

Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad bin ‘Abd al- Wahhāb and Shirk – 02

This series of articles addresses the claim of the Qubūriyyūn and Yasir Qadhi that Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb created a false conception of shirk from the Qur’ān and was not preceded by anyone in judging certain actions and forms of invocation to be shirk.

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IBN TAYMIYYAH ON THE TYPES OF DISCOURSE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE PEOPLE OF SHIRK



Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)—[while speaking about the shirk of prior nations, and how the Jinn deceive men and appear to them in the form of a prophet, or a saint, or a shaykh and then lead them towards shirk]—said:¹

And the mushriks from these (ones) sometimes say:

“We seek intercession through them”, meaning, “We request the angels and the prophets to intercede (for us), so when we come to the grave of one of them we request him to intercede for us, and when we fashion his statue...”—and statues are

¹ Majmū’ al-Fatāwā (1/157-160).

either in bodily form or as images, like the Christians depict them in their churches, they say, “...our intent behind these statues is to remember those whom they represent and their way (of piety) and we address these statues whilst our intent is to address those people so that they may intercede for us with Allāh.”

So one of them says:”O so and so honourable master” or “O my honourable master, George” or “O my honourable master, Peter” or “O my compassionate lady, Mary” or “O my honourable master al-Khalīl [Ibrāhīm]” or “Mūsā bin ‘Imrān” and other than that, “...intercede for me with your Lord.”

And sometimes they may address the dead person at his grave (saying), “Ask your Lord for me” or they may address the living person who is absent in the same way they may address him while present, alive.

And they would recite lines of poetry, one of them saying therein, “O honourable master so and so! I am in your reckoning, I am in your proximity, intercede for me with Allāh, ask Allāh for us that He helps us against our enemy, ask Allāh to remove this hardship (calamity) from us, I complain of such and such to you, so ask Allāh to remove this calamity from us.” Or one of them says, “Ask Allāh that He forgives me.”

And amongst them are those who interpret His, the Exalted’s saying:

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَأَسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ
الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا

“If only they, when they had been unjust to themselves, had come to you (O Muḥammad) and sought Allāh’s forgiveness, and the Messenger had sought forgiveness for them, indeed, they would have found Allāh all-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (4:64),

they say, “When we ask him to seek forgiveness (for us) after his death, we are in the same position as those from the

Companions who requested (his) seeking of forgiveness.”

But through this they oppose the consensus of Companions, those following them in goodness (Tābi’īn) and all of the Muslims, for one of them did not ask the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) after his death that he intercede for him and nor did he ask him (the Prophet) for anything and none of the leading Scholars of the Muslims mentioned any of this in their books. Rather it was mentioned by those who mentioned it from the later jurists and they cited narrations fabricated against Mālik (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ), their mention will come with a detailed discussion about them, if Allāh the Exalted wills.

So these types of discourse [in addressing] the angels, prophets and righteous after their death near their graves or in their absence, and addressing their statues, they are from the greatest types of shirk present with the mushriks besides the People of the Book and also amongst the innovators from the People of the Book and the Muslims who innovated (matters of) shirk and acts of worship for which Allāh, the Exalted, gave no authority.

Allāh, the Exalted, said:

أَمْرٌ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ شَرَعُوا لَهُمْ مِمَّنْ أَلَيْنَ مَا لَمْ يَأْذَنْ بِهِ اللَّهُ

“Or have they partners with Allāh, who have instituted for them a religion which Allāh has not permitted.” (42:21).

For supplicating to the angels and prophets after their death or in their absence and asking them and seeking rescue (istighāthah) through them and seeking intercession through them in this situation and setting up statues of them—with the meaning of seeking intercession through them (the deceased)—it is from the religion that Allāh did not legislate and with which He did not send any messenger and with which He did not reveal any book.

And it is not obligatory, or recommended by agreement of the Muslims. And none of the Companions or those following

them in goodness did this, and nor did any of the leading Imāms of the Muslims command it, even if that is from what is done by many of the people who have their (share) of worship and abstinence, and they bring citations and dreams with respect to it, all of this is from Shayṭān.

And amongst them is one who devises poetical compositions (comprising) supplication to the dead, seeking intercession through them and rescue from hardship (istighāthah), or he may mention that in the course of praising the prophets and righteous. All of this is not legislated, nor obligatory and nor recommended by agreement of the Muslims.

And whoever worshipped through an act of worship that is not obligatory nor recommended believing that it is obligatory or recommended then he is astray, an innovator with an evil innovation, not a good innovation, by agreement of the leading Imāms of the religion.

For Allāh is not worshipped except by what is obligatory or recommended. And many people mention benefits (positive outcomes) **about these types of shirk** and they use the angle of opinion and (personal) taste as a means of evidence (for these acts), or the angle of taqlīd (blind-following) or dreams and what is like this.

And then after a lengthy discussion explaining how these actions are unlawful (ḥarām) and an innovation (bid‘ah) in religion, and giving many illustrations of the khurāfāt (heresies and misguided practices) found with grave-worshippers, he says:²

This and its likes is what makes clear that those who invoke the Prophets and the Righteous after their death, at their graves or other than their graves, **they are from the mushriks who invoke other than Allāh**, just like those who invoke the stars,

² Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (1/178).

and those who took the Angels and Prophets as lords (arbāb).

[He mentions numerous āyāt of the Qur’ān].

And the likes of this is numerous in the Qur’ān: He prohibited that other than Allāh is invoked, neither the Angels and nor the Prophets and nor other than them, **for that is shirk or a means to shirk**, as opposed to what is requested from one of them while he is alive, of supplication and intercession, for this does not lead to that [shirk]. No one from the Prophets and Righteous was worshipped in his presence while alive, and he would prohibit the one who would have done that, as opposed to invoking them after their death, for that is a means to committing shirk through them.

NOTES AND COMMENTARY

1. The statement of Ibn Taymiyyah:

“So these types of discourse [in addressing] the angels, prophets and righteous after their death near their graves or in their absence, and addressing their statues, **they are from the greatest types of shirk present with the mushriks** besides the People of the Book **and also amongst the innovators from the People of the Book and the Muslims** who innovated (matters of) shirk and acts of worship for which Allāh, the Exalted, gave no authority.”

And also:

“This and its likes is what makes clear that those who invoke the Prophets and the Righteous after their death, at their graves or other than their graves, **they are from the mushriks who invoke other than Allāh**, just like those who invoke the stars, and those who took the Angels and Prophets as lords (arbāb).”

These are **broad generalised statements** and judgements with respect to invocations and addressing the prophets and righteous

after their death. We can call these **umbrella statements** comprising a broad general ruling.

2. Once that is clear, we should know that invocation takes on numerous forms and types:

—**a)** Invoking the dead for a need that only Allāh has power over, whether at the grave or at a distance.

—**b)** Invoking the living who is remote, far away, for a need, or for intercession.

—**c)** Asking the dead, at his grave, to make du’ā to Allāh for him.

—**d)** Asking the living who is remote, far away, to make du’ā to Allāh for him.

—**e)** Invoking Allāh by the grave, thinking it is better and more excellent and likely to be accepted.

—**f)** Invoking other than Allāh for intercession for fulfilment of needs.

—**g)** Invoking other than Allāh for intercession on the Day of Judgement.

—**h)** and more...

These types are discussed by Ibn Taymiyyah in his writings. So some of these are manifestly shirk and others are innovations, being a means to committing shirk. For example, invoking Allāh Himself by the grave, thinking it to be virtuous and commendable is a starting point which can eventually lead to shirk.

3. Upon the above, it can be found in the speech of Ibn Taymiyyah in places, the categorisation that:³

—Making istighāthah (seeking rescue) and invoking him for fulfilment of needs only Allāh has power over is manifest shirk and

³ See Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (27/72 onwards).

he includes within this those who argue that they only ask the dead so that they can intercede with Allāh for fulfilment of needs, because they are closer to Allāh, saying that these are the actions of the Pagans and the Christians and he cites the relevant verses in this respect, such as: **“We do not worship them except that they may bring us closer to Allāh.”** (39:3).

—Asking a dead person at his grave to make du‘ā to Allāh— [upon the view that the dead can hear]—is an act which is unlawful and an innovation, and is a means to shirk.

—Asking Allāh by the status, or honour of a Prophet or righteous person, this being an innovation.

But it can also be found in his speech that as well as asking him for fulfilment of a need, asking a dead person to make du‘ā “comprises shirk”⁴ and that invoking a shaykh or walī, requesting intercession from him, that it is from “the genus of the invocations of the Christians to Mary, and their priests and sages” and as “an innovation that resembles the dīn of the Pagans and Christians.”⁵

4. So what is happening here is that people like Yasir Qadhi are seeing the presence of ambiguity in selected citations from Ibn Taymiyyah and using that to confuse and deceive people, to spread the lie that Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad bin ‘Abd al-Wahhāb made a false construction of shirk from the Qur’ān, one in which he was not preceded by anyone before him, in all of Islāmic scholarship for a thousand years or more.

Whereas the reality is that what is found in the books of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb is also found in the books of Ibn Taymiyyah, and in those before Ibn Taymiyyah.

⁴ Iqtidā’ al-Şirāt al-Mustaqīm (Dār Shibīlyā,, 1419H) 2/224.

⁵ See Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā (27/87,90 onwards).

This is in addition to the deception of Yasir Qadhi in failing to give an accurate picture of **the ground realities** that have existed for centuries, before Ibn Taymiyyah, and which exist today and which were also witnessed by Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb.

There is certainly a “construction” present today in many of the lands of the Muslims that the awliyā’ in the graves affect the sustenance and security of the land and giving them attention, devotion, visitation, venerating their graves is a means by which that is secured, and upon that, they are invoked and sought for fulfilment of needs.

So we see from Yashi Qadhi two things:

—Falsifying the reality of the picture, the ground realities, in terms of what is in the hearts and minds of many people in various lands of the Muslims of “constructions”, in the context of which they do what they do at the graves, or of invocation for fulfilment of needs, actions which are plain manifest shirk, and not just unlawful and innovated.

—Creating doubts about Shaykh MuḤammad bin ‘Abd al-Wahhāb through careful use of ambiguities in some speech of Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah.

5. The reader should know and keep in mind the history of Yasir Qadhi, along the following:

—He was upon the way of the Surūriyyah during the 1990s, with Safar and Salmān and Jamāl Zarabozo.

—In the next decade, the 2000s he started making pacts and pledges with Sūfīs, and opening arms to third-wave Jahmites.

—In the next decade, the 2010s, he opened arms to the Rāfiḍah and called for an Ecumenical “Salafiyyah” and crystallised his revival of the manhaj of Ḥasan al-Bannā.

—And here, in the 2020s, we now see him entering into the realm of Tawḥīd and Shirk to do the same thing!

The Salafis have been refuting the errors and orientations of Qadhi in each of these four decades, because they saw back then, what many of the ḥizbīs, haters and opposers, may Allāh guide them, are seeing now.

Abu ‘Iyaḍ

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