

The Position of the Scholars Regarding Osama Bin Laden

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Introduction

In the name of Allāh, the most merciful, the bestower of all mercy. All praise and thanks are for Allāh and may peace and prayers be on Allāh's messenger, his family, and his companions.

Muslim brothers: May Allāh make us, in times of blessings, thankful. And in times of hardships, patient, because there have certainly appeared in our time lots of widespread tribulations. Circumstances have changed, religious corruption has occurred, hearts have become divided, religious innovations have risen, and murderous ways have been adopted. All of these things indicate that this worldly life is coming to an end and the last hour is approaching. And all of these things that are now prevalent, the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) informed us about, warned us against. The companions heard this from him, and their successors transmitted it, and scholars conveyed it to us – a chain of authentic narrators.

From these tribulations and afflictions which many youth from this (Islamic) nation have been tested with is a misfortune known as Osama Bin Laden. He's brought about hardships and humility all for the sake of reviving the ways of the Khawārij while attributing such tribulations to the Salafi methodology and attributing his terrorist acts against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other Muslim lands to the Islamic legislation – all in the name of Jihād.

But Allāh destined for there to be some great scholars from this (Islamic) nation acting as watchtowers, exposing Bin Laden's faults and disclosing his plots. However, deviant callers try their utmost to hide and suppress the religious rulings of the well-known, senior scholars from reaching people. Still, Allāh refuses except that He will manifest truth and suppress falsehood, for falsehood will always perish.

So, here you have – may Allāh have mercy on you – these religious verdicts documented regarding the one known as Osama Bin Laden.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Bāz¹

As for what people like Mohammad al-Massari and Saad Faqih² and others like them do today – those who spread corruptive, deviant methodologies – no doubt, this is one of the greatest evils and they are the callers to this evil, and widespread corruption. It is a religious obligation to warn against their teachings (i.e. books, audio, etc.), to confiscate them and destroy them and to never cooperate with these people in anything that invites corruption, wickedness, falsehood, and tribulations. This is because Allāh has instructed us to cooperate in righteousness and piety and not cooperate in anything that brings about corruption, evil, the spreading of lies and false calls that result in nothing but division and a loss of safety among other things.³

Such teachings circulated by Faqih, al-Maasari, or other callers to misguidance, wickedness, and division must be stopped and destroyed and never looked into. These people must be warned and guided back to the truth and cautioned against their falsehood. It is absolutely impermissible for anyone to cooperate with them in such evil. They must return to guidance and leave and reject this baseless way.

My advice⁴ to Al-Massari, Faqih, Bin Laden, and anyone following their way is to give up this destructive path they’ve taken, to fear Allāh and fear His retribution and anger. They must return to guidance and repent to Allāh for what they’ve done. Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ) has promised the repentant to accept their repentance, saying:

¹ Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Bāz (1909-1999) was the former Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia

² A simple online search (ex: Wikipedia, Google, etc.) will provide information on who these individuals are.

³ One proof for this is the verse in the Quran:

﴿ وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ﴾

And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression.

[Sūrah al-Māi’dah, 5:2]

⁴ It should be kept in mind that this article of Ibn Bāz (who died in 1999) was written many years ago, before 9/11 and before many other crimes these individuals have committed.

﴿ قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ ﴾

Say: Oh my servants who have transgressed against themselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allāh. Certainly, Allāh forgives all sins. Indeed, it is he who is the forgiving, the merciful. And return back to your Lord and submit to him before the punishment comes upon you; then you will not be helped.

[Sūrah al-Zumar, 39:53-54]

And he (سُبْحَانَهُ) says:

﴿ وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴾

And turn to Allāh in repentance, all of you, oh believers, that you might succeed.

[Sūrah al-Nūr, 24:31]

And there are many verses to this effect.⁵

Shaykh Ibn Bāz also mentioned that Osama Bin Laden is someone spreading corruption on earth, following evil and destructive ways, and has revolted and challenged the leaders and authorities.⁶

⁵ This article was taken from “al-Buḥūth al-Islāmiyyah” magazine, (No. 50, pgs. 7-17).

⁶ These statements were taken from “al-Muslimūn” and “al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ” newspapers (in the Arabic month of Jamādā al-Ūwá in 1417 Hijrah – which corresponds to 1996 C.E.).

Shaykh Muqbil Ibn Hādī al-Wādi'ī⁷

The scholar of Yemen, Shaykh Muqbil Ibn Hādī al-Wādi'ī, said in an interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper, “al-Ra’yu al-’Ām” (no. 11503, 12/19/1998), “Here, before Allāh, I completely reject and declare myself free of Bin Laden, for he is an evil threat and tribulation to the (Islamic) nation, and his actions are heinous.”

And in the same interview, the interviewer said, “It seems Muslims are beginning to face difficulties in western countries because of the bombings that have taken place in almost every place in the world.” Shaykh Muqbil replied:

I know. Some brothers from Britain even called me, complaining about the hardships they now face there, asking if it is permissible to publicize their rejection of and disassociation from Osama Bin Laden. We told them that we have already rejected and disassociated ourselves from him and his crimes a long time ago. And this current state is evidence that Muslims in the West suffer difficulties because of movements like those of ‘The Muslim Brotherhood’ and others. And from Allāh we ask help.

Interviewer: “Did you ever advise Osama Bin Laden (before all this)?”

I did in fact send my advice and warning but only Allāh knows if it actually arrived or not. However, some of those people did come to us, offering their help and assistance in preaching and calling to Allāh. Afterwards, we found them sending money, requesting that we distribute it among the leaders of various tribes; they were trying to buy rocket-launchers and machine guns. But I refused them and told them to never come to my house again. I made it clear to them that what we do is preach only and we don’t allow our students to do anything but that.

⁷ Shaykh Muqbil Ibn Hādī (d. 2001) was a famous scholar in Yemen.

Shaykh Muqbil also said in the book, “Tuḥfah al-Mujīb,” published on the 18th of the month of Safar in 1417 Hijrah (1996) in the chapter entitled: “Who is Behind the Bombings in the Two Sanctuaries (Mecca & Medina)?”:

Such things can only be attributed to ignorant people. al-Bukhārī and Muslim record a ḥadīth in both their collections from ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Amr (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا) that the prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ انْتِزَاعًا يَنْتَزِعُهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ وَلَكِنْ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ حَتَّى إِذَا لَمْ يَبْقَ عَالِمًا اتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ رُءُوسًا جُهَالًا فَسُئِلُوا فَأَفْتَوْا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ فَضَلُّوا وَأَضَلُّوا

“Allāh does not take away (religious) knowledge all at once from the servants. Rather, He takes away the knowledge by taking the scholars (as they die) until no scholar is left. People will then take ignorant people as their leaders. Others will ask them about things and they will give religious verdicts with no knowledge. So, they misguide themselves and others.”⁸

Like this, some people say that this scholar and that scholar do not have any idea about current affairs. Or they say so and so is a lifeless scholar just driving people away, like what was in the magazine “al-Sunnah” which should more appropriately be called “al-Bid’ah”. They have certainly made known their enmity to the people of the Sunnah in the Gulf countries.

Since people began turning away from referring back to and counseling with the scholars, they began acting chaotically and aimlessly. And Allāh (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) says:

﴿وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ أَدَّعَوْا بِهِ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ﴾

⁸ Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 100) and Muslim (no. 2673).

And when there comes to them information about (public) security or fear, they spread it around. But if they had referred it back to the messenger or to those of authority among them then the ones who can draw correct conclusions from it would have known about it.

[Sūrah al-Nisā, 4:83]

And “those of authority” here refers to the scholars, the leaders and authorities, the intellectuals, and the righteous. And when Qārūn (Korah) came out before his people, some of them said about his immense wealth and adornment:

﴿ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيَلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِمَن آمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَلَا يُلَقَّهَا إِلَّا الصَّابِرُونَ ﴾

Those who desired the worldly life said, “If only we had like what was given to Qārūn. He’s certainly someone of great fortune.” But those who had been given knowledge said, “Beware. The reward of Allāh is better for he who believes and does righteousness. And none are granted it except the patient.”

[Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ, 28:79-80]

It’s the scholars who put things in their proper places and understand things in the proper contexts.

﴿ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالِمُونَ ﴾

And these examples We present to people, but none truly comprehend them except those of knowledge.

[Sūrah al-A’nkabūt, 29:43]

﴿ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴾

Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge.

[Sūrah al-Rūm, 30:22]

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ ﴾

Only those who have knowledge from among His servants fear Allāh.

[Sūrah Fāṭir, 35:28]

﴿ يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ ﴾

Allāh will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees.

[Sūrah al-Mujādilah, 58:11]

So, is it the people of knowledge that Allāh raises in ranks or the people of rebellion, revolt, and government overthrows? In “Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī,” there is a ḥadīth from Abū Hurayrah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا) that the prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was asked, “When will the last hour be?” He answered:

إِذَا وُسِّدَ الْأَمْرُ إِلَى غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ فَانْتَظِرِ السَّاعَةَ

“When matters are entrusted to other than their appropriate people, then wait for the hour.”⁹

The head of all sectarianism, partisanship, and division is (religious) ignorance.

An example of these tribulations is that which has almost completely occupied Yemen – the tribulation of Osama Bin Laden. If it were said to him, “We need to raise twenty thousand Saudi riyals so we can build a mosque in such and such country,” he would reply, “We do not have the means. We will try to give it when we have got the means.” But if it is said, “We need rocket-launchers, machine guns, and other things,” he would reply, “Here is a hundred thousand and more to come.”

⁹ Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 59).

Shaykh Aḥmad al-Najmī¹⁰

Question: It has been authentically reported that the prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

لَعَنَ اللَّهُ مَنْ آوَى مُحَدِّثًا

“Allāh curses the one who supports and assists an innovator (someone who introduces foreign religious matters that oppose Islam).”¹¹

Does this ḥadīth apply to the Taliban government, especially since they support and accommodate the Khawārij in a camp known as the “al-Fārūq” camp which is presided over by Osama Bin Laden? Also, within this camp are four well-known families: al-Mu’tim, al-Shahrānī, al-Hājurrī, and the al-Sa’īd family, and it was these four that carried out the bombings in the ‘Ulayá neighborhood (in Riyadh). They declare the leaders, government, and scholars of this country (Saudi Arabia) to be disbelievers.

Answer: There’s no doubt that these people are considered innovators. And certainly those who support and accommodate them fall under this threat that the prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) made to whoever does it, saying:

لَعَنَ اللَّهُ مَنْ آوَى مُحَدِّثًا

“Allāh curses the one who supports and assists an innovator.”

If even a single one of them were to kill someone without right while you accommodate him and then say to the victims, “You have no right to arrest him,” and you protect him – would you not then be considered a supporter of religious innovators?!

¹⁰ Shaykh Aḥmad al-Najmī (b. 1927) is currently the Mufti of the Jīzān province in Saudi Arabia.

¹¹ Recorded by Muslim (no. 1978).

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Āli-Shaykh¹²

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Āli-Shaykh said in “al-Riyādh” newspaper (8/11/2001) regarding deviation in Islamic understanding:

There are many reasons this may occur. However, one of the most significant is that our teachers, even before college, must be seriously examined. I am not one of those who say that the problem is with our school curricula. Instead, the problem is with the teachers because it is the teacher who usually just gives a summary of what’s in the curriculum. If we were to take the subject of ‘Aqīdah, or Islamic creed, for example which is usually studied at mid-level, we could probably read it from beginning to end in one day because it is usually only about twenty or thirty pages. And now, a teacher comes and teaches this curriculum only for one year or an hour daily. It’s here that the (teacher’s own) explanation takes place. Some teachers, when explaining various meanings, give incorrect, misinterpreted explanations. I even face this with my own children when they come and say the meaning of this is such and such, it is understood in such and such way, and it is applied in such and such manner. Yet, sometimes it is completely wrong even in issues of Tawḥīd (worshipping Allāh alone) and ‘Aqīdah. They explain and apply it the wrong way.

The curriculum is the same religious curriculum you have all studied. So, why is it that thirty years ago, it did not lead to deviant understanding or religious extremism but now, only within the past fifteen or so years it does? And in the last fifteen years, a strong enthusiasm is seen among the youth, and this requires an appropriate solution.

So, one of the main reasons is the teacher. For this, I stress that that it is absolutely necessary for any teacher teaching subjects in Islamic law or religious studies that he be well-learned with the correct understanding. Not everyone who graduates from a faculty of Islamic law or faculty of Islamic studies is appropriate just because he studied it. Even these teachers must become well-grounded and prepared. He needs a set, standard and

¹² Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Āli-Shaykh is the current minister of Islamic Affairs in Saudi Arabia.

detailed teacher's textbook which he must stick to and not teach from anything else. And if he strays from the textbook, he should be held accountable. There is not a comprehensive teacher's guide for overall religious issues, rather there's a book of Fiqh, a book of Tawhīd, a book of Tafsīr, etc. But where does the explanation of them come from? Whoever explains them will give you many lessons. Perhaps in these times, you may even find some teachers glorifying Osama Bin Laden. This is all because of deviation in understanding Islam.