Principles of Takfīr

In this book, originally titled *Īmān Aur Kufr Qur'ān Kī Roshnī Mein* (Īmān and Kufr in Light of the Qur'ān), Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' provides a detailed explanation of the principles of Takfīr (declaring someone outside the fold of Islām). As he explains in the preface to the book, most of the academic content is taken from a highly technical and largely inaccessible work by his teacher, 'Allāmah Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī, called *Ikfār al-Mulḥidīn*. Thus, writing for the benefit of a more popular audience, Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' offers a clear understanding of what constitutes Īmān and Kufr, and outlines the principles on which a person who claims to be Muslim while denying core elements of Islām will be deemed a Kāfir.

Since the work was written shortly after the creation of Pakistan, Mufti Muḥammad Shafī' also includes a short tangential discussion on the two-nation theory (which was the basis for the creation of Pakistan).

In light of Zandaqah (crypto-Kufr) and Ilḥād (heretical distortion) – concepts discussed in detail in the book – being on the rise today, Muftī Shafī''s work is all the more relevant and important.

Muftī Muḥammad Shafī'

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Preface

In the name of Allāh, Most Merciful, Most Kind

All praise belongs to Allāh and He suffices. Peace be upon His slaves that He has chosen, especially upon our master Muḥammad, the Chosen One, and those guided by his way.

The degree to which the terms "Īmān", "Islām" and "Kufr" are recognised by all classes of people – such that even the illiterate ignoramuses of each group know them –, it is to the same degree that giving these terms comprehensive (*jāmi'*) and exclusive (*māni'*)[1] definitions is difficult. This is not exclusive to "Kufr" or "Īmān", but all popular and commonly used words, the meanings of which no child will entertain doubts over, like "hat", "shirt", "trouser", "shoe", "residence", "table", "chair", "jug", "cup" etc. – if the question arose of a comprehensive and exclusive definition of any one of them, even a great expert will be puzzled, and even after full contemplation and thought, the apprehension will remain that the definition he comes up with may leave out some things included in its meaning or include some things not included within its meaning.

The 'Ulamā' of the past, the Mufassirīn, Muḥaddithīn, Fuqahā' and Mutakallimīn, have written lengthy studies and separate treatises on the full definition of Īmān and Islām, as well as the definition of Kufr and its categories. In this latter period, the treasure-trove of Islāmic sciences, the support of the 'Ulamā', the teacher of teachers, my master and my teacher, Ḥaḍrat 'Allāmah Mawlānā Muḥammad Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī (his soul be sanctified), the previous headteacher of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband, wrote a very comprehensive and detailed book on the topic called *Ikfār al-Mulḥidīn*. The reason for compiling it was that a specific type of Kufr,

[1] "*Jāmi'*" (comprehensive) means the definition includes everything that the term applies to, and "*māni'*" (exclusive) means it excludes anything that it does not apply to. If the term is defined in a way that does not apply to some things included in its meaning it is not *jāmi'*. Conversely, if it is defined in a way that applies to some things outside its meaning it is not *māni'*.

called "Zandaqah" (crypto-Kufr) or "Ilḥād" (heretical distortion), which is the "Kufr al-Nifāq" (Kufr of Hypocrisy) of this age, and distinguishing it from Islām and Īmān, and separating Muslim from Zindīq (crypto-Kāfir), have always been topics under discussion; but based on the widespread unacquaintance with the sciences of Qur'ān and Ḥadīth in this age, it has become even more acute.

Mulḥidīn[2] and Zanādiqah[3] have arisen propagating the worst kind of Kufr in the guise of Islām and have become part of the Muslim society. Coming as "snakes in the grass" for Muslims, they keep on stinging them. Many goodhearted Muslims have become prey to this fitnah, asserting that anyone who regards themselves to be Muslim should be considered Muslim regardless of his beliefs and practice. In today's convention this is described as "political intelligence". But the necessary result of this is that Islām does not refer to any reality, belief or ideology, but is a meaningless term. Whoever wishes can be a Muslim while remaining on their previous beliefs, ideologies and actions. Islām will not enforce any restrictions on them.

How very catastrophic the terrifying results of this fitnah for Islām and Muslims would be required explanation. Thus, fully clarifying this category of Kufr – which operates in the guise of Islām and with the claim of Islām – became an important issue of this age. Two things on this subject in particular were such that, let alone commoners, even those of learning would fall into doubts concerning them:

First, there are general statements of the Fuqahā' and 'Ulamā' that someone who asserts a belief of Kufr but not clearly, rather expresses it with Ta'wīl (interpretation), cannot be deemed a Kāfir. It is also evident that anyone who adopts a belief of Kufr while claiming Islām will do so by bringing some defensive Ta'wīl. The result that emerges is that no claimant of Islām can be called Kāfir, while the texts of Qur'ān and Ḥadith are demonstrably against this. Thus, it was

[2] Plural of Mulḥid, those engaged in Ilḥād (heretical distortion) – a term that will be explained later.

[3] Plural of Zindīq, those engaged in Zandaqah (crypto-Kufr) – a term that will be explained later.

an important need to explain this agreed-upon principle of the Fuqahā' and Mutakallimīn – that asserting a belief of Kufr together with Ta'wīl will not necessitate Kufr.

Second, a rule is established in an authentic and clear ḥadīth, and is accepted by the 'Ulamā' and Fuqahā', that no one from "Ahl al-Qiblah"[4] can be called Kāfir. The result of this too is apparently that if a claimant of Islām accepts the Ka'bah as his direction of prayer, then regardless of the mistaken beliefs he holds regarding Allāh and His Messenger, and the mockery he makes of them, he will not be referred to as Kāfir.

Since these two doubts have an academic flavour to them, there was an even greater need to clarify the actual reality. Thus, the respected teacher, Ḥaḍrat 'Allāmah Shāh Ṣāḥib (his soul be sanctified), raised his pen on this topic, and compiled a matchless book, no book before it being found to be as comprehensive.

However, despite this, firstly, the book is in the Arabic language, and secondly, it is a display of Ḥaḍrat Shāh Ṣāḥib's (his soul be sanctified) academic loftiness, to reach which also requires great knowledge. The result is that the commoners were naturally deprived of benefitting from it, but, given the gradual decline in academic ability, even most people of knowledge were deprived. Thus, even after the publication of this book, many respected individuals demanded that its contents are written in easy Urdu and in a simple format. Many friends have also brought the attention of this lowly one to this task, and I too had earlier felt this need myself.

However, by demand of Divine Decree, this work has been held back till today. Now, when the Qadiyānī fitnah has taken on a new life in Pakistan, and those who conflate Kufr and Islām brought the old traps into the field with new nets, the subject has again become a fresh battle-field of study for the Islamists of

[4] Literally, those who adhere to the Muslim direction of prayer.

Pakistan. At the present time, the need is felt to have intensified, so taking the name of God Almighty I began writing the pages below.

All points of study and research have been taken from my respected teacher, but the order and explanation are of this worthless one. Since my respected teacher's point of reference was a specific fitnah and in response to some specific objections, a full investigation of Islām and Īmān or Kufr and its categories are not found in his book. The lowly one has added these. Moreover, without making the beliefs and ideologies of any specific sect the main locus of study, I have attempted to clarify the topic of Kufr and Islām in a general and inclusive way. Now, alḥamdulillāh, this book contains all the necessary topics of Kufr and Islām and has become adequate to eliminate doubts. And Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) is the guardian of giving direction and He is worthy of such.

At the time of creating Pakistan, along with the topic of Kufr and Islām, the door of another topic opened: is the division and distribution of peoples in the Dunyā based on lineage, hometown, colour and language or based on religion – i.e. Kufr and Islām? Further, even after the creation of Pakistan, this topic came to the fore in different forms. Thus, to start with, a short comprehensive piece has been written on this topic also.

Our Master, accept this from us. Indeed You are All-Hearing, All Knowing.

The slave, Muḥammad Shafī' (Allāh pardon him)
Resident at Karachi
Jumāda l-Ulā, 1373
January, 1954

Introduction: Principles of Distinguishing one Nation from Another

All people were originally one nation (*qawm*) and faith-group (*millah*). They were born from one mother and father. In the initial phase of humanity, the ideologies, beliefs and principles of social conduct and livelihood were also one. They accepted One God and regarded the laws that reached them from Him via the Messenger to be necessary to follow. Then, when individuals amongst them spread out in the world, each becoming distant from the other, and with greater and greater growth this distance encompassed the whole world – from the east to the west and from the south to the north –, their principles of social conduct and livelihood began to differ. Their manner of speech differed, and their languages became different.

Furthermore, beliefs and ideologies were also impacted. The door of worshipping creation instead of God opened and Allāh's creation divided up into different nations (*aqwām*). National struggles began. Together with internal struggles between nations, the need for cooperation and helping each other also arose, so based on their respective principles, different groups made their respective supporters and allies. Initially, there was consideration of four nations on the principle of the four directions of east, west, south and north, and then based on the seven regions of the earth, they were considered as seven nations. (*al-Milal wa l-Niḥal*, p. 2)

Moreover, some established their nationhood based on lineage and family, and went up against other families and lineages. Others established their nationhood on the bases of geography, hometown or language, regarding those who were different from them in these fundamentals as separate and rival nations. And yet others regarded nationhood to be based on ideologies and beliefs and regarded those who worship creation as one nation and those who worship God as a rival nation [based on the principle that]:

"*Since they have not seen the truth they concocted fantasies.*"

For the betterment and success of the children of Ādam, Allāh (Exalted is He) sent His Prophets in every age and nation.

وإن من أمة إلا خلا فيها نذير

"There was no nation except there had passed amongst them a warner." (Qur'ān, 35:24)

All Prophets shared one common teaching: abandon these artificial differences and once more become a single faith-group (*millah*); leave worshipping the creation and worship only one God; consider distinctions of geography and language as signs of Allāh's (Exalted is He) complete power, a means to create ease in social conduct and as favours; don't make these a basis for national division. Some that believed accepted, while the wretched adopted the path of rejection and opposition, from which the conflict between Kufr and Islām began.[5]

According to the practice of all Prophets, our Messenger, the Seal of Prophets (Allāh bless him and grant him peace), brought this very message and spread it in the most effective way. On the one hand, the Qur'ān, having declared distinctions of family, hometown and language as signs of divine power and as divine favours,

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[5] Apart from the verses quoted by the respected author, the following verses also point to this narrative: "He has ordained for you of Dīn that which He enjoined upon Nūḥ, and that which We have revealed to you, and that which We enjoined upon Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and 'Īsā - to establish the Dīn and not be divided therein. Difficult for those who associate others with Allāh is that to which you invite them. Allāh chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him]." (42:13) "Mankind was not but one community but then they differed. And if not for a word [i.e. decision] that preceded from your Sovereign-Master, judgement would have been made between them about what they differed." (10:19) "Mankind was one community, then [after they differed] Allāh sent the prophets as bringers of good tidings and warners and sent down with them the Book in truth to judge between the people concerning that in which they differed." (2:213) "We certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [calling them] to worship Allāh and avoid false deities. Amongst them were those whom Allāh guided, and amongst them were those upon whom misguidance was decreed." (16:36)

put them in their correct place – that they are a means of creating ease in social conduct, not a basis for nationhood. Observe the Qur'ānic statements:

ومن آياته خلق السموات والأرض واختلاف ألسنتكم وألوانكم، إن في ذلك لآيات للعلمين

"From amongst His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the variation in your tongues and colours. Surely there are signs for those who know in these." (30:21)

جعلناكم شعوبا وقبائل لتعارفوا

"We made you into families and tribes that you may recognise one another." (Qur'ān, 49:13)

And on the other hand, it called to a renewed enactment of the ancient unity. The abovementioned verse begins by saying:

يا أيها الناس إنا خلقناكم من ذكر وأنثى

"O people, We have created you from [the union of] a single male and a single female."

خلقكم من نفس واحدة وخلق منها زوجها

"He created you from one soul and created from it its mate." (Qur'ān, 4:1)

While delivering the sermon of Ḥajjat al-Wadā' towards the end of his life, the Noble Messenger (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) said, in explaining the constitution and basic principles of Islām:

أيها الناس، ربكم واحد، لا فضل لعربي على عجمي ولا لعجمي على عربي، ولا لأحمر على أسود، ولا لأسود على أحمر، إلا بالتقوى، إن أكرمكم عند الله أتقاكم

"O people, your Sovereign-Master is One. No Arab has virtue over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab over an Arab, nor a white man over a black man, nor a black man over a white man, except on the basis of Taqwā (piety). Surely the most honoured of you to Allāh is the one with most Taqwā."

In short, the upshot of the Messenger of Allāh's (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) teaching on this matter was to leave communal and geographic differences stuck in a swamp somewhere, and to redirect the world towards the correct unified nationhood that was the legacy of their glorious ancestor, Ḥaḍrat Ādam (upon him peace). For this, two methods were employed:

First, determining the wrong foundations on which people divide and distribute nations – of family, language and hometown – as being void, because if conceded that nations are to be divided and humanity is to be split on these bases then, firstly, to regard some as belonging to a different nation in national and communal dealings based on the involuntary and feeble reason of being born in some land or to some family goes against reason; and secondly, if this division is accepted within mankind's united nationhood, then at no time or context can it be eliminated: one born into an Arab or non-Arab family does not have the choice to be born into another family and, similarly, someone born in Asia cannot be born again in Europe.

In short, these differences of geography, hometown, language and family are based on many wisdoms. Eliminating them is neither in anyone's control nor would any person of intellect attempt to do so. Indeed, it is necessary to understand the limit and the correct position of these distinctions: that their objective is only to create ease in livelihood and social conduct. They have nothing to do with separating nations.

The second method of calling to unity was to concede that nations are demarcated based on beliefs and ideologies: those who believe in God cannot form one nation with those who reject Him. Undoubtedly those who reject God and His Messengers will be considered a separate and different faith-group and nation to those who believe. Based on this principle, the Qur'ān says:

خلقكم فمنكم كافر ومنكم مؤمن

"He created you, and then some of you were Kāfir and some of you were Mu'min." (64:2)

He further said:

إنا هديناه السبيل إما شاكرا وإما كفورا

"Indeed, We showed humanity the path, be he grateful or be he ungrateful." (76:3)

At another juncture, based on these differences in ideologies and beliefs, He named one group "the party of Allāh" (58:19) and another group "the party of Shayṭān" (58:22).

In short, on a principled basis, it was accepted that differences in ideologies and beliefs is a cause for difference in nationhood. Further, in order to eliminate this difference, the correct principles and true beliefs of worshipping God were propagated and the objectives and destructive nature – in this world and the next – of worshipping creation or of such false beliefs as rejecting God and the Messenger were explained, and methods were employed to save God's creatures from them, and no element of good-will and sympathy, from which the imprudent could be prevented from going in the direction of destruction, was left out.

However, many unfortunate and short-sighted people presumed this sympathy to be enmity. [The grounds for] hostility and conflict were thus paved, leading to conflict between Kufr and Islām. Now, if someone wants to put an end to this conflict, he has two options:

One is for worshippers of God, adherents of truth, to abandon their beliefs and put down their weapons before rejectors and Kāfirs and entrust the creation of God to those who deny God. Meaning, in other words, for a compassionate doctor, having become helpless about the wrong course of an illness, feeding it poison by his own hands!

The second option is for those in error, deniers of God and His Messenger, to abandon their ways.

From the two options, the first is nonsensical and the second is outside one's control. Thus, the difference between Kufr and Islām remaining is unavoidable until deniers of God and His Messenger come to their senses or come to an end.

The upshot is that the basic call of Islām is, in reality, towards a basic and true united nationalism that is not based on hometown or language, but on sound principles and correct beliefs, in which no opposition to Allāh and His Messengers occurs. Thus, those who have separated themselves from the ordinance of this united nationalism will be regarded as separate nations and separate faith-communities. From this, the two-nation theory was created which was the basis for Pakistan.

The continuous struggle for freedom had been underway in Hindustan for some time, but some of its flagbearers had created a wrong, nonsensical and impractical conception of united nationalism which combined the opposing elements of light and darkness i.e. of Kufr and Islām. Even at the time that this idea was "hot", several practising 'Ulamā' always continued to guide the ummah to the two-nation theory, but at that time the call was not heard. Eventually, when the struggle for freedom seemed to be a lost cause, one group of Muslims advocating the correct two-nation theory came out into the field of action with this as their foundation.

Every resident of Pakistan, in fact every Muslim in the world, should always remain thankful to Ḥakīm al-Ummah al-Thānawī (Allāh have mercy on him), Qā'id-e-A'ẓam and from his colleagues, Shaykh al-Islām Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā 'Uthmānī (Allāh have mercy on him), who showed the Muslims the right path, as a result of which Allāh (Exalted is He) granted them a free and autonomous sovereign-country.

The upshot of the discussion is that in this world, there are believed to be different causes of separating one nation from another, but Islām has made it clear in its teachings that dividing and demarcating nations can only be based on one principle: accepting God or rejecting Him, which is called "Islām" and "Kufr".

There is nothing else that can break up humanity and divide them into different groups.

The introduction has now ended. Now, the original objective of the treatise will commence. And Allāh gives direction and assists.

Definition of Īmān and Kufr

It is evident that accepting God means to follow and submit to Him, while not accepting Him means to not submit. Furthermore, submitting to God, i.e. recognising what is liked and disliked by Him, and adopting what He likes and avoiding what He dislikes, is not realistically possible in this world without a messenger bringing a message from Allāh (Exalted is He) that distinguishes what He likes from what He dislikes, because by one's intellect alone a human being cannot even distinguish between the likes and dislikes of his own father, brother, children and friends unless they express them vebally or in practice, so how is a human being to fathom Allāh's (Exalted is He) likes and dislikes by merely his own intellect when His being is far beyond human comprehension and reach? This is the wisdom behind sending Prophets (upon them peace).

In short, there is only one way of accepting God in this world: to accept with the heart and tongue the teachings brought by His Messenger. This is what is referred to as "Islām". Not accepting his teachings is called "Kufr".

The most basic topic of religion is of Īmān and Kufr. Thus, in the very first verses of its very first Sūrah [after Fātiḥah], the Noble Qur'ān elaborates on this matter. In fact, it divides the whole of humanity into three groups: Mu'min, Kāfir and Munāfiq. The first four verses of Sūrah Baqarah are about the character of a Mu'min. The subsequent two verses are about the Kāfir. Thirteen verses after that describe the Munāfiqīn. The latter two groups are in reality one because Kāfir and Munāfiq are in principle a single group but based on Munāfiqīn being apparently different from the generality of Kuffār, they are treated separately. Since this group of Kuffār are more dangerous and harmful to Islām and Muslims, their description was given in more detail, over thirteen verses. These are a total of nineteen verses. Some of them are provided below with their translation.

ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه، هدى للمتقين، الذين يؤمنون بالغيب ويقيمون الصلوة ومما رزقنهم ينفقون، والذين يؤمنون بما أنزل إليك وما أنزل من قبلك وبالآخرة هم يوقنون، أولئك على هدى من ربهم وأولئك هم المفلحون

"This [lofty] book contains no doubt. It is a guide to those on guard [from Allāh's displeasure], who adopt Īmān (belief) in the unseen, maintain ṣalāh and spend of what We have provided them; who adopt Īmān in what was revealed to you and what was revealed to those before you; and have full certainty in the next life; these are on right guidance from their Sovereign-Master and these are the successful." (1:2-5)

إن الذين كفروا سواء عليهم أأنذرتهم أم لم تنذرهم لا يؤمنون، ختم الله على قلوبهم وعلى سمعهم، وعلى أبصارهم غشاوة، ولهم عذاب عظيم

"Surely those who have adopted Kufr [and Kufr has been decreed for them], it is the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them – they will not adopt Īmān. Allāh has sealed their hearts and their hearing. Over their visions is a covering. For them [awaits] an immense punishment." (2:6-7)

ومن الناس من يقول آمنا بالله وباليوم الآخر وما هم بمؤمنين

"Amongst men are those who say: 'We have adopted Īmān in Allāh and the Last Day,' while they are not Mu'minūn." (2:8)

Up to "المفلحون", there is a description of Mu'minūn in four verses. From there up to "عذاب عظيم" is a description of Kuffār. Thereafter, from "ومن الناس" a description of the Munāfiqīn begins.

The definition of Īmān and Kufr, and of Mu'min, Kāfir and Munāfiq, also occurs within these verses. The first four verses which are about Mu'minūn firstly contains a summarised description of Mu'min and Īmān: الذين يؤمنون بالغيب – "those who adopt belief in the unseen". The Interpreter of Qur'ān, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās (Allāh be pleased with him), said that "the unseen" (*ghayb*) here refers to all such [religious] beliefs which are hidden to a human being's vision and observation, like Angels, Resurrection, Paradise, Barzakh, Bridge, Scale of Justice and so on. (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, *Khāzin*, etc.)

In this summarised decription, the term "in the unseen" may also indicate that their Īmān is the same in public as in private. They are not like their rival faction of Munāfiqūn, whose character has been described in a later verse as:

وإذا لقوا الذين آمنوا قالوا آمنا وإذا خلوا إلى شيطينهم قالوا إنا معكم

"When they meet those with Īmān they say: 'We have adopted Īmān!', but when in solitude with the Kuffār, they say: 'We are with you!'" (2:14)

Details to this summarised description of Īmān have been given in the third verse, with a complete definition, in the following words:

الذين يؤمنون بما أنزل إليك وما أنزل من قبلك وبالآخرة هم يوقنون

"Those who adopt Īmān in what was revealed to you and what was revealed to those before you."

[This is] a reference to those who adopt Īmān in the Book and Sharī'ah sent down to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) as well as the revelation and Sharī'ah sent down to previous Prophets, while maintaining certainty in the next life (Ākhirah). The reason it was not considered necessary to explicitly mention the very first component of Īmān, adopting Īmān in Allāh, is that if someone does not adopt Īmān in Allāh then there is no sense to him adopting Īmān in a Messenger or revelation. At the end of the Sūrah, when the meaning of Īmān was explained again, Īmān in Allāh was mentioned clearly in these words:

آمن الرسول بما أنزل إليه من ربه والمؤمنون، كل آمن بالله وملائكته وكتبه ورسله، لا نفرق بين أحد من رسله

"The Messenger and Mu'minūn adopt Īmān in what was sent down to him from his Sovereign-Master. Each [of them] adopt Īmān in Allāh, His Angels, Books and Messengers, [declaring that]: 'We do not differentiate between any of his Messengers.'" (2:285)

The "Īmān Mujmal" (summarised Īmān) and "Īmān Mufaṣṣal" (detailed Īmān) which are popular amongst the common people are probably based on this: Īmān

Mujmal has been derived from the first verses of Sūrah Baqarah and Īmān Mufaṣṣal from these latter verses.

Thus, three foundational principles of Īmān are realised from the abovementioned verse:

1. Adopting Īmān in Allāh
2. Having Īmān in the revelations of the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) and all previous Prophets
3. Having Īmān in the Ākhirah (next life)

These three things are in reality the roots of Īmān. The rest are its branches.

Imām al-Ghazālī wrote in *Fayṣal al-Tafriqah fī l-Islām wa l-Zandaqah*:

أصول الإيمان ثلاثة: الإيمان بالله وبرسوله وباليوم الآخر، وما عداه فروع

"The roots of Īmān are three: Īmān in Allāh, His Messenger and the Last Day. Everything else is branches."

If someone wishes to make these foundations even more brief, then Īmān in the Messenger alone includes all these foundations, because without Īmān in Allāh, it is not possible for there to be Īmān in the Messenger, and once there is Īmān in the Messenger, Īmān in the Day of Resurrection is automatically included because Īmān in the Messenger refers to adopting Īmān in all teachings presented by the Messenger, and it is obvious that belief in the Day of Resurrection is one of the most prominent of such teachings.

Thus, the Imāms of Islām have stated the definition of Īmān as follows:

هو تصديق النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فيما علم مجيئه بالضرورة

"It is to assent to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) in all that is known by necessity to have come [from him]."

A Useful Point About Khatm al-Nubuwwah

Within the definition of Īmān and Mu'min in this verse, it has been expressed in a subtle way that the chain of prophethood, messengership and revelation has ended with the messengership of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace), because along with adopting Īmān in what was revealed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace), there is an instruction to adopt Īmān only in the previous Prophets and their revelations. There is no mention of future Prophets. It is obvious that if any kind of legislating prophet were to be sent after him then just as having certainty in the revelations of the previous Prophets was determined as a component of Īmān, it would have likewise been necessary to mention adopting Īmān in future prophets. In fact, from one perspective it would have been a greater necessity to mention future prophets in comparison to previous prophets because previous Prophets have been mentioned in the Qur'ān itself and moreso in the commentaries and explanations of the Messenger o Allāh. There is no danger of the Ummah becoming misguided in this respect. This is distinguished from a prophet who will be sent in the future as the Ummah has no knowledge of his character and signs. The Ummah would have to recognise him directly and the salvation or damnation of the Ummah would hinge on accepting or rejecting him. In such a condition, it would have been necessary for the final book of God and the kind and gentle Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) to clarify all qualities, states and signs of the prophet to be sent in the future such that no room for doubt or confusion would remain. Furthermore, unambiguous commandments to adopt Īmān in him and his revelation and to obey him would have occurred repeatedly in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. But instead, when the Qur'ān mentions the foundations of Īmān, it mentions adopting Īmān in the previous Prophets and their revelations as components of Īmān, and has not even taken the name of any prophet or messenger to be sent in the future, nor his revelation. Furthermore, it is not just in one place, but in more than ten places of the Qur'ān there is emphasis on adopting Īmān in previous revelations. There is not even a mention of any revelation or prophet in the future.

The Qur'ān thus clearly demonstrates that no prophet will be appointed after the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace). It is only that 'Īsā ibn Maryam (upon him peace), who was appointed previously and who the Muḥammadan Ummah believed in from before, will come at the end of time. Thus, no newly born individual can, in calling this Ummah towards his prophethood and revelation, become the locus of salvation for the Ummah.

And Allāh grants direction and assists.

Definition of Mu'min and Kāfir and the Categories of Kufr

Although a brief outline of this was given under the previous heading, but for full clarity, it will be elaborated on under this heading based on the verses mentioned above. Since several technical terms are used in the definition of Islām and Kufr, definitions of these terms will be written first.

Definitions

Īmān: Assenting (*taṣdīq*) to the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) from the heart in all things that are established from him with certainty (*qaṭ'ī*) and by necessity (*badīhī*), on condition that there is verbal affirmation (*iqrār*) of submission also.

Islām: Verbal affirmation of following and submitting to Allāh and His Messenger (Allāh bless him and grant him peace), on condition that Īmān, i.e. assenting from the heart, exists alongside it.

Kufr: Denying and rejecting any matter which to assent to is necessary for Īmān.

Mu'min: The individual who assents to the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) from the heart in every matter which is established from him with certainty (*qaṭ'ī*) and by necessity (*badīhī*), on condition that there is affirmation of this assent and submission with the tongue also.

Muslim: The individual who confesses to obeying and following Allāh (Exalted is He) and His Messenger (Allāh bless him and grant him peace), on condition that he maintains belief in them from the heart too.

Kāfir: The individual who denies anything from [the necessary aspects of Īmān] from the heart or considers it false with the tongue.

Difference between Islām and Īmān & Muslim and Mu'min

Linguistically, "Īmān" is assenting with the heart, and "Islām" is obedience and submission. The location of Īmān is the heart while the location of Islām is the heart, limbs and appendages. However, in Sharī'ah, Islām without Īmān and Īmān without Islām are not given any consideration. That is, assenting to Allāh and His Messenger with the heart alone is not given any consideration in Sharī'ah unless the assent is expressed on the tongue and the obedience and submission verbally affirmed. Affirmation of obedience and submission is not considered unless Allāh and His Messenger are assented to in the heart.

In short, from a linguistic perspective, Īmān and Islām have separate meanings. Based on this lingiuistic meaning, a difference is mentioned between Īmān and Islām in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth too. However, according to the clear statements of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth themselves, it is also realised that in Sharī'ah, Islām without Īmān and Īmān without Islām are not given any consideration. Some experts of verification expressed this concept in the following manner: "The distance of Īmān and Islām is the same, the difference is only in the start and the end. Īmān starts from the heart and ends at the external, while Islām starts from the external and ends at the heart. If the assent in the heart does not reach outward affirmation and so on, the assent is not considered to be Īmān. Similarly, if external affirmation and obedience does not reach the assent of the heart, it is not considered to be Islām." (This was cited by Ustādh 'Allāmah Mawlānā Anwar Shāh, his secret be sanctified).

Now that the linguistic and Shar'ī meanings of Īmān and Islām have been specified, the meaning of Mu'min and Muslim have also become clear. Shaykh al-Islām Mawlānā Shabbīr Aḥmad al-'Uthmānī (Allāh have mercy on him), in his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, has a beneficial study on this topic. The above conclusion has been quoted from Imām al-Ghazālī (Allāh have mercy on him) and Imām al-Subkī (Allāh have mercy on him) in there. Part of Imām Subkī's (Allāh have mercy on him) statement is as follows:

الاسلام موضوع للانقياد الظاهر مشروطا فيه الإيمان والإيمان موضوع للتصديق الباطن مشروط فيه القول عند الإمكان (فتح الملهم، ج١ ص١٥١)

"Islām has been coined for external submission, Īmān being a condition for its [consideration], while Īmān has been coined for internal assent, verbal affirmation being a condition for its [consideration] when possible."

Shaykh Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Humām, the commentator of *al-Hidāyah*, in his authoritative and popular work on 'Aqā'id (beliefs), and its commentary *al-Musāmarah*, have quoted consensus of the Muḥammadan Ummah on this. Its words are as follows:

وقد اتفق أهل الحق وهم فريقا الأشاعرة والحنفية على تلازم الإيمان والإسلام بمعنى أنه لا إيمان يعتبر بلا إسلام وعكسه، أي لا إسلام يعتبر بدون إيمان فلا ينفك أحدهما عن الآخر (ج١ ٢ ص١٨٦، طبع مصر)

"The adherents of truth, namely the two groups of Ash'arīs and Ḥanafīs, agree on the interdependency between Īmān and Islām, in the sense that no Īmān is considered without Islām and vice versa – i.e. no Islām is considered without Īmān. Thus, one does not separate from the other."

Certain (*Qaṭ'ī*) Proof

That which has come from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) with Tawātur (mass-transmission), its authenticity is Qaṭ'ī (certain). For example, the Qur'ān, the number of Ṣalāhs, the number of Rak'āt, the methods of Rukū', Sujūd etc., Adhān, details of Zakāt, Ḥajj and its many details, the termination of prophethood at the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) and so on.

The meaning of Tawātur is that in every generation and period and in different parts of the world, from the [time of the] Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) up to our [time], those who narrated it from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) are of such large numbers that for them to all agree on an error or lie is considered realistically impossible.

Necessary (*Badīhī*) Proof

That which is expressed in the words "*ḍarūrī*" or "*bi l-ḍarūrah*" (by necessity) in the convention of the Fuqahā' and Mutakallimīn is something which together with Tawātur is well-known amongst all the commoners and elite to the degree that the masses also are familiar with it. For example, Ṣalāh, Ṣawm, Zakāt and Ḥajj being Farḍ, Adhān being Sunnah, prophethood terminating at the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) and so on.

The Ḍarūriyyāt (Necessities) of Dīn

In the terminology of the Fuqahā' and Mutakallimīn, those things are called "Ḍarūriyyāt of Dīn" which are established from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) by means of Tawātur together with popularity and necessity to the point that the elite and commoners are all aware of them.

Note

Īmān refers to assenting and submitting to a collection of things, which have been described in the above definition. However, for Kufr, it is not necessary to deny or do Takdhīb (consider as false) all such things. Rather, Takdhīb and denial of any one thing from them is Kufr, even if the veracity of all the rest of them is accepted in the heart. Thus, Islām and Īmān are one reality, while Kufr has many categories, two fundamental categories of which are mentioned in the aforementioned verses of Sūrah Baqarah: one is Kufr al-Ẓāhir (Kufr in the External) and the other is Kufr al-Nifāq (Kufr of Hypocrisy). The details and explanation of other categories will be elaborated on now. And Allāh grants direction and assists.

Categories of Kufr and Kāfir

As mentioned in the preface, this topic is the principal subject of the treatise. It is realised from the earlier discussion that Kufr means Takdhīb of the Messenger. Further, Takdhīb has several forms. As a result of these different forms, there are several categories of Kufr, which Imām al-Ghazālī (Allāh have mercy on him) in his book *Fayṣal al-Tafriqah bayn al-Islām wa l-Zandaqah* as well as his book *al-Iqtiṣād fi l-I'tiqād*, Ḥaḍrat Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz (his soul be sanctified) in his *Fatāwā* and Imām al-Baghawī (Allāh have mercy on him) in explaining the verse " إن الذين كفروا سواء عليهم..." have written about in detail. Furthermore, there is also detailed mention of them in the authoritative books of 'Ilm al-'Aqā'id and Kalām, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* and *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*. The summary of these categories of Takdhīb are:

1. One form of Takdhīb is that an individual explicitly denies the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) as being Allāh's (Exalted is He) Messenger, like the idolaters, Jews and Christians.

2. A second is that after accepting him to be the Messenger, and despite this, to explicitly consider a statement of his to be wrong or false. That is, adopting Īmān in some of his teachings and doing Takdhīb of others.

3. A third is to reject a statement or practice of the Messenger that is Qaṭ'ī al-Thubūt (proven with certainty), claiming that it is not the statement or practice of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace). This, in reality, is Takdhīb of the Messenger.

4. A fourth form is to, while accepting a statement or practice, interpret its meaning and understand it in a self-styled way that goes against the categorical statements of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Since this form of Kufr and Takdhīb occurs while claiming Islām and performing the salient aspects of Islām, most people fall into error about it, especially when they

discover that by consensus of the 'Ulamā', denial on the basis of Ta'wīl is not included in Takdhīb, and such a person cannot be deemed a Kāfir. It is obvious that Mulḥidūn (heretical distorters) would adopt some defensive Ta'wīl. Thus, there is greater need of explaining and clarifying this category [of Kufr] so that a distinction is realised between Ta'wīl and Ilḥād, and it is understood that where Ta'wīl is possible it is not a cause of Kufr, but the Ta'wīl of Ilḥād and Zandaqah are causes of Kufr by consensus. Thus, this topic will be discussed in detail.

Kufr, Zandaqah and Ilḥād

This fourth form of Takdhīb is designated as "Ilḥād" (heretical distortion) in the terminology of Qur'ān and as "Ilḥād" and "Zandaqah" (crypto-Kufr) in Ḥadīth.

الذين يلحدون في آياتنا لا يخفون علينا، أفمن يلقى فى النار خير أم من يأتي آمنا يوم القيامة، الآية

"Surely those who engage in Ilḥād of our verses are not hidden to us. Is then the one that is thrown into the Fire better or the one who comes secure on the Day of Resurrection?" (Qur'ān, 41:40)

عن ابن عمر قال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: سيكون في هذه الأمة مسخ، ألا وذلك فى المكذبين بالقدر والزنديقية، أخرجه الإمام أحمد في مسنده ج٢ ص١٠٨، وقال فى الخصائص: سنده صحيح، وفي منتخب كنز العمال، ج٦ ص٥٠، مرفوعا ما يفسره

"Narrated from Ibn 'Umar: I heard the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) say: 'There will be disfiguration in this Ummah. Pay attention! This will be amongst deniers of Qadr and by engagement in Zandaqah.' Imām Aḥmad transmitted it in his *Musnad*.[6] It states in *al-Khaṣā'iṣ* that its sanad is ṣaḥīḥ. There is a marfū' narration in *Muntakhab Kanz al-'Ummāl* which explains this."

Imām al-Bukhārī has written a separate chapter in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* in connection with this kind of Takdhīb:

[6] *Musnad Aḥmad*, 5867

باب قتل من أبى قبول الفرائض وما نسبوا إلى الردة

"Chapter on Executing the One who Refuses to Accept the Obligations and their being Characterised as Apostates."

In this chapter, he refers to such Takdhīb as "Irtidād" (apostasy)

In connection with this kind of Takdhīb, Ḥaḍrat Shāh Waliyyullāh Dehlawī (Allāh have mercy on him) wrote in *Musawwā Sharḥ al-Muwaṭṭa'*:

وإن اعترف به ظاهرا ولكن يفسر بعض ما ثبت من الدين ضرورة بخلاف ما فسره الصحابة والتابعون وأجمعت عليه الأمة فهو زنديق، كما إذا اعترف بأن القرآن حق وما فيه من ذكر الجنة والنار حق، لكن المراد بالجنة الإبتهاج الذي يحصل بسبب الملكات المحمودة والمراد بالنار هي الندامة التي تحصل بسبب الملكات المذمومة وليس فى الخارج جنة ولا نار، فهو زنديق (مسوى شرح موطأ، ج٢ ص١٣٠)

"If one confesses to it externally but interprets some of what is established by necessity from the Dīn in [a manner] contrary to the interpretation of the Ṣaḥābah, Tābi'un and consensus of the Ummah, he is a Zindīq. For example, one confesses that the Qur'ān is true and what is described in it as heaven and hell is true but [claims that] heaven refers to the joy that occurs on account of praiseworthy faculties while hell refers to the remorse that occurs on account of blameworthy faculties, and there is nothing externally that is heaven or hell – he is a Zindīq."

The Difference between Ta'wīl and Taḥrīf (Distortion)

ثم التأويل تأويلان: تأويل لا يخالف قاطعا من الكتاب والسنة واتفاق الأمة وتأويل يصادم ما ثبت بقاطع، فذلك الزندقة، فكل من أنكر رؤية الله تعالى يوم القيامة وأنكر عذاب القبر وسؤال المنكر والنكير وأنكر الصراط والحساب سواء قال: لا أثق بهؤلاء الرواة أو قال: أثق بهم لكن الحديث مؤول، ثم ذكر تأويلا فاسدا لم يسمع من قبله، فهو الزنديق، أو قال: إن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم خاتم النبوة ولكن معنى هذا الكلام أنه لا يجوز أن يسمى بعده أحد بالنبي، وأما معنى النبوة وهو كون الإنسان مبعوثا من الله تعالى إلى الخلق مفترض الطاعة معصوما من الذنوب ومن البقاء على الخطأ فيما يرى فهو موجودة فى الأئمة بعده، فذلك الزنديق (از تصانيف حضرت شاه ولي الله)

"Further, Ta'wīl is of two kinds: a Ta'wīl that does not oppose something categorical from the Book, Sunnah and consensus of the Ummah, and a Ta'wīl

that clashes with something that is established categorically, and that is Zandaqah. Thus, one who rejects the vision of Allāh (Exalted is He) on the Day of Judgement, denies the punishment of the grave, the interrogation of Munkar and Nakīr, the Bridge and the Judgement, whether he says, 'I don't have confidence in these transmitters,' or he says: 'I have confidence in them but the ḥadīth is interpreted', and mentions a corrupt Ta'wīl that is not accepted from him – he is a Zindīq. Or he says: 'The Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) is the Seal of Prophethood but the meaning of this phrase is that it is not possible for anyone after him to be named a prophet, but with regards to the meaning of prophethood, which is that a man is sent by Allāh (Exalted is He) to the creation, must be obeyed, is protected from sins and from remaining on an error in judgement, then that is found in the Imāms after him' – this is a Zindīq."

This fourth form of Takdhīb of the Messenger, which is referred to as Zandaqah (crypto-Kufr) and Ilḥād (distortion), is, in reality, a kind of Nifāq (hypocrisy). It is worse and more dangerous than the general type of Nifāq. After the death of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace), when revelation ceased, and we had no categorical method of recognising an individual's hidden Kufr and Nifāq, only such people could be called "Munāfiq" who along with claiming to be Muslims expressed statements and actions that reveal their inner Kufr. Zandaqah and Ilḥād are an expression of this. Thus, in *'Umdat al-Qārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, under the verse "في قلوبهم مرض" (in their hearts is a disease), the following statement of Imām Mālik (Allāh have mercy on him) is quoted:

المنافق في عهد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم هو الزنديق اليوم (تفسير ابن كثير، ج١ ص٤٢، طبع مصر)

"The Munāfiq in the era of the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) is today the Zindīq."

That is, after the death of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace), however hidden Kufr and Nifāq are in someone's heart, we cannot call him Munāfiq or Kāfir because we have no means of knowing this. Now, only one kind

of Nifāq remains which is called Zandaqah. That is, along with claiming Islām and adhering to the laws of Islām, holding a belief of Kufr and distorting the agreed-upon meaning of one of the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn & making false Ta'wīl of it.

Considering the great harm of Ilḥād and Zandaqah and the sensitivity of this issue, Ḥujjat al-Islām Imām al-Ghazālī (Allāh have mercy on him) compiled an independent book, *al-Tafriqah bayn al-Islām wa l-Zandaqah* on the subject of Īmān and Kufr, in which he clarified from Qur'ān, Sunnah, reason and transmission what the difference between Ta'wīl and Ilḥād is, demonstrating that Zanādiqah and Mulḥidīn have no place within the Islāmic fraternity and are definitely outside the fold of Islām even though they regard themselves as Muslims. Furthermore, keeping at the fore the precaution that is required in declaring a claimant of Islām to be "Kāfir", the aforementioned Imām offers a valuable advice and rule. This will be quoted together with its translation.

فصل...اعلم أن شرح ما يكفر به وما لا يكفر به يستدعي تفصيلا طويلا يفتقر إلى ذكر كل المقالات والمذاهب وذكر شبهة كل واحد ودليله، ووجه بعده عن الظاهر ووجه تأويله، وذلك لا تحويه مجلدات وليس يسمح لشرح ذلك أوقاتي، فأقتنع الآن بوصية وقانون.

أما الوصية فأن تكف لسانك عن أهل القبلة ما أمكنك ما داموا قائلين لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله غير مناقضين لها، والمناقضة تجويزهم الكذب على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بعذر أو بغير عذر، فإن التكفير فيه خطر والسكوت لا خطر فيه.

أما القانون فهو أن تعلم أن النظريات قسمان، قسم يتعلق بأصول العقائد وقسم يتعلق بالفروع، وأصول الإيمان ثلاثة: الإيمان بالله وبرسوله وباليوم الآخر، وما عداه فروع...

واعلم أن الخطأ في أصل الإمامة وتعيينها وشروطها وما يتعلق بها لا يوجب شيء منه تكفيرا، فقد أنكر ابن كيسان أصل وجوب الإمامة ولا يلزم تكفيره ولا يلتفت إلى قوم يعظمون أمر الإمامة ويجعلون الإيمان بالإمام مقرونا بالإيمان بالله وبرسوله، ولا إلى خصومهم المكفرين لهم بمجرد مذهبهم فى الإمامة فكل ذلك إسراف إذ ليس في واحد من القولين تكذيب الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم أصلا، ومهما وجد التكذيب وجب التكفير

وإن كان فى الفروع، فلو قال قائل مثلا: البيت الذي بمكة ليس الكعبة التي أمر الله تعالى بحجها فهذا كفر، إذ قد ثبت تواترا عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خلافه، فلو أنكر منكر شهادة الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم لذلك البيت بأنه الكعبة لم ينفعه إنكاره، بل يعلم قطعا أنه معاند في إنكاره، إلا أن يكون قريب عهد بالإسلام، ولم يتواتر عنده ذلك،

وكذلك من نسب عائشة رضي الله عنها إلى الفاحشة وقد أنزل الله براءتها فى القرآن فهو كافر، لأن هذا وأمثاله لا يمكن إلا بتكذيب الرسول، أو إنكار التواتر، والتواتر ينكره الإنسان بلسانه ولا يمنكه أن يجهله بقلبه، نعم لو أنكر ما ثبت بأخبار الآحاد، فلا يلزمه به الكفر

ولو أنكر ما ثبت بالإجماع فهذا فيه نظر، لأن معرفة كون الإجماع حجة قاطعة فيه غموض يعرفه المحصلون لعلم أصول الفقه، وأنكر النظام كون الإجماع حجة أصلا فصار كون الإجماع حجة مختلف فيه، فهذا حكم الفروع

وأما الأصول الثلاثة فكل ما لم يحتمل التأويل في نفسه وتواتر نقله ولم يتصور أن يقوم برهان على خلافه فخلافه تكذيب محض، ومثاله ما ذكرناه من حشر الأجساد والجنة والنار وإحاطة علم الله تعالى بتفاصيل الأمور، وما يتطرق إليه احتمال التأويل ولو بالمجاز البعيد فينظر فيه إلى برهان، فإن كان قاطعا وجب القول به لكن إن كان في إظهاره مع العوام ضرر لقصور فهمهم فإظهاره بدعة، وإن لم يكن البرهان قاطعا يعلم ضرورة فى الدين كنفي المعتزلة للرؤية عن الباري تعالى فهذا بدعة وليس بكفر، وأما ما يظهر له ضرر فيقع في محل الإجتهاد والنظر فيحتمل أن يكفر ويحتمل أن لا يكفر...

ولا ينبغي أن يظن أن التكفير ونفيه ينبغي أن يدرك قطعيا في كل مقام، بل التكفير حكم شرعي يرجع إلى إباحة المال وسفك الدم والحكم بالخلود فى النار فمأخذه كمأخذ سائر الأحكام الشرعية، تارة يدرك بيقين وتارة بظن غالب وتارة يتردد فيه، ومهما حصل التردد فالتوقف فى التكفير أولى والمبادرة إلى التكفير إنما يغلب على طباع من يغلب عليهم الجهل، ولا بد من التنبيه بقاعدة أخرى، وهي أن المخالف قد يخالف نصا متواترا ويزعم أنه مؤول، ولكن ذكر تأويله لا انقداح له أصلا فى اللسان لا على بعده ولا على قرب فذلك كفر وصاحبه مكذب، وإن كان يزعم أنه مؤول

"Realise that explaining what Takfīr is done on and what it is not done on demands a lengthy explanation, requiring a description of all doctrines and beliefs, and outlining the doubts and evidence of each one, as well as the reason for it being distant from the apparent meaning and the reason for adopting that interpretation. This would not be encompassed even in several volumes and my time does not allow explaining all of that. So, I will suffice now with a bequest and a rule.

"The bequest is to restrain your tongue from the Ahl al-Qibah as far as possible, for as long as they assert *lā ilāha illallāh Muḥammadur Rasūlullāh*, without nullifying it. Its nullification is their considering it possible for the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) to have lied for a cause or without cause. Indeed, there is great danger in Takfīr and there is no danger in silence.

"The rule is that you realise doctrines are of two kinds, one that relates to the roots of beliefs and one that relates to the branches. The roots of Īmān are three: Īmān in Allāh, His Messenger and the Last day, and the rest are branches…

"Realise that making an error in the principle of political leadership (*imāmah*), its specification, conditions and all that relates to it, none of that entails Takfīr. [The Muʻtazilī] Ibn Kaysān denied the very essence of the obligation of political leadership and making Takfīr of him did not become necessary. No attention is paid to a group that glorify the matter of political leadership and put Īmān in the Imām alongside belief in Allāh and His Messenger. Nor [is attention paid] to their opponents who make Takfīr of them based only on their belief in political leadership. All of this is excess, as neither of the two views entails Takdhīb of the Messenger (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) at all. Whenever Takdhīb is found, Takfīr is necessary.

"If [the opposition to Islāmic doctrine] is in the branches, then if someone says for example, 'The house that is in Makkah is not the Kaʻbah that Allāh (Exalted is He) has commanded making Ḥajj towards', then this is Kufr, as its opposite is established by Tawātur from the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace). Thus, if someone denies that the Messenger (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) certified that house as the Kaʻbah, his denial will not benefit him, and it is rather with certainty that he is being obstinate [and not genuine] in his denial. [This is the case] unless he only recently accepted Islām and this [information] has not become mass-transmitted to him. Likewise, one who accuses 'Ā'ishah of the shameless deed while Allāh has revealed her exoneration in the Qur'ān is a Kāfir, because this and things like it are not possible except by Takdhīb of the Messenger or denying something Mutawātir. A person may deny Tawātur with his tongue but his heart cannot remain ignorant of it. Yes, if one denies singular transissions (*akhbār al-āḥād*), Kufr will not be entailed.

"If one were to deny what is established [only] by consensus, then there is some consideration in this, because there is a degree of ambiguity in consensus being a

decisive proof as students of the science of ʻUṣūl al-Fiqh know. [The Muʻtazilī] al-Naẓẓām denied consensus being a proof at all, and thus consensus being a proof has become disputed. This is the rule of the branches.

"As for the three roots, everything that does not have scope for Ta'wīl and its transmission has come with Tawātur, and it is inconceivable that proof can be substantiated against it, its opposition is pure Takdhīb. Examples of this are as we mentioned [previously], [denial of] bodily resurrection, heaven and hell, the knowledge of Allāh (Exalted is He) encompassing the minute details of things. That in which there is scope for Ta'wīl even as a distant metaphor, its proof will be inspected. If [the proof] is decisive, it is necessary to adopt [this Ta'wīl] but if exposing such [Ta'wīl] to the public will be harmful due to the deficiency of their understanding, exposing it will be Bidʻah (innovation). If the proof is not decisive and known by necessity to be from the Dīn, like the Muʻtazilah's denial of vision of the Creator (Exalted is He), this is Bidʻah but not Kufr. But if harm arises from [such unnecessary Ta'wīl], it falls within the scope of juristic judgement – thus there is scope to make Takfīr and scope to not make Takfīr…

"It should not be assumed that Takfīr and its absence must always be realised by certainty. Rather, Takfīr is a legal ruling referring to the violability of [the offender's] property and life, and ruling that he will remain in hell eternally. Thus, its source is like the source of all rulings of Sharīʻah, sometimes realised by certainty, sometimes by overwhelming conviction and sometimes there is hesitation. But whenever there is hesitation, withholding from Takfīr is superior. Hastening to make Takfīr only dominates the temperaments of those who are dominated by ignorance.

"Another principle must be pointed out, which is that one may oppose a Mutawātir text claiming to be doing Ta'wīl but the mention of his Ta'wīl leaves no

impression at all on the tongue, neither at a distance nor from close-by.[7] This is Kufr and its advocate is guilty of Takdhīb even if he claims to be doing Ta'wīl."

In the end, having described these kinds of false Ta'wīls some more, he writes:

فأمثال هذه المقالات تكذيبات عبر عنها بالتأويلات

"Such doctrines are Takdhībs being expressed as 'Ta'wīls'."

It has become clear from this detailed write-up of Ḥaḍrat Imām al-Ghazālī (Allāh have mercy on him) that to make such false Ta'wīls in the Qur'ān and Ḥadith which alter their agreed-upon meanings, and to create a new meaning which goes against the agreed-upon beliefs of the Ummah, such Ta'wīl assumes the ruling of Takdhīb of the Messenger, which is obviously Kufr.

[7] Meaning, it is completely farfetched and holds no merit whatsoever

Further Citations from the Imāms of Islām on Zandaqah Being Kufr

The first and greatest testimony from all of them is the consensus of the Ḥaḍrāt Ṣaḥābah Kirām (Allāh be pleased with them) of fighting the withholders of Zakāt after the demise of the Noble Messenger (Allāh bless him and grant him peace), having determined them to be apostates, while they adhered to Ṣalāh, Ṣawm and all salient aspects of Islām. Due only to rejecting one ruling of Sharī'ah – Zakāt – they were considered Kāfirs by consensus of the Ṣaḥābah.[8]

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[8] Another incident that demonstrates the consensus of the senior Ṣaḥābah on this issue occurred in the time of 'Umar (raḍiyallāhu 'anhu). Ibn Abī Shaybah and al-Ṭaḥāwī report: "A group of people from Shām drank wine while Yazīd ibn Abī Sufyān was their governor, and they claimed it is ḥalāl based on Ta'wīl of [the verse]: 'There is no blame on those who believe and do righteous deeds for what they consumed [in the past]…' (5:93) He thus wrote to 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him). 'Umar wrote back to him, saying: 'Send them here before they corrupt those around you.' When they arrived, 'Umar consulted the people about them. They said: 'Amīr al-Mu'minīn, we find that they are lying about Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) and have legislated in their religion something not permitted to them by Allāh, so execute them.' 'Alī (raḍiyallāhu 'anhu) was silent so he said to him 'What is your opinion about them, Abu l-Ḥasan?' He said: 'I feel that you should ask them to repent, and if they repent you strike them with eighty lashes for drinking wine. If they don't repent then you execute them, for they have lied about Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) and have legislated in their religion something not permitted to them by Allāh.' Thus, he asked them to repent and they repented, so he struck them with eighty lashes each." Al-'Aynī said the chain is ṣaḥīḥ. (*Nukhab al-Afkār*, 15:531) Thus, the Ta'wīl these individuals presented did not save them from Takfīr according to the consensus of the senior Ṣaḥābah.

This incident should not be confused with another narration regarding the senior Ṣaḥābī, Qudāmah ibn Maẓ'ūn (raḍiyallāhu 'anhu). Qudāmah drank wine in a lapse of judgement (while recognising it to be ḥarām), but believed that if a person repents and corrects his ways after drinking wine he is no longer liable for punishment. 'Umar (raḍiyallāhu 'anhu) explained to him that his understanding was incorrect. However, such a misunderstanding was not Kufr. Thus al-Jaṣṣāṣ says: "They did not pass the same judgement about Qudāmah that they passed on those who drank wine in Shām…because [those in Shām] drank it believing it to be ḥalāl and anyone who believes what Allāh made ḥarām to be ḥalāl is a Kāfir, which is why he asked them to repent. As for Qudāmah, he did not drink it believing it to be ḥalāl, but he interpreted the verse [to mean]…that he does not deserve punishment while believing it

Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Taymiyyah (Allāh have mercy on him) wrote about them:

وفيهم من الردة عن شرائع الاسلام بقدر ما ارتد عن شرائع الاسلام، إذ كان السلف قد سموا مانعى الزكاة مرتدين مع كونهم يصومون ويصلون (فتاوى ابن تيمية، ج٤ ص٢٩١)

"Apostasy from the commandments of Islām is found in them to the degree that they apostatise from the commandments of Islām, since the Salaf would call the withholders of Zakāt 'apostates' (Murtaddīn) despite them fasting and praying."

The second testimony is the consensus of the Ṣaḥābah on the Kufr and apostasy of Musaylimah al-Kadhdhāb and on fighting him, although he and his supporters declared the Kalimah, and according to the clear statement of *Tārīkh Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī* (3:244) would call out "أشهد أن محمدا رسول الله" on their pulpits in their Adhāns, and would adhere to Ṣalāh and Ṣawm. But together with this, they considered Musaylimah al-Kadhdhāb to be equal to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) in prophethood, based on Ta'wīls that opposed the verse on "Khātam al-Nabiyyīn" and the ḥadīth "*lā nabiyya ba'dī*" ("there is no Prophet after me"), the clear statements of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth and the agreed-upon belief of the Ummah. The Noble Ṣaḥābah (Allāh be pleased with them) determined them to be Kāfirs by agreement and consensus, and considered it necessary to fight them. Under the command of Khālid ibn al-Walīd (Allāh be pleased with him), a huge army of the Noble Ṣaḥābah (Allāh be pleased with them) set out for battle. They were faced by 40,000 soldiers from Musaylimah's followers. The battle was very fierce. 1200 individuals from the Noble Ṣaḥābah (Allāh be pleased with them) were martyred and 28,000 from Musaylimah's army were killed, and Musaylimah himself was killed. (*Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*)

Not a single individual from the group of Ṣaḥābah (Allāh be pleased with them) disapproved of this, and not a single one said: "These people declare the Kalimah and are from Ahl al-Qiblah, how can we declare them Kāfir?" Nor did a single one

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to be ḥarām and after his good deeds have erased his bad ones." (*Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, cited with additional commentary in *I'lā' al-Sunan*, Idārat al-Qur'ān, 12:634-5)

of them express concern that such a great and powerful group will be reduced from the Islāmic fraternity. Thus, this rule has been determined as an agreed-upon ruling in all books of Aqā'id. It states in *Jawharat al-Tawḥīd*:

ومن لمعلوم ضرورة جحد من ديننا يقتل كفرا ليس حد، وقال شارحه: هذا مجمع عليه، وذكر أن الماتريدية يكفرون بعد هذا بإنكار القطعي وإن لم يكن ضروريا

"Whoever rejects something necessary from our Dīn will be executed for Kufr not as a Ḥadd."

The commentator said: "This is agreed-upon." And he quoted from the Māturīdīs that, beyond this, they make Takfīr of denying anything that is Qaṭ'ī even if not Ḍarūrī.

The ḥāfiẓ of ḥadīth, Imām Ibn Taymiyyah (Allāh have mercy on him), determined consensus to be the greatest of definitive proofs:

وإجماعهم حجة قاطعة يجب اتباعها بل هي أوكد الحجج، وهو مقدمة على غيرها (إقامة الدليل، ج٣ ص١٣٠)

"Their consensus is a decisive proof that must be followed. In fact, it is the strongest of proofs, and has priority over other than it."

The Imāms of Islām, Mufassirīn, Muḥaddithīn, Fuqahā' and Mutakallimīn, are all one voice on this matter: that to make false Ta'wīls in any one of the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn, that is, decisive and definitive issues, and take it out from the meaning and form that is clear from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth and was the understanding of the Ummah, is in realty Takdhīb of Qur'ān and Ḥadīth and Islāmic beliefs.

In the popular and authoritative book on 'Ilm al-'Aqāi'id, *al-Maqāṣid*, it states while defining Kufr and Kāfir:

وإن كان مع اعترافه بنبوة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وإظهاره شعائر الإسلام يبطن عقائد هي كفر بالاتفاق خص باسم الزنديق

"If while confessing to the prophethood of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) and expressing the salient aspects of Islām he conceals beliefs that are Kufr by consensus, he will be given the exclusive title of Zindīq."

Explaining this matter, Allāmah Shāmī (Allāh have mercy on him) said in *Radd al-Muḥtār*:

فإن الزنديق يموه كفره ويروج عقيدته الفاسدة ويخرجها فى الصورة الصحيحة، وهذا معنى إبطانه الكفر، فلا ينافى الجهار والدعوى إلى الضلال

"Because the Zindīq camouflages his Kufr and popularises his corrupt belief by bringing it out in an acceptable manner. This is the meaning of him concealing Kufr. So, it does not negate being open about it and inviting to misguidance."

Ḥaḍrat Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz Ṣāḥib Dehlawī (his soul be sanctified) explained the categories of Takdhīb and Kufr in his *Fatāwā* in the following words:

ولا شبهة أن الإيمان مفهومه الشرعي المعتبر به في كتب الكلام والعقائد والتفسير والحديث هو تصديق النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فيما علم مجيئه ضرورة عما من شأنه ذلك، ليخرج الصبي والمجنون والحيوان، والكفر عدم الإيمان عما من شأنه ذلك التصديق، فمفهوم الكفر هو عدم تصديق النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فيما علم مجيئه ضرورة، وهو بعينه ما ذكرنا من أن من أنكر واحدا من ضروريات الدين اتصف بالكفر.

نعم، عدم التصديق له مراتب أربعة فيحصل للكفر أيضا أقسام أربعة، الأول: كفر الجهل وهو تكذيب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم صريحا فيما علم مجيئه به مع العلم (أي: في زعمه الباطل) بكونه عليه السلام كاذبا في دعواه، وهذا كفر أبي جهل وأضرابه، والثاني: كفر الجحود والعناد وهو تكذيبه مع العلم بكونه صادقا في دعواه وهو كفر أهل الكتاب لقوله تعالى: الذين آتيناهم الكتاب يعرفونه كما يعرفون أبناءهم، وقوله: وجحدوا بها واستيقنتها أنفسهم ظلما وعلوا، وكفر إبليس من هذا القبيل، والثالث: كفر الشك، كما كان لأكثر المنافقين، والرابع: كفر التأويل، وهو أن يحمل كلام النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم على غير محمله أو على التقية ومراعاة المصالح ونحو ذلك؛

ولما كان التوجه إلى القبلة من خواص معنى الإيمان سواء كان شاملة أو غير شاملة عبروا عن أهل الإيمان بأهل القبلة كما ورد فى الحديث: نهيت عن قتل المصلين، والمراد: المؤمنين، مع أن نص القرآن على أن أهل القبلة هم المصدقون بالنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في جميع ما علم مجيئه، وهو قوله تعالى: وصد عن سبيل الله وكفر به والمسجد الحرام وإخراج أهله منه أكبر عند الله، فليتأمل (فتاوى عزيزي، ج١ ص٤٢)

"There is no doubt that the Shar'ī meaning of Īmān that is given consideration in the books of Kalām, 'Aqā'id, Tafsīr and Ḥadīth is assenting to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) in all that is known to have come [from him] by necessity from one who is capable of such – so as to exclude the child, madman and animal. Kufr is the absence of Īmān from one who is capable of such assent.

Thus, the meaning of Kufr is to not assent to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) in that which is known to have come [from him] by necessity. This is precisely what we mentioned [earlier]: that the one who denies one of the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn is characterised by Kufr.

"Yes, not assenting has four degrees, and thus Kufr has four categories. First, Kufr al-Jahl (Kufr of Ignorance), which is explicit Takdhīb of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) in what is known to come from him while believing that he (upon him peace) was lying/in error about his claim. This is the Kufr of Abū Jahl and his ilk.

"The second is Kufr al-Juḥūd wa l-'Inād (Kufr of Rejection and Obstinacy) which is Takdhīb of him while knowing him to be truthful in his claim, and this is the Kufr of the Ahl al-Kitāb based on His (Exalted is He) saying: 'Those to whom We had given the Book recognise him just as they recognise their own children' (2:146) and His saying: 'They denied them, despite their hearts being convinced of it, out of injustice and feeling superior.' (27:14) The Kufr of Iblīs is an example of this.

"The third is Kufr al-Shakk (Kufr of Doubt) as was the case of most Munāfiqīn.

"The fourth is Kufr al-Ta'wīl (Kufr of Interpretation) which is the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) being held to a [meaning] that it does not hold, or [understanding it] as dissimulation (*taqiyyah*) or [as a false statement made] to observe interests and the likes of that.

"Since turning in the direction of the Qibah was from the particularities of the character of Īmān, whether inclusive [of all who held Īmān] or not, they termed the possessors of Īmān 'Ahl al-Qiblah'; just as has been reported in ḥadīth: 'I have been forbidden from executing those who offer Ṣalāh,' and the intent is the Mu'minūn. Moreover, the Qur'ān explicitly states that the Ahl al-Qiblah are those who assent to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) in all that is known to come [from him], which is His (Exalted is He) statement: 'averting

from the cause of Allāh, disbelief in him and al-Masjid al-Ḥarām, and expelling its people from it is graver with Allāh' (2:217). This should be understood well." (*Fatāwā 'Azīzī*)

Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Qayyim wrote in connection with these false Ta'wīls in *Shifā' al-'Alīl*:

والتأويل الباطل يتضمن تعطيل ما جاء به الرسول، والكذب على المتكلم أنه أراد ذلك المعنى فتتضمن إبطاله الحق وتحقيق الباطل، ونسبة المتكلم إلى ما لا يليق به من التلبيس والألغاز، مع القول عليه بلا علم أنه أراد هذا المعنى، فالمتأول عليه أن يبين صلاحية اللفظ للمعنى الذي ذكره أولا واستعمال المتكلم له في ذلك المعنى في أكثر المواضع، حتى إذا استعمله فيما يحتمل غيره يحمل على ما عهد منه استعماله فيه، وعليه أن يقيم دليلا سالما عن المعارض على الموجب لصرف اللفظ عن ظاهره والحقيقة إلى مجازه واستعارته، وإلا كان ذلك مجرد دعوى منه فلا يقبل

"A false Ta'wīl comprises of neglecting what the Messenger has come with, and lying about the speaker that he intended that meaning. Thus, it comprises of falsifying the truth and considering falsehood as true, and characterising the speaker with something not fitting to him like trickery or riddles, together with slandering him without knowledge that he intended that meaning. Thus, the one engaging in Ta'wīl must show that the text allows for the meaning that he mentioned, firstly, and the speaker having used it in that meaning on most occasions such that when he used it in a [context] that has scope for another meaning it will be understood according to what is recognised as the norm from him in his usage of it; and he must present proof that is free from contradiction that it is necessary to shift the speech away from its apparent meaning and [shift] the literal meaning to its metaphorical and figurative meaning. Otherwise, it will be merely an assertion, and thus not heard."

It states in *Fatāwā Ibn Taymiyyah*:

ثم لو قدر أنهم متأولون لم يكن تأويلهم سائغا، بل تأويل الخوارج ومانعى الزكاة أوجه من تأويلهم، أما الخوارج فإنهم ادعوا اتباع القرآن وأن ما خالفه من السنة لا يجوز العمل به، وأما مانعوا الزكاة فقد ذكروا أنهم قالوا: إن الله قال لنبيه: خذ من أموالهم صدقة، وهذا خطاب لنبيه فقط، فليس علينا أن ندفعها لغيره، فلم يكونوا يدفعونها لأبي بكر ولا يخرجونها له (فتاوى ابن تيمية، ج٤ ص٢٩٧)

"Further, were it assumed that they are engaging in Ta'wīl, their Ta'wīl is not allowable. In fact, the Ta'wīl of the Khawārij and withholders of Zakāt has more merit than their Ta'wīl. As for the Khawārij, they claimed to follow the Qur'ān and that anything conflicting with it from the Sunnah cannot be implemented. As for the withholders of Zakāt, they narrate from them that they said: 'Allāh said to his Prophet: You take the Zakāt from their wealth, and this is an address to His Prophet alone, so we don't have to pay it to anyone else', and thus they would not pay it to Abū Bakr nor would they bring it out to him."

He further said:

وفي صفحة ١٨٥: وقد اتفق الصحابة والأئمة بعدهم على قتال مانعى الزكاة وإن كانوا يصلون الخمس ويصومون شهر رمضان، وهؤلاء لم يكن لهم شبة سائغة، فلهذا كانوا مرتدين وهم يقاتلون على منعها وإن أقروا بالوجوب كما أمر الله

"The Ṣaḥābah and Imāms after them agreed on fighting the withholders of Zakāt even though they would pray the five [Ṣalāhs] and fast the month of Ramaḍān. They did not have an allowable Ta'wīl, and thus were Murtaddīn, and they were fought for withholding [Zakāt] even though they affirmed the obligation as Allāh ordered [it] [i.e. in their understanding]."

It states in *Bughyat al-Murtād* (p. 69)

وإنما القصد ههنا التنبيه على أن عامة هذه التأويلات مقطوع ببطلانها وأن الذي يتأوله أو يسوغ تأويله فقد يقع بالخطأ في نظيره أو فيه، بل قد يكفر من تأوله

"The aim here is only to point out that the generality of these Ta'wīls are definitely false, and that the one who adopts Ta'wīl or allows for Ta'wīl may fall into something like it or into it by error, and indeed one who adopts Ta'wīl of it may even become Kāfir."

It states in *Sharḥ Jam' al-Jawāmi':*

جاحد المجمع عليه من الدين بالضرورة كافر قطعا

"The one who denies something agreed-upon to be from Dīn by necessity is definitely a Kāfir."

‘Allāmah ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm Siyālkotī wrote in *Ḥāshiyah Sharḥ al-‘Aqā’id*:

والتأويل في ضروريات الدين لا يدفع الكفر (حاشية الخيالي، ص١٢٦)

“Ta’wīl in Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn does not save [one] from Kufr.”

Shaykh Akbar Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-‘Arabī said in *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*:

التأويل الفاسد كالكفر (باب٢٨٩، ج٢ ص٨٥٧)

“Corrupt Ta’wīl is like Kufr.”

It states on p. 241 of Wazīr Yamānī’s *Īthār al-Ḥaqq ‘ala l-Khalq*:

لأن الكفر هو جحد الضروريات من الدين أو تأويلها

“Kufr is rejecting the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn or making Ta’wīl of them.”

It states in Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ’ *al-Shifā’ bi Ta‘rīf Ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā*:

وكذلك يقطع بتكفير من كذب أو أنكر قاعدة من قواعد الشريعة، وما عرف يقينا بالنقل المتواتر من فعل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ووقع الإجماع المتصل عليه، كمن أنكر وجوب الصلوات الخمس أو عدد ركعاتها وسجداتها، ويقول: إنما أوجب الله علينا فى الكتاب الصلوة على الجملة وكونها خمسا على هذه الصفات والشروط لا أعلمه إذ لم يرو فى القرآن نص جلي (شفاء)

“Similarly, there is certainty in the Takfīr of one who does Takdhīb or rejects one of the foundational principles of Sharī‘ah and what is known with certainty via Mutawātir transmission from the practice of the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) and uninterrupted consensus has occurred on it, like one who rejects the obligation of the five Ṣalāhs or the number of its rak‘āt and sajdahs, saying: ‘Allāh only made Ṣalāh in general obligatory on us in the Book, and its being five according to these descriptions and methods, I have no recognition of it as it is not mentioned in a clear text of Qur’ān.’”

It is stated in *Sharḥ Shifā’ Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ*:

وكذلك انعقد إجماعهم على أن مخالفة السمع الضروري كفر وخروج عن الإسلام (ص١٢١)

"Likewise, they have reached consensus that opposing a Ḍarūrī transmission is Kufr and leaving Islām."

Note

It has become clear from the statements of the Ṣaḥābah, Tābi'īn and Imāms of Dīn that the principle of not doing Takfīr of one who makes Ta'wīl is not absolute, rather the Ta'wīl that is made in the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn is not Ta'wīl but is distortion and Ilḥād, and is Kufr by consensus of the Ummah. If Ta'wīl is believed to unrestrictedly save [a person] from Kufr, then even Shayṭān would not be Kāfir because he too presented a Ta'wīl for his action: "خلقتني من نار وخلقته من طين" ("You created me from fire and You created him from clay"). Similarly, the Mushrikīn too cannot be Kāfirs because their Ta'wīl is mentioned in the Qur'ān: "ما نعبدهم إلا ليقربونا إلى الله زلفى" ("We do not make 'Ibādah of them but so that they draw us near to Allāh"). It has become clear from this that the Ta'wīl which is opposed to a clear text, consensus or the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn is not Ta'wīl but distortion and Takdhīb of the Messenger, another term for which is Ilḥād and Zandaqah.

The Issue of Making Takfīr of the Ahl al-Qiblah

A further question that arises in making Takfīr of those who express Īmān and Islām, and adhere to Ṣalāh, Ṣawm and so on, but make some baseless Ta'wīls in the decisive and definitive decrees of Islām and thus change its meaning in opposition to clear statements of the Qur'ān and Sunnah and the consensus of the Ummah, is that these people declare the Kalimah and are "Ahl al-Qiblah", and it is forbidden by agreement of the Ummah to make Takfīr of the Ahl al-Qiblah. Thus, it is necessary to explain the meaning of "Ahl al-Qiblah" here.

The basis of this matter is two ḥadīths of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace). One is transmitted in *Bukhārī*, *Muslim* etc. from Ḥaḍrat Anas (Allāh be pleased with him) about obedience to commanders. Its words are:

من شهد أن لا إله إلا الله واستقبل قبلتنا وصلى صلاتنا وأكل ذبيحتنا فهو مسلم، إلا أن ترواكفرا بواحا عندكم من الله فيه برهان

"One who testifies that there is none worthy of 'Ibādah besides Allāh, faces our Qiblah and eats our slaughtered meat, he is a Muslim, unless you see evident Kufr for which you have proof from Allāh."

There is another transmission in *Abū Dāwūd*, *Kitāb al-Jihād*, the text of which is:

عن أنس قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ثلاث من أصل الإيمان: الكف عمن قال لا إله إلا الله، ولا تكفره بذنب ولا تخرجه من الإسلام بعمل، الحديث

"It is narrated from Anas that the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) said: 'Three [things] are from the essence of Īmān: withholding from one who says *lā ilāha illallāh*, not making Takfīr of him because of a sin nor taking him out of Islām based on an action..."

Regarding this, the final words of the first ḥadīth themselves make it clear that the one who says the Kalimah will not be declared Kāfir unless a statement or practice that necessitates clear Kufr, or an unacceptable Ta'wīl, is established with certainty. There is a clear demonstration in the words of the second ḥadīth that

Takfīr cannot be made based on a sin or action, no matter how grave. But by agreement of the 'Ulamā', "sin" here refers to sins apart from Kufr. The intent is that no matter how great corrupt practices – Fisq, Fujūr – become, the Ahl al-Qiblah cannot be called Kāfir as a result. It does not mean that someone would not be deemed a Kāfir despite expressing beliefs opposed to the certainties of Islām.

The consensus of the Noble Ṣaḥābah on declaring the withholders of Zakāt and the claimant of prophethood Musaylimah al-Kadhdhāb and his followers Kāfirs and Murtadds and then fighting them is an open testament to the fact that the prohibition of making Takfīr of Ahl al-Qiblah does not mean that those who offer Ṣalāh facing the Qiblah may not be called Kāfir because of a false belief, but rather it is realised that "the one who professes the Kalimah" and "Ahl al-Qiblah" are technical terms. Only those Muslims are included in their definitions who along with adhering to the salient aspects of Islām, Ṣalāh and so on, are free of all things that necessitate Kufr and are free of false beliefs.

This meaning of Ahl al-Qiblah is found explicitly and clearly in the books of the 'Ulamā'. The statements of some Imāms of Islām are presented below, the aim of which is to give evidence of two things:

1. The correct meaning of "Ahl al-Qiblah"

2. Supporting the original topic of study, that in the decisive and definitive decrees of Islām, determining a meaning different to the meaning established from Qur'ān, Sunnah and consensus of the Ummah, also assumes the ruling of Takdhīb of the Messenger, and such Takdhīb is described as "Zandaqah" and "Ilḥād"

Muḥaqqiq Ibn Amīr Ḥājj (Allāh have mercy on him) who is a well-known student of Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar (Allāh have mercy on him) and Shaykh Ibn al-Humām (Allāh have mercy on him) and a Muḥaqqiq (scholar of verification), wrote while defining the "Ahl al-Qiblah" in *Sharḥ Taḥrīr al-Uṣūl*:

هو الموافق على ما هو من ضروريات الإسلام كحدوث العالم وحشر الأجساد من غير أن يصدر عنه شيء من موجبات الكفر قطعا من اعتقاد راجع إلى وجود إله غير الله تعالى أو حلوله في بعض أشخاص الناس أو إنكار نبوة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم أو ذمه أو استخفافه ونحو ذلك...وقد ظهر من هذا أن عدم تكفير أهل القبلة بذنب ليس على عمومه إلا أن يحمل الذنب على ما ليس بكفر، فيخرج الكفر به كما أشار إليه السبكي (شرح التحرير)

"He is the one who agrees to what is from the Ḍarūriyyāt of Islām like the temporality of the world and bodily resurrection, without anything that necessitates Kufr with certainty emerging from him, like a belief stemming from the existence of a deity apart from Allāh (Exalted is he), or His dwelling within some individuals amongst people or denying the prophethood of Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) or censuring him or belittling him[9] and the like of that…It becomes evident from this that not making Takfīr of Ahl al-Qiblah for a sin is not absolute, unless 'sin' is understood to be what is not Kufr, in

[9] Īmān, the unhesitating conviction in the truth of Allāh's Messenger, entails a necessary level of respect due to the Messenger and the major symbols of Islām. Thus, if an act emerges from a person claiming to be Muslim which shows that this level of respect is missing, this is proof he does not have Īmān. It is reported from Imām Abū Ḥanīfah that he said: "Had one recognised that he is Allāh's Messenger he would not wish for his murder, death or harm…No one that asserts that he affirms the oneness of Allāh and believes in Muḥammad will engage in belittling the Messenger of Allāh, by saying he is a 'Bedouin' or a 'destitute', intending to fault him and belittle him. Had he recognised Allāh and recognised that Muḥammad is His Messenger, Allāh and His Messenger would be loftier in his eyes than to mention His Messenger with something intended to fault or belittle him. Allāh has said about the elevated position of the Messenger, 'Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allāh,' since He has made the Messenger a guide to all creatures, whether Jinn or man, and a trustworthy bearer of all obligations and sunnahs. Thus, Allāh says: 'Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it, and whatever he forbids you, refrain.'" (*al-'Ālim wa l-Muta'allim*, p. 21, *Sharḥ al-'Ālim wa l-Muta'allim*, p. 173)

Commenting on this, Ibn Fūrak states: "If someone says, 'I recognise that you are Allāh's Messenger but wish to murder you,' we derive from this statement of his, when he is free of the circumstances of coercion, allusion and absentmindedness, that he is lying in his claim to recognise him as Allāh's Messenger, because if he was truthful in his recognition of him as Allāh's Messenger and recognised him as Allāh's Messenger that would dictate he glorifies and respects him to a point that does not permit the intention to murder him, belittle and mock him to come together with it." (ibid. p. 175)

which case Kufr will be excluded in this way [from the principle], as alluded to by al-Subkī."

Moreover, in clarifying that Ahl al-Qiblah are not made Takfīr of, it states in *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*:

قال: المبحث السابع في حكم مخالف الحق من أهل القبلة ليس بكافر ما لم يخالف ما هو من ضروريات الدين كحدوث العالم وحشر الأجساد، قال الشارح: ومعناه أن الذين اتفقوا على ما هو من ضروريات الإسلام كحدوث العالم وحشر الأجساد وما يشبه ذلك، واختلفوا في أصول سواها كمسألة الصفات وخلق الأفعال وعموم الإرادة وقدم الكلام وجواز الرؤية ونحو ذلك مما لا نزاع فيه أن الحق فيه واحد هل يكفر المخالف للحق بذلك الاعتقاد وبالقول به أم لا؟ فلا نزاع في كفر أهل القبلة المواظب طول عمره على الطاعات باعتقاد قدم العالم ونفي العلم بالجزئيات ونحو ذلك، وكذا صدور شيء من موجبات الكفر عنه. (شرح المقاصد)

"Seventh investigation on the ruling of one who opposes the truth from amongst the Ahl al-Qiblah: he is not Kāfir for as long as he does not oppose something from the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn, like the temporality of the world and physical resurrection. The commentator said: It means that those who agree to what is from the Ḍarūriyyāt of Islām like the temporality of the world, physical resurrection and all that resembles these, but differ over fundamental beliefs apart from these like the issue of attributes, human actions being created, the divine will being all-inclusive, the divine speech being eternal, the possibility of the beatific vision, and the like of that over which there is no dispute that the truth about them is one, would the opponent of the truth become Kāfir or not by holding that belief and advocating it? Thus, there is no disagreement over the Kufr of Ahl al-Qiblah who are consistent on obedience throughout their lives, based on the belief in the eternality of the world, the negation of divine knowledge of particulars and the likes of these, and likewise something that necessitates Kufr emerging from them." (*Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*)

It states in *Sharḥ al-Fiqh al-Akbar* of 'Alī al-Qārī (Allāh have mercy on him):

اعلم أن المراد بأهل القبلة الذين اتفقوا على ما هو من ضروريات الدين، كحدوث العالم وحشر الأجساد وعلم الله تعالى بالجزئيات وما أشبه ذلك من المسائل المهمات، فمن واظب طول عمره على الطاعات والعبادات مع اعتقاد قدم العالم

ونفي الحشر أو نفي علمه سبحانه تعالى بالجزئيات، لا يكون من أهل القبلة، وإن المراد بأهل القبلة عند أهل السنة أنه لا يكفر ما لم يوجد شيء من أمارات الكفر، ولم يصدر عنه شيء من موجباته (شرح الفقه الأكبر، ص١٨٩)

"Realise that the intent of Ahl al-Qiblah are those who agree to what is from the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn like the temporality of the world, physical resurrection, Allāh's (Exalted is He) knowledge of particulars and what resembles these from important issues. Thus, someone consistent throughout his life on obedience and worship along with belief in the eternality of the world and the negation of resurrection or negating His (Glorified is He) knowledge of particulars will not be from the Ahl al-Qiblah. Indeed, the intent of Ahl al-Qiblah according to the Ahl al-Sunnah is that he will not be made Takfīr of for as long as none of the signs of Kufr are found in him and nothing that necessitates it proceeds from him."

It states in Fakhr al-Islām al-Bazdawī's *Kashf al-Uṣūl*, *Bāb al-'Ijmā'*, 2:238, as well as in Sayf al-Dīn al-'Āmidī's *Kitāb al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām* and in *Ghāyat al-Taḥqīq Sharḥ Uṣūl Ḥusāmī*:

إن غلا فيه أي في هواه، حتى وجب إكفاره به لا يعتبر خلافه ووفاقه أيضا، لعدم دخلوه في مسمى الأمة المشهود لها بالعصمة، وإن صلى إلى القبلة واعتقد نفسه مسلما لأن الأمة ليست عبارة عن المصلين إلى القبلة بل عن المؤمنين وهو كافر وإن كان لا يدري أنه كافر (غاية التحقيق)

"If he goes into excess (in his deviation) such that it becomes necessary to make Takfīr of him, his disagreement is not considered nor his agreement, as he is not included in the meaning of the Ummah whose protection has been attested to, even if he prays towards the Qiblah and regards himself to be a Muslim, because the Ummah is not an expression of people who pray towards the Qiblah but of Mu'minīn, and he is a Kāfir even if he does not realise he is a Kāfir."

Referencing *Sharḥ Taḥrīr al-Uṣūl*, 'Allāmah Shāmī writes in *Radd al-Muḥtār*, *Bāb al-Imāmah*:

لا خلاف في كفر المخالف في ضروريات الإسلام وإن كان من أهل القبلة المواظب طول عمره على الطاعات كما في شرح التحرير (شامي، ج١ ص٢٧٧)

"There is no disagreement on the Kufr of an opponent in the Ḍarūriyyāt of Islām, even if from the Ahl al-Qiblah who was consistent throughout his life on obedience."

It states in *al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq Sharḥ Kanz al-Daqā'iq*:

والحاصل أن المذهب عدم تكفير أحد من المخالفين فيما ليس من الأصول المعلومة من الدين (البحر الرائق)

"The upshot is that the correct position is to not make Takfīr of any opponent in that which is not from the main principles known to be from the Dīn."

It states in the commentary on *Sharḥ al-'Aqā'id al-Nasafiyyah*, *al-Nibrās*:

أهل القبلة فى اصطلاح المتكلمين من يصدق بضروريات الدين أي الأمور التي علم ثبوتها فى الشرع واشتهر فمن أنكر شيئا من الضروريات كحدوث العالم وحشر الأجساد وعلم الله سبحانه بالجزئيات وفرضية الصلوة والصوم لم يكن من أهل القبلة، ولو كان مجاهدا بالطاعات، وكذلك من باشر شيئا من أمارات التكذيب كسجود الصنم والإهانة بأمر شرعي والاستهزاء عليه فليس من أهل القبلة، ومعنى عدم تكفير أهل القبلة أن لا يكفر بارتكاب المعاصي ولا بإنكار الأمور الخفية غير المشهورة (نبراس، ص٥٧٣)

"The Ahl al-Qiblah in the terminology of the Mutakallimīn are those who assent to the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn, meaning those things whose establishment in the Sharī'ah is known and popular, so whoever denies anything from the Ḍarūriyyāt like the temporality of the world, bodily resurrection, Allāh's (Glorified is He) knowledge of particulars, the obligation of Ṣalāh and Ṣawm, is not from the Ahl al-Qiblah, even if he strives in obedience; likewise one who commits any sign of Takdhīb like prostrating to an idol, debasing something from the Sharī'ah and mocking it, he is not from Ahl al-Qiblah. The meaning of not making Takfīr of Ahl al-Qiblah is that Takfīr is not made based on perpetrating sins nor based on denying hidden, unpopular, things."

It states in the well-known and authoritative book on 'Ilm al-'Aqā'id, *al-Mawāqif*:

لا يكفر أهل القبلة إلا فيما فيه إنكار ما علم مجيئه به بالضرورة أو أجمع عليه كاستحلال المحرمات

"Ahl al-Qiblah are not made Takfīr of except based on denial of what is known to have come from him with certainty, or there is consensus on it, like deeming the ḥarām to be ḥalāl."

It states in *Sharḥ al-Fiqh al-Akbar*:

ولا يخفى أن المراد بقول علمائنا: لا يجوز تكفير أهل القبلة بذنب ليس مجرد التوجه إلى القبلة فإن الغلاة من الروافض الذين يدعون أن جبرئيل غلط فى الوحي فإن الله تعالى أرسله إلى علي رضي الله عنه وبعضهم قالوا إنه إله، وإن صلوا إلى القبلة ليسوا بمؤمنين، وهذا هو المراد بقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: من صلى صلوتنا وأكل ذبيحتنا فذلك مسلم (شرح الفقه الأكبر)

"It is not hidden that the intent of the statement of our 'Ulamā' that it is not permissible to make Takfīr of the Ahl al-Qiblah based on a sin is not mere turning to the Qiblah because the extreme Rawāfid who claim that Jibra'īl erred in revelation because Allāh (Exalted is He) sent him to 'Alī (Allāh be pleased with him), and some of them say that he is a deity, are not Mu'minīn even if they pray towards the Qiblah. This is the intent of his (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) statement: 'Whoever offers our Ṣalāh, eats our slaughtered meat, that is a Muslim.'"

It states in *Kulliyyāt Abi l-Baqā'*:

فلا نكفر أهل القبلة ما لم يأت بما يوجب الكفر، وهذا من قبيل قوله تعالى: إن الله يغفر الذنوب جميعا، مع أن الكفر غير مغفور، ومختار جمهور أهل السنة من الفقهاء والمتكلمين عدم إكفار أهل القبلة من المبتدعة المأولة في غير الضرورية لكون التأويل شبهة كما في خزانة الجرجاني والمحيط البرهاني وأحكام الرازي وأصول البزدوي، ورواه الكرخي والحاكم الشهيد عن الإمام أبي حنيفة، والجرجاني عن الحسن بن زياد، وشارح المواقف والمقاصد والآمدي عن الشافعي والأشعري، لا مطلقا (كليات أبو البقاء، ص٥٥٤)

"Thus, we do not make Takfīr of Ahl al-Qiblah for as long as they do not express something that necessitates Kufr. This [principle] is similar to His (Exalted is He) statement: 'Indeed Allāh forgives all sins,' while Kufr will not be forgiven. The favoured view of the majority of Ahl al-Sunnah, from the Fuqahā' and Mutakallimīn, is to not make Takfīr of the Ahl al-Qiblah from the Mubtadi'ah (innovators) who adopt Ta'wīl outside of the Ḍarūriyyāt – not always – because

Ta'wīl is a doubt; as stated in *Khizānat al-Jurjānī*, *al-Muḥīṭ al-Burhānī*, *Aḥkām al-Rāzī* and *Uṣūl al-Bazdawī*; al-Karkhī and al-Ḥākim al-Shahīd narrated it from Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, and al-Jurjānī from Ḥasan ibn Ziyād, and the commentator of *al-Mawāqif* and *al-Maqāṣid* from al-Shāfi'ī and al-Ash'arī."

It states in *Fatḥ al-Mughīth Sharḥ Alfiyyat al-Ḥadīth*:

إذ لا يكفر أحد من أهل القبلة إلا بإنكار قطعي من الشريعة (ص١٤٣)

"Since no one is made Takfīr of from the Ahl al-Qiblah except by denial of something definitive from the Sharī'ah."

Imām Rabbānī Mujaddid Alf Thānī (Allāh have mercy on him) writes in his *Maktūbāt*:

"Since this misguided group is from the Ahl al-Qiblah, there should be no haste in making Takfīr of them for as long they do not deny the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn or something Mutawātir from the decrees of Sharī'ah, and do not accept the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn."

It states in *al-'Aqā'id al-'Aḍudiyyah*:

لا نكفر أحدا من أهل القبلة إلا بما فيه نفي الصانع المختار أو بما فيه شرك أو إنكار النبوة أوإنكار ما علم من الدين بالضرورة، أو إنكار مجمع عليه، وأما غير ذلك فالقائل مبتدع وليس كافر

"We do not make Takfīr of any of the Ahl al-Qiblah except for what constitutes negating a Free-Acting Creator, or what constitutes Shirk, or rejection of prophethood, or rejection of what is known from the Dīn by necessity, or rejection of something agreed-upon. As for other than that, the one asserting [a false belief] is a Mubtadi' (innovator) not a Kāfir."

Adopting Utmost Caution in Making Takfīr of a Claimant of Islām

It has been realised from the above discussion that not everyone who turns to the Qiblah is called "Ahl al-Qiblah". It is a technical term of Sharī'ah which is only used in respect to such people who offer Ṣalāh in the direction of the Qiblah and do not reject or distort anything from the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn. Based on this, many people would have to be declared Kāfir who call themselves Muslims and even perform Ṣalāh and Ṣawm, and even recite Qur'ān and engage in work of Dīn, but reject some decisive or definitive decree of Islām.

However, in this matter, there is the danger of another kind of carelessness: the door of internal Takfīr amongst Muslims may be opened, which is a path to destruction. At one time this danger did not remain a mere danger, but became a reality. Some nominal 'Ulamā' who were unacquainted with the realities of Dīn made it their purpose to declare Muslims Kāfir on small things. Internal fatwās of Kufr began to come. They were also deceived by the rulings in books of Fiqh called "expressions of Kufr" (*kalimāt kufriyyah*), which specify certain expressions as Kufr, the outcome of which is nothing besides the fact that an expression which amounts to denying one of the decisive aspects of Islām will be determined as an expression of Kufr. But along with this, the respected Fuqahā' have also stated that these statements being expressions of Kufr does not at all mean that the person from whose tongue these words emerge will be called Kāfir without thought, contemplation and investigation. [Takfīr cannot be made on this basis] until it is established that his intent is the meaning which is a Kufr belief or a rejection of something Ḍarūrī.

However, those who are unacquainted with reality made these expressions the locus of judgement, and began Takfīrism, one of the major harms of which of course is that calling a Muslim a Kāfir is a very grave matter the effects of which

are felt through the Islāmic social order. Apart from this, there is a danger in this to one's own Īmān as will be explained later.

From another angle, a great harm that is caused by such Takfīrism is that a fatwā of Kufr is treated lightly. The claimant of Islām who really is a Kāfir will have the opportunity to say that people call each other Kāfir [as an ordinary activity], and I too have become prey to this Takfīrism.

Thus, it was felt as being necessary to clarify that it is necessary to adopt utmost caution in referring to a person who calls himself Muslim as a Kāfir. There is danger to one's Īmān in passing such a fatwā based on minor issues or an interpretable or ambiguous expression without investigating the intent. In regards to this carelessness, you have observed a detailed statement of Imām al-Ghazālī (Allāh have mercy on him) above. For more clarification and emphasis, the following lines are being written.

Takfīr of a Muslim is itself Kufr

In a ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth, the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) said:

عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ما أكفر رجل رجلا إلا باء أحدهما به، إن كان كافرا وإلا كفر بتكفيره، وفي رواية فقد وجب الكفر على أحدهما (الترغيب والترهيب للمنذري، ص٥٠)

"Ḥaḍrat Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (Allāh be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) said: 'A man does not make Takfīr of another, except that one of them returns with it: either [the accused] is a Kāfir, or [the accuser] becomes Kāfir on account of his Takfīr.' In another version: 'Kufr becomes necessary on one of the two.'"

A Doubt and its Response

The upshot is that if a person that is called Kāfir is not really a Kāfir, the accuser will become a Kāfir. However, the definition of Kufr that was written earlier based on the text of the Qur'ān does not seem to apply to the individual who erroneously

and without Sharʿī cause called someone Kāfir, because such a person neither denies God nor His Messenger. Thus, some Fuqahā' understood this to be a mere threat or warning, just as terms of "Kufr" have been used as a threat for missing Ṣalāh, the intent of which is not actual Kufr [but metaphorical Kufr].

In *Mukhtaṣar Mushkil al-Āthār* (as cited in *Ikfār a-Mulḥidīn*, p. 51) and *Īthār al-Ḥaqq ʿala l-Khalq*, p. 432, another meaning is given to it: that the intent of calling someone Kāfir here is that his belief and ideologies are Kufr, so if in reality there is no Kufr in his beliefs but all of his beliefs are Īmān, then it would entail calling Īmān Kufr, and calling Īmān Kufr is definitely Takdhīb of Allāh and His Messenger. The Qur'ān states:

ومن يكفر بالإيمان فقد حبط عمله

"One who rejects Īmān, his deeds are wasted." (Qur'ān, 5:5)

The upshot is that the individual whose beliefs do not constitute Kufr, no matter how corrupt his deeds are, may not be called Kāfir. In fact, the Īmān of the one who calls such a person Kāfir is itself in danger, because the outcome of him calling him Kāfir is that Īmān is, as it were, being described as Kufr. It also becomes clear from this explanation that if someone calls the individual whose beliefs do constitute Kufr a Kāfir because of that, the accuser will by agreement not be Kāfir, because he has not determined Īmān as Kufr. However, the respected Fuqahā' and erudite 'Ulamā' have strongly forbidden haste in calling him a Kāfir even in this situation. They did not regard it to be permissible to call him a Kāfir unless there can be no valid interpretation to his "Kufr belief" or his "expression of Kufr". However, if upon hearing a belief or statement of Kufr someone hastily calls him Kāfir, the accuser will not be Kāfir by agreement of the Fuqahā'.

Similarly, if because of wrong information, misunderstanding or any other cause, an individual was deceived and fell into error about someone having a Kufr belief – for example, he thought a certain person, Allāh forbid, had debased a Prophet, or had spoken ill about Allāh (Exalted is He), and it was necessary to investigate the

case and stay away from ill-thought after finding it to be false but based on his carelessness and based only on assumption, he called him Kāfir – the accuser in this case will also not be Kāfir because he has not called Īmān Kufr. It is another matter that he will be sinful on account of his carelessness.

The respected Fuqahā' have decreed caution in this matter to the degree that if someone expressed an ambiguous statement which, from a hundred possibilities ninety-nine are meanings of Kufr and only one possible meaning of it is valid and sound, it is necessary for a Muftī to put aside the ninety-nine possibilities and incline to this one possibility and avoid calling him Kāfir, on condition that he does not make it clear from his speech and action that his intent is the meaning from which Kufr occurs.

In *Fatāwā 'Ālamgīrī*, this matter is expressed as follows:

إذا كان فى المسألة وجوه توجب الكفر ووجه يمنع فعلى المفتي أن يميل إلى ذلك الوجه إلا إذا صرح بإرادة ما يوجب الكفر، فلا ينفعه التأويل حينئذ

"When there are several possible meanings in the issue that necessitate Kufr and one possible meaning that does not, the Muftī must incline to that possible meaning, unless [the offender] clarifies the intent as being one that necessitates Kufr, then the interpretation will not benefit him."

Note

It should be understood that this statement of the Fuqahā' does not mean what some ignoramuses understood, namely that if one belief from the beliefs and statements of an individual is Īmān he should be considered a Mu'min, because if this was the meaning then there would be no Kāfir in the world – even the Shayṭān, Iblīs, would not be Kāfir – since every Kāfir must have some belief or statement which accords with Īmān. Rather, the intent of the respected Fuqahā' is that an expression that emerged from the tongue of any individual which in terms of language and convention can be held to different meanings, and which from the perspective of one meaning emerged from a correct belief while all remaining

meanings determine it to be a Kufr belief, then in such a situation it is necessary for the Muftī to interpret his statement according to the correct meaning and determine him to be a Mu'min, on condition that he does not himself specify that his intent was a meaning of Kufr.

In short, the aforementioned ḥadīth decrees Kufr on the one who mistakenly calls another Kāfir, whether this is only as a threat or warning as understood by some Fuqahā' (*al-Yawāqīt li l-Sha'rānī*), or it refers to actual Kufr. In both cases, the ḥadīth certainly shows that it is necessary to adopt extreme caution in calling a claiminat of Islām Kāfir.

Based on this, erudite 'Ulamā' and Fuqahā' did not consider it permissible to make Takfīr of a Muslim on the basis of such expressions or beliefs on which there is disagreement amongst the 'Ulamā' over them being Kufr, or can be given a correct meaning based on a valid interpretation.

Another Side of Caution

Just like on account of secondary differences, or because of some interpretable and ambiguous expression, or because of such a belief or expression on which there is disagreement amongst the 'Ulamā' over it being Kufr, calling a Muslim Kāfir is extreme carelessness and puts one's Īmān at risk as it entails calling Īmān Kufr, in exactly the same way to determine a definite Kāfir as Muslim is also an extremely dangerous crime and puts one's Īmān at risk, because it entails determining Kufr to be Īmān. It is evident that to voluntarily and wilfully determine Īmān as Kufr or Kufr as Īmān is undoubtedly Kufr; and if not, it is not free of the danger of Kufr.

Moreover, to call a Muslim Kāfir is not merely verbal carelessness but a huge injustice against the whole faith-community and Islāmic society because the social conduct of the whole faith-community is affected by it: marriage, lineage, inheritance, the slaughtered animal, Ṣalāh, communal and political rights are all affected.

Thus, the kind of Kufr which according to the earlier explanation is called "Zandaqah" and "Ilḥād" in the terminology of Sharī'ah, in which a person accepts Allāh and His Messenger from the heart and confesses to do so with the tongue, and adheres to Ṣalāh, Ṣawm, Ḥajj, Zakāt and other salient aspects of Islām, but along with this maintains some beliefs of Kufr, or distorts decrees of Dīn by making false Ta'wīls in the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn, is an extremely dangerous area where many people slip-up. Even slight carelessness in it can result in taking a real Muslim out of Islām, and can also result in making a disbelieving enemy of Islām a "snake in the grass" within the Islāmic fraternity. Both dangers are very grave for the faith-community and their consequences and results are extremely far-reaching.

Important Points Taken from the Treatise *Wuṣūl al-Afkār*

Seeing the excess and negligence of the children of the time, and their carelessness in the matter of Kufr and Islām, over 20 years ago in 1351 H (1933 CE), this lowly one wrote a detailed essay in response to a question, which was published with the title *Wuṣūl al-Afkār ilā Uṣūl al-Ikfār* (Minds Reaching the Principles of Takfīr)[10]. I felt it appropriate to write its summary here.

The reality is that calling a Muslim Kāfir or a Kāfir Muslim are both extremely grave matters. The Noble Qur'ān has strongly condemned both matters. Regarding calling a Muslim Kāfir it states:

يا أيها الذين آمنوا إذا ضربتم في سبيل الله فتبينوا ولا تقولوا لمن ألقى إليكم السلام لست مؤمنا تبتغون عرض الحيوة الدنيا، فعند الله مغانم كثيرة، كذلك كنتم من قبل فمن الله عليكم فتبينوا، إن الله كان بما تعملون خبيرا

"O you who believe, when you travel in Allāh's cause, verify, and do not say to one who offers you salām [and expresses his Islām], 'You are not a Mu'min!', seeking thereby the goods of the worldly life [i.e. the spoils taken from him]. Allāh has spoils in abundance. You were the same before and then Allāh favoured you [with Īmān]. So, verify. Indeed, Allāh is All-Aware of what you do." (4:94)

Meaning, when you first became Muslim, if someone said to you that you are not Muslim, what would you do?

It is realised from this verse that one who makes his Islām apparent it is impermissible and a great calamity to declare him Kāfir unless his Kufr is fully confirmed.

Similarly, the prohibition of its opposite – meaning, declaring a Kāfir Muslim – is found in this verse:

[10] This was the title given to it by Ḥakīm al-Ummah al-Thānawī, who also recommended the work and said that he had himself benefited from it. (*Jawāhir al-Fiqh*, 1:125)

أتريدون أن تهدوا من أضل الله؟ ومن يضلل الله فلن تجد له سبيلا

"Do you wish to guide one who Allāh has caused to go astray? Whoever Allāh causes to go astray, you will find no path for him." (4:88)

"أن تهدوا" (to guide) has been explained in *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* as follows:

أن تعدوهم من جملة المهتدين

"To count them amongst the totality of those who are guided."

The Salaf Ṣāliḥ, Ṣaḥābah, Tābi'īn and the Mujtahid Imāms after them, advised operating with extreme caution in this. The respected Mutakallimīn and Fuqahā' considered the matter to be extremely important and difficult to traverse, and instructed those entering it to be fully alert and cautious.

Thus, 'Allāmah Qārī (Allāh have mercy on him) quoted the following statement of Imām al-Ḥaramayn in *Sharḥ al-Shifā'*, *Faṣl Taḥqīq al-Qawl fi Ikfār al-Muta'awwilīn*:

إدخال كافر فى الملة الإسلامية أو إخراج مسلم عنها عظيم فى الدين (شرح الشفاء، ج٢ ص٥٠٠)

"Admitting a Kāfir into the Islāmic faith-community as well as removing a Muslim from it is [very] grave in the Dīn."

In contrast to this, nowadays both matters are taken so lightly that no principles or standards remain for Kufr, Islām and Īmān and Irtidād (apostasy). One group have made Takfīrism their pastime. Something slightly against the Sharī'ah or even simply against their temperaments will result in a fatwā of Kufr being laid against him! For the smallest of peripheral matters, Muslims are being taken out of Islām. On the other hand, there is another group on the opposite spectrum to them, for whom Islām and Īmān do not constitute any objective reality, but everyone is a Muslim who claims to be Muslim even if he rejects and makes a mockery of Qur'ān, Ḥadith and Islāmic commandments. In their view, there can be scope for all kinds of Kufr in the meaning of Islām. Like Hinduism and other false religions, they have treated Islām as merely a national label: whatever beliefs one wants to

keep he may do so, and one is free to make any statements and actions, and in all conditions will remain Muslim. In their view, this is described as "broadmindedness".

However, Islām and the Messenger of Islām (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) are extremely displeased with this aberration, and with both extremes of excess and neglect. Islām has presented a heavenly dispensation to its adherents. A person who accepts it with a cool heart and feels no restrictedness in his heart in accepting it is a Muslim. And one who rejects any definitive decree of this divine dispensation is undoubtedly and certainly outside the fold of Islām. Islām disapproves of keeping him within the parameters of Islām. By the census of the Islāmic fraternity increasing through them, Islām and Muslims are brought to shame. By accepting these few people into Islām, there is a strong likelihood of thousands of Muslims leaving Islām [by imitating their Zandaqah] as has been experienced and observed many times.

Question: What is the standard for Kufr and Islām, and on what basis can a Muslim be called Murtadd or as having left Islām?

Answer: The meaning of Irtidād linguistically is to turn back. In the terminology of Sharī'ah, turning away from Īman and Islām is called "Irtidād" and one who turns away a "Murtadd". The types of Irtidād are two. One is that a wretched individual turns away from Islām by explicitly altering his religion, e.g. by choosing Christianity, Judaism, Arya Samaj or any other religion, or rejects the existence of the Creator of the Universe or Tawḥīd, or rejects the messengership of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace).

The second is to not alter the religion and reject Tawḥid and Risālah in this way, but to adopt some actions, statements or beliefs that are synonymous with rejecting the Glorious Qur'ān and rejecting Risālah. For example, rejecting a Ḍarūrī or Qaṭ'ī decree of Islām which is established by a clear text of the Glorious Qur'ān, or is established with Tawātur from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace). This type is also included within Irtidād by consensus of the

Ummah, even if [the Murtadd] adheres strongly to all remaining Islāmic commandments apart from this one decree.

The definition of Īman is well-known and recognised, the most important components of which are two: one is to adopt Īman in Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) and the second is to adopt Īman in the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace). But just as Īman in Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) does not mean to only state that one believes in Him without it being necessary along with this to accept all perfect attributes of knowledge, hearing, sight, power and so on that are described in Qur'ān and Ḥadīth – or else every religion and faith-community, Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians and Hindus, accepts the existence of God and His attributes –, in the same way adopting Īman in the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) cannot mean to merely accept his existence, that he was born in Makkah Mu'aẓẓamah, migrated to Madīnah Ṭayyibah, lived for 63 years and did such-and-such things, rather the reality of adopting Īman in the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) is that which is described in the following words of the Glorious Qur'ān:

فلا وربك لا يؤمنون حتى يحكموك فيما شجر بينهم ثم لا يجدوا في أنفسهم حرجا مما قضيت ويسلموا تسليما (سورة النساء، ع٦)

"For, by your Sovereign-Master, they will not have Īman until they make you judge in all their disputes, and then find no constriction within their hearts over what you decreed, and they submit fully." (4:65)

In *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*, the explanation of this verse was transmitted from the Salaf in the follow manner:

فقد روي عن الصادق رضي الله عنه أنه قال: لو أن قوما عبدوا الله تعالى وأقاموا الصلوة وآتوا الزكوة وصاموا رمضان وحجوا البيت ثم قالوا لشيء صنعه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ألا صنع خلاف ما صنع أو وجدوا في أنفسهم حرجا لكانوا مشركين، ثم تلا هذه الآية (روح المعاني، ج٦ ص٦٥)

"Indeed it has been narrated from [Ja'far] al-Ṣādiq that he said: 'Had a community worshipped Allāh (Exalted is He), established Ṣalāh, given Zakāt and fasted

Ramaḍān and performed the pilgrimage to the House, and then said about something the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) did, Why did he not do differently to what he did? Or they experience constriction in their hearts, they would become Mushrikūn', and then he recited this verse."

It becomes clear from the aforementioned verse and its explanation that the reality of adopting Īman in Risālah is that all decrees of the Messenger are accepted with a cool heart, and there is no kind of uncertainty about it.

Once the reality of Īmān is realised, the nature of Kufr and Irtidād also becomes clear, because the rejection and denial of that which to accept and submit to is called "Īmān" is termed "Kufr" and "Irtidād" (as stated clearly in *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*). It also becomes established from the aforementioned definition of Īmān and Kufr that Kufr does not refer only to a person explicitly rejecting Allāh (Exalted is He) or the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and grant him peace), but a sub-type of Kufr and rejection is also to reject any one of the decrees established with certainty and defintiveness from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) after recognising that they come from the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace)[11], even while submitting to all other decrees and practising them diligently.

Note

Two things are worth considering here. First, Kufr and Irtidād apply to the scenario that a decisive commandment is rejected and opposed, and it is believed that it need not be implemented. But if someone regards the commandment to be necessary to implement but out of heedlessness or wicknedness does not practice it himself, he will not be said to have committed Kufr or Irtidād. Even if he does not

[11] Meaning, after being informed by the learned of the decisive and definitive nature of the matter. It is not a condition that the person is actually convinced of its provenance from the Prophet (ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wasallam), but only that the matter in question is defintiviely established and the person objecting informed of this. If he still objects after this, he is a disbeliever. (*Ikfār al-Mulḥidīn*, Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyyah, p. 61, 63)

practise on this commandment once in his entire life, he will be considered Muslim. In the first scenario, a decisive commandment is not even regarded to be necessary to implement. If for some reason, he practises it his whole, he will still be determined a Kāfir and Murtadd. For example, a person adheres firmly to five daily Ṣalāhs, but does not regard it to be obligatory – he is a Kāfir. Another person who regards it to be an obligation never offers it – he is a Muslim, although a Fāsiq, Fājir and a perpetrator of major sins.

Another matter that is worth considering is that with respect to authenticity, Islāmic decrees are of different types, and not all types share the same ruling. Kufr and Irtidād only apply to rejection of decrees that are Qaṭ'ī al-Thubūt (proven with certainty) and Qaṭ'ī al-Dalālah (have a clear meaning). Being Qaṭ'ī al-Thubūt means that it is proven from the Glorious Qur'ān or such ḥadīths narrated from the blessed time of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) till this time, by people in every age and generation, of different classes and areas, in such large numbers that it is considered impossible for all of them to have agreed on a lie. Technically, this is called Tawātur and these ḥadīths are referred to as Mutawātir ḥadīths

Being "Qaṭ'ī al-Dalālah" means that the meaning and intent of the text of the Glorious Qur'ān that relates to it, or the Mutawātir ḥadīth from which it is proven, is very clear. There is no confusion or ambiguity leaving room for Ta'wīl.

If the decisive decrees are well-known and popular amongs all classes of people, the elite and the commoners amongst Muslims, such that to acquire knowledge of them does not depend on any special effort or education and study, but is known generally by reception & passing down, like Ṣalāh, Ṣawm, Ḥajj and Zakāt being Farḍ, stealing and drinking wine being Ḥarām, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) being the final prophet, and so on, they are referred to as "Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn", and those that are not popular to this level are called "Qaṭ'īyyāt" only, not "Ḍarūriyyāt".

The difference between the ruling of Ḍarūriyyāt and Qaṭ'iyyāt is that rejection of Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn is by agreement always Kufr, and unacquaintance and ignorance will not be determined as an excuse, and nor will any kind of Ta'wīl be heard.

Those things that are Qaṭ'iyyāt only but don't reach this level of popularity, there is the following detail regarding them according to the Ḥanafīs: if a common person rejects them due to unacquaintance or ignorance, no judgement of Kufr or Irtidād will be passed right away. Rather, he will first be informed that this decree of Islām is established with certainty and has a meaning that is definitive and that its rejection is Kufr. If he remains upon his rejection thereafter, the judgement of Kufr will be made on him.

كما فى المسايرة والمسامرة لابن الهمام رحمه الله ولفظه: وأما ما ثبت قطعا ولم يبلغ حد الضرورة كاستحقاق بنت الابن السدس مع البنت الصلبية بإجماع المسلمين فظاهر كلام الحنفية الإكفار بجحده فأنهم لم يشترطوا فى الإكفار سوى القطع فى الثبوت...ويجب حمله على ما إذا علم المنكر ثبوته قطعا (مسامرة، ص١٤٩)

"That which is established with certainty but does not reach the degree of Ḍarūrah like the granddaughter being entitled to one-sixth [of the inheritance] when together with the daughter by consensus of the Muslims, the speech of the Ḥanafīs would appear to be to make Takfīr of its denial since they have not made anything besides the certainty in establishment a condition for Takfīr…This must be understood to be referring to [the situation] that the denier certainly knows of its proof."

The outcome of the discussion is that just as changing the religion is one type of Kufr and Irtidād, another kind is to reject anything from the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn and the certainties of Islām, or making such Ta'wīl in the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn which creates a different meaning to its well-known meaning and alters its known purpose.

The Guiding Principle on Takfīr

Thus, the guiding principle of Sharī'ah on making Takfīr of a Muslim is that when there is scope for a correct interpretation of anyone's speech, and there is no

explicit clarification from the speaker against it, or even the slightest disagreement has occurred between the Imāms of Ijtihād on the belief being Kufr, the speaker is not to be called Kāfir. But if someone rejects anything from the Ḍarūriyyāt al-Dīn or makes such Ta'wīl and distortion which creates a different meaning to its agreed-upon meaning, there will be no hesitation in his Kufr. And Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) knows best.

Addendum

The entire explanation so far applies to the situation that a person or group holding beliefs of Kufr or saying statements of Kufr is established via a definitive route. But if in any instance there is doubt over whether the person holds this belief or has expressed this statement it is more cautious and safer to adopt the path mentioned in *Imdād al-Fatāwā*, which is quoted below as an addendum.

If in connection with a person or group there is hesitation in making a judgement of Kufr, whether the reason for the hesitation is the disagreement of the 'Ulamā', or a variation in the indicators, or obscurity in the principles, then it is safer to not give the ruling of Kufr nor the ruling of Islām. In the first, there is carelessness in respect to dealings with him while in the second, there is carelessness in respect to the dealings of other Muslims. Thus, both precautions will be combined in judgements. Meaning, neither will permission be given to enter into a contract of marriage with them, nor will they be followed in Ṣalāh, nor will their slaughtered meat be eaten, and nor will policies that apply to a Kāfir be enforced on them. If it can be investigated, his beliefs are to be checked, and whatever is confirmed after this checking, the rulings will be enforced accordingly. If it cannot be investigated, silence is to be adopted, and his matter left to Allāh. Analagous to this is the ruling that is mentioned in ḥadīth in connection to the doubtful narrations of the Ahl al-Kitāb:

لا تصدقوا أهل الكتاب ولا تكذبوهم وقولوا آمنا بالله وما أنزل إلينا (رواه البخاري)

"Do not consider true [what the] Ahl al-Kitāb [report] nor consider it a lie, and say: 'We adopt Īmān in Allāh and whatever He has revealed to us.'"

A second jurisitic analogy is the rules of a hermaphrodite:

يؤخذ فيه بالأحوط والأوثق في أمور الدين، وأن لا يحكم بثبوت حكم وقع الشك في ثبوته، وإذا وقف خلف الإمام قام بين صف الرجال والنساء وصلى بقناع ويجلس في صلاته جلوس المرأة، ويكره له في حياته لبس الحلي والحرير وأن يخلو

به غير محرم من رجل أو امرأة، ويسافر مع غير محرم من الرجال والإناث، ولا يغسله رجل ولا امرأة، ويتمم بالصعيد، ويكفن كما يكفن الجارية وأمثاله مما فصله الفقهاء

"The most cautious and surest path will be adopted with respect to [the hermaphrodite] in matters of Dīn. No such ruling will be established in which there is doubt over its establishment. When he stands behind the imām he will stand in the row between men and women, and will pray with a khimār, and will sit in Ṣalāh as women sit, and it is disliked for him to wear jewellery or silk and to be in solitude with a Ghayr Maḥram whether a man or a woman, or to travel with a Ghayr Maḥram, man or woman. Neither a man nor a woman will bathe him [when he dies] but Tayammum will be done of him, and he will be shrouded like a female is shrouded, and other such rulings as detailed by the Fuqahā'."

Conclusion

In this matter, the very first thing that needs to be considered is that to come out of the fold of Islām or to become a Kāfir, it is not necessary to intend and aim to do this. The greatest devil, Iblīs, did not intend to become Kāfir, but his actions made him a Kāfir. It comes in the Glorious Qur'ān about this:

وكان من الكافرين

"He came to be from the Kāfirs" (2:34)

The withholders of Zakāt and followers of Musaylimah al-Kadhdhāb of the first generations did not abandon the Islāmic religion, but by consensus of the Ṣaḥābah were determined to be outside the fold of Islām. The reason is that if rejection along with Ta'wīl is determined to unrestrictedly be excluded from rejection and Takdhīb then the greatest Kāfir in the whole world cannot be taken out of Islām. In fact, polytheists, Jews and Christians must all be considered Muslims. The Shayṭān, Iblīs, never once rejected God, nor His divinity, nor any of His attributes, but only rejected [the command] to prostrate to another besides Allāh. He could have said "I am the greatest monotheist", but Allāh (Exalted is He) determined his rebellion to be in the ruling of Takdhīb and considered it an enormous Kufr. Similarly, idolaters at times make the Ta'wīl that they are worshipping their idols not regarding them as Gods, but they worship them as a means to acquire nearness to God for His pleasure. Mentioning this Ta'wīl of the idolaters, the Noble Qurān determined it as being not worthy of attention. Thus, it states:

ما نعبدهم إلا ليقربونا إلى الله زلفى

"We do not make 'Ibādah of them but so that they draw us near to Allāh."

And at times they make the Ta'wīl that these idols are not intrinsic gods but are subordinate to God, but because of being very close to Him they also share in the

knowledge, power and so on of God. It states in ḥadīth that the Mushrikīn would say as Talbiyah in their Ḥajj:

لا شريك لك إلا شريكا هو لك

"You don't have a parter except a partner that is Yours."

Meaning, idols etc.

In short, even idolaters and Mushrikīn did not explicitly oppose the Kalimah, *lā ilāha illallāh*, but adopted the path of Ta'wīl. But the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth determined these false Ta'wīls as synonymous with Takdhīb and rejection and called all of them Kāfirs because according to clear statements of Qur'ān and Ḥadith, on the subject of Tawḥid, there is no room for any exception to *lā sharīka laka* ("You have no partner"), and the unanimous belief of the Islāmic Ummah is to understand *lā ilāha illallāh* upon its apparent meaning without any restriction or exception.

Similarly, if someone chooses to create restrictions or exceptions by opposing the unanimous belief of the Muslim Ummah on the verse "Khātam al-Nabiyyīn" and the ḥadīth *lā nabiyya ba'dī* ("there is no prophet after me") – [by saying for example]: "He is Khātam al-Nabiyyīn and there will be no prophet after him but an exception to this is one who, by way of a shadow or manifestation, is the shadow or very essence of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and grant him peace) himself" – this in reality is similar to the Ta'wīl of the Arab Mushrikīn which they would make by saying "إلا شريكا هو له" (except a partner that is Yours).

If the one who makes false Ta'wīls in "Khātam al-Nabiyyīn" and "*lā nabiyya ba'dī*" is not considered to be outside the fold of Islām, then idolaters and Mushrikīn, and in fact their teacher and imām, Iblīs, cannot be said to be outside the fold of Islām or a Kāfir.

Those who feel bad about removing from the Islāmic Ummah those who make such false Ta'wīls and do Takdhīb of the unanimous beliefs of the Ummah and the clear statements of Qur'ān and Ḥadīth because it will cause harm to the Islāmic

fraternity, their numbers will dwindle, or it will cause division, then they should ponder: If avoiding division and dispute means one can do and say anything but cannot be considered to be outside the fold of Islām, then why is this defense limited to these handful of Mulḥidīn and Zanādiqah? Kāfirs of the whole world can be included in the Islāmic faith-community based on such senseless Ta'wīls. If such "freethinking" is to be employed, then do so without limit so the whole world's communities and sovereign-states become yours, and the conflict between Kufr and Īmān ends.

However, it is evident that this "enlightenment" and "freethinking" entails washing the hands of the Qur'ān, which declares:

منكم كافر ومنكم مؤمن

"Some of you were Kāfir and some of you were Mu'min." (Qur'ān, 64:2)

And which made a distinction between the "party of Allāh" and the "party of Shayṭān", and approximately half of which is full of opposition and conflict with Kufr and Kāfirs.

Not "Making Kāfir" But "Declaring Kāfir"

Nowadays, many people who are not acquainted with the principles of Dīn, having become influenced by the outward Ṣalāh, Ṣawm etc. of Mulḥidīn, accuse the 'Ulamā' who determine them to be Kāfirs of "making" Muslims Kāfirs. It becomes clear from the abovementioned evidences that it is not "making" someone a Kāfir, but rather expressing that the one who has himself become a Kāfir because of beliefs of Kufr having become a Kāfir.

The upshot is that the type of Takdhīb of the Messenger that is called "Zandaqah" and "Ilḥād" is the worst Takdhīb and Kufr and the most dangerous Kufr for Islām and Muslims. This is the kind of Takdhīb for which Iblīs was deemed a Kāfir. However, since the Takdhīb does not occur clearly, many Muslims were deceived, especially when the perpetrator adheres to all salient aspects of Islām, Ṣalāh, Ṣawm, Tilāwah, etc.

It was thus necessary to make his true reality known from the clear statements of Qur'ān, Ḥadīth and the seniors of the Ummah. Thus, with praise to Allāh, the full details on this has come in this treatise, from which it has become clear that to understand, by means of Ta'wīls, the definitive and decisive decrees of Islām as different to that explicitly mentioned and agreed-upon is in reality Takdhīb of the Messenger.

In the course of this discussion, it has also been realised that the Ahl al-Qiblah, who making Takfīr of has been forbidden in Ḥadīth, does not refer to those who merely face the Qiblah, but is a technical term in the Sharī'ah and Islām, referring only to people who carry out the salient aspects of Islām, Ṣalāh and so on, like all Muslims, while no statement or practice occurs from them which amounts to Takdhīb of the Messenger (Allāh bless him and grant him peace).

Our final call is: All praise belongs to Allāh, the Sovereign-Master of all that exists.

The feeble slave, Muḥammad Shafī' (Allāh pardon him), wrote this.

Rabī' al-Thānī, 1373 H
January, 1954[12]

[12] The book can be found in *Jawāhir al-Fiqh*, Maktabah Dār al-'Ulūm Karāchī, 1:39-122