The Murji‘ah and al-Kufr

By the Eminent Sheikh Sulaymaan bin Naasir al-‘Alwaan
And the people of the Sunnah [Ahl As-Sunnah] have agreed that the Kufr can be due to a statement, such as clear mockery [Istihzā‘] of the religion [Dīn] and it can occur due to actions such as prostrating to an idol or the sun or the moon or slaughtering for other than Allāh.

And the evidences from the Book and the Sunnah are clear concerning the Kufr of someone who commits something of Kufr, and this is due to the statements or actions alone, without tying this to willful rejection [Juhūd] or making it permissible [Istih‘lāl] as this is erroneous and no one from the companions [Sahābah] or the generation that came after them [Tābi‘īn] nor the known Imāms of the Sunnah have said this.

Allāh, the Most High, said: “And if you ask them [about this], they will declare: “We were only talking idly and joking.” Say: “Was it at Allāh, and His Ayāt [Proofs, Evidences, Verses, Lessons, Signs, Revelations, etc.] and His Messenger that you were mocking?” Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed. If We pardon some of you, We will punish others [amongst you] because they were Mujrimūn [disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, criminals, etc].” [Taubah:65]

And the cause of Kufr was the statement, which they uttered alone.

And Allāh, the Most High, said: “They swear by Allāh that they did not say (anything bad), but really they said the word of disbelief, and they disbelieved after their Islām, and they resolved that [plot to murder Prophet Muhammad] which they were unable to carry out, and they could not find any cause to do so except that Allāh and His Messenger had enriched them of His Bounty. If then they repent, it will be better for them, but if they turn away, Allāh will punish them with a painful torment in this worldly life and in the Hereafter. And there is none for them on earth as a Wālī [supporter, protector] or a helper.” [Taubah:74]

So ultimately, anyone who says or does something, which is clear Kufr, he disbelieves as long as nothing prevents that from the preventative factors such as compulsion [Ikhrā] or misinterpretation [Ta‘wīl] or accidental mistakes [Khata‘] like the slipping of the tongue or an ignorance, which is considered.

And from the clear Kufr is abandoning the category of actions [Jins Al-‘Amal] completely, without tying that to the actions of the heart, because the absolute abandonment of the category of actions [Jins Al-‘Amal] on its own is Kufr Akbar, yet we use the absence of that which is nessecitated as evidence for the inside, without making this a condition for the judgment [Hukm] and this is clear from the Book and the Sunnah as the judgment is upon the actions of the body and not upon what lays in the hearts because this is for the Knower of the Unseen [i.e. Allāh].

And Al-Hāfith Ibn Rajab, may Allāh be merciful to him, mentioned in “Fat’h Al- Bārī” 1/23 from Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyaynah that he said, “The Murji‘ah called abandoning the obligatory deeds [Al-Farā‘idh] a sin at the level of performing the impermissible [deeds], but they are not equal, because committing the impermissible [deeds] intentionally while not making them permissible [Istih‘lāl] is a disobedience, while
abandoning the obligatory deeds [Al-Farā‘īdh] while not being ignorant (of the duty to perform them) and without an excuse, is Kufr.”

And the clarification of that is in the issue of Ādam and Iblīs and the scholars of the Jews who accepted the Prophet’s being sent, upon their tongues, yet they did not act upon his legislations.

And Harb narrated from Is‘hāq that he said, “The Murji‘ah continued to go to extremes, until from their statements was that a people said, ‘Whoever leaves the prescribed prayers and the fasting of Ramadhān and the Zakāt and the Hajj and all of the obligatory deeds [Al-Farā‘īdh], without rejecting them [Juhūd], we do not make Takfīr to him. His reckoning is left to Allāh after he has become from those who accept them [i.e. the obligatory deeds].’ So those are the ones about whom there is no doubt; meaning the Murji‘ah.”

And Al-Khallāl narrated in “As-Sunnah” 3/586 [from ‘Ubayd-Allāh Ibn Hanbal, who said, “Abī Hanbal Ibn Is‘hāq Ibn Hanbal narrated to me, he said, ‘Al- Humaydī said, ‘I was informed that there are people who say, ‘Whoever accepts the Salāt and the Zakāt and the fasting and the Hajj but does not do any of them until he dies, or prays leaning on his back facing the opposite direction of the direction of prayer [Qiblah] until he dies, then he is a believer [Mu‘min] as long as he does not reject [their obligations]. If he knows that his abandoning of those things with his belief, if he accepts the obligations and the facing towards the Qiblah.’ So I said, ‘This is clear Kufr in Allāh and contrary to the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger [salallahu ‘alayhi wasallam] the actions of the Muslims.’"

Allāh, the Powerful, the Mighty, said: “Hunaf‘, and perform As-Salāt and give Az-Zakāt: and that is the right religion.”

And Hanbal said, “I heard Abū ‘Abdillāh, or I heard him saying, ‘Whoever says this, then he has disbelieved in Allāh and rejected His Commands and upon the Messenger [salallahu ‘alayhi wasallam] which he came with.”

And Al-Imām Ibn Battah, may Allāh be merciful to him, said, “So anyone who abandons anything from the obligatory deeds [Al-Farā‘īdh], which Allāh, the Powerful, the Mighty, prescribed in His Book or that His Messenger [salallahu ‘alayhi wasallam] in his Sunnah, due to willful denial [Juhūd] of it or inward disbelief [Tak’thīb] in it, then he is a disbeliever (Kāfir) with clear Kufr. No intelligent person, who believes in Allāh and the Last Day, would doubt that. And whoever accepts it and declares this upon his tongue but abandons it (totally), due to negligence or playing or due to believing the opinion of the Murji‘ah and following their school of thought [Math’hab], then he is an abandoner of the faith [Īmān]. None of it exists; neither a small nor a large quantity in his heart. And he is in the group of hypocrites [Munaqiṣīn] who committed hypocrisy [Nīfāq] with the Messenger of Allāh [salallahu alayhi wasallam] So Qur‘ān was revealed with their descriptions and what was in store for them and that they are in the lowest depths of the Hellfire. We seek refuge with Allāh from the misguided schools of thought of the Murji‘ah.” [Al-Ibnān Vol. 2/764]

And the leaders [Imāms] among the predecessors [Salaf] have warned concerning
them and made clear the error of their statements and the danger of their innovation [Bid’ah].

Imām Az-Zuh’rī, may Allāh be merciful to him, said, “No innovation [Bid’ah] was innovated in Islām that was more harmful to its people than this; meaning Al-Irjā’.” [Al Ibanah Vol. 2/885]

And Al-Awzā’ī said, “Yahya and Qatādah used to say, ‘There is nothing from the desires, which was more feared by them upon the nation [Ummah] than Al-Irjā’.” [Al-Ibanah Vol. 2/885-886]

And Shurayk said, “They are the worst of people. The extreme Shi’ites [Rawāfiḍh] are sufficient in evil, but the Murjī’ah lie against Allāh, the Powerful, the Mighty.” [As-Sunnah Vol.1/312]

By Sheikh Sulaymaan bin Naasir al-'Alwaan

Extract taken from the book, Verily, the victory of Allah is near