



The Methodology Of Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab

Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab took the verses revealed to speak about the blasphemers and applied them to the Muslims. The following examples from the Qur'an illustrate this point. Allah, ta'ala, said in **Surat al-Ahqaf, Ayah 5**:

إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَهُمْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ يَدْعُو مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَن لَّا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُ وَمَنْ
عَنْ دُعَائِهِمْ غَافِلُونَ

This verse means: [Who is more astray than the one who performs supplication (du'a') to [worship] other than Allah; the one other than Allah he supplicates to will not answer his du'a'.]

Allah, ta'ala said in **Surat Yunus, Ayah 106** :

وَلَا تَدْعُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكَ وَلَا يَضُرُّكَ

This verse means: **[Do not perform supplication (du'a') to [worship] other than Allah; the one other than Allah you supplicate to will not benefit you and will not harm you.]**

The verses in the Qur'an similar to these ones are numerous. Muhammad Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab gravely misinterpreted the previously cited verses and said: "The Muslim who asks help from the Holy Nabi, Sall Allahu alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim, other prophets, or the righteous people (salihun), or who calls or asks any of them for intercession is like those blasphemers mentioned in the Qur'an." According to the false claim of Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, the Muslims who do these things are blasphemers.

He also considered visiting the grave of Holy Nabi Muhammad and the graves of other prophets and righteous Muslims for blessings as blasphemy. Allah revealed **Ayah 3 of Surat az-Zumar** in reference to the mushrikun:

مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ

This verse means: **[Those who worship the idols said: "We do not worship them except to achieve a higher status from Allah."]**

Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab falsely stated: "Those who perform tawassul (asking Allah by the prophets, for example) are similar to those blasphemers mentioned in Surat az-Zumar, Ayah 3, who claim they do not worship the idols except to achieve a higher status from Allah." He said: "The blasphemers did not believe the idols create anything; they believed Allah is the Creator." He gave his version of proof from the Qur'an by citing **Surat Luqman, Ayah 25** and **Surat az-Zumar, Ayah 38**, in which Allah said:

لَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولَنَّ اللَّهُ

These verses mean: **[If you ask them, 'Who created the heavens and earth?' They will say, 'Allah'.]**

In **Surat az-Zukhruf, Ayah 87**, Allah said:

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولَنَّ اللَّهُ

Which means: **[If you ask them, 'Who created them?' They will say, 'Allah'.]** Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab falsely concluded from these verses that the

Muslims who perform tawassul are similar to those blasphemers.

In their writings to refute Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab's sayings, the scholars said his deduction was false. The believers did not consider the prophets or the awliya' as gods and they did not deem them partners to Allah. Instead, they

correctly believe the prophets and awliya' are good slaves and creations of Allah, and they do not deserve to be worshipped.

The blasphemers intended in these verses believed their idols deserved Godhood. They exalted them as one would exalt his Creator, even though they believed the idols did not create the heavens and the earth. The believers, on the other hand, do not believe the prophets or righteous Muslims (awliya') deserve to be worshipped, nor do they deserve to be attributed with Godhood, nor do they exalt them as one would exalt God. They believe these people are good slaves of Allah, His beloved ones whom He chose, and by their blessings (barakah) Allah grants His mercy to His creation. Hence, when the slaves of Allah seek the blessings (barakah) of the prophets and righteous Muslims (awliya') they are seeking these blessings as a mercy from Allah.

There are many proofs and examples from the Qur'an and Sunnah about this basic belief of the Muslims. Muslims believe Allah is the Creator, the One Who grants benefit and inflicts harm, and the only One Who deserves to be worshipped. Muslims believe that no one other than Allah has the power to affect the creation. The prophets and righteous people do not create anything. They do not possess the power to bestow benefit or inflict harm on others, but Allah is the One Who bestows the mercy upon the slaves by the righteous Muslims' blessings.

Hence, the belief of the blasphemers, i.e., the belief their idols deserve to be worshipped and have Godhood, is what makes them fall into blasphemy. This saying of the blasphemers, as previously cited in Surat az-Zumar, Ayah 3, was said in an effort to justify their belief when they were disproved and shown idols do not deserve to be worshipped.

How can Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab and those who follow him find it permissible to equate the believers, who believed in tawhid, to those blasphemers, who believed in the Godhood of the idols? All the previously cited verses and the verses which are similar to them are specific to the blasphemers who associate partners with Allah--none of the believers are included.

Al-Bukhariyy narrated by the route of Ibn 'Umar, may Allah raise their ranks, that the Holy Nabi, Sall Allahu alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim, described the Khawarij as those who took the verses revealed about the blasphemers and attributed them to the believers! In the narration by the route of Ibn 'Umar the Holy Nabi said:

أَخَوْفُ مَا أَخَافُ عَلَى أُمَّتِي رَجُلٌ يَتَأَوَّلُ الْقُرَّانَ

يَضَعُهُ فِي غَيْرِ مَوَاضِعِهِ

which means: **[What I fear most for my nation is a man who mis-explains the Qur'an and takes it out of context.]** This hadith and the previous one apply very well to the Wahhabis.

The Permissibility of Asking Allah for Things by Some of His Creation

If performing tawassul had been blasphemy, then the believers, i.e., the Holy Nabi, Sall Allahu alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim, his Companions, and the Salaf and Khalaf of this nation would not have done it. Yet it is mentioned in the sahih hadith of the Holy Nabi that the Holy Nabi used to ask Allah by saying:

اللهم انى اسالك بحق السائلين عليك

which means: **[O Allah, I ask You by the status of those who ask You.{10}]** Without doubt, this is tawassul. The Holy Nabi, Sall Allahu alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim, used to teach this supplication (du'a') to his Companions and order them to say it. This issue was expounded upon in different books and treatises refuting Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab.

There is a hadith related by al-Hakim that mentions after Adam ate from the tree, he performed tawassul by our Holy Nabi, Sall Allahu alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim. He did that, because he saw the name of the Holy Nabi written on the 'Arsh, Adam said: **<<O Allah, by the dignity of this son [Muhammad], forgive this father [Adam].>>**

It was also related by Ibn Hibban, that upon the death of Fatimah Bint Asad, may Allah raise her rank, the Holy Nabi, Sall Allahu alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim, with his own honorable hands, put her in her grave and said: **<<O Allah, forgive my mother{11}, Fatimah Bint Asad, and widen her place by the status of Your Holy Nabi and the prophets who came before me. You are the most Merciful.>>**

There is a hadith classified as sahih{12}, that a blind man asked the Holy Nabi, Sall Allahu alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim, to make a supplication (du'a') to Allah to return his sight. The Holy Nabi ordered him to make ablution (wudu') and pray two rak'ahs and then say:

"O Allah, I ask You and direct myself to You by Your Holy Nabi, Muhammad, the Prophet of Mercy. O Muhammad, I ask Allah by you to fulfill my need. O Allah, enable him to intercede for me."

The blind man did what the Holy Nabi taught him to do{13} and Allah brought his sight back. Moreover, as related by at-Tabaraniyy, the tawassul made by the blind man was used by the Companions and Salaf after the death of the Holy Nabi.

'Umar Ibn al-Khattab performed the tawassul by al-'Abbas (the uncle of the Holy Nabi), may Allah reward their deeds, when he prayed the Salah of 'Istisqa'{14} with the people. There are other proofs mentioned in the books of the Islamic scholars but we will not recount them at length here.

The one who pursues the saying of the Companions and their followers will find a great deal of proof about the validity of calling the prophet by saying "O Muhammad" in his presence as well as in his absence and in his life as well as after his death. In fact, many texts include the phrase which means, "O Muhammad". Calling the name of the Holy Nabi, Sall Allahu alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim, is permissible. An example is the saying of the Companion, Bilal Ibn al-Harith, may Allah reward his deeds, when he went to the grave of the Holy Nabi. He said: "O Messenger of Allah, ask Allah to send rain to your Nation." His saying contains this format{15}.

Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Sulayman al-Kurdiyy{16} was among the authors who wrote refuting Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab. He was Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab's own shaykh. Among what he said is as follows:

O Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, I advise you, for the sake of Allah, ta'ala, to hold your tongue regarding the Muslims. If you hear from anyone who asks for help from other than Allah that one has the power to effect things without the Will of Allah, then teach him the right thing about this issue, and show him the proofs which state no one other than Allah brings things from non-existence into existence. The one who rejects that is blasphemous. You have no right to label the majority of the Muslims as blasphemers{17} while you are deviant from the majority of the Muslims. In fact, it is more reasonable to consider the one who deviates from the majority of the Muslims as a blasphemer then to consider the Muslims as a nation as blasphemers-- because the deviant one has followed a path other than the path of the believers. In **Surat an-Nisa', Ayah 115**, Allah said:

غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ وَمَنْ
جَهَنَّمَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصَلِّهِ

This ayah means: **[Whoever contends with the Messenger after the right path was exposed to him and follows other than the way of the believers, Allah will leave him to whatever he followed and put him in Hell (Jahannam)].**

The Permissibility Of Visiting The Grave Of

The Holy Nabi Visiting the grave of the Holy Nabi, Sall Allahu alaihi wa Aalihi wa Sallim, was performed by the Companions and the Salaf and Khalaf who came after them. Many hadiths cite the benefit of this deed and the scholars of Islam have written books about this matter{18}

Among of what was mentioned concerning calling on someone other than Allah, whether that one is present, absent, dead or alive, is the saying of the Holy Nabi:

اذا افلتت دابة احدكم بارض فلا تة فليناد يا عباد الله اعينوا

which means: <<If the animal of anyone of you went out of control in the wilderness, then call: 'O slaves of Allah, help me'>>, since there are slaves of Allah [i.e. the angels] who will respond to him.

There is another hadith related by al-Bazzar in which the Holy Nabi said:

اذا اضل احدكم شيئا او اراد عوناً وهو با رض ليس فيها انيس فليقل يا عباد الله اعينوني

which means: << If one of you lost something or needs help while in an open land, then let him say: "O slaves of Allah, help me.">> Another narration says:

اغيثوني فان لله عبدا لا ترونهم

which means <<Rescue me, because Allah has created slaves whom you do not see.>>

When traveling at nightfall the Holy Nabi, sallallahu 'alyhi wa sallam, used to say:

يا ارض ربي و ربك الله

which means: << O earth, my Lord and your Lord is Allah.>>

When the Holy Nabi visited the grave of Muslims, he used to say:

السلام عليكم يا اهل القبور

which means: << O people of the graves, peace be upon you.>>

In the Tashahhud in as-Salah the Muslim says:

السلام عليك ايها النبي و رحمة الله وبركاته

which means: << "O Holy Nabi of Allah, may Allah protect you from infirmities, and have mercy and blessings on you.">>

There is no harm in calling on and performing tawassul by someone unless one believes that someone other than Allah actually creates things. Hence, as long as one believes that only Allah creates them, there is no harm in performing tawassul. Likewise,

attributing a certain doing to other than Allah does not harm unless one believes this doer actually creates. So once it is established the person does not believe the creating is for other than Allah then attributing a doing to other than Allah is understood in its proper context. When one says: "This medicine benefited me," or "This particular righteous Muslim benefited me," he is merely exposing the created reason of the benefit. These statements are also similar to when one says: "This food satisfied my hunger," or "This water quenched my thirst," or "This medicine cured me." When Muslims say such statements, they understand them in their proper context, i.e., food, water, and medicine are only reasons, and Allah is the Creator of their benefit.

The general proofs mentioned in this summary are enough to refute Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab. The scholars of Islam have expounded on this issue in several treatises.

Footnote

- {1} Al-Hijaz refers to the western part of Arabia which includes Makkah and al-Madinah.
- {2} Al-Haramayn refers to Makkah and al-Madinah.
- {3} Ash-Sham refers to the area that includes Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine.
- {4} Only the first adversity will be presented in this booklet.
- {5} Tawassul is asking Allah for goodness by a prophet, righteous believer, etc.
- {6} Shirk refers to associating partners to Allah.
- {7} The People of Tawhid refers to the Muslims.
- {8} Ad-Dar'iyah is a region north of the city of Riyad, Saudi Arabia.
- {9} Musaylimah al-Kadhdhab was a blasphemous man who claimed the status of prophethood for himself after the death of Holy Nabi Muhammad. He was killed by the Muslims during the caliphate of Abu Bakr, may Allah raise his rank.
- {10} Ibn Majah and others related this hadith and the-Hafidh, Ibn Hajar, deemed it a strong hadith.
- {11} The Holy Nabi called her 'my mother' out of likening her to his real mother.
- {12} Sixteen hafidhs of hadith classified this hadith as sahih, including at-Tirmidhiyy, at-Tabaraniyy, al-Bayhaqiyy, as-Subkiyy, among others.
- {13} It is clear in the narrations of this hadith, the blind man was not in the session of the Holy Nabi when he did as the Holy Nabi ordered him.
- {14} Salah of 'Istisqa' refers to performing a specific prayer which includes making supplication for rain.
- {15} Al-Bayhaqiyy related this hadith and classified it as Sahih.
- {16} Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Sulaym al-Kurdiyy was the one who wrote al-Hashiyah on the explanation of Ibn Hajar to the text of Bafadl.
- {17} It is mentioned in a hadith it is easier for the devil to trick the lonely person who is away from other Muslims. The Holy Nabi, sallallahu al 'alayhi wa sallam, while encouraging the Muslims to perform the prayers in congregation said:

وانما ياكل الذئب من الغنم القاصية