

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ، قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى قَالَ: مَنْ عَادَى لِي وَلِيًّا فَقَدْ آذَنْتُهُ بِالْحَرْبِ، وَمَاتَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي بِشَيْءٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا افْتَرَضْتُهُ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَا يَزَالُ عَبْدِي يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيَّ بِالنَّوَافِلِ حَتَّى أُحِبَّهُ، فَإِذَا أَحْبَبْتُهُ كُنْتُ سَمْعَهُ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ بِهِ، وَبَصَرَهُ الَّذِي يُبْصِرُ بِهِ، وَيَدَهُ الَّتِي يَبْطِشُ بِهَا، وَرِجْلَهُ الَّتِي يَمْشِي بِهَا، وَلَئِنْ سَأَلَنِي لِأَعْطَيْتَهُ، وَلَئِنْ اسْتَعَاذَنِي لِأُعِيذَنَّهُ - رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ.

Abu Hurairah, (رضي الله عنه), reported that the Messenger of Allah, (ﷺ), said: "Allah the Almighty has said: 'Whosoever acts with enmity towards a closer servant of Mine (wali), I will indeed declare war against him. Nothing endears My servant to Me than doing of what I have made obligatory upon him to do. And My servant continues to draw nearer to Me with supererogatory (nawafil) prayers so that I shall love him. When I love him, I shall be his hearing with which he shall hear, his sight with which he shall see, his hands with which he shall hold, and his feet with which he shall walk. And if he asks (something) of Me, I shall surely give it to him, and if he takes refuge in Me, I shall certainly grant him it.'" [Al-Bukhari]

Background

The translation of the term wali that is mentioned in the hadith is a closer servant (awliya') of Allah or a believer rather than a closer friend. There are many verses in the Qur'an that talk about the concept of wilayah. These verses talk about the qualities or attributes of awliya' and their status in the sight of Allah. In this hadith Allah mentions the status of the wali even before He talks about His attributes. This status is mentioned in the beginning (i.e. Allah will declare war against whoever acts with enmity towards one of His closer servants) and in the end (i.e. Allah will answer their du'a and will give them refuge). This shows the status of awliya' in the sight of Allah. In the middle of the hadith, Allah tells us the qualities of His closer servants.

The hadith also tells us that Allah loves those who are the closer servants to Allah. This is a natural result of what they do. Allah tells us about their actions upon which they deserved to be loved by Allah. We will see that there are two levels of servants of Allah: The first level is those who fulfill the obligations and avoid the prohibitions (muharramat). The second level is those who not only do this but also perform the preferable acts (nawafil).

The concept of wilayah (awliya' Allah) is based on the verses of the Qur'an and this hadith. In the Qur'an there are three verses in Surah Yunus - Ayah 62, 63 and 64.

No doubt verily the awliya' of Allah (the closer servants of Allah) no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve. Those who believed and used to fear Allah much, for them are the glad tidings in this life and the Hereafter.

Based on these three verses and this Hadith Qudsi, we can say that the concept of wilayah comprises of the following:

1. The love of Allah
2. Fearing of Allah
3. Belief or faith in Allah and his Messengers
4. Devotion, honesty, and sincerity
5. Obedience to Allah and following His instructions - this include performing good deeds. This motif of this obedience is based on fear of Allah, repenting to Allah and submission to His will.

The origin of wilayah is closeness to Allah and the enmity is being far away from the path of Allah. Based on this, the awliya' of Allah are those who are obedient and perform the good deeds which make them

closer to Allah. The enemies of Allah, on the other hand, are those who are evil doers. Their ill deeds distance themselves away from Allah and this will make them far from Allah's blessing, support, and love.

Lessons

In the first portion of the hadith ("Nothing endears My servant to Me than doing of what I have made obligatory upon him to do. And My servant continues to draw nearer to Me with supererogatory (nawafil) prayers so that I shall love him."), Allah classifies His servants into two categories:

1. The first category are those who get closer to Allah by fulfilling the obligations and avoiding the prohibitions. This is a moderate level that has been described in the Qur'an as *ashab alyameen*. This is the minimum level of *wilayah*. In other words, *wilayah* is achieved just by fulfilling the obligations and avoiding the prohibitions. This level of *wilayah* is expected from all believers.
2. The second category of people are those who are closer to Allah by being competent (*al-sabiqeen*) in their worship and effort and strive to be close to Allah. This category of people are not satisfied only of performing the obligations and avoiding the prohibitions but they go further by performing the preferable acts. They also avoid the non-preferable acts. Consequently, they will reach the degree of *wara'* and *wilayah* that will make Allah love them. Allah mentions this explicitly and that His love will be granted for these competent people.

Some of the early people (*salaf*) used to say that it is not a big matter whether you love; the biggest matter is to be loved by Allah. If you are loved by Allah, then you are granted with His mercy and blessings. You are going to be granted with His support and guidance.

The Prophet, (ﷺ), used to say the following in his *du'a*: "O Allah I ask You that You love me and the love of those who love You and to enable me also to love every act and deed that may bring me closer to You". That is the reason why some of the early scholars say that the actions and the worship that are based on the love of Allah will continue and never be depressed or frustrated. Some others say that the one who loves Allah will not get fed up or bored of getting closer to Allah. He never feels that he is bored of doing good deeds and acts that will get him closer to Allah. Other scholars say that for the one who loves Allah, his heart is purified and he always remembers Allah. He always seeks and strives to do good deeds and acts that will get him closer to Allah. He does all of this with pleasure.

The early scholars also say that the one who loves Allah should obey Him, otherwise he is only claiming to love Allah. Scholars say that among the preferable acts (*nawafil*) that make a person become closer to Allah, is the *nawafil al-salawat* (the preferable prayers that the Prophet, (ﷺ), used to pray every day). Another thing is the recitation of the Qur'an and listening to it with full attention and understanding. Also part of the preferable acts is the remembrance of Allah where what the tongue says matches with what the heart believes, and the love of other good Muslims who are closer to Allah.

The second portion of this hadith ("When I love him, I shall be his hearing with which he shall hear, his sight with which he shall see, his hands with which he shall hold, and his feet with which he shall walk.") implies that, as Ibn Rajab says, whoever strives, struggles and makes the effort to get closer to Allah by doing the obligations and performing the preferable acts, Allah will get him closer to him, support him, and take him from one level into another until this servant of Allah reaches the degree of *Ihsan* where this believer will be able to practice *muraqabah*. That is he worships Allah as if he sees Him, and his heart will be full with love of Allah.

Not only will Allah grant him love of Allah but he will also be helped to glorify Allah and granted with satisfaction. This will be strengthened by performing the preferable acts until the heart is full of these acts where nothing else will enslave or capture the heart. The heart is fully devoted to Allah. When that status is reached by the believer, the limbs of that servant will act only in accordance to what Allah loves. Then he will be seeing, hearing, and doing what Allah sees, hears and does. He will be walking towards what Allah wants and likes. The early salaf say that he cannot even commit a sin. Ibn Rajab quotes Ali who said that they used to believe that Omar's Satan was so frustrated to do any sin or disobedience. This is one of the secrets or the real fruits of tawhid. This is because "La ilaha illa Allah" means that we should only worship, glorify, obey, and love Allah and fear Him the most. When this realisation of tawhid is achieved, then he says the heart will have no place for anything that may displease Allah. What will be in the heart is only what Allah loves. In this case, that person will never commit a sin or any kind of disobedience. Committing sins takes place only if the person loves what Allah hates or that person hates what Allah loves. It also takes place when self interest is given a priority and dominance over the love of Allah. The result will be that the obligations of the tawhid will not be complete. The person will be led to delay obligations or to commit sins.

The third portion of this hadith ("And if he asks (something) of Me, I shall surely give it to him, and if he takes refuge in Me, I shall certainly grant him it.") Implies that the closer servant of Allah has a special status in the sight of Allah. This special status will lead to that whatever he asks of Allah, Allah will give him and his du'a will be attended to. If he seeks refuge from anything, he will be given that.

In Sunan Al-Imam Al-Nisa'ei, there is one chapter on iste'azeh. There are many hadiths in this chapter that tell us the sayings that the Prophet, (ﷺ), used to say to seek refuge of Allah to be saved from things such as poverty, ignorance, the turmoil of the grave, sadness and depression of this life, and various diseases. The closer servant of Allah is granted to be saved from the above mentioned things and many others. As Muslims we have to realise the importance of this portion of the hadith especially for those who are hearing the hadith for the first time. It is better that we learn from the Prophet, sallallahu 'alayhi wasallam, what to seek refuge of Allah from. We should try to memorise some hadiths which are in the form of du'a. In that way we will be granted the love of Allah and we will be given the status of awliya'. Consequently, we will be granted with the bounty that whatever we ask for, Allah will give us. Moreover, we will be saved from the harms that are mentioned above.

The last thing that we need to point out is the misconception of wilayah. After the early centuries of Islam, this concept has been misunderstood to the extent that there came a time when the attributes of the wali is not what is mentioned in the Qur'an and hadith. It is actually by claims. We look at the person and his attitude and worship of Allah and we are shocked to see a big difference. We are surprised to see that the actions do not match with the Islamic teachings. How, then, can this person be a wali? He is not a closer servant of Allah. The real closer servant of Allah will not abuse wilayah and use it for promotion because it is not what he claims but it is in the heart and love of Allah. This should be corrected because until today some Muslims are still confused about wilayah. Imam Shatibi sets a number of criteria for wilayah or karamah because they are granted only if the person is close to Allah. Awliya'u Allah are shy to claim that they are closer to Allah because this contradicts with the idea of ikhlas (sincerity).

Conclusion

We notice that Imam Nawawi brings this hadith which states the main fundamental concepts or principles of Islam in a clear way. By studying this hadith, one comes to know what the concept of wilayah or closeness to Allah means and what he should do. We also know the status of awliya'.

This hadith is a warning to those who may harm believers in general or the closer servants of Allah in particular. Allah declares war against the one who acts with enmity towards His awliya' (closer servants). This is a message to all Muslims and people not to harm others or to be enemies with Allah by harming the believers. That is how the situation will be, if not in this life, it will be in the Hereafter. Moreover, Allah knows better what is in our favour and what is not in our favour. That's why sometimes the closer servants of Allah may ask for something and Allah does not attend to their du'a because the things they may ask for may cause them some harm . But still because of their du'a, there will be the blessings and mercy from Allah in similar situations. The blessings of du'a will be also granted in the Hereafter.