

44. Rise of a Question

The writer raises a question as to when and how the representation of the Imam (Mahdi) is vested to the jurists indirectly and with full distinctions. How has he come to such an interpretation?

A simple thing becomes complicated because of the reasoning the writer has resorted to. The link of the defeat of the Ulama (clergy) against the governments of the Buyids, Safavids, and the Qajars is connected here.

The issue of the jurists being the oracles for the people in the times of Ghaybat, short or long comes into the light from two dimensions. The vital importance goes to the establishment of a link with the Imam by any means if not direct.

One: God's commands are to be understood so as to be acted upon. If in the time of the Prophet (S) or any of the Imams a man could not reach any of them he would then go to a clergy so as to ask his questions and learn what he has sought out to learn. This is a reasonable solution. Therefore it is only reasonable that during Imam Mahdi's occultation the same would happen.

The question that has been brought up as to what period the jurists actually became oracles for the people are not a sensible one. In the days of the Prophet (S) or the Imams or in the days of Ghaybat anyone who had a high knowledge on religious issues stood as an authority to be referred to. It was not limited to a certain time or place. Knowledge cannot be limited to a time or space. One who has a thorough knowledge of a subject stands as a guide whenever referred to and by whosoever.

Two; an oracle is an administrator of a society or a leader of a society, because he meddles in disputes, solves their problems, gives opinion in their differences and judges their quarrels and attends their various difficulties. In such a dimension, the jurists before the time of Imam Hasan Askari (as) had an active part. It was obligatory for the people to contact them. For a jurist the government of the Imam is valid. A jurist is in his place a representative of the Imam. This is an issue purely of jurisprudence.

The guardianship of a jurist is a second grade authority which descends from the absolute

authority of the Imam. In this regard there is no general agreement among the scholars. Some consider the guardianship of the Ullama (clergy) not fixed because they do not think that there is enough proof. Is'haq Bin Yaqob says that the uncertainty could run into events, as well as certain things which could not be determined.

The deputies of the Imam had a general responsibility. They had no intention to collect money. The writer is accusing a group of good people without feeling the least moral responsibility.

The guardianship of the jurisprudents is absolutely necessary. Whether some believe it or not, their being representatives of the Imam they all agree that on some matters no one other than a jurisprudent can have guardianship. To command the people towards virtue, to restrict the people from evil is the responsibility of a jurisprudent.

But the actions of a jurisprudent are regarded as final and to be honored. The governments and their power or authority over the people is a thing religiously illegal. Therefore, the governments are regarded as tyrants. In this description all governments are alike whether Buyids, Safavids or Kachars.

The writer thinks that the text of the tradition as told by Is'haq Bin Yaqob was deviated in later days. We tell him he is wrong. The versions might differ in words but the text remains the same.

One thing which waives off the writer's wrong conception is; In the text, there is a word in Arabic, "Alaikum" or "upon them" which makes no sense in the age of total occultation (Ghaybat) of the Imam, because there is no link, no Nawab, nor deputy, and therefore no link with the Imam. This pronoun 'Alaikum' better suits the days of short Ghaybat. We suggest that it should be translated as 'upon you'.

The writer has not attended these little things because of his over happiness in having gained something more important. Such examples abound. The translation of Bihar has rendered the word 'Rowaat' into jurisprudents, while such does not exist in the writings of Majusi. This is in the days of Kachar. The word "Rowaat" is not in the Arabic text of Bihar because it was not necessary. The writer now takes this and uses it as a weapon in which to accuse the Shia writes in interpreting the traditions as time fits. Our readers can judge for themselves whether to come to such a conclusion is just or unjust.

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