



Understanding of Shirk (Polytheism) in Islamic Thought

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What is shirk?

The word “shirk” is derived from the verb root “shirke”. The meaning of shirke is “to be a partner”. Therefore, the word shirk means to associate partners, to

recognize partners. In Islamic thought, shirk is to associate partners with Allah's Essence and Attributes and to associate other things with His actions.

All worlds exist by Allah's will, power and intention. The performer of all actions in these worlds is Allah Almighty. No object can exist, undergo any change or move without His will. However, when people look at the events in the macro and micro spaces around them, they observe that events occur for some reasons. As a result, they come to the conclusion that the effective power in events is these reasons. However, Allah Almighty has connected the events in the world to each other with reasons. The power and will that enable the causes to emerge and have an effect is again Him. The order in the universe is governed by the names and attributes of Allah. In this respect, the universe (nature) is passive and its perpetrator is God.

When people cannot see the real perpetrator in the universe, they perceive the intervening causes as the real perpetrator. Thus, they have fallen into polytheism by thinking that there are other besides Allah. The polytheism here is associating partners with Him in the universe, which is Allah's property. However, property belongs only to Allah and is under His absolute control only. Just as people fall into polytheism in this sense in their daily lives, positive scientists also fall into polytheism when they examine events in nature. Because rational scientists cannot see the real doer in natural events and imagine other doers. Very few people think that the real doer is Allah. For this reason, polytheism is widely prevalent in people's thoughts in societies.

On this subject, Hazrat Ibn Arabi (qs) writes the following in his book Futuhat-i Mekkiyya:

“When they saw that Allah performed His actions both directly and through means, they considered the things they associated with Him as ‘assistant ministers’ in the occurrence of some actions that occur in existence. For this reason, when Allah was mentioned alone, they thought that the one who mentioned Him did not do justice to the truth. Because they learned that some actions depend on the existence of creatures. In this context, they observed the divine actions that emerged from created causes in existence and did not accept the monotheism (unity) of actions.

Allah sided with the believers who did not see any other doer than Allah and condemned them. According to the believers, things that depend on hadith

(later) power and causes have no effect on the action. Those to whom Allah has dedicated this address are only the believers.

Those who deny Allah are those who cover Him with the veil of polytheism. They have believed in falsehood. Falsehood is nothingness. Their disbelief means that they conceal the attribution of existence to Allah. The partnership they see in existence has caused them to refrain from attributing existence only to Allah. For this reason, Allah has said to them, *"They are the losers"* (Al-Baqarah, 2/27). *"They have purchased heresy for guidance"* (Al-Baqarah, 2/16), that is, they have purchased astonishment and confusion in the face of clarity and clearness.

Those who unite Allah are in reality those who unite Him with Him. Those who unite Allah according to their own desires – not with Him – are those who add partners to monotheism. Allah Almighty says in this regard:

"Most of them do not believe in Allah except by associating others with Him." (Yusuf, 12/106)

"They believe in falsehood and deny Allah." (Al-Ankabut, 29/ 52)

The reason for this is that those who fall into polytheism have assumed the non-existent as existent and have accepted the existent as non-existent in their own beliefs. This non-existent thing is Allah. This situation is called covering. With this covering, the existence of Allah has been veiled from them. Thus, they have become infidels, or coverers.

Associating partners with Allah is taking something that belongs to Him from Him. Therefore, the polytheist is not loved by Allah and causes Him to be angry. Anger leads to narrowness. Therefore, the polytheist is in a narrow place and can only be with those who are polytheists like him. In contrast, wideness is only valid for the One, Allah and those who believe in Him.

An ignorant person is someone who secretly or openly associates partners with Allah. The wise men know where the ignorant people will address them and what their rank is. Therefore, they do not argue with them. Because if they had tried to respond to the ignorant, they would have joined them in ignorance. However, wise people know that a person can only speak to another person by being colored by the words he spoke to him and by entering his state. In this respect, the ruling of the following verse applies to them:

“The true servants of Allah, the Most Merciful, are those who walk on earth with humility and when the ignorant people speak to them, they say, “Selam” (Peace), without hurting him” (Al-Furqan,25/63).

Some people accept the causes of natural events as the cause, but nevertheless believe that the causes are placed by Allah. This kind of polytheism is not condemned or denigrated. Other polytheisms are condemned and denigrated. The reason for the condemnation and denigration of these polytheisms is that they accept one or more gods before Allah. This acceptance of the polytheists is expressed in the following verse with the words they said against the message of our Prophet (pbuh):

“Has He made the gods one god? This is truly a strange thing!” (Saad, 38/5)

Those who commit polytheism turn to monotheism in times of trouble and difficulty. On the other hand, in times of comfort, the polytheists do not show signs of monotheism. For example, people who travel by ship may carry signs of polytheism in their hearts. They wander in the narrowness of polytheism with thoughts such as the ship is made strong and therefore will not sink. However, when a storm arises and the ship rocks dangerously, the signs of polytheism disappear from them. They forget the things they committed polytheism to and turn to Allah and begin to pray. In this case, the person abandons polytheism and returns to true monotheism. When Allah saves them from trouble and grants them salvation, some people forget their prayers and supplications and abandon monotheism again and fall into the narrowness of polytheism. This situation is expressed in the following verses:

“Say: Have you ever considered yourselves? If the punishment of Allah comes to you or the doomsday comes, would you call upon anyone other than Allah? Answer, if you are truthful. No, you call upon Allah alone. If He wills, He removes the calamity you seek to remove, and then you forget what you associated with Him.” (Al-An’am, 6/40-41)

“When a disaster befalls you at sea, all the idols you call upon other than Allah vanish. And when Allah saves you from danger and brings you to dry land, you turn away. And man is ungrateful. Are you sure that when you go out from the sea to the land, He will not cause you to be swallowed by the earth, or that He will not send a storm of stones against you? Then you will not find for yourselves any protector.” (Al-Isra, 17/67-68)

Polytheism is a great injustice. In contrast, there is great news for those who believe in Allah and do not associate partners with Him. We learn this from the following verses and hadiths:

“And do not associate partners with Allah; indeed, polytheism is a great injustice.” (Luqman, 31/13)

“Those who believe and do not mix their faith with injustice... Those are the ones who are safe and they are the ones who are rightly guided.” (Al-An’am, 6/82)

“One day, the Prophet (pbuh) addressed one of his companions, Mu’adh (ra), as follows: Mu’adh! Do you know what is the right of His servants upon Allah if they worship Allah alone and do not associate partners with Him? The right of the servants over Allah is that Allah does not punish those who do not associate partners with Him.” (Hadith)

Allah Almighty created the heavens and the earth and everything in them for people. It is commanded in the following verse that people do not knowingly associate partners with Him:

“Allah has made the earth a bed for you and the sky a structure, and He sends down water from the sky, and with it He brings various fruits for you as a sustenance. So do not knowingly associate partners with Allah.” (Al-Baqarah, 2/22)

However, people see many signs (evidences) in the heavens and the earth, but they associate partners with Allah, thinking of other doers in them. In all ages, people have continued to recognize gods other than Allah. During the period of ignorance, the Arabs used to say in their talbiyahs: “O Allah! You have no partner, but there is only one partner, who belongs to You. You are his owner, and he does not own You.” The idolaters used to say: “Our Lord is Allah alone. The idols are his partners in worship.” The Jews say, “Our Lord is only Allah, and Ezra is his son.” The Christians say, “Our Lord is only Allah, and the Messiah Jesus is his son.” However, the polytheists’ associations with Allah are of no benefit to them, and they fear Allah’s punishment and hope for His mercy:

“Say: Call upon those whom you deify besides Allah, to help you. They can neither remove the distress from you nor change it. Those they call upon seek a means to draw nearer to their Lord, and hope for His mercy, and fear His punishment. For the punishment of your Lord is terrible.” (Al-Isra, 17/56-57)

Allah Almighty commands that the polytheists are filth and that they should not enter the Sacred Mosque:

"O you who believe! The polytheists are filth. They should not approach the Sacred Mosque after this year." (At-Tawbah, 9/28)

The first issue that all prophets fought against was polytheism:

"We sent no messenger before you except that We revealed to him: There is no god but Me. Therefore worship Me." (Anbiyya, 21/25)

"And We sent Noah to his people at one time. He said to them: I am a plain warner to you. Worship none but Allah. I fear the punishment of a Day that will come upon you." (Hud, 11/25-26)

"And to the people of 'Ad We sent their brother Hud. He said: O my people, worship Allah. You have no god but Him. You are only slanderers." (Hud, 11/50)

"And We sent to the people of Thamud, their brother Salih. He said: O my people! Worship Allah. You have no god but Him." (Hud, 11/61)

"And to Madyan We sent their brother Shuaib. He said: O my people! Worship Allah. You have no god but Him." (Hud, 11/84)

Allah Almighty states that the deeds of those who associate partners with Allah will be in vain and they will not be forgiven:

"Certainly, Allah does not forgive that partners should be associated with Him. He forgives whom He wills beyond that. And whoever associates partners with Allah has surely gone astray." (Nisa, 4/116)

"And it was revealed to you and to those before you: If you associate partners with Him, all your efforts will be in vain and you will surely be among those who lose themselves." (Az-Zumar, 39/65)

"This is the straight path of Allah. He guides whomever He wills of His servants. If they had associated partners with Allah, all their deeds would have been in vain." (Al-An'am, 6/88)

Our Prophet (pbuh) stated the following about the greatest sin of idolatry:

"(The greatest sin) is to associate partners with Allah while He has created you."

"Shall I inform you of the thing that I fear more for you than the Antichrist? It is hidden idolatry, which is the act of doing something to show off to others."

“In my Ummah, idolatry is more hidden than the crawling of ants on a smooth stone in the dark night. Its sign is love for injustice and hatred for justice. And what is religion except love for Allah and hatred for Allah? Allah the Almighty says: If you love Allah, then follow me so that Allah will love you.”

“Allah Almighty says: Let a person know that I am the Almighty, I forgive sins. I forgive him as long as he does not fall into polytheism.”

Behaviors that are polytheism in Islamic thought

Taking one's passions and desires as Gods

The word “passion” means empty, worthless. This term describes the human soul's fondness in empty and useless things such as excessive lust and pleasure. These are excessive desires of people and are not legitimate according to the religion of Islam. For example, they are wrong desires such as overeating, excessive sexual desire, chattering with empty words, trying to make people laugh, considering the forbidden as halal, and considering the halal as haram. Such desires cause a person to suffer torment in this world and the hereafter. However, it is halal for the human soul to desire things that the Islamic Sharia considers legitimate, and these behaviors earn a person reward. People are always under the influence of their desires and the whispers of Satan. Those who cannot fight against these as the religion of Islam shows, after a while, they start to follow them and as a result, they become slaves of the soul and Satan. For these people, the commands of the soul and Satan become a goal and purpose. These commands are contrary to the religion of Islam and cause the person to sin. For the person who cannot fight this situation, his desires and passions, in other words, the commands of the soul and Satan, have become his god. In this case, the person cannot go against the word of his god. This is polytheism.

The verses regarding the polytheism of the passion are as follows:

“Have you seen the one who has made his desires and wishes his God? Are you to be his guardian?” (Al-Furqan, 25/43)

“Have you seen the one who has taken his own desires as his God, and Allah has led him astray by a knowledge, and has sealed his hearing and his heart, and has put a veil over his sight? Who will guide him after Allah? Do you not take advice and think?” (Al-Jathiyah, 45/23)

If a person follows his own desires, he has turned away from Allah. This is a great error and perversion. These people are not taken as friends by Muslims: *“Do not follow those who follow their own desires.”* (Saad, 38/26). These people abandon the revelation and follow their own desires. Therefore, Muslims should not follow them and should not take them as friends. Allah Almighty informs us that if one were to follow their desires, everything in the universe would be corrupted and corrupted:

“If the God were to follow their desires, the heavens and the earth and everyone in them (and everything) would be corrupted.” (Al-Muminun, 23/71)

Because following one's desires means going beyond the rules set by Allah. Whereas the universe is sustained by the rules set by Him. If these rules are arbitrarily changed, the system in the universe will collapse.

Those who take their desires as their Gods are truly ignorant people. They push the truth of Islam aside and live their lives according to their own illegitimate desires. For this reason, it is reminded in the Quran that they should not be followed:

“If you follow their desires after the knowledge that has come to you (the Quran and its rulings), you will have no protector or helper from Allah.” (Ar-R'ad, 13/37)

“Judge by what Allah has revealed and do not follow their desires!” (Al-Maida, 5/48-49)

“Be straight as you have been commanded and do not follow their desires.” (Ash-Shura, 42/15)

When people act according to their own desires in society, it disrupts the social balance of society. Justice and law disappear in society, favoritism, bias, lawlessness and injustice emerge. This causes that the society leaves to be livable. Such societies are eventually doomed to collapse and disappear. The Quran mentions many nations that have been destroyed in this way.

Those who follow their desires and those who follow the religion of Islam are not the same. These two groups will be separated on the day of judgement tomorrow, and both will receive what they deserve. Those who follow their desires will go to hell, while believers who follow the Islamic law will go to heaven. It is stated in the following verse that these two groups will not be evaluated in the same way:

“Is the one who has a clear proof from his Lord like the one who follows his own desires, whose evil deeds are made to seem attractive to him?” (Muhammad, 47/14)

There are the following hadiths on this subject:

“There is no god under the firmament of the sky greater than the desires that are followed, besides Allah.”

“The true mujahid is the one who fights against his own desires.”

For those who follow their desires, things that are forbidden are normal for them and there is no harm in doing them. All kinds of negative behaviors such as committing injustice, stealing, threatening and raping the property and life of others stem from a person following their desires. If such people are the majority in society, it is no longer possible to live in peace in this society. The duty of Muslims in such a society is to hold tightly to the Islamic Sharia and to fight against these people. Because otherwise, Muslims will be held accountable for their laxity and turning away in the afterlife.

To do one's deeds for purposes other than Allah (Riya)

The word "Riya" is derived from the word "ru'yet". Ru'yet means seeing. Accordingly, riya is when a person performs deeds and worships for others to see. The person's aim in these deeds and worships is not to please Allah. The person's purpose here is to gain people's approval and appreciation. Those who act in this way are called "hypocrites" or "mira'i".

Riya shows that a person is not sincere, hypocritical and impersonal. Some weak-character people engage in behaviors that are close to the approval of others in order to gain worldly goods, position or fame. If there is hypocrisy in the actions that a person performs as worship, this is polytheism. Because these people do their worship not for the sake of Allah but to show off to others. Hypocrisy is condemned in Islam. Hypocrisy is expressed as a characteristic of hypocrites in the Quran:

“The hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but Allah will deceive them. When they stand up to pray, they stand lazily and show off to people and remember Allah only a little.” (An-Nisa, 4/142)

Similarly, those who perform prayers for show are condemned in the Surah Maun.

Hypocrisy is an attempt to gain an undeserved value in the eyes of people by appearing good in a way that is different from what they are. Therefore, hypocrisy shows that a person's character is corrupt and his morality is weak. In other words, it is an attempt to deceive Allah and people in a way. For this reason, the Quran condemns those who spend their wealth to show off to people, and states that their deeds are invalid. In contrast, believers spend their wealth only for the sake of Allah.

"They spend their wealth to show off to people, while they do not believe in Allah and the Last Day. And whoever has Satan as a companion, then what an evil companion!" (An-Nisa, 4/38)

The hadiths on this subject are as follows:

"Allah Almighty says: I am free from all that is associated with Allah. Whoever does a deed and associates others with it, I leave him alone with his partner."

"Whoever strives for heroism and show off is not in the way of Allah. But whoever strives for the sake of Allah's Great Name, then he is in the way of Allah."

Hidden polytheism

If people's hearts are filled with feelings such as excessive love of wealth and property, excessive greed for money and fortune, excessive desire for fame and position, these are considered hidden polytheism because they overshadow the love of Allah. The biggest problem of our century for Muslims is hidden polytheism. Because materialism is at a very advanced level in people today. The aim of the vast majority of people is to gain material gain. No one thinks of being content with little and sharing their material possessions with the poor. This greed for material gain has taken people captive in every way. For this reason, a large portion of people have forgotten the principles of Islamic Sharia. Hearts are filled with the love of matter, money, wealth and property. Such a heart cannot worship in peace and reverence. This situation is considered polytheism. Because a Muslim's heart should only have love for Allah. However, hearts are filled with love for the world. In this case, it is not possible for a person to worship sincerely. Because hearts carry other loves instead of Allah. Therefore, partners

have formed in the hearts to Allah. In today's world, where love of world surrounds people, people can easily fall into hidden polytheism without realizing it. This situation grows exponentially and leads people to the abyss with the support of the self and the devil.

Having excessive love for some people and institutions and placing them in hearts is also hidden polytheism. For example, today, excessive love is shown towards some politicians, athletes and sports clubs, theater and cinema artists and singers, and words such as “You are the greatest” and “May my life be sacrificed for you” are said to praise them. The people and institutions in question have nothing to do with the religion of Islam and are completely worldly. Using these words for these things, which are completely worldly, leads a person to polytheism. Because there is no greater being than Allah. It is also forbidden in Islam to sacrifice one’s life for a cause other than the path of Allah.

In this context, hypocrisy is also a type of hidden polytheism. Here are some hadiths of our Prophet (pbuh) on this subject:

“One day, the Prophet addressed his companions and said: “O people, beware of polytheism. Surely it is more hidden than the movement of an ant.” One of them asked, “O Messenger of Allah! How can we avoid such polytheism when it is more hidden than the movement of an ant?” Thereupon, the Messenger of Allah replied, “O Allah! We seek refuge with You from associating anything with You knowingly, and we ask Your forgiveness for what we do not know.”

“The most frightening thing that I fear for my Ummah is that they associate partners with Allah. Be careful; I am not saying that they will worship the moon, the sun, or idols. Rather, they will act according to the commands and desires of someone other than Allah.”

Accepting causes as the real doers is polytheism

It is observed that the phenomena in the universe occur as a result of some causes. For this reason, the majority of people accept these causes as the real doers of the phenomena. However, causes are objects placed by Allah and are a means in the formation of phenomena. Therefore, the real and absolute doer in the formation of phenomena is Allah Almighty. Therefore, accepting causes as

the real doer means associating partners with Allah's power and will. This is polytheism.

This situation especially emerges in today's people's understanding of science. The vast majority of scientists accept the causes of events in the universe as the real doers and all scientific theories are based on this assumption. However, this is not the case in reality. Because the causes in the universe are means that work with Allah's power and will. This fact actually shows itself in all scientific theories. Because none of the scientific theories are absolutely valid and each has deficiencies and contradictions. These deficiencies and contradictions are due to the fact that causes are accepted as the real doers. As Stephen Hawking said, there is no guarantee that no physical theory will be falsified tomorrow. These contradictions and deficiencies can only be eliminated by accepting Allah Almighty as the real doer and accepting the effects of some spiritual information that cannot be detected by material methods in the formation of phenomena.

Taking positive science and reason as Gods is polytheism

Today, most people accept positive science data as absolute truth and deify it. They believe that positive science will one day solve and explain everything definitively and absolutely. This means that people idolize their minds and positive science. In contrast, some positive scientists are more realistic and admit that their possibilities are limited. For example, the famous physicist Heisenberg said the following in one of his lectures while explaining the nuclear power in the atomic nucleus: "We detect the existence of these forces. But we do not know who put such a great power in such a small place."

However, today, taking science and reason as gods is very common. People believe that mathematics is a branch of science that is absolutely true and never question it. Some scientists with the title of professor use statements such as "It has been mathematically proven that God does not exist" in the media to show how ignorant they are. Accepting mathematics as absolute truth is one kind of ignorance, and comparing it to the existence of God is another kind of ignorance. If these scientists had not only left their claims as words but also published how they proved them, they would have been more realistic. In this way, we would have shown them how wrong they were. It is a great example of blunder and

ignorance to make claims while hiding behind the belief in the certainty of mathematics without such a study being published.

We have explained in the article titled "[Metaphysics of Numbers](#)", we have published on our website that mathematics is not an absolutely certain science. In these articles, we have stated that the science of mathematics is founded on certain axioms (acceptances). If we do not accept even one of these axioms, the entire science of mathematics will collapse. The accuracy of these actions has not been proven. In fact, it has been proven that it is not possible to prove these actions mathematically. For this reason, we recommend that people question and research before they believe in these matters unconditionally. Because otherwise, a person will fall into polytheism. This means that the person's afterlife will be darkened.

Behaviors that are not polytheistic in Islamic thought

Being a Sufi is not polytheism

Sufism is living the inner side of the religion of Islam. The outer side of the religion of Islam is the obligatory and voluntary worships. However, there is also an inner side of the religion of Islam, which can only be learned with a Sufi education. This education began with the emergence of the religion of Islam. In addition to teaching his companions the outer side of the religion, our Prophet (pbuh) also taught them the inner side of the religion, the secret sciences. These secret sciences are called the Ledunnî Science (Knowledge of God). These secret sciences have been transmitted and taught from person to person by those who know this work until today. There are still people who have this knowledge today. With the permission of Allah, this science is taught by authorized guides to those who are capable in this regard. The first and greatest teacher in this regard is our Prophet (pbuh). The Messenger of Allah states in a hadith, *"I have been sent to teach you the knowledge of Allah."* In a verse, it is stated that the Messenger of Allah was assigned to explain the verses of the Quran to people and to teach them wisdom.

"Indeed, We have sent to you a messenger from among yourselves. He recites to you Our verses, purifies you, teaches you the book and wisdom, and teaches you what you do not know." (Al-Baqarah, 2/151)

What is meant by wisdom in this verse is the *ledunnî* knowledge, that is, the Hidden Knowledges. The subject of Sufism is these hidden knowledges:

“He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and to whom wisdom is given, much good has been given, and none but the superior intellects understand it.” (Al-Baqarah, 2/269)

The training to be given to teach this knowledge is done by a perfect Murshid. In this Sufi education, the guide is not worshipped. Everyone involved in this business knows that worship is only done to Allah Almighty. Guides are the means for Sufi education and teaching. The perfect guide has learned these secret sciences from other guides before and has been assigned by Allah to teach them to others. Everything here happens with Allah's permission and will. Guides are not worshipped here. The real God is Allah and this is known by everyone involved in this business. However, today, some people are declaring Sufism as polytheism in order to denigrate it and are trying to mislead people with unrealistic statements. Those who do these are actually unaware of the spiritual side of Islam. They are doing injustice by denigrating a world they do not know and have not experienced. It is certain that these actions will put them in a bad position in the hereafter.

For 15 centuries, Sufism has been a science that has developed and kept Islam alive. Islam has spread and been introduced to the world through people who received this spiritual education. People like Ibn Arabi, Rumi, Yunus Emre, Ahmet Yesevi, Imam Rabbani are people of Sufism. Many students they raised taught the religion of Islam to the world and thus the religion of Islam rose on solid foundations. Those who do not like the rise of the religion of Islam and try to prevent it think that they will prevent the rise of Islam by attacking Sufism, which is the source of the rise of Islam. However, they are deceived. Because Allah Almighty will again raise His religion with the work of Muslims who are people of Sufism and in the future, the religion of Islam will once again dominate the world. Examples of this have been seen many times in history. Back then, the enemies of the religion of Islam made many obstacles but were not successful. Today, these people will not be successful in the same way and the religion of Islam will prevail again with the permission of Allah:

“Do not relax, do not be sad. If you are true believers, you are surely the superior.” (Al-i Imran, 3/139)

Being a member of a tariqah is not polytheism

The word “tariq” means path. “tariqah” means the paths that must be followed in order to approach Allah Almighty and gain His pleasure. The paths that reach Allah are as numerous as breaths and all of them are merely means. The essence of the tariqah is to cut off the human soul’s interest from the external world through training and guidance, and thus to reach God. Tariqahs that are means of reaching Allah have been organized in society to provide Sufi education. The number of small and large tariqahs known to date is around two hundred. The most famous of these are tariqahs such as Naqshbandi, Mevlevi, Bektashi. The difference between tariqahs is in their attire, dhikr styles, and views on Sufi education.

The chain of orders (tariqah) ends with our Prophet (pbuh) through the four caliphs. In other words, the starting point of all orders is our Prophet (pbuh). The divine knowledge he taught was transmitted to other Muslims by the four caliphs. With this transmission, orders were formed.

A person who wishes to enter any Order is called a talib, and the person who enters is called a murid. A murid is someone who surrenders his partial will to the universal will. A sheikh is a real master who directs those who follow him to that goal. The goal is to reach to Allah, to surrender to Him and to gain His consent. The sheikh is a means that serves to direct the disciple towards this goal. In order for the disciple to reach Allah, he must first turn away from everything else and turn only to Him. A guide is needed for this process to be fully realized. Here, there is no question of the disciple worshipping the guide. The sheikh, who is the guide, takes his disciple on the path called seyr ü sülûk in order to ensure his spiritual elevation. He helps his disciple to discipline his soul and helps him to reach perfection on this journey with dhikr and conversations. For this reason, being a member of a tariqah is not polytheism. Because here, neither the sheikh is prostrated to, nor is the sheikh worshipped, nor is partners associated with Allah. On the contrary, it is a feature that helps to reach Allah.

The religion of Islam has been spread for a thousand years in Anatolia and Rumelia through tariqahs. For this reason, religious orders are important social institutions of Islam. Although some fraudulent sheikhs and guides are encountered today, society should eliminate them and work for the

development of real religious orders. A society can only find peace and comfort if it lives the true religion of Islam. Otherwise, it cannot get rid of unrest and troubles.

Those who try to portray religious orders as polytheism and harmful social institutions are either ignorant people on this issue or are deliberately trying to prevent the spread and deepening of the religion of Islam. Muslims should be alert against these people and not be deceived by their distortion of the religion of Islam.

Asking for prayers from saints is not polytheism

Saints are friends of Allah. Allah Almighty is pleased with them and has placed them in a beautiful position. There are still living saints and there are deceased and gone to the hereafter. Since these people are in the position of Allah's approval, it is highly probable that their prayers will be accepted by Allah. Therefore, there is no harm in a person asking a friend of Allah to pray to Allah for a need of his. This is not polytheism. The saint, who is a friend of Allah, prays for the person who asks for prayers, if he wishes or not. This is his own business. If he prays, the place where this prayer will be accepted is Allah Almighty Himself. If Allah wishes, He accepts this prayer, if not, He does not. This fact is evaluated in this way by all Muslims.

Today, in social life, people use influential and respected people as intermediaries to get their work done. Asking for prayers from saints is similar to this. Since saints are beloved people in the sight of Allah, it is hoped that their prayers will be accepted. Therefore, there is no harm in Muslims asking for prayers from each other and from the friends of Allah with this thought. In the Age of Bliss, people also came to our Prophet (pbuh) and asked for prayers for some of their troubles. The Messenger of Allah prayed to Allah for most of them in any way they wanted. In fact, in some verses, the Messenger of Allah is commanded to ask for forgiveness for Muslims:

“O Muhammad! Know that there is no God but Allah. Ask forgiveness of Allah for your own sins and for the believing men and women...” (Muhammad, 47/19)

In the face of these facts, claiming that asking for prayers from saints is polytheism is either ignorant behavior or a deliberate attempt to alienate people

from Islam. Muslims should not believe in these thoughts. They should continue their Islamic lives by remaining loyal to the Quran and the Sunnah.

Visiting shrines is not polytheism

Shrines are the graves of the friends of Allah. When a person dies, his soul leaves his body and waits in the grave where the person is buried until the Day of Judgment. The souls that have earned their afterlife leave their graves and go wherever they want and can meet with other souls. They are provided with beautiful things by Allah in return for the good deeds they do. Souls see, hear and speak just like they do in the world. However, we do not see them or hear their speech. When we visit the saints in shrines, we greet them. They also receive our greetings and reciprocate. We read the Quran to their souls and present them as gifts, and they pray for us in return. We can ask these people to pray to Allah for any of our needs. This visit and request for prayer is not polytheism.

The soul in the grave can make the prayer we ask of it if it wants to, or if it doesn't, it doesn't. This is under the control of the soul there. However, if that soul prays to Allah for our needs to be met, there is a high probability that this prayer will be accepted. Because this person is someone whom Allah loves and is pleased with. Allah is the final authority. He accepts the prayer if He wants to, or if He doesn't. No one can impose any conditions or restrictions on this matter.

There is the following verse for the friends of Allah:

“Be aware that there is no fear on the friends of Allah, nor will they grieve.” (Yunus, 10/62)

Therefore, visiting the tombs of the friends of Allah, reading the Quran to them and giving them as gifts, and asking for prayers from them are behaviors that do not cause any harm in terms of Islam. They are also an act that Allah approves of. By visiting shrines, people also earn rewards. The reason why some people oppose these actions is either because they are ignorant and unaware of what we have explained above, or they are trying to distance Muslims from this spiritual door.

Believing that Hazrat Khidr is alive is not polytheism

Hazrat Khidr is alive today. His existence is confirmed by Islamic Sufis. Many Sufis have met with him today and in the past. It is not obligatory for everyone to believe that Hazrat Khidr is alive. However, believing that he is alive is not polytheism. Muslims believe the words of true Sufis such as Ibn Arabi and Rumi. These people narrate in their books that Hazrat Khidr is alive. Therefore, Muslims accept that Hazrat Khidr is alive, that he helps Muslims in difficult situations and teaches knowledge. According to what Ibn Arabi said, Hazrat Hızır drank the water of life and thus attained a long life. This is a blessing from Allah. This is not something difficult or impossible for Allah. Those who do not believe that Hazrat Hızır lived and consider believing in him as polytheism are people who cannot see the spiritual side of Islam and cannot live this spiritual life. These people ignore this spiritual world, which they cannot understand and live due to their own wrong thoughts and actions, and accuse those who believe in it of polytheism and infidelity. This is a clear slander. If these people had noticed the spiritual events taking place around them, they would have fallen face down on the ground in astonishment and fear. But unfortunately, they stand before the people of Sufism with great denial and accusation.

O Muslim brother! The world is not only what is perceived by the five senses. A person can only perceive the spiritual world through Sufism education. For this education, a person must be talented in every way and work hard. This is a difficult path, not everyone can easily achieve it. But someone who tastes this path will never give up on it again. Therefore, do not pay attention to the deceptions of those who are against spirituality and stay away from them. Perhaps one day you too will know and experience this spiritual world. Do not lose hope in Allah.

Believing in intercession is not polytheism

The event of intercession is mentioned in many verses of the Quran. For example:

“On that Day, no one will have the right to intercede except the one who has made a covenant with Allah, the Most Gracious.” (Maryam, 19/87)

“On that Day, intercession will be of no benefit except for those whom the Most Gracious has permitted and whose word He is pleased with.” (Ta-Ha, 20/109)

“And intercession in the presence of Allah will be of no benefit except for those whom He has permitted...” (Saba, 34/23)

According to these verses, on the Day of Judgement, Allah Almighty will grant the right to intercede to those whom He loves and is pleased with, especially the Prophets. Those who are granted the right to intercede will intercede for their loved ones, relatives and friends who are in hell and be a means for their salvation from hell.

The Messenger of Allah says the following in a hadith on this subject:

“Every prophet has a prayer that will be accepted. I will use this right of prayer tomorrow on the Day of Judgment by interceding for my community, who are in hell, to be saved from hell.”

It is stated in the above verses that Allah will grant permission to intercede for whomever He wishes, in addition to the prophets. It is hoped that those who will be granted permission to intercede will be people who have earned Allah’s approval, such as martyrs, saints and the truthful. Therefore, there is no problem in terms of Islam for a person to ask for intercession for him in the hereafter, especially for our Prophet (pbuh). This behavior is not polytheism. In this regard, the final place of acceptance is Allah Almighty, as in everything else. Both the person who requests intercession and the person who intercedes have this awareness. All of these are means of Allah’s mercy towards His servants. Therefore, those who want to close the door of such mercy, that is, those who want to prevent people from asking for intercession, should think about the difficult situation they will be in tomorrow in the hereafter and repent for what they have done and come to the mercy line of Islam. Otherwise, the responsibility of their behavior may lead them to an irreversible disaster tomorrow.

Reciting a Mawlid is not polytheism

A Mawlid is a poem written by Süleyman Çelebi in 1409 AD and tells the story of our Prophet (pbuh). This poem was written in Turkish. The real name of this poem written by Süleyman Çelebi is “Vesiletün Necat” (Means of Salvation).

While Süleyman Çelebi was serving as an imam at the Ulu Mosque in Bursa, a Shia cleric who came to the mosque and gave a sermon said that all prophets were of the same level, so he argued with him and said that our Prophet (pbuh) was superior to all prophets. With the spirituality of this discussion, Süleyman Çelebi wrote the poem we call "Mevlid-i Şerif". In this poem, he expressed the birth of the Messenger of Allah, his miracles and superiorities. Before and after Süleyman Çelebi, many eulogies have been written in praise of our Prophet. However, the eulogy written by Süleyman Çelebi was the most liked by the public. Muslims have made it a tradition to have Mevlid-i Şerif read on important religious days. In addition to Mevlid-i Şerif, the Quran is recited, salavat and hymns are sung and prayers are made. In this way, Muslims increase their faith by remembering Allah and His Messenger Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh). In this way, rewards are earned. These rewards are given as gifts to deceased relatives and other Muslims, thus helping them to benefit from it. There is nothing against Islam in this behavior. Therefore, there is no polytheism here.

Cooking and distributing Ashura is not polytheism

Ashura is a dessert made on the 10th day of the month of Muharram according to the Hijri calendar. According to Islamic belief, the 10th day of the month of Muharram is the day of Hz. Noah (pbuh) set foot on land after the great flood, he made a meal with the last ingredients he had. It is estimated that this meal included various grains, legumes, etc. Muslims symbolize the meal made on this day of salvation by making a dessert called Ashura on the 10th day of the month of Muharram and distributing it to people. In this way, Muslims both remember the salvation of Prophet Noah (pbuh) and his companions and earn rewards by offering each other Ashura. Because offering food is a praiseworthy behavior in Islam.

There is no polytheism in this behavior. Because no partners are associated with Allah in this action. Cooking and distributing Ashura may not have been done during the lifetime of our Prophet (pbuh). Because at that time, poverty was prevalent, at least to some extent. However, later on, Muslims became wealthy and this wealth was reflected in their meals and offerings. Muslims have established some customs to remember events they care about. Cooking and distributing Ashura should also be understood in this context. There is no

thought or action contrary to Islam in this behavior. Therefore, polytheism cannot be mentioned here.

Conclusion

Polytheism is an important issue in the religion of Islam. Muslims need to know well what is polytheism and what is not. In our society, there are constant publications on the subject of polytheism, with the aim of confusing people's minds. Those who are not fully versed in the subject may be influenced by these publications and go astray. For this reason, the subject of polytheism needs to be thoroughly examined by every Muslim.

In this article, we have explained what is and is not polytheism, in line with al-Sunnah. We recommend that our Muslim brothers carefully examine this article. We pray and implore Allah Almighty to save Muslims from the swamp of polytheism.

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