

Characteristics of Deviant Teachings

Excerpts from Friday sermon (16 April 2010) entitled '*Eradicating Deviant Teachings – Our Shared Responsibility*'.

In Singapore, the late Ustaz Embek Ali compiled various deviant teachings in a book entitled '*Noktah Hitam: Ajaran Sesat Di Singapura*' (The Black Dot: Deviant Teachings in Singapore). We can refer to this book to find out more about this topic.

We find several similar characteristics across the various deviant teachings. It is important for us to know these characteristics, so that we can distinguish the right from the wrong teachings.

First – There are claims that some individuals receive revelation or inspiration from Allah s.w.t. This, according to them, puts them on an equal footing with the status of a messenger or prophet.

We must remind ourselves, that there is no more messenger nor prophet after Prophet Muhammad s.aw. There are no more revelations after the revelations in the Holy Quran to

Rasulullah s.a.w. He is the final and last Messenger and Prophet of Allah s.w.t.

Allah s.w.t. explains this principle in surah al-Ahzaab verse 40:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ
النَّبِيِّينَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

Which means: “(The Prophet) Muhammad s.a.w. is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the **Last of the prophets**; and Allah has full knowledge over all things.”

Second – There are claims or teachings on unseen things, such as predictions of when earthquakes or the day of judgment will occur. These claims are mere lies!

Allah s.w.t. has mentioned that no one knows when the day of judgment will take place except Allah s.w.t. Himself. He says in surah al-A'raaf verse 187:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَلُهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ رَبِّي
 لَا تَحْجُبُهَا لَوْحَتَهَا إِلَّا هُوَ ثَقُلَتْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا
 تَأْتِيكُمْ إِلَّا بَغْتَةً ۗ يَسْأَلُونَكَ كَأَنَّكَ حَفِيٌّ عَنْهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا
 عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

Which means: *“They ask you about the final hour, when will be its taking place? Say: The knowledge of it is only with my God; none but He shall manifest it at its time; it will be momentous in the heavens and the earth; it will not come on you but of a sudden. They ask you as if you were solicitous about it. Say: Its knowledge is only with Allah, but most people do not know.”*

Third – They teach rituals which differ from those practised by Muslims, such as not performing prayers in the mosques, prostrating in *sujud* without the forehead touching the ground, performing the prayer (*solat*) covered with a huge cloth over the entire body, performing just one prayer (*solat*) a day, or even removing a pillar and obligation in Islam, such as saying that *solat* is not necessary (i.e. not *wajib*).

Such claims are unheard of in the Islamic tradition, and are not taught by the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. Thus, such teachings are clearly deviant. Our beloved Prophet s.a.w. has said:

فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ الرَّاشِدِينَ تَمَسَّكُوا بِهَا
وَعَضُّوا عَلَيْهَا بِالنَّوَاحِدِ وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَمُحَدَّثَاتِ الْأُمُورِ فَإِنَّ كُلَّ مُحَدَّثَةٍ
بِدْعَةٌ وَكُلُّ بَدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ

Which means: *“Thus, you must hold on to my Sunnah, and the sunnah of the rightly guided caliphs. Hold on to it very strongly. Refrain from innovations in religion, for every innovation (i.e. those that contradict the established principles in Islam) is deviant (from the true Islam).”* Narrated by Imam Abu Daud.

Fourth – The name of the group keeps changing from time to time, although they espouse the same teachings of earlier groups. This is to dissociate themselves from a group that has been declared deviant in the past.

Fifth – They do not stay put at a place. They shift from one place to the other, and they teach discreetly. In some cases, the leaders of the group do not allow the followers to distribute notes containing the teachings of the group. This clearly shows us something is not right with their teachings. Because no one will hide a teaching that is true and can be accepted by all Muslims. There is no need to spread the teachings of Islam secretly.