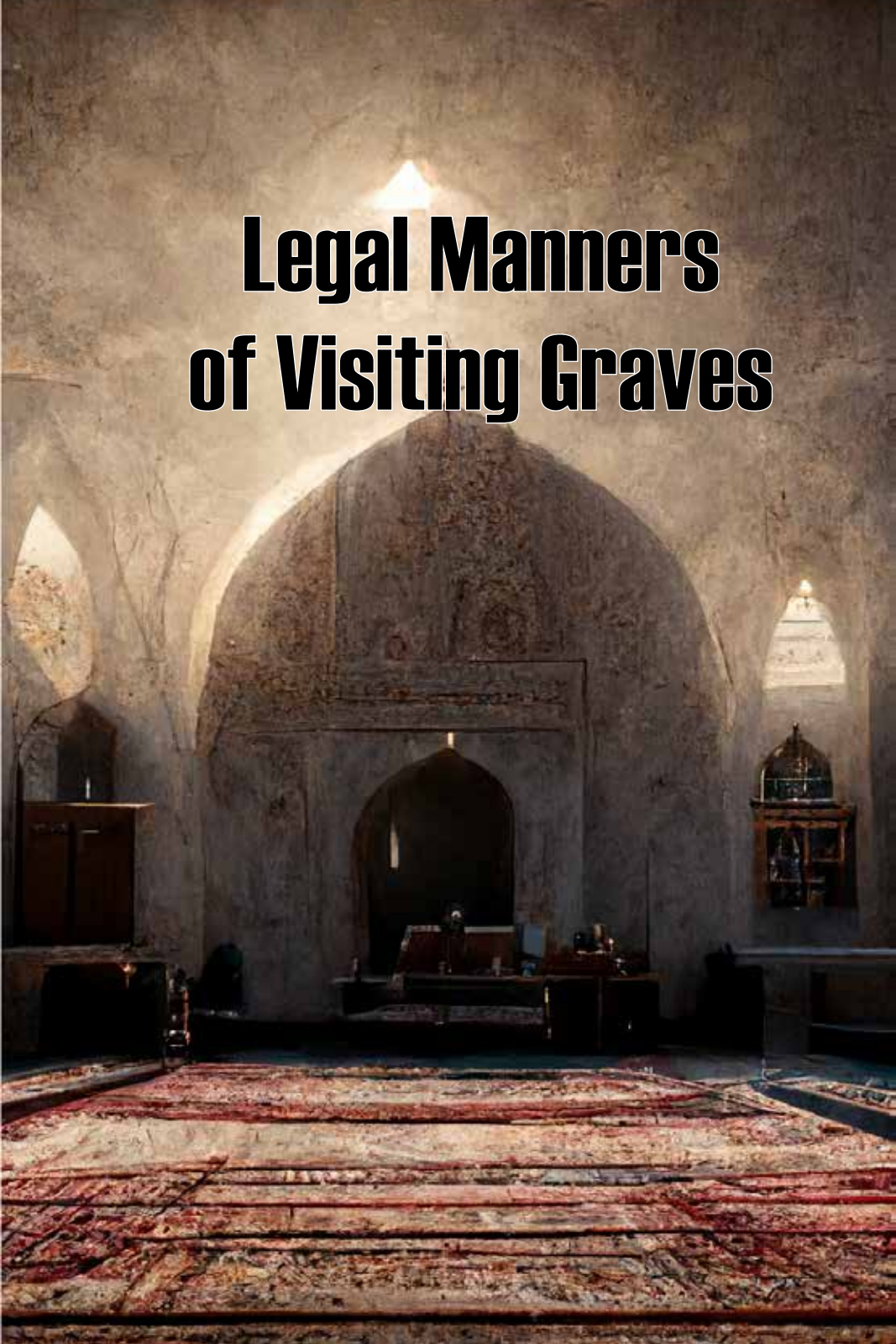


# **Legal Manners of Visiting Graves**



## Legal Manners of Visiting Graves

All praises and thanks are due to Allâh, the All-Rich, Worthy of all praise. He starts the creation and resurrects them. He is the Owner of the Glorious Throne, Who does what He wills, Whose knowledge encompasses all things and He is the Witness over all things. I thank, praise and invoke Him for more of His bounties and favors. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allâh Alone, without partners, rivals or equals. I bear witness that our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is His slave, Messenger and intimate friend, and the best caller to *Imân* and *Tauhid*. May Allâh's peace and blessings be on Muhammad, his progeny, Companions and all those who followed them with excellence until the Day of Judgment.

Allâh the Exalted and Most Honored said:

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

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ to mankind): “If you (really) love Allâh, then follow me (i.e., accept Islâmic Monotheism, follow the Qur’ân and the *Sunnah*), Allâh will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (3:31)

Also, Abdullah bin Mas‘ud رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«كُنْتُ نَهَيْتُكُمْ عَنْ زِيَارَةِ الْقُبُورِ، فَزُورُوا الْقُبُورَ، فَإِنَّهَا تَزْهَدُ فِي الدُّنْيَا، وَتَذَكِّرُ الْآخِرَةَ».

“I had disallowed you from visiting graves. Now, visit graves, for they discourage you from (excessively) indulging in this life and remind of the Hereafter.”

Dear Muslims! The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had disallowed men and women from visiting graves in the beginning of Islam, because they were not far away from the time of *Shirk*, during which they used to revere graves and the dead buried in them. During the time of *Jahiliyyah*, the Arabs used to revere stones, trees, the graves of

Prophets and righteous people, and so forth. Those who were new to Islam and not far from the time of *Shirk* with all its evil practices that resided in their hearts and that they were raised performing, feared that a residue of the practices of *Jahiliyyah* might have remained in their hearts. It was proper then that enough time was given so that *Imân* and *Tauhid* became firmly established in their hearts and the time and practices of *Shirk* faded away gradually. To support this, we should state that some new Muslims, who were not far from the time of *Shirk*, requested the Prophet ﷺ to appoint a tree for them to revere and hang their weapons on for blessings, just because they saw some *Mushrik* do so. They thought that this practice was allowed in Islam and that it would benefit them and bring them closer to Allâh. Truth and falsehood were confused for them because practices of *Jahiliyyah* were still fresh in their minds.

The Messenger ﷺ was most eager to dissipate the remains of *Shirk*, rid the hearts of its practices and close all doors that lead to it. He forbade visiting graves in the beginning of Islam for fear of *Fitnah* for new Muslims (subjecting them to trials in religion and life) and to draw them away from *Shirk* and its practices. When Islam became prominent and *Tauhid* firmly resided in their hearts, he allowed visiting graves because there are various benefits from visiting them. For instance, among the wisdom of visiting graves, is that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«كُنْتُ نَهَيْتُكُمْ عَنْ زِيَارَةِ الْقُبُورِ، فَزُورُوا الْقُبُورَ، فَإِنَّهَا تَزْهَدُ فِي الدُّنْيَا، وَتُذَكِّرُ الْآخِرَةَ.»

“I had disallowed you from visiting graves. Now, visit graves, for they discourage you from (excessively) indulging in this life and remind of the Hereafter.”

Therefore, visiting graves reminds one of death and the Hereafter, belittles the significance of this life and entails invoking Allâh for forgiveness and mercy for the dead. The Messenger ﷺ used to visit graves, invoke Allâh for the benefit of dead Muslims and greet them with the *Salam* (greeting of peace). He would cry and causing those

around him to cry. He also taught us how we should visit the graves of our Muslim brethren and what to say when we do. For instance, he used to recite this *Du'â'* when he visited graves:

«السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ  
لَآحِقُونَ، نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ لَنَا وَلَكُمْ الْعَافِيَةَ.»

“Peace be upon you, O believing and Muslim residents of these graves., We, Allâh willing, will soon follow you. We ask Allâh for the well-being of us and you.”

The Prophet ﷺ did not travel for the purpose of visiting graves, nor did he allow us to do so. Instead, he disallowed this practice when he said:

«لَا تُسَدُّ الرَّحَالَ إِلَّا إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ مَسَاجِدَ: الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ، وَمَسْجِدِي هَذَا،  
وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى.»

“Travelling is only allowed for three Mosques: Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah), this Mosque of mine (in Al-Madinah) and Al-Masjod Al-Aqsa (in Jerusalem).”

Hence, those who wish to visit the Prophet’s mosque in Al-Madinah should intend to visit the mosque and not the grave, so that this act is acceptable with Allâh and Islamically legislated. When one visits the Prophet’s mosque, he could visit the Prophet’s grave, greet him with the *Salam* and observe respect, quiet and good manners during this visit. He should then greet his two Companions in this life and the Hereafter: Abu Bakr As-Siddiq and ‘Umar Al-Faruq رضى الله عنهما. One should then depart from the Prophet’s gravesite.

There are no preferred times, days or months to visit graves or any of the three Mosques. Rather, Muslims are allowed to visit them any time they wish, for this is the guidance of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and this is the *Sunnah* he taught us. Yet, ignorance and abandoning the *Sunnah* have become so rampant, that many people fall into misguidance regarding visiting graves of righteous people. They turn visiting graves into sessions of invoking the dead and seeking their help! They do not distinguish between what the Prophet ﷺ allowed for his *Ummah* and

what he disallowed for them. But, Allâh has ordained on us to obey His Prophet ﷺ and follow his *Sunnah*. The Prophet ﷺ showed us, in statement and practice, the manners of visiting graves and explained the wisdom behind legislating it. Therefore, let our visiting graves be what it should be: a reminder and good advice for us. Let us invoke Allâh for forgiveness and mercy for our deceased Muslim brothers and sisters, for surely, the grave is where they will be needing *Du'â'* to Allâh from us, for their benefit. In the grave, one's chances to collect more good deeds will come to an abrupt end, and they will be in dire need for the *Du'â'* of their living brethren to Allâh to grant them His Pardon and Mercy.

As for women, they are not allowed to visit graves or follow funeral processions. The Prophet ﷺ emphasized this ruling when he cursed those women, whose habit was to visit graves,

«لَعَنَ اللَّهُ زَائِرَاتِ الْقُبُورِ، وَالْمُتَّخِذِينَ عَلَيْهَا الْمَسَاجِدَ وَالشُّرُجَ.»

“May Allâh curse those (women) who visit graves and those who build Mosques and erect lamps (lights) around them.”

The Prophet ﷺ disallowed women from visiting graves because of their emotional weakness and impatience. He did this fearing *Fitnah* (trials in religion) for them and because they panic easily. In these respects, they are surely weaker than men. The Prophet ﷺ said to some women whom he saw going to visit graves:

قَالَ ﷺ لِنِسْوَةٍ رَأَيْنَهُنَّ ذَاهِبَاتٍ إِلَى الْمَقَابِرِ: «اِزْجِعْنَ مَأْزُورَاتٍ غَيْرَ مَأْجُورَاتٍ، فَإِنَّكُمْ تَفْتِنَنَّ الْحَيَّ، وَتُؤْذِينَ الْمَيِّتَ.»

“Go back, earning a sin rather than a reward, for verily, you cause *Fitnah* to the living and bother the dead.”

It was also reported that he (ﷺ) said to his daughter Fatimah رضي الله عنها:

«إِنَّكَ لَوْ بَلَغْتِ مَعَهُمُ الْكُدَى - أَيِ الْمَقْبَرَةِ - لَمْ تَدْخُلِي الْجَنَّةَ.»

“If you reached with them the graveyard, you would not enter Paradise.”

Therefore, fear Allâh, O Allâh's slaves, follow the guidance of His Messenger ﷺ and obey Him and His Messenger so that you earn His Mercy. May Allâh direct us all, and you, to the blessings of the Glorious Qur'ân and benefit us all, and you, in whatever is in it of the *Âyat* and Wise *Dhikr*. I say this and ask Allâh the Great, the Most Honored for forgiveness for me, you and all Muslims for every sin, so invoke Him for forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Ahadith Al-Minbar*, by Shaikh Abdul-Aziz bin Abdullah bin Hasan Al-Shaikh, p. 161