

## **Never Lose Hope On Your Community Improvement In Religion: Issues Of Takfir (Infidel) And Codenmnation Among American Muslims**

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### **Abstract**

With the resent spread of Islam in the west and United States of America, it is now necessary to analyze the best gradual method of presenting the teachings of Islam to people in the light of objectives of Sharia. The expansion of Islam is of tactical and strategic planning of the part of Prophet Muhammed. Believers should be relieved from the fear of harsh methods that can make them lose hope in themselves and their community. The work will focus on the human feelings, and the simplicity of Islamic teachings and its effect of rising new generation within the Islamic schools. Contents will be derived from the Quran, the traditions of the Prophet and the sayings of the scholars based on the teachings. Prophet Muhammed said: “Verily, the religion is easy, and no one burdens himself in religion except that it overcomes him, so be moderate, seek closeness to Allah, give glad tidings and gain strength for worship in the morning and the night”. Muslim leaders in Houston along with the political leaders in America and many non-Muslims confirmed the simplicity of Islam. The result of this work will lay emphases on the importance of wisdom and beautiful admonitions. It will enhance Islamic schools’ perfect way to choose the syllabus that will serve the community better.

**Keywords:** Simplicity in Dah’wah, moderation, Tekfir, and Salafiyyah

### **Introduction**

A careful and extensive study of Islam will resuscitate the true tools needed to create Islamic awareness and to integrate into the society with its teachings in the way that people will assimilate especially in the United States of America. This will end-up in developing the society, morally Surveys indicate that Americans are far more religious and have believed in God more than any other people in the western world.<sup>1</sup> The working idea in this type of environment should lay more emphasis on the promotion of the culture of simplicity, in a community where the Muslims, Christians, and Jews are supporting one another. The era of president Trump requires the religious group to work together more than before, they should forget the hate speeches and the preaching of separations.

The nature of the tools needed in the society and its potential will convert all the modern terms for dealing into Islamic terminologies that explain and give the details of what the sharia of Islam is all about such as; ) Rifq أرفق kindness, Rahmah رحمة merciful, Al-Birr righteousness (Abdalati,

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<sup>1</sup> Carter, S. L. (1993). *The culture of disbelief: How American law and politics trivialize religious devotion*: Anchor.

1993) البر، Ashafaqat الشفقة<sup>2</sup> all these terminologies are to be exercised within the framework of the first principles set down by the Quran and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammed (May the peace and blessings of almighty Allah be upon him).

The primary objective of Sharia is to make life easy for Allah (SWT) says: “We have not sent down the Quran unto you (O Muhammed) to cause you distress” (Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al Hilali, 1996) (Quran20:2). A better understanding of the Quran will find a solution to some stringent Sharia rules and regulations that need to be understood properly. He (SAW) appointed Abdullahi Ibn Abbas for Quranic interpretation that will clarify the Sharia rulings and exchange all its complexities into simplicities through the application of the Prophetic methodology (Khan, 2001). Out of the deep concern and mercy of Prophet Muhammad for the believers, they were relieved of continuous fasting that does not reduce their reward from Allah and it is not required by the teachings of Islam. In a Hadith narrated in Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith 4.629 Narrated by Abdullahi bin Amr, Allah’s Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم was informed that I have said: By Allah, I will fast all the days and pray all the nights as long as I live. “On that, Allah’s Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم asked me. “Are you the one who says: I will fast all the days and pray all the nights as long as I live? I said Yes, I have said it. The prophet said: You cannot do that! So fast sometimes and do not fast sometimes. Pray and sleep. Fast for three days a month, for the reward of a good deed is multiplied by ten times, and so the fasting of three days a month equals the fasting of a year.” I asked: O Allah’s messenger, I can fast more than this. “The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) replied fast on every third day. I said I can do fast more than that. The Prophet said: “fast on alternate days and this was the fasting of Prophet Dawood (A.S.) which is the best sort of fasting I said O Allah’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) I can do fast more than that. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said There is nothing better than that (i.e. Fasting on alternate days)!” Showing how merciful he was.

### **Gradual process for community and individual religion up-lifting**

It is abundantly clear that Islam recognizes step by step approaches in all its teachings even if the correction must be made, it must be gradual, from being able to correct with hand or the tongue and the hearth if it is not possible to correct with the first two. This is the area that the scholars of the moderate Islam are making efforts to extract from the objectives of Sharia the simplicity as a prophetic mission that has been inherited by agents of social changes and modern Islam, people like Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qardawy and others. This is a value and dignity that the sharia comes to protect without any embarrassment<sup>3</sup>.

The rights to life and the dignity are the most important of all human rights and the source of all other personal rights that should not be tampered with and we are required to value these two rights above all others<sup>4</sup>. The fascistic American track record of accepting moderates and rejecting radicals is clear (Jan 2005).

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<sup>2</sup> Palmer, H. (1914). An early Fulani conception of Islam. *African Affairs*, 14(LIII), 53-59.

<sup>3</sup> Sulayman, H. I. (2014). Values-Based Curriculum Model: A Practical Application of Integrated ‘Maqasid Al-Sharia’ for Wholeness Development of Mankind. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 123, 477-484.

<sup>4</sup> Steiner, H. J., Alston, P., & Goodman, R. (2008). *International human rights in context: law, politics, morals: text and materials*: Oxford University Press, USA.

The generations of young Muslims that grown up in the west have gone through a system that is alien to Islamic teachings and with their own analysis of Islamic teachings and its approach to all the cultural and the environmental basics, it has to be meaningful and sensible to them, here is where the **wasatiyyah** (middle course) will come in <sup>5</sup>. Firstly, the community of the prophet SAW is the perfect example for all, and it takes the whole community to be ready for the changes and the improvement and it requires a gradual process.

Every Muslim, groups, and people that oversee dahwah efforts should pay close attention to their personality in the community building process; by making themselves perfect example for others to emulate with their sincere obedience to the teachings of Allah and His Prophet (SAW). Doing (Dahwah), calling people to the path of Allah is a profession that people need to learn how to do it right. Anyone doing it making effort to make changes in people's life must be ready to be in the for front of being a role model for others to follow. Allah says: "You are the best of Ummah, ever sent to the mankind; you enjoying what is good and forbidding whatever that is evil. And you believe in Allah" (Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al Hilali, 1996) (Quran3:109).

**There are three qualities that are required in building the society and the individuals:**

### ***Knowledge***

No one would be able to do good job in calling people in to the religion of Allah without having these three qualities. He or she needs to be knowledgeable with solid empirical proofs and evidence for what he will be preaching to people, he must be well advanced in the areas of Amr bil-Ma'ruf (encouraging what is good) and forbidden what is wrong. There must be a group of people within the community that will be ready to shoulder the responsibility of creating an opportunity for their community and individuals to improve and grow in faith without losing hope on them. Allah says" Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good and enjoining Al-mahroof (whatever that is good) and forbidding Al-munkar (whatever that is evil) and it is they who are successful"<sup>6</sup> (Q3:104).

There are some ambiguities in many aqeedah (creed) issues that require specialists to deal with, based on the societal and the environmental conditions, some of the issues were addressed by the prophet and some need to be addressed based on the understanding of the current scholars. It does not require wars of ammunitions nor the verbal insults and abuses within the ranks of the scholars and their followers.

Ability to tolerate other opinions on these ambiguities is an important aspect of the risk-taking behavior and divergent thinking, for there is less that is known and predetermined since the time of the Prophet. The best opinion in a society today might be the less applied one, in another society. What is not clear today in multicultural society could be unclear for years and the scholars will continue to indulge in research till when the best result will surface<sup>7</sup>. Muslims should not lose hope

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<sup>5</sup> Nielsen, J. S. (2002). New Centres and Peripheries in European Islam? *Mediterranean Politics*, 7(3), 64-81.

<sup>6</sup> Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al Hilali, M. M. K. (1996). *Interpretation of the meaning of the Noble Quran in the English Language*. RiyadhKingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam

<sup>7</sup> Herberg, D. C. (1993). *Frameworks for cultural and racial diversity*: Canadian Scholars Press.

on their communities and their members. They must continue to hold on to their religion despite all the societal pressures.

### ***Kindness***

Kindness is empirical within this society. It is essential that the preachers are demonstrating this quality in their speeches especially those that are living in the West. An issue that usually comes up during the end of the year celebrations and festival is whether Muslims can greet the non-Muslim during the festivals or not.

There are opinions that say that Muslims should not greet non-Muslims or receive any gift from them during their festivals because they are non-believers, one may not have thought that some will be frown upon hearing that and continue to greet the Christians happy Christmas. Islam commands mankind to be kind and pleasant in dealing with His creations including the non-Muslims. According to Dar-Aliftah Al-Missriyyah, maintaining ties, giving gifts, visitation and congratulating non-Muslims are from the acts of goodness {Al-Missriyyah, 2018 #404}.

Allah commands justice and doing good, likewise, it has never been prohibited by Allah for the Muslims to be nice to the Christians, Jews or the non-Muslims in general as this is one of the goodness and justice that Islam is preaching. Our teaching encourages visiting the non-Muslims or exchanging gifts with anyone of them as it happened that Prophet Muhammed (صلى الله عليه و سلم) received gifts from many non-Muslims as it was discovered that Salman the Persian, when he first arrived in Madinah, he gave a platter of dates to prophet as a Charity and the Prophet rejected it and he later brought another one and gave it to him as a gift and he then accepted it, that before he embraced Islam and immediately the Prophet accepted it, Salman embraced Islam.

Based on many evidences as well as the opinions of prominent scholars in Islam, we find out that it is from goodness that Muslim keep ties with non-Muslim during all such conditions such as sick visitations, sending condolences upon death of a relative, giving gifts including greeting of the non-Muslims during their festivals so far Muslims do not engage them in any of their religious activities.

In conclusion, Allah (سبحانه و تعالى) says: “Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you because of religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity. It is only about those who fought against you because of religion, and have driven you out of your homes, and helped to drive you out, that Allah forbids you to befriend them. And whosoever will befriend them, then such are the Zalimun (wrong-doers those who disobey Allah”<sup>8</sup> (Quran 60: 8-9)

### ***Patience***

Muslims leaders should not turn a blind eye to the side effects of being harsh in their ways of approaching people of the western world with some of the rulings that are totally opposite of life style in the western world especially when there are other views of erudite scholars or imams in Islam that simplify the cases. There might be other tradition of the Prophet that is in support of

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<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al Hilali, M. M. K. (1996). *Interpretation of the meaning of the Noble Quran in the English Language*. Riyadh Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam

other opinions, it is a requirement for the preachers or the scholars to exercise some levels of patience before resulting into condemnations of others, at times to the level of calling them, infidels. Prophet Muhammed (صلى الله عليه و سلم) makes life easier.

Painstakingly, Islam is better than any religion in term of worship, morals, and dealing<sup>9</sup>. It should be noted with serious concern that Muslims are losing out on many of the new converts in to Islam that are reverting to their previous religions because of the lack of coordination among the scholars of the religion on many issues.

Sinister motives in some of the Hadiths need to be addressed by religious leaders and scholars clarifying some ambiguities {March 2015 #405}. There are numerous examples of the traditions that have been misunderstood with the efforts to make the intents of the prophet known on some of the statements that people are misquoting. Many are in the books, like Sahih Bukhari and Muslims which are believed to be the most authentic books after the Quran {Rahman, 1999 #406}.

The change must be with a gradual approach and not with a drastic measure. Therefore, a good Da'hiyah (who is inviting people to Allah's path) must apply some soft measures in his Dahwah application. There are guidelines that had been detailed in Quran for Dahwah of changes with the characteristics necessarily needed for those that will be engaged in the efforts which there will be no result without having the skills and the qualities required of who should be inviting people to the path of Allah. They must be kind and lenient towards the community members and the individuals.

### **Simplicity of Islam makes it grow**

For the religion to be protected, it as to be in line with the teachings of Allah and His messenger, however it has to be simplified by making it easy and doable as one of the major objectives of the sharia from the time immemorial as Allah (SAW) addressed His Messenger in the Quran saying: “We have not sent down the Quran unto you (O Muhammad) to cause you distress. But only as a reminder to those who fear Allah<sup>10</sup>” (Quran20:2-3). This is one of the privileges given to the believers as an opportunity to have choices in their ways of practicing their religion. Situational contexts<sup>11</sup> of the verses of the Quran also specify occasions for certain revelations that Quranic commentators work with to derive judgments and verdicts.

Majority of the scholars are aware of how important it is to arrive at rulings for certain injunctions and they may not realize the full import in its general application while others will come after and expatiate on it as observed in Sheikh Yasir Qhadi<sup>12</sup> of Houston Texas that just moved to Memphis. Dr. Yasir was interviewed and asked questions about some of his former lectures specifically on Islamic sects where he condemned many of them and he responded that if he is to be given the opportunity to give the lectures again or answer questions about these sects, his response will be different. Because he had learned and read more to know that they are all Muslims, some may be

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<sup>9</sup> Roald, A. S., Faruqi, I. R. a., & Siddiqui, A. (2001). Islam and Other Faiths: JSTOR.

<sup>10</sup> Muhammad Taqi-ud-din Al Hilali, M. M. K. (1996). *Interpretation of the meaning of the Noble Quran in the English Language*. Riyadh Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam.

<sup>11</sup> Rahman, F. (1984). *Islam and modernity: Transformation of an intellectual tradition* (Vol. 15): University of Chicago Press.

<sup>12</sup> Qadhi, Y. (2016). Salafi-Ash'ari Polemics of the 3rd & 4th Islamic Centuries. *The Muslim World*, 106(3), 433-447.

transgressing limits in some areas and may be lazy to do some things that they should be doing but they are all Muslims as far as they are all saying: La ilaha illa Allahu Muhammad Rasulu Llai.

The most important networks that American Muslims enjoy are educational ones where the believers are moving from one educational program to another, learning about the sayings and teachings of Allah and His Prophets. Among the programs that motivate their interest and readiness are ISNA Islamic Society of North America conventions, TDC Texas Dahwah Conference, ICNA, Islamic Convention for North Americans and many other programs.

A Dahiyah to Islamic teachings should not give access to media to condemn Islam through his approach especially in the States. The United States of America is a place where public opinions that are derived from the media play a tangible role in forming government policies towards a set of people or any faith group. Public opinions and foreign policy connections are widely understood to be a major player in influencing the US-led interventions<sup>13</sup> in controlling their actions in the world as it happened in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Rwanda.

### **Takfir, Its Meaning And The Effects On Ummah**

Takfir could be defined as accusing someone, especially a fellow Muslim of kufr, expressing deviant views or committing actions, indicative of unbelief that may be tantamount to apostasy (ridda, irtidad ) and can result in his excommunication from the fold of Islam or even execution (Adang, Ansari, Fierro, & Schmidtke). It is regarded by most scholars as a dangerous instrument that does not only threaten the very fabric of Muslim societies, that are in Islamic countries, but other non-Islamic countries including the western world where Muslims are been persecuted, facing all kinds of trials and tribulations, islamophobia and government oppressions.

Legal scholars put some conditions together for takfir to be reckoned with, anticipating some peace of mind. It says that before one can be accused of being a disbeliever, one of the conditions need to be met:

- 1- Ilm (knowledge) it means that the person in question must have knowledge about the impermissibility of what he did or said, that will nullify the believe. But if he is ignorant of the law or the teaching, it means that he will be free of the accusation and he would not be punished.
- 2- Willful / Intention, the act must be deliberate which means he must intend to do or perform the act, disbelieving in Allah or any of His teachings not that it was unintended or for a misunderstanding of the situation.
- 3- Choice / Ikhtiyar, it must be with his choice not that he was forced to do the act, or it was made compulsory on him.

### **Muslims, terrorizing and condemning each other**

Some believers are terrorizing other groups based on their aqeedah (creed) affiliation. This cannot lead them to anywhere, it has led many to the practice of terrorisms and different levels of crime against the humanity. Some extremists with their rigid interpretation of disbelieving in other gods

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<sup>13</sup> Robinson, P. (2005). *The CNN effect: The myth of news, foreign policy and intervention*: Routledge.

beside Allah have unrestrictedly declaring Muslims who works for the government as infidels and legitimate targets for jihad<sup>14</sup> and even condemning living in the western world with no exception.

However, if not for the fact that Quran represents the final arbiter of all causes, in which the tools of logic and rhetoric were restated and extensively used in several instances. The eventual outcome of this development was the insulation of Islamic thought from the first origin without any dilution with current thought that are predominating in the minds of the Muslims thinkers, planners, and administrators in the contemporary Muslim world.

The great stimulus of which Islam is blessed with today is through the teachings of the Quran and the personality of Prophet Muhammed (صلى الله عليه و سلم) that was sent to this world as mercy, to win human souls with the mercy. The Arabic language is also a significant factor in maintaining the community for better understanding among the scholars. Arabic terms play roles in giving conceptual different meaning to cases in Islam<sup>15</sup>, it has been like that since the time of the companions when one word can be translated into different meanings.

Many groups and individuals have been labeled with negative perspectives because they believe that they do not follow the path of the Salaf As-Salih or because they are using their own intelligence to interpret some traditions of the Prophet in a way that will be slightly different from Salafis ways of interpretation. Sheih Yusuf Qardawi and the Centrists even hold Shiites to be religious innovators, not infidels as others will categorize them. Centrist (Al-Wasatiyyun) believe that Suna and Shia divide over the branches issues and not over the roots of faith. There are numerous hadiths calling for a better understanding of the tradition of the prophet<sup>16</sup> based on the understanding of the companions.

According to Sheikh Nasirul Ddeen Al-Albani, it is not only sufficient for a Muslim to be sincere and serious in respect to acting with the book and Sunnah. In addition to this, his methodology should be correct, good and upright by following what the righteous Salaf of this Ummah were upon <sup>17</sup>.

Among the traditions of the Prophet that created the ideology, differences is the hadith that says: “The Jews had split up into 71 sects, the Christians had split up into 72 sects and my nation will split up into 72 sects all of whom will be in the fire except one. The Companions asked, which one o messenger of Allah? He replied: The Jamaa’ah in another narration; “What I am upon and my companions”<sup>18</sup> This is a hadith that some believes it contains the commandment of Prophet regarding the opinions and path that should be followed on issues and specifically the opinions of As-Salaf as-Saalih<sup>19</sup> that are in line with the guidance of the righteous companions of the Prophet.

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<sup>14</sup> Kassim, A. (2015). Defining and Understanding the Religious Philosophy of jihādī-Salafism and the Ideology of Boko Haram. *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 16(2-3), 173-200.

<sup>15</sup> Muhammad, A. M. (1988). Islamic thought in modern world. *Islamization of Knowledge*, 5, 65-72.

<sup>16</sup> Muhammad, A. M. (1988). Islamic thought in modern world. *Islamization of Knowledge*, 5, 65-72.

<sup>17</sup> Waagemakers, J. (1976). *Salafism in Jordan*: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>18</sup> Waagemakers, J. (1976). *Salafism in Jordan*: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>19</sup>The people of the past, namely the first three generations of pious muslims during and after the revelation of the Qur'an, i.e.the Sahabah (companions) of the Prophet, (salla ALLAH `alayhi wa salam) , the Taabi'een (followers) and the Taabi Taabi'een (followers of the followers)(Chaumont, 1995).

There is a belief that all the Muslims must follow the teachings of the Prophet from A to z and some have the belief that they should get committed to their best ability.

“An Ayat in the Quran also says: And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed are the Kuffar (infidels)” (Quran 5:44). Some believe in literal meaning of this ayat (verse) and based on that, they resulted in calling whoever follow the rulers that are not following Sharia in their rulings Kuffar, calling Imams of mosques (Masajid) and (Khutabau) those that are giving khutbats (sermon) and the Muaddhineen (Those that are calling Adhan) Kuffar, why? because they are pleased with the rulings of the rulers that are judging without what has been revealed unto Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم).<sup>20</sup> Sheikh Nasir-ud-deen Al-Albani mentioned that categories of the kufr according to ibn Taymiyyah and his student ibn al-Qayyim are two, they are kufr of action and kufr of belief<sup>21</sup>. They expatiated on this and it helps a lot. It reduced the perception through which people have been submerged into kufr (disbelieve).

It was in the 1980s and 1990s that militant Sunni groups first began developing the doctrine of takfir for the modern era. It was crystallized into more coherent idea in 2003 following the invasion of Iraq<sup>22</sup>. Thousands of people have been killed through the jungle justice, denying people their human rights on which America exists to protect and that the decisions of any foreign courts even if it is legitimate cannot blind American courts from protecting the human rights<sup>23</sup> since it is similar to what it believes in.

There are many verses in the Quran where kufr are been mentioned and all cannot be understood to mean the act that will take one out of the fold of Islam. Regarding the (Quran 5:44), Abdullahi Ibn Abbas who is the Imam for Qur’anic interpretation said: “The Kufuru here is not the one that will make one a real Kafir, it is a kufr that is less than another kufr<sup>24</sup> Also in a hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim, Abdullahi bin Mashood (May Allah be pleased with him) said that the messenger of Allah said: “Cursing a Muslim is fossooq (Sin) and killing him is Kufr (disbelief).<sup>25</sup> This is hadith confirms how the Islamic laws are protecting the purity of Muslims more than any law of the world. Some technicalities are required for better understanding of Ahadeeths like these. The referred killing in this hadith will lead to kufr of action not kufr of Iman because he (the perpetrator) is still a Muslim, it does not mean that he has been out of the fold of Islam when killing was taking place.

Using the story of a man that was killed by a companion after the man had already confirmed the shahada is another lesson for the Ummah. The story in Bukhari and Muslim said: A companion of the Prophet, Usamah bin zayd said: “The Messenger of Allah SAW dispatched us to al-Huraqat, a sub-tribe of Juhaynah. So, we defeated them and pursued them in their trails. A man from the Ansar and I came across a man from amongst them, upon seeing us he hides behind a tree. When he caught up with him and raised a sword to strike him with, he said “There is no one worthy of worship but Allah, my colleague lowered his sword, but I thought the man was only saying it out of his fear of the sword. Thus, I attacked and killed him. But then I felt uneasy about it in my heart,

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<sup>20</sup> Waagemakers, J. (1976). *Salafism in Jordan*: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>21</sup> Abdallah, S. S. (2016). IBN TAYMIYYAH ON THE HADITH OF THE 73 SECTS. *Jurnal Akidah dan Pemikiran Islam*, 7(2006).

<sup>22</sup> Maher, S. (2016). *Salafi-Jihadism: The History of an Idea*: New York, Oxford University Press.

<sup>23</sup> Steiner, H. J., Alston, P., & Goodman, R. (2008). *International human rights in context: law, politics, morals: text and materials*: Oxford University Press, USA.

<sup>24</sup> Fishman, B., Warius, A., & Qaidi, A. (2009). A Jihadist’s Course in the Art of Recruitment. *CTC Sentinel*, 2(2), 10-12.

<sup>25</sup> Othman, M. Y. H. (2014). Islamic Science (Tawhidic): Toward Sustainable Development. *イスラーム世界研究*, 7, 110-123.



so I came to the Messenger of Allah (SWT) and informed him of what had happened. He said to me, he said: “There is no one worthy of worship but Allah” then you killed him? I said He did not say it willingly, he only said it out of fear of our weapons, but the Prophet SAW repeated his question, did he say, there is no one worthy of worship but Allah and you then killed him? Did you cut open his heart to know for certain that he only said it out of his fear of your weapons? Usamah remained silent for he obviously did not cut open his heart. But it was still on the battle field and the man he killed was indeed a warrior, still the Prophet SAW kept repeating the criticism, did he say, there is no one worthy of worship but Allah and then you killed him? O Usamah! You killed a man after he had said there is no one worthy of worship but Allah? How would you deal with this testimony - There is no one worthy of worship but Allah – on the day of resurrection? He continued to repeat himself until I wished I had only accepted Islam that day” said Usamah (Zayd, 2010)<sup>26</sup>; (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Prophet Muhammed ( صلى الله عليه وسلم ) said: “The one who starts abusing his fellow Muslim and calling him names bears the sins of both unless the abused person uses more vulgar phrases than the first” (Muslim). By now it should be clear to the believers that, it is not acceptable for a Muslim to be calling other Muslim Kafir and we are having many scholars all over the world now legalizing for their followers to be calling others kufar (Infidels) because of simple misunderstanding or differences in opinions<sup>27</sup>.

This a clear warning to Jamaat Takfir and the Kharajites <sup>28</sup> that are condemning people for minor issues including some group of salafiyyah that are indulging in extremists’ ideology, it has been witnessed sharply in the areas of middle east where such behavior is dominant and it is spreading all over the world including the western world.

Moderate traditional Muslims that have been striving in the United State of America to uphold the Tennent of Islam has been attacked and condemned by these influential groups that are having all the supports and financial backing that it requires from their world source.

Depriving people, the freedom of religion and thoughts are not acceptable, so far, all their thoughts are from the two sources; the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet. This is what America is fighting for and it happened that the Supreme Court of America took a strong decision against the critics that are insinuating the lack of freedom of religion in 1993, those that believe that justices have been strayed from the true protection of religious freedom<sup>29</sup>.

All the Islamic denominations received the basic faith of philosophy from the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet based on the understanding of their clerics. It is highly unfortunate that, the same resources that some are using wisely are what others are misinterpreting it to suite their satanic desires. There are guidelines that need to be followed before anyone can call his or her fellow Muslim Kafir. This is a fitnah<sup>30</sup> (Sedition) that the Ummah is facing on a global scale. These are the guidelines according to the scholar’s opinions:

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<sup>26</sup> Zayd, U. I. (2010). The deliberateness of the Prophet and his meticulous verification of information.

<sup>27</sup> Muhammad, M. H. S. (2012). Who Is a Muslim? : Retrieved.

<sup>28</sup> Kabbani, S. M. H. (2002). 200 Years of New Kharijism: the Ongoing Revision of Islam. *Islamic Supreme Council of America*.

<sup>29</sup> Carter, S. L. (1993). *The culture of disbelief: How American law and politics trivialize religious devotion*: Anchor.

<sup>30</sup> Kamali, M. H. (1997). *Freedom of expression in Islam*: Islamic Texts Society Cambridge.

- 1- Imam Al-Shawkani (Died.1250H/1834 CE). He sets the tone about the fitnah by saying:  
“Know that judging a Muslim to have left the fold of Islam and entered into disbelief is something that no Muslim who believes in Allah and the last day would proceed to do except with a proof, more evident than even the day time sun”. Ibn Umar (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: “When a man calls his brother an unbeliever, it returns at least to one of them. Either the accused is as claimed, or the charge will return against the accuser”.
- 2- One can easily exit out of Islam by rejecting one of the Shahadataen (I bear witness that there is no other god worthy of worship except Allah and that Prophet Muhammed (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is His messenger). According to Sheikh Solah As-Sawi of Houston Texas, he mentioned in his book titled ‘*Yashalunaka ani Tataruf Ad-deeni*’ (They will be asking you about the religious Terrorism) that there is no way you can call who ever proclaimed the Shahadataen that he is a Kafir because only Allah has control of knowing who become Kafir ‘Infidel’ because it has to do with heart and no one can see what is in the hearth of anyone except Allah.<sup>31</sup> The apostasy will also be confirmed, by rejecting any area of the Quran or the Quran itself or rejecting one of His prophets, denouncing one of the obligatory acts of worships like Solat, five times daily prayers, fasting or hajj. The person will also be declared Kafir by making lawful any of the unlawful acts such as fornication, adultery etc.

It must be clear to the believers that Allah is so merciful, that He is still ready to forgive any sinner if he or she still believes in La ilaha illa Allahu, Muhammadu Rasulu Llahi.

### **Attributes of Allah and the Takfiris view**

There are unnecessary frictions among different schools of thought on the issue of the attributes of Allah. There are two major schools and some Muslim Scholars who are in support of the two, based on what they inherited from their predecessor on the primary texts, Quran and Sunnah. The two schools are:

- 1- Group of Tafweed, affirming the attributes of Allah but consigning their modality to Allah.
- 2- Tahweel (Interpretation)

Both Schools agreed that the literal meaning will negate the meaning of transcendence of Allah the almighty above the attributes of His creations as verses of the Quran confirmed that: “There is nothing like unto Him and He is the All-Hearer, the All seer”. (Quran42:11-12). Allah (SWT) says again: “And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him” (Quran12:4). Quoting from Darul Iftahi EL-Misriyyah, Maliki scholar, Ibrahim Laqqani said in his book called *Jawharat at-Tawhid*:

“Any text that leads one to imagine the similitude of Allah to his created beings, should be treated either through Ta’weel or Tafweed and exalt Allah the almighty above His creation”.

Among the importance of this discussion is to correct the Jamaat of Takfeer that believe there is no room for Ta’weel in the attributes of Allah and people are distorting the teachings of Islam and

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<sup>31</sup> As-Sawi, S. (2014). يسألونك عن التطرف الديني (*They will be asking you about the religious Terrorism*) (A. T. Adesokan, Trans. Vol. 1): Mishkah Islamic University of North America.

distorting the words and attributes of Allah. They are regarding to whoever says that Allah is everywhere as Kafir, saying that, it is heresy and it is nothing but disbelief and it amounts to no less than pantheism, the belief that God is everywhere, in everything. Many verses and Ahadeeths cover this topic explicitly and implicitly, Quran 11 verse 7 says: “ And He it is He Who has created the heavens and the earth in six days and His throne was on the water.....” Sheikh Abdul Muslim Bn Amdi Il-Ibad was asked about “water” if it is the real water and he said Yes (Islamway.net). He said the throne has been in existence for 50,000,000 years before the creation of heaven and earth and His throne was on the water while the water and the throne were together in existence and the intended water is the one that people knew to be, not something else. Sheikh Hafid ibn Hajar in his explanation of the ayat said that the throne of Allah was on the water before the creation of the heaven and the earth for 50,000,000 years and the throne is still on the water and the water is real. Al bukhari and Muslim narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “The right hand of Allah is full and (its fullness) is not decreased by any spending; it is overflowing by night and day. Think of what he has spent since He created the heavens and the earth, but all this spending had not decreased what is in His Right Hand.” He said: “And His throne is over the water, and in His other Hand is the power to bring about death, and He raises some people and brings another low.”<sup>32</sup>. In the commentary of Al-Haafiz Ibn hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said that the apparent meaning of the hadith is that the throne was over the water before the creation of the heavens and earth and other hadiths indicate that it is still over the water<sup>33</sup>.

The question now is where being that water? Is it up or down? To understand this and to have a good answer to this question, there will be a need for Ta’weel (Interpretation) because for us to believe in the existence of Allah and to combine between the place of His throne and the water that is flowing on earth, there must be a correlation between the two. Allah (SWT) says: “Have not those who disbelieve known that the heavens and earth were joined together as one united piece; then we parted them? And we have made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe” (Quran21:30). It means that both the heaven and the earth were together before almighty separated between the two. With the belief that the throne is still on the water, negates the point that He Allah is in the heaven since the nature of the water is to flow on earth. As Allah says, the earth was part of the heavens, and He separated them. This would not seem to contradict the current theory of Earth’s origin. God said that the heavens and the earth possess diameters, an assertion confirmed by modern science, which suggests that they are either oval or ball-shaped<sup>34</sup> One has to take this explanation with great reservation until new scientific evidence is produced (Abbas, 1417 AH/1997).

It has been confirmed by scholars of Islam making that ta’weel (interpretation) is not a sin as it was reported that both the Khalaf (Successors) and the salaf (predecessors) pursued it, in fact, it was authentically reported that Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) interpreted Al-Kursi *the Chair* as knowledge (ilm) and the *Hands* as might and power and *Light* as guide. etc. All these are without denying the true meaning of the attributes nor distorting it <sup>35</sup>. Without any doubt, here is the role of the simplicity and the immutability nature of Islam with its

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<sup>32</sup> Al-Munajjid, S. M. S. (1997-2017). Quran and its sciences.

<sup>33</sup> Al-Asqalani, I. H. (1956). Fath al Bari. *Jiuid I,(Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr wa Maktanah Al-Salfiyah, tt), him, 150.*

<sup>34</sup> Bulletin, I. (201, 09/07/2014). The Holly names of Allah.

<sup>35</sup> Al-Missriyyah, D. A.-i. (2017). Does God have a shape.

principles since the time of the Prophet that proved its stability based on its tenets that are too often mistaken in the West today for stagnation and sterility (Nasr & De Santillana, 1968). The Khawarij applied the doctrine of takfir liberally and believe that whoever commits any of the major sins will be automatically confined to kufr and with that, he or she will become the target of the ruling of ridda which is apostasy that can result to the death penalty.

All the notable Sahaba (companions) of their time were named kufar because their slogan that was rampant by then was, NO RULE EXCEPT THE RULE OF ALLAH and anyone that rules without Allah's ruling will be labelled with kufr since they believe that they were committing sins and no sin can negate one's faith as far as such heart is full of Iman, even if it is major sins. So far, he repents to Allah and he pronounces it with his tongue. It means that intellectual conviction and oral testimony are sufficient to establish the Iman (faith).

### **Ibn Thaemiyah and The Takfiri Ideology**

Some believe that Ibn Thaemiyah's teachings contributed largely to all the fitan (trials) of the Jihadists movement. His work is taken as authorizing armed insurrection through applying takfir to those who fail to rule by a narrow construction of Sharia<sup>36</sup>. Tekfir comes from Salafi School and the father of the thought is Ibn Thaemiyah. Salafiyyun and their leaders are contributing greatly to takfir when they are calling other sects bad names, (Ahlu-ddolal (people of misguidance) Ahlul-bidat (people of innovation) because of their ideologies on issues of creed that are branches in the deen, they even believe that whoever believes in the tahweel of the attribute of Allah commits shirk, whoever says that Allah is everywhere with His knowledge or the hand of Allah is the power of Allah commits Shirk and kufr. Where is kindness and mercy that Allah sent Prophet Muhammed to spread? Salafis and their founders that among them are Sheikh Ibn Taymiyah – (1263-1328), his student Ibn al-Qayyim, Ad-dhahabi and Sheikh Muhammed Ibn AbdulWahab Najdi and his followers like Bin Baz (1910-1999), Uthaemin (1929-2001) and Al-Albani<sup>37</sup>, they all share a common religious creed.

The Salafis themselves differ over their perceptions of the contemporary modern issues like ruling on using of Sibha (counter for dhikr) or minor issues like saying Jumhat Mubarakat, wishing Muslims blessed Friday, some will say that it is Haram because it is bidhat (innovation) while others will say that it is permissible. The picture is another issue the Salafis themselves are having different opinions on which one is Haram (Forbidden) and which one is not. Differences over contextual interpretation have produced three major Salafi factions: Purists, Politicos, and Jihadis<sup>38</sup>.

### **Conclusion**

The aim of this work is to find a way to establish the right schools for the believers to learn about their peaceful religion and to hold on to it so far it is in line with the teachings of Allah and His

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<sup>36</sup> Maher, S. (2016). *Salafi-Jihadism: The History of an Idea*: New York, Oxford University Press.

<sup>37</sup> As-salafi, A. I. (1995). A brief Introduction of Salafi Dawah. *The Principles of Salafiyah*.

<sup>38</sup> Wiktorowicz, Q. (2006). Anatomy of the Salafi movement. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 29(3), 207-239.

prophet which the scholars agreed on it without fanaticism or extremism. Islam is a religion of peace, for individuals, group and the society at large. Allah wants the believers to be in peace with their worshiping and He (SWT) sent Prophet Muhammed to the Ummah to simplify it and make it doable as he said: 'Ma Nahaetukum anhu fajtanibuhu wa ma amartukum bihi fa'tu minu mas ta'tahtun' "Whatever I forbid for you stay away from it and whatever I command you to do, do it as much as you could". This is Islam that the Westerners and the inhabitants of the west will like to associate with, not that of fanaticism, hatred, and compulsion.

The United States of America's Syncretism and multiculturalism feeling among the Muslims and another religious group will serve as a model for world peace. All will automatically produce a natural religion that will build peace and harmony within the community of the World. The Deist perspective in the early eighteenth century was that the great truths of religion are all universal and that the true religion was natural (Van der Veer, 1994). Muslims in the North America including Texas are facing cultural displacement through migration and effects of living in plural societies that do not discriminate against any individual based on the sect or movement one belongs. People from old Muslims areas and the new converts are facing different challenges that require a lot of work and does not warrant to add the issue of tekfir or any other hardliner's thinking. Believers should learn how to sacrifice and leaf together in peace and harmony, accepting one another with their level of faith and belief.

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