



***al-Bay'aa wal Hizbiyyah* (Allegiance and Partisanship).**

Saleh As-Saleh

All Praise is due to Allah, and may the *salaah* and *salaam* be on Prophet Muhammad, his household, the noble companions and those who follow them until the Day of Resurrection. The subject of this lecture is, “*al-Bay'aa wa Hizbiyyah*” (Allegiance and Partisanship).

***al-Bay'aa* (Allegiance):**

Islam brought forth the obligation to give *bay'aa* (allegiance), and the Prophet (ﷺ: *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) commanded it. The allegiance was originally given to him, then the leaders after him and then the *khulafah* (caliphs) afterwards. In our time, many deviated; making *bay'aa* to anyone they chose from those who set themselves up as leaders of Muslim groups. Due to the large number of groups, *al-bay'aa* has multiplied and varied, becoming even numerous. This has led to disputes, with each group claiming to be on the truth and that their leader deserves the legal *bay'aa* (allegiance).

Definition of *al-Bay'aa*:

Linguistically, *al-bay'aa* means to reach an agreement with respect to matters of trade or on obedience and following (i.e., a covenant).

As for the Islamic meaning (*al-istilah*), *al-bay'aa* means the covenant on obedience. It is as if the one who pledges allegiance gives the covenant to his *ameer* (leader), assigning him the ability to conclude matters concerning himself and the Muslims at large; this *ameer* can not be disputed with in any way. Similarly, the Muslim agrees to

obey the *ameer* in what he assigns from certain tasks, whether it is in times of ease or difficulty, in that which he likes, and that which he dislikes.

When the people of the past used to give *al-bay'aa* to the leaders and give him the covenant, they would put their hands in his hand affirming the *'ahd*, confirming the promise of allegiance in a manner similar to the way people shake hands after reaching an agreement while selling and buying.

Definition of *Hizbiyyah* (Partisanship):

From the linguistic aspect, *al-hizb* means a group of people; the plural of *hizb* is *ahzab* (parties). The *hizb* of a man are his followers and his soldiers, who are holding to the same view as him. If a group of people's hearts and deeds are in agreement, then they constitute a *hizb*, even though they may not physically meet. In addition, a *hizb*, linguistically, is a kind of people whose desires are the same.

The Islamic or legal meaning (i.e., in Islamic terminology) of *hizb* is not totally blameworthy nor is it entirely praiseworthy. It is blamed or praised in accordance with its intended use. For instance, Allah says in the *Qur'an* (in the translation of the meaning):

(اسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَأَنسَاهُمْ ذِكْرَ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ حِزْبُ الشَّيْطَانِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ الشَّيْطَانِ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ)
[المجادلة، ١٩].

« **Shaytan has overtaken them. So he has made them forget the remembrance of Allah. They are the party of Shaytan. Verily, it is the party of Shaytan (hizbu-shaytan) that will be the losers!** » [Surah al-Mujadilah (58:19)]

Clearly, this is an example that is blameworthy. Similarly, in the same *surah* (chapter) of the *Qur'an*, Allah says (in the translation of the meaning):

(أَوْلَيْتَكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ)
[المجادلة، ٢٢].

«They are the Party of Allah (*hizbaAllahi*). Verily, it is the Party of Allah that will be the successful. » [Surah al-Mujadilah (58:22)]

Therefore, in one context, it was blameworthy when the *hizb* was associated with *Shaytan*, and in another instance, it was praiseworthy when it was the party of Allah, concerning the believers.¹ Certainly, if the *hizb* comprises the people of wickedness, desires, misguidance and disbelief, then all of that is blameworthy.

Dangers of *Hizbiyyah*:

Everyone who examines the Islamic history finds that *tahazub* (bigotry) to opinions, *madhahib* (schools of thought), and innovations splits the Muslim *ummah* and takes away from its unity. That is why the textual proofs are replete with calls for unity and keeping from all means that leads to splitting.

The Ruling concerning *al-Bay'aa*

Many textual proofs came to confirm the command of pledging allegiance and to warn against abandoning it and the consequences of that. Allah says (in the translation of the meanings):

(لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ
فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا
قَرِيبًا) [الفتح، ١٨].

¹If any group would carry such a name, then it must not have convictions and practices that oppose Tawheed, like invoking other than Allah, and worshipping graves etc. This is *shirk*. So Muslims should not be deceived by emotional and (or) politically misleading practices.

« Indeed, Allah was pleased with the believers when they gave their *Bay'aa* (pledge) to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) under the tree, He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down *As-Sakinah* (calmness and tranquility) upon them, and He rewarded them with a near victory. » [Surah al-Fath (48:18)]

Also, Allah says in the same *surah*:

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ
فَمَنْ نَكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنْكُثُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِمَا عَاهَدَ
عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا) [الفتح، ١٠].

«Verily, those who give *Bay'aa* (pledge) to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) they are giving *Bay'aa* (pledge) to Allah. The Hand of Allah is over their hands. Then whosoever breaks his pledge breaks only to his own harm, and whosoever fulfills what he has covenanted with Allah, He will bestow on him a great reward. » [Surah al-Fath (48:10)].

The *Sunnah* also emphasized *al-bay'aa*, calling for the believer to give allegiance and stating that whoever dies without having pledged allegiance to the Muslim ruler dies in the state of the pre-Islamic era. This refers to giving the pledge to the general Muslim *imam* who most people give the pledge to in his time or in his country, in the absence of the general Muslim *khilaa'fah*. This is the obligated pledge incumbent on every Muslim, and it is forbidden to abandon or dissent in terms of obedience on this pledge, whether in times of ease or difficulty, in that which he likes and that which he dislikes. This applies as long as the leader does not command sins, in which case, he can not be obeyed but rather is to be obeyed in other issues.

Not obeying the ruler on sins which he may command, does not necessitate rebellion against him, as many of the youth understand. When we talk about this *imam*,

whether he was set up by influential people in the country or assigned by his predecessor or even to the degree that he took leadership by force, it is forbidden to rebel against him as long as he does not commit clear, plain *kufir* and until the conditions of rebellion to remove him are fulfilled. First, his *kufir* must be clear and can not tolerate any misinterpretation, requiring an unambiguous proof from Allah and (or) the Messenger (ﷺ) that his case (saying and/or action) is truly *kufir*. Moreover, there must be the ability to change him and that this change will not lead to a greater evil. When all these conditions are met, and it is obvious how difficult this is, only then can he may be removed; otherwise the Muslims are told to be patiently persevering until these conditions are fulfilled.

The Illegal *Bay'aa*:

In our time, numerous deviations have occurred with respect to illegal pledges, not condoned by *shariah*. This has had a negative impact on Muslim society at large. The following are some instances of deviant pledges.

The first example is that of the *Sufis* to their elders or their *shaykhs*. You find the Sufi mystic making an "eternal" pledge to his shaykh, such that he can never leave that *shaykh's* way. Such a pledge has no basis in *shariah*; rather, it is without a doubt futile. Some mystic *Sufis* give the pledge by shaking hands between men and women. They say they will continue to be that *shaykh's* students and adepts, no matter what that *shaykh* says. To that end, they even take the pledge to share their wealth and money with him. In fact, the *shaykh* can take a tax levee from them. These are criminal acts and mischief that have no basis in *shariah* and Islam.

From the second type of deviant pledges is that of group members to their group leaders; this is becoming widespread in

many countries. Everyday you find these groups splitting, forming subgroups and sub leaders. In these groups, the leaders request from the members to make a full pledge, as if it were the legal pledge to the Muslim general leader or *imam*.

These groups vary with respect to the covenants they take. Some say that anyone who abandons giving the pledge of allegiance to the leader of their group is a *kaafir* (disbeliever). Others maintain that giving the pledge is *fardh* (obligatory) and that anyone who does not give it is sinful. As such, they assign an *ameer* for their group as a means to lift the sin from them. This kind of pledge is futile, baseless, and not found in *shariah*. Anyone who claims it is obligatory to give a pledge of allegiance to a leader of a group is certainly in error.

Consequences of the Illegal *Bay'aa*:

The consequences of the illegal *bay'aa* are many.

Firstly, we now have more than one pledge at the same time and in the same country because each group thinks that the correct *bay'aa* is for their *ameer*.

Secondly, these *bay'aa* lead to enmity, conflict, and hatred between these groups. In turn, they compete with each other to acquire larger and larger numbers for their groups.

Thirdly, it has spread misconceptions regarding *takfeer* because some of these groups believe that the one who does not give the pledge is a *kaafir* and feels that their *ameer* is the only *ameer*. Therefore, they make *takfeer* on anyone who does not give the pledge to that *ameer*.

Fourthly, it has led to the spilling of the inviolable blood. In some Muslim countries, a member of a particular group may be killed if he decides to leave that group. Likewise, a leader of a group may kill a

competitor or those who oppose his leadership. This is real, and not fictional, occurring in many places.

Fifthly, this has led and still leads to confrontations between these groups and the government. The consequences of that are terrible, including rebellion, bloodshed, harshness, *takfeer*, and evil on top of evil. It has reached the degree that some of these groups have adopted what they call “revolutionary concepts,” when even the term “revolution” has nothing to do with Islam.

Conclusion:

The consequences of these illegal *ahzab* (parties) who demand *bay'aa* are great. They have corrupted the souls and thoughts of many Muslim youths around the world. We refer the matter to Allah, the Most High. We ask Him to save us from falling into this mischief and to protect the *ummah* (Islamic nation) from such disputes.

There is no Power or Might except with Allah. May the *salaah* and *salaam* be on Prophet Muhammad, his household, the noble companions, and those who follow them until the Day of Resurrection.

Saleh As-Saleh

18-5-1427

June 15, 2006

Acknowledgment: This work originally appeared on www.understand-islam.net in audio form. It was based upon an article by sh. Muhammad al-Khamees, may Allaah preserve him. It was transcribed and organized by br. Abu Abdullaah al-Amreeki, and then text was reviewed by sis Umm Ahmad Al-Kanadiyyah, Jazaahumu Allaahu Khairan.