

Salaat

Worship And Submission

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Abstract: *the present article is the last part of a series of articles dealing with Salaat. In the previous articles we introduced Salat as the best way to get closer to God. in fact, Salaat which is the way of knowing God and worshipping Him can lead us to His Ma'arefa. .In this article, author has been tried to lighten up the meaning of worship and submission and the answer to this question has been provided, "What is the reality of servitude?" . in the last part of this article different aspects of mastership (Wilayah) has been explained by Imam Sadeq (p.b.u.h.).*

1- Also known as Namaz or the 'daily prayers

Allah the Almighty declares,

❖ *“I have not created the Jinns and mankind except to worship Me.”(The holy Quran 51:56)* ❖

❖ *“And your Lord has decreed that you will not worship anybody but Him.”(The holy Quran 17:23)* ❖

❖ *“And indeed We sent in every nation a Prophet saying, ‘worship Allah and keep away from the rebellious ones.’(The holy Quran 16:36)* ❖

Explaining the first verse, Imam Sadeq (p.b.u.h.) says:

“He created them so that they follow His command, i.e. they worship Him.”¹

Similarly, in another exegesis of the above verse, he (p.b.u.h.) says, “He created them for worship.”²

Ameerul Momineen (p.b.u.h.), in the sermon of Dhee-qaar elucidates,

“Then surely Allah the Almighty raised Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) with truth to bring out His servants from the worship of His servants to His worship, from the binding of His servants to His Own binding, from obedience of His servants to His Own obedience and from the mastership of His servants to His Own mastership.”³

To be an obedient implies a sense of smallness and humility. Vice-versa, to be a master means to feel great and lordly. One, who is king, is master and the one, who is a subject, is a slave. Allah, Who enjoys

¹ (Elalush Sharaa’e, p. 13)

² (Elalush Sharaa’e, p. 14)

³ (Al-Kafi, vol. 8, p. 386)

absolute Lordship dominates all affairs, possesses mastership and power of governance over one and all, and His mastership entails commands and prohibitions for everybody without exception. It is necessary that the servants should feel a sense of slavery, submission and humility in His presence. Imam Sadeq (p.b.u.h.) says:

“Knowledge is not acquired by learning. It is just a light which Allah (Blessed and High is He) penetrates in the heart of one whom He intends to guide. So, if you desire knowledge, then first seek in yourself the reality of servitude. Then seek knowledge for its application. Ask Allah for its understanding, He will make you understand it.”

The narrator says I enquired, ‘What is the reality of servitude?’

He (p.b.u.h.) replied, “It comprises of three things: Firstly, a person should never consider himself to be the master of things endowed to him by Allah the Almighty. He should consider every bounty and wealth to be Allah’s trust and utilize it as Allah wishes.

Secondly, a person should not have any plan opposed to that of his Lord.

Thirdly, all his efforts should be focused on His commands and prohibitions.

Thus, if a person does not consider himself as the master of the bounties granted to him by Allah the Almighty, it is easier for him to use them where Allah has commanded. And if a person does not plan against the planning of Allah, it becomes much easier for him to face the calamities and afflictions of this world. And if he uses all his efforts to act on His commands and prohibitions, he will not have any time left for disputing with the people or lording over them.

Hence, if Allah grants somebody these three things, the world, Iblis and all the creatures will not hold any significance in his eyes. He will not seek this world for lording over the people; he will not seek wealth for the sake of power and superiority and will not forfeit this world of a few days due to his laziness.

All these are from the first degree of piety. Allah the Almighty warns:

❦ ***“This is the house of the hereafter. We have made it for those who do not seek any loftiness in the earth nor mischief.”(The holy Quran 28:83)*** ❦

Therefore, a slave is one who feels that his self and all his possession, is under the dominion of his Master. Considering that everything has come and will come into existence, only on account of the will (masheeyat) of Allah, and nothing is independent of it. It will not be incorrect to say that only Allah is the Master and everything else is but His creation. For, the existence and survival of every creature in this universe depends on His will and intention.

Imam Sadeq (p.b.u.h.) declares,

“Nothing comes to existence on this earth and in the heaven except with the following seven stages:1)the Will of Allah, 2)His intention,3)His destiny,4)His decision, 5)His permission, 6)the Book (of specification);and 7)Duration of Time. whoever thinks that he can reduce any of these stages, indeed he has disbelieved.”¹

Therefore, in the first instance, nobody has got any right of mastership and superiority over the other, and the real master and the true king of one and all is only Allah. All are His subjects and it is obligatory on them to fulfill the right of servitude. They must obey only Him and subject themselves with utmost humility, modesty and lowliness in front of Him. Considering anybody else as the master is a great sin and is tantamount to denying Him and polytheism.

Acknowledging anybody to be at the same level or partner with Him is sheer polytheism.

¹ (Al-Kafi, Al-Usul, vol. 1(III),chapter 25,p.373,WOFIS,Tehran,Iran,1980)

Allah the Almighty says:

❦ ***“And they take gods other than Allah so that they become the cause of might for them. Nay! Soon they will deny them and will turn into their enemies.” (The holy Quran Quran 19: 81, 82)*** ❦

Explaining the above verse, Imam Sadeq (p.b.u.h.) says:

“Those who have taken to gods other than Allah the Almighty, on the Day of Judgment their gods will be raised to oppose them and their worship.”

Then Imam said, “Worship and servitude do not imply prostration and bowing. In fact, worship means obedience and submission. Whoever obeys a creature to disobey Allah, has in fact worshipped him.”¹

Imam Baqer (p.b.u.h.) says:

“You (Shias) are that group who has refused to worship the rebels. Whoever obeys an oppressor, has indeed worshipped him.”²

Ameerul Momineen (p.b.u.h) says:

“Allah deputed Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) with Truth so that he may take out His people from the worship of idols towards His worship and from obeying Satan towards obeying Him.”³

Anybody who thinks himself to be the master and ruler other than Allah the Almighty, he deserves to be left to himself. And anyone who takes a deity and lord besides Allah, He will hand him over to that deity and lord. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) says that Allah the Almighty has warned:

“Whoever obeys Me, I will not hand him over to other than Myself. And whoever disobeys Me, I will leave him unto himself. Then I won't bother in which valley he is destroyed.”¹

¹ (Tafseer al-Qummi, vol. 2, p.55)

² (Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 23, p. 361)

³ (Nahjul Balagha, sermon 147)

Imam Sadeq (p.b.u.h.) said to Abbad Ibn Katheer Basri:

“Woe unto you O Abbad! Keep away from ostentation. For, whoever works for other than Allah, Allah will hand him over to the one for whom he worked.”²

Hence, considering that His obedient and whatever is in their possession, all are the creatures and possession of Allah, the limbs and organs of this body and the entire existence is His property. Deriving benefit from them depends on His permission and satisfaction. Thus, any utilization which is not in conformity with His satisfaction and order, will be deemed as prohibited (haraam). So Allah the Almighty has given power and authority to everybody over their selves and wealth but has outlined their limitations through divine laws and regulations. Consequently, none possesses authority and domination over the other except that it has been granted by Allah the Almighty.

He declares in the Holy Quran:

❦ ***“Say O Allah! You are the King of the kingdom. You give the kingdom to whomsoever You please and snatch it away from whomsoever You please. You give respect to whomsoever You please and You degrade whomsoever You please. In Your hand is goodness. Surely You have power over all things.”(The holy Quran 3:26).*** ❦

It should be borne in mind that any perfection, power and authority that has been endowed by Allah, the Almighty, to his servants, are not because they deserved .It was not Allah’s duty to bestow these bounties upon them. But it was His mercy and grace on them that He granted these favors. Of course, this too, is not devoid of wisdom. Allah, the Almighty, brought the servants to the realm of existence from non-existence, and granted them the lights of intellect, knowledge, power, authority and freedom. Now, if they derive benefit from these great bounties, lower their necks for His obedience and submission, act with

¹ (Wasaael Al-Shia, vol. 15, p. 235)

² (Al-Kafi, vol. 2, p. 393).

modesty and humility in front of Him, fulfill the duties of worship diligently and express their gratitude for His bounties, they will draw themselves nearer to their real Master and attain great heights and perfection from His side. But if they adopt the path of disobedience and transgression while He intends to oblige them, He will snatch away the bounties from them so that they may be attentive towards their poverty and dependence on Him. And if He wants, He will increase their bounties and power so that their disobedience is augmented, thereby becoming eligible for a very severe chastisement in the hereafter. Therefore, if somebody acts with sins and vices with the bounties that he has received from his benevolent Lord, he should not think that these gifts are due to his transgressions. Rather, these are for preparing him for a great calamity in the next world. Allah the Almighty warns:

 ***“Let not those who disbelieve think that the respite that We have given them, is good for them. We have given them respite so that they increase in sins and for them is a debasing chastisement.”(The holy Quran 3:178)*** 

So, it should be borne in mind that all the powers and authorities are not in line with the power and authority of Allah. Only that power and authority is in line with that of Allah's which denotes obedience, servitude, humility and modesty in front of Him. And this governance and authority is that of the divine Prophets (p.b.u.h.), their successors (p.b.u.h.), those who have been permitted by them to take care of the affairs of the people and do not violate the regulations formulated by them. Among all these divine luminaries, the persona with the maximum power and authority is that of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). All the Imams (p.b.u.h.), all the chiefs of the armies, governors of cities, judges, scholars, guardians, etc. have all derived their master ship and authority from Allah's last messenger (s.a.w.a.). Imam Baqer and Imam Sadeq (p.b.u.h.) say:

 ***“Surely Allah has delegated to His Prophet (s.a.w.a.) the affairs of His creation, so that he overlooks as to how they obey Him. Then he (p.b.u.h.) recited the verse, ‘Whatever the Prophet gives you, take it; and whatever he prohibits, refrain from it’.(The holy Quran 59:7)*** 

Imam Reza (p.b.u.h.) says,

“Certainly Allah delegated the matters of His creation to His Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and said ‘Whatever the Prophet gives you, take it and whatever he prohibits, refrain from it. But He has not delegated to him the affairs of creation and providing sustenance...Indeed, the Creator of everything is Allah as He says, ‘Allah is He Who created you, then provided you sustenance, then caused you to die, then He brings to life (once) again. Is there anyone from your partners who can do any of these things? Glory be to Him and High is He from what they associate’.” (The holy Quran 30:40)¹

Imam Baqer (p.b.u.h.) says:

“Whatever the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) has prohibited, then it is as if Allah has prohibited it.”²

The same status is enjoyed by the Holy Imams (p.b.u.h.) who were from the progeny of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and were his successors barring the fact that making a thing permissible (halaal) or prohibited (haraam) was beyond their domain. Under the verse

 ***“Obey Allah, and obey His messenger and those in authority among you” (The holy Quran 4:59)*** 

Imam Baqer (p.b.u.h.) explains:

“This is about Ali and the Imams (p.b.u.h.). Allah has placed them in the position of the Prophets (p.b.u.h.) except that they don’t make a thing permissible or prohibited.”³

Thus, it is evident that obeying any one of them is equal to worshipping Him.

¹ (Oyoon-o-Akhbaar al-Reza (p.b.u.h.)

² (Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 17, p. 10)

³ (Tafseer-e-Ayyashi, vol. 1, p. 252)

Again, it is known that all power, authority and mastership returns to Allah, and they all ,ultimately ,belong to Him. So, if any one enjoys any authority and mastership with Allah's permission and order, then his mastership and authority are considered as that of Allah's and subservience to such mastership will be considered as His worship. Now, if anyone accepts his command and obeys him, then he has accepted Allah's command and obeyed Him and consequently, worshipped Him. But if someone assumes authority and power without His permission and command, then he has indeed usurped a position, placed himself as an opponent of Allah and claimed a status in front of Him. For, he will expect others to obey him and carry out his commands. Needless to say, those who obey him will only obey him and this obedience and obeisance has got nothing to do with Allah.

The same applies for the mastership, authority and control of a man over his own self and his wealth. If he views them as they are the endowments of Allah, and their utilization should be in conformity with His commands and prohibitions, then this very thought will be the obedience and worship of Allah the Almighty. But if he used them beyond the satisfaction of Allah, unwittingly and unintentionally, then it will not be considered as Allah's worship. Rather, all his expenditures and efforts will be for someone else and thereby illegal (haraam).

Describing the different aspects of mastership (Wilayah), Imam Sadeq (p.b.u.h.) says:

“There are two Masterships: One is the mastership of the rightful and just rulers, who have been appointed as guardians of the people by Allah, the Almighty. The same goes for those appointed by them as masters and this sequence till the lowest form of mastership. (i.e. all these are rightful masters as they bear divine endorsement).

The second kind of mastership is that of the oppressors and tyrants and those appointed by them till the lowest form of mastership due to whom people are misguided and deviated.

The legal of these two forms of mastership is obviously that of the just masters whose recognition and mastership has been made obligatory and enjoined by Allah. Obeying the sequence of these masters, down the

line, without reducing or adding anything from our side, or distorting his statements, is compulsory and strengthening his position, a recommended act. For, under the shadow of the just master and those appointed by him, rights are enlivened, justice is established and falsehood and oppression are destroyed. Therefore, one who looks out for such a master and helps him in his efforts is like the one who has made efforts to strengthen the religion of Allah.

But the mastership of the tyrant masters, right from the top to the last one appointed by them, has been condemned and following or assisting them is prohibited because they are the cause of misguidance and deviation of the people. Working with them and accepting their mastership is totally illegal and non-permissible. Whoever does so, becomes liable for a painful chastisement, even if his work is insignificant. For, any act which is done with the intention of helping and assisting them, is in fact, direct disobedience of Allah and consequently, a great sin. This is because under the shadow of a tyrant master, truth is trampled and falsehood is enlivened. Oppression, tyranny and destruction engulf the entire society, divine Prophets (p.b.u.h.), their books and the believers are thrown to the winds, mosques are destroyed, the traditions of Allah and His laws are subject to distortion.

Therefore, to work with them or to assist them is prohibited (haraam) except in a state of helplessness and coercion just as the occasion when man is forced to drink blood or eat corpse.”¹

So, it is evident that the reality of servitude is submission. And the reality of worship is humility, modesty and lowliness. The obedience of someone is tantamount to being humble and lowly in front of him, thereby resulting in his worship. Therefore, anyone who performs an action with the intention of obeying his master has indeed worshipped him. And if somebody has done something for the satisfaction of his self, then he has worshipped his self.

¹ (Tohaf Al-Oqool, p. 332)

So, those actions which are performed to gain paradise or for fear of hell, cannot be said to be Allah's worship, although Allah has ordered the same.

Because these actions have been performed out of the love of one's self. But Allah, on account of His grace and nobility, has permitted His servants to perform their actions with both these reasons and has promised them rewards of worship for the same. But it should be borne in mind that the right of worship is that it should be performed with the intention of Allah's love and proximity.

Imam Sadeq (p.b.u.h.) says,

“Surely the people worship Allah for three reasons: One group worships Him to acquire His rewards and this worship is of the greedy. The second group worships Him for fear of His hell and this is the worship of the slaves. But I worship Him because of my love and affection for Him and this is the worship of the liberals.”¹

Let us strive to worship our Lord for His love and affection and not for the sake of the love of the self, or out of craving for the bounties of paradise or out of fear for the punishment of hell, although Allah can be worshipped even by these two approaches.

All praise is for Allah the Lord of the worlds as He is worthy and blessings of Allah be on Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and his pure, immaculate off-springs. O Al Imams (p.b.u.h.), hasten the reappearance of our beloved Imam-e-Zamana(a.t.f.s.).lah! For the sake of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and theHoly

¹ (Elalush Sharaa'e, p. 12)

The Beginning of Hazrat Mahdi's Imamat (leadership)

Reza Hemyari

Abstract: *Imam Mahdi (p.b.u.h.) Is the 12 imam in Shia's belief. It is believed that he will reappear as the last savior of the world who is accompanied by holy Jesus. In this article his appointing as the last imam while he was only four years old after demise of his holy father has been pictured and the issue of being an imam in such an early age has been discussed.*