272368 - She was not sure how many circuits of tawaaf she had done, and she did another circuit after one quarter of an hour

the question

I did Hajj last year, and during tawaaf I lost my mahram, so I was distracted by looking for him, which led to me not knowing how many circuits I had done. After finishing tawaaf, when I was not sure how many circuits I had done, I prayed the two rak'ahs of tawaaf, but after finishing that I did not feel comfortable. I was anxious because I was not sure whether I had completed tawaaf, so I began to look for someone who I could ask (one of the employees of the Haram), and he told me to do another circuit, then repeat the prayer. When I told him how long it had been between finishing tawaaf and looking for someone to answer my question, which was approximately a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, he said it didn't matter. So I completed tawaaf and prayed the two rak'ahs. Is what I did correct?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

If someone is unsure about the number of circuits he has done in tawaaf, he should proceed on the basis of that which is certain, which is the smaller number.

Ibn Qudaamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: If he is uncertain about the number of circuits in tawaaf, he should proceed on the basis of that which is certain. Ibn al-Mundhir said: All the scholars from whom we learned knowledge are unanimously agreed on that. Because it is an act of worship, so if a person becomes uncertain about it whilst he is still doing it, he should proceed on the basis of what is certain, as is the case with prayer…

End quote from al-Mughni (3/187).

This applies if uncertainty arises whilst doing tawaaf.

But if someone feels uncertain after finishing tawaaf, then his tawaaf is valid and he should not pay any attention to that uncertainty.

It says in al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah (29/125): If someone feels uncertain after finishing tawaaf, he should not pay any attention to that according to the majority of scholars. The Maalikis regarded it as being the same as when uncertainty arises during tawaaf. The Hanafis discussed this matter in very general terms. End quote.

If you became uncertain whilst still doing tawaaf, you should have proceeded on the basis of the lower number and completed your tawaaf.

Secondly:

If your uncertainty had to do with just one circuit, i.e., whether you had done six or seven, then you did this circuit after an interval of a quarter of an hour, then that is acceptable according to the view of some of the scholars who do not think that it is essential that the circuits of tawaaf be done consecutively. This is the view of the Hanafis and Shaafa'is, and is one of the views narrated from Ahmad.

It says in al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah (29/131): The stipulation that the circuits of tawaaf be done consecutively is the view of the Maalikis and Hanbalis. According to the Hanafis and Shaafa'is, that is Sunnah and is to be followed, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did the circuits consecutively in his tawaaf. According to one view among the Shaafa'is, doing the circuits consecutively is obligatory.

The evidence for the stipulation that it is obligatory to do the circuits consecutively is the hadith: "Circumambulation of the House is a prayer." Thus it is stipulated that [the circuits of tawaaf] be done consecutively, as is the case with the actions in all other prayers. The evidence for it being Sunnah is the fact that this is what the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did. End quote.

The more correct view is that it is stipulated that the circuits be done consecutively, as we have explained in the answer to question no. 219227.

But as that is what happened, and you are no longer there, we think that your tawaaf is valid, in accordance with those scholars who suggest that.

Similarly, if you asked a scholar who gave you that verdict, then his fatwa is good enough for you, and you do not have to do anything else.

And Allah knows best.