

THE CONCISE DEFINITION:

Shaykh Saalih Ibn Sa'd as-Suhaymee - *hafidhahullaah* - said, "Worship (*'ibaadah*) in the (Arabic) language means utter debasement and subservience. According to the *Sharee'ah*, it is a general term referring to everything that Allaah loves and is pleased with in terms of statements, and actions; whether they are done openly or secretly." [1]

Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "Worship (*al-'Ibaadah*) is obedience to Allaah by following that which He ordered upon the tongues of His Messengers." He also said, "Worship (*al-'Ibaadah*) is a comprehensive term covering everything that Allaah loves and is pleased with - whether saying, or actions, outward and inward." [2]

Ibnul-Qayyim (d.751H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "Worship revolves around fifteen principles. Whosoever completes them has completed the stages of *'uboodiyyah* (servitude to Allaah). The explanation of this is that *'ibaadah* is divided between the heart, the tongue, and the limbs. And that for each one of these three come five types of rulings, covering all actions: *waajib* (obligatory), *mustahabb* (recommended), *haraam* (prohibited), *makrooh* (disliked), and *mubaah* (permissible)." [3]

Imaam al-Qurtubee (d.671H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "The root of *'ibaadah* is humility and submissiveness. The various duties that have been prescribed

upon the people are called *'ibaadaat* (acts of worship), since what is required is that these acts of worship must be done with humility and submissiveness to Allaah - the Most High." [4]

Ibn Katheer (d.774H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "And *'ibaadah* is obedience to Allaah by acting upon what He commands, and abandoning what He forbids; and this is the reality and essence of Islaam. And the meaning of Islaam is: *istislaam* (to submit and surrender) to Allaah - the Most High - along with the utmost compliance, humility, and submissiveness to Him."

He (Ibn Katheer) also said whilst explaining the aforementioned, "Indeed Allaah the Exalted created the creation so that they could worship Him alone, without associating any partner with Him. Whoever obeys Him will be completely rewarded, whereas whoever disobeys Him would be punished with a severe punishment. And He has informed that He is neither dependant, nor does He have any need for them. Rather, it is they who are in dire need of Him, in every condition and circumstance, since He is the One who created, sustains, and provides for them." [5]

THE PURPOSE OF CREATION:

Allaah the Exalted says,

"Say: Verily my Prayer, and my Sacrifice, and my living and my dying are for Allaah, Lord of the Worlds, having no

associate. This is what I was commanded with, and I am the first of the Muslims."
[Sooratul-An'aam 6:162]

And He said,

"And I did not create the Jinn, nor mankind, except to worship Me."
[Sooratudh-Dhaariyaat 51:56]

Imaam an-Nawawee (d.676H) - *rahimahullaah* - said,

"So mankind, along with every other creation, is in need of Allaah the Exalted in His Essence, and in whatever emanates from His Essence. It is not possible for the creation to be in need of anything except its Creator. And no one is self-sufficient by himself, except Allaah alone, and He is as-Samad (the Eternal), and al-Ghaneee (the Self-Sufficient), and everything other than Him is in need of Him." [6]

Allaah the Exalted said,

"Verily the one who associates partners with Allaah, then verily Allaah has prohibited Paradise upon him, and his dwelling place shall be the Fire. And the transgressors will not have any helpers."
[Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:72]

Imaam ash-Shaatibee (d.790H) - *rahimahullaah* - said,

"Indeed Allaah has divided worship up into many types so that the servants may eagerly embark upon it, so from them is: the types of worship that are related to *'aqeedah* (belief), such as believing in the *uloohiyyah* (divinity) of Allaah the Exalted, and describing Him with Perfect Attributes. And from them also is the type

of worship that is related to the heart, such as *'uboodiyyah* (servitude), and supplication. And from them is the type of worship related to this world, such as Prayer, fasting and *Hajj* (pilgrimage). And from them is the type of worship related to wealth, such as *zakaat* (obligatory alms), and charity. And all of these have only been legislated to preserve the Religion." [7] So from amongst the most important principles related to *'ibaadah* are the following:

[1] KNOWLEDGE COMES BEFORE ACTION:

Imaam al-Bukhaaree (d.256H) - *rahimahullaah* - said in his *Saheeh*, "Chapter: Knowledge comes before statement and action." [8]

Then al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar (d.852H) - *rahimahullaah* - commented upon this statement saying, "So knowledge is a condition for the correctness of the statement and action. So these two (statement and action) are not held in high esteem, except due to it (knowledge), so it must take precedence over them; since the correctness of the intention is a prerequisite for the correctness of action." [9]

al-Haafidh al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee (d.463H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, "So knowledge is a tree, and actions are its fruit. The one who does not act upon his knowledge is not to be counted as being a scholar. And it is said, the knowledge is the father, and actions are its offspring.



The Foundations of Worship

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Rabee' Ibn 'Aamir (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said, "Allaah has sent us to deliver whomsoever chooses, from the worship of men, to the 'uboodiyyah (worship and servitude) of Allaah. And from the narrowness of this world, to the vastness of this world and the Hereafter. And from the oppression of the (false) religions, to the justice of Islaam." [*al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah* (7/40) of Ibn Kartheer]

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actions of the hearts have a greater obligation upon the servants than the actions of the limbs. And how is it that the Believer is distinguished from the disbeliever, except by what is in his heart? And the servitude (*'uboodiyyah*) of the heart is greater and more enduring than the servitude of the limbs. So it becomes obligatory in every age." [19]

Footnotes:

- [1] *Mudhkiratun-fil-'Aqeedah* (p. 25)
 [2] *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (10/149) of Ibn Taymiyyah
 [3] *Madaarijus-Saalikeen* (1/109)
 [4] *Al-Jaami' li-Ahkaamil-Qur'aan* (1/225), and (17/56) of al-Qurtubee.
 [5] *Tafseerul-Qur'aanil-Adheem* (7/402)
 [6] *al-Majmoo'* (1/42)
 [7] *al-Muwaafiqaat* (2/8)
 [8] *Saheehul-Bukhaaree* (1/69)
 [9] *Fathul-Baaree* (1/160)
 [10] *Iqtidaa'ul-'Ilmil-'Amal* (p. 5-6) according to the checking of Aboo 'Abdur-Rahmaan Mahmood.
 [11] *Madaarijus-Saalikeen* (2/91) of Ibnul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah.
 [12] *ash-Sharee'ah* (p. 131) of Imaam al-Aajurree.
 [13] *Hilyatul-Awliyaa'* (2/199)
 [14] Related by Ibnul-Mubaarak in *az-Zuhd* (p. 63)
 [15] *Hilyatul-Awliyaa'* (3/70)
 [16] Related by al-Bukhaaree (7/1-2) and Muslim (2/703)
 [17] Related by al-Bukhaaree (9/284)
 [18] *Fathul-Baaree* (8/138)
 [19] *Badaa'i'ul-Fawaa'id* (3/330)

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“And verily this is My Straight Path, so follow it.” [Sooratul-An'aam 6:153]
 And He said,
 “Say: If you (truly) love Allaah, then follow me. Allaah will love you, and forgive you of your sins, and Allaah is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most-Merciful.”
 [Soorah Aali-'Imraan 3:31]

From 'Aa'ishah (*radiyallaahu 'anhaa*) who said: The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: Whosoever innovates into this affair of ours something that is not from it, then it is to be rejected.” [16]

From Aboo Hurayrah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) who said, 'The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: 'All of my Ummah will enter Paradise, except those who refuse.' It was said, 'Who will refuse?' He said, 'Whosoever obey me enters Paradise, and whoever disobeys me has refused.” [17]

From Anas Ibn Maalik (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) who said, 'I heard 'Umar saying, 'When the people were pledging allegiance to Aboo Bakr, and he was sitting upon the pulpit, he said: So verily Allaah has chosen your Messenger for you from amongst yourselves. And this is the Book of Allaah by which He guided your Messenger, so take it, since Allaah guided your Messenger by it.”[18]

[4] THE WORSHIP OF THE HEART:
 Imaam Ibnul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d.791H) - *rahimahullaah* - said, “So the

And action comes after knowledge, and narration comes after investigation. So do not feel content with action, as long as you are deficient in knowledge.” [10]

[2] SINCERITY TO ALLAAH:

Indeed sincerity to Allaah is “singling out the truth with the intention of obedience.”[11]

Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said, “A statement is not beneficial without an action, nor is the action beneficial without the statement, and neither of them are beneficial, except with the (proper) intention. And the intention does not benefit, except when it conforms with the *Sunnah*.” [12]

Mutraf Ibn 'Abdullaah said, “The rectification of the heart is by the rectification of the action. And the rectification of the action is by the rectification of the intention.” [13]

Ja'far Ibn Hayyaan said,

“The intentions are authoritative over these actions, so a man may reach by his intention, that which he does not reach by his action.” [14]

Yahyaa Ibn Abee Katheer (d.129H) - *rahimahullaah* - said,

“Learn the (proper) intention, for verily it is the most far-reaching of actions.” [15]

[3] CONFORMITY TO THE SUNNAH:

Allaah the Exalted said,