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THE ISSUE OF TAQLEED
[BLIND-FOLLOWING]

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Introduction to as-Siraatul-Mustaqeem (pp.18-27) of Shaykh Abdur-Rahmaan Faadhil Deoband

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The word taqleed is a derivative of Qalaadah, and the linguistic meaning of qalaadah is to wear a collar that a dog wears around its neck. The meaning of taqleed in terminology is to act upon the opinion of an Imaam from the Ummah without knowing the evidence. So the muqallid is the one who does taqleed.

THE BLAMEWORTHINESS OF TAQLEED

The blameworthiness of taqleed is that a person singles out a particular Imaam to follow and he accepts all of his opinions and ijtihaad as the religion when his opinions or ijtihaad is not supported by any one of the sharee'ah evidences of the Qur'aan, hadeeth or unanimous agreement (ijmaa).

THE PROBLEMS OF TAQLEED

This type of taqleed keeps the muqallid unaware and away from a great majority of the religion. It is a reality that there is not a single Imaam whose every opinion and thought agree or conform to a particular standard of the sharee'ah evidences. So where there is a possibility of him being correct, then there is also the possibility of him making a mistake or error.

So when this is the affair then we will not take the opinion of the Imaam in which he has erred; nor shall we embrace it. On the other hand the muqallid will consider this mistake to be part of his religion and he will be erring in this, yet there is no doubt that all the knowledge of Islaam is not encompassed in the chest of one man.

THE FIRST CALIPH - ABU BAKR (RADI-ALLAAHU 'ANHU)

The scholars of the Ummah are agreed that the station of Abu Bakr is far greater than anyone from amongst Ummah and from the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) and his station is high in respect to his knowledge and taqwaa. However he still did not have the knowledge of some issues.

It is narrated in Tirmidhee and Abu Daawood from Qabeesah Ibn Dhuwaib that a woman asked Abu Bakr, "My grandson has passed away, how much do I get in inheritance?" He replied, "From what I know there is nothing for you in the Book and the Sunnah of the Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam), return and I will ask the people." Mugheerah Ibn Shu'bah was also present and he said, "The Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) left one sixth (1/6) in inheritance to the grandmother," and Muhammad Ibn Muslimah agreed with him. So Abu Bakr ordered one sixth of the inheritance to be given to the grandmother.

THE SECOND CALIPH - UMAR IBN AL-KHATTAAB (RADI-ALLAAHU 'ANHU)

From the Companions, Umar's might and power is accepted and agreed upon and it is well known that the Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) said about him,

> *"If there was to be a Prophet after me then it would have been Umar (radi-Allaahu 'anhu)."* [Tirmidhee, Haakim and Ahmad]

However he was still unaware of some issues. It is in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree that if one is in a state of impurity and water is unavailable then one should perform tayammum and pray. Umar (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) would say if a person is in a state of impurity and he is unable to find water then he should not pray even if a whole month elapses. This is a well known issue that if a person is in a state of impurity and he cannot find water then he should perform tayammum and pray, but Umar (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) did not have knowledge of this issue.

- **ISTEEZAAN**

  This issue is well known: before entering someone's house one should stand at the door and say the salaam three times; the name of this issue is Isteezaan. However Umar (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) did not have knowledge of this issue. So when Abu Moosaa (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) mentioned this issue to Umar (radi-Allaahu 'anhu), he did not agree with him. Rather he asked him for a witness for support. So when Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) testified it was only then that Umar (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) accepted this issue. [Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim]

- **TAWAAF WIDAAH**

  The tawaaf widaah is not incumbent upon the menstruating women. Umar (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) however did not have knowledge of this; he would say the women should perform the tawaaf widaah after they have purified themselves of the menstruating blood. [Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim]

- **INCREASE IN THE DOWRY**

The increase in dowry allocated to each wife was disliked by Umar (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) so he would prohibit increasing it. So a woman recited this verse,

> **"...you have given one of them a Cantar (of gold i.e. a great amount) as Mahr, take not the least bit of it back..."** [Soorah an-Nisaa (4):20]

This verse explains that treasure can also be given in the dowry. So Umar (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) acknowledged his mistake after hearing this and he said,

> "The women have more knowledge then Umar." [Sa'eed Ibn Mansoor, Abu Ya'ala and Abdur-Razzaaq]

THE THIRD CALIPH - UTHMAAN IBN AFFAAN (RADI-ALLAAHU 'ANHU)

Uthmaan (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) was the third Caliph and the Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) said about him that the Angels of the heavens are shy in front of Uthmaan (radi-Allaahu 'anhu).

- **THE PERIOD OF PREGNANCY**

The minimum period of pregnancy was not known to Uthmaan (radi-Allaahu 'anhu). Ibn Abbaas (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) said the minimum period of pregnancy was 6 months and in evidence he recited the following verses,

> **"...and the bearing of him, and the weaning of him is thirty (30) months..."** [Soorah al-Ahqaaf (46):15]

And

> **"The mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years..."** [Soorah al-Baqarah (2):233]
>
> In this verse the period of suckling that has been established is a total of two (2) years. If we deduct two (2) years of milking from the complete period of the pregnancy and suckling then the remaining period of pregnancy is six (6) months.

So from these incidences we find that there is no man in the Ummah or an Imaam from whom we can take all the knowledge of the religion, or reliance on all their commands. Yet we know that the Companions are the most virtuous in terms of knowledge and action upon it. So when their status is that their hearts were righteous and the level of their knowledge reached great depths and Allaah established this group of the Companions for the establishment of the religion.

So if one Companion from the Companions could not preserve all the knowledge and we know that they did not have knowledge of certain issues, how can we accept that all the words and opinions of later Imaams or holy people are correct? Rather they clearly said that the word of the Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) is revelation. They said that our words can be correct or incorrect therefore do not do taqleed of us because considering a mistake of a person from the Ummah, to be the religion, is clear and manifest misguidance.

IMAAM ABU HANEEFAH

Shaykh Abdul Wahhaab ash-Saha'raanee, in refutation of taqleed, has mentioned the following statements of Abu Haneefah. He (Abu Haneefah) said,

> "It is not permissible for anyone to pass verdicts based upon my words without knowing my evidences."

And when he used to issue verdicts he would say,

> "This is the opinion of Nu'maan Ibn Thaabit and it is better for you than following your desires and if someone presents a better opinion, then take it as it will be considered to be appropriate." [Al-Yawaaqiyat wal-Jauhar (2/96)]

Imaam ash-Shawkaanee has mentioned,

> "It was said to Abu Haneefah, 'What shall we do when your statement contradicts the sayings in the Book of Allaah.' He said, 'Leave my statement for the Book of Allaah.' Then he was asked, 'What if your statement contradicts the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam)?' He replied, 'Reject my statement for the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam).' Then he was asked, 'What if your statements contradict the statements of the Companions?' He replied, 'Abandon my statement for the statements of the Companions.'" [Al-Qawl al-Mufeed of Imaam ash-Shawkaanee]

'Allaamah ash-Shaamee mentions the following statement of Abu Haneefah,

> "If a hadeeth is found to be authentic, then it is my madhhab." [Shaamee (1/50)]

IMAAM MAALIK

Shaykh Abdul Wahhaab ash-Saha'raanee mentions the statement of Imaam Maalik. He (Maalik) said,

> "Everyone's statement can be rejected or taken except that of the Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam)." [al-Yawaaqiyat Wal-Jauhar (2/96)]

Imaam Maalik also said,

> "I am a man, I may make mistakes sometimes and I may be correct sometimes, so weigh my statements with the Book and the Sunnah. If they are in accordance then take them and if they contradict it then leave them." [Al-Eeqaaz]

IMAAM ASH-SHAAFI'EE

Baihaqee and Haakim said that Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee said,

> "An authentic hadeeth is my madhhab."

In another narration Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee said,

> "When you find my statement contradicting the hadeeth then act upon the hadeeth and throw my statement against the wall." [Al-Yawaaqiyat wal-Jauhar (2/96)]

- **ADVICE**

Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee advised Muzanee (his student),

> "O Ibraaheem do not do taqleed of me in everything I say, rather look into them whether it is from the religion."

And he said,

> "No ones statement is evidence except the Messenger of Allaah's (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) even though the people may be great in number. Neither is analogical reasoning evidence or anything other than this (except the Book, Sunnah and the Ijmaa) and obey Allaah and His Messenger."

IMAAM AHMAD

Imaam Ahmad said,

> "There is no ones statement when it comes to obeying of Allaah and His Messenger." [Al-Yawaaqiyat wal-Jauhar (2/96)]

Whilst advising someone Imaam Ahmad said,

> "Do not do taqleed of me, nor of Maalik, al-Awzaa'ee, an-Nakhaa'ee or anyone other than them, take from where they took, from the Book and the Sunnah." [Al-Yawaaqiyat wal-Jauhar (2/96)]

SAYYID ABDUL QAADIR JEELAANEE

Sayyid Abdul Qaadir Jeelaanee, whilst refuting taqleed, wrote,

> "Make the Book and the Sunnah your Imaam and look into them and do not go by the statements of the people."

THE BEST GENERATIONS

It is a reality that, due to taqleed, a muqallid considers his Imaam's opinion, without evidence, to be the religion and he does not care about the Qur'aan and Hadeeth, which is the real religion, and this is the means of his misguidance. In their own times the scholars prohibited the people from taqleed. So if taqleed of a person (taqleed shaksee) was a recommended act then it would have most definitely existed in the period of the best generations and the Companions would have been muqallideen and taqleed would have been customary during the time of the Successors and their students.

If you take a look at the history of Islaam there has not been a single scholar from the best generations who did taqleed of another scholar or someone becoming a Siddeeqee by doing taqleed of Abu Bakr (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) or by becoming a Farooqee by doing taqleed of Umar (radi-Allaahu 'anhu) or an Uthmaanee or Alawee by doing taqleed of Uthmaan and Alee (radi-Allaahu 'anhumaa).

ABDULLAAH IBN ABBAAS (RADI-ALLAAHU 'ANHUMAA)

When he was asked whether he was an Uthmanee or an Alawee replied,

> "I am neither an Alawee nor an Uthmanee rather I am upon the way of Muhammad (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam)."

THE CONSENSUS OF THE COMPANIONS

It is mentioned in Fawaateh ar-Rahmoot Sharh Muslim ath-Thaboot,

> "The Companions are unanimously agreed that whoever asks Abu Bakr and Umar (radi-Allaahu 'anhumaa) about any issue then he should also ask Abu Hurairah and Mu'aadh Ibn Jabal (radi-Allaahu 'anhumaa) and he should act accordingly without considering this to be inappropriate."

Ibn Humaam added,

> "They would sometimes ask one Muftee and sometimes another but there was no notion of just asking one muftee."

It is apparent from these statements that taqleed of a particular individual did not exist in the best three generations and rather it was something created after the best three generations.

SHAH WALEEULLAAH MUHADDITH DEHLAWEE

Whilst mentioning the history of taqleed he said in Hujjatullah al-Baalighah,

> "And remember that people before the fourth century would not adhere to one particular madhhab."

So the evidence is sufficient to conclude that taqleed of one particular individual is not permissible as it did not exist in the period of the three best generations.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TAQLEED AND ITTIBAA

The sharee'ah meaning of taqleed is to act on someone's statement without knowing the evidence for it, whereas Ittibaa is acting upon the Qur'aan, Sunnah and Ijmaa (Consensus) because they are evidence.