

## Comprehensive Warning against The Tribulation of Takfeer

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### The Basis of Disbelief:

Imaam Ibnul Qayyim al-Jawziyyah said:

"So whoever denies something the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) came with, after he realizes that he (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) came with it, then he is a disbeliever in the minor parts of the Religion as well as the major parts."<sup>1</sup>

In discussing the person who is undecided about the Attributes of Allaah such as Amazement, Laughter, and Descent, Imaam adh-Dhahabee said:

"Verily he only disbelieves after he realizes that the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said that, and then he denies it and does not believe in it."<sup>2</sup>

Imaam Abu Ja'afar at-Tahaawee said:

"No man can be a disbeliever when he is a Muslim and submits to and confesses Islaam. So likewise, his apostasy does not come about except by denial of Islaam."<sup>3</sup>

Haafidh al-Hakamee said:

"The basis of disbelief is denial and resistance accompanied by arrogance and sin."<sup>4</sup>

Imaam as-Sa'adee said:

"The general extent of disbelief for all of its people and its types and its individuals is denial (*jahd*) of what the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) came with or denial of some of it."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Mukhtaarus Sihaah* (p. 208) It should be noted that throughout this article, the Arabic word *hukm* is interchangeably translated as rule or judgement. This was done to make the translation more grammatically sound in the English language.

<sup>2</sup> *al-Uluww* (p. 214)

<sup>3</sup> *Mushkilul Aathaar* (4/228)

<sup>4</sup> *A'alaamus Sunnatil Manshoorah* (p. 175)

Imaam at-Tabaree said:

"So everyone who does not rule by what Allaah revealed by denying it, then he is a disbeliever as Ibn 'Abbaas said. Due to this, his denial of the Judgement of Allaah after knowing that He revealed it in His Book is equal to denying the prophethood of His Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) after knowing that he is His Prophet."<sup>6</sup>

### **The Dangers of Takfeer:**

Haafidh Ibn Hazm said:

"Disbelief is a characteristic of a person who denies something that Allaah the Exalted has obligated - after the proof has been established upon him by the truth reaching him - in his heart without his tongue or on his tongue without his heart or in both of them together or in doing an action - and a text has come indicating the name of *eemaan* (faith) leaves a person due to that."<sup>7</sup>

He also said:

"Whoever destroys all of his deeds, then he is a believer who is sinning, deficient in faith. He does not disbelieve."<sup>8</sup>

In his book *Ar-Rooh*, Ibnul Qayyim explained the categories of Judgement (*hukm*). After mentioning *al-Hukmul Manzool* (the Revealed Judgement) and *al-Hukmul Mu`awwal* (the judgement of the *Mujtahid Imaams*), he said:

"As for *al-Hukmul Mubaddal* (when a person changes the Revealed Judgement) - and it is ruling by other than Allaah - then it is not permissible to implement it nor to act upon it and following it is not permitted. The one who does it is between disbelief (*kufri*), corruption (*fisq*) and transgression (*dhulm*)."<sup>9</sup>

Shaykhul Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah and his student 'Allaamah Ibnul Qayyim both related that Imaam Ahmad was asked about the type of disbelief mentioned in the *aayah* *hukm* (the *aayah* of Judgement)<sup>10</sup> so he said:

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<sup>5</sup> *al-Irshaad ilaa Ma'arifatul Ahkaam* (p. 203)

<sup>6</sup> *Jaami'ul Bayaan* (10/358) Shaykh Mahmood Shaakir described this statement as the 'decisive statement' in his notes to at-Tabaree's *tafseer* (10/349).

<sup>7</sup> *al-Ihkaam Fee Usoolil Ahkaam* (1/49-50)

<sup>8</sup> *al-Muhallaa* (1/40)

<sup>9</sup> *ar-Rooh* (p. 655)

<sup>10</sup> "**And whoever does not judge by what Allaah revealed, then they are the disbelievers.**" [Sooratul Maa`idah 5:44]

"It is disbelief which does not expel one from the Religion. It is like faith in some matters to the exclusion of others. So disbelief is like that until something comes from that matter about which there is no difference."<sup>11</sup>

Imaam Ahmad also said:

"Nothing causes a man to leave Islaam except *shirk* with Allaah the Magnificent, or his rejection of an obligatory duty from the obligatory duties of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic by denying them."<sup>12</sup>

Imaam Ibn 'Abdil Barr said in explanation of the statement of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*): "If a man calls another a disbeliever, then indeed one of them disbelieves."<sup>13</sup>

"So the meaning of it according to the people of *fiqh* and narrations - *ahlus sunnah wal-jamaa'ah* - is that it is a prohibition for a Muslim to declare his brother Muslim to be a disbeliever due to his sins of result. According to the entire group, he does not leave Islaam. So the prohibition of the *takfeer* of a Muslim is mentioned in this *hadeeth* by a wording of news (*lafdhul khabar*) without a wording of prohibition (*lafdhun nahee*). So this is present in the *Qur`aan* and the *Sunnah* and is known in the language of the Arabs...

Indeed a group of the people of innovation from the *Khawaarij* and the *Mu'tazilah* deviated in this topic. So they use these narrations and their likes for the *takfeer* of the sinners.

So they seek proof from statements in the Book whose meaning are not their apparent sense, like His - the Mighty and Majestic - statement:

**"And whoever does not rule by what Allaah revealed, then these are the disbelievers."**

...Indeed there are found in the statements of verdicts (*aayaatul muhkamaat*) in the *Qur`aan* what prove that no one is declared a disbeliever except after knowledge and rejection. From this is the statement of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic:

**"O people of the Book, why do you cover the truth with falsehood and conceal the truth while you know?"**

and other than that.

So all of these principles testify that sins do not make one a disbeliever...So the *Qur`aan* and the *Sunnah* prohibit the *tafseeq* (accusing of *fisq*) of a Muslim and the *takfeer* of him without any ambiguity in them...

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<sup>11</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah related it in *Majmoo'ul Fataawaa* (7/254) and Ibnul Qayyim related it in *ar-Roo'h* (p. 59-60).

<sup>12</sup> *Tabaqaatul Hanaabilah* (1/341) of Ibn Abee Ya'ala

<sup>13</sup> Bukhaaree (no. 6104)

From the direction of correct insight which cannot be repelled, everyone who confirms the covenant of Islaam in time by consensus of the Muslims, then he commits sins or consequences - so they differ afterwards concerning his leaving Islaam - they cannot have any disagreement after their consensus. This means proof is obligatory and one who is agreed upon cannot leave Islaam except by another agreement or a confirmed *sunnah* that has not opposition to it. Indeed *Ahlu Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* - and they are the people of *fiqh* and narrations - have agreed that one does not leave due to his sins - even if they are great - from Islaam. However, the people of Innovation oppose them. So it is upon the one who has insight not to declare someone to be a disbeliever except the one upon whom everyone unites, or upon the one whose *takfeer* is proven without a doubt from the Book or the *Sunnah*.<sup>"14</sup>

Al-'Allamah Muhammad Rasheed Ridhaa said about the *aayatul hukm*:

"As for its apparent sense, then no one from the famous *Imaams* of *fiqh* ever spoke of it, rather not a single person ever spoke of it. So verily its apparent sense represents anyone who has ruled by other than what Allaah revealed, regardless of the rule that was other than what Allaah revealed. This does not make anyone from among the Muslims a disbeliever..."<sup>"15</sup>

Shaykhul Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah said:

"Indeed what is affirmed from the way of *Ahlu Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* and proven from the Book and the *Sunnah* is that they do not declare anyone from the people of the *Qiblah* to be disbeliever due to his sins and they do not take him out of Islaam due to a prohibited action like adultery and theft and drinking wine. This does not guarantee the abandonment of faith.

As for if it guarantees abandonment of what Allaah has obligated faith in such as faith in Allaah and His Angels and His Books and His Messengers and the Resurrection after death, then indeed he disbelieves in those things. Likewise he disbelieves by falling short in belief in the obligation of apparent, concurrent obligatory duties and by being deficient in the belief in the prohibition of the apparent, concurrent prohibitions."<sup>"16</sup>

Imaam Abu Hayyaan al-Andaloosee described the way of the *Khawaarij* concerning the *aayatul hukm* when he said:

"So the *Khawaarij* seek to prove with this *aayah* that everyone who disobeys Allaah is a disbeliever! They say: 'It is a text showing that everyone who does not rule by what Allaah

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<sup>14</sup> *at-Tamheed* (17/14-22) Similar statements were made by Ibn 'Abdil Barr in *al-Istidhkaar* (27/300)

<sup>15</sup> *al-Manaar Magazine* (7/fatwaa no. 77), and *Tafseerul Manaar* (6/604)

<sup>16</sup> *Majmoo'ul Fataawaa* (20/90)

revealed is a disbeliever and everyone who sins, indeed he rules by other than what Allaah revealed. So it is incumbent that he be a disbeliever."<sup>17</sup>

### **The Two Types of Disbelief:**

Imaam 'Abdul Lateef Ibn 'Abdur Rahmaan Ibn Hasan aalush-Shaykh:

"Disbelief is of two types: disbelief in action and disbelief in obstinancy and denial. It - that is disbelief in denial - is to disbelieve in what the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) is known to have come with from Allaah by denying it and obstinantly refusing it, whether it concerns the Names of the Lord of His Attributes and His Actions and His Rulings whose origin is His *Tawheed*, and the worship of Him alone without any associate with Him."<sup>18</sup>

Imaam Ibnul Qayyim al-Jawziyyah said:

"As for ruling by other than what Allaah revealed, and abandoning prayer, then this is certainly disbelief in action. It is not possible to negate the name of disbelief from him after Allaah and His Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi was sallam*) have called him that.

So the one who rules by other than what Allaah revealed is a disbeliever, and the one who abandons prayer is a disbeliever - due to evidence from the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi was sallam*). However, this is disbelief in action, not disbelief in creed. So from the impossibility of the one who rules by what Allaah revealed being called a disbeliever by Allaah the Glorified, and that the label of disbelief was not uttered upon him is..."

Then he said:

"Indeed Allaah the Glorified and Exalted labeled the one who acts upon some of His Book, and abandons acting upon other parts of it: a believer in what he acts upon, and a disbeliever in what he abandons from it.

### **"So do they believe in a part of the Book and disbelieve in another part..."**

So they were believers in what they acted upon from the Covenant [the Book] and disbelievers in what they left off from it. So faith in action opposes disbelief in action, and faith in creed opposes disbelief in creed."

Then he said:

"This elaboration is the statement of the Companions (*radiyallaahu 'anhum*) who taught the Book of Allaah to the *ummah*, and Islaam and disbelief and their inseparable attributes. So

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<sup>17</sup> *Bahrul-Muheet* (3/493)

<sup>18</sup> *Usool Wa Dawaabit Fit-Takfeer* (p. 36)

do not take these matters, except from them. So the late comers have not understood their position. So they have divided into two factions:

- a. A group that takes people out of the Religion due to major sins and decrees dwelling in the Fire for them.
- b. A group that considers them to be believers who are complete in faith!

So those people exceeded the limits and these people fell short of the mark.

So Allaah guided the people of the *sunnah* to the exemplary path and the moderate statements like Islaam as compared to the other Religions. So here it is disbelief less than disbelief, and hypocrisy less than hypocrisy, and *shirk* less than *shirk*, and disobedience less than disobedience, and oppression less than oppression."

Then he - may Allaah have Mercy upon him - mentioned some narrations from the *salaf* in explanation of the statement of Allaah the Exalted:

**"And whoever does not rule by what Allaah revealed, then these are the disbelievers."**  
[Sooratul Maa'idah 5:44] He said:

"This is explained in the *Qur`aan* for whoever understands it. So verily Allaah the Glorified named the one who rules by other than what Allaah revealed a disbeliever, and He named the one who rejects what He revealed upon His messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), a disbeliever, but the two are not disbelievers in the same manner."<sup>19</sup>

Imaam Ibn Abil 'Izz al-Hanafee said:

"So here is a matter that is obligatory to comprehend, and it is that the rule by other than what Allaah revealed can be disbelief that expels one from the Religion and it can be a sin: major or minor. It can be disbelief that is either figurative or minor disbelief and that is according to the condition of the ruler. So if he believes that Ruling by what Allaah revealed is not obligatory or that he has an option in it or if he undervalues it along with certainty that it is the rule of Allaah, then this is major disbelief.

If he believes in the obligation of ruling by what Allaah revealed and he knows of it in this event, but he forgoes it - along with knowledge that it is worthy of being implemented - then he is a sinner and he is called a disbeliever with figurative disbelief, or with minor disbelief."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *AsSalaah Wa Hukmu Taarikuhaa* (p. 55-57)

<sup>20</sup> *Sharhul 'Aqeedatit-Tahaawiyyah* (p. 323-324). The reader is also encouraged to consult *Madaarijus-Saalikeen* (1/336-337) by Ibnul Qayyim.

Imaam al-Qurtubee said in his *tafseer*: "Ibn 'Abbaas and Mujaahid said: 'Whoever does not judge by what Allaah revealed in rejection of the *Qur`aan*, and in denial of the statement of the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), then he is a disbeliever."<sup>21</sup>

'Allaamah Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shanqeetee commented upon this statement of Imaam al-Qurtubee:

"So disbelief is either disbelief less than disbelief (*kufir doona kufir*), or it can be that one sees it to be permissible or he intends to deny the Judgements of Allaah and reject them despite knowledge of them. As for the one who rules by other than what Allaah revealed and he knows that it is a crime, and that the one who does it is impudent - and he only does it due to his desires - then he is from those Muslims who sin."

Then he said:

"Know that the liberating position in this research is that...whoever does not rule by what Allaah revealed in opposition to the Messengers, and he has nullified the Judgements of Allaah, then his transgression and his corruption and his disbelief - all of it - is disbelief that takes one out of the Religion. Whoever does not rule by what Allaah revealed, believing that he is perpetrating a prohibited action, the doer of which is foul - then his disbelief and his transgression and his corruption does not take him outside the Religion."<sup>22</sup>

Shaykh Ibn Baaz said:

"Indeed that scholars have agreed that whoever alleges that the judgement of other than Allaah is better than the Judgement of Allaah or that the guidance of other than the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) is better than the guidance of the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), then he is a disbeliever. Similarly, they have agreed that whoever believes that is permissible for someone from amongst the people to be exempt from the *Sharee'ah* of Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) or that he can rule by other than it, then he is a disbeliever."<sup>23</sup>

Imaam Ibnul Jawzee said:

"The decisive speech is that whoever does not rule by what Allaah revealed in denial of it and he knows that Allaah revealed it - as the Jews did - then he is a disbeliever. Whoever does not rule by it due to an inclination towards his desires - without denial of it - then he is a transgressor and a sinner."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> This statement is taken from *al-Jaami' li Ahkaamul Qur`aan* (6/188)

<sup>22</sup> *Adwaa`ul-Bayaan* (2/104)

<sup>23</sup> *Naqdul-Qawmiyyatul-'Arabiyyah* (p. 50)

<sup>24</sup> *Zaadul-Maseer* (2/366)

Al-'Allaamah 'Abdur Rahman Ibn Naasir as-Sa'adee said:

"So ruling by other than what Allaah revealed is from the actions of the people of disbelief and it can be disbelief that expels one from the Religion if one believes that it is *halaal*."<sup>25</sup>

Shaykh 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Abdul 'Azeez Ibn Baaz said:

"Whoever rules by other than what Allaah revealed, then he does not leave from four categories:

1. He who says: 'I rule by this because it is better than the Islaamic Law.' So he is a disbeliever with major disbelief.
2. He who says: 'I rule by this because it is like the Islaamic Law, so ruling by it is permissible and ruling by the *Sharee'ah* is permissible.' So he is a disbeliever with major disbelief.
3. He who says: 'I rule by this and ruling by the Islaamic Law is better, but ruling by other than what Allaah revealed is permissible.' So he is a disbeliever with major disbelief.
4. He who says: 'I rule by this.', and he believes that ruling by other than what Allaah revealed is not permissible, but he is indulgent, or he does it due to a command issued by his rulers, then he is a disbeliever with minor disbelief. He does not leave from the Religion and he committing the most major of major sins."<sup>26</sup>

**The Condition of Istihlaal** (making *halaal*):

Shaykhul Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah said:

"When a person makes *halaal* something that is agreed upon to be prohibited or he prohibits something that is agreed upon to be *halaal* or when he alters the Revealed Law that is agreed upon, he becomes an apostate disbeliever by agreement of the *fuqahaa*. The likes of this has been revealed in His statement...

**"And whoever does not rule by what Allaah revealed, then these are the disbelievers."**  
[Sooratul Maa'idah 5:44]

That is to say that he makes ruling by other than what Allaah revealed *halaal*."<sup>27</sup>

Shaykhul Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah also said:

"There is nothing wrong in holding that whoever does not believe in the obligation of ruling by what Allaah revealed upon His Messenger (*sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) to be a

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<sup>25</sup> *Tayseer Kareemur-Rahmaan* (2/96)

<sup>26</sup> *Qadhiyyatut-Takfeer* (p. 72-73) of Sa'eed Ibn Wahf al-Qahtaanee

<sup>27</sup> *Mujmal It'iqaadus-Salaf*(3/267)

disbeliever. So whoever holds it *halaal* to rule between the people by what he sees as justice without following what Allaah revealed, then he is a disbeliever..."

He has also noted that:

"So many of the people accept Islaam, but despite this they do not rule except by the customs of their neighbours who command them to follow. So if they know that it is not permissible to rule except by that which Allaah revealed, then they are not bound to that. Rather if they make it *halaal* to rule by other than what Allaah revealed, then they are disbelievers, except if they are ignorant like those whose case has preceded."<sup>28</sup>

### **The Position of Shaykhul Islaam Muhammad Ibn 'Abdul Wahhaab:**

Shaykhul Islaam Muhammad Ibn 'Abdul Wahhaab said:

"We do not declare a person to be a disbeliever, except by what all of the scholars have gathered upon, and it is the two testimonies (*shahaadataan*)."<sup>29</sup>

Shaykh 'Abdul Lateef Ibn 'Abdur Rahmaan Ibn Hasan aalush-Shaykh said:

"So the Shaykh ('Abdul Wahhaab) - may Allaah have mercy upon - did not declare a person to be a disbeliever except one who disbelieved in Allaah and His Messenger; and the *Ummah* is united upon this *takfeer*."<sup>30</sup>

### **Conclusion:**

Haafidh Khateeb al-Baghdaadee says:

"A man from the *khawaarij* entered upon Ma`moon, so he said: 'What is your position concerning our disagreement?' He said: 'A verse from the Book of Allaah the Exalted.' He said: 'What is it?' He said: 'His statement: "And those who do not rule by what Allaah revealed, they are the disbelievers."' So Ma`moon said to him: 'Are you certain that it was revealed?' He said: 'Yes.' He said: 'What is your proof?' He said: 'The agreement (*ijmaa*) of the *ummah*.' So Ma`moon said to him: 'So just as you are pleased with their agreement in its revelation, then you should be pleased with their agreement (*ijmaa*) in its interpretation.'"<sup>31</sup>

Ibn 'Abbaas said about the Companions (*radiyallaahu 'anhum*):

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<sup>28</sup> *Minhaajus-Sunnah* (5/131)

<sup>29</sup> *Durarus-Sunniyyah* (1/70)

<sup>30</sup> *Usool Wa Dawaabit Fit-Takfeer* (p. 15)

<sup>31</sup> *Taareekh Baghdaad* (10/186)

"The *Qur`aan* was revealed upon them and they are more knowledgeable concerning the Revelation than you."

And in a narration:

"The Revelation was revealed to them and they are more knowledgeable concerning its interpretation than you."<sup>32</sup>

Ibn 'Umar described the *Khawaarij* by saying:

"Verily they take *aayaat* that are referring to the disbelievers and attribute them to the Believers."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> The texts of both these narrations can be found in *Sunan Abu Daawood* (no. 4037), *Nisaa`ee* in *al-Khasaa`is* (no. 185) and in the *Musannaf* of 'Abdur Razzaaq (10/157-158) and *Mu'jamul Kabeer* of at-Tabaree (no. 10598) and in the *Mustadrak* of al-Haakim (2/150).

<sup>33</sup> It is reported in Bukhaaree with *al-Fath* (12/282) in *mu'allaq* (suspended) form. Imaam at-Tabaree connected it in *Tahdheebul Aathaar* and Ibn Wahb in his *Jaami'* as is proven in *Taghleequt Ta'aleeq* (23/334-335). It was authenticated by al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalaanee.