

What does your worship do for you?

Advice from Shaykh Uthaymeen

Shaykh Uthaymeen رحمه الله تعالى said¹: Allah the Exalted said:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَعْظُمُ بِيَاغِدَةٍ ۖ أَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ مِثْلَىٰ وَفُرَادَىٰ ثُمَّ تَتَفَكَّرُوا ﴿٤٦﴾

Say (to them O Muhammad): "I exhort you on one (thing) only: that you stand up for Allah's sake in pairs and individually, and reflect²

This verse shows that when a person does an action for Allah he must reflect upon how he performed this action. Did he perform it in the required manner; was it deficient, did he add something? **And did he achieve cleansing of the heart and purification of the soul from this action?** He mustn't be like the one who performs righteous actions as though it is a daily habit; rather you must reflect upon what you have achieved by this worship, and **what effect it has upon you heart and your uprightness.**

We will strike an example with the prayer. Allah the Blessed and Exalted said:

وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ ﴿٤٥﴾

And seek help through patience and prayer³

Let us reflect, when we pray does our prayer give us energy, strength and vigor towards righteous actions such that our prayer is helping us? In reality this is rarely seen in a person. **Look to see what your prayer is doing for you, does it assist you upon the obedience of Allah? Does it assist you when a calamity befalls?** It was said about the Prophet عليه الصلاة والسلام:

كان إذا حزنه أمر فزع إلى الصلاة

If something troubled him he would take refuge by praying.⁴

Likewise Allah the Exalted said:

¹ Explanation of Riyadis Saliheen Volume 1 Chapter: Reflecting upon the greatness of Allah's creation page 576

² Soorah Saba' 34:46

³ Soorah Al-Baqarah 2:45

⁴ Abu Dawood (1319)

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ۖ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ﴿٤٥﴾

Establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing⁵

Look at your prayer. After you have prayed **do you find in your soul a hatred for immorality and wrongdoing** or does the prayer not benefit you in this manner? If you understand this then you know the result of righteous actions.

Another example is Zakat. Zakat is obligatory charity given from pure wealth which the person spends in vary ways as Allah has commanded. Allah clarified the benefits of giving Zakat when He said to Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم:

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا ﴿١٠٣﴾

Take charity from their wealth in order to cleanse them and purify them with it⁶

When you have paid Zakat; look and observe. Did it cleanse you from despicable character and sins? Did it purify your wealth? **Many people give Zakat as though they are paying a fine!** They give it while hating to do so. They don't feel that it is purifying them, or that it is cleansing their soul.

Translated by Rasheed ibn Estes Barbee

⁵ Soorah Al-'Ankabūt 29 ;45

⁶ Soorah At-Tawbah 9:103