49025 - What Is Tawhid Al-Rububiyyah?

the question

What is the real meaning of Tawhid al-Rububiyyah?

Summary of answer

Tawhid al-Rububiyyah means affirming that Allah is One and Unique in His actions, such as creation, sovereignty, controlling affairs, provision, giving life and death, sending down the rain, and so on. A person’s Tawhid is not complete unless he affirms that Allah is the Lord, Sovereign, Creator and Provider of all things.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What Is Tawhid Al-Rububiyyah?

Tawhid al-Rububiyyah means affirming that Allah is One and Unique in His actions, such as creation, sovereignty, controlling affairs, provision, giving life and death, sending down the rain, and so on. A person’s Tawhid is not complete unless he affirms that Allah is the Lord, Sovereign, Creator and Provider of all things, that He is the Giver of life and death, the One Who brings benefit and causes harm, the only One Who answers prayers, the One Who is in control of all things, in Whose Hand is all goodness, the One Who is able to do whatever He wills – which also includes believing in the divine will and decree (al-qadar), both good and bad.

The mushrikin among whom the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was sent did not disagree with this aspect of Tawhid , rather they affirmed it in general terms, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And indeed if you ask them: ‘Who has created the heavens and the earth?’ They will surely say: ‘The All-Mighty, the All-Knower created them’” [Al-Zukhruf 43:9]

And they affirmed that Allah is in control of all things and that in His Hand is sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. Thus it is known that affirming the Lordship of Allah is not sufficient for a person to be a true Muslim, rather he must also affirm that which is implied by that, namely the oneness of the divinity of Allah and he must devote his worship to Allah Alone.

Did anyone deny Tawhid al-Rububiyyah?

This Tawhid – i.e., Tawhid al-Rububiyyah – is not denied by any of the sons of Adam. No one says that the world has two creators who are equal. No one argued with the idea of Tawhid al-Rububiyyah except Pharaoh, who denied it out of arrogance and stubbornness and even claimed – may Allah curse him – to be the Lord. Allah says of him (interpretation of the meaning):

“Saying: ‘I am your lord, most high.” [Al-Nazi’at 79:24]

“‘I know not that you have an ilah (a god) other than me’” [Al-Qasas 28:38]

This was arrogance on his part because he knew that the Lord was someone other than him. As Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And they belied them (those signs) wrongfully and arrogantly, though their own selves were convinced thereof” [Al-Naml 27:14]

And Allah tells us of Musa when he was debating with him:

“[Musa (Moses)] said: Verily, you know that these signs have been sent down by none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth” [Al-Isra 17:102]

So he himself recognized that the only Lord is Allah.

Similarly the Magians (Zoroastrians) rejected the idea of Tawhid al-Rububiyyah when they said that the world has two creators, darkness and light. However they did not regard these two

creators as equal, rather they said that the light is better than the darkness, because it creates good, and darkness creates evil, and that which creates good is better than that which creates evil. Moreover darkness is non-existent and does not shine, whereas light exists and shines so it is more perfect in and of itself.

The fact that the mushrikin affirmed Tawhid al-Rububiyyah does not mean that they did so in a complete sense. Rather they used to affirm it in a general sense, as Allah tells us in the verses quoted above. But they had some faults in their beliefs that undermined this concept, such as attributing rain to the stars, and their belief that soothsayers and fortune tellers had knowledge of the unseen, and other forms of shirk concerning the divine Lordship. But these faults are limited compared to their incorrect beliefs with regard to the oneness of the divine nature (Tawhid al-uluhiyyah) and worshipping Allah Alone (Tawhid al-‘ibadah).

We ask Allah to make us steadfast in adhering to His religion until we meet Him.

And Allah knows best.

References:

1. Taysir al-‘Aziz al-Hamid, 33.
2. Al-Qawl al-Mufid, 1/14.