

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Series of Questions Addressed to Scholar Sheikh Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah,  
Ameer of Hizb ut Tahrir through his Facebook Page

**Answer to Question:**

**How can I Avoid Kufr or Shirk and Die a Muslim**

To: Islam Zidan

(Translated)

**Question:**

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh

How can I avoid Kufr (disbelief) or Shirk (polytheism) and die a Muslim? Because I do not want to be one of the greatest losers as to my deeds. Is Kufr only an action, a speech or a conviction???

Please answer, May Allah bless you.

**Answer:**

Wa Alaikum Assalam wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,

Your question is twofold:

The first: How one avoids Shirk (polytheism) and Kufr (disbelief) and dies a Muslim.

The second: Is Kufr an action, a speech or a conviction?

We will start by answering the second part of the question because the answer to the first part of the question is based on it...

**• Answer to the second part of the question:**

Aqeedah (creed) and Iman (belief) are in one sense, namely the decisive belief (*at-Tasdeeq al-jazim*) conforming to reality with an evidence, and the place of Iman in the heart. It is linked to the decisive belief (*at-Tasdeeq al-jazim*), and not merely a belief (*Tasdeeq*), and to be in conformity with reality and with an evidence, so that it is deep rooted in the heart, and then one becomes a believer (*mu'min*). The place of disbelief (Kufr) is also in the heart, because it is linked to *at-Tasdeeq*, and the place of *at-Tasdeeq* is in the heart ... Allah (swt) says:

﴿قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ﴾

**“The bedouins say, “We have believed.” Say, “You have not [yet] believed; but say [instead], ‘We have submitted,’ for faith has not yet entered your hearts. Because it was not settled in their hearts.” [Al-Hujurat: 14].**

﴿وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاشِدُونَ﴾

**“but Allah has endeared to you the faith and has made it pleasing in your hearts and has made hateful to you disbelief, defiance and disobedience. Those are the [rightly] guided.” [Al-Hujurat: 7].**

﴿مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

**“Whoever disbelieves in Allah after his belief... except for one who is forced [to renounce his religion] while his heart is secure in faith. But those who [willingly] open their breasts to disbelief, upon them is wrath from Allah , and for them is a great punishment” [An-Nahl: 106].**

Therefore, the orbit of Iman (belief) and Kufr (disbelief) is the assent of the heart and its conviction and not speech and action, because speech and action are the acts of senses and the tongue, which are not the assent of the heart ... Two things, however, must be noted in this context:

1 - Speech and action, although they do not constitute believe they may reflect the belief and show it, and in this case, the speech and the action take the verdict of the belief and through them one may disbelieve. A Muslim disbelieves in four situations:

a. Believing, such as if he believes something from other than Islam, for example to believe in the prophethood of someone after Muhammad (saw), like if someone believes in the prophethood of Qadiani, so he disbelieves by this belief because his heart is knotted upon something other than Islam.

b. Doubting, such as if he doubted a matter of certainty in Islam. So, if someone is doubtful in the prophethood of Muhammad (saw) he would be a Kafir because his heart is no longer knotted upon believing the prophethood of Muhammad (saw).

c. Speech that is indicative of a belief, such as if a person says that there is no Creator or that the Holy Quran is not the Word of Allah, then whoever says such a saying becomes a Kafir by his speech that demonstrates his belief. In this case, however, it is a requirement that the speech is not likely to be interpreted, rather the disbelief (Kufr) in it is clear and definite.

d. Action that is indicative of a belief, such as to prostrate to an idol or pray the prayers of Jews and Christians, for such an action is a reflection of the doctrine of its owner. Whoever prays to an idol or prays the prayer of Jews or Christians, he has disbelieved in doing so, because it is indicative of his belief that is contrary to Islam. As well as in this case the action is not likely to be interpreted, but the Kufr in it is clear and definite.

These are the four situations in which a Muslim becomes a Kafir. As for the belief in something other than Islam and doubt about something that has been definite from Islam, it is evident that they are actions of the heart, because belief and doubt are linked to assent (*at-Tasdeeq*). However, actions and speeches are not linked to the actions of the heart but are the actions of the senses and the tongue. But because they are linked to the actions of the heart, by their indication to what is in the heart of belief, they were treated as belief in the above-mentioned examples ... The rest of the speeches and actions that do not characterize the belief of their owner remain outside the domain of Kufr and Iman, such as the one committing a sin while he holds Islam and its creed... Therefore, Muslims followed not to declare a Muslim a Kafir (Takfeer) by a sin that he perpetrated except if it was denial. Such as he who does not fast while denying the obligation of fasting. This is Kufr. Whereas, he who does not fast but holds fasting to be obligatory is a sinner and not a Kafir. The Messenger (saw) said: «إِذَا قَالَ الرَّجُلُ لِأَخِيهِ يَا كَافِرُ فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِهِ أَحَدُهُمَا» **“When a person calls his brother (in Islam) a disbeliever, one of the two will yield the title.”** Narrated by Bukhari from the chain of Abu Hurayrah. And in the narration of Ahmad on the authority of Ibn 'Umar from the Messenger (saw) who said:... «مَنْ كَفَرَ أَخَاهُ فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِهَا أَحَدُهُمَا» **“Whoever calls his brother (in Islam) a disbeliever, one of them will one of the two will yield that.”**

2. The decisive belief (*at-Tasdeeq al-jazim*) in the language has an indication of commitment, and it is the agreement of the tongue with the heart, and not to deny what he decisively believed in. So, one do not say that I believe in Allah, and I assert authoritatively that He is the Creator of this universe and He has no partner, and then he says that Allah wrongs or has a partner or He is not the Creator. Or he denies an obligation made by Allah (swt), the Creator of the universe, if it was proven with certainty that He (swt) has made it an obligation. Such as if one says he believes in Allah and then he denies the prayer or fasting or any matter known by Islam of necessity ..., then this person becomes a Kafir because he denies Allah's command that is definitively proven.

Like this, Iblis disbelieved, may Allah curse him, because he denied the soundness of Allah's command to him to prostrate to Adam, although he believes in the existence of Allah, but denies the soundness of His command. Allah (swt) says:

﴿قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَّا تَسْجُدَ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ﴾

**“[Allah] said "What prevented you from prostrating when I commanded you" [Satan] said "I am better than him You created me from fire and created him from clay".”** [Al-A'raf: 12].

He declared that Allah is wrong in commanding him to prostrate ... Iblis, may Allah curse him, saw that it is correct that Adam should prostrate to him and him not to prostrate to Adam, and he denied, may Allah curse him, the soundness of Allah's command, thus he was of the Kafir criminals. Likewise, those who had conviction in their hearts of the soundness of the verses which Moses,

peace be upon him, brought to them but denied them with their tongues and considered them magic, they had disbelieved. Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ﴾

**“And they rejected them, while their [inner] selves were convinced thereof, out of injustice and haughtiness. So see how was the end of the corrupters.” [An-Naml: 14].**

#### **In conclusion:**

The origin of Kufr is that it is a conviction (of something other than Islam), which is not a speech or an action, unless the speech or the action expresses a belief or denial of what is definite in Islam. In these cases, action and speech take the verdict of belief and they become Kufr, Allah forbid.

#### **• Answer for the first part of the question:**

As for how one avoids Kufr and Shirk and dies a Muslim, the reference to this is two basic things:

1 - To take the doctrine through the correct methodology that is indicated in the Holy Quran and the purified Sunnah of the Prophet (saw). And we can summarize its most important features in the following points:

a. Taking the belief with certainty, not speculation (*dhann*). That is, the evidences that indicate the required subject should be indisputable evidences in provenance and interpretation.

The Almighty said:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ لَيُسَمُّونَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تَسْمِيَةَ الْأُنثَى \* وَمَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا﴾

**“Indeed, those who do not believe in the Hereafter name the angels female names \* And they have thereof no knowledge. They follow not except assumption, and indeed, assumption avails not against the truth at all.” [An-Najm: 27-28].**

Thus, speculation is not sufficient in the doctrine (Aqeedah), but it must be with absolute certainty.

B - Adopting the rational (*aqli*) evidence in the understanding of the Aqeedah in things that are under the perception of the senses, like thinking about Allah’s creatures. And adopting textual evidences (*daleel naqli*) brought by the revelation in the unseen matters that are not under our sensation. And standing only at what is stated in the text, that is not to complicate the study of the Islamic Aqeedah and its philosophy. Instead, Aqeedah must be taken and understood easily and simply at the same time in depth and enlightenment, just as it was taken and understood by the Companions of the Messenger (saw):

• One thinks, ponders, and looks at the creatures and realizes that they have a Creator. Allah (swt) says:

﴿أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ \* وَإِلَى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ \* وَإِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ \* وَإِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ﴾

**“Then do they not look at the camels - how they are created \* And at the sky - how it is raised? \* And at the mountains - how they are erected? And at the earth - how it is spread out?” [Al-Ghashiyah: 17-20].**

And He (swt) says:

﴿أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ \* أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بَلْ لَا يُوقِنُونَ﴾

**“Or were they created by nothing, or were they the creators [of themselves]? \* Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Rather, they are not certain.” [At-Tur: 7].**

And Almighty says:

﴿وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِلْمُوقِنِينَ \* وَفِي أَنفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ﴾

**“And on the earth are signs for the certain [in faith]. And in yourselves. Then will you not see?” [Adh-Dhariyat: 20-21].**

• Then he contemplates upon the verses of the Holy Quran, which is accessible to whoever Allah made it easy for him:

﴿وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ﴾

**“And We have certainly made the Qur'an easy for remembrance, so is there any who will remember?”** [Al-Qamar: 17]

and believes in what it contains of the provisions and the unseen and does not engage in the unseen which are beyond our senses, but he believes in them as stated by the revelation. So, he believes in the names of Allah as received, but does not engage in the essence of Allah ...

﴿لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ﴾

**“Vision perceives Him not, but He perceives [all] vision; and He is the Subtle, the Acquainted.”** [Al-Ana'm: 103]

And he believes in all the unseen: in the Last Day, in Paradise (Jannah), Hellfire, etc., but he is restricted in that to what is stated in the Quran and the proven Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (saw) without increase or decrease. The Almighty says:

﴿تِلْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهَا إِلَيْكَ مَا كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُهَا أَنْتَ وَلَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ هَذَا فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ الْعَاقِبَةَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

**“That is from the news of the unseen which We reveal to you, [O Muhammad]. You knew it not, neither you nor your people, before this. So be patient; indeed, the [best] outcome is for the righteous.”** [Hud: 49].

And He (swt) says:

﴿قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ﴾

**“Say, "None in the heavens and earth knows the unseen except Allah, and they do not perceive when they will be resurrected.”** [An-Naml: 65].

2. The Muslim should be sincere in his intention to Allah (swt), truthful with His Messenger (saw), relying on Allah Almighty, guided by His guidance, fearing Him, abstaining from injustice and disobedience and asking Allah (swt) to keep him firm on the Truth (*al-Haq*) and Iman. As stated in the Hadith narrated by al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan from Anas who said: The Messenger of Allah (saw) often says: « يَا مُغَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ » **“O changer of the hearts, make my heart firm upon Your religion.”** And then Allah, by His permission, will keep him firm with the firm word:

﴿يُنَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ﴾

**“Allah keeps firm those who believe, with the firm word, in worldly life and in the Hereafter. And Allah sends astray the wrongdoers. And Allah does what He wills.”** [Ibrahim: 27].

And the more righteous, sincere and truthful he is, Allah will ease his matter. He (swt) says:

﴿فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَى وَاتَّقَى \* وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى \* فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْيُسْرَى \* وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَى \* وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَى \* فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَى \* وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّى \* إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَى \* وَإِنَّ لَنَا لَلْآخِرَةَ وَالْأُولَى﴾

**“As for he who gives and fears Allah \* And believes in the best [reward], \* We will ease him toward ease.\* But as for he who withholds and considers himself free of need. \* And denies the best [reward], \* We will ease him toward difficulty. \* And what will his wealth avail him when he falls? \* Indeed, [incumbent] upon Us is guidance. \* And indeed, to Us belongs the Hereafter and the first [life].”** [Al-Layl: 5- 13].

3 - In conclusion, I draw the attention of the questioner that, a Muslim is he who believes in the Aqeedah (doctrine) of Islam, that is he is in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day and the QaDaa and Qadar, the good and bad of which are from Allah, as stated in the Book of Allah Almighty:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا﴾

**“O you who have believed, believe in Allah and His Messenger and the Book that He sent down upon His Messenger and the Scripture which He sent down before. And whoever disbelieves in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day has certainly gone far astray.” [An-Nisa: 136].**

And as stated in the Hadeeth of the Prophet (saw) narrated by Bukhari from Abu Hurayrah, and narrated by Muslim from Abdullah ibn Umar, and the word is of Muslim: Abdullah ibn Umar said: my father Omar ibn al-Khattab related to me that, While we were one day sitting with the Messenger of Allah (saw) there appeared before us a man dressed in extremely white clothes and with very black hair. No traces of journeying were visible on him, and none of us knew him. He sat down close by the Prophet (saw) rested his knees against the knees of the Prophet (saw) and placed his palms over his thighs, and said: "O Muhammad! Inform me about Islam." The Messenger of Allah (saw) replied: «الإِسْلَامُ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَتَقِيمَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَتُؤْتِيَ الزَّكَاةَ، وَتَصُومَ رَمَضَانَ، وَتَحُجَّ الْبَيْتَ إِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا» "Islam is that you should testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger (saw), that you should perform salah (ritual prayer), pay the zakah, fast during Ramadan, and perform Hajj (pilgrimage) to the House (the Ka`bah at Makkah), if you can find a way to it (or find the means for making the journey to it)." He said: "You have spoken the truth." We were astonished at his thus questioning him (saw) and then telling him that he was right, but he went on to say, "Inform me about Iman (faith)." He (the Prophet) answered, «أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ، وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ، وَكُتُبِهِ، وَرُسُلِهِ، وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدْرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ» "It is that you believe in Allah and His angels and His Books and His Messengers and in the Last Day, and in fate (qadar), both in its good and in its evil aspects." He said, "You have spoken the truth." Then he (the man) said, "Inform me about Ihsan." He (the Prophet) answered: «أَنْ تُعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَمَا تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ» "It is that you should serve Allah as though you could see Him, for though you cannot see Him yet He sees you." .... Thereupon the man went off. I waited a while, and then he (the Prophet) said: «يَا عُمَرُ أَنْتَ ذِي السَّئَالِ؟» "O `Umar, do you know who that questioner was?" I replied, "Allah and His Messenger know better." He said: «فَأَبَاهُ جِبْرِيلُ أَنْتَا كُمْ يُعَلِّمُكُمْ» "That was Jibril. He came to teach you your religion."

To conclude, I ask Allah (swt) to give the questioner a good life spent in obedience to Allah (swt) and obedience to His Messenger (saw), that he may attain in both realms, and that is a great attainment.

**Your brother,**

**Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah**

3<sup>rd</sup> Sha'ban 1438 AH

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**The link to the answer from the Ameer's Facebook page:**

<https://web.facebook.com/AmeerhtAtabinKhalil/photos/a.122855544578192.1073741828.122848424578904/624436491086759/?type=3&theater>

**The link to the answer from the Ameer's Google Plus page:**

<https://plus.google.com/u/0/b/100431756357007517653/100431756357007517653/posts/PnfJSevTy2k>

**The link to the answer from the Ameer's Twitter page:**

<https://twitter.com/ataabualrashtah/status/860480096355987456>