

ARTICLE

Sincerity - The Key to Acceptance

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Alhamdulillah, all praises are for Allah Ta'la for His numerous bounties and favours which He has extended to us. Sincerity is certainly the key for the acceptance of good actions by Allah Ta'la. Sincerity means that in any good act we do, whether that (act) is considered small or great in our eyes, it must be done with the sole intention of pleasing Allah Ta'la alone and it must be free from any show or intention to please others beside Allah Ta'la.

My dear readers, sincerity is such an important quality that without it, we will never be able to achieve the pleasure of Allah nor will any of our good actions be of any benefit to us in the Hereafter. We must understand that even a small deed which is done with sincerity will be greatly rewarded by Allah whereas the greatest deed done without sincerity will fetch no reward in this world or in the Hereafter. In many traditions, the Prophet (S.A) has warned us about insincerity; so much so he has even linked it as being a type of shirk (associating partners to Allah).

In one hadith, the Prophet (S.A) says "Whoever performs salaah for show, he is guilty of false worship; whoever fasts for show, he is guilty of false worship; and whoever gives charity for show, he also is guilty of false worship" (Mishkaat). Guilty of false worship here means that these actions were done to show others and were not done solely to please Allah Ta'la, hence amounting to setting up partners to Allah indirectly. Another hadith says "Allah Ta'la only accepts those deeds of His servants which are done with complete sincerity to Him".

Allah Ta' la Himself says in the Holy Quraan "So whosoever wishes to meet his Lord, then let him do good actions and let him not associate any partners with Allah" (18:110). Abdullah Ibn Abbas (R.A) while explaining the reason for the revelation of this verse said that a person from among the Muslims used to fight in the Holy wars and his desire was that people should know of his bravery and courage. In order to correct his intention, this verse was revealed (Al-Mustadrak). This tradition shows that the person was warned about such thoughts and feelings and he was informed that it was shirk and must be avoided. In another narration it is related that a companion once mentioned to the Prophet (S.A) that he would sometimes stand to do an act of worship and his intention is only to please Allah; however along with this he has a desire in his heart that people should see his actions. The Prophet (S.A) heard this and remained silent until the above verse was revealed.

Abu Hurairah (R.A) relates that the Prophet (S.A) said "A man will be brought before Allah Ta' la (on the Day of Judgement) who will have so much good actions that he will look very tall and fat, however he will not weigh heavier than the wing of a mosquito". Similarly Abu Saeed Khudri (R.A) narrates that great actions would be brought on the Day of Judgement which would look like the mountains of Tihama, however they would have no weight on the scales of Justice. (Qurtubi)

These narrations show that there would be many people who would have done many good actions in this world, but because of their lack of sincerity or wrong beliefs, they would not be given a single reward for their actions and hence they will have no weight on the Day of Judgement. These people will surely be the greatest losers on that Day as Allah Himself says "Say (O Muhammad S.A), Shall we tell you the greatest losers in respect of (their) deeds? Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they

thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds"! (18:103-104)

My dear readers let us understand the importance of sincerity in all our actions, and let us strive to be sincere in everything that we do so that Insha Allah we will attain the pleasure of Allah Ta'la and the paradise which He has promised us. May Allah Ta'la through His Infinite Mercy also grant us the ability to be sincere in all our actions. Ameen