34634 - Can it be said of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) “Habeeb-Allaah (the Beloved of Allaah)”?

the question

Can the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) be described as “Habeeb-Allaah (the Beloved of Allaah)”?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is undoubtedly the Beloved of Allaah; he loves Allaah and Allaah loves him. But there is a better description than that, which is Khaleel-Allaah (the Close Friend of Allaah). The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was the Close Friend of Allaah, as he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Allaah has taken me as a close friend (khaleel) just as he took Ibraaheem as a close friend.” (Narrated by Muslum, 532).

Being a close friend is the most perfect form of love.

Hence whoever describes him as “habeeb” only is not giving him his full due. Close friendship (being a “khaleel”) is greater and more sublime than love. All the believers are beloved to Allaah, but the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) occupies a higher status than that, which is close friendship. Allaah took him as a close friend just as He took Ibraaheem as a close friend. Hence we say that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and the Close Friend of Allaah. This is better than saying that he is the Beloved of Allaah, because the Arabic word khillah (close friendship) implies love and more, because it is the ultimate love.

Majmoo’ Fataawa Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him), 1/319.

Shaykh al-Islam said in Majmoo’ al-Fataawa, 10/204:

The view of some people that Muhammad is the Beloved of Allaah and Ibraaheem is the Close Friend of Allaah, and their notion that love (hubb) is superior to close friendship (khillah), is a weak view, because Muhammad is also the Close Friend of Allaah (Khaleel-Allaah), as was proven in many saheeh ahaadeeth.

And Ibn al-Qayyim said in Rawdat al-Muhibbeen, 1/49:

Some of those who have no knowledge think that a “beloved (habeeb)” is superior to a “close friend (khaleel)”, so they say “Muhammad is the Beloved of Allaah and Ibraaheem is the Close Friend of Allaah.” This is false for many reasons:

For example: close friendship is specific whereas love is general. Allaah loves those who repent, and He loves those who purify themselves, and He says of His believing slaves (interpretation of the meaning):

“whom He will love and they will love Him”

[al-Maa'idah 5:54]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) stated that he had no close friend among the people of this world, but he stated that the most beloved of women to him was ‘Aa’ishah and the most beloved of men to him was her father.

And he said: “Allaah has taken me as a close friend (khaleel) just as he took Ibraaheem as a close friend.”

And he said: “If I were to have taken any of the people of this world as a close friend, I would have taken Abu Bakr as a close friend, but (between us) is the brotherhood and love of Islam.”

Note:

There is a hadeeth which appears to contradict the above statement that close friendship (khillah) is superior to love (hubb). It was narrated by al-Tirmidhi (3161) from Ibn ‘Abbaas who said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Ibraaheem was the Close Friend of Allaah and Moosa was the one with whom Allaah spoke, and ‘Eesa was a spirit and Word created by Allaah, and Adam was chosen by Allaah, but I am the Beloved of Allaah and I am not boasting…”

This hadeeth is da’eef (weak) and is not soundly narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). It was classed as da’eef by al-Albaani in Da’eef al-Tirmidhi.