Critical Examination of the Murji'ah Doctrine on the Separation of 'Faith' and 'Deed' with Emphasis on the Quranic Style of Rhetorical *Taṣrīf*

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT

SUBJECT & OBJECTIVES: Despite the rich background of discussions on the relationship between *Īmān* (faith) and *'Amal* (deed) in Islamic theological, exegetical, and ethical texts, this relationship has rarely been explored from a linguistic and stylistic perspective—particularly through the lens of *Taṣrīf* (semantic diversification) in the Quran. Pre-modern scholarship on Islamic doctrinal movements, notably the Murjiʾa, has predominantly engaged in theological and content-based analysis of their central tenet: the conceptual decoupling of faith from religious deeds. However, the lack of research into the Quran's rhetorical representation of this relationship opens a new lens for examining faith and deed as a conceptual and linguistic continuum within the divine text.

METHOD & FINDING: This study employs an analytical-comparative methodology to critically examine the doctrinal separation of faith and deed. Numerous Quranic verses emphasize the inseparable connection between faith and righteous deed. These two concepts are frequently mentioned together within the Quran, leading to the conclusion that faith and righteous deed are interdependent in the Quranic perspective. Faith without deeds is merely a verbal claim, i.e., its true realization is only possible through righteous deeds.

CONCLUSION: Employing an innovative method of linguistic inference based on the Quranic style of *Taṣrīf,* this study demonstrates that even through the analysis of verses from the perspective of *Taṣrīf* techniques, one can discern the fundamental interconnection and coherence between faith and deed. Moreover, examining the verses related to faith and deed in light of rhetorical *Taṣrīf* reveals new layers of this relationship—most notably, the elevated reflection of action over faith, showing that action is not merely a function of faith, but in certain contexts, it also serves as the very means through which faith is manifested, strengthened, and actualized.

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Introduction

The separation or unity of faith and deed has long been an argumentative issue in religious and Quranic discourse. Citing some Quranic verses (e.g., 39:53), some scholars consider faith independent of deed, arguing that sin weakens but does not nullify faith (Abū Ḥanīfah, 1984, p. 127). Conversely, others, based on some other verses (e.g., 103:3), regard deed as an inseparable part of faith (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1995, Vol. 9, p. 12). These divergences, rooted in interpretive differences, have shaped historical debates on salvation. Overstating the independence of faith risks neglecting its necessary bond with deed, fostering the misconception that faith alone ensures salvation (Ṣāliḥī Shāmī, 1994, p. 159).

This study approaches the issue through *Taṣrīf*, a distinctive Quranic rhetorical feature that has received limited scholarly attention. Unlike earlier works relying primarily on theological or exegetical frameworks, it highlights *Taṣrīf* as a semantic and discursive strategy whereby God communicates one consistent truth through varied expressions adapted to different audiences—warnings for disbelievers, glad tidings for believers, and parables for the public (Anṣārī-Moqaddam, 2023, pp. 40-85). While diverse in style, the Quran's message remains constant: the inseparable link between faith and righteous action. By systematically analysing *Taṣrīf*, this research contributes a novel lens for understanding the balance between belief and practice in Quranic teaching.

Conceptual Framework

1. *Īmān* (Faith)

The term *Īmān* (faith) is linguistically derived from the causative form of the Arabic root *a-m-n*, denoting the absence of fear and panic (Faraḥīdī, 1990, p. 377; Jawharī, 1984, p. 2071). Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī interprets it as inner tranquillity and freedom from fear (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1992, p. 25), while Ibn Fāris emphasizes its meaning as *Taṣdīq* (affirmation) (Ibn Fāris, 1984, p. 133). Ibn Manẓūr extends the concept to include trustworthiness, affirmation, and belief, highlighting its multidimensional nature (Ibn Manẓūr, 1994, p. 140). Together, these views reflect *Īmān* as both a psychological state of peace and a firm inner affirmation of divine truth.

ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī defines *Īmān* as a firm inner conviction and confidence in a belief, such that the individual feels secure regarding that belief and is not afflicted by doubt, since doubt, he argues, is the affliction of faith (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1995, Vol. 1, p. 72). Similarly, Shaykh Ṭabrisī defines faith as the affirmation of all that one knows God has made obligatory to affirm (Ṭabarsī, 1981, Vol. 10, p. 238).

Faith, in its comprehensive sense, is a state of inner assurance and spiritual tranquillity, accompanied by the conscious acceptance and affirmation of divine beliefs. This state frees the

individual from doubt and anxiety, directing them toward practical commitment to what God has deemed obligatory to believe in and uphold. Thus, faith embodies a synthesis of psychological security, internal affirmation, and adherence to divine norms.

2. ʿ*Amal* (Deed)

The term ʿ*Amal* means to produce an effect in something (ʿAskarī, 1980, p. 12), and encompasses all actions performed by humans with knowledge, thought, intention, and will (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1992, p. 587). Some scholars also derive it from inner human states (Muṣṭafāwī, 1989, p. 225). The phrase ʿ*Amal al-Ṣāliḥ* in the Quran refers to actions deemed worthy and acceptable to God. ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī defines it as:

- Deed worthy of acceptance, performed with pure intention for divine pleasure (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1995, Vol. 17, p. 21).
- All righteous deeds—from prescribed worship to social ethics such as charity, justice, and altruism—are subsumed under the theological category of ʿ*Amal al-Ṣāliḥ* (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1995, Vol. 3, p. 425).

Consequently, righteous deeds are behaviours that combine a praiseworthy essence with pure intention and divine motivation.

3. *Taṣrīf*

Taṣrīf is derived from the root *ṣ-r-f*, which means to turn or transform something into another state (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1992, p. 482). Technically, *Taṣrīf* refers to expressing a single meaning through diverse methods and discourses (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1995, Vol. 13, p. 28). Ṭabarsī defines it as presenting varied examples to stimulate the audience's reflection (Ṭabarsī, 1981, Vol. 15, p. 8). However, Makārim Shīrāzī explains it as conveying a single truth through multiple forms such as historical narratives, direct address, or depictions of the Hereafter (Makārim Shīrāzī, 1995, Vol. 13, p. 311).

In this research, *Uslūb al-Taṣrīf* signifies the Quran's method of discourse construction and meaning elaboration through varied expressions. Unlike restrictive interpretive approaches (e.g., lexical or contextual analysis), this method employs a systemic and multi-layered examination of inter-verse connections. The principal hermeneutic advantage of *Uslūb al-Taṣrīf* lies in its capacity to transcend context-specific interpretations by analyzing the Quran's holistic discursive structure, thereby yielding a more profound and integrated comprehension of divine revelation. Thus, God Almighty employs the stylistic device of *Taṣrīf* in the Quran to achieve rhetorical variety, conceptual emphasis, and deeper impact on the audience. This diversity in modes of expression—including parables, conditional clauses, exceptions, contrasts, and rhetorical questions—enables theological, moral, and educational concepts to penetrate the human heart on both intellectual and emotional levels. Moreover, through purposeful and varied repetition of verses, *Taṣrīf* serves to exhaust all excuses, firmly

establish divine proof, and facilitate broader and more accessible reception of the divine message.

4. Murji'ah Doctrine

The term Murjiʾah derives from *Irjāʾ*, meaning postponement or deferral (Shahristānī, 1956, p. 161). The Murjiʾah was one of the theological schools within Sunnism, a denomination in Islam. While the idea and tendency appeared under the Umayyad rule, it crystallized as a theological school toward the end of the first century AH. The designation itself stems from their core doctrine, which holds that deeds are deferred in relation to intention and faith (Baghdādī, 1977, p. 190). Thus, sinful actions do not harm faith; accordingly, *Rajāʾ* (hope) also conveys the meaning of expectation within this sect (Majlisī, 1983, p. 297). They held that whoever commits a grave sin will not necessarily dwell eternally in Hell; rather, their case is left to God's judgment (Shahristānī, 1956, p. 162). Every intellectual current is formed around a set of fundamental questions. The central question within Murjiʾah thought was whether the perpetrator of a major sin would be consigned to eternal damnation or not. From this inquiry, they sought to delineate the boundaries of faith and to define who qualifies as a believer (Majlisī, 1956, p. 297).

Literature Review

The notion of separating faith from deed is among the most contentious issues in the history of Islamic theology. Particularly in doctrinal, exegetical, and theological discourses, this issue has served as a focal point of foundational disputes among various schools and sects, consistently raising important theoretical and interpretive questions. Existing studies on the subject can be classified into three major categories:

- **Theological–Historical Studies (Early Islamic Centuries):**

Works such as *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* by al-Ashʿarī, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* by Shahristānī, and *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* by al-Baghdādī trace the theoretical roots of the separation of faith and deed in the thought of the Murjiʾah, Khārijites, Muʿtazilites, and Ahl al-Ḥadīth. These texts commonly identify the Murjiʾah as the chief proponents of such separation, whereas the Khārijites and Muʿtazilites are portrayed as advocates of the intrinsic unity between the two. These sources are primarily sectarian in nature, focusing more on documenting doctrinal positions than on offering conceptual or rhetorical analyses.

- **Exegetical–Scriptural Studies:**

Classical and contemporary exegetes of the Qur'an, such as Ṭabarsī in *Majmaʿ al-Bayān* (1981), Fakhr al-Rāzī in *Tafsīr al-Kabīr* (2000), al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī in al-*Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Quran* (1995), and Jawādī Āmulī in *Tafsīr al-Tasnīm* (2002), have each engaged with Quranic verses

concerning faith and action, offering perspectives on their interrelation. However, most of these exegeses have been profoundly shaped by the theological inclinations of the exegete, with rhetorical, stylistic, or structural analyses playing only a marginal role. Consequently, although these interpretations provide valuable content, their analytical methods remain confined to surface-level semantic approaches.

- **Contemporary Analytical–Philosophical and Sociological Studies:**

In the modern era, thinkers such as Naṣr Ḥāmid Abu Zayd, Faḍl al-Raḥmān, and Moḥammed Arkūn have explored the relationship between faith and deed within the context of evolving religious epistemology, modernity, and social transformation in Muslim societies. Some studies have also examined this issue through political–ideological lenses, including the role of the Murjiʾah in legitimizing Umayyad political authority or the critique of dogmatic interpretations through hermeneutical approaches. While these works offer significant contributions to discourse analysis, they often move away from the textual layers of the Quran, instead centering on the historical, political, and ideological consequences of this theological separation.

Persian scholarship contributes complementary perspectives, some of which come as follows:

- Dabbāgh and Nāseh (2018), in an article titled '*An Exegetical Analysis of the Levels and Degrees of Faith and Disbelief and the Relationship Between Faith and Righteous Deed*', offer a general discussion of the degrees of faith and an overview of its relation to righteous deed. discuss levels of faith and its link to righteous action.

- ʿAlī Gholāmī Dehqī (2008) in the book *'The Murjiʾah: Causes and Factors Behind Its Emergence'* centers on the historical and social background of the idea of separating faith from deed. However, it does not engage with Quranic or conceptual analysis.

- Majīd Maʿārif (2007), in his article *'Investigating the Roots of Antinomianism in Quranic Verses and Narrations, with Emphasis on a Comparative Study of the Relationship Between Faith and Deed in Theological Perspectives,'* focuses on a general comparative analysis of religious texts. The study, however, lacks a stylistic or structural engagement with the Quranic verses themselves.

- The article by Maḥmūdīān and Raẓavī (2016), *'The Intellectual Parallels Between the Murjiʾah and Secularism'*, attempts to highlight the conceptual similarities between

Murjiʾite thought and secularism. Yet, its focus on comparative and sociological aspects distances it from the Quranic-centered aims of the present study.

- The classical work *Sharḥ al-ʿAqīdah al-Ṭaḥāwiyyah* (2005), authored by Ibn Abi'l ʿIzz, elucidates the traditional Ḥanafī stance on faith and deed through the views of al-Ṭaḥāwī. While clearly critical of the Murjiʾah, this work lacks methodological innovation in its theological analysis.

- John B. Noss (2017), in *A History of the World's Religions*, briefly notes sectarian differences.

Despite these efforts, a significant gap remains since prior works have rarely engaged with Quranic rhetorical and structural features such as syntax, lexical symmetry, semantic *Taṣrīf*, and discursive cohesion. The present inquiry rectifies this scholarly gap through the application of *Taṣrīf* as a stylistic and hermeneutic framework, thereby facilitating a critical re-examination of the faith–deed nexus. Unlike earlier works bound to theological or exegetical readings, it foregrounds the Quran's compositional strategies, offering a more nuanced, textually faithful perspective that enables a rethinking of traditional and sectarian approaches.

Research Method
Beyond resolving theological ambiguities, this study refines concepts such as salvation and righteous deed, offering a documented framework for future scholarship. Its methodology is analytical-comparative, grounded in library sources (Dehnavi, 1999, p. 23). This study benefited from authoritative works free of personal bias (Nādirī & Seif Narāghi, 1999, p. 72; Nekūnām, 2000, p. 6), while the analytical method of the article focuses on extracting and examining Quranic expressions on faith and deed.

The comparative aspect juxtaposes the ideological foundations of differing views, weighing them against one another so that one may be validated and the other refuted based on credible evidence. By employing Quranic *Taṣrīf* together with diverse syntactic and rhetorical strategies, the study re-examines the intricate relationship between faith and deed, underscoring the need for a Quranic critique as the most reliable path toward understanding these two foundational pillars of Islam.

1.1. The Doctrine of Separation between Faith and Deed
The idea of separating faith from action emerged against the backdrop of political and social upheavals in the early Islamic period, particularly following the assassination of ʿUthmān and the subsequent internal conflicts such as the Battles of Jamal, Ṣiffīn, and Nahrawān. During this time, *Takfīr* (declaring others as unbelievers) became a widespread practice, especially among the Khārijites,

who excommunicated Muslims committing major sins as well as their political opponents. In response to this extreme approach, the Murjiʾah arose, advocating for a position of *Irjāʾ* (postponing judgment about a person's faith), emphasizing that the ultimate evaluation of belief should be left to God alone.

This stance was not only a reaction to sectarian violence and religious extremism but also an attempt to promote social peace and coexistence in a tumultuous society. The Murjiʾah believed that faith comprised knowledge of the Exalted God, humility before Him, abstention from arrogance toward Him, and heartfelt love for Him (Shahristānī, 1956, p. 125).

Doctrinally, they circumscribed faith to internal conviction and, in some iterations, verbal attestation, thereby explicitly excluding righteous deeds from its constitutive definition. Consequently, they maintained the status of a believer who commits a major sin, withholding the declaration of unbelief. This stance stood in direct opposition to the positions of the Khārijites and Muʿtazilites. The development of this doctrine can be understood as influenced by factors such as the desire for religious tolerance, the avoidance of sectarian violence, an emphasis on divine mercy over justice, and the conservative tendencies of certain religious and social groups—particularly the Tābiʿīn and jurists who sought to remain distant from political conflicts. Overall, the Murjiʾah represented an effort to provide a rational and peaceful response to the crisis of faith, sin, and religious judgment during a critical period in early Islamic history.

Ibn Ḥazm, in his discussion of the Murjiʾah's definition of faith, notes that this view belongs to those who equate faith solely with verbal confession of God's existence, even if the individual harbors disbelief in their heart. According to this view, once a person makes a verbal declaration, they are deemed a believer and destined for Paradise. Ibn Ḥazm attributes this understanding to Muḥammad ibn Karām Sajistānī and his followers (Ibn Ḥazm, 2011, pp. 212–214). What follows is a detailed analysis of this doctrine.

1.2.   Faith in the Murjiʾah Perspective

The Murjiʾah and their followers—most notably the Ḥanafīs and the Ashʿarīs—define faith solely as *Iqrār* (verbal affirmation) and *Taṣdīq* (acknowledgment), explicitly excluding action from the essential components of faith (Abū Ḥanīfah, 1984, p. 304; Ibn Abī al-ʿIzz, n.d., p. 348; Jundī, 2007, p. 66).

They hold that faith and deeds are separate and unrelated, and that verbal affirmation alone suffices—without the necessity of heartfelt acknowledgment (ʿAwīḍah, 1993, p. 89; Bābirtī, 2009, p. 51; Khāmīs, 2007, p. 355). According to this view, faith is reduced to mere verbal declaration and intellectual assent.

Māwardī, a prominent Shāfiʿī theologian and jurist, influenced by the Ashʿarite school of thought, defined faith in his works as merely an inner assent of the heart accompanied by verbal confession, while viewing deeds as an independent component, external to the essence of faith. In his view, although righteous actions may be regarded as the fruits and outcomes of faith, the realization of faith is not contingent upon performing such actions, and the abandonment of good deeds or the commission of sin does not, in and of itself, nullify one's faith (Māwardī, 1981, Vol. 1, p. 201).

In the book *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyya*, he likewise emphasized the conceptual separation between faith and action, describing acts of worship and legal obligations as part of a believer's religious duties, which, though significant, do not constitute the essential definition of faith (Māwardī, 1966, p. 20). Furthermore, in his Quranic exegesis, Māwardī explicitly stated that the faith of sinners remains valid, and that sin has no bearing on the reality of faith—a position rooted in belief in divine mercy and the ever-present possibility of repentance (Māwardī, 1981, Vol. 2, p. 157).

Proponents of this doctrine—notably the Shāfiʿī and Ḥanafī schools—maintain that salvation is contingent solely upon *Īmān Qalbī* (internal conviction) and *Shahādat bi al-Lisān* (verbal attestation) (Shāfiʿī, 2000, p. 158;

Abū Ḥanīfah, 1984, p. 304). They placed such little value on deeds that they claimed the faith of a sinful believer is equal to that of Gabriel and the Prophet Muhammad (Ṣāliḥī Shāmī, 1994, p. 159). According to al-Dhahabī, they held that no sin can harm true faith—even if a believer commits major sins, they will not enter Hell. In their view, faith alone is sufficient for salvation, regardless of one's actions; even abandoning prayer, withholding Zakāt, drinking alcohol, committing murder, or engaging in adultery does not negate complete faith or lead to damnation (Dhahabī, 1993, p. 436).

Followers of this idea assert that Faith is static, i.e., it neither increases nor decreases with sins (Isfarāyīnī, 1996, p. 207; Shahristānī, 1956, p. 139). All believers in heaven and earth share the same faith, though levels of certainty may vary (Abū Ḥanīfah, 1984, p. 127; Khāmīs, 2007, p. 390; Bārāti, 2009, p. 73; ʿAwīdah, 1993, p. 94; Jundī, 2007, p. 68). Accordingly, faith and disbelief are opposites, and reducing faith is only possible through increasing disbelief, while increasing faith is only possible through decreasing disbelief (Abū Ḥanīfa, 1984, p. 127). Therefore, no one can be simultaneously a believer and a disbeliever. They consider *Taṣdīq al-Qalb* (heartfelt conviction) as the foundation of faith and view differences among people based on their actions, not on faith or Tawḥīd (monotheism).

According to this doctrine, sin does not harm faith, and a person remains a

believer even after committing major sins (Shahristānī, 1956, p. 139). Citing the Quran 42:13, this group believes that the religion of the people of the heavens and the earth is the same. Consequently, they assert that faith is intrinsically static, being subject to neither increase nor decrease.

1.3.   Deed in the Murjiʾah Perspective

The Murjiʾah held that acts such as adultery and theft do not deprive a believer of faith in God's oneness, nor do they prevent entry into Paradise (Baghdādī, 1988, p. 124). In their view, obedience is unrelated to faith, and neglecting it causes no harm to the reality of faith nor results in divine punishment (Shahristānī,1956, p. 125). They believed that faith remains unaffected by sin and disobedience; it is inherently separate and independent from deeds. They argued that faith is fixed and unchanging in a person, and actions neither increase nor decrease it. One can remain a believer and a Muslim even while committing grave sins, as sin does not impair faith. (Shahristānī, 1956, p. 125). This perspective emphasizes absolute freedom in action, maintaining that only disbelief bars one from God's mercy—not deeds (Ashaʿrī, 1955, p. 154).

1.4.   The Arguments Underpinning the Dissociation of Faith from Deed

The Murjiʾah and their followers have presented several arguments to support the view that faith and deed are two distinct and unrelated concepts. Below, we examine their main proofs:

1.4.1.   Quranic Evidence

The initial idea of separating faith from deed arose from a literal interpretation of certain verses. Some of which come as follows:

- *"Those who have faith and do not taint their faith with wrongdoing—for such there shall be safety, and they are the [rightly] guided"* (Quran, 6:82)
- *"Except those who have faith and do righteous deeds, and enjoin one another to [follow] the truth, and enjoin one another to patience"* (Quran, 103:3).

The first verse implies the potential coexistence of faith with sin and injustice, whereas the second verse posits a distinct ontological status for righteous deeds, separate from the essence of faith itself (Sayyid Murtaḍā,1985, p. 155).

This means that if a person possesses true faith, even if they commit sins and slip up, those sins do not absolutely deprive them of God's mercy nor cause serious harm to their ultimate fate, because their faith leads to forgiveness and atonement for their mistakes.

In contrast, a person afflicted with disbelief, despite performing good deeds and outwardly positive behavior, will not find these acts alone sufficient for salvation or true benefit, as the absence of faith in God nullifies the acceptance of worship (Awājī, 2001, p. 1091).

A key emphasis of the leaders and followers of this doctrine is found in the Quran 39:53, *"Say [that Allah declares,] 'O My servants who have committed excesses against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah will forgive all sins. Indeed, He is the All-forgiving, the All-merciful."* This verse delivers a hopeful message to sinners, stressing the vastness of divine forgiveness and God's mercy. Another important citation for this group is in the Quran 4:48, which underscores that every sin except Shirk (associating partners with God) can be forgiven (Awājī, 2001, p. 1091).

1.4.2.   Ḥadīth Evidence

Certain Sunni Ḥadīth sources, especially the canonical collections, contain narrations from which the separation of faith from deed might be easily inferred. According to these traditions, merely testifying to the oneness of God and the prophethood of Muhammad is sufficient for entry into Paradise. In one such Ḥadīth, the Prophet said, "Whoever testifies that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, Allah will forbid the Fire for him." It is further reported that Muʿadh asked, "O Messenger of God, shall I inform the people so that they may rejoice?" The Prophet replied, "If you do, they will rely on this and neglect their deeds." Therefore, Muʿadh, fearing that he might have sinned by withholding this Ḥadīth, informed the people about it at the time of his death (Neyshabūrī, 1995, p. 61).

In another narration, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari reported from the Prophet (s.a) that Gabriel came to Him and gave glad tidings that whoever among your nation dies without associating partners with Allah will enter Paradise. Abu Dharr asked, "Even if he has committed adultery and theft?" The Prophet replied, "Yes, even if he has committed adultery and theft." Abu Dharr repeated the question twice more, and the Prophet replied the same, until the fourth time when He said, "Despite that, Abu Dharr" (Nāṣif, 1936, p. 31). Thus, the Murjiʾah and their followers rely on this set of Ḥadīths—despite their questionable chains of transmission and issues in Ḥadīth jurisprudence—as theological evidence to argue for the separation of faith from deeds (Neyshabūrī, 1995, p. 61, Nāṣif, 1936, p. 31).

2. Analyzing The Data of Faith and Righteous Deed by Focusing on The Method of Semantic *Tasrīf*

An examination of the Quran shows that the term *'Amina'* (security) and its derivatives appear in 62 forms and are used 879 times throughout the Quran (ʿAbd al-Bāqī, 1984, pp. 83-93). Of these, 358 occurrences are in Meccan verses and 521 in Medinan verses. In this study, all verses that mention both faith and righteous deed together are analyzed to understand their relationship.

Style of *Tasrīf*	Adjacent Concepts	The English Translation of the Verses
Imagery	Gardens with Rivers Flowing Beneath Them	"And give good news to those who have faith and do righteous deeds, that for them shall be gardens with streams running in them... " (Quran, 2:25).
	A Garden with Rivers Flowing Beneath It	"As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, We shall admit them into gardens with streams running in them " (Quran, 4:57).
	A Garden with Rivers Flowing Beneath It	"But those who have faith and do righteous deeds, We will admit them into gardens with streams running in them" (Quran, 4:122).
	Blissful Gardens	"Indeed, those who have faith and do righteous deeds, their Lord guides them by the means of their faith. Streams will run for them in gardens of bliss " (Quran, 10:9).
	A Garden with Rivers Flowing Beneath It	"Those who have faith and do righteous deeds will be admitted into gardens with streams running in them" (Quran, 14:23).
	Firdaws (Paradise)	" As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, they shall have the gardens of Firdaws for abode" (Quran, 18:107).
	A Garden with Rivers Flowing Beneath It	" Allah will indeed admit those who have faith and do righteous deeds into gardens with streams running in them" (Quran, 22:14).
	A Garden with Rivers Flowing Beneath It	"Indeed Allah will admit those who have faith and do righteous deeds into gardens with streams running in them" (Quran, 22:23).
	Gracious Gardens	"Then those who have faith and do righteous deeds will be in gardens of bliss" (Quran, 22:56).
	A Garden with Rivers Flowing Beneath It	"Those who have faith and do righteous deeds, We will surely settle them in the lofty abodes of paradise, with streams running in them" (Quran, 29:58).
	Blessed Gardens	"As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, for them will be gardens of bliss" (Quran, 31:8)
	Jannah (Heavenly Parks)	"But those who have faith and do righteous deeds will be in the gardens of paradise" (Quran, 42:22).
	Gardens with Rivers Flowing Beneath Them	"Indeed Allah will admit those who have faith and do righteous deeds into gardens with streams running in them" (Quran, 47:2).
	Gardens of Paradise	"Indeed, those who have faith and do righteous deeds— for them will be gardens with streams running in them" (Quran, 85:11).
	Darkness and Light/ Metaphor	"An apostle reciting to you the manifest signs of Allah that He may bring out those who have faith and do righteous deeds from darkness into light. And whoever has faith in Allah and does righteous deeds, He shall admit him into gardens with streams running in them" (Quran, 65:11).

	Pleasure Garden / Emphasis	"As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, they shall be in a garden, rejoicing" (Quran, 30:15).
	Heavenly Gardens/ Comparison	"As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, for them will be the gardens" (Quran, 32:19).
	Forgiveness of Sins / Gardens with Rivers Beneath Them/ Emphasis	"As for those who have faith in Allah and act righteously, He shall absolve them of their misdeeds and admit them into gardens with streams running in them" (Quran, 64:9).
Promising	Forgiveness / Generous Provision	"As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, for them will be forgiveness and a noble provision" (Quran, 22:50).
	Reward	"As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, He will pay them in full their rewards…" (Quran, 4:173).
	Forgiveness and Great Reward	"Allah has promised those who have faith and do righteous deeds forgiveness and a great reward" (Quran, 5:9).
	Pure Life / Righteous Life	"Whoever acts righteously, [whether] male or female, should he be faithful, We shall revive him with a good life and pay them their reward by the best of what they used to do" (Quran, 16: 97).
	Forgiveness and Great Reward	"Allah has promised those of them who have faith and do righteous deeds forgiveness and a great reward" (Quran, 48:29).
	Divine Sovereignty on Earth	"Allah has promised those of you who have faith and do righteous deeds that He will surely make them successors in the earth" (Quran, 24:70).
	Forgiveness and Great Reward	"But for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, there will be forgiveness and a great reward" (Quran, 35:7).
Emphatic	Paradise (Heaven)	"And those who have faith and do righteous deeds— they shall be the inhabitants of paradise" (Quran, 2:82).
	Prayer / Zakāt	"Indeed, those who have faith, do righteous deeds, maintain the prayer and give the zakat, they shall have their reward near their Lord" (Quran, 2:277).
	Guidance/Conditional	"Indeed, I forgive those who repent, become faithful, act righteously, and follow guidance" (Quran, 20:82).
	Purification of Mistakes	"As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, We will absolve them of their misdeeds" (Quran, 29:7).
	Righteous People	"Those who have faith and do righteous deeds, We will surely admit them among the righteous" (Quran, 29:9).
	Forgiveness and Generous Provision/ Promising	"That He may reward those who have faith and do righteous deeds.' For such there will be forgiveness and a noble provision" (Quran, 34:4)
	Faith and Deed of Men and Women	"But whoever acts righteously, whether male or female, should he be faithful, such shall enter paradise" (Quran, 40:40).
	Faith in the Prophet (ṣ) with Righteous Deed	"But those who have faith and do righteous deeds and believe in what has been sent down to Muhammad" (Quran, 47:2).
Conditional	Reward	" Those of them who have faith in Allah and the Last Day and act righteously—they shall have their reward from their Lord… " (Quran, 2:62).

	Entering Paradise	"And whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, should he be faithful—such shall enter paradise and they will not be wronged [so much as] the speck on a date-stone" (Quran, 4:124).
	Most Excellent Reward/ Glad Tidings	"But as for him who has faith and acts righteously, he shall have the best reward" (Quran, 18: 88).
	Attaining Truth	"But whoever does righteous deeds, being faithful, will neither fear any injustice or disparagement" (Quran, 20: 112).
	Salvation/ Promising	"As for him who repents, has faith and acts righteously, maybe he will be among the felicitous" (Quran, 28:67).
	Thawāb (Reward)/ Comparison	"Those who were given knowledge said [to them], 'Woe to you! Allah's reward is better for someone who has faith and acts righteously" (Quran, 28: 70).
Exception	Remembrance of God / Victory	"Barring those who have faith, do righteous deeds, and remember Allah much often, and vindicate themselves" (Quran, 26: 227).
	The Value of Faith and Righteous Actions	"It is not your wealth, nor your children, that will bring you close to Us in nearness, excepting those who have faith and act righteously" (Quran, 34:37).
	Avoidance of Loss	"Except those who have faith and do righteous deeds, and enjoin one another to [follow] the truth" (Quran, 103: 3).
	Entering Paradise/ Glad Tidings	"Barring those who repent, believe, and act righteously. Such will enter paradise (Quran, 19:60).
	Endless Reward	"Excepting such as are faithful and do righteous deeds: for them there will be an everlasting reward" (Quran, 84:25).
	Endless Reward	"Except those who have faith and do righteous deeds. There will be an everlasting reward for them" (Quran, 95:6).
Glad Tidings	Reward	"As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds— We task no soul except according to its capacity—they shall be the inhabitants of paradise, and they shall remain in it [forever]" (Quran, 7:42).
	Justice	"[that is] Allah's true promise. Indeed, He originates the creation, then He will bring it back that He may reward with justice those who have faith and do righteous deeds" (Quran, 10:4).
	Humility and Submissiveness / Paradise	"Indeed, those who have faith and do righteous deeds and are humble before their Lord—they shall be the inhabitants of paradise, and they shall remain in it" (Quran, 11:23).
	Ṭūbā (Happiness) / *Ḥusn al-Ma'āb* (Good End)	"Those who have faith and do righteous deeds—happy are they and good is their [ultimate] destination" (Quran, 13:29).
	Hopefulness	"Such is the good news that Allah gives to His servants who have faith and do righteous deeds" (Quran, 42:23).
Emphasis	Endlessness of Reward	"As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, there will be an everlasting reward for them" (Quran, 41:8).

	God's Positive Response to the Requests of Believers	"He answers [the supplications of] those who have faith and do righteous deeds" (Quran, 42:26).
	Best / Most Excellent	"Indeed, those who have faith and do righteous deeds— it is they who are the best of creatures" (Quran, 98:7).
	Divine Mercy	"As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, their Lord will admit them into His mercy" (Quran, 45:30).
Motivational	Guarantee of Peace/ Glad Tidings	"Those who have faith in Allah and the Last Day and act righteously—they will have no fear" (Quran, 5:69).
	Peace / *Taqwā* (God-consciousness) / Promising	"There will be no sin upon those who have faith and do righteous deeds in regard to what they have eaten [in the past] so long as they are Godwary and faithful and do righteous deeds" (Quran, 5:93).
	Absence of Anxiety/ Promising	"As for those who are faithful and righteous, they will have no fear, nor will they grieve" (Quran, 6:48).
Negated Question	Denial of Equality between Believers—Those Who Act and Corruptors	"Shall We treat those who have faith and do righteous deeds like those who cause corruption on the earth" (Quran, 38:28).
	Denial of Equality between Wicked and Good Doers	"Do those who have perpetrated misdeeds suppose that We shall treat them like those who have faith and do righteous deeds, their life and death being equal? Evil is the judgement that they make!" (Quran, 45:21).
Praise	Best Reward	"As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds— indeed, We do not waste the reward of those who are good in deeds" (Quran, 18:30).
Metaphorical	Divine Mercy	" Indeed, those who have faith and do righteous deeds— the All-beneficent will endear them [to his creation]" (Quran, 19: 96).
Valuation	Assurance of Reward	"But as for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, He will pay them in full their rewards, and Allah does not like the wrongdoers" (Quran, 3:57).
Encouraging	High Ranks	"But whoever comes to Him with faith and he has done righteous deeds, for such shall be the highest ranks" (Quran, 20:75).
Contrast	Sin / Good deed	"Except those who repent, attain faith, and act righteously. For such, Allah will replace their misdeeds with good deeds)" (Quran, 25:70).
Allegory	*'Aʿmā* (Blind) and *Baṣīr* (Seeing) – Metaphor for Ignorance and Insight	"The blind one and the seer are not equal, neither are the evildoers and those who have faith and do righteous deeds. Little is the admonition that you take!" (Quran, 40: 58).
Historical Narrative	Widespread Oppression / Injustice	"He said, 'He has certainly wronged you by asking your ewe in addition to his own ewes, and indeed many partners bully one another, except such as have faith and do righteous deeds, and few are they " (Quran, 38:24).
Warning/ Confrontation	Divine Favour	"So that He may reward those who have faith and do righteous deeds out of His grace. Indeed, He does not like the faithless" (Quran, 30:45).

3. Analysis of Faith and Action Data Focusing on Quranic *Tasrīf* Styles

This section examines the verses from the previous table and clarifies the relationship between faith and deed in the Quran.

3.1. *Tasrīf* Styles of Verses Concerning Faith and Righteous Action in the Quran

In the Quran, God employs diverse rhetorical *Taṣrīf* styles to clarify the profound connection between faith and deeds. These expressions convey the divine message effectively and comprehensively, addressing the intellectual, emotional, and ethical diversity of audiences. For believers, certain styles foster motivation and hope, while disbelievers and the heedless encounter approaches designed to render admonition pedagogically effective.

Those inclined toward reasoned argumentation, such as the People of the Book, are addressed with *Istifhām Inkārī* (negative interrogation) to awaken rational conscience. *Tamthīl* (parables) and *Istithnā'* (exceptions) make abstract concepts tangible and highlight the status of the faithful, while conditional and antithetical constructions demonstrate the logical links among faith, deeds, and divine reward. Praiseful commendations, historical narratives, and conditional glad tidings further reinforce these connections emotionally, intellectually, and behaviorally (Anṣārī-Moqaddam, 2023, pp. 40–85).

This stylistic diversity reflects not only divine wisdom but also the foundational truth that faith and action are intrinsically connected, permeating all dimensions of human understanding and experience. The following analysis examines these *Taṣrīf* styles to clarify the precise nature of the faith–deed relationship.

3.1.1. The Style of Imagery

The Quran employs vivid imagery to convey profound spiritual truths and the consequences of human action. For instance, Paradise is depicted as gardens beneath flowing rivers for those who combine faith with righteous deeds (Quran, 22:23). This verbal parallelism underscores the inseparability of belief and action, illustrating that neither alone is sufficient for ultimate reward. Through tangible metaphors, the Quran establishes a causal and ontological link between faith and deeds, presenting their union as the pathway to spiritual perfection. Numerous verses reinforce this style to make abstract principles of faith and ethical conduct accessible and concrete (Quran, 2:25; 4:122; 10:9; 14:23; 18:107; 22:14,23,56; 29:7,58; 31:8; 32:19; 42:22; 65:11; 85:11).

3.1.2. The Style of Allegory (Simile)

Parables and similes translate abstract realities into perceptible forms, enhancing comprehension and engagement. For example, believers who act righteously are compared to the seeing, while evildoers are likened

to the blind (Quran, 40:58). This contrast vividly conveys the interdependence of faith and action: faith without deeds is analogous to possessing sight without the ability to see. By transferring sensory perception to the spiritual realm, the Quran enables audiences to intuitively grasp ethical and spiritual truths. Such allegorical contrasts deepen the understanding of the continuous and developmental relationship between belief and practice.

3.1.3. The Style of Metaphor

Metaphor conveys abstract concepts through emotive and symbolic representation. Faith and righteous deeds are described as generating *Wudd* (divine love) within believers (Quran, 19:96), illustrating the dynamic, spiritually binding relationship between inner belief and outward action. Similarly, the transition from darkness to light (Quran 65:11) symbolizes guidance and spiritual transformation through ethical conduct. Metaphorical expression renders the unity of faith and deeds both emotionally compelling and sensorially tangible, emphasizing that separation diminishes spiritual growth and divine favor.

3.1.4. The Style of Valuation

Valuation assigns moral and spiritual worth based on faith and deeds. Verses such as the Quran 3:57 affirm that believers performing righteous actions receive full recompense, whereas wrongdoers are deprived of divine love. This evaluative pattern highlights that faith alone is insufficient to meet God's standards; righteous action actualizes divine justice. By contrasting reward and disfavor, the Quran reinforces the necessity of integrating belief and conduct as a measure of moral worth.

3.1.5. The Style of Encouragement

Encouragement motivates ethical action through the promise of tangible spiritual rewards. The Quran (20:75) illustrates that those believers ascending with righteous deeds attain the highest ranks, emphasizing that the proximity to God is meaningful only when faith is operationalized in action. This positive reinforcement nurtures aspirational engagement rather than fear, presenting faith and action as mutually essential dimensions of spiritual elevation.

3.1.6. The Style of *Bishārat* (Glad Tidings)

Glad tidings highlight ultimate reassurance for believers who act righteously, addressing existential concerns of fear and anxiety. According to the Quran (5:69), security and tranquility in the Hereafter are promised to those whose faith is expressed through ethical action. Repetition of faith in God, belief in the Last Day, and righteous conduct construct a hierarchy of moral and spiritual priorities. Other verses

employing this style (Quran, 7:42; 10:4; 11:23; 18:88; 13:29) reinforce the link between belief, ethical action, and ultimate felicity.

3.1.7. The Style of Promising (Encouraging)

Promise-based rhetoric assures believers of divine reward and forgiveness (Quran, 5:9), underscoring the interdependence of faith and deeds. Conditional phrasing and dual rewards—moral purification and eschatological recompense—illustrate that faith uncoupled from action is insufficient to activate divine promise. This style, reflected in the Quran (4:173; 5:93; 6:48; 16:97; 22:56; 28:67; 34:4; 35:7; 48:2), reinforces certainty and encourages adherence to ethical living through the lens of divine assurance.

3.1.8. The Style of *Tanḏīr* (Threat / Warning)

Warning-based rhetoric contrasts reward and punishment to clarify moral obligations. The Quran (30:45) juxtaposes the love for those who act righteously with the rejection of disbelievers, emphasizing that divine favor necessitates the union of faith and action. This dual valuation activates moral discernment and underscores the ethical imperative of integrating belief with conduct.

3.1.9. The Style of *Qiyās* (Analogy)

Analogical reasoning facilitates understanding by comparing moral outcomes. The Quran (28:80) contrasts worldly attachment with divine reward, demonstrating that only faith accompanied by righteous deeds merits ultimate excellence. Such comparative structures strengthen ethical discernment, highlighting the superiority of spiritual over material gain.

3.1.10. The Style of Historical Narrative

Historical narratives exemplify universal ethical principles. The Quran (37:24) recounts the story of David to illustrate that faith and righteous action transcend temporal contexts. Singular events are transformed into enduring lessons, affirming that ethical integration is a consistent criterion for divine justice across human history.

3.1.11. The Style of *Istifhām Inkārī* (Negative Interrogation)

Rhetorical questions emphasize moral impossibility, as in the Quran (38:28), denying equivalence between virtuous believers and corrupt wrongdoers. This method engages the audience's ethical reasoning and reinforces the indispensability of coupling faith with righteous action.

3.1.12. The Style of *Taḍādd* (Contradiction / Opposition)

Contrast highlights the transformation from wrongdoing to righteousness. The Quran (25:70) shows that repentance, faith, and action convert evil into good, emphasizing the transformative power of ethical engagement. Opposition elucidates the qualitative shift in human identity achieved through the integration of belief and action.

3.1.13. The Style of Praising

Praise commends those uniting faith with deeds (Quran, 18:30), affirming the authenticity of reward and motivating continued adherence. It presents faith and action as complementary wings, where separation diminishes spiritual efficacy, highlighting their inseparable value.

3.1.14. The Style of *Istithnā'* (Exception)

Exception distinguishes the saved from the lost (Quran, 103:2-3), emphasizing that only those who integrate faith and righteous deeds escape universal loss. By setting clear boundaries, the Quran underscores the pivotal role of ethical action in human salvation (Quran, 19:60; 26:227; 34:37).

3.1.15. The Style of Emphasis

Emphatic devices (Quran, 20:82; 2:82; 2:277; 29:7,9; 34:4; 40:40; 41:8; 42:26; 45:30; 47:2; 98:7) assert the certainty of divine forgiveness and the vastness of mercy, underscoring the intrinsic link between faith and action. Emphasis communicates the importance and assuredness of ethical engagement.

3.1.16. The Style of Conditional Sentences

Conditional structures clarify that entry into Paradise is contingent upon faith and righteous action (Quran, 4:124). Inclusive phrasing emphasizes divine justice and the simultaneous necessity of belief and ethical conduct, providing a systematic framework for understanding the integration of faith and deeds.

3.2. Findings and Results

According to the Quran, faith is not solely a mental or heart-based state but is expressed through action. Faith and righteous deeds are inseparable aspects of a single reality, each essential for understanding the other. 'Allāmeh Ṭabāṭabāeī, interpreting the verse, *"Except those who believe and do righteous deed"* (Quran, 103:3), notes that true faith encompasses belief in Allah, all His messengers, and the Day of Judgment; partial belief in some messengers does not constitute genuine faith (Ṭabāṭabāeī, 1995, Vol. 20, p. 357).

3.2.1. Decrease and Increase of Faith

Faith is directly addressed in 879 Quranic verses, many highlighting its degrees (Quran, 48:4; 8:2; 3:173; 9:124; 33:22; 74:31). Progress in inner conviction elevates spiritual

perfection, and divine rewards correspond to these levels (Ṭabāṭabāeī, 1995, Vol. 9, p. 12). The Quran contradicts the notion that faith cannot increase or decrease (Makārim Shīrāzī, 1995, Vol. 22, p. 29), emphasizing its dynamic relationship with human action.

3.2.2. Simultaneity of Faith and Deed

The Quran stresses that faith and righteous action occur simultaneously; faith without corresponding deeds is incomplete (ʿĀmili, 2002, p. 388). Actions are both the natural outcome and the measure of faith, and combined faith and deeds yield reward (Quran, 4:124; 19:96). Human perfection is realized only when faith is accompanied by action (Fakhr Razi, 2000, p. 568). As Ṭabāṭabāeī noted, partial righteousness does not exempt one from moral accountability (Ṭabāṭabāeī,1995, Vol. 20, p. 357).

3.2.3. Conditional Freedom in Action

The idea that faith is independent of deed and allows unlimited free will contradicts Quranic teachings (Shahristānī, 1956, p. 125; Baghdādī, 1988, p. 124). Freedom in action entails the capacity to choose righteousness, not unrestricted behavior. Believers' deeds are bound by faith and righteous conduct, and entry to Paradise requires performing specific virtuous acts, such as justice,

prayer, and piety (Quran, 10:4; 2:277; 5:93). The repeated use of the term *Ṣāliḥ* (righteous) underscores the necessity of conscious, upright action.

3.2.4. Faith Along with Deeds: The Path to Salvation

Faith begins with verbal declaration and inner conviction, reaching perfection when coupled with deed (Sobhānī, 1996, p. 26). Without faith, deeds lack value or proper direction (Khānsārī, 1981, p. 405). As the foundation of action, faith shapes deeds, whose worth depends on sincerity and correctness of belief (Javādī Āmoli, 2002, Vol. 7, p. 169). Thus, faith not only shapes righteous actions but also guides human behavior toward genuine ethical values (Quran, 16:97; 13:29).

Conclusion

The doctrine of separating faith from action—primarily advocated by the Murjiʾah and later embraced by adherents of the Ḥanafī and Ashʿarī theological schools—offers a reductionist definition of faith, limiting it to mere inner conviction and verbal affirmation, while detaching righteous deeds from the essence of faith. This view, grounded in a literalist reading of select verses and Ḥadīths, asserts the constancy and immutability of faith, holding that sin has no bearing on one's eternal destiny. Within this interpretive framework, even major sins—such as adultery, murder, or neglecting

prayer—are not seen as compromising one's faith. Salvation, accordingly, is regarded as contingent merely upon an internal and outward acknowledgment of God. In practice, however, such a view diminishes moral responsibility and weakens religious commitment, paving the way for a passive and obligation-free religiosity.

In contrast, the findings of this study—based on the Quranic technique of *Taṣrīf al-Āyāt* (cross-referential analysis of verses) and a close reading of the linguistic and rhetorical styles of divine revelation—demonstrate that, within the Quranic worldview, faith and action share an intrinsic, reciprocal, and inseparable relationship. The Quran not only consistently places faith alongside righteous deeds, but also presents this union as a defining feature of 'complete' and 'effective' faith, which plays a foundational role in determining one's eternal fate.

Faith is portrayed as a dynamic reality, subject to increase or decrease, and its degree is measured by the quality and consistency of righteous actions. Numerous verses explicitly affirm this interconnection, presenting righteous conduct as both a prerequisite for the realization of full faith and a necessary condition for ultimate salvation. Consequently, interpretations that negate the role of action not only deviate from the spirit of revelation but also undermine essential theological constructs such as divine justice, moral accountability, and the coherent framework of reward and punishment.

Accordingly, rejecting the doctrine of separation and affirming the inner bond between faith and action is not only solidly grounded in the Quran and Prophetic tradition but also paves the way for a more coherent theological vision, a deeper comprehension of divine justice, and the institutionalization of responsible religiosity in the Muslim community.

A thematic analysis of the Quranic text reveals that God repeatedly presents these two concepts as paired and complementary. Embracing this interconnection ultimately guards against syncretistic notions of salvation and restores a vital balance between internal belief and outward commitment. The findings of this study affirm that only through the integration of faith and action can one arrive at a rational, ethical, and practically viable reading of divine revelation—one that serves both individual spiritual growth and the collective moral advancement of society.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

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The author(s) declare that no AI tools or services were not used or not highly applied during the preparation of this work.

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