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Fatwa no. (4154) :

Q: The sermonizer of a Masjid (mosque) in one of the villages in Egypt where we live is a Sufi who follows Al-Shadhiliyyah Tariqah (Sufi order). This man teaches people Tawassul (supplicating) by the creatures of Allah, such as prophets and Awliya' (pious people). He urges them to visit shrines and tells them it is lawful to swear by the Prophet and the Awliya', and to make Kaffarah (expiation) if they break it. Our group, which is one of the Islamic groups, debated with him concerning these errors, but he remains adamant citing Da'if (weak) and Mawdu' (fabricated) Hadiths to defend his opinion. Is Salah valid behind such a man? We have yet to establish a Masjid, for we have only collected some donations for it. We would like to know your Fatwa concerning this. May Allah grant us all success. In addition, he declared the great scholars of Islam, such as the Shaykh of Islam Ahmad ibn Taymiyyah and Imam Muhammad ibn `Abdul-Wahhab (may Allah be pleased with them and merciful with them) as disbelievers.

A: Seeking the help of the dead and supplicating to anyone other than Allah is considered major Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah) which takes one out of the fold of Islam, whether the one whose help is sought is a prophet or otherwise. Seeking the help of the dead is major Shirk as well which also takes one out of the fold of Islam, we seek refuge in Allah from that. Salah behind such people is not valid as they are Mushriks (those who associate others with Allah in worship). However, if one seeks the help of Allah only, but supplicates by their honor, or circumambulates

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their graves without believing that they have the ability to do anything, but only hoping that their lofty status in the sight of Allah is a medium for answering their prayers, they have committed a Bid'ah (rejected innovation in religion), a sin, and one of the means leading to Shirk. I am afraid this might lead to major Shirk. May Allah help you spread Tawhid (monotheism), support the truth, and struggle against the innovators in religion.

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

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