

The Preamble to Faith

An English Translation of Tamhīd e Īmān



IMAM AHMAD RIDA KHAN AL-BARAYLAWI

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THE PREAMBLE TO FAITH



ALHAZRAT ~ SERIES

The Preamble to Faith

An English Translation of Tamhīd e Īmān

Fourth Edition

IMAM AHMAD RIDA KHAN AL-BARAYLAWI

(1272-1340 / 1856-1921)

Translated by

ABU HASAN

RIDAWI



PRESS



The Preamble to Faith, An English Translation of *Tamhid e Īmān*

Original Urdu Work by
Alahazrat Imām Aĥmad Riġā Khān Al-Baraylawī

Translation and Footnotes
Abu Hasan



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feedback@ridawipress.org
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complaints@ridawipress.org
admin@ridawipress.org

The translator can be contacted at:
abu.hasan@ridawipress.org

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CONTENTS

Translator's Preface	
1 Introduction	1
2 Lesser than the Devil's Knowledge	13
3 Knowledge like that of Quadrupeds	16
4 Falsehood in Divine Speech	24
5 Alibis of The First Group	29
6 Alibis of The Second Group	33
7 An Important Principle	62
8 False Accusations	71
9 Conclusion	82
<i>Appendix A:</i> Barāhīn al-Qāṭiāh	84
<i>Appendix B:</i> Ḥifẓ al-Īmān	88
<i>Appendix C:</i> Fatwā of Rashīd Gangohī	91
<i>Appendix D:</i> Sahāranpūr District	108
<i>Appendix E:</i> Transliteration Key	109
<i>Appendix F:</i> Bibliography	113
About the Author	119

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 praises to Allāh ﷻ the Lord Almighty, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. Blessings and peace upon our master Muḥammad ﷺ the prince of all the worlds; the chief of all prophets and messengers; he, who was sent with guidance and as a guide to the world. O Allāh! We ask Thee to guide us towards the 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 and imām – Shāh Aḥmed Dihlawī, famously

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, the son of Shāh Ābd ar-Raḥīm Dihlawī; Ismāyīl was the nephew of the famous muḥaddith, Shāh Ābd al-Āzīz Dihlawī [d.1238/1823].

known as Shāh Waliyullāh Dihlawī. Shāh Ismāyīl's books like *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, *Şirāt e Mustaqīm* and pamphlets like *Ek Rozi* introduced ancient² and modern³ heresies, hitherto unknown to commonfolk, which ignited the fire of sectarianism in the subcontinent. Scholars, including his own cousins, Shāh Makhşūsullāh Dihlawī and Shāh Mūsā Dihlawī refuted him. Indeed, many who staunchly opposed him, like Shaykh Faḍl al-Ĥāqq Khayrābādi, were students of his illustrious uncle, the ḥadīth master and Ḥanafī jurist, 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 was 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

² The Mūtazilī heresy that falsehood is included in Divine Power.

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

⁴ Mawlānā Ābd al-Samiy Rampuri, a confrere of Qasim Nānotwī 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 Sātiāh* and is also evident from endorsements of the book. The spiritual guide of Nānotwī and Gangohī, Shaykh Imdādullāh wrote a short booklet *Fayşlah 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 *Barāhīn al-Qātiāh* employing harsh and impudent language; unfortunately, the [purported] cure proved to be worse than the malady.

Much later, Alahazrat Imām Aḥmed Riḍā Khān رحمته الله also issued the ruling of kufr⁵ upon four elders of Deoband and asked [those living] to repent from their blasphemous statements. *Takfīr* was made 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 *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*.⁷

After Alahazrat’s return from Haramayn and the publication of *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*, Deobandis 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 in *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn*, Khalīl Aḥmed Ambehtawī

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-Mutamad Bināyi Najātu’l Abad*, a commentary on Shaykh Faḍl ar-Rasūl Badāyūnī’s *Al-Mūtaqad al-Muntaqad*.

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

⁸ Murtaza Ḥasan Chāndpūrī’s books.

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

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 Naʿīmuddīn Murādābādī, teacher of many prominent authors and translators in the subcontinent, wrote *Dafʿ al-Talbīsāt* 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 *takfir* of Deobandi elders was also in 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

¹⁰ Deobandis in our time do not attempt to veil their lies; Mufti Taqi Usmani, in a reply to someone inquiring about ‘the Barelwi group’, says [*Fatāwā al-Uthmānī*, 1/101, published in Deoband, India; English translation below by Ismaeel Nakhuda 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, especially someone who is considered as a scholar, can slander and lie so brazenly. The fatwā of kufr was issued on statements deemed as blasphemies – not because ‘*Deobandis criticised their beliefs*’. Abu’l Ḥasan Nadawī in *Nuz’hatu’l Khawāṭir* made a similar blantly false accusation on Alahazrat concerning the issue of *ilm al-ghayb* and its description.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ

¹¹ *Iman, Kufr and Takfir* on shadhilitariqa.com, which has been refuted in my book *The Killer Mistake*, first released in October 2013.

Alahazrat wrote *Tamhid e Īmān ba Āyāt e Qur'ān* or *The Preamble to Faith in the Light of the Qur'ān*, 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, analyses the disparaging statements made by Deobandis, the implications of such statements, and describes the background and the conditions that led to the ruling. He then mentions the extreme carefulness and restraint exercised by him in takfīr, 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 Gangohī, Ambehtawī 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 biased 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 the footnotes.
3. The language and style of the author, the rhyming prose and the 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.

¹² *Tamhid* (written in 1326 AH) is not a refutation of *Muhannad*, which was published only after 1329 AH as indicated by the date of some attestations in it.

4. Alahazrat's own footnotes are included and indicated accordingly.
5. *Preamble* has been translated from the Urdu text in *Fatāwā Riḍāwiyyah* without referring to any other translation;¹³ references are also taken from the same urdu edition.¹⁴ I have also used an older edition for the 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).
 - b. When both dates are mentioned, the first is always the Hijri date and the following is Gregorian, indicated either in parantheses or after 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 facsimile copy of the fatwā of Gangohī, which I have translated and analysed in Appendix C.

¹³ Various English translations of *Tamhīd* have been available long before *Preamble*. An Arabic translation of the work has also been published, whose PDF can be found online.

¹⁴ Volume 30, published by Raza Foundation & Jamiāh Nizamiyyah-Razawiyyah, Lahore.

Our esteemed brother Noori prepared the bibliographical index;
SunniStudent provided the scans of books included in Appendices.

wa billāhi't tawfiq.

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 verse translations – until one glaring error was highlighted by an opponent on his blog.¹⁵ 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 ﷺ who has said:

التَّائِبُ مِنَ الذَّنْبِ كَمَنْ لَا ذَنْبَ لَهُ

Abu Hasan

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

¹⁵ Incidentally, the Deobandī focused on an inadvertent mistake and conveniently ignored the serious and deliberate mistakes made by his elders, who stubbornly refused to repent even from outright blasphemies. *nas’alu Allāha al-āāfiyah.*

NOTE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

The text remains largely the same, with typos corrected here and there. A few sentences have been reworded for clarity, and some improvements in typography have been made. We ask Allāh táālā to accept our good deeds and forgive our mistakes.

نسأل الله العافية

Abu Hasan

18th Dhu'l Qaáadah 1438 / 8th August 2016





INTRODUCTION

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

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

A humble appeal to my Muslim brothers:

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 may we remain until our last breath. Āmīn, O Lord of the Universe!

Your Lord Almighty ﷻ says:

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَهِيدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا
لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

[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 in the evening.¹⁶

¹⁶ Sūrah Fatḥ, 48:8-9.

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.

O Muslims! Notice the elegant order of these three important principles. Faith¹⁷ 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. The reverence of the Prophet ﷺ without faith 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 the respect of the Prophet ﷺ was truly in their hearts, they would surely bear faith in [his message]. Even if one spends his entire life worshipping the Lord Almighty, it will be of no use and all of this hard work will be wasted, as long as one does not respect the Prophet ﷺ. There are *jogis* and monks¹⁸ 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*;¹⁹ but until they respect Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ, it will not benefit them in any way.

¹⁷ *imān*

¹⁸ *Jogi*: Hindu hermits; *Rāhib*: Monk.

¹⁹ The first part of the testimony of faith: “There is no God but Allāh ﷻ”.

None of this is accepted by Allāh ﷻ, and it is about such people that He ﷻ has said:

وَقَدَّمْنَا إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَّنْثُورًا

And their deeds, We have purposely made them scattered like dust particles [seen] in light shining through a small aperture.²⁰

And about such people Allāh ﷻ says:

عَامِلَةٌ نَّاصِبَةٌ ﷻ تَصِلُ نَارًا حَامِيَةً

They toil and do [good] deeds; but yet, they shall enter a roaring fire.²¹

We seek Allāh's refuge.

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 has said:

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

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.²²

²⁰ Sūrah Furqān, 25:23. This translation is now corrected; unfortunately, there was an error in its translation previously and had remained unnoticed until the third edition; this was not deliberate, and *astaghfirullāh* for the lapse.

²¹ Sūrah Ghāshiyah, 88:3-4.

²² Sūrah Tawbah, 9:24.

We learn from the verse, that if a person holds anybody or anything dearer than Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ, 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:

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*²⁵ and is narrated by the companion Anas ibn Mālik al-Anṣarī ﷺ. 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. All those who utter the *kalimah*,²⁶ 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 has said:

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ

Do people expect that they will be spared at [merely] saying 'We believe', and they will not be tested?²⁷

²³ *mu'min*

²⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, #14-15; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, #69-70.

²⁵ This ḥadīth is also mentioned in *Nasāyī*, 8/115; *Tirmidhī*, #2517, *Ibn Mājah*, #67.

²⁶ The testimony of faith: *lā ilāha illā Allāh Muḥammadu'r RasūlAllāh* ﷺ

²⁷ *Sūrah Ānkabūt*, 29:2.

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'ān 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

The conclusive test for the above, 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,²⁸ 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 with their clothes and turbans²⁹ – do the Jews not wear turbans? Why should we have regard for their name, erudition, and outward superiority – do we

²⁸ Pir or Shaykh.

²⁹ In the subcontinent, turbans used to be worn by prominent people – scholars and shaykhs among them.

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 Ḥādīth 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:

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
 وَأَيَّدَهُمْ بِرُوحٍ مِنْهُ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
 رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

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.³⁰

³⁰ 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 absolute³¹ 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.³² 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 tiding of a beautiful end;³³ because that which is inscribed by Allāh cannot be erased.
2. Allāh shall aid you by the Holy Spirit, the Archangel Gibril 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.”

³¹ *áām, muṭlaq*

³² In paradise.

³³ *ḥusn e khātimah*: to die as a Muslim.

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 Ámr³⁴ and to sever all relations with them for the sake of these precious bounties promised by Allāh táālā? 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 Allāh says:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا ءَاۡبَاءَكُمْ وَاِخْوَانَكُمْ اَوْلِيَآءَ اِنْ اَسْتَحَبُّوْا
 الْكُفْرَ عَلٰى الْاِيْمٰنِ ۗ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُوْنَ

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.³⁵

and He says:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا عَدُوِّيْ وَعَدُوْكُمْ اَوْلِيَآءَ

O you who believe - do not take My enemy and your enemy as friends...³⁶

تُسْرُوْنَ اِلَيْهِمْ بِالْمُودَةِ وَاَنَا اَعْلَمُ بِمَا اَخْفَيْتُمْ وَمَا اَعْلَنْتُمْ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْهُ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيْلِ

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.³⁷

³⁴ ‘Zayd and Ámr’ is similar to the English phrase ‘Tom, Dick and Harry.’

³⁵ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:23.

³⁶ Sūrah Mumtāhanah, 60:1.

³⁷ Sūrah Mumtāhanah, 60:1.

لَنْ تَنْفَعَكُمْ أَرْحَامُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ۝

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.³⁸

and He says:

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

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.³⁹

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:

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

And those who hurt the Messenger of Allāh, for them is a painful punishment⁴⁰

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

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.⁴¹

³⁸ Sūrah Mumtaḥanah, 60:3.

³⁹ Sūrah Māyidah, 5:51.

⁴⁰ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:61.

⁴¹ Sūrah Aḥzāb, 33:57.

Nobody can hurt Allāh táālā 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.
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?⁴² 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

⁴² That one is warned upon continuing friendship and maintaining relations with such impudent people.

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 claims⁴³ will not suffice; you will be examined and you have just read the verse: ***alif-lām-mīm; do people expect...***⁴⁴ 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 tǎālā, 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 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 tǎālā; 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.

⁴³ The claim that they love Allāh tǎālā and His Messenger ﷺ.

⁴⁴ Sūrah Ānkabūt, 29:2.

We have seen how the Qur'ān reproaches those who are lax⁴⁵ 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 disrespectful⁴⁶ 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?



⁴⁵ And does not keep away from those who insult the Messenger ﷺ.

⁴⁶ 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 táālā, and recall the immense respect and veneration due to Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ, the Messenger of Allāh; recall the lofty, exalted rank that Allāh táālā 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,⁴⁷ [but] where is such absolute scriptural text for the knowledge of the Pride⁴⁸ of the world?⁴⁹

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,⁵⁰ 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

⁴⁷ *naṣṣ*: scriptural evidence; *naṣṣ-e-qat'ī* meaning, absolutely established textual evidence, incontrovertible textual proof - usually the Qur'ān.

⁴⁸ *Fakhr-e-Āālam*: Pride of the world, referring to RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

⁴⁹ Khalil Aḥmed Ambehtawī-Saharanpuri, *Barāhīn al-Qāṭiāh*, p51.

⁵⁰ For example, try these phrases:

Khalil Ambehtawī, 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.

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 him:⁵¹

‘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 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:⁵²

...that [he]⁵³ refutes all scriptural texts [*nuṣūṣ*] and proves one polytheistic belief and says:⁵⁴

...if this⁵⁵ is not polytheism, then which part of faith is this?

A person who says such a thing, 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 tāālā has no partner. If this concept when attributed to RasūlAllāh ﷺ is considered as shirk⁵⁶ – 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 tāālā. Because, that is why, one who attests this [knowledge] for the Prophet becomes a polytheist.

⁵¹ Such a person who considers Satan as a devil and evil; not atheists or Satan worshippers.

⁵² Khalīl Sahāranpūrī, *Barāhīn*, p51.

⁵³ One who believes in the knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ encompassing knowledge of the earth.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ That is: to believe in the expanse of knowledge of RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

⁵⁶ According to the statement of Khalīl Ahmed.

In which case, this person patently attests the same for Iblīs and thus considers him to be 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.



KNOWLEDGE OF MADMEN AND QUADRUPEDS⁵⁷

And about another person who said:⁵⁸

If this refers to partial knowledge of unseen,⁵⁹ then where is the exclusiveness of RasūlAllāh ﷺ in this? Such knowledge is [possessed by] Zayd and Ámr;⁶⁰ 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 very brief, just tell them:

O people, whose knowledge is as much as that of an owl,⁶¹ 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

⁵⁷ We seek Allāh's refuge from such similitudes. Máadh'Allāh.

⁵⁸ Ashraf Áli Thānawi, *Ĥifẓ al-Īmān*, p8.

⁵⁹ *báaz úlūm e ghaybiyyah*

⁶⁰ An idiom meaning anyone, all and sundry; as said in English: "Tom, Dick and Harry".

⁶¹ In the Subcontinent, the owl is a metaphor for being *stupid*, unlike in English where it is a metaphor for being *wise*.

with blows if they could. Then why is such a thing, which is offensive to them, not disrespectful to Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ? MáādhAllāh!⁶² Is *his* honour lesser than that of their teachers and their shaykhs? Is this what you call Īmān and faith? Never, by Allāh. And then he said:⁶³

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**.⁶⁴ And then, if Zayd⁶⁵ 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?⁶⁶

Because, [such an attribute in which] there is no exclusivity for believers or even for humans;⁶⁷ then, how can this be an exclusive attribute of prophethood?⁶⁸ 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 táālā. Look, your Lord Almighty Allāh says:

⁶² *máādhAllāh*: We seek the refuge of Allāh!

⁶³ Thānawī, *Ĥifẓ al-Īmān*, p8.

⁶⁴ *áálimu'l ghayb*

⁶⁵ Zayd: a name used for illustration.

⁶⁶ *jumlā kamālāt e anbiyā'a*: Attributes that are considered as perfect, praiseworthy, distinguishing them from non-prophets.

⁶⁷ 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.

⁶⁸ 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 – *takhṣīṣ* – for the Prophet?'

وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا

And He has taught you whatever you did not know; and the bounty of Allāh upon you is immense.⁶⁹

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

And Allāh has said:

وَإِنَّهُ لَذُو عِلْمٍ لِّمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ

Verily, he was a person of knowledge, because of what We had taught him.⁷⁰

And He has said:

وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِغُلَامٍ عَلِيمٍ

And [they] gave him glad tidings of a knowledgeable boy.⁷¹

And He has said:

وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ مِنْ لَدُنَّا عِلْمًا

And We taught him [a special kind of] knowledge by Our Endowment.⁷²

These are some verses in which Allāh táālā has enumerated *knowledge* among attributes of perfection for His prophets ﷺ. 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,

⁶⁹ Sūrah Nisā'a, 4:113. Baghawī says, "It is said: from knowledge of the unseen." Államah Khāzin says: "He taught you all that you did not know from the knowledge of unseen".

⁷⁰ Sūrah Yūsuf, 12:68.

⁷¹ Sūrah Dhāriyāt, 51:28.

⁷² Sūrah Kahf, 18:65. Most tafsirs say that it is knowledge of the unseen.

knowledge.⁷³ And obviously that this generic attribute is true, even for animals.⁷⁴ When we do this replacement, notice how the speech of this insolent man,⁷⁵ contradicts the Speech of Allāh táālā. Then, according to this insolent person:⁷⁶

If, the attribution of knowledge to his⁷⁷ person by **God**⁷⁸ 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, Ámr – 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.**⁷⁹

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;⁸⁰ 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

⁷³ **muṭlaq ilm:** that is, instead of specifying ‘knowledge of unseen,’ let us just say: ‘knowledge’ which is generic. This should not be confused with the **muṭlaq ilm-e-ghayb** meaning ‘absolute knowledge of the unseen’ which is the attribute of Allāh táālā alone.

⁷⁴ 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.

⁷⁵ Ashraf Áli Thānawī in his *Hifzu’l Imān* as cited above.

⁷⁶ For the sake of illustrating the enormity of this claim, by replacing the words.

⁷⁷ Either our Prophet or all other prophets عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام.

⁷⁸ Notice the caution of Alahazrat, that in such sentences said for the sake of argument, he does not use the name of Allāh táālā, rather uses the descriptive: *Khudā* or God.

⁷⁹ **áālim:** knower or knowledgeable.

⁸⁰ As already claimed – even quadrupeds have knowledge, thus the negation of exclusivity.

even a single thing remains unknown, then the invalidity of such an idea is proven by numerous narrated⁸¹ and rational proofs.⁸²

Which proves that the previously stated verses are not valid⁸³ 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 táālā to be invalid.⁸⁴

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?’⁸⁵ Would it be surprising if he rejects the Word of Allāh táālā, terms it as invalid, throws it behind and stamps 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

⁸¹ *dalīl e naqlī o áqlī se sābit hai.*

⁸² 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.

⁸³ Because Allāh táālā has enumerated knowledge – without qualification – as a praiseworthy and attribute of perfection for prophets.

⁸⁴ Because, the Lord says that knowledge is an attribute of perfection for prophets; but Thānawī says it is not.

⁸⁵ This is a rhetorical question, highlighting the context and implication of such speech.

shaykhs, leaders and imāms, this and that, or such and such⁸⁶ – 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?⁸⁷ And if there is no such binding,⁸⁸ 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 rejected verses of the Qur’ān.⁸⁹ O Muslims! Ask this particular insolent

⁸⁶ *āālim, fāzil, mullā, chuniñ chunañ*

⁸⁷ *kamāl, kamālāt*: distinguishing feature or trait; not the literal meaning of perfection.

⁸⁸ *iltizām*: that you will call everyone a scholar.

⁸⁹ 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.

person and his followers whether this verse of the Qur'an describes them or not; your Lord Almighty Allāh has said:

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ ۗ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ
لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُسْمِعُونَ بِهَا أُولَئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ

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.⁹⁰

أَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ ۗ هَوَاهُ أَفَأَنْتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلًا ۖ

أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ ۗ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا

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.⁹¹

Ask these insolent people who have equated the knowledge of quadrupeds with the knowledge of prophets عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام: '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 it⁹² with four-legged beasts, would it be a surprise if they claim it for two-legged ones?⁹³ Suppose they do, ask them whether there is anyone among their teachers or shaykhs who is greater than them in knowledge.

⁹⁰ Sūrah Aārāf, 7:179.

⁹¹ Sūrah Furqān, 25:43-44.

⁹² The knowledge of prophets عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام.

⁹³ The insolent people themselves.

After all, there MUST be someone, who is higher to them in knowledge? When they find that *someone*, then 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.

كَذَلِكَ الْعَذَابُ وَالْعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةُ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ

Thus, is their punishment; and the punishment of the hereafter is greater, if they only knew!⁹⁴



⁹⁴ 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 táālā 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 transpire⁹⁵ [in the Speech of] the Creator?⁹⁶

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,⁹⁷ one should not call him a kāfir, a heretic or a misguided person.

and said:

One should not say harsh things to such a person⁹⁸

and said:

Because it would necessitate takfīr of elder scholars,⁹⁹ a Ḥanafī cannot scorn or claim that a Shāfiyī is misguided.

⁹⁵ **wuqūū e kizb e Bāri:** that falsehood shall or has occurred [in the speech] of Allāh táālā.

⁹⁶ 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 *takfīr* made on this account, and was published and circulated widely in his own lifetime.

⁹⁷ **ta'wīl e āyāt**

⁹⁸ Mentioned in the *istiftā*: that he believes in **wuqūū e kizb e Bāri**

⁹⁹ **ūlamā e salaf ki takfīr lāzīm āati hai**

In other words: It has been – *máādhAllāh* – the madh’hab of many elder scholars that the Lord Almighty is a liar.¹⁰⁰ This is a topic upon which there is difference and is similar to the difference of Ĥanafīs 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.¹⁰¹ 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 belier 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;**’¹⁰² does such a person remain a Muslim? Particularly, when he has explicitly attested.¹⁰³

The meaning of occurrence of falsehood thus becomes valid.¹⁰⁴

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

¹⁰⁰ According to such a muftī – i.e. Rashīd Aḥmed Gangohī.

¹⁰¹ 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.

¹⁰² *qudrah ālā al-kadhib maā imtināā al-wuqūū*: See Alahazrat’s classic *Sub’ḥān 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.

¹⁰³ Rashīd Aḥmed.

¹⁰⁴ *wuqūū e kizb ke maāni durust ho gaye* according to the fatwā; see Appendix C.

to attest¹⁰⁵ to the Truth of Allāh tāālā; and its diametric opposite is to belie.¹⁰⁶ 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 has occurred in such speech.¹⁰⁷ 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,¹⁰⁸ 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?

¹⁰⁵ *taṣdīq*: to attest to the truth of someone.

¹⁰⁶ *takdhīb, takzīb*: to belie, to consider someone false or their speech falsehood.

¹⁰⁷ Of what he considers as his god.

¹⁰⁸ *Wāḥid, Qahhār, Jabbār*

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 their¹⁰⁹ 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 those words which Allāh tāālā has mentioned in the Qur’ān to teach you, quoting the followers of Sayyiduna Ibrāhīm ﷺ:

فَدَكَاتَ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءُؤُا مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدَهُۥ

¹⁰⁹ Those who insult your parents or teachers and hurl profanities at them.

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...’¹¹⁰

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَمِيدُ

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*, the Praised.¹¹¹

He says, just as the companions of My friend¹¹² 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.



¹¹⁰ Sūrah Mumtaḥanah, 60:4

¹¹¹ Sūrah Mumtaḥanah, 60:6. *Al-Ghaniyy*: Absolute Sovereign, Absolutely Independent.

¹¹² 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'an earlier, that Allāh táālā has repeatedly said in His Book and expressly said that if you wish to escape the Wrath of Allāh táālā, 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:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ الْهَهُهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ
وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ غِشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ^ع أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Did you see him – he who has taken his own desire as his god? Allāh táālā 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 táālā, who will guide him? Do you not heed admonition?¹¹³

And He says:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِلُوا التَّوْرَةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا
يَسْئَلُ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ^ع وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

¹¹³ Sūrah Jāthiyah, 45:23.

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.¹¹⁴

And He says:

وَأْتَلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانسَخَ مِنْهَا فَاتَّبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ
 ﴿١١٤﴾ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ
 إِنْ تَحَمَلَ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثُ أَوْ تَرَكَهُ يَلْهَثُ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
 فَأَقْصِ الْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١١٥﴾ سَاءَ مَثَلًا الْقَوْمُ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَأَنْفُسُهُمْ
 كَانُوا يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾ مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدَىٰ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

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.¹¹⁵

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?’

¹¹⁴ Sūrah Jumu’ah, 62:5.

¹¹⁵ Sūrah Aarāf, 7:175-178.

The [angels will] answer:¹¹⁶ ‘Those who know are not the same as those who do not know.’¹¹⁷ 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. 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;¹¹⁸ 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 pandits¹¹⁹ and priests¹²⁰ are also scholars, aren’t they? Iblis was a big scholar, but does any Muslim respect him? He was known as the ‘Teacher of Angels,’¹²¹ but when he turned his face away from the esteem of Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ – because the light of RasūlAllāh ﷺ shone in the forehead¹²² of Sayyidunā Ādam ؑ and Iblis did not prostrate to it; from that moment, he wears the collar of damnation around his neck.

¹¹⁶ *Shuāb al-Īmān*, Bayhaqī, Ḥadīth #1900.

¹¹⁷ **Alahazrat’s footnote:** This ḥadīth is reported by Ṭabarānī in *Mūjam al-Kabīr*, Abū Nuáym in *Ḥilyah* narrating from Anas ؓ elevated it to RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

¹¹⁸ Because you respect his heir.

¹¹⁹ Hindu religious scholars.

¹²⁰ Christian religious scholars.

¹²¹ *muállimu’l malakūt*

¹²² **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 Nishāpūrī*: The prostration of angels to Ādam was on account of the light of Muḥammad ﷺ that shone in the forehead of Ādam عَظِيمُ السَّلامِ.

And since that day, his rightly-guided students¹²³ 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 táālā 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.



¹²³ *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 aspects¹²⁴ of religion themselves, and then after uttering explicit statements of *kufr*, they attempt to erase it by proffering interpretations so that the rider of *darūri*¹²⁵ 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.¹²⁶

بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ

Rather, Allāh has damned them due to their disbelief; and very little is what they believe.¹²⁷

These are enemies of Muslims and Islam. And to deceive commonfolk, they craft a few satanic devices – and attempt to alter the religion of Allāh.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ *zarūriyat e dīn*: things that are necessary to believe in, and denying of which is *kufr*. The respect of RasūlAllāh ﷺ is an obligatory requirement of religion.

¹²⁵ *darūri*: necessary, requirement; same as the above footnote.

¹²⁶ According to this second group of people.

¹²⁷ Sūrah Al-Baqarah, 2:88; 'little' is used euphemistically to mean none at all [*Madārik*]

¹²⁸ 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 hawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*.

THE FIRST SUBTERFUGE

They say: *Islam is the name of uttering the kalimah; it is said in the ḥadīth: whosoever uttered lā ilāha illā Allāh shall enter paradise.*¹²⁹ 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 by merely reciting the *kalimah*, one would become 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 liar or abuses the Prophet ﷺ, his faith remains unaffected.¹³⁰ One of the answers to this deception is already given above:

أَحْسَبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ

Do people expect to be spared by merely saying 'We believe', and they will not be tested?¹³¹

If Islām¹³² were valid by mere recitation of the *kalimah*, then why does the Qur'ān criticise and refute delusions of people?¹³³

¹²⁹ Ṭabarānī, *Mūjam al-Kabīr*, Ḥadīth No. 2348.

¹³⁰ 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 Ábbās reports that RasūlAllāh ﷺ was exhorting the community to fear Allāh, and the Jews and Christians said the above, as cited in the verse.

¹³¹ Sūrah Ānkabūt, 29:2.

¹³² **Alahazrat's Footnote:** Shaykh Mujaddid e Alf e Thānī (Imām Aḥmed 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.

¹³³ They will be spared by merely saying that they are Muslims as mentioned in the verse.

Your Lord Almighty says:

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ ءَأَمَّا قُلِّ لَمْ تَزِمْنَا وَلَكِنْ قَوْلُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ

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.¹³⁴

And He says:

إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُتَنَفِقُونَ قَالُوا نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ

إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُ، وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَكَاذِبُونَ

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.¹³⁵

Notice, that uttering the kalimah and swearing oaths that they were truthful did not avail the hypocrites – Allāh tāālā exposed them 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'an. 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:

يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ مَا قَالُوا وَلَقَدْ قَالُوا كَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلَامِهِمْ

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.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Sūrah Hujurāt, 49:14.

¹³⁵ Sūrah Munāfiqūn, 63:1.

¹³⁶ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:74.

Ibn Jarīr [al-Ṭabarī,] Ṭabarānī, Abu'l Shaykh, Ibn Mardawīh report from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās ؓ who narrates that:¹³⁷

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 amber¹³⁸ 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.'

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

وَلَمَّا سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ قُلْ أَبِاللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
 كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ

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.¹³⁹

Ibn Abī Shaybah, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Abu'l Shaykh report from Mujāhid, a prominent disciple of Sayyidunā ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās ؓ, and he narrates:¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ 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.

¹³⁸ The word in ḥadīth 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-ʿĀrūs*. Alahazrat has translated it as '*karanji ānkhōñ wālā*' meaning one with hazel or amber eyes.

¹³⁹ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:65-66.

¹⁴⁰ *Tafsīr Ibn Jarīr at-Ṭabarī* and *Tafsīr Durr al-Manthūr*; concerning the verse.

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?'¹⁴¹

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.*"¹⁴²

This is also a lesson to those who deny that the Prophet ﷺ did not have any knowledge of the unseen.¹⁴³ This is the speech of hypocrites, and anyone who says so, according to the verse, mocks Allāh tāālā, the Qur'ān and RasūlAllāh ﷺ and is an open disbeliever and an apostate.¹⁴⁴ Because, to possess knowledge of the unseen is a distinct attribute of prophets as said by Imām Ghazālī, Imām Qaṣṣallānī, Mawlānā Ālī al-Qārī, Āllāmah Muḥammad Zurqānī and other senior scholars, which I have mentioned in various books I have written on this subject.¹⁴⁵ 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.¹⁴⁶ Then, according to this person everything is hidden from Allāh tāālā and He

¹⁴¹ Lit., "What does Muḥammad ﷺ know about the ghayb?"

¹⁴² Sūrah Tawbah, 9:66.

¹⁴³ *muṭlaqaṅ munkir haiṅ*: those who deny such knowledge absolutely.

¹⁴⁴ According to Sūrah Tawbah, 9:65-66.

¹⁴⁵ And his masterpiece *Ad-Dawlatu'l Makkīyyah*.

¹⁴⁶ **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*.

cannot give this knowledge to anyone even if He so wishes! May Allāh táālā protect us from the deception of Satan.

Āmīn.

Yes, the claim of even a speck of knowledge for anyone without being given by Allāh táālā is certainly kufr. It is also an invalid belief that the knowledge of [anyone in the] creation¹⁴⁷ can encompass the knowledge of Allāh táālā, and is against the opinion of most¹⁴⁸ 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*¹⁴⁹ – is only a

¹⁴⁷ Anyone and everyone in the creation: *ilm e makhluq*.

¹⁴⁸ **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-Makkiyyah*.

¹⁴⁹ 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 [*ihāṭah*] 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 táālā. 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 hudūth*]."**

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 *Mawdū'āt*. This is because, gnostics like Sayyidi Abu'l Ḥasan al-Bakrī رضى الله عنه and those

small fragment from the infinite knowledge of Allāh tālā. 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 Makkiyyah* and other books. Anyway, this was mentioned as a point of objection, *in-shā’Allāh*, it was a beneficial digression; and now, let us return to our previous discussion.

THE SECOND SUBTERFUGE

They say: *The madh’hab of Imām Aázam رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ is: ‘takfīr 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 dhabiḥah¹⁵⁰ is a Muslim’.*¹⁵¹

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 followed him have said so, as mentioned by Shaykh Áshmāwī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in his commentary of *Ṣalāt Ahmed 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 takfīr, 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 tālā knows better what he really meant by this, because if this is taken literally [*ála żāhirihi*] 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 Aşdā’a al-Ghayniyyah bi Bayāni Iḥāṭatihī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ bi’l Úlūm al-Kawniyyah* in two volumes.

¹⁵⁰ Animal slaughtered according to Islamic Law.

¹⁵¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Ṣalah. 1/56.

who faces the qiblah and prays is a Muslim, even if he says that Allāh táālā lies, or insults Muḥammad RasūlAllāh ﷺ – his faith remains intact,

*as firm as the ablution of bibi tamiyz*¹⁵²

The First Answer: Your Lord Almighty Allāh táālā says:

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ
ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ

Righteousness is not in turning your faces towards the east or the west; rather, virtuous is he who bears faith in Allāh and the Final Day, and the angels, and the Book and the prophets.¹⁵³

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:

وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَنْ تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ نَفَقَاتُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الصَّلَاةَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالَىٰ وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كَارِهِونَ

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.¹⁵⁴

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

¹⁵² *chuñ wuzu e muḥkam e bibi tamiyz*

¹⁵³ Sūrah Baqarah, 2:177.

¹⁵⁴ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:54.

behind the qiblah of hearts and souls, the kábah of religion and faith, Sayyidunā RasūlAllāh ﷺ himself! Allāh táālā says:

فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَنُفِصِلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥٥﴾ وَإِنْ نَكَثُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَهْدِهِمْ وَطَعَنُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ فَقَدِ اتَّبَعُوا أَهْلَ
الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَأَيْمَانَ لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَنْتَهُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾

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.¹⁵⁵

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 táālā and His Messenger ﷺ? Listen to what your Lord Almighty says:

مَنْ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأَسْمَعُ
غَيْرَ مَسْمُوعٍ وَرَاعِنَا لِيَّأْتِنَا بِاللَّسِنِمْهُمْ وَطَعَنَّا فِي الدِّينِ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا
وَأَسْمَعُ وَأَنْظُرْنَا لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ وَلَكِنْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

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 a little.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:11-12.

¹⁵⁶ Sūrah Nisā', 4:46.

In Madinah, the 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.’¹⁵⁷

But the Jews would actually intend another meaning. Some have said that they intended *rūūnah*¹⁵⁸ 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 even negative meanings of the innuendos [mentioned in the verse, uttered by the Jews] are not as ugly as these explicit insults.¹⁵⁹ A curse to be deaf, foolishness or calling him a shepherd – are not as ugly¹⁶⁰ 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-īyādhu billāh! We seek Allāh’s refuge.

¹⁵⁷ 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-Aṣṣfahānī].

¹⁵⁸ *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*].

¹⁵⁹ Explicit insults uttered by Gangohī, Ambehtawī and Thānawī.

¹⁶⁰ They are ugly and are blasphemies; the sayings of the modern blasphemers are even more ugly and are hence even more severe blasphemies.

The Second Answer: Attributing this ugly delusion¹⁶¹ to the *madh'hab* of Imām Aázam رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ is a slander of the Imām, because he has said in his famous book explaining the creed of Ahl as-Sunnah:¹⁶²

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*:¹⁶³

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

Ālī al-Qārī says in the commentary of *Fiqh al-Akbar*:¹⁶⁴

Fakhr al-Islām¹⁶⁵ 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 Rāfiḏīs, who claim that the Qur'ān is a creation; do they not pray facing the Qiblah?¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ That merely facing the *qiblah* makes one a Muslim and regardless of everything else, we do not do *takfīr* of those who face towards our *qiblah* in their prayer.

¹⁶² *Fiqh al-Akbar*, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah.

¹⁶³ *Kitābu'l Waṣiyyah*, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah.

¹⁶⁴ *Minaḥ al-Rawḍ al-Az'har*, Ālī al-Qārī, p95.

¹⁶⁵ Fakhr al-Islām: Imām Muḥammad al-Pazdawī [d.482 AH].

¹⁶⁶ Aren't they considered as kāfirs according to major Imams, including the three mentioned above?

Take this very specific issue¹⁶⁷ that we are discussing now; Qāḍī Abū Yūsuf, the prominent Ḥanafī Imām says in his *Kitāb al-Kharāj*:¹⁶⁸

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*?¹⁶⁹ 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,¹⁷⁰ he is a disbeliever, an apostate by unanimous agreement.¹⁷¹ In fact, one who does not consider such a person¹⁷² 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.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁷ Of blasphemy; *sabb* or *shatam*.

¹⁶⁸ Imām Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, p182.

¹⁶⁹ *ahl al-qiblah*

¹⁷⁰ *ḍarūriyāt*; *zarūriyat e dīn*

¹⁷¹ *kāfir*, *murtadd* by *ijmāʿ*

¹⁷² One who denies or contradicts a necessary requirement of faith.

¹⁷³ Qadi Īyād al-Mālikī, *Kitāb al-Shifā bi Tārifi Ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā*, 2/208.

In *Majmá al-Anhur*¹⁷⁴ and *Durr al-Mukhtār*:¹⁷⁵

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 *Sharĥ 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 takfīr 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,¹⁷⁶ because Allāh táālā actually sent him¹⁷⁷ to Ālī ﷺ; and some others among them claim that Ālī 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."¹⁷⁸

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:¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ Shaykh-Zādah, *Majmá al-Anhur*, 1/677.

¹⁷⁵ Ālauddīn al-Ĥaskafī, *Durr al-Mukhtār*, Kitāb al-Jihād, Bāb al-Murtadd.

¹⁷⁶ *wahy*

¹⁷⁷ This is the belief of fanatical Shiáh [*ghulāt*] who claim that Sayyidunā Jibrīl ﷺ delivered the Revelation to Sayyidunā Muĥammad ﷺ instead of Sayyidunā Ālī ﷺ.

¹⁷⁸ Qārī, *Sharĥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, p446.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p429

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 is an accident,¹⁸⁰ that bodies will be resurrected and assembled on Judgement day,¹⁸¹ that Knowledge of Allāh tāālā encompasses everything,¹⁸² the general and the specific, and other such things. Even if a person piously fulfils religious obligations and performs worship, along with 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 takfīr of ahl al-qiblah***, according to scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah is, that we should not do takfīr of those who do not carry signs of disbelief; and have not said or done something that necessitates this ruling.

Imām Ábd al-Ázīz al-Bukhārī¹⁸³ says in his commentary on *Uṣūl al-Ĥusāmī*:¹⁸⁴

If a person is an extremist¹⁸⁵ in [heretical] belief, so much that it becomes necessary to rule him a kāfīr,¹⁸⁶ 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 ummah¹⁸⁷ that has been given the testimony of being [as a group] protected [from error]¹⁸⁸ and even if he imagines himself to be a Muslim. Because, the term ummah does not refer

¹⁸⁰ *ĥādīth, ĥawādīth*

¹⁸¹ *ĥashr*: to be gathered and assembled.

¹⁸² The Mútazilah believe that Allāh has only generic knowledge and does not have knowledge of specifics and the minutiae. *al-íyādhu billāh*.

¹⁸³ 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 commentaries of *Uṣūl al-Pazdawī* of Fakhr al-Islām Pazdawī.

¹⁸⁴ *Al-Muntakhab fi Usūl al-Madh'hab* by Imām Ĥusāmuddīn Muĥammad ibn Muĥammad al-Akhsīkathī, [d.644/1246] this is also known as *Ĥusāmī* or *Uṣūl al-Ĥusāmī*.

¹⁸⁵ *ghuluww* or exaggerated heretical belief.

¹⁸⁶ On account of his extreme heresy that necessitates *takfīr*.

¹⁸⁷ Ábd al-Ázīz Bukhārī, *Al-Taĥqīq fi Sharĥi Muntakhab al-Uṣūl; Bāb al-Ijmāá* – The Chapter on Consensus.

¹⁸⁸ The ummah is collectively vouchsafed from error according to the ĥādīth: “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].

to those who merely pray facing the qiblah, but to those who are [true] believers. This person¹⁸⁹ is a kāfir, even if he does not realise that he is one.

In *Radd al-Muhtār*:¹⁹⁰

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 unfailing in fulfilling obligations and doing good deeds all his life, as explained in *Sharh al-Tahrir*...

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 Mahadev¹⁹¹ once a day; can any sane person consider him a Muslim? Whereas saying that Allāh táālā 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 is implicitly belying the One God, whereas calling him a liar is explicitly belying him; and such prostration, there is a rational possibility¹⁹² that it is a prostration of respect and not a prostration of worship; and veneration¹⁹³ is

¹⁸⁹ Such a person whose heresy has crossed the limits of kufr due to fanatic beliefs.

¹⁹⁰ Ibn Ābidīn, *Radd al-Muhtār*, Kitāb al-Ṣalah; Bāb al-Imāmah, 1/377.

¹⁹¹ One of the many false gods and idols of Hindus.

¹⁹² *iḥtimāl āqlī*, meaning a plausible explanation exists.

¹⁹³ **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.

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 Shari‘ah 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 upon this difference,¹⁹⁴ but because repentance of a person prostrating to an idol is accepted by *ijmā‘*; whereas the repentance of a person who insults the Prophet ﷺ is not accepted according to numerous scholars.¹⁹⁵

This is also the preferred opinion¹⁹⁶ of the following Imams among Ḥanafis:

- Imām Bazzāzī;
- The accomplished researcher Imām Ibn Humām;
- Āllāmah Mawlā Khusraw, author of *Durar wa’l Ghurar*;

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 Shari‘ah, then we do not rule him a kāfir near Allāh, though he will be ruled a kāfir due to his outward action.

¹⁹⁴ 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.

¹⁹⁵ 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 Sujūd al-Taḥiyyah*. [The Pure Cream: On the Prohibition of Prostrations of Respect].

¹⁹⁶ There is a difference of opinion in our madh’hab; Imām Ibn Ābidīn has explained that repentance [*tawbah*] of a blasphemer is accepted in our madh’hab. See *Tanbih al-Wulāti wa’l Ḥukkām ālā Aḥkāmī Shātimī Khayr al-Anām*. This is why Alahazrat says: ‘among our Imams.’ Allāh tāālā knows best.

- Állāmah Zayn ibn Nujaym, author of *Baḥru’r Rāyiq* and *Ashbāh wa’n Nazāyir*;
- Állāmah Ūmar 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-Ĥaskafī, author of *Durr al-Mukhtār*.

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

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-Muḥtār*, etc. Allāh táālā knows best.

THE THIRD SUBTERFUGE

They say: *it is written in books of Fiqh that if a person has 99 components¹⁹⁷ of kufr, and one component of Islām, even then we should not call such a person a kāfir.*¹⁹⁸

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,¹⁹⁹ or rings a bell²⁰⁰ – 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 belief²⁰¹ that is the basis for all other beliefs! Particularly, the philosophers and Aryas²⁰² because they claim to believe in

¹⁹⁷ *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.

¹⁹⁸ This is not a hypothetical statement and is commonly cited by Qādiyānis.

¹⁹⁹ *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.

²⁰⁰ Ringing a bell or a *ghanti/ghantā* is a ritual in Hindu worship; it also *accompanies* worship in Christian churches and masses.

²⁰¹ that God exists

²⁰² 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, p57-62]

one God; the Jews and Christians will then be comparatively²⁰³ 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:

وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلَامِهِمْ

And they committed disbelief after professing Islām²⁰⁴

and in the verse:

لَا تَعْنِدُوا أَنْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ

Do not proffer excuses; you have certainly become disbelievers after having professed faith²⁰⁵

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,²⁰⁶ they may say as an answer to the above: 'this²⁰⁷ was a mistake made by God; or said in haste by Him; because this

"It was at Bombay, on the 10th of April 1875, that Swami Dayanand founded the Arya Samaj." [Ibid., p58]

²⁰³ In comparison to Arya-Samajis and philosophers.

²⁰⁴ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:74.

²⁰⁵ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:66.

²⁰⁶ This is said about Sunnis who make takfir; but Alahazrat extrapolates to ask whether you will say the same thing about Allāh?

²⁰⁷ Terming the hypocrites as a *kāfir* for a single thing.

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, God did not discuss this with Naturalist²⁰⁸ or Nadawī²⁰⁹ lecturers or other broad-minded Islamic reformers.²¹⁰ Allāh’s curse be upon oppressors!

The Fourth Answer: Your Lord Almighty says:

أَفْتَوْمُنُونَ بَعْضُ 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 ﴿٢٠٨﴾
 أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ فَلَا يَخَفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٢٠٩﴾

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.²¹¹

²⁰⁸ 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.

²⁰⁹ Members of *Nadwatul Ulama*, 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-Haramayn bi Rajafī Nadwah al-Mayn*.

²¹⁰ 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*?’

²¹¹ Sūrah Baqarah, 2:85-86.

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 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]:

يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ

They distort the [meanings of] words from their places.²¹²

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 *ijmāa* 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 urine²¹³ but these ignoramus 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.

²¹² Sūrah Nisā’a, 4:46.

²¹³ That is, all of it becomes impure like urine.

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 *Ámr has absolute and conclusive knowledge of the unseen*. This statement has the following possible meanings of kufr:

1. Ámr knows the unseen by himself;²¹⁴ this is plain and clear kufr.

قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

Say: no one in the heavens or the earth knows the unseen except Allāh táālā.²¹⁵

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

فَلَمَّا خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ الْجِنَّ أَنْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ الْغَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُوا فِي الْعَذَابِ الْمُهِينِ

The reality of the Jinn was exposed, that if they knew the unseen, they would not have remained in disgraceful punishment²¹⁶

Ámr –

3. is an astrologer

²¹⁴ 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 táālā.

²¹⁵ Sūrah Naml, 27:65.

²¹⁶ Sūrah Sabā, 34:14.

4. is a *rammāl*, a geomancer²¹⁷
5. is a *samudrak*, a palm reader or a practitioner of palmistry²¹⁸
6. divines, based upon the crowing of a crow etc.
7. divines, by insects falling on one's body, or –
8. divines by going to the right or left of a bird or a wild animal²¹⁹
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
13. knows mesmerism²²⁰
14. uses a magic table²²¹

²¹⁷ **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 analysing 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-Ĥadīthiyyah*].

²¹⁸ These kinds of fortune-tellers are commonly found in India, even today; they claim to tell the future by looking at the lines on one's palms.

²¹⁹ Augury; this and the two previous kinds (#6, #7) are also known as zoomancy or theriomancy: divination by animal behavior.

²²⁰ In 19th Century India, mesmerism was considered as a form of occult practice and magic.

²²¹ Like the Ouija boards.

15. enquires about the unseen from a planchette²²²

16. has knowledge of physiognomy²²³

17. has the knowledge of number-magic [*zāyirjah*]²²⁴ and he believes that he attains the knowledge of unseen – conclusively and absolutely – because this is kufr;²²⁵ 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.²²⁶

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:

²²² **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].

²²³ *qiyāfah dānī*: physiognomy; some extreme forms suggested that a person’s destiny could be predicted by using this science.

²²⁴ “*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 (*qaṭʿī-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.

²²⁵ **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.

²²⁶ 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.²²⁷

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.

وَلَكِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

But he is the Messenger of Allāh and seal of all prophets;
and Allāh táālā knows everything²²⁸

19. He does not believe that Ámr receives revelation, but claims that he has this knowledge by divine inspiration²²⁹ – 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.²³⁰

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

Say: are they equal, those who know, and those who do not know?²³¹

In *Nasīm ar-Riyād* it is said:

Whoever says that such-and-such a person is more knowledgeable than the Prophet ﷺ has faulted him, and thus takes the ruling of one who insults him ﷺ.²³²

²²⁷ Sunan Abū Dāwūd, 2:189.

²²⁸ Sūrah Aḥzāb, 33:40.

²²⁹ *ilhām*

²³⁰ 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.

²³¹ Sūrah Zumar, 39:9.

²³² *Nasīm ar-Riyād*, Shihābuddīn Khaffājī in his commentary on *Shifā*. 4/146.

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 directly by Allāh tāālā, without the medium of any Messenger of Allāh among men or angels²³³ or by following them – is also *kufr*.²³⁴

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

Allāh does not inform of the unseen to any [of you common folk]; however, Allāh chooses among His Messengers, whosoever He wishes²³⁵

عَلِمَ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا ۖ إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ

He is the Knower of Unseen; He does not reveal His knowledge of unseen to anyone – except His Beloved Messengers²³⁶

21. Zayd believes that Ámr has certain and conclusive knowledge, but only partial knowledge of the Unseen, by means of RasūlAllāh ﷺ either by

²³³ *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.

²³⁴ Thus if any information of the unseen is given to us by a non-prophet, or a waliy, 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 tāālā is *kufr* according to the verse which says: ‘Allāh does not inform of the unseen anyone except to Messengers He chooses’.

²³⁵ Sūrah Aāl Ímrān, 3:179. In *Tafsīr Baydāwī*: “Allāh tāālā 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, Allāh tāālā 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*]”.

²³⁶ Sūrah Jinn, 72:26-27. It must be noted that scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah have not referred to RasūlAllāh ﷺ as *āalimu'l ghayb* – or Knower of the Unseen; and they have always insisted on the very meaning propounded by various tafsirs of this verse. *wa billāhi't tawfiq*.

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: *Āmr 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 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.²³⁷ 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*, *Baĥr*, *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:

وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ

The oppressors shall soon know, which place they shall be returned to²³⁸

²³⁷ As it follows, such caution is exercised only when such statements are unclear, ambiguous or can be interpreted favourably. Explicit insults will be taken at face value and explanations will not be entertained. Even the Deobandis agree to this *fatwā*. See Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī's *Ikfār al-Mulhidīn*.

²³⁸ Sūrah Shuārā'a, 26:227.

In the commentary of *Fiqh al-Akbar*:²³⁹

Scholars have mentioned the issue of *takfīr* – 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:²⁴⁰

If in a particular issue, there are facets and possibilities that necessitate *takfīr* [ruling apostasy] and just one facet that prevents *takfīr*, it is necessary for the muftī and the judge to lean towards this facet and should avoid *takfīr*; 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 *takfīr*, he certainly remains a Muslim; but if his intention was not THIS meaning, then there is no point in the muftī trying to interpret it favourably such that it does not necessitate *takfīr*, 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:²⁴¹

²³⁹ Qārī, *Sharḥ Fiqh al-Akbar*, Objective: On Knowing what Constitutes Apostasy, p445.

²⁴⁰ *Khulāṣatu'l Fatāwā*, On Words of Apostasy: The Second Section 4/382.

Jāmiy al-Fuṣūlayn, The 38th Section: Concerning Words Amounting to Apostasy 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.

²⁴¹ *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 Shariāh is Apostasy,” 1/302.

TātārKhāniyyah, The Book on Apostates, 5/458.

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

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*, *Ĥadīqah an-Nadiyyah*, *Tanbīh al-Wulāt* and *Sall al-Ĥusām* etc., it is said:²⁴²

The muftī who says that he shall not rule on the apostasy 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 takfīr. But it is a habit of Jews²⁴³ to switch words and alter their meanings.



²⁴² *Tanbīh al-Wulāt wa'l Ĥukkām*, *Rasāyil Ibn Āābidīn*; 1/342.

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

²⁴³ Like the Jews in Madinah who would alter words and context in the Torah.

AN IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE

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

- if a person performs a nikāh and says: by the witness of Allāh ﷻ 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 himself²⁴⁴

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,²⁴⁵ like absolute knowledge or intrinsic knowledge without being granted etc. And because these statements can be interpreted in many²⁴⁶ 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,²⁴⁷ 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.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ Paraphrased from *Fatāwā Qāḍī Khān*.

²⁴⁵ 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.

²⁴⁶ Because even one single favourable meaning is enough to withhold from takfīr.

²⁴⁷ Twenty-one concerning conclusive-absolute knowledge as described in the example above; and the next twenty-one concerning conjecture and estimation.

²⁴⁸ *ilm e żanni*

In *Bāhr ar-Rāyiq* and *Radd al-Muhtār*:

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. Qurṭubī 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 astrologer²⁴⁹ or a geomancer; those who predict something in the future based on previous experience²⁵⁰ 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.²⁵¹

Further in *Bāhr ar-Rāyiq*:

Did you not see what they²⁵² have said concerning marriage of a *maḥram*?²⁵³ If he had assumed²⁵⁴ that it was a permissible union, he will not be punished according to

²⁴⁹ 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 the 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 go further and claim, that they can predict the influence of the stars on anything from wealth, love, marriage or children – even life and death.

²⁵⁰ 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*.

²⁵¹ *Radd al-Muhtār*, 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].

²⁵² jurists

²⁵³ *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.

²⁵⁴ Due to ignorance or mistaken derivation.

unanimous opinion;²⁵⁵ but rather he will be severely censured, as mentioned in *Zahīriyyah* etc., and nobody said that he had become a kāfir;²⁵⁶ thus it is in all such examples.

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 ruling²⁵⁷ concerns this specific case where the utterer intends the meaning which is kufr, for example, claim of intrinsic knowledge etc.,²⁵⁸ or else, these statements²⁵⁹ will themselves become invalid and contradict the scrutinised and validated position of scholars. More details can be found in *Jāmiy al-Fuṣūlayn*, *Radd al-Muhtār*, *Ĥāshiyah Állāmah Nuĥ*, *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.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁵ *ijmāá*

²⁵⁶ On account of such a mistaken idea.

²⁵⁷ That is, in the case of a person whose marriage is conducted 'by the witness of Allāh and RasūlAllāh ﷺ' as mentioned by Qādī Khān. As there are interpretations, his fatwā is thus dependent on the intention of the utterer.

²⁵⁸ *ilm dhātī*

²⁵⁹ Rulings as mentioned in the beginning of this section.

²⁶⁰ *Al-Ĥadīqatu'n Nadiyyah Sharĥi't Ṭarīqatu'l Muĥammadiyyah*; 1:304, "Slighting the Sharīāh is kufr."

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!²⁶¹ 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.²⁶²

This is by a metonymical elision,²⁶³ as it is said in the verse:

إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ

Except, when Allāh comes to them²⁶⁴

that is, when the *Command of Allāh* comes to them.²⁶⁵ 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 Īyāḍ:

Claim of interpretation in explicit statements is not accepted.²⁶⁶

²⁶¹ As a possible interpretation can be found for even explicit statements.

²⁶² *qadā mubram* and *qadā muállaq*

²⁶³ *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*.

²⁶⁴ Sūrah Al-Baqarah, 2:210; this is literal to keep the context and is explained in the text.

²⁶⁵ *Tafsīr Qurṭubī*: “this is not to be taken literally; it means when the command of Allāh comes;” *Kash’sḥāf*: “that is the coming of the command of Allāh;” *Ṭabarī*: “the signs of Allāh, the command of Allāh;” so also in tafsīrs *Bayḍāwī*, *Jalālayn*, *Nasafi*, and others.

²⁶⁶ *Kitāb al-Shifā*.

In its commentary, Āli al-Qārī says:

Such interpretation is rejected according to principles of sharīah.²⁶⁷

In the commentary by Khaffāji:

Such interpretations are not to be heeded; and are considered as vain talk.²⁶⁸

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

If a person says: *ana rasūlAllāh*, or says in Persian: *man payghambaram*²⁶⁹ 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.

THE FOURTH SUBTERFUGE

They deny it. If a person has not seen books of blasphemers,²⁷⁰ they flatly deny it and say they have never said such things anywhere.²⁷¹ If a knowledgeable person or a scholar shows them in printed²⁷² 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

²⁶⁷ *Sharḥ al-Shifā*, 2/396.

²⁶⁸ *Nasīm ar-Riyād*, 4/343.

²⁶⁹ Both phrases mean: I am a Messenger of Allāh; or I am a Messenger.

²⁷⁰ Like *Barāhīn al-Qāṭiāh*, or *Ĥifẓ al-Īmān*.

²⁷¹ Like Khalīl Aḥmed did in his *Muḥannad*.

²⁷² Which are being printed even in our time from both India and Pakistan.

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:

يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ مَا قَالُوا وَلَقَدْ قَالُوا كَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلَامِهِمْ

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.²⁷³

*it is an old habit, that they flatly deny it*²⁷⁴

Books²⁷⁵ 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.²⁷⁶ Scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah have been refuting them for ages and printing those refutations.

That fatwā²⁷⁷ in which its author unmistakably said that Allāh táālā has lied,²⁷⁸ and whose original,²⁷⁹ which carries the signature and seal [of the

²⁷³ Sūrah Tawbah, 9:74.

²⁷⁴ *hoti āyī hai ke inkār kiyā kartey haiñ*

²⁷⁵ **Alahazrat's Footnote:** that is, *Barāhīn al-Qāṭiāh*, *Ĥifẓ al-Īmān*, *Tahdhīru'n Nās* and books of Qādiyānīs.

²⁷⁶ **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].

²⁷⁷ **Alahazrat's Footnote:** that is, the fatwā of Gangohī.

²⁷⁸ 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.

²⁷⁹ The paper on which the fatwā is written in Gangohī's own hand and bears his seal and signature.

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 fatwā²⁸⁰ died in Jumādā al-Ākhirah 1323 and remained silent²⁸¹ 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.²⁸² 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?²⁸³ A fatwā by Zayd, that carries his seal is being circulated openly in his lifetime and his being in good health²⁸⁴ – and such a fatwā is certainly and absolutely kufr – and this is repeatedly published for

²⁸⁰ Rashīd Aĥmed Gangohī.

²⁸¹ About this *fatwā* or its many refutations.

²⁸² 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.

²⁸³ 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?

²⁸⁴ He is not insane; so that one does not claim that insanity prevented him from refuting this claim.

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;²⁸⁵ 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?²⁸⁶

And those who are alive²⁸⁷ 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.²⁸⁸ One should hear from those present in that

²⁸⁵ That is, fifteen more years after the first time he is declared kāfir on account of this fatwā.

²⁸⁶ 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 Rashidiyyah* related to this issue of *imkān e kazib*.

²⁸⁷ Khalil Aḥmed Ambehtawī and Ashraf Āli Thānawī; this book was written in 1326 AH.

²⁸⁸ **Alahazrat’s footnote:** that is Ashraf Āli Thānawī.

meeting²⁸⁹ 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 interpretation²⁹⁰ 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 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 al-Akhīrah, 1323 and were handed to the kingpin and his followers; and this is the fourth²⁹¹ 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 Thānawī's.

²⁹⁰ This incident occurred in 1320 AH and Ashraf Ālī wrote a rejoinder to his *Hifẓ al-Īmān* titled *Bastu'l Banān* in 1329 AH; Khalīl Aḥmed Ambehtawī's *Muhannad* was first published in 1325 AH according to Deobandi sources which is not possible.

²⁹¹ 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,²⁹² they resort to slander, which is the –

FIFTH SUBTERFUGE

This kind of behavior is described in the verse:

الَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا

They seek to prevent from the path of Allāh and wish to subvert it.²⁹³

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.²⁹⁴ After all, they have

²⁹² 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 publicly announce your repentance for sins done in public and in open.

This was reported with a fair, excellent chain by Aḥmad in *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, p141; Ṭabarāni in *Mújam al-Kabīr*, 331; Bayhaqī in *Shuāb al-Īmān* narrated by Muáadh ibn Jabal ﷺ.

²⁹³ Sūrah Aárāf, 7:45.

²⁹⁴ Deobandis have been selling this false narrative for ages and thereby, misguiding scholars outside the subcontinent. Nūh Keller’s essay, *Īmān Kufr & Takfīr*, was based on this false premise, his fanciful appraisal of the situation and fictitious retelling of events, which were refuted in my book *The Keller Mistake*, published by Ridawi Press, 2013.

declared Ismāyīl Dihlawī as kāfir; Maulvi Is'ḥāq²⁹⁵ and Maulvi Ábd al-Ĥayy²⁹⁶ as kāfir...²⁹⁷

And those who have a greater degree of shame²⁹⁸ add that *máādhAllāh!* we have declared Shaykh Shāh Ábdul Ázīz, Shāh Walīyullah, Hājī Imdādullāh, Mawlānā Shāh Faḍlu'r Raḥmān as kāfir.²⁹⁹ And those who are beyond all bounds of shame, accuse us of saying – and I seek Allāh's refuge from such a thing, *máādhAllāh* – that Shaykh Mujaddid e Alf-e-Sāni³⁰⁰ ﷺ was kāfir. Wherever they see that someone reveres 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 honourable³⁰¹ people went to Mawlānā Shāh Muḥammad Husayn Ilāhabādī and told him that we have said – and I seek Allāh's refuge: *máādhAllāh, máādhAllāh, máādhAllāh* –

²⁹⁵ Maulavi Is'ḥāq Dihlawī, the maternal grandson of Shāh Ábd al-Ázīz Dihlawī was sympathetic to Ismāyīl Dihlawī's ideas, though he did not reject *taqlīd* outright; he is the author of *Masāyil al-Arbayīn*.

²⁹⁶ 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.

²⁹⁷ Deobandis do this even now, like Taqī Usmani's fatwā mentioned earlier: 'he [Aḥmed Ridā] ruled Deobandi scholars as kāfir because they refuted these bid'ah practices.'

²⁹⁸ Said sarcastically; meaning, more shameless.

²⁹⁹ Which is an obvious lie; not only were these *úlamā* 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 Ábd al-Ázīz Dihlawī is the teacher and shaykh of Alahazrat's own shaykh, Sayyid Aāl-e-Rasūl Mārahawī, through whom Alahazrat narrates his sanad of ḥadīth; notably the *ḥadīth musalsal bi'l-awwalīyyah*, and which is narrated by Sayyid Ábd al-Ĥayy al-Kattānī through Alahazrat. See *Fahras al-Fahāris*, 179.

³⁰⁰ The Reviver at the head of the Second Millenium – Shaykh Aḥmed Sirhindi and the head of the eponymous Mujaddidi-Naqshbandi order.

³⁰¹ "For Brutus is an honourable man; So are they all, all honourable men—"

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:

إِنْ جَاءَكَ فَاسِقٌ مِّنْ بَنِيكَ فَتَبَيَّنُوا

If a corrupt person comes to you with information, then validate it³⁰²

and he wrote to me enquiring whether this was true. I wrote an epistle refuting these false accusations titled *Injā al-Barī ān Waswās al-Muftarī*,³⁰³ and dispatched it to the Mawlānā, who dismissed the lying slanderer with a present of *lā-hawla*.³⁰⁴ It is thus they freely slander; and the answer to this is what your Lord Almighty has said:

إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكَذِبَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَٰذِبُونَ

Verily, those who make false accusations are those who do not believe in the verses of Allāh; and it is they who are the liars³⁰⁵

and He says:

فَنَجْعَل لَّعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكٰذِبِينَ

We invoke the curse of Allah upon liars.³⁰⁶

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

³⁰² Sūrah Hujurāt, 49:6.

³⁰³ *Injā al-Barī ān Waswās al-Muftarī* [1310 AH].

³⁰⁴ 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.

³⁰⁵ Sūrah Nahl, 16:105.

³⁰⁶ Sūrah Aāl Īmrān, 3:61.

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 knows³⁰⁷ that you cannot³⁰⁸ - then see what the Qur’ān says about you being liars. Your Lord Almighty says:

فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشُّهُدَاءِ فَأَوَّلَتْ يَكْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْكٰذِبُونَ

When they cannot produce witnesses, then it is they who are liars near Allāh³⁰⁹

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 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.³¹⁰ O

³⁰⁷ Alahazrat is talking about himself; and since he never declared the aforementioned names as kāfir, he says that Allāh knows this to be true.

³⁰⁸ Because it does not exist.

³⁰⁹ Sūrah Nūr, 24:13.

³¹⁰ That is, they must have ruled them kāfir without properly investigating the issue; like Keller accuses Alahazrat of ‘making a mistake’ in the fatwā.

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?

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي كَيْدَ الْخَائِبِينَ

Verily, Allāh will not let the deceit of the treacherous to prevail³¹¹

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

قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

Say: bring your evidence if you are truthful³¹²

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 takfir, 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'ḥān as-Subbūh ān Āybi Kadhib Maqbūh*,³¹³ which was first published in 1309, by Anwār e Muḥammādī Press, Lucknow³¹⁴ in

³¹¹ Sūrah Yūsuf, 12:52.

³¹² Sūrah Baqarah, 2:111.

³¹³ 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'ḥān as-Subbūh ān Kadhibi Āybi Maqbūh*. However, in his later works – including here and *Mustanad al-Mūtamad*, *āyb* precedes *kadhib*; and both are correct.

³¹⁴ The book was written in 1307 AH and published in 1309 AH.

which 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 them³¹⁵ 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.³¹⁶ And Allāh tāālā knows best.

THIRDLY, in *Sall al-Suyūf al-Hindiyyah ālā Kufriyyāti 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,³¹⁷ yet on page 21-22, I wrote:

³¹⁵ 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.

³¹⁶ *hamāre nazdīk maqām e iḥtiyāt meīn ikfār sey kaff-e-lisān ma'khūz o mukhtār, murzā o munasīb*

³¹⁷ *luzūm-e-kufr*

This is the ruling of Fiqh scholars concerning these mendacious statements;³¹⁸ but may Allāh shower countless blessings and mercies upon our scholars for their restraint. In spite of seeing and hearing the leader of this sect³¹⁹ declare true Muslims as polytheists and disbelievers – neither does intense anger loosen their grip of caution; nor are they instigated by the desire for retribution; these blessed scholars³²⁰ 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.³²¹ 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 ān 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!*³²² I certainly do not like to make takfir of these people. Even until now, I still consider these followers³²³ and modern claimants³²⁴ as Muslims, even though there is no doubt in their heresy and

³¹⁸ of Ismāyīl Dihlawī in his books *Tafwiyatu'l Imān* et al.

³¹⁹ *ṭāyifāh kā pīr*: leader of this sect, Ismāyīl Dihlawī.

³²⁰ See *Mūtaqad*

³²¹ *luzūm-e-kufr* and *iltizām-e-kufr*.

³²² Allāh forbid! I seek Allāh's refuge! May Allāh never make it so!

³²³ Of Ismāyīl; that is Gangohī, Ambehtawī and other Deobandi followers.

³²⁴ Modern claimants of the dead and buried idea of *imkān al-kadhib*.

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-Rahmān – and I ask you: Is it not shamelessness to accuse a person of making careless takfir, 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:

إذا لم تستحي فاصنع ما شئت

If you have no shame, do whatever you wish³²⁵

O Muslims! These are my statements³²⁶ 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 *Mútamad al-Mustanad*³²⁷ was first published.

³²⁵ Nawawī, *Arbayīn*, #20; extracted from *Bukhārī*.

³²⁶ Refraining from takfir and utmost caution.

³²⁷ 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, *al-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-Firdawsī 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, apostasy and takfir.

Be mindful³²⁸ 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 person³²⁹ 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.³³⁰ After all, it is the same person, it is this slave of Allāh, who listed seventy reasons that necessitate kufr, but still said:

Our Prophet ﷺ has warned us from making takfīr³³¹ 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 takfīr] 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!*³³² I certainly do not like to make takfīr of these people...

It is in this part that Alahazrat first ruled the Deobandi blasphemers as kāfir. Allāh tāālā knows best.

³²⁸ *Allāh o Rasūl ke khawf ko sāmney rakh ke* as an idiom.

³²⁹ Imām Aḥmed Ridā himself.

³³⁰ Because Deobandi followers attempt to interpret those statements favourably; remember that interpretation is inadmissible in case of explicit insults.

³³¹ That is heedless and baseless takfīr, as is obvious.

³³² Allāh forbid! I seek Allāh's refuge! May Allāh never make it so!

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 issued³³³ by these blasphemers, and as long as I had not seen or heard³³⁴ of the blasphemies by these people concerning Allāh tāālā 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

³³³ **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.

³³⁴ **Alahazrat’s footnote:** Like Gangohī and Ambehtawī; 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 takfir. 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 Qādiyānī Liar; until 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 [Mirzā Qādiyānī]: ‘He seems to be a madman’. Thereafter, a fatwā came from Amritsar 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*, p18. Yes, when I saw his books myself, then I issued the decisive ruling that he had become a kāfir and an apostate.

these statements with my own eyes which explicitly insult Allāh táālā and His Messenger ﷺ, there remained no option except to rule them kāfir.³³⁵ Because our imams have said:

One who doubts in the kufr or punishment of such a person,³³⁶ is a kāfir himself.³³⁷

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:

وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبُطْلُ إِنَّ الْبُطْلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا

Say: that truth hath come and falsehood has been vanquished; and falsehood was bound to be vanquished³³⁸

and He says:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ

There is no compulsion in religion. The path of guidance is manifest from path of evil³³⁹



³³⁵ Otherwise Alahazrat would himself be enveloped in the ruling.

³³⁶ The blasphemmer.

³³⁷ Ĥaṣkafī, *Durr al-Mukhtār*, Kitāb al-Jihād, On Apostasy.

³³⁸ Sūrah Isrā'a, 17:81.

³³⁹ 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 kāfir³⁴⁰ 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 kāfir³⁴¹ 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 Āmr 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.³⁴²

³⁴⁰ After learning of their blasphemies.

³⁴¹ Because, it is necessary to consider a blasphemer as a kāfir or else one becomes a kāfir himself.

³⁴² Lit., seals.

Which endorsements can be higher and prominent than those of the scholars of the two pure sanctuaries?³⁴³ These sanctuaries, from where religion commenced and according to authentic ḥadīth, there will never be the prevalence of Satan in these places.³⁴⁴ 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 úlamā can be seen in the book: *Ḥusām al-Ḥaramayn álā Manḥar al-Kufri wa'l Mayn* which has been published in 1325 and also includes a facing translation³⁴⁵ 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 Ámr against Thee and Thy Messenger; for the sake of Muḥammad ﷺ. Āmīn! Āmīn! Āmīn!

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



³⁴³ *ḥaramayn ṭayyibayn*

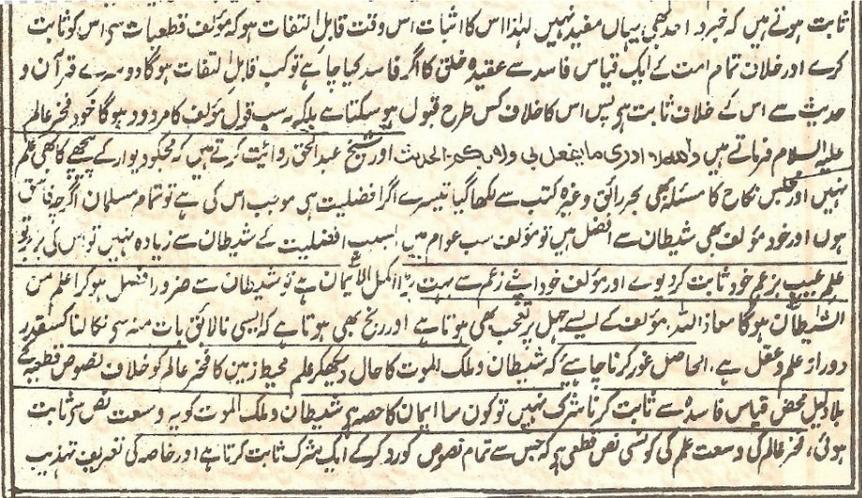
³⁴⁴ The Wahābī government of Saudi Arabia was established after Alahazrat passed away in 1921. While we do not dispute the ḥadīth, *máadhAllāh*, it does not necessarily mean that the *ḥaramayn* will always be under the rule of righteous Muslims. Even Fatimid Shia and Mútazilah have ruled over *ḥaramayn* 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.

³⁴⁵ Urdu translation by Alahazrat's nephew, Mawlānā Ḥasanayn Raza Khān titled: *Mubayyin e Ahkām o Taṣḍiqāt e Aálām*, 1324 AH.

Appendix A

BARĀHĪN AL-QĀṬĪĀH

Maulvi Khalīl Aḥmed (1269-1346/1852-1927) was born in Ambehṭa³⁴⁶ 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 Sātīāh* written by Mawlānā Abdu'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 Sahāranpūrī³⁴⁷ 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.



³⁴⁶ Sahāranpūr district, Uttar Pradesh, India.

³⁴⁷ He is known in the Arab world as *Sahāranfūrī*, the author *Badhl al-Majhūd*, a commentary on the Ḥādīth compendium, *Sunan Abū Dawūd*.

TRANSLATION OF THE PASSAGE

...rather all the claims of the author³⁴⁸ will be rejected. The Pride of the World ﷺ 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 Haq³⁴⁹ reports [that he said]: 'I do not even know what is behind the wall.'³⁵⁰ 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 one is a sinner;³⁵¹ 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!³⁵² Such ignorance on the part of the author is surprising, and it also saddening that he utters such an unworthy³⁵³ 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 earth³⁵⁴ for the Pride of

³⁴⁸ Ābdu's Samīy Rāmpūrī, author of *Anwār e Sātiāh*.

³⁴⁹ Ābd 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 *Ashiāātu'l Lamāāt*, a commentary on *Mishkātu'l Maṣābiḥ* and *Madāriju'n Nubuwwah*, a biography of the Prophet ﷺ.

³⁵⁰ Khalīl Aḥmed misquotes and states the opposite of what Shaykh Ābd 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.**"

³⁵¹ *fāsiq*

³⁵² Apparently, Khalīl Aḥmed finds it abhorrent that anyone else can equal Satan in knowledge.

³⁵³ *nā-lāyiq* literally means unworthy, but in usage and idiom it means contemptible, vile, disgraceful.

³⁵⁴ *ilm-e-muḥīṭ-e-zamīn*

the World,³⁵⁵ without any scriptural evidence³⁵⁶ 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 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 Aĥmed’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] ﷻ.
7. And if one tries to prove such knowledge [of Satan and the Angel of death] for RasūlAllāh ﷻ, it is refuting scriptural evidence,
8. And saying so is committing polytheism.

³⁵⁵ *fakhr-e-āālam* meaning RasūlAllāh ﷻ.

³⁵⁶ *naṣṣ*

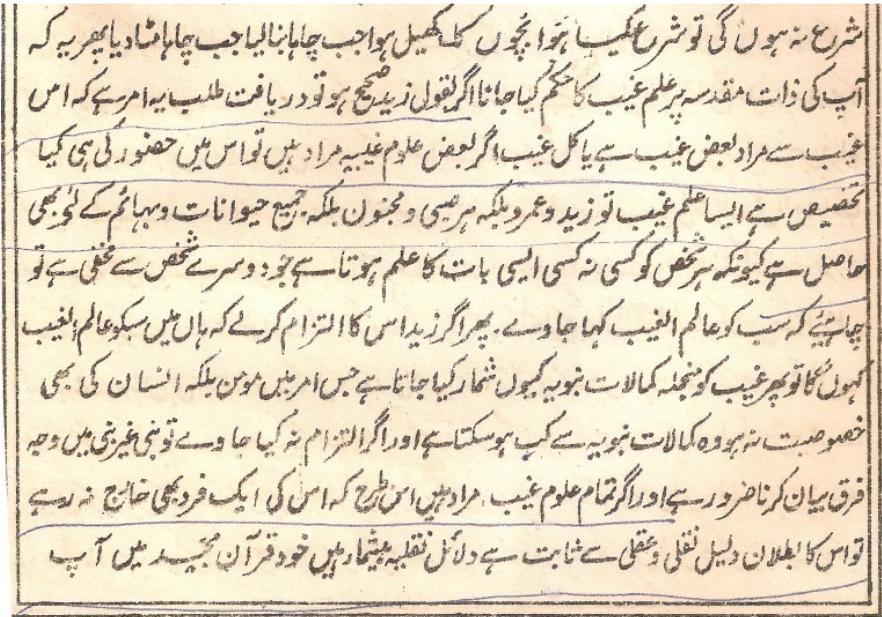
Look at it whichever way you want, but Khalil's statement means, that if you prove such knowledge for RasūlAllāh ﷺ, you commit shirk; but the same knowledge is possessed by Satan, and it is proved by *naṣṣ*!



Appendix B

HIFẒ AL-ĪMĀN

Ashraf Āli Thānawī³⁵⁷ was born in 1280 and died in 1362 (1863-1943). He graduated from Deoband in 1300 (1883) and Rashid Aḥmed Gangohī conferred the turban³⁵⁸ upon him. Qāsim Nānotwī, Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan Deobandi and Yāqūb Nānotwī were among his teachers.³⁵⁹ 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 Iyẓāziyyah Book House, Deoband.



³⁵⁷ Related to Thānā-Bhawan in Saharanpur District, Uttar Pradesh, India.

³⁵⁸ *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.

³⁵⁹ Muḥammad Akbar Shāh Bukhārī, *Akābir e Ūlamā e Deoband*.

If, the attribution of knowledge to his³⁶⁰ blessed person by Zayd³⁶¹ 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,³⁶² then where is the exclusiveness of RasūlAllāh ﷺ in this?³⁶³ Such knowledge is [possessed by] Zayd and Āmr;³⁶⁴ 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.³⁶⁵ 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?³⁶⁶ An attribute in which, there is no exclusivity for believers – not even exclusivity for humans;³⁶⁷ then, how can this be an exclusive attribute of prophethood?³⁶⁸ 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 narrated³⁶⁹ and rational proofs.

³⁶⁰ The Prophet ﷺ.

³⁶¹ Zayd: a name used for illustration.

³⁶² *bāaz ūlūm e ghaybiyyah*

³⁶³ In Urdu: *huzūr*; and this is meant to refer to RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

³⁶⁴ An idiom to say anyone; like it is said in English: ‘Tom, Dick and Harry’.

³⁶⁵ *āālimu’l ghayb*

³⁶⁶ *jumlā kamālāt e anbiyā’a*: that is, attributes that are considered as perfect, praiseworthy, distinguishing them from non-prophets etc.

³⁶⁷ 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.

³⁶⁸ 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 – takhṣīṣ – for the Prophet?*’

³⁶⁹ *dalīl e naqlī o āqlī 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.³⁷⁰ 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 Wahābīsm, 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 students³⁷¹ not only validated it, but wrote books and further compounded the mistake by making wild comparisons and conjuring egregious analogies. Alahazrat and other ūlamā refuted this (see *Subḥān 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 *wuqūū* – or occurrence – was handed to Sunni ūlamā 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

³⁷⁰ Founded in 1283/1866.

³⁷¹ Notably, Khalīl Aḥmed Sahāranpūrī [1269-1346/1852-1927]; and Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan Deobandi [1268-1339/1851-1920] in his *Juhd al-Muqill*.

this fatwā in *Ĥaramayn*, 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 tāālā 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. Alahazrat says³⁷² concerning this fatwā:

This unclean fatwā was published together with a refutation in the booklet *Siyānatu'n Nās* in 1308 by Ĥadiqatu'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 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 apologists may attempt to seize the moral high ground and cite 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 and one cannot refute every

³⁷² *Tamhīd e Īmān*

forgery – so also, Gangohī kept quiet. His silence cannot be considered as proof of culpability”.

Some Answers, and Some 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 in books/pamphlets from well-known publishers. Self-respecting people will not sit idle, if, for example, Penguin 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, when his fatāwā are solicited and he issues them 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 *ūlamā*. Gangohī replied to letters³⁷³ by Alahazrat and the compiler of *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah* included some fatāwā of Alahazrat for illustration.³⁷⁴ So it is clearly evident that Alahazrat was considered as a prominent personality.

³⁷³ 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 it is permissible to eat the domestic crow (*Tazkiratu’r Rashīd*, 1/180).

³⁷⁴ 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*, p172.

Which scholar in his right mind will keep quiet when a prominent personality forges a fatwā and circulates it in his name? The least he could do is deny it.

4. A Sufi like Imām Ábd al-Wahhāb al-Shaárānī³⁷⁵ 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.³⁷⁶

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 Hāji Imdādullāh that says: “*nobody claims wuqūú.*” This was an excellent opportunity for him 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. It is also incorrect, that Gangohī's disposition was against argument or debate. Apart from the book *Barāhīn-e-Qāṭiāh*, which was written “by his command,”³⁷⁷ there 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 has been reproduced by his biographer.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁵ Famous Shāfi'ī jurist and author, Abi'l Mawāhib Ábd al-Wahhāb Shaárānī [d.973 AH].

³⁷⁶ *Tazkiratu'r Rashīd*, Áshiq Ilāhī Meerutī.

³⁷⁷ 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 it of his own accord or even deny that Khalīl Aĥmed 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.

³⁷⁸ *Tazkiratu'r Rashīd*, Áshiq Ilāhī Meerutī, 1/180.

7. The book, *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, was published much later than this fatwā of *wuqūú* 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 wuqūú is being circulated in my name; I have nothing to do with it, and it is false.”³⁷⁹

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 mentioned on the purported seal, thus exposing the slanderers and forgerers; his nephew published his clarification, in spite of a tampering by the copyists (in the issue of statements attributed to Mawlānā Ḥasanayn Razā in his compilation of Alahazrat’s *Waṣayā*);³⁸⁰ Mawlānā Maḥbūb Ālī did the same when he published the third volume of *Ḥadāyiq* posthumously, without due diligence. When there was an uproar and Deobandis clamored “Sacrilege!” he 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

³⁷⁹ Such a statement is not found anywhere.

³⁸⁰ See the English translation of *Al-Wasaya* with notes titled, “The Noble Bequests’ published by Ridawī Press. <http://www.ridawipress.org/wp-content/uploads/wasaya.pdf>

of the new moon³⁸¹ for Ramadān and based it on the ‘common practice and that it 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?

TRANSLATION OF THE ISTIFTĀ AND THE FATWĀ OF GANGOHĪ

Bismillāhi’r Raḥmāni’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.³⁸² A third man said in the favor of one of the two:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ

Verily Allāh shall not forgive ascribing partners to Him;
and shall forgive anything other than that³⁸³

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

وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا

And for he who murders a believer intentionally,
his punishment is [in] Hell forever³⁸⁴

³⁸¹ *Tazkiratu’r Rashīd*, Āshiq Ilāhī Meerutī, 1/174.

³⁸² *kizb e Bārī*

³⁸³ Sūrah Nisā’a, 4:48; also 4:116.

³⁸⁴ Sūrah Nisā’a, 4:93.

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.”³⁸⁵ Upon this the third man said: “When did I say that I do not accept the occurrence of falsehood in Divine Speech?”³⁸⁶ The same person³⁸⁷ has also said: “Falsehood is not ugly and naturally despicable³⁸⁸ in general; Allāh táālā has permitted falsehood in certain situations. And in certain situations half-truths³⁸⁹ 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,³⁹⁰ or remains in the Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l Jamāáh in spite of his saying the above concerning falsehood in [the Speech] of Allāh táālā.

Please clarify, may Allāh táālā reward you.

³⁸⁵ *yaghfir*, not *yumkin an yaghfir*

³⁸⁶ *maiñ ne kab kaha hai ke wuqūú e kazib ka qāyil nahīñ hūñ?*

³⁸⁷ The third person.

³⁸⁸ *kazib álá'l úmūm qabīh ba mánā munāfir li't ṭabá nahīñ hai*

³⁸⁹ *tawriyah o áyn kazib*

³⁹⁰ *bidátī, zāll*

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.³⁹¹ Because a great number of scholars and elders accept occurrence of the repealing of the threat of punishment.³⁹² Thus, Maulavi Aḥmed Ḥasan has described this in his monograph *Tanzīh ar-Raḥmān*. Apart from this, those who consider that occurrence of repealing of the threat of punishment as possible,³⁹³ they also believe that such a repealing can occur. It is also clear that *khulf-wayīd*³⁹⁴ is a specific case and falsehood is a generic case.³⁹⁵ 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;³⁹⁶ and all of these³⁹⁷ are categories of falsehood. And the existence of the sub-category necessitates the existence of the main class.³⁹⁸ If one is a human, then certainly he will also be an animal.³⁹⁹

³⁹¹ *magar tā-ham usko kāfir kahnā yā bidātī zall nahiñ kahna chāhiye*

³⁹² *wuqūú e khulf e wayīd*

³⁹³ *mujawwizīn*

³⁹⁴ Foregoing the threat of punishment

³⁹⁵ That is, *khulf-wayīd* is a subset of *kazib*.

³⁹⁶ *gāh e wayīd, gāh e waád, gāh e khabar*

³⁹⁷ 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.

³⁹⁸ *wujūd e naú ka wujūd e jins ko mustalzam hai*

³⁹⁹ Animal is the main class and human is a sub-category and one among kinds of animals.

Therefore, the meaning of occurrence of falsehood thus becomes valid,⁴⁰⁰ 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, the 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.⁴⁰¹ 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*,⁴⁰² is an agreed-upon statement; and no one has differed upon this issue.⁴⁰³

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

And if We so Wished, We would have given every soul its guidance;
but it has been said in my Truthful promise,⁴⁰⁴
I shall fill Hell with men and jinn, all of them.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰⁰ *lihāzā wuqūū e kizb ke mánā durust ho gaye.*

⁴⁰¹ Upon which there is a difference between Shāfiyīs and Ḥanafīs; yet they do not consider each other heretics.

⁴⁰² *qudrah ālā al-kadhib maá imtināá al-wuqūū*

⁴⁰³ Which is another delusion and a false claim. No Sunni scholar has attested this belief; see *Sub’ḥān as-Subbūh* and a simplified summary in English titled: *The Truth About a Lie.*

⁴⁰⁴ In *Tafsīr Qurṭubi*: “My truthful promise that I shall punish those who disobey me.”

⁴⁰⁵ Sūrah Sajdah, 32:13.

And Allāh táālā knows best.

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

SEAL:



[End of Rashīd Gangohī's Fatwā]



سوال

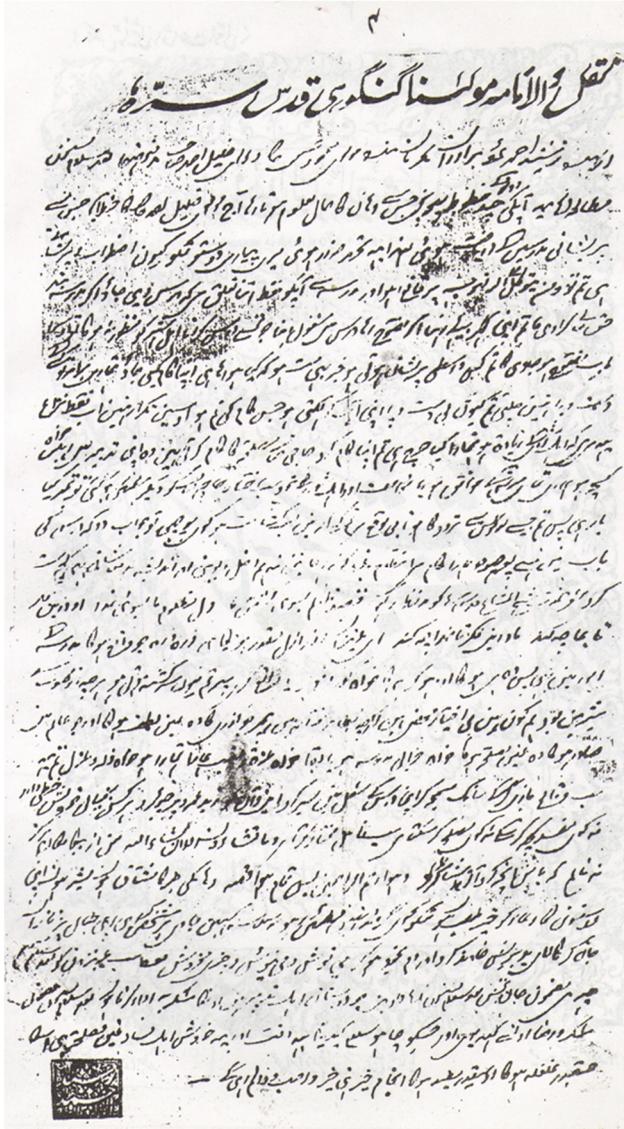
بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

ما فو لکم رحمہ اللہ و شخص کذب باری میں گفتگو کرتے تھے۔ ایک کی طرف داری کے واسطے تیسرے شخص نے کہا اللہ تعالیٰ نے فرمایا ہے ان اللہ لا یغفر ان یشرک بہ ویغفر ما دون ذالک الخ، لفظا عام ہے شامل ہے معصیت قتل مومن کو۔ پس آیت مذکورہ سے معلوم ہوا کہ پروردگار مغفرت مومن قاتل یا لعنہ بھی فرماوے گا۔ اور دوسری آیت میں ہے ومن یقتل مؤمنا متعمداً فجزاؤہ جہنم خالداً بالخ۔ لفظ من عام ہے شامل مومن قاتل یا لعنہ کو اس سے معلوم ہوا کہ قاتل مومن یا لعنہ کی مغفرت نہ ہوگی۔ اس قاتل کے خصم نے کہا کہ آپ کے استدلال سے وقوع کذب باری ثابت ہوتا ہے کیونکہ آیت میں ویغفر ہے نہ ویمنک۔ ان یغفر ای رسن کر اس قاتل نے جواب دیا۔ میں نے کب کہا ہے کہ میں وقوع کذب کا قائل نہیں ہوں۔ اور دوسرا قول اسی قاتل کا یہ ہے کہ کذب علی العموم قریح یعنی منافی لطیف نہیں ہے اللہ تعالیٰ نے بعض مواضع میں جائز رکھا ہے اور توبہ و عین کذب بعض مواضع میں دونوں اولیٰ ہیں۔ نہ فقط توبہ، یا یہ قاتل مسلمان ہے یا کافر، اور مسلمان ہے تو بدعتی ضال یا اہل سنت و جماعت باوجود قبول کرنے کے کذب باری تعالیٰ کے، بدینا و توجروا۔ **الجواب**۔ اگرچہ شخص ثالث نے تاویل آیات میں خطا کی مگر تاہم اس کو کافر کہنا یا بدعتی ضال نہیں کہنا چاہیے کیونکہ وقوع خلف و عید کو جماعت کثیرہ علماء و سلف کی قبول کرتی ہے۔ چنانچہ مولوی احمد حسن صاحب رسالہ تشریح الرحمن اپنے رسالہ میں تشریح کرتے ہیں۔ بقول علاءہ اس کے مجوزین خلف و عید وقوع خلف کے صحیح قائل ہیں۔ چنانچہ ان کے دلائل سے ظاہر ہے حیث قالوا لانه لیس بنقص بل هو کمال 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 واقع کو۔ سو وہ گاہ و عید ہوتا ہے۔ گاہ و عید گاہ خبر اور سب کذب کے انواع ہیں اور وجود نوع کا وجود جنس کو مستلزم ہے، انسان اگر ہوگا تو حیوان بالضرورة موجود ہوتا ہے۔ لہذا وقوع کذب کے معنی درست ہو گئے۔ مگر یہ یقین کن فرد کے ہو جس بنا علیہ اس ثالث کو کوئی سختی نہ کہنا چاہیے کہ اس میں تکبیر علماء و 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 ہے مگر تاہم مقدمین کے مذاہب پر صاحب دلیل قوی کو تفصیل صاحب دلیل ضعیف ہے۔ لہذا بعضی شافعی پر اور بعض بوجہ قوت و دلیل اپنی کے طعن و تفصیل نہیں کر سکتا انام یؤمن انشاء اللہ کا مسد کتب عقائد میں خود دیکھتے ہیں۔ لہذا اس ثالث کو تفصیل و تیسرے سے امون کرنا چاہیے۔ البتہ بڑی اگر فحاش ہو بہتر ہے۔ البتہ قدس علی الکذب مع امتناع الوقوع مسد اتفاق ہے اس میں کسی خلاف نہیں۔ اگرچہ اس زمانے میں لوگوں کو عقائد بیجا ہو گئے۔ قال اللہ ولوشکتا کل نفس ہدایا و لکن حق القول منی لا ملئس جہنم من الجنة والناس اجمعین۔ الایہ فقط و اللہ تعالیٰ اعلم۔ کتبہ اللہ الخ

فتان مہر احمد شید

SAMPLE OF GANGOHĪ'S WRITING

This sample of Rashīd Aḥmed Gangohī's handwriting is taken from the collection of his letters, published by his disciple, Aāshiq Ilāhī Meeruti, in a volume titled: *Makātib e Rashīdiyyah*, published by Azīzu'l Maṭābiy, Meerut.



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 *yā*; the placement of the dot on the *fā*; the strokes of *hā* below; the slanting of the joined *qāf-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 *yahīñ*, *nahīñ*, *yahī* etc;

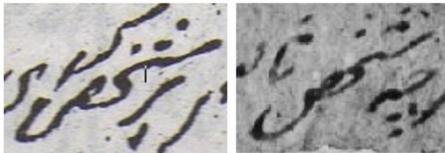
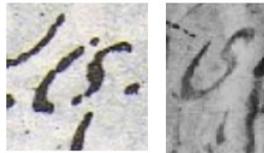
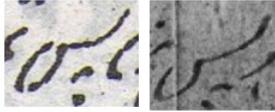
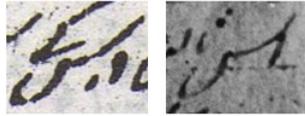
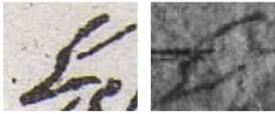
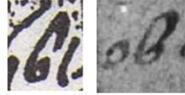
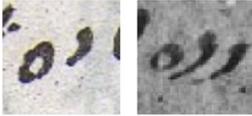
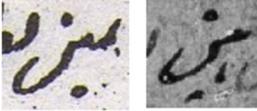
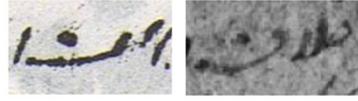
The seal is barely visible in the *fatwā* but upon adjusting the contrast it becomes somewhat legible. The *fatwā* has been untouched and Photoshop is used only to adjust the brightness-contrast, hues and mildtones to enhance visibility. Another screenshot shows the spacing of the lines. The writing 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 because of the ink flow which is not consistent; it was most likely written 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*.⁴⁰⁶ The joined *kāf-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, the similarity is noticeable.

Allāh táālā knows best.

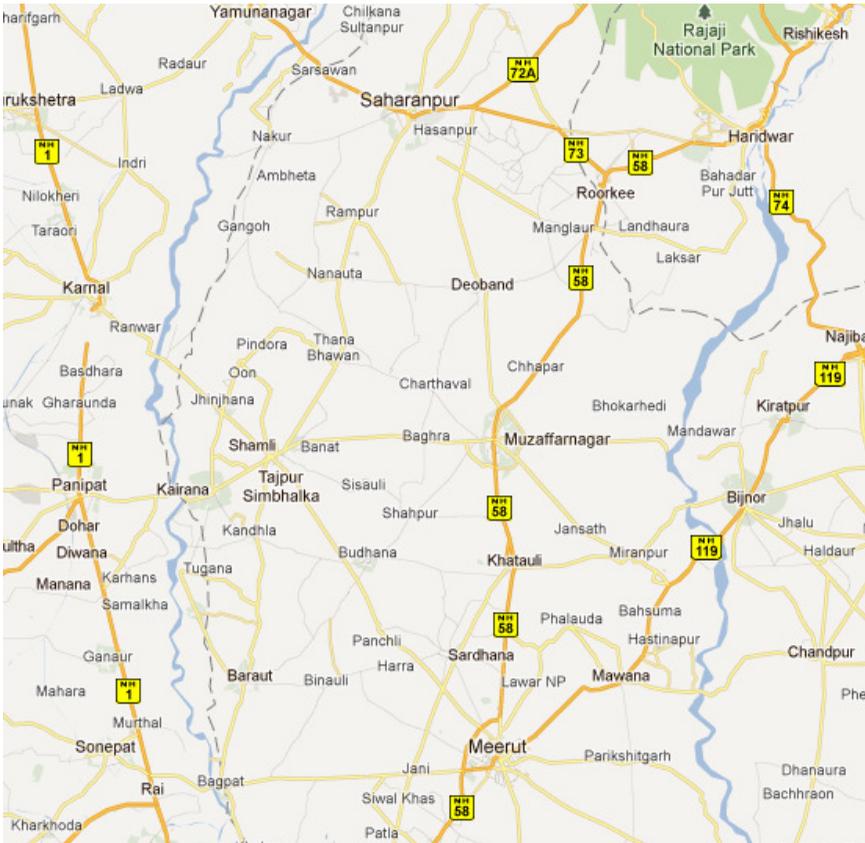
⁴⁰⁶ The lengthening of certain glyphs for adjustment or for beautification.



Appendix D

SAHARANPUR DISTRICT

The following map shows the district of Saharanpur. Apart from Deoband itself, Gangoh, Nānauta, Ambehta, 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	bab	basket
ت	t	تاج	tāj	t in French trois
ث	th	ثابت	thābit	thing
ج	j	جسد	jasad	jam
ح	ḥ	حسن	ḥasan	similar to hose no English equivalent voiceless pharyngeal fricative
خ	kh	خبر	khabar	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 عيد	árab ílm úmar ýid	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
ه	h	هدى	hudā	house
و	w	وزير	wazīr	word
ي	y	يد	yad	yellow
إ	i	إدام	idām	insight

Arabic Letter	Latin Character	Arabic Example	Transliteration	Similar Sound
أ	a	أتم	atam	advent
ب	ā	باب	bāb	father
ي	ī	سرير	sarīr	tree
و	ū	طور	ṭūr	root
ع	āā	عالم	āālim	-
عي	ýī	عيد	yīd	-
عو	úū	عود	úūd	-
ش	sh'sh sh-sh	الشمس	ash'shams ash-shams	-
أ	a' or a-	مأمور	ma'mūr	-
ئ	i'y or i-y	بئس	bi'ysa bi-ysa	-
ؤ	u' or u-	لؤؤ سؤؤك	lu'lu' su-lika	-
	,	أصحاب تكحيل أسهل	aṣ'hāb tak'hīl as'hal	separator to distinguish between sounds represented by letter pairs
	-	أصحاب	aṣ-hāb tak-ḥīl as-hal	separator to distinguish between sounds represented by letter pairs

Arabic Letter	Latin Character	Arabic Example	Transliteration	Similar Sound
		تكحيل أسهل		
	superscript	من	mi ⁿ	to indicate an elision
	-	مآرب	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 Bayhaqī 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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59. *Madâriğ an-Nubuwwah*, Ábd al-Ĥâğ MuĤadith al-Dihlawî, (d.1052/1642)
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61. *Nasîm ar-Riyâđ SharĤ al-Shifâ Qâđi İyâđ*, Shihab al-Din al-Khafâği (d.1069 AH)
62. *SharĤ al-Shifâ Qâđi İyâđ*, Áli ibn Sulţân MuĤammad al-Qârî (d.1014/1605)

I. Taşawwuf

63. *Ĥilyatu'l Awliyâ'a*, Abû Nuáym al-Aşbahânî

J. Others

64. *Masâyil al-Arbaýîn*, Is'Ĥâğ al-Dihlawî
65. *Fahras al-Fahâris*, Sayyid Ábd al-Ĥâyğ al-Kittânî (d.1382/1962)
66. Iranian Journal for the History of Science 6, Tarikh-e-Elm, Hamid-Reza Giahi Yazdi
67. *Kashf al-Zunûn*, Hâği Khalfah (d.1658 CE)
68. *Kitâbu'l Waşiyyah*, Imâm Aázam Abû Ĥanîfa Númán ibn Thâbit
69. *Maktûbât*, Shaykh Mujaddid e Alf e Thânî Imâm AĤmed Sirhindi (d.1624 CE)
70. *SharĤ Şalât AĤmed al-Badawî*, Shaykh Al-Áshmâwî
71. The Fortune-Telling Book, Raymond Buckland

72. Trans. Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddimah*, Franz Rosenthal

K. Deobandi Books

73. *Al-Barāhīn al-Qāṭiāh*, Khalīl Aḥmed Ambehtawī Sahāranpūri (d.1346/1927)

74. *Akabir e Ūlamā e Deoband*, Muḥammad Akbar Shāh Bukhāri

75. *Makātīb e Rashīdiyyah*, Aāshiq Ilāhi Meerutī

76. *Ĥifẓ al-Īmān*, Ashraf Āli Thānawī (d.1362/1943)

77. *Ek Rozī*, Shāh Ismāyīl Dihlawī (d.1246/1831)

78. *Nuz'hatu'l Khawāṭir*, Abu'l Ḥasan Nadawī (d.1999 CE)

79. *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, Maulvi Rashīd Aḥmed Gangohī (d.1323/1905)

80. *Fatāwā Uthmānī*, Muftī Taqī Usmānī (b.1943 CE)

81. *Tazkiratu'r Rashīd*, Aāshiq Ilāhi Meerutī

82. *Ikḡar al-Mulḥīdīn fī Ḍarūriyāti'd Dīn*, Anwar Shāh Kashmīri (d.1352 AH)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alahazrat Imām Aḥmad Riḍā Khān al-Baraylawī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was born in 1272 (1856) in a family of scholars of Bareilly, a city in North India. His father Mawlānā Naqī Āli Khān and grandfather Riḍā Āli Khān were prominent scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah in their time. Imām Aḥmad Riḍā began his Islamic studies in the tutelage of his erudite father and became a Mufti at a very young age. He was a master of many sciences, and especially in Ḥanafī fiqh, he was peerless among his contemporaries. Even his adversaries have acknowledged his expertise in this discipline.

He has many *ijāzahs* or degrees of authorisation in Ḥanafī fiqh, and the most important⁴⁰⁷ 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-Úlamā, Sayyid Aḥmed Zaynī Daḥlān al-Shāfiyī. Imām Aḥmed Riḍā is widely known for his refutation of Wahābīs, innovators and libertarian religion-reformers of the early 20th century CE.

Alahazrat, meaning the ‘Grand Master,’ was a common title of respect⁴⁰⁸ in the 13th/14th century Hijri. Imām Aḥmad 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 become a

⁴⁰⁷ According to Alahazrat himself as mentioned in the Preface of *Fatāwā ar-Riḍawīyah*.

⁴⁰⁸ Similar to "His Highness," "His Majesty," "His Holiness," etc.

synonym for Imām Aḥmad 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.⁴⁰⁹ 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.

Imām Aḥmad Riḍā referred to himself as ‘the slave of the Prophet’ ﷺ or *ʿAbd al-Muṣṭafā* in Arabic. His skill as a jurist outshone all his other abilities; in fact, the main corpus of his work is the collection of his *fatāwā*. Many lengthy books that he has written are usually as a response to questions, and hence are *fatāwā*. Many of his rulings (and more than 150 *fatāwā* as monographs) were collected, indexed and ordered by the Imām himself, which he named *Al-Āṭāyā an-Nabawiyyah fi’l Fatāwā ar-Riḍāwiyyah*, popularly known in the subcontinent as *Fatāwā e Razawiyyah* and has been recently published in Pakistan in 30 volumes.⁴¹⁰ 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. ***Fatāwā al-Ĥaramayn bi Rajafī Nadwatu’l Mayn***

⁴⁰⁹ *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.

⁴¹⁰ Initially, it was published in 12 volumes of approximately 800 pages each in quarto size and small handwriting. The *fatwā* collection has now been published in Pakistan in 30 volumes; along with 2 additional volumes for topic and word indexes. This new edition spans approximately 22,000 pages and contains 207 monographs of the Imām. Along with the indexes, it is now available as a 33 volume set.

3. *Mustanad al-Mútamad*: A commentary on the Arabic work *Al-Mútaqad al-Muntaqad* by Imām Fadl ar-Rasūl al-Badāyūnī.⁴¹¹
4. *Jadd al-Mumtār*: A five volume supercommentary on *Radd al-Muhtār* of Imām Sayyid Muḥammad Amīn Ibn Áabidīn al-Shāmī,⁴¹² which is arguably, the most widely used Ḥanafī text in latter times.
5. *Dawlah al-Makkiyyah bi'l Māddah al-Ghaybiyyah*
6. *Amn wa'l Úlā li Nāyiti'l Muṣṭafā bi Dāfiy al-Balā'a*
7. *Tamhīd e Īmān*
8. *Dhayl al-Muddāa li Aḥsan al-Wiāa li Ādāb al-Duāa*
9. *Fadl al-Mawhibī fi Máana: idhā ṣaḥḥa'l ḥadīthi fa huwa madh'habī*
10. *Fatāwā al-Āfriqah*
11. *Sub'ḥān as-Subbūḥ án Áybi Kadhib Maqbūḥ*
12. *Radd al-Rifḍah*
13. *Qahr al-Dayyān ālā Murtadd bi-Qādiyān*
14. *Niým al-Zād li Rawm al-Ḍād*
15. *Zubdath al-Zakiyyah li Taḥrīmi Sujūd at-Taḥiyyah*
16. *Kifl al-Faqīh al-Fāhim fi Aḥkāmi Qirtās al-Darāhim*
17. *Jalī an-Naṣṣ fi Amākin ar-Rukḥaṣ*
18. *Barakāt al-Imdād li Ahl al-Istimdād*

⁴¹¹ Passed away in 1289/1872.

⁴¹² Passed away in 1252/1836.

19. *Zahr al-Bāsim fī Ĥurmati'z Zakāh ālā Banī Hāshim*

20. *Masayil e Samāá*

21. *Zulāl al-Anqā min Bahri Sabqah al-Atqā*

22. *Madārij Ṭabaqāt al-Ĥadīth*

23. *Rawḍ al-Bahij fī Ādāb al-Takhrij*

24. *Hād al-Kāf fī Ĥukm al-Īdāāf*

25. *Nahy al-Akīd án as-Ṣalāti Warā'a Īdā al-Taqlīd*

He took the Qādirī path and was initiated in that Sūfī order by Sayyid Aāl e Rasūl al-Aĥmadi⁴¹³ of Mārahra in 1294.⁴¹⁴ 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: *Ĥadāyiq 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 age⁴¹⁵ of 68 in 1340 (1921). May Allah táālā have mercy on him and be well pleased with him. 

⁴¹³ Passed away in 1296/1879. The shaykh was a prominent student of the famous scholar and Mujaddid of his age Shah Ábd al-Ázīz Muĥaddith al-Dihlawī.

⁴¹⁴ Alahazrat himself points this out in a biographical note on his father Mawlānā Naqī Áli Khān, in the preface of his father's book *Sharĥ A-lam Nashrah*, that he (Alahazrat) received bayāh and khilāfah on the 5th of Jumādā al-Ūlā 1294/1877 along with his father.

⁴¹⁵ His age according to the lunar calendar is 68 and the solar calendar is 65. For more details, see *Who is Alahazrat*, a concise biography of Imām Áĥmad Ridā Khān, published by Ridawī Press.

ABOUT THE TRANSLATOR

Abu Hasan is a student of Islamic sciences and Sacred Law. Ḥanafī–Māturīdī and aspirant to the Qādirī path, he is an ardent admirer and follower of Imām Aḥmad Ridā Khān al-Baraylawī رحمته الله عليه. He translates bits and pieces from classical texts in the course of his learning for his own edification which he shares as helpful notes to beginners like himself. Some of his articles/translations can be found on *tanwir.org* and *ridawi.org*; he also writes on the Islamic forum, *sunniport.com*.



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