

# Iman Series

By shaykh Abu qatada (May Allah hasten his release)

Introduction:

All praise belongs to Allāh, *Al-Wāhid* (The Solitary), *Al-Ābad* (The One), *Al-Fard* (The Single), *As-Samad* (The Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures are in need of, yet He is in need of none); the One Who does not beget, nor was He begotten; and there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him; the One in Whose Hands is the destinies of all of creation, He grasps the life of whom He wills, and He lets alive whom He wills – and Life and Death are completely subservient to His Command Alone – Exalted is He.

And then we send salutations and peace upon the Best of Mankind, the one who was sent before the hour with a sword, as a mercy for mankind and the Jinn, and a light for the Two Abodes; so may the salutations of my Lord, and His peace be upon him, and upon his family, and his Noble Companions...

*To proceed:*

This article is based on a series of lectures given by Shaykh Abu Qatada named “Iman Series”. A group of brothers and myself went through this beautiful and eye opening series, and felt the need to attempt to translate it into English to benefit the Muslims who are unable to understand Arabic. The notes that were made whilst listening to the 37 audio tracks of this series, were later written up to form this article. We would of translated it word for word, but due to the style of the shaykh, it would have been too difficult to follow, as the shaykh sometimes digresses when talking about certain issues. Additionally, the styles of lectures and documents differ, so we resorted to writing up the notes. Unfortunately when the shaykh refers to scholars in his lecture, at times he gives the reference, which we have listed, however at other times he doesnt give the references. The layout of this article follows the same as his lecture.

May Allah benefit us by that which we have heard and teach us that which will benefit us. I ask Allah to make us those who say, and then do- and that He does not make us from those who say, but then do not do, those who are most hated by Allah “*O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? Most hateful it is with Allah that you say that which you do not do*” (AS-Saff 2-3}. I ask Allah to make you and us from the people of truth. I ask Allah to make us from the companions of endurance and certainty.

We ask Allah to accept this work from me and my brothers and that our intentions are solely for pleasure of Allah.

## How actions are Defined

The conditions for any action to take place, is that it must have the following two:

1. To have the **Iradaa** ( which is the will to do the act),
2. **There mustn't be any preventative factors** or barriers for the action to come about (basically the preventative factor is whether you have the ability to do the action or not).

So For example some Muslims may have the Iradaa to read the classical Arabic books to seek knowledge from them, but due to the fact that they don't understand the language, they won't be able to fulfil that action. So his inability of understanding the language is the preventative factor.

The **Iradaa** also has two pre requisites for it to come about:

1. **Knowledge**; As you can't will for something unless you know what it is that you want, for example if a man wills to drink water, he must know what water is otherwise he can't will for it.
2. **The motivation for the will**; You'll realise that Islam constantly provides us with motivations. Encouraging us that if we refrain from sin and do good deeds, that we'll be rewarded with jannah. And similarly we have constant reminders of the hell fire as a deterrent for us not to commit sin.

If either of these 2 are lacking or are corrupted. this will have an affect on your Iradaa, which intern affects your actions. So if your knowledge is corrupted in one way or another it will inevitably affect your action, regardless how motivated you are. And this is similar with a corrupted motivation, regardless if your knowledge is correct. Take for instance, if a man was thirsty, yet didn't have the knowledge that for him to quench his thirst, he must drink water. The fact that he is unaware of this knowledge, means that he won't be able to act and resolve his problem.

So one could sum up man as Iradaa. This reason being is that man is held accountable according to his Iradaa, and therefore his reward is dependent on it. This principal can be seen in the following example, if a man intended to drink alcohol, but in reality the cup in front of him was only water, but he thought it to be alcohol and drank from it, despite him only drinking in water in reality, this will be regarded as a sinful act according to the Shari`ah and this sin is similar to that of one who drinks alcohol knowing it to be alcohol. The matter in regards to the Shari`ah is that he has drank alcohol but the matter regarding the reality points to the fact that he only drank water, however as we mentioned before, we judge the person according to his Iradaa. Therefore the reality of the act doesn't excuse him from the sin. There could be instances where both the Shari`ah and reality may differ, however the Shari`ah judges the man on according to his Iradaa. So similarly back to the situation of the man and the alcohol, if he intends to drink water, but drinks alcohol instead, it will not be regraded as a sin. Another example to highlight this point can seen during the battle of Badr, where some Muslims accidentally killed Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman's father thinking him to be one of the mushrikeen. However the sahaba weren't punished for killing a Muslim as it wasn't their intention to kill his father.

However this doesn't mean that person should not try to find out the reality of things. So Islam brings certain aspects that would lead to both the Shari`ah and the reality to come together.

One of these aspects is to investigate the reality. So with regards to the example of the alcohol, if the man sees a label on a bottle indicating it to be alcohol, he can't dismiss this fact and drink the alcohol. So you have to try your utmost to ascertain the reality of the thing. However you are excused if you lack the ability; for example if you can't read the label on the bottle then your not at fault.

### **Preventative Factor:**

So if someone has the sound Iradaa (which is having the correct knowledge and correct motivation), however there maybe preventative factors, which ultimately leads to the man not performing the act, then he will still be rewarded for it according to Islam. And this is where the hadith narrated by Umar (RA) that he heard the prophet say 'actions are but by intentions and every man shall have only that which he intended'. For example if a man wanted to give charity to help the mujahideen, so he attempted to find a way to send money to them, however after exhausting all the abilities that were available to him, he still couldn't manage to find a way. The man will be rewarded according to his intentions despite there being a preventative factor (not been able to find a way to get the money sent to them)

The Shari`ah knowledge deals with the reality of things such as telling us what is halal or haram. A fundamental point to understand is that the truth is the actuality of the object and not what you may perceive. Because if it came to what we perceive you'll have many truths, when we know the truth can only be one.

Your Iradaa emanates from knowledge, as your not going to have any inclination for the action unless you know what it is. Which is why Islam recognises the importance of it and attempts to prevent any misconceptions to enter it. As any misconception will corrupt your knowledge and therefore affect your actions. Take for instance the Sufi groups that promote grave worshipping as part of worship. Through their misconceptions, they have included shirk into their worship, whereas we know that all our servitude should be solely to Allah with no intermediaries.

So with regards to this, certain misconceptions could lead to Kufr (disbelief). But as you'll see later on in the course, definitions have varying levels, so for example when it comes down to iman, you'll find many levels to it, like the hadith that mentions iman as having 70 branches and it spans from removing obstacles from the footpath to the extent of loving the prophet more than you love your own self. And likewise shirk has many levels.

Both misconceptions and hawaa (which is temptation) are in direct opposition to the categories of Iradaa (which are knowledge and motivation). Misconceptions being the opposite of knowledge and hawaa being opposite to motivation. So for example, through your knowledge you recognise that Allah wants us to give charity to the poor. Now your motivation kicks in as the prophet has mentioned in numerous hadiths the virtues of helping the poor and less fortunate than yourselves like the hadith of charity wiping away sins. So now you have both the knowledge to give charity and the motivation. However your hawaa creeps in and tell you that you have already given enough charity and how should you spend that money instead on yourself. So as can be seen, the hawwa is in opposition to your motivation.

Just as we said, for youe Iradaa to be correct, you need to have the knowledge and motivation, and similarly for sin to take place you'll require the opposites of these two. The levels between

the misconceptions and hawwa don't have to be in equal dosage, but one could be more than the other. So an act of disobedience takes place either from a misconceptions or your hawwa, or even both. For example you may no that its wrong to commit zina, but due to your overpowering hawwa you may end up committing this sin.

And a lot of people misunderstand this point and think it only really comes down to just your hawwa. So they'll try to combat this by boosting up your motivation. So you have groups of people that will go through the virtues of actions, like jihad for example. They'll explain to you that the shaheed is admitted into Al-Firdous and how he'll be able to intercede for 70 members of his family, and explains to you the high level that Islam gives to a shaheed. So the person walks away from this gathering pumped up wanting to perform jihad, however it wasn't explained to him what jihad is about. How that it's sole purpose is to raise the word of Allah supreme and that jihad attempts to remove the obstacles that have been put by man to stop the worship Allah. So as important as it is to mention virtues of actions, it should be equally explained how one can go around performing these actions.

Another example can be taken with regards to certain Sufi groups that believe some people could get to a level of being a wali of Allah( the friend of Allah) and how when he gets to this station, he'll be free from any inclinations or temptation to sin. So they believe that fundamentally man could get to such a position, that he can divorce himself from the temptation to sin. But this is wrong, even the sahaba despite their high levels, they still had urges and inclinations. This can be seen when Hafsa (RA) who was known to be the best cooks from the rest of the wives of the prophet Muhammad (SAW) sent some food to him whilst he was at Aisha's (RA) house, due to her jealousy, when she saw the plate of food, she through it on the ground. So we know that despite their shortcomings, they are still the best people in the ummah of Muhammed (SAW). So we take the middle path in regards to this, were you'll have the Sufis that claim that the sahaba were flawless and couldn't sin, and then on the other side you have the shia who through reading such hadiths will begin to hate the sahaba (as can be seen of their hatred for Aisha, Abu Bakr, Umar and many others- the scholars have said that anyone who hates the sahaba as a whole has apostated). This is the way Allah has created us, that our fitra is does desire certain things and dislike other. And this is part of the test, that despite our hawwa pulling us towards a sin, our taqwa should be even stronger and therefore resist the sin. However bearing this in mind, we know that man has these temptations that cause him to slip sometimes.

The shaytaan uses these weakness in ourselves to lead us astray. If someone is prone to acting purely on his desires, he'll give him evil whisperings and beautify the sin in his eyes. And this also applies to the one who is prone to easily listening to misconceptions, that shaytaan will get the individual to use his limited logic and try to suggest a better way than what the Shari`ah has informed us. This can be seen where a man insists that despite Allah's order on inheritance regarding the share of a male being twice of a female, he believes that there must be a mistake and instead he'll split his wealth between them equally. The shaytaan confuses the Muslims by adding or subtracting something from Islam as can be seen with the topic of iman. How he has managed to put so many incorrect definitions and meanings to this word.

The act of worship is an essence of man. Either he finds himself worshipping and serving Allah or serving other than Allah such as money, women, desires, etc. This can be seen where despite Allah's prohibition of usury, due to people's worship of money they perpetuate this sin.

If we look at the first sin man ever committed, it included both misconception and hawaa. Allah made it clear to Adam (AS) that he could go anywhere in the jannah, except to a particular tree. The shaytaan came to Adam and firstly convinced him that he was being genuine in his advice to him and how if he eats from the tree, it will give him eternal life and a kingdom. The misconception here is that the tree didn't have any of these qualities that shaytaan promised. The hawaa kicked in as man has a natural inclination to living forever and to having a kingdom.

The shaytaan gains control over a man by making things into illusions and getting man to see things that aren't the reality. In fact this is what magicians do.

The problems that Muslims have, isn't that they don't believe in Islam, but it's all the misconceptions that have been taken on with it. Some Muslims believe the way to solve this problem is through tarbiyyah and learning etiquettes, and the solution is for man to harness his motivation and read about virtues of actions. As we'll find out later, this is the wrong approach and the problems are deep rooted and until they could be understood, you cannot resolve the problem.

## **What Is Ahl Sunnah Wal Jammah (ASWJ)**

We will begin to study Iman according to Ahl Sunnah Wal Jammah (ASWJ). We need to first look at where the name ASWJ came from. We know that the name has no roots back to the prophet; however this term came about as an indication of the correct path.

### **How did it come about?**

The Prophet mentioned a hadith about there being 73 sects in his ummah, all of them entering hell fire except one. He added that this group follows what he was upon and what his companions were upon as well. From this hadith we understand that the 73 sects that the ummah will split into are part of our ummah, however through their deviation they will enter hell fire for a period of time and then eventually go to jannah. The group that is saved from the hell fire is given the name 'Firqatun-Naajiyah (saved sect)'.

The ahl Bidah (people of innovation) have differed with ASWJ on the understandings of either sunnah or jammat, or even both these definitions.

The wording 'what the prophet is upon' means his sunnah and the path he is on. However one could ask why did he qualify the hadith by adding 'what my companions are upon as well'? This indicates the relationship of an amir over a jamaat. This relationship is also one of a political level. This was evident that as soon as the prophet died, the companions delayed his burial so as to choose an amir over them. As they understood that for the saved sect to function properly, it needs an amir to lead the jamaat. Therefore they chose Abu Bakr as the Calipha over the Muslims.

If the religion was simply to teach the Muslims the mannerism and correct characteristics, then it will have been sufficient that we only need to learn 'what the prophet is upon'. However the mention of his companions serves no extra benefit in regards to characteristics, as the prophet is enough. So therefore we could conclude that the mention of the companion is in reference to having a jammat.

So you see the beauty of this message, where the prophet didn't only just teach us how to pray, fast, pay zakat etc. and leave us to remain in our own systems of kufr. As the two are not in harmony with each other as can be seen when the sahaba embraced Islam during the time of Madinah. The prophet didn't send these new companions back to their jahil (ignorant) society after teaching them the basics. As it's vital for a Muslim to implement his deen fully by living in a society that does not restrict him in his affairs. So for instances you have these deviant scholars who claim that one can be a "British Muslim" or a "democratic Muslim". Where they believe an individual could hold both principals of being British and of Islam. But in fact any other kuffar system is in direct opposition to Islam as one system has its roots to the shaytaan and the later has its noble roots from the guidance of Allah.

Another lesson we can draw from the hadith is where it says 'what I am upon today'. It means to follow the complete sunnah and not just parts of it that serve our interests. So you'll notice certain deviant groups that when they try to justify their methodologies for bringing back the Shari`ah to rule over us, they'll refer to only a particular period in the life of the prophet, regardless if there other rulings to abrogate it. So you have the murjiah (we'll deal with exactly what they believe and where they went wrong) who go down the route of compromise and not being violent to the ones who invade our lands. And to support such a ridiculous plan, they'll refer to the instances where the prophet did not use any sort of violence during his time in Mecca and they use hadiths that mention how despite all the persecution that the Muslims where made to suffer, the most ideal thing is to have patience and wait until they stop their actions against Muslims. However they misunderstand the seerah of prophet as not all the rulings came down at once, and also how some were later abrogated. Take for instances the prohibition of alcohol, it was banned in 3 stages. So someone could pick a particular time when it was permissible and try to justify that we are allowed to drink alcohol. You cannot pick certain rulings, whilst dismissing the abrogated rulings that followed.

### **Features of the Saved sect:**

- The 1<sup>st</sup> feature is that they submit to the text in its entirety.

This sect realises that Islam has come with a complete way of life, and therefore any instances or problems that they might endure, they will find a solution in the Qur`ān and Sunnah This principal is supported by the hadith of the 73 sects in his ummah, all of them entering hell fire except one. He added that this group is what follows what he was upon and what his companions were upon as well. Throughout history this saved sect always refers back to the same source. So any group that doesn't refer all their issue to the way of the Qur`ān and sunnah, does not qualify into the saved sect. So for instance, you'll have groups that depend on their intellect solely, and will put forward the suggestion of maslaha (the greater benefit). According to them, they will choose to put certain Islamic principal aside for the greater maslaha. They way they get to this maslaha is by using their intellect to weigh up the "perceived" pros and cons of the act. So in fact they rely on their intellect to determine what's the best course of action, and therefore it's as if they are making their own intellect as their Shari`ah . However the correct understanding of maslaha is what is supported by the Shari`ah and promoted by it.

So this group submits to the text regardless if their limited intellect agrees with it or not. It is not a condition for our intellect to agree with the Shari`ah in order for us to comply with it. However, within this sect there are levels of understanding the text. So at the lower level, the man understands that it is an order from Allah and he must obey it, and yet he doesn't seem to

understand the wisdom behind it. On a more higher level, which tends to be occupied by the righteous scholars, is where they comply with the text, and further to this, they understand the wisdom behind the ruling. For example, the reason why women should cover on in front of non mahram. The wisdoms behind this are numerous, one of which is that they don't cause other men who may have perverted hearts to think evil thoughts about them. Another is that it reduces the temptation as a man cannot see the women's beauty. There are many other benefits in addition to these.

When ibn Hazm was asked about the intellect, he said it is to act on the revelations. The Shari`ah has come down to establish the benefit over the evil. In this world you'll notice that there is no action that is 100% evil nor 100% good (only heaven and hell have 100% evil and 100% good respectively}. Take for instance alcohol, despite its prohibition, one can argue that it has benefits such as if a man has many problems in his life, he can turn to drink to forget about the predicament that he finds himself in . This is a benefit of alcohol, however we know it has many negative characteristics as well, as Allah says "*They ask you (O Mubammad SAW) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: "In them is a great sin, and (some) benefit for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit."* (surah 2:219)

So according to the deviant groups that use maslaha, they could weigh up the pros and cons and conclude that to drink alcohol is fine. However due to the harm that over-rides the benefit, Allah has forbidden it. One could even go to the extreme and say that even kufr has its maslaha, such as receiving a high salary from a government and on top of this Islam has its harm. So we can see that if man is left to decide what is good and bad for him, there will be so many different verdicts, and that is why Allah has laid down to mankind what is permissible and what is prohibited. He is the one that with all his wisdom can determine which benefits outweigh the negatives, whether these are seen or unseen. So when we act on an order that we may consider in our limited minds as "going against logic", then we must ultimately accept the command as its pros and cons have been analysed by God All Mighty , and He wouldn't order us to do something that is bad.

And similarly, just how certain groups use their intellect, the Sufi groups let their senses over ride the text. These groups have been corrupted by their senses. So many groups will try to justify their actions by claiming that "my heart is at tranquillity when I commit this act", when they carry out some of their worshipping. They don't bother referencing their actions to Qur'an or sunnah, but instead justify their actions by the senses/feelings they receive after doing the act.

So this saved sect only uses intellect and sense when it is supported by the text. They are both used to appreciate the deeper understanding of the text.

- The 2<sup>nd</sup> feature is that for any given issue, they will bring together all text.

You'll realise that the sunnah of Allah is that he doesn't only give an answer in one point, but instead could give it in different aspects of a scenario over different situations. For example some people may say that as long as you say the shahadaa, you will enter jannah. They support this view with the hadith that mentions whoever utters the shahadaa will enter into jannah. So they get to the conclusion that all you have to do in order to save yourself from the hell fire is to say the shahadaa and nothing else, and they then end up disregarding other texts. So the correct way is to bear in mind all the evidences before deciding on a particular situation. As any hadith could give a

wide and varied meaning, therefore you'll need to use other texts to qualify it. When there seems to be two hadith that come across as if they are contradicting, instead of just taking one and leaving the other, ASWJ accept the two and bridge them together.

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> feature of this group is their adherence of the prophet's sunnah.

This is where the group got its name from. Many deviant groups wouldn't dare to criticise the Qur'ān, however they find it easy to criticise the sunnah. Imam Ahmed ibn Hambal said that the sunnah is an explanation of the Qur'ān. The sunnah elaborates and explains to us the correct understanding to draw from the Qur'ān. Take for instance the order for us to pray, Allah says *“Guard strictly (five obligatory) AsSalawat (the prayers) especially the middle Salat (i.e. the best prayer Asr). And stand before Allah with obedience (and do not speak to others during the Salat (prayers)).”*(surah 3-238). However no-where in the Qur'ān does it tell us how to pray, this can be found only in the sunnah. That is why the sunnah is very important. It gives us the explanation of what Allah has ordered us to do from the Qur'ān. For example, the shia have only used very few hadiths in their books, and even the ones they do use have dodgy chains of narrations.

The importance of the sunnah led to ASWJ spending a lot of time collecting and clarifying hadiths.

This leads to certain groups adopting a way, when you present to them another hadith that contradicts what they are advocating, they will reject it as it may seem “not logical” or “not for the 21<sup>st</sup> century”. These groups arrive to certain conclusion before looking at all the relevant hadiths concerning the topic.

- The 4<sup>th</sup> feature of this group is jammat.

This is where the group also got its name from. This has 3 main categories, firstly when jammat is used, it gives the meaning of Islam. This is backed by the hadith that the prophet said “the blood of a Muslim is not halal except in three instances; adulterer, where a Muslim murders another Muslim, the third is if he leaves the jammat”. The scholars have said the “jammat” that is used in this hadith, is the group of Muslims, and if he leaves it, he has left Islam and thus become an apostate.

The second category of jammat is the Islamic state. This is backed up by the hadith by the prophet who said “whoever dies without having a pledge around his neck, then he has died a pledge of ignorance”. The pledge mentioned is referring to one of the Islamic state, and not of the first category of Islam. The ignorance mentioned in the hadith isn't of the type that takes you out of Islam.

So in someone was to leave the first category of jammat, then he has apostated and is not considered a Muslim. Whereas if someone leaves the second category, he is still a Muslim, however he may fall into the category of “Baghee”(Rebel)

### **What are bughaat( rebels)?**

According to ASWJ, its not enough for a Muslim or a group of people to be labelled as rebels except when the following conditions are met.

1. They refuse to give pledge to the imam or they had given the pledge initially and later went back on it.
2. They must have power i.e. Weapons.
3. They must have a ta`weel. This is where they have a misinterpretations that they believe justifies their actions. An example of this could be that this groups believes that the amir of the state doesn't distribute the wealth equally, and therefore they oppose him.

So no group that opposes the Islamic state could be labelled as rebels unless they fit the above 3 conditions. However if the group fits into conditions 1 and 3, then the correct opinion is that you don't fight them but you exile them instead.

These rebels are considered Muslims, but their act is considered disobedience. However not every disobedience makes someone a Fasiq( this is the label given to someone who perpetuates a major sin, however we will look into this topic more later in the course}. Therefore not every rebel is considered as a fasiq, as they may have many good deeds on their scales which cancels the label "Fasiq". Ibn Tammiyah is in support of this idea.

#### **Ruling on them:**

1. They are fought and killed as Muslims, but the ones who flee are not to be chased.
2. The injured are not to be killed.
3. The spoils of war cannot be taken from them, except what they have on them in the battle. So you cannot take their property, women, etc.

This is supported by the fact that when Ali(RA} fought Mu`awwiyah (RA} during the battle of the camel, he fought them as rebels. He prayed over all dead and instructed his army not to chase the others who ran way.

Some people have adopted the idea of labelling rebels as Khawarij . This is incorrect as the Khawarij are only judged according to their aqeeda, not their actions.

The third category of jamaat is whoever agrees with the truth, even if he is the only one on that is following the truth. Ibn Masud(RA} was asked about the jamaat, and he responded by saying whoever is upon the truth.

With these three definitions of jamaat, you may come across a deviant person who fits into the first category ( being in the jamaat of Islam}, and also fits into the second definitions( being in an Islamic state}, but does not fit into the third definition( being upon the truth}.

Therefore the definition that ASWJ takes is the third definition, which happens to be most narrowest. The reason it takes this definition is due to the hadith of the prophet mentioning "upon whatever I am upon and my companions" and also the response Ibn Masud (RA} gave about jamaat being whoever is upon he truth.

According to this, there could be a rebel who fits into the 1<sup>st</sup> definition ( being a Muslim}. He could also fit into the 3<sup>rd</sup> definition ( being upon the truth}. But due to him being a rebel he

doesn't fit into the 2<sup>nd</sup> definition (being under the Islamic State}. And this rebel could still be part of the saved sect (this is similar to ASWJ}.

### **The validity of having a jammat under the third definition whether there is a Islamic state or not:**

Both Bukhari and Ibn Masud(RA}, even at their time, despite the shar`iaa being established, they still stressed on having a jammat. Take for example the Calipha Ma`moon who was committing bid`aa promoting the idea that the Qur`an was created, there was a jammat (of the 3<sup>rd</sup> definition}, where they stepped in and corrected this misconceptions. This jammat will need to have an amir, but this doesn't mean this amir with contest the amir of the Islamic state. If there are any shortcomings where the Islamic state leaves a part of the deen, then this group should rise and try to correct the state. This has happened many times in history. During the time of Abu Bakr(RA} Caliphate, when Khalid ibn Walid(RA} was the general of the army, Ikrimah Ibn Abu Jahl(RA} saw a shortcoming in the army where they were exposed to the kuffar. He took a pledge of death from the sahaba numbering 400 to penetrate deep into the enemy ranks to ward off their advancement. Therefore there needs to be a group upon the truth, who needs to point out to the state where its shortcomings are.

Imam Tabari narrates that during the Abbasid rule in Iraq, the state was especially weak in Bagdad. Crime was on the high and not much was being done by the government to curb it. Some of the criminals were colluding with the authorities, so the corruption was at a high level. Shaykh Ahmad ibn Malik Al Khawazi, who was a great scholar of the Muslims at the time, rallied his students, relatives, neighbours and took a pledge from them to enjoin good and forbid evil, as the state clearly lacked in this respect. So this jamaat went around the city cleaning up the streets and eventually got rid of the criminals. The Calipha at the time got scared and felt threatened by this shaykh, and so as a reward of this sunnah the shaykh had revived, he ended up imprisoning the shaykh. Iman Ahmad ibn Hambal praised this shaykh, and no scholar in history criticised this formation of a jammat for what it had done.

Another proof to support having a group is the hadith that Hudthayfa Ibn Yaman asked the prophet about the stages in this deen and how people will be treated and whether after this good, there be any evil. The prophet said yes. Hudthayfa then asked whether after this evil, there will be any good. The prophet said yes, but it will be tainted. Hudthayfa then asked the prophet what he recommends him to do if he were to live to such a time. The prophet advised him to stick to the jammat. Hudthayfa then asked the prophet what should he do if there was no iman. The prophet said to him to keep away from these groups.

The advice of keeping away from "these groups", doesn't mean you end up joining a bid`ee group, but instead you should remain upon the truth( the 3<sup>rd</sup> definition of jammat}. The groups that the prophet is warning to keep away from fits no other meaning except that of a political sense. If it was a religious group that had aspects of bid`aa, then you shouldn't follow them regardless, but it can only be understood as a political group, as you must obey the iman of the Islamic state even if he was a man of bid`aa. The "taint" of the good mentioned in the hadith is to do with the aqeeda, otherwise the prophet would have just told him to follow his sunnah. Another indication that it is in referenc to a political sense, is Hudthayfa's question, "what happens if there is no iman", this could only be meant as a Calipha.

The hadith that mentions the splitting into 73 sects is that they are differentiated according to their aqeeda. The prophet is warning him to stay away from these groups that aren't calling to the Shari`ah. As opposed to some people using this hadith incorrectly to promote their idea that you must stay away from groups as a whole.

Therefore it is established that not only is it permissible to have a group within the Islamic State, but at times desirable. So how could these deviant groups argue that it is prohibited to have a group in our time?! (Shaykh Abu Qatada believes it is an obligation to be in a group in our time)

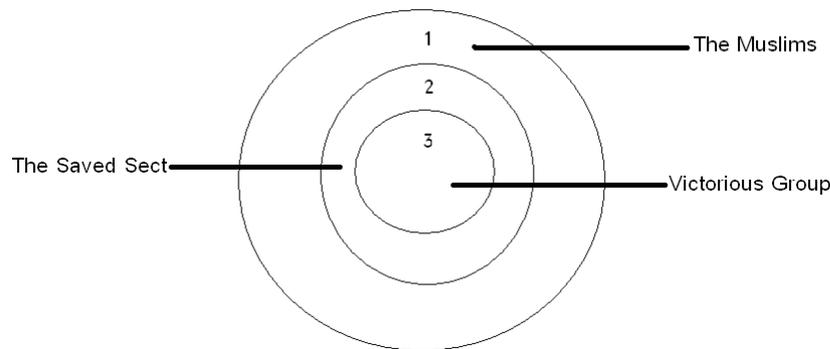
Another misconception regarding groups is the names they adopt and whether it is permissible to give the group a name, or whether they are only restricted to calling themselves "Muslims". If we take a look at history, there were many groups that adopted names to differentiate themselves from others. Take for instance the name "sahaba". This was used to separate between the Muslims who met the prophet and others who did not meet the prophet. Another example even within the sahaba are the names "muhajiroon" -who emigrated from Mecca to Madinah- and the "ansar"- who assisted these emigrants-. Both these groups got their names from the actions that distinguished these groups from other Muslims at the time. Another example is the "hajjaj" who is given to a Muslim who performs the ritual of pilgrimage. There are numerous other examples.

So according to ASWJ, it is permissible for a group to adopt the name of the sunnah act that they are trying to accomplish.

However what is disliked is if a group came together and name itself with an act that goes against the Shari`ah or something that is not part of the deen. The problem isn't the fact a group has come together, rather it will be the name they have adopted.

As we said earlier, even if there was an Islamic State, it is desirable to have these smaller groups that enjoin good, forbid evil, etc in order to cover up for any shortcomings the state have. If you take a glance at Islamic history, you'll notice that it was these groups that brought a lot of goodness to the Muslims and not the Caliphas at the time. As unfortunately, many of the caliphs were either too materialistic or oppressive. Take for example the attacks by the Tartars, it wasn't the state as a body( i.e. Islamic State soldiers) that fought against them, instead it was local militia men. Another example could be seen during the crusade wars, where yet again it was the smaller groups that were led by Salih-ud-deen Al Ayubi, or other groups of students that were led by their teachers. It was through these groups that the Muslims managed to fight and beat off the crusades.

**The Muslim ummah can be split into the following categories:**



As can be seen in the diagram, the outer and biggest circle is that of Islam. Within this circle is a better group, named the "Saved sect". Within this saved sect, there is even a better group called the "Victorious group".

In the 1<sup>st</sup> circle, it could involve both sunni and bid`ee groups. However this bid`aa isn't the type that will take the person out of the fold of Islam, if it did, it wont even make it into the 1<sup>st</sup> group.

Once you're in the ummah, you have to try to be in the next circle which is the "saved sect". As supported by the hadith of the prophet in relation to the 73 sects. To get into this group, your aqeeda has to be correct, it isnt enough to just do good actions. You must fit into the characteristics of this group as we mentioned earlier. Once your in the saved sect, you must then further try your utmost to get into the "victorious group". This is an even smaller group. The prophet praised them and said that they will always remain upon the truth. This group is different from the other two groups as they have to be:

1. Must be a Muslim
2. To have a sound aqeeda and not to be of the people of bid`aa
3. Some scholars said they have to be the people of Ahl Hadith( Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal is of this opinion. Imam Nawawi does a commentary on a book by Qadi Iyath, where it mentions Ahl Hadith, and Imam Nawawi comments that the victorious group are on the aqeeda of Ahl Hadith}

### **Who are Ahl Hadith?**

Nowadays, people think that this group is only scholars who sit behind their desk clarifying hadiths authenticity and verifying them. This is false! This cannot be the correct definition as you may get certain scholars who do this, but are from bid`ee groups( which goes against condition 2), or some scholars are even worse (as he may even be out of the 1<sup>st</sup> condition). So some scholars wouldn't even qualify into the saved sect, let alone the victorious group. The people in the past got the the name Ahl Hadith as they kept away from the bid`aa that people were getting themselves involved in.

### **What are the qualities of this victorious group?**

1. They have knowledge.

Knowledge has many levels, and it doesn't mean that every member of this group has to have a high level of knowledge like that of the scholars. However this group will require amongst its ranks people who are firmly rooted in the knowledge such as scholars.

This group is guided by knowledge; they seek it, and then follow it up by acting upon it and propagating it. Many nowadays “scholars” have got to their positions, through the non conventional methods of how our salaf got their recognitions. The scholars of the salaf got their reputations through their actions, conduct and stances they took. They would of got their positions once their teachers gave them that right. Nowadays, the scholars are given official posts, which are based on their government's decision. And these governments put the most ignorant of people in these posts, as to influence the religious rulings in their favour. They are tools in the hands of the apostate rulers. The rulers use these scholars just like how Pharaoh used his magicians to control the people. Both these tools deceive the masses to conform and legitimise the ruling party. How could we trust the very same people that these apostate rulers trust to run the religious affairs of the country?!

During this sad time of our ummah, there are many truthful scholars around the world who propagate the truth, however as the truth doesn't conform with the government's policies, no-one publishes their works. The apostate governments try to silence these scholars by labelling them as Khawarij (both ibn Tammiyah and imam Ahmad ibn Hambal and many others were labelled with such a name). But these governments should know that the light of Islam will never be extinguished.

Knowledge is initially done through reading. The studying with a scholar is just a means to attain the knowledge. Many of the classical scholars did not study directly under a scholar, but instead read through manuscripts of the scholars. The purpose is not to study under a scholar, it's just one way of attaining knowledge to act upon it. Many groups propagate that you must study under the knees of the scholars. If we look at it objectively, the classical scholars may have needed to a greater extent to study directly with a scholar due to there not being many printed manuscripts to go around. Whereas in our times the books are widely accessible, especially with the internet, you can pretty much find any book out there. Another reason could have been that there was no guarantee on the authenticity of the publishing house. Someone could have inserted his own points in the works or removed some that he disagreed with. Whereas in our times, whenever a publishing house prints a book, they give lot of information on the means of how they put the book together with all the references. This makes it easy to verify its authenticity, and if the publishing house proves to be untrustworthy, it will easily be fished out.

Ibn Kathir comments that it was a blessing that people had access to books to read. Abu Hajar Al Askalani in his book “Fath Bari” lists all his references which amounted to 1500. Could someone believe that with every single book he used, he went through it with a scholar? As long as the books were referenced to be authentic, there was no need to sit at the knee of the scholar to study it. Ibn Tammiyah had used the same method in his studies.

Therefore the victorious group does not necessarily learn all its knowledge from studying under the scholars, but could have studied from the books instead.

The prophet asked the companions, who the most virtuous of people were, they answered the angels. The prophet said no, they then said the prophets. The prophet said no, then they said the sahaba. The prophet said no, and added that they are the people who come later. They asked who these people were. The prophet answered that they are the ones who take their knowledge from the hanging books. (i.e. Books).

This hadith indicates the best source of knowledge in the later times is through the books. This is because a lot the minds of people will be tainted, therefore you must go back to the source, i.e. what the classical scholars said about the Qur'an and sunnah. The only way someone could distinguish who the truthful scholars nowadays, is to see if their message is the same as the classical scholars when using the text. Take for instance the great scholar Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab, many of the scholars at his time were grave worshipping, deviants, made takfir on Ibn Tammiyah etc. So how did the shaykh get the correct understanding of Islam? He had to smuggle in the books from such classical scholars as Ibn Tammiyah and others alike. There is so much good in those classical books.

## 2. They try to implement the truth and act upon it.

Whenever the truth comes to them, they act upon it and they do not fear the blame of the blamers. Unlike many other groups who take it only on the condition that it supports their intellect and doesn't cause contempt from the people. So this victorious group is not harmed by the ones who oppose them whether these are from the kuffar or within the ranks of Muslims.

## 3. They fight in the path of Allah.

This point is linked to the 2<sup>nd</sup> feature, as through implementing the truth, at times they are required to fight to support it.

A hadith narrated by Salama Ibn Nufail (RA) mentions "We were sitting with the prophet and a man entered and said that the people have put down their weapons (i.e. abstained from fighting) and abandoned the horses (i.e. Stopped preparing the war horse ect) and they said there is no need to fight. The prophet responded and said they have lied, now the war is entering into the fierce stage (i.e. the conflict has become more intense, greater need to prepare and train) and there will remain a group in my ummah fighting upon the truth, they are not harmed by those who oppose them or betray them until the emergence of Yagog and Magog".

The reason the fighting will end at the emergence of Yagog and Magog is because of the other texts that inform us that the jihad will only stop once dajal comes out.

Some groups try to remove this characteristic's from the victorious group by claiming that throughout history it is inconceivable to believe that there has always remained a group fighting. Our response is simple, just because you can't pinpoint a group, doesn't mean there isn't one. If the text tells us that there is a group, then we accept and affirm it. We say yes, there will always be a group fighting for the cause of Allah, and this group doesn't have to be in one particular place, as long as that particular group fits the criteria. To seek this group is obligatory.

**Who are ASWJ (another term for this “The Saved Sect”)?**

The scholars used this term in reference to two types groups:

1. The used it in reference to the people of truth.
2. Another usage by the scholars was those who opposed the Rawafid (a kafir shia sect}. So anyone Muslim who is in opposition to them.

So the more narrower definition and more specific is the 1<sup>st</sup> category, whereas many groups will fall under the more broad definition of the 2<sup>nd</sup> category. For example, both the maturidees and Ash'arees will not fit into the 1<sup>st</sup> category, but will fit into the 2<sup>nd</sup> category. This is narrated in ibn Tammiyah book "Minhaj As-Sunnah An-Nabawiyah".

In the classical books ASWJ is sometimes referred to as "Ahl Sunnah" or "Al-Jammat".

## **THE DIFFERENT DEVIANT SECTS:**

The first matter which Muslims fell into confusion was with regards to the understanding of iman. In our study of Iman, we will briefly look at some groups that the ummah has unfortunately fallen into.

### **The Khawarij :**

The first bid`aa that emerged in the ummah was the Khawarij. They had differed on the consensus of the sahaba and the opinion of ASWJ with regards to acts of disobedience and whether they take you out of the fold of Islam or not. This group took the opinion that anyone who acts on disobediences has left the fold of Islam.

It began when Ali (RA) received the pledge from the Muslims after the murder of Uthman (RA) in Madinah. The people of Sham refused to give him their pledge, as they were closely related to Uthman and wanted to seek justice before they gave the pledge. This conflict eventually led to the unfortunate battle of the camel. After this battle took place, during a smaller battle called "Sa`feen", the army of Ali were on the brink of defeating the army of Muwayyiah (RA). When the later saw the eminent defeat, they requested for an arbitration between the two camps. Ali was convinced to do this. However a group came to both camps and told them that they are can't judge on this matter, but must return all judgement to Allah. This group through their incorrect ta`weel, felt that the arbitration was judging by other than what Allah revealed. Therefore they made takfir of Ali, Muwayyiah and the rest of the sahaba that agreed to this.

The conditions for a Khawarij group:

1. They make takfir on anyone who sins.
2. They make takfir on anyone who disagrees with them. Imam Shafee said that these bid`aa groups make takfir on you if you dont agree with them. Whereas ASWJ accept that you can disagree with them, but do not make takfir on you for that. However depending on what your disagreeing about, if the issue is of one that does take the person out of Islam, then they would make takfir on you, such as someone claiming that the prophet Muhammad (SAW) is not the last of the prophets.

3. They rebel against the ruler (obviously this is a Muslim ruler, if he was a apostate ruler, it will be obligatory to fight him}

A branch of the Khawarij called the "Ubaydiah", play with their words and say that he is a kafir of blessing. This is still the same as they believe he will remain in hell-fire forever. Other names of the Khawarij are "Ahl-Narhrawaan" and "Haraweyeen".

The scholars do not call anyone a Khawarij except that he fits in all 3 characteristics. However the main points are one and two, as there were some classical scholars who believed that you can rebel against an unjust ruler. The stronger opinion is that you don't fight him even if he is fornicator or acloholic, as long as he is fulfilling his role as a leader.

### **Are the Khawarij kuffar according to ASWJ?**

As a general rule, these groups are not considered as kuffar. Even if the scholars make takfir on the group, doesnt mean that every individual in that group is labelled as a kafir, as we will see later on when it comes down to the ruling of the group and individual. Ali did not regard them as kuffar. The companions of the prophet labelled them as misguided and called them the dogs of hell-fire. Them being labelled as the dogs of hell-fire, doesnt mean they are kuffar. Such as the hadith that mentions whoever is bad to his parents goes to hellfire. This doesnt mean they will stay there forever, but instead a limited amount of time if Allah wills. Whenever there are hadiths that mention people going to hellfire (excluding the kuffar}, they will be recipients to Allah's threat, and also to his promise of jannah, so it will be upto whether Allah decides to forgive them or punish them when the time comes. Another proof that they are considered Muslims is that our scholars quoted from their scholars, for instances Imran Ibn Hasaan, who was the head of one of the worst groups called "Azaareqah". Imam Bukhari has narrated hadith with him in a chain. If they were kuffar, the scholars would have never narrated from them.

However as we said, it is the genreal rule, there are some Khawarij who are kuffar, such as the ones who deny surah Yusuf in the Qur'añ as it "depicts a love story" and reject it on that basis.

According to the Khawarij whoever opposes them, then his blood, wealth and honour is permissible for them to take. There is a famous incident that Abullah bin Khabab ibn Arat (RA), was stopped by the Khawarij. They asked him a series of questions about what his thoughts were on Ali and Muwayyiyah, and despite him uttering the shahadaa, they killed him and cut open his wife's stomach and killed the baby who was inside. During the battle of Ahl Nahrawaan, between Ali and the Khawarij, he noticed the man whom the prophet mentioned about having some deformation on his arm and how it will be very rewardable to fight against such a people. Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz tried to deal with them through discussions and debates, and won many of them over, as they were very fierce fighters and he wanted to avoid bloodshed.

The Khawarij have been mentioned explicitly in many hadiths as they were the first bid`ee group to emerge. This isn't an indication that they are the worst of the bid`ee groups.

Many deviant people label the ones who stand up to the truth as Khawarij and use the hadiths to try support their claims. If we look back in history, Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal, Ibn Tammiyah, Ibn Qayum and many others were all called Khawarij due to their stances against the falshood at their times. And similarly, in our times many of the people upon truth are labelled as Khawarij.

Take for instance the palace scholars who will label a man as a Khawarij because he calls a ruler who does not rule by Allah's law as a kafir.

### **Mu'tazila.:**

The books from ASWJ have wrote extensively about the Mu'tazila, as there was a bitter conflict with this group. There was a man named Wasil ibn Atar who attended the gatherings of Hasan Al Basaree and had a disagreement over the definition of m`umin( believer} and what his situation is if he commits a major sin. According to ASWJ, they say he is a Muslim, but cannot take the title as a believer (we will look into why this is the case later in the course}. Hassan Al Basraee called such as person a hypocrite. Whereas Wasil said that he is neither a Muslim or a kafir, but instead he is a Fasiq. This is where their concept of “Manzil Bayna Manzilatayn”( which translates as a place between 2 places}. He believed he is in a place between Iman and Kufr. Therefore the ruling on such an individual is that on earth you treat him like a Muslim, but cannot call him a Muslim, and in the hereafter his place will be in the hell-fire. So in essence this group shares similar characteristic's as the Khawarij, namely that if you commit a manjor sin you will reside in hellfire forever, but they differ on how he must be treated in this world.

The Mu'tazila has 5 main core principals, despite there being numerous groups that differ on other principals. Within the Mu'tazila, there are different groups such as "Al-Jahetiya", "Bahshami", "Nathamiyah", each one comes with varying opinions but all share these 5 main principals.

1. The Tawheed
2. Manzil Bayna Manzilatayn”( which translates as a place between 2 places}
3. Justice
4. The reward and carrying out of punishment
5. Commanding good and forbidding evil

Abdul Jabar Al-Mutazilee confirmed these points in his books. He was a judge as many of the Mu'tazila scholars were. He was appointed to his position during the reign of Tamor Lang-who headed the third campaign against Sham in 782H.

The Mu'tazila split into 2 main groups/schools:

1. The Bagdadiyoon( who were from Bagdad}
2. The Kufiyoon( who were from Kufa/Basra}

Before the Abbasid came to power, all the Mu'tazila were Kufiyoon. They used to incline to Ahl-Bayt and would prefer Ali over the other companions. Once the Abbasid came to power and built up the city Bagdad, the Mu'tazila moved there. So both these groups didnt exist at the same time, it was more of a transformation from one to the other.

### **1. What is Tawheed according to the Mu'tazila?**

ASWJ definition of Tawheed is the singling out of man's worship to the one who deserves to be worshipped. And this is what we mean by Tawheed of obedience. Whereas the Mu'tazila believe Tawheed to be singling out that which is the Qadeem( which means something that has

no beginning}, therefore they believe the thing that has no beginning is one. This term "Qadeem" is no where to be found in the Shari`ah and its closest meaning is "one". Thus, their Tawheed is to distinguish between what is the first( i.e the one with no beginning} and that rest which isn't the first.

This leads to a problem, ASWJ believe that the attributes of Allah are part of him and not separate from him, whereas the Mu'tazila separate them from Allah. Therefore according to the Mu'tazila, as they have this idea that the first is only one, if you add these attributes to Allah, you'll have more than one as the first, and therefore be committing shirk. This is because they believe that his attributes are just like anything else he owns, such as the kabah, our souls, trees, etc, and just how they cant' say that a tree is part of Allah, neither can they say his attributes are part of him, and therefore deny his attributes as being part of himself. They see this relationship is one of ownership. They single Allah as "the first", and everything else is possessed by him.

Their argument is that terms such as the "sight of Allah" and "hearing of Allah" are said in the same way we say "slave of Allah" and "camel of Allah". All of these sound the same, but are in fact different. We believe that everything is linked one way or another back to Allah. So the question is, how do we differentiate between the possession of ownership and the possession of quality? To answer this, let's take a look at an example, any house is "the house of Allah", in reality, however Allah has singled out from all the rest of houses and that is the Kabah. This was done to honour it from other places. So if the thing that is being owned is independent (i.e not related} from the owner, then it is a relationship of ownership. For example the "car of Muhammad", as these two are independent from each other, as you can have the car by itself and you can have Muhammed by himself, this will indicate to us this is a possession of ownership, and cannot say the car is a quality of Muhammad. Whereas to indicate a quality, both the entities have to be dependent( i.e the owned cannot exist by itself, it requires the other to qualify it}. For example, when we say the "hearing of Muhammad" we can separate Muhammad by himself, but cannot separate hearing by itself, as hearing is something abstract and does not take any form when its alone. The Mu'tazila do not differentiate between the types of possession.

### **How did this idea come about?**

Ibn Hazm mentions that this idea was heavily influenced by the Christians. The Christians argued that according to the explanation we have just given, if Allah's speech is an attribute of his, in the Qur'an it mentioned. "*Then the angels called him, while he was standing in prayer in Al-Mibrab, (saying): "Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya (John), confirming (believing in) the Word from Allah (i.e. the creation of Iesa (Jesus))" (Surat 3:39).* Therefore according to the definition we have given, we will be forced to accept that Jesus is part of God, which will affirm what the Christians say. And therefore they rejected that attributes are part of god in order to disagree with the Christians. And this inevitably led to their statement that the Qur'an is created.

How do we answer the Christians about the speech of Allah being Jesus?

We say that when Allah says "Be" in reference when creating Adam, does this mean that Adam is the word "Be" or is he a consequence of it? Obviously when Allah said "Be", Adam was created, so similarly, Jesus was the consequence of the speech of Allah.

## **2. What is Justice according to Mu'tazila?**

Their justice issue deals a lot with how they perceive Qadr to be. According to ASWJ, there are 4 stages of Qadr:

1. The knowledge of what's going to take place-which does not have beginning, i.e. Its always existed.
2. It was written
3. Allah wills it
4. Then he causes it to come in affect

The Knowledge is an attribute of Allah, and as we say his attributes have existed forever, similarly his knowledge has no beginning. Its the principal that Allah has no beginning, and therefore neither do his attributes have a beginning.

The "Qadariyyah" believe that man's actions are not known by Allah until it happens. They deny these 4 stages. A group of people went to Ibn Umar (RA) and said to him that Allah does not know something until it happens, therefore it cannot have been written nor can he have willed it. ASWJ make takfir of these people.

The Mu'tazila came after this group, they accept the knowledge, but don't believe everything has been written down, as its ongoing (i.e. Keeps being added on}. They also believe that Allah doesn't will for things to happen, man is left to his own will. So in a way they share similar characteristics to the Qadariyyah.

The reason they call this justice and not qadr is because they believe that according to the ASWJ stages of Qadr, if Allah was to punish you for a sin, then it will be injustice. Due to this, they reject that Allah wrote for it and then willed it to take place. They have a famous statement that "man creates his own actions". They dont deny Allah's will entirely, they accept his shari`ee will such as prayer, zakat, fasting etc, but they deny the will of everyday things. As we saw earlier, they took a certain stance in response to what the Christians were claiming, similarly they have adopted this stance in response to what the Jabariyyah say about man having no will at all.

### **3. The place between two places?**

A good way to explain this is by given an example of a man who fornicates. According to them, he earns the name fasiq. There explanation for this term is that he is neither a Muslim nor a kaffir, he is stuck in between them. They say you treat him as a Muslim in this world, without calling him that, and in the hereafter, he will be treated as a kaffir. They wanted to take the middle way between ASWJ and the Khawarij.

### **4. The reward and carrying out of punishment**

Another way we can explain this point is by giving an example. Take for instance a righteous man who commits zina, could Allah forgive him? Is it possible that he does a good act which cancels his sin? The answer to this is that yes Allah can forgive him, even if he doesnt do the good act to cancel it. Whereas the kaffir should not expect forgiveness and mercy from Allah, As Allah says; *"Verily! Allah forgives not (the sin of) setting up partners in worship with Him, but He forgives whom he pleases sins other than that"* (Surat 4:116)

So according to ASWJ, even if a man was to commit a major sin, Allah can still forgive him for that. There are many reasons why Allah may choose to forgive someone. The person could repent to Allah which eventually leads to him being forgiven. The person could go through some difficult test that serves as expiation for his previous sins. So we believe that when Allah threatens us with a punishment for a particular sin, such as being bad to ones parents, the threat is real, however we believe that Allah can choose to override this for certain reasons and forgive the person instead. Whereas the Mu'tazila don't recognise that Allah could overturn his threat. So if you die without seeking repentance for a sinful act and not being accepted in this world, then in the hereafter you will reside in hell forever. This ties in with the 3<sup>rd</sup> feature.

## **5. Commanding good and forbidding evil?**

This concept leads them to believe in rebelling against the Muslim leader if he is oppressive. However history will tell us that this was more theoretical than practical as they never really acted upon this. So they used to promote this idea only, whereas the Zaidis (a shia sect) who were an off shoot of the Mu'tazila aqeeda, actually acted upon this concept. The Zaidis put the condition on their leader that he must fight the ruler if the ruler is not of their mathab or if he commits major sins. So they share similar characteristics as the Khawarij with regards to rebelling against the ruler if he is sinful or follows a different mathab.

The main thing that symbolise the Mu'tazila group is their sayings that the Qur'ān is created.

The disease of the mutazialaa using their intellect to override text that doesnt agree with them can be seen in our times now. There are many groups that adopt this manhaj, but don't call themselves it due to their defeat by the salaf. Following their opinions that the Qur'ān was created, the Mu'tazila lost their platform for giving dawah as people would not pay them any attention, and therefore they melted away.

### **How were they beaten?**

Some of the causes of their defeat were from themselves and other causes were from ASWJ. For any defeat to take place it must have bear the following 2 factors.

1. Strength of its enemy
2. Weakness of oneself

With regards to the causes from ASWJ, they were mainly because the Mu'tazila came about at the time when the ummah was still strong and alive. The Muslims highly respected the hadiths, which the Mu'tazila didn't really pay much attention to when they argued. Also the conflicts between ASWJ and the Mu'tazila were severe and the people will witness these debates and will see how the Mu'tazila would always be beaten. At the time, the ASWJ scholars were geniuses and were very well versed. And the ummah at the time whether the person was educated or uneducated would have only referred to the Qur'ān and sunnah as their source and not Aristotle and Greek philosophy.

The causes from amongst themselves were that they brought words, that didn't make sense and were unfamiliar to the people. Whereas the words you see in Qur'ān and sunnah can be understood by even the most basic of people. Their explanations where very confusing to the common people. They've always had a small collection of followers, who were the elite of the

society, whereas the laymen will not comprehend them. They would make certain statements that were unacceptable, such as making takfir of the sahaba who fought alongside Mu`wayyiah during the fitna with Ali. And your average mulim will not tolerate anyone making takfir of the sahaba. When the average laymen will debate with the Mu'tazila and provide them with certain hadiths, the Mu'tazila will reject them and belittle the importance of hadiths. Another big factor that added to their downfall was that they claimed that the Qur'ān was created. Also once the people saw what the Mu'tazila had done to Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal (such as imprisoning and torturing him in order for him to confirm that that the Qur'ān was created}, they grew in animosity towards them as they truly loved this shaykh. The scholars did not narrate from the Mu'tazila for hadiths, which indicates the severity between ASWJ and them.

### **Ash'arees:**

Their history began with a man named Abu Hassan Al-Ash'aree. He initiated this school of thought and he died in 334H, at the age of 60. He grew up as a mutazilee under the care of Abu Ali Al-Jabaree who was a major mutazilee scholar at the time. Abu Ali had a son called Abu Hashim Al Jabaree who was another mutazilee scholar later established the "Bahshamiyah" sect (one of the sects of the Mu'tazila}. Abu Ali married Abu Hassans mother, and so he brought up Abu Hassan as a mutazilee. Abu Ali was a good writer, but not a great speaker. Abu Hassan was a good speaker, and so Abu Ali hoped that he will fill this void by becoming a speaker for the Mu'tazila. However once Abu Hassan reached the age 40, he decided to leave the group as he disagreed with some of their ideas. The scholars list many reasons to the factors that caused him to leave the group.

1. The historians that follow the Ash'aree mathab claim that he left the Mu'tazila and went to ASWJ due to a dream he had where the prophet asked him "how long will you remain opposing my sunnah?" They say that this dream affected him so much, that he stayed away from everyone for 40 days to reflect. Once the 40 days had come to an end, he went to the minbar and announced to everyone that he left the Mu'tazila and went to the mathab of ASWJ and the way of Imam Ahmad. (We say he didnt go to ASWJ at this particular time, but only near the end of his life did he eventually move to the truth.)
2. Another reason given is that Abu Hassan got into a debate with Abu Ali. The argument involved the topic where the Mu'tazila say that Allah is obliged to do what is good and therefore Allah is unable to do except that what is good (Whereas ASWJ say that Allah can do whatever he wishes, so Allah has the ability to be just and he can oppress if he chooses to, but he doesn't oppress as this isn't one of his attributes. We do not say that he is "unable" to do this). The Mu'tazila believe that it is not within his ability to do such an act. They go even further and say that Allah must do what is best. Abu Hassan presented an example to Abu Ali. If there is a man who has 3 sons. One died when he was young. The second grew up and become a kafir. The third also grew up but remained a Muslim. So Abu hassan asked him where all these 3 will be. Abu Ali answered that the young one is neither in hell nor jannah as he has done no actions to put him either of the two. The son who died as a kafir will go to hell. The son who died as a Muslim will go to jannah. Abu Hassan then said that according to the case of the young child, the child will go to Allah and ask him why he had taken his life at such a young age and how that if he given him a longer life he would have believed in him and thus entered jannah. So Allah would have told this child that he knew if he were to grow up, he will end up disbelieving in him, and he done him a favour and prevented him from growing up as a kafir and therefore going to Hell. So now, the one who died as a kafir will then ask Allah why he

didn't do the same with him and therefore prevent him from going to hell. Abu Ali could not find a solution to this question.

3. Another reason given was that Abu Hassan was a Shafi`ee, and changed his ideas after studying Imam Shafi`ees works.

After Abu Hassan left the Mu'tazila, he adopted the manhaj of Ibn Kulab, who was one of the first to reject certain attributes of Allah.

The attributes of Allah can be split into 2:

1. Attributes of Essence
2. Attributes of Actions

The difference between the two is that the attributes of actions are linked to his will. For example the attribute of Forgiveness, Allah can will to choose to forgive some people and not others. Whereas the attributes of essence are not linked to will. For example when Allah says he is the All seer, we do not say that he wills to sometimes see, and at others times chooses not to see. Another example is him being Ever living, we do not say that he can choose to live at sometimes, and at other times he choose to not live.

Ibn Kulab rejects the attributes of actions as they depend on Allah's will. Some of the ASWJ scholars were affected by this mathab. For example Ibn Furaq and his student Al-Bayhaqi. Imam Bayhaqi wrote a famous book on the Names and Attributes of Allah where you will see many aspects of this mathab.

### **Why do they reject the attributes of actions?**

They say that if "will" occurred at a particular time, it has a beginning (according to the 4 stages of Qadr, will has a beginning, whereas the knowledge of Allah does not have a beginning}, and anything that has a beginning, must have been created. This concept is taken from Aristotle. So according to them, will is created, and therefore it is not possible to say that something created can be part of Allah. Thus according to them, if you say that the will of Allah is part of him, this will be kufr. This leads them to claim that if the will of Allah is created, that means that anything that is done through his will must also be created.

To answer this deviation, we need to first clarify that "an occurrence" has two meanings in Arabic.

1. It is created
2. It has a beginning

Therefore an occurrence doesn't necessitate that it has been created, but can take the meaning that it has a beginning.

To us, a Lord that has the ability to do and not do, makes it a better Lord than the one who can only do. For example, a man who can speak at times and remain quiet at other times is better and more praiseworthy than a man who can only speak and not remain quiet.

Unfortunately, many of the ASWJ joined the mathab of Ibn Kulab, which explains why Abu Hassan thought that he was joining ASWJ. He was caught between the Mu'tazila and ASWJ. So they take the slogan that they are ASWJ, but don't have the same essence.

At the time of Abu Hassan, the mathab didn't really spread amongst many people. But it was Abu Bakr Al Bakalani who carried on the mathab after him. He was a prominent Shafi`ee scholar who died in 403H. They were spread once a Fatimee (who are shia sect) had conquered Bagdad and sacked the governor. He began to rule Bagdad. The Abbasid soon took over the city, however the shia ruler had influenced many of the citizens with the Fatimee mathab. The Abbasid felt that they had to counteract this by introducing a state mathab, and this was the ash`ree mathab. After this, anyone who disputed with the mathab was punished. The Ash'arees grew even stronger when Salid Ud-deen seized control of Egypt from the Fatimian.

The common understanding at the time was that the Ash'aree were part of ASWJ.

(back to Abu Hassan)

During the era of Abu Hassan, towards the East, there was a man called Abu Mansur Al-Maturedee. His case was the same, he wanted to bring some concepts from the Mu'tazila and ASWJ. He had done similar to what the Ash'arees had done, and the maturedees had influenced the hanafi school, just as the Ash'arees influenced the Shafi`ee school.

### **What are the Ash'arees beliefs?**

- The first main aspect of their belief is the subject of the Qur'ān
  1. ASWJ believe the Qur'ān is the speech of Allah. According to the Arabic language, speech is defined as “utterance that has meaning”.
  2. When we look at the “speech of Allah”, what attribute would that fall into? It is an attribute of action, i.e. Based on his will. Allah can choose to speak when he wants, and could choose not to speak at times. For example, when Allah spoke to Musa (AS), Allah didn't speak to him until he met him.
  3. The fact that speech is an utterance with meaning, and this is represented by letters, we can say that the Qur'ān is letters. There is a hadith that mentions that if anyone was to read a letter from the Qur'ān, Allah will reward them with 10 good deeds.
  4. The speech of Allah occurs, it doesn't exist forever, however his knowledge of the Qur'ān has been forever. Therefore Allah has always known the knowledge of the Qur'ān, but the speech of it only came afterwards. The Mu'tazila say that the Qur'ān is composed of letters which are created, due to his speech being created. Therefore they arrive at the conclusion that the Qur'ān is created. The Ash'arees try to come between the ASWJ and the Mu'tazila by claiming the Qur'ān is only the “meaning of Allah” and is not the “speech of Allah”.

The Ash'arees have different opinions with regards to how the letters of the Qur'ān came about. Some say that Allah gave the meaning of the Qur'ān to Jibril (AS), and he converted the meanings into letters. Other say the same concept, except that the meaning was given to the

prophet and he came out with the letters. The opinion that many of the recent Ash'arees adopt is that they say the meaning is from Allah, and the letters are a creation of Allah.

They believe that the entire Qur'ān has only one meaning (the Ash'aree have bizare explanations which you can't follow, atleast the Mu'tazila follow a certain logic}. For example, they say "All praise to Allah", is the utterance, which is created, but what these words point to is the meaning from Allah. So these words in the Qur'ān are not speech, but rather they are the "meaning" from Allah. The proof they use for this belief is from a poet named Al-Akhtal who said that "indeed the speech is in the heart, and the tongue has been made as an indicator of what's in the heart". And therefore utterance of the Qur'ān is not considered speech, but only an indication of speech. Thus the Qur'ān that one reads, is'nt the words of Allah, but is only an indication of the meaning of Allah's speech. Let us just take note that with such a serious claim that the Qur'ān is only meaning, they got to this conclusion by using some words of a poet!

Another proof they give is the hadith of Umar (RA) who said "I made up in myself some speech". It was said on his way to discuss with the ansar about the appointment of a caliph after the death of the prophet. They use this evidence to indicate that the meaning he was conjuring up in his mind was his speech.

ASWJ response to this:

When the word "speech" is used, it is utterance with meaning. However when it is qualified by something, then it can hold many different meanings. Also Al-Akhtal was a Christian, so how could you use the words of a kafir with regards to the speech of Allah? When the scholars tried to find this poem attributed to him, they didn't find it. Even the people who specialised in collecting his work could not find these particular words. However they did find a similar poem, but it didnt use the word speech, it used the word impulse/inclinations. The Arab linguist said that Al-Akhtal doesn't even qualify to be a reference for Arabic grammar. Beyond all this, it contradicts what the Arabs definition of speech is as we mention earlier.

With regards to the hadith of Umar, he qualified the speech when he said "to myself". Whereas if he just used the word "speech" without qualifying it, it will mean he made the speech and then uttered it.

Assuming we agree with their idea of speech being whats in the heart and not coming out, how come we know what the speech of the Qur'ān is? In essence, it's the same as what the Mu'tazila believe about Allah not speaking.

So at the end of the day, they will still say the Qur'ān that is with us is created. Some of the Ash'arees admit that the Qur'ān is created, but warn their students not to admit this except in their own gatherings.

The Ash'arees reject that attributes of actions (which come from Allah's will} due to their principal that everything created has a beginning. And therefore claim that speech is an attribute of essence i.e. That the speech has always been around. Thus according to them, Allah has always been speaking.

ASWJ confirm that Allah spoke with his voice. Bukhari narrated that Allah will speak with his voice on the day of judgement, which can be heard equally from the near and the far in the same

way. Therefore it confirms that Allah has a voice. However it also confirms that his voice is different from mankind. The fact Allah uses his voice to speak reiterates to us that his speech isn't "meaning as they claim".

Response with regards to the Qur'ān holding only 1 meaning:

If they were to say that all of the speech of Allah has one meaning, this will mean that the torah, ingel and Qur'ān is all one meaning. This doesn't make sense. There is no proof to support such an idea.

This leads them to reject that some surahs are better than others as the whole Qur'ān has only one meaning. But we know through narrations of the prophet that in fact some surahs are considered better than others, for example, surah Ahad is considered better than surah Ikhlas. Another example can be found in the Qur'ān where it mentions "*Whatever a Verse (revelation) do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring a better one or similar to it*" (2:106)

There are other ayat that indicate that Allah's speech isn't ongoing, where he says something, that wasn't said before. This is where the Qur'ān mentions that when Musa arrived, Allah spoke to him "*So when he reached it (the fire), he was called from the right side of the valley, in the blessed place from the tree: "O Moosa (Moses)! Verily! I am Allah, the Lord of the Alameen (mankind, jinns and all that exists)!"*" (28:30). This is a conditional statement, Allah spoke to him only when Musa arrived. They argue that whenever there is an instance where this occurs, it is not the speech, but it is instead the utterance of the speech.

ASWJ confirm that Allah speaks, but we don't know how he does it, but nonetheless we accept that he speaks. On this particular issue the Ash'arees are very similar to the Mu'tazila.

The scholars of ASWJ have mentioned that the Ash'arees are not considered to be part of ASWJ as they did not really combat shirk, in essence they are just another deviant sect.

- The second main aspect of their belief is how they view hadiths.

Hadith can be split into the following 2:

1. Ahaad
2. Mutawatir

They argue that Ahaad hadiths can only be used for actions, whereas mutawatir hadiths can be used for both actions and aqeeda. The reason why they don't use ahaad hadiths for their aqeeda is because they claim they are somewhat doubtful, and therefore cannot be used for evidence with regards to aqeeda.

### **Who made such a separation?**

ASWJ say that as long as you verify the hadith authenticity -whether it is ahaad or mutawatir-, you use it for aqeeda and actions. If the hadith is not good enough to be used for aqeeda, it shouldn't be used for actions either. There are vast amounts of hadiths which are ahaad, and therefore they restrict themselves from truly understanding aqeeda.

- The third main aspect of their belief is their understanding of Tawheed

ASWJ say you must single out your intentions and actions to Allah. They agree with this terminology, however disagree with the meaning.

Their Tawheed can be split into 3:

1. They define the Tawheed of the Essence of Allah as there being one God, who is neither divisible( like what the Christians believe as god being the trinity} nor multiple( like the hindus who have many different Gods }
2. Tawheed As-Siffat
3. Tawheed of Actions- the actions of Allah

As can be seen, all their categories can fall into Tawheed Rububiyah- which is to believe that God is single from anything else. And to recognise that he is the only one true god. A proof for this is where Allah says "*Allaah created all things and He Is the agent on which all things depend.*"(39:62)-

The problem with having such a broad definition for Tawheed is that according to the categories, the Quraysh mushrikeen will fit into the same group. As they recognised that God is one, and is the one who provides for them. They will invoke him before war just as Abu Jahl did on the battle of Badr, where he invoked Allah to give victory to the party upon truth. As Allah says "*Those who took for themselves patrons other than God (would say): We only worship them so that they may bring us closer to God.*" (39: 3). They merely used intermediaries as way to ask Allah for whatever they needed. Their shirk wasn't that they didn't recognise the Tawheed Rububiyah, but it was that they didn't single out their worship to God alone.

- Another main concept that ASWJ disagree with is their concept of Qadr.

They acknowledge the knowledge of Allah and take the opinion of Abu Hassan where he confirms the will of man, but claims that it has no effect on anything. They tried taking the middle path between the Qadariyah- who say that Allah does not have any will over you, and therefore not in control what you do- and the Jabariyah- who say that man has no will, he is infact like a feather in the wind-.

Ar- Razi who is their main imam tries to illustrate this point by using the following example; An old man places on top of him a young child, then climbed up the mountain. Who climbed the mountain? He answers by saying that the man done the climbing, and the child also ascended, but did not do it himself. He uses this example as an analogy, as if to say that Allah is the man, and we are the young child. So Allah does the will, and we go through with the action, but has nothing to do with our will.

Bizarrely, they say man is compelled, in the form of a creation that has choice. Logically this comment doesn't make sense, but what in seems like is that they hold the same view as the Jabariyah.

- Another main aspect of their belief that ASWJ disagree with is Iman

Amongst themselves, they share different definitions of Iman. Some say Iman is just that you know who Allah is. Others confirm this, but also say that you have to believe in its validity (i.e. to

have firm confirmation in the heart that what you believe in is the truth}. From both these definition, it can be seen that they do not include actions as part of Iman. Therefore they say the only way to know whether a person is a Muslim or a kafir is if the person was to utter certain words which indicate his level of iman. They judge a person as a “Muslim” if he states that he is one, as they consider this to be an indicator of what's in his heart. And similarly when someone says “I'm a disbeliever”, he doesn't leave Islam because of such a statement, but rather it's only an indicator of what's in his heart. So according to them, the action isn't the factor that takes him out of the fold of Islam, but the action only indicates what his heart believes. Therefore actions are not considered to be part of iman. Hence they share similar characteristics as the Murjah in this respect. The reason they can't include actions with iman is based on their concept of “Qadr”. As we mentioned previously, their stance with regards to "man's will" and how we are not really in control of our actions-similar to the Jarbaryyah-. They limit iman to the state of the heart. The problem with this deviant idea is that if this concept is spread among the ummah, they will begin to belittle actions and their importance, and may result in people committing major sins and believing that they have no impact on their iman.

However they do make takfir on certain actions, for example, if a man curses the Allah. But they make takfir on him on the basis that it's only the indication to the kufr in his heart, and not the action by itself.

They have had a great influence by the greek philosophy and unfortunately adopted some of their principals. Take for instance where aristotle claims that nothing can be known by its essence except by its essence, (i.e measurement, characteristics, etc}. Through this theory, the Ash'arees began to claim that all atoms are the same. They say it has the same essence, but shares different forms. So if you ask them why did Allah forbid alcohol and allow water, when they have the same essence? They answer by claiming that the only differentiation is that Allah chose to forbid it for one reason or another as they are in essence the same. So they believe that they are the same, but the only difference is that Allah has forbid one and not the other.

This leads to an even graver misconception. A simple person will ask; if everything has the same essence, why does water cool you down and nourish you, whereas fire burns you? Why is it that if someone sleeps on the ground, he rests, but if he sleeps in the fire he burns, and if he sleeps in water he drowns? The answer they give is that the type of things we may come across during our life don't have any qualities, for example, fire by itself does not share the quality of burning someone if he touches it. They will say that the fire does not burn man, but it's Allah that wills for man to burn. They say qualities don't exist in these things. They reject that matter can have innate power. Whereas ASWJ believe that when Allah created everything, he put their respective qualities within them and that the innate power cannot take place except through the will of Allah. A proof for this is where Allah says “*And We have made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?*”( 21:30). This indicates that the quality of life is from water. With this approach, they have dented the ummah's pursuit of science, as any matter that is discovered does not share any innate characteristics, which leads to man losing any incentive to investigate the world around us.

The Ash'arees issues regarding:

1. Qur'an- they differ from ASWJ, and similar to Mu'tazila
2. Sunnah- they differ from ASWJ
3. Qadr- they differ from ASWJ, but similar to Jabariyyah
4. Iman- they differ from ASWJ, but similar to the Murjah

- Another aspect that they differ with ASWJ is how they deem something good or bad.

According to the Mu'tazila, something good or bad is derived from our intellect. We say yes, the intellect can sometimes have the ability to know what is good or bad. For example, someone can naturally hate something due to its evil, before even hearing the Islamic ruling on it. This is linked to man's fitra (natural disposition}. However, where they go wrong is where they depend solely on their mind. The proof they put forward is where Allah's says "We do not punish them until we sent messengers", they argue that the messengers indicates intellect.

Whereas the Ash'arees believe it is only determined by the Shari`ah, and they disregard the nature of it. They say in itself there is nothing good or bad in matter. This point is linked to the previous topic. So according to them, before Allah sent down his ruling, everything will be the same- i.e neither good nor bad. For example, before the rulings for alcohol were revealed, they will argue that in itself it was neither good nor bad. But this is wrong, before the ruling was revealed, it was still considered bad, it lead to family problems, health problems, social problems. However due to its cons outweighing its pros, Allah forbid it. Another example, if Allah ordered us to be oppressive, they will believe that to be oppressive is good (obviously if He ordered us, then we accept it and act upon it}. So if Allah ordered us to commit shirk, zina, disobey our parents, etc, they will consider all these acts as good. Another impliaction is that if Allah turned everything round, where he sent all the Muslims to hell and rewarded the kuffar with jannah, according to them this will be good. They give no role to the intellect to ascertain what is good or bad.

ASWJ believe that Allah has created everything and put the good and bad within it. Proof for this is where Allah says "*Eat of the good lawful things We have provided for you*" (2:57). When Allah was addressing the Arabs at the time, when he mentioned the "good", they would have known what that was, and simarlary they would have also known what the "evil" was. However if they got the two mixed up or made a mistake, a ruling would have come down to correct them. This was due to them misunderstanding certain acts where they deemed to be good or evil and were wrong. Therefore the mind can determine whats good for it and bad for it. However, when it comes down to reward and punishment, then this can only be determined by the text. For example, alcohol was considered bad even before the ruling had come down as it had many bad affects, e.g family and social problems, health problems, etc. The Shari`ah came in regards accountability and not to introduce to us the good or bad in the matter. As its nature is the same before and after the ruling. And this concept is reflected when we take into consideration the means on how we do things, such as some people choosing democracy as a method for Muslims, which is evil by nature. So ASWJ believe that reward and punishment lies only with the Shari`ah, whereas we can use our intellect to ascertain the nature and whether it is good or not. So Allah may give a command that may seem evil, so if a man was to slaughter his son, would this be evil? We say yes it is. Just because Allah commanded Ibrahim (AS) to slaughter his son, does not make it good by nature, but the good in the action was the objective behind it. And that is Ibrahim willing to sacrifice his son for Allah This reinforces the idea of ASWJ that we implement what Allah orders us to do whether our intellect agrees with it or not. The intellect only plays a role afterwards to appreciate the text. With regards to the commands of Allah, he only commands us on things that benefit us and our surroundings and similarly forbids us from things that are evil for us and our surroundings. And the sound intellect will get to the same conclusion, for example zina, alcohol, shirk etc.

The Ash'arees fail to understand the reason why Allah has made any ruling. This is because everything is the same according to them. They believe in using qiyaas to get to a ruling( where there is no particular text to prohibit or forbid and act, but it is decided upon by weighing up similar text to get to the decision, e.g the permissibility of using an air plane for travel}, but dont recognise any matter as having good or bad. This is a contradiction, how on one hand they believe that nothing has innate qualities, but on the other they believe that they can weigh up the pros and cons of new issues and arrive to a decision using qiyaas.

Due to their misunderstanding of iman, they say that the victory of Allah will be granted when the believers attain high level of iman- which is linked to the heart and not the actions according to them.

Some may argue that all these issues we are discussing have already been addressed, and there is no need to highlight them again. Our response to them is that these issues are important, as we need to understand how we got to such a low level, mainly through our ignorance. We need to know how this ignorance has crept in, otherwise we will be discussing our problems all day without comprehending their roots.

In our times, there are many scholars coming out of these Islamic Institutions holding onto some of these deviant views. Such as their views with regards to man's will and whether he has control over it and the relationship between Allah's will and man's will. These problems and misconception are in the minds of the genreal people.

According to the Ash'arees, "ta`weel" is where you take the non-apparent meaning of a particular word. They approach the matter in a non straightforward way. Ar-Razi, who was famous Ash'aree scholar, said that the genreal rule is that if there seems to be conflict between intellect and text, then we place the text ahead of the intellect, but the text is nor confirmed except through the intellect.

As can be seen from this strange statement, they wanted to distance themselves from the Mu'tazila- who take intellect over text-, but in essence they say the same thing. In the end their intellect is their actual source, as it is the thing that qualifies and validates the text.

Ar-Razi also mentioned that if we were to abandon the text and follow the intellect, that is the same as accusing the Shari`ah as going against the text, so he says we have to harmonise between the two. He says that it is not possible to accuse the Shari`ah to be against intellect. This is because they put their intellect on a very high level. And if it appears that the two clash, he says that you must look for the hidden meanings in the text, so it can agree with the intellect, and this is what ta`weel means to them. For example, when Allah says "he rose above the throne", the Arabic meaning for the word "rose" is to sit or settle. So when they consider the word rose, they dont accept this definition, as it goes against their intellect, they refuse to accept this under the pretext that Allah cannot resemble his creation. This is because according to their Tawheed, one of his attributes is his actions; and his actions cannot resemble our actions, so if we settle, they say Allah does not settle as it will mean that Allah is resembling his creation. Thus, the apparent meaning of sitting/settling is not for Allah.

Also in Arabic, the word "above" indicates the aboveness of something, and this is one of the 6 qualities of direction- which are above, under, in front, behind, left, right-.they say that these qualities are created, so how is possible to attribute something created to Allah? So due to these

points, when it mentions “rose above the throne”, it is not permissible to attribute the apparent meaning, as he is alone in his attributes. Now, they go searching for other meanings to this statement, namely the hidden meaning that agrees with their intellect. They say that instead of the meaning “to rise”; it is in fact to “take charge”.

This same principal also leads them to try to find out the hidden meaning of the "speech" of Allah. They say due to man having speech, it is therefore inconceivable to believe that Allah posses speech. Thus, they say when the “speech of Allah” is mentioned, it means internal speech. They justify this through the poem of Al-Akhtal and the hadith of Umar (Ra) (as we mentioned before}. Another situation where they use ta`weel, is in reference to the "will" of Allah. ASWJ say that the “will” of Allah occurs. Whereas they say that any occurrence is created, and thereofer it cannot be attributed to Allah. So according to them, the will of Allah has always existed- i.e. It does not have a beginning.

To sum up, ta`weel to them is to remove the apparent meaning if it goes against ones intellect. For ta`weel to take place, it must agree with atleast one of the following 3 conditions.

1. The linguistic proof
2. The customery meaning
3. The shari`ee proof

For example, fish can never have its ta`weel as meat, as there is nothing to suggest it from the above conditions. Whereas the term zakat, can be understood linguistically as purification, whereas in the shari`ee context, it means to give a certain percentage of ones wealth every year.

This even leads them to do ta`weel with the names and attributes of Allah (Aqeeda Waasityyah is a good book to go through to get a good understanding of Allah's names and attributes). Allah's name "Ar-Rahman" is derived from his attribute of being merciful. These are suitable names as they reflect his attribute, but if they didn't reflect his attribute then they won't be good names. Take for instance a man called Hassan (which means good},if his actions werent considered good, then his name will be unsuitable for him as they don't represent the individual. Every name of Allah points to one of his attributes, however not every attribute points to his name. For example, one of his attribute is that he is the best of plotters, but we do not call him “plotter”.

They say that all of Allah's names and attributes can be put into 7 main attributes.

1. Life
2. Hearing
3. Seeing
4. Ability
5. Will
6. Knowledge
7. Speech

Where will Ar-Rahman fit into the above attributes? According to ASWJ, this is one of his attributes. Whereas the Ash'arees say "Ar-Rahman" falls under the section of “will”. This is because it comes from Allah wanting or choosing to give mercy to whomever he wishes. Thus, as will is created according to them, this means that his mercy is also created as it originates it.

Therefore mercy to them isn't part of Allah, but instead, it is something created. Another example that follows the same equation is "the one who forgives". As this is linked to Allah's will, this attribute is not part of Allah. Other attributes fit into the different groups. However the ones that they cannot categorise into these 7 groups, they reject them. The Mu'tazila deny the attributes due to their understanding of the Tawheed Al Qadeem-the beginning. Whereas the Ash'arees don't reject all his attributes, they reject instead the ones they cannot fit into their 7 main attributes. So in fact, they are similar to the Mu'tazila, but just to a lesser extent.

The shortcoming with such an approach is that you may get two attributes that fit into the same category, and therefore you're not do them justice in explaining them. For example, from Allah's mercy comes his forgiveness. They are both distinct even though they may overlap each other. His mercy encompasses all of his creation, but his forgiveness is only for the Muslims. Their broad categorisation does not encompass all the meanings. These names have to have a reality behind them, otherwise they will be useless to have. There is nothing in the sunnah that splits Allah's attributes into these 7 categories.

Their ta`weel causes them to reject some of Allah' attributes. Even though the Mu'tazila are worse than them in this respect, but at least they have a clear argument, and say what they believe. Whereas the Ash'arees remove the meanings behind Allah, and then fill the void with meanings that have not been given by Islam. They are running away from anthropomorphism -likening Allah to his creation-, but in fact they are going into something even worse. For example, they replace the meaning of "he rose" with the word "to take charge". This is even worse as it indicates that Allah has an opponent. So they deny the meanings of the attributes of Allah and they then give worse incorrect meanings to explain them.

Ibn Qayum mentions in one of his books how ta`weel had become a taghut in his time (the type of ta`weel we have been discussing). As people began to replace the aspects of the shari'aa that their intellect disagrees with.

The Ash'arees confirm the belief of the ghayb-unseen-, however they share a different meaning from ASWJ. The Mu'tazila reject the fact that we will see Allah in the hereafter. Whereas the Ash'arees say that we will see Allah, however not with our own eyes. So they will confirm the matters of the unseen, but add a false meaning to it.

The response we give them to this incorrect idea of ta`weel:

Many of the meanings they draw from ta`weel, don't even have a root with the word at hand. For example the word "he rose" (Istawaa}, they use ta`weel and say that it means "to take charge (Istawlaa}. There is no Arabic reference to this. The two words have no link between each other. Ibn Araby-a famous Arab linguist- has mentioned that there is no link between the 2 words.

Another proof they provide with regards to the speech of Allah is the poem of Al Aktal who no-one has been able to verify from him. Also he isn't even someone who is a reference point for Arabic grammar.

When you ask them as to why they do ta`weel, the answer they give is that they fear likening Allah to his creation. What our response to them is, why do you confirm the ability of Allah and not his mercy, when both these attributes can be found in man? Why do they confirm 7

attributes and not the others? How could you accept some attributes and reject others? Its illogical!

ASWJ acknowledge the meanings and attributes of Allah, despite some characteristic's being associated to man. For example, we know that both man and animals have feet. However by us accepting this fact does not mean that they have the same feet. They vary from size, colour, texture, etc. You cant understand the foot of a man unless you know what man is. Similarly with Allah, we confirm his attribute, however we are unable to visualise his attributes. Therefore the attributes can share the same name, but they differ in reality.

Imam Malik has made a very famous statement with regards to the attributes of Allah, he said “the rising above is known, the how is unknown.....”. From this statement, it's clear that when he mentions the “rising above is known”, its means that this is obvious and is clear in its meaning. Yet the “how is unknown”, as we do not know the way it happens as Allah has not informed us of this. So similarly, we confirm that Allah has eyes-as is confirmed in the text-, but we do not go into how they look like, size etc. Whereas they say his eyes mean knowledge or ability.

The later Ash'arees known as the “muwafitha”, refuse to discuss these issues and do not do ta`weel. So where the early ones would have said they know the meanings, the later choose not to delve into such topics. Many great scholars fell into this mistake of the muwafitha such as Imam Nawawi, as they thought it to be the manhaj of ASWJ. It doesn't make sense that Allah will choose to give us certain information, and yet, prohibit us from trying to understanding it. ASWJ is in between these two ideas, they do not do ta`weel of his attributes, and they do not choose to refuse to delve into it. They accept his attributes, but add nothing more to them than what they have already been told.

With regards to Allah's attributes that are dependent on his will such as “forgiveness”, his “decentration” etc, they don't accept them. Take for instance the issue of Allah descending to the lowest heaven as is mentioned in the hadith where Allah comes down to the lowest heaven in the last third of the night, they reject the fact that he descends as this is dependent on his will which is created according to them. Another reason they reject this point is because they say if he descends, there will be movement and therefore there will be a transformation. And that if he comes down to the sky, it means the sky is containing him.

ASWJ believe that He does descent in reality, but in a manner that benefits Him. The problem with using proofs to counteract what they say, is that they will just misinterpret them, so they have to be shown their errors grammatically. The Ash'arees say that Allah cannot descend or he cannot rise above. They reject them because they are directions, and it means that if one moves from one place, he leaves another place.

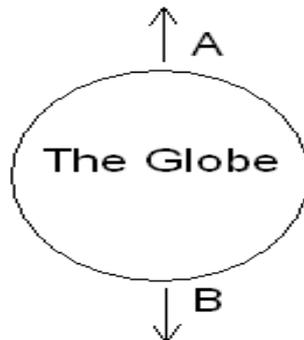
Our response to this point:

Allah says “*they ask Allah from above them*”, in Arabic “from above them” has the meaning of either the location or the degree of something. For example, the ceiling is above me from my position. With regards to assessing quality such as gold being higher than silver, this is how the word can be used in reference to degree of grades. They adopt the second definition in the ayat mentioned above, thus to them, Allah is higher than us with regards to quality and reject that it could mean the first definition. So how do you decided which of the two definition should be applied to a particular situation? The rule to use to is to see whether the word is attached with the

Arabic word “min”-from- either before the word “above” or “below”, if this takes place, it can only mean a sense of direction. In the Qur'ān ayat mentioned above, it uses the word “min”. Therefore according to the Arabic language, you can say that the ship is above the water by using the word “min”, and it will indicate its location to the water, and not discussing the gradeness of it.

The question regarding his "place", i.e. If He moves, that means He leaves His place. This term is not found in the Shari`ah. The word “place” has not been mentioned in the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and you cannot accept it nor reject, as it may have more than one meaning. Therefore it must be qualified when using it in this context. So when discussing with someone, firstly, you have to ask them what meaning does he hold for a word “place”. If he says he means “above”, then thats fine , however if in his definition he limits it to direction, then that is wrong. (And this similar principal can applied in reference to the definition of “something occurring”-which could either mean it is created or it has a beginning). So if someone says Allah has a place, then you should advice him that this principal is not mentioned in Qur'ān or Sunnah, however if he means above, then you can accept it. To clarify, Allah is not with his creation, he is above them. This is supported by the evidence where the prophet asked the slave girl where Allah was, she said in the heavens. In Arabic, the word “in” (Fi) could be used in the context “i am in the house” or “the money is in my pocket”, however it can also mean to be above. An example of the second usage is where Allah says “Pharaoh said i will crucify you above the palm tree”, the word used for above is “in”( Fi), and obviously Pharaoh didnt mean that they will be crucified in the actual tree.

When we say Allah is above his creation, we mean it in the sense that he is in the outer limit of his creation. So he is above and beyond the heavens. So when someone belonging to ASWJ says that Allah is in the sky, he means above it. This can be shown in the following diagram.



If there were people at both points A and B, and they were to point upwards to where Allah is, the directions would not be the same. It would seem that person B is pointing downwards. But the reason why they are both correct in pointing in these directions is because the centre of the earth is their anchor point and it is relative to their position. Therefore you cannot say person A is above person B. So despite them both pointing in "different direction", they are both in fact pointing to where Allah is.

Everything that surrounds the earth is considered to be above it, such as the sun, moon, planets etc. And when Allah is mentioned as above his creation, he is in fact outside his creation. Ibn Tammiyah has dealt with this issue far more extensively than i have, so if you want more information you can refer to his works.

The term “heaven” in Arabic can share the meaning that the thing is created-i.e. The 7 heavens- or it means something that comes from upon high. So when we say the rain comes from the heavens, in fact what we mean is that it comes from upon high.

When people say “may Allah be with you”, what does the term “with” indicate? ASWJ understand this word in 2 ways. The specific understanding, relates to the victory of Allah, such as where the prophet says “Allah is with us”. The general meaning is that Allah is supervising, aware, etc. as Allah says “Allah is with you wherever you go”. In Arabic, the word “with”, could mean that the person is accompanying someone. For example, Faaris went to the market with his younger sister Nusaybaa. Another usage can be used in the context “I am with the moon”-it's an Arabic term-. This means that the moon was overlooking the person. So when it mentions that Allah is with us, we adopt the second meaning.

The Ash'arees don't agree on everything, among them, some reject the attributes, some do ta`weel of them, etc. They don't all follow the same principals.

Out of the maturedees and the Ash'arees, the Ash'arees are closer to ASWJ, whereas the maturedees are closer to the mutazila. One of the main issues that two groups differ on is iman. For example, if a man says “i am a believer”, the maturedees will add inshallah to the end of it as they say they aren't too sure if they have a guarantee that they will go to heaven or hell. The Ash'arees argue with them that iman is in the heart, either it's there or not. This statement of the maturedees indicates to the Ash'arees that they have doubt in their belief.

Some people may ask what are the implications and why does it matter that we must agree with these attributes or whether Allah is above the heavens or not, what difference does it make to us all? Our response is that if we don't confirm that He is above, then that would imply that Allah is within his creation, and therefore leading to believe that Allah is everywhere. When we say he is above us, he doesn't exist in a particular place.

The Qadariyyah are very similar to the Mu'tazila. Their only difference is the understanding of Qadr. This issue of Qadr is the main principal of the Qadariyyah, so you can have a person who is a mutazilee who holds a Qadariyyee approach to Qadr.

In the Qur'an it mentions “*floating under our eyes*” (54:14). The tafsir given for this ayat by our salaf is that it means the protection and supervision of Allah. This is not ta`weel. ASWJ affirm both the reality and the implications of something. According to the Arabic language, someone can say “I am through your eyes”, and it could mean he is being looked after by the individual, however this can never be said about someone who has no eyes. So in the Qur'an, when Allah uses the term eyes in a certain context, even if it does not take the literal meaning of eyes, it will indicate that he does have eyes, otherwise the statement will be incorrect. And this principal can also be used with regards to when Allah mentions his hands in the Qur'an-who the Ash'arees claim to mean power and not an actual hand-. So Allah says in the Qur'an “*The Hand of Allah is over their hands*” (48:10). In Arabic, someone can say “your hand is over his hand”, and mean it in the context of one giving support to another. However, if the individual did not have a hand, then it will be incorrect to use such a statement with him. So this verse and many others prove to us that Allah does have a hand. Just because you're confirming an attribute of Allah in a specific context and not its literal meaning, does not mean you reject it. So in this instance, the Ash'arees will argue that this ayat indicates that the hand is meant at support. But this doesn't mean that he doesn't have a hand. Let us make it clear that this is not considered ta`weel, as to confirm that the

hand in this context means support, does not mean that we reject the attribute of Allah by saying he doesn't have a hand. Even their argument that his hand means power doesn't stand because Allah mentions them in the Qur'an as a pair, and obviously it cannot be said that it means 2 powers.

In Arabic, the term ta`weel has 2 definitions:

1. It is the interpretation of something
2. When something becomes realised- an example of this is where Yusuf (AS) said to his father in the Qur'an "*This is the interpretation of my dream afore time!*" ( surat 12-100)

The reason why we have been dealing with the deviant sects and their ideas instead of the kuffar, is that the biggest misconception comes from the blemishes of these groups. As many of us fall into the mistake of passing on certain misconception of these groups without even knowing it.

End of the Deviant Sects:

## **What is Iman?**

Man's actions are direct from his beliefs. For example, a socialist, the thing that drives him in life is socialism. The thing that drives a Christian man is his belief in his religion. Similarly, this also applies to the believer. If one point of his belief is corrupted, then this has a direct affect to his actions. So a believer has one point that is crucial for him to preserve, namely his belief. This is the same point that moulded the sahaba the men they were. And the corruption of this point, leads to the corruption of the people, as can be seen in our time. This point is none but the understanding of iman. This was the first call of Islam. Once the believers say the shahadaa, by saying this statement, they changed completely. Everything else follows this main point such as Shari'ah, conduct, sunnah, etc. It is precisely the misunderstanding of this one point, that has led to such devastation. As for the companions, everything they did was in line with this one point. This lead to their life being in harmony with the reality around them, which led to some amazing fruits in this world and the hereafter. This statement of iman is the statement of Tawheed. It truly moulds the individual, and it can destroy him if he misunderstands it. Some people say that iman is a clear cut manner only relating to the heart, and he restricts iman as the belief in the unknown, such as Allah, hereafter, angels, etc. Thus, if he were to believe in these unknowns, his iman will be sound. They say that the problem of the Muslims today is that they do not know how to interact with the daily life. So our response to them will be, who taught the sahaba how to interact with their surroundings?

When we look back at the beginning of the message of Islam, the first thing the prophet was sent to clarify what is Tawheed. The second was the establishment of the jamaat, so the efforts can be co-ordinated. And unfortunately in our time, both these concepts have become corrupted. Many misconception have crept in concerning the issue of aqeeda and and the understanding of jamaat. Take for instance, Hamas deciding to fight the jews, but do not seem to care that there is a kafir ruling over them in their land. This is because their actions are not properly connected back to iman.

And for this reason, we need to understand how these statements are understood by the salaf.

We find that surah Fathiha encompasses the whole meaning of the Qur'an "*to you we worship and to you we seek assistance*". "Worship" is the action you do while intending it for something or someone. So in this verse, we can clearly see that the worship is restricted solely to Allah. Likewise the "assistance" is also solely from Allah. Worship is when you offer your actions to something, whereas with regards to his needs, he "request" from someone. And both these actions should be directed to the one Lord. And this is where the concept of sincerity comes from.

So mans actions can be summed up into 2:

1. Performing an act
2. Requesting/seeking something

The intentions behind actions and request symbolise every movement of man. The prophet was sent for the purpose to unit both actions to be devoted to Allah alone.

If you can imagine having a model that encompasses 2 categories. The first category is the 3 main characteristics of man:

1. Actions:-This is symbolised by either offering actions or making request.
2. Attributes:- This are the aspects of man such as hair, legs, eyes, etc.
3. Essence/Body:- This indicates that man is a real thing and not something that is abstract.

On the other side of this model we have 3 similar characteristics of Allah, but they differ in reality:

1. Action:- His actions are one and all exclusive to him. i.e. No-one else has the power or shares the quality to create something.
2. Attributes:- His attributes are one and all exclusive to him. Allah has all the perfect attributes, i.e. No-one has mercy in its absolute sense except Allah.
3. Essence:-He is something that is real and one, not something that is abstract.

Mans intentions/actions and requests must be directed to the second model with all its exclusive actions, attributes and essence.

When man directs his actions and requests solely, exclusively to this model, then this is what we refer to Tawheed "Uboodiyah" or "Uloohiyah". So every action or request of ours should be directed in this regard. This aspect of Tawheed is also known as Tawheed Al-Ma`refa ( to know something} or Taweheed Al-Ithbat ( to confirm what it is}. The prophet came down to make man direct his "will" to God exclusively. The things your free to do such as the mubah (permissible actions that you neither get rewarded or punished}, where does it fall in? Take for example if a man decides to smell a flower. This fits into the above principal as the man is deciding to smell the flower because he knows that Islam permits him. This principal can be found in the Shari`ah, where every action is considered to be lawful unless there is a ruling to prohibit it. With the exception of acts and rituals of worhsip, where the rule is the other way round, i.e. Everything is forbidden unless there is proof to suggest otherwise. So all of our

actions that range from halal to haram are linked to Tawheed Uloohiya as everything is intended for Allah alone.

### **How does man interact with his surroundings?**

1. The first and most important interaction is his relationship with his Lord. This involves our worship to him and abstaining from the things that He has prohibited us. Actions such as praying, fasting, zakat, etc should be directed to Allah. These are called the "Tawheed of Nusuq".
2. Another relationship is how we interact with other people around us. Allah has informed us how to act with the different groups. Such as to love the believers, and hate the kuffar. This category comes under "Tawheed Al Wala Wal Bara" (love and hate for the sake of Allah).
3. The final relationship is to do with our code of conduct. This includes the correct ways of dealing with your wife, how to eat, how to sleep, how to trade, etc. These mainly refer to laws and code of conduct. Yet again, these all have to be done intending to attain Allah's pleasure. This aspect is called "Tawheed Al Qadaar wal Tashree".

This is a brief way of splitting up man's different relationship that he will be involved in during his life. So to sum up mans "will"-intentions and requests he makes:-

- Relationship of Allah-Tawheed Nusuq
- Relationship of interacting with others-Tawheed Al Wala Wal Bara
- Relationship of conduct-Tawheed Al Qadaar Wal Tashree

All of the above different Tawheeds fall under "Tawheed Uloohiya". And it is derived from the shahadaa "there is no God worthy of worship". This aspect of Tawheed only deals with the actions of man and what he does. And this is what we will be judged upon on the day of judgement.

The other side of Tawheed which deals with who Allah is, is referred to as "Tawheed Rububiyah"-which means that there is nothing like Allah and he has ultimate Lordship. This can be further broken down to Tawheed Al Ma`refa( to know something} and Tawheed Al Ithbat( to confirm something}. So this is to acknowledge and confirm whatever Allah has said about himself such as his names/attributes, he is the creator etc. The names and attributes were later separated by our salaf into a their own separate category of Tawheed (Tawheed Asma Was Siffat} due to the confusion and doubts that were raised about them. Tawheed Rububiyah deals with the actions of Allah.

If we look back at history of shirk, we notice that the first ever act of shirk was carried out by Iblees. The question is, was this a shirk anything to do with Rububiyah? Iblees did not reject Allah's attributes, his issue was that he did not act on what Allah commanded him to do. So this shirk was not of "rububiyah", namely accepting Allah's Lordship, but it was the shirk of "Uloohiyah", namely the issue of ibadaa-worship. A crucial point to understand is that shirk isn't only associating partners to Allah, but can also include the actions and intentions of man-if they arent directed solely to Allah.

### **What are the tools man uses?**

What tools has Allah bestowed us with regards to our actions? They are the heart, tongue and limbs. All these symbolise and represent man's actions.

The role of the heart: This is represented in speech (in Arabic this type of speech is indicated by opinion} and actions.

The role of the tongue: This is represented in speech.

The role of limbs: This is represented by actions.

All of the above components of action must be in line with what Allah has ordered us to do. All 3 tools can be found in Uloohiya-which are comprised of Tawheed nusuq, Tawheed al wala wal bara and Tawheed al qadaar wal tashree-.

Allah orders us to make all of our actions exclusively to him. He has shown us what obedience is required from us. Therefore iman is manifested in belief in the heart, speech of tongue, and actions of the limbs. The salaf have mentioned that iman is speech and actions. This is because the heart shares both characteristics-speech and actions-, the tongue deals with the speech alone, and the limbs deal with the actions alone. The salaf also considered iman as Tawheed Al Qasd wal Talab-which is another name for Tawheed Uloohiyah, namely who you offer your actions to and to whom you make requests to.

A question that needs to be answered is how did all these numerous terms come about? The salaf got all these terminologies from the classical books that mention man's actions in accordance with the Shari`ah. With regards to the connections of all the different Tawheeds, the najdi scholars have discussed this issue at great length. They have said many correct statements, however some people have misunderstood them.

From the brief explanation of Tawheed Uloohiyah and Tawheed rububiyah, is it possible that someone could have a sound understanding of Rububiyah, and yet not comprehend Uloohiyah? Or vice-versa? The answer is No. This is because the scholars have mentioned that Uloohiyah is a consequence of Rububiyah. As you cannot submit to something, unless there is recognition that you must do the particular act. Therefore if we were to see a man doing and acting on everything that Allah has commanded, then this will indicate he has a sound understanding of Tawheed Rububiyah-as his Uloohiyah is a direct consequence of his understanding of rububiyah. The more someone practices his Tawheed, the more he worships Allah.

The proof for Tawheed Uloohiyah can be found in numerous places in the Qur'an, an example is where Allah says "*fear Allah and obey me*" (43:63). And these verse tend to go hand in hand with the proofs for Tawheed Rububiyah where Allah reminds us that it is he who rewards and punishes people, then follows it with a rhetorical question as to why man does not worship him. So it can be seen that Allah uses His Rububiyah to establish His Uloohiyah. When man understands the greatness of Allah on a high level, it will inevitably lead to possessing sound Uloohiyah. This can be done by reading and pondering over verses of the Qur'an, which then lead to you to submit to Allah. Some people emphasise only on the Uloohiyah aspects and don't give much attention to the rububiyah side. So they will study fiqh and Shari`ah intensively, but wouldn't really understand the nature of Allah-from the information he has given us-.

Just as Tawheed Uloohiyah is manifested into the 3 categories-Tawheed nusuq, Tawheed al wala wal bara, Tawheed Al Qadaar wal Tashree-, shirk can take place in these 3 categories. Shirk can also take place with regards to aspects of Rububiyah, such as names and attributes.

The shirk that takes place with regards to Uloohiyah is directly linked to man's actions. These take place in the tools Allah has provided us with that we mentioned earlier:

- Heart
- Tongue
- Limbs

### **How are these tools manifested in Tawheed Uloohiyah?**

How are these tools manifested in the Tawheed of Nusuq?

Heart- Reliance in Allah, love of Allah, etc

Tongue- Dua, tasbih, thikr, good statements, reading Qur'an, etc

Limbs- Prayer, zakat, fasting, etc

How are these tools manifested in Tawheed Al wala wal bara?

Heart- Loving the believers and hating the disbelievers.

Tongue- Allah orders us to fight against the disbelievers with our tongues

Limbs – Jihad against the enemies of Allah

How are these tools manifested in Tawheed Al Qadaar wal Tashree?

Heart- Being happy with that Allah has decreed

Tongue- Not to lie, speak politely to people, etc

Limbs- How to drink water, how to eat, etc

And similarly, these tools are also manifested in Tawheed Rububiyah

Heart- You believe in Allah's rububiyah and you accept it

Tongue- You confirm and attest to these facts using your tongue

Limbs- (there are no actions with regards to Tawheed Rububiyah, as these only deal with aspects about Allah}

An important point to note is that all of the above tools of the different Tawhoods can be nullified, namely by committing shirk in there respective areas. For example, with regards to

Tawheed Nusuq, where the heart is supposed to love Allah, someone can commit shirk by not loving Allah. Hence, just as Tawheed is manifested in the heart, tongue and limbs, shirk can also be represented by the heart, tongue and limbs. And this is why we say that iman is the belief, speech and actions. And shirk can take place in any of the 3 tools.

Part of obedience is to believe in the names and attributes of Allah. Allah has ordered us to believe in his rububiyah as he has numerously informed us in the Qur'an about his oneness.

As we mentioned before, Iman is obedience of man through the tools Allah has given us- heart, tongue, limbs-. The opposite of iman is kufr, therefore it is also committed through these same tools. Therefore we can say that every act that man carries out falls either into iman or kufr. Whether it is praying, walking, talking ,etc. This is because the actions we do are either endorsed by the Shari`ah or prohibited by it. Man can fall into either of the 2 categories by his tools. So belief is in the heart, tongue and limbs, and similarly disbelief is in the heart, tongue and limbs.

In the books of the salaf you will come across different quotations of iman, some say it is “speech and actions”, whereas others will be more specific and say it is “intentions, speech, actions, sunnah”. But its definition can vary depending on the times they were made, and yet still are correct. For example, the ones who said it is “speech and actions” only said this as a refutation to the deviants at the time who were saying that iman is only in the heart and others who said that it is only on the tongue. So you will find variety of definitions of iman, but in essence they all point to the same thing. Even if someone was to say that iman is everything man has to offer to Allah, this will be considered to be correct. Some people dont understand that in these statements of iman, they implicitly include the heart. As “speech” is not only restricted to the tongue, but can also mean what the heart believes. So if someone prays, it is considered belief, and yet if someone abandons the prayer, he has committed disbelief. If someone listens to the Qur'an, it is considered belief, and yet if someone listens to music, he has committed disbelief- as we mentioned earlier in this document, definitions have different levels in their meanings, so where both acts are considered as disbelief , it doesn't necessarily mean that the one who perpetuates the act is a kaffir, as we do not hold the same views as the Khawarij -. Every obedience to Allah is belief, and every disobedience to Allah is kufr.

### **The actions of belief we carry out need to be in accordance with the following 2:**

1. Who you intend the action for i.e. To Allah
2. Following Allah's commandment

For example, some people may put forward the question as to how a trader can have his intentions for Allah when he is doing business. We say as long as he is not doing haram in his transactions, then this is considered as an act of belief. This is because Allah has permitted man to do business. One of its consequences is that you don't end up relying on peoples hand outs, and you may be able to help others who are in dire situations. So every act man does which is in accordance with the law of Allah, is considered as iman and Tawheed. And similarly, any act that is not in accordance with the law of Allah is considered as kufr and shirk. For example, to utter the words of “All praise is to Allah”, as long as they are done for the correct intention, then this itself is iman, and not just a “fruit of iman” as many people claim.

The commands of Allah are in turn linked to the requirements of his attributes. This means that the orders He gives to man, are linked to his beautiful names and attributes. If we understand this point, we can see how much love and grace Allah has for us. So when we are re-

enacting his orders, we can appreciate his attributes by interacting with them. Hence, all the good actions we do are implied in one of his attributes. Ibn Qayyim discusses this issue very deeply in his books. I'll give you a few examples to substantiate this point. When Allah orders us to seek forgiveness for our sins, what attribute of Allah is linked to this? It is clearly his attribute of forgiveness. When Allah orders us to be charitable, this is linked to his attribute of being graceful. When Allah orders us to do jihad against the oppressors, this is linked to his attribute of being the avenger. Another example can be seen with the variety of Allah's creation which gives us an insight into his ability. So when we ponder over all the good actions man commits, we would be able to see how beautiful Allah's names and attributes truly are. And the examples are endless where our actions can be linked back to the attributes of Allah. This is why some sahaba were able to anticipate certain rulings before they were even revealed. This is because the sahaba were in tune with the understanding of Allah. There are numerous examples where Umar (RA) gave his opinion on a ruling, and then Allah supported his ruling by confirming it, such as the correct way of dealing with the mushrikeen captives after the battle of Badr-where he thought they should have been executed, whereas Abu Bakr (RA) believed it was best to ransom them, however Allah sent down the verses *"It is not for a Prophet that he should have prisoners of war (and free them with ransom) until he had made a great slaughter (among his enemies) in the land."* (8:67) confirming Umar's opinion-. So the key is that if you truly understand the attributes of Allah, then his rulings will seem natural and you will see the wisdom behind all of them. A scholar isn't someone who just memorises enormous amounts of knowledge, but rather he is someone who understands the wisdom behind the rulings. If someone finds himself disassociated from the names and attributes of Allah, he will find it hard to both act and understand certain rulings. Thus it is imperative that we understand that all the actions the Shari`ah has laid down have a direct link to Allah's names and attributes.

As we mentioned previously, every order from Allah represents Iman, whereas every disobedience represents kufr and shirk. But what's the difference between kufr and shirk? Some scholars point to a difference between the two, however in reality there is no difference. Kufr is the disobedience to Allah, and shirk is where you obey someone other than Allah. Is it possible for someone to commit a disobedience, yet not committing shirk? No it is not possible, for example a man who commits fornication has carried out an act of disobedience, and yet at the same time he has committed shirk as he has followed a command other than Allah's, which is his hawwa (However the shirk in this example isn't of the type that will take him out of the fold of Islam). This kufr and shirk take place because the man is obeying other than Allah in such an action, which could be his hawwa, money, power, etc. So it is clear that both these concepts are linked together. Every act that is committed either falls into obeying Allah or obeying something else. As the commands are numerous, there isn't only one command that represents iman nor one disobedience that represents kufr. They both have different levels and branches.

How many branches does iman have?

There is a hadith that has collected all of man's actions and categorised them as just over 70 branches. Thus, all commands from Allah fall into these branches. Similarly, the kufr has to be numerous, as it is always in opposition to iman. The prophet said that interest is through 36 gates, and shirk has a similar number of gates. Some scholars say this hadith is hassan, whereas others say its weak.

### **Do all the commands of Allah share the same significance?**

The commands of Allah can be categorised in the following ways. Every act can fall into:

1. Pillars
2. Obligatory
3. Recommended

Actions are graded in this particular way due to the significance they share with regards to the orders from Allah. Everything will fit into these 3 categories.

Pillars- This is the thing that will render the action unsound and invalidate it if it is missing.

Obligatory- This is the thing that if it is missed, it doesn't invalidate it, but it causes the act not to be complete, i.e. It will have a shortcoming, but the act will still be valid.

Recommended- This is the thing that if it is absent, it only means that it doesn't reach the state of perfection.

The best way to explain how these categories fit into reality is to give a real life example. If we look at the composition of man, it is composed of many things that share their different importances. With regards to pillar, when man is created, what is the thing that is associated to man, that if it doesn't exist, it will render his position and invalidate him as a man? The answer is mans soul, heart, blood. All of these are things that if a man lacks, then this will invalidate him as a man. So when the soul leaves the human body, it is no longer called a human, it is considered as a dead body. A Shari`ah example of a pillar can be seen in reference to prayer, where if one of the pillars such as having wudu is missing, it will invalidate and nulify the prayer.

A real life example of an obligatory aspect in reference to man is his eyes, feet, hands etc. If man loses one of these, then it will hamper him. However it doesn't invalidate him. He is still called a man, yet he is not necessarily a called a complete man. A Shari`ah example of a obligatory act can be seen in prayer, where if one of the obligatorys such as saying “subhanaa rabbiyal azim” when in Rukuu position is absent, the the prayer is still valid, however he will be sinful for not performing this act.

An example of a recommended aspect of man is his hair. Where if he lacks it, its just an issue of perfection. This is different from a man who has no hands, eyes, legs ,etc. A Shari`ah example with regards to prayer, can be seen where the person says “ameen” at the end of surah Fatiha. Where this act only perfects the prayer, but if it is not carried out, then there is no sin on the individual.

Everything in creation and Shari`ah has pillars, obligatory and recommended. The commands are not all on the same level, therefore the branches of iman are not on the same level. Thus, iman can be split into these categories aswell.

Now if the pillars of iman are missing, does that mean the iman becomes invalidated? Yes it will become invalidated, even if the iman is fulfilling all the other aspects. This is because if we look at the prayer, even if you carry out all the pillars of prayer, except the one, then this will still invalidate your prayer. Whereas if the obligatory aspects of iman is missing, then it makes the individual's iman deficient, but iman still exists in him. And if the recommended aspects of iman are missing, then this only makes the iman lack the perfection.

This is the reason as to why iman can vary from a size of a mustard seed to limits that only Allah knows. On the day of judgement, the level of our iman will be reflected by the noor that will be emanating from us on that day. However if one of the pillars of iman don't exist, then it doesn't benefit him even if he does all the obligatory and recommended actions. Another word for pillars, is foundations. And all of these are linked back with the heart, tongue and limbs.

With regards to the heart, an example of a pillar that is linked to iman, is to believe in the *gayb*. A pillar of iman that is manifested on the tongue is the utterance of the *shahadaa*. All of these pillars that are associated with the tools that man has, if they lack, they will render his iman, thus leading to him being out of the fold of Islam. The scholars share differences of opinion with regards to the pillars of iman in the limbs. However the correct opinion is that the “5 pillars” of *islam-shahadaa*, prayer, *zakat*, *hajj*, fasting- are pillars of iman that are linked to the limbs. Many scholars hold this opinion such as Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal. So an example is where the scholars have consensus with regards to the person who abandons the prayer-however they differ as to the exact definition of “abandoning” the prayer- has invalidated his iman. Despite him fulfilling every other condition of the iman. So the person could do the other 4 pillars, yet if he abandons the one, then this invalidates his iman. And this principal is applied to all the pillars that are associated with iman.

So all of the examples we listed above are to do with commands from Allah that someone falls short of, however the prohibited actions can also nullify iman if they go against the pillars. And these prohibition could be endless in regards to listing them, as a new nullifier could literally appear every day. An example of this is worshipping a *taghut*, which can come about from a person claiming to have the right to legislate, to trees and stones that people attribute divine qualities to. A nullifier that could render someone's iman if committed in the heart is to hate the truth, the Muslims, detest the prophet. An example of a nullifier on the tongue is to curse Allah. And nullifier of the limbs is to prostrate to a statue or stand on the *Qur'ān*. So someone's iman can be rendered either by not fulfilling the pillars of it by disobeying Allah's commands, or by acting on a prohibited matter that goes against one of the pillars of iman.

Iman has pillars whose existence depends on. As we said before, if someone leaves just one of the pillars of iman, he has become a *kafir* irrespective whether this take place in the heart, tongue or limbs. This happens because of the particular act, and not due to it being a “implication of what's inside” as some groups say. If a man was to leave out one of the pillars of iman, but still fulfilled all the other pillars, he will still be a *kafir*! What about if a man leaves one of the obligatory aspects of iman? We say he still has iman, but it will decrease, as abandoning any obligatory aspect is considered a sin. Ibn Abbas (RA) statement about minor and major *kufir* indicates to us that the *sahaba* undertood that there is a difference between the two categories.

### **What is the difference between minor *Kufir* and major *Kufir*?**

Major *kufir* is something that if committed, makes the person leave the fold of Islam. Whereas minor *kufir* is any disobedient act that goes against the *Shari'ah*, however it does not reach the level that takes the person out of Islam. Some people may get confused when reading the text that mention only *kufir*, and cannot determine which of the two *kufirs* it is referring to. The first rule is to look at the text or proof and see what it indicates. And example is where ibn Masud (RA) reports that the prophet said "to draw lots-by using a bird to determine which direction to take-is *shirk* and it is not from among us". This hadith clearly indicates to us that to do such an action, invalidates your iman and makes you a *kafir*. The second rule to use is to see the

expression used. For example, the prophet said the killing/fighting of a Muslim is kufr. But this type of kufr is used as an expression of severity because in the Qur'an it mentions about two believing groups fighting each other "*And if two parties or groups among the believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them*" (surah 49:9). This is proof that to kill a believer isn't major kufr otherwise Allah would not have described the groups as believers. So it is important to see other evidences that will qualify or clarify what type of kufr it may be. The third rule is mentioned in Ibn Tammiyah book "kitaab Iman", where it mentions that whenever kufr is used in the definite article, indicates that it is major kufr. So when the word kufr is preceded by the word "Al", then it means major kufr. An example of this is where the scholars who support the view that abandoning the prayer is major kufr, is the hadith that the prophet said the thing that differentiates man and THE kufr is the prayer. As kufr is used in the definite article, the scholars say if someone leaves the prayer he becomes a kafir. Ibn Tammiyah supports this opinion. The fourth rule is that you will not find minor kufr being mentioned in the Qur'an, it can only be found in the sunnah. So it is important that when you read it in the sunnah, you must refer to the Qur'an to see if it deals with the issue at hand, just like we saw with the example mentioned above about the killing of a Muslim.

### **Can minor kufr ever change and become major kufr?**

Yes, ASWJ call this act "al-Kufr Al-Ma`eed". This is when a minor kufr is being perpetuated to such an extent, that it eventually leads it become a major kufr. We have to see it in the sense that there is a frontier that separates kufr and iman. So the more iman you do, the further you are away from kufr. And this is vice-versa. If a man keeps losing out on the obligatory aspects of iman-thus committing minor kufr-, the closer he will be to this frontier. This was the reason that the sahaba were very cautious with committing sins, even if they were small, as they knew it meant that they were a step closer to kufr. They feared that these minor acts of kufr will collect up and eventually lead to them being considered as major kufr. The consequence of this is that it either leads to the person being categorised as an apostate in this world, or him having a nasty shock on the day of judgement being told that he left the dunya as a kafir unknowingly-may Allah save us from such a situation- as Allah says "*Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds!*"(18-104). The prophet mentioned to us how the shaytaan will come to the dying person and try to make him commit an act of major kufr. All throughout his life, the shaytaan would have been preparing for this day.

Not every act of major sins (Al kaba`ir} is considered as kufr. We have to look at what terminology the Shari`ah has set before we label the person as a kafir. We know that to curse another Muslim is one of the major sins, but we have hadiths that mention the prophet referring to someone who curses a Muslim as a fasiq. In this same hadith, the prophet also mentions to kill a Muslim is kufr. The reason for this is to establish that there is a difference between the two sins.

Acts of major kufr expels someone from the religion of Islam. Either the person was a kafir by origin, or the person was a Muslim, but then apostated. Whereas acts of minor kufr lead to Fisq. Both take place through the heart, actions and speech. This key issue is where ASWJ disagrees with all the other deviant groups. Some groups say that major kufr only takes place in the heart. They support this view by quoting from the salaf "we do not not take anyone out of the deen as long as he follows the qiblah, only when believes the action he is doing is permissible". So this same group believes that no action or speech can take someone out of the fold of Islam, until he says that the particular act is permissible. Our response to them is that this

quote from the salaf was a general statement, and not specific. Also Ibn Tammiyah mentioned that the scholars made this statement in response to what the Khawarij were promoting-that any sinful act takes someone out from the fold of Islam-. However these deviant groups put this statement with every action. So ASWJ agree with the statement of the salaf, but we restrict it where necessary.

### **Minor kufr can become major kufr:**

1. When the man commits all the acts of minor kufr, then this will lead to him committing a major kufr. When we say all the acts, we do not mean the pillars, as leaving out just one, renders someone's iman. Rather, this is to do with abandoning all the obligatory acts of iman. The murjiaa disagree with this point. This could be found in Ibn Tammiyah's book on Kitaab Iman and in Ibn Qayyums works.
2. When the man makes the minor kufr permissible. So when he makes something haram into halal. This applies to any act of minor kufr. And this is manifested in the heart, tongue and limbs. So for example, a person can choose not to drink alcohol, yet if he believes that drinking alcohol is permissible-once he has been shown the proof of its prohibition, as man can be ignorant of a particular ruling-, then he has committed a major kufr, thus becoming him an apostate. So in this regard, it's not the carrying out of the action, but its making a sin permissible.

If an act of major kufr takes place in the heart, tongue or actions, then this is enough and sufficient to take the person out of the fold of Islam. For example, if a man desecrates the Qur'ān, he is not in need of anything else to be removed from the fold of Islam. This act is sufficient. ASWJ say it is not necessary that he must think that the act to be permissible (point 2 in the above list). By him committing the act, knowing that the book in front of him is the Qur'ān, then it takes him out of Islam, even if he doesn't know it is a major act of kufr. So, as long as he knows the reality, and the prohibition of the act, then it is sufficient. It is not necessary that he knows the act to be of major kufr as this is not a factor in the equation. Another example is for the one who abandons the prayer being labelled as a kafir. As long as he knows that Allah has ordered him to pray, if he refuses for one reason or another, then he is considered a kafir. It is not necessarily that he must know that to abandon the prayer takes him out of the fold of Islam. Our proof for this is that Allah mentions in the Qur'ān *"The hypocrites fear lest a Soorah (chapter of the Qur'an) should be revealed about them, showing them what is in their hearts. Say: "(Go ahead and) mock! But certainly Allah will bring to light all that you fear. If you ask them (about this), they declare: "We were only talking idly and joking." Say: "Was it at Allah, and His Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger (SAW) that you were mocking?" Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed. If We pardon some of you, We will punish others amongst you because they were Mujrimoon (disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, criminals, etc.)."* (Surah 9:64-66). So this proves that it is not a prerequisite that someone knows that the particular act he is committing is a nullifier, for us to label him as an apostate. However, no-one can become a kafir when abandoning one of the pillars of Islam if he is unaware that Allah has ordered him to do the act. But he doesn't need to know that it will be a nullifier or not, as long as he knows that it's an order from Allah. So for example, if a Muslim was in the middle of the amazon rainforest, and for some reason he didn't know that Allah has ordered him to pray, then we do not make takfir on him for not praying, as he is ignorant of the command. He is considered as Muslim. On the other extreme, is where you have a person who abandons the prayer and knows that Allah has ordered the Muslim to pray 5 times a day. He becomes a kafir even though he may not know that by abandoning the prayer he becomes a kafir.

So when a man commits an act of major kufr, it is not conditional on him to intend to leave the deen. Ibn Tammiyah said that you wouldnt find anyone who wishes to intentionally commit a major kufr except for a few. So a man can commit kufr without intending to leave Islam. This can be seen by the example listed above in surah Tawbah, where the man mocked the prophet, yet did not intend to leave Islam. There are many nullifiers of the deen, and one of them is to make a minor kufr into something permissible. I recommend all of us to study the nullifiers, as we may be doing one of the acts that takes us out of the Islam without us even knowing!

All of these nullifiers fit into the categories of Uloohiya, namely Tawheed nusuq, Tawheed Al wala wal bara and Tawheed Al Qadaar wal tashree. Everyone of these categories has pillars, obligatory and recommended aspects linked to iman. Therefore if you abandon any of their pillars, then your iman will be terminated. So no-one can say to abandon the nusuq is major kufr, as it has different levels. And yes, to abandon the pillars of nusuq is major kufr. Whereas the abandonment of the obligatory aspects of nusuq is minor kufr. Some people bizarrely say that the nusuq is the pillar, and Al Wala Wal bara is the obligatory aspects of iman. But our response to them is that the 3 levels can be found in each of the different Tawhoods of Uloohiyah. However if someone was to leave all the nusuq, then yes he has committed major kufr. This is because by him abandoning all of the nusuq, means that he has abandoned its pillars as well. And for this reason he has apostated.

Some people bring the ayat *“And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the Kafiroon.”*(5:44) and then uses ibn Abbas statement of kufr duna kufr (lesser of the two evils). They bring the two together and say that the term “do not rule” in the Qur’ān is in reference to the Tawheed of Al Qadaar wal Tashree, such as drinking alcohol, dealing with interest, etc. Therefore as a consequence, any issue pertaining to this particular Tawheed is not major kufr. And they support this view by quoting the saying of ibn Abbas.

With regards to the verse mentioned above, it has different levels. So within it, it has acts that are both major and minor kufr. Within the context, if someone was to legislate in regards to judgement- creates his own law that and does not refer to Qur’ān and Sunnah-, then this will constitute as an act of major kufr, hence he will become an apostate.

ASWJ find themselves in between the Murjiah and the Khawarij with regards to the understanding of iman. Both these two deviant groups believe iman to be only of one level, however they do disagree as to what this level is. The murjiah believe it all to be in the heart whereas the other group believes that for iman to be accepted, it requires all of the actions to be committed. So for example, the Khawarij will say that any act of disobedience is major kufr. They treat all actions as the the pillars of iman.

We agree with the Khawarij when it comes down to making takfir of people who commit an act of major kufr-pillars of iman-. However we disagree with them when they make takfir on people who commit acts of minor kufr-obligatorys of iman-.

When someone decided to drink alcohol or commit any other sin, does it come under the concept of ruling other than what Allah has revealed. Yes because the person is choosing to obey his hawaa instead of Allah. However this concept of ruling has different levels as we mentioned before, namely pillars, obligatory and recommended. Therefore if someone does fall into what this ayat is warning about, we have to see as which category the action is in accordance with.

Another example where someone falls into this ruling and yet does not leave the fold of Islam-i.e. The act he is committing is not against a pillar of iman- is where a man may decide to force another man to drink alcohol. If the compelled man does end up drinking the alcohol, does this mean the oppressive man is passing a judgement on the compelled man? This act does not mean that the act is major kufr. As this act is similar to a man raping a woman, which is against her choice. Yet this man will not be considered as a kafir, as it is not of the level of legislating.

Iman as we have said before has "darajat" (levels that ascend), whereas kufr as "darakat" (levels that descend).

Before you pass on a ruling that someone has apostated i.e. Making takfir of the individual, you must first take into consideration two matters:

1. You must establish that the act in question is a major kufr
2. Find out if there are any preventative factors

A big misunderstanding that many Muslims fall into is to believe that if the person does other good acts, then this will be a factor to bear in mind before making takfir on them. This is utterly wrong, as even some of the kuffar have good characteristics, such as the Buddhist, yet we still make takfir of them. So this is not a factor to bear in mind before making takfir on a particular individual.

A person cannot be named as a "mumin"-one who believes- until he performs all the pillars and obligatory aspects of iman. Therefore no-one can attribute this title to himself, as it is too difficult to know whether someone is doing all the obligatory aspects of iman. Thus, if someone was to believe this about himself, then it will indicate that he is guaranteed jannah as he will not be sinning at all. Therefore when ASWJ label a person as a "mumin", they follow it by saying "inshallah". So whenever the word mumin is used as an attribute to an individual, it must be followed by the word inshallah. However this doesn't apply to the term "Muslim"-one who submits-. This is because one must be certain that he is a Muslim, and therefore doesn't necessarily need to be followed with "inshallah". As he cannot entertain any doubt with regards to the pillars, however the term "inshallah" is in reference to the obligatory aspects of iman. So ASWJ use inshallah when referring to a mumin, but do not use this term when referring to a Muslim. However the ones who advocate that you can call yourself or someone else as mumin without using the word "inshallah" use a hadith where their prophet said "how are you Haritha?", he replied by saying "i woke up as a true mumin". Our response to them is that this is false, as the sahaba would never praise themselves. This hadith must have been tampered with. The meaning of the hadith is unacceptable, as it goes against other principals of Islam, therefore the hadith is referred to as mu`thal-this issue is to do with the science of hadith-.

### **The relationship between Islaam and Iman:**

ASWJ are split into 2 groups with regards to the relationship between Islam and Iman

1. The opinion of Bukhari and Muhammad ibn Nassir Al Marwazi who say that Islam and Iman have the same meaning.
2. The other group, which consists of Ahmad Ibn Hambal disagree with the first opinion. They say that the golden rule to know their relationship is; if they are mentioned together,

they hold separate meanings. Whereas if they are separated they contain the other word's meaning as well.

When Allah says mentions that the religion of Allah is Islam, what does the word "Islam" mean in this context? Is it the pillars? Is it the obligatory aspects? As we mentioned before, it includes all these categories of iman. So whenever Islam is used by itself, then it involves the definition of iman as well. And similarly, when iman is used by itself, then it involves the definition of Islam as well. Whereas when both the words are used together, then they hold different meanings.

The second opinion is more correct and more of the ASWJ scholars adopt this view. So what made Bukhari and Ibn Nassir Al Marwazi adopt their view? The evidence used by both groups is where Allah says "*The bedouins say: "We believe." Say: "You believe not but you only say, We have surrendered (in Islam), for Faith has not yet entered your hearts."* (49:14), however they both understand this ayat in different ways. This ayat indicates that there is a difference between iman-"We believe"- and Islam-"We have surrendered"-. Bukhari's opinion and tafsir of this ayat is that he says when Allah informs them that they are not believers; He means it in the context of embracing the Islamic faith. And when He says you have submitted, this means that they have submitted to the sword, which indicates they were in fact kuffar. However this is the wrong understanding of the ayat. ASWJ believe that when iman is used alongside Islam, they share different meanings. So the ayat is in fact telling the bedouins that they are Muslims, and not "mumins". Another example of iman and Islam being differentiated can be seen in the hadith where Jibril went to the prophet and asked him about Islam, Iman, Ihsaan, day of judgement and its signs. So there was a difference between Islam and Iman, otherwise he would not have needed to ask about the latter. When someone enters Islam, he is making the transition from being a kafir to a Muslim. Whereas with regards to his iman, it distinguishes the Muslim according to his level of obedience.

Iman is the distinguishing factor that either raises or brings down a man amongst other Muslims. Iman represents the inner belief. The groups we mentioned earlier have differed with this definition. And this difference would also affect the way they see kufr, as the two go hand in hand.

### **What is the significance of the shahadaa?**

This is the foundation of Islam, where if it were to be absent, it will make all of man's actions fruitless. And this also has pillars, obligatory and recommended as with all other things. ASWJ say that the foundation of the deen is that the shahadaa holds the meaning of affirming what is being said and to believe in it with the heart. What does this affirmation and belief in the heart actually mean? This is where one turns to his Lord and says "I believe in what you sent and the orders you have given. Because you are the only one deserving of my worship. -He doesn't say all this because Allah is the creator or the one who provides sustenance, but rather because Allah deserves to be worshipped as he is the only Lord-. And through this acknowledgement and recognition, I am your servant." This constitutes the foundation of the deen. The servant believes that Allah has the right to be worshipped, and establishes this in his heart. And this is followed up by his actions. Take for example a man who says "Oh Lord I recognise you are the only Lord, and I believe you are the one worthy of worship, and this is your right, and I'm certain of all this, but I've chosen not to follow your orders." If a man said all of this, then his ruling is that he is a kafir. This is because if someone believes that Allah should be worshipped, i.e. Accepting his Tawheed Rububiyah, and yet he refuses and does not intend to act on Allah's commands i.e.

Tawheed Uloohiyah, then he has disbelieved. You need both the practice both types of Tawheeds. There are many proofs to support this:

1. A group of Jews came to the prophet and asked him on 9 verses to establish if he was a prophet. He gave them the correct answers. They then said "we bear witness that you are the prophet of Islam". The prophet knew that this comment was not enough for them to follow him, so he asked them "what prevents you from following me, when you know I am a prophet. This indicates that he didn't judge them to be Muslims by their acknowledging him to be a prophet, the issue was that they didn't intend to follow him. And it was because of this that they weren't considered as Muslims. The prophet included this as a condition of the acceptance of Islam, that it should be qualified by their following of him and the need to take him as a reference point in their affairs. The Jew's reply to the prophet was that they will never follow a prophet other than one from Banu Dawud.
2. Abu Harith was an Arab who was given a position by the Romans. He came to the prophet to see if he was a prophet or not. On the journey there, one of the people had a problem with his animal and then cursed the prophet. Abu Harith said "don't say this as he is a prophet from Allah". So his brother asked him that if he believe this, what was the thing preventing him from following him. He replied "because our people have given us a lot of wealth, and if we were to follow him, we wouldn't have it anymore".

So the acceptance of the faith necessitates that you intend to follow what the prophet has preached. It is not enough just for a man to have recognition of this fact, but he must intend to follow it up by focusing his actions according to it.

### **What is the essence of Allah?**

This is to know who Allah is. However this by itself is not enough, as you must know his rights and attributes. You must be certain of this and intend to follow up the rights that must be fulfilled, namely Tawheed Uloohiyah. This is how the contract we have made with Allah is symbolised when we say "Only you have the right to be worshipped because you are the Lord". Allah's Rububiyah makes him deserving of being worshipped, as is indicated in the above statement. And the statement represents your resolve to fulfil your side of the agreement. Once you have made this agreement, you agree that you would worship him through the way the prophet has informed us of. This is part of the contract.

When we speak about the pillars such those in Tawheed of nusuq like Prayer, if one was to abandon it then he will become a kafir. So is the prayer in this instance a foundation of Islam? No, all these are the necessities of the contract of the deen. So does someone become a Muslim through the prayer or through the contract? He becomes a Muslim through the contract he makes. And this contract has its requirements such as the pillars of Tawheed Uloohiyah like prayer for example. The prayer in this example acts as an indicator that he has taken up the contract. This is a very important point to understand! The foundation of the deen is where the individual knows his Lord, and resolves to comply with his commandments. He must believe in this with certainty and not invalidate it by committing any of its nullifiers.

The individual does not need to know every single ruling such as the specific rulings concerning interest, zina and every other act of obedience or disobedience. It is not a condition that before he takes up the contract of Islam, that he must be aware of all its rulings. What the contract deals with is the initial recognition that Allah is that only Lord deserving to be

worshipped and that you intend to follow his commands, whatever they may be. This can be seen when the sahaba became Muslims in the early days of makkah, where hardly any rulings came down as a lot of the message was based around the concepts of faith and Tawheed rububiyah. Allah praises their iman even though there weren't any orders for them to carry out. The reason for their praise was due to their acceptance of the agreements of the contract.

### **What is the contract of compliance?**

This is the contract we must all make when accepting Islam. This is made through the shahadaa. The main factors of this are:

1. Recognition of Allah
2. Recognition of the truthfulness of the message
3. To confirm and declare it through statement and action

Let us now study the words of the shahadaa. When we say "I bear witness", it encompasses two factors. The first one is symbolised by us bearing witness to the truthfulness of the message (factor 2). It establishes the truthfulness of the account message. The second meaning covers the confirmation of the truthfulness by declaring it (factor 3). It is not sufficient to just only recognise it, but you must confirm and declare it. Also, that you accept its consequences and instructions of it. And that you intend to comply with them. So if a man does all these factors, but yet he still commits zina, this particular act does not nullify his contract. However, this is where the principal we mentioned earlier kicks in, that if someone was to go against all of the rules that Allah has sent down, then it will break his contract, leading to apostasy. The opposites of these 2 factors we listed are to belie it and to turn away from it, respectively.

Iman is that you accept the order, and then act upon it. This can be split into 2:

1. You confirm the information Allah has given us
2. Confirm his commands, this takes place by:
  - o You accepting that Allah has given you an order
  - o You acting upon it

So if you reject any of Allah's orders, which is represented by the first category, then you have become a kafir. However, when it comes down to fulfilling the actions, some are linked to pillars and others are linked to obligatory, so depending on which one you abandon, you may still be a Muslim.

The rejection of commands can take many different forms. One of these could be by obeying the mushrikeen instead of Allah.

### **What is the difference between the Kufr of Iblees and the Kufr of Adam (AS)?**

We know that the act of Iblees made him into a kafir, whereas the act of Adam was an action of Fisq. Before we deal with this issue we must first outline that the deen is to believe in what Allah has informed us about and to act on what he has instructed us to do. The opposite to this is not believe in what Allah informed us of and not to act upon his orders. The acceptance of the

deen falls into one level, whereas the opposite of acting has two levels (either falls into pillars or obligatory). The murjiah believe that all actions fall into the obligatory aspects of iman.

We can split Allah's commands into 2:

1. Orders
2. Prohibition

There aren't many orders that if we were to abandon will expel us from Islam, such as abandoning the prayer. Whereas there are many prohibition that if we were carry out, will lead us to leave Islam. Such as defecating on the Qur'an, cursing prophet, prostration to idols, etc.

Back to the issue about Iblees and Adam (AS). We know that Adam was ordered not to go near the tree. So his disobedience was that he perpetuated an act that was forbidden to him. Adam accepted the order not to go to the tree, as there is nothing to indicate that he rejected such an order. So we can assume that he did accept the order, eventhough he didn't follow the order. So if this action was one of the pillars, then that would have meant that by not acting on it he would have become a kafir. This action that he done was not a pillar. We know this because this action only required repentance in order for Allah to forgive him, which points that it was only minor kufr. Had it been an act of major kufr, he would have needed to renew his contract in order to be a Muslim. Whereas the disobedience of Iblees was linked to him not prostrating to Adam despite Allah ordering him to. This is clearly different from Adams disobedience. The act of Iblees was that he didnt accept the order from the beginning. He gave his reason that he was of a higher calibre than Adam, therefore he should not prostrate to him. So the issue here is not as simple as not carrying out an order, but it was in fact, disagreeing with the order itself, which is clear kufr. The problem was linked to the order that he was given, so even if he did carry the act out, and yet still refused the order deep down, then he still would have been considered as a kafir. Thus, his refusal was enough, it didn't need the action to accompany it for it to be an action of apostasy. These can be seen clearly when we take a look at the hypocrites. They do carry out orders from Allah, however due to their refusal of the commands deep down, this is the thing that makes them kuffar.

Additionally, Iblees also said to Allah that he thought the order was incorrect, and tried justifying that as he was made out of fire and Adam being made out of clay, which he thought made him better than Adam. As this action took him out of Islam, repentance wasnt sufficient. He would have had to re-enter Islam, where he had left it.

### **Kufr can be split into 2:**

1. The kufr of the nullifiers of the foundation of Islam-e.g. To believe that there are 2 gods-
2. The kufr of the nullifiers of the pillars of Islam-e.g. Abandoning the prayer-

The kufr of the foundation of Islam can be further split into 3 aspects:

1. This person is ignorant about Allah. This is opposite to acknowledging Allah's Tawheed Rububiyah. "kufr Jahil"
2. To belie the message. This is opposite to confirming and believing in the message. This is known as "Kufr Taktheeb"

3. This is where you acknowledge something, and yet still turn away from it. This can be seen where a man says "Oh Lord I recognise you are the only Lord, and I believe you are the one worthy of worship, and this is your right, and I'm certain of all this, but I've chosen not to follow your orders." This is known as "Kufr Iraad". This is the worst one out of all.

The other nullifiers are linked to the pillars of their respective aspects of Tawheed Uloohiyah. These are within the deen, such as prayers.

What causes Allah to be deserving of being worshipped? Where does this right come from? This is because he is the true Lord and therefore he deserves to be treated with greatness. This is the basis of his right to be worshipped. Certain actions of man may end up contradicting and nullifying this greatness, such as mocking Allah and his deen. This particular example goes against his attribute of "Greatness".

In respect to kufr, we reiterated that when a man comes with a major kufr, must it be qualified with something else in order for his expulsion from the deen? The answer is no. Therefore when someone perpetuates an act of major kufr, it does not need to be supported by the disbelief from his heart. So, when a man does a disbelieving act by prostrating to an idol, what is it considered? This is one of the actions of major kufr according to the Shari`ah. Assuming there was no preventative facts-we will study in depth what these are later in the document-, does this act need to be accompanied with something else, such as disbelief in the heart, in order for the individual to be labelled as a kafir? No it doesn't. This point is very important to understand!

Those who prostrate to idols, graves etc, ASWJ have declared them as disbelievers as these actions pertain to major kufr. However other deviant groups disagree with this point, they say, yes, we do accept that to prostrate to an idol is kufr, but there must be a condition applied before we make takfir, and that is that the individual must believe in his heart that this idol has the power to bring harm and benefit. These groups have added this condition. They say that only once the man confirms that he is seeking assistance from this idol and believes that it brings good and bad, and only once this belief accompanies his actions, do they eventually make takfir of the individual. The problem with these groups is that they don't seem to differentiate that kufr can take place both in aspects of Rububiyah and Uloohiyah, where ASWJ do separate the two, and which does prostrating fall under? Clearly it falls under Tawheed Uloohiyah, as this is to do with our worship to Allah. The prophet has clearly said if he were ever to get someone to prostrate to another, he will get the wife to prostrate to her husband. This right of prostration is reserved only to Allah.

If we look back at all of the prophets struggle for people to follow Islam, it was mainly emphasised on Tawheed Uloohiyah. This is because the majority of the pagans believed in Allah, that he was one who gave life, risq etc. But their shirk was to do with the offerings of their actions/worship whom they gave to other than Allah. Such as prostrations and slaughtering. The Quraysh believed in Tawheed Rububiyah, but they failed with regards to Tawheed Uloohiyah. Allah says *"Those who took for themselves patrons other than God (would say): We only worship them so that they may bring us closer to God."* (39: 3)

So back to the groups who only make takfir on the individual who prostrates to an idol, on the condition that he believes in the heart, namely they only make takfir of the individual with regards to his understanding of Tawheed Rububiyah. For example, they would attach the

condition that the person must believe that the idol can bring good and avert evil, which are attributes exclusively to Allah. In reality, the person is not making takfir on the act of prostration, but is rather making takfir on the person for his incorrect beliefs of Tawheed Rububiyah. And as we said before, the Quraysh did not really have this problem of not understanding the aspects of Rububiyah. So in fact, if these same groups saw a man from the Quraysh prostrating to one of their idols such as Al-lat, he will not make takfir on him, as this Qurayshi pagan is only using this idol as an intermediary between him and Allah. Another example is where a “Muslim” is fighting under the kafir banner against a Muslim group. This act is major kufr. This is because the highest level of allegiance is manifested in giving support. This particular person is not only just giving support, but he is giving support against another group of Muslims. So if this person was to carry this act out, will he need to deny the religion of Islam? Must his act necessitate in believing in his heart and professing it that he intends to fight against Islam in order for us to make takfir on him? No it doesn't. This man could have given his shahadaa, and carried out many good acts, but yet this very act by itself leads the person to apostasy. A proof for this can be seen with Abbas (RA)-who was the uncle of the prophet-during the battle of Badr. He believed in the message of the prophet and believed that the Quraysh were pagans. However for one reason or another he still fought in the ranks of the mushrikeen against the Muslims. When he was captured at the end of the battle, he said to the prophet, “oh prophet, you know that I'm a believer”. The prophet replied saying “oh uncle, you entered the conflict, so we responded”. His ruling was the same as the other POW from the Quraysh. Another example is where a ruler follows all the aspects of the deen, but decides to place a law to permit drinking alcohol or deal with interest in his state. ASWJ believe that any issue that pertains with someone legislating other than what Allah has revealed is an act of major kufr. Imam Sha`tebee said that there is consensus that to legislate other than Allah's law is an act of major kufr.

So if man prostrates to an idol, is this an action of Kufr? Or does it indicate to a presence of kufr? No the act itself is kufr. Similarly, prayer is not an indication to iman, but it is iman itself.

We will now discuss what opinions other groups hold in regards to iman. This obviously has an affect on their views of kufr, as the two go hand in hand.

## **What is Iman according to ASWJ**

### **ASWJ summary of the aspects of Iman:**

1. We say that iman is manifested in the heart, statements and actions.
2. Its branches have different levels.
3. Iman increases and decreases.
4. When we say “mumin”, we follow it with “inshallah”. Whereas we don't need to add this to the term of “Muslim”.
5. We say that when iman and islam are used together, they share separate meanings. Whereas if they are used separately, they contain the other meaning of the word aswell as its own.

We say that the iman of the sahaba, after the obligations were given to them, kept increasing. They noticed this increase, and therefore this explains why they always kept asking the prophet for more obligations to be given to them. In turn, this increased their iman even more.

## Our motivation can be categorised into 3 parts.

- Love
- Fear
- Hope

ASWJ say that we must involve all of the above in our worship. Some sufi groups say we only worship Allah from our love for him. However this is incorrect as Allah mentions to us that we should do good acts in order to be saved from the hell fire and to have fear for it "*Giving glad tidings (of Paradise to the one who believes in the Oneness of Allah (i.e. Islamic Monotheism) and fears Allah much (abstains from all kinds of sins and evil deeds) and loves Allah much (performing all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)), and warning (of punishment in the Hell Fire to the one who disbelieves in the Oneness of Allah)*,"(41:4). So you have the Khawarij who worship Allah only out of fear. You have the zindiq (we will go into who this person is later in the document) who worships Allah only out of love. And you have the murjiah who worship Allah only through hope.

How do ASWJ understand ability?

ASWJ split ability into 2 parts

1. You could not have the ability due to some sort of physical weakness and inability. For example someone may be very hungry, however he is too weak to get up and get some food. So a lack of ability in this context, if it caused a man not to perform an act, then he will not be accountable for it. This is because someone's weakness is beyond his Iradaa.
2. You could not have the ability due to laziness. So in this context, if the person did not carry out the act, then he is accountable and will be sinful for it. As this is part of his Iradaa.

If someone's ability is absent, this leads to the action not being fulfilled, therefore he would have an absence in his iman in that particular part. So someone could want to do good actions, however due to his weakness, he doesn't carry them out, would his iman be the same as someone who had actually carried the act out? No, it wouldn't be the same, however this doesn't mean the person wouldn't get rewarded for it. The person may get even more reward than the one who went, but his iman would not be more, the two are separate. As iman is directly linked to actions, and not just the person's intentions, as is the case with reward. This can be applied in any act, lets take the example of jihad. You may want to go to jihad, so your Iradaa is in the right place. However for one reason or another you may not be able to go at a particular time. You may still receive the reward of a mujahid, however your iman will not be the same as someone that is actually performing the jihad physically. This only applies to the first type of inability. If the case was of laziness, then this principal doesn't apply. For example, if you had a ladder and you were supposed to climb up a step every day for 30 days in order to get to the top of a building. However with 2 of the days, you didn't really feel like climbing. So after the 30 days, you don't reach your destination due to them days you took off. The man climbing cannot say that his inability was linked to weakness, but rather it was due to his laziness, and therefore he may be held accountable for it.

The reasons why we mentioned the above example is because iman isn't only the person's willingness to do the action, but rather the preparation he has made to do the action as well. So if the Islamic state were beaten by the kuffar, due to the Muslims not preparing an army to protect

them, then they would have fallen short in regards to their iman. As iman includes preparation as well as action. So the development of a Muslim is part of iman. This is why Allah says that he prefers the stronger believe. This love is in regards to his iman, and not to do with his reward.

Every goodness you see in the ummah is to do with iman. It is this that will civilise the Muslims and not the filth of secularism. When we look at the regression of our noble ummah, it is only because we lack iman in our actions and not just our heart as many people like to believe. People think it is only down to our hearts, and if we sort that out, then the victory will fall upon us from the sky. This is because they do not understand that iman is also linked to our speech and actions. All the promises that Allah has made to us are linked to our iman. What does this iman represent and how is understood? This indicates that there are necessary means for us to fulfil in order for the support of Allah to be given to us. And these means are in reference to the actions. So for example if your hungry, there are many aspects of iman that you can carry out, but there is only one particular one that will solve your problem, and that is to eat. So all the different actions of iman have their particular purposes and objectives. However they are all interconnected by faith, but they still have their own objectives. So when we discuss about attaining victory and removing this humiliation that the ummah is suffering which Allah has promised the believers, we must first look at which action is required to resolve the problem. We know iman has many different actions that constitute it, so the question is which action is required from us in order that the promise is fulfilled. It must be an action that involves us defending ourselves. This action is jihad. So if a kafir invades your country, what aspect of iman do you do in order to get rid of them? Do you do hajj? Do you do thikr? These aren't the necessary means. If someone was to do these actions, how could they expect the defence of Allah?!

A proof for this is where Allah says “*Verily! Allah will not change the good condition of a people as long as they do not change their state*” (13:11). This applies to all of his promises. In reality the promises of Allah are commandments from him. They outline what man is responsible for. They indicate what actions are required of man. So Allah will not do something for you except by you trying to help yourself first. Obviously there are instances where this rule doesn't apply, such as miracles.

What is required in order to establish an Islamic state?

There are some groups such as the murjiah who say that all we have to do is to establish iman in our heart. This is because they limit iman just to the heart. The prophet said “if you do usury and follow the tails of cows and you abandon jihad, Allah will inflict you with humiliation, it will not be lifted until you return to your deen”. So what is this part of the “deen” that is mentioned? We know the deen represents everything, so what is intended by the term deen? So what is in the “deen” that establishes honour and dignity? It is jihad! As for the usury and following the tail of cows, this is what leads to the abandonment of jihad. And the abandonment of jihad leads to humiliation. Some people say the only way to remove this humiliation is by learning the deen, abstaining from sin such as usury, slander, etc. Yes this are aspects of the deen, however they are not the actions that will remove the humiliation and bring back honour. Dignity is only established through jihad. For any result to come about, there must be a cause for it. And the misunderstanding of this point is why the Muslims find themselves in such a state.

### **How do the Khawarij view Iman?**

1. They agree with ASWJ in regards to iman being manifested in the heart, statements and actions.

2. They say that iman is one level i.e. if one aspect of iman is absent, then his entire iman is absent. So where we split the aspects into pillars, obligatory and recommended, they include pillars and obligatory together. Therefore if you abandon either of their aspects, you will have nullified your iman. So they do not make a distinction between the two. The majority of the Khawarij adopt this view; however there are some smaller groups within them that do not share this view.
3. This concept is linked to the second category. They don't believe iman increases or decreases. However some of them do believe it increases or decreases with the recommended aspects of iman.
4. As they say iman is one level, they don't differentiate between a "Muslim" and a "mumin". So they do not add "inshallah" to the latter.

### **The Karamiyyah's opinion on iman:**

They believe that iman is only in statements, namely the utterance of the shahadaa. The scholars have not really discussed much about them as there aren't many books concerning them. Ibn Tammiyah believes that they may have misrepresented, as he doesn't believe any group can have such a watered down version of iman.

### **How do the Mu'tazila view iman?**

1. They also agree with ASWJ with regards to iman being represented in the heart, statements and actions.
2. They believe iman is all one level-similar to the Khawarij -. However they differ with them by the ruling on the individual. Which is linked to their understanding "a place between two places". They will call the individual as a fasiq, whereas the Khawarij will call him a kafir.

### **How do the extreme Murjiah view Iman?**

They say Iman is only the first stage of how we conduct the contract of the deen, namely the shahadaa. So this is only one thing, and that is to know Allah. However they have different levels in their extremity. Therefore, a man's kufr will only take place by opposing this, and being ignorant about Allah -this was discussed before when we split the kufr into 3 groups; kufr of Ignorance, kufr of believing and kufr where you acknowledge something and yet still turn away from it-. Their only kufr is the kufr of ignorance. This is utterly wrong because even the tyrants such as Pharaoh and Abu Jahl knew their Lord. Even Iblees knew his Lord. So according to this principal, these individuals would be Muslims. Others from the extreme Murjiah believe in knowing Allah and they accept the truthfulness of the message. They say its not a condition to utter the shahadaa. When they are confronted about this, they say iman isn't statements, but it is only an indication of what's in the heart. So according to them, the statement of shahadaa acts only as an indicator. So this particular group only believe in the kufr of ignorance and kufr believing.

These people say that if a man does an act of kufr, it doesn't take him out of Islam. They attach the condition that he believes in the action with conviction and by "making it permissible". So they would not make takfir on someone who curses the prophet until he says "yeah, its permissible to do this" and that the individual believes that the prophet is in fact the thing that he curses him with.

So for them, there are instances where if you don't meet the conditions they attach, then you can curse the prophet and urinate on the Qur'ān, and yet still be a Muslim. Ahmad ibn Hambal said that anyone who says that iman is only to know Allah, then he is a kafir. So this particular view of the murjiah caused uproar amongst the scholars of ASWJ and the people. The murjiah found themselves cornered, and eventually said that these actions are apostasy. However they only believed this as the act proved to them and acted as an indicator that there was no iman in the heart. So at the end of the day, they declare takfir on such a person, however it's not because of the action itself, but rather because it was "an indicator" to the kufr of his heart and lack of conviction.

However, this leads to a bit of a problem!

This issue is delving into the separation of the appearance of something and the inner state of something. We'll explain this further.

When we say appearance of something, it really means the exterior, such as the tongue and the actions of the limbs. When we say inner state of something, this is the interior which is represented by the heart.

### **So what is the relationship between the two?**

As we mentioned in the beginning of this study, no action can take place except with Iradaa-will- and the person's ability to do the act. So if a man has a positive will to do something and has the ability to carry it out, then the action takes place. The Iradaa is linked to the interior state. So when we see an external action taking place, we know it is being driven by the internal state. Therefore if we see no external action taking place, this will point to the fact that there is no internal movement. This is either due to a lack of knowledge or a lack of motivation- a missing will-. So when we see external action taking place, it will indicate an internal action, whether this comes from strong knowledge or a strong motivation. This is the relationship between the two states. One implies the other by default. However there are cases where the preventative factors don't allow this to happen. Such as someone being forced to commit shirk. The forcing is considered as a preventative factor and therefore he is not labelled as a kafir. So his external actions may seem like he has committed shirk, but his Iradaa is being withheld from dictating his actions.

So it is imperative that you establish that there are no preventative factors before making takfir on the individual. So according to this principal, actions are a fruit of the internal movement, so if there is an external action of kufr, then this will indicate that there is internal kufr. Therefore if someone curses Allah or his prophet, then the action is clear kufr, and it reflects that his internal is of kufr as he lacks the love and respect of them. He lacks the fear of Allah.

According to the Murjiah, they don't make takfir on the individual unless he goes out and says that he is a kafir. Imam Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab said that major kufr doesn't require the individual to say "I'm making this halal even though I know that Allah has forbidden it". And this was the main call he made at his time. That acts of major kufr, by themselves take the person out of the fold of Islam. This issue has been a great divide between ASWJ and Ahl-bidah. Ibn Tammiyah said when refuting some scholars at his time regarding the issue of cursing the prophet. He said that anyone who claims that you must place the condition of "making it

permissible” with regards to cursing the prophet in order for his kufr, then he is of the murjiah or jahimmyah.

According to the murjiah, a man can be labelled as a Muslim, mumin, even a muhsin without needing to commit any good acts. This is because they do not link iman with actions. This dangerous concept has led the ummah to disregard the importance of actions and some began to abandon them.

All the religions on the world provide both information for its followers and rulings for them to abide. These are inherent in the word deen itself. Allah says “*Thus did We plan for Yoosuf (Joseph). He could not take his brother by the law of the king (as a slave)*” (12:76), the Arabic word used for law was “deen”. Another usage for the word deen is where Allah describes the day of judgement as the day of the deen, this term is used here as this is what we have been informed about.

So you have in Christianity where one of the information they are given is that Messiah is the son of God. Some rulings they must obey can be found in their 10 commandments. In communism they are given information that there is no hell or heaven and no God. Their rulings are given in the context of their economical and political systems. So this principal applies to all religions ranging from the the people of the books, to pagans, to people who adopt democracy and liberalism as religions. So everyone of these religions provides both information and rulings that the people must accept.

Unfortunately, the Muslims nowadays only understand the “deen” as information being passed down to them. So they see the “practising brother” as one who accepts this information. So you have people like zindani, who focus all their talks on Tawheed Rububiyah. In his book “Tawheed Al Khalik”, all he discusses is the need to confirm Allah's rububiyah, and doesn't mention anything to do with the Tawheed of actions, namely uloohiyah.

And you can see in the western countries where Christianity and secularism fit each other so well. You have Christianity which says you should believe in the religion, but doesn't really care whether you conduct your life according to it. And you have secularism, where it doesn't really care which religion you follow, as long as you conform to its conduct. And many Muslims use this same model with regards to Islam. So the Muslims limit Islam as believing in Allah and his messenger.

The ummah in the late 1900s found it easy to make takfir on a “Muslim” who adopted communism views. The ummah generally saw that you cannot mix the two concepts as they are diametrically opposed-as with any other kufr religion or movement-. However when the secularist movement appeared, the ummah didn't have a problem with it. They found it hard to make takfir on these people as they saw them with beards, going to the mosque, performing hajj etc. Where the “Muslim communist” would commit the kufr of believing the message, the “Muslim secularist” affirms it, but chooses not to abide by it. And for this reason this filth spread among many of our lands. Secularism has been successful in the Muslim lands through the murjiah. They say that as long as you believe in God and his messenger, there is no problem in being a “democratic Muslim” or a “liberal Muslim”. The reason why communism failed in the Muslim world was because it tried to make them commit kufr of believing the message. And even the most ignorant Muslim will never do this. So secularist brought forward the idea of democracy to our lands, as it doesn't deal with this particular issue. So these democrats will allow you to pray, fast, hajj etc. As these aren't really a threat to them. So in this way, both parties are content with

the comprise. The kuffar have learnt from history that the Muslims will never change their religion, and there are plenty of examples of this. So they introduced this idea and put these puppet rulers in the Muslim lands under the cloak of Islam. And unfortunately many Muslims fell for this deception, as the ones they put in power were their own people. And through this, the kuffar intend to bring Islam down from within. But by Allah the kuffar will never be successful, as there will always remain a group of people in this ummah who will strive to bring back Islam, even if it means the sacrifice of their own lives!

As-Sha`bee, who was one of the salaf, said that the murjiah are worse than the Khawarij. This is so true, despite there not being any specific hadith about them, like the numerous that mention the Khawarij. But the reason why the latter were mentioned so much, was that they were the first group of Ahl-bid`ah. The murjiah came about as a reaction to the Khawarij. Where you have the Khawarij on one side being extreme in their views, and you have the murjiah on the other side, being too lax. And both of these are wrong, you must take the middle path between them. The word "Irjaa", which is the where the group take its name from, means to hold something back. These people done irjaa on the actions from iman. You will realise that many of the ummahs problem's are due to this group. These are the ones who want to avenge the rape and killing of our ummah by negotiating with the kuffar in order to get recognition. These people have no courage.

### **Who are the Murjiah Al Fuqahaa (jurisprudence)?**

They were the first group that came up with these irjaa ideas. It originated from a man called Hamad ibn Abi Sulayman. He was the teacher of Imam Abu Hanifa. They said that iman is action of the heart and statement of the tongue. And that actions are just the thing that raises people over others. They say that people are equal on the level of iman, but are differentiated through their taqwa and yaqeen (certainty).

Some people may say that the differences between ASWJ and this group is just a difference in semantics. If the outcome is the same, then yes they will be right for saying this. However this lead to different conclusions, so it wasnt as simple as semantics.

The first difference is that if someone was to curse the prophet, we both agree that he becomes a kafir. However where we say it was the act that took him out, they say that he has nullified what was in his heart. When we know this cant be the case. As is mentioned in the Qur'an *"If you ask them (about this), they declare: "We were only talking idly and joking." Say: "Was it at Allah, and His Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger (SAW) that you were mocking?" Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed."* (9:65-6). This clearly indicates that they didnt commit belief inside, as they didnt really mean what they said, however their action is the thing that made them leave Islam.

The next difference is that if someone abandons all the obligatory aspects of iman, they believe he is still a Muslim, as he just lacks the level of taqwa and yaqeen. They are similar to nowadays murjiah. However the difference between the two is that the murjiah fuqahaa still occupied themselves with actions, whereas the nowadays leave out a lot of actions due to this principal they hold.

The hanafi mathab is accused of having irjaa. This is correct. So you'll realise that they went too far in their takfir in order to counteract this label. The hanafis have covered the takfir topic a

lot, as a reaction in order to dispel the accusation of irjaa. Ibn Tammiyah mentioned how irjaa has overwhelmed many of the scholars and the fuqahaa, and only very few books remain not affected by this.

### **Main features of irjaa in our time:**

1. They get the reality and coat it with Shari`ah. So instead of changing the reality in order that it complies with the Shari`ah, they just try to justify it using Islamic terminology.
2. These movements present Islam without responsibility or accountability.
3. They accuse the people of truth as being Khawarij . Every time the people of truth attack the kuffar, these groups take the side of the kuffar.
4. They are used and manipulated by the kuffar against the Muslims.

The ones who fought Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab weren't the kuffar, but in fact the murjiah at the time. This army came from Egypt and led by Muhammad Ali. They accused ibn Abdul Wahab as being a Khawarij . As it was an easy label to throw at someone as it permits fighting them. As is clearly mentioned in the hadiths about the Khawarij.

### **The ruling on the individual:**

So we have explained the different meanings of iman, kufr, Islam etc. But how do we apply the rulings and principals on someone correctly? Such as labelling someone to be a kafir, or hypocrite, or fasiq, etc.

The “ruling on an individual” is to pass a ruling on the person. We apply it to the person's Iradaa.

Before we discuss this issue further, we must clarify that when we apply the shari`ee ruling on someone, it is no connected to the foundation of the deen. As this does not need any discussing about, as the issue is very clear. The person must have the foundation before we can even consider him to be a Muslim. So we do not make takfir on issues that pertain to the foundation of the deen, as his kufr is not excusable.

So when we pass a judgement on someone being a Muslim or mumin, etc, is it the same way we pass the ruling on one who commits zina as being a "zanee" and someone who prays as a "musalee" (term given to someone who prays)? Yes it is the same. As these all apply to the shari`ee ruling on the individual.

You can have instances where 2 people from ASWJ agree on a particular concept, but yet both will have different conclusions as to passing the ruling on someone. So one could label a particular person as a kafir, whereas the other will label him as a Muslim. So when it comes down to the application, 2 people could hold the same principal, but differ on the ruling. For example, some say whoever abandons the prayer is a kafir, while others say he is not a kafir. Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal believes that he is a kafir. Whereas Imam Shafee says he is still a Muslim. Could Imam Hambal go to Imam Shafee and say that you have called a kafir a Muslim, and therefore you yourself have just become a kafir? Off course not. Even the sahaba differed over certain fiqhi issues. You have examples where the sahaba differed on Abdullah ibn Ubay (the leader of the hypocrites in medinah). The two sahaba accused each other as being a hypocrites. We don't say

that just because they accused each other as being a hypocrite, means that one of them must have been-as the hadiths mention if you call someone a kafir, then it must be the case with either of you, so if it isn't applied to the person, then it comes back to you-. So the person isn't judged according to his judgement, but rather according to his principals that he used to arrive at his conclusion. This is because people can differ on the judgement, and therefore it's not allowed for us to accuse the other of misguidance.

The relationship between the external and internal is a general ruling; however there are times where this ruling doesn't apply. This exception may be due to the person being compelled to perform an act that he doesn't want to do deep down or it could take place when the person is a hypocrite, where his internal is kufr, but his external is Islamic. All of this emanates from the person's *Iradaa*, which is manifested into external actions. This is how the two are linked.

We cannot pass judgement until the external is in fact a representation of the internal, namely that the action he is performing is linked to his will. So you can have instances where a person could commit an act of hypocrisy, but yet not be labelled as a hypocrite, and someone could commit an act of kufr, but yet is not called a kafir, due to their preventative factors.

How do we apply the principal, where if someone doesn't make takfir of a disbeliever, that he will become a kafir himself? This principal is correct, however it must be restricted. So which type of kafir does this principal apply to?

- The kuffar which are mentioned in the text
- Where there is consensus among the scholars
- The one that knows that the person is a kafir, but he chooses not to make takfir on him.

So anyone that chooses not to make takfir on someone mentioned in the text, such as the Jews, Christians, Abu Lahab, etc, then the person will become a kafir. Anyone whom there is consensus among the scholars that he is a kafir, such as Musalima the liar (one of the people who claimed prophethood during the sahabas era). And the last principal is where the person deep down knows that an individual is a kafir, but yet chooses not to make takfir on him, then he himself becomes a kafir.

Scholars have separated the kufr of individuals and the kufr on a group. The kufr of an individual requires many more factors to consider before passing a ruling.

### **How do you judge someone as a Muslim?**

You must first look at whether he has uttered the shahadaa. If a man says this, we say he is a Muslim. Is it possible that he makes this statement, yet we don't say he is a Muslim? Yes it is possible. If a man was to say the shahadaa, but the person had no intention to follow it, then it wouldn't be accepted. As can be seen with the example of the Jews who went to the prophet and confirmed that he was the prophet from Allah, however they chose not to follow him. Another example is where you get someone off the street, and teach him how to say the shahadaa, if he doesn't believe in it, then he cannot be accepted as a Muslim. However as a general rule, a man can enter the deen by uttering the shahadaa.

We must differentiate between the ruling of entering Islam, and then remaining in Islam. So a man can enter Islam by uttering the shahadaa, however once he is a Muslim, we have to see if

he actually upholds the pillars of iman, such as prayer. He needs to show his “Dalala” which is him symbolising his Islam such as prayer in congregation, having a beard, etc. The scholars have differed on the exact definition of “Dalala”. Shafee says if you know that someone is a disbeliever, and one day you see him in the mosque praying, that isn't enough to believe that he is a Muslim, and you must confirm that he has said the shahadaa. However the hanafees disagree with this, they say that if you know he was a kafir, and then you saw him in the mosque praying, that is enough to assume that he is a Muslim. They support this by the hadith of the prophet “whoever prays with us and eats our meat is a Muslim”.

So Dalala is for the person to undertake one of the symbols of Islam that are exclusive to Islam, such as fasting, hajj, prayer, etc.

Is it possible to bring the two opinions together? Yes. If you were to see a communist( from the ba`th party} in the mosque, we will still judge him as a kafir, as its not that he abandoned the prayer that led us to call him a kafir, and additionally, they dont stop their followers from attending the mosque. So it is possible to have a communist who attends the prayer. Therefore we will adopt Shafees opinion in this case. Whereas if you were to see a person who used to be a hindhu, praying in the mosque, then that will be sufficient to consider him as a Muslim, thus taking the Hanafees opinion.

### **The ruling on someone according to his Tabeeya:**

The ruling on a person can also be linked “Tabaeeya”-to follow-, which can either fit in the context of following your own parents or following of the land. A ruling on a child is that he is associated to the religion of his/her parent. If a child was brought up by the kuffar, then his ruling is that he is a kafir. So if he grows up and remains on the religion of his parents, he is considered as a kafir, and not an apostate. If one of the child's parent is a Muslim and the other is a kafir, then the child takes the better of the two parents religion-thus Islam. Whereas to judge the child as free/slave, then you must see what status his mother has. So if the mother was a slave, then the child adopts this label, and vise-versa. If the parents were Muslim, but then both apostated, the child is still considered as a Muslim.

If someone was to blind follow-where he sees the evidence, but prefers to do taqleed-, is this considered as a preventative factor? It depends on the type of kufr he is committing. Someone can choose to do taqleed despite being shown proof, because he may lack the conviction of the text being shown in front of him. Another reason why he may choose to do taqleed is due to his hawwa. Or it could be due to his arrogance. All these are factors that may make someone choose to do taqleed once shown proof that suggest otherwise. ASWJ regard taqleed in the foundations of the deen as kufr, for example, someone can be told that the prophet is a liar, and if this person believes this statement, then he obviously becomes a kafir. However if someone is doing taqleed on aspects of iman, then we don't call him a kafir. But there are factors which make some acceptable and others not.

ASWJ judge by what is the apparent, however they try to ascertain first if there are any preventative factors that lead to the external not being a representative of the internal. So if the instance was that the external doesn't reflect the internal, then we cannot pass the ruling on the individual. Take for example if there was an unjust intentional killing, the fact that someone does it on purpose, indicates his intention. So how can you as a judge, determine whether the person kills the individual by accident or whether it was murder with intent? As intention is something

that is hidden in the heart. We must first look at the tools of the murder. If a man uses a piece of wood to kill another, we know that it is not normal for people to be killed by a piece of wood. This is backed up by the hadith of the prophet who said “the one who is killed with a piece of wood or whip suggests to us it was an unintentional murder”-a term also known as manslaughter.

The scholars say that despite certain deviant groups being apostates, you cannot carry this label to every particular individual in the group. So just because you make takfir on a group, doesn't mean you make takfir on every member of the group. Unfortunately you have some people who refrain from making any takfir at all. The scholars have made takfir on the jahamiyyah group, however they didnt say that every individual in the group is a kafir. However the scholars have made takfir of every “brelvee”. So both this group and its individual are considered as a kuffar. This is because part of their belief goes against the foundation of the deen and the contract of the shahadaa. Whereas the other groups kufr isnt to do with the foundation of the deen.

With regards to defining the ruling of the land, it comes down to who is in authority and ruling the land. So the ruling of the land depends on the law and legislation that is being implemented whether this is in a city, town, village, etc and who has the authority in the land.

**According to AWJ, there are 2 types of land.**

1. Land of Islam
2. Land of Kufr

So for a land to be labelled as “land of Islam”, it is where the Shari`ah of Islam in its entirety is ruling over the people and that the Muslims have the upper hand, i.e. In charge of it. Whereas “land of kufr” is where any other law except Islam is ruling the land, i.e. A kufr law. There is no difference of opinion on this topic.

Land of Kufr can be further split into 2 categories:

1. Land of war
2. Land of Ahd-covenant-

Land of war is a land that is at war with the Muslims. Whereas a land of Ahd is where it has an agreed treaty with the Muslim, and therefore they are not at war with the Muslims. There is a difference of opinion as to whether you need to warn the kuffar in the land of war of their status with regards to the Muslims. The scholars who say that you don't need to warn them, give the example of the incident of Banu Mustalik. However it is recommended that you do warn them, if they havent heard about Islam, but nowadays which country in the world hasn't heard about Islam? Once the proof is established on the land of war, you fight them, but it doesn't mean you make takfir on all the inhabitants of the land. You give the message to the ruler either to become a Muslim, pay jizya or there will be a war of extermination. This is the sunnah of the prophet and the righteous guided caliphs, and in this particular order. The scholars have said it is sufficient to just send a letter to the leader, and then act on whatever decision he makes. So you dont have to send a letter to every person in the land and see what answer they give. In the Land of war, everyone is considered as a combatant regardless if the person agrees with the government or not. The ruling is passed on the individual, through the response of his ruler. So you can have a land where a man is against his government's foreign policy, but the ruling will still fall upon him.

However if there was a Muslim in the land of war, the overriding factor is that he is a Muslim, and therefore his blood, wealth, and honour is protected. So regardless where the Muslim resides, you must avoid his intentional killing, however if he is killed accidentally, then there is no sin in that. A proof for this is where the sahaba killed a Muslim by accident who was amongst the kuffar. His family went to the prophet asking for blood money for his death, the prophet said "I am free from the one who resides with the kuffar". So the ruling falls on all of the individuals of the land.

By default, the land of kufr is considered as a land of war. The exception is if the land has a contract with the Muslims. So the fact that some governments kill Muslims is just an extra reason why these particular countries should be attacked. But we are not supporting violence here! Even with the lands that you have a contract with, you can only have a contract for a limited period of time. Some scholars limit it to 10 years, and the reason they say this is in order for the Muslims not to abandon the jihad against the kuffar.

When you impose the kuffar to pay jizya to the Islamic state, they must still be ruled by the Shari`ah. So in history, whenever a town heavily populated by the kuffar agreed to pay the jizya, they must still live under the rules of the Shari`ah. However they have the discretion to refer to their own books in social matters, such as divorce, adoption, disputes etc. So where it is only an issue amongst themselves and is of a social nature, then they are allowed to refer to their own books. However if it is a crime that involves a Muslim or its nature affects the society, then it must be referred to the Shari`ah.

### **How is the ahd broken?**

If the kuffar unite on nullifying the contract, as a whole, as opposed to just one individual nullifying the contract, then the contract will be broken. So it must be a collective action that breaks the contract of the land, and not just one individual who breaks it. The scholars have consensus on this.

If there is a man in the land of kufr, and we don't know him to be a believer, the ruling on him is that he is a kafir. Whereas in the land of Islam, and we don't know him to be a believer, then the ruling on him is that he is a Muslim. These are the original rulings, unless they show signs of their truth faith.

How does the land of kufr become land of Islam?

This can take place when the Muslims take over the land and implement the Shari`ah.

### **However, can land of Islam become land of Kufr?**

In reality, it can become land of kufr, such as Spain. This view is adopted by the hanafees, malikees and hambalees. However some scholars prevent it being called "land of kufr". This view is taken by the shafee fiqh. This is because they use the principal that if something is not recognised by the Shari`ah, then it cannot adopt its name. Muslims should not recognise the rule of kufr after Islam was being ruled by it.

This difference of opinion is reflected on other fiqhi rulings. For example, if the Muslims take over some land, and the amir splits the booty amongst the Muslims, but then the kuffar come back and take their booty back, but then the Muslims regroup and take back the booty once again, what is the ruling on the situation? According to the hanafees, if the Muslims take the booty back, it must be split again amongst the Muslims. Whereas the shafees disagree, they say the property belonged to the Muslims from the first attack, but when the kuffar took it back, it was taken unjustly, so when the Muslims re-take the booty, it should be given back to the Muslims that possessed the booty in the first place and not split amongst the second group that retook the booty. This is a big fiqh discussion amongst the different schools. However both the schools agree with fighting the invaders. So even if the shafees don't recognise the land to be "land of kufr", they will still fight the people in authority.

Ibn Tammiyyah was asked about an area that was taken in the north of Syria by the Tartar, whether it was land of Islam or land of kufr. He said it involved both. It was considered as land of kufr because it was ruled by the kuffar. However it also was considered as land of Islam because the people that reside there are Muslims. So in this instance, you deal with the kuffar in that land under the conditions of "land of kufr", whereas the Muslims should be dealt with under the conditions of "land of Islam". So with regards to the Muslim lands nowadays, they will be closest to this particular ruling. The Muslims should be treated as a Muslims regardless what land he is in.

Some people say that the hanafee fiqh allows usury in the "land of kufr". However they have misunderstood this principal. They say it's still a sin; however the courts cannot do the "hudood" (legal punishment) on the person if he was found guilty. This applies to other sins as well. They say it is a sin, but do not see as an offence. Shafee writes in his books that usury is haram whether it is done in "land of Islam" or "land of kufr", in an attempt to counteract this view. In his book "Criminal law in Islam", Abdul Qadir Awda conducts a study and draws the differences between the two views. He mentions that the hanafees will first see the land you are in before they pass a ruling, whereas the other scholars look at the individual first before passing a ruling. This can be seen in the opinion of Abu Haneefa, where he says that if there is no imam, then there is no jummah prayer.

Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab mentioned in his book "Kash Fi-Shubuhaat"-this statement can also be found in Ibn Tammiyyah's book-, that Bani Ubayd took over Morocco and Egypt in the era of the Abbasid dynasty. They all testified to the shahadaa, claimed to be Muslims, prayed jummah, etc. However when they showed certain actions that opposed Islam, the scholars of Morocco issued many fatawaas that they were kuffar and Zanadiq.

Why were they called kuffar? This was because they ruled by other than the Shari`ah.

Why were they called Zanadiq? This was because they have the Ismaelee and Ubaydiyyah manhaj.

Qadi Iyad related this fatwa from other scholars. He says the reason they were called kuffar is because they ruled other than the Shari`ah. And no-one said that they were kuffar because of them being Ismaeleees. When the scholars of Morocco made the fatawaas, the Muslims rebelled and fought them. Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab took this discussion from Ibn Tammiyyah's works.

The reason why we have mentioned this account is because the scholars declared that land as a “land of war”, despite there being many Muslims who lived in Egypt and Morocco. However ibn Hazm disagrees with this as he didn't declare it “land of war”.

### **How do you judge someone with nifaaq?**

The root word of nifaaq according to the Arabic language is a desert rat. It is sly, cunning and sharp. It has 2 entrances to its house. So if there were something trying to hunt it, it goes through one door, but comes out of the other. And the door it runs out of is “nafeeqa”.

According to the Shari`ah, Nifaaq can be split into 2:

1. The major nifaaq:- This is to have inner kufr, but have an outward appearance of Islam.
2. The minor nifaaq:- It is the kufr actions we have mentioned earlier, such as lying, breaking promises, getting into rage when arguing. If all of these qualities are present, this will lead to major nifaaq

So if the person only had some of the qualities of a hypocrite, then it is considered as minor nifaaq. Whereas if someone has all of the characteristic's of a hypocrite, then it is considered as major nifaaq. These individuals appeared in Madinah.

ASWJ broke the hypocrites into 2 categories. Both are mentioned in surah Baqarah. The first example is where Allah says “*Their likeness is as the likeness of one who kindled a fire; then, when it lighted all around him, Allah took away their light and left them in darkness. (So) they could not see. They are deaf, dumb, and blind, so they return not (to the Right Path).*” (Verse 17-18). The analogy of the fire represents Islam. It has the characteristics of light and also the ability to burn. These people wished to have the truth, but when it came to them, they didn't benefit from it. The truth is considered as nur (light), but you must also have the nur inside in order to draw its benefit. So the Qur`ān is the nur, but you need a heart with nur to accept it. Just like the light of the sun, you will need the ability to see from your eyes in order to benefit from the sun's light. So when Allah says he took away the nur from them, it is their nur, and not the nur of the truth. So the person experiences the fire, without the benefit of light.

The other category of hypocrite is where Allah says “*Or like a rainstorm from the sky, wherein is darkness, thunder, and lightning. They thrust their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunderclap for fear of death. But Allah ever encompasses the disbelievers (i.e. Allah will gather them all together).*” (2:19) Sometimes this person believes and supports the deen, however when the dunya comes with all its pleasures, he disbelieves. So he sways between the two. So in this instance, the person isn't set on just kufr, whereas the first category, the person is set on kufr and doesn't go back and forth. This group falls into hypocrisy through misconceptions and/or hawaa.

The one who shows Islam, we judge him as a Muslim, as we don't know what's in the inside. This principal applies to both groups of hypocrites.

### **Can we pass the ruling on someone being a hypocrite?**

The scholars would refer to a person as a "zindiq"-plural zanadeeqa-. This is a Persian word. The term became widespread with the scholars in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, and that gave this label to someone who made his nifaaq apparent.

### **How is it made apparent?**

Some people say that the jihad against the hypocrites should only be made through Islamic debates and providing evidence, whereas the jihad against the kuffar is through the sword. Allah says "O Prophet (Muhammad SAW)! Strive hard against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be harsh against them, their abode is Hell" (9:73). This interpretation is correct to a certain extent, but at times you must fight the hypocrites with the sword. This is deduced from the ayat "If the hypocrites, and those in whose hearts is a disease (evil desire for adultery, etc.), and those who spread false news among the people in AlMadinah, cease not, We shall certainly let you overpower them," (33:60). This verse indicates to us that there are instances that they can be fought and killed.

Ali said that the prophet came down with 2 swords, one for the mushrikeen, and the other is for the hypocrites.

So why, that despite Allah's order to fight them, the prophet didnt kill the hypocrites?

We have to first see the different categories of the hypocrites at the time.

1. There were some who the prophet was aware of , such are the ones that Jibril told him, and he later told Huthayfa(RA)
2. There were some who the prophet was suspicious of Allah says "Had We willed, We could have shown them to you, and you should have known them by their marks, but surely, you will know them by the tone of their speech!" (47:30). So the prophet wasnt told about them, but was left to determine them from their tone of speech. However there was no guarantee that the prophet would have got it correct.
3. The last group where the ones the prophet didnt know, and neither suspected.

With regards to the third group, as he didnt know them, he obviously could not have fought or killed them. In regards to the second group, punishment cannot be given on mere suspicion. The proof is only established by evidence, thus he couldn't have fought them either. So what about the first category? The reason why he didn't kill them was in order to teach the Muslim ummah that it is not enough for the judge- as indicated by the prophet's role- to know of the crime, but it must be supported by witnesses. For example, if the judge was the only one to see two people committing zina, he cannot convict them unless 4 witnesses came forward. This keeps the system fair and unbiased. So judges later in history, cannot pass a judgement on just what they may have seen, but they need to rely on witnesses where necessary. There are differences of opinion on this, but the shaykh believes that this is the correct opinion of the reason why the prophet didnt fight the hypocrites at his time.

The prophet had two roles. The first was to inform people of the correct message and the rules they must abide to. The second was to apply the judgement on the reality around him.

There was an instance where Zubair and a hypocrite had a dispute over a well, and whose land it belonged to. They went to the prophet, and the prophet ruled that it should go to Zubair. So the hypocrite accused the prophet of not judging fairly and said that he only gave that ruling because Zubair was the son of his uncle. The hypocrite was not referred to as a kafir here. So

some deviants say that he had rejected the law of Allah, and wasn't called a kafir. They use this as a proof that someone could reject the law of Allah, and yet still be considered as Muslim. And uses this argument to say that the tyrants in the Arab lands are in fact Muslims. Our response to them is that the person didn't reject the law of Allah, but he had a problem with the prophet's judgement. He criticised the prophet's role as a judge, not the law of Allah. If it was a rejection of Allah's law, then yes indeed the person would be considered as a kafir. Another example is where the Khawarij said to the prophet "judge by justice". This person is not denying Allah's law, but he just believes that the prophet didn't judge according to it. So there is a difference between rejecting the law of Allah, and to reject the judgement of the judge. The shaykh believes the latter is not a nullifier, but to reject the law of Allah is a nullifier.

As the information of the hypocrites that was given to the prophet through wahi (divine revelation), the sahaba didn't know them. If Said ibn Ubayda (RA) knew that Abdullah ibn Ubay was a hypocrite, he wouldn't have defended him when there was a disagreement between him and the other sahaba. The sahaba couldn't have known about them. The prophet didn't kill them, as there was no "proof" from the Shari'ah to convict them. Thus leaving an important principal for other judges to follow after him. Also the prophet himself admitted that there may be instances where he can make a mistake in judgement.

Ibn Tammiyyah says that the ayat that mentions about killing the hypocrites, should only be applied if they don't cease in whatever action they are perpetuating. So the prophet not killing them, could have been due to the fact that they ceased committing the action.

The Spy is the one who passes information about the Muslims to the kuffar. The scholars differ on this person's ruling. The hanafees say that he should be told off, and that the action is only just disobedience. Others say he must be punished by death, however you kill him as a Muslim. Whereas others say you must kill him, and he is killed as a kafir.

We said that in reality, a hypocrite is in fact a disbeliever. However when passing a ruling on him, it must only be based on what is apparent, as we cannot know what is in the inside of man. So as long as the person shows an Islamic appearance, then we judge him as a Muslim. Whereas if the person shows signs of hypocrisy that nullify one's iman, then the ruling on him is that he is an apostate. At the time of the prophet, he knew some of them, but in our time, as we don't have wahi, it is difficult to know who a hypocrite is. Many of the scholars say that to label someone as a "hypocrite", ended at the time of the prophet. They acknowledge that there will always be hypocrites in every era, however to pass the judgement of hypocrisy doesn't apply in our times. So the ruling of a hypocrite is replaced by the label of zandeeq.

When someone commits clear kufr, he is judged as an apostate. Whereas a zandeeq is where someone keeps giving signs of constant hypocrisy. However these acts by themselves aren't enough to take the person out of Islam, but they put doubt on his character. Once he commits a major act of hypocrisy, he is called a zandeeq. So you don't judge the person on just one act, but you must see his profile first.

So a zandeeq portrays Islam outwardly, however he gives indications of hypocrisy such as lying, breaking promises, etc. So this person has a history of doing these particular acts, but these by themselves are not enough to pass this ruling on him. But as soon as he commits an act of major kufr, then he is declared as a zandeeq.

According to the scholars, if someone is labelled as a zandeeq, it is worse than being labelled as an apostate, which in turn is worse than an average kafir.

If a person is judged as an apostate, you try to clarify to him his misconception, and request him to do tawbah. If he were to do tawbah, then the judge is at discretion if he should receive the death penalty or not.

Whereas if a person is judged as a zandeeq, is his tawbah accepted? The shafees say regardless who the person is, if he does tawbah, then it should be accepted. Whereas Abu Haneefa and Imam Malik say you must kill him, and don't accept his tawbah. Abu Haneefa is strictest on this issue. The third opinion is adopted by Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal which is that you must give him 2 warnings, if he commits the same act on the third occasion, then you must kill him and his tawbah is not accepted. However the majority of the scholars adopt the second view, and that is you kill them and you dont accept their tawbah.

If a man curses the prophet, then he seeks tawbah. This tawbah of his prevents us from judging him as an apostate, however due to the specific instance of this crime, you must still kill him. As the scholars have mentioned that anyone who mocks the prophet should be killed regardless if he does tawbah or not. So if he died as a Muslim, then his killing is a form of expiation of that particular sin.

The prophet mentioned that he didn't want to kill the hypocrites and said he didnt want people to say that he kills his own followers. The reason he said this was that their kufr wasn't apparent, so the Muslims still considered them to be their brothers in faith.

Hikmah (wisdom) isn't that you tolerate the cursing and attacking of Islam. Yes we must defend the truth by speaking out, however there are instances where we are required to take the defence in a physical form. The ummah is lacking in manliness. The deviant people have destroyed this concept by advocating the use of "maslaha" for everything. When the man sees the deen being desecrated and stands up and defends the truth, Allah will be pleased by this. This is how we should view things, even though people may shed tears for their losses. When we please Allah, then this is the correct "maslaha". We must teach ourselves not to fear death, but we should prepare to welcome it.

It is jihad that breaths life into the ummah. It is the jihad that distinguished the Muslim from the hypocrite. We must be proud that we are the tool that Allah uses against the kuffar to punish them. What is this life thats so precious to us? It is worse than that of a dog, this humiliated and submissive life. Where the ummah is subjected to the worse of crimes, and groups still insist that Muslims should use peaceful measures in order to bring change. How ignorant!

When someone commits one of the major sins, they are referred to as a Fasiq. However not everyone who commits a major sin is given this label. Ibn Tammiyah has mentioned 10 preventative factors that must be taken into consideration before passing this ruling on someone. Unfortunately the recording of this talk was of poor quality, so we couldnt note what these were, and also which book it could be found in.

Some of the scholars say that you cannot curse any Muslim. Whereas others say you can only curse someone who has fallen into the category of Fisq. Can a Muslim see another Muslim do a major sin and then curse him for that act in order to discourage him from committing it again?

The correct opinion is that you can do that, however there are restrictions in the sunnah that you must abide to. This principal only applies to the person who repeatedly commits the act, or if he encourages other to do it.

### **When passing a ruling on the individual:**

The original kafir is well known to us, such as the Christian, Jewish, etc. We associate him to the group he is with.

ASWJ say that the kufr of ignorance of the foundation of the deen cannot be excused by a preventative factor. However if someone is ignorant about the principals of the deen, then he will not be included in this category. The reason why their ignorance of the foundation of the deen is not valid is because even some of the kuffar haven't heard anything about Islam. The scholars who were affected by the Mu'tazila thoughts said that this type of kafir, will be destined to either hell or heaven depending on his level of sins. So for them he is a kafir in the dunya and a kafir in the hereafter, because they believe that they dont need the prophet for the message, as their intellect could determine whether it is a sin or not. So they say even if a man hasn't heard about Islam, his intellect is capable to know which actions are sinful. Some other scholars who aren't associated with the Mu'tazila also adopted this view. When Allah says "*We dont punish people until we send them a prophet*", they say that this punishment is on Earth. And further to this, they say that every nation has had a prophet sent to them. The other opinion is that these kuffar will go to heaven, but only a few of the scholars hold this view. The third and correct opinion is linked to the hadith about the 3 people who will be tested on the day of judgement. To summarise the hadith, it mentions that Allah will bring heaven and hell in front of them, and ask them that if they were on Earth, would they have obeyed him. They will obviously reply in the affirmative, and then Allah will order them to enter hell. This is a test from Allah to see if they will truly obey him. So the ones who do obey him, will find themselves in heaven, and the ones who disobey him, will find themselves in hell. Ahmad ibn Hambal adopts this view. So we still label them as kuffar, despite Allah testing them on the day of judgement.

Ibn Hazm says that it is enough for the kafir to have heard that there is a man named Muhammad and that he is a messenger, for them to have no excuse on the day of judgement. So if they hear these facts, they wouldnt fit into the category that we mentioned in the previous paragraph. It is not necessary that you have long debates with the kuffar in order for the "hujjah" (proof) to be established on them. This principal can be seen where if you were to send a letter to a leader, then his response is a hujjah on all the inhabitants of the town.

### **Procedure of Takfir:**

The kufr of apostasy is where a man commits one of the nullifiers of his contract with Allah. The procedure of takfir on this person must follow certain steps. This steps are similar to those used in the Shari`ah court to convict someone of a crime.

1. You must first established that the action was committed. So it cannot just be "hear say", there must be proof that the person carried this act.
2. You then establish that the action itself is one of the nullifiers. Such as one of the acts of major kufr. However some of these acts, there is consensus amongst the scholars,

whereas other acts do not have consensus. In which case, the judge has the final say on which opinion he believes to be strongest on the ones where there is no consensus.

3. The person must qualify as someone who can be judged. The scholars have mentioned that a person must fit a criterion before judging them. Such as him being an adult, sane, Muslim, etc.
4. You must see if there are any preventative factors. What are the things that prevent the absolute ruling of kufr? We have discussed previously the relationship between the internal and external. There are times when these two are not in harmony. The preventative factors are
  - Ignorance behind the action
  - Ta`weel
  - Compulsion
  - He may have committed an act, that he didn't intend to commit( this isnt to do with the intention, but rather the action itself.)

According to ASWJ, we judge the person on his Iradaa. So we look at his external in order to judge the person.

#### 1. Ignorance:

There is ignorance that is excusable and ignorance that isnt. ASWJ say that if someone is ignorant of the shahadaa, then this is not excusable. Another example is where a man confirms the foundation of the deen, however he is ignorant of what these foundation are. Some people say that with matters of aqeeda, you cannot differ on and be ignorant about, as they believe this is part of the foundation of the deen. They say that everything is split into 2. So they say that the fundamentals and aqeeda, you cannot be excused due to ignorance. Whereas the other category involves all other things which you can be excused if your ignorant about. However our response to them is that even the sahaba differed on whether the prophet saw Allah or not on his night journey. And this is an issue of aqeeda. So it doesn't support their view. The shaykh believes that everything is excusable, except on issues that pertain to the foundations of the deen.

In reference to the kufr of turning away once you have seen the truth, if this is in regards to the foundations of the deen, then there is no disagreement of his kufr. Whereas if he turns away from the other elements, then he can be excused depending on the circumstances surrounding the situation.

It may be difficult to substantiate such accusation, as people may differ on what constitutes the foundations of the deen. People will disagree as to what aspects of the deen will come under this category. If someone abandons the pillars of Islam, and he is ignorant of this ruling from Allah, he is not made takfir upon.

There is no difference in aqeeda, sayings and actions. We dont say one is a fundamental and the others arent. You can be ignorant in all of these, but yet still be a Muslim.

A proof that ignorance is a preventative factor of takfir, is where Allah says *“(Remember) when Al-Hawareeoon (the disciples) said: “O Iesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)! Can your Lord send down to us a table spread (with food) from heaven?”* (5:112). This question represents some doubt if Allah can perform this act. And we hold the principal that if anyone entertains doubt about Allah's ability,

then he is a kafir. However they weren't called kuffar. Another proof is where the prophet mentioned about the person who committed all the sins and yey did not perform any good deeds. He told his family that once he dies, he wants them to burn his body and scatter the ashes all over, in order that Allah doesn't bring him together and punish him. But the hadith later mentions that Allah will forgive him due to the fear the man had for him. The person entertained doubt of Allah's ability, which is one of the nullifiers of Islam. However due to his ignorance he was excused of this. Another proof is where the companions went past some mushrikeen who used to hang their swords on a particular tree, in order for their weapons to be blessed. The new companions went to ask the prophet to give them a similar object for them to seek blessings from. The prophet said "you have fallen into something that people before you did". So he made it clear to them that their request was of shirk. This is because to think that certain places hold benefit and harm, is shirk. However they weren't considered apostates for asking this question. Some scholars have approached this hadith from the wrong angle, and said that in this, there is proof that someone can be ignorant in the fundamentals of the deen. Has Allah decided certain things to have barakah (blessing)? Yes he has, such as Masjid Haram, Aqsa, Maqamat Ibrahim, etc. Prayer and supplication in these places hold special blessings. Allah has put blessings in reading the Qur'ān. So we confirm that Allah has put blessings in certain things, however it is only through which the Shari`ah confirms. The problem is when someone seeks blessing in something that the Shari`ah hasnt enforced.

The seeking of blessings can be split into 2:

1. Seeking blessing from what come from the Shari`ah.
2. Seeking blessing from other than what the Shari`ah has sanctioned.

There are different types of the second blessings. Some of them can take you out of the fold of Islam, whereas others are just considered as sinful. So what determines whether it is permissible or not permissible? It is determined by Allah. So the sahaba that asked the prophet to give them something they can get blessing from wasn't kufr. Because they knew that blessing can only come from Allah, so they just simply asked the prophet to make a request. This is similar to when Umar (RA) made a request to the prophet that they should pray at Maqamat Ibrahim. So they only requested from the prophet to ask Allah to make it a blessing. ASWJ say that if someone asked for kufr, he has acted upon kufr, even before he has even committed the action. So during the sahaba's time, they could have asked the prophet as the revelations were still coming down. Whereas now, the Shari`ah has be perfected for us, so we cannot determine by ourselves where blessings can be found. What would have been kufr for these particular sahaba, is if they were to go to these places for blessings before Islam has sanctioned or not sanctioned it. However even with this, there is different levels of it. For example, if someone goes to a grave and supplicates to Allah, because he thinks that that grave has blessing, then he is not a kafir. However, if someone went to the grave and asked the dead person to ask Allah for something, then he is a kafir. So to seek blessing is not all on one level.

Now, how did the prophet respond to them? "you have come with what the people came with before, by saying make for us a God". It is similar to what the previous people requested, however the two levels are different. The sahaba didnt ask for shirk. The scholars sais that had they gone to this place for blessing, after the prophet told them not to, that would have been considered as shirk. The Qur'ān mentions "*Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope.*" (2:286), so the person cannot act on something beyond his knowledge.

Some of the Najdi Scholars say that ignorance is not a preventative factor when it comes down to takfir. They say that if the person is deprived from knowledge, then that is just his punishment.

### **Those who worship the Graves:**

Are these people excused for their ignorance?

“Ignorance” is a relative point. It varies from one context to another. It is relative to the individual. For example, you will expect the bedouin to be more ignorant than someone from the people of knowledge. So where the bedouin can be excused for ignorance, the people of knowledge would not be excused. Another factor to bear in mind is the land that the person resides in. So if you have a land where the ruler spreads the deen amongs the people, in this particular place, there will be knowledge that will be known by necessity. Thus the ignorance will vary depending on the knowledge that the average person will know. This knowledge may vary from land to land, as some lands could be more deviant than others. Another factor you must bear in mind is that an individual can vary on how much information he could soak up and whether he can understand it. Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab said if you try to explain in the way of eloquence in speech to an average commoner, he will not understand you. This reiterates that you must bear in mind the knowledge that is known by the average Muslim.

The majority of the Najdi scholars don't give excuses to the grave worshippers, and call them mushrikeen. However Ibn Abdul Wahab said that the ones who went to certain graves in “tuwaaaj”, were not kuffar, until you establish the hujjah on them. What does he mean by Hujjah in this case? This isn't the hujjah to establish the foundation of the deen that we mentioned earlier. The hujjah is to teach them the aspects of the deen. An example can be seen with Abdul latif Ali Shaykh who was asked about the Jahimees in Kuwait, who said that Allah is not above the heavens. He said before we do anything regarding them, we must establish the hujjah on them, and he quoted that ayat “*we dont punish people until Allah sends a messenger*”. He added that the absence of hujjah, means an absence of takfir.

This principal can be seen where if you were to imagine a commoner being told by his mosque imam that this particular act-grave worshipping- is what the prophet recommends and promotes. Then you must establish the hujjah on him, as he can be ignorant of this act. So we must look at the individual circumstances before passing a ruling on someone. The hujjah needs to be established on someone before takfir is made on them, whether it is done by yourself or someone else. So if the hujjah has been carried out by another person, and yet he still persists on the grave worshipping, then you can make takfir on him.

The ones that will disagree with this opinion and say that ignorance is not an excuse will provide proof where ignorance is not accepted in the kufir of the foundation of the deen. However, we agree them that ignorance is not an excuse when it comes down to matters that pertain the foundation of the deen. Whereas other matters, can be excused by ignorance.

ASWJ are in agreement that the hujjah must be established before the takfir is made, on aspects of the deen. However ignorance in the foundation of the deen is not excusable. With regards to the kuffar, you dont need to establish hujjah on them before you make takfir on them.

However the scholars have made two exceptions where they are not linked to the foundation of the deen, and yet ignorance will not excuse them. They are to curse the prophet or curse Allah. They say that even if you are ignorant of this, then you are still kafir, because it emanates from the corruption of your deen.

## 2. Another preventative factor is Ta`weel:

This is where something is transformed into something else. It is found in “senses”-which deals with issues about physics, imperial measurement, etc-, however we will not discuss this as it doesn't have anything to do with this topic-. Another form it takes is when it is used in abstract meanings.

Everything on earth can be found in 3 realities. These are:

- The real reality, i.e. The things Allah has created.
- The reality in the mind
- The reality in the literal sense.

For example, “A pen” can be found in all 3 realities. It can be found in the first case, as we know there is such a thing that is a pen. It can be found in the second case, as our mind knows what it is when its mentioned. It can also be found in the third case, as it can be expressed in words, namely “pen”. The "reality of the mind" and "literal sense" both emanate from the "real reality". This is obvious as you cannot attribute a word to something that you do not know its reality, nor can you think about something that you unaware of its real reality. Allah informs us about heaven, yet our mind cannot comprehend how it will be, because it's beyond whatever information we have. The philosophers like to deal in the realm of the mind, by discussing issues in their abstract cases. They say that the realm of the reality is only for the commoners.

So both the reality of the mind and literal, are connected to the real reality. Shirk takes place where the people imagine things that don't exist in reality. They believe that some Gods can help them, when in reality; those Gods cannot even help themselves, let alone these people. Islam has come to correct and bring into harmony the reality of the mind and the real reality. Whenever the reality is not in all 3 cases, then this is considered misguidance. So if someone was to cause your mind to see something other than the reality, then this someone is a magician. This can be seen with the example of the magicians at Pharaohs time, when they made people believe that the ropes they threw were snakes. This is falsifying the reality. Islam has come to establish the reality and maintain it. Islam does not permit things to be falsified or misrepresented, except in things that the Shari`ah has endorsed.

The ummah's problem is where they incorrectly use Islamic terminology for things that cannot be found in Islam. The Shari`ah has come down to confirm the reality for us. For example, a man can be nice to the kuffar, hoping to earn Allah's pleasure, but in fact the Shari`ah has told us how to seek Allah's pleasure and what to refrain from in order not to be on the receiving end of Allah's wrath.

Pharaoh changed the way people saw the reality, and similarly, this is what the nowadays Tawagheet do. And this is why Allah has told us that even eloquence could be considered as magic, as it affects how the reality is portrayed. So you have places like Saudi Arabia that try to cloak their king as the "Wali Al Amr" and the country to be as a land that implements the

Shari`ah such chopping the hand of the thief-which is only done to the poor, whereas the rich get away with the crime-, whilst allowing big western banks to operate on the land using interest based systems. Ontop of this is their support to the American attacks on our brothers and sisters in Iraq and Afghanistan. May Allah curse these tawagheet in our lands who are deluding the Muslims to think they are their brothers in faith.

So if you want to explain to someone what a pen is, you have to transform the pen in the real reality into the reality of the mind. We can teach him by either bringing the pen in front of him, or we can explain to him how and what it's comprised of, by using words. This is what Ta`weel means in the Qur`ān. For example, Allah has told us about heaven, however we havent seen it. So Allah has described it by informing us that there will be pomegranates. The other way we can find out about heaven, is if we were to see it ourselves. This will be the ta`weel of the pomegranates that we have been told about in the Qur`ān, by us seeing it. The Ta`weel is where the word is transformed to the reality of the mind, by either showing the reality to someone, or by describing it. Another example is where the prophet used ta`weel to inform us about the Dajjal. The first ta`weel is where he gave us it's description, so it is being transformed from the reality of the word, to the reality of the mind. The second ta`weel takes place when the Dajjal arrives, as then the real reality gets transferred into the reality of our mind.

Could ta`weel be associated to the attributes of Allah? Yes, according to the definition we have given. For example, when Allah says "Istawaa", we could describe what that means. Also there is reality of it, as Allah did rise above His throne. However, some people misunderstand the word ta`weel. These people understand ta`weel as looking at a word or statement, and then taking the hidden meaning behind it. This is the incorrect meaning of the word. The Qur`ān consists of both information and orders. The ta`weel of the information we have been given are a reality that we have come across, or that we will be coming across. And the ta`weel of the orders, are that we enact them.

Allah says "*No-one knows that ta`weel of Allah except him*", this is in reference to knowing the reality of the hereafter while we are on earth, and so we only know it through words. When Allah mentions the "mutashabahaat" in the surah Al-Imran, these arent part of the Shari`ah that we have to implement. This is because Allah would not give us an order that is unclear. The mutashabahaat that are mentioned, are in reference to the aspects of the unseen.

Ibn Abbas split the Qur`ān into 4 categories.

1. Those things that no-one is excused for misunderstanding. It is unacceptable for someone not to understand it.
2. Those who know Arabic
3. Those that relate to the rulings of the Shari`ah. These people have knowledge of the hadiths and sunnah, so they expound on the rulings from the Qur`ān.
4. Those issues that are only known by Allah.

There are no contradictions in these categories. The scholars of fiqh, use ta`weel when making ijtihaad about certain rulings.

The Ash'arees and the Mu'tazila adopt their opinion of ta`weel from Ar-Razi`s book "Al Qanoon Al Quli". Ar-Razi explains how when the text seems contradicting to the intellect, then you use ta`weel. The Mu'tazila will put their intellect ahead of the text if there is a difference

between the two. This can be coated by them dismissing that hadith as being fabricated, or by them claiming that the sahabee that narrated it was ignorant. The Ash'arees don't take the same approach. Instead, they say they want to bring harmony between the two. They will "understand" the text according to their intellect. So it's their rationality that guides the text. This can be seen when they adopt the hidden meaning with words, such as explaining Allah "rose" as him taking charge. The reason they say this, is because it goes against rationality, as Allah cannot be defined by directions. Therefore to say that Allah is above, we have restricted him, and goes against the rule that nothing is similar to Allah. So they conclude that as the creation is defined by direction, they feel they must apply "ta`weel" with the apparent meaning, and replace it with a hidden meaning. Thus, they say "he rose" (Istawaa) should be understood as "he took charge" (Istawlaa). Another example is where Allah says "*The Hand of Allah is over their hands.*" (48:10). They say that hands can only be attributed to man, therefore you can't apply it to Allah. So they remove the apparent meaning, and replace it with a hidden meaning, namely power.

Our reply to them is that Allah does have a hand, however it is not the same as the hand of man or any other creation. This is applied to any other attribute, for example, Allah does exist, and so does man. However both their existence are not the same. And to confirm this point, doesn't mean that you are saying that man is the same as Allah. And because of this point, some people such as the the Ismaeeli Karamita say that Allah doesnt exist.

The reason why they do ta`weel on some of these attributes, is because they dont want to fall into the likening Allah to his creation. Therefore they feel the need to remove the apparent meaning of the word, such as "Istawwa" to "Istawlaa". The latter word is even worse for them to accept as it necessities that you get into conflict with someone and you have overcome them. This has far worse connotations. So their motivation to do ta`weel is that they dont want make Allah similar to his creation. As-Shawkani who is a ASWJ said that "Ta`weel" is like "Talbees"- which is when you dress things up in a certain reality when its not its true reality. The proof they provide that "nothing is similar to Allah", has been misunderstood and used incorrectly by them.

A Muslim could investigate the rulings of Islam on Allah's names and attribute, yet due to his ignorance, he gets to the wrong conclusion concerning them. So he uses Qur'an and Sunnah, but due to his misunderstanding of it, these are not accepted as valid proofs to substantiate his argument. This prevents us from making takfir on the individual. His kufr isnt of the foundation of the deen. Whereas if someone was to investigate whether the prophet was only sent to the Arabs or to the entire mankind, and gets to the conclusion that he was only sent to the Arabs, then his ignorance is not an excuse. We make takfir on him as this issue is to deal with the foundation of the deen.

**Ta`weel is only accepted if it is either backed up by the following 3 factors.**

- The language
- The Shari`ah
- The customary meaning

So someone's ta`weel can only be accepted as an excuse if it falls into one of the above categories. If his ta`weel has its roots from the above, then it will be sufficient enough for us not to ake takfir on the individual. However the ta`weel cannot go against the foundation of the deen. For example, the Christians cannot have used their ta`weel to reject the prophet Muhammad as a messenger. Many of the people that dont believe in Islam, is because they use

ta`weel and arrive to the conclusion that he isn't a messenger. However this ta`weel is not accepted as an excuse, as it goes against one of the foundation of the deen. The second factor to bear in mind is that there must be something to support the ta`weel, for it to be used as a preventative factor.

When Banu Haneefa came to Abu Bakr and refused to pay him zakat, they used the proof from the Qur`ān “*Give sadaqa to prophet, who could purify them, pray for them, your prayer s a source to them*”. They said that this ayat indicates that they should only pay their zakat to the prophet. These groups of people who refused to pay zakat fall into different rulings. The ones who refused to pay zakat at all, were considered apostates. However there were people who refused to pay zakat specifically to Abu Bakr, but intended to pay it to the poor themselves. These were considered Muslims rebels. The scholars say that Banu Haneefa doesn't fall into either of the two categories, but they were still considered kuffar because it was well known that people should pay zakat. So if someone uses ta`weel with things that are well known, it wouldnt be accepted. For example if someone was to use ta`weel and say that he didnt need to pray, then that will not be an acceptable ta`weel that will prevent takfir being made on him.

If someone was to enter parliament, is this action in itself kufr? Does this make someone leave Islam? Before we answer this, we must first highlight some issues. As we said before, the problem of the ummah is that it uses Shari`ah terminology and applies it to the reality incorrectly. They limit Tawheed Nusuq as just praying, zakat, having a beard, etc. And that they understand “Ilah” as just to confirm Tawheed Rububiyah.

Democracy is a religion and people worship it. We mentioned earlier what factors constituted religion, namely people listen to its instructions and refer everything to it. The legislative parliaments are the ones that implement democracy to the country. Secularism, capitalism and democracy are all linked to each other by the fact that they give the freedom to the people. Secularism seeks to give authority to man to choose his own rules. Their principal is that man should not be restricted as to how he wants to live. They give man the supreme authority of legislation. Which is a quality that is exclusive to Allah. Legislation is where someone or something has the authority to set up procedures and to evaluate what is right and wrong. These people who legislate, say that Jihad is forbidden, whereas zina is permissible. Therefore it goes against what Allah has legislated.

There are 3 main bodies that share this type of authority:

- Executive body- Such as the police, i.e. The ones who carry out the order
- legislative body- This is carried out in the parliaments, they issue laws.
- Judicial authority- This is granted by the courts

Someone in the parliament will have the right to say that the Islamic rulings are wrong and need to be refined.

So democracy nullifies the foundation of the deen. This is because we say that Allah is the only legislator, whereas these people will say that the legislator is the supreme authority. Therefore anything that emanates from it is kufr, regardless if some of the laws that come out agree with the Shari`ah. Parliament is used to establish the authority.

The most distinguishing factor if “Ilah” is that you try your utmost to see what actions please Allah. And this is what the parliament does as well, but instead they seek to please the supreme authority. They give this authority divine characteristics. Part of worship is that you try your utmost to see what Allah says and what legislation he has given. So if we were to make a mistake, we say that inshallah Allah will forgive us for it. As we attempt to try to find out what Allah says and refer to him in our dealings. So now we have established that to enter parliament is an act of major kufr. When you join, you have to acknowledge and have a recognition that it is there where legislation takes place.

Ta`weel comes about from the corruption of:

- Misunderstanding the text
- Misunderstanding the reality

Misunderstanding the text can take place in various forms. It could be someone using a weak hadith, thinking it to be a “sahih” hadith.

When you ask one of their scholars who promote joining the parliament, who has the right to legislate, he will answer that it is Allah. This statement of his proves that he is complying to the shahadaa. He will say that when he enters parliament, he doesn't go in there with the intention to legislate, he simply goes in there to show them the truth, and let the ones inside know that all legislation belongs to Allah. This statement is also in compliance to the shahadaa. He argues that he has ta`weel, and provides the proof that the prophet went to the mushrikeen to call them to Islam. He uses this proof to argue that what he does is according to Islam.

Another factor to bear in mind is that is it common knowledge that democracy is kufr? There are 1000s of shuyookh who will regard that parliament is permissible according to maslaha, and there is a benefit in it. So we cannot say that this issue is well known that it is kufr. Therefore we cannot call him a kafir straight away.

If a man says to another that to abandon the prayer, he will still be a Muslim. You cannot make takfir on someone for saying this, as he may through his incorrect ta`weel find a hadith that supports his view. However if the person does abandon the prayer, then we do make takfir on him. So there is a difference between the two people. So there is a difference between the one calling to it, and the one who actually acts upon it. So similarly, if someone calls people to join parliament, we don't make takfir on him, but say he is misguided in his approach. However if a person was to enter the parliament, then we make takfir on him. So the kufr is through the man's actions, not the man's fatwaa. Bearing all this in mind, if the shaykh was to also add to his fatwaa that the supreme authority has the right to legislate, then we make takfir on him, as it negates his foundation of the deen. Whereas if he says you can go in there to command good and forbid evil, then you don't make takfir on him.

Another argument they use is that if a kafir country takes control over your land. They acknowledge that you must fight them, however it doesn't necessarily mean that you can't give them dawaa. Also if you cannot make jihad against them as you lack the preparation, meanwhile, you can call them to Islam. Some people say that FIS did this in Algeria during the 1990s. They argued that they joined the parliament in order to command good and remove them. They didn't have weapons, power, etc. So they say despite Allah's order to fight the apostate government, they use ta`weel to justify them participating in the elections.

According to the factors mentioned above, they say that they serve as preventative factors of making takfir on the ones who entered parliament. Others will argue that it is not a preventative factor, as they have received the information that what they are doing is kufr. Some of these people who have entered the parliament, make some statements, which cannot be excused by ta`weel, such as “ we will abide with the laws given by the legislative authority who has the right to legislate”. Then these people are kuffar, because their ta`weel will not be accepted.

The people who eventually find themselves in parliament and end up legislating, then this is clear kufr, and no ta`weel will be accepted for this.

The other argument used by some people is that they want to change the system from the inside. They claim they want to give dawaa inside. However, parliament isn't the arena to give dawaa. For example, a shaykh cannot go into a council of kufr in order to show them the truth and explain to them what Islam has to say about certain issues. The fact is, the people in the parliament arent obliged to follow what the man says. His words are just an opinion, just like any other member's opinion. So regardless what Allah has to say, it is just taken as any other opinion. So the members will spend hours weighing up the pros and cons, and then at the end, they choose someone else's opinion instead of the shaykhs.

Some deviant groups argue that the shaykh enters only to advice, and has nothing to do with the decision process.

The system states that before any law is made, everyone has the right to express their opinion, but the moment the majority accept the law, then the minority must accept it and go along with it. The thing that legitimises the law is that all the members have debated and come to a conclusion. So even if you are a opposition MP, you are still contributing to the law. It necessities that once it is issued, both the supporters and opposition legitimise the law. The opposition is an integral member, and gives legitimacy equally as does a supporter, and both have equal roles. Some Ikhwaan from Egypt and other “Islamic Democratic Parties”, say that they are the opposition. Yes this is true statement, however once the law is established, they are obliged to accept and abide by it, and by doing so, they are legitimising it.

Allah has informed us through the Shari`ah what is permissible and what isnt. If a parliament was to legislate that alcohol was prohibited, the government arrives to the same conclusion as that of the Shari`ah, how should we view them? We must first ask ourselves how they got to such a decision? Did they use the Qur`ān and sunnah? Or did they use the intellect of the people to arrive to such a conclusion? Even if the decisions made by the government agrees with what the Shari`ah endorses, Islam still regards it to be shirk. This is because they didn't refer to Allah in their decision, but instead referred to the people.

So the key issue here is to refer everything to Allah exclusively. Even if some of it agrees with the Shari`ah, it is still considered as shirk. Thus, we must look at where and how they got to this point and where they derived it from. As long as someone seeks the judgement of Allah, even if at times he was to make mistakes, he is still rewarded. And similarly, if the end agrees with Allah's commandment, but it came out from the parliament, it is still shirk. Our objectives is not that we get them to rule by parts of the Shari`ah through government, but we need them to submit to Allah's legislation.

We cannot make takfir on someone once we expose to them the errors in their ta`weel. This is because we don't know whether they accept our arguments deep down in the heart, so they may still believe in their ta`weel. Ibn Tammiyah refrained from making takfir on the people at his time who rejected the attributes of Allah, for this reason.

### 3. The third preventative factor is compulsion.

This compulsion has 2 main factors.

1. The threat can be or is carried out. This must be immediate, not a general. Even if the threat was for the next day, it will not be considered immediate.
2. The threat must contain in it harm. It must be severely harmful.

The threat is of taking someone's life or his property.

If the threat was some time in the future or you know for sure that the person threatening you doesn't have the ability to carry it out, then it wouldnt come under the category of compulsion.

Scholars have also mentioned that there is nothing to permit killing a Muslim in order to save oneself. Regardless as to the persecution that one may suffer, nevertheless it does not permit him to kill another Muslim in order to save himself. Who can determine who's life is more valuable? The person will be sinful if he commits this act.

Another example where compulsion is not acceptable is if a woman was to be raped. She cannot submit to the person. She must try to fight them off, even if may lead to her death.

In circumstances where a man is compelled to commit kufr, then it is permissible for him utter such words. This can be seen where Ammar ibn Yasir (RA) uttered words of kufr when he was persecuted. He then went to the prophet and informed him of what he said. Then the ayat came down confirming that this act is permissible in such situations “*the ones who are compelled and their hearts have iman, but the one who has opened his chest*”.

The people of deviation use this evidence to say that no-one can disbelieve except when he “has opened his chest”. Therefore they say if you commit any kufr act, it is not enough to take you out of Islam unless he opens his heart to it. Ibn Tammiyyah says that this is not a condition of a takfir. Its only a description. He said that the people who commit kufr, do open their hearts to it. But this clause is only applicable to the ones who are compelled.

The scholars have been unable to give an exact definition of what punishment is required in order to get to the level of compulsion. This is because people have different pain thresh holds. So you can have a man who can only handle 50 lashes before he is compelled, whereas another can handle 100 lashes before he is compelled. However, the one who is threatened to be removed from his post, or part of his wealth being confiscated, or they will kill him in one year time, then he is not compelled. So the threat does not automatically fall into compulsion, until some factors are outlined.

To be in a state of weakness does not permit them to utter kufr. It needs to get to a level where it is compulsion. And even when it does come to this stage, it is still better not to comply.

Some Muslims say that it is fine to work for the apostates if you are in a weak state. Islam doesn't permit disobedience in this state, let alone kufr.

When the person enters the state of compulsion, he can only act on what he is forced to do and not anything extra. So if you were forced to curse the prophet, you cannot decide to curse Allah on top of this just to keep the oppressor happy. So the compulsion is only applicable to the act you are being forced to commit.

Death is better than to be forced to do an act of compulsion. There are instances where the sahaba didn't take the "rukhsa" (where the person complies with the compulsion), and the prophet didn't criticise them for it.

#### **4. The fourth preventative factor is to do something unintentional.**

This is when the action is committed unintentional. We need to clarify that this is not linked to the intentions, namely that you don't intend to commit kufr by the action. The scholars have mentioned that no-one wishes to commit kufr when they do these actions, except for very few people. An example can be seen with the man who lost his camel. Once he retrieved it, he was so happy that he muddled up his words and said "Allah you are my servant, and I am your Lord". He didn't intend to say this, therefore it wasn't considered kufr. Whereas the people who mocked the prophet in surah Tawbah, were considered kuffar, even though they didn't intend to commit kufr. So the key difference here is that both the actions are kufr, however the first one was acted out unintentionally, whereas the second example shows that they intended to commit the act, but didn't intend to disbelieve through it.

The unintentional action could take place by the person overlooking it and not paying attention to it.

Another reason this can take place is through the person's anger. He may get to such a state where he doesn't know what he may have said. At this particular state, he is like the one who is sleeping or possessed, as he is not in control of his actions. Unfortunately, some people commit kufr to show that they are "angry" so people will know that they are in such a state.

#### **The ruling on the group:**

The group takes its ruling on the aspects that they come together upon. For example, if a group of people come together on an aspect of bid`aa, then they are labelled as a bid`ee group. If they come together upon kufr, then it takes a label of a kufr group.

So we must see what a group unites together upon. When the scholars label a group as kufr, does that mean every individual is labelled as a kafir? No, the ruling doesn't automatically fall upon every individual. The Khawarij and the jahmiyyah are kufr groups. The reason why the takfir may not fall on every individual, is maybe due to his ignorance or ta`weel.

So we are allowed to label a group as kufr, without it meaning we are labelling all its members as kuffar.

If a group that unites on kufr, and then gains power, how should you treat them? We fight them as a kufr group. However, when it comes down to the individual, we have to look at his own situation. As you may have members in this group that don't know what they are doing. They maybe ignorant, and therefore they are still Muslim.

The scholars differentiate between a kufr group who has power, and a kufr group that doesn't have power. With the group that doesn't have power, we apply the preventative factors to them. Whereas the group with power, you're not required to apply the preventative factors on them. Ibn Tammiyah mentioned something similar to this, when he was discussing fighting the kuffar, who may have some Muslims in their ranks. He said you don't need to ask every single one of them what his beliefs are before you fight him, as this is not practical.

Ibn Hajar said in his book that during the time of Abu Bakr caliphate, he fought against the kufr groups with power, and they didn't look at their preventative factors.

If a person belongs to a group without power, we must take him to the courts and see if they may have any preventative factors before passing the ruling on them. Whereas if the person belonged to a group with power, then you will rule upon them in their absence.

When the Khawarij were fought, they are fought as Muslims. They have the similar rulings to fighting the rebels against the state. Ibn Tammiyah makes his stance very clear that the Khawarij are not kuffar.

The majority scholars say that when you kill an apostate, you cannot take their women as captives. The hanafees and Ibn Tammiyah believe you can take their women. There is difference of opinion with regards whether every single one of them is ruled as an apostate. Others say you don't pass on this ruling on every single one of their soldiers. Both the groups have their evidences from the Shari`ah. However they both agree that regardless what ruling they fall under, their blood is halal and you can fight them.

Imam Tabari, the famous historian, mentions that Abu Bakr sent a letter to the leader of the apostates at his time. This letter was sufficient to apply this principle on the entire group. The leader acts as a representative for the group. There is consensus amongst the scholars that the wealth that belongs to the group is permissible. Therefore you are permitted to steal it from them, and even assassinate its members. There are some conditions with this, but the group fits all of them. However if they run, you can chase them and kill them.

However the two different opinions mentioned above, can be both brought together and consolidated. Back in the days, they couldn't verify who the people killed where. Whereas nowadays, we have the ability to verify some individuals. You could enquire on the persons family. It is important that you try to look at their situations as much as possible.

We say these groups are of kufr and apostasy, and the blood of its members is permissible, without needing to verify every person's situation.