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Fatwa no. 9412

Q: I am a secondary school student, and since my tender age I have seen my family in Sudan flocking to the shrines of shaykhs to rub them, seeking their blessings, and make vows by them. I have denounced such scenes within myself, but I could not declare it, because in their view I am considered a Kafir (disbeliever) and that they can poison me, and definitely can do me harm. For they claim that these people have Karamahs (extraordinary events performed at the hands of pious people) as they are Awliya' (pious people), and that most of them claimed to have seen Allah. I used to resent this inside me, until I came to know some people from Ansar Al-Sunnah Al-Muhamadiyyah; they showed me that these people's claims are only delusions and Shirk. They also taught me that these people are followers of Bid'ah (innovation in religion) and that every Bid'ah is a going astray that leads to the Fire. I also came across some books of theirs on Tawhid (Monotheism), written by Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab. However, I cannot afford to get them due to my straitened circumstances, so I just borrow them and return them after a short while.

I hope that you, as a father and a Da'y (caller) to the truth, will explain to me in a personal letter, your opinion on this group and send me some books, if possible, to enlighten me. And Allah is the Knower of intentions.

A: Making vows by the shrines of shaykhs is Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship), because making vows is an act of 'Ibadah (worship), and so dedicating a vow to other than Allah is a major form of Shirk. The same applies to supplicating to and seeking help from them, as these acts are intended to seek the blessings of these shaykhs.

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There is an authentic Hadith, narrated on the authority of Abu Waqid Al-Laythy, that indicates this. Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab (may Allah show mercy to him) also expounded on the issue in "Kitab Al-Tawhid" in the chapter: "Those who seek blessings from trees, stones, and the like, and rub shrines seeking blessings from their occupants."

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

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