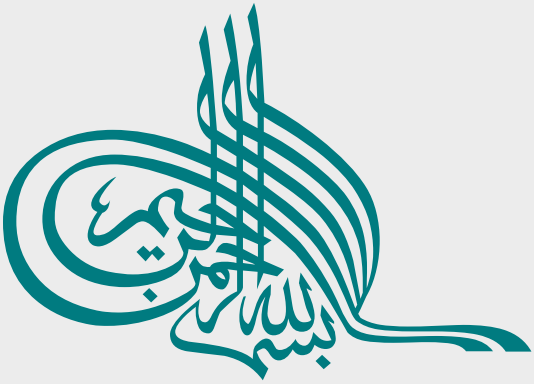
The Pioneer Sect of Islam



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In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Gracious

Introduction

All praise is due to the Almighty Allah, the Lord of mankind and all that exists. May His peace and blessings be upon Muhammed, His messenger, and the Prophet's family, Companions and those who follow their path in righteousness till the Day of Judgement. Our praise is due to the Almighty Allah who has ordained Islam to be the light to mankind, and has obliged His servants to embrace His teachings and harness to one another, so that an ever-lasting success is gained in this worldly life and the Hereafter. Praise is to Him who obliged His servants to refrain from separation and dispute lest they are led to failure and loss. Allah says in the Noble Qur'an: "And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart, and be patient». **(Al-Anfal, 46).** He says addressing His messenger: "Verily, those who divide their religion and break up into sects (all kinds of religious sects) , you (O Muhammad) have no concern in them in the least" **(Al-An'am, 159).** The Almighty Allah does not desire

the following to happen to Muslims "Of those who split up their religion (i.e. who left the true Islamic Monotheism), and became sects, [i.e. they invented new things in the religion (Bid'ah), and followed their vain desires], each sect rejoicing in that which is with it" **(Ar-Rūm, 32)**. Instead, Allah wants us to follow His Straight Path by adhering to the Ultimate Truth represented in His Holy Book (the Qur'an) and the authentic sayings (*Sunnah*) of His messenger Muhammed (peace be upon him) and by not leaning towards the sayings and opinions of humans including scholars if their sayings and opinions contradict the well-established teachings of the Qur'an and authentic *Sunnah*. The Almighty Allah says: «(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger).**(An-Nisa, 59).** Based on this, this booklet aims at familiarizing the reader with some historic jurisprudence and doctrinal facts about the first sect that ever existed in Islam, namely the Ibadi sect, which is also known as the sect of the People of Truth and Straightness, given the fact that a considerable number of Muslims barley know about this sect or they may have heard or read

misleading ideas about it, deliberately fabricated by Bani Umayyad's regime and authors loyal to this mischievous and unjust regime, who took the extra mile to deform the image and tarnish the reputation of the Ibadis. The verse "We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we will indeed follow their footsteps." **(Az-Zukhruf, 23)** talks about Muslims who blindly believe in and follow what their scholars and authors say about the followers of other Islamic sects without taking the trouble to scrutinize and vindicate such irrational and subjective opinions through referring to the real work produced by these Islamic sects. Alternatively, they refer to the work written about Ibadis by their opponents from other Islamic schools and sects. Yet, the aim of clarifying such misconceptions about Ibadis should not be understood as disrespect and contempt to the other Islamic schools. On the contrary, this booklet addresses both Ibadis and non-Ibadis alike aiming at solidifying the beliefs of Ibadis about their sect and bringing the Truth that has been covered for a very long time to the followers of other Islamic sects, so that they get to know the Truth

either by following this sect or at least by being just to it and its followers. It is worth emphasizing that the People of Truth and Straightness (Ibadis) are the most keen followers of and abiders by the teachings of the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) for he has been their leader and role model. Such a fact is established by scholars from other Islamic sects and schools. For instance, in his book entitled «The Ibadis: Methodology and Conduct», the great scholar As-Sayid AbdulHafith Abd-Raboh, who is one of the great scholars of *Al Azhar*, says that "Ibadis are the people of straightness; they are a group of believers about which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said they would be saved from Hellfire. They represent the Islamic group that the Prophet (peace be upon him) urged his followers to follow so that they gain Allah's satisfaction, for they have been keenly following the footsteps of the Prophet and are determined to carry out his sacred mission». The name Ibadis is derived from ***Ibad***, the second name for Abdullah bin Ibad At-Tamimi, the spokesman of Ibadis before Bani Umayyad, the dynasty that took over the State of Islam after the Caliph Ali bin Abi Talib

(May the Almighty Allah be pleased with him) was unanimously elected by Muslims, appeared. Hence, they have been referred to as Ibadis after Abdullah bin Ibad At-Tamimi was thought to be the founder of the Ibadi sect. The latter is a great follower of Jabir bin Zayd (May the Almighty Allah be pleased with him) who passed away 93 years after the Prophet's migration to Medina. He acquired knowledge from the great Companions of the Prophet like ‹Aisha bint Abi Bakr, Ibn Abbas, Ibn Omar (to name but a few) (May the Almighty Allah be pleased with them all). He also acquired knowledge from many other Companions. He was very renowned for his great knowledge that the distinguished scholar Ibn Abbas (May the Almighty Allah be pleased with him) said describing Imam Jabir's abundant knowledge «Ask Jabir bin Zayd for if all people on the face of earth ask him, indeed he would be able to respond to their queries». When Imam Jabir bin Zayd passed away, the great Companion Malik bin Anas (May the Almighty Allah be pleased with him) said «Today, the most knowledgeable scholar on the face of earth passed away». The Ibadis have been following

Imam Jabir bin Zayd's approach and embracing his views on the extrapolating and rooting of religious issues and advisory opinions (*fatwas*) till the present time. His *fatwas* go back to the great Companions that follow the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and authentic *Sunnah*. It is worth noting that the Ibadi sect was the first-born jurisprudence school ever. Thus, it was the school followed by the foremost and great Companions (May the Almighty Allah be pleased with them all). Imam Jabir bin Zayd was born 18 years after the Prophet's migration to Medina, a point in time that goes back 61 years before the birth of Imam Zayd bin Ali who was born 79 years after the Prophet's migration, and 62 years after the birth of Imam Abu Hanifa, the founder of the first *Sunni* Sect. The latter was born 80 years after the Prophet's migration. This gives no doubt that such an Islamic sect (Ibadi) was founded way before all other Islamic sects and schools.

The Ibadhi sect goes back to the day of *Sifeen* Battle led by the legal Caliph Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (May the Almighty Allah be pleased with him) against transgressor Mu'awiyah bin Abi Sufyan and his

mischievous army. A group of the Companions and followers who were fighting with Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (May the Almighty Allah be pleased with him) were for the opinion that the fight against the transgressors, Mu'awiyah bin Abi Sufyan and his army, should not cease. Imam Ali opted for otherwise, and thus that group separated from his army and headed to a place called *An-Nahrawan*. They came to be known latter as *Ahal An-Nahrawan*, a name given to them after the place they headed to. In fact, *Ahal An-Nahrawan* have chosen the optimal view when they advised Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (May the Almighty Allah be pleased with him), the legal Caliph, to persist in his fight against the transgressors and refuse any attempt to elect a new Caliph for Muslims. *Ahal An-Nahrawan* were very clear about their stand that the legal Caliph should fight the transgressors till they come back to the Straight Path by refraining from fighting and submitting to his Caliphate. There is no doubt that their view conforms with the Holy Qur'an as the Almighty Allah says: 'And if two parties or groups among the believers fall to fighting, then make

peace between them both, but if one of them rebels against the other, then fight you (all) against the one that which rebels till it complies with the Command of Allah». **(Al-Hujurat, 9).** Regrettably, Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (May the Almighty Allah be pleased with him) ceased his fight against the transgressors, resulting in noticeable weakness in his caliphate and his ruling of the state of Islam. Consequently, the Levantine zone (Nowadays covering Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon) has become under the command of Mu'awiyah.

The manifesto of *Ahal An-Nahrawan* (those who refused the idea of stopping the fight and electing a new Caliph) was to use no force against any Muslim so that all Muslims are safe for their blood and property. Later in time, however, Nafie bin Al-Azraq and his followers named after him (*Al-Azariqah*) as well as *An-Najdat* and *As-Sufira* (named after Najdah bin Aamir and Ziyad bin Al-Asfar, respectively) formed their own schools of thought and separated from *Ahal An-Nahrawan*. They considered their opponents to be like those who commit great sins *Kaba›ir* and classified all

as disbelievers. Hence, to them, it is permissible to exterminate them. Accordingly, they have become to be *Kharijites* due to such sinful ideology. Unlike the *Kharijites*, those who remained with *Ahal An-Nahrawan* (the Ibadis) were against such sinful ideology, and they were the first people who spared no effort in opposing and fighting against such an ideology. Led by Imam Al-Julanda bin Masoud, the Ibadis fought against the *Kharijites* when they came to Oman led by Shiban, the *Kharijite*. This gives evidence that the Ibadis have nothing to do with the *Kharijites*, and they themselves were fought by the *Kharijites*. Fortunately, the *Kharijites* were eradicated completely. Of them remained those who belong to different Islamic sects and groups, and who have adopted their radical beliefs and thoughts at our present time. Those consider their opponents as non-believers. Hence, they kill Muslims here and there in extremism based on sectarian beliefs, taking *Jihad* as a reason behind such impermissible killings.

It has been witnessed for such a long remembered time that Ibadi has been the best Islamic sect in relation

to dealing with other Islamic sects and groups with opposing views to those of Ibadis due to their deep understanding of the divine teachings manifested in the verse **"**And verily! This your religion (of Islamic Monotheism) is one religion, and I am your Lord, so keep your duty to Me" **(Al-Mu'minūn, 52).** This has made their mission unequivocal aiming at reaching the Ultimate Truth, no matter who brings that Truth. Such an aim is reflected in their behaviors, scholarly work and writings. A concrete example of such an aim is reflected by the highly quoted speech given by Abu Hamza Ash-Shari As-Suleimi (may Allah bestow His mercy upon him) in the very platform of the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) in Medina «Indeed we belong to Muslims and Muslims belong to us except for three: anyone who associates partners with the Almighty Allah via worshiping idols, a disbeliever from those who were given divine revelation (Jewish and Christian disbelievers) and a mischievous unjust Muslim Imam who does not follow the teachings of Islam in his regime».

Another example that reflects the main aim of Ibadis is what Imam Abdullah bin Humaid As-Salmi said

when talking about non-Ibadi fellow Muslims. The meaning of what he said is «We do not demand people anything after they bear witness that there is no God worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammed (peace be upon him) is His messenger. Those who do so are our Muslim brothers and we shall grant them all their rights as fellow Muslims.» Such respect and tolerance to non-Ibadi Muslims was witnessed in the different Ibadi imamates established in Oman, Yemen and Algeria, for their outmost pillar was respect and tolerance of denominations and different religious orientations.

The great scholar Sayed Qutub said «The jurisprudence of Ibadis, their views and advisory opinions are so flexible that they have many common grounds with other Islamic sects, especially those concerning the fundamentals of Islam. This is strong enough to make them Muslims just like other fellow Muslims who belong to other sects and Islamic schools». (Ash-Shihab Magazine, Issue No.15, March 1984)

It should be noted, however, that the Truth is not

necessarily recognized by how many followers a sect has, for Truth might have a few followers when compared to the followers of fallacy. The essence of Truth is manifested in its significance and aims, not in the number of its followers. The number of believers who fought in Medina and Mecca with the Prophet (peace be upon him) against the non-believers was so small in comparison with that of the non-believers. Likewise, the current number of non-Muslims as opposed to Muslims is so huge, but still that does not entitle the majority to be the followers of Truth. The same holds true for those who witness *Fajar* prayer as opposed to those who miss their prayer because of sleep. Such analogy is also witnessed in the number of talented and fruitful people as opposed to others who are not. The Almighty Allah has never praised numerousness in his Holy Book; on the contrary, He vilified numerousness in various situations when He said: (And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly. **(Yousif, 103)** and (And if you obey most of those on earth, they will mislead you far away from Allah's Path. They follow nothing but conjectures, and they do nothing but lie.

(Al-Ana'am, 116) and He said: 'But most men know not' **(Yousif, 68)**.

On the other hand, He has praised fewness when He said: "But few of My slaves are grateful" **(Saba'a, 13),** and He said "How often a small group overcame a mighty host by Allah's Leave?» **(Al-Baqarah, 249).** Therefore, this gives clear evidence that the huge number of followers in a certain sect is not necessarily a sign of Truth in that sect. Ibadism has less followers than other Islamic sects, but it has the Truth reflected in the aims and mission that go hand in hand with the essence of the Divine teachings.

Authentic Fundamentals

The main sources of legislation in the Ibadi sect are the Holy Qur'an, the authentic *Sunnah* (authentic sayings of the Prophet, peace be upon him), unanimous views/advisory opinions of Muslim scholars, and analogy. Ibadis do refer to the authentic *hadiths* in the *Sahihs* of Muslim and Bukhari as well as to the books of *hadiths* and jurisprudence from other sects despite the fact that the comprehensive *Sahih* of Imam Ar-Rabee' bin Habib Al-Farahidi (may the Almighty Allah bestow his mercy upon him), who is Ibadi, was the first book ever on authentic prophetic *Sunnah* and *hadith*. The comprehensive *Sahih* of Imam Ar-Rabee' bin Habib Al-Farahidi is the second source used by Ibadis after the Holy Qur'an, and it is the oldest and most authentic books of *hadiths*. Most of its *hadiths* are narrated by Imam Abu Obaidah who got them from Imam Jabir bin Zayd who in turn got them from the great Companions (may the Almighty Allah be pleased with them all). This *Sahih* comes even before *Sahih* Bukhari when it comes to the authenticity of

its *hadiths* (3).

The great scholar Dar Qutni has praised Imam Ar-Rabee' when he said "Imam Ar-Rabee' of Basra is a great scholar whose knowledge is of a great benefit." (Source: *Aduafa wal Matrukun*, pp. 208). The Syrian scholar Izz A'Deen At-Tanokhi said commenting on *Sahih* Imam Ar-Rabee's: "Indeed it has been so fortunate for a *hadith* to have the two Ar-Rabee's: Ar-Rabee' bin Sabih and Ar-Rabee' bin Habib, as they are the pioneers of those who collected and classified the *hadith*. It is so merciful that the Almighty Allah has protected the book of Imam Ar-Rabee' so that it has reached us, for he was one of the well-trusted, honest and reliable scholars'. (Source, Ibadis among the Islamic Denominations by Sheikh Ali Yahya Muaammar, pp. 152-153).

As mentioned above, Ibadis do show interest in knowing the views and opinions of their fellow Muslims from other Islamic sects and groups, and they show no reservation in using these views and opinions in their scholarly works. Such a fact can be tangibly observed in Ibadi books like ‹The Nile

Encyclopedic Book', ‹Shifa' Al-Aleel' by Imam Muhammed Tufayish, and ‹The Explanation of Imam Ar-Rabee's *Sahih* ' by Sheikh Abdullah bin Humaid As-Salmi, to name but a few. A reader of Ibadis' books would find an unprecedented tendency of using views and advisory opinions of scholars from other Islamic sects, for they have great respect to knowledge and Muslim scholars regardless of their sects, a tendency that can never be found in other Islamic sects and schools. Unlike Ibadis, some Islamic sects and groups spare no effort in deforming the image of other Islamic sects and obscuring the Truth to their followers, let alone referring to the views and advisory opinions of other Islamic sects.

Differences in Forms of Prayer among Islamic Sects

A question that might be raised by Muslims from other sects concerns the difference in the form Ibadis perform prayer. It should be noted, however, that Ibadis are the most keen Muslims to follow the authentic *hadith* "Pray exactly as you saw me praying" and thus Ibadis pray the very way the Prophet (peace be upon him) did and his Companions did after him. This can be vindicated by the fact that Omanis have converted to Islam six years after the honorable migration of the Prophet (peace be upon him) when he sent the Companion Amru bin Al-Aas, (May Allah be pleased with him) to Oman. Following the Prophet's instructions, Amru bin Al-Aas stayed in Oman for a long time teaching Omanis the principles of Islam and making sure that they apply its teachings. Amru bin Al-Aas left for Medina upon the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him) which gives clear evidence that Amru has taught Omanis the very way the Prophet was praying, and Omanis have been praying the very exact way

they were taught clutching to it till our present days.

Upon the death of Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him), Amru has left Oman for Medina accompanied by a delegation from Oman. They met the Caliph Abu Bakr As-Sadiq (May Allah be pleased with him) and he was pleased with their knowledge and grasp of the teachings of Islam. Hence, he definitely witnessed the way Omani Muslims were praying, and they themselves have witnessed the way he and other Companions (may the Almighty Allah be pleased with them all) were praying. (Source, Islamic Democratic Oman, by Hussain Ghabbash, pp. 38-39).

Other great evidence that Ibadis pray exactly like how the Prophet used to pray is the visit of the Omani Companion Mazin bin Ghadubah to Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) in Mecca. He was not taught by a great Companion like Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman or Ali. Instead he was taught how to pray by the first teacher of all Muslims, the Prophet (peace be upon him), who was pleased when Mazin converted to Islam and made blissful supplications

for Omanis. Then, Mazin bin Ghadubah came back to Oman teaching his people the exact way of prayer he was taught by the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Given these facts, Ibadis always refer to authentic *hadiths* and strong pieces of evidence on how prayer should be performed, and they reject unauthentic *hadiths* as well as controversial ones that are classified differently by different scholars. Yet, it is worth mentioning that scholars from all Islamic sects and schools approve the way Ibadis pray, which does not involve raising the hands, holding them to the chest, raising the index finger or saying Ameen. On the other hand, those scholars who say that such acts, those not included in the Ibadis' prayer, are preferable have controversial views on how and when these acts should be done as well as how many times they should be done, which reflects the unauthenticity of these acts as part of prayer.

It is worth mentioning here the most narrated authentic hadith about prayer. A man was not praying properly. The Prophet (peace be upon him) asked him to repeat his prayer three times saying «Pray

again for you have not really prayed». Still, the man continued to pray improperly. After praying for the third time, the man said to the Prophet (peace be upon him) that the way he prayed was all he knew about prayer. Then, the Prophet (peace be upon him) showed him the right way of prayer, and he did not mention raising the hands or holding them to the chest as part of prayer. Hence, scholars of *hadith* highlight that what has been mentioned in this *hadith* is a mandatory part of prayer while anything else that was not mentioned in it is not. The great scholar As-San'ani commented on this *hadith* in his book *Subl As-Salam* (Ways of Peace) saying that "This hadith is an authentic one that is widely cited by scholars to show that all what has been mentioned in it is a mandatory part of prayer while all other forms of practice that are not mentioned are by no means a mandatory part of prayer."

Accordingly, Ibadis have been following the view that was agreed upon by scholars of all Islamic sects, and they have rejected controversial views on which scholars have disagreement. Imam An-Nawawi, a scholar from *Ash-Shafi'i Sunni* sect, on his

explanation of *Sahih Muslim* said "The Islamic nation (*Ummah*) has unanimously agreed that raising the hands during prayer is not a mandatory part of prayer (1)." Imam Malik, the Imam of *Maliki Sunni* sect, views raising the hands during prayer as a hateful act in all cases. The great commentator of Qur'an, Imam Al-Qurtubi, mentioned the views of Imam Malik in his interpretation of Surat Al-Kawthar saying that Imam Malik views raising the hands during prayer a hateful act. In fact Imam Malik himself mentioned the same view in his book *Al Mudawanah* (The Blog), stating it clearly that raising the hands during prayer is an odd act unknown to him. Imam Malik's view was also narrated and cited by other scholars like Al-Ayni in *Sharh Al-Hidaya* (The Interpretation of Straightness). Ibn Az-Zubair, Al- Hasan, and Ibn Sireen. Al-Awzaei, on the other hand, were cited to have opted for optionality of raising the hands, but it is not a mandatory part of prayer.

It is also mentioned in Al-Qurtubi's interpretation of the Qur'an (V. 10, pp. 15) and in the book entitled *Mukhtasar ma Laysa Filmukhtasar* (The Briefing of the Un-briefed) that Imam Malik never raised his

hands while praying. Ibn Al-Qasim said that "I have never seen Imam Malik raising his hands in prayer and he sees it more reasonable not to raise the hands during prayer." It should be emphasized that Imam Malik was living in Medina and he got his knowledge of jurisprudence from the Companions in Medina. This provides strong evidence that the Companions living in Medina were not raising their hands during prayer, for they were praying exactly like Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) used to pray. In sum, these quotes of great scholars regarding Imam Malik's views about raising the hands during prayer indicates the prayer the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray and wanted his followers to follow which certainly included no such acts.

The same view is shared by Imam Jabir bin Zayd, the founder of the Ibadi sect. He learned how to pray from the Prophet's wife ‹Aisha bint Abu Bakr, the Prophet's cousin Ibn Abbas and other great former Companions (may the Almighty Allah be pleased with them all), and he never mentioned or was quoted to say that raising the hands and holding them to the chest are part of prayer. On the contrary, Imam

Ar-Rabee' has narrated a *hadith* (no, 213) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) once said "There will be people after I pass away who raise their hands during prayer like the tails of refractory horses". Other narration of this *hadith* is found in *Sahih Muslim* (no, 430) by Jabir bin Samrah that the Prophet (peace be upon him) once came to us and said "Why are you raising your hands during prayer as if they are like the tails of refractory horses? Refrain from doing that and stay still in your prayer.'

As for ending the prayer with *As-Salam*, Imam Abdullah bin Humaid As-Salmi said that the most common narration is having one *salam* to end the prayer, but another less common view opts for having two *salams*, one when turning right and another when turning left. Hence, the Ibadis opt for the commonly narrated view of having one *salam* to end the prayer, but they view having two *salams* permissible too. Strong evidence for the former view is what has been narrated by 'Aisha bint Abu Bakr, Salamah bin Al-Akwaa, and Sahal bin Saad, (may the Almighty Allah be pleased with them all) in At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Ahmed that «The

Prophet (peace be upon him) was using one *salam* to end his prayer and the *Muhajirun* (the migrants) were also using one *salam* to end their prayer." The great *Shafi'i* scholar Imam An-Nawawi said "Renowned scholars have unanimously agreed that ending the prayer requires one *salam* only". The scholar Ibn Al-Munthir stated that "Scholars have unanimously agreed that a payer ended with one *salam* is right.'

Dear Muslim brother and sister, it goes without saying that following the authentic and agreed-upon views on prayers is much better for your own religion and prayer than following controversial and unauthentic views. Prayer is the first deed one will be held accountable for on the Day of Judgement. Scholars of *hadith* from all Islamic sects do not give value for *hadiths* narrated by a single narrator to be regarded as evidence for issues related to doctrine, for a single-narrated *hadith* is subject to questions, weak narration, and memory problems of the narrator. Dear Muslim brother and sister, since prayer is a very major practice of Islam that comes next after creed, it is worthy of cautiousness and prudence.

It is revealed above that non-Ibadi scholars have unanimously agreed on the authenticity of the way Ibadis pray, for what they abandoned in prayer (e.g. raising the hands and holding them to the chest) is controversial and never agreed upon by scholars of other Islamic sects (5).

Doctrine Issues

Since having the right doctrine is of top priority to Muslims, the People of Truth and Straightness have a distinct doctrine that is far from the corrupted and manipulated doctrines which have led their followers astray. This is due to the fact that the People of Truth and Straightness are keen to use solid, agreed upon, authentic evidence from the Holy Qur'an and the authentic *Sunnah*, not equivocal evidence that is subject to controversy and dispute.

First and foremost, Transcendence of the Almighty Allah

Ibadis show absolute glorification to the Almighty Allah; He is the One that is unlike none of His creatures. Such a belief is based on His description of Himself when He said in the Holy Qur'an: "There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.) **(Ash-Shura, 11).** This verse is an unequivocal verse that is not subject to different interpretations which makes it a solid one when it comes to talking about the Almighty Allah. Other verses, on the other hand, are equivocal and could have different meanings, and thus they are subject to different interpretations. The Almighty Allah, however, made it very clear in His revelation that some verses are unequivocal making the core of the Holy Qur'an while other verses are equivocal and thus they should be judged and interpreted based on the unequivocal ones. Muslims who do not do so and therefore come up with interpretations that contradict the unequivocal verses are in fact devious

from the Right Path and from abiding by Allah's teachings. The Almighty Allah said: "It is He Who has sent down to you (Muhammad) the Book (this Qur'an). In it are Verses that are entirely clear, they are the foundations of the Book [and those are the Verses of Al-Ahkam (commandments, etc.), Al-Fara'id (obligatory duties) and Al-Hudud (legal laws for the punishment of thieves, adulterers, etc.)]; and others not entirely clear. So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking Al-Fitnah (polytheism and trials, etc.), and seeking for its hidden meanings" **(Al-Umran, 7).** Given that, those who give more weight to equivocal verses as opposed to the unequivocal ones have deviation in their hearts and thus they misinterpret the verses to create *fitnah* (dispute and trials) among Muslims. Examples of unequivocal verses are "He begets not, nor was He begotten **(Al-Ikhlas, 3)** and "Allah has permitted trading and forbidden Riba (usury) **(Al-Baqrah, 275)** whose meanings are straightforward and cannot be understood in two different ways by two persons. An example of an

equivocal verse, on the other hand, is "The Jews say: "Allah's Hand is tied up (i.e. He does not give and spend of His Bounty)." Be their hands tied up and be they accursed for what they uttered. Nay, both His Hands are widely outstretched. He spends (of His Bounty) as He wills" **(Al-Maida, 64)** where it could have different meanings and thus it needs interpretation. Taking the verse "There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.)" **(Ash-Shura, 11)** as a foundation verse whereby the Almighty Allah is never like any of His creatures, the above mentioned verse cannot be interpreted as having real physical hands, for such interpretation contradicts this foundation in the unequivocal verse. It should rather be interpreted as His visible and invisible blessings on His creatures or His blessing and power over His creatures. Such an interpretation goes in harmony with the above mentioned verse and it avoids anthropomorphism that could slip into blasphemy.

A God-fearing Muslim should be vigilant not to be deceived by the saying of anthropomorphists that "We

describe the Almighty Allah based on his description of Himself.» Accordingly, they opt for the literal meaning of the verse interpreting it in a way that makes the Qur'an seem like having contradictory notions and messages. The Arabic language is a rich language with abundant use of metaphors whereby a phrase or a sentence could have different meanings, which necessitates careful interpretation of verses of these sorts so that they are interpreted in accordance with the other related verses in the Holy Qur'an. Such devious saying of anthropomorphists has led them to blasphemy; they said that the Almighty Allah has real senses. For instance, they said that He has real hands but they are different from those of humans', far be it from the Almighty Allah for He resembles none of His creatures. The aforesaid saying and interpretation can be proved erroneous and can be refuted by so many verses from the Holy Quran. For instance, Allah said when talking about Noah's Ark "Floating under Our Eyes" **(Al-Qamar, 14).** This verse cannot be interpreted as the Ark was sailing literally under the eyes of the Almighty Allah. It rather means that it was sailing by the grace and

mercy of Allah because He was watching the Ark and He bestowed His mercy and grace over it and its passengers. Following their erroneous saying would implicate that the Almighty Allah has eyes which contradicts the Holly Qur'an and subsequently slips to blasphemic anthropomorphism. Noteworthy, the Holy Qur'an is full of equivocal verses that are subject to different interpretations and can have different meanings, which require explanation and interpretations that do not contradict the unequivocal verses. For instance, the Almighty Allah said in the Holy Qur'an: "The Most Beneficent (Allah) is firmly established on the throne of authority" **(Taha, 5).**

Rising over as used here means absolute control of the throne because the throne, heavens and earth are all under His control upon their creation, and they submitted to the Almighty Allah. This interpretation can be seen in the following verse "To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth and whatever is between them and whatever is beneath the soil." **(Taha, 6).** Rose over the mighty throne here does not mean that Allah sat on the throne, far be it from the Almighty Allah, for this is mere

anthropomorphism that describes Him as an entity that has dimensions and can be contained in a certain zone. Indeed this anthropomorphistic interpretation noticeably contradicts the Holy Qur'an, namely the verse, "There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer" **(Ash-Shura, 11)** as it describes the Almighty Allah just like His creations that can have dimensions and thus can be contained in a certain zone. Indeed the Qur'an does help in interpreting its verses. For instance, the Qur'an says when Prophet Hood (peace be upon him) was convincing his people about his prophet-hood *"I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord! There is not a moving (living) creature but He has grasp of its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on the Straight Path (the truth).»* **(Hood, 56).** This verse can by no means be interpreted that the Almighty Allah is on a path that is straight. It rather means that the Almighty Allah is the Absolute Truth in this universe. Space, time and all that exists were created by the Almighty Allah, and therefore they can never contain Him, far be it from Him, the Creator of heavens, earth and the mighty throne. Indeed, it contradicts the Holy

Qur'an; it goes against common sense; and it does not give Allah His due if one believes that He can be contained by some of His creation like the heavens, earth, and the throne based on false fabricated hadiths narrated by a single person. The Almighty Allah says describing Himself: "It is He (Allah) Who is the only Ilah (God) in the heaven and the only Ilah (God) on the earth.» **(Az-Zukhruf, 84)** and He says in another verse: " There is no Najwa (secret counsel) of three, but He is their fourth, nor of five but He is their sixth, not of less than that or more, but He is with them wheresoever they may be." **(Al-Mugadalah, 7).** The existence of the Almighty Allah in the two above mentioned verses has one and only one interpretation which is the Almighty Allah is in control of all that exists in heavens and on earth, and He is present with His knowledge with everything that exists in the universe. It can never be interpreted as the physical presence of the Almighty Allah, far be it from Him, for He is like none of His creations. Due to these verses and many others in the Holy Qur'an, the People of Truth and Straightness, Ibadis, do believe that the Almighty Allah is one that is unlike

none of His creation, and thus He can never be seen neither in this worldly life nor in the Hereafter. The belief that Allah will be seen by his servants in the Hereafter strikingly contradicts Allah's word when He says describing Himself: "No vision can grasp Him, but His Grasp is over all vision. He is the Most Subtle and Courteous, Well-Acquainted with all things". **(Al-An'am, 103).** The Almighty Allah states it clearly in His Holy Book that no vision can grasp him, and it is obvious that Allah's attributes, unlike His creations', do not change over time or space for He is the creator of space, time and all that exists. He is One, All-knowing, All-hearing ….etc. in this life and in the Hereafter too. Likewise, since He cannot be seen in this life, He will not be seen in the Hereafter for He does not change over time or space.

The limited human mind of those who believe in the physical seeing of Allah will undoubtedly lead them to liken the Creator to the created. This will cause removing His solemnity and greatness from the hearts. The Holy Qur'an regarded the Jews' request to see Allah as an ugly request and ill doing.

Therefore, Allah punished them with thunderbolt. Had seeing Allah been one of Paradise's blessings, thunderbolt would have not struck the Jews as we have never heard of someone requesting a blessing but getting struck with a thunderbolt instead! Allah states "When they said: "Show us Allah in public, but they were struck with thunder clap and lightning for their wickedness" **(An Nisa', 135)**. Contemplate on the word "wickedness" as it tells us that requesting to see Allah is considered as a form of wickedness. Therefore, Allah answered Mosa stating "You cannot see Me," **(Al Aaraf, 143)** which is a challenge resembling Allah's challenge to the unbelievers with "O mankind! A similitude has been coined, so listen to it (carefully): Verily! Those on whom you call besides Allah, cannot create (even) a fly, even though they combine together for the purpose. And if the fly snatched away a thing from them, they would have no power to release it from the fly.» **(Al Hajj, 73)**. The Arabic word *lan* in the two verses translated into *cannot* in English is one that means extreme negation and denotes impossibility. This means seeing Allah and the creation of a fly by the unbelievers will not

come true neither in this life nor in the Hereafter. The verses "Some faces that Day shall be *Nadirah* (shining and radiant). Looking forward to meeting their Lord (Allah);» dignifying the Lord, are interpreted by the verses "And some faces, that Day, will be *Basirah* (dark, gloomy, frowning, and sad), Thinking that some calamity was about to fall on them;" **(Al Qiyamah, 24-25)**. The faces of the first team are shining and radiant because of their Lord's mercy while the faces of the second team are dark, gloomy and frowning waiting for the hatred and anger of Allah. The best interpreter of the Qur'an is the Qur'an itself. Thus, the four previous verses are interpreted in Abasa chapter: "Some faces that Day, will be bright (true believers of Islamic Monotheism) **(39)** Laughing, rejoicing at good news (of Paradise) **(40)** And other faces, that Day, will be dust-stained;" **(Abasa, 38-40)**. The verses talk about the bright and shining faces which are rejoicing at the glad tidings. As for the actual seeing, it is realized by the bare eyes, not the faces!

Oh Dear monotheist, requesting to see Allah belongs to the Jewish creed. Therefore, do not seek this futile and vain request in fear of being lost. Worship Allah dignifying Him from resemblance to His creatures. The sayings reported on seeing Allah are weak and single-narrated. Many books are written by non-Ibadi scholars to refute them. Therefore, these cannot be evidence for creed as known by scholars.

Secondly: Whoever Insists on Sins Eternally Reside in Hell

This issue has a number of branching issues:

1) Ungratefulness for a blessing

The straight and true believers believe that a sinner of great sins who does not repent is considered to be ungrateful for the blessing as he does not utilize Allah's blessings in doing good. Allah says: "This is by the Grace of my Lord to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful! And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for (the good of) his ownself, and whoever is ungrateful, (he is ungrateful only for the loss of his ownself)." (An-Naml, 40) and "Verily, We showed him the way, whether he be grateful or ungrateful" **(Al Insan, 3)**. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, «That which differentiates us from the disbelievers and hypocrites is our performance of *Salat*. He who abandons it, becomes a disbeliever". Therefore, a person who sins is ungrateful for the blessings. However, he should

be treated as a Muslim who deserves to be advised to repent. If he refuses to take the advice, then he should not befriended but left out as a result of not being pious and righteous. He is to reside eternally in Hell, May Allah forbid, if he does not repent as Allah says after mentioning polytheism, killing and adultery "And those who invoke not any other *ilah* (god) along with Allah, nor kill such life as Allah has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse and whoever does this shall receive the punishment **(69)** The torment will be doubled to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace; **(70)** Except those who repent and believe (in Islamic Monotheism), and do righteous deeds, for those, Allah will change their sins into good deeds, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.» **(Al Furqan, 68-70)**. A large body of scholars who belong to the Sunni sects such as *Al Baihaqi*, Ibn Al Arabi and Ibn Hajr (similar to Al Bukhari, Muslim and Ibn Heban) agree with Ibadis about ungratefulness for blessings or committing wrong deeds. It is worth noting that those scholars call it ungratefulness below polytheism.

2) Intercession

According to the belief of the People of Truth and Straightness, intercession only happens for monotheist Muslims who repent and who gain Allah's satisfaction. Allah states: "And they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased. And they stand in awe for fear of Him." **(Al Anbia', 28)**. As for those who do themselves disservice and who insist on wrong doing, it suffices what Allah says about them: "There will be no friend, nor an intercessor for the *Zalimun* (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.), who could be given heed to" **(Ghafir, 18)**. Angels in their supplication ask forgiveness for the repentant only. They pray for them saying: "Our Lord! You comprehend all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who repent and follow Your Way, and save them from the torment of the blazing Fire!" **(Ghafir, 7)**. It is unreasonable as it has not been stated by the Holy Qur'an and Prophet's *Sunnah* and there is not even a single piece of evidence that thieves, adulterers, those who are undutiful to their parents and sinners of great sins are preempted (pleaded for) by the Prophet in the

Hereafter so that Allah forgives them and they enter Paradise! May God and His Prophet forbid! How come and the prophet says “Oh Fatma! the daughter of Muhammed, Oh Safia! the aunt of Muhammed! Buy yourself from Allah as I shall not benefit you more than your deeds.”

As a result, the belief of the People of Truth and Straightness is that the Muslim sinners of great sins who do not repent reside eternally in Hell. They shall not get the Prophet’s preemption or rescue as Allah has classified people into two groups: One in Paradise and the other in Hell. He the Almighty did not state that one group shall first enter Hell, then be transferred to Paradise. He also classified people in the Hereafter into the pious and wicked. There shall be no third group **“**Verily, the *Abrar* (pious and righteous) will be in delight (Paradise); **(14)** And verily, the *Fujjar* (the wicked, disbelievers, sinners and evil-doers) will be in the blazing Fire (Hell), **(15)** In which they will enter, and taste its burning flame on the Day of Recompense, **(16)** And they (*Al-Fujjar*) will not be absent therefrom (i.e. will not go out from the Hell)” **(Al Infitar, 13-16)**.

This means sinners shall never leave Hell. Therefore, a sane person should not claim that a Muslim who does not pray or does not pay money-due (*Zakaat*) or drinks or commits adultery are pious except for those who repent, believe in the Oneness of God and do good deeds. How will a Muslim's deeds be accepted if he does not pray (if a prayer is corrupted, then all other deeds are corrupted too)?.

This applies for those whose prayers are corrupted, how about those who do not pray at all? How will they enter Paradise for a claimed monotheism made by the people who claim they are the victorious or rescued group? Allah says: "Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up *As-Salat* (the prayers) [i.e. made their *Salat* (prayers) to be lost, either by not offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times, etc.] and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell (60). Except those who repent and believe (in the Oneness of Allah and His Messenger Muhammad)» **(Maryam, 59-60)**. How shall a Muslim who takes interest on loans that Allah and His Prophet announced a war

against enter Paradise "Then take a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger". Allah the Almighty has shown the fate of those who take interest if they do not repent "But whoever returns [to *Riba* (usury)], such are the dwellers of the Fire - they will abide therein" **(Al Baqarah, 275)**. May Allah grant us truthful repentance before death.

Dear monotheist, know that the creed of getting out of Hell is an originally Jewish belief "And they (Jews) say, "The Fire (i.e. Hell-fire on the Day of Resurrection) shall not touch us but for a few numbered days. "Say (O Muhammad Peace be upon him to them): "Have you taken a covenant from Allah, so that Allah will not break His Covenant? Or is it that you say of Allah what you know not?" **(81)** Yes! Whosoever earns evil and his sin has surrounded him, they are dwellers of the Fire (i.e. Hell); they will dwell therein forever." **(Al Baqarah, 80-81)**. Allah also says about them "but they chose (for themselves) the goods of this low life (evil pleasures of this world) saying (as an excuse): "(Everything) will be forgiven to us" **(Al Araf, 169)**.

The above has been the belief of the People of Truth and Straightness with strong, clear and pure Qur'anic evidence backed up with the Prophet's *Sunnah*. Imam Bukhari narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) saying "Any governor in charge of Muslim subjects who dies while acting dishonestly towards them will be excluded by Allah from Paradise." Al Bazaar, Ahmed, An Nesaeei and Al Hakim narrated that Ibn Omar narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) says «Neither a drunk nor undutiful to parents shall enter Paradise» and in another narration «Allah forbids Paradise from three persons: drunk, undutiful to parents and cuckold». The cuckold is the one who accepts his wife sleep with other men. It is reported that Imam Muslim narrated «The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, «There are two types of people who will be punished in Hell and whom I have not seen: men having whips like the tails of cows and they will be beating people with them and women who will be dressed but appear to be naked, inviting to evil, and they themselves will be inclined to it. Their heads will appear like the humps of the Bactrian camel inclined

to one side. They will not enter Jannah and they will not smell its fragrance which is perceptible from such and such a distance.» These sayings, though single-narrations, collectively mean the same. Therefore, the belief of the People of Truth and Straightness that Paradise is limited to only the pious is supported by "Such is the Paradise which We shall give as an inheritance to those of Our slaves who have been *Al-Muttaqun* (pious and righteous persons" **(Mariam, 63)**, "Verily, for the *Muttaqun*, there will be a success (Paradise);" **(An Naba', 31)**, "Verily, for the *Muttaqun* (pious and righteous persons are Gardens of delight (Paradise) with their Lord." **(Al Qalam, 34)** and "That home of the Hereafter (i.e. Paradise), We shall assign to those who rebel not against the truth with pride and oppression in the land nor do mischief by committing crimes. And the good end is for the *Muttaqun* (pious)". May Allah make us pious and purified!

Third: The Creation of the Revealed Qur'an

This issue is more political than religious as it dated back to the late Umayyad period. It was brought by Al Jaad bin Dirham and made into riot among Muslims. Some fanatic Muslims regarded this issue to be basic and they went as far as to consider those who do not believe in it to be disbelievers despite their strong evidence. There is no doubt that the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his honored Companions knew and believed that Allah created everything. Everything except Allah is created.

Ibadis believe that the Qur'an is the word of Allah the Almighty. It began after Allah but it is not as uncreated like Allah. The Qur'an was created and then revealed at the Power (*Al Qadr*) night in the low sky. It was revealed to Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) gradually according to events at a span of a few and twenty years. Similar to the creation and revelation of rain and iron, Allah created the Qur'an

then revealed it.

The word of the Lord is divided into:

1) Inward speech: It means the negation of dumbness from Allah.

2) Literal speech: denotes the letters and words revealed (created features). This shows that Allah's knowledge about the Qur'an is eternal. Thus, it is impossible that He is ignorant of it. All matters and issues are known by Allah eternally. However, known things may be eternal (their existence is not preceded by nonexistence) like God's knowledge that He is Hearing or it may be originated (created after nonexistence) like Allah's eternal knowledge about the creation of the Qur'an whose creation is originated.

The evidence for the creation of the Qur'an is Allah's description of it as revelation "Comes not unto them an admonition (a chapter of the Qur'an) from their Lord as a recent revelation" **(Al Anbiya':2)** and "And never comes there unto them a Reminder as a recent revelation from the Most Beneficent (Allah)" **(Ash-Shu'raa, 5)**. Revealed, as stated in the Qur'an, is a past participle which means Allah created it after it was not present. This is contrary to the word "eternal".

Another piece of evidence for the creation of the Qur'an is "We verily, have made it a Qur'an in Arabic, that you may be able to understand (its meanings and its admonitions)" **(Az-Zukhruf, 3)** "And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, fears Allah, and keeps his duty (to Him), such are the successful ones" **(Ash-Shura, 52)**. The word "made" means created like when Allah says in the creation of day and night "And have made the night as a covering (through its darkness), And have made the day for livelihood" **(An Naba', 10-11)** meaning created in addition to other evidence to refer to that goes beyond the scope of this booklet. The Qur'an

is the words of Allah which are originated as there is no relation between inward and literal words.

Among the scholars of the *Sunni* sect who stated the creation of the Qur'an are Iman Al Fakhr Al Razi and Al Tahir bin Aashour. Also, Imam Bukhari stated that when a man asked him about the utterance in the Qur'an, Al Bukhari said «Our deeds are created and our utterances are from our deeds».

This is the summary of Ibn Taimiyah's statement. Refer to the book «*Muqtadha Madhab Ibn Taimiyah Anna Al Qur'an Makhlouq*" written by Ahmed Mahmoud Mansour.

The ones claiming that the Qur'an is eternal have fifty opinions "The people of Ahmed bin Hanbal have disagreed and produced fifty different opinions". After this disagreement, is it reasonable that a Muslim glorifies the fallible at the expense of refuting the prophet's statement?

The scholar Abu Ishaq says «Perhaps the most just opinion about the disagreement is that it only relates to the literal meaning as the people believing in the

creation of the Qur'an mean the written and oral book, while others refer to its meaning. Allah knows best!»

To complete the bright picture of the Ibadis is to say that Omanis emraced Islam voluntarily during the wise reign of Abd and Jayfar, the sons of Al Julanda Al Ma'wali. Then, the first Imamate taking the way of the wise Caliphate was established by Imam Al Julanda bin Masoud Al Ma'wali. Then Imamates succeeded until recently and for a period over a thousand years.

Moreover, Ibadis established a wise Imamate in Yemen (the Seeker of Truth state) and in Algeria a civilized great state «Rustum State» which were established according to a divine political methodology to manage the reign taken from the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. This has not been found in other sects. Read, if you desire, for the Professor Hussein Obeid Ghabash, from Emirates, about the traditions of the true Imamate and Democracy Ibadis established in Oman. He says «The Ibadi movement found its ideological and intellectual identity in an earlier

time. Through Ibadis' keeping of consultancy, free election of Imamates, agreement and contracting, it is possible to consider the Ibadi sect the true successor of Caliphate's system especially in its first phase (the phase of Abu Bakr and Omar), May Allah be pleased with them.

All praise is due to Allah, the Ibadi sect, since its inception until today, has renowned scholars who got educated from the preceding generations in a golden continuous series throughout decades since the time of the Prophet's Companions. Those Companions got the knowledge from the Prophet (peace be upon him), Gabriel- May Allah's blessings be upon him, and from Allah the Almighty.

The Ibadi library is full of books on the fundamentals and branches of religion. Some of their writings exceed more than ninety volumes. A scholar may have 90 volumes for a book he wrote like Qutub Al Aimah Sheikh Muhammed bin Yusuf Itfeyish. It is worth noting that the books of Ibadis which have not yet been published exceed those that exist now. Therefore, a seeker of the truth should refer to the

books of Ibadis and not listen or read books written by outsiders so that he may get the clear truth which he will hopefully hold tightly to.

Finally, Dear brother! I ask Allah for me and you to enable us to seek the truth, follow it and purify our deeds and sayings. I ask Him for piety and good ending.

May Allah gather us all in the Right way He is satisfied with, unify our words and unite us. Oh God show us the Truth and enable us to follow it.

May Allah's blessings be upon Prophet Muhammed, his family and Companions. The last of our prayers is all praise is due to Allah.

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Comments

For more information about the sect of the People of Truth and Straightness, refer to the following:

1. Basirah website www.baseera.net

2. Almajarah website www.almajarah.com

3. Nafosa forum network www.nafosa.net

4. Noor Alestiqamah forum www.noor-alestiqamah.com.net

