

Q. 1: What are the etiquets of visiting Masjid-e-Nabvi and hallowed tomb of the Holy Prophet?

A. This sacred piece of land of Arabia deserves all regard and respect. Be the embodiment of humility and submission to visit the mosque of the Prophet and his holy tomb:

1. The visit should carry the sole intention of "Ziyaarat" (privilege of seeing the Holy Prophet) and invoke Allah's blessings on him extensively (Durood Shareef) on way to the hallowed tomb.
2. On sight of the Haram (of Madinah) approach it showing obeisance with the eyes downcast having the tears of love and veneration in them, preferably walk bare-footed and be engrossed in the splendidly elegant and glorious person of the Holy Prophet.
3. On the sight of the dome (of his holy tomb) recite Durood-o-Salaam (invoke Allah's blessings and peace on him) profusely heart and soul.
4. Before visiting the mosque of the Holy Prophet one should relieve oneself, if need be, and free from all those necessities of life which might distract attention and concentration as soon as possible. He should preferably take bath, if not, then perform ablution brushing the teeth with "Miswaak" put on white and clean cloths preferably new ones, apply antimony to the eyes and perfume, preferably musk, to the cloths and body.
5. Now proceed immediately to the mosque of the Holy Prophet with all fear and hope and humility and rapt attention. Arriving at the main gate of the mosque recite Durood-o-Salaam, and halt for a while as if seeking permission from the Holy Prophet to enter into.
6. He should step in the mosque, putting the right foot forward, reciting Bismil Laah with all care and respect and should divest himself of all other thoughts and ideas focussing his attention on "Ziyaarat", proceed on.
7. Do not utter aloud even a single word in the mosque.
8. Be sure that the Holy Prophet is very much alive as he was before his apparent departure from the mortal world. His death and of all Prophets was just for a moment to fulfill the Divine promise of death. Their death is mere disappearance from public eyes otherwise they are living.
9. If Jamaa'at is ready, join it. This Jamaa'at will also fulfill the optional prayer of "Tahiya-tul Masjid". Otherwise, if the enthusiasm for Ziyaarat permits and also it is not odious time then offer two Rak'at prayer of Tahiya-tul Masjid and of gratitude in the mosque preferably at or near "Mehraab-e-Nabi" (the arch from where the Holy Prophet used to lead prayer).
10. Produce oneself before "Muwaajah-e-' Aaliyah" (the bigger hole in the grille of the tomb indicative of the rest-place of the Holy Prophet) with all humbleness and subservience and repenting one's sins and be confident that he will show kindness. The Holy Prophet shows mercy to his "Ummati" (servant,slave) who visits him. This is, of course, a great blessing for the believer that will benefit him in this world and the world hereafter.

11. Now he should stand at a distance of at least four hands facing the Muwaajah-e-' Aaliyah (with his back towards the Qiblah) with the hands folded below the navel like that of standing posture in prayer and invoke Allah's blessings on him profusely observing all obeisance. And say: "Assalaamu 'Alaieka Aieyu-han-Nabieyu wa Rahmatul Laahi wa Barakaatuhoo, Assalaamu 'Alaieka Yaa Rasoolal Laahi, Assalaamu 'Alaieka Yaa Khakri Khalqil Laahi, Assalaamu 'Alaieka Yaa Shafee'al Muznebeen. Assalaamu 'Alaieka wa 'Alaa Aalika wa As-haabeka wa Ummatika Ajma'een".
12. Seek his "Shafaa'at" (intercession with Allah Almighty for one's forgiveness and raise of degrees) for oneself, for one's parents, spiritual guide(s), teachers, children, posterity, relatives, friends and for Muslims at large and repeatedly say: "As-alukash Shafaa'ata Yaa Rasoolal Laah".
13. Then convey "Salaam" if somebody willed you to, as fulfilling the fair desire of one believer is incumbent on another believer under the Shari'ah.
14. Thereafter he should move a hand on his right (meaning towards the east) and standing submissively before the face of Saiey-yidinaa Siddique Akbar (may Allah be pleased with him) say: "Assalaamu Alaieka Yaa Khaleefata Rasoolil Laahi, Assalaamu Alaieka Yaa Saahiba Rasoolil Laahi, Fil-Ghaari wa Rahmatul Laahi wa Barakaatuhoo".
15. Then move in the same way and standing submissively before the face of Saiey-yidinaa Faarooque 'Azam (may Allah be pleased with him) say: "Assalaamu Alaieka Yaa Ameeral Mu'mineen. Assalaamu Alaieka Yaa Mutammi-mal Araba'een. Asaalaamu Alaieka Yaa 'Izzal Islaami wal Muslemeen. Wa Rahmatul Laahi wa Barakaatuhoo."
16. He should come back (towards the west) a span and standing between the two holes in the grille (of Saiey-yidinaa Siddique Akbar and Saiey-yidinaa Faarooque 'Azam) say: "Assalaamu 'Alaiekumaa Yaa Khaleefatayee Rasoolil Laah. Assalaamu 'Alaiekumaa Yaa Wazeeraee Rasoolil Laah. Assalaamu 'Alaiekumaa Yaa Dajee'ae Rasoolil Laahi wa Rahmatul Laahi wa Barakaatahu, As-alokumash Shafaa'ata 'Inda Rasoolil Laahi Sallal Laahu Ta'ala 'Alaiehi wa 'Alaiekumma wa Baaraka wa Sallam."
17. These occasions are the eve of the acceptance of Du'aa. Make comprehensive Du'aa with all heart. However, profuse invocation of Allah's blessings on the Holy Prophet on these occasions is the best act.
18. Then he should offer two Rak'at Nafil prayer, if it is not odious time, near the pulpit of the Holy Prophet in "Reyaadul Jannah" (the garden of paradise) and thereafter make Du'aa. Similarly, he should offer prayer near each and every pillar of the old mosque and make Du'aa.
19. So long as the pilgrim stays in holy Madinah, he should spend all his time in Masjid-e-Nabvi except for essential needs offering prayers, reciting holy Quraan and Durood Shareef in the state of ablution. One should not indulge in worldly talks in mosques let alone this grand mosque and should always intend for Etikaaf on entering a mosque.
20. One good deed earns believer fifty times more reward in this great mosque. So busy oneself in worship and virtuous deeds as much as one could and take food less than the usual intake. Also try to observe fast in holy Madinah particularly in Summer, for, a Prophetic saying promises "Shafaa'at" for the believer who observes fast in the Summer in Madinah.

21. Seeing the holy tomb is also a worship. So look at it frequently to earn blessings and on the sight of its green dome from within or without the Madinah city, be immediately attentive to it and say Durood-o-Salaam with obeisance. Beware! It is impudence to go away without reciting Durood-o-Salaam on sighting the green dome.

22. Finish at least one reading of the whole Quraan here and one in "Hateem" of the holy Ka'bah.

23. Come to "Muwaajah Shareef after every prayer, if not, at least every morning and evening to recite Durood-o-Salaam.

24. Forgoing Jamaa'at without valid excuse is a sin and doing so for a couple of times consecutively is an unlawful act and grave sin and more so for the one who forgoes Jamaa'at in this grand mosque. Forgoing Jamaa'at here is an immense misfortune. May Allah protect us. There is in a Hadees that whoever offers forty prayers with Jamaa'at in my mosque consecutively (without missing any Jamaa'at), there is immunity for him from the fire of hell and hypocrisy. However, it should be borne in mind that the Imaam who leads prayer in Masjid-e-Nabvi" must be Sunni with correct beliefs and holds the Holy Prophet in high esteem i.e. he should in no way be an insolent to the Holy Prophet.

25. Be cautious! One should not turn his back towards the hallowed tomb and also avoid standing for prayer at such a place where one has to turn his back towards the tomb thereby to save oneself from committing disrespect.

26. Neither perform Tawaaf round the sacred tomb nor prostrate nor bow down like that of Rukoo. The respect and veneration of the Holy Prophet lies in loving him and obeying and following his Sunnat.

27. At the time of departure from Madinah pay the Holy Prophet farewell visit and beseech him repeatedly for grant of such visits in future too with all respect and obeisance and pray to Allah Almighty heart and soul that He may cause our death in the state of Islamic faith and following

Sunnah in holy Madinah and burial in "Jannatul Baqee" (the sacred graveyard of Madinah) -Aameen, Aameen. O' the Merciful of Merciful.