7867 - Following the funeral processions of those who worshipped graves

the question

Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):
“It is not (proper) for the Prophet and those who believe to ask Allah’s forgiveness for the Mushrikoon, even though they be of kin, after it has become clear to them that they are the dwellers of the Fire (because they died in a state of disbelief).” [al-Tawbah 9:113]
The apparent meaning of this aayah is that it is not allowed to ask for forgiveness for mushrikeen even if they are close relatives. Many of us Bedouin Arabs have parents and relatives who are accustomed to offering sacrifices at graves, seeking a means of reaching Allah through the occupants of those graves, fulfilling vows to offer sacrifices at their graves, and seeking the help of the occupants of the graves to alleviate distress and heal disease. They have died in this state, for no one reached them who could teach them about Tawheed and the true meaning of Laa ilaaha ill-Allah, or who could teach them that vows, supplications and worship are not right unless they are directed to Allah Alone. Is it correct to walk in their funeral procession, to pray over them, to make du`a and seek forgiveness for them, to perform Hajj on their behalf and to give charity on their behalf?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

If someone dies in the state which you describe, it is not permissible to walk in their funeral procession, or to pray over him, or to make du`a and seek forgiveness for him, or to perform Hajj on his behalf or give charity on his behalf – because the actions mentioned (sacrificing at graves, etc.) are actions of Shirk, and Allah has said, in the Soorah quoted above (interpretation of the meaning):

“It is not (proper) for the Prophet and those who believe to ask Allah’s forgiveness for the Mushrikoon, even though they be of kin” [al-Tawbah 9:113].

And it was reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “I asked my Lord for permission to pray for forgiveness for my mother, and He did not grant me permission. Then I asked Him for permission to visit her grave, and He granted me permission.”

(Narrated by Ahmad, 2/441, 5/355, 359; Muslim, 2/671, no. 976; Abu Dawood, 3/557, no. 3234; al-Nasaa’i, 4/90, no. 2034; Ibn Maajah, 1/501, no. 1572; Ibn Abi Shaybah, 3/343; Ibn Hibbaan, 7/440, no. 3169; al-Haakim, 1/375-376, 376; al-Bayhaqi, 4/76).

They cannot be excused by saying that no one came to them who could explain that the things which they did were shirk, because the evidence to that effect in the Qur’aan is very clear, and there are knowledgeable people among them whom they could have asked about whether what they were doing was shirk – but they turned away and were content with what they were doing.

And Allah is the Source of strength. May Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions, and grant them peace.