

FUNDEMENTALS OF TAWHID

Part 11

Grave Worship

Introduction

- The dead have been the cause for much deviation in aqeedah.
- With the passage of time, Muslims began to imitate other pagans.
- Shrines have been built over the graves of:
 - Sahabah
 - Imam Abu Hanifah
 - Imam Ash-Shafi'i
 - Abdul Qadir Al-Jeelani
 - Mohammed Ali Jinnah
 - Muhammed Ahmed (the so called 'Mahdi' of Sudan)

Prayers to the dead

- Those who perform grave worship, commit shirk in two ways:
 - 1) They use the dead as intercessors i.e. Middlemen.
 - This is similar to how Christian worship God.
 - This is similar to how the pre-Islamic Arabs saw their gods.
 - “We only worship them so that they bring us closer to Allah...” (Q. 39: 3)
 - 2) They direct their prayers directly to the dead.
 - Why? Because they believe the deceased possess the attributes of Allah (i.e. At-Tawaab or Al-Ghafur).

Christian worship for saints...

- Jude Thaddaeus
 - Patron Saint of the Impossible
 - Is used as intercession for incurable diseases
- Saint Peregrine
 - Patron Saint of Cancer patients
 - Is used as intercession for Cancer patients
- Saint Dymphna
 - Patron Saint of mental and nervous disorders
 - Is used as intercession for mental diseases

The reality...

- All methods of grave worship are rejected.
- The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **“When a man dies, his (good) deeds come to an end, except in three ways: Charity of continuing benefit, beneficial knowledge to people and righteous child who prays for him.”** [Muslim]

Words to consider...

“O people of Quraish, secure deliverance from Allah (by doing good deeds). I cannot avail you at all against Allah, O’ sons of Abdul-Muttalib, I cannot avail you at all against Allah, O’ (my uncle) Abbas ibn Abdul-Muttalib, O’ (my aunt) Safeeyah, I cannot avail you at all against Allah, O’ Fatimah daughter of Muhammad, ask me whatever you like, but I have nothing which can avail you against Allah!” [Muslim]

In spite of this...

- Many ask from a group of ‘saints’ rather than Allah Himself.
 - Sufis claim that cosmic order is preserved by a fixed number of saints called *Rijaal al-Ghayb*.
 - When one dies he is immediately substituted.
 - At the peak are the *Qutub*.
- Abdul Qadir Jeelani (d. 1166) is frequently called upon for help.
 - He is often referred to as “al-Ghawth al-’Adham.”
 - In times of calamity he is personally called to.

How does such shirk occur?

- 1) Imitating those before us:
 - “You will follow the practices of your predecessors, inch by inch and yard by yard; so much so that if they were to enter a lizard’s hole, you would follow them.” When he was asked if he meant the Jews and Christians, he replied “if not them, who else?” [Bukhari]
- 2) Excessive praise:
 - Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Do not praise me excessively as the Christians did with the son of Mary. Indeed, I am merely a slave, so (refer to me) instead as *Abdullah wa Rasuluh.*” [Bukhari]

Taking grave as places of worship

- Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) told the Prophet (peace be upon him) about a church she had seen in Ethiopia:
 - “If a righteous man dies among these people, they build over his grave a place of worship and paint in it those types of pictures. **They are the most evil of creation** in Allah’s sight.” [Bukhari]
- The reason for them being cursed is due to two sources of idolatry:
 - 1) Erecting effigies over graves.
 - 2) Making images.

Visiting graves

- Grave-worship was among the last things which the Prophet (peace be upon him) warned his *ummah* about.
- During his mission, the Prophet (peace be upon him) refrained others from visiting the graveyard:
 - “I used to forbid you from visiting graves, but now you should visit them, for surely they are reminders of the next life.” [Muslim]

Restrictions

Although visiting graves is permitted, it should be noted that certain restrictions are in place:

- **1) No prayer in graveyards**
 - “All the earth is a masjid except graveyards and toilets.” [Tirmidhi]
- **2) No prayer towards the grave**
 - “Do not pray towards graves nor sit on them.” [Muslim]
- **3) No reciting Qur’an**
 - “Do not make your houses as graveyards, for indeed Satan flees from the house in which *Surah al-Baqarah* is read.” [Muslim]
- **4) No white-washing of graves or building structure on top of them.**
 - Ali reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered him to level all graves more than a palm’s width high. [Muslim]
- **5) No building *masjids* over graves**
 - “May Allah curse the Jews and Christians for taking the graves of the Prophets as places of worship.” [Bukhari]
- **6) No seasonal gatherings around his grave**
 - “Do not make my grave an ‘Eid...” [Abu Dawud]
- **7) No setting out for journeys to visit graves**
 - “Do not travel to other than three masjids...” [Ahmed]

Graves as places of worship

- “The most evil of mankind are those who will be alive when the Last Day arrives and those who take graves as places of worship.”
[Ahmed]
- **How can they be classified as such?**
 - Prostration towards a grave.
 - Building a *masjid* over a grave.
 - Placing a grave in a *masjid*.

Masjids with graves

- These can be classified as two types:
 - 1) *Masjid* built over grave
 - A *masjid* built over the grave is to be demolished.
 - 2) *Masjid* in which a grave has been placed.
 - A *masjid* with a grave placed in it, should have it removed.
 - Regarding both:
 - » Prayer is despised in such places.
 - » *Shirk* if prayer is intended towards the graves.

DISCUSSION:

What about the Prophet's mosque in Madinah?

Does it not have three graves inside it?

The future of this ummah...

- Thawban (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **“The Last Hour will not come until some groups of my nation worship idols.”** [Abu Dawud]
- Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **“The Last Hour will not come until women from the Daws tribe wiggle their buttocks (as they circumambulate) around the temple of the idol al-Khalasha.”** [Bukhari]