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Publishers Note

It is with great pleasure that Darussalam presents this booklet 'Selected Fatāwa For Women.' The increasing importance that woman are playing in today's world highlights the importance of having correct and reliable information available for them. It is with this intention of supplying our Muslim ladies with the most accurate and practical information that Darussalam makes this humble presentation. We are honored to be based in the land of the Two Holy Mosques and as such are so fortunate as to have an unbroken chain of scholars of the highest integrity to rely upon. The Fatāwa that appear in this booklet are from the highest scholarly sources of our Holy Land. Besides Qur‘ān and authentic Ahādīth, this booklet relies on the Fatāwa of the Permanent Committee of Religious Research and three of its most eminent members, Shaikh bin Baz, Shaikh bin Uthaimin, and Shaikh bin Jibreen. Shaikh bin Baz is the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia and the most distinguished scholar of religion from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Shaikh bin Uthaimin is the ranking professor of Religious Fundamentals at the Shariah Faculty of Imam Muhammad bin Sa‘ud Islamic University and a member of the Senior Scholars Committee of Saudi Arabia. Shaikh bin Jibreen, who received his education from the great scholars of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including the eminent Shaikh bin Baz, is a member of the General Presidency of Islamic Research, Ifta, Call and Propagation and the author of many books and publications on Islamic topics.

Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager
Darussalam

Acquiring Knowledge

Women and the Seeking of Knowledge

Q. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to set a special day for teaching the matters of the religion to the women. He also used to permit them to be behind the men in the mosque in order to seek knowledge. Why do the scholars not follow the example of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ? Although they do fulfill some of those needs, it is not sufficient and we need more. May Allāh reward you.

A. There is no doubt that such was the practice of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, as well as the scholars. Indeed, I myself have done that here on a number of occasions as well as in Makkah, Tā’if and Jeddah.

I have no problem with setting apart a specific time for women in any locale if they want that from me. That is also the position of my scholarly colleagues.

Furthermore, by the radio program Noor ala Ad-Darb,1 Allāh has opened the way to much good. A woman can send her question to the program and during the program it will be answered. This program is aired two nights a week on the stations Nida-ul-Islam and Al-Qur‘ān al-Kareem.

Similarly, women may write to Dar-ul-Ifta. In this case, a committee of scholars may respond to their questions. It has been designed for that purpose. In any case, knowledge is equally obligatory for both men and women. There is nothing to prevent a woman from attending lectures, with the condition that she is properly dressed and is not exposing any of her beauty.

Shaikh bin Baz

1 This is a radio program in Saudi Arabia that the scholars participate in. It is basically a forum for questions to be put and answered.— JZ
Questions Related to ‘Aqidah (Faith)

The Ruling Concerning Visiting Graves and Using Them as a Means of Approach to Allāh

Q. What is the ruling concerning visiting graves and seeking to get closer to Allāh by means of mausoleums, and using sheep and wealth to get closer by them, such as visiting the mausoleum of Al-Sayid Al-Badawi, Al-Husain and Al-Sayidah Zainab.2 Benefit us [by responding to our question], may Allāh benefit you.

A. The visiting of graves is of two types. The first type is legally sanctioned and desired. This is to visit the graves in order to supplicate for the deceased and to ask for mercy for them, and also to remember death and prepare for the Hereafter. This is based on the Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ:

“Visit the graves as they remind you of the Hereafter.”3

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions used to visit the graves. However, this practice is for men only and not for women. As for women, it is not sanctioned for them to visit the graves. In fact, they must be prevented from doing so as it is confirmed from the Prophet ﷺ that he cursed those women who visited graves.4 This is because their visiting the graves is a great trial for them. It is also because [by their behavior] they become a trial for others due to their little patience and great grieving that overcomes them. Therefore, it is not legally sanctioned for them to visit the graves. It is also confirmed in the Sahih that Umm Atiyyah Ṭabi‘a said, “We were prohibited from following the funeral procession but this was not strictly enforced upon us.” This shows that they were prevented from following the funeral procession to the grave site out of fear that it would be a trial for them or because of them and because of their little patience. The basic ruling when something is ordered against is that of prohibition. This is because Allāh has stated:

وَمَا أَنزَلْنَاهُ عَلَى النَّارِ فَلْيَخْرُجُوا مَنَافِقُونَ وَكَافُرُونَ "Whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain from it.” (V. 59:7)

As for saying prayers over the dead (as in the funeral prayer), this is sanctioned for both men and women. This

Mājah and Ahmad. However, all of them narrated this through Abu Salem, who is a weak narrator. Hence, many scholars of Ḥadīth (such as Ibn Hajar, Al-Albani and others) consider that narration weak. The correct (Hasan) narration of this Ḥadīth states that the Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed those women who frequently visited the graves. [Recorded by At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Mājah and Ahmad. According to Al-Albani, this narration is Hasan. See Muhammad Nasir Al-Din Al-Albani, Sahih Sunan Al-Tirmidhi (Riyadh: Maktub al-Tarbiyah al-Arabi li-Daul al-Khaleej, 1988), vol. 1, p. 308.] This can give a very different interpretation of the Ḥadīth, as is given by Abdul Rahman Al-Mubarakpuri, Tuhfat-ul-Ahwadhi bi-Sharh Jami’ At-Tirmidhi (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, n.d.), vol. 4, p. 160. Bakr Abu Zaid, however, interprets this Ḥadīth to mean the same as the previous Ḥadīth. [See Bakr Abu Zaid, Jaz ‘fi Ziyārat-un-Nisa li-l-Qubur (Riyadh: Dar al-Aasima, 1994), pp. 24-27.] If a woman is known not to behave herself within the limits of the Shari‘ah at a gravesite, then she should be prevented from visiting the graves according to the agreement of the scholars. Allāh knows best.—JZ

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2 The question is referring to a common practice in many parts of the Muslim world. The three mausoleums mentioned in this question are located in Egypt. People visit them and offer wealth or animal sacrifices thinking that doing so in the honor of those deceased people will bring them closer to Allāh and make Allāh pleased with them.—JZ

3 Part of a Ḥadīth recorded by Muslim, Ahmad, An-Nasa‘i, Abu Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah with the last word being “death” instead of “the Hereafter.” Ibn Mājah also records something similar with the last word being “the Hereafter.”—JZ

4 This is in a Ḥadīth recorded by At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa‘i, Abu Dāwūd, Ibn