



**The  
specificities  
of the  
Holy Land**

**By**

**Mahmūd Ibn Ahmad al Dosary (PhD).**



## **The specificities of the Holy Land**

This chapter is divided into three sections:

**Section I: Allah made it a sacred land.**

**Section II: Allah made it a secure land.**

**Section III: Severity against heresy.**



## **Section I: Allah made it a sacred land**

A place does not differ or distinguish itself from another by itself alone; instead, the distinction and preference stem from a particularity or a quality given to it contrary to others, like holding something sacred or enjoying elements or resources of any sort granting it privilege over others.

**Mecca the Honoured has been preferred over all the places on earth for the perfection of the care awarded by Allah Most High to it; He granted it His Sacred House, made it the qibla (direction) of the world and characterized it with one of the greatest acts of worship, the Ḥajj, one of the five pillars of Islam. Allah, exalted be He, made it a sacred and secure land. Moreover, it is the cradle of the greatest being of mankind, Muḥammad (s), and the land of the Revelation for the last of heavenly messages. From all this ensues the distinction of this honoured and exalted place over the rest of the earth of Allah Most High.**



Among the greatest specificities of the Holy Land is that Allah Most High made it a sacred land. Allah exalted be He mentioned the word of His Prophet Muḥammad (s):

﴿ إِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ رَبَّ هَذِهِ الْبَلَدَةِ الَّذِي حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ ۗ ﴾

(Say, O Muḥammad), “I have only been commanded to worship the Lord of this City, Who made it sacred/forbidden and to whom (belongs) all things.” Surat an-Naml (The Ants): 91.

**The Sacred City** is Mecca the Honoured. “He characterized it over the rest of cities for it holds the Sacred House of Allah and because it is the most beloved city to His Prophet (s).”<sup>(1)</sup> Allah Most High attributed its sanctification to Himself, bestowing upon Mecca honour and singularity.

“This sanctification stems from the revelation of Allah to Ibrāhīm (p) when He



commanded him to build a house for His oneness and when He answered his supplication (p) when he said:

﴿رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا﴾

“My Lord, make this a secure city” Surat al-Baqara: 126.<sup>(2)</sup>

The word of Allah: “Who made it sacred/forbidden”(27:91) is a reminder of Allah’s bounties bestowed upon Quraysh; as He made their city safe from tribulations and raids usually found in the rest of the Arabian peninsula and He destroyed whoever wanted evil against it.<sup>(3)</sup>

The word of Allah Most High: “Who made it sacred/forbidden” is a glorification of its sanctity by Allah<sup>(4)</sup>, i.e. Allah made the City a secure Sanctuary, where bloodshed



should not be caused and where no one should undergo injustice; its game should not be hunted, its herbage should not be cut and only people in the state of *iḥrām* would enter it.<sup>(5)</sup>

### Meaning of making Mecca sacred:

The meaning of “made it sacred” is that Allah made it forbidden (*ḥarām*), inviolable. **The objective of hallowing the city** is the forbidding of entering it in order to oppose its wellness and the wellness of its inhabitants, human beings as well as animals and trees. This encompasses the interdiction of attacking its dwellers and committing inequities against them or terrorizing them and the interdiction of hunting its game and cutting its trees inside its known borders.<sup>(6)</sup>

### The hallowing of Mecca is a hallowing of perfection:

Generally speaking, the hallowing (*tahṛīm*) may sometimes be aimed at perfection and sometimes aimed at avoiding baseness, depending on the nature of the cause of the hallowing and its characteristic. Making a place or a period of time sacred or forbidden is a matter of preference and eminence, whereas forbidding immorality, alcohol, eating dead animals and drinking their blood, is a matter of flouting and denigration towards evil deeds. The interdictions concerning filiations, breast-feeding, family and foster ties come to in-



crease even more the sanctity. Therefore **making a place sacred or forbidden** is about interdictions of whatever can affect it; and **making a period of time sacred or forbidden**, like the sacred months, is about the interdiction of committing evil during it.<sup>(7)</sup>

### Reason for the use of the expression “made it sacred/forbidden”:

There are several aspects for the use of the expression “made it sacred/forbidden”: **First:** Allah forbade many things for those who perform Ḥajj. **Second:** The one who seeks asylum is safe in it. **Third:** Its sanctity is not violated except by he who is wrongful; and its trees are not to be cut or its game to be chased, as previously said. Allah reminded all this in His word Most High: “Who made it sacred/forbidden” as the Arabs used to be aware of the sanctity of Mecca. They used to know that this grace did not come from the idols but from Allah Most High. It is as if one said: When you come to know that He, exalted be He, is the One who bestowed these bounties, it is a duty for you to dedicate this land to adoration.<sup>(8)</sup>



The faith of the people of Mecca in the fact that Allah Most High is the one Who made it sacred/forbidden stems from the influence of the religion of Ibrāhīm (p) which was present there before the worship of idols and polytheism.

His word Most High:



﴿وَلَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ ص﴾

“And to whom (belongs) all things” (An-Naml: 91); means that everything comes inside His Lordship; the City was honoured as it falls within the scope of His Lordship from a particular and a general perspective.<sup>(9)</sup>

### Confirmation of the Prophet (s) of the sanctity of the City:

The Prophet (s) confirmed this sanctity the Day of the Conquest of Mecca when he said: **Allah made this city sacred on the day He created the Earth and the heavens; so it is sacred by the sacredness conferred on it by Allah until the Day of Resurrection.**<sup>(10)</sup>

‘Abd Allah Ibn Zayd (r) narrated: The Prophet (s) said: **Verily Ibrāhīm made Mecca sacred and supplicated (for blessings to be showered) upon it, and I made Medina sacred as Ibrāhīm had made Mecca sacred. I have supplicated (Allah for His blessings**



**to be showered) upon it; in its sā‘ and its mudd (units of measurement) as did Ibrāhīm (p) for Mecca.**<sup>(11)</sup>

### No contradiction between the verse and the hadīth:

There is no contradiction between the word of Allah Most High “Who (Allah) made it sa-

cred” and the word of the Prophet (s): **Verily Ibrāhīm made Mecca sacred and supplicated (for blessings to be showered) upon it, and I made Medina sacred.** The attribution of making sacred comes back to Allah Most High, by His decree and His science that precedes everything. The concretization of this divine order occurred through the supplication of Ibrāhīm (p), his will to make the city sacred and his delivery of the message to inform his people.<sup>(12)</sup>



Al-‘Aynī (m) similarly said: The attribution to Ibrāhīm of the hallowing is to be understood as the announcement of an order stemming from Allah. The hallowing of the city comes from Allah Most High through the words of Ibrāhīm, not from his own effort. Allah entrusted him with making the city sacred, the decree came from Him. According to some versions this hallowing is attributed to Allah and according to other versions it is attributed to Ibrāhīm; Ibrāhīm beseeched for it and the sanctification, given by Allah, came into effect through his supplication.<sup>(13)</sup>

### Reasons that reject the doubt of contradiction:

The doubt of a contradiction between the verse and the ḥadīth has no justification at all, for many reasons:

1. The repetition of the verse according to which Allah Most High made the city sacred.
2. The ḥadīth pronounced by the Messenger of Allah (s) states that the sacredness goes back to the day when Allah created the heavens and earth; in other words before



the existence of a city named Mecca, which was a sacred Sanctuary in the timeless knowledge of Allah Most High before it was even created and before Ibrāhīm (p) was created. The first ḥadīth came in order to explain and clarify the verse.

3. The supplication of Ibrāhīm (p) was for Allah to make this place a city when he said: “My Lord, make this a secure city”; i.e. in this wilderness where I left my family and my son. Allah Most High ordered him to migrate with his family towards this place because in the preceding knowledge of Allah it was written that it would become a secure city. Therefore the supplication of Ibrāhīm was in accordance with the destiny planned by Allah Most High.
4. The hallowing by Ibrāhīm (p) of the city was a declaration and statement for the people to know that Allah, exalted be He, is the one who made it sacred, whereas Ibrāhīm is actually the one who conveyed the message of the hallowing.

### Time of the hallowing:

An-Nawawī (m) said: The word of the Prophet (s): **Verily Ibrāhīm made Mecca sacred** is used by some people to claim that Mecca was made sacred at the time of Ibrāhīm (p). **The truth is** that it became sacred the day on which Allah created the heavens and earth...

**There are two possibilities concerning the hallowing of the city by Ibrāhīm: First:** Ibrāhīm made it sacred by the order of Allah Most High not by his own effort, this is why it is one time attributed to him and another time attributed to Allah Most High. **Second:** As he supplicated for it Allah Most High made it sacred through his supplication, for this reason the hallowing was attributed to him.<sup>(14)</sup>

He also said (m) in a different source: For sure the city was made sacred the day when Allah created the heavens and the earth; then He hid its sanctity which remained hidden until the time of Ibrāhīm; then He made it known and spread it, but the hallowing was not initiated then.<sup>(15)</sup>

### Requisites for the sacredness of Mecca:

The Prophet (s) clearly explained the requisites for the sacredness of Mecca: **Allah, not the people, has made Mecca sacred; so anybody who has belief in Allah and the Last Day should neither shed blood in it nor cut down its trees. If anybody argues that fighting is permitted in Mecca as the Messenger of Allah did fight in it, tell him that Allah gave permission to His Messenger, but He did not give it to you. Rather permission was given to me (to fight therein) for a short period of time one day and its**



sacredness was restored on the very day like that of yesterday. Let he who is present convey the information to he who is absent.<sup>(16)</sup>

### Jurisprudence (fiqh) of the ḥadīth:

The ḥadīth clearly shows that Allah made Mecca sacred, and he who said Ibrāhīm (p) is the first who made Mecca sacred is mistaken. **The truth is** that Mecca was made sacred the day on which Allah created the heavens and the earth.<sup>(17)</sup>

The apparent meaning of the ḥadīth indicates that only Allah Most High forbids and allows and makes sacred or withdraws sacredness. No one can enter in such a matter and He is the only one who teaches the rules. It also indicates that fighting is forbidden inside Mecca as it is even forbidden to lop its trees or its thorny shrubs.<sup>(18)</sup>

### Question:

Was the Prophet (s) allowed to do everything during the period of time where Mecca was not sacred?

**My answer:** He was only permitted to fight; not to chase nor to cut down trees, neither anything else which was forbidden for the people.<sup>(19)</sup>



## **Section II:**

### **Allah made it a secure land**

The hallowing of the Holy Land is among the grace bestowed by Allah Most High to favour this place; it has many great implications and maybe one of the most important is the blessing of safety that this land enjoys more than any other in the world. All the countries of the world acquire safety through governmental apparatus and strict



security services provided with precision and care and all the precautions and measures. But whatever degree of technology they could ever reach, they still remain imperfect and fallible; whereas Mecca the Honoured enjoys a safety stemming from The Lord of Humanity by divine decision and order. Allah Most High made it a safe land enjoying the greatest respect. There, people find security for their religion, person, possessions and honour; and as an overstatement in achieving security, if someone committed a crime outside the Sanctuary and then took refuge inside of it, he will find security therein and he will not be punished until he goes out of it. This safety has always been provided even during the days of ignorance of di-

vine guidance (Jāhiliya): if someone had found a patricide inside the Ḥaram he would not have drawn a crowd to arouse anger; which demonstrates the full care attributed by Allah for His great House and its eminence and loftiness; **among the verses that underline this:**

**The first verse:** the word of Allah Most High:

﴿وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا﴾

“When We made the House a place of recourse for the people and a place of security” Surat al-Baqara – The Cow: 125. It means that everyone is safe in it even animals and inanimate things like trees. This is why during the pre Islamic era (Jāhiliya) – in spite of idolatry – people used to show it the greatest respect and if someone had





found a patricide inside the Ḥaram he would not have drawn a crowd to arouse anger. When Islam appeared its sacredness, greatness, honour and eminence increased even more.<sup>(20)</sup>

Al-Māwardī (m) said two things about the word of Allah Most High “a place of security”: **the first one**: it was safe during the Jāhiliya from the attacks of the Arabs; as mentioned in the verse:

﴿وَعَامَنَّهُمْ مِّنْ خَوْفٍ﴾



“And made them safe from fear”; Quraysh: 4. **The second one**: safety for criminals from being punished inside of it until they leave it.<sup>(21)</sup>

**The second verse**: the word of Allah Most High:

﴿وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا﴾

“And whoever enters it is safe”; Surat ‘Āli ‘Imrān (Family of ‘Imrān) verse 97. This is a well established rule before and after the appearance of Islam; it is not only a piece of information about the past, instead it is and a piece of information meant to be an order.<sup>(22)</sup>

Ibn al-Qayyim (m) said about the meaning of this verse: This is **either** a piece of information with the meaning of an order; as it is impossible to contradict information emerging from Allah; **either** it is a law decreed for His Ḥaram **or** it is information about a custom or tradition perpetuated in His Ḥaram before and after the arrival of Islam; as Allah Most High said:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا وَيُتَخَطَّفُ النَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ﴾



“Have they not seen that We made (Mecca) a safe Sanctuary, while people are being taken away all around them?” Surat al-ʿAnkabūt (The Spider): 67. And Allah Most High said:

﴿وَقَالُوا إِن نَّتَّبِعِ الْهُدَىٰ مَعَكَ نُتَخَطَّفُ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا  
أَوَلَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَهُمْ حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا يُجِبْنَ إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّرَتُ كُلِّ  
شَيْءٍ رِّزْقًا مِّن لَّدُنَّا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

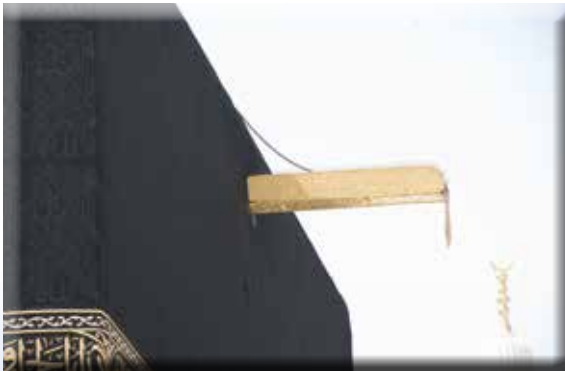
“And they say: If we follow the guidance with you, we would be snatched away from our land. Have We not established for them a safe Sanctuary to which are brought the fruits of all things as provision from Us?” Surat Al-Qaṣaṣ (The Stories): 57. <sup>(23)</sup>

**Safety for whoever committed a crime outside of the Sanctuary and then took refuge in it:**

Aṭ-Ṭabarī (m) said: The Pious Predecessors (Salaf) unanimously agreed on the fact that someone who committed a crime outside of the Ḥaram and then took refuge inside it cannot be punished therein; it is compulsory to take him outside to give him his punishment.

He commented on his own word saying: **If someone asks:** Why not enforcing the punishment on the criminal inside the Ḥaram? **The answer:** Because all the Pious Predecessors agreed: if he committed his crime outside the Ḥaram and then took refuge in it, he cannot be punished inside of it for his misdeed.<sup>(24)</sup>

How beautiful is the word of as-Sa'dī (m) as he supports this meaning: Whoever enters it is safe according to legislation and feels safe in the Unseen. **According to legislation:** Allah, His Messenger Ibrāhīm and then His Messenger Muḥammad ordered the respect of the Ḥaram and the provision of safety for whoever enters it and not cause turmoil against anyone inside it; this respect reached such an extent that it encompasses even its game, trees and plants. The ulama inferred from this verse that some-



one who committed a crime outside the Ḥaram and then took refuge inside it shall be safe and not punished until he goes out of it. **In the Unseen:** Allah Most High pre-ordained that there will be respect for it inside the souls, even the souls of the idolaters and disbelievers, at such a degree that if they had found a patricide in the Ḥaram, notwithstanding

their fieriness, pride and their repulsion for injustice, they would not have had drawn a crowd to arouse anger against him.<sup>(25)</sup>

**Thus;** Allah Most High decreed the sacredness and safety of the Ḥaram by His legislation and He put inside the souls a natural disposition to respect and hallow it; legislation and the inner nature of people meet, and both of them come from Allah Most High.

**Whoever commits a transgression inside the Ḥaram is punished inside of it:**

Aṭ-Ṭabarī (m) mentioned that the Pious Predecessors unanimously agreed that whoever, inside the Ḥaram, committed a crime involving a punishment shall be punished inside of it.



He commented on his word saying: The unanimous opinion is that whoever is caught inside it (the Ḥaram) for committing a transgression has to be punished inside it; the rules for both questions gathered unanimity as described.<sup>(26)</sup>

Enforcing the punishment inside the Ḥaram follows the rule according to which the penalty shall equal the violation. Therefore if one does not respect its sacredness by committing inside it an infringement that involves a punishment, then, as an appropriate reward, he loses the blessing of its safety, because he wasted it.

Enforcing a punishment inside the Ḥaram for a violation perpetrated inside it has also other wisdom: avoiding despising it and its sanctity, as it would become a theatre where anyone could commit crimes on the pretext that criminals are safe from punishment inside it.

**No contradiction between the verse and the duty of taking out of it a criminal:**

There is no contradiction between the word of Allah:

﴿وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا﴾

“And whoever enters it is safe” (Surat ‘Āli ‘Imrān – Family of ‘Imrān: 97) and the



word of scholars about the duty of taking out of the Ḥaram a criminal to punish him.

Safety is for those who entered it and did not commit a crime or an infringement; the Ḥaram is no longer safe for the others<sup>(27)</sup>, and it is compulsory to take them out of it to punish them outside, in order to avoid making it a refuge for criminals and renegades.

### Mistaken interpretations of the verse:

Some people misunderstood the meaning of safety inside the Ḥaram and gave wrong and untrue interpretation that contradicts the Consensus of the Muslims; a matter mentioned many times by scholars, among them: **Ibn Taymiya (m)** who said: Some people think that a person entering the Ḥaram is protected from the punishment of the Hereafter, even if he neglects his duties, like the prayers among others, and even if he commits sins! Such people are violating the Consensus of the Muslims and are among the disbelievers, the hypocrites and the defiantly disobedient people of Hell, according to the Consensus of the Muslims.<sup>(28)</sup>

**Ibn al-Qayyim (m)** confirmed: This wrong opinion and many others do not have to receive any attention. Some people say: Whoever enters the Ḥaram is protected against hellfire! Others say: Whoever enters it is protected to die as a non Muslim! Yet, how many people entered it and are now in the bottom of Hell.<sup>(29)</sup>

- **The third verse:** The word of Allah Most High:

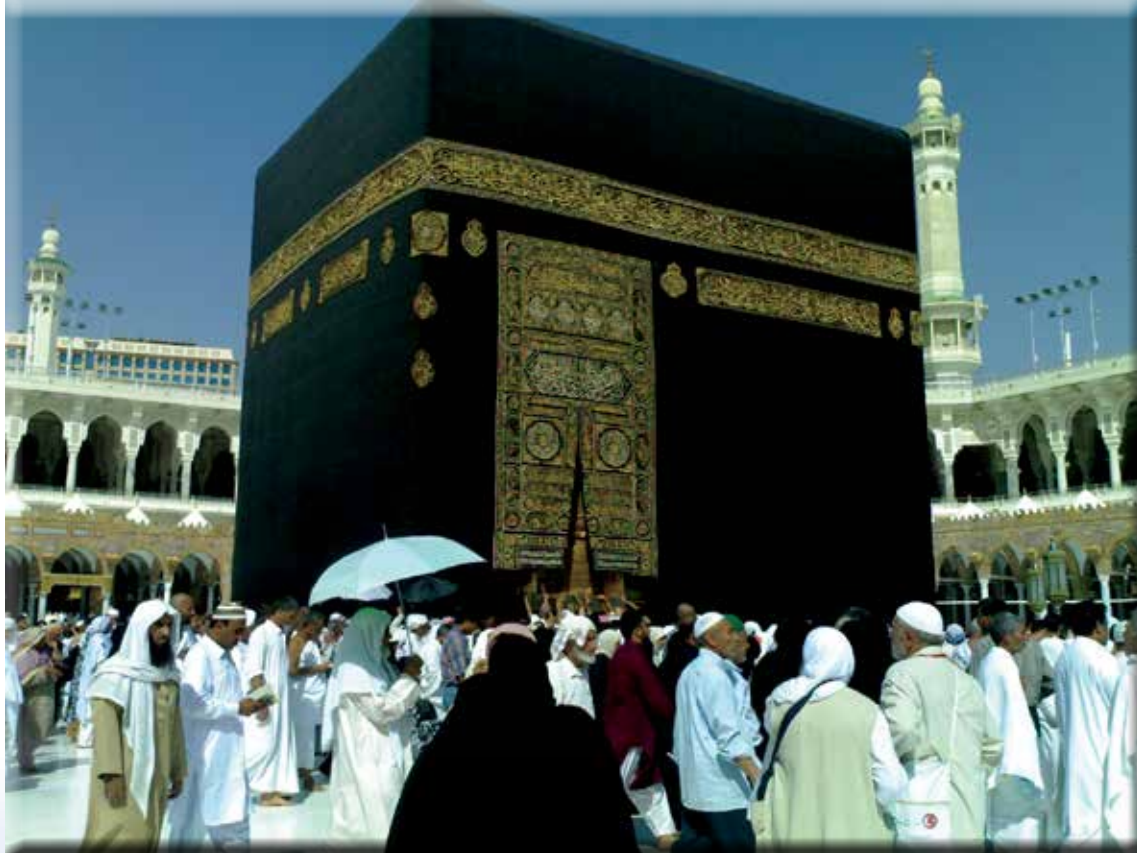
﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ آمِنًا﴾

“And when Ibrāhīm said: My Lord, make this a secure city” Surat al-Baqara: 126.  
And the word of Allah:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا ءَامِنًا﴾

“And when Ibrāhīm said: My Lord, make this City secure” Surat Ibrāhīm: 35.

i.e. secure against the grab of tyrants and oppressors and, contrary to all other lands, secure against the retribution of Allah, like being swallowed up by an earth-



quake, a flood, or other forms of the wrath of Allah and the exemplary punishments<sup>(30)</sup> that strike all other lands.<sup>(31)</sup>

### Reason for his supplication for security:

Ibrāhīm supplicated Allah for security because the land was uncultivable and barren; therefore if it was not secure, nothing would have ever been brought to it from outside and it could not have been settled. Allah answered the supplication of Ibrāhīm (p) and made it a secure land that has never been a haunt for tyrants and if one ever tried to seize it Allah Most High would have wiped him out as He did for the companions of the elephant for example.

**If you say:** Al-Ḥajjāj attacked Mecca and damaged the Ka'ba. **I reply:** His intention was neither to attack Mecca, its people nor to damage the Ka'ba; instead he wanted to





overthrow the caliphate of Ibn Zubayr and he achieved his goal only by doing so. But after his victory he reconstructed the Ka'ba, strengthened its foundations, exalted its sacredness and treated well the people of Mecca.<sup>(32)</sup>

**These words of the supplication of Ibrāhīm (p) were concise words but comprehensive in meaning.** Actually, the security of the land and of its ways calls for all the features to obtain a happy life. It involves justice, dignity and prosperity as there is no security if there is no justice, dignity and prosperity. Security calls for the settlement of people and allows the good and wealth to come. Therefore, security is achieved as



far as justice, dignity and prosperity are not disrupted; if they are disrupted, there is no security. Ibrāhīm (p) wanted with his supplication to facilitate its settlement for the people in order to consolidate the necessary means for the land to become the cradle of Islam.<sup>(33)</sup>

### The difference between the two verses:

The supplication of Ibrāhīm (p) in Surat al-Baqara – The Cow is: “make this a secure city”; “city” is not defined yet; whereas in Surat Ibrāhīm it stands: “make this city secure”; “city” is defined. So what is the difference between these two supplications?

The opinions of exegetes varied about the difference between both supplications, among them:

1. **Ibn Kathīr (m)** said: He said in al-Baqara: 126: “My Lord, make this a secure city”. Which means: make this place a secure city as it was before the construction of the Ka’ba. Allah Most High said in Surat Ibrāhīm: 35: “Make this city secure”. The supplication – Allah knows best – occurred later, after the construction of the House and the settlement of people there and after the birth of Ishāq who is 13 years younger than his brother Ismā’īl; this is why he (Ibrāhīm) said at the end of his supplication:

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى الْكِبَرِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَسَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ﴾

“Praise be to Allah Who has granted to me in old age Ismā’īl and Ishāq! Indeed, my Lord is the Hearer of supplication.” Surat Ibrāhīm: 39.<sup>(34)</sup>

2. **Ar-Rāzī (m)** said: **The first supplication** occurred before the place became a city; it is as if he said: “Make this valley a secure city”; as Allah Most High told about him that he said:

﴿بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ﴾

“in an uncultivated valley” Surat Ibrāhīm: 37. He then said: Make this valley a secure city. **The second supplication** occurred after this place became a city; it is as if he said: Make this place which you transformed into a city secure and safe.<sup>(35)</sup>

3. It states in **al-Itqān**: For **the first one**: He supplicated before it became a city; when he left there Hājir and Ismā'īl, the place was merely a valley, so he prayed for it to become a city. **The second one**: He supplicated after his return and after the tribe of Jurhum settled the place that became a city; he then prayed for its security.<sup>(36)</sup>
- **The fourth verse**: Allah Most High said:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا آمِنًا وَيُنْخَظِفُ النَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ﴾



“Have they not seen that We made (Mecca) a safe sanctuary, while people are being taken away all around them?” Surat al-‘Ankabūt (The Spider): 67.

Allah Most High reminds the disbelievers of Quraysh of the greatest bounty He bestowed upon them and according to which He characterised them among others, namely His safe exalted Sanctuary which He offered them. “The Arabs around Mecca used to fight each other, invade and pillage one another’s territory whereas the people of Mecca were keeping safe in their city. They suffered no raid in spite of their small population and the high number of Arabs outside it. Allah reminds them this special grace He granted them and He reprimands them for worshipping the falsehood and refuting such an obvious and evident blessing among others that cannot be counted except by Him alone.”<sup>(37)</sup>

**The reminder of the grace of security to the people of Mecca was because they were sure and convinced that Allah alone was responsible for such a grace; on this very point they were not associating anything to Him; the word of Allah Most High confirmed this:**



﴿ إِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ رَبِّي هَذِهِ الْبَلَدَةَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَهَا ﴾

(Say, O Muḥammad), “I have only been commanded to worship the Lord of this City, Who made it sacred/forbidden and to whom (belongs) all things.” Surat an-Naml (The Ants): 91. Allah Most High is described in this verse as “the Lord of this City” because it was well-known to them that the hallowing of the City was a grace of Allah alone which had nothing to do with the idols they were associating to Him in other matters.

Allah Most High reprimands them when He questions them in Surat al-‘Ankabūt: 67: “Have they not seen that We made (Mecca) a safe Sanctuary?” as they denied the truth they knew and continued to believe in the falsehood in which they used to live.

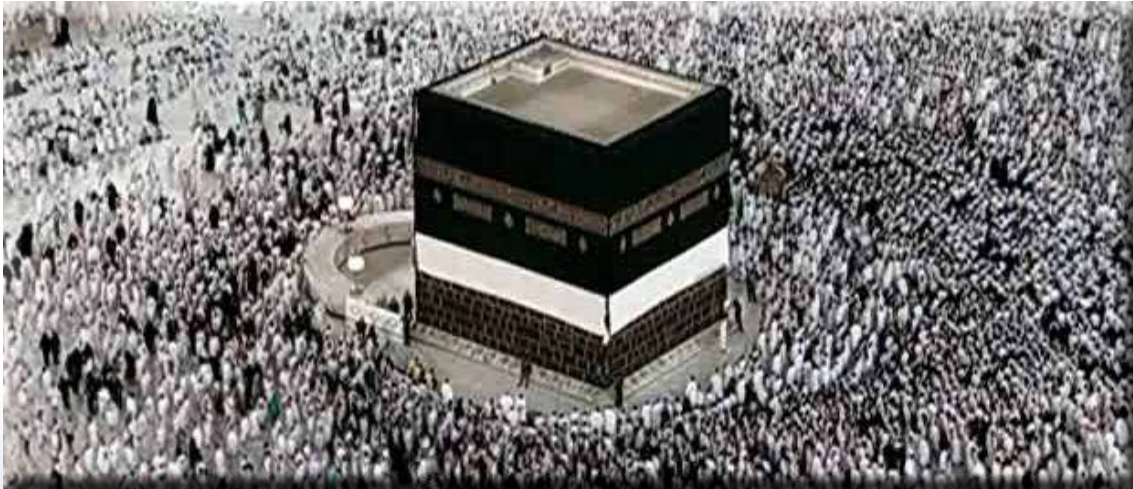


The bond between Mecca, the Holy Land of Allah, and security is an implicit and necessary bound: in it lies the Sacred House of Allah and the sacred sites and therein are performed the rituals: the Ḥajj and ‘Umra; which means that people coming from everywhere head for it and stay there the time to perform the rituals. Therefore it is necessary for the place to be secure as if it was not, people would refrain from going there and would be afraid for themselves and their goods.

It is as if Allah the Exalted Majestic extended an invitation, gave a guarantee and made a commitment. **The invitation** is extended in the word of Allah Most High:

﴿وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ﴾

“And proclaim to the people the Ḥajj” Surat al-Ḥajj: 27; whereas Allah ordered His prophet Ibrāhīm (p) to invite people to the Ḥajj at His Sacred House. **The guarantee** is given in the verse:



﴿يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَىٰ كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ﴾

“They will come to you on foot and on every lean camel; they will come from every distant pass” Surat al-Ḥajj: 27; Allah guaranteed that people would answer His invitation to the Ḥajj at His Sacred House as He granted them true faith and inspired them the praise of His Ka‘-ba and the eagerness of Him. **The commitment** is to make this place secure until the Day of Resurrection. The pilgrims are the guests of the Exceedingly Compassionate and they are under His protection, at His Sanctuary; therefore it is incumbent upon Him to treat well His visitors to the extent of His great generosity and indeed the first duty towards one’s guests is granting them security, protection and care.



### Section III:

#### Severity against heresy

This section is divided into three parts:

Part I: Danger of committing an act of heresy inside the Ḥaram.

Part II: Degrees of the intention of disobedience.

Part III: Recommendations to avoid committing an act of heresy inside the Ḥaram.





## Part I: Danger of committing an act of heresy (ilhād) inside the Ḥaram

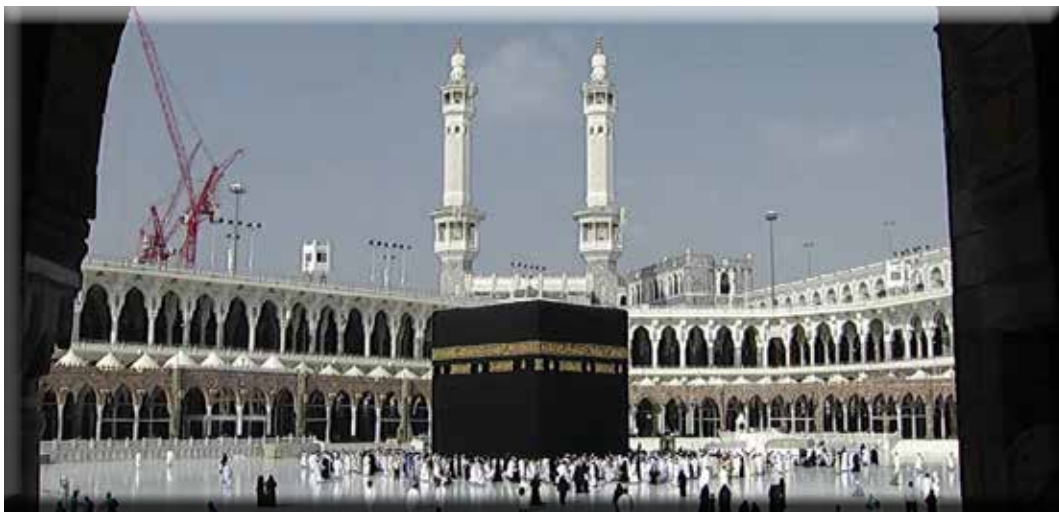
Another specificity of the Holy Land is the fact that Allah Most High threatened with a painful punishment he who intends to commit an act of heresy therein. Allah exalted be He said:

﴿وَمَنْ يُرِدْ فِيهِ بِالْحَافِدِ بِظُلْمٍ نُدَقَهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ إِلِيمٍ﴾

“Whoever intends (deed) therein of deviation (in religion) or wrongdoing - We will make him taste of a painful punishment.” Surat al-Ḥajj: 25. “Allah Most High characterized the Ḥaram by threatening he who intends to commit a wrongdoing or an act of heresy therein; here lies a mark of praise for the sacredness of the Sanctuary. **The exegetes did not diverge on the interpretation of this verse: the threat concerns he who intends to commit an act of heresy inside the Ḥaram, all of it, not only inside the Mosque.**”<sup>(38)</sup>

**The meaning of al-ilhād bi-ṭ-ṭulm (act of heresy, a deed of deviation in religion or wrongdoing):**





*Al-ilhād* in the **language** means the renunciation of one's objective or intention.<sup>(39)</sup>

Aṭ-Ṭabarī (m) said: *al-ilhād* is committing an injustice inside the Ḥaram.<sup>(40)</sup>

Al-Māwardī (m) said: Concerning *al-ilhād bi-ṭ-ṭulm*; there are four interpretations:

**The first one:** Associating anything with Allah (shirk, idolatry), namely worshiping therein others than Allah; which is the view of Mujāhid and Qatāda.

**The second one:** Making permissible, inside it, something that Allah made forbidden; this is the view of Ibn Mas'ūd.

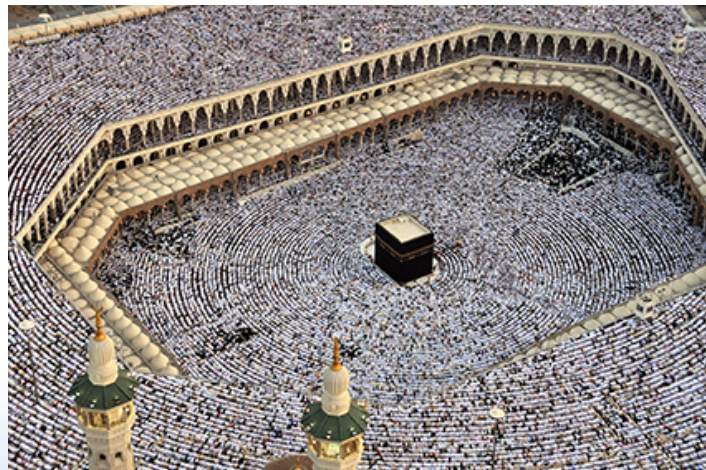
**The third one:** Making voluntarily permissible, inside it, something that Allah made forbidden; this is the view of Ibn 'Abbās.

**The fourth one:** To monopolize the food inside Mecca; this is the view of Ḥassān Ibn Thābit.<sup>(41)</sup>

**Committing an act of heresy inside the Ḥaram encompasses all acts of disobedience:**

**The investigators** consider that committing an act of heresy encompasses all acts of disobedience, from unbelief to minor sins<sup>(42)</sup>; concerning what has been said on the matter:

1. **Ar-Rāzī (m)** said, after mentioning the views defining the meaning of *ilhād* (heresy): Committing an act of heresy generally concerns all acts of disobedience; as major and minor sins are considered more serious therein than in any other lands.<sup>(43)</sup>
2. **Al-Qurṭubī (m)** said: Heresy and wrongdoing gather all acts of disobedience, from unbelief to minor sins.<sup>(44)</sup>
3. **Ibn Kathīr (m)** said, after mentioning some words of the companions about the meaning of *ilhād*: These reports indicate some meanings of the word wrongdoing, but the meaning is more general than that and includes things which are more serious. Hence when the owners of the Elephant planned to destroy the House:



﴿طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ﴿٢﴾ تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ﴿٤﴾ فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ ﴿٥﴾﴾

“Allah sent against them birds in flocks; striking them with stones of hard clay. And He made them like (an empty field of) stalks (of which the corn has been eaten up by cattle)” (Surat al-Fil – The Elephant: 3 – 5). It means that He destroyed them and made them a lesson and a warning for everyone who intends to commit evil actions there.<sup>(45)</sup>

‘Ā’isha (rh) narrated: The Messenger of Allah (s) said: **An army will raid the Ka’-ba and when it reaches al-Bay-dā’ (a wide open space) all of them will be swallowed up by the earth.** She said: O Messenger of Allah! How will they sink into the ground while amongst them will be their markets<sup>(46)</sup> and people not belonging to them<sup>(47)</sup>? He answered: **All of them will be swallowed by the earth but they will be resurrected for Judgement according to their intentions.**<sup>(48)</sup>



Ibn Mas’ūd (r) said about the verse:

﴿مَنْ يُرَدِّ فِيهِ بِالْحَادِ بِظُلْمٍ نُذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ﴾

“Whoever intends (deed) therein of deviation (in religion) or wrongdoing - We will make him taste of a painful punishment” (S.22:25): If a man intends to do some evil action therein, and even if he is at ‘Adan Abyan, he surely is in a position where Allah will make him taste a painful punishment.<sup>(49)</sup>

### Committing an evil action inside the Ḥaram is among the major sins:

Committing an evil action inside the Holy Land and considering it as permissible is among the major sins; evidence:

1. ‘Umayr Ibn Qatāda al-Laythī (r) who was one of the Companions narrated that someone questioned him and that he said: O Messenger of Allah! What are the major sins? He said: **They are nine...** he mentioned among them: **Allowing at the House what Allah has forbidden. It is your direction (qibla) in your life and after death.**<sup>(50)</sup>
2. There is a piece of evidence in the ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Umar (r2) narrated by Ayyūb from Ḥaysala Ibn ‘Alī an-Nahdī who said: I asked Ibn ‘Umar, who was at the Arāk tree on the day of ‘Arafa sprinkling water on his head and face, I said to him: May Allah have mercy on you! Please tell me what are the major sins? He said: The Messenger of Allah (s) said: **The major sins are: Associating others in worship with Allah ...** and he mentioned among them: **Committing an act of heresy at the House, your qibla (direction) in**



**your life and after death.(51)**

Upon this, we understand that committing an act of heresy within the Ḥaram is serious and considered as a major sin on one hand; and on the other hand it is like defying Allah the Exalted Majestic inside His protected Sanctuary.

**Summary:** The noble verse indicates the duty to respect the Holy Land, the importance of its exaltation and a warning against committing sins therein; and he who dares to do so is promised a painful retribution.

**In this threat lies a protection against the evil and injustice of the wrongdoers, in order to avoid negligence towards the Ḥaram and its sanctity; thus even the mere thinking of committing evil there hastens the punishment in this world in order to make a clear sign for those who reflect.**



## Part II: Degrees in the intention of disobedience

The sharī'a (Islamic legislation) states that no one can be blamed only for his thoughts as far as thoughts do not become acts or words; as Abū Hurayra (r) narrated: The Prophet (s) said: **Verily Allah has forgiven my community the evil thoughts that occur to their minds as long as such thoughts are not put into action or uttered.**<sup>(52)</sup>

### Intention of disobeying:

The rule on the intention of disobeying concerns the wilfulness of committing an evil act; it is more than merely thinking of disobeying.<sup>(53)</sup>

This is why a consensus of Pious Predecessors (Salaf) – from jurists to scholars in the science of ḥadīths – clarified the meaning of this ḥadīth and described evil thoughts as inferior to a firm determination to commit a sin. If the desire of disobedience reaches the level of a firm determination, the person should be punished for it.<sup>(54)</sup>

Whoever has the firm intention in his heart to disobey and is preparing himself to do so has committed a sin and hurt his faith, and therefore these ḥadīths mentioned among others do not apply to him, contrary to he who only thinks about committing a sin, without preparing himself to disobe-



dience and without a strong determination. There is a difference to notice between mere thoughts and a firm determination.

**Concerning mere thoughts which are not taken into account:** They are only thoughts without mental preparation, promise, wilfulness, firm intention or determination.<sup>(55)</sup>

### Degrees on what happens in one's soul:

Scholars like as-Sabakī (m) classified the different stations of the soul facing disobedience into five levels, namely:

1. The idea or thought that comes to the mind.
2. The continuous flow of thoughts that crosses the mind.
3. The insinuation of the soul: The hesitation between doing and avoiding doing.
4. Wilfulness of disobedience, having the firm intention to do.
5. The determination: The strong resoluteness to commit a sin.

**The ideas or thoughts** that come to the mind are not to be taken into account, according to a consensus, as peo-





ple are not responsible for them and cannot do anything against them.

**The continuous flow of thoughts and the insinuation of the soul** also are not taken into account as sins, according to the ḥadīth previously quoted(56). The insinuation of the soul is classified at the third degree and is forgiven; therefore the two first degrees which are less serious are forgiven as a matter of fact. This applies equally for ḥasanāt, the units of reward for good deeds, they also will not be granted: **no one will be rewarded for good thoughts classified within these three first stations.** For the first degree, as it is obvious and for the second and the third ones as there was no clear intention expressed.

**Concerning wilfulness:** the authentic ḥadīth is clear(57): wilfulness of doing a good deed is taken into account as a good deed accomplished and wilfulness of doing



a sin is not taken into account as an evil deed if the person does not concretize his thought and avoid evil for Allah; he is then rewarded by one ḥasana and if the person perpetrates the sin, only one sayy'a is written for him.

**Concerning the determination** of doing evil: the investigators said that the person will be punished for it.

**Evidence:**

**1. The word of Allah Most High:**

﴿إِذْ أَقْسَمُوا لِيَصْرِمْنَهَا مَصْبِحِينَ﴾

“When they swore to cut its fruit in the (early morning)” Surat al-Qalam: 17.

**Significance:** The confirmed their firm intentions by swearing; this is why they were punished even before committing their sins.

Al-Qurṭubī (m) said: In this verse lies evidence that firm determination is taken into account for the punishment of people: they had the firm intention to commit evil and they were punished even before they acted.<sup>(58)</sup>

**2. The word of the Prophet (s):** When two Muslims fight each other with their swords, both the mur-



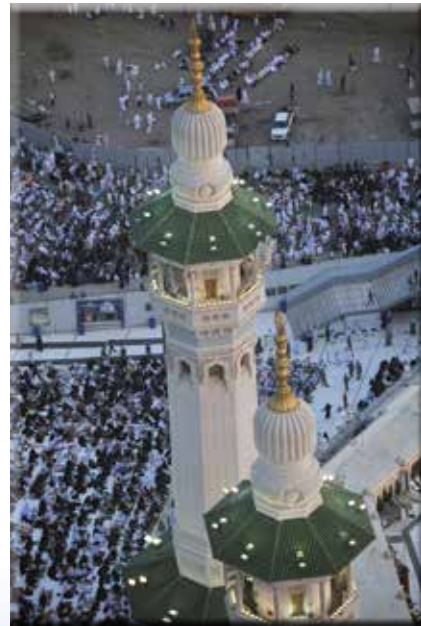
derer and the murdered will go to the Hellfire. They said: O Messenger of Allah! It is all right for the murderer but what about the murdered one? He replied: He surely had the firm intention to kill his companion.<sup>(59)</sup>

**Significance:** He explained that the murdered deserved Hellfire for his wilfulness to kill, his firm determination to murder his fellow Muslim; this is the reason for the Consensus about the fact that what happens inside the hearts is taken into account and people will be punished for firm evil intentions like for instance jealousy, hatred, etc.<sup>(60)</sup>

### Summary:

The classification of the different stations of the soul facing disobedience has five levels, namely: **the idea or thought** that comes to the mind; **the continuous flow of thoughts** that crosses the mind; **the insinuation of the soul:** The hesitation between doing and avoiding doing; **wilfulness of disobedience**, having the firm intention to do; **the determination**, the strong resoluteness to commit a sin.

**To conclude:** A person, adult and accountable, will not be punished for only thinking about committing a sin.



### **Part III: Recommendations to avoid committing an act of heresy inside the Ḥaram**

The Pious Predecessors used to recommend to each other that they avoid committing an act of heresy inside the Ḥaram: ‘Abd Allah Ibn ‘Umar once came to ‘Abd Allah Ibn az-Zubayr (rp) and he said: O Ibn az-Zubayr! Beware of committing an act of heresy inside the Sanctuary of Allah the Exalted Majestic, as I heard the Messenger of Allah (s) said: **A man from Quraysh will commit here an act of heresy and if his sin was weighed and compared to all the sins perpetrated by all the men and jinn his sin would be the heaviest.** He said: Beware **not** to be him.<sup>(61)</sup>

#### **Loathing of committing sins within the Ḥaram:**

Similarly, the Pious Predecessors used to loath committing sins inside the Ḥaram, among the examples of that:

1. What has been reported by Mujāhid over ‘Abd Allah Ibn ‘Amrū (r2): He had two tents: one inside the Ḥaram and one outside it. When he wanted to pray, he used to pray inside the one which was in the Ḥaram and when he had to visit his family, he used to pray inside the one which was outside. He once was questioned about that and he replied: Verily, Mecca is Mecca.<sup>(62)</sup>



2. Al-Azraqī quoted Mujāhid (m) with his chain of narrators concerning the verse:

﴿وَمَنْ يُرِدْ فِيهِ بِالْحَاكِمِ يُظْلَمِ نَذَقَهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ﴾

“Whoever intends (deed) therein of deviation (in religion) or wrongdoing - We will make him taste of a painful punishment”; Surat al-Ḥajj: 25. He said: ‘Abd Allah Ibn ‘Amrū Ibn al-‘Āṣ (r2) had two tents: one inside the Ḥaram and one outside it. When he had to blame someone from his family, he used to do so in the tent located outside the Ḥaram and when he wanted to pray, he used to pray inside the Ḥaram. He was once questioned about that and he replied: We were saying that an act of heresy inside the Ḥaram is saying: No! Not at all by Allah! And: Yes of course by Allah!<sup>(63)</sup>

### The difference between the Ḥaram and the rest of the world:

**If one asks:** What is the difference between the Ḥaram and the rest of the world?

**The answer is:** The noble verse came to warn people against committing an act of heresy inside the Ḥaram especially; as it is considered to be among the sacred sites of Allah and His signs which He exalted and which He ordered the people to exalt. Disobedience therein is the worst and the vilest and therefore its reward is the worst as it is a violation against the sacredness of the place<sup>(64)</sup>. For this reason, **he who commits an**



act of heresy inside the Ḥaram is considered to be among the most hated people to Allah Most High; Ibn ‘Abbās (r2) narrated that the Prophet (s) said: **There are three kind of people who are the most hated to Allah; he quoted among them: He who commits an act of heresy within the Ḥaram.**<sup>(65)</sup> Consequently, how is it possible for someone to commit an act of heresy or evil inside a place that Allah Most High made sacred and appointed to be His Sanctuary? The wisdom is to exalt the orders of Allah and respect His limits. No place is sacred by itself, only Allah Most High can bestow grace upon it, then Allah Most High commands His servants to worship Him as He wants through different acts of adoration in order to see who will obey and who will turn his back; therefore He rewards the good with excellence and He will punished the others for their sins.



## Endnotes

- (1) Tafsīr ash-Shawkānī (156/4).
- (2) At-Taḥrīr wa at-tanwīr (156/20).
- (3) See: Tafsīr al-baḥr al-muḥīṭ (246/7).
- (4) See: Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī (246/13).
- (5) Tafsīr al-Khāzin (191/5).
- (6) At-Taḥrīr wa at-tanwīr (156/20).
- (7) Ibid. (156/20).
- (8) At-Tafsīr al-kabīr (274/24).
- (9) Tafsīr al-baḥr al-muḥīṭ (246/7).
- (10) Reported by al-Bukhārī (1164/3), H. 3017. Muslim (986/2), H. 1353.
- (11) Reported by al-Bukhārī (749/2), H. 2022. Muslim (991/2), H. 1360.
- (12) Tafsīr al-baḥr al-muḥīṭ (246/7).
- (13) ‘Umda al-qārī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (145/2).
- (14) Sharḥ an-Nawawī ‘alā Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (134/9).

- (15) Ibid. (124/9).
- (16) Reported by al-Bukhārī (51/1), H. 104.
- (17) ‘Umda al-qārī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (144/2).
- (18) ‘Umda al-qārī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (145/2).
- (19) ‘Umda al-qārī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (145/2).
- (20) Tafsīr as-Sa’dī (65/1).
- (21) Tafsīr al-Māwardī (185/1).
- (22) See: Aḥkām al-Qur’ān, Ibn al-‘Arabī (285/1) ; Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī (140/4).
- (23) Zād al-ma’ād, (445/3).
- (24) Tafsīr aṭ-Ṭabarī (14/4); Aḍwā’ al-bayān (139/5).
- (25) Tafsīr as-Sa’dī (139/1).
- (26) Tafsīr aṭ-Ṭabarī (14/4).
- (27) See: Tafsīr aṭ-Ṭabarī (14/4).
- (28) Majmū’ al-fatāwā (343/18).
- (29) Zād al-ma’ād, (445/3).



- (30) Exemplary punishments: mathulāt: another meaning is a punishment that equals the reason for it. See: Maqāyīs al-lugha (297/5); at-Taḥrīr wa at-tanwīr (92/13).
- (31) Tafsīr aṭ-Ṭabarī (541/1).
- (32) Tafsīr al-Khāzin (108/1).
- (33) At-Taḥrīr wa at-tanwīr (715/1).
- (34) Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr (175/1).
- (35) Tafsīr ar-Rāzī (210/4).
- (36) Al-Itqān fī ‘ulūm al-Qur’ān (307/3).
- (37) Al-Kashshāf (469/3).
- (38) Ahkām al-Qur’ān, al-Jaṣṣāṣ (63/5).
- (39) See: Sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ibn Baṭṭāl (511/8).
- (40) Tafsīr aṭ-Ṭabarī (141/17).
- (41) Tafsīr al-Māwardī (63/4).
- (42) See: Tafsīr aṭ-Ṭabarī (142/17); Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr (216/3).
- (43) At-Tafsīr al-Kabīr (23/23).
- (44) Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī (36/12).

- (45) Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr (216/3).
- (46) their markets: The people who worked in business or buyers and not invaders. See: Faṭḥ al-Bārī (340/4); ‘Umda al-Qārī (236/11).
- (47) **people not belonging to them:** people accompanying them, not people who agree with them. See: Faṭḥ al-Bārī (340/4).
- (48) Reported by al-Bukhārī (746/2), H. 2012.
- (49) Reported by Aḥmad in al-Musnad (428/1) n°4071; al-Ḥākim in al-Mustadrak (420/2), n°3461 who said: ṣaḥīḥ according to Muslim and the two sheikhs did not reject it; accepted by adh-Dhahabī and ḥassan (good) according to the investigators of the chain (155/7), n°4071.
- (50) Reported by Abū Dāwūd (115/3), H. 2875. Al-Albānī made it ḥassan (good) in Ṣaḥīḥ sunan Abī Dāwūd (209/2), H. 2875.
- (51) Reported by aṭ-Ṭabarī in (Tahdhīb al-āthār – Musnad ‘Alī) (192-193/3), n°314; and al-Bayhaqī in al-Kubrā (409/3), n°6515. Al-Albānī made it ḥassan (good) in al-Irwā’ (155/3).
- (52) Reported by al-Bukhārī (2020/5), H. 4968.
- (53) Faṭḥ al-Bārī (323/11).
- (54) See: al-Ādāb ash-shar‘iya, Ibn Muflīḥ (129/1).
- (55) Sharḥ an-Nawawī ‘alā ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (151/2).

(56) See footnote 225.

(57) Reported by al-Bukhārī (2380/5), H. 6126; Muslim (118/1), H. 131.

(58) Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī (240/18).

(59) Reported by al-Bukhārī (20/1), H. 31.

(60) See: al-Ashbāhu wa an-naẓā'ir, as-Suyūṭī (33-34/1); Faṭḥ al-Bārī (328/11), al-Fawākih al-'adhāb fī ar-radd 'alā man lam yuḥakkim as-sunna wa-l-kitāb, Ḥamd Ibn Nāṣir al-Ḥanbalī (died in 1225 H.) (358/4).

(61) Reported by Aḥmad in al-Musnad (136/2), H. 6200; al-Ḥākim in al-Mustadrak (420/2), H. 3462 and he said: the chain is authentic and the two sheikhs did not reject it; authenticated by al-Albānī in as-silsila aṣ-ṣaḥīḥa (292/7), H. 3108.

(62) Reported by Ibn Abī Shayba in his Muṣannaf (269/3), n°14096; al-Azraqī in Akhbār Makka (131/2), isnād ṣaḥīḥ.

(63) Reported by al-Azraqī in Akhbār Makka (131/2).

(64) See: Faḍā'il Makka al-mukarrama, Dr. 'Abd Allah Ibn Muḥammad Nūrī, p. 118-119).

(65) Reported by al-Bukhārī (2523/6), H. 2523.

# Contents

## **The specificities of the Holy Land**

<b>Section I: Allah made it a sacred land .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Meaning of making Mecca sacred: .....	5
The hallowing of Mecca is a hallowing of perfection: .....	5
Reason for the use of the expression “made it sacred/forbidden”: .....	6
Confirmation of the Prophet (s) of the sanctity of the City: .....	7
No contradiction between the verse and the ḥadīth: .....	7
Reasons that reject the doubt of contradiction:.....	9
Time of the hallowing:.....	10
Requisites for the sacredness of Mecca: .....	11
Jurisprudence (fiqh) of the ḥadīth: .....	12
Question:.....	12
<b>Section II: Allah made it a secure land .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Reason for his supplication for security: .....	22
The difference between the two verses: .....	24

**Section III: Severity against heresy..... 30**

**Part I: Danger of committing an act of heresy (ilḥād) inside the Ḥaram.....31**

The meaning of al-ilḥād bi-ṭ-ṭulm (act of heresy, a deed of deviation in religion or wrongdoing):.....31

Committing an act of heresy inside the Ḥaram encompasses all acts of disobedience: .....33

Committing an evil action inside the Ḥaram is among the major sins: .....35

**Part II: Degrees in the intention of disobedience .....37**

Intention of disobeying: .....37

Degrees on what happens in one's soul: .....38

Summary: .....41

**Part III: Recommendations to avoid committing an act of heresy inside the Ḥaram .. 42**

Loathing of committing sins within the Ḥaram: .....42

The difference between the Ḥaram and the rest of the world: .....43

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