115502 - Qaseedat al-Burdah by al-Busayri and an explanation of what it contains of kufr and heresy

the question

I have heard several things about the Burdah. Some say its good and beneficial and I have also read that it may be shirk as some of the verses are praising the Prophet (pbuh) with attributes of Allah. I am asking for your opinion on this and whether you think it is shirk and to be avoided.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The qaseedah or ode al-Burdah is regarded as one of the most famous poems in praise of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), if not the most famous. It was written by al-Busayri, whose full name was Muhammad ibn Sa‘eed ibn Hammaad al-Sunhaaji. He was born in 608 AH and died in 696 AH.

It was said that the reason for his composing it was that al-Busayri was afflicted by a chronic disease, and no remedy was of any help; he used to send a great deal of blessings (salawaat) upon the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) until he saw the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in a dream one night, and he covered him with his cloak (burdah), and when al-Busayri woke up, he stood up and there was no trace of sickness in him, so he composed this qaseedah. And Allah knows best whether this story is true or not.

Secondly:

The poem referred to includes blatant and obvious kufr and heresy. The scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jamaa‘ah have studied it and criticised it, pointing out its faults and the ways in which it is

contrary to the beliefs of Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jamaa‘ah.

Among the most prominent verses for which this poem has been criticised are the following:

1. O noblest of creation, I have no one but you to turn to except you when major calamity strikes.

2. If you do not take my hand out of kindness on the Day of Resurrection, then what great trouble I will be in.

3. This world and the Hereafter are part of what you control, and part of your knowledge is the knowledge of al-Lawh al-Mahfooz and the Pen

4. Stay away from the way of the Christians in praising their Prophet, then (after that) praise him in any way you want

5. If he were to perform miracles commensurate with his real status, his name would bring dead people back to life.

6. I have a connection to him because I am called Muhammad as he is, and he is the kindest of creation in taking care of this connection.

Thirdly:

Some of the comments of the scholars, commenting on and criticising these lines of verse:

1.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhaab said:

With regard to control (of this world and the Hereafter), we will discuss it. Allah says: “The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)” [al-Faatihah 1:4]. Its meaning according to all mufassireen is as Allah explained it in the verse in which He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And what will make you know what the Day of Recompense is?

18. Again, what will make you know what the Day of Recompense is?

19. (It will be) the Day when no person shall have power (to do anything) for another, and the Decision, that Day, will be (wholly) with Allaah”

[al-Infitaar 82:17-19].

The one who understands the interpretation of this verse and realises that Allah will be the sole Sovereign (and controller) of that Day in particular, even though He is the Sovereign (and controller) of all days, that Day and others, will realise that it is emphasising this important matter (that Allah is the Sovereign and controller), because of knowledge of which a person may enter Paradise and because of ignorance of which he may enter Hell. What a serious matter it is; if a man were to travel for more than twenty years to learn about it, that would not be too much. What comparison can there be between this concept, believing in what the Qur’aan states clearly, as well as the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): “O Faatimah bint Muhammad, I cannot help you before Allah in any way”, and the words of the author of al-Burdah:

“O Messenger of Allah, undoubtedly your high position will enable you to help me when al-Kareem [Allah] takes the name of al-Muntaqim [the Avenger - i.e., on the Day of Resurrection].

I have a connection with him because my name is Muhammad and he is the kindest of all creation in taking care of this connection.

If you do not take my hand out of kindness on the Day of Resurrection, then what great trouble I will be in.”

Let the one who is honest with himself and those who are infatuated with it and those who claim to be scholars but prefer to recite this rather than reciting the Qur'aan ponder the meanings and implications of these lines of verse. Could any person believe in these lines of poetry and at the same time believe in the words of Allah (interpretation of the meaning): “(It will be) the Day when no person shall have power (to do anything) for another, and the Decision, that Day, will be

(wholly) with Allaah” [al-Infitaar 82:17-19] and the words of the Prophet, “O Faatimah bint Muhammad, I cannot help you before Allah in any way”? No, by Allah, no, by Allah, no by Allah, except if one may believe that Moosa was truthful and Pharaoh was truthful at the same time, or that Muhammad was following the path of truth and Abu Jahl was following the path of truth at the same time. No, by Allah, they are not equal and will never meet until the head of the crow turns grey.

One who examines and understands this issue and knows al-Burdah and those who are infatuated with it, will understand that Islam has become a stranger once again. End quote.

Tafseer Soorat al-Faatihah, by Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhaab, 5/13

2.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Hasan Aal al-Shaykh (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

From ‘Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Hasan and his son ‘Abd al-Lateef to ‘Abd al-Khaaliq al-Hifzi:

Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah and His blessings. To proceed:

We heard two years ago that you were interested in al-Burdah by al-Busayri, but it contains major shirk that is not hidden. For example he says “O noblest of creation, I have no one to turn to except you…” and so on until the end of the poem, in which he asks for reward in the Hereafter from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) alone.

The fact that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) is the best of the Prophets does not mean that he may be allowed exclusively something that Allah has forbidden to His slaves in totality; rather he is enjoined to forbade it and disavow it, as the Messiah son of Maryam disavowed it in the verses at the end of Soorat al-Maa’idah and as the angels disavowed it in Soorat Saba’.

With regard to turning to, this is the same as seeking refuge; seeking refuge is to ward off evil and turning to is to attain something good. Imam Ahmad and others narrated that there was

consensus that it is not permissible to seek refuge except in Allah and His names and attributes. As for seeking refuge with anyone else, that is shirk and there is no difference of opinion concerning that.

With regard to the phrase “this world and the Hereafter are part of what you control”, this is contrary to fact that sovereignty and control belong exclusively to Allah on the Day of Resurrection, as He says: “Whose is the kingdom this Day? (Allaah Himself will reply to His Question:) It is Allaah’s, the One, the Irresistible!” [Ghaafir 40:16]. And He says in Soorat al-Faatihah: “The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)” al-Faatihah 1:4]. And there are other similar verses.

And he [the author] discussed this line further to highlight how how much reprehensible shirk it contains.

End quote from Rasaa’il wa Fataawa al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Hasan ibn Muhammad ‘Abd al-Wahhaab, 1/82

3.

Shaykh Sulaymaan ibn ‘Abd-Allah Aal al-Shaykh (may Allah have mercy on him) quoted some of the lines mentioned above, then he said:

Think of how much shirk there is in these lines, such as:

(i)

He denied that there is any refuge when calamity strikes except the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). But that applies only to Allah alone, with no partner or associate. He is the one in Whom people can find no refuge except Him.

(ii)

He called upon the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), beseeched him, expressed his need of him, and stated that he had no choice but to seek his help, and asked of him these

things that can only be asked of Allah. This is associating partners with Allah in His divinity (shirk al-uloohiyyah).

(iii)

He asked him to intercede for him in the words: “undoubtedly your high position will enable you to help me when al-Kareem [Allah] takes the name of al-Muntaqim [the Avenger - i.e., on the Day of Resurrection].” This is what the mushrikoon sought from those whom they worshipped, relying on their high position and intercession before Allah, and this is shirk. Moreover, intercession cannot be granted except with the permission of Allah, so it makes no sense to seek it from anyone else. Allah is the One who gives permission to the intercessor to intercede; no intercessor can initiate his intercession.

(iv)

“I have a connection with him because my name is Muhammad and he is the kindest of all creation in taking care of this connection”

This is telling a lie about Allah and His Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). There is no special connection between him and one whose name is Muhammad except through obedience, not by just having the same name yet committing shirk.

This is a great contradiction and obvious shirk, because he is asking first and not doubting that his high position will enable him to help him, then he asks him to take him by the hand out of generosity and kindness, otherwise he will be doomed.

It may be said: How can you ask him first for intercession, then ask him to be kind to you? If you say that intercession can only come after permission from Allah, then how can you call upon the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and ask him to intercede? Why don't you ask for intercession from the One under Whose authority all types of intercession come, the One Who is the Sovereign and Controller of heaven and earth, the One Who there is no intercession except after His permission. This renders invalid your seeking intercession from anyone other than Allah.

If you say: All I want is to seek his help by means of his high position and intercession, by the permission of Allah.

The response is: How can you ask him (the Prophet) to be generous to you and take you by the hand on the Day of Recompense, when this is contrary to the words of Allah, “And what will make you know what the Day of Recompense is? 18. Again, what will make you know what the Day of Recompense is? 19. (It will be) the Day when no person shall have power (to do anything) for another, and the Decision, that Day, will be (wholly) with Allaah” [al-Infitaar 82:17-19]? How can belief in both this and that coexist in one heart?

If you say: I asked him to take me by the hand and be kind to me by virtue of his high status and intercession,

The response is: It comes back to seeking intercession from someone other than Allah, and that is the essence of shirk.

(v)

In these lines of verse there is turning away from the Creator -- may He be exalted and sanctified -- and relying on created beings with regard to calamities of this world and the Hereafter, as is obvious to the believer. What comparison can there be between this and the words of Allah?

“You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything)”

[al-Faatihah 1:5]

“But if they turn away, say (O Muhammad): ‘Allaah is sufficient for me. Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He) in Him I put my trust and He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne’”

[al-Tawbah 9:129]

“And put your trust (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) in the Ever Living One Who dies not, and glorify His Praises, and Sufficient is He as the All-Knower of the sins of His slaves”

[al-Furqaan 25:58]

“Say: “It is not in my power to cause you harm, or to bring you to the Right Path.”

22. Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): “None can protect me from Allaah’s punishment (if I were to disobey Him), nor can I find refuge except in Him.

23. “(Mine is) but conveyance (of the truth) from Allaah and His Messages”

[al-Jinn 72:21-23]

If it is said: He did not ask him to be kind to him; rather all he said was that if he is not included among those who receive his intercession, he will be doomed,

The response is: What is meant is still asking him and seeking help from him, as he called upon him the first time and said that there was no refuge for him except with him. Then he clearly asks for favour and kindness in the form of a supplication and condition, because just as asking may come in the form of a request, it may also come in the form of a condition, as Nooh (peace be upon him) said: “And unless You forgive me and have mercy on me, I would indeed be one of the losers” [Hood 11:47].

End quote from Tafseer al-‘Azeez al-Hameed fi Sharh Kitaab al-Tawheed, 1/187-189

4.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked:

I read a hadeeth - how sound is it? It says: “Whoever is named Muhammad, do not hit him or insult him.”

He replied: This hadeeth is fabricated and falsely attributed to the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). It has no basis in the Sunnah. The same applies to the saying “Whoever is called Muhammad has a special bond to Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and soon he will admit him to Paradise by virtue of that” and “Whoever is called Muhammad, his

house will get such and such (blessings).” All of these reports have no basis of soundness. What matters is following Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), not just having his name. How many of those who are called Muhammad are evildoers, because they do not follow Muhammad and do not adhere to his sharee’ah. Names do not purify people; what purifies them is their righteous deeds and their fear of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted. Whoever is called Ahmad or Muhammad or Abu’l-Qaasim, but is a kaafir or an evildoer, it will not benefit him; rather the individual has to obey Allah, strive to obey Allah and adhere to the sharee‘ah of Allah with which He sent His Prophet Muhammad. This is what will benefit him and this is the way of salvation. Mere names without acting upon Islamic teachings have nothing to do with salvation or punishment.

But al-Busayri made a mistake in his Burdah when he said: “I have a connection to him because I am called Muhammad as he is, and he is the kindest of creation in taking care of this connection,” and he made an even bigger mistake when he said:

“O noblest of creation, I have no one to turn to except you when major calamity strikes.

If you do not take my hand out of kindness on the Day of Resurrection, then what great trouble I will be in.

This world and the Hereafter are part of what you control, and part of your knowledge is knowledge of al-Lawh al-Mahfooz and the Pen”

This poor man made his refuge in the Hereafter with the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and not with Allah, may He be glorified and exalted. He said that he will be doomed if he (the Prophet) does not take him by the hand, and he forgot Allah, may He be glorified, in Whose hand is harm and benefit, giving and withholding; He is the One Who will save His close friends and those who obey Him. The poet is making the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) the sovereign and controller of this world and the Hereafter. He described him as having knowledge of the unseen, part of which is knowledge of what is in al-Lawh al-Mahfooz and the Pen. This is blatant kufr and ultimate exaggeration; we ask Allah to keep us safe and sound.

If he died believing that, and did not repent, then he died in the worst kind of kufr and misguidance. What every Muslim is required to do is to beware of this exaggeration and not be deceived by al-Burdah and its author. And Allah is the one Whose help we seek, and there is no power and no strength except in Allah. End quote.

Fataawa al-Shaykh Ibn Baaz, 6/370, 371

The scholars said more than this, and there is more in the lines of this poem that could be subject to criticism, but we have chosen just some of that and it is sufficient to make the point, which is that we should beware of this qaseedah (ode) and realize that it contains blatant exaggeration, kufr and heresy.

For more information on the criticism of this poem, see the book: al-'Aqeedah al-Salafiyyah fi Maseeratiha al-Tareekhiyyah, by Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahmaan al-Maghraawi, part 5 (p. 139-154), and the article Fawaadih 'Aqadiyyah fi Burdah al-Busayri, by Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Muhammad Aal 'Abd al-Lateef, which is to be found in the following link [in Arabic]:

http://www.saaid.net/arabic/ar20.htm

And Allah knows best.