41734 - Islamic Etiquettes During Travel

the question

Is there a particular etiquette that the traveller should pay attention to, especially when travelling to Hajj?

Summary of answer

Some of the etiquettes of travelling in Islam include:
• Consulting those whose religious commitment, experience and knowledge you trust about travelling at that time.
• Seeking Allah’s guidance by praying Istikharah
• Seeking to please your parents
• Ensuring that your funds are lawfully earned and free from any suspicion
• Seeking a companion who desires good and hates evil
• Bidding farewell to your family, neighbours, friends and all your loved ones
• Saying the reported Du`a when leaving your house
• Setting out at the end of the night
• Saying Takbir when going up a rise in the land and saying Tasbih when going down into valleys
• Making Du`a most of the time when travelling
• Trying to remain in a state of purity and to pray on time

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Etiquettes of travelling in Islam

There are many points of etiquette to be followed by the traveller, which the scholars have compiled. One of those who compiled these rulings well was An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on

him), in his book Al-Majmu` (4/264-287), where he mentions sixty-two points of etiquette. We will mention some of them in brief, and anyone who wants to know more may consult the writings of An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him).

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Chapter on the etiquette of travelling:

This is an important topic, for which there is a great need.

Our aim here is to refer to this etiquette in brief.

· When a person wants to travel, it is recommended for him to consult those whose religious commitment, experience and knowledge he trusts about travelling at that time. The one who is consulted must be sincere in offering advice and avoid being influenced by whims and desires. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“and consult them in the affairs.” [Al ‘Imran 3:159]

The authentic Hadiths indicate that the people used to consult the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with regard to their affairs.

· Once he has decided to travel, the Sunnah is to seek Allah’s guidance by praying Istikharah. So he should pray two Rak’ahs of non-obligatory prayer, then recite the Du`a of Istikharah.

· If he has decided to travel for Hajj or Jihad or any other purpose, he should start by repenting from all sins and disliked actions, and he should put right any wrongs he has done towards people and pay off whatever he can of the debts he owes them; he should also return anything that has been entrusted to him and seek forgiveness from anyone with whom he has any dealings or friendship. He should write his will and have it witnessed, and he should appoint someone to pay off the debts that he was not able to pay. He should also leave with his family and those on whom he is obliged to spend enough funds to cover their needs until he returns.

· He should seek to please his parents and those whom he is obliged to honour and obey.

· If he is travelling for Hajj or Jihad or any other purpose, he should strive to ensure that his funds are lawfully earned and free from any suspicion. If he goes against this and goes for Hajj or Jihad with wealth that has been seized by force, he is a sinner and although his Hajj or Jihad may be outwardly valid, it will not be an accepted Hajj (Hajj Mabrur).

· It is recommended for the one who is travelling to Hajj or for any other purpose for which provision is carried to take a great deal of provision and money with him, so that he can share them with those who are in need. His provisions should be good (lawfully earned), because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O you who believe! Spend of the good things which you have (lawfully) earned, and of that which We have produced from the earth for you, and do not aim at that which is bad to spend from it.” [Al-Baqarah 2:267]

He should give willingly so that it will be more likely to be accepted.

· If he wants to travel for Hajj or Jihad, he should learn about how they are to be done, for no act of worship is valid if done by one who does not know it properly. It is recommended for the one who wants to do Hajj to take with him a clear book about the rituals which also speaks about their aims, and he should read it constantly and often throughout his journey, so that it will become fixed in his mind. Hence there is the fear that for some of the common folk, their Hajj will not be valid because they fail to fulfil one of the conditions and so on. And some of them may imitate some of the common folk of Makkah, thinking that they know the rituals properly and thus being deceived by them. That is a serious mistake. Similarly in the case of one who is going out for Jihad etc, it is recommended for him to take a book which speaks of what he needs to know, and the warrior should learn what he needs to know about fighting and the Du`as to be said at that time, and the prohibitions on treachery, killing women and children, and so on. The one who is travelling for the purpose of trade should learn what he needs to know about buying and selling, which transactions are valid and which are invalid, what is lawful and what is prohibited, and so on.

· It is recommended for him to seek a companion who desires good and hates evil, so that if

he forgets, he (companion) can remind him, if he remembers, he can help him, and if he happens to be a man of knowledge, he should stick with him, because he will help him to avoid bad attitudes such as boredom with travel and he can help him to maintain a noble attitude and encourage him to do so.

He should also be keen to please his companion throughout the journey. Each of them should put up with the other and view his companion with respect, and be patient with whatever he may do at some times.

· It is recommended for him to bid farewell to his family, neighbours, friends and all his loved ones. He should bid them farewell and he should say to each of them: “I place your religion, your faithfulness and the ends of your deeds in the trust of Allah.” The one who is staying behind should say to the traveller: “May Allah bless you with Taqwa and forgive you your sins and make goodness easy for you wherever you are.”

· It is Sunnah to say the following Du`a when leaving the house: Bismillah, tawakkaltu ‘ala Allah, wa la hawla wa la quwwata illa Billah. Allahumma inni a’udhu bika min an adilla aw udalla aw azilla aw uzalla aw athlima aw uthlama aw ajhala aw yujhal ‘alayya (In the name of Allah, I put my trust in Allah and there is no power and no strength except with Allah. O Allah, I seek refuge with You lest I should stray or be led astray, or slip or be tripped, or do wrong or be wronged, or behave foolishly or be treated foolishly).”

· The Sunnah when leaving one's house and wanting to get up on one's mount is to say Bismillah. Then when he has mounted it he should say: “Al-hamdu Lillah illadhi sakhkhara lana hadha wa ma kunna lahu muqrinien wa inna ila rabbina la munqalibun (In the name of Allah… All praise be to Allah Who has placed this (transport) at our service and we ourselves would not have been capable of that, and to our Lord is our final destiny.” Then he should say Al-hamdu Lillah (praise be to Allah) three times and Allahu Akbar (Allah is most Great) three times, then, “Subhanaka inni thalamtu nafsi faghfir li innahu la yaghfir udh-dhunuba illa anta (Glory be to You, verily I have wronged myself, so forgive me, for surely no one can forgive sins except You).”

And: “Allahumma inna nas’aluka fi safarina hadha al-birra wa’t-taqwa wa min al-’aml ma tarda, Allahumma hawwin ‘alayna safarana hadha watwi ‘anna bu’dahu. Allahumma anta as-sahib fi’s-safar wa’l-khalifah fi’l-ahl. Allahumma inni a’udhu bika min wa’tha’ as-safar wa ka’abat al-manthar wa su’ al-munqalib fi’l-mali wa’l-ahl (O Allah, we ask You for righteousness and piety in this journey of ours, and we ask You for deeds which please You. O Allah, facilitate our journey and let us cover its distance quickly. O Allah, You are the Companion on the journey and the Successor (the One Who guards them in a person’s absence) over the family. O Allah, I seek refuge with You from the difficulties of travel, from having a change of heart and from being in a bad predicament, and I seek refuge with You from an ill-fated outcome with regard to wealth and family).” When returning the same words are recited with the following addition: “Ayibuna ta’ibuna ‘abiduna li rabbina hamidun (Returning, repenting, worshipping and praising our Lord).”

· It is recommended to travel with a group of people , because of the Hadith of ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “If the people knew what I know about being alone, no one would ever travel alone at night.” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari)

· It is recommended for the group to appoint the best and wisest amongst them as their leader, and to obey him, because of the Hadith of Abu Sa’id and Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with them) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “When three people set out on a journey, let them appoint one of them as their leader.” (This is a sound Hadith narrated by Abu Dawud with a sound Isnad (chain of narration))

· It is recommended to set out at the end of the night, because of the Hadith of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “You should travel at the end of the night (or throughout the night) because it is easier to cover a greater distance at night.” (Narrated by Abu Dawud and was classed as sound. It was also narrated by Al-Hakim who said: it is authentic according to the conditions of Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

· He should adopt a kind and good attitude, and avoid arguing or pushing and shoving people

on the road. He should guard his tongue against insults, backbiting, cursing his mount or any other kind of foul speech.

· It is recommended for the traveller to say Takbir when going up a rise in the land and to say Tasbih when going down into valleys and the like.

· If he sees a village or town that he wants to enter, it is recommended for him to say: “Allahumma as’aluka khayraha wa khayra ahliha wa khayra ma fiha wa ‘a’udhu bika min sharriha wa sharri ahliha wa sharri ma fiha (O Allah, I ask You for its goodness, the goodness of its people and the goodness of what is in it, and I seek refuge with You from its evil, the evil of its people and the evil of what is in it).”

· It is recommended for him to make Du`a most of the time when travelling , because his Du`a will be answered.

· He should try to remain in a state of purity and to pray on time. Allah has made it easy by allowing Tayammum and joining and shortening of prayers.

· The Sunnah when stopping in a place is to say what was narrated by Khawlah bint Hakeem (may Allah be pleased with her), who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say: “Whoever makes a stop then says: ‘A’udhu bi kalimat Allah it-tammati min sharri ma khalaq (I seek refuge in the perfect words of Allah from the evil of that which He has created),’ nothing will harm him until he moves on from that place.” (Narrated by Muslim)

· It is recommended for a travelling group to camp close to one another and not to be scattered or separated needlessly, because of the Hadith of Abu Tha’labah Al-Khushani (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: When the people stopped in a place, they would scatter in the mountain passes and valleys. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Your scattering in these mountain passes and valleys is something from the devil.” After that, they never stopped in any place without being close together. (Narrated by Abu Dawood with a sound Isnad)

· The Sunnah for the traveller is that when he has done what he set out to do, he should hasten to return to his family, because of the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), according to which the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Travel is a kind of torment, which keeps one of you from his food and drink. When one of you has finished what he set out to do, let him hasten back to his family.” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

· The Sunnah is to say when returning from a journey that which is narrated in the Hadith of Ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), according to which the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), when he came back from a campaign or from Hajj and ‘Umrah, he would say Takbir on every high ground three times, then he would say, ‘La ilaha ill-Allah wahdahu la sharika lah, lahu’l-mulk wa lahu’l-hamd wa huwa ‘ala kulli shay’in qadir. Ayibuna ta’ibuna ‘abiduna, sajiduna li rabbina hamidun. Sadaqa Allahu wa’dah wa nasara ‘abdah wa hazama al-ahzaba wahdah

(There is none worthy of worship but Allah alone, with no partner or associate. His is the Dominion, to Him be all praise, and He is Able to do all things. Returning, repenting, worshipping, prostrating to our Lord and praising Him. Allah fulfilled His promise, granted victory to His slave and defeated the confederates Alone). (Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: We came back with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and when we reached the outskirts of Madinah he said: “Ayibuna ta’ibuna ‘abiduna li rabbina hamidun (Returning, repenting, worshipping and praising our Lord).” And he kept saying that until we came to Madinah. (Narrated by Muslim)

· The Sunnah when returning home is to start by going to the mosque that is nearest one's home and praying two Rak’ahs with the intention of offering Salat Al-qudum (the prayer of arrival), because of the Hadith of Ka’b ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him), according to which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), when he came back from a journey, would start by going to the mosque where he would pray two rak’ahs and then sit down. (Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

· It is recommended to make food for the returning traveller, whether it is made by the traveller himself or by someone else for him, as indicated by the Hadith of Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him), according to which the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), when he came back to Madinah from a journey, would slaughter a camel or a cow. (Narrated by Al-Bukhari)

· It is prohibited for a woman to travel without a Mahram unnecessarily, whether that is a long or a short distance, because of the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "It is not permissible for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day to travel for the distance of one day and one night except with a Mahram." (Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)." (Al-Majmu`, 4/264-287)

Etiquette of travelling for Hajj

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"The etiquette of travelling for Hajj is divided into two categories: obligatory and recommended. The obligatory etiquette means that the traveller should fulfil all the obligations and pillars (essential parts) of Hajj, and avoid the things that are forbidden whilst in the state of Ihram in particular, and the things that are forbidden in general, whether they are forbidden whilst in Ihram or when not in Ihram, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"The Hajj (pilgrimage) is (in) the well-known (lunar year) months (i.e. the 10th month, the 11th month and the first ten days of the 12th month of the Islamic calendar, i.e. two months and ten days). So whosoever intends to perform Hajj therein (by assuming Ihram), then he should not have sexual relations (with his wife), nor commit sin, nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj." [Al-Baqarah 2:197]

The recommended etiquette when travelling for Hajj is for a person to do all the things that he should do, such as being generous to people, serving his brothers, putting up with their annoyance, not retaliating to mistreatment, and being kind to them, whether that is after he assumes Ihram or before, because this etiquette is sublime and good, and is required of every

believer at all times and in all places. There are also other points of etiquette that has to do with the act of worship, such as doing Hajj in the most perfect manner and striving to do it with the proper etiquette in both word and deed.” (Fatawa Ibn ‘Uthaymin, 21/16)

And Allah knows best.