

Walking with the Funeral

Q: Janaa'iz-69: Should one walk behind or ahead of the funeral? The people here have a practice of making a line ahead of the bier. Is this correct? Can one step on graves with the shoes on? What does the Shari'ah say?

Answer: Hadhrat Baraa bin Aazib RADI. reports that Rasulullaah SAW. commanded them to walk behind the funeral. It is therefore best and Mustahab to walk behind the bier. In fact, doing so will accord honour to the deceased and will 'also allow the people to ponder over death as they see it before them.

While it is permissible to be in front of the bier, this is not advisable. While a few people are allowed to be a little ahead of the bier to take it upon their shoulders, they must not be too far ahead. It is however Makrooh for all to be ahead, leaving the bier behind. It is therefore improper for people to form rows ahead of the bier. Some people may stay a little ahead of the bier to take it from those carrying, but most of the people should be at the back, where those who had handed it over should join when they finish carrying. In this way, people will be able to take chances at carrying.

Whether with or without shoes, it is a serious Makrooh act to step on graves. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

Fatawa Rahimiyyah vol.3