

Explanation of The Book of Tawheed

Class Notes – Chapter 66

بَابُ مَا جَاءَ فِي حِمَايَةِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ حَمَى التَّوْحِيدِ وَسَدِّهِ طُرُقَ الشِّرْكِ

What has been mentioned regarding the Prophet's ﷺ protection of tawheed and his blocking the paths leading to shirk.

- **Relevance of the chapter to the book:** In this chapter, the author emphasises that the perfection of *tawheed* cannot be achieved unless a person avoids the sayings and statements which result in the excessive praise (*ghuluw*) of the creation, because this could eventually lead to *shirk*.
- There is a similar chapter which has already proceeded (Chapter 22), however, there is a subtle difference between them. Chapter 22 was related to the Prophets ﷺ protection of *tawheed* in regards to actions, whereas this chapter is related to the Prophets ﷺ protection of *tawheed* regarding sayings and statements.
- (حِمَايَةَ) – “Protection”. Literally, to place a barrier around something to prevent anything reaching it. In this case placing a barrier around *tawheed* so that no *shirk* can transgress it.
- (وَسَدِّهِ) – “Blocking”. The Prophet ﷺ did not leave any paths open which a person can fall into *shirk* through, with the excuse that he did not make these paths clear.
- The protection of *tawheed* is inclusive of everything which negates it or reduces it. It also includes blocking all the paths which lead to *shirk*.

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الشَّخِيرِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: انْطَلَقْتُ فِي وَفْدِ بَنِي عَامِرٍ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ، فَقُلْنَا: أَنْتَ سَيِّدُنَا. فَقَالَ: السَّيِّدُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. قُلْنَا: وَأَفْضَلُنَا فَضْلًا وَأَعْظَمُنَا طَوْلًا. فَقَالَ: قُولُوا بِقَوْلِكُمْ أَوْ بَعْضَ قَوْلِكُمْ وَلَا يَسْتَجْرِبَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ. رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ بِسَنَدٍ جَيِّدٍ.

Abdullah Ibn al-Shikhir narrated: I went with a delegation of Banu 'Aamir to Allah's Messenger ﷺ and we said: 'You are our Sayyid (master)'. To this he replied: The Sayyid is Allah, the Blessed and Exalted. Then we said: 'You are one of us most endowed with excellence and superiority'. To this he replied: Say what you have to say, or part of what you have to say, and do not let the Shaytaan make you get carried away. [Abu Dawud - Sahih]

- **Abdullah Ibn al-Shikhir:** Ibn 'Awf Ibn Ka'ab. He embraced Islam on the day of the conquest of Makkah. He was one of the *sahabah* who narrated *hadiths*, may Allah be pleased with him.
- (السَّيِّدُ اللَّهُ) – “The Sayyid is Allah”. The complete and perfect mastership belongs to Allah alone because all the creation are His slaves and are under His mastership.
- (وَأَفْضَلُنَا فَضْلًا) – “Most endowed with excellence”. Excellence is the opposite of inferiority or mediocrity. That is, the Prophet ﷺ is the best of them.

- (وَأَعْظَمْنَا طَوْلًا) – “Most endowed with superiority”. This can have many meanings, including virtuous, generous, capable and self-sufficient. All of these words fall under the meaning of *al-tawl*.
- (فُولُوا بِقَوْلِكُمْ) – “Say what you have to say”. That is, say the words which are customary for you to say to your superiors. The Arabs would never praise their superiors excessively. Therefore, the order is to use familiar words of praise and avoid any words which are excessive and may lead to *shirk*.
- (أَوْ بَعْضَ قَوْلِكُمْ) – “Or part of what you have to say”. That is, leave some of your customary speech in an effort to avoid immoderation (*ghuluw*).
- (وَلَا يَسْتَجْرِبَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ) – “Do not let the Shaytaan make you get carried away”. That is, do not let the Shaytaan drag you to him so that you become his deputy and messenger.
- **General meaning of the hadith:** When the delegation of Banu ‘Aamir wished to show their love and respect for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, they praised him while in his presence.

Although they spoke the truth about him, the Prophet ﷺ wished to cleanse their hearts and protect their Imaan from *shirk*, so he forbade them from praising him excessively, especially in his presence, in order to protect them from all paths by which the Shaytaan might lead them to the darkness of *shirk* after they had escaped from it.

- **Relevance of the hadith to the chapter:** The *hadith* clearly forbids excessive praise of the Prophet ﷺ or anyone else, because this is a path that leads to *shirk*.

وَعَنْ أَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ نَاسًا قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، يَا خَيْرَنَا وَإِبْنَ خَيْرِنَا، وَسَيِّدِنَا وَإِبْنَ سَيِّدِنَا! فَقَالَ:
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قُولُوا بِقَوْلِكُمْ وَلَا يَسْتَهْوِيَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ، أَنَا مُحَمَّدٌ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولُهُ، مَا أَحَبُّ أَنْ تَرْفَعُونِي فَوْقَ
مَنْزِلَتِي الَّتِي أَنْزَلَنِي اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ. رَوَاهُ النَّسَائِيُّ بِسَنَدٍ جَيِّدٍ.

Anas narrated that some people said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, O the best amongst us and son of the best of us, you are our master and also the son of our master’. He ﷺ replied: O people, say as you used to say and do not allow the Shaytaan to seduce you. I am Muhammad, the slave of Allah and His Messenger. I do not like you to raise me above the status assigned to me by Allah, Almighty, All-Powerful. [al-Nasa’i - Sahih]

- (يَسْتَهْوِيَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ) – “Do not allow the Shaytaan to seduce you”. That is, do not let the Shaytaan decorate and adorn your desires so that you end up following them thinking that they are good.
- (عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولُهُ) – “The slave of Allah and His Messenger”. Because a slave is not worshipped, and a Messenger is not to be rejected. This title avoids both sides of extremism – the extremism of overly venerating the Prophet ﷺ whereby he is worshipped besides Allah, and the extremism of disbelieving and rejecting him.
- (مَنْزِلَتِي الَّتِي أَنْزَلَنِي اللَّهُ) – “The status assigned to me by Allah”. That is, the status of ‘The slave of Allah and His Messenger’. This proves that it is Allah who raises the status of His servants and gives them their deserving rank.
- **General meaning of the hadith:** When a number of people addressed the Prophet ﷺ in terms of excessive praise and eulogy, the Prophet ﷺ rejected this, informing them that it was the temptation of the Shaytaan by which he may lead them into *shirk*.
He then informed them of the correct manner of addressing him which is to say: ‘Muhammad, the Slave and Messenger of Allah’, and that he disliked being raised above the position and rank which Allah has designated for him.
- **Relevance of the hadith to the chapter:** The *hadith* proves the prohibition of raising the Prophet ﷺ above his assigned status because this constitutes *ghuluw* (excess) which may eventually lead to *shirk*.

- **Important issues of the Chapter**

1. **Warning people against exaggeration (ghuluw).** Because the Prophet ﷺ regarded their praise as the seduction and temptation of the Shaytaan.
2. **What one should say if it is said to him: 'You are our sayyid'.** They should respond by saying: 'Allah is the Sayyid'. This response removes any ambiguity as to who the true Sayyid is.
3. **The Prophet's ﷺ statement: 'Do not let Shaytaan make you get carried away', though they only told the truth.** Because it may eventually lead to *shirk*.
4. **The Prophet's ﷺ statement: 'I do not like you to raise me above the status assigned to me by Allah'.** That is, the status of 'Slave of Allah and His Messenger'. This shows the modesty of the Prophet ﷺ.