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جهاز الإرشاد والتوجيه

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THE LIFE & THE AQEEDAH OF MUHAMMAD BIN ABDUL-WAHHAB

Introduction by his Highness
Sh. Salih Abdul-Aziz Aal ash -Shaikh
The Minister of Religious Affairs,
Endowment, Da'wah & Guidance

*Revised edition
Compiled by*

Mahmoud bin Ridha Murad

طبع على نفقة صاحب السمو الملكي
الأمير / بدر بن عبد العزيز آل سعود
نائب رئيس الحرس الوطني

**The Prophet ﷺ said:
“Verily, Allah will send to
this Ummah at the
beginning of every 100
years one who revives its
deen for it.”**

Abu Dawood (4291)

**The Life & the Aqedah of
Muhammad Bin Abdul-Wahhab
Revised edition**

**Compiled by
Mahmoud bin Ridha Murad
Second edition
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Prince Abdullah Ibn Abdulaziz Al-Saud
The Crown Prince, First Deputy Premier and Head of National Guard**

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Foreword

All praise is due to Allah, Whose aid we implore, and Whose forgiveness, guidance and protection against our own evil and sinful acts we seek. He whom Allah guides aright, there is none to lead astray, and whom He leads astray, there is none to guide aright. I testify that there is no true god except Allah alone Who has no partner, and I testify that Muhammad, may Allah exalt his mention, is the slave of Allah, and His Messenger. May Allah exalt his mention and render him, his household, Companions, and those who follow their way safe from every evil, and grant them safety on the Day of Resurrection.

Allah has distinguished the Muslim Ummah by raising revivalists from it as a great favor from Him. The reference to the revivalists is made in the following authentic hadeeth: Abu Hurairah said, 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Surely, Allah will send to this Ummah at the beginning of every century one who will revive its deen.'

The prophecy mentioned in the above-hadith, praise be to Allah, has been materialized throughout the history of Islam, regardless of how much Muslims deviated through the ages. The revivalists undertook their missions by

¹ Sunan Abu Dawood

setting good examples for others to follow, and by defending Islam and refuting perverse beliefs.

The great Imam and the renowned reformer, Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab al-Tamimi, may Allah grant him invited Muslims who had deviated from the straight path of Islam to uphold the pure belief in the Oneness of Allah and adhere to His Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ. People for this reason, opposed him vehemently. Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab almost lost his life during the course of his mission. Till this day and age some people are still divided in opinion regarding this great revivalist.

In his book, Al-Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, Shaikh Ahmad bin Hajar al-Bootami, the ex-Judge of the Legal Court in Qatar, states: "The propaganda carried out by the Turks and the sherifs of Makkah at the time, against Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab's mission was responsible for the bad image of the Imam. The Turks and sherifs branded the Imam's mission as 'Wahhabism' in order to serve their political ends. This propaganda was coupled with the scarcity of books. Muslims then were unable to read the Imam's works to judge for themselves how sincere he was to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger,

may Allah exalt his mention. The majority merely accepted without verification, the judgment of those who manipulated public opinion by virtue of their religious or political influence.

A Turkish brother, who used to frequent the Islamic center, which of the four schools of jurisprudence I adhered to, once asked me. I responded that I was and still am, for which I am grateful to Allah, a Sunni Muslim who adheres to the teachings of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, as supported by his authentic traditions, regardless of which *madth-hab* or school of jurisprudence endorses it. Such is the attitude promoted by the four respected Imams: Abu Hanifah, Malik, Ahmad and ash-Shafi'ee.

I did not realize how serious were the consequences of my answer until a few days later when the Turkish brother decided to avoid praying behind me in congregational prayers for I was the imam at the time. He spread the word around that Murad is a 'Wahhabi.'

Later on, I discovered that the Turkish brother received a word from a *mulla* in Turkey instructing him not to pray behind an imam who does not subscribe to one of the

Four *madthahib*. I then began to feel the effect of the brother's reaction in the community. I was referred to, behind my back, as *the 'Wahhabi'* by those who were blinded by *madth-hab* fanaticism, and lacked knowledge of the basics of Islam.

One day I confronted one of them and asked him, 'Can you tell me what is Wahhabism?' Perplexed and shocked as he was, he gave me an honest answer: 'Brother, I really don't know a thing about Wahhabism.'

Another incident that took place during my visit to Trinidad, where I attend a conference held by the Muslim Guild there. The Trinidad Guardian, a leading daily, published a letter to the editor entitled, 'The Islamic Missionaries' Guild Going Fundamentalist' that was signed by someone with the pen name, 'Hanafi Sunni'. The writer attempted to calumniate the Guild for hosting a Saudi delegation headed by his highness, Prince Muhammad bin Faisal who was the Head of the Islamic Affairs in the Saudi Embassy in Washington DC., to whom the writer referred as 'Wahhabis'. In that letter, the writer displayed his ignorance of the fundamentals of Islam by describing the Wahhabis, with tongue in cheek, as 'fundamentalists' not aware that this appellation is given by non-Muslims to

practicing Muslims as a term of defamation while it is in fact a word of praise.

Islam, of course, is based on fundamentals. In this sense, every true Muslim is fundamentalist, because he upholds the fundamentals of Islam! In fact, every Muslim must be a fundamentalist in order to be among those who will enjoy the mercy of Allah on the Day of Resurrection. I mean it in the sense that is void of what the non-Muslim allege it to be.

The author of the letter also, contradicted himself by saying, at one point, 'Wahhabism in its religious form is based on one of the four schools of thought; the Hanbali.' But at another, he quoted an unknown Shiite as saying, 'Wahhabism is sanguinary, fierce and ruthless.' The writer then insisted that the Guild must adhere to its constitution, which declares that the Hanafi school is their creed! One should ask himself, 'What was the school of jurisprudence of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention?'

like most of the Muslims who immigrated from the Indian sub-continent, the majority of the Muslims in Trinidad adhere to the Hanafi school, and they too have misconception about the great Imam, Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab. I responded to the letter in question in an informative, rather than reactive manner.

I pointed out that the four *madthahib* are not the only schools of jurisprudence that have developed in the history of Islam. I also gave a brief of Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab's mission in chronological order, and said that his ultimate objective was to ensure that Muslims follow only the Qur'an and Sunnah.

I said in that letter: I hope that the open-minded Muslims in the Caribbean and elsewhere realize how unjustly Imam Muhammad b. Abdul-Wahhab has been slandered. The Trinidad Guardian was fair enough to publish the letter in its entirety. Later on, representatives of the Guild (who brought me the clipping) told me that my letter left a good impression on many Muslims there. Al- Hamdu lillah.

For the above-mentioned and many other reasons, I feel it is my responsibility to Allah, to the Imam's reputation, and the Muslims at large to clear up the image of the great revivalist, Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab since only few books or articles in English have portrayed him fairly.¹

¹ Some Sufi zealots and grave-worshippers who have obscure religious background try their best to undermine the Imam's reputation by publishing books full of lies against him to distort historical data with no valid references to substantiate their falsehood. The most flagrant and vicious of such

I strongly believe it is the duty of every sincere Muslim scholar, thinker or *da'ee* to try his best to correct the misconception about Shaikh Muhammad b. Abdul-Wahhab in his community. They will be questioned about it on the Day of Resurrection. Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab is still being slandered to this day, knowingly or ignorantly, while Allah the Exalted commands:

Do not backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead? You would certainly abhor it.¹

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, said: "He who defends the honor of his brother, Allah will turn the Fire away from his face on the Day of Resurrection."²

After all, the Mission of Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, the *Salafi da'wah* ³ not only founded a true Islamic state in the Arabian Peninsula, the cradle of Islam, but spread far and wide.

material was published by a person called Huseyn Hilmi Isik from Turkey, who imputes without consideration, *kufir* or blasphemy to the follower of the *Salafi da'wah*, and brands them as Wahhabis.

¹ Q. 49.12

² At-Tirmidhi

³ The *Salafi da'wah* is the call to bring Muslims back to the pure teachings of Islam as practiced by our *Salaf* or the Pious Predecessors.

The *Salafi Da'wah* today, attracts those who adhere to the *Salafi* concept of the first and the best generations of the entire Muslim *Ummah*; the companions of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, and their followers, may Allah be pleased with them all.

I pray to Allah that my humble effort serve the purpose of confirming the truth about one of the greatest revivalists and imams of his time and age as well as our. I also hope to expose attempts of deviated sects and open the eyes of the *madth'hab* fanatics.

M. Murad
Shawwal 1410/ May 1990

Introduction to the second edition

It is most appropriate that this book be introduced by his highness, Shaikh Salih Aal ash-Shaikh, the Minister of Religious Affairs, Da'wah and Endowments in Saudi Arabia. This not because of his official title, rather because he is one of the great-grand sons of Shaikhul-Islam, Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab. This in itself adds genuineness to the book, and gives me the honor for having this work authenticated by a distinguished member of the revivalist's household who is known to uphold a sound Aqeedah, and belong to people of knowledge. And now that he has assumed an important official post, we ask Allah to help him to render the da'wah activities more effective throughout the world.

I am grateful to Allah first and foremost then to Shaikh Salih Aal ash-Shaikh who wrote the introduction of this book, for which I ask Allah to reward him greatly.

I am also pleased to tell that the Ministry of the Religious Affairs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has decided to reprint this valuable book. It is mainly because of the recognition on the part of the Ministry of its significance, and secondly, because it will be distributed all over the world.

On the other hand, I have reviewed the entire book because I used in the first edition certain religious terms that I discovered later that they

were not as accurate. And I have compiled another book containing common mistakes in translating religious texts, whose introduction too is written by his highness, the Minister of the Religious Affairs. I pray to Allah to help the Muslim readers to benefit from it.

The Author
Shawwal, 1420
July, 2000

Introduction

His Highness

Sh. Salih bin Abdul-Aziz M. Al-Ash-Shaikh
Minister of the Religious Affairs,
Da'wah and Endowments
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

All praise is due to Allah Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the *deen* of truth to make prevail over all religions. Allah alone is sufficient as a witness on this fact. I testify that there is no true god except Allah, the King in Truth. And I testify that Muhammad ﷺ, the son of Abdullah, is the Messenger of Allah, the last of Allah's Prophets and Messengers, may Allah exalt his mention.

Islam is the *deen* of pure monotheism with which its adherents are entrusted, and a jewel on the their chests.

Fulfilling its rights can only be accomplished by preaching it sincerely as was revealed by Allah and as preached by the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention.

The *deen*, at times, suffers negligence when its own adherents forsake it under the influence of deviant people, and at times, it is eagerly upheld as the result of the revivalists who revive for people what has been effaced of their *deen*.

Among those whom Allah foreordained that they should erect the landmarks of Islam and its minaret, and to invite people to Islam after they had disregarded it was Shaikhul-Islam, Imam Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, may Allah grant mercy. He strove sincerely for the cause of Allah, and managed to guide Muslims back to Islam to worship Allah alone, ascribing no partner to Him. He addressed all men: "Now come and adhere to what the Mustafa, Muhammad, may Allah exalt his mention, was adhering. Are we but his followers? Is the *deen* but only his?"

The Imam explained the fundamentals of Islam, and erected the structure of monotheism by virtue of explaining and teaching the meaning of the Testification of Faith (There is no true god except Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.)

He upheld the *deen* in its entirety, but moderately. He neither exceeded its bounds nor fell short thereof. Allah helped men benefit from the Imam who laid down the foundation for them as clearly as the sun and the full moon.

The genuine reform *da'wah* of the Imam was and still endeared to people of sincere hearts, though geographically separated yet their souls gathered with concordance. They preach the

belief in the Oneness of Allah, and defend it. They also expose those who defame the Imam, Shaikhul-Islam, clear his image, and give a truthful account of his *da'wah*. Their defense of the Imam is indeed a defense of Islam.

Among those who loved Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab and his *da'wah* is the *da'ee*, brother Mahmoud Murad, the Chairman of Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah Society of North America. He wrote this book to which I have written this introduction, in English out of his desire to clarify the facts, preach the *Tawheed*, or the belief in the Oneness of Allah, and defend the Imam of the *da'wah* in these centuries, and project a genuine image of the Imam's *da'wah*.

Shaikh Mahmoud Murad, I think, has, as I have known him, sincere expression. His society is one of the best to preach the creed of *Tawheed* and the beliefs of the Pious Predecessors and adhere to the Sunnah.

There is a dire need for this book. He did not write it for the sake of writing. He has included in it elaborate details and strung the facts as jewels. This is a book which, indeed, worthy of publishing in the West and receiving proper support.

The respected brother acquainted me with the contents of this book, Salah bin Muhammad Al-Ash-Shaikh. After he read it to me I found it to be compiled with precision. Therefore, I ascertain in this introduction my thanks to the author and ask Allah to grant him success in his work of *da'wah* in North America and elsewhere, and render his endeavor most beneficial, and requite us and him with the best of rewards.

Salih bin Abdul-Aziz M. Al-Ash-Shaikh
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Birth of a revivalist

In an era that resembled Jahiliyah or the pre-Islamic era, a baby boy named Muhammad was born to the noble family of Al-Mushrif, in the year 1115 H.

The pious household in among which the boy was raised stood out like an oasis amidst a hostile desert land. Muhammad's father, a scholar himself, looked after the education of his son who showed ingenuity and shrewdness from an early age. He memorized the Glorious Qur'an at the age of ten. In those days, there were only primary Qur'an & religious schools that children attended to learn reading, writing, and the recital of the Qur'an.

Muhammad memorized from young age Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim and other collections of Hadith. He became a reputable scholar before the age of twenty. The young scholar realized that his fellow-country-men were overtaken by ignorance and un-Islamic rituals (*bida'*). Their deen was reduced to myths, superstitions and polytheistic rituals.

In an attempt to make a change, Shaikh Muhammad, who was opposed by many people at that stage, discussed the prevalent situation with other scholars. But only few of them were receptive, while most were arrogant and hostile.

The dispute that ensued was no longer restricted to Muhammad and his opponents. The deviant leaders formed a powerful lobby with pseudo-scholars who capitalized on people's ignorance and felt the young scholar's mission was threatening their interests.

On the other hand, Muhammad's father and family, along with sincere scholars who were supportive of his mission were also involved in this bitter dispute.

Eventually, Muhammad's father and his family had to leave Uyayinah, and take flight to Huraimilah where they would be safe from the hatred campaign that was waged against the young scholar his many enemies.

Uyayinah became void of Muhammad's supporters, yet he endured the enemies' challenges and persecution with courage and perseverance. The Shaikh debated with them in public places and mosques. A confrontation that forced his opponents to rally pseudo-scholars and mob leaders. The latter managed to undermine the Shaikh's reputation and the reputation of his few young supporters. Thereupon, Muhammad decided to leave Uyayinah till the wave of hatred subsided only to return to it shortly afterwards with more and stronger followers.

Muhammad's first pilgrimage

Having left his hometown, Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab headed for Mecca to perform Hajj, where he met many scholars and jurists. The Makkan scholars were gracious and received him with respect, and held friendly discussions with him. He was happy with their support and receptiveness of other scholars who came as pilgrims from all over the Muslim world.

Later on, he went to Madinah where he met its renowned scholars, Ibn Saif, and Muhammad Hayat al-Sindi. Muhammad studied under the instructions of the Madinah scholars, and benefited greatly from their broad knowledge.

He then returned to his home province, Najd, only to leave it once again but this time to Basrah, Iraq where he gained further religious knowledge that helped him publicize his call to Muslims to adhere to pure Islam and shun innovations more effectively.

He found people in Basra involved in innovations similar to those in Najd. When he tried to preach true Islam, he was beaten up, robbed, and forced to leave Basra in the heat of the day, wearing only a shirt and a 'thawb', with no head cover nor footwear. He returned to Huraimilah where his father and family

settled and continued his battle against falsehood.

Following the death of his father in the year 1153 H., Muhammad stepped up his activities, and his enemies had more reasons to step up their war against him. Nevertheless, his determination did not waver, nor did he succumb to his enemies. He sought help from Allah and continued with greater rigor and fervor, debating and denouncing the polytheistic rituals of his people, using the Book of Allah and the authentic Sunnah as evidence against his enemies who were unable to defeat him.

The plot against the Shaikh's life

The more supporters the Shaikh rallied behind him, the fiercer his enemies became. They planned a plot against his life in Huraimilah, where a gang of slaves owned by two major tribes tried to kill the Shaikh, but were too afraid to execute their plan in the daytime. They climbed the fence of his house during the night, but by the grace of Allah, their attempt was foiled in the last moment and they broke away when some neighbors discovered them.

Shaikh Muhammad left for Uyayinah whose ruler, Uthman bin Ma'mar had already heard

the news about Shaikh and the attempt against his life. He was pleased with his return and gave him an honorable reception.

The Shaikh assured the ruler saying: "If you support the Testimony of Faith (There is no true god except Allah)¹² Allah might give you victory and make you rule Najd and its Bedouins." Uthman took it upon himself to fulfill this duty. Furthermore, he gave the Shaikh his aunt in marriage to strengthen the kinship ties with him. This relationship was fruitful; the ruler, his family and the people of Uyayinah, all benefited. Uyayinah was full of idols in the forms of trees, domes, graves, and the like.

Both the ruler and Shaikh themselves led their followers and destroyed all the idols. Uyayinah became a haven for the seekers of knowledge. The ruler encouraged them and offered them accommodation, and the true

¹² The actual meaning of the Testimony of Faith is 'there is no god worthy of being worshipped except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, meaning Allah must be worshipped only in accordance with the teachings of His Messenger ﷺ. Based on this meaning, Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab asked the ruler of Uyayinah to help promote the true concept of the Testimony of Faith, and eliminate all objects worshipped beside Allah in the lands.

creed of the Oneness of Allah prevailed in Uyayinah and the neighboring lands.

Upon hearing of the growing support for Shaikh, Sulaiman b. Urai'ar, The tyrant ruler of Najd and al-Ahsa' was disturbed. He sent Uthman an ultimatum that if he did not execute the Shaikh he would withhold his income from al-Ahsa'. Uthman was shaken by the ultimatum, and was too afraid to disobey Sulaiman, his superior. The Shaikh, who was very considerate, did not want to expose his host to danger, and agreed to leave Uyayinah. Ibn Ma'mar, on the other hand, maintained his loyalty to the Shaikh and his mission.

The cornerstone of the Islamic state

The year, 1158 H., was marked by Shaikh's move to Dir'iyah where people heard of him and his mission. The ruler of ad-Dir'iyah was Muhammad bin Saud, who had a pious family. He was happy when he found out that the Shaikh's ultimate goal was to revive the *Salafi*¹³ concept of Islam, that is, to understand the Qur'an and Sunnah as they were understood by the Pious Predecessors or '*as-Salaf as-Salih*', the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, may

¹³ The *Salafi*, a term derived from *Salaf*, the Pious Predecessors, or the first three generations of Muslims.

Allah exalt his mention. The ruler promised to support the Shaikh, who in return, assured him victory so long as he supported the cause of Allah and promoted the belief in His Oneness.

Shaikh Muhammad also reminded him of the perseverance of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, and how they endured persecution patiently while enjoining good and forbidding the wrong, and how Allah granted them power. Ibn Saud felt assured that through *jihad*, or fighting for the cause of Allah, Allah joined the believers' hearts with love.

The pledge

Prince Ibn Saud, the ruler of ad-Dir'iyah, rejoiced upon hearing the Shaikh's promise of victory. The receptiveness of the ruler encouraged the Shaikh to speak to the ruler about the polytheistic practices, the manifestations of paganism, and injustice that prevailed in Najd. Shaikh Muhammad spoke of the urgent need of eliminating these practices so that the pure creed of the Oneness of Allah could ultimately prevail. Thereupon, Prince Muhammad bin Saud responded, 'O Shaikh! There is no doubt that this is the *deen* of Allah and His Messenger, may Allah exalt his mention. So rejoice in our support for you and your mission.' 'However,' Ibn Saud went on, 'I have two points to: 'First, I am concerned that

if we support you and fight for the cause of Allah with you, and Allah makes us prevail, you may leave us afterwards. Second, I have imposed a tax on the people of Dir'iyah which I levy in the harvest season." The Shaikh did not need time to think regarding what is lawful in Islam and what is not, nor was he deterred by his need of the Prince's support from speaking the truth. He said, 'As for the first, give me your hand in agreement. Blood is blood, and destruction is destruction.'¹⁴ But, as for the second, may that Allah help you conquer lands, and acquire booty that will free you from the need of such tax.'

¹⁴ The statement, 'Blood is blood and destruction is destruction' is a saying of the Arabs upon consummating a pact or treaty. The Messenger of Allah also made this statement on the occasion of the second pledge or Bai'at al-Aqabah, which was given to him by more than seventy men who were the first Muslims of Madinah. When the men expressed their worries of severing the ties of allegiance with their allies, the Jews, by pledging the Prophet ﷺ loyalty, he made the above statement meaning 'If your blood be sought, my blood shall be sought, and if your blood go for naught, my blood shall go for naught, or, according to another interpretation, 'And where you shall be buried, I will be buried', or 'your abode shall be my abode'. Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab quoted the same statement to Prince Muhammad bin Saud to revive the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on corresponding occasion.

Prince Ibn Saud gave the Shaikh his pledge to preach the creed of *Tawheed*, mobilize Muslims for *jihad* (fighting for the cause of Allah), enjoin adherence to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, enjoin the good and forbid evil, and follow the other teachings of Islam. Thereupon, Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab supplicated Allah to aid Ibn Saud and grant him victory so long as the latter supports the cause of Allah, and establish him and his offspring as imams whose people would approve of.

After consummated this pact, people of Dir'iyah flocked around the Shaikh to study the true Islam with him. The prince himself was one of his students and so were the prince's brothers and the prominent figures of Dir'iyah.

Dir'iyah was crowded with visiting students who had supported the Shaikh since the early stages of his mission. Shaikh Muhammad explained to people the meaning of the Testimony of Faith, and that it comprises negation and confirmation. The first part of the Testification of Faith (There is no true god) denies divinity all objects of worship, while the second part (except Allah) confirms and restricts divinity and dedication of worship to Allah alone. He also explained the concept of Divinity that is derived from the word 'Ilah',

meaning the One to whom the hearts of men are attached and yearn, and they humble themselves to Him in afflictions out of fear, reverence and hope. He also taught them the fundamentals of Islam.¹⁵

It was obvious that the great fame the Shaikh enjoyed aroused jealousy in the hearts of his enemies to the point that they imputed blasphemy to him and libeled him as *zindiq* and a sorcerer. However, this name-calling did not deter him from continuing his mission patiently and diligently. He debated with his enemies in a wise manner; he never met evil with evil. This attitude proved to be effective and turned many of his enemies into loyal supporters of his cause, and paved the way for the Salafi *da'wah*. Even Muhammad's own brother, Sulaiman, who opposed his *da'wah*, and wrote a book against him, finally accepted the truth, apologized to the Shaikh, and admitted that he was motivated by jealousy when he wrote it. He openly expressed his love and respect to his brother.

Delegates from the Arab world headed for Dir'iyah to pledge support for the Shaikh, study Islam with him, and return home to promote the *Salafi da'wah*.

¹⁵ I have already translated his book the Fundamentals of Islam that will be published soon, *in sha Allah*.

The ruler of Uyayinah and its prominent personalities in the meantime, paid tribute to the Shaikh, visited him, and pledged to fight his enemies and hold peace with whom he holds peace with, and support his mission till death.

The ruler of Uyayinah urged his aunt's husband, the Shaikh, to return to Uyayinah, but the Shaikh told him that he had already made a pact with Prince Muhammad bin Saud to stay in Dir'iyah. Ibn Ma'mar urged Prince Bin Saud to release the Shaikh from the covenant to no avail. However, Ibn Ma'mar returned to his land as one of the strongest supporters of the Shaikh.

A year later, Ibn Ma'mar returned to Dir'iyah and renewed his pledge to the Shaikh, and went back home only to be assassinated during a Jum'ah prayer. May Allah grant him mercy.

Having received the sad news of Ibn Ma'mar's death, the Shaikh hurried to Uyayinah for fear of rebellion, settled the affairs there, and appointed the brother of the late ruler, urging the people to obey him so long as he did not promote *bid'ah* or (innovation) in the *deen*.

The Shaikh's students, who studied under his instructions, were sent to different regions and countries to preach the true *deen* of Islam as based on the Book of Allah and the authentic Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention. Hence, the Shaikh's *da'wah*

began gaining grounds as respondents to his mission increased in number in the regions of Najd, al-Ahsa', and Iraq.

The Shaikh's popularity threatened the authority of tribal chiefs and rulers in neighboring regions. They were worried about the growing support of the Shaikh and his *da'wah*, which opposed the religious innovations, oppression, and tyranny. The worst of all these rulers was Dahham bin Dawwas, who was infamous for his reign of oppression, corruption and terror. A slave himself, Dahham took power after assassinating his own master and rallied around him people of his kind.

The Shaikh maintained preaching his *da'wah* with the support of Ibn Saud peacefully, while his enemies were recruiting mob to fight against him and assault his followers. The enemies of Shaikh Muhammad left no choice for him but to take up arms to defend the cause of Allah.

Although he had entered a peace treaty with Ibn Saud, Dahham, the ruler of Riyadh, spared no opportunity of breaching the treaty. He raided Manfoohah, a district next to Dir'iyah, because its people responded to the *da'wah* of the Shaikh, and entered in an alliance with Ibn Saud and the Shaikh. Ibn Saud was forced to retaliate. The ruler of Riyadh continued his

hostility for over twenty-five years from which Prince Muhammad bin Saud emerged victorious. Dahham had fled Riyadh in the year 1187.H., when Abdul-Aziz, the son of Muhammad bin Saud, finally conquered it.

When finally, the pious people, the army of Allah prevailed, Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab committed the political affairs to Abdul-Aziz bin Saud, while he dedicated his time for teaching. Neither the father nor the son ever disposed of any affair without first referring it to the Shaikh to instruct him with its legal ruling, nor did either one execute a sentence before consulting him.

Shaikh Muhammad maintained such a respectable status and reputation throughout his life. When the Shaikh was eighty-six, he still enjoyed sound health and never slowed down or suffered a disease until he died on the last day of the month of Dthul-Qi'dah, 1206.H. [1792] (212 years ago). All the people of the Arabian Peninsula and all the Muslims who upheld the creed of *Tawheed* elsewhere mourned him. May Allah grant him mercy and admit him into *Jannah*.

The mission of the Shaikh became strong enough to withstand all opposition, and by the grace of Allah, the Arabian Peninsula underwent a real change for the better; religiously, politically and otherwise.

The Saudi or the 'Wahhabi regime', (as it is called by the enemies of the *da'wah*) was not founded on a political theory innovated by Shaikh of al-Islam Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, or Muhammad bin Saud. The regime was based on Islam that guarantees justice and happiness to mankind. Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab was not seeking a position throughout his struggle; he was content with being an advisor and instructor. The Shaikh was a religious and social reformer who never isolated himself from people. He tried his best to apply the teachings of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, and the four *Khulafa'* after him until the banner of *Tawheed* prevailed over all the Arabian Peninsula reaching Iraq and Syria.

Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab appeared at a time when the pure belief in the Oneness of Allah was almost ignored, and people of *bid'ah* had the upper hand.

After the death of Muhammad bin Saud, his son Abdul-Aziz succeeded him. Abdul-Aziz received Islamic knowledge from the Shaikh himself. Being certain that Abdul-Aziz was fit for leadership, the Shaikh gave him *bai'ah*, or the pledge of loyalty, and became his advisor.

The Shaikh was content that his *da'wah* yielded its expected results, and the true Islamic society was established in which its

members constituted a single family. Allah the Exalted eliminated through the Shaikh's efforts enmity, hostility, and the feud that persisted for generations between tribes and families, fostering love and friendship in their place; they all returned to the pure Islam. Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab died but his *da'wah*, two centuries later, is still alive, not only in the Arabian Peninsula, but also in the whole world.

characteristics of the Shaikh and his knowledge.

Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab was one of the most prominent scholars, supporting the Sunnah and opposing *bid'ah*. He was an exegete, an authority in the science of Qur'an and Hadith (Prophetic traditions) a grammarian, a jurisprudential fundamentalist and an rhetorician. The Shaikh's attire reflected sincerity, clarity of thought and piety. Five sons, four of whom became scholars, survived him.

He was very generous and charitable, and was respected by all. He inherited all the fine manners from his father and his forefathers who were renowned people of knowledge. He treated poor and rich equally, and endured all

difficulties patiently. His offspring are still producing one scholar after another.

Courage and generosity were the Shaikh's outstanding qualities. He was courageous in denouncing all innovations in matters of religion that prevailed in his country, knowing that it would expose him to danger. It almost cost him his life, yet he believed that life and death are in the hand of Allah, and it is He Who decides the term of one's life.

Imam Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab was on one side and most of the scholars were on the other. The number of the opposing scholars did not waver the Imam's courage or dedication. He still debated with them and denounced their innovations. When the Imam's opponents failed to keep up with the debate, they resigned to forging lies against him. Scholars in his own country and abroad opposed him.

The Imam's strong belief in the Oneness of Allah motivated him to stand alone in defense of the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, against the deviated sects whose leaders were the most influential among people at the time.

Obviously, Shaikhul-Islam,¹⁶ the revivalist, had no worldly ambitions, nor did he exploit *da'wah* to amass wealth or secure power;

¹⁶ It is a title that is usually given to revivalists.

rather he dedicated his life for his mission. Students came to him from everywhere; some of whom were too poor to maintain themselves. He maintained his poor students from his own earnings that comprised a revenue from a farmland. When he died, Shaikh Muhammad left behind a large debt that was paid off from the government trust fund. He left this world with no estate for his heirs, but he left a legacy of knowledge, and fine reputation proving that his main goal was the promotion of the true teachings of Islam.

It is true, that there were several religious reform movements after that of Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab; but his was a unique movement, because other movements were restricted to preaching and could not even reach the stage of paving the way for a political regime to support them. On the contrary, the Imam transformed his movement into a genuine Islamic state. That is why his influence is still reflected in every aspect of the Muslim society.

The Social Reformer and the sincere counselor

There is no doubt that Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab was a unique reformer who left exemplary marks on the contemporary history of Islam. The Imam's reforms were based on a

strong belief in the Oneness of Allah, and on deep-rooted love of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, and his Sunnah. The Imam launched his mission only after he received genuine Islamic knowledge. He understood reform from the Islamic perspective, to involved correcting the *Aqeedah*. Therefore, he began his commission with what the Messenger, may Allah exalt his mention, did. He held the *Aqeedah* as the focal point of his *da'wah*, and taught people the Islamic beliefs from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, not as the pseudo-scholars molded them in inconceivable philosophies and sophisticated dogmas. And he, by the grace of Allah, was successful in his rectitude.

Another important factor in the Imam's success was presenting the *da'wah* to the leader of the people first; knowing that people are subservient to their superiors. The Imam approached Muhammad bin Saud, who was receptive to his *da'wah* and conscious of the need for it. Consequently, Ibn Saud's subjects followed suit. The Shaikh realized that blind adherence would only defeat the purpose of his mission; so he dedicated his time to educating the masses so that they could be vanguards of Islam.

Imam Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab did not work his way in by the sword. Rather, he dispatched his messengers and letters to rulers and scholars, informing them that he was not bringing a new religion, nor promoting *bid'ah* (religious innovation). He was a Muslim who adhered to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, may Allah exalt his mention, preaching Islam as was taught to the Pious Predecessors of the Muslim *Ummah*, (the first three generations of Muslims. The Imam fought only to defend the *da'wah*, and Allah, the Almighty, gave him victory over his enemies.

Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab cautioned the Muslims that their lagging behind, and degradation were only the results of neglecting the teachings of Islam. He further emphasized that progress could be achieved only by adhering to true Islam.

Indeed, Islam was introduced to uncivilized people who became civilized with it, and were poor and became rich. Muslims had strayed away from the real Islam and Allah guided them. They were fragmented and Allah unified them, and were ignorant and Allah made them knowledgeable.

They were staggering in the darkness of myths, superstitions and polytheistic rituals. They were handicapped by these practices and exploited by Sufi leaders. However, due to the

grace of Allah, Muhammad Abdul-Wahhab emerged victorious, declaring the defeat of the innovators and the rest of the deviant sects.

Had Muslim rulers received the *da'wah* of Shaikhul-Islam as Muhammad bin Saud did, they would have regained their power, and history would have taken a different course.

Praise be to Allah, that the *da'wah* of Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab did not stop by his death. The Imam's offspring inherited his knowledge with endurance and perseverance, carrying on the banner of the great revivalist.

The *Aqeedah* of the Imam

When the Imam's enemies failed to refute his sound *Aqeedah*,¹⁷ they resigned to forging lies against him to slander him at home and abroad. They incited the Ottoman rulers to put an end to his *da'wah* alleging that he imputed infidelity to all Muslims except those who followed him. At this point, the Imam announced his *Aqeedah* publicly in an epistle to the people of Qaseem, in which he asserted:

¹⁷ *Aqeedah*, a doctrine upon which one's mind is fully settled or determined; or to which one holds, or a firm belief, in this case the *Aqeedah* of *tawheed* signifies the belief that Allah is the One, and only One Who is worthy of being worshipped.

I hold as Witness Allah and the present angels, and hold you too as witnesses that I uphold the *Aqeedah* of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*, believing in Allah, His angels, His Scriptures, His Messengers, the resurrection after death and predestination and its consequences; good or evil.

I believe in Allah and in the attributes with which He has attributed to Himself, and in what His Messenger, may Allah exalt his mention, described him without distorting or negating their meaning. I believe that "There is none like unto Him, and He is the Hearer the Seer." I negate none of His attributes, nor do I pervert the meaning of His names, nor do I tamper with His words. I believe in the beautiful names of Allah by which He has named Himself, or by which His Messenger named Him in the authentic Sunnah, and that He is qualified with all the attributes wherewith He has qualified Himself; these being hearing, seeing, power, will, speech, mounting His *Arsh* (the Throne) and His descending to the lowest heaven every night, and the rest of His qualities, names and attributes. I also believe in all of His Divine qualities the way they are, and as the pious predecessors believed in them without modality or circumscription, negation or exemplification.

I believe in restricting worship to Allah, the *Rubb*¹⁸ of the worlds, alone, associating with Him neither an angel, a Messenger, nor any of His creatures. And I denounce worshipping anything other than Allah. Such is the Divine wisdom of creating the jinn and man, and sending Messengers and revealing the Scriptures.

I believe in all of the Prophets of Allah and His Messengers, making no distinction between them, and I believe that Muhammad, may Allah exalt his mention, is the best of them. Allah sent him with the stupendous and clear signs. Whoever follows The Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, shall prosper, and whoever disobeys him, shall be doomed to misery.

I believe that the Qur'an is the actual words of Allah. It was sent down from Him; not a created thing. The Qur'an issued from Allah and to Allah it shall return. Allah virtually pronounced the words of the Qur'an, and revealed it to His slave and Messenger, our

¹⁸ Some translate the term '*Rubb*' into 'Lord', the meaning of '*Rubb*' is far more comprehensive than to be restricted to a single word such as 'lord'. *Rubb*, means, among other things, the Creator, the Sustainer, the Provider, and the One in whose hands is the disposal of all affairs.

Prophet Muhammad, may Allah exalt his mention.

I believe that Allah does whatever He wishes and wills; and that nothing takes place against His will or planning, and no one can escape What Allah has foreordained. I believe in the interrogation of the grave, Resurrection and the Great Assembly on the Day of Resurrection when mankind shall stand before the *Rubb* of the worlds bare-footed, naked and uncircumcised. On that Day the sun will be very close to the people. The Scale will be set, and the deeds of the slaves will be weighed. Those whose weights [of good deeds] are hefty, they are the prosperous, and those whose weights are light are the losers.

I believe in the intercession of the Prophet, may Allah exalt his mention, and that he will be the first to intercede, and the first whose intercession will be accepted. Only the people of innovation deny intercession. However, intercession will be approved only after Allah permits. Allah says: "Who is it that intercede with Him except by His leave."¹⁹

¹⁹ Q. 2.255

Allah accepts only the *Aqeedah* of *Tawheed*, (the sound belief in the Oneness of Allah). Only those who uphold this *Aqeedah* will be permitted to intercede. As for the polytheists, "the intercession of the intercessors will not benefit them."²⁰ On that Day, *Sirat* ²¹will be set over Hell that people will have to cross in a speed each according to his deeds.

I also believe that *Jannah* and Hell-Fire, the two everlasting created things are already existent, and that the believers will see their *Rubb* with their own eyes on the Day of Resurrection as clearly as they see the full moon in a clear sky.

I believe that our Prophet Muhammad, may Allah exalt his mention, was the last of Prophets and Messengers, and that no slave can have faith without believing in his Message and testify to the veracity of his

²⁰ Q 74.48

²¹ *Sirat* is a bridge extending over the midst of Hell that mankind shall have to cross. The Prophet ﷺ said: "It is slippery. On it there are hooks, tongs, and spits like the thorns found in Najd known as as-sa'dan. The believers shall cross the *sirat* in a twinkling of an eye, like lightning, like wind, like birds, like the finest horses and camels. Some shall cross the *sirat* safely, some shall be lacerated and let go, and the others shall be pulled into the Fire of Hell..." (Muslim)

Prophethood. The best of the Prophet's Ummah (nation) is Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, then Umar bin al-Khattab, then Uthman bin Affan, then Ali, then the rest of the ten who were given the glad tidings of *Jannah*, then those who attended the battle of Badr, then those who gave the Prophet, may Allah exalt his mention, the first *bai'ah* or pledge of allegiance, then the rest of the Companion, may Allah be pleased with them all.

I relate to the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, and enumerate their excellent deeds, and ask Allah to grant them His forgiveness, and refrain from dwelling on their differences in application of the words of Allah:

"And those who came after them say, 'Our *Rubb!* Forgive us and forgive our brothers who preceded us in faith, and do not leave in our hearts grudge against those who believe. Our *Rubb!* You are truly Compassionate, Merciful.'"²²

I do not impute *kufr* (blasphemy) to any Muslim for committing a sin, and I believe that *jihad*, or fighting for the cause of Allah is effective until the Day of Resurrection, under the leadership of the Muslim *imam*,

²²Q. 59.10

or leader, pious or impious, and so is performing congregational prayers behind a pious or an impious imam. Muslims must Obey their pious or impious rulers whether so long as their commands do not entail disobedience to Allah. He who assumes the office of *Khalifah* by acclamation, or by force, obedience to him becomes a duty on Muslims, and rebelling against him is *haram* or unlawful.

I believe in disavowing peoples of *bid'ah* or innovations in religious matters until they repent to Allah. I judge the innovators by their outward state of affairs, and commit their insights to Allah. I believe that every innovated ritual is *bid'ah*.²³

I believe that *iman* is a combination of utterance by tongue, conviction of the heart, and application by the body. *Iman* increases by obedience and decreases by disobedience. It consists of seventy branches; its uppermost is the Testimony of Faith, and the least of which is removing a harmful object from the road.

²³ *Bid'ah*, is an addition or an impairment, or a religious novelty after the completion of the deen of Islam, or an opinion swerving from the right way, and an action produced after the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions.

Enjoining good and forbidding wrong is a duty that is enjoined on every Muslim by Islam

Such is my *Aqeedah* in brief, which I have written down for you that you may be aware of my beliefs, and Allah is the Witness of our statements.

In another letter the Shaikh sent to Abdurrahman bin Abdullah as-Suwaidi, in Iraq, he asserted: "My *Aqeedah* and my *deen* which I owe Allah, is the *deen* of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah which is upheld by the imams of the Muslim *Ummah* of whom were the Four Imams and their followers.

To summarize, anything that might have been related to me other than preaching *Tawheed*, or the belief in the Oneness of Allah and banning *shirk* or polytheism is falsehood and flagrant lies.²⁴

²⁴ The above are excerpts from a book entitled Ash-Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, by his eminence, sh. Ahmad b. Hajar Al-Boutami, the judge of the Jurisprudential Courts in Qatar.

Some of his works

Despite the fact that he was preoccupied with many affairs of *da'wah* and teaching, the Imam still managed to dedicate some of his time for writing. His works included:

- 1- Abridgment of *Sahih al-Bukhari*
- 2- *Kitab at-Tawheed alladhi huwa Haqullah ala' Abeed*, or the *Aqeedah* of the Oneness of Allah, the Right of Allah upon His slaves.
- 3- *Kitab al-Kabaa'ir* or The Book of or the Major Sins
- 4- *Al-Qawa'id al-Arba'ah*, or The Four Rules of the Belief in the Oneness of Allah
- 5- *Kashf ash-Shubuhah* or Refutation of Dubious Issues
- 6- Abridgment of *Zad al-Ma'ad* or Provisions of the Hereafter by Ibnul-Qayyim
- 7- Abridgment of the *Sirah* or the Prophet's biography
- 8- *Ahkam al-Qur'an*, or Eliciting rulings from the Qur'an
- 9- *Prophetic Traditions*
- 10- *The Fundamentals of Iman*
- 11- *Issues of Jahiliyah* or Pre-Islamic Era
- 12- *Qur'anic Exegesis*

And many other discourses and books dealing mainly with issues of *tawheed*.

Analytical study of the Imam's *da'wah*

The era in which the Imam lived resembled in many respects the early days of Islam, during which the pagans wielded power and distorted the belief of *Tawheed*, and social injustice was prevalent. Although Allah made the Imam's mission successful, yet its enemies refused to admit this fact. Their hate literature excited the naive Muslims against the Imam and those who uphold his *Aqeedah* to the point where the word 'Wahhabism' has become a swear word.

Those who opposed the Imam's *da'wah* in the beginning did so because it threatened their own livelihood and privileges. The enemies had neither the knowledge nor the courage to debate with the Imam. Instead, they turned the mob against him, condemned him to blasphemy, and forged lies against him. Nowadays, all those who resist the call of adhering to the authentic traditions of the Prophet, may Allah exalt his mention, and insist on the blind sectarian fanaticism, expose their falsehood by criticizing the *da'wah* of the great Imam. They do this using the same expressions their predecessors used to condemn him. A method that only proves their spiritual bankruptcy and hatred for the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention. In fact, the enemies of his *da'wah* are the promoters of every *bid'ah* in the Islam.

The Imam's works speak for themselves and refute every flagrant lie against him. He chopped down trees that people used to worship and pray to in Najd. They used to ask those trees things that only Allah is capable of. The trees he cut down resembled the tree which was called 'Dhat Anwaat' which the Prophet, may Allah exalt his mention, ordered to be cut down.

The Imam also demolished the domes that people took as temples for paganistic rituals. His action was indeed courageous and praiseworthy. But self-appointed scholars managed to deceive the rulers and the mob, and imposed on them their innovations. Furthermore, those scholars divided the *Ummah* and sowed seeds of hatred against the Imam and those who responded to his *da'wah*.

They referred to the Imam's *da'wah* as 'Wahhabism' which shows that they were ignorant of the basic grammatical rules of Arabic. 'Wahhabism' is derived from 'al-Wahhab,' which is one of Allah's names meaning 'accorder' or 'granter.' To refer to a person as Wahhabi is exactly as saying he is 'Rahmani,' which is derived from the Divine attribute 'Rahman,' meaning 'merciful.'

In other words, it is a title of praise not dispraise. Since the semi-scholars named his *da'wah* after him, they should have by right, named it 'Muhammadism,' after the Imam's

first name, not after his father's name, Abdul-Wahhab. But the fact of the matter is, his enemies chose the term 'Wahhabism' to discredit the Imam and scare people away from his *da'wah* by creating an ugly image of it.

Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab did not bring a new religion, as cited earlier, nor did he introduce new rites that are different from those in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The followers of the Imam adhere to the school of thought of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal in matters of derivatives of the religion, where differences of opinion among scholars are tolerable. But regarding the fundamentals, they adhere to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, may Allah exalt his mention.

Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab can easily be reckoned with his predecessor revivalists, Shaikhul-Islam, Ibn Taimiyah and his students Ibn al-Qayyim, Ibn Katheer and others. One can freely say that Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab is one of their followers. The Imam received the same accusations that Shaikhul-Islam, Ibn Taimiyah received because both of them encountered the same adversaries, and underwent similar situations.

The Imam's correspondence

In 1204 H. the imam sent a letter to Ghalib bin Saa'id, the Shereef of Makkah, who requested further clarification about his mission. The Imam wrote:

From Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab to the renowned scholars in the Sacred city. *As-Salamu alaikum wa rahmatullah wa barakatuh.*

You must have heard the news as others have about the commotion as a result of demolishing structures that were built on graves of pious people in our land, and of forbidding people to supplicate the dead, and enjoining them to supplicate Allah alone. Having brought this issue into public, it was very disruptive in its effects on the mob that were incited by pseudo-scholars, for reasons that are not obscure to people of your caliber. The most obvious of which is following their greedy impulses along with other reasons. They rumored that we revile the pious people, and that I am not on the path of the scholars. They spread such rumors in the East and the West, and forged against me lies that an intelligent person would be ashamed to utter.

We, praise be to Allah, are followers, not innovators, and adhere to *madth'hab* of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal. And I call on Allah and His angels to bear witness, and I call on you to bear witness that I uphold the *deen* of Allah and His Messenger, may Allah

exalt his mention, and I am a follower of the people of knowledge.¹

The essence of the *da'wah* of Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, or, 'Wahhabism,' as his enemies call it, is to worship Allah alone, and dedicate all acts of worship to Him alone. No Muslim in his right mind would disagree with such fundamentals. Allah says:

"Say, 'Verily, my prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allah, the *Rubb* of the worlds."

As for intercession, Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab and all his followers believe that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, shall be granted the privilege of intercession on the Day of Resurrection. Intercession will be permitted only by the permission of Allah, which will be made on behalf of those whom Allah is pleased with.

¹ Shalkh Muhammad Bin Abdul-Wahhab

The question of Intercession

In his book, at-Tawheed, Imam Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab cited the following Prophetic tradition about intercession:

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, said that he will prostrate himself before his *Rubb* reciting certain praise formulas before interceding. He will be told, 'Raise your head, and speak. You will be listened to. Ask and you will be given. Intercede, and you will be granted the privilege of intercession.'¹

The great scholar, Ibn al-Qayyim classified the Prophet's intercession into six categories:

1- The greater intercession with which only the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, will be privileged. By virtue of this intercession, all mankind will be relieved from the long standing in the assembly on the Day of Resurrection.

2- The intercession which will be undertaken by the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, on behalf of the people of *Jannah*, to be admitted into it.

3- The intercession of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, on behalf of the disobedient Muslims, who deserve the punishment of the Fire, to be taken out of it and be admitted into *Jannah*.

4- The intercession of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, on behalf of those

¹ Authentic tradition

who believe in the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted, that they too may be delivered from Fire, and be admitted into *Jannah*.

5- The intercession of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, on behalf of a group of people in *Jannah*, that their rewards therein may be increased and receive higher ranks.

6- The intercession of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, on behalf of his uncle, Abu Talib, that his punishment in Hell-Fire be lightened.

Awf bin Malik reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "An angel came to me from my *Rubb* and gave me the choice between having half of my nation enter *Jannah*, and the privilege of intercession, so I chose intercession. It shall be made on behalf of anyone who dies ascribing no partner to Allah.¹

This is the concept of *Shafa'ah*, or intercession in general, as upheld by the Imam and his followers, who are called 'Wahhabis.' It is the same concept that is held by Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah. They deny requesting intercession from any creature in this world, be it an angel, a Messenger, a martyr or a virtuous believer.

There are some deviated sects who call on Ali, Hasan, and Husain, asking them to

¹ Ahmad, Vol.3 , At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

intercede with Allah on their behalf. It is not only the 'Wahhabis' who denounce this form of intercession, but also every Muslim who upholds the correct belief in the Oneness of Allah, and a true faithful.

The proper way of requesting intercession in this world is to ask Allah directly: 'O Allah, make your Prophet Muhammad, may Allah exalt his mention, intercede with You on my behalf.' Or, 'O Allah, do not deprive me of his intercession.' Or, 'O Allah, make me among those on whose behalf Your Messenger will intercede with You.'

Who are the opponents of Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab?

The Shaikh's opponents criticize his stance on the issue of grave worshipping. They believe that a grave must be over revered; to make this reverence obvious, they built domes on them and lit candles in them.

The opponents also pray to those buried in the graves to fulfill their needs that only

Allah can fulfill such as healing the sick, enriching the poor, extending life or causing barren women to be fertile. All of these actions constitute *shirk*, or polytheism, and were condemned by Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, may Allah grant him mercy.

To further clarify this point, some Sufis in particular, hold the above practices as part of

their religion. They turn the graveyard, in which a pious person is buried, into a pilgrimage site where they sacrifice animals and practice other innovated rituals. This action doubtlessly constitutes major *shirk* which is punishable by eternal suffering in Hell-Fire.

Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, cursed women who visit graves and those who turn graves into mosques and burn candles in them."¹

Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab and his followers hold consuming liquor and smoking *haram*, or unlawful, because they are harmful, and Allah has made every harmful thing unlawful. They also consider swearing by other than Allah unlawful. The Prophet, may Allah exalt his mention, said: "He who swears by other than Allah commits *shirk*." In another version, he said: "He who swears by other than Allah commits an act of *kufr* (infidelity)."²

In other words, everything the Shaikh and his followers regard as unlawful is based on the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, may Allah exalt his mention.

Many groups have collaborated to excite hatred against Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab and his movement. As a result, the Shaikh had to struggle against them in written and spoken

¹ As-Sunan

² Ibid.

words and in battlefield. The local rulers of the Arabian Peninsula did not only wage such wars against him, but also by rulers abroad.

The Ottoman caliph authorized the ruler of Egypt to subdue the Shaikh's movement, which he branded as Wahhabism. The Shiites, the Sufis and other deviated sects, who were blinded by fanaticism, all stood against the 'renegade'(!) begrudging the success of the 'Wahhabism.'

Hundreds of articles, books and discourses were, and still are written to excite hatred against the 'Wahhabis.' This literature was so detrimental to the point that even people who did not know a thing about the *da'wah* of Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab were scared away from it. They publicly defy and turn the mob against any scholar who was branded as 'Wahhabi.'

The British government at the time exploited the situation and used the term 'Wahhabism' to divide the Muslims in India, thus, serving that country a severe blow. Having branded as "Wahhabis" the Muslim leaders who called for *jihād* against the British colonialists in India, the British Government managed to turn the naive Muslims and the mob against those leaders.

Unfortunately, some scholars in India were deceived by the British scheme; and thus the latter succeeded in turning Muslims against

each other there. They went as far as attempting to kill the national leader of India, Ahmad ash-Shaheed by poisoning his food.

The influence of 'Wahhabism' on the Muslim World

The 12th century (18th AD) was marked with catastrophic affects on the Muslims' freedom, religion, society and economy. The Islamic caliphate then was weak. Both the Eastern bloc (spearheaded by Czarist Russia) and the Western bloc (spearheaded by the British colonialism) collaborated against the Muslim world, thus causing it to lag behind in every field.

This particular stage of history was a stage of stagnation, apathy and indifference, and prevalence of religious innovations and idolatry. It was a stage of decadence and fragmentation of which Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab was aware. Although there were many other scholars like him in Najd, but they were both weak and preferred silence, or were only courageous enough to preach in a safe environment. But the Shaikh was a *Salafi* scholar in the full sense of the word. He was a courageous *da'ee*, or preacher who undertook the burden of his mission with perseverance until Allah aided him with a powerful man, and made through him the truth to shine again in the cradle of Islam.

Similarities between two eras

In his book,¹ Shaikh Ahmad al-Bootami, drew some similarities between the early stage of Islam and the stage in which Shaikh Ibn Abdul-Wahhab existed. He said:

It is not my intention to raise Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab to the level of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, for Allah has distinguished His Messenger, may Allah exalt his mention, over all His Prophets and Messengers, and made him their last; hence his rank is above theirs. As for Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, he was a reformer who revived what was effaced from the *deen* of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention.

Here are some of similarities:

- The time of the Messenger, may Allah exalt his mention, was overcome by perverse beliefs and norms. Idols were taken for gods and were worshipped beside Allah inside the Sacred Mosque and outside of it. The Arabs stooped to the lowest level of paganism and adopted a reviled code of manners, including alcoholism,

¹ Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, pp.94

prostitution, and social injustice and burying baby girls alive.

- People during the time of Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab were also involved to a large extent, in such vile and contemptible behavior.
- Allah sent Muhammad ﷺ as a Prophet after an interval of time during which there was a cessation of the Prophetic function. mankind then needed a savior to deliver them from their predicament, and guide them aright and transfer them from a chaotic state of affairs into peace and security.
- Shaikh Muhammad came at a time when the Arabian Peninsula was in dire need of a reformer to cure its deadly ailments, and bring it back to the pure teachings of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, to deliver its abysmal ignorance and set it back on the straight path.
- Allah, the Exalted, made His Messenger's mission, that is, the belief in the Oneness of Allah, prevail successfully.
- Likewise, Allah made the Mission of Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab successful in reviving the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his

mention, and purifying it from all innovations.

- The Messenger's stay in Makkah, his birthplace, was far from peaceful, for the Quraish made an attempt on his life. He migrated to Madinah after that to escape the mischief of Quraish. The Ansar of Madinah gave him the support and protection he needed to establish the Islamic state.
- Shaikh Muhammad faced the same dangers when Mamaleek and bondsmen made their attempt on his life, and his family suffered persecution. He eventually took flight to Dir'iyah where he found support and protection and was followed by his students.
- The Messenger of Allah ﷺ presented himself to the tribes seeking their support.
- Similarly, Ibn Abdul-Wahhab sought the support of tribes and families.
- During the life of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, in Madinah, Muslims were involved in many battles against the unbelievers, during which the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, himself was at the front fighting the enemies.

- The Imam, the follower and his followers fought the enemies side by side with Muhammad bin Saud and his son Abdul-Aziz, may Allah grant them His mercy.
- The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was kind to those who succumbed to him in battles; and as a result, they accepted Islam and fought beside him.
- He treated those who succumbed to the Shaikh kindly and they became supporters of his mission.

Conclusion

What did they say about the Shaikh

Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab's *da'wah* has become the milestone in modern history of Islam. It prevailed in the Muslim world through the efforts of the scholars who frequented Makkah and Madinah. There are many prominent *Salafi* Muslim scholars who were free from the shackles of fanaticism, who projected in their writings a clear image of Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab's *da'wah*. These scholars spoke well of his *da'wah* and helped promote it among the youth, in particular. Even the orientalist, who did not have prejudices,

were fair enough to speak well of 'Wahhabism' and the man behind it.

Shaikh Muhammad bin Isma'eel as-San'aani, the author of the famous book Subul as-Salam, composed a long poem expressing his joy, upon hearing of the Shaikh's *da'wah* to invite people to the correct *deen* and the pure Sunnah. He also pointed out that his enemies are the Rafidhah, or the Shiites, and the other deviant sects who took arms against him only because he was working to preserve the Sunnah of the Prophet, may Allah exalt his mention, and cleanse it from innovated rituals.

The great scholar Shaikh Muhammad bin Ali ash-Shawkani, the author of Nayl al-Awtar, also composed a long poem praising the role of the Imam in raising high the banner of *Tawheed*, and eliminating idolatry and *bid'ah*. He concluded his poem by urging Muslims to respond to the Imam's invitation to adhere to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, may Allah exalt his mention.

The renowned Iraqi scholar, Muhammad

Shukri al-Ahloosi wrote:

Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab was raised in the house of knowledge; his father was a renowned scholar in Najd. The Shaikh was very particular about following the Sunnah and vehement in opposing the *bid'ah* and he enjoined the good and

forbade the wrong. He began his mission with the *Tawheed*, and the emphasis on the fact that all the acts of worship must be dedicated to Allah alone. All the people who were in Najd learned the true Islam by virtue of his *da'wah*.¹

Shaikh Muhammad Hamid al-Faqi, the head of Jama'at Ansar as-Sunnah in Egypt, wrote:

Shaikh Ibn Abdul-Wahhab did not bring about a new *madth-hab*, or a new religion, but only endorsed the knowledge of *as-Salaf as-Salih*, or the Pious Predecessors. His efforts were focused on reviving the practice of the right religion and calling Muslims to return to the commands of the Qur'an, uphold the creed of the Oneness of Allah, and dedicate all acts of worship with full submission to Allah alone.²

Shaikh Muhammad Sahsawani of India wrote in his book, *Siyarat al-Insan*:

By the blessing of the *da'wah* of Ibn Abdul-Wahhab, Allah eliminated the signs of *shirk* and its monuments, demolished the temples of infidelity, defeated the renegades, enforced the Message of

¹ Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, Ahmad bin Hajar al-Bootami, pp.117

² Ibid., pp.119

Muhammad, may Allah exalt his mention, and gave sincere counseling to the rulers and the ruled of the *Ummah*. As a result, Allah joined their hearts with love after enmity and adversity, and Muslims became brothers by the grace of Allah. Allah granted them victory and power. Najd became the land to which people go in pursuit of the right religion as well as worldly gain.¹

It is a pity to know that some Muslims today still have misconceptions about the Imam and do not try to find out the truth. A Saudi brother who happened to attend weekly Islamic sessions in one of the mosques in India said that the imam who gave those sessions used to invoke Allah's curse on Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab at the end of each session, but he refrained from arguing with him in public. One day, he brought him a book on the *Aqeedah* of *Tawheed* after removing the cover of the book. The mosque's imam read the book and was happy with its contents. When he later discovered that the book was written by Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, he started supplicating Allah at the end of each session to reward Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab and grant him His mercy.

¹ Ibid. pp.136

Dubious publication such as those written by a Huseyn Hilmi Isik spew venom of hatred against the great revivalist and reformer without consideration. This man imputes infidelity to the Imam and his followers. In one of his books, Advice for the Wahhabis, Hilmi wrote about the seventy-two sects which the Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, foretold will go to hell-Fire, but will eventually come out of it, except, according to Hilmi, the Wahhabis who "will remain in Hell forever."¹ The Messenger of Allah, may Allah exalt his mention, declared that he who imputes infidelity or blasphemy to a Muslim, he himself becomes an infidel."²

Hilmi's books have unique style when it comes to degrading the mission of the great Imam Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab. He uses flagrant lies and abusive language, thinking that Allah is heedless of what he writes. In places to where Hilmi's books are sent, I found them lying on shelves collecting dust, while the books of Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab are endeared by Muslims, and the youth among them in particular

The Shaikh's works, by the grace of Allah, are read and studied by educated young Muslims all over the world. Reading the books of the Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab by

¹ pp. 4

² Sahih Muslim

young Muslims is an indicative of the awakening trend among Muslims in general, and of the fact that the influence of the mission of Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, praise be to Allah, is gaining new grounds every day everywhere around the world.

Finally, I am grateful to Allah, the Almighty for giving me the chance to complete this work, in recognition of what I owe the great reformer; and I pray to Allah sincerely to reward him greatly on behalf of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah.

Wal-Hamdu lillahi Rubbil-Aalameen.

حياة و عقيدة الشيخ محمد بن عبدالوهاب

تقديم معالي الشيخ

صالح بن عبدالعزيز آل الشيخ

وزير الشؤون الإسلامية والأوقاف والدعوة والإرشاد

تأليف

محمود بن رضا مراد

طبع على نفقة صاحب السمو الملكي

الأمير/ بدر بن عبدالعزيز آل سعود

ناشر رئيس الحرس الوطني

آخر إصدارات جهاز الإرشاد والتوجيه

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١٥١. منزلة الصلاة في الإسلام د. سعيد بن علي القحطاني
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إدارة التوعية والتوجيه

هاتف : ٤٩١٢٢٢٢ ، ٦٥٨٢ ، الرمز البريدي : ١١١٣٣

E. Mail: alershad@hotmail.com



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