

He replies to another question in the following way:

Q: Ilm-43: Will the followers of a Madh'hab be labelled perpetrators of Bid'ah or not?

Answer: The followers of a Madh'hab will not be labelled perpetrators of Bid'ah because following the four Madhaahib is really following the inner and outer implications of the Ahadeeth. labelling a follower of the Ahadeeth as a perpetrator of Bid'ah is an act of a deviate.

Imaam Rabbaani Mujaddid Alf Thaani RAH. says' It may be said without prejudice that the Madh'hab of Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. appears to the mind of the inspired ones as a large ocean while the other Madhaahib appear like rivers and lakes. When looking at it in reality as well, one will notice that the majority of Muslims follow this Madh'hab, which, despite the large following, is unlike the other Madhaahib in its principles, derivatives and manner of extracting laws. It is most astonishing to note the degree to which Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. follows the Sunnah because he gives as much importance to Mursal Ahadeeth as he does to Musnad Ahadeeth and gives these preference over his personal deductions. Because of their companionship with Rasulullaah SAW., Imaam Abu Haneefah SAW. gives preference to the opinions of the Sahabah RADI. over his own, which the others do not do. Despite all of this, his adversaries still refer to him as a person who follows only his personal opinions. Apart from this, they also use other disrespectful terms for him even though all admit that he was exceptionally knowledgeable and extremely pious. May Allaah guide them to not reject this leader of Islaam and in this way to stop hurting the majority of Muslims.

Such people (Ghayr Muqallideen) wish to blow out the light of Allaah with Their mouths by labelling these great men (Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Imaam Maalik RAH. Imaam Shaafi'ee RAH. and Imaam Ahmad RAH. as men who followed the dictates of their personal opinions. By doing this, they are effectively saying that a large - in fact majority - of the Ummah are ignorant and are in fact also ignorant of their ignorance by following men who forsook the Qur'aan and the Sunnah to follow men who followed their opinions. These few incompetents have learnt a few Ahadeeth and think that all of the Shari'ah revolved upon their knowledge by refuting everything else about which they have no knowledge. They are like that little worm in a hole that sees its entire world in that little hole (thinking that the hole is the entire world). The worm has however yet to see the real world. Such people are only prejudiced and making futile attempts."

Hadhrat Shah Muhammad Hidaayat Ali RAH. states: "It is not necessary for a person to follow the Imaam if he has perfect knowledge of Tafseer, Hadith and Fiqh and he is also capable of Ijtihad, together with having knowledge of abrogated verses and Arabic terminologies. It is Waajib (compulsory) for anyone lacking in any of these fields to follow an Imaam. In fact, it is best even for the person proficient in these fields to follow an Imaam. It is strange to see that people who cannot even recite Arabic without the diacritical marks, let alone having any knowledge of Tafseer, Hadith and Fiqh choose not to follow the Imaams and regard following them to be Shirk. Such people do not have a clue about deriving laws from the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth and fail to realise that even people who were proficient in the fields of Tafseer, Hadith and Fiqh such as Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. and Shah Abdul Azeez Muhaddith

Dehlawi RAH. also choose to follow Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Can the people of today be more knowledgeable or more pious than them? Such people choose to follow ignoramuses rather than the great men and even though they hardly understand Urdu (let alone Arabic), they claim that they are people of the Ahadeeth (Ghayr Muqallideen). If you ask them from where they learnt the laws they practise, was it from the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth or from someone else, they will tell you that they heard it from a particular person. If this is not Taqleed, then what is it?

He also writes, "It is Waajib (compulsory) to follow the Imaams of Ijtihad because they possessed deep knowledge of Arabic, Tafseer, Hadith, Fiqh, principles of Fiqh, abrogated verses and Arabic terminologies. It is for this reason that Allaah issued the command. Ask people of knowledge if you do not know 'It is Waajib (compulsory) for anyone lacking in any of these fields to follow an Imaam. In fact, it is best even for the person proficient in these fields to follow an Imaam. Even people who were proficient in these fields such as Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. and Shah Abdul Azeez Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. Imaam Rabbaani Mujaddid Alf Thaani RAH. Mirza Mazhar Jaane Jaan RAH. Hadhrat Qaadhi Thanaa'ullaah Panipati RAH. and many others also chose to follow Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. Which person today can claim to be equal to even a tenth of these men and has the nerve to say (like Iblees did) 'I am better than he'? It is a tragedy of our times that people whose total knowledge is not even where the knowledge of the Imaams started speak ill of following of the Imaams and make people follow their incomplete analogies and deductions."

Hadhrat Allaama Abdul Haqq Haqqaani RAH. writes, If every person has to propose his opinion in such matters. there would be tremendous chaos. While the Sahabah RADI. asked Rasulullaah SAW. whatever they needed to know when new situations arose after the third century of Islaam, The Imaams documented the finer details of the Shari'ah as derived from the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth, Therefore, the entire Ummah has been following these documented laws since then until today. Anyone proposing anything other than this will have forsaken the path of the unanimous majority. The evil has started nowadays of criticising the Mujtahideen, especially Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. saying that he opposes the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth. This is grossly misleading because none of his statements oppose the Qur'aan or the Ahadeeth and those that these people regard as baseless are really not so because it is their fault for not being able to find the basis. Proof of his integrity is that Allaah had kept his Madh'hab alive for thousands of years and claiming that his Madh'hab is misleading is to claim that the Ummah had been misled for so long. which contradicts verses of the, Qur'aan and Ahadeeth that laud the virtues of the Ummah."

Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. writes. "Most of the people who claim to be people of the Ahadeeth concern themselves only with collecting chains of narrators and determining Ahadeeth which are Ghareeb or Shaadli from many that are either Mowdoo or Maqloob. They do not concern themselves with the words of the Hadith, do not understand the meanings of the Ahadeeth and cannot derive rulings from its depths. These people condemn the jurists and claim that they oppose the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth without realising that they can never attain the knowledge that Allaah had granted to the jurists. They are really sinful for making such statements."

MERELY KNOWING AHADEETH FROM MEMORY IS NOT SUFFICIENT FOR UNDERSTANDING THE LAWS OF THE SHARI'AH

Merely knowing Ahadeeth from memory and remaining fixed on the apparent meaning is not enough for understanding the rulings of the Shari'ah. It is of vital importance to understand Fiqh (jurisprudence), the principles of Fiqh and to have a deep understanding of Deen. Reaching the true reality of the rulings is impossible without all of this. Those people who are mulish about the apparent meanings of the Ahadeeth are known to issue rulings that are unacceptable. Here follows a few examples:

1. The famous book of Ahadeeth Kanzul Ummaal contains the following narration: Hadhrat Mujaahid says, "Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. was once performing salaah while Ataa, Tawoos and Ikramah and I, all his students, were sitting together. A man arrived and asked, 'Is there a Mufti amongst you?' 'Ask your question,' I said. He said, 'Every time I urinate, a spurting liquid follows the urine out.' 'Is it the type of liquid from which a child is born?' we asked. When he replied in the affirmative, we ruled that he should take a bath (each time it happened). The man then turned away saying, 'Innaa Lillaahi wa Innaa Ilayhi Raaji'oon'. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. hastened with his salaah and as soon as he made the Salaam, he said, 'Ikramah! Go bring that man back.' When Ikramah brought him back, Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. turned to us saying, 'Tell me whether the verdict you gave this man was sourced from the Book of Allaah? 'No,' we admitted. 'Then was it sourced from the Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW. he asked further. When we again conceded that it was not, he asked, 'Then was it from the Sahabah SAW. of Rasulullaah SAW. Again we said no. 'Then from who did you learn it?' he asked. 'We derived it from our own Judgement,' we replied. To this, he remarked, 'It is for this reason that Rasulullaah SAW. said, 'A single jurist is more difficult for Shaytaan to contend with than a thousand worshippers.' He then turned to the man and asked, 'Tell me. Do you feel any lust in your heart when this happens to you?' 'No, I do not,' the man replied. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. asked further, 'Then do you feel any weakness in your body (after it emerges)?' When the man again replied negatively, Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. said, 'This happens because of coldness (in the body), so wudhu would suffice for you (there is no need to bath)."

Research scholars have written that Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. realised that the students were fooled by the word 'spurting liquid', which refers to semen. They therefore ruled that a bath was necessary. Because they were not jurists, they failed to look at the reason that makes a bath necessary. Had they looked at the factors that make a bath necessary, they would have noticed that since none of the factors accompanying the discharge of semen were found, the discharge could not be semen and therefore, a bath would itself not be necessary. Now although Hadhrat Mujaahid RAH. Ataa RAH.. Tawoos RAH. and Ikramah RAH. were all Muhadditheen of the highest calibre (and the teachers of almost all the others), they were really not jurists because they failed to look for the inner reasons. Because true jurists are such a rarity, Rasulullaah SAW. lauded them by saying that a single jurist is more difficult for Shaytaan to contend with than a thousand worshippers', Shaytaan's objective is to make people do things that are against the Shari'ah and the worshipper does not have the time to delve into the reasons for various rulings. Even the Muhadditheen because of their involvement in screening narrators, verifying chains of narrators and in doing so many other things do not have this opportunity. It is the jurists who are specialists in their fields, who, together with keeping all the relevant verses of the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth in front of them, are able to understand what the intent of the Shari'ah is. The adage is well said that states, "There is a specialist for every field"

2. Allaama Ibn Jowzi RAH. relates that when some people heard that Rasulullaah SAW. forbade people from watering other people's fields, they said, "We seek Allaah's forgiveness because when we have excess water on our fields, we direct it to the fields of our neighbours " None of them realised that Rasulullaah SAW. was referring to a person having intercourse with pregnant slave women.

3. Allaama Khattabi RAH. reports that a Sheikh did not have his hair shaved before the Jumu'ah salaah for years because he heard the Hadith that Rasulullaah SAW. forbade this. However. Allaama Khattabi RAH. explained to him that the word in the Hadith was .HAQ (with a fatha on the laam) meaning 'forming groups' and not . (with a sukoon on the laam; meaning 'shaving the head'. The prohibition was therefore from forming discussion groups in the Masjid before the salaah because at this time, people ought to perform salaah and then listen attentively to the Khutbah.

4. A Muhaddith once heard the Hadith in which Rasulullaah SAW. forbade using living things as targets. He however misunderstood the word (RA, WAAW HAA) to be (RA,WAW,HAA) because of which he thought that Rasulullaah SAW. forbade

5. There was another Muhaddith who was in the habit of performing his Witr salaah only after cleaning himself in the toilet. When asked the reason, he said that he was following a Hadith in which Rasulullaah SAW. instructed people to perform Witr salaah only after cleaning themselves in the toilet. What he did not realise was that the word he understood as cleaning oneself in the toilet actually meant 'to do in odd numbers'. The Hadith therefore meant that when a person cleaned himself in the toilet, he ought to clean himself an odd number of times i.e. three, five or more times if necessary.

Rasulullaah SAW. said. "May Allaah keep fresh and healthy (in mind) the person who hears my words. remembers them and conveys them on. It often happens that the one to whom the words are passed on understands them better than the one conveying them."

6. Allaama Dawood Zaahiri RAH. whom the Ghayr Muqallideen look up to, once issued a fatwa that Rasulullaah SAW. only prohibited urinating in stagnant water because the water will become impure by this act. This he derived from the apparent words of a Hadith that states, "None of you should ever urinate in standing water." Therefore, according to his fatwa, if a person urinated in a container and then emptied it into water, the water would not become impure. He also said that if a person urinated next to water and the urine flowed into the water. the water will also not be impure because in all these cases, the person did not urinate in the stagnant water itself. After recording this fatwa, Imaam Nawawi RAH. states that this is the worst of scenarios in a situation when people are mulish about sticking to the apparent meanings of narrations.

7. Another Muhaddith whom the Ghayr Muqallideen look up to is Haafidh Ibn Hazam RAH. who was also a great Mut'assir and Mutakallim (expert on matters of belief). He claimed that a person could shorten his salaah regardless of the distance he travels, even in his locality. This he derived from the apparent meaning of the verse: 'When you travel on earth, there is no sin on you should you shorten your salaah a He was adamant about this ruling but failed to realise

that in such a situation, every person leaving for the Masjid for salaah will then need to perform Qasr salaah.

8. The Sheikhul Islaam and Muhaddith of the Ghayr Muqallideen Moulana Abdul Jaleel Samrodi wrote in one of his booklets that according to the Hanafi Madh'hab, a person's fast will not be nullified by intercourse, regardless of whether ejaculation took place or not. He also asserts that according to the Hanafis, it will not also be necessary to bath. All of this is contrary to the truth because he failed to understand the text of Durrul Mukhtaar (Vol.2 Pg.103). Now if he was unable to fathom the text of a book, how will he understand the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth. Furthermore, if this is the condition of the Sheikhul Islaam and Muhaddith of the Ghayr Muqallideen, what must be the condition of the rest of them?

An incident comes to mind about a Persian man who saw his friend being beaten up by a thug. He immediately went on to the scene and held his friend's hands, because of which the poor man was unable to defend himself. Taking advantage of the situation, the thug beat the man up most severely. When someone asked the foolish friend why he had done so, He replied, "Did you not read Sheikh Saadi's poem in which he says, 'When you see your friend in trouble, hold his hand. ?You fool!' the people cried. "The poem means that you ought to help him when he is in trouble and not to physically hold his hands."

The incident is similar to the one when Miza Mazhar Jaane Jaan RAH. asked his servant. "Bring the flask, but hold the belly when you bring it." By this he meant that the servant should not carry it by the neck because it could break off, but should carry it by the belly. Taking the instruction literally, the servant carried the flask in one hand and held his belly in the other hand. Because he was a sensitive man, Mazhar Jaane Jaan RAH. Immediately got a headache when he saw this.

This is what happens when statements are taken literally without any understanding and insight. This is exactly what the Ghayr Muqallideen of our times are doing when they memorise some Ahadeeth and lack the proper understanding and perception of its meaning. They then claim that they are Mujtahideen and go a step further to criticise the true Mujtahideen.

They fail to realise that opinions are of two types. The one is that which defies the clear instructions of Allaah. which was what Shaytaan presented when he said, "You have created me from fire and crested him (Hadrat Aadam ALY. from And". He therefore reasoned that he was netter than Hadrat Aadam ALY. and did not want to prostrate. This type of opinion and reasoning is wrong and worthy of condemnation.

The second type of opinion and reasoning is that which does not defy clear commands and is used to elucidate the meanings of the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth. This type of opinion and reasoning is commendable and it is this that happened to the Sahabah RADI. when Rasulullaah SAW. 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 was 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). They therefore did not perform their Asr salaah until they reached their destination. The first group

however employed their faculties of Ijtihad and performed their salaah en route. When this was reported to Rasulullaah SAW. he did not reprimand either party. The reasoning perform the first group did not conflict with the instruction, but was merely an explanation of the same. Allaama Ibn Qayyim RAH. stated that this first group was the group of Fuqahaa.

DEEN IS FOUNDED ON TWO FACTORS

Deen is founded (1) accurate narration (riwaayah) and (2) accurate interpretation (diraayah). It is therefore necessary for there to be a group of people who safeguard the words of the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth and then convey it to the Fuqahaa. This group is the Muhadditheen. The Fuqahaa who are well-versed in the principles and derivatives of Fiqh and who understand the intent of these narrations then explain the meanings to the Ummah.

Allaama Ibn Qayyim Jowzi RAH. whom the Ghayr Muqallideen hold in high esteem states, "There are two things that are conveyed. One is the words and the other is the meaning and intent. The Ulema of the Ummah are therefore classified into two groups. The first are the Huffaadh of the Ahadeeth, who have memorised the Ahadeeth and have classified them in to the categories of authentic and fabricated. These men are leaders of the Ummah, the vehicles of the Ummah who have protected the fortress of Islaam and safeguarded the rivers of the Shari'ah from contamination. The second group are the Fuqahaa of the Ummah who extract laws and issue rulings. They have been selected to document the issues of Halaal and Haraam they are like the stars in the sky by which lost people find the way and confusing questions are answered. People have always had a greater need for them and obeying them is more important than obeying one's own parents, as the Qur'aan mentions; "O you with Imaan! Obey Allaah, obey the Rasool SAW. and obey those with command amongst you (the Fuqahas).

A deep understanding of Allaah's Deen is a bounty that Allaah grants to few of His servants. Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Allaah grants a deep understanding of Deen to the one for whom Allaah intends good," verse of the Qur'aan states, "Allaah grants wisdom (s deep understanding of Allaah's Deen) to whomsoever He pleases and the one granted wisdom has indeed been given s tremendous amount of good."

The person granted a deep understanding of Allaah's Deen can truly guide other, assist them in the very intricate matters and save them from the traps of Shaytaan. It is for this reason that Rasulullaah SAW. said, "A single jurist is more difficult for Shaytaan to contend with than a thousand worshippers."

The Ghayr Muqallideen lack this deep understanding of the Deen and are therefore antagonistic towards Fiqh and Talaqquh (deep understanding of Deen). It is for this reason that their leader Moulana Abdul Jaleel Samrodi writes in his book Boo'e Ghilleen that there would never have been differences amongst the Ummah had it not been for Fiqh and the principles of Fiqh. He also says that people should shun all the books of Fiqh. Furthermore, he states that the Qur'aan and the Sunnah will spread only when some just ruler takes a stance like Hadhrat Um ar RADi. and digs a trench, fills it with all the books of Fiqh of the various Madhaahib and sets them alight. The adage stating that a man is an enemy to that about which he is ignorant is clearly demonstrated in this enmity the Ghayr Muqallideen have for Fiqh.

Fiqh and acquiring a deep understanding of Allaah's Deen has been lauded in several Ahadeeth. Rasulullaah SAW. said:

1. "Everything has a pillar and the pillar of this Deen is Fiqh."
2. "people are mines like gold and silver mines. The bets of them are they? who were the best during times of ignorance on condition that they? acquire a deep understanding of the Deen" '
3. "Allaah grants a deep understanding of Deen to the one for whom Allaah intends good."
4. Hadhrat Ali RADI. said, "The example of the Fuqahaa is like the hands (on the body)."
5. "A single sitting (lesson) of Fiqh is better than sixty years of Ibaadah."

The importance of having a deep understanding of the Deen can be assessed from the fact that Rasulullaah SAW. once made du'aa for Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. saying. "O Allaah! Grant him a deep understanding of the Deen and teach him the interpretation of the Qur'aan.

Understanding the Ahadeeth is the work of the Fuqahaa because people who merely narrate Ahadeeth often make serious mistakes and cause much trouble, as stated above.

In his famous compilation of Ahadeeth. Imaam Iuslim RAH. quotes that Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. Once said that when a Hadith is narrated to people who cannot understand it, it becomes a source of tribulation for them.

Imaam Tirmidhi states, "So have the Fuqahaa stated and it is them who know most about the Ahadeeth."

Imaam Sufyaan bin Uyaynah RAH.. was the teacher of both Imaam Bukhaari RAH. and Imaam Muslim RAH. said, All but the Fuqahaa can be led astray by the Ahadeeth". This means that when a person does not enjoy a deep understanding of the Deen, he is likely to interpret the Ahadeeth according to his own desires, thereby deviating far off the path of truth. The Shias, Rawaafidh, Khawaarij, Mu'tazilas, Qaadianis and so many other deviated groups have all used the Ahadeeth to substantiate their claims, but these were all interpreted according to their whims.

When Hadhrat Ali RADI. once asked Rasulullaah SAW. what he was to do if he could not find a clear command regarding any affair. Rasulullaah SAW. advised him saying, "Consult with the Fuqahaa and the ardent worshippers (the Awliyaa)."

The gist of it all is that the person who ventures without the guidance of the Fuqahaa will certainly go astray. It is because of this that the Ghayr Muqallideen err so greatly when it comes to matters of twenty Rakaahs Taraweeth and three divorces.

The Qur'aan also speaks of a deep understanding of the Deen when it states, why does a small group from every large party not proceed to attain a deep understanding of Deen so that they

may warn their people (who had been engaged in Jihaad) when they return to them so that they may beware (of sin)?

Hadhrat Abu Sa'eed Khudri RADI. reports that Rasulullaah SAW. said, "(O my Sahabah RADI. People shall follow you and men will come to you from the ends of the earth to attain a deep understanding of the Deen. When they come to you. you must be good to them."

It is strange to note that while Rasulullaah SAW. advised the Sahabah RADI. to be good to the people who come to them to attain a deep understanding of the Deen, yet the Ghayr Muqallideen delect such people and want their books to be burnt! Yet the Sahabah RADI. are the true Muhadditheen. It is therefore necessary for these Ghayr Muqallideen respect and have love for the Fuqahaa. We will present a few examples:

1. The famous Muhaddith Imaam A'mash RADI. was the teacher of great Muhadditheen iike Imaam Shu'ba RAH. Imaam Sufyaan bin Uyaynah RAH. and Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. However, when an intricate matter was brought before Imaam A'mash RAH. he did not at all hesitate to say, "Nu'maan bin Thaabit (Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH.) will be able to provide a good reply to this question because I think that his knowledge has certainly been blessed."
2. 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 Han 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.

While the pharmacists store the various medicines and know one from another, it is the doctors who know the uses of these medicines and how to administer them. Similarly, while the Muhadditheen store and classify the Ahadeeth, it is the Fuqahaa who extract the rulings from them.

3. Imaam Abu Yusuf RAH. reports that Imaam A'mash RAH. Once asked him a question and when he gave the reply, Imaam A'mash RAH. asked -him where he had derived the answer. "From a Hadith that you had narrated to me," Imaam Abu Yusuf RAH. replied' To this. Imaam A'mash RAH. remarked, "I had memorised this Hadith before your parents even got together but it is only today that I have understood it properly.

Even more prominent than Imaam A'mash RAH. was Imaam Aamir Sha'bi RADI. who was a Taabi'ee who had met five hundred Sahabah RADI. He said, "We (the Muhadditheen) are not Fuqahaa. We merely listen to the Ahadeeth and relate them to the Fuqahaa.

Such was the reverence that the Muhadditheen had for the Fuqahaa that they admitted their virtue without pretence and referred to them when the need arose. However, as for our'people

of the Hadith? (Ghayr Muqallideen) who have no insight and can read only the translations of Mishkaatul Masaabeeh, Mu'atta and other books, they accuse the Fuqahaa of acting against the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and regard themselves as more learned and qualified than the Fuqahaa.

Even the leaders of the Ghayr Muqallideen admit to the prejudice and ignorance of their people. Their Qaadhi Abdul Wahhaab Khanpuri writes in his book *At Towheed was Sunnah fi Raddi Ahliil Ilhaad wal Bid'ah*, "As for the little Ahle Hadith people who perpetrate acts of Bid'ah, who oppose the pious predecessors and who are really ignorant of what Rasulullaah SAW. brought, they are fast becoming the unpaid successors and heirs of the Shias and Rawaafidh. Just as the Shias, Mulaahidah and Zanaadiqah became doorsteps and accessories for the Munaafiqeen, the same is becoming of these people (the Ghayr Muqallideen) .

The famous Ahle Hadith Moulana Waheeduz Zamaan writesd, "While the Ahle Hadith declare that it is Haraam to follow Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and Imaam Shaaft'ee RAH. they blindly follow Ibn Taymiyyah RAH.,ibn Qayyim RAH. Showkaani RAH. and Nawaab Siddeeq Hasan Khan."

Rather than following the dictates of their passions, it is best for our Ghayr Muqallideen brother to follow the Imaams.

(1) The Status and Proof of Taqleed

(2) Taqleed of Specific people

(3) Answers to Obiections Against Taqleed

The central claim of Islaam is that only Allaah must be obeyed. In fact, it is Waajib (compulsory) to follow Rasulullaah SAW. because his words and deeds were a rendering of Allaah's commands. Rasulullaah SAW. made clear what was forbidden and not forbidden and we obey him because he conveyed the message of Allaah. This essentially means that obeying Rasulullaah SAW. is really obeying Allaah. Allaah declares in the Qur'aan, "Whoever obeys the Rusool SAW. obeys Allaah."

Therefore, Muslims follow only Allaah and His Rasool SAW. and whoever claims that he should be followed independently of Allaah and Rasulullaah SAW. then such a person will be deemed despicable and worthy of condemnation. The two guides to follow are therefore the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth.

There are certain laws in the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth that can clearly be established from the verses of the Qur'aan and authentic Ahadeeth. These are called Mansoos laws. Then there are others that are not very clear or are very brief. There are also Ahadeeth and verses of the Qur'aan that are ambiguous, some that are Muhkam and others that are Mutashaabih. There are also those that are Mushtarak and those that are Mu'awwal . Furthermore, there are also those that seem to contradict other verses or Ahadeeth.

An example is a verse of the Qur'aan that states that a divorcee should remain in Iddah for three 'Quroo'. Now because the word Quroo means menstruation as well as the state of purity, some confusion may arise about whether a divorcee should wait in Iddah for three periods of menstruation to pass or for three periods of purity to pass.

Another example is a Hadith that states: "When a person has an Imaam then the Qiraa'ah of his Imaam is his Qiraa'ah as well." There is also another Hadith that states: "The Imaam has been appointed to be followed, so say the Takbeer when he says it and remain silent when he does." Now contrary to these Ahadeeth is a Hadith that states: "There is no salaah for the one who does not recite the opening of the Qur'aan (Surah Faatiha)." Like these, there are many Ahadeeth that appear to contradict each other.

There are also countless rulings that are not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth and which require deep thought and analysis. To arrive at a conclusion in such matters, one may resort to two avenues. One may either base the finding purely on one's personal judgement or, alternatively, one may search for a statement that the Sahabah RADI. Taabi'een or those after them made on the same issue. By virtue of them being closer to the period of Rasulullaah SAW. such people have been lauded in a Hadith in which Rasulullaah SAW. said, "The best of periods is my period, followed by those after them and then those after them." They were therefore more knowledgeable, more spiritually pure and had a deeper insight into the Deen than us.

The matter is simple to understand in the context of our worldly activities. When faced with any health issue, people refer to medical specialists, when faced with a legal issue, people consult lawyers and when faced with a construction issue, they refer to an engineer. Just as people refer to specialists when faced with a relevant issue in worldly matters, so too do they need to refer to and rely on the statements of the Mujtahideen when the issue is a Deeni one. This is what is referred to as Taqleed.

The person practicing Taqleed understands that by following the Imaam, he is actually following Allaah and Rasulullaah SAW. The Imaam is merely a link in the connection to the Qur'aan and Sunnah. The example is simple. Just as worshippers follow an Imaam in salaah as they hear him call out the Takbeers, when there are too many worshippers, a Mukabbir is appointed to transmit the Takbeers further for the people at the back to hear. The Mukabbir is however still following the Imaam and is not doing anything out of his own accord. At the same time, the people at the back know that they are following the Imaam and not the Mukabbir. The Mukabbir himself also understands that he is not the Imaam and is part of the congregation like the others. Similarly, the Imaam of jurisprudence also understands that he is merely a link and that he is following the Qur'aan and Sunnah just like everyone else.

The gist of it all is that when one is not relying on the Imaam to interpret the intricacies of the Deen, he resorts to following his own whims and passions. This is because such a person does not know which verses or Ahadeeth abrogated which others and also which rulings are preferred to which others. At the end, he will be doing only what his fancies dictate. At this point, Shaytaan seizes control over a person's heart and permeates his body. The Qur'aan depicts such a person in the worst manner, when it says: "but he clung to the ground (the material gains

of this world) and followed his passions. His example is like that of a dog."

Allaah also says , "Have you seen the one who has taken his whims as allaah (who follows the dictates of his desires); whom Allaah has allowed to stray despite (posses sing) knowledge (of the truth) ; whose (spiritual) ears and heart Allaah has sealed and on whose (spiritual) eyes Allaah hos cost a veil.

Yet another verse states: "can the one who is upon a clear proof from his Rabb be like the one whose evil acts have been beautified for him and who follows his whims There can be no doubt about the fact that the first is better than the latter.

Following the dictates of one's passions is so bad that even Rasulullaah SAW. was cautioned about it in the Qur'aan. Allaah says' "Do not obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who pursues his passions and whose (every) affair entails transgressing (the laws of Allaah).

Allaah also says, "should you now follow their wishes after knowledge (revelation) has come to you, then surely you would be among the unjust ones." Another verse states, "and do not follow their wishes, leaving aside the truth that has come to You.

Yet another verse says, "And (O Muhammad SAW.) you should Judge between them by that which Allaah has revealed to you and do not follow their whims. Beware of them lest they should divert you (be careful that they do not turn you away) from some part of what Allaah has revealed to You.

Allaah says, "Then (after all these nations had passed on) We placed you (o Rasulullaah SAW.) on s special way (the shari'ah of Islaam), so follow it (by practising and propagating it) and do not follow the whims of those who have no knowledge.

Although addressed to Rasulullaah SAW. the Qur'aan is cautioning all of the Ummah against following the dictates of their Nafs when He says, "and do not follow carnal passions which with mislead you from Allaah's path."

In another verse, Allaah says that those who do not follow Rasulullaah SAW. are actually following their whims and are the most deviated of people. Allaah also says , "Who can be more unjust (misguided) than the one who follows his whims without any guidance from Allaah?

While the Ghayr Muqallideen follow their Nafs, by the grace of Allaah who follow the Imaams are safely following the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. While we refer to the statements and deeds of the Sahabah RADI. And pious predecessors when faced with a unique situation, the Ghayr Muqallideen decide on the grounds of their personal fancies because they have no knowledge of Ijtihad, of the abrogated laws and other details of jurisprudence.

Rasulullaah SAW. said, "None of you can have true Imaan until his desires are subservient to what I have brought.

Rasulullaah SAW. also said, "There shall come a time when there will be people in whose bodies desires and passions will flow just as no vein or sinew of a person is left unaffected when a person is bitten by a rabid dog.

Two factors come to the fore when analysing the above Hadith. The first is that the rabies germ penetrates every area of the person's body, leading to his eventual death. Secondly, if this diseased person has to bite a healthy person, the healthy person will also become ill. Such is the condition of a person who follows the dictates of his Nafs. While he is a danger to himself, he also poses a threat to those in his company.

Desires and carnal passions are the walls surrounding Jahannam and whoever indulges in them is actually heading for Jahannam. It is for this reason that Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Jannah is surrounded by hardships and Jahannam is surrounded by carnal passions. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. once said to the people, "Today you people are in a time when desires are subservient to knowledge (of Deen) whereas 'a time shall come when knowledge will be subservient to desires."

The famous Sheikh Abu Umar Zujaaji RAH. (student of Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi RAH. said, "People during the Period of Ignorance followed that which their minds and disposition approved of. Rasulullaah SAW. then came and reformed them to the Shari'ah and obedience. The sound mind is therefore that mind which approves of that which the Shari'ah approves of and which disapproves of that which the Shari'ah disapproves of.

Imaam Shaatbi RAH. said, "The Shari'ah is there to remove people from the dictates of their whims."

Hadhrat Abdul Qadir Jaylaani RAH. said, "Shirk does not entail only worshipping idols, but it is also when you follow the dictates of your Nafs." This, he mentioned while explaining the verse: "Have you seen the one who has taken his whims as his Ilaah (who follows the dictates of his desires)"

Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. wrote: "Remember that it is the natural inclination of the Nafs to follow its carnal passions and will always do this unless the light of Imaan enters it."

Hadhrat Dhun Noon Misri RAH. said that people will fall prey to corruption for the following six reasons:

1. Weakness of intention with regard to the acts of the Aakhirah
2. When their bodies become an instrument for fulfilling their desires
3. When long hopes overcome them despite their short lives
4. When they prefer to please the creation rather than the Creator
5. When they follow the dictates of their Nafs rather than the Sunnah of their Nabi SAW.

6. When they make the errors of their predecessors a proof for their errant ways and forsake the virtuous deeds of these predecessors.

In short, it must be emphasised that following the dictates of the Nafs has been condemned by the Qur'aan, the Ahadeeth and the Ulema. The best course for people's safety is to follow the rightly guided Imaams and to rely on their guidelines. Following any of the four Imaams is a haven of safety for any Muslim.

Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. writes: "One ought to know that there is immense benefit in following the four Madhaahib and tremendous harm in turning away from them. In the same book, he writes further, "The second reason for following a Madh'hob is that Rasulullaah SAW. said, 'Follow the broader consensus of people'. 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.

Therefore, if one wishes to remain safe from the curses associated with following ones desires, one should follow one of the four Madhaahib, especially in these times when tribulations are so great and about which Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Then (after the best of periods) lying will be most rife."

Sound thinking will tell one that Taqleed is really natural and is attached to people like their shadows. Even our Ghayr Muqallideen brothers are not exempt from this because the children in their homes follow and imitate what their elders do. Their womenfolk are not Muhadditheen and also have to ask their men to find out what they need to be doing. Do they regard this form of following also to be Shirk and Bid'ah? In fact, the various trades and professions of this world also require Taqleed. If a person merely studies medicine without training under anyone and then opens a surgery, it will only be a madman who would consult him.

Now the adage is famous that says "While a fake doctor is a threat to the health, a fake Aalim is a threat to the Imaan." Since people feel the need for Taqleed in worldly matters, it is even more necessary for it to be a requirement when Deeni matters are concerned. Here we have a few people who study a bit of the translations of the classical works and then think that they are experts in the field of Qur'aan and Ahadeeth. They go a step further and criticise the Mujtahideen and declare Taqleed to be Shirk and a Bid'ah, while regarding their following of their Nafs as Towheed.

TAQLEED AS PROVEN IN THE QUR'AAN AND AHADEETH

Let alone the permissibility of Taqleed, the Qur'aan and Ahadeeth actually emphasise that it is Waajib (compulsory). Here follow a few verses of the Qur'aan:

1. "Ask those who know if you do not now."

2. "Those are the ones whom Allaah had guided, so follow in their guidance." While this verse commands following the previous Ambiyaa SAW. another verse states,

"Follow the creed of Ibraheem ALY. Who? was on the straight path and averse to all wrong ways."

3. "O you with Imaan! Obey Allaah, obey the Rasool SAW. and obey? those with command amongst you."

4. "Had they referred it to the Rasool. SAW. and to those in command amongst them, then surely those with insight would have been able to verify the matter."

5. "Why does a small group from every large party not proceed to attain a deep understanding of Deen so that they may warn their people (who had been engaged in Jihaad) when they return to them so that they may beware (of sin)?"

6. "From them We made leaders who guided under Our command when they exercised sabr and were convinced about (the truth of) Our Aayaat.

7. "Follow the path of the one who turns towards me."

8. "O you who have Imaan! Fear Allaah and be with those who are true."

Here follows a few Ahadeeth on the subject:

1. Hadhrat Hudhayfah RADI. reports that Rasulullaah SAW. said "I do not know for how much

longer I shall be with you, so (after I die). follow the two after me. Abu Bakr and Umar.

2. Rasulullaah SAW. said, "You must hold fast to my way of life and the ways of life of the righteous and rightly guided Khulafaa .

3. Rasulullaah SAW. said. "My Sahabah RADI. are like guiding lights and whichever of them you follow, you shall be rightly guided.

4. Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal RADI. reports that when Rasulullaah SAW. sent him to Yemen, Rasulullaah SAW. asked. "How will you pass Judgement when a case comes before you?" Hadhrat Mu'aadh RADI. replied. "I shall pass judgement according to the Book of Allaah,?" Rasulullaah SAW. asked, "And of you do not find the ruling in the Book of Allaah?" Hadhrat Mu'aadh RADI. replied, "I shall then pass judgement according to the Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW. Rasulullaah SAW. asked. "And of you do not find the ruling in the Sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW. Hadhrat Mu'aadh RADI. replied, "I shall then apply my mind Without making compromises."

Rasulullaah SAW. then placed his hand on Hadhrat Mu'aadh ?RADI.'s chest and said, "All praise belongs to Allaah Who has inspired the messenger of the messenger of Allaah with that which pleases him."

The following becomes evident from this narration of Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal RADI.

> There are many rulings that are not apparent in the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth

> Applying one's mind to those rulings that are not clearly stated in the Qur'aan and the Ahadeeth is commendable and pleases Allaah and Rasulullaah SAW.

> Applying one's mind to a question of Deen is a bounty from Allaah that Rasulullaah SAW. praised Allaah for. The fact that Rasulullaah SAW. placed his hand on the chest of Hadhrat

Mu'aadh bin Jabal RADI. shows that the blessings of Rasulullaah SAW. are with the Faqih and Mujtahid.

> Rasulullaah SAW. had sent Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal RADI. To Yemen to be the judge there and knew that the people of Yemen would refer their matters to him and would be following what he told them. They would therefore be making Taqleed of him. Close inspection of the above Hadith will reveal the reality and proof for Taqleed.

5. Rasuliullaah SAW. also said, "The Ulema are the heirs of the Ambiyaa ALY. Therefore, just as it is Fardh (obligatory) to follow the Ambiyaa ALY. so too is it to follow the Ulema. The legacy of the Ambiyaa ALY. their knowledge and since the Ulema also have this knowledge of the Shari'ah, it is necessary to follow them as well.

6. Rasulullaah SAW. also said, "It was their Ambiyaa ALY. who led and ruled over the Bani Israa'eel. Each time a Nabi ALY. passed away another succeeded him.

Remember that there shall be no Nabi after me, but there shall be Khulafaa and there shall be many of them (follow them as you had been following me).

The above Ahadeeth and verses of the Qur'aan prove the importance of Taqleed. Taqleed is of two types. The first type is not to follow any particular Imaam, but to choose to follow one Imaam in certain matters and another in other matters. This is called Taqleed Mutlaq. The other form of Taqleed is to follow a specific Imaam in all matters. This is called Taqleed Shakhsi. Both types of Taqleed were common during the time of the Sahabah RADI. And the Taabi'een. Those Sahabah RADI. who were not Fuqahaa followed the ruling of those who were regarded to be Fuqahaa. Whenever someone asked a ruling from the Fuqahaa, they replied sometimes with proof and sometimes without, and in all cases, the questioner practised what he was told. Never did the questioner ever ask the proof if it was not provided.

Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. says that the custom from the time of the Sahabah RADI. up to the time of the four Imaams was to follow a reliable Faqih and no one questioned this custom. Had it been something questionable, the great Sahabah RADI. and Taabi'een of the time would have certainly questioned it. Taqleed Shakhsi was also commonly practised because we see that the people of Makkah always referred to Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas

RADI. when there arose a difference in any ruling and they followed his ruling in the matter. Similarly, the people of Madinah referred to Hadhrat Zaid bin Thaabit RADI. and the people of Kufa referred to Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood ' RADI.

1. When people once asked Hadhrat Abu Moosa Ash'ari RADI. About something, he gave them a reply that turned out to be contrary to that which Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. gave. When Hadhrat Abu Moosa Ash'ari RADI. heard about this contradiction, he told the people, "Do not ask these rulings from me as long as that man of deep knowledge (Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI.) is with you.

2. A narration from Hadhrat Ikrama RADI. in Bukhaari states that when some people of Madinah asked Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. about the ruling concerning a woman who started to menstruate after performing her Fardh Tawaaf (could she return home without performing the Tawaaf Widaa?). When Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. Ruled that she may return home, they said, "We cannot accept your verdict and discard the verdict of Zaid bin Thaabit RADI. This narration makes it clear that they practised Taqleed Shakhsi in following Hadhrat Zaid bin Thaabit RADI. When he heard this, Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. neither reprimanded them, nor said that what they were doing was shirk or a Bid'ah. This he would have done if such a form of Taqleed was not Permissible.

3. Although Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas RADI. was himself a Mujtahid, he always maintained that it was no necessary to follow the verdict of anyone ultu ut long as Hadhrat Ali RADI. was alive

4. It is mentioned that as long as Hadhrat Saalim bin Abdullaah RADI. lived, Imaam Naafi RAH. never issued Fataawaa. This makes it apparent that during the time of Imaam Naafi RAH. people followed only Hadhrat Saalim RAH.

5. The previously quoted narration of Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal RADI. being sent to Yemen proves both Ijtihad as well as Taqleed Shakhsi because by allowing Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal RADI. to apply his mind to matters, Rasulullaah SAW. was making it compulsory for the people of Yemen to follow only Hadhrat Mu'aadh since he was the only one sent to them as judge and religious instructor.

6. It is common knowledge that there were seven great Fuqahaa who were followed during the period of the Taabi'een.

All the above clearly illustrates that both forms of Taqleed were well practised during the time of the Sahabah RADI. and the Taabi'een. It must be remembered that these were the best of times according to Rasulullaah RADI. It was time when people were overcome with Taqwa and religiousness and because people always took the more cautious of any two opinions, they comfortably practised Taqleed Mutlaq as well as Taqleed Shakhsi. However, as the times moves away from the blessed period of Rasulullaah SAW. piety and scrupulousness deteriorated and people started to become overwhelmed with worldly matters, the Ulema whose fingers were always on the pulse of the Ummah restricted Taqleed to Taqleed Shakhsi.

The Ulema all started to support this move and eventually the Ummah stood unanimously upon this because without such Taqleed, the laws of the Shari'ah would be a toy in the hands of every person and would be manipulated to conform to their desires.

In one of his works, Hadhrat Shah Wali'ullaah RAH. says, "It was during the second century of Islaam that following a particular Mujtahid became common and there was scarcely anyone who did not do so. This was compulsory.

Hakeemul Ummah Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi RAH. writes that it is really permissible to follow various people and ask something from each of them to follow.

In fact, the pious predecessors did ask certain rulings from Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and other rulings from Imaam Awzaa'ee RAH. and others. Today's people now wish to also do the same. While this is in itself permissible, it is forbidden because of another factor. However, before understanding this, first understand the following introduction. What needs to be understood is that the overwhelming and prevailing condition of people should be noted. The distinct difference between the people of that period and of today's times is that the people of those times were overwhelmed by piety and religiousness. Therefore, if they asked several Mujtahiddeen, it was really coincidental or because they wished to follow the most cautious of opinions. Now if the same state of religiousness prevailed today. It would not be necessary to restrict Taqleed to the following of only one person. But this is not the case today and how would such a state remain until today? Rasulullaah SAW. explicitly mentioned that after the best of times, lying and dishonesty would become widespread and the condition of people would be much worse.

Such is the situation today when people worship their desires and every person includes his motives in his opinions. Allaama Shaami RAH. Reports an incident of a Faqih who wished to marry the daughter of a certain Muhaddith. The Muhaddith however stipulated that he would allow the marriage only if the Faqih conformed to the practices of 'Raf'ul Yadain' and 'Aameen bil Jahar'. The Faqih accepted and the couple were married. When the incident was mentioned to a saint of the time, he lowered his head and after a while said, "I fear for his Imaan because he compromised what he was doing as a Sunnah for worldly gain.

If people are allowed to practise Taqieed Mutlaq, they would do so for their own ends, For example, if a person with wudhu started to bleed, he would maintain that his wudhu is not broken in accordance with the view of Imaam Shaafi'ee RAH. If he later happened to touch a woman, he would then say that his wudhu is till not broken because wudhu does not break in this way according to Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. In such a situation, he neither has wudhu according to Imaam Shaafi'ee RAH. as well as according to Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. even though he will be adamant that his wudhu is intact. People will therefore search for a ruling that appeases their whims and reject whatever does not. Deen will therefore be non-existent and all that will remain will be whimsical fancies.

Therefore, although Taqleed Shakhsi was not necessary during the best of times, it is necessary nowadays because of the difference of the people. Although it will not be said that Taqleed Shakhsi is Waajib (compulsory) or Fardh (obligatory), it must be noted that it secures the welfare of a person's Deen and without it, his Deen will be destroyed. Therefore, together with such Taqleed securing the safety of one's Imaan, it also makes life much easier.

Even Allaama Ibn Taymiyyah RAH. stressed the importance of Taqleed Shakhsi when he wrote, "According to their whims, these people sometimes follow an Imaam who permits a marriage and then follow another Imaam who disallows it. Such a practice is not at all permissible.

The Ghayr Muqallidden profess to follow Sheikh Abdul Wahhaab Najdi, but are really stepping ahead of him because even he professes to follow an Imaam. He writes, "By the grace of Allaah, we follow our pious predecessors and are not perpetrators of Bid'ah. We follow the Madh'hab of Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal RAH.

In another book, he writes. "I praise Allaah for being a follower of the pious predecessors and for not being a perpetrator of Bid'ah. My beliefs and Deen are those that conform with the Deen of Allaah. They are those of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah and the four Imaams and their

followers.

Explaining the stance of his father and himself, Sheikh Abdullaah who was the son of Sheikh Abdul Wahhaab Najdi writes, "We follow the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah in the principles of Deen, we follow the ways of the pious predecessors and follow Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal RAH. in the derivatives of Deen. We also do not condemn any person following any of the other three Imaams."

The above clearly spells out the stance of both Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhaab and Allaama Ibn Taymiyyah RAH. both of whom are revered, by our Ghayr Muqallidden brothers. They both regarded Taqleed to be necessary and did not at all refer to it as Shirk or a Bid'ah. However, our Ghayr Muqallidden brothers make no secret of their stance when they say in their book Fiqh Muhammadil , "Millions of thanks to Allaah for saving us from the Shirk of following a Madh'hab and being either Hanafis, Shaafi'ees, Maaliki or Hambalis. So many people are trapped in this whereas opposing the commands of Allaah and His Rasool SAW. is Shirk according to a verse stating that people take their priests and religious leaders as gods apart from Allaah. The Hadith of Hadhrat Adi bin Haatim RADI. also professes the same." The verse referred to by the author of the above book deduces that Taqleed is Shirk by virtue of the quoted verse of the Qur'aan. The verse however refers to the Jews and Christians who would listen to their priests and Rabbis when these men made lawful that which their religions clearly forbade and which they always knew was unlawful. Hadhrat Adi bin Haatim RADI. Then asked Rasulullaah SAW. what the Qur'aan meant by saying that the Jews and Christians took their religious leaders as gods whereas they never worshipped them. Rasulullaah SAW. explained, "Although they never worshipped them, they regarded something as lawful if these leaders legalised them and regarded things as unlawful when they outlawed them."

The clear difference between Taqleed and the ways of the Jews and the Christians is that Muslims do not regard the Imaams as the law-makers of the Shari'ah as the Jews and Christians did, but as conveyers of the commands of Allaah, as has been already explained. The verse of the Qur'aan therefore has no bearing on Taqleed as we define it.

Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. sums it up as follows: "While the original command is from Allaah, the ruling of something being Halaal or Haraam is attributed to Rasulullaah SAW. because his words are a sure indication of the command. They are further attributed to the Mujtahideen of the Ummah because they are reporting from Rasulullaah SAW. or deriving the rulings from what he said."

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