

QnA: The Fiqh of the Masjid



What is the meaning of Masjid?

When we read and study the Noble Quraan we find that All Mighty Allah uses the word Masjid, Masaajid in various places. One that is very important for our discussion is Surah Jinn (72), Verse 18.

وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا ۝ ١٨

Sahih International

And [He revealed] that the masjids are for Allah , so do not invoke with Allah anyone.

Masjid singular and Masaajid – the plural and wherever a Masjid is built, the land, the structure, the ground floor, the upper floors, right through till the Arsh (Throne) – all belongs only to Allah SWT. It cannot belong to any person, family or organisation. They can manage it and oversee it but the ownership of it is Waqf and it is to All Mighty Allah. Masjid, All Mighty Allah loves sajdah so much and All Mighty Allah sent Nabi Muhammad SAW to teach us. An authentic hadith in Sahih Muslim, Nabi Muhammad SAW said:

.... “The nearest the servant comes to All Mighty Allah is while that servant is in sajdah, **so Masjid is the place of performing Sajdah.** We stand there, we go into ruku, we bow down, we sit, but Masjid, because we make Sujood there, we prostrate there, prostrating / Sujood is so beloved to All Mighty Allah, the entire area is called Masjid.

What is the history of the Masaajid?

We, the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah are unanimous of the history of the Masjid throughout the world. The first Masjid to be built – and All Mighty Allah calls it a Masjid in various verses of the Quraan, Masjid al Haram – is the Baitullah, the Kab'ah Musharrafah. We say it was built by Nabi Aadam AS. This is also the Qiblah. Wherever we are we have to face in that direction whether we are on land, on sea, in the clouds, wherever we are we read Salaah and we have to face the Baitullah, as far as possible. The second point is the Hadith in Bukhari Shareef. Abu Dhar RA reports that he asked Nabi Muhammad SAW which was the first Masjid and Nabi Muhammad SAW replied it was Masjid al Haram, the Baitullah, Kab'ah Musharrafah. Then Abu Dhar RA asked which was the next one and Nabi Muhammad SAW said Masjid al Aqsa and that is the furthest Masjid. Haram means sacred, Masjid al Aqsa – the furthest Masjid in that direction, was built forty years after Masjid al Haram by Nabi Aadam AS. The Muassissasani – the second person who constructed Masjid al Haram was Nabi Ebrahim AS and Masjid al Aqsa was Nabi Sulaimaan AS.

Nabi Muhammad SAW migrated from Makkah Mukarramah to Madina Munawwarah. The first Masjid to be built in Madinah Munawwarah was Masjid Quba and thereafter Masjid an Nabawi.

Masjid al Haram – Nabi Aadam AS and later Nabi Ebrahim AS

Masjid al Aqsa – Nabi Aadam AS and later Nabi Sulaimaan AS

Masjid Quba – Nabi Muhammad SAW and the sahaabah RA

Masjid an Nabawi – Nabi Muhammad SAW and the sahaabah RA

This tells us that every Masjid of significance, these are the four most important Masaajid in the entire world – was built themselves by Ambiyaah AS. Therefore it has so much significance when we read Salaah in Baitullah Kab'ah Musharrafah, 100 000 sawaab is received as is mentioned in Bukhari Shareef. Praying Salaah in Masjid an Nabawi earns thousands in reward as mentioned in authentic Hadith. In Masjid al Aqsa 500 or 1000 reward received depending on which Hadith you accept. In Masjid Quba one receives the reward of

performing an Umrah according to an authentic Hadith mentioned in Ibn Majah.

The oldest Masjid in the African continent of 53 countries is Masjid Amr bin 'Aas. Amr bin 'Aas RA conquered Egypt and this was the first of Ramadaan – the 20th year after Hijrah. Seventy or 80 Sahaabah sat and made mashurah (consultation) regarding the direction of Qiblah. In South Africa the first Masjid was established 200 years before our first democratic election in Bo Kaap in 1794. The first Imam was Imam Tuan Guru RA. He wrote the Quraan Sharif while incarcerated at Robben Island between the years 1781 and 1793. In Natal the oldest Masjid is the Jummu'ah Masjid, the Grey Street Masjid, in old Transvaal – now Gauteng Province – the oldest Masjid is the Kerk Street Masjid in Johannesburg and the second oldest in Gauteng is in Heidelberg.

Who should qualify as trustees of the Masjid?

Firstly the person's belief structure must be correct, that person cannot be a Shia, a Qadiani, a Bahai because a majority of Shias are out of the fold of Islam. Qadianis and Bahai adopt beliefs which take them completely out of the fold of Islam. They might have Muslim names.

The trustee must be one who performs his Salaah regularly, punctually, daily, and makes others read Salaah as well.

From this the Ulama have drawn rules: If a person is not punctual with his Salaah he is not fit to be a trustee irrespective of his bank balance.

Today the criterion is a person's bank balance and how influential that person is. There is a "clique mentality, a group of people become the trustees because they are friends, they are wealthy and influential. This has no bearing at all and to make such people the trustees is an invitation for Qiyamah to come.

Hadith in Bukahri Shareef: When the power and leadership is handed

over to people who are not fit for the job, who do not have the Islamic credentials, then wait for Qiyamah to occur.

They must pay Zakaah – if they are wealthy then Zakaah is compulsory on them.

They must fear none except All Mighty Allah – this is a crucial criterion.

Who qualifies to be a Muazzin?

We should know what the Quran Kareem and Ahadith tell us about the qualities of a Muazzin. Whose speech can be better than those who call to All Mighty Allah? Sayyidatina A'aisha RA used to state that this ayah from the Quraan was revealed – the muazzin does good deeds and is from amongst the Muslims. This shows what a great rank it is to be a Muazzin. Nabi Muhammad SAW said in a Hadith in Musnad Ahmad and various compilations: “The Muazzin will have a long neck.” Which means the Muazzin will walk with honour and dignity on the day of Qiyamah because he called the people to Salaah. The Muazzin must be a man of integrity, punctual and be trustworthy. Today people exploit the Muazzin as cheap labour by deliberately employing immigrants from African countries. This is unacceptable in islam.

Who should be the Imaam?

The Imaam should be a person who realises his responsibility. A Hadith in Tirmidhi Shareef states: The Imaam is responsible. An Imaam stands in the place where Mustafa Nabi Muhammad SAW stood and when Nabi Muhammad SAW was in Madinah Munawwarah he always made Imaamat. Only when he was in fatal sickness do we find that on 17 occasions that Salaah was performed by Sayyidina Siddeeq RA and on one of this Nabi Muhammad SAW arrived late. So it isn't a minor thing to be the Imaam. It is a big responsibility.

Criterion for Imaam: preferably the Imaam must be a Hafiz or Qari therefore Nabi Muhammad SAW said, “The people who read well and know the laws, will be ideal.” He must be a man of integrity and honesty. You can't have people as Imaam whose income is Haraam or

dubious eg, the man who sells Televisions or whose wife travels on journeys without hijab etc. Such people cannot make Imaamat because according to the Fuqaha he is classified a Faasiq. Likewise the clothes of the Imaam must be proper. He cannot don clothes like that of a non Muslim. This does not behove the noble status and the sublime rank of an Imaam. Similarly the Imaam cannot be one who is looking for political expediency and scoring points, someone who wants to please the Muslims and Kaafirs. The Imaam should be someone who is punctual for Salaah. Sometimes you have a few Imaams who rotate and the Imaam only comes when it is his chance to be Imaam. There is a strict criteria for a person to be an Imaam. By putting a youngster, who is not versed in the masaa'il of Qiraat and are unqualified to be Imaam makes the Imaam and trustees guilty of a major sin.

What are the etiquettes of the Masjid?

The etiquette of a Masjid is when we enter we enter with the right foot and recite the dua for entering the Masjid. This is for any Masjid. When you enter the Masjid for any Salaah – according to the Shafi, Hanbali madhabs – two rakaah Tahiyatul Masjid must be read before being seated. According to the Hanafi madhabs for Fajr and Maghrib salaah one cannot perform these two rakaahs as it will delay the Salaah. Another etiquette is that noise should not be made in the Masjid. Nabi Muhammad SAW is reported to have said that the Masjid is not a place where noise is made. The musical ring tones of cell phones are a curse; they desecrate the sanctity of the Masjid.

Can one announce when something has been misplaced in the Masjid?

During the time Nabi Muhammad SAW someone misplaced something and made an announcement, Nabi Muhammad SAW said according to the Hadith in Abu Dawood that Allah SWT must not return the item to the man. When something is lost, a notice should be placed on the black board.

Can business be done in the Masjid?

Absolutely not. The Hadith is mentioned in Sahi Muslim that a person took his merchandise into the Masjid and Nabi Muhammad SAW

made dua against him. The Masjid is not a place for business. Even the men sitting for Itikaaf cannot take merchandise into the Masjid or be busy on his cell phone or iPad etc causing a disturbance to others.

How important is it to apply Lobaan in the Masjid?

In Sunnah Ibn Majah there is a chapter on Masaajid, it is mentioned, take your tajmeer, lobaan, incense and apply it in the Masjid. On Thursday nights after Maghrib or Friday mornings one can apply lobaan. At home one can apply it, it will be practicing the Sunnah.

Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyyah, the celebrated student of Sheikh ul Islam Ibn Taymiyyah RA wrote that in the time of Amirul Mu'mineen Sayyidina Umar ibn Khattab RA, there was a person Nu'aim al Mujmir whose name was known as lobaan Walla Mujmir. Hazrat Mufti Shafi Saheb RA – one of the greatest jurists – from the Indo Pak subcontinent wrote in Aadabul Masaajid, we have neglected the Sunnah in this day and age. All trustees and Imaam should revive the Sunnah of Rasulullah SAW.

People are spending millions on Masaajid, is this acceptable?

Nabi Muhammad SAW said Qiyamah will not come until people are showing off and competing regarding the building of Masjid. One can see the intention has nothing to do with pleasing Allah SWT. It is just Riyaah – ostentation – to impress people. There is no reward; rather we are attracting the anger and wrath of All Mighty Allah. It is unacceptable to build Masaajid in this way.

It is important to know that we should not use the term mosque. We should use the term Masjid or Masaajid. The laws of a Masjid do not apply to the Jamaat Khana and namaaz room. Two rakaah Tahiyatul Masjid is performed when entering the Masjid. In the Musallah etc one doesn't. In a Masjid you can make Itikaaf. Itikaaf can't be made in the Musallah, Jamat Khana etc. The prerequisite for Itikaaf must be Masjid. A lady in menses or a man or woman who had husband wife relations cannot enter a Masjid but they can enter a Salaah room etc because it is an ordinary room. It does not fall under the verdict of the Masjid