

Refuting Extremism

Sincere Advice to those who make takfeer



Part 4

by Abdul Qadir Baksh

Sincere Advice to the Takfeeri extremist

Ten Principles to consider before making takfeer

The issue of takfeer cannot be correctly understood except by first thoroughly comprehending all the principles of the Shari'ah that are involved. We will lay down for the noble reader a set of principles which are within our ability.

When we accuse a Muslim leader of a Muslim country or a layman of being a Kaafir (disbeliever), we essentially remove Imaan (faith) from him, implying that he no longer believes in the six pillars of Imaan. This means he does not believe in Allah, the Angels, the Books, the Messengers, life after death, and predestination. This is an accusation that is neither easy nor trivial. Rather, it is something extremely dangerous if we are wrong in our accusation. In order for us to take someone out of the realm of Imaan, we have to know what Imaan is and what its constituents are.

So in the course of this small research we will explain a number of important principles which are from the foundations of performing takfir which one must comprehend well before embarking upon this dangerous yet important subject. We shall also briefly cover Imaan as understood by Ahlus-sunnah wal-jamaa'ah, and then explain the deviated explanations of it. Principle nine will cover this point.

Finally, let the noble reader know for sure that these principles explained here are not exhaustive.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE

Let us now research the first principle (which our final conclusion will depend on): to stand up for justice and not allowing one's emotions, desires, hatred, and ignorance dictate the position one is going to hold regarding the issue of takfeer. The textual evidence from the shariah must be our single source of judgment.

This principle dictates not allowing the poor situation of the Muslims around the world (i.e., Palestine, Kashmir, Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq etc.) to influence one's position as well as not to allow one's hatred for a people (i.e. leaders of Muslim countries), make him unjust to them, even though we see from them manifest dhulm, fisq, and kufr.

EVIDENCE FOR THIS PRINCIPLE

The evidences for this principle are many. Of them is the statement of Allah:

“And if you judge between the people, then judge with justice.” [An-Nisaa’ (4):58]

The verse orders fairness, justice, and equality with all people when making judgement between them, and not being just with some people and not with others.

Indeed Allah ordered his Messenger with a straightforward command to be just by His saying:

“...And I have been ordered to be just between you all.” [Ash-Shoorā (15):42]

Also Allah has ordered the believers to be just by His saying:

“..Be just for it is closer to taqwa...” [Al-Maa’idah (5):8]

And Allah, the Most High also states:

“Verily Allah orders with justice and the doing of good and kindness to relatives” [An-Nahl (16):90]

Allah has specifically ordered all the believers to be just in their speech by His saying;

“..And if you speak then be just even if it be with your own relatives” [Al-An’aam (6):152]

Ibn Katheer said in the tafseer of this verse: “Allah orders to be just in actions and sayings with our near ones and our far ones and Allah orders everyone to be just at all times and in all situations.”

So His order to be just in our actions is in His saying:

“Oh you who believe stand out firmly for justice as witnesses to Allah even if it is against yourselves or your parents, or your kin..” [An-Nisaa’ (4):135]

And Allah has warned us not to be unjust, ever, in His statement:

“...So do not follow the desires lest you avoid justice...” [An-Nisaa’ (4):135]

Ibn Katheer said in the tafseer of this verse: “Meaning, do not let the desires and partisanship and hatred of a people cause you to be unjust in your matters and your affairs rather adhere to justness in every situation.”

So being just plays an important role when speaking about people and it is more important when pronouncing takfeer.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE

The issue of takfeer is grave, so one should be cautious in this matter and not rush to pronounce the Muslim leaders as kaafirs. The issue of takfeer should be taken very seriously and not bear on emotional happenings. There is a great possibility the person being labelled may not deserve it, which then brings the curse back on the one who issued the label in the first place.

EVIDENCE FOR PRINCIPLE TWO

Firstly to show that there is a possibility that a person may show apparent disbelief but really his heart is full of belief, and it would be very dangerous for one to pronounce takfeer upon him without establishing what he truly believes first. Allah says:

“Whoever disbelieved in Allah after his belief, except him who is forced thereto, whilst his heart is at rest with faith (imaan) but such as open their hearts to disbelief - on them is wrath from Allah and theirs will be a great torment.” [An-Nahl (16):106]

The above verse explicitly shows that what is displayed to us from a Muslim leaders action may not be what he holds in his heart.

The statement of the Messenger of Allah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam):

“He who says to his brother: O disbeliever, then it returns upon one of them.” [Bukhaaree, Muslim and Muwatta Imaam Maalik]

Also his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

“And he who accuses a believer of kufr then it is like killing him.” [Bukhaaree]

Also his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

“.....Except if you see clear open kufr, given to you as evidence from Allah..” [Muslim, An-Nasaa’ee]

And his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

“if a man says the people are destroyed, then he has destroyed them...” [Muslim]

Also his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

“Everything of a Muslim is sacred to a Muslim: his property, honour, and blood. It is enough evil for a man to despise his Muslim brother.” [Aboo Daawood: 4868]

And his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

“I warn you of suspicion, for indeed suspicion is the most lying speech.” [Agreed upon]

And his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

“Whoever accuses a man of kufr, or says enemy of Allah, and he is not that, then it returns upon him.” [Agreed upon]

And his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

"If anyone guards a believer from a hypocrite, Allah will send an angel who will guard his flesh on the day of judgment from the fire of Jahannam; but if anyone attacks a Muslim, saying something by which he wishes to disgrace him he will be restrained by Allah on the bridge over Jahannam until he is accounted for what he said." [Aboo Daawood: 4865]

And the saying of Shaykhul-Islam Ibnu Taymiyyah:

"I am one of the most severe in forbidding that a person in particular be labelled with disbelief (takfeer), or sin or disobedience until it is known that the proof has been established upon him...." [Al Fatawa 3/229 and see Al Fatawa 3/282, 283 (a principle with Ahlus-Sunnah)]

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE

Kufr is of two types;

Kufr in belief, that takes one out of the fold of Islam. It is also referred to as major kufr.

Kufr in action, that does not take one out of the fold of Islam on its own except, if after the establishment of the proof, his actions portray manifest denial, rejection, arrogance, etc. It is also referred to as minor kufr.

So this principle necessitates the establishment of whether the judgement by other than what Allah has revealed, falls under the type of kufr in belief which is rejection, denial, or making it permissible or even believing that one has a choice in the matter. Or does it fall under the type of kufr in action that does not make you a kaafir? Therefore if the scholars of Islam judge that the kufr in a particular instance was kufr in action then we would have indeed lied against Allah if we were to make them unbelievers.

EVIDENCE FOR PRINCIPLE THREE

If kufr was not of two types then how would we understand the hadith narrated by Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (radiyallaahu anhu)? The Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Abusing a Muslim is fisq (sin) and fighting him is kufr.”
[Agreed upon]

So is this fighting kufr in belief or kufr in action, bearing in mind that if it is kufr in belief, then the person who does this act becomes a disbeliever (kaafir)? The answer is clearly that it is kufr in action, the minor kufr which does not remove one from the fold of Islam, and this is established from Allah's statement;

“And if two parties from amongst the believers fight then make peace between them, and if one transgresses then fight you all the one which transgresses till it complies with the command of Allah.” [Al-Hujuraat (49):9]

So we find Allah describing those Muslims that fight each other as believers. Therefore fighting amongst believers is kufr in action or minor kufr and cannot be kufr in belief or major kufr. Each and every verse in the Qur'an and the hadith that mentions kufr must be verified to find out what type of kufr it is. This is a task for the scholars alone and not the common people. Other examples of such cases can be found in the following authentic ahadeeth, where all the examples are of kufr in action or minor kufr.

“Two things if done are kufr, abusing of genealogies and wailing over the dead.” [Saheeh Muslim]

“Arguing over the Qur'an is kufr.”

“Speaking about Allah's favours is giving thanks and leaving that is kufr.”

“Do not return to being kaafir after me by some of you striking the necks of others (fighting).” [Al-Bukhaaree]

“Whoever goes into his women from behind (anus) has indeed done kufr.”

And also the statement of Allaah:

“Whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed such are the disbelievers.” [Al-Maa'idah (5):44]

Like this there are many more verses and ahadeeth, that need to be explained by tafseer or hadeeth using principles of the shari'ah in order to arrive at the correct ruling - a work only befitting scholars. This is where many of the Muslims become confused and are lead astray. They try to implement the verses of Surah Al-Maa'idah and other texts, as they are, literally, without applying the principle that the kufr mentioned in the text can be one of two types.

THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE

That a Muslim is not pronounced a kaafir (disbeliever) except: if he rejects something known from the religion by necessity; or if he denies it out of arrogance or pride; or if he opposes it whilst not believing in it.

This principle dictates the following:

A) One who does not judge by what Allah has revealed out of rejection that it is an obligation, such an individual is a disbeliever (kaafir) with major kufr.

B) The one who does not adhere to judging by what Allah has revealed out of arrogance or pride is a disbeliever, with major kufr.

C) One who opposes judging by what Allah has revealed whilst not believing in it, rejecting it as an obligation is a disbeliever, with major kufr.

D) One who remains in doubt about the obligation of judging by what Allah has revealed is a disbeliever. [Doubt here can be of two types either in its obligation or in its interpretation. What is referred to here is doubt in its obligation.]

However, if such an individual accepts the obligation to judge by what Allah has revealed and believes that it is most supreme over any other law and system, but does not judge by it due to weakness, following of desires, sin, fear or hope, his original imaan does not disappear. Such an individual is not a disbeliever (kaafir), with major kufr. Rather he is a disbeliever with minor kufr and he is still within the fold of Islam.

EVIDENCE FOR PRINCIPLE FOUR

One of the best evidences demonstrating principle four in implementation is the following:

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (rahimahullaah) said: "And this was the state of An-Najaashi, (ruler of Habashi). Even though he was the king of the Christians, his people did not follow him in accepting Islam. Rather, only a number of them accepted Islam with him, and for this, when he died there was no one to pray over him. So the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) prayed over him in Medina. He went out with the Muslims to the musalla and arranged them in rows and prayed over him and informed them of the death the day he died. He (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "Verily a righteous brother of yours from the people of Al-Habashi has died."

Many of the outwardly manifested pillars of Islam were not established for his people because of his weakness. He did not do hijrah, nor did he fight jihad, nor did he perform the hajj. It has even been narrated that he did not even establish his five daily prayers, fast in Ramadan, pay the legislated Zakaat (all of these are obligatory actions) because his people would have disapproved of it and it was not possible for him to differ with them. We know definitely that it was not possible for him to judge between his people with the Qur'an even though Allah had made it an obligation upon the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) in Medina, that if the people of the book came to him, then he should not judge between them except with what Allah has revealed to him.." [Minhaaj as Sunnah 5/112-113]

From this statement of Shaykhul Islam Ibnu Taymiyyah, we can clearly understand that An-Najaashi did not rule by what Allah had revealed and that if one does not deny, reject, oppose or make halal what Allah made haram or vice versa, with belief that it is an obligation to judge by what Allah has revealed then such an individual is a believer even if he does not judge by what Allah has revealed, out of weakness, fear, hope, etc. This is because the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "...your brother in Habashi has died.." then he prayed over him, which he would not say or do if An-Najashi was a kaafir.

We also find in Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree, a narration about Haatib ibn Baltah, where he informed the Quraish to be aware that the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) was going to attack Mecca. When Allah gave this information to the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) he summoned Haatib, and 'Umar (radiyallaahu anhumaa). Umar said: "Let me take off the head of this munafiq, O Messenger of Allah." The Messenger refused and asked him (Haatib): "Why did you do this?" He replied: "O Messenger of Allah, verily I did not do this out of disbelief (Kufr) I believe Allah is going to aid you. All the companions here have relatives to take care of their families in Mecca but I do not. So I thought by giving them this information they will be lenient towards my family there." So the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "Leave him for perhaps Allah has turned to the people who partook in al Badr, do what you will, I have forgiven you." [Al-Bukhaaree]

So 'Umar (radiyallaahu anhu) believed this action to be hypocrisy, but the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) asked Haatib "Why did you do this?" He (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) established the proof on him first, and then let him be after concluding it was of the lesser kufr and not the major kufr.

Further evidence is in the saying of Imaam At-Tahaawi (rahimahullaah):

"And the slave is not taken out of the fold of imaan except by denying that which entered him into it." [Aqeedatut-Taahawiyah p-331]

The Shaykh is pointing out a refutation to the Khawarij and Mu'tazilah, where they say a person leaves imaan by doing major sins [other than shirk]. This clearly shows that a mere action alone cannot take one out of the fold of Islam until the proof is established that this action displayed is what the belief of the person is. Just as when one becomes a Muslim the action of the shahadah alone is not acceptable until it is clear the person understands and believes what he is entering into.

THE FIFTH PRINCIPLE

That a Muslim is not pronounced a disbeliever (kaafir) by what he says or does or believes until the evidence is established against him,¹ and his doubts disappear and all the conditions of takfeer apply and all the conditions that negate takfeer are negated.

So this principle dictates that we submit to the withholding of pronouncing takfeer upon the one who rejects, denies, or opposes something from the religion that is known by necessity up until the proof is established against him.

EVIDENCE FOR PRINCIPLE FIVE

The evidences for this principle are too many to mention however of the evidences that prove this sixth principle is the saying of Allah:

وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا

“And We never punish until We have sent a Messenger (to give warning).” [Al-Isra (17):15]

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَعَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Then, verily! Your Lord for those who do evil (commit sins and are disobedient to Allah) in ignorance and afterward repent and do righteous deeds, verily, your Lord thereafter, (to such) is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” [A-Nahl (16):119]

قُلِ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَأُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ لِأُنذِرَكُمْ بِهِ وَمَنْ بَلَغَ

“Say (O Muhammad (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam): “What thing is the most great in witness?” Say: “Allah (the Most Great!) is Witness between me and you; this Qur’aan has been revealed to me that I may therewith warn you and whomsoever it may reach.” [Al-An’aam (6):19]

Shaykhul Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (rahimahullaah) said:

“[Also] the women who had continual bleeding and said: “I have continual heavy bleeding which prevents me from prayer and fasting.” So he (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) ordered her to pray during the period of continual bleeding and did not order her to make up for the prayers she had missed.” [Al-Udar bi Jahal of Shaykh Ahmad Fareed]

“Also when the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) made hijrah to Medina the prayer was increased for the residents but those who were far from him, such as those in Mecca and Abyssinia, used to pray two rak`at and he did not order them to repeat their prayers.” [Al-Udar bi Jahal of Shaykh Ahmad Fareed]

Further evidence: "When Mu'aawiyah ibn Al-Hakam as-Sulamee (radiyallaahu anhu) spoke in prayer after the forbiddance, being ignorant of it. So he (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said "this prayer of ours - nothing from the speech of humans", and he did not order him to repeat the prayer." [Majmoo Al Fataawa 22/41-42]

Imaam Al Qurtubee (rahimahullaah) said:

"So just as the kaafir does not become a believer except by choosing imaan over kufr, then likewise a believer does not become a kaafir through something by which he did not intend kufr nor choose it. There is ijmaa upon this." [Tafseer Ul-Qurtabi 7/6128]

Ibn Al-Qayyim (rahimahullaah) said:

"..As for the kufr of ignorance when the proof has not been established and of one who has not been able to reach the truth, then Allah has denied punishment for such a person until the proof brought by the messenger is established."

Imaam Ash-Showkaani (rahimahullaah) said:

"..Whoever prostrates to other than Allah out of ignorance, he does not become a disbeliever." [Naylul Awtaar 6/210]

And there are many more statements from our salaf and the scholars of Ahla Sunnah wal Jammah establishing that proof has to be established upon a believer before pronouncing takfeer upon him. I refer the noble reader to the book Al-udhar-bil-jahal` by Shaykh Ahmad Fareed.

THE SIXTH PRINCIPLE

We judge the rulers only by that which is apparent, and leave that which is not apparent to Allah, for indeed He alone knows the inner most affairs of all people.

This principle dictates that we cannot venture into the leaders hearts, and speak of those things which we have no apparent evidence for, so we would indeed be sinning if we spoke of his actions which pertain to his heart, i.e love, hope, fear. We can only speak of the apparent effects of this.²

EVIDENCE FOR PRINCIPLE SIX

Imaam At-Tahaawi (rahimahullaah) states in his famous book of Aqeedatut-Tahaawiyyah:

“And we do not testify against them with kufr nor with shirk nor hypocrisy just so long as these are not apparent from them and we leave their unapparent affairs to Allah.”³

In explanation of this, Ibn Abi Izza said: “This is because we have been ordered to judge that which is apparent and we have been prohibited from suspicion, and following that which we have no knowledge of, as Allah said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا
مِّنْهُمْ

“O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter are better than the former..” [Al-Hujuraat (49):11]

And Allah also said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ

“O you who believe! Avoid much suspicions, indeed some suspicions are sins..” [Al-Hujuraat (49):12]

And Allah said:

لَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ
كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

“And follow not (O man i.e., say not, or do not or witness not, etc.) that of which you have no knowledge (e.g. one’s saying: “I have seen,” while in fact he has not seen, or “I have heard,” while he has not heard). Verily! The hearing, and the sight, and the heart, of each of those you will be questioned (by Allah).” [Al-Israa’ (17):36]

Imaam At-Tahaawi (rahimahullaah) also said:

“And we do not pronounce takfeer upon anyone from the people of Qibla by these sins, as long as they do not make them halal, and we do not say that one who sins his imaan is not harmed.”⁴ (This is also a refutation of the Murjia whom we are accused of being)

What is meant by “people of Qibla” in his above saying is: We name our people of the Qibla Muslims, Mu’mins [as long as they embraced what the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) professed with full knowledge]. The shaykh (rahimahullaah) is pointing out by this statement a refutation to the Khawaarij who pronounce takfeer on the one who does sin.⁵

THE SEVENTH PRINCIPLE

Major Kufr (disbelief) can be in belief, speech, and action.

This dictates that an individual can have a belief which is major kufr, or say something that is major kufr, or do an act of major kufr, which could make him a kaafir, a disbeliever [after the establishment of the proof against him].

Major Kufr in belief - Like believing that Allah has a partner, or believing that Allah has defects with His Names or Attributes, or believing that the Companions had defects in their religion or believing fornication and wine are Moobaaha (permissible).

Major Kufr in speech - Like reviling Allah, or His Messenger, or the angels, or the religion of Islam. This also includes making fun of Allah or His Verses or His Messenger. All these sayings are major kufr regardless of intent. These actions take one outside the fold of Islaam after the establishment of the hujjah (proof).

Major Kufr in action - Like prostration to a statue, a grave, the sun or moon and throwing the Qur'aan into the bin. Though these actions are major Kufr, to pronounce a specific person as an outright disbeliever can only apply after the establishment of the Hujjah.

And there are other acts of major kufr in belief, action and speech. However what is imperative to understand about this principle is that "not judging by what Allah has revealed" is not included in those particular acts that become major kufr.

This is because all the acts of kufr mentioned above fall under kufr al akbar (major kufr) and are connected to action of the heart however "not judging by what Allah has revealed" cannot be understood to be kufr al akbar connected to the heart, until the proof is established against him first.

EVIDENCE FOR PRINCIPLE SEVEN

The saying of Allah:

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ قُلْ أَبِاللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ
وَرَسُولِهِ كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِئُونَ لَا تَعْدِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ

"If you ask them (about this), they declare: "We were only talking idly and joking." Say: "Was it at Allah, and His Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger that you were mocking?" "Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed..." [At-Tawba (9):65-66]

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا
لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ

"Verily, whosoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, then Allah has forbidden Paradise for him, and the Fire will be his abode. And for the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers) there are no helpers." [Al-Maa'idah (5):72]

مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ
وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيمٌ

“Whoever disbelieved in Allah after his belief, except him who is forced thereto and whose heart is at rest with Faith but such as open their breasts to disbelief, on them is wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a great torment.” [An-Nahl (16):106]

Therefore, all actions of kufr in belief, speech and action that reach the level of kufr al akbar, are actions that take one out of the fold of Islam. Proof against the individual must be established.

THE EIGHTH PRINCIPLE

This principle establishes that the verse “And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed such are the unbelievers” is general and applicable to all people.

This means that one cannot restrict this verse to apply only to the Muslim leaders in the world today. It applies to leaders, the head of a house and/or organisation and even extends to every individual. This means if a father does not order his mature daughter to wear the hijaab, he is in violation of the verse, just as much as a ruler would be in the same case.

EVIDENCE FOR PRINCIPLE EIGHT

Our beloved Shaykh, Shaykh Alee Hasan, gave a very clear explanation of this from the verse of Surah Al-Maa'idah. He said: “..where Allah said: “wa man..” which means “and whoever..” this shows it is general for anybody without any exception...”⁶

He also mentioned that where Allah said: “..bi maa..” which means “..with whatever..” this shows that it is referring to any issue of legislation not just politics, or legislated punishments or jihad. Therefore, the principle implies: “the evidence is in the generality of the wording not in the specific reason of its revelation.”⁷

The saying of Al-Qurtubee (rahimahullaah):

“And Ibn Masood, and Al-Hassan said: “It is general for everyone that does not judge by what Allah has revealed. Meaning, believing in that, and making that halal.” [Al Jaami le Ahkaam al Quraan 6/190]

And As-Su'oodee and Ibraheem An-Nakhee said similar. [See Tafseer At-Tabari 10/356-357]

THE NINTH PRINCIPLE

This is to believe that Imaan consists of belief, speech and actions. It is broken down into the following detail; speech and actions of the heart, speech and actions of the tongue, and actions of the outwardly manifested limbs.

The Linguistic Meaning Of Imaan Is Tasdeeq

Tasdeeq or 'trust' or 'belief' as the brothers of Yusuf (alayhis-salaam) said:

قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا إِنَّا ذُهَبْنَا نَسْتَبِقُ وَتَرَكْنَا يُوسُفَ عِنْدَ مَتَاعِنَا فَأَكَلَهُ
الدُّبُّ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ لَنَا وَلَوْ كُنَّا صَادِقِينَ

They said: "O our father! We went racing with one another, and left Yûsuf by our belongings and a wolf devoured him; but you will never believe us even when we speak the truth." [Yusuf (12):17]

Whish means 'trustworthy'. It is the opposite of denial

The Technical Meaning Of Imaan

It is belief in the Messenger in all that he informed us of from Allah and to follow this with outwardly actions (ie the pillars of Islam) and with speech of the tongue.

EVIDENCE FOR PRINCIPLE NINE

When we look into the definition of Imaan according to the Shari'ah we find it is: a saying of the heart and tongue, actions of the heart and tongue and limbs.

Sayings of the heart

This is trusting in, and accepting, what is in the heart is manifest in the speech, as Allaah said:

وَالَّذِي جَاءَ بِالصِّدْقِ وَصَدَّقَ بِهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

"And he (Muhammad (Sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam)) who has brought the truth (this Qur'aan and Islamic Monotheism) and (those who) believed therein (i.e. the true believers of Islâmic Monotheism), those are Al-Muttaqûn (the pious and righteous persons)." [Az-Zumar (39):33]

Actions of the heart

This is the intention, sincerity, love, fear, reliance as Allah says

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

"The believers are only those who, when Allah is men-

tioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Verses (this Qur'aan) are recited unto them, they (i.e. the Verses) increase their Faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (Alone).” [Al-Anfaal (8):2]

Sayings of the tongue

This is in pronouncing the shahadah and attesting to all its necessities. As Allah said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

“Verily, those who say: ‘Our Lord is (only) Allah,’ and thereafter Istaaqamoo (i.e. stood firm and straight on the Islamic Faith of Monotheism by abstaining from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which Allah has forbidden and by performing all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained), on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.” [Al-Ahqaaf (46):13]

Actions of the tongue and body limbs

These are actions of the tongue which cannot be performed except by using the tongue alone like recitation of the Qur'aan, adhkaar (remembrances) and actions of the body limbs are those which cannot be performed except by using the bodily limbs alone like standing in prayer, rukoo, sajjood as Allah states:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ تِجَارَةً لَّنْ تَبُورَ

“Verily, those who recite the Book of Allah (this Qur'aan), and perform As-Salaat, and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a (sure) tradegain that will never perish.” [Faatir (35):29]

So the heart has sayings and an action, the tongue has sayings and actions, and the body limbs have actions all of which compromise Imaan.

The differences amongst the people in what constitutes Imaan.

Ibn Abi Izza (rahimahullaah) who explained Aqeedah at Tahaaweeyah said the people have differed in what they believed constitutes Imaan to be. Therefore, Maalik, Shafi'ee, Ahmed, Awzaa'ee, Ishaq bin Rahweeyah and all the rest of the people of hadith and people of Madina (may Allaah have mercy on them all) went to the opinion that Imaan constituted of belief in the heart, attesting that with the tongue and action of the body limbs. [Aqeedah Tahaaweeyah p373 - 374]

Some scholars were of the opinion that ‘attesting to it with the tongue’ is an extra pillar of Imaan. From them was Abu Mansoor al Maatureedi and he narrates from Abu Haneefah.

The Karaamiyah⁸ went to the opinion that Imaan was ‘attesting with the tongue only’. This necessitates that the hypocrite is a

believer with complete Imaan.

Jaham ibn Safwan of the Jahmiah sect and also the Qadariyah went to the opinion that Imaan was 'awareness (knowledge) in the heart only' and this opinion is far more corrupt than that of the Karaamiyah. This opinion necessitates that Fir'aun and his people were believers because they knew the truthfulness of Musa and Haroon yet they did not believe in them. Allah said about them:

قَالَ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَمَا أَنْزَلَ هَؤُلَاءِ إِلَّا رَبَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ بِصَآئِرٍ
وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّكَ يَا فِرْعَوْنُ مَثْبُورًا

He [Moosaa] said: "Verily, you know that these signs have been sent down by none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth as clear (evidences i.e. proofs of Allâh's Oneness and His Omnipotence, etc.). And I think you are, indeed, O Fir'aun (Pharaoh) doomed to destruction (away from all good)!"

[Al-Israa' (17):102]

And His saying:

وَجَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ
عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

"And they belied them (those Ayât) wrongfully and arrogantly, though their own selves were convinced thereof [i.e. those (Ayât) are from Allah, and Mûsa is the Messenger of Allah in truth, but they disliked to obey Musa, and hated to believe in his Message of Monotheism]. So see what was the end of the Mufsidûn (disbelievers, disobedient to Allaah, evil-doers, liars)."

[An-Naml (27):14]

Also, the People of the Book knew the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) as they knew their own children yet they still did not believe.

Further, Abu Taalib would be a believer accordingly because he knew the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) very well.

Even worse, Iblis himself would be a believer with complete Imaan according to Jahm bin Safwaan, for he was not ignorant about his Lord either. Allah confirms this from his saying:

قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنْظِرْنِي إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

"He [Iblis (Satan)] said: "O my Lord! Give me then respite till the Day they (the dead) will be resurrected."

[Al-Hijr (15):36]

And His saying:

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

"He [Iblis (Satan)] said: "O my Lord! Because you misled me, I shall indeed adorn the path of error for them (mankind) on the earth, and I shall mislead them all."

[Al-Hijr (15):39]

So Imaan with Jaham bin Safwan is knowledge of the Lord of the Worlds, and Kufr would be simply ignorance of Him. Upon this belief there is not a complete disbeliever in this earth, because no one is ignorant to the Creator of the Worlds.

Ibn Raawandi and those who followed him from the Mutazalite said that 'Imaan was only belief', with this definition all the Jews would be believers as they believed in the message of Mohammad (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) but they arrogantly rejected it so Allah negated Imaan from them.

The Murjiyah⁹ and the Karaamiyah¹⁰ say: 'Imaan is attesting with the tongue without belief in the heart.' Upon this the hypocrites are believers, and Allaah said about them: "And never (O Muhammad (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam)) pray (funeral prayer) for any of them (hypocrites) who dies, nor stand at his grave. Certainly they disbelieved in Allaah and His Messenger, and died while they were Fâsiqûn (rebellious, - disobedient to Allaah and His Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam))." [At-Taubah (9):84]

Others of the Murjiyah said Imaan is 'belief in the heart and attesting with the tongue' but they negate actions of the bodily limbs here, they remove the hadith of Jibraeel which explains the pillars of Islam.¹¹

The Khawarij and many others who followed them said Imaan was 'obedience to Allah in the obligations and voluntary deeds'.¹²

THE TENTH PRINCIPLE WITH ITS EVIDENCES

If we understand Imaan and what it constitutes and comprehended its meaning deeply we will now be able to see clearly what its opposite (Kufr) is, and what nullifies Imaan. What negates the sayings and actions of the heart, the sayings and actions of the tongue, and the actions of the limbs? This can be understood by breaking Kufr (disbelief) down into the following categories:

Kufr of ignorance and rejection

Kufr of denial and hiding or opposing

Kufr of arrogance and pride

Kufr of hypocrisy

Any one of these can take a Muslim outside the fold of Islam completely. To reiterate, the definition of Imaan was; sayings and actions of the heart, sayings and actions of the tongue and actions of the bodily limbs. The above categories dictate that it is possible for all of this definition to be negated or some of it, depending on the circumstances of the belief and kufr. For example:

Sayings, Actions, and Belief Negated:

If all the constituents of Imaan are negated, then all the above categories of kufr are present except hypocrisy.

Sayings Of the Heart Negated:

If affirmation of the heart is negated without the presence of knowledge of the truth then it is Kufr of ignorance and denial. This is similar to the kufr of the mushrikoon Arab, as Allah states regarding them:

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِمَا لَمْ يُحِيطُوا بِعِلْمِهِ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِهِمْ تَأْوِيلُهُ كَذَلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ
مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الظَّالِمِينَ

“Nay, they deny that; the knowledge whereof they could not compass and whereof the interpretation has not yet come unto them. Thus those before them did deny. Then see what was the end of the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.!)” [Yoonus (10):39]

Hiding the Truth whilst having Knowledge of it:

If one was to hide the truth (this includes not acting upon it) whilst acknowledging its truthfulness then this acts as the Kufr of rejection and hiding or denial and is like the kufr of Fir'awn and his people as Allah said:

وَجَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا
فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

“And they belied them (those Ayât) wrongfully and arrogantly, though their ownselves were convinced thereof [i.e. those (Ayaat) are from Allah, and Musa is the Messenger of Allah in truth, but they disliked to obey Musa, and hated to believe in his Message of Monotheism]. So see what was the end of the Mufsidûn (disbelievers, disobedient to Allah, evil-doers, liars.).” [An-Naml (27):14]

Actions of the Heart Negated:

If the actions of the heart like intention, sincerity and love were to be negated with the presence of outwardly manifested actions of the limbs, this is rendered kufr of hypocrisy. This would be the case even if complete attestation to the truth was present or negated whether the negation was by denial or doubt. This kufr is the type of kufr of Ibn Salool and his sect. Allah, The Most High said:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ

“And of mankind, there are some (hypocrites) who say: “We believe in Allah and the Last Day” while in fact they believe not.” [Al-Baqarah (2):8]

Actions of the Heart and Bodily Limbs Negated:

If actions of the heart and bodily limbs are negated, with awareness (knowledge) in the heart, and acknowledgment on the tongue, then this is kufr based on denial and arrogance. It is the kufr of Iblis, and most of the Jews those who witnessed the messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) was the True Messenger but did not follow him like Ka’ab bin al-Ashraf and it is like the one who abandons the prayer out of denial and arrogance.

Actions of the Bodily Limbs are negated with the Presence of Actions of the Heart:

The Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

“Verily in the heart there is a piece of flesh, if it is pure the whole body is pure if it is corrupt the whole body is corrupt, is it not the heart?” [Agreed Upon]

We hope this small research will help the reader to understand there are a number of principles which one must take into account before embarking upon this dangerous task of labeling Muslims may they be leaders or civilians as disbelievers.

- 1 That his kufr of action and saying is connected to his belief and heart.
- 2 Every action does not necessarily dictate the action of the heart. i.e. a father smacking his child (an action of the limbs) does not mean he hates (an action of the heart) his child.
- 3 Sharhul Aqeedatut-Tahaawiyyah p-378 by Ibn Abi Izza al Hanafi checked by Shaykh Naasirud-Deen Al-Albanee
- 4 Sharhul Aqeedatut-Tahaawiyyah p-316 by Ibn Abi Izza al Hanafi
- 5 Sharhul Aqeedatut-Tahaawiyyah p-316 by Ibn Abi Izza al Hanafi
- 6 One exception is that it is not applied upon the Muslim rulers
- 7 Even if we were to look into the specific reason of its revelation we find that it was specific to the Jews.
- 8 An offshoot group from the murjiyah
- 9 This is just one type of the murjiyah not all of them or most of them.
- 10 Mentioned in point 1 above
- 11 And this is the type of Murjiyah belief the Takfeeri people claim we hold
- 12 No doubt complete Imaan

calltoislam.

Masjid Al-Ghurabaa'

116 Bury Park Road, Luton. LU1 1HE Tel: 01582 724647