



Tauheed and Shirk

Tauheed

Tauheed means attributing Oneness to Allah (SWT) and describing Him as being One and Unique, with no partner or peer in His Essence and Attributes.

Tauheed is the primary and core subject of the Quran. There is a Hadith which mentions that Surah Ikhlas is one third of the Quran. It means that Surah Ikhlas contains only the topic of tauheed, oneness of Allah (SWT).

Importance of Tauheed

Allah (SWT) has mentioned tauheed in two different and separate ways and styles in Quran:

“And We did not send any Messenger before you, but We revealed to him (saying): **none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah)**, so worship Me (Alone).” [Al-Anbiya:25]

And at another place in Quran Allah (SWT) mentioned,

And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): **“Worship Allah (Alone)**, and avoid (or keep away from) Taghut.” [An-Nahl:36]

Both statements are diverse ways of proclaiming His Oneness and complete one another. At another place, He mentioned the name of His Prophet Hazrat Noah (AS) and His proclamation of Tauheed as,

“Indeed, We sent Nuh (Noah) to his people and he said: **“O my people! Worship Allah (SWT)! You have no other Ilah (God) but Him.”** [Surah Al-Araaf:59]

Repeatedly stating the subject of Tauheed in diverse ways and styles and at different places in Quran indicates the emphasis and importance on the belief of Tauheed. Allah (SWT) used the exact statement for other Prophets in Quran regarding Tauheed.

“And to 'Ad (people, We sent) their brother Hud. He said: **“O my people! Worship Allah (SWT)! You have no other Ilah (God) but Him.”** [Al-Araaf:65]

“And to Thamud (people, We sent) their brother Salih (Saleh). He said: **“O my people! Worship Allah (SWT)! You have no other Ilah (God) but Him.”** [Al-Araaf:73]

“And to (the people of) Madyan, (We sent) their brother Shu'aib. He said: “**O my people! Worship Allah (SWT)!!** You have no other Ilah (God) but Him.” [AI-Araaf:85]

So, Allah (SWT) continued to mention the Oneness of Him, as the kalima of tauheed begins with “La” which means negation. So, one negates every other false God before accepting the oneness of Allah (SWT).

“And (remember) Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) when he said to his people: “**Worship Allah (Alone),** and fear Him, that is better for you if you did but know.” [AI-Ankaboot:16]

“But the Hazrat Messiah Isa (AS) (Jesus) said: “O Children of Israel! **Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.**” Verily, whosoever sets up partners (in worship) with Allah (SWT), then Allah (SWT) has forbidden Paradise to him, and the Fire will be his abode.” [AI-Maeda:72]

“Say (O Mohammad): “But in truth **He (Allah) is the only one God.** And truly I am innocent of what you join in worship with Him.” [AI-Anaam:19]

So, till last messenger the message of Oneness of Allah (SWT) was sent to mankind which shows its high importance.

Shirk - The Unforgivable Sin

“And indeed, it has been revealed to you (O Mohammad), as it was to those before you: “If you join others in worship with Allah (SWT), (then) surely (all) **your deeds will be in vain,** and you will certainly be among the losers.” [Az-Zumar:65]

This was said to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), that even if you do shirk with Allah (SWT) then all of your good deeds will be wasted.

“Verily, Allah (SWT) **forgives not** that partners should be set up with Him, but He forgives what is less than that to whomever He wills...” [An-Nisa:48]

These references of ayahs from Quran shows that Shirk is an unforgivable sin. Hazrat Noah (AS) said to his people; Even if you seek repentance, not only Allah (SWT) forgives you but He will send rain from the sky, He will give you prosperity, He will increase your wealth and children and He will bestow upon you gardens and rivers.

This shows that if someone has committed the sin of shirk and then seek repentance on it from then Allah (SWT) forgives him but if someone dies on the belief of shirk then surely, he will meet the fire in Hell.

Now a question arises, why Shirk is so unforgivable sin?

Shirk is to associate someone other than Allah (SWT) in those aspects which are unique to Allah (SWT) and His exclusive right. Shirk is to worship created beings like Allah (SWT) is

worshipped, to venerate created beings like Allah (SWT) must be venerated, and to assign a portion of His divinity to someone else.

So, at the day of judgement Allah (SWT) will ask that person who did shirk that as you have done this deed for another person or god other than Me then ask the reward of it from that false God.

In the Bible, it is mentioned that at the day of judgement, people will come to Prophet Jesus and will ask him that O Lord, O Lord, we did charity in Thy name and they will mention their good deeds in Prophet Jesus's name. While Prophet Jesus will say that get away you evil doers, I even don't know you?

And in Quran, Allah (SWT) has mentioned that on day of Judgement when people will come to Prophet Jesus, Allah (SWT) will ask Prophet Jesus, "O Eesa, did you tell them to worship you besides Me? Or your mother besides Me?" and Prophet Jesus will say, Ya Allah (SWT) you know what is in my heart, I have never told them to worship me".

Our intrinsic nature, Fitrah is inclined towards the Oneness of God and all the design of the nature shows the glory and Oneness of a single Designer, hence that made the shirk an unforgivable sin as all the proves of oneness of God are present in ourselves. So, one has to go against their own nature to do shirk.

Repentance Before Death

There is a Sahih Hadith, an old man came to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) with a stick in his hand as a support for walking, He said to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) what do you say about a person who has committed every sin, big or small, he has not left any of it? Ya RasullAllah (SAW)! I am an old man I have done that all. Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said Have you said Shahdah? He said yes.

Then Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said, from this moment, you do righteous deeds and don't go back to those sins, Allah (SWT) will forgive you and will turn your bad deeds in to good deeds.

That person was shocked and said that even my treachery and the way I hurt other people will be forgiven? Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said, yes even those, and then he lifted his stick and went back with slogans of Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar.

Real repentance changes us and our ways of life.

Types of Tauheed

- 1. Rububiyah** (Lordship)
- 2. Uluhiyyah** (Worship)
- 3. Asmaa Was-Sifaat** (Names and Attributes)

1. Rububiyah (Lordship)

- This category is based on the fundamental concept that Allah (SWT) alone caused all things to exist when there was nothing.
- He sustains and maintains creation without any need from it or for it and He is the sole Lord of the universe and its inhabitants without any real challenge to His sovereignty.
- In Arabic, the word used to describe this creator sustainer quality is Rububiyah which is derived from the root "Rabb" (Lord). This is proved by Allah's (SWT) statement in Surah Al-Fatihah, verse one where He says, "[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds [mankind, jinn and all that exists]".
- According to this category, since God is the only real power in existence, it is He who gave all things the power to move and to change.
- Most of mankind excepts atheist believes in Rububiyah.

2. Uluhiyyah (Worship)

It is also called Ubudiyah. This means having a firm conviction that only Allah is the true God worthy of worship. In Arabic, the term 'ibadah' (worship) is associated with obedience, subservience and submission. It has been defined by some scholars as "complete love accompanied by complete submission". Thus, worship in all its forms cannot be dedicated to anyone else besides Allah (SWT). It is important to point out that the concept of worship is all-embracing. Worship transcends the five pillars of Islam and covers all the good things and deeds which please Allah (SWT). Therefore, things like supplication, reliance, obedience, subservience and submission would be covered by this definition. All these things should be done solely for the sake of Allah (SWT).

Evidence of this type of Tauheed is in Allah's (SWT) statement "And I Allah did not create the jinn and men except that they should worship Me (alone)". **[Surah Ad-Dhariyat: 56]**

➤ 'Kalima' as an example of Uluhiyyah

- ilah- one who is worshipped, on account of greatness and power is considered worthy to be worshipped.
- **La ilaha illallah** –There is no ilah other the one great being known by the name Allah (SWT).
- It means that in the whole of the universe, there is absolutely no being worthy to be worshipped other than Allah (SWT).
- That is only to Him our heads should bow in submission and adoration.

Our Prayers, charity, dua, tawaf, sajda etc are the acts of worship. If we perform them for anyone else other than Allah (SWT) then it is Shirk.

3. Asmaa Was-Sifaat (Names and Attributes)

This category of Tauheed has five main aspects:

- Unity of Allah's (SWT) names and attributes to be maintained in the first aspect.
- Allah (SWT) must be referred to according to how He and His Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) have described Him instead explaining His names and attributes by giving them meanings other than their obvious meanings.
- The second aspect of Tauheed al-Asmaa wasSifaat involves referring to Allah (SWT) as He has referred to Himself without giving Him any new names or attributes.
- In the third aspect of Tauheed al-Asmaa wasSifaat Allah (SWT) is referred to without giving Him the attributes of His creation. For example, it is claimed in the Bible and Torah that Allah (SWT) spent the first six days creating the universe then slept on the seventh. For this reason, Jews and Christians take either Saturday or Sunday as a day of rest in which work is looked at as a sin.
- The fourth aspect of Tauheed al-Asmaa wasSifaat requires that man not be given the attributes of Allah (SWT) to His Almighty level. E.g a man can be Raheem but not to the level of Allah (SWT).
- Maintaining the unity of Allah's (SWT) names also means that Allah's (SWT) names in the definite form cannot be given to His creation unless preceded by the prefix 'Abd meaning "slave of" or "servant of'.

Shirk of Followers of Hazrat Noah (AS)

People of Hazrat Noah (AS) are the first one to commit the crime of shirk.

In a hadith narrated by Hazrat Ibn 'Abbaas (R.A), the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said: "There were ten generations between Adam and Noah, all living according to Islam. The descendants of Adam started to slowly lose their religion and began committing sins, but they still believed in Tauheed – the unity of Allah (SWT). Ignorance was spreading amongst them. And the righteous amongst them were few.

Shaytaan came to them and said, "When these righteous men pass away, you will have no one to remind you of Allah (SWT) and about 'ibaadah. You will have no one to give you naseehah and advice. So how about, when they pass away, you erect some statues in their memorial to remind you about 'ibaadah?" Because these righteous men used to give them naseehah and advice. They followed the advice of shaytaan, thinking that it was a good advice. They erected these idols and hung them in market places and houses.

Then, shaytaan left them alone. Look at how patient he is with his plan. He left them until they forgot why these statues were built. After this generation passed away and new generation came and the people forgot why these were erected. Shaytaan came to them and told them, "Why don't you put those statues in the mosques, I am not saying to put them in front but at least put them at the back of mosque, so they would remind you about righteous

people and you would never forget to follow your role models?” They followed the advice of shaytaan and put the statues at the back of the mosque.

After this generation passed away and new generation came and the people forgot why these were erected in mosque. Then shaytaan came for third time and said to them, “these are your pious people and you show back to them, please put them in front. In this way, you can offer your Salah attentively with the pious and righteous people in front of you as a reminder of piety for you. They followed the advice of shaytaan and put the statues at the front of the mosque.

When that whole generation passed away and there was a new generation who didn't know why those idols were put there in front of mosque. Then Iblees came for the fourth time and said, “You are not supposed to talk to Allah (SWT) directly, you are nothing, you have to talk to those idols who can talk to Allah (SWT) on your part.” And this is how shirk started.

Allah talks about these 5 idols in the Qur'an: *wadd, suwa', yaghuth, ya'ooq* and *nasr*. (see 71:23) Hazrat Ibn 'Abbaas (RA) says that these were righteous men, whom the people of Nuh started to worship as their idols.

Types of Shirk

The texts of the Quran and Sunnah indicate that shirk and the ascribing of rivals to Allah (SWT) sometimes puts a person beyond the pale of Islam and sometimes does not. Hence the scholars divided shirk into two types which they call shirk akbar (major shirk) and shirk asghar (minor shirk).

I. Major Shirk

This means ascribing to someone other than Allah (SWT) something that belongs only to Allah (SWT), such as Lordship (ruboobiyyah), divinity (uloohiyyah) and the divine names and attributes (al-asma' wa'l-sifaat).

Major Shirk may sometimes take the form of beliefs:

- Such as the belief that there is someone else who creates, gives life and death, reigns or controls the affairs of the universe along with Allah (SWT).
- Or the belief that there is someone else who must be obeyed absolutely besides Allah (SWT), so they follow him in regarding as permissible or forbidden whatever he wants, even if that goes against the religion of the Messengers.
- Or they may associate others with Allah (SWT) in love and veneration, by loving a created being as they love Allah (SWT). This is the kind of shirk that Allah (SWT) does not forgive.
- Or the belief that there are those who know the Unseen as well as Allah (SWT). It is also shirk to believe that there is someone who bestows mercy in a manner that is befitting only for Allah (SWT), so he shows mercy as Allah (SWT) does and forgives sins and overlooks the bad deeds of his worshippers.

II. Minor Shirk

This includes everything that may lead to major shirk, or which is described in the scripts as being shirk, but does not reach the extent of being major shirk.

This is usually of two types:

1- Being emotionally attached to some means which have no basis and for which Allah (SWT) has not given permission, such as hanging up “hands”, turquoise beads, amulets, etc on the grounds that they offer protection or that they ward off the evil eye. But Allah (SWT) has not made them the means of such protection, either according to shareeah or according to the laws of the universe.

2- Venerating some people or things in a way that does not go so far as ascribing lordship to them, such as swearing by something other than Allah (SWT), or saying, “Were it not for Allah and So and so,” etc.