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# INVESTIGATION OF TRUTH

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Don't all human always act based on their own  
intellect and investigation?!

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Bahá'is consider their teachings unique. Independent Investigation of Truth – the first Bahá'í teaching – means that every person should put aside all prejudice and investigate and seek the truth.

Don't all human always act based on their own intellect and investigation?

## Bahá'is Claim

I will speak to you concerning the special teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. All the divine principles announced by the tongue of the Prophets of the past are to be found in the words of Bahá'u'lláh; but in addition to these he has revealed certain new teachings which are not found in any of the sacred Books of former times... Fundamental teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the oneness of the world of humanity... Another new principle revealed by Bahá'u'lláh is the injunction to investigate the truth—that is to say, no man should blindly follow his ancestors and forefathers. Nay, each must see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears and investigate the truth himself in order that he may follow the truth instead of blind acquiescence and imitation of ancestral beliefs.<sup>1</sup>

## Definition of Independent Investigation of Truth in Bahá'í Books

“The first principle of Bahá'u'lláh is Independent Investigation of Truth, that is, all the nations of the world have to investigate after truth independently and turn their eyes from the moribund blind imitations of the past ages entirely (i.e. Taqlid<sup>2</sup>). Truth is one when it is independently investigated, it does not accept division. Therefore the Independent Investigation of Truth will lead to the oneness of the world of humanity.”<sup>3</sup>

The first teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is the Investigation of Reality. Man must seek reality himself, forsaking imitations and adherence to mere hereditary forms.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Promulgation of Universal Peace; Pages 453-457: gr2

<sup>2</sup> Taqlid or taklid (Arabic تَقْلِيد taqlīd) is an Arabic term in Islamic legal terminology. It literally means ‘to follow (someone)’, ‘to imitate’. In Islamic legal terminology it means to follow a ‘mujtahid’ in religious laws and commandment as he has derived them. Mujtahid is a person that because of his extensive knowledge of Arabic grammar and literature, logic, Qur'anic sciences and Hadiths, science of narrators, principle of Jurisprudence and comparative Jurisprudence, is able to elicit Sharia's sub-commandments.

<sup>3</sup> Japan Will Turn Ablaze!; Pages 33-36: gr11

<sup>4</sup> Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Baha; Pages 106-108: gr5

## Other Teachings in the Bahá'í Books

In *The Book of Certitude*<sup>5</sup>, Bahá'u'lláh says that those who are seeking the truth, should not read the writings of those who are opposing (the faith), neither from a scholar nor from an ignorant.

“They that tread the path of faith, they that thirst for the wine of certitude, must cleanse themselves of all that is earthly—their ears from idle talk, their minds from vain imaginings, their hearts from worldly affections, their eyes from that which perisheth. They should put their trust in God, and, holding fast unto Him, follow in His way. Then will they be made worthy of the effulgent glories of the sun of divine knowledge and understanding, and become the recipients of a grace that is infinite and unseen, inasmuch as man can never hope to attain unto the knowledge of the All-Glorious can never quaff from the stream of divine knowledge and wisdom, can never enter the abode of immortality, nor partake of the cup of divine nearness and favor, unless and until he ceases to regard the words and deeds of mortal men [Oddly, the original Farsi text of *Kitáb-i-Iqán* has: “and deeds of scholars or ignorant”] as a standard for the true understanding and recognition of God and His Prophets.”<sup>6</sup>

In the *Kitáb-i-Iqán*, Bahá'u'lláh entreats the Bayán scholar not to depend upon their intellect, comprehension and learning.

“We entreat the learned men of the Bayán not to follow in such ways, not to inflict, at the time of Mustagháth, upon Him Who is the divine Essence, the heavenly Light, the absolute Eternity, the Beginning and the End of the Manifestations of the Invisible, that which hath been inflicted in this day. We beg them not to depend upon their intellect, their comprehension and learning.”<sup>7</sup>

## Similar Terms in Abrahamic Books

This is what the LORD says: “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The *Kitáb-i-Iqán*

<sup>6</sup> The *Kitáb-i-Iqán*; Pages 3-41: gr2

<sup>7</sup> *Kitáb-i-Iqán*; Pages 221-257: gr278

<sup>8</sup> Jeremiah 6:16

Do not treat prophecies with contempt but test them all; hold on to what is good, reject every kind of evil.<sup>9</sup>

Also due to the nature of Human's Fitrah<sup>10</sup>, Islam invites people to follow their intellect, seek the truth and gain knowledge and also avoid blind imitations from ancestors.

وَ إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ قَالُوا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَّلًا كَانُوا لَا يَلْمِزُونَ

(Al-Ma'ida: 104)

*“And when it is said to them, “Come to what Allah has revealed and to the Messenger,” they say, “Sufficient for us is that upon which we found our fathers.” Even though their fathers knew nothing, nor were they guided?”*

Islam is based on reasons and logic. It does not accept anything without reason.

وَ قَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَىٰ تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

(Al-Baqara: 111)

*And they say, “None will enter Paradise except one who is a Jew or a Christian.” That is [merely] their wishful thinking, Say, “Produce your proof, if you should be truthful”.*

Some other Verses:

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي

(Yusuf: 108)

*Say, “This is my way; I invite to Allah with insight, I and those who follow me.”*

فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَالِدُونَ

(Az-Zumar:17 & 18)

<sup>9</sup> 1 Thessalonians 5:21-23

<sup>10</sup> Fitra, or fitrah (Arabic: فطرة / ALA-LC: fiṭrah), is an Arabic word meaning ‘disposition’, ‘nature’, ‘constitution’, or ‘instinct’. In a mystical context, it can connote intuition or insight. It is similar to the Calvinist term “Sensus divinitatis”. According to Islamic theology, human beings are born with an innate inclination of tawhid (Oneness), which is encapsulated in the fitrah along with compassion, intelligence, beneficence and all other attributes that embody what it is to be human. It is for this reason that some Muslims prefer to refer to those who embrace Islam as reverts rather than converts, as it is believed they are returning to a perceived pure state.

*So give good tidings to My servants who listen to speech and follow the best of it. Those are the ones Allah has guided, and those are people of understanding.*

## Point of Origin

Bahá'í teachers consider 'following a mujtahid in religious laws' is against investigation of truth. But this is only a good looking cause for Bahá'is.

In human life there are numerous problems that solving each and every one of them takes a lot of toil and effort and requires extensive amount of knowledge which is beyond the reach of every human being. So humans are inevitably forced to work together and share such these tasks. Among them is the complete acquaintance of the Islam's intricate derivatives such as the commandments. Islam has necessitated investigation of the Principles of Islam and prohibited taqlid in this matter.

For taqlid of the derivatives we had 3 options:

- Study enough to become an expert and Faqīh;
- Study of the opinions by Islamic mujtahids and scholars along with observing the principles of caution<sup>11</sup> act based on Sharia;
- Follow a complete mujtahid in the derivatives of Islam i.e. act based on his words.

So Taqlid is finding the perfect scholar, only after you have sought the truth and have accepted the Principles. As the Holy Quran says:

وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَ لِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ

(At-Tawba: 122)

*And it is not for the believers to go forth [to battle] all at once. For there should separate from every division of them a group [remaining] to obtain understanding in the religion and warn their people when they return to them that they might be cautious.*

Studying the lives of a mujtahid, is very eye-opening for us. They normally start studying from their teenage years which goes on for decades. If they were to study at universities they would have probably earn numerous PhD degrees, but they have devoted their lives to the people who cannot or do not want to study all the derivatives of the religion.

<sup>11</sup> Ehtiyat (احتياط) in Arabic



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