

22245 - There is no secret knowledge in Islam that is only for the awliyaa' ("saints")

the question

What is the ruling on one who claims that the rulings of the Qur'aan apply to the Prophets and the masses, and that esoteric, mystical knowledge (al-'ilm al-laduni) which the awliyaa' receive through mystic intuition is only for the awliyaa'?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

Al-Shanqeeti said:

Al-Qurtubi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

Our Shaykh, Abu'l-'Abbaas, said: some heretics who followed batiniyyah (esoteric teachings) wanted to follow a path that did not enjoin these shar'i rulings. They said: these general shar'i rulings are obligatory upon the Prophets and the masses only. As for the awliyaa' and the elite, they do not need those texts. Rather what is required of them is what they receive in their hearts through intuition and the thoughts that dominate their minds. They said: this is because their hearts are free of anything that may cause distraction and of thoughts of anything other than Allaah. In this manner divine knowledge becomes manifest to them, and they discover the secrets of creation and learn the rulings concerning minor issues, thus they are no longer subjected to the holistic shar'i rulings. This is what happened in the case of al-Khidr who, by means of the knowledge that was made manifest to him was rendered independent of the knowledge that Moosa had. One of the things that they narrated was the words: "Consult your heart, no matter how many people give you fatwas and advice."

Our shaykh (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: These are the words of heresy and kufr; the one who says them should be executed without being asked to repent, because he has denied that which is known from the sharee'ah. For Allaah has set up the system by His wisdom in such a way that His rulings can only be known through His Messengers who are ambassadors between Him and His creation. They are the only ones who convey His Message and His words from Him, explaining His laws and rulings, and He has chosen them for that purpose.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allaah chooses Messengers from angels and from men. Verily, Allaah is All-Hearer, All-Seer”

[al-Hajj 22:75]

“Allaah knows best with whom to place His Message”[al-An'aam 6:124]

“Mankind were one community and Allaah sent Prophets with glad tidings and warnings”[al-Baqarah 2:213]

and there are other similar aayahs.

In conclusion, we know definitely and for certain, and the consensus of the earlier and later generations states likewise, that there is no way to learn the rulings of Allaah, which have to do with His commands and prohibitions, except through His Messengers. Whoever says that there is another way through which His commands and prohibitions may be known, independently of the Messengers, is a kaafir who should be executed without asking him to repent; there is no need to question him. For this is stating belief in Prophets after our Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), whom Allaah has made the Seal of the Prophets and Messengers, after whom there is no Prophet or Messenger.

What that means is that whoever says that he has taken the ruling of Allaah from his heart or from

what he received in his heart through intuition, and that he acts upon that and thus has no need of the Qur'aan or Sunnah, has claimed for himself the unique qualities of Prophethood, because this is like what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The Holy Spirit [i.e., Jibreel] told me in my heart..."

(From Tafseer al-Qurtubi).

What he quoted from his shaykh, that the heretic should not be asked to repent, is the view of Maalik and those who agreed with him. We have explained the views of the scholars and their evidence, and what is most correct according to the evidence, in our book Daf' Ayhaam al-Idtiraab 'an Ayaat al-Kitaab, in the chapter on Soorat Aal 'Imraan.