

Smile at people and make people comfortable and appreciated. If one is able to offer something, then give what one can. Be generous and feed as much as one can, as feeding has many virtues and draws Allah's mercy.

9. REFRAIN FROM FAULT-FINDING

Critiquing the mistakes of others and finding fault with the behaviour and actions of others should be avoided. There are people who may be ignorant or careless about certain aspects, however, by looking down upon them and exposing their faults, one only brings detriment to oneself. Overlook people, and find some excuse for the person. A person who finds fault with the people of the sacred cities is in fact criticising the inhabitants of these places. Remember, Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) is a resident of Madinah Munawwarah.

10. ADOPT GOOD CONDUCT AND SPEAK SOFTLY

Use the opportunity to improve one's behaviour and overcome bad habits. This is the time when Allah Ta'ala can change one's heart and cleanse us of the evil that lurks within us. Be gentle, do not be harsh, give preference to others, help others and show others mercy and forgiveness. Dua is the most profound Ibadah and etiquette. At every turn engage in dua and supplication for oneself, family and the Ummah.

May Allah Ta'ala accept the Hajj, Umrah and Ziyarah of the Ummah. Aameen.



CONTACT US

031 577 7868
www.darulihisan.com
disc@darulihisan.com
@discdbn
/darulihisancentre
70 Joyce Road,
Sea Cow Lake,
Durban

FATWA DEPARTMENT

For your Business Queries, Zakah Calculations, Estate Planning - Contact our Fatwa Department

fatwa@darulihisan.com
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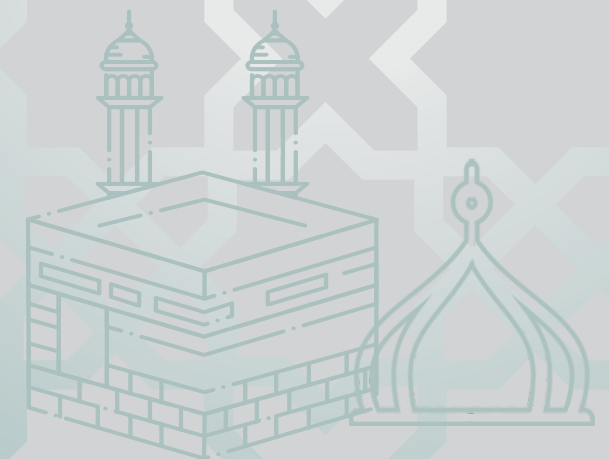
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10 Points On Respect & Etiquette Of & Effective Time Usage Whilst In The Holy Lands



Published By:



DARUL IHSAN
HUMANITARIAN CENTRE
GUIDANCE • UBUNTU • EMPOWERMENT

The opportunity to embark on a journey to visit the sacred cities of Makkah Mukarramah and Madinah Munawwarah for Hajj and Umrah is a special blessing bestowed by Allah Ta'ala upon His servants. One is honoured as the guest of the Master, in the most blessed precincts of the holiest places on earth.

However, the jurist and scholars have also cautioned the visitor regarding the sensitivities and importance of such a visit. Some jurists discourage taking permanent residency in these cities, fearing that familiarity may breed complacency, disrespect and lethargy in a person regarding the value and etiquette of the sacred cities. If a person is not cognisant of the etiquette and respect of the Makkah Mukarramah and Madinah Munawwarah, then it could lead to the spiritual detriment of a person.

It is therefore incumbent that every visitor to the blessed lands learns and understands the proper etiquette to be adopted when visiting. Fulfilling the required etiquette will give a person the full benefit and reward that can be attained in these places.

1. HAVE A TIMETABLE AND SET TARGETS

One effective way to maximise benefit during Hajj or Umrah is to have a practical routine. Realistically chalk out a timetable for the duration of your stay and try to stick to it as rigidly as possible. Give sufficient time for your meals, rest and other needs. Having a workable routine will ensure that you do not have time for things that are useless and undesirable. It is also a form of training that

one will acquire on how to spend one's every day and night.

2. AVOID EXCESSIVE SPEECH AND FRIVOLOUS TALK

This is perhaps the most important restraint to be adopted. Speak less, and avoid unnecessary discussions, debates and sitting around with friends or groups to pass time. The harm that is caused by the tongue is immeasurable. In such a blessed place it is best to adopt silence and use one's time and tongue to engage in Zikr, Tilawat, Dua and other acts of Ibadah.

3. CURB SOCIAL MEDIA AND MOBILE USE

Misuse of social media and other such distractions has become the thief of our time. The visitor to the sacred cities has limited time on his visit. Exposure to social media, etc. should be brought to a bare minimum. Use it when necessary, otherwise avoid unnecessary use, and do not indulge in any form of sin whilst in the sacred precincts. Do not spoil one's good deeds by taking selfies and photos whilst in the Haram Shareef.

4. MINIMISE MEETING AND SOCIALISING

Since every moment is precious and time is limited, the visitor should curtail social activity and excessively meeting people. Devote one's time to additional acts of Ibadah or take a rest so one may be fresh to undertake more good deeds. By avoiding socialising, one will be safe from the ills that can happen in the gathering.

5. SHOPPING AND DINING

Another aspect that consumes a great amount of time and energy is shopping and eating out. The malls and restaurants are teeming with people and it takes a lot of time for a person to get around. Avoid the busy periods and minimise your time in the malls. Plan your routine and needs wisely so that you can avoid the rush.

6. STAY AWAY FROM SINS

Committing sins in the holy cities is a great misfortune and deprivation. One is visiting these places for forgiveness, blessings, spiritual upliftment and to become close to Allah Ta'ala and Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam). Engaging in sins of the tongue, heart, mind and limbs cause great spiritual harm. Try not to commit a single sin intentionally during this sacred journey. Engage in excessive Istighfaar and make regular Taubah (repentance).

7. SHOW RESPECT TO THE PEOPLE

Just as one shows respect to the place and precincts of the sacred cities, one should also be courteous and respectful to its people. The residents of the Makkah Mukarramah and Madinah Munawwarah are the hosts and people from elsewhere are the visitors. Do not say anything or behave in a manner that undermines the honour of the host. Be respectful to them. Showing respect to the host is likened to honouring Allah and Nabi ﷺ.

8. GREET AND FEED

Greet people often and be first to greet.