

9364 - Ruling on organizing prayers for rain if this is not done by the ruler

the question

If the ruler of a state is neglecting the Sunnah of praying for rain (salaat al-istisqaa'), and he does not call the people to offer this prayer when there is no rain or the wells have dried up, is it permissible for the imaam of one of the mosques in that country to call the people of his city to offer the prayer for rain and for them to go out on their own to offer this prayer?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

If the people of a city are not ordered by their ruler to offer the Eid prayers or prayers for rain, then it is prescribed for them to offer the Eid prayer and prayers for rain in the desert (i.e., outside the city) if that is possible, or else in the mosques, because the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) prescribed that for his ummah. Eid prayer is fard kafaayah (i.e., if some members of the community undertake this duty, the rest are free from blame, but if no one does it, all will be held to blame), so it is not permissible for the Muslims in any city to neglect it. Some of the scholars said that it is fard 'ayn (an individual obligation) like Jumu'ah prayers, because the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did it and ordered others to do it.