

Taking graves as places of worship

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Question: I argued with people who hold the opinion that it is permissible to offer Salaah (Prayer) in a graveyard and in a Masjid (mosque) where there is a grave or graves. I refuted their arguments with clear and Saheeh Hadeeths (Hadeeths that have been transmitted by people known for their uprightness and exactitude; free from eccentricity and blemish). But they said: "Where did `Aaishah perform Salaah after the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)¹ and others had been buried in her house? Did she perform Salaah in her house or outside it? They also mentioned that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his Sahaabah (Companions of the Prophet) performed Salaah in Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) though Hajar, wife of prophet Ibrahim (Abraham, (عليه السلام)²) and some of the prophets are buried in it. Is this true or not? Also, is it true that `Aaishah used to perform Salaah in her house after the death of the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم)? I would also like to know the names of some books that deal with this subject.

Answer: It was related in the Two Saheeh (authentic) Books of Hadeeth (i.e. Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) on the authority of `Aaishah³ (رضى الله عنها)⁴ that she said that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said on his deathbed: **Let the curse of Allaah be upon the Jews and Christians; they have taken the graves of their prophets as places of worship.** `Aaishah (رضى الله عنها) said: **He was warning against what they did; and if it was not for that, he would have raised his grave above the ground but he feared that it might be taken as a Masjid.** Muslim related in his Saheeh on the authority of Jundub ibn `Abdullah (رضي الله عنه)⁵ that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said five days before his death: **Beware of those who preceded you and used to take the graves of their prophets and righteous men as places of worship, you must not take graves as Masjids; I forbid you to do that.** Muslim also related that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: **Do not sit on graves and do not pray towards them.** And: **The Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) forbade plastering of the graves, building over them, or sitting on them.** He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) cursed the Jews and Christians because they took the graves of their prophets as Masjids. The Prophet

¹ (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

² (عليه السلام) ('alaihi-salaam) Peace be upon him

³ Umm-al-Mumineen `Aaishah, the Mother of The Believers (رضى الله عنها)

⁴ (رضى الله عنها) (rad iyallaahu `anhaa) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with her

⁵ (رضي الله عنه) (rad iyallaahu `anhu) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with him

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(صلى الله عليه وسلم) forbade taking graves as places for Salaah, praying towards them, or building over them, in order to protect Tawheed (monotheism) and block the avenues that may lead to Shirk (associating others with Allaah in His Divinity or worship). Therefore, we can say that it is not permissible to perform Salaah in Masjids where there are graves.

As to the questions: Where did `Aaishah perform Salaah after the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and others had been buried in her house? Did she perform Salaah in her house or outside it?

Answer: `Aaishah (رضى الله عنها) is one of those who narrated the Hadeeths authentically reported from the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) regarding the prohibition of taking graves as Masjids. This is a sign for the Wisdom of Allaah (Glorified and Exalted be He). Therefore, we know that she did not perform Salaah in the room where the graves were located because doing so contradicts the Hadeeths she reported from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and this does not suit her. So she performed Salaah in the rest of her house.

It is clear now that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was not buried in the Masjid, but was buried in his house. When Al-Waleed ibn `Abdul-Maalik widened Al-Masjid Al-Nabawee (the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) Mosque), he included the room where the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was buried in the Masjid. Therefore, some people thought that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was buried in the Masjid. But it was not so. The Sahaabah were the most knowledgeable people about Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)). Thus, they did not bury the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) in the Masjid, but they buried him in his house so that it would not be used as a Masjid.

Moreover, there is no evidence that Hajar or any of the prophets are buried in Al-Masjid Al-Haram. Those who said this are historians whose sayings are not reliable due to lack of evidence.

May Allaah grant us success. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions.

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