

Permissibility of Fatiha Teeja Daswan and Chaliswan

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The reward (Thawab) of physical and financial good deeds is conveyed and received in favour of the other Muslim and it is permissible, in support of which there are many proofs provided by the verses of the Holy Qur'an, AHadith of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and the sayings (statements) of the religious scholars. The Holy Qur'an has stressed upon Muslims to pray for the welfare of other Muslims as brothers and well wishers in the Islamic fraternity; funeral prayer of deceased Muslim is a glaring example in this behalf. In the Mishkaat, Babul Fitaa, Babul Malaahim, Chapter Two, there is a saying of Hadrat Abu Huraira:

يضمن لي منكم أن أصلي في مسجد العشاء يعني بالأيلة ركعتين أو أربعة ، يقوس هذه عن أبي هريرة

Is there any of you who will undertake to pray two or four rak'ahs on my behalf in the mosque of al-Ashshar, stating, "they are on behalf of Abu Hurayrah"

Sunan Abi Dawood, Kitab al-Malaahim, Vol 2, Page 244, Hadith 3754

Shau'ab al-Iman lil Bayhaqi, Bab al Fadail al-Hajj wa al-Umrah, Vol. 9, Page 152, Hadith 3960

From the above narration three clear problems and their solutions can be deduced namely:

To offer physical act of worship (Namaz) with the intention of conveying the thawab of that Namaz to any other person is permissible.

To utter by the tongue praying Almighty Allah to convey the thawab to so and so (by Name) is much better than simple intention.

To offer the Namaz in the Masjid of some righteous saintly person with the intention of receiving more thawab is also permissible.

Fatiha, Teeja (Fatiha made on the 3rd day after a person's death), Daswaan (the 10th day after) and Chaliswaan (on the 40th day after) etc. pertain to the exclusive category of Eesal-e-Thawab and not for receiving any benefit for one's own self! On these occasions Fatiha (recitation of Qur'an a kind of physical deed of goodness) and Sadqah (a mode of financial involvement) are done mainly, rather exclusively for conveying the reward (Eesal-e-Sawab), in favour of the deceased persons whether near and dear ones or some spiritual dignitaries (Awliyal Allah) who are in themselves the fountain heads of blessing and beneficence for their devotees.

In Tafsir Ruh al-Bayan, it is said while commenting on the verse 155 of Surah An'aam:

و عن حميد الاعرج قال من قرء القرآن و ختمه ثم دعا امن علي دعائه اربعة الاف ملك ثم لايزالون يدعون له و يستغفرون و يصلون عليه الي المساء او الي الصباح

It is reported from Hadrat Aa'raj that the person who completes the recitation of the Holy Qur'an from beginning (at a stretch or with intermittent intervals) then prays for its acceptance along with the fulfillment of his desires in the Presence of Almighty Allah, on that occasion four thousand angels say Aameen and they (the angels) remain engaged in the prayer (Dua) for the betterment and forgiveness of that person from morning to evening or from evening to morning. [Tafsir Rooh al-Bayan, Vol. 3, Page 156/157, Under Verse 155 of Surah al-An'aam]

This very subject has also been mentioned in the book of Imam Nawawi's Kitab al Azkaar, Chapter relating to the Tilawat (recitation of the Holy Quran).

It is evident from the above presented reference that the prayer begged from Almighty Allah on the conclusion of the Completion of recitation of the Qur'an (known as Khatm-e-Quran), is granted by Almighty Allah. The deed of Eesal-e-Sawab is also a dua (invocation) in the Presence of Almighty Allah. This means that if the Eesal-e-Sawab is done when the Tilawat of the Quran has been done in full, it shall be most beneficial both for the person for whom the Eesal-e-Sawab is intended and the person or persons who help completing the reciting of the Quran for that purpose.

In the book Ash'atul Lam'at it is said in the chapter Ziyaratil Qubur (visiting the graves),

وتصدق کرده شوداز میت بعد رفتن ادا از عالمنا بفت روز

"After the death of the deceased, the sadqah should be given for seven days". [Ashiat al-Lam'at, Vol. 1, Page 716]

At another place in the some book it is said,

وبعض روایات آمده است که روح میت مے آید خانه خورا شب جمعہ پس نظر می کند کہ تصدق کنند از دے یا نہ

"The soul of the deceased visits its home in the night of Friday to see whether the inmates (relatives) are offering sadqah or not." [Ashiat al-Lam'at, Vol. 1, Page 716]

From this it is seen that at places where breads are distributed for seven days continuously (daily) after the demise of the relative and offer Fatihah regularly on each Thursday, the ceremony has this origin as to its admissibility.

In the book Anwar-e-Sati'ah and Hashiyah Khazanat ar-Riwayaat it is written that

Holy Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be Upon Him) offered sadqah on the third, seventh and fortieth day of the martyrdom of Sayyiduna Hamzah and repeated the same at every sixth months and at the end of the year. [Anwaar-e-Sati'ah, Page 145]

This is the origin and reality of the generally known Teeja, Chaaleewan, Shash Mahi (sixth monthly) and Barsi (yearly) Fatiha among the sunni Muslims.

Imam al-Nawawi Alaihir raHma has said:

Hadrat Anas bin Malik used to gather his family members on the occasion of Khatm al-Quran and offered Fatiha, in the Presence of Allah for the welfare of all. [Kitab al-Azkaar, Baab Tilawatil Qur'an]

Hakeem Ibn Utbah says that

Once Ibn Abi Lubabah invited a group of the people and told them that he had invited them at his home because he was completing the Khatm al-Qur'an on that day so that they might benefit thereby as the dua on that auspicious occasion receives the acceptance from the Almighty Allah. [Kitab al-Azkaar, Baab Tilawatil Qur'an]

It is also reported by Hadrat Mujahid on reliable authority that

Some righteous persons used to gather the people on the occasion of the Khatm al-Qur'an and told them that on this occasion, the Mercy (Rahmat) from Allah descends upon those present there. [Kitab al-Azkaar, Baab Tilawatil Qur'an]

This provides sanction from holding the gathering on the occasions of Teejah, and Cheh'lam (Chaliswan) is a practice among the saintly persons of the Ahlus Sunnah, which is in a sense their sunnah.

In Raddul Muhtar it is said that according to a Hadith:

من قرأ الإخلاص أحد عشر مرة ثم وهب أجرها للأموات أعطي من الأجر بعدد الأموات

If a person recites Surah Ikhlas eleven times and conveys its thawab to the deceased Muslims, then he himself shall receive the thawab equal to the total reward given to the souls of the deceased Muslims. [Raddul Muhtar, Qir'at lil Mayyit, Baab ad-Dafan, Vol. 1, Page 666]

It is said in the Shaami:

و يقرأ من القرآن مائيسرله من الفاتحة و ايه البقرة و ايه الكرسي و امن الرسوس و سورة يس و تبارك الملك و سوره التكاثر و الاخلاص اثني عشر مرة او احدي عشر او سبعا او ثلاثا ثم يقوس اللهم اوصل ثواب ماقرنناه الي فلان او اليهم

One may recite the Holy Qur'an by way of Fatiha, on any particular occasion in the following manner: In the beginning Surah Fatiha, then the first three verses of the Surah Baqrah then Ayat-ul-Kursi, the last three verses of the Surah Baqrah, then Surah Yasin, Surah Mulk, Surah Takathur and in the end Surah Ikhlas the last one recited Twelve times or Eleven times or Seven times or Three time then pray to Almighty Allah for the Eesal-e-Sawab in favour of so and so person or persons. [Raddul Muhtar, Qir'at lil Mayyit, Baab ad-Dafan, Vol. 1, Page 666]

In the above passages full procedure of the known offering of Fatiha has been outlined, which in short is that the man offering Fatiha should recite the Holy Qur'an from different places and finally pray to Almighty Allah to grant the reward of the recitation in favour of or persons concerned. Since it is sunnah to raise hand at the time of final prayer of Eesal-e-Sawab, the man should raise both palms joined together up to the shoulders. Thus the proof of the Fatiha is established.

It is said in the Fatawa Aziziyah:

طعاميكه ثواب أن نیاز حضرت امامین نمایند برآن قل و فاتحه و درود خواندن متبرک می شود و خوردن بسیار خوب است

"The Fatiha which is intended for Hadrat Imam Hasan and Hadrat Imam Hussain on the food prepared for the occasion should be offered with the recitation of the Surah Fatiha accompanied by four Quls and the Durood which is the source of blessing and eating the food prepared for the occasion is also blissful." [Fatawa Aziziyah, Page 75]

In the Fatawa-e-Azizia, at page 41 it is said:

اگر مالیدہ و شیر برائے فاتحہ بزرگے بقصد ایصال ثواب بروح ایشان پختہ بخوراند جائز است مضائقہ نیست

"If the Fatiha for the thawab of the Awliya Allah is offered on the food prepared with the milk and the bread meshed together (known as Maleedah) is also permissible and there is no harm in doing so." [Fatawa Aziziyah, Vol. 1 , Page 41]

Even the Teeja of Shah Waliullah (who the opposition accepts as their leader) took place. It is recorded in Malfoozat-e-Abdul Aziz:

روز سوم کثرت بجوم مردم آن قدر بود کہ بیرون از حساب است پشتادویک کلام الله بہ شمار آمدہ و زیادہ ہم شدہ باشد و کلمہ را حصریست

In the Teeja (3rd after the demise) of Shah Waliyullah there was a huge crowd of persons who could not be counted easily and number of the Khat'm-e-Qur'an was no less then eighty one or more and the repetition of the Kalima-e-Tayyabah was literally beyond numbers. [Malfoozat-e-Abdul Aziz, Page 80]

This justifies the ceremony of the Fatiha and Teeja and the recitation of the Holy Qur'an as much as it is convenient preferably the Khatm-e-Qur'an.

Qasim Nanotvi of Madrissa Deoband, writes in his book Tehzeer an-Naas:

جنید کے کسی مرید کا رنگ یکایک متغیر ہو گیا۔ آپ نے سبب پوچھا تو بروے مکاشفہ اس سے یہ کہا کہ اپنی ماں کو دوزخ میں دیکھتا ہوں حضرت جنید نے ایک لاکھ پانچ ہزار بار کلمہ پڑھا تھا یوں سمجھ کر بعض روایات میں اس قدر کلمہ کے ثواب پر وعدہ مغفرت ہے، آپ نے جی ہی میں اس مرید کی ماں کو بخش دیا اور اس کی اطلاع نہ دی۔ بخشتے ہی کیا دیکھتے ہیں کہ وہ جوان ہشاش بشاش ہے۔ آپ نے سبب پوچھا۔ اس نے عرض کیا کہ اپنی ماں کو جنت میں دیکھتا ہوں۔ آپ نے اس پر یہ فرمایا کہ اس جوان کے مکاشفہ کی صحت تو مجھ کو حدیث سے معلوم ہوئی۔ اور حدیث کی تصحیح اس کے مکاشفہ سے ہو گئی۔

"In a meeting, the colour of the face of one Murid of Hadrat Junaid changed suddenly (due to fear). Hadrat Junaid asked him the reason for this sudden fear, the murid explained through mukashifah that he has seen his mother in the hell. Hadrat Junaid had previously recited the Kalima one Lac and five thousand times. Believing that as he had come to know according to certain traditions (riwayat) that by reciting the Kalima for one Lac and five thousand times and the Eesal-e-Thawab thereof in

favour of certain deceased there is hope that the deceased shall be granted forgiveness by Almighty Allah, Hadrat Junaid offered the thawab of the said Kalima to the mother of his murid, secretly and silently in his heart without informing the murid. Within a few moments the murid was seen bursting with delight and happiness. On being asked the reason of this sudden change he said that he was seeing his mother joyfully admitted in the Paradise Then Hadrat Junaid explained the situation and said that he had come to know the Mukashifah correctness of the young man through the Hadith and the correctness of the Hadith was confirmed by the Mukashifa of that man." [Tehzeer al-Naas, Page 24]

From this passage it is observed that through the recitation of the Kalima Tayyaba one lac and five thousand times, and on being given reward to him, it is hoped that the deceased Muslim shall be forgiven of his short comings in the world. This tradition of Esal-e-Thawab has been accepted as the part of the Teeja.

The only aspect for consideration is whether the food should be kept in front and then offers the Fatiha, by raising hands. There are many Ahadith concerning this point. It is recorded in Mishkaat Sharif, Chapter of Miracles (Al-Mu'jizaat). It is reported by Hadrat Abu Huraira that once he brought some dates in the presence of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and requested him to pray for its abundant growth

فضمهن ثم دعا لي فيهن بالبركة

The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) mixed these dates together and prayed for increased growth of the dates (dry fruit). [Tirmidhi, Bab al-Manaqib, Vol 12, Page 327, Hadith 3774]

It is recorded in the Mishkaat, Babul Mujizat that in the Battle of Tabuk,

At one stage of the battle a shortage of food was felt in the Islamic army. The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) asked every man present there to bring whatever was with him. Every one brought whatever was with him and presented it to the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). The tablecloth was spread. The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) prayed for the blessing over the food so spread. After this he asked the men to put back the food in the utensils (pots) as a reserve for eating at the food time. [Mishkat al-Masabih, Baab al-Maujizat, Page 539]

In the same Mishkaat, it is also recorded that

On the wedding of the Holy Prophet (peace be upno him) with Hadrat Zainab, Hadrat Umm-e-Saleem prepared a small quantity of valima in celebration of the wedding. But the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) invited a large number of Companions to attend the Valima. The food was obviously short. The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) recited some prayer on the food and passed his Holy hand over the food. [Mishkat al-Masabih, Baab al-Maujizat, Page 539]

There is yet another incident of praying over the food for the blessing in the food which is recorded in the same Mishkaat and it is that

On the occasion of the battle of Trench (Ghazwa-e-Khandaq), the Companion Hadrat Jabir prepared some small quantity of food for the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). When the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) came to Hadrat Jabir, He brought some kneaded flour with intent for prayer for its sufficiency to feed the number of guest-companions whom the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) had brought with them to participate in taking the food. The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) offered Dua for the barakah in the food and mixed his blessed saliva (lu'ab) as a token of blessing. [Mishkat al-Masabih, Baab al-Maujizat, Page 539]

However, it suffices to prove that necessary stages of the Fatiha described in these lines, prove the Fatiha as a permissible offering for the purpose of Eesal-e-Sawab. It is now clear that Fatiha is the combination of the above mentioned two things namely, the recitation of the Quran and Sadqah which are obviously permissible as well as the means and medium of blessing (barkat) in their own way. Then why should the combination of these two in the offering of Fatiha be considered as Haram, when the intent has no mundane or worldly gain in the offering of Fatiha?

For obvious reasons when the ingredients of many eatables are halal, then on what grounds the combination of these ingredients be declared as unlawful or haram when the prepared combination does not produce any objectionable result which is not permissible in the laws of the shariah. The other point to observe in this regard is that the thing for which fatiha or dua for blessing is sought, should be placed before the person doing the dua. This is sunnah and the tradition of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) as we have seen that in the cases mentioned in these lines the things for which blessing was prayed were placed before the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). The funeral pier (Janaza) of the deceased is placed in front of the Imam who leads the funeral prayer and offers the Dua forgiveness in the Presence of Allah. Just in the same way the foodstuff on which blessing is sought is placed before the person offering the dua. There appears no valid justification for objecting this gesture of seeking Blessings from Almighty Allah. It is said that the Syeduna Rasoolullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam while sacrificing the animal of Qurbani prayed for the blessings in favour of the Ummah while the animal of sacrifice lay before him, he recited he following dua on that occasion:

اللهم هذا من امة محمد

O Allah! Accept this Qurbani (Sacrifice) on behalf of my Ummah. [Sunan Abi Dawood, Vol. 2, Page 30]

The Dua on the occasion of Aqiqa is also recited over the sacrificial animal that remains before the sight. Reciting Bismillah before eating the food kept in front is the command of the Shariagh. Bismillah, as we all know, is the verse of the Holy Qur'an. Fatiha for Eesal-e-Sawab or blessing is the process on a larger scale but not different in any way!

The leader of the prohibitors of the Fatiha is also in favour of the Fatiha in the current manner. Shah Waliyullah in his book Kitabul Intibah fi Salassil Auliya writes as under.

پس ده مرتبه درود خوانند ختم تمام کنند بر قدرے شیرینی فاتحہ بنام خواجگان چشت عموماً بخواند و حاجت از خدا سوال نمایند

"Then recite the Durood ten times and after completing it offer the Fatiha in the name and on behalf of the Khwajgan-e-Chisht on some sweets and then pray to Allah for His Blessing." [Kitabul Intibah fi Salassil Auliya, Page 114]

Shah Waliyullah in his other book 'Zubdatun Nasaiq' writes while replying to a question addressed to him:

وشیر برنج بر فاتحہ بزرگے بقصد ایصال ثواب بروح البیضان یزند و بخورند مضائقہ نیست و اگر فاتحہ بنام بزرگے وادہ شود اغنیا رابم خوردن جائز است

"Offer Fatiha on the food cooked with the mixture of rice and milk for the Eesal-e-Sawab of some Wali Allah and eat some of this yourself besides offering to the poor and the needy, If the Fatiha is offered in the name of some mystic great personality. Then this can be taken even by rich and the well to do persons." [Zubdat an-Nasaiq, Page 132]

Hadrat Haji Imdadullah, the Murshid of Ashraf Ali Thanwi and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi has written in his book 'Faisla Haft Mas'alah'

"No one has any objection and it is acceptable to all that the issue of Eesal-e-Thawab by itself for the blessings of the deceased persons is justifiable; however if the Fatiha or Eesal-e-Sawab is done in the name of some chosen person and restrict in the blessing thereof exclusively to that personality, believing it as Fard or Wajib, then such a course is prohibited except that this exclusive offering is on account of some specific reason without believing as Fard and Wajib, then such an offering can be allowed. This may be taken as or suggesting recitation of certain part of the Holy Qur'an in the offering of some Nawafil or other suggested prayers. The latter course has the approval and consent of the religious scholars, for example, practice of some Mashaikh in the Namaz of Tahajjud."
[Faisla Haft Mas'alah]

Then at another place he says:

"Though the intent in the heart for offering any namaz is permissible, but in order to have a kind of union between the heart and the tongue, it is advisable if the intent (Niyat) of the Namaz may also be uttered by tongue. Apropos of this holy intent in respect of the Namaz, if a few words O Allah! Grant the thawab of this Fatiha to some deceased. It should be taken as something permissible, This in other words, justifies the offering of the Fatiha or Eisale Sawab, as is usually done by devotees of the Sunnat wal Jama'at, especially some portion of the Holy Qur'an is also recited in the latter occasions in which the sawab of the Quran will be added to the offering of Fatiha. The most striking feature of this admissibility of the Nazar-o-Niyaz as the high ideals expressed by the great scholar"
[Faisla Haft Mas'alah]

Hadrat Haji Sahib continues saying:

"The Giyarhween of Ghaus Pak, Daswan, Beeswan, Chehlam, Shashmahi and Salan (The fatiha ceremonies of the day, twentieth day, fortieth day, the Sixth montly and the Annual Fatihahs), Tasha of Hadrat Shaikh Abdul Haq and Barsini of Hadrat Shah Bu Ali Qalander, the Halwa of Shab-e-Bra'at

and other modes of fatiha etc come within the purview of this general admissibility." [Faisla Haft Mas'alah]

The broad hearted words of the great Pir Sahib have settled the problem of Fatiha as a great and worth while decision in this behalf, on the moral logical, philosophical, religious, and spiritual grounds, leaving no justifiable excuse or objection in this behalf and if any such things crop up by way of objection or denial then it will not be difficult to answer them effectively!

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Extracted From

Ja Al-Haq (The Obliteration of Falsehood)

by Mufti Ahmad Yar Khan Na'eemi