

ANSWER TO QUESTION: DISTANCING THE SHABAB FROM HAVING THE MUFTI CHARACTER

Question:

It has been mentioned in an "Answer to question" that the Shabab should avoid acting as Muftis and that if they were asked about a current matter concerning a specific person, they should inform him frankly that they are not Muftis. It has also been mentioned that the questions they bring from other people in the shape of Fatwas would not be accepted and would not be answered, lest they turn into Sheikhs and lest their activity turn into a profession. We do know for a fact that Iftaa' (issuing Fatwas) is general, it includes that which is adopted in terms of thoughts and rules and that which is not adopted, because the Iftaa' is the conveyance of the Shari'ah rule, but not by way of imposition. So could it be right for you to confine our conveyance of thoughts and rules to that which is adopted, and to dismiss that which is not adopted, knowing that the Messenger of Allah (saw) has warned against the Iftaa' of the ignorant and said: "He who withholds knowledge Allah will bridle him with a bridle of fire." This Hadith has come in general terms, and it includes every acquired, received and recognised knowledge, adopted or otherwise; the Hadith warns against withholding the answer to a question while knowing the answer and described it as a withholding of knowledge. It also includes the knowledge which the Muslim had acquired regardless of whether he was asked or not. In principle, he should pass on the knowledge, regardless of whether he was asked or not. Otherwise it would be regarded as a withholding of knowledge which Allah (swt) has warned against. Hence, the type of knowledge in this context is unrestricted and so is the withholding, it includes passing on this knowledge whenever asked and whenever one is present even if he were not asked. As for your understanding: "Lest people think that the Shabab of the Da'awah are Sheikhs, and lest they turn it into a profession." I do not see it myself, for people have started to trust most of our Shabab and because they are Shabab from the party, they come to them because they know for a fact that they are the most pious of people and the best informed about the Shari'ah rules. Besides, people do not differentiate between the adopted thoughts and rules and the non-adopted. All they know is that our Shabab do have the full awareness. Therefore, I suggest that you change your viewpoint about those people on the one hand. On the other hand, what do I say to someone who has eaten and drunk in Ramadhan forgetfully? What do I say to him? Do I keep silent? Do I say to him go and asked someone else for a Fatwa? Despite the fact that I know for sure that he should continue his fast? What do I say to someone I bumped into in Mina during Hajj and he asked me: Is it sound to stone before noon during the Days of Tashreeq or not? Or if I saw that he was about to throw the stones before noon with my knowledge that this is wrong and it would not be fitting, do I keep silent or demonstrate to him the Shari'ah rule? There are many examples such as these and perhaps one may come and ask for a Fatwa about a matter whose time is very tight and if I do not give him the Fatwa he will violate a Shari'ah rule. Therefore, I hope that you clarify the issue in a comprehensive and conclusive manner.

Answer:

The purpose of preventing the Shabab from taking a leading role in giving Fatwas is not a withholding of knowledge from people, it is rather aimed at distancing the Shabab from having the Mufti character. The Shabab is a politician; hence, the image he should be reflecting is that of a politician as oppose to that of a Mufti. Besides his activity is to culture people with the adopted thoughts of the party not to give Fatwas. If he is a Sheikh, he should then change the image which people know him; this change will be by turning the specific question he is asked into a general thought with which he cultures the person or persons who ask him. That if he knows the answer. If he does not know the answer, he should say: "I do not know." It would be wrong for him to say: "I will ask the party for you." Or say: "I will look into the matter for you." The Shabab are first and foremost, Da'awah carriers treading the political path and it would be wrong for their image to be that of the Muftis before people; it should rather be that of the politician. Therefore, the point at issue is not withholding knowledge, but rather that of the manner in which the thoughts are conveyed to people. This manner is the one and only manner, which the Shabab studied in the party books.

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