387024 - Ruling on attributing oneself to one’s mother instead of one’s father

the question

What is the ruling on attributing oneself to one’s mother? Such as a woman saying, for example, that her name is Samah Nada [Nada being her mother’s name], and not mentioning her father’s name. When she is reminded of the verse {Call them by [the names of] their fathers} [al-Ahzab 33:5], she responds by saying that the verse refers to the prohibition on adoption only, and there is no reason not to attribute oneself to one’s mother. She tells us that there are [prominent figures] who were named after their mothers, such as Ibn Taymiyah, Ibn Buhaynah, Ibn Habtah, Shurahbil ibn Hasanah and Ibn al-Hanzaliyyah, and Sayyiduna Bilal ibn Rabah was also called Ibn Hamamah, and Muhammad ibn ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib was called Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

What is required is for a person to attribute himself to his father

What is required is for a person to attribute himself to his father, not to his mother, because Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): {Call them by [the names of] their fathers; it is more just in the sight of Allah} al-Ahzab 33:5].

Al-Bukhari (3508) and Muslim (61) narrated from Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) that he heard the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: “There is no man who knowingly attributes himself to someone other than his father but he has committed an act of disbelief, and whoever claims to belong to people when he is not one of them, let him take his

place in Hell.”

The scholars are unanimously agreed on that.

Al-Bahuti (may Allah have mercy on him) said in *Sharh Muntaha al-Iradat* (3/189):

A person should be attributed to his father, according to scholarly consensus, because Allah, may He be exalted, says: {Call them by [the names of] their fathers} [al-Ahzab 33:5].

Secondly:

Those of the Companions who were known by their mothers’ names and no one objected to that

If someone is known by his mother’s name or by his mother’s family name by way of identifying him or because he has become well known by that name – only – and not by way of judging his lineage, and if no trouble will result from that, such as mixing of lineages or loss of rights, and it is not changed in official papers, then there is nothing wrong with it, and it does not come under the heading of changing lineages; rather it is by way of identifying a person by a name by which he has become widely known.

There were some Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) who became well known by their mothers’ names, and the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did not denounce that.

One example is ‘Abdullah ibn Malik ibn Buhaynah. Buhaynah was the wife of Malik and the mother of ‘Abdullah. He was attributed to his mother sometimes, so he was called ‘Abdullah ibn Buhaynah; and he was attributed to both of his parents sometimes, so he was called ‘Abdullah ibn Malik ibn Buhaynah.

Another example is ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn Umm Maktum. Umm Maktum was the wife of ‘Amr, not his mother; Rather she was the mother of ‘Abdullah. He was often attributed to her, and sometimes he was attributed to both parents.

See: *Sharh Saheeh Muslim* by an-Nawawi (1/202, 9/333).

But this – as noted above – comes under the heading of how a person becomes known among people, by way of identifying him, if he has become well known by this name. It does not come under the heading of altering lineages or of him introducing himself to people as such so that he will become well known by this name.

The one whose lineage is known has no right, when he is asked his name, to say, So-and-so son of So-and-so [his mother's name], attributing himself to his mother, when we do not know what the motive for that is. Is it because he hates his father, or is it because he is following reprehensible feminist notions, or what?

Moreover, if it angers his father, this is another reason for it being forbidden, which is defiant disobedience towards parents ('uquq).

It is also clearly weird and odd, and is going against the tradition of our societies.

And Allah knows best.