

## Explanation of The Book of Tawheed

### Class Notes – Chapter 23

#### بَابُ مَا جَاءَ أَنَّ بَعْضَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ يَعْبُدُ الْأَوْثَانَ

#### **What has been mentioned regarding that some people of this Ummah will worship idols (awthaan).**

- **Relevance of the chapter to the book:** In this chapter, the author affirms (based on evidences), that *shirk* will occur in this *ummah*. The chapter refutes and disproves the fallacies of the grave-worshippers, who clearly commit *shirk*, then claim that it can never occur in the Muslim *ummah* as long as they verbally proclaim the *shahadah* (لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله).
- The grave-worshippers use the following *hadith* to justify their *shirk*.

« إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ آيسَ أَنْ يَعْبُدَهُ الْمُصَلُّونَ فِي جَزِيرَةِ الْعَرَبِ وَلَكِنْ فِي التَّحْرِيشِ بَيْنَهُمْ »

**Verily, Shaytaan has lost all hopes that the worshippers would ever worship him in the Arabian Peninsula, but he is hopeful that he would sow the seeds of dissension amongst them.** [Muslim]

- The response to their use of this *hadith* is to say that just because the Prophet ﷺ informed us that Shaytaan had lost hope, it does not mean he will stop attempting to misguide. Rather, the Prophet ﷺ was describing the situation of the Shaytaan when Islam was at its strength. However, after that, when Islam weakened, *shirk* re-entered the Arabian Peninsula, and also entered the *ummah* at large, as outlined in the evidenced of this chapter.
- (بَعْضَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ) – “Some of this *ummah*”. Not all of them, because the Prophet ﷺ informed us that there is a group from this *ummah* always upon the *haqq* until the Hour is established. Before the Hour is established, a breeze will come and take the lives of the believers so that only the worst of people remain on the earth.
- (الْأَوْثَانَ) – Plural of *wathan* (idol). It is everything worshipped besides Allah, and may or may not have a physical representation. It is more general than a *sanam* which is specific to a tangible deity.

وقوله تعالى: ﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْجِبْتِ وَالطَّغُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا سَبِيلًا ۗ ﴾

**Allah the Almighty said: Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the Scripture? They believe in al-Jibt and at-Taghut (all false deities) and say about the disbelievers, ‘these are better guided in their way than the believers’. [al-Nisaa’: 51]**

- { أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ } – “Given a portion of the Scripture”. Referring to the Jews and Christians who were given the Tawraah and Injeel respectively.
- { الْجِبْتِ } – It is a word which can refer to idols, soothsayers and sorcerers.

- {الطَّاغُوتِ} – It is taken from the verb ‘tagha’ meaning to exceed the proper limits. Anyone whom the limits of worship are exceeded in them are *taghoot*. What is specifically being referred to in the *ayah* is the Shaytaan who is the greatest of all *tawagheet*.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** Allah reprimands and degrades the Jews and the Christians by asking the Prophet ﷺ to consider their situation.

Though they were given a portion of the divine scripture (which clearly differentiated between truth and falsehood), they still choose the falsehood - such as idolatry, soothsaying and sorcery – all in obedience to the whispers of the Shaytaan.

- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** Since those who were given a portion of the scripture still chose to believe in *jibt* and *taghoot*, it is not far-fetched that those from this *ummah* who were given the Noble Quran, will also worship *jibt* and *tahgoot*.

This is because the Prophet ﷺ informed us that from among his *ummah*, there will be those who will follow in the footsteps of the Jews and Christians by approving their practices.

وقوله تعالى: ﴿ قُلْ هَلْ أَنْبِئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِنْ ذَلِكَ مَثُوبَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ الْقِرَدَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ وَعَبَدَ الطَّاغُوتَ ﴾

**Allah the Almighty said: Say:** 'Shall I inform you of something worse than that, regarding the recompense from Allah? Those who incurred the curse of Allah and His wrath, those of whom He transformed into monkeys and pigs and those who worshipped Taghut (false deities).' [al-Maa'idah: 60]

- {قُلْ} – “Say”. The Prophet ﷺ is being addressed.
- {بِشَرٍّ مِنْ ذَلِكَ} – “What is worse than that”. What is worse than your false accusation of the Prophet ﷺ and his followers whom you said of them: “Never have we seen worse than you”.
- {مَثُوبَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ} – “Recompense from Allah”. On the Day of Judgement. That is, those who are described with the following characteristics will have the worst recompense with Allah on the Day of Judgement.
- {مَنْ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ} – “Whom Allah has cursed”. Those whom Allah has distanced or removed from His infinite mercy.
- {وَعَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ} – “And with Whom He has become angry”. He will never be pleased with them after this anger. His anger necessitates punishment.
- {وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ الْقِرَدَةَ} – “And made of them apes”. That is, He transformed them into apes, referring to those from the Jews who broke the Sabbath.
- {وَالْخَنَازِيرَ} – “And made of them pigs”. Referring to the disbelievers from amongst the people of Isa, who asked him to ask Allah to send a table spread with food (*maa'idah*). Allah transformed them into pigs.
- {وَعَبَدَ الطَّاغُوتَ} – “And worshippers of taghoot”. Some of them (the Jews and Christians) worshipped the Shaytaan in what he insinuated to them from the disobedience of Allah. At the peak of disobedience is associating partners with Him.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** Allah commands His Prophet ﷺ to ask the People of the Scripture, who ridiculed Islam, if they would like to know the features of those who will face the worst penalty in the Hereafter. They are the ones whom Allah has cursed and they were worthy of Allah’s anger. They were externally transformed into apes and pigs, and are worshippers of the Shaytaan in everything he insinuated to them. These are the attributes of the Jews and Christians, and those who follow in their steps.

- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** That if there was from the People of the Scriptures who worshipped *taghoot* besides Allah, then it is not far-fetched that there will be those from this *ummah* who will do the same, as outlined in the subsequent *ahaadith* of the Prophet ﷺ.

وقوله تعالى: ﴿قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِم مَّسْجِدًا﴾

**Allah the Almighty said:** *Those who prevailed in the matter said, "We will surely build a place of worship over them. [al-Kahf: 21]*

- {غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ} – “Prevailed in their matter”. Those of influence who forced their opinion after the death of the Companions of the Cave. Their decision was that their graves be taken as a place of worship.
- {مَسْجِدًا} – A place of worship where people would pray and seek blessing in those buried therein.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** Allah denounces those who forced their opinion after the death of the Companions of the Cave, and took their graves as places of worship, where people would pray and seek blessings in the deceased buried therein.

The correct opinion (as mentioned by Ibn Katheer) is that they were from the Jews prior to Isa. This is because their story is mentioned in the Tawrah. Had it been in the Injeel they (the Jews) would not have paid it any heed.

- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** The *ayah* is evidence that there will be from this *ummah* who will take the graves as places of worship, just as the previous nations did.

In the previous chapters, we came to know that building *masaajid* on graves was from the characteristics of the Jews and Christians. In the subsequent *ahaadith* in this chapter, the Prophet ﷺ informs us that there will those from his *ummah* who will follow the way of the Jews and Christians in everything they did.

وعن أبي سعيد رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله ﷺ قال: لَتَتَّبِعَنَّ سَنَنَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ حَدْوُ الْقُدَّةِ بِالْقُدَّةِ حَتَّىٰ لَوْ دَخَلُوا جُحْرَ ضَبٍّ لَدَخَلْتُمُوهُ. قلنا: يا رسول الله ، اليهود والنصارى؟ قال: فمن؟. أخرجاه

**Abu Sa'eed narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:** "Surely, you will follow the ways of those nations who were before you, in everything as one arrow resembles another, so much so that even if they entered a hole of a sand lizard, you would enter it." They said: "O Allah's Messenger! Do you mean to say that we will follow the Jews and the Christians?" He replied, "Whom else?" [Bukhari and Muslim]

- (سَنَنَ) – “The Path”. Essentially the ways of the nations before you.
- (حَدْوُ) – “The example of”. That is, the example of the way you will follow them and the level of imitation of them.
- (الْقُدَّةِ بِالْقُدَّةِ) – “The feathers of an arrow”. The Arabs would have two feathers in the fletching of their arrows, and they would be similar in their resemblance and position. That is, you will imitate those before you, just as the two feathers of the arrow imitate one another in their resemblance.
- (حَتَّىٰ لَوْ دَخَلُوا جُحْرَ ضَبٍّ) – “Even if they entered the hole of a sand lizard”. Even if it was imaginable that they would enter the narrow hole of the sand lizard, your blind imitation of them would make you follow them into that hole. The hole of a lion is wider, so it is more likely that you will follow them into that.
- **General meaning of the hadith:** The Prophet ﷺ informs us there are some from his *ummah* who will blindly follow in the footsteps of the Jews and Christians, just as the feathers of an arrow resemble one another.

He gave an even more precise example of this blind imitation by stating that if the Jews or the Christians were to do a trivial or strange thing (like entering the hole of a sand lizard), some of his *ummah* would still follow in their footsteps.

- **Relevance of the hadith to the chapter:** That it was the way of the Jews and Christians to take the graves of their messengers as places of worship, and to obey the Shaytaan in what he adorned for them from the acts of *shirk*. Therefore, just as the Prophet ﷺ clearly explained, there will be those from this *ummah* who will follow in their footsteps and commit *shirk* (by worshipping the *awthaan*) just as they did.

**وَلِمُسْلِمٍ عَنْ ثَوْبَانَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ زَوَى لِي الْأَرْضَ فَرَأَيْتُ مَشَارِقَهَا وَمَغَارِبَهَا. وَإِنَّ أُمَّتِي سَيَبْلُغُ مُلْكُهَا مَا زُوِيَ لِي مِنْهَا. وَأُعْطِيتُ الْكَنْزَيْنِ الْأَحْمَرَ وَالْأَبْيَضَ. وَإِنِّي سَأَلْتُ رَبِّي لِأُمَّتِي أَنْ لَا يُهْلِكَهَا بِسَنَةِ بَعَامَةٍ وَأَنْ لَا يُسَلِّطَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَدُوًّا مِنْ سِوَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ فَيَسْتَبِيحَ بَيْضَتَهُمْ. وَإِنَّ رَبِّي قَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ إِنِّي إِذَا قَضَيْتُ قَضَاءً فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَرُدُّ. وَإِنِّي أَعْطَيْتُكَ لِأُمَّتِكَ أَنْ لَا أُهْلِكُهُمْ بِسَنَةِ بَعَامَةٍ وَأَنْ لَا أُسَلِّطَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَدُوًّا مِنْ سِوَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ يَسْتَبِيحُ بَيْضَتَهُمْ. وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعَ عَلَيْهِمْ مَنْ بِأَفْطَارِهَا حَتَّى يَكُونَ بَعْضُهُمْ يُهْلِكُ بَعْضًا وَيَسْبِي بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا.**

**ورواه البرقاني في صحيحه وزاد: وَإِنَّمَا أَخَافُ عَلَى أُمَّتِي الْأَيْمَةَ الْمُضِلِّينَ. وَإِذَا وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّيْفُ لَمْ يُرْفَعْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ. وَلَا تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ حَتَّى يَلْحَقَ حَيٌّ مِنْ أُمَّتِي بِالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَحَتَّى تَعْبُدَ فِتْنَامٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي الْأَوْثَانَ. وَإِنَّهُ سَيَكُونُ فِي أُمَّتِي كَذَّابُونَ ثَلَاثُونَ، كُلُّهُمْ يَزْعُمُ أَنَّهُ نَبِيٌّ وَأَنَا خَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّينَ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي. وَلَا تَزَالُ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي عَلَى الْحَقِّ مَنْصُورَةٌ لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.**

**Muslim reports from Thawban that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "Allah the Most Exalted folded for me the earth, so much so that I saw its easts and wests (i.e. the extremities). The kingdom of my ummah will reach as far as the earth was folded for me. The two treasures, the red (gold) and the white (silver) were bestowed on me, I prayed to my Lord that He may not destroy my community by a prevailing famine, and not give their control to an enemy who annihilates them en masse except from among themselves. My Lord said to me, 'Muhammad, if I issue a decree, it is not withdrawn; I have promised your Ummah that I will not destroy it by a prevailing famine, and I shall not give control over them to an enemy not from amongst themselves who exterminates them in large numbers, even if all the people from the different parts of the world join hands against them, unless they kill each other and take one another as captives'".**

**Al-Barqani recorded this Hadith in his sahih and added to it the following words: "I am afraid for my ummah from those astray leaders who will lead astray. When the sword is used among my ummah, it will not be withdrawn from them till the Day of Resurrection, and the Last Hour will not come until tribes from my ummah attach themselves to the polytheists and tribes from my ummah worship idols. There will be among my people thirty great liars each of them asserting that he is a prophet, whereas I am the Seal of the Prophets after whom (me) there will be no Prophet; and a section of my ummah will continue to hold to the truth and they will be victorious and they will not be harmed by those who oppose them till Allah's Command comes."**

- (زَوَى لِي الْأَرْضَ) – "Folded for me the Earth". Allah displayed the Earth for the Prophet ﷺ in a compact size and enabled him to see the dominion of his *ummah* from east to west. This is from the matters of the unseen which we believe in, even though it may seem opposite to reality. How the Earth was folded for the Prophet ﷺ is unknown to us, but we believe that it was, because he informed us of it.

- (الْكُوزَيْنِ الْأَحْمَرَ وَالْأَبْيَضَ) – “The two treasures, the red and white”. The red treasure refers to the gold which belonged to Qaysar (Caesar), the king of the Romans. The white treasure refers to the silver which belonged to Kisrah (Khosrow), the king of the Persians. The Muslims took their wealth when they conquered their lands.
- (بِسَنَةِ بَغَامَةٍ) – “Prevailing drought”. A great drought which causes famine, general destruction and kills people in large numbers.
- (يَسْتَبِيحُ بَيْضَتَهُمْ) – “Annihilates them in large numbers”. That is, an enemy foreign to them who kills them in large numbers. The literal meaning of ‘baydah’ is the helmet which is worn to protect the head from arrows. If it is removed, a direct hit to the head would destroy and kill the fighter.
- (حَتَّى يَكُونَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ يَهِلِكُ بَعْضًا) – “Unless they kill each other and take one another as captives”. If they kill one another and take one another as captives, then Allah will send an enemy from the disbelievers who will kill them in large numbers, otherwise they are saved from this foreign enemy.
- (الْأَيْمَةَ الْمُضِلِّينَ) – “Astray leaders”. The rulers, scholars, and devoted worshippers who are taken as role models by the common people. Plural of *imam*. An *imam* can be in leadership or in knowledge.
- (وَإِذَا وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّيْفُ) – “When the sword is used amongst my ummah”. That is, if *fitnah*, dissension and killing amongst the *ummah* occurs, it will continue until the Day of Judgement.
- (حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ) – “Till Allah’s command comes”. Referring to the gentle wind which will blow before the Day of Resurrection. It will take the souls of the believers so that only the worst of people will remain on the earth. Upon them the hour will be established.
- **General meaning of the hadith:** This great *hadith* outlines a number of significant issues and true incidents.

The Prophet ﷺ relates that Allah displayed the earth for him in a compact form, so that he could see the dominion of his *ummah* from east to west. This statement came true when the dominion of the Muslim *ummah* reached the most distant parts of the east and the west.

The Prophet ﷺ also relates that he will be given the two treasures, and that became true when his *ummah* laid hands on the possessions of Kisrah and Qaysar, including all their gold and silver.

The Prophet ﷺ also made *du’aa* to Allah that his *ummah* not be destroyed by a widespread famine, or to give sovereignty over them to an enemy not from amongst themselves who would exterminate them in large numbers. He stated that Allah promised to fulfill his first *du’aa*, but stipulated that Muslims must avoid disagreement and fighting each other in order for the second *du’aa* to be accepted. If they do not avoid disagreement and fighting, they will be dominated by their enemies, and this has already come true.

The Prophet ﷺ stated that he also feared the bad influence of devious leaders and scholars, who are always followed by the common people.

Then the Prophet ﷺ informed his *ummah* that once they fall into dispute and conflict with one another, they will suffer dissension until the Day of Judgement and this has already come true. The Muslim *ummah* has been afflicted with dissension and conflict ever since Uthman bin Afaan was assassinated.

In addition, the Prophet ﷺ stated that some of his *ummah* will follow the polytheists and live in their lands, and others would convert to polytheism. This has also come true.

Furthermore, the Prophet ﷺ foretold the emergence of thirty imposters who would claim prophethood.

At the end of the hadith, the Prophet ﷺ gave glad tidings, that despite all these calamities and hardships, a small number of his *ummah* would remain steadfast in their adherence to Islam without being affected by the opposition and harm of their enemies.

- **Relevance of the hadith to the chapter:** In this *hadith*, the Prophet ﷺ clearly foretold that a large number of his *ummah* will worship idols (*awthaan*). The *hadith* thus disproves the deception of the deviant groups that claim a Muslim cannot fall into *shirk*.
  
- **Important issues of the Chapter**
  1. **Explanation of the verse in al-Nisaa' (4:5).** As explained above.
  2. **Explanation of the verse in al-Maa'idah' (5:60).** As explained above.
  3. **Explanation of the verse in al-Kahf (18:21).** As explained above.
  4. **The most important issue is what is meant by believing in *jibt* (magic, shirk, idols) and *taghut* (all false deities worshipped besides Allah). Does it mean believing in that sincerely by the heart; or approval of those who do so while hating it and knowing its falsehood?** If they sincerely believed in them, then there is no doubt that they are included in the *ayah* and that Allah's curse is upon them. If, however, they approve of it while hating it and knowing its falsehood, then they have not fallen into disbelief but they are in great danger of doing so.
  5. **Their (Jews) saying (regarding the pagan Quraish) that the disbelievers who are well aware of their *Kufr* (disbelief) are on a more correct and guided path than the believers.** Whoever claims that the disbelievers (*kuffar*) who are aware of their disbelief are more guided than the believers, then they themselves are *kuffar*. This is because they have preferred disbelief (*kufr*) over belief (*imaan*).
  6. **Such people will be found in the Muslim *ummah* as is proven by the hadith of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri. This is the main object of the chapter.**
  7. **The occurrence of his declaration that many followers of this *ummah* will worship false deities (idols, statues etc).** As per the *hadith* of Thawban (with the addition of al-Barqani) that the Prophet ﷺ said: '... and the hour will not be established until a great number of my *ummah* will worship idols (*awthaan*) ...'.
  8. **Most amazing is the appearance of those claiming Prophethood like al-Mukhtar (al-Mukhtar bin Abi Ubaid Ath-Thaqafi who conquered Kufa at the beginning of the caliphate of Ibn Zubair). Despite his proclamation of al-Shahaadatain, and his declaration of being a part of this Muslim nation, and (his testifying) that the Messenger ﷺ was true and the Qur'an was true and therein is the confirmation that Muhammad ﷺ was the "Seal" of the Prophets. He was believed in spite of his clear and open contradiction to it (al-Shahaadatain). al-Mukhtar appeared in the latter era of the Companions and many people followed him.** Others who claimed Prophethood: Musailamah al-Kadhaab and al-Aswad al-Anasi, both during the time of the Prophet ﷺ. It is an astonishing matter (which belies belief) because they are essentially contradicting themselves. To believe in the Quran is to believe that the Prophet ﷺ is the final messenger!
  9. **The glad tidings that the truth will never perish completely as it had in the past. Indeed, there will always be a group upon the truth.** As per the *hadith* of Thawban (with the addition of al-Barqani) that the Prophet ﷺ said: '... and a section of my *ummah* will continue to hold onto the truth ...'.

**10. The greatest of signs is that they (victorious group) will not be harmed by those who oppose them and fight against them despite (them) being few in number.** As Allah says in Surat al-Baqara:

﴿ كَم مِّن فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴾

**How often has a small force prevailed against a large force by the permission of Allah and Allah is with those who remain steadfast.** [al-Baqara: 249]

**11. This will be the case until the Last Hour.** That is, close to the establishment of the Hour as the Hour will only be established on the worst of the creation.

**12. There are a number of signs in the statement of the Prophet ﷺ:**

- **Allah folded for him ﷺ the east and the west (i.e. the lands under the control of Islam); the meaning of it; and that it indeed occurred as he informed; as opposed to the north and the south.**
- **That two treasures (i.e. the treasures of Rome and Persia) were bestowed upon him.**
- **That two of his du'aa (invocations) on behalf of his nation have been accepted.**
- **That the third of his invocations was prevented.** The third *du'aa* which was rejected is implied in the *hadith*, but is explicitly stated in another *hadith* narrated by Muslim:

« وَسَأَلْتُهُ أَنْ لَا يَجْعَلَ بَأْسَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ فَمَنْعَنِيهَا »

**And I asked my Lord that there should be no bloodshed among the people of my Ummah, but He did not grant it.** [Muslim]

- **That the sword would be used and that it would not be lifted after that.**
- **That false prophets would appear among this ummah.**
- **There would always be a victorious group.**
- **All of this occurred as he mentioned even though each one of them was far from what could have been conceived.**

**13. The extent of fear for his nation from the misguided and astray leaders.** Because the leaders and scholars have a great influence on the people and can easily mislead them.

**14. Warning and notice of the meaning of idol worship.** It is not restricted to *rukoo'* and *sujood* but also includes following the misguided in making permissible what Allah has forbidden and vice-versa.