183713 - Various issues having to do with shirk, trust in Allah, and taking appropriate measures

the question

What is meant by a person seeking worldly benefit from his good deeds? For example, if a person prays for forgiveness with the intention of seeking forgiveness and attaining provision in this world, is he a mushrik? Or if he gives charity with the intention of seeking healing, is he a mushrik?
If a person wants his provision to be expanded, is he then a slave of money?
If a man says, “This is my wealth, I inherited it from my grandfathers”, is that shirk?
Is saying “Japan advanced because of hard work” shirk?
I hope that you can give a detailed answer. May Allah reward you with good.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

If a person seeks worldly benefit through his righteous deeds and the Hereafter never crosses his mind, his good deed is not valid and will not be accepted from him, unless he intends to seek thereby the Countenance of Allah.

Imam Ahmad (20715) narrated that Ubayy ibn Ka‘b (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Give this ummah the glad tidings of glory, high status, religious commitment, victory and establishment in the land. Whoever among them does a deed of the Hereafter for worldly gain will have no share of the Hereafter.” Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami‘ (2825).

But if he does a righteous deed seeking thereby the good of this world and the Hereafter, there is nothing wrong with that.

Al-Qarraafi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

With regard to combined intentions, such as one who strives to obey Allah by engaging in jihad and to acquire wealth from the booty, that does not affect him and it is not haraam for him, according to scholarly consensus, because Allah, may He be exalted, has granted him that in this act of worship.

The same applies to one who fasts in order to benefit his physical health or to rid himself of some disease that may be treated by fasting, and seeking medical benefit is his aim or part of his aim, and the fasting (as an act of worship) is part of his intention too, and he fasted with these objectives in mind; these objectives do not affect his fast; rather the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) enjoined that when he said: “O young men, whoever among you can afford it, let him get married, and whoever cannot afford it should fast, for it will be a shield for him.”

Another example is renewing one’s wudoo’ with the intention of cooling down or cleaning oneself. None of these aims include any kind of veneration of people; rather this is a combination of benefits that have nothing to do with veneration (of anything other than Allah), so they do not have any adverse effect on acts of worship.

Yes, there is no doubt that these objectives that may be mixed with worship may detract from the reward, and if the act of worship is free of these things then the reward will be greater. But to suggest that there is sin in that, and that the act of worship is invalidated thereby, is not right at all.

End quote from al-Furooq (4/429-430)

See also the answer to question no. 84018

So if a person prays for forgiveness with the intention of seeking forgiveness and seeking provision, or he gives charity with the intention of seeking healing, there is nothing wrong with that.

Secondly:

There is nothing wrong with a person seeking and wanting his provision to be expanded, because this is seeking something that is permissible. If he seeks that so that he may spend for the sake of Allah, then seeking it is mustahabb (encouraged) and prescribed. That is in contrast to the one who seeks that for the sake of accumulation and increase, and out of eagerness for worldly gain and adornment, in which case it is blameworthy to a degree commensurate with what that leads to of sin.

Al-Bukhaari (6344) and Muslim (660) narrated that Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: My mother said: O Messenger of Allah, your servant Anas, pray to Allah for him. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “O Allah, increase him in wealth and children, and bless for him whatever You give him.”

Thirdly:

If a man says, “This is my wealth, I inherited it from my grandfathers”, this is not shirk, because he has affirmed the shar‘i and qadari means by which he acquired that wealth, namely inheritance, which is something for which he will not be taken to task.

But if a person says that by way of arrogance towards people and conceit and boasting of being descended from forefathers who were wealthy and had high status, then in this case it is blameworthy and is one of the deeds of Jaahiliyyah.

Fourthly:

If someone says “Japan advanced because of hard work”, this is not shirk if he believes that this happened by the will of Allah, because that is what indeed happened, and that statement highlights the virtue of hard work and perseverance.

But if he believes that Japan achieved what it achieved by means of its people’s genius and huge efforts, without acknowledging the will of Allah, then he is a disbeliever in Allah. Undoubtedly any Muslim who says such a thing would not intend this corrupt meaning; rather he would intend the first meaning, and there is nothing wrong with that.

See also the answers to questions no. 118262, 130499 and 34817

And Allah knows best.