

The Types of *Taaghoot*

والطواغيتُ كثيرونَ ورؤوسُهُمُ خمسَةٌ: إبليسُ لعنةُ الله، ومَنْ عُبِدَ وهو راضٍ

The *taaghoots* are many, and their heads are five: Iblees - may Allaah's curse be upon him. Whoever is worshipped and is pleased with that.⁷⁹

[79]:

His saying: "And the *taaghoots* are many and the heads of them are five."

The *taaghoots* upon whom this definition applies are: everyone who is worshipped or followed or obeyed, and they are many but their heads are five – meaning their major ones are five.

Firstly, Iblees, may Allaah's curse be upon him - meaning: may Allaah expel him and distance him away from His Mercy on account of the fact that he refused to prostrate to Aadam and he disobeyed Allaah, the Perfect and Most High and he was proud and haughty. And He said:

﴿ قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ ﴾

And he (Iblees) said: I am better than him (Aadam), You created me from fire and You created him from clay. [38:76]

So therefore he disobeyed the command of Allaah and was haughty; therefore Allaah cursed him and He repelled him and distanced him. And he is called Iblees, it is said, because he *ablasa* (despaired) of Mercy – meaning he despaired of Mercy. So the *mublis* is one who despairs of something.

So Iblees, may Allaah's curse be upon him, is the head of the *taaghoots* because he is the one who commands with worship of other than Allaah and he is the one who commands with following other than the Messenger of Allaah *sallallaahu'alaihiwasallam* and he is the one who commands obedience to other than Allaah by declaring things to be permissible or forbidden.

So Iblees is the source of evil and he is the head of the *taaghoots*.

The second category (of *taaghoots*) is:

The one who is worshipped and he is pleased with that – meaning he is worshipped and he is pleased with the people's worship of him. So he is a *taaghoot*.

As for one who is worshipped and he is not pleased with that then he does not enter into that.

For ‘Eesaa *‘alaibissalaam* has been worshipped besides Allaah but he was not pleased with that. And his mother and ‘Uzayr and the *amliyaa* (beloved servants of Allaah) and the righteous people from the servants of Allaah, they are not pleased with that (worship of them). Rather they used to criticise this and fight against those who did it. So whoever is worshipped and he is not pleased with that, then he is not called a *taaghoot*.

And that is because when Allaah sent down His saying:

﴿إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصْبُ جَهَنَّمَ أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وَرَدُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾﴾

You (people of shirk) and whatever idols you worship will be fuel for the Hellfire. You will enter it. [21:98]

- the people of shirk became happy and they said, “We worship the Messiah (‘Eesaa) and we worship such and such and we worship such and such. Therefore they will be with us in the Fire.”

So Allaah, the Most High, sent down:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَسِيسَهَا ﴿١٠٢﴾ وَهُمْ فِي مَا اشْتَهَتْ أَنفُسُهُمْ خَالِدُونَ﴾

Those for whom Allaah has written that they shall be people of bliss, they shall be kept far away from it. They shall not hear even the slightest sound from it (the Fire) but rather they shall be enjoying whatever their souls desire forever. [21:101-2]

And there occurs in the other aayah that they said:

﴿وَقَالُوا ءِالِهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ ﴿٥٨﴾﴾

And they say: are our gods better or is he?

Meaning: ‘Eesaa *‘alaibissalaam*

Then He said:

﴿مَا ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًا بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ مَثَلًا لِّبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ ﴿٥٩﴾﴾

They do not quote him as an example to you except in order to argue. Indeed they are an argumentative people; he was no more than a slave upon whom We bestowed favour and We made him an example for the Banoo Israa.eel. [43:58-9]

So he is a slave of Allaah and he was not pleased that he should be worshipped besides Allaah. Indeed Allaah sent him to criticise that:

﴿ مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ أَنْ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ ﴾

(‘Eesaa will say on the Day of Resurrection), “I did not say to them except what You commanded me to – that you should worship Allaah alone, my Lord and your Lord. [5:117]

Therefore one who is worshipped and he is not pleased with that – he does not enter under this threat and he is not a *taagboot* because he rejects and criticises that. This is because a *taagboot* is one who is pleased with worship besides Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic.

وَمَنْ دَعَا النَّاسَ إِلَى عِبَادَةِ نَفْسِهِ

Whoever calls the people to the worship of himself.⁸⁰

[80]:

The third: “Whoever calls the people to the worship of himself”:

Such as the heads of the people of shirk, those who call the people to worship them, such as Fir’awn who said:

﴿ فَقَالَ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَى ﴾

So he (Fir’awn) said, “I am your highest Lord.” [79:24]

And such as Namrood and such as the extreme Soofees, those who call the people to worship them, to such an extent that they give instructions to the people to worship them after they have died, so that one of them says, “When matters become very difficult for you then come to my grave” – meaning: “when affairs become difficult for you, then you should come to my grave and a few handfuls of earth cannot prevent you from me.”

So they counsel the people to come to their (the leaders’) graves and they promise them that they (the leaders) will carry out their needs. So whoever calls the people to worship of himself, whether whilst he is alive or dead, then he is from the heads of the *taaghboots*. And likewise whoever calls the people to worship someone else besides him from the *taaghboots* and they are the callers to shirk, they are *taaghboots*, those who falsely beautify shirk for the people and they call it with other than its name, and they say, “This is a case of tawassul (seeking legitimate means to Allaah) or a case of *shafaa’ah* (legitimate intercession).” And they are many.

Those are *taaghboots* because they call the people to shirk, so they call to the worship of other than Allaah and they call that (shirk) with other than its name and they falsely adorn it for the people with doubts and falsely adorned speech. They are *taaghboots*. The callers to shirk are *taaghboots*. And everyone who is worshipped besides Allaah and is pleased with that or calls the people to the worship of himself or calls the people to worship of other than Allaah then he is from the *taaghboots*; indeed he is from the heads of the *taaghboots* – we ask Allaah for safety and salvation.

وَمَنْ ادَّعَىٰ شَيْئًا مِنْ عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ

Whoever claims to possess anything from the knowledge of the affairs of the hidden and unseen (*al-Ghayb*)⁸¹

[81]:

The fourth one is “whoever claims to possess anything from knowledge of the hidden and unseen”.

And entering into this are the sorcerers and the astrologers and the fortunetellers and the geomancers, and everyone who claims that he possesses knowledge of the *ghayb* and says to the people, “Such and such will occur for you. For you, you will receive bliss or you will receive some hardship or you will have a successful marriage or you will have an unsuccessful one. Those people claim knowledge of the hidden and the unseen. And the hidden and unseen is not known except by Allaah, the Perfect and Most High.

And knowledge of the *ghayb* is not known except by Allaah, the Perfect and Most High. He, the Most High, said:

﴿قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾

Say: No one in the Heavens or the Earth knows the *ghayb* except Allaah. [27:65]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿عَلِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٦﴾ إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ﴾

He (Allaah) is the Knower of the *ghayb*. He does not reveal what He has kept hidden to anyone except to one whom He is pleased with whom He has sent as a Messenger. [72:26-27]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبُرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٌ فِي ظِلْمَتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٌ وَلَا يَابِسٌ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٥٩﴾﴾

And with Allaah are the keys to the *ghayb*; no one knows it except Him. And He knows whatever is in the land and in the ocean; and no leaf falls except that He knows of it. Nor is there any grain in the darkness of the Earth nor any fresh thing nor any dry thing except that it is written in a Clear Book. [6:59]

﴿ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ ﴾

no one knows it except Him...

This is a limitation. So no one knows the *ghayb* except for Allaah or one from His Messengers to whom Allaah has revealed something from the *ghayb* for the benefit of Mankind and as miracle for the messenger. However he will not know the *ghayb* from himself. Rather he only knows from Allaah's teaching it to him. So no one knows the *ghayb* except for Allaah. So whoever claims to have knowledge of the *ghayb* then he would be a sharer with Allaah with regards to something particular to Him, He the Perfect.

Therefore, that person is a *musbrik* (person of *shirk*), he is a *taaghoot*, and he is a *kaafir* (disbeliever).

And this is one of the greatest forms of apostasy from Islaam.

وَمَنْ حَكَمَ بِغَيْرِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ

And whoever judges by other than what Allaah sent down.⁸²

[82]:

The fifth one is whoever judges by other than that which Allaah sent down.

And the proof is His saying, He the Most High:

﴿يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ﴾

They wish to refer for judgment to the *taaghoot*. [4:60]

So whoever judges by other than that which Allaah sent down holding that to be permissible to do, then he will be a *taaghoot*.

And the person who says, “It is permissible to refer for judgment to man-made laws or to the customs of the times of *Jaabilyyah* or to the customs of the tribes of the Bedouins and to leave behind the Legislation,” – he says, “This is lawful to do,” or he says, “This is equal to that which Allaah sent down.”

And if he says, “It is better than that which Allaah sent down or equal to that which Allaah sent down,” or he says, “It is just permissible to do,” and he doesn’t even say, “It is equal or better,” – he just says, “It is permissible and allowed to do this”, then this person is a *taaghoot*. And this is by the text of the Qur’aan.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ﴾

They wish to refer for judgment to the *taaghoot*. [4:60]

He was called a *taaghoot* because he has gone beyond his limit.

As for a person who judges by other than that which Allaah has sent down whilst he affirms that that which Allaah sent down is what is obligatory to follow and is the Truth and that anything else is false and futile and that he is judging with something futile - then this person is counted as being a *kaafir* who has committed *al-kufr-ul-asghar* (lesser *kufr*) which does not take a person out of the religion.

However he is upon great danger, he is upon a way which may lead to *kufr* which takes a person out of the religion if he becomes lax about this matter.

As for one who judges by other than that which Allaah sent down, without intending to do so, rather (he does so) from *ijtihad* (personal striving and deduction) and he is a person

who is rightful to be performing *ijtibaad* from the people of *fiqh*, and he performs *ijtibaad* but he does not actually attain the judgment of Allaah and he makes a mistake in his *ijtibaad*, then this is forgiven for him.

He *sallallaahu‘alaihiwasallam* said:

@ إذا حكم الحاكم ، فاجتهد ، ثم أصاب ، فله أجران ،
وإذا حكم فاجتهد ، ثم أخطأ ، فله أجر !

“When the judge judges and strives and he reaches the correct conclusion, then he will receive two rewards. And when he judges and strives and reaches the incorrect conclusion, then for him there is one reward.”⁹¹

Because he did not deliberately commit a mistake. He was intending the Truth; he was intending conformity with the judgment of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic. However, he was not granted the success of attaining it. So this person is counted as being excused and one who will receive reward.

But it is not permissible to follow him upon the error.

So from this are the matters of *ijtibaad* of the jurists who have made a mistake in those matters or the striving of the judges in the courts when they strive to arrive at a ruling and they exert effort to reach the Truth. However they are not granted it. So their error is forgiven.

⁹¹ Reported by al Bukhaaree (7352) and Muslim from the hadeeth of ‘Amr ibn al ‘Aas *radiyallaahu‘anhu*