124812 - Does the Multiplied Prayer Reward Apply to All of the Haram (sanctuary)?

the question

Is the reward for prayer in the mosques of Makkah Al-Mukarramah within the boundary of the Haram (sanctuary) multiplied to one hundred thousand or does that apply only to the mosque of the Ka`bah?.

Summary of answer

The multiplied prayer reward in Al-Masjid Al-Haram is a debated topic among scholars. Some argue that it applies only to the mosque surrounding the Ka'bah, while others believe the entire sanctuary of Makkah is included. The most correct view is that the multiplication of the reward for prayer is unique to the mosque in which the Ka`bah is.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Understanding the Virtue of Prayer in Al-Masjid Al-Haram

The multiplication of reward for prayer in Al-Masjid Al-Haram is proven in the report narrated by Ahmad and Ibn Majah (1406) from Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "One prayer in my mosque is better than one thousand prayers elsewhere, except Al-Masjid Al-Haram, and one prayer in Al-Masjid Al-Haram is better than one hundred thousand prayers elsewhere."

This Hadith was classed as authentic by Al-Mundhiri and Al-Busayri. Al-Albani said: Its chain of narration is authentic according to the conditions of the two Shaykhs [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]. (End quote from Irwa' Al-Ghalil, 4/146)

Scholarly Opinions on the Scope of the Multiplied Reward

The jurists differed as to what is meant by Al-Masjid Al-Haram here. There are several opinions, the most well-known of which are two:

1. that it refers only to the mosque of the Ka`bah, which was the view of a number of scholars, including An-Nawawi, Al-Muhibb At-Tabari, Ibn Muflih and Ibn Hajar Al-Haytami, and this view was also favoured by Ibn `Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him);
2. that it includes the entire Haram (sanctuary), and this view was attributed to the majority of Hanafis, Malikis and Shafi`is, and was the view favoured by Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him); it is also mentioned in Fatwas issued by the Standing Committee and Shaykh Ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him).

Does the Entire Haram Share the Same Reward?

It says in Al-Mawsu`ah Al-Fiqhiyyah (27/239): The Hanafis, according to the well-known view, the Malikis and the Shafi`is are of the view that the multiplication of reward for prayers applies to the entire Haram of Makkah. It is narrated in the Hadith of `Ata' ibn Abi Rabah who said: While Ibn Az-Zubayr was addressing us he said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "One prayer in this mosque of mine is better than a thousand prayers anywhere else except Al-Masjid Al-Haram; one prayer in Al-Masjid Al-Haram is one hundred times better."

`Ata' said: It is as if it is one hundred thousand. He said: I said: O Abu Muhammad, does this virtue apply only to Al-Masjid Al-Haram or to the (entire) Haram (sanctuary)? He said: Rather to the (entire) Haram, for the entire Haram is a mosque.

Seven Scholarly Interpretations of Al-Masjid Al-Haram

Az-Zarkashi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: With regard to what is meant by Al-Masjid Al-Haram in which the reward for prayer is multiplied, there are seven opinions:

1. that it applies to the place where it is Haram for the person who is in a state of major impurity to stay
2. that it is Makkah
3. that it is the entire Haram up to the boundaries that separate the outside world from the Haram. This was the view of ‘Ata’ and a similar report was previously narrated from Al-Mawardi and others. Al-Ruyani said: The Haram is superior to all other spots and it is allowed to offer prayers there at all times because of the virtue of the place, and because of the multiple rewards. Az-Zarkashi said: This is a clear statement.
4. that it is the Ka`bah. Az-Zarkashi said this is the most unlikely view.
5. that it is the Ka`bah and the mosque around it. This is what An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said concerning the issue of facing the Qiblah.
6. that it is the entire Haram and `Arafah. This is the view of Ibn Hazm.
7. that it is the Ka`bah and what is within the Hijr of the Ka`bah. This is the view of the author of Al-Bayan who is one of the companions of the Shafi`is. Al-Muhibb At-Tabari narrated that there was a difference of opinion among the jurists concerning the place where the reward for prayer is multiplied. He thought it most likely that the multiplied reward applies only to the mosque where prayers are held in congregation. (End quote)

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Zad Al-Ma`ad (3/303), when discussing the story of Al-Hudaybiyah: Imam Ahmad narrated concerning this story that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to pray in the Haram, when he was staying outside the sanctuary. This is like evidence that the multiplied reward for praying in Makkah applies to all of the Haram, not just the Mosque which is the place of Tawaf, and the words “one prayer in Al-Masjid Al-Haram is better than a hundred prayers in my mosque” are like the words of Allah (interpretation of the meaning): {So let them not come near Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah)” [At-Tawbah 9:28] and “Glorified (and Exalted) be He (Allah) Who took His slave (Muhammad) for a journey by night from Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah)} [Al-Isra’ 17:1]. The Isra’ began from the house of Umm Hani’. (End quote)

But I would respond to this argument with two points:

- that the Hadith is inauthentic and
- that even if the Hadith is authentic, it indicates that prayer offered within the Haram is better, but it does not indicate that it is one hundred thousand times better than prayers offered elsewhere.

Ibn Muflih (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The apparent meaning of their words concerning Al-Masjid Al-Haram is that it is the mosque itself. Nevertheless the Haram is better than the areas outside it, and prayers offered therein are better. Hence in Al-Muntaqa he mentioned the story of Al-Hudaybiyah as narrated by Ahmad and Al-Bukhari, then he mentioned a report which was narrated only by Ahmad, in which he said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to pray in the Haram when he was staying outside the sanctuary. This report is narrated from Ibn Is-haq from Az-Zuhri, but Ibn Ishaq is Mudallis. (End quote from Al-Furu`, 1/600)

It says in Al-Adab Ash-Shar`iyyah (3/429): This multiplication of the reward is unique to the mosque according to the apparent meaning of the report and the comments of the scholars among our companions and others. (End quote) (See: Al-Majmu`, 3/197; Tuhfat Al-Muhtaj, 3/466; Fatawa Al-Lajnah Ad-Da’imah, 6/223; Fatawa Ash-Shaykh Ibn Baz, 4/130)

The Strongest View: Does the Reward Apply Only to the Ka’bah Mosque?

The most correct view is the first one, which is that the multiplication of the reward for prayer is unique to the mosque in which the Ka`bah is, because of the report narrated by Muslim (1396) from Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: A woman fell sick and said: If Allah heals me, I will certainly go and pray in Bayt Al-Maqdis (Jerusalem). She recovered, then she made preparations to set out. She came to Maymunah, the wife of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), to greet her, and told her about that. Maymunah said to her: Stay here and eat the provisions you made, and pray in the Mosque of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah

be upon him), for I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say: “One prayer therein is better than a thousand prayers offered in any other mosque, except the mosque of the Ka`bah.”

And Muslim (1397) narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “No journey should be undertaken to visit any mosque but three: this mosque of mine, Al-Masjid Al-Haram and Masjid Al-Aqsa.”

This is a clear statement that what is meant by Al-Masjid Al-Haram in these two Hadith is the mosque in which the Ka`bah is, and it does not apply to Makkah or the Haram in general.

Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked: Is there the same reward in the other mosques of Makkah as in Al-Masjid Al-Haram?

He replied:

The answer to the question is there the same reward in the other mosques of Makkah as in Al-Masjid Al-Haram? is no, the other mosques of Makkah are not the same as Al-Masjid Al-Haram in terms of reward, rather the multiple reward is only in Al-Masjid Al-Haram, both the older parts and the extensions, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “One prayer in this mosque of mine is better than a thousand prayers anywhere else except the mosque of the Ka`bah.” (Narrated by Muslim)

So the ruling applies only to the mosque of the Ka`bah, and the mosque of the Ka`bah alone. Just as the multiplication of reward for prayers applies only to the Mosque of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), it also applies only to Al-Masjid Al-Haram.

This is also indicated by the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “No journey should be undertaken to visit any mosque but three: this mosque of mine, Al-Masjid Al-Haram and Masjid Al-Aqsa.” It is well known that if we undertake a journey to visit any of the mosques of Makkah apart from Al-Masjid Al-Haram, this is not prescribed, rather it is forbidden.

The one to which a journey should be undertaken is the one in which there is the multiple reward, but praying in the mosques of Makkah, and indeed in any part of the Haram, is better than praying outside the sanctuary. The evidence for that is the fact that when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) halted at Al-Hudaybiyah, part of which is outside the sanctuary and part of which is in the Haram, he would pray inside the Haram even though he was staying outside of it. This indicates that praying inside the Haram is better, but it does not indicate that one attains the multiple reward that is applicable only to the mosque of the Ka`bah.

If it were said: How should we respond to the words of Allah (interpretation of the meaning): {Glorified (and Exalted) be He (Allah) Who took His slave (Muhammad) for a journey by night from Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah)} [Al-Isra' 17:1], when he was taken on the Isra' (Night Journey) from Makkah from the house of Umm Hani'?

The answer is that it is proven in Sahih Al-Bukhari that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was taken on the Isra' from Al-Hijr. He said: "Whilst I was sleeping in the Hijr, someone came to me…" The Hijr is inside Al-Masjid Al-Haram. Based on this, the Hadith which says that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was taken on the Isra' from the house of Umm Hani' – if the report is authentic – points to the beginning of the Isra', and it ended in Al-Hijr, as if he was woken up in the house of Umm Hani' and he got up and went and slept in Al-Hijr, then he was taken on the Isra' from Al-Hijr. (End quote from Fatawa Ash-Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin, 12/395)

Check these answers for further details: (475342, 235370, 118128, 34752, 11669, 122224)

And Allah knows best.