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Judging the People of the Book who do not believe in the mission of Muhammad (peace be upon him) to be disbelievers

Third question from Fatwa No. (9438):

Q 3: The Glorious Qur'an explicitly declares the People of the Book to be disbelievers except for those among them who believe in the mission of Muhammad (peace be upon him) (i.e. the Qur'an). Jews claimed that 'Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allah whereas Christians claimed that Jesus Christ is the son of Allah, on account of which The Quran has explicitly spoken of their disbelief: (Surely, disbelievers are those who said: "Allâh is the third of the three (in a Trinity).") ... the verse.

Although the facts mentioned above are decisively established, some scholars claim that the People of the Book are not disbelievers and are to be called the "People of the Book" and nothing more. Please, inform us about the truth of such issues.

A: Those who hold such a view are disbelievers, for they deny the explicit texts in the Qur'an and Sunnah judging the People of the Book to be disbelievers. Allah (may He be Exalted) says: (O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! "Why do you disbelieve in the Ayât of Allâh, [the Verses about Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him present in the Taurât (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)] while you (yourselves) bear witness (to their truth).")... verses, (Surah Al-'Imran).He also said: (Surely, in disbelief are they who say that Allâh is the Messiah, son of Maryam (Mary).)... verses, (Surah Al-Ma'idah).Allah, moreover, said: (Surely, disbelievers are those who said: "Allâh is the third of the three (in a Trinity).")

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... verses, (Surah Al-Ma'idah).Furthermore, Allah said: (And the Jews say: "Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allâh", and the Christians say: "Messiah is the son of Allâh". That is their saying with their mouths, resembling the saying of those who disbelieved aforetime. Allâh's Curse be on them, how they are deluded away from the truth!)... verses, (Surah Al-Tawbah).Besides, Allah (may He be Exalted) says: (Those who disbelieve from among the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and Al-Mushrikûn, were not going to leave (their disbelief) until there came to them the clear evidence.)... verses, (Surah Al-Bayyinah).In addition, Allah said: (Fight against those who believe not in Allâh, nor in the Last Day, nor forbid that which has been forbidden by Allâh and His Messenger (Muhammad peace be upon him), and those who acknowledge not the religion of truth (i.e. Islâm) among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), until they pay the Jizyah with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.)There are also many other occurrences in the Qur'an to the same effect.

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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