

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

We seek forgiveness from Allah

We stand witness to Allah that there is no God but Him

That Mohamamad (saww) is his slave and messenger

Introduction

The Meaning of Ikhlas

- Rasulullah (saww) had said:

“Innaa liqulli haqqin haqiiqah wamaa balagha ‘abdun haqiiqatal ikhlaas hatta laa yuhibba an yahmida ‘ala syaiin min ‘amaalillah”

“Certainly there is a reality of every truth and a servant cannot reach the reality of **Ikhlas** unless he doesn't like people to praise him for the actions he has done (only) for the sake of God”. [Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 72, p.304, hadith #51]

- Allah says in Surah Al Insaan 76:9 in regard to Ahlul Bayt:

إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا

“(Saying): we feed you, for the sake of Allah only. We wish for no reward nor thanks from you”

The above verse captures the fulfillment of Ahlul Bayt in regard to their bows; when they gave food, they gave it only for the sake of Allah and not for the intention of seeking any recompense nor reward nor even a note of thanks. This is the meaning of **ikhlas**.

Interpretation of The 2nd to 5th Verses of Surat Al Faathihah

Rabbul 'Aalamiin

- According to Allamah Tabarsi in *Majma'ul Bayaan*, the word *Rabbul 'aalamiin* in Arabic has several meanings. One meaning of the word is *sayyid* or *master*. It also has the meaning of “*the one that is obeyed*”. The word can also be interpreted as *shahib* or *owner*.
- According to Allamah Thabathaba'i in *Al Mizan*, there is no English word that can equate the meaning of *Rabb*; the closest word is *Lord*. *ar-Rabb* is “*the master who manages the matters of the servant*”. Thus, it connotes the idea of ownership. In a social structure, ownership signifies the relationship of one person to the other; it is a relationship that defines the duties and obligations of a servant to his master.

Classical Tafseer Class - Summary
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- Our existence is not real. Only Allah swt is the real existence. In surah **Al Insaan 76:1**, Allah swt says:

هَلْ أَتَى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا

“Hath there come upon man (ever) any period of time in which he was a thing unremembered?”

- According to Agha Mahdi Pooya, *Rabb* in Arabic stands for “nourisher, cherisher, and sustainer”. According to Raghīb, an Arab lexicologist, the word *Rabb* signifies “the fostering of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until its goal of completion”.
- When Pharaoh asked who his Lord is, Moses (as) replied (in **Surah Thaha 20:50**):

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ نَّشَأَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى

“(Say) Our Lord is He who gave unto everything in its form, and then guided it aright”

This is *rahmah*, mercy, from the *Rabbul ‘alaamin*.

The love and mercy of Allah towards His creatures surpasses, in quantity and quality, “the love of both father and mother put together”. From the birth to the last breath everything in the universe depends upon the *rububiyat*, the nourishing, cherishing, sustaining and protecting aspect of the mercy of the Lord of the worlds.

- By making Allah known as the *Rabbul ‘alaamin*, Islam has disclosed the truth to mankind that He is the Lord of everything in the universe, be that human, animal, vegetable, mineral, perceptible or imperceptible, visible or invisible, near or far, in the earth or in the heavens, or in between them. A newly born child at once sucks the mother’s breast. The roots of the plants and trees absorb from the earth only that which helps their growth, leaving out the unessential, notwithstanding its presence in the soil. As soon as a fish is born it swims. Every creature functions under the divine guidance.
- In **Surah Al A’laa 87:1-3**, Allah swt says:

سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى Praise the name of thy Lord the Most High
الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى Who createth, then disposeth
وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَى Who measureth, then guideth

In relation to this, Pharaoh asked Moses Kalimullah, “Who is your *Rabb*?” and Musa said that “He is the Lord of heavens and earth and all that is between in them”.

- In **Al Maniq** on the first page, in one of *munaajat* (which means an intimate / intense discourse) Imam Ali (as) says:

“|laahi kafaah bii izzan an akuuna laka ‘abdan wakafaa bii fakhran anta kuunali rabban anta kamaa uhibbu faj’alni kama tuhibbuu”

“My Lord, the honour of me, being your slave is sufficient. And I am proud of the fact that You are my Lord. Do unto me as you please.”

- Interestingly, the word *wife* in the Arabic language is *rabbatul manzail* which means *shahib of the house*.

Ar Rahmaanir Rahiim

- Allamah Tabarsi in *Majma'ul Bayaan* argues that this word is not a repetition even though it sounds as if it has been repeated. The word refers to the praise of Allah in the form of slavery (*dzikru 'ubdiyyatan*) and also to the blessing and bounties of Allah swt.
- Two significant attributes of Allah swt are that of *ar Rahmaan* and *ar Rahiim*. In fact we recite this at least 30 times in our daily prayers. It is imperative that we try to incorporate these attributes in our daily lives and activities. Imam Ali has demonstrated these attributes many times. One day Imam Ali (as) went to the masjid and bought 2 shirts. He gave the more expensive and the better shirt to Qambar, his servant.

Qambar asked “*Why did you give this to me, you are Amiirul Mu'miniin. It is more fitted for you to wear the more expensive shirt*”

Imam Ali (as) said, “*You are younger than me and hence your desire for a better shirt might be more than mine. Since I am Amiirul Mu'miniin, I should lead by example.*”

- In *Tafseer Nur Tsaqalain*, Allah SWT says that:
“*When my servant says ar Rahmaanir Rahiim, Allah jalla jalaala says ‘my servant has beared witness that I am the beneficent and the merciful and I bear witness for him that I will increase my rahmaan on them. I will give generously my grant according to their capacity’*”.

Maaliki Yaumid Diin

- Most of the *mufassiriin* translate *Maaliki Yaumid Diin* as “*the master of the day of judgment*”. He who sits in judgment is known as a judge. The Arabic word is *qadi*. Here the word *qadi* is not used because *qadi* is not the law-giver or lawmaker, but only an executor of the law made and enforced by some other authority, and therefore, is restricted by the judicial system in force.

Maalik or the master is “*the law-maker as well as the executor of His own laws*”. With the supreme powers of a law-maker, He uses His discretion not only in passing the judgment but also in carrying it out, according to the merits of each individual’s case and in view of His own satisfaction, in the light of explanations given by the accused.

When an accused is proved guilty, the *qadi* cannot grant pardon or remission of punishment but the *Maalik* can grant amnesty to the petitioner at His own independent discretion which cannot be challenged.

- In **Surah az Zumar 39:53** Allah swt says:

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ
الدُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

“Say: O My slaves who have been prodigal to their own hurt! Despair not of the mercy of Allah, Who forgiveth all sins. Lo! He is the Forgiving, the Merciful”.

- According to Agha Mahdi Pooya, the actual *Maalik* (master) is “*He who exercises absolute authority over everything in His possession*”. Everything owes its existence to Him. He is the absolute. Therefore, the use of the term “*master*” for the possession and the right of possession (*malikiyyat*), or power and authority (*mulukiyyat*) is true and real in the case of Allah swt only. For others it would be only figurative and unreal. This is also strictly applicable to all His other attributes.
- In **Tafseer Nur Tsaqalain** it is mentioned that whenever Imam Ali Zainul Abidin (as) said *Maaliki Yaumid Diin*, he kept on repeating it, as if was about to lose his life.

Iyyaaka Na’budu wa Iyyaaka Nasta’iin

- It is translated as “*Only You we worship and only You we seek help from*”. It is interesting to know that in Arabic, when object of the verb precedes its subject the meaning of exclusiveness is indisputable. In this case the verb is “*na’budu*” while the object is “*iyyaaka*”, therefore *mufasssiriin* translates into “*Only you we worship. Only You we seek help from*”. The word “*na’budu*” precedes the word “*nasta’iin*”. This means that the act of worshipping here is the *wasilah* (intercession) towards seeking help from Allah swt.
- According to Allamah Tabarsi in **Majma’ul Bayaan**, “*iyyaaka na’budu*” means that “*we only worship You and only ask You for assistance*”.
- According to some *mufasssiriin*, the social aspect is reflected in this verse because we are using “*we*” which is the plural form. Therefore a servant should consider himself that he is part of the community when standing in front of Allah swt. It is also proven by the fact that although we pray personally, we always use “*we*” and not “*I*”.

In relation to this, Fathimah az Zahra (sa) has given us an example. In one of her *fajr* prayers, she prayed for neighbours and for others but not for herself and when Imam Hassan (as) asked about this, the reply given by her to Imam Hassan (as) is

“aljaar qabla daar”

“*neighbours come before home*”.

This is because if we pray for others then *malaikaat* will pray for us in return and there is no *hijab* for the prayers of *malaikaat*. Because of this, we are encouraged to pray for others.

- Imam Ali (as) in one of his *munaajat* used to say:
"Ilaahi maa 'abattuka khaufan min naarika walaa tham'an li jaannatika walaakinii wajattuka mustahiqan lil 'ibaadah fa'abadtuka"
"My Lord, I do not worship You just in fear of hellfire or in greed of Paradise. But I worship you since you are fit to be worshipped and thus I enslave myself to you."

Mind Blowing Story

The Loaves

Zarr Bin Hobeish relates this story:

Two travelers sat together on the way to their destination to have a meal. One had five loaves of bread. The other had three. A third traveler was passing by and at the request of the two joined in the meal.

The travelers cut each of the loaf of bread in three equal parts. Each of the travelers ate eight broken pieces of the loaf.

At the time of leaving the third traveler took out eight dirhams and gave to the first two men who had offered him the meal, and went away. On receiving the money the two travelers started quarrelling as to who should have how much of the money.

The five-loaf-man demanded five dirhams. The three-loaf-man insisted on dividing the money in two equal parts.

The dispute was brought to Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib (as) - the Caliph of the time in Arabia - to be decided.

Imam Ali (as) requested the three-loaf-man to accept three dirhams. The man refused and said that he would take only four dirhams. At this Imam Ali (as) returned,
"You can have only one dirham. You had eight loaves between yourselves. Each loaf was broken in three parts. Therefore, you had 24 equal parts. Your three loaves made nine parts out of which you have eaten eight portions, leaving just one to the third traveler. Your friend had five loaves which divided into three made fifteen pieces. He ate eight pieces and gave seven pieces to the guest. As such the guest shared one part from your loaves and seven from those of your friend. So you should get one dirham and your friend should receive seven dirhams."

The equation:

The first traveler had 9 parts of bread (3x3) and he ate 8 of those 9 parts and thus gave only 1 to the third traveler.

The second traveler had 15 parts of bread (5x3) and he ate 8 parts and hence gave 7 parts to the third traveler.

Thus the share of the first traveler was 1/8 of 8 dirhams, which is 1 dirham. And the share of the second traveler was 7/8 of 8 dirhams, which is 7 dirhams.

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In this tafseer class, there might be shortcomings in imparting the knowledge of the tafseer. If there is any information that requires correction, please do not hesitate to let us know via e-mail: jaafari_tafseer_committee@yahoo.com.sg.
Allah knows best.