

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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# **The Virtues of al-Madeenah and Manners of Residence and Visiting**

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All praise is due to Allaah. We praise Him, seek His aid, and seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allaah from the evils of our own selves and the evil results of our misdeeds. Whoever Allaah guides none can lead astray, and whoever Allaah allows to stray none can guide. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His worshipping servant and Messenger, and His *Khaleel* and Chosen One among the creation. Allaah sent him before the Hour as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner; a caller to Allaah, by His permission, and a shining lamp. Thus, he guided his *Ummah* to every good and warned them against every evil. O Allaah, send *salaah, salaam*, and blessings upon him and upon his family, Companions, and all who tread his path and follow his guidance until the Day of Reckoning.

The city of the Noble Messenger ﷺ, *Taybah at-Tayyibah*, is the cradle of revelation where Jibreel, the trustworthy angel, would descend upon the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ; the place to which *Eemaan* will retreat; the centre where the *Muhaajireen* and *Ansaar* convened; and the home for those who settled there and adopted *Eemaan*. It was the first Muslim capital; in it banners were raised for military operations sanctioned by Allaah; from it troops set out with the truth to emancipate mankind from all manifestations of darkness and bring them to light; and from it emanated the light which shone upon the Earth with guidance. It was the destination of the Chosen One's migration; in it he lived the latter portion of his life; there he died and was buried; from it he shall be raised, and his grave shall be the first whose inhabitant will rise; and no one can identify the location of the grave of any Prophet with certainty except for his ﷺ.

Allaah has ennobled and favoured this blessed city and made it the best location on the Earth after Makkah, whose excellence over al-Madeenah is shown by the statement of the Noble Messenger ﷺ – when the non-Muslims expelled him from it and he set out migrating to al-Madeenah – as he addressed Makkah saying,

وَاللّٰهُ اِنَّكَ لَـٰخَيْرُ اَرْضِ اللّٰهِ، وَاَحَبُّ اَرْضِ اللّٰهِ اِلَى اللّٰهِ، وَلَوْلَا اَنِّيْ اُخْرِجْتُ مِنْكَ مَا خَرَجْتُ.

**“By Allaah, you are most certainly the best spot upon the Earth of Allaah, and the most beloved part of the Earth to Allaah. Had I not been forced out of you, I would not have left.”**

This is an authentic hadeeth collected by at-Tirmithi and ibn Maajah.

There is a hadeeth ascribed to the Messenger ﷺ where he prayed saying, “O Allaah, You have expelled me from the most beloved of lands to me – referring to Makkah – thus, allow me to abide in the most beloved of lands to You – referring to al-Madeenah.” This is a fabricated hadeeth and its meaning is also incorrect because it establishes that the most beloved to Allaah is not the most beloved to the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, and vice versa. However, we know that the love of the Messenger ﷺ conforms to what Allaah loves. Therefore, the most beloved to Allaah cannot be different from the most beloved to the Messenger ﷺ.



I saw it fit to compose this work about the virtues of this blessed city, manners of residing in it, and manners of visiting it. I shall mention several of these aspects in that order.

### Among the virtues of this blessed city:

- Allaah, Most Exalted, made it a sacred sanctuary just as He made Makkah a sacred sanctuary. It has been reported from the Noble Messenger ﷺ that he said,

اِنَّ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ حَرَّمَ مَكَّةَ، وَاِنِّيْ حَرَّمْتُ الْمَدِيْنَةَ.

“Indeed, Ibraaheem declared Makkah sacred, and I have declared al-Madeenah sacred.”  
Collected by Muslim.

The act of declaring these places sacred – which has been ascribed here to both Muḥammad ﷺ and Ibraaheem ؑ – is merely their announcing the fact that those places are sacred. In actuality, Allaah is the one who made them both sacred and sanctified.

Allaah ﷻ distinguished each of these two lands with the quality of being a *ḥaram* (sacred and sanctified) and did not do so for any other place. There is no evidence to substantiate that any place other than Makkah and al-Madeenah is a *ḥaram*. As regards the common notion that *al-Masjid al-Aqṣaa* is the third of the two *ḥaram* areas, this is a widespread misconception since the two *ḥaram* areas have no third. The correct thing to say is that it is the third of the two great venerable mosques. The Prophet ﷺ spoke of the virtue held by these three mosques, and going to them for the purpose of performing prayer there, when he said,

لَا تُشَدُّ الرَّحَالَ إِلَّا إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ مَسَاجِدَ: الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ، وَمَسْجِدِي هَذَا، وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى.

“A journey should not be undertaken except to three mosques: *al-Masjid al-Haraam*, this *Masjid* of mine, and *al-Masjid al-Aqṣaa*.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

The meaning of the *ḥaram* area as it relates to Makkah and al-Madeenah is all that falls within their respective boundaries; this is what the “*ḥaram*” refers to. The common notion that the *ḥaram* refers only to *al-Masjid an-Nabawee* (the Prophet’s Masjid ﷺ) is a widespread misconception. All of al-Madeenah – from ‘Ayr to Thawr and all that lies between the two black mountains – in its entirety is *ḥaram* area as the Prophet ﷺ said,

الْمَدِينَةُ حَرَمٌ مَا بَيْنَ عَيْرٍ إِلَى نُورٍ.

“Al-Madeenah is a *ḥaram* (sacred and sanctified area) in all that lies between ‘Ayr and Thawr.”  
Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

He ﷺ also said,

إِنِّي حَرَّمْتُ مَا بَيْنَ لَابَتِي الْمَدِينَةِ أَنْ يُقَطَعَ عِصَاهُهَا أَوْ يُقْتَلَ صَيْدُهَا.

“I have declared sacred what lies between the two black mountains of al-Madeenah, and have forbidden cutting its thorny shrubs or killing its game.” Collected by Muslim.

It is well-known that al-Madeenah in our present time has grown to such an extent that portions of it lie outside of the *ḥaram* area. As such, it cannot be said that all buildings in al-Madeenah fall within the *ḥaram*. Whatever lies within the boundaries of the *ḥaram* is considered part of it, and whatever lies outside the boundaries is considered as part of al-Madeenah but cannot be said to be part of the *ḥaram*.

In defining the boundaries of the *ḥaram*, it has been reported from the Noble Messenger ﷺ that he said it is “what lies between the two mountains of volcanic rock,” “between the two black mountains,” “between the two mountains,” or “between ‘Ayr and Thawr.” There is no contradiction or inconsistency between these wordings because the smaller area falls within the larger. Thus, all that falls between the two black mountains is *ḥaram* area; all that falls between the two black mountains is *ḥaram* area; and all that falls between ‘Ayr and Thawr is *ḥaram* area. If there is any area about which uncertainty exists as to whether or not it is part of the *ḥaram*, it must be considered as one of the doubtful matters about which caution should be exercised. The Noble Prophet ﷺ clarified the approach to be taken regarding them as mentioned in an authentic *ḥadeeth* narrated by an-Nu‘maan ibn Basheer ؓ in the two *sabeeh* collections,

فَمَنْ اتَّقَى الشُّبُهَاتِ فَقَدْ اسْتَبْرَأَ لِدِينِهِ وَعِرْضِهِ، وَمَنْ وَقَعَ فِي الشُّبُهَاتِ وَقَعَ فِي الْحَرَامِ.

“Thus, he who avoids doubtful matters absolves himself regarding his religion and his honour. However, he who falls into doubtful matters will fall into that which is unlawful.”

• The Prophet ﷺ named it *Taybah* and *Taabah*. In fact, it is established in *Saheeh Muslim* that Allaah named it *Taabah*, as the Prophet ﷺ said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمَّى الْمَدِينَةَ طَابَةً.

“Indeed, Allaah gave al-Madeenah the name *Taabah*.” These two epithets are both derived from goodness and they both convey that meaning. Thus, they are two names, full of goodness, given to a land of goodness.

• *Eemaan* shall retreat to it, as the Prophet ﷺ said,

إِنَّ الْإِيمَانَ لِيَأْرِزُ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ كَمَا تَأْرِزُ الْحَيَّةُ إِلَى جُحْرِهَا.

“*Eemaan* will surely retreat to al-Madeenah as a snake retreats to its hole.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

That means that *Eemaan* heads to it and can be found in it. It also means that Muslims journey there driven by their *Eemaan* and love for that blessed land which Allaah has made sacred.

• The Prophet ﷺ described it as a town which devours all towns, saying,

أُمِرْتُ بِقَرِيَّةٍ تَأْكُلُ الْقُرَى، يَقُولُونَ لَهَا يَثْرِبُ، وَهِيَ الْمَدِينَةُ.

“I have been commanded to migrate to a town which devours all towns. They call it *Yathrib*, and it is al-Madeenah.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

His statement “devours all towns” has been explained to mean that it is victorious over other towns and it shall have dominance over them. It has also been explained to mean that the spoils from *Jibaad* in the cause of Allaah are transferred to it. Both of these have taken place.

The dominance of this city over others occurred as reformers of guidance and troops of victory set out from it to remove mankind from the depths of darkness and take them to light by the permission of their Lord. As a result, many accepted the religion of Allaah ﷻ. Every good experienced by the inhabitants of the Earth emanated from this blessed city, the city of the Messenger ﷺ. Hence, its quality of devouring other towns is consistent with its being victorious over others, as was the case among the first generation – the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ and the rightly-guided *Khulafaa'* ؓ.

In addition, the transfer of spoils to al-Madeenah also occurred as the Prophet ﷺ had foretold that the treasures belonging to the kings of Persia and Rome would be distributed in the cause of Allaah, and this actually took place. Those treasures were brought to al-Madeenah and distributed by ‘Umar, *al-Faarooq* (who distinguishes between truth and falsity) ؓ.

• The Prophet ﷺ encouraged patient endurance of its distress and hardships as he said,

الْمَدِينَةُ خَيْرٌ لَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ.

“Al-Madeenah is better for them, if they only knew.” He said this regarding those who contemplated moving from al-Madeenah to other areas where life was easier, means of livelihood were more readily available, and wealth was in abundance. The Prophet ﷺ said,

الْمَدِينَةُ خَيْرٌ لَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ، لَا يَدْعُهَا أَحَدٌ رَغْبَةً عَنْهَا إِلَّا أَبَدَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهَا مَنْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ، وَلَا يَنْبُتُ أَحَدٌ عَلَى لَأْوَائِهَا

وَجَهْدَهَا إِلَّا كُنْتُ لَهُ شَفِيعًا أَوْ شَهِيدًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

“Al-Madeenah is better for them, if they only knew. No one leaves it out of dislike for it except that Allaah will replace him in it with someone better. And no one endures its hardships and difficulties except that I will intercede, or be witness, for him on the Day of Resurrection.” Collected by Muslim.

This establishes the virtue of al-Madeenah as well as the excellence of patiently enduring its hardships, distress, difficulties, and strain if one were to experience that. Such circumstances should not cause him to move elsewhere in search of ease and a more affluent livelihood. Rather, he should patiently persevere through whatever he may experience while there, and he has been promised a tremendous reward from Allaah ﷻ for doing so.

• The Prophet ﷺ explained its prestige as well as the gravity of innovating anything into the religion while there. He stated,

الْمَدِينَةُ حَرَمٌ مَا بَيْنَ عَيْرٍ إِلَى تَوْرٍ، مَنْ أَحَدَثَ فِيهَا حَدَثًا أَوْ آوَى مُحَدَّثًا فَعَلَيْهِ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ، لَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ صَرْفًا وَلَا عَدْلًا.

“Al-Madeenah is a *haram*, from ‘Ayr to Thawr. Anyone who innovates some form of heresy there, or shelters such an innovator, shall incur the curse of Allaah, His angels, and all of mankind; and Allaah will not accept any obligatory or optional deed from him.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

• The Prophet ﷺ prayed for it to be blessed, and one such instance is his statement,

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي ثَمَرِنَا، وَبَارِكْ لَنَا فِي مَدِينَتِنَا، وَبَارِكْ لَنَا فِي صَاعِنَا، وَبَارِكْ لَنَا فِي مُدَّنَا.

“O Allaah, bless us in our fruits; bless us in our city; bless us in our *saa’*; and bless us in our *mudd* (units of measurement).” Collected by Muslim.

• The plague and the *Dajjal* cannot enter it. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said,

عَلَى أَنْقَابِ الْمَدِينَةِ مَلَائِكَةٌ، لَا يَدْخُلُهَا الطَّاعُونَ وَلَا الدَّجَالُ.

“At the entrances to al-Madeenah are angels. Neither plague nor the *Dajjal* can enter it.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

The narrations about the virtues of al-Madeenah are very, very many, and the preceding are only a selection of them found in the two *Saheeh* collections or just one of them. Among the best works written on the topic is the book *al-Ahadeeth al-Waaridah fee Fadaa’il al-Madeenah, Jam’ wa Diraasah* (A Collection and Study of Narrations about the Virtues of al-Madeenah) prepared by Dr. Saalih ibn Haamid ar-Rifaa’ee as his Ph.D. thesis at the Islaamic University of al-Madeenah. It is a work which I encourage students to utilize as a reference.



Among the sites within this city are two splendid mosques: the *Masjid* of the Noble Messenger ﷺ, and *Masjid Qubaa’*.

A number of narrations explain the excellence of the *Masjid* of the Noble Messenger ﷺ, and one of them is his statement,

لَا تُشَدُّ الرَّحَالُ إِلَّا إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ مَسَاجِدَ: الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ، وَمَسْجِدِي هَذَا، وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى.

“A journey should not be undertaken except to three mosques: *al-Masjid al-Haraam*, this *Masjid* of mine, and *al-Masjid al-Aqsa*.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

Hence, this city contains one of three mosques which were constructed by Prophets, and a journey should not be undertaken except to them.

He ﷺ also mentioned the virtue of prayer in it being greater than one thousand, saying,

صَلَاةٌ فِي مَسْجِدِي هَذَا أَفْضَلُ مِنْ أَلْفِ صَلَاةٍ فِيْمَا سِوَاهُ إِلَّا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ.

“One prayer in this *Masjid* of mine is better than one thousand prayers anywhere else, except *al-Masjid al-Haraam*.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

This is a truly magnificent virtue, an opportunity to work for the hereafter, and its rewards are multiplied not just by tens or hundreds, but by thousands and more.

When business owners know that their commodities sell well in a given place at a specific time, they prepare for that opportunity accordingly even if the profit is only half or double the value. How much more deserving is this instance, where profit in the hereafter is not only tenfold – or even one hundred, or five hundred, or six hundred – but more than one thousand fold?

### Points to note regarding the blessed *Masjid*:

1) Multiplication of reward for prayer in it by more than one thousand is neither specific to obligatory nor optional prayers. Rather, it applies to all of them based on the generality of the phrase “one prayer” in the foregoing *hadeeth*. Therefore, one obligatory prayer is rewarded with one thousand obligatory prayers, and one optional prayer is rewarded with one thousand optional prayers.

2) Multiplication of reward mentioned in the *hadeeth* is not specific to the area of the *Masjid* which existed at the time of the Messenger ﷺ. It applies there as well as to all expansions added to the *Masjid*. Evidence for this can be found in the expansions made by ‘Umar and ‘Uthmaan ؓ while each was in his capacity of *Khaleefah*. Each of them extended the *Masjid* towards the front, and the *Imaam* as well as the rows immediately behind him fall in those expansions which are outside the area of the *Masjid* that existed at the time of the Messenger ﷺ. If the added portion did not have the ruling of multiplied rewards, they would not have extended the *Masjid* towards the front. Furthermore, the Companions during their time were present in abundance and none of them objected to their actions. This clearly demonstrates that multiplication of reward is not specific to the portion of the *Masjid* which existed during the life of the Prophet ﷺ.

3) There is an area in the *Masjid* which the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ described as being among the gardens of *Jannah*, as he said,

مَا بَيْنَ بَيْتِي وَمَنْبَرِي رَوْضَةٌ مِنْ رِيَاضِ الْجَنَّةِ.

“What lies between my house and my *minbar* (pulpit) is a garden among the gardens of *Jannah*.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim. This quality is exclusive to that area and does not apply to other parts of the *Masjid*, and this shows its virtue and distinction.

One can take advantage of this by performing optional prayers there, as well as engaging in remembrance and mention of Allaah, and recitation of the Qur’aan – so long as none of that involves harming anyone while one is in the area itself, or on the way to it. As it relates to obligatory prayers, performing them in the front rows is best, based on his ﷺ saying,

خَيْرُ صُفُوفِ الرِّجَالِ أَوْلَاهَا، وَشَرُّهَا آخِرُهَا.

“The best rows for men are the frontmost and the worst of them are the rearmost.” Collected by Muslim. There is also his ﷺ statement,

لَوْ يَعْلَمُ النَّاسُ مَا فِي النِّدَاءِ وَالصَّفِّ الْأَوَّلِ، ثُمَّ لَمْ يَجِدُوا إِلَّا أَنْ يَسْتَهْمُوا عَلَيْهِ لَاسْتَهْمُوا عَلَيْهِ.

“If people knew the reward that lies in the call to prayer and the first row, and found no other way to reach that except by drawing lots, they would certainly draw lots to attain that.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

4) If the *Masjid* of the Prophet ﷺ fills with worshippers, anyone who arrives late may still join prayer with the Imaam in the rows extending out to the streets on the right, left, and rear of the *Masjid*, but not the front. He would attain the reward for prayer in congregation, but not the multiplication of rewards to over one thousand as that is specific to those praying within the *Masjid*. This is based on his saying,

صَلَاةٌ فِي مَسْجِدِي هَذَا خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ صَلَاةٍ فِيَمَا سِوَاهُ إِلَّا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ.

“One prayer in this *Masjid* of mine is better than one thousand prayers anywhere else, except *al-Masjid al-Haram*.” Those who pray in the streets are not praying in his ﷺ *Masjid* and, therefore, do not attain the multiplied reward.

5) There is a widespread misunderstanding among many who visit al-Madeenah that they must perform forty prayers in the *Masjid* of the Messenger ﷺ based on a narration in the *Musnad* of al-Imaam Ahmad narrated by Anas ؓ which mentions that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Anyone who prays forty prayers in my *Masjid*, not missing any of them, will have protection from the hellfire and safety from punishment written for him, and he shall be absolved of *Nifaaq*.” This is a weak hadeeth which cannot be used as a legitimate proof. In reality, this is an issue about which there is great flexibility, and someone who visits al-Madeenah is not obligated to perform specific prayers in the *Masjid* of the Prophet ﷺ. Every prayer performed there is better than one thousand prayers, irrespective of amount or which specific prayer it is.

6) Muslims in many countries have been afflicted with the practice of constructing mosques over graves or burying the deceased inside mosques. Some of them obstinately adhere to saying that doing so is acceptable due to the presence of the Prophet’s grave inside his *Masjid*. This idea can be addressed by bearing in mind that the Prophet ﷺ himself built this *Masjid* when he first came to al-Madeenah, and he built the houses where the mothers of the believers resided adjacent to the *Masjid*. One of them was the dwelling of ‘Aa’ishah in which the Prophet ﷺ was buried. These dwellings remained outside of the *Masjid* during the era of the rightly-guided *Khulafaa’* ؓ, as well as the rule of Mu’aawiyah ؓ and the other rulers after him. However, during the era of *Banee Umayyah* (the Umayyads), the *Masjid* was expanded and the dwelling of ‘Aa’ishah – containing the grave of the Prophet ﷺ – was incorporated into the *Masjid*.

There are unambiguous narrations, which preclude any possibility of abrogation, that forbid taking graves as mosques. Among them is the hadeeth of Jundub ibn ‘Abdillaah al-Bajalee ؓ where he heard the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ just five nights before he died saying,

إِنِّي أَبْرَأُ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يَكُونَ لِي مِنْكُمْ خَلِيلٌ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ اتَّخَذَنِي خَلِيلًا كَمَا اتَّخَذَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا، وَلَوْ كُنْتُ مُتَّخِذًا مِنْ أُمَّتِي

خَلِيلًا لَا تَتَّخِذُ أَبَا بَكْرٍ خَلِيلًا، أَلَا وَإِنَّ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ كَانُوا يَتَّخِذُونَ قُبُورَ أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ وَصَالِحِيهِمْ مَسَاجِدَ، أَلَا فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْقُبُورَ مَسَاجِدَ، فَإِنِّي أَنهَاكُمُ عَنْ ذَلِكَ.

“I free myself, before Allaah, from taking a *Khaleel* among you, because Allaah has taken me as a *Khaleel* just as He took Ibraaheem as a *Khaleel*. If I were to take someone amongst my *Ummah* as a *Khaleel* I would have chosen Aboo Bakr. Verily, those who were before you used to take the graves of their Prophets and righteous people as *Masaajid* (places of prayer and worship). Thus, do not take graves as *Masaajid*, as I forbid you from doing so.” Collected by Muslim in his *Saheeh*.

Also, even when death approached, the Prophet ﷺ warned against taking graves as places of worship, as can be found in the two *Saheeh* collections where ‘Aa’ishah and ibn ‘Abbaas ﷺ both narrated that in his last moments, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ would cover his face with a blanket, and when he became hot and short of breath he removed it from his face. While in that state he said,

لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْيَهُودِ وَالنَّصَارَى، اتَّخَذُوا قُبُورَ أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ مَسَاجِدَ.

“May Allaah curse the Jews and Christians. They took the graves of their Prophets as places of worship.” He said this to warn about what they had done.

These narrations from ‘Aa’ishah, ibn ‘Abbaas, and Jundub ﷺ are explicit and cannot be abrogated under any circumstances. The narration from Jundub was during the last days of the Prophet’s ﷺ life, and the narration from ‘Aa’ishah and ibn ‘Abbaas was from his very last moments. It is, therefore, impermissible for any of the Muslims, whether individuals or groups, to leave these explicit authentic narrations and resort to an act done during the Umayyad era – that of incorporating the grave of the Prophet ﷺ into his *Masjid* – and using that to prove the legitimacy of constructing mosques over graves or burying the deceased inside mosques.

**As for *Masjid Qubaa’* (*Qubaa’ Mosque*),** it is the second of the two mosques in this city which has virtue and prominence. Both of them were founded upon *Taqwaa* from the very first day, and there are deeds and words from the Prophet ﷺ which show the excellence of prayer in *Masjid Qubaa’*.

In terms of deeds, ‘Abdullaah ibn ‘Umar ﷺ said that the Prophet ﷺ used to go to *Masjid Qubaa’* every Saturday, walking and riding, and he would perform two units of prayer there. This was collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

In terms of words, Sahl ibn Hunayf ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said,

مَنْ تَطَهَّرَ فِي بَيْتِهِ ثُمَّ أَتَى مَسْجِدَ قُبَاءَ، فَصَلَّى فِيهِ صَلَاةً، كَانَ لَهُ أَجْرُ عُمْرَةٍ.

“Anyone who purifies himself at home, goes to *Masjid Qubaa’*, and performs prayer there shall earn the reward of ‘Umrah.” Collected by ibn Maajah and others. His statement “and performs prayer there” includes the obligatory and the optional.

There is nothing in the Sunnah which indicates the virtue of any mosque in al-Madeenah other than these two.



## Manners of Residing in al-Madeenah

If Allaah blesses someone with residence in this blessed city, *Taybah at-Tayyibah*, he must fully bear in mind that he has been granted an immense blessing and favour, and he must thank Allaah for



this favour and praise Him for His bounty and kindness. He must also always consider that multitudes of people the world over yearningly desire to come to Makkah and al-Madeenah and spend time there, even if only a short while. Among them are those who set aside small sums of money over many long years in order to make their dream reality. I recall that one of the Indian scholars recounted how those who came from India to perform Hajj in the past would travel by sail ships, and they spent a long time journeying on the sea in order to reach Makkah and al-Madeenah. He mentioned that a group of them were on a ship, and when they spotted the land in which Makkah and al-Madeenah lay, they prostrated to Allaah in gratitude while still aboard the ship.

### **Manners of residence in al-Madeenah include:**

1) The Muslims should love this city due to its virtue, and due to the love of the Prophet ﷺ for it. Al-Bukhaaree collected in his *Saheeh* that Anas ؓ narrated that whenever the Prophet ﷺ was returning from a journey and he could see the walls of al-Madeenah he would urge his mount to go faster, and if on a horse he would urge it to gallop, out of his love for al-Madeenah.

2) When in this city, the Muslim should take care to observe the commands of Allaah, remain obedient to Allaah and obedient to His Messenger ﷺ, and be extremely cautious of engaging in sins or innovated heresies. Good deeds in this city have very high standing, while sins and innovated heresies committed in it are very grave. The sin of someone who disobeys Allaah within the *haram* is greater than someone who disobeys Him outside of it. Sins committed within it are not multiplied in number, but they are certainly more grave and severe when committed within the *haram* boundaries.

3) While in this city, the Muslim should strive to amass for himself a sizeable quantity of good deeds for the hereafter, the rewards of which are multiplied many times over. This can be done by performing prayer as much as possible in the *Masjid* of the Prophet ﷺ in order to earn the great reward promised in his statement,

صَلَاةٌ فِي مَسْجِدِي هَذَا خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ صَلَاةٍ فِيَمَا سِوَاهُ إِلَّا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ.

“One prayer in this *Masjid* of mine is better than one thousand prayers anywhere else, except *al-Masjid al-Haram*.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

4) In this blessed city, the Muslim should set a good example because he is residing in the land from which the light shone forth, and from which the great reformers carried guidance to the ends of civilization. In doing so, those who come to this city will find its residents to be good examples with fine traits and respectable manners. Upon seeing this, they would return to their countries deeply impacted and having learned from the good which they saw and the obedience to Allaah and His Messenger ﷺ which they witnessed. Also, just as a visitor to this blessed city gains much good by witnessing a good example, if he sees the opposite in al-Madeenah, the effect will also be the opposite and instead of gaining good for himself and praising its residents, he will experience harm from them and end up criticizing them.

5) While in this city, the Muslim must remember that he is in a land of goodness; the cradle of revelation; and the place to which *Eemaan* shall retreat. It was the domain of the Noble Messenger ﷺ and his esteemed Companions – the *Muhaajireen* and *Ansaar* – who settled here and went about their lives in it following a sound course, adhering to guidance and the truth. Thus, the Muslims must be wary of going about this land in a manner contrary to the way of the aforementioned by perpetrating

deeds which earn the wrath of Allaah and will have a disastrous outcome in this life and the next.

6) Anyone whom Allaah blesses to reside in al-Madeenah must avoid innovating in it or sheltering anyone who does so because he will expose himself to being cursed. The Messenger ﷺ said, **الْمَدِينَةُ حَرَمٌ، فَمَنْ أَحْدَثَ فِيهَا حَدَثًا أَوْ آوَى مُحَدِّثًا فَعَلَيْهِ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ، لَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَدْلٌ وَلَا صَرْفٌ.**

**“Al-Madeenah is sacred. Anyone who innovates some form of heresy there, or shelters such an innovator, shall incur the curse of Allaah, His angels, and all of mankind; and Allaah will not accept any obligatory or optional deed from him.”** Collected by Muslim from Aboo Hurayrah ؓ, and it is also in both *Saheeh* collections from ‘Alee ؓ.

7) In al-Madeenah, one must not cut trees or hunt game, as mentioned in a number of reports from the Messenger ﷺ such as,

**إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَرَّمَ مَكَّةَ، وَإِنِّي حَرَّمْتُ الْمَدِينَةَ مَا بَيْنَ لَابَتَيْهَا، لَا يُقَطَّعُ عِضَاهُهَا، وَلَا يُصَادُ صَيْدُهَا.**

**“Indeed, Ibraaheem declared Makkah sacred, and I have declared al-Madeenah sacred in what lies between its two black mountains. Its thorny shrubs are not to be cut and its game is not to be hunted.”** Collected by Muslim from Jaabir ibn ‘Abdillaah ؓ.

Muslim also collected the hadeeth of Sa’d ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ where the Prophet ﷺ said,

**إِنِّي أُحَرِّمُ مَا بَيْنَ لَابَتَيْ الْمَدِينَةِ أَنْ يُقَطَّعَ عِضَاهُهَا أَوْ يُقْتَلَ صَيْدُهَا.**

**“I have declared sacred what lies between the two black mountains of al-Madeenah, and have forbidden cutting its thorny shrubs or killing its game.”**

Additionally, in the two *Saheeh* collections, ‘Aasim ibn Sulaymaan al-Ahwal asked Anas, “Did the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ declare al-Madeenah sacred?” He replied, “Yes. For all that is between such and such points, it is forbidden to cut its trees, and anyone who innovates something into the religion while there shall incur the curse of Allaah, the angels, and all mankind.”

Also in the two *Saheeh* collections it is reported that Aboo Hurayrah ؓ said, “Whenever I saw gazelles grazing in al-Madeenah I would not chase them. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said,

**مَا بَيْنَ لَابَتَيْهَا حَرَامٌ.**

**“What lies between its two mountains is sacred.”**

The prohibition of cutting trees and vegetation applies to that which Allaah has made to grow naturally. As for what people have sown and planted, they are allowed to cut it.

8) The Muslim should patiently endure any rough living conditions, distress, or hardship he may experience here based on what Aboo Hurayrah ؓ narrated from the Prophet ﷺ where he said,

**لَا يَصْبِرُ عَلَى لَأْوَاءِ الْمَدِينَةِ وَشِدَّتِهَا أَحَدٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي إِلَّا كُنْتُ لَهُ شَفِيعًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَوْ شَهِيدًا.**

**“None among my Ummah patiently endures the hardships and difficulties of al-Madeenah except that I will be an intercessor or a witness for him the on the Day of Resurrection.”** Collected by Muslim.

Also in *Saheeh Muslim* is a report where Aboo Sa‘eed – the freed slave of al-Mahree – went to Aboo Sa‘eed al-Khudree ؓ during the nights of *al-Harrah* (when strife had taken place) and sought his advice about leaving al-Madeenah. He also complained to him of the high prices there, the difficulty in

sustaining his large family, and he said he had no patience left to bear the hardships and difficulty of al-Madeenah. Aboo Sa'eed al-Khudree said to him, "What is the matter with you?! I do not advise you to do that. Indeed, I heard the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ saying,

لَا يَضْبِرُ أَحَدٌ عَلَيَّ لِأَوَائِهَا فَيَمُوتَ إِلَّا كُنْتُ لَهُ شَفِيعًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِذَا كَانَ مُسْلِمًا.

**"No one patiently endures its hardships and then dies except that I will be an intercessor for him on the Day of Resurrection if he was a Muslim."**

9) One must avoid harming its residents. Harming Muslims in any location is forbidden, but it is far more grave when done in this sacred land. Al-Bukhaaree collected in his *Saheeh* a narration from Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ who heard the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ saying,

لَا يَكِيدُ أَهْلَ الْمَدِينَةِ أَحَدٌ، إِلَّا انْمَاعَ كَمَا يَنْمَاعُ الْمِلْحُ فِي الْمَاءِ.

**"No one schemes against the inhabitants of al-Madeenah except that he will be destroyed like salt dissolves into water."**

Muslim collected in his *Saheeh* a narration from Aboo Hurayrah ؓ who said that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said,

مَنْ أَرَادَ أَهْلَ هَذِهِ الْبَلَدَةِ بَسُوءٍ - يَعْنِي الْمَدِينَةَ - أَذَابَهُ اللَّهُ كَمَا يَذُوبُ الْمِلْحُ فِي الْمَاءِ.

**"Whoever wishes ill towards this land – referring to al-Madeenah – Allaah will destroy him like salt dissolving into water."**

10) No one who lives in al-Madeenah should be deceived by the fact that he is one of its residents and say, "I am a resident of al-Madeenah, so I must be a good person!" Mere residence without good deeds, continuous obedience to Allaah and His Messenger ﷺ, and remaining away from sins and disobedience will not avail him in any way. On the contrary, it will only harm him in the end.

In the *Muwatta'* of al-Imaam Maalik is a report from Salmaan al-Faarisee ؓ where he said, "A land does not make anyone righteous on its own; it is only one's deeds which make him righteous." This statement was reported via a broken chain of narrators, but its meaning is accurate and corresponds to reality. Furthermore, Allaah ﷻ has said,

﴿إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْفَقَكُمْ﴾

**"Indeed, the most honourable of you with Allaah is the one who observes *Taqwaa* most."** [*al-Hujuraat* (49):13]. It is established, historically, that throughout the centuries both righteous and evil people have inhabited al-Madeenah. The deeds of the righteous individuals will be to their benefit, while the land of al-Madeenah will not render the evil people righteous and it will not raise their status in any way. This is similar to lineage, since merely belonging to someone's lineage without doing any good deeds will not avail him with Allaah, as the Prophet ﷺ said,

وَمَنْ بَطَأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرَعِ بِهِ نَسَبُهُ.

**"And whoever is held back by his actions, he will not be hastened forward by his lineage."** Collected by Muslim in his *Saheeh*. Thus, if someone is held back from entering *Jannah* by his deeds, his lineage will not hasten his entrance.

11) While in this city, the Muslim must sense that he is in a land from which the light of beneficial knowledge emanated to the farthest reaches of the Earth. Thus, he should be keen to attain knowledge of the *Sharee'ah* which will enable him to proceed to Allaah with clear insight, and call others

to Him based on that. This is further emphasized if the acquisition of such knowledge takes place in the *Masjid* of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, as Aboo Hurayrah ؓ narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ saying,

مَنْ دَخَلَ مَسْجِدَنَا هَذَا، يَتَعَلَّمُ خَيْرًا أَوْ يُعَلِّمُهُ كَانَ كَالْمُجَاهِدِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ لِغَيْرِ ذَلِكَ كَانَ كَالنَّاظِرِ إِلَى مَا لَيْسَ لَهُ.

“Anyone who enters this *Masjid* of ours to learn something good or to teach it to others is like the *Mujaahid* in the cause of Allaah. And anyone who enters it for some other reason is like a bystander looking at what is not his.” Collected by Ahmad, ibn Maajah, and others. It also has a supporting narration from Sahl ibn Sa’d ؓ collected by at-Tabaraanee.

Just as residence in al-Madeenah has certain manners, so does visiting it, and a visitor should also observe the aforementioned manners of residence in al-Madeenah. One should also realize that if he wishes to visit al-Madeenah, the legislated thing for him to do is to intend undertaking his journey to visit the *Masjid* of the Messenger ﷺ based on his saying,

لَا تُشَدُّ الرَّحَالَ إِلَّا إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ مَسَاجِدَ: الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ، وَمَسْجِدِي هَذَا، وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى.

“A journey should not be undertaken except to three mosques: *al-Masjid al-Haraam*, this *Masjid* of mine, and *al-Masjid al-Aqsa*.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

This hadeeth prohibits setting out on a journey to any place – whether a *Masjid* or not – with the objective of seeking nearness to Allaah at that specific destination. In *Sunan an-Nasaa’ee* is a report from Aboo Hurayrah ؓ where he said, “I met Baṣrah ibn Abee Baṣrah al-Ghifaaree ؓ who asked, “Where have you arrived from?” I replied, “From at-Toor.” He said, “Had I met you prior to your departure, you would not have travelled there.” I inquired, “And why is that?” He said, “I certainly heard the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ saying,

لَا تُعْمَلُ الْمَطِيُّ إِلَّا إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ مَسَاجِدَ: الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ، وَمَسْجِدِي، وَمَسْجِدِ بَيْتِ الْمَقْدِسِ.

“A riding mount is not to be used unless to head to three mosques: *al-Masjid al-Haraam*, my *Masjid*, and the *Masjid* at *Bayt al-Maqdis*.” This is an authentic hadeeth and it shows how Baṣrah used it to prove the prohibition of travelling to mosques, or anywhere else, other than these three.

When one arrives in this blessed city, it is legislated for him to visit two mosques and three cemeteries. The two mosques are: the *Masjid* of the Messenger ﷺ, and *Masjid Qubaa’*, and various references to their virtues have preceded. The three graveyards where visiting is legislated are: the grave of the Messenger ﷺ as well as the graves of his two Companions, Aboo Bakr and ‘Umar ؓ; *al-Baqee’* Cemetery; and the *Uhud* Martyrs Cemetery.

When someone visits the graves of the Messenger ﷺ and his two Companions ؓ, he approaches from the front end of the *Masjid*, faces the grave, conducts his visit in the manner prescribed by the *Sharee’ah*, and he must avoid innovated aspects of visitation. The *Sharee’ah* prescribes that the visitor invokes *salaam* upon the Prophet ﷺ and supplicates for him in a respectful, composed manner and in a low voice saying,

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ وَسَلَّمْ وَبَارَكَ عَلَيْكَ وَجَزَاكَ أَفْضَلَ مَا جَزَى نَبِيًّا عَنْ أُمَّتِهِ.

“May peace be upon you, Messenger of Allaah, as well as mercy and blessings of Allaah. May Allaah send *salaam*, *salaam*, and blessings upon you, and give you the best reward He gives to any Prophet on behalf of his *Ummah*.” He then extends the *salaam* to Aboo Bakr and supplicates for him, and then extends the *salaam* to ‘Umar and supplicates for him.

It is noteworthy at this point to mention that these two great men, each of whom was one of the rightly-guided *Khulafaa'*, were both granted honour by Allaah which was not granted to anyone else. When Allaah sent forth His Messenger ﷺ with guidance and the truth, Aboo Bakr was the first man to believe in him and closely accompanied him in Makkah, during the time of Messengership, for thirteen years. When Allaah gave His Messenger ﷺ permission to migrate to al-Madeenah, Aboo Bakr accompanied him on the journey there and Allaah even revealed a portion of the Qur'aan about it which is recited to this day:

﴿إِلَّا نَضْرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّا اللَّهُ مَعَنَا فَاَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَىٰ وَكَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

“If you do not aid him, Allaah already aided him when the disbelievers expelled him. The second of the two while they were in the cave, as he said to his companion, ‘Do not grieve. Indeed, Allaah is surely with us.’ Then Allaah sent down His tranquility upon him and strengthened him with troops whom you cannot see; and He rendered the word of the disbelievers lowest, whereas the word of Allaah is what is highest. And Allaah is Almighty, Most Wise.” [at-Tawbah (9):40]. In addition, Aboo Bakr remained close to him in al-Madeenah for ten years and participated in all expeditions. Then, when the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ passed away, he assumed the position of *Khaleefah* (successor) after him and did full justice to his role. When he himself passed away, Allaah honoured him to be laid to rest beside the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, and when he is raised he shall accompany him in *Jannah*. Such is the favour of Allaah which He grants to whom He wills, and Allaah is the possessor of infinite bounty.

As for ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab ؓ, about forty men accepted Islaam before him. He had been a very severe individual against the Muslims, but after Allaah guided him to Islaam his force and sternness was redirected against the non-Muslim disbelievers, and his acceptance of Islaam was a source of strength for the Muslims. ‘Abdullaah ibn Mas‘ood ؓ recounted, “We have continued to remain strong since the time ‘Umar accepted Islaam.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree in his *Saheeh*.

He kept close to the Prophet ﷺ in Makkah, migrated to al-Madeenah when he did so, and participated in all expeditions. When Aboo Bakr was put in authority after the Prophet ﷺ, ‘Umar was his right hand who was later himself appointed as *Khaleefah* after Aboo Bakr. ‘Umar remained in that capacity for over ten years during which many conquests took place: the lands of Islaam grew, the two great empires of the time – Persia and Rome – were defeated, and the treasures belonging to the Kings of Persia and Rome were distributed in the cause of Allaah as prophesized by *as-Saadiq al-Masdoq* (the truthful and believed) ؓ. All these took place at the hands of *al-Faarooq* ؓ, and when he passed away Allaah honoured him to be laid to rest next to the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ and when he is raised he shall accompany him in *Jannah*. Such is the favour of Allaah which He grants to whom He wills, and Allaah is the possessor of infinite bounty.

Is it conceivable that these two great men with such standing and excellence could possibly be hated or disparaged? We seek refuge in Allaah from being forsaken.

Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who have preceded us in *Eemaan*, and do not place any rancour in our hearts towards those who have *Eemaan*. O our Lord, You are Most Kind, Most Merciful.

Our Lord, do not cause our hearts to deviate after You guided them; and grant us mercy from You, as You are indeed the Bestower.

In explaining the statement of Allaah,

﴿إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا نُهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نَكْفِرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا﴾

“If you avoid the major sins from which you have been forbidden, We shall forgive your sins for you and grant you a noble entrance,” [an-Nisaa’ (4):31] ibn Katheer ﷺ cited in his *Tafseer* a report from ibn Abee Haatim with his chain of narration to al-Mugheerah ibn Miqdam who remarked, “It used to be said that cursing Aboo Bakr and ‘Umar ﷺ is a major sin.” Ibn Katheer then added, “Some of the scholars declared anyone who abused the Companions to be outside the fold of Islaam, and this view was reported from Maalik ibn Anas ﷺ. Muḥammad ibn Seereen also stated, ‘I don’t think anyone can harbor hatred for Aboo Bakr and ‘Umar while still loving the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ.’ Collected by at-Tirmithi.”

### Innovated aspects of visitation include:

1) Supplicating the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, seeking deliverance from him, seeking from him to fulfill one’s needs, asking him to remove affliction, and anything else which cannot be sought from anyone except Allaah. *Du’aa’* (prayer and supplication) is worship, and worship is not to be directed to anyone other than Allaah alone. The Prophet ﷺ said,

الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ الْعِبَادَةُ.

“*Du’aa’* is worship,” and this is an authentic hadeeth collected by Aboo Daawood, at-Tirmithi, and others. At-Tirmithi commented, “It is a hasan sabeeh hadeeth.”

Worship is a right that belongs to Allaah and it is impermissible to direct any right of Allaah to other than Him. Doing such is considered to be *Shirk* (associating partners with Allaah). Allaah, the Most Exalted, is the One in whom hope is to be placed, and He is the One to be prayed to and supplicated, whereas the Messenger ﷺ is to be prayed for, not prayed to. This applies to all others in their graves – they are prayed for, not prayed to. It is established that the Messenger ﷺ is alive in his grave – that being the life of the *barzakh* – in a state more complete than that of martyrs. However, no one knows the reality of that life except Allaah, and that manner of life differs from life before death as well as life after being resurrected. Therefore, it is not permissible to pray to the Prophet ﷺ or seek deliverance from him, because doing so is an act of worship, and worship must not be directed to anything or anyone other than Allaah alone, as has preceded.

2) Placing the two hands upon the chest as if performing prayer. This is not permissible because it is a posture of humility and servitude to Allaah prescribed for the Muslim when he stands in prayer to commune with his Lord. During the lifetime of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, his Companions did not place their hands on their chests when extending the *salaam* to him, and if there was any good in that they would have preceded in doing so.

3) Wiping the walls and openings around the area of his ﷺ grave. This also applies to any part of the *Masjid*, or even elsewhere. None of that is permitted by the Sunnah, and it cannot be found in the practices of the righteous *Salaf*. It is, in fact, a means leading to *Shirk*. Someone may object to this and say, “I do this out of love for the Prophet ﷺ!” In reply to this, we say: it is true that love for the Prophet ﷺ must be in the heart of every Muslim even more than his love for his parents, children, and all people. The Prophet ﷺ said,

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ وَالِدِهِ وَوَلَدِهِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

“None of you has complete *Eemaan* until I am more beloved to him than his parents, children, and all of humanity.” Collected by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

Moreover, that love must be even greater than one's love for his own self as mentioned in the hadeeth of 'Umar رضي الله عنه found in *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree*. The reason this love must be greater than one's love for his own self, parents and children is because of the blessing which Allaah brought to the Muslims at the hands of His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم: the blessing of Islaam; the blessing of guidance to the straight path; the blessing of being saved from all forms of darkness and taken to light. These are the greatest forms of being blessed, and no other blessing is comparable to them.

However, showing one's love is not done by wiping the walls and openings there. Rather, it is shown by following the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم and acting according to his Sunnah, because the religion of Islaam is built upon two foundations:

- None is to be worshipped except Allaah
- Allaah is not to be worshipped with anything other than what the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم taught.

These are directly implied by the testimony that *laa ilaaha illallaah, muhammadun rasoolullaah* (none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah صلى الله عليه وسلم).

There is an *ayah* in the Qur'aan which some scholars named *ayah al-imihaan* (the *ayah* of examination) and it is the statement of Allaah تعالى,

﴿ قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴾

“Say: if you truly love Allaah, then follow me. Allaah shall love you and forgive your sins for you. And Allaah is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.” [*Aali 'Imraan* (3):31].

Al-Hasan al-Basree and others among the *Salaf* said, “A set of people claimed they loved Allaah, so He examined them with this *ayah*”.

The meaning of “He examined them” is that He tested them in order to distinguish the truthful from the untruthful. Anyone who claims to love Allaah and His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم must produce proof for that, and it lies in following the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم.

In explaining this *ayah*, ibn Katheer said,

This noble *ayah* decisively rules that anyone who claims that he loves Allaah yet does not follow the way of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم remains untruthful in his claim until he conforms to the *Sharee'ah* of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and the prophetic religion in all his words and deeds. It is authentically established that the Messenger of Allaah صلى الله عليه وسلم said,

مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُنَا فَهُوَ رَدٌّ.

“Whoever does a deed that does not conform to our command, it shall be rejected.” This is why he said, “If you truly love Allaah, then follow me; Allaah shall love you,” meaning that you shall attain something even greater than what you sought by your love for Him, and that is His love for you which is infinitely greater than the former. This is why some of the astute scholars remarked, “What matters is not that you love, but what truly matters is that you are loved.”

Afterwards, ibn Katheer cited the preceding comment of al-Hasan al-Basree and others among the *Salaf*.

In *al-Majmo' Sharh al-Mubaththab*, an-Nawawee discussed wiping and kissing the walls around the grave of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and said,

One must not be misled by the incorrect actions of the general populace when they do that. Following practices and doing deeds are to be based on the *Ahaadeeth* as well as statements of the scholars, and no attention is to be given to baseless or ignorant practices of others. It is reported in the two *Saheeh* collections from 'Aa'ishah رضي الله عنها that the Messenger of Allaah صلى الله عليه وسلم stated,

مَنْ أَحَدَثَ فِي أَمْرِنَا هَذَا مَا لَيْسَ فِيهِ فَهُوَ رَدٌّ.

“Whoever introduces something into the religion which does not belong to it, then it shall be rejected,” and, in a narration in *Saheeh Muslim*, he said,

مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُنَا فَهُوَ رَدٌّ.

“Whoever does a deed that does not conform to our command, it shall be rejected.” Aboo Hurayrah رضي الله عنه also reported that the Messenger of Allaah صلى الله عليه وسلم said,

لَا تَجْعَلُوا قَبْرِي عِيدًا، وَصَلُّوا عَلَيَّ، فَإِنَّ صَلَاتَكُمْ بَلِّغُنِي حَيْثُ كُنْتُمْ.

“Do not take my grave as a place of gathering or frequent visitation; but send *salaah* upon me, because it will reach me wherever you may be.” This was reported by Aboo Daawood with a *sahheeh* chain. In addition, Al-Fudayl ibn ‘Iyaad رضي الله عنه made a statement along the lines of, “Follow the paths of guidance, and it will do you no harm if there are only a few who tread them; and beware of the paths to misguidance, and do not be misled by the multitude of those headed to their demise.” Furthermore, whoever thinks that wiping an object with his hand, or something similar, will bring him more blessing, then this idea comes from his own ignorance and heedlessness. Blessing is only acquired by valid, legislated means. How could bounty be sought by opposing what is correct?

4) Performing *Tawaaf* around the grave of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Doing so is impermissible because Allaah did not legislate *Tawaaf* to be performed anywhere except around the *Ka’bah*. Allaah صلى الله عليه وسلم said,

﴿وَلِيَطَّوَّفُوا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ﴾

“And let them perform *Tawaaf* around the Ancient Protected House.” [*al-Hajj* (22):29]. Therefore, *Tawaaf* is not to be performed anywhere except around the *Ka’bah*, and this is why it is acceptable to say that Allaah has multitudes of people performing prayers to Him in every place, or giving charity, or fasting, or remembering and making mention of Him in every place. However, it is not acceptable to say that Allaah has multitudes of people performing *Tawaaf* in every place, because *Tawaaf* is something particular to the ancient, protected house.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله stated, “The Muslim scholars unanimously agree that *Tawaaf* is not prescribed except around the *Ka’bah*. Thus, *Tawaaf* around the rock in *Bayt al-Maqdis*, or the dwelling of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, or the dome at the mount ‘Arafaat, or anywhere else is impermissible.”

5) Raising one’s voice at his صلى الله عليه وسلم grave. This is not permissible because Allaah taught the believers proper conduct while the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was still alive among them. Allaah said,

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا يَجْهَرُوا لَهُ، بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَغُضُّونَ أَصْوَاتَهُمْ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ امْتَحَنَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِلنَّقَاةِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

“O you people who have *Eemaan*! Do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet, or speak loudly to him as you speak loudly to one another, lest your deeds be rendered void without you even realizing. Indeed, those who lower their voices in the presence of the Messenger of Allaah, those are the ones whose hearts Allaah has examined for *Taqwaa*. They shall have forgiveness and a tremendous reward.” [*al-Hujuraat* (49):2-3]. Furthermore, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is to be respected while alive and after his passing away.



6) Facing the grave from a far distance and extending the *salaam* to him ﷺ, whether within the *Masjid* or from outside. Our Shaykh, ‘Abdul-‘Azeez ibn Baaz ﷺ, said in his book about Hajj, “This act of theirs is closer to disrespect than it is to affection and sincerity.”

Another point worthy of mention is that there are some visitors to al-Madeenah who have been told by their family or others to convey their *salaam* to the Messenger ﷺ. However, since there is nothing in the Sunnah to support this practice, if this is sought from someone he should reply, “You yourself can send much *salaah* and *salaam* upon him ﷺ and the angels will actually convey that to him.” This is based on his saying,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَلَائِكَةٌ سَيَّاحِينَ يُبَلِّغُونِي عَنْ أُمَّتِي السَّلَامَ.

“Indeed, Allaah has angels who travel about. They convey to me the *salaam* from my *Ummah*.” This is an authentic hadeeth collected by an-Nasaa’ee and others. It is also based on his saying,

لَا تَجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ قُبُورًا، وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا قَبْرِي عِيدًا، وَصَلُّوا عَلَيَّ فَإِنَّ صَلَاتَكُمْ تَبْلُغُنِي حَيْثُ كُنْتُمْ.

“Do not make your homes graveyards, and do not take my grave as a place of gathering or frequent visitation; but send *salaah* upon me, because it will reach me wherever you may be.”

This is an authentic hadeeth collected by Aboo Daawood and others.

Another point to note is that performing Hajj and ‘Umrah have no connection to visiting al-Madeenah, and it is perfectly acceptable for someone to perform Hajj or ‘Umrah and then return to his homeland without visiting al-Madeenah. It is similarly acceptable for someone to visit al-Madeenah and return to his homeland without performing Hajj or ‘Umrah. It is also acceptable to perform Hajj or ‘Umrah and visit al-Madeenah on the same trip.

There are certain narrations about visiting the grave of the Prophet ﷺ such as, “Anyone who performs Hajj and does not visit me has shunned me,” and “If someone visits me after my death, it is as if he visited me while I was still alive,” and also “If anyone visits me and my forefather, Ibraaheem, in the same year, I guarantee that Allaah will grant him *Jannah*,” as well as, “If someone visits my grave, then he shall have my intercession.”

However, these narrations and others similar to them do not prove anything because they are either fabricated or extremely weak as has been mentioned by great erudite scholars including ad-Daraqutnee, al-‘Uqaylee, al-Bayhaqee, ibn Taymiyyah, and ibn Hajar, ﷺ.

As for the statement of Allaah ﷻ,

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا﴾

“If they – when they had wronged themselves – came to you, sought forgiveness from Allaah, and the Messenger sought forgiveness for them, they would have found Allaah accepting their repentance and merciful to them,” [*an-Nisaa’* (4):64] this does not contain any evidence for setting out to the grave of the Prophet ﷺ upon wronging oneself and seeking forgiveness from him. The *ayaah* is speaking about the *munaafiqeen*, and going to him was only done during his lifetime since none of the Companions ﷺ went to his grave to seek forgiveness. This is why ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab ﷺ resorted to asking al-‘Abbaas ﷺ to pray for rain when they were stricken by drought and he said, “O Allaah, we used to ask our Prophet to pray to You, and You would send rain for us. Now we ask the uncle of our Prophet to pray to You, so send rain for us,” and the rain would fall. This was collected by al-Bukhaaree in his *Saheeh*.

If it was permissible to make requests via the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ after his death ‘Umar would not have resorted to asking al-‘Abbaas ﷺ. Another proof of this is collected by al-Bukhaaree in his *Saheeh*, in the chapter of *mardaa* (the ill), that ‘Aa’ishah ﷺ said,

وَأَرَأْسَاهُ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: ذَاكَ لَوْ كَانَ وَأَنَا حَيٌّ فَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكَ وَأَدْعُو لَكَ. فَقَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ: وَآ تُكَلِّبَاهُ، وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَأُظُنُّكَ تُحِبُّ مَوْتِي... ”

“*Waa ra’saab!* (My head is in severe pain).” The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ then said, “**If you were to die while I am still alive, I could ask Allaah to forgive you and I could supplicate Allaah for you.**” She responded, “*Waa thuklayaab* (an expression of pain and distress)! By Allaah, I most certainly think you wish for my death...”

If supplication and seeking forgiveness were possible for him after his death, there would be no difference between her dying before him and him dying before her.

There are a number of narrations which show the legitimacy of visiting graves, such as his ﷺ statement,

زُورُوا الْقُبُورَ؛ فَإِنَّهَا تَذَكَّرُكُمْ الْآخِرَةَ.

“**Visit the graves because they remind you of the hereafter.**” Collected by Muslim in his *Saheeh*.

However, one should neither stand at his ﷺ grave for a lengthy time nor visit it very often, because doing such can lead to excessiveness. In addition, Allaah distinguished His Prophet ﷺ from all others among his *Ummah* with the special quality of having the angels convey the *salaam* to him from all places, based on his statement,

إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَلَائِكَةً سَيَّاحِينَ يُبَلِّغُونِي عَنْ أُمَّتِي السَّلَامَ.

“**Indeed, Allaah has angels who travel about. They convey to me the *salaam* from my *Ummah*.**” And also based on his statement,

لَا تَجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ قُبُورًا، وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا قَبْرِي عَيْدًا، وَصَلُّوا عَلَيَّ فَإِنَّ صَلَاتَكُمْ تَبْلُغُنِي حَيْثُ كُنْتُمْ.

“**Do not make your homes graveyards, and do not take my grave as a place of gathering or frequent visitation; but send *salaam* upon me, because it will reach me wherever you may be.**” When he forbade taking his grave as a place of gathering and frequent visitation, he also provided a substitute which fulfils that role by saying, “**send *salaam* upon me, because it will reach me wherever you may be**” and that is by means of the angels.

Visiting the graves at *al-Baqee’* and the martyrs at *Uhud* is a recommended act if done in the prescribed manner, and it becomes a prohibited act if accompanied by innovated aspects.

The prescribed visit is the one conforming to the teachings of the Messenger ﷺ and produces benefit for the visitor as well as the deceased who is being visited.

**The living visitor gains three things:**

**Firstly:** a reminder of death and a sense of urgency to prepare for it by doing good deeds. This has been mentioned in his ﷺ saying,

زُورُوا الْقُبُورَ؛ فَإِنَّهَا تَذَكَّرُكُمْ الْآخِرَةَ.

“**Visit the graves because they remind you of the hereafter.**” Collected by Muslim.

**Secondly:** the act of visitation itself, and he will be rewarded for doing so because it is a Sunnah instituted by the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ.

**Thirdly:** showing kindness to the deceased by supplicating for them, and he will also be rewarded for this kindness.

As it relates to the deceased being visited, when done in the proper manner, they reap the benefits of the kindness shown to them when the living supplicate and pray for them.

When one visits graves, it is recommended to pray for the deceased as done by the Messenger

of Allaah ﷺ. Buraydah ibn al-Huṣayb ؓ narrated one such instance where he said, “The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ used to teach them that whenever they went out to the graveyards they should say,

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ لَلْحَاقِقُونَ، أَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ لَنَا وَلَكُمْ الْعَافِيَةَ.

“Peace upon you, o inhabitants of these dwellings – believers and Muslims – we shall, if Allaah so wills, most certainly be joining you. I ask Allaah to grant us and you protection.” Collected by Muslim.

Visiting graves is an act recommended for men, and there is scholarly difference about women visiting graves. Some scholars say it is permissible and others say it is impermissible. The stronger view appears to be that of impermissibility, based on his ﷺ statement,

لَعَنَ اللَّهُ زَوَارَاتِ الْقُبُورِ.

“May Allaah curse the women who visit the graves.” Collected by at-Tirmithi and others. At-Tirmithi said, “It is a *hasan saheeh* hadeeth.”

The most correct understanding of the word *zanmaaraat* is that it ascribes the act of visiting to women. It has a similar linguistic construction to the word *thallaam* in the statement of Allaah,

﴿وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ﴾

“And your Lord is not unjust to His servants in any way,” [*Fussilat* (41):46] meaning that He does them no injustice, or that the act of injustice cannot be ascribed to Him. Thus, the word *zanmaaraat* in the *hadeeth* ascribes the act of visiting to women, and it does not convey the meaning of performing the act very often, as claimed by some who hold the view that it is permissible for women to visit graveyards. In addition to this, women have certain weaknesses and may not restrain themselves from weeping and wailing.

Moreover, the view of impermissibility is the safer view because if a woman does not visit the graves she only misses out on a recommended deed, whereas if she were to visit them she may fall under the curse of Allaah.

With regards to the innovated aspects of visiting graves, they are acts which have not been legislated. They include going to graves in order to pray to the deceased, beseech them for help, ask them for fulfillment of one’s needs, and other similar things. In a visit of this nature, the deceased does not gain anything, and the living harms himself. The living brings harm to himself due to his committing *Shirk* (associating partners with Allaah) which is impermissible, and the deceased does not gain anything because no one prayed for him. They prayed to him instead of to Allaah.

Our Shaykh, ‘Abdul-‘Azeed ibn Baaz ؓ, said in his book about the rites of *Hajj*,

As for going to their graves for the purpose of praying to them, devotion, asking for the fulfillment of needs or healing the ill, asking Allaah through them or by way of their status, or other things of a similar nature; all of these are blameworthy, innovated forms of visitation which have not been prescribed by Allaah or His Messenger ﷺ, and none of the *Salaf* ؓ practiced them. They constitute the obscene speech which the Messenger ﷺ prohibited in his saying,

زُورُوا الْقُبُورَ وَلَا تَقُولُوا هُجْرًا.

“Visit the graves, and do not use obscene language.” All the aforementioned items share the quality of being innovated heresies, though they are of various degrees. Some of them are innovations which do not amount to *Shirk*, such as supplicating Allaah while at the graves, asking Him through or by the deceased, and things similar to this. Others are major *Shirk*, such as supplicating to the deceased, seeking help from them, and acts of a similar nature.

This concludes what I wished to mention, and I ask Allaah, Most Mighty and Majestic, to guide us – as well as all the residents and visitors in this city, and the Muslims at large – to everything that has a praiseworthy outcome in this world and the hereafter; to bless us with respectable residence and conduct in this fine land; and to grant us an honourable ending. May Allaah send *salaah*, *salaam*, and blessings upon His worshipping servant and Messenger, our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon all his family and Companions.