

Explanation of the Nullifiers of Islam

Authored by Shaykh al-Islam Muhammad ibn
'Abd al-Wahhab, may Allah have mercy on him

Explanation by His Eminence Shaykh Sulayman ibn
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Book Information:

Title: Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

Authored by: Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb — may Allah have mercy on him

Explained by: The noble scholar, His Eminence Shaykh Sulaymān ibn Salīmullāh al-Ruḥaylī — may Allah preserve him

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Indeed, all praise is due to Allah. We praise Him, and seek His help, and seek His forgiveness. And we seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our own selves and from the evil consequences of our deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides, none can misguide him, and whomsoever He allows to go astray, none can guide him. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, alone without any partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger.

“O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allah.”

[Surah Āl ‘Imrān, 3:102]

“O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.”

[Surah al-Nisā’, 4:1]

“O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. * He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), he has indeed achieved a great achievement.”

[Surah al-Aḥzāb, 33:70–71]

To proceed:

Indeed, the best speech is the Book of Allah, and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad ﷺ, and the worst of affairs are the newly-invented matters, and every newly-invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Fire.

To continue: this is a commentary on a small text in size, great in benefit, one that is greatly needed—rather, it is a necessity—since it contains the preservation of the Muslim’s religion from that which nullifies it.

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

That text is the text “The Nullifiers of Islam” (Nawāqid al-Islām) by Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, may Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, have mercy upon him and upon all the scholars of the Muslims.

And it is known that Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, sent Muhammad ﷺ as a mercy to the worlds; so He sent him to the jinn and to mankind, as a caller and a warner, just as our Lord, Glorified and Exalted, said:

“And We have sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ) not but as a mercy for the ‘Alamīn (mankind, jinn and all that exists).”

[Surah al-Anbiyā’, 21:107]

He, Glorified is He, sent him as a bearer of glad tidings of good and its reward, and a warner from evil and its consequence. Allah, the Most High, said:

“And We have sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ) only as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner.”

[Surah al-Furqān, 25:56]

And He revealed to him the Qur'an and inspired to him the Sunnah, so that he may clarify the religion to the people with complete clarity. Allah, the Most High, said:

“And We have also sent down unto you (O Muhammad ﷺ) the reminder and the advice (the Qur'an), that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought.”

[Surah al-Naḥl, 16:44]

And Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says:

“And We have not sent down the Book (the Qur'an) to you (O Muhammad ﷺ), except that you may explain clearly unto them those things in which they differ, and (as) a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe.”

[Surah al-Naḥl, 16:64]

And He, Glorified and Exalted is He, clarified His Straight Path so that it may be adhered to and followed, for it is the religion. He, the Most High, said:

“And verily, this is My Straight Path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path. This He has ordained for you that you may become Al-Muttaqûn (the pious).”

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[Surah al-An‘ām, 6:153]

And He explained the evidences so that the path of the criminals becomes clear and therefore avoided. He, the Most High, said:

“Thus We explain the Ayāt (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, laws, etc.) in detail, so that the way of the Mujrimûn (criminals, polytheists, sinners) may become manifest.”

[Surah al-An‘ām, 6:55]

So the matter became completely clear and evident, so that:

“He who is destroyed (as a disbeliever) might be destroyed after a clear evidence, and he who is saved (as a believer) might be saved after a clear evidence.”

[Surah al-Anfāl, 8:42]

And the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to ask the Prophet ﷺ about good, and Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, guided some of them to ask about evil so that the path of good and the path of evil would both become clear. In the Şaḥīḥ (1), it is narrated:

From Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān, may Allah be pleased with them both, who said:

“The people used to ask the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about good, but I used to ask him about evil for fear that it might overtake me.”

(1) Narrated by al-Bukhārī (3606), and Muslim (1847)

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

And the greatest matter that has been clarified and detailed from the good in the Qur'an and Sunnah is Tawḥīd—which is the greatest obligation of the religion.

And the greatest matter whose clarification has come in the Qur'an and the Sunnah from the evil is Shirk; for its explanation came both in foundational and detailed form. And it is the greatest form of injustice and the most severe of oppression. Therefore, it is obligatory upon every legally responsible individual—whether male or female—to know Tawḥīd so that he may establish it, and to know Shirk so that he may avoid it. Seeking knowledge about this is an individual obligation upon every person who is legally accountable, whether male or female. It falls under the primary application of the Prophet's ﷺ statement:

“Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim.” (1)

And for this reason, the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah gave tremendous importance to affirming Tawḥīd, clarifying how to preserve it, and explaining what nullifies or diminishes it. And the writings of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah in this field are too numerous to be counted—they are indeed very many.

Among those works of great benefit is a short treatise that can be read in just a few minutes. It is brief in wording, but by the Lord of the Ka'bah, it is tremendous in meaning, tremendous in its benefits, and tremendous in its impact upon whoever reads it. That treatise is:

“The Nullifiers of Islam” by Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, may Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, have mercy upon him.

And the need to read it and to understand it with a sound, Salafi, correct understanding is extremely urgent in our time—because today, in this era, two great and destructive diseases have spread:

(1) Narrated by Ibn Mājah (224), from Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him), with a chain that is very weak. It has other routes, all of which are weak in chain. Some scholars have declared it authentic, and others have graded it ḥasan. See the commentary of al-Albānī on al-Mishkāh (218).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

As for the first of the two: it is excessiveness in takfīr (declaring others disbelievers), and attacking the Ummah by pronouncing takfīr upon all its individuals—except for the isolated few who agree with the takfīrīs. So the blood of Muslims was made lawful, along with those non-Muslims whose blood is inviolable, and you saw bombings, destruction, and corruption falsely and wrongfully named jihād.

And since when has oppression, transgression, and opposing the legislation of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, in judging people—been jihād in His cause, Glorified and Exalted is He?!

Rather, even the mosques of the Muslims were violated, and they had no sanctity in the eyes of those takfīrīs—neither the adhān that is raised from their minarets, nor the shahādātayn that are repeated in it, signifying the presence of Islam. Instead, the entire Ummah, in their view, had apostatised and returned to a Jāhiliyyah worse than the Jāhiliyyah that existed before the Prophet’s mission (1). And the mosques of the Ummah, according to them, became masājid ḍirār (mosques of harm), which must be abandoned, and whose people must be abandoned. It is not permissible, according to them, to pray Jumu‘ah or Jamā‘ah in them (2).

To the extent that their leaders boast that they do not pray Jumu‘ah nor Jamā‘ah, and that one of those deceived by them once came to one of the heads of the takfīrīs at the time of Jumu‘ah, and said:

“Jumu‘ah has arrived—come, let us pray.”

He replied: “I do not pray Jumu‘ah nor Jamā‘ah!” (3)

We seek refuge with Allah from misguidance.

Rather, their misguidance reached the point where they deemed it obligatory to destroy the Houses of Allah and kill their people! We seek refuge with Allah from misguidance.

(1) See: Fī Zilāl al-Qur‘ān (2/1057) and (4/2009, 2033, 2122 – Dār al-Shurūq), and Ma‘ālim fī al-Ṭarīq (pp. 101–103 – Dār al-Shurūq), by Sayyid Qutb.

(2) See: al-Zilāl (3/1816).

(3) See: al-Tārīkh al-Sirrī lil-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn by ‘Alī ‘Ashmāwī (p. 112 – Dār al-Hilāl).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

And these misguided and transgressive individuals may conceal themselves behind the speech of the scholars regarding takfīr, but they misunderstand it and apply it to those who are not deserving of it. They then attribute themselves—falsely, slanderously, unjustly, and aggressively—to the imāms of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah.

And opposing these individuals are others who disagree with them regarding takfīr, but they go on to accuse the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah—the protectors of creed, the guardians of safety for mankind—of takfīr, terrorism, and destruction. So they imitate those takfīrīs in their aggression and wrongdoing against the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah, and they agree with those transgressors in their distorted understanding of the speech of the scholars grounded in divine knowledge.

As for the second disease, it is the total abandonment of takfīr, even if the conditions are met, the preventative barriers are removed, and explicit disbelief is established. And the matter escalates with some of them to the point that they declare disbelief in general, but as for a specific individual, they do not declare him a disbeliever, even if he commits that which necessitates disbelief, and even if all the conditions are met and the barriers removed. Rather, even if he openly proclaims disbelief, he says:

“I do not declare him a disbeliever in his person; this is only generic disbelief (kufir naw‘i)!”

And this is from the most vile of statements, the most corrupt of them, and the greatest of them in evil. It contradicts—explicitly—the evidences of the Qur’an and the Sunnah and the consensus of the Salaf of this Ummah.

And just as the former ones did, these individuals may use the speech of some of the imāms of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah as a proof, but they misunderstand it and apply it incorrectly. As a result, they leave the door open for every deviant and atheist to say whatever he wishes, while feeling safe from the protectors of the creed ever declaring him a disbeliever or clarifying his exit from the religion of Islam.

So the audacity against the religion of Allah became great, and the audacity against the scholars of the Muslims became great—and this is a tremendous slander.

And from here, it becomes obligatory to clarify the moderate methodology—the methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah—in the

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matters of names and rulings, and specifically in the matter of passing judgement of takfīr.

And it is among the rights of the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah upon us that we clarify the meaning of their speech with a correct clarification, for their speech agrees with what is found in the Book and the Sunnah. Within it is complete justice, derived from its foundation, and within it is wisdom extracted from the evidences of the Book and the Sunnah.

And this treatise that is in our hands—despite the tremendous benefit it contains—the takfīrīs spread it and interpret it incorrectly, in a way that is contrary to the author's intended meaning, may Allah have mercy on him.

So we present, before explaining this treatise, a number of introductions that are necessary in this field—and whoever does not know them will inevitably fall into error.

First Introduction:

**Explanation of the Title of the Treatise: The Nullifiers of Islam
(Nawāqid al-Islām)**

“Nawāqid” is the plural of “nāqid”, and this plural comes on the pattern “fa‘ā’il”, because it is the plural of something inanimate. And that which is inanimate is usually pluralized with the broken plural pattern “fa‘ā’il”.

As for “nāqid”, it is the active participle (ism fā‘il) derived from “naqḍ”. And naqḍ means the opposite of binding (ibrām); it is the undoing of something that was tied or fastened (1).

As Allah, the Most High, said: “And be not like her who undoes the thread which she has spun, after it has become strong.” [Surah al-Naḥl, 16:92]

Meaning: she spun and twisted it and made it strong, then she undid it.

And He, Glorified is He, said: “And break not the oaths after you have confirmed them.” [Surah al-Naḥl, 16:91]

And He, Glorified is He, also said: “Those who break Allah’s Covenant after ratifying it.” [Surah al-Baqarah, 2:27]

Therefore, “naqḍ” linguistically and in the Sharī‘ah means: undoing after fastening.

For this reason, the jurists say: “The nullifiers of wudū’”, meaning: the occurrences that happen after performing wudū’ which invalidate it.

And it is well known that whoever says the two testimonies:

“Ashhadu an lā ilāha illa Allah, wa ashhadu anna Muḥammadan Rasūl Allah”

(“I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah”),

then he has tied the bond of Islam, and Islam is established for him.

Then after that, he may commit something that diminishes his Islam while its foundation remains, or he may commit something that nullifies it, undoes it, and completely invalidates it.

(1) See: Tahdhīb al-Lughah by al-Azharī (8/269) – Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī;

Ma‘jam Maqāyīs al-Lughah by Ibn Fāris (entry: ن-ق-ض – no. 4705);

Lisān al-‘Arab by Ibn Manzūr (7/242) – Ṣādir; and al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ by al-Fayrūzābādī (p. 656 – al-Risālah).

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And the expression “nullifying Islam” (naqḍ al-Islām) is linguistically correct based on the meaning we have understood, and correct in the Sharḥ sense based on the meaning we have understood. And it was used by the righteous predecessors, may Allah be pleased with them.

Among that is what has been reported from Ibn ‘Abbās, may Allah be pleased with them both, that he said: “Al-Qadar (Divine Decree) is the foundation of Tawḥīd. So whoever affirms the oneness of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, and believes in al-Qadar, then that is the firm handhold (al-‘urwah al-wuthqā) that will never break. And whoever affirms the oneness of Allah, Exalted is He, but rejects al-Qadar has indeed nullified Tawḥīd.”

Narrated by al-Firyābī in al-Qadar and others. (1)

And his statement: “Islam” — what is intended by it is the Islam that came after the sending of the Prophet ﷺ, meaning: the religion with which Muhammad ﷺ was sent, and which Allah has chosen for all jinn and mankind as a religion, and He accepts no religion other than it.

And it is: “Submission to Allah through Tawḥīd, yielding to Him in obedience, and disavowal of Shirk.” (2)

So our saying: “submission to Allah through Tawḥīd” means: absolute surrender to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.

For submission to other than Allah is not Islam, and submission to Allah and other than Him is not Islam.

And our saying: “yielding to Him in obedience” means: obedience to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, and obedience to whomever Allah has commanded to be obeyed, for obeying them is obedience to Allah.

As the Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever obeys me has obeyed Allah, and whoever disobeys me has disobeyed Allah.” (3)

(1) Reported by al-Firyābī in al-Qadar no. (205), al-Ājurrī in al-Sharī‘ah no. (456), Ibn Baṭṭah in al-Ibānah al-Kubrā no. (1624) and (1800), and al-Lālikā’ī in Sharḥ Uṣūl I’tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah no. (1224 – Ṭayyibah ed.).

(2) See: Iqtiḍā’ al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm Mukhālafat Aṣḥāb al-Jaḥīm by Ibn Taymiyyah (2/376–377 – ‘Ālam al-Kutub); al-Istiḳāmah (2/302–303 – Muḥammad Rashād ed.); al-Nubuwwāt (1/346–347 – Ḍiyā’ al-Salaf); and Badā’i’ al-Fawā’id by Ibn al-Qayyim (2/600 – ‘Ālam al-Fawā’id).

(3) Reported by al-Bukhārī (2957) and Muslim (1835), from Abū Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him.

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And our statement: “and disavowal of shirk” means: it is necessary to disbelieve in the tāghūt, and it is necessary to show disavowal of shirk and the people of shirk, upon the correct meaning which will come to us, if Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, wills.

And included in the disavowal of shirk is: being free from the nullifiers of Islam; for whoever commits one of the nullifiers of Islam, and is judged based on its effect, is not a Muslim.

This is the meaning of Islam.

Therefore, Islam must include two great matters:

- There must be Īmān (belief).
- And there must be disbelief in that which contradicts it.

As Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said:

“And verily, We have sent among every nation a Messenger (proclaiming): ‘Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tāghūt (all false deities).’” [Surah al-Naḥl, 16:36]

And as the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Whoever says: Lā ilāha illa Allah and disbelieves in whatever is worshipped besides Allah, his wealth and his blood become inviolable, and his reckoning will be with Allah.”

Narrated by Muslim in al-Ṣaḥīḥ (1).

So, belief is necessary, and disbelief in that which contradicts it is necessary.

And Islam and Īmān are two legislative terms:

When they are mentioned together, they are distinct; and when mentioned separately, they are combined in meaning. (2)

So, if they are mentioned together in a text or statement:

Islam refers to outward actions, and Īmān refers to inward actions.

(1) Ḥadīth no. (23), from Ṭāriq ibn Ashyam al-Ashjaʿī, may Allah be pleased with him.

(2) See: Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā by Ibn Taymiyyah (7/551), and Sharḥ al-ʿAqīdah al-Ṭaḥāwīyyah by Ibn Abī al-ʿIzz al-Ḥanafī (p. 350 – Dār al-Salām).

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And when they are mentioned separately—so it is said: “Islam”, or it is said: “Īmān”—then they both carry the same meaning; that is: the religion with which Muhammad ﷺ was sent.

And by this, you come to know that the nullifiers of Īmān are the nullifiers of Islam.

And the Ummah has reached consensus that Islam, just as it can be affirmed, it can also be nullified (1). For this reason, you find in the books of ‘aqīdah, as well as in the books of fiqh—in all four madhhabs and other than them—discussion about apostasy, and clarification of the matters by which a Muslim leaves his religion.

The scholars have mentioned many causes for this—some of them listed more than four hundred matters by which Islam is nullified (2).

And what I must draw the attention of the students of knowledge to is:

That one’s belief regarding the meaning of Īmān affects how he enumerates the nullifiers of Islam and Īmān—for every person mentions that which contradicts Īmān based on his own understanding of Īmān.

(1) See: al-Durra fīmā Yajibu l’itiqāduh by Ibn Ḥazm (pp. 205, 206, 215, 220–222 – al-Khānjī);

al-Tamhīd by Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (1/142), (4/226);

al-Shifā’ by al-Qādī ‘Iyād (2/604–616);

al-Mughnī by Ibn Qudāmah (3/9), (11/12 – Cairo ed.);

Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā by Ibn Taymiyyah (3/267), (11/405–406), (12/496), (35/105);

Personal Letters of Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (pp. 167, 177–179, 219–221 – Imām University);

al-Durar al-Saniyyah fī al-Ajwibah al-Najdiyyah (10/402);

al-Kalimāt al-Nāfi‘ah fī al-Mukaffirāt al-Wāqi‘ah by ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (pp. 329–350 – al-Jumayḥ);

Majmū‘at al-Rasā’il wa al-Masā’il by Ḥamad ibn Mu‘ammar al-Najdī (p. 143);

and ‘Uyūn al-Rasā’il wa al-Ajwibah by ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan Āl al-Shaykh (2/971).

(2) See: al-Durar al-Saniyyah (2/360)

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So this is a matter that should be heeded by anyone who reads the books of fiqh: Those who exclude actions from Īmān have their own method for enumerating the nullifiers of Islam.

Whereas Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah, who have unanimously agreed—up to this very day, and none among them disagrees—that Īmān is:

(A statement upon the tongue, belief in the heart, and actions of the limbs and bodily parts; and that actions are part of Īmān) (1) — they have their own method for counting the nullifiers of Islam and Īmān.

And it is the correct method, about which there is no doubt.

And Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, may Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, have mercy on him—as was his way in preserving the religion of the Muslims and warning against what contradicts Islam—authored this treatise on the Nullifiers of Islam.

He was not alone in this among the scholars of the Muslims; rather, the scholars of Islam from all four madhāhib—and even from all sects—are unanimously agreed that there are matters which nullify Islam.

Ishāq ibn Rāhūyah said: “The scholars are unanimous that whoever insults Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, or insults the Messenger ﷺ, or rejects anything Allah has revealed, or kills a prophet from among the prophets of Allah—while still affirming what Allah has revealed—then he is a disbeliever.” (2)

And I have brought this text to clarify that takfīr, when in its proper place and for its rightful cause, is unanimously agreed upon, and that the mention of the nullifiers of Islam is unanimously agreed upon among the people of knowledge entirely—even if there is difference of opinion in how many nullifiers there are.

(1) See: I'tiqād al-Rāziyyayn (1/198) – from Sharḥ Uṣūl I'tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah; Mu'taqad Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah by al-Ḥarb al-Kirmānī (p. 27 – al-Minhāj); al-Jāmi' fi al-Sunan wa al-Ādāb wa al-Tārīkh by al-Qayrawānī (p. 110 – al-Risālah al-'Atīqah); Uṣūl al-Sunnah by Ibn Abī Zamanīn (p. 207 – al-Ghurabā' al-Athariyyah); Sharḥ Uṣūl I'tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah by al-Lālikā'ī (1/195) and (4/930–959 – Ṭayyibah); 'Aqīdat al-Salaf wa Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth by al-Ṣābūnī (p. 264 – al-'Āṣimah); al-Tamhīd by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (9/238); Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim by al-Nawawī (1/146); Majmū' al-Fatāwā by Ibn Taymiyyah (3/151); and Sharḥ al-Ṭaḥāwiyyah by Ibn Abī al-'Izz (p. 332).

(2) al-Tamhīd by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (4/226); also see: Ta'zīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh by Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marwazī (2/929–932 – al-Faryawā'ī).

Second Introduction:

The Foundational Principle to Which This Chapter Is Referred Back

The scholars have unanimously agreed that the foundation concerning the one who utters the two testimonies is that he is a Muslim (1), and that this is what is certain in his case. So whoever is known to be a Muslim, it is not permissible to remove the ruling of Islam from him except with a certainty equal to that certainty.

And if doubt occurs, then it is referred back to the foundation: the doubt is repelled, takfir is prevented, and the Muslim is treated outwardly with the treatment of the people of Islam (2).

Meaning: the matter according to the scholars is that when a person says the two testimonies, we affirm Islam for him, and we apply to him the rulings of Islam.

So if we doubt his Islam, then we must return to the original ruling, which is: he is a Muslim.

And for this reason, the scholars have unanimously agreed that if a Muslim is brought forward to be prayed over in the lands of the Muslims, then he is prayed over (3).

(1) See: Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim by al-Nawawī (1/148–149); Rawḍat al-Ṭālibīn by al-Nawawī (10/82 – al-Maktab al-Islāmī); al-Īmān by Ibn Taymiyyah (pp. 283, 324 – al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 5th ed.); Jāmi‘ al-Masā’il, vol. 8, by Ibn Taymiyyah (p. 201 – ‘Ālam al-Fawā’id); Jāmi‘ al-‘Ulūm wa al-Ḥikam by Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī (1/228 – al-Arna’ūt).

(2) See: al-Durar al-Saniyyah (10/112–113).

(3) See: Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn by al-Ash‘arī (1/229 – Zarzūr ed.); and Uṣūl al-Sunnah by Ibn Abī Zamanīn (p. 224).

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And what some people do—by not praying over one who is brought to the mosques of the Muslims, and instead claiming that he will only pray over someone whom he personally knows to be a Muslim—this is an innovated practice.

Among such innovations also is what some of the people of innovation in this era have held: of prohibiting the meat slaughtered by Muslims, unless it is known and certain that the individual is a Muslim. So they do not eat the slaughtered meat—even if it is slaughtered by someone named Muḥammad—unless they personally know that he is a Muslim by name.

This is because their foundation is doubt, and in their view, doubt carries the same ruling as certainty of disbelief—and this is a bid‘ah (innovation) and misguidance, and it only leads to evil.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, said—clarifying the methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah:

“It is not permissible for anyone to declare a Muslim a disbeliever—even if he errs or makes a mistake—until the proof is established against him and the evidence is made clear to him. And whoever’s Islam is confirmed with certainty, it is not removed from him due to doubt. Rather, it is only removed after the proof is established and the doubt is removed.” (1)

And he also said:

“Whoever’s Īmān is established with certainty, it is not removed from him due to doubt.” (2)

And Imām Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, may Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, have mercy on him, said:

“This is a foundational principle used by the people of knowledge: that you do not remove someone from a state that is confirmed except by another certainty like it, and that certainty is not abandoned due to doubt.” (3)

(1) Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (12/466)

(2) Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (12/501)

(3) al-Tamhīd (14/339–340)

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And he also said, may Allah have mercy on him: “From the perspective of sound reasoning, which cannot be refuted: everyone whose bond of Islam is established at one point in time—by consensus of the Muslims—and then he commits a sin, or interprets something incorrectly, and thereafter the scholars differ regarding whether he has exited Islam or not: then this disagreement after their consensus has no meaning that constitutes a binding proof. And the one whose Islam was agreed upon is not to be removed from Islam except by another consensus or by a firmly established Sunnah—that is: a clear and authentic evidence with no opposing text.” (1)

And he also said, explaining the method of the scholars: “So what is obligatory in this matter is that no one is to be declared a disbeliever except someone upon whom all agree concerning his disbelief, or someone whose disbelief is supported by a proof that cannot be refuted—from the Book or the Sunnah.” (2)

And Ibn Nujaym al-Ḥanafī said in his book al-Baḥr al-Rā’iq: “Whatever is doubtful as to whether it constitutes apostasy—no ruling of apostasy is made upon it; for the established Islam does not cease due to doubt.” (3)

And the ḥadīth of Usāmah ibn Zayd, may Allah be pleased with them both, is clear evidence for this: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent us to the tribe of al-Ḥuraqah from Juhaynah, and we raided the people in the morning and defeated them. I and a man from the Anṣār chased one of their men—this man had been very aggressive in killing the Muslims. He did not target any Muslim except that he intended to kill him, and he had killed many. When his people were defeated, he fled. So when we overtook him—with our weapons—he said: Lā ilāha illa Allah. The Anṣārī refrained from him, but I struck him with my spear and killed him.

When we returned, the matter reached the Prophet ﷺ, and he said to me:

‘O Usāmah! Did you kill him after he said: Lā ilāha illa Allah?!’

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, he only said it to protect himself!’

He ﷺ replied: ‘Did you kill him after he said: Lā ilāha illa Allah?!’”

(1) al-Tamhīd (21/17)

(2) al-Tamhīd (22/17)

(3) al-Baḥr al-Rā’iq (5/134 – Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmī)

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He (Usāmah ibn Zayd) said:

"He kept repeating it to me until I wished that I had not embraced Islam before that day."

Agreed upon (1).

And in a narration by Muslim (2):

He said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent us in a military expedition. We raided al-Ḥuraqāt from (the tribe of) Juhaynah in the morning. I caught up with a man, and he said: 'Lā ilāha illā Allāh,' but I stabbed him, and it troubled my soul. So I mentioned it to the Prophet ﷺ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Did he say: Lā ilāha illā Allāh, and you killed him?!' I said: O Messenger of Allah, he only said it out of fear of the weapon! He ﷺ said: 'Did you split open his heart to know whether he said it or not?!' He kept repeating it to me until I wished that I had accepted Islam only on that day."

So this man uttered the shahādah; thus, the contract of Islam was established for him. However, there was a major indication that strongly suggested doubt regarding the truthfulness of his statement — because shortly before that, he had been fighting the Muslims and striving to kill them. And when his people were defeated, he fled as well. So when he was caught and saw the weapon over his head, he said: Lā ilāha illā Allāh! Even with that, since he did not commit any nullifier (of Islam) after it, the Prophet ﷺ rebuked the one who killed him.

This ḥadīth is a clear proof — for whoever understands — that whoever has had the contract of Islam affirmed, it is not allowed to declare him a disbeliever based on suspicions or doubts. And that the default regarding the one who has uttered the two testimonies is that the contract of Islam is affirmed for him — until a clear nullifier is established with certainty.

So when the nullifier is confirmed with certainty, then that is a different matter.

And this is a beneficial principle — it purifies the heart of a Muslim from the crime of transgression in the matter of takfīr. So wherever doubt is found, takfīr is repelled.

(1) Narrated by al-Bukhārī (4269) and Muslim (96), and the wording is Muslim's.

(2) Narration no. 96 (Muslim).

Third Introduction:

Distinguishing between describing an action or statement as disbelief (kufr), and describing the doer or speaker as a disbeliever (kāfir)

This is what Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah are unanimously agreed upon; for describing the action or statement as kufr is a Shar‘ī ruling based upon evidences, whereas describing the doer or speaker as a kāfir is the application of the ruling, and this requires the presence of the causes and the absence of preventions. Confusing between the two is a grave error.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said, drawing attention to this error—he said about some people:

“Whenever they see the scholars, they say: ‘Whoever says such-and-such is a disbeliever,’ so the listener assumes that this phrase includes everyone who says it, and they do not contemplate that takfīr (declaring someone a disbeliever) has conditions and preventions which may not be present in the case of a specific individual. And that absolute takfīr does not necessitate takfīr of the specific individual unless the conditions are fulfilled and the preventions are absent.” (1)

This statement clarifies the methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah, and it is a refutation against the two groups we previously discussed:

Those who say: Everyone who falls into kufr, or says a statement of kufr, or about whom we have doubt—he is a disbeliever.

And those who say: We do not declare any individual to be a disbeliever at all, even if his kufr is as clear as the sun.

Both of these approaches contradict the path of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah.

(1) Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (12/487–488)

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Then he (may Allah have mercy on him) mentioned that Imām Aḥmad did not declare the individuals who said that the Qur'an was created during his time to be disbelievers by name, nor those who called to it. And whomever he did declare to be a disbeliever by name among them, it was only due to the presence of the conditions and the absence of the preventions. As for those in whom there was a prevention—such as the rulers who were being confused by the scholars of evil, and the common folk—then Imām Aḥmad (may Allah have mercy on him) did not declare them to be disbelievers. (1)

And Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymīn (may Allah, the Almighty and Majestic, have mercy on him) said: “Kufr (disbelief) is a legislative ruling, and its reference is to Allah and His Messenger. So, whatever the Book and the Sunnah indicate to be disbelief is disbelief, and whatever the Book and the Sunnah indicate is not disbelief is not disbelief. Thus, it is not for anyone—rather, he does not even have the right—to declare anyone a disbeliever until the evidence from the Book and the Sunnah is established proving his disbelief.” (2)

And he also said: “It is obligatory to be cautious in applying disbelief to a group or a specific individual until it is known that the conditions of takfīr have been fulfilled in his case, and the preventions are absent.” (3)

(1) See: Majmū' al-Fatāwā (12/489) and (23/348–349)

(2) Majmū' Fatāwā wa-Rasā'il al-Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymīn (3/52 – al-Waṭān)

(3) Majmū' Fatāwā wa-Rasā'il al-Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymīn (3/55)

Fourth Introduction:

Whoever hears of an act of disbelief (kufr) from a Muslim must be deliberate and not hasty.

And there are essential matters:

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymīn (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“There must be four conditions for takfīr (declaring someone a disbeliever):

First: Confirmation that this statement, action, or omission is disbelief, based on the indication of the Book and the Sunnah.

Second: Confirmation that it was committed by the person who is held legally accountable.

Third: The proof has reached him.

Fourth: The absence of any barrier that would prevent takfīr in his case.”
(1)

Thus, it is obligatory upon the Muslim who is upright upon the path of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, that if he hears of a Muslim — whether ruler or ruled — committing kufr, then he must proceed through the following steps:

First matter: That he verifies the action attributed to the one who did the act, or the statement attributed to the one who said it. For not everything that is said is true, especially in our time, where trials have become widespread and people transmit based on conjecture and exaggerate reality.

This, unfortunately, has become a widespread trait among many people — and it is an issue that must be addressed. Its remedy is in deliberation and verification. If it is confirmed, then the one looking into it should examine it. But if it is not confirmed, or he is unsure about it, he turns away from it and returns to the original principle: the Muslim’s innocence from it.

(1) Majmū‘ Fatawā wa-Rasā’il Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymīn (3/52)

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The Second Matter: One must verify whether the action or statement is truly kufr (disbelief), for not everything that is said to be kufr is actually kufr. Therefore, one must verify in this matter.

The Third Matter: To verify whether the proof of the message has reached the person and whether the barriers preventing takfīr are absent. If the proof has not reached him, then he is not to be declared a disbeliever individually. Likewise, if the proof did reach him but there existed an excuse that prevents takfīr, then he is also not to be declared a disbeliever.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Declaring takfīr upon the individual from among these ignorant people and the likes of them, whereby it is ruled that he is among the disbelievers — it is not permissible to proceed with this except after the proof of the message (al-ḥujjah al-risāliyah) has been established upon one of them, by which it becomes clear to them that they are opposing the messengers — even if this statement is undoubtedly kufr.” (1)

That is: even if we are certain that the statement is kufr, we do not declare the individual to be a disbeliever until the proof of the message is established upon him, which clarifies to him that he is in opposition to the Messenger ﷺ — and this is what the scholars have affirmed. (2) We will explain it further, if Allah wills.

(1) Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (12/500)

(2) See: Khalq Af‘āl al-‘Ibād by al-Bukhārī (2/118 – al-Fuhayd), al-Sunnah by Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim (2/645 – al-Maktab al-Islāmī), al-Tabsīr fī Ma‘ālim al-Dīn by al-Ṭabarī (pp. 132, 133, and 139 – al-‘Āṣimah), al-Durra fīmā Yajibu l’itiqāduh by Ibn Ḥazm (pp. 413 and 415), al-Ḥujjah fī Bayān al-Maḥajjah by al-Aṣbahānī (2/552 – al-Rāyah, 2nd edition), Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (11/412–413), al-Istighāthah fī al-Radd ‘alā al-Bakrī by Ibn Taymiyyah (pp. 252–254 and 411–412 – al-Minhāj), al-Durar al-Saniyyah (1/104, 467, 522 and 10/113), Minhāj al-Ta’sīs wa al-Taqdīs by ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Āl al-Shaykh (pp. 60, 88–89, and 99 – Dār al-Hidāyah), al-Ḍiyā’ al-Shāriq by Sulaymān ibn Saḥmān (p. 372 – al-Burjas), and al-Qawl al-Mufid ‘alā Kitāb al-Tawḥīd by Ibn ‘Uthaymīn (2/163 – Ibn al-Jawzī).

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Then, this grave matter and tremendous ruling—where misjudgment in it is severe—must be referred back to the Rabbānī scholars, the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah, those who speak with knowledge and justice, just as Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said:

“When there comes to them some matter touching (public) safety or fear, they make it known (among the people), if only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have understood it from them. Had it not been for the Grace and Mercy of Allah upon you, you would have followed Shaitān (Satan), save a few of you.” [Sūrah al-Nisā’, 4:83]

This indicates that it is obligatory in serious matters to refer them to the Rabbānī scholars, and that turning away from the Rabbānī scholars is following the Shayṭān and falling into his grasp—and we seek refuge with Allah.

So when the believer understands these introductions, he knows how to walk upon this path, and he will be upon the straight path of Allah.

The author — may Allah have mercy on him — said:

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful (Bismillāh ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm).

Explanation:

The Shaykh — may Allah have mercy on him — began his book with the basmalah (i.e. saying “In the Name of Allah” – Bismillāh):

In imitation of the Noble Qur’an, as it begins with: “In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful” (Bismillāh ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm), by consensus of the scholars (1).

And the first thing that was written in the muṣḥaf is: “In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful” (Bismillāh ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm).

And in imitation of the letters of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; for the letters of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ have been examined and found to begin with the basmalah (Bismillāh), and that the Prophet ﷺ would suffice with the basmalah at the beginning of them.

Therefore, the Sunnah in writing is to begin with “In the Name of Allah” (Bismillāh),

and in speech is to begin with “Praise be to Allah” (al-ḥamdu lillāh) — this is the ḥamdalah (i.e. saying “Praise be to Allah” – al-ḥamdu lillāh) (2).

So if a person is speaking, the Sunnah is to begin with the ḥamdalah (al-ḥamdu lillāh), and if he is writing, the Sunnah is to begin with the basmalah (Bismillāh).

And some of the people of knowledge combined between the basmalah (Bismillāh) and the ḥamdalah (al-ḥamdu lillāh) in their books, considering that the book is written — so it is begun with “In the Name of Allah” (Bismillāh), and considering that the book is heard — so it is begun with “Praise be to Allah” (al-ḥamdu lillāh).

And the Shaykh began with the basmalah (Bismillāh) in imitation of the Book and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

(1) See: Sharḥ Muslim by al-Nawawī (4/111).

(2) See: al-Ḥawī al-Kabīr by al-Māwardī (9/1, al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah), and Faṭḥ al-Bārī by Ibn Ḥajar (1/8).

He – may Allah have mercy on him – said:

Know that from the greatest nullifiers of Islam are ten.

Explanation:

His statement: “Know” – this command indicates two matters:

The first matter: That what comes after it must be learned, and that learning it is an individual obligation (farḍ ‘ayn) upon every accountable person.

The second matter: That what will be mentioned in it are matters of great importance, for indeed this command is only brought forth before tremendously important matters – just as Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said:

“So know (O Muhammad ﷺ) that Lā ilāha illallāh (none has the right to be worshipped but Allah), and ask forgiveness for your sin.” [Muḥammad: 19]

So if you see in the speech of the Salaf or in the speech of the scholars the word “Know”, then know that what is mentioned thereafter is something that must be known, and that it is from the tremendous and majestic matters of the religion of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.

His statement: “From the greatest nullifiers of Islam are ten.” And in some manuscripts: “From the nullifiers of Islam are ten.”

It has already preceded that the nullifiers of Islam are many, but the Shaykh selected ten from them due to their widespread fame, great danger, and frequent occurrence, and because their detailed aspects may be hidden from some Muslims – such that they fall into shirk while detesting shirk, but it is hidden from them that it is shirk.

So these ten are the most well-known and most dangerous nullifiers of Islam, and there is ambiguity in their details. For that reason, many Muslims have fallen into some of these nullifiers without perceiving or realizing it. Thus, it is obligatory to clarify them and present the evidences for them.

He – may Allah have mercy on him – said:

The First: Shirk (associating partners) in the worship of Allah, and the evidence is the saying of the Most High:

“Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him in worship, but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He wills.” [An-Nisā’: 48]

And from that is slaughtering for other than Allah, such as one who slaughters for the jinn or for the grave.

Explanation:

The first of these nullifiers: is shirk (associating partners) with Allah, exalted and glorified is He, and it is agreed upon that it is a nullifier of Islam if it is major shirk. (1)

And shirk is of two types:

The first type: Major shirk, which expels from Islam and invalidates it, and does not coexist with Islam, and this is what the Shaykh intends here.

The second type: Minor shirk, which is from the greatest and most harmful of sins, but it does not nullify Islam; rather, it diminishes Islam, and this is not what is intended here.

And the major shirk was explained by the Prophet ﷺ; for it is narrated from ‘Abdullāh – may Allah be pleased with him – who said: “I asked the Prophet ﷺ: Which sin is greatest in the sight of Allah, the Most High? He said: That you set up a rival unto Allah while He alone created you.” Agreed upon. (2)

(1) See: Ash-Shifā’ by al-Qādī ‘Iyād (2/604–606), Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā by Ibn Taymiyyah (1/124), al-Iqnā‘ by al-Ḥajjāwī (4/297 – al-Ma‘rifah), Taysīr al-‘Azīz al-Ḥamīd by Sulaymān ibn ‘Abdillāh (1/493, 494).

(2) Reported by al-Bukhārī (4477) and Muslim (86).

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So shirk is: that the servant sets up a rival to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic; thus he equates other than Allah — absolutely — with Allah in that which is from the exclusive attributes or rights of Allah.

And the exclusive attributes are that which is specific to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, such as Lordship (ar-Rubūbiyyah). So from shirk is that one equates other than Allah with Allah in the actions of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic — such as when the forsaken one believes that a walī (saint) provides sustenance, or that the one in the grave provides sustenance, or that the walī is able to create the fetus in the womb of its mother, or that he gives life and causes death, or that he believes the aqṭāb (spiritual poles) control the universe, and that the universe revolves around them!

This is shirk in Lordship, and it did not occur from the people of Jāhiliyyah.

Or in His Names and Attributes — meaning: in that which belongs to Allah of the exclusive traits of Names and Attributes.

And the right refers to worship, such that a type of worship is directed to other than Allah. And this is what is intended by the Shaykh here: equating other than Allah with Allah in the right of Allah — and that is worship.

And shirk is the greatest sin, and the most unjust of injustice. And if a person meets his Lord with major shirk, then Allah does not forgive him, and he will never enter Paradise. Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said:

“Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He wills.”

[An-Nisā': 48]

So this proves that it is the greatest of sins, because it is specified that Allah does not forgive it for the one who dies upon it and meets Allah with it. As for the one who repents in this world, then Allah accepts his repentance. He, the Most High, said:

“Say: ‘O ‘Ibādī (My slaves) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah: verily, Allah forgives all sins.’”

[Az-Zumar: 53]

Meaning: for the one who repents. So whoever committed shirk then repented, Allah will accept his repentance. But whoever persists upon

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shirk, dies upon it, and meets Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, with it — then Allah does not forgive his sin.

And Shirk nullifies all deeds for the one who commits Shirk with Allah after having embraced Islam and dies upon that.

And no deed is accepted alongside original Shirk or apostasy in any way whatsoever. Allah, the Most High, said:

“But if they had joined in worship others with Allah, all that they used to do would have been of no benefit to them.” [al-An‘ām: 88]

And He, the Most High, said:

“And We shall turn to whatever deeds they did, and We shall make such deeds as scattered floating particles of dust.” [al-Furqān: 23]

And this is general, of the highest level of generality — all of their deeds will be, on the Day of Resurrection, scattered particles of dust.

And Paradise is forbidden for the one who commits Shirk. Allah, the Most High, said:

“Verily, whosoever sets up partners (in worship) with Allah, then Allah has forbidden Paradise for him, and the Fire will be his abode. And for the Zālimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers) there are no helpers.” [al-Mā'idah: 72]

And worship is the exclusive right of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, alone. Allah, the Most High, said:

“And I (Allah) created not the jinns and humans except that they should worship Me (Alone).” [adh-Dhāriyāt: 56]

i.e., “except that they should single Me out in worship.”

And He, the Most High, said:

“And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allah, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him); and perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give Zakât: and that is the right religion.” [at-Tawbah: 31]

That is: all of creation was not commanded except to worship One God. So every object of worship besides this One God — worshipping it is shirk and oppression.

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Then Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, emphasized this by His saying:

“There is no deity worthy of worship except Him. Glorified is He above all that they associate with Him.”

So, “There is no deity worthy of worship except Him” — that is, there is no true deity except Him. “Glorified is He above all that they associate with Him” — He is far removed, glorified and exalted above every kind of shirk.

And He, the Most High, said:

“And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allah, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him), and perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give Zakât: and that is the right religion.” [al-Bayyinah: 5]

They were commanded only to worship Allah alone. And Allah affirmed this meaning with His saying:

“Making the religion sincerely for Him, Hunafā’ (i.e., to worship none but Allah).”

And “Hunafā’” means: turning away from shirk, avoiding it, and adhering firmly to Tawḥīd.

And the Prophet ﷺ said:

“O Mu‘ādh! Do you know what is the Right of Allah upon His slaves, and what is the right of the slaves upon Allah?”

I said: “Allah and His Messenger know best.”

He said:

“The Right of Allah upon the slaves is that they should worship Him and not associate anything with Him, and the right of the slaves upon Allah is that He does not punish those who do not associate anything with Him.”

Agreed upon. (1)

So whoever directs anything — even if a little — from the types of worship to other than Allah — even if it is to a righteous person — then he has committed shirk.

(1) Narrated by al-Bukhārī (2856) and Muslim (30).

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Allah the Most High said:

“And the mosques are for Allah (Alone), so invoke not anyone along with Allah.” [al-Jinn 72:18]

And “anyone” is indefinite in the context of prohibition, so it includes every single one.

Thus, directing anything of worship to other than Allah is major shirk with Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.

And the Shaykh — may Allah have mercy on him — said:

“And from it is sacrificing for other than Allah, like the one who sacrifices for the jinn or for a grave.”

That is due to the severity of sacrificing for other than Allah, and how widespread it is among those who ascribe themselves to Islam, while they believe that they are pleasing Allah the Mighty and Majestic.

So the Shaykh specifically mentioned it here, otherwise, the discussion includes every act of worship.

And the Shaykh has elaborated on this matter in great beneficial detail in Kitāb at-Tawhīd.

And slaughtering is an act of worship that must be for Allah alone, as Allah the Most High said:

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): ‘Verily, my prayer, my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamīn (mankind, jinn and all that exists). He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims.’” [al-An‘ām 6:162–163]

This proves that sacrifice (al-nusuk) — slaughtering — is worship, and that it must be solely for Allah, and that slaughtering for other than Allah is shirk.

And sacrificing is worship from two angles:

- From the angle of intention and drawing close
- And from the angle of veneration and seeking assistance

So whoever slaughters as a means of drawing near to other than Allah — like slaughtering to get closer to the occupants of graves — then he has committed major shirk with Allah.

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Whoever slaughters with the intention directed to the occupant of the grave, intending the occupant of the grave — he is drawing near to the occupant of the grave — this is major shirk.

And this is what the Shaykh referred to in his statement: “Like the one who slaughters for the grave” — meaning: for the occupant of the grave.

And whoever slaughters for a created being out of reverence and as an act of drawing close, or for drawing close and seeking assistance—such as one who slaughters for the jinn, or slaughters for a venerated person from among the sons of Adam to seek his help in attaining benefit or repelling harm—then he has committed shirk with Allah. So, the one who slaughters for the ruler out of reverence and to draw close to him—this is major shirk. And the one who slaughters for the jinn to draw close to them and seek their aid—this is major shirk.

So whoever slaughters at the doorstep of his house upon first moving in, intending thereby to draw close to the jinn so that they do not harm him—this is major shirk. For indeed, some people bring a slaughtered animal to the threshold of the door and spill its blood upon the doorstep, intending thereby to draw near to the jinn so that they do not harm him or his children, or to seek the help of their elders in repelling the harm of their young ones—this is major shirk that nullifies Islam. And to this meaning the Shaykh referred in his statement: “like one who slaughters for the jinn.”

And the Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah has cursed the one who slaughters for other than Allah.” Narrated by Muslim (1), meaning: Allah has expelled him from His mercy with a complete and permanent expulsion, one without forgiveness or mercy—because he is a mushrik (one who associates partners with Allah), with major shirk.

(1) Ḥadīth (1978) – narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim.

The author – may Allah have mercy on him – said:

The second: Whoever sets up intermediaries between himself and Allah; calls upon them, asks them for intercession, and relies upon them – has disbelieved by consensus.

Explanation:

Indeed, Allah, Exalted in Might and Most High, is Generous, Near, Responsive, and Almighty – Glorified and Exalted is He – just as Allah, the Exalted, said:

“And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad ﷺ) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me. So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright.” [Al-Baqarah 2:186]

This verse severs all ties of shirk (associating partners with Allah); for indeed Allah, Glorified and Exalted is He, is near – thus, there is no need for intermediaries to reach Him. And He is Responsive – thus, there is no need for intermediaries for Him to respond and give. Rather, He is the Self-Sufficient – glorified is He – with complete self-sufficiency, and the Most Generous with perfect generosity, Near and Responsive.

And this verse indicates that supplication is an act of worship and a form of īmān (faith), so the servants have no need for intermediaries to draw them near to Allah, Glorified and Exalted is He.

Rather, the believer only seeks nearness to Allah, Exalted is He, through tawhīd (affirming the Oneness of Allah) and obedience to Him – Glorified and Exalted is He – just as Allah, Exalted is He, said:

“O you who believe! Fear Allah and seek the means of approach to Him, and strive hard in His Cause as much as you can. So that you may be successful.” [Al-Mā'idah 5:35]

Al-Ṭabarī said: “And seek the means of approach to Him” – meaning: seek nearness to Him by acting upon what pleases Him. (1)

And he narrated from Qatādah his saying: “And seek the means of approach to Him” – meaning: draw near to Him by obeying Him.

(1) Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān (8/403)

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And acting upon what pleases Him. (1)

And Ibn Kathīr (may Allah have mercy on him) said—after mentioning these meanings: “And this which was said by these Imāms—there is no difference among the mufassirūn (exegetes) regarding it.” (2)

So this wasīlah (means) does not mean intermediaries, but rather it means: drawing near to Allah through tawḥīd, and through what pleases Him, exalted is He.

And Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, has clarified to His servants this wasīlah with a sufficient and healing clarification. It is reported from Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“Indeed Allah said: ‘Whoever shows enmity to a wali (close ally) of Mine, then I have declared war against him. And My servant does not draw near to Me with anything more beloved to Me than what I have obligated upon him. And My servant continues to draw near to Me with the nawāfil (supererogatory acts) until I love him.’”

This ḥadīth was recorded by al-Bukhārī in his Ṣaḥīḥ (3).

And it is not permissible to draw near to any of the creation of Allah in order that he may be an intermediary with Allah; rather, this is from the major shirk.

And the argument of the intermediaries is what led the mushrikīn into shirk, just as Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said:

“So worship Allah (Alone) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allah’s sake only. Surely, the religion (i.e. the worship and the obedience) is for Allah only. And those who take Awliyā’ (protectors and helpers) besides Him (say): ‘We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah.’ Verily, Allah will judge between them concerning that wherein they differ. Truly, Allah guides not him who is a liar, and a disbeliever.”

[al-Zumar: 2–3]

(1) Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī (8/404). Ascribed also by al-Suyūṭī in al-Durr al-Manthūr (3/71, al-Fikr edition) to ‘Abd ibn Ḥumayd and Ibn al-Mundhir.

(2) Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm (3/103, Salāmah edition).

(3) Ḥadīth no. 6502 in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī.

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Subhānallāh! Look at what is found in this verse:

His saying, the Most High: "So worship Allah (Alone and none else) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allah's sake only." [Az-Zumar: 2] — this is a command for pure Tawhīd.

And His saying, the Most High: "Surely, the religion (i.e. the worship and the obedience) is for Allah only." [Az-Zumar: 3] — in it is that Allah does not accept except the pure religion for Him, exalted is He.

And His saying, the Most High: "And those who take Awliyā' (protectors and helpers) besides Him (say): 'We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah.'" — it means: all those who take others as Awliyā' besides Him say: "We do not worship them for their own sake, but rather we worship them so they may bring us closer to Allah, they are our intercessors with Allah, and our intermediaries to Allah!"

Then He, the Most High, said: "Verily, Allah will judge between them concerning that wherein they differ. Truly, Allah guides not him who is a liar, and a disbeliever." [Az-Zumar: 3]

So He clarified that the one who worships other than Allah and uses the excuse that he does not worship them directly, but only seeks nearness to them so they bring him closer — then indeed he is a liar in his claim, and he is a worshipper of them. And His saying "disbeliever (kaffār)" is in an intensified form.

And taking intermediaries is the trick of Shayṭān which he used to deceive some Muslims. For he knew that a Muslim strongly abhors shirk, so he came to him with this deception — and thus he caused some Muslims to fall into worship of other than Allah under the claim that they are intercessors with Allah. And he brings them various doubtful matters, saying to them for example: "You are sinful, falling short, and your rank is too low to reach Allah. So come closer to the allies (awliyā') of Allah so they may convey your needs to Allah!"

And so he leads them to that which severs their connection with Allah — and that is shirk.

As He, the Most High, said: "And they worship besides Allah things that hurt them not, nor profit them, and they say: 'These are our intercessors with Allah.' Say: 'Do you inform Allah of that which He knows not in the heavens

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and on the earth?' Glorified and Exalted be He above all that they associate as partners (with Him)!" [Yūnus: 18]

And Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) explained this matter and clarified it, and he said — may Allah have mercy on him: “Whoever makes the angels and the prophets intermediaries— calling upon them, placing reliance upon them, and asking them to bring about benefits and to repel harms, such as asking them for forgiveness of sins, guidance of the hearts, relief from distress, and the removal of poverty—then he is a disbeliever by the consensus of the Muslims.” (1)

And Allah, the Most High, said: “And they say: ‘The Most Beneficent (Allah) has begotten a son (or children).’ Glory to Him! They [those whom they call children of Allah i.e. the angels, ‘Īsā (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary), ‘Uzayr (Ezra)], are but honoured slaves. They speak not until He has spoken, and they act on His Command. He knows what is before them, and what is behind them, and they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased. And they are afraid for fear of Him.” [al-Anbiyā’ 21:26–28]

This is regarding the angels, peace be upon them—so it is not befitting that one draws near to them in worship to make them intermediaries with Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. And the statement of the Shaykh, may Allah have mercy on him: “He calls upon them”—i.e. he draws near to them with supplication, under the claim that he is merely taking them as intercessors. So he does not say, “O Allah!” but rather says, “O my master so-and-so!” Yet supplication is worship; so whoever directs it to other than Allah has committed shirk, regardless of the justification. As Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said: “And your Lord said: ‘Invoke Me, I will respond to your (invocation). Verily, those who scorn My worship they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!’” [Ghāfir 40:60]

So He made du‘ā’ (supplication) an act of worship.

And the Prophet ﷺ said: “Supplication is worship.”

Narrated by Abu Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhī, and Ibn Mājah (2), and it was authenticated by a group of scholars, among them al-Albānī (3).

(1) Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (1/124).

(2) Reported by Abu Dāwūd (1479), al-Tirmidhī (2969), (3247), and (3372), who said: “ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ,” and Ibn Mājah (3828), from al-Nu‘mān ibn Bashīr, may Allah be pleased with them both.

(3) Authenticated by Ibn Ḥibbān in his Ṣaḥīḥ (890), al-Ḥākim in al-Mustadrak (1802), who said: “Ṣaḥīḥ al-isnād,” and al-Dhahabī agreed with him. Al-Ḥāfiẓ also mentioned its isnād in Fath al-Bārī (1/49), and al-Albānī authenticated it in Ṣaḥīḥ Abī Dāwūd (1329).

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And his saying, may Allah have mercy on him: “and he asks them for intercession”: Intercession is the possession of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. He grants it to whomever He wills among His slaves as an honour for him. And no one’s intercession benefits except by Allah’s permission and His pleasure, and it is not for anyone except one whom Allah is pleased with. Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says: “Say: To Allah belongs all intercession.” [Az-Zumar 39:44]

So no one, no matter how great his virtue is, owns anything of it. Rather, it belongs to Allah; He grants it to the one whom He permits and is pleased with.

And He, Glorified is He, says: “And those whom they invoke besides Him have no power of intercession — except for him who bears witness to the truth (i.e. believed in the Oneness of Allah), and they know (him).” [Az-Zukhruf 43:86]

And the polytheists have called upon the angels, and they have called upon the prophets, and they have called upon idols, and they have called upon the sun, and they have called upon the moon. But Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says: “And those whom they invoke besides Him have no power of intercession” — not the angels, nor the prophets, nor the awliya’, nor any other created being owns the intercession — “except him who bears witness to the truth” while being a muwahḥid (person of Tawḥīd), “and they know (him),” so Allah was pleased with them and gave them permission.

And He, Glorified is He, says: “And no intercession benefits with Him except for him whom He permits.” [Saba’ 34:23]

And He, Glorified is He, said: “On that Day no intercession shall avail, except the one for whom the Most Beneficent has given permission, and whose word is acceptable to Him.” [Ṭā-Hā 20:109]

So intercession is not attained except by one who is upon Tawḥīd. And intercession is not attained through shirk with Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. Rather, shirk with Allah causes the slave to be deprived of intercession.

From Abū Hurayrah — may Allah be pleased with him — that he said: “O Messenger of Allah! Who will be the happiest of people with your intercession on the Day of Resurrection?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

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“Indeed, I thought — O Abū Hurayrah — that none would ask me about this ḥadīth before you, due to what I have seen of your eagerness for ḥadīth. The happiest of people with my intercession on the Day of Resurrection is the one who says: ‘Lā ilāha illa Allāh’ sincerely from his heart or soul.” Narrated by al-Bukhārī (1).

Abu Hurayrah — may Allah be pleased with him — was keen on taking hadith from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ bore witness to this for him. In this is a refutation against those who criticize Abu Hurayrah — may Allah be pleased with him — for narrating many hadiths. This, then, is a refutation from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ against them. So he — may Allah be pleased with him — asked this great question: “Who is the happiest of people with your intercession on the Day of Resurrection?”

He ﷺ said: “The happiest of people with my intercession on the Day of Resurrection is the one who says: Lā ilāha illa Allāh (There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah), sincerely from his heart or from his soul.”

– so he was a muwahḥid (a person of pure monotheism).

And he ﷺ said: “Every Prophet had a supplication that was answered, so every Prophet hastened his supplication. But I have saved my supplication as intercession for my Ummah on the Day of Resurrection. And it will reach — if Allah wills — the one who dies from my Ummah not associating anything with Allah.” Narrated by Muslim (2). So reflect on his ﷺ statement: “And it will reach — if Allah wills” — because the matter is by Allah’s permission, and the Prophet ﷺ does not own intercession for anyone except by the permission of Allah, exalted and glorified is He. And his statement ﷺ: “The one who dies from my Ummah not associating anything with Allah” — indicates that the one who dies while committing shirk with Allah will not be reached by intercession. So how can one hope for intercession while committing shirk with Allah under the pretext of intercession? By Allah, this is a severe contradiction! And ash-shafā‘ah (intercession) is from the word ash-shaf‘ (even), and ash-shaf‘ indicates the pairing of two things, and the joining of one to the other (3).

(1) Ḥadīth no. (99)

(2) Ḥadīth no. (199)

(3) See: aṣ-Ṣiḥāḥ (3/1238), Tahdhīb al-Lughah (1/277), Maqāyīs al-Lughah (3/201), and an-Nihāyah. and Al-Qāmūs (pp. 733-734)

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And ash-Shafā‘ah (intercession), according to the terminology of the scholars, is: the intercessor intervening on behalf of another with someone else to bring about a benefit or remove harm from him (1). It is said: “So-and-so interceded for so-and-so,” if he came on his behalf, requesting something for him or seeking to remove harm from him.

Therefore, some say (2): “Intercession is requesting good for someone else from someone else.”

And people today call it al-wāsiṭah (a connection or go-between); one of them says: “I arranged a connection with the official,” so the intermediary goes to the official in order to request something for the one he is interceding for — either to bring about some benefit for him, or to avert some harm from him.

Intercession, in its origin, is divided into two categories:

The First Category: Intercession in the worldly life; and it is of two types:

A – Intercession of a created being for another created being, with a created being; such as when you intercede for your brother with an official, a minister, or a king, or someone of that nature.

And this intercession is only in worldly matters, and it is legislated if it is good, and the one who does it is rewarded. So whoever intercedes a good intercession for his brother in this worldly life, then he will be rewarded, whether his intercession is accepted or rejected. Allah the Most High said: “Whosoever intercedes for a good cause will have the reward thereof.” [An-Nisā’ 4:85].

So whoever intercedes a good intercession for his brother in this world will receive a share of its goodness and will earn a good deed.

(1) See: Al-Qawl al-Mufid by Ibn ‘Uthaymīn (1/330)

(2) See: Lawāmi‘ al-Anwār al-Bahiyyah by as-Saffārīnī (2/204, al-Khānjī edition)

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And the Prophet ﷺ said: “Intercede, and you will be rewarded.” (1)

The condition for this intercession in worldly matters is that it must not be for something ḥarām. If it is for something ḥarām, then it becomes an evil intercession. So, if a person intercedes in injustice—such as giving precedence to one who is less deserving over one who is more deserving—then this is oppression, and it is an evil intercession. But if he intercedes on behalf of two people who are equal, so that one of them is favoured, then this is a good intercession. Or if he highlights a quality in one of them which would warrant giving him precedence over others—such as praising him or recommending him—and he deserves to be put forward because of that, then this is a good intercession. However, if the intercession is in opposition to the regulations set by the ruler (Walī al-Amr), then it is a forbidden intercession. Likewise, if the intercession is regarding a ḥadd punishment from the prescribed punishments of Allah, then it is forbidden.

In Ṣaḥīḥayn (2), from ‘Ā’ishah – may Allah be pleased with her – that Quraysh became worried about the case of the woman who had stolen during the time of the Prophet ﷺ at the time of the Conquest. So they said, “Who will speak to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about her?” They said, “Who would dare to do so other than Usāmah ibn Zayd, the beloved of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?”

So she was brought to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and Usāmah ibn Zayd spoke to him on her behalf. The face of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ changed (out of anger) and he said: “Are you interceding regarding one of the limits set by Allah?”

Usāmah said: “Seek forgiveness for me, O Messenger of Allah.”

Then later that evening, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood up and addressed the people. He praised Allah with that which He is worthy of, and then said: “Indeed, those before you were destroyed because when a noble person among them stole, they would let him go, and when a weak person stole, they would carry out the punishment upon him. By Allah, if Fāṭimah the daughter of Muḥammad were to steal, I would cut off her hand.” (End of ḥadīth)

(1) Reported by al-Bukhārī (1432) and Muslim (2627) from Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī – may Allah be pleased with him.

(2) Reported by al-Bukhārī (4304) and Muslim (1688) — the wording is from Muslim — from ‘Ā’ishah – may Allah be pleased with her.

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So this intercession, if it is good—and its criterion is that it must not be in something ḥarām—then it is legislated, beloved, recommended, and the person is rewarded for it.

As for if it is in something ḥarām, then it is an evil intercession, and the person is held accountable for it, and we seek refuge with Allah.

b. The intercession of a created being for another created being before Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, in this world—meaning: supplicating for him.

You say: “Intercede for me,” meaning: “Supplicate for me.”

And this is permissible, on the condition that it is requested from one who is alive and present—like when a brother says to his brother: “I have a sick person, so supplicate to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, that He may cure him.”

This is intercession, because the intercessor joins his supplication to his, and his need to his need.

But if the intercession is requested from the dead or those who are absent—then this is not permissible. Rather, the servant asks his living, present brother to intercede—that is, to supplicate for him so that he may attain his objective.

So if someone says to you: “Intercede for me with Allah,” then he is to be asked for clarification:

If what he means is: “Supplicate to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, for me, so that I may attain my objective”—then this is permissible, and it falls under the category of seeking du‘ā’ from the living and present.

But if what he means is that you intercede for him with Allah on the Day of Resurrection—then this is not permissible, because intercession on the Day of Resurrection is only sought from Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.

The Second Type: Intercession in the Hereafter:

Indeed, our Generous and Noble Lord bestows upon His servants intercession for one another on the Day of Resurrection.

And that is to honour the intercessor and benefit the one for whom intercession is made.

For Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, is not in need of intercessors.

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However, He—Exalted is He—out of His generosity and bounty, bestows intercession upon whomever He wills of His servants on the Day of Resurrection, and that is to manifest the honour of the intercessor—for there is no doubt that the intercession of the intercessor indicates the status he has with the One before whom he intercedes—and to benefit the one for whom intercession is made.

Principles Regarding Intercession

The First Principle: All intercession belongs to Allah, exalted and majestic is He. No created being possesses it, no matter how high his rank or status. The intercession that takes place on the Day of Resurrection is not to be sought except from Allah, exalted and majestic is He.

The Second Principle: The evidences for unrestricted intercession are restricted by other evidences; so, the texts that negate intercession are restricted by the texts that affirm it. And the evidences which state that intercession is for the one who says: “Lā ilāha illa Allah” (There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah), or for the one who says: “Lā ilāha illa Allah” once in his life, or for the one who remembers Allah once — these are all restricted by the evidences which indicate that intercession is only: For the people of Tawhīd; for the one who dies not associating anything with Allah, and for the one who does not die upon disbelief. As for the one who dies while associating partners with Allah, then he will abide forever in the Fire, and the intercession of those who intercede will not benefit him. And whoever committed an act of disbelief and died upon it, and we judged him with specific takfir — while this judgment was in accordance with what is apparent and in reality — then he is not included among those who are eligible for intercession, because the evidences of intercession are restricted. Among that is what has been authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ regarding intercession: “It (my intercession) will be granted — if Allah wills — to the one who dies from my Ummah not associating anything with Allah.” (1)

Therefore, if a person declares another to be a disbeliever due to a valid Sharʿī reason, after it became clear to him that all preventing factors are absent and all conditions are fulfilled, then he holds — based on what he knows — that this individual will not benefit from the intercession of the intercessors. And if that person’s affair is as was believed, and he dies upon disbelief, then without doubt, intercession will not benefit him.

(1) Reported by Muslim (199), from Abū Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him.

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For example: the one who holds the view that the one who abandons the prayer completely is a disbeliever — as is my belief based upon the evidences — then if he learns that a certain person has died while abandoning the prayer, he believes that the intercession of the intercessors will not benefit him. However, he does not assert this definitively, because he does not know with certainty that his ruling upon him corresponds to what he truly is upon. Therefore, I say: if his inward state matches what he was ruled upon outwardly, then certainly the intercession of the intercessors will not benefit him.

Thus, the unrestricted evidences regarding intercession are restricted by the restricted evidences, and this is not from the category of the muḥkam (clear) and mutashābih (ambiguous), rather all the evidences on intercession are muḥkam — but some are unrestricted, and some are restricted — so this is returned back to that.

And there is no doubt that Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah are unanimously agreed that whoever dies while associating partners with Allah, intercession will not benefit him, and that he will abide forever in the Fire. (1)

The Third Principle Derived from the Texts:

That intercession in the Hereafter is of two types:

The First Type: Negated Intercession

And this has four forms according to the people of knowledge: (2)

The first: Intercession for the people of shirk and disbelief — for no one will intercede for the people of shirk and disbelief on the Day of Resurrection, and these polytheists and disbelievers will not benefit from the intercession of the intercessors.

(1) See: Sharḥ Muslim by al-Nawawī (2/97), and al-‘Adhb al-Namīr min Majālis al-Tafsīr by al-Shinqīṭī (1/65 – ‘Ālam al-Fawā‘id).

(2) See: Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (1/120, 128–130, 149–151, 332), (7/77), (14/402–407), Ighāthat al-Lahfān (1/395–369), Taysīr al-‘Azīz al-Ḥamīd (1/582, 593–595, 601, 606), and al-Qawl al-Mufīd (1/331, 335–337, 339, 345).

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The Second: Intercession without the Permission of Allah, the Most High

No intercessor will intercede on the Day of Resurrection except with the permission of Allah, exalted and glorified is He. So intercession without His permission is certainly rejected on the Day of Resurrection.

The Third: Intercession for those whom Allah is not pleased with

There is no intercession except for those whom Allah is pleased with, except what is excluded, which we will mention — and they are:

The great intercession of the Prophet ﷺ for the commencement of the reckoning — this will include everyone.

The intercession of the Prophet ﷺ for his uncle Abū Ṭālib.

So these two types of intercession have the condition of permission from Allah. As for Allah's pleasure with the one interceded for, that will be mentioned shortly.

The Fourth: The intercession of those who are worshipped besides Allah for their worshippers on the Day of Resurrection

This is the intercession assumed by the polytheists — in the past and in the present. They assume that those whom they worship besides Allah — those to whom they offer closeness and acts of devotion besides Allah — will intercede for them with Allah and be their intercessors before Him. This type of intercession is certainly negated. For those who are worshipped besides Allah will not intercede for their worshippers on the Day of Resurrection.

The Second Category: The Affirmed Intercession (1)

It is the intercession which Allah bestows upon those whom He has permitted from the intercessors and is pleased with — and upon those whom He is pleased with among those interceded for.

(1) See: Majmū' al-Fatāwá (7/78), (14/388, 390, 392); Ighāthat al-Lahfān (1/396, 399, 400); Al-Qawl al-Mufid (1/336).

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So in the affirmed intercession, three matters are essential:

1. Allah's Permission – No one, regardless of his noble status or high rank, can intercede for anyone with Allah except by Allah's permission.
2. Allah's Pleasure with the intercessor himself.
3. Allah's Pleasure with the one for whom intercession is made.

Here arises a question: What is the meaning of Allah being pleased with the one for whom intercession is made? Does it mean that he must be righteous in every aspect?

The answer: No.

Rather, what is meant is that he must be a monotheist (muwaḥḥid), even if he is a perpetrator of major sins. As long as he is a muwaḥḥid and prays, he falls under this condition. The Prophet ﷺ intercedes for the people of major sins from his Ummah.

So it is not to be understood from this condition—“that Allah is pleased with the one for whom intercession is made”—that he must be sinless and righteous. Rather, what is meant here is that he must be among the people of Tawḥīd.

So if he meets Allah while being from the people of Tawḥīd, it may be that intercession is made for him by the permission of Allah, exalted is He.

The Fourth Principle:

The affirmed intercession on the Day of Resurrection is, in general, divided into two categories (1):

The First Category: A specific intercession that belongs to the Prophet ﷺ and no one else will attain it.

(1) See: Majmū' al-Fatāwá by Ibn Taymiyyah (3/147–148), Tahdhīb Sunan Abī Dāwūd with 'Awn al-Ma'būd by Ibn al-Qayyim (13/55–56), al-Nihāyah fī al-Fitan wa al-Malāḥim by Ibn Kathīr (2/202–248), Sharḥ al-Ṭaḥāwīyyah by Ibn Abī al-'Izz (pp. 229–236), Faṭḥ al-Bārī by Ibn Ḥajar (11/428–429), and Sharḥ al-'Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah by Ibn 'Uthaymīn (2/169–179) – Ibn al-Jawzī.

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

The Prophet ﷺ said: “I have been given five things which were not given to anyone before me,” and from them he mentioned: “intercession (al-shafā‘ah).” Agreed upon. (1)

This intercession which the Prophet ﷺ was given — and which was not given to any prophet before him — is the specific intercession that is exclusive to him. So this ḥadīth is a proof that there is a type of intercession that is specific to the Prophet ﷺ.

And this intercession is of different types:

The First Type: The Greatest Intercession (al-shafā‘ah al-‘uzmā):

It is part of the Praised Station (al-maqām al-maḥmūd) which Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, will raise him to. It is the intercession of the Prophet ﷺ for the people of the standing (on the Day of Resurrection), wherein the Prophet ﷺ will intercede so that judgment may begin between them — and that will be when the people request intercession from the prophets, starting with our father Ādam عليه السلام.

But the prophets and the messengers of strong will (ulū al-‘azm) will decline to do so. So when they go to the Prophet ﷺ and request him to intercede with Allah, Blessed and Exalted is He, the Prophet ﷺ will say: “I am for it (anā lahā).”

Then the Prophet ﷺ will seek permission from his Lord, and he will fall in prostration, and Allah will open for him from the words of praise things he did not know before, and his prostration will be prolonged. Then it will be said: “O Muḥammad, raise your head, speak and you will be heard, ask and you will be given, intercede and your intercession will be accepted.” (2)

So on that Day, Allah will raise him to a Praised Station, for which all the people of the gathering will praise him. This intercession benefits everyone at the standing — in the matter of judgment beginning between them.

The Second Type: The Intercession of the Prophet ﷺ for the People of Paradise — that they may enter Paradise:

Wherein the believers — those who are the people of Paradise — will gather and go to Ādam عليه السلام...

(1) Reported by al-Bukhārī (335) and Muslim (521), from Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh — may Allah be pleased with him.

(2) Reported by al-Bukhārī (7510) and Muslim (193), from Anas ibn Mālik — may Allah be pleased with him.

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

So they will say: “O our father, open for us the gates of Paradise.” So he (Ādam, peace be upon him) will excuse himself, until they come to Muḥammad ﷺ, and he will rise, and permission will be granted to him (1). Then he will come to the gate of Paradise and ask for it to be opened. The gatekeeper will say: “Who are you?” He will say: “Muḥammad.” He will say: “It is you I was commanded (to open for); I will not open for anyone before you.” (2) So at that point, Paradise will be opened for its people, and the Prophet ﷺ will enter it, and he will enter from his Ummah those who are not held accountable and are not punished, from the rightmost gate of the gates of Paradise. Then the rest of the people will share in the gates of Paradise. (3)

The third type: The intercession of the Prophet ﷺ for his uncle Abū Ṭālib:

That the punishment is lightened for him; for Abū Ṭālib died upon shirk and did not say: *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, despite his prior support of the Prophet ﷺ. Al-‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him) said to the Prophet ﷺ: “What benefit did you give to your uncle? For indeed, he used to protect you and become angry for your sake.” This was in the form of a question, not out of objection or anything like that.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “He is in a shallow part of the Fire, and were it not for me, he would have been in the lowest depths of the Fire.” Agreed upon. (4)

(1) See: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (4712), and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (194)

(2) Reported by Muslim (197), from Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him)

(3) See: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (4712) and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (194)

(4) Reported by al-Bukhārī (3883), and Muslim (209)

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

And Abū Ṭālib was mentioned to the Prophet ﷺ, so he said:

“Perhaps my intercession will benefit him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will be placed in a shallow part of the Fire reaching to his ankles, from which his brain will boil.”

Agreed upon. (1)

So he will not be taken out of the Fire, but will be placed in a shallow part (ḍaḥḍāḥ) reaching his ankles, and due to its intensity, his brain will boil.

This is the condition of the one who is in the shallowest part of the Fire — so what then of the one whom the Fire surrounds and engulfs completely? And we seek refuge in Allah!

Indeed, the Fire is of severe punishment and intense heat — so the intelligent one is he who flees from it by obeying Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, and by distancing himself from His disobedience.

The point of evidence: That Abū Ṭālib died upon shirk, but the Prophet ﷺ intercedes for him by the permission of Allah, so that the punishment is lightened for him — not that he is taken out of the Fire.

For indeed, the disbelievers will abide eternally in the Fire.

And this type of intercession is an exception to the condition of Allah’s pleasure with the one interceded for, as was mentioned earlier.

However, even this intercession will not occur from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ except by the permission of Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He.

The Fourth Type: The Intercession of the Prophet ﷺ for the People of Madinah.

It is for the one who lived in it upon Tawḥīd, was patient upon its hardship, did not complain, and died there.

So it is a special intercession from the Prophet ﷺ, and it is specific to the people of Madinah.

It is not the general intercession for the people of major sins among the people of Tawḥīd, or for the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ in general.

The Prophet ﷺ said about Madinah:

(1) Reported by al-Bukhārī (3885) and Muslim (210) from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (may Allah be pleased with him).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

“No one is patient with its hardships and dies [therein], except that I will be an intercessor for him — or a witness — on the Day of Resurrection, if he is a Muslim.”

Narrated by Muslim. (1)

And his statement “and dies” — meaning: dies therein.

And this shows that whoever committed shirk in Madinah and lived as a polytheist, it only increased him in evil, and the Prophet ﷺ will not intercede for him.

As for the hypocrites who lived in Madinah, the intercession of the Prophet ﷺ will not benefit them — meaning, he will not intercede for them.

Rather, he will intercede for the one who was Muslim, lived in Madinah upon Tawḥīd, was patient upon its difficulty and hardship, did not show complaint or dissatisfaction, and died upon that.

(1) Ḥadīth (1374), from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (may Allah be pleased with him).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

And the meaning of the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: “Except that I would be an intercessor or a witness for him”:

- Some of the scholars said (1): The Prophet ﷺ said it like this, so perhaps he promised the one who has this description that he would be an intercessor for him or a witness for him.
- And some of the scholars said (2): “Or” here means “and”, i.e., I would be for him a witness and an intercessor on the Day of Resurrection.
- And some of the scholars said (3): “Or” here is for categorisation; meaning: I would be a witness for the obedient ones among them — I testify for them, and an intercessor for the sinners among them from the people of Medina — if they were upon Tawḥīd, were patient upon its hardships, and died upon Tawḥīd.

They said: Its meaning is that I would be a witness for one group, and an intercessor for another group; so I would be a witness for the obedient, and an intercessor for the sinners.

(1) See: Al-Muntaqā by al-Bājī (7/189 – Maṭba‘at al-Sa‘ādah), Ikmāl al-Mu‘allim by al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ (4/483 – al-Wafā’), and Sharḥ al-Nawawī ‘ala Muslim (9/136–137).

(2) See: Ikmāl al-Mu‘allim by al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ (4/483), and Sharḥ al-Nawawī ‘ala Muslim (9/140).

(3) See: Ikmāl al-Mu‘allim by al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ (4/483), Sharḥ al-Nawawī ‘ala Muslim (9/140), Tuḥfat al-Abrār Sharḥ Maṣābīḥ al-Sunnah by al-Bayḍāwī (2002 – Nūr al-Dīn Ṭālib), and Sharḥ al-Maṣābīḥ by Ibn al-Malik (3/364 – Nūr al-Dīn Ṭālib).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

And some of the scholars (1) said: Rather, the meaning is that I will be a witness for those who were with me from the people of Medina, and I will be an intercessor for those who came after me from the people of Medina — so long as they were Muslims, adherents to tawḥīd, and patient until they died upon that. So the testimony is for those whom the Prophet ﷺ saw, and the intercession is for those who came after the death of the Prophet ﷺ. And this intercession is a glad tidings for the people of Medina and an honour for them — if they fear Allah in Medina.

So you, O servant of Allah — O you who reside in Medina — are between two matters:

- Either tremendous nobility and a lofty station — if you fear Allah therein and remain patient until you die — then you are upon great status and promised this intercession.
- Or, and we seek refuge with Allah, you cast yourself into grave evil — due to the saying of the Prophet ﷺ:

“Medina is a sanctuary between ‘Ayr and Thawr. So whoever introduces into it an innovation or accommodates an innovator, upon him is the curse of Allah, the angels, and all the people, and Allah will not accept from him any ṣarf (compensation) nor ‘adl (ransom) on the Day of Resurrection.” (2)

Section Two:

Intercession from the Prophet of Allah and others — by which Allah honours whom He wills from His servants.

It is of various types:

- The First Type: The intercession for groups of Muslims who entered the Fire.

So the Prophet ﷺ will intercede for them to be taken out of the Fire, and the prophets will intercede for them, and the believers will intercede for them, and the angels will intercede for those people to be taken out of the Fire. So Allah will take out groups of people from the Fire by intercession.

(1) See *Ikmāl al-Mu‘allim* by al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ (4/483), and *Sharḥ al-Maṣābīḥ* by Ibn al-Malik (3/364, Nūr ad-Dīn Ṭālib edition).

(2) Reported by al-Bukhārī (6755) and Muslim (1370), from ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, may Allah be pleased with him.

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

There are people among the monotheists (muwaḥḥidīn) who commit sins by which they deserve to enter the Fire. So, they enter the Fire, and the Prophet ﷺ will intercede for them. Through his intercession, many people from among them will be taken out of the Fire. And the prophets will intercede, so Allah will take out many people through their intercession. And the believers will intercede, so Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, will take out people through their intercession. And the angels will intercede, so Allah will take out people through their intercession.

And this intercession, even though it is for the Prophet of Allah and others, the Prophet ﷺ is given precedence in it.

- The second type: Intercession for people from among the monotheists who deserve to enter the Fire – so that they do not enter it:

And the difference between this and the first: the first is for people who have entered the Fire – so that they may be taken out of it. Whereas this intercession is for people who have not yet entered the Fire – so that they do not enter it at all.

And from that is what the Prophet ﷺ said: “Indeed, a man who is not a prophet will intercede, and by his intercession, people will enter Paradise equal to the tribes of Rabī‘ah and Muḍar.” Narrated by Aḥmad, and authenticated by al-Albānī. (1)

And his saying, “equal to the tribes” means: like the two great tribes – Rabī‘ah and Muḍar.

And the Prophet ﷺ said: “A man from my Ummah will intercede, and by his intercession more people will enter Paradise than the tribe of Banū Tamīm.”

It was said: “O Messenger of Allah, other than you?”

He said: “Other than me.” Narrated by al-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah, and authenticated by al-Albānī. (2)

(1) Ḥadīth (22215), from Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī – may Allah be pleased with him. Authenticated by al-Albānī in al-Ṣaḥīḥah (2178).

(2) Reported by al-Tirmidhī (2438) and Ibn Mājah (4316), from Ibn Abī al-Jadh‘ā’ – may Allah be pleased with him.

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

This is a man from the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ by whose intercession more people will enter Paradise than Banū Tamīm, and they are a very large and numerous tribe. And the apparent meaning of this ḥadīth is that they will enter Paradise from the beginning (i.e., without entering the Fire).

And among that also is the statement of the Prophet ﷺ:

“There is no Muslim man who dies, and forty men stand over his funeral prayer, not associating anything with Allah, except that Allah grants them intercession for him.”

«مَا مِنْ رَجُلٍ مُسْلِمٍ يَمُوتُ، فَيَقُومُ عَلَى جَنَازَتِهِ أَرْبَعُونَ رَجُلًا، لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا، إِلَّا شَفَعَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِيهِ»

Narrated by Muslim in Ṣaḥīḥ (1)

- And his statement: “mā” (مَا) is negating;
- “min” (مِنْ) is for emphasis of generality;
- “Muslimin” (مُسْلِمٍ) is indefinite (nakirah), so it is general.
- “...dies, and forty men stand over his funeral prayer, not associating anything with Allah...” — in this is the virtue of tawḥīd for both of them.

And his statement:

“Except that Allah grants them intercession for him” — its apparent meaning is that their intercession is in the forgiveness of his sins and his entrance into Paradise.

The Third Type: Intercession for the Raising of Ranks in Paradise

And for this reason, it has been legislated that the believer asks for his brother that his rank be raised in Paradise.

So this is from the general intercession that is for the Prophet ﷺ and others.

And from that is the intercession of the one whose rank has been raised in Paradise, for the one from his family whose rank is lower in Paradise.

So if the father and the children enter Paradise, and the father is raised above the children in rank, then indeed Allah will join the children to their father — and he would have interceded for them by his deed through which he was raised in Paradise — so Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, raises them to his rank.

(1) Ḥadīth no. (948), narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās — may Allah be pleased with them both.

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

So these are the categories of affirmed intercession on the Day of Resurrection in its various types.

And the Shaykh, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

“And he relies upon them”:

So whoever relies upon a created being, and believes that in his hand is the bringing of benefit or the repelling of harm, and he depends upon him with absolute reliance — then he has committed shirk with Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.

And tawakkul (reliance) in the Arabic language means: to depend upon someone else in a matter, while showing inability. (1)

And tawakkul in the Sharī‘ah and in the terminology of the scholars is: the true dependence of the heart upon Allah, exalted is He, in seeking to attain benefit and repel harm, along with taking the necessary means. (2) Allah the Most High said: “And put your trust in Allah if you are believers indeed.” [al-Mā‘idah]

So, tawakkul is established upon two matters:

1. A matter related to the heart.
2. A matter related to the limbs.

As for what is related to the heart: it is the dependence of the heart upon Allah, exalted is He, in seeking to bring about a benefit or repel a harm— that is, to have trust in what is with Allah, and belief in the power of Allah, exalted is He—such that the heart depends upon Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, to bring benefit and repel harm.

And as for what is related to the limbs: it is the taking of the legislated means—whether they be small or large. So the heart depends upon Allah, while the limbs carry out the means; for Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, has decreed His way in His creation by linking outcomes to their causes—but the heart does not depend upon those causes. Rather, dependence is only upon Allah, exalted is He.

(1) See: al-Şiḥāḥ (5/1845), Maqāyīs al-Lughah (6/136), al-Naẓm al-Musta‘dhab fī Tafsīr Gharīb Alfāẓ al-Muhadhdhab by al-Rukkabī (8/1 – al-Maktabah al-Tijārīyah), and Ṭalabat al-Ṭalabah by al-Nasafī (p. 138 – al-Maṭba‘ah al-‘Āmirah).

(2) See: Jāmi‘ al-‘Ulūm wal-Ḥikam (2/497).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

So a man gets married in order to have a child, but his heart relies upon Allah for attaining the child. And he goes to the market, buying and selling to attain provision, but his heart is attached to Allah, the Provider, exalted is He. And the farmer goes out early to his field, ploughs the land, sows the seeds, and places the fertilisers, but his heart is reliant upon Allah for attaining the objective. This is tawakkul.

Tawakkul is not that the heart relies while neglecting the means. Rather, this is tawākul (false reliance), ignorance of the religion, and contrary to sound reason; for every sane person realises that one must take the means — and taking the means is what the Sharī‘ah has legislated.

For Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said to Mary — peace be upon her — at the time she delivered ‘Īsā عليه السلام: "And shake the trunk of the date-palm towards you, it will let fall fresh ripe dates upon you." [Maryam 19:25]

And Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, is capable of making the dates fall without her shaking it — yet He commanded her to take the means.

And Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said to Ayyūb عليه السلام:

"Strike the ground with your foot: This is (a spring of) water to wash in, cool and a (refreshing) drink." [Ṣād 38:42]

And Allah is capable of bringing out the water from the ground without Ayyūb عليه السلام striking with his foot.

And the Prophet ﷺ — while he is the leader of those who rely upon Allah — would take the means in all of his affairs ﷺ.

So it is essential in tawakkul to combine between:

- exerting effort and taking the means,
- while the heart relies upon Allah, not on the means themselves.

And the Prophet ﷺ combined both in one ḥadīth where he said:

“If you were to rely upon Allah with the reliance He deserves, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds: they go out in the morning hungry and return in the evening full.”

Narrated by al-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah, and authenticated by al-Albānī. (1)

(1) Reported by al-Tirmidhī (2344), who said: ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ, and Ibn Mājah (4164) — from ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him.

Authenticated by al-Albānī in al-Ṣaḥīḥah (310).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

So does the bird get its provision while in its nest?

The answer: No.

Rather, “it goes out in the morning hungry (تَغْدُو خِمَاصًا)” — meaning: hungry — “and returns full (وَتَرْوَحُ بِطَائِنًا)” — so it exerts effort and takes the means.

Such is tawakkul (reliance upon Allah).

Some of the people of knowledge have mentioned that tawakkul is divided into three categories (1):

The first category: Complete and absolute reliance of the heart upon the one being relied upon, such that he believes that this one holds in his hand the bringing of benefit and the repelling of harm.

And this tawakkul — if it is upon Allah, the Mighty and Majestic — then it is Tawhīd, and its status in the religion is tremendous.

Rather, the people of knowledge have said: It is half of the religion, due to the statement of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic:

“So worship Him (Alone) and put your trust in Him.”

[Hūd: 123]

So the religion becomes two components: worship and tawakkul (reliance) — just as Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said:

“You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).”

[Al-Fātiḥah: 5]

So the religion is worship, tawakkul, and seeking help from Allah, exalted is He.

And this tawakkul brings about the love of Allah for the servant, exalted is He:

“Verily, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him).”

[Āl ‘Imrān: 159]

(1) Tayseer al-‘Azīz al-Ḥamīd (2/993), Qurrat ‘Uyūn al-Muwaḥḥidīn (p. 172 – Bashīr ‘Uyūn print), al-Qawl al-Mufīd by Ibn ‘Uthaymīn (2/89–90), Sharḥ al-‘Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah by him as well (1/186 – Ibn al-Jawzī print), al-Irshād ilā Ṣaḥīḥ al-I‘tiqād (pp. 78-79 – Ibn al-Jawzī).

(2) See al-Qawl al-Mufīd by Ibn ‘Uthaymīn (2/89–90).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

Likewise, this tawakkul is a cause for the naṣr (victory) of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. For no servant places his reliance upon his Lord except that Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, grants him victory.

“If Allah helps you, none can overcome you; and if He forsakes you, who is there after Him that can help you? And in Allah (Alone) let believers put their trust.”

[Āl ‘Imrān: 160]

And this tawakkul upon Allah is a means for the servant to be protected from Shayṭān. Allah, the Most High, said:

“Verily! He has no power over those who believe and put their trust only in their Lord (Allah).”

[Al-Naḥl: 99]

And it is a reason for Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, to suffice His servant:

“And put your trust in Allah, and Sufficient is Allah as a Wakīl (Disposer of affairs, Trustee).”

[Al-Aḥzāb: 3]

And directing anything from this tawakkul to other than Allah is major shirk.

So whoever relies in his heart with an absolute reliance upon a created being in any affair—whether small or great—has committed major shirk. Likewise, if one relies upon other than Allah along with Allah, then this is major shirk.

And some people depend in their hearts, in seeking benefit or repelling harm, upon those buried in graves—upon those called “awliyā’.” They rely upon them. So when they hope for provision, their hearts are not attached to their Lord with reliance upon Him, rather they go to that buried one in his grave and depend upon him. Likewise, if they fall into distress, they do not turn to Allah; rather, they turn to the one in the grave. And this is major shirk that takes one out of the fold of Islam.

And this shirk—as the scholars have stated—has many forms:

- Among them: relying upon those buried in graves absolutely.

(1) See: Taysīr al-‘Azīz al-Ḥamīd (1/151, 2/993), Qurrat ‘Uyūn al-Muwahḥidīn (p. 172), Al-Qawl al-Mufīd (2/89), I‘ānatu al-Mustafīd (2/68).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

Among them: relying upon the absent in an absolute manner.

And among them: relying upon the living present in that which he is not capable of doing — and all of these forms are major shirk.

Its guideline is: the attachment of the heart to the one relied upon from the creation — this is major shirk.

Whereas the attachment of the heart to Allah, and the absolute reliance upon Allah — this is Tawhīd.

The second category: is the heart's reliance upon other than Allah, exalted is He, in matters of provision, livelihood, and worldly affairs; such that the heart becomes attached to the one relied upon besides Allah, exalted is He, from the angle of it being a means, not from the angle of it being a cause itself (1). This is minor shirk.

For example: a person relies upon his job for obtaining wealth, and his heart becomes attached to this — this is minor shirk.

So pay close attention to the difference between doing the means and the heart becoming attached to the means; for doing the means is Tawakkul, while attachment of the heart to the means is minor shirk.

However, if the heart becomes attached to the means believing it to be a true causer of benefit or harm, then it becomes major shirk.

Therefore, the reliance of the heart upon other than Allah has two scenarios:

The first scenario: the heart's reliance upon other than Allah from the angle that it brings about benefit or repels harm — and this is major shirk.

(1) See Taysīr al-‘Azīz al-Ḥamīd (2/993), Qurrat ‘Uyūn al-Muwaḥḥidīn (p. 172), al-Qawl al-Mufīd (2/89), and al-Irshād ilā Ṣaḥīḥ al-‘Iṭiqād (p. 79).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

The Second Image:

The attachment of the heart to other than Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, from the aspect of him being a means, while believing that the bringer of good is Allah and the repeller of harm is Allah — then this is minor shirk.

As for taking the means while the heart is attached to Allah — then this is tawakkul upon Allah, and it is tawhīd.

The Third Category:

Relying upon a living, capable creation regarding what he is able to do, as a means. (1)

Their saying: “Relying upon a living creation” — excludes the dead.

And their saying: “capable” — excludes the incapable, such as the absent.

And their saying: “regarding what he is able to do” — excludes that which he is not able to do.

And their saying: “as a means” — excludes attachment of the heart to him.

And this type is permissible.

For example: you entrust your brother to follow up on a government office on your behalf — so you relied on him as a means, and he is capable of that. Then this is permissible.

And this, in reality, is tawakkul in terms of the linguistic meaning, and not tawakkul in terms of the Shar‘ī meaning. So pay attention to the difference between the two matters.

For tawakkul in the language means: to rely upon another in some matter.

But according to the Shar‘ī meaning, it is not tawakkul, because tawakkul in the Shar‘ī meaning is the reliance of the heart.

(1) See: Tayseer al-‘Azeez al-Ḥameed (1/151), Qurrat ‘Uyoon al-Muwaḥḥidīn (p. 172), al-Qawl al-Mufīd (2/89–90), and al-Irshād ilá Ṣaḥīḥ al-‘Itiqād (p. 79).

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And this is, in reality, called tawkeel (delegation), and this is more appropriate than calling it tawakkul, so that it does not cause confusion. Therefore, it should be called tawkeel.

– Based on this: Is it valid for a person to say, “I placed my trust in you (توكلت عليك) in such-and-such transaction”?

We say: If what he intends by his statement, “I placed my trust in you in such-and-such matter,” is that he relied upon him from the aspect of him being a means, not from the aspect of attachment of the heart — then the meaning is correct, but the wording is incorrect. So he should say, “I delegated you (وكلتك),” or the like of that. And is it permissible for a person to say to another whom he has appointed to handle something at the municipality: “I placed my trust in Allah, then in you (توكلت على الله ثم عليك)”?

We say: Some of the scholars permitted this, and some of them prohibited it.

And the most correct opinion is:

That if his intent by “tawakkul” is the reliance of the heart, then this is ḥarām and not permissible, rather it is either:

- Major shirk (shirk akbar) — if he believes that the one entrusted can bring benefit or repel harm,
- Or minor shirk (shirk asghar) — if the heart becomes attached to him from the aspect of him being a means.

As for if his intent is dependence in the linguistic sense, then the meaning is correct.

However, even so, he should be prohibited from using this wording, as a preventative measure (saddan li-dh-dharī‘ah). So, the person should not say: “I placed my trust in Allah, then in you.”

And the statement of the Shaykh — may Allah have mercy on him —: “So he calls upon them, takes them as intercessors, and places his trust upon them” — contains an additional benefit; and that is:

That taking intermediaries from the creation between the slave and the Creator is of two types:

- A legislated (permissible) type.
- And a prohibited type.

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As for the prohibited type: it is seeking closeness to them in order that they may bring one closer to Allah — and this is shirk with Allah.

As for the legislated type: it is placing an intermediary between the servant and Allah for the purpose of learning the religion of Allah — and this is legislated. Jibrīl (peace be upon him) conveyed the religion of Allah to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ conveyed to us the religion of Allah — so they are our intermediaries in learning the religion of Allah. And the rabbānī scholars have clarified the religion of Allah — so they are our intermediaries in learning the religion of Allah.

So let us be cautious of the difference between one who takes intermediaries in order to know the religion of Allah, and one who takes intermediaries to draw close to them so they may bring him near to Allah. And for this reason, the Shaykh (may Allah have mercy on him) restricted his words to the worship of those intermediaries.

And you will observe here — O blessed one — that this nullifier is a type of the first nullifier. The first nullifier is broader, and this is one of its types. However, the Shaykh singled it out for emphasis, due to the fact that many of those who ascribe themselves to Islam fall into it — committing shirk with Allah, the Mighty and Majestic — under the pretext that “they are our intercessors with Allah,” and “they are our intermediaries to Allah.” So the Shaykh (may Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, have mercy on him) singled it out to clarify that seeking closeness to other than Allah is absolute shirk — whether the servant says to them: “I do not worship them, but I seek nearness to them so they may bring me close [to Allah],” or does not say that — for indeed, it is major shirk that expels a person from the religion of Islam.

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The third: Whoever does not declare the polytheists to be disbelievers, or doubts their disbelief, or validates their religion — has disbelieved by consensus.

Explanation:

The believer in Allah singles out Allah alone in worship and disbelieves in the Tāghūt, and holds as disbelief whatever Allah the Exalted has declared as disbelief. Allah the Most High said:

"Indeed there has been an excellent example for you in Ibrâhîm (Abraham) and those with him, when they said to their people: Verily, we are free from you and whatever you worship besides Allâh, we have rejected you, and there has appeared between us and you hostility and hatred for ever, until you believe in Allâh Alone."

[al-Mumtahina 60:4]

Meaning: "We have disbelieved in all of you, since you disbelieved, and in whatever you worship besides Allah."

So, not declaring the disbeliever to be a disbeliever, or doubting his disbelief, or validating his religion contradicts īmān entirely, and nullifies Islam entirely.

And the Shaykh mentioned in this nullifier three matters, all of which nullify Islam:

First: Whoever does not declare as a disbeliever the one whom Allah has declared a disbeliever, or whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has declared a disbeliever — for indeed, he is rejecting the Qur'an and repelling the ruling of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

And the scholars are in consensus that whoever denies a single verse of the Qur'an has committed disbelief. (1)

(1) See: Sharḥ al-Sunnah by al-Barbahārī (p. 31), al-Radd 'alā man Ankar al-Ḥarf wa-ṣ-Ṣawt by al-Sijzī (p. 160 – Muḥammad Bākīrīm), ad-Durrah fīmā Yajibu I'tiqāduh (p. 220–221), Marātib al-Ijmā' by Ibn Ḥazm (p. 174 – al-'Ilmiyyah), ash-Shifā' by al-Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ (2/646–649), Lum'at al-I'tiqād by Ibn Qudāmah (p. 21 – Ministry Edition), al-Iqnā' fi Masā'il al-Ijmā' by Ibn al-Qaṭṭān (1/46), Rawḍat al-Ṭālibīn by an-Nawawī (10/64), al-Iqnā' by al-Ḥajjāwī (4/297), al-I'lām bi-Qawāṭi' al-Islām by al-Haytamī (p. 86 – Dār at-Taqwā).

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And whoever rejects the ruling of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ after knowing it – then he has disbelieved. (1)

So whoever says: “The one who says that Allah is the third of three is not a disbeliever, rather they are our brothers who worship Allah just as we worship” – then he has disbelieved. And whoever says: “The one who says that ‘Uzayr is the son of Allah is not a disbeliever” – then he has disbelieved.

And whoever says that the Dahrīs (naturalists), or communists, or Buddhists are not disbelievers – then he has disbelieved, because he has denied the Qur’an and rejected the ruling of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and because he did not disbelieve in the ṭāghūt. And the two pillars of the testimony (shahādah) are: belief in Allah, and disbelief in the ṭāghūt.

As for the second matter: it is the one who doubts the disbelief of those whom Allah has declared disbelievers, or those whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has declared disbelievers, or hesitates in that. You say to him: “The one who says that Allah is the third of three – is he a disbeliever?” He replies: “I withhold my tongue, I remain undecided. Perhaps it is like this or perhaps it is like that.” So he remains hesitant. And doubt is the hesitation of the heart – even if the tongue does not speak. So whoever doubts in his heart and hesitates regarding the disbelief of one whom Allah has declared a disbeliever, or one whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has declared a disbeliever – then he has nullified his Islam, even if he does not speak, and even if he does not inform anyone of this doubt.

And let us be aware that doubt (shakk) is different from whispering (waswasah). Doubt is an act of the heart from the person himself.

Waswasah is the casting of something into the heart from Shayṭān – so waswasah is something external.

Whereas doubt is an internal action of the heart.

And doubt nullifies certainty – there remains no certainty alongside doubt in the heart. But waswasah merely clouds certainty. (2)

(1) See: Ta‘zīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh by al-Marwazī (2/930); Aḥkām al-Qur’ān by al-Jaṣṣāṣ (2/268, al-‘Ilmiyyah); al-Fiṣal fī al-Milal wa-al-Niḥal by Ibn Ḥazm (3/144, al-Khānjī); Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī (5/267).

(2) See: Tafsīr Ibn ‘Aṭīyyah (1/352–353; 3/143, al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah); al-Mu‘allim bi-Fawā’id Muslim by al-Māzarī (1/313–314); Sharḥ Muslim by al-Nawawī (2/155–156); al-Ta’rīfāt by al-Jurjānī (p. 259, al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah).

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And I give an example for whisperings (waswasah) for those afflicted with it in creed: like the clouds during the daytime — they cover the sun from the one looking, but the sun is still there. So the whisperings that occur to some people regarding belief in Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, or regarding rulings, these do not nullify certainty. Certainty is still present. That is why you find this afflicted person fearing these whisperings intensely and detesting them, but they veil the certainty if he gives in to them.

So let us not confuse between doubt (shakk) — which is an action of the heart — and whisperings (waswasah) which are cast into the heart by Shayṭān. Whispering is something external. Doubt is an action of the heart. And doubt cuts off certainty; there remains no certainty alongside doubt in the heart. Whereas whisperings only veil certainty.

And the reason for declaring as disbeliever the one who doubts the disbelief of those whom Allah has declared disbelievers or whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has declared disbelievers is the same previous reason: that he has belied the Qur'an, and rejected the report of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and he has not disbelieved in ṭāghūt.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

“Muḥammad ibn Sahnūn, from the companions of Mālik, said: The scholars have unanimously agreed that whoever reviles the Prophet ﷺ or belittles him — is a disbeliever, and the threat (of punishment) applies to him from the punishment of Allah, and the ruling upon him, according to the Ummah, is execution. And whoever doubts his disbelief and punishment has disbelieved.” (1)

This is the point of evidence: so whoever doubts the disbelief of one whose disbelief is known, then he is a disbeliever by consensus of the scholars. (2)

(1) As-Ṣārim al-Maslūl ‘alā Shātīm ar-Rasūl (p. 4 and p. 513)

(2) See: Ash-Shifā’ (2/610), and Al-I’tiqād al-Khāliṣ min ash-Shakk wa an-Naqd by Ibn al-‘Aṭṭār (p. 378 – az-Zuwayhirī)

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Imām Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“The Qur’an is the Speech of Allah. Whoever says it is created is a disbeliever. And whoever doubts his disbelief is himself a disbeliever.” (1)

And the two Rāzīs — Abū Ḥātim and Abū Zur‘ah (may Allah have mercy on them both) — while speaking about the creeds of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah and what they found the scholars upon in all the lands — in Ḥijāz, ‘Irāq, Shām, and Yemen — they said:

“From their creed was: that īmān is statement and action; it increases and decreases. And the Qur’an is the Speech of Allah, uncreated. And whoever claims that the Qur’an is created is a disbeliever in Allah the Almighty — a disbelief that expels one from the religion. And whoever doubts his disbelief — among those who understand — is a disbeliever.” (2)

The point here is to clarify the consensus of the scholars that whoever doubts the disbelief of one whose disbelief is known has nullified his Islam. (2)

And the third matter — which is even more severe and dangerous — is:

“Whoever validates their creed” and does not reject it at all.

And we notice that the Shaykh (may Allah have mercy on him) mentioned in this nullifier three matters:

- The first: regarding judgment upon the polytheists.
- The second: also regarding judgment upon them.
- The third: regarding judgment upon their creed, their actions, and their statements.

And this is more severe and dangerous.

So whoever says that the creed of the disbelievers, or part of their creed, or the creed of some of them, or part of the creed of some of them — is correct — from that which they disbelieved due to — then he is a disbeliever, and his Islam is nullified. (3)

(1) Narrated by ‘Abdullāh ibn Aḥmad in al-Sunnah (no. 25 – Ibn al-Qayyim).

(2) Sharḥ Uṣūl I’tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah by al-Lālikā’ī (1/200).

(3) See: al-Shifā’ (2/610), Ikfār al-Mulḥidīn fī Ḍurūriyyāt al-Dīn by al-Kashmīrī (p. 58 – Pakistan), Fatāwā al-Lajnah al-Dā’imah (12/281–283, Fatwa no. 19402), al-Liqā’ al-Shahrī by Ibn ‘Uthaymīn (Session 30).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

And whoever says: “Everyone worships Allah in his own way, and Paradise, whose width is as the heavens and the earth, accommodates all”—then he is a disbeliever.

And whoever says: “Everyone who seeks closeness to whom he thinks is a god, according to his knowledge, is upon goodness, and Paradise accommodates all”—then he is a disbeliever.

And whoever says: “All religions are one,” or “We must unite the religions,” or “We must unite the revealed books”—then his Islam is nullified; because whoever says the religions are one has affirmed the beliefs of the disbelievers, as unity between falsehood and truth is impossible.

Therefore, among the dangerous matters of our time is the call for the unification of religions and making the religions into one.

As for interfaith dialogue, then this is another matter in which there is detail (1):

If the interfaith dialogue is to arrive at a common ground upon which the religions can unite in belief and to unify the religions—then this is like the unification of religions.

But if the dialogue is between the followers of religions in order to clarify the truth and refute falsehood through evidences, and each one presents what he has—then this is legislated and required for clarifying the truth.

(1) See: Fatāwā al-Lajnah al-Dā'imah (12/123, Fatwa No. 7807) and (12/279–283, Fatwa No. 19402); Liqā' al-Bāb al-Maftūḥ of Ibn 'Uthaymīn (Meeting No. 214); and a fatwa by Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān in Ṣaḥīfat al-Madīnah, Friday 18 Sha'bān 1428 AH (Issue No. 16200).

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And if the dialogue between the followers of religions is to repel corruption from the people of the earth, prevent crimes, and oppose the people of perversity, then this is also required.

As for dialogue to reach religious unity, then this — and we seek refuge with Allah — is disbelief (kufr) and a nullifier of Islam.

And whoever validates the creed of the disbelievers, or believes that it is from the religion of Islam which Allah is pleased with as a religion, then he is a disbeliever; because he is a denier of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and a denier of the saying of Allah the Most High:

"And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers." [Āl 'Imrān: 85]

And it should be known that this nullifier is related to one whom the scholars have unanimously agreed upon that he is a disbeliever, or the evidence indicates that he is a disbeliever, and the conditions have been fulfilled and the preventives have been removed — even if the scholars have not unanimously agreed upon his disbelief. (1)

So whoever the scholars have agreed upon his disbelief, then someone comes and does not declare him a disbeliever, or is lenient regarding his disbelief, or validates the creed by which he disbelieved — then he has nullified his Islam.

And whoever the evidence establishes his disbelief — even if there is no consensus, or a disagreement is reported — and the conditions have been fulfilled and the preventives have been removed, yet he does not declare him a disbeliever — then he has nullified his Islam.

As for one who does not declare a specific individual to be a disbeliever due to his belief that a condition is absent or a preventive is present — while believing that the statement or action is disbelief due to the evidence indicating that — then he is not declared a disbeliever, and it is not said that he has nullified his Islam. (2)

(1) See: Majmū' al-Fatāwā (2/368), as-Şārim al-Maslūl (p. 586–587), Tamayyuz aş-Şidq mina al-Mayni fī Muḥāwarat ar-Rajulayni (p. 132–133 – al-Āşimah), and Kashf al-Awhām wal-Iltibās (p. 75–79 – al-Āşimah), both by Sulaymān ibn Saḥmān an-Najdī.

(2) See: Fatāwā al-Lajnah ad-Dā'imah (2/151, Fatwā no. 11043)

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And with even greater reason, if he believes that the individual in question did not commit the nullifier (of Islam) at all, and thus does not declare him a disbeliever, then indeed he does not become a disbeliever; rather, declaring him to be so would be aggression and injustice.

So to take control over the Ummah through chain takfīr—where someone believes that a specific individual is a disbeliever, then declares everyone who does not also declare that individual a disbeliever to be disbelievers, thereby excommunicating the Ummah except those who agree with him on the takfīr of this specific individual—this is aggression, injustice, and opposition to the religion of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.

And using this nullifier, or what Shaykh al-Islām mentioned, as a proof is invalid, because this is not what the scholars intended.

The Imams of the Da‘wah have clarified this matter in their books (1). Not everyone whom you believe to be a disbeliever—and then someone else doubts his disbelief or does not declare him a disbeliever—becomes a disbeliever. Rather, the one who becomes a disbeliever is the one who does not declare a person to be a disbeliever whom the scholars have unanimously agreed upon his disbelief, or for whom there is evidence proving his disbelief, and the conditions have been fulfilled and the preventions have been removed, and a god-fearing scholar ruled on his disbelief—and despite knowing all this, he still does not declare him a disbeliever—then this is a nullifier (of Islam).

As for other than this, then it does not nullify one’s Islam. Rather, it may even be obligatory upon a person—if he believes that the mentioned individual did not commit a nullifier at all—that he must not declare him a disbeliever. Or he believes that the individual did what he did in a manner that does not constitute disbelief—then it is obligatory upon him not to declare him a disbeliever. Or he believes that the individual—even if he committed disbelief—the conditions were not met, or one of the preventions was present, and so he does not declare him a disbeliever—then this does not nullify his Islam.

(1) Al-Durar al-Saniyyah (1/104, 467), (8/160), (10/440), Tamayyuz al-Ṣidq min al-Mayni fī Muḥāwarat al-Rajulayn (p. 132–133, al-‘Āṣimah), Kashf al-Awhām wa-l-Ilṭibās (p. 75–79, al-‘Āṣimah), both by Sulaymān ibn Saḥmān al-Najdī, Fatāwā al-Lajnah al-Dā’imah (2/147–151, fatwa no. 11043), Majmū‘ Fatāwā Ibn Bāz (28/231–234, ed. al-Shuway‘ir)

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Fourth: Whoever believes that the guidance of other than the Prophet ﷺ is more complete than his guidance, or that the ruling of other than him is better than his ruling—such as those who prefer the rulings of the ṭawāghīt over his ruling—then he is a disbeliever.

Explanation:

This is the fourth nullifier from the nullifiers that invalidate Islam and cannot coexist with Islam. Within it are two issues:

- The first issue pertains to guidance (hady).
- The second issue pertains to ruling (ḥukm).

As for the first issue, which pertains to guidance:

Whoever believes that the guidance of other than the Prophet ﷺ is more complete than his guidance, then he is a disbeliever.

And guidance (al-hady): it is the way, the methodology, the conduct, the condition, the appearance, and the path upon which the Prophet ﷺ was. (1) Included within this is the guidance of clarification and indication which the Prophet ﷺ came with—he clarified the religion through his speech, and he clarified the religion through his actions. Allah the Mighty and Majestic said:

“And verily, you (O Muhammad ﷺ) are indeed guiding (mankind) to the Straight Path.”

[Surah Ash-Shūrā 42:52]

So, the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ—his way, his condition, his methodology, and his path—is the best guidance.

(1) See: Ikmāl al-Mu‘allim bi-Fawā'id Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim by al-Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ (vol. 3, p. 229, al-Wafā'), Al-Ifṣāḥ 'an Ma'ānī al-Ṣiḥāḥ by Ibn Hubayrah (vol. 8, p. 352, Dār al-Waṭan), Al-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth by Ibn al-Athīr (vol. 5, p. 253, al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyyah), Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ by al-Qārī (vol. 2, p. 759, al-Fikr).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ used to say in his sermons:

“Verily, the best speech is the Book of Allah, and the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad.”

Reported by Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah (1) with this wording.

And it is found in Muslim (2) with the wording:

“And the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad.”

And in a narration also reported by Aḥmad (3):

“Verily, the most truthful speech is the Book of Allah, and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad.”

And in another narration reported by Aḥmad (4):

“Indeed, the most beautiful speech is the Book of Allah, and the most beautiful guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad.”

So, the guidance of Muḥammad is the best guidance, the most beautiful guidance, the most virtuous guidance, and the most complete guidance. And all of his guidance is revelation from Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He:

“Nor does he speak of (his own) desire. It is only an Inspiration that is inspired.”

[Surah An-Najm: 3–4]

So whoever believes that the guidance of other than the Prophet ﷺ is better than his guidance, then he has disbelieved and has denied what is in the Qur’an and the Sunnah.

Thus, those who believe and see that the path of a shaykh of a ṭarīqah is better, more complete, and nearer to Allah than the path of Muḥammad ﷺ have certainly fallen into disbelief and falsehood.

(1) Reported by Aḥmad (14,984), and Ibn Mājah (45), from Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh – may Allah be pleased with him.

(2) Ḥadīth no. (867), from Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh – may Allah be pleased with them both.

(3) Ḥadīth no. (14,334), from Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh – may Allah be pleased with them both.

(4) Ḥadīth no. (14,331), from Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh – may Allah be pleased with them both.

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And those who see that the guidance of philosophers and the judgments of the intellect are better, more beautiful, and more complete than the guidance of Muḥammad ﷺ—then they have brought forth falsehood and disbelief, have slandered the religion, and have belied the Qur’an and the Sunnah.

Therefore, the religious obligation—which is from Tawḥīd—is that the believer holds that the guidance of Muḥammad is the best guidance, and rather, believes that every guidance that opposes the guidance of Muḥammad ﷺ is falsehood.

And whoever believes that the guidance of someone other than the Prophet ﷺ is better than his guidance, then he has nullified his Islam and committed major disbelief – and we seek refuge with Allah. This is the first matter.

As for the second matter, it is the issue of judgement. Whoever believes that the judgement of someone other than the Prophet ﷺ is better and more just than his judgement, then he has disbelieved.

What is meant by the judgement of the Prophet ﷺ is the judgement by what Allah has revealed, and it is the judgement of Islam.

All judgement belongs to Allah, exalted is He, as Allah the Mighty and Majestic said:

“The decision is only for Allah.”

[Surah Al-An‘ām: 57]

This is a restriction (ḥaṣr) that clearly indicates that all judgement belongs to Allah. And He, glorified be He, said:

“So the judgement is only with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great.”

[Surah Ghāfir: 12]

And the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Indeed Allah is the Judge, and the judgement is His.”

Reported by Abū Dāwūd and an-Nasā’ī, and authenticated by al-Albānī. (1)

(1) Reported by Abū Dāwūd (no. 4955), and an-Nasā’ī (no. 5387), from Hānī’ ibn Yazīd al-Ḥārithī – may Allah be pleased with him. Authenticated by al-Albānī in Irwā’ al-Ghalīl (no. 2615).

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Every judgement that opposes the judgement of Allah or the judgement of His Messenger is from the judgement of jāhiliyyah (pre-Islamic ignorance). So whoever believes that a judgement which opposes the judgement of Allah or the judgement of His Messenger ﷺ is better, more virtuous, and more just than the judgement of Allah and the judgement of His Messenger, then he has disbelieved.

Allah the Mighty and Majestic said:

“Have you seen those (hypocrites) who claim that they believe in that which has been sent down to you, and that which was sent down before you, and they wish to go for judgement (in their disputes) to the Tāghūt (false judges), while they have been ordered to reject them. But Shayṭān (Satan) wishes to lead them far astray.

And when it is said to them: ‘Come to what Allah has sent down and to the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ),’ you see the hypocrites turn away from you with aversion.”

[Surah An-Nisā’: 60–61]

So in this verse is amazement and condemnation of the actions of those who claim — and the term “claim” is most often used to refer to false speech — they claim with their tongues that they believe in Allah and believe in the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and yet they desire to refer judgment to the Tāghūt — to the rule that contradicts the legislation of Allah — even though they were commanded to disbelieve in it. So every judgment that contradicts the legislation of Allah, the believer is required to disbelieve in it and hold it to be false — to the utmost degree of falsehood. But they obey the Shayṭān who wants to lead them far astray.

Allah the Almighty said:

“Do they then seek the judgement of (the days of) ignorance? And who is better in judgement than Allah for a people who have firm Faith.”

[Surah al-Mā’idah 5:50]

Allah the Almighty condemned everyone who desires a judgment other than His or other than that of His Messenger ﷺ. He clarified that the most perfect, the best, and the most just ruling is His ruling. And what is intended by the phrase of preference here (i.e., “better in judgment”) is the perfection in description — and not a comparison between “good” and “better.” So the meaning of “أَحْسَنُ” (better) here is the utmost perfection

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and completeness of goodness — not a comparison between the ruling of Allah (as “better”) and the ruling of others (as merely “good”). No, and never! The ruling of other than Allah is false and contains no goodness whatsoever. Rather, complete goodness lies only in the ruling of Allah the Almighty.

And Allah the Almighty said:

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad ﷺ) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.”

[Surah an-Nisā’ 4:65]

The Exalted Lord swears: “But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith,” until they refer their judgment to you in all that arises among them — and beyond that, that they submit completely, without any discomfort in their hearts regarding the ruling of Allah and the ruling of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

And Allah the Almighty said:

“And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the disbelievers.”

[Surah al-Mā’idah 5:44]

These verses are general — they include acting upon every ruling that Allah has revealed in His Book or upon the tongue of His Messenger ﷺ. And the people of innovation have gone astray in their understanding of these verses related to takfīr (declaring disbelief), so they declared the Muslims disbelievers using these very verses — claiming that the Muslims did not rule by the legislation of Allah the Almighty.

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr said:

“And a group from the people of innovation among the Khawārij and the Mu‘tazilah went astray in this chapter – meaning the chapter of takfīr – so they used these narrations and their likes as evidence to declare the sinners disbelievers. And they used as evidence from the Book of Allah verses which are not to be taken upon their apparent meaning, such as His statement the Mighty and Majestic:

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‘And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the disbelievers.’ [Surah al-Mā'idah 5:44] (1)

And by this you come to know, O noble one, that the people of innovation throughout different eras are upon one heart and one path; they recite the Qur'an but do not understand its meaning, and they distort its meaning. And from them are those whose recitation does not go beyond their throats, so their hearts are not softened by it, nor are their actions made upright by it.

Likewise, the people of innovation today who transgress in takfīr restrict these verses to the rulers; because they do not want to establish the truth nor give victory to the religion. Rather, they are a people who are spiteful toward the rulers and want to bring them down, and they knew that the people of Islam would not obey them in what they intend except if they deceive them, so they cloaked their speech in the garments of religion. And for this reason, you find them striving to restrict tawḥīd to insulting the rulers, criticising them and declaring them disbelievers, and to restrict shirk to what they named “shirk of ḥākimiyyah.” And you find that they apply these verses to the rulers only, whereas if they were just, they would have known that they themselves, in their creed, have not ruled by what Allah the Mighty and Majestic has revealed.

And the Salaf are unanimously agreed that these verses are not to be taken upon their apparent meaning, and that the disbelief mentioned in the verse is not the disbelief that expels from the religion:

(1) At-Tamhīd (16/17) – Moroccan Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs

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Ibn Jarīr narrated (1) from Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with both of them) regarding the saying of Allah: “And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the disbelievers” [Surah al-Mā’idah 5:44]; he said: “Whoever rejects what Allah has revealed, then he has indeed disbelieved. And whoever affirms it but does not judge by it, then he is a wrongdoer and a rebellious sinner.”

And Ibn Jarīr narrated from ‘Aṭā’ that he said: “Disbelief less than (major) disbelief, and sin less than (major) sin, and oppression (2) less than (major) oppression.”

And al-Ḥākim narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with both of them) that he said: “It is not the disbelief which they go towards. Indeed, it is not a disbelief that expels from the religion.

‘And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the disbelievers’ [Surah al-Mā’idah 5:44]; it is disbelief less than (major) disbelief.” (3)

Then al-Ḥākim said: “This ḥadīth has a ṣaḥīḥ isnād (authentic chain), and the two Shaykhs (al-Bukhārī and Muslim) did not narrate it.” And al-Dhahabī agreed with him, and said: “Ṣaḥīḥ.”

And the statement of Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with both of them) has an authentic route with Ibn Jarīr and Aḥmad in al-Īmān, and with others (4).

(1) Reported by al-Ṭabarī in Tafsīr (8/467), and Ibn Abī Ḥātim in Tafsīr (4/1142).

(2) Reported by Abū Dāwūd in Masā’il Aḥmad (1357), al-Marwazī in Ta’zīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (575), al-Ṭabarī (8/464–465), Ibn Abī Ḥātim (4/1149), and al-Khallāl in al-Sunnah (1417, 1422). Its isnād was authenticated by al-Albānī in al-Ṣaḥīḥah (6/114), no. (2552).

(3) Reported by Sa’īd ibn Manṣūr in Sunan (4/1482 – al-Ṣumay’ī), al-Marwazī in Ta’zīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (569), Ibn Abī Ḥātim in Tafsīr (4/1143), al-Khallāl in al-Sunnah (1419), al-Ḥākim (2/342 – route of ‘Aṭā’), and he authenticated it; also by al-Bayhaqī (8/38). Al-Albānī authenticated it upon the conditions of the two Shaykhs as in al-Ṣaḥīḥah (6/113), no. (2552).

(4) Reported by ‘Abd al-Razzāq in Tafsīr (2/20 – ‘Ilmiyyah ed.), al-Ṭabarī in Tafsīr (8/465–466), al-Marwazī in Ta’zīm Qadr al-Ṣalāh (2/521, 522), Ibn Abī Ḥātim in Tafsīr (4/1143), al-Ṭaḥāwī in Mushkil al-Āthār (2002), and al-Khallāl in al-Sunnah (1420); from Ibn Ṭāwūs from his father who said: A man said to Ibn ‘Abbās regarding these verses: ‘And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed...’ So whoever does this, has he disbelieved? Ibn ‘Abbās said: “If he does so, then it is disbelief, but not like the one who disbelieves in Allah, the Last Day, and such and such.”

And in another wording: “Ibn ‘Abbās said: It is disbelief.” Ibn Ṭāwūs said: “But not like the one who disbelieves in Allah, His angels, and His messengers.”

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It has multiple chains of narration that strengthen one another (1), and no opposing view is known from the Companions, so this would be considered a consensus during the time of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that it is disbelief less than major disbelief (kufr dūna kufr). The speech of the Salaf has unanimously agreed upon this, and there is no known statement from the Salaf nor from the great Imams of Islam like Mālik, Aḥmad, and others that contradict this; rather, the matter has details. This is what the Muslim must understand, believe in, and base his speech upon.

Here, the scholars discuss two issues:

The first issue: Some scholars refer to it as the issue of legislation.

The second issue: Is the issue of ruling and seeking judgment.

As for the first issue — the issue of legislation — then legislation is of three categories:

The first category: That a person lays down laws and organizes matters which the Legislator has remained silent about in acts of worship; this is considered innovation in religion. So, whoever introduces into worship something that the Sharī'ah has remained silent about, and then legislates it for the people and calls them to it — either in its foundation, such as introducing celebrations for the birthday of the Prophet ﷺ, or for the Companions, or for Ahl al-Bayt, or for the awliyā', or others besides them — then such a person has innovated, and he has a portion of the saying of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic:

“Or have they partners with Allah (false gods), who have instituted for them a religion which Allah has not allowed?” [Surah Ash-Shūrā: 21].

The foundation regarding acts of worship is restriction (tawqīf), so if the Sharī'ah has remained silent about it, then that indicates prohibition. And whoever introduces a religious act in its origin or description, about which the Sharī'ah has remained silent, then he has innovated.

(1) See: As-Ṣaḥīḥah by al-Albānī (2552).

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And the second category: is that a servant enacts laws and organizes matters in affairs about which the Lawgiver remained silent, and in which no ruling has come; the default in these matters is allowance, permission, and permissibility — such as customs and transactions. This is permissible and there is no harm in it, and it may even be required if public interests are connected to it. For example, if the ruler organizes the job market and financial market, and issues regulations and systems — then this is required from him. Because it is agreed upon that the actions of the leader concerning his subjects are dependent upon benefit, and that it is obligatory upon the ruler to act for the people in the most beneficial and best way possible.

And the third category: is that a servant enacts laws and systems that oppose the Law of Allah; so he establishes a system and man-made law that contradicts the Law of Allah — such as one who rules that drinking alcohol does not necessitate a punishment, or he details it by saying: if it is drunk in the house, or not while driving, or in authorized bars — then there is no punishment; but if it is drunk in such and such case, then the punishment is such and such — this is a system that contradicts what Allah, Glorified is He and Most High, has revealed. And this is of two levels:

The first level: that he replaces the Law of Allah by his own choice — meaning: he comes across the Law of Allah being firmly established, then he replaces the Law of Allah with secular man-made laws that contradict it, by his own choice — just as the one who abolished the Ottoman Caliphate did and replaced what he found from the Law of Allah with secular rulings and man-made laws.

And groups from among the people of knowledge have declared him to be a disbeliever, and said: His action is disbelief, and he is a disbeliever.

And the students of Shaykh Ibn Bāz – may Allah have mercy on him – transmitted from him that such a person is not declared a disbeliever unless he believes that it (the secular law) is better than the Law of Allah, or equal to it, or that it is permissible to act upon it. But if he believes that the Law of Allah is better, and that it is what must be acted upon, yet he replaces it — then he is not declared a disbeliever.

And he – may Allah have mercy on him – was asked: Is there a difference between complete replacement (التبديل ككل) and ruling in a single issue — i.e., by other than what Allah has revealed? So he – may Allah have mercy on him – said: “If he did not intend by that to declare it permissible (استحلال),

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and he only ruled by that due to other reasons, then it is disbelief less than (major) disbelief (كفرًا دون كفر).

But if he says: It is permissible, and there is no harm in ruling by other than what Allah revealed — even if he says: The Sharī‘ah is better — but if he says: There is no harm, it is permissible — he becomes a disbeliever with major disbelief, whether he says: The Sharī‘ah is better, or that it is equal, or that it (the secular law) is better than the Sharī‘ah — all of it is disbelief — we seek refuge in Allah — meaning in all scenarios.” (1)

So here you come to know that Shaykh Ibn Bāz – may Allah have mercy on him – does not differentiate between replacement (التبديل) and ruling (الحكم), rather he details the same distinction that we will mention regarding ruling by other than what Allah has revealed.

As for the second level: it is that a person finds the judgment by man-made laws present in the land, and there is no ruling by the Law of Allah; rather, what is applied is the man-made laws that contradict the Law of Allah — and he legislates similar ones, whether as an individual or a body like the parliament; then the ruling regarding this follows the same detail as that of ruling by other than what Allah has revealed — his situation is to be examined.

(1) Majmū‘ Fatāwā Ibn Bāz (28/148-149 – al-Shuway‘ir).

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And a third category is added to this second degree, and it is: the one who is unable to change that system — meaning the rule by man-made laws — and he proceeds gradually and does what is possible, along with his sincere intention to implement the legislation of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. Then such a person is not declared a disbeliever. He arrived to find man-made laws — which contradict what Allah has revealed — firmly established, and he is unable to change them, so he proceeds gradually and does what is within his ability, along with his sincere intention to implement the legislation of Allah — then he is not declared a disbeliever due to this action of his.

As for the second issue: it is regarding judgement and resorting for judgement, and the difference between them is:

- Judgement (الحكم) returns to the ruler — whether the general ruler or the judge.
- Resorting for judgement (التحاكم) is the action of the general people by referring to the one who judges. And this has categories:

The first category: ruling by the Sharī‘ah, and referring to the legislation of Allah for judgement — and this is a religious obligation, and from the necessities of Tawhīd.

The second category: ruling by man-made laws that do not contradict the Sharī‘ah of Allah, and referring to them for judgement — and this is permissible; rather, it may even be required, such as in traffic regulations and accidents that occur between people.

The third category: ruling by laws that contradict the legislation of Allah, and referring to them for judgement — and these are of varying degrees, as clarified by the people of knowledge, derived from the principles established by Ahl al-Sunnah.

Shaykh Ibn Bāz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“And there is no doubt that ruling by other than what Allah has revealed is a great evil, and from the types of disbelief (kufr)” — meaning: it can be major kufr or lesser kufr.

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“As Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, has clarified, and it is from the rulings of Jāhiliyyah, as He said:

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‘Do they then seek the judgement of (the days of) Ignorance?’”

[Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 50]

And no one is permitted to rule by other than what Allah has revealed. Rather, it is a great evil and a heinous crime.

As for it being disbelief that expels one from the religion, then this is the point of detail and clarification among the scholars. So whoever practiced ruling by other than what Allah has revealed, believing it to be permissible, or seeing that there is no problem with it, or sees that it is equal to the ruling of Allah, or even more atrocious than that: that the Sharī'ah is not suitable for today, and that man-made laws are more appropriate and more correct — all of this is major disbelief, in all of these three cases.

And whoever claims that the ruling of other than Allah is better than His ruling, or equal to it at any time, or that it is permissible to rule by other than what Allah has revealed — even if he says that the Sharī'ah is better and more excellent — then in these three cases, the one who says this is a disbeliever; and likewise, whoever believes this. Whoever believes that the ruling of other than Allah is permissible, or equal to the ruling of Allah, or better than the ruling of Allah — then he is an apostate by the agreement of all the people of Islam.

As for the one who does that for some purpose from among the purposes, while knowing that he is mistaken, and that he is a criminal, but he did that for the purpose of a bribe, or flattering a people, or for other reasons, while Allah knows from his heart that he rejects this, and that he sees it as falsehood, and that it is a sin — then he does not become a disbeliever by this action. Rather, he is a sinner, and is a disbeliever with disbelief less than (major) disbelief, and a wrongdoer with wrongdoing less than (major) wrongdoing, and a sinner with sinfulness less than (major) sinfulness, just as Ibn 'Abbās — may Allah be pleased with him — said, and Mujāhid ibn Jabr, and a number of others; and this is well-known among the people of knowledge.

And if you find some of the scholars who have made a general statement regarding his disbelief — meaning, if you find an unrestricted statement from some scholars saying: “He is a disbeliever” — then what is meant by it is disbelief less than (major) disbelief. (1)

(1) Fatāwá Nūr 'ala al-Darb by Shaykh Ibn Bāz (4/127, 128 – al-Shuway'ir).

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And he – may Allah have mercy on him – mentioned that this is the saying of Ahl al-Sunnah; he said: “And this is the saying of Ahl al-Sunnah” (1), and he said in another place: “This is the saying of Aḥmad and others from Ahl al-Sunnah, and nothing else is known from them.”

So this scholar, well-acquainted with the speech of Ahl al-Sunnah, affirms that this detailed clarification is the saying of Ahl al-Sunnah and their imams.

And Shaykh al-Albānī – may Allah have mercy on him – said: “And here is a matter that must be given due attention: That ruling by other than what Allah has revealed may be disbelief (kufr) that expels one from the religion, and it may be a major or minor sin, and it may be kufr either metaphorically (majāzī) or minor kufr (kufr aṣghar), according to the two mentioned opinions – and that depends on the state of the ruler.

If he believes that ruling by what Allah has revealed is not obligatory, or that he has a choice in it, or belittles it while being certain that it is the ruling of Allah – then this is major kufr (kufr akbar).

And if he believes in the obligation of ruling by what Allah has revealed and knows it in this particular case, and deliberately turns away from it while admitting that he deserves punishment – then he is a sinner and is called a kāfir either metaphorically (kufr majāzī) or minor kufr (kufr aṣghar).

And if he is ignorant of the ruling of Allah in the matter, despite exerting his effort and striving his utmost to know the ruling and then makes a mistake – then he is mistaken, rewarded for his ijtihād, and his mistake is forgiven.” (2)

And al-Albānī – may Allah have mercy on him – has a valuable article in this regard, published (3).

(1) Majmū‘ Fatāwā Ibn Bāz (1926, 193), and see: (2/326).

(2) Commentary on al-‘Aqidah al-Ṭahāwiyyah (p. 60 – al-Maktab al-Islāmī).

(3) The fatwa of the Shaykh – may Allah have mercy on him – was published in al-Muslimūn Newspaper on 15/1/1416 AH, Issue (557). See: Fatāwā al-A’immah fī al-Nawāzil al-Mudlimah, wa Tabri‘at Da‘wat wa Atbā‘ Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb min Tuhmat al-Tatarruf wal-Irhāb by Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn al-Qaḥṭānī (pp. 204–221 – al-Awfyā’).

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And it disturbed the sleep of the Takfiris, shook their entity, and increased them in affliction and shaking, that the article was read to the two shaykhs: Ibn Bāz and Ibn ‘Uthaymīn – may Allah have mercy on them both – and they approved it and praised it (1). Thus these three imams from the Imams of Ahl al-Sunnah agreed upon what was in that article of detail, and it goes back to what has preceded.

And I recommend reading the fatwa and article of Shaykh al-Albānī – may Allah have mercy on him – and placing it in the sermons, and explaining it to the general people; for indeed, in it is clarification of the knowledge that must be known, and the belief that must be believed, and what Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah are upon.

And the summary of what I have mentioned:

- That whoever rules by laws that oppose the Sharī‘ah of Allah while deeming that permissible and saying: “This is allowed”; then this is major disbelief (kufr akbar).
- And whoever rules by other than what Allah has revealed, from that which opposes the Sharī‘ah of Allah, believing that it is better than the Sharī‘ah of Allah, more suitable, and more just; then this is major disbelief.
- Likewise, if he believes that it equals the ruling of Allah, and that both achieve justice so they are the same; then this is major disbelief.
- But if he believes that the ruling of Allah is better, and that it is not permissible to rule by man-made laws that oppose the Sharī‘ah of Allah; yet he became weak and ruled by laws that oppose the Sharī‘ah of Allah; then this is a great sin, a tremendous crime, and a great danger, and he has fallen into disbelief, but it is not the disbelief that expels from the religion.

(1) See: Majmū‘ Fatāwā Ibn Bāz (9/124–127), and Fatāwā al-A‘immah fī al-Nawāzil al-Mudlahimmah (pp. 222–225).

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And pay attention here – may Allah protect you – that this detail is related to the belief of the hearts, and this no one knows except Allah. So as long as the one who rules has not explicitly declared what necessitates disbelief, then it is not permissible to transgress by declaring him a disbeliever.

Rather, we have already mentioned in the introductions that the foundation with the one who brings the two testimonies is Islam, and his Islam is not removed with doubt. So it is not for anyone to say: “Yes, this detail is correct, but our ruler falls under the categories of those who are disbelievers,” except if he himself explicitly states what is in his heart. But if he does not explicitly state it, then no – rather the Muslim is to be carried upon the best interpretations, as long as there is no clear evidence necessitating otherwise.

So observe – may Allah protect you – that all of the detail is built upon what is in the heart, and the heart no one has access to except Allah, and He is the One who will call the servants to account. As for us, we judge according to the outward, that he is a Muslim, and we carry him upon the continuation of Islam.

There remains in the issue of seeking judgment a matter that the scholars add; and that is: seeking judgment by that which contradicts the legislation of Allah in cases of necessity. Such as if a trader dealt with a trader from the disbelievers in their land, and the disbelieving trader denied him, and he is not able to retrieve his wealth except by seeking judgment in those courts in that disbelieving land.

Or like if a Muslim woman in a land of disbelief was abandoned by her husband, leaving her hanging, and the righteous spoke to him but he refused to divorce her, harming her thereby – then is it permissible for the Muslim, in a case of necessity, to seek judgment from one who rules by man-made laws that contradict the legislation of Allah? This the scholars have differed about.

And most of the scholars are of the view that it is permissible with conditions:

The first condition: that the harm of leaving arbitration is certain, not imagined.

The second condition: that the harm of leaving arbitration is great, not something bearable; meaning, for example: the dispute is not over

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thousands that the trader does not care about, but rather over harm and a great matter that is not usually bearable.

The third condition: that there is no way to remove the harm except by arbitration.

The fourth condition: that the one who seeks arbitration does not transgress his Sharʿī right; for indeed the man-made courts may rule and wrong, so it is not permissible for him to transgress in the ruling and take more than what he deserves. For example: his right is one hundred thousand, so the court rules for him with one million; then it is not permissible for him to take except the one hundred thousand.

This is the summary of what is related to this nullifier.

And the truth is that learning what is related to this nullifier in its correct manner is an obligation upon the students of knowledge in this time; in order to repel the transgression of the Takfīrīs upon the ruler and the ruled by takfīr, and considering the lands of the Muslims to be lands of war. For indeed these Takfīrīs, those who deceive the common people with emotions, and that they are establishing the Islamic Caliphate, and that they want to rule by what Allah has revealed – these consider the lands of the Muslims to be lands of war, and they deem their wealth, their lives, and their honours to be lawful. Rather, some of their seniors explicitly stated that Makkah and Madinah today are lands of war and not lands of Islam. So these are an evil upon themselves, an evil upon the Ummah, an evil upon individuals. And how many individuals they have wasted: a man in Europe accepts Islam, then the evildoers kidnap him, and they beautify for him that he should go to the lands of that gang; until he is taught hatred against the Ummah, and he is taught that Tawḥīd is reviling the rulers. To the extent that they take the young children of fathers who have newly accepted Islam, and they teach them harshness of the hearts, and they give the boy a knife so that he may slaughter with it the one who says at the time of his slaughter: Ash-hadu an lā ilāha ill-Allāh, wa ash-hadu anna Muḥammadan Rasūlullāh!

So standing in their faces is Jihād in the path of Allah, and nullifying their plotting is from the greatest obligations upon the students of knowledge.

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The fifth: Whoever hates anything of what the Messenger ﷺ came with – even if he acts upon it – has disbelieved by consensus.

And the evidence is His, the Most High's, statement:

“That is because they hate that which Allah has sent down, so He has made their deeds fruitless.” [Muḥammad: 9]

Explanation:

Indeed, what Muḥammad ﷺ came with in rulings, prescribed punishments, rights, and other matters is revealed from Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. Whoever hates what Allah has revealed has disbelieved, and his deeds are rendered null. Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said:

“But those who disbelieve (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism), for them is destruction, and (Allah) will make their deeds vain. That is because they hate that which Allah has sent down, so He has made their deeds fruitless.” [Muḥammad: 8–9]

So this verse indicates that hatred of what Allah has sent down is among the greatest characteristics of the disbelievers, and among the greatest reasons for which they disbelieved: that they hated what Allah revealed. This is from their misguidance and disbelief, so Allah rendered their deeds null because of their disbelief. This verse thus clearly indicates this great foundational principle.

So if this hatred is made explicit, articulated, and uttered – even alongside acting upon it – then this is disbelief of creed. For example, if he says: “I hate the cutting of the thief’s hand,” or “I hate the flogging of the fornicator,” or “I hate the stoning of the married adulterer” – then this is disbelief of creed.

And if this hatred is in the heart without being made explicit, even if he acts upon it – then this is hypocrisy in disbelief. Because he outwardly displays Islam, and he acts upon these matters, yet inwardly conceals disbelief, not showing what is in his heart of hatred – then this is hypocrisy in disbelief.

This is if he hated what the Prophet ﷺ came with.

As for if he disliked the action because his soul cannot bear it, or he disliked a specific person doing it because it opposes his desire; then this is not disbelief. For example, if a person disliked the cutting of the hand of the

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thief, not from the perspective of the cutting itself, but from the perspective that he cannot bear to witness this cutting, while his heart is content with the ruling of Allah and loving of the ruling of Allah, but he cannot bear to see this cutting. You say to him for example: “Come today, the hand of a thief will be cut off,” and he says: “No, I dislike this,” meaning: I dislike to see it, I cannot bear it!

Or for example: that a woman dislikes that her husband marries another wife over her; from the perspective that she loves her husband and does not want him to marry over her, not from the perspective of disliking and hating polygyny which Allah legislated, but from the perspective of her own desire — she wants her husband to be only for her; then this is not disbelief.

As for if she hated polygyny — and we seek refuge with Allah — from the perspective of it being polygyny itself; then this is from disbelief, and we seek refuge with Allah.

So it is obligatory to differentiate between disliking and hating what Muhammad ﷺ came with from the perspective that it is what Muhammad came with, from its essence, and from the perspective of it being legislation, and between the dislike for a matter external to that, not from what Muhammad ﷺ came with. So one must not confuse between matters. For it has reached me that some husbands say to their wives: “If you dislike my marriage to another, then you are a disbeliever, because whoever hates what Muhammad ﷺ came with is a disbeliever!” And this is not correct, and it is dangerous upon the one who says it, that he applies the legislation of Allah in other than its rightful application.

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The sixth: Whoever mocks anything of the religion of the Messenger, or the reward of Allah, or His punishment; has disbelieved. The evidence is His statement, the Most High:

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

Explanation:

Mocking, scoffing, and belittling anything that the Prophet ﷺ came with, and it is known to be established no matter what it is, is disbelief that expels from the religion. So whoever mocked the Qur’an, and scoffed at the Qur’an, or mocked the religion, or mocked the Prophet ﷺ, even one of his characteristics—for example, whoever mocked the thick beard while knowing that the Prophet ﷺ had a thick beard, and the one who says: “The beard is filth, contrary to civilization, and the action of cavemen,” while knowing that the Prophet ﷺ had a thick beard—then this is major disbelief that expels from the religion.

Likewise, mocking Paradise, or mocking the Fire, or mocking any type of the delights of the people of Paradise, such as mocking the ḥūr al-‘īn, or mocking a type of punishment that is established in the Fire—and we seek refuge in Allah—then indeed this is disbelief. And this does not come from a heart that magnifies Allah, and magnifies the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and magnifies the religion of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. And it is from the disbelief of the hypocrites, as Allah the Mighty and Majestic said:

“The hypocrites fear lest a Sūrah should be revealed about them, showing them what is in their hearts. Say: (Go ahead and) mock! But certainly Allah will bring to light all that you fear.” [At-Tawbah: 64]

They mock the religion of Allah, the Book of Allah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and the people of Islam, and this is what you do secretly: “Certainly Allah will bring to light all that you fear.”

And this is not permissibility; rather it is a threat, Allah informs them that He knows what is in their hearts, and He knows of their conditions when they are alone with their devils, mocking the religion of Allah and the

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Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and the Qur'an, and He threatens them that He will expose them and make manifest their condition which they conceal.

“And if you ask them (about this), they declare: ‘We were only talking idly and joking.’” — meaning: if you became aware of their mockery and ridicule of the religion and its people from the perspective of religion, they would excuse themselves and say: we do not believe this, we are believers, but we were only engaging in the speech of people, passing time, and playing and entertaining ourselves. “Say: ‘Was it at Allah, and His Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger ﷺ that you were mocking? Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed. If We pardon some of you, We will punish others amongst you because they were Mujrimûn (disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, criminals, etc.)’” [At-Tawbah: 65–66].

And it has been reported: “That a man in the battle of Tabuk said one day in a gathering: ‘I have not seen the like of these reciters of ours: more desirous of stomachs’” — he was mocking them with regard to their righteousness and religiosity — “nor more lying in tongues, nor more cowardly at meeting the enemy.” So a man in the gathering said: “You have lied, rather you are a hypocrite,” because the companions knew that such a thing does not emanate from a believer, and this man outwardly shows faith, yet he says this statement! “I will surely inform the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.” So this reached the Prophet ﷺ, and the Qur'an was revealed — meaning the verses.

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar said: “So I saw him clinging to the strap of the camel of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ” — i.e., the belt — “while the stones were striking him and he was saying: ‘O Messenger of Allah, we were only talking idly and joking.’ And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was saying: ‘Was it at Allah, and His Ayat, and His Messenger ﷺ that you were mocking?’” (1).

(1) Reported by al-Ṭabarī in Tafsīr (11/543–544), and Ibn Abī Ḥātim in Tafsīr (6/1829), from Ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both).

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And this story has different wordings, and it is authentic, narrated by Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, and others (1). And it was mentioned by the muḥaddith of Yemen and the reformer in its lands; the ḥāfiz, the scholar, the ascetic, the pious: Shaykh Muqbil al-Wādīī – may Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, have mercy on him and all the scholars of the Muslims – in his book: al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Musnad min Asbāb al-Nuzūl (2).

And Allah, the Most High, said: “And We send not the Messengers except as givers of glad tidings and warners. And those who disbelieve dispute with false argument, in order to refute the truth thereby. And they take My Ayāt (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), and that with which they are warned, for mockery!” [Al-Kahf: 56].

This is something by which the disbelievers disbelieved; that they took the Ayāt of Allah, that which was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ, and that with which they were warned – this threat from Allah – they took it as mockery. So this is something by which the disbelievers disbelieved. This indicates a clear proof that whoever mocks anything from the religion has invalidated his Islām or has exposed his hypocrisy, if the mockery is directed at the religion or the righteous people because of the religion.

As for mocking individuals, then this is fusūq (sinful disobedience). And the Prophet ﷺ said: “Insulting a Muslim is fusūq.” (3).

Meaning: if a person comes and mocks the beard, and ridicules it, and writes words mocking the beard – if his mockery of the beard is of the action itself, while knowing that it is established in the Sharī‘ah, then this is kufr.

But if his mockery is of the beard of a particular person – attributed to so-and-so – not from the perspective of the action itself, then this is fusūq and not kufr.

(1) Narrated by al-Ṭabarī in Tafsīr (11/545) from Muḥammad ibn Ka‘b and others, with a weak chain. And narrated by al-Ṭabarī (11/543) from Zayd ibn Aslam, with a weak chain. And narrated by ‘Abd al-Razzāq in Tafsīr (2/158), and al-Ṭabarī (11/545), and Ibn Abī Ḥātim (6/1830), with authentic chains from Qatādah; mursal.

(2) Reported in (pp. 108–109, Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah) from the narration of Ibn ‘Umar – may Allah be pleased with them both – and he said afterwards: “The men of this ḥadīth are the men of al-Ṣaḥīḥ, except Hishām ibn Sa‘d; Muslim only narrated from him in the shawāhid as in al-Mizān. And al-Ṭabarī narrated it through his route (vol. 10, p. 172). And it has a witness with a good chain with Ibn Abī Ḥātim (vol. 4, p. 64) from the narration of Ka‘b ibn Mālik.”

(3) Narrated by al-Bukhārī (48), and Muslim (64), from the ḥadīth of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd – may Allah be pleased with him.

Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The seventh: Magic (sorcery) – and from it: aṣ-Ṣarf (sorcery of separation: causing division between those who love one another, whether they are spouses or friends) and al-‘Aṭf (sorcery of attachment: causing love, such as making a husband love his wife, or even between non-spouses, like a young man becoming attached to another man through sorcery). So whoever does it or is pleased with it; he has disbelieved. And the evidence is His saying, the Most High:

“But neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, ‘We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)’” [al-Baqarah: 102].

Explanation:

This nullifier from the nullifiers of Islam occurs frequently among the Muslims; therefore, it must be clarified and warned against. So the Shaykh (may Allah, the Almighty and Majestic, have mercy on him) mentioned it among the ten nullifiers which are the most harmful nullifiers and the most frequent in occurrence. This was from his eagerness (may Allah, the Almighty and Majestic, have mercy on him) to warn the Ummah against that which destroys their religion and nullifies the foundations of their īmān. And this was his constant way (may Allah, the Almighty and Majestic, have mercy on him).

And what is meant by siḥr (magic) here: are the knots and the incantations in which blowing is done, and which have an effect on the hearts and the bodies by the universal will of Allah (1).

And magic is of types, and what the Shaykh intended here is a specific type of magic; which is the magic that occurs by means of knots, incantations, and spells upon which blowing is done, and wherein help is sought from the devils. So they affect the hearts and the bodies by the universal will of Allah. And this magic is major disbelief which expels from Islam (2); because in it there is seeking nearness to the jinn by the sorcerer and the bewitched. For the sorcerer does not achieve his request and goal from the jinn except by drawing near to them.

(1) See: al-Mughnī (9/28), and al-Iqnā‘ fi Fiqh al-Imām Aḥmad (4/307).

(2) See: al-Mughnī (9/29–30), Taysīr al-‘Azīz al-Ḥamīd (1/779–780), and Aḍwā’ al-Bayān of ash-Shinqīṭī (4/50 – al-Fikr).

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And that is why it is predominant upon the sorcerers to be filthy and dirty in their bodies and in their homes, because they seek nearness to the jinn by this, in addition to what they slaughter for them as well, even if it is from that which has no benefit and is not eaten, like flies and the like; because what is intended is the intention of the heart. And it may even be demanded from the sorcerer – and we seek refuge with Allah – that he urinates upon the Muṣḥaf or something like that.

Likewise, the one who is bewitched is requested to draw near to the jinn by a specific slaughter, or by a specific action, and this is major disbelief. And Allah the Almighty said:

“They followed what the Shayâtîn (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulaimân (Solomon). Sulaimân did not disbelieve, but the Shayâtîn (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Hârût and Mârût, but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, ‘We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us).’ And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah’s Leave. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not. And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter.” [Al-Baqarah: 102].

So this verse clarified that the mentioned magic is disbelief in Allah, the Almighty; for indeed it is from the disbelief of the devils, and from the teaching of the devils who are disbelievers. “And they (the angels) never taught anyone until they had said, ‘We are only for trial, so disbelieve not.’” – so this indicates that learning magic is disbelief, even if he does not act upon it. And acting upon magic is disbelief, because it only occurs after learning it and drawing near to the devils, and refuge is sought with Allah.

“And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife.” – and this is Siḥr al-Ṣarf (sorcery of separation between those who love one another; whether they are spouses or friends). “But they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah’s Leave.” – so reliance must be upon Allah, the Exalted. “And they learn that which harms them and profits them not.” – and this only occurs in disbelief, for it is that which is harmful without benefit. “And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter.” – and this also indicates the disbelief of the magician, whether as a learner or as a practitioner.

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And sorcery is of many kinds, but the most frequent sorcery is Siḥr al-‘Aṭf and Siḥr al-Şarf.

So Siḥr al-‘Aṭf (1) (sorcery of attachment: causing love, such as making a husband love his wife – for example – and it may occur between non-spouses, like a young man loving another man and becoming attached to him by way of sorcery): this has been seen and known.

And Siḥr al-Şarf (2) (sorcery of separation: causing division between those who love one another, whether they are spouses or friends): this is the most frequent sorcery among the Muslims.

So whoever does sorcery has committed major disbelief (kufr akbar).

And whoever is pleased with sorcery – like the one for whom sorcery is done – if he is pleased with the sorcery, even if he did not draw near to the devils, then he disbelieves; because the one who causes the act is like the one who does it. For the one for whom sorcery is done requests sorcery from the sorcerer, and the sorcerer disbelieves in Allah by this, and draws near to the devils. So even if the one for whom sorcery is done does nothing other than request it, he has approved of it and caused it, and by this he has committed major disbelief.

I say this, because some ignorant people say: “We do not do anything that angers Allah, and we do not slaughter anything for the devils.” We say: as long as you requested sorcery from the sorcerer, then you have caused it and approved of it, and the one who causes sorcery is like the one who does it – he commits major disbelief – and the one who is pleased with it, who does not reject it nor repel it, is like the one who does it, even if he did not request it nor perform it.

So it is obligatory upon the Muslim to beware of sorcery and sorcerers, and to put his trust in Allah, the Most Glorified, the Most High.

(1) See: Fatāwā wa Rasā’il of Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm (1/163 – Maṭba‘at al-Ḥukūmah); Majmū‘ Fatāwā of Ibn Bāz (8/81); and I‘ānat al-Mustafid of Şāliḥ al-Fawzān (1/151).

(2) See: Fatāwā wa Rasā’il of Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm (1/163 – Maṭba‘at al-Ḥukūmah); Majmū‘ Fatāwā of Ibn Bāz (8/81); and I‘ānat al-Mustafid of Şāliḥ al-Fawzān (1/151).

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The eighth: Supporting the polytheists and helping them against the Muslims.

And the evidence is His saying, the Most High:

“And if any amongst you takes them (as Auliyā’), then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allah guides not those people who are the Zālimūn (polytheists and wrong-doers and unjust).” [Al-Mā’idah: 51]

Explanation:

The eighth nullifier: Supporting the polytheists.

Supporting the polytheists is taking them as allies. And al-tawallī is aiding them and helping them against the Muslims from the angle of their being disbelievers. This is the support. And its wording implies loving the dominance of the disbelievers over the Muslims, and loving the dominance of the religion of the disbelievers over the religion of the Muslims.

Supporting the disbelievers with this meaning is major disbelief by consensus of the Muslims (1). And it is in opposition and hostility and a rejection of what Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, willed for the religion of the Muslims.

Allah, the Most High, said:

“It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islām), that He may make it (Islām) superior over all religions even though the Mushrikūn (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) hate (it).” [At-Tawbah: 33]

So this indicates that whoever hates the dominance of Allah’s religion is a polytheist, a disbeliever. Then how about the one who loves the dominance of the religion of the disbelievers over the religion of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic? There is no doubt that he disbelieves with major disbelief.

(1) See: Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī (5/315) and (8/508), al-Muḥallā by Ibn Ḥazm (12/125 – al-Fikr), Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī (6/217), Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā by Ibn Taymiyyah (28/531), al-Durar al-Saniyyah (8/159 and 8/326), al-Mawrid al-‘Adhb al-Zulāl fī Kashf Shubuhāt Ahl al-Ḍalāl by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥasan Āl al-Shaykh (pp. 291–292 – al-‘Āṣimah), Aḍwā’ al-Bayān (1/413), Majmū‘ Fatāwā Ibn Bāz (1/269 – al-Shuway‘ir), and Majmū‘ Fatāwā wa-Rasā’il Ibn ‘Uthaymīn (25/423).

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And Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said:

“And if any amongst you takes them (as Auliyā’), then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allah guides not those people who are the Zālimūn (polytheists and wrong-doers and unjust).” [Al-Mā’idah: 51]

And al-ẓulm (oppression) here is the greatest oppression, and it is disbelief, like His saying, the Most High:

“Verily, joining others in worship with Allah is a great ẓulm (wrong) indeed.” [Luqmān: 13]

So this indicates that the one who takes the disbelievers as allies, with the meaning that we mentioned, is a disbeliever, and that he is from the people of the greatest oppression, and it is shirk with Allah, the Glorified and Exalted.

As for supporting the disbelievers with a type of support that is not for their religion, and without loving the appearance of their religion, but rather for a desire or worldly matter that a person hopes for; then this is a great crime and a major sin, but it is not disbelief that expels from the religion (1).

The evidence for this is what came from ‘Alī (may Allah be pleased with him), he said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent me, along with Az-Zubayr and Al-Miqdād ibn Al-Aswad, and he said: ‘Go forth until you come to Rawdat Khākh, for indeed there is a woman traveler there, and with her is a letter, so take it from her.’ So we set out riding quickly on our horses until we reached the garden, and behold, we were with the woman. We said: ‘Bring out the letter.’ She said: ‘I do not have a letter’ – she denied the letter. So we said: ‘You will surely bring out the letter, or we will remove the clothes,’ meaning: we were certain that the letter existed, because the report of the Prophet ﷺ is truthful. So either you bring the letter to us by choice, or we will strip you of your clothes to take it.” He said: “So she brought it out from her hair braid – that is, from her hair – and we brought it to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Behold, in it was (a letter) from Hātib ibn Abī Balta’ah – and he was a Companion (may Allah be pleased with him) – to some of the polytheists from the people of Makkah, informing them of some of the matter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ,” meaning: informing them of the plan of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ regarding the conquest of Makkah.

(1) See: Al-Umm by Ash-Shāfi‘ī (4/264 – Al-Ma‘rifah), Ahkām al-Qur’ān by Ibn al-‘Arabī (4/225 – Al-‘Ilmiyyah), Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī (18/52), Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā by Ibn Taymiyyah (7/522, 523), Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah (1/473, 474; 8/159, 160), Miṣbāh az-Ẓalām fī radd ‘alā man kadhaba ‘alā ash-shaykh al-imām (p. 99 – Al-Wizārah).

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He ﷺ said: “O Hātib! What is this?” So he inquired in detail. And this is the first evidence that not every support of the disbelievers is absolute disbelief; for if the matter were disbelief unrestrictedly, the Prophet ﷺ would not have inquired. He (Hātib) said: “O Messenger of Allah, do not rush against me. Indeed, I was a man attached to Quraysh – meaning: I was not from them, nor from their origin – and those who were with you from the Muhājirīn had relatives in Makkah who would protect their families and their wealth. So I loved, since I had no lineage with them, to take a hand with them that they would protect my relatives.”

Then let us look at what Hātib said; he said: “And I did not do it as disbelief, nor apostasy, nor as approval of disbelief after Islam – meaning: O Messenger of Allah, I did not send it to them out of approval of disbelief, nor apostasy, but I hoped for this matter, which is to take a hand with them, so if the affair was for you – and that is what is established in the soul – then all praise is due to Allah, and if the affair was against you, then I had taken a hand with them to protect my relatives, my family, and my wealth in Makkah.” So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Indeed, he has told you the truth” – that he did not do that as disbelief, nor apostasy, nor as approval of disbelief.

This indicates that not every support for the disbelievers is disbelief. Ḥāṭib (may Allah be pleased with him) supported the disbelievers with a type of support, which was informing them of the plan of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and this – as it is said – weakens the position of the Prophet. And indeed, the Prophet ﷺ, when he intended to march against a people, he would conceal (his real intention) so as to surprise them (1).

(1) Reported by al-Bukhārī (2948), and Muslim (2769), from Ka‘b ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ rarely intended to go on a military expedition except that he would conceal (his real intention) with other than it.”

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So Ḥāṭib (may Allah be pleased with him) sent to them with this news, and in this there was a type of support against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and those with him from the Companions. And yet, when Ḥāṭib said: “I did not do that as disbelief, nor apostasy, nor approval of disbelief,” the Prophet ﷺ said: “Indeed he has told you the truth.” ‘Umar said: “O Messenger of Allah, let me strike the neck of this hypocrite.” He said: “Indeed he witnessed Badr, and what will make you know, perhaps Allah has looked at the people of Badr and said: ‘Do whatever you like, for I have forgiven you.’” Agreed upon (1).

And this statement: “Perhaps Allah has looked at the people of Badr and said: ‘Do whatever you like, for I have forgiven you,’” indicates two matters:

- The first matter: That supporting (the disbelievers) not for the sake of their religion, but rather for worldly reasons or the like, is not disbelief. For if it had been disbelief, it would not have been forgiven — neither for the people of Badr nor for others. Rather it is only forgiven through repentance.
- The second matter: That this action, even though it was for the sake of the world and not disbelief, is still a great sin that requires forgiveness.

This clearly indicates that supporting (the disbelievers) not for their religion, nor because they are disbelievers, is not disbelief, but rather it is a grave sin. As for if someone helps the disbelievers against some Muslims for the benefit of the Muslims — rather, even for the benefit of others, from among the interests recognized in the Sharī‘ah — then this is not a sin at all. Rather it is something required, such as cooperation between states to capture criminals: thieves who steal in the lands of the Muslims, fraudsters who cheat Muslims and non-Muslims, these corrupt terrorists and destroyers who blow up the mosques of the Muslims, who lie in wait for the virtuous Muslims on the roads to the mosques to kill them, who break covenants and treaties, and who kill in the lands of the disbelievers after being given covenant and entering with a visa. And other than this from their actions. For all of these, cooperating with the disbelievers to remove their evil and to establish the general interest is not a sin at all, let alone disbelief. Rather, it is something required by the Sharī‘ah, for Allah does not like corruption.

(1) Reported by al-Bukhārī (3007) and Muslim (2494), from ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allah be pleased with him).

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Therefore, what these corrupters in the land promote—that the Islamic states assist the kuffār against them, and that this is disbelief and apostasy—is false. Rather, we say: this is not a sin at all; rather, this is required from the Muslim rulers: that they kill the Khawārij and prevent corruption and the corrupters. So if the Muslims are in need of assistance from the kuffār because these Khawārij and corrupters are not in the hands of the Muslims or are fortified with a strength that necessitates seeking assistance from the kuffār against them for the sake of the interest of the Muslims and repelling their corruption; then this is legislated, and there is no harm in it.

And it should be known that at-tawallī (التَّوَلَّى) [alliance / taking as patrons] is not the same as al-muwālāt (المُؤَالَاة) [loyalty / showing affection and closeness]. For at-tawallī (التَّوَلَّى) [alliance / taking as patrons] is an-nuṣrah (النُّصْرَة) [giving support and aid] (1), and its ruling is divided into these three rulings:

Supporting the disbelievers for the sake of their religion – and this is major disbelief.

Supporting the disbelievers for the sake of worldly matters; while hating their religion and hating its dominance – and this is a sin and a great crime.

(1) See: Tahdhīb al-Lughah by al-Azharī (15/325), Lisān al-‘Arab (15/408), al-Durar al-Saniyyah (8/422) and (15/479), and Majmū‘ Fatāwā of Ibn Bāz (18/235).

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Giving support and aid (nuṣrah – التُّصْرَة) to the disbelievers against some corrupt and criminal Muslims, for the sake of establishing benefit and repelling harm; this is legislated (mashrū‘ – مَشْرُوع), and not forbidden.

As for al-muwālāt (المُوَالَاة) [loyalty / showing affection and closeness], it is love and affection, and what may follow from that. And this has conditions (1):

- If the love of the disbeliever is because of his religion, and because he is a disbeliever — so he loves him because he is a disbeliever — then this is ḥarām and disbelief (kufr – كُفْر) that expels one from the religion; because loving the disbeliever for his disbelief is approval of his disbelief, beautifying his disbelief, rather even loving his disbelief — and this is disbelief. And upon this the texts that have been mentioned are to be carried.
- As for the natural love (maḥabbah ṭabī‘iyyah – مَحَبَّة طَبِيعِيَّة) that overwhelms the heart without one putting forth a cause for it; then the person is not taken to account for this at all. For example, a child loving his disbelieving father with the love of a child for a parent, while hating him for his disbelief; or a father loving his disbelieving child with the love of a parent for a child, while hating him for his disbelief; or a Muslim marrying a woman from the People of the Book — and this is permissible — and loving her with marital affection, while hating her for her disbelief. Then the person is not taken to account for this.
- As for the love that is other than this — meaning, not natural love — rather it is acquired love, and not because of religion; then this is prohibited (muḥarram – مُحَرَّم). So it is not permissible for a Muslim to love a disbeliever with heartfelt love because of worldly reasons or the like.

And love is different from showing love. For showing love outwardly — in speech or action — does not necessitate that there is love in the heart. For example, if the Muslim is in the lands of the disbelievers,

(1) See: Majmū‘ Fatāwā Ibn Taymiyyah (7/129, 522, 523); Miṣbāḥ al-Zalām (pp. 98–99); Fatāwā al-Lajnah al-Dā’imah (4/332, Fatwa no. 1851; 12/253–254, Fatwa no. 4214); Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-Thalāthah by Ibn ‘Uthaymīn (p. 36, al-Thurayyā).

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And he feared them and their evil, so he showed them love while his heart hated them; there is no harm upon him in that, because he is protecting himself from them out of out of precaution (taqiyyah), otherwise his heart hates them (1).

And if this is permissible for a personal interest, then likewise it is permissible for the general interest of the Ummah; such as if the Muslim ruler writes to a disbeliever that he loves him, or writes the phrase: “To our friend,” or something similar — as a form of diplomatic courtesy and words with the tongue, while his heart hates the disbelievers — then this is not disbelief, rather it is allowed when its reason exists.

And confusing between the matters has caused many of the youth to fall into the darkness of takfīr, and then into explosions and destruction. But if the matters are distinguished, and everything is placed in its proper place, the situations will become upright, and the religion will remain safe.

(1) See: Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī (5/315–318), Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr (2/230 – Salāmah ed.), Al-Durar al-Saniyyah (8/123, 124, 144–145), and Aḍwā’ al-Bayān (1/413).

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The ninth: Whoever believes that some people are permitted to leave the Sharī‘ah of Muḥammad ﷺ, just as al-Khiḍr was permitted to leave the Sharī‘ah of Mūsā (peace be upon him), then he is a disbeliever.

Explanation:

Allah sent the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ to all mankind, as Allah the Mighty and Majestic said: “Say (O Muḥammad ﷺ): ‘O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah’” [Al-A‘rāf: 158].

Rather, He sent him to the jinn and mankind, as Allah the Mighty and Majestic said: “And We have sent you (O Muḥammad ﷺ) not but as a mercy for the ‘Ālamīn (mankind, jinn and all that exists)” [Al-Anbiyā’: 107], meaning: for the jinn and mankind (1).

And the Prophet ﷺ said: “The Prophet used to be sent to his people in particular, but I have been sent to all mankind.” Agreed upon (2).

So the Prophets – peace be upon them – before the Prophet ﷺ, each one of them used to be sent only to his people in particular.

As for the Prophet ﷺ, he was sent to all mankind: their white and their black, their Arabs and their non-Arabs, those among them who were Jews, Christians, Buddhists, or other than that. All of them the Prophet ﷺ was sent to, and it is obligatory upon them to follow him and to enter into his religion.

(1) Reported by al-Ṭabarī in Tafsīr (1/145, 146 – Hijr), its chain authenticated by Aḥmad Shākir (al-Risālah 1/144), al-Ḥākim no. (3021), Ibn Abī Ḥātim in Tafsīr (1/28 – al-Bāz), al-Firyābī, ‘Abd ibn Ḥumayd, and Ibn al-Mundhir, as in ad-Durr al-Manthūr (1/33), through various chains from Ibn ‘Abbās regarding His saying: “Lord of the ‘Ālamīn” [Al-Fātiḥah: 2], he said: “the jinn and mankind.” Ibn Abī Ḥātim authenticated it, as in ad-Durr al-Manthūr.

(2) Reported by al-Bukhārī (335), and similarly by Muslim (521), from Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh (may Allah be pleased with him).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

Thus, it has been reported from Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, that he said: “By Him (Allah) in Whose Hand Muḥammad’s soul is, there is none from this Ummah (nation) – meaning: Ummah of Da‘wah (those to whom the message of Islām is conveyed) – be he a Jew or a Christian, who hears of me, and then dies without believing in that with which I have been sent, except that he will be from the dwellers of the Fire.” Reported by Muslim (1).

So Judaism will not benefit the Jew after the sending of Muḥammad ﷺ – even if it had not been distorted – then how is it when it has been distorted?! Rather, it is obligatory upon him to believe in him as soon as he hears of the Prophet ﷺ, otherwise he will be from the people of the Fire.

And likewise Christianity will not benefit the Christian after the sending of the Prophet ﷺ – even if it had not been distorted – then how is it when it has been distorted?! Rather, it is obligatory upon him, if he hears of the Prophet ﷺ, that he follows him and enters into his religion, otherwise he will be from the disbelievers who will abide eternally in the Fire.

Accordingly, whoever believes that any person – whether he calls him a walī (saint), or a shaykh, or a quṭb (pole) – is not obligated to follow the Prophet ﷺ, and that it is permitted for him to leave the Sharī‘ah of Muḥammad ﷺ, and abandon the religious obligations, and that the duties have fallen from him because he has “reached” (a so-called spiritual station) – then he has lied and disbelieved (2), and he has belied the Qur’an and the Sunnah.

And this is the reason why the Shaykh mentioned this nullifier here, because among the Muslims who ascribe themselves to Islām are those who believe that the shaykh of the ṭarīqah (Sufi order) does not have the ḥarām prohibited for him, and that the obligatory is not obligatory upon him, and that he is not bound to act upon the Sharī‘ah of Muḥammad ﷺ! And this is major disbelief – and we seek refuge with Allah – which expels one from the religion of Islām (3).

(1) Ḥadīth (153).

(2) See: Ash-Shifā’ (2/613), Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (3/422) and (11/539), al-Iqnā‘ (4/298, 299), and al-Mi‘yār al-Mu‘rab of al-Wansharīsī (2/513, 514 – Moroccan Ministry of Endowments).

(3) See: Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (11/417).

He (may Allah have mercy upon him) said:

The tenth: Turning away from the religion of Allah, the Most High; not learning it and not acting upon it. And the evidence is His saying, the Most High: “And who does more wrong than he who is reminded of the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of his Lord, then he turns aside therefrom? Verily, We shall exact retribution from the Mujrimun (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, etc.)” [As-Sajdah].

Explanation:

This tenth and last nullifier is related to the disbelief of turning away.

And the disbelief of turning away means: that he turns away from the religion completely; he neither learns it nor acts upon it. Or he turns away from the Prophet ﷺ completely; so he says: “I do not affirm him nor do I deny him,” and he does not listen to his news, so he turns away from him completely with his hearing and heart. As Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “The disbelief of turning away is that he turns away with his hearing and heart from the Messenger; he does not affirm him nor deny him, nor ally with him nor show enmity to him, and he does not incline to what he came with at all.” (1)

And likewise from the disbelief of turning away: turning away from Tawheed; he neither learns it nor acts upon it. He does not accept it, nor turn towards it, nor listen to the evidences for it from the Book and the Sunnah, so he refuses this and turns away. And he also does not learn Shirk, especially if he is falling into it; rather, he turns away from learning. All of this is from the disbelief of turning away. (2)

(1) Madārij as-Sālikīn (1/347 – al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī).

(2) See: ad-Durar as-Saniyyah (1/102), Majmū‘ Fatāwā Ibn Bāz (4/26–27), and Majmū‘ Fatāwā Ibn ‘Uthaymīn (2/126–127).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

As for if he turns away from some of the religion after its foundation has been established; so he turned away from learning some rulings, and did not learn them and did not act upon them; without denying what is known; then this is a sin and not disbelief that takes him out of the religion of Islam. And attention must be given to this; not every turning away is a nullifier; and for this reason the Shaykh said: “Turning away from the religion of Allah; not learning it and not acting upon it.”

And the evidence that this is disbelief was mentioned by the Shaykh in the saying of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic:

“And who does more wrong than he who is reminded of the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of his Lord, then turns aside therefrom? Verily, We shall exact retribution from the Mujrimun (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners)” [As-Sajdah: 22].

So there is none more unjust; meaning: he is in the utmost injustice, and the one in the utmost injustice is the disbeliever, the polytheist with Allah; He, the Most High, said:

“Verily, joining others in worship with Allah is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed” [Luqman: 13].

So the one who turns away from the verses of Allah completely; not learning them and not acting upon them: is a disbeliever, unjust. And likewise, the one who turns away from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as we have described, or turns away from Tawheed, and refuses to learn it and act upon it, then all of this – and refuge is sought with Allah – is from disbelief.

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

And there is no difference in all of these nullifiers between the one who does it in jest, or the one who does it seriously, or the one who does it out of fear; except the one who is compelled (1).

Explanation:

The Shaykh says: Indeed these nullifiers, there is no difference in them – if a person does them – between:

- The one who does them deliberately, and deliberateness requires knowledge and intent, so he is knowing and intending. These ten nullifiers, whoever does them knowingly and intentionally – that is, deliberately – then he disbelieves.
- Or the one who does them in jest, and the one in jest is the one who understands the meaning, knows it, and intends it; however, he takes it out of seriousness. Like when he says to his wife: “You are divorced.” Then when we asked him: Did you know that this is divorce? He said: Yes, I know; but I did not intend divorce, I was only joking with her. We said: Did you intend the meaning? He said: Yes; but as a form of jest! This one is not excused, rather his divorce is valid, even if he was jesting and joking.

And we mentioned this example to clarify the meaning of jesting. So the one who knows disbelief, and intends its meaning; however, he takes it out of the realm of seriousness into the realm of jest – he is not excused, rather he disbelieves, and refuge is sought with Allah (2).

- Or the one who does them out of fear; that is, he commits one of these nullifiers out of fear, but not the fear of compulsion. What is intended by fear here is psychological fear, not compulsion.

(1) I’lām al-Muwaqqi’in (3/55 – al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah).

(2) Al-Mughnī (9/28).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

As for if he does it under compulsion, and compulsion occurs upon action and speech, but it cannot occur upon the heart. For that reason Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said: “Except him who is forced thereto and whose heart is at rest with Faith” [An-Naḥl: 106]. So if a person is compelled with a real compulsion – not imagined – with a great matter; such as being killed or his honour violated or the like of this, and he does not find a way of escape from this except by responding, so he responded – that is: he said disbelief or did disbelief – while his heart hates this statement and action, and his heart is at rest with īmān; then this does not make him a disbeliever.

For example – and we seek refuge with Allah – if a Muslim is threatened with death unless he reviles the Messenger, as occurred with ‘Ammār (may Allah be pleased with him) with the disbelievers of Quraysh, so he reviled the Messenger ﷺ while his heart hated this and his heart was at rest with īmān; then this does not nullify his īmān and does not harm him. Rather, as the Prophet ﷺ said: “If they return [to torturing you], then return [to saying what saves you].” (1)

(1) Reported by ‘Abd al-Razzāq in Tafsīr (2/275), and from him Ishāq ibn Rāhawayh (12/350, no. 2901 – al-Maṭālib al-‘Āliya), and Ibn Sa‘d in aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā (3/249 – Ṣādir), and at-Ṭabarī in Tafsīr (14/374), and Abū Nu‘aym in Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’ (1/140); from Abū ‘Ubaydah ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir; with it. Al-Ḥāfiẓ said in al-Faḥḥ (12/312): “It is mursal, and its narrators are trustworthy.”

And it was also reported by Musaddad (14/759, no. 3646 – al-Maṭālib al-‘Āliya) from the route of Ismā‘īl ibn Muslim, from Abū al-Mutawakkil an-Nāji; mursal, with its meaning, and in it is the story. As-Suyūṭī attributed it in ad-Durr al-Manthūr (5/171) to Ibn al-Munḍir and Ibn Mardawayh, and the verifier of al-Maṭālib al-‘Āliya authenticated its chain.

And the story of ‘Ammār was also narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās with a weak isnād, and from ash-Sha‘bī, Qatādah, Ibn Sīrīn, Abū Mālik, al-Ḥakam, and as-Suddī. See: Tafsīr at-Ṭabarī (14/374–375), Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr (4/605), and ad-Durr al-Manthūr (5/170).

And the two Imāms Yaḥyá ibn Ma‘īn and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal used as proof the story of ‘Ammār (may Allah be pleased with him), as in Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah by Ibn Abī Ya‘lá (1/404), and Manāqib al-Imām Aḥmad by Ibn al-Jawzī (p. 523 – Hijrah), and it was strengthened by al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar in al-Faḥḥ (12/312).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

As for if the heart is content; then there is no compulsion, because compulsion does not have authority over the heart. Who is it among mankind and the compellers that can look into the heart and what is within it?!

As for if the Muslim commits one of the nullifiers by mistake; then he does not disbelieve, due to the saying of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, in the blessed supplication of the believers:

“Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error” [Al-Baqarah: 286].

Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, said: “Yes”, as the Prophet ﷺ informed in the Ṣaḥīḥ (1). And in another narration (2): Allah said: “I did.”

And from that is what Muslim narrated (3) from Anas ibn Mālīk (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“Allah is more pleased with the repentance of His slave when he turns towards Him in repentance than one of you who was upon his riding animal in a waterless desert and it escapes from him, and upon it was his food and drink. So he despaired of it, and then he came to a tree and lay in its shade having despaired of his riding animal. Then suddenly it was there in front of him, standing by him. So he took hold of its reins, then he said out of extreme joy: ‘O Allah! You are my slave and I am Your Lord.’ He erred due to extreme joy.”

Meaning: He intended to say: “O Allah! You are my Lord and I am Your slave,” intending thereby to give thanks for the great blessing, but out of extreme joy he erred and said: “O Allah! You are my slave and I am Your Lord.”

The Prophet ﷺ said: “He erred due to extreme joy.”

(1) Narrated by Muslim, no. (125), from Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him).

(2) Narrated by Muslim, no. (126), from Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with them both).

(3) Narrated by Muslim, no. (2747).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

And likewise, if he does something from the nullifiers of Islam while being heedless, with his mind overwhelmed, then he does not disbelieve. For in the two Ṣaḥīḥs (1), from Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), from the Prophet ﷺ, he said: “There was a man who used to be excessive upon himself (i.e., with many sins). When death approached him, he said to his sons: ‘When I die, burn me, then crush me, then scatter me in the wind. For by Allah, if my Lord is able over me, He will punish me with a punishment that He has not punished anyone with.’” As though he thought here that if he were burned, crushed, and scattered in the air so that he dispersed within it, Allah would not be able to gather him and resurrect him – and this, if someone believed it, would be disbelief –. “When he died, they did that to him. So Allah ordered the earth, and said: ‘Gather what is in you of him.’ So it did, and behold, he was standing. Allah said: ‘What caused you to do what you did?’ He said: ‘My fear of You, O Lord.’ So He forgave him. And another narrator said: ‘My fear of You, O Lord.’” Meaning: his fear intensified upon him at the approach of death until it bewildered him, so he said what he said, so Allah forgave him. And if this had been disbelief along with the bewilderment of his mind, it would not have been forgiven him; because Allah says:

“Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship).” [al-Nisā’: 48].

Likewise, when the mind is overwhelmed, such as when a person becomes angry to the extent that he is overcome in his mind, so he no longer distinguishes or comprehends due to the severity of his anger; so he insults Allah, or insults His Messenger ﷺ, or insults the religion – then he does not disbelieve by this as long as he was overwhelmed in his mind.

There remains a great issue which revolves much upon the tongues, and it is:

The one who does a nullifier while being ignorant: and ignorance is the lack of knowledge – so is he excused?

I say: The scholars are agreed that whoever his ignorance is established, and his ignorance is not a mere claim, nor out of turning away; then he is excused and is not declared a disbeliever (2).

(1) Reported by al-Bukhārī (3481), and Muslim (2756).

(2) See: Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (11/407).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

And there is no difference among the people of knowledge in this principle. And Allah the Mighty and Majestic said:

“And We never punish until We have sent a Messenger (to give warning).” [al-Isrā’: 15].

So there is no punishment and no holding to account except after knowledge. So if he did not know, and his lack of knowledge was not out of turning away, then he is not punished nor held accountable.

And I say: Indeed, this is an area of agreement among the people of knowledge. Even those who are strict in the issue of the excuse of ignorance excuse in some cases, such as one who grew up in a desert far away from knowledge, or one who has newly accepted Islam (1), and then committed a nullifier; he is excused—not because of being in the desert, nor because he newly accepted Islam—but because his ignorance is real and not a mere claim.

Therefore, we say: what revolves of disagreement is only regarding the verification of ignorance, not ignorance itself. So whenever ignorance is verified and it is not due to turning away, then the scholars agree upon the excuse of ignorance.

And Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb has much speech regarding the excuse of ignorance (2).

(1) See: Al-Muḥallā (12/135 – Al-Fikr), and Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (11/407).

(2) Previous references were already made to places in his books and the books of the Imāms of the da‘wah on p. 22. From that is his saying—as in Al-Durar al-Saniyyah (1/104):

“And if we do not declare the one who worships the idol that is upon ‘Abd al-Qādir (al-Jīlānī), and the idol that is upon the grave of Aḥmad al-Badawī, and their likes, to be disbelievers—because of their ignorance and the absence of one who warns them—then how can we declare a disbeliever the one who did not commit shirk with Allah, if he did not migrate to us, or did not declare takfīr and fight? Glorified be You (O Allah)! This is a great slander.”

And his saying in (10/113):

“As for what the enemies mentioned about me, that I declare takfīr based on suspicion and on mere alliance, or that I declare takfīr upon the ignorant one upon whom the proof has not been established; then this is a great slander. They only intend by it to drive people away from the religion of Allah and His Messenger.”

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

And it is possible to deliver a complete lecture on the excuse due to ignorance according to Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb. And he has clear and evident speech regarding the excuse due to ignorance. And whatever from his words might give the impression that he does not excuse due to ignorance; then it returns back to the lack of verification of ignorance, not to the essence of ignorance (1).

And the one who looks into the evidences and into the words of the scholars knows that no one is declared a disbeliever until the proof of the Message reaches him, in the manner that he understands, with the removal of the doubt. So there must be the establishment of the proof of “knowledge and clarification,” not the proof of mere submission. That which is indispensable is the proof of “knowledge and clarification,” which Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah expressed with this strong, firm wording: “the proof of the Message” (2), which is in the Book and the Sunnah, in the manner in which he understands it. So if the Qur’an were recited to a non-Arab who does not understand the Arabic language; the proof of the Message would not have been established upon him. Rather, I say: even if the Qur’an were recited today upon an Arab who barely understands the meanings of the Qur’an, then it is necessary that it be established in a way that he understands the intended meaning, with the removal of the doubt (3).

And the issues in this chapter are of two types:

Clear matters, in which ignorance is not conceivable, or ignorance therein is extremely unlikely (4); like the issue of reviling Allah, and worshipping those in the graves. So the foundation regarding these is the absence of ignorance. If someone claims that he is ignorant, we verify his matter, and we do not accept his claim in isolation. Then if it is verified to us that he is ignorant, we excuse him.

(1) See: Sharḥ Kashf al-Shubuhāt by Ibn ‘Uthaymīn (p. 35 – Al-Thurayyā).

(2) See: Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (3/229) and (12/493, 500).

(3) See: Al-Ajwibah wal-Buḥūth wal-Mudārasāt al-Mushtamilah ‘alayhā al-Durūs al-‘Ilmiyyah by Ṣāliḥ Āl al-Shaykh (1/40–41 – Al-Ḥijāz).

(4) See: Al-Risālah by al-Shāfi‘ī (p. 357), Al-Mughnī (2/329, 427, 428), Sharḥ Muslim by al-Nawawī (1/205), Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (4/54), Jāmi‘ al-‘Ulūm wal-Ḥikam (1/196), Al-‘Awāṣim wal-Qawāṣim by Ibn al-Wazīr (4/174 – Al-Risālah), Al-Durar al-Saniyyah (10/433, 355), Minhāj al-Tasīs wal-Taqdīs (p. 101, 320), Tuḥfat al-Ikhwān bi-Ajwibah Muhimmah Tata‘allaq bi-Arkān al-Islām by Ibn Bāz (pp. 47–48 – Al-Wizārah).

Explanation of Nawāqid al-Islām (The Nullifiers of Islam)

An example of that is: that some Muslims seek closeness to the people of the graves, and call upon other than Allah; but they believe that this is the religion, and they are ignorant that it is shirk. Rather, their scholars who teach them say to them: whoever does not believe in this and act upon it; then he is from the most disbelieving of the people of the earth!

And I have mentioned repeatedly: that I met a car driver in one of the countries, and he said: O Shaykh, by Allah, I spent years seeking closeness to the awliyā', calling upon other than Allah, and my mind was not at rest, but the shuyūkh said: this is Islam! So I used to force myself to believe, until the knowledge came to us from the students of the Islamic University, and they taught us tawḥīd, so I came to know tawḥīd, and I disassociated myself from shirk and its people; so this one was ignorant, and there is no doubt that such a one is excused.

Likewise; whoever we know, from the state of his country, ignorance of tawḥīd and knowledge of shirk, then we know that if he claims ignorance he is truthful; so this one is also excused.

As for the mere claim in these manifest issues, it is not accepted; because the foundation repels this claim and refuses it.

And as for the issues which may be hidden; then the foundation is ignorance of them, so whoever claims ignorance of them, we believe him, and we teach him, and we clarify for him (1).

And this division – I mean the apparent issues and the issues that may be hidden – differs in terms of its types from one country to another; for an issue may be apparent with us, but in another country it may be hidden (2). Therefore, it is obligatory upon the student of knowledge, when judging – if he is in need of that – to be a jurist in examining the types of issues, and not to transfer what is in one country to another country. And this is of great importance.

(1) See: *Al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām* by Ibn Ḥazm (1/149 – Shākir), and *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (4/54 and (6/60, 61), and *Al-Durar al-Saniyyah* (10/93), and *Minhāj al-Tasīs* (p. 101), and *Al-Ḍiyā' al-Shāriq* by Ibn Saḥmān (pp. 372, 373, and 384), and *Fatāwā al-Lajnah al-Dā'imah* (2/147, Fatwā no. 11043).

(2) See: *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (11/407–413).

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“And all of them are from the greatest of dangers, and from what occurs the most.”

Explanation:

This is a clarification of the reason for his choice of these ten nullifiers; that they are among the greatest in danger, and from what occurs the most.

So it is incumbent upon the Muslim to beware of them and to fear them for himself.

There is no doubt that the believer must beware of shirk, and must fear the trial; for indeed Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) used to beware of shirk and fear the trial, and it used to be from his supplication:

“And keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols” [Ibrāhīm: 35].

And this fear and caution requires from the person that he learns Tawḥīd, that he is keen upon it, that he rejoices in it wherever he finds it being taught, that he does not become bored of listening to its lessons, and that he knows shirk in detail in order to beware of it, and so that he does not fall into it.

So I ask Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, to aid us in carrying out the obligation, supporting Tawḥīd, spreading Tawḥīd, and being patient upon what befalls us in this path.

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

We seek refuge with Allah from that which necessitates His Anger, and His painful punishment. And may Allah's Ṣalāt be upon the best of His creation, Muḥammad, and upon his family and companions, and grant him peace.

Explanation:

With this, this treatise ends — short in wording, but great in meaning — which we are in need of reading, teaching, and clarifying its meanings in the correct way. For indeed, from the greatest harms afflicting the Ummah today is confusion in the matters of takfīr, whether in affirmation or in negation. So from the greatest forms of jihād is that we learn it, teach it, and clarify what the Shaykh intended by it.

We ask Allah to place in what we have mentioned in this explanation goodness and blessing, and to make it from that which brings us joy at His Meeting. And Allah knows best, and may Ṣalāt and Salām be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.



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- **The Fifth Nullifier:**

Whoever hates anything of what the Messenger ﷺ came with – even if he acts upon it – has disbelieved by consensus.

And the evidence is His, the Most High's, statement:

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- **The Sixth Nullifier:**

Whoever mocks anything of the religion of the Messenger, or the reward of Allah, or His punishment; has disbelieved.

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So whoever does it or is pleased with it; he has disbelieved.

And the evidence is His saying, the Most High:

“But neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, ‘We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us).’” [al-Baqarah: 102] page 90

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- **The Eighth Nullifier:**

Supporting the polytheists and helping them against the Muslims.

And the evidence is His saying, the Most High:

“And if any amongst you takes them (as Auliya’), then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allah guides not those people who are the Zālimūn (polytheists and wrong-doers and unjust).” [Al-Mā'idah: 51] page 93

- **The Ninth Nullifier:**

Whoever believes that some people are permitted to leave the Sharī'ah of Muḥammad ﷺ, just as al-Khiḍr was permitted to leave the Sharī'ah of Mūsā (peace be upon him), then he is a disbeliever page 100

- **The Tenth Nullifier:**

Turning away from the religion of Allah, the Most High; not learning it and not acting upon it.

And the evidence is His saying, the Most High:

“And who does more wrong than he who is reminded of the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of his Lord, then he turns aside therefrom? Verily, We shall exact retribution from the Mujrimun (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, etc.).” [As-Sajdah] page 102

- **He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:**

And there is no difference in all of these nullifiers between the one who does it in jest, or the one who does it seriously, or the one who does it out of fear; except the one who is compelled page 104

- **He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:**

“And all of them are from the greatest of dangers, and from what occurs the most.” page 111

- **Conclusion**..... page 112



Explanation of the Nullifiers of Islam

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