

What has been attributed to Imaam Ahmad concerning seeking the Prophet's Intercession

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The Muhaddith of the Era

What has been attributed to Imaam Ahmad concerning seeking the Prophet's Intercession (ﷺ)

by The Albaani Blog

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Questioner: It is reported from Imaam Ahmad that he used to permit intercession [tawassul] through the Prophet (ﷺ)¹, what is the authenticity of that [report]? And what is your opinion [concerning this]?

Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)²: As for the authenticity of that according to the method employed when checking hadeeth, [then] we are not able to establish it, and it is not possible for us to establish [the authenticity] of every statement relayed about an Imaam of the Muslims according to the method of the scholars of hadeeth.

But we cannot but rely on the scholars who have preceded us in time and knowledge, and we can only but rely on them in the statements and narrations they relay to us—until a mistake in their reporting that becomes clear to us ... [about] Imaam Ahmad (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) permitting intercession through the Prophet (ﷺ).

I remember reading that a long time ago in the Shaykh of Islaam Ibn Taymeeyah's book, 'At-Tawassul wal-Wasilah,' he narrates that [statement] as being one of Imaam Ahmad's, and his authority in that was the hadeeth of the blind man.

And as I just said: as long as Ibn Taymeeyah is narrating that, and he is someone who is trusted and relied upon in that which he narrates, then we maintain that which he narrated until the weakness of what he is narrating is established with us, this is regarding the answer to the question.

But I want to mention something important, in my view, concerning statements such as this: it does not harm us whether or not this statement is confirmed from Imaam Ahmad, both matters are equal before us—that is because we are not 'Ahmadees' [i.e., blind followers of Imaam Ahmad (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)], but rather as I just said: we cherish these Imaams and hold them in high esteem and benefit from their knowledge and methodology, but we do not surrender the command of our Aqeedah or our pillars to them except those to whom it becomes clear to us have the truth with them.

¹ (ﷺ) (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

² (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

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Thus, if the report from Ibn Taymeeyah about Imaam Ahmad allowing that ... and that his proof in that was the hadeeth of the blind man, and then upon studying the hadeeth of the blind man it becomes obvious that it does not denote seeking the intercession of the Prophet (ﷺ) after his death, because the blind man was only seeking intercession through the supplication [Du'aa] of the Prophet (ﷺ) as is well-noted in that same book of Ibn Taymeeyah's [we] just mentioned, and as I further clarified in my book [entitled], 'At-Tawassul Anwaa'uhu wa Ahkaamuhu,' ... and the hadeeth of the blind man all centres around seeking intercession with the rank of the Prophet (ﷺ), so it is not permissible for us to say that it is permissible to seek intercession through the Prophet (ﷺ) now, because we cannot inform him what it is we need him to supplicate to his Lord for us is, and, for example, when he supplicates while in the state of barzakh we cannot know that he has [actually] supplicated, so the issue in the hadeeth of the blind man is connected to when he was alive (عليه السلام)³ and it has no connection to [after] his death.

Al-Fataawa al-Kuwaitiyyah, pp. 45-47.

³ (عليه السلام) ('alaihi-salaam) Peace be upon him