The *'Amal*of Madina

by

Aisha Bewley

You probably have heard the term, "the *'amal* of the people of Madina" and wondered what it means and what all the fuss is about. What is*'amal*or action? What does it mean and where does it come from? What does it have to do with us? This topic is one which is fraught with misunderstanding because most people have no idea what it means, and this difficulty in grasping the concept of *'amal*is a result from what has happened to the Muslims, because of the development and imposition of a statist methodology and mentality onto Muslim learning - a process which really began to solidify from the time of the Abbasid khalifate in Baghdad, about 250 *hijra*, a process which has been largely covered up or ignored, a process which has left the Muslims paralysed and unable to deal realistically or authentically with the situation in which they find themselves today.

To understand why the concept of the *'amal*of Madina has been swept to one side is to understand why the Muslims are now powerless, and to understand exactly what the *'amal*of Madina really is, is to understand the direction that the Muslims must take in order to re-activate Islam as a political force. This, I hope, will become clear in the course of this talk.

We have to ask ourselves: what is the basis of a Muslim's behaviour? What sources must we turn to in order to know how to conduct our lives? What is the guideline for our behaviour? The answer is simple: the Qur'an and *Sunna*. We have little trouble with Qur'an.. But then we come to the real crux of the problem I have mentioned: if we are to follow the *Sunna*, just what is the *Sunna*and how do we find it? This is the core question which must be answered because, in fact, what the *Sunna* does is to explain the Qur'an in terms of behaviour. It is the way in which the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, behaved, and it shows us how the guidance of the Qur'an is transformed into actual behaviour to which we can aspire.

To unravel the answer to what the *Sunna* is, we need to understand two additional terms: *hadith*and *'amal*.

What is *hadith*? A *hadith* is a verbal transmission from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. It is a report of what he said or did which is transmitted from person to person by a known chain of transmission. Many people have come to regard the corpus of *hadith* as being the same as the*Sunna*, and indeed people sometimes openly state this. For example, "The Prime Sources of the religion of Islam are the Qur'an and the Hadith." *(Shari'ah: The Islamic Law*, 'Abdu'r-Rahman I. Doi) or "All the articles of faith ... are based on and derived from the teachings of the Qur'an and the Traditions of Muhammad." *(Islam in Focus*, Hammudah Abdalati) There is a muddling here of the two terms which will become clear.

We are often given a picture of the Muslims suddenly falling into a state of panic about losing the *Sunna* and frantically attempting to authenticate it and write it down before it was swept away. But what was written down were the *hadiths*, and so there is a *hadith* = *sunna* assumption. It you want a more detailed exposition of how this move to a *hadith*-based Islam happened and how the entire methodology of *hadith* has been developed and codified, read*Root Islamic Education* by Shaykh Abdalqadir al-Murabit. It would take too long to go into here.

In any case, this *hadith*-based view is obviously a rather anachronistic view of the early period. People were doing the prayer, performing *hajj*, doing *wudu*', collecting *zakat*, carrying on their lives as Muslims in Madina as they had done from the time of the Prophet right up to Malik and beyond. Any conflict would only arise if someone came with something new, and then it would have to be compared with the existing practice. They did not reach for a volume of *hadith*. They were not a bookish people. Transmission was immediate and direct. What did people do? Or, as Malik said, "If you want knowledge, then take up residence, i.e. in Madina. The Qur'an was not revealed on the Euphrates," i.e. in Iraq.

In Iraq, however, there were few Companions, and Iraq was new to Islam. To find out what was correct, people would have to go to a Companion and ask, and then they would get one opinion of one person, be it in the form of an opinion, a *fatwa*, or a *hadith*. Furthermore, it was in this environment, in Iraq, that forgery of *hadith* took place and the whole science of *hadith*, its texts, its men, etc. developed in order to ascertain the authenticity of the hadith. As Ibn Taymiyya said, "There were no people of a city who lied more than the people of Kufa." It is also well-known that Malik and the people of Madina did not normally accept the *hadith* of the people of Iraq because there were so many liars there and the Iraqis did not distinguish between the those who were truthful and the liars.

There is a dangerous assumption which underlies this picture of Muslims trying to preserve the *Sunna* by writing down the *hadiths*, and that is the assumption that *hadith* is synonymous with *Sunna*. This was not, and is not the case: *HADITH* IS NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH *SUNNA*. You cannot pick up the collections of *hadith*, read them, and then uncover the *Sunna* from them. So *hadith* is not synonymous with *Sunna*. You will not be able to have direct access to the *Sunna* via *hadiths*. Indeed, in the time of the Prophet, the Messenger of Allah had forbidden them to write down other than the Qur'an from him. He told them to wipe out all that they had written, and then he later permitted it. But there is an indication of the desire to avoid elevating *hadiths* to the level of the Qur'an.

This leaves us with *'amal*.*'Amal*literally means "action" and refers to the agreed-upon practice of the people of Madina. So *'amal*includes the *sunna* of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and also the *ijtihad*, or individual judgement, of later authorities, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab in particular. The *Sunna* is the practice of the Prophet and so all *sunna* is *'amal*, but not all *'amal* is *sunna*.

*'Amal*is an integral part of the *sunna*. The *sunna* is not, as we said, synonymous with *hadith* because *hadiths*, while agreed to be completely authentic and sound, both in text and *isnad*, were not necessarily acted upon in the early period in Madina, and thus were not part of the *sunna*. The*'amal*is the normative practice of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, or that of the first four khalifs, the Companions and their Successors, the Tabi'un, and the generation after them, the Tabi'u't-Tabi'in. Zayd ibn Thabit, the famous Companion, stated, "When you see the people of Madina doing something, know that it is the sunna." This clearly refers to the *'amal*, to "doing", and not to a verbal transmission. Thus *sunna* and *amal* are, in fact, closer to being synonyms than *hadith* and *sunna*, and you often find them being used as such: "The *sunna* of the Rightly-guided khalifs," for instance.

The position of *hadith* has become rather entrenched and rigidified today. There is, however, a very serious problem is taking *hadiths*as your basis for behaviour. That is that in order to use the *hadiths*, you need to have *fiqh* or understanding. Ibn Wahb said, "Anyone who knows a *hadith* but does not have an *imam* in *fiqh* is astray (*dâll*)," and Ibn 'Uyayna said, "*Hadiths* are a source of misguidance except for the *fuqaha*'." You must have criteria for deciding what *hadith* mean, which ones are abrogated, which ones you must act by and which ones you must leave.

The criterion of Madina was the *'amal*. If a  *hadith* conflicted with the *'amal*, the *hadith* was ignored. In fact, the *hadith* in question might well have been superseded, referred to a particular situation, etc. etc. In fact, if you think about the things which you recount to someone, you do tend to recount the unusual rather than the mundane and everyday. And, in any case as regards transmission of*hadith*, as Ibn Taymiyya categorically states, "The people of Madina were the soundest of the people of the cities in both transmission and opinion. Their *hadith* is the soundest of *hadiths*. The people of knowledge of *hadith* agree that the soundest of *hadiths* are the *hadiths* of the people of Madina and then the *hadiths* of the people of Basra." Furthermore, the actual hadith transmissions of Malik were considered to be the most trustworthy of any. Al-Bukhari said that the *isnad*, "Malik from Nafi' from Ibn 'Umar", is "the golden chain of authority". Whenever Bukhari has a *hadith* from Malik in any section of his Sahih, it is Malik's transmission which he puts first.

Regarding the position of *'amal* vis-`a-vis hadith in Madina, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab stated on the minbar, "By Allah Almighty I will make it difficult for a man who relates a *hadith* different from it (the*'amal*)." Ibn al-Qasim and Ibn Wahb said, "I saw that in Malik's opinion, action *('amal*) was stronger than the*hadith*." Malik said, "The men from the people of knowledge among the Followers conveyed *hadiths* which had been conveyed to them from others and they said, 'We are not ignorant of this, but the past action is other than it.'"

Malik said, "I saw Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr ibn 'Amr ibn Hazm who was a *qadi*. His brother was 'Abdullah, a truthful man who had a lot of *hadiths*. When Muhammad gave a judgement in which a *hadith* had come contrary to the judgement, I heard 'Abdullah criticise him, saying, 'Hasn't this and this come in this *hadith*?' He said, 'Yes.' His brother said to him, 'Then what is wrong with you? Why don't you give judgement by it?' He said, 'Where are the people in respect to it?' i.e. what is the consensus of action in Madina? He meant that the action is stronger than the *hadith* in it."

Ibn Mahdi said, "The established *sunna* from the *sunna* of the people of Madina is better than the *hadith*." This clearly shows the difference between *Sunna* and *hadith*. (Ibn Mahdi died in 186 AH and was one of the greatest *hadith* scholars of his time in Madina.) He added, "It may be that I have a hadith on a subject and then I find that the people of the courtyard have something different than that. Therefore it becomes weak in my estimation." And there is the famous statement of Rabi'a, "I prefer a thousand from a thousand over one from one because one from one can strip the *Sunna* out of your hands." This is precisely what has happened.

Why is this the case? Malik said, "About so many thousand Companions came with the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, from a certain expedition at such-and-such a time. About 10,000 of them died in Madina, and the rest split up in the cities. Which would you prefer to follow and whose words would you prefer to take? Those in whose presence the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, died with his Companions I mentioned, or the one who died with one or two of the Companions of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace."

There are four possibilities which can arise in the area of*'amal* versus *hadith*, :

1. The*'amal* is in agreement with the *hadith*, and so the *'amal*supports the validity of the *hadith*.

2. The*'amal*is in accord with one *hadith*, but is contradicted by another *hadith*. The existence of the *'amal*makes the first *hadith* the one preferred.

3. The*'amal*contradicts all the *hadiths*. If the *'amal*is from the time of the Prophet, it is preferred because this category of *'amal*is definitively authoritative and has a multiple transmission (*mutawatir*) whereas the other *hadiths*, being single transmissions, one from one, are merely probable. If the*'amal*is based on *ijtihad*, then there is some disagreement about this.

4. There is *hadith* but no*'amal*. Then the *hadith* is followed, and there is some disagreement about this.

Now, we must ask, why is the *'amal* here preferred over the *hadith*? *Hadiths* are divided into two types: *mutawatir* *hadiths* which derive from a large number of Companions, and single *hadiths* which go back to a single Companion.*'Amal*is *mutawatir*, in that it comes from a large number of Companions, and it represents the consensus of the bulk of the Companions, who were in Madina, and their agreed-upon practice. The multiple transmission dominates the single one, the one from a single Companion, and thus *'amal*predominates.  A clear picture of why the *'amal*is preferred is given by Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889):

"In our opinion the truth is more likely to be established by *ijma'* than by the transmissions of *hadith*. *Hadith* may be subject to forgetfulness, error, uncertainties, different possible interpretations and abrogation; someone trustworthy may transmit from someone who is not; there may be two different commands, both of which are possible, such as making either one or two *taslims* [at the end of the prayer.] Similarly, a man may have been present when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, gave a certain command and then been absent when he told people to do something different. He will then transmit the first command and not the second because he does not know it. *Ijma'*, however, is free from such vicissitudes."

Thus in Madina at the time of Malik, there was a transmission of one generation to another generation and this took place in the city of the Prophet, where the people were following the pattern of behaviour which he had demonstrated. It is not possible that a whole generation would stop doing something and then do something new without something extraordinary happening. In the time of the Prophet, it would have been a direct command. Short of that, there would be no reason for it to change. This is clearly seen are things like the measures of the *sa'*and the *mudd* and taking *Zakat al-Fitr*using them, the form of the *adhan* and the *iqama*, not saying the basmala aloud in the aloud in the prayer, allowing the *waqf*, etc. These were followed by all in Madina and their practice went back to the Prophet and his Companions. Malik refers to it as "an inheritance which was bequeathed from generation to generation up until our time."

This seems such a logical position to take that we must look at what happened historically to alter this position because such a radical shift of position really is quite extraordinary, [and Ibn Taymiyya is my main source for this].

The school of Madina was the soundest of the schools of all the other cities because they were the strongest in following the Messenger and they had the firmest and fullest connection to what he left. You do not find madhhabs at this point. Madhhabs developed later. There were no Malikis, not Hanafis, no Shafi'is. At this point, if you qualified yourself, you were declaring yourself a member of sect - a Jahmi, a Mu'tazili, a Murji'i, or whatever.

Because of the strong connection which the Madinans had to the legacy of the Prophet, Ibn Taymiyya says, "This is why none of the Muslim scholars believed that the consensus of any of the cities except Madina was a proof which must be followed - not in those times nor after them." He points out that no innovation emerged from Madina, while there were innovations in every other city, and that the appearance of innovations was commensurate with the distance from Madina. This is a very important statement: there were NO innovations in Madina, and the further you go from Madina, the greater the number and scope of innovations.

When Syria and Iraq were conquered, 'Umar sent people to the cities to teach them the Book and Sunna. 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, Hudhayfa ibn al-Yaman, 'Ammar ibn Yasir, 'Imran ibn Husayn, Salman al-Farisi and others went to Iraq. Mu'adh ibn Jabal, 'Ubada ibn as-Samit, Abu'd-Darda', Bilal ibn Rabah and their likes went to Syria. There remained with him in Madina men like 'Uthman, 'Ali, and 'Abdu'r-Rahman, and those like Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Muhammad ibn Maslama, Zayd ibn Thabit, and others.

Ibn Taymiyya says, "Now the action of the people of Madina was either a sunna from the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, himself or they referred to the judgements of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab. It is said that Malik took the bulk of the *Muwatta*' from Rabi'a, and Rabi'a from Sa'id ibn al-Musayyab, and Sa'id ibn al-Musayyab from 'Umar, and 'Umar related it. Of 'Umar's weight, at-Tirmidhi has that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, 'If I had not been sent among you, then 'Umar would have been sent among you.'" In the two *Sahih* collections (al-Bukhari and Muslim), the Prophet said, 'In the nations before you there were men who were inspired. If there is such a one among my community, it is 'Umar.' In the *Sunan*, the Prophet said, 'Follow those who come after me: Abu Bakr and 'Umar.'

'Umar used to consult the great Companions, like 'Uthman, 'Ali, Talha, az-Zubayr, Sa'd, and 'Abdu'r-Rahman. They were the people of consultation (*shura*). This is why ash-Sha'bi said, "Look at the judgements that 'Umar made. He used to consult." It is known that that on which 'Umar gave judgement or *fatwa* and on which he consulted them is more predominant than the judgement or *fatwa* of Ibn Mas'ud or his like, may Allah be pleased with all of them.

"In questions of the *deen*, both in respect of the fundamental principles and the branches, 'Umar used to follow the judgement of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and he used to consult 'Ali and others of the people of consultation."

"At this time and after it, all the Muslim cities followed the people of Madina. Ibn Mas'ud was the most knowledgeable of the Companions in Iraq at the time when the *Fitna* took place. He used to return to Madina to ask about judgements that he had made in Iraq and if he found that the practice in Madina was different, he would retract the judgement he had made.

"After the *Fitna*, all the cities except for Kufa followed the people of Madina. The people of Kufa then declared that the position of the Kufans was equal to that of the Madinans." As they had been deeply embroiled in the *fitna* and lost, it was clear that this was a political position which they were taking in order to justify themselves. As Ibn Taymiyya says, "Before the *Fitna*, they followed the people of Madina and imitated them. Before the murder of 'Uthman, it is not known that any of the people of Kufa or anyone else claimed that the people of their city knew more than the people of Madina. When 'Uthman was murdered and the community divided and split into parties, then there appeared among the people of Kufa those who claimed that the scholars of the people of Kufa were equal to the scholars of the people of Madina."

The practice of following the 'amal was still strong under the Umayyad khalif, 'Umar ibn 'Abdu'l-'Aziz. He gathered the *fuqaha*' together and asked about the *sunan* and the judgements which were acted upon, and confirmed them. Those among them were not acted upon by the people, he threw out, even if they came from a reliable source.

The early Abbasids also preferred the people of Madina. "Abu Ja'far (al-Mansur) knew that at that time the people of the Hijaz were more concerned with the *Deen* of Islam than the people of Iraq and it is related that he said that to Malik or another of the scholars of Madina, "I have looked into this business and I found the people of Iraq to be a people of lies and fraud," or words to that effect, "and I found the people of Syria to be people of raiding and *jihad*, and I found this business with you." It is said that he said to Malik words to the effect, "You are the most knowledgeable of the people of the Hijaz." Al-Mansur asked the scholars of the Hijaz to move to Iraq and to spread knowledge there and several went.

The business is summarised in the letter of Imam Malik ibn Anas to al-Layth ibn Sa'd:

"It has reached me that you give *fatwas* to the people concerning things which are contrary to what is done by our community of people and in our city. You are the Imam and you have excellence and position with the people of your city, and they need you and rely on what comes from you. Therefore you ought to fear for yourself and follow that whose pursuit you hope will bring you rescue. Allah Almighty says in His Mighty Book, 'The outstrippers, the first of the Muhajirun and the Ansar.' Allah Almighty says, 'Give good news to My slaves who listen to the word and the follow the best of it.' People follow the people of Madina, and the *hijra* was made to it and the Qur'an was sent down in it, and the *halal* was made *halal* and the *haram* was made *haram* there since the Messenger of Allah was living among them and they were present at the revelation itself. He commanded them and they obeyed him. He made *sunna* for them and they followed him until Allah made him die and chose for him what is with Him, may the blessings of Allah and His mercy and blessing be upon him.

"Then after him, the people followed those from among his community who were given authority after him. Whenever something happened that they had knowledge about, they carried it out. What they did not have knowledge of, they asked about, and then took the strongest of what they found regarding that by their *ijtihad* and the recentness of their contract (with the Prophet). If someone disagreed with them or said something else which was stronger than it and better, they left the first statement and acted on this other one.

"Then the Tabi'un after them followed this path and they followed those *sunan*. Since the business in Madina was open and acted upon, I do not think that anyone should oppose it because of what the Madinans possess of that inheritance which none is allowed to plagiarise or lay claim to.

"If the people of the other cities had begun to say, 'This is the action which is in our city and this is what happened in it from those before us,' they would not be certain about that and they would not have that which allows them that."

So this was the position of the people of knowledge right through to the Abbasids, a position now marginalised in the Muslim world and replaced by a new methodology, Iraqi in origin, which, as Rabi'a, said, "Strips the *Sunna* out of your hands." If you think about it, it is an extraordinary shift of position.

To understand some of the consequences of this, it is necessary to look at the differences between the two main schools, Madinan and Iraqi. A major difference in approach between the Madinans and Iraqis is that the Iraqi school, being far from the actual 'amal as well as embroiled in sectarian conflicts, became very legalistic and formal, intensely concerned with the letter of the Law and the minutia of purity and purification, and, by virtue of their rigid methodology, allowed various legal devices which enabled injustice to occur, whereas the school of Madina was concerned with justice and what would entail justice and avert injustice, and they insisted a great deal on avoiding usury and were less concerned with legalisms. One is concerned with method and the other with consequences.

This aspect of avoiding legalisms also extends to not going to excess in the Deen. It is not necessarily true that a if a little of something is good, a lot of it is much better. That is every important as is evidenced in this: "Malik was asked about a man who assumed ihram before the *miqat* and he said, "I fear *fitna* for him." He said, "Allah Almighty says, 'Let those who oppose His command beware lest a *fitna* befall them.' (24:63)" The asker said, "What *fitna* is that? It is only increase in obeying Allah Almighty." He said, "And what *fitna* is greater than that you suppose than you are singled out for an action which the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, did not do?"

In other words, you are making yourself the arbiter of what is right and what is wrong, and so you are making yourself greater than the Prophet and the Companions. You are imposing your interpretation of the *Sunna* onto the Sunna, and, in effect, letting your opinion be the judge. You are virtually re-inventing the *Deen*. Allah says in His Book, "Do not follow your false opinion (*hawa*)." (38:26) Imam Malik ibn Anas also used to say, "The last of this community will not be right except by what the first of it was put right. Or whenever a man comes to us with a stronger argument than another man, will we leave what Jibril brought to Muhammad for the argument of this one?"

So it is important to cling to the practice of the Prophet and not to exceed it. This is what the Madinans insisted on. Another aspect that the Madinans insisted upon was making things easy for people and not difficult. Because they aimed at making it simple and accessible, and because of their knowledge of the *sunna*, as Ibn Taymiyya says, "Thus the people of Madina were not in need of any sort of administration from rulers above them." The deen did not have to be imposed from above. It was lived. It does not require an elite corps of scholars with knowledge of the 50 or 200 disciplines of *hadith* to tell you how to live.

We see further evidence of this if we look at contracts, as Ibn Taymiyya says: "The people of Madina make the starting point in contracts derive from the customs and habits of the people. What the people consider to be a sale is a sale and what they consider to be hire is hire and what they consider to be a gift is a gift. This is closer to the Book and the *Sunna* and more just. Some terms have a linguistic definition, like sun and moon, while others have a definition in the *Shari'a*, like prayer and *hajj*. Still others have no definition neither linguistic nor in the *Shari'a*, but rather refer to customs, like taking possession *(qabd*). It is known that the terms, "sale," "hire" and "gift" in this area were not defined by the Lawgiver nor do they have a linguistic definition. Rather that varies according to the customs and habits of the people. So what they consider to be a sale is a sale and what they consider to be a gift is a gift and what they consider to be hire is hire."

Thus customs (*'urf*) have a place as long as they do not contradict the Book and the *Sunna*. Indeed, acceptance of custom is one of the legal principles of the Maliki school. This is part of making things easy for the people, making it accessible.

In stressing the position of the Madinans, Ibn Taymiyya points out: "It is known that if the Messenger made something unlawful, that thing contains corruption (*fasâd*) and that to permit it to be done by any means whatsoever has no benefit in it. So to do this is a fault and stupidity. The corruption is still there, but it has increased by their cheating. And if that involves inconvenience to themselves, they have put themselves out and gained no benefit at all. And what does such a person think of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace?"

This type of position is the Iraqi school which uses elaborate devices to permit usury, and this is the same mentality today which leads to fatwas allowing Islamic banking, Islamic insurance, etc, all erecting an elaborate legalistic structure and argument which nonetheless still has the haram at the core of it, but the very haram-ness of the transaction is covered up by the edifice of legalisms. The use of legal devices to get around a religious prohibition is frequented encountered in Jewish law. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Do not commit what the Jews committed. They make lawful what Allah made unlawful by the basest devices."

It is also not surprising that the school of Iraq was adopted as the official *madhhab* by most ruling dynasties - because it is an easy means to induce paralysis in people and to legalise the *haram*. Justice goes right out the window. Ibn Taymiyya says regarding the real source of this injustice, "The real source of this error is that the school of the Kufans is lacking in knowledge of the policy of the Messenger of Allah and the policy of the Rightly-guided khalifs." He goes on, "When the khalifate went to the Abbasids and they needed to manage the people and they appointed judges for them among those of the *fuqaha*' in Iraq who took it on, they did not have adequate knowledge of the just policy." This continued until those who claim to rule by the Shari'a do not know the *sunna* and so deprive people of their rights, shed blood unlawfully and make the *haram* lawful. On the other hand, those who rule by policy, or today "democratic principles", do whatever they like without any reference to the*Shari'a*. But, as he says, "There was judgement by justice (in the cities where the people of Madina dominated) which did not occur in other cities."

As Ibn Taymiyya concludes, "The *Deen* of Islam is that the sword follows the Book. When knowledge of the Book and *Sunna* has the upper hand, and the sword follows that, then the business of Islam is established. The people of Madina are the most entitled of the cities to the like of that. As for the time of the Rightly-guided Khalifs, the business was like that. After them, some of them had more of it than others. When knowledge of the Book is insufficient and the sword sometimes agrees with the Book and sometimes opposes it, then where is the deen in that? Whoever is guided to these matters and their like, it is clear to him that the bases of the people of Madina is incomparably sounder that the bases of any of the people of the earth. "

To conclude, thus*'amal*consists of the parameters of action in Madina which were used to judge the *hadith* and to preserve the *Sunna*. As 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar said, "When a sedition occurs, if people would only refer the business to the people of Madina, and if they agree on something, do it, then the business would be put right. But when a dog barks, the people follow it."