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## Bismillah Ar-Rahman Ar-Rahim

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In the subject of imitation, how can we answer the 122nd verse of Surah At-Tawbah? Thank you very much.

## Answer to question: 5

In verse 122 of blessed Surah of At-Tawbah, it has been said: وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً ۚ فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنْذِرُوا قَوْمِهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا And believers were not those who migrate altogether ; إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴾ (toward the Prophet), so why not from each group of them some migrate to learn about the religion and to warn their own nation when they return, so that they may beware". It is clear that this blessed verse is not related to "imitating the scholars", but rather it is related to the narrations of the narrators from the Prophet peace be upon him and his household; as all the people of the knowledge, have mentioned this verse is one of the proofs for authority of narrations; although contrary to what they think, it only implies on the authority of Mutawatir narrations from his Excellency or merely narrations of him for the people of his time; considering that on one hand, not all the migrants toward the Prophet peace be upon him and his household were "scholars" (Mujtahid), but were "narrators" and were narrating his Excellency's words and deeds to their people after returning to them; especially considering that following several scholars (Mujtahids) is not reasonable for a nation; because their religious orders are habitually different from each other and on the other hand, "tribe" (Ta'eifah) in Arabic means a group of more than three people, and narration of more than three people, if they are righteous and narrate about a unique subject and commandment, is considered Mutawatir and the Mutawatir narration is proof. This is while we consider the meaning of "tribe" (Ta'eifah) is those who migrate toward the Prophet peace be upon him and his household from different tribal communities, but if we – like some commentators - consider its meaning to be those who migrate from the Prophet peace be upon him and his household and do not migrate toward him, then there is no debate on this verse implying the authority



of Mutawatir narrations; because those who stay with the Prophet peace be upon him and his household to learn about the knowledge of religion, are a "group" (Firqah) meaning a community who are much more than a "tribe" and it is clear their narrations from the Prophet peace be upon him and his household is Mutawatir.

Regardless of the fact that if we assume this "tribe" (Ta'eifah) or "group" (Firqah) means "scholar" (Mujtahid), we cannot consider that the fear of their people by their warning means following them without reason; because following a non-infallible person without reason, is in contradiction with intellect and many verses of the Quran and therefore, we should consider that the fear of their people by their warning means following them with detailed knowledge about their definitive reasons, which is not counted as imitation; considering that imitation means following a statement or an action of another person without reason (see: Return to Islam, page 48).

To conclude, we should say that verse 122 of Surah At-Tawbah, does not prove the permission to imitate scholars, but proves the authority of Mutawatir narration or merely narrations of the Caliph of God for the people of his time, and this is clear that following the definitive reasons of the scholars, such as Quran's verse or Mutawatir narration of God's Caliph or merely narration of him for the people of his time, is not considered imitating scholars and is not subject to dispute; because the subject of dispute is the permission to follow the religious orders (fatwas) of scholars without knowing their reasons; as it is common today by referring to their manual of religious orders and jurisprudential books.

May God grant all Muslims the success of freedom from imitation and make them turn to do research on religion.





