



The Crime of Tamyee' upon the Salafee Manhaj

Majmoo' al-Fataawaa 15/328-329¹

Note: Tamyee' means "to soften, to melt". It refers to the manhaj adopted by the contemporary false claimants to Salafiyah towards the Hizbiyyeen, the Ahl ul-Bid'ah. One of leniency and softness, and which involves breaking down the social and methodological barriers that separate Ahl us-Sunnah from Ahl ul-Bid'ah. This manhaj has been around and operative in the behaviour of people for quite a few years, but has not really been identified and nor has it caught the attention of many people (except of course the Imaams of Jarh and Ta'deel), but in light of the fitnah of Abul-Hasan al-Misree al-Mubtadi', the Salafees are now clear about this particular destructive behavioural pattern, and they have been able to reflect back in the years gone by, and actually recognise and recall this pattern of Tamyee' that was observed in the behaviour of many in the midst of numerous tribulations.

Part 9: Ibn Taymiyyah on Making Imtihaan of the People

فَصَلِّ وَالْمُؤْمِنِ مُحْتَاجٌ إِلَى امْتِحَانٍ مَنْ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُصَاحِبَهُ وَيُقَارِنَهُ بِبِكَاحٍ وَغَيْرِهِ قَالَ تَعَالَى : ﴿ إِذَا جَاءَ كُمْ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ مَهَاجِرَاتٍ فَاْمْتَحِنُوهُنَّ ۗ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِهِنَّ ۗ ﴾ الْآيَةَ . وَكَذَلِكَ الْمَرْأَةُ الَّتِي زَنَى بِهَا الرَّجُلُ فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَتَزَوَّجُ بِهَا إِلَّا بَعْدَ التَّوْبَةِ فِي أَصَحِّ الْقَوْلَيْنِ كَمَا دَلَّ عَلَيْهِ الْكِتَابُ وَالسُّنَّةُ وَالْأَثَرُ ؛ لَكِنْ إِذَا أَرَادَ أَنْ يَمْتَحِنَهَا هَلْ هِيَ صَاحِبَةٌ التَّوْبَةِ أَمْ لَا ؟ فَقَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ابْنُ عُمَرَ وَهُوَ الْمَنْصُوصُ عَنْ أَحْمَدَ : أَنَّهُ يُرَاوِدُهَا عَنْ نَفْسِهَا فَإِنْ أَجَابَتْهُ لَمْ تَصِحَّ تَوْبَتُهَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تُجِبْهُ فَقَدْ تَابَتْ . وَقَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ : هَذَا الْإِمْتِحَانُ < ٣٢٩ > فِيهِ طَلَبُ الْفَاحِشَةِ مِنْهَا وَقَدْ تَنَفَّضَ التَّوْبَةَ وَقَدْ تَأَمَّرَهُ نَفْسُهُ بِتَحْقِيقِ فِعْلِ الْفَاحِشَةِ وَيَزْيِينُ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ ذَلِكَ وَلَا سِيَّمَا إِنْ كَانَ يُجِبُّهَا وَنَجِبُهُ وَقَدْ تَقَدَّمَ لَهُ مَعَهَا فِعْلُ الْفَاحِشَةِ مَرَاتٍ وَذَاقَتْهُ وَذَاقَهَا فَقَدْ تَنَفَّضَ التَّوْبَةَ وَلَا تُخَالِفُهُ فِيمَا أَرَادَهُ مِنْهَا .

وَمَنْ قَالَ بِالْأَوَّلِ قَالَ : الْأَمْرُ الَّذِي يُفْضَدُ بِهِ امْتِحَانُهَا لَا يُفْضَدُ بِهِ نَفْسُ الْفِعْلِ فَلَا يَكُونُ أَمْرًا بِمَا نَهَى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ وَيُمْكِنُهُ أَنْ لَا يَطْلُبَ الْفَاحِشَةَ ؛ بَلْ يُعْرَضُ بِهَا وَيَنْوِي شَيْئًا آخَرَ وَالتَّعْرِيفُ لِلْحَاجَةِ جَائِزٌ ؛ بَلْ وَاجِبٌ فِي مَوَاضِعَ كَثِيرَةٍ . وَأَمَّا نَفْضُهَا تَوْبَتَهَا فَإِذَا جَازَ أَنْ تَنَفَّضَ التَّوْبَةَ مَعَهُ جَازَ أَنْ تَنَقُّضَهَا مَعَ غَيْرِهِ وَالْمَقْصُودُ أَنْ تَكُونَ مُمْتَبِعَةً مِنْ يَرَاوِدُهَا فَإِذَا لَمْ تَكُنْ مُمْتَبِعَةً مِنْهُ لَمْ تَكُنْ مُمْتَبِعَةً مِنْ غَيْرِهِ .

وَأَمَّا تَزْيِينُ الشَّيْطَانِ لَهُ الْفِعْلَ فَهَذَا دَاخِلٌ فِي كُلِّ أَمْرٍ يَفْعَلُهُ الْإِنْسَانُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ يَجِدُ فِيهِ مَحَبَّتَهُ فَإِذَا أَرَادَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُصَاحِبَ الْمُؤْمِنَ أَوْ أَرَادَ الْمُؤْمِنُ أَنْ يُصَاحِبَ أَحَدًا وَقَدْ ذَكَرَ عَنْهُ الْفُجُورُ وَقِيلَ إِنَّهُ تَابَ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَانَ ذَلِكَ مَقُولًا عَنْهُ سَوَاءً كَانَ ذَلِكَ الْقَوْلُ صِدْقًا أَوْ كَذِبًا : فَإِنَّهُ يَمْتَحِنُهُ بِمَا يَطْهَرُ بِهِ بَرُّهُ أَوْ فُجُورُهُ وَصِدْقُهُ أَوْ كَذِبُهُ وَكَذَلِكَ إِذَا أَرَادَ أَنْ يُؤَلِّيَ أَحَدًا وَلا يَأْتِيهِ امْتِحَانُهُ ؛ كَمَا أَمَرَ عُمَرُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْعَرِيزِ غَلَامَةً أَنْ يَمْتَحِنَ ابْنَ أَبِي مُوسَى لَمَّا أَعَجَبَهُ سَمْنُهُ فَقَالَ لَهُ : قَدْ عَلِمْتُ مَكَانِي عِنْدَ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَكَمْ تُعْطِينِي إِذَا أَسْرَتْ عَلَيْهِ بَوْلَاتِيك ؟ < ٣٣٠ > فَبَدَّلَ لَهُ مَالًا عَظِيمًا فَعَلِمَ عَمْرٌ أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ بَصَلْحٍ لِلْوَلَايَةِ وَكَذَلِكَ فِي الْمُعَامَلَاتِ وَكَذَلِكَ الصَّبِيَّانِ وَالْمَمَالِيكَ الَّذِينَ عَرَفُوا أَوْ قِيلَ عَنْهُمْ الْفُجُورُ وَأَرَادَ الرَّجُلُ أَنْ يَشْتَرِيَهُ بِأَنَّهُ يَمْتَحِنُهُ فَإِنَّ الْمُحَدَّثَ كَالْبَغِيِّ وَتَوْبَتُهُ كَتَوْبَتِهَا . وَمَعْرِفَةُ أَحْوَالِ النَّاسِ تَارَةً تَكُونُ بِشَهَادَاتِ النَّاسِ وَتَارَةً تَكُونُ بِالْجَرَحِ وَالتَّعْدِيلِ وَتَارَةً تَكُونُ بِالِاخْتِيَارِ وَالِامْتِحَانِ .

¹ This quote was posted on AnaSalafi.Net recently, and after verification it has been quoted in full here.

Shaykh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said (Majmoo' al-Fataawaa 15:328-329):

“And the Believer is in need of making imtihaan (testing, examining) the one he wishes to accompany, and unite with in marriage and other such things. The Most High said, **“When the emigrating believing women come to you, then examine them, Allaah knows best regarding their Imaan”** (al-Mumtahinah 60:10)...”

Then Shaykh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah speaks about the repentance of a zaaniyah (unmarried women who fornicates) with a man and if this man wants to marry her, he tests the reality of her repentance by attempting to seduce her (to see if she refrains or not), and he quotes a narration from Abdullaah Ibn Umar and Imaam Ahmad in this regard, and then the saying of those who oppose this, and then he gives an explanation of what is actually intended by those who say that the man (who fornicated with her) makes an attempt to seduce her (to test her), which is that if she is willing to commit zinaa with him, then she may be just as willing to commit it with others, hence he does not marry her, because her tawbah was not real.

Then Shaykh ul-Islam said, “...So when a person wishes to associate with a Believer, or a Believer wishes to associate with anyone, and fujoor (wickedness) is mentioned about him, and it has been said that he has repented from it, or that that (the claim of him having wickedness) was stated about him, regardless of whether that saying was true or false, then he can test him (fa innahu yamtahinahu) by what he displays, his goodness (birr) or his evil (fujoor), his truthfulness or his lying.

And likewise, when he desires to give someone a position of authority, he tests him (imtahanahu), just as Umar bin Abdul-Azeez commanded his servant to test Ibn Abee Moosaa (yamtahinahu) when his mannerism amazed him (somewhat), so he said to him, “You know of my position with the Ameer ul-Mu'mineen, so how much will you give me if I indicate (the appropriateness) of your (being given) authority to him? So he gave him a great amount of wealth. And from this Umar knew that he was not fit for authority.

And similarly, in the mu'aamalaat (dealings between the people), and likewise regarding the young children² and the slaves when fujoor (wickedness) is known about them or it has been said regarding them, and a man wishes to purchase him, then he should test him (yamtahinahu), because the

² Possibly referring to captured children in war, battle etc.

mukhannath (effeminate man, gay) is like the whore, his repentance is like her repentance. **And (likewise) knowing the states (ahwaal) of the people which occurs sometimes by the testimonies of the people, and sometimes by al-Jarh wat-Ta'deel, and sometimes it can be by making al-ikhtibaar (examining) and al-imihaan (testing).**" End quote from Shaykh ul-Islaam.

Additional Quotes

- a) Imaam al-Barbahaaree said, "To set up a Mihnah (a trial) in Islaam is a Bid'ah, but as for today the people are to be tested (yumtahanu) about the Sunnah" (Sharh us-Sunnah, p.96, Eng. Trans.)
- b) And Imaam ash-Shaatibee brings a narration in his book al-I'tisaam (1/43): "And Ibn Battaal quotes in his 'Sharh ul-Bukhaaree' from Abu Haneefah that he said: "I met 'Ataa ibn Rabaah in Makkah and I asked him about something and he said: 'From which place are you?' I said: 'Kufah'. He said: 'Are you from the town [whose inhabitants] split their religion and break into sects?' I said: 'Yes'. He said: 'From which group are you?' I said: 'From those who do not revile and abuse the Salaf (Pious Predecessors), [from those] who have faith in al-Qadr and who do not declare anyone to be a disbeliever on account a sin [that he committed].' So 'Ataa said: 'You know [the truth] so hold fast."
- c) Ibn al-Qayyim said, "Just as Ibn Abee Haatin and Shaykh ul-Islaam reported with their chains of narration that Hishaam bin Ubaydullaah ar-Raazee, the companion of Muhammad bin al-Hasan, the Qaadee of ar-Rayy, imprisoned a man for at-Tajahhum (the view of Jahm bin Safwaan). He repented and so was brought to Hishaam that he may test him (liyamtahinahu), so he said, "All praise is due to Allaah for the tawbah". Then Hishaam tested him (imtahanahu) saying, "I testify that Allaah is above His Throne, distinct and separate from His creation (baa'inun min khalqihi)". So he (the man) said, "I testify that Allaah is above His Throne, but I do not know what is "baa'inun min khalqihi". So he (Hishaam) said, "Return him to the prison, for he has not repented". (Ijtima' Juyoosh al-Islaamiyyah p.75, by way of Abu Abdullah al-Madani, on Sahab.Net). And Shaykh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah said, "And this wording has been reported by Shaykh ul-Islaam Abu Ismaa'eel al-Ansaaree al-Hawaree from him with a chain of narration, in the book "al-Faarooq", and Ibn Abee Haatim reported also that Haashim bin Ubaydullaah ar-Raazee, the associate of Muhammad bin al-Hasan, the Qaadee of ar-Rayy, imprisoned a man due to Tajahhum. He repented and so was brought to Hishaam so that he may free him. So he said, "Do you testify that Allaah is above His Throne, distinct and separate from His creation (baa'inun min khalqihi)". So he (the man) said, "I testify that Allaah is above His Throne, but I do not know what is "baa'inun min khalqihi". So he (Hishaam) said, "Return him to the prison, for he has not repented". (Majmoo' al-Fataawaa 5/94 by way of Abu Abdullaah al-Madani on Sahab.Net).
- d) And Shaykh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah said, "And Imaan is known about a man, just as all the states of his heart are known by way of his (outward) allegiances, enmities,

his rejoicing, anger, hunger, thirst, and other such affairs. For these matters have certain outward binding necessities (lawaa'zim dhaahirah) and the outward matters necessitate inward matters. And this is a matter known, the people know this concerning the one that they have experienced and tested (jarraboohu wamtahinoohu)...". (Minhaaj us-Sunnah 8/475 by way of Abu Abdullaah al-Madani on Sahab.Net).

- e) Muhammad bin Seereen said, "This is the knowledge of the religion, so look from whom you take your religion". (Introduction of Saheeh Muslim, and Abu Nu'aym in al-Hilyah 1/155)
- f) Ibn al-Madeene said, "I heard Abdur-Rahmaan bin Mahdee say: Ibn 'Awn is a test for the people of Basrah. If you see a person from them loving him, then incline and be secure with him. For the people of Kufah, Maalik bin Mighwal and Zaa'idah bin Qudaamah are a test. If you see a man loving them then seek his goodness. And for the people of Shaam, al-Awzaa'ee, and Abu Ishaq al-Fazaaree are a test. And for the people of Hijaaz, Malik bin Anas." (al-Laalika'ee 1/62). Ibn Mahdee said, "When you see a person from Shaam loving al-Awzaa'ee and Abu Ishaq al-Faraazee, then he is a person of the Sunnah". (al-Jarh wat-Ta'deel of Ibn Abi Haatim, 1/217). Ahmad bin Yunus narrates from Sufyaan ath-Thawree who said, "Test (imtahinoo) the people of Mawsul by Mu'aafi bin Imraan." (Tahdheeb ut-Tahdheeb of Ibn Hajar, 10/180). Ahmad bin Zaheer said, "I heard Ahmad bin Abdullaah bin Yoonus say: Test (imtahin) the people of Mawsul with Mu'aafi bin Imraan. If they love him, then they are Ahl us-Sunnah, and if they hate him, then they are Ahl ul-Bid'ah – just as the people of Koofah are to be tested (yumtahanu) with Yahyaa." (al-Laalika'ee 1/66).
- g) Abu Qilaabah said, "May Allaah fight the poet who said: Do not ask about a man, but ask about his companion. For every person guides himself by his companion. This poetry is by Adeeb bin Zaid, and al-Asma'ee said about it, "I have never seen a line of poetry which resembles the Sunnah more than this saying of Adeeb bin Zaid." Al-Ibaanah (2/439). Abu Hurairah - radiiallaahu anhu - said, the Messenger of Allaah said, "A person is upon the deen of his friend, so let each one of you look at whom he befriends." Saheeh. Refer to Silsilah as-Saheehah of al-Albaani (no.927). Ibn Mas'ood - radiiallaahu anhu - said, "Indeed a person walks alongside and accompanies the one whom he loves and who is like him." Al-Ibaanah (2/476). Abu ad-Dardaa - radiiallaahu anhu - said, "It is from the fiqh (understanding of a person) that he [chooses] those whom he walks with, whom he enters upon (visits) and whom he sits with." Al-Ibaanah (2/477). Yahyaa bin Katheer said, "Sulaimaan bin Daawood – alaihis salaam – said: Do not pass a judgement over anyone with anything until you see whom he befriends." Al-Ibaanah (2/464). Moosaa bin Uqbah the Syrian approached Baghdad and this was mentioned to Imaam Ahmad. So it was said, "Look at whose residence he goes to and with whom he resides and finds shelter." Al-Ibaanah (2/480). Imaam Al-Awzaa'ee said, "Whoever hides his innovation from us will not be able to hide his companionship from us." Al-Ibaanah (2/476). Al-A'mash said, "They (the Salaf) did not used to ask anything more about a person after having asked about three affairs: Who he walks with, who he enters upon (i.e. visits) and who he associates with amongst the people." Al-Ibaanah (2/478).

Abdullaah bin Mas'ood – radiallaahu anhu - said, “Make consideration of the (regions of the) Earth by the names given to them and make consideration of a person by his companion.” Al-Ibaanah (2/479). Muhammad bin Ubaid al-Ghulaabee said, “The Ahl ul-Ahwaa (People of Desires) hide everything except their intimate friendship and companionship.” Al-Ibaanah (2/482). Mu'aadh bin Mu'aadh said to Yahyaa bin Sa'eed, “O Abu Sa'eed! A person may hide his viewpoint from us, but he will not be able to hide that in his son, or his friend or in the one whom he sits with.” Al-Ibaanah (2/437). Ibn 'Awn said, “Those who sit with the People of Innovation are more severe upon us than the People of Innovation themselves.” Al-Ibaanah (2/273). Yahyaa bin Sa'eed al-Qattaan said, “When Sufyaan ath-Thawree came to Basrah he began to look into the affair of ar-Rabee' bin Subaih and the people's estimation of him. He asked them, ‘What is his madhhab?’, and they said, ‘His madhhab is but the Sunnah’. He then asked, ‘Who is his companionship?’ and they replied, ‘The people of Qadr’ so he replied, ‘In that case he is a Qadari’.” Al-Ibaanah (2/453). Ibn Battah (after quoting this) said, “Allaah's mercy be upon Sufyaan ath-Thawree. He has indeed spoken with wisdom and he spoke the truth. He spoke with knowledge that is in agreement with the Book and the Sunnah and what is necessitated by wisdom and what the people of sure insight know. Allaah the Exalted said, “O you who believe! Take not as (your) Bitānah (advisors, consultants, protectors, helpers, friends, etc.) those other than you (outside your religion or upon other than the right way) since they will not fail to do their best to corrupt you. They desire to harm you severely.” (Aali Imraan 3:118)” (Al-Ibaanah 2/453). Abu Dawood as-Sijistaanee said, “I said to Abu Abdullaah Ahmad bin Hanbal: I see a man from Ahl us-Sunnah with a man from Ahl ul-Bid'ah. Shall I leave his speaking to him? He said, ‘No, inform him that the man that you saw him with is a person of innovation, so if he leaves him, then speak to him, otherwise treat him the same as him, as Ibn Ma'sood said, ‘A man is like his companion’.” Tabaqaat ul-Hanaabilah (1/160).

- h) Shaykh Ubayd al-Jaabiree was asked, “When the condition of a man is unknown, or hidden (mastoor ul-haal), and nothing is known about him, is it permissible to ask about him in order to know his condition, or is it not permissible? **Shaykh 'Ubayd:** “There is no doubt that in every time and in every place [it often occurs that] a person who is not known comes to the people. And this person who is not known, if he is one who remains silent and is reserved, and does not manifest any opposition, then he remains mastoor (hidden, unknown). **However, when the people have doubts about this man or they desire anything of the (worldly or religious) affairs from him, then it is their right to investigate into his condition.** And amongst the evidences for this is what Muslim and others have reported from Mu'aawiyah bin al-Hakam (radiallaahu anhu), that he used to have a female slave who used to tend to the flock of sheep. And then a wolf came and snatched a sheep from the flock. Mu'aawiyah came and slapped her, and then this became heavy upon him. So he went to the Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) and informed him of the incident. He said, “Bring her to me so I can see if she is a believer or not?” So he brought her, and the Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) said, “Where is Allaah?” She said, “Above the heaven”. He said to her, “Who am I?” She said, “You are the Messenger of Allaah”. He said, “Free her, for she is a believer”. And in the long past, they – meaning the Scholars – used to say, “Test the people of Madinah with Maalik bin

Anas, and the people of Shaam with al-Awzaa'ee, and the people of Misr with al-Layth bin Sa'd, and the people of Mawsul with Mu'aafee bin Imraan". Hence, when doubts arise about a person, or something of the affairs is desired from him, then he is to be tested (yumtahanu). **And this is a matter that the people cannot do without, until even in their dealings with each other.** If a man was to propose to a woman, then they are required to ask about his condition. Is he a person whose deen and character is pleasing, or not? This is necessary, and it is not to be said that there is nothing known about this person. So by this, the falsehood of the statement, "The basis with respect to a person is 'adaalah (uprightness, integrity)" becomes clear.³ The affair is not like this. This statement is falsehood, and the books of al-Jarh wat-Ta'deel are a witness to what we say. If the original basis with respect to Muslims was that they are all upright, sound, trustworthy ('adaalah), then the people would not have required Scholars and Imaams who disparage whom they disparaged and give appraisal to those whom they appraised." (Cassette: "Jinaayat ut-Tamayyu' Alal-Manhaj as-Salafee")

³ [Note]: Shaikh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said, "As for the saying of the one who says, "The base rule (asl) concerning Muslims is al-'adaalah (uprightness, trustworthiness, integrity, honesty), then it is baatil (false, futile). Rather, the base rule concerning the Son of Aadam is dhulm (oppression) and jahl (ignorance), just as the Most High has said, "...**But man took it upon himself (i.e. the trust that was refused by the Heavens and Earth). Verily, he was unjust (to himself) and ignorant (of its results).**" (Ahzaab 33:70). And the mere utterance of the two testimonies of faith does not necessitate that a person has moved from oppression and ignorance into al-'adl (integrity, justice, honesty)." (Majmoo' al-Fataawaa 15/357). And refer also to MNJ150004 for an explanation by Shaikh Rabee' of this statement.

Comprehension Notes

1. Setting up trials in Islaam, such that everyone, the general and specific folk, are tested for being from Ahl us-Sunnah or not, and examined, then this is prohibited. Shaykh Ahmad an-Najmee said, in his explanation of the point mentioned above from Imaam al-Barbahaaree about al-Mihnah and al-Imtihaan, “[The saying of al-Barbahaaree], “To set up a Mihnah (a trial) in Islaam is a Bid’ah...”, meaning that a man is tested until it is known whether he is from Ahl us-Sunnah or not? And what is apparent is that the generality of the people are upon the generality of Islaam, and we do not test anyone except when he manifests something that opposes the madhhab of Ahl us-Sunnah, such that he is lax (in the deen) with Irjaa’, or with the belief of the Jahmiyyah, or as-Soofiyyah, or ar-Raafidah and what resembles that. So he is asked about that which he is suspected about. So if he is (suspected) a Murji’ he is asked, “Does Imaan increase and decrease? And is it belief, speech and action, or is tasdeeq sufficient for it alone?” And when he is (suspected) a Mu’tazilee, he is asked about the five foundations that are with the Mu’tazilah, and when he is (suspected) a Jahmee, he is asked about the Attributes, and about the saying about the Book of Allaah, and if he is (suspected) a Raafidee, he is asked about the Ahl ul-Bayt, are they infallible or not? And this is how it is said (for other matters)...” (Irshaad us-Saaree Ilaa Tawdeeh Sharh us-Sunnah lil-Imaam al-Barbahaaree, p.170).

Thus, combining between the statement of Shaykh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah above, and this explanation of Shaykh Ahmad an-Najmee, Imtihaan (testing) is in a situation which requires that, and is not a general rule or principle, and it is a means from amongst the means to a particular end, which is knowing the condition, state of people. And Ibn Taymiyyah listed three means for knowing the condition of the people i) the reports of the trustworthy people concerning that person or persons ii) al-jarh wat-ta’deel and iii) al-ikhtibaar and al-imtihaan. And there is an additional matter that is reported from the Salaf which is judging people by their close companionship, as is clear in the narrations quoted above.

2. Thus Imtihaan is just one of the means that can be resorted to when there is a need for that, when something is manifested (by a person or persons), which subsequently requires examination of their condition. But as for setting up trials in general and testing all the common people and specific people to see if they are upon the Sunnah or not, this is not what is intended, such as the trial of the creation of the Qur’aan, set up by the some of the earlier Khulafaa in the time of Imaam Ahmad, which was in fact a trial based upon falsehood (with the innovated saying of the creation of the Qur’aan), and not even upon the truth. Rather, from the speech of the Scholars, the issue of Imtihaan is in the context of when there is something observed, or something narrated, or said about what a person has manifested, or where there is a reason or a context that necessitates asking and testing.

3. Amongst the situations to which Imtihaan can be applied, when the situation requires that (from the narrations quoted above and the speech of Shaykh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah) are:

- a) Testing the one known for fujoor (sin, wickedness) or innovation, to see if he has truly left it and truly repented from it or not

- b) Testing someone to see if he is really fit for a position of authority, responsibility or not
- c) Testing someone who has come from a particular location, land or place that is known for bid'ah (such as what is in the quote from Imaam ash-Shaatibee) to see if he is affected by it or not
- d) Testing people by love or hate of a particular person or persons known for the Sunnah in a particular land, when travelling to that land, so that one can distinguish Ahl us-Sunnah from Ahl ul-Ahwaa
- e) Testing a person about whom some doubts arise in what has been said or narrated about him
- f) Testing a person from whom there is a need, be that in relation to the world (such as business, marriage, entrustment, etc.) or the deen (taking knowledge from him, choosing good companionship etc.) so that one can be sure of his reliability, trustworthiness, or soundness

So these are some situations to which Imtihaan can be applied for a particular objective, which is knowing the condition of people. And as stated ealier, Imtihaan is just one of the means to a particular goal which is knowing the condition of a person. The others being taking the witness and reports of reliable people concerning that person, or al-jarh wat-ta'deel (i.e. the speech of the scholars upon a particular person or persons), and another means is looking at the company and friendship of people and with whom their intimacy lies. So these are amongst the ways and means that aid in knowing the condition of people.

4. So from all of the above, when in our times doubt arises concerning a person, either due to his own speech or actions, or from what has been narrated about him, or when there is religious or even worldly need from him, then he can be tested, this being just one of the few ways and means that can be resorted to, the others being the witness and reports of trustworthy people about him, or any disparagement or appraisal that has been made upon him (by way of the people of knowledge), or looking to his company and intimate friendship.