

Visiting the Home of the Deceased

Q: Imaan-68: It is customary in many places here for the relatives and friends of the deceased to visit the deceased's house on the second and third days after the funeral. Some young girls even dress up and gather there to eat. The meals that need to be prepared are like wedding feasts and even cigarettes have to be provided. If this is not done, there is always the fear of people being taunted and labelled as Bid'atis, Wahaabis, etc. Is this custom permissible or not?

Answer: The custom in question is an act of Bid'ah and not permissible. There is, of course, no harm in feeding the poor according to one's capabilities and conferring the rewards to the deceased. This, however, is permissible when there is no fixed day or time for this. Rather than presenting any proofs or extracts from the books of Fiqh, we shall present a Fatwa from Molvi Ahmad Ridha Khan himself. He says:

How terrible is this impure custom! This grave sin includes many evils. Imaam Ahmad in his Musnad and Ibn Maajah have both quoted the narration from Hadhrat Jareer bin Abdullah Bajali RAH. stating that the Sahabah RADI. regarded gathering at the home of the deceased and preparing food to be part of Niyaaha (wailing), which is Haraam according to Mutawaatir Ahadeeth, Fat'hul Qadeer states, "It is Makrooh for the family of deceased to prepare food to host people because this is usually done to rejoice and not during times of grief". This is a terrible act of Bid'ah indeed." Allaama Sharambulali RAH. states the same in his Maraaqil Falaah and similar words are also used in Fatawaa Khulasa, Fatawaa Siraajiyyah, Fatawaa Zaheeriyyah, Fatawaa Tatarkhaniyyah as well as in Khazanatul Muftiyyeen taken from Zaheeriyyah and Fatawaa Hindiyyah, taken from Tartarkhaniyyah.

Fatawaa Siraajiyyah states that for the family of the deceased to feed guests on the third day is Makrooh because feeding guests is done on occasions of happiness. Qaadhi Khan RAH. state in his Fatawaa that it is Makrooh to host guests during the days following the funeral because these are days of grieving. It is therefore unbecoming to engage in actions of happiness during such occasions. Imaam Zayla'ee RAH. writes in his Tabyeenul Haqaa'iq, "There is no harm in sitting with the bereaved family for up to three days as long as no forbidden acts take place such as laying out carpets and partaking of meals served by the bereaved family. Imaam Bazaazi RAH. states, It is Makrooh and forbidden to prepare food on the first day, third day and a week after a funeral." Allaama Shaami RAH. Has written at length about this in his Raddul Mukhtaar and concluded that it is carried out for show and needs to be abstained from.

Jaami'ur Rumooz states, "It is forbidden to remain in the Masjid for three or less days for condolences and it is also forbidden to prepare meals for this duration of time and forbidden to also partake of these meals, as is made clear in Khiyaratul Fataawaa." Fataawaa Qarwi and Waaqi'aatul Mutaqeen state that hosting people for three days is Makrooh because this is done on occasions of joy. (He then quotes the same from Kahful Ghita in Persian)

The second (reason for the prohibition is that) there is often an orphan amongst the heirs or an absent heir, from whom permission is not taken (to use the estate for the meals) and the

Qur'aan states, " Indeed those who unjustly eat (use) the wealth of orphans, they eat only fire in their bellies (because the end result of this will be their entry into Jahannam). Very soon they shall enter the Blaze (Jahannam) Another verse states, "Do not devour each other's wealth unjustly." (An extract to this effect is also quoted from Khaaniyyah Bazaaziyyah, Tatarkhaniyyah and Hindiyyah)? The third reason for the prohibition is that the gathering of women here leads to the perpetration of evils such as wailing and other acts that fall under the category of Niyaaha.

It is also not permissible for the family and friends of the deceased to send food because this will be aiding a wrong and Allaah says "Do not assist in sin and acts of disobedience."

The fourth reason for the prohibition is that many people have to undergo more difficulty than they can bear because of this evil act of Bid'ah. They are required to forget their grief and fall into the calamity of wondering where they will find the means to prepare for the feast As a result, they are forced to fall into burdensome debts. Such extremities are disliked by the Shari'ah even in matters that are permissible, let alone in matters that are forbidden. Thereafter, the tremendous effort involved in the preparations is a matter of its own. If the loan involves interest, the act becomes purely Haraam and (Allaah forbid!) will attract the curses of Allaah. According to the Ahadeeth, paying interest incurs Allaah's curse just as taking interest without reason does.

The gist is that there is no doubt in the prohibition of this vile custom. May Allaah grant all Muslims the ability to disregard this evil custom and the taunting of people, which harms both their lives in this world as well as in the Akhirah

NOTE: It is a Masnoon practice for friends and family to send two meals for the bereaved family for a day and to insist that they eat, this practice applies to meals only for the bereaved family and for the first day only. It does not at all apply to feeding all present. (Extracts from Kashful Ghitaah and Fataawaa Aalamgeeri are then quoted in substantiation).

The above has been extracted from Molvi Ahmad Ridhaa Khan's book Ahkaamush Shari'ah (Vol.3 Pgs.51 -64).

Fatawa Rahimiyyah (Vol.1)

?