

Explanation of The Book of Tawheed

Class Notes – Chapter 14

بَابٌ مِنَ الشِّرْكِ أَنْ يَسْتَعِيْثَ بِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَنْ يَدْعُوَ غَيْرَهُ

From the acts of shirk is to seek help in other than Allah or to invoke other than Him.

- **Relevance of the chapter to the book:** The author continues to mention the acts of *shirk* which contradict and remove pure *tawheed*. From amongst these matters is to seek help and deliverance in other than Allah (*istighaathah*) and to invoke others besides Allah (*du'aa*).
- (مِنَ الشِّرْكِ) – “From the acts of shirk”. To seek deliverance or rescue in other than Allah, or to make *du'aa* to other than Allah in something only Allah can give you, is an act of major *shirk*.
- (أَنْ يَسْتَعِيْثَ) – “To seek help”. It is to seek deliverance and rescue from severe adversity and destruction. *Istighaathah* is founded on the concept that none besides Allah has the power to benefit or to harm. It is of three types:
 1. To seek rescue and deliverance in Allah. This is pure *tawheed*.
 2. To seek deliverance in the dead or in the living who are not present and are incapable of granting deliverance. This is major *shirk*.
 3. To seek deliverance in the living from those who are aware of the situation and able to grant deliverance. This is permissible. Allah says in the story of Musa:

﴿ فَاسْتَعَاثَهُ الَّذِي مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ عَلَى الَّذِي مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ فَوَكَرَهُ مُوسَى فَقَضَى عَلَيْهِ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

The one from his faction called for help to him against the one from his enemy, so Moses struck him and [unintentionally] killed him. [al-Qasas: 15]

- When seeking the permissible type of *istighaathah*, it is important to correct your *tawheed* by firmly believing that whoever deliverance is being sought in is merely a cause with no direct ability to alleviate any hardship. Not doing so is a deficiency in *tawheed*.
- (أَوْ أَنْ يَدْعُوَ غَيْرَهُ) – “Or invoking other than Him”. The difference between *istighaathah* and *du'aa* is that *istighaathah* is specific to those who are in great distress, while *du'aa* is general and is made by both those in distress and those who are not. Essentially, *istighaathah* is a special form of *du'aa*.

﴿ وَقَوْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى: ﴿ وَلَا تَدْعُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكَ وَلَا يَضُرُّكَ فَإِنْ فَعَلْتَ فَإِنَّكَ إِذَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾

Allah the Almighty said: And invoke not besides Allah any that will neither profit you nor hurt you, but if (in case) you did so, you shall certainly be one of the Zalimun (polytheists and wrongdoers).

[Yunus: 106]

- {وَلَا تَدْعُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ} – “And do not invoke besides Allah”. Generally speaking, *du'aa* is to seek that which is beneficial, or to seek the removal of that which is harmful.

- {مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكَ} – “Which neither benefits you”. It does not bring about any good were you to worship them or to invoke them in your *du’aa*.
- {وَلَا يَضُرُّكَ} – “Nor harms you”. It can have two meanings both of which are correct:
 1. They are not able to divert or remove harm should you ask them.
 2. They could not harm you if you left their worship, because they are incapable of revenge.
- There is no opposite meaning to this ayah in that it is still forbidden to invoke others besides Allah even if those invoked have the restricted ability to benefit or harm. The *ayah* merely outlines the reality of the situation in that those invoked besides Allah cannot bring about benefit or harm.
- {فَإِنْ فَعَلْتَ فَإِنَّكَ إِذَا مَنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ} – “If you did, you would be of the wrongdoers/oppressors”. The wrongdoing or oppression referred to in the *ayah* is that of *shirk*. Allah says:

﴿ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

Indeed, shirk is a great injustice. [Luqman: 13]

- **General meaning of the ayah:** Allah commands His Messenger ﷺ not to invoke any of the creation who are incapable of either bringing about benefit or repelling harm. Had the Prophet ﷺ invoked anyone besides Allah, he would have been regarded as one of the polytheists. Although the *ayah* specifically addresses the Prophet ﷺ, the prohibition is general and addresses his whole *ummah*.
- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** Allah clearly prohibits the invoking of anyone besides Him and informs us that such an invocation is considered as *shirk* which contradicts pure *tawheed*. If the most righteous servant (the Prophet ﷺ) invoked false deities besides Allah, he would be regarded as a polytheist. So, what about those who are lesser in righteousness?!

﴿ وَقَوْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى: ﴿ وَإِنْ يَمَسُّكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَادَّ لِفَضْلِهِ ﴾

﴿ يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾

And He also said: And if Allah touches you with hurt, there is none who can remove it but He; and if He intends any good for you, there is none who can repel His Favour which He causes it to reach whomsoever of His slaves He wills. And He is the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. [Yunus: 107]

- {بِضُرٍّ} – “Adversity”. Such as sickness, poverty, or famine.
- {فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ} – “None can remove it except Him”. If Allah decrees hardship upon His servant, then He alone is the only One who can remove it.
- {يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ} – “He causes it to reach whomever He wills”. The pronoun in (بِهِ) Returns to either the good (خَيْرٍ) or to the bounty (فَضْلٍ). Both are correct in meaning.
- {مَنْ يَشَاءُ} – “Whomsoever He wills”. Allah’s *mashee’ah* (will or decree) always has a wisdom behind it, regardless of this wisdom being known to us or not.

﴿ وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

And you do not will except that Allah wills. Indeed, Allah is ever Knowing and Wise.

[al-Insaaan: 30]

- {مِنْ عِبَادِهِ} – “Of His servants”. The good and bounty referenced in the *ayah* is general and covers the good of this world and the Hereafter. The good of this world extends to the disbelievers, therefore the *uboodiyya* mentioned in the *ayah* is generic in that Allah’s creations are His slaves willingly or unwillingly.

- **General meaning of the ayah:** Allah informs us that to Him alone belongs the sovereignty of all things. He alone gives, deprives, brings about benefit and inflicts harm. Therefore, because of this, none has the right to be invoked or worshipped besides Him. Those who are invoked besides Him are incapable of inflicting harm or bringing about benefit – neither for themselves, nor for others.
- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** The *ayah* clearly demonstrates that Allah alone is deserving of all *du'aa* because He alone can remove adversities and bestow bounties upon His servants. When the meaning of the two ayaat (106 and 107) are combined, we understand that the prohibition of invoking others besides Allah is *shirk* because something specific to Allah (asking for the alleviating of harm and bringing about good) has been dedicated to other than Him.

وقول الله تعالى: ﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ لَكُمْ رِزْقًا فَابْتَغُوا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الرِّزْقَ
وَأَعْبُدُوهُ وَأَشْكُرُوا لَهُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

And He also said: *Verily, those whom you worship besides Allah have no power to give you provision, so seek your provision from Allah (Alone) and worship Him (Alone), and be grateful to Him. To Him (Alone) you will be brought back.* [al-Ankabut: 17]

- {لَا يَمْلِكُونَ لَكُمْ رِزْقًا} – “Certainly cannot give you any provision”. That is, the idols worshipped besides Allah cannot give provision. This is evidence that the polytheists would seek provision and sustenance in their idols.
- {فَابْتَغُوا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الرِّزْقَ} – “So seek provision from Allah alone”. Because Allah alone is the One who provides. What is with Allah never runs out, while what is with others decreases when it is given.
- {وَأَعْبُدُوهُ} – “And worship Him”. It is a command to dedicate all acts of worship solely to Allah. Mentioning worship after seeking provision is mentioning something general after something specific. This is because seeking provision from Allah is a form of worship.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** Allah commands His servants to seek provision exclusively from Him, to devote all acts of worship solely to Him and to acknowledge all His favours by using them for His obedience.

Furthermore, Allah emphasises that all the creation will return to Him on the Day of Judgment and He will recompense them for their good and evil deeds. Therefore, everyone must prepare themselves for accountability before Allah.

- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** That Allah orders all worship to be dedicated to Him alone (وَأَعْبُدُوهُ). From the acts of worship which are to be dedicated to Him alone is seeking provision from Him. Therefore, seeking provision from other than Allah is *shirk*.
Furthermore, the one who has been tested with poverty, will seek help and deliverance (*istighaatha*) to be removed from this poverty. Doing so in Allah is *tawheed* (as per the *ayah*), while doing so in other than Allah is *shirk*.

وقول الله تعالى: ﴿وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّن يَدْعُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَن لَّا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَهُمْ
عَن دُعَائِهِمْ غَافِلُونَ ﴿٥﴾ وَإِذَا حُشِرَ النَّاسُ كَانُوا لَهُمْ أَعْدَاءً وَكَانُوا بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ كَافِرِينَ ﴿٦﴾

And He also said: *And who is more astray than one who calls (invokes) besides Allah, such as will not answer him till the Day of Resurrection; and who are (even) unaware of their calls (invocations) to them? And when mankind are gathered (on the Day of Resurrection), they (false deities) will become enemies for them and will deny their worshipping.* [al-Ahqaaf: 5-6]

- {وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ} – “And who is more astray”. A rhetorical question, meaning that there is none more astray than the one who invokes besides Allah those who will not respond.
- {لَا يَسْتَجِيبُ} – “Will not respond to Him”. Those invoked besides Allah are incompetent and unable to fulfill the invocations of those who call upon them.
- {إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ} – “Until the Day of Resurrection”. That is, they will never respond, because when the Day of Resurrection is established, the opportunity for deeds is gone and there will only be accountability.
- {وَهُمْ عَنْ دُعَائِهِمْ غَافِلُونَ} – “And they are of their invocation unaware”. Those invoked besides Allah are unaware of the invocations directed at them because they are either dead, inanimate, or preoccupied for that which they have been created (such as the angels).
- {كَانُوا لَهُمْ أَعْدَاءً} – “They will be enemies to them”. Those who are invoked besides Allah will dissociate themselves on the Day of Judgment from those who invoked them in this life.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** The *ayah* clearly states that the most deviated persons in the sight of Allah are those who invoke false deities who are unable to respond to their invocation and even worse, are unaware of such invocations.

When the people are gathered on the Day of Judgement, the ones invoked will dissociate themselves from those who invoked them. Therefore, the polytheists are losers in this life and in the Hereafter. Their invocation will not be realised in this life, and it will be rejected when they are in dire need of relief in the Hereafter.

- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** That Allah clearly states that none is more misguided than the one who invokes others besides Allah. The greatest misguidance is *shirk*, therefore to invoke, or seek help in others besides Allah is major *shirk*.

﴿ وَقَوْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى: ﴿ أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا تَدْكُرُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ ﴾

And He also said: Is not He Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls Him; and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations? Is there any god with Allah? Little is that you remember! [al-Naml: 62]

- {الْمُضْطَرَّ} – “Desperate”. The one beset with severe trials which have overcome them, and they cannot see an escape from them.
- {أَلَيْسَ مَعَ اللَّهِ} – “Is there a deity with Allah”. Besides Allah who can respond to the desperate when they call upon them and remove evil. None can do this besides Allah.
- {قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذْكُرُونَ} – “Little do you remember”. Little do you remember the Majesty of Allah and the favours He has bestowed upon you. As a result of this lack of reflection, you associate others in worship besides Him.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** Allah refutes the polytheists who invoke others besides Him during the times of ease, although they acknowledge that Allah alone removes their afflictions at the time of adversity. Therefore, the polytheists are condemned for worshipping false deities that cannot grant them any of the favours bestowed by Allah. Their lack of reflection on these favours is what made them fall into the abyss of polytheism.
- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** That after mentioning that He alone responds to the desperate and uncovers the evil, Allah follows it with a rhetorical question: “Is there a deity with Allah”. Therefore, *du’aa* and *istighaatha* are acts of worship which are dedicated to Allah alone and not to any false deities.

وَرَوَى الطَّبْرَانِيُّ بِإِسْنَادِهِ: أَنَّهُ كَانَ فِي زَمَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ مُنَافِقٌ يُؤْذِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ، فَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: قُومُوا بِنَا نَسْتَعِثُ بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ مِنْ هَذَا الْمُنَافِقِ. فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: إِنَّهُ لَا يُسْتَعَاثُ بِي ، إِنَّمَا يُسْتَعَاثُ بِاللَّهِ.

al-Tabarani narrates with his *Isnad* (chain of the narrators): During the days of the Prophet ﷺ there was a hypocrite who used to harm the believers, some of them (the believers) said, "Come (support) with us while we appeal to Allah's Messenger ﷺ for assistance against this hypocrite." The Prophet ﷺ replied: **Verily, no one should seek to me for assistance. Indeed, it is Allah Who is to be sought for assistance and help.**

- (بِإِسْنَادِهِ) – “With his chain of narration”. al-Tabarani narrates this hadith with a narration all the way to the *sahabi* Ubadah Ibnul Saamit. The grading of the hadith is *da'eef*, although some scholars grade it as *hasan*.
- (مُنَافِقٌ) – “A hypocrite”. It could have been Abdullah Ibn Ubay Ibn Salool, the head of the hypocrites or it could have been other than him. The harm of the hypocrite manifests itself through false speech and evil actions, rather than physical harm.
- **General meaning of the hadith:** When Islam spread widely and the Muslims increased in strength, a group of disbelievers decided to outwardly embrace Islam, but covertly and inwardly remain as disbelievers – they were the *munafiqoon* (hypocrites)

The hypocrites would harm the believers with their words and actions, as was the case of the man mentioned in the *hadith*. Some of the *sahabah* came to seek refuge in the Prophet ﷺ so that he would deter the hypocrite from his abuse.

It was within the capacity of the Prophet ﷺ to fulfill their request for help; however he instead denounced the wording they used (*nastagheethu*) as it implied lack of respect for Allah. The Prophet ﷺ did this to teach the *sahabah*, to block all avenues leading to *shirk*, and to keep their pure *tawheed* intact.

- **Relevance of the hadith to the chapter:** The Prophet ﷺ restricted the seeking of aid and deliverance to Allah alone whereby He said: “Indeed it is Allah who is to be asked for assistance and help”. If this is the case, then to direct the seeking of aid and help to other than Allah is *shirk*.

● **Important issues of the Chapter**

1. **To attach supplication or invocation (Du'a) with seeking assistance (Istighatha) through conjunction is to attach a general matter to one which is specific.** This is referring to the chapter title whereby the author mentioned *du'aa* (general matter) after *istighaatha* (specific matter). As mentioned previously, *istighaatha* is a specific form of *du'aa* which is made in the times of extreme hardship.
2. **Explanation of the verse: "And invoke not besides Allah any that will neither profit you nor hurt you..." (10: 106).** As explained above.
3. **This is the greater Shirk.** Because in the *ayah* Allah refers to those who invoke others besides Him as *thalimoon* (transgressors) and *shirk* is the greatest of transgressions.
4. **The most pious person, if he calls for help other than Allah, even for the gratification of someone else, he will become one of the Zalimun (wrong-doers, polytheists).** Because the *ayah* is addressing the Prophet ﷺ who is the most pious of all people. However, if he were to call others besides Allah, then no preferential treatment is given, and he would also be from the *thalimoon*. So what about those below him in status?
5. **Explanation of the verse following (10: 107).** As explained above. If Allah alone can remove harm, then it is obligatory to worship Him alone and to seek aid and deliverance from Him.

- 6. Calling others for help besides Allah is of no benefit in this world and besides that it is disbelief (Kufr).** Because as the *ayah* implies, calling others besides Allah is of no benefit, as only He can remove the harm. Therefore, the one who calls others besides Allah has lost in this *dunya* (because their *du'aa* is of no benefit), and in the Hereafter they will meet Allah upon disbelief.
- 7. Explanation of the Verse 29: 17.** As explained above.
- 8. Requesting sustenance and provisions should be done to none other than from Allah. Just as Paradise can be requested from none other than Him.** Taken from "So seek your provision from Allah alone". As for requesting Jannah it is taken from "... and worship Him", because through worship, a servant seeks the pleasure of Allah, and ultimately His Paradise.
- 9. Explanation of the fourth Verse 46:5.** As explained above.
- 10. There is none more misguided than the one who calls on others than Allah.** Taken from "And who is more astray ...". The purpose of the question is to negate, that is there is none more astray.
- 11. To whom the call is made (besides Allah) is unaware of the supplications of the caller; he knows nothing about it.** Taken from "And who are unaware of their calls (invocations) to them".
- 12. That call will be the cause of anger and enmity of the one called towards the caller.** Taken from "And when mankind are gathered, they (false deities) will become enemies for them ...".
- 13. The call is named as worship of the one called on.** Taken from "And will deny their worshipping". In the first *ayah* (46:5), Allah referred to it as *du'aa*, then in the second *ayah* (46:6) He called it *ibaadah* (worship).
- 14. The one called upon will deny and reject this act of worship towards him.** Also taken from "And will deny their worshipping".
- 15. This is why such a supplicant is the most astray of the people.** No one is more astray than the one who calls others besides Allah because:
1. They make *du'aa* to the one who cannot respond.
 2. They invoke those who are unaware of their *du'aa*.
 3. When they are resurrected, those they invoked will be their enemies.
- 16. Explanation of the fifth Verse 27: 62.** As explained above.
- 17. Astonishing is the admission of idolaters that none relieves the one in distress other than Allah. That is why, they call upon Him in times of extreme difficulty with the utmost religious sincerity.** The *mushrikoon* of the past acknowledged that only Allah could alleviate the hardships and thus called upon Him in these times. However, in their times of ease they would revert to the worship of their false idols. If there was any validity to their idol worship, they would have instead turned to them in the times of hardship.
- 18. The protection of the Chosen One (May Allah be pleased with him) means the protection of Tauhid and being mindful towards Allah.** Because the Prophet ﷺ forbade that *istighaatha* be made to him as a means of blocking all future avenues of *shirk*.