



## **Readings in al-Qawaa'id al-Arba'ah (The Four Principles) : Part 6**

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From this treatise:

When you acknowledge that Allaah has created you for His worship, then know that worship is not regarded as such unless it is accompanied by tawheed, just as prayer is not regarded as prayer unless it is accompanied by purification (taharah). So when shirk enters into worship it corrupts it just like an impurity invalidates purification

## Part 5: The Third Principle

Shaikh Salih al-Fawzaan says:

### TEXT

The third principle is that the Prophet (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) encountered people differing in their worship. Amongst them were people who worshipped the angels, some who worshiped the prophets and the righteous men and others who worshipped stones, trees, the sun and the moon. The Messenger of Allaah (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) fought them and did not differentiate between them.

The proof is the saying of Allaah the Most High,

*“And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and worshipping of others along with Allaah) and all the deen is for Allaah (Alone).”* [al-Baqarah (2):193]

And the proof that sun and the moon (are worshipped) is the saying of the Most High,

*“And from among His signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate to the sun or the moon.”* [Fussilat (41):37]

And the proof that the angels (are worshipped) is the saying of the Most High,

*“Nor would he order you to take angels and Prophets for lords (gods).”* [al-Imraan (3):80]

And the proof that the prophets (are worshipped) is the saying of the Most High:

*“And when Allaah will say (on the Day of Resurrection) “O Iesa ibn Maryam did you say unto men, ‘Worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allaah.’” He will say, “Glory be to You! It was not for me to say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing You would surely have known it. You know what is in my inner-self though I do not know what is in Yours, truly You are the All-Knower of all that is hidden.”* [al-Maa'idah (5):116]

And the proof that the righteous (are worshipped) is the saying of the Most High,

*“Those whom they call upon desire (for themselves) means of access to their Lord (Allaah), as to which of them should be the nearest and they hope for His Mercy and fear His Torment.”* [al-Israa' (17):57]

And the proof that stones and trees (are worshipped) is His, the Most High's, saying,

*"Have you considered al-Laat and al-Uzza. And Manaat, the other third?" [an-Najm (53):19-20]*

And the hadeeth of Abu Waaqid al-Laythee (may Allaah be pleased with him) who said: *"We departed with the Prophet (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) to Hunain and we had recently left kufr. The mushrikeen used to have a tree which they used to devote themselves to and hang their weapons upon, they used to call it 'Dhaat Anwaat'. We passed by a tree and said, "O Messenger of Allaah, appoint for us a Dhaat Anwaat like they have a Dhaat Anwaat. He said, " Allaahu Akbar, Allaahu Akbar, Allaahu Akbar! By the One in whose Hand is my soul, these are the ways. The like of what you have said is what Bani Israaeel said to Musaa,*

*"Make for us a god as they have gods." He said, "Verily you are an ignorant people." [al-A'raaf (7):138]*

[Reported by at-Tirmidhi (2180) who said the hadeeth is Hasan Saheeh, and Ahmad (5/218), Ibn Abi Aasim in As-Sunnah (76), Ibn Hibbaan in his Saheeh (6702) and it was authenticated by Ibn Hajar in al-Isaabah (4/216).]

## **EXPLANATION**

The third principle is that the Prophet (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) was sent to a people who were mushrikeen, amongst them were people who worshipped the angels and those who worshipped the sun and the moon while others worshipped the idols, stones and trees, and some others worshipped the awliyaa and the righteous.

And from the ugliness of shirk is that its doers cannot unite upon any single thing, as opposed to the muwahhideen whose object of worship is One, He who is free from all imperfections, the Most High,

*"Are many different lords (gods) better or Allaah, the One, the Irresistible? That which you worship besides Him are names which you have named (forged)." [Yusuf (12):39-40]*

So from the negative aspects and absurdities of shirk is that its people differ in their worship. They cannot be untied under a general rule because they do not have any foundation. Rather they proceed upon their desires and the propaganda of the misguided callers, so their differences increase.

*"Allaah puts forth a similitude: a (slave) man belonging to many partners (like those who worship others along with Allaah) disputing with one another, and a (slave) man belonging entirely to one master, (like those who worship Allaah Alone). Are those two equal in comparison? All the praises and thanks be to Allaah! But most of them know not." [az-Zumar (39):29]*

So the one who worships Allaah alone is like a slave serving one master who is pleased with him, he knows his intents and wishes and he is pleased to serve him. However, the mushrik is like the one who has many masters, he doesn't know which of them to please,

each of them has his own desires and wishes and each of them wants him for himself. Due to this Allaah, the One free from all imperfections, said

*“Allaah puts forth a similitude: a (slave) man belonging to many partners (like those who worship others along with Allaah) disputing with one another.”* [az-Zumar (39):29]

Meaning he is owned by many people and he doesn't know which of them to please.

*“And a (slave) man belonging entirely to one master.”* [az-Zumar (39):29]

He has only one owner who is pleased with him. Allaah likens their example to that of a mushrik and a muwahhid.

So the mushriken differ in their worship but the Prophet (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) fought them all and did not differentiate between them. He fought the idol worshippers, the Jews, the Christian's, the Maajoos, those who worshipped the angels, the awliyaa and Saaliheen. In fact he fought all the mushriken and did not differentiate between them.

So this contains a refutation of those who say: “The one who worships an idol is not like the one who worships a righteous man or an angel. This is because the mushriken worship stones, trees and inanimate objects. As for the one who worships a righteous man or a wali of Allaah, then he is not like the one who worships an idol.”

These people intend to say that the one who worships the graves in our times has a different ruling from the one who worships an idol. So they do not declare him to be a disbeliever nor consider this action of his to be shirk and they do not permit fighting him.

So we say: “The Prophet (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) did not differentiate between them, rather he considered all of them as mushriken and permitted shedding their blood and taking their property. Then there were those who worshipped al-Maseeh, the messenger of Allaah, but despite this he (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) fought them. And the Jews worshipped Uzair, who was from their prophets or righteous men, but the Messenger of Allaah (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) fought them and did not differentiate between them. So within shirk there is no distinction between a mushrik who worships a righteous man, an idol, a stone or a tree, since shirk is the worship of other than Allaah, whatever or whoever it may be. And because of this He said,

*“Worship Allaah and join none with Him in worship”* [an-Nisaa (4):36]

And the word 'none' here is mentioned in the context of negation. It covers and includes everything that is associated along with Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, such as the angels, the prophets, the righteous, the awliyaa, stones and trees.

His saying “**The proof is the saying...**” i.e. the proof for fighting the mushriken without differentiating between them on account of their deities. The saying of the Most High, “*And fight them*” is general for all the mushriken and it does not exclude any of them. Then He said “*..until there is no more Fitnah.*” and fitnah here is shirk so the verse

means until no shirk is found, and this shirk is general whether it is shirk regarding the awliyaa, the righteous, stones, trees, the sun or the moon.

*“And all the deen is for Allaah (Alone).”* means all worship is for Allaah alone, there is no share in it for anyone, whoever it may be. So there is no difference between shirk with the awliyaa, the righteous, stones, trees or the shayateen.

His saying, **“And the proof that the sun and the moon (are worshipped) ...”** proves that there are people who prostrate to the sun and the moon. And due to this the Messenger (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) prohibited prayer at sunrise and sunset as a way of blocking the means which leads to shirk. Since there are people who prostrate to the sun at sunrise and sunset, he prohibited us from praying during these two times even if the prayer was directed towards Allaah. However, since prayer at these times resembled the action of the mushrikeen, it was prohibited as a way of blocking the means which lead to shirk. And the Messenger (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) came with the prohibition against shirk and blocking all that which leads to it.

His saying, **“And the proof that the angels...”** proves that there are people who worship the angels and the prophets and that this is shirk.

And the grave-worshippers of today say, “The one who worships the angels and the prophets is not a disbeliever.”

His saying **“And the proof that the prophets...”** contains the proof that the worship of the prophets is shirk similar to the worship of the idols.

So it contains a refutation against those grave-worshippers who make a distinction in this issue. It is a refutation against those who say shirk is the worship of idols alone. According to them the one who worships the idols is not the same as the one who worships a wali or a righteous man and they deny that all these types of shirk are the same as each other. They claim that shirk is restricted to the worship of the idols alone. And this is a clear mistake from two aspects:

The first is that in the Qur'aan, Allaah, the Mighty and Most High, censured all of the mushrikeen and commanded fighting against all of them.

The second is that the Prophet (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) did not differentiate between the worshipper of an idol and the worshipper of an angel or a righteous man.

His saying **“And the proof that the righteous...”** means the proof that there are those who worship the righteous from mankind is His, the Most High's saying,

***“Those whom they call upon desire (for themselves) means of access to their Lord (Allaah), as to which of them should be the nearest.” [al-Israa' (17):57]***

It is said that this verse was revealed regarding those who used to worship al-Maseeh, his mother and Uzair. So Allaah, the One free from all imperfections, mentioned that the Maseeh, his mother Maryam and Uzair were all slaves of Allaah, who themselves seek

nearness to Allaah and hope for His Mercy whilst fearing His Punishment. So they are slaves who depend on Allaah and are in need of Him. They supplicate to Him and seek a means of approach to Him through obedience,

*“Desire (for themselves) means of access”* [al-Israa' (17):57]

Meaning they seek nearness to Him through obedience to Him and worship of Him. And this proves that they are not deserving of worship since they are humans, dependant and poor. They supplicate to Allaah, hope for His Mercy and fear His Punishment. And whoever is like this is not deserving of being worshipped alongside Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic.

The second interpretation of this verse is that it was revealed regarding some people from the mushrikeen who used to worship a group of Jinn. Then the Jinn became Muslims but those who used to worship them did not know about their conversion to Islaam. So the Jinn began to seek nearness to Allaah through obedience and submissiveness, hoping for His Mercy and fearing His Punishment. So they are slaves dependant and poor, not deserving of worship.

Whichever of the two interpretations is the intended meaning of the verse, it proves that worshipping the righteous is not permissible whether they are from the prophets and the truthful or the awliyaa and the righteous. It is not permissible to worship them, since they are all slaves of Allaah, poor in front of Him. So how can they be worshipped alongside Allaah, the Mighty and Most High?

And the meaning of 'waseelah' here is obedience and seeking nearness [to Allaah] and the meaning in the language is something which leads to that which is desired. So that which leads to the Pleasure and the Paradise of Allaah is a waseelah to Him. This is the legislated waseelah mentioned in His, the Most High's saying:

*“Seek the means of approach to Him”* [al-Maa'idah (5):35]

As for the deviants and the foolish, they say: “waseelah is to set up between yourself and Allaah intermediaries from the awliyaa, the righteous and the dead, in order to seek nearness to Allaah”

*“We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allaah.”* [az-Zumar (39):3]

So the meaning of waseelah according to these foolish people is that you set up intermediaries between yourself and Allaah, who introduce you to Allaah and convey your needs and inform Him about you. It is as if Allaah, the Mighty and Most High, does not know or as if He, the Mighty and Most High is stingy and does not give unless intermediaries request from Him, glorified is Allaah above that which they say. Due to this they place doubts within people and say,

“Allaah, the Mighty and Most High, says: “Those whom they call upon desire (for themselves) means of access to their Lord.” [al-Israa' (17):57]. *So this proves that taking intermediaries, from the creation, to Allaah is a legislated issue because Allaah has praised those who do it. And in another verse “O you who believe! Do your duty to Allaah*

*and fear Him. Seek the means of approach to Him, and strive hard in His Cause as much as you can.* [al-Maa'idah (5):35] ”.

They say, *“Allaah has commanded us to take a waseelah to Him and the meaning of waseelah here is intermediaries.”*

Thus they twist the word from its correct meaning. The waseelah that is legislated in the Qur'aan and Sunnah is obedience by which nearness to Allaah is sought and to draw closer to Him through His Names and Attributes, the One free from all imperfections and the Most High. As for seeking nearness to Allaah through the creation then that is the prohibited waseelah constituting shirk which the mushrikeen of old used to practice.

*“And they worship besides Allaah things that hurt them not, nor profit them, and they say: “These are our intercessors with Allaah.” ”* [Yunus (10):18]

*“And those who take Awliyaa' (protectors and helpers) besides Him (say): “We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allaah.” ”* [az-Zumar (39):3]

This is exactly the same as the shirk of the earlier and later generations even if they called it waseelah it is the same shirk (as before). It is not the waseelah which Allaah has legislated since Allaah has never made shirk a waseelah to Him rather shirk cause separation from Allaah

*“Verily, whosoever sets up partners in worship with Allaah, then Allaah has forbidden Paradise for him, and the Fire will be his abode. And for the Dhaalimun (polytheists and wrongdoers) there are no helpers.”* [al-Maa'idah (5):72]

So how can he make shirk a waseelah to Allaah, far removed is He from what they say.

It is evident from the verse [al-Israa' (17):57] that it contains proof that there are people from the mushrikeen who worship the righteous, since Allaah has clarified that and explained that those whom they worship are themselves poor slaves.

*“Those whom they call upon desire (for themselves) means of access to their Lord. ”* [al-Israa' (17):57] Meaning they seek nearness to him through obedience

*“...which of them should be the nearest...”* [al-Israa' (17):57] They compete with each other in performing worship for Allaah due to their poverty in front of Him and their need of Him.

*“They hope for His Mercy and fear His Torment.”* [al-Israa' (17):57] So whoever is like this is not deserving of being made a deity who is called upon and worshipped besides Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic.

[As for *“Have you considered al-Laat and al-Uzza. And Manaat, the other third?”* [an-Najm (53):19-20]

This verse contains a proof that amongst the mushrikeen are those who worship stones and trees.

His saying “**Have you considered...**” this is a negative question meaning inform Me, from the aspect of rejection and reprimand

**Al-Laath** with takhfeef (without a shaddah) on the taa, was the name of an idol in Taa'if in reference to a sculptured rock upon which a monument was built. It was surrounded by curtains to resemble the Ka'bah and around it was a courtyard with custodians. The people used to worship it besides Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, and it belonged to Thaqeef (a tribe) and their related tribes and they used to take pride in it.

And it is also recited **Al-Laath** with tashdeed on the taa. It is a proper noun derived from latta, yaluttu and it refers to a righteous man who used to mix gruel and feed pilgrims. After his death the people built a tomb upon his grave and they hung up curtains around it and they continued to worship it besides Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic.

As for **al-Uzza**, it was in the form of a tree in a palm growth between Makkah and Taa'if. A curtained building surrounded it and it used to have custodians. There were shayateen in it who would speak to the people and the ignorant people used to think that they were being spoken to by the tree or the building that was built upon it, although it was the shayateen who used to speak to them to divert them from the Path of Allaah. And the Quraish, the people of Makkah and those around them used to glorify it.

**Manat** was a big rock which used to be in a place near Jabal Qudayd between Makkah and Madinah. It was venerated by Khuzaa'ah, 'Aws and Khazraj. And they used to make Ihraam at it on the way to Hajj and they used to worship it besides Allaah.

These were the three major idols of the Arabs. Allaah, the Most High, said,

*“Have you considered al-Laath and al-Uzza. And Manaath..”* [an-Najm (53):19-20]

Meaning do they enrich you in any way, or benefit you, or do they create and sustain and give life and death, what do you see in them? This is from rejection and an admonition to the intelligence to return to guidance, for verily these are only rocks and trees which do not contain any benefit or harm, rather they are created.

When Allaah sent Islaam and the Messenger (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) conquered Makkah, he (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) sent al-Mughair bin Shu'bah and Abu Sufyaan bin Harb to al-Laath in Taa'if to destroy it. And he (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) sent Khalid bin Waleed to destroy al-Uzza and cut the trees and kill the female jinn who used to address the people from it and misguide them and it was eradicated until nothing remained from it - and all Praise is due to Allaah. And he (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) sent 'Ali bin Abi Taalib to Manaath to destroy it. So they could not save themselves, how could they save their people and worshippers?

*“Have you considered al-Laath and al-Uzza. And Manaath, the other third?”* [an-Najm (53):19-20]



Were they able to benefit you, and were they able to save themselves from the soldiers of Allaah and the army of the muwahhideen?

So this contains proof that there are people who worship trees and stones. Rather these three idols were the greatest of their idols and despite this Allaah wiped them out from existence yet they were not able to defend themselves or benefit their people. The Messenger of Allaah (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) fought the people but their idols were not able to save them. So this contains that which the Shaikh has used as a proof for the fact that there are people who worship stones and trees.

Subhaan Allaah! People with intelligence worshipping inanimate trees and stones which have no mind and are motionless and lifeless. Where is the intelligence of the people? Far removed is Allaah from that which they say.

From Abu Waaqid al-Laythee (may Allaah be pleased with him) – he was amongst those who accepted Islaam after during the year of Conquest, eight years after the Hijrah.

**His saying, “They used to call it Dhaat Anwaat’.**” Anwaat is the plural of hawt’ which means clinging or hanging i.e. something upon which things are hung. They used to hang their weapons on it to seek blessings from it. So some of the companions uttered this statement as they had recently accepted Islaam and they were still not fully aware of tawheed.

His saying, **“Appoint for us a Dhaat Anwaat like they have a Dhaat Anwaat.”** This is the problem of blind following and imitation. It is from the greatest of the trials and due to this the Prophet (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) was amazed and said: **“Allaahu Akbar, Allaahu Akbar, Allaahu Akbar!”** And when he (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) was amazed by something or rejected something, he would make takbeer or say ‘SubhaanAllaah’ repeatedly.

His saying, **“these are the ways ...”** means the paths which the people travel along, some of them following others. So the reason which led you to this is following the ways of those who came before you and imitation of the mushrikeen.

His saying, **“The like of what you have said is what Bani Israaeel said to Musaa, “Make for us a god as they have gods.” He said, “Verily you are an ignorant people.” [al-A’raaf (7):138] ”**

When Musaa (may Allaah’s peace and blessings be upon him) crossed the sea with Bani Israaeel and Allaah drowned their enemies in it while they were watching, they passed by some mushrikeen who used to devote themselves to their idols. So they said to Musaa (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him), *“Make for us a god as they have gods.”* He said, *“Verily you are an ignorant people.”* [al-A’raaf (7):138].

He rejected their saying and said:

*“Verily these people will be destroyed for that which they engaged in.”* [al-A’raaf (7):139] i.e. the evil and falsehood.

*"And all that they are doing is in vain."* [al-A'raaf (7):139] due to the fact that it was shirk.

*"He said, "Shall I seek for you a god other than Allaah, while He has given you superiority over the Aalameen.""* [al-A'raaf (7):140]

So Musaa rejected their saying just as our Prophet rejected the saying of these individuals. However, the people of Musaa and those with the Prophet (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) did not commit shirk. So Bani Israeel did not commit shirk when they uttered this statement because they did not carry out the act just as the Companions of the Prophet (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) did not carry it out. Rather, Allaah saved them and when their Prophet prohibited them they ceased and uttered this statement out of ignorance and not intentionally. So when they came to know that it was shirk they ceased and they did not act upon it and if they had carried it out they would have committed shirk with Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic.

So it is evident from the verse that there are people who worship the trees since these mushrikeen had taken Dhaat Anwaat [for worship] and the Companions in whose hearts knowledge was not firmly grounded attempted to imitate them, except that Allaah saved them with His Messenger (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him).

It is also clear that there are people who seek blessings from and devote themselves to trees. The meaning of devotion ('akoof) is to stay at a place for a time period to seek nearness to something.

So this indicates great principles:

**The first:** the danger of being ignorant about tawheed. For the one who is ignorant about tawheed is likely to fall into shirk without even knowing. So due to this point it is obligatory to gain knowledge of tawheed and to learn what opposes it from shirk, until a person is upon clear insight (baseerah) so that he is not destroyed by his ignorance, especially when he sees someone doing an action (of shirk) and regards it to be the truth due to his ignorance. So the hadeeth contains a great warning about the danger of ignorance especially in matters of aqeedah.

**The second:** the hadeeth shows the danger of resembling the mushrikeen and the fact that it leads to shirk. He (may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon him) said, *"Whoever imitates a people is one of them."* [Abu Dawood (4031), Ahmad (2/50), Shaikh-ul-Islam said that the chain is good in Iqtidaa as-Siraat al-Mustaqeem (1/236-239)]. So it is not permissible to resemble the mushrikeen.

The third: that seeking blessings through stones, trees and buildings is shirk even if it is given another name. This is because it is seeking blessings from other than Allaah such as stones, trees, graves and tombs and this is shirk even if it is given a label other than shirk.