

I'tikaaf is restricted to the three mosques

# LEARN ABOUT ISLAM.NET

Spreading the Message of Islam

## Itikaaf is restricted to the three mosques

Translated by Aboo Talhah Daawood ibn Ronald Burbank (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**I'TIKAAF IS RESTRICTED TO THE THREE MOSQUES (AL-MASJIDUL-HARAAM IN MAKKAH, AL-MASJIDUN-NABAWEE IN AL-MADEENAH, AND AL-MASJIDUL-AQṢAA IN JERUSALEM)**

The evidence being the authentic hadeeth of Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه)<sup>1</sup> that Allaah's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم)<sup>2</sup> said:

(لا اعتكاف إلا في المساجد الثلاثة)

<<There is no I'tikaaf except in the three mosques.>>

Shaykh al-Albaanee-(رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)<sup>3</sup>-authenticated this Hadeeth in 'Silsilatul-Ahaadeethis-Saheehah'

(vol. 6, pp. 667-676, no. 2786), saying:

"It was reported by al-Ismaa'eelee in 'al-Mu'jam' (112/2): from his Shaykh al-'Abbaas ibn Ahmad al-Washaa: Muhammad ibn al-Faraj narrated to us; and al-Bayhaqee in 'as-Sunan (4/316) by way of Muhammad ibn Aadam al-Marwazee: both of them from Sufyaan ibn 'Uyainah: from Jaami' ibn Abee Shaddaad: from Aboo Waa'il who said: Hudhayfah said to 'Abdullaah [meaning: Ibn Mas'ood- (رضي الله عنه)]: "[A people] are performing I'tikaaf between your house and the house of Aboo Moosaa and you do not correct (and in a narration: you do not forbid them)?! And you know that Allaah's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: ... and he mentioned it..

So 'Abdullaah said: "Perhaps you have forgotten and they have memorized; or you have made a mistake and they are correct."

I say: This is a chain of narration 'saheeh' to the standard of the two Shaykhs; and the saying of Ibn Mas'ood is not a direct statement definitely declaring Hudhayfah to be mistaken in his narrating the wording of the hadeeth. Rather perhaps he was declaring him to be mistaken in using the hadeeth to apply to the I'tikaaf which Hudhayfah was criticizing, since it is possible that the meaning of the hadeeth with Ibn Mas'ood was: 'There is no **complete** I'tikaaf', just like his (صلى الله عليه وسلم) saying: <<There is no Eemaan for the one who has no trustworthiness, and there is no Religion for the one who does not keep his agreements>>, and Allaah knows best.

<sup>1</sup> (رضي الله عنه) (rad iyallaahu `anhu) May Allaah be pleased with him

<sup>2</sup> (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him

<sup>3</sup> (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

## I'tikaaf is restricted to the three mosques

Then I saw that at-Tahaawee reported the hadeeth in 'al-Mushkil' (4/20) through the aforementioned chain, and he claimed that it was abrogated !

Likewise 'Abdur-Razzaq reported it in 'al-Muṣannaf' (4/348/no.8016), and from him at-Tabaraanee (9/350/no.9511) from Ibn 'Uyainah with it, except that he did not clearly trace it back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

And Sa'eed ibn Manṣoor reported it: Sufyaan related to us, with it; except that he had doubt whether it was traced back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and he abridged it. So he said:... from Shaqeeq ibn Salamah who said: Hudhayfah said to 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood:

"You know that Allaah's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: <<There is no I'tikaaf except in the three mosques>>, or he said: <<A congregational mosque>>."

Ibn Hazm mentioned it in 'al-Muhallaa' (5/195), and then he rejected the hadeeth on the basis of this doubt; and he is excused since he did not come across the narration of the main body of narrators from Ibn 'Uyainah, tracing it back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) without any doubt; and they are:

1-Muḥammad ibn al-Faraj, in the report of al-Ismaa'eelee;

2-Mahmood ibn Aadam al-Marwazee, in the report of al-Bayhaqee;

3-Hishaam ibn `Ammar, in the report of at-Tahaawee;

and they are all reliable (thiqaat), and here are there biographies taken from 'at-Taqreeb':

1-"He is al-Qurashee, their mawlaa, al-Baghdaadee, 'Ṣadooq' (trustworthy), from the Shaykhs of Muslim";

2-" 'Ṣadooq' (trustworthy), from the Shaykhs of al-Bukhaaree according to what Ibn 'Adiy mentioned";

3-" 'Ṣadooq' (trustworthy), a reciter. When he grew old he began to except narrations; so the narrations are more authentic, he was also from the Shaykhs of al-Bukhaaree."

I say: So their agreement with the two reliable narrators who came before is a proof that he correctly memorized it. So those who doubted about whether it was traced back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (marfoo') or whether it was 'mawqoof' (the saying of the Companion) will not harm them; since its being traced back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is an addition from reliable narrators, which must therefore be accepted.

Then I saw that al-Faakihee reported it in 'Akhbaar Makkah' (2/149/no. 1334): Sa'eed ibn 'Abdir-Rahmaan and Muḥammad ibn Abee 'Umar narrated to us, both saying: Sufyaan narrated to us with it; except that they did not doubt. So this is an important point of benefit, and they are both reliable (thiqah) also.

For more articles on Islam please visit [LearnAboutIslam.Net](http://LearnAboutIslam.Net)

**LEARN ABOUT ISLAM.NET**  
Spreading the Message of Islam

## I'tikaaf is restricted to the three mosques

So in summary the agreement of those five reliable narrators upon tracing the hadeeth back to the Prophet, without any doubt it, is a decisive proof that the hadeeth is a saying of his (صلى الله عليه وسلم); and that the hesitation of Sa'eed ibn Mansoor about whether it is marfoo' or mawqoof does not affect its authenticity; especially since the context of the incident further emphasizes that-if it is carefully considered. That is because Hudhayfah would not criticize Ibn Mas'ood for remaining silent about those people performing I'tikaaf in the mosques between the houses upon the basis of his opinion alone, when he knew his virtue and his knowledge and understanding –radiyallaahu 'anhumaa.

So if the hadeeth did not emanate from the Prophet in his view, then he would not have been so bold as to criticize him with something which could not establish proof against him.

Even the narration of 'Abdur-Razzaq which is 'mawqoof' lends weight to what I have mentioned, since it is with the wording:

“ ‘A people performing I'tikaaf between your house and the house of Aboo Moosaa, and you do not forbid the!”

So 'Abdullaah said to him: 'Perhaps they are correct and you are mistaken, and they have memorized and you have forgotten!' So Hudhayfah said: "There is no I'tikaaf except in these three mosques....", and he mentioned them.

And like it is the narration of Ibraaheem who said: "Hudhayfah came to 'Abdullaah and said: 'Are you not surprised at your people performing I'tikaaf between your house and the house of al-Ash'aree' meaning: (in) the mosque!

'Abdullaah said: 'Perhaps they are correct and you are mistaken.' So Hudhayfah said: 'Do you not know that there is no I'tikaaf except in three mosques-(and he mentioned them.) I would not care whether I performed I'tikaaf in it or in this market place of yours,' (and those who were performing I'tikaaf, and who were criticized by Hudhayfah were in the largest mosque in Koofah)."

This was reported by Ibn Abee Shaybah in 'al-Musannaf' (3/91)-and the context is his-, and likewise by 'Abdur-Razzaq (4/347-348)- and the addition is his, and from him by at-Tabaraanee (9510); and its narrators are reliable, narrators (accepted by) the two Shaykhs, except for the fact that Ibraaheem- who is an-Nakha'ee-did not reach Hudhayfah.

So Hudhayfah's using this phrase: 'There is no I'tikaaf' as evidence against Ibn Mas'ood gives the impression that it was a proof with him, otherwise he would not say: 'Do you not know...' etc., and Allaah knows best.

And know that the scholars disagree concerning the conditional nature of the mosque for I'tikaaf, and its description, as you will see in detail in the two 'Musannaafs' which have been mentioned,

## I'tikaaf is restricted to the three mosques

and in 'al-Muḥallaa' and elsewhere. So there is nothing authentic in that regard which can be used as evidence except for his Saying-He the Most High-:

( وَأَنْتُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ )

[SOORATUL-BAQARAH (2): 187]

[[Meaning: Whilst you are performing I'tikaaf in the mosques]];

and this authentic ḥadeeth; and the Aayah is general, and the ḥadeeth is specific. So the principles (of Fiqh) necessitate restricting the general to the specific. So therefore the ḥadeeth specifies and clarifies the Aayah. This is indicated by the speech of Hudhayfah and his Ḥadeeth.

Then the reports (aathaar) about that also disagree, so what has most right is to accept those reports from them which conform to the Ḥadeeth, such as the saying of Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib: "There is no I'tikaaf except in the mosque of a Prophet,"

This is reported by Ibn Abee Shaybah and Ibn Hazm with a 'saḥeeh' chain of narration from him.... "