

مَاذَا فَهِمَ أَقْوَامُ الرُّسُلِ مِنَ الدَّعْوَةِ إِلَى

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ؟

What did the people of the
Messengers understand from the
da'wah towards *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*?

“They said: ‘Have you come to us so we may worship Allāh alone
and leave what our forefathers used to worship?’”

(Al- A’rāf 7:70)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh the Most Merciful the Most Beneficent

Introduction

All praise is due to Allāh who did not leave His creation in darkness and misguidance without revealing books to them and sending them messengers, which suffice for them in finding the correct path that leads them to success and salvation in both this life and the next.

Despite of this evident fact, we live in an evil time where the most clear of messages which these messengers (*'alayhim as-salām*) and these books came with – which is Tawhīd – have been distorted and made unclear for the people, so many wander in darkness while believing they have entered the light, and many argue for falsehood while believing they are supporting the truth.

The solution for every sincere seeker of the truth and the one who wants salvation for himself, is to return the issue to the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (*sallAllāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

إِنِّي قَدْ تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ شَيْئَيْنِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدَهُمَا : كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّتِي

"I have verily left you with two things after which you will never go astray; The Book of Allāh and My Sunnah"

(Al-Hākim in his Mustadrak)

And whoever refers the issue of Tawhīd back to the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (*sallAllāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) will find the answer very one-sided; Tawhīd means to leave the worship of anything else than Allāh and unifying Allāh in worship, and whoever have not done this, is and cannot be a Muslim.

It is so now, and so has it always been. And every time Allāh sent a messenger to a *mushrik* people they all invited these *mushrikūn* to the same message when they said:

﴿ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ ﴾

"O my people. Worship Allāh, you have no other *ilāh* (deity) than Him." (Al-A'rāf 7:59)

There is no surprise in that. But what is really interesting is that all the people of the messengers ('*alayhim as-salām*) understood from this request what many people ascribing themselves to Islam today fail to understand, either due to ignorance or stubbornness.

Many of these people claim that a person committing *shirk* can still be a Muslim – or as many like to say: '*Takfīr upon the mushrikūn is not from asl ad-dīn*' – while this is opposite to what every disbelieving people before them understood from the request of their messengers. And the following evidences along with their explanations from acknowledged sources, clearly proves without any doubt that whoever has not left *shirk* and dedicated the worship to Allāh alone is and cannot be a Muslim. Not according to the evidences nor according to the intellect.

The people of Hūd ('*alayhi as-salām*)

Allāh – the Exalted – informed that they said:

﴿ قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا لِنَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَحْدَهُ وَنَذَرَ مَا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴾

”They said: ‘Have you (i.e. Hūd) come to us so we may worship Allāh alone and leave what our forefathers used to worship? So bring us what you warn us with, if you truly are among those who speak the truth.’” (Al- A’rāf 7:70)

From the call to *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* , they understood that in order to accept this call they had to leave whatever their fathers used to worship – which was the religion which they had inherited from them – and disassociate themselves from this misguidance. This verse in itself is sufficient as clarification for the fact, that what is wanted from the *da’wah* of Allāh to His creation is, that they enter into Islām by leaving their *shirk* and disassociating themselves from *shirk* and its people. And as long as they did not do this they would not have entered Islām.

Ibn Jarīr At-Tabarī – *rahimahullāh* – said in his *tafsīr* of the verse:

يَقُولُ تَعَالَى دِكْرُهُ : قَالَتْ عَادُ لَهُ : أَجِئْتَنَا تَتَوَعَّدُنَا بِالْعِقَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ عَلَى مَا نَحْنُ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الدِّينِ ، كَيْ نَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَحْدَهُ ، وَنَذِيرَ لَهُ بِالطَّاعَةِ خَالِصًا ، وَنَهَجِرَ عِبَادَةَ الْأَهْلِ وَالْأَصْنَامِ الَّتِي كَانَ آبَاؤُنَا يَعْبُدُونَهَا ، وَنَتَّبِعَ مِنْهَا؟ فَلَسْنَا فَاعِلِي ذَلِكَ ، وَلَا نَحْنُ مُتَّبِعُونَكَ عَلَى مَا تَدْعُونَا إِلَيْهِ ، فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا مِنَ الْعِقَابِ وَالْعَذَابِ عَلَى تَرْكِنَا إِخْلَاصَ التَّوْحِيدِ لِلَّهِ ، وَعِبَادَتِنَا مَا نَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ ، إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصِّدْقِ عَلَى مَا تَقُولُ وَتَعِدُ .

“He – Exalted is His Mention – says: ‘Ād said to him (i.e. Hūd): Have you come to us threatening us with the punishment from Allāh due to what we are upon of religion, in order for us to worship Allāh alone, and dedicate the religion to Him with sincere obedience, and that we forsake the worship of the ālihah (deities) and idols which our fathers used to worship, and that we disassociate ourselves from it? But we will not do that, nor will we follow you in what you are inviting us to. So bring us that which you are promising us of punishment and torment due to us leaving the sincere Tawhīd for Allāh, and (due to) our worship of what we are worshipping besides Him of the statues, if you are from the people of truthfulness in what you say and promise.”

(Tafsīr At-Tabarī – Surah Al-A’rāf)

What is important to notice and comprehend is, that not in the evidences nor in the explanations of the evidences are the people of Ād – or any disbelieving people for that matter – *kuffār* and *mushrikūn* due to their name or their ascription. Rather they are *kuffār* and *mushrikūn* due to the acts of *kufr* and *shirk* which they perform. So ‘Ād were not *kuffār* simply due to being ‘Ād. Ibn Jarīr mentioned the reason for their *kufr* in his *tafsīr* of the verse when he said:

“So bring us that which you are promising us of punishment and torment due to us leaving the sincere Tawhid for Allāh, and (due to) our worship of what we are worshipping besides Him of the statues.”

He furthermore stated their own understanding of what was required from them in order to become Muslims and followers of the religion of their Prophet Hūd (*‘alayhi as-salām*), when he said:

“Have you come to us threatening us with the punishment from Allāh due to what we are upon of religion, in order for us to worship Allāh alone, and dedicate the religion to Him with sincere obedience, and that we forsake the worship of the ālihah (deities) and idols which our fathers used to worship, and that we disassociate ourselves from it?”

So how and based upon what can it be concluded that a person can still be a Muslim when committing *shirk* (i.e. worshipping something else than Allāh), and that uttering *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* with the tongue without leaving the worship of anything besides Allāh is sufficient for entering into Islām? This opposes the very essence of Tawhīd which is singling Allāh – the Exalted – out in all types of worship.

The rest of the Qurān is filled with the same meaning as the above mentioned. There was not a people who were invited to *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, except that they understood that this demanded and required from them that they left the worship of whatever they used to worship besides Allāh and disassociate themselves from that completely.

The following are examples that solidify what is already clear:

The people of Sālih (*alayhi as-salām*)

Allāh – the Exalted – informed that they said:

﴿ قَالُوا يَا صَالِحُ قَدْ كُنْتَ فِينَا مَرْجُوًّا قَبْلَ هَذَا أَتَنْهَانَا أَنْ نَعْبُدَ مَا يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا وَإِنَّنَا لَفِي شَكٍّ مِمَّا تَدْعُونَا إِلَيْهِ

﴿ مُرِيبٍ ﴾

“They said: ‘O Sālih, you were among us a man of promise before this (request of yours). Do you forbid us to worship that which our fathers worshipped? And we are verily in a great doubt regarding that which you are inviting us to.’” (Hūd 11:62)

Ibn Jarīr At-Tabarī – *rahimahullāh* – said in his *tafsīr* of the verse:

يَقُولُ تَعَالَى ذِكْرُهُ : قَالَتْ ثَمُودُ لِصَالِحٍ نَبِيِّهِمْ : (يَا صَالِحُ قَدْ كُنْتَ فِينَا مَرْجُوًّا) ، أَي كُنَّا نَرْجُو أَنْ تَكُونَ فِينَا سَيِّدًا قَبْلَ هَذَا الْقَوْلِ الَّذِي قُلْتَهُ لَنَا ، مِنْ أَنَّهُ مَالَنَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ (أَتَنْهَانَا أَنْ نَعْبُدَ مَا يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا) ، يَقُولُ : أَتَنْهَانَا أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَلْهَةَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ آبَاؤُنَا تَعْبُدُهَا (وَإِنَّنَا لَفِي شَكٍّ مِمَّا تَدْعُونَا إِلَيْهِ مُرِيبٍ) ، يَعْنُونَ أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ صِحَّةَ مَا يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ تَوْحِيدِ اللَّهِ ، وَأَنَّ الْأُلُوهَةَ لَا تَكُونُ إِلَّا لَهُ خَالِصًا .

“He – Exalted is His Mention – says: Thamūd said to their prophet Sālih: ‘O Sālih, you were among us a man of promise before this (request of yours).’ This means: We used to wish that you would be our leader before these words which you have said to us; that we do not have any other ilāh than Allāh. ‘Do you forbid us to worship that which our fathers worshipped?’ He says: Do you forbid us to worship the ālihah which our fathers used to worship? ‘And we are verily in a great doubt regarding that which you are inviting us to.’ They meant that they do not know whether or not that which he invited them towards of Allāh s Tawhid and that the ulūhiyyah (divinity, i.e. worship) not is for anyone but Him exclusively, is correct.”

(Tafsīr At-Tabarī – Surah Hūd)

Just like ‘Ād, the people of Thamūd also understood and realized merely from the invitation towards *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, that whoever wanted to enter into Islām had to leave the worship of something else than Allāh, and whoever remained upon *shirk* did not answer the *da’wah* of the messenger.

The people of Shu'ayb (alayhi as-salām)

Allāh – the Exalted – informed that they said:

﴿ قَالُوا يَا شُعَيْبُ أَصَلَاتُكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَنْ نَتْرِكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا أَوْ أَنْ نَفْعَلَ فِي أَمْوَالِنَا مَا نَشَاءُ إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ الرَّشِيدُ ﴾

“They said: ‘O Shu'ayb, does your prayer command you that we should leave what our fathers used to worship or not do with our wealth what we please? Verily, you are the forbearing, the discerning.’” (Hūd 11:87)

As-Sa'dī – *rahimahullāh* – said in his *tafsīr* of the verse:

وَمَعْنَى كَلَامِهِمْ: أَنَّهُ لَا مُوجِبَ لِنَهْيِكَ لَنَا، إِلَّا أَنَّكَ تُصَلِّي لِلَّهِ، وَتَتَعَبَّدُ لَهُ، أَفَإِنْ كُنْتَ كَذَلِكَ، أَفَيُوجِبُ لَنَا أَنْ نَتْرِكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا، لِقَوْلِ لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلٌ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ مُوَافِقٌ لَكَ، فَكَيْفَ تَتَّبِعُكَ، وَتَتْرِكُ آبَاءَنَا الْأَقْدَمِينَ أَوْلَى الْعُقُولِ وَالْأَلْبَابِ؟!

“And the meaning of their words are: That there is nothing that obligates your forbiddance upon us, except that you pray to Allāh and worship Him. And if you are like this, does this then obligate upon us that we leave what our fathers used to worship, due to a word for which there is no proof, except that it is in accordance with you (i.e. your opinion). So how should we follow you and leave our fathers of old who have intellects and great minds?”

(Tafsir As-Sa'dī – Surah Hūd)

The people from other nations

Allāh – the Exalted – said in *sūrah* Ibrāhīm:

﴿ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَبَأُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ لَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا اللَّهُ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَرَدُّوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فِي أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَقَالُوا إِنَّا كَفَرْنَا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ وَإِنَّا لَفِي شَكِّ مِمَّا تَدْعُونَنَا إِلَيْهِ مُرِيبٍ (9) قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ شَكُّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَدْعُوكُمْ لِيَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُخْرِجَكُمْ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى قَالُوا إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا فَأْتُونَا بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ ﴾

“Has there not reached you the news of those before you; the people of Nūh and 'Ād and Thamūd and those after them? No one knows them but Allāh. Their messengers came to

them with clear proofs, but they returned their hands to their mouths and said: ‘Verily, we disbelieve in that which you have been sent with, and we are verily in a great doubt regarding that which you are inviting us to.’ Their messengers said: ‘Can there be doubt about Allāh, the Creator of the heavens and earth? He invites you that He may forgive you of your sins, and He delays your death for a specified term.’ They said: ‘You are nothing but men like us who wish to turn us away from what our fathers were worshipping. So bring us a clear authority.’” (Ibrāhīm 14:9-10)

Ibn Jarīr At-Tabarī – *rahimahullāh* – said in his *tafsīr* of the verse:

فَقَالَتِ الْأُمَمُ لَهُمْ : (إِنْ أَنْتُمْ) ، أَيُّهَا الْقَوْمُ (إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا) ، فِي الصُّورَةِ وَالْهَيْئَةِ ، وَلَسْتُمْ مَلَائِكَةً ، وَإِنَّمَا تُرِيدُونَ بِقَوْلِكُمْ هَذَا الَّذِي تَقُولُونَ لَنَا (أَنْ تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا) ، يَقُولُ : إِنَّمَا تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَصْرِفُونَا بِقَوْلِكُمْ عَنْ عِبَادَةِ مَا كَانَ يُعْبُدُهُ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ آبَاؤُنَا.

“So the nations said to them: ‘You are’, O people, ‘nothing but men like us’, in appearance and form, and you are not angels. And verily do you want with these words of yours which you are saying to us ‘to turn us away from what our fathers were worshipping.’ He says: You verily want to turn us away – with your words – from the worship of that which our fathers used to worship of statues.”

(Tafsīr At-Tabarī – Surah Ibrāhīm)

The people of Muhammad (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*)

Allāh – the Exalted – informs about the people of Muhammad (*sallAllāhu alayhi wa sallam*) when He said:

﴿إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ (35) وَيَقُولُونَ أَئِنَّا لَتَارِكُوا آلِهَتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَجْنُونٍ﴾

“Verily when it was said to them: *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, they would become arrogant. And they would say: ‘Should we leave our *ālihah* for a crazy poet?’” (As-Sāffāt 37:35-36)

And they said:

﴿أَجْعَلِ الْأَلِهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عُجَابٌ﴾

“Has he made the *ālihah* (dieties) (all) into One Ilāh (Diety, i.e. Allāh)? Verily, this is a strange thing!” (Sād 38:5)

And Allāh – the Exalted – said about them:

﴿ وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَصُدَّكُمْ عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤَكُمْ ﴾

“And when our verses are recited to them as clear evidences, they say: ‘This is nothing but a man who wishes to turn you away from that which your fathers were worshipping.’ (Saba 34:43)

Ibn Jarīr At-Tabarī – *rahimahullāh* – said in his *tafsīr* of the verse:

يَقُولُ - تَعَالَىٰ ذِكْرُهُ - : وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَىٰ هَؤُلَاءِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ آيَاتُ كِتَابِنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ ، يَقُولُ : وَاضْحَاتِ أَهْنُ حَقٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا (قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَصُدَّكُمْ عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤَكُمْ) يَقُولُ : قَالُوا عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ : لَا تَتَّبِعُوا مُحَمَّدًا ، فَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَصُدَّكُمْ عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ ، وَيُغَيِّرَ دِينَكُمْ وَدِينَ آبَائِكُمْ

“He – Exalted is His Mention – says: And when the clear verses in Our Book are recited for these mushrikūn – He says: And it is clear that they are the truth from Us – ‘They say: This is nothing but a man who wishes to turn you away from that which your fathers were worshipping.’ He says: With this they said: Do not follow Muhammad, because he is nothing but a man who wants to turn you away from what your fathers used to worship of statues, and to change your religion and the religion of your forefathers.”

(Tafsīr At-Tabarī – Surah Saba)

And As-Sa’di – *rahimahullāh* – said in his *tafsīr* of the verse:

يُخْبِرُ تَعَالَىٰ عَنْ خَالَةِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ، عِنْدَمَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ الْبَيِّنَاتِ، وَحُجَجُهُ الظَّاهِرَاتِ، وَبَرَاهِينُهُ الْقَاطِعَاتِ، الدَّالَّةُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ خَيْرٍ، النَّاهِيَةُ عَنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ، الَّتِي هِيَ أَعْظَمُ نِعْمَةٍ جَاءَتْهُمْ، وَمِنَّةٍ وَصَلَتْ إِلَيْهِمْ، الْمُوجِبَةُ لِمُقَابَلَتِهَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَالتَّصَدِيقِ، وَالْإِنْقِيَادِ، وَالتَّسْلِيمِ، أَنَّهُمْ يُقَابِلُونَهَا بِضِدِّ مَا يَنْبَغِي، وَيُكَذِّبُونَ مَنْ جَاءَهُمْ بِهَا وَيَقُولُونَ: مَا هَذَا إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَصُدَّكُمْ عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤَكُمْ أَي: هَذَا فَصَدُّهُ، حِينَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْإِخْلَاصِ لِلَّهِ، لِتَنْتَرِكُوا عَوَائِدَ آبَائِكُمْ، الَّذِينَ تَعَظَّمُونَ وَتَمَشُونِمْ خَلْفَهُمْ، فَرُدُّوا الْحَقَّ بِقَوْلِ الصَّالِينَ، وَلَمْ يُورِدُوا بُرْهَانًا، وَلَا شُبْهَةً،

“He – the Exalted – informs about the situation of the mushrikūn when the clear verses of Allāh and His apparent arguments and His certain evidences are recited upon them, which points out everything good and forbids everything evil and which is the biggest blessing that came to them and bestowing that reached them which necessitates that it is met with imān, belief, submittance and acceptance, that they (when the verses are recited upon them) met it with the opposite of what they should. And they belied the one who came to them with it and they say: This is nothing but a man who wishes to turn you away from that which your fathers were worshipping. This means: This is what he wants, when he orders you to have ikhlās to Allāh, in order for you to leave the habits

of your fathers whom you admire and walk behind. So they answered the truth with the saying of the misguided ones, and they did not bring any proof, nor a shubhah (doubt)."

(Tafsīr As-Sa'di – Surah Saba)

Ponder over the words of As-Sa'di – *rahimahullāh* – when he said:

*"And they belied the one who came to them with it and they say: **This is nothing but a man who wishes to turn you away from that which your fathers were worshipping.** This means: This is what he wants, when he orders you to have ikhlās to Allāh."*

So the *ikhlās* which Muhammad (*sallAllāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) invited towards, is the leaving of everything which is worshipped besides Allāh and dedicating the worship exclusively to Allāh, just like the rest of the messengers (*'alayhim as-salām*) who came before him. And the evidence for this is the saying of Allāh the Exalted:

﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ﴾

"And verily, We have sent among every nation a Messenger (proclaiming): 'Worship Allāh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) tāghūt (all false deities, i.e. do not worship tāghūt besides Allāh).'" (An-Nahl 16:36)

And Muhammad (*sallAllāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) explained that what is required in order for a person to be judged as a Muslim in this life and thereby receive the protection of Islām is that he must leave everything which is worshipped besides Allāh and exclusively dedicate the worship to Allāh the Mighty and Majestic.

Abū Mālik Al-Ashja'ī – *radiAllāhu 'anhu* – said that the Messenger of Allāh (*sallAllāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

مَنْ قَالَ : لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ، وَكَفَرَ بِمَا يُعْبَدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ ، حَرَّمَ مَالُهُ ، وَدَمُهُ ، وَحَسَابُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ

"Whoever says *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* and rejects everything which is worshipped besides Allāh , his wealth and blood are protected, and his account is with Allāh ."

(Sahīh Muslim)

So based upon this, it is included in the understanding of *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* that the one who has not left the worship of something else than Allāh he is not considered a Muslim according to the clear evidences from the Qurān and *Sunnah*. If he ascribes to Islām then this does not benefit him, just like it didn't benefit Quraysh to ascribe themselves to Ibrāhīm and Ismā'īl ('*alayhima as-salam*) and to claim that they were upon the truth. The Book of Allāh judge people based upon the reality of their situation and not upon what they claim with their tongues and upon the fact that they themselves think that they are guided.

﴿ فَرِيقًا هَدَىٰ وَفَرِيقًا حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الضَّلَالَةُ إِنَّهُمْ اتَّخَذُوا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنََّّهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ ﴾

“A group He has guided, and a group deserved to be in error. Verily they took the *shayātīn* (devils) as *awliyā* (protectors, helpers, allied) instead of Allāh while they think that they are guided.” (Al-A'rāf 7:30)

So as long as a person remains upon his *shirk* the name *mushrik* is given to him whether or not he acknowledges being a *mushrik*, and whether or not the *hujjah* has been established upon him.

Conclusion

The easiest thing to conclude is, that all people whom received a messenger from Allāh who called them towards *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* understood solely from this request, that in order to become a Muslim (i.e. accept the call of their messenger) they had to leave the *shirk* which they were upon and disassociate themselves from it and its people. The verses in the Qurān, the Sunnah and the *tafsīr* confirms this with a confirmation that is without any doubt.

It can furthermore be concluded that whoever claims that a person can be a Muslim while committing *shirk*, or that declaring *takfīr* upon the *mushrik* is not from the meaning of *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, then his understanding of *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* is worse than the understanding of ‘Ād and Thamūd, who knew very well that it meant leaving *shirk*. So when leaving *shirk* is a part of *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, then whoever has not left *shirk* has not fulfilled *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, and whoever has not fulfilled *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* he is not a Muslim. Thus declaring *takfīr* (i.e. considering a person as a non-Muslim) is from what is understood from *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, just as leaving *shirk* is from what is understood from *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.

What testifies to this fact is that every *mushrik* (i.e. everyone committing one or another type of *shirk*) whether he ascribes himself to Islam or not, when he sees the punishment of Allāh the first thing he will do to try to save himself is to establish the Tawhīd of Allāh and reject whatever he used to worship besides Allāh. But it will be too late due to the fact that Allāh already sent messengers and revealed books to warn the people from the consequences of *shirk*. If there among the people committing *shirk* were those who were and will be excepted from the punishment of Allah – for example those who commit *shirk* while claiming to be Muslims – then they would verily have been mentioned when mentioning the people of *shirk* and their situation. Rather everyone who commits *shirk* are considered the same in the Book of Allāh and their judgment and final destination are the same.

﴿ فَلَمَّا رَأَوْا بُاسَنَا قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَكَفَرْنَا بِمَا كُنَّا بِهِ مُشْرِكِينَ (84) فَلَمْ يَكُ يَنْفَعُهُمْ إِيمَانُهُمْ لَمَّا رَأَوْا بُاسَنَا سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي قَدْ خَلَتْ فِي عِبَادِهِ وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴾

”So when they saw Our punishment they said: ‘We have believed in Allāh alone, and rejected that which we used to commit *shirk* to.’ But their belief did not benefit them when they saw Our punishment. (This is) the *Sunnah* of Allah in dealing with His slaves. And there the disbelievers lost (everything).” (Ghāfir 40:84-85)

Ibn Jarīr At-Tabarī – *rahimahullāh* – said in his *tafsīr* of the verse:

وَقَوْلُهُ (قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ) يَشْعُورُ : قَالُوا : أَفَرَزْنَا بِتَوْحِيدِ اللَّهِ ، وَصَدَقْنَا أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُهُ (وَكَفَرْنَا بِمَا كُنَّا بِهِ مُشْرِكِينَ) يَشْعُورُ : وَجَحَدْنَا
 الْآلِهَةَ الَّتِي كُنَّا قَبْلَ وَقْتِنَا هَذَا نُشْرِكُهَا فِي عِبَادَتِنَا اللَّهُ وَنَعْبُدُهَا مَعَهُ ، وَتَتَّخِذُهَا آلِهَةً ، فَبَرَّئْنَا مِنْهَا .

“And His words: ‘**We have believed in Allāh alone**’. He says: They said: We have acknowledged the Tawhīd of Allāh and believed in that there is no ilāh but Him, ‘**and rejected that which we used to commit shirk to.**’ He says: And we have rejected the ālihah which we used to worship before this time and (that we) gave part in our worship to Allāh and which we worshipped along with Him and took as ālihah, so we have disassociated ourselves from them.”

(Tafsīr At-Tabarī – Surah Ghafir)

It is either Tawhīd or *shirk*. Muslim or *mushrik*. There does not exist in the book of Allāh a person who claims to be a Muslim but is committing *shirk* and excused in this so he is a Muslim. Rather there exist a person committing *shirk* (i.e. a *mushrik*) and a person performing Tawhīd (i.e. a Muslim). ‘Ād knew this, Thamūd knew it, the other nations knew it, and we, the *muwahhidūn* of today know it with full certainty

So we say: Whoever commits *shirk* is a *mushrik*, and not a Muslim, and if he dies in that state before making *tawbah* then he will remain in hellfire forever, even though he used to claim to be a Muslim in *dunyā* and pray and fast. And whoever does not know that the one who commits *shirk* is a *mushrik* or he refuses to declare *takfīr* upon him while knowing his situation, then he is even further astray than the disbelieving nations of the messengers, who knew the meaning of *Lā ilāha illa Allāh* better than him. We advise these people to review their religion, and ponder on why and how they fail to understand that which the nations whom Allah destroyed easily could understand and comprehend from their first encounter with *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*.

May the peace and abundant blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and companions, and whoever follows them in goodness until the Day of Judgement.

Written by Abū Hājar