

## Explanation of The Book of Tawheed

### Class Notes – Chapter 36

#### بَابُ مَا جَاءَ فِي الرِّيَاءِ

#### **What has been mentioned regarding showing-off.**

- **Relevance of the chapter to the book:** Since showing-off (*al-riyaa*) in acts of worship is a form of minor *shirk* which violates the obligatory *tawheed* and renders good deeds null and void, the author intends to admonish against it in this chapter.
- The author did not mention the ruling of showing-off in the chapter title so that every individual looks within themselves and judges accordingly. This is because showing-off is hidden to other than Allah and the one who intends it.
- Showing-off is considered as minor *shirk* because other than Allah was intended in the act of worship. Like all acts of minor *shirk*, excessiveness in them could lead to major *shirk* – in this case, the *riyaa* of the hypocrites.
- The ruling of an act of worship which has elements of showing-off in it, falls into three scenarios:
  1. That the act of worship was performed purely to show off. This is *shirk*, and the act of worship is nullified and rejected by Allah.
  2. That the act of worship started off being for the sake of Allah, however, partway through, it reverted to showing-off.
    - a. If they repel the *riyaa*, recognise its dangers and continue their act of worship upon *ikhlaas*, then their act of worship is valid.
    - b. However, if they are happy with the *riyaa* and continue with it, then the entire act of worship is nullified and rejected by Allah.
  3. That the act of worship was completed for the sake of Allah, and only afterwards did the thoughts of showing-off enter into the mind of the person. This does not affect the act of worship and it is still valid.
- (مَا جَاءَ) – “What has been mentioned”. In the Quran and the Sunnah because these are the evidences the Sheikh uses.
- (الرِّيَاءِ) – “Showing-off”. From the verb to see (*ra’aa*). It is to perform good deeds with the intention of people seeing you. That is, the good deed is done with the intention of pleasing people.

وقول الله تعالى: ﴿ قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ اللَّهُ وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا ﴾ ﴿١١٠﴾

**Allah the Almighty said: Say (O Muhammad): I am only a human like you to whom has been revealed that your Ilaah (deity) is only One Ilaah. So, whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord. [al-Kahf: 110]**

- {قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ} – “Say; I am only a human like you”. That is, I have no share with Allah in His Lordship or Worship.
- {أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ} – “That your ilaah (deity) is one deity”. That is, the One whom I call to you to worship is one deity alone who has no partners.
- {يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ} – “Hopes for the meeting with his Lord”. That is, they fear meeting him upon sins and thus perform righteous deeds hoping to see Him in Paradise.
- {فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا} – “Let him work righteousness”. Deeds which are righteous (saalih) are sincerely devoted to Allah alone and comply with the rules of the sharee’ah.
- {وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا} – “And associate none as partner in the worship of his Lord”. By keeping away from all forms of shirk (including riyaa) and devoting all good deeds to Allah alone.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** In this ayah, Allah commands the Prophet ﷺ to inform the people that he is an ordinary man like them, who does not possess any attributes of Lordship or Worship. Rather, the mission of the Prophet ﷺ is to inform people of what Allah revealed to Him.

The most significant of what was revealed to him is that Allah is the only One deserving of All worship, and that thus it is prohibited to associate anyone with Him in worship.

People will inevitably return to Allah on the Day of Resurrection. Therefore, whoever wishes to be saved on that day, must perform good deeds which are sincerely devoted to Allah and are in accordance to the shari’ah.

- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** That Allah orders his servants to be sincere in their worship of Him, and prohibits them from associating partners with Him. This includes avoiding showing-off which is an act of lesser shirk.

وَعَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ مَرْفُوعًا: قَالَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى: أَنَا أَغْنَى الشُّرَكَاءِ عَنِ الشِّرْكِ، مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا أَشْرَكَ فِيهِ مَعِيَ غَيْرِي تَرَكْتُهُ وَشِرْكُهُ. رواه مسلم

**Abu Huraira narrated in a marfu’ hadith that Allah said: I am most independent and free from needing associates. Whoever performs a deed while associating partners with Me, I will leave him along with his shirk. [Muslim]**

- (أَنَا أَغْنَى الشُّرَكَاءِ عَنِ الشِّرْكِ) – “I am most independent and free from needing associates”. Allah does not need anything or anyone. From the completeness of His self-sufficiency, is that the obedience of His servants does not benefit Him in any way, just as their disobedience does not harm Him in any way.
- (أَشْرَكَ فِيهِ مَعِيَ غَيْرِي) – “While associating partners with Me”. That is, they intended to please other than Me in their acts of worship.
- (تَرَكْتُهُ وَشِرْكُهُ) – “I will leave him along with shirk”. That is, Allah will not reward them for the deeds they perform which are not sincerely devoted to Him. If the shirk was minor, Allah will only leave the act of worship which the minor shirk was mixed with. If, however, the shirk was major, Allah will leave all their deeds and render them invalid.
- **General meaning of the hadith:** This is a hadith qudsi, as the Prophet ﷺ conveys the Words of Allah the Almighty. The Prophet ﷺ narrates that Allah rejects any deeds intended for others besides Him, through showing-off or the like. Allah only accepts the deeds which are devoted to Him alone.
- **Relevance of the hadith to the chapter:** The hadith is clear in showing that Allah rejects any deeds which include shirk in them, whether it be major or minor shirk. Included in this shirk, is any deed performed with the intention of showing-off to others.

وَعَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ مَرْفُوعًا: أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِمَا هُوَ أَخَوْفُ عَلَيْكُمْ عِنْدِي مِنَ الْمَسِيحِ الدَّجَالِ؟ قَالُوا: بَلَى. فَقَالَ:

الشِّرْكَ الْخَفِيُّ: يَقُومَ الرَّجُلُ يُصَلِّي فَيُزَيِّنُ صَلَاتَهُ لِمَا يَرَى مِنْ نَظَرِ رَجُلٍ. رواه أحمد

*Abu Sa'eed narrated in a marfu' hadith: Shall I not tell you what I fear for you more than the false Messiah? They replied: Indeed, O Messenger of Allah. He said: Inconspicuous shirk, when a man stands in prayer and on seeing someone looking at him, beautifies his prayer. [Ahmad]*

- **Takhreej:** This *hadith* is narrated by Ahmad in his *Musnad*. The *hadith* with this *isnaad* (chain of narration) is weak, but it is supported by the authentic narration of Mahmoud Ibn Labid also narrated by Ahmad in his *Musnad*.

عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ لَبِيدٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: «إِنَّ أَخَوْفَ مَا أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ الشِّرْكَ الْأَصْغَرَ: الرِّيَاءَ»

*Mahmoud Ibn Labid narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'The thing I fear most for you is the lesser shirk (polytheism): showing-off (in good deeds).'* [Ahmad - Sahih]

- (أَخَوْفُ عَلَيْكُمْ عِنْدِي مِنَ الْمَسِيحِ الدَّجَالِ) – “I fear for you more than the False Messiah”. The Dajjal, the False Messiah or the Antichrist, who will be sent a short time before the Day of Resurrection and will be the greatest *fitnah* (trial) to ever occur on the face of the Earth since the time of Adam. The Prophet ﷺ feared showing-off more than he feared the Dajjal, because showing off is hidden and inconspicuous, whereas the Dajjal will be apparent for all to see.
- (الشِّرْكَ الْخَفِيُّ) – “Inconspicuous shirk”. In the narration of Mahmoud Ibn Labid, the Prophet ﷺ explicitly called it lesser *shirk*. It is inconspicuous and hidden, because the outward actions of the one who shows off appear to be for Allah, but inwardly they hide the fact that the deed was devoted to other than Allah.
- (يُزَيِّنُ صَلَاتَهُ) – “Beautifies his prayer”. Such as implementing all the *sunan* (recommended acts) of *salaah*, lengthening it, and putting on a show of tranquillity.
- **General meaning of the hadith:** While the *sahabah* were discussing the *fitnah* of the Dajjal and expressing their fears at the event, the Prophet ﷺ joined them in their discussion. The Prophet ﷺ informed them that there was a greater matter he feared for them more than the Dajjal, namely intending other than Allah in acts of worship, which is invisible to people. The Prophet ﷺ explained that this type of *shirk* can be represented in a person beautifying their prayer with the intention of attracting people's admiration. The Prayer which is supposedly intended for the sake of Allah is instead performed seeking the admiration of others.
- **Relevance of the hadith to the chapter:** That if the Prophet ﷺ fears something for his *ummah*, then that is a strong warning that they should avoid it. The Prophet ﷺ is therefore warning against showing-off as it is an act of minor *shirk* which detracts from the obligatory *tawheed*.

- **Important issues of the Chapter**

1. **Explanation of the verse in Sural al-Kahf (18: 110).** As explained above.
2. **The great issue - that a good deed is rejected by Allah if it was joined with other than Him in any way.** As per the *hadith* of Abu Huraira. It is great issue, because Allah clearly declares: ‘I leave him and his shirk’, indicating that the deed is null and void.
3. **Allah's absolute self-sufficiency is the reason (of the rejection of the good deed, if it is not done purely for Him).** As per the *hadith* of Abu Huraira. Allah is High and Far Removed from having any partners because He is The Self-Sufficient (*al-Ghaniyy*).

4. **Another reason is that He is the Best when it comes to those who are given share in worship (i.e. false deities of disbelievers).** As per the *hadith* of Abu Huraira. That is, the false deities who are given shares in worship may accept that others be worshipped besides them, but Allah will never accept that.
5. **The fear, the Prophet ﷺ had of Riyaa, for his Companions.** As per the *hadith* of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri. He feared it upon his *Sahabah* more than the *fitnah* of the Dajjal. If he feared it upon his companions, then those after them are more in need of being feared over them.
6. **He explained Riya' by expressing the state of a person performing prayer for Allah, but he beautifies the Salat when he knows that others are looking at him.** As per the *hadith* of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri. He gave an example of *riyaa* which was the example of the one who beautifies their prayer seeking the admiration of people.