34644 - Mistakes in Tawaf

the question

During tawaf, we noticed that some people stand at the beginning of tawaf and utter out loud their intention of doing tawaf. We also noticed that some of them push and shove in order to reach the Black Stone, and even fight over it. What is your opinion about these actions?

Summary of answer

Some of the mistake made in tawaf include: 1- Uttering the intention out loud; 2- Pushing and shoving too much when touching Black Stone; 3- Thinking touching the Black Stone is done for barakah; 4- Reciting a specific du’a in each circuit.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Mistakes made in tawaf

These are mistakes that occur during tawaf , and are of various types:

1. Uttering the intention out loud when wanting to do tawaf , so you see the pilgrim standing facing the Black Stone when he wants to do tawaf, saying, “O Allah, I intend to do seven circuits of tawaf for ‘Umrah” or “O Allah, I intend to do seven circuits of tawaf for Hajj,” or “O Allah, I intend to do seven circuits of tawaf in order to draw closer to You.”

Uttering the intention out loud is bid’ah (an innovation). The Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not command his ummah to do that. Everyone who worships Allah in a manner in which the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not worship Him or command his ummah to do so has introduced an innovation into the religion of

Allah that is not part of it.

So uttering the intention out loud when doing tawaf is a mistake and an innovation. Just as it is a mistake from the point of view of Shari'ah, it is also a mistake from a rational point of view.

What is the point of uttering the intention out loud when the intention is a matter between you and your Lord, and Allah knows what is in people's hearts and He knows that you are going to circumambulate this House. If Allah knows that then there is no need to say that out loud to the slaves of Allah.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did tawaf before you and he did not speak the intention out loud. The Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them) did tawaf before you and did not speak the intention out loud when they did tawaf, or when doing any other act of worship, so this is a mistake.

1. Some of those who do tawaf push and shove too much when they touch the Black Stone and the Yemeni Corner , and they are disturbed by the overcrowding and disturb others. They may be pushing and shoving a woman, and the Shaytan may tempt him and fill his heart with desire when he is crowding this woman in this narrow place. People are only human and may be overwhelmed by their souls that prompt them to do evil, so an evil action may take place in the shadow of the House of Allah. This is a matter that becomes even worse in light of where it takes place, although it is a fitnah in any place it happens.

It is not prescribed to push and shove when touching the Black Stone or the Yemeni Corner, rather if it is easy for you to do so in a calm and dignified manner, then you must do it, and if it is not easy for you to do it, then you should just point to the Black Stone.

With regard to the Yemeni Corner, there is no report from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he pointed to it, and we cannot compare it to the Black Stone, because the Black Stone is greater than it, and it was proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) pointed to the Black Stone.

Just as crowding is not prescribed in this situation and there is the fear that it may cause fitnah when one is crowded together with women, so too it may also cause annoyance, because in crowded situations a person will inevitably hear words that he dislikes and he will feel annoyed and angry when he leaves this place.

What the person who is doing tawaf should do is always remain calm and dignified, so that he will have the proper presence of mind for worshipping Allah. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Tawaf around the House and (Sa’i) between al-Safa and al-Marwah and the stoning of the Jimar have only been prescribed so that remembrance of Allah (dhikr) will be established.”

1. Some people think that tawaf is not valid unless one kisses the Black Stone , and that kissing the Black Stone is one of the conditions of tawaf being valid, and of Hajj and ‘Umrah being valid too. This is a mistaken notion. Kissing the Black Stone is Sunnah, and it is not an independent Sunnah either, rather it is Sunnah for the one who is doing tawaf. I do not know that kissing the Black Stone is Sunnah except in tawaf. Based on this, since kissing the Black Stone is Sunnah and is not obligatory and is not a condition of Tawaf, then if a person does not kiss it, we do not say that his tawaf is invalid or that his tawaf is lacking and he is sinning. Rather his tawaf is valid and if there is a lot of crowding then pointing is better than touching, because this is what the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did when the place was crowded, and because by doing this a person avoids harm that he may do to others or that others may do to him.

If someone were to ask us: If the Mataf (place of tawaf) is very crowded, what do you think – is it better to push in and touch and kiss the Black Stone, or to point to it?

We say that it is better to point to it, because that is the Sunnah. That was narrated from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

1. Kissing the Yemeni Corner. There is no proof concerning this from the Messenger of Allah

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and if an act of worship is not proven from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then it is bid'ah and is not an act of worship that brings one closer to Allah. Based on this, it is not prescribed to kiss the Yemeni Corner, because that was not proven from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Rather that was narrated in a da'if (weak) hadith that cannot be taken as evidence.

2. Some people, when they touch the Black Stone or Yemeni Corner, touch it with their left hands in a careless manner. This is a mistake, because the right hand is better than the left hand, and the left hand is only used for unclean things such as cleaning oneself after relieving oneself, or rinsing one's nose, and so on. When it comes to matters of kissing and respect, the right hand should be used.
3. They think that touching the Black Stone and the Yemeni corner is done for barakah or blessing, not as part of the ritual of tawaf, so they touch them seeking barakah from them. This is undoubtedly contrary to the purpose, for the purpose of touching the Black Stone or wiping it or kissing it is to glorify Allah. Hence when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) touched the Black Stone he said: "Allahu akbar," as an indication that the purpose of this action is to glorify Allah, not to seek barakah by touching this stone. Hence when the caliph 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) touched the Black Stone he said: "By Allah, I know that you are just a stone and can neither cause harm nor bring benefit. Were it not that I had seen the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) kiss you, I would not have kissed you."

This mistaken notion held by some people – that the purpose behind touching the Yemeni Corner and the Black Stone is to seek barakah – has led some of them to bring their young children and touch the Corner or the Stone with their hands, then wipe their children with their hands. This is a corrupt belief that should be denounced. We should explain to people that these stones can neither harm nor benefit, and that the purpose of touching them is to glorify Allah and establish His remembrance (dhikr), and to follow the example of His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

All of these matters and others are not prescribed in shari'ah. Rather they are innovations (bid'ah) and do not benefit those who do them in any way. But if the one who does that is ignorant and does not realize that this is bid'ah, then there is the hope that he may be forgiven. But if he knows that this is bid'ah or is negligent and does not ask about his religion, then he is sinning.

1. Some people recite a specific du'a in each circuit . This is a kind of bid'ah that was not narrated from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) or his Companions. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not recite a specific du'a in each circuit, and neither did his Companions. The most that can be said concerning that is that between the Yemeni Corner and the Black Stone the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to say: "Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!" [al-Baqarah 2:201 – interpretation of the meaning].

And he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Tawaf around the House and (Sa'i) between al-Safa and al-Marwah and the stoning of the Jimar have only been prescribed so that remembrance of Allah (dhikr) will be established."

This bid'ah is even more wrong when the person carries a small booklet in which there is a du'a for each circuit, and he reads this booklet, not knowing what he is saying, either because he does not know Arabic and does not understand the meanings, or because although he is an Arab and speaks Arabic he does not know what he is saying. We even hear some of them say du'as that clearly deviate from Islamic teaching; for example, we have heard someone saying, "O Allah, make me independent of means by Your Majesty (jalalika) so I have no need of that which You have forbidden" when he should have said, "by that which You have permitted (halalika)."

We also see some people reading this booklet, and when they finish the du'a for the circuit they are doing, they stop and do not recite any other du'as for the rest of that circuit. If there are not many people in the Mataf, they finish the circuit before they finish the du'a, so they cut the du'a short.

The remedy for that is to explain to the pilgrims that during tawaf a person can say whatever du’a he wants, and he can remember Allah (dhikr) however he wants. If this is explained to the people this problem will go away.

Ruling on one those who make mistakes in tawaf

With regard to these actions, people are either:

- Completely ignorant and do not realize that what they are doing is haram. In this case there is the hope that there will be no blame on such people.
- Or they know but they are deliberately going astray and leading others astray. Such a person is undoubtedly a sinner and will also bear the burden of the sins of those who follow his example.
- Or they are unaware and are negligent, not caring to ask people who know. There is the fear that these people may be sinning because of their carelessness and their failure to ask.

These are the errors that we have noticed during tawaf. We hope that Allah will guide our Muslim brothers to put things right so that their tawaf will be in accordance with the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), for the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Religion is not based on emotions and inclinations, rather it is to be based on what has been narrated from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

And Allah knows best.