8198 - Can Women Go to Graveyards in Islam?

the question

My aunt’s father died and she visited his grave once. She wants to visit it again, but she has heard a hadith which means that women are forbidden to visit graves. Is this hadith sahih, and if it is sahih, is she guilty of a sin for which expiation is required?

Summary of answer

It is not allowed for women to visit graves because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed women who visit graves.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Can Muslim women visit graves?

The correct view is that it is not allowed for women to visit graves , because of the hadith mentioned. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed women who visit graves. Women should stop visiting graves .

Visiting graves out of ignorance

The woman who visited a grave out of ignorance (of this ruling) is not to blame, but she should not do it again. If she does so, she has to repent and seek forgiveness, and repentance cancels out whatever came before.

Who can visit grave?

Visiting graves is only for men. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Visit

graves, for they will remind you of the Hereafter."

Why was visiting graves not allowed at the beginning of Islam?

At the beginning of Islam, visiting graves was not allowed for men and women alike, because the Muslims were new in Islam and came from a background where grave-worship and attachment to the dead were widespread. So they were forbidden to visit graves as a preventative measure, to avoid evil and prevent shirk.

Once Islam was well-established and they understood Islam, Allah prescribed visiting the graves because of the lessons and reminders of death and the Hereafter involved in that, and so that they could make du`a for the deceased and pray for mercy for them.

Why did Allah forbid women to visit graves?

Then Allah forbade women to do that – according to the most correct of the two scholarly opinions – because they may present a temptation to men and even to themselves, and because they have little patience and they get too upset. So by His mercy and kindness towards them, Allah forbade them to visit graves. This is also a form of kindness towards the men, because if they were all to gather at the grave, this might cause fitnah. So by His mercy, Allah forbade women to visit graves.

Can women offer funeral prayers?

But with regard to the prayer (women praying the funeral prayer), there is nothing wrong with that. Women may join the funeral prayer. The prohibition applies only to visiting the graves. Women should not visit graves according to the more correct of the two scholarly opinions, because of the hadiths which indicate that that is forbidden. She does not have to offer any expiation; all she has to do is to repent to Allah sincerely.

And Allah knows best.