the book of Allah ‘the Quran’.

9. As narrated by Abu Hurairah, the prophet once said, “During the end of time, there will be those who enter (Islam) in a state of hypocrisy and lying. Do not listen to their calling, nor associate with them in anyway.”

Third: From the Saying of the Prophet’s Companions:

1. Ibn Said that Abu Bakr stated: “Oh you people, I am only a follower but not a heretic so if I do right, please help me keep on, and if I do wrong, please correct me”

2. Umar Ibn Khattab said: “Beware of those who tend to be opinionated (referring to heretics) as they are the enemies of the Sunna, they were too weak to memorize the Hadith, so they started forming opinions about the religion and then their opinions led them astray.”

(p.29)

3. Ibn Masud: “Follow and do not come up with heresies and you should be satisfied. All heresies are forms of misguidance.”

Fourth: From the Sayings of the Successors and their Followers:

1. ‘Amr ibn ‘Abdul-Aziz wrote to a man: “Seek out piety and moderation, follow the Sunna and reject all changed/invented acts that came up after the prophet.”

2. Hasan al-Basari said: “Words aren’t true if they aren’t followed by acts, words and acts aren’t true if they are not based on good intentions, and words, acts, and intentions are not true if they do not refer to the Sunna.”

3. Imam al-Sha’fi said: “My verdict concerning the people of Kalam (referring to opinions and unnecessary conversations) is that they should be whipped with the palm branches and then they should be mounted onto camels and paraded throughout the district and that it be called out: ‘Rhis is the end of those who abandoned the book of Allah and the Sunna of Mohammed and turned their attention instead to Kalam.’”

(p.30)

4. Imam Malik once stated: “Whoever makes things up in Islam is indirectly saying that Mohamed hasn’t conveyed the message properly, as Allah has said in His book that He has perfected the religion with Mohammed. So, that which wasn’t part of the religion at Mohammed’s time is never part of the religion.”

5. Imam Ahmad (Ibn Hanbal) said: “The assets of Sunna are to stick to the traditions of the companions of the prophet, to turn away from innovations and heresies as heresies are forms of misguidance, to turn away from arguing or sitting with the people of worldly desires, to stay away from arguing or fighting over religion.”

Fifth: Heresy is reprehensible due to several reasons:

1. It is known based on experience that minds can never function against self-interests without the divine revelation. Heresy goes against this.

2. Sharia was revealed completed, no more and no less.

3. Heretics go against Sharia.

4. Heretics follow their own desires, as the mind goes after worldly desires if it does not follow the Sharia.

5. Heretics put themselves in the position of challenging and changing the Sharia law.

(p. 31)

Fourth Section: Causes of Heresy

Heresy has its own causes that include the following:

First: Ignorance, it is a dangerous force.

Allah says: “And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned.’

Allah also says: “Say, ‘My Lord has only forbidden immoralities - what is apparent of them and what is concealed - and sin, and oppression without right, and that you associate with Allah that for which He has not sent down authority, and that you say about Allah that which you do not know.’”

And Amr ibn al-Aas stated: “I heard the prophet say, ‘Allah does not take away knowledge from people (by removing it from their hearts), rather He will take away knowledge by taking away scholars, then when there are no scholars left the people will take the ignorant people as their leaders, they will be asked questions and they will issue verdicts without knowledge, thus they will go astray and will lead others astray.’

Second: Following one’s desires; some of the dangerous factors that lead to heresy is following the desires.

Allah says: “[We said], O David, indeed We have made you a successor upon the earth, so judge between the people in truth and do not follow [your own] desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of Allah.”

Indeed, those who go astray from the way of Allah will have a severe punishment for having forgotten the Day of Account.

(p. 32)

Allah says: “Do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire and whose affair is ever [in] neglect.”

Allah says: “Have you seen he who has taken as his god his [own] desire, and Allah has sent him astray due to knowledge and has set a seal upon his hearing and his heart and put over his vision a veil? So who will guide him after Allah? Then will you not be reminded?”

Allah says: “And who is more astray than one who follows his desire without guidance from Allah?”

Allah says: “They follow not except assumption and what [their] souls desire, and there has already come to them from their Lord guidance.”

Third: Being attached to suspicious acts. Indeed, heresy is bent on suspicious acts.

Allah says: “It is He who has sent down to you, [O Muhammad], the Book; in it are verses [that are] precise - they are the foundation of the Book - and others unspecified. As for those in whose hearts is deviation [from truth], they will follow that of it which is unspecified, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation [suitable to them]. And no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah. But those firm in knowledge say, ‘We believe in it. All [of it] is from our Lord.’ And no one will be reminded except those of understanding.”

Fourth: Relying on abstract thinking.

Those who rely on their own reasoning and reject any of the holy scripture of the Qur’an and Sunna will be of misguidance.

Allah says: “And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.

(p. 33)

Allah says: “It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should thereafter have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error.”

Fifth: Blind imitation and extremism.

Most heretics follow their fathers and their priests. And they become radicalized about their sects.

Allah says: “And when it is said to them, ‘Follow what Allah has revealed,’ they say, ‘Rather, we will follow that which we found our fathers doing.’ Even though their fathers understood nothing, nor were they guided?”

Allah says: “Rather, they say, ‘Indeed, we found our fathers upon a religion, and we are in their footsteps [rightly] guided.’

People of heresy see their acts as good ones.

Allah says: “Then is one to whom the evil of his deed has been made attractive so he considers it good [like one rightly guided]? For indeed, Allah sends astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills. So do not let yourself perish over them in regret. Indeed, Allah is Knowing of what they do.”

Allah also says describing the state of people of heresy and desires: “The Day their faces will be turned about in the Fire, they will say, ‘How we wish we had obeyed Allah and obeyed the Messenger.’ And they will say, ‘Our Lord, indeed we obeyed our masters and our dignitaries, and they led us astray from the [right] way. Our Lord, give them double the punishment and curse them with a great curse.’

Sixth: Being surrounded by the evil people and spending a lot time with them.

One of the factors that lead to heresy is this one.

(p.34)

Allah has clarified that one who spends a lot of time with evil people, regrets it in the end.

Allah says: “And the Day the wrongdoer will bite on his hands [in regret] he will say, ‘Oh, I wish I had taken with the Messenger a way. Oh, woe unto me! I wish I had not taken that one as a friend. He led me away from the remembrance after it had come to me. And ever is Satan, to man, a deserter.’”

Allah also says: “And when you see those who engage in [offensive] discourse concerning Our verses, then turn away from them until they enter into another conversation. And if Satan should cause you to forget, then do not remain after the reminder with the wrongdoing people.”

Allah also says: “And it has already come down to you in the Book that when you hear the verses of Allah [recited], they are denied [by them] and ridiculed; so do not sit with them until they enter into another conversation. Indeed, you would then be like them. Indeed Allah will gather the hypocrites and disbelievers in Hell all together.”

The prophet said: **“The parable of a good friend and a bad friend is that of a seller of musk and a blacksmith. The seller of musk will give you some perfume, you will buy some, or you will notice a good smell. As for the blacksmith, he will burn your clothes or you will notice a bad smell”**

Seventh: Scholars’ silence about heresy and hiding knowledge.

This is another reason behind the spread of heresy and corruption among people.

(p.35)

Allah says: “Indeed, those who conceal what we sent down of clear proofs and guidance after we made it obvious for the people in the scripture, are cursed by Allah and cursed by those who curse; Except for those who repent and correct themselves and make evident (or apparent) of what they concealed. Those, I will accept their repentance, and I am the one who accepts repentance, the merciful.”

He says: “Indeed, they who conceal what Allah has sent down of the Book and exchange it for a small price - those consume not into their bellies except the Fire. And Allah will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them. And they will have a painful punishment.”

He says: “And mention, when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the scripture, they stated, ‘You must make it clear to the people and not conceal it.’ But they threw it away behind their backs and exchanged it for a small price. And wretched is that which they purchased.”

Allah has obliged one group of the Umma to call for his path; by enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.

So, He says: “And let there be arising from you a nation inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful.”

On the authority of Abi Saïd, the prophet stated: “If you witness something wrong, correct it with your hands, if you are unable to do so, correct it with your tongue (speak out against it), if you are unable to do so, correct it with your heart (feel bad about it) but this is the weakest form of faith.” This hadith lays the foundation of the concept of “Command that which is right and forbid that which is wrong.” Allah commands everyone to do this but on different levels.

On the authority of Abdullah ibn Masud, the prophet stated: “All the prophets that were sent before me have had companions that follow their traditions, but those companions change, they begin to say what the prophets did not say and they do what the prophets did not do. So, whoever resists them by hand is a believer, and whoever resists them by words is a believer, and whoever resists them by heart is a believer, and no one beyond this level remains a believer”

(p.36)

On the authority of Abu Huraira: The prophet once said: “Whoever conceals knowledge when asked about it, will be in the hellfire on the Day of Judgment.”

Eighth: Imitating nonbelievers and following them.

One of the biggest factors that lead to heresy is this one.

The proof is the Hadith that was narrated by Abi Waqed al-Laithi who said: “We went out with Allah's Messenger on the campaign to Hunain while we had just left disbelief (Kufr) for Islam. The non-believers had a Sidra (a tree) where they would stay and hang their arms, called Dhat Anwat. When we passed a Sidra, we asked, ‘Oh Messenger of Allah, won't you make for us another Dhat Anwat just like their Dhat Anwat?’ Allah's Messenger said, “Allah is the Most Great! By the One who holds my soul in His Hand, verily these are the ways of earlier nations, you have said exactly as the Israelites have said to Moses, 'Make for us a god just as their gods.' He said, ‘Verily you are a people who know not.’ Certainly you will follow the ways of those who went before you.”

(p. 37)

In this Hadith, there's a clear indication that imitating non-believers has led the Israelites to request this from Moses, and has led Mohammed's companions to ask the prophet to dedicate a tree from which they seek blessings away from Allah. This is how the majority of Muslims behave, they have imitated the non-believers and came up with heresies, such as celebrating birthdays, making funerals and building on graves. There is no doubt that following the previous traditions is a way of following desires.

On the authority of Abi Said al-Khidri, the prophet said: “‘You will follow the traditions of those who came before you exactly as it is.’ So we asked: ‘Do you mean Jews and Christians?’ And the prophet said: ‘Who else could I mean?’”

(p. 38)

Ninth: Relying on weak and forged Hadith.

Another reason behind the spread of heresy. A lot of heretics relied on the weak and fabricated hadith, the ones that are not accepted by the Hadith scholars. Those heretics have rejected the sound hadith and therefore they have lost.

Tenth: Ghuluww (Extremism/Excess) is one of the reasons that lead to shirking

The people, after Adam, were all believers in monotheism for 10 centuries until they got too attached to righteous people and begun to worship them. Therefore, Allah has sent Noah and all the prophets after Noah to call for monotheism.

(p. 39)

It can take three levels:

1. Ghuluww in people, such as idolizing Imams and putting them in higher ranks than they deserve. This leads to worshipping them in the end.
2. Ghuluww in religion, such as doing more than what was commanded by Allah, or being radical about a belief and declaring others as non-believers.
3. Ghuluww in Truth, exceeding the limits in beliefs and deeds such as overpraising something, or over-criticizing something.

Allah has warned of Ghuluww. He said: “O People of the Scripture, do not commit excess in your religion.”

The prophet also has warned of Ghuluww. He said: “Beware of committing excess in religion; this is what led those who came before you astray.”

So it is made clear that excess in religion is a cause of shirking and heresy.

Therefore, the prophet has warned of complimenting him; he said: “Do not exaggerate in praising me as the Christians praised the son of Mary, for I am only a Slave. So, call me the Slave of Allah and His Messenger.”

(p. 40/41)

Fifth Section: Types of Heresy

Heresy is of different types:

First: Real and additional heresies

1. Real heresy: The one that has no roots in the Quran, Sunna or consensus. It is called ‘Bida’a’ or ‘innovation’ because it isn’t part of the real religion but has been added to it. Examples of this include Congregation; isolating oneself on mountains and turning away from this life and its desires in order to be devoted to worshipping Allah. Those who have committed this have come up with an act of worship that isn’t part of the religion; they have deprived themselves of the good things in order to worship Allah.
2. Additional heresies come in two categories: the first has a proof to back it up, while the second has no proof. Examples of this include: Post-prayers remembrance, devoting the day of mid-Shaaban for fasting and praying al-Raghaeb. These are additional prayers because they were not mentioned in Quran or Sunna and therefore they are acts of heresy.

Second: Doing more actions and abandoning certain actions

The first is an exaggerated way of practicing religion. Examples of this include; having different and more worship acts than Mohammed and specifying times for acts such as fasting and praying on the night of mid-Shaaban.

(p. 42)

The second is to refrain from doing some acts.

This is heresy because it is an invented way of practicing religion. It is when an act is permitted by Islam but people refrain from doing it. This could be for legitimate reason such as refraining from eating something for reasons related to health or religion. The prophet said: “O young men, whoever among you can afford to get married, let him do so, and whoever cannot afford it, let him fast, for that will be a shield for him.”

(p. 43)

It could also be either an expression of religiosity or not; if it isn't an expression of religiosity, then the person is only making an error.

If the person refrains from doing certain acts as an expression of religiosity, then the person is a heretic.

(p. 44)

The prophet said: "Whoever turns away from my Sunna is not of my people."

Sunna here means the way.

So as mentioned before, there are heresies related to doing more actions and other heresies related to abandoning certain actions. Similarly, there is a Sunna related to doing actions and another Sunna related to abandoning some actions.

(p. 45)

Third: Heresy in saying and believing, and the practical heresy

1- Heresy in saying and believing: the sayings of al-Jahmiya, al-Mutazila, al-Rafida [Shia], and the rest of the misguided sects with their beliefs. Those sects include; al-Qadiyaniya, al-Bahaeya, and all the Batiniyya groups such as Ismailia, Nasiriya, Durooz, and Rafida [Shia].

2. Practical heresy: a heresy in the way worship acts are performed. This includes adding prayers, fasts and 'Eid that are not part of Sharia. This also includes adding a fifth rak'ah (kneeling) to the prayers of noon and afternoon.

3. Praying differently such as reading the remembrance texts collectively or worshipping by controlling the breath.

4. Specifying days for certain acts of worship that were not specified by the Sharia.

(p. 46)

Sixth Section: Religious Verdict of Heresy

There is no doubt that all heresies are forms of misguidance, and are not permitted based on the following saying of the prophet: "If one commits something that we haven't done, one becomes an apostate."

Heresies in acts of worship are forbidden. However they have different levels.

Some of these heresies are acts of disbelief, such as circling around graves and tombs, offering sacrifices for these graves, calling the dead people in the graves and asking them for help such as the sayings of the Jahmiya, Mutazila, and Rafida [Shia].

Some of these heresies are means of shirk, such as building on graves and performing prayers next to the graves.

Some of these heresies are sins, like the heresy of celibacy, fasting in extreme hot weathers, and castration for the purpose of reducing lust.

(p. 47)

Al-Shatibi stated: “The innovators’ sins are not all the same, they have different levels, and these differences are analyzed from different aspects.

1. Whether the heretics claim to have diligence or not.
2. Whether the heresy is of the basic assets of religion, soul, honor, intellect, and property or not.
3. Whether the heretics practice their heresies publicly or privately.
4. Whether the heretics call people to commit the heresies or not.
5. Whether the heretics go against the people of Sunna or not.
6. Whether the heresy is real or additional.
7. Whether the heresy is clear or not.
8. Whether the heresy is considered an act of disbelief or not.
9. Whether the heretics insist on their heresies or not.”

Al-Shatibi clarified that these heresies vary in the amount of sins that their people receive.

He also clarified that some of these heresies are forbidden, some of them are abominable, but they are, in all their forms, considered as acts of misguidance.

(p. 48)

There is no doubt that heresies are of three different levels in terms of evilness:

1. Sheer disbelief
2. One of the major sins (Kabair)
3. One of the minor sins (Saghair)

The minor sins’ conditions are the following:

1. It isn’t done repetitively because repetitiveness makes it a major sin.
2. The sinner should not be calling for their sins.
3. The sinner should not be doing it publicly or in the places where Sunna is practiced.
4. The sinner should not consider their sins trivial because such consideration is worse than the sin itself.

The name of misguidance applies to all three levels because the prophet considered all heresies forms of misguidance; this includes the heresy that is considered as sheer disbelief as well as the heresy that is considered as either a major or a minor sin.

Some [scholars] have divided heresies into five types; some heresies are obligatory, some are forbidden, some are recommended, some are abominable, and some neither forbidden nor recommended.

However, this way of dividing heresies goes against the prophet’s saying:

(p. 49)

“All inventions are forms of heresies, and all heresies are forms of misguidance.”

Imam al-Shatabi responded to all these divisions after mentioning them and the ones who made them: “The answer is that this division is invented; it is not supported by any evidence from the Sharia.”

Seventh Section: Types of Heresy near Graves

First: Those who invoke the dead people and ask them for help; they are considered the same as idolaters.

Allah says: ‘Say, “Invoke those you have claimed [as gods] besides Him, for they do not possess the [ability for] removal of adversity from you or [for its] transfer [to someone else].’ Those whom they invoke seek means of access to their Lord, [striving as to] which of them would be nearest, and they hope for His mercy and fear His punishment. Indeed, the punishment of your Lord is ever feared.”

Anyone who calls upon a prophet, a saint (wali) or a righteous person, and considers them of divine nature, is addressed by this verse. This verse addresses those who pray for anyone other than Allah.

(p. 50)

Anyone who calls upon a dead or an absent person commits the major Shirk, whether the calls/prayers are verbal invocations or not. Allah does not forgive this type of Shirk unless repentance is made.

Saying to other people: ‘Oh my master, support me, help me, I am under your mercy’ is Shirk.

All these acts are acts of Shirk and misguidance. People who commit such acts should repent or else they must be killed because Allah has sent prophets and holy books in order to be worshipped alone.

Second: Calling on the dead to find the way unto Allah.

This is one of the heresies that was added to Islam but is not considered a major Shirk or sin.

The mainstream people who call upon prophets and say to Allah, ‘I seek unto you through your prophet, or your prophets, angels, the righteous among your servants,’ or to say, ‘I seek unto you through that cleric, through his sacredness,’ these sayings and prayers are forms of heresies.

What is included in the Sunna is to seek unto Allah through His names and through the righteous deeds. This is confirmed in the Sahih [texts books] in the story of the people of Ghar.

Third: Believing that praying next to graves is better than praying inside mosques.

There is a general consensus that such acts are reprehensible. Scholars don’t have doubts about this. These acts have not been commanded by Allah, the messenger of Allah, or any of his companions.

(p.51)

The companions of the prophet had many misfortunes; however, none of them went near the grave of Mohammed to pray. The Salaf have forbidden the act of praying near graves. Ali Ibn al-Hussain saw a man praying next to the grave of the prophet, so he said: “I will tell you a Hadith I heard from my father who has heard it from my grandfather, prophet Mohammed: ‘Do not make my grave a place of festivals, do not make graves out of your houses, pray for me, and send me greetings wherever you are, and I will receive your greetings and your prayers.’”

The grave of the prophet is the best grave on Earth but still it is reprehensible to pray next to it. On the authority of Abu Huraira, the prophet once said: “Do not make graves out of your houses, do not make my grave a place of festivals, pray for me, I will receive your prayers no matter where you send it from.”

Section Eight: Contemporary Acts of Heresy

There are so many heresies today; examples of them include the following:

First: Celebrating the birthday of the prophet

This is a condemned heretic act. It was made up by Obaidiyon (*al-Fāṭimīyūn*) in the fourth century. Scholars have clarified that this act is a heresy for several reasons:

(p.52)

First: It is a heresy because the prophet did not do it and did not tell his followers to do it. He is our role model and our Imam. Allah says: “Whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.”

Allah also says: “There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.”

Second: The righteous caliphs and the companions of the prophet did not celebrate the prophet’s birthday, and did not call on people to celebrate it. The righteous caliphs are the best in the Umma after its prophet, and the prophet has said the following about them: “Stick to my Sunna, and the Sunna of the rightly guided caliphs. **Bite onto that with your molar teeth, and do not come up with new things in your religion, because they will be acts of heresies, and all heresies are forms of misguidance.**”

Third: Celebrating the birthday of the prophet is one of the practices of the people of deviation and misguidance. The first to celebrate it were al-Fatimiyoun, al-Obaydiyoun in the fourth century. They falsely claimed that they belonged to Fatima, while they are in fact Jews, and some said they are Zoroastrians, or disbelievers. Among them is al-Mu’izz Li-Dinillah al-Obaidi al-Maghribi, who left from Morocco to Egypt in Shawwal 361 AH.

(p.53)

So, how can a rational person imitate al-Rafidah [Shia] or follow them and go against the Sunna of the prophet Mohammed?

Fourth: Allah has perfected the religion.

He says: “This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion.”

The prophet has delivered the message; he encouraged the Umma to take the paths that lead to heaven. It is known that our prophet is the best one of all the prophets, so, if celebrating his birthday is accepted by Allah, the prophet would’ve told the people to do it.

The prophet once said: “All the prophets are obliged to guide the people to the best of deeds and warned them of the worst of deeds.”

(p. 54)

Fifth: Having these celebrations leads to the understanding that Allah has not perfected the religion. Also, it leads to the understanding that the prophet has not delivered the message until those heretics came up with their heresies that they claim will bring them closer to Allah. There is no doubt that such practices are very dangerous; they are practices of rejection of what Allah and His messenger have commanded.

Sixth: Scholars of Islam declared that these practices are reprehensible, and they warned of them based on texts from the holy book and the Sunna that forbid heresy and call on people to follow the prophet and warn of going against him in acts, practices, and sayings.

Seventh: Celebrating the prophet's birthday is not a way of showing love to the prophet. The way of showing love to the prophet is following him.

Allah says: "Say, [O Muhammad], If you should love Allah, and then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful."

Eighth: Celebrating the prophet's birthday is an act of emulating the Christians and the Jews and this was forbidden.

Ninth: The rational person should not be fooled by the number of people that celebrate the prophet's birthday everywhere. Truth is not known by the number of people but known from the proofs from the Sharia.

Allah says: "And if you obey most of those upon the earth, they will mislead you from the way of Allah."

Allah also says: "And most of the people, although you strive [for it], are not believers."

Additionally: "And few of My servants are grateful."

(p. 55)

Tenth: The Sharia rule is the following: Turning controversial practices back to the book of Allah and the Sunna of His prophet. Allah says: "O you, who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best [way] and best in result."

Allah also says: "And in anything over which you disagree - its ruling is [to be referred] to Allah. [Say], 'That is Allah, my Lord; upon Him I have relied, and to Him I turn back.'"

There is no doubt that if we try to look up for proofs of the legitimacy of this celebration from the book of Allah or the Sunna of His prophet, we will realize that the religion is perfected and that nothing should be added to it.

Allah says: “Whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.”

Therefore, celebrating the birthday of the prophet is reprehensible by the religion and it is one of the heresies.

Eleventh: It is permissible to fast on Mondays because the prophet was asked about that and he answered by saying, “that’s the day on which I was born and the day I received the revelation.”

(p.56)

Twelfth: A lot of evils occur in the celebration of the prophet’s birthday. These include the following:

Most of the poems include phrases that establish partners beside Allah. These poems also include ‘Ghuluw’. The prophet has said: “Beware of complimenting me the way Christians have complimented Isa (Jesus), I am not but a servant of Allah, so just say that I am the servant and messenger of Allah.”

A lot of forbidden practices occur in these celebrations including free-mixing between women and men, singing and using musical instruments, drinking alcohol, and committing the greatest Shirk which is invoking the prophet and asking him for help, and neglecting the holy book. In these celebrations, people smoke while Quran is recited. Their practices lead to extravagance and waste of money. They organize distorted remembrance sessions in mosques during the celebration, with their voices being very loud. All of these practices have been forbidden by the consensus of the people of Truth.

(p.57)

One of the ugly practices in the celebrations of the birthday of the prophet is that people tend to stand to glorify him when his birth is mentioned as they believe that the prophet attends the celebration.

This is one of the worst wrongdoings and a sign of ugly ignorance.

The prophet does not come out of his grave until the Day of Judgment. He does not communicate with anyone, he does not attend any of their gatherings, but he remains in his grave until the Day of Judgment and his soul is in heaven with God.

Allah said: “Then indeed, after that you are to die. Then indeed you, on the Day of Resurrection, will be resurrected.”

And the prophet said: “I am the master of the sons of Adam on the Day of Resurrection, with no pride, and I will be the first one to get out of grave and the first intercessor and the first whose intercession will be accepted by Allah.”

This means that the prophet and all other dead people only come out of their graves on the Day of Judgment.

Ibn Baz stated: “There’s a consensus among Muslim scholars about this.”

(p.58)

Second: The Heresy of Celebrating the First Friday Night of the Islamic Month Rajab

Celebrating the first Friday night of the Islamic month Rajab is a heresy.

Imam Abu Bakr Al-Tartawashi that he was told by Abu Mohammed al-Maqdisi: “We did not see the prayer of Raghaeb being performed in Bayt al-Maqdis until the year [480 A.H]. We have not seen it performed or heard of it before that time.”

Imam Abu Shama said: “As for the prayer of Raghaeb, what is known is that it is the prayer performed between the two night prayers on the first Friday night of Rajab.”

Al-Hafiz bin Rajab said: “It has not been confirmed that there is a special prayer to be performed specifically in the month of Rajab. All the Hadiths that have been used to justify this practice are false. This prayer is a heresy according to all Muslim scholars.”

Al-Hafiz bin Hajar said: “We have found no Hadith that could be an evidence for the legitimacy of the prayer of Raghaeb.”

Then he showed that there are two kinds of Hadiths about praying and fasting in Rajab. They are either weak or fabricated.

(p.59)

Then he clarified that the Hadith used to justify the practice of the prayer of Raghaeb is a false one.

Imam Ibn al-Salah said about this prayer: “The Hadith used to justify this practice is false. This prayer is a heresy that was practiced 400 years A.H.”

Imam al-Izz bin Abdulsalam issued a fatwa in the year [637 A.H] declaring al-Raghaeb prayer a heresy and saying that its Hadith is a false one.

(p. 60)

Imam Abu Shama provided several reasons behind declaring this prayer as a form of heresy:

1. All the scholars, including the prophet’s companions, the successors, and their followers –who are all keen to educate people about the obligatory and supererogatory prayers, have not mentioned anything about this prayer. None of them have written about it in their books. It is impossible that these scholars are not aware of this prayer if it was part of the Sunna.

2. This prayer is against the Sharia from different perspectives:

a) It goes against the hadith of Abu Huraira. The prophet said: “Do not choose the Friday night among all other nights for standing in prayer, and do not choose Friday among all other days for fasting except that one you have accustomed to.” This includes the first Friday night of Rajab.

b) Prayers of Rajab and Shaaban are heretic prayers. It has dangerous implications that include the following: disregarding the obligatory prayers, being absorbed in sins and waiting for this night to pray believing that all the sins will be forgiven, and misguiding people.

c) It goes against the Sharia for several reasons:

(p. 62)

First: Going against the traditions of Mohammed in the amount of prayers. Heretics pray a different amount of prayers. Heretics do not follow the prophet in their prayers; they have different amount of prostrations,

different amount of recitations and glorifications and different amount of reciting Sura al-Qadr and Sura al-Ikhlās.

Second: Heretics do not follow the prophet in the tradition of pure submission to Allah during prayers.

Third: Heretics do not follow the prophet in the tradition of performing the supererogatory prayers at home; the prophet said that these prayers are better to be performed at home rather than in mosques, better individually than collectively, except for the prayer of Tarawih in Ramadan.

Fourth: Heretics also fast on Thursdays when they perform that prayer in order to perfect it. This disrupts two of the traditions of prophet Mohamed: the Iftar and the tradition of clearing the heart of the pain of thirst and hunger.

Fifth: There are two prostrations at the end of this prayer that have no reason.

Therefore, the heresy of Raghaeb is an ugly practice that has no legitimate grounds in religion.

Third: The heresy of celebrating the night of Israa and Miraj

The night of Israa and Miraj is one of the greatest miracles that prove the prophecy of Mohamed, his great God-given position and shows Allah's great power and impeccability.

(p.63)

Allah says: "Exalted is He who took His servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings, We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing."

It has also been frequently narrated that the messenger of Allah has ascended to Heaven and has had its gates open until he reached the seventh sky in which Allah has talked to him and informed him about the five prayers after they were fifty. Our prophet kept asking Allah to lessen the amount of prayers, until Allah has agreed to do so. The obligatory prayers are now five but their reward is equal to the reward of fifty as the good deeds are rewarded ten times. Praise be to Allah whose blessings are uncountable.

And this night, on which Israa has occurred, is not to be celebrated. It isn't related to any kind of the invented acts of worship for several reasons:

First: The date of this night isn't specified in history, it wasn't in the month of Rajab, nor in any other month. Some have said that the night was after fifteen months of the revelation. Others have said that it was on the 27th of the month of Rabie Althani, one year prior to the prophet's migration. It has also been said that the night of Israa was five months after the receiving the revelation, or on the 27th of Rabia Alawal. Imam Abu Shama has said: "Some of the story tellers have mentioned that the night of Israa was in Rajab but this has been proven wrong by the reviewers."

(p.64)

Also Imam Ibn Alqayyim has stated that the night of Israa's actual date isn't known.

The prominent Muslim scholar Abdulaziz ibn Baz has said: "The actual date of this night, on which the night journey and the ascension to Heaven have occurred, isn't specified in the correct Hadith. It isn't mentioned that it was in Rajab, it isn't mentioned that it was on any other month. All that has been said about specifying a date for it is inaccurate. Indeed, Allah is wise for allowing people to forget the actual date."

And even if the date were to be specified, there is no evidence that it is a special worshipping night.

Second: It isn't known, in the history of Islam, that any of the earliest Muslims, the people of knowledge and faith, has ever put more value to this night than any other night of the year. Also, the prophet, his companions and their followers never celebrated it, never gave it any more value and never actually mentioned it. Therefore, if it was permissible to celebrate it, the prophet would have clarified that to the people of Islam; either by declaring this with his words or acts. If this has ever occurred, it would have been known to mainstream Muslims at that time and would have made its way through the generations to us.

Third: Allah has perfected the religion for the people, and has perfected His blessings. Allah says: "This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion."

(p. 65)

Allah also says: "Or have they other deities who have ordained for them a religion to which Allah has not consented? But if not for the decisive word, it would have been concluded between them. And indeed, the wrongdoers will have a painful punishment."

Fourth: the prophet has warned us of heresy and has declared that all kinds of heresy are actually misguidance. On the authority of Aisha: the prophet has once said, "'if one commits something that we haven't done, one becomes an apostate.'"

The righteous Salaf have also warned us of heresy because it is an invention in religion and it is a new approach to it that hasn't been approved by Allah or His messenger. It is also a form of imitating the enemies of Allah; of Christians and Jews who have added to their religion and invented in it.

Fourth: Celebrating the night of mid-Shaaban

Imam Mohamed bin Waddah al-Qortobi has declared, on the authority of Abdulrahman bin Zaid bin Aslam: "I haven't recognized that any of our prominent scholars and jurists has ever referred to the night of mid-Shaaban as a special night or as a different one from any other night of the year."

(p. 66)

Imam Abu Bakr Tartooshi has said: "Abu Mohammed al-Maqdisi has told me that they never performed the prayer of Ragaeb in Jerusalem, the prayer that is performed in the month of Rajab and Shaaban. The first time that this prayer was performed was in the Hijri year 448, when a man from Nablus known as Ibn Abi al-Hamraa, who has a good voice in recitation, has come to Jerusalem, and prayed on the Aqsa mosque on the night of mid-Shaaban. A lot of people have then gathered behind him and prayed with him. So, by the time he ended the prayer, there were many people behind him. A year later, this man has also come and performed the same prayer, and had a lot of people praying behind him as well. After that, this prayer has become famous among Muslims in the mosque of Aqsa, and has been performed every year until this day."

Also, it is narrated by Imam Ibn Waddah, on the authority of Ibn Abi Malika, that Ziyad Alnumairi said: "The night of mid Shaaban's reward is as great as the reward of the night of Qadr.' Then Ibn Abi Malika said, "If I had heard him saying that, I would have beaten him had I had a stick in my hand."

(p. 67)

Imam Abu Shama Alshafei has also said that 'the Alfiyya is the prayer that is performed on the night of mid-Shaaban, it is called Alfiyya, 'derived from 'Alf' meaning 'one thousand' because one has to recite

the Surat al-Tawhid a thousand times while performing this prayer, because it is made of one hundred Rakaa (Kneeling); in each, one has to read Surat al-Fatiha one time and Surat al-Tawhid ten times, and it is a very long, heavy prayer, that hasn't been approved, or has been approved by a weak authority. Mainstream Muslims are taken by this prayer, and a lot of people are keen to perform it all night long at mosques in which all kinds of immorality take place such as the union of men and women. Those who perform it as an act of worship, consider it an asset of religion.

Al Hafez bin Rajab has said: "On the night of mid-Shaaban, the Tabi'un of Sham (generations of Muslims who were born after the passing of prophet Mohamed but were contemporaries of the companions of Mohamed) such as Khalid bin Ma'dan, Makhool, and Luqman bin A'mer considered it a great night and have devoted themselves to praying on it. It was circulated among people at that time that this prayer was inspired by the Israelites and this has made people change their opinion about it. Some of them have accepted it, those are the people of Basra, and some of them have rejected it and those are people of Hijaz.

(p.68)

Those include: Ata'a and Ibn Abi Malika. This has been narrated by Abdulrahman bin Zayd bin Aslam on behalf of the jurists of Madina, and this is the opinion of Malik's companions who have considered it all as heresy.

The scholars of Sham have different approaches about the manner of performance:

The first is that it is better to perform it as groups in mosques. Khalid bin Ma'dan and Luqman bin A'mer used to wear their best outfits when they performed it, and put on Bukhoor and wear Kohl. They used to spend the whole night in the mosque when they perform this prayer. Isaac bin Rahawaih has approved of this and has said that it is not a heresy, this is narrated in the writings of Harb al-Karmani.

The second is that it is better to not gather in mosques to pray such prayers or to tell stories or to ask Allah for something; however, it is permissible to perform it individually as the Awzaa'I says. He also says 'Nothing has been narrated on behalf of Imam Ahmed about the night of mid-Shaaban, there are only two narrations about its value. In one of them, he doesn't encourage performing it in groups and in the other he does encourage that because Abdulrahman bin Zayd has done that.

This is the same about the prayers of the night of mid-Shaaban; it isn't confirmed that the prophet has performed it, nor that his companions have done so, but it is confirmed that the Tabi'u'n of Sham have performed it'

(p.69)

Imam Abdulaziz Ibn Baz has said 'Alawza'ai sayings about the supererogation of this prayer as well as the approval of Alhafez Ibn Rajab are strange and weak because any act that isn't backed by enough proofs that it is part of the Sharia is not to be performed by Muslims whether individually or collectively and whether the performance was secret or in public. The evidence of this in Hadith is the prophet's saying, 'if one commits something we haven't done, one becomes an apostate,' as well as other sayings about condemning heresy.

What is understood from the sayings of the following Imams – Imam Ibn Waddah, Imam Tartooshi, Imam Abdulrahman bin Ismael (Abu Shama), Imam Alhafez bin Rajab and the Imam of the modern age Abdulaziz Ibn Baz – is that specifying a special prayer or acts of worship for the night of mid-Shaaban is pure heresy that doesn't have roots in the Quran or the Sunna and it was never performed by any of the prophet's companions.

Fifth: The Act of Tabarrauk (Seeking divine blessings)

It means to obtain blessings from the pious or the blessed. There are no doubts that blessing is in the hand of Allah and He has chosen some of His creation to be granted what He wishes of blesses. The Baraka (The Bless) is essentially meant to remain and linger, it is used to describe growth. 'Tabrik' means to pray for something to be blessed.

(p.70)

In the Quran, there are different uses of the term 'Baraka':

- The remaining and permanence of the good.
- The growth of the good.

'Tabarak' is only used to describe Allah, it means that Allah's generosity is permanent; His goodness is always growing which shows His greatness and sacredness. It also means that all blessings are from Him and that He chooses whom to bless from his creation. This is how the Quran uses the term.

The 'blessed' are:

- The holy Quran is blessed: it has a plenty of blessings, it includes the 'goodness' of this life and the afterlife. Seeking blessings from Quran should be through reciting it properly and acting according to its principles and in a manner that satisfies Allah.
- The prophet is blessed: Allah placed 'Baraka' in his character and it has two types:
 1. Moral 'Baraka': All the blessings that followed his noble message either in this life or in the afterlife as Allah has sent him as a Mercy to all creatures, Allah took people out of darkness to light, commanded to them what is just, forbade what is evil, and sealed the advent of the prophets with Mohammed whose religion spreads kindness and forgiveness.

(p.71)

2. Practical 'Baraka' which has two types:

- a) Baraka in his acts which is related to all the miracles that Allah blessed him with which prove the truthfulness of his message.
- b) Baraka in his character and his influence; the reason behind considering all his personal belongings sacred.

Being blessed by the prophet can never be equated with being blessed by any other creature as the blessings that Allah has given him are immeasurable.

It is doubtless that the prophets (peace be upon them all) have been given blessings by Allah, and so have the angels and the righteous. However, they are not to be sought blessings from because of the lack of evidence that permits such acts.

The same applies to a lot of sacred places such as the three sacred mosques: Al Masjid al-Haram, Al Masjid an-Nabawi, and Al Aqsa Mosque.

Also, Allah has blessed some occasions such as the month of Ramadan, the night of Qadr, the sacred months, the three sacred week days (Monday, Thursday, Friday), the time of the divine descent (last third

of the night) and other blessed times that are not to be considered sources of blessings because a Muslim should only seek blessings from Allah by performing virtuous acts.

3. There are also blessed substances such as the water of Zamzam, rainwater (that is important for the survival of humans, animals and plants), olive trees, milk, horses, sheep, and palm trees.

(p. 72)

The permitted acts of 'Tabarrok' [Seeking blessings]:

1. Seeking blessings through the remembrance of Allah and the recitation of Quran: asking for blessings in an acceptable manner through continuous remembrance of Allah by the heart, the tongue and practices. The blessings that follow this include: the relief of the heart, strength to obey Allah's commands, happiness in this life and the afterlife, forgiveness and having Quran as a mediator on the Day of Judgment. Seeking blessings from Quran isn't supposed to be through placing it in the house or the car, but through reciting it and acting according to its commands.

2. Seeking blessings from the character of the prophet during his life as the prophet is blessed in his character and all that is connected to it. For that reason, his companions have sought blessings from him; one of the evidences is what has been narrated by Abi Juhayfa who said: (The prophet once went out to the desert in a very hot weather, he performed ablution and then prayed; and after he finished, people were putting his hand on their faces, I then touched his hand and passed it over my face only to find out that it was colder than ice and smelled better than Misk.)

(p.73)

The prophet's companions used to ask for blessings by touching the prophet's clothes, places where he sat, the water that he used for ablution, his drinking water, and all the things that he leaves behind such as his hair, the tools that he used such as his dishes and his shoes and all the things that touched his body.

However, this isn't applicable to other people as the prophet never encouraged seeking blessings from anyone other than him. Also, his companions never committed such acts during his life or after his death, not even with the righteous caliphates or the ten people promised paradise.

Imam Shatiby said: "The companions, after the death of the prophet, never committed such acts (seeking blessings from someone other than the prophet) as the prophet left no one behind that is better than Abu Bakr, and the later didn't do any of this, nor did Omar, who is the best after Abu Bakr, nor Othman, nor Ali. It hasn't been proved than any of these has ever committed acts of seeking blessings from ordinary people."

It is doubtless that benefitting from the knowledge of the scholars and listening to their advices and prayers has a lot of blessings, however, one must not seek blessings from their belongings but act in a good manner like they did, and follow the people of Sunna among them.

(p.74)

3. Seeking blessings from the water of Zamzam: As it is the best water on Earth that satisfies whoever drinks it and cures whoever drinks it with the intention of seeking cure, the prophet said about the water of

Zamzam 'It is blessed'. Also, Jabir has said that the prophet used to take the water of Zamzam and pour it on sick people.

(p.75)

4. Seeking blessings from rainwater: There's no doubt that rainwater is blessed. Allah has put a lot of blessings in it; Allah has brought everything to life from water. It has been narrated that the prophet once revealed parts of his body when the rain was falling, so the people around him asked him about the reason and he said: because it just came fresh from Allah. This means that rainwater is a mercy.

The unpermitted acts of 'Tabarrok':

First: Seeking blessings from the prophet is not permitted except in two cases:

1. Believing in him, obeying his commands and following him as whomever does that receives all goodness, great rewards and happiness in this life and the afterlife.
2. Seeking blessings from his personal belongings that he left such as his clothes, his hair and his dishes.

Anything other than that is not to be sought blessings from. Muslims shouldn't seek blessing from the prophet's grave and they shouldn't travel to visit it; however they should travel to one of the three sacred mosques. The grave's visit is only permitted for those who are in Madina and have visited al-Masjid al-Nabawi.

(p.76)

The visit should begin by performing the prayer of 'greeting the mosque.' The visitor should then head to the prophet's grave, stand in a respectful way, and say politely and quietly: 'Peace be upon you Oh messenger of Allah.' Ibn Omar didn't use to say more than that; if he does day more, it'd be 'Peace be upon you, messenger of Allah, best of Allah's creation, I recognize that you have delivered the message and fought for the sake of Allah.' There's nothing wrong with this addition because the way the prophet is described is true.

It is, however, not permitted to pray next to the prophet's grave with the false belief that the prayer would be directly answered. It is also not permitted to ask for his intercession, kiss his grave or touch the places where he sat, prayed, or received revelation. It is not permitted to seek blessings from the place or night of his birth, the night of Israa, or the Hijra day.

Second: It is not permitted to seek blessings from the righteous people, by going to the places where they used to worship or reside or by visiting their graves. It is not permitted to travel to their graves or pray next to it. Whoever does this and believes that it is in their hand to harm and benefit people, becomes a Mushrik (polytheist) and those who commit these acts claiming that they seek blessings from Allah through the righteous ones, are exhibiting a very ugly act of heresy.

(p.77)

Third: Seeking blessings from mountains and places is also not permitted; because this goes against what the prophet commanded. Such acts also give more significance to these mountains and places than they

actually have. It is not permitted to equate these acts with the act of kissing the black stone or with the ritual of tawaf because these rituals are commanded by Allah.

Imam ibn al-Qayem said ‘there’s no other place on Earth that Muslims are allowed to kiss other than the black stone and al-Rukn al-Yamani in Mecca’

He also said that there’s no other place on Earth that people should be eager to visit other than Mecca.

Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyya also said regarding the issue of performing Tawaf in a place other than the Kaaba ‘Tawaf in another place is not permissible at all, it is one of the ugliest acts of heresy, whoever chooses this path, has to seek repentance or else has to be killed’

(p.78)

It is also not permissible to kiss Maqam Ibrahim, the stone, or anything of the walls of the mosque. It is not permissible to seek blessings from the mountain of Hira or the mountain of Nur, it is not even permissible to visit it, or visit the mountain of Arafat, the mountain of Abi Qubais or the mountain of Thubayr. Moreover, it is not permissible to seek blessings from houses such as Dar al-Arqam, or to visit the mountain of Tur, or to seek blessings from trees and stones.

Those acts of Tabarrok are forbidden because those who perform them are ignorant of religion; they are exaggerating in showing love and respect to the righteous ones and they are imitating the non-believers.

The implications of these acts include committing the greatest ‘shirk’ (Idolatry) – which is the most dangerous of all implications-, coming up with new concepts in religion, committing sins, lying, distorting religious texts, interpreting texts in a false way, loosening the traditions and taking generations astray, all of these are the implications of unpermitted Tabarrok.

The ways to resist the rise of these acts include spreading knowledge, calling for the true path, banning the means to ‘Tabarrok’, destroying all the things that allow this to exist.

(p.79)

Scholar Saadi said in his response to the book of ‘Tawhid’: “Whoever seeks blessings from trees and stones is committing shirk as scholars have made a consensus about that, it is not permissible to seek blessings from trees, stones and shrines, this applies to all the aforementioned places including Maqam Ibrahim, the prophet’s room, Bayt al-Maqdis rock and other holy spots.”

As for kissing the black stone and al-Rukn al-Yamani, it is an act of mere obedience and praising to Allah, these are considered the soul of worshipping. It becomes an act of praising humans if it is not permissible. The difference between the two is that the permissible one is just like praying, an act of believing and loyalty, while the impermissible is an act of shirk and non-believing.

Sixth: Heretical acts that include the following:

1. Saying the Niyah –the intention to perform something for the sake of Allah - publicly; when someone says: ‘I intend to pray for the sake of Allah’ or ‘I intend to fast on this day’ or ‘I intend to perform ablution or major ablution.’ Such acts are heresy because they weren’t performed by the prophet and because Allah

says: ‘Say: would you acquaint Allah with your religion while Allah knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth, and Allah is Knowing of all things’

(p.80)

The correct place for Niyya is the heart; it is a task for the heart not the tongue. Hafid bin Rajab said, “Niyyah is the intention of the heart and shouldn’t be said publicly.”

2. Collective thikr after performing prayers; what is permitted is to say thikr individually the way the prophet used to do it and the way his companions did it after him. Saying thikr publicly is clearly going against the traditions of the prophet.

3. Reciting ‘al-Fatiha’ for the souls of the dead people, after praying for them, or after the marriage speech. All of these are heresy; the prophet didn’t do such acts, nor did his companions.

4. Establishing places for mourning, making food for distribution, and inviting reciters with the belief that these acts are acts of consolation that will benefit the dead ones. All of these are heresy acts that find no roots in what is revealed by Allah.

5. Sufi thikr with all its different types that go against Mohammed’s traditions.

(p. 81)

6. Establishing mosques on graves, praying towards the graves and visiting it to attain blessings; all of these acts are ugly heretic ones.

Section Nine: Heretics’ Repentance

There’s no doubt that heresy is more dangerous than sins as they are more soul-destroying than sins. As Sufian al-Thawri said, “Heresy is more loved by Satan than sins as it is possible to repent after committing sins but it is not possible to repent after committing heresy.”

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiya has said, “It’s not possible to repent after committing a heresy because heretics, who chose a path that isn’t approved by Allah or His prophet, see their evil acts as good ones, therefore, they’re unable to repent because the first stage of repentance is the recognition of the evilness of the act.”

Then he said, “But repentance is possible only if Allah chooses to forgive those heretics and take them back to the straight path until they become able to see the truth.” He also said, “Allah never accepts the repentance of the heretics because they have done a huge mistake.”

(p.82)

Ibn Taymiya explained the Hadith of heretics’ unacceptance repentance clearly here.

On the authority of Anas: “The prophet said Allah will not accept the repentance of all heretics.”

There’s no doubt that these texts are consistent. Allah showed to His servants that He will accept their repentance if they refrain from doing the sins that they’re used to doing, promise that they will not commit

those sins ever again, and return the rights to the people. Allah says after telling the end of the non-believers, the murderers, and adulterers, ‘Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful.’”

Allah says: “But indeed, I am the Perpetual Forgiver of whoever repents and believes and does righteousness and then continues in guidance.”

Allah also says: “Say, ‘O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.’”

He also says: “And whoever does a wrong or wrongs himself but then seeks forgiveness of Allah will find Allah Forgiving and Merciful.”

(p.83)

This mercy includes all those who repent from non-believers and heretics if they meet the conditions of repentance.

Section Ten: Implications and Dangers of Heresy

Heresy leads to many dangerous consequences including the following:

1. Heresy leads to disbelief. On the authority of Abu Huraira, the prophet once said: “You will follow the traditions of the people who preceded you and will copy everything they do. So the people asked him, ‘Do you mean the Jewish and Christian people?’ And the prophet said ‘Who else could I mean!’”
2. Heretics say against Allah what they don’t know. Looking closely at what heretics do, one would notice that their sayings are full of lies about Allah and His prophet. Allah has warned people from doing this.

(p.84)

He has said, “And if Muhammed had made up about Us some false sayings, we would have seized him by the right hand, then we would have cut from him the aorta.”

The prophet also warned from spreading lies about him and threatened anyone who would do so with the torment, as he said, “Whoever spreads lies about me intentionally, let him take his seat in the Hellfire.”

3. Heretics hate the Sunna and the people of Sunna, which indicates how dangerous heresy is. Imam Ismael bin Abdulrahman al-Sabooni said: “Signs of the people of heresy are evident on them, the most obvious one is their contempt and hatred towards people who spread the news of the prophet.”
4. The deeds of the heretics are unaccepted as the prophet says, “If one commits something we haven’t done, one becomes an apostate.”
5. Because Satan wants to lead people astray in different struggles, the first is through Shirk. If one survives from this, one might be attacked by Satan to commit heresy, which is why heresy is more dangerous than sins. As Sufian al-Thawri said, “Heresy is more loved by the Satan than sins as it is possible to repent after committing sins but it is not possible to repent after committing heresy.”

(p.85)

6. Reversal of heretics' rationality: heretics will see the good deeds as bad deeds, and the bad deeds as good deeds and will see the heresy as Sunna and the Sunna as heresy.

Hudhaifa bin al-Yaman said: "I swear by Allah that heresy will spread to the extent that if part of it is missed, one would say, Sunna is missed."

7. Testimonies of heretics are unacceptable. Scholars have consensus that it is unacceptable to take the testimony of the heretic whose heresy leads to disbelief. However, there is controversy regarding the testimony of the heretic whose heresy does not lead to disbelief. Imam Nawawi suggested that it is permissible to accept the testimony in this case if and only if it doesn't call for heresy.

8. Heretics are mostly the ones who bring about trials and disorder. Allah has warned from trials as he said: 'And fear a trial which will not strike those who have wronged among you exclusively, and know that Allah is severe in penalty.'

And He also said, "So let those beware who dissent from the Prophet's order, lest fitnah (disorder) strike them or a painful punishment."

So, is there any act that is more dangerous than going against the traditions and Sunna of the prophet?

(p.86)

9. Heretics have added to Sharia. By coming up with heresy, a heretic assigns himself as completer of the religion even though Allah has completed the religion. As He says: "This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion."

He also clarified the following in the Quran: "And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things and as guidance and mercy and good tidings for the Muslims."

10. Heretics have confusions about what is truth and what is not because knowledge is a light that Allah uses to guide whoever He chooses of His servants while the heretic has been deprived of piety because of heresies and therefore will not have the light of knowledge.

Allah says: "Oh you who have believed, if you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion and will remove from you your misdeeds and forgive you. And Allah is the possessor of great bounty."

11. Heretics are accountable for their sins and the sins of whoever follow them. On the authority of Abu Huraira, the prophet has once said: "Whoever guides people for the right path, receives the same rewards as his followers without reducing his followers' rewards. And whoever misguides people, has the same amount of sins as his followers without reducing the amount of their sins"

(p. 87)

12. Heresy leads the heretic to be cursed. In the Hadith that was narrated by Anas, the prophet once said about heretics in Madina: "Whoever commits a heresy, or provide shelter for heretics, will be cursed by Allah, angels, and people. Allah will also not accept heretics' deeds."

13. Heretics will be denied access to the prophet's basin on the Day of Judgment. On the authority of Sahil bin Saad, the prophet once said: "Whoever passes through the basin is permitted to drink, whoever drinks never feels thirsty again. A lot of people that I know will not be allowed to drink from the basin."

The prophet also said: "Cursed are those who change the religion after me."

14. Heretics turn away from the remembrance of Allah. Allah included prayers in the Quran and delivered some prayers to us through His messenger. Some of these prayers were restricted such as the prayers that we say every day, the prayers of morning and evening, the prayers we say before going to bed, and the prayers we say after waking up. Allah said: “Oh you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance and exalt Him morning and afternoon.”

Heretics turn away from these prayers and from remembering Allah either because they are so busy with their lies and so dazzled by it or because they have changed the real forms of prayers with heresies and lies.

(p.89)

Heretics hide the truth and prevent their followers from reaching it. Allah has threatened those that they'll be cursed.

Allah says: “Indeed, those who conceal what We sent down of clear proofs and guidance after We made it clear for the people in the Scripture - those are cursed by Allah and cursed by those who curse.”

16. The deeds of the heretics turn people away from Islam. When heretics act according to the myths they believe, the enemies of Islam will ridicule the Islamic faith while Islam has nothing to do with these heresies.

17. Heretics divide the Umma. With their heresies, heretics create different parties and sects within the Umma. Allah says: “Indeed, those who have divided their religion and become sects - you, [O Muhammad], are not [associated] with them in anything. Their affair is only [left] to Allah; then He will inform them about what they used to do.”

18. Gossip is permitted if it is about heretics who make their heresies known. There is no doubt that those who publicly speak about their heresies are more dangerous than those who publicly speak about their sins. Gossip is not permitted in the Quran and Sunna but it becomes permitted sometimes for six reasons: grievance, seeking help in order to change obscenity, seeking advice, warning Muslims about an evil, making sins known to public, making heresies known to public.

(p.90)

19. Heretics follow their own desires and go against the Sharia.

20. Heretics put themselves in the position of challenging the Sharia and changing it, Allah has set the rules and commanded us to follow them.

I ask Allah to grant me and all Muslims pardon and health in this life and the afterlife. Peace be upon our prophet Mohammed, peace be upon his family, companions and whoever follows them.