

## A Discussion About Sunni and Imamiyah Faith

We should know that according to Ahlul Sunnat people, from the three Caliphs, only Umar Ibn Khattab had the status of a jurisprudent (Mujtahid). Abu Bakr and Uthman never performed any derivation of Islamic law. However, each of them are known as the collectors of Quran, because the Quran was 'collected' in the Caliphate of the first Caliph and rearranged in the Caliphate of the third Caliph. As we have mentioned before, the religious laws derived by Ali (a.s.) were different from those formulated by Umar. It was on the basis of this very contradiction that two sects came into being. One was Farooqi sect and the other Alawite.

Although the beginning of religious differences was initially seen during the tenure of the Caliphate of Umar, as the days passed, the differences became more pronounced. Finally, it assumed the form of the Farooqi religion, which is also known by the name of the religion of Ahlul Sunnat wal Jamaat whose cause of being named thus has already been mentioned before. In the same way, the jurisprudence of Ali (a.s.) resulted in the formation of the religion known as the religion of the practice (Sunnat) of Ali (a.s.) or the Imamiyah faith.

The completion of the religion of Ali (a.s.) was in the way that as there came Imams from the family of the Prophet, they continued the jurisprudence of this school of thought and remained on that religion. This religion became famous as the Imamite religion. It should be clear that due to the jurisprudence (Ijtihad) of the Imams of the family of the Prophet, the followers of Farooqi religion always remained aloof and depending upon their need, continued to derive the solution of their religious problems.

Thus, day-by-day their differences increased in the principles and articles of faith. These differences became so pronounced that today the two sects are completely unrelated to each other. It is only the ignorance of the common people, who think that the only point of difference between Sunni and Shia is the matter of Caliphate. It is definitely not so. There is no sort of similarity between these two, whether in principles of faith or practical laws.

So much so that the God of Ahlul Sunnat seems to be different from that of Shia God. In the same way, all principles of religion of these two religions are quite dissimilar and their practical laws should also be

derived from them. It should be clear that in the beginning, the Farooqi faith was simple and straightforward. That is, it was dissociated from wisdom and philosophy, but at last it began to form its distinct philosophy.

The first scholars of Ahlul Sunnat were Motazalite. This religion began to assume a distinct form from the time of Hasan Basri and in its time, the Motazalite religion was thought to be the true one.

Then Abul Hasan Ashari opposed his teacher, who was a Motazalite and began to formulate the Ashari faith in 365 A.H. From this time, the Motazalite faith began to decline and people began to be attracted towards the new concocted faith. Even those, whose teachers were Motazalite, opposed their teachers and left the Motazalite faith.

Thus, the four Imams: Abu Hanifah, Malik, Shafei and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal became aloof from the Motazalite faith and formed their own distinct religions. Then the religion of Matrudiya was established. We should know that the principles of faith of Ahlul Sunnat have been derived by the jurisprudence of Abul Hasan Ashari and Abul Mansoor Matrudi.

In the same way, the practical law was formed by the decrees of the four Imams. These four gentlemen ignored the jurisprudence of Ali (a.s.) and took the decrees of Ibn Masood and Zaid bin Thabit as the basis for framing their laws.

This is clearly explained in detail by Shah Waliullah in his book, *Izalatul Khifa*. They were clearly divorced from the opinion of Ali (a.s.) in all matters. Thus, when we see every class of people of Ahlul Sunnat, we find that they have raised their structure of religion on the Farooqi foundations and never sought the assistance of any of the Imams of the family of the Prophet.

If we examine carefully Sunni and Shia faith, we shall realize that there is no sort of compatibility and similarity between the religion of Ali (a.s.) and the Farooqi faith; both are unrelated to each other. There has always been absolute dissociation between the scholars and Imams of the two religions. All the past Ahlul Sunnat scholars avoided any sort of association with the Imams of the family of the Prophet and with the scholars of this school.

A study of Ahlul Sunnat books shows that Abu Hanifah did not follow any of the Imams of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). Although Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) from the family of the Prophet was present, Abu Hanifah continued his own jurisprudence. Actually the fact is that Abu Hanifah and Malik Ibn Anas had no sort of relation with Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.).

This is another misconception that these two gentlemen had the license from Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) to practice Islamic jurisprudence. Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) was himself an Imam, then how can he entrust jurisprudence to people of other faiths? Neither Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) had any sort of shortcoming, nor was there any compulsion on him to do so.

It was the common practice of the jurists of both faiths that as much as possible, they used to be dissociated and be aloof from scholars and Imams of rival faiths. It is illogical to assume that Abu Hanifah and Malik used to practice jurisprudence on the lines of Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.). Numerous proofs of this type of dissociation are mentioned below.

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