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## The dislike of making a vow

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

### The ahadeeth of Tawheed from ‘Silsilah Ahadeeth As-Saheehah’

#### Chapters of Tawheed and the Shahadtayn<sup>1</sup>

478 – “Allaah Azza wa jal<sup>2</sup> said: Making a vow does not earn anything for the son of Adam except that which I have destined for him. Rather, making a vow is something which makes a miserly person give. He comes to Me with that which he would not offer due to his miserliness. “

And in another narration: ‘He offers that which he never offered before.’”

#### From the Figh of the hadeeth

This hadeeth, with all its different wordings, indicates that it is not legislated to make a vow, rather it is disliked.

The apparent meaning of this prohibition in some of its narrations is that making a vow is haraam<sup>3</sup> as some of the scholars have said. However, the saying of Allaah Ta’ala<sup>4</sup>: “**Rather, making a vow is something which makes a miserly person give.**” One feels that this dislike or prohibition is specific to making a vow which is offered to Allaah as a recompense or which is done in exchange for a reward rather than a vow which, from the onset, is done out of obedience to Allaah. This (second type of) vow is purely a means of coming closer to Allaah.

This is because the one who is making the (second type of) vow has the correct intent with it, i.e. that he wants to receive an obligatory reward, which is better than the optional reward. This is the vow which is intended – and Allaah knows best – with the saying of Allaah Ta’ala: [**They fulfil their vows**] rather than the meaning of the vow which is offered as a recompense to Allaah or which is done in exchange for a reward.

Al-Haafidh<sup>5</sup> said in ‘al- Fath (11/ 5000) that at -Tabaree<sup>6</sup> narrated an athar<sup>7</sup> with an authentic chain on the authority of Qatadah who said regarding the saying of Allaah Ta’ala: [**They fulfil their vows**]

‘They would make vows in obedience to Allaah in their prayer and their Fasting, Zakaat, Hajj, Umrah and in those things that Allaah had made obligatory upon them. Allaah labelled them as righteous

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<sup>1</sup>The word Shahahdah means to testify. There are two parts to the Shahahdah which when taken together is called the Shahadtayn. The first part means that there is no deity truly worthy of being worshiped except Allaah, while the second part is to affirm that the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is a slave of Allaah and His Messenger.

<sup>2</sup> Mighty and Majestic is He

<sup>3</sup> Forbidden

<sup>4</sup> He, The Most High

<sup>5</sup> Haafidh Ibn Hajr al-Asqalane (May Allaah have mercy on him) wrote the famous explanation of Saheeh al-Bukhaaree called Fath ul-Baree.

<sup>6</sup> Muhammad Ibn Jareer at-Tabaree, the compiler of the famous Tafseer of the Noble Qur’aan called Tafseer at-Tabaree.

<sup>7</sup> athar: narration

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people. It is clear that this praise is not for the making a vow which is offered as a recompense to Allaah.' Before this he said:

'That Qurtubee<sup>8</sup> mentioned in his book 'al- Mufhim', that the prohibition in the hadeeth regarding the vow was that vow offered as a reward to Allaah, and he said:

An example of this prohibition is to say for instance, "If Allaah cures me from my illness then I will give such and such in charity." The point of objection here is when the goal of coming closer to Allaah is given a condition, this then makes it clear that the action was not done with the pure intention of coming closer to Allaah Ta'ala rather he did it in exchange for recompense.

What shows us this is that if he was not cured -from his illness- then he would not give charity. So he attached the act of giving charity to (Allaah) curing him. This is the condition of the miserly person. Surely he does not give anything from his wealth unless he has a quick, increased return on what he gave.

So this is the meaning which is referred to in the hadeeth when the Messenger of Allaah said **"Making a vow is something which extracts from a miserly person, that which a miserly person would not give."**

Sometimes what is added to this ignorant belief is the idea that a vow means that the goal will be achieved or that Allaah gives him this goal due to this vow. This is also indicated in the hadeeth: **"Without doubt, a vow cannot repel whatever Allaah has destined."** The first situation is close to disbelief and the second is a clear mistake.'

Al- Haafidh said: "I say: rather that the second type is also close to disbelief." Then he brings a quote from al-Qurtubee in which the scholars regarded the prohibition mentioned in the narration is understood to be of disapproval.

Then he says: "what is apparent to me is that, it is held to be prohibited for the one whom you fear has corrupt belief. Therefore it would be haraam for this person to make this vow, and it would be regarded as disapproval for the one who does not have that corrupted belief."

This is a good explanation and what supports this is the story of Ibn Umar (rad iyallaahu `anhu)<sup>9</sup>, who is the narrator of the hadeeth regarding the prohibition of vows, since they are vows offered as recompense.

I say: what he intends by this story is what has been narrated by Hakim (4/304) by way of Faleeh bin Sulayman on the authority of Sa'eed bin Harith that he heard Abdullaah bin Umar (rad iyallaahu `anhu) when he was asked by a man called Mas'ood bin 'Amr, from the tribe of Bani Ka'b, say: O Abu Abdur Rahman my son was in the lands of the Persians, from those who were with Umar bin Ubaydallaah in Basra. There fell a severe plague, so when this reached me I made a vow that if Allaah brought my son to me I would walk to the Ka'bah. My son came, but he was sick and died, so what do you think?

Ibn Umar (rad iyallaahu `anhu) said: Were we not prohibited from making vows?! Certainly the Messenger of Allaah (عليه الصلاة والسلام)<sup>10</sup> - said; **"A vow doesn't bring anything forward nor does it delay anything, rather it takes something out of a miserly person."** Fulfil your vow."

<sup>8</sup> Imam Aboo 'Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Aboo Bakr al-Ansaaree al-Qurtubee (d 671AH, 1273CE) compiler of the famous Tafseer known as Tafseer al-Qurtubee.

<sup>9</sup> May Allaah be pleased with him

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So, summing up, there is a warning in this hadeeth for the Muslim not to approach a vow which is offered as a reward. Therefore, it is for the people to know this so that they do not fall into this prohibition whilst they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds!

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<sup>10</sup> Upon him prayer and peace