7100 - How often should one visit the Sacred House (the Ka’bah) in one's lifetime?

the question

I was recently told by two sources that in the Sunnah there is a reference to fulfilling an Islamic precept that one should visit Mecca 7 times in ones life and Jerusalem once.
Could you please help me verify this as I have been unable to.
Thank you very much for your help.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

1. There are ahaadeeth which state the virtues of praying in the Sacred House of Allaah in Makkah, in the Prophets Mosque [in Madeenah] and in al-Masjid al-Aqsaa [in Jerusalem].

It was reported from Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: One prayer in this mosque of mine is better than one thousand prayers anywhere else, apart from al-Masjid al-Haraam [in Makkah].

(Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1133; Muslim, 1394).

It was reported that Jaabir ibn Abd-Allaah said: the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: One prayer in this mosque of mine is better than one thousand prayers anywhere else, apart from al-Masjid al-Haraam, and one prayer in al-Masjid al-Haraam is better than one hundred thousand prayers anywhere else.

(Narrated by Ibn Maajah, 1406; Ahmad, 14847. The hadeeth was classed as saheeh by al-Boosayri in al-Zawaaid. Haamish Sunan Ibn Maajah).

With regard to praying in al-Masjid al-Aqsaa (in Jerusalem), the correct view is that its virtue is equal to one-quarter of that of a prayer in the mosque of Madeenah.

It was reported that Abu Dharr (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: when we were with the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) we were discussing which was better, the mosque of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) or the mosque in Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem). The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: One prayer in this mosque of mine is better than four prayers there, and how good a place of worship it is

(Narrated and classed as saheeh by al-Haakim, 4/509; al-Dhahabi and al-Albaani agreed with him, as stated in al-Silsilah al-Saheehah, at the end of the discussion of hadeeth #2902).

With regard to the famous hadeeth which says that a prayer in al-Masjid al-Aqsaa is like five hundred prayers, this hadeeth is weak (daeef).

(See: Tamaam al-Minnah by Shaykh al-Albaani (may Allaah have mercy on him), p. 292).

2. Concerning the timing of ones visits to the Sacred House of Allaah, it has been reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said:

Allaah says: if my slave in sound in body and has an ample provision, and five years pass [without him visiting My House], he is truly deprived [of mercy].

(Narrated by Ibn Hibbaan, 960; Abu Yalaa, 1/289; al-Bayhaqi, 5/262. The hadeeth was classed as saheeh by Shaykh al-Albaani in al-Silsilat al-Saheehah, 1662).

The more often one visits the House of Allaah, the better, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: Keep on following Hajj with Umrah, and Umrah with Hajj, for they wipe out poverty and sins

(Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 810)

With regard to the idea referred to in your question, that one should visit the Kabah seven times in one's lifetime and al-Masjid al-Aqsaa once, ask the person who told you this what his source and evidence is, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

Say , Produce your proof [al-Baqarah 2:111]

-- for it is not permissible to say that something is obligatory or to claim that there is virtue in something without sound evidence. May Allaah help us and you to do that which He loves and which pleases Him. May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad.