

ومعنى شهادة أن محمدا رسول الله : طاعته فيما أمر ، وتصديقه فيما أخبر ، واجتناب ما عنه نهى وزجر، وأن لا يعبد الله إلا بما شرع

The meaning of the testification that 'Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah' is to obey him in whatever he commanded, to believe in the truth of whatever he informed of, and to avoid whatever he forbade and prohibited, and that Allaah is not to be worshipped except with that which He legislated.³⁸

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The testification that 'Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah' has a meaning and something which it necessitates; it is not just a mere saying to be said. So its meaning is that you acknowledge with your tongue and heart that he is the Messenger of Allaah. You say it with your tongue and you hold it as your creed and belief with your heart that he is Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu'alaihiwasallam*.

As for testifying it upon the tongue whilst denying it in the heart, then this is the way of the hypocrites just as Allaah informed us about them in His saying:

﴿ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ قَالُوا نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١﴾ اتَّخَذُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ جُنَّةً ﴿٢﴾ الْمُنَافِقُونَ: ١ - ٢ ﴾

When the hypocrites come to you (O Messenger of Allaah *sallallaahu'alaihiwasallam*), they say: 'We bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of Allaah.' Allaah knows that you are certainly His Messenger and Allaah bears witness that the hypocrites are certainly liars. They take their oaths as a cover to shield themselves. [63:1-2]

They make their oaths, meaning their testimonies, a screen to conceal them. They block and prevent people from Allaah's Path. So this shows that saying it upon the tongue is not sufficient.

Likewise believing in the heart whilst not saying it upon the tongue for one who is able to speak will also not suffice. This is because the *mushrikoon* (the people of *shirk*) used to know that he was Allaah's Messenger, however, they obstinately refused just as He the Most High said:

﴿ قَدْ نَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُ لَيَحْزَنُكَ الَّذِي يَقُولُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يَكَذِبُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَاللَّهُ يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ الْأَنْعَام: ٣٣ - ٣٤ ﴾

We certainly know that that which they say grieves you (O Messenger of Allaah *sallallaahu'alaihiwasallam*): however, they do not believe you to be a liar. But rather, the *Dhaalimoon* just outwardly reject the signs of Allaah. [6:33]

So in their hearts, they acknowledge his Messenger-ship and they know that he is indeed Allaah's Messenger. However, they were prevented with haughtiness and obstinacy from affirming his Messenger-ship (upon their tongues).

Likewise, they were prevented by envy as is the case with the Jews and the Arab *mushriks*. Aboo Jahl 'Amir bin Hishaam used to acknowledge and say: We and Banoo Haashim used to be equal in all matters. However, now they say: From us has come a Messenger and there is no Messenger from us. How could we bring out a Messenger?

So therefore, they deny his Messenger-ship out of envy towards Banoo Haashim.¹ Aboo Taa-lib said in his poem:

**And I certainly know that the religion of Muḥammad
is the best of the religions of the people.**

**If it were not for the fear of being rebuked or abused
He would have found me clearly embracing that**

So, he acknowledged in his heart the Messenger-ship of Muhammad, however zealousness for his own people from the days of ignorance prevented him. So, he did not reject the religion of 'Abdul-Muttalib which was the worship of idols. Therefore, they acknowledged his Prophet-hood in their hearts. But acknowledgement in the heart that he is the Messenger is not sufficient. Rather, it is essential that the person (also) states it with his tongue.

Then, it is not sufficient that a person states it upon his tongue and acknowledges it with his heart, rather a third matter is essential which is to follow the Messenger *sallallaahu'alaihiwasallam*. Allaah the Most High said with regard to him:

﴿ فَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴾

الأعراف: ١٥٧

So those who believe in him (Muḥammad *sallallaahu'alaihiwasallam*), honor him, aid him, and follow the light which he was sent down with, they are the successful ones. [7:157]

¹ See '*As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah*' of Ibn Hishaam 1/201 - the story of when the Quraysh listened to the recitation of the Prophet *sallallaahu'alaihiwasallam*.

Even if a person were to aid him to the extent that Aboo Taa'lib did, and defend him whilst knowing that he is Allaah's Messenger, however he does not follow him, then he will not be a Muslim unless and until he follows him.

This is why the *Shaykh* (Muhammad bin 'Abdul-Wahhaab) said: The meaning of the testification that 'Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah' is to obey him regarding whatever he commanded, to believe in his truthfulness with regard to whatever he informed of, and to avoid whatever forbade and prohibited, and that Allaah is not worshipped except with that which He legislated.

So there has to be, along with acknowledgement of his Messenger-ship outwardly, inwardly and in belief, there has to be following of him *salallahu'alaibivasallam*.

And that is summarized in these four phrases which the *Shaykh* (*rahimahullaah*) mentioned:

First: To obey him in whatever he commanded. Allaah the Majestic and Most High says:

﴿ مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ ﴾ النساء: ٨٠

Whoever obeys the Messenger has indeed obeyed Allaah. [4:80]

And He the Perfect says:

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ﴾ النساء: ٦٤

And We did not send a Messenger except that he should be obeyed by the Permission of Allaah. [4:64]

So He joined obedience to the Messenger along with obedience to Him, He the Perfect and Most High. And He joined disobedience to the Messenger to disobedience to Him:

﴿ وَمَنْ يَعِصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ، فَإِنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا ﴾ الجن: ٢٣

And whoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger, then there will be for him the Fire of Hell. They will remain forever in it. [22:23]

And He said:

﴿ وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوهُ تَهْتَدُوا ﴾ النور: ٥٤

And if you obey him, you will be rightly guided. [24:54]

And He said:

﴿وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ﴾ النور: ٥٦

And obey the Messenger so that you may receive mercy. [24:56]

So it is essential to obey him *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam*. The person who bears witness that he is the Messenger of Allaah, then it becomes binding upon him to obey him regarding whatever he commanded. This is because of His saying He the Most High:

﴿وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا﴾ الحشر: ٧

And whatever the Messenger gives you, then accept it. And whatever he forbids you from, then desist. [59:7]

And His saying:

﴿فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ﴾ النور: ٦٣

So let those who oppose his command, beware lest a trial befall upon them or a painful punishment. [24:63]

Who oppose his command: Meaning: the command of the Messenger. So therefore, it is essential to obey the Messenger *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam*.

Second: Believing in the truth of whatever he informed of because the Messenger *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam* informed of many matters of the hidden and the unseen. He informed about Allaah, the angels, and he informed about matters which are not present and matters of the future with regard to the establishment of the Hour, the signs of the Hour and Paradise and the Fire. And he informed about matters of the past with regard to the conditions of the previous nations. So it is essential to attest to the truth of whatever he informed of because it is true, there is no falsehood in it. He the Most High said:

﴿وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ﴾ النجم: ٣-٤

He does not speak from his own desires, it is just revelation sent. [53:3-4]

The Messenger *ṣallallaahu'alaibivasallam* did not speak with these reports or with these commands or prohibitions - he did not speak with anything from his own self '*alaibisalaatuwassalaam*. He only spoke through revelation from Allaah the Mighty and Majestic. So therefore, what he reported is true and whoever does not believe him with regard to which he informed of, then he is not a believer and he is not truthful in his testification that he is the Messenger of Allaah. How can a person testify that he is indeed the Messenger of Allaah and then disbelieve in what he narrates? How can he bear witness that he is Allaah's Messenger and then not obey his command?!

Third: Avoiding whatever he forbade and prohibited. Keep away from whatever the Messenger *ṣallallaahu'alaibivasallam* forbade. He forbade you from many sayings, actions, and characteristics and he *ṣallallaahu'alaibivasallam* would not forbid anything at all unless it contained harm and evil. He would not command something except something containing good and righteousness. So if the servant does not avoid that which Allaah's Messenger *ṣallallaahu'alaibivasallam* prohibited, then he is not truly bearing witness to his Messenger-ship. Rather, he is contradicting himself; how could he bear witness that he is Allaah's Messenger and then not avoid that which the Messenger *ṣallallaahu'alaibivasallam* forbade him from?

Allaah the Most High says:

﴿ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا ﴾ الحشر: ٧

And whatever the Messenger gives you, then accept it. And whatever he forbids you from, then desist. [59:7]

He, *ṣallallaahu'alaibivasallam* said:

﴿ إِذَا نَهَيْتَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ ، وَإِذَا أَمَرْتَكُمْ بِأَمْرٍ فَأَتُوا مِنْهُ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ ﴾

When I forbid you from something, then keep away from it. When I command you with a matter, then do from it what you are able to.²

So it is essential to avoid whatever he *ṣallallaahu'alaibivasallam* forbade.

Fourth: Allaah is not to be worshipped except with that which he legislated. Restrict yourself in acts of worship to that which Allaah legislated for his Messenger *ṣallallaahu'alaibivasallam*. So do not perform an act of worship which the Messenger *ṣallallaahu'alaibivasallam* did not legislate even if you are intending good and even if you are desiring reward, for this action will be a futile action because the Messenger *ṣallallaahu'alaibivasallam* did not come with it. The intention will not suffice, rather there must be following.

² Reported by Al-Bukhaaree (7288), Muslim (1337) from a *hadeeth* of Aboo Hurayrah (*radiallaahu 'anh*).

So actions of worship are *tanqeefiyyah* (depend upon the text). It is not permissible to perform acts of worship which Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam* did not legislate. Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam* said:

﴿من عمل عملا ليس عليه أمرنا فهو رد﴾

Whoever does an action which our affair is not in accordance with, then it is rejected.³

And he *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam* said:

﴿عليكم بسنتي وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين المهديين من بعدي ، تمسكوا بها وعضوا عليها بالنواجذ ، وإياكم ومحدثات الأمور ، فإن كل محدثة بدعة ، وكل بدعة ضلالة﴾

Adhere to my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the rightly-guided orthodox Caliphs who come after me. Adhere to it and cling unto it with your molar teeth. And beware of newly introduced matters, for every newly introduced matter is an innovation and every innovation is an astray.⁴

So performing an act of worship which was not legislated by Allaah's Messenger is counted as an evil innovation which is prohibited, even if so-and-so or so-and-so holds it as his saying or if it is done by so-and-so from the people because it is something outside what the Messenger *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam* came with, then it is innovation and misguidance. So therefore, Allaah may not be worshiped except with that which he legislated upon the tongue of His Messenger. And the newly-invented matters introduced in the religion and false superstitions are all false and futile actions. They will be a deficiency and a misguidance for the one who does it, even if he is intending good by it and intending to gain reward. This is since it is not the intended goals that are counted, rather what is counted is *al-ittibaa'* (the following of the Messenger), obedience and compliance. And if we were free to do whatever we wish and to perform as many acts of worship as we want, then we would have not needed the sending of the Messenger *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam*.

Rather from the Mercy of Allaah upon us is that He did not leave us to our own intellects and He did not leave us to so-and-so and so-and-so from the people because these are matters which are referred back to the legislation, to Allaah and His Messenger. And nothing from them (i.e. acts of worship) will benefit except that which conforms to that which Allaah and His Messenger legislated. So this means avoiding all of the innovations, and whoever introduces any innovation in the religion which the Messenger *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam* did not come with, then he has not truly borne witness that He is the Messenger of Allaah. He has not given the true testification because the one who testifies that he is indeed the Messenger of Allaah *sallallaahu'alaibivasallam* with a true testification will

³ Reported by Al-Bukhaaree (7350) and Muslim (1337) from the *hadeeth* of 'Aai'shah (*radiallaahu 'anha*)

⁴ Reported by Aboo Daawood (4607), At-Tirmidhee (2676), Ibn Maajah (42, 43) and Ahmad (28/373) from the *hadeeth* of 'Irbaad bin Saariyyah (*radiallaahu 'anhu*).

restrict himself to that which he legislated and he will not introduce anything from himself or follow anything which has been introduced by those who preceded him.

This is the meaning of the testification that 'Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allaah.' It is not just a few words which are said upon the tongue without adherence, without action and without restricting oneself to that which the Messenger *ṣallallaahu'alaibivasallam* came with.