

Refuting Extremism

Study Notes (no1)
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Note: The revision notes below should not be solely relied upon. They are to be utilised along with their corresponding explanations delivered during the lessons.

CHAPTER ONE

Linguistically, 'extremism' is taken from the word *Ghulu* which means to go beyond the limit and measure. Ibn Faaris stated: "the letters *Ghain, Laam*, and the weak letter *wow* form a sound root that indicates 'rising above and going beyond the appropriate measure.' [Mujam Maqaayes al Lughah, section ghulu]

Technically according to the Qur'aan and Sunnah it means to go beyond the prescribed limits, in excess of the boundaries laid down by Allaah. Allaah makes this clear from His warning:

"Oh people of the book! Commit no excess in your religion nor say anything of Allaah but the truth..." [An-Nisaa' (4):171]

Islam has a balanced approach in all its commandments. It is a manifest characteristic within this religion. Allaah, the Most High says:

"Thus we have made you a nation justly balanced, that you maybe a witness over the people and the messenger a witness over yourselves."
[Al-Baqarah (2):143]

Also He (subhaanahu wa ta'aala) said:

"Guide us to the straight path, the path of those whom you have favored and not of those whom deserve you anger or those who have gone astray." [Al-Faatihah (1): 6-7]

Here Allaah makes clear that Islam is a middle way, a balanced path between the two extremes of the Jews and the Christians. The Jews tried to kill their Prophet 'Eesa (alayhis-salaam) and the Christians raised him to the level of God and worshipped him.

Allaah (subhaanahu wa ta'aala) said:

"You are the best nation raised for mankind.." [Aali-'Imraan (3):110]

Because we are balanced, moderate, we are just, we take the middle path. At-Tabaree (rahimahullaah) said:

"My opinion is that Allaah described them as being *wasat* (middle, balanced) due to their moderation and being balanced in religion. They are not from those who go to the extreme of the Christians who practice monasticism and in what they said about the person of Jesus. Nor are they from those who are lax in the practice of their religion, such as the Jews who altered the book of Allaah, killed their prophets and lied in speaking about their Lord. Instead they (the nation of Muhammad) are the people of balance and moderation in the religion. Allaah

described them in that manner because the most beloved of matters to Allaah are those that are balanced and just." [At-Tabaree Jaami al Bayaan vol 2, p6]

Ease In Islam

The religion of Islam is built upon ease - ease is a foundation this religion is constructed upon. One of the reasons Allaah sent his messenger Mohammad (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) was to relieve the people from the chains which had captured the previous nations. Allaah states:

"Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet who they found mentioned in their tawraat (Torah) and Injeel (Gospel) ... he releases them from their heavy burdens and from the fetters (bindings) that are upon them..." [Al-Araaf (7):157]

And Allaah (subhaanahu wa ta'aala) states:

"..and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship..." [Al-Hajj (22):78]

Allaah (subhaanahu wa ta'aala) also states:

"Allaah wishes for you ease and does not wish for you hardship."
[Al- Baqarah (2):185]

Allaah (subhaanahu wa ta'aala) also mentions:

"Allaah does not want to place you in difficulty, but He wants to purify you.." [Al-Maa'idah (5):6]

So the religion is made easy and Allaah wishes for us every ease and no hardship. Abu Bakar al Jasaas said: "since hardship is also restriction and tightness and He has denied about Himself that He desires hardship for us. It then permissible to use the apparent meaning of this verse as evidence to deny hardship and to establish the flexibility in every matter concerning which people differ related to the laws that come from the texts. Therefore if anyone argues in favor of aspects that are hardship and difficulties, the clear meaning of this verse will defeat them." [Ahkaam al Qur'aan vol 2 p39]

Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa salaam) said:

"Verily the religion is easy. No one overburdens himself in the religion except that it overcomes him (and he will not be able to continue)."
[Al-Bukhaaree and An-Nisaa'ee]

Different Forms Of Extremism

Extremism comes in a number of different forms. From them we find extremism related to beliefs and actions. We are discussing here extremism as it relates to contemporary Muslims, their deviation and call to deviation which leads to going beyond the boundaries set by Allaah. Such deviations then have an immediate or long term consequences on themselves and fellow Muslims and the *ummah* as a whole.

We will first research the extremism in the issue of *takfeer* (declaring a Muslim as a disbeliever or excommunication). It is a major contemporary problem amongst Muslims and has immediate and long term effects on them. It not only affects just those who go to extremes in this field but it affects the general people and even the non-Muslims.

VERSES FROM THE QUR'AAN:

So the mother of all these verses concerning "Takfeer" is the verses of Surah Al-Maa'idah where Allaah (subhaanahu wa ta'aala) informs us:

"..And whoever does not judge by what Allaah has revealed such are the disbelievers (kaafiroon)." [Al-Maa'idah (5):44]

"..And whoever does not judge by what Allaah has revealed such are the Oppressors (dhaalimoon)." [Al-Maa'idah (5):45]

"..And whosoever does not judge by what Allaah has revealed such are the disobedient (faasiqoon)." [Al-Maa'idah (5):47]

**"Do they seek the judgement of the days of ignorance and who is better in judgement than Allaah for a people who have faith."
[Al-Maa'idah (5):50]**

Allaah (subhaanahu wa ta'aala) said instructing His prophet:

"And so judge between them by what Allaah has revealed and follow not their vain desires....." [Al-Maa'idah (5):48]

And Allaah (subhaanahu wa ta'aala) said also to His messenger:

"Surly we have sent down to you the book in truth that you may judge between men with that which Allaah has shown you..." [An-Nisaa' (4):105]

Also Allaah (subhaanahu wa ta'aala) has ordained that:

"Indeed the ruling is for none, except Allaah.."

He, the Most High repeats this statement in similar words, in different places:

"..The judgement is for none but Allaah..." [Yusuf (12):40 & 67]

Also His (subhaanahu wa ta'aala) saying;

**"It is not befitting for a believing man or women that if Allaah and His messenger have judged in a matter that they have a choice in it.."
[Al-Ahzaab (33):36]**

" But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission. " [An-Nisaa' (4):65]

".. and with them He sent the Scripture in truth to judge between people in matters wherein they differed.." [Al-Baqarah (2):213]

PROPHETIC AHADEETH

His saying (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam):

"If a man says to his brother O *kaafir* then one of them is a *kaafir*."
[Agreed Upon]

And his saying (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam):

"You did indeed judge amongst them with the judgement of Allaah
the greatest the sublime." [Agreed Upon]

From Adiy ibn Haatim (a former Christian) who said: I came to the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) with a gold cross around my neck and he (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "O Adiy, throw this idol away from yourself." And I heard him reading from Sura Al-Baraa'a (At-Tauba): "**They took their scholars and their monks as lords other than Allaah...**" He (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "They did not actually worship them. Rather it was their practice that if they declared something lawful they took it as lawful and if they declared something unlawful they forbid it." [Hasan – At-Tirmidhee]

Also his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

"If a man was called a *kaafir* or enemy of Allaah, and he was not any of them then it is not except that the curse is returned upon the one who said it."
[Agreed upon]

And his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

"There is no obedience to the creation if it means disobedience to the creator."
[Saheeh – Musnad Ahmad]

Also his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

"The difference between us and between them is *salaat*, so whoever abandons has disbelieved (*kafara*)."
[Ahmad]

Also his (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

"Whoever swears by other than Allaah has indeed disbelieved or associated partners."
[Saheeh At-Tirmidhi]

So the question that remains to be answered after reading all these verses and *ahadeeth* is does this mean that any Muslim that does not judge by what Allaah reveals is an unbeliever, *kaafir*, outside the fold of Islam? And how do we understand all these *Qur'aanic* verses and Prophetic *ahadeeth*?

The answer to this will follow in chapter two, in shaa' Allaah.

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