

## ISLAM AND TRAVELLING

LECTURE BY BROTHER MAHMOOD BEGG AT THE NEW MOSQUE ON  
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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Islam,

Assalamoalaikum,

All Praise belongs to Allah (S.W.T), All Greatness belongs to Allah (S.W.T), and Every Single Blessings is through the beloved Sayyidna Mohammad (S.W.S). We must always remember this.

Welcome to this lecture which has come at a very appropriate time when thousands of people and families all over the world are preparing for a journey of a life time to Makkah namely the HAJJ! and the Zeeyarat of Masjide Nabwee and the Green Tomb in Madina where our beloved Prophet Mohammad is resting – the most beautiful sight in the whole World! Subhan Allah!

I will begin my lecture from a different angle. We have all heard the name of Maulana Jalaludeen Rumi – the famous Sufi Saint of Konya (Turkey). Over eight hundred years ago Maulana Rumi's father, Sultan Valad left Afghanistan with his family and mureeds (followers) and travelled towards the Anatolia region of Turkey as the conditions in Afghanistan were not good. Strangely enough even today Afghanistan is in turmoil! May Allah (S.W.T) bring peace to our Muslim brothers and sisters in Afghanistan. Ameen.

Sultan Valad who had been given the title of "Sultan-UI-Ulema" in his days (he was a very holy person indeed), arrived at town of Keysiree in the Anatolia region of Turkey and was met by some people of the town who asked him, "Where have you come from and where are you going to?" To this Sultan Valad replied, "We have come from Allah and we are going towards Him". (Subhan Allah). The people in the town immediately realised that he was a holy Saint and welcomed him, his family and followers with open arms. After staying here for a few years Sultan Valad travelled to Konya and settled there and it is here that his son Jalaludeen Rumi began his spritual accent.

My purpose in relating this incidence is to make us aware that as soon as a child is born, his or her journey back to Allah starts ticking over. So the whole mankind is in the process of that journey whether we are resting, sitting, sleeping or working or travelling. We must remember this because it is this knowledge that one day we shall be accountable to Allah (S.W.T) is what makes us a responsible person. It is lack of this knowledge and belief that can make people behave in the worst possible manner.

Now let us look at the Five Pillars of Islam:

1. Belief in One God and Muhammad (S.W.S) as His last Prophet.
2. Salat (Prayer five times a day).
3. Fasting during the month of Ramadhan.
4. Zakat (Paying charity to the poor – 2 ½ %)
5. Performing the Hajj at least once a life time providing one is healthy and can afford the journey.

From the last Pillar of Islam, it is quite clear how much importance travelling is given in Islam. The Hajj is the biggest movement of people on Earth during a six to eight weeks period. Thousands of people and families start their journey to Makkah and Madina from the farthest corners of Earth. The Hajj duties themselves require travelling from one place to another and the reward of it all is the highest! One is cleaned of all sins and is like a new born baby.

Now let us go on to the Hijra. This is the journey our Prophet Muhammad (S.W.S) made from Makkah to Madina on the command of Allah (S.W.T). The Muslim Calendar is therefore called the Hijra Calendar since it is based on Hijra Journey of our Prophet (S.W.S). Whenever one is experiencing persecution or lack of progress in one place it recommended to make Hijra , in other words to move to another place or country. The best Hijra is of course one for the sake of Allah (S.W.T).

Now let us consider the Mehraj - this is another journey which our Prophet Muhammad (S.W.S) was called to by Allah. This is of course the most miraculous journey by our Prophet (S.W.S) when he reached (LA MAKAN) and actually saw Allah (S.W.T.) with his own eyes. He was also shown the heavens and hells.

He was also given the gift of Salat for the Muslims. So you can see this is another example of how much importance travelling and journeys have in our faith.

Now let us see what the Qoran tells us about travelling. The Ayat:

“QUL SAIRU FIL ARDH WA ANZAROO KAIFA KANA AKIBATU MUKAZIBEEN” appears several times in the Qoran in different ayats and situations. Fundamentally Allah (S.W.T.) is telling people through his beloved Sayyidna Muhammad (S.W.S) that they should travel through the Earth and reflect on what happened to people and nations who went before them. Effectively, this means that we should study history as a means of instruction for us to improve our own conduct and belief in Allah (S.W.T.).

If one is therefore travelling through Egypt, one can and should reflect on the fact that this is a country where the Pharaoh (Firoun) used to live at one time and how he proclaimed to be god and what happened to him in the end – a god who drowned! We the Muslims therefore always say that there is No God except Allah – The Ever Living – ‘Baqi’. Everything else is Fanna. This is a lesson which the Qoran makes clear to us again and again.

Another example is that if one travels Tunisia and visits the ‘Oqba Mosque’ in the Holy City of Kirouan one would come to learn that this great splendid mosque with the tallest minaret in Africa was built by a prominent Sahabi Oqba bin Nafi who when he conquered the whole of North Africa and reached the shores of Atlantic, raised his hands to Allah and said ‘O Allah I have stopped only because there is no more land left to be conquered!

Similarly if one is travelling through Saudi Arabia, one would have to remember that this a land in which our beloved Prophet Sayyidna Mohammad (S.W.S) lived and did his travels through all those very high black mountains burnt with heat and deserts from one end of the country to the other. We will have to remember what he preached, how successful he was despite all the difficulties and opposition, how his Sahabas respected him and were willing to die for him at any time! They took Islam to the four corners of the Earth. We will also realise why it is important to follow his teachings to the best of our abilities.

Similarly different countries have different histories and as we travel to them or through them we begin to understand what has gone before us – the very thing the Qoran teaches us – to reflect on what had happened before and take lesson from it for ourselves for our own future!

One can see clearly how Allah (S.W.T) is giving importance to travelling. Now let us look at the Malaysian example. No war was ever fought between Muslims and non Muslims in that part of the world and yet Islam is the dominant faith in the area. How did this happen?

History tells us that it was the Naqshbandi Sufi traders who went to Malaysia hundreds of years ago and found the land dominated by Hindu and Buddhist faith and the people were thoroughly entangled in Riba – payment of interest on loans – families were sinking with loans and interest on loans! The Sufi traders started giving interest free loans! This feature started to attract people towards Islam. They were of course also observing the prayers being said and the whole life style of the Muslim traders. This is how the people became attracted to Islam started entering into Islam and the momentum continued. Today most of the people in Malaysia and Indonesia are Muslims. One can clearly see how Islam has spread through the travelling of Muslims and also marriage with local people.

Britain itself is an example of how Islam is spreading here through the arrival of Muslims. Today there are at least 24 thousand English men and women who are Muslims. The number is growing InshaAllah but we have to present a better example and the Ulema have to consider this matter more seriously. If more work had been done I sure a much bigger number of English People would have accepted Islam. Nevertheless, effort must continue.

#### THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF TRAVELLING.

In one famous hadith our Prophet (S.W.S) has said that you should travel even to China for the sake of education. In other words one should be willing to go to any part of the world for the sake of education – by this we mean good education including Islamic Education.

Travelling requires planning. Consider your travel to Saudi Arabia for Hajj or Umra. There is months of planning that has to go into it. You need to book your holidays from work, have enough money in hand to spend, book your tickets, get visa for Saudi Arabia, find the right company, buy all your personal requirements, learn all the duas for Hajj, get fit for long walks on high grounds and develop a spirit of helping other who might be old or not too well. You have to be ready not to miss any Salat or any other religious duty for Hajj or Umra. You cannot just walk to Heathrow Airport with a suitcase without any preparation or planning!

Travelling widens your horizons. You see different landscapes, different types of trees, birds, rocks, sand and of course different colours of people and their cultures and languages. One can also see the greatness of Islam when one sees people from every corner of the earth in Makkah and Madina during the Hajj period. Your thinking widens – you do not see Islam as an Indian or Pakistani faith only. You can see its International reality. A travelled person is much more accommodating when dealing with people from other countries. The educational value of travelling is truly immense – one can deal with it as a topic in itself.

## SOME OF THE ADAAB (MANNERS) REGARDING TRAVELLING.

(This part of the Lecture was supplemented by Maulana Shahid Raza at the request of Brother Mahmood Begg.)

1. Before travelling do some Sadaqa. (Give charity)
2. It is better to set out on Monday, Thursday or Saturday.
3. Specially it is Sunnah to set out on a Thursday (Bukhari).
4. Morning time for setting out is a blessed time.
5. On a Friday, it is not good to set out before Friday prayer.
6. While leaving the home one should read this Dua.

‘BISMILLAHE TAWAKUTUHU’

7. While boarding a plane, or on Train or Car/Coach etc. one should read as under:



BISMILLAH	3 TIMES
ALLAH-O-AKBAR	3 TIMES
ALHAMDO LILLAH	3 TIMES
SUBHAN ALLAH	3 TIMES
LA ILAHA ILLALLAH	1 TIME

and then the following Dua:

BISMILLAHI ALHAMDULILLAHE SUBHAN ALAZI SAKHARALANA  
HAZA WA MA KUNA LAHU MUQRINEENA WA INA ILA RABINA  
LAMUNQALIBUNA.

- While travelling by Sea, the following Dua has to be read:

‘BISMILLAHE MAJREEHA WA MURSAHA INA RABBI  
LAGAFURURAHIM’



- One should take all that which is required during the journey.
- Seek permission from your parents, wife from husbands.
- You can travel for Jihad, Hajj (which is Fardh) and for learning Islam even without permission.
- Avoid travelling alone. (Bukhari)
- Whenever there are 3 or more than 3 people travelling together, one person should be the Leader (Ameer).
- While returning home, bring some gifts for your household.

#### APPLICATION OF THE LAWS OF SHARIAH WHILE TRAVELLING

A person travelling for more than 57 ½ miles is considered as a Traveller subject to the variations of the laws of Sharia.

1. Such a person is allowed to miss fasting and make it up later on.
2. Friday prayer is not Fardh on such a person.
3. Prayer in congregation is not necessary for him/her.
4. Eid prayers are not compulsory on such persons.
5. All four Rakah Fardh prayer become half, ie. 2 Rakah.
6. On moving trains, coaches or flying planes prayers are not performed. These missed prayers should be made up later on.
7. On boats and ferries we can perform Salah.
8. While travelling by plane/Train, and the time of prayer approaches, one is advised to meditate briefly in Zikr to show respect to the time of prayer.

MAY ALLAH HELP US TO OBSERVE ALL THE ADAAB OF TRAVELLING AND FORGIVE US FOR OUR SHORTCOMINGS AND GIVE US THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT ALL THE HOLY PLACES IN ISLAM.. AMEEN.