

Dealing with differences Imam Muhammad Mahmoud

- When Musa (AS) came back he found the people worshipping the cow, excuse of Harun (AS) was that if he insists on them they will be divided. You cannot change munkar with a bigger one.
- When u have a strong evidence- u don't need to make ijima (majority opinion)
- Differences of opinions happen when there is no definite evidence- so they have to use their intellect
- The 4 imams did their best to follow the Quran and the sunnah
- Many people say to go back to the Quran and sunnah and not have any differences. This is the wrong understanding. The differences started with the angels- e.g. the man who killed 99 souls- when he went to the a non scholar who gave him the opinion that wasn't correct (that Allah (SAW) will never forgive him for his sins, he killed another soul and made it 100) until he went to the scholar- who told him to move into another city so that he can change- he died on the way; the angels disputed on whether he was of hell or heaven.
- Suleiman(AS) and his son Dawud (AS); the same story was presented to Dawud (AS) the man with the sheep that ate from the grass of another man (they made different agreement on how settle the dispute between these 2 men).
Two ladies whom each had a baby- one animal came and killed one of them- they both said that the remaining child was theirs; Dawud decided that the one who was crying was the owner- Suleiman came and said give me a knife and I will cut it in half the real mother who wasn't crying said – don't cut up the child, just live the baby to the other woman crying. This shows that different interpretations can be derived from the same evidence presented.
- Allah(SWA) said in the Quran that he gave knowledge to both of them; Suleiman(AS) was more correct but Allah(SWA) praised both of them.
- When u follow the scholar's with opinion that was that strong- u don't do blind imitation- none of them say just follow me and not others
- You take everyone from some of their words and reject from some of their words- except the prophets
- Scholars- all of them said that follow the Prophet(SAW) and throw their opinions if they contradict the Prophet's
- Imam Malik- he wrote the first book of hadith (70 scholars agreed upon it)- it was one of the most authentic books- he was given a great opportunity- by the caliph who told him to distribute his book to everyone- he said no
- Don't oppress people to follow only one opinion and leave the others
- Umar (RA); chose Abdullah ibn Masud- for the people Iraq- they had over 300 differences of opinion- Umar said he chose him over others for the people of Iraq although he used him to get opinions and advice
- Umar(RA) and Abdullah ibn Umar(RA) had about 20 differences of opinions

- Unity is very important; the prophet(SAW) told Aisha(RA) that he wanted to change the kaaba to have 2 doors but because they were so close to the times of ignorance so there would have been eruption of disputes about it, he didn't do it

The differences are they good or bad:

- It depends on the subject- the differences were mentioned with something good- differences are great mercy- eg Umar ibn Abdul-Aziz said - it is better for me than a red camel that the Sahabas (RA) has differences as if they had none of them then I would have no choice but just to follow this one opinion
- Most scholars believe that they are good- eg Ibn Hanbal- man wrote a book and called it a book of differences and he told him to name it a book of mercy- as differences are a blessing from Allah(SWA)
- It is one type of differences- the good differences.
- Hadith- Abdullah ibn Masud (RA) and another man; they had differences in recitation (due to accents and dialects)- these still exist in Quran recitation even today. So they came to the Prophet (SAW) and he told them that both of them were correct- don't have dispute, because people before u had differences and Allah (SWA) destroyed them.
- He warned them about the differences he was displeased about- u have to follow the rules and manners for it to be good
- U could be right or wrong- always live this room in your heart- debating with others- use the wisdom as Allah(SWA) has said- use the best way
- Imam Shafie said – I love the truth comes from the tongue of the person who is debating with me
- Allah(SWA) said u will never be questioned about our crimes and u will be questioned about ur actions (this is manners of talking to others; crimes are bad and action can be both good and bad)- so don't talk about the bad of others
- Some differences are meant to be others aren't
- Haram and halal- it can't be both- truth and falsehood can't be together
- General public practicing Muslims won't be blamed by Allah(SWA) for following a wrong opinion as long as they searched the truth- e.g. hajj will count correct even if they discovered later that Arafat was stood on the wrong day- it is because they made collective agreement. Same with taraweeh and moon sightings.
- It is better for you to follow the scholars
- The scholars did not have disputes among themselves; eg Imam Shafie would pray behind Malik even when he believed that u have to mention bisimilahi rahman raheem which Malik didn't believe
- Story during the time of the prophet(SAW)-banu Quraida broke a treaty and he wanted to give them a lesson; so he told the Sahaba (RA) that no one will pray asr except in the place of Banu Quraida- so they have no difference of authenticity - as they had heard it directly from the prophet himself; so when the time of asr came - in the middle of the way to Banu Quraida- they had different opinions of when to pray- by the time u make- u might miss it- will u pray on time or wait
- Some prayed on time (they said that the prophet(SAW) wanted them to hurry- so he never wanted us to delay Asr if he was with us he wouldn't- they took the meaning behind the statement)
- The others took it word by word- so they stuck with it and waited until they reached Banu Quraida

- They told the Prophet(SAW) what happened- he told both of them that they were right
- We don't follow our desires, we follow the method of deriving opinions- where evidence is used with the right acquired tools.
- Hadith- if a qualified scholar made an opinion and was correct- 2 rewards and if he was wrong- 1 reward and one excuse
- The one who isn't qualified even if he was correct he was wrong so no reward and he will be punished for it as in the first place u shouldn't have done so- eg someone who pretends to be a doctor and treats people- then one day u will kill a person- this person deserves to be imprisoned. The same has to do with religion; the akhirah of people is more important than their worldly life.
- During the prophet's(SAW) time; a man was in a state of janaaba; it was really cold- he asked some Sahabas (RA) who told him that he had to have a shower in order to pray- he died and the prophet blamed them for his death and he told them that next time they should be the ones who know (himself)
- Umar(RA) told all the companions to stay with him for consultations so it minimized the differences
But during caliph Uthman's (RA) time they started to happen as they were let to live in different parts of the world
- You need to understand the reasons behind the differences- we should understand how we should deal with them.