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Purity (taharah) an Essential Condition

As *Salat* means to stand before the Almighty, seeking closeness by the pious servants towards their Lord and the ascension of the believers, there are some essential conditions in it that should not be ignored or overlooked by the praying one.

One of these conditions, when the slave is being honored by being in the presence of His Master, is that he should purify himself from all sorts of filth and presents himself before His Lord with clean clothes and pure body. More importantly, he should perform either of the ritual cleanliness, viz. *Wudhu* or *Ghusl*. If neither of them is possible, then he must do *Tayammum*. And as there have been special orders from divinity for these three forms of purity, it is obligatory that we perform them by keeping all their essentialities into consideration and apart from the divine orders, we must not include anything from our will in their performance.

The Holy Prophet (‘s) says,

خُلَّتَانِ لَا أَحِبُّ أَنْ يُشَارِكَنِي فِيهِمَا أَحَدٌ: وَضُؤِي فَإِنَّهُ مِنْ صَلَاتِي، وَ صَدَقْتِي.

“There are two things for which I do not like to include anybody in their performance. *Wudhu* for it is from my prayers and my charity.”¹

Amir al Mu’minin (‘a) while performing *Wudhu*, did not permit anybody to pour water for him. Somebody questioned him regarding this, he (‘a) replied, “I do not like to include anybody in my worship (of Allah). Allah the Almighty says,

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَ لَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

'Then whosoever desires to meet his Lord, then he must act righteously and not include anybody in the worship of his Lord.' (18: 110) 2

Imam Ar-Ridha' ('a) says,

هَآ أَنَا أَتَوَضُّؤُا لِلصَّلَاةِ وَهِيَ الْعِبَادَةُ فَأَكْرَهُ أَنْ يُشَارِكُنِي فِيهَا أَحَدٌ.

“Here, I am performing Wudhu for Salat. And it is worship which I do not like to share with anybody.”³

We shall talk about worship and sincerity later. Here, we shall suffice to state that by itself, *Wudhu* is not obligatory. Therefore, if somebody performs *Wudhu* with the intention of its being obligatory, without keeping in mind any of the desired acts to be performed with it, then such a *Wudhu* is void and an innovation.

But because *Wudhu* is recommended and an act loved by Allah, therefore, if somebody performs it for gaining nearness to Allah (without the intention of any action), then such a *Wudhu* is correct. Consequently, he can perform *Salat* and all other actions of worship for which *Wudhu* is a must.

1. Khisal, p. 33

2. Wasai'l al shia, vol. 1, p. 477

3. Usul al Kafi, vol. 1, p. 21

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