

TOURISM AND ISLAM

*A SATANIC MOCKERY
OF HAJJ AND UMRAH*



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INTRODUCTION

THE UMRAH TRIP

The Ramadan eve annual Umrah trip is the latest fad to catch the eyes of the Muslim elites. Thanks to the advancement of modern travel and easy availability of foreign exchange, the traffic to the Holy Land has increased manifold since the dawn of the 90's. Notwithstanding the steep increase in airfares and hotel accommodation, some people have made such trips an annual ritual. The elite suburbs are agog with talk of who made how many umrahs.

Undoubtedly, visiting the house of Allah and performing the minor haj are excellent acts of virtue. No sane person can deny their virtues. But after performing these acts of worship once, if there are other more urgent requirements in the Muslim community, they should enjoy priority. One can soothe one's conscience by saying how much of reward one is achieving by performing Umrah after Umrah, but if sincerity is absent, our acts of worship will be bereft of all reward. We must not shirk from drawing attention towards false notions of religiosity that inspire some Muslims to perform pilgrimages time and again.

Repentance and seeking forgiveness are indeed the hallmark of a concerned Muslim. If genuinely sought, Allah's blessings are not denied even to the worst sinner. Sultan Salahuddin, Allamah Iqbal, Tippu Sultan, Aurangzeb and several other luminaries of Islamic history did not perform even the obligatory haj despite a burning desire for it. Their pre-occupations with administration, expansion or the conquest of Baitul Maqdis in the case of Salahuddin did not permit them to carry out the Fardh act, let alone making it a ritual.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is reported to have warned his companions of a time in future when the Muslim elite would come to the Holy Places as part of a pastime, people of average means would visit for the purpose of trade, while the poor would utilize the opportunity for begging. The statement carries tacit discouragement for turning visits to holy places into a periodic ritual. If indeed this is the case, all of us must express concern at the fulfilment of this prophecy. Let not our instincts of deriving pleasure be camouflaged by such religious zeal that is without sanction from Islam. Having concern for our Muslim brothers and sisters in all parts of the world in the form of financial assistance and da'wah to revive the

flagging Iman will carry infinitely superior rewards and are exceptionally greater priorities.

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COMMENT

While in general we are in agreement with the view expressed by Madrasah Arabia Islamia of Azaadville, and which view we shall, Insha-Allah, be emphasizing in the ensuing pages, there is a need to comment on their statement:

“Sultan Salahuddin, Allamah Iqbal, Tippu Sultan, Aurangzeb and several other luminaries of Islamic history did not perform even the obligatory haj despite a burning desire for it. Their pre-occupations with administration, expansion or the conquest of Baitul Maqdis in the case of Salahuddin did not permit them to carry out the Fardh act, let alone making it a ritual.”

The subject under discussion is *Tourism and Islam*. Its permissibility or impermissibility is governed by *Shar'i dalaal*, not by the actions of luminaries whose deeds do not constitute such *dalaal*. The luminaries listed above, with the exclusion of Iqbal, were undoubtedly noble

Islamic personalities. But their actions do not constitute *daleel* in the Shariah. In their opinion, due to their commitments, etc., Hajj was not Fardh on them, hence they did not undertake the sacred journey to Makkah Mukarramah.

Iqbal was a poet. The ‘Allaamah’ designation for him is inappropriate and highly misleading, especially when even Ulama appellate it to him. His expertise and accomplishment in the domain of poetry does not qualify him for the title ‘Allaamah’. It is highly misleading for Ulama to cite Iqbal in a Shar’i context.

In support of their view, the Madrasah should have cited Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) who, despite being in close proximity to Makkah, had performed Hajj only once in his lifetime. Umrah *per se* too, was performed only once in his lifetime, and that was a Qadha Umrah. The two other Umrahs were by the way. The intention was not specifically for Umrah. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) did not undertake journeys specifically with the intention to perform the two Umrahs. This Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) firmly rebuts the current haram holiday umrah/hajj trend. The abstention of the other noble

personalities is not a *daleel* for arguing against these merrymaking tours deceptively dubbed with Deeni designations. There is an array of factors which renders these tours and holidays haraam. Insha-Allah, these shall be discussed in the ensuing pages.

THE HARAAM TOURS

Question

What is the Shariah's view regarding tourism? Many Muslims undertake the 'Three Haram' tours, Umrah and other types of tours. Is there any Islamic merit in touring?

ANSWER

Tourism is part of satanism. It is a sinful merrymaking activity of the kuffaar which Muslims too have adopted. The further away Muslims drift from the Deen, the more they display their kufr tendencies acquired from their western kuffaar masters whose cult of life they have adopted 100%. In the words of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam): *Muslims will emulate the Yahood and Nasaara so much that even if they enter into a lizard's hole, Muslims will follow suit.* In other words, if the west says that faeces is gold, Muslims will accept and adore

the faeces.

A man came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and said:

“O Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam)! Permit me to tour.” Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Verily, the tourism of my Ummah is Jihaad fi Sabeelillaah.”

In another Hadith, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *“There is no monasticism and no tourism in Islam.”*

Commenting on the Hadith, Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *“Tourism in Islam is devoid of substance. It is not of the acts of the Ambiya nor of the Saaliheen.”*

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *“This dunya has been created for you while you have been created for the Aakhirat.”* Our presence on earth is not for merrymaking. The purpose of touring is nothing other than merrymaking, such merrymaking accompanied by a variety of haraam activities.

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi

wasallam) said: “*Safar (journey) is a portion of athaab (punishment).*” In one Hadith it is mentioned: “*Safar is a portion of the Fire.*”

The punishment and fire will differ for different types of journey. However, for the vast majority of today’s holiday-makers, tourists and mock ‘umrah’ tourists, these journeys are loaded with haraam, fisq and fujoor. A journey nowadays is an excursion of sin. The traveller plunges into sin from the time he leaves home until his return. It is sin and transgression all the way along the journey.

Total intermingling with the opposite sex, wholesale neglect of Salaat, trapped in fisq and fujoor at airports, hotels, and even in the Haramain Shareefain, consuming mushtabah and haraam food, squandering wealth, etc. are regular and permanent sins in which travellers nowadays have to participate.

Passport and visa photos for touring and nafl umrahs are also haraam. It is not permissible to indulge in haraam for the sake of a Nafl ibaadat. Wasting large amounts of money aggravates the villainy of journeys and the intensity of the *athaab* and *naar*. While millions of the Ummah

are languishing in abject squalor, poverty, hardship, sickness, lack of shelter, etc., affluent Muslims satanically enjoy themselves by squandering the *ni'mat* of wealth on luxuries and haraam sight-seeing and merrymaking journeys in kuffaar style.

The degree of shamelessness of men and women on board the plane, in the airport lounges and hotels brings out their evil lusts and even kufr which they struggle to conceal at home. The men who are supposed to be the mahrams for their womenfolk are transformed into shameless *swines* along the journey. Their Imaani *ghayrah* (*honour*) is completely abandoned on the journey. For their wives and daughters to intermingle with strange fussiaaq males is an accepted norm on the journey. Such men are described in the Hadith with the term "*dayyooth*" (*cuckold*). However, the purport of the word is better conveyed and understood from the word, *swine*.

Supposedly 'pious' men deceive themselves by soothing their conscience with the Zakaat and other charity they dole out. They believe that the large amounts they squander on these journeys are justified and permissible since they do pay their Zakaat, etc. This is a shaitaani deception. Even if all Muslims all over the world contribute

all the money they waste for the aid of the suffering Ummah, then too, the needs of the unfortunate suffering members of the Ummah will not be fulfilled.

Once a man came to Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (Rahmatullah alayh) and said that he had saved 200 dinars (gold coins) for a Nafil Hajj. He had come seeking advice. Hadhrat Bishr asked the man to state whether he planned to go on the journey for merrymaking or for the acquisition of thawaab (reward). He promptly responded that his intention was thawaab.

Hadhrat Bishr (Rahmatullah alayh) said: “If your intention is thawaab, then I shall advise you with a better way of gaining the reward of 200 accepted Hajj. Distribute the 200 dinars to either ten orphans or ten widows or ten hard-pressed families, and I assure you of the thawaab of 200 Hajj.”

The man said that his heart was set on performing Hajj. Hadhrat Bishr then said: “As long as you do not waste the money in haraam avenues, you will not derive peace.” He implied that since the money was not acquired in a halaal manner, this man would not derive satisfaction as long as he does not waste it on the haraam merrymaking tour which he described as Nafil

Hajj to soothe his conscience. Thus, those who squander money on these haraam merrymaking tours should understand that there is considerable contamination in their wealth, hence they incline towards the shaitaaniyat of *israaf*. The Qur'aan Majeed describes them as *Ikhwaanush shayaateen (brothers of the devils)*.

Every Muslim knows that Hajj constitutes one of the Five Fundamental Pillars of Islam. It is Fardh once in a lifetime for the Muslim who is able to reach Makkah subject to certain conditions of the Shariah. Despite the fundamental importance and significance of this Fundamental act of Ibaadat, it will not be permissible to undertake the Hajj journey if it involves the commission of sin, e.g. neglect or missing Salaat or indulgence in any prohibition. The Fuqaha decreed in this regard: *“It is mentioned in Al-Mudkhal: Our Ulama say: When the mukallaf person knows that he will miss even one Salaat if he proceeds for Hajj, then verily Hajj is waived. Elsewhere it is said: If performing Hajj is not possible except by expelling Salaat from its time (i.e. making it Qadha) or something similar (i.e. committing sin), then Hajj is waived.”*

Al-Barzali narrating from Al-Maazari said: "If he (the traveller) will commit neglect of Salaat such that its time lapses or even performs its substitute (i.e. Salaat in the sitting position), in the wake of the Hajj journey, then most certainly this journey is not permissible, and the obligation of Hajj is waived for him."

At-Taadali narrating from Al-Maazari said: "Verily, Istitaa'ah (i.e. the condition of ability to go for Hajj) is to reach the Bait (Ka'bah) without hardship together with safety for oneself, one's wealth and the ability to execute the Faraaidh (acts of Ibaadat), abandonment of extremes and abandonment of sins."

Ibnul Muneer mentions in his Mansik: "Know that destroying (i.e. not performing on time) even one Salaat is a colossal sin. The virtues of Hajj do not compensate for it (for this loss). In fact, it (Salaat) is greater than it because it is of greater importance. Therefore if dizziness is the norm for the traveller on sea or on the land even if for one Salaat (i.e. due to this ailment he will miss a Salaat), then Hajj is haraam for him, i.e. if he can reach Makkah only by neglecting Salaat.

"Whoever knows that if he goes on a sea voyage (even air or land travel), he will be affected by dizziness (or any other sickness)

which will mentally impair him or cause unconsciousness, causing him to neglect Salaat or abandon Salaat totally, then there is no difference of opinion (among the Fuqaha) that it is not permissible for him to undertake the journey. The journey of a person of this type is only nafsani lust. In fact, it is an inspiration of shaitaan.

Al-Barzali said: "Our Shaikh Abu Muhammad Ash-Shabeebi narrating from Taalib said: "The Shayaateen (Devils) of the east and the west became involved in a dispute. Who among them are the greatest deceivers (misleading people)? The devils of the east said to the devils of the west: 'We are greater than you in deception because we incite a man to commit sin and perpetrate prohibitions in the abodes of the Ambiya (in the Holy Places).' The Shayaateen of the West responded: 'We are greater (in the art of deception). We find a man with his wife and children performing the Fardh Salaat, paying Zakaat and practising other acts (of virtue). He is in a state of comfort and his Angels are with him.

Then comes along the (Hajj / Umrah) agent (such as the travel agencies and Sahuc, Khidmatul Awaam) enticing people to travel to

the land of Hijaaz (for Hajj and Umrah). Then we (the devils of the west) goad and induce him to come out (i.e. undertake the journey). We poke them with a knife (a figurative expression for the shaitaani snare of enticement. Then he cries (yearns to go for Umrah). Thus he emerges for the journey. From the day he leaves (his home) we induce him to neglect the Faraaidh and to violate the prohibitions (of the Shariah) – from the day of his departure until the day of his return to his family. Thus, he is in loss regarding himself and his wealth in the east and the west.

Then the Shayaateen of the East acknowledged the superiority of the Shayaateen of the West in the art of deception.”

Al-Barzali said: “Verily, I have witnessed some of this in my Hajj journey. We seek safety from Allah.”

(Mawaahibul Jaleel)

In this discussion of the two groups of shayaateen there is a sombre lesson for those who undertake the merrymaking tours. They dwell in self and shaitaani deception.

The following is mentioned in *Irshaadus Saari*: *Among the conditions for the obligation (Fardhiyat) of Hajj, is the ability to perform the*

Fardh Salaats, and not making qadha.”

If one Salaat is performed without Jamaat, it is the equivalent of committing 700 major (Kabeerah) sins. Hadhrat Abu Bakr Warraaq (Rahmatullah alayh) on the first day of his Hajj journey was unable to perform one Salaat with Jamaat. He then said that he should be taken back because he had committed 700 Kabeerah sins on the very first day of the journey.

This is the Shariah’s position regarding journeys for even the Fardh ibaadat of Hajj. If the journey entails missing Salaat or the commission of haraam, then it will not be permissible to undertake the journey. When such is the view of the Shariah regarding Hajj, then what does the Imaan of a Mu’min dictate regarding merrymaking tours, deceptive nafl Umrah and the ‘three Haram’ merrymaking tours?

The Fuqaha have explicitly ruled, and so does Imaani intelligence rule, that it is not permissible to go for Hajj even if just one Salaat will be missed or made qadha on the journey. Now what is the state of affairs nowadays when people embark on these merrymaking fun tours dubbed with Deeni designations?

The Shayaateen of the West are great

conspirators just as are the people of the West. These devils embroil these tourists in haraam from the day they depart from home until the day they return. Wholesale neglect of Salaat is the norm. In a plane full of men and women ostensibly going for Hajj or Umrah, only a few venture to perform Salaat on the plane. Most of these tourists remain in their seats like kuffaar. They display total indifference to Salaat. Their wanton abstention from Salaat is wholesale kufr neglect.

Then they indulge gluttonously in the mushtabah, filthy and haraam food served on the plane. They devour the impure foods like animals. All purdah vanishes. For these shaitaani tourists it seems that there is no need to observe purdah. Men and women freely mix and converse in the plane and at the airports. In the plane, men and women line up inter-mixed at the toilets. Every vestige of *haya* (shame) is effaced. Their very Imaan is defaced by excessive and flagrant indulgence in fisq and fujoor. It is as if they are without Imaan. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "*Haya is a branch of Imaan.*" But these male and female Ibleesi tourists labouring in the deception of going for ibaadat, stand against one another in the queue at the

toilet. A woman emerges from the toilet with a man standing against the toilet door. It is indeed a rotten state of affairs, but these juhala are on an 'ibaadat' tour. It is a tour leading to Jahannam.

At the immigration and custom points, when checking in and being searched, fisq and fujoor prevails. In the transit lounges, in the hotel foyers and lifts, fisq and fujoor reign. They claim to be going for Umrah / Hajj, but they squander the time in malls and merrymaking places. In the streets men and women rub shoulders, and worse is the horrendous intermingling right inside Musjidul Haraam and even in the Mataaf whilst making Tawaaf of the Ka'bah. It is nothing but compounded fisq and fujoor of the worst kind in the holiest Places.

The amount of haraam photography taking place is absolutely shocking and lamentable. Huge sums of money are wasted on these haraam tours while millions of the Ummah are suffering in extreme straits of poverty and misery.

It is clear that the earnings of these people are either doubtful or haraam, hence they have the strong inclination to waste the money thereby becoming the "brothers of the devils". Almost every step of this touring is haraam just as the Shayaateen of the West say. They have

succeeded in their nefarious plot of ruining the akhlaaq and Imaan of Muslims with these haraam tours.

The Ulama or so-called Ulama are also trapped in this shaitaani snare. They are deaf and blind. They fail to hear and see the evils of these journeys. They come within the purview of the Qur'aanic aayat:

“Verily, the vilest of creatures by Allah are the deaf and the blind who have no intelligence.”

The Qur'aan says that they eat *“like animals”*. Only those whose Imaan has been defaced by nafsaaani lust fail to see and understand the villainy of these haraam tours.

It is indeed incredible that even supposedly pious and senior Ulama miserably fail to see the flagrant sins which are necessarily perpetrated on these journeys of imaginary 'ibaadat'. When the Fuqaha maintain that the missing of even one Salaat waives the compulsion of Hajj, what other than shaitaaniiyat and nafsaaaniiyat are able to render the Ulama completely blind and totally unconcerned with the deluges of sin committed on these satanic tours.

Hadhrat Fudhail Bin Iyaadh (Rahmatullaah alayh) said:

“There are people who emerge from their bathroom purified of sin while others return from the Ka’bah loaded with the burden of sin.”

Instead of returning from Hajj purified of all sins – pure and holy as one is on the day one is born – these tourists return with darkened souls, contaminated Imaan and a mountain of sin. There is no conundrum in the prohibition of this type of tourism. If the blinkers of the lustful nafs are removed, the villainy of these journeys will be clearly discernable. The journey is bedevilled with compound sins – sins of the *kabeerah* kind. A fatwa from a Mufti is not required to understand this prohibition. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) instructed: “*Seek a fatwa from your heart.*”

If the heart is not totally overshadowed with the *zulmat* (*darkness*) of sin, it will readily issue the fatwa to guide one to the Haqq.

ABUNDANCE OF UMRAH

Some people attempt to justify their many ‘umrah’ tours on the basis of the numerous Umrahs performed by Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu). If they apply their minds with sincerity to understand the Shariah’s

stance, they will not fail to discern the error of their argument.

The significance of the Ibaadat of Umrah is not denied. Umrah is Sunnatul Muakkadah once in a lifetime subject to the conditions imposed by the Shariah. Hadhrat Ibn Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu) did not commit a single sin during his Umrah journeys. Similarly, the Auliya of former times would journey on foot through deserts, wildernesses, over mountains, etc. undergoing immense hardships enroute to Makkah Mukarramah. They were not embroiled in sin, fisq, and fujoor along the journey as is the norm today.

Those who cite the abundant Umrahs of Abdullah Ibn Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu) in the attempt to justify the deception of their nafs, should reflect on the abundance of his Ibaadat. They should emulate him in his *zuhd* (*abstinence*), simplicity, poverty and ibaadat. They should pelt women with pebbles to prevent them from entering Masjidun Nabawi and other Musaaqid as was the practice of Ibn Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu).

It is indeed preposterous and dishonest to tear the ibaadat of Umrah from the context of his life, and cite it as a *daleel* for permissibility of

journeys of fisq and fujoor. The prohibition applies to the evil in which these misguided tourists are embroiled. Umrah *per se* is not prohibited. The journey is haraam on account of the preponderance of sin and evil in which people are embroiled on these journeys.

This baseless argument is similar to the putrid argument with which bid'atis justify their halqah and loud bid'ah forms of thikr in the Musaaqid. When the bid'ah form of their thikr is criticized, they stupidly retort that we are preventing from Thikrullaah. Similarly, the misguided tourists allege that the ibaadat of Umrah is being prohibited when in reality the prohibition applies to the journeys of fisq and fujoor.

The Imaan of even the Ulama is so terribly desensitized to evil that they no longer perceive the gravity and villainy of the glaring acts of fisq and fujoor flagrantly committed. The villainy and prohibition of the acts of fisq and fujoor are swept under the carpet in the name of Hajj and Umrah and ziyaarat of Musjidul Aqsa. Their lack of understanding the prohibition of a Nafl act if sin has to be committed in its attainment, is a lamentable commentary of the deficiency of their Imaan.

For performing Umrah, Abdullah Ibn Umar

(Radhiyallahu anhu) did not acquire haraam passport and visa photos. He did not intermingle with women. He did not sit in a plane in which fisq and fujoor are incumbently and flagrantly committed. He did not sit in a plane abstaining from Salaat and watching haraam television. His entire journey from Madinah to Makkah was spiritually exhilarating and absolutely devoid of the filth of sins in which every man and woman are entrapped in this day when they go on their tour of mock umrah and hajj. There is absolutely no merit in this baseless argument proffered to justify fisq and fujoor.

They should rather cite Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) who had performed only one Hajj despite being close to Makkah. Of the three Umrahs he had performed, only one was by design. That was his Qadha Umrah. The other Umrah was on the occasion of the Conquest of Makkah when Umrah devolved Waajib upon entering Makkah. The second Umrah was part of his Hajj.

A DIVERSION FROM THE AAKHIRAT

Touring is a shaitaani ploy which diverts the mind and heart from the Aakhirat. It is a merrymaking occupation of the kuffaar. There is

no affinity between Imaan and tourism. Precisely for this reason did Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) discourage the Sahaabah from travelling. The diversionary effect of today's journeys impregnated with fisq and fujoor have multiplied in intensity manifold. Life is short and fleeting. Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *This world has been created for you while you have been created for the Aakhirat.*"

The topic under discussion does not purport denigration of the lofty status and reward of Umrah and Nafl Hajj. Only a shaitaan will shrug off ibaadat and denigrate its virtues. Our discussion pertains to indulgence in haraam, in sin and transgression. It is haraam to indulge in sin and transgression for the sake of Nafl ibaadat. This is the message in a nutshell.

Although many Fuqaha maintain that performing multiple Umrahs is not permissible, we have not discussed this issue. There is considerable difference of opinion among the Authorities of the Shariah regarding the performance of many Umrahs. However, this subject is not the target of this article.

TRAVEL IN THE EARTH?

“Verily, the Rusul (Messengers) before you (O Muhammad!) were also mocked. Then the very thing with which the mockers mocked hemmed them in. Say (to them, O Muhammad!): ‘Travel in the earth then see what was the ultimate end of the rejecters (of the Deen).’”

(An’aam, aayats 10, 11)

There are many similar verses in the Qur’aan exhorting ‘travel’ to view the ruins of the civilizations of transgressors. When their transgression and denial of the Deen had exceeded all bounds, Allah’s universal punishment utterly destroyed entire civilizations such as the Aad, Thamud, the people of Nabi Loot (alayhis salaam) and others.

One of the sites of destruction – where the people of Nabi Loot (alayhis salaam) were destroyed by showers of stones from the heaven, viz. the Dead Sea region – has been developed into a zina resort for tourists. Kuffaar tourists are flocking to this evil resort for enjoyment, and for nothing else. No one is ignorant regarding the forms of enjoyment which tourist resorts provide.

Many Muslims who have lost their Imaani bearings and who have ample haraam money to

squander on haraam activities have seen it befitting to tour and enjoy themselves at the Dead Sea zina resort. Those who masquerade as people of the Deen aggravate their crime and sin by justifying their haraam touring of the haraam resort with the fanciful argument of ‘deriving lesson’ from the Dead Sea resort. In justification of their evil vacation, they cite the Qur’aanic verses which say: *“Travel in the earth and see the ultimate end (of destruction) of the rejectors / transgressors.”* In this aayat, so they argue, Allah Ta’ala exhorts touring the regions of destruction – the areas which were utterly destroyed by the punishment of Allah Ta’ala.

This argument is another specimen of *Talbees-e-Iblees* (the deception of shaitaan). Firstly, those who squander tens of thousands of rands to tour the Dead Sea zina resort are fully aware of the true motive for their tour. Allah Ta’ala says in Surah Al-Qiyaamah: *“In fact, man has full awareness of his nafs.”* What lurks in his heart, man is fully aware. Without the slightest fear of contradiction it can be claimed that whoever goes to the Dead Sea resort do so for nafsaani pleasure, and for absolutely nothing else.

Secondly, those who go on this misguided tour into the region of Divine Wrath and Curse, pass

their time in nafsaani enjoyment in the five star hotels of liquor, gambling and zina. They devour contaminated, haraam and mushtabah food served by fussaag and fujjaar staffing these evil hotels. They enter into a domain of transgression where Hijaab and Ibaadat are violated or abandoned or at least severely damaged. From the moment they leave their homes to the moment they return, they are involved in transgression and neglect of ibaadat.

Thirdly, the argument which they raise on the basis of the Qur'aanic verses is utterly spurious. These verses are directed to a specific audience. If the Muslim tourists concede that they too are within the purview of the audience to whom the Qur'aan directs the exhortation to 'travel in the earth', then we too shall concede the veracity of their argument. All the verses exhorting 'travel in the earth to view the destroyed civilizations of bygone times, are directed to the kuffaar and mushrikeen. These verses were not exhorting the Sahaabah to leave Madina and Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) for viewing the ruins of the kuffaar civilizations. When the mushrikeen would mock and deny the Message of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), Allah Ta'ala exhorted them to take lessons from the destroyed

civilizations. The same chastisement could overtake and destroy them as well.

The Sahaabah did not entertain any doubt regarding Tauheed and Imaan. The audience to whom these verses were directed were exclusively the mushrikeen and the kuffaar. If those who love to visit the areas of destruction and curse say that they are among the mushrikeen and kuffaar, then undoubtedly, these verses will apply to them. These verses were never intended for the Mu'mineen. On the contrary, Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) forbade Muslims from venturing near to the accursed regions on which Allah's *athaab* (punishment) had descended. Even the water and ground of the Dead Sea region are accursed.

Once on returning from a Jihad expedition, Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah camped at a place in the desert. Soon after they had set up camp, Hadhrat Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) appeared and ordered Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to immediately depart from that area. It was an area where a former nation of transgressors was eliminated by the punishment of Allah Ta'ala. The pall of Divine Wrath and Curse still overhung the region. Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)

issued instruction for immediate departure. Even the water of that region was accursed.

This episode exhibits the error of the interpretation of those who claim permissibility of visiting the Dead Sea resort on the basis of the Qur'aanic verses. If you are among the mushrikeen and kuffaar, then the verses apply to you.

“The life of this world is nothing but play and amusement while the Aakhirat is best for those who fear. What! Have you no intelligence?”

(Qur'aan)