Chapter-1,
The Ideological Background
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Shari'ɑ is the basic of the ideological study in relation to Saudi political system. In a literal sense Shari'ɑ means "the road to the watering place." As a technical term, it means the canon law of Islam. In Islamic jurisprudence Shari'ɑ is used as a technical term in relation to the Prophet as the preacher of the rules of the conduct of a Muslim, but more frequently it is applied to Allah as the lawgiver.¹

According to Tabari the Shari'ɑ comprises the law of inheritance (fara'īd), the hard-punishment, the commandments and prohibitions. It means totality of Allah's commandments relating to the activities of men, apart from those relating to ethics (akhlak) which are treated separately. Fiqh is the science of the Shari'ɑ, and the Usul-al-fiqh is also called Usul-as-shara'. According to the orthodox view, the Shari'ɑ is the basis for the judgment of actions as good or bad, which accordingly can only come from Allah.²

Within Muslim discourse, Shari'ɑ designates the rules and regulations governing the lives of Muslims, derived in principal from the Qur'an and the Sunna. In this sense, the word is closely
associated with *fiqh*, which signifies academic discussion of divine law.\(^3\)

The *Shari'a* contained in God’s revelation (*Qur'an* and *Hadith*), is explained and elaborated by the interpretative activity of scholars, masters of *fiqh*, the *fuqaha*.\(^3\) Since this is in practice the only access to the law, the two words are sometimes used synonymously, though *Shari'a* retains the connotation of divine, temporal. Since the late 19\(^{th}\) century, Al-Qanun al-Islami (Islamic law) has become a part of Muslim discourse and carries with it connotations of the legal system, as in modern states.\(^4\)

The *Qur'an*, from which the basic norms of the Muslim legal system were deduced or derived, did not provide details of the law. It leaves to the interpreter the task of building up, on its foundation. The superstructure of a comprehensive code, since the Prophet remained, during his lifetime, the sole interpreter of the *Qur'an*, his speech, actions and tacit approvals, termed together as *Sunna* (Tradition). The Traditions were regarded as the second basic source of Islamic law, after the *Qur'an*. The Prophet did not, however, during the short span of his prophetic career (spread over about twenty-three years), complete the required code. Further work was to be done on it, for which he had left some guidelines.
After the Prophet’s demise in the first quarter of the seventh century A.D., the task of developing details of the law, and thereby completing the Muslim code, fell on the jurist-theologians of the age, who had to interpret and apply the Qur’an and the Sunna, (Tradition). While performing the task of interpreting and applying these fundamental sources of Islamic law, the jurist-theologians developed two more sources of the law, namely, Consensus and Analogy.

Consensus (ijma') was the agreement of Muslim jurists on any particular principle of law. Such an agreement could be based by the jurists on the Qur’anic texts the Sunna (traditions) reason or general practice (‘urf). A principle found in the Qur’an or the Sunna (Traditions) or settled by ijma' (consensus), applicable to a particular case, could be extended by the jurists to another similar case, or its opposite applied in contrary conditions. This source of legislation was called the Qiyas (analogical deduction).

The method of analogy (Qiyas), when applied to divergent cases by several jurists, gave rise to three other principles of legislation. The first of these was Istihsan (juristic preference), permitted the setting aside of analogy in favour of a principle based on the Qur’an or the Sunna or settled by juristic
consensus (ijma). The second, al-masalih al-mursala, was tantamount to the modern doctrine of public interest, and the third, Isdidal. It stood for the application of logic in the formulation of legal principles. 6

The early stage scale and systematic expressions of the law are found in a bundle of texts attributed to scholars of the 2nd and early 3rd centuries, notably Malik b. Anas (d.179/795), al-Shafi‘i (d.204/820) al-Shaybani (d.189/805), and Abu-yousuf (d. 182/798). The last two are pupils of Abu-Hanifa (d. 150/767), who, together with Malik, al-Shafi‘i and later, Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 241/ 855) gave his name to a broad tradition or school (madhab) of juristic thinking. These four schools have been dominating the Sunni community. 7

Modern jurists emphasize the importance of law for understanding the character and ethos of a people. “Law,” says a modern jurist, “streams from the soul of a people like national poetry.” It is as holy as the national religious, ethical, and poetical elements that contribute to its vital force; it is “the distilled essence of the civilization of a people; it reflects the people’s soul more clearly than any other organism.” This is true of Islam more than of any other faith.
Chapter -1 The Ideological Background

The Shari'a is the central core of Islam; for understanding its civilization, understanding its social history or its political system is not possible without a knowledge and appreciation of its legal system.

Shari'a is the totality of Allah's commandments. Each one of such commandments is called hukm (pl. ahkam). The law of Allah and its inner meaning is not easy to grasp; and Shari'a embraces all human actions. For this reason it is not 'law' in the modern sense; it contains an infallible guide to ethics. It is fundamentally a doctrine of duties, a code of obligations. Legal considerations and individual rights have a secondary place in it; above all, the tendency towards a religious evaluation of all the affairs of life is supreme.

A man may be learned, 'Alim (pl. Ulama), but to be a faqih (pl. fuqaha'), he must possess the quality of independent judgement, the capacity to discern between the 'correct' and binding rule of law, and the 'weak' or unsupported opinion of a classical author. The terms fiqh and fuqaha' may also have been suggested by the Latin terms jurisprudentia and jurisprudentes; for a study of fiqh reveals that the traces of Roman, Jewish and Persian laws that have been incorporated in it.8
All actions of human life are classified by the Shari'a under one of the following five categories (al-ahkam al-khamsa): 1) "duty" (fard) or "obligatory" (wajib), i.e. action, performance of which is rewarded and omission punished [of the further divisions of fard (wajib), the most important is that into fard'ain and fard kifaya, a similar division being made in the following category]; 2) "meritorious" (Sunna) or "the usual custom" (Sunna in this meaning is not to be confused with the "Sunna of the Prophet", one of the usul al-fiqh]; 3) "recommended" (mandub); 4) "desirable" (mustahabb); and 5) "voluntary meritorious action" (nafil or nafilah). The performance of such is called tatwur'.

The Shari'a then, by virtue of its character as the expression of God’s will, and by the common acceptance of its prescriptions and their implications on the part of all Muslims, supplies the authority, sanctions, and moral basis for the unity and constitution of the Umma as a political entity; however, neither in the Qur'an nor in the Sunna of the Prophet can there to be found precise instructions as to the forms and institutions by which the unity of the Umma, a political organization, should be expressed and maintained. On the Prophet's death (A. D. 632), therefore, the community itself by the first and most decisive exercise of Ijma' (consensus of the community), took the
step of electing Abu-Bakar as its temporal head or imam, with the designation of "successor (caliph, or khalifa) of the Prophet of God."\textsuperscript{10}

After the death of the Prophet, his successor, the first caliph, although taking over quite naturally his role as the supreme judge of the Muslim community, could not pretend to continue his activity as the transmitter of divine revelation. As to the Sunnis, during the first generation of Islam after the Prophet, the authority for deciding how the law should be and the authority for enforcing it were vested in the same person. The regulations of the Qur'an and the other prescription of the Prophet were of course complied with, and the new decisions were to be made according to his intention; but the legal institutions as found in the recently conquered territories were freely adopted.

The Shari'a has always been a considerable educational force and is still ardently studied; it is still regarded in wide circles of Islam as the principle subject of true learning.\textsuperscript{11}

One should, however, not draw too sharp a line between the doctrine of the Shari'a and the law as enforced by the state. This is particularly evident in the office of the qadi, the religious
judge who is at the same time a state official. The Muslim princes have never coercively appointed qadis or granted them the necessary organs for enforcing their decisions. The early qadis rendered their judgments according to their own discretion, basing themselves, besides on the prescriptions of the Qur'an and the directives of the caliphs, on equity and on customary law with more or less stress laid on religious points of view.

During the period of classical Islam, the administration of justice had made the most important contribution to the development of the Shari‘a. But once this had arrived in its definite form—a fact which roughly coincided with the coming to power of the ‘Abbassids, the qadis remained exclusively bound by this authoritative doctrine, in complete independence of the government. This is the theory; in practice, the qadis could not but take notice of the wishes of the authority by which they were appointed and dismissed, and on which they depended for the execution of judgments. The hearing of certain claims, moreover, could be withheld from the qadis competence, so as to make prescriptions of the law inapplicable. Although under the Ummayyads occasional attempts at direct interference by the
political authorities were mostly rejected, this completely changed, in spite of the theory, early under the ‘Abbasides.

The Shari’a has hardly been in practice as regards to the constitution of the Muslim state, international relation, and war. To the jurisdiction of the qadi there was finally left only public worship and purely religious obligations. Nevertheless, the law regarding marriage, family and inheritance, in part also pious foundations (wakf), and in all fields which in the popular mind are more closely connected with religion, Shari’a has prevailed.

It was during the flourishing period of the Ottoman empire in the 16th and 17th centuries that the Shari’a reached at last, under the auspices of “pious” rulers, the peak of its practical application, even in the fields of civil and commercial law. Uniformity of jurisdiction all over the territory was achieved, and the qadis were organized in a kind of hierarchy. The supreme mufti, the Shaikh al-Islam had to superintend the proper application of the Shari’a, but even then the criminal, financial and landed property law was ruled by the temporal legislation of the so-called kanun-namas, which actually were, although they pretended not to be, contrary to the Shari’a.
The reform movement starting in the 19th century brought about the introduction of the codes conceived on European lines, at first for the commercial. Still as late as 1876, the civil law of the Shari'a was codified in the majalla. This, however, being a code quite apart from the modifications contained in it, did not correspond to the strict requirements of the doctrine, and was not to be used by the Shari'a tribunals themselves, but by secular courts. The last step was taken in 1926 by the introduction of the Swiss civil (and the Italian penal) code which replaced the Shari'a even for the law of marriage, family and inheritance, followed in 1928 by the omission of the last mention of the Shari'a from the constitution and the radical secularization of the State.

Albania has so far been the only Islamic country to follow the example of Turkey by completely abandoning the Shari'a. In Egypt, the adoption of codes after the European model for the field abandoned by the Shari'a in practice, began only in 1883. Some modification of the doctrine regarding procedure, comparable to those contained in the majalla but binding the Shari'a tribunals themselves, were first introduced in 1910. Lastly, the material rules regarding some points of family law have been modified, cautiously at first in 1920, and more boldly
in 1929 and 1931 (here also Turkey had taken the lead in 1917).\textsuperscript{12}

Towards understanding Saudi system of government in relation to \textit{Shari'\'a}, an understanding of the four schools of Islamic thought is pertinent. With the emergence of the ‘Abbasid state in the 8\textsuperscript{th} century, the science of jurisprudence flourished and attained its golden age, for in that period the four Sunni schools (Hanafite, Shafi'ite, Malikite, Hanbalite) of law became widespread, traditions were collected, commentaries of the Qur'an were written, and the science of sources was compiled.

The schools each name themselves after one of the four great early scholars Abu Hanifa (d. 150/767), Malik (d. 179/795), al-Shafi'i (d. 204/820), and Ibn Hanbal (d. 241/855). Often, though not always, over time the scholars of each school came to agreement about which ruling on any significant issue was the best, and this became identified as the view of that school on that issue. In later eras, lower-level scholars considered themselves ordinarily bound to follow the standard view of the school to which they belonged.

Though these schools in theory are purely intellectual groupings, they came to occupy largely separate geographical
zones. The Hanafi school, begun in Iraq, became widespread in Iraq and Syria and spread eastward through Central Asia. Thus the majority of Sunni Muslims from the Levant to China follow the Hanafis. The Maliki school, arising in Medina and developing in Egypt and elsewhere in the East, spread early to the Muslim West in Africa and Spain.

The Shafi'i school arose in Egypt, and was widely followed in Iraq, Persia, and Central Asia, long competing successfully with the Hanafi school. It spread to East Africa and the western and southern regions of the Arabian Peninsula, including the Hijaz (the region of Mecca and Medina), and then moved through coastal trading routes further east, becoming eventually the predominant school in Southeast Asia.

The last of the four schools to arise, the Hanbali, was adopted by populations in Baghdad, Damascus, and the Arabian Peninsula. The school enjoyed an influence disproportionate to the number of its adherents, however, since it was the chief advocate of a powerful theological movement influential in Baghdad from the ninth through thirteenth centuries and thereafter in Damascus.
Hanbali School; The Imam and his pupils: The Hanbali school is being followed in Saudi Arabia in matters of government. Hence, a study of this school is prerequisite to understand the political system in Saudi Arabia. This also forms the ideological basis of the government.

The founder of the fourth Sunni school is the Imam Abu” Abdullah Ahmad ibn Hanbal, who was born in Baghdad in the year 164 A.H. (780 A.D.) and died in the same city in 241 A.H. (855 A.D.). Ibn Hanbal was a traveler whose journeys in the quest of knowledge and traditions took him to Syria, Hijaz, Yemen, Qufa and Basra. He compiled a major work consisting of a large collection of traditions entitled Musnad al- Imam Ahmad, which comprises six volumes containing more than 40,000 traditions.

Ibn Hanbal was renowned for his aversion to opinion (Ra’y) and for his adherence to the strict text of the Qur’an and the traditions. This was true to such an extent that some prefer to include him among the traditionalists (Muhaddithun) rather than among those jurists qualified to use independent reasoning (mujtahid). Among those who considered him so was Ibn al-Nadim, who classified Ibn Hanbal along with al-Bukhari,
Muslim, and other traditionalists in the section of his work, *Al-Fihrist*, devoted to those learned in the traditions.

Ibn Abd al-Bir does not mention the biography of this imam in his book *Al-Intiqā’ fi Fada’il al-A’immah al-fuquha’* (Selections in the Virtues of the Imams of Jurisprudence). Similarly, al-Tabari in his Book *Ikhtilaf al-Fuqaha’* (The Disagreements of the Jurists), does not mention Ibn Hanbal or his school of law. This opinion should, without doubt, be rejected since the Hanbali school is considered among the four original Sunni schools of jurisprudence, having an independent system of its own as well as characteristic principles in the science of the origins and the branches of the law.

Indeed, Ibn Hanbal was one of the most distinguished of the students of ash-Shafi’i, and he later founded an independent school based on five main sources: the texts of the *Qur’an* and the *Sunna*, the *fatwas* of the companions (if there was nothing to contradict them, the sayings of certain companions when these were consistent with the *Qur’an* and the *Sunna*), *da’īf* and *mursal* traditions (the former type having a weak chain of transmission, while the latter lacks the name of some of the transmitters), and finally, reasoning by analogy (*qiyas*) whenever necessary. 13
Ibn Hanbal was noted for being unbending in his religion, and very firm in his faith. It was no wonder then that he rejected the theory of the creation of the Qur’an when he was called upon to accept it in the days of the caliph al-wathiq. For his uncompromising attitude on this issue he was persecuted, beaten, and imprisoned. He was not, however, the only one to suffer this fate. History is full of episodes of intellectual persecution endured by those learned in the Shari’a. Al-Buwayti, a companion of Ash-Shafi’i, was imprisoned for the same reasons as Ibn Hanbal and died in the prison of Baghdad. We have already seen how Abu-Hanifah was imprisoned and how Malik was beaten for well-known political reasons.

It was said that al-Sarakhsi started dictating his book al-Mabsyt while in prison, and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah and his teacher, Taqi al-Din ibn Taymiyah, were likewise both imprisoned in the citadel of Damascus. It was there that the latter died. In the old Roman Days, moreover, the Emperor Coracle ordered the execution of Opinion, who was of Syrian origin and the undisputed dean of all Roman jurists because of his refusal to issue a legal ruling sanctioning the murder of Geta, brother of the Emperor. These and other examples indicate that
genuine integrity and true faith do not yield to force and tyranny, and do not fear sacrifice, whatever the price.

Included among the followers of Ahmad ibn Hanbal are: Muwaffaq al-Din ibn Qudamah (d: 620 A.H.), the author of one of the greatest books on Islamic jurisprudence, al-Mughni; Shams al-Din ibn Qudamah al-Maqdisi (d. 682 A.H.), the author of al-sharh al-kabir, a commentary on the Muqni; Taqiy al-Din Ahmad ibn Taymiyah works; and Abu ‘Abdullah ibn Bakr al-Zar, the Damascene, better known as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah (d. 751 A.H.), who was also the author of very well known books (Note: The author also mentions several other followers of Ibn Hanbal, and their works, many of which are almost as well known as those listed above).

**Concept of a Constitution in Islam**

In Saudi Arabia, the basic law of government was introduced by royal decree in 1992, as chapter-1 article-1 defined God’s book and the *Sunna* of his Prophet as the constitution of Saudi Arabia. In this context it is necessary to discuss the concept of a constitution in Islam.

The constitution of any country is the base over which the whole system of the government is built. The building and
The constitution is actually a set of those principles, by the practice of which, the government is run. In these documents, it is decided what would be the basic aims and development policies of a state; the rights of the citizens, what freedoms will be given to them and under what limits would they exercise them; what would be the method of developing the country; according to which method will the assembly be elected, what would be the requirements for the head of state, ministers, and members of the assembly, who would be given the authority to dismiss or keep them; who would be given the authority to change the laws and to what extent; on what system would the courts work, and to what extent would they be independent of the government; on what basis the government employees would be appointed, removed and divided in different sections; of what type would the budget be and on what basis would it be prepared, and what would be the principles in applying them to the public, in the time of emergency especially at the time of war; and to what extent would the system of the state be changed, and at these times what special authority would the state be able to exercise.
All these things are decided in the constitution, and then the whole machinery of the government works accordingly. Only those steps of the government can be challenged in the court, which are against the constitution.¹⁵

What is meant by an Islamic constitution? What are the qualities on the basis of which any constitution qualifies to be called an Islamic constitution?

Some such principal and basic laws are given in the light of which all the parts of the constitution can be decided. In the case of a constitution, some basic instructions are bestowed. In these basic instructions, no person is allowed to make any modifications or changes, even if the whole community collectively wants to change or modify these instructions. Only under these basic instructions, other subsidiary matters can be decided collectively by consultation (mashwara) of the community. In these other subsidiary matters, if the community decides something by consultation, Islam does not objects to that.

In the matters which come under discussion in the constitution of a country, many are of such a kind that whatever is decided by collective consultation under the basic principles
are acceptable from the Islamic point of view. What shall be the official language of a country, how many provinces shall be there in the country, what shall be the kind of interaction of these provinces (keeping in mind the union of the country), how many members shall there be in the parliament and in the assembly, what methods shall be applied for the better assessment of finance (accounts). Instead of giving specific instructions, Islam has left such matters on the collective consultation of the community. Therefore, in such matters, whatever the public decides is correct and can be followed.

But, in some basic matters, instructions are given in which no person is permitted to make changes or modifications. Not only the decisions of the assembly, but even some referenda of the public cannot lead to a change in them. If any constitution does not take account of these principles, it cannot be called an Islamic constitution. These basic instructions are as follows:

(1) "The supreme authority resides only with Allah"

This article of Islamic constitution differentiates it from non-Islamic democracies. In non-Islamic democracies, the power and authority is ultimately resides in the public, therefore if the opinion of the majority is against Allah's order, they can go for it.
But in Islam the actual right of authority lies with no one but Allah, and man gets the right to rule as the caliph.

“We are going to make a caliph on earth”\textsuperscript{18}

So, man has no right to make decision against Allah’s orders.

(2) Any law against Quran and Hadith would neither be passed nor will it be sustained. No such law of the system can be given. “And if someone does not rule on the instructions given by Allah, such people are the infidels”\textsuperscript{19}

(3) The basic purpose of the government will be to establish a system of justice and equality, eliminate internal and external violence, take care of offering prayers for Muslims, motivate the people for good, and to stop them from evil.

“They are those to whom if we give power on earth, they will establish namaaz, give zakat, order for good deeds, and stop from evil.”\textsuperscript{20}

“And when you decide amongst people (Allah orders) you decide with equality”\textsuperscript{21}
“And if (by establishing governance like this) Allah had not stopped some people to oppress against others, violence would have taken birth on earth”\(^{22}\)

(4) The country’s parts and treasury are *amanat* (*faith*) in the hands of ruler; therefore it is the responsibility of the government to take *amanat* to its destiny without any doubt. Allah orders you to deliver the *amana* to their bearers. \(^{23}\)

(5) The attitude of government should be authoritative but consultative, and entire important affairs would a result of public consultations.

“And their affairs are decided by each other’s consultations”\(^{24}\)

(6) Unity would be the base of community. that would be necessary for the country to eliminate the geographical, tribal, Arial, lingual and communal feelings, work for unity and strength of the Muslim community, and establish solid equality between all Muslims.

“Without any doubt all Muslims are brothers of each other.” \(^{25}\)

“We made you different groups and tribes so that you may recognize each other, doubtlessly the more respected is that person who possesses *taqwa*.”
(7) The ruler of the country must necessarily be Muslim, honest and must be having the quality of knowledge and practice.

"The tyrant would not get our promise." 26

The Prophet said, "Surely Allah has chosen him (Talut) over you, and has increased him in knowledge and physique." 27

(8) All the citizens would be guaranteed their basic fundamental rights under which organizations shall be established for security of life, money, dignity (clothes), and religion; and freedom from criticism shall be provided. "And do not kill anyone whom Allah has forbidden except by right." 28

"And do not devour your riches among yourselves in vanity." 29

"O you who believe! Let not one group scoff at another group." 30

"No compulsion is there in religion." 31

"And let there be among you a community calling others to good."32

"You are the best community ever sent forth to mankind; you enjoin good and forbid evil. 33

(9) No person would be given penalty for a crime without evidence.
“If a mischief-maker came to you with a report, then make strict inquiry, lest you may hurt a people unwittingly and thereafter repent of what you have done.” 34

(10) To give justice with equality, it would be free from any pressure, and no interference shall be acceptable except by the laws of Shari’a. “Be you maintainer of equity and bearers of testimony for Allah’s sake though it be against yourselves or your parents or kindred.” 35

“So judge thou between them according to what Allah has sent down, and do not follow their desires” 36

(11) Complete arrangements would be made for the helpless, handicapped, and rejected. The common treasury should be justly divided amongst all, not only the rich.

“What Allah has bestowed on His Messenger (and taken Away) from the people of the townships,- belongs to Allah, to His Messenger, and to kindred and orphans, the needy and the wayfarer; in order that it may not (merely) make a circuit between the wealthy among you.” 37

(12) Private property attained legally shall not be taken unjustly from the owners.
“And do not devour your riches among yourselves in vanity.” 38

(13) No such tax would be levied on the public, which they may not endure; also no such orders would be issued which may be beyond their capabilities.

“Relieve them of their burdens and the shackles which have been upon them.” 39

“On no soul doth Allah place a burden greater than it can bear.” 40

(14) Education and training would be provided to all Muslims so that they may become aware of the Quran and the basics of Islam and may lead an Islamic life; also, professional education would be given to them so that they may make the country independent of foreign help.

“And (Prophet’s) duty will teach them Qur’an and wisdom.” 41

(15) Non-Muslim citizens (not apostates) too would be given the same rights as the Muslim citizens.

“If he (who killed by mischance) be of a people between whom and you is a compact them the blood-wit to be delivered to his family” 42

“O ye who believe! Fulfill (all) obligations.” 43
(16) Compulsory *jihad* would be brought in practice according to the Islamic law.

> "And strive (jihad) in His cause as ye ought to strive, (with sincerity and under discipline)."  

> "Allah does not forbid you to deal benevolently and equitably with those who did not fight against you on account of religion nor drove you out from homes; verily Allah loves the equitable."  

(17) Treaties with other countries which are legal according to *Shari'a* would be followed, and only those treaties would be broken which are not legal according to *Shari'a*.

> "Except those of the associates with whom you covenanted and they have not failed you in aught, nor have they baked up any one against you; so fulfill to them covenant till their full period.

(18) No such posts would be given to non-Muslims, which may be related to the secrets of the country.

> "Take not into your intimacy those outside your ranks. They will not fail to corrupt you."  

(19) Those elements of the constitution shall not be changed anyhow which are directly related to the Qur'an or traditions.
“Perfected is the word of the Lord in veracity and justice; and none can change His words.” 47

These are the basic points of the Islamic constitution without the incorporation of which a constitution cannot be called an Islamic constitution. I have just mentioned the verses of Qur'an for the sake of briefing.

These points are mentioned in hadith (traditions and sayings of the Prophet) with description. The first constitution was systematically written by the Prophet (s.a.w.) after the establishment of the state of Medina, and pointed out the rights of Muslims and non-Muslims of Medina. These documents are incorporated in 52 articles. The famous writer Ibn Hi’sham has compiled these in his book on Seerat. 48

Saudi Arabia is the most theocratic state in the contemporary Sunni Muslim world. By definition, a non-Muslim cannot be a Saudi citizen. The idea of religious pluralism has neither meaning nor support in many segments of population, and religious norms and practices are encouraged, promoted, and even enforced by the state.
The Fundamental Principles of the Islamic Government

In the royal decree of 1992, according to Article-1 "Saudi Arabia is a sovereign Arab Islamic state." In this regard we need to know what the fundamental principles of the Islamic government are.

The explanation of the following mentioned principles is important in the constitution of an Islamic government.

1. The original head of the state is Allah.

2. The foundation of the laws of the state will be in the context of the Quran and Sunna (Hadith). The laws, which are against the Quran and Sunna, can neither be formed nor implemented in the state.

3. The government will not be based on the geography, race, language or any other picture, but it will be based on those principles and objectives which will be in accordance to Islamic laws.

4. It is the duty of Islamic government to establish the teachings of the Quran and Sunna, to demolish the acts of infidels, to promote Islamic customs and to arrange the Islamic education for the superior and acceptable Islamic tribes/classes (maslak).
5. It is the duty of an Islamic government to build a stronger relationship of unity and brotherhood between all the Muslims of the world and stop the tribunes and ignorance based on race, language, area, geography and other factors. This includes making arrangements to protect and build a stronger unity among the Islamic nations.

6. Without difference in race, religion and so on, the government is responsible to provide the necessary needs such as food, clothing, shelter, and education to the needy persons who are not able to earn or whose earnings would be insufficient to meet their food and other necessary needs because of illness and other reasons.

7. The inhabitants of the state should be given all those rights which the Islamic Shari‘a has bestowed to them, i.e., protection of property within the limits of law, freedom of religion and maslak, freedom of worship, freedom of cast, freedom of expression, freedom of movement, freedom of earnings and so on. Equal opportunities for progress should be provided, including the right of benefits from institutions.

8. From the above given rights no right can be snatched from the citizen of the state without the authentic certificate of the Islamic
law. The court cannot impose punishment on a criminal without providing the time to him for the clarification of the charge.

9. The accepted Islamic group (maslak) has the complete right of the maslak within the limits of the laws, and they have the rights to teach their followers. With the right of their own perception, they can extend their maslak. The judgements of their individual matters can be according to their own fiqahi maslak. It will be best if the judges are of their own maslak.

10. The non-Muslim citizens of the state within the government have the complete rights of religion, worship, civilization, culture and religious education. They have the right to judge their individual matters according to their own religious law or custom and tradition.

11. The non-Muslim citizens of the state are bound to follow those rules and agreements within the laws of Shari'a. The non-Muslim citizens of the state equally share those rights, which have been mentioned in number 7.

12. The head of the state should be a Muslim man, whose honesty, ability and decision making power can be trusted by the people or their elected person.
13. The head of the state is actually responsible for the functions of the government. But he can hand over some parts of his authority to any person or group.

14. The head of the state cannot rule the state independently, but with consultation, i.e., he has to take the advice from members of his government and the elected members of the people to perform his duties.

15. The head of the state has no right to suspend the constitution or its parts, and rule the state without the Shura.

16. The group which has the power to elect the government can also dismiss it by the large number of votes.

17. In the public right, the head of the state will be similar as that of the common people, and he will not be above law.

18. There will be the same laws for the members of the government and the common people. The common courts can impose these laws on them.

19. The judiciary department will be separated and independent from the department of the management, so that the courts can perform their duties without any pressure from the department of management.
20. The propagation of thoughts and ideas contrary to the rules and principles of the Islamic government will be banned.

21. The different provinces of the country will be mere administrative units. They will have no individual racial, tribal or linguistic identity. They will not have a right to secede from the federal government.

22. The interpretation of the constitution will not be reliable/trustworthy if the same is against the Quran and Sunna.

Twenty-three ulmas approved the above mentioned 22 points, which have been accepted almost by all of the acceptable Islamic firkas (groups). 49

The creation of the first Saudi State on this basis was not unprecedented. Ss Michael Cook puts it, in a classical pattern of state formation in Arabian history, “one takes a religious doctrine of a politically activist kind; one mobilizes a tribal population, which may or may not be nomadic; and one fuses them into a state – of sorts.”

**The Muwahhidun**

As a rejuvenator of the Hanbali school, Abd al-Wahhab was second only to Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn al-Qayyim in advocating a
return to the religious spirit of the forefathers who, for the basic principles of their religion, referred to the Qur'an and the authentic Sunna of the Prophet, and who fought against the blind imitation that had retorted the thinking of Islamic people thought...and the spirit of independence. He was a bitter antagonist of those who held on to the excuse, “we found our fathers so doing.” Commentaries, texts, opinions and whims containing any of these elements were repudiated. Likewise, he opposed all religious deviations such as the sanctification of domed buildings, the worship of tombs, the performances of the drummers, flute players and dervish dancers who made a mockery of God’s saying, as well as all similar activities which were according to him incompatible with the true spirit of Islam and which were akin to the paganism of the pre-Islamic era.

In modern times Arabia, after centuries as a backwater country, has once again asserted itself. The first factor in this phenomenon was the birth in the middle of the eighteenth century of another Arabian religious movement, the puritanical reassertion of fundamental Islamic propositions known as the “Wahhabism”.  

The followers of Muhammad Ibn Abd al Wahhab, preferred to call themselves Muwahhidun (Unitarians). This name,
however, is not often used, and is associated with, other completely different sects that are extant and defunct.

Wahhabism is a steadfastly puritanical interpretation of Islam in the tradition of Ibn Hanbal, founder of the Hanbali school of law, and the theologian Ibn Taymiyyah. The is often said that the Wahhabis belong to the Hanbali School of law (madhhab), but strictly speaking, like the Ahl al-Hadith (the peopled Tradition), they are ghayr muqallidin (non-adherents) and do not see themselves as belonging to any school, anymore than the first Muslim generations did. Wahhabism is noted for its policy of compelling its own followers and other Muslims strictly to observe the religious duties of Islam, such as the five prayers, under pain of flogging at one time, and for the enforcement of public morality to a degree not found elsewhere.51

According to Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab’s teachings, a Muslim must present a bayah or oath of allegiance, to a Muslim ruler during his lifetime to ensure his redemption after death. The ruler conversely is owed unquestioned allegiance from his people so long as he leads the community according to the law of God. 52
The Al-Saud by 1803 had expanded their dominion across the peninsula from Mecca to Bahrain, installing teachers, schools, and the apparels of state power. So successful was the alliance between the Ash Shaykh and the Al-Sa’ud that even after the Ottoman sultan had crushed the Wahhabi political authority and had destroyed the Wahhabi capital of Ad Dariyah in 1818, the reformed religion remained firmly planted in the settled districts of southern Najd and of Jabal Shammar in the north. It would become the unifying ideology in the peninsula when the al Saud rose to power again in the next century. 53

**Muhammad b. Abd Al-Wahhab: Early Life:** Hanbali, theologian and founder of Wahhabism, was born in 1115/1703, in the center of the Najd at al-Uyana, an oasis which at that time was enjoying some prosperity. There had already been several representatives of Hanbalism in the Najd and the young Muhammad belonged to a family, which had produced several scholars of the school. His grandfather, Sulayman bin Muhammad, had been mufti of the Najd. His father ‘Abd al-Wahhab was kazi at ‘Uyayna during the emirate of ‘Abd Allah bin Muhammad bin Mu’ammar; he taught hadith and fikh in mosques of the town and left several works of Hanbali inspiration, which in part survive.
Muhammad bin ‘Abd al-Wahhab’s education began under his father’s guidance. He learned the Qur’an by heart and first studied Hanbali doctrine in the works of Shaykh Muwaffak al-Din bin Kudama (d.620/1223) and in the particular in the ‘Umda, which according to Shaykh Ibn Bishr was regarded in the Najd at that period as having great authority over this author and on the Umda.54

The young theologian soon left ‘Uyayna in circumstances which are not very well known. It may be that he had already begun his teachings against the cult of saints and paganism, which was rife among the bedouin, and that the amir showed little inclination to follow him in this matter. It is also likely that, as the oasis of ‘Uyayna offered relatively few intellectual resources, the young Shaykh felt the need to go and complete his education in other centers.

Little is known of the chronology of his journeys “in search of learning.” He performed Haj, thus going first to Mecca, where he found the teaching of Islam disappointing. The stay which he made after this at Medina was decisive in shaping the later direction of his thoughts. At Medina, he met a Hanbali theologian who was to have a decisive influence on him, Shaykh ‘Abd Allah bin Ibrahim al-Najdi, who had become a supporter of
Chapter 1 The Ideological Background

the neo-Hanbalism of Ibn Taymiyya and who had himself been the pupil of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Baki al-Hanbali (d. 1071/1661). ‘Abd al-Baki, a native of Ba'labakk, had himself studied under al-Bahuti and al-Mar'i; he taught for a long period at Medina and then returned to Damascus, where he continued teaching at the Umayyad mosque.\(^{55}\)

In 1157 /1744, the amir and the theologian swore an oath of mutual loyalty (bay'a) to strive, by force if necessary, to make the kingdom of God prevail. This pact, which was always faithfully adhered to, marked the true beginning of the Wahhabi state, which transformed a small bedouin principality into a legally instituted theocracy. Henceforth it was impossible to separate the destiny of the Shaykh from that of the Sa'udi dynasty.\(^{56}\)

Several of the sons or the descendants of Muhammad bin ‘Abd al Wahhab carried on his work. His son Abdallah accompanied Sa'ud bin ‘Abd al-'Aziz (1803-14) on his conquest of the Hijaz in 1805-6.

Sulayman bin ‘Abd al-Wahhab, the grandson of Shaykh Muhammad who was also greatly devoted to the principle of reform, was kazi of Dar'iyya. He was violently hostile to the
Ottomans and forbade all relations with them. He was sentenced to death by Ibrahim Pasha after the capture of Darʿiyya in 1233/1818, while his brother ʿAli was pursued by the Egyptians and killed at Kharzi. Sulayman wrote a work studying the relationship of Wahhabism with ʿIraq, the *K. al-Tawdih an tawhid al khallak fi djawab ahl al-ʿIraq* (Cairo, 1319). ⁵⁷

The doctrine of Muhammad b. Abd al-Wahhab was very strongly influenced by that of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) and, to a lesser degree, by that of Ibn Kayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350), but, beyond these two writers, it is still more closely linked to the formulation of Hanbalism as found in the works of earlier writers, such as the Shaykh ʿAbd Allah (d. 290/903) or Abu Bakr al-Khallal (d. 311/924). Very hostile to the sects which had always been denounced by the Hanbalis as incompatible with Sunnism (shiʿa, Muʿtazila, Khawriji etc.), Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab criticized, even within Sunnism, all the forms of *kalam* or of Sufism which tended to introduce into the dogma or the law of Islam, innovations (*bidʿa*) considered to be heretical or schismatic. He denounced no less violently the survival, particularly among the Bedouin, of practices going back even to the period of the Djahiliyya. Although Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab’s doctrine was condemned or rejected by an important...
section of Muslim opinion, it was nevertheless able to make a powerful contribution not only to a more profound Islamization of Arabia, but also to a general renewal of the Islamic conscience immediately before the modern period of intrusion from the West. 58

The popular misconception of *Tasawwuf* had completely overshadowed the purely Islamic *Tauheed*. The mosques were desolate and ignorant people ran away from them and were in the clutches of Fakeers and Godmen who cheated them with amulets and magic. They went to the graves of saints who were worshipped as intermediaries between man and God since they thought that due to the greatness of God, He cannot be worshipped directly. Not only were Qur'anic teachings put behind, they were also disobeyed. Even the holy places of Makkah and Madinah became centers of misdeeds, and hajj, which was ordained upon every Muslim by the Prophet of Islam (SAW), had become trivial due to Bidaah. In short, Islam had lost its soul; if the Prophet (SAW) would have come again in the world, he would have declared his followers infidels. 59

In the 18th century the Muslim enthusiasm was at its lowest ebb. The so-called caliph had cost his esteem. His rule did not extend much beyond a small area. Yemen had thrown this
yoke off, a century ago. The nobles of Makkah were more united in opposing the local lords than Christians. The unity, which we see now, was nowhere to be seen, and the spiritual centre of Makkah had turned into a centre of materialistic luxury and lavishness, and there was tolerance there for everything except virtue. 60

**Arabian Background to Wahhabism:** Two aspects of the historical background to the Wahhabi movement should be stressed. One is well enough known, but the other has until recently received less attention. The better-known aspect is the low state to which religion had sunk in the Arabian Peninsula by beginning of the eighteenth century. Religious observance was slack and much weight was given to the power of ‘holy’ trees and the tombs of saints, even the tomb of prophet Muhammad and to various other superstitions and talismans. Orthodox Islam regards such practices as *shirk* (Polytheism) or *bid’a* (heresy), and it is clear that the precepts of the *Shri’a* were in many respects ignored. In Wahhabi parlance, the period is condemned as that of *jahiliya* (ignorance), that is, a state equivalent to the lack of religion before the preaching of Muhammad.

The other aspect concerns the continuation of the tradition of religious learning in the towns of the peninsula. The political
system in Arabia in the eighteenth century was not conducive to a strong religious supervision. A number of petty rulers controlled various towns and their surroundings, and there were incessant inter-urban and inter-tribal feuds. The Ottoman writ ran mainly in the Hijaz in Yemen and on the eastern coast. Central Najd was outside of such control. In the towns of the peninsula, however, the tradition of religious learning had not been allowed to die despite the political vicissitudes. Medina, Damascus, and Cairo were the centers to which scholars traveled from Najd and elsewhere, and where they received, at the hands of the Ulama, the training which they took back and attempted to put into practice in their home towns. Many such scholars became qadis to local amirs and usually held office at their pleasure.61

They assured a tradition of religious learning in central Arabia. Through this stream of scholars, contact was maintained between Najd and the main currents of Islamic learning, usually but not exclusively Hanbali and Gibb's picture of original Wahhabism, as "a solitary protest in a corrupt world that should now be modified." The jahiliya which existed was not among the Ulama but among the tribes and the urban populace. Qadis of some repute held office in a number of towns in Najd, notably
Ushaiqir, 'Uyaina, Dar'iya and al-Riyadh. They were scholars trained in the school of Ibn Qudama (representing the conservative Hanbali tradition in low) and of Ibn Taimiya and Ibn al-Qaiyim who were more radical. One or two in the seventeenth century are known to been have moved to condemn in writing the corruption they witnessed around them. It seems, though, that qadis were dependent for their position on the amir who was, in turn, subject to political pressures and public opinion and therefore limited in his ability to support the 'ulama when they expressed dissatisfaction with the moral and religious practices of the people.62

**Doctrines of Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab:** His general aim was to do away with all innovations (*bida*), which were later than the third century of Islam; thus the communities are able to acknowledge the authority of the four Sunni law schools, and the six books of tradition. His written polemic and that of his followers is almost entirely aimed at the cult of saints, as exhibited in the building of mausoleums, their employment as mosques, and their visitation. The following list, which is taken from the *Lam* seems to agree with what is known of Whahabi practice.

1. All objects of worship other than Allah are false.
(2) The bulk of mankind is not monotheistic, since they endeavor to win God's favour by visiting the tombs of saints; their practice therefore resembles what is recorded in the Qur'an of the Meccan mushrikin.

(3) It is polytheism (shirk) to introduce the name of a prophet, saint, or angel, into a prayer.

(4) It is (shirk) to seek intercession from any but Allah.

(5) It is (shirk) to make vows to any other being.

(6) It involves unbelief (kufr) to profess knowledge not based on the Qur'an, the Sunna, or the necessary inferences of reason.

(7) It involves heresy (ilhad) to deny Kadar in all acts.

(8) It involves unbelief to interpret the Qur'an by a ta'wil.

His system is said to have departed from that of Ibn Hanbal in the following matters:

1. Attendance at public salat is obligatory.

2. Smoking of tobacco is forbidden and punished with stripes not exceeding forty; the shaving of the beard and the use of abusive language are to be punished at the qadi's discretion
3. Alms (zakat) are to be paid on secret profits, such as those of trading, whereas Ibn Hanbal exacted them only from manifest produce.

4. The mere utterance of the Islamic creed is not sufficient to make a man a believer, so that animals slaughtered by him are fit for food. Further inquiry must be made into his character.

The list given by S. Zwemer in The Mohammedan World of Today (New York-1906, p. 106.) does not differ materially from the above, but contains the following item which may be noticed:

They forbid the use of the rosary, and count the names of God and their prayers on the knuckles of the hand instead.  

Wahhabi mosques are built with the greatest simplicity, and no minarets or ornaments are allowed.

The Rawdat al Afkar devotes a long section to a list of the practices savoring of paganism current in Arabia in Muhammad bin Abd al Wahhab's time. Besides the visitation of tombs, reverence was paid to sacred trees, and gifts of food were placed on graves. It is clear that the two were not "innovations," but survivals of pre-Islamic usage Charges brought against him of burning the logical works of on a great scale are treated both by himself and his followers as calumnies, the latter admit the
burning of the work *Rawa al-Rayahin*, but not (apparently) that of the *Dala'il al Khairat*. The charge of rejection of the Sunna altogether (repeated by Nolde) is certainly erroneous. On the other hand, the destruction of tombs on a great scale was practiced both by Muhmmad bin 'Abd al- Wahhab and his followers. The former destroyed that of Zaid bin al-Khattab at-Djubaila, and it has recently been carried on a great scale at al-Baki' of Medina, as a comparison of the photographs in Rif'at pasha's *Mir'at-al Haramain* (1925) with Eldon Rutter's *Holy Cities of Arabia* (1928) shows. 64

Various minor points of ritual, in which they claim to have abolished innovations, are enumerated in *al- Hadiya al-Sunniya*, such as: raising the voice in places of *Adhan* with matter other than the *Adhan*, reciting the tradition of Abu Huarira before the Friday sermon, and special gatherings to hear the *Sirat al- Nabi* recited etc.

It would appear that under the Banu Rashid, the founder's precepts were followed less rigorously than under the Banu Sa'ud; yet Philby in confining the name Wahhabi to the followers of the latter differs from the other travelers, who regarded Ha'il as for time the metropolis of the community. As has been seen, the community does not itself recognize the appellation. 65
Until his death in 1206/1792, Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab continued his activities in the religious as well as political field. He taught at the mosque in Dar‘iyya, wrote theological works and sent out numerous letters to win his cause and gain new supporters in the Nadjd and the neighboring regions. He also remained the political counsellor of Muhammad bin Sa‘ud (1178/1765) and, to a lesser degree it seems, of his successor ‘Abd, al-‘Aziz (1765-1801).

Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab’s literary and doctrinal works, which have appeared in many editions for the use of Wahhabi missionary activities, are important. Most of his writing is fairly short, full of quotations from the Qur’an and Hadiths. The Kitab al-Tawhid, his main work, often reprinted and the subject of many commentaries, sets out his teaching in the line of the strictest Hanbali doctrine.

His Kitab al-Usul al-Thalatha, written at the request of the ruler Abd al-Aziz is a type of official catechism, is still esteemed. His Kitab Kashfu ash-Shubuhat, more polemical in presentation, condemns Muslims who do not practice the true tawhid.

The Madjmuat al-Hadith al-Nadjdiya (Cairo, 1346) mentions several other short treatises by the Shaykh defining his
conception of faith (Iman) and of Islam (Usul al Iman; Fadl al-Islam; al Kaba’ir; Nasihat al-Muslimin). 66

The creed of Wahhabism centered upon the principle called tawhid, the assertion of Divine Oneness. Wahhabis, moreover, do not take into doctrinal consideration any opinions other than those expressed by the generation of the Prophet and his Companions and those of the generation immediately following. Therefore Wahhabism precludes the principle of ijma’ (“consensus”) as a basis of Shari’a (“Islamic law”).

The legal approach of Wahhabism is in many respects unique, but it coincides most closely with the school of Ibn Hanbal, and may be considered a kind of Hanbalism. The Wahhabis would, however, deny this or any other affiliation. The sign of changing times in Saudi Arabia is that the exigencies of the modern world and pragmatism have opened the door to accepting the legal precedents of the other schools.

The Wahhabis consider, or previously considered, many of the practices of the generations which succeeded the companions as bid’ah (“objectionable innovation”). These included the building of minarets (today accepted) and the use of funeral markers. The cemeteries of Mecca and, above all,
Medina, were once filled with colorful sepulchral markers which were all removed at the Wahhabi conquest, leaving bare fields. Even the tomb of the Prophet was almost destroyed by Wahhabi zealots; it was left untouched through the forbearance of King ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, protests by the diplomatic representatives of various Islamic countries, and the bad aim of Beduin gunners. When Medina was conquered, the perhaps groundless-rumour spread rapidly to the effect that the desert tribesmen had turned Turkish cannons captured in Medina on the Prophet’s tomb, its presence being a scandal in their eyes because of the Prophet’s saying: Do not make of my grave a place of pilgrimage as the Christians make of theirs.”

Wahhabism vigorously denies all forms of mysticism, and rejects the idea of saints, including the visiting of saints’ tombs or any tomb or grave, exception being made only to the pressure of universal customs as regards to visiting the tomb of the Prophet.

To call upon saints for aid or protection and even to entertain the notion of borakah (“blessing”) rouses indignation in Wahhabi breasts as being nothing less than polytheism (Shirk). They also reject all notions of the holiness or sacredness of objects or places as detracting from the exclusive holiness of God.
and as infringing on Divine Unity. Compared to traditional Islam, the Wahhabi view seems to reduce religion to a set of rules.

Typical of Wahhabi Islam are the *mutawwi’un* (“enforcers of obedience”), who are, in effect, religious police. In some countries, for a Muslim to eat in public during Ramadan is legally public scandal or disorderly conduct, but among the Wahhabis, private non-observance too can be a matter for sanction. In Saudi Arabia the *mutawwi’un* patrol the streets to punish those who do not perform the prayer or to enforce prompt closing of shops at prayer time. They keep a close eye on what elsewhere would be matters of private conscience and not public morality. In old Riyadh, if the enforcers of public morality smelled tobacco, they did not hesitate to enter private house to beat the offender. Today the *shisha* café, where water pipes are smoked, is found almost everywhere.

Wahhabi Islam has now become much milder than it was on the day that it sprang out of the Najd desert. Attitudes prevalent in other Muslim countries have crept in, so that the stringent denunciations made by the founder, Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab, are now explained as having been a reaction to an improbable lapse into idolatry on the part of some tribes in Arabia two centuries ago. Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab’s descendants are
today known as the Ash-Shykh family. Their fortunes naturally followed those of the Sa‘ud, half of the original “alliance” made in Diriyah at the end of the 18th century between Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab and Muhammad Ibn Sa‘ud.

**Ideology, Message and Organization:** The ideology of Wahhabism and its roots have probably become obvious in the foregoing sections. Most Islamic revivalist movements have had the same message, although different aspects have been stressed usually depending on the milieu in which they were preached. Some movements have been more extreme than others, with apocalyptic and messianic elements. Wahhabism was strictly orthodox, with Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab making no special claims for himself. His message was that Islam had been corrupted and that a return to pristine conditions of the early days of the Islamic community was necessary.

His religious ideas came either directly from Ibn Hanbal, or indirectly from the same source as interpreted by later scholars, especially Ibn Qudama and Ibn Taimiya. For all these men, doctrine was entirely dominated by ethical considerations, by the conviction that the end of all actions is to serve God. Faith is not just a simple body of rites. It is a whole system of moral convictions based on absolute sincerity in the service of God.
(ibada). Faith includes the feelings on which this service is based, the formulae in which it is expressed, and the actions through which it is practiced.

In his tract, *Al-Usul al-Thalatha*, Ibn ‘Abd al Wahhab laid out the requirements of the true Muslim. Four things are necessary: a knowledge and understanding of God, the Prophet and faith; action thereon; the profession of faith; and patience in affliction in carrying out the faith. The greatest thing that God has commanded is the assertion of his Oneness (tawhid); the greatest thing He has forbidden is idolatry (shirk). The understanding of faith comprises confession and obedience and has three stages: salvation, belief, and finally, gratitude. What is striking in Ibn ‘Abd al Wahhab’s message is the insistence on service to God and the close relationship that this implies.

Much has been made of the prohibitions and restrictions of Wahhabism, yet Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab insisted that social obligations stem solely from the religious practices which God has explicitly prescribed, and only in the form prescribed (thus outlawing Sufi and other practices). Nothing can lawfully be forbidden other than practices forbidden by God in the Qur’ān and Sunna.
Everything considered innovative (*bid'a*) was prohibited on this ground, including music, silk, tobacco, wine, and the worship of trees, stones and saints' tombs. Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab added nothing to and took nothing away from the teaching of the Prophet while stressing certain aspects as necessary for obedience to God, of prayer (he quoted with approval the *hadith*: prayer is the essence of worship), and of a continual *jihad* (of self tongue and the sword). He emphasized the promise of paradise: “The elect will see God in paradise as one sees full moon.”

From Ibn Taimiyya he took the notion that religion and state are indissolubly linked. Without the coercive power of the state, religion is in danger, and without discipline of revealed law, the state becomes a tyrannical organization. The duty of the state is to bring about the rule of *tawhid* and prepare for the coming of a society devoted to the service of God. The mission of the *imam* is to build and instill respect for systems of order and prohibition, which govern the various areas of the life of the community. The *imam* must also bring about and ensure the solidarity of the community in the face of opposition from outside.

This was basically the simple message that Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab preached in his attempt to recreate in Arabia a society
similar to that of the earliest days of Islam. Those who followed him were promised paradise. Those who did not were threatened with damnation. There is one final factor to be mentioned regarding the success of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab’s *da‘wa*.

The Saudis derived legitimacy from Wahhabism as *imams* of the only truly religious community in Islam, while Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab needed Saudi political power. The movement which developed from the pact was not simply a religious undertaking aimed at convincing those Muslims in Najd who were dissatisfied with the state of Islam. The Wahhabi message was henceforward linked with the political fortunes of the dynasty, which, to promote the *da‘wa*, engaged on a campaign of expansion that eventually threatened the power of other rulers in Arabia. Thus the religious message of Wahhabism was perpetuated in a state-committed to uphold its principles. 68
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