



Module 11

Miscellaneous Matters

MAIN POINTS

- It is individually obligatory upon every Muslim to secure their faith and safeguard it.
- Thus it is important to know the beliefs, statements, and actions that cause one to leave the fold of Islam.
- Kufr is any saying, deed or belief that denies, disrespects, or makes fun of God, the Prophets, the Angels, the Quran or the Islamic religion.

MAIN POINTS

- In theology (beliefs about Allah)
- In prophetology (beliefs about the Prophets)
- Disrespect, disdain
- Denial of what is known from the religion by necessity
- Misc...

MISC...

IMPORTANT RULES REGARDING KUFR

- To help someone commit kufr is kufr.
- To be happy with someone's kufr is kufr.
- To say or do an act that entails kufr is only kufr when the person is sane (*'aqil*). This does not apply to someone who is insane or a young child who does not discern.
- As for someone who is drunk or high and utters kufr or does an act entailing kufr, they are **not** guilty of kufr according to the Hanafi school because the ruling of ridda only applies to one who does or says something **with belief and intention** (i.e., intending to say or do the action—not intending kufr). According to the Shafi'i school (in one position), and the soundest view in the Hanbali school, a drunk person can still be guilty of kufr.

IMPORTANT RULES REGARDING KUFR

- To say or do an act that entails kufr is only kufr when one does so out of free choice, willingly, intending to utter kufr or do what entails kufr. Therefore, one is not guilty of kufr if they are **compelled** as long as their heart is firm on faith.
- Ignorance is not an excuse for kufr pertaining to the attributes of Allah or the Prophets; however, if someone is a new Muslim and lives far from Islamic scholars, they are not guilty of kufr if they think that something haram is halal or vice versa.

LEGAL EFFECTS OF APOSTASY

If a Muslim committed apostasy, then:

- His fasting would be broken if he was fasting
- The meat of his slaughter is forbidden to eat
- He/she is unlawful for their Muslim spouse
- None of his acts of worship are valid.
- All his previous good deeds have been lost, even if he returns to Islam later.
- He must return to Islam immediately.

HOW TO RETURN TO ISLAM AFTER APOSTASY

If someone commits kufr, he is required to immediately say **‘I firmly believe that no one and nothing deserves to be worshipped except God, and Muhammad is His Prophet and Messenger,’** with the intent in his heart to become Muslim and to leave anything that contradicts that belief, loud enough to hear himself, with the intent in his heart to become Muslim, leave that kufr and never repeat it again. This is how one returns to Islam. One is required to feel sorry for having committed kufr.

CONDITIONS

1] The belief, statement, or action is considered kufr according to the Quran, the Sunna, and Ijma'. (If there is no evidence showing that the belief, statement, or action is kufr, takfir is prohibited. There is no takfir over matters that are differed over.)

2] There must be certainty that the person fell into kufr. The principle states: 'Whoever has entered Islam with certainty is not taken out of Islam except with certainty.'

3] The proof must be established against that person. Allah says, '*And We do not punish until We have sent a Messenger.*'

IMPEDIMENTS

1] **Compulsion.** (If a person is forced to utter something that is kufr at the threat of loss of life or limb, they are excused as long as faith remains in their heart.) Allah says, ‘*Whoever disbelieved in Allah after his belief, except him who is forced and whose heart is at rest with faith, but such as open their breasts to disbelief, on them is wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a great torment.*’)

IMPEDIMENTS

2] Lack of intention. This doesn't mean they must say 'I intend to disbelieve'; rather, it means they said or did something that is kufr and intended it. This excludes those who said something that is kufr due to a slip of the tongue or transposing words, etc.

IMPEDIMENTS

The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said, ‘Allah is more pleased with the repentance of His slave than a person who has his camel in a water-less desert carrying his provision of food and drink and it is lost. He, having lost all hopes (to get that back), lies down in shade and is disappointed about his camel; when all of a sudden he finds that camel standing before him. He takes hold of its reins and then out of boundless joy blurts out: **‘O Allah, You are my slave and I am Your Rabb’**. He commits this mistake out of extreme joy.”

IMPEDIMENTS

3] Faulty interpretation that negates intent. (This doesn't apply to explicit statements or actions of kufr, but only those that carry the possibility of a faulty interpretation, such as what happened with 'Uthman b. Maz'un who misunderstood the verses prohibiting alcohol and thought that alcohol was halal for certain types of people. He did not deny the prohibition but had a faulty interpretation of it.

‘IBADA/WORSHIP

- Only Allah deserves to be worshipped.
- Worshipping other than Allah, shirk, is the greatest sin and it not forgiven if someone dies upon it.
- To safeguard our iman we must know what ‘ibada is and what shirk is.
- We must also know what they are so we don’t accuse others of shirk out of ignorance and due to an incorrect understanding of ‘ibada.

‘IBADA/WORSHIP

The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said, “Verily, I fear about a man from among you who will read the Quran so much that his face will become enlightened and he will come to personify Islam, and this will continue until Allah desires [otherwise]. Then these things will be taken away from him; he will disregard them by putting [righteousness] behind his back and he will attack his neighbor with the sword accusing him of shirk.” The Prophet was asked, “Which of the two will be deserving of such an accusation, the attacker or the attacked?” He replied, “The attacker.” (Ibn Hibban)

‘IBADA/WORSHIP

‘Ibada has been defined in various ways.

1. “Every act by which one obeys Allah and draws near to Him.”
2. “Everything Allah loves and is pleased with from statements and actions, inwardly and outwardly.”
3. “The epitome of humility and submission.”

These are all true, but what is the definition of ‘ibada that enables us to distinguish between ‘ibada and what resembles ‘ibada?

ISSUES WITH DEFINITIONS

A] There are many actions that Allah loves and is pleased with—such as feeding hungry people, removing trash from the road, etc., but if they are done for *other than Allah* they are not shirk or worship of others besides Allah. If you feed your neighbor (Allah loves us feeding others) and your intention is not to draw near to Allah, but to draw near to your neighbor (for them to like you), you have not worshipped your neighbor.

ISSUES WITH DEFINITIONS

B] If an idol-worshipper makes sajda to an idol we can all say that he is worshipping that idol, but if the idol worshipper feeds someone to make his neighbor happy, we don't say he worshipped other than Allah. There is a clear difference between the two acts.

ISSUES WITH DEFINITIONS

C] There are certain actions that the Shariah informs us that Allah loves and is pleased with, yet they can also be done for other than Allah and will not become shirk. One example is sajda. Allah loves and is pleased with sajda, and we draw near to Allah with the act of sajda, but the angels prostrated to Adam and were not considered Mushriks. (Same for the family of Yusuf)

The definitions are sound as general definitions of ‘worship of Allah,’ but do not provide us a specific definition that helps us understand the difference between ‘ibada and what resembles ‘ibada.

ISSUES WITH DEFINITIONS

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THE EXAMPLE OF LOVE

Is love an act of worship? It can be. The definition for ‘ibada needs to give us the ability to explain the difference between love that is ‘ibada and love that is shirk.

1] Allah is pleased with our love for Him, so how do we distinguish between love that is worship and love which is not worship?

2] Love can often take the form extreme submissiveness and humility, so why isn't that kind of love considered worship. (Imagine a man is in love with a woman so deeply that when she rejects him he goes crazy. Is shirk in love? Has he worshipped her?

THE COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION

التذلل الكامل المبني على إعتقاد الربوبية

“Complete submission [to one] based on belief that [the object of worship] has qualities of Lordship.”

THE COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION

In the Arabic language the word ‘ibada has the meaning of التذلل.

All of the meanings in the classical Arabic lexicons revolve around terms like خضوع and التذلل.

However, the terms التذلل and خضوع cannot be the “technical definition” (ta’rif) for worship. That is because Allah commands us to have التذلل and خضوع toward some of those who have rights over us, like the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) and our parents—so if التذلل and خضوع constituted worship on their own, it would mean that Allah is ordering us to commit shirk. That is not possible, as Allah says: *إن الله لا يأمر بالفحشاء* ‘Allah does not enjoin what is immoral.’

THE COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION

This definition includes two things:

A] التذلل الكامل (complete submission)

B] المبني على إعتقاد الربوبية (based on belief in of Lordship)

The linguistic meaning of worship is not enough, because:

- A child may kiss his father's feet—this is التذلل but not worship.
- The brothers of Yusuf made sajda to him—this is التذلل but not worship.
- The angels prostrated to Adam—this is التذلل but not worship.

This means we need a condition that keeps these things out of the definition. It is:
المبني على إعتقاد الربوبية.

APPLICATIONS—SAJDA

- 1] Sajda is ‘ibada when it is accompanied by the belief in the *rububiyya* (Lordship) of the one to whom a person prostrates—when a Muslim makes sajda to Allah in prayer, it is with this belief and state, and it is therefore ‘ibada.
- 2] When the brothers of Yusuf made sajda, it was a greeting and they did not have the belief of *rububiyya* toward their brother.
- 3] When the Angels made sajda to Adam, it was a show of respect and they did not have the belief of *rububiyya* toward Adam.

APPLICATIONS—LOVE

1] Love that is accompanied with submission and belief in the *rububiyya* of the one loved is ‘ibada. When one loves Allah it is with this belief and state, and is therefore worship. If someone loved someone else—a person or an object—with the belief in their *rububiyya*, it would be shirk.

2] When a man loves his wife intensely, no matter how deeply he loves her he does not believe in her *rububiyya*, so his love is not an act of worship.

CONCLUSION

- The intention of worship must be present (*niyya al-ta'abbud*)
- If we go back to the example of sajda, we see that it may be done as an act of 'ibada, or it may not be done as an act of 'ibada (such as the sajda of the brothers of Yusuf). This means that if these actions are done toward other than Allah **they are not automatically** acts of shirk.
- Sajda as an action looks the same in both cases. What makes one worship and the other not? Intention.
- The Angels did not intend worship when they prostrated to Adam. The brothers of Yusuf did not intend worship when they prostrated to Yusuf.
- Therefore, if an action might—on its appearance—be 'ibada or not 'ibada, the intention of the person must be known before we can give a judgment on the act they are doing.
- If we do not consider the intention of the person doing the act, then every sajda to other than Allah is shirk akbar, including the sajda of the brothers of Yusuf. That is obviously false.