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Appointing a Person as an *Amīr* and Returning to Him When Differing Occurs

The Noble Shaykh, al-‘Allāmah,

Rabī Ibn Hādī al-Madkhalī

- May Allāh preserve him -

Translation by Abū Suhayl Anwar Wright

Q If some people came together for the purpose of *da‘wah* being upon the correct ‘*aqīdah* and they appointed for themselves an *Amīr* (leader) who they can go to when differing occurs and they all agree that whoever disobeys him, meaning the *Amīr*, then that person is not from them and they count the person who disobeys him as sinful, is this permissible?

A In reality the likes of these leaderships and pledges of allegiance (*bay‘ah*) and gathering for this purpose leads to innovation and it leads to having *al-walā‘ wa al-barā‘* (alliance and disassociation) only for the sake of this leadership. And we have experienced this often, even from those who claim that they are upon the *Salafī manhaj*, they also did this very same thing upon the basis that they were upon the methodology of the *Salaf* and upon correct principles, however there began *al-walā‘ wa al-barā‘* over this leadership, so whoever would submit to this leadership then they were from them and whoever does not submit to it they are not from them.

This is something which is present and we advise the Muslims to have brotherhood for the sake of Allāh, loving one another for His sake and to be cooperative. Just as the Prophet (ﷺ) said to Mu‘ādh and Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (*raḍiyallāhu ‘anhumā*), “Be cooperative and do not differ amongst yourselves and make things easy and do not make things hard.”¹

So this (i.e appointing an *Amīr*) is from making things difficult and delving too deep and being harsh. Did Aḥmad (Ibn Ḥanbal) (d.241H) used to have the people pledge allegiance or did they place him as an *Amīr* over them?

¹ Related by al-Bukhārī (no. 3038) and Muslim (no. 1733) from the *ḥadīth* of Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (*raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu*).

What about the Imām of the *Sunnah*, Ibn Bāz (d.1420H); do the people pledge allegiance to him or place him as their *Amīr*? Also, Shaykh al-Albānī (d.1420H) and other than them from the Imāms of the *Sunnah* in our time, do they have a pledge of allegiance and do they have a leadership? Or do the hearts of the Muslims surround them due to their scholarliness and their knowledge and virtue?!

If an *‘Ālim* (Scholar) comes about, then the people love him and follow his example. As for one who is ignorant and the majority of his affair is ignorance whereas he has fanaticism (to what he is upon) and delves deep and he sees himself as a true *Amīr* and he wants to lead the people and wants the people to obey him and he has alliance to the people upon this basis; (We say) O brother, Allāh has raised the *‘Ālim* because of his knowledge and the Muslims surround him (i.e. because of his knowledge) and he leads the Muslims with his *fatāwā*, his direction and his advice that he gives without any pledge of allegiance.

This (ideology) by Allāh, they have taken it from the people of partisanship (*hizbiyyah*) and the people of desires. So we leave this and we let Islām remain as it was in the time of the Messenger (*ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*). The pledge of allegiance is only for the rulers of the Muslims and that is it!

Did the people pledge allegiance to Imām Mālik (d.179H) or Imām al-Shāfi‘ī (d.204H) or Imām Ahmad?

Did they used to pledge allegiance to al-Awzā‘ī (d.157H)? Did they used to pledge allegiance to Sufyān al-Thawrī (d.167H)? Did the Imāms of the famous *madhāhib* have a pledge of allegiance? So therefore there are no pledges of allegiance.

“And whoever opposes the Messenger after the clear evidence has been made clear to him and he follows a way other than that of the believers, we will leave him to the path he has chosen and land him in the hell fire and what and evil destination.” [Sūrah al-Nisā‘ 4:115]

You teach in this mosque and I teach in this mosque and all of our efforts fall into the pool of *Sunnah* and that which benefits the Muslims, and we consult one another and we cooperate upon righteousness and piety, just as was done by the *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*. This is because if an affair leads to a greater harm it is incumbent that it be left.

So this is something we have seen and experienced and some of the Scholars say that there is nothing wrong with it. However, we say that this leads to greater harms and it leads to rancour and enmity and (blameworthy) fanaticism and alliances, so we leave that and traverse upon the way of the *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*.

The Scholar who is a sincere advisor, the common folk and the students of knowledge alike all love him without these pledges of allegiance and leaderships. This is due to the innate nature of the people because him connecting them to Islam and because of him connecting them to the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger (*ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi*

wa sallam). Because of this, the Scholar becomes a person who is trusted amongst the Muslims, such as Ibn Bāz (d.1420H), without pledging any allegiance, or claiming any leadership or anything else, he is a person trusted by the people.

Also, the Committee of Major Scholars (in Saudi Arabia) are those who are trusted by the people without any pledge of allegiance or claiming any leadership. Likewise, there are other than them from the Scholars in the Islāmic world who set out for calling to Allāh and to the *Tawḥīd* of Allāh, not any pledges of allegiance or any leadership or anything else. The hearts are connected to them and they have trust in them and they listen to their advice, their guidance and their *fatāwā*. And some of those who still are upon a pure *fitrah* may sometimes even leave their leadership and return to these (Scholars) regarding those matters that concern their Religion, after (first) returning to Allāh, the Exalted and High.²

² Taken from the book *al-Lubāb min Majmū' Naṣā'ih wa al-Tawjīhāt al-Shaykh Rabī' li al-Shabāb* (p. 95-97).