

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Friday Khutbah 04/04/2014

What conflicts with *Ikhlas*- Some issues regarding *Ikhlas*

*Ikhlas* is the basis of the *Deen* without which there is no Islam. It is a condition for the acceptance of acts of worship and acts of obedience of Allah (*subhanahu wa ta'ala.*) Allah (*subhanahu wa ta'ala*) does not accept any act that is done without *Ikhlas*.

Since *Ikhlas* is so important then it is a must for every Muslim to endeavour to gain it and have it in every act that he or she does.

Last Friday's talk was about the ways and means to gain *Ikhlas*. The most important of these ways is learning *Ikhlas* by knowing its reality and the things which contradict and it. The most serious thing that contradicts *Ikhlas* is *Riya'* by showing people one's good deeds or by telling them about one's good deeds which they did not witness.

Acts of worship and acts of obedience of Allah are divided into three categories with regard to *Riya'*.

- a) The first category is that of the acts which are done purely for the sake of Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala.*) These are the good and righteous acts which are acceptable by Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala.*)
- b) The second category is that of the acts which are done purely for showing off. These acts are invalid and will be rejected.
- c) The third category is that of the acts which are done with double intention; for the sake of Allah but at the same time for prestige. These acts are also invalid and will be rejected in accordance with the *Hadith*: "Allah says: I am the most self-sufficient of *Shuraka'* (partners.) Whoever does an act and makes a sharer with me in that act' I leave it for the sharer."

*Ibn Rajab* said: Sometimes an act is done for Allah but there is also the intention of *Riya'*. If this *Riya'* is shared from the beginning, then this act is invalid according to the sound texts. However, if the initial intention behind the act is to seek the pleasure of Allah and then *Riya'* occurred at some stage, if this *Riya'* was only a thought that one can push away, then there is no harm. If *Riya'* continues then there is disagreement between the scholars regarding the invalidity of the act. The soundest opinion is that it becomes invalid and will be rejected.

The Qur'anic and *Hadith* texts have severely warned against *Riya'*, Rasulullah (*salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*) said in a *Hadith*: "Whoever seeks to make people hear about his good deeds, Allah will make them hear about his bad deeds and whoever seeks to make people see his good deeds, Allah will make them see his bad deeds."

The motive behind *Riya'* is love of praise and prestige. The love of these two things is deeply rooted in the human *Nafs*. There is no way to get rid of it except by strengthening and deepening one's *Iman* in Allah, love of *al-Baqiyati as-Salihah* (the good deeds that last) instead and turning to Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala*) in supplication seeking his help to overcome these feelings.

There remain three issues which I would like to talk about in conclusion of the talk on the subject of *Ikhlas*. These issues are:

- i) People's praise of one's *'amal*.
- ii) Doing more good deeds when in the company of righteous people.
- iii) Have more than one *Niyah* in one act.

i) As for the first issue, it is the case that a sincere person does his good deeds purely for the sake of Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala*) seeking His pleasure alone and not seeking fame or publicity. As a result of his sincerity, people love him and praise him. He is pleased with people's praise without him intending to gain it. This is glad tidings for the sincere person and will not affect his sincerity as long as his pleasure with people's praise is not because of his love of having a position in their hearts. In a *Hadith* narrated by *Abu Dharr (radhiya Allahu 'anhu)*: It was said to Rasulullah (*salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*): What do you think of a man who does a good deed and then people praise him for it? He said: This is advanced glad tidings for the believer.”

ii) As for the second issue: When a person is in the company of good and right acting people his resolve to do good deeds increases as a result. They might pray long at night and he prays with them, they give *Sadaqah*, and he gives *Sadaqah* and so on. A person might wrongly think that this is *Riya'*, and it is not so.

*Ibn Qudamah Al-Maqdasi* said: 'A person may spend the night with people who are *mujtahid* (do extra effort) in *Ibadah*, who pray most of the night and he prays with them whereas his habit was to pray just for a short while or that they fast and he fast with them. If it were not for their presence he would not have done extra effort. A person might think that this is *Riya'*; however, this needs further explanation. Every believer wishes to do more acts of worship of Allah; however, many obstacles arise. Seeing others actively engaged in acts of worship removes some of the obstacles such neglect and encourages one to act. In such a situation *Shaytan* comes to one in order to prevent one from doing an act of obedience saying to one: if you do more than what you are used to do then you are showing off. One should not listen to the whisper of *Shaytan* but only consider his internal intention.

c) Combined *Niyyah*. There are two forms of joining more than one *Niyyah* in one act. The first form is to have the *Niyyah* of two *Ibadah* in one act. The basic rule is that every *Ibadah* should have a separate act of itself. For example one cannot pray four *rak'ats* and intends it to be for *Dhuhr* and *Asr*. That wouldn't be acceptable. However, there are some exceptions in *Shari'ah* for certain acts of *Ibadah*. One can do *Ghusl* with the intention of it being *Ghusl al-Janabah* and Friday *Ghusl*. One can pray two *rak'ats* with the intention of *Tahiyat-ul-Masjid* and regular *Sunnah*. One can read the Qur'an with the intention of *Ibadah* and to revise one's memorisation so as not to forget it and similar forms of permissible combinations.

The second form is to have the *Niyyah* of *Ibadah* and intention of a permissible deed in one act such as performing *Wudu* with the *Niyyah* of *Ibadah* and the intention of cooling the body or cleanliness, or to fast with the intention of *Ibadah* and the intention of losing weight or to go on Hajj with the *Niyyah* of *Ibadah* and the intention of trading. This combining of two *Niyyah* in one act does not spoil one's *Ikhlās*. However, these permissible acts may decrease the reward – and if an act is done purely for the purpose of *Ibadah*, the reward will be greater.

One of the proofs that combining two *Niyyah* in one act is permissible and that it does not spoil the *Ibadah* is his words (*salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*): “O young men! Whoever of you can afford to marry let him do so because in it there is preservation for the gaze and protection for the private parts, and whoever cannot afford let him fast because there is protection in it.”