



Q 4: Would you please give us your opinion on the letter sent by Shaykh Sulayman ibn Sahman to Shaykh `Aly ibn `Abdullah ibn `Isa in which he refutes the claim of those who say that it is permissible to perform Tawassul (supplicate to Allah through a means), such as by the rights of prophets and pious people and to ask their help. He stated that Shaykh Al-Islam said that he knew no opinion permitting it, and that it is also not permissible to swear by our Prophet (peace be upon him), contrary to what was mentioned by Al-`Iz ibn `Abdul-Salam, due to the evaluation of the authenticity of the Hadith.

A: Shaykh Sulayman ibn Sahman quoted that Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said, "I know no juristic opinion permitting it and it is also not permissible to swear by our Prophet (peace be upon him), contrary to what was mentioned by Al-`Iz ibn `Abdul-Salam, due to the evaluation of the authenticity

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of the Hadith." This is a correct quote. (Refer to "Majmu` Al-Fatawa", vol. 1, pp. 337-347)

The Hadith referred to here is the account of the blind man who performed Tawassul for the recovery of his sight through the Prophet (peace be upon him) and sought his intercession. This Hadith is related by Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Nasa'y, and Ibn Majah, on the authority of `Uthman ibn Hunayf from the Prophet (peace be upon him). It is explained by Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah be merciful to him) that due to the evaluation of the authenticity of the Hadith, there is nothing in it that can be used in evidence to support Tawassul through the person of the Prophet (peace be upon him). In fact, it states that Tawassul was made through the Prophet's Du`a' (supplication) to his Lord to restore the blind man's sight.

The following is what was mentioned by Ibn Taymiyyah about the different narrations of the Hadith and his clarification. It was reported by Al-Tirmidhy in a Sahih (authentic) Hadith that the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught a man to supplicate by saying: *«O Allah! I ask of You and supplicate to You through Your Prophet, Muhammad, the Prophet of mercy, O Muhammad! O Messenger of Allah! I supplicate to my Lord through you for my need to be met. O Allah! Accept his intercession on my behalf.»* A similar Du`a' was also related by Al-Nasa'y.

Furthermore, Al-Tirmidhy and Ibn Majah related from `Uthman ibn Hunayf that, *«A blind man came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said, "Make Du`a' to Allah for Him to cure me." He (peace be upon him) said, "If you want (me to), I will make Du`a' (for you), and if you want to be patient, that will be better for you." The man said, "Make Du`a' to Him." The Prophet then told him to perform Wudu' (ablution) properly, and then make the following Du`a', "O Allah! I ask of you and I turn to you through Your Prophet, Muhammad, the Prophet of mercy. O Messenger of Allah! O Muhammad! I have turned to my Lord through you for this need to be fulfilled. O Allah! Accept his intercession on my behalf.»*

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Al-Tirmidhy said that this Hadith was Hasan (a Hadith whose chain of narration contains a narrator

with weak exactitude, but is free from eccentricity or blemish) and Sahih (a Hadith that has been transmitted by people known for their uprightness and exactitude; free from eccentricity and blemish). According to another narration reported by Al-Nasa'y on the authority of `Uthman ibn Hunayf in his words, (A blind man said, "O Messenger of Allah! Make Du`a' to Allah to uncover my vision for me." He (peace be upon him) said, "Go and perform Wudu', then perform two-Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), then say: 'O Allah! I ask of you and I turn to you through Your Prophet, Muhammad, the Prophet of mercy. O Muhammad! I have turned to my Lord through you to uncover my vision. O Allah! Accept his intercession on my behalf.'" When he had done this, Allah uncovered his vision.)

Also, **Imam Ahmad said, in his "Musnad"**, "It was narrated to us by Rawh, who narrated from Shu`bah, on the authority of `Umayr ibn Yazid Al-Khatmi Al-Madani, who said that he heard from `Umarah ibn Khuzaymah ibn Thabit, who narrated on the authority of `Uthman ibn Hunayf, (A blind man came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said, "O Prophet of Allah! Make Du`a' to Allah to cure me." He (peace be upon him) said, "If you want (me to), I will delay that, and it will be better for your Afterlife; and if you want me to I will make Du`a' for you." The man said, "Make Du`a' to Allah for me." So the Prophet told him to make Wudu', perform two-Rak`ahs, and make this Du`a': "O Allah! I ask of you and I turn to you through Your Prophet, Muhammad, the Prophet of mercy. O Muhammad! I have turned to my Lord through you for this need to be met. O Allah! Accept his intercession on my behalf.") The man did this and was cured. This Hadith shows Tawassul being made through the Prophet in a Du`a'.

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Some people say that this Hadith implies absolute permissibility of Tawassul through the Prophet, whether he is alive or dead. This is claimed by those who make Tawassul through his being after his death and in his absence. They think that the Tawassul made during his lifetime by the blind man and the Sahabah (Companions) means that they can swear by him to Allah or ask Allah through the Prophet's being to fulfill their needs. They think that Tawassul through the Prophet does not require him (peace be upon him) to make a Du`a' for them nor for them to be obedient to him. It is all the same to them whether the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) makes a Du`a' for them or not and they all make Tawassul through him, whether they obey him or not. They think that Allah (Exalted be He) fulfills needs that are requested of Him through Tawassul, according to their claim, without the Messenger making a Du`a' to Him in the same way as he fulfilled the need of the blind man who performed Tawassul through his own Du`a' and that of the Messenger's Du`a' for him. They think that both of these are the same and that anyone who seeks Allah's Help through the Prophet is performing Tawassul in the same way as the blind man did, and that what the blind man was told to do is lawful for them. What these people are saying is false according to the law and intellect, and they are not in agreement with what Allah decreed or in conformity with what is said by others.

There are some people who say that this story established a ruling that can be expanded to similar cases that have points of comparison in the ruling, but it cannot be expanded to cases that are dissimilar. The point of difference is legally and logically clear between the case when the Prophet made a Du`a' for someone and when he did not, and it is not permissible to make either of them the same as the other.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) interceded for the blind man, this was why he said in his Du`a':

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(O Allah! Accept his intercession on my behalf,) as He knew that the Prophet was interceding for him. As to the words: ("If you want to be patient, that will be better for you." And he said, "Make

Du`a' for me") this was a request from the Prophet (peace be upon him) to supplicate to Allah for him. He (peace be upon him) told him to offer Salah (Prayer) and supplicate to Allah for himself in his Du`a' as well, saying: (O Allah! Accept his intercession on my behalf.) This shows that the meaning of his words: (O Allah! I ask of you and I turn to you through Your Prophet, Muhammad) refers to his Du`a' and intercession, and was what was also meant by `Umar when he said, "O Allah! If we were suffering from a drought, we would supplicate to You by our Prophet and You would send us rain".

The meaning of these Hadiths is the same. The Prophet (peace be upon him) taught a man to make Tawassul through him during his lifetime and `Umar mentioned that they made Tawassul through the Prophet when they were afflicted by drought, and after his death they made Tawassul through someone else instead of him.

If making Tawassul through the Prophet when he was alive is the same as after his death, and it was the same whether the Messenger made Du`a' for the person performing Tawassul through him or not, the Sahabah would not have made Tawassul through other than him. Although the Messenger was the best of creation to Allah, the dearest of them to his Lord, and the nearest one to Him, they made Tawassul through someone else who was not equal to him.

Additionally, if the blind man had made Tawassul through the Messenger and the Messenger had not made Du`a' for him due to the man's status, all, or at least some of the other blind Sahabah would have done what that blind man did. But they abstained from doing so, as did others from the early generation of Muslims, from among the Muhajirun (Emigrants from Makkah to Madinah), Ansar (Helpers, inhabitants of Madinah who supported the Prophet), and those who followed them righteously; and they were more knowledgeable than us about Allah and His Messenger, and their rights and the lawful supplications which were beneficial, and which were not

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lawful or beneficial. They lived in a time of need and famine when they asked for relief from their distresses, ease from their difficulties, and for rain by any possible way, showing by what they did and what they avoided what was lawful.

This is why the jurists mention what the Sahabah did when discussing Al-Istisqa' (supplicating to Allah for rain), in this way the scholars affirm that Tawassul through the Prophet when he was alive meant asking for his Du`a' and intercession, and this is lawful. So the Sahabah used to ask the Prophet (peace be upon him) during his lifetime to make Du`a' for them. However, after his death, they did not ask, by his graveside or anywhere else, for him to make Du`a' for them, as many people now do by the graves of pious people, when they ask the dead to meet their needs or swear to Allah by them, and other matters. 

May Allah grant us success. May Peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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