

A Brief History Of The Salafi Da'wah In The UK & How It Spread At The Hands Of Du'āt - [By Abū Humayd Sālīm]

بسم الله والحمد لله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله وعلى آله وصحبه أما بعد:

The Da'wah of returning back to the way of the righteous Salaf of this Ummah has had a profound appeal to many of the masses seeking the truth and continues to do so until this day. Yet, this greatly refreshing and inviting call of Salafiyyah has also seen many deviant callers using its strong appeal for their own interests - by promoting themselves as callers and teachers of Salafiyyah in order to amass the followers and fame they seek.

The need for writing this piece comes as we see a massive influx of unknown self-propped callers and instant overnight teachers on the internet, social media and other platforms, many of whom claim to be the vanguards of Salafi Da'wah. Those of the younger generation, even those of the earlier ones, who have yet to learn the 'Aqīdah (Beliefs) and Manhaj (methodology) of the Salaf and are unacquainted with the Da'wah's history in the West, could find themselves confused as to who to take as its true proponents and teachers and make themselves susceptible to following misguided individuals who wear the guise of Salafiyyah, yet are far from upholding its beliefs and principles and are equally as far from cooperating with those responsible and renowned for establishing the Da'wah for close to 30 years and who continue to do so to this day.

To give a detailed account of the beginnings of Salafiyyah in the UK would require writing a great number of pages and is best told by those who were at its forefront (for a more detailed account please visit: (See: Salafi Da'wah in 1996: A First-Hand Personal Account; <https://abukhadeejah.com/may-1996-oasis-salafi-publications-a-new-approach-to-salafi-dawah/>).

In brief, Da'wah As-Salafiyyah in the UK saw a number of stages and was not free of its share of tests and challenges. With **Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith UK** set in their ikhwānī ways, **JIMAS (Jamiat Ihyā Minhāj al-Sunnah)** was founded by Abū Muntasir in the late 80's and there came under its umbrella those who worked with him such as Abū 'Āliyah and 'Abdur-Rahīm Green upon what appeared to be a call to the way of the Salaf. However, their qutubist/jihadist/ikhwānī inclinations would expose them as deviants from the way of the Salaf too. They would go on to be advised by those close to them - by their brothers Abū Khadījah 'Abdul-Wāhid, Abū 'Iyyād Amjad Rafiq, Abū Talhah Dāwūd Burbank and others - only to reject their advice.

By the early/mid 90's **OASIS (Organisation of Associated Salafi Islamic Societies)** was set up in Manchester by Abū Khadījah, Abū 'Iyyād and others with the aim of uniting the Salafi du'āt and students across the UK at that time. Conferences and gatherings took place with scholars in attendance and the likes of Suhaib Hasan and Abū Usāmah Ath-Thahabī were given the chance to translate, both of whom would go on to expose their then hidden ikhwānī nature. Soon enough, and as time always reveals, there would be others from amongst the du'āt those who showed their true colours - either shades of sufism, tints of Qutubiyyah/Jihād or the stripes of Ikhwān al-Muslimīn.

By late 1996, **Salafi Publications** was established by Abū Khadījah 'Abdul-Wāhid, Abū 'Iyyād Amjad Rafīq, Abū Talhah Dāwūd Burbank, Abū Hakīm Bilāl Dāvis in order to disseminate the pure Salafi Creed and Methodology through print publications, online websites, regular classes and conferences. A new era had begun - Da'watus-Salafiyyah - as it truly is - was being spread and provided the much needed clarity in a sea of confusion whereby there were many Ikhwānis, Takfiris, Sūfis and various other types of individuals.

Alhamdulillah, Salafiyyah was now being taught via numerous means: classes, lectures and conferences with scholars in attendance both in-person and via tele-link; translations of scholarly works; the publication of leaflets, articles and books; the distribution of recordings; da'wah stalls, arranging visits to Scholars in Makkah and Madīna via 'Umrah trips and more. All of this and more consistently for over two and a half decades has resulted in Da'watus-Salafiyyah spreading across various cities and towns throughout the UK as well as internationally - across the US, Canada, the Caribbean, Europe, Sri-Lanka, Maldives and many other locations.

From the praiseworthy effects of such continuous and steady da'wah is the Salafi being able to travel to the various Salafi communities throughout the UK and truly feel the unity and reality of the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم description: *"The souls are like a recruited army, those that agree, come together and those that disagree, differ."* [**Sahīh Al-Bukhārī, no. 3336 & Muslim, no. 2638**]. These fruits are as a result - after the Will of Allāh - of diligence, consistent and unwavering efforts in the da'wah for three long decades.

The UK alone has seen over twenty-five Salafi communities being established, working closely with each other upon birr and taqwā and cooperating with one another upon spreading the Da'wah of Salafiyyah. Many of these communities would seek advice and assistance from their brothers at Salafi Publications due to their experience, strong connections to the Salafi Scholars and for regularly referring matters back to them. By Allāh's Tawfiq, these communities continue to cooperate with each other and provide advice and support to one another as brothers and sisters upon Salafiyyah.

The following is a list of these Salafi masājid and marākiz in the UK:

- Masjid As-Salafi, Masjid As-Sunnah An-Nabawiyyah and Al-Maktabah As-Salafiyyah (Salafi Publications) all in the city of Birmingham,
- Masjid Ibn Bāz and Al-Maktabah Al-Athariyyah in East London,
- Masjid As-Sunnah in Cranford, West London,
- Masjid Dārus-Sunnah in Shepherds Bush,
- Markaz As-Sunnah in Alperton,
- Markaz Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal in Slough,
- Markaz At-Tawhīd in Cardiff, Wales,
- Masjid Al-Furqān and Masjid Abī Hurayrah in Stoke-on-Trent,
- Markaz As-Salafi in Manchester,
- Masjid As-Sunnah and Salafi Bookstore in Bradford,
- and other Masājid, Marākiz and Salafi communities in Middlesbrough, Leeds, Bolton, Nelson, Liverpool, Sheffield, Tooting, Woolwich, Gloucester, Reading, Loughborough, Oxford (See: <https://www.wrightstreetmosque.com/a-word-of-unity-and-cooperation-from-the-salafis-in-the-uk-2015/>)

The teachers and Shuyūkh who were instrumental in teaching the Sunnah and Salafiyyah across the UK specifically and in the West in general over multiple decades:

- Shaykh Abū Talhah Dāwūd Burbank -رحمه الله-
- Shaykh Abū Khadijah 'Abdul-Wāhid,
- Shaykh Abū Hakīm Bilāl Davis,
- Shaykh Abū 'Iyyād Amjad Rafiq,
- Shaykh 'Abdul-Ilāh Al-Lahmāmī,
- Shaykh Uwais Tawīl,
- Shaykh Abū Idrīs Muhammad,
- Shaykh Hasan As-Somālī,
- Shaykh Abū 'Umar Fārūq -رحمه الله-.

These are our beloved teachers¹ and those who, after thanking Allāh, we thank them immensely for connecting us to the major scholars of Salafiyyah, for teaching us their words and for guiding us continuously for many years - may Allāh reward them with

¹ We must not forget others who have always been there from the 90's and played a supportive and helpful role in the Da'wah such as Abū Fudayl 'Abdur-Raqīb, Abū Tasnīm Mousaf, Abū Junaide Yusuf Bowers, Abū 'Abdillāh Bilāl Hussain and others who participated and contributed greatly. We also appreciate the efforts of those who came later in the recent decade and are involved in teaching.

the best of rewards, forgive those of them who have passed and preserve those of them who are alive. For many years we refrained from addressing these teachers of ours as Shaykhs so as to not exaggerate in their persons and imitate the people of innovation and desires. It is only after hearing the senior Scholars of Makkah & Madīna themselves on many occasions, in open and closed gatherings, addressing these teachers of ours as Shaykhs and recognising this from them, that we imitate our scholars in that. Moreover, linguistically in the Arabic language, they have surely reached the age and status of mashāyikh.

In final, this extremely brief account should clarify and remove any confusion as to who a person should take as the callers and teachers of Salafiyyah in the UK. The sincere advice of Muhammad Ibn Sirīn - رحمه الله - of the Ṭābi'īn (2nd generation of the Salaf) should also provide a guiding rule for anyone desiring to traverse the way of the Salaf:

“Indeed, this knowledge is religion, so look to whom you take your religion from.”

[Muqaddimah Sahīh Muslim, page:11]

“They used not to ask about the chain of men (transmitting narrations/knowledge). But when the fitnah appeared (splitting, differing and innovations) they would say ‘Name for us your men. So the People of Sunnah would be looked into and their hadīth would be accepted whilst the People of Innovation would be looked into and their hadīth would be rejected.’” [Muqaddimah Sahīh Muslim, page:11]

Thus, when it comes to the matter of acquiring knowledge, the Salafi is not so vulnerable so as to become bedazzled by titles - whether the speaker dubs himself with the title of ‘Mufti’, ascribes himself to ‘Da’wah’ or by the number of YouTube subscribers he has following him - his affair is to be looked into - is he from the well-known Salafi teachers attested to by the Salafi Scholars and recognised by the long-established Salafi communities throughout the country? Does he cooperate and work with them? Or is he alien to the large united Salafi community here in the UK?

Remember that our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم described the souls as being like that of a recruited army - coming together when they agree with one another and when traversing the same path, whilst fleeing from each other when they differ. The true followers of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم have been described as being clearly upon the truth, not hidden or obscure, but manifest: *“There will not cease to be a party from my Ummah, manifest and aided upon the truth. They will not be harmed by those who forsake them or oppose them until the Command of Allāh comes.”* [Sahīh Muslim, no. 156].

وبالله التوفيق