101896 - A glimpse at the ‘Ubaydi (Fatimid) state – its origins and beliefs

the question

What is your opinion about who calls for restoration of the Faatimi caliphate and the state of “Obeidis” saying: “The Faatimi state is the Islamic state that has the right solution at the current time as it had it in the past”?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

This person is making a grave error when he describes the ‘Ubaydi state as being an Islamic state.

The ‘Ubaydi state – which is what they call the Fatimid state by way of deception– was founded in Tunis in 297 AH, and moved to Egypt in 362 AH, where it was firmly established, and its power spread to a large part of the Muslim world, such as Syria and the Arabian Peninsula.

Its rule began with al-Mu’izz li Deen-Allaah Mu’aadh ibn al-Mansoor al-‘Ubaydi and ended with al-‘Aadid ‘Abd-Allaah ibn Yoosuf in 567 AH.

The Sunni imams, scholars and historians spoke of the founding of this state and explained that their claims to be descended from Faatimah (may Allaah be pleased with her) were false, and they described how it spread kufr and heresy, persecuted Ahl al-Sunnah, and supported the kuffaar and even cooperated with them against the Muslims. Among these imams and historians were: Abu Shaamah, Ibn Taghri Bardi, Ibn Taymiyah, Ibn Katheer, al-Dhahabi and many others.

Imam al-Dhahabi said of ‘Ubayd-Allaah al-Mahdi, who was the first ruler of that state:

There are several opinions concerning the lineage of al-Mahdi, which may be summed up by noting that he was neither Haashimi nor Faatimi [i.e., he was not descended from Banu Haashim or from Faatimah]. End quote.

Siyar A’laam al-Nubala’ (15/151).

And he said:

The genealogists and scholars denied his claims concerning his lineage. End quote.

Tareekh al-Islam, events of 321-330 AH, p. 23

It was narrated that Abu Shaamah – who wrote a book about this state entitled Kashf ma kaana ‘alayhi Banu ‘Ubayd min al-Kufr wa’l-Kadhb wa’l-Makr wa’l-Kayd – said:

They claimed to be descendents of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), although they are descended from a Magian or Jew, until they became known as such, and their state was called al-dawlah al-‘alawiyyah (‘Alawi state – i.e., descendents of ‘Ali) or al-dawlah al-faatimiyyah (Fatimid state). But in fact it is the esoteric, heretic “Jewish state” or “Magian state”. End quote.

See: Siyar A’laam al-Nubala’ (15/213) and al-Rawdatayn fi Akhbaar al-Dawlatayn ((1/216).

Among the actions and beliefs of the rulers of that state: they claimed to have knowledge of the unseen, and they made claims of Prophethood and divinity, and they demanded that their subjects and followers prostrate to them, and they reviled the Sahaabah. There follows proof of the above and more:

1 –Claims of Prophethood and divinity:

al-Dhahabi (may Allaah have mercy on him) narrated that the fuqaha’ and devoted worshippers supported the Khawaarij in their war against the ‘Ubaydis because of the kufr and heresy of the latter. When Abu Yazeed Makhlad ibn Keedaad al-Khaariji wanted to fight Banu ‘Ubayd, al-Dhahabi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The fuqaha’ and devoted worshippers hastened to make full preparations with drums and banners. Ahmad ibn Abi’l-Waleed addressed them on Friday at Jumu’ah prayers, and he exhorted them and said: Strive against the one who disbelieves in Allaah and claims that he is a lord instead of Allaah.

… And he said: O Allaah, this kaafir Qarmati who is known as Ibn ‘Ubayd-Allaah and claims to be divine is denying Your blessings, and He disbelieves in Your Lordship, slanders Your Messengers, disbelieves in Muhammad Your Prophet, and sheds blood. Curse him greatly and humiliate him deeply and send Your curse upon him morning and evening. Then he came down and led them in Jumu’ah prayer.

Siyar A’laam al-Nubala’ (15/155).

Among those who claimed divinity was the ‘Ubaydi ruler of whom al-Dhahabi said: The heretic Ismaili who claims to be divine.

Al-Siyar (15/173).

He also said concerning him:

It was said that he wanted to claim to be divine and he started to do so, but the prominent figures of his state spoke to him and warned that all the people would rebel against him. End quote.

Al-Siyar (15/176).

Among those who incited the ruler to make these claims was Hamzah ibn ‘Ali al-Zawzani who was one of those who claimed that the ruler was divine, and who founded the Druze sect in Syria.

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

The heretic Durzi was killed because of his claims that the ruler was divine, and some of the ignorant used to say when they saw the ruler: “O One, O One, O giver of life, O giver of death.”

Al-Siyar (15/180, 181).

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

I read in a one-volume book of history which describes what happened each year and was written by some good people around the year 630 and was given to the ruler of Egypt, al-Malik al-Saalih,

in 667:

This action (i.e., putting an end to the ‘Ubaydi state) was one of the noblest of the deeds of Salaah al-Deen al-Ayyoobi. What a good thing he did, for these people were baatinis and heretics who called for belief in transmigration of souls and the belief that the divine was physically incarnated in them.

Al-Dhahabi said: al-Haakim said to his propagandist: How many do you have listed (as followers)? He said: Sixteen thousand who believe that you are god.

Their poet said:

“Rule, for you are the one, the compeller; it is what you wish and not what the divine decree wills”

May Allaah curse both the praiser and the praised, for this is no less abhorrent than when Pharaoh said, “I am your lord, most high” [al-Naaz’iaat 79:24].

One of their poets said concerning al-Mahdi in Raqqaadah:

“Adam and Nooh are there, and anything other than Allaah is nothing.

The Messiah is there in Raqqaadah, Allaah in His glory is there.”

He said:

This man is worse in his kufr than the Christians, because the Christians believe that the divine was incarnated physically in ‘Eesa only, but these people believe that He was incarnated in the bodies of Adam, Nooh, the Prophets and all the imams.

This is their creed, may Allaah curse them.

Tareekh al-Islam, events of 561-570 AH, p. 274-281.

When ‘Ubayd-Allaah claimed to be a prophet, he brought two of the faqeehs of Qayrawaan to appear before him as he was sitting on his throne, and he ordered one of his servants to say to the

two Shaykhs: “Do you bear witness that this man is the messenger of Allaah?” They said: “By Allaah, if he came to us with the sun on his right and the moon on his left, both of them saying that he was a messenger of Allaah, we would not believe that.” So he ordered that they be slaughtered.

Al-Siyar (14/217).

2 – Claim to have knowledge of the unseen

Ibn Khallikaan (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

They claimed to have knowledge of the unseen, and there are well known reports concerning that.

Wafiyaat al-A’yaan (5/373, 374)

3 – People prostrated for them

They ordered the people to prostrate for them. al-Dhahabi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

In 396 AH, khutbahs were given in the two holy sanctuaries under the authority of the ruler of Egypt al-Haakim, and the people were ordered to stand up and prostrate when he was mentioned. Inna Lillaahi wa inna ilayhi raaji’oon (Verily to Allaah we belong and unto Him is our return).

Duwal al-Islam (1/350).

When al-Haakim was mentioned they would stand up and prostrate for him. Al-Dhahabi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

They stood up and prostrated in the market place, and in their meeting places. Inna Lillaahi wa inna ilayhi raaji’oon (Verily to Allaah we belong and unto Him is our return). These ‘Ubaydis were an evil that befell Islam and the Muslims.

Al-Tareekh, events of 381-400 AH, p. 234.

4 – They killed the scholars who did not follow their beliefs

Abu'l-Hasan al-Qaabisi, the author of al-Mulakhkhas, said: The number of those killed by 'Ubayd-Allaah and his descendents in his torture chamber was four thousand scholars and worshippers, to stop them saying "Radiya Allaah 'anhum (may Allaah be pleased with them)" about the Sahaabah.

Al-Siyar (15/145).

5 – The Qaraamitah participated in their crimes

al-Dhahabi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

During the reign of al-Mahdi the Qaraamitah committed crimes in Bahrain. They attacked the pilgrims, killing and taking prisoners, and they violated the sanctuary of Allaah in Makkah and took away the Black Stone. 'Ubayd-Allaah corresponded with them and incited them, may Allaah destroy him.

Al-Siyar (15/147).

6 – Reviling the Sahaabah

During the reign of al-'Azeez, the Sahaabah were reviled openly.

Al-Siyar (15/170).

He ordered that words reviling the Sahaabah be written on the doors of the mosques and in the streets, and he ordered his state workers to revile them in 395 AH.

Tareekh al-Islam, events of 395 AH, p. 283.

And he said:

Reviling of the Sahaabah was widespread during his reign (i.e., al-Mustansir) and the Sunnah was unknown and hidden.

Al-Siyar (15/196).

In brief, they were baatinis who changed the religion of Islam; they were outwardly Raafidis but inwardly they were heretics.

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

They changed the religion of Islam. They were outwardly Raafidis, but inwardly they were Ismailis.

Al-Siyar (15/141).

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

As for the baatini ‘Ubaydis, they are enemies of Allaah and His Messenger.

Al-Siyar (15/373).

He also (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

How these ‘Ubaydis tampered with and changed the religion of Islam is indescribable.

Al-Siyar (16/149).

Al-Qaadi ‘Iyaad (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

Abu Yoosuf al-Ra’eeni said: The scholars in Qayrawaan are unanimously agreed that Banu ‘Ubayd are apostates and heretics.

Tarteeb al-Madaarik (4/720); see also al-Siyar (15/151).

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in al-Radd ‘ala al-Bakri:

The ‘Ubaydis, who are inwardly heretics, follow the beliefs of the philosophers and Magians and have mixed them with Raafidi views. The best they show of commitment to Islam is the Raafidi way, but inwardly they are heretics, worse than the Jews and Christians.

Hence the scholars said concerning them that they are outwardly Raafidis, but inwardly their belief is pure kufr. They are among the people who venerate shrines the most, and believe in astrology, and other religious practices of the mushrikeen. They are the least likely of people to venerate the mosques which Allaah has ordered to be raised (to be cleaned, and to be honoured), in them His Name is remembered (cf. al-Noor 24:36).Their legacy in Cairo proves that. End quote.

And he said (may Allaah have mercy on him) in al-Radd ‘ala al-Mantiqiyyeen:

The ‘Ubaydis were outwardly Muslim and said that they were Shi’ah, so they appeared to be Raafidis but inwardly they were heretics as Abu Haamid al-Ghazaali said in al-Mustazhari: Outwardly they are Raafidis but inwardly their belief is pure kufr. What Abu Haamid said about them is that on which there is consensus among Muslim scholars. End quote.

He said (may Allaah have mercy on him) in Minhaaj al-Sunnah:

They (the rulers of the ‘Ubaydi state) are well known for their heresy, opposition to Allaah and His Messenger, apostasy and hypocrisy. End quote.

Ibn Katheer said in al-Bidaayah wa’l-Nihaayah (11/386):

When the khateeb mentioned al-Haakim the people would all stand up out of respect. They also did that in Egypt, and in addition to that they would prostrate for him. They would prostrate when he was mentioned. So those who were praying would prostrate and those who were in the marketplace would prostrate when they prostrated. May Allaah curse him. End quote.

Such was the ‘Ubaydi state, and these are some of their evil deeds. Thus it is clear that the one who says that the ‘Ubaydi state was an Islamic state and ignores the blessed states and times in which Islam ruled, and focuses instead on the ‘Ubaydi state as the solution for our own times, is wrong. This is a bad and abhorrent statement.

The one who says that wants to repeat the spread of heresy and kufr, the reviling of the Sahaabah and the killing of the scholars!

There is no solution for the Muslims except to return to the teachings of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and his noble Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them).

We ask Allaah to bring the Muslims back soundly to their religion.

See the study entitled Mawqif al-Imam al-Dhahabi min al-Dawlah al-'Ubaydiyyah nasaban wa mu'taqadan by Dr. Sa'd ibn Moosa al-Moosa, assistant professor at the Faculty of Sharee'ah in Umm al-Qura University, which was published in Majallat Jaami'at Umm al-Qura, issue no. 24, Rabee' al-Awwal 1423 AH/May 2002 CE.

And Allaah is the Source of strength.