



TAUHEED AND SHIRK

BY: Ghazali-e-Zaman Hazrat Allama Moulana

Sayyed Ahmed Saeed Kazmi Shah Saheb (Alaihe Rahmah)

The being of the Allah (Almighty) is indeed one. It is only those who are ignorant and persist in being ignorant need an explanation on how Allah (Almighty) is One and is actually Present.

Those who are Allah conscious do not desire an explanation on this subject of Tauheed and Shirk. They in fact accept without questioning. There is a famous proverb in the Arabic language, which is as follows:

“Objects are indeed understood by its opposites.”

THE UNITY OF ALLAH (ALMIGHTY)

The being of the Allah (Almighty) is indeed one. It is only those who are ignorant and persist in being ignorant need an explanation on how Allah (Almighty) is One and is actually Present.

Those who are Allah conscious do not desire an explanation on this subject of Tauheed and Shirk. They in fact accept without questioning. There is a famous proverb in the Arabic language, which is as follows:

“Objects are indeed understood by its opposites.”

For example, peace can only be understood and appreciated by that person who has felt anxiety, cannot appreciate peace. In the same manner, Day cannot be understood if a person has not experienced the Night. Likewise, if a person has not comprehended misguidance how is it possible for him to understand guidance? Using this very principle, we may ask, if a person has understood “Shirk” or Polytheism, how is it possible for him to appreciate or comprehend “Tauheed” or Monotheism? It is, therefore, only logical that after we have understood Shirk can we then understand Tauheed.

The Allah (Almighty) has in fact very clearly explained the action Shirk and Tauheed, thereby completely eradicating the concept of non religion. It is very surprising that after explaining the differences in the concept of Tauheed and Shirk so clearly, there are still doubts in the minds of those whose sole duty it is to destroy the concept or fundamentals of unity found in Islam.

THE MEANING OF TAUHEED

The meaning of “Tauheed” is to believe that there is no partner to Allah (Almighty) in His Being and in His Attributes. In other, how Allah (Almighty) is, we do not believe that there is another being like Him. If any person believes on the contrary, then his belief would constitute Shirk. We should remember that the attributes of Allah (Almighty) among others, include the act of Listening, seeing and Possessing Knowledge. If any individual believes that another possesses these Attributes, he will be guilty of Shirk.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TAUHEED AND SHIRK

After we have understood the meaning of Tauheed, the natural question that arises is, if knowledge, which is one of the Attributes of Allah (Almighty), is ascribed for another individual, will this really mean that we are guilty of Shirk? We know that that Listening and Seeing are also among the Attributes of Allah (Almighty). If we prove these very attributes for another of Living is also among the Attributes of Allah (Almighty). If we ascribe this attribute for another individual will we again be guilty of Shirk?

THE DIFFERENCE

No! Dear Muslim Brothers and Sisters do not be deceived by those who hope to mislead you. You should remember that indeed Allah (Almighty) possesses the Attribute of “Living”, yet He (Almighty) has, also through His Mercy, bestowed upon His creation this very quality. The attribute of living though, which we relate to ourselves, is not the same Attribute of Living as we relate to Allah (Almighty) The difference is that His Attribute of Living is non-bestowed, while the attribute of living which we possess is one which we have been bestowed upon us is temporary and non-eternal, while His (Almighty) Attribute of living is Eternal and non-bestowed.

If this principle and law is applied to all qualities and attributes, than the question of Shirk will never arise. It is simple, yet, as we have mentioned earlier, those Muslims whose sole aim is to deprive Islam of its unity, peace and harmony, intentionally make it difficult so that the simple-minded Muslims become confused and misguided.

HAS THE ALLAH (ALMIGHTY) GIVE MAN POWER AND AUTHORITY?

The answer to this is quite simple. If man has not been given power and authority, than what indeed is the difference between him and stone? We also know that the Allah (Almighty) possesses Power and Authority we also know that He (Almighty) has created these attributes within man. You may well ask, if both possess power and authority, then what is the difference? The answer to this is quite simple. If one applies the above law and principle, there is no doubt that the Allah (Almighty) possesses power and Authority, yet, although possesses these Attributes, He (Almighty) is not subservient to anyone, neither have these Attributes been given to Him (Almighty) by anyone. His (Almighty) slave, man, on the other hand, possesses these attributes of power and authority, yet, he is still subservient to the Allah (Almighty), and these attributes are not his, rather they have been bestowed upon him by the Allah (Almighty).

THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ALLAH (ALMIGHTY) AND HIS SLAVE

This very same principle as explained above, can be applicable to the question of knowledge, Seeing, Listening, and other Attributes. The Allah (Almighty) possesses these Attributes and so does the slave. On one has given these Qualities to Allah (Almighty) whilst the slave, on the other hand, has been accorded these attributes by Allah (Almighty) This is, in fact, one of the clear differences between the Allah (Almighty) and His slave.

We understand that if the Allah (Almighty) has bestowed an attribute, which is conferred to any slave, upon the slave, then this belief cannot be labeled as Shirk. For example, if we relate the quality of “hearing” to a slave, we must therefore believe that the Grace of Allah (Almighty) has bestowed this attribute of “hearing” upon the slave, then this belief cannot be termed shirk. At this point an important question arises. Applying the above principle, we ask, way is it that we condemn the Idol worshippers who also believe that their Idol have been give these amazing powers by Allah (Almighty). Are they not using the very same principle, which we are applying?

The answer to this question is quite clear and simple. When the Idol worshipper believed that their Idols were a creation of Allah (Almighty) they also should have believed that the slave is indebtedly in bondage to the creator (Almighty). Without the creator (Almighty), the creation cannot come into being. They also should have believed and accepted that, as in life or in death, the slave is in need of the creator (Almighty) But, they refused to believe and accept this principle, that is, Allah's (Almighty) Authority.

They began to believe that although their Idols were a creation, Allah (Almighty) had given the Idols Divinity and total "God-head". They believed that after creating their Idols, there was now no need for submission toward Allah (Almighty) to complete (Allah forbid!) because their Idols could do whatever it wished, even if Allah (Almighty) had not commanded it to do a certain thing, The Idol worshippers could not understand this very simple principle, that is, that the creation can never be totally independent of Allah (Almighty).

DIVINITY CANNOT BE GIVEN

Indeed, Allah (Almighty) through His Mercy may bestow upon His slave whatever power he wishes, yet He (Almighty) would not bestow upon Divinity, which is permanent and Independent, the attributes given to His slave are not permanent or even independent. The Idol worshippers believed that because of the tremendous worship performed by the Idols, "Ilaah" and "Manaaat", Allah (Almighty) set them free to do as they pleased. Based on this belief that their Idols have been given Divinity and God-head. Any person Who believes that Allah (Almighty) has given His certain slave God-head and Divinity has committed Shirk. There is no doubt in this. This is another difference between the Muslim and the Idol worshipper. The Muslim believes that the servant of Allah (Almighty) will always remain a servant and can never become one possessing God-head and Divinity.

DEEDS PERFORMED BY THE SLAVE THROUGH THE PERMISSION OF ALLAH (ALMIGHTY) CAN NEVER BE TERMED SHIRK

THE Allah (Almighty) states in the Holy Quran:

"Who is it that can intercede with Him, except with His permission "
(Sura Baqara : 255)

From this Quranic injunction, an important fact is becoming apparent to us. Allah (Almighty) is quite clearly stating to us that not everyone will be given permission to intercede except those to whom He (Almighty) has given permission. It is also a warning to the Idol worshippers, in that they should not believe and hold high esteem of their Idols considering that their Idols have never been given permission to intercede for their worshippers. This clearly proves that their idols are totally useless.

The beloved slaves of Allah (Almighty), on the other hand, have been given permission to intercede. The first to intercede will be the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) as proven by many authentic sources. There after, the other Prophets (Alehis Salam), the Martyrs (Shuhada (Radi Allah Unho)), the Saints (Radi Allah Unho) etc. Another important fact we must always bear in mind is that if an individual performs a duty without the permission of Allah (Radi Allah Unho), then this would be considered Shirk, whereas if a duty has been allocated, as will be discussed shortly, then this cannot be considered Shirk.

The Holy Quran is evidence of Hazrat 'Isa (Alehis Salam) explaining to his nation some of his amazing miracles. This serves as a reminder to all, of the power and authority bestowed by Allah (Almighty) upon His beloved servants.

He states:

“I heal those who are born blind and the leper and I raise the dead by Allah’s permission.” (Sura Ale Imran 49)

We know that to perform amazing duties as explained by Hazrat ‘Isa (Alehis Salam) is indeed the Grace of the Allah (Almighty), yet this great Prophet (Alehis Salam) is actually stating that he can perform them. Is he guilty (Allah forbid!) of committing Shirk? No, for he has clearly proven by one verse the difference between Shirk and Tauheed.

If one question this and states that a Muslim cannot perform these amazing duties (of miracles and interceding) then he is contradicting numerous Quranic verses and Ahadith wherein amazing qualities and attributes of the special servants of Allah (Almighty) are explained.

THE REASON FOR THE CREATION OF MAN

Every creation of the Allah (Almighty) has been created for some specific reason and purpose, namely, the sun, the trees, water the wind. Explaining the purpose for the creation of Man, the Allah (Almighty) states:

“I have not created Man and Jinn, but that they worship Me.” (Ad Dhaariyat:65)

Worship can only be performed if there is recognition. In other words, mankind and jinn have been created to recognize the Allah (Almighty). The question that arises is what is the outcome of this recognition? It means that the more we recognize Allah (Almighty), the more we worship Him (Almighty).

From the above discussion we come to realize that mankind has been created to recognize Allah (Almighty) and by doing so we become closer. In other words, closeness to Allah (Almighty) is the pinnacle of glory in the life of mankind.

By understanding this, we must examine its connotation, it’s results and it’s meaning in the light of Islamic law. There is a Hadith-e-Qudsi found in the shih Bukhari explaining this; The Prophet (Peace be upon him) has explained that the Allah (Almighty) has stated: “He who has caused enmity with My Wali (Friend), I give him declaration of war. Among those acts through which My slave achieves My slave achieves My closeness, the most beloved are the Fardh (Compulsory) acts. My slave also achieves My closeness through the Nafil (Optional) deeds, till I make him into My beloved When he becomes My beloved, I become his ears through which he listens, his eyes through which he sees, his hands by which he holds, his feet by which he walks. When he pleads to Me for anything I definitely bestow it on him. When he seeks refuge in Me from any bad deed, then I definitely save him from it.”

Some individuals stats that only after achieving this status dose the slave refrain from all bad deeds. This thought is a flagrant misinterpretation of the Tradition, for any person possessing a little common sense will tell you that after refraining from all bed deeds, does the slave achieve his status. In other words, after he has adopted piety and abstinence, dose he stand any chance of becoming the beloved.

In the following verse, Allah (Almighty) is explaining how we can achieve His (Almighty) closeness. He states:

“Say (O Muhammad to them), if you lave Allah follow me, Allah will love you.”

(Sura Ale Imran:31)

In other words, after we have adopted piety and abstinence in following the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) will we have any chance of becoming a beloved? The slave first refrains from bad deeds and actions. He then performs the Fardh and Nafil acts continuously. Then only dose he

become the beloved. It is not possible for him to continue performing evil deeds and still feels he can become the beloved servant of Allah (Almighty).

Imam Fakhruddin Raze (Radi Allah Unho) in his “Tafseer Kabeer” explained the above Hadith : “In the same manner, if the slave continuously adopts good deeds, then he indeed reaches that stage of which the Allah (Almighty) states that He becomes the slaves eye of the slave, then the slave perceives, things near and distant. When this light becomes the hand of the slave, then he, the slave, is then able to dispense with thing easy and difficult, near and far.”

We also come to realize from this explanation that the beloved slaves of Allah (Almighty) have been given the power to help and assist. Once we have proved this, how can we call it shirk if we implore them for assistance? It can never be Shirk, for although the slave and creator (Almighty) can help and assist, remember that the creator (Almighty) possesses this Attribute without it being given to Him by any one. The slave, on the other hand, possesses these attributes after Allah (Almighty) has given it to him, and we still believe that the slave is the servant of Allah (Almighty) and is still subservient to Him (Almighty). This is the belief of all Muslims.

When we have understood and accepted this, the difference between Tauheed and Shirk becomes quite clear, yet, unfortunately, there are certain individuals who state that they believe in Allah (Almighty), yet consider asking His beloved slaves for assistance as Shirk. If this indeed be their faith, then what, we ask of you, is Kufr?

It also seems to be the habit of these “believers” to relate verses meant for the Kuffar towards Muslim, perhaps they are merely following the habit of their forefathers. It is recorded in the Shahi Bukhari that Hazrat Abdullah Ibn-e-Omar (Radi Allah Unho) used to despise the Khariji sect the most. Why? Let us see. He considered them the worst of creation. He use to say that “these people have made it a practice of theirs, that whatever verse has been revealed against the idol worshippers, they relate these verses towards the Muslims.

IMPORTANT QUESTION

Some individual has asked this question, and we feel that it should be answered. The question is this: we accept that the beloved slave of Allah (Almighty) possesses all these magnificent attributes. We accept that he can assist and help. Yet, are not all these attributes only prevalent in him when of sand and rubble? When it dose become a heap of sand, will not all the attributes found in him be immediately nullified?

ANSWER

This doubt, in fact, has only been created, for we have merely considered Man to be a combination of flesh and bones. This manner of thinking is indeed incorrect for the essence of man is not flesh and bones; rather it is the soul, unlike the flesh and bones, newer dies. If we accept that his soul will die, then how will he experience the punishment and reward within the grave? Describing the condition within the grave, the Prophet (Peace be upon him) has stated that the grave is sometimes a Garden of Paradise and sometime a pit of Hell.

We, therefore, logically ask: for ho is this grave sometimes a pit of Hell or sometimes a Garden of Paradise? It is, without doubt, for the soul, which is still alive. The soul always has a connection with the body even if the body, described as the rays of the sun, even though it may manifest itself on a heap of sand, on a tree or on the roof of a house, it still has a relationship a Pit of Hell. So we judge from this that the essence of man is the soul, it this which enables him to assist us in times of need and anxiety.

Another query that seems to confuse people is: how is it that we cannot see the punishment or

reward experienced by the body or the soul? The answer to this is simple. The happenings of the grave are being experienced within the Aalam-e-Barzakh, a world in itself which means, "The Screened World." A logical explanation of this would be that if a person complains about a headache and although the pain he is experiencing is an absolute reality, we cannot perceive it or even comprehend it simply because the pain is screened from our eyes. Similarly, punishment and reward is experienced within grave.

Another example would be of a person dreaming. Although he is seeing himself burning, we cannot see him burning or receiving a gift, for the simple reason is that his life in that context is screened from our eyes.

THE SQUEEZING OF THE GRAVE

It is reported in the Ahadith that when the person is placed within the grave, the grave squeezes him, be Muslim or non-Muslim. The earth could be described as "the mother", for man has been created from sand. Therefore, it stands to reason that all will return to her. Some of her children who have adopted piety and abstinence, they she will be welcomed and agreeably received. Those, on the other hand, who have adopted disgraceful behavior and dishonor, she will receive them, not welcome them, but rather to punish them. This example clearly describes how a Muslim and non-Muslim as a mother caressing her child, while she will squeeze the disbeliever till his ribs appear on opposite sides. This illustrates that the soul never dies and that the reward or punishment within the grave is a reality.

Let us return to the discussion describing the magnificent attributes possessed by the beloved slaves of Allah (Almighty). Having proven that his soul and body still possesses these attributes, it means that he can still assist us, traverse miles on end, listen and see things far and near. When he can still do these things with the Permission of Allah Almighty, then how can any sane person term it as being as Shirk if we them to assist us ?

In the Tirmidi Shareef, Hazrat Abdullah ibne Abbas (Radi Allah Unho) narrates that a Sahaba once pitched his tent on a plot of ground with out realizing that he was doing so over a grave. After a while, he realized that his tent was over a grave for he could hear the recital of the Sura Mulk. He related the entire episode to the Prophet (Peace be upon him). who replied that the recital of Sura Mulk indeed assists the person with in the grave and protects him from pain and punishment.

From this episode, we see that the beloved servants of Allah (Almighty) are still alive with in their graves, or else the Prophet (Peace be upon him) would have merely disregarded the entire incident. But he did not do so. Rather, he commented on the excellences of the Sura Mulk, which means that he also accepted that the beloved servants of Allah (Almighty) are still alive within their graves.

Let us relate another incident from the period of the companions. It is recorded that in the period of Hazrat Muavia (Radi Allah Unho) a canal was dug between Mecca and Madina. Coincidentally, the canal passed through that plot of land where the Shuhada (Radi Allah Unho) (Martyrs) of Uhud lay buried. A person while digging accidentally cut the foot of a Shaheed (Radi Allah Unho) with a spade. As a result of this incident that aside from their souls, even the bodies of these great and beloved servants of Allah Almighty are alive. This incident is narrated in "Jazb-ul-Quloob" by Sheikh Muhaddith Dehlvi (Radi Allah Unho) and "Sharahus Sudur" by Imam Jalaluddin Suyuti (Radi Allah Unho).

Let us now quote quote another example from the period of the Tabaeens Imam Abu Maeem

(Radi Allah Unho) in his book, , “Hilyatul Awliya” , narrates from Hazrat Saeed (Radi Allah Unho). The great Saint states, “ By Allah , Hameed Taweel (Radi Allah Unho) and myself were burying Hazrat Thabit Nibhani (Radi Allah Unho). As we were setting the final rocks, one rock, one rock accidentally fell into the grave. As I peeped into the grave, I saw that Hazrat Thabit Nibhani (Radi Allah Unho) was about to perform the Salah and he was imploring Allah (Almighty) in the following manner, ‘O Allah, You have given creation of Your creation the Permission to perform their Salah within the grave, give me also the same permission’. It was indeed beyond the Mercy of Allah (Almighty) to refuse him.”

N.B. : Hazrat Thabit bin Aslam Nibhani Basra was a Taba'en. He has narrated Ahadith from Hazrat Anas (Radi Allah Unho) and various other companions. sahaba (Radi Allah Unho) states that he used to complete the recitation of the Holy Quran in one day and night. He also used to fast during the day. Abu Bakr Al Muzni (Radi Allah Unho) states that he had not seen a more pious person than Thabit bin Aslam (Radi Allah Unho). (“Kashfun Noor”, Imam Abdul Gani Nablisi (Radi Allah Unho) pg 9)

Imam Bahiqi (Radi Allah Unho) narrates from Qazi Nishapuri Ibrahim (Radi Allah Unho) who states that, “A pious woman passed away. Among those that were present for her Janaza was a coffin thief, who attended only with the intention of noticing where she was being buried. As darkness set in, he dug the grave and was about to steal the coffin when the pious lady exclaimed, ‘By Allah Almighty, how strange that a dweller of Paradise is stealing the coffin of another dweller of Paradise’. She explained that whosoever took part in the Janaza. The thief immediately covered the grave and repented with a true heart.” Indeed this is the greatness of the beloved servants of Allah that one goes to them as a thief and returns as a Saint himself.

It is reported in the Hadith-e-Qudsi that the Almighty Allah has stated: When My slave, becomes My beloved, then his words and attributes become the mirror of My Words and Attributes.

Whatever he pleads for, I bestow it upon him. If he seeks refuge in Me, I protect him.”

As we have seen, all these gifts are still found in the beloved servants of Allah Almighty even after they have departed from this world. It is due solely to this that the believing Muslims visit the grave of the saints (Radi Allah Unho) for they are indeed people who have been promised the Mercy and Assistance of Allah (Almighty). We derive from these proofs, that if an individual goes to the Mazar of a great Saint (Radi Allah Unho) and implores to him in this manner, “O beloved servant of Allah (Almighty), you are indeed the beloved slave of Allah (Almighty) Please ask the Almighty on my behalf,” how, we ask of you, can this be termed Shirk, when the Allah (Almighty) Himself has promised them all these gifts?

After considering these facts, if any person feels that he cannot achieve any help and assistance by visiting a Mazar of a great Saint, then he has not in any way insulted the Saint, rather he has doubted the promise of Allah (Almighty) whereas Allah (Almighty) has promised his slaves His assistance.

Till now, we have proved that help and assistance that can be rendered by the beloved slaves of Allah (Almighty) in this world and in the Aalam-e-Barzakh, the question is: will they be able to assist us in the Hereafter?

This answer has already been given by the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him). He has stated: “The Ulama, the Huffaz, and the Shuhada of my followers will indeed intercede intercede on the Day of Judgment. Even the infant whose parents are Muslim will intercede.” If, as some misled individuals say, that it is Shirk to to ask the creation for assistance, then how will these above

mentioned beloved slaves help us on the Day of Judgment. This again is proof that it is not Shirk to ask them in this world either!

The events that will take place on the Day of Judgment are clear to all. We know that mankind will go to each Prophet (Alehis Salam) seeking assistance, when finally they reach the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him), he will say, "I am for it (that is, I am that person who will intercede for you)."

He will then go into prostration and Praise the Allah (Almighty), after which the Allah (Almighty) will say, "O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)! Raise your head. Speak you shall be listened to. Ask, it shall be given to you. Intercede, your intercession will be accepted."

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) will then intercede. After him, the great Prophet (Alehis Salam) for assistance, how will it be permissible on the Day of Judgment? We suggest to those who consider this action as Shirk to voice their opinion on the Day of Judgment, perhaps they will be amply "rewarded" for their folly.

May the Allah (Almighty) bestow upon people the Imaan to differentiate correctly between Shirk and Tauheed Aameen.!

Written and Signed by :

Sayyed Ahmed Saeed Kazmi

(May Allah the Merciful forgive him)