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## The ruling on abandoning mosques which fall short in implementing Sunnahs

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Article taken and slightly adapted from: [shaikhalbaani.wordpress.com](http://shaikhalbaani.wordpress.com)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**Questioner:** There are some youth in Morocco and Poland and other countries who boycott the mosques of the innovators, for example, [those who perform innovations such as] sending Salaah on the Prophet of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم)<sup>1</sup> in unison, reading the Qur'aan in one voice, they do not give due attention to the Prophet's Sunnah (صلى الله عليه وسلم)...

**Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ):**<sup>2</sup> Like?

**Questioner:** ... straightening the rows during prayer, saying Aameen loudly, and they also recite the Qur'aan in unison [as I mentioned above] and other things too.

**Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ):** From the mistakes of these Imaams boycotted by that group [of youths] you are speaking about is that they [i.e., those Imaams] do not establish the Sunnah, correct? [i.e., that is what you're asking, right]?

**Questioner:** Yes.

**Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ):** This [itself] is something which is considered to be in opposition to the Sunnah: i.e., boycotting a mosque because of the shortcomings of the Imaams of these mosques in implementing the Sharee'ah rulings and their lack of due concern for the Prophetic Sunnah does not make it permissible for those keen on following the Sunnah to boycott those mosques—except if it is to leave a mosque which has innovations like those [you mentioned] for another mosque which does not.

As for boycotting in the manner described in the question, i.e., a total boycotting of all mosques, then the example of that is like someone who builds a palace but destroys a whole country in doing so.

Since establishing the prayer, establishing the five prayers with the Muslim congregation in the mosques is an obligation, and it is not permissible for a Muslim to turn away from or to be complacent in carrying it out except for a legislated excuse.

It is no excuse whatsoever that mosques should be completely abandoned because some of those who pray there, even if it be the Imaam himself, oppose the Sunnah in many or a few matters—except if it is like what I just mentioned, that a person leaves a mosque which is close to him and goes to another because it is free of innovation, this is something obligatory on those who want to cling to the Sunnah.

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<sup>1</sup> (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him

<sup>2</sup> (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

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This is because in this day and age, if a Muslim wanted to go into such fine detail with the Imaams of the mosques he would have to seclude himself from all of the people, because you will hardly ever find a mosque today which is established on the Sunnah from all angles, this is something impossible.

And that is because firstly, all of the mosques, or most of them, are built with tainted money, and are built in a manner which opposes the Sunnah. You will hardly find a mosque today except that it is decorated and embellished, even Makkah and Madinah, as you know.

So if these people don't want to pray in a mosque which has an innovation in it, where will they go? They will have to leave all the congregations of the Muslims and will remain in the corners of their homes, praying there. And as such many hadeeths would apply to them about the one who opposes the Jamaa'ah dying the death of the days of ignorance.

For we find an excuse for a person who leaves a certain mosque to go to another which has less innovations, I do not say that this other mosque does not have any innovations, this does not exist today, but as was said of old, 'Some evil is less than others [in severity].'

So it is possible that a Muslim can find a mosque close or far from him which establishes the prayer on the Sunnah, but [still] it will be full of engravings and decorations, but he has no say in that.

So today the Muslim [should be] as the Prophet (عليه السلام)<sup>3</sup> said in some authentic hadeeths, '**Be moderate and aim to do good ...**'<sup>4</sup>, as for trying to find the Prophet's Mosque as it was in his time (عليه السلام), then he will not find it today—so will a person then isolate himself from the people by staying in his house and severing his ties between himself and the Muslims in the most sacred and pure of Allaah's places as is mentioned in an authentic hadith that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said about the best and worst of places, '**The best places are the mosques and the worst are the markets.**'<sup>5</sup>

So if a Muslim wants a mosque which does not have a single breach of the Sharee'ah, it will mean that he will leave the best of places, i.e., the mosques—and this is not allowed, because as you know the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and I will not prolong this too much, encouraged and stressed that one should pray with the Muslim congregation in the mosques, rather, Allaah the Mighty and Majestic ordered that in the Noble Qur'aan when He said, **[And establish prayer and give zakaah and bow with those who bow [in worship and obedience].**<sup>6</sup>

Thus, these people who stay away from or who boycott praying in the mosques—they are not doing so based upon any knowledge, for if they were upon knowledge they would have known the principle that when a Muslim is presented with two evils, he chooses the lesser of the two.

So they either pray in these mosques which they have no control over, except for ordering the good and forbidding the evil, they can't change the evil there with their hands but they can say a good word—so if they leave off praying in these mosques and do so in their houses it would mean that they would have left the legislated principle which [as I just mentioned is that] when a Muslim is presented with two evils, he chooses the lesser of the two.

<sup>3</sup> (عليه السلام) (alaih-salaam) Peace be upon him

<sup>4</sup> Saheeh Muslim, no. 7117

<sup>5</sup> Aboo Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) (rad iyallaahu `anhu) May Allaah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: The parts of land dearest to Allaah are its mosques, and the parts most hateful to Allaah are markets. Saheeh Muslim.

<sup>6</sup> سورة البقرة - Soorah al-Baqarah [2:43]

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But I [also] said that if there is a mosque which opposes the Sunnah less [than another] and a Muslim goes there leaving the one close to him, then this is something we order and encourage as far as we are able to do so.

It may be that one of these beginners in knowledge may have read, for example, the narration which occurs in Sunan Abee Daawood that Ibn Umar entered a mosque and heard a man calling out to the prayer, saying, 'The prayer! The prayer!' ... in Syria after the call to prayer is given they open a window and [a person calls out and] his voice can be heard in the street, saying, 'O worshippers, the prayer! O worshippers, the prayer!'—when the muezzin said, 'Come to prayer! Come to success!' was it in vain [such that this man now has to say these extra words after the call to prayer?] [Calling out with these extra words after the adhaan] is a correction of the One who laid down the Sharee'ah [i.e., Allaah], for this reason [going back to that narration of Ibn Umar], when he entered the mosque and heard that man calling out, he said, 'This is a mosque which has an innovation in it,' and he left it.

But this does not mean that one should leave all mosques, but rather that one should go to a mosque which does not have innovations [if he can find one], for this reason these people [mentioned in the question] were only overcome due to their lack of knowledge and their extremism in following the Sunnah and worship, and the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, sincerely advising his Ummah, '**Indeed, for every action there is some vigour, and each [instance of] vigour has a certain time, so whoever's period [of vigour] is towards my Sunnah then he has been rightly guided, and whoever's is towards an innovation, then he has gone astray.**'

They flee from some innovations which they do not have the power to rectify and instead fall into a bigger innovation which they do have the power to change, and thus they fell into the madhhab of Aboo Nawwaas who said, 'And cure me with the disease [itself] ...'

Al-Hudaa wan-Noor, p. 574.