

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Class Notes – Lesson 79

وَالْإِجْمَاعُ هُوَ الْأَصْلُ الثَّلَاثُ الَّذِي يُعْتَمَدُ عَلَيْهِ فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالِدِّينِ. وَهُمْ يَزْنُونَ بِهَذِهِ الْأُصُولِ الثَّلَاثَةِ جَمِيعَ مَا عَلَيْهِ النَّاسُ مِنْ أَقْوَالٍ وَأَعْمَالٍ بَاطِنَةٍ أَوْ ظَاهِرَةٍ مِمَّا لَهُ تَعَلُّقٌ بِالِدِّينِ. وَالْإِجْمَاعُ الَّذِي يَنْضَبِطُ: هُوَ مَا كَانَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَفُ الصَّالِحُ، إِذْ بَعْدَهُمْ كَثُرَ الْاِخْتِلَافُ، وَانْتَشَرَتِ الْأُمَّةُ.

The third fundament is consensus (ijma') which is relied on in matters concerning knowledge and religion. They use these three fundaments to judge everything that people do of speech and deeds, both inward and outward, which is connected to the religion. The consensus that can be accurately ascertained is that which the Righteous Salaf were upon for after them, differences increased and the Ummah spread.

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The third fundament is consensus (ijma') which is relied on in matters concerning knowledge and religion.

- Meaning, the third source of evidence, because the sources of evidence are the foundations upon which the rulings of Islam are built upon. The first foundation is the Quran, the second is the Sunnah, and the third is the *Ijmaa'* (consensus). This is why they are called *Ahlul Kitaab wal-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*.
- The Quran and Sunnah are two independent sources of evidence, whereas the *Ijmaa'* is dependent on the Quran and Sunnah. There cannot be *Ijmaa'* except with the Quran and Sunnah.
- Consensus (or *Ijmaa'*) is defined as: 'The consensus of the scholars of a period upon a religious matter.' It is decisive evidence in which acting upon it is obligatory.
- The evidences that the Quran and Sunnah are foundations upon which evidences of the *deen* are derived from are many. Allah says:

﴿فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ﴾

And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger. [al-Nisa': 59]

﴿وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ﴾

And obey Allah and obey the Messenger. [al-Ma'idah: 92]

﴿مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ﴾

Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah. [al-Nisa': 80]

- Whoever rejects the *Sunnah* as being a foundation for the evidences of Islam, then they have rejected the Quran as being a foundation. They have disbelieved and apostated from the religion of Islam because they have belied and rejected the Quran. This is because in more than one place in the Quran, Allah has mentioned the *Sunnah* as being a foundational source.
- The evidences that the *Ijmaa'* is also a foundational source of evidence are affirmed in both the Quran and Sunnah. Allah says:

﴿وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا﴾

Whoever opposes the Messenger after guidance has become clear to them and follows a path other than that of the believers, We will leave them on the path they have chosen and throw them into Hell, and what an evil destination! [al-Nisa': 115]

Also, the Prophet ﷺ said:

«لَا تَجْتَمِعُ أُمَّتِي عَلَى ضَلَالَةٍ»

My Ummah will never unite upon misguidance. [Tirmidhi - Hassan]

- Therefore, the majority of the *Ummah* hold the view that the *Ijmaa'* is a foundational and independent source of evidence, and that when we find a *mas'alah* (a religious issue) upon which there is *Ijmaa'* then we must affirm it. This is what the Sheikh intended to prove in this part of his treatise; that the *Ijmaa'* of *Ahlus Sunnah* is a *hujjah* (or proof).

وَهُمْ يَزِنُونَ بِهَذِهِ الْأُصُولِ الثَّلَاثَةِ جَمِيعَ مَا عَلَيْهِ النَّاسُ مِنْ أَقْوَالٍ وَأَعْمَالٍ بَاطِنَةٍ أَوْ ظَاهِرَةٍ مِمَّا لَهُ تَعَلُّقٌ بِالدِّينِ

They use these three fundamentals to judge everything that people do of speech and deeds, both inward and outward, which is connected to the religion.

- (الأُصُولُ الثَّلَاثَةُ) – ‘Three fundamentals.’ Meaning, the three foundations of the Quran, Sunnah and *Ijmaa'*. *Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* use these three foundations to weigh what the people are upon of sayings and actions, internal or external. They do not know whether something is true, until they weigh it against these three foundations. If there is evidence in them for a particular matter, then it is held to be true, and if there isn't, then it is held to be false.
- (مِمَّا لَهُ تَعَلُّقٌ بِالدِّينِ) – ‘Which is connected to the religion.’ Such as the prayer, *zakaat*, *hajj*, fasting, etiquettes and dealings with other people, creed and ideology and other matters of the *deen*. As for the matters that are not from the religion, such as customs and worldly matters, then the general principle is that they are permissible (*mubaah*) unless there is evidence to show that it is impermissible.

وَالْإِجْمَاعُ الَّذِي يَنْضَبِطُ: هُوَ مَا كَانَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَفُ الصَّالِحُ، إِذْ بَعْدَهُمْ كَثُرَ الْاِخْتِلَافُ، وَانْتَشَرَتْ الْأُمَّةُ

The consensus that can be accurately ascertained is that which the Righteous Salaf were upon for after them, differences increased and the Ummah spread.

- Meaning, the *Ijmaa'* which it is possible to accurately ascertain and regulate is what the Righteous *Salaf* were upon. They are the first three generations: The *Sahabah*, *Tabi'een* and the generation after them.
- (إِذْ بَعَدَهُمْ كَثُرَ الْاِخْتِلَافُ) – '**For after them, differences increased.**' Meaning, after the Righteous *Salaf*, it became difficult to correctly ascertain the *Ijmaa'* of the scholars, because when the *Ummah* divided into groups, the differences of opinion increased, and not all of them intended the truth. Therefore, it became very difficult to gather all the views.
- (وَانْتَشَرَتِ الْأُمَّةُ) – '**And the Ummah spread**'. Meaning, when the *Ummah* spread across the world after the conquests, it became difficult for the different views to be communicated effectively. In this case it would be difficult to affirm that they were all upon a single view. It is as if the Sheikh is saying that whoever claims *Ijmaa'* after the Righteous *Salaf* (the first three generations) then their claim is incorrect, but the *Ijmaa'* that can be correctly ascertained is that of the Righteous *Salaf*.

There can be no *Ijmaa'* with the existence of prior differences, just as differing after the *Ijmaa'* has been verified is of no use.

Review questions

1. Can there be a valid *Ijmaa'* without the Qur'an and Sunnah? Briefly explain.
2. What is the definition of *Ijmaa'* in Islamic terminology?
3. What evidences from the Qur'an and Sunnah support the validity of *Ijmaa'*?
4. Why is rejecting the *Sunnah* also considered a rejection of the Qur'an?
5. Why is the *Ijmaa'* of the Righteous *Salaf* considered the only reliable form of consensus?