

CHAPTER SIXTY-SIX

THE SUNNAH OF TRAVEL

O Allah (The Exalted) bless our lord and master Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) as much as all there is water in the sea.

People travel on a daily basis locally as well as throughout the world. By learning the Sunnah one will gain benefit and success through the journey.

Loss in travelling alone & at night

'Abd-Allah Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, *"If a person knew how much loss there was in travelling alone and how many trials and afflictions come upon a person during the night then people would never travel alone."*ⁱ *Allahu Akbar!*

He preferred three people to travel together. One of the wisdoms behind this is that if something happened to one, one can stay with that person whilst the other goes for help, *Subhanallah!*

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that, *"Travelling is an experience of torture. It deprives a traveller of his sleep, food and drink. When a person has accomplished his purpose of journey, he should return to his house hastily."*ⁱⁱ

Forgiveness before leaving

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) states that, *"Whosoever asks forgiveness in this way and the other person does not forgive, then on the Day of Resurrection that unforgiving person cannot meet me at the pool of Kawthar."*

When travelling we should ask for our faults to be forgiven because one does not know if one will return again.

What does Allah say?

'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) asked the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) once, *"O Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)! Why did you smile?"* The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, *"When a person recites a supplication and then says istighfar then Allah is pleased and says, "Look at how much my servant fears me, that even before going on a journey, he asks for forgiveness." Subhanallah!*

Qasr (reduced) Salaah

Yahya (may Allah be pleased with him) related that 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) that, *"The prayer was prescribed as two cycles, both when settled and when travelling. Then the travelling prayer was kept as it was, and an increase was made in the prayer when settled."*ⁱⁱⁱ

When a person travels more than 57.5 miles, it becomes necessary (wajib) to offer two cycles instead of four of the Fardh of Dhuhr, 'Asr and 'Isha. The other Salaahs can be prayed and should be prayed in full.

Travel in the morning

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has said that, *"The best time to start a journey is in the first part of the day."* Meaning the morning.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, *"There should be a bottle of Surma (eye colour), a mirror, scissors, comb and a Miswak in a travel pack."*

These are Sunnah to take with you whilst travelling, one may think there is no need for these, however, whether there is a need for them or not, there will be blessings as you are following the Sunnah.

Leader of the group

'Ali Abu Rabati (may Allah be pleased with him) states, "I was accompanied by 'Abd-Allah Maruzi, he said, *"During our journey one of us should be the leader, now tell me are you my leader or vice versa?"* I said,

“You are the leader.” He said *“Then listen, whatever I ask from you, you will obey.”* I replied, *“What ever I hear I will obey.”* He commanded me to bring a bag and I brought it. He placed all my clothing and goods in the bag and placed it on his back and began walking. I said *“There is a lot of goods, let me at least carry my own you will become very tired, however, he kept giving the same answer,”* *“You choose me as your leader and have no right to over-rule my command.”*

One night it rained, all night he stood with a blanket over my head and did not let one drop fall on me (he himself was soaked) and when I tried to speak he would repeat *“I am the leader and you are a follower.”* I was crying inside and wished I did not choose him to be my leader.”^{iv} *Subhanallah!*

Becoming a leader is not about giving orders but to do work and be some sort of helper for the rest of the group.

Difficulties in travelling

A companion said to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), *“Oh Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) I suffer many difficulties in travelling and my business doesn’t prosper either.”* The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, *“Recite five Surahs from the Qur’an, Al Kafiroon, Idha Jaa (Surah Nasr), Qul HuwaAllah (Surah Ikhlas), Qul-A’udhu Bi Rabbil Falaq (Surah Falaq) and Qul-’Audhu Bi Rabbin Naas (Surah Naas), and during the journey repeat ‘Allah, Allah (The Exalted)’ and you will not suffer any difficulty and your business will be a success.”* *Subhanallah!*

Those who go on a business trip be it to a close town, try and practise this and it will bring many blessings *Insha-Allah!*

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) told Jabir Mutim (may Allah be pleased with him) to recite the following five Surahs when on a journey:

1. Surah Al Kafiroon
2. Surah Nasr
3. Surah Ikhlaas
4. Surah Falaq
5. Surah Naas

Every Surah should be commenced with *‘Bismillah’* and ending at Surah Naas with *‘Bismillah’* meaning reciting *‘Bismillah’* six times.

Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) states that, *“When I went out on a journey and although I was wealthy and had more merchandise than my companions, my condition was worse than them. However, from the time I began reciting these Surahs, my condition was better upon my return than all of them and I would have most provisions from the journey.”*^v *Subhanallah!*

Women travelling on their own

Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) heard the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) saying, *“It is not permissible for a man to be alone with a woman, and no lady should travel except with a Muhram (i.e. her husband or a person whom she cannot marry in any case; e.g. her father, brother, etc.)”* Then a man got up and said, *“O Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)! I have been enlisted in the army for such-and-such battle and my wife is proceeding for Hajj.”* The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, *“Go, and perform the Hajj with your wife.”*^{vi}

Look at the emphasis on being accompanied by a Mehram. At that time Muslims were little in number and were desperately in-need of as many fighters as possible, however, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said to his companion to accompany his wife. Unfortunately, this is very much neglected, many excuses are made, we will not be able to make these excuses in the court of Allah (The Exalted) and His beloved Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). Let us begin to follow the shari’ah (Islamic law) as it has been laid down.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, *“When returning from a journey, ring a gift for you’re the household be it stones.”*^{vii}

After the journey

The Messenger of Allah’s (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) blessed Sunnah was to return from a journey during Chast time. He would first go to the Masjid and perform two cycles Salaah. Thereafter he would stay in the Masjid for a little while before going home.^{viii}

When returning from a long journey at night one should not go home immediately, but rather spend the night in the Mosque and go home the next day. It was the habit of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), that when he returned from a journey he generally did so at the time of Chasht. He first went into the Mosque, read two Cycles of Superergratory Salaah and sat in the Mosque meeting the people for a little while before going home.

Supplication when feeling tired

Umme Salma (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates that, “Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her) came to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) to ask for a slave to assist her. Her hands had turned red due to grinding and drawing water. The colour of her face had also changed due to cooking and sweeping. She came and found that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was not present. When the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) arrived he enquired, ‘*Why did my daughter come?*’ He was told, to ask for a slave. Then the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) went to her house and asked her, ‘*You wanted a slave? There is no helper at the moment, however, when one is present then you will get one.*’ He then said, ‘*The worldly work is easy perform it whichever way you can. Be a good servant of Allah (The Exalted), fear him and look after your husband. I will show you such a deed that is better than a slave, before sleeping recite Subhanallah (All purity belongs to Allah) 33 times, Alhamdulillah (All praise be to Allah) 33 times, and 34 times Allahu Akbar (Allah is the greatest).*’”^{ix}

This is the reason this tasbih is also known as Tasbih-e-Fatima. Many people to rid their tiredness turn to massage parlours and get massaged by the opposite gender which is strictly forbidden. Even if people get massaged by the same gender their bodies are not covered according to the Shari’ah (Islamic law). When a person recites the Tasbih given by the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) it will rid you of tiredness as well as give you spiritual benefit. May Allah (The Exalted) save us from using forbidden methods of ridding tiredness and give us the ability to perform the remembrance of Allah (The Exalted), Ameen.

The best day to travel

When the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would set out or send someone on a journey, he thought of Thursday as an appropriate day for departure.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) considered himself a traveller in this world having no concern with comforts and luxuries. He was a living example of living in this world like a stranger or a passer by. He said, “*Be in this world as though a stranger or a wayfarer.*”^x

Gifts

Do your best to bring some gifts to those receiving you, and likewise present your guests with a present. Always be prepared to reciprocate gifts with suitable ones. A gift, however, symbolic, will greatly enhance the pleasure of such a meeting. The joy of years every time your gift is seen or used.

Manners of Travelling

1. To read four Cycles of Superergratory Salaah before setting out on a journey.
2. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) preferred a Thursday for commencing a journey.^{xi}
3. It is Haraam to set out on a journey after the Jumu’ah Adhan and before the Jumu’ah Salaah.^{xii}
4. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) refrained from setting out on a journey alone.^{xiii}
5. He preferred a group of three and he stated that if four companions set out on a journey then it was preferable.
6. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has stated that if more than three persons are travelling in a group then one of them should be appointed as an Ameer (leader).^{xiv}
7. The leader of the group is the one who serves the group. Choose someone who practices the Sunnah.^{xv}

8. Before setting out on a journey one should meet one's friends and relatives and make supplication for them that I hand over to Allah (The Exalted) your religion, your trustworthiness, and your result.
9. Women must not travel without her husband or a man with whom marriage is permissible with (Ghair-Mehram) for more than three days or Fifty-seven and a half miles or more, because for women to travel alone is not permissible in Islam. ^{xvi}
10. Take permission from your parents before travelling. ^{xvii}
11. You do not need permission from your parents for travelling to learn the knowledge of Islam this is not disobedience. ^{xviii}
12. When going on a journey, remember a few Sunnahs, Prayer mat, personal hygiene can¹, Miswak, comb, nail cutter, and stick.
13. On dry ground the measurement is taken as miles and the total amount of miles are fifty seven and a half (57.5). ^{xix}
14. When a person is travelling (more than 57.5 miles) Qasr Salaah is necessary, meaning instead of the four Fardh of Dhuhr you will pray two Fardh, the four Fardh of 'Asr you will pray two and the four Fardh of 'Isha you will pray two Fardh.
15. There is no Qasr for the two Fardh of fajr, three Fardh of Maghrib, and the three Witr of 'Isha, they have to be prayed in full.
16. There is no Qasr in Sunnat and therefore should be prayed in full. In fact due to fear or if in a hurry you can miss the Sunnats but you cannot pray them as Qasr. ^{xx}
17. Fardh, Wajib or Sunnat cannot be prayed on a moving train. Therefore when the train stops at a station pray these Namaz and if you see that the time is running out then pray the Namaz whichever way possible and then when you get the time repeat the Namaz. ^{xxi} **IMPORTANT:** A moving train should not be mixed with a moving boat or ship because if these are stopped then they wouldn't be stopped on ground and you can touch the ground from the train if you get off and you cannot do that on a ship. It is only allowed to pray Namaz on a ship when it is in mid water, if it is on the shore and you can get off then you must do this as praying on the ship in this situation is not allowed.
18. If a traveller made the intention of staying at a destination for fifteen days or more, there is no Qasr once reaching the destination.
19. Return home as soon as you have completed your work. ^{xxii}
20. Help your friends and others whilst on your travels.
21. When leaving home leave your family, wealth in the hands of Allah (The Exalted).
22. Make supplication when travelling as supplications are accepted more quickly.
23. If you fear an enemy pray Surah Quraish, (Li-ila-Fi Quraysh) you will attain peace in any affliction.
24. Pray 'Ya Samadu' 134 times every day and you will gain satisfaction from your food and drink.

¹ For cleansing after going to the toilet. Many people use tissue and think they are unclean and miss their Salaah, Allah (The Exalted) forbid. We know we are going on a journey but make efforts to prepare for other things, but not prepare for that which is necessary. One can take the tissue and wet it and perform Istinja or take a bottle of water. Even if no water was available and one performed Istinja with tissue, as long as the filth is no more than a 50p piece/two pound coin (if you take water in your palm making a cup and the amount of water that is left in the palm, that is the size) then one should still offer their Salaah and if it is more than that it should be made pure. If this is not possible then the Salaah should still be offered and then repeated again.

25. It is not permissible to pray any Fardh, Wajib, or the Sunnah of Fajr on a moving train. However, if the train is not to stop then you should pray it and repeat it later.
26. If you are travelling by air (i.e. by plane), Salaah should be prayed and there is no need to repeat it.
27. One should remember that it is obligatory (Fardh) to pray all the Salaah (besides Superogatory) whilst standing otherwise the Salaah will be void.
28. Do not face any direction but find out the direction of the Qibla.
29. If you encounter any problems, then it states in the hadith proclaim three time *Ya 'Aeinuni Ya 'Eibadallah*, (O Allah's servants! Help me) ^{xxiii}
30. Only an intention of travelling is not sufficient but they have to leave the area, if it is a city then to leave the city, if it is a town to leave the town and if it is a city then not only the city but it's associated landmarks then the journey has begun. ^{xxiv}

Supplication when leaving the home

When leaving home at the beginning of a journey one should read the following supplication:

‘Bismillahi Tawak-Kaltu ‘Alallahi Wala Howla Wala Quwwata Illabillah’

“Allah’s name I begin with, I trust in Allah (The Exalted), there is no power and might except from Allah (The Exalted).”

31. When one boards any vehicle, he should read: *Bismillah*. ‘Allah’s name I begin with’.
32. When seated, he should read: *AlhamduLillah*. ‘All praise be to Allah (The Exalted)’.

Supplication for travelling

Thereafter one should read the supplication for travelling aboard any vehicle:

‘Alhamdulillah Subhaanal-Ladhi Sakh-Kharalana Hadha Wamakunnaa Lahu Muqrineen Wainna Ilaa Rabbina Lamun Qaliboon.’

“All praise be to Allah (The Exalted) purity belongs to He, who has subjected this conveyance for us and we were not capable of controlling it and, surely, to our sustainer we are to return.” ^{xxv}

33. After praying this supplication it is Sunnah to smile.
34. Thereafter recite ‘Alhamdulillah’ and ‘Allahu Akbar’ three times.

Supplication when you stop at a place

When stopping en route at any place read:

“A’udhu Bikalimaa Tillahit Taammaati Min Sharri Maa Khalaq”
‘I seek refuge in the perfect words of Almighty Allah from the evil of which he has created’.

As long as the person who utters these words remains at that place, nothing from (that place) shall cause him harm.

No evil will harm till he departs from that place. ^{xxvi}

Supplication when you enter a village

When one enters any village, town or settlement one should read:
“Allahumma Baarik Lanaa Feehaa.”

‘O Allah (The Exalted) Bless us in this (place).

Supplication when one returns from a journey

Upon returning from a journey one should recite:

“ ‘Aa- iboona Ta’aiboona ‘Aabidoona Lirrabinaa haamidoon.”

‘We are returnees, of those who repent and we are worshippers and those who prostrate and those who praise our lord.’^{xxvii}

May Allah (The Exalted) give us all the ability to follow the Sunnah and make it easy for all of us gaining reward and blessings whilst travelling, Ameen.

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- ⁱ Bukhari
ⁱⁱ ibid & Muslim
ⁱⁱⁱ Muwatta of Imam Malik
^{iv} Faizane Sunnat
^v Hisnul Hasin
^{vi} Bukhari
^{vii} Abu Dawud
^{viii} Bukhari & Muslim
^{ix} Musnad Imam Ahmad & Madarij-un-Nabuwah
^x Imaam Nawawi
^{xi} Bukhari
^{xii} Tirmidhi
^{xiii} Abu Dawud
^{xiv} ibid
^{xv} Baihaqi
^{xvi} Durre Mukhtar & Raddul Mohtar
^{xvii} Alamgiri
^{xviii} Alamgiri
^{xix} Fatawa-e-Razawiyya, Bahar-e-Shariat
^{xx} Alamgiri
^{xxi} Bahar-e-Shariat
^{xxii} Bukhari
^{xxiii} Hisnul Hasin
^{xxiv} Durr-e-Mukhtar, Radd-ul-Mohtar
^{xxv} Abu Dawud in Jihad & Mishkat
^{xxvi} Muslim
^{xxvii} ibid