

The Role of the Mosque

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About the Author

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Ahkam al Boyou' (The rules of transactions)

Khabar al Ahad (The book on single reports)

The duty of Jihad between Mind and Text

How to observe Ramadan

Why Islam declares war against Insurance

Political struggle in Islam

A nation without a cause is like a body without a soul

The way to Palestine

A quick reference to the Islamic economic system

Business and Company Structure in Islam

In addition to being a speaker and khateeb in many mosques, he also has audio and visual productions, including commentary on the Qur'an.

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Introduction

One of the many graces which Allah¹ (swt) has bestowed upon the generous Muslim Ummah² is that He (swt) has made the whole Earth pure, so that it serves as a mosque and a grand mihrab³, where Allah (swt) is worshipped in every single corner of it, whether in the mosques, in the markets, in the streets, or at schools and universities, in the houses, at the frontiers and so on.

Therefore, the whole earth is a mosque and this is indicated by the hadith⁴ reported by Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Jabir ibn 'Abdullah that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, '*I have been granted five things which were not granted to any other prophet before me: I have gained victory with awe from the period of one month (before the battle); the Earth has been made sacred and pure and a mosque for me, so whenever the time of prayer comes for anyone of you, he should pray wherever he is; the spoils of war have been made lawful for me and these were never made lawful to anyone before; I have been granted shafa'a (intercession on the Day of Judgement); and every Prophet was sent particularly to his own people, whereas I have been sent to the whole of mankind.*"

The Messenger of Allah (saw) was sent to the whole of mankind, for Allah (swt) says,

"And We have not sent you but as a Messenger to all mankind." [TMQ 34:28]

And Allah (swt) has made it an obligation upon the Muslim Ummah to carry Islam as away of life to the whole world, for Allah (swt) says,

"Indeed We have made you into a leading Ummah so that you can witness the people's affairs, and the Messenger will be a witness over your affairs."
[TMQ 2:143]

¹ Allah: This word is the name of the Creator (God). Unlike in the English language, this name does not carry any male or female connotations.

² Ummah: The world wide Muslim community

³ Mihrab: The area where the Imam stands to lead the prayer.

⁴ Hadith: report of speech, action or consent of the Prophet Muhammad (saw).

Therefore, one of the most important duties of this Ummah is to work towards spreading the deen⁵ of Allah (swt), for He (swt) says;

"It is He Who has sent the Messenger with Guidance and the deen of Truth to dominate, even though the disbelievers dislike it." [TMQ 9:33]

This can be achieved by providing leadership to the world, in order to bring mankind out of the darkness and guide it into the light, and by flying the banner of Islam high, i.e. the banner of Tawheed (oneness of Allah), of justice and security, above everything else. Bukhari reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*Islam stands highest and nothing else can stand above it.*" And since the Earth is a grand mosque, as is mentioned in the hadith quoted earlier, the Ummah should work towards purifying the Earth, this grand mosque, and carry Allah's (swt) Message all over it, in order to lead people away from worshipping of idols and people, and to bring them to the worship and following the Creator of the universe, Allah (swt).

Since Islam's viewpoint of life is general and comprehensive, the mosque has to be at the heart of all of life's positive and constructive activities, in order to shape righteous generation. Therefore, it is the duty of the Islamic State, and desirable for all Muslims, to build mosques all over the world. These mosques serve as branches for the grand mosque, acting as a springboard from which to launch the propagation of the Message and its implementation. This is why we find that the Qur'an exhorts the building of mosques, making it a sign of belief. Allah (swt) says,

"The mosques of Allah shall be visited and maintained by such as believe in Allah and the Last Day, who establish regular prayers, and pay zakat."
[TMQ 9:18]

The Messenger of Allah (saw) encouraged the building of mosques and made it very appealing, stressing that it is a rewardable act. It has been reported on the authority of 'Uthman Ibn 'Affan that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*He who builds a mosque for the sake of Allah, seeking the pleasure of Allah, will be rewarded by Allah with a dwelling in Heaven.*"

⁵ Deen: Ideology or a way of life. This is distinct from the word 'religion' because religion usually refers to a set of rituals or an aspect of man's relationship with his Creator. Ideology, on the other hand, provides a basis, in other words a creed, upon which all aspects of life are built. The Islamic creed is the belief in the Oneness of the Creator, that Muhammad (saw) is the final messenger of Allah (swt), in the Day of Judgement, in all the Books revealed to mankind through various Messengers, in the angels and that all good and bad are from Allah (swt).

Role of the Mosque

The building of a mosque was the starting point to the expansion of the Islamic conquests which engulfed most of the world, as it plays a vital part in the life of the Muslim Ummah. This can be seen from the example of the Messenger of Allah (saw), who began to build a mosque as soon as he (saw) established the Islamic State in Madinah⁶. To emphasise the great importance of the mosque in the shaping of the Islamic society, he (saw) personally took part in the construction of the mosque. This mosque served as the launching pad for the practical implementation of Islam within both the State and society.

The first mosque was very modest and basic, its pillars were palm trees and its walls were made of clay. But this modest mosque was the first school of the Islamic campaign, and the headquarters of the Islamic State. It was the school where the Messenger of Allah (saw) instructed his Sahabah⁷, the dwellers of Heaven, who disciplined the tyrants. In that modest building, he (saw) cultured the Muslims with Islam, purified their bodies and their souls, and defined the Truth, the fard (obligations), the mandub (recommended), the mubah (permitted), the makruh (disliked) and the haram (forbidden).

⁶ The building of the Prophet's Mosque took place in 622 CE, and it was one of the first tasks performed by Muhammad (saw) when he (saw) arrived in Madinah.

⁷ Sahabah: Companions of Muhammad (saw), some of whom were promised a place in Paradise whilst they were still alive.

The Role of the Mosque

Some people carry the notion nowadays that the mosque only exists for the performance of Salah⁸, and that no other activities are permitted in it. Anyone talking about contemporary issues in the mosques, such as the political corruption of the Muslim rulers, or issues relating to the economic or the social system of Islam, are looked down upon and even stopped. Notice boards prohibiting gatherings which discuss the affairs of the Muslim Ummah are placed in many mosques. Furthermore, some Muslims have even gone as far as writing constitutions not only to prohibit discussions in the mosques, but also to keep Muslims of certain nationalities out of the mosque committees. This applies particularly in the West where mosques are usually run by groups of individuals or organisations.

All of these man made practices are forbidden in Islam. The very nature of the mosque dictates that it is central to the affairs of the Muslims. Furthermore, the Islamic Shari'ah has determined that the mosque is expected to play many important roles within the Muslim community, and the classical scholars have devoted considerable sections in books of Islamic fiqh (Jurisprudence) highlighting these roles. This will become clearer when the tasks which the mosque is expected to be central to, are examined.

1. The Mosque is the headquarters of the Islamic State's supreme leadership

The mosque is the headquarters of the Islamic State's supreme leadership. It is also a centre from where the State's affairs are run, since the Messenger of Allah (saw) used to meet envoys, sign agreements, judge between disputing parties and so on in the mosque. The Khaleefah⁹, i.e. the head of the Islamic State, would outline his policies and methods, and address and debate with his subjects directly without any fear of reprisal in the mosque. The speech of Khaleefah Abu Bakr, delivered in the mosque of the Messenger of Allah (saw), once he had been given the bay'ah (oath of allegiance), has perhaps gone down in history as being the shortest political speech delivered by a ruler. Abu Bakr said,

⁸ Salah: The five prescribed prayers

⁹ Other titles include Imam, Ammir al Mu'mineen and Sultan

Role of the Mosque

"O you people! I have been given authority over you but I am not the best of you. If I do well, help me, and if I do wrong, then put me right. Truth consists in loyalty and falsehood in treachery. The weak among you shall be strong in my eyes until I secure their right if Allah wills; and the strong among you should be weak in my eyes until I wrest the right from them. If a people refrain from fighting in the way of Allah, Allah will smite them with disgrace. Wickedness is never widespread in a people but Allah brings calamity upon them all. Obey me as long as I obey Allah and His Messenger (saw), and if I disobey them you owe me no obedience. May Allah forgive me and forgive you."

2. The Mosque is a section of the Department of Information and Culture

The mosque is regarded as an important centre for Islamic information, since it is the scene of political, social, cultural and ritual life. All the important news relating to vital issues are announced in the mosque and it also ensures direct contact between the carrier and the receiver of the Message. It is considered to be one of the most effective and successful means of da'wah¹⁰ and of giving information. The adhaan¹¹, for instance, is information about the time of prayer and at the same time it is also a means of campaigning for Islam and spreading it. The pulpit is a place for information about the campaign and on it the principles of the campaign are explained and its rules announced. Prayer is another tangible method of giving information, especially the group prayer. Circles for studying the Qur'an and fiqh, meetings and conferences are considered to be successful methods of departing information about Islam.

The Messenger of Allah (saw) used the mosque as a place of worship, as a centre of information, as a meeting place for Muslims where they would hold their prayers, for studies, for consultation and for training the mujahideen (those who fight in the way of Allah (swt)). Preparation of equipment, plans for Jihad¹², as well as strategies for the campaigns would also take place in the mosque.

¹⁰ Da'wah: The call to Islam for non Muslims. Can also include advice for Muslims.

¹¹ Adhaan: The call for congregational prayer. When given outside prayer times, it acts as an alert in the event of an emergency, thus calling Muslims to gather for instructions in the mosque.

¹² Jihad: The Shari'ah meaning of Jihad is the material struggle against non Muslims who occupy Muslim land, and it is also a means of removing obstacles to the implementation of Islam outside the Islamic State.

3. The Mosque is a Judiciary Court

The mosque used to be a place where judges would sit to settle disputes and to look into complaints. There is much evidence showing this and there is no difference of opinion among the various Schools of Thought concerning this.

4. The Mosque is a University for Learning and Teaching

The mosque teaches the basics of the 'aqeedah (creed), the acts of worship and the Shari'ah rules in all their types, political, economic, social, judicial and others. Its policy is based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah¹³ with the aim of building and educating Islamic personalities by way of study circles, debates, and conferences. Such meetings will be engulfed by compassion; the mercy of Allah (swt) descends on them, and they are surrounded by the angels. The mosque is a university that welcomes everyone, by day or by night, in summer or in winter, not turn anyone away be they young, old, male, female, Muslim, non Muslim, black, white, Arab or non Arab.

Moreover entry into the mosque does not require any fee, insurance or permission. There are no hindrances or obstacles, and the mosque does not differentiate between a scholar and a non scholar, nor between a ruler and his subject.

The management of the mosques is undertaken by the Director of the Department of Information and Culture, who is to be appointed by the Khaleefah once what is known nowadays as the 'Ministry of Education and Arts' or the 'Ministry of Information and Arts' in the Muslim countries have been dissolved, since they promote nothing but secular viewpoints about life. In addition to his duties as Director of Information and Culture, the appointed person would be responsible for providing public libraries in the mosques, colleges and markets.

It is this department that would be in charge of the mosques, rather than the Ministries of Awqaf that exist in Muslim countries at present. The Department of Information and Culture would sincerely work towards restoring the role of the mosque as being a centre where Usul al Fiqh, seerah and other Shari'ah sciences are taught and support would be given to the smaller mosques as well as the jami'a i.e. the central ones.

¹³ Sunnah: Example of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), which include his (saw) speech, actions and consent. Sunnah is also taken as revelation, and forms one of the sources of Islamic Jurisprudence.

5. The Mosque is a platform for oratory, eloquence and poetry

Al Tirmidhi and al Hakim extracted a hadith upon the authority of A'isha, who said, "*The Messenger of Allah (saw) used to provide Hassan with a pulpit in the mosque from which he would lampoon the disbelievers.*"

Narrated Hassan ibn Thabit al Ansari, "*I asked Abu Hurayrah: By Allah! Tell me the truth as to whether you heard the Prophet (saw) saying, 'O Hassan! Reply on behalf of the Messenger of Allah (saw). O Allah! Help him with al Quds'. Abu Hurayrah said, 'Yes'.*"

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Jabir ibn Samra, who said, "*I witnessed the Messenger of Allah (saw) more than once sitting in the mosque while his Sahabah would recollect poetry and things, from the times of jahiliyyah¹⁴, he (saw) would sometimes share a smile with them.*"

Al-Tirmidhi also reported on the authority of Jabir ibn Samra, who said, "*I sat with the Messenger of Allah (saw) more than once, his Sahabah would recite poetry and recollect things from the times of jahiliyyah, he (saw) would keep silent, and sometimes he would share a smile with them.*"

6. The Mosque is a detention centre for the prisoner of war

Bukhari reported that Abu Hurayrah said, "The Prophet (saw) sent some horsemen to Najd and they brought a man called Thumama 1bn Uthal from Banu Hanifah (as a prisoner of war). They fastened him to one of the pillars of the mosque. The Prophet (saw) came and ordered them to release him. He (Thumama) went to a (garden of) date palms near the mosque, took a bath and entered the mosque again and said, 'I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (i.e. he embraced Islam)'."

7. The Mosque is a place where war booties are divided

It has been confirmed in Sahih Bukhari that the Messenger of Allah (saw) distributed and divided monies which came from Bahrain in the mosque.

¹⁴ Jahiliyyah : Literally means Ignorance, and it is used for anything that prevailed during the pre Islamic days which Islam has forbidden e.g. burying of daughters, tribalism and so on.

8. The Mosque is a hospital where casualties of war are treated

Bukhari reported on the authority of A'isha that she said, "*Sa'd ibn Wadh was injured in the battle of the Trench, being hit in the medial arm vein by a man from Quraysh called Habban ibn Arqa, and the Messenger of Allah (saw) pitched a tent in the mosque for Wadh so that he could be near him and visit him. However his wound was bleeding profusely and he died after spending a month in the tent.*" In this hadith, there is an indication that it is permitted to sleep in the mosque and for the sick to be nursed there even if they are badly wounded.

9. The Mosque is a home and refuge for the poor, needy and the travellers

Bukhari reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) reserved a corner of the mosque as a shelter for the poor who were known as the people of al Suffah. Bukhari reported that 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar used to sleep in the mosque of the Messenger of Allah (saw) when he was still young.

10. The Mosque is a place of relaxation and siesta

Ubada ibn Tamim reported on the authority of his uncle that he saw the Messenger of Allah (saw) lying down in the mosque. Ahmad, al Nisa'i and Abu Dawud reported on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar that he said, "*During the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (saw) we used to sleep in the mosque and have siesta there when we were young.*" Bukhari also extracted a hadith stating that the Messenger of Allah (saw) came to the mosque while 'Ali was asleep in there and 'Ali's garment had fallen off his side and was covered in dust; the Messenger of Allah (saw) wiped the dust off and said to 'Ali, "*Get up Abu Turab (father of dust).*" We gather from these texts that the Messenger of Allah (saw) and the Sahabah used to rest and sleep in the mosque.

11. The Mosque is a place where the pleasure of Allah and 'good reputation' is sought

Bukhari, Ahmad and Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*Allah will prepare a quarter in Heaven for he who frequently goes to the mosque each time he comes and goes.*" Ahmad, al Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah reported on the authority of Ibn Sa'id that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*If you see a man going frequently to the mosques, bear witness that he is a believer.*" Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*He who purifies himself at home and then walks to*

one of Allah's houses to perform one of Allah's commands, each one of his steps will wipe out a sin and the other will increase his reward."

12. The Mosque is an eating place for the hungry and the needy

Ibn Majah reported that 'Abdullah Ibn al Harith said, "*We used to eat bread and meat in the mosque during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (saw).*" Bukhari also reported in his Sahih that the people of al Suffah¹⁵ lived in the mosque, they therefore had to eat in there as well.

13. The Mosque is a place for celebrations, socialising and amusement

Bukhari and Muslim narrated that 'A'isha said, "*The Messenger of Allah (saw) was once covering me while I was watching the Abyssinians playing with their spears in the mosque.*" 'A'isha also reported, "*A black girl who lived in a small room in the mosque used to come to talk to me, and every time she sat she recited a verse of poetry.*" This hadith carries an indication that it is permitted to sleep and rest in the mosque. Muslim reported that Jabir ibn Samra said, "*The Messenger of Allah (saw) would not rise from the spot where he prayed the dawn prayer until the sun rose and when it did, he (saw) would rise.*" She also said, "*They used to talk and mention the time of jahiliyyah, they would laugh and he (saw) would smile.*"

14. The Mosque is a place where people in need can ask for help

Muslim and al Nisa'i extracted from the hadith of Abu Hazim Salman al Ashja'i that the Messenger of Allah (saw) has permitted the needy person to seek help in the mosque. Abu Dawud has also included in his works a special chapter entitled 'The Chapter of Mas'ala (request) in the Mosque'. 'Abd al Rahman ibn Abu Bakr reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*Has any of you fed a needy person today?*" Abu Bakr said, "*I entered the mosque and I saw a man in there begging, 'Abd al Rahman had a loaf of bread in his hand so I took it and gave it to him.*"

¹⁵ These were the poor people of the Muhajiroon (those who emigrated from Makkah to Madinah with Prophet Muhammad (saw) in 622 CE).

15. The Mosque is a place for consultation and exchanging views

Bukhari and Muslim, among others, reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) consulted people in the mosque about the Ifk¹⁶ event.

16. The Mosque is a place of worship and prayer

The prescribed prayers are held in the mosque, and from it the call of Allah (swt) is initiated. It is a major cultural centre where the learned scholars hold study circles, debates and talks on the sciences of Qur'an, hadith, fiqh and the Arabic language.

The mosque is not a limited company or a public limited company, as some mosques have become today in the West, nor is it an association or a charitable organisation, nor is it a place where rituals are monopolised, for the whole earth is a mosque. We ought to work on this basis so that the deen of Allah (swt) engulfs the whole earth, where His (swt) name is ever remembered, and His (swt) deen stands highest.

17. The Mosque is a Jami'a

The mosque is a jami'a holding the Jum'ah prayer, and popular gatherings of the Ummah are held daily in the mosque. There are five prescribed prayers daily, which are held in congregation. This is a desirable action, and people meet in there united by the love of Allah (swt) and in obedience to Him (swt). Allah (swt) says,

"Those that turn (to Allah) in repentance, those that serve Him, and praise Him, those that wander in devotion to the Cause of Allah, those that bow down and prostrate themselves in prayer, those that enjoin good and forbid evil and observe the limits set by Allah (these do rejoice)." [TMQ 9:112]

In addition, there is a weekly meeting which is compulsory upon male Muslims and designed in order that the people can discuss the affairs of the Ummah and perform the obligatory Friday prayer.

¹⁶ The event concerns A'isha, the youngest wife of the Messenger of Allah (saw), when some people accused her of bad conduct. Allah (swt) then revealed a verse of the Qur'an clearing her name and laying down a rule that whoever accuses a woman of a bad conduct (e.g. fornication or adultery), they must produce witnesses, otherwise the accusers will be punished.

The mosque is therefore a meeting place and a council which never closes, neither on a public holiday nor on any other day. The mosque binds people from all walks of life united together in one Islamic community.

18. The Mosque is the best place to be

The mosque is the best place to be and the best place for i'tikaf¹⁷. Evidence about the fact that those who frequently go to the mosque are among the best people is extracted from the hadith of the Messenger of Allah (saw) where he (saw) exhorts us to testify the belief of the one who frequently goes to the mosque. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*If you see a man going frequently to the mosque, bear witness that he is a believer.*"

He (saw) made it mandub for us to perform i'tikaf in the mosque, and this has been mentioned in all books of hadith and there is no difference of opinion about this.

19. The Mosque is a place where some of the penal codes are implemented

The leading Imams of hadith have agreed about what has been reported on the authority of Sahl ibn Sa'd, that he witnessed the Messenger of Allah (saw) carrying out the penalty of mula'ana or li'an¹⁸ in the mosque, concerning Hilal Ibn Umayyah who accused his wife of adultery without having any proof.

The Li'an is part of the penal code, however the Hanafi School have forbidden penal codes to be executed in the mosque.

20. The Mosque was one of the first houses built for mankind

Allah (swt) says,

"The first House (for worship) appointed for mankind was that at Bakkah (Makkah)." [TMQ 3:96]

And He (swt) says,

¹⁷ I'tikaf: Staying in the mosque for an extended period of time as a matter of worship.

¹⁸ Li'an: The oath of condemnation or the sworn allegation of adultery which is alleged to have been committed by either a husband or a wife.

Role of the Mosque

"Do they not see that We made a sanctuary secure, and that mankind is being snatched away from all around them?" [TMQ 29:67]

He (swt) also says,

"And We gave the site to Ibrahim of the (Sacred) House, saying: Associate not anything (in worship) with Me, and sanctify, My House for those who compass it round, or stand up, or bow, or prostrate themselves (in prayer)." [TMQ 22:26]

General Rules about the Construction of the Mosque

1. The building of a mosque is a duty upon the Islamic State and a mandub act upon individuals. The mandub act must only be done within the permitted rules of Islam and it does not necessitate the taking of actions that are contrary to the Islamic Shari'ah, as some Muslims do nowadays. So to build a mosque by getting a loan from the bank which involves riba (usury) is strictly forbidden.
2. It is forbidden to build a mosque over a Muslim graveyard and impure land. Bukhari, Muslim, al Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah reported on the authority of Abu Sa'id that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*The whole earth is a mosque except the graveyard and the toilet.*"
3. It is permissible to build mosques on areas which may have some graves of mushrikoon¹⁹ provided that the remains in the graves are moved to another place²⁰. Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Anas that when the Messenger of Allah (saw) built the mosque, the graves belonging to the mushrikoon were dug up and their remains removed. This was done to purify the area.
4. A mosque can be built on site which was used by mushrikoon as their place of ritual. It is narrated in Abu Dawud that 'Uthman ibn al 'As was ordered by the Messenger of Allah (saw) to build a mosque for the people of Tai'f on a site where the mushrikoon used to house their idols.

This rule also applies to the places of worship of Ahle al Kitab (the People of the Book) e.g. Churches and Synagogues.

5. It is not permitted to build a mosque with any material that contains nijas (filth), whether it is in the material such as the bricks, the cement, or the water used in the cement.

¹⁹ Mushrikoon: Those who associate partners with Allah (swt).

²⁰ This only applies to Kafir Harbi (non Muslims who are at war with the Muslims).

The Mandub (recommended) in the Mosque

The following are some general rules on which there is no difference of opinion between the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i or the Hanbali Schools of Thought.

1. Remaining in the mosque for a duration of time

It is mandub for a Muslim to be in the mosque and to remain there for a duration of time. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*Seven are being sheltered by Allah ... and one of these is a man whose heart is tied to the mosque.*"

2. To say du'a (supplication) on entry into a mosque

It is mandub for a person who is just about to enter the mosque to do so with his right foot and to say the following, which is reported by Imarn Ahmad, Ibn Majah and al Tabarani from Fatimah al Zahrah:

*Bismillah wassalam 'ala rasool Allah. Allah humagfir li dhanoobi waftah
Ii abwab rahmaatik*

"In the name of Allah, and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah. O Allah! Forgive my sins and open for me the gates, of Your mercy."

3. Praying two rakat

It is mandub for the one who enters a mosque to pray two rakat as a greeting to the mosque. Bukhari, Muslim and Imam Ahmad have reported on the authority of Abu Qutadah al Aslami that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*If any of you enters a mosque, you should pray two rakat before sitting down.*"

4. Sitting in the mosque

It is mandub to go to the mosque and sit there. Bukhari, Muslim and Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*Allah will prepare a house in Heaven for he who frequently goes to the mosque each time he comes and goes*" and he (saw) also said, "*He who purifies himself at home and then walks to the house of Allah to perform one of his duties, each step he takes will wipe out a sin and another will lift him up by a degree.*"

5. To say du'a when leaving the mosque

It is mandub for a Muslim when leaving the mosque, to step out with his left foot and to say:

Bismillah wassalam 'ala rasool Allah. Allah humagfir Ii dhanoobi wqftah li abwab fadhlak

"In the name of Allah, and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah. O Allah! Forgive my sins and open for me the gates of Your blessings."

6. Praying obligatory prayers in the mosque

It is mandub for a Muslim to pray the obligatory prayers in the mosque in congregation. Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "The *jam'a* (congregational) prayer is twenty five times better than the prayer of the individual, and the angels of the day and of the night meet at the *fajr* prayer." Bukhari and Muslim also reported on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Urnar that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "The *jam'a* prayer is better than the individual prayer by twenty seven degrees."

7. Removing offensive items

Removing any offensive or harmful items from the mosque is a rewardable act. Ibn Majah reported that Abu Sa'id al Khudri narrated that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "Allah will build a palace in Heaven for whoever removes from the mosque any offensive item."

8. Praying with someone who has missed jam'a

Islam has made it mandub for a man who has just prayed his *jam'a* in the mosque to join another brother who has missed the *jam'a* prayer and to pray with him again as *nafila*²¹ and it is a charitable act on his part allowing his brother to gain the award of the *jam'a* prayer. Abu Sa'id reported that a man entered the mosque and the Messenger of Allah (saw) had just prayed with his (saw) companions; he (saw) said, "Who would volunteer to pray with this man?" A man from the group stood up and prayed with him. This hadith has been reported from Ahmad, Abu Dawud and al Tirmidhi.

²¹ Nafila: Supererogatory prayer

9. Praying with jam'a as nafila

Islam has made it mandub for the one who prayed his prescribed prayer and then came to the mosque while the jam'a was being observed to pray with the jam'a as nafila, for al Nisa'i and al-Tirmidhi reported on the authority of Yazid al Aswed that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said to two men, "*If you prayed in your home and then came to the mosque, and a jam'a was being observed and you joined them in prayer, it would be for you a nafila.*"

10. To have wudu whilst being in the mosque

It is mandub to be in a state of wudu²² whilst staying in the mosque, but it is permitted to be there without wudu.

11. To take care of the mosque

It is a rewardable action to look after the mosque. Tamim al-Dari was the first man to bring lamps from Damascus, for the mosque which he hung on its walls. This pleased the Messenger of Allah (saw) and he (saw) praised him saying, "*You have illuminated our mosque, may Allah cast His light upon you.*"

²² Wudu: Ablution, which involves washing the hands, face, arms, wiping over the head with wet hands and washing the feet. It is a prerequisite for prayer.

The Haram (forbidden) in the Mosque

The following are some general rules on which there is no differences of opinion between the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i or the Hanbali Schools of Thought.

1. Spitting

Islam has made it haram to spit in the mosque. Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Anas ibn Malik that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*Spitting in the mosque is a sin and its indemnity is to bury it.*"

Nowadays many mosques have carpets in the prayer area and if one spits, he should clean the area thoroughly as there is no sand or earth to bury in it.

2. Sitting in circles before the Friday prayer

Islam has made it forbidden to sit in circles before the Friday prayer, and some of the Schools of Thoughts have in fact made it mubah.

3. Boasting in the mosque

Anas reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "The hour will not come until people boast in mosque." This hadith has been reported by Bukhari, Muslim, al Nisa'i, Ibn Majah and Abu Dawud.

4. To dig a well

It is prohibited to dig a well in the mosque.

5. The joining (crossing) of the fingers together in the mosque

The learned scholars of all Schools of Thought have consented on the undesirability of joining the fingers together in the mosque. Abu Sa'id al Khudri reported, "*I entered the mosque with the Messenger of Allah (saw) and there was a man sitting in the middle of the mosque with his knees together and joining his fingers together. The Messenger of Allah (saw) pointed to him but the man did not notice him, so the Messenger of Allah (saw) turned around and said, 'If any of you are inside a*

mosque let him not join his fingers together as this is an act of Shaytan (Satan) and every one of you is in fact in prayer as long as he is inside the mosque until he comes out of it." This hadith has been reported by Imam Ahmad. Some Schools of Thought have made this forbidden.

6. To prevent the study of fiqh, tafseer, science, tilawaat (recitation of the Qur'an) and the current affairs of the Muslims

The Islamic Shari'ah has made it categorically forbidden for anyone to prevent the mentioning of the name of Allah (swt), the teaching of His (swt) deen and the application of the deen to manage the affairs of the Muslims. Anyone preventing these considered sinful and an enemy of Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw), his credibility will be tarnished, and he would become a wrongdoer. Further, no testimony would be accepted from such a person and his company would be undesirable. Allah (swt) says,

"And who is more unjust than the one who forbids the celebration of His name in the mosques of Allah? And whose zeal is (in fact) to ruin them? It was not fitting that such should themselves enter them except in fear. For them there is nothing but disgrace in this world and exceeding torment in the Hereafter."

[TMQ 2:114]

The mosque is a public place which does not require permission for entry: The learned scholars of all Islamic Schools of Thought agree that the mosque is the House of Allah (swt) and that He (swt) has given permission to everyone to enter it in order to mention His (swt) name, worship Him (swt) and to study the affairs of the Muslims whilst inside it, just as the Messenger of Allah (saw) did, his (saw) Sahabah, his (saw) family and al Salaf al Salih (the Righteous Successors) used to do. Some Schools of Thought consider the one who prevents people from entering the mosque as being a disbeliever and an apostate, and the one who imposes the seeking of permission to enter the mosque under the pretext of organisational and administrative formalities is considered a fasiq (wrongdoer) and a mubtadi' (innovator). This is so because permission to enter the mosque is given by Allah (swt) and it is of general nature. He (swt) says,

"Allah is the one Who authorises establishing a mosque (house) in order to convey His deen." [TMQ 24:36]

This permission applies to every place known as a mosque.

8. The prohibition of sexual conduct

The four Schools agree that it is haram to engage in sexual conduct in the mosque.

9. Sitting in the mosque whilst in a state of junub

According to the four Schools of Thought, it is haram to sit in the mosque whilst being in a state of junub²³.

If one experiences a wet dream whilst sleeping in the mosque, one must leave the mosque immediately. To continue to stay in the mosque will render the Muslim sinful, as being in the state of junub requires one to stay out of the mosque until ghusl²⁴ is performed.

10. Ghusl cannot be performed in the mosque

It is haram to perform ghusl in the mosque, both for men and women, and there is no difference of opinion about this amongst the four Schools of Thought.

11. The sand from the mosque cannot be used for tayyamum

It is haram to use the sand from the mosque to perform tayyamum²⁵.

12. Urinating in the mosque is prohibited

The Messenger of Allah (saw) forbade urination in the mosque by saying that the mosque is not a place for that purpose.

However, today we find that many mosques are constructed with toilets and wudu facilities built inside them, so can one use these facilities? The answer to this is that we should not make the toilets or the wudu area part of the mosque, rather they should be build as separate units, as mentioned by the hadith of Messenger of Allah (saw), "*The whole earth is a mosque except the graveyard and the toilet.*". The actual place of the prayer should be considered as the mosque. In

²³ Junub: Being in a state of sexual impurity.

²⁴ Ghusl: Washing of the entire body with water to purify it from sexual impurity.

²⁵ Tayyamum: Ablution made with dust when water is not available. This is done by placing the hands on clean dust, and wiping the face, arms and so on.

Role of the Mosque

this way it will be permissible to use the toilets, as they would not actually form part of the mosque itself.

The Makruh (disliked) in the Mosque

The following are some general rules on which there is no differences of opinion between the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i or the Hanbali Schools of Thought.

1. Disputing

Muslims should be aware that the mosque is a central focus for the constructive aspects of life, and not a place where mischief is made. Although discussions are permitted in the mosque related to the deen of Allah (swt), arguments and disputes are disliked. This is the position of the four Schools of Thought.

2. Shouting or speaking aloud

It is makruh for people to raise their voices or to enquire loudly about what they have missed from a conversation or an announcement. The Hanafi School makes an exception to this rule only for issues that are very important to the Ummah.

3. Raising one's voice in Dhikr or in Da'wah

It is makruh to raise one's voice during dhikr²⁶ or when one is engaged in da'wah in the mosque. The Hanafi School only permits the faqih to raise his voice so that people around him may learn from him.

4. Offensive words

It is makruh to use offensive words in the mosque.

5 Planting a tree

According to the Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali Schools it Is Makruh to plant a tree inside the mosque. But if the tree has grown in the mosque, then it cannot be removed.

²⁶ Dhikr Remembrance of Allah (swt)

Role of the Mosque

The Hanafi School permit the planting of a small tree for the purpose of absorbing water from the prayer area, otherwise it is makruh.

The Islamic Schools of Thought on various issues

The various issues related to the mosque on which the Schools of Thought hold different opinions are presented here.

1. Making wudu in the mosque

The Messenger of Allah (saw) requested people not to perform wudu in the mosque itself, as this would cause the prayer area to become wet. Based on this instruction, the Hanafi and Maliki Schools extracted that making wudu in the mosque is makruh, and not haram. The Shafi'i and Hanbali Schools hold the opinion that it is haram.

2. Eating and drinking inside the mosque

According to the Hanafi School, it is makruh tahreem²⁷ to eat and drink inside the mosque, whilst Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali hold the opinion that it is permitted, as long as the mosque is left clean.

3. Entering a mosque after eating food with an odour

Bukhari and Muslim reported the narration of Ibn 'Urnar, who said that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*Whoever eats from that particular tree (pointing to the garlic plant) should not come near our mosque.*" In another hadith, reported by Bukhari and Muslim, Anas said that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*Whoever eats from that plant should not come near us, nor pray with us.*" Bukhari and Muslim also reported a hadith, on the authority of Jabir, that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*Whoever eats onions or garlic, let him leave our mosque.*"

According to the Hanafi School it is makruh tahreem to enter the mosque after eating food with bad odour, whilst for Shafi'i it is makruh. Maliki and Hanbali maintain that it is haram.

²⁷ Makruh Tahreem: According to the Hanafi School of Thought if this is performed, it renders the person sinful.

4. Sleeping in the mosque

Sleeping in the mosque is considered makruh by the Hanafi and Maliki Schools, except for the musaafir (traveller).

The Shafi'i School maintains that it is a matter of mubah and they base their argument on the fact that Ibn 'Umar and Imam 'Ali used to sleep there, and that the Messenger of Allah (saw) never rebuked them. The people of al Suffah also used to sleep in the mosque during the life of the Messenger of Allah (saw).

As for the Hanbali School, it is permitted for the travellers and the homeless, as long as the mosque does not become their permanent residence.

5. Non Muslims entering the mosque

Non Muslims are not allowed to enter the Masjid al Haram in Makkah, and this is agreed upon by the four Schools of Thought. As for the other mosques, it is a matter which has produced different opinions.

The Hanafi School maintains that it is permitted for non Muslims to enter the mosque.

The Maliki School holds the opinion that it is haram to allow non Muslims into the mosque except for a particular reason, such as for construction or repair which cannot be carried out by Muslims because of lack of skills and so on. In this case, non Muslims must take permission from the Muslims. This opinion is derived through al Masalih al Mursalah.

The Shafi'i School permits the entry of non Muslims into the mosque except in Makkah and Madinah. Outside these cities, non-Muslims can sleep in the mosque, and they can even be in a state of junub.

The Hanbali School holds the opinion that non Muslims are not permitted in the mosque except for two reasons:

- a. To obtain information about Islam.
- b. If they are envoys to the Islamic State, as was the case during the time of the Messenger of Allah (saw), who received them in the mosque.

However, non-Muslims are not allowed to enter the mosque for promoting their belief or way of life. The practice of allowing Members of Parliament, Senators or other non Muslim politicians and opportunists to propagate their

non Islamic values, as happens in the Western world from time to time, is strictly forbidden by Islam. And there is no disagreement about this issue.

6 Begging in the mosque

Begging in the mosque is makruh tahreem for the Hanafi School, whilst others consider it makruh.

7. Trading and announcing a lost riding beast

AI Tirmidhi and al Nisa'i reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*If you see a man buying and selling in the mosque, say to him, 'May Allah never make your trade profitable', and if you see a man announcing the loss of his riding beast say to him, 'May Allah never return it to you'.*"

According to the Hanafi and Maliki Schools, buying and selling in the mosque is makruh, whilst the Shafi'i and Hanbali Schools say that it is haram.

8. To give something to the one who asks in the mosque

Giving something to the one who asks in the mosque is makruh for the Hanafis, whilst it is permitted for the Maliki and Hanbalis, the Shafi'i School maintains that it is mandub.

9. To take animals into the mosque

The Shafi'i School permits the taking of animals into the mosque based on the evidence that the Messenger of Allah (saw) took his riding animal into the vicinity of the Ka'ba.

The Hanafis say that although this is true, the Messenger of Allah (saw) only did this to demonstrate that it is permissible. However, based on istihsan, the Hanafi School consider this act to be makruh. This is also the view of the Malikis. It is also makruh for the Hanbalis.

10. To close the mosque outside of the prayer time

To close the mosque outside of the time for prayer is prohibited. This is the view of the four Schools of Thought. However, the Hanafis permit the closure of the mosque if there is a danger that theft may occur from the mosque or that many people assemble inside the mosque for reasons other than for what it is meant.

11. Writing on the roof, ceiling and the walls

The four Schools of Thought consider that any writing on the mosque wall which they face during prayer to be makruh, since it distracts the people during their prayer.

As for the other walls, ceiling or the roof, the Hanafi and Shafi'i opinion is that it is makruh except if the writing is an ayah from the Qur'an. Maliki and Hanbali consider it permissible.

12. Decoration

Ibn 'Abbas narrated that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*I was not ordered to decorate the mosques.*" This hadith has been reported by Abu Dawud and it actually refers to the decoration and beautification of the mosque.

The mosque should be kept simple and tidy without any elaborate decorations which distract the people during prayer. This was the case during the time of the Messenger of Allah (saw) and his (saw) noble Sahabah.

The Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali Schools of Thought consider any decoration that distracts the people as makruh, whereas the Hanafi School permit decorations as long as it is not on the wall which the people face during the prayer.

The Fiqh relating to women & children in the Mosque

1. Women are permitted to pray in the mosque

Islam has made it mandub for a woman to pray in her house and made it permissible for her to perform prayer in the mosque and in congregation. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*It is better for a woman to pray in her home than in the mosque.*"

Imam Ahmad reported that A'isha said that the jam'a prayer of a women is no good unless it is held in the mosque or if it is the janazah.

2. Prohibition of Preventing women from going to the mosque

Islam has prohibited disallowing women from going to the mosque. It has been reported on the authority of 'Urnar that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*Do not prevent women from going out to the mosques, but their homes are better for them.*"

Ahmad and Abu Dawud reported, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "*Do not prevent the maid servants of Allah from going to the mosques of Allah, and let them go out unadorned (i.e. not wearing any make up or perfume).*"

3. Women in the state of haidh, junub and nifas passing through the mosque

The scholars of Islam differ on the verdict regarding the passing of women through the mosque who are menstruating, in a state of, junub or who are in a state of nifas (a period of 40 days after the birth of a child).

As for the Hanafi School it is makruh tahreem for such women to pass unless they have a legitimate reason. For Malikis, it is simply makruh, whereas for Shafi'is and Hanbalis, it is mubah. However, Shafi'is stipulate that women who are menstruating can sit in the mosque as long as they do not allow the mosque to become unclean.

4. Women in a state of junub or nifas staying or sitting in the mosque

According to the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali Schools of Thought, it is prohibited for women who are in a state of junub or nifas to stay or sit in the mosque.

5. Regarding children under the age of seven going to the mosque

The classical scholars differ in their verdicts regarding children going to the mosque who are under the age of seven.

The Hanafi School maintains that it is makruh tahreem for children under the age of seven to go to the mosque.

The Malikis adopt, through al masalih al mursalah, that it is haram.

The Shafi'i School permits them to go to the mosque as long as they do not make the mosque impure. This opinion is based on the reports in Bukhari and Muslim that the Messenger of Allah (saw) prayed in the mosque whilst he had Umamah bint Zaynab (child of Zaynab) with him.

The Hanbali opinion is that it is makruh. However, if the purpose of children attending the mosque is to teach them. then in this case it is permitted.

The issue of Zakat in Relation to the Mosque

Some people today have started to spend zakat in a manner which is not specified by the Islamic Shari'ah. One such example is spending on the mosque.

It is forbidden to spend zakat funds on the mosque, for Allah (swt) has restricted the disposal of zakat to the eight categories mentioned in the Qur'an. He (swt) says,

"Alms are for the poor, the needy, those employed (by the Islamic State) to administer the (funds), for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to the Truth), for those in slavery and in debt, in the Cause of Allah, and for the traveller. This is ordained by Allah, and Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom!" [TMQ 9:60]

This verse has clearly singled out the categories eligible to receive a share of the zakat, and there is no mention of the mosque among them. The phrase 'fi sabilillah' (in the way of Allah) in Shari'ah terminology refers solely to lawful Jihad. Besides, the zakat is an act of worship that should not be questioned, nor should the disposal of it be reasoned either. This is so because the Shari'ah principle states: '*The basis of rituals, food and clothing is that they are unquestionable.*' i.e. their rules should be taken as they are without any reasoning.

As for collecting the zakat funds in the mosque, it is forbidden without prior permission of the Khaleefah; and in the absence of the Khaleefah, the role of the mosque is restricted, as far as the duty of zakat is concerned, to directing the Muslims and exhorting them towards acting to establish the Khilafah and to appointing a Khaleefah, as well as exhorting them to establish the duty of zakat by handing it directly to those eligible categories which Allah (swt) mentions in the Qur'an. However, it is permitted for the one who becomes liable for zakat to delegate an individual who he trusts, whether he is the Imam or someone else, to dispose of due zakat on his behalf, provided the zakat is spent exclusively on the eight categories mentioned in the verse.

It is absolutely forbidden to delegate the duty of distributing zakat to associations, groups, parties or to charitable organisations. It is, however, permitted to delegate individuals belonging to such associations in an

individual capacity, because the rules of delegation in Islamic Shari'ah apply only to individuals and not to groups. We must warn here that the establishment of so called charitable organisations is forbidden in Islam²⁸; it is an innovation which was

28This is the case with permanent organisations who take it upon themselves to be the guardians of the Ummah. The organised collection and distribution of zakat is the sole responsibility of the Islamic State, and no one else, just as the application of hudood (punishments) is exclusively carried out by the State and no one else.

Furthermore, these organisations employ permanent staff whose salaries are taken from the zakat and sadaqah given by the people. This is absolutely not allowed because zakat is only for the eight categories mention in the Qur'an, and charity worker is not one of them. Also the sadaqah given by the people is amana so one is not allowed to deduct anything from it, not even for the wages of the collector.

brought to us by the disbelieving colonialists and designed to separate the deen from politics, leaving political work in the hands of politicians and charity work in the hands of the clergy, and this contradicts the rules of Islam, It is wrong to claim that the establishment of charitable organisations is permissible in the absence of the Khilafah. Some people use the verse,

"And cooperate on goodness and in piety." [TMQ 5:2]

to back their arguments. Who said that the formation of charitable organisations is an act of birr (goodness)? Rather it is a mischievous act; and evidence of this is expressed in the remainder of the verse,

"And do not cooperate in sin and in aggression." [TMQ 5:2]

One might ask that if these organisations did not exist, who would help the poor and the needy? The answer to this is that Islam has made it mandub for Muslims to give them sadaqah and made it compulsory upon Muslims to give zakat to them. And sadaqah and zakat can be given directly to them if the Islamic State does not exist to collect and distribute it. In fact, it is the absence of the Islamic State that makes it difficult for the poor and needy to receive zakat properly in an organised and continuous way, whenever it is needed. The Muslims should, therefore, in obedience to Allah (swt) concentrate their efforts on establishing the Khilafah State and removing the collaborating rulers, rather than splitting their duties as some ignorant people among them have claimed, disobeying the command of Allah (swt), and becoming sinful just like the rulers, as they too would be implementing other than the rule of Allah (swt).

Role of the Mosque

It is also forbidden to pay zakat to the rulers for they rule by other than what Allah (swt) has revealed and they therefore have no legitimate mandate to collect zakat or any other funds.

The Mosques, past and present

A brief comparison between the present state of our mosques and that of the righteous ancestors reveals that in the past they used to concentrate on their essence and not the appearance, whereas today we tend to concentrate on the physical appearance and disregard the essential role of the mosque. Everything seems to be the opposite – the role of the mosque has become restricted to establishing the five prescribed prayers, and then it shuts its doors. Consequently, the mosque has become isolated from everyday life, under the banner of separating the deen from temporal life. Government preachers and councillors take centre stage and have begun acting according to guidelines issued by the rulers to reiterate their slogan of 'no politics in religion', claiming that the clergymen have nothing to do with politics even though Islam is a deen and that the political, economic, social and judicial systems are an integral part of Islam.

Finally, the mosque is the place from which the Message of Islam was launched, and the place from where the Muslim leaders began their glorious journeys, carrying the Message of Allah (swt) to the whole world. It was a modest mosque, its carpet was of pebbles, it was lit at night and its roof was made of the branches of palm trees. Therefore, we should not occupy ourselves with decorating the mosque at the expense of disregarding its real role and turning it into a place of strife, disputes and racism. We have sunk to a level today where we are witnessing our mosques being placed into the hands of the disbelievers who are dividing us into nationalities.

For example, today we have Pakistani mosques, Bengali mosques, Syrian mosques, Persian mosques, Kurdish mosques, Turkish mosques and so on. We also have mosques belonging to various Islamic groups, parties and Schools of Thought, and each one prevents others from carrying the Message with excuses, concealing the real reason which is the yearning for power, leadership, and authority, and the satisfaction of the instinct of survival. All this is taking place in our mosques today despite the fact that the mosques are solely for Allah (swt) and not for any group or party or for any particular nationality or race. Allah (swt) says,

"And the mosques are for Allah, so invoke not anyone besides Allah."
[TMQ 72:18]

Therefore it must be stressed, especially to Islamic groups, parties and Imams, that they should fear Allah in His mosques and open the doors of the mosques to sincere Muslims, to learned scholars, to those who prostrate, to those who advise on the deen and those who are engaged in re establishing the Islamic way of life. Only then will the name of Allah (swt) reign supreme in mosques, and people will enjoin what is good, forbid what is evil, and take concern about the Ummah's affairs. Then we can safely say that the mosques have resumed their rightful role, where the deen and the name of Allah (swt) are once again, the highest. Allah (swt) says,

"Allah is the one Who authorises establishing a mosque (house) in order to convey His deen." [TMQ 24:36]