

SUNNAH-SALAH IN JOURNEY?

Q:20- Should we perform the Sunnah Salah while we are on journey and whilst performing Qasr in the obligatory prayers? Some people say that the Sunnah Salah is not permissible in journey and the Holy Prophet saw, did not perform it during his travels. What is the correct view of the Shariah? (Ibid)

A: The correct position, according to the majority of Muslim Jurists, is that the Sunnah becomes Nafl or mustahabb when one is on travel. If he performs it he deserves much reward, but if he leaves it, there is no sin on him.

It is not correct to say that the Holy Prophet saw, did not offer the Sunnah prayer during his travels. In fact, sometimes the Holy Prophet saw, did perform the Sunnah prayer while on travel and sometimes he did not. Both ways are equally established by the authentic traditions. For example, the blessed companion Bara' ibn Azib reports that he accompanied the Holy Prophet saw, in eighteen journeys and he never found him abandoning the two rak'at after the Zawal. (See Tirmidhi and Abu Dawood)

Even Abdullah ibn 'Umar has reported both ways. In a tradition he reports that the Holy Prophet did not offer the Sunnah or nafl prayers in his travels but in another report he says that the Holy Prophet: used to offer Sunnah or nafl prayers. Both the reports are available in the Sunnan of Tirmidhi. There is, in fact no contradiction between the reports. Actually, the Holy Prophet, sometimes prayed the Sunnah prayers, and sometimes left them.

So, all the four Muslim Schools (Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali) are unanimous on the point that performing the Sunnah prayers in journey is more desirable if one is in peaceful condition. However, if someone does not offer the Sunnah prayer while he is in journey, he should not be regarded as sinful.

(See Almughni, Ibn Qudamah (2:141) and Ibn Abidin).

Contemporary fatawaa