6745 - Sufi formulas andbid’ah

the question

In your 'Innovations' sections, you say it's bidah to recite, say a 100 times or something, suras hoping for reward. After reading a Sufi book by Hakim Moinuddin Chishti called 'Sufi Healing", I saw that it justified using such formulas by saying that the formulas and other things had been inspired by Allah through dreams or etc. to certain Muslims who were very close to Allah. Would this make it a part of Shariah? How can we know that they are being truthful? Is this acceptable in Islam?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

1. Allah described His awliyaa (close friends) as having two characteristics: Eemaan (faith) and Taqwa (piety, awareness of Allah). Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

No doubt! Verily, the Awliyaa of Allah [i.e., those who believe in the Oneness of Allah and fear Allah much and love Allah much], nor fear shall be upon them nor shall they grieve, - those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah) and used to fear Allah much [Yoonus 10:62-63]

2. The true awliyaa of Allah do not go against what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) brought. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) warned against innovated matters in religion, because Allah has perfected His religion and completed His favour upon His slaves. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion [al-Maaidah 5:3].

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Whoever innovates something in this

matter of ours [i.e., Islam] that is not a part of it, will have it rejected.

3. Therefore one can distinguish between the walee (close friend) of Allah and the walee of the Shaytaan, by looking at the persons character, behaviour and religious commitment does he pray regularly in jamaaah in the mosque, for example? Does he avoid wrongfully consuming peoples property? Does he avoid going against Islam by either adding or taking away anything? And so on

4. It is not permissible for a Muslim to innovate any dhikr to recite regularly or to tell others to do so such as awraad/wird, mathooraat or duaas. The adhkaar that were reported in the saheeh Sunnah are sufficient for this, otherwise a person is an innovator or one who calls others to bidah. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Whoever innovates something in this matter of ours [i.e., Islam] that is not a part of it, will have it rejected.

(Narrated by Al-Bukhaari, 2550; Muslim, 1718). According to a report narrated by Muslim: Whoever does any action that is not in accordance with this matter of ours (i.e., Islam) will have it rejected.

Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbali (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This hadeeth represents one of the most important principles in Islam. It is like a scale against which the external appearances of deeds are measured, just as the hadeeth Actions are but by intention is the scale against which the inner motivations of actions are measured. Just as every deed which is not done for the sake of Allah will bring no reward for the one who does it, so also every deed which is not in accordance with the way of Allah and His Messenger will be rejected and thrown back at the one who does it. Anyone who innovates new things in the religion and does things for which Allah and His Messenger have not granted permission, this is not a part of the religion at all.

(Jaami al-Uloom wal-Hukam, 1/180).

Al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This hadeeth is one of the most important basic principles of Islam, and it is one of the most concise and comprehensive sayings of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It

clearly states that innovations and newly invented matters will be rejected. The second report adds another idea, which is that some of those who follow the innovations of others may become stubborn when they are presented with the evidence of the first report which says, Whoever innovates something They may say, I am not innovating anything. But he may in this case be presented with the evidence of the second report, which says, "Whoever does any action"... This clearly shows that all innovated actions will be rejected, whether the one who does them innovates them himself or is following someone else who innovated it This hadeeth is one that should be learned by heart and used to denounce evil actions and be spread as evidence so that all people may use it.

(Sharh Muslim, 12/16).

5. Shaykh al-Islam [Ibn Taymiyah] (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

No doubt adhkaar and duaas are among the best forms of worship, and worship is one of the matters in which there is no room for personal opinions we have to follow what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did and taught, not our own whims and desires or innovations. The duaas and adhkaar of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) are the best that anyone could find. The one who follows this way will be safe and sound, and the benefits and positive results that he will gain are beyond description. Any other duaas and adhkaar may be haraam or they may be makrooh; they may involve shirk even though most people do not realize that the details of this would take too long to explain here.

No one has the right to teach the people any kinds of duaas or adhkaar apart from those that are mentioned in the Sunnah, or to make it a kind of regular worship which he expects the people to do regularly as they do the five daily prayers this is the innovation in religion which Allah does not allow As for adopting a wird or regularly reciting a dhikr that is not prescribed in shareeah, this is one of the things that is not allowed. The duaas and adhkaar prescribed by shareeah are the best that anyone could ever hope to find, and no one ignores them in favour of newly-invented, innovated adhkaar except one who is ignorant, negligent or a wrongdoer.

(Majmoo al-Fatawa, 22/510-511).

And Allah knows best.