

SURKHEEL SHARIF

# Salafism Reconsidered

JAWZIYYAH PRESS & TURATH PUBLISHING

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## THE CALL, THE CALLERS AND THE CAMARADERIE

(c.1994, based on Tolkien, *Song of Durin*; *The Lord of the Rings*)

Friends were young, friendship green,  
No stain upon the friends was seen.  
    No bitter words, no hearts alone,  
No torn-up souls, no broken bones.  
When few did walk in love, not hate,  
When few did strive to propagate;  
    A Call so noble, fair and pure,  
That only humble hearts endure.

The Call was fair, it towered tall;  
    In bygone days before the fall.  
Of close-knit friends in Western lands,  
How eager souls strove hand in hand.  
    Description of events of old;  
    All that glitters is not gold.  
    Blessings which did fade away,  
How Call was fair in friendship days.

Home behind, the road ahead,  
And many other paths to tread.  
Through shadows to a joy so bright,  
How hearts and souls were set alight.  
    Forsaking home, forsaking beds,  
    No time to rest those weary heads.  
Through thick and thin, through cold and heat,  
    No time to rest those weary feet.

Unwearied then were friendship folk,  
Beyond the clouds a light awoke.  
The Ancient Call arose again,  
Pseudo-calls they fled in vain.  
Then discord raised its ugly head,  
Truth was tainted, egos led.  
Friendship shattered into parts,  
And schisms darkened humble hearts.

Friends grew distant, friendship grey;  
Stains upon the friends there lay.  
Bitter words, hearts alone,  
Torn-up souls and broken bones.  
Now many walk, who love to hate,  
And egos fight to propagate;  
Words unjust, untrue, impure;  
O how can humble hearts endure?

Hearts grew weary, hearts grew old;  
Souls once warm turned bitter cold.  
Friendship lost, no solid wall,  
The individual voice did fall.  
Though Call slipped pass them by that day,  
Tomorrow Call may come their way.  
For now it lies in waters deep,  
Till friendship wakes again from sleep.



فَيَا  
أَيُّهَا الْقَارِيءُ  
لَهُ وَالنَّاظِرُ فِيهِ، هَذِهِ  
بِضَاعَةٌ صَاحِبِهَا الْمَرْجَاةُ مَسْوُوقَةٌ  
إِلَيْكَ، وَهَذَا فَهْمُهُ وَعَقْلُهُ مَعْرُوضٌ عَلَيْكَ، لَكَ  
عُنْمُهُ وَعَلَى مُؤَلِّفِهِ عِزُّهُ. وَلَكَ تَمَرَّتُهُ، وَعَلَيْهِ عَائِدَتُهُ. فَإِنْ عَدِمَ  
مِنْكَ حَمْدًا وَشُكْرًا، فَلَا يَعْدِمُ مِنْكَ مَغْفِرَةً وَعُذْرًا، وَإِنْ أَبَيْتَ إِلَّا الْمَلَامَ فَبَابُهُ مَفْتُوحٌ.  
Dear reader, these are the deficient wares peddled to you by the author. This  
is his understanding and thoughts presented to you. Yours is the  
benefit, while the author's is the labour. Yours is the  
fruit, while his is the cost. So even if he does  
not earn your praise or thanks, do not  
deprive him of your forgiveness  
and excuses. And if you  
refuse even that,  
and find only  
fault, then  
let it  
be.

### 13. Knowledge Turmoils in Salafistan

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AROUND THE LAST decade, or maybe even less, before Shaykh al-Albani passed away in 1999, he was asked about the state of Salafism in general, and about Kuwait, Egypt and Saudi, in particular. His response:

Regrettably, the Salafi *da'wah* right now is in turmoil (*fi idtirab*). I attribute this cause to the hastiness of many Muslim youths in claiming knowledge. He has the audacity to give fatwas, or [declare] *haram* or *halal*, even before he has knowledge. Some of them, as I've heard many a time, cannot [even] recite a verse from the Qur'an properly, even if the noble *mushaf* is open in front of him ... Many of these people become headstrong and hasty in claiming knowledge, or penning [pseudo] works. This is what makes those who, not having traversed even half the path of knowledge, and ascribe to the Salafi *da'wah*, unfortunately splinter into factions and parties.<sup>145</sup>

Further in the conversation, the Shaykh relates a famous *salaf*-report from 'Abd al-Rahman b. Abi Layla: 'I met one hundred and twenty Companions of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, from the Ansar. There wasn't a man among them who was asked about something, save that he loved his brother to suffice him [by replying].'<sup>146</sup> Al-Albani then reflects on this report, saying:

The reason for this is that they feared making an error that others might then fall into. So each wished they didn't have to carry such a burden, and that another would shoulder this huge responsibility for him. As for now,

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145. Al-Albani, *Jami' Turath fi'l-Manhaj*, 1:184.

146. Cited in Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm* (Riyadh: Dar Ibn al-Jawzi, 1994), no.2201.