20760 - She is confused about which groups and sects are telling the truth

the question

I know you have already explained the fact that the way to find the real jammah is one which follows hadith and sunna, as these poeple cannot go astray.

i was with eh-le hadith (saudi salafis) until lately i have received so much info from hanafi's and also shaikh faisal too. they criticise the salafs so much and off cousre with hadith, which i cant really reject. so i put these arguments forward to the salaf and they quoted hadith too and they were equally persuasive, so i cant really reject them too.
i cant leave the salafs because they are the only sound jammah in my little (unnoticed town) where no other organisations are present. apart from the grave? peer worshippers.
and if i do follow them would that constitute me blind following the salafs cos as the hanafi say we must follow only one imam?
to sum up all what is the best solution? why do majority of these groups,sects whatever always quote hadith and then say it has saheeh sanad, but they contradict other hadith? so how can they be authentic? so what is to be done??????.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

We have discussed in many of our answers the standard by which the Muslim can judge the groups, sects and parties that go against Islam. We will explain it in more detail here:

With regard to differences which you see between the Muslim nowadays, Allah has not left the people confused and unable to distinguish the true from the false, rather Allah has created signs by which the truth and those who are sincere may be known, and He has created clear evidence and proof for the correct path, from which no one deviates but he is doomed.

When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) spoke of the ummah splitting into seventy-three groups, he said that they would all be in Hell apart from one, the one which follows the same path as him and his companions. This is the standard, so we have no choice but follow in the footsteps of the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them). It is not sufficient for a person to quote a hadeeth and say that it is saheeh, then use that as evidence to support his madhhab or his point of view according to his own understanding of that hadeeth; rather what he should do is to research whether the Sahaabah understood this hadeeth in this manner or not.

This is the criterion which divides those who really follow the truth from others. This means referring the interpretation of Islam to our righteous forebears, the Sahaabah and those who followed them in truth, for they are the best and most knowledgeable of this ummah, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said.

Anyone who examines the groups that have deviated from the Straight Path will see that they have confused the people by quoting a verse or a hadeeth out of context, so that people think that they are following the Qur'aan and Sunnah, but they cannot prove that this is the way in which the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) understood these texts.

Those who distort the attributes of Allah, those who worship graves and circumambulate them, those who dance in dhikr, those who deny the divine will and decree (al-qadar), those who say that the Qur'aan was created, and other deviant beliefs and ways, none of them claim that his belief is the same as the belief of the Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Even if they claim that they have a verse or hadeeth to support them, they cannot prove that their interpretation is the same as that of those who witnessed the revelations and heard the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), namely the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them).

This is an important and precise standard by means of which a person can know whether what he hears and reads of beliefs and ways whose proponents say is true guidance is in fact true or false.

If you follow what the Salafi scholars tell you of Tawheed, fiqh and hadeeth, this is following true Islam, which Allah wants for all people. The Shaytaan may come and tell you and whisper to you that this is taqleed (blind imitation) and is not permissible; undoubtedly that is the first step towards deviation from the right path. Allah has enjoined upon the ordinary Muslim to ask the scholars and to follow their opinions and fatwas. You know that the closest of them to the right path and the truth are those who follow the path of the Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in their understanding of the Qur'aan and Sunnah; they are the followers of the righteous Salaf.

The Muslim who has some measure of Islamic knowledge can find out for himself whether what he hears or reads is sound or not, by studying and comparing it with that which has been proven from the righteous salaf.

There is no reason why the one who goes against the way of the Salaf should not be right in some cases, but no way or madhhab can be sound apart from the way of the salaf or first generations of this ummah, the Sahaabah and Taabi'een and those who follow them in truth.

Everything quoted by the Salafi scholars is the view of the Sahaabah and of Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib, al-Zuhri, Mujaahid, 'Ata', Maalik, Hammaad ibn Zayd, Hammaad ibn Salamah, al-Shaafa'i, Ahmad, al-Bukhaari, Muslim, Abu Dawood, and other prominent scholars.

You will find that the innovators quote that which they think supports their view, and ignore that which clearly proves that they are wrong. You will find them mentioning things in their books that goes against the Sunnah, and rejecting the Sunnah because it goes against their books, distorting that which is stated clearly in the Qur'aan, describing as da'eef that which is clearly stated in the Sunnah because it goes against their opinions and their whims and desires, and so on. For this reason they are called ahl al-ahwa' (people of whims and desires).

With regard to Ahl al-Sunnah, they are more objective, they look at the Sunnah without any bias or preconceptions, and they give the Sunnah – if it is saheeh – precedence over everything else. They do not have any whims and desires that they follow to the extent that they reject a hadeeth or

distort a verse for their sake.

In fact there is no contradiction between the texts of the revelation, rather there may appear to be a contradiction in some cases. Every field of knowledge has specialized scholars, so in the field of hadeeth there are scholars who can explain what is saheeh (sound) and what is not, and can explain what is meant and dispel confusion, and reconcile between reports which seem to contradict one another.

To sum up:

The best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and the people with the most knowledge of this guidance are the scholars of hadeeth, namely the righteous salaf. Those who follow them will be saved and those who go against them will be doomed.

So you must adhere to this path and ask Allah for guidance and steadfastness.

With regard to the questioner saying that Ahl al-Hadeeth are the “Saudi salafis”, this restriction is not correct.

Ahl al-hadeeth are not restricted to a particular country or to certain people, rather Ahl al-hadeeth includes everyone who follows the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and understands it correctly in accordance with the understanding of the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) and those who follow them in truth.

And Allah is the Guide.