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فتاوى صراط مستقيم

FATAWA

Sirat-e-Mustaqeem

By

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with the help of various scholars.

His ambitions were very high and he wished to achieve many goals for the betterment of Muslims in the UK. Sadly, on 10 October 1988, during a journey back home on the M6 Motorway, all his ambitions and desires collapsed, when he, along with his son and mother-in-law, died in a major car accident. His funeral was itself a proof of his popularity among the Muslim community. His funeral service was historical and unique in the UK, attended by thousands of Muslims from all over the UK and from various organisations and groups. He was buried at a cemetery in Birmingham, and left behind his widow and two sons:

May Allah accept all his efforts and services and may Allah forgive him and grant him Paradise. Aameen.

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Chapter 1

FAITH & PRACTICE

To the Chief Editor of Sirat-e-Mustaqeem. Please answer the following questions according to the Qur'ân and *Hadîth*.

Is practicing Islam part of *Imân* (faith)?

Does a Muslim become a disbeliever if he doesn't practice Islam?

Nazir Ahmed Saghir, Birmingham

Answer:

The matter of belief and disbelief and to say whether a someone is a Muslim or not, is a very serious issue and we need to be very careful in such matters. The definition of *Imân*, Practice and Sin are all important issues and if one discusses these without enough knowledge, he may become confused. I will try to answer your question in brief so that everyone can understand and benefit.

With regard to these issues, various opinions are held by different groups of people. These opinions are as follows:

Opinion 1 A person declaring *Shahadatain* (Accepting Islam) cannot be called a *Kafir* in any way.

Opinion 2 A person who declares *Shahadatain* and then commits a major sin, he will become a non-Muslim.

Opinion 3 A person who declares *Shahadatain* and commits a major sin, though he will be considered out of Islam, we cannot call him a *Kafir*. However he will be in between Islam and *Kufr*.

Opinion 4 After declaration of *Shahadatain*, if one denies the general practices of Islam and ignores the prohibitions in Islam, he will become a disbeliever /non-Muslim.

Opinion 5 If one commits a sin which *Shari'ah* considers as

Kufr, he will be considered a non-Muslim.

Opinion 6 If a believer does not practice according to Islam he will enter the Hell fire, but because he had some faith and did not commit *Shirk* in his life, he will enter Paradise, after being punished in the Hell-fire.

Before I discuss and analyse these various opinions, I would first like to explain what *Imân* is.

The Holy Qur'ân repeatedly mentions *Imân* with 'Amal (Faith and Actions). As *Surat Al-Kahf* states:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا ﴾ [١٠٧: ١٨]

“As to those who believe and do righteous deeds, they have the Gardens of Paradise for their entertainment.” (18:107)

Many *Ahâdith* also mention actions with belief. A famous *Hadîth* about the Pillars of Islam, mentioned in Bukhari and other *Hadîth* books says:

«بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ، وَالْحَجِّ وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ».

"Islam is based on 5 pillars:

1. To testify that *La ilaha illallah wa anna Muhammadar Rasulullâh* (None has the right to be worshipped but Allâh and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh)
2. To offer prayers,
3. To pay *Zakat*,
4. To perform *Hajj*,
5. To observe *Saum* (Fast)."

The latter four relate to practical Islam (actions).

These proofs give a clear indication that there is a strong link between belief and practice. So, we can say that *Imân* can be divided into two parts: 1) to believe, 2) and to act according to Islam.

A definition by scholars says: "*Imân* is to seriously believe, to pronounce it and to act with parts of your body."

Some say that *Imân* is only serious belief and others say that *Imân* is just to pronounce it. But both these definitions are incomplete and incorrect.

According to the first explanation, we have two opinions for the definition of *Imân*:

- 1) Practice is part of *Imân* - if someone does not practice, his *Imân* will not be considered.
- 2) Practice is only necessary to complete *Imân* - this means that without practice we can consider one's *Imân*, but it will be incomplete.

We cannot tell what someone has in their heart, only Allâh is the All-Knower. Therefore, if someone declares that they are Muslims, we have to accept and deal with them as Muslims. Though at times, we can justify one's *Imân* from their practice. We shall discuss this in detail at a later stage.

When we call someone a Muslim, it will be because of his declaration. Likewise, calling someone a disbeliever is also because of his declaration or him not pronouncing *Shahadatain*.

With some deeds in Islam, it has been mentioned that if one does not practice them, one will be called a *Kafir*. This *Kufr* however, will not be in the sense of one being completely non-Muslim, but means that his *Imân* will be incomplete.

In conclusion, practice is part of *Imân* and a condition for the completion of one's *Imân*.

If someone declares *Imân* and does not practice according to Islam, completely or partially, to what extent will he be a Muslim

or *Kafir*? We shall discuss this in detail, with reference to the opinions given above.

First Opinion:

After declaring *Shahadatain*, one will be considered a Muslim regardless of practice or not. This opinion is not right because at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) there were hypocrites who declared *Shahadatain* but they were mentioned as disbelievers. Everyone agrees that if someone denies the prohibitions of Islam and rejects the obligatory deeds, he becomes a disbeliever. It doesn't matter how strongly he declares otherwise. Therefore, the first opinion is considered incorrect.

Second Opinion:

According to the second opinion, if someone commits a major sin after declaring *Shahadatain* he will be considered a *Kafir*. Those who hold this opinion attempt to prove it from the Qur'ân and *Hadîth*. As in *Surat Al-Mâ'idah* Allâh says:

﴿ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴾ [٥ : ٤٤]

“If any do fail to judge by what Allâh has revealed, they are disbelievers.” (5:44)

The Prophet (ﷺ) has said:

«سِبَابُ الْمُسْلِمِ فُسُوقٌ وَقِتَالُهُ كُفْرٌ»

“Abusing a Muslim is an evil doing and to fight him is *Kufr*”.

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

“If someone calls another Muslim a *Kafir*, then one of them will be a *Kafir*.”

This verse and *Ahâdîth* show that if a major sin is committed, the person becomes a disbeliever. But, we do not generally accept this opinion to be correct because we cannot declare someone to be a *Kafir*. We can only use the word '*Kufr*', as this word may be used in different contexts. According to this opinion, if we

consider such a person as *Kafir*, he automatically becomes a *Murtad* (Apostate- someone who abandons the religion) and the punishment for a *Murtad* is that he is to be killed.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“He who misses one prayer becomes a *Kafir*.”

Scholars have agreed that this *Kufr* is not in the sense that he becomes a disbeliever, but only that his act resembles a *Kafir* and if one continues this habit, then he will become a *Kafir*.

Third Opinion:

This opinion states that after committing a major sin one is considered to be out of Islam but is not completely a *Kafir*, because he has accepted Islam. However, he will remain in the Hell-fire. This opinion is also incorrect because if one declares himself to be a Muslim, then how can he remain in Hell fire forever?

Fourth Opinion:

This opinion says that after the declaration of *Shahadatain*, if one ignores obligatory duties and does not bother about *Halâl* or *Harâm* (lawful & unlawful), he will certainly be a disbeliever. This is a valid opinion.

Fifth Opinion:

We can declare someone a *Kafir* in that act only if he commits a sin which in Islamic *Shari'ah* is considered as '*Kufr*'. As in *Surat Al-Mâ'idah* Allâh says:

﴿ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴾ [٥ : ٤٤]

“If any do fail to judge by what Allâh has revealed, they are disbelievers.” (5:44)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«بَيْنَ الْمُسْلِمِ وَبَيْنَ الْكُفْرِ تَرْكُ الصَّلَاةِ.»

“The difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim is