26139 - A brief look at the beliefs of the Druze

the question

Can you give me a brief idea about the beliefs of the Druze? What is the Islamic ruling concerning them?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The Druze originated as a secret sect among the esoteric (baatini) groups that appear outwardly to be Muslim and who sometimes pretend to be religious, ascetic and pious. They make an outward show of false pride in religion, pretending to be various kinds of Shi'ahs, Sufis and lovers of Ahl al-Bayt (the family of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)). They claim to carry the banner of peace and reconciliation amongst people, and they talk about uniting people in order to deceive them and lead them astray from their religion. When the opportunity arises, when they become stronger and find supporters among the ruling classes, they show their true colours and proclaim their real beliefs and aims, and they start to promote evil and corruption, and try to destroy religious teachings, sound beliefs and morals.

This is clear to anyone who studies their history and follows their progress from the day the Jew 'Abd-Allaah ibn Saba' lay the foundations and planted the seed, a legacy which has been handed down from one generation to another, as they have tried hard to implement these principles, and this has continued until the present day.

Although the Druze are one of these esoteric groups, they have their own characteristics as regards their origins and the time when they emerged, and the circumstances which helped them to become established. We will mention some brief details concerning that and the rulings of the scholars concerning them.

1 – The Druze are named after Durzi, whose full name was Abu 'Abd-Allaah Muhammad ibn

Ismaa'eel al-Durzi. His name is also given as 'Abd-Allaah al-Durzi and Durzi ibn Muhammad. It was said that Muhammad ibn Ismaa'eel al-Durzi was Tashtakeen or Hashtakeen al-Durzi. It was also said that they are named after Tayrooz, a city in Persia. Al-Zubaydi narrated that the correct form of the name is Darzi, based on the phrase "awlaad darzah" meaning those who are base and vile.

2 – Muhammad ibn Ismaa'eel al-Durzi appeared at the time of al-Haakim bi Amrihi, Abu 'Ali al-Mansoor ibn al-'Azeez, one of the 'Ubaydi kings (known in the west as Fatimids) who ruled Egypt for nearly two hundred years and who falsely claimed to be descended from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) through Faatimah (may Allaah be pleased with her).

Muhammad ibn Ismaa'eel al-Durzi was originally a follower of the esoteric Ismaili sect who claim to be the followers of Muhammad ibn Isma'eel ibn Ja'far al-Saadiq. Then he left this group and contacted the 'Ubaydi al-Haakim, approving of his claim to divinity, and he called the people to worship him alone. He claimed that God had become incarnate in 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib, and that the soul of 'Ali has migrated to his sons one after another, until it reached al-Haakim. Al-Haakim gave him authority in Egypt so that the people would obey him in his call. When his true intentions became clear, the Muslims in Egypt rebelled against him and killed some of his supporters. When they wanted to kill him, he escaped and fled to al-Haakim, who gave him some money and told him to go to Syria to spread his call there. So he went there and stopped in Waadi Taym-Allaah ibn Tha'labah, to the west of Damascus, where he called them to deify al-Haakim and spread the principles of the Druze among them, and distributed money to them, and they responded to his call.

Another man also spread the call of the deification of al-Haakim, a Persian man whose name was Hamzah ibn 'Ali ibn Ahmad al-Haakimi al-Durzi, one of the leading baatinis. He had contacted the leaders of the secret call of al-Haakim's party, and he called for his deification in secret until he became one of their main leaders. Then he proclaimed that openly and claimed that he was the messenger of al-Haakim, and al-Haakim supported him in that. When al-Haakim died and was succeeded by his son who was known as Al-Zaahir li I'zaaz Deen Allaah (the supporter of the religion of Allaah), and he disavowed himself of his father's claim to divinity, this call was chased

out of Egypt. Hamzah fled to Syria and was followed by some of those who had responded to his call. Most of them settled in the region that later came to be known as Jebel el Druze in Syria.

Their principles are as follows:

(a)Incarnation. They believe that Allaah was incarnated in ‘Ali (may Allaah be pleased with him), then in his sons after him, one after another, until He was incarnated in the Faatimid al-Haakim Abu ‘Ali al-Mansoor ibn al-‘Azeez. They believe that al-Haakim will return and that he disappears and reappears.

(b)Dissimulation (taqiyah) – i.e., hypocrisy and concealment. They do not tell anyone their real beliefs except those who are of their number. Indeed they do not disclose their secrets to anyone except those whom they trust from among their own group.

(c)Infallibility of their imams. They think that their imams are infallible and protected from sin. Indeed, they deified them and worshipped them instead of Allaah, as they did with al-Haakim.

(d)Esotericism (baatiniyyah). They claim that the texts of sharee’ah have an esoteric or secret meaning other than the apparent meaning. They based their heresy concerning the texts on this, and distorted the meanings of the reports, commands and prohibitions.

With regard to their heresy concerning the reports, they deny the perfect attributes of Allaah and they deny the Day of Resurrection with its reckoning and recompense of Paradise and Hell. They replaced that with something that they call the transmigration of souls, the belief that the soul of a person or animal moves, when he or it dies, to the body of another person or animal when he or it is born, to dwell therein being either blessed or tormented. They believe that the universe is eternal and is no more than wombs giving birth and the earth swallowing the bodies of the deceased (i.e., a never-ending cycle of birth and death). They do not believe in the angels or the message of the Prophets, and they follow the philosophers who followed their own whims and desires and the principles and theories of Aristotle.

With regard to their heresy concerning the texts which stipulate commands and prohibitions, they

distort them. They say that salaah (prayer) really means knowledge of their secrets, not the five daily prayers; siyaam (fasting) means concealing their secrets, not refraining from things that break the fast from dawn until sunset; and that Hajj (pilgrimage) means visiting the shaykhs whom they venerate. They regard immoral actions, both outward and inward, as permissible, and they allow marriage to daughters and mothers, and other kinds of tinkering with the texts and denying things that are clearly known to be the laws of Allaah that He has enjoined upon His slaves. Hence Abu Haamid al-Ghazaali and others said concerning them: outwardly their madhhab is Raafidi (Shi'ism) but inwardly it is pure kufr.

(e) Hypocrisy and deceit in their call. They make an outward display of being Shi'ah and of loving Ahl al-Bayt (the Prophet's household) to those whom they call. When they respond to them, they call them to Shi'ism and openly criticize the Sahaabah and slander them. If they accept that then they disclose to them the alleged faults of 'Ali and slander him. If they accept that, then they go on to slander the Prophets and say that they have secrets that go against the message to which they called their nations; they say that they were smart and devised new laws for their nations for them to achieve worldly interests, and so on.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah was asked about how the Druze and Nusairis should be judged. He replied:

These Druze and Nusairis are kaafirs, according to the consensus of the Muslims. It is not permissible to eat the meat they slaughter, or to marry their womenfolk. They do not agree to pay the jizyah, so they are apostates from the religion of Islam and are not Muslims, nor are they Jews or Christians. They do not agree that the five daily prayers are obligatory, or that fasting Ramadaan is obligatory, or that Hajj is obligatory. They do not regard as haraam that which Allaah and His Messenger have forbidden of dead meat or wine, etc. Even if they pronounce the Shahaadatayn, with these beliefs they are kaafirs according to the consensus of the Muslims. As for the Nusairis, they are the followers of Abu Shu'ayb Muhammad ibn Naseer, who was one of the extremists who say that 'Ali is a god, and they recite these words:

"I bear witness that there is no god except Haidar [i.e., 'Ali],

and no screen covering him except Muhammad, the honest and trustworthy one,

and there is no way to him except through Salmaan the all-powerful.”

Haidar is a title given to ‘Ali ibn Abi Taalib (may Allaah be pleased with him).

With regard to the Druze, the followers of Hashtakeen al-Durzi, who was one of the freed slaves of al-Haakim whom he sent to the people of Wadi Taym-Allaah ibn Tha’labah and he called them to believe in the divinity of al-Haakim and they call him “the creator, the all-knowing”, and swear by him, they are among the Ismailis who believe that Muhammad ibn Isma’eel abrogated the law of Muhammad ibn ‘Abd-Allaah. They are worse kaafirs than many other extremist groups. They believe that this universe has no creator and they deny the resurrection and the duties and prohibitions of Islam. They are among the esoteric Qarmatians (al-Qaraamitah) who are worse kaafirs than the Jews, Christians and mushrik Arabs. Basically they follow the philosophy of Aristotle and his ilk, or the Magians. Their ideas are a mixture of Magian philosophy but they make an outward, hypocritical display of being Shi’ah. And Allaah knows best.

Shaykh al-Islam also said, refuting the ideas of some sects of Druze:

The fact that these groups are kaafirs is something concerning which there is no dispute among the Muslims. Rather whoever doubts that they are kaafirs is a kaafir like them. They do not have a status like that of the People of the Book or of the mushrikeen, rather they are misguided kaafirs and it is not permissible to eat their food, their women may be taken captive and their wealth may be confiscated. They are heretics and apostates whose repentance cannot be accepted, rather they should be killed wherever they are found, and they may be cursed because of what they are. It is not permissible to employ them as guards and gatekeepers. Their scholars and leaders must be killed, lest they lead others astray. It is haraam to sleep with them in their houses or to be friends with them, or to walk with them or to attend their funerals, if their death is announced. It is haraam for the Muslim authorities to neglect to carry out the hadd punishment that Allaah has enjoined by whatever means they see fit. And Allaah is the One Whose help we seek and in Whom we put our trust.

From the fatwas of the Standing Committee for Academic Research and Issuing Fatwas.