225893 - Is it Sunnah to separate one naafil prayer from another by moving to the first spot or to another spot?

the question

When offering the Sunnah prayer before Zuhr, after the first two rak‘ahs, is it correct to change one’s place to offer the other two rak‘ahs, so as to earn reward, although it is the same type of prayer (regular Sunnah) – or is that applicable only between Sunnah and obligatory prayers?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

In the answer to question no. 116064 we stated that it is mustahabb to separate between obligatory and naafil prayers by speaking or moving to another spot. Some of the scholars stated that the wisdom behind that is so as to increase the number of places where the Muslim prostrates, so that they will testify in his favour on the Day of Resurrection.

What is mentioned in the Sunnah is to move after an obligatory prayer, for one who wants to offer a naafil prayer. There is nothing in the Sunnah – as far as we know – about moving between two naafil prayers. If a person wants to do so, such as in the case of one who is offering four naafil rak‘ahs, and wants to move after the first two rak‘ahs so as to increase the number of places where he prostrates, there is nothing wrong with that.

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) said, when speaking about the four rak‘ahs before Zuhr:

The best is to offer them two rak‘ahs by two, because of the saheeh hadith: “The prayers of the night and day are two rak‘ahs by two.” As for moving forwards or backwards, or to the right or to the left, this is mentioned in some da‘eef hadiths, and I do not know of anything to indicate that doing so is Sunnah. Rather there are some da‘eef hadiths which mention moving forwards or

backwards, or to the right or to the left. Some of the scholars said that this is so that these spots may testify to this act of worship, but I do not know of anything concerning that that is proven to be from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). If someone offers the regular Sunnah prayers in one spot, there is nothing wrong with that, and I do not know of any evidence to suggest that it is mustahabb to move to another spot for the last two rak'ahs (of the Sunnah prayer), whether he moves to the right or to the left, or forwards or backwards. But if he does that there is nothing wrong with it.

End quote from Fataawa Noor 'ala ad-Darb (10/296)

And Allah knows best.