



Shaykh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah: Explaining Imaan and the Errors of the Murji'ah – Part 3

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All praise is due to Allaah and prayers and peace be upon His Messenger, to proceed: This is a compilation of some excellent excerpts from Kitaab ul-Imaan of Shaykh ul-Islaam, which explain in detail, the errors of the Murji'ah in their understanding of Imaan, as well as giving a thorough understanding of the reality of Imaan itself, and that which opposes it, which is Kufr.

THE COMMON ERRORS OF THE JAHMIYYAH, ASH'ARIYYAH AND THE MURJI'AT UL-FUQUHAA IN IMAAN AND KUFR

Shaykh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah said:

“And on account of this, and other than it, the corruption of the view of the saying of Jahm Ibn Safwaan, as-Saalihee and others who followed them both, in the issues of Imaan, such as al-Ash'aree, in the most famous of his two sayings, the majority of his companions, and also a group from the companions of Abu Haneefah from the latecomers, such as al-Maatureedee and those like him – so [the corruption of their view] becomes apparent in that they made the mere tasdeeq in the heart something that all the servants are equivalent in, and that either it is non-existent, or it exists, and it cannot be divided into parts, and that it is possible for complete Imaan in the heart (al-Imaan taamman fil-qalb) alongside the existence of statements of kufr, reviling Allaah and His Messenger, wilfully, without being compelled. And that whatever was known from the outward statements that the one who utters them is a kaafir, then that is because it necessitates the absence of that tasdeeq which is in the heart, in the actions...[this part here has no words in the original manuscript]...¹ and that the outward righteous actions are not binding from the inward Imaan that is in the heart, rather the Imaan of the heart can be found complete (taamm). And this saying contains error from numerous angles...” (Kitaab ul-Imaan 7/581).

And Shaykh ul-Islaam also said, in explaining the view of Abul-Hasan al-Ash'aree:

“Abul-Hasan said, “Then as-Sam' (i.e. the revelation, what is heard) has mentioned the addition of other conditions to it (i.e. to Imaan), and that is that there should not be anything that accompanies it which gives evidence (yadullu) to the kufr of the one who brings it, either in action or abandonment (of action) (fi'lan wa tarkan). For the

¹ This note was put here by the verifier of the Fataawaa. It appears that there is not text after the words, “in the actions” and hence the full meaning of the sentence is not clear.

Legislation has ordered him to abandon worship and prostration to the idol, and if he did that it would indicate his kufr, and likewise, the one who killed a Prophet or who belittled him, it would indicate his kufr, and likewise the one who abandoned venerating the mus.haf (the qur'aan), or the ka'bah it would indicate his kufr." He said: And the keenest (i.e. sharpest) of that which we have sought as indicative of his kufr is what the Legislation has prohibited that it is combined with Imaan, or which it has made obligatory that it be combined with Imaan, and which if it was found, it would indicate to us that the tasdeeq (assent) which is actually Imaan is actually absent from his heart, and similarly, everything by which the opposer makes takfir by way of ta'weel, then we actually make takfir of a person on account of it, because it indicates (gives evidence to) that he has lost that which is Imaan in his heart (i.e. tasdeeq) – and this is due to the impossibility of the legislation judging with the kufr of someone who has Imaan and tasdeeq with his heart." (Kitaab ul-Imaan 7/148).

And Shaykh ul-Islaam also said, "So those who speak with the view of Jahm and as-Saalihee have made it clear that reviling Allaah and His Messenger and saying that Allaah is one of three (i.e. the Trinity) and every other statement of disbelief is not internal disbelief, but it is in reality an outward indication of disbelief and despite this it is possible for this one who reviled to be one who acknowledges Allaah, unifying (his belief and worship) for Him and a believer in Him internally. So when the proof is established against them, either by way of textual evidence or a consensus on this issue, they reply, "This means that such acts necessitate internal rejection, takdheeb." (Kitaab ul-Imaan 7/557).

And Shaykh ul-Islaam also said, "And Abu Abdullaah as-Saalihee said, "Imaan is merely the tasdeeq of the heart and its ma'rifah (knowledge), however it has inseparable characteristics (lawaazim). Hence, when they go, this gives evidence to the absence of the tasdeeq of the heart. And every outward speech or action that the Legislation has indicated that it is kufr, then it is so because it gives evidence (daleel) to the absence of the tasdeeq of the heart and its ma'rifah, and kufr is nothing but this one characteristic (i.e. absence of tasdeeq and ma'rifah), and Imaan is nothing but the mere tasdeeq that is in the heart, and its ma'rifah. And this is the most famous of the two sayings of as-Saalihee." (Kitaab ul-Imaan 7/508).

Shaykh ul-Islaam also said, "Likewise, if it was said, that a man witnesses that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, internally and externally, and then it was requested from him (to express it outwardly), and without their being any fear or cause for aversion on account of which he withholds from it, and then he withholds from it, until he is killed, then it is impossible for this person to be internally witnessing that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah. And for this reason, the outward speech is from the Imaan without which a person cannot be saved, in the view of the generality of the Salaf and the Khalaf from the earlier and later [ones], except the Jahmiyyah, Jahm and whoever agreed with him..." (Kitaab ul-Imaan 7/219).

Shaykh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah said, quoting al-Ash'aree in his "Maqaalaat", "The First Firqah: They claim that Imaan in Allaah is ma'rifah (knowledge) of Allaah and of His Messenger of of everything that has come from Allaah, only. And that whatever is besides ma'rifah, such as affirmation with the tongue, the submission (khudoo') of the heart, love of Allaah and His Messenger, veneration (ta'dheem) of them both, and fear (khawf) and acting with the limbs, then that is not Imaan. And they claimed that kufr in Allaah, is to be ignorant of Him and this saying is quoted from Jahm Ibn Safwaan. He [i.e. al-Ash'ari] said: And the Jahmiyyah claimed that when a person brings ma'rifah, and then makes rejection with his tongue (jahada bi lisaanihi), that he does not become a disbeliever by this jahd (outward rejection), and that Imaan does not divide into parts, and nor do its adherents excel each other with respect to it, and that Imaan and Kufr do not exist except in the heart [i.e. in the presence and absence of its speech], not in the limbs." (Kitaab ul-Imaan 7/542). And Shaykh ul-Islaam after quoting the passage from al-Ash'aree said, "So this is his saying in this book (al-Maqalaat) in which he has agreed with Ahl us-Sunnah and As.haab ul-Hadeeth, in opposition to the saying that he supported in "al-Moojiz". (Kitaab ul-Imaan 7/549).

Notes

1. A common underlying error of the Jahmiyyah, Jahm and others who followed in his way, such as al-Ash'aree and those with him, and some from the companions of Abu Haneefah was that the people are equivalent with respect to the tasdeeq, and that it is only a single entity, and cannot be divided into parts (i.e. it is one singular whole).
2. A second common underlying error with them was that it was possible for complete Imaan to exist in the heart (i.e. the tasdeeq in the heart which they considered to be one indivisible singular whole) and at the same time the tongue can utter that which is kufr and the limbs can perform that which is kufr, and that if the legislation had judged that such statements or actions were kufr, then it was because these statements and actions indicated the absence of tasdeeq in the heart.
3. A third common underlying error with them was that the outward righteous actions are not necessarily binding and fundamentally tied to the inward Imaan (which they only considered to be tasdeeq), and hence, the Imaan in the heart (the tasdeeq) can be complete, independently of any outward statements and actions of righteousness.
4. And Abul-Hasan al-Asha'ree stated that – building upon one of the errors mentioned previously – that what indicates the kufr of a person who falls into that which is kufr (such as prostrating to an idol, or belittling the mus.haf) is that the Legislation (i.e. the Sharee'ah) would not judge anyone a disbeliever who has tasdeeq in his heart (which is an incorrect assertion), and that such people are disbelievers (by such actions and statements) because these statements and actions cannot possibly arise from a person who has tasdeeq, hence these actions are indicative of the absence of tasdeeq in the heart, and thus it is kufr. In other words, kufr is takdheeb (the opposite of tasdeeq), and all outward statements and actions that are kufr, are so, because they necessitate the presence of this takdheeb in the heart.
5. And some amongst them, such as Abdullaah as-Saalihee stated that “kufr is nothing but this one characteristic”, meaning the absence of tasdeeq and ilm in the heart, in other words, kufr can only be in the form of takdheeb.
6. Jahm and the Jahmiyyah and those who agreed with them held that a person who has tasdeeq in the heart, but does not express it outwardly, then even if he is treated outwardly as a disbeliever in the life of this world, he will actually be saved (in the Hereafter) by way of this tasdeeq. And this is a gross error. Rather, the outward speech is from the Imaan without which a person cannot possibly be saved in the Hereafter, and this the view of the generality of the Salaf.
7. Abul-Hasan al-Ash'aree, in his later book “al-Maqaalaat” refuted the saying of Jahm (which he used to be upon before), and agreed with the generality of Ahl us-Sunnah and As.haabil-Hadeeth.