979 - Kinds of Tawassul

the question

I have been discussing the subject of using "waseela" while supplicating to Allah (swt) with some Muslims, and have come to know that there are quite different opinions about fact whether the use of "waseela" in duaa is halaal or haraam. Could you please provide me with some information about this subject, some ayaat from the Holy Quran or authentic ahaadeeth? With the term "use of waseela" I mean asking via the agency of someone, fx "I ask You (O Allah) to grant me forgiveness via the agency of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him and his household)" or via the agency of other Prophets (Peace be upon them), saints or other pious Muslims.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What is meant by tawassul and waseelah is four things:

1. the kind of tawassul without which faith cannot be complete, which is seeking to reach Allah (tawassul) by believing in Him and His Messengers, and obeying Him and His Messenger, This is what is meant in the aayah (interpretation of the meaning):

O you who believe! Do your duty to Allah and fear Him. Seek the means of approach to Him [Al-Maaidah 5:35]

This includes seeking to approach Allah through His Names and Attributes, or by doing acts of obedience and worship by which one seeks to approach Allah, and so on.

Seeking to approach Allah by asking His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to make dua for one during his lifetime, and the believers asking one another to make duaa for one

another. This follows on from the first type and is encouraged.

Seeking to approach Allah by virtue of the status and virtues of some created being, such as saying, O Allah, I ask You by virtue of Your Prophet and so on. This is allowed by some of the ulama, but this opinion is daeef (weak). The correct view is that it is definitely haraam, because there can be no tawassul in duaa except by virtue of the Names and Attributes of Allah.

Tawassul as it is understood by many of the Muslims of later times, which is calling on the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and seeking his help (or seeking the help of the dead and so-called awliya). This is a form of major shirk, because calling on or seeking help from anyone other than Allah with regard to something that that only Allah is able to do is a kind of worship, and directing worship to anyone or anything other than Allah is major shirk.

And Allah knows best.