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OPENING THE AVENUE FOR SHIRK

Question

I was sent the following message:

An Earnest Appeal To All Muslims

Shaykhul Islam Mufti Muhammad Taqi Uthmani (Hafidhahullah) has recommended that every Muslim dedicates a minimum of 10 minutes daily to recite Aayat e Kareemah (لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ) while picturing Rasulullah (Sallallahu 'Alayhi WaSallam) and reciting with feeling and from the depth of one's heart. He goes on to say that if one cannot even do this much, then it is feared that one will be taken to task by Allah Ta'aala for not having done anything despite witnessing the great harm and affliction being caused to the Muslims. We should all try and read this very easy Dhikr and encourage others as well. Jazaakallahu Khayran" (*End of the message*)

I asked the sender if this is permitted to do. The learned aalim said the following,

"He is referring to what is known as "Tasawwur". This means to picture in your mind that Rasulullah (Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wa Sallam) is in front of you / with you and in that condition recite the Aayat e Kareemah. Jee, this is permissible. There is no belief of him being there physically with you, rather it is merely a means of enhancing the concentration and feeling with which the Aayat e Kareemah is read. Tasawwur has many spiritual benefits as well and can be made of many things. At times the Sufis also encourage certain people to make Tasawwur of Allah, His creations, His bounties, etc."

1.) Advise kindly whether this practice is correct or incorrect, even if one recites the Ayah of tawheed, can one picture Nabi Sallallahu alayhi wasallam?

2.) I also would like to know if one pictures ALLAH Ta'ala as this allocates an imaginary image for ALLAH Ta'ala thus associating a certain image to be ALLAH, and I understand this to be shirk. Please advise.

ANSWER

It is not permissible to engage in this 'tasawwur' practice. The Mufti's claim of being taken to task by Allah Ta'ala for abstaining from a practice which he (the mufti) has fabricated and advised, is the height of temerity and jahaalat. Did he receive Wahi from Allah Ta'ala to impose on Muslims which even according to him "Sufis advised it sometimes", not as a regular *shaghl*.

It is a practice fraught with the danger of shirk. While some Sufis, not all Sufis, do have the practice of *Tasawwur* (*imagining Allah Ta'ala or the shaikh*), it is not permissible for sundry Muslims, for the laeity, for *awaamun naas* to adopt this practice on the basis of a miscreant mufti advising it. Mufti Taqi should advise the masses and himself to abstain from fisq and fujoor, and from his haraam pictures, videos and bank *riba*, and from other haraam acts in which he flagrantly participates.

People should not adopt practices (*ashghaal*) which have absolutely no basis in the Shariah, and which open up an avenue of shirk and sin. Certain practices are meant for only Sufis who execute same under supervision of expert Mashaa-ikh. It is clear that Mufti Taqi is ignorant of the dangers of the practice he has advised.

Shaitaan is a cunning ustaadh. With the aid of his agents he is subtly introducing shirk in this fallen and disgraced Ummah. Dua in the Sunnah way is more than adequate. There is no need for bid'ah and fabrications. These are destructive for Imaan.