

**Verdicts of Grand Religious Authorities**

**and Muslim Scholars on**

**Prohibition of**  
**Excommunicating**  
**Muslims**

**And Insulting the Sacred Symbols of**

**Islamic Sects**

**Plus:**

**The Mischief of Calling**  
**Muslims as Kafir**

**The Academy of Hajj and Pilgrimage**



**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH  
THE BENEFICENT  
THE MERCIFUL**

## **Prohibition of Excommunicating Muslims**

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## **Introduction**

Today, the Islamic world is going through one of the most critical periods of its history. On the one hand, the Islamic awakening and the call of those Muslims, who have grown frustrated with non-Muslim thoughts, have permeated the world; on the other hand, the sworn enemies of Islam are making their utmost efforts to fight this life-giving religion. The enemies of Islam have well understood that there will be no room for colonialism and imperialism once the genuine and noble teachings of Islam become pervasive among Muslims and, that no sooner this feat is realized than Islam will be globalized.

Unfortunately, what is causing irreparable damage to Islamic society and Islamic awakening, beside the damage done by the non-Muslim enemies, is Fitna-i Takfir (the mischief of calling Muslims as kafir). There is not a single day that passes by without the Takfiris spilling, on false pretexts, the pure blood of Muslims or demolishing their sacred sites. Just like the

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Kharijites, the Takfiris murder other Muslims, plunder their property and then justify all their atrocities by misinterpreting the teachings of the Quran. As Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said to the Kharijites, *"They say something that sounds honest and true, when it's actually false"*. They legitimize violating the inviolable life, honor and possessions of Muslims as well as spilling their blood through their own heretical and deviant interpretations of religious teachings. Moreover, through false attribution of some decrees to religious authorities, and by way of exaggerating the improper conduct of some commoners, the Takfiris add fuel to the flames of discord and schism among Muslims hurting their religious feelings, the result of which is but the expansion of dissension and pessimism among Muslims. Since Shiite grand religious authorities and scholars have condemned derogatory acts against all Islamic sects and have explicitly considered the act of excommunicating the followers of other Islamic sects as prohibited, a decision was made by the Supreme Leader's Representative Office in Hajj and Pilgrimage Affairs to publish these verdicts and views so as to take a significant step towards strengthening the foundations of proximity among Islamic sects. It is hoped that publication of these



verdicts would bring closer the ideas of the scholars and religious authorities of Islamic sects in order to help take concrete action against the Takfiri trend and the atrocities committed by Takfiris.

The present booklet includes verdicts of some of Shia's grand religious authorities, viewpoints of a number of Muslim scholars and intellectuals and an overview of Fitna-i Takfir from the perspective of the Quran, the Tradition and also that of the Muslim intellectuals. Through such efforts and also the aid of scholars across the Islamic world can we, hopefully, see Fitna-i Takfir annihilated in both theoretical and practical fronts.

**The Academy of Hajj and Pilgrimage**

## Islamic Reflections on Fitna Al- Takfir

### History of Takfiri Trend

a. Kharijites: the precursors of Takfiri trend

Fitna-i Takfir started in the Islamic World by a group called "Kharijites". The Kharijites were the first deviant group in the Islamic world that presented the most devastating interpretation of faith. The great Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him and his descendants) had foreseen the formation and emergence of the Kharijites long before they existed. He said:

«يَمْرُقُونَ مِنَ الدِّينِ كَمَا يَمْرُقُ السَّهْمُ مِنَ الرَّمِيهِ»<sup>1</sup>

*"They will leave the religion (of Islam) as fast as an arrow leaves the bow"*

The Kharijites exited Islam and took a different path amidst the battle of Seffin following the incident of arbitration. Though they were considered only a deviant political party at first, they gradually adopted certain ideological principles to justify their abominable and anomalous acts and behavior.

Notwithstanding the Kharijites' various ideologies, the single most significant cause of the formation of the Kharijites' ideological principles

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1. Al-Shahrestani, *M.A. Al-Melal Wa-al-Nehal*. Vol. 1, p. 134.

was their extremist interpretation of the concept of faith, in reaction to which, many other Kharijite sects later evolved. Through their radical interpretation of the faith, the Kharijites accused all other Muslims of heresy, so they were indeed the first group in the Islamic world to excommunicate other Muslims<sup>1</sup>. The ideological principles of the Kharijites were first formed after "alMahkama al-Ulaa"<sup>2</sup> in the time of a group called "Azaareqah"<sup>3</sup>, and the most important of their principles was their belief in the "concomitance of faith and practice". According to the Kharijites, faith had three components: confession with the tongue, belief with the heart and practice. Based on this definition, if, for instance, someone believed in God in his words and in his heart but he committed sins in practice, such a person would lose his faith in God and become a disbeliever. Based on this principle the Kharijites believed in the following:

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1. For more information on the Kharijites and their sects, vide:  
Al-Baghdadi, T.M. "Al-Feraq bayn Al-Feraq". Pp. 72-95.
  2. The reason why they are called "Al-Mahkamah Al-Ulā" is that they were the first Kharijite sect who were formed in the process of their objection to the incident of arbitration. Of course in this time the ideological boundaries of the Kharijites have not yet been fully formed.
  3. Al-Baghdadi, T.M. Al-feraq bayn Al-feraq. P. 82: " The leader of the Azaareqah was a person called "Nāfe'e bin Azraq" and they were the most powerful group and had most of the followers among other Kharijite groups.

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- a) Anyone who opposed them was not only a disbeliever but also a pagan.<sup>1</sup>
- b) The Qaedin\_ those of the Kharijites who did not take part in their battles\_ were also disbelievers.<sup>2</sup>
- c) The land on which their opponents lived was the non-Muslim state (dār al-kufr).<sup>3</sup>
- d) It was obligatory to kill the pagans; it was also permissible to kill the women and the children of the pagans and the children of the pagans were believed to dwell in the Fire eternally.<sup>4</sup>

The Kharijites tested everyone who came to join them in a special way; they gave the newcomer a captive and ordered him to kill the captive. If the newcomer did as ordered and killed the captive they would welcome him to their rank and if he refused to do so they would call him a hypocrite and a pagan and kill him.<sup>5</sup> They assassinated and martyred the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (peace be upon him), under the pretext that he had become an apostate because of accepting the arbitration and thus deserved to be killed.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Al-Baghdadi, T.M. "Al-Feraq bayn Al-Feraq". p. 83.

2. Al-Baghdadi, T.M. "Al-Feraq bayn Al-Feraq". p. 83.

3. Al-Baghdadi, T.M. "Al-Feraq bayn Al-Feraq". p. 84.

4. Al-Baghdadi, T.M. "Al-Feraq bayn Al-Feraq". p. 83.

5. Al-Baghdadi, T.M. "Al-Feraq bayn Al-Feraq". p. 83.

6. For more information on the Kharijites' other beliefs (such

Such beliefs led this group to disregard the life, honor, and property of Muslims and call all Muslim countries the lands of disbelievers. It was at a time when they adhered to the outward aspects of Islam. Many of them were constantly fasting during the day and engaging in prayers at night. However, as the great Prophet of Islam (Peace be upon him and his descendants) had predicted, they exited the religion through their deviant stance on the concept of faith and today, there is but a name left of them.

### **b. The fourth century and the carnage of Muslims**

After the annihilation of the Kharijites and until the fourth century, the Takfiri trend was not prevalent among Muslims. Though the leaders of certain sects talked about it, its principles were never practiced in reality and no one issued any verdict on the permissibility of spilling the blood of Muslims or plundering their property. However, in the fourth century *Fitna-i Takfir* was revived in the Islamic world by a person called Hassan bin Ali bin Khalaf Barbahāri (born 233 or 252 A.H.). This man, who called himself a Hanbalite, excommunicated all other Muslims by misusing this sect's name. Ibn Athir has recorded the incidents of the year 323 A.H. in his chronicles as follows:

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as their belief in Divine Decree) refer to: Al-Shahrestani, A. *Al-Melala wa-Nehal*. Vol. 1, p. 131.

*"In that year they grew famous and gained power. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of Jamadi Al-Akhar, "Badr Kharshani" who was the head of the police in Baghdad, ordered his men to announce on both sides of the Baghdad Bridge that no two companions of Barbahāri were allowed to convene in one place and that they were prohibited to discuss their faith with others. They also announced that their prayer leader had to read the phrase "In the name of God" out loud and clearly in the morning, evening, and night prayers. However, this order of the police was not only of no avail but it also caused the companions of Barbahāri to embark on creating mischief. They forced some blind people who lived in the mosque to beat all the Shafiites who entered the mosque to death. Further, Barbahāri and his followers used to attack people's houses under the pretext of preventing and prohibiting evil. They spilled the wine wherever they found it and when they saw a female singer, they broke her musical instruments into pieces and bate her up. They meddled with people's business and if they saw a man walking with a woman or a boy they stopped and interrogated him and if they realized that they were not related to each other, they arrested him and testified against him. They continued doing such things until Baghdad was in chaos. Finally, the Caliph sent Barbahāri and his companions a number of letters in which he*

*strongly threatened and criticized them for excomm-unicating Shiites and denying them pilgrimage to the tombs of their Imams.<sup>1</sup>*

According to some other historical accounts, Barbahāri and his followers looted and burned down people's shops in the same year to show their objection to the arrest of some of their companions<sup>2</sup>. As a result of these crimes, Barbahāri was prosecuted but he managed to escape. His companions, however, were captured and punished severely<sup>3</sup>. Although it has been said that he lived in hiding the rest of his life<sup>4</sup>, Sowli has met him in 326 Hegira and talked to him. Other evidence indicates that he had been openly active during the same year (326-327 A.H.). Later on, Sowli expressed his satisfaction over Barbahāri's death because the seditions subsided thereafter.

### **c. Fitna-i Takfir in the contemporary era**

After the mischief of the Barbahāris the flames of the mischief of excommunication began to die down. Although some people like Ibn Taimiyyah still propagated Takfiri trend in

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1. Bin Athir. *Al-Kāmel fi Al-Tarikh*. Vol. 7, pp. 113-114;

Abu-Ali Maskuyeh. *Tajareb Al-Omam wa Ta'āgeb Al-Hemam*. Vol. 5 p. 183.

2. Sowli, M. *Al-Awraq Akhbār Al-razi Bellah*. P. 65.

3. Dhahabi, S.A. *Seyr A'elām Al-Nablā*. Vol. 15, p. 92.

4. Al-Safdi, K. *Al-Wāfi bel-Wafiyat*. Vol. 12 p. 90.

the Islamic world, their attempts were restricted to theoretical level only and they never got the chance to put their ideas into practice. Thus Takfiri ideas and views were never practiced and they did not lead to massacre of Muslims either. However, in the twelfth century the fire of Takfir blazed once more with many Muslims, mostly Sunnites, killed in its flames. And today, we are still witnessing that Takfiri groups massacre Muslims based on the same beliefs and views going so far as to slaughter Muslims, even innocent women and children, in the most atrocious and heinous ways.

This is while the idea of excommunicating Muslims has been categorically prohibited in Islamic teachings and great Muslim scholars have all strongly condemned it.

## Takfirism from the perspective of Islamic teachings

### a. Islamic teachings on human dignity

Based on Islam's teachings, man's life and property must be honored and respected as signified by the following verse of the Quran:

﴿مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا﴾

*"On that account: We ordained for the Children of Israel that if any one slew a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land -*



*it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people."* (Al-Ma'idah.32)

### **b. The dignity of a Muslim**

Apart from the inviolability of a human being's life, a believer's life is much more respected; thus, if a person murders a believer he will be punished much more severely than says the following:

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَعُذِبَ  
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا﴾

*"If a man kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, to abide therein (For ever): And the wrath and the curse of Allah are upon him, and a dreadful penalty is prepared for him."* (Nisaa, 93)

Moreover, the holy Quran states that the criterion which sets apart belief from disbelief is adherence to Islamic practices and declaring oneself to be Muslim. Under such conditions no one is allowed to infringe upon him:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا صَرَبْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ  
آلَقَىٰ إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَصَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا﴾

*"O' ye who believe! When ye go abroad in the cause of Allah, investigate carefully, and say not to anyone who acknowledges believing in Islam: "Thou art none of a believer!" Coveting the perishable goods of this life"* (Nisaa, 94)

The occasion of revelation of the above-mentioned verse has been said to be the story of

Osamah bin Zaid. As per the story, after the battle of Kheybar, the great Prophet of Islam (Peace be upon him and his descendants) sent Osamah bin Zaid along with few other Muslims to some Jewish villages near Fadak to invite them to Islam. When one of those Jews, named Mordās bin Nahik, realized that Osamah had come to their village, he took all his belongings and family members to a nearby mountain and then came to Osamah and said:

«اشهد ان لا اله الا الله و ان محمداً رسول الله»

*(I hereby testify that there is no God but Allah and that Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah).*

However, Osamah killed that man. When he went back to the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him and his descendants) he recounted the story of what he had done. The Prophet asked him: "*Did you really kill a man who testified that there is no God but Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah?!*"

Osamah replied: "O' Messenger of God! He just verbally testified to save his life!"

The Prophet said: "*Did you cut out his heart and see what went on in there that you were so sure?!*"<sup>1</sup>

There are numerous narrations which have strictly forbidden Muslims from excommunicating their fellow Muslims. For instance, in the

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1. Majlesi, M.B. *Behār Al-Anwār*. Vol. 22, p. 92.

following narration the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him and his descendants) has set the boundaries between belief and disbelief:

*"I have been given a mission [by God] to fight the people until they say "there is no God but Allah". Therefore, once they acknowledge this and say prayers like us and toward our Qibla, and slaughter their sheep as we do, then their blood and property are inviolable."*<sup>1</sup>.

Furthermore, when the Prophet (S) appointed Imam Ali as the commander of his army in the battle of Khaybar and ordered him to conquer the strongholds of Khaybar, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) asked him: *"How far should I go in fighting them?"*

The Prophet answered: *"You should fight them until they confess (with their tongues) that there is no God but Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah. Once they do this, you are no longer allowed to infringe upon their lives and property except if they do something evil in which case their punishment will be with God, the Almighty"*<sup>2</sup>.

In yet another narration, the Prophet made similar statements with regard to this issue:

«كفوا عن اهل لا اله الا الله لا تكفروهم بذنب فمن اكفر اهل

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1. Sahih Al-Bukhari, "Al-Salāt". Chapter 28, p.108. No. 392.

2. Neyshaburi, M. *Sahih Muslem*. Vol. 4, p. 1872. "Fadhael Al-Sahabah" No. 33.

لا اله الا الله فهو الى الكفر اقرب»<sup>1</sup>

*"Leave those, who have testified that there is no God but Allah, and do not call them kafir owing to a sin; whosoever excommunicates those, who have testified that there is no God but Allah, he himself is closer to disbelief."*

Further, according to Samā'ah bin Mehran, Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has been narrated as having said:

*"Islam is but the confession that there is no God but Allah and that Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah. Based on this belief, lives are protected, marriage relationships are established, and inheritance is regulated and this is what all people believe in."*<sup>2</sup>

There are numerous narrations in the sources of all Islamic sects, banning Muslims from excommunicating others, narrations which we do not mention here for the sake of brevity<sup>3</sup>.

### **c. Muslim intellectuals' view on excommunicating others**

Muslim intellectuals have always strongly censured the act of excommunicating Muslims. Many Shiite scholars have, in their verdicts, announced that the act of excommunicating

1. Tabarani, S.A. *Al-Mo'ejam Al-Kabir*. Vol. 12, p. 372.

2. Kuleini. *Osool Kāfi*. "The chapter on belief and disbelief". Vol. 2, p. 19.

3. Subhani, J. *Al-Imān Wal-Kufr*. Pp. 63-64.

Muslims is prohibited. Among them are Sheik Saduq<sup>1</sup>, Sheik Hassan Najafi the author of "Jawaher al-Kalām"<sup>2</sup>, grand Ayatollah Hakim<sup>3</sup>, grand Ayatollah Amoli<sup>4</sup>, and Allamah Majlesi.

In regard to this issue, Sheik Saduq, for instance, maintains:

*"Islam is to utter that "there is no God but Allah and that Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah"; by saying these words, a person's life and property will not be infringed upon; thus the life and possessions of anyone who speaks these words will be protected"*<sup>5</sup>.

Late Seyed Kadhem Yazdi, one of the great Shiite scholars, has also made the following remarks:

*"An unbeliever is a person who denies the Oneness of God, the Prophethood or any other essential articles of faith. Of course such a denial leads to disbelief only when it is done while one is fully aware that he is in fact denying an essential and indisputable article of faith, in a way such that it amounts to denial of Prophethood"*<sup>6</sup>.

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1. Sheik Sadouq. *Al-Hedayah fi Jawame'e Al-Feqhiyeh*. P. 47.

2. Najafi, M.H. *Jawaher Al-Kalām fi Sharh Shara'e Al-Islam*. vol.2, p. 58.

3. Hakim, S.M. *Mustamsak Al-Urwat al-Wuthqa*. Vol.2, p. 123.

4. Amoli, M.T. *Mesbāh Al-Hodā fi Sharh Al-Urwat al-Wuthqa*. Vol. 1 pp. 410-411.

5. Sheik Sadouq. *Al-Hedayah*. P. 47.

6. Yazdi, S.M.K. *Al-Urwat al-Wuthqa*. Vol. 1, p. 69.

Grand Ayatollah Khoi has also said in this regard as follows:

*"What leads to realization of Islam and its respective results such as purity, and the inviolability of one's life and possessions are the following: belief in the oneness of God, Prophethood and Resurrection which all Islamic sects believe in."*<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, the great Shiite intellectual and scholar, Seyed Abdul Hussein Sharafuddin, who has written extensively in explication of Shiite's view on different religious issues and has authored valuable works such as "Al-Murajaat" and "Al-Nass wal-Ejtihad", has also authored an invaluable book called "Al-Fos'ul Al-Muhemmah fi Ta'lif Al-Ummah" on Fitna-i Takfir and the impermissibility of excommunication from the Shiites' and the Sunnites' point of view<sup>2</sup>.

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1. Khuii, S.A. *Al-Tanqih*. Vol. 3, p. 62.

2. This is the first book written by the late Sharafuddin in 1327 Hijri. This indicates how important the issue of unity had been to Sharafuddin as he dedicated his first book to it. According to Aqa Bozorg Tehrani (Aqa Bozorg Tehrani: *Tabaqat A'elam Al-Shiite*. Vol. 3, chapter 1, p. 1080), even after writing the book "Fos'ul Al-Muhemmah" Sharafuddin seriously pursued this goal until the end of his life and made considerable attempts for it. The first edition of this book was published in Seyda, Lebanon, in 1330 Hijri in a single volume containing ten chapters which were as follows: "The necessity of a consensus and unity about the Quran and Tradition", "The meaning of

In the Sunnite world, Ibn Hazm has sorted out different Takfiri beliefs into a number of separate categories in his book. Moreover, he has dedicated a separate chapter to this issue under the title of "Al-Kalām fi Man Yukaffir wa laa Yukaffar"<sup>1</sup> in which he has made the following remarks:

*"There is discrepancy in this regard among people; some have excommunicated all those whose beliefs are different from theirs in ideological issues or in fatwa; some others have excommunicated a part of their opponents' beliefs and some other parts as leading to impiety and have based all their judgments on their own beliefs; yet a third group has excommunicated anyone with ideologies opposing theirs but have neither considered those who oppose them in their verdicts and religious practices as unbelievers nor as evildoers, but as "excused mujtahids"*

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Islam and faith", "The sanctity of the life and possession of those, who acknowledge as to the oneness of God and the Prophethood of the holy Prophet, in the Tradition", "The Shiite Imams' emphasis on having relations with the Sunnites", "The story of excommunicating the Shiites", "False accusations leveled at the Shiite", "The reasons of divisiveness". Later on the author added two more chapters to the book under the title of "The glad tidings of the Shiite in the Tradition" and "The end of pre-Islamic prejudice".

1. Ibn Hazm, A.M. *Al-Fash fi Al-Melal wal-Abwā wa-Nehal*.

Vol. 3, p. 291: Al-Kalām fi man Yukaffir wa lā Yukaffir.

*who, even if they have made mistakes, are pardoned because of their [good] intention; finally the last group has accepted the beliefs of the third group in issues related to religious practices but regarding the ideological issues they have maintained that any disagreement regarding the Divine attributes would lead to heresy while discrepant ideas in other issues would be considered as evildoing (fisq)."*<sup>1</sup>

Ibn Hazm has referred to the perspective of the great Sunnite scholars and that of his own in this regard:

*"Some scholars have stated that no Muslim must be called disbeliever or an evildoer simply because they have opposing ideological stances or decrees ... and this is also the viewpoint of Ibn Abi-Leili, Abu-Hanifah, Shafeii, Sufyan Thowri, and Dawood bin Ali. It is also the view of all the Companions of the Prophet whose perspectives are known to us and there is no one who opposes this view"*<sup>2</sup>.

Bin Hazm has, then, gone so far as to call the two narrations from the Prophet (Peace be upon him and his descendants) as unreliable and dai'f

1. Ibn Hazm, A.M. *Al-Fash fi Al-Melal wal-Abwā wa-Nehal*.

Vol. 3, p. 291: Al-Kalām fi man Yukaffir wa lā

Yukaffir.

2. Ibn Hazm, A.M. *Al-Fash fi Al-Melal wal-Abwā wa-Nehal*.

Vol. 3, p. 291: Al-Kalām fi man Yukaffir wa lā

Yukaffir.



(weak). Based on these two narra-tions, the Prophet has called the two sects i.e. "Murje'ah" and "Ghadariyah" as Zoroastrians among the Muslims and also predicted that the Muslim Ummah would be divided into seventy different sects, only one of which would go to Paradise. Following these remarks, Ibn Hazm says the following:

*"The validity of these two narrations is under question, because they were transmitted through defective chains of narrators, even by the standard of those who believe in the validity of a tradition with a single transmitter, let alone by the standard of those who do not believe in it."*<sup>1</sup>

Zaher Sarakhsi, one of the disciples of Abul Hassan Ash'ari, has said: "Abul Hassan Ash'ari was in my house while he was in his deathbed and before he died he ordered me to gather all his disciples and companions and when they all gathered there, he addressed them all and said: *"All of you bear witness that I do not excommunicate anyone among Muslims because of committing sins, for they all worship the same God and Islam includes them all"*<sup>2</sup>.

Similar remarks have also been transmitted from Shafe'i, the leader of the Shafiites, some

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1 Ibn Hazm, A.M. *Al-Fash fi Al-Melal wal-Abwā wa-Nehal*.

Vol. 3, p. 292: Al-Kalām fi man Yukaffir wa lā

Yukaffir.

2. Sharafuddin, S.A. *Al-Fosool Al-Muhemmah fi Ta'elif Al-Ommah*. P. 38.

of which are as follows:

*"I would not excommunicate whimsical people because of a sin", "I would not excommunicate anyone among the people of Qibla (Ahl-e Qibla) because of a sin" and "I would accept the testimony of all the innovators except for that of the "Khatabiyah""<sup>1</sup>.*

In his book "Aqidah Tahawiyah", on which numerous annotations have been written by a number of Sunnite intellectuals and scholars, Abu Ja'far Tahawi has stated the following:

*"We call all the people of Qibla (those who pray in the direction of Qibla) as believers and Muslims insofar they believe in the teachings of the great Prophet of Islam... and we do not excommunicate anyone among Muslims because of committing a sin as long as they do not believe that it is allowed"<sup>2</sup>.*

Qazi Ayaz, who is one of the great Maleki scholars of the sixth century, has also made the following remarks:

*"If someone says something which is against the greatness and the glory of God but which is not considered blasphemy and which has also been the result of one's personal interpretations rather than an act of disbelief,*

1. Sharafuddin, S.A. *Al-Fosool Al-Muhemmab fi Ta'elif Al-Ommab*. P. 32.

2. Al-Tahawi, A. *Al-Aqidah Al-Tahawiyah: Bayan Aqidah Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah*. Pp. 20-21.

*then such a person is considered to be an innovator; however, this is one of those issues about which there has been much disagreement among religious authorities in the past and present as to whether such a person must be treated as disbeliever or not"<sup>1</sup>.*

According to Mulla Ali Qari, an accredited Hanafite scholar of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Ibn Hajar had believed in the following:

*"It is true that, according to the decrees of most of our scholars in the past and present, we never excommunicated innovators and evildoers unless their words or deeds were considered to be plain heresy and not when it is interpreted as heresy by implication, because, based on a more accurate definition, what signifies a religion is not that religion per se. This is also why Muslims maintained relationship with such people, got married with them, offered funeral prayer on their dead and buried their dead in Muslims' cemeteries in the same way as they treated other Muslims; this is because, though they are evildoers and sinners and should be considered as misguided ones, they did not intend heresy*

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1. Al-Heysi, A.B. *Al-sbefā Beta'erif Hoquq Al-Mustafa*. Vol. 2, p. 272.

*through their words.*"<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, in his annotation of Abu-Hanifah's "Fiqh Al-Akbar" and following a review of some of the views of the scholars regarding the issue of excommunication, Mulla Ali Qari says:

*"None of the people of Qibla is called disbelievers and, as the annotator of the book "Al-Aqaed" has also stated, it is very difficult to affirm the view that those who believe in things such as the createdness of the Quran or the impossibility of seeing God or those who curse Shaykhain are disbelievers. In addition, according to the annotator of the book "Mawāqif", there is a consensus among the Islamic theologians and jurisprudents based on which none of the people of Qibla can be excommunicated"*<sup>2</sup>.

Finally, as an attempt to bring reconciliation between the views of those who have excommunicated evildoers and that of the scholars who have prohibited excommunication of Muslims, Mulla Ali Qari has referred to the

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1. Al-Ghari, M.A. bin Sultan. *"Merqat Al-Mafatih Sharh Meshkāt Al-Masabih"*. Vol.1 p. 284.

2. Al-Ghari, M.A. bin Sultan. *"Manh Al-Rawdh Al-Azhar fi Sharh Al-Feqh Al-Akbar"*. P. 425.

view of Ibn Hamam as put forth in his book "Sharh Al-Hedayah":

*"Considering the view of Abu-Hanifeh and Shafe'i with regard to prohibition of the act of excommunicating the people of Qibla, the verdict as to excommunicating evildoers can be justified as follows: Having such beliefs is disbelief per se and a person who speaks such words have spoken blasphemous words; however, such a person himself is not excommunicated as his viewpoint has been the result of his intellectual efforts, i.e. his individual reasoning, to obtain the truth".<sup>1</sup>*

In this regard, Taqi Al-ddin Sabki, an accredited Shafiite scholar has also stated the following:

*"Behold! O brother, Commenting or deciding about excommunicating the people of faith (ahl-e iman) is a very difficult task and those who have faith in God in their hearts would find the issue of excommunicating of evildoers and innovators very perilous, because all of them utter the words "there is no God but Allah and*

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1. Al-Ghari, M.A. bin Sultan. *"Manh Al-Rawdh Al-Azhar fi Sharh Al-Feqh Al-Akbar"*. P. 425.

### 30 Prohibition of Excommunicating Muslims

*Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah". Thus excommunicating such people is a horrific and dangerous thing to do"<sup>1</sup>.*

In another instance, when asked about exaggerators (ghulāt), innovators, evildoers, theologians and philosophers, Taqi Al-ddin Sabki also replied:

*"You must know that anyone who fears God will never dare so much as to speak about excommunicating those who say "there is no God but Allah and that Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah" ... no one decrees as to the excommunication of others unless he violates the basic articles of faith, denies the oneness of God and the prophethood of His Prophet and finally exit the religion of Islam"<sup>2</sup>.*

Some of the Sunnite scholars have also gone so far as to refrain from excommunicating people like the Kharijites. For instance, Nawawi, who is the annotator of the book "Sahih Muslim", says:

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1. Sharafuddin, S.A. *Al-Fosool Al-Mubemmah fi Ta'elif Al-Ommah*. P. 28.

2. Sharafuddin, S.A. *Al-Fosool Al-Mubemmah fi Ta'elif Al-Ommah*. P. 29.

*"It is one of the beliefs of the Followers of the Truth that no Muslim is ever excommunicated for committing a sin and even evildoers and innovators, such as the Kharijites and the Mu'tazilites must not be excommunicated either. Only those who deny the conspicuous and basic articles of the religion of Islam are to be excommunicated and called disbelievers"<sup>1</sup>.*

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1. Al-Nawawy, Y.S. *Sharh Sahih Muslem*. Vol. 1, p. 213.



## **Fatwa of Supreme Leader, Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei**

In the Name of God, the Compassionate the  
Merciful

Considering the existing decisive and indisputable proofs on the necessity of Islamic unity in the present time, what is your idea about applying the title *Islamic Ummah* to the followers of Islamic religions like the four Sunni sects such as Zaidiyah, Zaheriyah, Abaziyah etc. which believe in the main tenets of Islam? Is accusing them of heresy allowable? What are the limits and criteria for such accusations? We pray to God, the Glorious, to grant you further



success in serving Islam and Muslims especially the Shi'a world.

Answer given by the office of the Supreme Leader:

All the Islamic denominations are, in fact, parts of one and the same Islamic Ummah, and enjoy all the Islamic privileges. Causing division and disunion among them is against the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the normative conduct of the Holy Prophet (S). Besides, this weakens Muslims, and will be used as a pretext by the enemies of Islam. Thus, accusing the above-mentioned Islamic sects of heresy is by no means permissible.

**Board of Istefta**

**The Office Grand Ayatollah Khamenei**

## **Supreme Leader: *Insulting Symbols of* Sunni Brothers Forbidden**

Supreme Leader, Grand Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei, issued a fatwa, declaring unlawful the insulting Prophet's wife Aisha, and any of the Sunni Islamic symbols .In response to a question posed by a group of Saudi Arabian Shia-Muslim scholars, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ruled: Insulting the symbols of our Sunni brothers, including the Prophet Muhammad's wife [Aisha], is forbidden. This includes the women associated with all prophets, especially those associated with the holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)."



**The statements of the Supreme Leader,  
Grand Ayatollah Khamenei in his  
meeting with Kurdish people, in  
Sanandaj, Azadi Square**

**Date: May 12, 2009**

*In his journey to Kurdistan province in the year 2009, the Supreme Leader of Iran made important and valuable comments about Islamic unity condemning those who embark on insulting and desecrating the sacred symbols of other sects. An exception of his speech is as follows:*

"A few years ago in a Kurdish region, a broad minded cleric delivered a sermon during a Friday prayers and said: I swear by God, those who sow seeds of grudge against Sunnis

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in the heart of Shi'a, and sow seeds of hatred in the hearts of Sunnis against Shi'a, are neither Shi'a nor Sunni. They like neither Shi'a nor Sunni. They are enemies of Islam. Of course many of them are ignorant, they just do not understand and it is a pity. Today these Wahhabi people regard Shi'a as unbelievers and accuse Sunnis who love the Holy Household as heretics too! They regard Sunnis believing in Erfani and Ghaderi denominations as infidels!

"Where do such false ideas originate in? All the Shi'a people throughout the world, as well as the Shafiites in North Africa, and Malekis in middle African countries, are all lovers of the Household of the Holy Prophet (S). Are they infidels because they respect the tomb of Hussein ibn Ali in Cairo, or consecrate the mosque of Ra's al-Hussein? Is that the reason why they are heretic? The Shi'a are unbelievers! The Sunnis who are related to Qaderi or Naghshbandi denominations and reside in Saghez, Sanandaj or Marivan are heretics too! What is this idea? Why should

such wrong and ominous ideas cause disunity among Muslims? Some Shi'a people, out of ignorance or spite, cause division and insult the things that Sunnis hold sacred. Let me remind you that the actions of both are religiously and legally unlawful."



**Supreme leader, Grand Ayatollah  
Khamenei addressing Shi'a and Sunni  
clerics and students of theological  
schools in Kurdistan:**

**Date: May 13, 2009**

Some of us open fire on our friends under the impression that we are shooting our enemies not knowing that we are ignorant of the fact that causing religious strife is a plot hatched by the enemy to provoke internal conflict. A Sunni does his best to beat a Shi'a while a Shi'a does his best to beat a Sunni. This is very regrettable,

and this is what the enemy wishes to see.

When it comes to defending the rights of Palestinians, all countries and governments lagged far behind Iran, and the whole world confirmed this. We were so helpful that some Arab countries taunted us, accusing us of trying to serve our own interests! Of course the Palestinians paid no heed to such accusations. In the issue of Gaza and the 22-day war, the Islamic revolution's leadership, the Iranian president, different officials, and people all tried to support the oppressed Muslim brothers in Palestine, through demonstrations, monetary contributions and other forms of assistance.

In the thick of the situation, we suddenly see a virus is spreading! Some keep on visiting the clerics and honorable figures saying: "Sir! Who are you helping? The people in Gaza belong to the Nasebi (Anti-Shi'a) denomination. They are enemies of the Household of the Prophet (S)!"

Some people have fallen for this wrong idea. I was given the message that "Sir, we are told they are Nasebis", I said, "I take refuge in God! God's damn the devil! In Gaza, there are mosques named *Imam Ali ibn- Abi Talib* and *Al Imam al- Hussein* mosque. How can they be

called Nasebis? Of course they are Sunnis, but not Nasebis. They have such remarks and acts! On the contrary, some go to Qom, look through the pages of Shi'a books and say: Look, these are Shi'a books! Or an ignorant, foolish or spiteful preacher goes up the pulpit, and makes sacrilegious remarks about the things Sunnis hold sacred. Some tape-record the remarks, record CDs, and distribute them everywhere and say, "Look this is Shi'a. They try to make the Shi'a and Sunni hostile to each other, what is all this for? «وتذهب ريحكم» "and your power departs" . When there is disunity, when there is division, when we treat each other with suspicion, and accuse each other of treachery, naturally we will not work in cooperation. And even if we do, it won't be close and effective. This is what the enemy wishes to happen. Both Shi'a and Sunni worlds must understand this. It is evident that the sects may have differences in some principles or branches of religion, but still they are united. A difference does not mean enmity. The religious decrees of some Shi'a jurists are poles apart. The religious decrees of many Sunni jurists are different, but there is no need for swearing and insulting when there are



differences. They can believe in different sects. No one must suppose that the Ahlul-Bayt (A.S) belong exclusively to Shi'a. They belong to the whole Muslim world. Who does not believe in Lady Fatima? Who does not believe in Imam Hussein and Imam Hassan, the masters of youth in Paradise? Who does not believe in the Shi'a Imams? The followers of one denomination may consider it obligatory to obey one Imam, and those believing in another denomination may not. However they all believe in these Imams. These are facts that need to be understood and internalized, but some do not understand, and get provoked by the enemies' intrigues thinking that they are doing the right thing.

﴿قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا﴾  
 ﴿الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعِيَّهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا﴾

*“Say: shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds?” “Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life, while they thought that they were acquiring good by their works.” (Al-Kahf.103-104)*

They are working for the enemy. This is the nature of our time.



## **Grand Ayatollah Shaykh Abdullah Javadi Amoli**

**(An excerpt from his Hajj Message in August 2013)**

The question of human rights is an international issue that concerns all human beings irrespective of their religions and ideologies. The principle that governs human rights is the purport of this verse:

﴿لَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَا لَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ﴾

*"Allah does not forbid you respecting those who have not made war against you on account of (your) religion, and have not driven you forth*

*from your homes, that you show them kindness and deal with them justly; surely Allah loves the doers of justice."* (Al-Mumtahina, 8).

According to this verse, no individual or nation is superior to others and no individual or nation has the right to dominate others. The nation that does not transgress is entitled to the grace of divine justice and Muslims are obliged to justly deal with them. Justice is a divine tradition that is carried out by God in this world as well as in the hereafter and is thus beyond the reach of ordinary people. God implements justice especially in the hereafter by dealing with everything in accordance with what it deserves. Since every nation, theist or atheist, has its own sacred symbols that are respected and honored by all of them, one must not insult or disrespect them. This is because this action, in addition to being an act of psychological infringement, faces legal problems. That is the reason why the Holy Quran has prevented Muslims from such practices:

﴿وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَذَلِكَ زَيْنًا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلُهُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

#### 44 Prohibition of Excommunicating Muslims

*"And do not abuse those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest exceeding the limits they should abuse Allah out of ignorance. Thus have we made fair seeming to every people their deeds; then to their Lord shall be their return, so He will inform them of what they did."* (Al-Anaam, 108).

It was thus forbidden to insult or abuse idols worshiped by polytheists lest the polytheists should insult or abuse Allah, the one worshiped by believers, out of ignorance. The reason their abusing of God is an act of ignorance is that they believe in God, but, nevertheless, they worship idols thinking that they are close to God and thus they intercede for them with God. This is no doubt, an unfair justification. The verse cited above contains a general rule based on which one does not have the right to insult non-believers' sacred symbols lest they should follow suit and begin insulting things held sacred by believers.

Struggles against evils and preventing falsehood need to be done in a good manner. If forbidding wrong is done in a bad manner it must be stopped and it must be looked at as evil.

Similarly the invitation to truth and goodness must be carried out in a way that is consistent with purpose. This is because a good purpose never justifies a bad means. If enjoining the truth is done through a bad means it must be stopped. This is because there is no actual relation between the destination and the way that leads to it. A straight path never leads to a wrong destination and a deviated path never ends in a right direction. Abusing the sacred symbols of other nations, though they are wrong, is an incorrect practice forbidden by God. To summarize:

1. A universal religion has a universal program.
2. The most important comprehensive religious duty is to abide by law and follow international etiquettes.
3. From among public etiquettes, the best is to protect human dignity and refrain from insulting things held sacred by other groups.
4. To curse or abuse the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), to insult things sacred for Shiites or Sunnites and to insult or desecrate the beliefs of any one of them is forbidden. To sow discord among Muslims is a major sin that must be avoided by all especially

those who go on a Hajj or Umra journey.

5. To learn that it is necessary to unite, it is forbidden to engage in seditious differences and to refrain from insulting the sacred among other nations must be among the achievements of your spiritual Hajj journey so that we should see nothing in the world of Islam except harmony and unity. This is because if we do not follow this advice we will be weakened from within and the enemies will be encouraged to destroy religious centers. God says:

6. ﴿الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبَّنَا اللَّهُ وَ  
لَوْلَا دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَهَدَمَتْ صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَ  
صَلَوَاتٌ وَمَسَاجِدُ يُذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَ لَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ  
يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ﴾

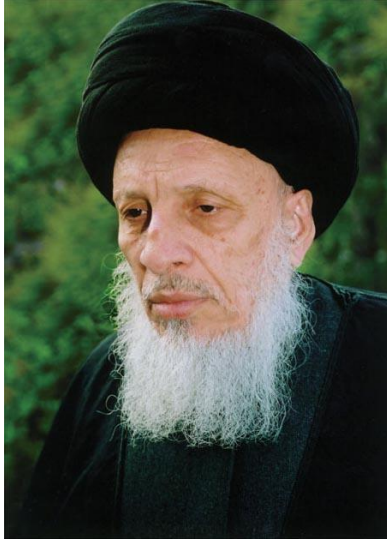
*"And had there not been Allah's repelling some people by others, certainly there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which Allah's name is much remembered; and surely Allah will help him who helps His cause; most surely Allah is Strong."*  
(Hajj, 40).



## **Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Mohammad Hussaini Shahroodi**

Whoever testifies to the Oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Mohammad is a Muslim. His life and property must be respected and protected and infringing upon his property, massacring, accusing others of heresy and causing division and inciting sedition among Muslims are not permissible. It is necessary to avoid infringing on the things held sacred by Muslims and it is not permissible to violate believers' honor and property.

**Seyyed Mohammad Shahroodi.**



## **Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Sae'id al-Hakim**

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the  
Most Merciful

Salamun alaikum,

Please guide millions of Muslims with  
regard to these two important issues:

Is someone who professed his faith in the  
oneness of God and prophet hood of  
Muhammad Ibn Abdullah (PBUH), said prayers  
facing the Qiblah and followed one of the eight  
denominations (Hanafi, Shafe'i, Maleki,



Hanbali, Ja'fari, Zaidi, Abazi and Zaheri) considered a Muslim? Must his life, honor and property be respected?

His Eminence's reply:

“Accusing the companions or other Muslims of heresy, no matter what denomination they belong to, is not a Shi'a belief because it is against the spirit of Islam and its principles. This point is implied by hadiths narrated from Shi'a Imams (peace be upon them) and reaffirmed by their scholars through their lectures and religious decrees.”

Question:

Many Muslims and non-Muslims ask us about relationships and interaction among Islamic denominations. Please reply to the following two questions:

1. Is someone who is following one of the eight denominations (Hanafi, Shafe'i, Maleki, Hanbali, Ja'fari, Zaidi, Abazi and Zaheri) considered Muslim?

2. What is the limit of accusing others of heresy? Is it permissible for a Muslim to accuse others of heresy, especially the followers of other famous denominations or the denominations of

## **50 Prohibition of Excommunicating Muslims**

Ash'ariyah or Mu'tazilah? Is accusing the followers of Sufiyah of heresy allowable?

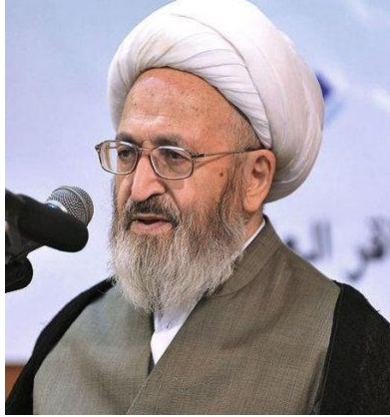
His Eminence's reply:

In the name of God, Most Gracious, the Most Merciful and praise be to Him

1. A profession of faith in the oneness of God, and in the prophet hood of Muhammad Ibn Abdullah (PBUH), carrying out the religious duties and the obligatory precepts of religion like saying prayers and etc. are enough for a person to be considered a Muslim. Thus, all the religious precepts like the necessity of respecting his life, property etc. hold good for him.

2. Answered above.

**Al-Seyyed Mohammad Sa'eid al-Hakim**



## **Grand Ayatollah Shaykh Ja'far Subhani**

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the  
Most Merciful

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا﴾

*“And hold fast, all together, by the Rope which Allah stretches out for you and be not divided among yourselves.”` (Al-e-Imran.103)*

God, the Exalted, commands Muslims to hold fast to the Rope (covenant) of Allah. It is likely that the similarity between a divided and disunited nation, and a person fallen into a well has led to the use the term "rope". Because the only such a person can be saved is to grab the rope which has been dropped into the well.

This point is so important that the holy Qur'an

has continuously praised and commanded unity and harmony, and prohibited us from disunity. The holy Qur'an has reproached disunity to the extent that it has considered it to be among the dreadful calamities.

﴿قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّنْ فَوْقِكُمْ أَوْ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْضِكُمْ أَوْ يَلْبِسَكُمْ شِيْعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُم بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ﴾

*"Say: He has power to send calamities on you from above and below or to cover you with confusion in party strife and give you a taste of mutual vengeance each from the other."* (Al-An'am.65)

Thus, all Muslims must follow the Qur'an, act in accordance with its commands, be united, and refrain from anything that causes division. Especially in this era, in which the unbelievers and arrogant powers conspire to cause discord among Muslims, lead them into shedding each other's blood for achieving their evil aims, dominating the Islamic countries and plundering their God-given blessings and resources. And in so doing, they try to guarantee security of the occupying forces which have invaded the beloved land of Palestine and Quds.

The mischief of Takfir (accusing others of heresy) is an ignoble and indecent act because all Muslims worship the One God and believe in the prophethood of the Holy Prophet and the Judgment Day. As said by Bukhari in his account of the Battle of Khaybar, this belief is enough to

consider them as Muslims, even if they do not believe in any of the Islamic denominations. On his deathbed, Imam Ash'ari gathered all his disciples and told them: "Bear testimony that I never accused any Muslim of heresy, because they all worshiped the One God and were all under the banner of Islam. We, too, are obliged to have the utmost respect for others' feelings and beliefs. We must not treat them in a way that causes division and sows seeds of hostility and grudge, as this used to be a common practice of our pious predecessors, who lived in an atmosphere of peace and reconciliation.

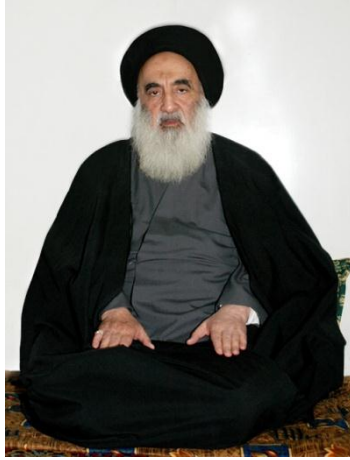
The accusation of cursing the prophet's companions which is wrongly leveled against Shi'a is false and groundless. The Shi'a vehemently deny such allegations. In their attitude towards the companions of the prophets, they follow the example of Imam Ali bin Hussein who prayed to God:

«اللهم وأصحاب محمد خاصة، الذين أحسنوا الصحبة،  
والذين أبلوا البلاء الحسن في نصره، وكانفوه، وأسرعوا إلى  
وفادته، وسابقوا إلى دعوته»

"O God, salute the chosen companions of Mohammad, who were good companions for the Prophet and who endeavored to aid and support him, those who hastened to welcome him, benefit from him and embrace his invitation.

**Peace and mercy of God be on you.**

**Ja'far Subhani**



## **Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Sistani**

Please guide millions of Muslims with regard to these two important issues:

Is someone who professed his faith in the oneness of God and prophethood of Muhammad Ibn Abdullah (PBUH), said prayers facing the Qiblah and followed one of the eight schools (Hanafi, Shafe'i, Maleki, Hanbali, Ja'fari, Zaidi, Abazi and Zaheri) considered a Muslim? Must his life, honor and property be respected?

His Eminence's reply:

In the Name of God, the Most High

1. Whoever recites the Two Testimonies

(Shahadatain) and does not speak anything counter to it and does not also show enmity and hatred towards the family of the Holy Prophet (S) is considered to be Muslim.

2. Sunnis are considered Muslims according to Shiites and all Islamic laws apply to them and hold good for them. It is permissible to marry them; they inherit from Shiites and Shiites inherit from them. Apart from the Kharijites and Nasibis, others' lives, property and honor are inviolable. The allegation that Shiites excommunicate the People of Badr and the People of Redhwan Allegiance, the believers among Muhajir and Ansr, the leaders of Islamic sects and their followers, is a pure lie."

Wassalamun alaikum wa rahmatullah wa barakatuh

## **The Statement of Grand Ayatollah Sistani on the Subject of Islamic Unity and Against Sectarian Strife**

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the  
Most Compassionate

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا﴾

*“And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves.”* (Al-e-Imran 103)

The Islamic world is going through difficult circumstances, and facing major crises and enormous challenges affecting its present and threatening its future. Everyone is aware of this situation and needs to close ranks and reject those who fan the flames of sectarianism and we must avoid stirring sectarian differences.

Those differences that have existed for centuries, and no completely satisfactory resolution – pleasing to all parties – seems to exist, and hence should not be pursued for the sake of creating controversy and strife, but only within the framework of scientific research in a sober and in particular in a manner that does not affect the fundamentals of Islam.

Everyone believes in One God, and the message of Prophet Mustafa(S), may Allah shower



His blessings upon him and his family, and in the concept of Ma'ad (Resurrection /Judgment), and the fact that the Quran – which is guarded and protected by Allah from distortion-along with the Honorable Prophetic Sunnah (Tradition) which is the source for the Shari'a (Islamic Legal) rulings and the affection for the Holy Ahl al-Bayt(A), peace be upon them, and so on; these basics are shared by the Muslims in general, among which are the pillars of Islam: Prayer, Fasting, Hajj and so on. These common concepts form the basic core for Islamic Unity. We must focus on them to establish closer bonds of love and affection between the people of this Ummah, and indeed do no less than work on peaceful co-existence amongst each other, and move away from bickering and communal and sectarian rhetoric under whatever guise or title.

So every effort must be exerted by all those concerned about the elevation and glory of Islam, and it must be promoted to the Muslims to do everything in power in order to bridge the gap between them, and alleviate the repercussions (effects) of the tensions caused by the political pressure, in order to obliterate any chance of further dissention and division. That dissension – if left untended to – would inevitably give way for the enemy's aspirations – to dominate the Islamic Countries and seize their wealth – to be fulfilled.

However, sadly and regrettably it is evident that certain people and parties are working on a

## **58 Prohibition of Excommunicating Muslims**

completely contrasting agenda. They have been seeking to perpetuate and increase the division and foster deeper sectarian differences among Muslims. They have increased their efforts lately, especially after the recently increasing political conflicts in the region and the intensification of the fight over power and influence.

They have exerted serious efforts to elucidate and disseminate the ideological differences among different Muslim sects, going so far as to even adding their own made-up differences by methods of tucking and slander, in order to achieve their purposes of discrediting a certain sect and disrupting its followers, and intimidating others against them.

And in pursuit of this scheme, they have published in the media – from satellite and internet web sites, magazines and other means – strange rulings (opinions) which are offensive to some Islamic Schools and Sects. They have attributed these made-up rulings to His Eminence (Ayatullah al-UdhmaSayyed Ali al-Husayni as-Sistani(HA)), in an apparent attempt to defame his authority for the sole purpose of increasing the sectarian tensions, leading to their specific goals.

The opinions of the Esteemed Sayyed (Ayatullah al-UdhmaSayyed Ali al-Husayni as-Sistani(HA)), can only be taken from the reliable

sources, such as books of his rulings documented and bearing his signature and seal; and they do not contain anything defaming to other Muslim sects or parties from other schools of thought. And anyone who has even the slightest knowledge of Ayatollah (HA)'s rulings can detect the outrageous lies within what is being said and published.

We can also point out to the stance and statements of His Eminence (Ayatullah al-Udhma Sayyed Ali al-Husayni as-Sistani (HA)) during the past years on the issue of the plight of wounded Iraq, as well as his commandment to his followers and imitators (muqallideen) in dealing with their brethren from the people of the Sunnah with love and respect. Also, he has recurrently stressed on the sacrosanctity of the blood, honor and wealth of all Muslims, be they Sunnah or Shia; and that anyone who kills unjustly is to be abjured.

All of this clearly discloses the methodologies followed by this religious authority in dealing with the followers of other schools of thought, and in what light these followers are viewed. Had everyone followed the footsteps of this religious authority, things would have been different from what we are witnessing today in terms of blind violence hitting everywhere, and horrendous murders that do not exclude even young children or old people or pregnant women; and unto Allah do we complain!

We ask Allah, the Mighty, the Most High,

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to take the hands of all to that which is good for the Ummah and for its best interests, verily He has power and authority over all things.

**The Office of Ayatullah al-Udhma Sistani (HA),  
an-Najaf al-Ashraf, Iraq**

**Muharram 14, 1428 / February 3, 2007**



## **Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Musa Shubairi Zanjani**

Except for Khawarij and Nawasib, whoever who testifies to the oneness of God and the prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) is a Muslim and all the Islamic rulings regarding marriage, inheritance, inviolability of his life and property, etc. hold good for him. Those creating division among Muslims accusing other Islamic denominations of heresy are ignorant of the reality of Islam, and there is no doubt that they are either direct agents of colonial powers, or act in line with the evil attempts of the colonialists to destroy the foundations of Islam, uproot the religion of the Holy Prophet, and wipe out his name from the minds. The suicide attacks conducted by these

groups only please the heretics and sworn enemies of Islam:

﴿قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا \* الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا﴾

*"Say: Shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds, those whose efforts have been wasted in this life. While they thought that they were acquiring good by their works." (Al-Kahf 103-104)*

God willing, all Muslims being alert to the enemies' tricks and deceits, will remain resolute and steadfast in promoting the glory and honor of Islam.

**Sayyid Musa Shubairi Zanjani**

**3 Rajab, 1434**



## **Grand Ayatollah Shaykh Irfan Qasbi Saafi Gulpaigani**

﴿وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ﴾

*“And fall into no disputes lest you lose heart  
and your power apart” (Al-Anfal-46)*

Whoever testifies to the oneness of God and prophet hood of the Seal of the prophets (peace be upon him and his holy descendants) is a Muslim and his life, honor, and property are protected, and no one has the right to insult what he holds religiously sacred. The suicide

attacks and the massacre of Muslims are great sins. Muslims have a duty to show the world the reality of Islam which is the religion of mercy, compassion and grace. They all must stand in one line, and make every endeavor to spread and promulgate our beloved religion and to guide people throughout the world. They have to foil the treacherous plots of the enemies of the Holy Qur'an in unison and accord, and carry out their Islamic duties.

(إِنْ تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ)

*“If you will help the cause of Allah, he will help you and plant your feet firmly.”* (Mohammad- 7.)

**Peace and mercy of God and his blessings be upon you.**

**Lotfullah Saafi Gulpaigani**





## Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Ali Alavi Gorgani

In His Name, the Most Exalted

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السَّلَامِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا  
خُطَوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ﴾ (Al-Baqarah -208.)

God says:

*"Oh you who believe! Enter into Islam  
wholeheartedly and follow not the footsteps of  
Satan for he is to you an avowed enemy "*

The message of Islam has always been  
reliance on logic and dialogue, and refraining  
from any insult and throwing accusation at  
others. God says:

﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾

*"Repel (evil) with what is bettr. (Al-Mu'minun.96)*

﴿وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ﴾

*"Revile not to those whom they call upon  
besides Allah, lest they, out of spite, revile Allah in*

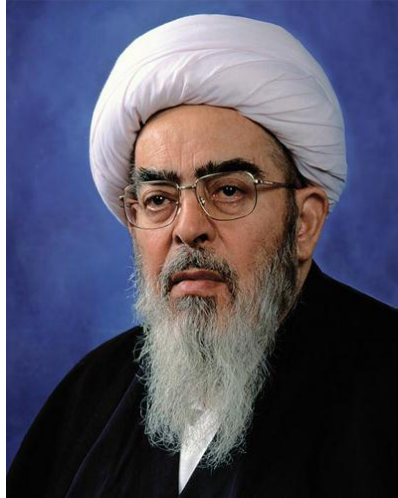
*their ignorance*" (Al-An'am.8)

In the present time when the conspiracies of the enemies are aimed at destroying the basis of Islam and elimination of the word "Allah" and all the divine calls, as well as at establishing the rule of Satan in the world. We must not insist on the differences, create a hostile atmosphere and move along a path which benefits the arrogant powers and international Zionism. In the past, despite having specific doctrines, the followers of different Islamic sects maintained respectful and peaceful coexistence, and engaged in logical debates only during meetings and discussions. Today, they must, as before, get along with each other and act in unison against the common enemy. Condemned are the acts of those who accuse others of heresy under different pretexts, show hostility toward other sects particularly Shia, and engage in massacre in different countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Indonesia. They just please the world's arrogant powers, serve their interests and act in opposition to the Holy Qur'an which says clearly:

﴿لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ﴾

*"Take not for friend's unbelievers rather than believers."*(An-Nissaa.144)

They must not extend the hand of friend-ship to Zionists and cooperate with them against the Shi'a. We pray and hope that Allah will keep Muslim community away from hostility and division.



## **Late Grand Ayatollah Sheikh Mohammad Fazel Lankarani**

As you are well-informed, the West has decided to stir up seditions among Muslims and, depict Islam as a violent religion. In this situation, maintaining unity of Muslims seems to be more crucial and vital than ever before. Considering the decisive proofs of the necessity of Muslim unity in the present time, what is your idea about using the name of Islamic Ummah for the followers of Islamic religions like the four Sunni sects such as and Zaidiyah, Zaheriyah, Abaziyah, etc., who believe in the principles of

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Islam? Is accusing them of heresy allowable? What are the limits and criteria for such accusations? We pray to God, the Glorious, to grant you success in serving Islam and Muslims especially the Shi'a world.

Reply:

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Insofar as these denominations have not denied any of the principles and obligatory precepts of Islam, or God forbid, the Infallible Imams (Peace be upon them), they are considered to be among Islamic denominations.

**Mohammad Fazel Lankarani**



## **Late Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Yusef Madani Tabrizi**

### **In the Name of God, the Most High**

Islam does not allow insulting the religious beliefs of any religion, especially Islamic denominations, and any action aimed at creating discord among Muslim communities and causing heavy losses to their lives and properties is strictly forbidden. The suicide attacks against Muslims and their massacre in different countries break the heart of any broad-minded man. This is not compatible with Islam, which is the religion of mercy and compassion, not to mention the fact that such actions also portray a misleading picture of Islam to the world. May God protect us against the evil of the cruel and the corrupt.

**Seyyed Yusef Madani Tabrizi**



## **Grand Ayatollah Shaykh Hussein Mazaheri**

In the name of God, the Gracious the  
Merciful

What you have written is an unpleasant reality, to which the world's Muslims and in particular the scholars of Muslim sects as well as the heads of Islamic countries must pay attention and come up with solutions and remedies. Today, the enemies of Islam and the global arrogant powers are expanding and strengthening their nefarious domination through causing discord among Muslims, especially in respect of their religious and doctrinal beliefs. The holy Qur'an regards such strife as a fire and a punishment engulfing

Islamic society:

﴿قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ أَوْ مِّن تَحْتَ آرْجُلِكُمْ أَوْ يَلْبِسَكُمْ شِيْعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُم بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ﴾.

*“Say: he has power to send calamities on you, from above and below, or to cover you with confusion, in party strife, giving you a taste of mutual vengeance each from the other.” (Al-An`am.65)*

As Qur’an clearly says, the arrogant powers and the enemies of humanity and spirituality have been able to dominate human beings, by creating hostility and resentment among them.

﴿إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيْعًا﴾.

*“Truly Pharaoh elated himself in the land and divided its people into sections”. (Al-Qassas.4)*

And the remedy for this great pain, and the solution to this calamity will be impossible to achieve without implementing the Qur’anic orders

﴿تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ﴾

*“Come to common terms as between us and you.*

(Al-e-Imran.64)

Thus, as we have notified several times, exacerbating the conflicts by any person or group, provoking each other's religious sentiments, causing desecration and sacrilege to Muslims and creating division among the followers of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) are religiously and rationally impermissible. The suicide attacks and destructive actions by those petrified and rigid people, who accuse other sects of heresy, and who massacre innocent Muslims, are an

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inhumane and ignominious act which breaks the heart of any broadminded human being. Certainly all these actions are in accordance with the enemies' agenda and aspirations, and the arrogant powers seek to make the Muslims practically aligned with them through causing discord and division among them. Clearly, following the enemies and global arrogant powers is a great sin. May God protect all Muslims against the evil of division and strife, and bless you and all those who strive towards strengthening unity and harmony among Muslims.

**Peace and mercy of God and his blessings be upon you.**





## **Grand Ayatollah Shaykh Naser Makarem Shirazi**

In His Name, the Most High.

We have always reiterated that Muslim unity and proximity of Islamic denominations are of great importance at any time and specifically in the present situation. Thus, any kind of desecration and sacrileges is religiously unallowable and Muslims, including Shi'a and Sunnis, must watch out for the tricks and traps laid by their enemies and stop exciting religious seditions. Suicide operations and massacre of innocent people are among the greatest sins and clear examples of

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corruption and eternal punishment in the fires of hell. It will portray Islam as a violent and unacceptable religion. May God guide all those who do wrong and are astray.

Peace and mercy of God and His blessings be upon you.

**Naser Makarem Shirazi**



## Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Abdulkarim Musavi Ardebili

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the  
Most Merciful

﴿إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُونِي﴾

*“Verily this ummah of yours is a single ummah.*

*I am your Lord and Cherisher: therefore serve Me.*

(Al-Anbiyaa.92)

Unity and brotherhood are the most precious  
gifts about which Allah, the Generous, has  
reminded us by saying:

﴿وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً قَالَفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ  
فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا﴾

*“And remember with gratitude Allah’s favor on you, for*

*you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His grace you became brothers”* (Al-e-Imran.103)

How can one follow the Prophet of mercy and give himself the honorable name of Muslim and then not respect the life, honor and properties of others. Those who think that they can defend Islam through bloodshed and violence are, in fact, deceived people who are being used as tools by the enemies of Islamic Ummah, who exploit them for their own benefit. In today's world, discord within people will take away their glory, greatness and peace, and weaken the global status of Islam. The followers of the prophets' household must pay attention to this important issue more than other Muslim brothers. We are honored by being called followers of Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (A.S). The reality of Shi'ism is to follow the path of the Imam of believers. He did not permit speaking ill of and insulting others. He prohibited swearing at others. That great man persevered in the interest of Islam and Muslims and for the sake of reconciliation among them. He settled their differences, invited them to unity and brotherhood, and, in this mission he was taunted and reprehended. It is hoped that all Muslims, and specially the followers of the religion of the Ahlul-Bayt (A.S) in the present chaotic situation, give Muslims' interests priority over ethnic conflicts, and adhere to divine teachings and guidance of the Holy Prophet. May God reverse the enemy's tricks upon themselves.

**The Office of Grand Ayatollah Musavi Ardebili**



## **Grand Ayatollah Sheikh Bashir Najafi**

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the  
Most Merciful

Many Muslims and non-Muslims ask us about the relationships and interaction among Islamic denominations. Please reply to the following two questions:

1. Is someone following one of the eight denominations (Hanafi, Shafe'i, Maleki, Hanbali, Ja'fari, Zaidi, Abazi and Zaheri) considered Muslim?

2. What is the limit of accusing others of heresy? Is it permissible for a Muslim to accuse others of heresy, especially the followers of other famous denominations or the denominations of

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Ash'ariyah or Mu'tazilah? Is accusing the followers of Sufiyah of heresy allowable?

His Eminence's reply:

In His Name, the Most High

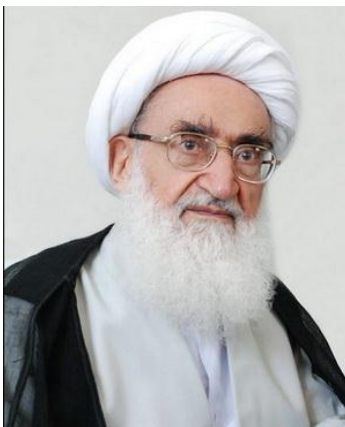
Anyone who has professed his faith in the oneness of God, the prophethood of Muhammad Ibn Abdullah (PBUH), the finality of his prophethood, and the Judgment Day, and has not denied any of these tenets, and proved himself to be a Muslim, is considered Muslim. His life, honor and property are protected and all the religious precepts apply to him. All Muslims have a religious duty to protect his life, honor and property. God knows best.

2. It is not allowable to accuse of heresy anyone who has testified to the oneness of God, the prophethood of Muhammad Ibn Abdullallah (PBUH), the finality of his prophethood, and the Judgment Day, and has not denied any of these tenets and proved himself as Muslim. There are some narrations from the Holy Prophet regarding prohibition of this action. Anyone stirring up religious seditions or accusing of heresy someone who has professed the above, is ignorant, or he pretends to be ignorant, or he is an enemy of Islam

who tries to influence Muslims to serve the interests of the unbelieving arrogant powers and to cause division and disunity.

**God knows best.**

**Bashir Al-Najafi**



## **Grand Ayatollah Sheikh Hossein Nuri Hamedani**

In the Name of God

Whoever recites the two testimonies (except Nawasibies and Khawarejies) is Muslim and Islamic rulings such as the right of inheritance, the value of life and wealth and etc. should be respected. Those groups of Muslims who cause a divide amongst other Muslims and declare other groups as blasphemers have lost the reality of this religion; If not an agent of the colonizers, such people are definitely helping the enemy destroy Islam, diminish Muhammad's (SAWS) path and wipe away the eminent name of the holy prophet.



﴿قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا \* الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعِيَّهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا﴾

(Al-Kahf 103 & 104)

Hopefully all Muslims will understand the tactics of our enemies and take a diligent step into the path of Islam's success and pride more than ever In Sha Allah. Stay away from offending holy figures amongst different Muslim sects. Do not help the enemy reach their goal. Any act which causes the bloodshed of a Muslim or an innocent person is Haram.

**Hossein Nuri Hamedani**



**Grand Ayatollah Shaykh Hossein  
Vahid Khorasani**

In the Name of God

We are a group Shi'a Muslims living in a Sunni neighborhood. The Sunnis accuse us of heresy and believe that Shi'a are unbelievers. Can we retaliate against them by regarding them as unbelievers and treating them as such? Kindly, let us know our religious duty with regard to such assaults.

Signature

A group of believers

This is the reply given by Grand Ayatollah  
Vahid Khurasani:

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the  
Most Merciful.

Whoever testifies to the oneness of the God and the prophethood of the Seal of Prophets (peace be upon him and his holy descendants) is a Muslim and his life, honor and property are as valuable as the life, honor, and property of a follower of the Ja'fari sect. You are religiously obliged to treat with respect a person who has professed his faith in God and the Holy Prophet even if he regards you as an unbeliever. Despite their unjust behavior, do not deviate from the right path of justice. If they get sick, pay them a visit. If one of them dies, attend his funeral. If he makes a request, grant his request, and submit to the will of God who said:

﴿وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَا نُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ﴾

*“And let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just; that is next to piety.”* (Al-Ma'idah.8)

And obey the commands of God who said:

﴿وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ أَلْفَىٰ إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا﴾

*“And say not to anyone who offers you a salutation, you are none of a believer.”* (An-Nissaa.94)

**Peace and mercy of God be upon you.**



## **Ayatollah Shaykh Mohammed Mahdi al-Asefi**

In the Name of God, the Compassionate the  
Merciful

1. One who recites the Two Testimonies (Shahadatayn) and admits divine limits and the indisputable rules of Islam i.e. those accepted by all Muslims, is considered to be a Muslim. His blood and property are inviolable for a Muslim. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has been reported as having said:

«أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَقُولُوا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ فَمَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ عَصَمَ مِنِّي مَالَهُ وَنَفْسَهُ إِلَّا بِجَفَّةٍ وَحِسَابِهِ عَلَى اللَّهِ»<sup>1</sup>

- 
1. This tradition has been narrated in different parts of Al-Musnad by Ahmad Hanbal. As well, Beyhaqi has narrated in his Sunan, Bukhari and Muslim in their Sahih books. Also, many memorizers of prophetic traditions have passed on this tradition with authentic chains of transmission on the authority of Shia and Sunni narrators.

*"I have been commanded to fight against people so long as they do not declare that there is no god but Allah, and he who professed it was guaranteed the protection of his property and life on my behalf except for the right affairs rest with Allah."*

2. The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, has described as "unbelievers" those who fight Muslims without a clear injunction in the Book of Allah and in the Tradition of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Addressing Muslims in Masjid al-Khayf located in Mina, the Holy Prophet said:

«إِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ حَرَامٌ كَحُرْمَةِ  
يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا فِي شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا...»

*"Verily your blood, wealth (property) and honors are harām (to infringe upon) like the inviolability (hurmah) of this day of yours, in this land of yours in this month of yours..."*

Then he said:

«لَا تَرْجِعُوا بَعْدِي كُفَّارًا، يَضْرِبُ بَعْضُكُمْ رِقَابَ بَعْضٍ»  
*"Do not renegade as disbelievers after me by striking the neck of one another."<sup>1</sup>*

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1. There is consensus as to the authenticity of this tradition. Ahmad Hanbal has narrated it in different parts of al-Musnad. As well, al-Nesai has narrated this hadith in his al-Sunan al-Kubra and IbnHayyan in his Sahih. Also, Bukhari and Muslim have mentioned the tradition in their Sahih books not to mention many a number of memorizers of prophetic traditions who have passed on this tradition with authentic chains of transmission through Shia and Sunni sources.

3. Fanning the fire of sectarian strife and exacerbating grudge and discord among Muslims are not permissible nor is it permissible to try to break up the ranks of Muslims and to provoke discord and differences among them. God, the Exalted, says:

﴿وَاَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا﴾

*"And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited."* (Aal-e Imran, 103).

Without doubt, insulting the sacred symbols of other Muslim sects is one of the main factors causing disunity among Muslims, something which Allah has forbidden us from.

4. We have been commanded to be kind, cordial and affable, to cooperate with and help each other, to visit and love others regardless of their sects and religions, albeit with the exception of Nawasib (Nasibis). There are a number of traditions from the Holy Prophet in this regard and many of those traditions are authentic. As well, many traditions with reliable chains of transmission have been narrated from the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, concerning the same subject, traditions which I have cited in my book al-Fitna al-Taefiyah (Sectarian Strife).

5. What was just said does not mean that scholarly jurisprudential and doctrinal dialogue in a scientific and impartial atmosphere should be stopped among Muslim scholars of different

religions. Certainly, this dialogue is necessary as it helps promote and improve cultural, jurisprudential and ideological interaction among Muslims as recommended by Islam.

We pray to Allah, the Exalted, to unite Muslims, strengthen their ranks and positions and help all those who call to unity and proximity among Muslims.

**Muhammad Mahdi Al-Asefi**

**an-Najaf al-Ashraf**



## **Ayatollah Shaykh Mohammad Hashem Salehi**

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the  
Most Merciful

After the necessity of negating polytheism, the second most emphasized issue in Islam is the unity of Muslims.

بني الاسلام على دعامتين كلمة التوحيد و وحدة الكلمة.

*"Islam is based on two principles: Monotheism and Unity".*

Therefore, infringing upon the life, property and honor of Muslims is among the greatest sins and prohibitions in Islam.

Islam does not allow insulting the religious beliefs of any Islamic sect or denominations.



On the other hand, the suicide attacks and mass murdering Muslims in different countries is religiously unlawful and are considered to be one of the clear manifestations of corruption; they are unforgivable sins which will eventually cause the fires of Hell to become the perpetrator's eternal abode.

Shia and Sunni Muslims should be wary of the conspiracies hatched by enemies, division creators and those who accuse others of heresy.

It is incumbent on all Muslims to show the true face of Islam to the world, the Islam which is the religion of mercy, compassion and kindness. It is necessary for them to propagate Islam and maintain their brotherhood and unity.

**Mohammad Hashem Salehi**

**Kabul, Afghanistan**



## **Ayatollah Shaykh Asef Mohseni**

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the  
Most Merciful.

Firstly, anybody believing in the unity of God, the prophet hood of Prophet Muhammad, the finality of his prophecy and the Day of Resurrection is a Muslim.

Secondly, infringing upon Muslims' life, property and honor is strongly prohibited.

Thirdly, all Muslims are brothers, and they have to propagate Islam by maintaining Islamic brotherhood among themselves, and accepting their minor differences.

Fourthly, causing dispute and division among Muslims, in fact, amounts to betraying Islam.

**Ayatollah Asef Mohseni, Afghanistan**

**10/2/92**



## **Ayatollah Shaykh Mohammad Reza Mahdavi Kani**

(Head of the Society of Clerics and Council of Experts)

In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the  
Most Merciful

Question: There is a frequently asked question, that is: Who is Muslim and to whom do the rulings of Islam apply? Are all Sunnis Shiites and followers of other sects treated as Muslims and the Islamic laws hold good for them?

Answer:

A person who testifies to the oneness of God and prophet hood of Muhammad (PBUH) is a Muslim, unless he shows hatred and enmity towards the Prophet's household.

The followers of the household of the

prophet are commanded to treat all Muslims with respect, warmth, and friendship.

And they should attend Muslims' congregational prayers and funeral ceremonies, visit them if they get sick, and refrain from any animosity and strife as this is exactly what the enemies of Islam wish to see.

The Shiites should respect all religions and be aware of the mischief of the enemies of Islam, because the enemies fear the Islamic awakening.

قال الله تعالى: ﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا...﴾

*"And hold fast, all together, by the Rope which Allah stretches out for you, and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favor on you; for you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His grace, ye became brethren". (Al-i-Imran: 103).*

اللهم انصر الاسلام واهله واخذل الكفر واهله.

*"O God assist Islam and Muslims, and inflict destruction and misery on heresy and heretics".*

Accusing Muslims of heresy and murdering and plundering their properties are religiously forbidden and is considered as a great sin.

﴿مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا﴾

*"If any one slew a person—unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land it would be as if he slew the whole people."* (al-Maedah: 32)

**Tehran Society of Clerics and Head of the Council of Experts**

**Mohammad Reza Mahdavi Kani**



## Ayatollah Shaykh Mohammad Yazdi

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the  
Most Merciful

﴿وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا  
بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ﴾<sup>1</sup>

God, the Exalted, says:

*"Revile not ye those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite Revile Allah in their ignorance."*

The Holy Quran explicitly prohibits us from speaking ill, cursing, and imprecating those deviating from the right path as this makes them disrespect the Creator of the world.

If we look carefully at this holy verse, we can infer a general criterion from it.

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1. Al-An'am: 108

Doing anything that can provoke hostility and cause people to do wrong deeds is prohibited.

Therefore, speaking ill, cursing, and imprecating those who are respected by a group, especially if they are followers of a divine religion, is not allowed.

It is clear that if these actions, whether directly or indirectly result in murder, massacre, destruction and loss of life and property of others, they are haram, and those in charge should be held accountable both in this world and the hereafter.

Such cursing and swearing may be figurative or real, and might take the form of poems, panegyric or even eulogy or mourning or theater and cinematic atmosphere. No matter what the nature of the action may be, it brings about murder, massacre, and damage to the life, honor and property of the people.

Considering this general introduction, in this world where nothing remains secret, satellites, security forces, spying networks, and modern and speedy mass media, ranging from internet, radio, television, mobile phones to other reporting devices, broadcast the events.

Cursing the leaders of divine religions, especially the divine prophets, the Muslim caliphs and their successors, the prominent figures in Islam, and the caliphs in the early period of Islam, the Prophet's wives and his children, is not permissible.

Not only these actions cause division and dispersion among Islamic Ummah, but they are also the source of numerous conflicts in different parts of the Islamic world, and they are obviously forbidden in Islam.

The normative conduct of the guiding Imams especially the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali, is testimony to this claim. And in general, ill-speaking, cursing and imprecating have never been an effective tool for stating any true ideas.

We should not ignore the point that the research for substantiating a fact by scholars, scientists and elites, whether individually or in a group, in scientific, educational and research centers of seminaries and universities should be conducted away from any bias, prejudice and political affiliation.

The scientific advances in all fields of humanities, religious ideological studies or other scientific disciplines are dependent on impartiality and objectivity, not friendship or hostility.

It is hoped that the various strata of the Muslim Ummah know the time and circumstances of today's world, consider these issues more cautiously, and act more sensibly and logically so that they will be protected by God, God willing...

**Mohammad Yazdi**

**Chairman of the Supreme Council of Society of  
Teachers of the Islamic Seminary of Qom**