

INCUMBENCY OF TAQLEED

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Taqleed in the Shariah, as opposed to Admut Taqleed, means to follow the Qur'~n and the Sunnah as understood, interpreted, practised and transmitted to the Ummah by the Sah~bah (Companions) of Rasulullah (sallall~hu alayhi wasallam).

Taqleed which literally means to be fettered; to be tied and to follow, refers to a special and specific type of following in Islam. It refers to the rigid following of the Qur'~n and Sunnah as commanded by Allah Ta'ala Who says:

"O People of Im~n! Obey Allah and obey the Rasool....."

Numerous Qur'~nic ~y~t (verses) and Hadith narrations command this strict obedience and following which are known as Taqleed in the terminology of the Shariah.

The attainment of Allah's Pleasure is possible o-nly by means of obedience and submission to His laws which consist of innumerable details and particulars related to numerous concepts and commands. It goes without saying that the abundance of rules of the Shariah is the product of

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divine revelation and inspiration to the sole repository of Allah's law, viz. the blessed heart of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Hence, the Qur'an says:

"He (Muhammad) does not speak of desire (or baseless opinion). It (his speech) is only Wahi which is revealed."

Personal opinion has no scope in the determination of the rules pertaining to the transcendental concepts and institutions of Islam. When man abandons Taqleed (following the Qur'an and Sunnah) he enslaves himself to his personal opinion which is the product of his hawm (nafsani desire). Criticizing the slaves of desire, Sayyiduna Umar (radhiallahu anhu) said:

"Verily, the votaries of opinion are the enemies of the Sunnah."

That Taqleed (following) is an Islamic fact and a Qur'anic command is undeniable. The Qur'an Majeed says:

"Ask the people of Thikr (Knowledge) if you do not know."

"Follow the path of those who turn to Him."

In the first and foremost instance, the People of Thikr and those who have turned to Allah Ta'ala refer undoubtedly to the Sah~bah (Companions) of Rasulullah (sallall~hu alayhi wasallam). Both the Qur'~n and Hadith are emphatic o-n this assertion. The Qur'~nic verses in this regard cited here glowingly praise the Sah~bah and confirm their rank by Allah.

"Those who are ahead, the first o-nes among the Muh~jireen and Ans~r and those who followed them with virtue, Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him....."

"Verily, Allah became well-pleased with the Mu'mineen (i.e. the Sah~bah) when they gave you (Muhammad) the oath of allegiance (bay't) under the tree....."

A famous Hadith specifies that the Path of salvation and rectitude is the way of the Sah~bah. o~nce Ras~lullah (sallall~hu alayhi wasallam) said that of the 73 sects into which his Ummah will be split, o~nly o~ne will be o~n the path of righteousness and salvation. When asked about the righteous sect, Ras~lullah (sallall~hu alayhi wasallam) said:

"That Path o~n which I and my Sah~bah are."

The Qur'~n and H~dith categorically state and command that the Ummah adopts the Taqleed of the Sah~bah. Any taqleed (following) which diverges from the Taqleed of the Sah~bah is taqleed of hawa (nafs~ni desire) and shait~n. It should therefore be understood that those who abandon the Taqleed of the Sah~bah are in reality adopting the taqleed of shait~n.

Let us now see what this path of the Sah~bah is) the Path, the Taqleed of which the Qur'~n and Hadith command, and without which Naj~t (salvation) in the }khirah is not possible; without which adherence to the Qur'~n and Sunnah is not possible.

THE QUR'ĀN AND SUNNAH REACH US BY TRANSMISSION

Everyone knows that Wahi (Divine Revelation) terminated with Rasūlullah (sallall~hu alayhi wasallam). Thus, the only passage for the transference of the Qur'~n and Sunnah to the successive generations of the Ummah is the Golden Chain of Transmission emanating from Rasulullah (sallall~hu alayhi wasallam), the very first link being the noble Sah~bah. Rasulullah (sallall~hu alayhi wasallam) transmitted Isl~m to his Sah~bah who in turn transmitted it to the next generation, namely, the T~bi-een. The T~bi-een transmitted Islam to the next succeeding generation, known as the Tab-e-T~bi-een. In this manner Islam reach us in the present age by reliable transmission from one generation to another, and in this very same manner will it be transmitted to the end of time.

Isl~m did not reach us by way of books nor by the way of the teaching of geniuses who do not form links in the Golden Chain of Transmission which links up with Rasulullah (sallall~hu alayhi wasallam) via the medium of the Sah~bah who constitute the link which unites the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen and Fuqaha with Rasulullah (sallall~hu alayhi wasallam).

This Golden Chain of Transmission is the Institution established by Allah Ta'ala for the protection and preservation of Islam. Preservation of Islam in its pristine purity is a Divine Promise. The Qur'~n says:

"We have revealed the Thikr (Qur'~n) and verily, We are its Protectors."

This Golden Chain of Transmission has been maintained intact by the institution of Taqleed. Enemies of Islam in diverse forms and methods have always conspired to break this sacred Golden Chain by attacking the Islamic practice of Taqleed. Once the pernicious aim of these enemies is achieved, the Ummah's link with true and original Islam will be broken. However, since Allah Ta'ala Himself has undertaken to protect Islam, the nefarious plots of the enemies will be thwarted and neutralized by the forces of Haqq.

While the followers of the four Math-habs have accepted the entire edifice of the Shariah as inherited from each preceding generation which commenced with the Sah~bah, the first generation or link in the Chain of Transmission, all other sects subject the Qur'~n and Hadith to personal opinion and whimsical interpretation. Thus, while the Muqallideen are following Islam in the form it was acquired from the Sah~bah, the deviant sects have no hesitation in rejecting any Shar'i opinion if it does not agree with their own understanding of the Qur'~n and Hadith.

Since their own interpretation of the Qur'~n and Hadith plays a dominant part in their acceptance or rejection of the Shariah, they fall beyond the confines of the Ahlus Sunnah whose Shariah is not the product of personal opinion, but is the Shariah acquired from the Sah~bah by way of reliable transmission. Submission to this Shariah is known as TAQLEED. Admut Taqleed is dhal~l (deviation). It is in fact the blind following of the lowly nafs. Such blind following which is the result of abandoning taqleed of the Sah~bah is a great deception. A superior Taqleed is renounced for accepting a grossly erroneous and deceptive taqleed, viz. the

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taqleed of the nafs.