

Did Rasulullaah SAW. Ever Miss a salaah?

Q: Salaah-489: What do the Ulema and Muftis have to say about an incident that an Aalim narrated, stating that Rasulullaah SAW. once missed a salaah. He said that Rasulullaah SAW.'s eyes did not open for the salaah and it was only the rays of the rising sun that woke him up. Rasulullaah SAW. then performed Qadhaa salaah. Is this true? We cannot understand how this could have happened to Rasulullaah SAW. If the incident is true, please furnish references and explain the reasons for this. There has since developed a conflict between us in this regard.

Answer: Without doubt, such an incident did transpire when Rasulullaah SAW. needed to perform Qadhaa salaah because he did not wake up from his sleep. Rasulullaah SAW. was a human being and part of creation and not the Creator. He therefore needed sleep. It is only Allaah who does not need any sleep, as Allaah says, "Neither drowsiness nor sleep overcomes Him.

The incident does not how ever cast any shadow over the personality of Rasulullaah SAW. because he was never a negligent or a lazy person. What happened was that Rasulullaah SAW. was travelling with the Sahabah RADI. by night and they reached their camp when the night was about to end. Because they were all extremely weary and needed to sleep, Rasulullaah SAW. asked which of the Sahabah RADI. would stay awake to awaken them all for the Fajr salaah. Hadhrat Bilaal RADI. took the responsibility and the rest went to sleep. However, despite trying his best to stay awake, Hadhrat Bilaal RADI. also fell asleep. This was when they all missed the salaah and had to perform Qadhaa.

The incident is however replete with wisdom because through it the Ummah practically learnt how to perform the Qadhaa salaah. Rasulullaah SAW. then had the Adhaan called out and they offered the Qadhaa salaah in Jamaa'ah. Rasulullaah SAW. then consoled the Sahabah RADI. saying, "O people! Verily, Allaah takes hold of our souls (when we sleep) and had He so willed. He could have returned them to us sooner (before sunrise). If any of you is asleep or forgets to perform his salaah, he must still perform his (Qadhaa, salaah as he would have performed the salaah." This Hadith is reported in Mishkaatul Masaabeeh (Pg. 1 67 ).

The incident also teaches us the lesson that all of creation are subservient to the will of Allaah. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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