



Fatwa no. (4521):

I am writing this letter to inquire about:

Q: Offering Salah (prayer) in a Masjid (mosque) with a grave in it. Some scholars say that it is impermissible and if there is no other Masjid in town, it is better for you to offer Salah at home than in a Masjid which has a grave in it. Other scholars say that it is permissible to offer Salah there, as the graves of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and his two Companions, Abu Bakr and 'Umar are in his Masjid. This matter seems confusing to me, so I wrote this letter to inquire about the truth. I live in the countryside of Senegal where there is only one Masjid in our town in which there are four graves. Three of them are outside the Masjid, but they are adjacent to

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its southern edge, and the fourth is inside the Masjid. Please give me the correct position supported by evidence, as I have no idea. Thus, I'm asking you, as Allah states in the Qur'an, ﴿ So ask those who know the Scripture if you know not. ﴾ (Surah Al-Nahl, 16: 43).

A: First, it is impermissible to build Masjids on graves, or offer Salah in a Masjid that was built on a grave, as it is authentically established that `Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) said, ﴿ In his last moments of life, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) placed his garment over his face and when he felt short of breath he uncovered it and stated, "May Allah curse The Jews and the Christians; they took the graves of their prophets as places of worship." He warned against what they did and had it not been for fear of it being turned into a Masjid, his grave would have been placed in an open place. ﴾ Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim. Jundub Ibn `Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) also narrated that he heard the Prophet (peace be upon him) five days before his death stating, ﴿ I stand free of blame before Allah for having taken any one of you as a friend, for Allah has taken me as His friend, as He took Ibrahim as His friend. Were I to have taken any one of my Ummah (community) as a friend, it would have been Abu Bakr. Beware of those who preceded you and used to take the graves of their prophets and righteous men as places of worship, but you must not take graves as mosques; I forbid you to do that. ﴾ Narrated by Muslim. The Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade building Masjids over graves, and cursed those who do so. This shows that it is one of the major sins. Building

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Masjids over graves and offering Salah in them is also exaggeration in religion and a means leading to Shirk (associating others with Allah in worship), we seek refuge with Allah from that. `Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) said, ﴿ He warned against what they did and had it not been for fear of it

being turned into a Masjid, his grave would have been placed in an open area.)

Second: If the Masjid has been built over a grave, it should be demolished, because it has been established upon something other than what Allah has ordained. Maintaining and offering Salah in it entails insistence on committing sin, exaggeration in religion, and glorification of those upon whose grave the Masjid was built. This leads to Shirk, and we seek refuge in Allah from that. Allah the Exalted stated, ([Do not exceed the limits in your religion.](#)) The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated, ([Do not exceed the limits in your religion, for those who preceded you were destroyed due to their excessiveness in religion.](#)) If the Masjid has not been built on a grave and a dead body was buried there later, it should not be demolished; however, the body should be exhumed and buried outside in a Muslim cemetery, because burying it in the Masjid is a Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) which should be changed.

Third: The Prophet's Masjid was established by the Prophet (peace be upon him) on the basis of Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared) and desire to please Allah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was not buried there after his death, rather

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he was buried in the room of `Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her). When Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) died, he was buried with him in the same room, and when `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) died, he was also buried there as well. This room was not inside the Masjid, but to the left of the place of Salah outside the Masjid. It did not become part of the Masjid when `Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) added an extension to Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy, but it was included after the time of the Rightly Guided Caliphs (may Allah be pleased with them). Therefore, Salah there is permissible; it is even better than a thousand Salah elsewhere, except in Al-Masjid Al-Haram which is not like those Masjids that have been established on graves or in which people were later buried, as Salah is impermissible in them.

Fourth: You cannot perform obligatory Salah at home, but you must perform it in congregation with some of your fellow Muslim brothers in any place other than the Masjid which was built on a grave, even if in an open area. You must establish another Masjid based upon what Allah has ordained in order to establish the five obligatory prayers in accordance with Shari'ah and away from what Allah has prohibited.

May Allah grant us success! Peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions.

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