

التوسل في الإسلام

Tawassul in Islam

A comprehensive examination on the issues regarding intercession

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Fehrist

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Introduction

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

It is well known that the Shi'a of Ahlulbayt (s.a) hold *tawassul* through the *A'imma* (a.s) to a high regard. It is something they are taught to do from a young age throughout their lives. Unfortunately, many do not seem to understand the wisdom behind it, and those who ask questions may ask the wrong people and start to doubt what they're doing due to the influence of the recent movement that will be called *Salafiyyah*.¹ Many know the basic polemics regarding *tawassul* but most people fail to be able to structure their arguments correctly, mostly because it's usually just remnants of arguments they know. Hence, in this book, the proofs and objections made against *tawassul* will be discussed in a coherent format.

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We will discuss them providing you with *rizq* and *tafwidh* as Sayyid al-Sistani² and Sayyid Sa'eed al-Hakeem³ have mentioned.

It's important to clarify all the different meanings and terms that will be used throughout out the book:

- Awliya (اولياء) - Saints; can differ but this will be the intended meaning
- Istighatha (استغاثة) - To seek help or aid
- Shifa'a (شفعاء) - Intercession; to use someone as an intercessor
- Waseela (وسيلة) - Intermediary; means
- Tawassul (توسل) - Reaching through a means; to use a *waseela*

¹ This is despite the fact that we do not believe these individuals truly follow the salaf due the numerous *bid'ah* they have brought to Islam and their heretical beliefs.

² [Contemporary legal rulings in Shi'a law - al-Sayyid al-Sistani Q: 193](#)

³ [Supplication to the Imams - al-Sayyid al-Hakeem's office](#)

It's also important to note that the meanings of the words are often used interchangeably, different scholars will describe the meanings of *istighatha* and *tawassul* differently. In this book, we will describe them as the following:

Tawassul: Seeking the intercession of a saint

Istighatha: Seeking [spiritual] help from a saint

Who is Ibn Taymiyyah?

Tawassul has been a matter of debate since the time of Ibn Taymiyyah (C. 8th / 14th) who seems to be the first scholar to question this practice hence we wanted to briefly mention him. Ibn Taymiyyah is a prominent Hanbali scholar, who the *Salafiyyah* today base their doctrines regarding these beliefs primarily from as well as his students.

We read from al-Manawi's [Faydh al-Qadir, Vol. 2, pg. 170](#):

قال السبكي ويحسن التوسل والاستعانة والتشفع بالنبي إلى ربه ولم ينكر ذلك أحد من السلف ولا من الخلف حتى جاء ابن تيمية فأنكر ذلك وعدل عن الصراط المستقيم وابتدع ما لم يقله عالم قبله وصار بين أهل الإسلام مثلة انتهى .

Al-Subki said: 'And it is appropriate to do tawassul, istigāthah and seeking intercession to the Prophet (s) from his lord, and none from the *salaf* (earliest generations) nor from the *khalaf* (later generations) have rejected this until Ibn Taymiyyah came and rejected this, and turned away from the straight path and innovated that which no other scholar before him did.'⁴

So who is this Ibn Taymiyyah and what were the views of the scholars regarding him?

We read from Ibn Buttata's⁵ [Kitab al-Rihla, pg. 95 - 96](#):

وكان بدمشق من كبار فقهاء الحنابلة تقي الدين بن تيمية كبير الشام يتكلم في الفنون إلا أن في عقله شيئاً. وكان أهل دمشق يعظمونه أشد التعظيم ويعظمهم على المنبر وتكلم مرة بأمر أنكره الفقهاء ورفعوه إلى الملك الناصر فأمر بإشخاصه إلى القاهرة وجمع القضاة والفقهاء مجلس الملك الناصر وتكلم شرف الدين الزواوي المالكي وقال أن هذا الرجل قال كذا وكذا وعدد ما أنكر على ابن تيمية وأحضر العقود بذلك ووضعها بين يدي قاضي القضاة وقال قاضي القضاة لابن تيمية ما تقول؟ قال لا إله إلا الله فأعاد عليه فأجاب بمثل قوله فأمر الملك الناصر بسجنه فسجن أعواماً.

⁴ From his original book; [Shifa' al-Saqamar pg. 357](#). Also, [al-Haythami](#) says the same.

⁵ [Ibn Battuta](#) (C. 14th) was a Muslim Moroccan scholar, and explorer who traveled more than anyone in premodern history, crossing lands all over the world and documenting his travels.

وصنف في السجن كتاب في تفسير القرآن سماه البحر المحيط في نحو أربعين مجلداً ثم أن أمه تعرضت للملك الناصر وشكت إليه فأمر بإطلاقه إلى أن وقع منه ذلك ثانية

وكنت إذ ذاك بدمشق فحضرته يوم الجمعة وهو يعظ الناس على منبر الجامع ويذكرهم فكان من جملة كلامه **أن قال أن الله ينزل من سماء الدنيا كنزولي هذا ونزل درجة من درج المنبر** فعارضه فقيه مالكي يعرف بابن الزهراء وأتكر ما تكلم به فقامت العامة إلى هذا الفقيه **وضربوه** بالأيدي والنعال ضرباً كثيراً حتى سقطت عمامته وظهر على رأسه شاشية حرير فأتكروا عليه لباسها واحتملوه إلى دار عز الدين بن مسلم قاضي الحنابلة فأمر بسجنه

وعزره بعد ذلك فأتكر فقهاء المالكية والشافعية ما كان من تعزيره ورفعوا الأمر إلى ملك الأمراء سيف الدين تنكر وكان من خيار الأمراء وصلحائهم فكتب إلى الملك الناصر بذلك وكتب عقداً شرعياً على ابن تيمية بأمر منكرة منها أن المطلق بالثلاث في كلمة واحدة لا تلزمه إلا طلقة واحدة ومنها أن المسافر الذي ينوي بسفره زيارة القبر الشريف زاده الله طيباً لا يقصر الصلاة وسوى ذلك ما يشبهه وبعث العقد إلى الملك الناصر فأمر بسجن ابن تيمية بالقلعة فسجن بها حتى مات في السجن.

In Damascus, there was a prominent Hanbali jurist named Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyyah, the foremost scholar of the Shami region. He was knowledgeable in various fields, but **had something [strange] in his aql**.

The people of Damascus held him in high esteem and he would deliver sermons to them from the pulpit. On one occasion, he spoke about **a matter that the scholars disagreed with**, so they reported it to the ruler, al-Malik al-Nasir. The ruler ordered his deputies to bring Ibn Taymiyyah to Cairo and gathered judges and scholars in the court of al-Malik al-Nasir.

Sharaf al-Din al-Zawawi, a Maliki scholar, spoke against Ibn Taymiyyah and presented the objections raised by the scholars. He presented written documents containing these objections and placed them before the Chief Judge. The Chief Judge asked Ibn Taymiyyah, "What do you say?" **Ibn Taymiyyah replied, "There is no god but Allah."**⁶ The Chief Judge repeated the question, and Ibn Taymiyyah gave the same response. So, al-Malik al-Nasir ordered his imprisonment, and he remained imprisoned for many years.

While in prison, he authored a book on the tafsir of the Quran titled "Al-Bahr al-Muhit" in approximately forty volumes. Then, his mother approached al-Malik al-Nasir and complained to him about her son's imprisonment. So, he ordered Ibn Taymiyyah's release.

⁶ Ibn Taymiyyah is lying here, for the scholars didn't disagree with that statement they disagreed with the *tajsim* and *shirk* he used to say instead.

I was in Damascus at that time and I attended his sermon on Friday, and he addressed the people from the pulpit of the mosque, reminding them. **Among his words, he said that Allah descends from the heavens to the earthly sky, just as I descended a step from the pulpit.** A knowledgeable Maliki jurist, known as Ibn al-Zahraa, objected to what he said. **The general public turned against the jurist, hitting him** with their hands and shoes until his turban fell off, revealing a silk cap on his head. They criticized him for wearing it and took him to the house of 'Izz al-Din bin Muslim, the Hanbali judge, who ordered his imprisonment and punished him.

The Maliki and Shafi'i scholars disapproved of his punishment and brought the matter to the attention of the ruler of rulers, Saif al-Din Tankiz. He was one of the virtuous rulers and his advisers. Tankiz wrote a letter to al-Malik al-Nasir about this issue and issued a legal document against Ibn Taymiyyah, citing objectionable matters. These included the ruling that pronouncing the triple divorce in one statement counts as a single divorce and that a traveler intending to visit the Prophet's shrine is not exempt from shortening prayers. They also mentioned other matters similar to these.

Tankiz sent the document to al-Malik al-Nasir, who ordered Ibn Taymiyyah's imprisonment in the citadel, where he remained until he died in prison.

From this account, we notice that Ibn Taymiyyah had remarkable influence upon his followers. They deemed him worthy of taking fatwas from and loved him to the point they would attack a scholar who would disagree with him inside the mosque.

As for his beliefs, Ibn Taymiyyah had a common agenda regarding anthropomorphism. His statement that 'God can come down to the earthly sky' holds many problems, such as limiting God to a physical form, this would imply God is no longer transcendent. It also implies that creation is capable of holding God's infinite power, however this would signify that creation also holds infinite power, for finity cannot hold infinity; that's a logical contradiction. This would mean he would have to believe, if he accepts human reason, that the universe is equally as powerful as God. To justify this by saying 'it could work outside of human reason' would be on par with justifying christian beliefs who would argue for logical contradictions. Therefore, he would be forced to say the universe is a partner of God (*wal'ayathibillah*).

It is quite interesting to note how he is the one who calls those who perform *tawassul* as the 'polytheists'.

With that being said, we can begin discussing this topic

وصلى الله على محمد وآل محمد



Chapter 1: Answering common questions

This chapter is regarding issues people have with this topic, answering common questions that are usually brought up. If there are further questions that you have that we have not answered, consider contacting us to receive feedback. The list of questions are the following:

1. What is the purpose behind 'Ya Ali'?
2. Why can't you approach God alone?
3. Why the need for intermediaries when God is all-forgiving?
4. Why do you ask God on behalf of someone?
5. Doesn't the Qur'an forbid this?
6. How does this differ from the Quraysh?
7. How can the dead hear you?
8. Does this mean the dead are all-hearing?
9. Can the dead benefit you?
10. Can the dead provide you with sustenance (rizq)?
11. How can a dead person aid you outside of intercession?
12. Why visit graves?
13. Why have you raised graves?
14. Why do the Shi'a scholars permit the graves to be raised?
15. Why have you built Masjids over graves?
16. Why do you pray near graves?
17. Why do you name yourself Abd al-Hussain?
18. Why do you swear upon other than God?

(You can press on the questions to jump to them)

What is the purpose behind ‘Ya Ali’?

Many times those who practice *tawassul* are defamed, slandered and accused for that of which they are innocent of. None of the revered ‘*Ulema* of the Shi’a, from the first ones until the last, have dared to say that *tawassul* in any way is a form of associating partners with Allah (swt). It is important to know the intent behind these acts before foolishly accusing others of *shirk*.

So let us answer the question, what is the intention behind Ya Muhammad or Ya Ali?

- A) **Dhikr**: The intention behind ‘Ya Ali’ can differ, one reason many do this act is as an act of *dhikr*. This means the person is remembering Allah (swt) and his religion through the *awliya* or the representative of Islam in this case. It is a form of praise and often said with a harmless intention that cannot constitute *shirk* whether you are a Sunni or a Shi’a. In fact, this is what Rasullulah (s) has wanted for us as said in hadith al-Thaqalayn that his Ahlulbayt (a) are *dhikr-ul Allah*, thus none can disagree. We read in [Majmu al-Fatawa, Vol. 4, pg. 154](#) by Ibn Taymiyyah:

حيث قال يوم غدیر خم : أذكركم الله في أهل بيتي

He (the Holy Prophet) said on the day of Ghadeer Khumm: ‘I remind you of Allah through my Ahlulbayt’.

- B) **Shifa’a**: The second intention, which is the focus of this book, is to acquire the intercession of the *awliya* to get closer to Allah (swt). This means that through their du’a we are able to get answered and elevated in rank. One may ask a few questions, such as why does it elevate us? By using our rationality, we can see that indeed God favors His Messenger over sinners. Thus, if His Messenger were to intercede for the sinner, it would be of more benefits than for the sinner to intercede for himself alone. Another question one may ask is whether this is what God wants, the answer is a certain yes. Using something to gain nearer to Allah (swt) is what a *waseela* is, and this is what Allah (swt) has wanted us to use in the Qur’an in 5:35. The Prophet (s) is the means, or any *awliya* for that case are our means. In fact, the Prophet (s) himself has emphasized us to seek his *shifa’a*. We read from [Sunan Abi Dawud 5131](#):

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: اشفعوا إلي لتؤجروا وليقبض الله على لسان نبيه ما شاء.

Rasullulah (s) said: Make intercession to me, you will be rewarded, for Allah decrees what he wishes by the tongue of his prophet.

So these are the 2 common motives behind saying ‘Ya Ali’ or whoever, and it is without a doubt the furthest thing away from *shirk*, for neither of these intentions encourage worship besides Allah (swt) as he is the one who is seen as the independent bestower of needs.

Why can't you approach God alone?

The question alone is wrong, because none have claimed you cannot approach God alone without doing *tawassul*. The Shi'a have countless *du'a* which is primarily focused on supplication to Allah (swt) alone without the use of *tawassul*. However, what the argument is that it's better and stronger to seek a saint to get closer to Allah (swt). If I say 'Oh God, forgive me' there is no objection here at all, but if I say 'Oh God forgive me on behalf of your Prophet (s)' this is much stronger *du'a* for Allah (swt) loves his Prophet more than the average person. The hadith that was posted earlier explains just that, God will bestow upon his prophet what he asks for.

Hence Allah (swt) asks the Prophet (s) all over the Qur'an to seek forgiveness for his followers or them seeking forgiveness through him:

إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ

Had they after having wronged themselves, come to you and sought forgiveness from Allah, and had the Messenger prayed for their forgiveness [4:64]

فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ

So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them [3:159]

وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Ask forgiveness for them of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful. [60:12]

We see that this form of *tawassul* was practiced since the time of Musa (a):

فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ غِيظَنَا إِلَىٰ آبَائِهِمْ لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ بَلَّغُوهُ إِذَا هُمْ يَنْكُتُونَ

They would say, whenever a plague struck them, 'Moses, pray to your Lord for us by virtue of the promise He has made to you: if you relieve us of the plague, we will believe you and let the Children of Israel go with you,' [7:134]

Another prime example is the sons of Ya'qub (a):

قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا اسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا خَاطِئِينَ قَالَ سَوْفَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

The [brothers] said, 'Father, ask God to forgive our sins- we were truly in the wrong.' He replied, 'I shall ask my Lord to forgive you: He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.' [12:97-98]

Moreover, we read in [Sahih al-Bukhari 1010](#):

حَدَّثَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْأَنْصَارِيُّ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، عَنْ مُنَادٍ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَنَسٍ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، أَنَّ عُمَرَ بْنَ الْخَطَّابِ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - كَانَ إِذَا حَفَّتُوا اسْتَسْقَى بِالْعَبَّاسِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ فَقَالَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَتَوَسَّلُ إِلَيْكَ بِنَبِيِّنَا فَتَسْقِينَا وَإِنَّا نَتَوَسَّلُ إِلَيْكَ بِعَمِّ نَبِيِّنَا فَاسْقِنَا. قَالَ فَيُسْقَوْنَ.

Narrated Anas: Whenever drought threatened them, `Umar bin Al-Khattab, used to ask Al-Abbas bin `Abdul Muttalib to invoke Allah for rain. He used to say, "O Allah! We used to seek (na'tawasulu) our Prophet to invoke You for rain, and You would bless us with rain, and now we ask his uncle to invoke You for rain. O Allah ! Bless us with rain." And so it would rain.

This hadith eliminates the whole doubt behind the premise of this question. For why would the companions seek *tawassul* through the Prophet (s), why not call upon God alone? Why did the Prophet (s) not tell them, go approach God alone? This therefore exposes the hypocrisy of the individuals who attack this practice, bringing forth doubts that hold no value. You can only approach Allah (swt) when it comes to Ahlulbayt (a.s), but for others it is okay you can seek *tawassul* through them. Why the hypocrisy? People who criticize the Shi'a seem to be very proud of themselves when they ask these questions, pretending to refute this whole concept, but why the hypocrisy? The companions did it as well, so why weren't they questioned why they didn't approach God alone?

The answer is evidently clear, one who is closer to Allah (swt) will help you get closer to Allah (swt) Himself. Sometimes our sins hold us back from being able to approach our Lord, hence we seek one who is closer to God who can help us gain proximity to Him.

Why the need for intermediaries when God is all-forgiving?

Many ask why there is a need for approaching the *awliya* when Allah (swt) is infinite in his mercy and generosity and so forth. There are multiple answers:

First reason

It is not just to let the *du'a* of the *dhalimeen* be equal to the *awliya*. If they are both treated equally it makes the desire to be from the *awliya* much less and it would be seen as unfair. Moreover, the *dhalimeen* could ask for evil things such as wanting to destroy the army of the *awliya* for example. Hence there is a necessity for one *du'a* to be superior to another. This is why we read in the Qur'an:

أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ

But would We treat those who believe and do good deeds and those who spread corruption on earth as equal? [38:28]

أَفَنَجْعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ

Should We treat those who submit to Us as We treat those who do evil? [68:35]

It is clear the pious cannot be equal to the wrongdoer, hence there is a level for each person depending on their virtue. As for the wrongdoer who has been guided, he must still climb the ladder of virtue before he can be called a pious, and the strongest way to do this is to seek intermediaries. Sometimes, both people could be pious but one would seek the intercession of the other, and this is because other things affect their level of virtue, such as *taqwa* or knowledge as we read:

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Say, 'How can those who know be equal to those who do not know?' Only those who have understanding will take heed. [39:9]

Second reason

The normal servants worship God to be protected from the fire or to be entered into heaven. This is the norm for most people, to simply worship God to get something out of it. While this form of worship is not problematic at all, and God will accept this worship, the superior worship is to worship God because he is truly worthy of it. It would not make any sense for God to equally reward these individuals as one is clearly more virtuous than the other and God is more just than to reward 2 unequal people equally as said all over the Qur'an.

To give them a “better” heaven won't fulfill this either, because heaven was never what the servant was seeking, so they would be rewarded with less than what they worshiped for. This is why God rewarded them with one which is equal to their level of worship, which is to be the means to Him. You cannot worship God without believing in Musa (a), Nuh (a) etc... This is because Allah (swt) has made them a means to you that is obligatory for you to believe in. So the reason is to honor the *awliya* and reward them for their level of worship.⁷

⁷ If you would like to listen to the argument in more detail, refer to [al-Sayed Baqir al-Qazwini's](#) video.

Why do you ask God on behalf of someone?

Amongst the claims that Ibn Taymiyyah has made, is the prohibition of asking Allah (swt), pleading him, for the sake of someone. To explain this further, we read in the Qur'an:

الصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْمُنْفِقِينَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ

The patient and the truthful and the obedient and the charitable and those who ask forgiveness in the morning times. [3:17]

The Qur'an has praised this group, giving them such titles to own. Now, if someone in the middle of the night, turns towards Allah (swt) and pleads by the right of this group and says:

اللهم إني أسئلك بحق الصابرين والصادقين والقانتين والمنفقين والمستغفرين بالأسحار اغفر لي ذنوبي

Oh Allah, I ask you on behalf of the patient, the truthful, the obedient, the charitable and those who ask forgiveness in the morning times [to] forgive my sins

How can such an act be considered polytheistic? What in this sentence would equate to worshiping besides Allah (swt)? Who has been put as partners besides God? When the Qur'an mentions what the *mushriks* would think, it would state:

وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ اشْمَأَزَّتْ قُلُوبُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

And when Allah alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the hereafter shrink, and when those besides Him are mentioned, they are joyful [39:45]

So how could the believer be considered to be amongst those as this verse mentions, who take pride and joy when a Lord besides God is mentioned? Rather, they are pleading to God alone, on behalf of those whom God has bestowed love upon.

Objection 1

Some have argued there exists *ijma'* of the sunni scholars that this act is forbidden. However this is a lie, it's well known many Ashari scholars throughout the periods have accepted this form of *tawassul*. Moreover, the early scholars such as the 4 Imams have never given *fatwas* regarding this issue. So on what basis can one even argue that there is *ijma'*? There is no proof for this whatsoever that scholars throughout all periods of Islam have unanimously rejected this.

Objection 2

Some have said that asking Allah by the right of a creature is not permissible because the one who is created has no right before the Creator. However, there is no basis nor proof for such a reasoning. On the contrary we read from [Mishkat al-Masabih 3089](#)

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: "ثَلَاثَةٌ حَقُّ عَلَى اللَّهِ عَوْنُهُمْ: الْمُكَاتَبُ الَّذِي يُرِيدُ الْأَدَاءَ وَالنَّاسِحُ الَّذِي يُرِيدُ الْعَفَاةَ وَالْمُجَاهِدُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ". رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ وَالنَّسَائِيُّ وَابْنُ مَاجَهَ

Abu Huraira reported God's Messenger as saying, "There are three whom it is **right for God to help**: the slave whose master has agreed to let him buy his freedom when he wishes to pay the sum, the one who marries desiring to live a chaste life, and the one who fights in God's path."⁸

So we see that indeed the created does have a right before God in many cases.

كَذَلِكَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نُنَجِّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

It is **binding on Us** [that] We [cause] the believers to succeed. [10:103]

وَكَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

And helping the believers is **binding upon Us**. [30:47]

No creature has any right upon Allah **except** if Allah, due to His Mercy and Favor, justifies it upon Himself and shows that His creatures as creditors and Himself as debtors.

⁸ [Tirmidhi](#), [Nasa'i](#) and Ibn Majah transmitted it.

Doesn't the Qur'an forbid this?

Many make the false presupposition that the verses in the Qur'an which command that you cannot supplicate to other than Allah (swt) is proof for the forbidding of these practices. However, these people have not understood *tawassul* at all. The verses regarding these acts all use the word دعاء in different forms. This word holds multiple meanings, for example:

أَدْعُوهُمْ لِبٰتِّهِمْ

Call them after their fathers [33:5]

وَيَقُومَ مَا لِي أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى النَّجْوَةِ وَتَدْعُونِي إِلَى النَّارِ

My people, why do I call you to salvation when you call me to the Fire? [40:42]

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا

He said: 'O Lord! I called my nation [to you] day and night'.

The verses above use forms of the word دعاء which is the word that's always used in the verses to prohibit *tawassul*. However, this verse clearly does not refer to that, rather it uses the literal word دعاء which is general to just calling someone towards something, hence the word *da'wah* roots from *du'a*.

The meaning could also refer to worship, for example:

وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا كَبْسِطٍ كَفَيْهِ إِلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِبَلِّغَهُ

Those they call upon besides Him give them no answer any more than water reaches the mouth of someone who simply stretches out his hands for it- it cannot do so [13:14]

We read from [Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Vol. 4, pg. 566](#):

(والذين يدعون من دونه) أي ومثل الذين يعبدون آلهة غير الله

(And those they call upon besides him) is the example of those who worship Gods other than Allah.

This is just one example, but all these verses that mention this are like this and all *mufasssireen* agree upon this meaning. This verse refers to worship because the Quraysh,

as the ayah evidently says, used to supplicate (or call upon) to their idols in the belief they were partners of God hence the ayah says ⁹من دونه.

This means you can call upon someone, so long as you believe they depend upon God and not put them as equal to him. But in practical glorifications like *ruku'* and *sujood*, which is accompanied with the belief in the divinity of the person, it implies worship. For the case of instances where Angels have prostrated to Adam (a.s) or others, their prostration was still to Allah (swt) just through an intermediary. This is in the same sense that when we prostrate to the *Kaaba*, we are doing it to Allah just through an intermediary which represents Allah (swt).

Furthermore, some verses such as 40:60 show that that dua in some aspects is worship, where Allah (swt) says to make *du'a* to him, and follows this up by worship.

Hence these verses hold no relevance when discussing the issue of *tawassul* or *istighatha* because they're not said to be independent.

Some bring the objection that seeking help from the dead contradicts the following verse:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

It is You who we worship and You whom we seek help from [1:5]

However, this verse is in reference to independence, in that all help comes from God alone. It doesn't mean seeking help from medicaments is *shirk*, it means ascribing independence to them is *shirk*. The verse is not related, as explained earlier the *awliya* are not independent.

Another verse some people bring forth is the following:

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَؤُلَاءِ شَفَعُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

They worship besides Allah others who can neither harm nor benefit them, and say, "These are our intercessors with Allah." [10:18]

At first glance someone may assume this therefore means interceding through intermediaries is *shirk*. However, this is a misunderstanding of the verse. The Quraysh used to worship idols, they used to invoke them and believe they could answer without the need to depend on God - this is why God says in the verse: ويعبدون من دون الله

So how could a comparison be made when the Quraysh used to worship idols and give the excuse they are intercessors, while the monotheist worships God alone and puts none

⁹ Important to remember the Quraysh did not believe in one God, so they called upon a statue believing this statue can help it without the need of God himself (i.e., independent).

beside him - this is the correct way to do intercession not through the false understanding of the Quraysh. This is why we read:

من ذا الذي يشفع من عنده إلا بإذنه

Who could possibly intercede with Him **except by His permission? [2:255]**

It is evident the Qur'an makes a clear distinction between *shirk* and *shifa'a*. Intercession is allowed (if God permits it) without a shadow of a doubt unless you reject this verse, which therefore means the understanding of the previous verse is incorrect. If someone asks how do we know the *awliya* have been given permission to intercede for us, we know this because a muslim (as per islamic law) is allowed to intercede for another muslim, while intercession for a *kafir* is not allowed.

If it is argued muslims can only fulfill this on *Qiyamah*, can the opponent provide sufficient proof for this argument? It is known in many cases that *intercession* has occurred amongst the people of companions such as in [Mishkat al-Masabih 1661](#):

'A'isha reported the Prophet as saying, "If a company of Muslims to the number of a hundred pray over a dead person, all of them interceding for him, **their intercession for him will be accepted."**

If the opponent now changes the argument that intercession is only allowed while someone is alive, then can they provide sufficient evidence for such? We advise our readers to continue reading as we will cover more points later on regarding the issue of the dead

How does this differ from the Quraysh?

Ibn Taymiyyah was the first one to compare the practices of the polytheists with that of the faithful whilst presuming that both are in reality the same. If we want to critique the beliefs of the faithful using the aforementioned verses, then it is upon us to first accurately analyze the specificities of the beliefs of the polytheists in order that we may determine to what extent the two are similar. We shall therefore observe verses that discuss the beliefs of the polytheists or address the polytheists, and then compare them with the practices and beliefs of the faithful.

First difference

The acts of Quraysh would involve worshiping idols to seek proximity to a non-existent God. They believed this non-existent God to **not** be one in essence, nor did he send prophets or commands, nor did he guide, nor would he resurrect everyone at a prescribed period of time. Therefore, the polytheists did not believe in the hereafter, they would reject the prophets and would reject the revelation of divine scriptures and would not admit any obligations from their lord. In many verses, Allah has unveiled their delusions:

They consider it odd that there should come to them a warner from among themselves, and the faithless say, 'This is a magician, a mendacious liar. Has he reduced the gods to one god? This is indeed an odd thing!'. [38:4-5]

but they said, 'Shall humans be our guides?!' So they disbelieved and turned away, and Allah was in no need [of their faith] and Allah is all-sufficient, all-laudable. [64:6]

Therefore, the God that the polytheists were worshiping was nothing but an illusionary figure, lacking external reality, a figment of their imagination and conception of their minds, hence their words about their worshiping their idols as an excuse they are intercessors was nothing but a delusional argument of theirs, for they did not really believe in the real God such that they could reach proximity to Him.

Perhaps it is for this reason that Allah describes them as liars and disbelievers, for He says in verses with their excuses: "Indeed Allah does not guide someone who is a liar and an ingrate."

On the other hand, the Shi'a all believe in these fundamental concepts that are necessary to believe in to be a Shi'a and recognise Allah (swt) as one with no partners. The acknowledgement of the real existence of God gives you the ability to actually, *unlike the Quraysh who seeked nearness to an imaginary God they made up in their minds*, seek nearness to Him with His permission as mentioned in many verses such as:

لَا يَمْلِكُونَ الشَّفْعَةَ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ عَهْدًا

None will have [power of] intercession except he who had taken from the Most Merciful a covenant. [19:87]

Second difference

The believer does not believe power comes from anything except Allah (swt);

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا

Whoever seeks power [should know that] power entirely belongs to Allah [35:10]

Where as the Quraysh used to believe the source of power would come from other than Allah (swt):

وَاتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ آلِهَةً لِيَكُونُوا لَهُمْ عِزًّا

They have taken gods besides Allah that they may be a [source of] power to them [19:81]

It is clear that the believer does not worship the *awliya* through whom he intercedes, but the Quraysh did and saw them as independent powers while the believer does not. Perhaps Ibn Taymiyyah's comparison of the believers to the Quraysh came from his delusions about the lies he perpetuated in his books, such as in [Minhaj al-Sunnah, Vol. 1, pg. 99 - 100](#):

فلا يقولون: إنه خالق كل شيء، ولا إنه على كل شيء قدير، ولا إنه ما شاء كان، وما لم يشأ لم يكن .

They (the Shi'a) do not say: He is the Creator of everything, nor that He has power over everything, nor that He wills what He wants, and what He does not will.

However, it's known that none of the Shi'a from the firsts until the present have ever made this claim, rather it's part of the many delusions Ibn Taymiyyah had made while writing his book.

Third difference

The Quraysh would seek intercession through idols of which have no power to intercede nor power to hear. For example:

وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الشَّفَعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

Those gods they invoke besides Him have no power of intercession, unlike those who bore witness to the truth and recognized it. [43:86]

Unlike the Quraysh, the monotheist seeks the intercession of those who have the power to intercede for him and have the power to reply as previously shown.

It is therefore clear, that no possibility exists to compare the practice of a monotheist with that of a polytheist, or to adjudge that the specificities of their mental workings and doctrinal beliefs are the same, or accusing a monotheist with polytheism in an ad-hoc manner and without proof. Hence, I will mention some important points:

First point

It is crucial that when accusing others of a crime as little as lying, clear evidence must be established against them. Bigger crimes such as *zina* hold a penalty to accuse without evidence and *takfir* can lead to one holding a status similar to an apostate. We could only imagine the consequence of wrongly accusing one of *shirk*, the biggest crime a human can do.

Second point

During the lifetime of the Prophet (s), when the *Sahaba* would request for his intercession, or would seek blessings from parts of his body or clothes or would use him as an intermediary when supplicating to Allah for the fulfillment of their needs, and similarly even after his (s) demise, they were of the belief – like every believing monotheist – that worship is exclusive to Allah but these practices were not considered as a type of worship whereas the polytheists would worship their intercessors because they had taken them as deities, as Allah says,

أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ

We only worship them so that they may bring us near to Allah [39:3].

It is here that the principal difference between the faith of the believers and the delusion of the polytheists come to fore. So, what does it even mean to compare the two, comparing the Muslim and the Polytheist, whilst the difference between the two is so clear?

Third point

It is not necessary for an action of a person to be considered polytheism by the mere accompanying with the action of Allah, and it is also not necessary to consider this as going against *Tawhīd*, for there are many instances in the Quran where Allah has supported this [i.e., instances whereby an action is attributed to both Allah and others]. He has given to himself and the Prophet (s) the attribute of ‘enricher’ (*mughni*).

وَمَا نَقَمُوا إِلَّا أَنْ أَغْنَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ

and they were vindictive only because Allah and His Apostle had enriched them out of His grace. [9:74]

Based on the monotheistic outlook, these matters are not considered as ascribing partners to Allah, because they are all actions under the action of Allah and not in line with it (i.e., all the creatures in this system do not possess anything essentially and they do not give or have an impact except with the permission of Allah).

How can the dead hear you?

It's a false assumption that the dead cannot hear. A good example is Prophet Salih (a.s) addressing his people who were killed:

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جِثْمِينَ قَتَوْنِي عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَوْمَ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَاتِي رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُحِبُّونَ
النَّاصِحِينَ

An earthquake seized them: by the next morning **they were lying dead** in their homes.

So he turned away from them, saying, '**Oh my people (Ya Qowmi)**¹⁰, I delivered my Lord's messages to you and gave you sincere advice, but you did not like those who gave sincere advice.' [7:78-79]

Also, Prophet Shu'ayb (a.s) had done the same thing as we read in

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جِثْمِينَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعْبًا كَأَن لَّمْ يَغْنَوْا فِيهَا الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعْبًا كَانُوا هُمُ الْخَاسِرِينَ قَتَوْنِي عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَوْمَ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَاتِي رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ فَكَيْفَ آسَأُ عَلَى قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ

So the earthquake seized them, and they became within their home [corpses] fallen prone. Those who denied Shu'ayb - it was as though they had never resided there. Those who denied Shu'ayb - it was they who were the losers. And he [i.e., Shu'ayb] turned away from them and said, "**O my people (Ya Qawmi)**, I had certainly conveyed to you the messages of my Lord and advised you, so how could I grieve for a disbelieving people?" [7:91-93]

Another example is the Prophet (s) speaking to the dead on Badr in [Sahih al-Bukhari 1370](#):

Narrated Ibn `Umar: The Prophet (saw) looked at the people of the well (the well in which the bodies of the pagans killed in the Battle of Badr were thrown) and said, "Have you found true what your Lord promised you?" Somebody said to him, "**You are addressing dead people.**" He replied, "You do not hear better than they do but they cannot reply."

Some try to argue that this incident above only is specific to the kuffar that were killed at badr. However, there is no basis for this claim other than speculation. We see another example of the Prophet (s) going to graveyards and saying in [Sunan Abi Dawud 3237](#):

Narrated Abu Hurairah: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) went out to the graveyard and said: Peace be upon you, inhabitants of the dwellings who are of the community of the believers. If Allah wills we shall join you.¹¹

¹⁰ A question that is to be asked, is why is 'Ya Ali' *shirk* but when Salih (a.s) said 'Ya Qawmi' who were *kuffar* not *shirk*? How do you solve this inconsistency?

¹¹ A similar tradition in [Sunan an-Nasa'i 2039](#); [Sahih Muslim 974a](#)

On the contrary, other reports make it clear that all people, whether killed at badr or not, can hear such as in [Sahih Muslim 2870b](#):

Anas b. Malik reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: When the dead body is placed in the grave, he listens to the sound of the shoes (as his friends and relatives return after burying him).¹²

In fact, even Ibn Taymiyyah points this out in his [Majmu al-Fatawa, Vol. 12, pg. 492](#):

وأيضاً فإن السلف أخطأ كثير منهم في كثير من هذه المسائل ، واتفقوا على التكفير بذلك ، مثل ما أنكروا بعض الصحابة أن يكون الميت يسمع نداء الحي

And indeed many of the Salaf made mistakes in many of these matters, it agreed this does not mean we can takfir them over these matters, for example some Sahaba denied that the dead can hear the call of the living.

There are many more sources one can bring to prove that indeed the dead can hear, these were some occasions and reports that make it very evident. Some bring forth some verses of the Qur'an which indicate that the dead can't hear:

إِنَّكَ لَا تَسْمِعُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَلَا تَسْمِعُ الْأَعْمَىٰ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ

You certainly cannot make the dead hear 'the truth'. Nor can you make the deaf hear the call when they turn their backs and walk away. [27:80]

Dr. Mustafa Khattab accurately translated this with his commentary of 'the truth'. The dead are in reference to those who are spiritually dead, and the deaf are in reference to those who are close-minded, hearing refers to knowing the truth.

We read from [Sahih al-Bukhari 1371](#) regarding this verse:

Narrated `Aisha: The Prophet (s) said, "They now realize that what I used to tell them was the truth and Allah said, 'Verily! You cannot make the dead hear nor can you make the deaf hear (27:80)'".

In the hadith above, Rasullullah (s) is talking about *kafirs* who have died, and then he mentions this ayah. What this means is that he points out you can't make people accept the truth, some people are just like the dead, UNABLE to accept the truth. Salafi scholars make this false assertion as well as other scholars, that this points to the dead unable to interact. They make the argument 'The Quran is making a comparison between people who cannot

¹² This hadith indicates that the dead hearing you is possible and interactions are possible, hence arguing the dead are completely still is false and not in line with the Sunnah. If it is argued they can ONLY hear the footsteps and nothing else, then again on what basis do they make this? The example of the kuffar at Badr and Salih (a) show that the dead can hear more than just footsteps.

hear the truth and the dead, implying the dead can't hear'. This is false because he believes hearing means to literally hear, while rather it means to be able to accept truth.

The accurate comparison here is between how people are unable to accept the truth just like dead people who cannot accept the truth.

Another frequent verse brought about is the following:

إِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوا دَعَاءَكُمْ وَلَوْ سَمِعُوا مَا اسْتَجَابُوا لَكُمْ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُونَ بِشِرْكِكُمْ وَلَا يُنَبِّئُكَ مِثْلُ خَبِيرٍ

If you call them they cannot hear you; if they could hear, they could not answer you; on the Day of Resurrection they will disown your idolatry. None can inform you [Prophet] like the One who is all aware. [35:14]

This is referring to the idols the Quraysh would worship, the idols do not have the capability of interceding for us nor do we have the capability to perceive their form of living. It isn't talking about the *awliya* who have passed away. Moreover, this ayah uses 'دعاء' which we previously explained to mean worship. (Yes the Quraysh worshiped idols refer to 39:3).

Furthermore, it's incorrect to use this to justify the Salafi beliefs. This is because the verse merely implies that idols can't hear you, nowhere in the ayah does it even mention dead people. We ask a Salafi to show us where it mentions 'dead people' in this verse? Otherwise, this has nothing to do with *tawassul* but rather to do with worshipping idols.

Does this mean the dead are all-hearing?

This is among the few silly objections people today make, while these arguments were never used in the past, not even by the first - Ibn Taymiyyah himself.

When Allah (swt) attributes to himself to be all-hearing, this is not a literal understanding of hearing as to hear is to receive sounds and Allah (swt) does not receive sounds, this would be limiting God because you're arguing he depends upon creation (i.e., sounds) in order to be aware of things. Rather, this is just a scope of his omniscience. God is all-knowledgeable, him being all-hearing is just a scope or another view on this knowledge (i.e., hearing refers to having knowledge). Therefore, this (i.e., omniscience) cannot be attributed to the creation as creation itself cannot bare omniscience as you need to be a self-sufficient being for that.

In Islam, we have a concept called *'Alami al-Ghayb* - the world of the unseen. We do not know how certain things function, such as how does the Angel of Death take the souls of thousands of people simultaneously at the same time, or how Shaytan whispers to billions of people at the same time, or how the Prophet (s) returns the *Salam* to millions of his followers at the time etc... This is because it is above our understanding, and hence trying to understand it is pointless for it is called the 'unseen' for a reason. However, our ignorance and lack of knowledge does not therefore give us the right to attribute divine attributes to the Angel of death for example (*wal'ayathibillah*).

There are many miraculous events in the Qur'an, such as Sulaiman (a.s) controlling the winds, communicating with the ants. Also, there is the example of the mother of Musa (a.s) giving birth while her signs of pregnancy are completely hidden such having menstruations monthly and not having her stomach increase in size at all. Subhanallah, we ask these secular muslims of how this is possible? How can all these events occur when we want to limit our understanding of reality to our perceptions? If we say we cannot understand how these *awliya* are able to hear, this does not refute their ability to do so. In the same way, the previous examples given are not possible to be understood, yet none dare to reject that.

We read in [al-Kafi](#) and [Kamil al-Ziyarat](#) that their bodies are taken up to heaven and heaven operates outside of our understanding. They receive our calls and salams and may intercede for us if God permits it. If one wants to argue it only applies to hearing a '*salam*' there must be a basis brought forth for this.

Can the dead benefit you?

Some Salafis are of the belief that the status of a dead person is like that of a stone or piece of wood, he cannot perceive nor hear anything, and therefore can neither harm nor benefit anyone, and if even the deceased could have any of these powers, it is beyond our understanding, hence a deceased and an idol are both equal in this regard. They base this belief off numerous verses in the Qur'an.

Firstly, this view holds no basis as Ibn al-Jawzi says in his [Kitab al-Ruh, pg. 8](#):

والسلف **مجمعون** على هذا ، وقد تواترت الآثار بأن الميت عنهم: **يعرف زيارة الحي له** ويستبشر به

And the salaf are in **consensus** on this [topic], as mass-transmitted reports [say] that the dead [concerning] them: **He (the dead one) is aware of the visitation of the living and he rejoices at this.**

Another critique to be made here is that it is well known that the deceased has the power to return a *Salam* if you send it to them and they have the power to reply but the way they do is above our understanding. This is confirmed by Ibn Taymiyyah himself in [Majmu' al-Fatawa, Vol. 24, pg. 185](#):

الحمد لله، نعم قد جاءت الآثار بتلاقيهم، وتساؤلهم وعرض أعمال الأحياء على الأموات ... وأما علم الميت بالحي إذا زاره وسلم عليه، ففي حديث ابن عباس قال: قال رسول الله ﷺ: «ما من أحد يمر بقبر أخيه المؤمن كان يعرفه في الدنيا فيسلم عليه، إلا عرفه، ورد عليه السلام». قال ابن المبارك: ثبت ذلك عن النبي ﷺ، وصححه عبد الحق صاحب الأحكام

Question: If living people have visited the dead ones, do they know about their visit and do they know about the death of any of their relatives or others?

Answer: Alhamduillah, yes traditions came with narrations about their meeting, their questioning and the display of the alive one... Regarding the awareness of the dead when the alive ones visit him and greet him, the narration of Ibn Abbas from Rasulullah (s): “No one passes by the grave of his believer brother, whom he used to know in this world, and greets him, but the dead would recognise him and greets him back.”

Let's ask a question now, is a '*Salam*' not a *du'a*? When we send our *salams* upon Rasulullah (s) or towards our brothers and sisters, are we not making a *du'a* for their safety? Why do we say 'peace be upon him' after naming a righteous servant such as a prophet? It is because we are making a prayer for their souls. So if we accept that a deceased can return the *salam* (i.e., make *dua* for you) why is it all of a sudden *shirk* for them to do other *du'as* such as praying for your forgiveness? Does this claim hold any basis in the Qur'an & Sunnah?

Moreover, we continue reading that during *al-Israa' wal-Mi'raj* in [Sahih Muslim 2375a](#):

Anas b. malik reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: I came. And in the narration transmitted on the authority of Haddib (the words are): I happened to pass by Moses on the occasion of the Night journey near the red mound (and found him) saying his prayer in his grave. It was also recorded in [Sunan an-Nasa'i 1633](#).

Shaykh [Assim al-Hakeem](#) says this refers to Musa (a) praying in the *barzakh*, meaning he had the capability to pray. This further adds upon the argument I presented previously, if they are able to perform prayers in the *barzakh*, how can we be considered *shirk* if we simply ask them to do prayer for us while we know they can?

In fact, this is a capability all prophets have had the ability to do as we read in [Musnad Abu Ya'la, Vol. 6, Pg. 147](#) by al-Mawsili:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: «الْأَنْبِيَاءُ أَحْيَاءٌ فِي قُبُورِهِمْ يُصَلُّونَ»

Anas ibn Malik who said: "The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: "The Prophets are alive in their graves praying."

So to answer the question: Yes the dead can benefit you through their intercession.

Can the dead provide you with sustenance (*rizq*)?

The belief of delegation given to the Imams (*tafwidh*) is rejected by the consensus of scholars. This is because a deistic view of God is rejected by the Qur'an, where God explicitly says he is the one who enriches people, provides sustenance, guides people etc... Hence this belief is a direct contradiction with the Qur'an. Here is a hadith of Imam al-Ridha (a) regarding the believers of this in [Uyun al-Akhbar](#):

قَالَ: مَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ أفعالنا ثُمَّ يَعْزِبُنا عَلَيْها فَقَدْ قَالَ بِالْجَبْرِ وَمَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فَوَّضَ أَمْرَ الْخَلْقِ وَالرِّزْقِ إِلَى حُجَّتِهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَقَدْ قَالَ بِالتَّفْوِيضِ وَالْقَائِلُ بِالْجَبْرِ كَافِرٌ وَالْقَائِلُ بِالتَّفْوِيضِ مُشْرِكٌ

He said, 'Whoever claims that Allah does our deeds and then punishes us for them has said *jabr* (predeterminism), and whoever claims that Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, has delegated the affairs of creation and provision to His *hujjaj* has said *tafwid* (delegation). The one who says *jabr* is a *kafir* and **the one who says *tafwidh* is a *mushrik*.**'

I further provide the words of al-Shaykh al-Mufid (r.a) regarding the position of this group in his [Tashih I'tiqadat al-Imamiya, pg. 133 - 134](#):

والمفوضة صنف من الغلاة، وقولهم الذي فارقوا به من سواهم من الغلاة اعترافهم بحدوث الأئمة وخلقهم ونفي القدم عنهم وإضافة الخلق والرزق مع ذلك إليهم، ودعواهم أن الله سبحانه وتعالى تفرد بخلقهم خاصة، وأنه فوض إليهم خلق العالم بما فيه وجميع الأفعال

The adherents of the doctrine of delegation (*al-Mufawwidah*) are a group of **extremists (*ghulat*)** who are distinguished from the others by their peculiar claim that though the Imams are [things] created. [They're] created beings and not eternal, yet they ascribe to them [the ability to] create and sustain. Also, they maintained that Allah, the Exalted, created them and ceased to create, delegating to them the creation of the world and what lay therein.

So the answer is no, the Imams can't directly provide you with sustenance, they can only distribute this sustenance. This is why Allah (swt) says Rasullulah (s) enriched the muslims:

وَمَا نَقْمُوا إِلَّا أَنْ أَغْنَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ

and they were vindictive only because Allah and His Apostle had enriched them out of His grace. [9:74]

This is also narrated in sunni books that indeed Rasullulah (s) distribute rizq. We read in [Al-Adab Al-Mufrad 844](#):

Abu Hurayra said, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, forbade for someone to have both his name and his kunya. He said, 'I am Abu'l-Qasim. Allah gives and I distribute.'"¹³

There is more that can be included here, but this will be sufficient. If it is argued that Rasullullah (s)'s affairs in distribution only applies in *dunya*, first they need to provide evidence for that claim, second it's known Rasullullah (s) is aware of the actions of his followers, so through that knowledge he can still distribute.

وَقُلْ أَعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

Say [Prophet], 'Take action! God will see your actions, **as will His Messenger** and the believers- and then you will be returned to Him who knows what is seen and unseen, and He will tell you what you have been doing. [9:105]

Some try to argue this only applies to this *dunya*, however this is baseless. One might argue that the verse mentions 'believers' so would it apply to them as well? Yes it does, and our *tafasir* makes mention that these believers here are the Ahlulbayt (a.s).

We read from [Majma' al-Zawa'id, Vol. 8, pg. 427](#) by al-Haythami:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: «إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَلَائِكَةَ سِيَّاحِينَ يَبْلُغُونَ عَن أُمَّتِي السَّلَامَ». قَالَ: وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: «حَيَاتِي خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ تَحْدِثُونَ وَتَحْدِثُ لَكُمْ، وَوَفَاتِي خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ تَعْرَضُ عَلَيَّ أَعْمَالِكُمْ، فَمَا رَأَيْتَ مِنْ خَيْرٍ حَمَدْتَ اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَا رَأَيْتَ مِنْ شَرٍّ اسْتَغْفَرْتَ اللَّهَ لَكَ»

Narrated Abdullah b. Mas'oud from the Prophet (s) who said: "My life is good for you. You will relate to me and it will be related to you, and my death is good for you, **for your actions will be presented to me**. If I see goodness, I will praise Allah (swt), and if I see other than that I will ask forgiveness from Him for you."¹⁴

It is known the Prophet (s) is alive in a way above our understanding, so the claim that he is no longer capable of distributing must hold a basis. If it is argued how he distributes, the answer is via his intercession or via (for example) his command of angels or whatever means it may be. It may also be possible he distributes via spreading knowledge by for example appearing in people's dreams.

It is known the Prophet (s) holds authority over not just the believers, but also the world itself because it was created for him. If one would like to critique this point, then let us bring forth Ibn Taymiyya's attestation of the possibility of this in [Majma' al-Fatawa, Vol. 11, pg. 98](#):

¹³ Another narration found in [Sahih Ibn Hibban, Vol. 13, pg. 134](#)

¹⁴ Some try to weaken [Abdul Majeed](#) but Ibn Ma'in authenticates him and others.

فإذا كان الإنسان هو خاتم المخلوقات وآخرها وهو الجامع لما فيها وفاضله هو فاضل المخلوقات مطلقاً ومحمد إنسان هذا العين؛
وقطب هذه الرحى وأقسام هذا الجمع كان كأنها غاية الغايات في المخلوقات فما يتكر أن يقال: إنه لأجله خلقت جميعها وإنه لولاه لما
خلقت فإذا فسر هذا الكلام ونحوه بما يدل عليه الكتاب والسنة قبل ذلك

If a person is the seal of all creatures and the last of them, and he is the gatherer of all that is in them and his excellence is the absolute excellence of all creatures, then Muhammad, this human being, is like the axis of this mill, and the sections of this gathering are as if they are the ultimate goal of all goals in creatures. It cannot be denied to say that **all creatures were created for his sake, and if it were not for him, they would not have been created.** Therefore, if this statement and its like are interpreted in a way that is supported by the Quran and the Sunnah before that, then it is acceptable.

Why visit graves?

A well-recorded practice of the Muslims since the time of the *Salaf* until even the *khalaf* is the idea of *ziyara*. In this, a person may go and visit a grave for a number of reasons which in turn allows us to become more pious and closer to Allah (swt). For example:

1. **Honor:** A believer may visit a grave of a loved one that has deceased to honor them or for his love for them, and visiting them often is regarded as highly *mustahab*. It's established that the dead are aware of the ones who visit them, and this view holds consensus amongst the *Salaf* as mentioned earlier. It's well known the Prophet (s) used to visit the grave of his mother in [Muslim](#) & [Nasai](#), and there's the example of al-Sayyida al-Zahraa (s.a) in [Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah, Vol. 3. pg. 582:](#)

عبد الرزاق عن ابن عيينة عن جعفر بن محمد عن أبيه قال : كانت فاطمة بنت رسول الله تزور قبر حمزة كل جمعة

Abd al-Razzak from Ibn 'Ayyana from Ja'far Ibn Muhammad (a.s) from his father (a.s) who said: Fatima bint Muhammad used to visit the grave of Hamza (a.s) every friday.¹⁵

Some hold the misconception the Prophet (s) forbade visitation of the graves, but this not entirely true, rather he allowed after some time because people would previously go to graves to worship them. We read from [Sahih Muslim](#), [Abu Dawod](#) and [Ibn Majah](#):

Ibn Buraida reported on the authority of his father that the Messenger of Allah (s) said: I forbade you to visit graves, but you may now visit them.

2. **Reminder:** A believer may visit the grave to remind himself of the certain truth, death. Sometimes it's important to remind yourself that there will be an end and to wake up from your *ghaflah* (distractions from dunya). This is why we read:

أَلْهَمُكُمْ التَّكَاثُرَ حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ

Competition for worldly gains distracts you [from Allah], until you visit the graves.
[102:1-2]¹⁶

3. **Tabarruk:** A believer may visit the grave of a righteous to seek blessings from their graves, through these blessings he may get *du'as* answered or seek closeness to Allah (swt). The value of *tabarruk* is high, we read [Sunan Abu Dawood 4650:](#)

¹⁵ All the narrators here are *Thiqah* and Imam al-Baqir (a.s) is narrating from his forefathers hence this chain is not *mursal* unless the opponent is trying to claim he is doing *tadlis*.

¹⁶ Some try to interpret this verse differently, the same message is found in [Sunan Ibn Majah 1569](#).

The company of one of their men whose face has been **covered with dust by the Messenger of Allah (s)** is better than the actions of one of you for a whole lifetime even if he is granted the life-span of Noah.¹⁷

We further read in al-Ayni's [Umdat al-Qari, vol. 1, pg. 435](#):

وقال أيضا: وأما تقبيل الأماكن الشريفة على قصد التبرك، وكذلك تقبيل أيدي الصالحين وأرجلهم فهو حسن محمود باعتبار القصد والنية

And he (al-Shafi'i) said: As for kissing sacred places for the purpose of seeking blessings, as well as kissing the hands and feet of the righteous, **it is *hasan* (good) and praiseworthy** considering the intention and purpose

Different people may visit graves for different reasons, but these shall suffice for now as they're the main ones one may visit graves.

¹⁷ In [Sahih al-Bukhari 5670](#) the Prophet (s) healed someone by letting them drink his *ghusl* water. This was a common practice amongst the companions, where they sought blessings from what the Prophet (s) had touched.

Why have you raised graves?

A common objection that many Salafis bring up is the issue of the elevation of the graves. There are numerous reports which indicate that the elevation of the graves is indeed forbidden, so how can we reconcile with the fact that the Muslims throughout all the era's of Islam until just recently of about 100 or more years ago under the family of al-Sa'ud - the graves were destroyed. Is it possible that all the Muslims have somehow missed the fact that we are not allowed to elevate graves, but al-Sa'ud just so happened to know?

It is known that elevation of the graves of the *awliya* and building shrines for them is a means to honor them. To build over their shrines and protect anyone who visits it, is a well recorded practice of the muslims. Indeed, it is the sunnah of Rasullulah (s) and how he has honored his companions. For example, in [Sunan Abi Dawud](#):

When Uthman ibn Madhoon died, he was brought out on his bier and buried. The Prophet (ﷺ) ordered a man to bring him a stone, but he was unable to carry it. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) got up and went over to it rolled up his sleeves.

The narrator Kathir told that al-Muttalib remarked: The one who told me about the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: I still seem to see the whiteness of the forearms of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) when he rolled up his sleeves. He then carried it and placed it at his head saying: **I am marking my brother's grave with it**, and I shall bury beside him those of my family who die.

As we can see the Prophet (s) had raised the grave of his companion as a means to honor it and mark it. This is why we see later companions such as Sa'ad Ibn Abi Waqqas wanting his grave to be elevated as we read in [Sahih Muslim 966](#):

'Amir b. Sa'd b. Abu Waqqas said that Sa'd b. Abu Waqqas said during his illness of which he died: Make a niche for me in the side of the grave and set up bricks over me as was done in case of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ).

And also in [Bulugh al-Maram](#):

Al-Baihaqi transmitted on the authority of Jabir a similar narration and added, 'And his grave was raised one span from the ground.' Ibn Hibban graded it as Sahih.

From the Qur'an we can deduce from the following ayah:

فِي بُيُوتٍ أُذِنَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ تَرْفَعَ وَيُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا أَسْمَاءُ رُسُلٍ لَهُمْ فِيهَا بِالْغَدُوِّ وَالْأَصَالِ

In houses which God has permitted that they are raised and His name remembered in [them], glorifying him in the mornings and evenings. [24:36]

The word 'بيوت' refers to houses of the *awliya*. It does not necessarily refer to mosques as some commonly try to argue, this is because a house has a roof hence the *Kaaba* is called *Bayt Allah*. The verses of the Qur'an too show that by house, it is meant a place possessing a ceiling such as:

وَلَوْلَا أَنْ يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَجَعَلْنَا لِمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ سُقْفًا مِنْ فِضَّةٍ

And were it not that all people had been a single nation, We would certainly have assigned to those who disbelieve in the Beneficent God (to make) silver the roofs of their houses. [43:33]

While Mosques on the other hand did not have roofs at the time of the Prophet (s), they were actually made using leaves etc. For example, we read in [Sahih al-Bukhari 2018](#) that when it used to rain the entire Mosque would get wet because of the roof not being made of concrete material. This tradition is found in many different sources, another is narrated by Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (r.a) in [Sahih al-Bukhari 2040](#):

By Him Who sent Muhammad with the Truth, the sky was covered with clouds from the end of that day, and the mosque which was roofed with leafstalks of date palm trees (leaked with rain) and I saw the trace of mud and water over the nose of the Prophet (ﷺ) and its tip.

Ibn Umar narrates that this was kept up until Uthman bin Uffan decided to change it in [Sahih al-Bukhari 446](#):

In the lifetime of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) the mosque was built of adobes, its roof of the leaves of date-palms and its pillars of the stems of date-palms. Abu Bakr did not alter it. `Umar expanded it on the same pattern as it was in the lifetime of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) by using adobes, leaves of date-palms and changing the pillars into wooden ones. `Uthman changed it by expanding it to a great extent and built its walls with engraved stones and lime and made its pillars of engraved stones and its roof of teak wood.

It's recommended for a mosque to have an opening, hence its argued a Mosque is not included in the definition of a 'بيت'. Rather, as said earlier, it refers to the houses of the *awliya*. Infact, we read a very important tradition narrated in al-Suyuti's Tafsir [Durr al-Manthur, Vol. 6, pg. 203](#):

وأخرج ابن مردويه عن أنس بن مالك وبريدة قال : قرأ رسول الله هذه الآية في بيوت أذن الله أن ترفع فقام إليه رجل فقال : أي بيوت هذه يا رسول الله ؟ قال : بيوت الأنبياء . فقام إليه أبو بكر فقال : يا رسول الله هذا البيت منها ؟ البيت علي وفاطمة قال : نعم . من أفضلها .

Narrated from [Ibn Mardewah](#): Anas bin Malik and Buraydah narrated that Rasulullah (s) recited this verse: ‘and amongst houses is a house that Allah has ordered to be exalted’. A man stood up and asked: ‘O Prophet of Allah, which house is being referred to here?’ **He (s) said: ‘This refers to the houses of Prophets’**. Then Abu Bakr stood up and asked: ‘O Rasulullah, is this house one of them?’ **The house of Ali and Fatima’**. Rasulullah (s) replied ‘Yes, it is one of the best’.

This report can also be found with a very weak chain¹⁸ in [Tafsir al-Tha’labi, Vol. 29, pg. 273 - 274](#) narrated by the great Aban bin Taghlib (r.a) who is a companion of Imam al-Sadiq (a.s), whom the Sunnis weaken.

So we see in this ayah, it has permitted some graves to be raised and has allowed worship to be in them, so long only Allah (swt) is being worshiped.

There are more things that can be mentioned regarding this specific issue, however just for the sake brevity this will be sufficient.

Objections

There is a hadith attributed to Abi al-Hayyaj to Ali (a) in [Sahih Muslim](#), [Sunan al-Nasai](#), [Sunan al-Tirmidhi](#), [Sunan Abu Dawud](#), [Musnad Ahmad](#) and other sources saying:

Ali said to Abu Al-Hayyaj Al-Asadi: 'I am dispatching you with what the Prophet dispatched me: “That you not leave an elevated grave without leveling it, nor an image without erasing it.”

Chain analysis

1. Sufyan al-Thawri: A famous scholar for Ahlus Sunnah and a leader of a *Madhab*. However what has been reported about him is that he was a *mudalis*. We read from Ibn Hajar’s [Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, vol. 4, pg. 115](#):

وقال ابن المبارك حدث سفيان بحديث فجئته وهو يدلسه فلما رأني أستحي وقال نرويه عنك

Ibn al-Mubarik¹⁹ said: Sufyan narrated a hadith when I approached him, he was distorting it. When he saw me, he felt ashamed and said: We attribute it to you.

2. Habib ibn Abi Thabit: A Kufi from the *tabi'in*. Some accused him of *tashayyu*. We read from Ibn Hibban’s [Kitab al-Thuqat, vol. 4, pg. 137](#):

كان مدلسا

He was a *mudalis* (deceiver).

¹⁸ The *Muhaqiq* calls it *mawdh'u* (fabricated) and this is a common view amongst the sunnis.

¹⁹ Famous scholar amongst the Sunnis, he’s a mujtahid and well-respected.

Multiple other scholars likewise say this, such as Daraqutni, Ibn Khuzayma, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, al-Qattan etc. See [here](#).

3. Abul Wa'il: He was a Uthmani (from the nawasibs) per [Ibn Abi al-Hadid](#).

Matn analysis

The phrase ولا قبرا مشرفاً إلا سويته can be analysed as well. There are 2 words that we need to focus on: مشرفاً and سويته

- A. The word 'مشرفاً' is understood as 'elevated' by some, but the more authentic definition of this word is in reference to 'height'. We read from [Qamus al-Muhit, pg. 823](#)²⁰:

الشَّرْفُ مَحْرَكَةٌ: العُلُوُّ ... البعير سنامه

Al-Sharafu is its root [word]: [It means] height...and it's [derived] from the camel's hump

Therefore the word (مشرف) in absolute terms is called 'height' and in particular, that height which is in the shape of a hump of a camel (see picture [here](#)).

- B. The word 'سويته' means to make equal or to proportion. For example:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى

Who created and proportioned. [87:2]

Thus, 2 possibilities exist of the understanding of this hadith:

1. The Prophet (s) ordered Abi al-Hayyaj to destroy the elevated graves and level them to the ground.
2. The Prophet (s) ordered Abi al-Hayyaj to make the top of the grave even or flat, unlike the graves which are made in the shape of the hind of a fish or the hump of a camel.

Evaluation

The first possibility is problematic, because the hadith itself doesn't mention 'destruction' or anything related to that. As we examine both words, we see that neither indicates this. If the intended phrase was to mean 'to destroy' the hadith would've said 'إلا سويته بالأرض' which would then mean 'unless you leveled them [the graves] to the ground'. From that we would know that graves being demolished was the intended order. However, the hadith does **not** say that.

²⁰ Al-Qamus Al-Muhit is a famous comprehensive Arabic dictionary compiled by Persian lexicographer [al-Firuzabadi](#) (11th / 15th C.)

Secondly, why have scholars not interpreted this hadith as the *Salafis* do? We read from the book of al-Jaziri²¹, [Kitab al-Fiqh 'ala al-Madhahib al-'Arbi'a, vol. 1, pg. 486](#):

ويندب ارتفاع التراب فوق القبر بقدر شبر، ويجعل كسنام البعير، باتفاق ثلاثة، وقال الشافعية: جعل التراب مستوياً منظماً
أفضل من كونه كسنام البعير

It is recommended to raise the soil above the grave by about a hand's span and shape it like a camel's hump, according to the consensus of the three [schools]. The Shafi'i school [however] suggests that making the soil flat and even is better than shaping it like a camel's hump.

This therefore shows that the first possibility of this hadith is unlikely, and was not viewed by scholars throughout the centuries. The second possibility is far more likely and logical, it just means the top part of the grave should be even or flat, not that it should be leveled to the ground. It's interesting to note that Imam Muslim puts this [hadith](#) under the chapter [باب الأمر بتوسية القبر](#) and al-Nasai and al-Tirmidhi did the same. This title gives the meaning that the **surface** of the grave should be even and flat. If it meant that the graves should be made level to the ground then he would have named it as 'الأمر بتخريب القبور وهدمها'. This is because, in Arabic language if *سَوَّيْتَهُ* is ascribed to anything (like a grave) it means that the thing itself should be flat and even. There is no indication not that it should be made equal or leveled with anything (like ground), evidence for this interpretation is required.

There is another tradition in [Sahih Muslim](#) saying:

When we were with Fadala b. 'Ubaid in the country of the Romans at a place (known as) Rudis, a friend of ours died. Fadala b. 'Ubaid ordered to prepare a grave for him and then it was leveled; and then he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) commanding (us) to level the grave.

The key to understanding this tradition lies in acquiring the meaning of the word *سَوَّيْتَهُ* which possesses three possible meanings. Here are the three possibilities:

1. 'To destroy the structure over the graves' - This is false because the graves which were in Medina were not possessing structure or dome.
2. 'To level the surface of the grave to the ground' - This is against the Sunnah of the Prophet (s) which is conclusive that the grave should be above the ground by one span.
3. 'To surface the grave and make even the uneven portions and hence bring it out from the shape of the hind of a fish or hump of a camel'. This meaning is exact and precise and needs no reason for proving this interpretation.

²¹ Abd al-Rahman al-Jaziri was a famous egyption *Shafi'i* scholar & professor in Al-Ahzari University. In this famous 5 volume book, he compares differences in jurisprudence (*fiqh*) of the 4 Sunni schools of thought (*madhab*).

We read from al-Nawawi's [Sharh Sahih Muslim, vol. 7, pg. 52](#):

إن السنة أن القبر لا يُرفع عن الأرض رفعاً كثيراً ولا يُسنم بل يُرفع نحو شبرٍ ويُسطح

The Sunnah is that the grave should not possess excessive height above the ground and should not have the shape of a hump of a camel. However, it should be one span above the ground and should be even.

This sentence shows that the commentator of Sahih Muslim has derived the same meaning as we have derived from the word *سَوَّيْتَهُ*. That is to say, Imam Al-Nawawi recommended and advised that the surface of the graves should not possess the shape of the hind of a fish and they should be made uniform, flat and even, not that they should be leveled with the ground or that the grave and the structure on it should be destroyed.

Moreover our discussion is not about the grave itself but about construction and structures over the graves where people occupy themselves under the shade of these structures and recite the Qur'an, invocations and prayers. Which part of this sentence bears testimony for the destruction of the structures surrounding the graves which in fact facilitates the visitors to worship and recite Qur'an and protects them from outside environment.

Objection

We read from [Sunan Ibn Majah 1562](#):

It was narrated that Jabir said: “The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) forbade plastering over graves.”

We further read in [Sunan Ibn Majah 1563](#):

It was narrated that Jabir said: “The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) forbade writing anything on graves.”

These hadiths are narrated in many books of Ahlus Sunnah, you can find similar narrations in Musnad Ahmad, Sunan Abu Dawud, Sunan Nasai, and [al-Mustadrak al-Hakim, vol. 1, pg. 525](#) where he comments:

هذه الأسانيد ، صحيحة وليس العمل عليها فإن أئمة المسلمين من الشرق إلى الغرب مكتوب على قبورهم وهو عمل أخذ به اختلف
عن السلف

The tradition is Sahih but not practical because the Islamic leaders from East to West have been writing over the graves. This is a practice which the people have adopted from the Salaf.

So what's the Shia view of these hadiths?

Evaluation

In all the chains of transmission of this tradition, Ibn Jurayh and Abu Al-Zubayr have either both come together or at least one of them has been mentioned.

1. Ibn Jurayh - we read from [Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, pg. 405](#) by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani:

قال الدارقطني: تجنب تدليس ابن جُرَيْحٍ فإنه قبيح التدليس لا يُدلس إلا فيما سمعه من مجروح

Al-Daraqutini said: Keep away from the deception (*tadlis*) of Ibn Jurayh, for he is ugly in his deceit. He only engages in deception with what he has heard from a wounded (weak) person, presenting it as if it came from a trustworthy individual

2. Abu al-Zubayr: [Ibn Hajar](#) said he used to do *tadlis*.

Assuming that the chains of narration of this tradition are reliable, it does not indicate more than that the Holy Prophet (S) prevented construction over graves. However, preventing one thing is no proof of its being prohibited because prohibition sometimes is of *haram* type and sometimes of *makruh* type and prohibition has been mostly used in the *makruh* sense in the discourse of the Holy Prophet (S) and other religious leaders. We will further explain what the Shi'a scholars have said regarding such hadiths below.

Why do the Shi'a scholars permit the graves to be raised?

The Shi'a have narrated numerous hadiths regarding the prohibition of elevating the grave, including a hadith narrated in [al-Kafi](#) similar to the one by Abi al-Hayaj mentioned previously.

For example, the hadith in [al-Kafi](#) states:

Amir al-Mu'minin (a.s) has said: "Rasullulah (s) sent me to destroy the graves and pictures (forms)."

However, this hadith is not a *malawi* command. This is because it would only apply to those graves that he was sent to destroy, for the graves of the christians and jews were high and elevated. We know this for many reasons including the fact that this was not a command given to all the companions, but rather a specific expedition for Ali (a.s) as the hadith states it was a *بعث*.

The jurists have mentioned that the graves of the Prophets and the Imams (a.s) are excluded from this [ruling of] undesirability, rather— this is the case even with the graves of the scholars and righteous people, and this is due to a number of reasons which we will mention generally and then we provide a detailed explanation by Sayyid Muhammad Sa'eed al-Hakeem (r.a).

Reason 1: What is meant by "prohibited building" [over the graves], is if the grave is beneath the building and the walls, since it is considered a form of disrespect to the sanctity of the deceased, and this is supported [by the fact that] the narration also prohibited sitting on the grave, and sitting does not occur except whereby the grave would be beneath the person sitting on it, and this prohibition does not include the case if the building [is constructed] whereby the grave would be underneath the roof of the building and underneath the dome, in a way which the building would be around the grave, as it is commonly practiced.²²

Reason 2: The established practice of those who adhere to the law (*Sirah al-Mutasharri'a*) with regards to construction over their graves without anyone objecting to them on the basis of these narrations, and the clearest example of this is the Prophet's grave (s), for it has always remained built over and constructed throughout most historical periods. In *Ja'fari fiqh*, if an act is practiced during the times of the Imams (a.s) and no one objects to it, then it is considered a permissible act for the Imam would've informed us otherwise.

²² Refer to Majma al-Fa'ida, vol. 2, pg. 501 for details.

Reason 3: Building over their graves is a way of honoring the Islamic rituals and elevating their status, and a method of acquiring many religiously expedient things. These are the words of numerous scholars.²³

Reason 4: The reasoning behind the undesirability of building over graves is due to the restriction of the people's access to gravesites, thus it is not undesired to build [over it] if the grave were to be on privately owned land, where no one would be restricted to other graves around it.²⁴

Reason 5: These narrations which prohibit [this act] are constricted to the general [public] and do not apply to the graves of the Imams (a.s) but rather it discusses the general case.²⁵ So this ruling would not apply to the Imams, since they have an exemption to this rule as mentioned in, for example, the verse 24:36 where numerous sources state they are regarding the Imams.²⁶

And al-Sayyid al-Hakim (r.h) stated in his *Misbah al-Minhaj*, vol. 7, pg. 409:

«It is not far-fetched [that] the undesirability is lifted or crowded out with the presence of a religious purpose, such as the glorification of religious rituals and the like, as is appropriate due to what has been mentioned in the reliable [narration] of Yūnus.²⁷ Hence, it is not far-fetched to make an absolute exception for the one whose building of his grave and construction of it is [regarded as] glorifying the religion such as the infallible Imams (upon them be peace), scholars, and righteous individuals. On the contrary, rather— it is recommended to construct their graves and to glorify them as per the customs of the sect, rather as per the custom of the Muslims in general, except for those who deviated from them and are amongst the people of innovation and misguidance.

And it is fitting with what was mentioned in the construction of the graves of the Imams (upon them be peace), such as what is in the report of Abi 'Āmir, the preacher of the people of al-Hijāz: "I visited Abā 'Abdillah (a.s), thus I said: 'What is the reward for the one who visits his grave— meaning the Commander of the Faithful (upon him be peace)— and constructs its dome?' He said: 'O Aba Āmara, my father narrated to me, from his father, from his grandfather— al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī (a.s) that the Prophet (upon him and his family be peace) said to him (i.e 'Alī): 'By Allah, you will be killed in the land of Iraq and be buried in it.' I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, what is the reward for the one who visits our graves, constructs and maintains them?' He said to me: 'O Aba al-Ḥasan, Allah has made your grave and the graves of your sons a part amongst the parts of Paradise, and Allah has also made the pure hearts among His creation and the elite among His servants to yearn for you and bear harm and humiliation for you, thus they construct your graves, increase their visits,

²³ Refer to al-Shahid al-Awwal's *Mawsuat*, vol. 5, pg. 421 and al-Majlisi's *Mir'at al-Uqool*, vol. 14, pg. 192. Also in *Madarik al-Ahkam*, vol. 2, pg. 150 & *Jami' al-Maqasid*, vol. 1, pg. 450.

²⁴ This is what Allamah al-Hili has mentioned in his *Muntaha al-Matlab*, vol. 7, pg. 403.

²⁵ This is what has been mentioned in *Riyad al-Masa'il*, vol. 1, pg. 448 & *Hada'iq al-Nadira*, vol. 4, pg. 132.

²⁶ Source of this can be found in *Tafsir al-Burhan*, in sources like [al-Kafi](#) and [Kamil al-Ziyarat](#).

²⁷ This report is found in *al-Kafi*.

and they are the ones, O ‘Alī, who are specially chosen for my intercession... O ‘Alī, whoever builds your graves and maintains them, it is as if he helped Sulaymān b. Dāwud in building Bayt al-Maqdis (i.e. the temple of Jerusalem)."²⁸ And [likewise] what is in the report of Ṣafwān in the narration of his visitation of the Commander of the Faithful (a.s), he said: "And he gave me Darāhim (coins) and I [by that] renovated the grave."²⁹ And [likewise] in the Marfū‘ [narration] of ‘Alī b. Asbāṭ: "Abu ‘Abdullah (a.s) said: ‘If you were to come to al-Gharī (i.e. al-Najaf), you would see two graves: A large grave and a small grave, as for the large one, then it is the grave of the Commander of the Faithful (a.s), and as for the small one, then it is the head of al-Ḥusayn (a.s).'"³⁰

Thus, the distinguishing factor between the two graves in being small and large— shows their identification by means of construction, not only the process of just gathering soil, which is subject to scattering and decay in exposed locations due to the blowing of the wind.

Rather, what contains the desirability of visiting the graves of the Imams (a.s) and their descendants fits for granted, the preponderance of identifying them through building and it's like, since the features of a grave that deteriorates and decomposes through the passing of time— rather, it's remaining as a pile of soil— does not suit the respect and veneration that is derived from the emphasis of its visitation. And then, the practice of the sect has been emphasizing on building it since the era of the Imams (a.s) and in their sight and hearing, rather the matter is clearer than that and more apparent [than the need to clarify].»

²⁸ This hadith can be found in al-Mazār of al-Mufīd, Vol. 1, pg. 227, and al-Tusi's Tahdhīb, Vol. 6, pg. 107.

²⁹ This hadith be found in al-Mazār al-Kabīr of Ibn al-Mashhadī, pg. 242

³⁰ This hadith can be found in Kamil al-Ziyarat.

Why have you built *Masjids* over graves?

A common objection that is brought forth by these *Salafis* which is a continuation of the previous question, is regarding structures built over graves. They strictly deem it as an impermissible act as Ibn Taymiyyah has said in his [Ziyarat al-Qubur, pg. 106](#):

قال علماءنا لا يجوز بناء المسجد على القبور

Our scholars said that it is not permissible to build a mosque over graves

By paying attention to the general principles of Islam, construction of mosques, in the vicinity of graves of the *awliya* and pious doesn't not have the least problem. This is because the purpose of construction of mosques is nothing more than worshiping Allah near the grave of His beloved who has become the source of receiving gifts. In other words, the aim of establishing mosques in these instances is that the visitors to the Divine leaders either before or after their *ziyarat*, perform their duty of worship over there in as much as neither *ziyarat* to graves is forbidden nor performing *salat*, after or before *ziyarat*. Therefore, there is no reason to believe that the construction of mosque near the graves of *awliya* for the purpose of worshiping Allah and performing divine duties is forbidden

It is strange the *Salafi fuqaha* have argued the impermissibility of these acts, for it is known the Prophet (s) himself had a structure built over his grave.

We read from [Mishkat al-Masabih](#) graded authentic by Albani:

'A'isha said: I used to enter my house in which God's messenger was and put off my garment, saying that only my husband and my father were there; but when 'Umar was buried along with them, I swear by God that I did not enter it without having my clothes wrapped around me owing to modesty regarding 'Umar.

So we see from this hadith Rasulullah (s) was buried, according to A'isha, in her house. So can they explain why there is a structure over his grave?

Moreover, paying attention to the story of Ashab Al-Kahf it is deduced that this action was a custom prevalent in the previous religions and Qur'an has narrated that without any criticism. When the incident of Companions of Kahf was disclosed to the people of that time after 309 years, they expressed their views about the ways of honoring the Companions of Kahf. One group said that a structure should be made over their grave (so that apart from honoring them their names, signs and memories are kept alive). Qur'an expresses this view as such:

فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا عَلَيْهِم بُيُوتًا

They said: Build a building over them [18:21]

Another group said that a mosque should be built over their grave (and in this way tabarruk sought). Sunni *mufasssireen* have suggested the first group was related to the polytheists and the suggestion of the second group was that of the monotheists.³¹ The Qur'an, while narrating this saying, says:

قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِم مَّسْجِدًا

**Those who prevailed in their affair said: We will certainly raise a masjid over them.
[18:21]**

If the construction of a mosque over or near the grave of the *awliya* is a sin or polytheism, then why did the monotheists make such a suggestion and why does the Qur'an narrate this without any criticism? Is not the mention of this in the Qur'an together with this silence, a testimony upon its permissibility? It is never proper that God narrates the sign of polytheism from a group but without specifically or implicitly criticizing them. Certainly not, God always does this and if one objects then let them answer why would God remain silent while polytheism is happening?

Objections

Many sunni hadiths narrate the prohibition of building structures over graves. Now we have to pay attention to the contents of the traditions and derive their correct meanings. As one verse can remove the ambiguity of another verse and help its correct interpretation, in the same way, one hadith too can remove the ambiguity and interpret another hadith. The *Salafis* have stuck to the apparent meaning of one tradition and relied on that in such a manner that any kind of mosque over or near the graves of the *awliya* is prohibited, whereas if they would have collected all the hadiths together, they would have understood the objective of the Prophet (s).

One evidence they cite for this is a hadith narrated in [Sunan Ibn Majah 1564](#):

It was narrated from Abu Sa'eed that the Prophet (ﷺ) forbade building structures over graves.

People use this narration prove that building over graves is *haram* because it says '*nahi*', however this report's authenticity cannot be established because the narrator 'وَهَيْبٌ' (wahb) is unknown of which wahb this is. Al-Dhahabi lists over 17 narrators in his Mizan who had this name, most of whom are *maj'hoor* or *da'if*.

More hadiths with different chains like this can be found, *all* weak in chains once investigated.

Both sunnis and shias narrate hadiths such as this one in [Sahih al-Bukhari 1390](#):

³¹ This was the view of al-Suyuti in *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*; al-Zamakhshari in *Tafsir al-Kashaf*; al-Nishapuri in *Ghara'ib al-Qur'an*

Narrated `Aisha: Allah's Messenger (s) in his fatal illness said, "Allah cursed the Jews and the Christians, for they built the places of worship at the graves of their prophets." And if that had not been the case, then the Prophet's grave would have been made prominent before the people. So (the Prophet (s)) was afraid, or the people were afraid that his grave might be taken as a place for worship.

However, scholars have not interpreted this to mean it's *haram* to build mosques over graves. We read from al-Jaziri's book on [pg. 487](#):

يكره أن يبنى على القبر بيت أو قبة أو مدرسة أو مسجد أو حيطان تحديق به - كالحيشان - إذا لم يقصد بها الزينة والتفاخر، وإلا كان ذلك حراماً، وهذا إذا كانت الأرض غير مسبلة ولا موقوفة؛ والمسبلة هي التي اعتاد الناس الدفن فيها، ولم يسبق لأحد ملكها؛ والموقوفة: هي ما وقفها مالك بصيغة الوقف، كقرافة مصر التي وقفها سيدنا عمر رضي الله عنه أما المسبلة والموقوفة فيحرم فيهما البناء مطلقاً، لما في ذلك من الضيق والتجوير على الناس، وهذا الحكم متفق عليه بين الأئمة، **إلا أن الحنابلة قالوا: إن البناء مكروه مطلقاً**، سواء كانت الأرض مسبلة أو لا، والكراهة في المسبلة أشد؛ وبذلك تعلم حكم ما ابتدعه الناس من التفاخر في البنيان على القبور، وجعلها قصوراً ومساكن قد لا يوجد مثلها في مساكن كثير من الأحياء، ومن الأسف أنه لا فرق في هذه الحالة بين عالم وغيره.

It is disliked to build a house, dome, school, mosque, or walls that overlook the grave, such as fences, if they are not intended for decoration or showing off. Otherwise, it would be prohibited. This applies if the land is not designated or reserved. The designated land refers to the area where people customarily bury their dead and no one has ownership over it. The reserved land refers to land that has been designated as a waqf (endowment) by its owner, such as the grave of our master Umar, in Qarafa, Egypt. As for the designated and reserved lands, construction is completely prohibited in both cases due to the narrowness and restriction it imposes on people. This ruling is unanimously agreed upon by the scholars. However, **the Hanbali school of thought states that construction is [only] disliked in all cases**, whether the land is designated or not, and the dislike is stronger in the case of designated land. This clarifies the ruling regarding the innovations that people have introduced by building extravagant structures on graves, turning them into palaces and dwellings that may surpass the homes of many living people. It is regrettable that in such cases, there is no distinction between a knowledgeable person and others.

So what is the correct understanding of this hadith?

Reply

We read from [Sahih Muslim 528a](#):

'A'isha reported: Umm Habiba and Umm Salama made a mention before the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) of a church which they had seen in Abyssinia and which had pictures in it. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: When a pious person amongst them (among the religious groups) dies they build a place of worship on his grave, and **then decorate it with such pictures**. They would be the worst of creatures on the Day of judgment in the sight of Allah.

The Jews and the Christians used to take these shrines as *qiblas* and do *sujood* towards them. The purpose of putting portraits near the graves of pious people was that people would worship them such that they considered the portrait and grave to be their qibla or still more, consider them as idols for worship and prostration. Worshiping idols is placing the idol in front and falling into humiliation before it.

This is shown by the fact that some traditions say: “Allah, do not make my grave as an idol which is subject to worship”. (Scroll up for reference) Therefore, the problem wasn't the *masjid* or a structure over a grave itself, for that doesn't equate to worship, the problem was that it would drag attention to his grave to make it appear as an object of worship.

This is why we read in Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani's [Fath al-Bari, vol. 1, pg. 626](#):

لما كانت اليهود والنصارى يسجدون لقبور الأنبياء تعظيماً لشأنهم ويجعلونها قبلة يتوجهون في الصلاة نحوها واتخذوها اوثاناً ، مُنع المسلمون في مثل ذلك فأما من اتخذ مسجداً في جوار صالح وقصد التبرك بالقرب منه لا للتعظيم ولا للتوجيه إليه فلا يدخل في الوعيد المذكور.

In view of the fact that the Jews and Christians were taking the graves of their Prophets as their qibla for the purpose of respect, and were paying attention towards them at the time of their prayers, their graves took the position of idols. For this reason the Muslims have been forbidden from this action. However, if someone constructs a mosque near the grave of a pious person for the purpose of seeking tabarruk and not for worshiping or paying attention towards them, he will never be included in this prohibition.

Objection

Some may ask if that is the question why did the Prophet (s) say: “If it was not for the fear that the grave of the Holy Prophet (S) would be taken as a mosque the Muslims would have kept his grave open”. (They would have not constructed a barrier around the grave)

The barrier's purpose is to prevent the people from worshiping the grave as an idol or taking it as a qibla. However, performing salat near the grave without worshiping the grave or considering it as a qibla is absolutely possible, whether there exists a barrier or not and whether the grave is open or hidden. This is because for fourteen centuries the Muslims

have been performing salat near the grave of the Holy Prophet (s) facing the qibla and have been worshiping Allah without the barrier preventing them from doing this action.

The barrier achieves this purpose in 2 ways:

1. It prevents the grave from being in the shape of the idol, since people are unable to see his grave.

2. The Ka'ba is a universal conventional qibla in all the conditions, making no difference if it is seen or not. The grave of the Prophet (s) is not a universal qibla, people will not know its direction if they're out of its reach. Hence such a deviation (i.e., taking his grave as the qibla) is more achievable if it is uncovered and seen; but when the grave is concealed the thought of prostrating over his grave even in the form of qibla is much less.

Why do you pray near graves?

Prayer near graves holds no intention to pray to the graves themselves. The whole reason people pray near graves is because near the graves of the *anbiya* indeed Allah (swt) has bestowed blessings upon it. We know this for people would seek blessings or *tabarruk* through the prophets themselves, such as via their *ghusl* water or their very clothing such as in the case of Yusuf (a.s). Due to this, people know that near the graves of the *anbiya* there are blessings Allah has bestowed upon their bodies, if it is argued after their death these blessings disappear then we ask on what basis is that claim made. For it is known that the earth does not consume the bodies of the prophets as said in [Sunan Abi Dawud](#).

Scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah prohibited acts of worship near graves. However, there are a few objections one can make.

لَتَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ مَسْجِدًا

For we will set up a place of worship over them. [18:21]

Their aim in considering the graves as mosques was to perform their religious obligations or, so to speak, their prayer and *du'a* over there. So why is it that the monotheists in the Qur'an have done this and are not condemned by God, but the monotheists today are?

وَاتَّخِذُوا مِنْ مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى

And appoint for yourselves a place of prayer on the standing-place of Ibrahim. [2:125]

If you place this verse before anyone they will not understand anything from it except that this place has achieved superiority and dignity due to the standing of Ibrahim (a) over this spot and perhaps his worshiping of Allah in that place. Due to the auspiciousness and dignity this spot possesses, the Holy Qur'an orders the Muslims to recite *salat* at that spot and essentially seek *tabarruk*.

When the *Qiyam* (standing) of Ibrahim (a) in one place gives holiness and dignity to such a place then, does not the burial of the bodies of martyrs and virtuous people become the source of dignity and excellence and does not prayers in such a place possess a greater value and *du'as* get better answered?

Aisha said she buried the prophet (s) in her house, so where would she pray? Is it not that she took the prophet's graveyard as a place of worship? How can this be justified then? If it held no significance why did Abu Bakr and Umar insist to be buried next to him?

Further on, this is the Prophet (s) acts as read in [Sahih Muslim](#):

Anas reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) observed prayer on the grave.

So no such argument can be made that worship near graves is forbidden, rather it was temporarily forbidden by the Prophet (s) because he didn't want his community to misunderstand monotheism, for the Christians used to worship graves and he didn't want the muslims to imitate them.

This is why hadiths say 'I have previously banned you from graveyards, but you may go to them now'.

Why do you name yourself Abd al-Hussain?

While this is not part of the topic of *tawassul*, it's still worth addressing.

In Arabic, *عبد* means to be enslaved to, or to be a servant of. If you're a servant [or slave] of someone, it merely means you must obey this individual. A man is only enslaved to his desires if he won't do anything but obey them. A man is a slave to a master, if he won't do anything but obey him.

This is why we Imam al-Ridha (a.s) says in [Uyun al-Akhbar](#) by al-Saduq (r.a):

قال علي ابن موسى عليه السلام: لكانا نقول: الناس عبيد لنا في الطاعة

Imam al-Ridha (s) said: What we have said is that people are submissive ('abeed) to us [in matters] of obedience

If the objection is made that even this is allegedly *shirk*, then let the accuser open the Qur'an and read:

وَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَيْمَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَائِكُمْ ۚ إِن يَكُونُوا فُقَرَاءَ يُغْنِهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَسِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Marry off the single among you and those of your male and female slaves who are fit [for marriage]. If they are poor, God will provide for them from His bounty: God's bounty is infinite and He is all knowing. [24:32]

The Qur'an mentions that you (a muslim) can have slaves (*'abad*), so why is it shirk for Ahlulbayt (a.s) to have *'abad*, but it's permissible for any other regular muslims to have it?

Therefore, no such objection can be made and the permissibility behind calling yourself a slave [or servant] of al-Hussain (a.s) or Ali (a.s) or al-Zahraa (a.s), so long the intention is merely obedience.

Why do you swear upon other than God?

Amongst the scholars of Ahlus Sunnah were those who have claimed that swearing upon other than Allah (swt) is minor *shirk*. All over the Qur'an, we find excessive mention of the act of swearing upon other than God. There are many examples to mention, for example:

وَالْتَيْنِ وَالزَّيْتُونَ

By the fig and the olive [95:1-3]

لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ

By your life, they were blindly wandering on in their intoxication. [15:72]

One might object, by saying it's okay if God swears by his creation but it's not permissible for us to swear by the creation. There are two problems;

1. Why would Allah (swt) consider it okay to set up partners for himself since the claim is that swearing upon other than Him is setting partners?
2. Why would Allah (swt) not make mention of this while He constantly swears by the creation. Why does he not inform us of this? The Qur'an never remains silent on polytheism, so why does it do so for this case specifically?

Another point to consider is the fact that the Prophet (s), the example for the believers and the one free of committing any *shirk*, swears by another man's father (i.e., other than God) in [Sahih Muslim](#):

Abu Huraira reported that a person came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and said: Messenger of Allah, which charity is the greatest in reward? (The Prophet said): **By your father, beware, you should give charity (in a state when you are) healthy and close-fisted, haunted by the fear of poverty, and still hoping to live (as rich). And you must not defer charity (to the time) when you are about to die, and would then say: "This is for so and so, and this for so and so." It has already become the possession of so and so.**³²

So how could the Prophet (s) be committing an act of *shirk* here? How could *shirk* be allowed for him? Now they narrate traditions where the Prophet (s) has said to not swear by your fathers, however this is not a *mawlawi* command. Rather this is just specific for the people such as Umar ibn al-Khattab whose forefathers were *mushriks*. You can't swear by your father if he is a *mushrik*, it doesn't mean you can't swear by your father entirely.

³² Also another narration [here](#).

Moreover, a binding oath, as our scholars have explained, can only be done with Allah (swt).³³

As for the Shi'a, there are many examples in duas, sermons and hadiths where the Imams swear by other than Allah (swt). Also, their companions also have done this such as in [Khisal](#) a companion of Imam al-Ridha (a.s) swears by Ahlul Kissa and the Imam does not condemn him or call him out for *shirk*.

An example is in [Nahj al-Balagha, letter 6](#):

وَأَمَّا مَا سَأَلْتَ مِنْ دَفْعِ قَتْلَةِ عُثْمَانَ إِلَيْكَ، فَإِنِّي نَظَرْتُ فِي هَذَا الْأَمْرِ، فَلَمْ أَرَهُ يَسْعُنِي دَفْعُهُمْ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا إِلَى غَيْرِكَ، وَلَعَمْرِي لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْزِعْ عَنْ غَيْرِكَ وَشِقَاقِكَ لَتَعْرِفَهُمْ عَنْ قَلِيلٍ يَطْلُبُونَكَ

As regards your request to hand over to you the murderers of `Uthman, I have thought over this matter and I do not find their handing over to you or to someone else possible for me. **By my life**, if you do not give up your wrong ways and disruptive acts you will surely know them...

Another is in [Sermon 25](#):

لَعَمْرُ أَبِيكَ الْخَيْرِ يَا عَمْرُو! إِنِّي عَلَى وَضْرٍ - مِنْ ذَا الْأَنْاءِ - قَلِيلٍ

O 'Amr! **By your good father's life**. I have received only a small bit of fat from this pot

As for traditions which may appear to say that swearing by other than God is forbidden, scholars have interpreted them to refer specifically to a binding oath.

³³ A binding oath is one which is said in court as testimony. If an oath is broken, kaffara must be paid. This is what [al-Sayyid al-Sistani](#) has mentioned. He also mentioned the permissibility behind *hifl* by the Prophet (s) and the Imams (a.s) in his [Minhaj al-Saliheen](#).



Chapter 2: Proving the permissibility of these acts

Having answered objections made, we will now present our case in the proof of the permissibility of these acts. A valid point that one should bring about is the fact that everything is *halal* until proven *haram*, so if the argument is that these acts are forbidden, it is the accuser who must provide proof for this. Nonetheless, we will discuss several points to prove from a sunni perspective the validity of *tawassul*.

The following points will be covered:

1. **Intercession on the day of Judgement**
2. **The wisdom behind the salawat**
3. **Life after death for the awliya and anbiya**
4. **The case of ‘Uthman bin Hunaif (r.a)**
5. **The case of ‘Umar bin Abd al-Aziz**
6. **The case of Ahmad bin Hanbal**

(You can press on the questions to jump to them)

Intercession on the day of Judgement

It is well known and attested by sects across all of Islam that intercession will be accessed for people after their death on the day of Judgement. There are numerous reports which show the Prophet (s) talking about his intercession prevailing amongst his Ummah. In fact the Qur'an speaks heavily about the greatness of intercession all over the Qur'an and the desperate desire that people will have to want to gain intercession. For example the disbelievers when they come to Judgement day they will say:

يَوْمَ يَأْتِي تَأْوِيلُهُ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ نَسُوهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ قَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ فَهَلْ لَنَا مِنْ شُفَعَاءَ فَيَشْفَعُوا لَنَا

On the Day it is fulfilled, those who had ignored it will say, 'Our Lord's messenger spoke the truth. Is there anyone to intercede for us now? [7:53]

The first they seek to gain is the intercession of others, but the Qur'an let's them know the value of intercession for them even if they hypothetically had gotten it is:

يَوْمَئِذٍ لَا تَنْفَعُ الشَّفَعَةُ إِلَّا مَنْ أذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَرَضِيَ لَهُ قَوْلًا

On that Day, intercession will be useless except from those to whom the Lord of Mercy has granted permission and whose words He approves. [20:109]

So we understand from this verse that on the day of Judgement there are particular people whose intercession will hold much value, but at the same time there will be others, even though they may be muslims, their intercession will be meaningless. Either of these people, if they intercede for a disbeliever, that intercession will hold no value nor any reward as intercession is strictly for a muslim.

Furthermore, we know from many verses that intercession holds no value unless Allah (swt) accepts it to take place. This means that in order for you to intercede for another person, it is ultimately Allah (swt) who will permit this intercession to hold value or not. This is something the Quraysh did not believe, but rather believed that intercession is not in need for their non-existent God to accept but any intercession these idols gave would be sufficient for them. We see examples of this with the Angels:

وَكَم مِّن مَّلَكٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ لَا تُغْنِي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ يَأْذَنَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَرْضَى

There are many angels in heaven whose intercession will be of no use until God gives permission to those He will, whose words He will accept. [53:26]

So now the question is, how is it possible that intercession is considered polytheistic in nature in this world, but considered monotheistic in the next? There is an obvious contradiction in the theology of the Salafis here for them to claim that intercession becomes monotheistic.

Shirk is assigning partners with Allah (swt), so how can assigning partners with Allah (swt) become monotheistic in nature in the next world if you claim it to be polytheistic in nature in this world? If the argument is that it's only polytheistic because the dead cannot hear, then we have answered this previously. This therefore leaves us off with no possible attacks about the legitimacy of seeking the intercession of the *awliya*. There is no argument to prove it to be 'polytheism' aside from the ignorance of scholars.

The wisdom behind the salawat

It is agreed upon by all muslims about the reward of the *salawat* upon Muhammad and his family being amongst the most powerful of all. We read from [Sifwat Salat al-Nebi, Vol. 1, pg. 997](#) by Al-Albani:

وقد قال علي رضي الله عنه: كل دعاء محبوب ؛ حتى يُصَلَّى على محمد وآل محمد

And Ali (as) has said: Every supplication is void until blessings [has been sent] upon Muhammad and his family.

So what is the reasoning for this? Why must a dua be said with the *salawat* to be answered? Is *Tawhid* not between you and Allah (swt) alone? Why would the Prophet need our blessings considering he is the highest ranking creature to have been created by God? While one answer may be to honor the Prophet (s), the stronger reasoning is to make the Prophet a mercy for us. What does that mean? We find the answer in [Sunan an-Nasa'i 1297](#):

Anas bin Malik said: "The Messenger of Allah (s) said: "Whoever sends blessings upon me once, Allah (swt) will send blessings upon him tenfold, and will erase ten sins from him, and will raise him ten degrees in status."

So we see here the blessings upon Muhammad (s) is something that benefits us on such a high degree. This is because this blessing is an act of intercession for us, Allah (swt) sends blessings upon us for sending blessings upon Muhammad. This means that we are seeking closeness to Allah through the Prophet, in this case sending blessings upon him. So how is it considered polytheistic when we aim to seek closeness to Allah through the Prophet by directly approaching him instead of indirectly? Logically speaking, it makes no sense to call it polytheism at all. Furthermore it's what the Qur'an mentions:

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ

Had they after having wronged themselves, come to you and sought forgiveness from Allah, and had the Messenger prayed for their forgiveness [4:64]

So we see both examples of indirectly and directly seeking the Prophet to gain closeness to Allah as mentioned in the Qur'an, yet somehow one is considered polytheistic in nature while the other is seen as the peak of monotheism. And again if the objection is that it's because he is dead, this is no proof for it being *shirk* as that is putting partners with Allah and none are putting partners with Allah when seeking the intercession of the Prophet (s). Ultimately, this is the flaw of the Salafi methodology, unable to clearly identify what makes this action polytheistic in nature and avoiding the actuality of this issue.

Life after death for the awliya and anbiya

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ

**Never say that those martyred in the cause of Allah are dead—in fact, they are alive!
But you do not perceive it. [2:154]**

The verses of Qur'an are a clear witness to the fact that death is not the end of life, but a window for a new life in a world completely new to him and much superior than this material world. Those who believe that with death everything of man is finished and nothing remains of him except one lifeless body, which after some time is changed to soil and destroyed, follow the philosophy of materialism. Such a belief shows that a person with such a view thinks life to be nothing but part of material effects of the organs of the body and chemical reactions of the brain.

In this school of thought, humans are nothing more than a machine where he is formed from different tools and components, which give the power of thought and perception to the brain. The views of materialists about soul and spirit were completely discarded by the great philosophers and scholars of the world. The theologians believe that except from the material system of body, the nervous system and its reciprocal material reactions there exists for man, a real substance called a 'soul' and 'spirit', which remains with the body for some period and then cuts off its relation with the body and lives in a special world with a much more delicate body.

The continuity of soul after the death of a person is not a matter which can be established and proved in these pages because today the eternity of soul and spirit has been proven by verses of Qur'an, precise philosophical reasoning and convincing spiritual experiences. Verses of the Qur'an clearly indicate that the spirit continues to live after its separation from the body.

إِنِّي آمَنْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَاسْمِعُونِ قِيلَ ادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ قَالَ يَا لَيْتَ قَوْمِي يَعْلَمُونَ بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ

Surely I believe in your Lord so hear me. It said: Enter the garden. He said: O would that my people had known of that on account of which my Lord has forgiven me and made me of the honored ones. [36:25-27]

In this story, Allah (swt) sent two prophets to a nation, later another one was sent to make it three prophets (36:14). The people arrogantly reject the signs (36:15) but then a righteous man³⁴ comes and tells them to worship God (36:20). He later dies.³⁵

³⁴ A hadith in [Amali al-Saduq](#) says his name was Habib al-Najjar.

³⁵ While the Qur'an does not mention how, a hadith in [al-Kafi](#) says that he was murdered by his own people.

He then goes on to mention how he wishes to tell his people about how Allah (swt) has honored him while he is in *Jannah*. Of course this *Jannah* is not in reference to the one in the *akhira*, rather it refers to the one in the grave - the *Jannah* (garden or paradise) of the *barzakh*. This is because he wishes that his people knew and were aware that God has forgiven and honored him. Such a wish is not compatible with the world of the Hereafter, where the curtains will be removed from the eyes of the people and their condition will not be hidden from each other. Rather such unawareness is befitting with this world where the people of this abode are unaware of the condition of the people living in another world.

Therefore there is a paradise of this world, which is called *barzakh*. There is a form of hell in this world as we read:

النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ

The fire, they shall be brought before it (every) morning and evening and on the day when the hour shall come to pass: Make Fir'auns people enter the severest chastisement. [40:46]

From this verse we understand that before the approach of *qiyamah*, the Fire will be presented to them morning and evening but after the *qiyamah* they will be given the worst punishment. This therefore shows that indeed in the grave we still hold a form of life.

Qur'an does not recognize death to be the end of a human's life. Rather, it states that life exists for the *awliya* and the *dhalimeen* before the approach of *qiyamah*. Either a life accompanied with joy or with torment.

So knowing this, we are left with some important details. For one, it's known the Prophets are all alive in their graves, including Rasulullah (s). For two, it's known that the martyrs³⁶ are alive in the grave. To be alive, in this sense means to live a life of fulfillment in the *barzakh* and connections with the living is still possible. We have already shown Ibn Qayyim's statement that there is *ijma'* of the *Salaf* that the dead are aware of the living, and we have shown that Habib al-Najjar was aware of his people that he tried to bring to truth.

So that shows it's not possible to consider that the dead are of no use, rather they are alive, just in a way above our understanding. This therefore would prove us approaching them, cannot be considered polytheistic in nature in any way. For when a man comes to a statue, it is unable to help him, for it does not possess the ability to hear. But when a man comes to the *awliya*, indeed they can hear! And not only that, but they live a powerful life of goodness, so why would you accuse them of being unable to do anything without any evidence?

³⁶ A hadith from [Ghaybat al-Nu'mani](#) states that all members of Ahlulbayt (a.s) will die by martyrdom. An authentic hadith in [al-Kafi](#) states that anyone who dies upon the belief in *al-Wilaya* then he will die a martyr even if he dies peacefully on his bed. It means he will be considered to be alive in his grave receiving *rizq* from his Lord as mentioned in 3:169.

The case of ‘Uthman bin Hunaif (r.a)

Uthman Ibn Hunaif was a companion of Rasullulah (s). He was famously known for his hadiths regarding *tawassul* through the Prophet. It has been narrated that a blind man called on the Prophet (s) and beseeched his help for the restoration of his eyesight. The Prophet (s), instead of discouraging him or condemning his act as a form of disbelief, instead told him to supplicate through him. This kind of supplication in itself is a composite of mediation and appeal for help (*istigatha*), and if it is offered even today with the same intensity of sincerity. The story goes, in [Mishkat al-Masabih 2495](#) graded sahih by Albani:

عَنْ عَثْمَانَ بْنِ حُنَيْفٍ قَالَ: إِنَّ رَجُلًا ضَرِيرَ الْبَصَرِ أَتَى النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: ادْعُ اللَّهَ أَنْ يُعَافِيَنِي فَقَالَ: «إِنْ شِئْتَ دَعَوْتُ وَإِنْ شِئْتَ صَبَّ بِنَبِيِّكَ مُحَمَّدِ نَبِيِّ الرَّحْمَةِ إِنِّي تَوَجَّهْتُ بِكَ إِلَى رَبِّي لِيَقْضِيَ لِي فِي حَاجَتِي هَذِهِ اللَّهُمَّ فَشَفِّعْهُ فِيَّ». رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ وَقَالَ: هَذَا حَدِيثٌ رِثٌ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكَ». قَالَ: فَادْعُهُ قَالَ: فَأَمَرَهُ أَنْ يَتَوَضَّأَ فَيُحْسِنَ الْوُضُوءَ وَيَدْعُوَ بِهَذَا الدُّعَاءِ: «اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ وَأَتَوَجَّهُ إِلَيْكَ حَسَنٌ صَاحِبٌ غَرِيبٌ».

‘Uthman b. Hunaif told that a blind man came to the Prophet and asked him to pray to God to cure him. He replied, “If you wish, I shall make supplication to God, but if you wish you will endure, for that is better for you.” The man asked him to make supplication. [‘Uthman] said: He then commanded him to perform ablution, doing it well, and make this supplication, “O God, I make request of Thee and I turn towards Thee by means of Thy prophet Muhammad, the prophet of mercy. By means of you I have turned towards my Lord to accomplish for me this need of mine. O God, make him an intercessor for me.” Al-Tirmidhi said this is hasan sahih ghareeb.³⁷

From this case we can identify the following:

1. Intercession through the Prophet (s) is allowed
2. Intercession is recommended
3. Intercession can be directly approaching someone

In clearer terms, he asks from God through the channel of the Prophet (s) and turns to God through him. Moreover by *nabi*, it is meant the Prophet (s) himself and not his *du'a*.

The sentence *يا محمد اني أتوجه بك إلى ربي* shows that he is using the Prophet himself, as a way to seek closeness to God, not the *du'a* of the Prophet.

So this thus proves the permissibility behind *tawassul* as he’s asking for a *du'a* to be answered through him to God. Some make the objection that now the Prophet (s) is unable to do this, but we ask:

1. Is it not allowed because he can’t hear or because he can’t supplicate?
2. Can something become *shirk* after previously being *halal*?

We have previously shown evidence which answers either answer back in question one, as the Prophet (s) can hear just like anyone and he can supplicate as he is alive in his grave.

³⁷ Narrated in [Ibn Majah](#); [Tirmidhi](#); [Mustadrak al-Hakim](#); [Musnad Ahmad](#)

As for the second question, the answer should be no, as *shirk* is always *shirk* nothing can become monotheistic in nature after being previously polytheistic. The Prophet (s) told us to do something and forgot to inform us that it will become *shirk* after he dies for some reason?

Nonetheless, what's further interesting is that he continued this after his death.

We read from al-Tabarani's [al-Mu'jam al-Saghir, Vol. 1, pg. 183 - 184:](#)

حدثنا طاهر بن عيسى بن قيرس المقرئ المصري التميمي، حدثنا اصبيغ بن الفرغ، حدثنا عبد الله بن وهب، عن شبيب بن سعيد المكي، عن روح بن القاسم، عن ابي جعفر الخطمي المدني، عن أبي أمامة بن سهل بن حنيف، عن عمه عثمان بن حنيف « ان رجلا كان يختلف الى عثمان بن عفان رضي الله عنه في حاجة له ، فكان عثمان لا يلتفت إليه ، ولا ينظر في حاجته ، فلقي عثمان بن حنيف ، فشكا ذلك إليه ، فقال له عثمان بن حنيف: إيت الميضاة فتوضا ، ثم ايت المسجد فصل فيه ركعتين ، ثم قل: اللهم ، اني اسالك واتوجه اليك بنبينا محمد صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم نبي الرحمة يا محمد اني اتوجه بك الى ربك عز وجل فيقضي لي حاجتي »

On the authority of Uthman Ibn Hunaif: "A man came to Uthman Ibn Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, with a need. Uthman ignored him and did not pay attention to his need. The man met Uthman bin Hunaif and complained to him about what happened. Uthman Ibn Hunaif said to him: "Go perform ablution then come to the mosque and offer two Rakat prayers. After that, say: "O Allah, I ask of You and I turn my face towards You by Your Prophet Muhammed (SAWA), The Prophet of Mercy (SAWA). **Ya Muhammed I have turned to my Lord by your virtue concerning this need of mine so that it may be met and for your intercession regarding my need."**

Al-Tabarani says this hadith is authentic and so has al-Haythami in his [Majma' al-Zawa'id](#).³⁸

So what this shows is that Uthman bin Hunaif (r.a) considered this form of *tawassul* permissible and acknowledged that the Prophet's death is merely a cover of him from us regarding our understanding of his way of living. Nonetheless, he is still capable of being interacted with and seeking closeness to God through him.

What is further interesting, is that Ibn Taymiyyah notes that these forms of *du'as*, where someone would beseech Rasullullah (s) was quite common. We read from [Majma al-Fatawa, vol. 1, pg. 263 - 264:](#)

قلت : فهذا الدعاء ونحوه **قد روى أنه دعا به السلف** ، ونقل عن أحمد بن حنبل في منسك المروذي التوسل بالنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في الدعاء ، ونها عنه آخرون .

I say, This dua and similar ones is narrated to be how the Salaf used to supplicate and it has been narrated from Ahmad ibn Hanbal in Mansak Al-Marudi the legitimacy of intercession by the Prophet (saw), and some others have forbidden it.

³⁸ A list of each narrator [here](#).

The case of 'Umar bin Abd al-Aziz

Sunnis have a famous hadith in [Sunan Abi Dawud 4291](#):

The Prophet (s) said: Allah will raise for this community at the end of every hundred years the one who will renovate its religion for it.

This is called a *mujaddid* and according to many sunnis during the first century after the Prophet (s), the *mujaddid* was Umar II.

Abul Hasan al-Sulaymani wrote in [Fiqh al-Tafjeerat. pg. 128](#):

وقد جرى صنيع السلف في عَدِّ المجددين في كل قرن باعتبار رأس المئة الهجرية، فَعَدُّوا عمر بن عبد العزيز في المئة الأولى

The tradition of following the footsteps of the *salaf* occurred by the *Mujadideen in every era*, taking the beginning of each Islamic century as a reference. They included Umar Ibn Abd al-Aziz in the 1st century.

He was, according to them, a pious ruler who Allah (swt) had sent after the Ummah went through a lot of suffering under the Umayyad dynasty. Therefore, a *mujaddid* without a doubt cannot be considered as a *kafir* nor a *mushrik*. Yet, we see that he had the same view on *tawassul* as the Shia have today.

We read in Abu Faraj's [Kitab al-Aghani. Vol 9. pg. 194 - 195](#):

حدثني أبو عبيد الصيرفي قال حدثنا الفضل بن الحسن المصري قال حدثنا عبد الله بن عمر القواريري قال حدثنا يحيى بن سعيد عن سعيد بن أبان القرشي قال دخل عبد الله بن حسن على عمر بن عبد العزيز وهو حديث السن وله وفرة فرجع مجلسه وأقبل عليه وقضى حوائجه ثم أخذ عكنة من عكنه فغمزها حتى أوجعه وقال له اذكرها عندك للشفاعة فلما خرج لامه أهله وقالوا فعلت هذا بغلام حديث السن فقال إن الثقة حدثني حتى كأني أسمعه من في رسول الله قال إنما فاطمة بضعة مني يسرني ما يسرها وأنا أعلم أن فاطمة لو كانت حية لسرها ما فعلت بابنها قالوا فما معنى غمزك بطنه وقولك ما قلت **قال إنه ليس أحد من بني هاشم إلا وله شفاعة فرجوت أن أكون في شفاعة هذا**

Sa'ad b. Aban Al Qurashi narrates that Hadhrat Abdullah bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali bin Abi Talib who had not yet attained puberty approached Umar bin Abdul Aziz in relation to a matter. Umar suspended his gathering, heard the matter and fulfilled his need. He then squeezed his stomach in such a manner that he began to feel pain, with that he said to him 'Remember this on the Day of Judgement at the time of intercession'. When he left the people asked why he dedicated such time to this child. He replied 'I heard a Hadith from a Thiqah narrator who said 'I heard the Prophet (s) say 'Fatima is a part of my body I desire whatever she desires'. He then said 'If Fatima was here then this would have been what she desired, in the way that I had treated her son. They then asked 'Why did you embrace him in such a manner and say what you did?'. **He replied 'There is not even one person amongst the Banu Hashim who hasn't been given the rights of intercession, I desire to attain intercession through this boy.**

If in a ignorant case, someone was to argue this was his *ijtihad* then there are two issues:

1. How can *ijtihad* justify *shirk* or *bid'ah*? For neither a *mushrik* nor a *mubtadi* can be considered *mujtahids*.
2. If there is clear *nass* regarding the impermissibility of an act, then how can one be excused with exercising *ijtihad*? If someone claims you could worship a grave, even if they claimed to be a *mujtahid*, they cannot be excused with *ijtihad* for Allah (swt) would clearly not reward an individual who is worshiping besides him.

The case of Ahmad bin Hanbal

It is infamous that all the madhab leaders have actually not only allowed and practiced these acts, but they also have recommended these acts to their *muqalids*.

Ahmad Ibn Hanbal

Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal is one of the easiest people to prove he accepted this form of *tawassul*. We read [Kitab al-I'la' Wa Ma'rifat al-Rijal, Vol. 2, pg. 492](#) by Ibn Ma'in:

سألته عن الرجل يمس منبر النبي ﷺ ويتبرك بمسه ويقبله ويفعل بالقبر مثل ذلك أو نحو هذا يريد بذلك التقرب إلى الله جل وعز فقال : لا بأس بذلك

I (Yahya ibn Ma'in) asked about the case of a man who touches the Minbar (i.e pulpit) of the Prophet (s) and gain blessings by touching that and kissing that, and does that with grave like it or similar to it, and he intends to gain nearness to Allah (swt) with that. He (Ahmad) replied: "**There is nothing wrong with that**".

This has also been mentioned in [Umdat al-Qari, Vol. 9, pg. 346](#) by al-'Ayni:

وأخبرني الحافظ أبو سعيد ابن العلاءي قال: رأيت في كلام أحمد بن حنبل في جزء قديم عليه خط ابن ناصر وغيره من الحفاظ، أن الإمام أحمد سئل عن تقبيل قبر النبي، صلى الله عليه وسلم، وتقبيل منبره، فقال: لا بأس بذلك، قال: فأریناه للشيخ تقي الدين بن تيمية فصار يتعجب من ذلك، ويقول: عجبت أحمد عندي جليل يقوله؟ هذا كلامه أو معنى كلامه؟ وقال: وأي عجب في ذلك وقد روينا عن الإمام أحمد أنه غسل قيصا للشافعي وشرب الماء الذي غسله به، وإذا كان هذا تعظيمه لأهل العلم فكيف بمقادير الصحابة؟ وكيف بآثار الأنبياء، عليهم الصلاة والسلام؟

وقال المحب الطبري: ويمكن أن يستنبط من تقبيل الحجر واستلام الأركان جواز تقبيل ما في تقبيله تعظيم الله تعالى، فإنه إن لم يرد فيه خبر بالندب لم يرد بالكراهة. قال: وقد رأيت في بعض تعاليق جدي محمد بن أبي بكر، عن الإمام أبي عبد الله محمد بن أبي الصيف: أن بعضهم كان إذا رأى المصاحف قبلها، وإذا رأى أجزاء الحديث قبلها، وإذا رأى قبور الصالحين قبلها، قال: ولا يبعد هذا، والله أعلم في كل ما فيه تعظيم لله تعالى

Narrated Hafiz Abu Sa'eed: "I saw in the words of Ahmad ibn Hanbal in an old volume, written in the handwriting of Ibn Nasser and other scholars, that Imam Ahmad was asked about kissing the Prophet's grave, peace be upon him, and kissing his pulpit. He replied, 'There is no harm in doing so.' **Then I showed it to Ibn Taymiyyah, and he was amazed by that and said, 'I wonder, Ahmad has a great status in my eyes, does he really say this? Is this his statement or the meaning of his statement?'** He also said, "What is so amazing about that when we have narrated that **Imam Ahmad washed a shirt for Imam Shafi'i and drank the water used for washing**

it? If this is his way of showing respect to the people of knowledge, then how about the companions? And how about the relics of the Prophets, may peace be upon them?'

And Al-Muhibb Al-Tabari said: "It is possible to deduce from the act of kissing the Black Stone and touching the corners of the Kaaba that kissing what deserves to be kissed is an act of honoring Allah Almighty. If there is no specific prohibition against it, then it is not disliked." He said: "I have also seen in some annotations by my grandfather Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, quoting Imam Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Abi al-Saif, that some people, when they see the Qur'an before them, or parts of Hadith before them, or the graves of the righteous before them, they kiss them. This is not far-fetched, and Allah knows best about any act that entails honoring Allah Almighty."

Al-Dhahabi actually further comments upon this and confirms this in [Siyar A'lam al-Nubala, vol. 11, pg. 212:](#)

قال عبد الله بن أحمد : رأيتُ أبي يأخذُ شعرةً من شعر النبي ، ، فيضعها على فيه يُقبلُها . وأحسبُ أني رأيتُه يضعها على عينه ، و
ويغمسها في الماء ويشربه يستشفى به
ورأيتُه أخذ قطعاً من النبي ، فغسلها في حُبِّ الماء ، ثم شرب فيها ورأيتُه يشربُ من ماء زمزم يستشفى به ، ويمسح به يديه ووجهه
قلت : أين المتنطع المنكر على أحمد ، **وقد ثبت** أن عبد الله سأل أباه عمّن يلمس رمانة منبر النبي ، ، ويمسّ الحجر النبوي ، فقال :
لا أرى بذلك بأساً . أعاذنا الله وإياكم من رأي الخوارج ومن البدع

Narrated Abd-Allah ibn Ahmed said: I saw my father (Ahmad ibn Hanbal) taking a hair of the hairs of the Prophet (saw), and he put it on his mouth and kissed it, and I think I saw him putting it on his eyes, and he dipped it in the water and would drink it for therapy. And I saw him taking the bowl of the Prophet (saw) and entering it into a bucket of water and then drinking with it and I saw him drinking Zam Zam water and using it for therapy and wiping his face and hands with it.

I (Al-Dhahabi) say: Where are the profound critics of Ahmad? **Indeed it has been proven** that Abdullah has asked his father about touching the place of the pulpit of the Prophet (saw), and touching the Prophetic grave, so he said: "I see nothing wrong in this, and may Allah (swt) keep us away from the opinion of the Khawarij and from the innovations."

Infact, Albani admits in his [Tawassul, pg. 42:](#)

فأجاز الإمام أحمد التوسل بالرسول ﷺ وحده فقط، وأجاز غيره كالإمام الشوكاني التوسل به وبغيره من الأنبياء والصالحين

Imam Ahmad permitted seeking *tawassul* solely through the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and others also permitted like Imam Shawkani to seek intercession through him (the Prophet) and through other prophets and righteous individuals

And likewise does Ibn Taymiyyah in his [Majma al-Fatawa, vol. 1, pg. 263 - 264](#):

قلت : فهذا الدعاء ونحوه قد روى أنه دعا به السلف ، ونقل عن أحمد بن حنبل في منسك المروزي التوسل بالنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في الدعاء ، ونها عنه آخرون .

I say: This dua and alike it is narrated to be how the Salaf used to supplicate and it has been narrated from Ahmad ibn Hanbal in Mansak Al-Marudi the legitimacy of *tawassul* through the Prophet (saw), and some others have forbidden it.

Some might object that Ahmad bin Hanbal believed in *tawassul* because hanbali scholars tend to reject *tawassul*. However, this comes from ignorance, here are multiple BIG hanbali scholars:

We read from a major hanbali scholar of the 9th C. (A.H), Ali ibn Sulayman al-Mardawi, who writes in his [al-Insaf, Vol. 2, pg. 456](#):

• ومنها : يجوز التوسل بالرجل الصالح، على الصحيح من المذهب

وقيل : يستحب قال الإمام أحمد للمروزي : يتوسل بالنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في دعائه

The correct position of the [Hanbali] school is that it is permissible in one's du'a to use as one's means of a pious person, and it is said that it is desirable (*mustahab*). Imam Ahmad said to Abu Bakr Al-Marwazi: "Let him use the Prophet (saw) as a means in his supplication to Allah (swt)."

We read from the head hanbali scholars in samarra in the 7th C. (A.H), Muhammad bin Abdullah al-Samiri, in his [al-Mustawib, vol. 1, pg. 293](#):

ولا بأس بالتوسل إلى الله تعالى في الاستسقاء بالشيخ والزهاد وأهل العلم والفضل والدين من المسلمين

And there is no problem in *Tawassul* to Allah the Most High, by Shuyookh and righteous people and the people of knowledge, the respected and the religious people in asking for rain.

Al-Dhahabi has a biography of him in his [Siyar A'lam al-Nubala, vol. 22, pg. 144 - 145](#):

Al-Samiri. The Shaykh of the Hanbalis, judge of Samarra. Aboo Abdallah Muhammad bin Abdallah bin Muhammad bin Idrees bin Sunaynah Al-Samiri. Author of "Al-Mustu'ab." He is from the greatest Fuqaha (jurisprudents). He compiled and heard from Abi Al-Fath bin Al-Bata, but he did not narrate anything. He gained ruling

authority over Samara for a period of time, and then quit from that. He died in Rajab, in the year 616 A.H, and he lived 81 years..

Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi records that one of the founding fathers of the hanbali madhab in his [Tarikh al-Baghdad, Vol. 1, Pg. 442](#):

أبا عليّ الخلال يقول: ما همي أمرٌ فقصدت قبر موسى بن جعفر فتوسّلتُ به إلا سهل الله تعالى لي ما أحبُّ

Abu 'Ali al-Khallal said that he visited Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far's (as) grave and resorted to him whenever he had a problem and then his problem was solved.

So he's doing *tawassul* or seeking *tabarruk* through his grave. There are many other examples to bring, but this shall suffice.

If those who criticize *tawassul* are sincere, I open them to *takfir* Ahmad bin Hanbal, if not I ask why is he not considered a *kafir* when he has endorsed this same act? If it is argued this is not *shirk*, then why is it considered *haram*? If it is argued it is rather *bid'ah*, then would you accuse Ahmad bin Hanbal of being a *mubtadi*? If it is argued that he has applied *ijtihad*, this is impossible for never can *ijtihad* justify *shirk*. One cannot be a *mujtahid* if he is not a muslim, and *shirk* takes you out of the fold of Islam. This is why if a scholar said 'There are 2 Gods' he is not justified with *ijtihad*, for how can Allah (swt) reward someone who preaches such? Moreover, a *mubtadi* cannot be a *mujtahid* either.



Chapter 3: The Shia hadiths on these matters

There are a few silly polemicists who try to point out that the practice of *tawassul* is not found anywhere in the corpus of the Shi'a nor in the corpus of the Sunnis. While we have demonstrated this is not the case for the Sunni corpus, we will also demonstrate how this is also not the case for the Shi'a. There is far too much evidence to show regarding the permissibility of this act, scholars have compiled evidence that reaches a level beyond *tawatur*. People who bring forth arguments of conjecture, try to argue that the Shi'a have no proof for these acts in their corpus. They say this **not** because they have read the Shi'a corpus, but because they know that many Shi'a do not bother bringing sources together regarding these acts and so catches them off guard. The reason why many Shi'a do not have sources about this is because everyone knows that these acts are permissible in the Shi'a *madhab*, for scholars have *ijma'* on these actions and any *du'a* or *ziyara* that they read, they always find acts where intercession via Ahlulbayt (a.s) are recited.

We shall present the following points that shall suffice:

1. **Approaching a Waseela**
2. **Visiting the dead**
3. **The case of Prophet Adam (a.s)**
4. **Ziyarat Jami' al-Kabira**

(You can press on the points to jump to them)

Approaching a Waseela

The scholars have accepted the premise to do intercession on many proofs that have been mass-transmitted in both shia and non-shia sources. Amongst them is the Holy Qur'an.

The Qur'an talks about shifa'a all over it, continuously finding many verses about it such as in Ayatul Kursi we read *من ذا الذي يشفع من عنده إلا بإذنه*.

However, the main verse that scholars have used to support their claims is:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ **الْوَسِيلَةَ** وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

O you who have believed, fear Allāh and seek the means [of nearness] to Him and strive in His cause that you may succeed. [5:35]

The word 'waseela' refers to a means which helps you reach Allah (swt). To use a means is to do *tawassul* which is the whole premise that is attempted to be proven. There can be different means, such as your own actions, the names of Allah, belief itself. But seeking a means to Allah (swt) through a saint is amongst them.

In one hadith in [Uyun Akhbar](#):

قَالَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: الْأُمَّةُ مِنْ وُلْدِ الْحُسَيْنِ، مَنْ أَطَاعَهُمْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ عَصَاهُمْ فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، هُمُ الْعُرْوَةُ الْوُثْقَى، وَهُمْ **الْوَسِيلَةُ** إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

Rasulullah (s) said: "The Imams are from the progeny of al-Husayn (a.s). Whoever obeys them it is as if he has obeyed God, and whoever disobeys them it is as if he has disobeyed God. They are the trustworthy rope [of God] and a means towards God."³⁹

Imam Ali (a.s) has been attributed to have called himself a *waseela* when reciting this verse. Refer to [Tafsir al-Burhan](#) for sources.

In many *du'as* and *ziyaras* we read that indeed the Ahlulbayt (a.s) are our means to Allah (swt), which is why you'll see this verse being used so often. They are of a praiseworthy rank before God, so he has honored them to be a means for the weaker to attain closeness to Him.

If it is argued that they can only be a means during their lifetime, then this is ridiculous. For why would God make something *shirk*? That is illogical. Moreover, it is proven they are still alive in a way above our understanding, and hold the ability to hear and they are able to still pray. So on what basis is it to say that God all of sudden restricts these rights and where is the proof for such a statement?

³⁹ Chain can be found [here](#).

Visiting the dead

The Shi'a have narrated *mutawatir* traditions regarding *ziyara* and this is an established ritual that scholars have had *ijma'* on since the earliest scholars until the present.

For example, here is an authentic hadith in [al-Kafi](#) where it is said:

Abu Najran said: 'I once asked Abu Ja'far (a.s), "What is the reward for the one who visits Rasullullah (s) voluntarily?". He replied, "The reward for him is paradise."'

Al-Kafi alone has hundreds of chapters regarding *ziyara*, here are just a few in Vol. 4: [C.216](#), [C. 217](#), [C. 220](#), [C. 221](#), [C. 224](#), [C. 227](#), [C. 230](#) (and more)

For even further sources, Ibn Qulawayh (r.a) collects about 800 hadiths regarding *ziyara* and acts alongside it in his [Kamil al-Ziyarat](#):

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ قُلْتَ وَ لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ - وَ اسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا وَ إِنِّي آتَيْتُ نَبِيَّكَ مُسْتَغْفِرًا تَائِبًا مِنْ ذُنُوبِي - وَ إِنِّي أَتَوَجَّهُ إِلَيْكَ بِنَبِيِّكَ نَبِيِّ الرَّحْمَةِ مُحَمَّدٍ (ص) يَا مُحَمَّدُ إِنِّي أَتَوَجَّهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّي وَ رَبِّكَ بِكَ لِغَفْرِي ذُنُوبِي وَ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَ حَاجَةٌ

Oh Allāh you have said: 'And had they, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allāh and the Messenger had (also) asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allāh Oft-returning (to mercy), Most Merciful.' (4:64) I have come to Your Prophet, repenting and asking for forgiveness for my sins, and I have turned to You through Your Prophet, the Prophet of Mercy, Muḥammad. O Muḥammad! I have turned to Allāh, Your Lord and mine, through you, so that He forgives my sins.⁴⁰

The recommendation to go to shrines, recite *du'as* and seek closeness to God through the *awliya* is without a doubt established in the Shi'a corpus. Even from a non-shia perspective it's not possible to see how you could claim that the Ahlulbayt (a.s) did not recommend going to the graves due the overwhelming sources in both shia and non-shia sources. Furthermore, we know they can hear because of what the Ahlulbayt (a.s) used to teach their followers to say at these graveyards. Speaking to these holy personalities affirms that the dead can indeed hear. There are even explicit such as in [al-Kafi](#) and [Kamil al-Ziyarat](#):

People come only to the places where their (the *awliya*)'s marks are left. They convey and express their al-Salam from distant places and they hear them nearby in the places where their marks are left.⁴¹

⁴⁰ This chain is authentic. You can press [here](#) for all the narrators.

⁴¹ So it goes without a doubt to say, that most certainly the dead can hear you and visiting them delights Allah (swt).

The case of Prophet Adam (a.s)

When Adam (a.s) had disobeyed the *irshadi* (advisory) command of God, committing *tark al-Awla*, out of his proximity to God, sought forgiveness from Allah (swt) for this act. What is interesting to note, is that he sought this by doing *tawassul* through the Ahlulbayt (a.s).

فَتَلَقَىٰ آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ **كَلِمَاتٍ** فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

Then Adam received from his Lord [some] words, and He accepted his repentance. Indeed, it is He who is the Accepting of Repentance,] the Merciful. [2:37]

The word *كلمات* in the Qur'an is commonly applied to holy personalities, it does not refer to literal words. For example:

يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ **بِكَلِمَةٍ** مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ

O Maryam, surely Allah gives you good news with a Word from him (of one) whose name is the Messiah, Isa son of Maryam. [3:45]

Isa Ibn Maryam (a.s) is described as a word of God (also found in 4:171). This is obviously not a literal phrase, for if it is said that Isa (a.s) is a literal word, this is clearly an absurdity.

Another example is:

أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ **بِيَحْيَىٰ** مُصَدِّقًا **بِكَلِمَةٍ** مِنَ اللَّهِ

That Allah gives you the good news of Yahya verifying a Word from Allah [3:39]

So we see another example of a Holy personality being described as a 'word' from God. This is because the chosen servants of God are *kalimat ul-Allah* (the words of God). For they are the ones who spread his messages, thus they are described as his words for they are the means God uses to communicate to his creation. So we see He says:

وَالْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ سَبْعَةُ أَبْحُرٍ مَا نَفَدَتْ **كَلِمَاتُ اللَّهِ**

With seven more seas to increase it, the words of Allah would not come to an end. [31:27]

This verse is proof that indeed Allah (swt) will always have a living word (i.e., *hujjah*) who will in one way or another spread his message, whether in the open in public like the Prophet (s) did in Medina, or in private like the early years of the Prophet (s) in Mecca.

So we see the possibility that the verse (2:37) when talking about 'words' refers to holy personalities that Allah (swt) had revealed to him. Is there any evidence for this claim?

An authentic tradition can be found in Qutb al-Rawandi's (r.a) [Qisas al-Anbiya pg. 51](#):

عن عمر بن الخطاب قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لما أكل آدم من الشجرة رفع رأسه إلى السماء فقال: أسألك **بمحمّد** إلا رحمتي، فأوحى الله إليه: ومن محمّد؟ فقال: تبارك اسمك لما خلقتني رفعت رأسي إلى عرشك فإذا فيه مكتوب: "لا إله إلا الله محمّد رسول الله" فعلمت أنه ليس أحد أعظم عندك قدرا "من جعلت اسمه مع اسمك، فأوحى الله إليه: يا آدم إنه لآخر النبيين من ذريتك فلولا محمّد ما خلقتك

و(بالإسناد عن الصدوق، عن أبيه) عن سعد، عن أحمد بن محمّد، عن الحسن بن علي الخزاز، عن عبد الله بن سنان عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال: قال آدم عليه السلام: "يا رب **بمحمّد وعلي وفاطمة والحسن والحسين** إلا تبت علي" فأوحى الله تعالى إليه: يا آدم وما علمك بمحمّد؟ فقال: حين خلقتني رفعت رأسي فرأيت في العرش مكتوبا: "محمّد رسول الله علي أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام

From Umar bin al-Khattab who said: Rasullulah (s) said, "When Adam ate from the tree, he lifted his head to the sky and said, 'I ask You **by the right of Muhammad** to have mercy on me.' So Allah revealed to him, 'And who is Muhammad?' He said, 'Blessed is Your Name for as long as I have lifted my head, I have seen written on the Throne, "There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah," so I knew that there was no one greater in status to You than the one whose name You have made equal to Yours.' Then Allah revealed to him, 'O Adam, he is the last of the prophets from your offspring, and had it not been for Muhammad, I would not have created you.'"

(In the chain of al-Saduq, from his father)⁴² from Sa'ad, from Ahmad bin Muhammad, from al-Hassan bin Ali al-Khazzaz, from Abdullah bin Sinan, from Abu Abdullah (a.s) who said: Adam, peace be upon him, said, "**O Lord, by the right of Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein**, except if You forgive me." So Allah the Almighty revealed to him, "O Adam, what do you know about Muhammad?" Adam replied, "When You created me, I lifted my head and saw written on the Throne, 'Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, Ali is the Commander of the Faithful.'

This is why our *mufasssireen* have mentioned under this verse that it included Ahlulbayt (a.s).

For example, al-Shaykh al-Tabrasi (r.a) in his [Majma al-Bayan](#) says:

⁴² This is what has been mentioned in [Bihar al-Anwar](#) regarding the chain being from Saduq, from his father, from Sa'ad bin Abdullah al-Qummi. The chain is connected and everyone there is known to narrate from each other.

وقيل وهي رواية تختص بأهل البيت عليهم السلام: إن آدم رأى مكتوبا على العرش أسماء معظمة مكرمة، فسأل عنها، فقيل له: هذه أسماء أجل الخلق منزلة عند الله تعالى، والأسماء: محمد، وعلي، وفاطمة، والحسن، والحسين، فتوسل آدم عليه السلام، إلى ربه بهم في قبول توبته، ورفع منزلته

And it was said that this narration is specific to the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them): Indeed, Adam saw written on the Throne distinguished and honored names. He asked about them, and it was said to him, "These are the names of the noblest creations in the sight of Allah, and the names are Muhammad, Ali, Fatimah, Hasan, and Husayn." So Adam (peace be upon him) sought their intercession with his Lord for the acceptance of his repentance and the elevation of his status.

Abu Sa'eed al-Mada'ini⁴³ also confirms this is regarding Adam (a.s) in [Ma'ani al-Akhbar](#).

More hadiths about this can be found in [Ma'ani al-Akhbar](#), [Tafsir al-'Askari](#), [al-Kafi](#) and [al-Khisal](#).

If you read the hadith from al-Khisal, you would have noticed that this also applied to Nuh (a.s). This is also true as we read in the Qur'an similar phrasing.

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبَّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَاتَمَمَهَا

And when Abraham was tried by his Lord with words and he fulfilled them. [2:124]

We further read from [pg. 105 - 106](#):

أخبرنا الأستاذ أبو القاسم بن كمح، عن الشيخ جعفر الدوريسي، عن الشيخ المفيد، عن أبي جعفر بن بابويه، حدثنا محمد بن بكران النقاش، حدثنا أحمد بن محمد بن سعد الكوفي حدثنا علي بن الحسن بن فضال، عن أبيه، عن الرضا صلوات الله عليه قال: لما أشرف نوح صلوات الله عليه على الغرق دعا الله بحقنا، فدفع الله عنه الغرق، ولما رمى إبراهيم في النار دعا الله بحقنا، فجعل النار عليه بردا وسلاما، وإن موسى عليه السلام لما ضرب طريقا في البحر دعا الله بحقنا فجعله يبسا، وإن عيسى عليه السلام لما أراد اليهود قتله دعا الله بحقنا، نجى من القتل فرفعه إليه

The narrator Abu Al-Qasim Ibn Kmah reported from Sheikh Ja'far Al-Duraystee, who reported from Sheikh Al-Mufid, who reported from Abu Ja'far Ibn Babawayh, who reported that Imam Al-Rida, peace be upon him, said: "When Noah, peace be upon him, was about to drown, **he invoked Allah by our right**, so Allah saved him from drowning. And when Ibrahim was thrown into the fire, he invoked Allah by our right, so Allah made the fire cool and peaceful for him. And when Musa struck the sea, he invoked Allah by our right, so Allah made it dry. And when the Jews wanted to kill

⁴³ A companion of Imam al-Sadiq (a.s)

Isa, peace be upon him, he invoked Allah by our right, and he was saved from their plot and was lifted up to Him."

This is why we see some early islamic poets saying in *Kashf Al-'Irtiyab*, pp. 307, 308:

به قد اجاب الله آدم دعا ونجى في بطن السفينة نوح قوم بهم عفرت خطيئة آدم وهم الوسيلة والنجوم الطلوع

On account of him, Allah accepted the dua of Adam and saved Noah inside the ship. They are such people through whom Adam's sin was pardoned and they are those who are the channels to Allah and the sparkling stars.

Having proven that Prophet's of God have done the act of *tawassul*, it goes without saying that indeed the permissibility behind this act is most certainly established. For prophets can never commit *shirk* nor can act become *shirk*. Thus proving the permissibility behind doing *tawassul*.

Ziyarat Jami' al-Kabira

Authenticity

Ziyarat Jami' al-Kabira (The Grand Comprehensive Visitation) is a famous *ziyara* attributed to Imam Ali al-Hadi (a.s). This du'a was *mashoor* (famous) among the *muqadima* (early scholars) and we find it in many sources whose books have rich manuscripts.

Most famously, al-Shaykh al-Tusi (r.a) includes this ziyara in his [Tahdhib al-Ahkam](#) and al-Saduq (r.a) included it in [Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha](#) and [Man La Yahdhural Faqih](#).

Al-Shaykh al-Saduq (r.a) says a few pages before it in [Vol. 2, pg. 598](#):

وقد أخرجت في كتاب الزيارات، وفي كتاب مقتل الحسين عليه السلام أنواعا من الزيارات واخترت هذه لهذا الكتاب لأنها أصح الزيارات عندي من طريق الرواية وفيها بلاغ وكفاية

I extracted different types of ziyarat from the Book of Ziyarat and the book of Maqatal al-Hussain. I extracted them for this book because they are **the most authentic ziyarat** that I have in their tariq.

Al-Shaykh al-Saduq (r.a) also vouches for the reliability of the content in this book in [Vol. 1, pg. 12](#):

وصنفت له هذا الكتاب بحذف الأسانيد لثلاث تكثر طرقه وإن كثرت فوائده، ولم أقصد فيه قصد المصنفين في إيراد جميع ما رووه، بل قصدت إلى إيراد ما أفتي به وأحكم بصحته وأعتقد فيه أنه حجة فيما بيني وبين ربي

And I compiled this book for him by omitting the chains of narration so that its various benefits may not be obscured by its numerous chains. My intention in it was not to follow the approach of the authors in mentioning everything that they have narrated, rather, I intended to mention what I have issued a legal opinion on **and judged to be authentic**, and I believe that this book is a proof between me and my Lord.

The presence of this ziyara in our *mu'tabar* books, 2 of whom are our main ones, already give it much value in regards to its reliability. Al-Saduq vouches for the reliability of his sources in the introduction of his book and Tusi's mention of this *ziyara* in his book further suggests Saduq's belief in its reliability otherwise why would he share it to Tusi? So it's quite safe to say that Saduq viewed this *ziyara* as an authentic one.⁴⁴

Content

⁴⁴ Also interestingly enough, [al-Sayyid al-Sistani](#) has also called this *ziyara* to be authentic and declared anyone who says otherwise as upon misguidance (*dhalala*).

This *du'a* is a perfect example of *tawassul* done by the Imams (a.s). The act of calling upon the Ahlulbayt (a.s) as said in the very first line: السلام عليكم يا أهل بيت النبوة (Peace be upon you, Oh household of prophethood). It shows that the act of calling upon them is not a *bid'ah* as some might try to argue and it shows the capability of them being able to hear us. While many ask why the Shi'a call upon them, thinking they can hear us, our answer is simple - this is what the Ahlulbayt (a.s) have indeed taught.

Moreover, we see many examples of *istighatha* throughout the dua such as later one where the Imam (a.s) says: زائر لكم لانذ عانذ بقبوركم (A visitor to you, unpleasant and harmful, seeking refuge [or protection] through your graves). This is very similar to how Shi'a today act when visiting the graves of the infallibles, seeking help through the graves in the hopes that Allah (swt) may allow them to support us (such as through their intercession; distributing sustenance etc...). It also shows that their graves do not hinder them from their capability to interact with this world, but only hinders our capability of hearing them and perceiving their level of existence.

Other phrases in the supplication make it evidently more clear regarding the concept of *shafa'a* (intercession) such as: مستشفع الى الله بكم ومقرب بكم اليه (I seek intercession to God through you and seek nearness through you to Him). This phrase shows indeed that our *waseela* to Allah (swt) are the blessed household of Muhammad (s). Through them, we seek intercession which allows us to seek close proximity to God, the ultimate goal behind all these acts that include intercession such as *tawassul*, *istighatha* and *tabarruk*.

We see the Imam (a.s) constantly explaining their high positions for us to seek distribution of sustenance and answers to *hajjats* (needs) to God through such as: ومقدمكم أمام طلبتي وحواسي وإرادتي، في كل أحوالي وأموري (And your kindness is always present in front of my requests, needs, and wishes, in all my situations and affairs). This line shows to us how the Imams can be used as intermediaries between us and God in order to have needs answered and wishes fulfilled. This is why we often see people asking them for needs, as they believe they are capable of distributing sustenance to us.

Analysis

Some have criticized parts of the *ziyara* to hold phrases containing *ghuluw* (exaggeration) of the Ahlulbayt (a.s). However, it is strange to even consider this to hold anything problematic knowing that Saduq accepted it and he was amongst the most strict people with regards to *tafwidh*. He was a student of Qum Ibn al-Walid who used to argue that rejecting *sahw* was a degree of *ghuluw*, of which al-Shaykh al-Mufid (r.a) comments that this was a normal belief in Qum at that time, which is where Saduq was from. Saduq's inclusion of this *ziyara*, where Ahlulbayt (a.s) are portrayed to be immaculate, supernatural, protected from error like beings and to be used as means (i.e., a *waseela*) to gain proximity to God reflects a tolerance (or even an endorsement) of these beliefs even in the strict seminaries of early Qum.



The conclusion

Throughout this book we have demonstrated the act of approaching God through a means, and have explained both the wisdom behind this act, examples of these acts and motives behind them. We also have covered criticisms that some have brought forth to question these practices and even went to the extent of providing proof from both corpus' regarding the permissibility of these acts. We therefore end by asking for those who still hold doubts, what exactly are you doubting? Is it that the dead can't hear us? For if that was the case then ask yourself why? What is so difficult behind believing that when the proof is evident? If the doubt is that they cannot intercede for you, then you are contradicting the words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) and the idea of the *barzakh*. So what reason is left now? Is the doubt regarding that it should be left between you and Allah (swt) alone? In that case why has Allah (swt) mandated the *salawat* for us in the Qur'an on the Prophet (s) if it's just between you and Allah (swt) alone?

We wish to point out that doubts regarding these practices seem to be more emotional based rather than factual based, and rejection of them is not based on teachings of scripture, rather it is based on subjective interpretation and understanding of the Holy Qur'an.

We advise our readers to recite this *du'a* with us:

اللهم بحق محمدٍ وعليٍّ وفاطمة والحسن والحسين والأئمة المعصومين من بعده اغفر لنا ذنوبنا

Oh Allah, by the right of Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, al-Hassan, al-Hussain and the infallible Imams after him, forgive us of our sins

May all your prayers be answered and your *hajjat* be fulfilled, through the intercession of the *awliya*. Thank you dear reader for having read through this book, may Allah (swt) continue to increase your knowledge and bless you for your (hopefully) sincere intention of seeking knowledge.

وصلى الله على محمد وإل محمد