

A Comparative Study on the Prohibition of Sitting and Doing Religious Services in Tombs from the Point s of View of Ibn Taymiyyah and the Four Sunni Schools

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Abstract

Doing religious services in tombs is one of the controversies among Ibn Taymiyyah and his followers and the Sunni Muslims. Wahhabis believe that the people doing religious services in the tombs of prophets are pagan; they demolish holy tombs, excommunicate and exterminate other Muslims. Ibn Taymiyyah as the main theorist of excommunicative thinking justifies the excommunication based on some weak arguments like a Hadith related from Aba-Morsad Al-Ghanavi prohibiting religious service in tombs and even sometimes excommunicates the act. The present study, attempts to conduct a comparative study on the issue of doing services in tombs from the point of view of Ibn Taymiyyah and his follower and the four Sunni Schools of jurisprudence. The final conclusion made is that beside several errors in the documentation and content of the above Hadith, it conflicts with many other general and specific Hadiths allowing religious service in tombs. Moreover, Sunni scholars have antipathy toward the act in their most radical ideas and do not consider it taboo. Another important conclusion made is that the Wahhabis and Ibn Taymiyyah ideas are in great contradiction with Sunni and other Muslims' ideas.

Keywords: Ibn Taymiyyah; Service; Tomb; Sunni; Prayers; Do not say prayers; Aba-Morsad Al-Ghanavi; Do not say prayers for them

1. Introduction

The world and especially the middle east is now experiencing some of the most tremendous crimes in human history in various forms committed by groups like Wahhabis, Al-Qaeda, Taliban, Boko Haram, ISIL etc. These groups excommunicate others and demolish the holy tombs through a distorted concept of the term Salaf (Predecessor). One of the main theorists of these cults is Ibn Taymiyyah whose Fatwas (religious decrees) are the origin of Wahhabi thoughts. He was a Hanbali theologian and logician and was living in the 13th and 14th centuries. In his book, Al-Hamoodiyat Al-Kobra¹ he stands against Ash'ari Hadiths. His extreme points of view about pilgrimage to tombs, imploration, sanctifying and intercession in the books Minhaj Al-Sunnat Al-Nabaviyah² and Al-Ziyarah³ eventually sent him to prison⁴. The questions here are what the reason for his ideas are if there is any and if the excommunicating belief in his leadership could be generalized to the general Sunni believers. A closer look at Ibn Taymiyyah's thoughts and arguments and comparing them to the ideas of Sunni Schools could reveal the authenticity of his reasoning. Interestingly, the excommunicating consider themselves as the delegates of Sunni community using support from western imperialism, dollars from selling oil and their own propaganda. Does the Sunni community concur with Ibn Taymiyyah's ideas at least on religious services in holy tombs? Do the followers of Ibn Taymiyyah have the right to consider themselves as the delegates of Sunnis? A comparative study on the ideas of Ibn Taymiyyah and other Sunni ideas will clearly reveal the answer to these questions. Needless to say that Sunni Islam was founded more than 600 years before the emergence of Ibn Taymiyyah and was much closer to the foundation of Islam to which Ibn Taymiyyah followers claim to be truest followers. The Ayah and Hadith documents based on which Ibn Taymiyyah has issued his Fatwas are the same available to the scholars before him.

One of the most important arguments of Ibn Tamiyyah and his followers reflected frequently in their works is a Hadith related by Aba-Morsad Al-Ghanavi from the holy prophet Muhammad. A just evaluation of this argument and Sunnis' opinions about it will not only elaborate on their ideas about doing religious services in tombs but also will reveal the closeness or farness of Wahhabi and Ibn Taymiyyah ideas to the original Sunni ones.

In order to do so, the key concepts of tomb, service, belief and understanding of Ibn Taymiyyah from this Hadith will be mentioned and elaborated on first and later the Hanafi, Maliki, Hanbali and Shafi'i scholars' points of views are discussed. The study is a documented library, analytical and rational research that attempts to

¹ الحموديه الكبرى

² منهاج السنه النبويه

³ الزياره

⁴ Sunni Cults (فرق تسنن), P. 623 and Islamic Schools (مذاهب اسلامي) P. 346

refer to at least eight authentic and first-hand references from all four Sunni schools.

2. Terminology

Service: According to dictionaries, service is defined as humility and humbleness.¹ Any form of humility toward anyone is literally service thus service includes behaviors like humbleness and respect toward the prominent religious figures and their tombs and even kissing the Black Stone (حجر الاسود) etc. However, in its broader meaning, service refers to the humility accompanied by the belief in unity of God and worshipping him. Service in its idiomatic meaning is the humility, sanctification, praise and transcendence of the God from any flaws and defects. The heathens in Mecca were pagans for they believed in their idols' divinity and offered them their service and sanctification. Therefore, mere humility before someone without believing in his divinity or his sanctification is not a service. Thus, the angels' prostration in front of Adam or the prostration of Jacob's children before Joseph could be considered as service in its literal meaning but in its idiomatic meaning, they were not services. In short, service is defined as any form of humble and modest behavior in its literal sense and comes with the belief in God's divinity and sacredness in the idiomatic sense of meaning.²

Service has various forms. In the present study, service is considered as saying prayers as the most important form and as a service emphasized by Ibn Taymiyyah.

Tomb: Dictionaries define tomb as the burial site and its plural form is tombs. Tomb is also considered as grave whose plural form is graves.³ Tomb is the gravesite for the dead body. The Arabic word مقبره seems to have been driven from the word قبر. The reason may be that the name of the place could be taken from the things that are abundant in the place like the word den which is full of wild animals. In Persian, Graves is the equivalent for gravesite. In its literal sense, the meaning does not change if the gravesite is new or old or even one is buried or many bodies are buried in the site. The present paper takes this definition.

3. Doing Services in a tomb from Ibn Taymiyyah's point of view

In order to prove his belief, Ibn Taymiyyah refers to Quran and Hadiths. He aims to prove that any form of attention toward anything but God is forbidden. Among the most important arguments he presents from Quran are Sura Al-Isra, verses 56 and 57⁴, Sura Ash-Sharh, verses 7 and 8⁵ and Sura Nuh, verse 23⁶. Besides, he refers to several Hadiths, two of which are the most cited ones. The first one is the Aba-Morsad Al-Ghanavi Hadith⁷ that prohibits sitting by the grave and saying prayers in the tomb and the second one is the Shed Ol-Rehal Hadith⁸. Not only does not Ibn Taymiyyah believe in the virtue of saying prayers in the tombs of the prophets and the righteous, but also he prohibits them. His argument in prohibiting doing services in the tombs emphasizes that the salafis concord on the virtues of saying prayers in a mosque compared to doing it in the tombs of prophets and the righteous⁹. Moreover, none of the close people to the prophet believes in a virtue for those services. Acceptance of prayers in these tombs does not approve of their virtue for prayers may also be accepted in a pagan's tomb as well. Moreover, many of the tombs attributed to the prophets and the righteous are not authentically approved to be theirs except for the tomb of the holy prophet Muhammad therefore, doing services next to their graves will be out of ignorance¹⁰. For him, even standing by the grave of the holy prophet is forbidden. Ibn Ghayem, one of Ibn Taymiyyah's followers, goes further and not only considers doing services by the graves as a sin but also considers it to be idolatry¹¹. They believe that, even when the focus of the service in a tomb is God, it will be like focusing on the buried body and intending anything but God is idolatry.

4. An Evaluation of the Aba-Morsad Hadith

As it was mentioned before, one of the most important Hadiths referred by Ibn Taymiyyah to prove his verdict is the Hadith forbidding sitting and saying prayers in tombs¹². Ibn Taymiyyah has referred to this Hadith more than 11 times and Ibn Ghayem has mentioned it more than 7 times. Based on this Hadith, they argue that doing service in tombs is a forbidden heresy. They believe that even with the intention of God, the prayer acts as if he

¹ Lesan Ol-Arab Vol. 3, P. 273

² Wahhabi Creed, P. 196

³ Al-Ain, Vol. 5, P. 158 and Lesan Ol-Arab Vol. 5, P. 70

⁴ قُلْ ادْعُوا الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ فَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ كَشْفِ الضُّرِّ عَنْكُمْ وَلَا تُخْوِيلًا
أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ يَبْتَغُونَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمُ الْوَسِيلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُ ۚ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ كَانَ مَحْذُورًا
فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ

وَأِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ

⁵ وَقَالُوا لَا تَذَرُنَّ آلِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا

⁶ Sahih Moslem, Vol. 2, P. 668 عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: لَا تَجْلِسُوا عَلَى الْقُبُورِ، وَلَا تُصَلُّوا عَلَيْهَا

⁷ لَأَشْتَدَّ الرَّحَالُ إِلَّا إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ مَسَاجِدَ: الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى وَمَسْجِدِي هَذَا

⁸ Ziarat Al-Ghoboor, P. 29

⁹ Majmu al-Fatwa al-Kubra, Chapter 27, Ps. 115 and 130

¹⁰ Eghaṣat Ol-Lohfan, Vol.1, Ps. 185 and 201 & Elam Ol-Moghein, Vol. 4, P. 668

¹¹ عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: لَا تَجْلِسُوا عَلَى الْقُبُورِ، وَلَا تُصَلُّوا عَلَيْهَا

has intended the tomb owner and this means idolatry. Ibn Taymiyyah not only considers this act to be forbidden and heresy but also similes it to the Christianity in which Christians give a divine position to Jesus and Mary. This taboo is much stronger in the tombs of prophets¹. A closer look at the Hadith from the point of view of authenticity and content will reveal how correct this argument is.

5. Document Analysis on the Hadith:

This Hadith is mentioned in many of the Sunni books of Hadiths including: Sahih of Moslem, Sahih of Ibn Habbab, Sahih of Ibn Khazimeh, Mosnad of Ahmad, Mosnad of Abi Ya'li, Tarditions of Beihaghi, Hadiths of Tarmazi, Mostadrak of Hakem and Al-Mo'jam Tabrani. Two proofs have been offered for this Hadith in Sunni references. The narrator of both references is Aba-Morsad Al-Ghanavi. Therefore, the Hadith is among the Ahad Hadiths related in the third level with two documents. In the first document, Abdullah Bin Mubarak and Abu Edris Khulani are referred; however, in the second one, no two narrators are mentioned².

One of the major differences of these two documents is the presence of Abdullah Bin Mubarak in the first document. This difference has made Tarmazi and Ibn Khazime to relate the Hadith with two documents but doubt about the one that has a reference to Abdullah Bin Mubarak. According to them, the second document could only be referred to³. Rejali reference of Sunnis, introduce Abdullah Bin Mubarak as "Shaikh without Truth"⁴ and Zahabi refers to him as non-memorizing⁵.

Thus, firstly, this Hadith is not related in most of the authentic Sunni books including Sahih of Bukhari, and Hadiths of Abi Davud; secondly, the first relation whose document is based on Abdullah Bin Mubarak is void according to Tarmazi and other people; thirdly, the second relation of the Hadith is under some questions. These questions may include the point that Vasel relates the Hadith directly from the holy prophet and does not consider Al-Ghanavi making it a flat relation. In case of Tabrani relation, there are five intermediate narrators between Valid Bin Muslem and Ibn Jaber with probable different levels. Therefore, this Hadith has a weak documentation and could not be referred⁶.

6. Content Analysis

Along with the documentation and its errors, the Hadith is also controversial for its prohibition. Not only does not Beizavi accept the prohibition in this Hadith and others of this nature, but also believes in the acceptance of saying prayers in tombs without any abomination⁷. Maghlateye Hanafi does not believe that this Hadith is sufficient for prohibiting saying prayers in a tomb⁸.

Prominent Sunni scholars have taken the prohibitions of the holy prophet to be at the most abomination. Besides, Beihaghi Al-Manavi and adr Al-Din Hanafi has also mentioned this⁹. Accordingly, based on the ideas from Sunni scholars, abomination has priority over prohibition.

Some of the sources cited in Sunni books consider the holy prophet's prohibition to be because of the dirt and ordure of the tombs. Thus, after the dirt and ordure are removed, even the abomination verdict is gone. It should be noted that some of these sources, believe in the cleanliness of the body of the prophets for their elegance and dignity allowing services in the tomb of theirs¹⁰.

7. Shafi'is' View toward Al-Ghanavi Hadith

Shafi'i allows saying prayers in clean tombs and thinks it does not need to be compensated. In his point of view, exhumation in a tomb that pollutes it with the flesh and bones of the dead makes the tomb dirty and prohibits saying prayers and the reason for this is not the fact of being a tomb¹¹.

Nuri, one of the prominent Shafi'i scholars, states: "there are three views on doing services and saying prayers in a tomb. People like Ibn Manzar believe in their abomination. Other people like Abu Horaira, Vael Bin Asgha' and Hassan Basari believe there is no abomination and there are to relations from Malik the most famous

¹ Majmu al-Fatwa al-Kubra, Chapter 1, Ps. 237 and 354 & Chapter 27, P. 127

² Hadiths of Kobra, Vol. 2, P. 435 and Vol. 4, P. 79 & Sahih of Moslem, Vol. 2, P. 668 & Mosnad of Abi Ya'li, Vol. 3, P. 83 and Sahih of Ibn Habbab, Vol. 6, P. 90

³ Hadiths of Tarmazi, Vol. 3, P. 368 & Sahih of Ibn Khazimeh, Vol. 2, P. 7 & Mosnad of Imam Al-Hanbal, Vol. 28, P. 451

⁴ Lesan Al-Mizan, Vol. 3, P. 330

⁵ Sei A'alam Al-Nabla', Vol. 15, P. 395

⁶ Mostadrak Ala Sahihain, Vol. 3, P. 243 & Mojam Ol-Kabir Al Tabarani, Vol. 19, P. 193

⁷ Sabal Ol-Salam, Vol. 1, P. 299

⁸ A Description on the Hadiths of Ibn Majeh, Maghlatay, Vol. 1, P. 1238

⁹ ويستفاد من الحديث مسالتان، الأولى: كراهة الجلوس على القبر. والثانية: كراهة الصلاة إليها Sonan Ol-Kobra, Vol. 2, P. 435. Al-Taisir Besharhe Jame'e Al-Saghir, Vol. 2, P. 491. Feiz Ol-Ghadir, Vol. 6, P. 506. A Description on Sonan Ol-Abi Davud Al-Aini, Vol. 6, P. 186

¹⁰ Margins of E'anat Ol-Talebin, Vol. 1, P. 195 and Vol. 2, P. 277. Tohfah Ol-Habib Ala Sharh Al-Khatib, Vol. 2, P. 95

¹¹ Ma'alem Al-Sona, Vol 1, P. 148. Al-Tamhid Lema Fi Al-Mota, Vol. 5, P. 230. Sharh Al- Sonat, Vol. 5, P. 411. Fath Al-Bari, Vol. 2, Ps. 398-407, Omda Al- Ghari, Vol. 4, P. 173

one of which is that if there is no ordure or dirt in the site, there will be no abomination as well¹."

Ibn Rajab Hanbali attributes the abomination verdict to Shafi'i. He says, "followers of Shafi'i divide tombs into three categories. Tombs that have exhumations very often and saying prayers in their sites is not permitted because of the pollution; the second category is for the tombs that have not had exhumations and saying prayers in them is not permitted and has abomination; and finally the third type of tombs that are doubtful and saying prayers is permitted for some views and prohibited for other ones²."

Some Shafi'i scholars refer to the Al Ghanavi and other similar Hadiths and conclude that saying prayers in the tombs of the prophets is not permissible yet for them, the act is allowed in other tombs³. According to the researcher's understanding from the Ansari text, saying prayers in a prophet's tomb is not allowed if the grave is in front of the prayer. However, in case the grave is not before the prayer, it is permissible. Nevertheless, other scholars believe in abomination of saying prayers in the tombs for people other than prophets. The reason for this prohibition by them is the vicinity of dirt and pollution for the dead body is considered to be unclean. Therefore, if the dirt is removed, the abomination will be removed accordingly. These scholars have no problem with saying prayers in the tombs of the prophets and martyrs. For them, prophets and martyrs are of such a great level in humanity that they could not be considered as dead bodies and their bodies then will not be unclean. According to Quran, they are alive. Thus, saying prayers between the Column and the Position is allowed even if it is the tomb of a prophet. These scholars believe that the Al-Ghanavi Hadith implies that the tomb of the prophet is virtuously turned into the direction toward which the prayer is said⁴.

In conclusion, unlike Ibn Taymiyyah, Shafi'i does not infer prohibition from the Hadith. For them, doing services in a tomb is permissible and in some cases, they think it is virtuous.

8. Hanafis' View toward Al-Ghanavi Hadith

A majority of Hanafis do not consider doing services beside tombs to be problematic⁵. The Hanafi Al-Eini believes in the permissibility of saying prayers in a tomb only if there is no pollution and the prayer is not on or in front of the dead body⁶. According to some Hanafi scholars who follow Ibn Taymiyyah teachings, saying prayers in a tomb is abominable. The reason for their abomination is the pollution of the tomb and after the tomb is cleaned, the prayers will be allowed⁷.

Like Shafi'i's, some Hanafis consider the prophets and martyrs to be alive and because of their high positions in humanity, believe in virtuousness of saying prayers in their tombs. The tomb for Ismail is under the Kaaba Downpipe or between the Black Stone and the Zamzam as the tomb for 70 prophets are some of the best places for prayers⁸.

The majority of Hanafis believe that there is not even the slightest problem with saying prayers and doing services in the tombs of prophets and the righteous.

9. Malikis' View toward Al-Ghanavi Hadith

In Malik's point of view, anyone saying his prayers in clean tombs, has said a correct prayer and does not need to redo it. It is said that Malik and Hassan Basri would say their prayers in tombs; thus, Malik would permit saying prayers in tombs⁹. Maliki scholars follow Malik and permit saying prayers in tombs¹⁰. Ibn Alish and some other Maliki scholars response to the question of prohibition of saying prayers in tombs was permitting without abomination¹¹.

Ibn Abdol-Bar, Algharafi and other Maliki scholars wrote under the Al-Ghanavi and similar Hadiths that those who believe in abomination of saying prayers in tombs, refer to them. These Hadiths may be well documented but could not be referred to as a document for they could be interpreted in various ways. Prohibiting services and prayers in a tomb needs an authentic verdict that could not be interpreted otherwise and the Al-Ghanavi Hadith is in conflict with other similar Hadiths¹².

Another important argument from Ibn Adol-Bar on permitting saying prayers in a tomb is that the

¹ Al-Majmoo Sharh Al-Mohazab, Vol. 3, P. 185

² Fath Al-Bari, Vol. 2, Ps. 398- 407

³ Al-Majmoo Sharh Al-Mohazab, Vol. 3, P. 185

⁴ The margin of E'anat Al-Talebin, Vol. 1, P. 195, Vol. 2, P. 277. And Tohfah Al-Habib Ala Sharh Al-Khatib, Vol. 2, P. 95

⁵ Rad Ol-Mohtar Ala Al-Dor El-Mohtar, Vol. 1, P. 380

⁶ Omda Al-Ghari, Vol. 4, P. 173

⁷ Al-Mabsoot Al-Sarakhsi, Vol 1, P. 380, Badaye Al-Sanaye', Vol. 1, P. 115, Tohfah Ol-Foghaha, Vol. 1, P. 257, and the Margin of Ali Maraghi Al-Fallah, Vol. 1, P. 241

⁸ The margin of Ali Maraghi Al-Fallah, Vol 1, P. 241

⁹ Omdaye Al-Ghari, Vol. 4, P. 173, Sharh Al-Soneye Baghavi, Vol. 2, P. 411

¹⁰ Sharh Al-Soneye Baghavi, Vol. 2, P. 411, Fath Ol-Bari, Vol. 2, Ps. 398- 407, Tahzib Al-Modavanah, Vol. 1, P. 97

¹¹ Fath Ol-Ali Al-Malik Fel-Fatwa Ala Mazhab El-Imam Malik, Vol. 1, P. 386

¹² Al-Estezkar, Vol. 8, P. 245, Al-Tamhid Lema Fel-Mota, Vol. 1, P. 168 and Vol. 5, P. 218 and Vol. 6, P. 383, Al-Zakhira, Vol. 2, P. 96, Moa'alem Al-Senan, Vol. 1, P. 141

mosques built by holy prophet were constructed on the grounds in which pagans were buried. If the holy prophet was supposed to exempt these grounds, the grave site of pagans would be a better exemption over the exemption of Muslim gravesites¹. Some other Maliki scholars refer to this issue as the confrontation of the base to the dominant and argue that Malik has preferred the base of correct prayers on the dominant of polluted prayer site and incorrectness.

Thus, just like Shafi'is and Hanafis, the Maliki, in the most extreme condition, in contrast to Ibn Taymiyyah and the Al-Ghanavi Hadith, believe in abomination of the service in tombs.

10. Hanbalis' View toward Al-Ghanavi Hadith

Several Hadiths have been related from Ahmad about saying prayers in a tomb. There have been two relations about the acceptance of prayers in case of pureness of the tomb and rejection of service and redoing it². People like Abu Eshagh Hanbali consider the prayers correct and not redoing it³; and some others believe it to be abominable⁴. However, most Hanbali scholars do not permit saying prayers in a tomb⁵. It is worth mentioning that these prohibitions are for the time other sites are available for saying prayers. Thus, in case there is a condition in which saying prayers is impossible in another place, it will be permitted to be done in a tomb. Therefore, it could be said that Hanbalis do not absolutely deny prayers in a tomb. They believe that the prayer on a dead individual can be said in a tomb without any abomination although the prayer on a dead individual could not be taken as prayers⁶.

Hanbali scholars believe that the prayers are discarded if the prayer knows the act is unacceptable for he is a sinner and closeness to God is impossible with sins. However, as the act is done on ignorance and unintentionally, there are to verdicts on correctness and incorrectness of the service. The people believing in correctness of the prayers in case of ignorance say the prohibition is ruled because of the doubt about dirtiness of the tomb. In other words, prohibition is based on the present of ordure not because of the grave in the tomb; thus, the site does not affect the verdict. In case the site is clean, prayers must be correct⁷. Bokhari believes in the correctness of prayers in case the individual does not know about the dirtiness of the tomb as well.⁸

There are two ideas about the reason for prohibiting doing services in a tomb. Some of them consider their verdict because of the servitude and the other considers it due to the ordure. Majority of the scholars consider servitude to be the reason not any other rational reason; therefore, prohibiting service is for any place that is commonly known as a tomb either it is new or it is old, whether it is demolished or not. Accordingly, in a place where one, two or a few bodies are buried, no prohibition exists for the site is not commonly known as a tomb⁹. It should be noted that the graves of the prophets and the righteous are generally a grave for one body and therefore, the grave could not be taken as a tomb; and the criterion for the prohibition is being a tomb. Thus, praying in these sites could not be prohibited and when the name of the tomb changes in its common meaning into another term, the prohibition for the service is discarded¹⁰.

Another possibility for the prohibition may be the presence of ordure in the site. Generally speaking, the tomb is polluted when it is demolished or an exhumation is conducted and blood and meat is mixed with the soil. In other words, without any explicit reason, the doubt about ordure is for the prohibition. Therefore, the removal of the probability of ordure, the prohibition is discarded. In case the verdict is delayed, the servitude is better¹¹. This possibility represents several evidences. One example of the people who believe in the prohibition of prayers in a tomb refers to a narration of Umar ibn Al-Khattāb from the holy prophet¹². A little speculation about this Hadith reveals that, according to it, except for the roof of Kaaba, all other sites are considered dirty.

According to one of the prominent Hanbali scholars, Ibn Ghodameh, saying prayers and doing services in tombs is not allowed based on general¹³ and specific¹⁴ relations of Hadiths. He believes that the dominant

¹ Eghasat Al-Lohfan, Vol. 1, P. 187, Al-Tamhid Lema Fel-Mota, Vol. 5, P. 230, Al-Zakhira, Vol. 2, P. 96, Moad'alem Al-Senan, Vol. 1, P. 141

² Al-Sharh Al-Kabir, Vol. 1, P. 478 & Al-Moghani, Vol. 1, P. 406

³ لم ينقل عن أحد من العلماء أنهم أمروا بإعادتها ولأن النهي لمعنى في غير الصلاة أشبه ما لو صلى وفي يده خاتم ذهب (مع التحريم) للنهي عنه مع الكراهة وفاقا وعنه لا تصح «
Al-Mobade', Vol. 1, P. 398

⁴ Masa'el Al-Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal & Ibn Rahviah, Vol. 1, P. 163

⁵ Al-Mobade', Vol. 1, P. 394 & Zad Al-Mostaghne' Vol. 1, P. 39

⁶ Akhsar Al-Mokhtasarat, Vol. 1, P. 109, Kashf Ol-Ghena' Vol. 1, P. 297, Kashf Ol-Mokhadarat, Vol. 1, P. 119, Mataleb Ola Al-Nahy, Vol. 1, P. 366

⁷ Al-Moghani, Vol. 1, P. 404, Al-Sharh Al-Kabir, Vol. 1, P. 479

⁸ Al-Sharh Al-Kabir, Vol. 1, P. 218

⁹ Al-Moghani, Vol. 1, P. 405, Al-Sharh Al-Kabir, Vol. 1, Ps. 218 & 480, Al-Mobade', Vol. 1, P. 395, Kashf Ol-Ghena', Vol. 1, P. 297, Kashf Ol-Mokhadarat, Vol. 1, P. 119, Mataleb Ola Al-Nahy, Vol. 1, P. 366

¹⁰ «فإن كان في الموضوع قبر أو قبران لم يمنع من الصلاة فيها لأنها لا يتناولها اسم المقبرة.» Kashf Ol-Ghena', Vol. 1, P. 298, Kashf Ol-Mokhadarat, Vol. 1, P. 121, Mataleb Ola Al-Nahy, Vol. 1, P. 366

¹¹ Al-Moghani, Vol. 1, P. 405, Sahrh Al-Kabir Ibn Ghodama, Vol. 1, P. 366

¹² «سُبْحَ مَوَاطِنَ لَا تُجُوزُ فِيهَا الصَّلَاةُ: ظَاهِرُ بَيْتِ اللَّهِ، وَالْمَقْبَرَةُ، وَالْمَرْبِئَةُ، وَالْمَجْرَزَةُ، وَالْحَمَامُ، وَعَطْنُ الْإِبِلِ، وَمَحْجَةُ الطَّرِيقِ» Sonan of Ibn Madjeh, Vol. 1, P. 246

¹³ جعلت لي الارض مسجدا وطهورا .. فحيثما أدرتلك الصلاة فصل فانه مسجد

¹⁴ الارض كلها مسجد إلا الحمام والمقبرة

Hanbali idea prohibits saying prayers in a tomb. However, the reason for this prohibition is the fear of the presence of ordure in the tomb. He cites two famous quotes on not redoing the prayers but he himself believes in redoing those prayers¹.

With a little tolerance, it could be concluded that almost all Hanbali scholars consider doing service in a tomb to be prohibited. However, the final decision by Ahmad Hanbal is not clear and some scholars do not believe in such prohibition.

11. Summary and Conclusion

Having a little tolerance it could be said that the majority of Sunnis except for the Hanbali, not considering the Al-Ghanavi Hadith, and other arguments they offer, believe in permitting saying prayers and doing services in a tomb. There are two main views toward the issue among Sunnis. The majority view of almost all Hanafis, Shafi'is and Malikis and the minority view including Hanbalis, Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Ghayem and their followers.

Minority View

In some references, Ahmad, Abu Soor and The Zaher community consider praying in tombs to be absolutely prohibited whether the tomb is carpeted and ultimately clean or not and whether it is the grave for Muslims or pagans². However, in some cases, people like Ahmad, Es-hagh, and Abu Soor etc. believe in abomination of prayers in a tomb even if it is clean³.

People believing in the prohibition of saying prayers in a tomb argue the servitude aspect of it. For them, the mere fact of being a tomb is enough for a prayer not to be acceptable and do not differentiate between old or new and a grave or exhumed. These people disagree with people who believe in the abomination of doing services in a tomb only for the ordure in the site and argue that the reason for prohibition is not pollution and the dirt goes away with transformation. The main reason they offer is that the graves, and pagans and disbelievers should not be praised⁴. One of the evidences brought up by this group is the Al-Ghanavi Hadith which was discussed above. This Hadith, in spite of its documentation problems making it flat evidence, is not enough for proving the idea of its supporters. Besides, this Hadith is in contrast with other evidences. Ignoring the problems this Hadith has, most of the scholars citing it abominate the services and prayers in tombs.

Majority view

The view of majority of Sunnis toward services and prayers in tombs is permitting them and not needing to redo them if the tomb is clean. This majority is divided by two groups, the first of which considers it with abomination and the second one believes the acts to be accepted without abomination.

Group one: Permitting with Abomination

Abu-Hanifa, Soori, Oza'ei, and Al-Rafe'i believe in the abomination but correctness of the prayers without needing to redo them. Rafe'i believes that if the tomb or a dirty place is carpeted the prayers are acceptable with abomination⁵. The reason for the abomination for this group may vary. Some consider servitude as the reason and thus the abomination persists in any condition; however, people like Khatabi, and Shafi'i Al-Baghavi argue the pollution in the tomb and removal of the dirt discards the abomination⁶.

Group two: Permitting without Abomination

In this group's point of view, if the tomb is clean, saying prayers there will be accepted. It is cited from Malik, Shafi'i and Hassan Basri that they said prayers in tombs and considered the act to be without abomination in case the site was clean⁷. The Hanafi Al-Aini believes that saying prayers in a tomb is beyond abomination in case the direction is not toward the grave or on it⁸.

In conclusion, it could be concluded that the majority of Sunnis except for the Hanbali, ignore the Al-Ghanavi Hadith but do not permit saying prayers and doing services in tombs. Quitting a legitimate deed like doing services in tombs based on general and specific evidences and because of the misunderstanding of a small cult from some weak documents damage the whole body of Islam. Another important conclusion is that the ideas presented by Ibn Taymiyyah and Wahhabis following him are in great contrast with the ideas of other Sunni schools of thought and Muslim world. It is hoped that there comes a day in which there is no disagreement

¹ Al-Moghani, Vol. 1, P. 406, Sahrh Al-Kabir, Vol. 1, P. 218 & 478- 482

² Omdeye Al-Ghari, Vol. 4, P. 173

³ Sharh Al-Soneye Baghavi, Vol. 2, P. 411, Ma'alem Al-Sonan, Vol. 1, P. 148

⁴ Fath Al-Bari, Vol. 2, Ps. 398- 407

⁵ Omdeye Al-Ghari, Vol. 4, P. 173, Fath Al-Bari, Vol. 2, Ps. 398- 407

⁶ Ma'alem Al-Sonan, Vol. 1, P. 141, Shar on Sonan Al-Baghavi, Vol. 2, P. 411

⁷ Ma'alem Al-Sonan, Vol. 1, P. 148, Omde-ye Al-Ghari, Vol. 4, P. 173, Shar on Sonan Al-Baghavi, Vol. 2, P. 411

⁸ Omde-ye Al-Ghari, Vol. 4, P. 173

between Sunnis themselves and between them and Shiites.

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