

**The Validity of Existence
Of Various Muslim States
In the Absence of *Khaleefah*
(Greater Imam)**

***Refuting the Misconception that Obedience
Is Valid Only to the Greater Imaam.***

Saleh As-Saleh

17th Rajab 1427 AH

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allaah, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful, I begin (to write):

The following Question was received from a brother in USA:

Assalaamu 'alaykum wa rahmatullaah

As you know, there are a number of *ahaadeeth* concerning how Muslims are to deal with the Muslim rulers, including the sinful and oppressive rulers.

How would you respond to the one who claims that these *ahaadeeth* are concerning the *khaleefah* of the Muslims, not the various leaders, kings, or prime ministers of today?

Baarakallaahu-feek.

The Answer:

Wa'alaykum as-Salaam wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh

This *Shubuha* (misconception) that the *Ahaadeeth* of obedience to the Rulers are restricted to the general *Khaleefah* (greater Imaam) is, *al-hamdulillah*, already answered by the scholars of Islaam. Here are some of their statements:

1- Sh. Al-Islam Ibn Taymeyah (*rahimahullaah*) said:

"The *sunnah* is that the Muslims have one Imaam and the rest are his deputies. Suppose, however, the *Ummah* abandoned this due to a sin from some part of it and incapacity from the rest or for a reason other than that and which led to having number of Imaams, then it is binding upon each Imaam to establish the *Hudood* (prescribed punishments) and fulfill the rights (of people)." [Majmoo' al-Fataawaa, 35/175-176].

2- Imaam Ash-Shawkaani (*rahimahullaah*) said:

"In Principle, all Muslims should have one Imaam. However, after the spread of Islam and the expansion of its territories and their remoteness, it is known that in each region there became a ruler or Imaam and so with the rest of the regions, none of them having authority to command and forbid in the other regions...

So the presence of various (multiple) Imaams and Rulers is of no harm, and it is binding to obey each one of them after giving him the *bay'ah* (pledge of allegiance) in the region in which his commands and prohibitions are executed therein. And similarly in the case of the one in charge of another region.

And it is not obligatory upon the people of the other regions to obey him, nor to be under his governorship due to the remoteness of the regions..."

Then he said: "You should know this, since it is fitting to the Sharee'ah Foundations, and in full agreement to what is indicated by the evidences. **And turn down what is being said in opposition to this**, since the difference between the condition of the early Islamic *wilaayah* (administrative governorship) and its state nowadays is clearer than the sun during the day." [Imaam Ash-Shawkaani in *As-Sayelul Jarraar*, 4/512].

3- Sh. Imaam Muhammad bin 'Abdil Wahaab (*rahimahullaah*) said:

"The Imaams from each Madh-hab are unanimous that whoever overtakes a country or countries (seizes power) is entitled to assume the same rulership as the Imaam in **ALL** affairs. Were it not so, the affairs of this worldly life would not be upright. And for a long time, since before the time of Imaam Ahmad (*rahimahullaah*) and until our time, people were not in agreement upon one Imaam, **and they have no account of a scholar stating that the validity of (the applicability) of any of the rulings (of sharee'ah) is conditional upon the presence of the Greater Imaam.**" [In *Ad-Durar As-Saniyyah*, 7/239].

4- Al-'Allaamah (esteemed scholar) As-San'aani (*rahimahullaah*) said in his explanation of the hadeeth of Abu Hurairah (*radiya Allaahu 'anhu*), raised to the Prophet (ﷺ: *sallaallaahu 'aleihi was-sallam*):

"من خرج عن الطاعة، وفارق الجماعة، ومات فميتته ميتة جاهلية" [مسلم 1848]

"One who defected from obedience (to the Amir) and separated from the main body of the Muslims - if he died in that state - would die the death of one belonging to the days of Jahiliyya (i. e. would not die as a Muslim). [Saheeh Muslim, Book 20, # 4555, English Translation]

that the "obedience" is the obedience to the *Khaleefah* upon whom there is agreement, **and it seems that what is intended is the khaleefah on any region from the regions**, since people were not on agreement on a single *khaleefah* over the entire Islamic lands since the Abbasid Rule. Rather each region became independent under a ruler running its affairs. And if we carry the *hadeeth* to apply only to one *khaleefah* upon whom the Muslims are unanimous then its (the *hadeeth*) benefit would be diminished.

And that the saying (in the *hadeeth*) "and separated from the main body of the Muslims," means: separated from the *Jamaa'ah* who agreed upon an Imaam under whom their body and affairs are organized, their world is united, and their protection from their enemy is achieved."

So, it becomes clear that negating the validity of governorship on separate Muslim states leads to evil in the sense that it sets the stage for rebellion against the rulers, and this is forbidden in *Islaam* even if the ruler is an oppressor as this constitutes the creed of *ahl-us-Sunnah*.

And Allaah Knows Best.

May Allaah, the Most High, guide me, you, and all Muslims to abide by the way of the *Salaf* and make us from those who relate the unclear matters to the clear so that they reach that which is clear and pleasing to Allaah.

Was-Salaam

Saleh As-Saleh

