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Third, fourth, and sixth questions from Fatwa No. 9047

Q 3: What is your opinion regarding the saying of imam Ibn Taymiyyah (Shaykh Al-Islam) in his book [Iqtida' Al-Sirat Al-Mustaqim]: "There is no dispute among the scholars but in respect of taking oaths by the Prophet (peace be upon him) where two juristic opinions are cited among the Hanbali school of jurisprudence. Regarding the issue of Tawassul (supplicating to Allah through a means) by means of the Prophet, Imam Ahmad is reported to have adopted a view that lends support to his opinion on the validity of taking oath by the Prophet. This is reported in "Mansak Al-Marudhi i.e. A book on the rituals of Hajj). However, the sound view states that taking oath by the Prophet is invalid, and thus ineffective. Similarly, Tawassul by means of the Prophet is also invalid.

Also his opinion in [Majmu' Al-Fatawa]: "But if we do not ask Allah by means of supplicating to them nor by means of our deeds, but by virtue of their personalities, they will not be a reason for answering our supplications. Therefore, we are performing tawassul through a fruitless means. It is why we find no authentic report from the Prophet (peace be upon him) or even a notably transmitted report from the Salaf in support of this behavior. However, Al-Marudhi, in his book [Al-Mansak], related a formula of supplication uttered by imam Ahmad including Tawassul by the Prophet (peace be upon him).

A : What is reported by Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy upon him) from the leading jurists in his two books on the topic is various in wording but equivalent meaning.

It may be interpreted as follows: The leading Jurists like Malik , Abu Hanifah , and Al-Shafi'i (may Allah have mercy upon them) maintain that swearing by anyone other than Allah is absolutely forbidden whether the oath is taken by a prophet or not, thus this formula of oath is invalid. This is the correct opinion

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reported from Ahmad (may Allah have mercy upon him). This is also the choice of Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah. He said: "This is the right opinion." The other opinion of Ahmad declares the permissibility of swearing by our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and thus the oath is valid. Some Hanbali jurists expanded this judgment to all prophets. The validity of this oath constitutes the grounds for the validity of adjuring Allah in the name of the Prophet or other prophets. Thus, the well-known account of the blind man who offered Tawassul by means of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is understood in light of this view. Ibn Taymiyyah states that the view that permits and validates taking oaths by the Prophet is odd and weak. Therefore, whatever judgments originated from them i.e. the permissibility to adjure Allah by the Prophet and the like, is also odd and weak. Indeed, the opinion of Shaykh Al-Islam forms the right opinion held by the majority of scholars. In fact, it goes in conformity with the legal evidence. Finally, all success belongs to Allah.

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

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