101272 - The status of the imams of the Ithna ‘Ashari Shi’ah

the question

What is the position on the 12 Imams of the Shia, especiallt the later ones?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The Raafidis, Imamis or Ithna ‘Asharis (“Twelvers”) are one of the branches of Shi’ism. They are called Raafidis because they rejected (rafada) most of the Sahaabah and they rejected the leadership of the two Shaykhs Abu Bakr and ‘Umar, or because they rejected the imamate of Zayd ibn ‘Ali, and deserted him. They called Imamis because they are primarily focused on the issue of imamate, and they made it a basic principle of their religion, or because they claim that the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated that ‘Ali and his descendents would be imams. They are called Ithna ‘Asharis (“Twelvers”) because they believe in the imamate of twelve men from the Prophet’s family (ahl al-bayt), the first of whom was ‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) and the last of whom was Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-‘Askari, the supposed hidden imam, who they say entered the tunnel of Samarra’ in the middle of the third century AH and he is still alive therein, and they are waiting for him to come out!

They hold beliefs and principles which are contrary to those of the people of Islam, such as the following:

-1-

They exaggerate about their imams, claiming that they are infallible, and they devote many acts of worship to them such as supplication, seeking help, offering sacrifices and tawaaf

(circumambulating their tombs). This is major shirk which Allah tells us will not be forgiven. These acts of shirk are committed by their scholars and common folk alike, without anyone among them objecting to that.

-2-

They say that the Holy Quran has been distorted, and that things have been added and taken away. They have books concerning that which are known to their scholars and many of their common folk, and they even say that believing that the Quran has been distorted is an essential tenet of their beliefs. See the answer to question no. 21500.

-3-

They regard most of the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) as kaafirs, and disavow them, and they seek to draw closer to Allah by cursing and reviling them. They claim that they apostatized after the death of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) except very few (only seven). This is a rejection of the Quran which affirms their virtue, and says that Allah was pleased with them and chose them to accompany His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It also implies a slur against the Quran itself, because it was transmitted via them; if they were kuffaar then there is no guarantee that they did not distort it or change it. This is what the Raafidis believe anyway, as stated above.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: As for the one who goes further and claims that they apostatized after the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) died, apart from a small number, no more than ten or so, or that they became evildoers, there is no doubt that he is a kaafir, because he is rejecting what it says in the Quran in more than one place, that Allah was pleased with them and praised them. Indeed, the one who doubts that such a person is a kaafir is to be labelled as a kaafir himself, because what this view implies is that those who transmitted the Quran and Sunnah were kuffaar or rebellious evildoers. The verse says “You (true believers in Islamic Monotheism, and real followers of Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Sunnah) are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind”

[Aal ‘Imraan 3:110], and the best of them were the first generation. But according to this view, most of them were kaafirs and rebellious evildoers, and this ummah is the worst of nations and the earliest generations of this ummah were the most evil of them. The fact that this is kufr is something that no Muslim has any excuse for not knowing. End quote from al-Saarim al-Maslool ‘ala Shaatim al-Rasool (p. 590).

-4-

They attribute badaa’ to Allah, i.e., forming a new opinion that was not held before. This implies attribution of ignorance to Allah, may He be exalted.

-5-

They believe in taqiyah (dissimulation) which means showing outwardly something other than what one feels inside. In fact this is lying and hypocrisy and skill in deceiving people. This is not something that they do at times of fear; rather they regard use of taqiyah as a religious duty for minor and major matters, at times of fear and times of safety. Whatever of truth was narrated from one of their imams, such as praise for the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), or agreeing with Ahl al-Sunnah, even in matters of purification or food and drink, is rejected by the Shi’ah who say that the Imam only said that by way of taqiyah.

-6-

Belief in raja’ah, which is the belief that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the members of his household (ahl al-bayt), ‘Ali, al-Hasan, al-Husayn and the other imams will return. At the same time, Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmaan, Mu’aawiyah, Yazeed, Ibn Dhi’l-Jooshan and everyone who harmed Ahl al-bayt – according to their claims – will also return.

All of these people will return – according to their beliefs – to this world once more before the Day of Resurrection, when the Mahdi reappears, as the enemy of Allah Ibn Saba’ told them; they will return in order to be punished because they harmed Ahl al-Bayt and transgressed against them and denied them their rights, so they will be severely punished, then they will all die, then they

will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection for the final recompense. This is what they believe.

And there are other corrupt beliefs which one can find more details about in the following books, which explain how false they are:

al-Khutoot al-‘Areedah by Muhibb al-Deen al-Khateeb (available in English, translated by Abu Bilal Mustafa al-Kanadi)

Usool Madhhab al-Shi’ah al-Imamiyyah by Dr. Naasir al-Qafaari

Firaq Mu’aasirah tantasib ila al-Islam by Dr. Ghaalib ibn ‘Ali ‘Awaaji (1/127-269)

Al-Mawsoo’ah al-Muyassarah fi’l-Adyaan wa’l-Madhaahib wa’l-Ahzaab al-Mu’aasirah (1/51-57).

See also the answer to question no. 1148 .

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were asked: Is the Imam Shi’ah way part of Islam? Who made it up? Because they, i.e., the Shi’ah, attribute their madhhab to Sayyiduna ‘Ali (may Allah ennoble his face).

Answer: The Imami Shi’ah madhhab is a fabricated madhhab that has been introduced into Islam. We advise you to read the book al-Khutoot al-‘Areedah and Mukhtasar al-Tuhfah al-Ithna ‘Ashariyyah and Minhaaj al-Sunnah by Shaykh al-Islam [Ibn Taymiyah], which will explain a lot of their innovations.

‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn ‘Abd-Allah ibn Baaz, ‘Abd al-Razzaaq ‘Afeefi, ‘Abd-Allah ibn Ghadyaan. End quote.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah (2/377).

Secondly:

From the above it is clear that this madhahb is false and that it goes against the beliefs of Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jamaa’ah, and that its beliefs will not be acceptable from anyone, either from their

scholars or their common folk.

As for the imams to whom they claim to belong, they are innocent of this lie and falsehood.

There follow the names of these imams:

1-‘Ali ibn Abi Taalib (may Allah be pleased with him) who was martyred in 40 AH.

2-Al-Hasan ibn ‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) (3-50 AH)

3-Al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) (4-61 AH)

4-‘Ali Zayn al-‘Aabideen ibn al-Husayn (38-95 AH), whom they call al-Sajjaad

5-Muhammad ibn ‘Ali Zayn al-‘Aabideen (57-114 AH) whom they call al-Baaqir

6-Ja’far ibn Muhammad al-Baaqir (83-148 AH) whom they call al-Saadiq

7-Moosa ibn Ja’far al-Saadiq (128-148 AH) whom they call al-Kaadim

8-‘Ali ibn Moosa al-Kaadim (148-203 AH) whom they call al-Rida (Reza)

9-Muhammad al-Jawaad ibn ‘Ali al-Rida’ (195-220 AH) whom they call al-Taqiy

10-‘Ali al-Haadi ibn Muhammad al-Jawaad (212-254 AH) whom they call al-Naqiy

11-al-Hasan al-‘Askari ibn ‘Ali al-Haadi (232-260) whom they call al-Zakiy

12-Muhammad al-Mahdi ibn al-Hasan al-‘Askari, whom they call al-Hujjah al-Qaa’im al-Muntazar. They claim that he entered a tunnel in Samarra’, but most researchers are of the view that he did not exist at all, and that he is a Shi’i myth.

See: al-Mawsoo’ah al-Muyassarah (1/51).

Ibn Katheer said in al-Bidaayah wa’l-Nihaayah (1/177): As for what they believe about the tunnel of Samarra’, that is a myth which has no basis in reality and no proof or sound reports. End quote.

Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) divided the Imams of the Ithna ‘Ashari Shi’ah into four categories:

1 – ‘Ali ibn Abi Taalib, al-Hasan and al-Husayn (may Allah be pleased with them). They are noble Sahaabah and no one doubts their virtue and leadership, but many others shared with them the virtue of being companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and among the Sahaabah there are others who were more virtuous than them, based on saheeh evidence from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

2 – ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn, Muhammad ibn ‘Ali al-Baaqir, Ja’far ibn Muhammad al-Saadiq and Moosa ibn Ja’far. They are among the trustworthy and reliable scholars. Manhaaj al-Sunnah (2/243, 244).

3 – ‘Ali ibn Moosa al-Rida, Muhammad ibn ‘Ali ibn Moosa al-Jawaad, ‘Ali ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Ali al-‘Askari, and al-Hasan ibn ‘Ali ibn Muhammad al-‘Askari. Concerning them, Shaykh al-Islam (Ibn Taymiyah) said: They did not show a great deal of knowledge such that the ummah might benefit from them, nor did they have any authority by means of which they could help the ummah. Rather they were like any other Haashimis, they occupy a respected position, and they have sufficient knowledge of what which is needed by them and expected of people like them; it is a type is knowledge that is widely available to ordinary Muslims. But the type of knowledge that is exclusive to the scholars was not present in their case. Therefore, seekers of knowledge did not receive from them what they received from the other three. Had they had that which was useful to seekers of knowledge, they would have sought it from them, as seekers of knowledge are well aware of where to go for knowledge. Minhaaj al-Sunnah (6/387).

4 – Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-‘Askari al-Muntazar (the awaited one). He did not exist at all, as stated above.

And Allah knows best.