



Fatwa no. 236

All Praise is due to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger and upon his family. The Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research and Ifta' looked into the letter of his Excellency Minister of Justice that was submitted by the General Secretariat of the Council of Senior Scholars No. 1437, on 17-8-1392 A.H. which includes the inquiry of the Head of the Cultural Foundation in Ceylon regarding what some people do during performing Salah (prayer) in Al-Masjid Al-Hanafy in Colombo. They stand on the right side of the Masjid facing a picture of the grave of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and then they invoke peace and blessings upon him. The Head of the Cultural Foundation there asked for a legal ruling on this matter.

After the Committee studied the query, the answer was as follows:

Putting a photograph or introducing an image of the Prophet's grave (peace be upon him) in any Masjid is an abominable Bid'ah (rejected innovation in religion).

(Part No. 1; Page No. 456)

Furthermore, staying or standing before it is also an abominable Bid'ah to which people were driven by their exaggeration in revering righteous men, and have fallen into it by exceeding the limits in honoring the prophets and messengers. The Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade exceeding the limits in religion when he said: [\(Do not exceed the limits in your religion, for those who preceded you were destroyed due to their excessiveness in religion.\)](#) Narrated by Ahmad, Al-Nasa'y, Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim. This was not practiced by the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) or those who followed them of the best generations (may Allah be pleased with them all), despite their having dispersed to many other countries and were far away from Madinah. Had it been a permissible act, they would have preserved this practice and never neglected it, for they loved and appreciated the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) more than us. Furthermore, they were the keenest of people to do good and adhere to the teachings of Islam. It is, in fact, a means leading to major Shirk (major form of associating others in worship with Allah), I seek refuge in Allah from this. So, they were cautious and guarded against falling into such evil. We, as Muslim people, should follow their footsteps by treading their path, for all good is in the following of the Salaf (righteous predecessors), and all evil is in the innovations of the Khalaf (those who succeeded). It was authentically reported in the Sahih Hadiths that the Prophet (peace be upon him) warned against taking graves as Masjids by building them (Masjids) over graves or performing Salah there. He also (peace be upon him) warned against burying the dead inside Masjids to avoid excessiveness in honoring righteous people and exceeding the limits in revering them. For this may lead to invoking them and seeking their help during calamities besides Allah. Due to this, the Prophet (peace be upon him) supplicated to His Lord not to allow his grave to be taken as an idol to be worshipped. He cursed the Jews and the Christians for taking the graves of their prophets and righteous men as Masjids to warn Muslims not to imitate them in these acts of Bid'ah (rejected innovations in religion) and idolatry.

In addition, photographing the graves of righteous men and hanging them on the walls of Masjids is like burying them in Masjids or building these Masjids over their graves.

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All these acts are means leading to pre-Islamic idolatry and worshipping others than Allah. They are devices of evil which Muslims must block to safeguard 'Aqidah Al-Tawhid (the creed of Oneness of Allah) and protect themselves from falling into the abyss of misguidance. It was narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim (When Um Salamah and Um Habibah (may Allah be pleased with them) told the Prophet (peace be upon him) about a church which they had seen in Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and the images that were in it, he said, "Those (people), if a righteous man among them dies, they build a place of worship over his grave and make such images in it. Those will be the most evil of creation in the Sight of Allah on the Day of Resurrection.") It was also narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of `Aishah that she said: ("When death came upon the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), he started to cast a garment of his over his face, and when it made him short of breath, he would remove it from his face; while in that state he said, 'May the Curse of Allah be upon the Jews and the Christians, for they have taken the graves of their Prophets as places of worship.'" (Aisha said), "He was warning against (doing) what they did." She also said, "Had it not been for that, his grave would have been made prominent, but he feared lest it might be taken as a place of worship.") It is also reported in Sahih Muslim that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ("Beware! Those who preceded you used to take the graves of their Prophets and righteous people as places of worship. Do not take graves as places of worship; I forbid you to do that.") It was also narrated by Malik in his book "Al-Muwatta" that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ("O Allah! Do not allow my grave to be made into an idol that is worshipped. The Anger of Allah has flared up against a people who took the graves of their Prophets as places of worship.") Abu Dawud narrated in his Sunan on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) stated: ("Do not make your houses graves (i.e., devoid of worship) and do not take my grave as an often-visited place (i.e., a place which you visit repeatedly). And invoke Allah's blessings upon me, for your invocation of blessings (upon me) will reach me wherever you may be.") So, he (peace be upon him) ordered that we invoke Allah's blessings upon him wherever we may be and informed us that our invocation of blessings upon him will reach him no matter where we are, without needing to stand in front of his grave or having its picture hung on the wall.

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Taking these pictures and putting them in Masjids is of the abominable Bid'ahs that lead to shirk, I seek refuge in Allah from that. In conclusion, Muslim scholars should condemn these acts and the authorities should remove these grave-pictures from the Masjids to overcome enticement to evil and protect the private territories of Tawhid (monotheism).

May Allah grant us success. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions.

The Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research and Ifta'

Member	Member	Deputy Chairman
`Abdullah ibn Sulayman Ibn Mani`	`Abdullah ibn Ghudayyan	`Abdul-Razzaq `Afify