46597 - Passing through the Hijr when doing Tawaaf

the question

Some people enter through the gate of the Hijr when doing tawaaf, and they do not complete tawaaf from outside the Hijr, especially when it is crowded. Is their tawaaf valid?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: This is a very serious mistake, when some people enter through the gate of the Hijr when doing tawaaf and exit through the other gate when it is crowded, thinking that this is easier. It is a serious mistake because the one who does that is not considered to be doing tawaaf around the Ka’bah. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“and circumambulate the Ancient House (the Ka‘bah at Makkah)”

[al-Hajj 22:29]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) circumambulated the House from outside the Hijr. If a person circumambulates the Ka’bah going inside the Hijr, he is not regarded as having circumambulated the House, so his tawaaf is invalid. This is a serious matter, especially since tawaaf is a pillar (essential part) of both Hajj and ‘Umrah. The answer to that is that we should explain to the pilgrims that tawaaf is not valid unless it encompasses the entire Ka’bah, including the Hijr.

Calling the Hijr “Hijr Ismaa’eel”

I would like to take this opportunity to point out that many people call the Hijr “Hijr Ismaa’eel”, but in fact Ismaa’eel had nothing to do with it and it is not his Hijr. Rather this Hijr came into being when Quraysh ran short of cash, when they wanted to rebuild the Ka’bah, and they did not have

enough resources to build the Ka’bah on the foundations of Ibraaheem, so they left this side out of it, and it was called hateem and hijr; so Ismaa’eel knew nothing of it and had nothing to do with it.

There are some people who do not make sure they keep the Ka’bah on their left, so you see them doing tawaaf with their women folk, and they hold hands with their brothers or friends to protect the women, so you see them doing tawaaf with their back towards the Ka’bah, and his brother or friend doing tawaaf facing towards the Ka’bah. This is also a serious mistake, because the scholars say: One of the conditions of tawaaf being valid is that the Ka’bah should be to one's left, and if you have you back towards it, or face it, or walk with it to your right, then this tawaaf is not valid.

What people should do is to pay attention to this matter, and strive to make sure the Ka’bah is to their left throughout tawaaf.

There are some people who put their backs to the Ka'bah or face it for a few steps because of the crowding. This is also a mistake. People should be on the safe side with regard to religious matters, and acknowledge the boundaries set by Allaah with regard to worship and avoid mistakes, so that they will worship Allaah with knowledge.

Does it not astonish you that if a man wants to travel to a land that he does not know, he does not travel until he has asked about it and tried to find out the easiest way to get there, so that he can reach it comfortably and with ease, without getting lost, but when it comes to matters of religion, many people – unfortunately – start their worship and do not know the limits set by Allaah. This is a shortcoming, and indeed is negligence. We ask Allaah to guide us and our Muslim brothers, and to make us among those who know the limits that Allaah revealed to His Messenger.