

# ON BOYCOTTING

AL-ALBAANI

March 2013

THEALBAANISITE.COM

الإسلام بين المنهج والحرمة

*“Let not a person belittle or make slight of his vast knowledge, of his copious knowledge, of his tremendous service, of his massive benefit—for he, in truth, is from the unique scholars of this time and from those who have made strenuous efforts in the service of the Sunnah of Allaah’s Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ .”*

[Al-Abbaad](#) on al-Albaani’s Knowledge

**QUESTIONER:** THE FIRST [QUESTION] IS CONCERNING THE TOPIC OF THE 'AQIDAH OF loyalty and disavowal [*al-Walaa wal-Baraa*]: is it permissible for a Muslim that the 'aqidah of loyalty and disavowal be made apparent [i.e., implemented] before, *ya'ni*, establishing the proof against another person, whether that other person is a non-Muslim or someone from other than *Ablus-Sunnah*, *ya'ni*, someone astray ...

**AL-ALBAANI:** If you were to remove the term 'loyalty and disavowal [*al-Walaa wal-Baraa*],' from your question, do you think the question still holds? Because I see that a connection which holds the question together cannot be found if you remove the term 'loyalty and disavowal?'

**QUESTIONER:** No, it does not hold.

**AL-ALBAANI:** Why ... I then don't understand the question, because the completion of your question ...

**QUESTIONER:** Loyalty ... so, the question ... it's as though it is worded incorrectly, in the negative, I mean disavowal ...

**AL-ALBAANI:** Let us repeat the question. What is the question that is connected to [the term] disavowal, is it permissible for a Muslim to what?

**QUESTIONER:** That, *ya'ni*, he starts from the person ...

**AL-ALBAANI:** Now it's clear.

**QUESTIONER:** ... from the action, the basis is for him to start from the action ... but from a person, [*this question is jumbled and not clear, he is saying that if you want to boycott someone you boycott him for the action not because of him personally, so you say the action is misguidance etc., and then afterwards based upon that that the person is misguided etc.*] *ya'ni*, who is involved in this action before the proof being established against him, whether he is a non-Muslim or [a Muslim but] from other than *Ablus-Sunnah*.

**AL-ALBAANI:** Now the question is clear. After this clarification, maybe we can replace the term, 'disavowal,' with another word which will make the question aimed at clearer, i.e., 'disassociation or boycotting,' is this correct do you think, [answer me] so I can go on to answer?

**QUESTIONER:** Disassociation?

**AL-ALBAANI:** Yes, i.e., 'Is it permissible for a Muslim to disassociate [himself] from a non-Muslim and not deal with him and to boycott him, [and] is it permissible for a Muslim to disassociate [himself] from an openly sinning Muslim who does not practice, [is it allowed for the practicing Muslim to] act upon Islaam and boycott him?' This is what is intended from the question or something else?

**QUESTIONER:** Warning, *ya'ni*, against him.

**AL-ALBAANI:** What?

**QUESTIONER:** Warning against him and his *da'wab*.

**AL-ALBAANI:** Warning against him, does this warning against him necessitate cutting off and boycotting him? Say [in response to this question I just asked], 'Of course,' or should he maintain communication and then warn against him? Namely, the question must be clarified until we can come to know the answer.

**QUESTIONER:** ... so that I understand ...

**AL-ALBAANI:** I'm saying, a person is warning against another, does he maintain relations with him or boycott him?

**QUESTIONER:** He boycotts him.

**AL-ALBAANI:** Okay, so there is a correlation, the two issues are linked, after this clarification I now say that I can tackle the answer to the question.

Amongst our problems in this day and age is that we deal with issues based upon emotion.

[What] I want to say is that lots of the youth today who are enthusiastic about their Islaam, their religion, deal with some critical/complex *fiqh* issues in a manner based upon [their] emotions for Islaam ... dealing with [those issues] in a manner not accompanied by knowledge drawn from the Book and the *Sunnah* and the methodology of the Pious Predecessors.

I believe that a question such as this, i.e., warning ... cutting off ... boycotting ... loyalty and disavowal ... these are issues that are connected to a strong Islamic society which is capable of, firstly, implementing issues such as these and secondly, is capable of benefitting from their outcome.

So now, it is not necessary/a prerequisite that [such a] warning is coupled with ostracism or boycotting in this day and age, but as for when our society is an Islamic one then all of these issues must be brought together. Nowadays, for example, there is a very clear example [which I will give you]: the Muslim who doesn't keep up/maintain his prayers [and thus] to whom applies the *hadith* which you mentioned in your [other earlier] question, "*Between a person and disbelief is abandoning the prayer, whoever abandons the prayer has disbelieved,*" the correct, legislated expression concerning this man who I just mentioned is that he be called someone who is defiantly disobedient [a *faasiq*], if not a disbeliever who has apostatized from his religion, it is only by way of using gentler words that he be called, 'not practicing,' he is a *faasiq*, and that disbeliever is more of a *faasiq* than him, so [for now] we will speak about this person and then we may be in need of talking about the one who is ever more defiantly disobedient than him, i.e., the *kaafir*.

This Muslim who has abandoned the prayer has left obedience to Allaah in that issue, for this reason he deserves the title of *faasiq*: if we warned the people against him and, along with this warning, [also] connected what I just mentioned earlier, [i.e.,] boycotting him ... this warning and this cutting off and this boycotting will not produce the results desired by [the implementation of] these three words: warning ... cutting off ... boycotting—why?

Because if you cut off from him you will find tens of people like you who will keep contact with him, and thus the situation will be turned on its head—you will be cut off from him and not him from you, and at that point, what is the advantage of you boycotting him?

This reminds me of a Syrian saying and it has a similar [version] here [in Jordan], but [whatever the case] the Syrian expression says that the people thought that a *faasiq* who had abandoned the prayer repented to Allaah and turned back, and for the first time he goes to the mosque to pray but finds it closed, and so says, ‘You’re closed and [so] I have a day off [from praying]!’ obviously the saying is understood.

Okay, likewise nowadays this *faasiq*, the one who has abandoned the prayer, when you decide to boycott him ... to cut off from him ... to warn against him ... he doesn’t care, [and even if he doesn’t say it with his tongue] his state of affairs says, ‘You’re closed and [so] I have a day off [from praying]! You’re cutting off from me and I’ll cut off from you and distance myself from you,’ and so on.

In summary, the principle of cutting off/ostracizing today is out of the question because we are in a time when the Muslims are weak.

And this connection [that I’m about to mention] which keeps them linked together, [i.e.,] the correct Islaam, represented in his saying عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ in the authentic *hadith*, ‘The example of the believers in their mutual love, mercy and compassion is that of the body, if one part of it complains, the rest of the body joins it in staying awake and suffering fever,’—the Muslims today are not like that.

For this reason we do not have the means which it is fitting to rely on to bring together this widespread and dispersed division of today except by relying on His Statement the Mighty and Majestic:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَدِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best.” [Nahl 16:125]

This is now the means which it is fitting that we rely on.

So when we see a *faasiq* person who has turned away from performing some of what Allaah has made obligatory upon a Muslim, we admonish him and remind him and are gentle with him.

Likewise, when we see a person or people who we cannot call *faasiqs* because we [for example] assume that they are guarding the obligatory duties whose obligation is well-known amongst all of the Muslims, i.e., the type of things [that are so fundamental to the religion and well-known] that they are from the category of actions called, ‘known as being from the religion by necessity,’ for we may find people who perform such obligatory duties and who do not leave them, and [thus] their perseverance in those

obligatory actions comes between us and the application of the term *faasiq* to them, understood [so far]?

Okay, yet along with that it is possible that in these people there is some deviation from the correct *'aqidah* in a certain issue or in many points of *'aqidah*, this is possible, like the groups whose names today we hear recorded in the books dealing with sects and history [but which] we do not find [present] with those names in the current day and age, but we do find their effects in the state of affairs of many of the Islamic *jamaa'ahs* or individual Muslims, the *Mu'tzailah* for example, the *Jabariyyah*, the *Qadariyyah*, the *Khawaarij*, and so on.

In these sects there used to be people who had deviated from the *Sunnah* in *'aqidah* and who were regarded as righteous worshippers, yet along with that would be misguided, for example, 'Umar ibn 'Ubaid al-Mu'tazili, he would be cited as an example in his righteousness and his *taqwaa* but he held the [belief of the] *madhhab* of the *Mu'tazilah*, so it is not said of him that he is a *faasiq* but rather that he strayed from the correct *'aqidah*.

And this type exists today in the Muslim world even if there is no group or *Jamaa'ah* which [verbally] say, 'We are *Mu'tazilah*,'—I haven't heard of anyone except one man who openly declared it in this city in front of the people, he said, 'I'm a *Mu'tazili*,' he said it openly, 'I'm a *Mu'tazili*,' and he really was a *Mu'tazili* and [in fact] even more misguided than they were ... [but] we're not in the middle of explaining that right now ...

So the point is that it is obligatory on us to be gentle with misguided people such as these too and to establish the proof against them from the Book of Allaah, the *Sunnah* of Allaah's Messenger ﷺ, the statements of the Pious Predecessors and the *Mujtahid* Imaams—this is what it is obligatory for our stance to be towards those who have deviated from Islaam in either action or notion, until the Muslims become stronger and gain power and a country, then when these people are told about the correct Islaam and [still] do not restrain from the defiant disobedience [*fisq*] and misguidance they are upon, they then have a different ruling, [but at the same time] this ruling is not connected to individual righteous Muslims [to carry out], but is rather connected to the Muslim ruler, and perchance this is close, if Allaah so wills.

Perhaps I've answered your question?

**QUESTIONER:** Yes, as a completion, what ... [is it] likewise with non-Muslims?

**AL-ALBAANI:** Yes, it is likewise, without a doubt.

**QUESTIONER:** The Jews and the Christians and so on?

**AL-ALBAANI:** Today, regretfully, my brother, the situation of the Muslims is very precarious. Today the Christians, rather the Jews, in fact the Magians live in an Islamic country as natives and the ruler does not differentiate between a Muslim and a non-Muslim, all are covered by the term citizen, and our Lord the Mighty and Majestic says:

أَفَنَجْعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ

“Then will We treat the Muslims like the criminals? What is [the matter] with you? How do you judge?” [Qalam 68:35-36]

For this reason this society which has reached this level of corruption ... it is not permissible for an individual, righteous Muslim who acts upon his knowledge to confront this society with force because he will have to make an about turn, but rather [he should use] the force which cannot be overpowered, and that is the force of proof/evidence and clear statements [explaining the truth].

Next question.

**QUESTIONER:** Also, as a completion, O Shaikh, *ya'ni*, a Muslim's compassion for such a person before, *ya'ni*, establishing [the proof] ...

**AL-ALBAANI:** It is that, all of that ... *ya'ni*:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ط

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction.” [Nahl 16:125]

That is what this means, and in this regard I say that many of our brothers who are enthusiastic for the correct Islaam [wrongfully] look at other Muslims, who have deviated due to their ignorance of the Book and the *Sunnah*, with a look of scorn and contempt and spite and buried hatred. For example, many [astray] Shaikhs permit seeking succour from the Allies [of Allaah] and the righteous, they permit other things even more readily [like] seeking intercession through them instead of the Lord of the Worlds, they permit frequenting their graves and seeking blessings [from them] by coming to them and so on. And another type [of Shaikh] forbids following the Book and the *Sunnah* based upon the fact that [according to them] the general folk do not understand the Book and the *Sunnah*, and they impose blind-following on them, and then the stance of the other people who are with us upon the Book and the *Sunnah* and the methodology of the Pious Predecessors is to have enmity towards these people and to hate them in a most severe manner, such that it is not possible that this person will meet that one—this is a mistake.

I say: these people [who call upon the Allies of Allaah and the righteous etc.] ... I do not refrain from calling them by their [rightful] name ... [i.e.,] people have ‘deviated from the truth [*daaloon*’] and when I [do] say that they have ‘deviated from the truth’ there is no problem in using this expression from an Islamic perspective, for Allaah the Mighty and Majestic used this expression concerning His Messenger عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ [stating] that before the revelation was sent down to him:

وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ

“And He found you lost [*daal*] and guided [you].” [Duhaa 93:7]

Thus, there is no doubt that these people who oppose the Book and the *Sunnah* are misguided/lost [*daaloon*] ... what I want to say is: as long as they are like that then they are ill and it is obligatory for us to be compassionate towards them and to deal with them with gentleness and to call them [to the Truth] as is mentioned in the previous *aaayah*:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَدِّلْهُمْ بِأَلَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best.” [Nahl 16:125]

And we remain in this state until it becomes clear to us from one of them that he is haughty and denies the truth and that kindness and softness have no benefit at all with him, it is then that the Statement of our Lord the Mighty and Majestic comes in to play:

وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

“... and turn away from the ignorant.” [A'raaf 7:199]

Bring the next question.

**QUESTIONER:** I mean, O Shaikh, now ... so that we can move on to the second question [let me just ask about this final point so that all questions on this topic are finished] because it [i.e., the second question] is totally separate from this one ... [so] is this [i.e., the answer you just gave] regarding *Jamaa'abs* as a whole or [is it applied to] people on an individual basis ... when it becomes clear that all of them as a group or sect or such are haughty [subsequently] when someone meets one of them individually should he apply this to them on an individual level?

**AL-ALBAANI:** No. That which is applied to a *Jamaa'ab* is not applied to the individual.

We say, for example, the system and laws of some of the factions present today in the Islamic world, unfortunately, are ones of disbelief, like the Ba'ath Party for example and the Communist Party, there is no doubt that these forms of government are those of disbelief, and that whoever adopts them as religion is a disbeliever.

But we know that as regards the reality in many Islamic countries, especially Syria for example, many of those people who used to affiliate [themselves] to the Ba'ath [Party] used to pray and fast and totally guard the obligatory duties, and [that] when they would be reminded and warned from affiliating to a sect such as it they would say, and their statement was invalid [i.e., incorrect] ... but we understand that they have not adopted Ba'athism as a replacement for Islaam [and we know this] because they would say, ‘*Yaa akhi*, what can we do, we want to live,’ so the example of such a person is like any other obstinate sinner [*faasiq*] who does something forbidden in order to live ... in order to earn a living.

And how many are the trades, professions and businesses many of the Muslims pursue nowadays which contain forbidden things, and when you remind them and tell them that this and that are *haram*, they'll say, ‘*Yaa akhi*, what can we do,’ and the good one from among them will say to you, ‘*Wallaahi*, I'm thinking about getting something ... [getting] another job which will be [Islamically] legal but until it

becomes possible I'll carry on doing what I'm doing,' and so on. This all shows that it is not possible to declare these people to be disbelievers in the same way that we declare the system and all those who [actually] adopt it as a part of their *'aqidah* to be disbelievers.

Therefore, it is possible that individuals in these factions can be found who really are disbelievers because they have adopted their system as a replacement for Islaam and [at the same time] there are individuals amongst them who are not like that and who only, as I gave you an example of just now, take it as a means of living—[but by me saying this] I do not mean that this way is permissible, what I mean is that as long as the individual has not adopted it as creed, as a system [which replaces Islaam], as an ideology, then it is not allowed to deal with them as the system itself and those who do adopt it as *'aqidah* are dealt with.<sup>1</sup>

*Al-Huda wan-Noor*, 735.

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<sup>1</sup> Further answers by the Shaikh on boycotting can be found [here](#).