

In The Name of Allah The Most Merciful The Bestower of Mercy.

Al-Allamah Salih Al-Fawzan, may Allah preserve him, said:

All praise and thanks be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may Allāh's peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and his companions. To proceed: Indeed, the hadith that will be addressed – in this lecture – is the hadith of Hudhaifah Bin Al-Yaman, may Allah be pleased with him. He said:

People used to ask Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, about the good times, but I used to ask him about bad times fearing lest they overtake me. I said, "O Messenger of Allah! We were in a state of pre-Islamic ignorance and evil, and then Allah brought us this good (time through Islam), is there any evil time after this good one?" He said, "Yes" I asked, "Will there be a good time again after that evil?" He said, "Yes, but therein will be a hidden evil". I asked, "What will be the evil hidden therein?" He said, "People who will follow ways other than mine and seek guidance other than mine. You will know (their) good points as well as (their) bad points". I asked, "Will there be an evil time after this good one?" He said, "Yes, when there will be people standing and inviting at the gates of Hell. Whosoever responds to their call they will throw them into the fire". I said, "O Messenger of Allah! Describe them for us". He said, "They will be a people having the same complexion as ours and speaking our language". I said, "O Messenger of Allah! What would you suggest if I happened to live in that time?" He said, "You should stick to the main body of the Muslims and their leader". I said, "If they have no main body and no leader?" He said, "Separate yourself from all these factions, though you may have to eat the roots of trees (in a jungle) until death comes to you and you are in this state". [Bukhari and Muslim.... The wording of the above is that of Imam Muslim]

Indeed, Allah pre-decreed that the creation will be visited by tribulations, trials and tests, in order that the truthful one is distinguished from the hypocrite. Allah, The Exalted, said:

الْم

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ  
وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ

Alif-Laam-Meem. Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested. And We indeed tested those who were before them. And Allah will certainly make (it) known (the truth of) those who are true, and will certainly make (it) known (the falsehood) of those who are liars, (although Allah knows all that before putting them to test). [Al-Ankabut. 1-3]

Fitnah is a test. The human being will not be left alone because he says, "I believe, I submit, I am a Muslim, I am a believer!" He will be put to trial. If he exercises patience and firmly adheres to his Iman during tribulations, he is the one truthful to his Iman. If he deviates during tribulations and turns away from his religion, this one is not truthful to his Iman. He is a hypocrite (i.e. depending on the severity of the deviation), as Allah [The Exalted] said:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ  
يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ  
فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ

And of mankind, there are some (hypocrites) who say: "We believe in Allah and the Last Day" while in fact they believe not. They (think to) deceive Allah and those who believe, while they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not! In their hearts is a disease (of doubt and hypocrisy) and Allah has increased their disease. A painful torment is theirs because they used to tell lies. [Al-Baqarah. 8-10]

This is the way of Allah. Allah, The Mighty and Majestic, said:

مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْتَبِي مِنْ رُسُلِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ فَأَمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ۚ وَإِنْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

Allah will not leave the believers in the state in which you are now, until He distinguishes the wicked from the good. Nor will Allah disclose to you the secrets of the Ghaib (unseen), but Allah chooses His Messengers whom He pleases. So, believe in Allah and His Messengers. And if you believe and fear Allah, then for you there is a great reward. [Aal Imran. 79]

Allah allows trials and tests to occur in order that the truthful one is distinguished from the liar, the true believer from the hypocrite, and the good one from the wicked one. This is from Allah's (perfect) Wisdom. Trials will occur as a result of this (perfect) Wisdom. If trials do not occur, the truth will be confused with falsehood-the believer will be confused for the hypocrite and there will not be a distinction between this one and that one.

In this hadith reported by the honourable companion Hudhaifah Bin Al Yaman, he said: "The people used to ask the Messenger of Allah about the good times". They used to ask him about the good regarding righteous deeds, the correct Islamic creed and dealings, but Hudhaifah used to ask him about the evil times fearing lest they overcome him. Therefore, this is evidence that it is not enough to only learn about the good; rather one must know about the evil to avoid it. If you do not know about the evil, you will come close to falling into it, as the poet said: "I acquaint myself with the evil not for the sake of evil, but to be safeguarded from it. The one who does not know (the distinction between) evil and good will fall into evil".

A person must learn about the truth-its proofs and evidences. He must learn and know what falsehood is and the doubts associated with it, in order that he can be saved from falsehood and warn people against it. How can he avoid and warn people against it if he is unaware of it? In this regard, the Qur'an has clarified truth and falsehood, Iman and Kufr, Tawhid and Shirk, and Halal and Haram. It has not only clarified Tawhid, Halal and truth; rather it clarified that which is in opposition to them, so that the Muslim can avoid them.

Likewise, the Prophet - in his Sunnah- clarified good and evil, truth and falsehood in all matters of the religion. The scholars clarified – in their written works- what Tawhid, Shirk, disbelief and hypocrisy are. They have clarified the belief of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah and the beliefs of the deviated sects, such as the Jahmiyyah, the Mutazilah, the Asha'itah .....and other than that. They have clarified the correct and forbidden dealings, the correct marriage, the false and corrupt marriage and the women forbidden (for one to marry). They have clarified the (good) and the evil manners. All of this gives the Muslim an insight into his affairs, so that he knows the truth based on its evidence, knows what falsehood is and the doubts associated with it, in order that he can avoid falsehood and tell the people to avoid it. This is why you find in the books of belief: clarification of the belief in Tawhid and the belief of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah, clarification of the beliefs (that are tantamount) to misguidance, the doubts associated with it and refutation against them, so that a Muslim is not misled by deviations, false beliefs and deviated schools of thought, and so that Muslims can be upon a correct understanding in their religion and that which is in opposition to it.

Some of the people at present- the majority of them ignorant ones and amongst them misguided ones- say, "Do not learn about the false beliefs; suffice yourselves with learning the correct belief only and do not involve yourself in seeking to know the beliefs of the people of misguidance and the refutations against their doubts. Leave this and teach the children of the Muslims the correct belief only. Do not inform them about the statements that are in opposition, the doubts and refutation against them". This one (i.e. the one who makes these statements) is either one of the ignorant people who knows nothing about knowledge or he is one of those motivated by personal desires-those who want to spread the false schools of thought and their doubts; rather it may be that they say, "It is sufficient for a person to say, I am a Muslim, I am a believer..... a general Islam suffices, do not say, Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa-ah, the people of misguidance, splitting and differing; do not say this because it will cause division between the Muslims". These (statements are tantamount to) misguidance because Allah [The Mighty and Majestic] has clarified the truth and falsehood, guidance and misguidance, and Tawhid and shirk.

Allah [The Mighty and Majestic] has clarified all the matters of the religion- a detailed clarification of the matters related to worship, mutual dealings and manners. Therefore, this must be clarified so that it is made clear to the people, (and in order) that they can be upon clarity, and the true Muslim is distinguished from the so-called Muslim and no deviation and forgery enters into Islam. We must make a distinction between this and that one, in order that truth is not confounded with falsehood, distinguish between truth and falsehood, good and wickedness. We do not suffice ourselves with a general Islam because this is misleading, and it is deception. We warn against this propaganda. The truth must be clarified and distinguished from falsehood, and guidance must be distinguished from misguidance. Hudhaifah used to ask the Prophet about the evil and did not suffice himself by only asking the Prophet about the good. The Prophet affirmed that for him and did not say to him, "Suffice yourself with knowing what good is" rather he affirmed and clarified- for him- the evil that was to occur, in order that he may beware and warn others. This is the Sunnah, this is the path of the Qur'an and that of the Messenger.

Hudhaifah said: "O Messenger of Allah! We were in a state of Al-Jaahiliyyah and evil".

Al-Jaahiliyyah: It is derived from al-Jahl (ignorance). It is the absence of knowledge, and the intent behind it is the state of affairs before Islam. The state of affairs before the advent of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is Al-Jaahiliyyah. This is because the people were in a state of ignorance and misguidance with regards to worship, mutual dealings, food consumption, marriage and other than that. They were in ignorance and misguidance due to the long period between Eesa and Muhammad (i.e. the absence of a Messenger). This was a period of over four hundred years within which the divine message ceased. The divine message was obscured, whilst ignorance and misguidance became widespread. The people worshiped idols, trees, stones, false deities, the Jinn and humans. They worshiped the angels, and the righteous, and they were upon divergent paths. With regards to the halal and haram, they did not distinguish between good and filth; rather they used to deal in usury. The usury of the pre-Islamic era of ignorance was that when they settled a debt with a debtor, they would say, "Either you settle the debt, or we increase the debt and double the time it (should be paid)". This was the Pre-Islamic Usury and it used to be predominant in their mutual dealings. They used to gather wealth through forbidden means- through pillage, plunder, robbery and devouring people's wealth through falsehood.

And with regards to food consumption, they made dead animals and blood lawful. They used to eat dead animals, blood and repugnant things. With regards to their relationship between one another, they used to kill and fight one another over the most trivial thing. They neither had a leader nor a state. They were either under the authority of tribal systems or under the authority of the Persians and the Romans. The powerful used to violate (the rights of the weak), and an oppressor used to transgress the limits, and no one stopped him. This was the state of affairs in Al-Jaahiliyyah (The Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance). They were upon ignorance in all aspects (of life) and the greatest of this was related to worship and creed. They believed in Shirk, rejected the (Resurrection) and the Divine Message. [They said]: مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ بَشَرٍ مِّن شَيْءٍ – Nothing did Allah send down to any human being (by revelation)]. 6:91]

This was their state of affairs in Al-Jahiliyyah. Then, Allah [Glorified be He and free is He from all imperfections, sent Muhammad with the Guidance and the Religion of Truth. Allah stated: هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ – It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad) with Al Huda'a (the Guidance) and Deenul Haqq (the religion of truth -Islam) 9:33]

Huda'a is beneficial knowledge and Deenul Haq is righteous action. Allah sent His Prophet with beneficial knowledge and righteous action, thus that pre-Islamic ignorance ceased to exist for ever and knowledge and guidance appeared. The Jaahiliyyah Aamma (The Pre-Islamic ignorance that was widespread in the world and touched every aspect of life) has ceased to exist; but it remains amongst some people or some of the tribes, or in some of the lands. This is Jaahiliyyah Juz'iy (partial Pre-Islamic Ignorance). As for the 'Jahiliyyah Aamma', this has ceased to exist after the advent of the Messenger, but some traits of Pre-Islamic ignorance remains among some of the people due to statement of the Prophet "Among my people there are four characteristics belonging to pre-Islamic period which they do not abandon: boasting of high rank, reviling other peoples' genealogies, seeking rain by stars, and wailing (i.e. for the dead)." [Sahih Muslim]. This remains, but it is an aspect of Jaahiliyyah. As for the Jaahiliyyah Aamma, it has ceased to exist. Therefore, it is not permissible to say that the people are in Al-Jaahiliyyah (unrestrictedly). Some say: "(The people) are in a state of Pre-Islamic ignorance that is more severe than the one before the advent of the Prophet".

The meaning of this is a denial of what the Messenger conveyed – a denial of the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Prophet and the abundant knowledge within our hands. Its meaning is that we are in Al-Jaahiliyyah. This (statement) is a mistake; the people are not in Al-Jaahiliyyah, but there remains some of the traits of Al-Jaahiliyyah in some individuals- in some nations and tribes; but this is a specific Jahiliyyah. Therefore, it is obligatory to be acquainted with this affair.

His [Hudhaifah's] statement, "We were in a state of ignorance and evil".

What is evil? Evil is that which the people were upon- Shirk, worship of images, eating haram and other evil deeds before the advent of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. These were evil deeds, but Allah brought about good (through Islam). Hudhaifah, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "And then Allah brought us this good (time through Islam)". This is an acknowledgement of Allah's grace, for indeed good (only) comes from Allah [The Exalted] and He is The One Who guided us. We cannot recognise good (solely) through our intellects and the knowledge we possess; rather we come to know of it through the revelation given to the Messenger- the Magnificent Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunnah.

The truth is not known through the intellects or habits, or through blind following and opinions; rather it is known through the revelation sent down by Allah - the revelation that was communicated through the tongue of His Messenger. Therefore, this is a rebuttal against those who say that the people are free to hold onto their views and everyone can say what he wants. We say, "No, the people are the slaves of Allah and their intellects and views are deficient. They must return to the revelation in order to know the truth and reject falsehood".

Regarding his (Hudhaifah's) statement: "And then Allaah brought us this good (time through Islam)". What is good? It is Islam because of the guidance it contains, knowledge and the absence of doubts that have pervaded the minds of many people. Allah brought about this immense good. This is an acknowledgement of Allah's blessing because blessings only come to us from Him, Glorified and Exalted be He. Indeed, Allah did not leave us to our intellects and views; rather Allah is the One Who shows us good and guides us towards it.

Allah said:

قُلْ إِنْ ضَلَلْتُ فَإِنَّمَا أَضِلُّ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِي وَإِنِ اهْتَدَيْتُ فَبِمَا يُوحِي إِلَيَّ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ قَرِيبٌ

Say: If (even) I go astray, I shall stray only to my own loss. But if I remain guided, it is because of the Revelation of my Lord to me. Truly, He is All-Hearer, Ever Near (to all things) 34:50]

(Then) he (Hudhaifah) said: "Is there any evil time after this good one?"

This is proof that a Muslim is not safe from trials and tribulations even if he has knowledge, righteous action and correct creed. Indeed, he will not be safe from the callers to misguidance and evil, and due to this reason Hudhaifah asked Allah's Messenger, saying: "Is there any evil time after this good one?" This is proof that evil will appear after good, and these are trials and tests Allah will allow to appear amongst the people. Indeed, they will not continue to be upon one state; rather they will face changing circumstances. The human being will not be safe from trials and doubts; he will not be safe from the callers to misguidance even if he is upon good- upon a correct creed and Religion. This is why Hudhaifah asked: "Is there any evil time after this good one?" He (the Prophet) said, "Yes".

This is Khabar [information] from the Messenger that evil will occur after good. This took place during the latter part of the era of the Sahaabah. Trials and evil emerged from the misguided sects, such as the Qadariyyah, the Shia, the Murji'ah, the Jahmiyyah and others. This took place during the latter part of the era of the Sahaabah, may Allah be pleased with them. However, as long as the Qur'an and the Sunnah are present, this evil will be repelled if the scholars convey the Qur'an and the Sunnah and clarify these trials and evils for the people. Therefore, the cure is present -all praise and thanks be to Allah-and evil will be repelled.

(Hudhaifah) said, "Will there be a good time again after that evil time?" He (the Prophet) said: "Yes". In this is proof that evil will not be continuous, and that the Muslim should wait for solace from Allah.



Allah, The Mighty and Majestic, said:

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا  
إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

So verily, with the hardship, there is relief. Verily, with hardship, there is relief (i.e. there is one hardship with two reliefs, so one hardship cannot overcome two reliefs).

Solace must come. He (the Prophet) said: "Know that along with patience is assistance, along with distress is solace, and along with every hardship is relief".[Reported by Ahmad]

(One) should not lose hope when trials and evil increase. Indeed, he should be in a state of tranquility and encourage others to be in a state of tranquility when trials occur, and he should say: "All praise and thanks be to Allah, we are upon guidance and a clear religion. Solace is close by and evil will cease to exist by the permission of Allah". This is what is incumbent upon the good people and the scholars, that they have tranquility and (urge) the people to be in a state of tranquility because this (evil) will cease by the permission of Allah and solace will come after it.

It is not permissible for a person to say: "The people are destroyed". This is not permissible; rather (one) should (urge) the people to be in a state of tranquility, firm upon good and expectant of assistance, for indeed the good end is for the people of piety. Therefore, regardless how great the evil and trial is, it will cease to exist. He (the Prophet) said: "A group of my followers will remain manifest upon the truth. They will neither be harmed by those who forsake them nor by those who oppose them till Allah's command comes (i.e. the day of Judgement)".[Bukhari and Muslim]

Islam will not cease to continue and all praise and thanks be to Allah. The religion and the Qur'an will not cease to exist until that appointed time about which the Prophet has informed us that at the end of time the Qur'an will be taken away from the hearts of men and from the Masaahif (i.e. the copies of the Qur'an). The Qur'an will not remain within the hands of the people (at that time), but this will be at the time of the destruction of the world (i.e. when the day of judgement is very close).

(However), good will continue to exist while the Qur'an, the Sunnah and the Qiblah are present, even though there is one who is led away from it and strays; and even though there is one who deviates from it and deviated, as the saying goes: "Fitnah has its victims". It takes away the one who goes with it; but the people of Iman will remain even if they are small in number. Even if there is one who goes along with the Fitnah, the one who goes astray and the one who comes along, the truth and its people will remain, and all praise and thanks be to Allah. The truth is present, as Allaah said:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

Verily We: It is We Who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur'an) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption).

A person is neither to lose hope nor despair. He should not make the people lose hope of a return to goodness. He should not make the people lose hope that truth will prevail, and falsehood will be repelled. This is because Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, has made that promise and He does not fail to fulfil His promise. Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy upon him, said, "The Religion is aided when put to the test; therefore, do not be amazed for this is the way the Most Merciful (Allah)".

Allah said:

وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ  
وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَمْحَقَ الْكَافِرِينَ

And so are the days (good and not so good), We give to men by turns, that Allah may test those who believe, and that He may take martyrs from among you. And Allah does not the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrong doers). And that Allaah may test (or purify) the believers (from sins) and destroy the disbelievers.

This is the wisdom behind the occurrence of trials and tribulations, so that the believers are purified, exercise patience, become firm upon the truth and are cautioned for their mistakes, and repent to Allah, and the disbelievers in Allah are destroyed. Therefore, (trials and tribulations) are a purification for the believers and destruction for the disbelievers, and all praise and thanks be to Allah. It is obligated to a Muslim that he looks at (the affairs) with optimism-neither looks at history and the state of affairs with pessimism and hopelessness nor make the people lose hope. It has been reported in a hadith: "Whoever says the people are ruined, he himself is ruined". [Muslim]

Therefore, a person should neither lose hope in Allah's Mercy nor does he make people lose hope that Allah will bring about solace.

(Hudhaifah) said: "Will there be a good time again after that evil time?" He (the Prophet) said, "Yes, but therein will be Dakhan (a hidden evil)". I asked, "What will be the evil hidden therein?" He said, "People who will follow ways other than mine and seek guidance other than mine. You will know (their) good points as well as (their) bad points". In this is proof that one should expect solace and not despair of Allah's Mercy. Indeed, good will come after evil. The Muslim should neither despair nor lose hope; he has to wait for solace. However, this has to be accompanied by the deeds one is able to do, statements, spreading knowledge, calling to Allah, telling the people to have certainty and keeping them away from despair and lack of hope. He (the pessimist) says: "Islam and the Muslims have vanished, the affair has ended, and the religion has been annihilated.....and so forth.....". These are Maqaalaat Sayyi'ah (evil statements).

Regarding his (the Prophet's) statement: "But therein (during this period) will be a hidden evil", meaning, there will be something of alteration during that good time. It is a (good time) but there would be something of an alteration in it. This is information given by the truthful one, the one who is believed- (i.e. the Prophet), and indeed good has occurred along with something of alterations.

(Hudhaifah) said, "What will be the evil hidden therein?" Subhaanallaah! This man is precise (in the manner) he presents his questions, and Allah made him utter that which is beneficial and education for the ummah. He (the Prophet) said: "People who will follow ways other than mine and they will seek guidance other than mine". Meaning, they will be matters with them that are (not agreement with the guidance of the Prophet). They are Muslims and believers who possess good, but they will (also) have something of those things that are not (in conformity with the guidance of the Messenger) that will not terminate their Iman and religion; but it will make it deficient. Likewise, there will be deficiencies in worldly affairs. It (has been reported in another) hadith: "No time will come upon you but the time following it will be worse than it, till you meet your lord". Thus, they will have some things that are in (opposition to the Sunnah and the guidance of the Messenger) and they will seek guidance other than that of the Prophet. They will initiate things in opposition to the Sunnah, however it will not be a complete opposition; rather it will be a specific type of opposition. In this is a warning against opposing (the Sunnah) even if that is little.

In this is a warning against seeking guidance other than that of the Prophet, even if that is little because the Prophet referred to it as Dakhan- Meaning, deficiency and Harm. In this is proof that the judgment of disbelief is not passed on the Muslim as long as he does not commit Major shirk or apostates from Islam through one of the nullifiers of Islam. However, he may have some deviations and some things that are not in accordance with the (Sunnah). This either makes him one who is mistaken and misguided or a sinner due to committing a sin that does not expel him from Islam. In this is a fundamental principle from the fundamental principles of Aqeedah that the judgment of disbelief is not passed on the one who commits a major sin; rather this is called Dakhan (hidden evil) and Naqsan (deficiency) in religion, or sin; but it is not called disbelief and apostasy as the Khawaarij and Mutazilah say.

He (the Prophet) said: "You will know (their) good points as well as (their) bad points". You will know the good points of these people and this is proof that they will possess good. You will know their bad points, and this is proof that they will have something of evil that will be in opposition to the guidance of the Messenger. They will possess both good and evil. The Messenger referred to (this period) with good and attested to it, and this is proof that it is good even if there is a hidden evil in it. In this is proof of the Creed of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaa'ah regarding the fact that not every matter that is in opposition to the Prophet's guidance is disbelief; rather, it may be an error, misguidance or deficiency in Iman, and it can also be called evil. There is a differentiation between absolute evil, partial evil and evil that is compared (with other evil things). Therefore, we must name things with their appropriate names.

[Hudhaifah] asked: "'Will there be a bad time after this good one?" He (the Prophet) said: "Yes". This is the third time that evil will occur, but it will be greater than the first time. In the first evil, the people possessed both good and evil. However, these ones will be callers to the gates of hell fire. They do not say to the people, "Come to the hell fire!!", they say: "'Come to progress and civilization, development and conformity with the nations. Do not remain old fashioned and rigid". The meaning of this is to abandon your religion and go along with the people. These are callers to the gates of hell fire-they call (the Muslims) to abandon their religion and affiliate themselves to the disbelievers. This is the call to the hell fire because the hell fire is a promise for the disbelievers. They call the people to that which the people of hell fire are upon – the disbelievers, the idolaters and the atheists. How numerous are these callers in the Islamic world today! Laa Hawla Walaa Quwwata Illaa Billaah!

Therefore, we must issue severe warnings against them. Why? Because they call us to the hell fire, and Allah, The Mighty and Majestic, said about the disbelievers:

أُولَٰئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ

Those (Al-Mushrikoon) invite you to the fire, but Allah invites (you) to Paradise and Forgiveness by His Leave.

He, Glorified and Exalted be He, said about shaytaan:

إِنَّمَا يَدْعُو حِزْبَهُ لِيَكُونُوا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ

He only invites his Hizb (followers) that they may become the dwellers of the fire.

The believer amongst the people of fir'awn said:

وَيَا قَوْمِ مَا لِيَ أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى النَّجَاةِ وَتَدْعُونَنِي إِلَى النَّارِ

And O my people! How is it that I call you to salvation while you call me to the fire.

How did he call them to Paradise and how did they call him to the fire?

تَدْعُونَنِي لِأَكْفُرَ بِاللَّهِ وَأُشْرِكَ بِهِ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَأَنَا أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى الْعَزِيزِ الْغَفَّارِ

You invite me to disbelieve in Allaah and to join partners in worship with Him of which I have no knowledge; and I call you to the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving!

This is the difference between the callers to good and the callers to evil. Indeed, the callers to good invite to (the path of) Allah-to His Religion and Paradise; and the callers to evil invite to the hell fire. (The callers to evil) do not say to the people, "Come to the fire!!" They say, "Come to paradise, these are the actions of the people of Paradise, this is good, this is development, this is rectification, this is and this is...." and they beautify that for the people. Therefore, the Muslims should be cautious of these people. Indeed, they have become numerous in this era, and Allah knows best whether they will increase in the future. They might be facilitated with tools that were not possessed by the previous callers to misguidance, given firm support and the misguidance rapidly reaches the people. The suggestion of the seducer and the falsifier will be adorned and made to appear as something good to the people in any place, whilst it is something evil. This is the height of fitnah.

"Whosoever responds to their call will be thrown into the fire". Whoever responds to them by complying, believing and assisting them, will be thrown into the fire. As for those who do not comply with them, oppose and openly reject what they are upon, they will not harm him. Allah said:

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

And verily this is My Straight Path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path. This He has ordained for you that you may become pious.

The Prophet whilst explaining this Ayah drew a straight line and said, "This is the path of Allah". Then he drew lines to the left and right (of this straight line) and said, "These are the other paths, and on every path is a devil calling the people to it". [Ahmad 1/435]

This is a description of the callers to misguidance, their methodologies and objectives. It has been thoroughly illustrated for us that whatever opposes the Straight Path is a path leading to Jahannam, and whoever abandons the Straight Path is heading towards the Jahannam, even if he regards himself civilized, progressive and open minded.

[Hudhaifah] said: "O Messenger of Allah! Describe them for us".

Look at these amazing questions from this honourable companion?! The Messenger of Allah paused, but he asked him and the Messenger answered him in detail and with clarity. He said, "They will be a people having the same complexion as ours and will speak our language". This is a Calamity!! Indeed, they are close to you, they are from our community and country. Had they been foreigners, from America or other than it, the affair would have been easy; however, the problem is that they are the son of so and so, and it may be that they say, "I am a scholar, I have certifications, I am, and I am.... ". They are from us and they speak our language. They are Arabs like us; rather they possess eloquence. When they write, deliver a speech or a lecture, they speak with our tongue just as Allah said concerning the hypocrites: **وَإِنْ يَقُولُوا تَسْمَعُ لِقَوْلِهِمْ** - And when they speak, you listen to their words. [63:4]

They possess eloquence that overwhelms the listener. The listener listens to them because of their eloquent speech. The Prophet said: "Indeed, some eloquent speech has the influence of magic". [Al-Bukhari 5146]

They speak with our tongue (i.e. the Arabic tongue). Had they spoken with a foreign language or the language of the Persians, there would not have been an inclination towards them, but the problem is that when they speak with eloquent speech, the people are lured towards them. This is the height of fitnah.

Hudhaifah said: "O Messenger of Allah! What would you suggest if I happened to live in that time?" He said: "You should adhere to the Jamaa'ah (the main body of the Muslims) and their leader". In this is a clarification regarding what the Muslim must do when these trials occur and the evils through which people are called to deviation, decadence, agreement with the disbelievers and abandonment of Islam and its rulings. Indeed, the Muslim is not deceived by them, rather he stays with the Jamaa'ah of the Muslims. He adheres to the Jamaa'ah of the Muslims and does not separate from them- neither by way of opinions and beliefs nor statements. He is not deceived by speech and what is falsely made to seem desirable; rather he looks at what the Muslims (who are adhering to Qur'an, the authentic sunnah and understanding of the companions). The Prophet said: "My ummah will not agree upon misguidance". He said: "It is obligated to you to adhere to the Jamaa'ah, for indeed the Hand of Allah is over the Jamaa'ah". [Tirmidhee] So be with the Jamaa'ah of the Muslims.

The Muslims cannot be a Jamaa'ah except if they have a ruler who is obeyed. There is no Jamaa'ah except with a leader and there is no leader except that he is to be listened to and obeyed. Due to this Allah said: **يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ** – O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority” [4:59]

And Allah said:

**وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَ الَّذِينَ يُسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا**

When there comes to them some matter touching (public) safety or fear, they make it known (among the people), if only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have understood it from them (directly). Had it not been for the Grace and Mercy of Allâh upon you, you would have followed Shaitân (Satan), save a few of you.” [4:83]

In this is proof regarding the means to safety from trials, and that is to adhere to the Jamaa'ah of the Muslims and their leader. This is safety by the permission of Allah. As for the one who isolates from the Jamaa'ah of the Muslims and follows the callers to misguidance, he will be destroyed alongside those who will be destroyed. There is a guaranteed safety in adhering to Jamaa'ah of the Muslims and their leader. Allah said:

وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا

And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger (Muhammad) after the right path has been shown clearly to him and follows other than the believers' way (i.e. the way of the companions). We shall keep him in the path he has chosen and burn him in Hell – what an evil destination.” [4:115]

He (the Prophet) said: "It is obligated to you to adhere to the Jamaa'ah, for indeed the Hand of Allah is over the Jamaa'ah. Whoever isolates himself from the Jamaa'ah will be isolated in the fire". He said: "I enjoin upon you to have fear of Allah, and to listen and obey even if a slave is placed in charge over your affairs. For indeed whosoever lives long amongst you will see a lot of differences, so stick to my sunnah and the sunnah of the rightly guided khulafaa after me". Therefore, whoever wants to save himself during these trials and evils, he should not move away from what the Muslims and their leader are holding onto; rather he must exercise patience along with them. Even if he is afflicted with difficulties, he still exercises patience until Allah, The Mighty and Majestic, brings about Solace. This is the path to safety. He (the Prophet) said: "Adhere to the Jamaa'ah of the Muslims and their leader".

[Hudhaifah] said: "What if they have no (such thing as the) main body and have no leader?"

This honourable companion does not stop asking the Messenger questions that contain great benefits for the ummah. He replied: "Separate yourself from all these factions though you may have to eat the roots of trees (in a jungle) until death comes to you and you are in this state". In this is proof (to abandon) all the groups that are in opposition to that which the Messenger conveyed, and that which the pious predecessors of this ummah and their Imams were upon, and that which the Jamaa'ah of the Muslims are upon.



When the Jamaa'ah of the Muslims is no longer (present), Laa-Hawla-Walaa-Quwwata-illaa-Billaah, what should the Muslim do? He should isolate himself from all these sects because they are all deviated sects and callers to the gates of hell fire. He should adhere to the Jamaa'ah of the Muslims if he finds them, and if not, then isolate yourself even if you are alone. Be firm upon the truth even if you are alone, and that is why it is said, "The Jamaa'ah is the one upon the truth even if he is alone". This is the Jamaa'ah, and the Jamaa'ah is not the numerous groups; rather it is the one upon the truth, "though you may have to eat the roots of trees (in a jungle) until death comes to you and you are in this state".

In this is proof that what is given consideration are one's final deeds. Indeed, the one who avoids trials, stays firm upon the truth and exercises patience when facing trials until death comes to him in this state, he will be from the people of Paradise. The one upon whom death comes to whilst he has changed and substituted (the truth, his religion etc) and followed the callers to misguidance, he will be from the people of hell fire.

These are the few statements regarding this tremendous hadith. It clarifies the dangers that are an obstacle to the ummah in their (path, religion). In it is clarification regarding what is obligated to a Muslim during trials and that which is obligated to him in relation to adhering to the Jamaa'ah of the Muslims and their leader, the pious predecessors of this ummah and their Imams. All praise and thanks be to Allah, Lord of the words, and may Allah's peace and blessings be upon our Prophet [Muhammad], his family and all his companions.

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**شرح حديث انا كنا في جاهلية**