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هل المسلم ملزم باتباع مذهب معين؟

# SHOULD A MUSLIM FOLLOW A PARTICULAR MADHHAB?

By  
Sheikh Muhammad Sultan  
Al-Ma'soomi Al-Khajnadee



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## Reality of Islam and *Imân* (Faith)

Not only ignorant and illiterate people but also many scholars, who imagine themselves very well informed, are of the opinion that every Muslim must follow an *Imam*. A Muslim must follow either Imam Abu Hanifah or Imam Shafe'i or Imam Mâlik or Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal. This is not only a mistaken idea but it is also an attestation of people's ignorance and unawareness of the basic knowledge of Islam.

In *Sahih ul-Bukhâri* and *Sahih Muslim* there is a *Hadith* in which Jibrael appears before Allâh's Messenger ﷺ, and asked about Islam saying: "What is Islam"? Allâh's Messenger ﷺ said:

إِنَّ جِبْرِئِيلَ - عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ - سَأَلَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ فِي جَوَابِهِ: «أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَتُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةَ وَتُؤْتِيَ الزَّكَاةَ وَتَصُومَ رَمَضَانَ وَتَحُجَّ الْبَيْتَ إِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا. قَالَ: مَا الْإِيمَانُ؟ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: «أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدْرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ. قَالَ السَّائِلُ: مَا الْإِحْسَانُ؟ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: «الْإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ».

"Islam is to testify that there is no God to be worshipped but Allâh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh, to perform the prayers, to pay the *Zakât*, to fast in Ramadan, and to make the pilgrimage to the House (the Ka'bah in Makkah) if you are able to do so." He (Jibrael عليه السلام) said: "What is *Iman* (belief)?" He ﷺ said: "It is to believe in Allâh, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, and to believe in destiny— both the good and the evil thereof." He (Jibrael عليه السلام) said: "What is *Ihsan*?" He ﷺ said: "It is to worship Allâh as though you

are seeing Him, and while you see Him not yet truly, He sees you." (*Muslim*)

Imam Bukhâri and Muslim also related on the authority of 'Abdullah bin 'Umar رضى الله عنهما. Allâh's Messenger ﷺ said:

إِنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ قَالَ: يُنْبِئُ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسِ شَهَادَةٍ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ وَحُجَّ الْبَيْتِ لِمَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا.

"Islam is built on five pillars: Testifying that there is no god but Allâh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh, performing prayers, paying the *Zakât*, fasting in the month of Ramadan and making pilgrimage (*Hajj*) to the House (the Ka'bah in Makkah), if you are able to do so."

Imam Muslim on the authority of Abu Huraira رضي الله عنه reported; A bedouin came to Allâh's Messenger ﷺ and said:

يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! دُلَّنِي عَلَى عَمَلٍ إِذَا عَمِلْتُهُ دَخَلْتُ الْجَنَّةَ؟ قَالَ: «تَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ لَا تُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا. وَتُقِيمُ الصَّلَاةَ الْمَكْتُوبَةَ. وَتُؤَدِّي الزَّكَاةَ الْمَقْرُوضَةَ. وَتَصُومُ رَمَضَانَ» قَالَ: وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ! لَا أَزِيدُ عَلَى هَذَا شَيْئًا أَبَدًا، وَلَا أَنْقُصُ مِنْهُ. فَلَمَّا وَلَّى، قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: «مَنْ سَرَّهُ أَنْ يَنْظُرَ إِلَى رَجُلٍ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ، فَلْيَنْظُرْ إِلَيَّ هَذَا».

"O Allâh's Messenger ﷺ, direct me to a deed by which I may be entitled to enter Paradise.' Upon this he ﷺ said: 'You testify that there is no god to be worshipped but Allâh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh, perform the obligatory prayers, and pay the *Zakât* and observe the fast of Ramadan.' He (the bedouin) said: 'By Him in whose hand is my life, I will never add anything to it, neither will I neglect anything of it.' He ﷺ said: "If what the bedouin is saying true, he is successful."

## Following Certain *Madhhab*

Different *Madhahib* are personal and private opinions, judgments and interpretations of legal points according to religious scholars and jurists. Allâh and the Prophet ﷺ have not ordered us to follow these opinions and interpretations. There is a possibility of being correct or incorrect in their opinions and interpretations. There are many issues on which Imams had different views and they explained them according to their own reasons and speculations. But when the truth came to their knowledge, they reconsidered their own opinion and accepted the truth. They never stuck to their opinion when a true *Hadith* came to their knowledge.

If anyone accepts Islam, he has only to testify that there is no god but Allâh and Muhammad ﷺ is His Messenger, to perform the prayers five times a day, to pay *Zakât*, to fast in the month of Ramadan and to make the pilgrimage to the House of Allâh (the Ka'bah) if he is able to do so. It is certainly not necessary for him to follow any *Madhhab*, i.e. *Hanafi*, *Shâfi'i*, *Mâliki* or *Hanbali*. If he does so, in the eyes of Islamic law, he will be considered a wrongdoer, prejudiced and sinful person, and will be treated among those who divided the religion of Islam into different sects. Allâh has strongly condemned those who create dissension in Islam. The Qur'ân says:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا لَسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ﴾

“Verily, those who divide their religion and break up into sects, you (O Muhammad ﷺ) have no concern in them in the least... .” (6:159)

On another place the Qur'ân says:

﴿وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝ مِنَ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا ۚ كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ﴾

“And be not of *Al-Mushrikûn* of those who split up their religion and became sects, each sect rejoicing in that which is with it.” (30:31,32)

In the light of the above quoted verses from the Noble Qur'ân it is clear that there is no place for different *Madhahib* and sects in Islam and it is not obligatory to follow anyone of these *Madhahib* or sects. What is worth following is the way of the Prophet ﷺ, as stated in the Noble Qur'ân:

﴿قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾

“Say you (O Muhammad ﷺ): This is my way; I invite unto Allâh with sure knowledge — I and whosoever follows me. And I am not of those who set up partners to Allâh.” (12:108)

It is a fact that the followers of different *Madhahib* are always at odds with each other and the result of this confrontation is clearly stated in the Noble Qur'ân:

﴿وَلَا تَنزَعُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَيُكْفَرُوا بِكُمْ وَاصْبِرُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾

“And do not dispute lest you lose courage and your strength depart, and be patient. Surely, Allâh is with those who are patient.” (8:46)

On the contrary it has been advised to create the atmosphere of unity among themselves and to hold fast the rope of Allâh as prescribed in the Noble Qur'ân:

﴿وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۗ﴾

“And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allâh and be not divided among yourselves.” (3:103)