

Who are they ?

WHO ARE THE AWLIYA (FRIENDS OF ALLAH) ?

Introduction

Wilayat (Sainthood) is a very special rank and position of acceptance given by Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) to His beloved servants. A Wali is a pious Muslim who attains this position of wilayat. Wilayat is deduced from the root word "Wila", which means closeness. Some attain this position due to their sincere devotion and worship. Some attain this position from birth, but ultimately, it depends on Allah's mercy and kindness. Wilayat is a shadow of Nabuwat (Prophethood). A Wali, no matter how great his status, cannot reach the status of a Prophet or a Sahaabi (companions of the Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam)). All the Awliya Allah belong to the Ahl as-Sunnah wal Jama'at, and anyone belonging to any other sect cannot be Awliya because they have beliefs contrary to the teachings of Sayyadina Rasoolallah (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam).

The following narration explains the status of the Awliya:

Hadrat Umar (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) said:

"I heard the Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam) saying that there will be certain worshippers of Allah who will not be Prophets, nor martyrs, but the Prophets and martyrs will envy them on the Day of Judgement."

The Companions then asked, "O Prophet of Allah, who are these people?"

Then the Most Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam) explained to them the qualities of the Awliya. The Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam) read to them the verse:

"Beware, verily on the friends of Allah, there is no fear, nor shall they grieve."

(Surah Yunus, Verse 62)

There are two types of Wilayat:

1) Wilayat-e-Amma (general closeness to Allah) – This is the closeness of Allah to every believer, as Allah declares in the Qur'an al-Kareem:

“We are closer to him, than his own jugular vein.”

(Surah Al-Kaaf, Verse 16)

2) Wilayat-e-Khaas (special closeness to Allah) – This closeness is exclusive to the Awliya. This is a speciality of those who have traveled on the path of Tasawwuf, and attained nearness to Allah. This is declared in a Hadith-e-Quddsi, where Allah says to the Most Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam), “Among the things that bring My servant close to Me, the ones I love best, are the things that I have made fard (compulsory). When My servant does nafil ibaadat (optional prayer), he gets very close to Me. So much so, that I love him very much. When I love Him, I become his hearing ear, seeing eye, holding hand, and walking foot. I give him whatever he wishes. When he invokes Me for help, I protect him.”

Allah’s closeness is not like material closeness that can be understood by reason, or perceived through the sense organs. It can only be comprehended through the knowledge of Ma’rifa (gnosis) bestowed by Allah upon the Awliya. From the Awliya of all the ummahs (of the previous Prophets), the greatest Awliya are from the ummah of Sayidina Rasoolallah (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi

wa Sallam). There have been Awliya Allah in every era and there will always be Awliya Allah in every era. However, their recognition may be difficult.

The Qur'an al-kareem divides those that are favoured by Allah into 4 groups:

a) The Prophets – This cycle has ended after the appearance of Sayyadina Rasoolallah (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam).

b) The Siddeeq (The Truthful) – This rank is next after the Prophets. The greatest Siddeeq was Hadrat Abu Bakr (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu). The meaning of Siddeeq is Truth. Such a person recognizes truth in all its manifestations.

c) The Shuhada (Martyrs) – One need not actually be killed in the battlefield to prove one's self as shaheed (martyr). One in this stage feels satisfied by sacrificing everything that he has for the Creator.

d) The Salih (Pious) – This is the lower grade that one can attain by devotional activities. In this stage, one cleanses himself from all spiritual impurities such as jealousy, hatred, hypocrisy etc.

From the Awliya of the ummah of Sayyadina Rasoolallah (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam), the most superior Awliya are the four Khulafa-e-Rashideen (The Righteously guided Caliphs), namely Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu), Hadrat Umar Farooq (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu), Hadrat Uthman Ghani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu), and Hadrat Ali Murtaza (Radi Allahu

ta'ala Anhu), and then all the other Sahaba. All the Sahaba were Awliya, BUT all Awliya are not Sahaaba.

Amongst the Awliya are the following groups:

At any given time, there are 4000 Awliya living on Earth. They are not recognized by the general public. In fact, amongst them, one does not know the other, and they themselves are not aware of the validity of their actions and devotion. 300 from this group are statesman, involved in the administration of this world. They control all transactions that take place. They are known as the "Akhyaar".

Amongst these 300, 40 are known as "Abdaal".

Amongst the 40, 7 are "Abraar".

Amongst this 7, 4 are "Autaad".

Amongst these 4, 3 are "Noqabah".

From these 3, 1 is the "Ghaus" or "Qutub". He is the most senior of them all, and head of the spiritual assembly.

In reference to the Abdaals, Imam At-Tabarani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) quotes a Hadith Shareef in which the Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam) declares, "There will always exist 40 persons on the Earth, each of whom is blessed like Hadrat Ebrahim (Alaihis Salaam). It rains because of their barakah. Allah appoints another when one of them dies."

In another Hadith Shareef, Abu Naeem (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) reports that the Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam) said, "There always exist 40 persons among my ummah. Their hearts are like that of Hadrat Ebrahim (Alaihis Salaam). Allah Ta'aala redeems His human servants from disasters for their sake. They are called Abdaal. They do not attain to that degree by performing salaah, fasting, or giving zakaah."

Ibn Mas'ud (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) asked, "Ya Rasoolallah (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam), by what means do they attain that degree?"

"They attain it by being generous, and by advising muslims," said the Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam).

Do remember that although all the Awliya Allah are equal as far as Wilayah is concerned, they differ as far as status is concerned.

top

THE KARAMAT OF THE AWLIYA

A supernatural act, or miracle, performed by a Wali, is known as karamat. One must understand that the performing of miracles, is not a necessary condition of sainthood. There are some people, when they read or hear about the Awliya, he/she immediately looks for miracles. They think that since they have not heard of any miracle, that person cannot be a Wali. This is totally incorrect. To deny the karaamat of a Wali is a sign of ignorance and misguidance, as this is proven in the Qur'an. The Qur'an

al-Kareem relates that karamat of Hadrat Asif (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu), who was a Wali from the ummah of Hadrat Sulayman (Alaihis Salaam). Before a blinking of an eye, Hadrat Asif (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) presented the throne of Bilqees, which was in a very distant place, before Hadrat Sulaiman (Alaihis Salaam). (Surah 27, Verse 10) Another narration is when Hadrat Zakariya (Alaihis Salaam) questioned Hadrat Bibi Maryam (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhaa), the mother of Hadrat Isa (Alaihis Salaam), about the fruit which were out of season, that he saw in her place of worship. She said that they had come from Allah.

(Surah 3, Verse 37).

The mothers of the Prophets are Waliyas.

HOW TO RECOGNISE A WALI

The method of recognizing a Wali and a non-Wali is to rectify one's heart and mind, and to adopt his company. Thereafter if you find that his company generates the thought and love of Allah in your heart, then he is a Wali. On the contrary, if the heart indulges in worldly thought, then he is not a Wali, because it is said, "The heart is a mirror of another heart".

Imam Nawawi (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu), and also Ibn Maja (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) report that when Sayyadina Rasoolallah (Salla Allahu ta'ala Alayhi wa Sallam) was asked about the characteristics of the Awliya, he declared, "Allah is remembered when they are seen."

ALLAH DECLARES WAR ON THE ENEMIES OF THE AWLIYA

In Bukhari Shareef, Hadrat Abu Huraira (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) reports the following Hadith-e-Quddsi:

The Most Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu Ta'ala Alayhi Wa Sallam) has said that Allah said, "Whoever shows enmity to a friend of mine, I shall be at war with him."

Who has the courage to be at war with Allah? Certainly, they will be destroyed! Therefore, it is important that the Awliya should be respected and honoured. Whoever disrespects, and insults the Awliya, will without a doubt, receive Allah's wrath.

Hadrat Khawaja Gharib Nawaaz Mu'inuddin Chisti (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) narrated:

“There was a man who hated the Awliya. When he died, and was placed in the grave, the people tried to turn his face toward the Qibla, but it would always turn away from that direction. The people were astonished at this action. There was a voice from nowhere announcing, ‘It would be a futile exercise to try to turn his face toward the Qibla, because he used to turn his face away at seeing the Awliya, and that he who would turn his face in disgust from My friends, I will turn My face on him. He is a condemned soul, and on the day of judgement, such people will appear with faces of donkeys.’”

top

IMPORTANCE OF LOVING THE AWLIYA

Allah revealed to Musa (Alaihis Salaam), “What actions have you done for my pleasure?” He said, “O Allah, I have prayed to you, kept fast, and paid charity.” Allah said, “Prayer is a clear proof for you, fast is a shield for you, and charity is your shade. But what have you done for me?” Hadrat Musa (Alaihis Salaam) then asked, “O Allah, show me as action which is only for

you.” Allah said, “O Musa, have you loved someone for My sake, and hated anyone for My sake?”

(Ihya al-uloom id-deen, Vol II)

From this, we can say that although we have never seen many of the great Awliya, but we only love them, because they love Allah, and Allah loves them. Therefore, we love them for the sake of Allah, and we should distance ourselves from those who dislike the friends of Allah, as we will be hating them for Allah’s sake.

Hadrat Baba Farid Ganje Shakar (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) has narrated:

“A sinful young man died in Multan. Someone asked him in a dream as to what was his condition. He replied that Allah had pardoned him. He explained that one day, when Khawaja Baha-ul-Haq Zakarriya Multani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) was walking, he had kissed his hand with utmost respect. Because of this respect, he had been pardoned.”

top

THE AWLIYA ALLAH ARE ALIVE IN THEIR GRAVES:-

Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) says in the Qur'an al-Kareem “Do not even think of those who are martyred in the way of Allah as dead, BUT THEY ARE ALIVE near their lord and given provision. They are joyous of what Allah bestowed upon them of his favour and they give good news to those who have not as yet reached them.” (Surah Al-Imraan, Verse 170).

As we have explained earlier that the Awliya are those who have attained nearness to Allah. Attaining this nearness is not easy because there are certain obstacles. One of the greatest obstacles is bringing one's carnal desires (nafs-ul-ammarah) under control. In this regard, the struggle with one's carnal soul has been regarded as a Jihad-e-Akbar (Great battle), in contrast to Jihad-e-Asghar (Smaller Battle, which is fought on the actual battlefield). This concept is derived from the popular Hadith of the Most Beloved (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam), in which he said to his companions returning from a battle:

“You have returned from a smaller battle to a greater battle.”

He was then asked by the companions, “What can be a greater battle that that we have just fought?”

He (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam), answered, "The battle against one's nafs."

Imam al-Ghazzali (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) says in Ihya al Uloom Vol. IV:

"Death cannot destroy the soul, which is the place of Allah's Ma'rifat, because it is something spiritual. Death causes the change of the condition of soul, and relieves it from the prison of its bodily cage. It does not end as Allah says

"Do not even think of those who are martyred in the way of Allah as dead, BUT THEY ARE ALIVE near their lord and given provision. They are joyous of what Allah bestowed upon them of his favour and they give good news to those who have not as yet reached them."

(Surah Al-Imraan, Verse 170)."

One should not think that this position is acquired only by those that are martyred on the battlefield, because every breath of an Arif (one who has recognized his creator) is a martyr."

From the above quotations we can deduce that if those that fight the smaller battle are alive, then surely, without any doubt, those that fight the greater battle are ALIVE!!!

Imam Abu Naeem (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) , in his book "Hilyaat-ul-Awliya", narrates from Hadrat Saeed (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) , that:

"By Allah, Hameed Taweel, and myself were burying Hadrat Thabit Nibhaani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) . As we were setting the final rocks, one rock accidentally fell into the grave. As I peeped into

the grave, I saw Hadrat Thabit Nibhaani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) was about to perform salaah, and he was imploring to Allah in the following manner:

‘O Allah! You have given certain of your creation the permission to perform their salaah within the grave. Give me also this same permission.’

It was indeed beyond the mercy of Allah to refuse him.”

Hadrat Thabit Nibhaani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) was a Taba’ee (Ones that saw the Sahaaba after the demise of the Most Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam)).

Courtesy of Sabiree.com

top

About the freinds of Allah

The Awliya-Allah

For the believers' orientation, proofs from the Qur'an al-Kareem, the hadith and other scriptural sources concerning the wonderful and decisive issue of the Saints or awliyâ' of Allah will be presented. The words walî, plural awliyâ' and walâya are all of Qur'anic origin with the root wly meaning: to be close, to be a friend, to govern. It appears in the Qur'an al-Kareem in different forms over 200 times.

For those in the community (ummah) who unwittingly deny the science of tasawwuf (spiritual excellence) or neglect the believer's inner jihâd (spiritual struggle) restrict the understanding of the 'friends of Allah' as being 'pious worshippers', which is what every believer should be. But what are their qualities and favours and what is their function in the ummah?

We feel it would be useful to draw first of all attention to the work by Michel Chodkiewicz entitled 'Seal of the Saints; Prophethood and Sainthood in the doctrine of Hadrat Ibn`Arabi,' (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu) from which we have quoted.

At first, Allah is the Lord and Protector (walî) of man; man is the one being tested as he is searching for meaning in life, for fulfillment and purpose. When the believer understands and accepts that truth, light and meaning derive from Allah and His Beloved Messenger (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam), he will turn away from the distractions of the lower world (dunyâ), the favours of other than God and will turn to Allah in everything he intends and does, because:

“He (Allah, may His Majesty be exalted) is their Friend (walî) and they are His friends (awliyâ’).”
KAM211

Allah, says in the Qur'an al-Kareem:

ALLAH is the Friend (walî) of those who believe; HE brings them out of all kinds of darkness into light... 2-257

Surely those who believed and fled (their homes , emigrated) and struggled hard in Allah's way with their property and their souls, and those who gave shelter (asylum) and helped - these are guardians , allies (awliyâ'u) of each other ...8-72

Here is protection (walâyah) only Allah's, the True One; He is best in (the giving of) reward and best in requiting.18-44

Now surely the friends (awliyâ-Allah) of Allah - they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve...10-62

There is a comment on this last mentioned Qur'anic verse in the famous Hadith (qudsi) where Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) through the mouth of His Beloved Messenger (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) states why they shall have no fear nor sorrow:

"Allah said, 'I will declare war against him who shows hostility to a pious worshipper (walî) of Mine. And the most beloved things with which My slave comes nearer to Me, is what I have enjoined (frD) upon him; and My slave keeps on coming closer to Me through performing nawâfil (praying or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) till I love him, so I become his sense of hearing with which he hears, and his sense of sight with which he sees, and his hand with which he grips, and his leg with which he walks; and if he asks Me, I will give him, and if he asks My protection (Refuge), I will protect him; (i.e. give him My Refuge) and I do not hesitate to do anything as I hesitate to take the soul of the believer, for he hates death, and I hate to disappoint him."

Narrated by Abu Huraira (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu) in Bukhari, vol8, Hadith 509

So it is clear that the awliyâ' are under the loving care and protection of Allah Almighty. They are those who are 'no longer subject to natural appetites, nor to desires of the soul.' SIA40 Freed from the entanglements of the world and their own souls they can devote themselves to their original function.

Certainly our Leader and Doctor of hearts, the Most Beloved Messenger of Allah, Sayyidunâ Muhammad (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) is not on our level or station in relation to Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) or in relation to creation. So what then is the station of the awliyâ' when we remember that every prophet is a walî, but not every walî a Prophet ? Some quotes from our upright predecessors may give an explanation:

“It has been given to the awliyâ' by Allah in advance to enjoy His dhikr and to have access to His proximity. The life of their body is that of earthly beings and the life of their spirit is that of heavenly beings.”

Abu Sa`id al-Kharrâz in Sulami's Tabaqât

Abu Nu`aym quotes this saying:

“The servants whom God loves best are the pious and the hidden. When they are away no one misses them, and when they are present they are ignored. They are the imâms of good guidance and the torches of knowledge.” Suyuti, al-Fahr al-kabir, refers it to Abu Nu`aym's Hilyat-ul awliyâ'.

Al-Qushayri defined the walî as:

“One whose obedience attains permanence without interference of sin; whom Allah Most High preserves and guards, in permanent fashion, from the failures of sin through the power of acts of obedience.”

In Ibn `Abidin, Rasa'il (2:277)

Walâya does not involve spectacular manifestations and no walî would strive for those either. Far from it - the awliyâ are concealed as described in the words of Abû Yazîd al-Bistâmî (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu) in a way that the “saint of Allah has no feature by which he is distinguished, nor any name by which he can be named.” SIA36 As 'Imâms of good guidance and the torches of knowledge' their function is very important. In this respect, Ibn`Arabi's (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu)says that walâya is 'the shadow of the prophetic function,' just as the prophetic function is 'the shadow of the divine function.'

This also means that walâya is about the appropriation of the divine character (takhalluq). This is possible because man still possesses a shadow of some of Allah's qualities, such as 'life', 'mercy', or 'knowledge'. Walî is also a shared concept as expressedly stated in Sura Al-Ma'idah, the Table Spread (5), verse 55:

Certainly, your protecting Friend () is only Allah and His Most Beloved Messenger (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow.5-55

This then is the channel of the believer to his spiritual goal and therefore the direction in which he has to turn when embarking on the greatest of travels, which is the Way towards Allah (tarîq ila - Allah).

Analysing the many stations on the Way, R. Baqlî writes about walâya:

- The start of the Way is the will [or spiritual desire, irâdah] and it is accompanied by spiritual battles.
- The middle of the Way is love [for Allah alone, mahabbah] and it is accompanied by miraculous graces (karamât).
- The end of the Way is gnosis [direct intellectual intuitive knowledge, ma`rifah] and it is accompanied by contemplation (of the divine - mushâhadât).

The above mentioned evokes the closeness or proximity between the walî and his Rabb (Lord). ("But insofar as walâya applies to Allah, it is also nus.ra, the divine Assistance from which" he benefits and which has been promised. SIA42) Also it is clear that the 'way of knowledge' is not opposed from the 'way of love', they really are merely different aspects in islamic tasawwuf, as every "walî is both a `arif (knower) and a muhibb (lover)."

Ibn al-Jawzi said:

“The Friends of Allah and the Righteous are the very purpose of all that exists (al-awliya wa al-salihun hum al-maqsud min al-kawn), they are those who learned and practiced with the reality of knowledge... Those who practice what they know, do with little in the world, seek the next world, remain ready to leave from one to the other with wakeful eyes and good provision, as opposed to those renowned purely for their knowledge.”

Ibn al-Jawzi's, Sifat al-safwa (Beirut ed. 1989/1409) p. 13, 17.

And Allah Knows Best

top

Affiliation with the Awliya:

‘Umar ibn Sa‘eed Al-Futi’

Ta‘alluq

‘Umar ibn Sa‘eed Al-Futi said:

Know that the Connection with the People of Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) and to be close to them, is to be connected with Allah al-Kareem and standing in His Presence. Because they are the Means to the Mercy of Allah in this Life and in the Here-After. And from their hands descend Blessings from the Merciful to all those who are deprived (mahrumeen) and they are the Mediators between us and Allah. And if it were not for them, nothing of this world would exist. Allah said, “Oh you who believe,

if you help Allah, Allah will help you." [47:7] And At-Tirmidhi narrated from a Hadith Qudsi, " If you Honour my Awliya, I will Honour You."

Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) says, "He who wishes for the Reward for this Life, we will provide it for him. And he who wishes for the Rewards of the Here-After, we will provide it for him." The Knowers of Allah said, "The Reward of this Life (means) the Association with the awliya. And the Reward of the Hereafter is the Association with Al-Haqq. Allah ta'ala says, "Assist one another in Righteousness and Taqwa. Don't assist one another in Sin and Enmity." [5:2] Some of the Knowers of Allah said, "To assist one another in Righteousness and Taqwa (means) Obedience to the Grand Ones amongst the Masters and the Shaykhs. And do not withhold your portions from them in assistance. And they did not assist one another in Sin, (means) being busy with this life. And with Enmity, (means) agreeing with the Desires and the Purposes of the Ego."

Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) says, "From within every group in their midst some shall refrain from going forth altogether and should devote themselves to acquiring Knowledge of the Religion" [9:122] Al-Araais said, "That is to understand the Realities of the Rulings of the Knowledge of Allah, the Way, Reality and Divine Law. And Sahl said, " The best Travel is from desire to (using) intellect, from ignorance to knowledge, from this life to the hereafter, from ability to do something to participating in it from strength and power, from following the ego to God-Consciousness, from the earth to the Heavens, from creation to Allah ta'ala. Al-Murtaash said, "Travel is of two kinds:

To learn of the Judgements of the Religion and the fundamentals of Divine Law.

To learn the proper good conduct of worship and to battle with the self.

He who returns from learning the rulings (ahkaam), invites creation to Allah. And he who returns from learning the battle with the self teaches the creation proper conduct from his example (which he learned from the Shaykhs). This kind of travel is for Allah, which entails seeing the People of Allah and by their examples and teachings learning proper good conduct (adab). For this is Allah's Blessings for everyone in every land."

It is said in reference to what Allah says, "Those who migrate or who are banished from their homes and their properties while seeking Grace from Allah...." [59:8] "It is said that they left for the sake of the Love of the Poor and to accompany and emulate them because Poverty is the Way of Truth. Did you not see that The Chosen One (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) sat with them and said, 'Our dead for your dead and our living for your living.' And when Allah says, "And incline not to those who do wrong, or the Fire will seize you," [11:113] it means to diverge from the example of those who worship for show, the ignorant ones and those who gather for the sake of evil and the love of being honoured among people and to lead others. And not to depend on your tyrannical ego that is ignorant of the rights of Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala). Al-Kashaani said, "One who does not sit with a Guide (Imam) who is a Physician (hakeem), is always in error." Hamud Al-Qasar said, "Do not sit with the People of Mischief. If you do, you will be prevented with sitting with the People of Virtue." Ja'far said, "Don't trust your ego, because it is a tyrant". And Sahl said, "Don't sit with the People of Innovation".

Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) says, "Oh you who believe, seek a Means to Allah..." [5:35] Our Shaykhs say, "Seek a means to Allah that doesn't separate from Allah so that you may reach Him And there is no Greater Means to Allah than the Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam). And there is no Greater Way to the Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) except invocation (salawat) on him (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam). What is desired in using a means (waseela) to Allah is a Perfect Shaykh. For He is the Greatest of the Ways to Allah. A person is with the one he loves and who loves a people, he is one of them. As narrated from Al-Bukhari (Radi Allahu anhu) that a man came to the Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) and asked about the Hour saying, "When is the Hour?" Muhammad said, "What have you prepared for it?" the man said, " Nothing except I love Allah and His Messenger." Muhammad (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) said, "Surely you will be with the one you loved." Anas said, "I love the Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) and Abu Bakr, and 'Umar, (may Allah be pleased with them). And I hope to be alive while they are living." Muhammad (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) said, "A man is gathered on the Day of Judgment on the Religion of his brother. So be careful for the one you befriend."

And if you know this my brother, you should not befriend any except one who raises you up to Allah and shows you the Way to Allah. And this is not to be except one who is free from everything except Allah. There is no enjoyment (for the True Believer) except in their Friendship and no happiness except in their service and their associations. So always be with them with your Heart. Happiness will reach you through their associations and you will benefit greatly from them. If you sit with those who are happy, you will be happy. And if you sit with the neglectful, being neglectful will be pleasing to you. And if you were to sit with those who Remember their Lord, it will arouse you out

from your slumber and being aware will be pleasing to you. For they are the Group in which there is no distress in sitting with them.

top

Introduction

Since the Saudi-Wahhabi regime found new wealth [Oil], it has donated unprecedented amount of financial assistance in the history of Islam to forcefully and aggressively propagate their version of Wahhabi and Taymiyya/Jawziyya/Neo-Taymiyya-Jawziyya Islam. The faith of the naive amongst the Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah is held at ransom for oil-wealth assistance.

Their propaganda machines consist of Qur'an translation publishing houses - publishing in multiple languages their 'Zahiri' interpretation, 'Wahhabi' literature publishing & translating houses, distribution centres, establishment of Mosques and Madrasah's to be served by their 'qualified' Imam's, etc. They are intolerant and extremely aggressive with the Orthodox Ahl as-Sunnah wal Jama'ah. They have initiated a Crusade of either mass conversion through the widespread distribution of Wahhabi 'allegedly' Salafi literature or to be marginalised and excommunicated from the Ummah.

Since, Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya & Ibn 'Abdul Wahhab, etc, are the principal adversaries of the Orthodoxy in Islam, the Ahl as-Sunnah Scholars are accustomed to quote the above from their own writings to corroborate and establish the Truth of the Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah; their beliefs and practices. For when the Truth is acknowledged and surfaces from the opponent it then speaks for itself.

top

Seeking help through the Awliya:

Belief of Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah regarding Seeking Help through the Awliya

'Allama Sa'eedi and 'Allama 'Abd al-Hakim Sharf Qadri write:

"It is better that help is sought directly from Allah, most High, and through the waseela of the anbiya or awliya. If an individual seeks help from the anbiya or awliya by means of achieving help from Allah, most High, the person is not committing kufr."

[Sharh Muslim, 'Allama Sa'idi, Nidaa-e-Ya Muhammad, page 30 by 'Allama Sharf Qadri]

Shaykh al-'Alawi al-Maliki, the Mufti of Makka writes:

"When we ask help from the anbiya and awliya, as a means, it is through their supplication (du'a) that they help us. Take for example the Day of Judgment when the umma will benefit from our Beloved Prophet,

Hadrat Muhammad Mustafa (May Allah bless him and grant him peace). This is called asking for help through the anbiya and awliya and likewise to ask them to make du'a for us can be called help or istishfah or tawasul.

[Ziyarat of the Grave, page 213, by the mufti of Makka, 'Allama Shaykh Muhammad al-'Alawi al-Maliki al-Makki]

The Permissibility of Seeking Help from the Pious

Ibn Taymiyya and Qadi Shawkani quote the following hadith: 'Abd Allah bin Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with Him, reported that our Beloved Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), stated:

"If you ever find yourselves stranded alone in a desolate place or jungle, then say, 'O servants of Allah! Help me, Allah have mercy on you.'"

[Al-Kalim al-Tayyib, page 69, by ibn Taymiyya, and Qadi Shawkani in Tufhat ad-Dhakireen, page 130. Ibn Sunni, Imam Bazaar, Hafidhh al Hasamim and Imam Nawawi all quote this hadith also in their various books.]

This hadith, demonstrates that one can ask help from those who one cannot see, like the angels, the friends of Allah, the jinn, and that it cannot be said that it is a wrong act. Mullah 'Ali Qari writes that our Beloved Prophet Muhammad, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), said that:

If you are in the jungle alone say, "O servants of Allah! Help me." The servants of Allah are the angels, Muslims, jinn, or 'abdal. This hadith is useful for travellers.

[Al Hirzu al-ThAmin, page 378, by Mullah 'Ali Qari]

top

The Awliya's Provision of Help beyond Human Capability

The Prophet Sulaiman, peace be upon him, asked his companions who could bring the throne of the Queen of Sheba to his court.

Allah says, describing this in the Qur'an al-Kareem:

An ifreet of the jinn said,

'I will bring it to you

before you get up from your seat.

I am strong and trustworthy enough to do it.'

He who had knowledge of the Book said,

'I will bring it to you

before your glance returns to you.'

And when he saw it standing firmly in his presence,

he said, 'This is part of my Lord's favour to me to test me

to see if I will give thanks or show ingratitude'.

[Surah Al-Naml, verse 39-40]

Hafidh Ibn Kathir writes concerning this verse that the man who brought the throne was called Asif bin Barkhiyah.

[Tafsir Ibn Kathir]

There was a companion named Salamah bin Akwa, may Allah be pleased with Him, who was injured so severely on his shin that people began to fear that he would die a martyr. Salamah, may Allah be pleased with Him, states: "I went to the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), and told him about my wound, whereupon he proceeded to blow on it three times and I was cured instantly."

[Mishkat, chapter on Virtues of Sayyid al-Mursalin]

Ibn Kathir writes: "During the khilafah of 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him, there appeared a fire in the desert. 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him, asked Tamim al-Dari, may Allah be pleased with Him, to assist him. They approached the area of the fire and Tamim al-Dari, may Allah be pleased with Him, began to gather the fire with his hands and started shoving the fire into a hole in the ground. This was a karamah of Tamim al-Dari, may Allah be pleased with Him."

[Tarikh Ibn Kathir, Vol. 6, chapter on Miracles, and Sirat un-Nabi, Ibn Kathir, chapter on Mu'jizat]

Elsewhere, Ibn Kathir writes: During the khilafah of 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him, the governor of Egypt wrote to 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him, asking for help as the river Nile had failed to flood. 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him, wrote a letter in return and addressed the river itself. This was then placed in the Nile, and no sooner as this was done, the Nile's water began to flood.

[Tarikh Ibn Kathir, volumes 1 and 8, chapter on Rivers and chapter on Khilafah of 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him.]

The above narrations prove that certain categories of humans, even though they are not Prophets, are capable of doing acts that are normally impossible. Secondly, the narrations prove that one can ask for these supernatural acts from humans. If this were not the case, why would the Prophet Sulaiman, peace be upon him, ask Asif bin Barkhiyah to bring the throne of Bilqees (Queen of Sheeba)? Why would 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him, ask Tamim al-Dari to quench the raging fire? Why would Salamah bin Akwa, may Allah be pleased with Him, ask the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), to miraculously cure his wound? And why would the governor of Egypt ask 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him, to make the Nile flood? So, in summary, it is permissible to request a person to do something impossible under 'normal' circumstances.

Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab writes that the people who claim that it is permissible to seek help from the pious cite the following evidence in support of their argument:

When Ibrahim, peace be upon him, was thrown into the fire, Jibreel peace be upon him, offered his help to free him. If seeking help from other than Allah is shirk, then why did Jibril offer his assistance to Ibrahim? The answer is that the help which was being offered, was within his capability given by Allah, most High, and therefore not shirk.

[Kitab Kasfh al Shubhat, page 23]

The help that is sought from the anbiya or awliya is within their capability. For example, it is permissible for one to request a deceased person to make a du'a, as it has already been proved that the deceased can make du'a. This means that asking help from another which is out of their capacity is not shirk.

Ibn al-Qayyim explained in his book Kitab al-Ruh.

The Pious can Help from Far Away Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab writes:

"One night, the Prophet of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), was in his house and was heard to proclaim 'I am here!' three times and 'You have been granted help' also three times. Umm al-Mu'minin, Maymunah, may Allah be well pleased with her, asked the Beloved Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), whom he had been talking to since there was no one present. He, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), replied, 'I was talking to a person called Rajiz from the tribe of Bani Ka'ab. He asked for help from me against the Quraysh.' Umm al-Mu'minin, Maymunah, may Allah be well pleased with her, said that when she finished reading the fajr prayer the next morning, she heard Rajiz calling out the following in the streets of Madina: "Ya Rasul Allah! Help us and call the servants of Allah to help us."

[Mukhtasar Sirat ar- Rasul, chapter on the Conquest of Makka]

This narration shows that the Sahaba would seek help from the Messenger of Allah from afar and He, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), would answer their calls for help. When Rajiz asked the Beloved Prophet the following morning for help, the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), did not stop him from asking for this help. The Messenger of Allah was at some distance, yet he still assisted.

Ibn Kathir writes:

'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him, whilst delivering a Friday sermon in Madinah called out and said, 'Ya Sariah! The mountain.' That very moment, Sariah, may Allah be pleased with Him, was in a place in Persia called Nahawand, engaged in a battle with the enemy. What 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him, meant by his call was: O Sariah! Seek protection behind the mountain. Sariah, may Allah be pleased with Him, heard this and was subsequently saved. When the people heard these words during the Friday they were surprised. After winning the battle, Sariah came to Madinah. He told about how they had been under attack by the enemy. Suddenly they had heard 'Umar's voice and hid behind the mountain and were saved.

[Tarikh Ibn Kathir, chapter on the Khilafah of 'Umar]

This narration demonstrates that the pious can help people who are not present with them. Also, this is why proclaiming 'Ya Rasul Allah', (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), is not an act of shirk, because he, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), is aware of our call. It could be that the salutations are conveyed through the angels or that he listens to them himself. As Ibn al-Qayyim wrote:

Another question that is raised is why, if it is possible to seek help and advice from the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), after he had passed away, the Sahaba didn't go to his blessed grave and ask for help when there was any dispute amongst themselves?

This is only scepticism. The reality is that there was no need for the Companions to go and seek help and advice from the blessed grave of the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), as the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) had already foretold the dispute of his Companions and who would be right or wrong, therefore there was no need for the Sahaba to ask again.

Also, the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), did help the Companions on various occasions. Here are some examples from Tarikh Ibn Kathir:

Bilal bin Harith asked the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), for help during the famine in Madina during the khilafah of 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him. The Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), gave water to 'Uthman, may Allah be pleased with Him, from a window when he was being surrounded by his enemies and, furthermore, even comforted him by giving the news that he would be martyred and would be breaking his fast with him in paradise the next day. The Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), gave advice to Imam Hussayn, may Allah be pleased with Him, regarding the battle of Karbala -when he was departing for Kufa and then later, on the night before his death. The Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), gave news that they would meet the next day in Paradise.

[Tarikh Ibn Kathir, chapter on Khilafa of 'Umar; chapter on Death of 'Uthman, and the chapter on Karbala]

It is not wajib to seek help from the pious, it is merely permissible. However, we do not encourage people to ask help from the pious and especially those who are cannot differentiate between help and Istishfah.

Those who argue that once the pious have passed away, they are unable to help, also include the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), in this reference. However, it is very strange that this does not apply to scholars whom they hold in high esteem. As Ibn al Qayyim states:

Many people saw Ibn Taymiyyah after his death in their dreams and asked him many difficult questions on issues of Fiqh Masaa'il and he replied to all their questions. Only those people can reject this who are ignorant of the status of the spirits (Arwah)

[Kitab-ar-Ruh, end of chapter 3., Ibn al-Qayyim]

If Ibn Taymiyya can answer questions after passing away, and solve complex fiqh issues, then why is it not possible for our Beloved Prophet Muhammad , (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), to assist his Ummah ?

Whatever we have written above some of the narrations involve people's dreams - and to this, people might argue that this is not a credible proof in Islam. The answer to this is that the narration's we have written are not all from dreams, and even if the narration we used are dreams, the Most Beloved Prophet of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), has said: 'A Shaytan cannot form my image.' So all the dreams are true about him, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace). Also, Ibn al Qayyim mentions that:

When numerous people have the same type of dream and what they have seen in their dreams actually happens - to call these kinds of dreams as only dreams, this is said by the people that have no sense

[Kitab al Ruh, Chapter, 3., Ibn Qayyim]

top

The pious can help, even after their death

When the Beloved Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), went on the Mi'raj, fifty prayers a day were initially ordered. On return Prophet Musa, peace be upon him, requested the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), to return to Allah and ask for a reduction in prayers. He did so and by doing this, the number of times was reduced to five prayers a day.

[Muslim and Bukhari chapter Miraj]

Prophet Musa, peace be upon him, helped the Umma of the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), even after he had passed away.

Some further evidence:

- Ibn Khathir writes that: 'Uthman Ghani, may Allah be pleased with Him, said that when the enemy surrounded his house and stopped the household from receiving water, they were thirsty for many days. 'Uthman said: One day I saw that the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), give me some water from my window. Some days later my roof parted, and the Prophet of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) accompanied by Aby Bakr and Umar (May Allah be pleased with them, entered and gave me some water to drink, and enquired: You will break your fast with us tomorrow

[Tarikh Ibn Kathir, Chapter on the death of 'Uthman, may Allah be pleased with Him]

- Imam al Waqdi writes that: Abu Ubaidah, may Allah be pleased with Him, was the leader of the army of Damascus and was in Jihad. In his dream he saw the Prophet of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), inform him that ' Tomorrow Damascus will be defeated,' and He, (May Allah

bless him and grant him peace), departed quickly'. I asked the Prophet ' Why are you returning so hastily?' He replied ' Abu Bakr has died and I am going to attend his Janaza' (funeral)

[Futuh as sham, Allama Waqdi]

- Imam al Waqdi writes; In the battle of Damascus, a kafir became a Muslim, and began to speak Arabic in an instant. Abu Ubaidah asked him ' you do not know Arabic, how is it that you speak so fluently? He replied 'Last night I saw the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), in my dream. I asked him, if you are the messenger of Allah, then supplicate for me that I may speak Arabic. When I woke up in the morning I found that I could speak Arabic'.

[Futuh as Sham, Chapter on Fath ad Dimishk, Allama Waqdi]

- Ibn Kathir writes that In the 18th year of the Hijra during the Khilafa of 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him, there was a famine. 'Umar and Bilal, May Allah be well pleased with them, went to the blessed grave of the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), and said 'Ya Rasul Allah! Your Umma is dying (from hunger), pray for us that Allah sends us rain'. Later, Bilal, may Allah be pleased with Him, had a dream in which the Prophet of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), told Bilal to go to 'Umar, and convey his salaam, and to inform him that there will be rain and that he should perform Salaah Istisqa'. This is a very authentic narration.

[Tarikh Ibn Kathir, chapter Khilafa of 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with Him]

" Ibn Taymiyya says that: In the time of a drought, a person came to our Prophet's grave and complained about the drought. He then saw our Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), who said go to 'Umar and tell him to perform the Salaah of Istisqah. There are numerous true narrations similar to this.

[Iqtisa Sirat al Mustaqim, page 373, Also Imam Bukhari has mentioned about this in his book, Tarikh al Kabir, biography of Malik al dar]

- Ibn Hajar al Asqalani writes: A person came to the grave said: 'Your Umma is dying; supplicate to Allah to send rain. Sayf says: The person who made this supplication to the Messenger of Allah, his name was Bilal Ibn al- Harith, may Allah be pleased with Him. This narration is authentic.

[Fath al Bari, Chapter on al Istisqa, Hafidhh Asqalani]

- The Scholar of Masjid an Nabawi, Shaykh Al-Jazari writes: The narration of Bilal bin Harith concerning going to the grave and asking our Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), to supplicate for the rain, is also recorded by Imam Bukhari in his book of Tarikh. Also, Hafidhh Asqalani recorded this in Fath al Bari; Imam al Bayhaqi included it in his Dala'il al -Nabuwat, and it also appears in the Musnaf of Ibn Abi Shayba, Ibn Abi Khusayama and in Ibn Abd al Barr - this narration has really surprised me.

[Waja a-Yarkudun, page32 by Abu Bakr al-Jazari]

If Abu Bakr Al-Jazari knew that Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Kathir wrote this narration, he would not have been so bewildered.

top

A clarification

After reading Ibn Kathir's, Ibn Taymiyya's and Asqalani's verifications, there is no need to discuss any further about this narration, of Bilal, may Allah be pleased with Him. However, there is a possibility that there are some Muslims who would then question the narrator of this hadith - whether he was considered weak or authentic. Lets now look at the narrators of this narration.

The narrators of this narration are:

- Abu Mu'awiya
- Imam A'mash
- Abu Salih Abd al Rahman bin Sa'eed
- Malik bin Ayyad al-Dar

The first two narrators are considered as great narrators of Hadith - all the great scholars of Hadith have taken their narrations including Imam Muslim and Imam Bukhari, so there is no doubt about their authenticity. The third and fourth narrators will be discussed now. The third narrator is Abd al Rahman bin Sa'eed al-Makhzumi.

Ibn Hajar al Asqalani writes:

Imam Bukhari took a narration from him in his book *Juz Raf-al-yadain*. Imam Abu Dawud also took a narration from him. He was a student of 'Uthman bin Affaan, the third Caliph of Islam and he took narrations from Malik Aldar, and he in turn, learned the knowledge of Hadith from his Father (i.e. Ayyad). Imam Ibn Abu Sa'eed said 'He was an authentic narrator'. Imam Ibn Hibban also listed him in the list of authentic scholars of Hadith. Imam Ibn al-Madani, who was the teacher of Imam Muslim and Imam Bukhari also made the same remarks about him.

[Tahzib-ut-Tahzib, biography of Sa'eed bin Abd al Rahman, Asqalani]

The fourth narrator of this Hadith is Malik bin Ayyaz Aldar.

- Imam Bukhari writes: Malik bin Ayyaz Aldar narrated that: 'Umar said 'O Allah, I am only lacking when I am powerless'. Abu Salih also narrated this from Malik Aldar.

[Tarikh al-Kabir, biography of Malik Aldar by Imam Bukhari]

- Imam Ibn Abi Hatim writes: Malik bin Ayyaz Aldar was a slave of 'Umar and he was freed by him. He narrated from Abu Bakr and 'Umar. He was a taba'ee and Abu Salih also narrated from him - and he was famous'.

[Al-jar-hu-wal-ta'deel., biography of Malik Aldar by Imam Ibn Abi Hatim]

- Imam Ibn Abi Saad writes: Malik Aldar was a freed slave of 'Umar, and he narrated Hadith from Abu Bakr and 'Umar [May Allah be well pleased with them all] and he was a famous man'.

[Tabaqat Ibn Sa'ad, biography of Malik Aldar by Imam Ibn Sa'ad]

After these references it can be seen that the third and fourth narrators of Hadith are famous, authentic and not unknown and no one can assume these narrators are weak.

- Imam al Qurtabi writes: One Arab went to the grave of our Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), and recited the verse from the Holy Qur'an: 'We sent not a messenger, but to be obeyed in accordance with the leave of Allah. If they had only, when they were unjust to themselves come unto thee and asked Allah's forgiveness, and the Messenger had asked forgiveness for them they would have found Allah indeed oft-returning, most merciful.'

[Surah An-Nisa' verse 6]

He then began to cry and say how sinful he was, and requested to the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), to supplicate for him. A voice then came from our Prophet's [May Allah bless him and grant him peace] grave, saying that Allah has forgiven your sins.

[Tafsir al Qurtabi, under Ayat 64 Surah Nisa]

- " Ibn Kathir also recorded this event, he writes;

When an Arab came to our Prophet's grave and said "I repent from my sins through you and ask for forgiveness, I would give my life for you". Afterwards our Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), appeared in the dream of Utba', may Allah be pleased with Him, and informed him to go to the Arab and convey the message that there is a good news for him that Allah had forgiven his sins.

[Tafsir Ibn Kathir, under verse 64 Surah Nisa]

- Ibn Taymiyya writes: A person came to the blessed grave of the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), and requested food from the Prophet and sat down. After a while a Hashmi [a member of the Prophet's (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) family came to him. He had with him a tray of food, and said, "this food has been sent by the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), and with it he gave a message: eat it and leave from here because whoever loves us does not make this kind of desire".

[Iqtida as Sirat al Mustaqim, page 290 by Ibn Taymiyya]

- " Ibn Kathir and Ibn Hajar al Asqalani both write: Imam Bukhari had lost his sight in his days as a youth, and his mother used to pray to Allah vigorously for the return of her son's sight. One night in her dream, she saw the Prophet Ibrahim, upon whom be peace, who told her that Allah had

accepted her prayers because of her tears in them in front of Allah and her son's sight would be return'. When Imam Bukhari awoke in the morning, his eyesight had returned.

[Tahrikh Ibn Kathir, under biography of Imam Bukhari, and Muqadimah Fath al Bari, biography of Imam Bukhari]

Imam Daarmi writes: " When Yazid bin Mu'awiya attacked Madinah, there was no adhan or Jam'at in Masjid an-Nabawi for three days. Sa'eed bin Musayab states, 'I stayed in Masjid an-Nabawi for the three days and pretended to be Majnun, (mad) and for every prayer, I heard the adhan from the blessed grave of the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace).

[Daarmi, chapter on Fada'il e-Nabi]

- Ibn-e-Taymiyya writes that: Ibn Musayab's listening of the adhan from the Prophet's grave or the returning of salaam from the graves of the Awliya, is haqq and we believe in it.

[Iqtida as Sirat al-Mustaqim, page 373]

- Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani writes: Abd al-Wajid says that I saw the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), in a dream with his companions waiting at this place, like they were waiting for someone. I said, "As Salaam 'alaykum," after the reply to the salaam I asked "what or who are you waiting for?" The reply was we are waiting for Imam Bukhari, and that was the day Imam Bukhari passed away.

[Fath al Bari, chapter on the death of Imam Bukhari, and Tarikh Baghdad by Hafidhh Asqalani, and Khatib al Baghdadi]

- Asqalani writes: Hafidhh Marwazi says that I was in the Ka'ba and I fell asleep. I then had a dream and in that dream I saw the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace). Our Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), said that you have read Imam Shafi's book and why not mine? I asked which one is yours and the reply was Imam Bukhari's book is my book.

[Fath al Bari, Hafidhh Asqalani under Biography of Imam Bukhari] [Mizan al Ta'dil, biography of Simaq Dhahabi]

From all the above narrations, it should be sufficient proof that to do Istishfah (to make a request) from the Pious is permissible. They are able to help us and they are fully aware of matters that occur on the earthly plain, and this includes the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace). From the above examples, we have proof of the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) Asking for forgiveness on the behalf of others; informing of an impending victory; consoling 'Uthman, may Allah be pleased with Him, at the time of great suffering, and many others.

- Ibn Taymiyya writes: Some people came to the grave of our Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), and requested something, and their needs were fulfilled. In the like manner, the pious people can also fulfill the needs of people - and we do not deny this

[Iqtida as Sirat al-Mustaqim, - page 373, Ibn Taymiyya]

- Ibn al Qayyim writes: After dying, the Ruh (Spirit) can do those things that it cannot do when the person is alive in the dunya, (world) just as one or two Ruhs defeated a large army. Many companions relate that they saw the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), Abu Bakr and 'Umar, May Allah be well pleased with them, in their dreams at night fighting with them against the kuffar and winning the battle. Then it became a reality: on the following day a small army of Muslims defeated an army of many, many kafirs.

[Kitab ar-Ruh, chapter 15, Ibn al Qayyim]

From the above statements, they prove that the pious are able to help after their death. Their spiritual powers increase after their death.

top

Q: Why do we see some people asking the pious for help, rather than asking them to make dua on their behalf?

A: The meaning for this is that they say metaphorically to the pious but really they are asking the pious to make Dua for them. The companions of the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), used to do this as well. This has been mentioned in Hadith.

Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim quote the following hadith:

The Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), was on his way to the battle of Khaybar with his companions and asked 'Amir, may Allah be pleased with Him, to recite a poem. 'Amir then recited the following:

"Oh Prophet of Allah!

Allah is our Witness.

Without you we would not have had guidance.

Nor would we pray nor give zakah.

You forgive us and we sacrifice ourselves for you.

Send blessings on us and make us stand firm when fighting the enemy"

[Bukhari & Muslim Chapter. - Battle of Khaybar]

Ibn Hajar al Asqalani and al Asqalani have commented upon this Hadith that

The poem's verses are addressed to the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), because the word "sacrifice" cannot be used to Allah. This is because scholars have said the word 'sacrifice' (fida) is used in situations when one takes the place of another who is in difficulty, to remove the harm from another and take it upon oneself. This of course cannot apply to Allah - most High. The word "forgive" means that if we have gone astray obeying you, then bring us back on to the straight path. The objection to this may come from the first line of the poem - "Oh Allah!" The word 'Allahumma' is used to take Allah's oath to the following verses and the poet used the word 'Allahuma' in the beginning for baraka (blessing) and he wants to start with the word of Allah - most High. The objection to the opinion that the verses are addressed to the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), may come from the phrases - "bless us" and "make us stand firm". The answer to this question lies in the fact that the Prophet makes Dua to Allah for blessings to be sent to the people

[See Fath-al-Bari/Irshad-as-sari, Chapter on Khaybar by Asqalani & Qastalani]

Ibn Kathir and Ibn Athir have said that 'Amir has said these verses in the praise of the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace).

[Sirat an- Nabi and Usd al-Ghaba, Chapter on Khaybar and the Biography of 'Amir bin Akwah by ibn Kathir & Hafidhh ibn Athir]

Also, if the poetry were addressed to Allah, it would not make sense at all. The reason being that the words of the poem state, 'without you we would not have had guidance. Nor would we pray nor give zakah'. If Allah did not exist (Which is a stupid thing to say, as what Allah is implies that He is), nothing else would exist, not only guidance, prayers, and zakah, not even 'nothingness' would exist, as Allah has created all. So by assuming the poem is addressed to Allah, they are not those words which would be expected of a Muslim, let alone in the presence of the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace). The above proves that the one who is being addressed, in this poem is none other than the Prophet of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace).

Also, the poem asks for forgiveness and this does not have to be specifically directed to Allah. If 'Amir has used these words of praise for the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), it does not go against the spirit of Islam. To ask the pious for help directly is not shirk as 'Amir asked help from the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace). The real meaning of 'Amir's seeking help, was to ask the Messenger of Allah, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), to supplicate on his behalf. In the same way when an ordinary Muslim asks help from the pious, their real meaning is also the same as 'Amir's. The help comes through the pious's supplication's so metaphorically we say - the pious is helping us - when in fact, everything comes from Allah.

top

Q: Some people argue that once the pious have died - their ability to help anyone ceases. So, why do people still go to their graves to seek help?

A: We, the Ahl as-Sunna wa'l Jama'at say that when the pious die, their ability to help others does not diminish and end. They are alive in their graves and the power of their souls become stronger than when they were alive. If you cover a living person with a blanket, he would not be able to recognise those who pass by, but it has been proved from narrations that the deceased can recognise and hear the footsteps of those who pass by the grave. A living person cannot understand what the birds are saying, but the deceased can hear and understand exactly what they are saying. Also, a living person cannot travel millions of miles faster than the blink of an eye, but the deceased can travel many millions of miles faster than the blink of the eye. An example of this is when one sleeps, one can travel many miles and break the physical laws of this world. In the same way the deceased can break the laws of this world, as their spiritual bodies are stronger.

Ibn al Qayyim writes that the deceased are pleased with those people who attend the funeral or those who stand at his grave. When people pass the grave and convey their salaams, he [the person in the grave] returns the salaams and also recognises the person who has conveyed the salaam. When the birds praise Allah - most High, the person in the grave also understands the birds' praises (i.e. what the birds are saying).

The martyrs' souls are in heaven, and when people convey their salaam to them at their graves, they come back to their grave and return the salaam.

The ordinary souls at the very highest of the seven skies are at a place called Illiyin and when someone greets them with salaam, they come back to their grave, answer the salaam and also recognise the person. As in the case with people who are alive - some are strong and some are weak. In the same way, some souls are stronger than others like in the case of the pious. The more pious the person is, the stronger the soul. There could be some people who do not believe in what has been written, but Allah - most High has created those people who believe this and their hearts verify it. Every Muslim should believe that the deceased soul meets other souls, in the same way that the living people meet each other and this is proved in the Qur'an. Allah - most High says in the Qur'an, in Surah az Zumr Verse 42:

Allah takes away the souls at the time of their death

and of those who don't die during their sleep.

Then He with holds that against which He has decreed death

and sends back the other until an appointed time

[Surah az Zumr Verse 42]

Imam Sudayy says that Allah takes souls when people are asleep, and the deceased souls and people who are alive come together and discuss issues in their dreams. The deceased souls can give the living information that other people do not know. Sometimes they can inform people when people are going to die. In different matters, they guide the living. There were two companions of the Prophet, (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), called Salman Farsi and Abd Allah bin Salam, May Allah be well pleased with them both. They both said that whoever dies first, he would inform the other what had happened to him. Abd Allah bin Salam died first and appeared in Salman Farsi's dream. Abd Allah then informed Salman Farsi that out of all of his good deeds, Allah - most High liked one particular deed the most, which was perfect reliance of God, so Salman continued having unshakable trust in Allah.

Ibn Sirin, may Allah be pleased with Him, appeared in his friends dream and said that Allah, most High has given him paradise. The dreamer asked him about Hasan al Basri. He said Allah has given him a higher status than himself. There was another companion called Mas'ar and he used to appear in peoples' dreams and inform them to attend dhikr gatherings since Allah was pleased with this act. Similarly, many people have seen Hafidhh ibn Taymiyya in their dream, and they have asked him very complex fiqh questions, and Hafidhh ibn Taymiyya has answered them and satisfied them all

Some people might say that these are only dreams and we don't know whether they are right or wrong so how can we trust them? But they should know that when the deceased gives news about a person who is going to die at a particular time; or says that on a particular day rain will fall; or there will be famine; or the enemy will attack; or there will be trouble; or if he gives that kind of news that nobody knows except him, these will become reality. These types of facts are only ignored by a person who is unaware of the power of the spirits. It is also a fact that if many Muslims see a similar dream, this becomes evidence like Prophet Muhammad (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), said to his companion: all of your dreams show that the Night of Power (Laylat al Qadr) will be on the last ten days of Ramadan.

What I have written is not all from the dreams. The Power of Souls, I have proved from the Qur'an and Sunna in the last chapter.

[Kitab ar Ruh, a summary of chapters 1, 2, 3 and 15, Hafidhh ibn al Qayyim]

On this Topic I have written everything to the best of my knowledge. May Allah The Most High and Merciful, accept this, and if in any way I have made any errors, May Allah The Most Generous, The Most Kind and the Most Merciful. Forgive me. Amin.

COURTESY : Islamic Information Centre Bristol U.K

top

AWLIYA KIRAM - The Friends of ALLAH:

Allah loves them, so should we.

Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala says in the Qur'an Majid :

"Listen carefully and no doubt there is no fear nor any grief upon the friends of Allah." (Surah Yunus : 62).

This verse shows that there are some people who are nearer to Allah Ta'ala than other peoples. These are the friends of Allah Ta'ala and in Islamic terminology they are called AWLIYA-ALLAH and Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) reserves special treatment for them.

Imam Bukhari (rahmatullah alaihi) narrates that the Most Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) said that Allah Ta'ala says, "My servant comes nearer to me by nafl worships upto this that I begin to love him and when I love him I become his ear by which he listens and I become his eyes by which he sees. (Saheeh al-Bukhari) Imam Muslim in his Saheeh and other scholars in their books narrate that the Most Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) says :

"When Allah Almighty loves a person so, he calls Jabrail (alaihi as-salaam) and says that " O Jabrail I love my so and so servant, and you also love him. Hence Jabrail (alaihis salaam) also loves him. Then Jabrail (alaihis salaam) announces in the skies that Allah Ta'ala loves his servant than all of the dwellers of skies love him. Then he is made beloved amongst the dwellers of the earth".

Imam Abu Nuaim in Hilya and Imam Ibne Asakir narrate from Abdullah ibne Masood (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu) that the Most Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) says ;

"Undoubtedly there are 300 Awliya (friend) of Allah within his creature and there hearts are the heart of Adam (alaihis salaam) and the hearts of 40 are like the heart of Musa (alaihis salaam) and the hearts of the seven are like the heart of Ibraheem (alaihis salaam) and the heart of the five are like the heart of Jabrail (alaihis salaam) and the hearts of the three are like the heart of Mikail (alaihis salaam) and the heart of one is like the heart of Israfeel (alaihis salaam). When that one (whose heart is like the heart of Israfeel) dies the one among of three made his representative and when some one dies among these three the one among five is made his representative and when some one dies from five the one among the seven is made his representative and when some one dies from seven the one among the forty is made his representative and when some one dies from the forty the one among the three hundred is made his representative and when some one dies from the three hundred the one among the general creature is made his representative. These are the 356 Awliya due to them the life, death, raining and the growing of the plant is happened ".

According to the teachings of the Qur'an al-Kareem and Hadith, karamat's (miracle) are acts of the truth. Imam al-A'zam Abu Hanifa (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu) writes in his Al-fiqh al-akbar that the karamat of Awliya is real but there are some materialists who proclaim to be Muslim but they deny spiritualism, they do not believe in the karamat of Awliya. Here we shall prove it in the light of Qur'an-e-Paak and AHadith.

Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) says in the Qur'an al-Kareem, " Sulayman said, " O chiefs, which of you who may bring her throne to me before they came to me submitting "? One big evil jinn said, 'I will bring you that throne before you rise from your sitting and undoubtedly, I am powerful over that, trustworthy. One who had knowledge of the Book said, 'I shall bring it to you before twinkling of the eye.' Then when Sulayman saw the throne set before him said, 'this is of the grace of my lord that he may try me wether I am grateful or ungrateful' And whosoever is grateful for his own good, and whosoever is ungrateful, then my Lord is self sufficient and all virtuous". (Sura An-Namal, Verse 38 to 40). In this verse Allah Almighty has mentioned the karamat of the Companion of Hadrat Sulayman (alaihis salam). His name was Asif bin Barkhia. According to the commentators this throne was very huge and it was at the distance of 1500 miles away but the friend of Allah brought it before the twinkling of the eye.

Allah Almighty mentions the story of Maryam (Radi Allahu ta'ala anha) and says, "And shake towards yourself holding the trunk of the palm tree fresh with rip dates will fall upon you". (Sura Al-Maryam, Verse 25). According to the commentators this was a dry tree, no fruit was on it but when the Waliyah of Allah, Maryam (Radi Allahu Ta'ala anha) shook it the dates fell down. It was her Karamat that the dates fell from the dry tree.

Allah Almighty mentions another karamat of Maryam (Radi Allahu ta'ala anha). He says, " Whenever Zakariya (alaihis salaam) went to her place of prayer he found new provisions with her. He said,"O Mary! Whence did this come this to you? She spoke, " that it is from Allah, 'No doubt Allah gives whomsoever what He pleases without measure. (Sura Al'-Imran, Verse 37).

The famous commentator of the Qur'an al-Kareem Imam Ibne Kathir writes from Mujahid Ikrama, Saeed bin Jubair, Abu Shasa, Ibraheem Nakhai, uhak, Qatada, Rabi bin Anas, Atiyah Alaufi and Sudi say that Zakariya (alaihis salaam) found with her the fruit of summer in the winter. (Ibne-Kathir vol 1 p. 480). This was the karamat of Maryam (Radi Allahu ta'ala anha) that she had the fruit of summer in winter while no one came to her to give these fruit. There are many other karamat of Awliya have been mentioned in the Qur'an al-Kareem but I am leaving those due to the lack of the time. Now i write some karamat from the book of the Hadith.

Imam Bukhari (rahmatullah alaih) narrates from Anas (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu) that Usaid ibne Hudair and Ibad ibne Bishr were talking with the Most Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) about their works. This happened in a dark night then both of them came out from that place to turn. Each of them have a small stick in his hand. At once the stick of one among them brightened and both of them walked in that light. when they separated from each other because of the separation of the way the stick of other one also brightened. So each of them walked in the light of his own stick upto he reached his house. [Mishkat Shareef Page 544]

It has been narrated in 'Sharhus Sunnah' from Ibne Munkadir that the slave of the Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam), Hadrat Safina lost his companion in Rome or he was arrested. He escaped and was searching for his friends; at of a sudden he saw a lion in front of him, so he said, " O Abul Harith (Lion) I am the slave of the Beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) and I have faced such and such problem. Listening to this the lion came near him and stood by him. Whenever the lion heard a voice he went to that place and stood, again and again, he just used to walk up to Hadrat Safina (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu) until he reached his companion. [Mishkat Shareef Page 545]

Imam Baihaqi Radi Allah anhu narrates from Ibne Umar in 'Dalailun Nabuwah' that Hadrat Umar Radi Allah Ta'ala anhu sent a campaign and made a person their chief who was called Saria. When Umar Radi Allah Ta'ala anhu was delivering a lecture he suddenly cried with a loud voice " O Saria keep the mountain. ' After few days a messenger came from campaign and said that "O Ameer al-Mumineen we faced our enemy. They attacked us and compelled us to run away. All of a sudden we listened to a cry that kept saying that "O Saria keep the mountain". We touched our backs with the mountain, so Allah Almighty made them run away". There are many other narrations which prove this karamat of Awliya, but it is enough for those who have some common sense. May Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) keep us on the right path of the Ahl as-Sunnah w'al Jama'ah. [Mishkat Shareef Page 546]