

## Explanation of The Book of Tawheed

### Class Notes – Chapter 57

#### بَابُ مَا جَاءَ فِي اللُّوِّ

#### What has been mentioned regarding saying: 'If only ...'

- **Relevance of the chapter to the book:** From the perfection of *tawheed* is to submit to the decree of Allah. It is obligatory to have patience at the decree of Allah and forbidden to display any forms of discontent. From these forms of discontent is to say 'if only...', as these types of statements indicate that a person is dissatisfied with the decree of Allah. This represents a deficiency in their *tawheed*.
- It is forbidden to use the 'if' clause if it is said in opposition to the decree of Allah. However, there is no blame in using it as an expression of regret for missing an act of obedience, because this demonstrates a person's desire to do good. The Prophet ﷺ said:

« لَوْ اسْتَقْبَلْتُ مِنْ أَمْرِي مَا اسْتَدْبَرْتُ مَا سَفْتُ الْهَدَى، وَحَلَلْتُ مَعَ النَّاسِ حِينَ حَلُّوا »

*If I had formerly known what I came to know recently, I would not have driven the hadi (sacrificial animal) with me and would have ended the state of ihraam along with the people when they ended it. [Bukhari]*

- (ما جاء) – “What has been mentioned”. What has been mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah regarding its prohibition.

وقول الله تعالى: ﴿ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَا قُتِلْنَا هَاهُنَا قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَى مَضَاجِعِهِمْ وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿١٥٤﴾

**Allah the Almighty said:** *They say: 'If there was anything we could have done in the matter, we would not have been killed right here'. Say: 'Even if you had been inside your houses, those decreed to be killed would have come out to their death beds'. It was so that Allah might test what is in your chests and purify what is in your hearts. And Allah knows well what is in the hearts.*

[aal-Imraan: 154]

- {يَقُولُونَ} – “They say”. Referring to some of the hypocrites who said this statement in opposition to the decree of Allah regarding what happened in the Battle of Uhud.
- {لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ} – “If there was anything we could have done in the matter”. That is, if we had a choice in the matter and someone consulted us.
- {مَا قُتِلْنَا هَاهُنَا} – “We would not have been killed right here”. We would not have been defeated at Uhud, and those killed would not have been killed.

- {لَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ} – “If you had been inside your houses”. Referring to those whom Allah has decreed that they will be killed.
- {لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَى مَضَاجِعِهِمْ} – “Those decreed to be killed would have come out of to their death beds”. That is, if those whom Allah has decreed to be killed where inside their houses, they would have eventually exited their houses and met their death. Sitting in their houses would not have saved them from the decree of Allah.
- {وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ} – “So that Allah might test what is in your chests”. So that Allah may test your hearts to see what they contain from sincerity or hypocrisy.
- {وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ} – “And purify what in your hearts”. To distinguish between your intentions.
- {وَأَللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ} – “And Allah knows what is in the chests”. Allah does not need to test people so as to know their real intentions, for He has Knowledge of what is hidden and what is apparent. Rather, He exposes the real intentions of people to establish the proof (*hujjah*) for or against them, and thus reward them and punish them accordingly.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** In this *ayah*, Allah informs us of what was hidden in the hearts of the hypocrites on the day of Uhud regarding their displeasure and discontent at what befell them from defeat and death. They claimed that if they had a choice in the matter, they would not have set out for the battle and would have thus escaped from defeat and none of them would have been killed. Allah refutes their claim by stating that what afflicted them was already decreed and could never have been avoided even by staying at home. Therefore, their expressions of regret by uttering the ‘if’ clause was of no avail.
- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** That uttering the ‘if’ clause in opposition to the decree of Allah is forbidden, as it was the statement of the hypocrites whom Allah refuted.

وقول الله تعالى: ﴿الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا قُلْ فَادْرِعُوا عَنْ أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٦٨﴾

**Allah the Almighty said:** *Those who said about their brothers while sitting at home: ‘If they had obeyed us, they would not have been killed’. Say: ‘Then prevent death from yourselves, if you should be truthful’. [aal-Imraan: 168]*

- {قَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ} – “Those who said about their brothers”. This is again the statement of the hypocrites regarding the events of the battle of Uhud. They referred to the true Muslims as brothers either because they share the same outward state of Islam, or because they are of the same ancestry.
- {وَقَعَدُوا} – “While sitting at home”. While sitting at home refraining from fighting in the path of Allah.
- {لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا} – “If they had obeyed us, they would not have been killed”. That is, had they obeyed us and stayed at home they would not have been killed.
- {إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ} – “If you should be truthful”. That is, if you are truthful in claiming that staying back will save you from being killed, then try to avert death if it comes to you in your homes.
- **General meaning of the ayah:** Allah refutes the hypocrites for showing opposition to His decree when they claimed that those who had set out with the Prophet ﷺ and were killed during the Battle of Uhud would not have been killed had they listened to their advice and not set out with the Prophet ﷺ and fought with him.

Refuting their claim, Allah challenges them to guard themselves against death if they are truthful in their claim. However, they are powerless to guard themselves against death, and similarly they cannot guard others against it.

- **Relevance of the ayah to the chapter:** That repeating the 'if' clauses in opposition to the decree of Allah is forbidden as it was the statement of the hypocrites whom Allah refuted.

**فِي الصَّحِيحِ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالَ: أَحْرِصْ عَلَى مَا يَنْفَعُكَ وَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ، وَلَا تَعْجِزَنَّ، وَإِنْ أَصَابَكَ شَيْءٌ فَلَا تَقُلْ: لَوْ أَنِّي فَعَلْتُ كَذَا لَكَانَ كَذَا وَكَذَا، وَلَكِنْ قُلْ: قَدَّرَ اللَّهُ وَمَا شَاءَ فَعَلَ، فَإِنَّ لَوْ تَفْتَحُ عَمَلَ الشَّيْطَانِ.**

**Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: Seek carefully what benefits you, seek help only from Allah and do not lose heart. If any adversity befalls you do not say: 'If I had only acted in such and such way, it would have been such and such' but instead say: 'Allah has decreed it and what He willed is done'. Indeed saying 'if' opens the way for the work of Shaytaan. [Muslim]**

- (أَحْرِصْ عَلَى مَا يَنْفَعُكَ) – “Seek carefully what benefits you”. That is, be diligent and persistent in achieving that which benefits you in both this world and in the Hereafter, in your *deen* and *dunya*.
- (وَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ) – “Seek help only from Allah”. Seek help only from Allah when seeking what benefits you and do not rely on others besides Him.
- (وَلَا تَعْجِزَنَّ) – “And do not lose heart”. That is, do not be negligent in seeking that which benefits you by relying solely on the decree of Allah and leaving the *asbab* (causes). Also do not submit to weakness and laziness.
- (وَإِنْ أَصَابَكَ شَيْءٌ) – “If any adversity befalls you”. From what Allah has decreed. That is, you set out to achieve a matter by putting in the effort and relying on Allah, however Allah had decreed other than what you have intended.
- (قَدَّرَ اللَّهُ) – “Allah has decreed it”. Because whatever Allah decrees will definitely occur, therefore as Muslims, we are duty bound to submit to the decree of Allah.
- (فَإِنَّ لَوْ تَفْتَحُ عَمَلَ الشَّيْطَانِ) – “If opens the way for the work of the Shaytaan”. Because it allows him to insinuate sorrow, regret sadness and opposition to the decree of Allah.
- **General meaning of the hadith:** In this *hadith*, the Prophet ﷺ commands us to be keen in performing acts that bring about benefit and to seek aid from Him in performing these acts. He also prohibits us from being from being sluggish and lazy, for these bad characteristics prevent a person from achieving what is beneficial.

Furthermore, since a person is susceptible to adversities in this life, they are ordered to show endurance and forbearance and not to express opposition to the decree of Allah by saying: ‘If I did so and so’ or ‘If I did not do so and so’. Such utterances are of no avail but rather open a door for *Shaytaan* to overcome the person and cause them sorrow.

- **Relevance of the hadith to the chapter:** The *hadith* is clear proof of the prohibition of uttering the ‘if’ clause when struck by adversity. This is because it shows opposition to the decree of Allah and results in opening a doorway for the *Shaytaan*.

- **Important issues of the Chapter**

1. **Explanation of the two verses in aal-Imraan (3:154 and 3:168).** As explained above.
2. **Clear prohibition of saying 'if' when struck by adversity.** As per the *hadith* of Abu Hurairah. The Prophet ﷺ clearly prohibited it.
3. **To do so opens the way for the work of Shaytaan.** As per the *hadith* of Abu Hurairah. It is forbidden because it gives the *Shaytaan* an avenue to increase his whispers and cause sorrow and regret.

4. **Guidance to the best speech.** As per the *hadith* of Abu Hurairah. The best thing to say when struck by adversity is: *Allah has decreed it and what he willed is done.*
5. **The incitement to do good deeds which are beneficial while seeking help only from Allah.** As per the *hadith* of Abu Hurairah.
6. **Doing the opposite by displaying weakness and laziness is prohibited.** As per the *hadith* of Abu Hurairah. The Prophet ﷺ clearly prohibited it when he said: '*And do not lose heart*'.