

The Forty-eighth Greater Sin: Disrespect to Masajid

Every building that is designated as a Mosque by one or other sects of the Muslims is deserving of respect. Its respect is Wajib and its disrespect, like demolishing it or making it impure is a Greater Sin. Every religious person knows that a Mosque is associated with the Almighty Allah (S.w.T.).

“And that the mosques are Allah’s,” (Surah al-Jinn 72: 18)

Therefore disrespect of a mosque is an act of insult towards Allah, the blessed and the High.

Abu Basir the narrator says that he asked Abu Abdillah Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq (a.s.) for the reason why respect of mosques is obligatory? Imam (a.s.) said that it was because a mosque is the house of Allah on earth.

According to traditions the Almighty Allah says, that, ‘Mosques are My houses on the earth. How fortunate are those who perform Wuzu in My house and they visit Me in My house in a state of ritual purification. In these circumstances it is Wajib for the master of the house to honour the guests who visit him. To convey the good news of light (Nur) that I will bestow on the day of Qiyama upon those who leave their homes to go to the mosques in the darkness of the night. 1

All the faithfuls consider disrespect of mosques a Greater Sin. The Holy Qur’an has mentioned breaking of a Masjid an act of disrespect to it and considered it one of the serious types of injustices.

“And who is more unjust than he who prevents (men) from the Masajid of Allah, that His name should be remembered in them and strives to ruin them?” (Surah al-Baqarah 2: 114)

We shall now explain in brief the various legal rulings with regard to Masjids.

Polluting a Masjid is Harām

It is Harām to make a Masjid najis. Also it is Harām to take any absolute Najis thing (Ain al-Najasat) inside a Mosque, lest it pollutes the Masjid. And even if the Masjid is not polluted it would be an act of defilement. The same rule applies to things that have become polluted (Najis) due to their contact with Ain al-Najasat, even if they are dry, and they will not pollute the mosque, it is Harām in all cases. But if it neither pollutes the Masjid nor is it an act of disrespect, it is permissible. However, on the basis of precaution Ain al-Najasat must not be taken inside the Masjid under any circumstances.

Purification of Masjid is Wajib

Purifying the Masjid immediately is Wajib, such that it should not be generally considered as wilful delay or heedlessness. Immediately means that if there is some time for the prayer it should be purified before prayers. It should also be clear that purifying the Masjid is incumbent not only on the person who has polluted it, but it is a Wajib al-Kifai on all Muslims. It is Wajib to bear the expenses even if it is a costly matter. If one cannot bear the cost alone it is incumbent on him to ask help from others.

Staying in the Mosque in a state of Janabat, Haiz or Nifas

A Junub person, a woman in haiz or Nifas is not permitted to stay in a mosque. Thus the Holy Qur'an says:

“Nor when you are under an obligation to perform a bath — unless (you are) travelling on the road — until you have washed yourselves.” (Surah an-Nisā’ 4: 43)

In other words a Junub person is allowed to pass through a mosque from one door and out of another. He cannot come out from the same door nor leave anything inside the mosque. However, in the case of Masjidul Harām, Masjidun Nabi and Masjidul Aqsa the Junub persons and haiz and Nifas women cannot even pass through them.

Recommended Actions

Lighting a lamp in Masjid, keeping it absolutely clean and pure, entering it with the right foot forward and leaving it with the left foot first are all recommended (Mustahab) acts. Before entering we must ensure that our shoes are not najis, lest the Masjid becomes najis due to it. Enter the Masjid in a state of ritual purification (Ghusl and Wuzu). Wear the best dress, apply perfume and pray two rakat prayers of saluting the mosque.

Detestable (Makr h) Acts

Passing through a mosque is Makr h without reciting at least two rakats of prayers. We must not throw nasal discharge and sputum in the mosque. Also makr h are the following acts: sleeping in the mosque, raising one's voice except in Azan (call for prayer), announcing lost property loudly, or asking something from a person, reciting poetry that does not contain any moral lessons. Discussing worldly matters and business transactions are makr h in a Masjid. We must not go to the mosque after eating onion, garlic or anything that creates a foul breath. We must also avoid taking young children and insane persons inside the mosque.

Different Grades of Mosques

The most sacred and honourable mosque is Masjidul Har m. A prayer inside this Masjid equals one hundred thousand prayers in ordinary Masjids. The next in status is Masjidun Nabi (of Madinah). A prayer performed in it equals ten thousand prayers in ordinary ones. Next in line are Masjids of Kufa and Aqsa. A single prayer offered in these mosques carries the reward of one thousand prayers in other Masjids. After this the Jama Masjids of the city carry great merit. And prayers in Jama Masjids are hundred times more rewarding than prayers in other places. After Jama Masjid the main Masjid of the area deserves greater respect because a single prayer in it equals twenty five prayers. Last of all is the Masjid in market, wherein prayers earn the worshipper twelve rewards in comparison to one reward of other prayers.

1. Wasa'il ul-Shia

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