

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Surah Baqarah

رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ  
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٢٩﴾

129. "Our Lord! send amongst them a Messenger of their own, who shall rehearse Thy Signs to them and instruct them in scripture and wisdom, and sanctify them: For Thou art the Exalted in Might, the Wise."

How beautiful this prayer is, and how aptly it comes in here in the argument! Such Paganism or star-worship or planet-worship as there was in Abraham's time was first cleared out of Makkah by Abraham, This is the chief meaning of "sanctification" or "purification" in 2:125, although of course physical cleanliness is (in physical conditions) a necessary element of purification in the higher sense. Abraham and his elder son Isma'il then built the Ka'bah and established the rites and usages of the sacred city...

*The Noble Quran/Yusuf Ali*

As becomes a devout man, he offers and dedicates the work to Allah in humble supplication, addressing Him as the All-Hearing and the All-Knowing. He then asks for a blessing on himself and progeny generally, both the children of his eldest-born Isma'il and his younger son Isaac. With prophetic vision he foresees that there will be corruption and backsliding in both branches of his family: Makkah will house 360 idols, Jerusalem will become a harlot city (Ezekiel 16:15), a city of abomination. But the light of Islam will shine, and reclaim the lost people in both branches and indeed in all the world. So he prays for Allah's mercy, addressing Him as the Oft-Returning, Most Merciful. And finally he foresees in Makkah a Prophet teaching the people as one "of their own." and in their own beautiful Arabic language: he asks for a blessing on Muhammad's ministry, appealing to the Power and Wisdom of Allah. ...

*The Noble Quran/Yusuf Ali*

According to a hadith reported by Imam Ahmad in his "Musnad", the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that Allah had chosen him as the Last Prophet at a time when Sayyidna Adam (عليه السلام) was not yet born and only his clay was being prepared, and that he was the manifestation of the prayer of his father, Sayyidna Ibrahim (عليه السلام) of the good tidings brought by Sayyidna `Isa (Jesus Christ (عليه السلام) and of the dream seen by his mother...

*Mariful Quran*

Ibrahim was the first person to mention the Prophet to the people. Ever since, Muhammad was known to the people, until the last Prophet was sent among the Children of Israel, Jesus the son of Mary, who mentioned Muhammad by name. Jesus addressed the Children of Israel saying,

إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَ مُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ (I am the Messenger of Allah unto you, confirming what is before me in the Tawrah, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad) (61:6). This is why the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, دَعْوَةُ أَبِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَبُشْرَى عِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ (The supplication of my father Ibrahim and the glad tidings brought forth by Jesus the son of Mary.)

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, وَرَأَتْ أُمِّي أَنَّهُ خَرَجَ مِنْهَا نُورٌ أَضَاءَتْ لَهُ قُصُورُ الشَّامِ (My mother saw a light that went out of her and radiated the palaces of Ash-Sham.)

It was said that the Prophet's mother saw this vision when she was pregnant with, narrated this vision to her people, and the story became popular among them. The light mentioned in the Hadith appeared in Ash-Sham (Greater Syria), testifying to what will later occur when the Prophet's religion will be firmly established in Ash-Sham area. This is why by the end of time, Ash-Sham will be a refuge for Islam and its people. Also, Jesus the son of Mary will descend in Ash-Sham, next to the eastern white minaret in Damascus...

*Tafsir Ibn Kathir*

The Two Sahihs stated, لَا تَزَالُ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي ظَاهِرِينَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُمْ وَلَا مَنْ خَالَفَهُمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ أَمْرٌ (There will always be a group of my Ummah who will be on the truth, undeterred by those who fail or oppose them, until the command of Allah comes while they are on this.)

Al-Bukhari added in his Sahih, (And they will reside in Ash-Sham.)... Allah said, وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ (and instruct them in the Book) meaning, Al-Qur'an, وَ الْحِكْمَةَ (and Al-Hikmah) meaning, the Sunnah, as Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Muqatil bin Hayyan and Abu Malik asserted. It was also said that `Al-Hikmah', means `comprehension in the religion', and both meanings are correct. `Ali bin Abi Talhah said, that Ibn `Abbas said that, وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ (and purify them) means, "With the obedience of Allah!..."

*Tafsir Ibn Kathir*

...The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has himself said, إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ مُعَلِّمًا have been sent only as a teacher. From this, it necessarily follows that his followers are required to be disciples, and that every Muslim, man or woman, should as a Muslim be a life-long student, keen to learn what the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has taught... The Arabic word Tazkiyah تذكیه denotes purifying a thing or person from all kinds of filth, internal as well as external...The internal varieties include...false beliefs like infidelity (Kufr كفر) association (Shirk شرك)...and, [external include] pride, vanity malice, jealousy, love of worldly things, etc. ..To attain any degree of perfection one must also learn to put

the principles into practice, and "realize" them in oneself and for oneself, which again requires the supervision of an authentic teacher and guide... In the Way... the function of the spiritual guide (Shaykh) is to help the disciple in obeying the injunctions of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah so thoroughly that it becomes a matter, not of effort, but of habit - so to say, his very "nature....

*Mariful Quran*

...on the subject of purification (tazkiyah تزكیه) we might add another important consideration. From the days of the First Prophet to the days of the Last (عليهم السلام) it has been the Way of Allah that in order to guide men and to show them the Straight Path, He has been sending them not only His Books but His prophets also. This indicates the general principle that for their guidance men need, on the one hand, a Divine Teaching revealed in the form of a Book, and, on the other, a human teacher in the form of a prophet who should train and discipline them into absorbing the divine guidance fully. Men need not merely one of these, but both. For, a man alone can be the teacher of another man, and not a book - which serves only as an aid. That is why Islam began with a Book and a Prophet... For the coming generations too, the two basic principles of guidance have continued to function in the form of the Shari'ah and the Men of Allah".

The Holy Qur'an has emphasised the point again and again. Let us quote a few instances:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ O believers, fear Allah, and be with the truthful" (9:119).

In summing up the qualities of "the truthful" (الصَّادِقِينَ) (Al-Sadiqun)

Another verse ends with the words: أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ It is they who are truthful, and it is they who are the God-fearing. (2:177) ... Allah who can show the Straight Path to the seeker. Says the Holy Qur'an صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ the path of those on whom You have bestowed Your grace, not of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor of those who are misguided. (1:7)

Another verse provides greater specification.

فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ Those on whom Allah has bestowed His grace - the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous. (4:69)

Similarly, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has, for the benefit of all the later generations of Muslims, explicitly named certain personalities who should be followed in religious matters: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّبِعُوا مَن تَرَكْتُ

"I am leaving behind me two things; if you stand firm by them you will never fall into misguidance - firstly, the Book of Allah, and, secondly, my descendants and the members of my family." [Tirmidhi ]

A hadith reported by Bukhari says: اقتدوا بالذين من بعدي أبي بكر وعمر "After me, follow Abu Bakr and Umar."

And a third hadith says: "عليكم بسنتي و سنة الخلفاء الراشدين" "You must adopt my way (the Sunnah) and the way of Al-Khulafa' al-Rashidin" [Rightly guided Caliphs]...

*Mariful Quran*

...The "Book" is the Qur'an and the "Wisdom" (Hikma) is recognition and acceptance of the din, grasping its interpretation and understanding it, which is by an innate faculty and light from Allah. Malik stated that, and Ibn Wahb related it from him. Qatada said that the "Wisdom" is the Sunna and clarification of the laws of the Sharia. It is said that it refers to the judgements and rulings derived from it. The meanings are close...

*Tafsir Qurtubi*

### Compilers' notes:

- هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٦٢﴾ It is He Who has sent amongst the Unlettered a messenger from among themselves, to rehearse to them His Signs, to sanctify them, and to instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom,- although they had been, before, in manifest error [62:2].

- وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُّوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ And We sent not (as Our messengers) before you other than men, whom We sent revelation. So ask the people of the message if you do not know [21:7].

- One needs to be very careful with internet sites (Google sheikh), YouTube videos and online materials and seek guidance from ulama/teachers to ensure authenticity and reliability of their contents.

قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " خَيْرُكُمْ قَرْنِي، ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ، ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ ". قَالَ عِمْرَانُ لَا أَدْرِي أَذَكَرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَعْدُ قَرْنَيْنِ أَوْ ثَلَاثَةٍ. قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " إِنْ بَعَدَكُمْ قَوْمًا يَخُونُونَ وَلَا يُؤْتَمِنُونَ، وَيَشْهَدُونَ، وَلَا يُسْتَشْهَدُونَ وَيَنْذِرُونَ وَلَا يَفُونَ، وَيَطْهَرُ فِيهِمُ السِّمْنُ

Narrated Zahdam bin Mudrab: I heard `Imran bin Husain saying, "The Prophet ﷺ said, "The best people are those living in my generation, then those coming after them, and then those coming after (the second generation)." `Imran said "I do not know whether the Prophet ﷺ mentioned two or three generations after your present generation. The Prophet ﷺ added, "There will be some people after you, who will be dishonest and will not be trustworthy and will give witness (evidences) without being asked to give witness, and will vow but will not fulfil their vows, and obesity/fatness will appear among them." [Bukhari].

Learning from live teachers' was the practice in the first three generations. There is also great benefit/baraka to learn from pious and knowledgeable teachers and get their Dua', especially

from those with unbroken chain of isnad/ اسناد i.e. whose link of شيوخ or teachers' goes back to the Prophet ﷺ.

Great respect and deference need to be shown to all mujtahid Imams, including, the Imams of four well known Madhabs (Imams Abu Hanifa, Shafi'i, Malik and Hanbal), who lived in the first three generations. They have made life easier for both ordinary people as well as for ulama by deducing specific rulings, known as fiqh/jurisprudence, based on the Quran and Sunnah.

The statement of some Mujtahid Imams along the lines: 'if you find a hadith that is Sahih/contradicts my verdict, then follow the hadith' is directed towards other mujtahid Imams/Ulama. Imam Qurtubi, in his Tafsir of 2: 170 states "The obligation for the common person who is not able to deduce rulings from basic principles because he is not qualified to do so on account of his lack of knowledge of the din is to head for the person with the most knowledge in his time and his land and ask him about his problem and follow his fatwa since Allah says, ' فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ' (16:43)". It is reported that a number of Imams and fuqaha (jurists) of great eminence e.g. Imam Gazzali (Al-Shafi'i), Abdullah Ibn Mubarak (Hanafi) themselves followed a madhab. The door of ijtiḥad is, however, not closed. Some mujtahid Imams may not follow a particular madhab. Yet, other mujtahid Imams/Ulama may primarily follow a madhab but apply ijtiḥad, for which they are qualified, to adjust rulings.

Mujtahid Imams are experts of experts. Apart from utmost dedication and exemplary piety, they possessed profound knowledge of exegeses of the Quran, ahadith, their contexts, relevance of applications, knowledge of others disciplines such as Arabic language and literature and legal sciences to draw inferences and deduce rulings from the original Arabic texts. Just to put things in perspective, the number of hadiths outside the Six Books of Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Abu Dawood, Nesai and Ibn Majah are huge. Sunan Baihaqi alone contains more hadiths than the Six Books combined (Book on ahadith by Mohammad Mazhar Hussaini, Al-Meezan International Inc, Illinois). Musannaf Abi Shaiba, Musannaf Abdur Razzaque, Baihaqi, Sunan Darimi, Musnad Ahmad Hanbal, Muatta of Imam Malik and many other hadith books contain extensive collections of sahih ahadith. This is not a place to include detailed discussions on ulama's views on madhab.

