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The meaning of the word kufr mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and hadith a research review

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Abstract

Quran and Hadith are perfect sources of such perfection can be estimated by their use of words in them which are multifarious / manifold.

Therefore the word kufur is one of such words which has multitudinous possibilities, according to an order, kufur has two kinds.

Major unbelief (Kufur e Akbar those who fall into this category are transgressors and declared out of Islam)

Minor unbelief (Kufur e Asghar the transgressors do not go beyond the Islamic Laws)

But for both kinds the word kufur is used only that is why it becomes complex to comprehend that for which verse word Major unbelief is used and for which verse the word Minor unbelief is used.

This remains the matter of kinds of kufur only. Many of the verses are there in which other words are used for kufur such as the word Zulm (cruelty) is also used for kufur. As well as for Shirk (polytheism / sin of idolatry) the word kufur is also used. In the same way the word kufur is used for disobedience [Fisk] also.

Hence a research is made in this article that in which verse the term kufur is used as a Major unbelief and in which verse the term Minor unbelief is used.

After comprehending the accurate meaning of kufur it will be easy to understand the problem of Takfeer.

Key Words: Major and Minor unbelief, cruelty, Fisk, Problem of Takfeer

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The use of the word kufr is very common in the Holy Qur'an and the hadiths of the Prophet (SAW) but not every word of kufr came for Major unbelief [Kufr Akbar] because the word "Kufr" is sometimes used on Major unbelief [Kufr Akbar] and sometimes on Minor unbelief [Kufr Asghar].

Types of disbelief according to the command:

As for unbelief it is of two kinds, major and minor

Major unbelief:

Major unbelief is one that causes one to enter the fire for eternity.

Minor unbelief:

The minor one causes one of become the target of the warning (of the fire) without eternity¹-

Allama Ibn Taymiyyah says:

In the Qur'anic verses mentioned above the word 'unbelief" implies both hypocrisy, wherein a hypocrisy [inwardly] rejects the belief and [outwardly] pretends to behave as a Muslim; and unbelief, wherein an unbelief rejects belief openly and explicitly. Allah mentions in His book that in the Hereafter, hypocrisy will be consigned to the lowest level of Hellfire. In some verses of the Holy Qur'an the word "unbelief" is associated with the word "hypocrisy". For example, in the first section of surah al Baqarah the Chapter of the cow, Allah describes the traits of believers in four verses of the unbelievers in two verses, and of hypocrites in ten verses....For Allah will collect the hypocrites and the unbelievers all in Hell.²

The word kufr is applied to major unbelief in the light of Qur'an:

3
: ﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَأَنْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنْذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ 3

Indeed, those who disbelieve- it is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn them - they will not believe

Abdullah bin Abbas Said:

Who remain firm in their disbelief? ⁴

Ibn e jareer said:

"Now the meaning of kufr (unbelief) in "As for the unbelievers" is repudiation: that is to say the rabbis among the Jews of Medina repudiated the prophet hood of Muhammad and concealed it from the people, keeping in secret."

Indeed, those who deny Allah's signs, kill the prophets unjustly, and kill people who stand up for justice—give them good news of a painful punishment

7
: ﴿ فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ 7

When Jesus sensed disbelief from his people, he asked, "Who will stand up with me for Allah?

Imam al Razi says:

ان المراد انه عرف منهم اصرارهم على الكفر 8

It means when they recognized his insistence on disbelief

How can you disbelieve when Allah's revelations are recited to you and His Messenger is in your midst?

Allama Aalusi says:

 10 قيل المراد بكفرهم فعلهم في الكفر

It has been said that disbelief means their action in disbelief

They have certainly disbelieved who say, "Allah is the Messiah, the son of Mary.

Imam Qurtubi further explains that:

The disbelief of the Christians was proved in the meaning of this word. It was because of this statement of theirs Allah is the Messiah, the son of Mary. From the point of view of religion, because if they had said this from the point of view of narration, they would not have been disbelievers in denying it

The word kufr applied for major unbelief in the view of Hadith:

Anas bin. Malik reported that Allah's Messenger (*) thus told him: When a non-believer does well he is made to taste its reward in this world. And so far as the believer is concerned, Allah stores (the reward) of his virtues for the Hereafter and provides him sustenance in accordance with his obedience to Him

Allama Shabbier Ahmed Usmani said:

And know that the good deeds of a disbeliever, such as honesty, prayer, and serving people, do not bring them closer to God Almighty because of losing faith, which is a condition for their being close, but they are good deeds that will be rewarded in this world-

Anas bin. Malik reported that a person said:

Allah's Messenger, how the non-believers be made to assemble on the Day of Resurrection (by crawling) on their faces? Thereupon he said: Is He Who is powerful to make them walk on their feet not powerful enough to make them (crawl) upon their faces on the Day of Resurrection? Qatada said: of course, it is so. (He adjured): By the might of our Lord.

Allama Badar ud din Aini says:

والحكمة في حشر الكافر على وجهه انه يعاقب على عدم سجوده لله تعالى في الدنيا ،فيسحب على وجهه في القيامة اظهاراً لهوانه
16

And the wisdom of the disbelievers will be on their faces that they will be punished for not prostrating in this world so on the Day of Resurrection they will be dragged on their faces.

Abu Huraira reported that: Allah's Messenger (*) invited a non-Muslim. Allah's Messenger (*) commanded that a goat be milked for him. It was milked and he drank its milk. Then the second one was milked and he drank its milk, and then the other one was milked and he drank its milk, till he drank the milk of seven goats. On the next morning he embraced Islam. And Allah's Messenger (*) commanded that a goat should be milked for him and he drank its milk and then another was milked but he did not finish it, whereupon Allah's Messenger (*) said: A believer drinks in one intestine whereas a non-believer drinks in seven intestines.

Allama Shabbier Ahmed Usmani said

The hadeeth does not refer to the real gut, nor does it refer to food, but to the scarcity of the world and its abundance Ibn Tin narrated: The meaning of the hadeeth is that the believer eats halal and the disbeliever eats haraam and less than halal haraam in terms of existence Or it refers to the abundance of food for the disbeliever and the scarcity of food for the believer.

: The word kufr applied for minor unbelief in the view of Hadith

Just as disbelief is applied to the major disbelief in the Qur'an and Sunnah, so too is disbelief applied to the minor disbelief and it has been applied literally, as if one of the meanings of disbelief is ingratitude, the farmer is also called a kaafir because he also hides the grain in the ground,

similarly, when the word kufr used in the face of thanksgiving, it means disbelief is a blessing, not real disbelief.

The word kufr is applied to other meanings besides the term kufr, the examples of which are as follows:

Disbelief is a blessing:

Allah Almighty says:

1:﴿ فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرُكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ
19

So remember me; I will remember you. And be grateful to me and do not deny me.

Allama Alusi says:

To deny my blessing and disobey my order

And we had certainly given Luqmān wisdom [and said], "Be grateful to Allah." And whoever is grateful is grateful for [the benefit of] himself. And whoever denies [His favor] - then indeed, Allah is Free of need and Praiseworthy.

Imam Razi says:

اى الله غير محتاج الى شكر حتى بكفران الكافر وهو فى نفسه محمود سواء شكره الناس او لم يشكروهـ
22

Allah does not need thanks Even the disbeliever is ungrateful, he is praiseworthy in himself, whether he thanks the people or not.

And whoever is grateful - his gratitude is only for [the benefit of] himself and whoever is ungrateful - then indeed, my Lord is free of need and Generous.

Allama Aalusi says:

The meaning of (ومن كفر) is one who does not give thanks.

Imam al Razi says:

فالمراد منه الكفران ، لا الكفر لان الكفر المذكور في مقابله الشكر ليس الا الكفران
26

This refers to ingratitude, not disbelief, because disbelief means ingratitude over gratitude.

Hadith and minor disbelief:

The word kufr has been applied to minor unbelief [kufr asghar] in many places of Hadith which are as follows.

Narrated lbn Abbas that the Prophet. Said: "I was shown the Hell-fire and that the majority of its dwellers were women who were disbelievers or ungrateful." It was asked, "Do they disbelieve in Allah!" (or are they ungrateful to Allah?) He replied, "They are ungrateful to their husbands and are ungrateful for the favors and the good (charitable deeds) done to them. If you have always been good (benevolent) to one of them for a period of time and then she sees something in you (not of her liking), she will say, 'I have never seen any good from you.

Hafiz Ibn e hajar narrated:

It is called kufr, but it is kufr that does not depart from the religion.

In the Sahi Al Bukhari: Imam Bukhari has also made a chapter to be ungrateful to one's husband. And disbelief is of (different grades) lesser (or greater) degrees.²⁹

Imam Nawwavi has also made a chapter:

Clarifying that faith decreases with shortcoming in obedience, and the word Kufr may be used with regard to matters other than disbelief in Allah, such as ingratitude for blessings and not fulfilling one's duties³⁰-

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet (*) said: Do not turn away from your fathers, for that is unbelief upon you.

Hafiz Ibn e Hajar explain this hadith:

Here, disbelief does not mean real disbelief, the perpetrator of which becomes hell forever.

The Prophet said, "Abusing a Muslim is Fusüq (an evil doing) and killing him is Kufr (disbelief)

Allama Badar ud din Aini says:

The fact of disbelief is that he expelled from Islam But disbelief has been applied to it for the purpose of exaggeration to scare and the consensus of Ahl as-Sunnah is that a believer does not become a kaafir because of murder nor because of any other sin

Abu Hurairah narrated that: the Prophet said: Whoever engages in sexual intercourse with a menstruating woman, or a woman in her anus, consults a soothsayer, then he has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad.

Imam tirmizi explore this hadith:

36
 قال ابو عيسىٰ وانما معنى هذا عند ابل العلم على التغليظ

Abu Essa said: According to the people of knowledge, this is only meant to indicate the severity of it.

Other words applied to the word kufr:

The word polytheism applied to the kufur:

And his fruits were encompassed [by ruin], so he began to turn his hands about [in dismay] over what he had spent on it, while it had collapsed upon its trellises, and said, "Oh, I wish I had not associated with my Lord anyone

Muhammad bin Jareer Tabari says:

When this disbeliever perished and his world disappeared from him and he was left alone because of what he did, he wished that he had not disbelieved in Allah and had not associated anything with Him. Would have. It was narrated from Anas bin Malik that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

There is nothing standing between a person and Shirk (polytheism) except leaving the prayer, so if he leaves it he has committed Shirk.

In this hadith, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) applied disbelief to shirk because in Sahih Muslim, Imam Nawawi has written a chapter like this:

Chapter: Clarifying the usage of the word Kafir for one who abandons Salat. **Imam Nawawi writes on this:**

Polytheism and unbelief are sometimes used in one sense and that is unbelief with Allah and sometimes there is a difference between both.

Oppression is applied to disbelief:

In many verses oppression is applied to disbelief Imam Razi says:

On many occasions, Allah has applied the word oppression to disbeliever and oppression has also been applied to shirk.

Allama Ibn Taymiyyah says:

As for the meaning of term al-Zulm, unrestricted wrong, when used in an absolute sense, it includes unbelief plus all other sins. Allah says: "Gather those who wronged along with their wives and the things they worshiped beside Allah, and lead them to the way to the Fire, but stop them, for they must be asked: what is the matter with you that you do not help each other 43

Allah Almighty says in Quran:

And the Day the wrongdoer will bite on his hands [in regret] he will say, "Oh, I wish I had taken with the Messenger a way.

Abdul Majid darya abadi says:

The oppressor does not mean the oppressor of Urdu, but the oppressor of one's self, that is, the infidel or the denier.⁴⁵

Allama Ibn Taymiyyah further explain this and says:

The absolute wrong implies [but is not limited to] unbelief. For it may refer to unbelief as well as what is less serious than unbelief, such as committing minor sins like wickedness and rebellion. 46

And do not address me concerning those who have wronged; indeed, they are to be drowned And when you have boarded the ship, you and those with you, then say, 'Praise to Allah who has saved us from the wrongdoing people

Abdul Majid darya abadi says:

Those who do wrong to themselves, that is, infidels this usage is common in Quranic idioms. 48

Imam Razi says:

The attribute of this nation is stated that they are wrongdoers because disbelief was due to their wrongdoing-

Just as absolute oppression is applied to major disbelief, so sometimes oppression is also applied to minor disbelief and sin.

Allama Ibn Taymiyyah says in Majmu al Fatawa:

"فالكفر المطلق مو الظلم المطلق"

Absolute disbelief is absolute oppression

However, oppression is sometimes characterized by the oppression of a person with his own life and the oppression of some people against others.

Then we caused to inherit the Book those we have chosen of our servants and among them is he who wrongs himself, and among them is he who is moderate, and among them is he who is foremost in good deeds by permission of Allah. That [inheritance] is what is the great bounty?

Allama Aalusi says:

والذى يعضده معظم الروايات والاثار ان الاصناف الثلثة من اهل الجنة فلا ينبغى ان يلتفت الى تفسير الظالم بالكافر
52

It is strengthened by the traditions and important relics that all the three classes belong to the people of Paradise Therefore, it is not advisable to interpret the interpretation of a tyrant from a disbeliever.

Allama Ibn Kathir savs:

It was also reported from a number of the Salaf that those among this Ummah who wrong themselves are still among those whom Allah has chosen, even though they are imperfect and feel short [by not adhering to the straight path]. Others said that those who wrong themselves are not part of this Ummah and are not among those whom Allah has chosen and who inherited the Book. The correct view is that they are also part of this Ummah.⁵³

Applying the word disobedience [Fisq] to disbelief:

In some verses of the Holy Qur'an, the word "Fisq" [wickedness] has also been used on Major unbelief [Kufr Akbar].

The words of Almighty:

And [mention] when we said to the angels, "Prostrate to Adam," and they prostrated, except for Iblees. He was of the jinn and departed from the command of his Lord. Then will you take him and his descendants as allies other than me while they are enemies to you? Wretched it is for the wrongdoers as an exchange

Ibn al qaiim jauzia says about wickedness:

As for wickedness, it is according to the Book of God of two kinds, [1] alone and unqualified, and [2] accompanied by disobedience.

When alone, it is of two kinds as well,

The wickedness of unbelief that separates from Islam,

Wickedness that does not separate from Islam.

When accompanied [by disobedience], it is a sit appears in the words of God Almighty:

But God made you love faith and beautified it in your hearts, and made hateful to you unbelief, wickedness, and disobedience: Such are the rightly-guided.

When alone, the wickedness of unbelief appears in the words of the Almighty:

He misleads many thereby, and He guides many thereby; and He misleads thereby only the wicked: those who break the covenant of God after ratifying it, and sever that which God ordered to be joined, and make mischief in the earth; such are the losers.

And the words of Almighty:

We have sent down clear signs and only the wicked reject them His saying, furthermore:

And as for those who act wickedly, their retreat is the Fire. Whenever they desire to issue forth from thence, they are brought back thither. Unto them it is said: Taste the torment of the Fire which you used to deny.

All of this is the wickedness of unbelief 55-

As for the wickedness that does not cause excommunication from Islam, it is referred to in the words of the Almighty, "Neither the scribe nor the witness should be harmed; if you do so, it would be wicked of you.

His words also, "O you who believe, if a wicked one comes to you with a news, verify it, lest you harm some folk in ignorance and later lament what you have done.⁵⁶

But as for those who defiantly disobeyed, their refuge is the Fire **Imam Tabari says:**

The words of Almighty [who defiantly disobeyed] means In any case, those who disbelieve in Allah and disobey Him are separated.

The clauses mentioned in the Holy Qur'an with the substance of disbelief:

The word kufr has appeared in the Holy Qur'an in many forms, the details of which are as follows:

The word [کَفَر] is the three root letter word [ثلاثی مجرد] and sometimes it has become contagious with the preposition, if the verb is a three root letter [ثلاثی مجرد] then it means the term kufr. The words of Almighty:

[Allah] said. "And whoever disbelieves - I will grant him enjoyment for a little; then I will force him to the punishment of the Fire,

And if it is contagious [Mutaddi] with the preposition, then it means rebellion, [Allah] said

The words of Almighty:

(ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُ بَعْضُكُمْ بِبَعْض وَبَلْعَنُ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا
60

Then on the Day of Resurrection you will deny one another and curse one another

Allma Aluusi says:

والمراد بكفر بعضهم ببعض التناكر اى ثم يوم القيامة يظهر التناكر والتلاعن بينكم 61 Some disbelieve with others means they will show unfamiliarity with each other, that is, on the Day of Resurrection they will show ignorance and curse.

The word [كُفْرَ] is the source of [كَفْرَ] means disbelief, e.g The words of Almighty are that :

And whoever exchanges faith for disbelief has certainly strayed from the soundness of the way.

[كفر] noun of word [الكافر]

Imam Raghib Isfhani says:

Absolute disbeliever applies to a person who denies the Oneness of Allah or Prophecy or Shari'ah or all three.

means to deny [الكُفُورَ] The word

But most of the people refused [anything] except disbelief means Denied Al Isbahani says about the word[الْكَفُور]

In it, disbelief is found to mean exaggeration in blessings The words of Almighty:

67
 ﴿ إِنَّهُ لَيَئُوسٌ كَفُورٌ ﴾ 67

Indeed, he is despairing and ungrateful The meaning of word [كَفَار]

Means to intensify disbelief and denial the words of Almighty

69 وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلُّ كَفًار أَثِيم ﴾

And Allah does not like every sinning disbeliever

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