

## SHIRK HAS TWO TYPES

### First: The Major Shirk

The greater *shirk* refers to any practice of including in the various forms of worship any entity other than Allah or any co-partner of Allah in any single worship. If such a *Mushrik* dies without atonement he shall be consigned to eternal Hell. He will never be admitted to Heaven. Allah has proclaimed:

﴿ إِنَّهُ مَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن أَنصَارٍ ﴾ المائدة: ٧٢

(Translation of meaning) [“Verily, for one who takes a co-partner of Allah, Allah has forbidden the Heaven for him and his destination is Fire. And there are no supporters of the transgressors” Al-Maedah: 72)].

In another place it is proclaimed:

﴿ وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ﴾ النساء: ١١٦

(Translation of meaning) [“And one who takes co-partners of Allah has deviated to the far extreme” (An-Nisa: 116)].

Addressing His Messenger Muhammad (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) God Almighty proclaimed:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكَ لَئِن أَشْرَكَتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴾ الزمر: ٦٥ - ٦٦

(Translation of meaning) [“(O Muhammad) verily, it has been revealed to you as well as to those before you: That if you commit shirk your deeds will go in vain and you shall be among the losers. But worship you Allah and be among the grateful” (Az-Zumar: 65-66)].

### Forms of Major Shirk

1. **Shirk in Invocation [Du’a]:** It is reserved for the majestic state of God Almighty that, one invoke and pray to Him alone. If someone else along with Him or someone other than Him is invoked it will be tantamount to *shirk*. For instance, to pray to the dead or expect benefit from them or seek cure of some malady from them or to call them for help in an ordeal or to invoke them for easing of difficulties, are all of

them variations of shirk in invocation. In fact *Du'a* is also an act of worship. The Messenger of Allah (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

«الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ الْعِبَادَةُ» (الترمذي)

(Translation of meaning) "Du'a (Invocation) is worship (Tirmizi). Therefore those who invoke the dwellers of graves commit shirk.

This form of *shirk* is the most ancient. It marked the first step of deviation from *tawhid*. The folk of Hadrat Nuh (*Alaihis Salam*) took to exaggerated glorification of their dead ancestors. After passage of time these people began to invoke them for fulfilment of their wishes. Then in due course they began to worship them. When Hadrat Nuh explained to them the right course and called them to invoke and worship God Almighty alone rather than their ancestors the way, he was treated by his folk has been narrated in the holy Quran in these words:

﴿وَقَالُوا لَا تَذَرُنَّ آلِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا﴾ نوح: ٢٣

(Translation of meaning) [“And they said: Do not forsake your gods and do not forsake either Wadd or Suwa’ or Yaghuth or Ya’ooq or Nasr” (Nuh: 23)].

So far as *shirk* [polytheism] was concerned the attitude of the pagans of Mecca was the same. They actually believed that their idols facilitated their access to God Almighty. Thus the holy Quran says:

﴿مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَى﴾ الزمر: ٣

(Translation of meaning) [“We do not worship them except for the reason that they will facilitate our access to Allah” (Az-Zumar: 3)].

Thus those who seek succour from the dead persons and regard them as intermediaries between them and Allah are following the footprints of these *Mushriks*. These ignorant people do not know that the force they seek access to through these intermediaries is nearer to them than their life vein. Thus Allah pronounced in the Quran:

﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ﴾ البقرة: ١٨٦

(Translation of meaning) [“And when my slaves question you about me tell them I am near [you]” (Al-Baqarah: 186)].

The door of Allah is open for all His creatures. They should invoke Him without seeking the help of intermediaries or co-partners. But, there exist no boundaries of stupidity nor can stupid people see the reason. May Allah save us from their contamination and grant them His right guidance.

- 2. The Shirk of Will and Intention:** Co-partnering in will and intention refers to the fact that the worship of Allah is meant for a purpose other than seeking the pleasure of Allah. Allah has proclaimed:

﴿مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَلَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوا فِيهَا وَبَاطِلٌ مَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾﴾  
هود: ١٥ - ١٦

(Translation of meaning) [“And those who want the material world and its luxuries we give them the full reward of their deeds here and they will not be treated miserly [in this respect]. They are the people for whom there is nothing in the After-life except Fire. [There they will come to know] that whatever they made in the world was in vain and whatever they were doing was void” (Hud: 15-16)].

For the acceptance of one’s deeds before God the purity of will and intention is the first essential condition. According to a Prophetic tradition, God Almighty declares that

«أَنَا أَغْنَى الشُّرَكَاءِ عَنِ الشِّرْكِ، مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا أَشْرَكَ فِيهِ مَعِيَ غَيْرِي، تَرَكْتُهُ وَشِرْكُهُ» (مسلم)

(Translation of meaning) I have no need for co-partners. If anybody performs some deed in which, he takes a co-partner with me I abandon him as well as his co-partner (Muslim). Thus Allah proclaimed:

﴿مَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا ﴿١١﴾﴾ الكهف: ١١٠

(Translation of meaning) [“So if one hopes for a meeting with his Creator he should perform good deeds and do not take any as co-partner of Allah in his worship” (Al-Kahf: 11)].

The sole objective of a believer in all of his worship is to seek the pleasure of Allah. He thus proclaimed:

﴿ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُفَاءَ ﴾ البينة: ٥

(Translation of meaning) [“And they were not commanded except that they worship Allah with pure faith in Him and single-mindedly” (Al-Bayyinah: 5)].

### In another place Allah ordains:

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾ لا شريك له، وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ

الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿ الأنعام: ١٦٢ - ١٦٣

(Translation of meaning) [“Say, verily my salat, and my rites, and my life, and my death is for Allah the Creator of the worlds. There is no co-partner of Him. And I have been ordered for that and I am the first of the submitters” (Al-An’am: 162-163)].

3. **Shirk in Obedience:** It means that one considers other than Allah as the law-giver and comply with commands voluntarily. Or he thinks that the commands of the latter are better than the commands of Allah. Or he carries out some of the commands of Allah and leaves others. That is, he carries out an addition and accretion to or deletion and amendment of the code of Allah. Or else, he obeys an individual, group or party in making *halal* what has been declared as *haram* by Allah or making *haram* what has been declared as *halal*. That is, he obeys the law devised by an authority other than Allah. For instance, if he declares fornication as licit when it has been declared as illicit by Allah. Likewise, if he makes the consumption of liquor *halal* whereas Allah has made it *haram* and so on. It is on the ground of such conduct that Allah has declared the People of the Book guilty of committing *shirk*. Once Hadrat ‘Uday Bin Hatim (RadhiAllahu Anhu) came to the Messenger of Allah (sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) and heard him reciting this verse:

﴿ اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ سُبْحَانَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴾ التوبة: ٣١

(Translation of meaning) [“They took their theologians and monks as their gods in disregard of Allah and the Masih Son of Maryam. And they

were not commanded but to obey One God. There is no god but Him. He is pure of their partnering” (Al-Taubah: 31)].

Hadrat ‘Uday pointed out that it is not that the People of the Book worshipped their theologians and monks. He replied why not? They prescribed the *halal* and *haram* on their own authority and others followed them. This was tantamount to worshipping them (Tirmidhi, Ahmad). Similarly, Allah has forbidden the consumption of flesh of the dead animals and of those slaughtered without reciting the name of Allah. The pagans of Mecca raised an objection to it. On this occasion Allah made it clear that those who follow the pagans will be held guilty of committing *shirk*.

﴿وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ﴾ الأنعام: ١٢١

(Translation of meaning) [“And if you obey them then you certainly are *Mushrik*” (Al-An’am: 121)].

Another instance of greater *shirk* is *shirk* in devotion. Allah proclaimed:

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ﴾ البقرة: ١٦٥

(Translation of meaning) [“And there are people who take others as peers of Allah and love them like they love Allah” (Al-Baqarah: 165)].

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