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Soothsaying

Fatwa no. 3261

Q: People in our town do not say Isti`adhah (Seeking refuge with Allah from Satan), Tasmiyah (saying, "Bismillah [In the Name of Allah]"), recite Du`a' Al-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer), or pause where the Messenger (peace be upon him) used to pause. Many of them, especially the Khatibs (preachers) shave their beards in addition to other Bid`ahs (innovations in religion) such as practicing soothsaying and issuing Batil (null and void) Fatwas to please others. We have informed them of the Hadith authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) regarding Salah (prayer) but they did not accept our advice and said: "This is what we found our fathers following". Some Imams do not follow Allah's commands in bringing up their children. Their daughters go out without wearing Hijab (veil) and without taking into consideration that their actions contradict Islam. Khatibs do not forbid Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) committed by these people on Friday. They even narrate Hadith and recite Qur'an before the Khutbah and before the Imam enters the Masjid (mosque). They also say the Adhan (call to prayer) on Friday three times which is a prevailing phenomenon in our country. Those adhering to the Sunnah

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(whatever is reported from the Prophet) have advised them.

These practices are some of the Bid`ahs that they commit, which contradict what the Prophet (peace be upon him) has been sent with.

Q: Is it permissible for a Muslim to perform Salah behind these Imams who commit acts of Bid`ah?

Is it permissible to perform Salah behind an Imam who denies the Sunnah? Some of them say Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah) collectively after every Salah in a loud voice and always recite a Hizb (a 60th portion of the Qur'an) collectively after Fajr and Maghrib prayers. They recite Qur'an in parties, weddings, graveyards, and funerals for money. They also escort the deceased to the graveyard while saying Dhikr. We hope that you can explain the ruling on these matters so that we are fully aware of our religion.

A: First: It is recommended to say Isti`adhah when starting the recitation of the Qur'an whether in Salah or not, for Allah says: [﴿So when you want to recite the Qur'ân, seek refuge with Allâh from Shaitân \(Satan\), the outcast \(the cursed one\).﴾](#) But it should be said subvocally like Tasmiyah. It is also recommended to say Tasmiyah subvocally before starting the recitation of Al-Fatihah when offering Salah, in addition to taking a slight pause between Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) and the recitation of Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening

supplication when starting the Prayer)

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and also between the end of the recitation and Ruku` (bowing). Whoever adopts this view is right and gets double reward, and whoever does not adopt it, gets one reward in case he was a Mujtahid (a scholar qualified to exercise juristic effort to infer expert legal rulings) who sought the truth but made a mistake. Salah of both of these people behind each other is permissible. There is flexibility in this matter, so it is not permissible to argue or quarrel regarding it.

Second: It is unlawful for men to shave their beards because the Prophet (peace be upon him) orders men to let their beards grow and trim their moustaches. This is also against Fitrah (natural disposition).

Third: A soothsayer is a person who claims to know the Ghayb (Unseen) or what is in the inner-selves. Most of them practice astrology or use Jinn who eavesdrop. Some of these people practice sand-reading, cup-reading and palm-reading claiming that this enables them to know the Ghayb. They are Kafirs (disbelievers) because this means that they claim to share one of Allah's Attributes, and for disbelieving in the saying of Allah (Exalted be He): ﴿Say: "None in the heavens and the earth knows the Ghaib (Unseen) except Allâh"﴾ and: ﴿(He Alone is) the All-Knower of the Ghaib (Unseen), and He reveals to none His Ghaib (Unseen).﴾ ﴿Except to a Messenger (from mankind) whom He has chosen (He informs him of unseen as much as He likes), and then He makes a band of watching guards (angels) to march before him and behind him.﴾ And Allah's words: ﴿And with Him are the keys of the Ghaib (all that is hidden), none knows them but He.﴾

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Whoever consults and believes a soothsayer is a Kafir. It was related by Abu Dawud on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Anyone who resorts to a soothsayer and believes in what they say has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad.﴾ (peace be upon him).^{🗨️} It is also related by the four compilers of Hadith (Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Al-Tirmidhy and Al-Nasa'y) and by Al-Hakim who declared it Sahih (a Hadith that has been transmitted by people known for their uprightness and exactitude; free from eccentricity and blemish) on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Anyone who resorts to a diviner or a soothsayer and believes in what they say has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad.﴾ (peace be upon him),^{🗨️} in addition to other numerous Hadiths declaring soothsayers, fortunetellers and whoever believes in them as Kafir. It is not permissible to perform Salah behind them and it is void, and anyone who performs Salah behind any of them, should ask Allah for forgiveness and repeat the Salah.

Fourth: Guardians should direct their family members to all that is good for them regarding their religion and worldly affairs. They should teach them the morals of Islam because they are considered their responsibility. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ﴿All of you are guardians and responsible for your subjects...﴾

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Imams and scholars are role models for people. Neglecting their family affairs encourages others to be negligent and exceed all limits and manners of religion. Such Imams and scholars do not guide or educate their families, and as a result their wives and daughters go out without being appropriately

covered. The ruling on performing Salah behind such people is the same as the ruling on performing Salah behind a Fasiq (someone openly and flagrantly violating Islamic law) like those who shave their beards. It is a sound Salah according to the preponderant opinion of the scholars.

Fifth: Reciting the following Ayah, ﴿Allâh sends His Salât (Graces, Honours, Blessings, Mercy) on the Prophet (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and also His angels (ask Allâh to bless and forgive him).﴾

And narrating the Hadith which warns people against speaking during the Khutbah and ordering people to listen to the Khutbah before it even starts, are acts of Bid`ah (innovation in religion). Reciting the Qur'an and saying Dhikr collectively on Friday before the Imam comes, calling two Adhans and saying some invocations collectively before the time of the actual Adhan called at Jumu`ah Prayer due time are all forms of Bid`ah which have spread in Muslim countries and many scholars do not warn people against them. All of the similar practices are Bid`ah and are against what Allah allows. We ask Allah to keep us safe and to help Ahl-ul-Sunnah (those who adhere to the Sunnah) to disapprove of these innovations, so that Muslims may return to the right path of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Rightly-Guided Caliphs (may Allah be pleased with them). We ask Allah to reward you for denying these Bid`ahs and others and may Allah keep you steadfast

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in the truth and help you support the Sunnah and resist Bid`ah, for He (Glorified be He) is the One Who answers the supplications.

May Allah grant us success. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions.

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