

Some Objections of the Ghayr Muqallidden and Responses to These

THE FIRST OBJECTION: Because the laws of the Shari'ah were not documented during the time of Rasulullaah SAW. it is a Bid'ah to do so afterwards.

This objection reflects only their ignorance because even the Qur'aan was not compiled during the time of Rasulullaah SAW.

Hadhrat Zaid bin Thaabit RADI. reports that Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. once sent for him after the Battle of Yamaamah. With Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. at the time was Hadhrat Umar RADI. Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI. said to Hadhrat Zaid RADI. "He (Hadhrat Umar RADI. has come and said, 'Many Huffaadh of the Qur'aan have been martyred in this battle of Yamaamah and I fear that if all the other battles also take a heavy toll on the Huffaadh, the Qur'aan should not leave us. I have therefore decided that you should compile the Qur'aan (into a single manuscript).'"How can we attempt to do something that Rasulullaah SAW. never did?' I asked him. 'But is an excellent thing,' he replied. Umar RADI. then continued convincing me until Allaah put my heart at ease about the matter just as his heart was at ease. I now share Umar's opinion on the matter.

Hadhrat Zaid RADI. narrates further, "Umar RADI. was sitting there without saying a word. Abu Bakr RADI. then continued, 'You are young and intelligent and we . have no accusations to level against you. Furthermore, you used to write down the Qur'aan during the time of Rasulullaah SAW. You should therefore do the compilation."

Hadhrat Zaid RADI. says, "By Allaah had they charged me with moving a mountain, it would not have been more difficult than the instruction to collect the Qur'aan (into one manuscript). I said, How can you do something that Rasulullaah SAW. never did? By Allaah!'said Abu Bakr RADI. 'the act is an excellent one.' Abu Bakr RADI. then continued convincing me until Allaah put my heart at ease about the matter just as the hearts of Abu Bakr RADI. and Umar RADI. were at ease."

Hadhrat Zaid then went on to compile the Qur'aan with great care and meticulousness. Now can the Ghayr Muqallideen claim that this was an act of Bid'ah and therefore not permissible?

The books of Ahadeeth such as Bukhaari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ibn Maajah, Abu Dawood and others were also compiled after the period of Rasulullaah SAW. Can it be said that this was also a Bid'ah? It is wrong to label the compilation of the books of Fiqh, Ahadeeth and the Qur'aan as acts of Bid'ah merely because they were undertaken after the time of Rasulullaah SAW. It is only people lacking knowledge and understanding who would do this because an act of Bid'ah is something that is added to the Deen, regarded as an act of Ibaadah to be rewarded and pleasing to Allaah whereas it has absolutely no substantiation in the Shari'ah. It can neither be proven from the Qur'aan, nor the Ahadeeth, nor from Qiyaas or Ijtihad. For example, adding Adhaan to the Fid salaah is an act of Bid'ah, whereas an act done for the benefit of Deen and for its strengthening and preservation is not regarded as a forbidden act of Bid'ah. Such is the case with the compilation of the Ahadeeth, the books of Fiqh, the placing of diacritical marks in the Qur'aanic text, the naming of these books and the documenting and classification of the various Madhaahib. Apart from being encouraged, the above are really necessary because had

they not been done, we would not have had the Ahadeeth before us today and there would have been very few people who would be able to recite the Qur'aan properly. People would then be following the dictates of their whims in as far as the Shari'ah is concerned. The documenting of the laws and rulings of the Shari'ah was inspired by Allaah and has made life exceptionally easy for Muslims to practise on the Shari'ah. Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. writes, "The gist of it all is that following these four Madhaahib is something extremely subtle that Allaah has inspired in the hearts of the Ulema and upon which they have declared unanimity, regardless of whether they understand it or not.

He also says, "Understand well that there is tremendous benefit in following the four Madhaahib and great harm in forsaking them."

THE SECOND OBJECTION: Since there were so many Mujtahideen in the Ummah, why have the four Imaams been distinguished? Does the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth distinguish them from others?

These people unfortunately raise futile objections merely to deceive others. Does the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth distinguish Bukhaari, Muslim, Abu Dawood, Nasa'ee and other books of Ahadeeth above others? The fact that distinguishes these books from the rest is that the Ulema and pious people of the Ummah have given greater acceptance to these books, which is a sign of their reliability. Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. states that the acceptance of the Ulema and pious predecessors is a strong proof in itself.

The question will then be raised, "Why only four and not more or less?" The straight forward answer to this is had there been five, again the question will be. "Why five?" Similarly. if they had been any more or less, the same question would be posed for each possibility. Only Allaah knows the reason why there are four. Furthermore, the detail with which these four Madhaahib document each chapter from the chapter of purity to the chapter of inheritance is better than has been done for any other Madh'hab. The finest of details pertaining to almost every facet of life can be accessed in their books.

The Ummah has therefore restricted Taqleed to these four Madhaahib only. The eminent Sheikh Ahmad RAH. better known as Allaama Mulla Jeewan RAH. writes-, "In all fairness. the confinement of the Madhaahib to the four and following only", is from the grace of Allaah and denotes His acceptance of them There is no need for an explanation."

Allaah has blessed these four Imaams with detailed knowledge of the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth and they were masters in deriving rulings from the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth. Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. writes. "The knowledge of these four Imaams, namely Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH., Imaam Malik RAH., Imaam Shaafi'ee RAH. and Imaam Ahmad RAH. encompassed the knowledge of all other Ulema."

While Allaah best knows the reason for the Madhaahib being four we find many other things also being restricted to four, eg:

1. While the Ambiyaa ALY. were many, four are regarded as the most prominent: Rasulullaah

Muhammad SAW. Hadhrat Ibraheem ALY. And Hadhrat Moosa ALY.

2. While the divine scriptures were many, four are regarded as the most prominent the Qur'aan, the Torah, the Zaboor and the Injeel

3. While the angels are many, four are regarded as the most prominent: Hadhrat Jibra'eel ALY., Hadhrat Mikaa'eel ALY., Hadhrat Israafeel ALY. and Hadhrat Israa'eel ALY.

4. While the Sahabah RADI. were many, four are regarded as the most prominent; Hadhrat Abu Bakr RADI., Hadhrat Umar RADI. Hadhrat Uthmaan RADI. and Hadhrat Ali RADI.

5. While the routes of Tareeqah were many, four are regarded as the most prominent; Chistiyyah, Naqshbandiyyah, Qaadiyyah and Suharwardiyyah

6. While the signs of Allaah's might are many, four are most prominent stated in Surah Ghaashiya; the camel, the sky, the mountains and the earth. Allaah says: Have they (mankind) not looked at the camel and seen how it was created (perfectly adapted to the harsh climate of the desert with many unique peculiarities) ? And (have they not looked) at the sky, how it was raised (so high without any supports)? And (have they not looked) at the mountains, how they were placed firmly (into the earth with their bulk underground)? And (have they not looked) at the earth, how it was spread out (with large tracts of land that seem flat despite the spherical shape of the earth)?

It is therefore nothing strange for the Imaams to be four in number and is futile to object to this.

Hadhrat Abdul Qaadir Jaylaani RAH. was a follower of Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal RAH. and he always wished that Allaah should keep as a follower of Imaam Ahmad RAH. and raise him on the Day of Qiyaamah in the company of Imaam Ahmad RAH.

The gist of it all is that although there had been many Mujtahideen, the Madhaahib of the others had never been so well documented as these four, because of which it is necessary to follow one of them. Shah Wali'ullaah

Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. says, "Since there are no Madhaahib on the truth besides the four Madhaahib, following them will be following the broader consensus of people and failing to follow them will be to leave the broader consensus of people, which will be against the instruction of Rasulullaah SAW. He also adds that in these latter times, there are no Madhaahib that cover all aspects of the Deen as well as these four.

THE THIRD OBJECTION: The Ghayr Muqallideen argue that why should there be differences amongst the Imaams when the Qur'aan is one and Rasulullaah SAW. is one? They claim that this merely confuses people.

In reply we say that the first addressees of the Qur'aan were the Sahabah RADI. and because they understood the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth directly from Rasulullaah SAW. they are a criterion for us to follow. Despite the fact that the Qur'aan is one and Rasulullaah SAW. was one, there

still existed many differences between the Sahabah RADI. Since the Imaams were followers of the Sahabah RADI. if and the Taabi'een, there naturally arose differences amongst them as well.

With regard to the difference amongst the Sahabah RADI. Rasulullaah SAW. said, "When I asked my Rabb about the disputes to arise between my Sahabah RADI. after me, he sent revelation to me saying, 'O Muhammad! Your Sahabah RADI. are like stars. While all the stars are radiant, the radiance of some exceed the radiance of others. When their opinions differ concerning a matter, a person following the opinion of any of them will be rightly guided.'" Rasulullaah SAW. added, "My Sahabah RADI. are like stars. You will be rightly guided by following any one of them."

Because these differences were based on sincerity, they cannot be condemned and are in fact a source of Allaah's mercy, as Rasulullaah SAW. himself stated when he said "the differences amongst my Ummah are a mercy." Here Rasulullaah SAW. was referring to the differences between the Sahabah RADI. and amongst the Imaams such differences were plenty. Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. mentioned that there were those Sahabah RADI. who recited Bismillaah audibly in salaah while others did not, those who recited the Qunoot in the Fajr salaah and those who did not, those who regarded vomiting and bleeding of the nose as factors nullifying salaah and those who did not, those who regarded touching a woman or the private part as factors nullifying salaah and those who did not, those who regarded eating roasted foods and camel meat as factors nullifying salaah and those who did not .

In his Al I'tidaal, Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Zakariyyah RAH. cites the following examples of differences that existed between the sahabah RADI.

1. According to Hadhrat Umar RADI. touching of the private parts breaks the wudhu, but according to Hadhrat Ali RADI. and Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. it does not.
2. According to the vast majority of Sahabah RADI. it is permissible to make wudhu with sea water but Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. says that it is Makrooh.
3. According to the vast majority of the Sahabah RADI. it is commendable and Mustahab to use perfume on Fridays, but Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah RADI. maintains that it is Waajib (compulsory).
4. While Hadhrat Umar RADI. and Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. say that wailing and lamenting over a deceased one brings punishment to the deceased, Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. denies this most vehemently.
5. Imaam Zuhri RAH. reports that there was a difference between Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. and Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah RADI. about whether fasts not kept in Ramadhaan should after be kept consecutively or whether it may be done intermittently.
6. The viewpoint of a large group of Sahabah RADI. Was that, wudhu is nullified after eating food cooked by fire. Among those holding this view were Hadhrat Anas RADI., Hadhrat Abu Hulyrah RADI., Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. and Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI.. However, the

view of the four Khulafaa as well as the vast majority of Sahabah RADI. is that wudhu does not break in this case.

7.? Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. believed that in Tayammum it is necessary to wipe dust-covered hands right up to the elbows. Hadhrat Ali RADI. however maintained that doing !o up to the wrists is enough.

8. It was the belief of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Uma r RADI. and Hadhrat Anas RADI. that if a donkey passes in front of a person in salaah, The salaah becomes nullified. On the other hand, Hadhat Uthmaan RADI. and other Sahabah RADI..r say that salaah does not break.

9. If there are only two persons together with the Imaam in salaah, then according to the Sahabah RADI. the Imaam should stand ahead of the other men, while Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. states that the Imaam should stand in-between the two and in line with them.

10. A narration of Muslim states that Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. instructed that when a woman is bathing, she should open up the plaits of her hair. When Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. heard this, she said, It is surprising that he is instructing that the hair be opened. Why does he rather not instruct women to shave off their hair? I used to bath with Rasulullaah SAW. from the same utensil and I did no more than pour water thrice over my head."

11. While the majority of the Sahabah RADI. believed that Ramal is Sunnah during Tawaaf, Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. was of the opinion that Rasulullaah SAW. did it only once to show the Mushrikeen that the Muslims were not weakened by disease..

There are numerous other examples to be found in the books of Ahadeeth and one who studies Tirmidhi will find many. shah wali'ullaah Muhaddith

Dehlawi RAH. has provided many detail about the reasons for these differences in his Hujjatullaahil Baaligha. After all of this, he summarises by saying that the Taabi'een qathered many Ahadeeth together with the differences of the sahabah RADI. preference to some opinions over others, regarding some to be weaker than others even though they were all reported from the Sahabah RADI. An example of this is that according to Hadhrat Umar RADI. and Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. Tayammum was not permissible for the person in need of a bath. However, when the narrations of Hadhrat Imraan bin Husayn RADI., Hadhrat Ammaar RADI. and others came to light. the former ruling was abandoned.

It then happened that the people of every area also started to rely on certain important scholars from the Taabi'een, the people of Madinah relied on Hadhrat Saeed bin Musayyib RAH. and Hadhrat Saalim bin Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. The people of Makkah followed Hadhrat Ataa bin Abi Rabaah RAH. and the people of Kufa followed Hadhrat Ibraheem Nakha'ee RAH.. The people of Basrah followed Hadhrat Hasan Basri RAH., the people of Yemen followed Hadhrat Tawoos bin Kaysaan RAH. and the people of Shaam followed Hadhrat Makhool RAH.

Allaah inspired many hearts by the knowledge of these men and people would flock to them for learning Ahadeeth and for asking rulings. Hadhrat Sa'eed RAH. and Hadhrat Ibraheem RAH.

classified and categorised all the various chapters and faculties of Fiqh and even the principles of Fiqh, which they had learnt from their seniors. Hadhrat Sa'eed RAH. and his companions believed that the Ulema of the Haramain possessed the soundest knowledge of the Deen and their Madh'hab was based on the Fataawaa of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI., Hadhrat Aa'isha RADI. , Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. and the verdicts of the judges of Madinah. They therefore collected all of this and scrutinised it, taking the most accepted opinion in cases where there were differences.

Hadhrat Ibraheem RAH. and his students believed that none was more reliable in Fiqh than Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. In fact, Hadhrat Alqama RAH. said this to Hadhrat Masrooq RAH. Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. also said to Imaam Awzaa'ee RAH. Ibraheem RAH. was a greater faqih than Saalim RAH. and had Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. not been a Sahabi, I would say that Alqama RADI. was a greater Faqih than he. As for Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI., he was Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI.

The basis of the Madh'hab of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. is the Fataawaa of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. the verdicts of Hadhrat Ali RADI. and the verdicts of Qaadhi Shuray RAH. and other judges of Kufa. He therefore compiled all their rulings and just as Hadhrat Sa'eed RAH. had collected the narrations of Madinah, Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. did the same for the narrations of Kufa. While Hadhrat Sa'eed RAH. was the mouthpiece for the people of Madinah and knew all the Ahadeeth of Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah RADI. and the verdicts of Hadhrat Umar RADI. Hadhrat Ibraheem RADI. was the mouthpiece of the people of Kufa. The people therefore relied on whatever these two men said and although they sometimes never said it, their statements were attributed to one or other of their pious predecessors.

There is really no reason to object to the differences of opinion between the Imaams. In his Hujjatullaahil Baaligha, Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. has shed great light on the mater, as had Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad, Zakanyyah RAH. in his Ikhtilaafe A'immah and Al'tidaal.

Allaam Sha'raani RAH. says that a fair look at the Madhaahib will reveal that all four Imaams were upon the truth and no follower of any of them can criticise another because they are all part of the Shari'ah and their differences are a mercy to the Ummah. Allaah Who is All Knowing and All Wise must have placed some good in it, otherwise he would have declared it Haraam just as it is Haraam to differ on matters of belief. By confusing the differences in derivatives with differences in fundamental beliefs is a slip-up that easily leads to destruction.

When great Ulema see no problem in differences, it is strange that the Ulema of the -Ghayr Muqallideen have a problem with it, especially when they themselves are divided on so many issues. Here are a few examples of the differences they have:

1. While Allaama Showkaani and Nawaab Siddique Hasan ate of the opinion that it is not necessary to cover the necessary areas of the body during salaah, Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is a precondition without which salaah is invalid.
2. While Nawaab Siddique Hasan says that it is not permissible to employ and pay a person to

call out the Adhaan, Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that there is no doubt about the permissibility of this.

3. Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that the Mu'adhin has to be a male whereas Nawaab Siddique Hasan says that even a woman can fill the position.

4. Nawaab Siddique Hasan says that the Adhaan is Waajib (compulsory), while Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is Sunnah.

5. While Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan is of the opinion that the earnings of a prostitute is Haraam and that it is Haraam to eat her food or to have any dealings with her⁶, Molvi Abdullaah Ghaazipuri says that this is permissible as long as she repents.

6. Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is permissible to use the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth to make amulets for sick people whereas other Ghayr' Muqallideen say that this is not permissible.

7.? Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is permissible for a person to enter into the state of Ihraam before the Miqaatl. Nawaab Siddique Hasan says that this is not permissible.

8. Nawaab Siddique Hasan says that Hajj will not be nullified by sexual intercourse', but Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is and that the Hajj Hajj will have to be repeated the following year.

9. Molvi Basheer Qanooji says that it is a Bid'ah for the Haafidh to recite Surah Ikhlaas thrice when the Qur'aan is completed in the Taraaweeh salaah. Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan however says that it is not a Bid'ah.

10. Nawaab Siddique Hasan says that Adhaan cannot be called out before the time of the salaah and that the Adhaan of Hadhrat Bilaal RADI. Was merely to wake the people up. Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan however states states that two Adhaans should be called out for Fajr.

11. Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that although there is a difference of opinion about music and singing on occasions of happiness such as weddings and Eid the best opinion is that it is not only permissible. But recommended. Nawaab Siddique Hasan on the other hand states that this is Haraam. This was the opinion of Ibn Taymiyyah RAH. and Ibn Qayyim RAH.

12. Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that surah Fatiha should not be recited audibly in the Janaazah salaah, while Nawaab Siddique Hasan says that it should be audible.

13. While the Ghayr Muqallideen Nurut Hasan says that it is permissible to marry an illegitimate woman Abdul Jaleel Saamrodi says that it is not permissible because it is not mentioned in the six most authentic books of Ahadeeth.

14. Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is not necessary to pay zakaah for merchandise, while Abdul Jaleel Saamrodi says that according to most of the Ahlul Hadith, zakaah should be paid.

15. Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is not permissible to condemn the Mouloud as it takes place nowadays, while Molvi Thanaa'ullaah says that it is a Bid'ah.

16. Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is Waajib (compulsory) to pay zakaah for gold and silver , while Nawaab Siddique Hasan says that it is not.

17. Nawaab Siddique Hasan says that it is permissible to say, "O Qibla of Deen, help me! "O Kabah of Imaan, help me!", "O Ibn Qayyim, help me!" and "O Qaadhi Showkaani, help me!, Molvi Thanaa'ullaah Amritsari says that this is Shirk.

18. As can be noticed from number 17 above, Nawaab Siddique Hasan is of the opinion that it is permissible to write the words Qibla and Kabah, but this is not permissible according to Abdul Jaleel Saamrodi.

19. While Dawood Zaahiri says that wudhu needs to be made after bathing, Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is not necessary.

20. Abdul Jaleel Saamrodi says that it is permissible for a Musaafir to perform salaah behind a Muqeems. However, Ali Hasan Khan says that is not at all permissible and if he has to do so, he should join only in the last two Rakaahs.

21. While Nurul Hasan says that masturbation is permissible, Abdul Jaleel Saamrodi says that it is not.

22. Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is permissible to call for others apart from Allaah, while Molvi Thanaa'ullaah says that it is Shirk.

23. While Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is Mustahab to rub the body while bathing, Nawaab Siddique says that it is Waajib (compulsory).

24. While Molvi Waheeduz Zamaan says that it is permissible to call out four or five Takbeers in the Janaazah salaahs, Nawaab Siddique says that it is a Bid'ah to call out more or less than four.

THE FOURTH OBJECTION: A similar objection that the Ghayr

Muqallideen raise is that how can ail four Madhaahib be corred when the truth can only be one. They therefore say that it is best to forsake ail forms of Taqleed and follow only the Qur'aan and Sunnah directly.

We say that the sources of all the Madhaahib are the Qur'aan and the Ahadeerh and to declare them all to be wrong is (Allaah forbid!) tantamount to claiming that the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth are misleading. The Kabah has four sides (north, south, west and east) and the people ort each side face tire side they are on, Now although the direction of every person is different. The salaah of each of them is correct because their purpose is all the same.

In the same way, one Imaam may use certain criterion and factors to interpret a certain verse of the Qur'aan In a particular manner, another Imaam may use other factors to arrive at a different interpretation, both of which are accommodated by the verse. In alike manner, a particular Imaam may interpret a Hadith according to his research and using certain rules and principles, At the same time, another Imaam will use his principles and standards to interpret it differently. On other occasions, one Imaam may use the apparent meaning of a Hadith or verse to arrive at a conclusion, while another may, Use the implied meaning. Apart from the above, there are various other ways in which the Imaams of the Madhaahib differ. The same differences ale apparent front the interpretation of the Sahabah RADI. Well. Here follows a few examples:

1. A Hadith appears in Bukhaari and Muslim stating that when Rasulullaah SAW. gave the Sahabah RADI. the command to march against, the Banu Qurayzah tribe, he said that they should not perform their Asr salaah anywhere but at the settlement of the Banu Qurayzah tribe. Now while some of the Sahabah RADI. understood that Rasulullaah SAW. ?s intention wars to emphasise a speedy march, others took the direct meaning, meaning that they", should not perform the Asr salaah on the road (even if the time was running out). However, since Rasulullaah SAW. did Not disapprove of this difference. it appears that both parties were right Such are the differences between the four Madhaahib.

2. Hadhrat Taariq RADI. reports that a Sahabi RADI. was in need of a bath and because there was no water, he neither performed wudhu, Tayammum or his salaah. When he reported this to Rasulullaah SAW. Rasulullaah SAW. approved of his action. When another Sahabi RADI. was faced with the same situation, he performed Tayammum and performed salaah. Rasulullaah SAW. approved of his action as well. Now although both Sahabah RADI. applied their minds to the same situation, their conclusions were different. Rasulullaah SAW. however approved of both. Such is the situation with the Imaams of the Madhaahib.

Take the example of a person who cannot determine the direction of the Qibla on a dark night. According to the Hadith, he ought to apply his mind and arrive at a conclusion. Now if there are several people in the same place in the same situation, and each of them applied his mind and arrived at different conclusions, they would all be performing salaah in different directions. All of their salaahs would however be valid because they have all practised on the Hadith. Although only one will be facing in the correct direction, all will deemed correct in the sight of Allaah. While the one who is correct will receive double the rewards, the others will still receive a single reward. A Hadith of Bukhaari and Muslim states that when one applies one's mind to a question of the Shari'ah and arrives at the correct conclusion, he will receive double the reward and if he errs, he will still be rewarded. Regardless of whether the reward is single or double, the fact is that Allaah accepts the effort of both persons. Therefore, although only Allaah knows precisely which of the Imaams of the Madhaahib is correct in which of the various rulings, is in perfectly in order to say that each of them is correct in the sight of Allaah because they have all applied their minds to the rulings. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

THE FIFTH OBJECTION: Another objection that the Ghayr Muqallideen raise is that if all four Madhaahib are correct, why follow only one?

The reply to this has already passed in the foregoing pages where the proof for Taqleed had

been established. If people are left to follow any of the various Madhaahib as and when they please, the Shari'ah would become a mere toy. For example, if a person decides to follow Imaam Shaafi'ee RAH. for a year, he will regard frogs and other like creatures to be Halaal for consumption and if he then follows Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. The following year, the same things would be Haraam. This would then be just as a verse of the Qur'aan states when it says about the Kuffaar: "They make it Halaal one year and Haraam another year." Mixing the rulings of the Shari'ah in this manner is called "Talf'eeq", which is Haraam according to all the jurists.

If a person chooses to follow one Madh'hab for a few days and then another, what are his academic reasons for doing so? Thereafter, when he follows another Madh'hab in other issues, what are his reasons for leaving the first? What wrong did he see in the former? When he has no knowledge of the Shari'ah to base his reasons upon and is doing so on the direction of others, then he is also practising Taqleed by following someone. This then becomes a fifth Madh'hab. When people then keep changing their Madhaahib in this manner, the Shari'ah then becomes a toy.

1. Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.
2. The Necessity for Codifying Fiqh
3. The Popularity of the Hanafi Madh'hab in the Indian Subcontinent

The Imaam of the Imaams. the leader of the Fuqahaa and Mujtahideen, Haafidh of Hadith Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. was that Mujtahid of the highest calibre. that Muhaddith, ascetic, pious and humble Imaam whose virtues and attributes have been lauded by great Muhadditheen and Ulema of all the Madhaahib. One may refer to their various books for details.

Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. is commonly referred to as Imaame A'zam (The greatest of the Imaams) and has been revered by a large group of Ulema and Muhadditheen. In fact. more than half of the Ummah are his followers.

He was born during the period of the Sahabah RADI. and was an embodiment of piety, knowledge and all good attributes. His hometown was Kufa, which was then a seat of knowledge because thousands of Sahabah RADI. lived there. There were over a thousand Fuqahaa in Kufa, a hundred and fifty of whom were Sahabah RADI. Amongst these were people like Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. and Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah RADI. as well as four thousand students of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. and eight hundred students of Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah RADI. it was amongst such people that Imaam Abu Haneefah RADI. Was brought up and together with this. he also studied under the Ulema of the Haramain.

GLAD TIDINGS FOR IMAAM ABU HANEEFAH RAH. FROM THE AHADDEETH

Rasulullaah SAW. once said. "Even if Imaan has to be on the Pleiades constellation, a man of Persian descent would get it from there." Another Hadith states that Rasulullaah SAW. said that some people of Persian descent Will get it from there. Imaam Jalaaluddeen Suyuti RAH. reports from many Muhadditheen like Imaam Bukhaari RAH. and Imaam Muslim RAH. that these

Ahadeeth refer specifically to Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. One of Inraani Suyuti RAH.'s students writes, this statement of his teacher is absolutely true because no other person of Persian descent reached the height of knowledge that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. reached.

Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. also says that the Hadith refers to none other but Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and the author of Ghaayatul Awtaar writes: "It is certain that the Hadith of Bukhaari and Muslim refers to Imaame A'zam and his students because none of the descendants of the Persians had more knowledge and a deeper understanding of the Deen than them."

IMAAM ABU HANEEFAH RAH. WAS A TAABI'EE

Allaama Ibn Hajar Haythami Makki RAH. writes in his Khayraatul Hisaan that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. was amongst the greatest of the Taabi'een and that he met a large group of the Sahabah RADI. who lived in Kufa after his birth in 80 A.H. None of the Imaams in his time had this honour, not even Imaam Awzaa'ee RAH. who was in Shaamn, the two Imaams named Hamaad who were in Basrah, Imaam Thowri RAH. Who was in Kufa. Imaam Maalik RAH. who was in Madinah and Imaam Layth bin Sa'd RAH. who was in Egypt.

A large group of critics have verified that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Was reliable in his narrations, had a profound knowledge of Ahadeeth and his narration were absolutely reliable. Here we shall quote a few of these experts:

1. Imaam Yahya bin Ma'een RAH. (passed away 233 A.H.) was a famous saint, Muhaddith and expert in the subject of Riijaal (critical analysis of the narrators of Ahadeeth). He taught Imaam Bukhaari RAH. and other Muhadditheen and Imaam Bukhaari RAH. has the following to say about him, "I have never seen myself belittled (in terms of knowledge) in front of anyone other than Yahya bin Ma'een RAH. This same Imaam Yahya RAH. attests to the great calibre of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and says, "He is Thiqa (reliable) and trustworthy and I have never heard anyone who regards him to be a weak narrator." He also mentioned that the best Fiqh in his estimation is that of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.

2. Imaam Yahya bin Sa'eed Qattaan RAH. (passed away 198 A.H.) was also a famous saint, Muhaddith and expert in the subject of Riijaal (critical analysis of the narrators of Ahadeeth). He taught the likes of Imaam Ahmad RAH. and Imaam Ali bin Madeeni RAH. Despite his profound knowledge, he learnt from Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. And expressed great praise in being a student of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. He followed the rulings of imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. In many caes and had the following to say about imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.

> "I have never heard an opinion belter than those of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. . He would therefore issue rulings corresponding to those of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.

> "By Allaah! We sat in the company of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and learnt Ahadeeth from him and each time I looked at his face. I could see that he was a person who feared Allaah."

> "There was none other than Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. To solve the problems people were

having. Although he was not known of initially, his status and position then multiplied in leaps and bounds.

3. Amirul Mu'mineen in Hadith Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak RAH. (passed away 181 A.H.) was one of the most senior of the Muhadditheen and the teacher of people like Imaam Ahmad RAH. and Imaam Yahya bin Ma'een RAH. In fact, the first books that Imaam Bukhaari RAH. studied were those of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak RAH. He is unanimously regarded as the Ameerul Mu'mineen in the field of Ahadeeth and Imaams Bukhaari RAH. and Muslim RAH. Narrate many Ahadeeth from him. He was one of the special students of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and was so captivated by the personality of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. that he stayed with him throughout his Life. He had the following to say about Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.

> He (Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.) was amongst those who knew the most Ahadeeth of Rasulullaah SAW. and had studied Ahadeeth from many teachers." Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak RAH. used to encourage people to follow Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and say, "We have been to many scholars of Hijaaz and Iraq but have never found a class more blessed and more beneficial than that of Imaam Abu Hanifah RAH.

> "I have been to many cities but I had never known the principles. of Halaal and Haraam until I met him (Imaam Abu Hanifah RAH.

> I have studied under many teachers but have never known any as proficient in Fataawaa as he (Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.

> Were it not for sounding prejudiced. I would say that I have never seen anyone as proficient in Fataawaa as he (Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.

> He (Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.) excelled people in his memory for Ahadeeth. his Fiqh, his knowledge, his trustworthiness and his sheer piety."

> "He had the deepest understanding of Deen and I have never seen any other with a deeper understanding than he."

> If an opinion is to be sought, it is to be taken from Maalik, Sufyaan and Abu Haneefah RAH. . From them, the one with the best, the deepest and most finely tuned understanding is Abu Haneefah RAH.

> There is none more worthy of being followed than Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. because he was an Imaam, a pious man, an Aalim and a Faqih. With his keen insight, understanding and intelligence, he has exposed knowledge in such a way that no other person has done.

4. Imaam A'mash Kufi RAH. (Passed away 148 A.H.) was an eminent Faqih and Muhaddith of Kufa and one of the teachers of the great Muhadditheen. Despite this, he always had words of praise for Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Note the following.

> on one occasion when he was asked a question, he referred the questioner to Imaam Abu

Haneefah RAH.6., saying that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. will have a better reply because he has been blessed in his knowledge.

> Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar reports that he was once sitting with Imaam A'mash RAH. when Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. also arrived there. someone then asked an intricate question, about which Imaam A'mash RAH. kept his peace. He then turned to Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and asked him what the answer was. when Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. gave a satisfying reply. Imaam A'mash RAH. asked him from which Hadith did he derive the reply. Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. then explained that it was from a Hadith that Imaam A'mash RAH. had himself narrated to him. He also explained how he had arrived at the conclusion. To this Imaam A'mash RAH. exclaimed, "We (the Muhadditheen) are just the pharmacists while you people (the Fuqahaa) are the doctors.

5. Ameerul Mu'mineen in Hadith Hadhrat Shu'ba bin Hajjaaj RAH. (passed away 150 A.H.) was one of the highest ranking narrators of all those whose narrations are included in the most authentic books of Ahadeeth. He had a very good relationship with Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Note the following:

> Whenever he was asked about Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. he would always laud praises on him and sent him a gift every RAH.

> When he heard that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. had passed away, he exclaimed, ""Innaa Lillaahi wa Innaa Ilayhi Raaji'oon! The light of knowledge had been extinguished for the people of? Kufa, the likes of which they will never see again."

6. The Imaam of Ahadeeth Hadhrat Ali bin Madeeni RAH. (passed away 234 A.H.) was the teacher of personalities like Imaam Bukhaari RAH. Imaam Abu Dawood RAH. and Imaam Dhahabi RAH. He was always praising Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and said:

> Men like Thowri. Ibn Mubaarak. Hamaad bin Zaid. Hishaam. Wakee. Abbaad bin Awaam and Ja'far bin Maymoon have all narrated from Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. who is absolutely reliable and no objections can be levelled against him.

7. Imaamul Hadith Hadhrat Sufyaan Thowri RAH. (passed away 161 A.H.) Was a Muhaddith of the highest calibre. Khateeb writes that all scholars are unanimous about his piety, reliability in knowledge and being an authority of the highest ranking. He was a contemporary of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and both men revered and stood in great praise of each other. He had the following to say about Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.

> I swear by Allaah that he was extremely proficient in acquiring knowledge and abstained rigidly from what was forbidden. He practised only that which was conclusively proven from Rasulullaah SAW. and he had profound knowledge of what was abrogated and what was not. He always researched the actions that Rasulullaah SAW. did during the final stages of his life.

> Hadhrat Muhammad bin Muntashir San'aani RAH. Says, "When I once went to Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. he asked Me where I was coming from. When told him that I had come from

Itlaam Sufyaan Thowri RAH, he remarked, you are coming from a man whom even Alqama and Aswad would have been in need of had they been alive.' When I then went to Sufyaan RAH. and he asked me where I had come from, I replied that I had been with Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. He then remarked, 'You have come from a man who is the greatest Faqih on earth.'

> Whenever Hadhrat Sufyaan RAH. was asked an intricate ruling, he would say, "None would have a better answer to that other than the man we all envied." He would then turn to one of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.'s students and ask. "what has your teacher got to say about that?" After the student had given the reply, Imaam Sufyaan RAH. would take note of the reply and then issue his verdict according to the reply.

8. The famous Muhaddith Hadhrat yazeed bin Haaron RAH. (passed away 206 A.H.) was a great scholar of his time. He studied under Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Imaam Maaik RAH. and Hadhrat Sufyaan Thowri RAH. Amongst the countless students he had, some of the famous ones were Hadhrat Ali bin Madeeni RAH. and Imaam Yahya bin Ma'een RAH. Seventy thousand people would listen to his lessons at the same time and he performed the Isha and Fair salaahs with the same wudhu for forty years. He has the following to say about Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.

> Although I have studied under a thousand teachers, I have never found any with as such Taqwa and more truthful than Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.

> Hadhrat Muhammad bin Sa'd RAH. reports that Hadhrat yazeed bin Haaron RAH. was once with Hadhrat yahya bin Ma'een RAH., Hadhrat Ali bin Madeeni RAH. Hadhrat? Ahmad bin Hambal RAH. Hadhrat Zuhary bin Harb RAH. and several others when a person arrived and posed a question.? "Go to the men of knowledge," Hadhrat Yazeed RAH. told the man. "Are the men of knowledge and Ahaadeeth not with you??" Hadhrat Ali bin Madeeni RAH. asked. Hadhrat Yazeed RAH. replied, "The people of knowledge are the students of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. You people are the pharmacists."

> When someone once asked him when it would be alright for a person to issue Fataawaa. he replied. "When the person is like Abu Haneefah RAH. It is strange that you should' say that," the person remarked Hadhrat Yazeed RAH. then said' "You are right. I should actually give him more praise than that. I have not seen a map who is a greater Aalim and Faqih than he' I have also not seen anyone as pious as he. I once saw him sitting beside someone's door in the sweltering heat. When I asked him why he did not rather sit in the shade of the house, he replied that it was because the owner of the house owed him some money (he did not want to take from the person more than what was due by sitting in his shade as well). Hadhrat Yazeed then added, "Have you ever seen anyone more pious than that?"

9. Imaam Wakee bin Jarraah RAH. (passed away 197 A'H.) was one of the senior teachers of the Imaams who compiled the six most authentic books of Ahadeeth.

> A very intricate Hadith once came up in his lesson. which made him stand up and sigh, "Regret will be of no use now' Where is Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. now to solve the problem for us?"

> He once said, "I have never met a Faqih greater than Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. nor anyone who performed salaah better than he."

10. Haafidhul Hadith Hadhrat Imaam Abu Yusuf RAH. (passed away 182 A.H.) was an Imaam in the field of Ahadeeth and the teacher of great Muhadditheen like Imaams Ahmad, Yahya bin Ma'een and Imaam Ali bin Madeeni RAH. These were all senior teachers of the likes of Imaam Bukhaari RAH. and other Muhadditheen. Imaam Abu Yusuf RAH. was one of the senior students of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and he has the following to say:

> ?He (Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. had a deeper understanding of authentic Ahadeeth than I had."

> I have never seen anyone more knowledge of the explanations of the Ahadeeth than Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. When we once differed on a ruling, we went to Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. he immediately presented a satisfying reply.

> Hadhrat Isaam bin Yusuf RAH. narrates that they once said to Imaam Abu Yusuf RAH. "People agree that there is none more knowledge of Fiqh and Ahadeeth than you." To this, he remarked, "My knowledge compared to that of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. is like a little stream beside the Euphrates River.

11. When Imaam Shaafi'ee RAH. once asked Hadhrat Imaam Maalik RAH. (passed away 179 A.H.) about several Muhadditheen, he described their conditions to him. when he then enquired about Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Imaam Maalik RAH. Exclaimed, "Subhaanallaah! I have never seen any like him.

12. Imaam Shaafi'ee RAH. (passed away 204 A.H.) said:

> "People are all successors of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. in Fiqh because I have never known a Faqih greater than him."

> "Anyone who does not refer to his (Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. books can never have a deep understanding of knowledge and of Fiqh.

13. Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal RAH. (passed away 204 A.H.) said, In terms of his piety, abstinence and preference of the Akhirah over this world, he (Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. had reached a level that no other has.

14. Imaamul Hadith Hadhrat Mis'ar bin Kudaam RAH. was a teacher of the compilers of the Sihaah Sitta and the Imaam of the Muhadditheen. This testimony is given by Ameerul Mu'mineen in Ahadeeth Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak RAH. He was also the teacher of the likes of Hadhrat Sufyaan Thowri RAH. and Hadhrat Sufyaan bin Uyaynah RAH. Despite this. he studies under Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak RAH. says, "I saw Mis'ar in the lessons of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. asking questions and deriving great benefit." He has the following to say about Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.

> "I am sure that a person has nothing to fear if he places imaam Abu Haneefah RA as a medium between himself and Allaah and if he follows his Madh'hab.

>? Hadhrat Mis'ar RAH. once passed by imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and his students as they were discussing something point of Fiqh in raised voices. He stood there for a while and then remarked. "These people are belter then the martyrs, worshippers and those who perform Tahajjud. They are reviving the Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW. and removing the ignorant from their ignorance.

15. The famous Muhaddith Imaam Awzaa'ee RAH. (passed away 157 A.H.) was a great Muhaddith, Faqih and Mujtahid. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak RAH. relates, "Imaam Awzaa'ee RAH. once asked me, 'Who is this perpetrator of Bid'ah in Kufa who is known as Abu Haneefah?' I gave no reply, but later presented to him some rulings that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. had passed. After reading through them. Imaam Awzaa'ee RAH. saw that they were written by someone called Nu'maan bin Thaabit. He therefore asked me who this man was. I replied, 'He is a man whom I have met in Iraq.' Imaam Awzaa'ee RAH. then remarked. 'This is a gem from amongst scholars. Go and learn as much as you can from him, then told him, 'He is the same Abu Haneefah whom you have been preventing me from.' When Imaam Awzaa'ee RAH. later met Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. in Makkah, the two started discussing some rulings, to which Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. gave excellent explanations, After they had separated. Imaam Awzaa'ee RAH. said I envy him for this tremendous knowledge and accomplishment of his wit. I repent from the error I had been living with. Stay close to him because he is not at all as I have been told."

16. The great Muhaddith Makki bin Ibraheem RAH. (passed away 215 A.H.) was a Faqih, a great scholar of Ahadeeth and the teacher of Imaam Bukhaari RAH. and Allaama Ibn Ma'een RAH. He used to say that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. was the most knowledgeable scholar of the time.

17. The famous Muhaddith, Aalim and saint Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi RAH. (passed away 194 A.H.) said that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. was the most knowledgeable of all people, the most pious of all, the most devoted worshipper of all, the most revered and most cautious.

Apart from the above personalities, there have been many other Muhadditheen who have heaped praises upon Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and testified to his veracity and Dependability and to the fact that he was a Haafidh of Ahadeeth and a peerless Faqih. His great status can be ascertained from the fact that countless great Muhadditheen were his students and the compilers of the Sihaah Sitta were students of his students.

Despite these accolades there are people who still say that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. was a weak narrator and knew only 14 to 17 Ahadeeth, If this is not prejudiced and a result of warped thinking, it can be nothing else.

Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak RAH. reports that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. once saw himself in a dream digging the grave of Rasulullaah SAW. and collecting Rasulullaah SAW.'s blessed bones. When someone asked for the interpretation from the famous dream interpreter

Hadhrat Ibn Seereen RAH. Hadhrat Ibn Seereen RAH. asked who it was that saw the dream. The person remained silent and again asked for the interpretation. When Hadhrat Ibn Seereen RAH. again asked who it was that saw the dream, the person again held his peace. Upon the third request, Hadhrat Ibn Seereen RAH. said, "The person who saw this dream will make knowledge so apparent that none before him as ever done.

Hadhrat Ali bin Uthmaan Hajweri Lahori RAH. who passed away in the year 465 A.H. was regarded as one of the leading Awliyaa of the Indian subcontinent. He wrote the famous book Kashful Hujooob and was a staunch Hanafi. He narrates an interesting dream he had when he fell asleep at the tomb of Hadhrat Biiaal RADI. in Damascus. He says that he saw himself in Makkah and that Rasulullaah SAW. entered the Masjidul Haraam through the Banu Shaybah gate. He saw that just as a loving elders takes a child in his lap, Rasulullaah SAW. took a man in his lap. Hadhrat Ali bin Uthmaan RAH. ran towards Rasulullaah SAW. and started to kiss his hands and feet. Rasulullaah SAW. knew that he wished to know who the person in his lap was, so he informed him that the man was Hadhrat Ali bin Uthmaan SAW.'s Imaam and the Imaam of his nation, namely Imaam Abu Haneefah SAW.

Hadhrat Ali bin Uthmaan RAH. says that this gave him great hope in his people and told him that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. was one of those people lived only to keep the Shari'ah alive and he sacrificed himself only to keep alive what Rasulullaah SAW. brought. Because his condition was such, he was therefore not likely to make any mistakes in his judgement.

THE NECESSITY FOR CODIFYING FIQH

As long as the Sahabah RADI. lived, the Fuqahaa and Mujtahideen amongst them spread out in the Muslim empire and the various problems were solved by them. However, when the last Sahabi Hadhrat Abu Tufayl RADI. passed away in the year 110 A.H., the students of the Sahabah RADI. the Taabi'een - took over this responsibility and seven places became famous for being strongholds of knowledge and where Fataawaa were issued. These centres were Madinah, Makkah, Kufa, Basrah, Damascus, Egypt and Yemen. Kufa was however distinguished because thousands of Sahabah RADI. lived there and there remained thousands of students of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. and Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah RADI.

Upto the year 120 A.H., Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. was on of the celebrated students of the famous Muhaddith and Faqih Imaam Hammaad RAH. After the demise of Imaam Hammaad RAH., Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. became his successor and a teacher and Mufti in his own right.

Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. realised that many changes. had taken place in the first century of Islaam and that this would not stop. Many evils such as the fabrication of Ahadeeth had cropped up. Seeing that knowledge was not confined to one person or place, Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. decided that if no compilation and codifying took place, the necessary knowledge would be lost. Another reason was that as time speedily went by, many men of knowledge were also leaving the world, making it increasingly difficult for people to attain the knowledge they need. It was for these and other reasons that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. started the monumental task.

HOW FIQH WAS CODIFIED AND COMPILED

Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. selected forty of the most proficient men of his students to form a committee to undertake this task. These men were:

1. Imaam Zufar RAH. (passed away 158 A.H.)
2. Imaam Maalik bin Mughawwal RAH. (passed away 159 A.H.)
3. Imaam Dawood Taa'ee RAH. (passed away 160 A.H.)
4. Imaam Mandil bin Ali RAH. (passed away 168 A.H.)
5. Imaam Nadhar bin Abdul Kareem RAH. (passed away 169 A.H.)
6. Imaam Amr bin Maymoon RAH. (passed away 171 A.H.)
7. Imaam Hibbaan bin Ali RAH. (passed away 173 A.H.)
8. Imaam Abu Ismah RAH. (passed away 173 A.H.)
9. Imaam Zuhayr bin Mu'aawiyah RAH. (passed away 173 A.H.)
10. Imaam Qaasim bin Ma'n RAH. (passed away 175 A.H.)
11. Imaam Hamaad bin Imaam Abu Haneefan RAH. (passed away 176 A.H.)
12. Imaam Hayyaaj bin Bistaam RAH. (passed away 177 A.H.)
13. Imaam Shareek bin Abdullaah RAH. (passed away 178 A.H.)
14. Imaam Aafiya bin Yazeed RAH. (passed away 180 A.H.)
15. Imaam Abdullaah bin Mubaarak RAH. (passed away 181 A.H.)
16. Imaam Abu Yusuf RAH. (passed away 182 A.H.)
17. Imaam Muhammad bin Nooh RAH. (passed away 182 A.H.)
18. Imaam Hushaym bin Basheer Sulami RAH. (passed away 183 A.H.)
19. Imaam Abu Sa'eed Yahya bin Zakariyyah RAH. (passed away 184 A.H.)
20. Imaam Fadhl bin Ayyaadh RAH. (passed away 187 A.H.)
21. Imaam Asad bin Amr RAH. (passed away 188 A.H.)

22. Imaam Muhammad bin Hasan RAH. (passed away 189 A.H.)
23. Imaam Ali bin Mis'ar RAH. (passed away 189 A.H.)
24. Imaam Yusuf bin Khaalid RAH. (passed away 189 A.H.)
25. Imaam Abdullaah bin Idrees RAH. (passed away 192 A.H.)
26. Imaam Fadhl bin Moosa RAH. (passed away 192 A.H.)
27. Imaam Ali bin Tibyaan RAH. (passed away 192 A.H.)
28. Imaam Hafs bin Ghayyaath RAH. (passed away 194 A.H.)
29. Imaam Wakee bin Jarrah RAH. (passed away 197 A.H.)
30. Imaam Hishaam bin Yusuf RAH. (passed away 197 A.H.)
31. Imaam Yahya bin Sa'eed Qattaan RAH. (passed away 198 A.H.)
32. Imaam Shu'ayb bin Is'haaq RAH. (passed away 198 A.H.)
33. Imaam Abu Hafs bin Abdur Rahman RAH. (passed away 199 A.H.)
34. Imaam Abu Mutee Balkhi RAH. (passed away 199 A.H.)
35. Imaam Khaalid bin Sulaymaan RAH. (passed away 199 A.H.)
36. Imaam Abdul Hameed RAH. (passed away 203 A.H.)
37. Imaam Hasan bin Ziyaad RAH. (passed away 204 A.H.)
38. Imaam Abu Aasim Nabeel RAH. (passed away 212 A.H.)
39. Imaam Makki bin Ibraheem RAH. (passed away 215 A.H.)
40. Imaam Hamaad bin Daleel RAH. (passed away 215 A.H.)

All the above scholars were Mujtahideen. From them, ten or twelve were selected to form a higher committee. The pillars of this committee were Imaam Abu Yusuf RAH., Imaam Zufar RAH., Imaam Dawood Taa'ee RAH., Imaam Yusuf bin Khaand RAH., Imaam Yahya bin Zakariyyah RAH., Imaam Muhammad RAH., Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mubaarak RAH. and Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. himself.

With regard to this committee. Imaam Wakee RAH. who was the teacher of Imaam Shaafir'ee RAH. said, "How could there have remained any errors in this work of Imaam Abu Haneefah

RAH. when he had with him experts of Hadith such as Abu Yusuf, Hafs bin Ghayaath, Hibbaan and Mandil? And when he had experts in Arabic such as Qaasim bin Ma'n who was the grandson of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI? And when there were people of Taqwa and piety present such as Dawood bin Nadheer and Fudhayl bin Ayaadh? A person who has such people as companions cannot be wrong because there would always be someone to correct him if he ever erred.

The sequence Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. employed in extracting rulings was to first look for them in the Qur'aan, then the Ahadeeth, then the sayings of the Sahabah RADI. and then Qiyaas. His insight on Ahadeeth was very deep and apart from verifying which Ahadeeth fell into which category of strength, he also sought out the actions that Rasulullaah SAW. called out during the last portion of his life.

After in-depth deliberation over various rulings, Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. also explained those rulings that had not taken place but which were a possibility. The students around him were allowed to freely discuss the various rulings while keeping within the ambit of the Qur'aan, the Ahadeeth, the sayings of the Sahabah RADI. and Qiyaas. In fact, the discussions were often so free that some students would criticise the proofs of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. himself. When strangers asked him how he tolerated such apparent insolence, he said that he had trained them never to be overawed by any person, so that they could dissect the rulings of any person, even those of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. himself.

In this manner, they would deliberate upon various issues and note it down immediately if consensus was reached. If not, further discussions would take place until a satisfactory decision was reached. Some discussions would continue for months on end and when they became too prolonged, Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. would stand up to address the scholars. They would all listen intently as he provided a solution that all would accept. In certain cases when some of the senior committee members remained adamant about their opinions, all their opinions were noted.

The rulings of the Shari'ah were thus codified and documented during a period of 22 years and the books were famously known as the books of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. They comprised of 83000 pages with a total of which 38000 rulings about salaah and the remaining 45000 about the various aspects of social dealings and penal code.

These documents became useful for the Ulema of the time and the government. They were officially approved by the government and courts were compelled to judge according to them. Hadhrat Yahya bin Aadam RAH. says, "The Khulafaa, Imaams and governors issued verdicts according to them and this is how affairs remained.

Hadhrat Muhammad bin Is'haaq RAH. says that all knowledge, whether on land or at sea, in the east or west or far and near were all the fruit of these documentations of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.

None of the other Imaams had as many companions or students as Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and Ulema as well as the Muslim public benefited from the way in which he explained difficult Ahadeeth and extracted rulings.

It was from those times until today that the followers of the Hanafi Madh'hab have always been many. Allaama Ibn Atheer Shaafi' ee RAH. writes that it is Allaah's secret why so many people perform their salaah according to the method shown by Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Allaama Mulla Ali Qaari RAH. states that followers of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Outnumber those of the other Imaams just as the followers of Rasulullaah SAW. outnumber those of the previous Ambiyaa ALY. adds that just as two thirds of the people of Jannah will be from this Ummah, the followers of the Hanafi Madh'hab number two thirds of the Ummah.

Apart from this, Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and his followers have been granted forgiveness by Allaah, as a story reported in Imam Kurdi 's book states. He reports that Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. once entered the Kabah and recited half of the Qur'aan Standing on one foot and the other half standing on the other. Thereafter, he made du'aa saying, " O Allaah! I have not recognised You as I ought to have done and have not worshipped You as I ought to have done. Please grant me your perfect recognition in exchange for my imperfect devotion." A voice was then heard from the corner of the Kabah saying "You have attained excellent recognition and have worshipped sincerely. You have therefore been forgiven together with all those who follow you.

The gist of it all is that the majority of the Ummah has followed the Hanafi Madh'hab because since the time that the Muslims conquered the Indian subcontinent, both the rulers and the subjects have all been Muqallideen and followers of the Hanafi Madh'hab. Hadhrat Moulana Abdur Rasheed Nu'maani (damat barkatuhu) writes in his book that all the conquerors of India from Mahmood Ghaznawi to Aurangzeb have all been followers of the Hanafi Madh'hab, as applied to those after them like Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and others. Therefore, even the people of Kashmir have been followers of the Hanafi Madh'hab. as mentioned by Muhammad Qaasim Farishta and Mirza Haydar in their old books. In fact. Hadhrat Mujaddid Alf Thaani RAH. Also mentions that the king of the time was a Hanafi and follower of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah. Shah Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. States that the Muslims of Rome as well as the people of the Indian subcontinent all belonged to the Hanafi Madh'hab.

Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. writes that they were discussing the Hadith stating that if knowledge was on the Pleiades constellation. a man or a nation of Persian descent will surely get it from there. Hadhrat Shah then stated that the man must surely be Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. because Allaah spread the knowledge of Fiqh through him and it was only the Hanafi Madh'hab that was in vogue in the times gone by when the rulers and judges of the Muslim lands were all Hanafis, as were almost all the teachers and the general public.

He writes in his Tafheemaat² that the Muslims of the majority of countries and cities belong to the Hanafi Madh'hab.

We see that the conquerors of the Indian subcontinent and all the saints who lived there throughout the ages, whether they belonged to the Chistiyyah, Naqshbandiyyah or any other denomination, all followed the Hanafi Madh'hab. Even now, we see that the majority of Muslims in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are all followers of the Hanafi Madh'hab and number in excess of fifty million.

Throughout the passage of time on the subcontinent when the various evils took shape such as in the time of Akbar and later on as well, there were people like Mujaddid Alf Thaani RAH. and Shah Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. who stood up to the challenge and wiped them out. Later on when the British posed a threat to Islaam, especially in the year 1272 A.H., they were also routed out in due course and Islaam was given firm root on Indian soil when two great men named Qaasim Nanotwi RAH. And Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi RAH. started the Daarul Uloom Deoband beneath a pomegranate tree. As a result of this, thousands of people became Ulema and Mashaa'ikh and are befitting the Ummah to this day. All the people rendering these great services to Islaam happened to be followers of the Hanafi Madh'hab.

Now the evil of the Ghayr Muqallideen has cropped up and has started to revile the Hanafi Madh'hab in particular. It reared its head here in Surat in the town called Samrod, where a certain Moulana Muhammad Samrodi started spreading it. The Ghayr Muqallideen issued challenges to the Hanafis to debate with them and made bold claims that none will be able to face the challenge. When the Hanafi Ulema accepted the challenge, Molvi Samrodi started delaying tactics and made all sorts of excuses. One of the excuses was that his son was facing a court case but even this eventually failed when the case was over.

The debate was to take place in Dhabel and the chief of police even made all the necessary arrangements. He sent for Molvi Samrodi and told him that the people were willing to follow him if he won the debate and if he did not, he would have to submit and become a Hanafi since the challenge came from him. When he still failed to show up, some people went to Samrod and told him that he had to appear because he had started the proceedings.

He was eventually forced to arrive and the debate began at nine o' clock on a Jumu'ah on the seventh Jumadal Ula 1303 A.H. before a crowd from approximately ten to fifteen villages. It continued until twelve that afternoon and everything was written down and then signed by both Moulana Abdul Haqq RAH. (author of Tafseer Haqqaani), Molvi Samrodi, the police chief and other people present there.

When Molvi Samrodi could not reply to a question, he requested three days leave to consider the answer, which was gracefully granted. The next debate with Hadhrat Moulana Ali Eid Roos RAH. in Surat was scheduled for the following day and it took place after Zuhr that Saturday before a crowd of approximately four to five thousand people. This debate was also attended by leading Ulema and officials, all of whom witnessed how the Ghayr Muqallideen were unable to give answers. It was evident before all that their stand was a pathetic one and at the very end Moulana Abdul Haqq RAH. asked them why they did not rather give in and accept when they had no answers. He then continued to deliberate on the necessity and substantiation for Taqleed, using proofs and references that were derived from the Qur'aan and Sunnah as well as those that appeal to the logic. When he had completed his lecture after an hour and a half, many people who had become Ghayr Muqallideen repented from their errant ways and became Muqallideen again. It was unfortunate that Molvi Samrodi remained adamant and started to use foul and offensive language. Moulana Abdul Haqq however bore this with patience.

Although Molvi Samrodi did not acknowledge his defeat then, the effect of it was that he later repented for his ways and pledge allegiance to the famous saint of the time Hadhrat Sheikh

Peer Moosaji Tarkeesri RAH. He then stayed with the Sheikh and even wrote a poem in praise of the Sheikh.

A descendant of Moulana Muhammad Surti by the name of Molvi Abdul Jaleel became a Ghayr Muqallid of the highest degree. He published many works reviling the Hanafis and finally debated with Mutakallimul Islaam Hadhrat Moulana Shaber Ahmad Uthmaani RAH. also in Dhabel. He arrived in much pomp and show with an ox cart full of books. He was however left speechless and miserably lost the debate. I was also present there and many other people who are still alive today.

He was however not repentant and continued spreading false propaganda against the Hanafis. Many pamphlets were printed with his name on them, which translated text of Hanafi books in a most inappropriate and contemptible manner. The state then arrested the printer and publisher on account of the vile language used and a case was opened. I was approached to provide expert evidence on the matter and accepted. I made it clear that although the texts in question were from the stated sources, it was the translations that brought them to disrepute. The simple example I stated was that while it was fine to call one's mother 'Mother' or 'Mom'. It would be disrespectful and insolent to call her 'my father's consort' even though this is accurate. While the texts may be translated in an appropriate manner, it was obvious that the publisher purposely distorted them to cause injury to the repute of the Hanafi Madh'hab.

I presented the argument in writing to the magistrate and also delivered a talk for an hour and a half. explaining the reason why the Fuqahaa had deliberated upon such rulings and why they had to. When Samrodi had no reply to offer, his lawyer told him that the only way out was to claim that he had not written the articles nor printed them or had them distributed. He then did this and the printers also did the same. As a result. the magistrate ruled that it could not be conclusively proven that Samrodi had written the pamphlets or that the printers in question had printed them. The pamphlets were however confiscated because they were unlawful.

Samrodi has since passed away but his successors continue to spread propaganda against the Hanafis. They print a pamphlet in the Jambosar District called Nidaa'e Haqq, every issue of which contains some defamatory content. They also publish a pamphlet every year about the twenty Rakaah Taraaweeh issue, which has already been answered and printed in book form. However, because of their relentless propaganda campaign, they have managed to convert many unsuspecting people to their ways. We pray to Allaah to save us from their evils and to grant us a good death. Aameen.

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