

ﷺ

صفة الاعتكاف النبوي

The I'tikaaf of the
Prophet ﷺ Described

لفضيلة الشيخ الدكتور وصي الله محمد عباس

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Publishers Foreword:

Alhamdulillahilahi Rabbil A'lamīn, Waṣalatu Wasalam Ala Rasūlillahil Karīm, Wa, Ba'd

I'tikaf is a very important element of Islam in that a believer, a Muslim, Mu'min establishes a powerful and intimate connection with Allah, the Mighty, Majestic and the creator of the universe. It is a very important time a Muslim engages in constant and sustained worship Allah Jallo wa A'la and thus the rules and regulation of revolving around I'tikaf are equally important.

It is also important from another perspective and that it repels and subdues the practice of the people of innovation who have fabricated and self formulated aspects of worship in seclusion. The Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was to perform I'tikaf in Ramadhan to worship Allah in a state of fasting thus creating dependency on the creator for sustenance.

The brother, May Allāh reward him abundantly for his diligence who painstakingly transcribed the lessons and added beneficial notes to aid comprehension for the reader. Brother Arshan 'Umer Anṣārī, where necessary has referred to different explanations of the Bulugh al-Maram to further assist the avid reader of the sacred sciences. May Allāh accept this from him and reward him with good and Success. Amīn.

Abū Ḥibbān & Abū Khuzaimah Anṣārī

On behalf of

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Introduction

Bismillah-i Rahmaan ar Raheem (In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful)

All praises be to Allah, the creator of all creation. He is the creator of the heavens and the earths, and he is the one who shaped them. He is the one who created sun and the moon, wind and sand, fire and water, the birds and animals, and the fishes of the sea. He is the one who shaped them, and assigned purpose to them.

He created everything for a purpose. And he set duties for everything, be it the Sun, or the wind, or the cloud, or the seed or anything else. If a man reflects on the universe, he'll find that there is not a single thing without any purpose. Everything has a purpose that it is fulfilling: Honeybee is collecting nectar, ants are collecting things necessary for them, wind is making the clouds move so that it rains, heat from the sun causes liquid and frozen water to evaporate into water vapor gas, which rises high in the sky to form clouds, etc.

And if anyone were to really reflect, his conclusion would be that there is not even a single creation in the universe without any purpose. If a man has this belief that there is even a single thing in the universe that Allah has created without any purpose, then this alone is enough to remove out a person out of the fold of Islam. Allah says, 'And We did not create the heaven and the earth and that between them aimlessly. That is the assumption of those who disbelieve so woe to those who disbelieve from the Fire. Or should we treat those who believe and do righteous deeds like corrupters in the land? Or should We treat those who fear Allah like the wicked?' (38:27-28)

Here, after mentioning the purpose of the life, Allah has asked a very important question. Will Allah the Most – Just and the Wisest, who created the universe in complete balance, will he let go everything just like that? Will he equate those who lived their lives in the limits of Allah, and those who transgressed his limits every other minute? Nope, he shall certainly decide between the two groups with justice, if it will not happen here, then there certainly will be another world where the oppressed will get full justice.

The purpose of our life is worship of Allah, as Allah says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

'And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.' (51:56)

So what fulfills the purpose of life better than I'tikaaf, that a person wakes up only to spend time worshipping Allah, and he sleeps only so that he gets energy to worship Allah the next day? If a person thinks as such, then his sleep as well becomes a worship. This is why scholars say that knowledge upgrades the level of a slave, he thinks in a way from which many men are deprived of.

The human body is made of clay (soil, dust and water), so nothing fills its desire other than what comes from clay. So, we eat fruits, vegetables etc. that grow from earth; and cattle, fishes, etc. which were made from earth. Clay suits only that what has come from clay.

Same is the case with our soul. Our soul has come from Allah. Allah says, “The soul is of the affair of my Lord.” (17:85) Since the soul comes from above, nothing fills its need, and nothing satisfies it other than what comes from Allah. And this is nothing but the two revelations from Allah: Qur’an and Sunnah. People seeking inner peace and happiness in things other than these two often get upset for pointless issues. Some commit suicide for failing an exam, others due to a business loss, and others due to loss of love! Therefore, Allah favored us by sending his messenger to teach us the correct and moderate way of life and worship, unless we out confusion deviate and fell into worshipping stones and animals.

The reality is that every religion teaches, or that it is in human instinct (fitrah) that he seeks seclusion for Allah's worship. Islamic shariah (legislation) and shariah of other prophets as well taught this. It is done to spend some time exclusively for the sake of worship of Allah, and reflecting on his signs and remembering the Day of Judgment, all which is very difficult in the middle of this busy world. But I'tikaaf wide opens the door for this.

I'tikaaf refers to confining oneself to a Masjid for the worship of Allah. Allah even asked his khaleel and prophet Ibraheem to prepare the sacred masjid specially for those coming to perform I'tikaaf: “And We commanded Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma'il (Ishmael) that they should purify My House (the Ka'bah at Makkah) for those who are circumambulating it, **or staying for worship (I'tikaf)**, or bowing or prostrating themselves (there, in prayer).” (2:125)

I'tikaaf is a form of worship which boosts one to worship more, it lets one taste the sweetness in worship. I'tikaaf is a school for the righteous, and meeting point among worshipers. It is a school which teaches patience in obedience to Allah. Ten days out of three hundred and sixty days of a year were chosen by Allah to make apparent the fruits of rectification of soul.

Firstly, the mu'takif (the one engaging in I'tikaf) leaves his home secretly, and does not inform others of his good deeds. He leaves, and his heart has nothing but Allah, exclusively seeking the face of Allah and his forgiveness. So the first point is that he leaves with complete sincerity. The basis of I'tikaf is sincerity. May Allah bless such one in his speech, and in his deeds. But there are those who leave homes for other reasons, then they should cry on themselves. The sincere mu'takif hides his deeds from others. The prophet used to make a tent, although he was the most perfect of mankind in sincerity. So why did he make a tent? So that nothing distracts him, and no one observes him. The luckiest of people are those left their homes with sincerity. That one sincerely displeases that people praise him and his deeds.

Secondly, that we guide ourselves through the guidance of the messenger of Allah. So, we should have extreme eagerness to know the etiquette of I'tikaf of the prophet. And that we keep an open heart to accept when we get his guidance, and that we love when we are advised or corrected according to his guidance. All this to remain in the boundaries set by Allah, and so we implement everything that the prophet taught.

The mu'takif makes use of the time, and spends most of his time in Salah, due to the statement of the messenger (ﷺ):

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ خَيْرَ أَعْمَالِكُمُ الصَّلَاةُ

"Know that the best of your deeds is Salat (prayer)." (Sunan Ibn Majah)

And the best of voluntary prayers is the night prayer. This is why Allah told his messenger (ﷺ):

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ

"And from [part of] the night, pray with it as additional [worship] for you." (17:79)

However, one must divide the time for recitation of the Qur'an, dhikr and dua as well. And the happiest of people are those who recite Qur'an, reflect on it and have eagerness to act in accordance to it. Because the one who reflects while reciting does not merely recites it, but realizes that it is Allah speaking; it is Allah the Lord of the Worlds commanding, and that it is him prohibiting. So when he recites: 'O you who believe.' his heart puts complete focus trying to understand what Allah is saying. Because the message of the Qur'an is exclusively for those with an open heart:

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرًا لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ

"Indeed in that is a reminder for whoever has a heart." (50:37)

As for adhkaar, then the best of adhkaar are the supplications of the prophet (ﷺ). Be it adhkar of the morning or evening, standing or sitting, entrance or exit. So, we should stick to the adhkar which were supplicated by the most blessed man ever. Indeed, Qur'an is itself the best of dhikr. And the next in status is those supplications proved in authentic ahadith. The sahaba were the best of people, yet they would ask the prophet (ﷺ) for adhkar. Our mother, the mother of believers, Aisha was the most knowledgeable woman of this ummah. Yet she asked him saying: "O Messenger of Allah! If I realize Lailat-ul-Qadr (Night of Decree), what should I supplicate in it?" He (ﷺ) replied, "You should supplicate:

" اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوفٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي "

Allahumma innaka 'afuwwun, tuhibbul-'afwa, fa'fu 'anni (O Allah, You are Most Forgiving, and You love forgiveness; so forgive me)." [At-Tirmidhi].

She could recite her own adhkar, as she knew Arabic very well. But no, the sahaba would stick to the adhkaar of the messenger (ﷺ).

The sincere slave keeps asking this to Allah in the last ten days. That O Allah, its not my deeds but just your forgiveness that I need. This also keeps a person far from self-admiration of all the acts of worship that he's been doing. For self-admiration makes a person think that he has been forgiven, and that in turn makes a person lazy in worship.

And spending a part of the time studying the religion (Qur'an/Hadith/Fiqh) is also encouraged. And attend the lectures, if there happens to be one.

There are few people who keep busy with adhkaar in the corner of the masjid or recite Qur'an when the lecture is going on thinking that reciting Qur'an is better than the dars. We did not come across any report from the sahâba that they used to do 'wird' or adhkar or recite Qur'an while the lecture is going on. Rather, we have read narrations of them having so much interest in duroos (lectures) that if in any case they were not able to attend the lecture (due to work or sickness), they would request one of their friends to listen the lecture and share it with them afterwards.

For these are the gatherings that angels witness and Allah forgives. But the angels say: Our Lord, there is one amongst them such and such individual who happened to pass by (that gathering) and sat there along with them. He (the Lord) would say: "I also grant him pardon, for they are a people the seat-fellows of whom are in no way unfortunate." (Saheeh Muslim)

Very often when Shaikh Wasiullah Abbas begins his Urdu lectures in Masjid al Haram (Makkah), the arabs and other non-Urdu speakers begin to move. So, shaikh would ask them to remain sitting and narrate the above hadith saying: "For they are a people the seat-fellows of whom are in no way unfortunate. And when I asked Shaikh Wasiullah about those who say that studying fiqh is makrooh for a mu'takif, he replied saying, "How can it be makrooh?! Till today scholars of Madina teach in Masjid an Nabawi, and people there attend the lectures." Indeed, that is mere claim without any proof.

And the prophet (ﷺ) said:

"If anyone pursues a path in search of knowledge, Allah will thereby make easy for him a path to paradise." (Sunan Abu Dawood)

And Shaikh Munajjid told us about Imam at Tabari, the one who was known for deepness in understanding of Qur'an, that he narrated about himself:

وإذا انتهينا من درس الدولابي ؛ يكون قد حان موعد درس الرازي وبينهما مسافة -أي: قرئتين- قال: ثم نغدو كالمجانين حتى نصير إلى ابن حميد فنلحق مجلسه نغدو كالمجانين -أي: من السرعة في العدو للحاق بدرس الشيخ،

That when one lecture would end, he and his companions (ibn khuzaimah and others) would run like madmen to the place where the next lecture is about to begin.

Therefore, 'ilm is also worship.

In fiqh al Ibaadat (jurisprudence of acts of worship) we also learn: Nawaafil prayers and Qur'an recitation come in the section of Ibaadat al qâsirah (acts of individual benefit). And understanding of the deen and seeking knowledge comes under the section ibadaat al muta'ddiyyah. Because the one who prays voluntary prayers benefits himself, but the one who seeks knowledge benefits others as well.

This is the understanding of the wise and smart, who knows when to do what. And this is why oceans of knowledge would say:

"العلم صلاة السر وعبادة القلب"

"Knowledge is Salah in secret, and worship of the heart."

And Ibn Taymiyyah said about reality of ibaadah:

"هي اسم جامع لكل ما يحبه الله ويرضاه من الأقوال والأعمال الظاهرة والباطنة"

"It (ibaadah) is a [comprehensive] term that brings together everything that Allaah loves and is pleased with, from the sayings and actions, [both] inward and outward."

And Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal said:

"-أن العلم لا يعدله شيء -يعني من النوافل"

"Nothing (from the voluntary acts) is equal to seeking knowledge"

And if you happen to find an ignorant one, then teach him the deen. Encourage others in the masjid for good, and stop them from evil. Also teach other brothers in I'tikaaf the correct way of I'tikaaf, and if you happen to find them talking and joking then remind them that they have not left their homes for this. That O brothers, how many people are in hospital wishing to observe I'tikaf. How many people are in their graves who hoped to live in this Ramadan. Moreover, I'tikaaf was prescribed by Sharee'ah with the main purpose of making the heart fully occupied with and totally devoted to Allah alone, seeking nothing but His pleasure and finding intimacy in none but Allah, thus, this intimacy will remove his loneliness in the grave and grant him happiness, and this is the greatest purpose of I'tikaaf.

Remind others, for Allah says:

(3) وَالْعَصْرِ (1) إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ (2) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

"By Al-'Asr (the time). Verily! Man is in loss, Except for those who have believed and

done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience." (103:1-3)

There are others in your Masjid (and other masjid) engaged in I'tikaaf, so ask Allah to make you the best of those in I'tikaf. When a honored guest comes to your home, you try to please him in the best of ways possible. You serve the best of food, come up with the best of topics of discussion etc. So, how about when you are trying to connect and please the King of the Kings? For achieving this, we must work hard before life comes to an end.

Many people do not engage in I'tikaf giving the excuse that it is not obligatory. But this was not the case with the sahaba (companions of the prophet ﷺ). Others don't as they don't get the comfort that one gets in home. Smart was Abu Hazim who said, "Trade of the Hereafter is not sought after. And whatever is left of it (this life), is about to finish! As a result, no part of it, minor or major, will remain." It was Al-Mu'tasim said when he was dying, "If I knew that my life would be this short, I would not have committed what I committed." Also, Caliph Al-Muntasir said at the time of death, when he was wished well, "All will happen except being well! Life has gone away and the Hereafter has come." A man prepares for job, marriage, children years before it even happens. But if a man were to reflect on death, he would stop giving excuses and begin to prepare for what is about to come.

Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (radiyallahu anh) once said, "The believer will not attain comfort until he meets Allah." Life is just like a dream that passes as fast as clouds. It is a mere hour of time that soon fades away. It is a journey that has already started and will soon come to an abrupt end. When one will reflect on death, he would not give such excuses, rather hurry towards goodness.

And remember that the Masjid is the most beloved of places to Allah, as the Prophet ﷺ said, "The dearest parts on the face of the earth near Allah are its masjid, and the most hated parts near Allah are its markets." [Muslim]. This is why Allah chose masjid for I'tikaf. So, see to it that you maintain its etiquette. Harm no one. Sacrifice yours for the benefit of fellow brothers. And keep away from all unnecessary speech.

Keeping up to the etiquettes of the Masjid and serving it is so great that Allah revealed a complete surah by the name, "Aal Imran" (the family of Imran), reminding us of the noble family that served the Masjid. Imran was not a prophet, but Allah ranked the family of Imran with the family of some of the greatest prophets:

"Indeed, Allah chose Adam and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of 'Imran over the worlds." (3:33)

The wife of Imran decided to give her only child, Maryam, to serve the Masjid. The rest of the story is already known to you all; angels would serve food for Maryam, miracles occurred for her guardian Zakariyya, and one of the greatest of prophets was then born to her, namely Isa.

They were good, so Allah rewarded them with good. This is the law of Allah subhanahu wata'ala. Allah says in Surat-ur Rahman: "Is there any reward for good other than good?" (55:60) And it is not difficult for Allah to raise us and our family to such high rank as well.

And remember that before voluntary deeds come obligations. So, memorialize that after the rights of Allah are the rights of parents. The one leaving for I'tikaf should take permission for it from the parents. And if they need him, then he should stay with them. For how many are there who give up I'tikaaf for serving their parents, and Allah writes for them the reward of I'tikaaf. Perhaps, this is how Allah wishes to test an individual. Similarly, he should take care of his wife. And if he fears fitnah, then he may shift days, for instance, stay with her for a day, and a day in the masjid. And the same goes for children, and their rights.

And he should also remember the rights of his body. So, even if he chooses to pray the whole night, then he should sleep in the morning. For the I'tikaaf of the prophet (ﷺ) was not a punishment on himself. Aisha (radiyallahu anha) would comb his hair while he was in I'tikaaf. This shows the balance of Islam. And no doubt that Safiyyah (radiyallahu anha) visited him and spoke with him for a while. So, this deen is not a deen of extremism in any aspect.

And finally, Shaikh Wasiullah Abbas's fiqh is very strong. I mean that he is very well versed in the subject. So, I wanted to make a separate book on I'tikaaf to make it easily accessible to our English speaking brothers and sisters. I hope from Allah that this will be beneficial for everyone as:

1. There are very few works exclusively on I'tikaaf itself in the English language.
2. It's a forgotten sunnah in many of the lands. By presenting this work, I wish to revive it. How great is the Muslims' need to revive this Sunnah and establish it in the proper manner, as the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his companions used to observe it.

How great will be the success of those who adhere to the Sunnah after the ummah has neglected it and become corrupt.

Some of the salaf (early generations of Islam) found it odd that people did not observe I'tikaaf even the Prophet (ﷺ) persisted in doing so. Ibn Shihaab al-Zuhri said: It is strange that the Muslims have given up I'tikaaf when the Prophet (ﷺ) did not give it up from the time he entered Madeenah until Allah took him (in death) ('Awn Al Bari)

Abu Hurairah (radiyallahu anh) reported:

The Prophet (ﷺ) used to observe I'tikaf every year (during Ramadan) for ten days; and in the year in which he passed away, he observed I'tikaf for twenty days. [Al-Bukhari].

Scholars used this narration to show the emphasis the prophet put on I'tikaf. And that as an individual gets old, he should increase in good deeds so as to meet Allah with the best of deeds.

3. Many of the works available on I'tikaaf are sufi influenced works, which have spread misconceptions like the mu'takif is forbidden from talking completely, so some of them even faces covered. And they also claim that if there is a masjid where no person performs I'tikaaf in Ramadan, then people of that masjid will be punished by Allah. So, some of them even pay any random man to stay in the Masjid. And they have made bigger blunders, inspired from Buddhism and other foreign faiths, in the name of seclusion for worship. So, this pure Ahl-al Hadith version would help people know its authentic rulings.

This work is mostly a translation of the lessons of Shaikh Wasiullah Abbas's marvelous explanation of the chapter named "Baab al I'tikaaf wa Qiyaam Ramadaan" (book of I'tikaaf and Voluntary prayers of Ramadan), from the classical book of fiqh of Shaikh ul Islam Ibn Hajr al 'Asqalani's Bulugh al Maram. And I have contacted the shaikh, may Allah preserve him, for extra queries, which are as well added in this work for general benefit. The name of this book "Sifat al I'tikaaf an Nabi" was as well chosen by Shaikh himself on my suggestion.

And of course, it was also the encouragement from Abu Khuzaimah (U.K.) of Salafi Research Institute that helped me complete this work. I also thank my brother Mohammad Faraz (India) who designed the cover page.

And last but never the least, may Allah's countless peace, mercy and blessings be upon our role model and our prophet, Muhammad.

Arshan Umar Al – Ansari

[14st Ramadan, 1437/ 20th June,2016]

1. I'tikaaf (seclusion for worship) in Islam and other religions:

I'tikaaf refers to choosing to stay in a specific place for worship, specifically Masjid. I'tikaaf outside the Masjid is not correct.

Qiyaam of Ramadan refers to performing tahajjud (voluntary prayers) at night. It is more virtuous if performed in Ramadan, and it has separate set of rulings. If a man does not prays tahajjud outside of Ramadan, he should at-least perform it in Ramadan due to its virtues.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ - أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ - صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قَالَ: { مَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا, غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ { مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“Whoever prays during the night in Ramadan out of sincere faith and seeking its reward from Allah, will have all of his previous sins forgiven.” (Agreed upon)

There are so many such deeds just due to which Allah has promised forgiveness. Minor sins will certainly be forgiven, and major sins will as well be forgiven if he forgot after committing those major sins.

And i'tikaaf linguistically refers to reserving a place to stay for long for some work. There were people who used to stay and worship their idols, and this is also called i'tikaaf. Allah says:

فَأْتَوْا عَلَى قَوْمٍ يَعْكُفُونَ عَلَى أَصْنَامٍ لَهُمْ ۖ

"And they came upon a people ya'kuffoon (secluded/devoted) to some of their idols (in worship)." (7:138)

But the shar'ie (legal) meaning is to reserve a place in a masjid for the sake of Allah to spend a specific number of days worshiping and remembering him.

The reality is that every religion teaches, or that it is in human instinct (fitrah) that he seeks seclusion for Allah's worship. Islamic shariah (law/legislation) and shariah of other prophets as well taught this. We acknowledge that even Christians had something that is called "rahbaaniyyah", they would separate from the people, and spend their time in jungles or they would reserve any other place for complete confinement. Allah has mentioned it:

وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ

"But the rahbaaniyyah (monasticism) which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them.." (57:27)

They would abandon many human needs like marriage, and would cut ties with rest of the world. This is Islamically incorrect. They are the ones who came up with this innovation (bid'ah), and it was never prescribed by Allah.

Similarly, hindus call it "tapasya", which entails placing oneself to difficulty to please Allah. These are called 'saadhoo' (or tapasvi, English: saint). Some of them have such exercises which help them loose desire for marriage (warmth of sexual intimacy), and they do it all to please Allah. They would as well spend their time in jungles with the animals (or Himalayas or other retreats), living on eating just leaves. Islam has no place for this.

Muslims as well left the specific days, times, and places prescribed for the worship of Allah, and instead took ways similar to what other people before us used to do. This is found specially among the Sufis. 'Sufi' itself is a name that we acknowledge to be something new (or innovated). But the difference between modern-day sufis and sufis of the past is like the difference between the heavens and the earth; the modern day sufis have completely changed the religion itself! There were sufis who would seclude themselves in huts built in jungles, and would eat whatever others provided them or-else they would live on leaves, and this was the life style that they innovated. Sufis have many such ways.

There was a scholar in Pakistan (in whose name there is a university as well) who wrote his own father's biography. He wrote about his late father that he was so pious and righteous that he led many years in jungles. He would stay between wild animals, and sometimes when frightened, he would try to concentrate on his heart. This, in his words, would make him spiritually separate from the animals around, and so he wouldn't feel frightened anymore. This is what he wrote about his father. Reading this makes me amazed whether how is it that a man who studied Qur'an, hadith and fiqh is praising something like this, and thereby encouraging others to do it. This has never been in this deen (religion).

The methodology that the beloved messenger (ﷺ) took is the only way permissible for us. Or are you trying to compete with him? Subhanallah! I always mention what the beloved messenger (ﷺ) used to mention in his khutbah or in any special speech:

فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ وَخَيْرُ الْهُدَى هُدَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Surely the best speech is the Book of Allah and the best of all guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. (Sahih Muslim)

Whatever be it, the best lifestyle is the lifestyle of the beloved messenger (ﷺ), be it as a husband, or a father, or as a friend. His complete seerah (biography) is present in front of us: how he used to sleep, or wake up, what he used to eat, or how he used to fast, and then break his fast etc. Ibn al Qayyim wrote in Zad al ma'ad that his seerah is balanced for living an ordinary life and for a life of worship. This is why Allah said:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا

"And thus we have made you a justly balanced community." (2:143)

Neither is there anything less nor is there any exaggeration against the will of Allah. It is for tazkiyat-un nafs (purification of the soul) that Allah send his messenger (ﷺ).

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ

"He is the one who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger (Muhammad (ﷺ)) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses, purifying them (from the filth of disbelief and polytheism), and teaching them the Book (this Quran, Islamic laws and Islamic jurisprudence) and Al-Hikmah (As-Sunnah: legal ways, orders, acts of worship, etc. of Prophet Muhammad). (62:2)

People were in depths of ignorance. The beloved messenger (ﷺ) purified them by teaching them Qur'an and his sunnah. And the first method of purification is by fulfilling the obligations.

A man went and asked the messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about the (arkaan) pillars of Islam. When he informed about Salah, Zakat, Siyam and Hajj, he asked: "Is there any other obligation on me?" The beloved messenger (ﷺ) replied:

"لا إلا أن تطوع"

"No, but whatever you observe voluntarily." ie., additional salah, fasts and charity.

So he said:

والله لا أزيد على هذا ولا أنقص منه

"By Allah, I will neither make any addition to this nor will I decrease anything from it."

The beloved messenger (ﷺ) replied:

"أفلق إن صدق"

"He is successful if he proves truthful (to what he is saying)." (Agreed upon)

What I mean to say is that our beloved messenger (ﷺ) has left his sunnah in all things. The method for tahajjud taught by the beloved messenger (ﷺ) to worship Allah in the darkness of night will certainly purify the heart. Reflecting on the fact that Allah descends at this time, how much ever a man be in the depths of luxuries of this world, but gradually - inshallah - his heart will be purified.

This was the method of purification of heart of the beloved messenger (ﷺ), and seeking any other ways for its purification will go futile. It is for purification of the soul that people came up with new methods. And this became a necessity for those who did not have any guiding book to trust, or any ideal seerah to follow. But beloved messenger(ﷺ)'s each and every thing is preserved. Their Gospel (injeel), Torah, and Vedas are not preserved, and they themselves doubt as to when exactly were their books written. A man named Paul authored their books after Isa (alayhis-salaam), and yet there were further insertions and deductions. But as for us, we have authentic information of every blink of the eye of the beloved messenger (ﷺ). This is why the beloved messenger (ﷺ) has cautioned already:

فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْخَبِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ وَخَيْرُ الْهُدَى هُدَى مُحَمَّدٍ

"Surely the best speech is the Book of Allah and the best of all guidance is the guidance of Muhammad." (Sahih Muslim)

This is the deen (way of life) intended by Allah to be the final deen unlike other deens, which is why they became distorted. A tabi'ee narrated that a Jew asked him, "Why is it that your Qur'an is preserved exactly how it was revealed to your prophet, but ours aren't?" So he replied, "Allah gave you the responsibility of your book

اسْتَحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ

"To them was entrusted the protection of Allah's book." (5:44)

But as for the Qur'an, Allah took the responsibility on himself:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

"Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur'an and indeed, We will be its guardian." (15:9)

This is why each and every letter is preserved with us, and its explanation in the ahadith is as well preserved. This is why the best speech is the Book of Allah, and the best of all guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. And the worst of all affairs are newly invented things. When you have the best thing, then attempting to come up with new things would mean that you do consider this deen to be incomplete and imperfect (that you're preferring it).

With all due respect for the sufis, no doubt that they came up with a lot of wrong things. And many who were mulhids (heretics/athiests).. Mansur al Hallaj who Indian poets revere and respect a lot, he was a complete apostate who was permitting every prohibited (haram) thing. The then caliph had him executed. He would say: "The slave is the lord, and the Lord is the slave." He was the one who made the foundation for wahdat-ul wujood among the Muslims. There are Muslims who claim to believe in this, but do not understand its meaning. And there was another man (Ibn Arabi) who said similarly:

العبد رب والرب عبد يا ليت شعري من المكلف

"The slave is the Lord and the Lord is the slave, so I do not know who is mukallaf (i.e, whether who is supposed to follow the Islamic rules and regulations of halal and haram)." This is why he freed himself from these regulations all his life.

Such were things that they innovated, and many from them were (hypocrite) Jews. There was a hindu pandwa who went to a place in Bihar, in which 75% people were of authentic creed. He falsely claimed to be a Muslim and established himself there, and started a exorcist center specially for women, and deviated them. Later at his death, people came to know that he was a hindu, niether circumcised nor anything else. And then it was revealed that he was from such and such place. So taking this as a lesson, I am trying to explain that the experts say that many Jews and Christians hid under the name of sufism to deviate Muslims from the authentic creed.

Whoever turns from the sunnah of the beloved messenger (ﷺ), be it even if with some good intention, it will be wrong. And those who do it with an evil intention like the hypocrites of the past who would claim Islam and hide their kufr to do their work, then - inshallah - Allah would bring them to account.

What I was trying to say was that the method of tazkiyat-un nafs that the beloved messenger (ﷺ) left for us must be implemented. Continue with dhikr (remembrance) and adhkaar all the time. When you pray, assume that you are seeing Allah.

"الإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ "

"Ihsaan is to worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you do not achieve this state of devotion, then (take it for granted that) Allah sees you."

To Allah belongs the best of examples, but man stands in front of his dad or grand father in a such a manner that he does nothing that would make them feel unpleasant or bad. This is just a small example. It is certain that Allah is seeing us - but when we will assume that we are as well seeing him.. and compare it with a father seeing his son, no man can do any wrong acknowledging this. This is the method of the noble prophet of purifying the soul. Continue with dhikr and adhkar of morning and evening: Subhanallah, wal-hamdulillah, etc., this is all taught by beloved messenger for tazkiyat-un nafs. Aisha (radiyallahu anha) said:

"كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - يُذَكِّرُ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ أَحْيَانِهِ "

"Allah's messenger (ﷺ) used to mention Allah (praise Him) at all times." (Bukhari)

If you're sitting, then know that a Muslim's sitting as well is not wasted. You may read a book if nothing else, and if you're tied (imprisoned) then use your tongue, and if you're tongue is as well tied then remember Allah. Allah says, "If he remembers Me in his heart, I remember him to Myself, and if he remembers me in an assembly, I mention him in an assembly better than his (ie., in a gathering of angels)." (Agreed upon) So, a Muslim spends his day remembering all the time like the beloved messenger . This is the only way of purification of soul acceptable in the sight of Allah. As for those who take other wrong ways, then certainly they're responsible for innovations and have deviated. So what I wanted to say is that abandoning the world for a cave or a jungle and eating leaves there, this creed and this deed is not acceptable in Islam.

The beloved messenger (ﷺ) used to do i'tikaaf in the first, second or third tenth of Ramadan. His itikaaf was such that he would sit in the masjid in seclusion from people, although he would join them for congregation and answer their queries, as for the rest of the time he had a tent and put a reed mat (over the door, as in saheeh Muslim) and he would remember Allah sitting in it. First, he did i'tikaaf in the first tenth, then next Ramadan in the second tenth, and in the latter part of his life his i'tikaaf was in the last tenth. And his wives as well would observe i'tikaaf.

The condition for I'tikaaf is that it should be in a masjid. And it should preferably be in a jami' (Friday mosque), so he would not need to go to some other masjid for performing Jum'ah. It is permissible for him to leave the other worldly issues for ten days for the sake of Allah, up-to an extent that if anyone is sick, he is not supposed to visit him. Exception to this is emergency cases

like if his mother or father is about to die, and this is taken from general proofs. But the hadith is explicit that he is not supposed to visit a sick, or attend a funeral. If the funeral is brought to the masjid then he may attend it, but he should not attend if it is outside the masjid. The beloved messenger engaged in i'tikaaf with such restrictions. However, if there is no one to wash or bury the dead, then he may attend it as there is no other option.

So the point is that i'tikaaf is **mashroo' (legitimate) in Islam**, be it for ten days or for more if he vows for it.

2. Performing qiyam at-least in Ramadan, if not in other days:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ - أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قَالَ: { مَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا، غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ }

Abu Hurairah narrated that the messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“Whoever prays during the night in Ramadan out of sincere faith and seeking its reward from Allah, will have all of his previous sins forgiven.” (Agreed upon)

I mentioned earlier that most scholars are of the opinion that the sins forgiven are minor sins. But if he has done major sins, then tawbah (repentance) is obligatory. If he remembers those major sins (yet does not seek repentance), his minor sins will be forgiven but not the major ones. But if he forgets them, then - inshallah - his major sins will as well be forgiven. And this opinion matches the general proofs. So, if a person does a major sin and then forgets it, then Allah will expiate them through these good deeds.

What a virtuous thing this is! And for this reason, we should not have laziness for it. You may perform the qiyam of Ramadan individually or in congregation. The beloved messenger (ﷺ) performed it individually, in-fact Abdullah ibn Umar (radiyallahu anh) would say that it is better for the one who has memorized the Qur'an to perform it individually. Be it however, the beloved messenger (ﷺ) has shown that congregation is mashroo' (legitimate) by performing it for three days. So, congregation is permissible as well.

No doubt that the sahaba would not leave the congregation behind the beloved messenger (ﷺ). But after he passed, many would leave the congregations and perform them in their homes. The same tahajjud which is performed at the time of tahajjud (ie., late night) in ordinary days, the beloved messenger (ﷺ) legalized it to be prayed after Isha' salah. If he does not pray directly after Isha', or if the congregation chooses to delay salah to pray late night, then this as well is permissible.

3. Waking up the family for qiyam in the nights of Ramadan:

وَعَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ: { كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - إِذَا دَخَلَ الْعَشْرُ - أَي: الْعَشْرُ الْأَخِيرُ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ - شَدَّ مِئْزَرَهُ, وَأَخِيًا لَيْلَهُ, وَأَيَّقَطُ أَهْلَهُ } مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ. 'A'isha (radiyallahu anha) narrated, 'When the last ten days of Ramadan began, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to tighten his waist belt and used to stay up praying all night, and he would also wake his wives.' (Agreed upon)

What is the meaning of "شَدَّ مِئْزَرَهُ" (tighten his belt)?

Scholars have said that it means that he would not get in sexual contact with his wives while in i'tikaaf. Others have explained that he would prepare himself like how one gets ready by putting on special clothes.

وَأَخِيًا لَيْلَهُ, وَأَيَّقَطُ أَهْلَهُ

He would remain wake in its nights, and would awake his family members as well.

This was his sunnah in the last ten nights, that one spends his night worshipping Allah. One may sleep as well in case of necessity. But one must do his best as it will not last for long, rather its just a matter of just few nights. A man remains awake several nights for small things, so waking up just few nights for the sake of Allah will get easy if he reflects on this. But people do not truly believe in the reward. If it was told that you will receive such amount of money if you go outside this Masjid al haram, you'd definitely go. Similarly, if we are certain that if we do this, we'll receive Allah's rewards in return, then we would certainly compete for this.

4. When he (ﷺ) began his i'tikaaf:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ: { أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - كَانَ يَعْتَكِفُ الْعَشْرَ الْأَوَّلَ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ, حَتَّى تَوَفَّاهُ اللَّهُ, ثُمَّ اغْتَكَفَ أَزْوَاجَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ } مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ

'A'isha (radiyallahu anha) narrated, 'The messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to perform i'tikaf during the last ten days of Ramadan until he died. Then his wives used to perform i'tikaf after his death.' (Agreed upon)

Other narrations also show the he first engaged in i'tikaaf in the first tenth, then the second tenth, then later he would observe i'tikaaf only in the last tenth until his death. 'And then his

¹ And other narrations also show that he observed i'tikaaf in other than Ramadan as well that once he postponed it to the first ten days of Shawwal. [Muslim]. The first tenth of Shawwal includes Eid-ul Fitr as well, as mentioned by scholars.

wives did i'tikaaf after his death, and his companions would as well do. This means that the ruling is not mansookh (abrogated). He would do, and his wives after him, but had it been mansookh it would not be permissible to do it.

وَعَنْهَا قَالَتْ: { كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - إِذَا أَرَادَ أَنْ يَغْتَكِفَ صَلَّى الْفَجْرَ، ثُمَّ دَخَلَ مُغْتَكِفَهُ { مُتَّقٍ عَلَيْهِ

'A'isha (radiyallahu anha) narrated, "Whenever the messenger of Allah (ﷺ) intended to make I'tikaf he would pray the morning prayer and then he would enter the place of his i'tikaf (i.e. the place which he had prepared for his i'tikaf inside the mosque)." (Agreed upon)

Fajr of what date? From when does the last tenth begins?

When twenty days of Ramadan are over, then twenty - first Ramadan begins with the night itself. But he would perform Fajr salah on the twenty first, and then enter his place of seclusion (in the masjid).²

5. The minimum length of time for i'tikaaf

Is it correct to stay in the masjid from one salah to another salah with the intention of i'tikaaf? For example, if one stays in the masjid from Asr until Maghrib with the intention of i'tikaaf, is this correct?

No, this intention is not correct.

Because this is not called I'tikaaf. And I'tikaaf should be of atleast a day or a night, because less than this is not proved from the beloved messenger (ﷺ).³ There is a narration of Umar (radiyallahu anh) in Saheeh al Bukhari that he said, "I vowed in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance to stay in Itikaf for one night in Al-Masjid al-Haram." So the beloved messenger (ﷺ) said:

² Similarly, it is Sunnah to end the I'tikaaf at Maghrib.

³ This is because of the well accepted rule:

الأصل في العبادات الحظر أو التوقف

The basis for acts of worship is to not do it unless proved (from Qur'an or Sunnah).

It was narrated from Abu Dharr (radiyallahu anh) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "There is nothing by means of which one may draw close to Paradise and move far away from Hell but it has been explained to you. (at-Tabaraani in al-Kabeer)

أَوْفِ نَذْرَكَ

"Complete your oath." ⁴ So he went and observed i'tikaaf.

Less than one night is not correct. But with that said, this act will be considered waiting for salah. And as the hadith mentions, a slave is as if performing salah until he is waiting for the salah, i.e., he will be rewarded for waiting. But this will not be called i'tikaaf, in the shar'iah. It used to be written in the pillars at the entrance of Masjid an Nabawi to remind people of i'tikaaf:

"نويت سنة الاعتكاف"

So that whenever you enter the masjid, you intend for i'tikaaf. However, this intention is **not shar'ie (legitimate)**.

And I asked the Shaikh, may Allah preserve him, about narrations in the Musannaf Aburrazzaq of 'Ata ibn Abi Rabah (rahimahullah) and others permitting I'tikaaf for a short period. So the Shaikh told me that if one stays in the Masjid for a period of time, then it will be rewarded. This is because of the proof from authentic ahadith like: Abu Hurairah (radiyallahu anh) reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Everyone among you will be deemed to be occupied in Salat (prayer) constantly so long as Salat (the prayer) detains him (from worldly concerns), and nothing prevents him from returning to his family but Salat." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

However, there is no narration from the prophet naming this act of waiting as I'tikaaf, and this is why we choose to abstain from calling this short period as I'tikaaf.

6. What if a man becomes ill, and now he wants to leave the i'tikaaf?

There is no problem with it. Even if he takes an oath that he will spend last tenth of Ramadan in I'tikaaf, he can leave it at any time. Because this (I'tikaaf) is a sunnah. The same applies for any sunnah: If you're performing sunnah salah, you may leave it for a need. Similarly, if you're observing voluntary fasts then you may leave it if you want in case of hunger or any other need. However, if it is an oath, then you must complete it in other days.

⁴ Scholars also deduced from this narration that fasting is not a condition for I'tikaaf. Had it been a condition, the prophet would have commanded him for that.

And the narration of Saheeh Muslim has the word 'Day' instead of 'Night.' However, Ibn Hajar mentioned in Fath al Bari that ad-Daraqutni considered the narration that mentions 'Day' to be shadh (irregular) since most narrations more authentic than this mention 'Night' instead of 'Day'. And when I asked Shaikh Wasiullah about it, he said that he has no doubt that the narrations mentioning 'night' are to be followed.

7. I'tikaaf (seclusion) is not acceptable but in a masjid, but leaving it for necessities is permissible:

وَعَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ: { إِنْ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - يُدْخِلُ عَلَيَّ رَأْسَهُ - وَهُوَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ - فَأَرْجُلُهُ، وَكَانَ لَا يَدْخُلُ الْبَيْتَ إِلَّا لِحَاجَةٍ، إِذَا كَانَ مُعْتَكِفًا، مَتَّقًا عَلَيْهِ، وَاللَّفْظُ لِلْبُخَارِيِّ

'A'isha (radiyallahu anha) narrated, 'The messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to put his head into (my room) while he was in the mosque (performing i'tikaf) and I would comb his hair, while he was in I'tikaf. And he would not enter the house except for some need.' (Agreed upon and the wording is from Al-Bukhari)

An issue to mention here is that mere touch of a woman, or if a man touches a woman and madhiy (urethral discharge or any other discharge) does not occurs, then wudhu (ablution) does not breaks. This is the correct opinion. Touching any woman will not invalidate the wudhu.

أَوْ لَأَمْسَتْكُمْ النِّسَاءُ

"Or if you have been in contact with women (then perform ablution)." (4:43)

Here, it specifically refers to when comes into sexual contact. But touching itself does not invalidates the wudhu. The beloved messenger (ﷺ) would touch even while performing salah (as in the narration of Aisha radiyallahu anha).

The wall of the masjid and his room was the same, as it was his masjid. And the door for his entrance to the masjid was ahead of the first line. This is what is understood from the narrations. When he wanted to get his hair combed, he would place his blessed head to Aisha (radiyallahu anha) while sitting in the masjid itself. She used to be in her room, and would wash and comb his hair.

So, the point is that one may take help from his wife but the only condition is that he must not leave the masjid. He'll leave only for necessities. But one may place the head outside the masjid while he is still in the masjid.

Secondly, this also shows that a woman touching the husband, or husband touching his wife does not invalidates wudhu, as there is no mention of the beloved messenger (ﷺ) performing wudhu after this incident.

And thirdly, this is all over his seerah (life) that how much ever busy one be in worship, he should not separate completely from the wife and children, as they as well would not want that. So he would keep meeting, but this meeting would not be include sexual relations. And he (ﷺ) asking her to do comb his hair could be because she would feel joyous doing so.

Fourthly, this also proves that a woman may visit her husband who is in his place of seclusion. Safiyyah (radiyallahu anha) went to visit the place of i'tikaaf of the beloved messenger (ﷺ). And he accompanied her in her return back to her home. Two men were looking at the beloved messenger (ﷺ). When he (ﷺ) saw them, they began to leave that place as in courtesy to him and his wife, but he called them and said:

'Take it easy. This is (my wife) Safiyyah Bint Huyai' (so that they don't (mis) think that she's some strange woman). So they said, O Allah's messenger, we cannot doubt you. The beloved messenger (ﷺ) replied, 'Verily, the Devil flows through the human like the flowing of blood. And I feared lest he put some evil into your hearts.'" (Bukhari, Muslim and others)

From this we not only learn the a woman may visit her husband, but also that a man must clarify the doubts that others have about him. In order to preserve his honor, he should clarify the issue. Because the beloved messenger (ﷺ) thought that what if they begin to think that a strange woman was with him in seclusion. This is why when they said, "We can not doubt you." So the beloved messenger (ﷺ) replied:

" إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَجْرِي مِنَ ابْنِ آدَمَ مَجْرَى الدَّمِ "

'Verily, the Devil flows through the human like the flowing of blood."

So, the point is that a woman may visit the place of seclusion as 'A'isha (radiyallahu anha) narrated, 'The messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to put his head into (my room) while he was in the mosque (performing i'tikaf) and I would comb his hair, while he was in I'tikaf. And he would not enter the house except for some need.'" (Bukhari)

A man in i'tikaaf should leave the masjid only for necessities. What is a 'haajah' (necessity)? A type of necessity is sexual relations with wife, but a man in i'tikaaf cannot get into sexual contact as Allah says,

وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ؕ

"And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in I'tikaf in the mosques." (2:187)

So, leaving the masjid for this necessity is not correct. Other than this, it is permissible for necessities like urination or defecation, or to take a bath and change the clothes. He may leave the masjid only if is not possible to do all this in the (boundaries of the) masjid itself.

You acknowledge that he engaged in i'tikaaf in the end of his life in the last tenth of Ramadan. Toilets were not built in the houses until 5th to 6th hijri. Aisha (radiyallahu anha) said that they used to consider it bad to build toilets in the houses, and mentioned that they used to leave their homes for completing their necessities. This is an incident of 5th Hijri, until then there were no toilets in the houses. But later they began building toilets in the houses itself, as narrated by Abdullah ibn Umar that once he went to the roof top of the house his sister Hafsa and found that he was answering the call of nature while facing the qiblah and his back was towards Shâm (the area around modern day Syria). He (was a young boy) and just unexpectedly saw him.

So "haajah" (need) will be explained here that he would not enter his house except for responding to the call of nature in terms of urination or defecation, or to take a bath. And food used to brought to him, as is mentioned in the narrations. From this we learn that whatever need can be fulfilled in the masjid, he must fulfill it there itself and he should not leave it. But if there is necessity (the word 'haajah' is used), like if no one is able to bring food from home so he may eat outside but not occupy himself with unnecessary things and return back to his place of seclusion.

Some of them have mentioned this as well, like there is a shaikh may Allah bless in his age, a very good da'ee in Jeddah - Shaikh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab Al Banna. He could not leave his job, so he would go for his work in Jeddah early in the morning and return back here (in masjid al haram, Makkah) by Dhuhr. And he would say,

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا^٤

Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope." (2:286)

When I have ability and time to do this, then why should I waste it. He used to say that this is as well a need, as he had no other option. Thus, such an i'tikaaf may also be done. So the point is that if a man is unable to give all his time then he may give the part of it that he is able to. This type of necessity has as well been made permissible by scholars.

8. Conditions of i'tikaaf, and things that are forbidden on the mu'takif:

وَعَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ: { السُّنَّةُ عَلَى الْمُعْتَكِفِ أَنْ لَا يَعُودَ مَرِيضًا، وَلَا يَشْهَدَ جِنَازَةً، وَلَا يَمَسَّ امْرَأَةً، وَلَا يُبَاشِرَهَا، وَلَا يَخْرُجَ لِحَاجَةٍ، إِلَّا لِمَا لَا بُدَّ لَهُ مِنْهُ، وَلَا اغْتِكَافَ إِلَّا بِصَوْمٍ وَلَا اغْتِكَافَ إِلَّا فِي مَسْجِدٍ جَامِعٍ } زَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ، وَلَا بَأْسَ بِرَجَالِهِ، إِلَّا أَنْ الرَّاجِحَ وَقَفَّ آخِرُهُ

'A'isha (radiyallahu anha) narrated, 'It is Sunnah for the one performing I'tikaf not to visit the sick, attend a funeral, or touch his wife (with sexual desire), nor have sexual intercourse with her. He should also not go out (of the mosque) for anything but for which he has no other option. There is no i'tikaf except in a state of fasting, and there is no i'tikaf except in a congregational mosque.' (Related by Abu Dawud with an acceptable chain of narrators, but the last part (starting from : 'no I'tikaf is accepted....) is Mawquf (i.e. that which the companion does not connect to the Prophet (ﷺ) or it is her ijtihaad))

This statement is based on the ahadith of the beloved messenger (ﷺ). He never observed i'tikaaf without fasting. But this was what he did, and so the best form of i'tikaaf will be in a state of fasting. Scholars have explained her statement, 'there is no i'tikaf except in a state of fasting' as her personal opinion. Meaning that fasting is not a condition for i'tikaaf. Many say on the basis of this fatwa (verdict) of Aisha (radiyallahu anha) that fasting is obligatory (for a mu'takif). If it is in Ramadan, then one would certainly fast. Yet exceptional cases like of a man who has been asked (by the doctor) not to fast. Can such an individual then observe i'tikaaf? He may observe

i'tikaaf without fasting. Furthermore, i'tikaaf is mashroo' (legitimate) in other ordinary days as well, and fasting is not a condition for it. This condition of fasting without i'tikaaf is her own fatwa (from her understanding).

Similarly her statement:

وَلَا اعْتِكَافَ إِلَّا فِي مَسْجِدِ جَامِعٍ

'And there is no i'tikaf except in a congregational mosque.'

This has also been regarded as Aisha (radiyallahu anha)'s verdict. And scholars have stated that it is permissible to stay in any ordinary masjid, and he may leave the masjid for performing Jum'ah. And the correct opinion is that it can be any masjid, as Allah says:

وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ^٥

"While you are in I'tikaf in the masaajid." (2:187)

I'tikaaf should be in a masjid only, but a friday masjid is not a condition. But it is afdal (more virtuous) to observe i'tikaaf only in those masajid where Friday prayers are performed, as he won't need to leave the masjid for performing Jum'ah.

These two are the only points of difference of opinion (among the sahaba and later scholars), rest of them including sexual intercourse or to fondle a woman, or to visit a sick is prohibited. Although those deeds (like visiting a sick, etc) are important, but one must complete the i'tikaaf, as i'tikaaf is better than all that.

وَعَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا؛ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قَالَ: { لَيْسَ عَلَى الْمُعْتَكِفِ صِيَامٌ إِلَّا أَنْ يَجْعَلَهُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ } رَوَاهُ الدَّارُقُطْنِيُّ وَالْحَاكِمُ، وَالرَّاجِحُ وَفَقَهُ أَيْضًا

Ibn 'Abbas (Radiyallahu anh) narrated that the messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: The one who is performing I'tikaf does not has to fast unless he obliges himself to do so." (Related by Ad-Daraqutni and al-Hakim, and it is as well Mawquf)

This narration says in contrary to the last narration (of Aisha). But this narration is not authentic in terms of its isnaad (chain). Had this narration been authentic, there would be no difference of opinion. The one who is observes I'tikaf does not has to fast unless he obliges himself to do so i.e., if he takes an oath to do so. Similar to how fulfilling any other oath is obligatory, this oath will also become obligatory.

But attributing it to the beloved messenger (ﷺ) is incorrect. Rather, this was Ibn abbas's own fatwa, just like the last fatwa of Aisha that I'tikaaf is not correct except in a Friday masjid. Similarly, this is Abdullah ibn abbas (radiyallahu anh)'s fatwa because he noticed that the beloved messenger (ﷺ) did not put fasting a condition for i'tikaaf. Just because the beloved messenger (ﷺ) did not happen to observe i'tikaf without fasting does not mean that its a condition. This is the fatwa of Abdullah ibn Abbas, and many act according to it. But when it is not proved from the hadith of the beloved messenger (ﷺ), it is not correct to obligate it. And

until it is not proved that the beloved messenger (ﷺ) gave a command for fasting in i'tikaaf, it won't be considered a condition.

And I asked sheikh that few people say that if fasting is not a condition for itikaaf as there is no explicit statement of messenger making it a condition, then can we also say that itikaaf may be done outside a masjid as well?

So the sheikh said:

How is it not a shart (condition)? Allah has clearly stated:

وَلَا تُبَايِعُواهُمْ وَلَا تَنَابِرُواهُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ

“And do not have relations with them as long as you are staying for worship in the mosques.” (2:187)

And the messenger had his home just together with the masjid. If he wanted, he and his wives could have observed itikaaf in the room itself. But rather, they would specially make tents for itikaaf in the masjid. Thus, no scholar of sunnah would say any such thing.

9. Status of I'tikaaf in other than the three sacred Masâjid:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ -: { لَا تُشَدُّ الرِّجَالُ إِلَّا إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ مَسَاجِدَ: الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ، وَمَسْجِدِي هَذَا، وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى } مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ .

Abu Sa 'id AI-Khudri (radiyallahu anh) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“One should not undertake journeys except to three mosques: al-Masque al-Haram (in Makkah), the Aqsa mosque, or this mosque (in Madinah).” (Agreed upon)

If someone travels (i.e., a very long distance) to a Jami' (friday mosque) with the intention that the reward will be more there is not permissible. But if someone happens to be there for anyother reason (like a business trip, etc) then it is permissible. But travelling purposefully for it will not be permissible.

From this we also deduce that travelling to visit a grave is not permissible. But if a person happens to travel for some other reason, it is mashroo' (**legitimate/permissible**) to visit a grave (or a graveyard). Scholars have agreed that it is prohibited, and their deduction is from this very hadith. When it is not permissible to travel to any other masjid, then how about travelling to a grave? It is not allowed to travel even if it is with a correct intention of going and praying for them. Because this type of reverence may lead to exaggeration in revering them, and this is exactly what deviated the other nations. This is why the beloved messenger has completely prohibited traveling to the graves.

But if we look at the situation of Muslims, travelling to graves has been made easier (and promoted) by many governments. This should never happen in a Muslim country. If a kafir does it for kuffar then it is something different, but a Muslim's ettiquite with a grave is just this that he does not sits on it, nor urinates or defecates on it. Its ettiquites are only what is taught by the beloved messenger. Niether should one build a building over it, nor should it be surrounded by walls, nor anything else that has been prohibited by beloved messenger. He even prohibited cementing it, because such a grave may become a reason for deviation of people.

I don't think that people nowadays travel to masjid, like travelling to such and such grand masjid of Lahore, rather they travel to graves! They prepare for the travel with food and drinks and sacrifice chickens there, and others usually steel those sacrificed chickens. How strange this is! May Allah give us all understanding of this deen (religion).

I asked Shaikh Wasiullah, may Allah preserve him, when I visited Masjid al Harâm in Sha'bân 1437: Is the hadith following hadith authentic:

لا اعتكاف إلا في المساجد الثلاثة؟

Translation: "There is no I`tikaf except in the three Masjids (mosques)."

Yes, the hadith is authentic. But its interpretation is not like that. There is a hadith:

لا ايمان لمن لا عهد له

"The one who does not keep his promises has no faith."

Here as well, it is not complete negation of presence of faith. Similar is:

لا اعتكاف إلا في المساجد الثلاثة

"There is no I`tikaf except in the three Masjids (mosques)."

So, no i'tikaaf is kaamil (perfect/complete) except in the three masjid. There are few youngsters who take some speeches and stick to it stubbornly. They take what few scholars said that i'tikaaf is not permissible except in Masjid al Haram, Masjid an Nabawi and Masjid al Aqsa. And the hadith, "There should be no I`tikaf except in the three Masjids (mosques)" is authentic.

The i'tikaaf is not complete or perfect except in the three masjid, as scholars explained. And this explanation is found in a lot of issues like:

لا ايمان لمن لا عهد له

"The one who does not keep his promises has no faith." And:

لا صلاة لجار المسجد إلا في المسجد

"There is no prayer for a neighbor of the mosque except in the mosque." (Al-Salaah wa Hukm Taarikiha)

There are many such (narrations) of this type (i.e., in the same meaning). End quote.

10. Lailat ul Qadr (Night of decree) and its date:

وَعَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا: { أَنَّ رِجَالًا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - أُرُوا لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ فِي الْمَنَامِ، فِي السَّبْعِ الْأَوَاخِرِ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - "أَرَى 1 رُؤْيَاكُمْ قَدْ تَوَاطَأَتْ فِي السَّبْعِ الْأَوَاخِرِ، فَمَنْ كَانَ مُتَحَرِّبًا فَلْيَتَحَرَّهَا فِي السَّبْعِ الْأَوَاخِرِ { مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ

Ibn 'Umar (radiyallahu anh) narrated, 'Some of the companions of the Prophet were shown in their dreams that the night of Qadr was in the last seven nights of Ramadan. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to them, "It seems that all of your dreams agree that (the Night of Qadr) is in the last seven nights, and whoever wants to seek that night should do so in the last seven nights (of Ramadan)." (Agreed upon)

The virtues of Lailat-ul qadr (the Night of Decree) is that worship on this night alone is better than a worship of thousand months. Subhanallah! Few narrations have that the beloved messenger (ﷺ) mentioned few from Ahl-al kitaab of the past who worshipped Allah with much sincerity for seventy years. Some of the sahâba then said that they don't even get to live for seventy years, so Allah blessed Muslims with this favor. That he choose a night in the year that if a man were spend it according its etiquettes, then it will be regarded as better than the worship of seventy years!

And there is no doubt that this is one of the virtues of the ummah of the beloved messenger (ﷺ), that they (ahlal kitâb) kept worshipping for several years but he made one night better than that. It entails beloved messenger's virtue, and Allah's love for him, and is a proof of virtue of this ummah as well.

Allah says,

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ

1. Indeed, We sent it (the Qur'an) down during the Night of Decree.

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ

2. And what can make you know what is the Night of Decree?

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ

3. The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months. (97:1-3)

How many years do a thousand months make? Eighty three years (and four months) So, this night is better than worship of eighty three years. But the ummah of Muhammad is today so lazy that we find many of them careless about this night.

This is one night that needs to be searched for in the (last) ten nights. It is not any specific night, and this is the reality. Few narrations mention that it is on the twenty seventh, and its correct

explanation is that it may be on that date in that year. But Allah's messenger (ﷺ) said, 'I was informed of (the date of the Night of Qadr) but I was caused to forget it..' (Bukhari)

تَحَرَّوْا لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ فِي الْعَشْرِ الْأَوَاخِرِ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ.".

"Look for the Night of Qadr in the last ten nights of the month of Ramadan." (Bukhari and Muslim)

This means that if you were to worship in those ten nights, then you'll certainly get that night as well. This is similar to what the beloved messenger (ﷺ) has said regarding friday: "There is a time in it at which no Muslin would stand up while praying and asking Allah, who is Great and Glorious, for something but he would give it to him." (Agreed upon) And this issue as well, if you search there are many opinions concerning this time but the (best) conclusion is that if a person occupies himself with dua and adhkâr from morning to evening, then he will get that time. The same is about Lailat-ul qadr that if a man awakes (the last) ten nights for the worship of Allah, he would certainly get it.

But if someone limits it to only twenty second night, or twenty third, or twenty fifth, or to twenty seventh only as is the creed of many of the common masses, then this is not correct. A night from these ten nights may be in a year, and then another night in the next year. For instance, a year on twenty third, another on twenty fifth and so on. Allah has taken the knowledge of this date as the beloved messenger informed.

11. Explanation of dua on Lailat ul Qadr:

وَعَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ: { قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ : أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ عَلِمْتُ أَيَّ لَيْلَةٍ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ, مَا أَقُولُ فِيهَا؟ قَالَ: " قُولِي: اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي " { رَوَاهُ الْحَمْسَةُ, غَيْرَ أَبِي دَاوُدَ, وَصَحَّحَهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ, وَالْحَاكِمُ

'A'isha (radiyallahu anh) narrated, 'I asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) 'O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), if I know what night the night of Qadr is, what should I say during it?' He said, "Say:

O Allah, You are the Pardoner and You love to pardon, so pardon me." (Related by the five Imams except for Abu Dawud. At-Tirmidhi and Al-Hakim reported it as Sahih)

She means to ask: "If I get to know which night is Lailat-ul Qadr, what "If I get to know which night is Lailat-ul Qadr, i.e., I look for it (using the signs), then what should I say? Note her question (shows that they used to learn the **adhkaar (supplications)** from the messenger (ﷺ) only, and also that used to look out for the signs of Lailat-ul qadr as they did not know the exact date). So, the beloved messenger (ﷺ) said, 'Say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

"O Allah, You are the Pardoner and You love to pardon, so pardon me."

If a man is forgiven for his sins, then this is the greatest benefit. And it is for this reason that the beloved messenger (ﷺ) used to like to do istigfaar (seek forgiveness) a lot. He himself says, "I ask for my own forgiveness a hundred times a day." (Saheeh Muslim) For this reason, the beloved messenger (ﷺ) preferred that one asks for forgiveness as much as possible.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوفٌ

'Afuw means the one who forgives a lot. You are extremely forgiving one.

تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ

"You love to pardon."

Allah has mentioned this in the noble Qur'an in many instances:

وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى

"And to forego it is nearer to Taqwa (righteousness)." (2:237)

Allah himself forgives others, and wants us as well to forgive others. Allah said praising his righteous servants:

وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ

"Those who are forgiving towards mankind." (3:134)

And this issue of forgiving others is very important for the islaah (rectification) of the ummah. Small mistakes happen by us at times, and in reality it is absolutely fine (and normal for it to occur). When your own blood-brother says anything wrong, you feel as if it is a very big issue! Bearing a grudge against him just due this small mistake will certainly widen the distance. But I always repeat, few people should gather and solve the issue. This is as well very important. If we leave these two in their situation, their hatred for each other will increase and their friendship will decrease, widening the distance between them. But if people gather and remind them to fear Allah, and remind them that they're children from the same parents, etc., will solve the problem and their hatred for each other will be buried at that very point. Allah considers this act of forgiveness to be very pleasing.

"O Allah, You are the Pardoner and You love to pardon, so pardon me."

Allah himself asks,

هَلْ مِنْ مُسْتَغْفِرٍ لِيُعْفَرَ لَهُ

"Is there any supplicator of forgiveness so that he be forgiven?"

So Allah loves to forgive such people.

فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

"So forgive me."

Keep repeating this, as Aisha (radiyallahu anha) would keep repeating it all night. When anyone would ask for something, she would answer them and after that she would continue again repeating it, as the beloved messenger (ﷺ) had himself taught her.

And another benefit of this dua is as Allah says:

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا ۖ

"And (all) the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allah, so invoke him by them." (7:180)

Use Allah's names and attributes to call upon him.

For example, Oh Allah, you are the Most forgiving; or Oh Allah, you are the bestower; or Oh Allah, you are the Malik-ul Mulk (owner of the Kingdom) so bestow me with such and such, etc. If a man were to call upon Allah using his sifaat (attributes) or in this manner, his heart would feel content, and Allah would as well be pleased by this.

12. The sahâba would search for Lailat ul Qadr through the signs:

وَعَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قَالَ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ: { لَيْلَةُ سَبْعٍ وَعِشْرِينَ } رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ، وَالرَّاجِحُ وَفَقَّهُ.

وَقَدْ اِخْتَلَفَ فِي تَعْيِينِهَا عَلَى أَرْبَعِينَ قَوْلًا أوردتها في "فتح الباري".

Mu'awiyah bin Abi Sufyan (radiyallahu anh) narrated, 'The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said regarding the night of al-Qadr, "It is the 27th night (of Ramadan)"'. Related by Abu Dawud. And it is Mawqûf ie., the saying of Mu'awiyah and not the Prophet(ﷺ)

[Ibn Hajr said: Forty different sayings were mentioned regarding the exact night of Lailat-ul Qadr and I mentioned them in Fath Al-Bâri.]

Only the experts of a field can inform about the field. The muhaqqiqeen (researchers) said that attributing this to the beloved messenger (ﷺ) is not correct. Or else, there would be no arguments or differences on this topic. This is the personal opinion of Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, because certain signs of this night have been mentioned, like when the sun rises it will not be very bright, and morning would be calm with cold wind blowing. So, Mu'awiyah may have guessed through these signs on twenty seventh of that year. But the later narrators of this chain took it from Mu'awiyah (radiyallahu anh) and attributed it to the beloved messenger (ﷺ). The scholars of hadith (like Ibn Hajr) say:

وَالرَّاجِحُ وَفَقَّهُ.

"And it is Mawqûf" ie., the saying of Mu'awiyah (radiyallahu anh) and not the Prophet (ﷺ)

Very often you come across narrations where a companion narrated from the beloved messenger (ﷺ). And then it is written that it is the opinion of the companion himself, not the statement of the beloved messenger (ﷺ). How do we get to know this?

It happens very often, that a man says something but the listeners add a lot of other different things (while narrating others). Later when a research is made, you find that it was not said by him but was added by the listener himself. The same happens in hadith narrations as well. People attributed things to the prophet (ﷺ) thinking that it must be from him, as was the narration of Aisha. But it was the strength and will of Allah that he placed such scholars that they would check each and every letter and conclude whether it is the statement of the beloved messenger (ﷺ) himself, or someone else.

For instance, in Usool al hadith, there is something called mudraj (interpolation) which refers to addition of words by someone else to the statement of the beloved messenger (ﷺ) may be to explain or clarify the meaning, be it a difficult arabic word or something else. And similarly, people would attribute statements to the beloved messenger (ﷺ) mis-thinking it to be his statement. And this usually happens by those who came after the sahâba, like the tabi'een and others. So how do the scholars get to know this? This narration must have been narrated by many people from Mu'awiyah, and ten people narrated it as his statement and fatwa, but one but one of them mis-thought, and narrated it as Mu'awiyah attributing it to the beloved messenger (ﷺ). Therefore, there are narrations of a sahâbi narrating something from the beloved messenger (ﷺ), but when tahqeeq (research) is made the conclusion comes that it was the statement of the sahâbi himself.

13. Numbers of rak'ahs (units) in Taraaweeh prayer:

The issue of taraweeh was not mentioned, so brothers may ask concerning it. The reality is that the beloved messenger (ﷺ) did not perform more than eight units. And scholars have said using other general proofs that be it Ramadan or any other month, it is permissible to pray how much ever voluntary rak'ahs (units) you wish. This is permissible, and to add, no one should believe that performing eight units is not permissible, or less than twenty units is not permissible. Rather, if someone believes this then it would be told to him that this belief is innovated thing.

But the correct understanding is that performing eight units is sunnah, and that performing more than that, be it thirteen units or fifteen (or more) is permissible, and thus he may pray more number of rak'ahs. But the one who prays just eight units has performed Qiyam-ul lail in accordance to the sunnah of the beloved messenger (ﷺ), and he will receive the reward for performing Qiyam-ul lail.

This is why those who perform just eight rak'ahs should not be criticized. Rather, these people are reviving the sunnah of the beloved messenger (ﷺ).

And they say that it is not permissible to perform less than twenty rak'ahs, nor more than it. If performing more than eight rak'ahs, which is the sunnah of the beloved messenger (ﷺ), is permissible, then you should permit more than twenty as well (for example, thirty six or forty rak'ahs). This is as well something that does not matches the sunnah of the beloved messenger (ﷺ).

And I have seen that people nickname those who perform eight rak'ahs and make fun of them, although this is the sunnah and it is not proved that he ever performed more than eight rak'ahs (as in the narration of al-Bukhari). However, if someone wants add more rak'ahs with the intention of extra reward, then you may pray even eighty instead of eight.

About the book:

This work is detailed explanation of I'tikaaf, its spiritual aspect and the jurisprudential rulings with clear proofs in the light of Qur'an and Sunnah. The fact that this topic is important can be understood by just acknowledging the fact that Allah asked Ibraheem (alayhis-salaam) to purify and prepare the house for the sake of people coming for I'tikaaf. Allah says:

وَعَهَدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنْ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ

“And We commanded Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma'il (Ishmael) that they should purify My House (the Ka'bah at Makkah) for those who are circumambulating it, or staying for worship (I'tikaf), or bowing or prostrating themselves (there, in prayer).” (Al - Baqarah 2:125)

This alone puts immense interest in a believer to understand more about this topic. Leaving that aside, let me ask you a question: Can you, dear brother/sister, live the ten last days of Ramadan without committing sins?

The answer to this is: Yes, you can! How could you possibly disobey Allah while being in His House in the last ten nights of Ramadan and while making I'tikaaf! This work, being an excerpt from the explanation of the classical Fiqh book 'Bulugh al Maram', is undoubtedly a very comprehensive work available in the English language. Many ahadith indicate that one of the goals of I'tikaaf was Lailat-ul Qadr, therefore this book covers up everything that pertains specially to the last ten nights of Ramadan: Voluntary prayers, I'tikaaf and Lailat-ul Qadr. And hence, it is an essential book for those wish to understand this subject with a deeper understanding.

About the Shaikh:

Shaikh al – Muhaddith Dr. Wasiullah Muhammad Abbas was born in India in 1948, and completed his degree from Islamic University of Madina. He learnt under several scholars including Shaikh Hammad al Ansari and Shaikh Taqi-ud Deen al Hilali. The Shaykh holds a teaching chair in al-Masjid al-Haraam, with authorization attained from the “General Director of the Affairs of the Grand Mosque in Makkah and the Prophet’s Mosque in Madinah”, since 1419H. His chair is located straight upstairs from the Ka’bah, between the doors of “Baab al Malik Fahd” and “Baab al-Umrah”, where he continues to teach five days a week between the Asr, Maghrib and Isha prayers, both in Arabic and Urdu language.

His published works: His works in Arabic are too many to mention, most popular of which is “al-Masjid al-Haraam: Taareekhuhu wa Ahkaamuh” (The Grand Mosque in Makkah: Its History and Its Rulings). Notes from his lectures on explanation of Bulugh al Maram are noted in English and are being gradually published online. There are other works transcribed from his lectures in English like “Masaa'il fil Jihad” (Matters concerning Jihad) which was an advice for the general Muslim masses to clarify how several different contemporary Muslim organizations have deviated from Islam in their political stances.