

Explanation of Riyaadus-Saliheen (1) Part 1

All praise be to Allaah, the Lord of mankind, and Peace and Salutations be upon the best of messengers and prophets, our master Muhammad and upon his household and his companions;
To proceed:

Riyaadus-Saliheen is one of the greatest and most beneficial books, for what it contains from Qura'aan and Sunnah. As Al-Imaam An-Nawawi compiled in this book many rulings, mannerisms, virtuous deeds, in addition to the inclusion of a provision for awakening a desire and providing a source of fear, which the author has derived from the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah, that every Muslim needs, and He called it Riyaadus-Saliheen.

Riyaad is the plural of Rawdah (garden), and Rawdah is the beautiful garden that contains water and fruits which the inhabitant of it enjoys. What the author mentioned in his book is the garden in which the righteous enjoys for its proofs that are derived from the book and the Sunnah, he lives with its beauty and goodness, and he benefits from it in this life and in the hereafter. And no one enjoys it except the righteous from the servants of Allah those **صلى الله عليه وسلم** who take care of the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger and the matter of their religion is important to them and they love to hold on to that which Allaah has commanded them with, this is the garden (Rawdah) that those people will enjoy.

The word 'Saalih' means righteous which is the opposite of 'Taalih' which is bad or evil and the opposite of 'Faasid' which is corrupt. And righteousness or Salaah is known by following the book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger **صلى الله عليه وسلم**. Corruption (Fasaad), is the opposite of this. So this book is indeed Riyad usSaaliheen.

The author of this book is Imam an-Nawawi, one of the Imaams of Fiqh and of

Hadeeth. He is Muhyiddeen Abu Zakariyyaah Yahya bin Sharaf An-Nawawi Ad-Damashqi al-Faqeeh. An-Nawawi is an ascription to Nawa and Nawa is a village from Harran. Harran is located between Dar'a and the surroundings of Dar'a and Nawa is ascribed to the state of Dar'a today which is in the south of Syria near the Jordanian borders.

So An-Nawawi was a scholar and an Imaam from the Imaams of the land of Shaam. And the land of Shaam is Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon and they have produced many scholars of Islaam and Imaams of this religion. From them was this great noble scholar who authored this book who is known as Imaam an-Nawawi. He has great and precious books that every student of knowledge needs rather the scholars cannot leave the books of this Imaam behind.

With that which is left from this Dunya, the Imaam did not live except for 45 years but Allaah has blessed his knowledge and blessed his books to the extent that the scholar and the student of knowledge cannot leave the books of this Imaam.

From his great books: al-Majmoo'u Sharh ul-Muhaththab - which is a book of Fiqh and is called today al-Fiqh al-Muqaaran, the explanation of Saheeh Muslim - which is a great and well known book, Riyaad us-Saaliheen - this book is well known amongst the scholars and the laymen. Also, from his great books: Tahtheebul Asmaa'i wal-lughaat, which is published and available.

This Imaam was a great Imaam, he was known for Fiqh, knowledge, Zuhd (asceticism) and piety. He used to seek knowledge, studying in one day 12 books and fields from the fields of knowledge under the scholars. He was known for knowledge and authored these great books that we have in our hands today. He was born in 631AH, so he was from the scholars of the 7th century and he died in the year 676AH. Indeed, he was a great Imaam and from the great books that he authored is the one that we are going to explain now.

Praise be to Allaah, and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allaah.

The author said:

All Praise is due to Allah. The One, the Subduer, the Mighty, the Oft Forgiving, and the Alternator of night upon day. A Reminder to those gifted with hearts of understanding and vision of cognisance Enlightenment for men of understanding and admonition.

He caused to awaken from His creation those whom He had selected, then

[instructed them] to renounce this existence. He preoccupied them with His observation, perpetual reflection and cogitation, [followed by] the accompaniment of remembrance and exhortation. He assisted them in the perseverance of obedience to Him, preparation for the Hereafter, vigilance from what He is enraged with and [prepared] and prescribed the dwelling of destruction. [The continuous] observance of that [obedience] with the alteration of conditions and stages.

I praise Him, [with] a more profound and purified form of praise, for it is more comprehensive and extensive [in essence].

I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of being worshipped save Allah the Munificent, the Beneficent. I testify that Muhammad is His slave, His Messenger and intimate friend. The guide to the Straight Path, the caller to the correct Religion, may the peace and salutations of Allah be upon him, and upon the remainder of the Prophets, upon each House, and upon the Virtuous.

The author has started by praising Allaah and sending his salutations upon Him. Before that he started with the basmallah, (صلى الله عليه وسلم) the Prophet the basmallah is to say 'bismillaahi ar-rahmaan nir-Raheem', meaning I start my book in the name of Allaah or In the name of Allaah I start my book. Bismillaah means you are counting on Allaah and you are seeking blessings used to (صلى الله عليه وسلم) with the mentioning of His name. The Prophet started his letters with the Basmalah, however with regards to lectures; he used to start with praising Allaah. And the author started with praise of the Prophet responding to the commandment of Allaah, (صلى الله عليه وسلم), because he was ordered to send and the author started (صلى الله عليه وسلم) his salutations upon the Prophet in response to the (صلى الله عليه وسلم) by sending Salaah upon the Messenger command of Allaah. Allaah has commanded us to send Salaah and Salaam upon the Messenger.

So the author said sallaa Allaahu alayhi wassalaam and we say sallaa Allaahu alayhi wassalaam. And Alhamdulillah it is the description of the one who is being praised with perfection and awe. And the author has described Allaah with perfection and mentioned Him with the attributes of perfection of love and awe.

The meaning of al-hamd is close to gratefulness or gratitude and we are (صلى الله عليه وسلم) commanded to praise Allaah and follow the Sunnah of Messenger by starting our books with praising Allaah. (عليه وسلم)

The author said:

To proceed:

Verily Allah the Most High, stated:

[Surah al-Dhaariyaat : Ayah 56-57].

This is a clear declaration that they (mankind and Jinn) were created for the purpose of worship. They are therefore obligated to concern [themselves] with their purpose of creation [in a diligent and cautious manner]. In addition, [they are duty bound to] renounce the pleasures of this world [by means of] asceticism.

For [this world] is a dwelling of evanescence not a place of perpetuity, a vessel of passage not as residence of delight, absolute severance not an eternal abode.

Accordingly, those vigilant from amongst it's people are the worshippers, and the most judicious of men amongst them are the ascetics.

Allah the Most High stated:

[Surah al-Yoonus : Ayah 24].

There are numerous Verses synonymous in meaning (to the communication above).

Indeed how beautiful is the saying:

Verily for Allaah are the intelligent servants

They abandoned the world for they feared the temptation;

They looked upon it,

When they realised it was not an abode for the one alive,

They placed it in the depths of the Ocean

And they accumulated virtuous deeds upon [her] vessels

And this is from the sharpness of the intellect the author that he has pointed out in the introduction the wisdom for which Allaah has created us and put us

He said, (جل وعلا). in this Dunya. What is this wisdom? It is to worship Him this is the wisdom of your existence, o servant of Allaah in this Dunya and it is from evil and from deprivation that you deviate yourself from this wisdom that Allaah has created you for in the Dunya.

And to deviate yourself to that which opposes this wisdom which is the Dunya. The Dunya: to look at it to enjoy it, to go through it, this will lead you to abandon the wisdom the wisdom in which Allaah has created you for. Because, the opposite of the worship of Allaah and being obedient to Allaah; is seeking the Dunya. It is where you slip, it is that which causes you to lose or to deviate from the wisdom that Allaah has created you for. So the author pointed out this matter specifically because it is the first matter that the believer must know. Allaah did not create you in this Dunya for you to play and to enjoy, no, rather He created you to worship Him alone with no other partners.

Hence, you shouldn't play about in this Dunya and at the same time we do not tell you leave the Dunya and be one of the angels. No, Allaah did not want this from us; if Allaah wanted this from us He would have made us angels. The matter would have reached an end, rather Allaah has ordered us to seek the methods that would aid us in obeying Him and which would make us reach the abode that He has promised us and that will be a dwelling for us, this is what is obligatory upon a Muslim.

It is not permissible for a Muslim to just worship Allaah nad leave seeking provisions and leave seeking the methods of living. At the same time it is not

permissible for him to leave that which Allaah has commanded him to do, so he can expand in the Dunya. It is not this way neither the other way. You say to the servants of Allaah today, 'pray o slave of Allaah' and he would reply: O Shaykh, working is worship. No this is wrong; working is worship in its time. And Salaah is worship in its time. And Allah has given every matter its limits, so you work and you have time to work, a long time. However you do not forget that you have been brought to this Dunya to worship Allaah. Work, is a means, which you take from this Dunya to reach the Aakhirah. And this is what the author wanted to point out.

The author said:

Accordingly, if the matter is as I have described. [And] our condition and that which we were created for is as I have presented, it is an obligation upon the one entrusted to place himself upon the route traversed by the righteous. To proceed upon the path of [those furnished] with intellect and vision, upon those bestowed with that which I have pointed towards, concerned with that which I have cautioned against. [Pursuing it upon] the correct path [for it to be acquired]. [And upon] the path of clear guidance from amongst the [divergent] paths.

I instruct with that which has been authentically narrated from our Prophet, master of the first and the last, most noble of those who proceeded and those who proceeded [him], may the peace and salutations of Allah be upon him, and upon the remainder of the Prophets.

So here, there is another matter. After the author showed us the wisdom for why Allaah created us. Here, he shows what goes against this wisdom, so that you are aware of it. He wanted to show you the way to worship Allaah. And he has mentioned the most guided way for that, which is to adhere to what, has been authentic from our Prophet and our master Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

There is a famous fundamental for the scholars of Islaam. Which is, how does Allaah want us worship Him. And for your worship to be accepted, o slave of Allaah, by Allaah, you must acquire two conditions, if one of these two conditions is invalid, then your worship will be rejected. The first condition, which we have to observe, is Ikhlāas(sincerity), that we are sincere in our worship to Allaah, it is a must that your deed is sincere, that you are not seeking the Dunya or the pleasure of the people or for people to mention you. This is the first condition and the proof will come later In Shā'a Allaah in

the words of the author of the book as he has provided us with the proofs. The second condition is (صلى الله عليه وسلم) from Allaah and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that your worship is upon the same way that Muhammad came with. You should not worship Allaah according to your desires or according to your own opinion or your intellect. No, rather the worship of Allaah should be according to what Allaah has legislated. The proof of this second condition is the saying of the messenger of Allaah:

Whoever performs a deed that is not from our matter then it is rejected.

Meaning that, his deed would be rejected. So, even if your intention is sincere it will not benefit you because there are two conditions to be fulfilled in order for your deed to be accepted. The first is that you are sincere to Allaah and (صلى الله عليه وسلم) the second that it is according to the Guidance of His messenger. It is not that you worship Allaah in the way you want. And if the deed (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is not in accordance to what is in the book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger then it is rejected. And from the great sayings (صلى الله عليه وسلم) Messenger of the Salaf is the saying of Al-Fudayl Bin Ayyaad: when he said about the saying of Allaah:

So Al-Fudayl Bin Ayyaad said: "[meaning] the most sincere and the most correct." This is the righteous deed, the sincere and the correct together. He said, "If the deed was sincere and was not correct it would not be accepted and if it was correct and was not sincere it would not be accepted until it is sincere and correct." And he said, "And the sincere, if it is for Allaah, this is how it is sincere, and the correct, if it is upon the Sunnah, it is correct. Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, the one who explained Jaami ul-Uloomi wal-Hikam, said: and what strengthens what al-Fudayl ibn Ayyad said is that verse in the book of Allaah:

So these are two conditions that he does righteous deed and the deed as Allaah said, let him to righteous work, and the deed is not righteous unless it is upon the Sunnah. And the Allaah said: so the deed must be sincere to Allaah. So these are two conditions that you should fulfil.

(صلى الله عليه وسلم) story that took place at the time of the Prophet will tell you a And I so you can ponder and reflect upon it. Three people went to the (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

and they asked about the worship (صلى الله عليه وسلم) houses of the prophet So the narrator of the story said, directing (صلى الله عليه وسلم) of the prophet his speech to the wives, as if they are saying it is less, they saw that his (the messenger) worship is not enough or is little and they wanted to come with something that is greater. They said: As for the prophet then Allaah has forgiven him for his sins and if he has done something that is not great, it is sufficient for him, however for us we need to do a lot of deeds. So one of them said, as for me I will stand up (in prayer) in the night and I will not sleep. The other said, as for me I will not marry women. the third one said, as for me I'm going to fast and not eat at all. Look at this worship, whoever sees these types of worship will not know what Allaah wants from us. And he would think that these deeds would save the person who would (صلى الله عليه وسلم) perform them as those three thought. So when the prophet heard that, he said, "What is the matter with people who say such and (صلى الله عليه وسلم) such, I am indeed the most pious of you and the most fearing person of Allaah and whoever turns away from my sunnah is not from me. This was the reply Therefore, worship is not permissible. (صلى الله عليه وسلم) of the Messenger to be according to what we desire and what you think is righteous according to your own intellect, it should be according to the guidance of the Messenger And from here, the refutation of the invented matters. (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, every newly invented matter is (صلى الله عليه وسلم) came. The prophet an innovation and every innovation is a misguidance and every misguidance is in Hellfire.

So what is Bid'ah (innovation), it is every type of worship that you seek closeness to Allaah with and has no origin in the book of Allaah and the (صلى الله عليه وسلم) Sunnah of the Messenger

It is a matter to do with worship not a matter to do with the Dunya. Because not every newly invented matter that is not from the Deen, like airplanes and cars, not every new thing comes under the category of Bid'ah. Why, because these are matters of Dunya, they are not matters of worship, we are here talking about worship, these are innovations, that you perform a certain deed (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that has no origin in the book of Allaah and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

Lets ponder upon the words of two great Imams from the the Imams of Islaam, with regards to this subject.

Imaam Maalik bin Anas, the Imaam of Daarul Hijrah and the Imaam who is known to everybody, the founder of the Math-hab al-Maaliki, he said, "whoever invented in the religion of Allaah a certain innovation, has claimed that Muhammad has betrayed the message. Ponder upon it; if you invent an innovation in the religion of Allaah, you have claimed that Muhammad has betrayed the message. Why did the Imam say this? Because you are claiming

did not proclaim the religion perfectly (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that the prophet and you came and you have completed the religion from yourself. Allaah did not take the soul of the Messenger until he completed the religion. Allaahs said: . So the religion has been completed, so any addition is rejected and not came (صلى الله عليه وسلم) accepted. Worship should be upon what the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) with, because if you add anything you are claiming that the Prophet did not complete the religion and this is an addition from yourself. (عليه وسلم)

Imaam Ash-Shafi'ee said, "Whoever invents an innovation, then he has legislated." you are not going to be safe from these two matters, if you invent an innovation. It is either you are a person who legislates with Allaah, and Allaah said: . So the legislation is what Allaah has allowed only, or you are (صلى الله عليه وسلم) claiming that Allaah has allowed this legislation, but the prophet did not proclaim it. So you have no exit from these two matters. (عليه وسلم)

However, a lot of people fall into certain innovations due to their ignorance in these innovations. However they do not want it, but it does not come to their minds. So they must be aware of these matters. Therefore the conclusion which the author has pointed out, that all types of worship must be according (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to the way and guidance of the prophet.