

Clarification of a Hadith

Q: Prohibitions and Permissions-43: A scholar from the Bid'ati group has written a kitaab targeting the Tablighi Jamaa'ah in which he quotes a Hadith from Musnad Daarmi. The Hadith states that some people used to gather in the Masjid to engage in Dhikr and count their Tasbeehaat with pebbles. Hearing about this, Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. hastened to the Masjid in anger and asked them what they were doing. When they replied that they were engaged in Dhikr, he remarked. "How quickly have you people headed for destruction when the shroud of Rasulullaah SAW. has not even aged and his companions are still amongst You.

He uses this Hadith to prove that with the Tablighi Jamaa'ah, Masaajid no longer remain Masaajid since they have become places of cooking, eating and living. He says that it was with people who engage in such types of activities in the Masjid that Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. became angry. Could you please verify which people were being referred to in the above Hadith.

Answer: The Hadith in question is reported in Izaalatul Khifaa and other authentic books of Ahadeeth. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood RADI. stopped them from what they were doing because the form of Ibaadah that they were practising was not substantiated. The manner and specified time of their practise made it an act of Bid'ah and therefore impermissible. It is for this reason that it is also forbidden to Perform the Witr salaah in Jamaa'ah out of Ramadhaan and to perform the Tahajjud salaah in Jamaa'ah as well.

The activities of the Tablighi Jamaa'ah are activities of Ta'leem (teaching and Tabligh. These activities are not restricted to the conditions that govern acts of Ibaadah. By comparison, there is more liberty in these activities in terms of restriction because they may be done collectively or individually and at any time people wish to. This liberty does not apply to acts of Ibaadah that are conducted collectively.

It is, however, necessary to observe the sanctity of the Masjid. The Jamaa'ah may sleep in the Masjid with the intention of I'tikaaf if there are no alternatives, but they may not eat in the Masjid. These people are travelling for their own reformation and for the propagation of the Deen, so if they are not permitted to use the Masjid. where else are they expected to go?

A narration of Hadith states that when a Christian delegation from Najraan arrived in Madinah. they entered the Masjidun Nabawi after Asr, which happened to be the time for their prayers. When they sought to conduct their prayers, the Sahabah RADI. were about to stop them when Rasulullaah SAW. allowed them to continue. They then completed their prayers facing east in their customary manner.

It is therefore wrong to criticise the Tablighi Jamaa'ah for their activities. Of course, if the sanctity of the Masjid is encroached upon, it should be brought to their notice with love and kindness. They must ensure that they respect the Masjid and do not treat it as a traveller's inn. otherwise they will be guilty of a grave sin. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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