

KHUTBA

Friday 17.02.12

English

Good intentions

A Muslim believes in the great importance of intention and its implication as regards his deeds, both for this world and the hereafter. Due to it, the deed is strengthened or weakened. Depending on the intention, the deed is either valid or void. This belief of the Muslim- concerning the necessity of intention for every deed and the obligation to make the intention proper- is based first of all on Allah's words: ***"And they were commanded not but that they should worship Allah and worship none but him alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to him)"*** (98:5)

This belief is also based on Allah's messenger's word: ***"Verily, all actions are but driven by intention and for everyone is what he intended."***

Allah's messenger also said: ***"Certainly, Allah does not look at your appearance or wealth. But he only looks at your hearts and deeds."*** (Bukhari and Muslim)

Looking at the hearts means looking at the intention, for it is the intention that is the driving and motivating force behind the deed. Allah's messenger also said: ***"He, who seriously considered doing a good deed but did not do it, will have one good deed recorded for him."*** (Muslim)

Just seriously considering a good deed is a good deed itself by which one earns reward. Allah's messenger also said: ***"There are four types of people: One is a man whom Allah has given knowledge and wealth. He behaves with his wealth based on his knowledge. Another person says; 'if Allah had given me similar to what he gave him, I would have acted in the same fashion.' The reward for both of them will be the same. A third person is one, whom Allah gives wealth but he does not give knowledge. Therefore, he spent his money according to his desire. Another man says; 'if Allah had given me what he gave him, I would have acted in the same manner.' These two will have the same burden upon them."*** (Ibn Majah)

The one who has a pious intention is rewarded for a good deed and the one who has an evil intention will bear its burden just like the one who did an impious deed. All of that is due to intention alone. At the battle of Tabuk, Allah's messenger said: ***"There are people with whom you do not travel any distance, nor do you spend anything, nor do you pass any valley but they are with you in that matter, while they remain in al-Madinah."*** The people said, "How is that?" he said: ***"They have been restrained due to some excuse, but they are with us because of the good intention."*** (Bukhari)

Good intention is what makes the non-combatant equal in reward to the combatant. It is what makes the non-mujahid receive a reward like that of a mujahid. Allah's messenger has also said: ***"If two Muslims meet each other with their swords, then both the killer and the killed will be in the hell-fire."*** Someone said, "O Allah's messenger, that is the case for the killer but why should that be the case for the killed?" He answered: ***"Because he wanted to kill his companion."*** (Bukhari and Muslim)

The impious intention and evil desire have made both fighters equal in deserving the hell-fire. If

the person killed did not have that evil intention. He would have been one of the inhabitants of paradise.

In another hadith, Allah's messenger states: **"The one who marries based on a dower that he has no intention of paying is, in fact, a fornicator. And one, who takes a loan that he has no intention of repaying, is, in fact, a thief."** (Ahmad)

Therefore, an evil intention can transform a permissible deed into a forbidden one. It can also change a deed that is free from any harm into a harmful deed.

All of the above emphasize what a Muslim believes about the seriousness of intention and its gravity. Therefore, he bases all of his deeds upon a pious intention. He also strives his best not to perform any deed without an intention or with an impure intention. The intention is the soul of the deed and its value. The deed is sound if the intention is sound and the deed is wicked if the intention is wicked. The one who performs deeds without intention is done for show.

Furthermore a Muslim believes that intention is an essential component of deeds and a condition for the validity of the deed. He also knows that the intention is not simply the statement of the tongue, "O Allah, I intend such and such..." nor is it simply a thought in the mind. Instead, it is the driving force in the heart towards a deed in accord with a sound goal of bringing about also the will that directs a person to perform a deed for the sake of Allah and to fulfill His commands.

A Muslim therefore, also believes that a permissible act may become an act of obedience, worthy of reward and recompense. At the same time, an act of obedience, if it is void of a pious intention, becomes an act of disobedience worthy of punishment and burden. He also does not believe that an act of disobedience can be changed into an act of obedience simply due to a good intention.

For example, the one who backbites a person just to make another person feel better has disobeyed Allah and has committed a sin. His "good intention" will not benefit him at all before Allah. Similarly, the one who builds a mosque with money from prohibited sources will not be rewarded. One who attends singing and dancing parties or who purchases raffle tickets to support good purposes or for the sake of jihad, is a sinner and will bear the burden of his sin, instead of being rewarded for what he has done. Similarly, anyone who builds a dome over the grave of a pious person, slaughters an animal on his behalf or makes an oath on his behalf, all in the name of having love for the pious people, is disobeying Allah and earning a sin for what he has done. This is done even if, in his eyes, he had a pious intention. A deed is not transformed by a pious intention into an act of obedience unless it was something permissible in the shariah in the first place. As for a forbidden act, it never becomes an act of obedience under any circumstances whatsoever.