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## **The Effect of the View That ‘Diversion of Faith-Act’ on Prayers**

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### The Effect of the View That 'Diversion of Faith-Act' on Prayers

#### Abstract

The most important religious and social consequence of the integrity of faith-act view of the Kharijites and Mutazila is takfir. Although Allah Taala strictly forbids the unjust killing of a Muslim, takfir has many times caused serious conflicts among Muslims. This violent and wrong practice initiated by the Kharijites continues today as ISIS etc. is continued by organizations. The result of this situation is the blood that flows non-stop in the Muslim geography. However, the principle that ahl al-qibla cannot be declared as heretics has led Ahl as-Sunnah to firmly defend that prayers are not a part of faith. It is obvious that it is necessary to accept the idea that prayers are not part of faith. Otherwise, as the verse "*We created the soul and inspired it with wickedness and righteousness*" indicates, one would have to pay the price of making a mistake by being judged and perhaps killed. In addition, the principle of diversion of faith-act is based on solid foundations not only politically but also religiously. Many nass/verses-hadiths support this principle. Especially Hanafis have emphasized this meticulously. For example, Imam Azam Abu Hanifah drew attention to the importance of the issue in the treatises he wrote, especially in the treatises he wrote, and especially in *al-Alim ve al-mutaallim*, and repeatedly emphasized that a believer can never be declared a heretic. However, especially today, surveys on religious life have been conducted by institutions such as DIB and IIIT. In these surveys, percentage data on faith and performance of prayer such as praying and fasting were published. According to surveys, the rate of belief is very high at 98%, while praying is very low compared to belief at 40%. Considering the results of the surveys, we have come to the conclusion that some people who believe in Ahl as-sunnah, knowingly or unknowingly, do not care or are not aware of the value of prayers, like some sects that have been criticized by the Ahl as-sunnah with their attitude towards prayers in the history of Muslim thought. Because when some people are told about their deeds, obedience or disobedience, they say that they are good-hearted and talk about honesty, fairness, etc. they say they have these traits. This article will try to explain what the distinction between faith and deed means, what value the deed carries, and what the Ahl as-sunnah actually mean by this idea, and to put each concept in its place. The meaning given to faith will be revealed by starting from the oldest theological sources and especially by referring to

Hanafi sources. Then, the position of deeds relative to faith and its connection with faith will be examined. As a result, efforts will be made to reveal what the role of prayers is in the religious life of the believer. Such a study is important in showing that religion is not built on independent facts, but that all of them together form religious unity. *"And they were not commanded except to prayer Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth, and to establish prayer and to give zakah. And that is the correct religion"* as the verse clearly states, although faith and deeds are different phenomena, when all of these come together, the true religious life emerges. By taking this verse as a principle, the article tries to determine, in a sort of tentative manner, how deeds should be viewed in terms of theology, and specifically according to the Hanafis.

**Keywords:** Kalam, Hanafi, Diversion of Faith-Act, Pray, Sin.

### 'İman-Amel Ayrımı' Görüşünün İbadetlere Etkisi

#### Öz

Hâricîler ve Mutezilenin iman-amel bütünlüğü görüşünün doğurduğu en önemli dini ve toplumsal sonuç tekfirdir. Allah Teâlâ'nın bir Müslümanın haksız yere öldürülmesini katiyyen yasaklamasına rağmen tekfir pek çok defa Müslümanlar arasında ciddi çatışmalara sebep olmuştur. Hâricîlerin başlattığı bu şedid ve yanlış uygulama günümüzde de DEAŞ vb. örgütler tarafından devam ettirilmektedir. Bu halin neticesi de Müslüman çörafyada durmak bilmeden akan kandır. Fakat ehl-i kible tekfir edilemez düsturu Ehl-i sünneti amelin imandan bir parça olmadığını kesin olarak savunmaya itmiştir. Amelin imanın parçası olmadığı düşüncesini kabul etmenin gerekliliği ortadadır. Aksi takdirde insan olmanın sonuçlarından birini, yani *"nefsi yarattık ve ona fücuru ve takvayı ilham ettik"* ayetinin işaret ettiği üzere hata yapmanın bedelini tard edilerek ve belki öldülerek ödemek zorunda kalınabilirdi. Ayrıca iman-amel ayrımı ilkesi sadece siyasi değil dini açıdan da sağlam temeller üzerine oturmuştur. Pek çok nass bu ilkeyi destekler niteliktedir. Özellikle Hanefî gelenek bunun üzerinde titiz şekilde durmuştur. Mesela İmâm-ı Âzam Ebû Hanîfe yazdığı rislelerde ve hassaten yazdığı rislelerde ve hassaten *el-Âlim ve'l-müteallim'*de meselenin önemine dikkat çekmiş, bir müminin asla tekfir edilemeyeceğini defaatle vurgulamıştır. Bununla beraber özellikle günümüzde, DİB ve IIIT gibi kurumlar tarafından dini hayat konulu anketler yaptırılmıştır. Bu anketlerde iman etme ve

namaz kılma, oruç tutma gibi ibadetlerin ifasına dair yüzdeler veriler yayınlanmıştır. Anketlere göre iman etme oranı %98 gibi çok yüksek bir orandayken ibadetler %40 olarak imana nispetle çok düşük kalmıştır. Anketlerin sonuçları göz önüne alındığında, Ehl-i sünnet itikadına sahip bazı insanların bilerek ya da bilmeyerek müslüman düşünce tarihinde amellere karşı tutumuyla Ehl-i sünnet tarafından da tenkit edilmiş olan bir takım fırkalar gibi amellerin taşıdığı değeri önemsemediği veya farkında olmadığı kanaati bizde hâsıl olmuştur. Çünkü birtakım insanlara amellerden, taatlerden ya da masiyetlerden bahsedildiğinde kendisinin iyi kalpli olduğunu söylediği ve dürüstlük, adillik vb. hasletlere sahip olduğunu söylemektedir. O kişi bu söyledikleriyle adeta saydığı özelliklerin amelden daha değerli olduğunu, iman ettiği takdirde bu özelliklere sahip olarak yaşamını sürdürdüğü takdirde amele ihtiyacını beyan etmek istemektedir. Bu vaziyet zihnimizde iman-amel ayrımının ameli imandan ayırmakla birlikte tamamen dışladığı ve dini hayatta bir yeri olsa da en azından cennete girmek için çok da gerekli olmadığı fikrinin toplumda yaygın bir hal aldığı düşüncesini uyandırmıştır. Bu makale iman-amel ayrımının ne anlama geldiği, amelin nasıl bir değer taşıdığı ve Ehl-i sünnetin bu fikirle aslında neyi kastettiği açıklanmaya, her kavram yerli yerine konulmaya çalışılacaktır. En eski kelam kaynaklarından yola çıkmak suretiyle hususiyetle de Hanefî kaynaklara müracaat edilerek imana verilen anlam ortaya konulacaktır. Daha sonra amelin imana göre konumu ve imanla olan bağlantısı incelenecektir. Neticede de amelin müminin dini yaşantısında rolünün ne olduğu açığa çıkarılmaya gayret edilecektir. Böyle bir çalışmanın dinin birbirinden bağımsız olgular üzerine bina edilmediğini, hepsinin birlikte dini bütünlüğü oluşturduğunu göstermek açısından önemi vardır. *“Hâlbuki onlara, Allah’a kulluk etmeleri, Hanîfler olarak O’na yürekten inanıp boyun eğmeleri, namaz kılmaları ve zekât vermeleri emredilmişti. Doğru din de işte budur”* ayetinin açıkça beyan ettiği üzere heryer ne kadar imanla amel farklı olgular olsa da bunların hepsi bir araya geldiğinde dopru dini hayat ortaya çıkmaktadır. Makale bu ayeti düstur edinerek bir nevi deneme edasıyla kelam açısından, özelde de Hanefîlere göre amele nasıl bakılması gerektiğini tespit etme çabasıdır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kelam, Hanefî, İman-Amel ayrımı, İbadet, Günah.

## Introduction

Prayer is regarded as the cornerstone of Islam and an essential component of our religious practices. From the moment we accept the existence and unity of Allah and the prophethood of Muhammad, we are obliged to perform prayer as part of our duties. The Quran and hadiths provide guidance on the importance, benefits, and consequences of prayers, along with detailed instructions on how to perform them correctly.

The debate on whether prayers constitute a part of belief is a significant issue in the field of kalam. This topic has given rise to various sects and divergent opinions, particularly concerning the fate of murtekibi kabire in the afterlife. The deaths of Muslims resulting from conflicts among them have raised questions about the status of their faith and their standing in the hereafter. Islamic laws prescribe eternal punishment in Hell for those who knowingly and unjustly shed the blood of another Muslim. The main focus of the discussion among theologians has been whether a person who commits a major sin such as killing a fellow Muslim will remain in Hell forever. While the Kharijites and Mutazila contend that Muslims who commit major sins will go to Hell and remain there forever unless they repent, the issue of determining who is right is not theologically relevant.

Ahl as-sunnah's belief that major sinners will not remain in Hell forever stems from the diversion of faith and act of prayers from faith. According to Ahl as-sunnah's principles, anyone who accepts the existence of Allah, His unity, His books, His prophets, His angels, the Last Day, and destiny is a believer and will be rewarded with Paradise. This is supported by both intellectual and narrated evidence. While disregarding the Islamic Sharia and committing prohibited acts may lead to worldly or otherworldly consequences, such actions do not impact one's faith. Faith is a matter of conviction within the heart, and the actions of the body cannot alter what the heart acknowledges. Therefore, any sin apart from polytheism and heresy does not weaken one's faith.

The Ahl as-sunnah's view that sins do not weaken faith, that a believer will not remain in Hell forever, and that they will enter Paradise

cause certain issues regarding society's perception of prayers. The problem is not in the belief itself, but in the misunderstanding and interpretation of the view of Ahl as-sunnah. Such misunderstandings could lead to prayers being undervalued. If the belief that the main aspect of faith is intention alone is prioritized, then the original understanding of the Ahl as-sunnah's perspective regarding the separation between faith and action could be distorted. Consequently, the belief that having a pure heart alone is enough may emerge, leading to neglecting other religious obligations. This understanding has been widely located by some in religious society, legitimizing not fulfilling other obligations as long as one remains well-intentioned and honest.

In order to address the problem outlined, the initial step is to accurately and comprehensively clarify the Ahl as-sunnah's perspective on the separation of faith and prayers. Therefore, we will examine how Ahl as-sunnah scholars define faith, practice, and the connection between faith and action, starting from the earliest Sunni sources available, to shed light on their perspective on this matter.

### **1. The Relationship Between Faith and Action According to Ahl as-Sunnah**

To appropriately contextualize concepts within a paradigm, it is crucial to understand how the individuals who shaped that paradigm defined those concepts. Therefore, it is essential to identify how Sunni scholars define the concepts of faith and prayers.

Said b. Jubayr who was tâbi'în defined faith as affirmation. According to him, stated that faith is the servant's affirmation of Allah, His angels, the books He sent down, the Messengers He sent and the Last Day.<sup>1</sup> After the classical definition of faith, the main issue is what he said about the definition of affirmation. When he was asked what confirmation means, he replied: "Confirmation is when a servant acknowledges the

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<sup>1</sup> Abu Abdillah Said b. Jubayr b. Hisham al-Assad Said b. Jubayr, "Risalatuh Said b. Jubayr", *al-Jami fi aqaid ve resaili Ahl as-sunnah ve'l-eser* (Beirut: Dar al-Lulua, 2018), 1/32.

things he approves of in the Qur'an. This means that he does not neglect any of them and performs them without carelessness".<sup>2</sup>

Said b. Jubayr is noteworthy that defined belief as affirmation and affirmation as action. The logical conclusion to be drawn from this is: A=B, B=C, therefore A=C. That is, faith equals affirmation, affirmation equals action, therefore faith equals action. But Said b. Jubayr said later shows that he did not look at the issue from the point of view of logic. According to him, it is a sin for the servant not to do what he approves of the Qur'an or to do it incompletely; It requires repenting to Allah and not doing it again.<sup>3</sup> As it is understood from his words, he does not see faith and action as the same thing or as a part of faith. If it were, he should have said that the servant had sinned and that he had to believe, not that he should repent. In this case, what does it mean for him to define belief as affirmation and affirmation as action?

Faith and prayers according to Said b. Jubayr, they are two different phenomena that complement each other. Although they exist on their own, they only form a whole together. If we explain this with an example; We can compare faith to substance and prayers to accident. The ore is thick by itself, and the qualities are thick only with ore. Although the ore is essential it is not possible for the ore to be existence without qualities. After the ore exists, it is mutable with either rest or motion; It is impossible for both of these two events to be the same. Perhaps it would be appropriate to explain this with another example. The main thing to be full is meat. However for meat to be edible, it has to be cooked. Meat has to be cooked to eat it. Even though belief is self-contained after its existence, it cannot be pure from prayers. Amal, on the other hand, cannot be solid without faith.

Another of the important narrators and commentators of the early period, Dahhak b. Muzahim, explained the relationship between faith and action and what the distinction between faith and action meant in clearer terms. Dahhak defined faith as believing in Allah, the Last Day, angels,

<sup>2</sup> Said b. Jubayr, "Rislatu Said b. Jubayr", 1/ 32.

<sup>3</sup> Said b. Jubayr, "Rislatu Said b. Jubayr", 1/ 32.



books, and prophets, confirming and confessing what came from Allah, surrendering to Allah's decree and decree, and consenting to Allah's destiny.<sup>4</sup> According to him, this is faith and whoever believes in this way has a perfect faith. Allah has forbidden the life and property of believers, but has also given them some responsibilities as a form of prayer.

The explanations of Dahhak show that he accepts that faith is a phenomenon by itself, that it will be completed by believing in the principles of faith and that it will reach the level of perfection. However, after these words about faith, he makes a remarkable sentence. Dahhak states that the believer deserves the reward of faith and attains its honor only if he puts what he has into practice. The way to get the reward of faith is to act with faith. The meaning of acting with faith is to do the obligatory duties by following the orders of Allah, to avoid haram, to follow the example of righteous people, to perform prayers (صلاة), to give zakat... etc. to perform prayers.<sup>5</sup>

The works of Abu Hanifah, one of the founding leaders of the Ahl as-sunnah, will be a source for us to open our horizons and put the concepts in their proper place. In his works, the subject of faith came to the fore, and he made long explanations about the definition and use of the concepts of faith and prayers. In fact, Imam Azam was accused of being Murjiism because of his inclination and views on the issue of faith.<sup>6</sup> He has his own statement regarding this accusation in the treatise he wrote to Osman el-Bettî. According to the treatise, his enemies accused him of being a Murji and creating a category of faith as "heretic believer".<sup>7</sup> However, Imam Azam does not accept this as an accusation. Regarding

<sup>4</sup> Abu'l-Qasim (Abu Mohamad) Dahhak b. Muzahim al-Hilali al-Khorasani al-Balki Dahhak b. Muzahim, "Risalatuh Dahhak b. Muzahim", *al-Jami fi aqaid ve resaili Ahl as-sunnah ve'l-eser* (Beirut: Dar al-Lulua, 2018), 1/ 76.

<sup>5</sup> Dahhak b. Muzahim, "Risalatuh Dahhak b. Muzahim", 1/ 76, 77.

<sup>6</sup> Bekir Şahbaz, *The Debate of Abu Hanifah's been a Murciyah* (Konya: Necmettin Erbakan University, Institute of Social Sciences, Master Thesis, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> Numan b. Sabit b. Zuta b. Mah Abu Hanifah, "Risala to Osman al-Betti", *al-Aqida ve ilm al-kalam min amal al-Imam Mohamad Zahid al-Kawsari* (Beirut: Dar al-kutub al-ilmiya, 2004), 629.

the faith of the fasiq, irja is the right way for him. Murjia who does this is on the right path.<sup>8</sup>

Abu Hanifah defined faith as follows in *al-Alim and al-mutaalim*, one of his works: "Faith is confirmation, knowledge, certainty, confession and surrender".<sup>9</sup> This definition brings to mind the debates about what faith is. Some of the Islamic scholars have defined faith as affirmation, some as knowledge, and some as confession. Abu Hanifah said that they all have the same meaning. According to him, acknowledging that Allah is Lord, confirming, knowing with certainty (yaqin), recognizing Him as Lord (marifet) means the same as saying "O human, o man, o whatisname" for a person.<sup>10</sup>

Abu Hanifah, who says that action is not from faith, and that they are two different phenomena, states that Allah, the Exalted, separates the two from each other in the Qur'an. Allah Almighty says, "*Those who believe and do righteous prayers...*"<sup>11</sup>, "*No, it is not like that! Whoever surrenders his essence to Allah is a muhsin*"<sup>12</sup>, that is, he has faith.<sup>13</sup> Because of their belief in Allah, believers pray, give zakat, fast, make pilgrimage and remember Allah. Otherwise, they have not believed in Allah because of their prayers, zakat, fasting and pilgrimage.<sup>14</sup>

Some of the words that Abu Hanifah said while explaining that diversion of faith and act is remarkable.<sup>15</sup> He says that the reason why prayer is fardh is faith. After the person believes in the principles of faith, prayer, fasting, etc. he is obliged to fulfill his prayers. Just as believing is fardh on a person, it is also fardh to perform prayers after belief. The

<sup>8</sup> Abu Hanifah, "Risala to Osman al-Betti", 630.

<sup>9</sup> Numan b. Sabit b. Zuta b. Mah Abu Hanifah, "al-Alim ve al-mutaalim", *al-Aqida ve ilm al-kalam min amal al-Imam Mohamad Zahid al-Kawsari* (Beirut: Dar al-kutub al-ilmiya, 2004), 575.

<sup>10</sup> Abu Hanifah, "al-Alim ve al-mutaalim", 576.

<sup>11</sup> al-Ra'd 13/29; al-Baqara 2/25; vd.

<sup>12</sup> al-Baqara 2/112.

<sup>13</sup> al-Isrâ' 17/19.

<sup>14</sup> Abu Hanifah, "al-Alim ve al-mutaalim", 575.

<sup>15</sup> Abu Hanifah, "al-Alim ve al-mutaalim", 575.

Ash'ari scholar Ibn Fûrak explains this in the commentary he wrote to *al-Alim* with the following sentence: "The difference between belief and action is that the obligation of belief precedes the obligation of action".<sup>16</sup> Faith and prayers are two things that are inseparable from each other. Where one is, the other must be present. But there is a condition for this: Faith must be present before action. Imam-i Azam explained this situation as a debtor man. The man first admits that he owes and then pays, not paying first and then not accepting that he owes it. Acknowledging that he is in debt does not result from making a payment. The fact that he pays is due to his acceptance of his debt.<sup>17</sup>

The formation of faith is the condition for the occurrence of prayer. Requires conditional legitimacy. The formation of faith necessitates the occurrence of prayers. The necessity mentioned here is not an obligation like fire burning cotton. The necessity here is that the wagons attached to the locomotive follow the locomotive. Although locomotives and wagons are separate entities and can be separated from each other, wagons need wagons to be able to move and reach range. The locomotive can reach the range without the wagons. But since he goes without a wagon, he cannot carry any cargo to his destination. In this example, the faith depicted by the locomotive is the prayer depicted by the wagons.

## 2. The Opinion of Those Who Say That Action is From Faith

Among the scholars of Ahl as-sunnah, there are those who consider prayers as a part of belief and those who describe belief as words and prayers. The scholar who is especially referenced to those who consider prayers as part of faith is Imam Shafi'.<sup>18</sup> Imam Shafi'i defines faith as affirming with the heart, confessing with the tongue, and acting on the organs. Again, one of the leading scholars of Ahl as-sunnah, Sufyan as-

<sup>16</sup> Abu Bekr Mohamad b. al-Hasan Ibn Furek, *Sharh Kitab al-Alim and al-mutaalim*, Critical ed. Ahmad Abd al-Rahman as-Sayih (Cairo: Maktaba al-sakafa al-diniya, 2009), 112.

<sup>17</sup> Abu Hanifah, "al-Alim ve al-mutaalim", 575.

<sup>18</sup> Abu Yusr Mohamad b. Mohamad Pezdavi, *Usul al-din* (İstanbul: Kayıhan Publisher, ts.), 210; Mohamad b. Mohamad Abu al-Muin al-Nasafi, *Bahr al-kalam* (Beirut: Endülüs Publisher, 2019), 108.

Sevri added intention to the definition of faith. According to him, faith is words, prayers and intentions. Words only together with prayers; word and prayer but with intention; words, prayers and intentions are permissible only if they are in accordance with the sunnah. Compliance with the sunnah is to follow the path of the first four caliphs.<sup>19</sup>

Although it is clear that scholars define faith in this way, what they say after this definition is remarkable. Sufyan es-Sevri and Imam Shafi argue that no one can be called takfir because of his sin. In the treatise of Sufyan es-Sevri, Şuayb b. Harb giving advice to Harb, he says: "O Şuayb! What I wrote to you is only Mr. It is beneficial when you do not say that it is heaven or hell for anyone except the witnesses of the Prophet".<sup>20</sup> Imam Shafi also said in his treatise: "I do not make takfir of anyone from the people of tawhid because of his sins, even if he commits a major sin. I leave their situation to Allah".<sup>21</sup>

At first glance, the attitudes of Sufyan es-Sevri and Imam Shafi may seem contradictory compared to their own definitions of faith. It would be a logical error to say that those who accept that one of the elements that make up faith is an action and do not perform the action do not fall into disbelief. When we think of faith as a whole consisting of words and prayers, when the action is not fulfilled, a part of the whole is missing. When it is lacking, it is not faith. However, we do not think that both scholars can fall into such a clear contradiction. Pezdavi must also be of this opinion, as he interpreted their two contradictory views as saying that action is from faith in terms of being subject to it.<sup>22</sup> In other words, they wanted to say that it is from faith to accept that prayers are ordered by Allah and that religion is from his own.

<sup>19</sup> İbn Said b. Mesruq Sufyan as-Savri, "Mucmel itiqad Ahl as-sunnah ve al-asar", *al-Jami fi aqaid ve rasail Ahl as-sunnah ve al-asar* (Beirut: Dar al-Lulua, 2018), 1/ 113.

<sup>20</sup> Sufyan as-Savri, "Mucmel itiqad Ahl as-sunnah ve al-asar", 1/ 114.

<sup>21</sup> Mohamad b. Idris b. Abbas Shafi, "Mucmel itiqad Ahl as-sunnah ve al-asar", *al-Jami fi aqaid ve rasail Ahl as-sunnah ve al-asar* (Beirut: Dar al-Lulua, 2018), 1/ 243.

<sup>22</sup> Pezdavi, *Usul al-din*, 210.

Pezdevi's interpretation is one of the interpretations of the attitudes of Sevri and Imam Shafi. In our opinion, another interpretation that can be made to this attitude is that they see religion as a whole, and faith and practice as parts of religion. As it is expressed in the verse, religion is to prayer with sincerity, to perform prayers and to give zakat.<sup>23</sup> Evzai said that religion consists of faith and prayers.<sup>24</sup> Accordingly, in order for a person to be considered fully religious, he must have faith and perform prayers. Faith and prayer are two separate things. Failure to fulfill the prayer leaves the religion incomplete, not the faith. Allah Almighty said that religion is the whole of faith and prayers. Evzai, Sevri and Imam Shafi also meant religion by saying that faith is words and prayers, and they wanted to explain that faith and action are necessary for the completion of religion, and that faith is different from action by saying that people of tawhid cannot be made takfir because of their sins.

This attitude of Imam Shafi and other scholars reminds of Abu Hanifah's views on Islam and faith and falls in parallel with him. Abu Hanifah said: "Islam is submission and obedience to the commands of Allah. Although there is a difference between Islam and faith in terms of language, faith is not without Islam, and Islam cannot be without faith. These are like two sides of a hand".<sup>25</sup> Islam is to obey and fulfill the orders of Allah, such as not to associate with partners, to pray, to give zakat, to obey your parents. Faith, on the other hand, is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His prophets, the Last Day, the resurrection after death, the destiny from Allah for good and evil, the truth in the Hereafter, the reckoning, the balance, Heaven and Hell. All these constitute the whole of religion. Abu Hanifah explained this by showing the two sides of a hand

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<sup>23</sup> al-Bayyina 98/5.

<sup>24</sup> Abd al-Rahman b. Amr b. Yuhmid Avzai, "as-Sabr ala as-sunnah ve luzum tariq as-salat", *al-Jami fi aqaid ve rasail Ahl as-sunnah ve al-asar* (Beirut: Dar al-Lulua, 2018), 1/ 100.

<sup>25</sup> Numan b. Sabit b. Zuta b. Mah Abu Hanifah, "al-Fiqh al-akbar", *al-Aqida ve ilm al-kalam min amal al-Imam Mohamad Zahid al-Kawsari* (Beirut: Dar al-kutub al-ilmia, 2004), 622; Ahmad b. Mahmud Nur al-din Sabuni, *al-Bidaya fi usul al-din* (Eygpt: Dar al-maarif, 1969), 157.

as an example. Although the two sides of the hand are different from each other, the two combine to form the hand itself.<sup>26</sup>

### 3. Ahl as-Sunnah's Attitude Towards Prayers

Allah has rights over His servants. In a hadith narrated by Muadh bin Cebel, the Prophet asked Muaz if he knew what Allah's right over His servants was, and he said that Allah's right over His servants is that they prayer Him and not associate partners with Him.<sup>27</sup> The rights of Allah, which is expressed in the hadith, are two: belief and prayers. The duty of the servant after he was created, with exceptions, is to believe and prayer. These are the rights of Allah, who has given us blessings, on us. Abu Hanifah quoted the hadith exactly as his own view and said that Allah's right on His servants is that they prayer Him and not associate anything with Him.<sup>28</sup>

Hanafi scholars have explained in more detail the issue of Allah's rights mentioned in the hadith. Actions against the public interest are violating the right of Allah. For example, adultery means violating the right of Allah because it is against the public interest.<sup>29</sup> Again, prayer, fasting, etc. failure to perform prayers causes harm to the public interest. In addition to the fact that such prayers have preventive features against prostitution, their absence is an example in the society.

Failure to fulfill the orders regarding prayer has both worldly and otherworldly consequences. As a worldly sanction, Hanafi jurists have issued a fatwa that a person who deliberately abandons prayer due to

<sup>26</sup> Abu Hanifah, "al-Fıqh al-akbar", 619.

<sup>27</sup> Mohamad b. İsmail b. İbrahim Bukhari, *as-Sahih* (Damascus: Dar Ibn Kesir, 2002), Tevhid 1; Muslim b. al-Haccac Muslim, *as-Sahih* (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-turas al-Arab, ts.), Iman 48.

<sup>28</sup> Numan b. Sabit b. Zuta b. Mah Abu Hanifah, "al-Fıqh al-absat", *al-Aqida ve ilm al-kalam min amal al-Imam Mohamad Zahid al-Kawsari* (Beirut: Dar al-kutub al-ilmiya, 2004), 614.

<sup>29</sup> Muharrem Midilli, "Publicity of the Hanafi Criminal Law between the Rights of God and the Rights of Man", *Jurnal of Karadeniz Technical University Divinity Faculty* 4 (2017), 65-87.

laziness should be imprisoned and beaten until he starts to pray.<sup>30</sup> The imprisonment in this punishment aims to remove him from the society and isolate him so that he does not set an example, and his beating is intended to be a lesson to those who do not pray in the society.

There is an aspect of abandoning prayer related to the hereafter. Imam-i Azam said the following about a person who believes in al-Fihu'l-ebsat, but does not pray, fast, and does not perform any of these prayers: "The situation of that person depends on the will of Allah. If Allah wills, He will punish him; He will have mercy on him if he wills".<sup>31</sup> This saying of Abu Hanifah declares that the punishment for abandoning prayer is torment in the hereafter. Whether or not the punishment will be applied is up to the owner of the right, that is, Allah. If he wishes, he can punish his servant who does not fulfill his prayers because he does not observe his rights. No believer can be sure of His punishment for his sins. Abu Hanifah said that a person will not be punished because of his prayers, that is, because he does not fulfill his prayers and does bad prayers. He did not accept Murjie's view that sin with faith does no harm.<sup>32</sup>

The Hanafi-Maturidi school believes that making a distinction between faith and prayers in the understanding of kalam and adopting the idea that everyone who dies with their faith will go to heaven causes the some of followers of this tradition to underestimate committing sins contrary to what the diversion principle suggests. The reason for this underestimation is the belief that he will be forgiven. Abu Hanifah explained the reason why believers commit sins as follows: "A believer does not commit a sin knowing that he will be punished. He sins because of two characteristics: First; hopes to be forgiven. Latter; He has the

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<sup>30</sup> Mehmed b. Feramurz b. Ali Mullah Husrav, *Durar al-hukkam fi sharh Gurar al-ahkam* (Dar Ihya al-kutub al-Arabi, 1997), 1/ 124; Mohamad Abd al-Vahid Ibn al-Humam, *Feth al-qadir* (Dar al-fiqr, ts.), 1/ 497; Zayn al-din b. Ibrahim b. Mohamad Ibn Nujaym, *al-Bahr al-raiq sharh Kanz al-daqaq* (Beirut: Dar al-kutub al-ilmiya, 1997), 2/ 159.

<sup>31</sup> Abu Hanifah, "al-Fiqh al-absat", 605, 606.

<sup>32</sup> Abu Hanifah, "al-Fiqh al-akbar", 621.

intention to repent before he gets sick and dies".<sup>33</sup> However, there is no knowledge or guarantee that a person will enter Heaven.<sup>34</sup> However, he can also commit a sin, such as eating or drinking something, participating in war, going on a sea voyage, even though he is afraid of harm.<sup>35</sup> He wouldn't have done this if he didn't think he would survive. However, the founding and developing scholars of this tradition have no intention of causing sin to be taken lightly.<sup>36</sup> As a matter of fact, according to them, the person who abandons the orders and does the prohibitions will not be punished. Because in the verse, Allah forgives whom He wills and punishes whom He wills he ordered. Since there is no guarantee of forgiveness, it is not appropriate to sin in the hope of forgiveness. In the holy hadith narrated from the Prophet, it is expressed how those who commit sins will stay away from Paradise: he commanded. He said, "The one who is included in me is over." he said. Then, Allah again ordered Paradise to talk to him. He said, "The believers are prosperous." he said. Thereupon, Allah said, "I have made you unlawful for all stingy people, alcohol and drug addicts, ungrateful and deyyus."<sup>37</sup> When the narration is carefully examined, it is sinners, not unbelievers, whom Allah has forbidden Heaven. When Heaven spoke, he said that believers attained salvation, and Allah explained this statement in more detail by saying that sinners among them cannot enter Heaven.

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<sup>33</sup> Abu Hanifah, "al-Alim ve al-mutaalim", 581.

<sup>34</sup> Abu Hanifah, "al-Fıqh al-absat", 605.

<sup>35</sup> Abu Hanifah, "al-Alim ve al-mutaalim", 581.

<sup>36</sup> Mohamad b. Abd as-Sayid b. Shuayb Abu Shekur as-Salimi, *al-Tamhid* (İstanbul: ISAM, 2017), 275.

<sup>37</sup> Abu Shekur as-Salimi, *al-Tamhid*, 276. The narration takes place in *Kenzu'l-ummal* with a slightly different version. Ali b. Husam al-din b. Abd al-Melik Muttaqi al-Hindi, *Kanz al-ummal fi sunan al-aqval ve al-afal*, Critical ed. Bekri Hayyani (Muassasa al-risala, 1981), 1/ 55.



#### 4. The Relationship Between Faith and Prayer According to Sūrat al-'Ankabūt

In the second verse of Sūrat al-'Ankabūt, the twenty-ninth sura of the Qur'an, Allah says: "*Do people think that they will be left untested by believing*".<sup>38</sup> In the verse, Allah has declared that people will be tested after they have believed.

Maturidi said that the act of belief, which is mentioned here and has no object, is to believe in Allah and the Prophet. He explained that the expression "do they think" also means "they should not think". According to this, the meaning of the verse is "... let them not think that they will be left without being tested". The meaning of this is that faith necessarily brings the test after it. According to Maturidi, Allah tests His servants by changing their situations. This change sometimes happens with narrowness and distress, sometimes with abundance, prosperity and various prayers.<sup>39</sup> According to Maturidi's explanation, prayer is also included in testing. Since the test is the result of belief, prayer, which is a type of test, is also the order that the servants are absolutely responsible for after belief.

Fahreddin Razi said the following about liability in the interpretation of this verse: Because Allah Almighty says, "Did people think that they would be left to say, 'We believe', and that they would not be put to the test? I mean, do they think that they will be left with just this word? On the contrary, they have been commanded with all kinds of obligations". Therefore, the meaning of those suras in which the name of the Qur'an is mentioned, which contains orders and prohibitions, is also (tacitly) present in this surah.<sup>40</sup> According to Fahreddin Razi, the expression "without being tested" in the verse is a set of physical and financial

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<sup>38</sup> al-'Ankabūt 29/2.

<sup>39</sup> Mohamad b. Mohamad Maturidi, *Tavilat al-Quran* (İstanbul: Ensar Publisher, 2018), 11/112.

<sup>40</sup> Fahr al-din al-Razi, *al-Tafsir al-kabir*, trans. Suat Yıldırım (İstanbul: Huzur Publisher, 2002), 17/ 584.

obligations.<sup>41</sup> Physical and financial obligations are also acts of prayer. The most important thing required of people is prayer. As mentioned in the hadith, the most important purpose of prayer is love. "My servant continues to approach me with his prayers; finally, I love him". The interpreter of the heart is language. The certifiers of the word are the limbs.

<sup>42</sup>

Omar an-Nasafi, one of the important names of the Maturidi tradition, interpreted the test in the verse as a test of sincerity. After believing, a person is tested to reveal how sincere he is in his faith. The test of ikhlas is done only by prayers.<sup>43</sup> Thus, it becomes clear who is telling the truth and who is a liar. Gabriel came and said to the Prophet: "Allah says: We sent prophets to peoples before you. Those who affirmed them became affirmers, and those who denied them became liars. We have named those who confirm as believers and those who deny as disbelievers. After we had driven the Prophet out of it, We sent plagues on them to distinguish the faithful from the liars." Then Allah revealed this verse.<sup>44</sup>

Allah will surely test people with heavy obligations such as emigration, jihad, abandoning their selfish desires, duties of prayer and obedience, and various misfortunes in their lives and property, so that sincere people will be separated from hypocrites and those who have persevered in religion, and those whose faith has been shaken by events,

<sup>41</sup> Fahr al-din al-Razi, *al-Tafsir al-kabir*, 17/ 585.

<sup>42</sup> Fahr al-din al-Razi, *al-Tafsir al-kabir*, 17/ 585. The whole narration given by Fahreddin Razi is as follows: "My servant cannot approach me with anything more beloved than obligatory prayer. He continues to approach me with voluntary prayers. After all, I love him. In joy, I become his hearing ear, seeing eye, hand holding, walking foot. I'll give it to him when he asks me to. I protect her when she takes shelter in me." Bukhari, *as-Sahih*, Riqaq 38.

<sup>43</sup> Necm al-din Ibn Mohamad b. Ahmad Omar al-Nasafi, *al-Taysir fi al-Tafsir*, Critical ed. Mahir Edib Habbush (İstanbul: Dar al-Lubab, 2019), 11/ 478.

<sup>44</sup> Omar al-Nasafi, *al-Taysir fi al-Tafsir*, 11/ 479. The narration is also included in the work of Hatib al-Baghdadi. Ahmad b. Ali b. Sabit Hatib al-Baghdadi, *Muvazzih avham al-jam ve al-tafriq* (Beirut: Dar al-marifa, 1407), 2/ 395.

and Allah will reward and punish them according to the degree of their prayers. . For, even if it is with sincerity, abstract belief can only be a means of getting rid of the eternal torment of Hell. Also, there is no reward or punishment.<sup>45</sup>

### 5. Ahl as-Sunnah's Attitude Towards Sins

Acts are not just about prayers. Another aspect of acts, as important as prayer, is to stay away from sins. A believer cannot be content with merely obeying Allah's orders. He must also obey his prohibitions. Just as fulfilling the fards is wajib for a believer, avoiding the haram is also wajib. Avoiding harams as required and staying away from disgrace are the requirements of obligation.

The fact that believers commit sins and resort to haram after they have believed is the result of following their lusts and whims, sometimes with the encouragement of Satan and other people. If a believer does not commit sins out of ignorance, his motivations when committing sins are generally thinking that he will go to heaven anyway because he has faith, believing that he will get rid of his sins by repenting before he dies, and hoping that Allah will forgive him even if he dies as a sinner.<sup>46</sup> However, there are some sins that are mentioned among the sins that cannot be forgiven in the Qur'an, and it is declared that their punishment is the eternal torment of hell. For example, in the chapter of Furqan, Allah tells us that those who kill people unjustly and commit adultery will be punished. Immediately afterwards, he states that the torment of those who commit these sins will be eternal.<sup>47</sup>

In verses 68 and 69 of Sūrat al-Furqān, sins such as unjust killing and adultery are mentioned together with polytheism. This situation can be interpreted as the fact that those who commit these sins are tormented and their torment is continuous, indicating that those people are unbelievers, not believers. For example, Fahreddin Razi narrated from Hasan al-Basri

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<sup>45</sup> Abu as-Suud Efendi, *Irshad al-aql as-salim* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Publisher, 2007), 10/ 4637.

<sup>46</sup> Abu Hanifah, "al-Alim ve al-mutaalim", 581.

<sup>47</sup> al-Furqān 25/68, 69.

that unjust killing and adultery are the characteristics of the polytheists.<sup>48</sup> However, Maturidi thinks that these are independent sins.<sup>49</sup> In other words, he said that murder and adultery are not only the acts of the polytheists, but there are those who commit these sins even though they believe. As a matter of fact, in the chapter of al-Furqān, the believers' cries to Allah are conveyed from the tongues of the believers, and the believers ask Allah to protect them from the torment of Hell and emphasize that the torment of Hell is an uninterrupted destruction.<sup>50</sup> The fact that believers demand protection from the torment of Hell indicates that there is a possibility that they will also suffer, and that it is a permanent destruction, which indicates the severity of the torment.

Another verse about the punishment of killing a believer unjustly is in Sūrat al-Nisā'. According to the verse, the punishment of a person who kills a believer unjustly is Hell, in which he will remain forever. This person has also been cursed by Allah.<sup>51</sup> Maturidi said that this verse is not about unbelievers who kill someone because they are Muslims, but about believers who kill for their own sake.<sup>52</sup> Accordingly, the murderer who will be punished is a believer. Because the narration<sup>53</sup> by Mâturîdî from Ibn Abbas that Allah can forgive anyone who is in this situation shows that this person is a believer. Because the disbeliever cannot be forgiven. According to this, the reward for the sin committed by the believer who is a murderer is Hell. It is certain that he will be punished regardless of Allah's forgiving him.

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<sup>48</sup> Fahr al-din al-Razi, *al-Tafsir al-kabir*, 17/ 282.

<sup>49</sup> Maturidi, *Tavilat al-Quran*, 10/ 313-315.

<sup>50</sup> al-Furqān 25/65.

<sup>51</sup> al-Nisā' 4/93.

<sup>52</sup> Maturidi, *Tavilat al-Quran*, 3/ 367, 368.

<sup>53</sup> Ibn Abbas said: "Hell is His punishment; He punishes if He wishes, and forgives if He wishes." Maturidi, *Tavilat al-Quran*, 3/ 368. Abu Davud narrated this hadith from Abu Miclez. Suleyman b. al-Aşas b. İshaq Abu Davud, *Sunen Abu Davud*, Critical ed. Shuayb Arnavut (Beirut: Dar al-risala al-alemiyya, 2009), Fiten 6.

When the verses and their interpretations are examined, the result is that believers who commit sins deserve punishment. The severity and duration of his punishment or his complete forgiveness is in the hands of Allah. However, after it is determined that the punishment is hell, there is a possibility of being forgiven as well as not being forgiven. At the very least, it is a requirement of the faith and mind of a believer that no sin should be taken lightly and that he should not be slack in avoiding harams.

### **Conclusion**

In the belief of Ahl as-sunnah, especially the Hanafi-Mâturîdî school, the idea of separation between faith and prayer is misunderstood by some followers of this school. Faith and prayers are thought to be two phenomena that are completely independent of each other and do not converge at any point, and faith is considered sufficient for a Muslim, and prayer is not given the necessary value. However, this is not what the founders of the Hanafi-Maturidi school mean by the distinction between faith and prayer. What they mean is that although faith and action are separate entities, they are related to each other like trees and fruits. Faith brings with it action. Action is the necessary result of faith. This necessity is not an existential necessity like the burning of fire. This obligation is the necessity of the obligation. Just as believing is a command, performing prayer after believing, not committing sins, and not approaching haram are also commandments of the same nature. The taxpayer has no choice, no alternative, in the form of fulfilling one of his orders and not following the other.

The aim of those who consider prayers as a part of belief among Ahl as-sunnah is not to remove those who are deficient in prayers from the circle of belief. What they mean by action counted as faith is faith in action. For example, believing that prayer is an obligatory act of prayer is part of faith. For this reason, it is not the lack of prayer that drives a person out of faith, but the disbelief that acts are the order of Allah. As a matter of fact, according to them, no one who says he believes can be called takfir. However, prayer is the indicator and obligatory result of faith. Although the lack of action does not remove the person from the circle of belief, it puts him under a great scourge.

Prayer is one of Allah's rights. Because Allah has two rights over His servants: The servants' belief and prayer in Him. Allah is the One who creates His servants and gives them blessings. Giving thanks to the one who gives blessings is the responsibility of the servants. The practical state of gratitude is faith and prayer. To believe is to recognize the creator and the giver of blessings, and to prayer is to thank the creator he knows. In this respect, belief without action is a kind of denial of blessings. Although denying the blessing is not considered a sin that deserves eternal torment like nonbeliever, it makes the believer rebellious and causes him to deserve the torment of Hell. Although it is possible for the punishment of denying a blessing to be forgiven by Allah, it is also possible for it not to be forgiven.

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