

Naṣīḥa li Ikhwānīna ‘Ulamā’ Najd

SHEIKH AS-SAYYID YŪSUF AL-RIFĀ‘Ī

Grave Destruction and Desecration

You destroyed the sign-posts by which we knew the graves of the Companions, the Mothers of the Believers, and the members of the noble Family of Prophet ﷺ. You left them a vacant lot, the grave-posts scattered stones so that we no longer know whose grave is where. Gasoline was even poured on one of them.¹ Truly there is no change nor power except with Allāh Most High, Most Great. Leave stone superstructures intact for they are allowed! Leave the hand-span elevation for it is allowed, together with the two grave-posts! It is established that the Prophet ﷺ placed a rock on top of ‘Uthmān ibn Maz‘ūn’s ﷺ grave saying: “With it I shall designate the grave of my [milk-] brother and later bury in it whoever dies among my relatives.”² Kharija ibn Zayd ﷺ said: “I can see myself when we were young men in the time of ‘Uthmān [ibn ‘Affān] ﷺ. The strongest one of us in high jump was he who could jump over the grave of ‘Uthmān ibn Maz‘ūn ﷺ and clear it.”³

Razing of the Mosque of Abū Bakr ﷺ

You allowed a generous donor from Madīnah to raze and rebuild the mosque of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ in Jabal al-Khandaq at his expense. Once the building was razed, you cancelled the rebuilding permit for you consider it an innovation to visit the

¹ The blessed resting place of the noble Mother of the Prophet ﷺ, Sayyidah Āmina bint Wahb peace be upon her.

² Narrated from an unnamed Companion by Abū Dāw‘ūd and al-Bayhaqī in *al-Kubrā* (3:412) with fair chains cf. Ibn Ḥajar, *Talkhīs al-Habīr* (2:134); Ibn al-Mulaqqin, *Tuḥfat al-Muḥtāj* (2:29). The complete report states that the Prophet asked a man to place a rock on top of Ibn Maz‘ūn’s ﷺ grave; when he was unable to move it, he rolled up his sleeves and helped him and the whiteness of his arms was visible. Ibn Maz‘ūn ﷺ was the first of the *Muhājirūn* buried in Baqī‘ al-Gharqad. Our Master Ibrāhīm ﷺ, the Prophet Muḥammad’s ﷺ blessed son, is laid to rest next to him.

³ Cited by al-Bukhārī without chain in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* chapter-title, “[Placing] a Stalk on Top of the Grave.” Ibn Ḥajar said in *Fath al-Bārī* (3:256=1959 ed. 3:223): “Al-Bukhārī narrated it with its [sound] chain in *al-Tārīkh al-Saghīr* (1:42)... It contains a proof for the licitness of raising high the grave and elevating it above the surface of the earth.”

seven Mosques at the site of the Battle of the Trench, concerning which was revealed Sūrah al-Aḥzāb! In fact, you wish to destroy them all.⁴

Destruction of Our Historical Vestiges

You have wreaked destruction on the historical vestiges of the Prophet ﷺ and those of his most honourable Companions in Madīnah al-Munawwarah especially and the two Sanctuaries generally. Nothing seems to remain of these vestiges anymore except the Prophetic Mosque itself. Yet, in our time, the nations of the world pride themselves in and preserve their historical vestiges as a memento, a lesson, a meaningful sign of their time-honoured past. But you consider that every vestige that is stopped at for perusal or visit, is a partner [worshipped] together with Allāh ﷻ. But Allāh ﷻ Himself ordered us to travel the earth to see the vestiges of the idolaters and derive lessons from them, such as ‘Ād and Thamūd, found at Diyar Sālih, al-‘Ala, near Madīnah al-Munawwarah, which are still visited sites, as Allāh ﷻ said: [Systems have passed away before you. Do but travel in the land and see the nature of the consequence for those who did deny (the messengers)] (3:137). [Have they not travelled in the land to see the nature of the consequence for those who disbelieved before them? They were mightier than these in power and (in the) traces (which they left behind them) in the earth. Yet Allāh ﷻ seized them for their sins, and they had no protector from Allāh ﷻ. That was because their messengers kept bringing them clear proofs (of Divine sovereignty) but they disbelieved; so Allāh ﷻ seized them. Lo! He is Strong, Severe in punishment] (40:21-22). [Has not the history of those before you reached you: the folk of Noah and (the tribes of) ‘Ād and Thamūd and those after them? None but Allāh ﷻ knows them. Their messengers came unto them with clear proofs, but they thrust their hands into their mouths, and said: Lo! we disbelieve in that wherewith you have been sent, and lo! We are in grave doubt concerning that to which you call us] (14:9). Why then do you deprive the Muslims from witnessing the sign-posts and vestiges of the battles of Badr, Uḥud, Hdaybiya, Ḥunayn, al-Aḥzāb, and others of the Days of Allāh ﷻ in which He gave victory to His Messenger ﷺ and righteous servants, routing idolatry and the polytheists? Fear

⁴ On their destruction of Albanian Kosovar religious monuments, graveyards, and Ottoman-style mosques, see Stephen Suleiman Schwartz, “Letter from the Balkans” in *The Muslim Magazine* vol. 3 (1-2 Winter/Spring 2000) p. 25-26, section titled, “Reaction to Wahhābī Reconstruction.”

Allāh ﷻ, and be among those endowed with hearts so that, perhaps, you will be granted mercy!

Erasing Poetry in Praise of the Prophet ﷺ

You take advantage, every year, of the opportunity of maintaining, polishing, and refurbishing the Prophetic Mosque in order to eliminate many of the emblems of Islam [still] found in the inner hall of the Mosque such as historical vestiges and praises of the Prophet ﷺ. Thus you painted over many of the verses of al-Busayrī's poem on the Prophetic Mantle (*al-Burda*). You have also tried to cover up the famous two verses – inscribed on the windows of the Mosque – quoted in the story of al-‘Utbī as mentioned by Ibn Kathīr in his *Tafṣīr*: “*O best of those whose bones are buried in the deep earth, and from whose fragrance the depth and height have become sweet! / May I be the ransom for a grave in which you dwell, where one finds purity, bounty and munificence!*”⁵ If the Custodian of the Two Sanctuaries – King Fahd – had not stopped you when the news reached him then ordered you to restore them as they were...! But what is the reason for this disrespect and obstruction of your most noble Prophet ﷺ, the means of access between you and your Lord? What has transpired between you and him? You seem to have forgotten His saying: [Those who vex the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), for them there is a painful doom] (9:61) and [Lo! those who malign Allāh (ﷻ) and His Messenger, Allāh (ﷻ) has cursed them in the world and the Hereafter, and has prepared for them the doom of the disdained] (33:57).

Asking to Demolish the Green Dome

You allowed a man by the name of Muqbil ibn Hādī al-Wadī⁹ – known through his books and tapes for his propensity to insult and disparage those of the ‘Ulamā who disagree with him, those who call unto Allāh ﷻ, and the pious of this Community of Islam – to produce some research at the end of his studies at the Islamic University of Madīnah titled “About the Dome Built over the Grave of the Messenger” sponsored by Ḥammād al-Anṣārī. In this paper he demands openly and without shame that the Noble Grave be brought out of the Mosque, deems the presence of the Grave and Noble Dome there major innovations, and asks that they both be destroyed! On top of this you granted him high marks and a passing grade!

⁵ Ibn Kathīr, *Tafṣīr* (2:306) and *al-Bidāya* (1:180)

Do you honour those who challenge the Messenger of Islam, the Beloved of Allāh, the Mercy to the Universes ﷺ and His Intimate Friend?! Then this man directed hundreds of his followers, imitators, and their kind among those influenced by your School, bearing arms, to destroy and unearth the graves of the pious Muslims in Aden, Yemen, a few years ago.⁶ They roamed the land spreading corruption and ruin, digging up the graves of the dead with picks and spades until they brought out the bones of some of the dead and violated their sanctity. They caused a deaf and blind dissension. We heard they even used dynamite in some places! All this is part of the record of your deeds.

Attempting to Close Down al-Baqīʿ

You strove to commit a major innovation in which none preceded you, not even those who adhered to your doctrines and methods before you: striving to close down the noble Baqīʿ cemetery, prevent burial in it, and redirect the burial of the new dead to another spot “far from the place of idolatry and innovations,” as you put it, so as to stop people from entering al-Baqīʿ and visiting whoever is in it of the Prophetic relatives, the Companions, the Successors, and the rest of the Righteous. Allah ﷻ brought your endeavours to nought, causing someone to inform King Fahd, the Custodian of the Two Sanctuaries, of this plan. Whereupon he rejected what you were planning and ordered that al-Baqīʿ be enlarged so as to eliminate your pretext that it became too full to accommodate more Muslim burials.

Replacing Sayyidah Khadijah’s House with Latrines

You approved, without the least objection, the razing of the house of Sayyidah Khadijah al-Kubrā – the Mother of the believers and First Beloved of the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds ﷺ. That place is the spot where the Revelation descended upon him for the first time from the Lord of Might and Majesty. You did not raise a peep when this destruction occurred, satisfied that washrooms and latrines took its place! Where is fear of Allāh ﷻ? Where is shame before his most noble Messenger?

⁶ First among them Imām al-Ḥabīb al-ʿAydarus al-ʿAdanī [Abū Bakr ibn ʿAbd Allāh (d. 911)] the blessing of Aden and Hadramawt, Allāh have mercy on him! Allāh thwarted their plans and his shrine was renewed and blessed dome rebuilt.

Eradicating the House of his Mawlid

You tried and continue to try – as if it were your goal in life – to destroy the last remnant of the historical vestiges of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, namely the noble place where he was born. This house was razed then changed into a cattle market, then some pious people used ruse to transform it into a library which became “*Maktabat Makkah al-Mukarramah*.” You began to pry at that place with evil stares and vengeful threats, trying to entrap it with the official departments. You openly requested that it be destroyed and have shown hostility to the authorities, pressing them hard to effect such destruction after the decision taken to that effect by the organization of your major scholars a few years ago. I have an explicit taped recording of this decision. But the Custodian of the Two Sanctuaries, King Fahd – the prudent and wise man who is aware of next-worldly consequences – ignored your request and froze it indefinitely. Alas, for shame! Such disrespect and disloyalty against this noble Prophet ﷺ by whom Allāh ﷻ brought us out and yourselves and your ancestors into light! What shamelessness in his presence the Day we come to drink from his blessed Basin! Alas, woe and misery for a Sect that hates its Prophet whether in word or in deed, holding him in contempt and trying its best to eradicate his traces! Yet Allāh ﷻ says to us: [Take as your place of worship the place where Ibrāhīm stood (to pray)] (2:125). And He said, bestowing on the Israelites the gifts of Talut, Mūsā ﷺ, and Hārūn ﷺ: [And their Prophet said unto them: Lo! the token of his kingdom is that there shall come to you the ark wherein is peace of reassurance from your Lord, and a remnant of that which the house of Mūsā ﷺ and the house of Hārūn ﷺ left behind, the angels bearing it. Lo! Herein shall be a token for you if (in truth) you are believers] (2:248). The ‘Ulamā of Qur’ānic commentary said that these vestiges consisted in the staff of Mūsā ﷺ, his sandals, etc.⁷ Read also, if you like, the sound and authentic ḥadīths that pertain to the physical and personal relics of the Prophet and the true concern of the Companions over them as mentioned in the pages of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. There is enough evidence [for him who has a heart or gives ear with full intelligence] (50:37) and ample provision for those who think and reflect.⁸

⁷ “The Beast shall come out and with her is Sulaymān’s ﷺ seal-ring and Mūsā’s ﷺ rod...” Narrated from Abū Hurayra رضي الله عنه by al-Tirmidhī (*ḥasan gharīb*) and Aḥmad.

⁸ Cf. Sheikh H. Kabbānī’s *Encyclopaedia* (4:135-156).

Recent Elimination of a Vestige

There was a vestige at the spot where the Prophet's ﷺ camel alighted in the mosque of Qubā when he emigrated to Madīnah, at which location was revealed the verse⁹ [A place of worship which was founded upon duty to Allāh ﷻ from the first day is worthier that you should stand to pray therein, wherein are men who love to purify themselves. Allāh ﷻ loves the purifiers] (9:108). You eliminated this vestige which we used to see until recently.

Defacing Masjid al-Qiblatayn

There used to be, in the *Mosque of the Two Qiblas*, a marker indicating the old *qibla* and the abrogated direction of prayer towards the Farthest Mosque [in *al-Qudus, Shām*], so you eliminated it on the grounds that you consider it an innovation.

Razing the Gardens and Wells of the Companions

You eliminated the garden of the *Ṣaḥābī* Salmān al-Fārsī ؓ which contained a date palm-tree planted by the Prophet ﷺ and you destroyed the well of *al-‘Ayn al-Zarqa’* near Qubā and the well of *Aris* – the “well of the ring.”¹⁰ You also forbade sighting of the well of *Ruma* which ‘Uthmān ؓ had bought from a Jew and turned into a permanent endowment for the Muslims in the way of Allāh ﷻ. There are many other important vestiges that were either eliminated or defaced and changed.

Razing Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī's ؓ House

You wreaked destruction on the house of the great Companion Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī ؓ who hosted the Prophet ﷺ upon his arrival in Madīnah al-Munawwarah before the building of his noble apartments. All the periods that preceded yours have preserved this vestige, including your immediate predecessors. But you destroyed this most noble vestige which used to be in the *qibla* of the most prayer-niche (*miḥrāb*) of the noble Prophetic Mosque on the pretext that “the polytheist Muslims” derived blessings from it!!

⁹ But see Ibrāhīm Rifʿat Basha, *Mirʿāt al-Ḥaramayn* (1:397).

¹⁰ Ibn ‘Umar ؓ: “The Prophet ﷺ wore a silver ring on his hand ... [that] fell in the well of Aris. (*Al-Bukhārī*). See also Ibrāhīm Rifʿat Basha, *Mirʿāt al-Ḥaramayn* (1:398-399).

Destroying an Invaluable Library

You destroyed, near the house of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī رضي الله عنه, the library of Sheikh al-Islam Ḥārif Ḥikmat which was filled with priceless books and manuscripts.¹¹ Its fine Ottoman architecture was unique. You destroyed all of the above when it was far from the enlargement of the Sanctuary and had nothing to do with it.

Madīnah Destroyed

You also destroyed the well of *Bir Ha'* inside the enlargement area, leaving no trace of it nor marker indicating its former existence. The Prophet ﷺ entered it as mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and elsewhere.¹² You spared none of the vestiges of al-Muṣṭafā and his Companions in Madīnah, only the Prophetic Mosque.

¹¹ Sheikh Muṣṭafā ibn al-Sayyid Ibrāhīm al-Basir al-Maghribī told the translator of this book that the entire holdings of this library was whisked off by the truckloads to a remote desert location and burnt.

¹² Cf. al-Bukhārī, book of *zakāt*, from Ḥānās ibn Mālik رضي الله عنه: “Abū Ṭalḥa رضي الله عنه was the largest owner of date palms among the Anṣār in Madīnah and the dearest of all his plantations to him was *Bir Ha'*. It lay opposite the Mosque and the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to enter it and drink from its water, which was fresh and sweet...” Also in Muslim, book of *zakāt*.