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The third question of Fatwa no. 8008

Q 3: What is the meaning of Al-Taghut in general? We would also like to know the interpretation of Ibn Kathir concerning the Ayah (Qur'anic verse) mentioned in Surah Al-Nisa': ﴿Have you not seen those (hypocrites) who claim that they believe in that which has been sent down to you, and that which was sent down before you, and they wish to go for judgement (in their disputes) to the Tâghût (false judges) while they have been ordered to reject them. But Shaitân (Satan) wishes to lead them far astray.﴾ **We would like to know two things:**

Firstly: What is the meaning of Al-Taghut in general? Is what is said by Ibn Kathir: "The Taghut of every people are those whom they refer to in judgment beside Allah," included in this meaning? Does the word Taghut comprise rulers and those who refer to them in judgment when they do not judge according to the Shar` (Law) of Allah according to the interpretation of Ibn Kathir?

Secondly: What is the meaning of His saying: ﴿They wish to go for judgement (in their disputes)﴾ ? Some of them said that the "wish" here is a hidden act that nobody knows. Therefore, we cannot judge with Kufr (disbelief) for whoever goes for judgment (outside the Shar` of Allah) except after realizing his inner intention which is inconceivable. Others said that the "wish" here means an explicit doing derived from the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that means content and continuity in seeking judgment in this way. Which one is true?

A: Firstly: The general meaning of Taghut is what is worshipped instead of Allah. This `Ibadah (worship) may be Salah (Prayer), Sawm (Fast), vowing, resorting for removing harm or bringing benefit,

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referring to him in judgment instead of Qur'an and Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) or any other thing that should be dedicated to Allah Alone.

The Taghut in the Ayah means all what is referred to for judgment besides the Qur'an and Sunnah including man-made laws, systems, inherited customs and habits or what is thought by chieftains, leaders and soothsayers.

Therefore, we know that systems made to be referred to for judgment are included in the meaning of Taghut. Those who are worshipped besides Allah though they were not satisfied with that as prophets and righteous people will be excluded from the meaning of Taghut. Taghut is whoever calls and incites people to do so from among the jinn and mankind.

Secondly: What is meant by "wish" in the saying of Allah (Exalted be He): ﴿They wish to go for judgement (in their disputes) to the Tâghût (false judges)﴾ is what is accompanied by signs and indications that prove the intention. This is affirmed by the next Ayah: ﴿And when it is said to them: "Come to what Allâh has sent down and to the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)," you

(Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) see the hypocrites turn away from you (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) with aversion.) This is also affirmed by the cause behind the revelation of the Ayah that was mentioned by Ibn Kathir and others in interpreting this Ayah. Continuity in doing anything means approval. Thus, these things remove the problematic saying that "wish" is a hidden meaning

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that cannot be judged except after knowing the intention of the doer which is inconceivable.

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

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