

THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF TAKFIR ON THE LIVES OF YOUTH

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Abstract

This article examines the perilous outcomes of takfir – the act of declaring fellow Muslims as disbelievers – by individuals or groups who, after limited study, consider themselves “mujtahids” and hastily excommunicate others. It highlights how such actions, often perpetrated by certain sects and movements, embolden their followers to make audacious judgments on matters of faith and disbelief. Consequently, some of our youth, lacking profound Islamic knowledge, blindly follow these factions, leading them astray into misguidance and ignorance. The article addresses pressing questions: Why is this happening? Where do their errors lie? Is there a solution to this problem?

Keywords

Takfir, Aqidah, Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jama’ah, Hanafi, Fiqh al-Akbar, Ahl al-Qibla.

Introduction

In today’s world, global political dynamics and the geopolitical maneuvers of various interest groups have jeopardized the peace and security of newly independent nations. Notably, the increasing emphasis on utilizing religion in international politics exacerbates these threats. Opponents of Islam distort its true essence to serve their nefarious agendas, leading to a surge in efforts to exploit the religion for political and aggressive purposes.

Western media incessantly portrays Islam as a religion of destruction, murder, savagery, and violence. This misrepresentation necessitates that societies discern between genuine Islamic values and the political or aggressive objectives pursued under the guise of “reviving Islam.”

Our region is not immune to these malicious endeavors. Recently, certain religious-political and extremist forces in Central Asia have intensified efforts to politicize religion, aiming to influence the minds of people, especially the youth. As

highlighted in the book "Allah is in Our Hearts," these malevolent individuals ensnare inexperienced and naive youth, manipulating them for their vile objectives, thereby tarnishing the humanitarian ideals of Islam (Tulepov, 2014: 461).

Such reprehensible actions threaten our nation's tranquility, interethnic and interfaith harmony, and can sow discord by dividing people into opposing groups, spreading sedition and destructive ideologies.

Addressing the Challenge

To counter these well-orchestrated assaults, it's imperative to enlighten our people about the true nature of external disruptive forces exploiting religion for their interests. Islam does not advocate violence, bloodshed, or destruction; instead, it is a religion of peace, humanity, tolerance, and benevolence. In essence, Islam calls for the performance of noble deeds and refrains from any form of oppression or harm to others.

As stated in a hadith:

"Indeed, this human is Allah's creation. Cursed is the one who destroys Allah's creation."

The Rise of Misguided Sects

Regrettably, the traditions of our great ancestors have been forgotten. Individuals who, after reading a few books, consider themselves "mujtahids" and hastily declare others as disbelievers have emerged. Groups like "At-Takfir wal-Hijra," "Hizb ut-Tahrir," and "ISIS" have become excessively audacious in matters of faith and disbelief. Some of our youth, lacking deep Islamic knowledge, blindly follow these factions, leading them into misguidance and ignorance (Tulepov, 2014: 461).

This raises pertinent questions: Why is this happening? Where do their errors lie? Is there a solution to this problem? This article seeks to address these questions.

Divine Guidance

Allah Almighty calls upon His servants to follow the best and most beneficial words:

"So give good news to My servants who listen to the word and follow the best of it. Those are the ones Allah has guided, and those are people of understanding." (Qur'an, 39:17-18)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also emphasized righteous deeds and avoiding evil:

"A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands people are safe. A believer is the one whom people trust with their lives and wealth. A Muhajir is the one who abandons sins

and disobedience. A Mujahid in the path of Allah is the one who strives against his own soul."

"My Ummah will never agree upon misguidance."

"Indeed, Allah, His angels, the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, even the ants in their holes and the fish in the sea, send blessings upon the one who teaches people goodness."

Common Errors in Takfir

Those who deviate from our religion's teachings and follow misguided sects often commit several errors:

Hasty Judgments. Declaring an individual or an entire community as disbelievers without thorough understanding is perilous. As narrated by Abu Huraira, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "If a man says to his brother, 'O disbeliever,' then it returns upon one of them."

Neglecting Beneficial Deeds. Engaging in actions not ordained by Allah, such as unnecessary declarations of disbelief, distracts from deeds beneficial in this world and the hereafter. Imam Shatibi stated: "The knowledge recognized by Sharia is that which encourages action and leads its possessor to follow knowledge, not desires."

Lack of Proper Understanding. Addressing sensitive issues like takfir without comprehensive knowledge leads to misguidance. As Hazrat Ali (may Allah honor his face) described the Kharijites: "Young in age and foolish in thought. They recite the Qur'an, but it does not go beyond their throats" (Tulepov, 2014: 464).

In Islam, the principle "Certainty is not overruled by doubt" emphasizes that a Muslim's faith should not be questioned based on mere suspicions. The Prophet (peace be upon him) declared during the Farewell Pilgrimage: "Indeed, your blood, your wealth, and your honor are sacred to you, like the sanctity of this day, in this month, in this city."

Therefore, on what basis do these "takfiri scholars" declare Muslims as disbelievers and issue fatwas for their killing? The Prophet (peace be upon him) warned: "If someone points a weapon at his brother, the angels curse him until he puts it down."

Understanding the Nuances

It's essential to recognize that while the concepts of disbelief and takfir exist in Islam, there's a significant difference between labeling an act as disbelief and declaring an individual as a disbeliever. As narrated by Hazrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), a man named Abdullah was repeatedly punished for drinking alcohol. When someone cursed him, the Prophet (peace be upon him)

said: “Do not curse him, for he loves Allah and His Messenger” (Sharhi Aqidai Tahavi: 350).

This illustrates that a Muslim should not be declared a disbeliever due to sins or mistakes unless they openly deny fundamental tenets of Islam. Imam Abu Hanifa stated in his book “Fiqh al-Akbar”: “We do not declare any Muslim as a disbeliever due to a sin, even if it’s a major one, as long as they do not consider it lawful” (Sharhi Aqidai Tahavi: 355; Madelung, 1982: 32–39).

Similarly, in “Aqidah Tahawiyyah,” it’s mentioned: “We do not declare any of the people of the Qibla as disbelievers due to a sin, as long as they do not consider it lawful” (Sharhi Aqidai Tahavi: 360; Melchert, 1997: 44–48).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the misuse of takfir poses a significant threat to the unity and harmony of the Muslim community. It’s imperative to approach such matters with caution, deep knowledge, and adherence to authentic Islamic teachings. Declaring fellow Muslims as disbelievers without clear evidence and proper authority not only leads to discord but also contradicts the principles of Islam.

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