

Al-Uboodiyyah: Being a True Slave of Allâh

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

“The heart is inherently dependent on Allâh in two ways: from the point of view of worship, which is the ultimate goal, and from the point of view of seeking His help and relying upon Him, which are the means to that end. The heart cannot be sound, or succeed, or find joy, or be happy, or feel pleasure, or be good, or be at peace, or find tranquility, except by worshipping its Lord, loving Him and returning to Him. Even if it attains all that it can enjoy of created things, it will not feel at peace or find tranquility, because it has an inherent need for its Lord, for He is the focus of its worship, love and seeking, and this is the only way to attain joy, happiness, pleasure, peace and tranquility ...

...For if a person is helped to attain what he loves, seeks, desires and wants, but he does not worship Allâh, he will never achieve anything but sorrow, regret and suffering. He can never be free of the pain and hardship of this life except through loving Allâh sincerely, so that Allâh becomes his ultimate desire and he loves Him for what He is, and he loves anyone or anything else only for His sake, and he does not love anything for its own except Allâh. If he does not achieve this (level of love), he has not properly understood the true meaning of “La illaha ill Allâh” or of *Tawheed* or of *Uboodiyyah* or of loving Allâh. There is something lacking in his *eemaan* and Tawheed, and he will suffer pain, regret and anguish accordingly.”

The highest degree of love is *Tatayyum* (total enthrallment). The lowest degree is *‘alaqah* (attachment), when the heart is attached to the beloved: then comes *sabahah* (infatuation), when the heart is poured out: then *gharam* (passion), when love never leaves the heart: then *ashaq* (ardent love), and finally *tatayyum*. When we say that a person is enthralled, as it were, by Allâh, it means that he worships Allâh, because enthrallment is like enslavement to the beloved.

When a person submits to another even though he dislikes him, this is not worship or enslavement: when he loves someone but is not subservient to him, as a man might love his child or friend, this is not worship or enslavement either. Either of them alone is not enough when it comes to worshipping Allâh. Allâh must be more important than all else. Nothing is deserving of complete love and submission except Allâh. Love for anything other than Allâh is corrupt love, and veneration of anything except Allâh is false veneration. Allâh says:

Say: If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred: the wealth that you have gained: the commerce in which you fear decline: or the dwellings in which you delight- are dearer to you then Allâh,

or his messenger, or the striving in His cause- the wait until Allâh brings about His Decision ... [Sûrah Al Tawbah: Ayah 24]

Love, like obedience, should only be for Allâh and His Messenger, and for the sake of earning Allâh's pleasure:

... But it is more fitting that they should please Allâh and His Messenger ... [Sûrah Al Tawbah: Ayah 62]

It is also for Allâh and His Messenger to give;

If only they had been content with what Allâh and His Messenger gave them ... [Sûrah Al Tawbah: Ayah 59]

Worship ('ibadah) and the things that are connected to it, such as complete trust and fear, and so on, can only be for Allâh alone, as He says:

Say (O Muhammad): "O People of the Book (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allâh, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allâh." Then if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims." [Sûrah Al Imran: Ayah 64]

If only they had been content with what Allâh and His Messenger gave them, and had said: **"sufficient unto us is Allâh! Allâh and His Messenger will soon give us of His bounty: to Allâh do we turn our hopes!"** (That would have been the right course.) [Sûrah Al Tawbah: Ayah 59]

So it is it is for Allâh and His Messenger to give, as He said:

... So take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you. [Sûrah Al Hashr: Ayah 7]

It is only Allâh Who is sufficient for us, as He says:

Those (the believers) un to whom the people (the hypocrites) said: "Verily, the people (the pagans) have gathered against you (a great army), therefore fear them." But it (only) increased them in Faith, and they said: Allâh (alone) is sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs (for us). [Sûrah Al Imran : Ayah 173]

O Prophet! Allâh is sufficient for you and for the believers who follow you. [Sûrah Al Anfal: Ayah 64]

The last ayah means" Sufficient for you and those who follow you of the believers, is Allâh." Anyone who thinks that it means "Allâh and the believers with Him are sufficient for you" is making a grave mistake. Allâh also says:

Is not Allâh Sufficient for His slave? ... [Sûrah Al Zumar: Ayah 36]

In conclusion, therefore, we may say that slave (*abd*) means the one who is enslaved by Allâh and who submits and humbles himself to Him.