

Studying the Books of Refutation

By the Noble Scholar of al-Islām

Zayd ibn Muḥammad ibn Hādī al-Madkhalī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)

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SHAYKH ZAYD AL-MADKHALĪ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) was asked: “A questioner from the Emirates says: ‘What is your advice, O Shaykh, for the beginner who busies himself with what is between the scholars from statements and refutations, although he does not possess even basic knowledge of *al-Ṭahārah* (purification) and other than it?’”

Shaykh Zayd responded: “My advice to him is to acquire knowledge of the religion, of ‘*Aqīdah* (Creed), acts of worship, manners, and the *Manhaj* (methodology) upon which he traverses; and from that, the books of refutation, whereby the *Salaf* and those who followed them refuted the people of desires and innovation, and how abundant they have been in every time and place. Therefore, it is not permissible for anyone to use lack of knowledge of *al-Ṭahārah* (purification) or *al-Ṣalāh* (prayer) as an excuse to prevent people from hearing the books of refutation, recording them, and studying them, for indeed the religion is complete. So just as it is necessary for us to acquire knowledge of *al-‘Aqīdah* (creed) and rites of worship, it is also necessary for us to acquire knowledge of the *Manhaj* and of the *Sunnah*, with the purpose of adhering to it and recognizing its opposite, innovation, so as to steer clear of it. This is a must.

Thus, it is not permissible for anyone to tell the people, ‘Leave these refutations and leave off such and such’ or ‘You must study [only] such and such.’ This is said due to lack of knowledge, because if he (i.e. the beginner) did not recognize evil, he would fall into it; and refutations distinguish the path of good from the paths of evil. So he (i.e. the beginner) listens to the recording and reads the book and listens to the scholar on every aspect of the religion: creed and legislation, *Sunnah* and *Manhaj*. Moreover, the people of innovation, from the time of the companions until today, would not be known to us except by way of the books of refutation against them. Thus, if the works of refutation had not been produced in every time and place, the masses would not have known the people of innovation and would have been incapable of warning against the *mubtadi*’.

Additionally, it is upon the people of refutation [to uphold] the Covenant of Allāh that they do not speak except with the truth, and that they do not accuse one whom they do not have clear proof against from his writing, recording, or publication. This is the [correct] manner of refutation. Otherwise, it is impermissible for anyone to refute [a person] by way of suspicion or to impute him without facts.”¹



¹ See <http://www.sahab.net/forums/index.php?showtopic=134687>