

Issues and Rulings Related to the Prayer



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All praise is for Allāh ﷻ Who promised those who are steadfast in their prayers a great reward, and prepared for them the gardens of Paradise-an everlasting bounty.

I bear witness that there is no God worthy of worship save Allāh ﷻ Alone, having no partners. So praise your Lord, the Most Generous, the Most Merciful. I also testify that Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger and servant of Allāh ﷻ, and the best man that ever prayed, and he is the leader of all the righteous ones.

O people! Fear Allāh ﷻ, and be steadfast in your prayers, observe them on Fridays and in congregation. Do not abandon or neglect them. If you do, you will be exposing yourselves to destruction. Allāh ﷻ says:

﴿ خَلَفَ مِنْ بَدَلِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَاتِ فَسُوفَ يَلْقَوْنَ عَذَابًا ﴾

“Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up *As-Salāt* (the prayers) [i.e. made their *Salāt* (prayers) to be lost, either by not offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times] and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell.” (19:59)

Whoever abandons the prayer and does not repent will be thrown into *Ghail* in this life and the Hereafter. *Ghail* is the plain loss. Ibn Masud رضي الله عنه further explained the meaning of *Ghail* by saying:

“*Al-Ghail* is a very deep valley in Hell that has an offensive taste.”

Whoever is steadfast in the prayer shall thank Allāh ﷻ for this favor and ask Him to keep him firm on it. On the other hand, those who are negligent of their prayers should repent immediately and return to Allāh ﷻ before it is too late. That is when their hearts are misguided and are leading them to their destruction.

You keep the prayer by rightly fulfilling its prerequisites, establishing its pillars, and performing both the obligatory and optional actions.

When one intends to pray, one must perform the *Wudu* (ablution) correctly and face the *Qibla* (the direction of the Ka‘bah). Facing the *Qibla* is mandatory. Allāh ﷻ said:

﴿ وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ
شَطْرَهُ ﴾

“And from wherever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid Al-Harām (at Makkah), and wherever you are, turn your faces towards it (when you pray).”
(2:150)

In a standing position, the worshiper starts the prayer by saying: *Allāhu Akbar* (Allāh is Greatest). Then he recites the opening supplication, which could be any one of a few narrations that were authentically transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ. Thereafter, he recites *Al-Fatiha* (the first chapter of the Qur’ān.) Reciting *Al-Fatiha* is also mandatory; without it the prayer is invalid. It is obligatory upon the *Imam* (the leader of the people in prayer) and upon the persons who follow him, as well as anyone praying alone. The *Hadith* that was narrated regarding this has a general meaning to the effect that reciting *Al-Fatiha* (The Opening Chapter) is obligatory upon every person whether the *Imam*, the follower, or when praying alone. Other *Ahadith* (recorded traditions or sayings of the Prophet ﷺ) that exclude the followers from the obligation were narrated, but were proven to be unauthentic. The *Imam* should, therefore, pay attention to this and recite *Al-Fâtihah* slowly so that the followers may be able to recite it after them.

After reciting *Al-Fâtihah*, the Muslim may recite some verses of the Qur’ān. For instance, he may read from the short detailed chapters at the evening prayer (*Maghrib*), though he may also read other than the short chapters sometimes. It was reported that the Prophet ﷺ had read *Al-Araf*, *Muhammad*, *Al-Toor*, and *Al-Mursalaat* at the evening prayer. The *Imam* leading the prayers must not deliberately intend to make the prayer difficult on his followers by making it long. At the morning (*Fajr*) prayer, the *Imam* may read from long detailed chapters. At the

noon prayer and the afternoon prayer, and the night prayers he may read medium chapters; however, the noon prayer could be a little longer than the afternoon prayer. After the recitation, he bows and while in this position he says: “*Subhana Rabbiyal Azeem*” (far is our Almighty Lord from imperfection.) He should say this once, but it is better to repeat it at least three times. Thereafter, he rises while saying: “*Sami‘ Allâhu Liman Hamidah*” (Allâh listens to those who praise him.) At the standing position, both the *Imam* and his followers say: “*Rabbana wa Lakal-Hamd*” (O our Lord! For You is all praise.) The follower shall not repeat *Sami‘ Allâhu Liman Hamidah* as the Prophet ﷺ said:

قَالَ ﷺ: «فَإِذَا قَالَ - يَعْنِي الإِمَامَ - سَمِعَ اللهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ فَقُولُوا: رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ».

“...and when he (i.e., the *Imam*) says: “*Sami‘ Allâhu Liman Hamidah*,” you say: “*Rabbanna wa Lakal-Hamd*.”

After that, the worshiper prostrates laying seven of his body parts and limbs on the ground: the forehead and the nose together, the palms, the knees, and the toes. He should not lift his feet from the ground, nor his nose, nor any other body part. Moreover, he should not lay his forehead on his palm on the ground. However, it is permissible to have a rug or a cloth between the forehead and the ground, so long as such is not connected to him, such as, for example, his garment or scarf. This is not preferred or allowed except if necessary. In the prostration position, he should say: “*Subhana Rabbiyal Al-Aa‘la* (far is our Lord the Most High from any imperfection.) He should not recite Qur’ân while bowing or prostrating, as Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنهما said:

قَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ - رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا - كَشَفَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ السِّتْرَ وَرَأَسُهُ مَعْصُوبٌ فِي مَرَضِهِ الَّذِي مَاتَ فِيهِ وَالنَّاسُ صُفُوفٌ خَلْفَ أَبِي بَكْرٍ فَقَالَ: «اللَّهُمَّ هَلْ بَلَّغْتُ - ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ - إِنَّهُ لَمْ يَبْقَ مِنْ مُبَشِّرَاتِ النَّبُوَّةِ إِلَّا الرُّؤْيَا الصَّالِحَةُ يَرَاهَا الْمُسْلِمُ أَوْ تُرَى لَهُ، إِلَّا وَإِنِّي نُهِيتُ أَنْ أَقْرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ رَاكِعًا أَوْ سَاجِدًا».

“The Prophet ﷺ had lifted the curtain and his head was wrapped

during the sickness he died from, while the people were standing in rows behind Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه. Thereupon he said: ‘O Allâh, have I conveyed (the message)?’ He repeated this three times and then said: ‘Verily, nothing of the prophecy has remained but a good dream seen by a Muslim or seen about him. Verily, I have been forbidden to recite Qur’ân while bowing or prostrating.’ ”

‘Ali رضى الله عنه also said:

“The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ has forbidden me to recite Qur’ân while bowing or prostrating.”

However, if he reads a Verse of the Qur’ân that is also a supplication in his prostration as a *Duâ’*, but not for the purpose of reciting Qur’ân, then this will be permitted. For instance one may read:

﴿ رَبِّكَ إِنَّا ءَامَنَّاكَ فَآغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴾

“Our Lord! We have indeed believed, so forgive us our sins and save us from the punishment of the Fire.”

This can be recited as an invocation but not as if he is reciting Qur’ân. After prostration he sits and says: “Oh Allâh, forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, give me health and provide for me.” Then he prostrates again and does all that throughout his prayer.

There is also another very important aspect of the prayer; that is tranquility. A Muslim must perform all the acts, movements, and sayings of the prayer with the feeling of tranquility and peace at every position. The prayer is invalid if performed quickly without peace and tranquility.¹

I seek refuge with Allâh from Satan, the outcast:

﴿ وَأَقِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴾

“And perform *As-Salât* (*Iqâmat-as-Salât*), and give *Zakât* and obey the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) that you may receive

¹ *Ad-Diya Al-Lami*, by Shaikh Muhammad Al-Uthaymin, p. 141

mercy (from Allâh ﷻ).” (24:56)

May Allâh give us blessing in the great Qur’ân and benefit us with its verses and wisdom. With this I conclude my speech and ask Allâh to forgive you, all the Muslims, and me for our sins. Ask Him for forgiveness, for He is indeed the All-Forgiving and All-Merciful.