

Explanation of The Book of Tawheed

Class Notes – Chapter 27

بَابُ مَا جَاءَ فِي النَّشْرَةِ

What has been mentioned regarding the curing of magic possession (al-Nushrah).

- **Relevance of the chapter to the book:** In the previous chapters, the author outlined the legal ruling of sorcery and soothsaying. In this chapter he outlines the ruling of *al-nushrah*, because like sorcery and soothsaying, it is usually from the devils of the *jinn* and the sorcerers and thus also negates the concept of pure *tawheed*.
- The one who has been possessed with magic and sorcery is in need of having this magic removed because it is harmful to them. This is the essence of *al-nushrah* and depending on the method used, is either blameworthy or praiseworthy.
- (مَا جَاءَ) – “What has been mentioned”. In the *sunnah* and sayings of the scholars regarding its prohibition or permissibility, as these are the evidences which the author presented in the chapter.
- (النُّشْرَةُ) – From the verb *nashara*, which from its linguistic connotations, means to separate. Its *shar’i* meaning (extended from its linguistic meaning) is to remove the sorcery from the one who has been possessed with it. That is, they separate the magic from the person and remove it. It is a type of treatment which is administered to the one who is believed to be magically possessed.

عَنْ جَابِرٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ سُئِلَ عَنِ النَّشْرَةِ؟ فَقَالَ: هِيَ مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ. رَوَاهُ أَحْمَدُ

بِسَنَدٍ جَيِّدٍ، وَأَبُو دَاوُدَ.

Jabir narrates that Allah's Messenger ﷺ was asked about al-Nushrah and he ﷺ replied: It is from the work of Shaytaan. [Ahmad – with a good chain of narration and also Abu Dawud].

- (النُّشْرَةُ) – Referring to the *nushra* which was known and practiced by the Arabs of the *jaahiliyya* which was to treat the person possessed with magic with more magic. It is of two types according to the previous categorization of *sihr*.
 1. Through the assistance of the *shayateen*, through incantations, talismans, charms, knots etc.
 2. Through potions, drug, spells etc. which affects the one possessed with the *sihr*.
- (مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ) – “It is from the deeds of Shaytaan”. Because they remove the magic from the one possessed with devilish and magical practices which are forbidden in Islam. It was attributed to the Shaytaan because he orders it and is pleased with it, as Allah says:

﴿وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكٍ سُلَيْمَانَ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ﴾

And they followed instead what the devils had recited during the reign of Sulayman. It was not Sulayman who disbelieved, but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic. [al-Baqarah: 102]

- Its attribution to the Shaytaan also indicates that it is a prohibited act.

- **General meaning of the hadith:** That when questioned about the way of treating those magically possessed with more magic (as commonly practiced in the *jaahiliyya*), the Prophet ﷺ declared that such practices of incantations and spells are of satanic origins because they involve magical processes and acts of *shirk* which are prohibited.
- **Relevance of the hadith to the chapter:** The *hadith* is clear evidence of the prohibition of *al-nushra* and that it is the practice and work of Shaytaan. The *nushra* being referred to in the *hadith* is that of the *jaahiliyya*.

وَقَالَ: سَأَلَ أَحْمَدُ عَنْهَا فَقَالَ: ابْنُ مَسْعُودٍ يَكْرَهُ هَذَا كُلَّهُ.

Abu Dawud reported that when Imam Ahmad was asked about it (al-Nushrah) he replied: 'Ibn Mas'ud disliked all of this.'

- (وَقَالَ) – “And he said”. Referring to Abu Dawud, who heard Imam Ahmad, being asked about *al-nushra* and thus recorded his answer, although he did not ask the question himself.
- (فَقَالَ: ابْنُ مَسْعُودٍ يَكْرَهُ هَذَا كُلَّهُ) – “He replied: Ibn Mas'ud disliked all of this”. Imam Ahmed responded by quoting the *athar* of Ibn Mas'ud.
- The reference to *kullahu* (all of this) may give the impression that even the permissible *nushra* was disliked by Ibn Mas'ud. However, like the previous *hadith* it is referring to the *nushra* of the *jaahiliyya*. When the statement is understood in the context it was narrated in, *kullahu* refers to a number of things disliked by Ibn Mas'ud.

كَانُوا يَكْرَهُونَ التَّمَائِمَ وَالرُّقَى وَالنَّشْرَ

They (the school of Ibn Mas'ud) disliked talismans (tamaa'im), incantations (forbidden ruqya) and spells (nushra).

- The term *yakrah* (disliked) when used by the earlier generations of the *salaf* does not actually mean disliked, but rather means prohibited. That is, Ibn Mas'ud did not dislike *al-nushra*, but rather considered it as prohibited and forbidden.
- **General meaning of the athar:** That when Imam Ahmad was asked about *al-nushrah*, he quoted the opinion of Ibn Mas'ud, which was that he considered it as forbidden. This is as per the *hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ who considered it from the work of Shaytaan.
- **Relevance of the athar to the chapter:** That Ibn Mas'ud considered the *nushra* of *jaahiliyya* to be forbidden because of what it contains of magical processes and acts of *shirk*.

وَفِي الْبُخَارِيِّ عَنْ قَتَادَةَ: قُلْتُ لِابْنِ الْمُسَيَّبِ: رَجُلٌ بِهِ طِبٌّ أَوْ يُؤَحِّدُ عَنْ امْرَأَتِهِ، أَيَحِلُّ عَنْهُ أَوْ يُنَشَّرُ؟ قَالَ: لَا بَأْسَ بِهِ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُونَ بِهِ الْإِصْلَاحَ، فَأَمَّا مَا يَنْفَعُ فَلَمْ يَنْهَ عَنْهُ.

al-Bukhari reports from Qatadah who said: 'I asked Ibnul Musayib: A man is under a magical spell or is unable to be intimate with his wife, should we treat him by al-nushrah or apply some other means to cure the sorcery?'

Ibnul Musayib replied: 'There is no harm in it because they intend restoration or mending. That which benefits is not forbidden.'

- This *athar* is narrated in the *ta'leeqaat* (chapter headings) of al-Bukhari, not in his *sahih* proper. He narrated it in the Chapter of Medicine.
- (بِهِ طِبٌّ) – “Is under a magical spell”. They would call it *tibb*, which literally means medical treatment, as a form of optimism that the person would be cured from the magical spell.

- (أَوْ يُؤَخِّدُ عَنْ أَمْرَاتِهِ) – “Or is prevented from being intimate with his wife”. This is a common form of *sihr*, which is why it was specifically mentioned after the general mention of *sihr*. That is, they are under a magical spell which prevents them from being intimate with their wives.
- (لَا بَأْسَ بِهِ) – “There is no harm in it”. That is, there is no harm in treating the one magically possessed with the permissible *ruqya* because it benefits and repels the harm off them.
- **General meaning of the athar:** That when asked about the legal ruling of practicing *al-nushra*, Ibnul Musayib legalised it on the grounds that it is used for deriving benefit and repelling harm. Ibnul Musayib intended the legal type of *al-nushrah*, which is practicing *ruqya* by reciting the Quran and the established *du’aa* in the *sunnah*.
- **Relevance of the athar to the chapter:** The *athar* shows that *al-nushra* which uses the words of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ is from the permissible types of *al-Nushrah*.

وَرُوِيَ عَنِ الْحَسَنِ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: لَا يَحِلُّ السِّحْرَ إِلَّا سَاحِرٌ.

It has been narrated that al-Hassan (al-Basri) said: Only a sorcerer can break the magic of another sorcerer.

- The *athar* with this wording was mentioned with no chain of narration, thereby making it *da’eef* (weak). That is, it can not be authentically traced back to al-Hassan al-Basri. However, what can be authentically traced back to him is his statement:

سُئِلَ الْحَسَنُ عَنِ النَّشْرِ: فَقَالَ: سِحْرٌ

al-Hassan was asked about al-nushra. He replied by saying: ‘It is magic’.

- This is consistent with the *hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ referring to the *nushrah* of the *jaahiliyya* and that it is from the work of Shaytaan because of what it involves of *sihr*.
- **General meaning of the athar:** Although not authentic, the statement of al-Hassan al-Basri is a statement of fact, and not an opinion. It can be interpreted as meaning that in the vast majority of cases people resort to having magic removed with similar magic, hence it was viewed that only a sorcerer can break the spell of another. This interpretation is more consistent with the statement authentically narrated from him.
- **Relevance of the athar to the chapter:** That al-Hassan considered the *nushrah* of *jaahiliyya* as *sihr*, and therefore forbidden.

قَالَ ابْنُ الْقَيِّمِ: النَّشْرَةُ: حَلُّ السِّحْرِ عَنِ الْمَسْحُورِ، وَهِيَ نَوْعَانِ:

أَحَدُهُمَا: حَلُّ سِحْرِ مِثْلِهِ، وَهُوَ الَّذِي مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ، وَعَلَيْهِ يُحْمَلُ قَوْلُ الْحَسَنِ، فَيَتَقَرَّبُ النَّاشِرُ

وَالْمُنْتَشِرُ إِلَى الشَّيْطَانِ بِمَا يُحِبُّ، فَيُبْطَلُ عَمَلُهُ عَنِ الْمَسْحُورِ.

وَالثَّانِي: النَّشْرَةُ بِالرُّفْيَةِ وَالتَّعَوُّدَاتِ وَالْأَدْوِيَةِ وَالدَّعَوَاتِ الْمُبَاحَةِ، فَهَذَا جَائِزٌ.

Ibnul Qayyim stated that al-Nushrah is removing the effects of sorcery from the affected one, and it is of two types:

First: *The use of magic (sorcery) to remove the effects of other magic and it is an act of Shaytaan to which the statement of al-Hassan applies. That is, the sorcerer and the patient both get closer to Shaytaan by that which he loves. Shaytaan then removes the effects of magic from the one possessed.*

Second: The effects of magic can be removed by reciting Qur'anic verses, reciting ruqyah, seeking refuge with Allah, taking permissible medicine and offering invocations. This type of nushrah is permissible.

- Ibnul Qayyim divides *al-nushrah* into two categories. This division takes into account all the aforementioned *athaar* of Ibn Mas'ud, Ibnul Mussayib, and al-Hassan al-Basri and reconciles between them.
- His commentary indicates that treating the magically possessed with lawful remedies, such as reciting the *Quran*, is permissible, however treating them by means of other magical spells is forbidden.
- ***Important issues of the Chapter***
 1. ***Prohibition of al-Nushrah.*** As per the *hadith* of Jabir referring to the *nushrah* of *jaahiliyya*. “It is from the work of *Shaytaan*”. Whatever is attributed to the *Shaytaan* is forbidden.
 2. ***The difference between the prohibited and permissible for the removal of such problems.*** As per the categorisation of Ibnul Qayyim.