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Takfir

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Ruling on Takfir of a Muslim for committing a sin

The First Question from Fatwa no. 5003

Q1: What is the ruling on Takfir (declaring someone to be a disbeliever) in relation to Muslims? In Egypt, there is a group that is declaring Muslims to be Kafirs (disbelievers) for committing sins other than Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah). Can committing minor or major sins render someone a Kafir despite their declaration of the Shahadah (Testimony of Faith)?

A: Major sins differ with respect to the gravity of the offence; some of them are Shirk and others are not. Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim community) do not declare Muslims to be Kafirs if they commit sins other than Shirk, such as killing, drinking alcohol, Zina (illegal sexual intercourse outside marriage), theft, consuming orphans' property, slandering chaste Muslim women, and consuming Riba (usury), and other major sins. In these cases, the ruler should carry out the penalty prescribed for the sin they have committed, such as Qisas (just retaliation), Had (prescribed punishment), or Ta`zir (discretionary punishment). The person should perform Tawbah (repentance to Allah) and seek forgiveness. However, if the major sin is such as seeking the help of other than

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Allah, for example, making Du`a' (supplications) to the dead to relieve distresses, or making vows to and slaughtering for the dead, these and similar acts are all major sins and are major acts of Kufr (disbelief). It is obligatory that this should be explained to those who commit them and they should be given the evidences. If they perform Tawbah after the explanation, this will be accepted; otherwise the ruler should execute them for Riddah (apostasy).

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

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