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23: Giving Sadaqah On Behalf Of Imam (aj)

Giving Sadaqah on behalf of Imam (aj) proves ones love and friendship for him. The correctness of this statement is based on whatever has been recorded concerning the giving of Sadaqah or praying on behalf of believers. As Imam (aj) is the Master of the believers, he is the most deserving. Apart from this, we have many traditions that recommend performing Hajj, Tawaf, Ziarat etc. on behalf of Imam (aj). Further research, however, throws up the evidence that if we sift through the huge collection of hadith we shall find that every kind of worship act on behalf of Imam (aj) is highly rewarding.

As mentioned by Allamah Ali Ibne Tawoos in his book Kashful Muhajja, in which he has reminded his son about the acts that we should perform during the Ghaibat of Imam (as). He finally says, "You must care for his leadership, loyalty and attachment in a way that Allah, Prophet (S) and the forefathers of Imam Mahdi (aj) expect from you. You must give preference of the needs of Imam (as) over your own needs when you are reciting the Namaz-e-Hajat (Prayer of having your need fulfilled). Before giving Sadaqah on behalf of your family members, give Sadaqah on behalf of Imam az-Zaman (aj) and pray for him. In addition to this, give him preference in every good deed. All these things will invite Imam's (as) attention and favors." 1

In addition to this, this deed is a type of kindness to the Holy Imam (as) and we shall study the merits of kindness towards the Imam (as) in the coming pages, Insha Allah. That which illustrates that giving Sadaqah for the Imam is an act of kindness to him, is the traditional report of Ali bin Abi Hamza that is quoted in Bihar, Wasail and other books in which he says: I asked Abu Ibrahim [Imam Musa Kazim (as)]: Shall I perform Hajj, pray and pay Sadaqah on behalf of my dead and alive relatives and friends? He replied: Yes, on their behalf give Sadaqah and pray and as a result of your kindness to them and for joining relationships you will become eligible for other rewards.2

I say: Even though the above tradition mentions only relatives and friends, the fact is that acts of kindness with regard to all those who are having some connection with us is a meritorious deed. And in this instance relatives and friends are mentioned only by way of examples. The question is about the legality of performing worship acts on behalf of the dead and alive believers.

Hence the Imam replied with further clarification and said 'yes' and then to stress on its recommended nature said: 'on their behalf pay Sadaqah and pray'. At that moment the Imam wanted to encourage further and said: 'you will become eligible for other rewards' and since he wanted to highlight the eligibility for reward he said, 'as a result of your kindness to them and for joining relationships'.

Thus this statement confirms the legality of this action and shows that it is lawful as well as recommended. Therefore, the respected reader is requested to think deeply on this point. If kindness of one believer makes one eligible for divine rewards, what would be the position of one who gives Sadaqah on behalf of the Imam of the Time (aj)? Yes, he will be rewarded for that and be counted as the best of the Sadaqah–givers since he has performed this worship act on behalf of one who is the best in the whole world.

And without any doubt the more perfect is the connection between him and the Holy Imam (as), the more will be the reward of giving Sadaqah on his behalf. We pray to the Almighty Allah to bestow on us and all the believers love and devotion towards the Holy Imam (as) and opportunity to serve him; and Allah is the Hearer of Dua. That giving Sadaqah on behalf of the Imam is better than giving it on behalf of others can be proved from logic as well as a tradition from Tafseer Imam Hasan Askari (as) which we shall present ahead, Insha Allah.

Note and Guidance

We should know that from the above mentioned traditional report of Abu Hamza it becomes clear that it is allowed to perform worship acts on behalf of believers, whether dead or alive, although the tradition has only spoken of Hajj, Sadaqah and prayer. The narrator only mentioned these three items as examples. This can be proved by the following:

Firstly: It is that when the Imam replied, he only mentioned Sadaqah and prayer and did not make any mention of Hajj, while on the basis of other traditional reports, Hajj on behalf of others is allowed and none of our scholars have doubted this matter. This shows that the Imam considered the three items as examples only.

Secondly: To bring the cause of His Eminence (aj) and think that it is lawful, rather Mustahab that he says: "And there will be other rewards for you due to your good turn to him." It proves that to represent the believer men and women in ones divine obedience and worship acts is a good turn and a favor to them, therefore the person who does this gets other rewards in addition to the rewards of those worship acts due to the good turn and favor done to them.

As for the obligatory worship acts: It is proved with evidence that a person must perform these himself and obligatory worship acts are not allowed by proxy, except for Hajj and that also in a particular case, which will be explained later.

Also, the above mentioned traditional report even though narrated by Abu Hamza, is weak because he was a Waqifi1.3 However, we have already explained that weak reports can be accepted in matters of recommended deeds. Proving this matter are some traditional reports that are quoted in Kafi,4 Wafi and other books, which say: If a person hears a traditional report about reward of a good deed and performs that act with intention of gaining that reward, will get the same reward even if that tradition is not authentic.

Here, two points become clear: First: All worship acts are acts of goodness Secondly: To perform them by proxy on behalf of the dead and alive, is a recommended act except in cases which are out of this scope. And there is no obstruction except the possibility that it is an innovation but such a thought is rejected, because he does an act in hope of reward with reference to traditional report mentioned that: "One who hears about the reward of the deed..."

And joining with this aim to another it can be proved as it is mentioned: From the above mentioned tradition it is proved that it is allowed, rather recommended to pray recommended prayers on behalf of the living, therefore this order is applicable to all kinds of good actions and worship acts because there does not exist a command contrary to this, as all those who consider it permissible for prayer, also consider it permissible for other worship acts. Thus if anyone considers it lawful only in prayer and denies it in other worship acts; the third statement appears that Ijma composed of by itself.

Shaykh Ansari has mentioned this reason in one of his writings, but it is worth attention because the proof of Ijma that is narrated is worth contemplation as mentioned in its own place. Although, for the purpose of supporting this point it is appropriate.

And also for proving this point we can reply on this argumentation because among the best recommended worship acts are prayer, fasting, Tawaf, Marabata, Ziarat and Qurbani, and it is permissible rather recommended to perform these on behalf of others as the traditional reports prove clearly. Further, this rule also applies to other worship acts.

And in this context also it is possible that a doubt may arise about it, because this inductive reasoning is conjectural and in this way it is not a proof for us. But we can join the motives mentioned in traditional reports about proxy of Hajj and Tawaf etc. as these causes are linked with one who performs them under proxy, and therefore the reward of the doer is two-fold. The same is the conclusion for doing recommended acts by proxy of believers as an absolute act of good turn with relation to him; and the goodness and value of a good turn to believer is not concealed from anyone having a perfect understanding.

In the same way, as regards the correctness of proxy in prayer on behalf of others is proved by the traditional report of Muhammad bin Marwan in Kafi that he said: His Eminence, Imam Sadiq (as) said: What stops a person from among you to perform good deeds on behalf of your parents, whether dead or alive? Perform the ritual prayers on their behalf, pay Sadaqah, do the Hajj and keep fasts. What you do

for them will be recompensed to them and you will also get its equal reward. Thus Allah, the Mighty and Sublime, in view of that good deed increases it many times for you.5

The cause of this reasoning is that the statement of the Imam: 'Perform the ritual prayers on their behalf', apparently shows the importance of kindness to parents during their lifetime and after their passing away and this is what our scholars have concluded, may Allah have mercy on them. This is what they have claimed that this order applies to the matter in discussion. However Allamah Majlisi, the second, in his book, Miratul Uqool6 has explained it to be kindness to parents after their passing away (pay attention). And it is possible to prove the point under discussion with the help of the following verse of Qur'an:

And help one another in goodness and piety. (Qur'an, Surah Maidah 5:2)

Because helping one other, sometimes takes the shape of two persons doing something jointly and sometimes one person does it on behalf of another who gets the benefit. Doing something on behalf of a believer is of the same type as is clear to those who tread the straight path. The conclusion derived from this is that it is recommended to perform recommended worship acts on behalf of dead and alive believer men and women.

Of those who are inclined to this view is Shaykh Ansari (r.a.) who in his treatise on Qadha of Mayyit, after quoting the report of Ali bin Abi Hamza says: Apparently to perform prayer on behalf of another, praying by proxy and not that one performs the prayer and gifts its reward to that person.

Thus this report proves that praying by proxy for a living person is allowed and this also applies to all acts of goodness as the statement is not talking exclusively about prayer, rather in the case of obligatory fasts it becomes necessary as result of vow of a living person and this is mentioned in the report of Abdullah bin Jabla in Faqih, quoting from Ishaq bin Ammar. Rather, the generality of proxy in all obligatory acts except on those regarding whom there is consensus that they are not lawful, can be derived from traditional reports that talk of legality of repaying the debts of Allah. Then can be derived the law of legality of proxy in recommended acts because no one can distinguish between the two whether it be voluntary or proxy. So think on this point.

Also having the same view is the author of Jawahir who in his book, Kitabul Wikala in the explanation of lawfulness of proxy in Tawaf Prayer says: As for instances other than these two recommended deeds and optional fasts: In the book of Masalik it is considered lawful to do it by proxy and it is that a group of our scholars have definitely considered it unlawful to perform worship acts by proxy, which are also included in it, although some of the instances are restricted.

I [author of Jawahir] say: From religious sources we can derive the legality of gifting of reward of all

recommended deeds to the living and dead, rather perhaps it can be derived that a recommended act can be performed in a number of ways in proxy of a person that he should get the reward for it, as we indicated in most worship acts, although in acts when we don't have the proof of legality of proxy its recommended address is not cancelled from the responsible person, rather the recommended nature of that act remains for that person, even though from the aspect of performing it be another person with the intention of proxy which makes the reward related to him. So think upon this.

This shows the absolute value of legality of proxy in deeds as this is taken as the base in Masalik. Even though it may be related to special circumstances, there is doubt in the statement of the author of Masalik, because in worship acts there is nothing but performing those acts with the intention of gaining proximity and the legislator has related its reward to that person. And this does not contradict performing of that act in proxy.

Thus it is taken as a general rule of proxy, whose requirement is its legality to consider the act of another as ones own through permission and proxy of another. And this meaning is applicable to worship etc. so think on this point as it would be beneficial. And it is the result of that same origin that we mentioned before. Along with this we should know that it is allowed when the person is alive and after his death especially in case of monetary worship acts; so think on this. Allah knows best." End of quotation from the book of *Jawahir*.

I say: The main aim of the author is clear from his words: "Originality of justification of proxy in all acts, except when it is proved that it is not allowed." May Allah have mercy on the author. We can refer to it whenever we have a doubt that a particular act allows proxy or not. But the evidence of this origin deserves consideration and that which is well known cannot prove it, and the details of this will be given at an appropriate place.

Among those who apparently consider proxy lawful in recommended prayers is Muhaqqiq Hilli in the book of Sharai as the prohibition of proxy of living persons is only in case of obligatory prayers as he says: "And proxy is valid in all circumstances when one is under control, that Allah wants to make that person directly responsible like, Ghusl or Wudhu with the power even though proxy is allowed in washing parts of the body in times of need and like the Obligatory Prayer, till one is alive..."

Sometimes suspicion arises that there is contradiction between the tradition of Ali bin Abi Hamza and Abdullah bin Jundab. Abdullah bin Jundab says: I wrote this question to His Eminence, Abul Hasan [Imam Musa Kazim (as)]: There is a person who would like to keep a third of all his good deeds and prayers for himself and dedicate the rest to his parents; or can he dedicate all his recommended deeds for them? What is the command if one of them is alive and the other, dead? Imam (as) wrote in reply: As for the dead, it is allowed and as for the alive, nothing is allowed, except good deeds and favor.7

I say: There is no contradiction between these two traditional reports because the query in the letter is concerned with dedication of rewards and not performing the acts by proxy. Thus between this report

and traditional reports that prove the legality of gifting of deeds and their rewards – that we mentioned in their place – there is contradiction. And supposing we accept that it implies proxy, it supports the reconciliation of this report and the one quoted previously. It is that which Sayyid Ibne Tawoos (r.a.) has mentioned that Prayer should be considered as obligatory prayer but before that he says: It does not imply recommended prayer, because apparently it is considered lawful to pray the recommended prayer of Ziarat and Hajj etc on behalf of the living.

- 1. Kashful Muhajja, Pg. 151-152, Part 150
- 2. Wasailush Shia, Vol. 5, Pg. 367, Tr. No. 9
- 3. Waqifi are those who stopped at the Imamate of Imam Musa Kazim (as).
- 4. Usool Kafi, Vol. 2, Pg. 87
- 5. Usool Kafi; Muhammad bin Yaqoob Kulaini; Vol. 2, Pg. 159, Chapter of Parents, tr. No. 7
- 6. Miraat al-Uqool, Vol. 8, Pg. 388
- 7. Wasailush Shia, Vol. 5, Pg. 368, Tr. No. 16

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