
Worshipping Allaah out of Hope for His Paradise and Fear of His Fire

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Our Shaykh, without any objection [to the question I am going to ask], sorry [but]: Why do we worship Allaah, do we worship him out of the desire for Paradise and fear of the Fire? Or is there something else? I.e., something which is [connected to] the natural disposition of man?

Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)¹: i.e., your question centres around what has been reported from Raabi’ah al-Adawiyyah that she used to say when calling upon Allaah ... “I don’t worship You out of hope for Your Paradise and nor out of the fear of Your Fire, rather I only worship You because You deserve to be worshipped.”

The reality is that this issue which has been reported in this sentence from Raabi’ah—and it does not concern me whether it has been authentically attributed to her or not, because I look at what is said and not at the one who is saying it—this sentence goes against the natural state of man, goes against what I assume is the natural disposition [fitrah], i.e., which is that a person worships Allaah according to other than the madhhab of Raabi’ah if it [i.e., that saying] has been correctly attributed to her.

[A person] worships Allaah out of hope and fear and this is something which Allaah described His servants with in the Noble Qur’aan, and it is not possible for a person to be divested of fear from something which is [so] colossal, horrendous, and terrifying. It is not possible except if he is taken out of the state of being human—and we are talking about humankind [here].

So look, for example, at Moosa (عليه السلام)², the one whom Allaah the Blessed and Most High spoke to, when Allaah gathered him and Pharaoh’s magicians together and they came with their magic which took hold of the reasoning of those present, included among them was Moosa (عليه السلام) about whom the Lord of all Creation said in the clear text of the Noble Qur’aan, “**And he sensed within himself fear, did Moses. We said, “Fear not. Indeed, it is you who are superior.”**”³

So Moosa felt fear from the magic of those magicians, [magic] which was falsehood, but fear is from man’s nature.

For this reason when a person can be afraid of a wild animal, a lion, a hyena, the magic of a magician and so on, then how can he not be afraid of the punishment of the Lord of all Creation? And how can he not hope for the everlasting bliss which is with Allaah?

It is not possible for a person to free himself of this at all. So he worships Allaah in the hope of gaining His Paradise and fearing His Fire.

¹ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

² (عليه السلام) (alaihis-salaam) Peace be upon him

³ Surah Taa-Haa [20:67-68]

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For this reason the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)⁴ when describing himself, he mentioned something to them which I don't recall now ..., [he said], **“By Allaah! I am the one who fears Allaah the most from all of you and the most pious of you.”** So he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) feared Allaah.

So how can it be possible to imagine a person who worships Allaah and does not fear Him, this is impossible.⁵

⁴ (صلى الله عليه وسلم) May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him

⁵ *Al-Huda wan-Noor*, 261.