

Al-Taqiyya, Dissimulation Part 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Assalamu `Alaykum,

Today, I would like to present the concept of "al-Taqiyya" in the following exposition. This topic is as thorny as previous ones have been, and many people have experienced great difficulty in trying to understand it. I pray to Allah (SWT) that this discussion will help loosen some of the intellectual rust that has accumulated over the years in many peoples' minds.

The interminable negative propaganda that people are bombarded with on a daily basis serves to nurture feelings of animosity and disbelief towards the Shi'a; additionally, it may promote the explicit denial of proven facts and truths. Nonetheless, you owe it to yourself to search for the truth; and, indeed, Allah (SWT) has commanded that you do.

As such, it is your prerogative to believe or reject everything that the Shi'a claim; but my plea is that the next time you hear a discussion about the Shi'a in your Mosque, or any place else, please remember my posts, and question the person who is discussing the topic. Only then, will you see my point, In Sha' Allah (SWT).

I intend to demonstrate and prove that the concept of "al-Taqiyya" is an integral part of Islam, and that it is NOT a Shi'ite concoction.

As usual, the two perspectives, the Sunnis and the Shi'a, will be presented to maintain a level of fairness and integrity in the reporting of this topic.

Introduction

The word "al-Taqiyya" literally means: "Concealing or disguising one's beliefs, convictions, ideas, feelings, opinions, and/or strategies at a time of eminent danger, whether now or later in time, to save oneself from physical and/or mental injury." A one-word translation would be "Dissimulation."

The above definition must be elaborated upon before any undertaking of this topic is to ensue. Although correct, the definition suffers from an apparent generalization, and lacks some fundamental details that should be construed:

First, the concealment of one's beliefs does not necessitate an ABANDONMENT of these beliefs. The distinction between "concealment" and "abandonment" MUST be noted here.

Second, there are numerous exceptions to the above definition, and they MUST be judged according to the situation that one is placed in. As such, one should NOT make a narrow-minded generalization that encompasses all situations, thereby failing to fully absorb the spirit of the definition.

Third, the word "beliefs" and/or "convictions" does NOT necessarily mean "religious" beliefs and/or convictions.

With the above in mind, it becomes evident that a better, and more accurate definition of "al-Taqiyya" is "diplomacy." The true spirit of "al-Taqiyya" is better embodied in the single word "diplomacy" because it encompasses a comprehensive spectrum of behaviors that serve to further the vested interests of all parties involved.

Al-Taqiyya According To The Sunnis

Some Sunnis assert that al-Taqiyya is an act of pure hypocrisy that serves to conceal the truth and reveal that which is the exact opposite (of the truth). Furthermore, according to those Sunnis, al-Taqiyya constitutes a lack of faith and trust in Allah (SWT) because the person who conceals his beliefs to spare himself from eminent danger is fearful of humans, when, in fact, he should be fearful of Allah (SWT) only. As such, this person is a coward.

Sunni Sources In Support Of Al-Taqiyya

The following exposition will Insha Allah demonstrate the existence of al-Taqiyya in the Qur'an, Hadith, the Prophet's (S) custom, and the companions' custom. As usual, Sunni books will be used to further the argument. This is in keeping with the commitment to reveal the truth by showing that the Sunnis reject the Shi'a's arguments, while their own books are replete (full) with the same ideologies that the Shi'a uphold!

Although some Wahhabis staunchly argue their aforementioned statements, and aggressively defame the Shi'a and refute their doctrines, they have failed to explain the validity of their argument vis-a-vis the existence of these same doctrines in their own books, as has been demonstrated in all the past posts about the Shi'a.

Those who think that they are the true protectors of the custom of the Prophet (S) and the only guardians of the Islamic Faith, how can they explain their own rejection of that which they are supposed to protect? Rejecting al-Taqiyya is rejecting the Qur'an, as will be shown shortly.

Let's Begin...

Reference 1

Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti in his book, "al-Durr al-Manthoor Fi al-Tafsir al-Ma'athoor," narrates Ibn Abbas', the most renowned and trusted narrator of tradition in the sight of the Sunnis, opinion regarding al-Taqiyya in the Qur'anic verse: "Let not the believers take for friends or helpers unbelievers rather than believers: if any do that, (they) shall have no relation left with Allah except by way of precaution ("tat-taqooh"), that ye may guard yourselves ("tooqatan") from them....(3:28)" that Ibn Abbas said:

"al-Taqiyya is with the tongue only; he who has been coerced into saying that which angers Allah (SWT), and his heart is comfortable (i.e., his TRUE faith has not been shaken.), then (saying that which he has been coerced to say) will not harm him (at all); (because) al-Taqiyya is with the tongue only, (not the heart)."

Note: The two words "tat-taqooh" and "tooqatan," as mentioned in the Arabic Qur'an, are BOTH from the same root of "al-Taqiyya."

Note Also: The "heart" as referred to above and in later occurrences refers to the center of faith in an individual's existence. It is mentioned many times in the Qur'an.

Reference 2

Ibn Abbas also commented on the above verse, as narrated in Sunan al-Bayhaqi and Mustadrak al-Hakim, by saying:

"al-Taqiyya is the uttering of the tongue, while the heart is comfortable with faith."

Note: The meaning is that the tongue is permitted to utter anything in a time of need, as long as the heart is not affected; and one is still comfortable with faith.

Reference 3

Abu Bakr al-Razi in his book, "Ahkam al-Qur'an," v2, p10, has explained the aforementioned verse

"...except by way of precaution ("tat-taqooh"), that ye may guard yourselves ("tooqatan") from them....(3:28)" by affirming that al-Taqiyya should be used when one is afraid for life and/or limb. In addition, he has narrated that Qutadah said with regards to the above verse:

"It is permissible to speak words of unbelief when al-Taqiyya is mandatory."

Reference 4

It has been narrated by Abd al-Razak, Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Mardawayh, al-Bayhaqi in his book "al-Dala'il," and it was corrected by al-Hakim in his book "al-Mustadrak" that:

"The nonbelievers arrested `Ammar Ibn Yasir (ra) and (tortured him until) he (ra) uttered foul words about the Prophet (S), and praised their gods (idols); and when they released him (ra), he (ra) went straight to the Prophet (S). The Prophet (S) said: "Is there something on your mind?" `Ammar Ibn Yasir (ra) said: "Bad (news)! They would not release me until I defamed you (S) and praised their gods!" The Prophet (S) said: "How do you find your heart to be?" `Ammar (ra) answered: "Comfortable with faith." So the Prophet (S) said: "Then if they come back for you, then do the same thing all over again." Allah (SWT) at that moment revealed the verse: ***"....except under compulsion, his heart remaining firm in faith... (16: 106)"***

Note: The full verse that was quoted partially as part of the tradition above, is:

"Any one who, after accepting Faith in Allah, utters unbelief, EXCEPT UNDER COMPULSION, his heart remaining firm in faith -- but such as open their breast to unbelief, -- on them is Wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a dreadful Chastisement (16: 106)." (Emphasis Mine)

Reference 5

It is narrated in Sunan al-Bayhaqi that Ibn Abbas explained the above verse "Any one who, after accepting Faith in Allah, utters unbelief....(16: 106)" by saying:

"The meaning that Allah (SWT) is conveying is that he who utters unbelief after having believed, shall deserve the Wrath of Allah (SWT) and a terrible punishment. However, those who have been coerced, and as such uttered with their tongues that which their hearts did not confirm to escape persecution, have nothing to fear; for Allah (SWT) holds His (SWT) servants responsible for that which their hearts have ratified."

Reference 6

Another explanation of the above verse is provided by Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti in his book, "al-Durr al-Manthoor Fi al-Tafsir al-Ma'athoor," vol. 2, p178; he says:

"Ibn Abi Shaybah, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Munzir, and Ibn Abi Hatim narrated on the authority of Mujtahid (a man's

name) that this verse was revealed in relation to the following event: A group of people from Mecca accepted Islam and professed their belief; as a result, the companions in Medina wrote to them requesting that they emigrate to Medina; for if they don't do so, they shall not be considered as those who are among the believers.

In compliance, the group left Mecca, but were soon ambushed by the nonbelievers (Quraish) before reaching their destination; they were coerced into disbelief, and they professed it. As a result, the verse

"...except under compulsion, his heart remaining firm in faith (Qur'an 16: 106)..."

was revealed."

Reference 7

Ibn Sa'd in his book, "al-Tabaqat al-Kubra," narrates on the authority of Ibn Sirin that:

The Prophet (S) saw `Ammar Ibn Yasir (ra) crying, so he (S) wiped off his (ra) tears, and said: "The nonbelievers arrested you and immersed you in water until you said such and such (i.e., bad-mouthing the Prophet (S) and praising the pagan gods to escape persecution); if they come back, then say it again."

Reference 8

It is narrated in al-Sirah al-Halabiyah, v3, p61, that:

After the conquest of the city of Khaybar by the Muslims, the Prophet (S) was approached by Hajaj Ibn `Aalat and told: "O Prophet of Allah: I have in Mecca some excess wealth and some relatives, and I would like to have them back; am I excused if I bad-mouth you (to escape persecution)?" The Prophet (S) excused him and said:

"Say whatever you have to say."

Reference 9

It is narrated by al-Ghazzali in his book, "Ihya `Uloom al-Din," that:

Safeguarding of a Muslim's life is a mandatory obligation that should be observed; and that LYING is permissible when the shedding of a Muslim's blood is at stake.

Reference 10

Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti in his book, "al-Ashbah Wa al-Naza'ir," affirms that:

"it is acceptable (for a Muslim) to eat the meat of a dead animal at a time of great hunger (starvation to

the extent that the stomach is devoid of all food); and to loosen a bite of food (for fear of choking to death) by alcohol; and to utter words of unbelief; and if one is living in an environment where evil and corruption are the pervasive norm, and permissible things (Halal) are the exception and a rarity, then one can utilize whatever is available to fulfill his needs."

Note: The reference to the consumption of a dead animal is meant to illustrate that even forbidden things become permissible in a time of need.

Reference 11

Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti in his book, "al-Durr al-Manthoor Fi al-Tafsir al- Ma'athoor,"v2, p176, narrates that:

Abd Ibn Hameed, on the authority of al-Hassan, said: "al-Taqiyya is permissible until the Day of Judgment."

Reference 12

Narrated in Sahih al-Bukhari, v7, p102, that Abu al-Darda' said:

"(Verily) we smile for some people, while our hearts curse (those same people)."

Reference 13

Narrated in Sahih al-Bukhari, v7, p81, that the Prophet (S) said:

"O `Aisha, the worst of people in the sight of Allah (SWT) are those that are avoided by others due to their extreme impudence."

NOTE: The meaning here is that one is permitted to use diplomacy to get along with people. The above tradition was narrated when a person sought permission to see the Holy Prophet (S) and prior to his asking permission the Prophet (S) said that he was not a good man, but still I shall see him. The Prophet talked to the person with utmost respect, upon which Aisha inquired as to why did the Prophet (S) talk to the person with respect despite his character, upon which the above reply was rendered.

Reference 14

Narrated in Sahih Muslim (English version), Chapter 1077 v4, p1373, Tradition #6303:

Humaid b. `Abd al-Rahman b. `Auf reported that his mother Umm Kulthum daughter of `Uqba b. Abu Mu`ait, and she was one amongst the first emigrants who pledged allegiance to Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him), as saying that she heard Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: A liar is not one who tries to bring reconciliation amongst people and speaks good (in order to avert

dispute), or he conveys good. Ibn Shihab said he did not hear that exemption was granted in anything what the people speak as lie but in three cases: in battle, for bringing reconciliation amongst persons and the narration of the words of the husband to wife, and the narration of the words of a wife to her husband (in a twisted form in order to bring reconciliation between them).

The (Sunni) commentator of this volume of Sahih Muslim, Abdul Hamid Siddiqi, provides the following commentary:

Telling of a lie is a grave sin but a Muslim is permitted to tell a lie in some exceptional cases, and this permission is given especially on three occasions: in case of battle for bringing reconciliation amongst the hostile Muslims and for bringing reconciliation between the husband and the wife. On the analogy (Qiyas) of these three cases, the scholars of Hadith have pointed out some other exemptions:

for saving the life and honor of innocent person from the highhandedness of tyrants and oppressors if one finds no other way to save them.

Notice that neither the above tradition nor the commentary are concerned with dealing with non-Muslims only.

Please refer to Sahih Muslim Volume IV

Chapter 1077

Tradition no. 6303 p1373

English only – Abdul Hamid Siddiqui

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