

Explanation of The Book of Tawheed

Class Notes – Chapter 12

بَابُ مِنَ الشِّرْكِ النَّذْرُ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ

From the acts of shirk is to vow to other than Allah.

- **Relevance of the chapter to the book:** The author explains another category from the categories of *shirk* which contradicts pure *tawheed*, and that is to dedicate a vow to any false deity besides Allah. It also serves as a warning against such an act of polytheism.
- (مِنَ الشِّرْكِ) – “From the acts of shirk”. To dedicate a vow to other than Allah is major *shirk* which removes a person from the fold of Islam.
- (النَّذْرُ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ) – “To vow to other than Allah”. To make a vow is an act of worship, so to dedicate it to other than Allah is *shirk*. A vow is to impose upon yourself a non-obligatory act of worship which as a result makes it obligatory to fulfill.
- It is done out of glorification and veneration to the one whom the vow is dedicated to. For example, a person says: “The occupant of this grave has a vow upon me” or “Jibreel has a vow upon me”, intending by their vow drawing closer and venerating the one to whom the vow is dedicated to.
- There is a difference between a polytheistic vow and sinful vow. The polytheistic vow was never dedicated to Allah, whereas the sinful vow was. However, the stipulated action of the sinful vow is in direct disobedience to Allah.

وقول الله تعالى: ﴿يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا﴾

Allah the Almighty said: Those who fulfill their vows, and they fear a Day whose evil will be widespread. [al-Insaaan: 7]

- {يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ} – “They fulfill their vows”. The fulfillment of vows which Allah has praised in this *ayah* are all acts of worship He has made obligatory. This is because when a person starts any obligatory act they are duty bound to complete it.
- The *ayah* also includes the fulfillment of vows which a person obligates upon themselves. Although it is initially disliked, if a person commits to a vow of obedience to Allah, then it becomes obligatory upon them to fulfill it.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** Allah praises the righteous believers who worship Him through their fulfillment of the obligatory acts of worship – both those He has obligated upon them (general) and those they have obligated upon themselves through vows (specific).
- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** Allah praises those who fulfill their vows (both general and specific), and Allah only praises those who observe acts of worship or abandon the unlawful prohibitions. Praising the fulfillment of vows means that Allah loves it, and every action beloved by Allah is an act of worship. Any act of worship directed to other than Allah is *shirk*.

وقوله: ﴿ وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِّن نَّفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِّن نَّذْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُ ﴾

Allah the Almighty said: And whatever you spend of expenditures or make of vows, indeed Allah knows of it. [al-Insaaan: 7]

- { وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِّن نَّفَقَةٍ } – “Whatever you spend of expenditures”. It is general and includes anything which a person spends of their wealth, whether it be in the obedience of Allah or in His disobedience.
- { نَذَرْتُمْ مِّن نَّذْرٍ } – “Whatever you make of vows”. It is also general and includes all vows whether they be in the obedience of Allah or in His disobedience.
- { فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُ } – “Indeed Allah knows of it”. That is, Allah knows of your deeds and will recompense them accordingly. This is what Allah’s knowledge of our deeds necessitates – that He will record them and call us to account for them.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** Allah states that He has knowledge of our acts of worship – specifically what we spend of wealth, and what we obligate upon ourselves from vows. He will record all our acts of worship and reward them according to their intentions.
- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** Allah knows what we spend of wealth and what we obligate upon ourselves from vows and will recompense us accordingly. Whatever actions necessitate recompense (reward or punishment), then they are acts of worship. Therefore, vows are acts of worship, which if directed to other than Allah, constitute *shirk*.

وفي الصحيح عن عائشة رضي الله عنها أن رسول الله ﷺ قال: مَنْ نَذَرَ أَنْ يُطِيعَ اللَّهَ فَلْيُطِعهُ ، وَمَنْ نَذَرَ أَنْ يَعْصِيَ اللَّهَ فَلَا يَعْصِهِ .

Narrated 'Aishah that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: Whoever vows that he will be obedient to Allah must obey Him; and whoever made a vow that he will disobey Allah must not disobey Him.

[Bukhari]

- **'Aishah:** One of the Mothers of the Believers. The daughter of Abu Bakr al-Sideeq. She was the most knowledge women in Islamic jurisprudence, and the most beloved to the Prophet ﷺ amongst his wives. There is a difference of opinion amongst the scholars whether she or Khadijah was more endeared to the Prophet ﷺ. She died in the year 57 A.H.
- (في الصحيح) – “In the Sahih”. That is, Sahih Bukhari. It is also narrated in Sahih Muslim.
- (فَلْيُطِعهُ) – “Must obey Him”. That is, they must fulfill the act of worship they have stipulated in their vow. This is an order, indicating that the fulfilment of the vow is obligatory.
- (فَلَا يَعْصِهِ) – “Must not disobey Him”. That is, they must not fulfill the act of disobedience stipulated in their vow. This is a prohibition, meaning the one who commits it is disobeying Allah and has incurred a sin.
- **General meaning of the Hadith:** The Prophet ﷺ commands the Muslims to fulfill their vows which are devoted to Allah, such as giving in charity or offering optional prayers. He also warns them against fulfilling their vows if they entail the disobedience of Allah such as offering a sacrifice to other than Allah or offering prayers at a tomb.
- **Relevance of the hadith to the chapter:** The hadith mentions that a vow can either be in the obedience or disobedience of Allah. Therefore, making a vow is an act of worship, which if dedicated to a deity besides Allah is an act of major *shirk*.

- **Important issues of the Chapter**

1. **Fulfillment of the vow is obligatory.** Exclusively referring to the vow of obedience because the Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever vows to obey Allah must obey Him”.
2. **Since it is approved that making a vow is an act of worship to Allah, then directing a vow to other than Allah is committing shirk.** This is a general principle in *tawheed al-uloohiyya* (the *tawheed* of worship) in that whatever is established as being an act of worship, then directing it to other than Allah is an act of *shirk*.
3. **Any vow based on disobedience (to Allah the Almighty) is impermissible to be carried out.** Because the Prophet ﷺ clearly stated: “Whoever vows to disobey Allah must not disobey Him”. The most correct opinion is that they must pay a *kafaarat yameen*.