

The Preamble to Faith

A descriptive translation of Tamhīd e Īmān



IMAM AHMED RIDA KHAN AL-BARAYLAWI

RIDAWI



PRESS

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IMAM AHMED RIDA KHAN AL-BARAYLAWI

(1272-1340 / 1856-1921)

Translated by

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RIDAWI

PRESS



The Preamble to Faith, A Descriptive Translation of *Tamhid e Īmān*

Original Urdu Work by
Alahazrat Imam Ahmed Rida Khan Al-Baraylawi

Translation and Footnotes
Abu Hasan



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على سيد الأنبياء والمرسلين وعلى آله الطاهرين وصحبه الطيبين
اللهم هداية الحق والصواب

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

All praise be to Allāh ﷻ the Lord of all creation. Blessings and peace upon our master Muḥammad ﷺ the prince of all worlds; the chief of all prophets and messengers; he was sent with guidance and as a guide to the world. O Allāh! We ask Thee to guide us towards truth and upon the right path.

Muslims in India belonged to traditional Sunni faith, until dissenting groups began to appear in the 12th century Hijri. Ironically, the grandsire of most splinter groups thereafter, Ismāyīl Dihlawī,¹ was the grandson of a prominent Sunni scholar – Shāh Aḥmed Dihlawī, famously known as Shāh Waliyullāh Dihlawī. Shāh Ismāyīl's books like *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, *Ṣirāt e Mustaqīm* and pamphlets like *Ek Rozi* introduced ancient² and modern³ heresies hitherto unknown to commonfolk, which ignited the fire of

¹ Shāh Ismāyīl Dihlawī [1193-1246/1779-1831] was the son of Shāh Ābd al-Ghaniy Dihlawī, who was the son of Shāh Waliyullāh Dihlawī, who was the son of Shāh Ābd ar-Raḥīm Dihlawī; Ismāyīl was the nephew of the famous muḥaddith Shāh Ābd al-Āziz Dihlawī [d.1238/1823].

² The Mútazilī heresy, that falsehood is included in Divine Power.

³ Of mixed Wahābī-Khārijī extremism of branding Muslims as polytheists, and of anthropomorphism; Ismāyīl wrote that it is a heresy to believe that God is without a direction or that He is transcendent from space.

sectarianism in the subcontinent. Scholars, including his own cousins, Shāh Makhṣūsullāh Dihlawī and Shāh Mūsā Dihlawī refuted him. Indeed, many who staunchly opposed him, like Shaykh Fadl al-Ḥaqq Khayrābādī, were students of his illustrious uncle Shāh Ābd al-Āzīz Dihlawī. After Ismāyīl died in 1246, it seemed as if the tribulation had subsided; but unfortunately, it was rekindled and defended by his followers and admirers among the founders of the Deoband school. Ūlamā expressed their displeasure, but Deobandi elders were committed to defend Ismāyīl. The disease of irreverence spread and amplified; major scholars of the Deoband school wrote things and spoke of doctrines that no Muslim should utter, or even wish to hear. Sunni scholars reproached them and refuted this new sect – but they ignored all remonstrations and pleas to revert.⁴

Much later, Alahazrat Imām Aḥmed Riḍā Khān رحمۃ اللہ علیہ also issued the ruling of kufr⁵ upon four elders of Deoband and asked [those living] to repent from their blasphemous statements. *Takfir* was done upon blasphemies, even though Deobandis pretend that the opposition was due to Alahazrat's misunderstanding or rancour or some such reason. During his visit to the blessed sanctuaries in 1323, Alahazrat presented his ruling⁶ to scholars in Makkah and Madinah for endorsement. Major scholars attested the ruling of kufr by Alahazrat and praised him for the accuracy of his fatwā and commended his action. These attestations were published along with the fatwā in the form of *Ḥūsām al-Ḥaramayn*.⁷ After Alahazrat's return from Haramayn and the publication of *Ḥūsām al-Ḥaramayn*, Deobandis

⁴ Mawlānā Ābd as-Samīy Rampuri, a confrere of Qasim Nānautawī and Rashīd Gangohī [as they shared the same teacher and shaykh] complained to Mawlānā Raḥmatullah Kīrwānī and Hājī Imdādullah Muhājir Makkī and requested them to advise their disciples, as he narrates in the preface of *Anwār e Sāṭiāh* and is also evident from endorsements of the book. The spiritual guide of Nānotwī and Gangohī, Shaykh Imdādullah wrote a short booklet *Fayṣlah e Haft Mas'alah* to end this discord. Gangohī did not heed it [as is evident from his *fatāwā*] and Khalīl Aḥmed [at the behest of Gangohī] wrote a refutation of *Anwār* titled *Barāhin al-Qāṭiāh* employing harsh and impudent language; unfortunately, the [purported] cure proved to be worse than the malady.

⁵ Rashīd Gangohī was ruled an apostate by other scholars even before Alahazrat did, for the fatwā of 'occurrence of falsehood' in Divine Speech of Allāh or *wuqū' e kizb* in Urdu. See Appendix C for more details.

⁶ Extracted from *Al-Mustanad al-Mútamad Bināyi Najātu'l Abad*, a commentary on Shaykh Fadl ar-Rasūl Badāyūnī's *Al-Mútaqaḍ al-Muntaqaḍ*.

⁷ The Sword of the Two Sanctuaries; *ḥaramayn* or *two ḥarams* : Makkah and Madinah.

responded in many ways: character assassination of Alahazrat,⁸ accusations of lies and slander,⁹ and some others tried to dismiss the issue by trying to explain explicit insults in favourable light. One common response was: 'Deobandis are also scholars and pious men; and we should not criticise them'. Deobandis allege that Alahazrat deceived the scholars of Haramayn by mistranslating and misrepresenting the passages in question. One of those accused, Khalīl Aḥmed Ambethwī Sahāranpūrī, wrote a book *Muhannad* in which he denied (both on his own behalf and those scholars of his group) that they held such beliefs and claimed that they never said or wrote such things. Mawlānā Sayyid Naẓīmuddīn Murādābādī, teacher of many prominent authors and translators in the subcontinent, wrote *Daʿ al-Talbisāt* refuting the delusions and exposing the lies of *Muhannad*. Another serious charge made by Deobandis in a bid to deflect criticism of their own scholars, is that Alahazrat was hasty in labelling someone or anyone as kāfir, if they differed from his viewpoint; and that he did not hesitate or deliberate in this matter. According to them, the *takfīr* of Deobandi elders was also due to haste and lack of deliberation.¹⁰ A similar accusation was made by Nuh Keller, a contemporary scholar, in an article published on his website.¹¹

Alahazrat wrote *Tamhīd e Īmān ba Āyāt e Qurʾān* or *The Preamble to Faith in the Light of the Qurʾān*, to explain the basis of faith and the priorities we should have as Muslims. He also refuted the propaganda that he was careless and hasty in takfīr.¹² He explains fundamental principles of faith,

⁸ Murtaza Ḥasan Chāndpūrī's books.

⁹ Ḥusayn Aḥmed Tāndwī's *Shihāb al-Thāqib*.

¹⁰ Deobandis in our time do not attempt to veil their lies; Muftī Taqī Usmani, in a reply to someone inquiring about 'the Barelwi group', says [*Fatāwā al-Uthmānī*, Vol.1, Pg.101, published from Deoband, India; translation below by Ismaeel Nakhuda, a Deobandi]:

"Their imam, Shaykh Ahmad Rada Khan al-Barelwi circulated a fatwā of kufr against the 'ulama of Deoband and even said that he who does not consider them a kāfir is also a kāfir. This was because they (the 'ulama of Deoband) had criticised their beliefs and said: the knowledge of the unseen is a quality (sifah) of Allah Most High, no one is a partner with him in this."

It is incredible that a person who claims to believe in Judgement day – can slander and lie with such ease; particularly someone who is considered as a scholar. The fatwā of kufr was issued on statements deemed as blasphemies – not because 'Deobandis criticised their beliefs'. And as for the issue of *ilm al-ghayb* and its description, this is the same false accusation made by Abu'l Ḥasan Nadawī in *Nuz'hatu'l Khawāṭir* and is repeated by Deobandis at every opportunity.

¹¹ *Iman, Kufr and Takfir* on shadhilitariqa.com, which has been refuted elsewhere.

¹² *Tamhīd* is not a refutation of *Muhannad*

and analyzes disparaging statements made by Deobandis and implications of such statements, describes the background and conditions that led to the ruling and mentions the extreme carefulness and restraint exercised by him in takfir, debunking the myth that he was '*quick to label anyone a kāfir*'.

Notes on the text and the translation:

1. Alahazrat employs a second-person narrative in what is meant to be a personal appeal to the reader.
2. Alahazrat does not mention the names of Gangohī, Ambhetwī or Thānawī, in the main text. One probable reason could be that names can evoke passions and thus cause the reader to become defensive; even the most sincere statement may then fail to move a prejudiced reader. In order to avoid this potential psychological barrier, he might have omitted the names and says Zayd, Āmr or 'that person' instead. In a few places though, he mentions names in footnotes.
3. The language and the style of the author, rhyming prose and compound sentence structure pose many difficulties in translation. Sentences had to be broken down or slightly reordered, and in one case, a clause was moved from the main text to the footnote.
4. Alahazrat's own footnotes are included and indicated accordingly.
5. *Preamble* has been translated directly from the Urdu text in *Fatāwā Ridāwīyah* without referring to any other translation;¹³ references are also taken from this edition.¹⁴ I have also used an older edition for verification of the text.
6. The original text does not have sections and chapter names; these are inserted for quick reference and readability.
7. About dates:
 - a. Dates are in Hijri by default and where there could be a confusion, it is indicated by the abbreviation AH (Anno Hegirae) or CE (Common Era).

¹³ English translations are available. An Arabic translation of the work was also found online.

¹⁴ Volume 30, published by Raza Foundation & Jami'ah Nizamiyah-Razawiyah, Lahore.

- b. When both dates are mentioned, the first is always the Hijri date and the following is Gregorian, indicated either in parantheses or follows a forward slash.

Many thanks to brothers for their suggestions and corrections during the review of the book. The first edition had a number of mistakes for which I am solely responsible. Special thanks to Shaykh Monawwar Ateeq for providing the fatwā of Gangohī, which I have translated and analysed in Appendix C. Our esteemed brother Noori prepared the bibliographical index; SunniStudent provided the scans of books included in Appendices.

wa billāhi't tawfīq.

Abu Hasan

7th Ramaḍān 1432/7th August 2011

SECOND EDITION

The text has been edited for clarity. Many errors that had escaped notice in the previous edition have been corrected; Quranic text has been verified once again, as the first print edition contained formatting errors.

Abu Hasan

7th Ramaḍān 1433/25th July 2012

NOTE TO THE THIRD EDITION

The second edition was released with mostly correction of typographical errors and standardised Qur'ānic text, but translations of verses were overlooked; thus, a few errors remained in those translations – until one glaring error was highlighted by an opponent on his blog. Even though the error was a minor one without affecting any major point of áqīdah or contradicting an Islamic principle, I was accused of purposely distorting verses of the Qur'ān. *astaghfirullāh wa atūbu ilayh*.

We are human, and in spite of our best efforts, errors are inevitable except when Allāh ﷻ protects us. None of these errors were deliberate, not even the mistranslation; utmost, they were a result of haste and heedlessness, but were never intentional. In the previous edition, verses were translated idiomatically with a focus on conveying the meaning, which appears inadequate in hindsight. Therefore, I have revised the translation of verses in this edition to be congruent with the Arabic text as much as possible.

I seek the forgiveness of Allāh ﷻ for my lapse and for all my sins committed knowingly and unknowingly, and hope to be pardoned for the sake of His beloved ﷻ who has said:

التَّائِبُ مِنَ الذَّنْبِ كَمَنْ لَا ذَنْبَ لَهُ

Abu Hasan

4th Dhu'l Ĥijjah 1434/9th October 2013



INTRODUCTION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ خَاتَمِ
النَّبِيِّينَ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ بِالتَّجِيلِ وَحَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنَعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

In the name of Allāh, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of all Worlds. Blessings and salutations, upon the liegelord of all messengers, the seal of prophets, our master Muḥammad ﷺ; and upon his progeny and companions. Allāh ﷻ is sufficient for us and in Him we trust.

A humble appeal to Muslim brethren:

My dear brothers! *As-salāmu ālaykum wa raḥmatu'llāhi wa barakātuh.*

May Allāh ﷻ keep you, and for your sakes, this poor sinner, steadfast upon true faith and grant us the true love of His beloved, the final messenger, Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ and fill our hearts with his reverence and respect; and thus we remain until our last breath. Āmīn, O Lord of the Universe!

Your Lord Almighty ﷻ says:

O Messenger! Verily, We have sent you as a witness, a bringer of glad tidings and a warner [of punishment]. So that, [O people] you may believe in Allāh and His messenger; and that you revere him and respect him, and that you sanctify your Lord in the morning and evening.¹⁵

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَهِيدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا
لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ - وَتَعَزَّزُوهُ
وَتُوقِرُوهُ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

O Muslims! Notice the reasons for which religion was given, and the Qur'ān was revealed; they are three, as mentioned in the above verse:

First, that people bear faith in Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ

Second, that people revere and respect the Messenger ﷺ and

Third, that they worship Allāh ﷻ.

¹⁵ Sūrah Fat'h, 48:8-9.

O Muslims! Notice the elegant order of these three important principles. Faith¹⁶ is mentioned first; worship of the Lord Almighty is mentioned in the last, and in between these two, is the reverence and honour of His beloved Prophet ﷺ.

Without faith, reverence of the Prophet ﷺ is of no use. There are Christians who respect and honour the Prophet ﷺ and defend his honour by writing books and answering objections of scoundrels among infidels; they give lectures in this regard – yet, without faith, none of this is of any use [to them] as this is mere extraneous respect. If they had respect of the Prophet ﷺ, truly in their hearts, they would surely bear faith in [his message]. Even if one spends his entire life worshipping the Lord, it is of no use and all of this hard work is wasted without the reverence of the Prophet ﷺ. There are *jogis* and monks¹⁷ who have distanced themselves from the world; they worship and remember the Lord in their own ways and spend their entire lives doing so; there are some among them who even learn and recite the phrase: ***lā ilāha illā Allāh***,¹⁸ but until they respect Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ, it does not benefit them. None of this is accepted by Allāh ﷻ and it is about such people that Allāh ﷻ has said:

And deeds they had done, We purposely made them scattered like dust particles [that are seen] in light shining through a small window.¹⁹

وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ
فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَّنثُورًا ﴿١٩﴾

And about such people He ﷻ says:

They toil and do deeds; but yet, they shall enter a roaring fire.²⁰

عَامِلَةٌ نَّاصِبَةٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ تَصَلَّىٰ
نَارًا حَامِيَةً ﴿٢٠﴾

We seek Allāh's refuge.

¹⁶ *īmān*

¹⁷ *Jogi*: Hindu hermits; *Rāhib*: Monk.

¹⁸ The first part of the testimony of faith: "There is no God but Allāh ﷻ".

¹⁹ Sūrah Furqān, 25:23. The translation is now corrected; unfortunately, the error remained unnoticed in previous editions and was certainly not deliberate; *astaghfirullāh* for the lapse.

²⁰ Sūrah Ghāshiyah, 88:3-4.

O Muslims! Say, is it then, the love of Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ the basis of faith, the basis of salvation, the basis for acceptance of good deeds or not? Say: “Yes it is!” And indeed, it is so. Your Lord, Almighty Allāh says:

O Prophet! Tell them: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your family, the wealth that you have amassed, and the business that you are afraid will be ruined, and dwellings that delight you; if any of these are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger, or more precious than striving in the path of Allāh – then await the Wrath of Allah; verily, Allāh does not give way to the contumacious.²¹

فَلْإِنْ كَانَ ءَابَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ
وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا
وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ
تَرْضَوْنََهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ
اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

We learn from the verse, that if a person holds anybody or anything dearer than Allāh and His Messenger, then such a person is turned away from the door of Allāh ﷻ. And that Allāh ﷻ will not guide such a person toward Himself, and that such a person should anticipate the Wrath of Allāh ﷻ. We seek Allāh’s refuge. Your beloved Prophet ﷺ has said:²²

None amongst you is a [true] believer,²³ unless I have become most beloved to him, and dearer to him than his own father, his children and all the people in the world.²⁴

This ḥadīth has been reported by Bukhārī and Muslim and is narrated by the companion Anas ibn Mālik al-Anṣarī ؓ. It clearly explains that a person who considers anyone [in the creation] as more honourable than RasūlAllāh ﷺ is certainly not a Muslim. O Muslims! Is considering Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ more beloved than the entire world, the basis of faith and basis of salvation or not? Say it is; and indeed it is so.

²¹ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:24.

²² Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī 1:7 and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 1:49.

²³ *mu’min*

²⁴ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 1:49.

All those who utter the *kalimah*,²⁵ will gladly agree to all that has been said so far; and they will say: 'Yes. The honour of Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ is prominent in our hearts; and yes, we love him more than we love our parents, our children and the entire world.' Brothers! May Allāh ﷻ make this to be true; but listen to what your Lord says. Your Lord Almighty Allāh ﷻ says:²⁶

Do people expect that they will be spared at saying 'We believe', and they will not be tested?

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا
ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ❁

This verse is alerting Muslims that they will not be spared on merely uttering the testimony of faith or by claiming faith. Listen! Verily you shall be tested; and you will be considered a Muslim only if you pass the test. In any test, it is seen whether indeed, the thing [being claimed] is present or not to justify the claim. We have seen earlier that the Qur'an and Ḥadīth say that two things are necessary for faith to be real and present:

- Respect and reverence of Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ
- Love of Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ more than anything in this world.

This can be tested definitively is thus: Consider those whom you respect; no matter how much you revere them, or have a close friendship with them, or have affectionate relations with them; like your father, your teacher, your guide,²⁷ your brother, your relatives, your companions; the scholar, the reader, the muftī, the preacher – whosoever it may be; if you find them disrespectful towards Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ then you should have no love or respect for them. Dissociate from them immediately, and cast them away like you would cast a fly, fallen in a glass of milk. Abhor them and do not even look at their faces. Do not care about their relationship or friendship; or their being scholars or shaykhs; or their piety or elderliness. All these qualities should be respected *for* the sake of Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ. When such a person has disrespected the master himself, then where does this relationship have any value? Why should we be impressed

²⁵ The testimony of faith: *lā ilāha illā Allāh Muḥammadu'r RasūlAllāh* ﷻ

²⁶ Sūrah Ānkabūt, 29:2.

²⁷ Pir or Shaykh.

with their clothes and turbans²⁸ – do the Jews not wear turbans? Why should we have regard for their name, erudition, and outward superiority – do we not see erudite Christian priests and philosophers, who are masters of many sciences? If you do not heed this, and try to make excuses for the person who disrespects RasūlAllāh ﷺ, and if you do not consider him as the vilest and most sinful; or at the least, if you ignore this and do not find a dislike for the person disrespecting the Prophet ﷺ – then be fair, and ask yourself; by Allāh, did you pass the test? How far did you stray from the benchmark set by the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth for attaining faith? O Muslims! Will those who respect and love Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ more than anything in the world, have consideration for a person who insults him? Even if such a person were his own teacher or his father? Will they not detest such a person, even if he is a close friend or a brother, because RasūlAllāh ﷺ is dearer than the whole world?

For the sake of Allāh, have pity on your own selves, and heed the saying of your Lord, the Almighty – and see, how He calls you toward His mercy, when He says:

You will not find a people who have faith in Allāh and the Final Day bearing affection for those who oppose Allāh and His Messenger, even if they are their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their relatives. It is they, upon whose hearts He has inscribed faith and aided them with a spirit from Him; He will make them enter gardens in which streams flow underneath, and they shall abide in them forever. Allāh is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him. This is the party of Allāh. Listen, indeed, only the party of Allāh is successful.²⁹

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ
إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ أُولَئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي
قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِنْهُ
وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ
وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ
حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

²⁸ In the subcontinent, turbans used to be worn by prominent people – scholars and shaykhs among them.

²⁹ Sūrah Mujādilah, 58:22.

It is thus explained, that a Muslim will not befriend someone who disrespects Allāh or His Messenger ﷺ; conversely, one who befriends them is not a Muslim. Apart from the generic and absolute³⁰ nature of the command, there is a further clarification with the specific mention of ‘fathers, sons, relatives,’ and that one cannot befriend or have affection for such a blasphemer even if it is natural to do so; otherwise, one does not remain a believer. This commandment of the Lord Almighty is sufficient for a Muslim; but yet, He calls you towards His mercy and motivates you by stimulating your interest in His supreme and enchanting gifts.³¹ If you keep away from those who disrespect the Messenger ﷺ, look at what you gain:

1. Allāh shall inscribe faith upon your hearts; which is – Allāh willing – a glad tidings of a beautiful end;³² because that which is inscribed by Allāh cannot be erased.
2. Allāh shall aid you by the Holy Spirit, the Archangel Gibrīl ﷺ.
3. He shall make you enter gardens of paradise, that abide forever and in which streams flow underneath.
4. You shall be called ‘The Party of Allāh’ and those who belong to Allāh.
5. You shall get everything you ask for, and millions of times more than you can imagine.
6. Allāh shall be pleased with you.
7. And He says: “I shall be pleased with you and you shall be pleased with Me.”

What other bounty can a slave aspire for, after his Lord is pleased with him? But still, He says in His infinite Compassion and Grace: ‘Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allāh’. O Muslim! If a man has a billion lives, and he sacrifices all the lives for such bounties – it is still a bargain. Then, how difficult is it to get rid of Zayd and Ámr³³ and to sever all relations with

³⁰ *áám, muṭlaq*

³¹ In paradise.

³² *ḥusn e khātimah*: to die as a Muslim.

³³ ‘Zayd and Ámr’ is similar to the English phrase ‘Tom, Dick and Harry.’

them for the sake of these precious bounties promised by Allāh tāālā? It is the manner of the Qur'ān that whenever bounties are mentioned for believers, warnings of punishment are also mentioned, so that people with low aspirations may take heed and find their way, fearing punishment.

Now, listen to the warnings; your Lord Almighty says:

O you who believe - do not take your fathers and your brothers as friends if they prefer disbelief over faith; and those who befriend them amongst you, then it is they who are the oppressors.³⁴

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا ءَابَاءَكُمْ
وَإِخْوَانَكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْكُفْرَ عَلَى
الْإِيمَانِ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَاُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

and He says:

O you who believe - do not take My enemy and your enemy as friends...³⁵

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي
وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ ...

You confide [your] affection to them, but I know what you keep secret and whatever you do openly. Whosoever amongst you does thus has strayed from the right path.³⁶

تُسِرُّونَ إِلَيْهِمْ بِالْمُؤَدَّةِ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا
أَخْفَيْتُمْ وَمَا أَعْلَنْتُمْ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْهُ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ
ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ﴿٣٦﴾

Your relatives and your children will certainly not avail you; on the day of Judgement, He will cause segregation between you; and Allāh sees what you do.³⁷

لَنْ نَنْفَعَكُمْ أَرْحَامَكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادَكُمْ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

³⁴ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:23.

³⁵ Sūrah Mumtaḥanah, 60:1.

³⁶ Sūrah Mumtaḥanah, 60:1.

³⁷ Sūrah Mumtaḥanah, 60:3.

and He says:

And he who befriends them amongst you, then indeed, he is one of them; verily, Allāh tāālā does not give way to people who transgress.³⁸

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

In the first two verses, those who maintain friendship with blasphemers of the Messenger ﷺ were only termed as transgressors and astray; and in this third verse, the clarification is decisive: those who maintain friendship with insulters belong to the same community and are infidels like them and they will be bound together. Remember that whip: *'you meet them secretly, and I know what you do secretly and openly.'* And now, hear about those who insult the Messenger ﷺ and the rope with which they will be tied together:

And those who hurt the Messenger of Allāh, for them is a painful punishment³⁹

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٧﴾

Verily, those who hurt Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ; Allāh has damned them in this world and the hereafter; and readied for them a humiliating punishment.⁴⁰

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ﴿٦٨﴾

Nobody can hurt Allāh tāālā as He is transcendent from being hurt; but He has denounced those who disrespect His beloved Messenger ﷺ as those who hurt Allāh. These verses mention seven lashes for a person who has affection for those who disrespect RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

1. He is a transgressor.
2. He is a deviant.
3. He is a disbeliever, an infidel.

³⁸ Sūrah Māyidah, 5:51.

³⁹ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:61.

⁴⁰ Sūrah Aḥzāb, 33:57.

4. A painful punishment awaits him.
5. He shall be humiliated in the hereafter.
6. He has hurt Allāh táālā, the Subduer.
7. And the damnation of Allāh táālā is upon him in both worlds.

We seek Allāh's refuge from such a misfortune.

O Muslims! O the followers of the Prince of men and jinns! Are the former seven on distancing immediately from insolent people better, or these seven latter?⁴¹ The heart being firm on faith, the aid of Allāh táālā, entering paradise, being included in the Party of Allāh, wishes being granted, Allāh táālā being pleased and you being pleased with Allāh táālā. Are these seven better or the seven that betide a person who maintains relations with such people: transgressor, deviant, infidel, destined for hell, humiliated in the hereafter, one who hurts Allāh táālā, the damnation of Allāh táālā upon him in both worlds? Certainly not! Who can say that the latter seven are desirable? And who will say that the former seven can be abandoned? But dear brother, mere claims⁴² will not suffice; you will be examined and you have just read the verse: *alif-lām-mīm; do people expect...*⁴³ Are you in a delusion that you can simply say it with your tongue and be let off without being examined?

Yes, indeed! This is the hour of truth and the trial. Thus you are tested by Allāh táālā, the Subduer. And look, He is telling you that your relations will not avail you on the day of Judgement; [and He says] How can you sever [your relation] with Me and establish it with others? And He is warning you: 'I am not unaware, I am not uninformed; and I am Seeing your deeds. I Hear your speech; I Know what is in your hearts.'

Do not be heedless and ruin your future [in the hereafter] for the sake of others. Do not be obstinate and oppose Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ. Be mindful, He is warning you of a painful torment – and there is no refuge

⁴¹ That one is warned upon continuing friendship and maintaining relations with such impudent people.

⁴² Claim that we love Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ.

⁴³ Sūrah Ānkabūt, 29:2.

from His Retribution. And He calls you towards His Mercy and there is no place to run, except towards His Mercy. Remember that other sins are merely sins which deserve punishment, but one does not lose faith because of sins; [one can come out of hell] by either being removed after being punished, by the Mercy of Allāh táālā; or even completely escape punishment by the intercession of His beloved Messenger ﷺ. But, the reverence of Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ and His esteem is the basis of faith. We have seen how the Qur'ān reproaches those who are lax⁴⁴ in this issue and that Allāh's damnation is upon them in both worlds. Remember that if one loses faith, there is no chance of redemption, there is no avenue for release from eternal punishment. And such people who are disrespectful⁴⁵ in this world, about whom you bear concern, will be suffering themselves and they will not come to save you on that day; and even if they come – what can they do? Is it sensible to allow oneself to be seized by the Wrath of Allāh táālā and the fire of hell for the sake of such people?



⁴⁴ And does not keep away from those who insult the Messenger ﷺ.

⁴⁵ About respect to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

LESSER THAN THE DEVIL'S KNOWLEDGE

For the sake of Allāh! Close your eyes and bow your head for a moment and forget everyone else; envision yourself in the Presence of Allāh tāālā, and recall the immense respect and veneration due to Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ, the Messenger of Allāh; recall the lofty, exalted rank that Allāh tāālā has bestowed upon him, and remember the fact, that the foundation of your faith is in respecting him; with this in your heart and in all earnestness, say whether the following statement is insulting or not:

The expanse of Satan's knowledge is proven by scriptural text,⁴⁶ [but] where is such absolute scriptural text for the knowledge of the Pride⁴⁷ of the world?⁴⁸

Does it not mean that the knowledge of the accursed Satan is greater than that of RasūlAllāh ﷺ? Doesn't the person who says this, disbelieve in the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and believe in the knowledge of Satan? O Muslim! If you tell the same insolent person: 'O ye, whose knowledge is equal to Satan's knowledge,'⁴⁹ will he not find it offensive? Notice, that we did not even say that his knowledge was lesser than that of Satan's, we only said: 'equal to Satan's knowledge,' but still, will he not consider it as an insult? Suppose, to save face, he denies that it is insulting; then, go to a person in a high position or authority – a king or a governor – and tell them:⁵⁰

'O you, whose knowledge is equal to Satan's knowledge'

Is this not an insult? Then, is it not an insult when said about RasūlAllāh ﷺ and is it not kufr to insult RasūlAllāh ﷺ? Surely, it is; and indeed it is an

⁴⁶ *nass*: scriptural evidence; *nass-e-qat'ī* meaning, absolutely established textual evidence, incontrovertible textual proof - usually the Qur'ān.

⁴⁷ *Fakhr-e-Ālām*: Pride of the world, referring to RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

⁴⁸ Khalīl Aḥmed Ambhthwī-Saharanpuri, *Barāhīn al-Qāṭi'ah*, 51.

⁴⁹ For example, try these phrases:

Khalīl Ambethwī, whose knowledge is equal to Satan's knowledge;
Rashīd Gangohī whose knowledge is equal to Satan's knowledge;
Ūlamā of Deoband, whose knowledge is equal to Satan's knowledge.

⁵⁰ Such a person who considers Satan as a devil and evil; not atheists or Satan worshippers.

insult. After claiming that the knowledge of Satan is proven by the *naṣṣ*, he says about those who believe in the extensiveness of the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ:⁵¹

...that [he]⁵² refutes all scriptural texts [*nuṣūṣ*] and proves one polytheistic belief and says:⁵³

...if this⁵⁴ is not polytheism, then which part of faith is this?

Such a person who says the above, does he not consider the accursed Iblīs as a partner to Allāh? Certainly he does; because, if anything attributed to someone in the creation is considered as shirk, then it is shirk when attributed to anyone else – because Allāh táālā has no partner. If this concept when attributed to RasūlAllāh ﷺ is considered as shirk⁵⁵– such that there is ‘no part of faith’ in it – then he certainly means that it is a specific attribute that is attested only for Allāh táālā. Because, that is why, one who attests this [knowledge] for the Prophet becomes a polytheist. In which case, this person patently attests the same for Iblīs and thus considers him a partner with Allāh táālā. O Muslims! Is this not an insult to Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ? Certainly it is [an insult]. It is obvious that it is an insult to Allāh táālā because one who says so, attributes a partner to Allāh – and that too, who? The accursed devil Iblīs, that is who. And it is an insult to RasūlAllāh ﷺ because he elevates Iblīs to a rank where he shares the unique attribute of Allāh táālā and such that, if you attribute the same to RasūlAllāh ﷺ, you would become a polytheist! O Muslim! One who disrespects Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ; is he not a kāfir?

Indeed, he is a kāfir.

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⁵¹ Khalīl Sahāranpūrī, *Barāhīn*, 51.

⁵² One who believes in the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ encompassing knowledge of the earth.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ That is: to believe in the expanse of knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

⁵⁵ According to the statement of Khalīl Afīmed.

KNOWLEDGE LIKE THAT OF QUADRUPEDS

And about another person who said:⁵⁶

If this refers to partial knowledge of unseen,⁵⁷ then where is the exclusiveness of RasūlAllāh ﷺ in this? Such knowledge is [possessed by] Zayd and Ámr,⁵⁸ rather, children and madmen; rather, all animals and quadrupeds also possess [such knowledge].

Is this not a profanity hurled at Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ? Was the Prophet ﷺ given only as much knowledge of unseen as that of madmen and quadrupeds? O Muslim! O follower of Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ! I ask you for the sake of your religion and your faith: do you doubt in this being an explicit insult and that it is a profanity? We seek the refuge of Allāh; has the reverence of Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ evaporated from your heart, that you do not consider this as an insult? Still, if you are not moved by this, then go and say the same thing to your teachers, to your shaykhs; go and tell them:

O you [folk,] you have only as much knowledge as a pig. Your teacher had only as much knowledge as a dog. Your shaykh had knowledge only as much as a donkey.

Or if you wish to be brief, tell them:

O people, whose knowledge is as much as that of an owl,⁵⁹ a donkey, a dog or a pig.

Will they consider this as an insult of their own selves, their teachers, their shaykhs, or not? Certainly, they will feel offended; and they may shower you with blows if they could. Then why is such a thing, which is offensive to them, not disrespectful to Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ? MáadhAllāh!⁶⁰ Is **his** honour lesser than that of their teachers and their shaykhs?

⁵⁶ Ashraf Áli Thānawi, *Ḥifẓ al-Īmān*, 8.

⁵⁷ *bāaz ulūm e ghaybiyyah*

⁵⁸ An idiom meaning anyone, all and sundry; as said in English: 'Tom, Dick and Harry'.

⁵⁹ In the Subcontinent, the owl is a metaphor for being *stupid*, unlike in English where it is a metaphor for being *wise*.

⁶⁰ **máadhAllāh**: We seek the refuge of Allāh!

Is this what you call *Īmān* and faith? Never, by Allāh. And then he said:⁶¹

Because, every person has the knowledge of something that is hidden from another; then, it becomes necessary to call every [such] person **knower of the unseen**.⁶² And then, if Zayd⁶³ makes it binding upon himself, that he shall call everyone a **knower of unseen**, then why does he consider this as an exclusive attribute of prophethood?⁶⁴

Because, [such an attribute in which] there is no exclusivity for believers or even for humans;⁶⁵ then, how can this be an exclusive attribute of prophethood?⁶⁶ And if one does not consider it binding, then it is necessary to explain the reason for differentiating between a prophet and a non-prophet.

Is it not an insult to the Prophet, when he does not differentiate between animals, madmen and the Prophet ﷺ? He has expressly rejected the Word of Allāh *tāālā*. Look, your Lord Almighty Allāh says:

And He has taught you whatever you did not know; and the bounty of Allāh upon you is immense.⁶⁷

وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ
اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا

In this verse, Allāh *tāālā* has mentioned the bestowal of the knowledge of unknown things, as an attribute of perfection for the Prophet ﷺ.

⁶¹ Thānawī, *Ĥifẓ al-Īmān*, 8.

⁶² *ūālimu'l ghayb*

⁶³ Zayd: a name used for illustration.

⁶⁴ *jumlā kamālāt e anbiyā'a*: Attributes that are considered as perfect, praiseworthy, distinguishing them from non-prophets.

⁶⁵ Thānawī has in the previous paragraph said it explicitly that even animals have such knowledge; so it is not exclusive to prophets, or even believers, or even humans. In other words: knowledge is not a trait that can be considered as exclusive for prophets.

⁶⁶ Ergo, prophets do not have knowledge of unseen. Thānawī has said earlier that madmen and animals have knowledge that is similar to that of the Prophet ﷺ. Any possible ambiguity [that could be claimed by Deobandis] is removed by the rhetorical question he himself asks: '*where is the exclusivity – takhṣīs – for the Prophet?*'

⁶⁷ Sūrah Nisā'a, 4:113. Baghawī says, "It is said: from knowledge of the unseen." Āllāmah Khāzin says: "He taught you all that you did not know from the knowledge of unseen".

And Allāh has said:

Verily, he was a person of knowledge,
because of what We had taught
him.⁶⁸

وَأَنَّهُ لَدُو عِلْمٍ لِّمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ

And He said:

And [they] gave him glad tidings of a
knowledgeable boy.⁶⁹

وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِغُلَامٍ عَلِيمٍ

And He said:

And We taught him [a special kind of]
knowledge by Our Endowment.⁷⁰

وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ مِن لَّدُنَّا عِلْمًا

These are some verses in which Allāh táālā has enumerated *knowledge* among attributes of perfection for His prophets عليه الصلاة والسلام. In the above passage, for the sake of argument, replace the name of Zayd with the name of Allāh táālā and replace the [phrase] *knowledge of unseen*, with the generic, *knowledge*.⁷¹

And obviously that this generic attribute is true, even for animals.⁷² When we do this replacement, notice how the speech of this insolent man,⁷³ contradicts the Speech of Allāh táālā.

Then, according to this insolent person:⁷⁴

⁶⁸ Sūrah Yūsuf, 12:68.

⁶⁹ Sūrah Dhāriyāt, 51:28.

⁷⁰ Sūrah Kahf, 18:65. Most tafsirs say that it is knowledge of the unseen.

⁷¹ *muḥlaq ilm*: that is, instead of specifying 'knowledge of unseen,' let us just say: 'knowledge' which is generic. This should not be confused with the *muḥlaq ilm-e-ghayb* meaning 'absolute knowledge of the unseen' which is the attribute of Allāh táālā alone.

⁷² Because, even animals have some knowledge – no one disputes this. Thānawī's claim is that there is no exclusivity for the Prophet ﷺ on account of the attribute of knowledge.

⁷³ Ashraf Ālī Thānawī in his *Ĥifzu'l Īmān* as cited above.

⁷⁴ For the sake of illustrating the enormity of this claim, by replacing the words.

If, the attribution of knowledge to his⁷⁵ person by **God**⁷⁶ is valid, then it is necessary to inquire – whether He refers to some parts of **knowledge** or all kinds of **knowledge**? If this refers to some kinds of **knowledge**, then where is the exclusivity for the Prophet ﷺ or other prophets? Such knowledge is possessed by Zayd, Āmr – rather all children and madmen – rather all animals and quadrupeds [possess such knowledge]. Because, every person has the **knowledge** of something or the other; then, it becomes necessary to call every [such] person as **knowledgeable**.⁷⁷

And then, if **God** makes it binding, that He shall call everyone as **knowledgeable**, then why does he consider **knowledge** as an attribute of perfection of prophethood? Because, [such an attribute in which] there is no exclusivity for believers or even for humans;⁷⁸ then, how can this be an exclusive attribute of prophethood? And if one does not consider it binding, then it is necessary to explain the reason for differentiating between a prophet and a non-prophet. And if he refers to all kinds of knowledge such that not even a single thing remains unknown, then the invalidity of such an idea is proven by numerous narrated⁷⁹ and rational proofs.⁸⁰

Which proves that the previously stated verses are not valid⁸¹ according to the above argument. O Muslims! Did you notice that this insolent man has not only reviled Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ, but has also considered the Speech of his Lord, Almighty Allāh tāālā to be invalid.⁸²

⁷⁵ Either our Prophet or all other prophets صلى الله عليه وسلم.

⁷⁶ Notice the caution of Alahazrat, that in such sentences said for the sake of argument, he does not use the name of Allāh tāālā, rather uses the descriptive: *Khudā* or God.

⁷⁷ *ʿālim*: knower or knowledgeable.

⁷⁸ As already claimed – even quadrupeds have knowledge, thus the negation of exclusivity.

⁷⁹ *dalīl e naqlī o āqlī se sābit hai*.

⁸⁰ These lines follow the inflammatory passage in the original *Ĥifzu'l Īmān*. If one reads the whole passage, it is apparent that Thānawī rejects '*part ilm al-ghayb*' and draws similarity of such '*part ilm al-ghayb*' of the Prophet ﷺ with that of animals and madmen; because he trails the discussion with the invalidity of '*kull ilm al-ghayb*.' So the parallels drawn are not accidental or an incidental outcome, but rather deliberate and intentional.

⁸¹ Because Allāh tāālā has enumerated knowledge – without qualification – as a praiseworthy and attribute of perfection for prophets.

⁸² Because, the Lord says that knowledge is an attribute of perfection for prophets; but Thānawī says it is not.

O Muslims! A person whose audacity has plummeted to such depths that he equates the knowledge of unseen of RasūlAllāh ﷺ with the knowledge of madmen and animals; would it be any surprise if he shuts his eyes, [disregarding] faith and humanity and say: ‘what is the difference between a prophet and an animal?’⁸³ Would it be surprising if he rejects the Word of Allāh tāālā, terms it as invalid, throws it behind and tramples over it – in fact, only a person who does all of this will dare to utter a disrespectful epithet describing RasūlAllāh ﷺ. But ask him, whether the same description can be used for his own self and for his teachers? Ask these insolent people whether they will allow us to attribute them with the very words that they have used to describe RasūlAllāh ﷺ? Why are you people called as scholars and shaykhs, leaders and imāms, this and that, or such and such⁸⁴ – why are they not called as animals?

For example, why are they not called as dogs and pigs? Why do your followers respect you, and on what account do they kiss your hands and feet? Why do they not do these things with animals – for example, why do they not show such reverence to donkeys? What is the reason for this difference? After all, certainly, even you do not possess complete knowledge; so, where is the exclusivity for you folk in your partial knowledge? Because, such knowledge is possessed by owls, donkeys, dogs and pigs – then it would become necessary to address them as scholars and shaykhs.

But if you will make it binding upon yourself that you will call all of them as scholars, then why are you considered as distinguished on account of your knowledge? In such a thing [as knowledge,] in which there is no exclusivity for believers – or even to humans; and an attribute [of knowledge] which donkeys, dogs and pigs all share; why is this your distinguishing attribute?⁸⁵ And if there is no such binding,⁸⁶ then by your own rule, it is necessary to explain the difference between you people and donkeys, dogs and pigs. O Muslims! If you ask them in this manner, it will be unmistakably evident that these folk have explicitly reviled Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ and also

⁸³ This is a rhetorical question, highlighting the context and implication of such speech.

⁸⁴ *āālim, fāzil, mullā, chuniñ chunañ*

⁸⁵ *kamālāt*: distinguishing feature or trait; not the literal meaning of perfection.

⁸⁶ *iltizām*: that you will call everyone a scholar.

rejected verses of the Qur'an.⁸⁷ O Muslims! Ask this particular insolent person and his followers whether this verse of the Qur'an describes them or not; your Lord Almighty Allāh says:⁸⁸

And We have created for hell, many among the jinn and mankind – they have hearts with which they do not understand, and they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear; they are like cattle – or even worse in being astray; and it is they who are heedless.

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ
وَالْإِنْسِ لِيَمَّ قُلُوبَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ
أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَا
يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا أُولَئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَمِ بَلْ هُمْ
أَضَلُّ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

Did you see him – he, who has taken his desire as his god; wouldst you be responsible for him? Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are like cattle – rather worse in having deviated from the path.⁸⁹

أَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ أَفَأَنْتَ
تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكَيْلًا ﴿٦٩﴾ أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ
أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا
كَالْأَنْعَمِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٧٠﴾

Ask these insolent people who have equated the knowledge of quadrupeds with the knowledge of prophets ﷺ: 'Is your knowledge equal to that of prophets – or that of the leader of all prophets ﷺ?' Surely, they will not dare to explicitly claim such equality.

But if they do – after all, when they have equated it⁹⁰ with four-legged beasts, would it be a surprise if they claim it for two-legged ones?⁹¹ Suppose they do, ask them whether there is anyone among their teachers or shaykhs who is greater than them in knowledge. After all, there MUST be someone, who is higher to them in knowledge? When they find that *someone*, then

⁸⁷ When Thānawī says that knowledge is not a distinguishing attribute of prophets ﷺ it implies that he rejects the verses which say that it is an attribute of distinction.

⁸⁸ Sūrah Aārāf, 7:179.

⁸⁹ Sūrah Furqān, 25:43-44.

⁹⁰ The knowledge of prophets ﷺ .

⁹¹ The insolent people themselves.

obviously these people are lesser than that *someone*, otherwise why would they become their students or followers? In which case, the knowledge of this *someone*, is equal to that of animals or cattle. These insolent followers are therefore, more astray than cattle according to the above verses, which describe them aptly.

Thus, is their punishment; and the punishment of the hereafter is greater, if they only knew!⁹²

كَذَلِكَ الْعَذَابُ وَالْعَذَابُ الْأَخْرَى أَكْبَرُ لَوْ
كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

﴿٦٣﴾

⁹² Sūrah Qalam, 68:33.

FALSEHOOD IN DIVINE SPEECH

O Muslims! Thus was the description of words which were disrespectful to prophets and even the Master of all Prophets ﷺ; what can one say about statements that assail the Glory of Allāh tāālā Himself! For the sake of Allāh, be just, and say whether a person who says the following remains a Muslim?

When did I say that I do not believe that falsehood can transpire⁹³ [in the Speech of] the Creator?⁹⁴

Which means, the Lord Almighty is effectively a liar, has lied and shall lie. And concerning the above statement, the muftī who issued the following ruling:

Even though such a person has erred in the understanding of Quranic verses,⁹⁵ one should not call him a kāfir, a heretic or a misguided person.

and said:

One should not say harsh things to such a person⁹⁶

and said:

Because it would necessitate takfir of elder scholars;⁹⁷ a Ḥanafī cannot scorn or claim that a Shāfiyī is misguided.

In other words: It has been – *māādihAllāh* – the madh’hab of many elder scholars that the Lord Almighty is a liar.⁹⁸ This is a topic upon which there

⁹³ ***wuqūū e kizb e Bāri***: that falsehood shall or has occurred [in the speech] of Allāh tāālā.

⁹⁴ This is the statement of some person upon which Rashīd Aḥmed was asked for a fatwā; instead of ruling that such a person is a kāfir, Rashīd Aḥmed rationalised these statements. See Appendix C for a full translation of the *istiftā* and the fatwā. In summary, it was this fatwā, upon which Rashīd Aḥmed was ruled a kāfir; later Deobandis deny this fatwā and claim that it is a forgery – even though Gangohī neither refuted it nor denied it himself, in spite of the *takfir* made on this account, and was published and circulated widely in his own lifetime.

⁹⁵ ***ta’wīl e āyāt***

⁹⁶ Mentioned in the *istiftā*: that he believes in ***wuqūū e kizb e Bāri***

⁹⁷ ***ūlamā e salaf ki takfir lāzim āati hai***

⁹⁸ According to such a muftī – i.e. Rashīd Aḥmed Gangohī.

is difference and is similar to the difference of Ḥanafīs and Shāfiyīs; some hold their hands [in prayer] below the navel, and some above. Similarly, some have said that the Almighty is truthful and some have said that He is a liar. Therefore, do not consider a person who calls Him a liar as misguided or a heretic.⁹⁹ So, if one calls the Almighty a liar – let alone calling him a heretic, do not even consider him a sinner! One who issues a ruling about the belie of the Almighty, and of his own volition attests that the Almighty has **‘Power to utter falsehood; but it is impossible to occur, and this is an issue that is agreed upon;’**¹⁰⁰ does such a person remain a Muslim? Particularly, when he has explicitly attested:¹⁰¹

The meaning of occurrence of falsehood thus becomes valid.¹⁰²

That is, it is valid to say that falsehood has occurred in the [speech of the] Almighty. Does a person who says so remain a Muslim? And does one who considers such a person as a Muslim, remain a Muslim himself? O Muslim! For the sake of Allāh, be just and fair. After all, by definition, ‘faith’ means to attest¹⁰³ to the Truth of Allāh tāālā; and its diametric opposite is to belie.¹⁰⁴ Belie means to consider someone as having lied. When someone explicitly says that the Almighty can lie, and yet his faith remains intact – only the Lord knows – ‘faith’ is the name of which animal! Why are Magians, Hindus, Christians and Jews considered as *kāfir*? They do not call even those objects they worship [as gods] as liars. Yes, they reject the Word of the True Lord, the Almighty – by denying that the Qur’ān is not His Word; or by refusing to accept what it describes. As such, there might not be a *kāfir* in this world who considers his god as a god; and his speech as his speech –and yet claim that his speech contains falsehood and that it is valid to say that falsehood

⁹⁹ As implied by the fatwā. By not ruling such a person kāfir, the muftī himself becomes a kāfir; and as if this was not enough, the muftī’s explanation attests *wuqūū* and leaves no room for misunderstanding.

¹⁰⁰ ***qudrah ālā al-kadhīb maā imtināā al-wuqūū***: See Alahazrat’s classic ***Sub’hān as-Subbūh*** for a detailed refutation of this mendacity and a paper in English based on it, ***The Truth About a Lie***, in which *kalām* terms crucial for a clear understanding of this issue were explained.

¹⁰¹ Rashīd Aḥmed.

¹⁰² ***wuqūū e kizb ke maānī durust ho gaye*** according to the fatwā; see Appendix C.

¹⁰³ ***taṣḍīq***: to attest to the truth of someone.

¹⁰⁴ ***takdhīb, takzib***: to belie, to consider someone false or their speech falsehood.

has occurred in such speech.¹⁰⁵ An unbiased person will not have any doubt that these people have blasphemed against Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ. This is where you are tested by Allāh; fear Allāh, the Subduer, the One, the Powerful,¹⁰⁶ and recall the verses that have been mentioned earlier and act upon them. If you do so, faith will fill your heart with a dislike of the blasphemers; it will certainly not allow you to side with those who have insulted Allāh and Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ. You will be averse to them and you will dissociate from them, instead of finding baseless and lame excuses for their abuses. Be just for the sake of Allāh! If a person reviles your father or your mother, your teachers, your shaykhs – and not just verbal insults, but written ones that are printed and published; will you still maintain your friendship with them? Will you find excuses for them or try to interpret their words favourably? Or totally ignore them?

No, no; never!

If you have self-respect as a human should, and care for the honour of your parents or teachers as any self-respecting individual should, you would find their¹⁰⁷ very faces abhorrent. You would flee from them, you would even avoid their shadows; you would be upset on hearing their names – and detest those people who try to find excuses for such abuses. Now, place the honour of your parents and teachers on one side of the scale, and your belief in the honour and respect of Allāh tāālā and Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ on another. If you are a Muslim – you will certainly consider the love and honour of Allāh and His Messenger to be greater than that of your parents. You wouldst consider respecting them [Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ] far more important than anything else – and far more necessary and mandatory than any obligation or obligatory act. Your hate for those who insult your parents should not be a thousandth part of what it should be for those who insult Allāh tāālā and His Messenger ﷺ. And such are the people for whom, glad tidings of the Seven Gifts are given.

O Muslims! This humble well-wisher of yours hopes that you will heed the verses of Allāh tāālā, the Subduer – and after this exposition, you will not require another explanation, and your own faith will urge you to proclaim

¹⁰⁵ Of what he considers as his god.

¹⁰⁶ *Wāḥid, Qaḥḥār, Jabbār*

¹⁰⁷ Those who insult your parents or teachers and hurl profanities at them.

those words which Allāh tāālā has mentioned in the Qur’ān to teach you, quoting the followers of Sayyiduna Ibrāhīm ﷺ:

Verily, there is an excellent example for you in Ibrāhīm and those with him; when they said to their people: ‘verily, we are dissociated from you and that which you worship other than Allāh; we reject you – and between you and us, enmity and hatred has arisen forever; until you believe in the One God, Allāh...’¹⁰⁸

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءُؤُا
مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا
بِكُمْ وَبِذَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدُوَّةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ
أَبَدًا حَتَّى تُوْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدَهُ

Verily for you, there was an excellent example in them; for he who has hope in Allāh and the Final day; and for he who turns away – verily Allāh tāālā is *Al-Ghaniyy*,¹⁰⁹ the Praised.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ
يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ
اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿١٠٩﴾

He says, just as the companions of My friend¹¹⁰ Ibrāhīm, readily became enemies of their own community and immediately abandoned them, and plainly told them that they had broken off all relations with them and they detest them, so also you should distance from those who insult Allāh tāālā and His Messenger ﷺ. Allāh tāālā is telling this to you for your own good; if you accept, you will be vouchsafed – and if you reject, then Allāh tāālā does not care for your actions. If you side with those who have sought enmity with Allāh – then along with them, or even the whole world – Allāh tāālā does not care for anybody or anything. These are rulings from the Qur’ān. Whosoever Allāh wishes to bestow favour upon, will guide them to obey His commands.

﴿١٠٩﴾

¹⁰⁸ Sūrah Mumtaḥanah, 60:4

¹⁰⁹ Sūrah Mumtaḥanah, 60:6. *Al-Ghaniyy*: Absolute Sovereign, Absolutely Independent.

¹¹⁰ Khalīl of Allāh : the friend of Allāh.

ALIBIS OF THE FIRST GROUP

At this point, there are two groups of people who have reservations in accepting the above rulings. The first group is of uninformed and ignorant people; and they present two excuses:

The First Alibi: *These people are our teachers, our elders and our friends.* The answer to this excuse has already been given from the verses of the Qur'ān earlier, that Allāh tāālā has repeatedly said in His Book and expressly said that if you wish to escape the Wrath of Allāh tāālā, do not make any concessions to an insolent person even if he is your own father.

The Second Alibi: *These people are also scholars; and how can we consider scholars as kāfirs or censure them?* This is also answered by your Lord Almighty who says:

Did you see him – he who has taken his own desire as his god? Allāh tāālā has made him to go astray in spite of his knowledge; He has sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a veil on his sight. After Allāh tāālā, who will guide him? Do you not heed admonition?¹¹¹

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ - وَقَلْبِهِ -
وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ - عَشُورَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ
بَعْدِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

And He says:

The example of those who were tasked to convey the Torah but did not bear it, is like that of a donkey carrying books. What a bad example of a people are they – they who belie the signs of Allāh. Verily Allāh does not guide the transgressors.¹¹²

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ
يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا
بِئْسَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

¹¹¹ Sūrah Jāthiyah, 45:23.

¹¹² Sūrah Jumuhāh, 62:5.

And He says:

And recite unto them, the chronicle of whom We gave knowledge of our signs – but he departed from it, and Satan pursued him – and he became a transgressor. If We wished, we would have elevated him, on account of his knowledge, but he held his ground [and worldly life] and followed his desire; his example is like that of a dog – which pants if you chase it and pants if you leave it alone. This is the example of the people who belied our signs; so narrate these parables, mayhap they will ponder. What a bad example is that of a people who belied our signs and harmed their own selves. Whoever Allāh has guided is on the right path; and those He let go astray, verily, they are in a great misfortune.¹¹³

وَأْتَلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا
فَأَسْلَخَ مِنْهَا فَأَتَّبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ
الْعَاوِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ
أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَآتَبَعَ هَوَاهُ فَمَثَلُهُ
كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحْمِلَ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثُ أَوْ
تَرَكَهُ يَلْهَثُ ۚ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ
كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَاقْصُصِ الْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

سَاءَ مَثَلًا الْقَوْمُ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
وَأَنْفُسَهُمْ كَانُوا يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١١٥﴾ مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ
فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِي وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ
الْخٰسِرُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

Guidance is not guaranteed by knowledge; it is the discretion of the Lord Almighty. These are verses of the Qur’ān and there are numerous ḥadīth that warn about misguided scholars. For example, in one ḥadīth, it is said that the angels of hell will seize such scholars before they seize idol-worshippers; when they protest, ‘do you seize us even before you take idol-worshippers?’ The [angels will] answer:¹¹⁴ ‘Those who know are not the same as those who do not know.’¹¹⁵ Brothers! A scholar is respected because he is considered as an heir of the Prophet ﷺ; and this is true when he is rightly guided.

¹¹³ Sūrah Aārāf, 7:175-178.

¹¹⁴ *Shuāb al-Īmān*, Bayhaqī, Ḥadīth #1900.

¹¹⁵ **Alahazrat’s footnote:** This ḥadīth is reported by Ṭabarānī in *Mujam al-Kabīr*, Abū Nuāym in *Ḥilyah* narrating from Anas ؓ elevated it to RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

But when he goes astray, is he the Prophet's heir, or the heir of Satan? In the former case, respecting him is respecting the Prophet;¹¹⁶ and in the latter, it is showing respect to Satan. And this is so, when such a scholar has not even breached the boundary of kufr, like scholars among innovators. Then, what about those who commit explicit kufr? It is kufr to even *consider* him a scholar, let alone *respecting* him for being a scholar. Brothers! Knowledge is beneficial, but only when it is accompanied by faith and righteousness; otherwise pandits¹¹⁷ and priests¹¹⁸ are also scholars, aren't they? Iblīs was a big scholar, but does any Muslim respect him? He was known as the "Teacher of Angels,"¹¹⁹ but when he turned his face away from the esteem of Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ – because the light of RasūlAllāh ﷺ shone in the forehead¹²⁰ of Sayyidunā Ādam ﷺ and Iblis did not prostrate to it; from that moment, he wears the collar of damnation around his neck.

And since that day, his rightly-guided students¹²¹ send damnation upon him; every Ramaḍān, he is shackled in chains of fire for the whole month; and on the day of Judgement, they will drag him and throw him in hell. It is clear that respect for knowledge or teachers is eliminated when they are disrespectful to RasūlAllāh ﷺ. Brothers! A million laments upon such claims of being Muslim, who considers the eminence of his teachers as more important than Allāh tālā or Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ. Or the love of brothers or friends is more valuable than the love of Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ. O Allāh! Give us true faith for the sake of Your beloved ﷺ and for the sake of his true esteem and mercy. Āmīn.



¹¹⁶ Because you respect his heir.

¹¹⁷ Hindu religious scholars.

¹¹⁸ Christian religious scholars.

¹¹⁹ *muḍllimu'l malakūt*

¹²⁰ **Alahazrat's footnote:** It is in *Tafsīr al-Kabīr* of Imām Fakhrudīn Rāzī concerning the verse: 'And these are Messengers, we made some superior to others..' [Sūrah Baqarah, 2:253]:

The Angels were commanded to prostrate to Ādam because the light of Muḥammad ﷺ shone in his forehead. And in *Tafsīr Nishāpūri*: The prostration of angels to Ādam was on account of the light of Muḥammad ﷺ that shone in the forehead of Ādam ﷺ.

¹²¹ *shāgirdān-e-rashīd*: here it refers to angels.

ALIBIS OF THE SECOND GROUP

The second group is that of adamant people, enemies of religion – those who deny necessary aspects¹²² of religion themselves, and then after uttering explicit statements of *kufr*, they attempt to erase it by proffering interpretations so that the rider of *ḍarūrī*¹²³ is lifted and thus they can escape the ruling of *kufr*. As if Islam is nothing more than parroting the *kalimah*– even if such a person considers the Almighty as a liar or utters filthy words referring to the Messenger ﷺ, his faith remains intact.¹²⁴

Rather, Allāh has damned them due to their disbelief; and very little is what they believe.¹²⁵

بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ

These are enemies of Muslims and Islam. And to deceive commonfolk, they craft a few satanic devices – and attempt to modify the religion of Allāh.¹²⁶

THE FIRST SUBTERFUGE

They say: *Islam is the name of uttering the kalimah; it is said in the ḥadīth: whoever uttered lā ilāha illā Allāh shall enter paradise.*¹²⁷ Then how can anyone become a *kāfir* by just saying or doing something?

O Muslims! Beware of this accursed deception; which implies that as if reciting the *kalimah* makes one the son of the Almighty! Because, if a man's son abuses him or beats him – or does whatever – he still remains that man's son. Similarly, if one says *lā ilāha illā Allāh*, and then calls the Almighty as a

¹²² *zarūriyat e dīn*: those things that are necessary to know and denying it is *kufr*. The respect of RasūlAllāh ﷺ is a requirement of religion.

¹²³ *ḍarūrī*: necessary, requirement; same as the above footnote.

¹²⁴ According to this second group of people.

¹²⁵ Sūrah Al-Baqarah, 2:88; 'little' is used euphemistically to mean none at all [*Madārik*]

¹²⁶ When such people try to insist that these heresies like 'falsehood is included in Divine power' is an old issue WITHIN Ahl as-Sunnah, is it not an attempt to change the religion of Allāh tāālā? *lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*.

¹²⁷ Ṭabarānī, *Mújam al-Kabīr*, Ḥadīth No. 2348.

liar or abuses the Prophet ﷺ, his faith remains unaffected.¹²⁸ One of the answers to this deception is already given above:

Do people expect to be spared by merely saying 'We believe', and they will not be tested?¹²⁹

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا
ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

If Islām¹³⁰ were valid by mere recitation of the kalimah, then why does the Qur'ān criticise and refute delusions of people?¹³¹ Your Lord Almighty says:

The bedouins say: 'We bear faith.' Tell them: you have not believed yet; rather say, 'we have submitted' as faith has still not entered your hearts.¹³²

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ ءَامَنَّا فَلَمْ نَدُخِلْهُمْ
فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَكِنْ قُلُوا
قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي
قُلُوبِكُمْ ۚ

And He says:

When the hypocrites come to you, they say: 'We bear witness that indeed you are the Messenger of Allāh.' And Allāh knows that verily, you are His Messenger – and Allāh gives witness that verily, the hypocrites are liars.¹³³

إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ قَالُوا نَشْهَدُ
إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ
لَرَسُولُهُ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ
لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

¹²⁸ This is also derived from the verse that refutes the Jews and Christians, when they said: “**we are the sons of Allāh and His beloved ones**” [Sūrah Māyidah, 5:18.] Ibn Ābbās reports that RasūlAllāh ﷺ was telling the community to fear Allāh, and the Jews and Christians said the above as cited in the verse.

¹²⁹ Sūrah Ānkabūt, 29:2.

¹³⁰ **Alahazrat's Footnote:** Shaykh Mujaddid e Alf e Thānī (Imām Ahmed Sirhindī, d.1034 AH) says in his *Maktūbāt*:

In Islām it is not sufficient to merely say the *kalimah*; rather it is necessary to attest to all the required aspects of religion - all that can be known spontaneously. It is also necessary to disavow and repudiate disbelief (kufr) and infidels (kāfirs) so that (one's) Islām is valid from all perspectives.

¹³¹ They will be spared by merely saying that they are Muslims as mentioned in the verse.

¹³² Sūrah Hujurāt, 49:14.

¹³³ Sūrah Munāfiqūn, 63:1.

Notice, that uttering the kalimah and swearing oaths that they were truthful did not avail the hypocrites – Allāh tāālā revealed and bore witness that they were liars. If one says: ‘he who utters *lā ilāha illā Allāh* will enter paradise’ to mean ‘regardless of anything,’ he is actually rejecting the Qur’ān.

However, concerning one who recites the kalimah and calls himself a Muslim; we shall certainly consider him a Muslim as long as he does not contradict fundamental precepts of Islām either in word or deed. And if such a word or deed [that negates Islām] has occurred, then his utterance of the kalimah is of no use. Your Lord Almighty Allāh says:

They swear by Allāh that they did not say [things disrespectful to the Prophet] And verily, they have uttered words of disbelief [kufr] and have become disbelievers after having been Muslims.¹³⁴

يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ مَا قَالُوا وَلَقَدْ قَالُوا كَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلَامِهِمْ

Ibn Jarīr [al-Ṭabarī,] Ṭabarānī, Abu’l Shaykh, Ibn Mardawīh report from ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؓ who narrates that:¹³⁵

RasūlAllāh ﷺ was sitting in the shade of a tree; presently he said: ‘A man will come to you now and look at you with the eyes of Satan; do not speak with him when he comes.’ After a while, a man with amber¹³⁶ eyes appeared. RasūlAllāh ﷺ called him and asked: ‘Why were you and your friends saying disrespectful things about me?’ The man went back and brought his companions and they swore that they had not said anything that was insulting or disrespectful. Allāh tāālā revealed these verses on this occasion and said: ‘You swear that you have not said it; but you have certainly said it and it is an utterance of disbelief [word of kufr] – and because of this, you have become kāfirs after [previously] having been Muslims.’

¹³⁴ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:74.

¹³⁵ Various *tafsīrs* mention this report citing from Ibn Jarīr, in the commentary of the verse 74 of Sūrah Tawbah. See *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr* for more details.

¹³⁶ The word in ḥādīth is **azraq** – literally ‘blue,’ but it does not necessarily mean blue. Amber or grey eyes are also termed as *azraq*, as mentioned in *Tāj al-Ārūs*. Alahazrat has translated it as **‘karanji ānkhōñ wālā’** meaning one with hazel or amber eyes.

Allāh tāālā bears witness that those who say disrespectful things about the Prophet ﷺ become kāfir even if they insist that they are Muslims.

If you ask them, [why they said so] they will reply, 'We were jesting and were being playful.' Tell them: 'Do you make fun of Allāh tāālā, His verses and His Messenger?' Do not give excuses – you have disbelieved after professing faith.¹³⁷

وَلَيْنِ سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا
نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ قُلْ أَبِاللَّهِ
وَأَيِّئَاتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ كُنْتُمْ
تَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿١٣٧﴾ لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ
كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ

Ibn Abī Shaybah, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abī Hātim and Abu'l Shaykh report from Mujāhid, a prominent disciple of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās ؓ and he narrates:¹³⁸

Concerning the verse: **When you ask them, they say, 'We were jesting and were being playful.'** A hypocrite said: 'Muḥammad ﷺ tells us that the camel of so-and-so is in such-and-such a valley; what does he know of the unseen?'¹³⁹

O Muslims! Notice, that a hypocrite who said: '*what does Muḥammad ﷺ know about the unseen*' was deemed an insult to Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ and Allāh tāālā categorically rejects all excuses and says: "*Do not try to find excuses – you have become kāfirs after having professed faith.*"¹⁴⁰

This is also a lesson to those who deny that the Prophet ﷺ did not have any knowledge of the unseen.¹⁴¹ This is the speech of hypocrites, and anyone who says so, according to the verse, mocks Allāh tāālā, the Qurʾān and RasūlAllāh ﷺ and is an open disbeliever and an apostate.¹⁴² Because, to possess knowledge of the unseen is a distinct attribute of prophets as said by Imām Ghazālī, Imām Qaṣṣallānī, Mawlānā ʿAlī al-Qārī, ʿĀllāmah Muḥammad Zurqānī and other senior scholars, which I have mentioned in

¹³⁷ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:65-66.

¹³⁸ *Tafsīr Ibn Jarīr at-Ṭabarī* and *Tafsīr Durr al-Manthūr*; concerning the verse.

¹³⁹ Lit., "*What does Muḥammad ﷺ know about the ghayb?*"

¹⁴⁰ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:66.

¹⁴¹ *muṭlaqaan munkir haiñ*: those who deny such knowledge absolutely.

¹⁴² According to Sūrah Tawbah, 9:65-66.

various books I have written on this subject.¹⁴³ It is exceedingly strange and obvious heresy, that one denies that prophets have such knowledge and [says] that it is *muḥāl* even if this knowledge has been **bestowed** by Allāh tāālā.¹⁴⁴ Then, according to this person everything is hidden from Allāh tāālā and He cannot give this knowledge to anyone even if He so wishes! May Allāh tāālā protect us from the deception of Satan.

Āmīn.

Yes, the claim of even a speck of knowledge for anyone without being given by Allāh tāālā is certainly kufr. It is also an invalid belief that the knowledge of [anyone in the] creation¹⁴⁵ can encompass the knowledge of Allāh tāālā, and is against the opinion of most¹⁴⁶ scholars. However, the knowledge about everything from the first day to the final day of judgement – that which has happened and shall happen, *mā kāna wa mā yakūn*¹⁴⁷ – is only a

¹⁴³ And his masterpiece *Ad-Dawlatu'l Makkīyyah*.

¹⁴⁴ **Alahazrat's footnote:** By the grace of Allah, there are four upcoming epistles refuting this novel narrative: 1) *Irāḥatu Jawāniḥ al-Ghayb* 2) *Al-Jalā al-Kāmil* 3) *Ibrā'a al-Majnūn* 4) *Mayl al-Hudāh* among which the first will be published very soon along with a translation and the rest will also follow, with the aid of Allāh; *wa billāhi't tawfīq*.

¹⁴⁵ Anyone and everyone in the creation: *ilm e makhlūq*.

¹⁴⁶ **Alahazrat's footnote:** The reason why we have restricted it to 'most' shall be explained, InShāAllāh, in the gloss titled, *Fuyūdāt al-Malikiyyah li Muḥibbi al-Dawlah al-Makkīyyah*.

¹⁴⁷ From the first day of the first creation coming into existence, until the day of Judgement. And we believe that RasūlAllāh ﷺ was given this knowledge. In the gloss:

Thus it is proven that it is impossible [*muḥāl*] by both Law [*sharān*] and rational proofs [*āqlan*] that for anyone in the creation to encompass [*ūḥāṭah*] the Knowledge of Allāh completely and comprehensively; rather even if the knowledge of first and the last [in the creation] are put together, it is not even comparable to the relation, a billionth part of a drop of water has to a billion oceans because that billionth part is from a drop of infinity and thus infinite in itself and so forth [recursively].

Further, replying to an accusation in *Ghāyatu'l Ma'mūl*:

This is our belief in Allāh tāālā. Anyone who reflects on this explanation in this section – not to mention these final comments concerning the comparison of the knowledge of Creator and that of His creation – will be convinced that I am exonerated from the falsehood and slander of those who attribute the following belief to me: **"he [Aḥmed Ridā] claimed equality [*musāwāh*] of the Knowledge of the Creator and His creation [that is RasūlAllāh ﷺ] except that the two differed only in former being Pre-Eternal and the latter an accident [*qidam wa ḥudūth*]."**

small fragment from the infinite knowledge of Allāh tāālā. The comparison of this fragment, is like the comparison of a billionth part of a drop of water in relation to a billion oceans. Indeed, this 'part' is itself a small part of the knowledge of Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ. I have described all these issues in *Dawlatu'l Makkīyah* and other books.

Anyway, this was mentioned as a point of objection, *in-shā'Allāh*, it was a beneficial digression; and now, let us now return to our previous discussion.

THE SECOND SUBTERFUGE

They say: *The madh'hab of Imām Aázam ؒ is: 'takfir is not done of anyone who prays facing the qiblah' and it is in the ḥadīth that: 'whoever prays facing our qiblah and eats our dhabiḥah¹⁴⁸ is a Muslim'.¹⁴⁹*

O Muslim! This is an unclean deception in which, they go beyond mere utterance of the kalimah, and reduce faith to facing the qiblah. Thus, one who faces the qiblah and prays is a Muslim, even if he says that Allāh tāālā lies, or insults Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ – his faith remains intact,

as firm as the ablution of bibi tamiyz¹⁵⁰

Concerning the word **most**, he writes:

Yes, in spite of all this, we still do not do takfir of those who say this, as claimed in *Mawḏūāt*. This is because, gnostics like Sayyidi Abu'l Ḥasan al-Bakrī ؒ and those who followed him have said so, as mentioned by Shaykh Áshmāwī ؒ in his commentary of *Ṣalāt Aḥmed al-Badawī*...

Citing the opinion of the famous muḥaddith, Shāh Ábd al-Ḥaqq al-Dihlawī, he writes:

...Shaykh Ábd al-Ḥaqq mentioned this in his *Madāriju'n Nubuwwah* and neither did takfir, nor called him a heretic [*yuḏallil*.] he did not even name him and simply said, 'a gnostic has said;' and followed it, with the comment: 'Allāh tāālā knows better what he really meant by this, because if this is taken literally [*āla zāhirihi*] it contradicts numerous [established] proofs'.

This issue is also discussed in extensive detail by the great Moroccan ḥadīth imām, Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Jaáfar al-Kittānī [1274-1345/1857-1927] in his book, ***Jalā'a al-Qulūb mina'l Aṣḏā'a al-Ghayniyyah bi Bayāni Iḥāṭatihi*** ؒ ***bi'l Úlūm al-Kawniyyah*** in two volumes.

¹⁴⁸ Animal slaughtered according to Islamic Law.

¹⁴⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Ṣalah. 1/56.

¹⁵⁰ *chuñ wuzu e muḥkam e bibi tamiyz*

The First Answer: Your Lord Almighty ﷻ says:

Righteousness is not in turning your faces towards the east or the west; rather, virtue is in he who bears faith in Allāh and the Final Day, and the angels, and the Book and the prophets.¹⁵¹

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ
قَبْلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ
مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَأَمَّلَ الْكِتَابَ وَالنَّبِيَّيْنَ

Thus it is explained that the most important thing is that one should have faith in the necessities of religion; merely turning to face a direction to pray is of no use [when a fault exists in the fundamentals]. Allāh táālā says:

That which they spend [in charity] was not barred from acceptance, except because they disbelieved in Allāh and His Messenger; and they do not come to prayer, except languidly; nor do they give charity, except reluctantly.¹⁵²

وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَنْ تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ نَفَقَتُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنَّهُمْ
كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ - وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الصَّلَاةَ
إِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالَى وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ
كُرْهُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

They [hypocrites] were called as kāfirs, in spite of their prayer; were they not facing the qiblah? Not only were they facing the qiblah, they were praying behind the qiblah of hearts and souls, the kábah of religion and faith, Sayyidunā RasūlAllāh ﷺ himself! Allāh táālā says:

So, if they repent and establish prayer, and give charity, they are your brothers in religion. And we explain our verses to people who know. But if they violate their covenants and scorn your religion, then slay the leaders of disbelief, as their oaths are not valid anymore – mayhap, they refrain.¹⁵³

فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ
فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَنُقِصِلُ الْأَيُّمَ لِقَوْمِ
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾ وَإِنْ نَكَثُوا أَيْمَنَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ
عَهْدِهِمْ وَطَعَنُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ فَقَتَلُوا أُنْمَةً
الْكَافِرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَا أَيْمَانَ لَهُمْ لَعَلَّيْهِمْ يَنْتَهُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

¹⁵¹ Sūrah Baqarah, 2:177.

¹⁵² Sūrah Tawbah, 9:54.

¹⁵³ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:11-12.

When those who prayed and gave charity said something scorning religion, they were described as leaders of kufr, and chiefs of disbelievers. Is it not scorning religion to disrespect Allāh tāālā and His Messenger? Listen to what your Lord Almighty says:

Among the Jews are those who distort words from their places and say: "We hear and we disobey. Hear us, may you never be able to hear, be considerate with us." They say *rāyīnā* by twisting their tongues, and to scorn [your] religion. If they had said "We hear and obey; hear us and show consideration," it would be better for them and appropriate. But Allāh has damned them because of their kufr and they will not believe, except little.¹⁵⁴

مِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأَسْمَعُ غَيْرَ مُسْمَعٍ وَرَعْنَا لَيْئًا بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ وَطَعْنَا فِي آلِدِينٍ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأَسْمَعُ وَأَنْظُرْنَا لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ وَلَكِنْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٤٦﴾

In Madinah, Jews would attend the assembly of the Prophet ﷺ and would say: 'Hear us! May you never be made to hear.' On the outside, this was meant as a prayer, meaning: 'May you never hear an undesirable thing,' but in their hearts, they had this sick intention: 'may you become deaf.' When the Messenger ﷺ said something, they would say *rāyīnā*, outwardly meaning 'have consideration for us, we have not understood it properly.'¹⁵⁵

But the Jews would actually intend another meaning. Some have said that they intended *rūūnah*¹⁵⁶ and others said that they used to twist their tongues and say it with a little elongation, *rāyīnā*, meaning 'our shepherd.' When an innuendo is considered as disparaging religion, should not an explicit insult be worse? If you are judicious, you will not fail to notice that

¹⁵⁴ Sūrah Nisā', 4:46.

¹⁵⁵ They tried to pretend as if they were saying: '*ihfaznā* - protect us,' though they really meant to insult by deriving it from *rūūnah* [*Mufradāt al-Qur'ān*, Imām Rāghib al-Aṣḥānī].

¹⁵⁶ *rūūnah* means foolishness or imbecility. In major readings it is recited as *rāyīnā* without tanwīn meaning, 'Do not say *rāyīnā*.' Ḥasan recited this verse with tanwīn: *lā taqūlū rayīnan*; Thālab says that it means: '[O] Jews, who say this] do not utter a lie, in mockery and foolishness' [*Tāj al-Ārūs*].

even negative meanings of the innuendos [mentioned in the verse, uttered by the Jews] are not as ugly as these explicit insults.¹⁵⁷ A curse to be deaf, foolishness or calling him a shepherd – are not as ugly¹⁵⁸ as saying: ‘less in knowledge than Satan,’ or ‘equal to madmen and animals in knowledge’ or referring to God, ‘that He is a liar, tells lies and one who calls Him a liar is a righteous Sunni Muslim.’ *al-iyādhu billāh!* We seek Allāh’s refuge.

The Second Answer: Attributing this ugly delusion¹⁵⁹ to the *madh’hab* of Imām Aázam رحمته is a slander of the Imām, because he has said in his famous book explaining the creed of Ahl as-Sunnah:¹⁶⁰

The Attributes of Allāh are Pre-eternal and are not accidents; nor are His Attributes created by Himself; whoever says that His Attributes are His creation or that they are accidents, or tarried in belief or doubted in this, then verily, he has disbelieved in Allāh.

The Imām says in his *Kitāb al-Waṣiyyah*:¹⁶¹

Whoever says that the Speech of Allāh is a creation, is a disbeliever of Allāh tāālā.

Álī al-Qārī says in the commentary of *Fiqh al-Akbar*:¹⁶²

Fakhr al-Islām¹⁶³ mentioned a validated report that Imām Abū Yūsuf said: ‘I debated Abū Ḥanīfah in the issue of *Createdness of the Qur’ān*, and eventually we both agreed that whosoever says that Qur’ān is created is a disbeliever (kāfir).’ This has also been reported by Imām Muḥammad.

It is the unanimous opinion and agreement of the three [foremost] imams of the *madh’hab*, that those who say that the noble Qur’ān is a created thing are kāfirs. The Mútazilah, the Karrāmiyyah and the Rāfidīs, who claim that

¹⁵⁷ Explicit insults uttered by Gangohī, Ambhetwī and Thānawī.

¹⁵⁸ They are ugly and are blasphemies; the sayings of the modern blasphemers are even more ugly and are hence even more severe blasphemies.

¹⁵⁹ That merely facing the *qiblah* makes one a Muslim and regardless of everything else, we do not do *takfir* of those who face towards our *qiblah* in their prayer.

¹⁶⁰ *Fiqh al-Akbar*, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah.

¹⁶¹ *Kitābu’l Waṣiyyah*, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah.

¹⁶² *Minaḥ al-Rawḍ al-Az’har*, Álī al-Qārī, 95.

¹⁶³ Fakhr al-Islām: Imām Muḥammad al-Pazdawī [d.482 AH].

the Qur'ān is a creation; do they not pray facing the Qiblah?¹⁶⁴ Take this very specific issue¹⁶⁵ that we are discussing now; Qāḍī Abū Yūsuf, the prominent Ḥanafī Imām says in his *Kitāb al-Kharāj*:¹⁶⁶

Any Muslim who insults the Messenger ﷺ or belies him, or finds fault with him, or diminishes his rank – has certainly committed kufr and has disbelieved in Allāh tāālā. The wife of such a person goes out of wedlock.

It is clearly and explicitly said that even an attempt to diminish the rank of RasūlAllāh ﷺ by a Muslim, will render him a kāfir and his wife goes out of wedlock. By common definition, is not a Muslim among those who pray facing the *qiblah*?¹⁶⁷ Indeed, he is; but on account of his blasphemy and uttering words disrespectful to Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ, his facing the qiblah will not avail him.

The Third Answer: In the terminology of scholars, *ahl al-qiblah* or the People of Qiblah, are those who fulfill all the requirements of faith and if a person contradicts or denies even a single thing from those classed as Necessary Requirements,¹⁶⁸ he is a disbeliever, an apostate by unanimous agreement.¹⁶⁹ In fact, one who does not consider such a person¹⁷⁰ as a kāfir, is himself a kāfir. It is said in *Shifā*, *Bazzāziyyah*, *Durar wa'l Ghurar* and *Fatāwā al-Khayriyyah*:

Muslims unanimously agree upon the ruling that one who insults the Messenger ﷺ is a kāfir, a disbeliever; and he who doubts that such a blasphemer is *kāfir*, or doubts that such an apostate will be punished is himself a kāfir.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁴ Aren't they considered as kāfirs according to major Imams, including the three mentioned above?

¹⁶⁵ Of blasphemy; *sabb* or *shatam*.

¹⁶⁶ Imām Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, 182.

¹⁶⁷ *ahl al-qiblah*

¹⁶⁸ *ḍarūriyyāt*; *zarūriyyat e dīn*

¹⁶⁹ *kāfir*, *murtadd* by *ijmā'*

¹⁷⁰ One who denies or contradicts a necessary requirement of faith.

¹⁷¹ Qadī Íyād al-Mālikī, *Kitāb al-Shifā bi Tārīfi Ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā*, 2/208.

In *Majmá al-Anhur*¹⁷² and *Durr al-Mukhtār*:¹⁷³

Repentance of a person who is ruled a *kāfir* due to his insulting prophets is not accepted; one who doubts that such a person will be punished, or that he is a *kāfir* is an apostate himself.

Though cited in support of this sub-topic, the ruling clearly describes that a blasphemer, according to *ijmāá* is an apostate and those who do not consider such people as apostates, are apostates themselves. In *Sharh Fiqh al-Akbar*:

It is mentioned in *Mawāqif* that the people of *qiblah* are not ruled as *kāfirs* as long as they do not reject things that are classified as requirements of faith or those things upon which there is a unanimous agreement, like considering a forbidden thing to be permissible.

...it is obvious that our scholars do not permit the *takfir* of *ahl al-qiblah* on account of sins; but this does not mean just facing the *qiblah*, because the extremist and fanatical Rafīdīs who claim that [Sayyidunā] Jibrīl ﷺ made a mistake in delivering Revelation,¹⁷⁴ because Allāh tāālā actually sent him¹⁷⁵ to Āli ﷺ; and some others among them claim that Āli is god. Even if they pray facing our *qiblah*, they are not believers. This is the intended meaning of the Prophet's ﷺ saying: "One who prays like us and facing our *qiblah*, and eats our slaughter, then he is a Muslim."¹⁷⁶

That is, he is a Muslim as long as he does not contradict a necessary aspect of religion or does not do anything that negates his belief. In the same book, he says elsewhere:¹⁷⁷

Know that '*ahl al-qiblah*' is meant to refer to those who agree [and believe in] the necessary aspects of religion. For example, things like: the world and everything in it

¹⁷² Shaykh-Zādah, *Majmá al-Anhur*, 1/677.

¹⁷³ Ālāuddīn al-Ĥaskafī, *Durr al-Mukhtār*, Kitāb al-Jihād, Bāb al-Murtadd.

¹⁷⁴ *wahy*

¹⁷⁵ This is the belief of a fanatical group of Shiáh [*ghulāt*] who claim that Sayyidunā Jibrīl ﷺ delivered the Revelation to Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ instead of Sayyidunā Āli ﷺ.

¹⁷⁶ Qārī, *Sharh Fiqh al-Akbar*, 446.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 429

is an accident,¹⁷⁸ that bodies will be resurrected and assembled on Judgement day,¹⁷⁹ that Knowledge of Allāh tāālā encompasses everything,¹⁸⁰ the general and the specific, and other such things. Even if a person piously fulfils religious obligations and performs worship alongside the belief that the world is pre-eternal or denies that people will be assembled with their [resurrected] bodies or that Allāh tāālā does not know the minutiae, is not included in the *ahl al-qiblah*. And the meaning of the saying: **we do not do takfir of ahl al-qiblah**, according to scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah is, that we should not do takfir of those who do not carry signs of disbelief; and have not anything nor said something that necessitates this ruling.

Imām Ábd al-Ázīz al-Bukhārī¹⁸¹ says in his commentary on *Uṣūl al-Ĥusāmī*:¹⁸²

If a person is an extremist¹⁸³ in [heretical] belief, so much that it becomes necessary to rule him a kāfir,¹⁸⁴ then it does not matter whether he agrees or disagrees with a certain position or not; because he is not included in the classification of ummah¹⁸⁵ that has been given the testimony of being [as a group] protected [from error]¹⁸⁶ and even if he imagines himself to be a Muslim. Because, the term ummah does not refer to those who merely pray facing the qiblah, but to those who are [true] believers. This person¹⁸⁷ is a kāfir, even if he does not realise that he is one.

¹⁷⁸ *ĥādīth, ĥawādīth*

¹⁷⁹ *ĥashr*: to be gathered and assembled.

¹⁸⁰ The Mútazilah believe that Allāh has only generic knowledge and does not have knowledge of specifics and the minutiae. *al-tyādhu billāh*.

¹⁸¹ Imām Ábd al-Ázīz ibn Áĥmed al-Bukhārī, [d.730/1329] is also famous for his *Kashf al-Asrār*, considered as one of the most important commentary of *Uṣūl al-Pazdawī* of Fakhr al-Islām.

¹⁸² *Al-Muntakhab fī Uṣūl al-Madh'hab* by Imām Ĥusāmuddīn Muĥammad ibn Muĥammad al-Akhsīkathī, [d.644/1246] this is also known as *Ĥusāmī* or *Uṣūl al-Ĥusāmī*.

¹⁸³ *ghuluww* or exaggerated heretical belief.

¹⁸⁴ On account of his extreme heresy that necessitates *takfir*.

¹⁸⁵ Ábd al-Ázīz Bukhārī, *Al-Taĥqīq fī Sharĥī Muntakhab al-Uṣūl*; **Bāb al-Ijmāʿ** – The Chapter on Consensus.

¹⁸⁶ The ummah is collectively vouchsafed from error according to the ĥadīth: “Verily Allāh tāālā will not make the followers of Muĥammad ﷺ agree upon error; and Allāh’s aid is with the (righteous) group; and those who go out of this group shall go into fire” [*Tirmidhī*, #2167].

¹⁸⁷ Such a person whose heresy has crossed the limits of kufr due to fanatic beliefs.

In *Radd al-Muhtār*:¹⁸⁸

There is no dispute concerning the disbelief of a person who opposes [or rejects] any required component of faith, even if he prays facing our qiblah, even if he is punctual and unfulfilling in fulfilling obligations and doing good deeds all his life, as explained in *Sharh al-Taḥrīr*...

Such straightforward descriptions and clear-cut rulings are found commonly in books of Āqīdah, Fiqh and Usūl.

The Fourth Answer: It is self-evident from this issue itself. Consider a man who prays facing the qiblah five times, and bows down to Mahadev¹⁸⁹ once a day; can any sane person consider him a Muslim? Whereas saying that Allāh tāālā is a liar and insulting Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ is far worse than bowing down to Mahadev, even though they are the same in being disbelief; because some kinds of kufr are worse than others.

The reason [why the former is worse] is because, bowing to an idol implicitly belying the One God, whereas calling him a liar is explicitly belying him; and such prostration, there is a rational possibility¹⁹⁰ that it is a prostration of respect and not a prostration of worship; and veneration¹⁹¹ is not kufr in itself. Therefore, if someone prostrates to a scholar or a gnostic out of veneration will be a sinner, not a kāfir. However, prostrating to idols [or such icons] is absolutely kufr according to the Shariāh because this is a distinct characteristic of polytheists. But insulting the Prophet ﷺ is a major kufr in itself and bereft of any vestige of Islām. I do not base my argument

¹⁸⁸ Ibn Ābidīn, *Radd al-Muhtār*, Kitāb al-Ṣalah; Bāb al-Imāmah, 1/377.

¹⁸⁹ One of the many false gods and idols of Hindus.

¹⁹⁰ *ih̄timāl āqlī*, meaning a plausible explanation exists.

¹⁹¹ **Alahazrat's footnote:** it is in *Sharh al-Mawāqif* [*Marṣad al-Thālith, Maṣṣad al-Awwal*: The Third Standpoint, The First Objective]:

Prostration to the sun is clear proof that such a person does not attest to the veracity of our Master Muḥammad ﷺ on the exterior; but we issue the ruling according to the exterior, not because it is an article of faith to not prostrate to anyone other than Allāh. Even if it is known that such a person did not prostrate [*sajdah*] for either veneration or the belief that the sun was a god; and if his heart is convinced and unperturbed about attestation [*taṣḍīq*] of the Shariāh, then we do not rule him a kāfir near Allāh, though he will be ruled a kāfir due to his outward action.

upon this difference,¹⁹² but because repentance of a person prostrating to an idol is accepted by *ijmāʿ*; whereas the repentance of a person who insults the Prophet ﷺ is not accepted according to numerous scholars.¹⁹³

This is also the preferred opinion¹⁹⁴ of the following Imams among Ḥanafīs:

- Imām Bazzāzī;
- The accomplished researcher Imām Ibn Humām;
- Állāmah Mawlā Khusraw, author of *Durar wa'l Ghurar*;
- Állāmah Zayn ibn Nujaym, author of *Baḥru'r Rāyiq* and *Ashbāh wa'n Nazāyir*;
- Állāmah Úmar ibn Nujaym, author of *Nahru'l Fāyiq*;
- Állāmah Abū Ábdullāh Muḥammad al-Ghazzī, author of *Tanwīru'l Abṣār*;
- Állāmah Khayruddīn al-Ramlī, author of *Fatāwā al-Khayriyyah*;
- Állāmah Shaykhī Zādah, author of *Majmá al-Anhur*;
- Állāmah Muḥammad ibn Áli al-Ḥaskafī, author of *Durr al-Mukhtār*.

More details and additional research on this issue can be found in *Fatāwā al-Riḍawiyah*. The ruling 'tawbah is not accepted' is in Islamic lands and for Muslim sovereign, so that the blasphemer is executed even after his repentance. Nevertheless, if a blasphemer sincerely repents, it is accepted near Allāh táālā.

¹⁹² The difference is: one kufr is worse than another based on the hypothetical possibility of one being a prostration of respect, compared to another which is blasphemy against the Prophet ﷺ, which does not have a hypothetical possibility for exemption.

¹⁹³ Lit. "thousands of scholars." Yet, according to latter imāms, repentance is acceptable as Alahazrat himself explains below. Alahazrat has also explained this issue of prostration of reverence in detail in his book: *Zubdah az-Zakiyyah li Taḥrīmi Sajdah al-Taḥiyyah*. [The Pure Cream: On Prohibition of Prostration of Respect].

¹⁹⁴ There is a difference of opinion in our madh'hab; Imām Ibn Ábidīn has explained that repentance [*tawbah*] of a blasphemer is accepted in our madh'hab. See *Tanbīh al-Wulāti wa'l Ḥukkām álá Ahkāmī Shātīmi Khayr al-Anām*. This is why Alahazrat says: 'among our Imams.' Allāh táālā knows best.

The blasphemer should not make this [ruling] a basis to forsake repentance and say: 'if repentance is not accepted, then why should I repent?' No, this is not the case. Repentance will certainly erase kufr and make him a Muslim and he will be saved from everlasting punishment in Hell. There is a unanimous agreement upon this as described in *Radd al-Muhtār*, etc.

Allāh tāālā knows best.

THE THIRD SUBTERFUGE

They say: *it is written in books of Fiqh that if a person has 99 components¹⁹⁵ of kufr, and one component of Islām, even then we should not call such a person a kāfir.*¹⁹⁶

The First Answer: This is the ugliest of all deceptions. If a man says the *ādhān* once a day or prays two *rakāh* and then worships an idol 99 times; or blows a conch,¹⁹⁷ or rings a bell¹⁹⁸ – does he still remain a Muslim? Can any sensible person consider him a Muslim just because he has one component of Islam, even though he has 99 components of disbelief?

The Second Answer: According to this claim, everybody except atheists will have to be considered as Muslims: any polytheist, Magian, Hindu, Christian, Jew – because after all, they believe in a God – which is one component of Islām; rather the fundamental belief¹⁹⁹ that is the basis for all other beliefs!

¹⁹⁵ *bateñ*: That is, things or components or ingredients of kufr. This is not about 99 interpretations that are disbelief and one possible meaning of Islām in ONE statement/action, as it is explained further below in the fifth answer.

¹⁹⁶ This is not a hypothetical statement and is commonly cited by Qadianis.

¹⁹⁷ *sankh* or *shankha*: The shell of a large sea snail commonly occurring in the Indian Ocean (scientific name *Turbinella pyrum*;) this is used as a trumpet in rituals, religious practices and an object of worship among Hindus.

¹⁹⁸ Ringing a bell or a *ghanti* is a ritual in Hindu worship; it also *accompanies* worship in Christian churches and masses.

¹⁹⁹ that God exists

Particularly, the philosophers and Aryas²⁰⁰ because they claim to believe in one God; the Jews and Christians will then be comparatively²⁰¹ stauncher Muslims because in addition to monotheism, they also believe in revealed scriptures, thousands of prophets, Judgement day, resurrection, reward and punishment, heaven and hell, which are all Islamic beliefs.

The Third Answer: Qur'ānic verses mentioned earlier are sufficient to refute this strange claim, where, in spite of uttering the kalimah, in spite of performing the obligatory prayer, hypocrites were declared as kāfirs for just one utterance of kufr; as mentioned in the verse:

And they committed disbelief after
professing Islām²⁰² وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلَامِهِمْ

and in the verse:

Do not proffer excuses; you have certainly
become disbelievers after professing faith²⁰³ لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ

Even though, according to this vile subterfuge, it was incorrect to call these people kāfir for merely one thing, and unless more than 99 components of disbelief were found. Probably,²⁰⁴ they may say as an answer to the above: 'this²⁰⁵ was a mistake made by God; or said in haste by Him; because this makes the boundaries of Islām constrained – because those uttering the kalimah are being expelled from Islām for a single thing; and He neither listens to excuses nor allows them to explain their excuses. Unfortunately,

²⁰⁰ Followers of the *Arya Samaj*, which was founded by Dayananda Saraswati (1824-1883.) Among the principles of the samaj/society are belief in monotheism and condemnation of idol worship. [*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Hastings and Selbie, 57-62]

"It was at Bombay, on the 10th of April 1875, that Swami Dayanand founded the Arya Samaj." [Ibid., 58]

²⁰¹ In comparison to Arya-Samajis and philosophers.

²⁰² Sūrah Tawbah, 9:74.

²⁰³ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:66.

²⁰⁴ This is said about Sunnis who make takfīr; but Alahazrat extrapolates to ask whether you will say the same thing about Allāh?

²⁰⁵ Terming the hypocrites as a *kāfir* for a single thing.

God did not discuss this with Naturalist²⁰⁶ or Nadawī²⁰⁷ lecturers or other broad-minded Islamic reformers.²⁰⁸ Allāh’s curse be upon oppressors!

The Fourth Answer: Your Lord Almighty says:

Do you bear faith in some parts of the Book and disbelieve in [other] parts? So, what is the recompense of those who does thus amongst you, except humiliation in this worldly life? On the day of Judgement they shall be turned towards a severe punishment; and Allāh is not heedless of what you do. These are a people who have bartered the hereafter, for life in this world; neither will their punishment abate, nor will they be given aid.²⁰⁹

أَفْتُوْمُنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ
بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا
خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفِيلٍ
عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا
الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ فَلَا يَخَفُ عَنْهُمْ
الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

Suppose, there are a thousand things in the Qur’ān; then it is a necessary requirement to believe in each one of them. If a person believes in 999 things and does not accept just one, the Qur’ān says that such a person is a *kāfir*, in spite of having believed in 999 things out of a thousand; and that he will be humiliated in this world and be meted severe punishment in the hereafter which shall be forever, which will neither cease nor ease even for a moment. This does not say that a person saying 99 things of kufr remains

²⁰⁶ Naturalist or a *neychari* in Urdu, who attempt to explain miracles according to laws of nature; Sir Syed Ahmed Khān of Aligarh and his followers.

²⁰⁷ Members of *Nadwatul Ūlamā*, a reformist movement of the 20th century, initiated with an ostentatious claim of burying differences between sects (irrespective of being Shiah or Sunni; Wahābī or Khariji; Muslim or Naturalist) and unite under the banner of “*One-Qiblah and One-Kalimah*” as Muslims; Alahazrat refuted this in *Fatāwā al-Ĥaramayn bi Rajafī Nadwah al-Mayn*.

²⁰⁸ Those who insult the Prophet ﷺ are *kāfir* – and even if it is only once. This is according to Divine Law and precedent in the revelation. Secondly, when we issue this ruling, the Naturalists, Nadawīs and other reformers say: ‘this ruling of *kufr* is a mistake and done in haste; this constricts boundaries of Islām, expelling People of Qiblah from Islām for petty things; such rulings are issued without consulting others.’ Thus, ‘Would you say the same about God Almighty because He has declared those who uttered one word of insult as *kāfirs*?’

²⁰⁹ Sūrah Baqarah, 2:85-86.

a Muslim just because of one thing; this is not the doctrine of Muslims – rather it is in itself clear disbelief according to the Qur’ān.

The Fifth Answer: In reality, those who attributed this belief to scholars of fiqh have actually acted as the Jews who transposed words [of the Book]:

They distort the [meanings of] words
from their places.²¹⁰

يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ

Scholars of fiqh did not say that: ‘a person is a Muslim if he has one component of Islām, even if he has 99 components of kufr’. We seek Allāh’s refuge. Rather, it is the *ijmā’* of our *ummah* that if a person has 99,000 ingredients of Islām, but has one ingredient of kufr – then certainly and absolutely such a person is a kāfir. If a drop of urine falls in 99 drops of rosewater, all of it becomes urine²¹¹ but these ignoramuses say, that if a drop of rosewater falls in 99 drops of urine, everything becomes clean! Leave alone scholars of fiqh, even an ordinary man with some discerning will not make such an absurd and ignorant statement. Rather, what scholars have said is that if a man says something, and 99 meanings of *that statement* are of disbelief, and one meaning is admissible in Islām, then unless it is proven that he has really intended the meaning of kufr, we shall withhold from making takfir; because, there is one possibility of this statement which is not kufr. They also add that, if he indeed intended a meaning that is kufr, our efforts to interpret favourably will not benefit him – because he will remain a kāfir near Allāh. This can be illustrated by an example: suppose Zayd says *that Āmr has absolute and conclusive knowledge of the unseen*. This statement has the following possible meanings of kufr:

1. Āmr knows the unseen himself;²¹² this is plain and clear kufr.

Say: no one in the heavens or the earth
knows the unseen except Allāh
tāālā.²¹³

قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

²¹⁰ Sūrah Nisā’a, 4:46.

²¹¹ That is, all of it becomes impure like urine.

²¹² Knows by Himself without having been instructed by anyone else. Because the Attribute of absolute knowledge, and without being informed by anyone is only that of Allāh tāālā.

²¹³ Sūrah Naml, 27:65.

2. Ámr does not know the unseen by himself, but he has conclusive knowledge because those who know it have informed him of it.

The reality of the Jinn was exposed, that if they knew the unseen, they would not have remained in disgraceful punishment²¹⁴

تَبَيَّنَتْ الْجِنُّ أَنْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ الْغَيْبَ
مَا لَبِثُوا فِي الْعَذَابِ الْمُهِينِ

3. Ámr is an astrologer

4. *rammāl*, a geomancer²¹⁵

5. *samudrak*, a palm reader or a practitioner of palmistry²¹⁶

6. divines, based upon the crowing of a crow etc.

7. divines, by insects falling on one's body

8. or by going to the right or left of a bird or a wild animal²¹⁷

9. divines by omens: observing twitching of eyes or other parts of the body

10. throws dice

11. fortune teller

12. enquires about unseen things through mediums

²¹⁴ Sūrah Sabā, 34:14.

²¹⁵ **Raml** or Geomancy: is a form of divination that interprets markings on the ground or the patterns formed by tossed handfuls of soil, rocks, or sand. The most prevalent form of divinatory geomancy involves interpreting a series of 16 figures formed by a randomised process that involves recursion followed by analyzing them, often augmented with astrological interpretations. [Wikipedia]

In *Kashf al-Žunūn*, it is said that the number of these figures are 12 according to the number of the zodiac signs. Haytamī says that it is ḥarām to learn or teach this science [*Fatāwā al-Ĥadithiyyah*].

²¹⁶ This kind of fortune tellers are common in India; they claim to tell the future by looking at the lines on one's palms.

²¹⁷ Augury; this and the two previous kinds (#6, #7) are also known as zoomancy or theriomancy: divination by animal behavior.

13. knows mesmerism²¹⁸

14. uses a magic table²¹⁹

15. enquires about the unseen from a planchette²²⁰

16. has knowledge of physiognomy²²¹

17. has the knowledge of number-magic [*zāyirjah*]²²² and he believes that he attains the knowledge of unseen – conclusively and absolutely – because this is kufr;²²³ RasūlAllāh ﷺ has said:

If one goes to a soothsayer or a fortune-teller and validates what he says [attests to the truth of the soothsayer] then he has disbelieved in that which was given to Muḥammad ﷺ.²²⁴

This is narrated by Abū Hurayrah ؓ and reported through a ṣaḥīḥ chain by Imām Aḥmed and Ḥākim; and the wordings of the ḥadīth reported by Aḥmed and Abū Dāwūd:

²¹⁸ In 19th Century India, mesmerism was considered as a form of occult practice and magic.

²¹⁹ Like the Ouija boards.

²²⁰ **Planchette:** A planchette (French for a small plank or board) is an instrument used to communicate with spirits, in spiritualism. It is usually about three inches wide and four inches long, resting on three small legs. [Raymond Buckland, *The Fortune-Telling Book*, 373].

²²¹ *qiyāfah dānī*: physiognomy; some extreme forms suggested that a person's destiny could be predicted by using this science.

²²² "*The Za'irajah*: A branch of the science of letter magic, (practiced) among the (authorities on letter magic), is (the technique of) finding out answers from questions by means of connections existing between the letters of the expressions (used in the question). They imagine that these (connections) can form the basis for knowing the future happenings they want to know." [Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, Trans. Franz Rosenthal, Vol.3. Pg.182].

In all these examples, it is kufr to believe that information obtained from such sciences (or pseudosciences) is absolutely true and certain (*qaḍī-yaqīnī*) and one who has obtained this information has absolute knowledge of unseen (is also kufr); but if one practices the *Zayirjah* or *Jafar* – as a guide similar to *istikhārah* and not with the belief or claim of absolute knowledge of unseen, it is not kufr. Allāh tāālā knows best.

²²³ **Alahazrat's Footnote:** That is, when one believes that such knowledge is absolute, certain and conclusive and claiming this with certitude is kufr, as mentioned in the discussion itself.

²²⁴ Reported by Imām Aḥmed in his Musnad, 2:249, Ḥākim.

He who consults a soothsayer has verily disavowed, that which has been revealed to Muḥammad ﷺ.²²⁵

18. Ámr believes he receives revelation, and on this basis he has veritable knowledge of the unseen as it was given to Prophets; this is outright disbelief.

But he is the Messenger of Allāh and seal of all prophets; and Allāh táālā knows everything²²⁶

وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٢٢٦﴾

19. He does not believe that Ámr receives revelation, but claims that he has this knowledge by divine inspiration²²⁷ – and has complete knowledge of all unseen such that it encompasses the knowledge of the Lord Almighty; this is kufr because, this person has elevated Ámr above RasūlAllāh ﷺ because even his knowledge does not encompass the entire knowledge of the Lord Almighty.²²⁸

Say: are they equal, those who know, and those who do not know?²²⁹

فُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

In *Nasīm ar-Riyāḍ* it is said:

Whosoever says that such-and-such a person is more knowledgeable than the Prophet ﷺ has faulted him and thus inherits the ruling of one who insults him ﷺ.²³⁰

20. Suppose, he does not claim complete knowledge that is all-encompassing; but whatever knowledge he has by inspiration – if he claims that this knowledge, either extraneously or internally, has been given to him

²²⁵ Sunan Abū Dāwūd, 2:189.

²²⁶ Sūrah Aḥzāb, 33:40.

²²⁷ *ilhām*

²²⁸ Alahazrat explains two principles in this statement: Proving that anyone else in the creation has more knowledge than RasūlAllāh ﷺ is kufr; and secondly that the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ does not encompass the knowledge of Allāh táālā. In spite of his repeated clarification, Deobandis continue to accuse Alahazrat of believing in the opposite.

²²⁹ Sūrah Zumar, 39:9.

²³⁰ *Nasīm ar-Riyāḍ*, Shihābuddīn Khaffājī in his commentary on *Shifā*. 4/146.

directly by Allāh táālā, without the medium of any Messenger of Allāh among men or angels²³¹ or by following them – is also *kufr*.²³²

Allāh does not inform of the unseen to any [of you common folk]; however, Allāh chooses among His Messengers, whosoever He wishes²³³

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُظْهِرَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَكِنَّ
اللَّهَ يَجْتَبِي مِنْ رُسُلِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

He is the Knower of Unseen; He does not reveal His knowledge of unseen to anyone – except His Beloved Messengers²³⁴

عَلِمَ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا
إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَى مِنْ رَسُولٍ

21. Zayd believes that Ámr has certain and conclusive knowledge, but only partial knowledge of the Unseen, by means of RasūlAllāh ﷺ either by hearing [from the Master ﷺ] or by seeing [miraculously] or by clairvoyance; that Allāh táālā has given this kind of knowledge or shall give to someone. This is a valid statement and does not contravene Islam. Therefore, jurists and researchers do not rule a person in this example as a *kāfir* when he says: *Ámr has absolute and conclusive knowledge of the unseen.*

Because, in addition to the twenty meanings of *kufr*, there is a twenty-first possibility that is admissible in Islām. Therefore, being guarded and careful, and because we should have a good opinion of Muslims, such a person will

²³¹ *rusul*, pl. of *rasūl*; Messengers of Allāh, they can be either men or angels; however, Prophets are all men – according to the standard doctrine of Ahl as-Sunnah.

²³² Thus if any information of the unseen is given to us by a non-prophet, or a wali, it is only through the means of Messengers of Allāh; angels or prophets [because, only a prophet among humans can be a messenger among humans.] To claim such knowledge directly from Allāh táālā is *kufr* according to the verse which says: ‘Allāh does not inform of the unseen anyone except to Messengers He chooses’.

²³³ Sūrah Aāl Ímrān, 3:179. In *Tafsīr Baydāwī*: “Allah táālā will not give any of you the knowledge of unseen so that they can be aware of what is in the hearts - whether disbelief or faith; however, Allah táālā chooses whoever He wishes for His Message; and sends him revelation and Divine Inspiration and gives him some knowledge of the unseen. [*baād al-mughayyabāt*]”.

²³⁴ Sūrah Jinn, 72:26-27. It must be noted that scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah have not referred to RasūlAllāh ﷺ as *áálimu'l ghayb* – or Knower of the Unseen; and they have always insisted on the very meaning propounded by various tafsīrs of this verse. *wa billāhi't tawfīq*.

not be ruled a *kāfir* UNLESS it is proven conclusively that such a person unmistakably intended one of the meanings of kufr. This, however, does not include people who explicitly insult or blaspheme against Allāh táālā or His Messenger ﷺ, as they do not remain Muslims regardless.²³⁵ Because, if one does not consider explicit insults as unbelief, it means that he terms blasphemies as Islamic; and one who terms blasphemies as Islamic is himself a *kāfir*. We have seen from *Shifā*, *Bazzāziyyah*, *Durar*, *Baḥr*, *Nahr*, *Fatāwā Khayriyyah*, *Majmá al-Anhur*, *Durr Mukhtār* etc., that whosoever diminishes the Prophet's ﷺ rank is a *kāfir*; and one who doubts in the disbelief of a person (who faults the Prophet ﷺ) is himself a *kāfir*. But some people, like the dishonest Jews, falsely accuse jurists and attempt to transpose and alter statements from their intended meanings:

The oppressors shall soon know, which place they shall be returned to²³⁶ وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ

In the commentary of *Fiqh al-Akbar*:²³⁷

Scholars have mentioned that the issue of *takfir* – or ruling someone *kāfir*: if there are 99 possibilities [for a statement] that are disbelief, and one possibility that is not disbelief; then it is better for the muftī and the judge to incline towards the meaning that is not disbelief.

In *Fatāwā Khulāṣah*, *Jāmiy al-Fuṣūlayn*, *Muḥiṭ*, *Fatāwā Hindiyyah* etc., it is said:²³⁸

If in a particular issue, there are facets and possibilities that necessitate *takfir* [ruling apostacy] and just one facet that prevents *takfir*, it is necessary for the muftī and the

²³⁵ As it follows, caution is exercised only when such statements are open to interpretation; explicit insults are taken at face value; even the Deobandis agree to this *fatwā*. See Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī's *Ikfār al-Mulḥidīn*.

²³⁶ Sūrah Shuárā, 26:227.

²³⁷ Qārī, *Sharḥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, Objective: On Knowing what Constitutes Apostacy, 445.

²³⁸ *Khulāṣatu'l Fatāwā*, On Words of Apostacy: The Second Section 4/382.

Jāmiy al-Fuṣūlayn, The 38th Section: Concerning Words Amounting to Apostacy 2/298.

Muḥiṭ al-Burhānī, Section on Apostates and Rulings Concerning Them, 5/550.

Fatāwā Hindiyyah, The Book of War: The Ninth Chapter, 2/301.

judge to lean towards this facet and should avoid takfir; because it is necessary to have a good opinion of a Muslim. Yet, if the intention of the person who uttered the statement was according to the possible interpretation that prevents takfir, he certainly remains a Muslim; but if his intention was not THIS meaning, then there is no point in the mufti trying to interpret it favourably such that it does not necessitate takfir, and this will not benefit the accused.

Similarly, in *Fatāwā Bazzāziyyah*, *Baḥr ar-Rāyiq*, *Majmā al-Anhur*, *Ḥadiqah an-Nadiyyah*, *TātārKhāniyyah*, *Sall al-Ḥusām al-Hindī* it is said:²³⁹

Ambiguous statements that are open for interpretation will not earn the ruling of kufr; because it is the extreme of all punishments for the most extreme crime; and where there is possibility of interpretation, it cannot be termed as extreme.

In *Baḥr ar-Rāyiq*, *Tanwīr al-Abṣār*, *Ḥadiqah an-Nadiyyah*, *Tanbīh al-Wulāt* and *Sall al-Ḥusām* etc., it is said:²⁴⁰

The mufti who says that he shall not rule on the apostacy of a Muslim as long as his statement can be interpreted favourably, has done well.

Notice, that all this is about a statement or a word that was uttered and which can take multiple meanings; It does not mean that if a person says a few things – some kufr and some Islamic – then we should withhold from takfir. But it is a habit of Jews²⁴¹ to switch words and alter their meanings.



²³⁹ *Fatāwā Bazzāziyyah*, “On Words that are Ambiguous”, 6/321.

Baḥr ar-Rāyiq, The Book of War: Chapter on Apostates, 5/125.

Majmā al-Anhur, The Book of War: Chapter on Apostates, 1/688.

Ḥadiqah an-Nadiyyah, “The Slighting of Shari’ah is Apostacy,” 1/302.

TātārKhāniyyah, The Book on Apostates, 5/458.

Sall al-Ḥusām al-Hindī, *Rasāyil Ibn Ābidīn*; 2/316.

²⁴⁰ *Tanbīh al-Wulāt wa’l Ḥukkām*, *Rasāyil Ibn Ābidīn*; 1/342.

Durr al-Mukhtār Sharḥ Tanwīr al-Abṣār, Chapter on Apostates, 1/356.

²⁴¹ Like the Jews in Madīnah who would alter words and context in the Torah.

AN IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE

This analysis clarifies another issue mentioned in books of fatāwā like *Fatāwā Qādī Khān* etc., where it is said that the following statements or actions are kufr:

- if a person performs a nikāḥ and says, by the witness of Allāh tāālā and His Messenger ﷺ
- or says that the souls of shaykhs are present and are aware
- or says angels have the knowledge of unseen
- or claims knowledge of unseen for himself²⁴²

In all the above circumstances, some books of fatāwā ruled the person kāfir, and this was on the basis of a meaning that amounts to disbelief,²⁴³ like absolute knowledge or intrinsic knowledge without being granted etc. And because these statements can be interpreted in many²⁴⁴ favourable ways that have valid meanings in Islamic Law [the ruling of kufr does not apply.] Furthermore, as the statement is not about absolute and conclusive knowledge – and this could mean knowledge by conjecture or by estimation; in which case, the twenty-one possibilities would be doubled,²⁴⁵ and many of these forty-two possibilities will not be kufr; because it is not kufr to claim that one has knowledge of unseen by estimation or conjecture.²⁴⁶ In *Baḥr ar-Rāyiq* and *Radd al-Muḥtār*:

It follows from all these issues that whosoever considers a forbidden thing to be permitted on the basis of presumption will not be ruled a kāfir; rather kufr is when one who believes that a ḥarām thing is ḥalāl.

²⁴² Paraphrased from *Fatāwā Qādī Khān*.

²⁴³ The ruling of kufr is given, only when the intention of that statement was a meaning that is regarded as kufr; otherwise, in case of statements open to interpretation, caution is exercised.

²⁴⁴ Because even one single favourable meaning is enough to withhold from takfir.

²⁴⁵ Twenty-one concerning conclusive-absolute knowledge as described in the example above; and the next twenty-one concerning conjecture and estimation.

²⁴⁶ *ilm e żannī*

Qurtūbī has mentioned an example to explain this in his commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, where he says: "If a person presumes that the [knowledge of] unseen is permissible [for others] like an astrologer²⁴⁷ or a geomancer; those who predict something in the future based on previous experience²⁴⁸ in ordinarily occurring things; then, such guesswork can be veritable.

That which is impermissible is when this is claimed on the basis of knowledge of the unseen..." Obviously, claim of knowledge of the unseen on the basis of conjecture is ḥarām, not kufr; as opposed to [conclusive] claim of knowledge of the unseen.²⁴⁹

Further in *Baḥr ar-Rāyiq*:

Did you not see what they²⁵⁰ have said concerning marriage of a *maḥram*?²⁵¹ If he had assumed²⁵² that it was a permissible union, he will not be punished according to unanimous opinion;²⁵³ but rather he will be severely censured, as mentioned in *Zahīriyyah* etc., and nobody said that he had become a kāfir;²⁵⁴ thus it is in all such examples.

²⁴⁷ In medieval times, astrology and astronomy were the same discipline; these were considered as separate only later in Western philosophy – one as a form of divination and other as a science. Regardless, there are theories that claim to predict natural phenomena by studying the position of the celestial objects; even modern science supports some predictions such as the solar or lunar eclipses and weather forecasts, for example; but astrologers claim more and claim to predict the influence on anything from wealth, love, marriage or children – even life and death.

²⁴⁸ For interesting anecdotes and references, see Hamid-Reza Giahi Yazdi, *Tarikh-e-Elm: Iranian Journal for the History of Science*, 6 (2008), pp.75-82. *Solar Eclipses in Medieval Islamic Civilization: A Note on Cultural and Social Aspects*.

²⁴⁹ *Radd al-Muḥtār*, Kitāb al-Ḥudūd 4/188: [Section titled: One is not ruled a kāfir if he considers ḥarām to be permitted due to false assumption; similarly about knowledge of unseen by guesswork].

²⁵⁰ jurists

²⁵¹ *maḥram*: is a relative with whom marriage is forbidden forever; like a sister, or a maternal or paternal aunt. In the previous edition of this translation, the word was erroneously transliterated and an unnecessary footnote had distorted the meaning. The error is regretted.

²⁵² Due to ignorance or mistaken derivation.

²⁵³ *ijmāʿ*

²⁵⁴ On account of such a mistaken idea.

When scholars are so unequivocal in their explanation that even a single possibility of a valid interpretation annuls the ruling of kufr, then why would a person be ruled a kāfir absolutely when multiple valid interpretations exist? Undoubtedly, this ruling²⁵⁵ concerns this specific case where the utterer intends the meaning which is kufr, for example, claim of intrinsic knowledge etc.,²⁵⁶ or else, these statements²⁵⁷ will themselves become invalid and contradict the scrutinised and validated position of scholars. More details can be found in *Jāmiy al-Fuṣūlayn*, *Radd al-Muḥtār*, *Ĥāshiyah Āllāmah Nuḥ*, *Multaqīṭ*, *Fatāwā al-Ĥujjah*, *Tātār Khāniyyah*, *Majmā al-Anhur*, *Ĥadīqatu'n Nadiyyah*, *Sall al-Ĥusām* etc. These citations can be found in various monographs concerning the knowledge of unseen, like *Lu'lu al-Maknūn* etc., – wa billāhi't tawfiq – but here, I quote only from *Ĥadīqatu'n Nadiyyah*:

All that is found in books of fatāwā concerning statements that are considered as kufr, which are explained and insisted upon by various authors that such a thing is kufr – then [in all such cases] this is dependent on the intention of the person who said it. If his intention was the same as that, which the basis for the ruling of kufr, then he is a kāfir; if his intention was otherwise, then it won't be considered as kufr.²⁵⁸

IMPORTANT NOTE: One cannot try to find interpretations for clear and explicit statements; interpretation is valid only where there is ambiguity and scope for multiple meanings; otherwise, nothing can be termed as kufr!²⁵⁹ For example, if Zayd says: *There are two gods*. And claim to possibly interpret this as: here, 'God,' actually means the 'Commandment of God' – thus, what Zayd actually said was, destiny as ordained by Allāh is of two kinds: the unalterable and the impending.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁵ That is, in the case of a person whose marriage is conducted 'by the witness of Allāh and RasūlAllāhﷺ' as mentioned by Qādī Khān. As there are interpretations, his fatwā is thus dependent on the intention of the utterer.

²⁵⁶ *ilm dhātī*

²⁵⁷ Rulings as mentioned in the beginning of this section.

²⁵⁸ *Al-Ĥadīqatu'n Nadiyyah Sharḥi't Ṭarīqatu'l Muḥammadiyyah*; 1:304, "Slighting the Sharīāh is kufr."

²⁵⁹ As a possible interpretation can be found for even explicit statements.

²⁶⁰ *qaḍā mubram* and *qaḍā muāllaq*

This is by an metonymical elision,²⁶¹ as it is said in the verse:

Except, when Allāh comes to them²⁶²

إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ

that is, when the *Command of Allāh* comes to them.²⁶³ Or, if Āmr says 'I am the Messenger of Allāh,' and claims that he actually meant the literal meaning of *rasūl*; and because, it is Allāh who sent the soul in his body. Such interpretations are absolutely invalid and are unacceptable. In *Shifā* of Qāḍī Īyād:

Claim of interpretation in explicit statements is not accepted.²⁶⁴

In its commentary, Ālī al-Qārī says:

Such interpretation is rejected according to principles of shariāh.²⁶⁵

In the commentary by Khaffājī:

Such interpretations are not to be heeded; and are considered as vain talk.²⁶⁶

In *Fatāwā Khulāsah*, *Fuṣūl al-Īmādiyyah*, *Jāmiy al-Fuṣūlayn* and *Fatāwā al-Hindiyyah* etc., and in the words of Īmādī:

If a person says: *ana rasūlAllāh*, or says in Persian: *man payghambaram*²⁶⁷ and then claims that he actually meant: 'I bear a message,' such a person will [regardless] be ruled a *kāfir*.

Remember that attempts to interpret explicit statements favourably is absolutely invalid and unacceptable.

²⁶¹ *ba hazaf e muzāf*: metonymy: conceptual substitution of an attribute to the entity itself. In the verse mentioned, 'when the command of Allāh comes' is substituted with 'when Allāh comes,' because it is impermissible to take the literal meaning as it is *muḥāl*.

²⁶² Sūrah Al-Baqarah, 2:210; this is literal to keep the context and is explained in the text.

²⁶³ *Tafsīr Qurṭubī*: "this is not to be taken literally; it means when the command of Allāh comes;" *Kash'shāf*: "that is the coming of the command of Allāh;" *Ṭabarī*: "the signs of Allāh, the command of Allāh;" so also in tafsirs *Bayḍāwī*, *Jalālayn*, *Nasafi*, and others.

²⁶⁴ *Kitāb al-Shifā*.

²⁶⁵ *Sharḥ al-Shifā*, 2/396.

²⁶⁶ *Nasīm ar-Riyād*, 4/343.

²⁶⁷ Both phrases mean: I am a Messenger of Allāh; or I am a Messenger.

THE FOURTH SUBTERFUGE

They deny it. If a person has not seen books of blasphemers,²⁶⁸ they flatly deny it and say they have never said such things anywhere.²⁶⁹ If a knowledgeable person or a scholar shows them in printed²⁷⁰ books, they turn up their noses disdainfully or look squarely in the eye with perfect shamelessness and say: 'I shall keep saying the same thing even if you conclusively prove your point.' Or if the poor person happens to be a common man without knowledge, they will tell him that these statements actually mean something else. If it is something else, then what is it? This single verse is sufficient to answer such people:

They [hypocrites] swear by Allāh that they have never said [things disrespectful to the Prophet.] But they have certainly uttered words of disbelief and have committed disbelief after professing Islām.²⁷¹

يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ مَا قَالُوا وَلَقَدْ
قَالُوا كَلِمَةً الْكُفْرِ وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ
إِسْلَامِهِمْ

*it is an old habit of issuing denials*²⁷²

Books²⁷³ of these people in which these statements of kufr are present have been published by them in their lifetimes. Some of these books have been through second reprint.²⁷⁴ Scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah have been refuting them for ages and printing those refutations.

²⁶⁸ Like *Barāhīn al-Qāṭiāh*, or *Ĥifẓ al-Īmān*.

²⁶⁹ Like Khalīl Aĥmed did in his *Muhannad*.

²⁷⁰ Which are being printed even in our time from both India and Pakistan.

²⁷¹ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:74.

²⁷² *hoti āyī hai ke inkār kiyā kartey haiñ*

²⁷³ **Alahazrat's Footnote:** that is, *Barāhīn al-Qāṭiāh*, *Ĥifẓ al-Īmān*, *Taĥdhīru'n Nās* and books of Qāḍianis.

²⁷⁴ **Alahazrat's Footnote:** like *Barāhīn al-Qāṭiāh* and *Ĥifẓ al-Īmān* [**Translator:** Until the recent past, printing and publishing was controlled and driven by demand. Unlike today, where anybody is a publisher – including us – getting a book published cost money and effort; reprints would mean it was done with the knowledge and sanction of the author].

That fatwā²⁷⁵ in which its author unmistakably said that Allāh tāālā has lied,²⁷⁶ and whose original,²⁷⁷ which carries the signature and seal [of the author] is preserved to this day. Photocopies of this fatwā have been made; and the copy I had taken [along with other books of these blasphemers] to the blessed sanctuaries to show it to scholars, is preserved in the library of Madinah until now.

This unclean fatwā was published together with a refutation in the booklet *Siyānatu'n Nās* in 1308 by Ĥadīqatu'l Ūlūm Publishers, Meerut. It was published again by Gulzār-e-Ĥasanī Publishers, Bombay, in 1318 along with a more detailed refutation. Thereafter, in 1320 it was published once again with another refutation by Tuĥfah-e-Ĥanafīyyah Publishers, Azīmābād-Patna. The person who gave this fatwā²⁷⁸ died in Jumādā al-Ākhirah 1323 and remained silent²⁷⁹ until his last breath. Neither did he deny that it was his own fatwā, even though disowning this fatwā was easier than disowning a published book.²⁸⁰ Nor did he say: 'the meaning of my words is not what the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah describe; rather, I meant something else.' Was it an ordinary thing to be attributed with such an explicit kufr, that he did not bother about it?²⁸¹ A fatwā by Zayd, that carries his seal is being circulated openly in his lifetime and his being in good health²⁸² – and such a fatwā is certainly and absolutely kufr – and this is repeatedly published for years; and people have published refutations of this fatwā; and declare Zayd

²⁷⁵ **Alahazrat's Footnote:** that is, the fatwā of Gangohī.

²⁷⁶ Because Gangohī says in that fatwā, "*wuqū' e kizb ke maānī durust ho gaye*: the meaning of the statement '*falsehood has occurred*' is thus validated." See Appendix C.

²⁷⁷ The paper on which the fatwā is written in Gangohī's own hand and bears his seal and signature.

²⁷⁸ Rashīd Aĥmed Gangohī.

²⁷⁹ About this *fatwā* or its many refutations.

²⁸⁰ Like Mirzā Qādiyānī, who denied being the author, when his books were refuted by Sunni scholars. Compared to this, distancing oneself from a *fatwā* on a paper is relatively easier.

²⁸¹ That is, if one is accused of saying something that is explicit kufr, and that such a thing is published for 15 years; shouldn't a self-respecting Muslim bother to at least say that such a fatwā was not his?

²⁸² He is not insane; so that one does not claim that insanity prevented him from refuting this claim.

to be a kāfir on account of this fatwā; Zayd lives for fifteen more years;²⁸³ and Zayd sees and hears all of this – and Zayd does not publish a denial or disavowal concerning that fatwā; and keeps silent with bated breath until his breath has abated – can any sane person imagine that Zayd had denied that the fatwā was his? Or that he meant something else?²⁸⁴

And those who are alive²⁸⁵ are silent until this moment; neither can they deny that they have said such things which are present in published books; nor can they find fancy explanations for such explicit insults. In the year 1320, all these blasphemies were refuted together in a single publication. Thereafter, some Muslim leaders took a questionnaire concerning these blasphemies to their kingpin.²⁸⁶ One should hear from those present in that meeting²⁸⁷ describe his state of bewilderment and speechlessness at this development! Even then, he could not deny that such things were written, nor could he come up with an interpretation²⁸⁸ or explanation for such statements. He only said: “I have not come here to debate, nor do I want to debate; I am ignorant of in this skill [of debate] and my teachers were also ignorant. Even if you convince me, I shall keep saying the same thing.” The questionnaire and details of this incident were printed on the 15th of Jumādā

²⁸³ That is, fifteen more years after the first time he is declared kāfir on account of this fatwā.

²⁸⁴ This is the case of Gangohī and his *fatwā*. Deobandis later claimed that the fatwā was spurious, and try to prove it false from his other fatāwā. The question is, why did Gangohī not deny this in his own lifetime? Alahazrat was not the first to declare Gangohī kāfir; and in fact, he withheld for sometime (as he explains further below) and for fifteen years – the fatwā carrying Gangohī’s name was published, along with refutations and fatāwā that ruled him kāfir. These events occurred a hundred years ago, when there was no deluge of books nor publishers, such that it is difficult to keep track of what is being printed where. All this activity was happening in the same geographical location [which is currently the state of Uttar Pradesh] and refutations were published from Meerut, which is about 120 km from Gangoh and 100 km from Deoband. See maps in Appendix D. But there is not a word of denial from him for 18 years until he died. Even now, such claims are made by other Deobandis; and a denial by Gangohī is non-existent. Gangohī was not completely oblivious of this matter, because there are a number of *fatāwā* in *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah* related to this issue of *imkān e kazīb*.

²⁸⁵ Khalīl Aḥmed Ambhetwī and Ashraf Ālī Thānawī, as this book was written in 1326 AH.

²⁸⁶ **Alahazrat’s footnote:** that is Ashraf Ālī Thānawī.

²⁸⁷ Thānawī’s.

²⁸⁸ This incident occurred in 1320 AH and Ashraf Ālī wrote a rejoinder to his *Ĥifẓ al-Īmān* titled *Bastu’l Banān* in 1329 AH; Khalīl Aḥmed’s *Muhannad* was first published in 1325 AH according to Deobandi sources.

al-Akhīrah, 1323 and were handed to the kingpin and his followers; and this is the fourth²⁸⁹ year running but the answer is only a deafening echo of silence. In spite of all this, the subterfuge of denial is like saying these people who have insulted Allāh táālā and His Messengers have never been born in this world, and all of this is an outright fabrication. How can one answer this?

May Allāh táālā give them some shame.

❧

²⁸⁹ Including the year 1323 AH.

FALSE ACCUSATIONS

When they become helpless and powerless, and cannot find a refuge to flee; and because Allāh tāālā has not given them guidance to repent; and they do not refrain from uttering those blasphemies said against Allāh tāālā and His Messenger ﷺ; nor withdraw insults that were published, nor proclaim this withdrawal,²⁹⁰ they resort to slander, which is the –

FIFTH SUBTERFUGE

This kind of behavior is described in the verse:

They seek to prevent from the path of
Allāh and wish to subvert it.²⁹¹

يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا

To thwart poor common folk from the path of Allāh and to instigate them, and seeking to pull wool over their eyes in broad daylight, they tell them: “What is the reliability of these scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah? And what is the credibility of their fatāwā? These people do takfīr for petty things and their machine always keeps churning out fatāwā of kufr. After all, they have declared Ismāyīl Dihlawī as kāfir; Maulvi Is’ḥāq²⁹² and Maulvi Ābd al-Ḥayy²⁹³ as kāfir...”²⁹⁴

²⁹⁰ It is necessary to proclaim repentance for sins done in public, because RasūlAllāh ﷺ said:

When you commit a sin; then repent. Private repentance for sins done in private and proclaim your repentance for sins done openly and in public.

This was reported with a fair, excellent chain by Imām Aḥmed in *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, 141; Ṭabarānī in *Mujam al-Kabīr*, 331; Bayhaqī in *Shuāb al-Īmān* and narrated by Muādh ibn Jabal ؓ.

²⁹¹ Sūrah Aārāf, 7:45.

²⁹² Maulavi Is’ḥāq Dihlawī, the maternal grandson of Shāh Ābd al-Āzīz Dihlawī was sympathetic to Ismāyīl Dihlawī’s ideas, though he did not reject *taqlīd* outright; he is the author of *Masāyil al-Arbayīn*.

²⁹³ Alahazrat did not do takfīr of these people, even though Ismāyīl was the most deserving to be ruled kāfir for his ugly statements –which Deobandis stoutly defend in the subcontinent.

²⁹⁴ Deobandis do this even now, like Taqī Usmani’s fatwā mentioned earlier: ‘he [Aḥmed Riḍā] ruled Deobandi scholars as kāfir because they refuted these bid’ah practices.’

And those who have a greater degree of shame²⁹⁵ add that *māadhAllāh!* we have declared Shaykh Shāh Ābdu'l Āzīz, Shāh Walīyullah, Hājī Imdādullah, Mawlānā Shāh Faḍlu'r Raḥmān as kāfir.²⁹⁶ And those who are beyond all bounds of shame, accuse us of saying – and I seek Allāh's refuge from such a thing, *māadhAllāh* – that Shaykh Mujaddid e Alf-e-Sāni²⁹⁷ ﷺ was kāfir. Wherever they see that someone has a special reverence for a certain personality, they use his name and say that Sunnis have declared him a kāfir. This kind of defamation has reached such a state, that some esteemed and honourable²⁹⁸ people went to Mawlānā Shāh Muḥammad Husayn Ilāhābādī and told him that we have said – and I seek Allāh's refuge: *māadhAllāh, māadhAllāh, māadhAllāh* – that Sayyidunā Shaykh al-Akbar Muhiyuddin Ibn al-Ārabi [may Allāh sanctify his secret] is a kāfir. May Allāh tāālā grant the noble Mawlānā lofty stations in paradise, that he acted upon this verse:

If a corrupt person comes to you with information, then validate it²⁹⁹

إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا

and he wrote to me enquiring whether this was true. I wrote an epistle refuting these false accusations titled *Injā al-Barī án Waswās al-Muftarī*,³⁰⁰ and dispatched it to the Mawlānā, who dismissed the lying slanderer with a present of *lā-hawla*.³⁰¹

²⁹⁵ Said sarcastically; meaning, more shameless.

²⁹⁶ Which is an obvious lie; not only were these *ulamā* respected by Alahazrat, this was reciprocal in the case of Shāh Faḍlu'r Raḥmān Ganj-Murādābādī who put his own turban on Alahazrat's head as an accolade. Moreover, Shāh Ābd al-Āzīz Dihlawī is the teacher and shaykh of Alahazrat's own shaykh, Sayyid Aāl-e-Rasūl Mārahrawī, through whom Alahazrat narrates his sanad of ḥadīth; notably the *ḥadīth musalsal bi'l-awwaliyyah*, and which is narrated by Sayyid Ābd al-Ḥayy al-Kattānī through Alahazrat. See *Fahras al-Fahāris*, 179.

²⁹⁷ The Reviver at the head of the Second Millenium – Shaykh Aḥmed Sirhindi and the head of the eponymous Mujaddidi-Naqshbandi order.

²⁹⁸ And Brutus is an honourable man.

²⁹⁹ Sūrah Ḥujurāt, 49:6.

³⁰⁰ *Injā al-Barī án Waswās al-Muftarī* [1310 AH].

³⁰¹ The phrase *lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*, which is also a prayer is recited to repel mischief and the devil. In Urdu idiom, 'to give a present of *lā ḥawlah*' means, that he dismissed the person and banished him like a devil; the Mawlānā thus chased away the lying and slandering devils.

It is thus they freely slander; and the answer to this is what your Lord Almighty has said:

Verily, those who make false accusations are those who do not believe in the verses of Allāh; and it is they who are the liars³⁰²

إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكَذِبِ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴿٣٠٢﴾

and He says:

We invoke the curse of Allah upon liars.³⁰³

فَنَجْعَلُ لَعْنَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ

O Muslims! It is not difficult to settle this gossamer deception and weak strategem; just ask those who claim such things for proof. Tell them, if you say that these people have been ruled as kāfir, do you have any evidence to show us where this has been said? Which is the book or booklet or fatwā or pamphlet in which it has been thus ruled? Yea, yea. If you have proof, then why are you holding it back? Show it to us, and if you cannot – and Allāh tāālā knows³⁰⁴ that you cannot³⁰⁵ - then see what the Qur'ān says about you being liars. Your Lord Almighty says:

When they cannot produce witnesses, then it is they who are liars near Allāh³⁰⁶

فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالْبُحْثِ فَوَلَّوْا عُنُقَهُمْ
وَاللَّهُ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ

O Muslims! Where is the need to examine that which is proven for ages? This has happened many times; that they have made such vociferous claims and when a Muslim has asked them for evidence, they have turned their backs and never again shewed their faces. Yet, for the shame they have, they do not let go of the repetend stuck on their lips; and why would they let it go? After all, a drowning man will clutch at a straw. They use the only pretext that remains for them to draw a veil on the disbelief of those who

³⁰² Sūrah Nāḥl, 16:105.

³⁰³ Sūrah Aāl Ímrān, 3:61.

³⁰⁴ Alahazrat is talking about himself; and since he never declared the aforementioned names as kāfir, he says that Allāh knows this to be true.

³⁰⁵ Because it does not exist.

³⁰⁶ Sūrah Nūr, 24:13.

insult Allāh and His Messenger; they keep repeating this constantly in the hope that unsuspecting common folk are brainwashed into believing that scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah have this habit of making takfīr needlessly and carelessly; and they must have ruled these blasphemers as kāfir in the same way.³⁰⁷ O Muslims! Where do these slanderers have proof that we carelessly accuse them of kufr? And where can there be a proof for a figment of imagination?

Verily, Allāh will not let the deceit of the treacherous to prevail³⁰⁸

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي كَيْدَ الْخَائِنِينَ

Their false claims are falsified, and your Lord Almighty says:

Say: bring your evidence if you are truthful³⁰⁹

قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

This much was sufficient to settle the case; yet, we shall provide more evidence to prove the falsehood of these people such that every Muslim can recognise their lies easily. And that too, written proof which has been published, and that too [published] years ago! If the accusations upon the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah, of careless takfīr, were true, then the greatest possibility of finding an instance would be in the case of Ismāyīl Dihlawī. Because scholars have pointed out numerous points of kufr in his statements as mentioned in various publications.

Thus, **FIRSTLY**: In *Sub'hān as-Subbūh ān Āybi Kadhib Maqbūh*,³¹⁰ which was first published in 1309, by Anwār e Muḥammadī Press, Lucknow³¹¹ in which

³⁰⁷ That is, they must have ruled them kāfir without properly investigating the issue; like Keller accuses Alahazrat of 'making a mistake' in the fatwā.

³⁰⁸ Sūrah Yūsuf, 12:52.

³⁰⁹ Sūrah Baqarah, 2:111.

³¹⁰ There seems to be some confusion in the name; the title of the published work, (and also in the *Fatāwā Ridawiyah*), it is slightly different and given as *Sub'hān as-Subbūh ān Kadhibi Āybun Maqbūh*. However, in his later works – including here and *Mustanad al-Mutamad, āyb* precedes *kadhib*; and both are correct.

³¹¹ The book was written in 1307 AH and published in 1309 AH.

I detailed 75 aspects of kufr in the sayings of the aforementioned Dihlawī and his followers; yet, on page 90, I wrote in the conclusion thusly:

Scholars who exercise utmost caution should not consider them³¹² as kāfirs. And this is the right opinion; and this is the answer; the fatwā should be issued based on this opinion; which is the preferred opinion in our madh'hab and is also the reliable position; and in this is safety and this is most appropriate thing to do.

SECONDLY, in *Al-Kawkabah al-Shihābiyyah fī Kufriyyāti Abi'l Wahābiyyah*, written solely refuting Ismā'īl Dihlawī and his followers; which was first published in 1316 by Tuḥfah-e-Ĥanafīyyah Press, Azīmābād. In this work more than 70 aspects that necessitate the ruling of kufr were listed and proved [as kufr] citing Qur'ān, Ḥadīth and scholarly rulings; yet, on page 62, I wrote:

In my opinion, the state of utmost caution bids us to withhold our tongue from declaring him as kāfir; and this is the preferred and most suitable opinion.³¹³ And Allāh tāālā knows best.

THIRDLY, in *Sall al-Suyūf al-Hindiyyah ālā Kufriyyati Bābā an-Najdiyyah*, which was first published in Ṣafar 1316, from Azīmābād. Even in this, Ismā'īl Dihlawī and his followers were refuted and many aspects were listed that necessitate kufr,³¹⁴ yet on page 21-22, I wrote:

This is the ruling of Fiqh scholars concerning these mendacious statements;³¹⁵ but may Allāh shower countless blessings and mercies upon our scholars for their restraint. In spite of seeing and hearing the leader of this sect³¹⁶ declare true Muslims as polytheists and disbelievers – neither does intense anger loosen their grip of

³¹² Even though *Barāhīn al-Qaṭiāh* was mentioned in the question that resulted in the book *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ*, only the part of 'possibility of falsehood' was cited. Alahazrat's restraint on takfīr was upon this issue. Moreover, Khalīl Aḥmed was ruled kāfir for his insulting statements about RasūlAllāh ﷺ; not upon this issue of *imkān-e-kizb*. Alahazrat is explaining here, that if he were hasty and careless in takfīr, he would have ruled Ismā'īl and his followers as kāfir even back then.

³¹³ *hamāre nazdik maqām e iḥtiyāt meīn ikfār sey kaff-e-lisān ma'khūz o mukhtār, murzā o munasib*

³¹⁴ *luzūm-e-kufr*

³¹⁵ of Ismā'īl Dihlawī in his books *Tafwīyatul Imān* et al.

³¹⁶ *ṭāyifāh kā pīr*: leader of this sect, Ismā'īl Dihlawī.

caution; nor are they instigated by the desire for retribution; these blessed scholars³¹⁷ are still hesitant to rule him kāfir and assert that there is a difference between that which *necessitates* kufr and that which is *necessarily* kufr.³¹⁸ It is one thing for such statements to be classified as kufr; and an entirely different thing to consider a person who has said that as a kāfir. We shall tread with utmost caution; we shall remain silent – and as long as there is a weak or even the remotest possibility to withhold from takfir, we shall do so; we shall hesitate and fear to issue the ruling of kufr.

FOURTHLY, in *Izālatu'l Āār bi Ĥajr al-Karāyim an Kilāb an-Nār*, which was first published in 1317, from Azīmābād; I wrote on page 10:

We prefer the opinion of Kalām scholars in these matters. And thus, do not do takfir of a person as long as he does not deny or reject any necessary aspect of religion; or considers such a denier to be a Muslim.

FIFTHLY, let us forget Ismāyīl Dihlawī. Take these blasphemers who have been ruled kāfir only recently. As long I was not aware of their blasphemies, after listing 78 reasons that necessitate kufr on the issue of *imkān al-kadhib*, in *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ*, I wrote on page 80 (in the first edition):

I seek Allāh's refuge – and a thousand times: *ḥāshā lillāh!*³¹⁹ I certainly do not like to make takfir of these people. Even until now, I still consider these followers³²⁰ and modern claimants³²¹ as Muslims, even though there is no doubt in their heresy and waywardness. Neither do I issue a ruling of kufr upon the leader of their sect, Ismāyīl Dihlawī; because our Prophet ﷺ has warned us from making takfir of those who say: 'lā ilāha illā Allāh'. **We do not rule them kāfir, as long as we do not have proof as obvious and glaringly apparent as the mid-day sun;** and [withhold from takfir] until the remotest possibility remains to absolve them from kufr. For Islām shall prevail and it cannot be subdued.

O Muslims! I remind you of your religion and your faith; of the day of Judgement, the Prophet and the reckoning in the presence of Ar-Raḥmān – and I ask you: Is it not shamelessness to accuse a person of making careless

³¹⁷ See *Mūtaqad*

³¹⁸ *luzūm-e-kufr* and *iltizām-e-kufr*.

³¹⁹ Allāh forbid! I seek Allāh's refuge! May Allāh never make it so!

³²⁰ Of Ismāyīl; that is Gangohī, Ambhetwī and other Deobandi followers.

³²¹ Modern claimants of the dead and buried idea of *imkān al-kadhib*.

takfīr, in spite of such utmost caution? Is it not oppression? Is it not unjust and unfair to slander him thus? Sayyidunā Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ has said, and whatever he says is the truth:

If you have no shame, do whatever you wish³²² إذا لم تستحي فاصنع ما شئت

O Muslims! These are my statements³²³ that have been published for years – some ten, some seventeen and nineteen years ago; yet, the ruling of kufr concerning these blasphemers was issued only six years ago in 1320, when the book *Al-Mútamad al-Mustanad*³²⁴ was first published.

Be mindful³²⁵ of Allāh and His Messenger and be judicious; these statements of caution and restraint, not only refute the slanders but also bear witness that the person³²⁶ who has been extremely careful in takfīr did not issue the ruling of kufr unless their kufr had become obvious and glaringly apparent as the mid-day sun. Unless he had seen conclusive, clear, incontrovertible and compelling proof of their explicit insults, for which there is absolutely no possibility of a favourable interpretation, he did not rule them kāfir.³²⁷

After all, it is the same person, it is this slave of Allāh, who listed seventy reasons that necessitate kufr, but still said:

³²² Nawawī, *Arbayīn*, #20; extracted from *Bukhārī*.

³²³ Refraining from takfīr and utmost caution.

³²⁴ In 1270 AH, Mawlānā Faḍlu'r Rasūl Badāyūnī [1213-1289 / 1798-1872] wrote a book on the doctrine of Ahl as-Sunnah and criticising the heresies of that time, titled *Mútaqad al-Muntaqad*; this was out of circulation for a long time and surviving copies like the printed edition from Bombay had many typographical errors. Mawlānā Ábd al-Wahīd al-Firdawsi requested Alahazrat to edit this work for reprint. In the course of reviewing the manuscript, Alahazrat felt the need to explain and add, and discuss various burning issues of the age; thus he wrote a commentary on the tract titled *Al-Mustanad Al-Mútamad Bināyi Najātu'l Abad*, which was published together with the original text in 1320 AH. The closing part of the commentary contains juridical answers to questions concerning heresy, apostacy and takfīr. It is in this part that Alahazrat first ruled the Deobandi blasphemers as kāfir. Allāh tāālā knows best.

³²⁵ *Allāh o Rasūl ke khawf ko sāmney rakh ke* as an idiom.

³²⁶ Imām Áhmed Ridā himself.

³²⁷ Because Deobandi followers attempt to interpret those statements favourably; remember that interpretation is inadmissible in case of explicit insults.

Our Prophet ﷺ has warned us from making takfīr³²⁸ of those who say: *lā ilāha illā Allāh*. We do not rule them kāfir, as long as we do not have proof as obvious and glaringly apparent as the mid-day sun; and [withhold from takfir] until the remotest possibility remains to absolve them from kufr.

It is the same person who explained 78 reasons that necessitate kufr of these blasphemers according to jurists; but as long as he did not have conclusive proof of their blasphemies refrained from takfīr and said:

I seek Allāh's refuge. And a thousand times: *hāshā lillāh!*³²⁹ I certainly do not like to make takfir of these people...

Did I have friendship with them at that time, and now, we are estranged? Do we have a dispute on property now and previously, we did not have any? We seek Allāh's refuge. A Muslim's relation – of love and hate, friendship and enmity is solely for the sake of Allāh tāālā and His Messenger ﷺ. As long as these insults were not issued³³⁰ by these blasphemers, and as long as I had not seen or heard³³¹ of the blasphemies by these people concerning

³²⁸ That is heedless and baseless takfīr, as is obvious.

³²⁹ Allāh forbid! I seek Allāh's refuge! May Allāh never make it so!

³³⁰ **Alahazrat's footnote:** Like Thānawī, whose ugly insult of RasūlAllāh ﷺ was published in 1319 AH. Prior to this he used to present himself as a Sunni and there was a time he even used to attend celebrations of Mawlid along with other Muslims.

³³¹ **Alahazrat's footnote:** Like Gangohī and Ambhetwī; because earlier, I had received that part of their passage which mentioned their statement of falsehood being a possibility for Allāh tāālā; I came to know of it later that he also says that the knowledge of satan is greater than that of RasūlAllāh ﷺ. And concerning Gangohī's fatwā where he says, God can be a liar and if someone calls him a liar, he remains a Sunni and righteous Muslim; I remained silent even after seeing a printed version of the fatwā due to extreme caution and because others had published it, this was not conclusive proof on the basis of which we could make takfīr. Thereafter, I saw the original fatwā with my own eyes, which is in Gangohī's own hand and carries his seal and signature; and in spite of this being reprinted again and again, he kept silent and did not protest, then it was established conclusively that the fatwā was his own. A similar case was that of the Qadiani Liar; unless I had seen his books myself, I did not insist upon his takfir. As long as I had only heard that he claims to be the Mahdī and that he (claims he) is similar to Jesus ﷺ, I had said in reply to a question concerning him: 'He seems to be a madman'.

Thereafter, a fatwā came from Āmrītsar which declared him kāfir; and in which passages from his books with reference to page numbers were listed, I wrote only this much: "If these statements are present in the books of Mirza, as mentioned here, then certainly he is a kāfir." See the monograph: *Sū'u wa'l Īqāb ālā al-Masīh al-Kadh'dhāb*, page 18. Yes, when I saw his books myself, then I issued the decisive ruling that he had become a kāfir and an apostate.

Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ, I was mindful of their being Muslims, and their being people who utter the kalimah: *lā ilāha illā Allāh*. I was careful and I exercised caution; even though this necessitated kufr according to the opinion of jurists, I preferred the opinion of kalām scholars. When I saw these statements with my own eyes which explicitly insult Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ, there remained no option except to rule them kāfir.³³² Because our imams have said:

One who doubts in the kufr or punishment of such a person,³³³ is a kāfir himself.³³⁴

Then, it was incumbent upon me to save myself and the faith of my Muslim brothers and was thus compelled to issue the decree of kufr. *And thus is the recompense of oppressors, the tyrants*. Your Lord Almighty says:

Say: that truth hath come and falsehood has been vanquished; and falsehood was bound to be vanquished³³⁵

وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَطْلُ إِنَّ
الْبَطْلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا ﴿١٠١﴾

and He says:

There is no compulsion in religion. The path of guidance is manifest from path of evil³³⁶

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ
مِنَ الْغَيِّ ﴿١٠٢﴾

﴿١٠٢﴾

³³² Otherwise Alahazrat would himself be enveloped in the ruling.

³³³ The blasphemer.

³³⁴ Ĥaşkafī, *Durr al-Mukhtār*, Kitāb al-Jihād, On Apostacy.

³³⁵ Sūrah Isrā'a , 17:81.

³³⁶ Sūrah Baqarah, 2:256.

CONCLUSION

There were four important milestones to cover in this book:

- That the statements written and published by blasphemers are indeed insulting Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ.
- That anyone who insults or disrespects Allāh táālā and His Messenger is a kāfir.
- That whosoever does not consider them a kāfir³³⁷ and values their relationship; or has esteem for them on account of such people being his teachers or shaykhs or friends; then, he too is a kāfir³³⁸ along with them and will be tied with the same rope on the day of Judgement.
- That all the alibis proffered by ignorant and corrupt folk are rejected and unacceptable.

Praise be to Allāh, that all these were firmly established and which, we have explained with proof from the verses of the Qur'ān. Now, on one hand is felicity and paradise; and on another is damnation and hell fire. People are free to choose what they like. But remember one thing: a person who forsakes the mantle of Sayyidunā RasūlAllāh ﷺ for the sakes of Zayd and Ámr will never succeed. As for guidance, that is in the Power and choosing of Allāh táālā.

These are basic issues that any knowledgeable Muslim should know, but our commonfolk brothers are fond of seeing endorsements.³³⁹ Which endorsements can be higher and prominent than those of the scholars of the two pure sanctuaries?³⁴⁰ These sanctuaries, from where religion commenced and according to authentic ḥadīth, there will never be the

³³⁷ After learning of their blasphemies.

³³⁸ Because, it is necessary to consider a blasphemer as a kāfir or else one becomes a kāfir himself.

³³⁹ Lit., seals.

³⁴⁰ *ḥaramayn ṭayyibayn*

prevalance of Satan in these places.³⁴¹ Therefore, to satisfy our brothers, I went to visit the sanctuaries and presented my fatwā to the scholars and muftīs of Makkah and Madīnah. The beautiful endorsements and eloquent speeches made by the esteemed ūlamā can be seen in the book: *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn ālā Manĥar al-Kufri wa'l Mayn* which has been published in 1325 and also includes a facing translation³⁴² of each page in Urdu.

O Allāh! Give guidance to Muslim bretheren to accept the truth and to forsake obstinacy and egoism, and protect them, such that they do not advocate Zayd and Āmr against Thee and Thy Messenger; for the sake of Muĥammad ﷺ.

Āmīn! Āmīn! Āmīn!

والحمد لله رب العالمين وأفضل الصلوة وأكمل السلام
على سيدنا محمد و على آله وصحبه وحزبه أجمعين آمين

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³⁴¹ The Wahābī government of Saudi Arabia was established after Alahazrat passed away in 1921. While we do not dispute the ḥādīth, *māādihAllāh*, it does not necessarily mean that the *ḥaramayn* will always be under the rule of righteous Muslims. Even Fatimid Shia and Mūtazilah have ruled over *ḥaramayn* in the past. However, it will not prevail as we can see that Wahābīs are already coming unstuck in the kingdom – may Allāh hasten their departure.

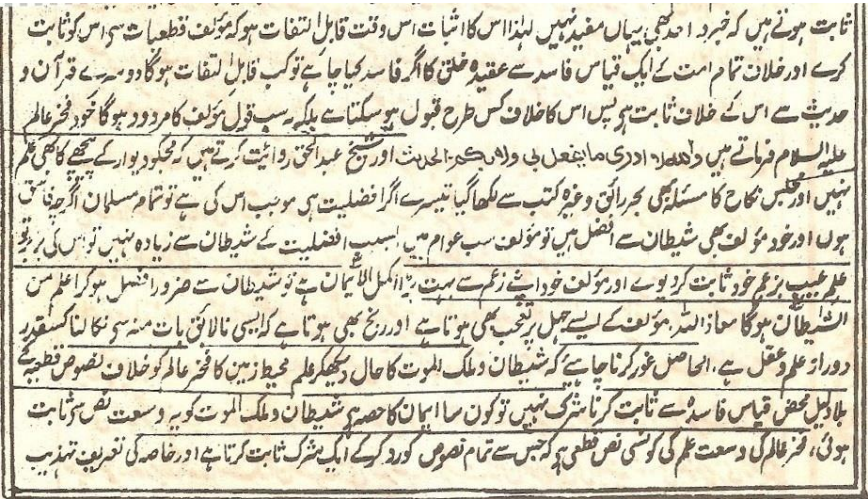
³⁴² Urdu translation by Alahazrat's nephew, Mawlānā Ḥasanayn Raza Khān titled: *Mubayyin e Aĥkām o Taṣdīqāt e Aālām*, 1324 AH.

Appendix A

BARĀHĪN AL-QĀTĪĀH

Maulvi Khalīl Aḥmed (1269-1346/1852-1927) was born in Ambetha³⁴³ and studied at Deoband. He was the student of Rashīd Aḥmed Gangohī and at his behest, wrote *Barāhīn al-Qāṭīāh* as a refutation of the book *Anwār e Sātiāh* written by Mawlānā Ābdu's Samīy Rampūrī, a Sunni scholar who was also a disciple of Ḥājī Imdādullāh Muhājir Makkī, Gangohī's spiritual master.

It is in this book that Maulvi Khalīl Aḥmed Sahāranpūrī³⁴⁴ says that the knowledge of Satan is proven from scriptural texts and there is no such evidence for the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ. He also wrote another book in Arabic named *Muhannad* where he denied that he ever said such a thing. The controversial passage appears on page 51 of *Barāhīn al-Qāṭīāh*, published by Kutub Khana Imdādiyah, Deoband, UP, India, 1962.



³⁴³ Sahāranpūr district, Uttar Pradesh, India.

³⁴⁴ He is known in the Arab world as *Sahāranfūrī*, the author *Badhl al-Majhūd*, a commentary on the Ḥādīth compendium *Sunan Abū Dawūd*.

TRANSLATION

...rather all the claims of the author³⁴⁵ will be rejected. The Pride of the World *عظمت السلام* has himself said: 'By Allāh, I do not know that which may befall me nor that which may befall you' as mentioned in the Ḥadīth. Shaykh Abdu'l Haq³⁴⁶ reports [that he said]: 'I do not even know what is behind the wall.'³⁴⁷ Thus it is also written in *Bahr ar-Rāyiq* and other books concerning the assembly of marriage. Thirdly, if it is superiority that necessitates [being higher in knowledge] then all Muslims should be higher than Satan in knowledge – even if it is a sinner,³⁴⁸ in fact the author is also superior to Satan; so let the author prove that he has knowledge of unseen equal to that of Satan if not more than him, on account of his [the author] being superior to Satan. The author, according to his own claim is a superior believer, a person of perfect faith, then certainly he is superior to Satan, and therefore he should be more knowledgeable than Satan! We seek Allāh's refuge!³⁴⁹ Such ignorance on the part of the author is surprising, and it also saddening that he utters such an unworthy³⁵⁰ statement which is far removed from knowledge and reason.

The outcome: One should ponder, that by looking at the state of Satan and the angel of death, [and then] proving such encompassing knowledge of the earth³⁵¹ for the Pride of the World,³⁵² without any scriptural evidence³⁵³ and merely by fallacious analogy – if this is not polytheism, then which part of faith is it? The extensiveness of knowledge for Satan and the

³⁴⁵ Abdu's Samiy Rāmpūri, author of *Anwār e Sātiāh*.

³⁴⁶ Ábd al-Ḥaq al-Dihlawī, (958-1052/1551-1642) famous scholar and the most prominent ḥadīth master in the past 400 years in the subcontinent. He is the author of many books including *Ashīáātu'l Lamáāt*, a commentary on *Mishkātu'l Maṣābīh* and *Madāriju'n Nubuwwah*, a biography of the Prophet ﷺ.

³⁴⁷ Khalīl Aḥmed misquotes and states the opposite of what Shaykh Ábd al-Ḥaq said; such a thing is either *talbīs* or *kadhib*. Because, in the first volume of *Madārij* the Shaykh says: "Some people pose an objection on this and say that it has been mentioned in some reports that RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: 'I am a slave and I do not not know what is behind this wall.' **Whereas, this statement is baseless and there is no authentic report of this kind.**"

³⁴⁸ *fāsiq*

³⁴⁹ Apparently, Khalīl Aḥmed finds it abhorrent that anyone else can equal Satan in knowledge.

³⁵⁰ *nā-lāyiq* literally means unworthy, but in usage and idiom it means contemptible, vile, disgraceful.

³⁵¹ *ilm-e-muḥīṭ-e-zamīn*

³⁵² *fakhr-e-áālam* meaning RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

³⁵³ *naṣṣ*

angel of death is proven by scriptural proof; where is such scriptural proof for the extensiveness of the knowledge of the Pride of the World, thereby refuting all scriptural proofs and establishes one polytheistic belief?

Khalīl Aḥmed's compound sentence above can be decomposed thus:

1. Satan and the Angel of death have encompassing knowledge of the earth;
2. One should not prove similar knowledge for Pride of the world ﷻ by analogy [because it is a false analogy].
3. Because doing so opposes scriptural evidence;
4. And proving such knowledge [even by analogy] is polytheism [the rhetorical question: *if this is not polytheism, then which part of faith is it?*].
5. Knowledge of Satan and the Angel of death is proved by scriptural evidence [*naṣṣ e qaṭʿī*].
6. There is no scriptural proof for such knowledge for the Pride of the world [RasūlAllāh ﷺ].
7. And if one tries to prove such knowledge [of Satan and the Angel of death] for RasūlAllāh ﷺ, it is refuting scriptural evidence,
8. And saying so is committing polytheism.

Look at it whichever way you want, but Khalīl is saying that if you prove such knowledge for RasūlAllāh ﷺ, you commit shirk; but the same knowledge is possessed by Satan and it is proved by *naṣṣ*!

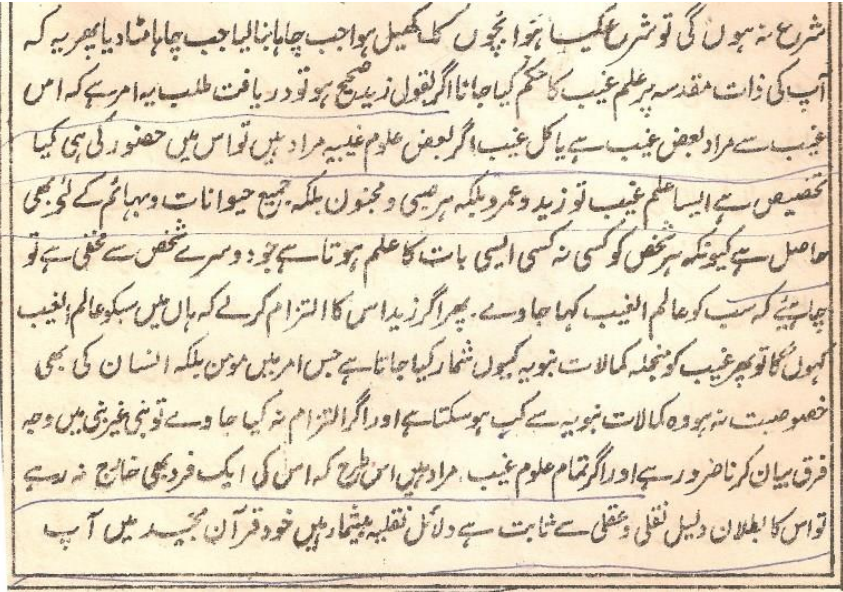
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Appendix B

HIFẒ AL-ĪMĀN

Ashraf Ālī Thānawī³⁵⁴ was born in 1280 and died in 1362 (1863-1943). He graduated from Deoband in 1300(1883) and Rashīd Aḥmed Gangohī conferred upon him the turban;³⁵⁵ Qāsim Nānotwi, Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan Deobandi and Yāqūb Nānotwi were among his teachers.³⁵⁶

In 1319, he wrote a short booklet titled *ḤifẒ al-Īmān* in which he made a statement that any native Urdu speaker, even an illiterate, will consider as an insult. The following scan is from page 8 of the book, published by Iyāziyyah Book House, Deoband.



³⁵⁴ Related to Thānā-Bhawan in Saharanpur District, Uttar Pradesh, India.

³⁵⁵ *daṣṭār bandī*: this is a graduation ceremony in Islamic schools; and the conferring of the turban signifies that the student is now deemed a graduate.

³⁵⁶ Muḥammad Akbar Shāh Bukhārī, *Akābir e Ūlamā e Deoband*.

TRANSLATION

If, the attribution of knowledge to his³⁵⁷ blessed person by Zayd³⁵⁸ is valid, then it is necessary to inquire – whether he refers to partial knowledge or all kinds of knowledge? If this refers to a part of such knowledge of unseen,³⁵⁹ then where is the exclusiveness of RasūlAllāh ﷺ in this?³⁶⁰ Such knowledge is [possessed by] Zayd and Ámr;³⁶¹ rather, children and madmen; rather, all animals and quadrupeds also possess [such knowledge].

Because, every person has knowledge of something that is hidden from another; then, it becomes necessary to call everyone a knower of the unseen.³⁶² And then, if Zayd makes it binding upon himself, that he shall call everyone a knower of unseen, then why does he consider this as an exclusive attribute of prophethood?³⁶³ An attribute in which, there is no exclusivity for believers – not even exclusivity for humans;³⁶⁴ then, how can this be an exclusive attribute of prophethood?³⁶⁵

And if one does not consider it binding, then it is necessary to explain the reason for differentiating between a prophet and a non-prophet. And if he refers to all kinds of knowledge such that not even a single thing remains unknown, then the invalidity of such an idea is proven by innumerable narrated³⁶⁶ and rational proofs.

³⁵⁷ The Prophet ﷺ.

³⁵⁸ Zayd: a name used for illustration.

³⁵⁹ *báaz úlūm e ghaybiyyah*

³⁶⁰ In Urdu: *hūzūr*; and this is meant to refer to RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

³⁶¹ An idiom to say anyone; like it is said in English: ‘Tom, Dick and Harry’.

³⁶² *áālimu’l ghayb*

³⁶³ *jumlā kamālāt e anbiyā’a*: that is, attributes that are considered as perfect, praiseworthy, distinguishing them from non-prophets etc.

³⁶⁴ Thānawī has in the previous paragraph said it explicitly that even animals have similar knowledge; so it is not exclusive to prophets, or even believers, or even humans. In other words, Thānawī says: knowledge is not a trait that can be considered as special for prophets.

³⁶⁵ Ergo, Prophets do not have knowledge of unseen. Thānawī has said earlier that madmen and animals have knowledge that is similar to that of the Prophet ﷺ. Any possible ambiguity is removed by the rhetorical question he himself asks: ‘*where is the exclusivity – takhṣīs – for the Prophet?*’

³⁶⁶ *dalīl e naqlī o áqlī se sābit hai*.

If one reads the whole passage, it is clear that Thānawī rejects '*part ilm al-ghayb*' and draws similarity of such '*part ilm al-ghayb*' of the Prophet ﷺ with that of animals and madmen; because he trails the discussion with the invalidity of '*kull ilm al-ghayb*'. So the parallels drawn are not accidental or incidental outcome; rather, intentional and deliberate. Some Deobandis try to fool common people by saying that Thānawī was talking about the phrase '*āālimu'l ghayb*' or the 'knower of the unseen.' The passage talks of knowledge and compares – draws similarity with the knowledge of prophets. This is why he asks rhetorically: 'then you should call everyone as knowers of the unseen.'

Appendix C

FATWĀ OF RASHĪD GANGOHĪ

Maulvi Rashīd Aḥmed Gangohī (1244-1323/1829-1905) was one of the founders of the Deoband school.³⁶⁷ Even though his teachers and shuyukh were Sunnis and approved of ideas and practices which are now labeled as ‘Barelwi,’ at some juncture, he and his friend Maulvi Qasim Nānotwī became admirers of Ismāyīl Dihlawī and Indian Wahābism, which they propagated and advocated in the seminary they founded at Deoband.

This dispute was not merely about certain practices – like celebrating the birthday of the Prophet ﷺ or donating reward to the deceased; but rather in fundamental articles of faith itself. The concept *imkān al-kadhib* or the possibility of falsehood in the Divine Speech of Allāh was first instigated by Ismāyīl Dihlawī in India. Gangohī and his students³⁶⁸ not only validated it, but wrote books and further compounded the mistake by making wild comparisons and conjuring egregious analogies. Alahazrat and other úlamā refuted this (see *Sub’ḥān as-Subbūḥ*) but withheld from ruling them *kāfir* as this could be due to the misunderstanding of a *kalām* concept. Thereafter Gangohī was asked about a person who claims ‘occurrence of falsehood’ and Gangohī replied in a written fatwā that such a person remains a Sunni Muslim. This fatwā of *wuqū’* – or occurrence – was handed to Sunni úlamā who ruled Gangohī *kāfir* because of this fatwā which was in Gangohī’s hand and upon which his seal is imprinted; Alahazrat presented photocopies of this fatwā in *ḥaramayn*, and it was preserved in the library of Madinah in his time. It is said that the fatwā is present even to this day in a library in Moradabad in India. Allāh táālā knows best.

Deobandis claim that this fatwā was forged by Sunni scholars to malign Gangohī. Alahazrat refuted this claim and explained that this denial was never made in Gangohī’s own lifetime in spite of the fact that this fatwā was published with refutations for 15 years until his death in 1323.

³⁶⁷ Founded in 1283/1866.

³⁶⁸ Notably, Khalīl Aḥmed Sahāranpūrī [1269-1346/1852-1927]; and Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan Deobandi [1268-1339/1851-1920] in his *Juhd al-Muqill*.

Alahazrat says³⁶⁹ concerning this fatwā:

This unclean fatwā was published together with a refutation in the booklet *Siyānatu'n Nās* in 1308 by Ḥadiqatu'l Ūlūm Publishers, Meerut. It was published again by Gulzār-e-Ḥasanī Publishers, Bombay, in 1318 along with a more detailed refutation. Thereafter, in 1320 it was published once again with another refutation by Tuḥfah-e-Ḥanafiyyah Publishers, Azīmābād-Patna. The person who gave this fatwā died in Jumādā al-Akhīrah 1323 and remained silent until his last breath. Neither did he deny that it was his own fatwā, even though disowning this fatwā was easier than disowning a published book. Nor did he say: 'the meaning of my words is not what the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah describe; rather, I meant something else.' Was it an ordinary thing to be attributed with such an explicit kufr, that he did not bother about it? A fatwā by Zayd, that carries his seal is being circulated openly in his lifetime and his being in good health – and such a fatwā is certainly and absolutely kufr – and this is repeatedly published for years; and people have published refutations of this fatwā; and declare Zayd to be a kāfir on account of this fatwā; Zayd lives for fifteen more years; and Zayd sees and hears all of this – and Zayd does not publish a denial or disavowal concerning that fatwā; and keeps silent with bated breath until his breath has abated – can any sane person imagine that Zayd had denied that the fatwā was his? Or that he meant something else?

Some may attempt to seize the moral high ground and make the following alibi: "A Sufi does not reply to attacks on his person; even if people slander him or circulate lies about him. It is difficult to answer every libellous charge. Anybody can publish anything; it is impossible to answer everything. For example, forgeries abound on the internet – so also, Gangohī kept quiet. His silence cannot be considered as proof of culpability".

Some answers and more questions:

1. It is important to keep the context of the age in perspective. It was not like today's internet age where anybody is a published author. Back then, anything had to be published through a press. Certain publishers – even as in our time – had a reputation. This fatwā was published from well-known publishers. Self-respecting people will not sit idle, if, for example, Penguin

³⁶⁹ *Tamhīd e Īmān*

or McGraw Hill publishes an article of kufr and attribute it to them. The least a person can do is deny the authorship of such a thing.

2. *Kufr* is not an ordinary accusation to ignore. Particularly, when one is a muftī and a leader of a prominent school and when he is well known, and when his fatāwā are solicited and issued regularly. Shouldn't a muftī worry about safeguarding his reputation? If a fraud can forge one fatwā, then what stops him from making more fatāwā?

3. Those who republished the *fatwā* and refutations were also well-known *ulamā*. Gangohī replied to letters³⁷⁰ by Alahazrat and the compiler of *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah* included some fatāwā of Alahazrat for illustration.³⁷¹ It is apparent that Alahazrat was considered as a prominent personality. Which scholar in his right mind will keep quiet when a prominent personality forges a fatwā and circulates it in his name?

4. A Sufi like Ábd al-Wahhāb al-Shaárānī notes that forgeries were inserted in his books and denies them; so it is not against being a Sufi to clear one's name. But, we do not find any denial by Rashīd Gangohī himself in any of his books or in his sayings reported by his close disciple and biographer Aāshiq Ilāhī Meerutī.³⁷²

5. In the *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, the author mentions and attests that he believes in *imkān al-kadhib*. There is even a letter purported to be written by Hājī Imdādullāh that says: “*nobody claims wuqū.*” This was an excellent opportunity to add a note that: “A forged fatwā is being circulated in my name and I categorically deny it – it is not my fatwā”.

6. That Gangohī was not inclined to argue or debate is incorrect. Apart from the book *Barāhīn-e-Qāṭiāh*, which was written ‘by his command,’³⁷³ there

³⁷⁰ See *Dafā e Zaygh e Zāgh*, an exchange between Alahazrat and Gangohī on the issue of the domestic crow, which indicates there was correspondence between them. Rashīd Gangohī in his fatwā says that the domestic crow is permissible to eat (*Tazkiratu'r Rashīd*, 1/180).

³⁷¹ The compiler adds a note that the fatwā has been included only to emphasise that even the leader of the other camp – i.e. Alahazrat – was in agreement with Gangohī on this issue; see *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, 172.

³⁷² *Tazkiratu'r Rashīd*, Aāshiq Ilāhī Meerutī.

³⁷³ Thus, it is on the cover of *Barāhīn al-Qāṭiāh*. It would not be surprising if modern Deobandis claim that Gangohī did not know of this and even Khalīl was unaware – and that the printer put

are a number of fatāwā that indicate that he was an active participant in the discourse and a lengthy fatwā criticising Nazeer Husain Dihlawī accusing him of being a closet *lā-madh'habi* which is reproduced by his biographer.³⁷⁴

7. The *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah* was published much later than this fatwā of *wuqū'ū* which was issued in 1308. In the published Fatāwā, one can find letters that are dated as late as 1322. So there was ample chance to include a statement or a saying (because the compiled *Fatāwā* has sections that are oral fatāwā or the *Malfūz*) that: “a fatwā of *wuqū'ū* circulated in my name is false.”

8. When Deobandis made false charges and concocted books attributing it to Alahazrat's forebears, he refuted them. When they forged a seal attributing it to his father, he pointed out that his father had passed away prior to the date on the forged seal, thus exposing the slanderers; his nephew published his disavowal, in spite of a forgery by the copyists (in the issue of the *Waṣīyyah*); Mawlānā Maḥbūb Ālī did the same when he published the third volume of *Ĥadāyiq* posthumously, without due diligence. When there was an uproar and Deobandis clamored “Sacrilege!” he humbly retracted and published his statement of repentance. All Gangohī had to do was repudiate the fatwā.

9. The fatwā carries the seal and signature of Gangohī. The seal was, and is, a method of authentication and non-repudiation. True, a possibility of forgery exists, but the only way to address that shortcoming is by a denial when such a spurious document is brought to the notice of the author. In one fatwā, Gangohī permits even the use of telegrams (wire) to confirm news of the new moon³⁷⁵ for Ramaḍān and based it on the ‘common practice and is generally considered to be trustworthy.’ When a fatwā attributed to him, in his hand, carrying his seal is circulated, surely people would consider it authentic and trust it even more than a cablegram? If this fatwā was a forgery, then, why did he not refute it?

it of his own accord or even deny that Khalīl Aḥmed ever wrote a book like it! *Barāhīn* received a second reprint in the lifetime of Gangohī; the purported letter by Hāji Sahib is included in it.

³⁷⁴ *Tazkiratu'r Rashīd*, Āshiq Ilāhī Meerutī, 1/180.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 174.

TRANSLATION OF THE ISTIFTĀ AND THE FATWĀ OF GANGOHĪ

Bismillāhi'r Rahmāni'r Raḥīm

Question: May Allāh have mercy on you, please give us your opinion in the following matter: Two people were talking about the falsehood of the Creator.³⁷⁶ A third man said in the favor of one of the two:

Verily Allāh shall not forgive ascribing partners to Him; and shall forgive anything other than that³⁷⁷

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ - وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ

“The particle *mā* is generic, which also includes the sin of murdering a believer. Thus, it is understood from the above verse that Allāh tāālā will forgive a believer who has deliberately murdered [another believer]. And in another verse it is said:

And for he who murders a believer intentionally, his punishment is [abiding in] Hell forever³⁷⁸

وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا

In this verse, the particle *man* is also generic which includes believers who commit deliberate murder. This means, a believer who has committed a pre-meditated murder will not be forgiven.” The opponent of the third man said: “Your argument would then prove occurrence of falsehood [in the Divine Speech of] Allāh. Because, the verse says: *shall* forgive; not will *possibly* forgive.”³⁷⁹ Upon this the third man said: “When did I say that I do not accept the occurrence of falsehood in Divine Speech?”³⁸⁰ The same person³⁸¹ has also said: “Falsehood is not ugly and naturally despicable³⁸² in general; Allāh tāālā has permitted falsehood in certain situations. And in

³⁷⁶ *kizb e Bārī*

³⁷⁷ Sūrah Nisā'a, 4:48; also 4:116.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 4:93.

³⁷⁹ *yaghfir*, not *yumkin an yaghfir*

³⁸⁰ *maiñ ne kab kaha hai ke wuqū' e kazib ka qāyil nahīñ hūñ?*

³⁸¹ The third person.

³⁸² *kazib ālā'l ūmūm qabīh̄ ba mánā munāfir li't ṭabá nahīñ hai*

certain situations half-truths³⁸³ and plain lies are both preferable [to truth] – not just half-truths. Concerning this third person:

a) Does he remain a Muslim or has he become a kāfir?

b) If he is a Muslim, is he a heretic and astray,³⁸⁴ or remains in the Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l Jamā'ah in spite of his saying the above concerning falsehood in [the Speech] of Allāh táālā.

Please clarify, may Allāh táālā reward you.

Answer:

Even though the third person has committed a mistake in the interpretation of the verses, one should not call him a kāfir or a heretic or a misguided person.³⁸⁵ Because a great number of scholars and elders accept occurrence of the repealing of the threat of punishment.³⁸⁶ Thus, Maulavi Aḥmed Ḥasan has described this in his monograph *Tanzih ar-Raḥmān*. Apart from this, those who consider that occurrence of repealing of the threat of punishment as possible,³⁸⁷ they also believe that such a repealing can occur. It is also clear that *khulf-wayīd*³⁸⁸ is a specific case and falsehood is a generic case.³⁸⁹ Because falsehood means: that which is contrary to what has [really] occurred. And that which can be contrary can be either in the case of the threat of punishment or promise of reward or any information;³⁹⁰ and all of these³⁹¹ are categories of falsehood. And the existence of the sub-category necessitates

³⁸³ *tawriyah o áyn kazib*

³⁸⁴ *bidátī, zāll*

³⁸⁵ *magar tā-ham usko kāfir kahnā yā bidátī zall nahiñ kahna chāhiye*

³⁸⁶ *wuqūū e khulf e wayīd*

³⁸⁷ *mujawwizīn*

³⁸⁸ Foregoing the threat of punishment

³⁸⁹ That is, *khulf-wayīd* is a subset of *kazib*.

³⁹⁰ *gāh e wayīd, gāh e waád, gāh e khabar*

³⁹¹ If one acts contrary to carry out the threat [wayīd] or contrary to the promise of reward [waád] or gives information contrary to the occurrence [khabar;] all these are kinds of falsehood.

the existence of the main class.³⁹² If one is a human, then certainly he will also be an animal.³⁹³ **Therefore, the meaning of occurrence of falsehood thus becomes valid,**³⁹⁴ regardless of whom this concerns. Thus, based upon this, one should not say any harsh word to the third person, because that would necessitate takfir of elder scholars. Nevertheless, this is a weak statement. However, according to the mad'hab of the elders, it is not permissible for the person with a strong evidence to consider the person with a weak evidence as a heretic. See Ḥanafīs and Shāfiyīs do not scorn each other or consider each other as a heretic on the basis of the strength of evidence. Just as saying "*in-shā'Allāh I am Mu'min*" is mentioned in books of doctrine.³⁹⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to save this third person from being considered a heretic or a misguided person. However, it is better to explain this to him in a nice manner. However, *Power over falsehood, with the impossibility of occurrence,*³⁹⁶ is an agreed-upon statement; and no one has differed upon this issue.³⁹⁷

And if We so Wished, We would have given every soul its guidance; but it has been said in my Truthful promise,³⁹⁸ I shall fill Hell with men and jinn, all of them.³⁹⁹

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدًى
وَلَكِنْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ مِنِّي لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ
مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ

And Allāh tāālā knows best.

Written by the lowly Rashīd Aḥmed Gangohī, may he be forgiven.

SEAL:



﴿﴾

³⁹² *wujūd e naū ka wujūd e jins ko mustalzam hai*

³⁹³ Animal is the main class and human is a sub-category and one among kinds of animals.

³⁹⁴ *lihāzā wuqūū e kizb ke mánā durust ho gaye.*

³⁹⁵ Upon which there is a difference between Shāfiyīs and Ḥanafīs; yet they do not consider each other heretics.

³⁹⁶ *qudrah ālā al-kadhib maá imtināú al-wuqūú*

³⁹⁷ Which is another delusion and a false claim. No Sunni scholar has attested this belief; see *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ* and a simplified summary in English titled: *The Truth About a Lie.*

³⁹⁸ In *Tafsīr Qurṭubi*: "My truthful promise that I shall punish those who disobey me."

³⁹⁹ Sūrah Sajdah, 32:13.

سوال

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

ما قولکم رحمہ اللہ و شخص کذب باری میں گفتگو کرتے تھے۔ ایک کی طرف داری کے واسطے بتیرے شخص نے کہا اللہ تعالیٰ نے فرمایا ہے ان اللہ لا یغفر ان یشرک بہ ویغفر ما دون ذالک الخ، لفظ عام ہے شامل ہے معصیت مثل مومن کو۔ پس آیت مذکورہ سے معلوم ہوا کہ پروردگار مغفرت مومن قائل بالحمد بھی فرماوے گا۔ اور دوسری آیت میں ہے ومن یقل مؤمناً متعداً فجزاؤہ جہنم خالداً بالئیم۔ لفظ مؤمن عام ہے شامل مومن قائل بالحمد کو اس سے معلوم ہوا کہ قائل مومن بالحمد کی مغفرت نہ ہوگی۔ اس قائل کے خصم نے کہا کہ آپ کے استدلال سے وقوع کذب باری ثابت ہوتا ہے۔ کیونکہ آیت میں ویغفر ہے نہ ویمنع۔ ان یغفر، یہ نہ کہ اس قائل نے جواب دیا۔ میں نے کب

کما ہے کہ میں وقوع کذب کا قائل نہیں ہوں۔ اور دوسرا قول اسی قائل کا یہ ہے کہ کذب علی العموم یتبع یعنی منافر للطبع نہیں ہے اللہ تعالیٰ نے بعض مواضع میں جائز رکھا ہے اور توریہ و عین کذب بعض مواضع میں دونوں اولیٰ ہیں۔ نہ فقط توریہ، ابابیر قائل مسلمان ہے یا کافر؟ اور مسلمان ہے تو بدعتی ضال یا اہل سنت و جماعت باوجود قبول کرنے کے کذب باری تعالیٰ کے، بیدینا و توقیر و الجواب ہے۔ اگرچہ شخص ثالث نے تاویل آیات میں غلطی مگر تاہم اس کو کافر کتا یا بدعتی ضال نہیں کہنا چاہیے کیونکہ وقوع خلف و عید کو جماعت کثیرہ علماء و سلف کی قبول کرتی ہے۔ چنانچہ مولوی احمد صاحب رسالہ تفسیر الرحمن اپنے رسالہ میں تفسیر کرتے ہیں۔ بقول علاء اس کے مجوزین خلف و عید وقوع خلف کے بھی قائل ہیں۔ چنانچہ ان کے دلائل سے ظاہر ہے حیث قالوا لانہ لیس بنقص بل ہو کمالی الخ۔ اس سے ظاہر ہوا کہ بعض علماء خلف و عید کے قائل ہیں۔ اور یہ بھی واضح ہے کہ خلف و عید خاص ہے اور کذب عام ہے کیونکہ کذب بولتے ہیں قول خلاف واقعہ کو سو وہ گاہ و عید ہوتا ہے۔ گاہ و عید گاہ خبر۔ اور سب کذب کے انواع ہیں اور وجود وقوع کا وجود جنس کو مستلزم ہے، انسان اگر ہوگا تو حیوان ہالفر و موجود ہووے گا۔ لہذا وقوع کذب کے معنی درست ہو گئے۔ اگرچہ بعض کس فرد کے ہو۔ پس بنا علیہ اس ناسخ کو کوئی سخت کلمہ نہ کہنا چاہیے کہ اس میں تکلیف علماء سلف کی لازم آتی ہے۔ ہر چند یہ قول ضعیف ہے مگر تاہم مقدمین کے مذاہب پر صاحب دلیل قوی کو تفصیل صاحب دلیل ضعیف کی درست نہیں۔ پھر حنفی شافعی پراور یکس بوجہ تو وہ دلیل اپنی کے طعن و تضلیل نہیں کر سکتا انا مؤمن انشاء اللہ کا مسد کتب عقائد میں خود لکھتے ہیں۔ لہذا اس ناسخ کو تفصیل و تفسیق سے امون کرنا چاہیے۔ البتہ برہمی اگر فہمائش ہو بہتر ہے۔ البتہ قدسہ علی الکذب مع امتناع الوقوع مسد اتفاقہ ہے اس میں کسی کا خلاف نہیں۔ اگرچہ اس زمانے میں لوگوں کو اعتقاد ہی ہو گیا ہے۔ قال اللہ ولموشکنا کل نفس ہذا واکن حق القبول من لاملئ جہنم من الجنۃ والناس اجمعین۔ الایہ فقط واللہ تعالیٰ اعلم۔ کتبہ الاحقر رشید احمد کھنوی عفی عنہ،

نشان مہر احمد رشید

ORIGINAL FATWĀ IN GANGOHĪ'S HAND WITH SEAL

Handwritten text in Urdu script, likely a fatwa, written on aged, stained paper. The text is densely packed and covers most of the page. A vertical crease or fold is visible down the center. At the bottom center, there is a small, rectangular red seal. The paper shows signs of wear, including discoloration and some damage at the corners.

ANALYSIS

These images have been resized to fit on a smaller page size in this document. When comparing a high resolution scan at considerable magnification it can be discernably seen that both specimens are written by the same hand. Given below are comparisons – in all examples below, on the left are clips from an established specimen – the official handwriting (from *Makātīb*); and on the right are clips from the *fatwā*, whose authenticity is questioned by Deobandis. The clips of the *fatwā*, that is the clip on the right, in spite of its poor visibility, is sharper than the printed specimen because it is written by a pen. Notice the strokes of the *yaa*; the placement of the dot on the *faa*; the strokes of *haa* below; the slanting of the joined *qaaf-áyn*; same words used in the two specimens are identical; including Rashīd Aḥmed writing his own name. Other examples are: *alif-sīn*, *wāw-hā*, the *nun* joined with *yaa* or *hā* – the glyphs of *yahīn*, *nahīn*, *yahī* etc;

The seal is barely visible in the *fatwā* but upon adjusting the contrast it becomes somewhat legible. The *fatwā* has been untouched and Photoshop is used only to adjust the brightness-contrast, hues and mildtones to enhance visibility. Another screenshot shows the spacing of the lines. The writing is of superior quality based on *Nastáliq*, but it does not conform to the formal script used by calligraphers; and is therefore a semi-formal hand similar to cursive writing in English. Calligraphy enthusiasts can notice the formation of certain glyphs, short-cuts and the natural strokes are produced by a mature hand that has been writing for years. It would be very difficult to reproduce a similar hand and with such consistency of glyphs, with the spacing and the placement of dots etc. Obviously, the *fatwā* in question was not written with a modern instrument; but with a reed pen, common at that time. Notice the word *ke* which is slightly above the line and the ending *fā* or *tā*, *bā* as a *kashīdah*. The joined *kaaf-alif* glyph is something unique to the writer and is commonly observed throughout in both specimens.

At similar sizes, when placed next to each other, one can notice the similar line spacing; similarly when we zoom out both specimens at a smaller size, their similarity is starkly noticeable.

Allāh táālā knows best.



ببین تو در کیم آن برین کی اختیار زین
بلا هر که ده عزیز دستور با غناه
بوقوع مازگر گرانگ سبکرا

نظایر عریانم او سبک گزینش باید سبکی
کونی بی خیالیم قولی همگی
وقوع غصه کی بیستندل این بیخیز
خار مواند توفیق غلامان صف

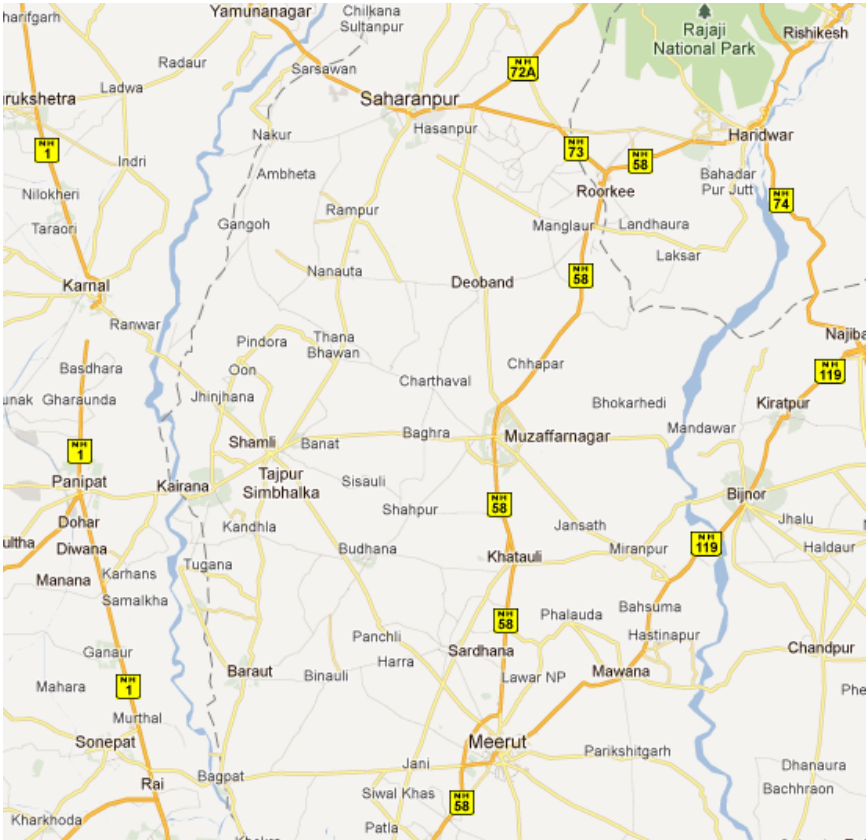
ببین تو در کیم آن برین کی اختیار زین
بلا هر که ده عزیز دستور با غناه
بوقوع مازگر گرانگ سبکرا
بوقوع غصه کی بیستندل این بیخیز
خار مواند توفیق غلامان صف

ببین تو در کیم آن برین کی اختیار زین
بلا هر که ده عزیز دستور با غناه
بوقوع مازگر گرانگ سبکرا
بوقوع غصه کی بیستندل این بیخیز
خار مواند توفیق غلامان صف

Appendix D

SAHARANPUR DISTRICT

The following map shows the district of Saharanpur. Apart from Deoband itself, Gangoh, Nanauta, Ambheta, Thana-Bhawan, Chandpur, Kandhla, Raipur, Meerut, Bijnor and Panipat can be seen.



The distance between Meerut and Gangoh is approximately 120 km; and the distance between Meerut and Deoband is 100 km.

Appendix E

TRANSLITERATION KEY

Arabic Letter	Latin Character	Arabic Example	Transliteration	Similar Sound
أ	a	أمير	amīr	amazing
ب	b	باب	bāb	basket
ت	t	تاج	tāj	t in French trois
ث	th	ثابت	thābit	thing
ج	j	جسد	jasad	jam
ح	h	حسن	ḥasan	similar to hose no English equivalent voiceless pharyngeal fricative
خ	kh	خير	khābar	similar to Scottish loch no English equivalent
د	d	دار	dār	d in French dais
ذ	dh	ذكر	dhikr	there
ر	r	راشد	rāshid	trilled r as in rose
ز	z	زكي	zakī	zebra
س	s	سهل	sahl	solid
ش	sh	شاب	shāb	shock
ص	ṣ	صبر	ṣabr	pharyngeal s no English equivalent
ض	ḍ	ضياء	ḍiyā'a	similar to daughter no English equivalent
ط	ṭ	طب	ṭibb	pharyngeal t no English equivalent

Arabic Letter	Latin Character	Arabic Example	Transliteration	Similar Sound
ظ	z	ظل	ẓill	pharyngeal z no English equivalent
ع	á, í, ú, ý	عرب علم عمر عبد	árab ílm úmar ýíd	voiced pharyngeal fricative no English equivalent
غ	gh	غار	ghār	as in French r rester voiced uvular fricative
ف	f	فجر	fajr	flower
ق	q	قريب	qarīb	a guttural k voiceless uvular stop no English equivalent
ك	k	كتاب	kitāb	kin
ل	l	لباس	libās	late
م	m	مال	māl	morning
ن	n	نور	nūr	noon
هـ	h	هدى	hudā	house
و	w	وزير	wazīr	word
ي	y	يد	yad	yellow
إ	i	إدام	idām	insight
أ	a	أتم	atam	advent
أب	ā	أب	bāb	father
شج	ī	شجر	sarīr	tree
سـ	ū	شجر	ʃūr	root

Arabic Letter	Latin Character	Arabic Example	Transliteration	Similar Sound
ع	áā	عالم	áālim	-
عي	ýī	عيد	ýīd	-
عو	úū	عود	úūd	-
ش	sh'sh sh-sh	الشمس	ash'shams ash-shams	-
أ	a' or a-	مأمور	ma'mūr	-
ي	i'y or i-y	بنس	bi'ysa bi-ysa	-
و	u' or u-	لؤلؤ سؤلؤك	lu'lu' su-lika	-
	'	أصحاب تكحيل أسهل	aṣ'hāb tak'hīl as'hal	separator to distinguish between sounds represented by letter pairs
	-	أصحاب تكحيل أسهل	aṣ-hāb tak-ḥīl as-hal	separator to distinguish between sounds represented by letter pairs
	superscript	من	mi ^ḥ	to indicate an elision
	-	مأرب	ma-ārib	separator when elongation follows a vowel

In transliteration of Arabic names, the definite article 'al' is not transcribed *always* for readability, even though it may be incorrect in the original. The following rules are followed:

- The 'al' is retained when used as an auxiliary, as in Abu Bakr **al**-Bayhaqī and Badruddīn **al**-Āynī.
- It is omitted when used alone, as in Bayhaqi or Āynī.
- It is retained when the full name of the book is transcribed, but omitted when the book is known by its popular name like *Durr al-Mukhtār*.

Appendix F

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91. *Tazkiratu'r Rashīd*, Aāshiq Ilāhi Meerutī
92. *Ikfar al-Mulḥīdīn fī ʿDarūriyāti'd Dīn*, Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī (d.1352 AH)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Imām Aḥmed Riḍā Khān al-Baraylawī رحمته was born in 1272 (1856) in Bareilly, a city in North India and in a famous family of scholars; his father Mawlānā Naqī Āli Khān and grandfather Riḍā Ālī Khān were prominent scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah in their time. He studied Islamic sciences in the tutelage of his erudite father. He was a master of many sciences and particularly in Ḥanafī fiqh, he was outstanding among his contemporaries. Even his adversaries have acknowledged that he was peerless in this discipline.

He has many *ijāzahs* or degrees of authorisation in Ḥanafī fiqh, and the most important⁴⁰⁰ among them is from the Muftī of Makkah, Shaykh Ābd ar-Raḥmān as-Sirāj ibn Ābdullāh as-Sirāj. This chain of transmission reaches Imām Abū Ḥanifah through twenty seven links and in further four to the Master of all creation, Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ. He has an authorisation of ḥadīth transmission from the great Meccan scholar, Malik al-Ūlamā, Sayyid Aḥmed Zaynī Daḥlān al-Shāfiyī. Imām Aḥmed Riḍā is widely known for his refutation of Wahābis, innovators and libertarian religion-reformers of the early 20th century of the Common Era.

Alahazrat, meaning the 'Grand Master,' was a common title of respect⁴⁰¹ in the 13th/14th century Hijri. Imām Aḥmed Riḍā was called as Alahazrat by his followers as he was the major force against innovators and the leader of Sunni scholars of his time. This title became so famous, that it has almost become a synonym for Imām Aḥmed Riḍā Khān. Upon his second and eventful visit to Arabia in 1324 AH, the scholars of the two sanctuaries – Makkah and Madinah – were so impressed by his erudition and his efforts to safeguard Ahl as-Sunnah, that prominent ones among them hailed him as the Reviver of the Religion.⁴⁰² Major scholars in (pre-partition) India agreed that all the qualities required in a Reviver were found in him and thus he is the Mujaddid of the 14th century after the Prophet's ﷺ migration.

⁴⁰⁰ According to Alahazrat himself as mentioned in the Preface of *Fatāwā ar-Riḍawiyah*.

⁴⁰¹ Similar to "His Highness," "His Majesty," "His Holiness," etc.

⁴⁰² *Mujaddid*. It is related from tradition, that an erudite scholar will appear at the head of every century and revive the religion and clarify doubts and fight innovation.

Imām Ahmed Ridā referred to himself as ‘the slave of the Prophet’ ﷺ or *Ābd al-Muṣṭafā* in Arabic. His skill as a jurist outshone his other abilities and even the corpus of his work is mainly *fatāwā*. Many lengthy books that he has written are usually as a response to questions. Many of his rulings (and more than 150 *fatāwā* as monographs) were collected, indexed and ordered by the Imām himself and named *Al-Āṭāyā an-Nabawīyyah fi’l Fatāwā ar-Ridāwiyyah*, popularly known in the subcontinent as *Fatāwā e Razawīyyah* and has been recently published in Pakistan in 30 volumes.⁴⁰³ Apart from commentaries and glosses on various texts, his other important works are :

1. ***Kanz al-Īmān***: An explanatory translation of the Qur’ān in Urdu.
2. ***Mustanad al-Mūtamad***: A commentary on the Arabic work *Al-Mūtaqad al-Muntaqad* by Imām Faḍl ar-Rasūl al-Badāyūnī.⁴⁰⁴
3. ***Jadd al-Mumtār***: A five volume supercommentary on *Radd al-Muḥtār* of Imām Sayyid Muḥammad Amīn Ibn Āābidīn al-Shāmī,⁴⁰⁵ which is arguably, the most widely used Ḥanafī text in latter times.
4. ***Dawlah al-Makkiyyah bi’l Māddah al-Ghaybiyyah***
5. ***Al-Amn wa’l Ūlā li Nayiti’l Muṣṭafā bi Dāfiy al-Balā’a***
6. ***Tamhīd e Īmān***
7. ***Dhayl al-Muddāā li Aḥsan al-Wiāā li Ādāb ad-Duāā***
8. ***Faḍl al-Mawhibī fi Māana: idhā ṣaḥḥa’l ḥadīthu fa huwa madh’habī***
9. ***Fatāwā al-Ḥaramayn bi Rajafi Nadwatu’l Mayn***
10. ***Fatāwā al-Āfriqah***
11. ***Sub’ḥān as-Subbūḥ ān Āybi Kadhib Maqbūḥ***
12. ***Radd ar-Rifḍah***
13. ***Qahr ad-Dayyān ālā Murtadd bi-Qādiyān***

⁴⁰³ Initially, it was published in 12 volumes of approximately 800 pages each in quarto size and small text-size; however, this has been republished from Pakistan in 30 volumes; along with 2 additional volumes for topic and word indexes. This new edition spans approximately 22,000 pages and contains 206 monographs of the Imām. Along with indexes it is now available as a 33 volume set.

⁴⁰⁴ Passed away in 1289/1872.

⁴⁰⁵ Passed away in 1252/1836.

14. *Niým az-Zād li Rawm ad-Ðād*
15. *Zubdatu'z Zakiyyah fī Tah̄rīmi Sajdah at-Taḥiyyah*
16. *Kiḥl al-Faqīh al-Fāhim fī Aḥkāmi Qirtās al-Darāhim*
17. *Jalī an-Naşş fī Amākin ar-Rukhaş*
18. *Barakātu'l Imdād li Ahl al-Istimdād*
19. *Zahr al-Bāsim fī Ḥurmati'z Zakāh álā Banī Hāshim*
20. *Masayil e Samāá*
21. *Zulāl al-Anqā min Bah̄ri Sabqah al-Atqā*
22. *Madārij Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥadīth*
23. *Rawḍ al-Bahīj fī Ādāb al-Takhrīj*
24. *Hād al-Kāf fī Ḥukm ad-Ðiáāf*
25. *Nahy al-Akīd án as-Şalāti Warā'a Ādā at-Taqlīd*

He took the Qādirī path and was initiated in that Sūfī order by Sayyid Aāl e Rasūl al-Aḥmadī⁴⁰⁶ of Mārahra in 1294.⁴⁰⁷ Alahazrat was an ardent lover of the Prophet ﷺ which is evident from his works. He was also a great poet and has written sublime verse in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. His verse in Urdu and Persian is published in two parts named: *Ḥadāyiq e Bakh'shish* meaning 'Gardens of Salvation'. Many of his eulogies and odes are recited, and in particular, the Ode of Salutation or the *Salām* has achieved unparalleled fame and acceptance among Muslims from the subcontinent. The Imām passed away at the age⁴⁰⁸ of 68 in 1340 (1921). May Allah táālā have mercy on him and be well pleased with him.



⁴⁰⁶ Passed away in 1296/1879. The shaykh was a prominent student of the famous scholar and Mujaddid of his age Shah Ābd al-Āzīz Muḥaddith al-Dihlawī.

⁴⁰⁷ Alahazrat himself points this out in a biographical note on his father Mawlānā Naqī Ālī Khān, in the preface of his father's book *Sharḥ A-lam Nashrah*, that he (Alahazrat) received bayāh and khilāfah on the 5th of Jumādā al-Ūlā 1294/1877 along with his father.

⁴⁰⁸ His age according to the lunar calendar is 68 and the solar calendar is 65.

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