

“The Mosques of Allah shall be maintained only by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day”

[at-Tawba:18]

Shaikh Mustafā bin Muhammad Mabram حفظه الله تعالى

All praise is due to Allāh, and may Allāh make mention of the Messenger in the highest company and grant him safety from evil, as well as his family, his Companions, and those who tread upon his path until the Day of Reckoning.

We ask Allāh to grant us and you success to what He loves and is pleased with, and that He makes our actions sincerely for His sake, and that He rewards with goodness those who were behind organising this gathering, talk, and lecture that has been arranged for our brothers in the city of Liverpool in the United Kingdom. They selected the title to be in regards to the virtues of the mosques and spending upon them, and we ask Allāh to grant us success to that which is upright in speech.

The topic, no doubt, is from the most important of topics, because its connection is to the establishment and practice of the religion that Allāh commanded His Prophet Muhammad عليه الصلاة والسلام with. Due to this, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم paid attention and gave importance to building a mosque upon his arrival in Madīnah, and preparing it for prayers and for that which the religious and worldly benefits of the people are established upon.

Our Lord سبحانه وتعالى clarified that from the greatest, most apparent, and clear signs of Eemān are in the maintenance of mosques. Indeed, maintaining the mosques is from the most apparent signs of Eemān in Allāh and the Last Day, and fear of Allāh the Most High, and that the ones who establish the prayer and give the zakāt are the people of these mosques, and the people given guidance through which Allāh سبحانه وتعالى desired goodness for them.

Indeed, Allāh the Mighty & Majestic said in His Noble Book:

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَجْشِ إِلَّا اللَّهَ

فَعَسَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنْ يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ

“The Mosques of Allah shall be maintained only by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and give Zakat and fear none but Allah. It is they who are on true guidance.”

(Sūrah at-Tawbah: 18)

And the word “عسى” from Allāh - as the Scholars say - is upon a meaning of actualisation, (that they are **indeed** upon true guidance).

And this “maintenance” is inclusive of the outward maintenance, which is the physical building, and the (other form of) maintenance which is the obedience to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى in terms of Prayer and that which enters in it, and in its rulings such as the call to prayer, and similar matters.

We came to know just earlier that the maintenance of mosques included these two affairs; physical maintenance, and maintenance in meaning (via performance of worship therein).

We shall begin by highlighting the virtue of the maintenance in meaning (through worship) and that is the basis of what is intended, then - Allāh willing - we will highlight the affair of physically building mosques and maintaining them. When our Lord تبارك وتعالى mentioned this type of maintenance of the mosques, He mentioned some aspects of it, and so our Lord the Mighty & Majestic said in His Noble Book:

فِي بُيُوتٍ أَدَانَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ

اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ

يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ

وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

“In houses (mosques) which Allah has ordered to be raised (to be cleaned, and to be honoured), in them His Name is remembered [i.e. Adhan, Iqamah, Salat (prayers), invocations, recitation of the Qur'an etc.]. Therein glorify Him (Allah) in the mornings and in the afternoons or the evenings. Men whom neither trade nor sale (business) diverts from the Remembrance of Allah (with heart and tongue), nor from performing As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), nor from giving the Zakat. They fear a Day when hearts and eyes will be overturned (out of the horror of the torment of the Day of Resurrection). That Allah may reward them according to the best of their deeds, and add even more for them out of His Grace. And Allah provides without measure to whom He wills.”

(Sūrah an-Nūr: 36-38)

This is a comprehensive, exclusive, and unique āyah in clarifying the virtue of the houses of Allāh the Most High, and that they have been built and raised for the remembrance of Allāh تبارك وتعالى, and that Allāh has permitted that and commanded it:

“In houses (mosques) which Allah has ordered to be raised (to be cleaned, and to be honoured)...”, and these ‘houses’ they are the mosques, and the intent behind these mosques is the mosques that have been established for the worship of Allāh جل وعلا and not anyone besides Him, just as Allāh said:

وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا

“And the mosques are for Allah (Alone), so invoke not anyone along with Allah.” (Sūrah al-Jinn: 18)

Due to this Allāh سبحانه وتعالى clarified the great oppression that occurs from the one who forbids the performance of that which the mosques were built for, as Allāh تبارك وتعالى said:

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ وَسَعَىٰ فِي خَرَابِهَا

أُولَٰئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا خَائِفِينَ

“And who is more unjust than those who forbid that Allah’s Name be glorified and mentioned much (i.e. prayers and invocations, etc.) in Allah’s Mosques and strive for their ruin? It was not fitting that such should themselves enter them (Allah’s Mosques) except in fear.”

(Sūrah al-Baqarah: 114)

So this individual who forbids the performance of the actions in the mosques of Allāh that they were built for - and that is the remembrance of Allāh and His name, and establishing His worship - then he has committed a great crime, indeed he has committed a great and blatant crime, and due to this He said about them:

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ مَنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ

“And who is more unjust than those who forbid that Allah’s Name be glorified and mentioned much (i.e. prayers and invocations, etc.) in Allah’s Mosques...” (Sūrah al-Baqarah: 114)

Meaning, no one is more unjust than the one who forbids the remembrance of Allāh in the mosques - and sufficient is this as a calamity upon the one who does that. This verse is sufficient in clarifying the purpose of building mosques, and that is for the remembrance of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى.

The name of Allāh here (grammatically speaking in the Arabic language) is singular and annexed (مضاف) therefore indicating it to be generalised upon all the names of Allāh the Mighty & Majestic.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم clarified this affair with the utmost clarity, as it was mentioned in the Hadīth of Anas رضي الله عنه regarding the story of the

man who urinated in the corner of the mosque, and so the people rebuked him, but the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم forbade them and explained to him that these mosques were not built for this, rather they were built for prayer and remembrance of Allāh - and all that is included within the maintenance in meaning - and it is the greatest and most emphasised evidence and indication upon the eemān of the one who is upon such maintenance of the mosques. So if he prays in the mosque, or makes the call to prayer, or leads the people in prayer, or sits reciting the Qur-ān in it, or teaches knowledge within in - then this from the signs upon his eemān and he has actualised the greatest objective in building the mosques that Allāh commanded to be built and maintained - this is the maintenance of mosques in reality. Otherwise, what is the benefit in large, towering mosques being built, wealth is spent on them, and they are beautified with inscriptions and colours but then no-one sees them, no-one attends them, no-one sits in them, no lessons or lectures or talks are held in them.

As for the second type of maintaining the mosques, which is physically building them and spending wealth on them in order to actualise the first objective (remembrance of Allāh) then that is within every reward associated with righteous actions and means that lead to actualising a desired objective. It is sufficient for the Muslim that he is building an honourable thing that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى annexed to himself - as mentioned previously in the statement of Allāh:

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ

“And who is more unjust than those who forbid that Allah’s Name be glorified and mentioned much (i.e. prayers and invocations, etc.) in Allah’s Mosques...” (Sūrah al-Baqarah: 114)

And this annexation is an annexation of honour, and in the other verse:

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ

“The Mosques of Allah shall be maintained...”

This virtue and excellence is from the greatest of virtues and highest of excellences, the fact that you put your wealth into a place that when you point to it, it will be said, “this is the house of Allāh”, or “this is a mosque”, and the mosques are built for the establishment of the religion, so this is from the greatest of virtues, therefore ponder - and I mean the fact that Allāh annexed the mosques to Himself, and this is an annexation of honour - and you are participating in the building of this masjid which has within it an annexation of honour to Allāh جل وعلا.

And the texts that indicate this great virtue are explicit in highlighting the virtues of building these mosques, it has been reported in Sahīh al-Bukhārī & Sahīh Muslim from the hadīth of ‘Ubaydullāh al-Khawlānī who said that he heard ‘Uthmān bin ‘Affān رضي الله عنه say - when people

were arguing excessively over his intention to reconstruct the mosque of Allāh’s Messenger - “Indeed you have become excessive, and indeed I heard the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم say: ***“Whomsoever builds a mosque for the sake of Allāh seeking by it the Face of Allāh the Most High Allāh will build for him a house in Paradise”***. And in one version, ***“will build for him the likes of it in Paradise”***, and in another version in the hadīth of Mahmūd bin Labīd collected by Muslim, “Uthmān bin Affān wanted to reconstruct the mosque but the people disliked that, and desired that he leave it upon its original construction, so he said, “I heard the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم say, ***“Whomsoever builds a masjid for Allāh, Allāh will build for him the likes of it in Paradise”***.”

Notice how the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم highlighted the necessity of sincerity to Allāh, seeking by it the Face of Allāh, so he does not desire to be spoken of (praised), nor fame, nor to gather the people (around himself), rather he desires only the Face of Allāh, sufficient for him as an honour is that this mosque is a place Allāh is worshipped in.

It has been collected by al-Imām ibn Mājah in the hadīth of ‘Umar bin al-Khattāb رضي الله عنه that he said: ***“I heard the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم say: “Whomsoever builds a mosque wherein the name of Allāh is remembered, Allāh will build for him a house in Paradise”***, declared either Hasan or Sahīh by Shaikh al-Albānī رحمه الله in Sahīh ibn

Mājah. Focus on his statement, *“Wherein the name of Allāh is remembered”*, every time the name of Allāh is remembered, every time the call to prayer is made, every time prayer is performed, every time the Qur-ān is recited, every time a lesson is held, every time someone sits to recite or revise Islamic knowledge in the mosque, then upon all those times this individual who participated in the building of the mosque has great reward. And Allāh has outstretched the sustenance for His servants, so whomsoever has been provided with ample sustenance and aids in the building of the mosques, then indeed he has successfully achieved a great achievement.

And it has been collected by al-Imām ibn Mājah in the hadīth of Jābir bin ‘Abdillāh رضي الله عنهم ا that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *“Whomsoever builds a mosque for Allāh”*, take note of the wording, *“for Allāh”*, *“Whomsoever builds a mosque for Allāh, like a sparrow’s nest or even smaller, Allāh will build for him a house in Paradise.”* This is authenticated by Al-‘Allāmah al-Albānī in Sahīh ibn Mājah.

What is it that you build in this building? And how much will this construction cost you? Or if you participate in its construction? Look at the reward in return for this, Allāh will build for him a house - descriptions of which are unknown - in Paradise, in the greatest abode, the resemblance is only in the names, as for the reality then it is not known expect to Allāh.

And indeed our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commanded us to build mosques in the '*duwar*', which the scholars mentioned are the residential areas, and that they are to be purified and made clean & fragranced. It has been collected in the Sunan of Abū Dāwūd from the hadīth of 'Āisha رضي الله عنها, "The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم built - or commanded for - mosques to be built in the residential areas and to be purified, cleaned and fragranced."

And that they are built in the '*duwar*', the point is the residential areas where a group of people are located, so that they can congregate for the prayer in the mosque.

Our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم highlighted a number of etiquettes in building the mosques, so that a person does not fall into opposing the legislation despite thinking he is fulfilling the objectives. Ibn Mājah or Abū Dāwūd collected the hadīth Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنهما that the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I have not been commanded with '*tashyīd*' of the mosques", ('*Tashyīd*' - becoming excessive in building them in huge sizes, heights, and embellishment), Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنهما said: "You are going to embellish them as the Jews & Christians did", and that is an authentic hadīth.

Ibn 'Abbās indicated that the '*tashyīd*' is its embellishment and beautification, and all this is an affair that is prohibited, in fact as we will

come to see shortly, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stated it to be from the signs of the Hour that will occur from those who are careless in the affairs of the religion and in obedience to Allāh.

And the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم clarified the state people will end up in before the establishment of the Hour, and that is from its signs, and that perhaps people will build mosques, but they will build them from the angle of boasting over one another. Ibn Mājah collected from the hadīth of Anas bin Mālik that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “The Hour will not be established until people compete and boast in the building of mosques”, they boast in the embellishment and expansiveness, and elevated size of them and the likes, and all of this is prohibited.

It is collected by Ibn Abī Shaybah from Abū Sa’īd raised to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, a hadīth that is from the most severe in threat, and it is in the Silsilah Sahīhah of al-Albānī رحمه الله, and within it is the statement of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, “If you adorn your mosques, and decorate your copies of the Qur-ān, then destruction is upon you”, and in one version, “if you embellish”, so the meaning of adorning is embellishing. And you know - may Allāh bless you - that this has become widespread among people, except those whom Allāh has mercy upon. Some people are overcome by the need to boast such that they elevate the mosques in the minarets, and pulpits, and adornment, and

embellishment. If you were to take the money used to build just that minaret, or for the embellishment in some places, you would find it's enough to build a whole new mosque, and this is not correct or appropriate in relation to the Muslims.

Mosques have etiquettes and rulings, from them that they are to be kept clean and fragranced, and looked after, and so - may Allāh bless you - it is a tremendous matter to strive in building mosques and participate in that, and the best of guidance is the guidance of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, may Allāh grant success to everyone in that which He loves and is pleased with, and may Allah make mention of our Prophet Muhammad in the highest company, and his family, and his companions, and all praise is due to Allāh, and may Allāh reward you with good, and may Allāh thank you for your gathering and attentive listening, and may Allāh reward those who organised this gathering and talk, and may Allah thank you our brother Abā Mu'ādh for this translation, may Allāh grant success to everyone in that which He loves and is pleased with.

وصلى الله على نبينا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين والحمد لله رب العالمين والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

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