

Earning For The Hereafter

Call To Islam Research

Bismillaahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem

Know, may *Allaah subhaanahu wa ta'aala* have mercy upon you, that He has informed us of the reason why He created us and our purpose in this short worldly life. He *subhaanahu wa ta'aala* says in His Noble Book:

"I have not created the jinn and the human being except to worship Me (alone)." [Surah Al-Dhaariyaat (51):56]

So this worship or *Ibaadah* of *Allaah* is the reason why we are here. If we do this *Ibaadah* properly then we will earn good deeds for the hereafter and deserve the ultimate goal of every Muslim – the endless pleasure of Paradise.

However, if we wrong ourselves and choose not to enter the Paradise by being ungrateful to *Allaah* - The Lord of Honour, our Creator, our Provider and Sustainer, by turning away from being His slave and thus earning evil - then we deserve to enter The Fierce Fire that is lying in wait to feed on the transgressors.

So if our Maker *subhaanahu wa ta'aala* created us only to worship Him and doing this is our ticket to supreme success and not doing so is our ticket to complete humiliating and painful failure, then we come to realise how important it is to correctly understand the definition and concept of worship, in order to fulfil this lofty goal properly.

So worship – or *ibaadah* – is defined linguistically as: having a complete love for the object that is worshipped, along with complete humility and servitude.

So when an object is loved, but a person does not feel humble towards it, then this is not known as *ibaadah*. Such an instance might occur when a father shows love towards his family and children.

Likewise, when an object is shown servitude and humbleness, without any love, this too is not known as worship. Such an instance might occur with a ruler or a king.

Only when these two characteristics are combined in their fullest form will *ibaadah* take place.

When the term *ibaadah* occurs in the texts of the *Qur'aan* or *Sunnah* it refers to all actions and statements that *Allaah* loves and is pleased with, whether these actions are of the heart (such as hoping the best from *Allaah*), the tongue (such as reciting the *Qur'aan* and calling others to the worship of *Allaah*) or the limbs (such as praying, fasting and smiling at one's brother).

So it can be seen that the term *ibaadah* is a very wide and vast term, since it includes all actions that *Allaah* commands and is pleased with.

***Ibaadah* has two basic pre-conditions to it, and three pillars.**

The term 'pre-condition' signifies that every single act of worship that is performed must meet these two simple conditions in order for the act to be accepted. No act

qualifies as an act of worship until these two conditions are met. The term 'pillar' signifies that these pillars must be present when the act is performed, in order for it to be a perfect act of worship.

The first pre-condition is that the act must be done solely for the sake of *Allaah subhaanahu wa ta'aala*. To achieve this one has to fulfil the following two requirements:

(1) Purify one's conception of *Allaah*, and ascribe to Him the Most Perfect Names (*Asmaa'*) and Noble Attributes (*Sifaat*) which have authentically come to us from the tongue of the one who knows *Allaah* better than any other human being – *Muhammad sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam*. It involves negating the existence of any object or deity that has the capability of Creating, Sustaining, Nourishing or Controlling the creation except for *Allaah*. It involves affirming the perfect Existence of *Allaah*, having no partners or sons.

(2) Purify one's actions of worship, so that none except *Allaah* is worshipped. This is the implementation of the phrase: *La ilaaha illa Allaah*, which means 'no one has the right to be worshipped except *Allaah*.'

The second pre-condition is that the act that is performed be in accordance with the authentic *Sunnah* of the Prophet *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam*. In other words a person cannot invent an act of worship by himself for the only way to know whether a particular act is an act of worship or not is to see if the Prophet *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam* commanded it or not. And this is the actualisation of the phrase: *Muhammadur-Rasoolul-laah* which means '*Muhammad* is the Messenger of *Allaah*.'

By affirming the Messengership of *Muhammad sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam* a person affirms that only he *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam* has the right to be obeyed totally and without question. The only person who can inform us how to worship *Allaah* is the Prophet since he is the one with whom *Allaah* communicated.

So these pre-requisites are essential before a person starts any act of worship. If the first pre-condition is not met, then the act will be considered a type of *shirk* (giving *Allaah* a partner or rival), since it was done for other than *Allaah*. And if the second pre-condition is not met, then the act will be considered a religious innovation or *bid'ah* and be rejected.

At the same time, there are three essential pillars upon which all of a person's worship is based. In other words, while he or she is performing any act of worship, these three pillars must be present in order for it to be a complete and perfect act. It can also be stated that these three pillars are in fact the 'driving force' for all acts of worship.

These three pillars are: love, fear and hope. So a person worships *Allaah* out of a love for Him, and a fear of His punishment, and a sincere hope for gaining His reward. If any of these three conditions are not met, then the proper spirit of worship will not be present.

Some of the scholars gave an example of *ibaadah* and these three pillars in the form of a bird with its two wings. The heart of the bird is the love of *Allaah*, and 'fear' and 'hope' are its two wings. So if the 'love' (the heart) is not present, the *ibaadah* (the bird) will be completely dead. And if either 'hope' or 'fear' is absent, the *ibaadah* will not be able to move.

Although the evidences for each of these three pillars are numerous, *Allaah* combines them in one verse of the *Qur'aan*:

“Those whom they invoke (besides Allaah) seek a means of closeness to their Lord, (striving as to) which of them would be nearest, hoping for His Mercy and fearing His punishment.” [Surah Al-Israa' (17):57]

In this verse, *Allaah* describes the situation of His righteous servants who are worshipped by ignorant people. These servants are racing with one another, trying to come close to *Allaah*, because they love Him, whilst being hopeful of achieving His Mercy, and fearful of His punishment. So they worship *Allaah* with the three pillars of love, fear and hope.

So with worshipping *Allaah* properly by fulfilling the above mentioned pre-conditions and pillars we can start to earn good deeds for the hereafter and deserve to enter Paradise.

Wallaahu a'lam - wa sallallahu `ala Muhammad wa aalihi wasahbihi wa sallam