

# The Importance of Knowing the Various Groups and Sects to Avoid Misguidance from the Path

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Evidence That the Splitting of This Ummah Is an Undeniable Reality

Allāh (عز وجل) and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) have informed us of a reality that is going to unfold with respect to this ummah: that it would follow in the footsteps of previous nations, split and divide, and amongst them would be those who would leave the guidance. All of this is an actual reality from the knowledge of the unseen that the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was informed and the foundations of which we can find very clearly in the Qur’ān. For example, the statement of Allāh (عز وجل) in the beginning of Sūrah Āli ‘Imrān,

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ

فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلَةٍ﴾

“It is He Who has sent down to you (Muḥammad) the Book (this Qur’ān). In it are Verses that are entirely clear, they are the foundations of the Book [and those are the Verses of al-Aḥkām (commandments, etc.), al-Farā’id (obligatory duties) and al-Ḥudūd (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” [Sūrah Āli ‘Imrān 3:17]

When we go back to the books of Tafsīr and the statements of the Ṣaḥābah and Tabi‘īn, we see that they will make remarks that this refers to Ahlul-Ahwā’ (the People of Desires) and the People of Innovation.

Similarly, the statement of Allāh (عز وجل),

﴿وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ﴾

**“And verily, this is my Straight Path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path.” [Sūrah al-Anām 6:153]**

Once more, this verse is elaborated upon in the Sunnah, and likewise we find statements from the Salaf applying this verse to the People of Innovation and Misguidance.

Likewise, a very clear command from Allāh (عز وجل),

﴿وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ﴾

**“And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment.” [Sūrah Āli ‘Imrān 3:105]**

And similarly, the statement of Allāh (عز وجل) in Sūrah al-Anfāl,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ﴾

**“O you who believe! Obey Allāh and His Messenger, and turn not away from him (i.e., Messenger Muḥammad) while you are hearing.” [Sūrah al-Anfāl 8:20]**

This is an āyah that mentions the obedience to the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and to listen and attend to him, and that there can be a trait amongst the people where despite

them hearing him, they turn away from him. This would apply to the firaq (sects) who know the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم), they listen to his speech, yet they turn away. Meaning, they turn away in the matter of guidance.

So, all of this is very clear and apparent. And likewise in the Sunnah, there are many aḥādīth that relate to this topic. The most famous of them, the ḥadīth of the splitting of the ummah just like the Jews and the Christians split before the Muslims; and likewise the statement of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم), “Indeed the best speech is the Book of Allāh, the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and the worst/most evil of affairs are the newly introduced affairs/the novelties, and every novelty is an innovation and every innovation is misguidance.” And in another narration, “All misguidance is in the Hellfire.” “Whoever leaves my Sunnah, he is not from me.” And likewise, the ḥadīth of al-‘Irbād (رضى الله عنه), “Whoever amongst you lives for long, he will see great controversies, so upon you is to stick to my Sunnah and the sunnah of the Rightly Guided Khulafā’.” And there are many statements from the Salaf speaking along similar lines.

Ibn Mas‘ūd (رضى الله عنه) said, “Follow and do not innovate, for indeed you have been sufficed away from every misguidance.” Similarly, Ibn ‘Abbās (رضى الله عنهما) said, “Upon you is Istiqāmah (to remain upright upon this guidance) and upon the athar (narration) and beware of innovating.” And similarly, Ayyūb as-Sakhtiyānī (رحمه الله) said, “Never does a person of innovation increase in his efforts in his innovation, except that he increases in his distance from Allāh (عز وجل).”

These are just a very quick sample of statements, and what we want to derive from them first of all is the fact that Allāh (عز وجل) and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) have informed us about an unfolding reality that is going to happen in the ummah.

We also have the statement of Allāh,

﴿وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ ۝ إِلَّا مَنْ رَحِمَ رَبُّكَ﴾

**“...but they will not cease to disagree, except him on whom your Lord has bestowed His Mercy (the follower of truth - Islamic Monotheism)” [Sūrah Hūd 11:118-119]**

Some of the commentators like Mujāhid (رحمه الله) said, « وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ » “Meaning, Ahlul-Bāṭil (the People of Falsehood).” « إِلَّا مَنْ رَحِمَ رَبُّكَ » “Meaning, Ahlul-Ḥaqq (the People of Truth), and there is no difference between them.” Meaning, they do not differ in the uṣūl (foundations of the religion); they are united upon that.

We have been informed about this, and Allāh and His Messenger speak the truth. The Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) also mentioned some of these groups by description or by name, like the Khawārij and the Qadariyyah—so all of this is something undeniable.

This is the point we wanted to make because there are people in the modern era (in the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century) who come along and want to ignore this reality and ignore the fact that it is this very splitting and differing that is the cause of weakness, increased humiliation and a lot of confusion. All of this hinders the hearts of the people from receiving that pure revelation and being nurtured upon that pure guidance. Therefore, any Muslim who wants to be upon right guidance must pay attention to this affair. And obviously this whole topic is connected to ‘Aqīdah because as you study the Creed, inevitably you are going to come across the groups that deviated from that Creed.

## The Benefits and Objectives Behind the Study of These Sects

When we understand the benefits and objectives, it shows the importance of this topic in general. There are numerous points that can be made:

1. To know the actual causes and reasons that lead them to fall into their misguidance, which itself can branch into numerous other possibilities.
  - Sometimes there are historical events that explain why this deviation happened, and this is very clear with respect to the Khawārij and the Rāfiḍah.
  - Other times there can be foreign/external influences that have come upon a person or a group of people, which is very clear with people like al-Ja'd b. Dirham and Jahm b. Safwān, and others.
  - Other times it can be as a result of abandoning the People of Knowledge (the true People of Knowledge who took knowledge from the Ṣaḥābah and were grounded) and relying upon their own opinions. An example of this would be Wāṣil b. 'Atā' who abandoned the gatherings of the People of Knowledge in his time, which lead to the statement and deviation of the Mu'tazilah.

So we want to identify what the reasons are in order to take an admonition for ourselves and not follow in the same footsteps. Just like Ḥudhayfah b. al-Yamān (رضي الله عنه) used to say, "The people used to ask the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) about goodness and I used to ask him about evil, fearing that it might reach me."

2. To preserve Allāh's Religion and the hearts of His servants.

We want to explain the futility and falsehood of what they are upon, whether it is a matter of belief or an innovated act of worship. In doing so we are protecting the Creed, the religion and the Sharī'ah from these foreign beliefs/doctrines or acts of worship being ascribed to the Sharī'ah, which would cause the Sharī'ah to undergo

Tabdīl (alteration) and Taḥrīf (distortion), just as it happened to the legislations of the previous nations such as the Jews and Christians. Similarly, we want to protect the Muslims in general from the deviations that they may possibly fall into.

3. To have a sound, solid understanding of the Creed of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah and thus be able to call to Allāh upon ḥaṣīrah (insight) and spread the Sunnah thereby.

As Ḥudhayfah b. al-Yamān (رضى الله عنه) said that he used to ask the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) about the evil in order to avoid it. And similarly, as we find in a statement of poetry, “And by their opposites are the realities of things known.”

So when you have a statement of truth, there is also a statement of falsehood and that statement of falsehood could take on many forms. When you know that statement of falsehood, it increases your understanding and grasp of the statement of truth. It increases our insight and our understanding of the 'Aqīdah of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah and we become more firmly rooted in the sound Creed when we know in detail what opposes it.

4. To be able to give the correct ruling to an individual and his statements and doctrines, and likewise to the group/sect as a whole.

So it is to arrive at the correct Sharī'ah ruling on them and therefore how they are interacted with because there are other rulings and consequences that come from that as well. In some instances, the innovation/deviation could be in fact a statement of disbelief and sometimes it might just be a mistake and a deviation that does not reach the level of disbelief. Therefore, a detailed study is necessary in order to pass the correct ruling upon individuals, groups and parties and our interaction with them is also made clear thereby because we want to make sure that we abide by justice and do not fall short, nor fall into excess/exaggeration when it comes to ascribing statements, passing rulings and in how we behave and interact.

## **The Methodology in Building Knowledge About the Various Sects**

We have to be practical and act in accordance with the realities, which is that there is just too much information to grasp at any one time and it is not relevant to every person. No one has the time and resources to be able to sit and learn everything about every sect, every individual, every deviation, every statement of heresy—it is just not practical. Therefore, there is a method you have to lay down so that systematically as time progresses you are gradually building your knowledge of a particular sect/deviation.

We need to first of all have a broad, bird's-eye view of history and a basic idea of the key innovations or sects that appeared and at what time they appeared. To demonstrate, we will concentrate on the time before Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) i.e., the first seven centuries.

### **Block 1: The Khawārij, Rāfiḍah, Qadariyyah and Murji'ah**

It is related from Yūsuf b. Asbāṭ (رحمه الله), one of the Salaf at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century Hijrah, by al-Ājurri and others that he said, “The foundations of innovation are four: they are the Rawāfiḍ (the Rāfiḍah), the Khawārij, the Qadariyyah and the Murji'ah.” These are the four major sects that appeared in the 1<sup>st</sup> century Hijrah; these are the uṣūl (foundations).

So basically, what you would do is get a series of notebooks of average size (40 sheets, 60 sheets, 80 sheets). One book will be for the Khawārij, one for the Rāfiḍah, one for the Qadariyyah and one for the Murji'ah, and you label them. In each of these books you are going to slowly build your knowledge every time you come across a relevant piece of information.

### **Key Points to Take Note of**

1. What are the names of the men/key figureheads?

Sometimes you have many figureheads within a sect or a group so you need to find out who is the original person. Also to be noted is when they died or roughly which era they were in.

For example, you have al-Ja'd b. Dirham for the Jahmiyyah and Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā' and 'Amr b. 'Ubayd at the beginning of the second century.

2. What are the issues of dispute?

What is the concept/idea that they went astray in?

3. What are the texts that they are misinterpreting?

What are the texts (āyāt and aḥādīth) that they have actually misunderstood?

4. What are the effects/consequences of this idea/ innovation?

Additionally, you are looking to build your knowledge regarding any subgroups, the names of the figureheads of these subgroups and why they split.

**Example #1**

Sects: The Khawārij and Murji'ah

Issue: al-Asmā' wal-Aḥkām

This is to do with what label do we put on a sinful Muslim. Is it Kāfir, Mu'min, Muslim or Mu'min nāqishul-īmān (a believer deficient in īmān)? The Murjī will say about a sinful person that he is a Mu'min kāmīlul-īmān (a believer who is complete in his īmān), but this is incorrect. A person who commits major sins cannot be complete in his belief. On the other hand, the Khawārij say a person who commits a major sin is a kāfir (disbeliever) and he will remain eternally in the Hellfire. This is now a judgement that they have passed upon this person, and this judgement is wrong.



So here in the case of the Khawārij and the Murji'ah, we are trying to resolve the issue of labels and names that we give to people and the rulings that apply to them because as you know, in Islām there are many rulings. There is the ruling of Islām, Īmān, Iḥsān, Kufr, Shirk and Nifāq. So we have a Muslim, Mu'min, Muḥsin, Kāfir, Mushrik and Munāfiq—these are all rulings. We need to apply the right labels and rulings upon people otherwise there will be oppression and either exaggeration, as is the case with the Khawārij who fall into extremism, or neglect, as we see in the case of the Murji'ah who weaken the religion because they put lofty labels upon sinful, disobedient people and make light of the religion.

### **Example #2**

Sects: The Khawārij and Rāfiḍah

Issue: The Ṣaḥābah (رضي الله عنهم) and al-Imāmah (leadership)

This is the issue of leadership/rulership and the status of the Companions in the religion and as carriers and conveyers of the revelation. What is their status, how do we speak about them, the issues of rulership, the Khilāfah and how the leadership is acquired and so on and so forth. These are the central issues we need to understand and we need to be clear about the answers from the Sunnah and how these people went astray. And when we understand we can see the nature of the mistake these people are making. For example, we will notice about the Rāfiḍah that they have a revolutionary spirit and that they will always be contending with the Sunnī leadership. So we need to understand what drives that spirit, what are the misconceptions, what are the innovations and what are the lies.

So you will be putting all of this information in each book that you now have for the Khawārij, Rāfiḍah, Qadariyyah and Murji'ah. A similitude to explain the method of study is if you imagine that a careless driver is the cause of an accident on the motorway, which causes a big wreck. The ambulance and police will come and then you have cameras and eyewitnesses,

everybody gives their testimony and all of that information is gathered. Now there is a forensic analysis to figure out what actually happened: why and how it occurred, whose fault was it, and what are its consequences. And it is exactly the same thing here. You need to have a plan in which to build that knowledge gradually over time.

### **Example #3 (Subgroups)**

We already know Dhul-Khuwaysarah at-Tamīmī, the seeds of that discontent in the time of the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and the group of people with him. Then in the time of ‘Uthmān (رضى الله عنه) this same group appeared and started speaking, making people go against and hate ‘Uthmān (رضى الله عنه), thus creating a revolution that eventually led to his assassination. The same elements then conspired to create more tribulation until they arrived in the time of ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah (رضى الله عنهما) as a distinct group, and then after that we find that they split into sects.

### **The Azāriqah**

The figurehead of this subgroup is Nāfi‘ b. al-Azraq, who was a very extreme barbarian. He declared anyone who did not agree with his view to be a mushrik, that their children were mushriks and they could be killed. Even if his own followers were upon his view but resided amongst the Muslim and did not come and join him, they were considered to be disbelievers.

### **The Najadāt**

They spilt away when they saw the extremity of the Azāriqah and became known as the Najadāt. The figurehead of this subgroup is Najdah b. ‘Āmir. He rejected some of the extremism of the Azāriqah and so he had his own group and views.

### **The ‘Ibādiyyah**

This subgroup was more moderate and not as extreme. They basically held similar views but said that they can live alongside the people who do not hold their view. They considered them to be disbelievers but held that they could marry and interact with them.

## **Block 2: Ahlul-Kalām**

Now we move into the 2<sup>nd</sup> century all the way to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries. For the People of Kalām you will need a slightly larger book (maybe twice the size) because there are many sects and groups. Among the Ahlul-Kalām there are:

- The Jahmiyyah (100H/110H).
- The Mu'tazilah (110H/120H).
- The Hishāmiyyah (170H/180H). These are the Rāfiḍah. They fell into something of 'Ilmul-Kalām as well as Tajsīm and Tashbīh.
- The Kullābiyyah (around 230H) in the time of Imām Aḥmad.
- The Karrāmiyyah (250H). They are like Ḥanafīs. They fell into 'Ilmul-Kalām and also something of at-Tashbīh, after the time of Imām Aḥmad.
- The Ash'ariyyah (330H/340H).
- The Mātūrīdiyyah (roughly 320H-340H).

We need to understand that the issue with these groups is they have looked at the Christians, the Ṣābi'ah and Greek philosophy and tried to incorporate some of the ideas and arguments that these nations were using to prove Allāh's existence. So when they tried to use these arguments, it forced them to deny the Names and Attributes and actions of Allāh (عز وجل). They then fell into dispute amongst each other with respect to what can they affirm and what can they deny for Allāh (عز وجل) of the Names and Attributes.

The Jahmiyyah denied everything, the Mu'tazilah denied everything but the Names, then the Kullābiyyah, Ash'ariyyah and Mātūrīdiyyah affirmed the Names and some of the Attributes but denied the chosen actions of Allāh (عز وجل), and they had different approaches. They made a mistake in the issue of the Attributes and instead of sticking to the rational evidences of the Qur'ān, they entered foreign, innovated, dubious, speculative things and the baggage of previous nations, which is obviously going to have an impact.

### **Block 3: Taṣawwuf and the Extreme Ṣūfīs**

This will be a separate book which you would label Taṣawwuf/Sufism. Taṣawwuf, meaning the roots of Sufism and extreme Sufism. We have to understand that some of the major deviations that happened in the later centuries (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries) combined some of the innovations of the earlier centuries. So when we come to the extreme Ṣūfīs for example, we find that they combine between the bid'ah of some of the groups of the Qadariyyah, the bid'ah of Taṣawwuf and some aspects of the Bāṭiniyyah (secretive esoteric groups).

Taṣawwuf (asceticism) started in the East. When we go to Irāq (in Baṣrah) and what is modern-day Afghanistan towards Khurasān, we find that in those places there used to be the Buddhists and the Hindus and people like that, and so the notion of spirituality and asceticism started coming from that direction. It started as something very small (asceticism) and then it began to incorporate other innovations until it became what it became of Sufism. So here you are dealing innovations in worship, exaggeration in Zuhd and basically going beyond the bounds.

### **Block 4: The Bāṭiniyyah**

These are movements that are trying to merge between Islām, Philosophy and some aspects of Shiism. Bāṭiniyyah means that they believe there is some secret knowledge and there are some secret interpretations of the Qur'ān, which actually began very early with the followers

of ‘Abdullāh b. Saba’ al-Yahūdī. The early group of the Sab’iyyah began to say that every verse has seven hidden meanings, and then they said 70, and then they said 700, and then they said 7000. So, now the Qur’ān is full of hidden, secret meanings.

These ideas began to occur right at the very beginning starting with the Sab’iyyah, which is basically in the 1<sup>st</sup> century during the time of ‘Alī (رضي الله عنه). So over time it began to grow and this sowed the seeds of the Bāṭinī (secret) movements, which have political objectives and they want to merge the Qur’ān with the worldly sciences and Philosophy. This movement really began to take shape at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century and early 4<sup>th</sup> century.

From the Bāṭiniyyah is the Qarāmiṭah. They attacked Makkah, took the Black Stone and kept it for many years around 319H/339H. They became strong and eventually created a number of states in the middle of the Muslim empire. They established states in Egypt (the Ubaydiyyah), Bahrain and likewise in northern Iran. It is very useful for us to study this movement because through that we are able to understand the ways, techniques and methods of the people of Nifāq (Hypocrisy) who want to distort and corrupt the Islamic sciences and merge the speculative sciences with the Qur’ān. There are many books written by the Muslim scholars about this group, and Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله) has many discussions about these people as well.

#### **Block 5: The Falāsifah (Philosophers)/Mutafalsifah (Pseudo-Philosophers)**

This is now the block of the Falāsifah (Philosophers), which will be in a separate notebook because they were a significant movement in early Islamic history. They were debating with the People of Kalām such as the Ash‘arīs and Mātūrīdīs, so there was a battle between the people of Philosophy (the Falāsifah) and the People of Kalām.

Some of Mutafalsifah (those who try to be like the Greek philosophers):

- Ya'qūb al-Kindī (d. 252H)
- Al-Farābī (d. 339H)
- Ibn Sīnā (d. 429H), who was from the Bāṭinīs as well
- Ibn Rushd.

The likes of Ibn Sīnā were trying to say that the universe is eternal, there is no such thing as creation, there is no such thing as prophethood and anyone can become a prophet as it is just some skills you have to acquire. They were saying these things on the basis of what they inherited of Greek philosophy. So unless you understand these people, you will not really understand a lot of the issues to do with the People of Kalām because the issues of Ahlul-Kalām are intertwined with the Falāsifah.

Also, how do we as People of the Sunnah look at the arguments between these two blocks? Unless we understand all of this, we will not be able to understand the refutation against all of these people and we will not really grasp many of the writings of Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله), Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) and the scholars who spoke with detail regarding the statements and sayings of these groups.

#### **Block 6: The Extreme Šūfīs (The People of Waḥdatul-Wujūd, Ittiḥād and Ḥulūl)**

The extreme Šūfīs started appearing in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries, the likes of Ibn 'Arabī and people like that. They started combining many things such as the bid'ah of Jabar, issues to do with the Šifāt, aspects of Taṣawwuf and likewise aspects of Rafḍ (the Rāfiḍah). They combined all of these things and came up with some really extreme, devious and heretical doctrines such as Waḥdatul-Wujūd, Ittiḥād and Ḥulūl. They basically abolish the Sharī'ah since they say that Allāh is everything and everything is Allāh, so there is no ḥalāl, there is no ḥarām, there are no Sharī'ah commands and no one needs to abide by any command; some of them claimed prophethood and some claimed that being a walī is superior to prophethood.

What we have done till this point is like I said, you have to have a bird's-eye view first of all. You start from the general, broad overview then you start filling in the details. It is a bit like the jigsaw puzzle; you need to have the broad picture first otherwise you cannot do the puzzle and you will be lost because you do not know what goes where. So you need to have the broad picture first, then as time goes on you start putting the right pieces in the right place. This is what we are doing here. It is as if you have a bird's-eye view of history in the first seven centuries, then you can see the different organised blocks in the first century, then a block of the Ahlul-Kalām, then the block of Taṣawwuf and then the Falāsifah and then the Bāṭinī movements and then you have the extreme Sūfīs. This is only the first seven centuries, which is really the foundation for what comes afterwards.

You must have a grasp of all of this because you see that the same things are being repeated; there is nothing new happening in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. It is the same old things repeating but coming in a different garment. So unless you have a good grasp of all of this, then you will not really understand what comes afterwards.

### **The Different Types of Books Available**

We need to be aware that when it comes to the sects and the doctrines, there are four types of historical books/resources that are available to us in order to engage in this study.

#### **1. The simple affirmation of Creed.**

In these books are very short, simple statements affirming the Creed of Ahlus-Sunnah and within there it might make mention of some of the groups.

Examples of such books:

- Uṣūl us-Sunnah of Imām Aḥamd
- Sharḥ us-Sunnah
- Kitāb us-Sunnah

- Kitāb al-Īmān
- Khalq Afālul-‘Ibād of Imām al-Bukhārī
- Risālah ar-Radd ‘alā al-Qadariyyah by ‘Umar b. ‘Abdil- ‘Azīz, the righteous Khalīfah
- Aṭ-Ṭahāwī’s Creed.

In these short, simple books you get introduced to some of the issues to do with the Ṣaḥābah, Qadar, the Attributes of Allāh etc.

2. The books organised in terms of subject area that bring many narrations from the Sunnah, Qur’ānic verses and āthār from the Ṣaḥābah on a topic-by-topic basis.

For example:

- Ash-Sharī‘ah of al-Ājurī (d. 360H)
- Ibn Baṭṭah’s Ibānatul-Kubrā
- Sharḥ Uṣūl al-‘itiqād of al-Lalakā’ī.

These books are a bit more detailed, and in there you find evidences, refutations of the evidences of the People of Bid‘ah, and so on and so forth.

3. The books of Rudūd (refutations).

For example:

- Ar-Radd ‘alā az-Zanādiqah wal-Jahmiyyah of Imām Aḥmad
- Imām ad-Dārimī’s refutation of Bishr al-Marīsī
- Risālah ar-Radd ‘alā al-Qadariyyah of ‘Umar b. ‘Abdil- ‘Azīz
- Ar-Radd ‘alā al-Qadariyyah of Ismā‘īl b. Ḥammād
- Ar-Radd ‘alā Ahlul-Ahwā of al-Ḥumaydī
- Ar-Radd ‘alā al-Jahmiyyah of Imām al-Bukhārī.

Many scholars wrote books titled Ar-Radd ‘alā al-Jahmiyyah and Ar-Radd ‘alā al-Murji’ah.



With these books you gain more understanding and insight about the misinterpretation of the verses.

4. Encyclopaedias that were written by many authors where they bring all of the groups, subdivisions of the groups and mention the various statements.

These reference books were mainly authored by those who were Ash'arī in orientation.

For example:

- Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn of Abul-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī
- At-Tanbīh war-Radd of al-Malṭī
- Al-Farq baynal-Firaq of 'Abdul-Qāhir al-Baghdādī
- Al-Faṣl fil-Milal wan-Nihal of Ibn Ḥazm
- Al-Milal wan-Nihal of Ash-Shahrastānī.

والحمد لله رب العالمين