

English Translations of

Collection of “Noor ala Al-Darb” Programs

By:

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

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Chapter on the rulings of the office of Imam continued

1- The ruling on the Salah of an Imam who forgets an Ayah when reciting a Surah after Al-Fatihah

Q: I prayed behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) during the obligatory Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer and it was my first time praying behind him. After reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), the Imam recited a Surah (Qur'anic chapter) and forgot an Ayah (Qur'anic verse). Those who were close to him did not prompt him. Are the Ma'mums (persons being led by an Imam in Prayer) to be blamed for this? What is the ruling on this Salah (Prayer)?

A: Forgetfulness of an Ayah during recitation does not invalidate the Salah, so the Salah is valid and acceptable. The most important thing is to recite Al-Fatihah properly. If he recited Al-Fatihah, the Salah is valid, because reciting a Surah after Al-Fatihah is Mandub (commendable), so there is nothing wrong in this.



Q: When an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) commits a mistake while reading a Surah (Qur'anic chapter) and none of the Ma'mums (persons being led by an Imam in Prayer) corrects him, what should he do?

A: He is free from blame, if he has recited Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) properly.





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2- Ruling on offering Prayer behind an Imam mispronouncing some letters during recitation

Q: What is your opinion if an Imam mispronounces some letters due to speech impediment?

A: If the recitation of Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) is correct and nothing of it is omitted, there is no blame because the recitation of chapters other than Al-Fatihah is not obligatory but just Mustahab (desirable). Only the recitation of Al-Fatihah is obligatory and a pillar of Salah (Prayer). Therefore, if the recitation of Al-Fatihah is correct and pronounced properly, the Salah is valid and this Imam may lead people. However, if a person cannot recite Al-Fatihah properly, he is not qualified to be an Imam and should pray with people as a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer).



3- Ruling on offering Salah behind an Imam mispronouncing Qur'anic Ayahs and changes their meanings

Q: I prayed behind a person in a Masjid (mosque) and he recited the Qur'an beautifully, but he mispronounced some words that changed their meaning. For example, while reciting Surah (Qur'anic chapter) Al-Nur [the Qur'an, chapter 24], he recited the following Ayah: [\(The lamp is in a glass, the glass as if it were Kawkabun Durry i.e. a brilliant star\)](#) He pronounced "Kawkabun Durry, i.e. a brilliant star, as Kawkabun Durri`.

After Salah (Prayer), I asked some worshipers about the recitation of this Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and one of them said that this was his dialect. Is it permissible to pray behind a person whose

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dialect is like this?

A: He should be taught and the Salah is valid, as long as his mistakes are not in Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an). This is because he is ignorant and may pronounce a word that he is not familiar with it, so he should be taught. After teaching and informing him, if he mispronounces a word of the Qur'an intentionally, the Salah becomes invalid; because he speaks extraneous things purposefully during the Salah. This is unlike the case of one who does so ignorantly or forgetfully, as this does not invalidate Salah if the Surah recited is not Al-Fatihah.



4- Ruling on an Imam who neglects the order of Surahs when reciting during Salah

Q: I led people in the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and I recited, during the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) Surah Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and Surah Al-Ma`un [The Qur'an, chapter: 107] and during the second Rak`ah I recited Surah Al-Fatihah and Surah Al-Duha [The Qur'an, chapter: 93]. After finishing Salah (Prayer), one of the worshipers said to me: Do not recite Surah Al-Ma`un in the first Rak`ah and Surah Al-Duha in the second Rak`ah. Note that I was offering Salah. Please, guide me. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: The basic rule is to abide by the order of Surahs as they are in the Mus-haf (copy of the Qur'an) as the brother told you, so you should recite Surah Al-Duha and then Surah Al-Ma`un, not the opposite.

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However, there is nothing wrong and what you did is acceptable, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills). In other words, reciting Surah Al-Ma`un in the first Rak`ah and Surah Al-Duha in the second Rak`ah is acceptable but you left the better order, because the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) put the order of Surahs in the Mus-haf as revealed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) during the last period of his life. The order of the Qur'an begins with Surahs Al-Fatihah, Al-Baqarah, Al-`Imran, Al-Nisa', Al-Ma'idah, etc. A worshiper should abide by this order, not the opposite. Thus, if you recite Surah Al-Ma`un in the first Rak`ah, recite Surah Al-Kawthar [The Qur'an, chapter: 108] in the second Rak`ah: ﴿Verily, We have granted you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) Al-Kauthar (a river in Paradise).﴾ You may also recite the Surah after it. You should not recite the Surahs before it such as Surah Quraysh [The Qur'an, chapter: 106]: ﴿(It is a great Grace from Allâh) for the protection of the Quraish,﴾ or Surah Al-Fil [The Qur'an, chapter: 105]: ﴿Saw you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) not how your Lord dealt with the owners of the Elephant;﴾ or Surah Al-Humazah [The Qur'an, chapter: 104]: ﴿Woe to every slanderer and backbiter.﴾ or Surah Al-Duha [The Qur'an, chapter: 93]: ﴿By the forenoon (after sunrise).﴾ This is the best, i.e. reciting Qur'anic chapters in order, but the negligence of this order does not incur blame, praise be to Allah.



Q: Our shaykhs told us that it is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) during the recitation of the Qur'an in both Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud) and Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) to abide by the order of Surahs (Qur'anic chapters) as they are in the Mus-haf (copy of the Qur'an). It is impermissible to reverse the order of Surahs. For example, it is impermissible to recite Surah Al-Kafirun [The Qur'an, chapter: 109] in the first Rak`ah (unit of prayer) and Surah Al-Zalzalah [The Qur'an, chapter: 96] in the second Rak`ah. However, many brothers, who lead people in Salah in the case of the absence of the qualified Imam, do not abide by this order. What is the sound view in this regard? May Allah reward you with the best.

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A: It is better for the reader of the Qur'an to abide by the order of the Mus-haf whether in Salah or outside it. This is better and this is the legally prescribed manner in order not to cause difference (in order). This order was arranged by the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet, may Allah please them) as revealed to the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, if a person recites a Surah before another while it is after it in the order of the Mus-haf, it is tolerated but it is better to abide by the order of Mus-haf during the recitation. For example, one should recite Surah Al-Baqarah [The Qur'an, chapter: 2], then Surah Al-`Imran [The Qur'an, chapter: 3], then Al-Nisa' [The Qur'an, chapter: 4], etc. This is the best manner. However, if a person recites Surah Al-Kafirun [The Qur'an, chapter: 109]: ﴿Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar)!﴾ in the first Rak`ah and then recites Surah Al-Duha [The Qur'an, chapter: 93]: ﴿By the forenoon (after sunrise).﴾ or Surah Al-Tin [The Qur'an, chapter: 95]: ﴿By the fig﴾ or other Surahs in the second Rak`ah, there is nothing wrong in this, for it is authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he recited, during some nights, Surah Al-Baqarah [The Qur'an, chapter: 2], then Surah Al-Nisa' [The Qur'an, chapter: 4] and then Surah Al-`Imran [The Qur'an, chapter: 3]. He recited Surah Al-Nisa' before Surah Al-`Imran.

It is also authentically reported on the authority of `Umar that he recited Surah Al-Nahl [The Qur'an, chapter: 16] in the first Rak`ah and Surah Yusuf [The Qur'an, chapter: 12] in the second Rak`ah. To sum up, it is permissible not to abide by the order of the Qur'anic chapters but it is better for a person to abide by the order determined by the Sahabah. This is the best manner in order not to cause difference in the order of the Qur'anic chapters in the Mus-haf.



5- Ruling on offering Salah behind an Imam who repeats the same Surahs in Salah

Q: Is it permissible for me to pray in another Masjid (mosque) in the same district if the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) repeats the same Surah (Qur'anic chapter) in the Salah (Prayer)? Indeed, I like to ponder on what the Imam recites from

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the Qur'an.

A: There is nothing wrong with repeating the same Surahs in Salah. For example, reciting a certain Surah in the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and repeating it in the 'Isha' (Night) Prayer or in the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. There is nothing wrong with that, praise be to Allah. However, you are free to choose whatever Masjid you like; you should choose what is better for your heart and beneficial to you, unless there is a chance that leaving Salah in this Masjid will defame you and lead to claims that you do not attend the congregational Salah. In this case, you should not leave it to protect your honor and escape false claims. Offer Salah with those around you, so that they may know that you offer Salah with the congregation and thus your honor will be protected from violation and false claims. However, no harm will result if you leave Salah in this Masjid, and if you believe your Salah behind the other Imam is useful to you and brings tranquility and submission to your heart, you are free from blame in offering Salah in it.



Q: A questioner says: If the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) recites a Surah after Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the first Rak`ah (unit of prayer) and during the second Rak`ah he recites the same Surah and someone corrected the Imam, saying: Subhana Allah (Glory be to Allah) [a word said when the worshiper thinks that the Imam made a mistake].

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What should the Imam do in this case? Should he perform Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness)?

A: No, he should not observe Sujud-ul-Sahw if he repeated the same Surah, as this is acceptable, and all praise is due to Allah. It is authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he repeated the same Surah during the two Rak`ahs, so this is acceptable. If a person recites the same Surah during the first and the second Rak`ahs, there is no Sujud-ul-Sahw required, even if he does so out of forgetfulness, because this is a legally prescribed matter.



Q: A questioner says: If the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) recites a Surah after Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) and during the second Rak`ah he recites the same Surah, then one of the worshipers said: Subhana Allah (Glory be to Allah) [a word said when the worshiper thinks that the Imam made a mistake]. What should the Imam do in this case? Should he perform Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness)?

A: There is nothing wrong with repeating the same Surah during the two Rak`ahs. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) repeated the same Surah of Al-Zalzalah [the Qur'an: Chapter 99]: [\(When the earth is shaken\)](#) in two Rak`ahs. Therefore, there is nothing wrong in reading the same Surah or the same Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) in two Rak`ahs.



6- Ruling on offering Salah behind a Musbil or a beardless person

Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) behind a person who memorizes the Qur'an by heart but he is a Musbil (one who lengthens and trails clothing below the ankles) and shaves his beard and mustache?

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Is it permissible or not to pray behind him?

A: Shaving the beard is a sin and cutting it short is a sin. Similarly, Isbal (lengthening and trailing clothing below the ankles) is a sin for a man. All these are sins. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: [\(Act against the polytheists, trim closely the mustache and let the beard grow.\)](#) (Related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also says: [\(Act against the polytheists, trim closely the mustache and let the beard grow.\)](#) (Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (authentic) Hadith Book). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also says: [\(Trim closely the mustache, and let the beard grow long, and thus act against the Magi.\)](#) This means that the beards should be left untouched until it is long and heavy. This is the manner that a Muslim should assume to obey Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and obey his Messenger (peace be upon him) and to avoid the likeness of the disbelievers such as the Magi and their likes. If they let their beard grow, we should not cut it short even if they leave it to grow long. However, they mostly cut it short or shave it but if it happens that the Christians let their beards grow, we should not act against them by cutting it short.

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Rather, we should let it grow long and there is nothing wrong in their likeness to us, as we like that they accept Islam, offer Salah (Prayer), and fast with us. To sum up, we should act against them but we should not violate the commands of our Shari`ah to be contrary to them. Rather, we should abide by the commands of our religion even if they act in agreement with us and let their beards grow long. In this case, we also have to let the beard grow long and should not cut it short or shave it. Similarly, we should not lengthen and trail the Izar (garment worn below the waist), trousers, shirts, gowns, garments, or cloaks or any other kind of clothes below the ankles, but the maximum length should be up to the ankle. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whatever is below the ankles of the Izar \(garment worn below the waist\) is consigned to Hellfire.\)](#) This is generally applied to whatever clothes fall below the ankles, which is known as Isbal. However, letting one's clothes fall below the ankles out of arrogance is much worse and more sinful, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever drags his garment out of conceit, Allah will not look at him on the Day of Resurrection.\)](#) However, letting one's garment fall below the ankles without arrogance is less sinful while both acts are absolutely forbidden. This is the sound view that Isbal is forbidden even if no intention of arrogance is there, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whatever is below the ankles of the Izar is consigned to Hellfire.\)](#) The Hadith is related by Al-Bukhari, but he does not mention that the condition of forbiddance is

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being arrogant. That is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) says in the other Hadith: [\(Beware of Isbal, because it is a form of conceit.\)](#) He thus considers Isbal as a form of conceit, because it is a means to conceit even if no intention of arrogance is there. According to the other Hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(There are three people to whom Allah will neither speak to on the Day of Resurrection, nor will look at them, nor will purify them; and for them is a painful punishment. The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) repeated it three times. Abu Dhar \(may Allah be pleased with him\) said: "They failed and lost! Who are they, O Allah's Messenger?" He said: The Musbil; and the Mannan, i.e. the one who reminds people of what he gave them, and the one who does his business using false oaths.\)](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Hadith Book). This great threat emphasizes that Isbal is one of the grave sins. The mention of Izar in the Hadith is due to it being the most common of the Arab clothes at the time, but the meaning is generally applied to all kinds of clothes whether Izar, shirt, trousers, cloaks, or any other clothes. As for a Mannan, he is a person who hurts people by mentioning his help and aid to them saying: I gave you... The third one is a person who conducts his business with false oaths; he wants to sell his goods and thus uses false oaths in the name of Allah, God forbid, so that people may buy them. For example, he says: 'By Allah, I am telling the truth' while he is a liar or: 'By Allah, it costs so and so' to sell it for a higher price than its, while he is a liar.

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May Allah grant us safety from this.



7- Ruling on offering Salah behind a smoking Imam

Q: A questioner says: What is the ruling on offering Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who shaves his beard or smokes cigarettes? Appreciate your guidance, may Allah guide you.

A: If it is possible for you, do not offer Salah behind them and this is better. Do not offer Salah behind a person who smokes or shaves his beard when it is possible for you to pray in another Masjid (mosque) behind another Imam. This is better for your Salah and religion. However, the one who shaves his beard is of worse sin, because his sin is apparent while the sin of a smoker may be concealed. There are some means of purification and cleanliness that a person may use to hide the odor of smoking but shaving the beard is an apparent sin and a form of declaration of sin that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) forbids. Thus, the sin of smoking is worse, graver, and of greater evil although both acts are forbidden. Smoking is forbidden and it incurs many harmful consequences but the smoker may hide his sin. However, there is no way to hide the shaving of the beard, because it is an apparent sin and a form of similarity to the polytheists and women. So, one must beware of both of these sins and officials should not entrust sinful people with the task of leading people in Salah.

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The righteous, who are free from apparent sins and leave their beards grow and refrain from smoking and other sins, should be chosen to lead people in Salah. May Allah grant us all guidance and success.



8- Explaining that the true `Aqidah is a prerequisite for occupying the office of Imam in Salah

Q: A questioner says: Many of our brothers complain of the Imams (those who lead congregational Prayer) of Masjids (mosques), who are notorious for their worship of graves while others complain that their Imams belong to certain doctrinal groups such as the Asha`irah (a Muslim group that bases its creedal issues on logic) and others. They complain a great deal about these matters. Please, give us a word of advice on this issue.

A: It is the duty of the Ministry of Hajj and Awqaf (religious endowments) and the officials concerned to fear Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and beware of tolerating this matter. They should do their best to choose the best Imams. Only those known for their true `Aqidah (creed) of Salaf (righteous predecessors) should be entrusted with this duty. They should only appoint those assuming the proper appearance that is in conformity with Shari`ah. For example, they let the beard grow and abandon Isbal (lengthening and trailing clothing below the ankles). By doing so, the officials are free from blame and this is obligatory on them. All the officials, including those of the Ministry of Hajj and Awqaf (religious endowments) and other officials in charge, must accurately choose the true Imams and muezzins. However, the Imam has a greater position,

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so due care should be given to the choice of good Imams. Only those qualified for the office of Imam and known for their true `Aqidah and assuming the proper Islamic appearance should be appointed in this position. The matter of `Aqidah is greater and more important and it is the duty of the officials of Awqaf to take care of this matter. They have to fear Allah (Exalted be He), cooperate with the courts and with the general presidency of the Scholarly Research and Ifta', and with the Committee for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice (CPVPV), and with all trustworthy people who can help and guide them to choose the proper Imams. It is also the duty of people of knowledge, such as teachers and judges, to undertake the office of Imam in order to fill the wide gap that compels the Ministry of Awqaf to employ foreign Imams who may be of bad religion and morals. It is the duty of judges and scholars to undertake the duty of Imam and seek the reward with Allah. They should endure this patiently to fill the wide gap in this matter. Indeed, there is an actual determination in the state to found institutes for Imams and preachers. When this is achieved, this gap will be filled and the duty will be fulfilled. There is agreement to found a new institute for Imams and preachers in Riyadh and we hope that similar institutes will be opened in Madinah, Makkah, Al-Qasim, Ha'il, Abha and other regions to fill this gap for the urgent need for this matter. May Allah guide the state to hasten to found these institutes. This institute will be under the supervision of Imam Muhammad ibn

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Sa`ud, which is worthy of this matter. May Allah facilitate the opening of this institute this year. I was informed that the measures have been taken and only a few things are remaining. We hope it will be accomplished these days to be opened and other institutes will be opened later in Makkah Al-

Mukarramah (Makkah, the Honored), Madinah and in other cities where these institutes should be located, because of the urgent need for them. However, this does not exempt teachers, judges and others from their duty. Rather, they should lead people in Prayer in the Masjids that need Imams and seek the reward with Allah (Exalted be He) until the proper Imams are available to replace them and fill the gap. May Allah grant us all guidance and success.



9- Ruling on offering Salah behind a person who plays the tambourine by the graves and circumambulating them

Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) behind a person who shaves his beard and plays the tambourine by the graves of Awliya' (pious people), circumambulating the graves and calling people to act like him? Is the Salah of those praying behind him valid?

A: This question needs some details; it is permissible to offer Salah behind a person who commits sins and the Salah offered behind him is valid. For example, a person who shaves his beard while he is a Muslim and does not call to the worship of graves or to seeking their help, he is a Muslim

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but he shaves his beard, commits Isbal (lengthening and trailing clothing below the ankles), or lets his mustache grow; thus the Salah offered behind him is valid. That is because he just commits sins. The sound view is that offering Salah behind a sinner is valid, for some Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) prayed behind criminal leaders, such as Al-Hajjaj. For example, Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) prayed behind Al-Hajjaj, who was one of the worst Fasiqs (someone flagrantly violating Islamic law) and killers. To sum up, the Salah offered behind a sinner is valid. The one who shaves his beard is Fasiq if he insists on that while knowing that Allah forbids it. If he tolerates it, he is a Fasiq. Similarly, a person who commits Isbal after knowing of its impermissibility and after being informed by the scholars that Isbal is unlawful, is a Fasiq but Salah behind him is valid. However, he should not be taken as an Imam and should be removed from this office if he insists on his sin. The officials should displace him from this post, but Salah behind him is valid.

As for a person who plays the tambourine around the graves, calls upon the graves and supplicates to the dead, he is a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and one should not offer Salah behind him. No one should pray behind a person who circumambulates the graves to draw close to them, supplicates to them instead of Allah, beseeches them for help, makes vows for their sake or slaughters for them, because he is a Kafir (disbeliever).

As for a person who plays the tambourine thinking that doing so is permissible without supplicating to the graves or beseeching them for help,

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but he visits the graveyard and plays the tambourine by the graves without supplicating to the graves or beseeching them for help, Salah that is offered behind him is valid. That is because the mere playing of tambourine is just a sin. As for a person who circumambulates the graves thinking that it is permissible, like circumambulation of the Ka`bah, but his circumambulation is for the sake of Allah, this is a Bid`ah (innovation in religion). As for a person who circumambulates the graves to draw close to the dead, he is a Mushrik. May Allah save us from that.



10- Ruling on offering Salah behind an Imam who wears trousers or takes a salary for delivering admonitions and Imamah

Q: A questioner from the Arab Republic of Egypt asks: Is it permissible to offer Salah behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who is a Musbil (one who lengthens and trails clothing below the ankles) and shaves his beard? Is it permissible to offer Salah behind an Imam who wears trousers and shirts? Is it permissible to offer Salah behind an Imam who is paid for his Imamah (leading people in congregational Prayer), and delivering admonitions to people when he has no other source for sustenance? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: Offering Salah behind the people mentioned is valid, because they are all Muslims but commit sins. A person who shaves his beard or does Isbal commits a sin but the sin does not invalidate Salah, so his Salah is valid and the Salah of those behind him

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is valid, too. However, it is prescribed for the officials to replace him as they should only entrust those known for their righteousness and religiosity with Imamah, because the Imam is an example. As for Salah behind a person who shaves his beard, does Isbal or is paid for Imamah from the Ministry of Awqaf (religious endowments) or from people to help sustain him to meet his needs, it is valid. Salah behind him is valid and there is no blame in receiving sustenance from the public treasury or from Muslim brothers for leading them in Salah and serving the Masjid (mosque). This is a way of supporting a person to obey Allah and if it is possible for him to do without this money due to being rich, for example, this is fine, praise be to Allah. Receiving money from the public treasury is a right for all Muslims and when someone undertakes some duties for that, this becomes a way to help them do their best in the job such as the office of Imamah, judicature, Adhan (call to Prayer), and similar duties. As for Salah behind a person who wears trousers, it is valid if the trousers cover all of the `Awrah (private parts of the body that must be covered in public). If the trousers like those of the disbelievers, one should not wear them but the Salah is valid. However, if the clothes are common among Muslims and others, there is nothing wrong in wearing them. Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) prayed behind Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf Al-Thaqafy, who was the most wrongful and worst sinful person. The rule is that Salah of a sinner is valid and the Salah behind him is also valid but the Salah behind a Kafir (disbeliever) is invalid. Thus, Imamah of and Salah behind a Kafir is invalid, when you know that he is a Kafir. This is unlike the sinner, as there is nothing wrong in offering Salah behind him but he should be replaced and the officials in charge should only entrust

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those known for apparent religiosity and righteousness with the office of Imamah, because they are an example for people to imitate and the one who commits sins openly should not be entrusted with this office, such as a person who shaves his beard or does Isbal and similar sins. It is obligatory to advise him at first to give up these sins. His Muslim brothers should advise and guide him to righteousness in order to abide by the right way, whether he is an Imam or not.



11- Ruling on offering Salah behind an Imam who memorizes the Qur'an but is a Musbil and shaves his beard

Q: A listener asks: Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) behind a person who is a Musbil (one who lengthens and trails clothing below the ankles) and shaves his beard?

Please, clarify this issue. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: Such man should not be taken as Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) except when necessary. For example, if someone fails to find a person to offer Salah behind, then they should not offer Salah alone and must offer it with the congregation even if the Imam is Musbil and shaves. However, officials should remove him and appoint a righteous person, if possible. This is their duty. And you mentioned that he shaves his beard and mustache! In conclusion, it is obligatory on the officials in charge of supervising the Masjid (mosque) to appoint someone else who is known for his religiosity, who is better in recitation and understanding of the Qur'an and is known for good morals and displays an Islamic appearance; one who lets his beard grow and refrains from Isbal (lengthening and trailing clothing below the ankles). Officials should carefully choose a good and righteous Imam, who abides by the Shari`ah of Allah. However, when you or other Muslims are tried by an Imam who shaves his beard or is a Musbil and it is not possible to replace him, do not offer Salah alone and offer Salah with the congregation.

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At the same time, you must advise him with good speech in the best manner. May Allah guide him through your advice.



12- The proper way of giving advice

Q: Your Eminence, should advice be offered privately or publicly?

A: If the matter of advice is publicly known, it may be given openly and it is better to advise him (the Imam) privately. This may be better and more beneficial. A group of people may also advise him in the Masjid (mosque) saying: O servant of Allah, fear Allah, raise your garment above your ankles. They should express their advice collectively, but if only one person advises him, this is acceptable. If some feel that it is best to advise him privately, they may visit him at home or one of them may lead them in offering their private advice. They should choose what is best and most effective.





13- Ruling on offering Salah behind an Imam who is a Musbil and shaves his beard

Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who does not shorten his garment and lets it trail below the ankles, and does not grow his beard, and his wife and daughters go out with their faces, hair, shins and hands uncovered?

A: The Salah offered behind him is valid, if he is a Muslim but when it is possible to offer Salah behind another person who is better and more righteous than him, this will be better. This Imam is a sinner

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and the Salah behind the sinner is valid, according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars, if he is a Muslim. He should be advised and guided until he lets his beard grow and makes his garment up to the ankles. His Muslim brothers and friends should advise and guide him continuously until he abides by the right path. His family should also advise him, because the Muslim is the brother of his fellow Muslim. Allah (Glorified be He) says: **(The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another)** It is obligatory to advise and help one another to abide by Al-Haqq (the Truth) in all things. The Imam, who leads worshipers, should be an example for others in every aspect of goodness. If he falls short, officials should choose someone else who is better, until he complies with the advice. They should seek someone better than him to be an example for others, so that worshipers may benefit from his morality. If Muslims exchange advice and help one another to be steadfast upon Al-Haqq, goodness will prevail and evil will decrease. But, when they remain silent, evil will prevail and goodness will decrease. May Allah grant us safety.



Q: What is the ruling on an Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) who smokes, lengthens and trails his garment below the ankles, and shaves his beard or trims it closely? I hope you will explain this to us.

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A: All such acts are considered sins. Shaving the beard, for example, is a sin. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(Trim the mustache closely, and let the beard grow.\)](#) [\(Act against the polytheists, trim closely the mustache and let the beard grow.\)](#) [\(Act against the Magi...\)](#) Smoking falls under the same ruling as shaving the beard, for the great harm it causes. Isbal (lengthening and trailing clothing below the ankles) is also impermissible. All these things are impermissible for the Imam and anyone else. If the Imam of the mosque commits any of these sins, those in charge of the mosque should look for another person to lead the Prayer if he does not abandon it. The Prayer he leads is valid, but the people in charge of the mosque should seek someone better than this Imam to lead the Prayer, and he should repent from all such sins. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(The part of an Izar which hangs below the ankles is in the Fire.\)](#) Therefore, Isbal is of great danger and is considered grave Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also stated: [\("There are three types of people to whom Allah will not speak to on the Day of Resurrection, or care for them or purify them, and theirs will be a painful chastisement." He \(the Prophet\)](#)

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[repeated it three times. Then Abu Dharr \(may Allah be pleased with him\) asked: "Who are these people, O Allah's Messenger? Surely, they are failures and losers." The Prophet replied: "Those who practice Isbal, those who offend others by mentioning their generosity toward them, and those who sell their commodities by means of lies."](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Hadith Book). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also stated: [\(Allah will not look, on the Day of Resurrection, at the person who lengthens his garment \(behind him\) out of conceit.\)](#) If Isbal is done out of conceit, it is considered a greater sin than if practiced for the intention of other than conceit. Anyway, it is impermissible and may lead to conceit, but the sin is less than when done out of conceit. Generally speaking, Isbal is Munkar, regardless of the intention, even if it is not done out of conceit. In this case it is considered squandering, vanity and exposing clothes to impurities, all of which are impermissible. Smoking is also a great sin and extremely harmful; therefore, it is obligatory to abandon it. May Allah (Exalted be He) guide all to the right path.



Q: Is it permissible for a smoker to lead the Prayer if there is no one who can recite the Qur'an other than him? Some people frequently ask me to lead the Prayer, though I am a smoker. I hope you will explain the ruling on this issue. May Allah grant you with guidance.

A: He who leads the Prayer should be chosen from among the best who are well versed in Qur'anic recitation among the congregation. The Prophet

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(peace be upon him) stated: [\(The one who is most versed in Allah's Book should act as Imam \(one who leads congregational Prayer\) for the people, but if they are equally versed in reciting it, then the one who is most knowledgeable in Sunnah \(acts, sayings and approvals of the Prophet\). Again, if they are equal regarding the Sunnah, then the earliest immigrant; if they emigrated at the same time, then the earliest one to embrace Islam.\)](#) In another narration of the Hadith: [\(.. then the older in age\)](#) It is incumbent on Muslims to pay attention to this point, assigning as Imam the best among them according to a consistent order. However, if a sinner, e.g. a smoker, one who is ungrateful to his parents, one who cuts the ties of kinship or anyone accused of similar sins, leads the Prayer, it will be valid. According to the preponderant opinion, Prayer is valid even if led by a Fasiq (someone flagrantly violating Islamic law) or sinner. But it is by no means valid to be led by a disbeliever. A Muslim who practices usury but does not consider it permissible is valid to lead the Prayer. Sinners, according to the preponderant opinion, can lead the Prayer. It was reported that Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) was led in Prayer by Al-Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf, who had been one of the most Fasiq people known for shedding blood. Many of the Prophet's Companions offered Prayer behind Fasiq leaders. This indicates that Prayer is valid if led by

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one who is Fasiq. However, priority is given to the pious and straightforward people. When a pious person is there, he should be assigned to lead the Prayer. Those in charge of mosques should preserve the order of assigning the best people for leading the Prayer and avoid, as much as possible, entrusting it to corrupt people. When a group of people congregate in a certain place for Prayer, they have to do their best in assigning as Imam the best of them, as an act of adhering to the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and honoring the status of Prayer.



Q: A questioner from Sudan residing in Al-Ahsa' asks: There is a mosque in my village, and I am an educated person. Can I act as Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in such a mosque, bearing in mind that I am a smoker and betel chewer? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: You should not lead the Prayer, if you smoke and chew betel, for the Imam should be an example for others. Someone else, who is better and does not commit such visible sins, can lead the Prayer. Moreover, you must repent to Allah from all these sins, refrain from doing them anymore, seek Allah's Support to do so, and befriend good people who assist you to do what is good.

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Indeed, repentance wipes out previous sins. On the other hand, if you lead the people in Prayer while you are still a smoker and betel chewer, the Prayer will be valid, according to the preponderant opinion, which deems that the Prayer led by a sinner is valid. However, it is recommended not to assign as Imam known for a visible sin. Those in charge of mosques should seek good and pious people to serve as Imams; people who do not show any disobedience to Allah, as they are to be taken as examples and leaders of others in this noble act of worship and pillar of Islam, i.e. Prayer. May Allah guide us all.



14- Ruling on praying behind an Imam who sells Qat

Q: There is a man whom I thought to be an honorable person, because he is an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) of a Masjid (mosque). However, now, I no longer think highly of him, because I saw him selling Qat (Khat: leaves and buds that are habituating stimulants when chewed or used as a tea). What is the ruling on praying as a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) behind this man?

A: This man should be advised. He might have thought that it is permissible because many Yemeni scholars see it permissible and chew it. Thus, this person might have followed their opinion, and now he has a misconception. So, he should be advised not to chew or sell it. Praying behind him does not render Salah (Prayer) invalid. According to the most correct opinion maintained by scholars, praying behind an Imam who is a Fasiq (someone flagrantly violating Islamic law) is valid.

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However, if he is a Kafir (disbeliever), Salah is invalid. Yet, you should advise this Imam or at least ask another person whose advice may be more acceptable by this Imam. By doing so, you get reward from Allah. Finally, as mentioned above, your Salah is valid. Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah).



15- Ruling on praying behind an Imam who chews Qat

Q: An Egyptian teacher working in Yemen asks: What is the ruling on Qat (Khat: leaves and buds that are habituating stimulants when chewed or used as a tea), its user, and being led in Prayer by one who chews it?

A: According to trustworthy scholars in Yemen and elsewhere, it was proved that Qat is very harmful and, hence, impermissible to chew. We recommend those who chew it to abandon this habit and keep aloof from it for the good of their health and wealth. Some people in Yemen take this seriously and stop eating it, while others take the matter leniently. What is scientifically proved, depending on consulting trustworthy specialists, is that it is extremely harmful and, hence, it is obligatory to abandon it. We invoke Allah (Exalted be He) to guide to the right path our brothers in Yemen and everywhere and help them abandon such a harmful thing and protect them from its bad effects. We also recommend the questioner to beware of it. As for the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)

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who chews this harmful plant, there is nothing wrong with praying behind him, for chewing this plant is a sin. But this Imam may be adhering to a doubtful opinion that considers it permissible. Therefore, he should be advised to abandon it. Anyway, if it is possible to find someone else to lead the Prayer this will be better.

Qat is impermissible to chew, for it is a sin. However, if someone chews it because they think that it is permissible or was told it is permissible by some scholars who consider it lawful, they are not sinners. Those who know that it is harmful and impermissible and insist on having it are sinners. All in all, chewing Qat and smoking have a bad effect on one's health and wealth and are considered acts of disobedience to Allah (Exalted be He), so it is obligatory to abandon it altogether. May Allah help us and all fellow Muslims keep away from all that is impermissible.



16- Ruling on praying (as a Ma'mum) behind an Imam who deals in Riba

Q: For a long time, we prayed behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who deals in Riba (usury/interest). After some time, this man made Tawbah (repentance to Allah), but he did not give back the interest which he used to charge.

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Are our past, and present Salah (behind this Imam) valid? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: Your Salah (Prayer) is valid, Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah). If the Tawbah he made was sincere, Allah (Exalted be He) would accept it. If this person dealt in Riba out of ignorance, Allah (Exalted be He) would forgive him and he does not have to give back the interest he charged. However, if he knowingly dealt in Riba, he should make Tawbah and give the interest, he took, in Sadaqah (voluntary charity) to the needy and the poor. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(whereas Allâh has permitted trading and forbidden Ribâ \(usury\). So whosoever receives an admonition from his Lord and stops eating Ribâ \(usury\) shall not be punished for the past; his case is for Allâh \(to judge\)\)](#) Thus, if a person who did not know the prohibition was admonished by someone, made Tawbah and ceased dealing in Riba, Allah (Exalted be He) would forgive him. Moreover, he does not have to give back the interest he took. However, if he knew the ruling and continued to do so, he should make Tawbah and should not take the interest, but give it in Sadaqah or in any form of charity.



17- Ruling on praying behind a bareheaded Imam

Q: A questioner from Yemen asks: Is it permissible to be led in Prayer by a bareheaded Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer)? And is it Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) to cover the head in Prayer ?

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A: It is permissible for an Imam to lead the Prayer without covering his head, for covering the head in Prayer is neither Sunnah nor conditional for the validity of the Prayer. It is preferable to take one's usual adornment in Prayer. Allah (Exalted be He) states: **﴿O Children of Adam! Take your adornment (by wearing your clean clothes), while praying [and going round (the Tawâf of) the Ka'bah,]﴾** Abiding by social norms in this regard is much better, for a person may be blamed for acting against it. In a nutshell, if it is the convention of the community to cover the head in Prayer, the Imam is recommended to cover his head so as not to be blamed or considered lenient concerning established social manners or indifferent to wearing suitable clothes, etc. Otherwise, it is not considered a condition for the validity of the Prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **﴿None of you should pray in a single cloth, none of which is over (covering) his shoulders.﴾** The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not mention the head in the Hadith, but he specified the shoulders: **﴿... (covering) his shoulders.﴾** To perform Prayer a Muslim should wear Izar (garment worn below the waist) and Rida' (garment worn around the upper part of the body) in Prayer. There is nothing wrong, however, with uncovering the head in Prayer. If it is the custom of the people in a certain place to cover it, the Imam should adhere to that custom so as not to be accused of

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acting against social convention. If he abandons it intentionally, the Prayer is still valid; however he should be advised to cover it in order not to be mistaken as acting contrary to local etiquette and neglecting that which is more suitable.



Q: What is the ruling on one who offers Adhan (call to Prayer) and leads the Prayer while bareheaded, bearing in mind that he has memorized a great portion of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: There is nothing wrong with praying while bareheaded, for what is obligatory is to cover one's `Awrah (private parts of the body that must be covered in public) and partially cover the shoulders. It is preferable to cover the shoulders, but the head is not necessary to cover. As for the Muhrim (pilgrim in the ritual state for Hajj and `Umrah), he prays with his head uncovered. If one prays in his usual garment, it will be quite acceptable. Allah (exalted be He) states: **﴿O Children of Adam! Take your adornment (by wearing your clean clothes), while praying [and going round (the Tawâf of) the Ka'bah,]﴾** Therefore, praying in the usual clothes is quite permissible, and there is nothing wrong with uncovering the head.





Q: A questioner from Yemen asks: Is it permissible for a man to lead congregational Salah (Prayer) without covering his head? May Allah reward you with the best.

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A: Yes, it is permissible and there is nothing wrong with it, for the Prophetic Hadith specifies covering the shoulders. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(None of you should pray in a single cloth, none of which is over \(covers\) his shoulder.\)](#) It is required to cover the shoulders, but it is not necessary to cover the head. Therefore, the instruction of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is: [\(None of you should pray in a single cloth, none of which is over \(covers\) his shoulder.\)](#) According to another wording of the Hadith: [\(... over \(covers\) his shoulders.\)](#) There is no mention in the Hadith of covering the head. The Prophet (peace be upon him) led the Salah when he was in a state of Ihram (clothing worn during the ritual state for Hajj and `Umrah) while wearing only an Izar (garment worn below the waist) and a Rida' (garment worn around the upper part of the body). The Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) also used to pray in Izar and Rida'. It was the custom of the Arabs to wear an Izar and a Rida' as well. One may wear a turban on his head, but this is not a condition for the validity of Salah; although it is better because it is considered a form of adornment [as the Qur'an instructs to be properly and finely dressed for Salah]. All praise is due to Allah.



Q: What is the ruling on an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) leading people in Salah (Prayer) without wearing a head cover?

A: There is nothing wrong with this. The head is not an `Awrah (a part of the body that must be covered in public). The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is that a man should pray wearing an Izar (garment worn below the waist) and a Rida' (garment worn around the upper part of the body). The Prophet (peace be upon him said): [\(No one of you should pray](#)

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[in one garment, with nothing of it over his shoulders.\)](#) Accordingly, if a man prays with his head uncovered, there is no harm in this. However, it is better to be completely and fully dressed and prepared. Allah (Exalted be He) says: [\(O Children of Adam! Take your adornment \(by wearing your clean clothes\), while praying \[and going round \(the Tawâf of\) the Ka'bah,\]\)](#) If a head cover is part of the complete, customary dress of the people in the area, i.e. they usually cover their heads, then it is better to wear one, but if they do not follow this custom; rather, they usually do not wear a head cover, then there is nothing wrong with an Imam leading people in Salah with his head uncovered.



18- Ruling on praying behind a butcher with bloodstained clothes

Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) led by an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who is a butcher and whose clothes are bloodstained?

A: It is not permissible for a butcher to be an Imam or offer Salah in his bloodstained clothes. The butcher should offer Salah in clean clothes or wash the blood stains from his clothes before offering Salah, whether he is an Imam, a Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually), or a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer). He is not permitted to lead people in Salah or to pray alone in Najis (ritually impure) clothes. Besides this, you are not permitted to pray behind him; rather, you should admonish him and instruct him to either wash his clothes or change into clean clothes. If his clothes are Najis, his Salah while wearing such clothes is not valid.

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He should either purify these clothes or change into clean clothes. This is obligatory upon the butcher and any other person whose clothes are Najis. The only exception is if the person is unable to wash off his clothes due to being, for example, in the desert and having no access to water. If he fears that the time of Salah may pass, he is permitted to pray as he is, even in his Najis clothes, and his Salah is valid, until he finds water to wash off his clothes or finds other clean clothes. This is applicable for the person who is under the compulsion of necessity and has no alternative due to being in the desert or in prison and has no other clean clothes and is unable to wash his Najis clothes. Allah (Glorified be He) says: **(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can)** The person under the compulsion of necessity is to pray as he is until Allah relieves his state and makes a way out for him. However, if he is able to change or wash off his clothes, he should do so.



19- Ruling on praying behind an Imam whom one justifiably hates

Q: What is the ruling on praying behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) whom I hate?

A: If you do not know anything about the Imam that renders him a disbeliever, your Prayer behind him is valid, even if you hate him. This is because hatred may or may not be justified. You may hate someone for some undeserved reasons. If he (the Imam) has some sins, this will not affect the validity of the Prayer.

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Some of the Companions of the Prophet were led in Prayer by Al-Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf Al-Thaqafy, who was one of the most unjust people. Thus, being a sinner does not render one's leadership of Prayer invalid as only very few people are free from sins - La hawla wala quwwata illa billah (there is neither might nor power except with Allah!). All in all, your Prayer behind by a Muslim Imam whom you hate is valid, for you are not infallible and, therefore, your hatred may or may not be justified. In this case, this does not render the Prayer invalid.



Q: A questioner asks: Is the Prayer behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) whom a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) hates render it invalid?

A: No, his Prayer is still valid. However, if a Ma'mum hates the Imam justifiably, he is recommended to leave him for another Imam. Still, if he prays behind the Imam whom he hates, the Prayer is valid, whether hatred is motivated by some personal reason or because the Imam commits some sins. All Praise is due to Allah (Exalted be He).





20- Ruling on delaying Takbirat-ul-Ihram

Q: A questioner asks: I am asking about the ruling on those who, when standing in Prayer, wait for around five minutes before they offer

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Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer); is this correct? Should a person offer Takbirat-ul-Ihram immediately upon standing for Prayer or recite something prior to it? I hope you will clarify this issue.

A: It is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) for the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) to ensure that the rows behind him are aligned and instruct the Ma'mums (persons being led by an Imam in Prayer) to stand in straight and well-organized rows. Once they respond to his directions, he should offer Takbirat-ul-Ihram. There is no certain Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah) to recite between the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) and Takbirat-ul-Ihram. The Imam is only to direct the Ma'mums and ask them to stand in straight rows, complete the front rows before those in the rear, not to disturb or go between one another, and then offer Takbirat-ul-Ihram. This was the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him).



21- Ruling on an excused person leading the healthy in Salah

Q: What is the ruling on an excused person (e.g. one who has an illness) leading the healthy in Salah (Prayer), bearing in mind that the latter is not versed in Qur'anic recitation?

A: The ruling depends on the state of the excused person. If his excuse does not prevent him from doing any of the obligations and integrals of the Salah, e.g. a person who has had his hand cut or some fingers cut,

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there is nothing wrong with him leading the Salah. However, if the excuse prevents him from standing in Salah, he cannot lead the Salah sitting down. In such a case, someone other than the excused person should lead the Salah, unless he is an appointed Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) or the Imam of the district, in which case it is permissible that he leads the Salah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) led his Companions in Salah while sitting down, for he was very ill. He (peace be upon him) said in this regard: [\(The Imam is appointed but to be followed; hence, if he prays sitting down, sit down behind him.\)](#) Therefore, if the excused person is an appointed Imam and prays sitting down, the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) have to pray sitting down as well. However, if they pray standing, their Salah will be valid. Towards the end of the Prophet's life, when he was so ill, he led the Companions in Salah sitting down, while they were standing. And he did not command them to sit down, which indicates that it is permissible. On the other hand, if the excused person is not the Imam of the district, he should not lead the Salah sitting down. Instead, they should look for someone who is not excused to lead the Salah standing.



22- Ruling on a disabled person being an Imam

Q: Is it permissible for a disabled person to be an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)?

A: This needs to be explained in detail: If this disability prevents him from performing Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration),

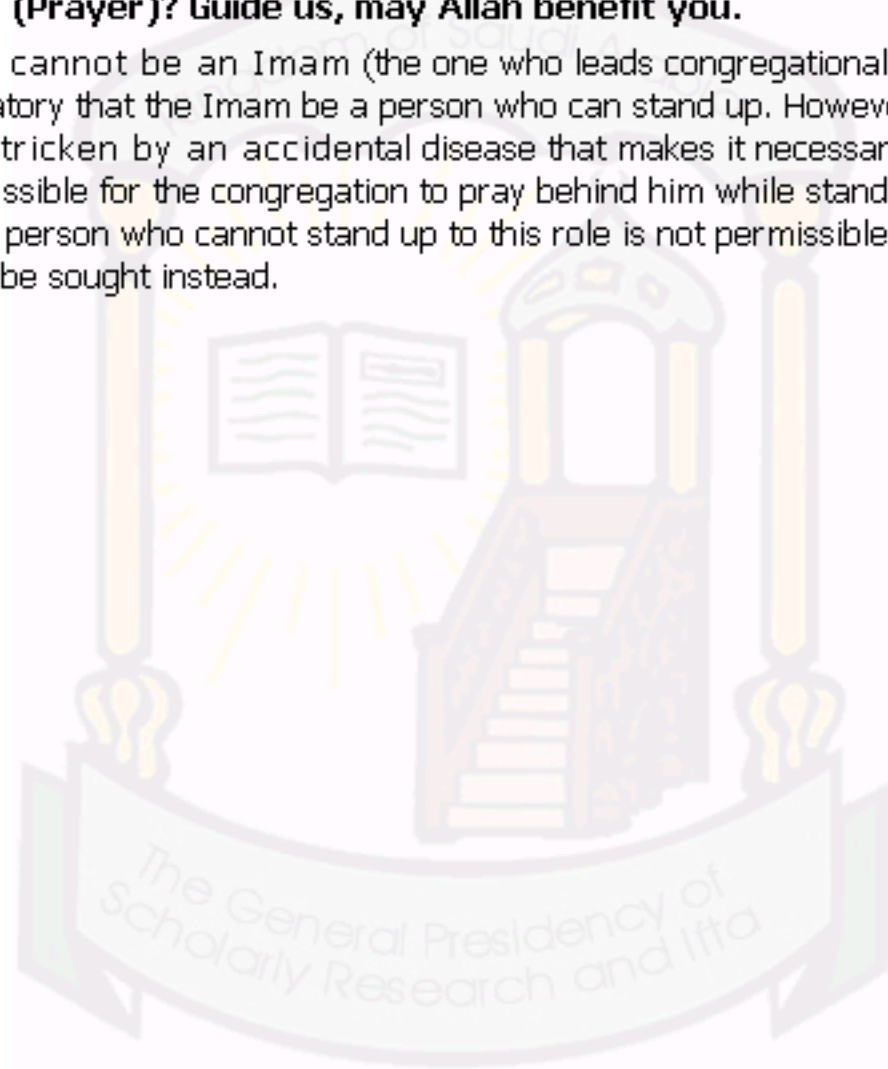
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it is not permissible for him to be an Imam; rather, he should be replaced with an able-bodied person. But if he is the regular Imam and just had an accident as happened with the Prophet (peace be upon him), he is to pray while sitting. There is nothing wrong with this if he is the regular Imam of the district. No person other than the regular Imam is allowed to lead people in Salah (Prayer) if he is disabled, prays while sitting, and cannot bow or prostrate. Instead, an able-bodied person who can perform Ruku` and Sujud should be sought to lead people. However, if the disabled person only has a disease in his legs or hands that does not prevent him from praying while standing and performing Ruku` and Sujud, it is permissible for him to lead people in Salah and there is nothing wrong with that.



Q: There is a disabled person who cannot stand up and walks on his hands and legs, but he is the best one of us in terms of reciting the Qur'an, for he spent more than ten years in Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) memorizing the Qur'an. Is it permissible for him to lead us in Salah (Prayer)? Guide us, may Allah benefit you.

A: Such a person cannot be an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), for he cannot stand up. It is obligatory that the Imam be a person who can stand up. However, if the regular Imam of the district is stricken by an accidental disease that makes it necessary for him to pray while sitting, it is permissible for the congregation to pray behind him while standing up or sitting. But to assign a disabled person who cannot stand up to this role is not permissible; rather, a person who can stand up should be sought instead.





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23- Ruling on praying behind an enuretic Imam

Q: Is it permissible for an enuretic person to be an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)? Please bear in mind that there is no person more fitting to lead people in Salah than this person, as he is the most versed in the Book of Allah and the most knowledgeable of the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) and the Shari`ah (Islamic law)-based matters?

A: It is better not to assign him as an Imam if he suffers from incontinence of urine. This is to be on the safe side, for a group of scholars maintains that such a person is not valid to be an Imam. So it is better that another person who is valid to be an Imam to lead the people in Salah, even if he is less learned and less recited of the Qur'an. The enuretic person can offer the `Isha' (Night) Prayer without repeating Wudu' (ablution) if he did it for the time of `Isha'. Likewise, it is permissible for him to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night), for the time of both of them is one.



Q: Is it permissible for a person who suffers from urinary incontinence to recite the Qur'an from the Mus-haf (copy of the Qur'an), directly after offering the obligatory Salah (Prayer) without repeating the Wudu' (ablution)?

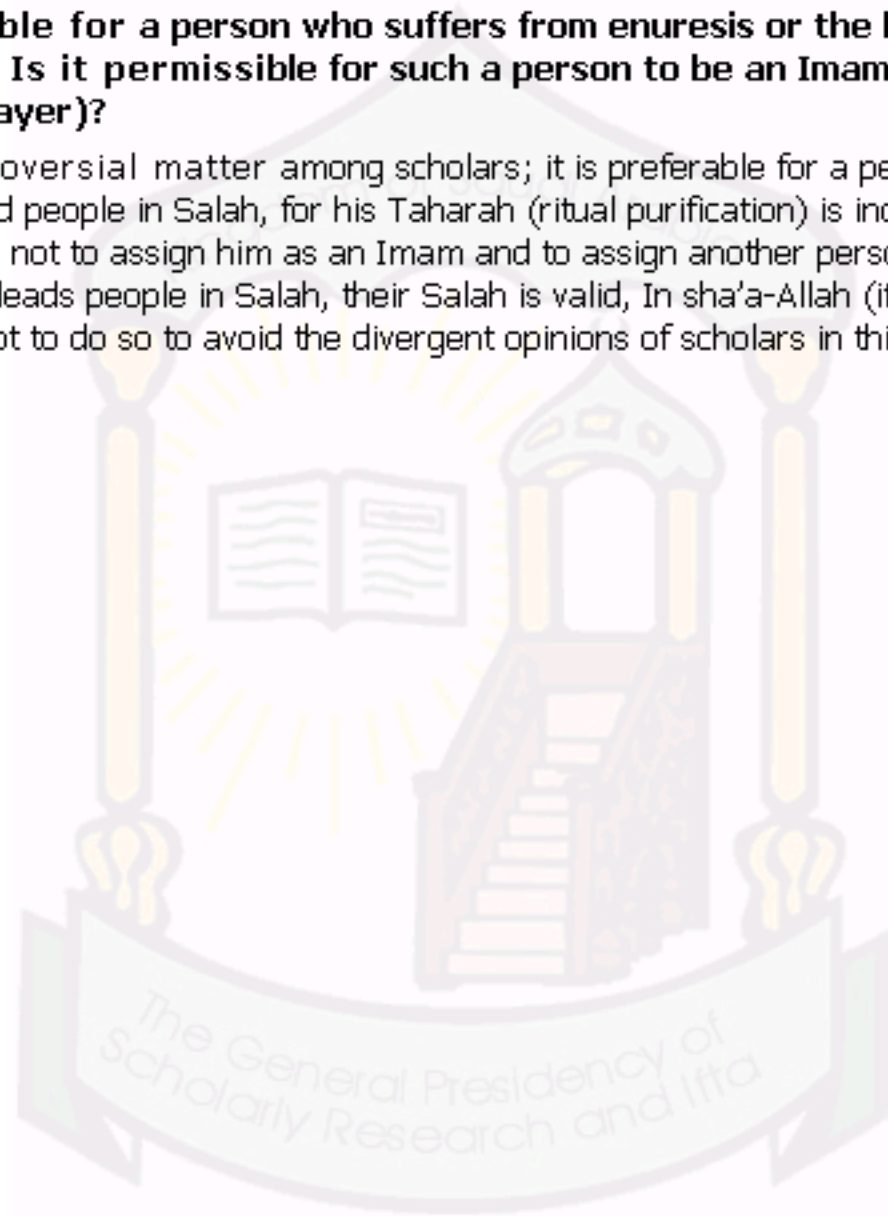
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A: Yes, the enuretic person who performs Wudu' after the time of Salah is due is permitted to pray and touch the Mus-haf and offers supererogatory Salah as they wish until the time of the obligatory Salah is over. For example, if an enuretic person performs Wudu' for the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, they are permitted to offer it and offer after it whatever they wish of supererogatory Salahs. If an enuretic person performs Wudu' for the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, they are permitted to pray as they wish between the Maghrib Prayer and the `Isha' (Night) Prayer. If an enuretic person performs Wudu' for the `Isha' Prayer, they are permitted to pray as they wish until midnight when the time of `Isha' Prayer is over.



Q: Is it permissible for a person who suffers from enuresis or the like to lead people in Salah (Prayer)? Is it permissible for such a person to be an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)?

A: This is a controversial matter among scholars; it is preferable for a person who suffers from enuresis not to lead people in Salah, for his Taharah (ritual purification) is incomplete. To be on the safe side, it is better not to assign him as an Imam and to assign another person instead. However, if the enuretic person leads people in Salah, their Salah is valid, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills). However, it is better for him not to do so to avoid the divergent opinions of scholars in this respect.





Q: I am enuretic; is it permissible for me to lead people in Salah (Prayer)?

A: According to a group of scholars, you should not lead people in Salah, because your Hadath (ritual impurity that invalidates ablution) is permanent. It is preferable for you not to lead people in Salah; rather, you should be a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer), perform Wudu' (ablution)

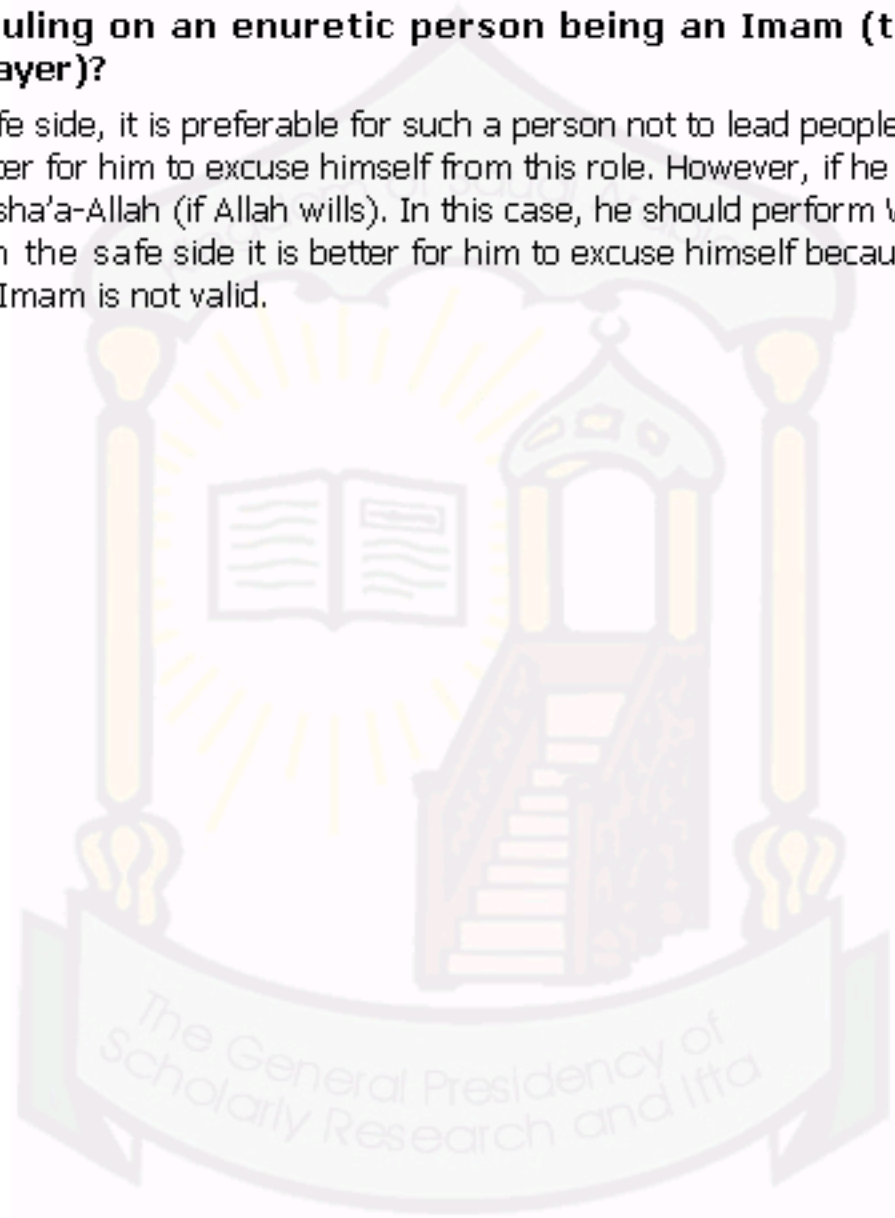
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for every Salah, just like the woman in Istihadah (abnormal vaginal bleeding outside the menstrual or post-partum period), offer Salah at its time, and touch the Mus-haf (copy of the Qur'an) until the time of Salah is over. This Taharah (ritual purification) is necessary. You should offer Salah behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and not act as an Imam to be on the safe side, according to the opinion held by scholars.



Q: What is the ruling on an enuretic person being an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)?

A: To be on the safe side, it is preferable for such a person not to lead people in Salah. If the Imam is enuretic, it is better for him to excuse himself from this role. However, if he leads people in Salah, his Salah is valid In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills). In this case, he should perform Wudu' for every Salah. However, to be on the safe side it is better for him to excuse himself because some scholars hold that his Salah as an Imam is not valid.





Q: A questioner from Jordan asks: Is it permissible for an excused person, such as a person who suffers from urinary incontinence or flatulence, to perform Wudu' (ablution) before the time when the obligatory Salah (Prayer) is due? This is in order to be able to go early to the Masjid (mosque) and join Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) and the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) and also to offer the Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer), if the Masjid is far away. Kindly guide us.

A: It is obligatory for the person who suffers from permanent Hadath (ritual impurity that invalidates ablution) not to perform Wudu' until after the time when the obligatory Salah is due. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to women who experience Istihadah (abnormal vaginal bleeding outside the menstrual or post-partum period): [\(Then perform Wudu'](#)

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[for every Salah.](#)) If a person suffers from urinary incontinence or flatulence, he should perform Wudu' after the time when the obligatory Salah is due, i.e. in the afternoon for the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, when the shadow of everything is equal in length to the object itself, in the afternoon for the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, after sunset for the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, after the disappearance of the twilight for the `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and after the break of dawn for the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. He should not hasten to perform Wudu'. There is nothing wrong with doing this, even if he misses Takbirat-ul-Ihram or the first Rak`ah, if the Masjid is far away. Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah).



Q: Is it permissible for a person who suffers from urinary incontinence to be an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)?

A: This is a controversial matter among scholars; however, it is preferable for him not to be an Imam to be on the safe side and to avoid the divergent opinions of scholars. It is better for him to be a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer).





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24- Ruling on leading Salah while having an injury

Q: What is the ruling on leading Salah (Prayer) while having an injury?

A: If the injury is covered with a bandage, one should wipe the bandage with water or perform Tayammum (dry ablution with clean earth) for the place of the injury only, while the rest of the organs are washed with water as in a usual Wudu' (ablution), whereby Salah will be valid. The Prophet (peace be upon him) led the Companions in Salah on the Day of the Battle of Uhud, though he underwent so many injuries. He treated his injuries and led Salah. His side was wounded in Madinah and he fell from his riding animal and stayed at home for a period of time, during which he led his Companions in Salah. Therefore, there is nothing wrong with leading the people in Salah while having an injury.



Q: What is the ruling on praying behind an Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) who has an injury covered with a bandage?

A: If the injury is covered with a bandage, it would suffice to wipe the bandage with water. But if it is uncovered, one has to perform Wudu' (ablution) as usual and perform Tayammum (dry ablution with clean earth) for the place of the injury. If it bleeds, it must be treated to stop the bleeding. It is preferable not to lead Salah (Prayer) if there is no means to stop the bleeding. In such a case, he

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falls under the same ruling as the one who has urinary incontinence, i.e. it is preferable for him not to lead Salah. However, if the injury does not bleed but is uncovered, he has to perform Tayammum, and if it is covered with a bandage, he has to wipe it with water and there is no need to perform Tayammum.



Q: What is the ruling on leading Salah (Prayer) for a person who has a bleeding injury which is not covered?

A: The Salah is valid, according to the preponderant opinion. Neither the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) nor the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) should offer the Salah again. Allah (Exalted be He) says: [﴿So keep your duty to Allāh and fear Him as much as you can﴾](#)





25- Ruling on a person who performs Tayammum leading people who perform Wudu' in Salah

Q: Is it permissible for a person who performs Tayammum (dry ablution with clean earth) to lead people who perform Wudu' (ablution) in Salah (Prayer)?

A: Yes, it is permissible for a person who performs Tayammum to lead people who perform Wudu' in Salah, as long as he has a Shar`y (Islamically lawful) excuse that permits him to perform Tayammum. There is nothing wrong with that Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah), because Tayammum is a Shar`y Taharah (ritual purification). If he is ill and cannot use water and instead performs Tayammum, he can lead people in Salah even if they perform Wudu'. Likewise, if the people are traveling

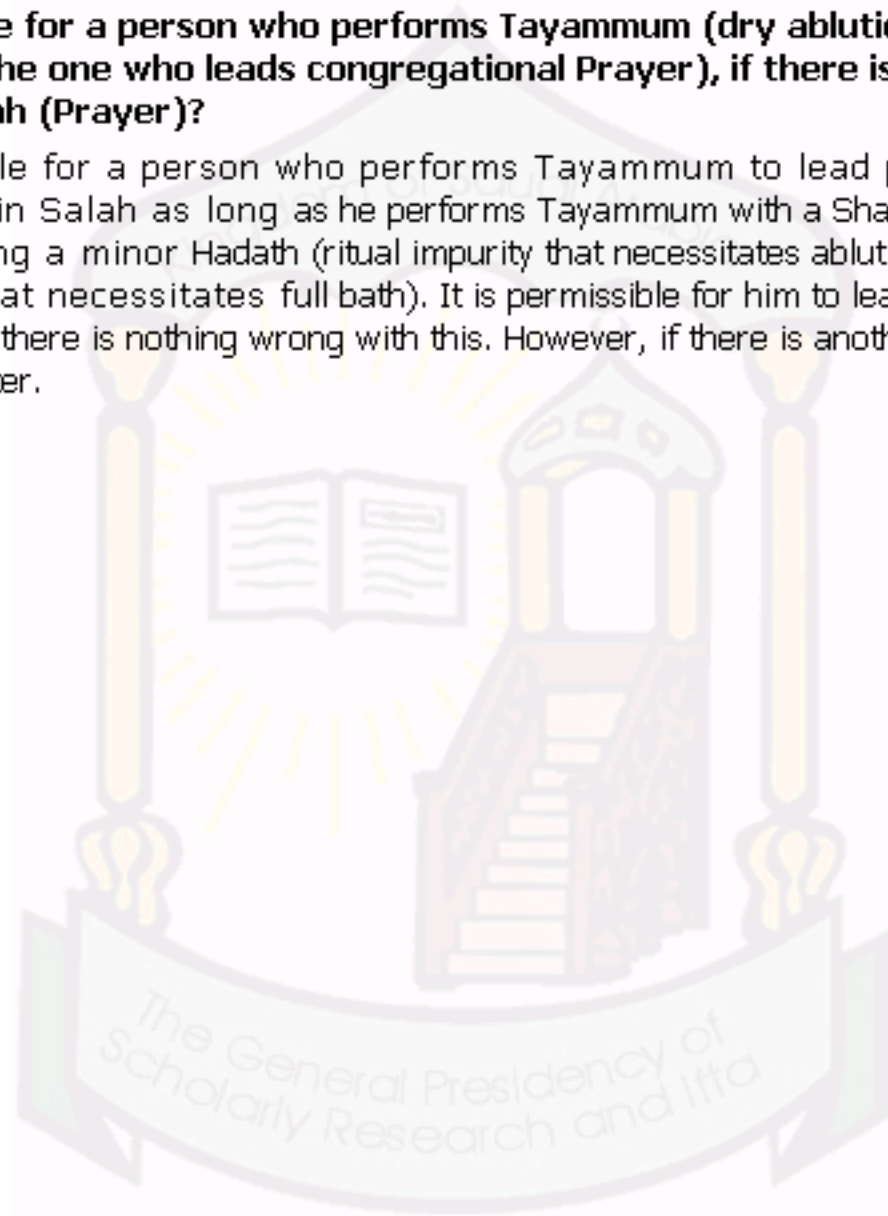
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and have performed Wudu', and he happens to have Hadath (ritual impurity that invalidates ablution), and he performs Tayammum because there is no water, it is permissible for him to lead them in Salah.



Q: Is it permissible for a person who performs Tayammum (dry ablution with clean earth) to be an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), if there is no other person to lead people in Salah (Prayer)?

A: It is permissible for a person who performs Tayammum to lead people who perform Wudu' (ablution) in Salah as long as he performs Tayammum with a Shar`y (Islamically lawful) excuse after having a minor Hadath (ritual impurity that necessitates ablution) or a major Hadath (ritual impurity that necessitates full bath). It is permissible for him to lead people who perform Wudu' in Salah and there is nothing wrong with this. However, if there is another person who is fit to be Imam, this is better.





26- Reciting the Surah of Al-Ikhlâs every Salah by the Imam

Q: A questioner asks: I observe that some Imams regularly recite the Surah of Al-Ikhlâs (chapter 112) in the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), is this act Mashru` (Islamically permissible)?

A: There is latitude in this matter; however, it is better for the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) to follow the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) of the Prophet (peace be upon him) who would prolong the recitation in Fajr (Dawn) and Zhuhr (Noon) Prayers, and shorten it in `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer. At Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, he would sometimes shorten it and sometimes prolong it. Yet his recitation in `Isha' (Night) Prayer was neither long nor short. This is the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that is better to be followed. For instance, in Fajr Prayer it is better to recite any of the long Surahs of Mufassal (the last 65-70 chapters of the Qur'an), such as Surahs:

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(Qâf. [These letters (Qâf, etc.) are one of the miracles of the Qur`ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings].), (By (the winds)), (By the Tûr (Mount)), and so on. In Zhuhr Prayer, you can recite a Surah where the number of verses is less than these Surahs. In `Asr Prayer, it is better to be less than in Zhuhr Prayer. For Maghrib Prayer, sometimes recite long Surah and some others short one. Sometimes, the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited in Maghrib Prayer the Surah (By the Tûr (Mount)) and sometimes the Surah (Al-Mursalat (Chap. 77)). Mostly, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would recite in Maghrib Prayer short Surahs of Mufassal, such as Surahs (By the sun and its brightness.), (By the forenoon (after sunrise).), (By the night as it envelops.), (When the earth is shaken), (Al-Qâri`ah (the striking Hour i.e. the Day of Resurrection).), and so on. But, as mentioned above, if a person prolonged the recitation sometimes, it would correspond to the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Finally, it is recommended to recite in `Isha' Prayer any Surah of Awâsit Al-Mufassal (section of the Qur'an which starts from the Surah of Al-Naba', and ends with the Surah of Al-Duha), such as Surahs (Has there come to you the narration of the overwhelming (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)?), (By the heaven holding the big stars.), (By the heaven, and At-Târiq (the night-comer, i.e. the bright star);), (When the heaven is cleft asunder.), etc. This is evident when the Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed Mu`adh (may Allah be pleased with him) to do so.



27- Ruling on reciting part of a Surah in Salah

Q: Is there anything wrong with reciting part of a Surah (Qur'anic chapter) in Salah (Prayer)?

A: There is nothing wrong with this, for Allah (Exalted be He) says: [\(So, recite you of the Qur'ân as much as may be easy for you.\)](#) Therefore, if a person

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recites some Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) of a Surah or the last part of it, there is no problem with this at all. Also if they recite in the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) Surah Al-Ikhlâs that starts: [\(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allâh, \(the\) One.\)](#) or recite it with another Surah, there is nothing wrong with this. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was told that an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) from among Ansar (Helpers, inhabitants of Madinah who supported the Prophet) used to recite Surah [\(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allâh, \(the\) One.\)](#) with some other Surah (of the Qur'an). When the Prophet asked him about the reason for this, he replied: I recite it (i.e. Surah Al-Ikhlâs) because I love it, for it talks about Allah's Attributes. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him: [\(Your love for it will bring you into Paradise.\)](#) In another wording of the Hadith: [\(Tell him that Allah loves him.\)](#) That is, Allah loves him as he loves that Surah. Therefore, there is nothing wrong with reciting it with some other Surah or reciting it alone after Surah Al-Fatihah, but it is much better to adhere to the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and stick to his approach.



Q: I notice that people offer Iqamah (call to start Prayer) for the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer immediately after Adhan (call to Prayer) without praying two supererogatory Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) in between. Is this correct?

A: It is preferable not to hasten in offering Iqamah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer

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Maghrib Prayer earlier than other Prayers, but he would wait after Adhan for a short period of time, only enough to offer two Rak`ahs. So, it is Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) to offer two Rak`ahs after Adhan and then offer Iqamah. People should wait for a short while to allow those on the way to the Masjid (mosque) or performing Wudu' (ablution) to join the Prayer. However, the period of time between Adhan and Iqamah for the Maghrib Prayer should not be as long as that of other Prayers. Instead, it should be shorter, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not used to wait except for a short while, during which it was only possible to offer two Rak`ahs, and then start the Prayer.



28- Ruling on praying behind someone who compels people to follow him in Salah

Q: There is someone who acts as Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) and imposes himself on us without consulting us, bearing in mind that there are among us people who are more versed in Qur'anic recitation and more knowledgeable of the Sunnah (acts, sayings and approvals of the Prophet) than him. What is the ruling on praying behind such a person?

A: It is incumbent on such a person not to impose himself on others. Rather, he should consult them, and if they accept him, he can act as Imam. If they do not agree, he must not act as Imam. It is also incumbent on him to appreciate the people praying with him. So long as there is among them one who is more versed in reciting the Qur'an and more knowledgeable of the Sunnah, this one should be given priority to act as Imam. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿

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The one who is most versed in Allah's Book should act as Imam for the people, but if they are equally versed in reciting it, then the one who is most knowledgeable in Sunnah. However, if they are equal regarding the Sunnah, then the earliest immigrant (should act as Imam); if they emigrated at the same time, then the older in age.﴾ In another narration of the Hadith: ﴿... then the earliest one to embrace Islam,﴾ in place of "the older in age.﴾ So, it is impermissible to impose oneself on others, and the matter should be subject to consultation. If the elite among the group elect him as Imam, he will have the right to be Imam; and if they elect someone else who is more knowledgeable or more versed in reciting the Qur'an than him, this will be much better. Anyway, he does not have the right to compel others to follow him in Salah (Prayer). If there is an official in charge of the Masjid (mosque), whether appointed by the Ministry of Awqaf (Endowments) or otherwise, the official or the Ministry, or one who is in charge of the Masjid because he is the founder or custodian of it, will have the right to consider the matter and choose a person suitable for the position of Imam. If there is no official, the group attending the Salah can elect one who is the best of them in terms of piety, knowledge, and Qur'anic recitation. They should not allow anyone to impose himself upon them. However, if a person imposes himself on the congregation and acts as Imam forcibly, the Salah will still be valid, but he will be exposing himself to bad consequences. There has been reported a great threat for the one who leads people in Salah forcibly while they hate him. Hence, he should not

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act as Imam for people who hate him. Salah will be valid anyway, but he will be exposing himself to risk. One should beware and avoid acting as Imam except by the consent of the Ma'mums (persons being led by an Imam in Prayer).



29- Ruling on leading people in Salah without taking their permission

Q: A questioner from Al-Kamil area asks: I act as Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) for people without taking their permission. Is this permissible?

A: If the Imam is elected by the elite or those in charge of the Masjid (mosque), there is no need to take the permission of the rest of the people attending the Salah (Prayer). However, if they hate him due to some dissension or because he commits Bid`ah (innovation in religion) or any other visible sins, he should not lead them in Salah. It was reported in some Sahih (authentic) Hadiths that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(There are three kinds of people whose Prayer Allah does not accept...\)](#) one of the three is [\(the one who leads people in Salah while they hate him.\)](#) The scholars of Hadith maintain that this applies to the one who leads the Salah though he does not have the right to do so. If they justifiably hate him, i.e. for convincing reasons such as committing Bid`ah or having dissension with them, he should not lead them in Salah. On the other hand, if he is a good and pious person from among Ahl-ul-Sunnah (adherents to the Sunnah) but they hate him

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because he calls them to the Way of Allah, teaches them, enjoins the Ma`ruf (that which is judged as good, beneficial, or fitting by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect), and forbids the Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect), their hatred must not be taken into consideration. The only hatred that counts is that which is based on dissension, Bid`ah, or such visible sins as Isbal (lengthening and trailing clothing below the ankles) or shaving the beard. If he shaves his beard or shortens it, or lengthens his clothes below the ankles, they have the right to object to him, and he has either to keep to the right path or to keep away from them. The same is true of the one who is known for committing Bid`ahs, e.g. celebrating the birthdays of dead religious persons, the Night of the Prophet's Isra' (Night Journey) and Mi`raj (Ascension to Heaven), or any other acts that suggest Bid`ah or visible sins. In a nutshell, if the Ma'mums (persons being led by an Imam in Prayer) hate the one who acts as Imam justifiably, i.e. for convincing reasons such as Bid`ah, dissension, committing the Munkar in public, or similar things that justify their hatred for him, then he does not have the right to lead them in Salah.



30- A piece of advice for the Imams who come late to the Fajr and `Asr Prayers

Q: It is noticed that some Imams (those who lead congregational Prayer) attend the Masjid (mosque) late for the Fajr (Dawn) and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers. When advised, they would reply, saying: "This is done as an act of trial." How does Your Eminence direct the Imams and the Ma'mums (persons being led by an Imam in congregational Prayer)?

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May Allah reward you with the best.

A: It is incumbent on the Imam to attend early for all Five Obligatory Daily Prayers. Moreover, the Imams and all Muslims should adhere to offering Prayer in its specified time. The Imam should neither hasten nor delay the Prayer in order not to disturb the people or waste their time. Rather, he should stick to the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and strictly follow the specifications of the Administration of Awqaf (Endowments) concerning the time of Prayer so as not to disturb the people by either hastening or delaying it. The Ma'mum also should attend all Prayers early in the Masjid. They should pay equal attention to the Fajr and `Asr Prayers as all other Prayers. Neither the Imam nor the Ma'mum is allowed to be lenient regarding this matter. They should take great care of offering all Prayers in congregation in their specified time respectively.



31- The duty of the Imam toward the congregation

Q: What is the duty of the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) toward his place of residence and the congregation of the Masjid (mosque)?

A: It is incumbent on the Imam to provide his people with advice, take care of them, and not to cause them any hardships or problems

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by either delaying or hastening Salah (Prayer). Instead, he has to stick to what is acceptable, based on the directions and specifications offered by the officials in charge of the Masjid. He has to avoid delaying or hastening too much, both of which are harmful. He should try to adhere to the specified time of each Salah. There is nothing wrong with a little delay or hastening that does not disturb the people. What is important is to avoid an excessive delay or hastening which is contrary to established specifications. In a nutshell, he should pay attention to what is good for the people.



32- Imams must pray as the Prophet prayed

Q: Some Imams (the ones who lead congregational Prayer) act as follows: In the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), they recite many Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) with due diligence in the loud recitation during the first two Rak`ahs. But, in the remaining Rak`ahs, i.e., those performed with silent recitation as well as all Sirri Salahs (Prayers with subvocal recitation), the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) are barely able to finish Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) properly according to the cited recitation description of the Salah (Prayer) as performed by the Prophet (peace be upon him), especially in the last two Rak'ahs, if they try to recite with due diligence.

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A: Imams have to pray as the Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed. He (peace be upon him) said: [\(Pray as you have seen me praying.\)](#) They have to recite calmly, carefully, and clearly just as the Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed the man improperly offering Salah. Observing him offering incomplete Salah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him: [\(When you are going to offer Salah, perform Wudu' \(ablution\) thoroughly, face the Qiblah \(Ka`bah-direction face in Prayer\), say: 'Allahu Akbar \(Allah is the Greatest\)', recite from the Qur'an as much as you can, bow down until you are tranquil in your bowing, rise until you straighten up, prostrate yourself until you are tranquil in your prostration, sit up until you are tranquil in your sitting and then do the same throughout your whole Salah.\)](#) Therefore, Imams have to offer Salah carefully, completely, and clearly. Recitation must be clear and free from omission or dropped letters. Rather, the Imam must recite clearly so that the congregation can benefit. The first and second Rak`ahs in Maghrib (Sunset) and 'Isha' (Night) Prayers are Jahri Rak`ahs and so are Fajr (Dawn) and Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayers. The Imam is to recite loudly to benefit the congregation. He should not hurry in his recitation. It is preferable to adopt the mode of Tartil (slow recitation of the Qur'an), pausing at the end of each Ayah as the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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used to do, so that the congregation can benefit from the recitation. A Ma'mum must listen attentively to the recitation, but if the Imam continues recitation and does not allow a pause for the Ma'mums to recite Al-Fatihah, they must recite it and then listen to the Imam because they are commanded to do so, by the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\('Perhaps you recite Qur'an while your Imam is reciting?' They said, 'Yes.' He \(peace be upon him\) said, 'Do not do that, except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab \(the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah\), for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it.'\)](#)

This ruling generally applies to both Jahri and Sirri Prayers. A Ma'mum has to recite Al-Fatihah. However, if a Ma'mum joins the congregational Salah while the Imam is bowing down, it will be enough for him to bow down without having to recite Al-Fatihah. The same ruling applies if a Ma'mum forgets to recite Al-Fatihah or is ignorant of the ruling, thinking that a Ma'mum does not have to recite Al-Fatihah. His Salah will be valid, unlike the Imam and Munfarid (person offering

Salah individually); they have to recite Al-Fatihah as an indispensable pillar that cannot be waived on account of ignorance or forgetfulness. Thus, they have to recite Al-Fatihah, unlike a Ma'mum whose ruling is broader. He has to recite Al-Fatihah, but if he does not recite it due to ignorance or forgetfulness, or if he joins Salah while the Imam is in Ruku' (bowing), it will count as a valid Rak`ah - all praise be to Allah. An Imam must also maintain tranquility during the third and fourth Rak`ahs of 'Isha', Zhuhr (Noon), and 'Asr (Afternoon) Prayers, and the third Rak`ah of Maghrib Prayer. He should be at ease and not hurry so that the Ma'mums can recite Al-Fatihah. Thus, an Imam should recite carefully and slowly so that the Ma'mums can recite Al-Fatihah, as people vary in their pace of recitation. In a word, an Imam has to be considerate of the Ma'mums and must not hurry. On the other hand, a Ma'mum has to recite with due care

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so that he can recite Al-Fatihah completely without interruption in order not to miss reciting it, as some people may give intermittent recitation, stopping and taking long pauses. This is baseless; a Ma'mum should recite continuously so that he can complete the recitation before the Imam performs Ruku'.



33- Description of Imam's Du`a' during Sujud

Q: Is it permissible for a person who is leading people in Salah (Prayer) to make Du`a' (supplication) during Sujud (prostration), such as saying: "O Allah! Forgive me all my sins; major and minor ones, those I did in the past or will do in the future", and make Du`a' after the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer), such as saying, "I seek refuge with Allah from the torment of Hell, from the torment of the grave, and the trial of Al-Masih-ul-Dajjal (the Antichrist)"? Is it recommended that the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and other worshippers make Du`a' during Sujud and after the last Tashahhud in the obligatory Salah and say more Tasbih ("Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") during Ruku' (bowing) and Sujud or limit themselves to the minimum for perfection?

A: Du`a' (supplication) is Mashru` (Islamically recommended) to every praying person, whether an Imam, a Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually), or a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(As for Ruku`, extol in it the greatness of the Lord, and as for Sujud, strive in making Du`a' for you will be more deserving of being responded to.\)](#)

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i.e. so that your supplications will be more likely to be answered. (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) He (peace be upon him) also said: [\(The nearest a Servant can be to his Lord is when he is prostrating, so supplicate to Allah a lot \(while in that posture\).\)](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) Accordingly, it is Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) for every praying person, whether an Imam, Munfarid, Ma'mum, man or woman, to make a lot of Du`a' during Sujud. One of the Prophet's supplications was: [\(Allahumma ighfir li dhanbi kullahu, diqahu wa jilahu, wa awalahu wa akhirahu, wa `alanyatahu wa sirrahu \[O Allah! Forgive me all my sins, small and great, first and last, open and secret\].\)](#) (Related by Muslim in Sahih under the chapter of the Prophet's Supplications) A good Du`a' during Sujud is also to say: "O Lord, forgive me, my parents, and all Muslims." One may also supplicate: "O Lord, reform my heart and deeds and bless me with understanding of religion." The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to say: [\(Ya Muqallib al-qulub thabbit qalbi 'ala dinik \[O Controller of the hearts make my heart steadfast in Your Religion\].\)](#) Among the forms of Tasbih (glorification of Allah), he taught: [\(Subhanaka Allahumma Rabbana wa bi-hamdik, Allahumma ighfir li \[Glory be to You, O Allah, our Lord, and all praise be to You. O Allah, forgive me\].\)](#) [\(Subbuhun quddus Rabbul-mala'ikati war-ruh \[All Glorious, All Holy, Lord of the Angels and the Spirit\].\)](#) He (peace be upon him) used to repeat saying this as much as possible.

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During Sujud, the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to say: [\(Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la \[Glory be to my Lord, the Most High\].\)](#) A praying person should not content himself with the obligatory single Tasbih, but he may repeat it three, five, or seven times. This is preferable. The same applies to

Ruku'. A worshiper is to say: [\(Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim \[Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great\]\)](#)
The minimum for perfection is to say this three times. If a worshiper increases the number to five, seven, or ten, this is better. However, the Imam should try to avoid causing hardship to the congregation. His Salah (Prayer) should be moderate, neither lengthening it so as to cause hardship to people nor shortening it to less than the obligatory limit. Thus, his Salah should be something in between. During Ruku' and Sujud, he should repeatedly say: "Glory be to You, O Allah, our Lord, and all praise be to You. O Allah, forgive me" and "All Glorious, All Holy, Lord of the Angels and the Spirit." `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(During Ruku' and Sujud, the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to say: Glory be to You, O Allah, our Lord, and all praise be to You. O Allah, forgive me.\)](#) (Agreed upon its authenticity) He (peace be upon him) also used to say during Ruku' and Sujud: [\(All Glorious, All Holy, Lord of the Angels and the Spirit.\)](#)

In the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer), after invoking Allah's Blessings and Peace upon the Prophet (peace be upon him),

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a worshiper may supplicate: [\(Allahumma inni a`udhu bika min `adhabi jahanam wa min `adhab il-qabri wa min fitnat il-mahya wal-mamaat wa min sharri fitnat il-masih il-dajjal \[O Allah! I seek refuge with You from the torment of Hell, from the torment of the grave, from the trials of life and death, and from the evil of the trial of Al-Masih-ul-Dajjal \(the Antichrist\)\].\)](#) [\(Allahumma a'inni ala dhikrika, wa shukrika, wa husni ibadatika \[O Allah! Help me remember You, thank You, and worship You in the best manner\].\)](#) [\(Allahumma ighfir li ma qaddamtu wa ma akhkhartu wa ma asrartu wa ma a`lantu wa ma astraftu wa ma anta a`lamu bihi minni. Anta al-muqaddim wa anta al-mu'akhir la ilaha illa anta \[O Allah! Forgive me my past and future sins, those I have committed secretly and those I have committed openly, and things I have exceeded in and whatever You know more about than I. You are the One Who brings forward, and You are the One Who puts back, there is no god except You\].\)](#)

Another recommended Du`a': [\(Allahumma inni zhalamtu nafsi zhulman kathiran wa la yaghfir ul-dhunuba illa anta faghfir li maghfiratan min `indaka warhamni innaka anta Al-Ghafur Al-Rahim \[O Allah, I have wronged myself greatly and no one forgives sins but You, so grant me forgiveness from You and have mercy on me, for You are the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful\].\)](#) This is a great Du`a' prescribed to be said during Sujud, and also in Tashahhud

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before Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). Another Du`a' prescribed before Taslim is: [\(Allahumma inni a`udhu bika min al-bukhli, wa a`udhu bika min al-jubni, wa a`udhu bika min an uradda ila ardhalil-`umr, wa a`udhu bika min fitnat il-mahya wal-mamaat wa-`adhabil-qabr \[O Allah! I seek refuge with You from miserliness; and I seek refuge with You from cowardice; and I seek refuge with You from being brought back to decrepit \(old\) age; and I seek refuge with You from the trials of this world; and I seek refuge with You from the punishment of the grave\].\)](#) If a praying person supplicates using other good Du`a's before Taslim, this is good. But if he leads people in Salah, he should not prolong the Du`a' too much so that he does not cause hardship to the congregation. However, as far as a Ma'mum is concerned, he follows his Imam and so he can continue supplicating until his Imam finishes the Salah. A Munfarid can lengthen the Salah as he likes because there is nobody praying led by him who may feel burdened. Thus, he can lengthen Salah as he likes but must stay within the bounds of Shari`ah (Islamic law) in every aspect of it.



34- Ruling on an Imam hiring a deputy to lead Salah on his behalf

Q: Is it permissible for an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) to hire somebody to lead the congregational Salah on his behalf?

A: There is nothing wrong with that, according to the more correct of the two scholarly opinions, provided the hired person is eligible for this task and approved by the concerned authority, such as Awqaf (Endowments Institute) or the owner of the Masjid (mosque) who has appointed him as an Imam. However, it is preferable for the Imam to avoid hiring a deputy by suggesting: "Lead the congregation on my behalf and I, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), will help you." This is better than an explicit hiring agreement for such a purpose which most scholars dislike

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as outlined in the following Hadith: [\(Appoint a \(volunteer\) muezzin who does not take a payment for his pronouncing the Adhan \(call to Prayer\).\)](#) Ahmad (may Allah be merciful to him) was asked about a man bargaining: "I will lead you in Salah during Ramadan in return for such-and-such a payment." He said: "Allah forbid! Who can offer Salah led by this kind of man?" or as he (may Allah be merciful to him) said. To sum up, such arrangements are improper. Rather, he may suggest: "Lead the congregational Salah on my behalf and I, In sha'a-Allah, will do my best to help you, or give you what enables you to fulfill that", or the like. This is better than engaging his help under Ijarah (a hiring agreement).



35- Ruling on the salary earned by an Imam who does not lead the congregational Salahs in the Masjid

Q: What do you think about a neglectful Imam burdening the keeper of the Masjid (mosque) with the great part of his workload, including the Adhan (call to Prayer), Iqamah (call to start the Prayer), leading the congregation, and looking after the Masjid? Is the salary he earns Halal (lawful)?

A: This is a sort of betrayal of trust. He must not do that and his negligence must be reported to

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the relevant authority, so that he either corrects his behavior or is replaced by somebody better than him. The congregation and people in charge should report his behavior. We seek Allah's Guidance for us and him.



36- Ruling on an Imam traveling to Makkah during Ramadan without appointing a deputy

Q: What is the ruling on an Imam of a Masjid (mosque) going on `Umrah (lesser pilgrimage) during Ramadan and leaving behind the congregation without appointing a deputy in his place to lead the Salahs?

A: It is the duty of the Imam concerned to appoint a deputy in his place or otherwise report the information to the relevant authority so that it can undertake to appoint somebody to replace him. If it permits him to travel, there is nothing wrong with that. But he may not take this matter lightly; he should appoint somebody else who is either equally or more qualified than him to act on his behalf or notify the relevant authority to appoint somebody else to replace him if it permits him to travel. He may not ignore this issue because this is a trust that cannot be betrayed. Allah (Glorified be He) says: **﴿Verily, Allâh commands that you should render back the trusts to those to whom they are due﴾** He (Glorified be He) also says, describing the believers: **﴿Those who are faithfully true to their Amanât (all the duties which Allâh has ordained, honesty, moral responsibility and trusts) and to their covenants;﴾** Thus, in case of emergency, like `Umrah or the like, an Imam has to appoint a deputy to act on his behalf.

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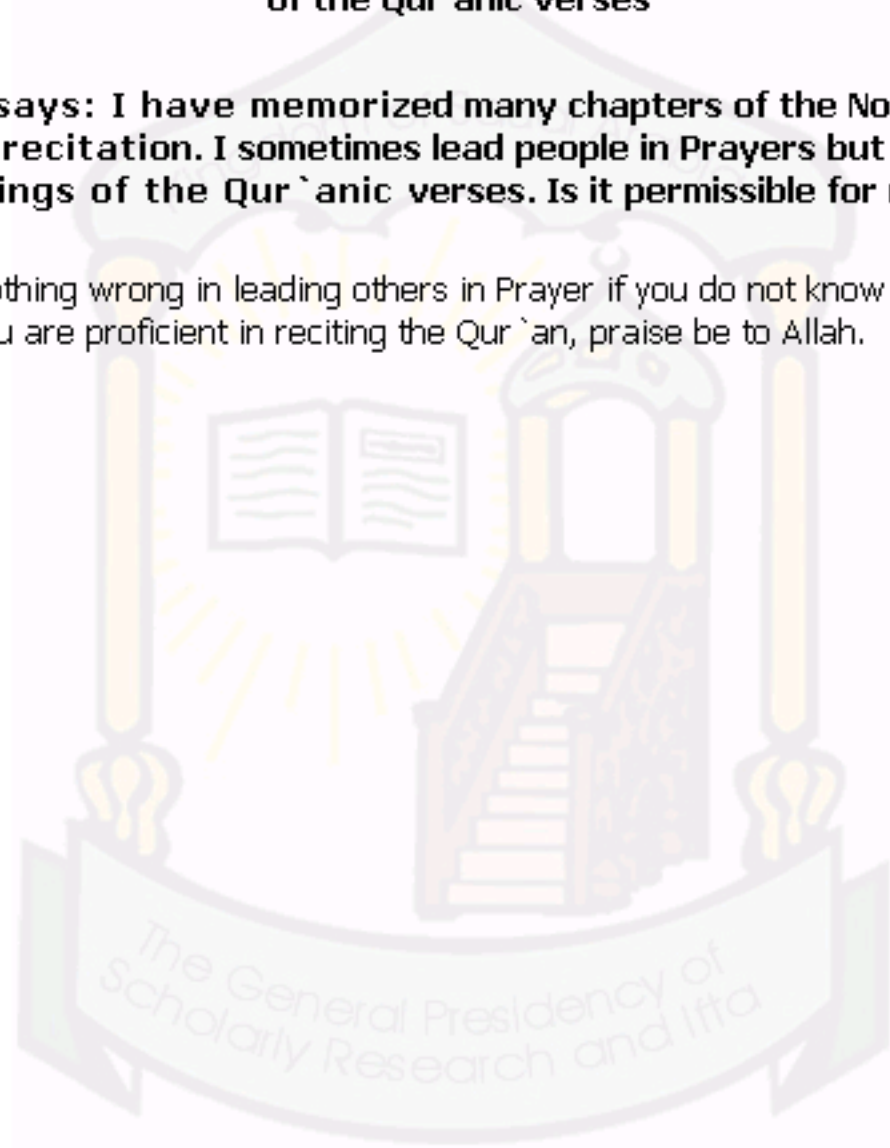
He should not take this matter lightly. Whenever seeking permission is required, this must be done from the relevant authority. Still, if the need is not considerable, he may himself appoint somebody else who is equally or better qualified than him to act in his behalf. All praise be to Allah.



37- Ruling on someone who leads congregational Prayer but does not know the meanings of the Qur'anic verses

Q: The inquirer says: I have memorized many chapters of the Noble Qur`an and I am proficient in its recitation. I sometimes lead people in Prayers but I do not know much about the meanings of the Qur`anic verses. Is it permissible for me to lead people in Prayer?

A: Yes, there is nothing wrong in leading others in Prayer if you do not know the meanings of some verses as long as you are proficient in reciting the Qur`an, praise be to Allah.





38- Praying behind an indebted person

Q: Is it valid to pray behind an indebted person? This person is poor but has memorized the Qur'an, and due to his debt, people in the congregation do not allow him to lead them in Prayer. Is it permissible to pray behind such a person?

A: Yes, it is permissible to pray behind this person even though he is indebted. When a dead person who was indebted was brought to the Prophet (peace be upon him),

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he would say: [\(Observe the Prayer over your companion\)](#) but later he (peace be upon him) ceased to do this. He himself used to pray over indebted people. Out of his generosity, he used to settle their debts if they were unable to do so themselves. At a earlier stage the Prophet (peace be upon him) used not to pray (i.e. Funeral Prayer) over indebted persons who had died while unable to settle their debts, but this ruling was abrogated. Therefore, he (peace be upon him) performed the Funeral Prayer over persons who died while indebted and then sought to settle their debts from their own property or through some other people. The point is that the command not to pray over an indebted person was abrogated and that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray over an indebted person before settling his debt.



39- Ruling on praying behind a heretic Imam

Q: What is the ruling on offering Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who practices Bid`ah (innovation in religion) whether or not this Bid`ah concerns acts of worship or creed?

A: It is impermissible to follow an Imam who practices acts of Bid`ah and it is impermissible to set him up in this office.

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An upright and pious person is to be appointed as an Imam. Additionally, he must be someone who is free from practicing Bid`ah. This is the duty of people in authority. They must choose a person who fulfills the above conditions and who must also be virtuous and possess knowledge of religion. However, Prayers are valid if performed behind a mosque Imam who practices Bid`ah that do not take him out of Islam, but it is a duty to remove him from the office of Imam and replace him with someone else. Prayers are invalid if performed behind an Imam who practices Bid`ah that takes him out of Islam, such as praying behind a grave-worshiper or one who seeks the help of the dead. The Prayers of such a person are not valid and consequently it is invalid to pray behind him. However, if the Bid`ah he practices does not take him out of Islam but only makes him disobedient, such as if he practices Namimah (tale-bearing), Ghibah (backbiting), drinks alcohol or shaves his beard, it is valid to pray behind him but the people in authority are not to appoint him as an Imam so as not to allow him to display his disobedience. Some of the Prophet's Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) sometimes prayed behind Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, who was an extremely Fasiq (someone flagrantly violating Islamic law) and committed murders but they prayed behind him because he was a Muslim. Among the acts of Bid`ah that do not take a Muslim out of Islam is the celebration of Mawlid (the Prophet's birthday) if it does not involve Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). The mere celebration of this occasion and the religious lectures and eulogies it includes does not constitute Shirk. However, it is a reprehensible Bid`ah. But if the celebration includes acts of Shirk such as directing one's Du`a' to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and seeking his help, then this is considered major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam). Other acts of Bid`ah include celebrating the night of Isra' (Night Journey) and Mi`raj (Ascension to Heaven), though it is a Bid`ah that does not take one out of Islam unless it includes a call to other than Allah

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and asking for the help of other than Allah. A person who commits any of the above is guilty of Kufr (disbelief that takes a Muslim out of Islam) due to seeking the help of other than Allah and calling upon the dead and the absent. An example of an act of Bid`ah includes one saying: "I intend to pray such-and-such." This is a verbal Bid`ah that does not take one out of Islam but is an act of disobedience on the part of the believer. Prayers behind such a person are valid. Furthermore, it is impermissible to say: "I intend to offer Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer" (or any other Prayer), though the Prayers are valid.



Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah (prayer) behind a Muftadi` (one who introduces innovations in Islam), who invites people to imitate his Bid`ah (innovation in religion)?

A: The authorities should be informed of this Muftadi` to exclude him from leading people in Salah and stop him from spreading his Bid`ah. As for the Salah, we have to go deeper into details. If he practices Bid`ah Shirkiyyah (innovation in religion tantamount to associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship), then he is considered a Kafir (disbeliever), and thus it is forbidden to offer Salah behind him, and he should be dismissed. But, if his Bid`ah is tantamount to Fisq (flagrant violation of Islamic law) and does not lead him to disbelief, then he is not a Kafir. In this case performing Salah behind him is valid, but you should try hard to dismiss him and seek help from the authorities to replace him with another Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who adheres to the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Performing Salah behind the disobedient Fasiq (someone flagrantly violating Islamic law) and Muftadi`, whose Bid`ah does not take him out of Islam, is valid, but they both should be excluded from the imamate and be replaced by another who is an adherent of the Sunnah (acts, sayings, or approvals of the Prophet). On the contrary, if he is a Kafir, then neither his imamate nor offering Salah behind him is valid.

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As for the criteria of his being a Kafir, as in for example, his worshipping idols and beseeching the pious for help, such as Al-Husayn, Al-Badawy, Shaykh `Abdul-Qadir or anyone else among the dead. Such a person is a Kafir (disbeliever) guilty of major Kufr (disbelief that takes the Muslim out of Islam). Similarly, anyone who curses Islam or looks down upon the Islamic faith is considered a Kafir, and thus it is forbidden to offer Salah behind him. However, if his Bid`ah is contrary to what has been mentioned above, he is not considered a Kafir; for example, if he pronounces his intention openly before offering Salah. Doing so is an act Bid`ah, but it does not take him out of Islam or nullify offering Salah behind him. In this case he should be advised and informed of that as uttering one's intention (before offering Salah), which is inherent in one's heart, is considered Bid`ah. Similarly, as ordinary man who attends Mawalid (the celebrations held in honor of the dead pious) is not considered a Kafir, provided that he does not associate others with Allah or beseech the help of the dead. So, attending such Mawalid is considered Bid`ah, but it is not Kufr (disbelief) as long as he does not ask the dead for help, make vows for them, or sacrifice for them. These acts render him a Kafir -we ask Allah for safety- and thus Muslims should not offer Salah behind him.



Q: A questioner asks: Is it permissible to pray behind a Muftadi` (one who introduces innovations in religion), who supplicates to Allah by virtue of the status of the Prophets and the pious people, and practices deeds which are considered disbelief?

A: Such a person is not qualified to be Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer); authorities should be informed of his matter

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to dismiss him. An Imam should be known for being upright and benevolent. It is impermissible to pray behind a Muftadi`, who seeks help from others than Allah. This action is considered Bid`ah (an innovation in religion) and disbelief, but if he commits other acts, such as beseeching the Prophets, Ahl-ul-Bayt (members of the Prophet's extended Muslim family), or the pious for help or asking for their intercession; this act is considered major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam). Thus, his Salah (Prayer) is not valid, and it is impermissible to perform Salah behind him. Worshipers should inform the proper authorities and insist that he be replaced with one who is known for his faith, fairness, and uprightness. As long as he practices innovations in Islam, he must be dismissed. However, as a Muslim his Salah is valid, provided that his Bid`ah does not take him out of Islam; otherwise he is not considered a Muslim. Similarly, it is impermissible to pray behind those who beseech Ahl-ul-Bayt for help, believe that they know the Ghayb (the Unseen) or that they are infallible, or deride the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet).



Q: What is the ruling on offering Salah (Prayer) behind a Muftadi` (one who introduces innovations in religion)?

A: Performing Salah behind a Muftadi` should be explained in greater detail. If the Muftadi` practices a Bid`ah (an innovation in religion), which

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tantamount to Kufr (disbelief), such as the followers of Jahmiyyah (a deviant Islamic sect denying some attributes of Allah, claiming that they are ascribed to people and cannot be ascribed to Allah), Mu`tazilah (a deviant Islamic sect claiming that those who commit major sins are in a state between belief and disbelief), and Khawarij (separatist group that believes committing a major sin amounts to disbelief), then it is not permissible to pray behind him. However, if he practices minor Bid`ah, which does not lead to disbelief; for example, he openly utters, "I intend to pray", or other forms of minor Bid`ah. In this case it is permissible to pray behind him, but it is recommended to replace him with another Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) of Ahl-ul-Sunnah (adherents to the Sunnah), if possible, because this is obligatory. Finally, it is permissible to offer Salah behind an Imam whose Bid`ah does not take him out of Islam; for example, it is permissible to perform Salah behind a disobedient Imam, who commits minor sins, as he is a Muslim.



Q: A questioner from Kenya asks: Is it permissible to perform Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam who practices Bid`ah (innovation in religion) such as charlatany and Sihr (witchcraft)? What is the ruling on one having offered Salah behind such an Imam frequently in the past?

A: It is not permissible to pray behind him if he practices Bid`ah, especially that which takes him out of Islam. But if his Bid`ah is objectionable, such as Mawlid (the Prophet's birthday) and Bid`ah of openly uttering one's intention before entering into Salah, then there is no blame if you pray behind him. However, it is recommended to choose another Imam of Ahl-ul-Sunnah (adherents to the Sunnah). Again, offering Salah behind him is valid as long as he is not unanimously accused of disbelief, but if he practices Bid`ah that takes him out of Islam, such as supplicating to other than Allah, beseeching others than Him for help, or vowing

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or sacrificing for others than Him, then it is forbidden to pray behind him as he is considered a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship).



Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam who practices Bid`ah (an innovation in religion)?

A: This question requires some clarification; for example, if the Bid`ah is of the type that takes one out of Islam, or if the person practicing Bid`ah promotes and admits Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship), then it is not permissible to offer Salah behind him. But, if the person practicing Bid`ah interprets the Attributes of Allah, or attends Mawlid (celebrations held in honor of the dead pious) and is not a Kafir (disbeliever), then it is permissible to pray behind him where necessity demands, e.g., Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer; however, offering Salah behind another Imam is preferable if possible. On the other hand, if his Bid`ah is tantamount to Kufr (disbelief), e.g., worshipping graves or beseeching the dead for help, then it is impermissible to offer Salah behind him. We ask Allah for safety.





Q: Someone asks Your Eminent: What is the ruling on praying behind a Muftadi` (one who introduces innovations in religion) Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)? Is it permissible to pray behind him? What should be done if it is not possible to keep this Imam away from that position in the Masjid (mosque)?

A: If the Bid`ah (innovation in religion) that he is practicing does not imply Kufr (disbelief), Salah (Prayer) behind him is valid. For example, if he makes the intention for Salah audibly, saying: "I intend to pray such-and-such Salah" and the like of such Bid`ahs, this does not cause him to be a Kafir (disbeliever), and then Salah behind him is permissible. However, those who are in authority must seek someone who is better than him; a person that is free from practicing Bid`ah. Nonetheless, if the Bid`ah implies Kufr,

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then you must not pray behind him. For example, if he says that the Qur'an is created or believes in invoking and seeking help of the dead, this is major Kufr (disbelief that takes the Muslim out of Islam) and it is, therefore, impermissible to pray behind him.



40- Ruling on praying behind a Sufi

Q: There is a Masjid (mosque) in our district that was built by a group of Sufis, although we, Ahl-ul-Sunnah (adherents to the Sunnah and the Muslim mainstream), wanted to build it first. However, they insisted on being the ones to build it and they did. Now the Masjid is under their control and management. They recite poetry and eulogy in it. Is it permissible for us to pray in it with them, behind a Muftadi` (one who introduces innovations in religion) Imam (one who leads the congregational prayer) or what should we do?

A: If their Imam is not a Kafir (disbeliever) but practices only some acts of Bid`ah (innovation in religion) that do not take him out of Islam, then it is permissible to pray with them. Moreover, you may advise and direct them after the Prayers and during Halaqahs (learning circles) in the Masjid, so that they may benefit from your knowledge and give up the Bid`ah that they are practicing. Your advice will be included in the principle of cooperation in goodness and piety and in exchange of sincere advice. However, if their Imam practices what implies Kufr (disbelief), like seeking relief from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), calling unto him or seeking relief from the dead and offering them sacrifices, which is all Kufr and Dalalah (deviation from what is right), then you must not pray behind him because such acts indicate Kufr and Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). The same applies if their Imam has Kufr-based beliefs like believing that others, besides Allah,

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from among the Awliya' (pious people), as is the case with some of the Sufi sects, manage the affairs of the universe. This also includes believing in Wahdat-ul-Wujud (Sufi belief that Allah is the only Existent in reality, all else is transitory) in addition to other atheistic beliefs. If the Imam is like that, then he is a Kafir (disbeliever) and it is impermissible to pray behind him. As for the acts of Bid`ah that do not reach the extent of Kufr, like the Bid`ah of celebrating the Mawlid (the Prophet's birthday) and others that are practiced by the Sufis and are not indicative of Kufr, they do not make it impermissible for people to pray behind such an Imam.

As for the poetry recited in the Masjid, it should be carefully examined. If it implies anything indicating Kufr, like the Poem of Burdah (a deviant eulogy composed in praise of the Prophet), which includes excessive praise of the Prophet (peace be upon him), such as:

**Most noble of all creatures, I have none save you with whom
To refuge seek, when on the world, the Day of Doom does
loom.**

**Oh should the Prophet, not to my aid come on Judgment Day,
Then all would be lost and into oblivion fade away.**

**Since this life and the Hereafter, your merit doth contain. A
knowledge of the predetermined that you ascertain,
Of God's decrees upon the Tablet, which He does record, And**

of the Pen that registers all deeds that were performed.

Such lines of poetry contain disbelief, then it is impermissible to pray behind the Imam of such people who adopt such deviant beliefs, like believing that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) knows the unseen. The unseen is only known by Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), Who owns this world and the Hereafter. Similarly, some of the Sufis and pagans believe that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is the one who

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saves people on the Day of Judgment, and saves those who supplicate to him and takes them out of Hellfire. This is all Kufr and Dalalah, because all affairs are in the Hand of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) Alone, the One Who saves from Hellfire and knows the unseen. He owns and manages everything and the Prophet (peace be upon him) cannot take people out of Hellfire. Rather, the Prophet (peace be upon him) can intercede on behalf of the people of Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah) and faith and Allah puts limits to his Shafa`ah (intercession) on the Day of Judgment. Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said to the Prophet (peace be upon him): ["O Messenger of Allah! Who is most deserving of your intercession?"](#) The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ["O Abu Hurayrah! It is he who says: There is no God but Allah sincerely from his heart,"](#) or said: ["Sincerely from his inner self."](#) Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ["I have reserved my supplication as an intercession on behalf of my Ummah \(nation based on one creed\) on the Day of Judgment, and it would be granted, if Allah so willed, for everyone amongst my Ummah provided that he dies without associating anything with Allah."](#) Hence, the Shafa`ah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) will be granted to the people of Tawhid and the believers, not to the Kafirs who associate partners with Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).

To sum up, if the Imam does anything that indicates his Kufr, it will be impermissible to pray behind him. But if his Bid`ah does not imply Kufr, then there is nothing wrong with praying behind him. Nonetheless, if there is another Masjid for Ahl-ul-Sunnah, it will be preferable to pray with them.

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Despite this, however, Ahl-ul-Sunnah must contact the people of Bid`ah to offer them advice and direction and to teach them and help them understand matters of religion and cooperate in goodness and piety. That is because some of the people of Bid`ah might be ignorant and if they know the right thing, they will follow it and give up their Bid`ah. Hence, Ahl-ul-Sunnah must communicate with the people practicing Bid`ah to advise and teach them the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) and to warn them against Bid`ah, and this is obligatory on the scholars and the believers. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ["Invite \(mankind, O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\) to the Way of your Lord \(i.e. Islâm\) with wisdom \(i.e. with the Divine Revelation and the Qur'ân\) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better."](#) and: ["And who is better in speech than he who \[says: "My Lord is Allâh \(believes in His Oneness\)," and then stands firm \(acts upon His Order\), and\] invites \(men\) to Allâh's \(Islâmic Monotheism\), and does righteous deeds, and says: "I am one of the Muslims."\]](#) We ask Allah to grant us all success and guidance.



Q: A questioner says: If I go to a village and the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) there is a Sufi and does not hold his hands together in Salah (Prayer) and does not put his knees on the floor first before his hands in Sujud (prostration), is it be permissible for me to pray behind him?

A: If he is from the people of Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah), not a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) but

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shows some ignorance or Sufism, yet he is a Muslim and believes in and worships Allah Alone and does not worship or supplicate to shaykhs instead of Allah, like Shaykh `Abdul-Qadir or others. The fact that he merely does not hold his hands together is not a reason for not praying behind him. It is Mustahab (desirable) to hold the hands together and to place the right one over the left one on the chest. However, a praying person who does not do that, his Salah (Prayer) is still valid. This is the opinion maintained by a group of scholars and it is the opinion known from the Madh-hab (School of Jurisprudence) of Malik (may Allah be merciful to him). However, what is right and prescribed is to hold the hands together. This is preferable and the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet), i.e. putting the right hand over the left hand or the wrist and arm and putting them on the chest. This was reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) as related by Abu Dawud Al-Nasa'y and others on the authority of Wa'il ibn Hujr. This was supported by another Hadith related in the Musnad (Hadith compilation) of Ahmad (may Allah be merciful to him) on the authority of Qabisah ibn Halb from his father where it was reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(used to put both hands on his chest.\)](#) That is better. However, a person who leaves both hands loose, his Salah will be valid. Some said that putting the knees on the ground before the hands in Sujud is better, while others said that the opposite should be done as mentioned

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in a Hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah. The matter is open to choice. The Salah will be valid if one puts his knees on the ground first or his hands first, although, it is better to put his knees on the ground first, then his hands, his forehead and nose. This is preferable as supported by evidence. Nonetheless, putting the hands on the ground first is permissible as well and one's Salah will still be valid. There is nothing wrong with praying behind a person who does that.



41- Ruling on following the Imam in leaving the hands loose in Salah

Q: If the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) does not put his right hand over his left hand, rather, he leaves them loose, should the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) follow him and do the same or should he put his right hand over his left one?

A: If the Imam leaves his hands loose, then he will be contradicting the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet). Hence, none of the Ma'mums should follow his example in terms of contradicting the Sunnah. Similarly, if he does not raise his hands when performing Ruku` (bowing) or when rising from Ruku` or when rising to perform the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), the Ma'mum must raise his hands in these positions, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do so at performing Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer), Ruku` and rising from it, and standing for the third Rak`ah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) is the one who should be followed and he is the greatest Imam.

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Therefore, if your Imam is negligent in his Salah (Prayer) and does not apply the Sunnah, you should not follow him in contradicting the Sunnah. Rather, you have to apply the Sunnah even if it means contradicting your Imam because, by this, you are following the greatest Imam (peace be upon him).



42- Ruling on performing Salah behind a person who approves of Bid`ahs

Q: If one's Salah (Prayer) is valid then the Salah of those behind him is valid as well, does that apply if the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) approves Bid`ahs (innovations in religion)?

A: Yes, Salah in this case is valid if the Bid`ah does not cause him to be a Kafir (disbeliever). Bid`ah is only a sin and not an act of major Kufr (disbelief that takes the Muslim out of Islam). Therefore, it is permissible to offer Salah behind him. However, if his Bid`ah causes him to be a Kafir, such as, a person who worships the dead and seeks relief from them, which is major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam), then it will be impermissible to offer Salah behind him. This also applies if his Bid`ah implies Kufr, such as the Bid`ah of those who believe in Wahdat-ul-Wujud (pantheism) who say that there is no Creator and creature but they are rather one, which is major Kufr. To sum up, Bid`ahs that do not cause Kufr do not make it impermissible for people to offer Salah behind the one who practices them. If such a person is abandoned until he repents, that will be good. However, if someone prays behind such a person, who is not a Kafir, their Salah will be valid like offering Salah behind a sinner and that is according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars (may Allah be merciful to them). Some of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet), like Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) offered Salah behind Al-Hajjaj Ibn

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Yusuf Ath-Thaqafy who was one of the most unjust and dissolute people. A large number of the Salaf (righteous predecessors) offered Salah behind him during Hajj. Therefore, there is nothing wrong with that.



43- Ruling on offering Salah behind an Imam denying the Istiwa' of Allah

Q: There is an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who leads us in Salah (prayer) and who says that Allah is neither up nor down but He is everywhere. Is it permissible for us to offer Salah behind such an Imam?

A: This is a Muftadi` (one who introduces innovations in religion) and deviant person behind whom you must not offer Salah. The one who says that Allah is not up or down is Kafir (disbeliever) because Allah is up as He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿The Most Gracious (Allâh) rose over (Istawâ) the (Mighty) Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty).﴾ Allah (Exalted be He) also says: ﴿Indeed, your Lord is Allâh, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days, and then He rose over (Istawâ) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty).﴾ He also says: ﴿And He is the Most High, the Most Great.﴾ ﴿He is the Most High, the Most Great.﴾ ﴿So the judgement is only with Allâh, the Most High, the Most Great!﴾ Allah (Glorified be He) says:

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﴿To Him ascend (all) the goodly words, and the righteous deeds exalt it (i.e. the goodly words are not accepted by Allâh unless and until they are followed by good deeds)﴾ He says: ﴿The angels and the Rûh [Jibrîl (Gabriel)] ascend to Him﴾ There are many Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) to this effect and whoever claims that Allah is not high and says that He is everywhere is none but a deviant and misleading Kafir who must be ordered to Tawbah (repentance to Allah). If he does not offer Tawbah, he must be killed and the ruler must order him to offer Tawbah in court. Otherwise, he must be killed. May Allah grant us safety.



44- Ruling on offering Salah behind an imam who utters the intention for Salah

Q: The imam at our Masjid (mosque) utters the intention for Salah (Prayer) before he performs Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) audibly, saying, for instance: "I offer, facing the Qiblah [Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer], the Fard (obligatory) Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer as three units". He then performs Takbirat-ul-Ihram and says that this utterance of the intention is a Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet). We request that you direct us in this matter, may Allah reward you with the best!

A: It is not a Sunnah to utter the intention for performing Salah; it is rather a Bid`ah (innovation in religion). The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not utter the intention before performing Salah and neither did his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) but he used to intend it in his heart and then perform Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") and his Sahabah did likewise. Therefore, it is a Bid`ah to uttering the intention such as saying, "I intend to offer such-and-such Salah," when performing Takbirat-ul-Ihram. Even though some scholars maintain its permissibility, there is no

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evidence for this. When there is a scholarly controversy on a certain matter, scholars should resort to the Qur`an and the Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet) and if their opinions are substantiated by evidence found therein, they must implement it; otherwise, they are to forsake them. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: *﴿(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم)﴾* and *﴿And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allâh (He is the ruling Judge).﴾* There is nothing in the Book of Allah nor in the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to indicate that one must utter the intention for Salah. However, every Mu'min (believer), male or female, should intend in his heart, whether it is for Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset) or `Isha (Night) Prayers. The Imam you mention must be taught what is correct and advised to follow the Sunnah until he forsakes this Bid`ah. We ask Allah for guidance for everyone!



45- Ruling on not attending a Masjid whose people are known for their Bid`ahs

Q: We have an orchard that is almost twenty or thirty kilometers away. I go there after the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer with my brother and we offer Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer there. I lead him in Salah (Prayer). Sometimes we form a congregation with some of our brothers and friends. I cannot go to the Masjid (mosque) because the Masjids nearby belong to a certain category of people who practice Bid`ahs (innovations in religion) and they offer Salah late. It is also not possible to

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return to our region because of the short time available and the crowded street with children and cars. If I set out half an hour earlier, I can attend Salah at the Masjid; however, that makes me miss watching the laborers, who are unreliable Sikhs. Is our Salah valid? What is the ruling on using non-Muslim laborers?

A: If the case is as you mentioned, then there is nothing wrong with you offering Salah in the orchard with your brother and those who attend Salah with you. As for the people of Bid`ah whom you mentioned, you should not offer Salah with them because they are not qualified to lead you in Salah and you cannot lead them. If it is possible for you to lead them in Salah, this will be permissible; however, the other way around is not right because the people of Bid`ah must not lead Ahl-ul-Sunnah (adherents to the Sunnah). It is permissible for you to offer Maghrib and `Isha' (Night) Prayers in the orchard with those who attend Salah with you because you are far from the Masjids of Ahl-ul-Sunnah. As for using laborers from among the Sikhs, it is Wajib (obligatory) on you to use Muslim laborers because your country is a part of the Arabian Peninsula and the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered us to get the Kafirs (disbelievers) out of it. Hence, I advise you to employ Muslims and keep

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the Kafirs from the Sikhs, Christians, Hindus or others away. It is Wajib to keep away the Kafirs and bring the Muslims close and use them at work in the Muslim countries, especially the Arabian Peninsula because the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered us during his last illness to keep the Kafirs away from it. This advice is not for you alone, rather, it is my advice to all the inhabitants of the Peninsula in Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Emirates, Yemen, and everywhere in the Peninsula. It is our duty to keep the Kafirs away and to employ the Muslims who are more entitled to earn your money than the Kafirs. However, there is nothing wrong with employing those from among the Kafirs who are guided to Islam and may Allah grant us all guidance.



46- Ruling on Imam's prolonging the last Sujud in Salah

Q: The Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and some worshippers prolong the last Sujud (prostration) in the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) and make Du`a' (supplication) only then. In case of the Imam, we as Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) notice that he prolongs this last Rak`ah more than any other. What is the ruling on this? May Allah reward you with the best!

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A: We do not know of any evidence that indicates the legitimacy of prolonging the last Sujud; however, it is a Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) to prolong some of the Sujuds but the Imam should not prolong Sujuds too much for the sake of the Ma'mums. His Sujuds must be moderate and similar in duration to each other. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to prolong his recitation in the first and second Rak`ahs and perform a moderately long Sujud. He did not prolong Salah (Prayer) as much as possible for sake of the people. He used to do the same in the third and fourth Rak`ahs of Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers. He used to recite the Fatihah (opening Chapter of the Qur`an), perform a moderately long Ruku` (bowing), straighten up for a moderate length of time so as not to cause hardship for the people. His Sujuds were likewise moderately long. He used to perform his Sujud unhurriedly and with tranquility, straighten up with presence of mind and heart and recite unhurriedly. He used to do the same in Ruku`, Sujud and between the two Sujuds, so that the components of his Salah were similar in length. This is how the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught us to offer Salah.



47- Ruling on the Imam's Du`a' after each Salah

Q: Is it permissible for the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) to make Du`a' (supplication) for himself and the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) after each Salah (Prayer),

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or should he make Du`a' secretly?

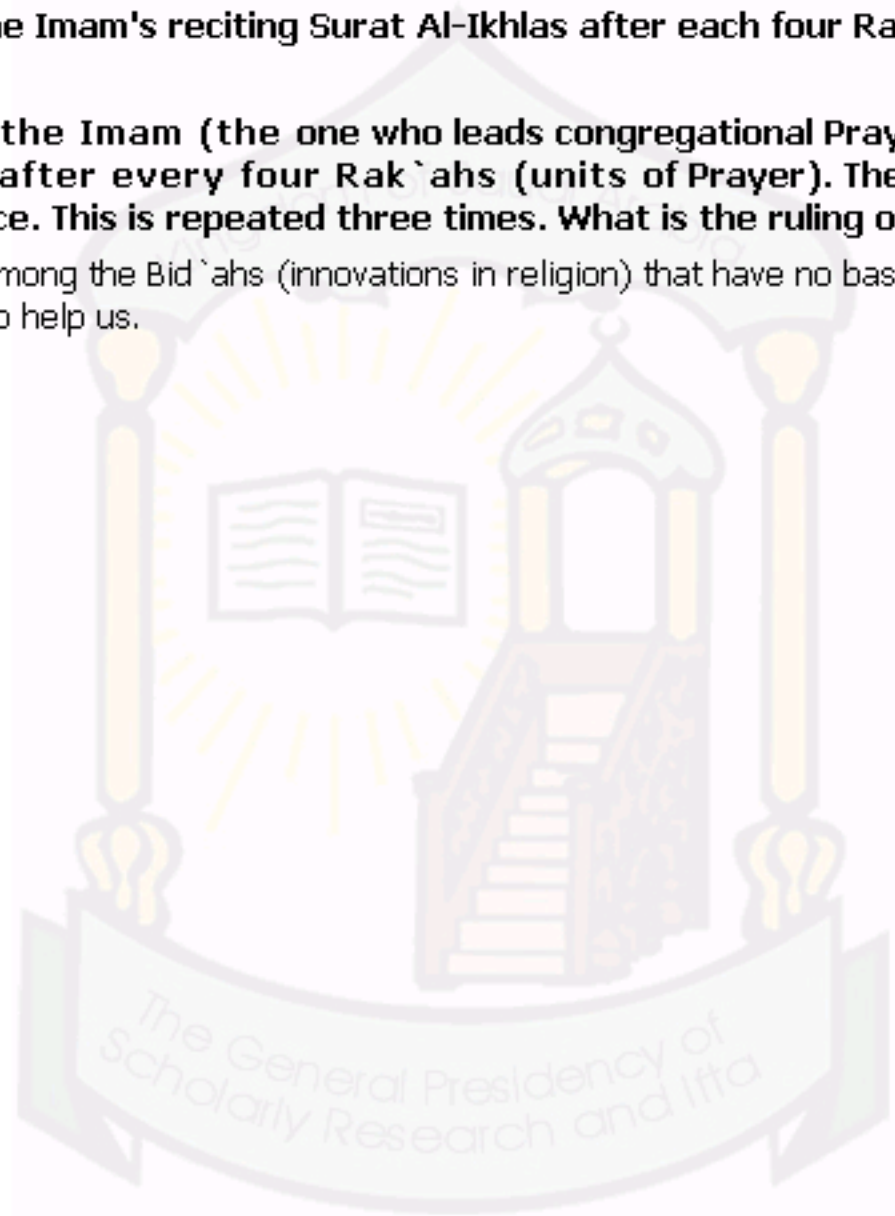
A: The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to make Du`a' in his Sujud (prostration) for himself and for the Muslims at the end of the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer). As for raising his hand and making Du`a' for himself and the Ma'mums after Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), it has no origin in Shari`ah (Islamic law).



48- Ruling on the Imam's reciting Surat Al-Ikhlās after each four Rak`ahs of Tarawih

Q: In Ramadan, the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) sits and recites Surat Al-Ikhlās after every four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). The congregation then recites it all at once. This is repeated three times. What is the ruling on this?

A: This action is among the Bid`ahs (innovations in religion) that have no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law). We ask Allah to help us.





49- Ruling on the Imam's reciting several Hadiths every day after Salah

Q: In some Masjids (mosques) and especially after the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, everyday, the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), or a fellow brother reads some Hadiths from the book Riyadh

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al-Saliheen [The Paths of the Righteous]. Is this a Bid`ah (innovation in religion)?

A: This is not a Bid`ah but instruction and teaching. This is one way of teaching the masses and guiding them to what they must do at Masjids after the `Asr or `Isha' (Night) Prayers or at any other time, that is, teaching those who are present at the Masjid. All of this is required since it is a method of teaching.



50- Ruling on offering Salah behind an Imam adopting Tijaniyyah

Q: If there is a man adopting the Tijaniyyah (a deviant Sufi sect embracing strange beliefs far from Islam) Tariqah (Sufi order), is it permissible for him to be an Imam (one who leads the congregational Prayer) for people in Salah (Prayer)?

A: The Tijaniyyah Tariqah is evil and bad and it is impermissible for a Muslim to adopt it or adhere to it. Therefore, it is impermissible to make its followers Imams at the Masjids (mosques) or to offer Salah behind them. It is Wajib (obligatory) on a Muslim to give up this Tariqah and be wary of it. We wrote a booklet about it that it is distributed to make people aware of its evil nature. My advice to those who adopt it is to give it up and to adhere to the way of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), especially in their private meetings and in all their deeds. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(Indeed in the Messenger of Allâh \(Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\) you have a good example to follow\)](#)

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Therefore, our example and role model is the Prophet (peace be upon him) not Ahmad at-Tijani or anyone else. It is Wajib on Muslims to follow in the steps of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in terms of their sayings and acts and to adhere to his religion and way. They must carry out the commands of Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) and keep away from what Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) forbade. As for the Tijaniyyah `Aqidah (creed), it is an innovated way and an evil Bid`ah (innovation in religion) and it is impermissible to take anything from it, or from anything else, except what agrees with the Qur'an and the Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet) because what agrees with the Qur'an and the Sunnah is right and whatever contradicts them must be renounced and given up.



51- Definition of Bid`ah and its ruling

Q: Is there good Bid`ah (innovation in religion) and evil Bid`ah, noting that some Bid`ahs are fine and does not conflict with the core beliefs of Din (religion) of Islam? Do the Four Imams (Abu Hanifah, Malik, Al-Shafi`, and Ahmad) have an opinion on the appearance of Bid`ah? Did some of them permit some Bid`ahs? When we talk to a person and try to convince him that part of what he is doing is a Bid`ah and that every single Bid`ah is Dalalah (deviation from what is right), he says that it is fine because it does not affect our Din. There is an Imam (one who leads the congregational Prayer) who believes it is right to offer Du`a' (supplication) with the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) after Salah (Prayer).

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Some people were even about to hurt him because he did not offer Du`a' with them. This goes along with so many other Bid`ahs. Please clarify this issue for us. May Allah reward you and guide you to perform your mission successfully.

A: There is no such thing as a good Bid`ah because all Bid`ahs are Dalalah as the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: **(and every Bid'ah is a Dalalah.)** These are great words indicating a great general rule. What people innovate in Islam, in terms of acts of `Ibadah (worship) that were not prescribed by Allah, is called Bid`ah. This entails doing something that was not prescribed by Allah in Salah (Prayer), such as, raising the hands between the two Sujuds (prostrations), at the end of the Salah or after performing Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) in the obligatory Salah. All such acts are included in the definition of Bid`ah. Other examples of Bid`ah are: celebrating Mawalids (birthdays of righteous people), building on the graves and taking them as Masjids (mosques) and similar Bid`ahs that were not prescribed by Allah, but rather were introduced by people. The rule states that everything people innovate in Islam and consider an act of obedience or a Qurbah (a good deed by which Allah's Pleasure is sought) although it has no origin in Shari`ah (Islamic law) is a Bid`ah. Some people think some acts to be a good Bid`ah though they are not regarded as Bid`ah in the first place, such as, building Masjids made of concrete. This is something new and not considered a

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Bid`ah because the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) ordered Muslims to build Masjids, whether from mud, adobe, rock, wood or concrete. Using any of these in building Masjids cannot be called a Bid`ah. Similarly, building schools and forming leagues are not Bid`ahs even if people call them so linguistically though it is something that did not previously exist. The Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered Muslims to seek education and to build Masjids. Therefore, there is nothing wrong in building a Masjid with concrete or a school or form a league for the poor people, immigrants or others. All these things are not regarded as evil Bid`ah, rather, they are matters prescribed by Shari`ah because benefiting Muslims and being kind to them are an implementation of the command of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) to benefit Muslims, be kind to the poor and educate the

ignorant whether that is carried out at Masjids or schools. All these are not Bid`ahs against which the Prophet (peace be upon him) warned. This is in spite of the fact that such things can be called a Bid`ah linguistically as `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said about the Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan): "This is, indeed, a good Bid`ah." He meant it linguistically because he gathered people behind one Imam every night, although during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him), they used to offer it in groups. The Prophet (peace be upon him) led them in Tarawih three nights and then stopped.

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He (peace be upon him) said: [\(I was afraid that the \(voluntary\) night Salah would be made Wajib \(obligatory\) on you\)](#) or he (peace be upon him) said: I am afraid that the (voluntary) night Salah will be made Wajib on you. Therefore, he discontinued it out of fear for his Ummah (nation based on one creed) lest the voluntary night Salah would become a duty on them. During the era of `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), he gathered the people behind one Imam to lead them in Tarawih and said: "This is, indeed, a good Bid`ah". However, he meant this from the linguistic point of view, because it was originally a Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) that was done and encouraged by the Prophet (peace be upon him). The same applies to schools and leagues that people establish for the sake of education, the institutions and all such places that are of benefit to people are not a Bid`ah; rather, they are cooperation in goodness and piety and an interest to teach people goodness and gather them in places where they can learn. All these are not Bid`ahs. As for what the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated in the authentic Hadith: [\(Whoever introduces a good practice in Islam which is followed after him \(by people\) will have the reward](#)

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[of those who followed it, without their rewards being diminished in any respect.\)](#) This means that one should stress acts of Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet), revive them and make them known to those who are ignorant of them. Therefore, whoever teaches people will have a great reward for reviving the Sunnah. This does not mean that such a person innovates something in Islam that was not prescribed by Allah because Allah reprimands those who do this stating: [\(Or have they partners \(with Allâh — false gods\) who have instituted for them a religion which Allâh has not ordained?\)](#) Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(Whoever introduces anything into this affair of ours \(Islam\) that is not of it will have it rejected.\)](#) Thus, innovation in Islam is Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect); however, reviving the Sunnah and instructing others who are ignorant of it is what is meant here: [\(Whoever introduces a good practice in Islam\)](#) This is proven by the fact that this Hadith was stated by the Prophet (peace be upon him) when he urged people to give Sadaqah (voluntary charity) and a man came with a heavy purse that he could hardly carry in his hand and offered it as charity. On seeing him, people

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came in succession offering Sadaqah. Hence the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(Whoever introduces a good practice in Islam which is followed after him \(by people\) is assured of the like reward of those who follow it, without their reward being diminished in any respect.\)](#) This refers to the act of stressing Sadaqah and offering money for that purpose, the thing which caused people to follow that man by offering Sadaqah.



Ruling on Performing Salah behind a person who is heedless of Salah

Q: What is the ruling on offering Salah (Prayer) behind a person who performs some Faridah (obligatory) Salahs and neglects others heedlessly?

A: Salah should not be offered behind such a person because he has committed a grave Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) in the view of the Ijma` (consensus of scholars), which is to neglect Salah heedlessly. A group of scholars are of the view that such a person commits Kufr (disbelief) due to neglecting Salah or part of it heedlessly. If a person neglects Zhuhr (Noon) or `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer heedlessly and keeps on neglecting them or he sometimes offers Salah and sometimes neglects it, he will be considered a Kafir (disbeliever). Salah should not be offered behind him and the ruler is to ask him to offer Tawbah (repentance to Allah). Being sure of his condition, the ruler should ask him to offer Tawbah. If such a person refuses to offer Tawbah, he has to be killed. Salah should not be offered behind him and he is not to be respected as well according to the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [﴿What prevents a person from Shirk \(associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship\) or Kufr \(disbelief\) is \(his performance of\) Salah.﴾](#)

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and the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [﴿That which differentiates us from them \(Kafirs \[disbelievers\] and hypocrites\) is \(our performance of\) Salah. Whoever abandons it becomes a Kafir.﴾](#)
May Allah grant us health and safety!



Ruling on offering Salah behind an Imam who calls for Tabarruk with the graves of the pious people

Q: While we were offering Salah (Prayer) at a Masjid (mosque), an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) ordered people to do what Allah has prohibited in His Book or on the tongue of His Messenger (peace be upon him). For example, during the Khutbah (sermon) for Jumu`ah (Friday Prayer), he ordered us to seek Tabarruk (seeking blessings) from the graves of the pious people whether they are dead or alive. He also commanded us when we ask to say: 'By virtue of the status of so and so'. Is it permissible to offer Salah behind such an Imam?

A: It is impermissible to offer Salah behind this Imam who orders Tabarruk from the pious people and their graves. He is ignorant of the Shar`y (Islamically lawful) ruling and Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism). As for the phrase: 'By virtue of the status of so and so', it is a Bid`ah (innovation in religion) and not Kufr (disbelief) and it is impermissible because neither the Prophet (peace be upon him) nor His Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) said it and it is not a Shar`y way for Tawassul (seeking to draw close to Allah through lawful means). Therefore, it is Wajib (obligatory) to avoid it. It is not permissible for a Muslim to say in his Du'a' (supplication): 'by virtue of the status of Muhammad or so and so' or:

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'by virtue of the status of the prophets' because this is not Islamically prescribed or narrated in the Du`a's of the Prophet (peace be upon him) or that of His Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with and please them). As for his commandment to seek Tabarruk from the graves of the pious people, this is rather a laconic speech. Tabarruk from the graves of the pious people requires that he asks them, seeks Tabarruk from them or seeks help from them. This is very dangerous. Such a speech reveals his ignorance and that he has to be removed and not be an Imam any more. The authority has to be approached and asked to replace him with another Imam. Salah should not be offered behind such an Imam except when the truth is explained and taught to him and he repents from this. There is nothing wrong if he repents and becomes upright In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills). This is because Tawbah (repentance to Allah) deletes what was before it.



Ruling on offering Salah behind someone who believes in amulets written from the Qur'an

Q: Is it valid to offer Salah (Prayer) behind someone who believes in amulets that are written from the Qur'an and then hung? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: Offering Salah behind such people is valid because it is a matter of disagreement. Some scholars validate using amulets which are taken from the Qur'an. The correct opinion is that they are prohibited because they are a means leading to wearing other amulets and because Hadiths prohibit amulets in general,

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such as the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(If one wears an amulet, may Allah not accomplish affairs for him.\)](#) This is general. Therefore, all amulets, whether from the Qur'an or not, should be avoided. Amulets should not be hung on one's son, daughter or riding animal whether it is from the Qur'an or not. A person should put his trust in Allah. They should supplicate to Him for health and cure and avoid wearing amulets whether they are made from iron or fabric, written from Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) or Hadiths or from any other source. Hadiths on this matter are general and the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If one ties an amulet, may Allah not accomplish his affairs.\)](#) [\(He who hangs an amulet has committed Shirk \(associating others in worship with Allah\).\)](#) However, Salah behind such a person is valid because it is a matter of disagreement among scholars. We advise the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) to avoid such a matter.



55- Ruling on offering Salah behind a person who swears by other than Allah

Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who swears by other than Allah and, if he is advised, does not respond?

A: This Imam should be displaced, because swearing by other than Allah is considered minor Shirk (associating other partners with Allah that is not tantamount to taking the Muslim out of Islam).

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So this Imam should be displaced and his case should be referred to the competent authorities. However, the Salah of the person praying behind him is valid because he is a Muslim, and his action does not take a person out of the fold of Islam. The same applies in the case of offering Salah behind sinners. But if it is possible to displace such a person, this should be done, unless he repents and abandons this act of Shirk. It is not permissible at all to swear by the Prophet (peace be upon him), honor, Ka`bah, etc. This is considered Shirk. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Anyone who swears by other than Allah has committed an act of Shirk.\)](#) According to the people of knowledge, swearing by others than Allah is considered minor Shirk, unless a person does so out of glorification to the thing sworn by or thinks that anything other than Allah has control over the universe, or similar misbeliefs, which will be major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam). We ask Allah to grant us safety. The basic ruling is that swearing by others than Allah is considered minor Shirk. The Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them) used at the beginning of Islam to swear by their fathers, until the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited them from doing so and said: [\(Verily! Allah forbids you to swear by your fathers. If one has to take an oath, they should swear by Allah or otherwise keep quiet.\)](#) If the Imam swears by others than Allah and is advised against doing this, but does not accept the advice, he should be replaced by someone who is more practicing, and his matter should be referred to the official authorities, for this matter is serious

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and may lead to graver Fitnah (sedition), so this matter should be considered appropriately and should be referred to the competent authorities to take the necessary action to displace this Imam.



Offering Salah behind a person who beseech others than Allah for help

Q: What is the ruling on praying behind a man who beseeches help from other than Allah and makes Tawassul (seeking to draw close to Allah through unlawful means) through the pious?

A: It is impermissible to pray behind a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and it is also impermissible to follow his example because whoever seeks the help of anyone other than Allah is considered a Mushrik. Therefore, a person is not to pray behind him whether he beseeches the Prophet (peace be upon him), Al-Badawy, or Al-Husayn, (may Allah be pleased with him), sheikh `Abdul-Qadir or others. Whoever calls upon the dead and asks them for help and to fulfill their needs is considered a Mushrik and must hasten to make Tawbah (repentance to Allah). Whoever makes sincere Tawbah, Allah will help them to desist from their sins. However, such a person is not to be set up either as an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) or a muezzin since they must both be monotheists. If it is found that an Imam is a Mushrik, he must be removed and those in authority must appoint someone else who is far removed from Shirk; it is the duty of the leaders of Islam and Muslim rulers not to appoint anyone who associates partners with Allah in mosques since his imamate would be invalid and the same applies to a muezzin; they must both be Muslims since they inform the people of the time

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of Prayers and the people rely on them in these matters. It is necessary for a muezzin to be honest, a Muslim, and a monotheist. We ask Allah to guide everyone to the Straight Path.



57- Ruling on offering Salah behind a person who is known to make Du`a' to someone other than Allah

Q: Is offering Salah (Prayer) behind a person known to make Du`a' (supplication) to someone other than Allah accepted? What is the ruling on those who offer Salah behind him?

A: The Salah of a person, which is offered behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who commits Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) is invalid as long as he makes Du`a' or vows to someone other than Allah. The scholars say that people should not offer Salah behind a Kafir (disbeliever) as it is invalid. There is controversy among the scholars concerning offering Salah behind a Fasiq (someone flagrantly violating Islamic law). However, there is no controversy concerning offering Salah behind a Kafir.



Q: Is Salah (Prayer) offered behind a soothsayer valid, bearing in mind that he is the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)? What is the ruling on offering Salah behind him?

A: A soothsayer is a person who claims to know Ghayb (the Unseen), believes the sayings of devils and Jinn (creatures created from fire). Therefore, he should not be an Imam and the people should not offer Salah behind him. If you want to ask about

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another person, mention him in another question but soothsayers are the people who accompany the Jinn and believe them in Ghayb matters. Moreover, they claim to know all about Ghayb. People ask them regarding their needs. These people should not assume the position of Imam. In addition, they should not be believed or asked and the people should not offer Salah behind them. May Allah keep us safe.



58- Ruling on offering Salah behind someone who believes that some people know Ghayb

Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah behind a person who believes that there are people who have knowledge of Ghayb (the Unseen)? Is it permissible to eat from the meat of animals slaughtered by them?

A: Whoever believes that there are people in this world who have knowledge of Ghayb is a Kafir (disbeliever). We should not eat from the meat of animals slaughtered by them and should not offer Salah behind him. It is impermissible for such a person to be an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in the first place. There is no one in this world who has knowledge of Ghayb and no one knows Ghayb except Allah. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(Say: "None in the heavens and the earth knows the Ghaib \(Unseen\) except Allâh"\)](#) Knowledge of Ghayb belongs exclusively to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). Neither the prophets nor any other person have this knowledge. Therefore, whoever believes that there are people in this world who have knowledge of Ghayb from among the Jinn (creatures created from fire) or humans is a liar and a Kafir. Consequently, he must offer Tawbah (repentance to Allah) to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).



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59- Ruling on offering Salah behind a person who believes in the graves

Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah behind a person who believes in the graves?

A: This is a general question as there are many types of believing in the graves. If the person believes that the dwellers of the graves may be worshipped instead of Allah, that they can ask them for help, make vows to them, slaughter animals for them, and circumambulate their graves, this is regarded as major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam). Therefore, it is impermissible to offer Salah behind this person, as he is a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). It is impermissible to offer Salah except behind a Muslim. If this person believes in the matters mentioned above, in the manner that some ignorant people do at the grave of Al-Badawy, Al-Husayn, Sheikh `Abdul-Qadir Al-Jilany, or any other person, their act is regarded as major Shirk. The people who believe in the dead are not Muslims but they are Kafirs (disbelievers). They act in the way the Kafirs of Quraysh and similar people who belong to the ignorant Arab Mushriks because the Arabs worshipped the dead such as Al-Lat and `Uzza, idols, trees and stones, sought their help, made vows to them, and slaughtered animals for them. Allah considers them as Mushriks. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in the Glorious Qur'an: [﴿And they worship besides Allâh things that harm them not, nor profit them﴾](#) Also, He

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(Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [﴿It is not for the Mushrikûn \(polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh\), to maintain the Mosques of Allâh \(i.e. to pray and worship Allâh therein, to look after their cleanliness and their building,\) while they witness against their ownelves of disbelief. The works of such are in vain and in Fire shall they abide.﴾](#) The ruling on the Mushriks applies to those who worship idols, trees, stones, or the dead. Therefore, no one should offer Salah behind them. As for those who believe that it is Mustahab (desirable) to visit the graves and supplicate to Allah for the dead in the manner Allah prescribes, this act is Mashru` (Islamically permissible). It is Mustahab to visit the graves and supplicate to Allah to be merciful to the dead; there is nothing wrong with that. There is a third type of people who believe in the dead: they offer Salah and recite Qur'an at their graves as they believe that they will attain blessings by doing so. However, they do not worship, supplicate to them, offer Salah for them, or circumambulate their graves. They offer Salah only at their graves or supplicate to Allah and not to the dead people as they believe that the graves are blessed places. This act is considered a Bid`ah (innovation in religion), but they are not regarded as Muskriks in this way. They should be blamed for this act and guided to know that this act is wrong. Allah does not prescribe offering Salah, reciting the Qur'an or supplicating to Him at the graves. The prophet (peace be upon him) said: [﴿May Allah curse the Jews and the Christians, for they have taken the graves of their prophets as places of worship.﴾](#)

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The Masjids (mosques), and not the graves, are the places where the people are permitted to offer Salah, supplicate to Allah and recite the Qur'an. It is not prescribed to visit the graves to do that, but to ask Allah to be merciful to their Muslim dwellers as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Visit the graves, as they remind you of the Hereafter.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) used to guide his Sahabah (Companions of the prophet) (may Allah be merciful to them) to say when they visit the graves: [\(Peace be upon you, O inmates of the abodes from among the believers and the Muslims. We shall follow you In sha'a-Allah \(if Allah wills\). We pray to Allah for well-being for ourselves and for you.\)](#) `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said, as it was narrated in Sahih (Authentic Book of Hadith) Muslim that the Prophet said: [\(May Allah have mercy upon those who die first and those who die last.\)](#) [\(O Allah, forgive the occupants of Baqi` Al-Gharqad.\)](#) Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) narrated that the Messenger (peace be upon him) visited graves (those located in Madinah) and said: [\(Peace be upon the occupants of the graves.](#)

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[May Allah have forgive you and us. You have gone ahead of us, and verily we will, in shaa' Allah, join you.\)](#) This is the Shar`y (Islamically lawful) visit for the graves. Muslims are permitted to visit the graves of Muslims in their own place without travelling to visit graves in another place. Moreover, they are permitted to salute them and supplicate to Allah to be merciful to them and forgive them. This visit causes good to both the dead and those who are alive as those who are alive remember and prepare themselves for the Hereafter as well as supplicate to Allah for the dead. The dead benefit from this Du`a' (supplication).

If the dead are not Muslims, they can be visited for to learn a lesson only, and the visitor should not supplicate to Allah for them. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) visited his mother's grave, he asked Allah to seek His forgiveness for her, but Allah did not permit that. Therefore, he visited her grave to learn a lesson only. When Muslims visit the grave of a Kafir, they should only remember the Hereafter without supplicating to Allah for them because it is impermissible to supplicate to Allah for a Kafir or to seek His forgiveness for him. Moreover, this applies to the people who died as Kafirs in the Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance), such as the mother of the Prophet (peace be upon him), who died embracing the religion of the Jahiliyyah. Therefore, Allah prevented the Prophet (peace be upon him) from seeking His forgiveness for her. The people who believe in the graves in that way, as they believe in worshipping the dead instead of Allah, supplicating to them, seeking their help, circumambulating them, in the way the Muslims do with the Ka`bah to get closer

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to the dead, and slaughtering animals for them, their acts are regarded as major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam), which was adopted by Quraysh and others during Jahiliyyah. Thus, no Muslim should offer Salah behind them nor eat their slaughtered animals because they are not Muslims.

The second type is those who believe in the dwellers of the graves in the way that they may visit and supplicate to Allah for them as well as ask Allah to be merciful to them without travelling for them, following the Shar'y manner of visiting the graves and the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(Visit the graves, as they remind you of the Hereafter.\)](#) The dead people need this visit, Du`a', seeking Allah's forgiveness for them, and asking Allah to be merciful to them. This is a prescribed act, which the Prophet (peace be upon him) did and ordered the Muslims to do.

The third type is those who believe that offering Salah, reciting the Qur'an, or supplicating to Allah at the graves is beneficial and leads to attaining blessings. This is groundless and a Bid`ah. The graves are not visited for these purposes. However, offering Salah, reciting the Qur'an and supplicating to

Allah should take place at the Masjids or at home.

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This is not Mashru` (Islamically permissible) but it is a means leading to Shirk. May Allah grant us success and guide us.



60- Ruling on performing Salah behind those who think that righteous people can bring benefit or remove harm

Q: Is it permissible to perform Salah (Prayer) behind those who think that Awliya' (pious people) and righteous people can bring benefit if they seek refuge with them and ask them for help? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: Those who believe that prophets and righteous people can bring benefit or remove harm and thus seek refuge with them and ask them to fulfill their needs and remove their distress are considered Mushriks (those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) who commit major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam), which is similar to that of the Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance) that was committed by Abu Jahl and the like. Allah (Exalted be He) says: [﴿Nor would he order you to take angels and Prophets for lords \(gods\). Would he order you to disbelieve after you have submitted to Allâh's Will? \(Tafsir At-Tabarî\).﴾](#) He (Exalted be He) called it a Kufr (disbelief). Moreover, He says about Mushriks: [﴿They \(Jews and Christians\) took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allâh \(by obeying them in things which they made lawful or unlawful according to their own desires without being ordered by Allâh\)﴾](#) This means that they have worshipped them besides Allah, invoked them, asked them for help, and built Masjids (mosques) over their graves. Thus, they committed Kufr by doing so. This was exactly what happened with the people of Nuh (Noah). When Wadd, Suwa', Yaghuth, Ya`uq, and Nasr, who were righteous men,

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died within a short period of time, their people grieved for them. Satan inspired them to depict their images and put them in their meeting places and they did so, as it was said by Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him). With the passage of time, they worshipped them besides Allah. They asked them for help, vowed for them, and sacrificed animals for their sake, which are the acts of Shirk. Therefore, Allah sent for them His prophet Nuh (peace be upon him), who kept calling them to worship Allah alone and be sincere to Him for a period of nine hundred and fifty years. But when they insisted on their obstinacy, Allah (Exalted be He) destroyed them by drowning them. No body escaped this punishment except those who were in Nuh's Ark. Allah (Exalted be He) says: [﴿Then We saved him and those with him in the ship, and made it \(the ship\) an Ayâh \(a lesson, a warning\) for the `Alamîn \(mankind, jinn and all that exists\).﴾](#) Therefore, those who call upon Awliya', prophets, angels, or Jinn (creatures created from fire), ask them for help, vow for them, ask for their intercession, or invoke them for healing or granting victory commit Kufr and Riddah (apostasy). Some people do this with Al-Husayn (may Allah be pleased with him), Al-Badawy, Ibn `Araby in the Levant (the region covering Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine), Shaykh Abdul-Qadir Al-Jilany in Iraq, or with other people. Doing so is impermissible, even if they do so with the Prophet (peace be upon him) in Madinah, As-Siddiq,

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Umar, or those who are buried in Al-Baqi`. Committing these acts is a Kufr. It is not permissible to invoke the dead or ask them for help. Similarly, it is not permissible to invoke the angels or the Jinn, vow for them, sacrifice animals for their sake, or draw close to them hoping to gain benefit or eschew harm. All these acts are major Shirk and one of the habits of Jahiliyyah if one believes that they can bring benefit or remove harm besides Allah (Exalted be He). In this case, this kind of Shirk will be more grievous than the Shirk of the early Jahiliyyah, as it associates others with Allah with regard to His Lordship. Believing that those persons can bring benefit or remove harm or that Allah (Exalted be He) gave them the universe to organize it is a Shirk with regard to Allah's Lordship, which is more grievous than the Shirk committed by Abu Jahl and idol worshippers in Quraysh and other places. Moreover, any one who believes that a certain tree, or statue brings benefit or removes harm and thus invokes them for help or vows for their sake commits a major Kufr (disbelief that takes the Muslim out of Islam). May Allah (Exalted be He) safeguard us against all these things. Therefore, it is incumbent upon every Muslim to beware of these acts and repent to Allah of what he has done of these sins. This is an obligation upon all those who testify that La ilaha illa Allah (there is no god but Allah) and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Also, it is an obligation upon all mankind and Jinn to worship Allah alone, testify that La ilaha illa Allah, believe that no one is worthy of being worshipped except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establish Salah (Prayer), pay Zakah (obligatory charity), observe Sawm (Fast) of Ramadan, perform Hajj, obey Allah's Commands, and avoid what He has prohibited. This is an obligation upon all the dwellers of the Earth whether mankind or Jinn. The Jews,

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Christians, communists, idol worshippers, or others should worship Allah (Exalted be He) alone, testify that there is no god but Allah (Exalted be He) and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, believe Allah and His Messenger in everything, believe in the previous messengers and that they were sent with the truth, believe in what Allah (Exalted be He) and His Messenger told them about Paradise, Hellfire, what will happen before the end of time, and other things. Everyone should worship Allah alone and embrace Islam. If one is already a Muslim, they should stick to their religion, preserve it against what leads to Riddah, be diligent in eschewing what Allah (Exalted be He) prohibits and carrying out what He ordains, hope for Allah's Reward, and fear His Punishment. May Allah grant us all success.



Q: If the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) believes in the Awliya' (pious people) and the righteous people and permits seeking their help, is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) behind him?

A: You should not offer Salah behind this Imam, as he is a Kafir (disbeliever) because he permits seeking help from someone other than Allah and making Du`a' (supplication) to the dead. Muslims should not offer Salah behind a person who seeks the help of the dead and circumambulates the graves because he is a Kafir. It is impermissible to offer Salah behind a Kafir. May Allah keep us safe. This person should be advised and educated, and we should not despair in helping him, may Allah guide and grant him Tawbah (repentance to Allah).





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Q: Some Muslims believe that Awliya' (pious people) perform actions which cause harm and benefit, secure benefit and protect against misfortune. These Muslims belong to Islam, performing its rituals, such as Salah (Prayer) and other rituals. Is Salah behind their Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) valid? Is it permissible to make Istighfar (seeking forgiveness from Allah) for them after their death? Benefit us with your answer! Many thanks!

A: This is one of the worst statements. This is Kufr (disbelief) and Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) with Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) because Awliya' neither benefit nor harm. They neither secure benefits nor protect from harm if they are dead. If it is valid to call them Awliya' in the first place because they are known for their sincere `Ibadah (worship) and piety (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "I possess no power over benefit or harm to myself except as Allâh wills.) Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Propitious and the Afflicter who says about the Mushriks (those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship): (And they worship besides Allâh things that harm them not, nor profit them, and they say: "These are our intercessors with Allâh.") Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Propitious and the Afflicter and no creatures can benefit or cause harm. This is more applicable to the dead because

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their life is over and thus they neither benefit or harm because they have lost their ability to act. Even when they were alive, they could neither benefit nor cause harm except with the permission of Allah. Their claim that they exclusively benefit and cause harm while they are alive, is also Kufr (disbelief). The Propitious and the Afflicter is Allah alone (Glorified and Exalted be He). Therefore, it is impermissible to worship them, make Du`a' (supplication) for them, seek help from them or vow to them. Hence, people of deep insight should know that what people do at the grave of Al-Badawy, that of Al-Husayn, Al-Kazhim, or that of Shaykh `Abdul-Qadir Al-Jilany and similar actions of seeking help are acts of Kufr and Shirk with Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). Consequently, we should beware of and make Tawbah (repentance to Allah) from this and counsel each other to avoid it. Salah behind such people should not be offered nor should Salah over the dead because they have committed an act of Shirk which was committed by the people of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance). The Shirk of Abu Jahl and other Kafirs of Makkah and the Arabs was to make Du`a' to and seek help from the dead, the trees and the stones. This is the essence of Shirk with Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). Allah (Glorified be He) says: (But if they had joined in worship others with Allâh, all that they used to do would have been of no benefit to them.)

Scholars should show people, explain the truth to them and guide them towards the correct knowledge and warn them against this Shirk with Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).

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Scholars, everywhere, in Egypt, Levant (the region covering Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine),

Iraq, Makkah, Madinah and other Muslim countries, have to guide people, particularly when the pilgrims are present and explain to them this grave and serious matter because some people commit this out of ignorance or Taqlid (strictly following a specific School of Jurisprudence). Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism) and the meaning of La ilaha illa Allah (there is no god but Allah) have to be explained to them and that the meaning of the latter is that no one has the right to be worshipped but Allah. This negates Shirk and `Ibadah of anyone other than Allah and proves it to Allah Alone. This is the meaning of the saying of Allah (Glorified be He): [﴿And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴾](#) [﴿And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone \(abstaining from ascribing partners to Him\)﴾](#) And: [﴿So worship Allâh \(Alone\) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only.﴾](#) [﴿Surely the religion \(i.e. the worship and the obedience\) is for Allâh only.﴾](#) And: [﴿So, call you \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and the believers\) upon \(or invoke\) Allâh making \(your\) worship pure for Him \(Alone\) \(by worshipping none but Him and by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only and not to show off and not to set up rivals with Him in worship\), however much the disbelievers \(in the Oneness of Allâh\) may hate \(it\).﴾](#) It is Wajib (obligatory) to direct the worshippers of Allah to what is good and guide them towards Tawhid. It is Wajib on every individual to worship Allah Alone and devote `Ibadah, Du`a', fear, hope, trust, seeking help, Salah, Sawm (Fast) and other acts of `Ibadah solely to Allah Alone. It is never permissible to worship any of these things instead of Allah (Glorified be He), including a prophet, a pious person or anything else. The prophet can

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neither benefit nor harm himself but he has to be followed and obeyed with respect to Al-Haqq (the Truth). A prophet is to be followed, obeyed and loved sincerely. Although our Prophet (peace be upon him) is the best and most honorable prophet, he should not be invoked beside Allah nor beseeched for help, nor should Sujud (prostration) made to him, nor should Salah be offered to him or aid asked from him but he is to be followed and peace and blessings of Allah are to be invoked on him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has to be more beloved than ourselves, our children, our parents and everything else. This is Wajib according to the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [﴿None of you will believe until I am dearer to him than his children, his father and all people.﴾](#) However, such love does not make it permissible for us to associate him with Allah nor justify invoking him beside Allah or seek help and cure from him but we are to love him sincerely because he is the Messenger of Allah to us and the best creature and because he informed the Message and fulfilled the Trust. We love the Prophet (peace be upon him) sincerely more than any other people, wealth or children for the sake of Allah. However, we do not worship him beside Allah. This is the case with the Awliya' (pious people): we love them for the sake of Allah and seek mercy for them, including the scholars and the worshippers of Allah but we do not call upon them beside Allah nor do we build on their graves, seek help from them, make Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka`bah) around their graves nor seek aid from them. All of these things are acts of Shirk with Allah. Tawaf around the Ka`bah is impermissible except for the sake of Allah Alone. Whoever makes Tawaf around a grave, seeking

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benefit from the dead or seeking aid, healing or victory over the enemies commits an act of Shirk with Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). It is Wajib on all of us to be very careful against this.



Is Salah (Prayer) behind those who excuse the worshippers of the graves valid? Many of my brothers and I do not offer Salah behind such people because they do not declare the Kufr (disbelief) of the worshippers of the graves. If I offer Salah behind them, I feel unsure of the correctness of my Salah and I repeat it.

A: Salah should not be performed behind the worshippers of graves who are among Muslims. No Salah should be offered behind them because Salah behind a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) is invalid. No Salah is to be offered behind a person who worships the graves, such as the worshippers of Al-Husayn, Al-Badawy, the worshippers of similar persons, the worshippers of Shaykh `Abdul-Qadir Al-Jilany and the worshippers of idols and other objects. Whoever worships anyone other than Allah, by supplicating him, seeking help from him, making Tawaf or asking him to fulfill a need, or offering Salah to him, slaughtering for him or similar actions. No Salah is to be offered behind doers of such actions because their apparent actions indicate Kufr (disbelief) and hence no Salah is to be performed behind them. This also applies to the person who calls for, validates and encourages such actions. No Salah is to be offered behind such a person. If Salah was offered behind a worshipper of the grave, it has to be repeated.



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61- Ruling on offering Salah behind a person who makes Tawassul through the Prophet (peace be upon him)

Q: What is your opinion on offering Salah behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who makes Tawassul (supplicating to Allah by the virtue of the status of) by the Prophet (peace be upon him), such as if he says at the end of his Du`a' (supplication): 'By the holiness of Prophet Ahmad'? Is Salah performed behind such an Imam permissible? Do we have to repeat Salah which we have performed behind him? I asked a scholar in our area about this and he proclaimed that it is permissible to make Tawassul by the Prophet (peace be upon him) since he himself used to make Tawassul through Hamzah and `Umar Ibn Al-Khattab made Tawassul through Al-`Abbas, the Prophet's uncle. Please give us a Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) on this may Allah bless you!

A: According to scholars, making Tawassul by virtue of the holiness of the Prophet (peace be upon him), his status or by virtue of the prophets or their status is all a Bid`ah (innovation in religion). According to the Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars), it is a Bid`ah and it is impermissible because Allah did not legislate this to us. Tawassul is an act of `Ibadah (worship) and consequently it is impermissible to do anything other than what Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) legislated. It is therefore impermissible to say: 'I ask you in the name of so-and-so' or 'by the status of so-and-so' or 'by so-and-so'. It is impermissible to do this by using the name of the Prophet (peace be upon him) or any other. A person is to make Tawassul by the names and attributes of Allah

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and in the manner prescribed by Allah: [\(And \(all\) the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allâh, so call on Him by them\)](#) and in the Hadith: [\(Oh Allah! I invoke You by the fact that I testify that You are Allah and that there is no god but You.\)](#) A person is to make Tawassul in the manner of the people trapped in the cave who made Tawassul through their good deeds. Because of rain, they entered a cave and spent the night there. They were trapped in the cave by a great stone that blocked the entrance of the cave. As they could not move it they told each other: 'Nothing will save you from this situation except if you ask Allah to save us through your good deeds.' Therefore, they made Tawassul to Allah by virtue of their good deeds and Allah moved the stone for them. This was reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) from a Hadith reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) and narrated by Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father). One of the youths trapped in the cave made Tawassul by virtue of his dutifulness towards his parents, another made Tawassul by virtue of his honesty, while the other made Tawassul by virtue of his chastity and protecting himself from fornication. Due to their Tawassul by virtue of their good deeds, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) removed the stone.

As for making Tawassul through the status of so-and-so or by the virtue of so-and-so, this is unlawful but

Salah is valid when performed behind someone who does this because he is not a Kafir but disobedient and sinful in this matter. He practices a Bid`ah that does not take him out of the fold of Islam. Therefore Salah performed behind him is valid. However, if there is someone else to fulfill the qualities required for the Imam, he takes precedence over such a person and it is better to choose a person who does not practice this Bid`ah. A person such as that mentioned in the question must be advised, instructed and guided to what is right. As for the verdict made by the scholar you asked and who maintained permissibility, it is erroneous in spite of the fact that some scholars maintain the same opinion. However, according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars, this opinion is erroneous due to the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him) who said: [\(Anyone who does an action which is not in accordance with this matter of ours \(Islam\) will have it rejected.\)](#) He also said: [\(Anyone who introduces anything into this matter of ours \(Islam\) that is not part of it will have it rejected.\)](#) Making Tawassul by virtue of the status of so-and-so or the honesty of so-and-so is a Bid`ah which is impermissible to practice. Additionally, it is considered as a means to exceeding the proper limits and Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity and worship) and a person who practices it must forsake it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not make Tawassul through Hamzah and neither did `Umar make Tawassul through Al-`Abbas. They made Tawassul through their Du`a'. When the people offered Salat-ul-Istisqa' (Prayer for rain), they used to ask the Prophet (peace be upon him) to supplicate for them. They said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Our property is gone and people are dying. Pray to Allah for rain on our behalf.' The Prophet (peace be upon him) would then supplicate to Allah for them. This was during Jumu`ah (Friday Prayer) during the Prophet's lifetime. The Prophet (peace be upon him) made Tawassul on their behalf and Allah answered his Du`a' and gave them rain. The people asked the Prophet (peace be upon him)

for help, so he went out into the desert and led them in performing two Rak'ahs (units of Prayer), asking Allah for rain and Allah answered his supplications. `Umar did likewise when he was asked the same thing during his caliphate. He said: [\(O Allah! We used to ask our Prophet to invoke you for rain and you would bless us with rain.\)](#) This means that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to invoke Allah and make Tawassul on their behalf and they would make Tawassul through his supplications. He would raise his hands up to the Heavens and ask Allah for help on their behalf. The people used to ask Al-`Abbas to supplicate on their behalf. They did not say: 'We ask Al-`Abbas' but told him: 'Invoke Allah and we will pronounce Ta'min (saying: "Amen" after reciting Surah Al-Fatihah) to the invocations. Therefore, Al-`Abbas stood up and supplicated to Allah and they pronounced Ta'min to his invocations. This is how they offered Salat-ul-Istisqa' by beseeching Al-`Abbas to supplicate on their behalf. Therefore, a Muslim is not to confuse matters. Making Tawassul through the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Al-`Abbas is by supplicating. The people asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) to supplicate on their behalf and he did. `Umar did likewise and asked Al-`Abbas to supplicate and beseech Allah for rain. Al-`Abbas complied and invoked Allah and the Muslims pronounced Ta'min to his invocations so Allah blessed them with rain. May Allah grant success to everybody!



62- Ruling on offering Salah behind a soothsayer and the one who claims to have knowledge of Ghayb

Q: What is the ruling on offering Salah behind a charlatan and the person who claims to have knowledge of Ghayb (the Unseen) and who

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uses incense as this is his work?

A: If this person claims to have knowledge of Ghayb and is known to worship the Jinn (creatures created from fire), then one is not to offer Salah behind him since he is a Kafir (disbeliever). Believers must distance themselves from him, warn others against him and refer this matter to the competent authorities. This is if he is living in a country where he can be sentenced and prevented from practicing his work. Believers must strive to put an end to his work through the authorities concerned and warn people against him and they are not to offer Salah behind him. But if the medicine he prescribes and the treatment he offers are of the type that are customary and known to the people and are ordinarily used by them, then there is no harm in this and may Allah benefit them from this medicine and treatment! If this person qualifies to be an Imam, then there is no objection to offering Salah behind him.



Q: Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) practicing sorcery, knowing that some of these Imams master the recitation of the Qur'an? Guide us, may Allah reward you with the best.

A: If the Imam practicing sorcery claims that he knows Ghayb (the Unseen) and performs superstitious actions and Munkars (that which are unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect), he should not be taken as an Imam and Salah should not be offered behind him because he who claims to know Ghayb is a Kafir (disbeliever). May Allah protect us! Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says:

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﴿Say: "None in the heavens and the earth knows the Ghaib (Unseen) except Allâh, nor can they perceive when they shall be resurrected.﴾ If he commits some sins and does not claim knowledge of Ghayb, another Imam should be taken though Salah behind him is valid. The correct opinion is that Salah is valid behind a transgressor if he is not a Kafir. However, those who are better than him should be sought and the good and kind people should be employed for Muslims in order to be their Imams. The transgressors should not be taken as Imams but if they were found and became Imams, Salah behind them would be valid because Muslims may be afflicted with such Imams. However, if he was a Kafir claiming knowledge of Ghayb or supplicates to anyone other than Allah and seeks help and aid from the dead, Salah should not be offered behind him. If he was a witchcraft practitioner who practices sorcery on people and learns and teaches it to them, Salah should not be offered behind him. May Allah protect us!



Q: We have an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) of a Masjid (mosque) who practices activities of sorcery and witchcraft and undoing sorcery. Is it permissible to offer Salah (prayer) behind him?

A: This question requires details: if he practices activities of Kufr (disbelief), including sorcery, making Du`a' (supplication) to the Jinn (creatures created from fire) or seeking help from them, which is major Kufr (disbelief that takes the Muslim out of Islam), Salah is not to be offered behind him. However, if he

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practices activities other than major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship), Salah behind him is valid. For example, some people use and hang amulets taken from the Qur'an. Such an action includes a doubtful matter, which does not prohibit Salah behind its doer though what they do is impermissible. However, Salah is not to be offered behind a person who is accused of Shirk, Kufr, seeking help from the Jinn and writing amulets of Shirk including invocation of partners with Allah, connection with witchcraft and believing the witchcraft practitioners and that the latter know Ghayb or serving witchcraft practitioners by invoking Jinn and seeking help from them and so on. What is meant is that he practices witchcraft and seeks help from the Jinn and so on, all of this includes major Kufr. May Allah protect us!



Q: There is a man who leads us in Salah (Prayer) but he performs some dubious actions, such as, making amulets for people, writing some Wirds (portions of Qur'an recited with consistency) and the so-called erasing, which is some Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) that he writes, then washes in a container and gives it to people to drink claiming that this will be of benefit to them. What is the ruling of the religion on this man? Is it permissible for him to be an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)?

A: If the man is well-known for what you have mentioned of writing amulets which people hang, this is impermissible and he should not be an Imam because hanging

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amulets is a form of minor Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) in actions and thus it is impermissible for a Muslim to do or encourage people to do this but it has to be avoided. If he practices witchcraft, this is even worse. Likewise, if it is proved that he practices witchcraft, which is major Shirk, it would be impermissible for him to be an Imam and his being an Imam is invalid and false. As for writing the Ayahs on plates and sheets of paper which they call the erasing, if he was known for being a good person who writes some Ayahs and supplications with saffron, there is nothing wrong with this according to scholars. However, his writing amulets which people hang on children and patients is a major Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) and thus such a person should not be an Imam. His case should be presented to the authorities in order to sack him and thus he will not be an Imam any more. If he practices witchcraft and the `Ibadah (worship) of graves and seeks help from the dead, it is impermissible for him to be an Imam. This is major Kufr (disbelief), may Allah protect us. He has to be asked to repent. If he refused to repent, he would be killed. The ruler and the religious courts have to ask him for repentance. If he refused to repent, he would be killed. May Allah protect us.



63- Ruling on Salah behind a charlatan who declared his repentance

Q: We have here in our village an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) of a Masjid (mosque) who treats people through the help of Jinn (creatures created from fire). He is a popular physician.

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This Imam says that he repented of using such means and has started to follow the correct way. In your view, should we continue to offer Salah led by this Imam?

A: The righteous, good and trustworthy people of your village who know him need to be asked about him. If his repentance is true, all praise is due to Allah, there would be no impediment to his stay in the Masjid and offering Salah behind him. However, if he is still accused of evil practices and using the Jinn, Salah should not be offered behind him. He has to be rebuked and his case has to be referred to the authorities, ministry or the court in order to stop him from such bad practices and punish him as he deserves. However, whenever he repents, returns to the truth and avoids such evil practices and this is confirmed by honest trustworthy people or through the court, offering Salah behind him will be permissible.



Q: We have an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in our Masjid (mosque) who teaches religious subjects and to whom patients come. He makes Hirz (protective amulet) for them and breaks an egg of a hen in the house of the patient in our province. Is it valid to offer the Salah (Prayer) behind him? May Allah safeguard you.

A: What you mentioned is dangerous and it is a major Munkar (that which is unacceptable, or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). It is not permissible to do such an action. Using Hirz, i.e. amulets which some people call

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Jawami` is Munkar. It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **(He who wears an amulet, Allah will not fulfill his need, and he who wears a sea-shell, Allah will not give him peace.)** An Amulet, referred to as Hirz, Jami`ah, or Hijab as some people call it, is any item hung on children, patients or the elderly to protect against `Ayn (the evil/evil eye) or Jinn (creatures created from fire). They write some writings on them and put sea-shells, pearls, or talismans of individual letters whose meaning is unknown. They write them, put them in a piece of cloth and then tie them to boys, patients or old people claiming that they shield them from the `Ayn or Jinn. All these things are false, wrong, and Munkar because the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited them. It is obligatory for the believer to beware of this and not to do it. This is some sort of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) in a minor form. However, if one believes that it benefits or harms without Allah's Will, they commit a major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam), may Allah protect us! The rule is that it is not permissible to practice this act. Likewise, breaking an egg in the house of a patient or in any house believing it will be of benefit to him; this is superstition and it has no basis in the Shari`ah, and is some sort of sorcery, telling lies, and deception. Such a person should not be an Imam and we are not sure that

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he may have more erroneous beliefs. Salah should not be offered behind him and he should be dismissed from being an Imam. Efforts should be exerted to carry this out unless he makes sincere and obvious Tawbah (repentance to Allah) since Tawbah blots out what is before it. Allah is the One Whose help is sought.



64- Ruling on offering Salah behind someone whose reality of faith is unknown

Q: Is it valid to offer Salah behind someone whose reality of faith is unknown? In the society in which I live, many Bid`ahs (innovations in religion) and false beliefs grow; people worship graves and believe in (the ability of) dead people, besides other corrupt beliefs.

A: If the reality of his faith is unknown and he does not show any signs of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and pretends to be a true Muslim, offering Salah (Prayer) behind him is valid, all praise is due to Allah. This is so unless you know something that invalidates doing so like showing Kufr (disbelief) and Shirk. However, as long as the reality of his faith is unknown by Muslims and he does not show anything that makes him an apostate, you are allowed to offer Salah behind him, all praise is due to Allah.



Q: Is it valid to offer Salah (Prayer) behind someone whose reality of faith is unknown?

A: Yes, if a person's appearance indicates that he is Muslim and he leads Muslims in Salah, offering Salah

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behind him is valid. This is so unless he shows something that makes him Kafir (disbeliever), in which case offering Salah behind him is invalid. If it transpired that he is Fasiq (someone flagrantly violating Islamic law), offering Salah behind him is valid according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars. However, if he happens to be a Kafir, Salah is not to be offered behind him and he is to be prevented from being an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) as offering Salah behind him is invalid. This is like the one who appears to be a hypocrite by abusing and deriding the religion or abusing the Prophet (peace be upon him) and does similar actions that cause him to apostatize from Islam. Or, it could be that he worships, seeks help from the people of the graves, and offers sacrifices to them and similar actions that indicate his apostasy and Kufir (disbelief). May Allah protect us.



65 - Ruling on Salah performed behind an Imam who turns a little away from the Qiblah due to weak eye sight

Q: A questioner says: There is an old Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in my neighborhood. He is both the Imam of the Masjid (Mosque) and the muezzin. First, he sometimes makes the Adhan (call to Prayer) almost five or ten minutes or more later than the due time. Second, when he offers the Salah (Prayer), his direction in the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) is away from the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer) to the left-hand or right-hand side. For your knowledge, his eye sight is weak. Once we asked him about turning away and he answered: The Qiblah is vast and wide and there is no problem in turning a little away from it. Is his answer enough? Or, what do you advise us

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and him, Your Eminence Shaykh?

A: We advise the above-mentioned person to be careful to make the Adhan at its due time so that he may not cause the community of his Masjid (mosque) to be late for the Salah or confuse them. He must be punctual because it is a trust. Allah (Exalted be He) says: [\(Verily, Allāh commands that you should render back the trusts to those to whom they are due\)](#) As for the Qiblah, there is a flexibility in its direction according to the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(Any direction that is between east and west can be regarded as a Qiblah.\)](#) As for the north and the south, any direction that is between east and west can be regarded as a Qiblah. As for the east and the west, any direction that is between north and south can be regarded as a Qiblah. However, it is highly recommended to make full investigation of the direction of Qiblah. This is the preferred course of action. Otherwise, a little turning to the right-hand side and the left-hand side does affect the validity of the Salah, and all praise is due to Allah.



66- Public advice to the Imams of Masjids

Q: We offer Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who is closed-minded and afflicted with many diseases. He postpones the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) of Salah and we are always disagreeing with him, a fact which forced

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some worshippers to offer Salah in other Masjids (mosques). We hope that Your Eminence will advise this Imam and other Imams to be in agreement with their community. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: It is obligatory for all Imams to have Taqwa (fear/wary of offending Allah) and to follow the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in their Salah and all their affairs. It is also obligatory for the community to have Taqwa of Allah (Exalted be He) and be helpful to the Imams to put the Sunnah into practice. The Imam should be careful to follow the Sunnah in his Salah, recitation, Ruku` (bowing), and Sujud (prostration) so that he may not cause any hardship to people. He should also be careful to follow the Sunnah and not to be late for them and keep them like prisoners inside the Masjid. He should come at fixed times and mind the prescribed times (of Salah) in order not to cause any hardship to people but to show gentleness to them. The community has to do the same for him and should not cause any hardship to him and force him to go against the Sunnah or postpone the Salah in order to enable many people to offer the Salah but they have to cooperate with their Imam. The community should help each other to have Taqwa and righteousness, following the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in this so that their performance of Salah will be satisfactory. However, if the Imam disagrees with them stubbornly and does not

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mind the Sunnah, his case should be raised to the Ministry of Endowments. If the latter ignored the issue and was apathetic, his case should be raised to the court or to the concerned authority by way of cooperating in righteousness and Taqwa. If the matter was set right, all praise is due to Allah. It is obligatory for the Imam not to cause them to resort to the court or the judge but he should research the Sunnah and teach it to them so that they would learn and be convinced that his work is good. If they were not convinced, the court or the concerned authority would guide everyone if the Ministry of Endowments does not do its duty. May Allah guide us all.



67 - Ruling on making excuses from leading people in congregational Salah and teaching them good deeds due to shyness

Q: I am very shy and cannot lead people in congregational Salah (Prayer), although sometimes I am the best reciter of the Book of Allah. If I am asked a question, I tremble out of shyness. What is the solution for this problem?

A: A believer and a seeker of knowledge should have high zeal and dynamism in informing and calling for good deeds, teaching

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the ignorant, guiding those who are misled and propagating virtue and preventing vice. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(A strong believer is better and dearer to Allah than a weak one, and both are good.\)](#) However, the strong believer who teaches people, leads them in Salah if need be, reads knowledge to and guides them and enjoins upon people what is right and forbids them from what is wrong is better than the weak and disabled believer who cannot teach people or benefit them. I recommend the questioner to have Taqwa (fear/wary of offending Allah) and high dynamism, lead people in congregational Salah if he is the best of those who are present, and to take the initiative to do so, display knowledge if he has any, and give Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) to the questioner from the knowledge, which the Almighty granted him, about Allah and His Messenger and not to be shy, because this is not a context for shyness. Shyness is for the ignorant and the evil-doer. However, whoever teaches people about good deeds, gives them Fatwa from the knowledge of the Shari`ah and endeavors to fulfill their interests, it is not appropriate for him to be shy nor is it proper for him to be a coward or late. But he should come forward and encounter all situations in order to be of benefit to people and guide them, and be a leader in good deeds.



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Q: What is the ruling on an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who does not offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque)?

A: It is sufficient for the Imam to offer the obligatory Salah (Prayer). The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to go to the Masjid (Mosque) and begin by offering the obligatory Salah and did not offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to come to the place of the Imam and offer Salah. If the Imam intends to offer the Salah and does not sit down in the Masjid because he comes to offer the obligatory Salah, he should begin by offering it and this will be sufficient for him. This ruling applies to the one who comes to the Masjid while the Imam has already started the Salah and the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) has been announced. It would be sufficient for him to offer the obligatory Salah and he does not have to offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid.

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68- Ruling on an Imam who waits at home after the Adhan until the time of Iqamah

Q: If the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) waits in his house and does not come to the Masjid (mosque) until the time of Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) without occupying himself with offering supererogatory Salah or reciting the Qur'an, is it better for him to go to the Masjid early before the Iqamah?

A: We do not know of any fixed rule or evident Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet) in this regard. The decision is thus left to the Imam: if he feels it better for his heart and the people that he arrives at the Masjid to offer supererogatory Salah, recite the Qur'an, answer questions and the like, this is preferable. However, if he sees it better to remain in his house to recite

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the Qur'an, offer the regular supererogatory Salah and then go to Salah at the time of Iqamah as done by the Prophet (peace be upon him), this is acceptable. It is well known that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to remain in his house until the time of the Iqamah. It is the basic rule that the Imam should remain in his house and engage in recitation of the Qur'an, seeking knowledge, offering supererogatory Salah, and the like. He should be keen to offer the supererogatory Salah: four Rak`ahs (units of prayers) before Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and two Rak`ahs after it, two Rak`ahs after Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, two Rak`ahs after `Isha' (Night) Prayer, two Rak`ahs before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. These are the supererogatory Salah that the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed on a regular basis. If the Imam performs these supererogatory Salah and other good deeds such as reciting the Qur'an and reading books or memorizing the Qur'an, this is good. In conclusion, the basic rule is that the Imam should remain in his house to follow the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) until the time of Iqamah. However, there is no blame if the Imam sees it better in some cases, villages or towns to go early to Salah and await there with people at the Masjid to offer the supererogatory Salah, recite the Qur'an, recite Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") and Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]"). Therefore, it is better for the Imam to stay home until the time of the Iqamah to follow the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and if another objective

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necessitates that he comes to the Masjid for a preponderant benefit, there is no harm in this as far as I know. He should decide what is best and is closer to achieving the benefit and interests of Muslims.



Q: Am I to blame for missing one or two of the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers during the month for certain excuses if I am the resident Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) of a certain Masjid (mosque)?

A: There is no blame on you but you should inform those in the congregation so that they do not wait you in vain or you may appoint someone to lead them in Salah (Prayer). You can tell them that if you are delayed beyond a certain time, they should choose someone to lead them in Salah. You have to do your best to keep to the appointed times and avoid the obstacles that may hinder you on some occasions.





69- What an Imam must do upon remembering that he is in a state of ceremonial impurity during the Salah

Q: What should the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) do if he remembers that he is ceremonially impure during Salah (Prayer)?

A: He should choose someone of those behind him to lead the people and complete Salah. He should select someone to take his place for the remaining part of Salah. Thanks to Allah, this is the correct manner. He should bring forward a righteous person to lead the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) and complete Salah. When 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was stabbed while leading people in the Salah, he advanced 'Abdurrahman Ibn

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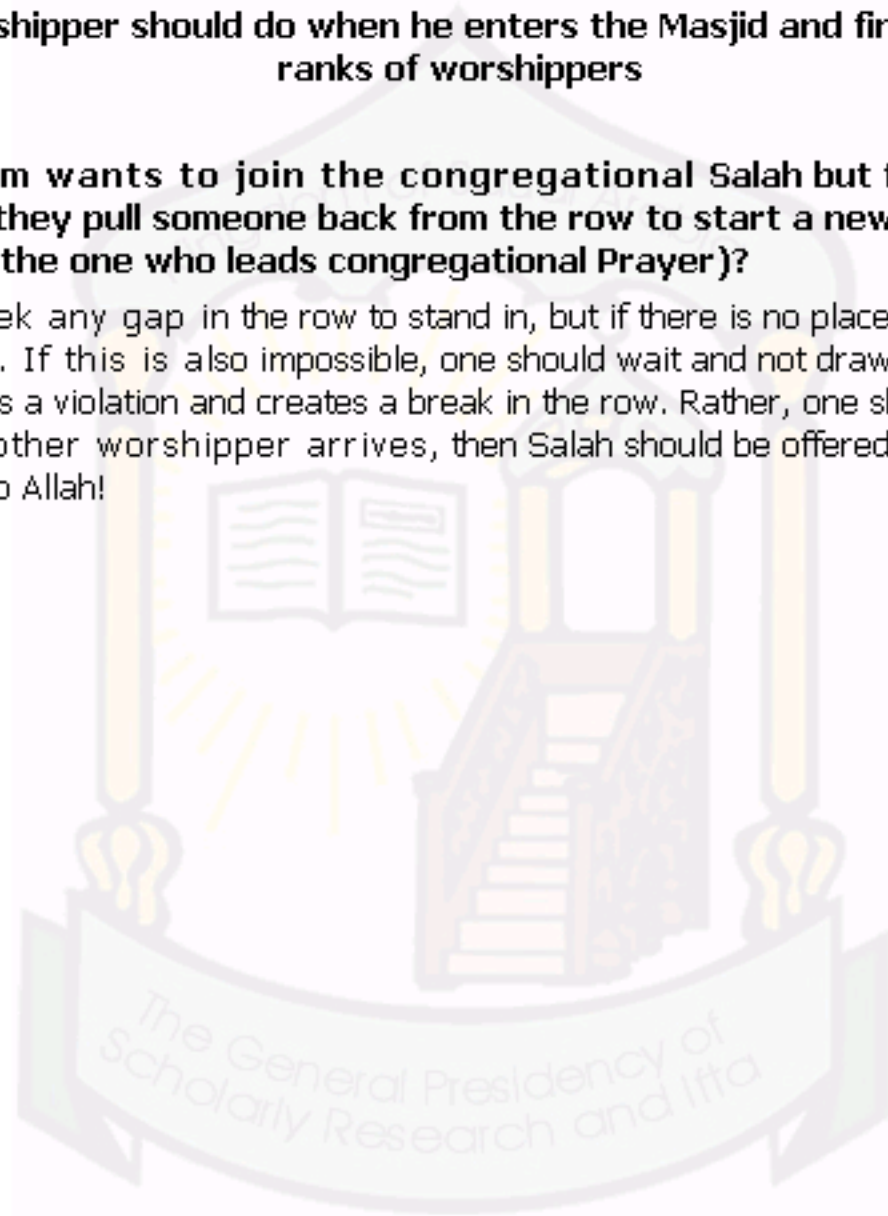
'Awf to lead the congregation in Salah and complete it. If worshipers start anew, they may choose someone to lead them and start it again. There is also no blame if they wait for the Imam until he performs Wudu' (ablution) and returns to lead them anew. However, it is best for the Imam to appoint someone to lead them and complete Salah so as not to create a hardship. This is permissible, praise be to Allah. The Imam can then perform a new Wudu' and repeat Salah.



70- What a worshipper should do when he enters the Masjid and finds no place in the ranks of worshippers

Q: When a Muslim wants to join the congregational Salah but finds that the row is complete, should they pull someone back from the row to start a new row or stand alone behind the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)?

A: One should seek any gap in the row to stand in, but if there is no place, one may stand to the right of the Imam. If this is also impossible, one should wait and not draw anyone from the row, because doing so is a violation and creates a break in the row. Rather, one should wait and if Salah is over before another worshipper arrives, then Salah should be offered individually and one is excused, praise be to Allah!





Q: If one offers the first Rak`ah (unit of prayer) with the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) while standing alone behind the ranks and then another worshipper joins them, should one end Salah (Prayer) with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after the Imam or make up for the Rak`ah which they offered individually in the row?

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A: If a worshipper offers one Rak`ah behind the ranks individually, their Salah is invalid. One must repeat Salah in this case with another worshipper who joins them. If one continues Salah without restarting it, it is invalid because they offered one Rak`ah alone behind the ranks. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(There is no Salah for the one who offers Salah alone behind the row.\)](#) This Hadith has been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). It is also authentically reported that he commanded a worshipper who offered the Salah behind the ranks to repeat it. However, if one starts Salah alone and another person joins the row before Ruku` (bowing) or during Sujud (prostration), Salah is valid and acceptable, and all Praise is due to Allah, as done by Abu Bakrah (may Allah be pleased with him).



Ruling on the Imam choosing another person in the case of Hadath

Q: If an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) experiences Hadath (ritual impurity) during Salah (Prayer), how should he get out of the Salah so that another Imam can replace him? Or should he complete or repeat the Salah? What If there is nobody who is qualified to succeed him?

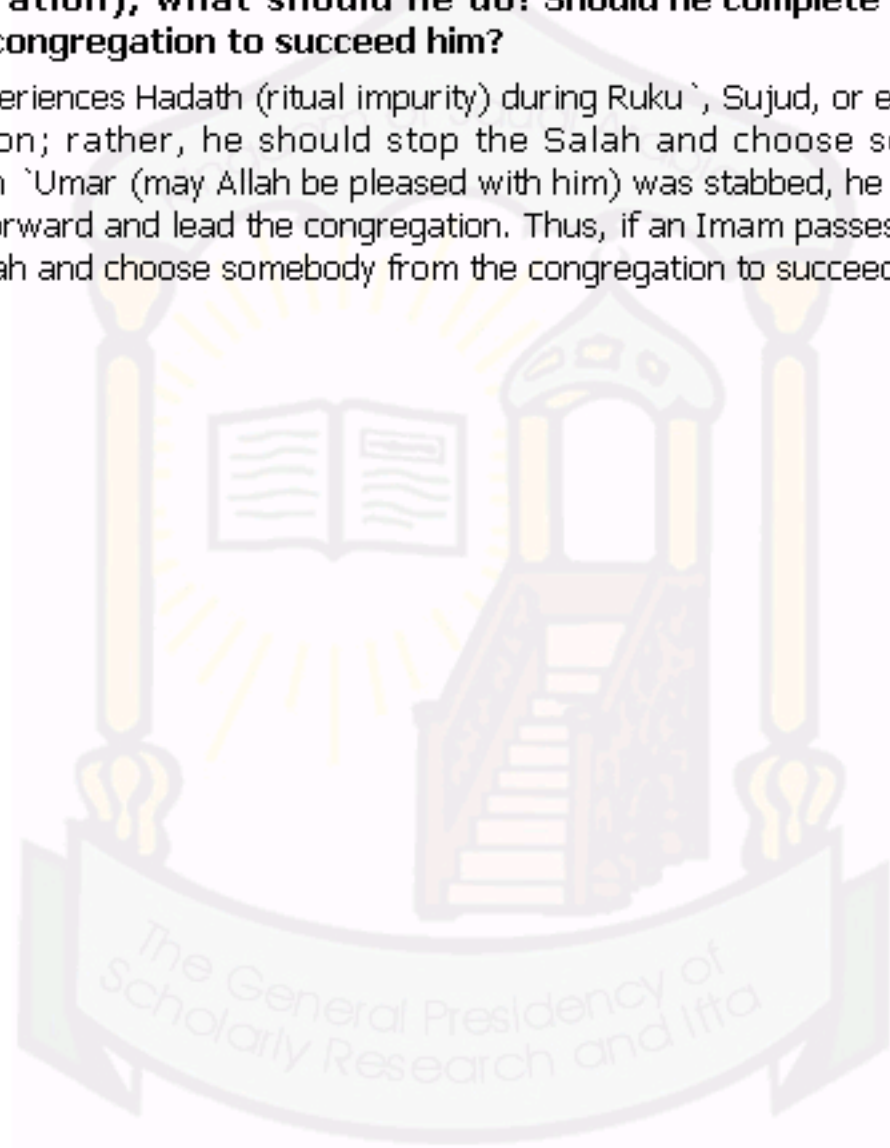
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A: If an Imam experiences Hadath during Salah, he should stop the Salah, tell the congregation to wait for him, go to perform Wudu' (ablution) and then repeat the Salah. However, if there is someone to replace him, he may ask him to step forward or make him step forward by taking him by the hand so that the person can complete the Salah. When `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was stabbed, he took `Abdul-Rahman (may Allah be pleased with him) by the hand to step forward. Basically, if an Imam happens to experience Hadath during Salah, he should stop the Salah and bring someone qualified to step forward and lead the congregation until the finish. Otherwise, they should wait for him until he comes back to repeat the Salah.



Q: If an Imam passes wind or urine invalidating his Salah (Prayer) during Ruku` (bowing) or Sujud (Prostration), what should he do? Should he complete the Salah or choose somebody of the congregation to succeed him?

A: If an Imam experiences Hadath (ritual impurity) during Ruku`, Sujud, or elsewhere in the Salah, he should not go on; rather, he should stop the Salah and choose somebody to lead the congregation. When `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was stabbed, he chose `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf to step forward and lead the congregation. Thus, if an Imam passes wind or urine, he has to get out of the Salah and choose somebody from the congregation to succeed him.

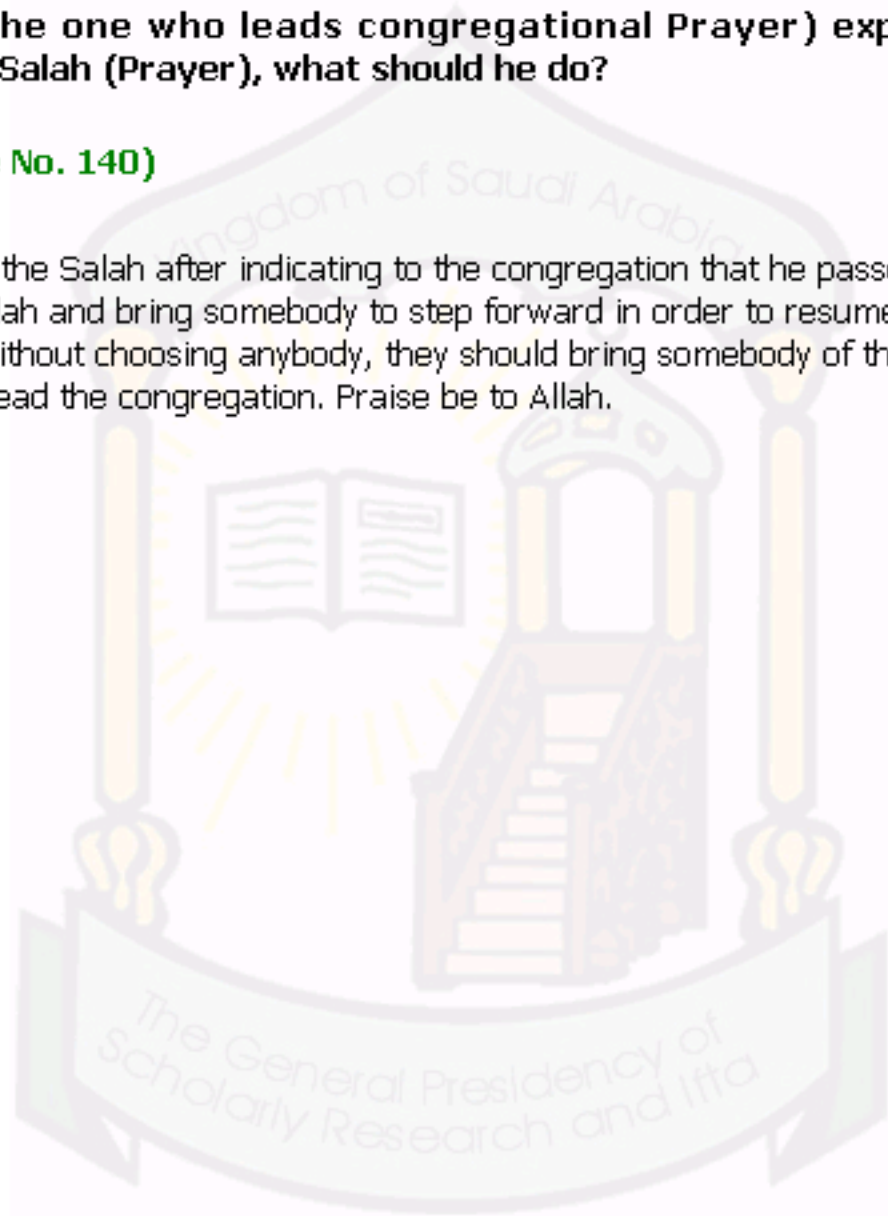




Q: If an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) experiences something invalidating to his Salah (Prayer), what should he do?

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A: He has to leave the Salah after indicating to the congregation that he passed wind or urine. He is then to stop the Salah and bring somebody to step forward in order to resume the rest of the Salah. If he goes away without choosing anybody, they should bring somebody of the congregation to step forward in order to lead the congregation. Praise be to Allah.





Q: If an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) suffers a nosebleed and the door of the Masjid (mosque) is behind the congregation, can he cross the lines to get out of the Masjid or should he wait until they finish their Salah (Prayer)?

A: If an Imam suffers nosebleed or has his Wudu' (ablution) invalidated, he should appoint somebody else to lead the congregation on his behalf according to the preponderant opinion. He may then, if he can, leave even if he has to cross lines for he has a valid excuse. But if he can not, he may sit down until he can leave. He should take care to avoid dropping blood in the Masjid. There is no blame on him in this case. Praise be to Allah. After all, the correct opinion requires choosing somebody to succeed him so that he will not interrupt the congregational Salah just as `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) did. When he was stabbed, he chose `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf as his successor. He led the congregation resuming the Salah. This is the correct opinion.





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Q: What is the ruling on the Salah (Prayer) of an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who forgets to perform Wudu' (ablution) and remembers that only in the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer)? What is the ruling on the Salah for the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer)?

A: According to the correct opinion, if an Imam offers Salah and then remembers that he has not performed Wudu' (ablution), he should choose a successor for when `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was stabbed, he chose `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf (may Allah be pleased with him) as a successor. This indicates that the correct opinion requires that an Imam should choose a successor. This is the more correct opinion. Some scholars are of the opinion that he cannot choose a successor; rather, the Ma'mums have to wait until he finishes Wudu' and then comes back or chooses a successor to repeat the Salah or the congregation themselves choose somebody to resume the Salah. But according to the most correct opinion, either he or they should choose somebody to resume the Salah as their Salah is still valid. They offered Salah with Wudu' and Taharah (ritual purification), but it is he who offered Salah forgetting Taharah. So, if he resumes Salah until Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), their Salah will be valid, but it is he who has to repeat his Salah. Just as their Salah will be valid if he resumes Salah, their Salah will be valid also if he remembers that during Salah and chooses somebody to lead them or they bring somebody to step forward to lead them in case he does not chooses a successor. Praise be to Allah. This is the correct opinion.



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Ruling on the Imam choosing the late Ma'mum as successor

Q: I joined congregational Salah (Prayer) one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) late and then the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) experienced Hadath (ritual impurity), so I succeeded him to resume the Salah. What should I have done given that I was late? I asked somebody who told me that I had to point to people to stay until I performed the late Rak`ah and then we would finish the Salah together. Is this correct?

A: They should not follow you performing an extra Rak`ah. So you may point to them to stay until you complete your late Rak`ah if you fear they will get up following you, then you finish the Salah together. Praise be to Allah. As a successor, you have to resume your Salah while they are waiting for you. When you complete your Salah, you will finish the Salah together. If you fear that they will get up, point to them by the hand so that they will stay and not get up following you.



73- What the congregation should do if the Imam ends the Salah for a reason?

Q: We were led by an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who got so confused while reciting the Qur'an that he left us. Should somebody of us have stepped forward or should we have stopped the Salah (Prayer) and repeated it led by a new Imam?

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A: The correct opinion is that if the Imam leaves the Salah or experiences Hadath (ritual impurity), the congregation have the option to bring somebody of them to step forward and resume Salah with them if the Imam does not choose anybody to succeed him or they may repeat the Salah. However, it is more preferable to bring somebody close to the Imam to step forward and resume the Salah. Praise be to Allah. This is the preponderant opinion. There is nothing wrong with that In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills) for when `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was stabbed, he chose as a successor `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf (may Allah be pleased with him) who led the congregation resuming the Salah.



Q: I went to the Masjid (mosque) to offer the `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and found that the congregation was two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) ahead of me. When I said: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" to offer Salah (Prayer), the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) had an excuse to stop Salah and so he chose me to act as an Imam in his behalf. What should have I done in this case given that I was two Rak`ahs late?

A: You should have performed the two Rak`ahs you were to perform if you were led by the Imam, then sit down for the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer) in which it is preferable to invoke Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him). Then you should have got up and pointed to the congregation so that they would sit down until you finish and then you make Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) together. So you should have pointed to the congregation so that

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they would sit down and not follow you. When you made up for the two Rak`ahs you missed, you should have made Taslim with the congregation for you had a valid excuse in this case. Thus, you would get up to complete your Salah while the congregation is waiting for you as you had a valid excuse. Then you will make the Taslim with the congregation. This is what is legally prescribed. It is preferable that the Imam chooses a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) who did not miss any Rak`ah to succeed him. However, if the Imam chooses a late Ma'mum as a successor, the Salah is still valid. Praise be to Allah. Such an alternative Imam will lead them during two Rak`ahs, sit down for Tashahhud, invoke Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) according to the more correct opinion after the Two Shahadahs (Testimonies of Faith), and then get up saying: "Allahu Akbar" to perform the third Rak`ah. When he finishes his Salah, he will make Taslim with them. However, they will not get up following him. Rather, they will wait until he finishes and make Taslim with him. If a Ma'mum ignorantly gets up following him, his Salah will be still valid. However, he could point to them so that they will sit down and draw their attention after the Salah to the fact that it is legally prescribed in such cases to sit down and wait for the alternative Imam.



74- Ruling on congregational Salah performed behind an Imam who is not ritually pure

Q: One day I led some Muslims in Salah (Prayer). During Salah, I remembered that I was not in a state of Taharah (ritual purification) and I failed to make the right decision. I was so confused that I completed the Salah as an Imam, then I repeated my Salah but I did not tell the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) about this mistake as I felt ashamed.

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I would like to get your opinion on this matter, may Allah reward you abundantly!

A: The Ma'mums' Salah is valid as they did not know about the Imam's state. If an Imam begins the Salah then remembers that he is not in a state of Taharah and completes the Salah, then the Ma'mums' Salah is valid. As for the Imam, he has to repeat his Salah. He should be God-conscious and should not complete his Salah if he breaks the Wudu' (ablution) or remembers that he is no longer in a state of Taharah. In this case, he is to stop the Salah and ask one of the Ma'mums to complete the Salah saying to him: Step forward and lead the Salah. However, if the Imam leaves the Salah without choosing another Imam, the Ma'mums should bring someone forward to lead them. This is because when 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was stabbed, he brought forward 'Abdul-Rahman to complete the Salah as an Imam, and this is what is recommended in this case. However, there is no problem if the Imam leaves the Ma'mums and they ask someone to lead them. Still, it is permissible for the Ma'mums to repeat their Salah. So, there are many options to solve such cases and praise be to Allah who made it easy on us.



Q: I led a congregational Prayer and after finishing Salah (Prayer) I remembered that I was not in a state of purity. What should I have done in such a case? May Allah reward you!

A: There is nothing wrong if you did not know or remember until after finishing the Salah. The Ma'mums' (people being led by an imam in prayer) prayer is correct, but you have to repeat your Salah after performing Wudu' (ablution).

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However, if you remember while you are still in Salah, you must stop offering your Salah and ask someone to lead the Salah in your stead by saying to one of the Ma'mums behind you: Step forward and complete the Salah as Imam. Alternatively, there is no problem if the Ma'mums start their Salah again or wait for you to lead the congregation from the beginning of the Salah. But, it is easier for the Ma'mums if you bring someone forward to lead them, and you go to perform Wudu' and repeat your Salah. These are the rulings related to the case in question.



Q: After I had finished the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer in congregation, I found that I was Junub (in a state of post-sexual ritual impurity), so I performed Janabah Ghusl (full ritual bath to cleanse of sexual discharge) then I performed the Fajr Prayer. Is the Prayer I performed before Janabah Ghusl correct, given that I did not know then that I was Junub?

A: The Salah is invalid since you know that you were Junub or not having Taharah (ritual purification). As for the Ma'mums (people led by an Imam in Prayer) who followed you in Salah, their Salah is sound as neither you nor they knew that you were Junub. But you have to repeat your Salah as you later remembered that you were Junub. This is exactly like the case when you come to know right after performing a Salah that you had minor Hadath (ritual impurity that necessitates ablution), in which case you have to repeat this Salah. So if the Junub or the one having a minor Hadath performs a Salah and then knows that he was in a state of impurity, he must repeat the Salah. If one is an Imam in a congregation and does realize that he is impure until after finishing the Salah,

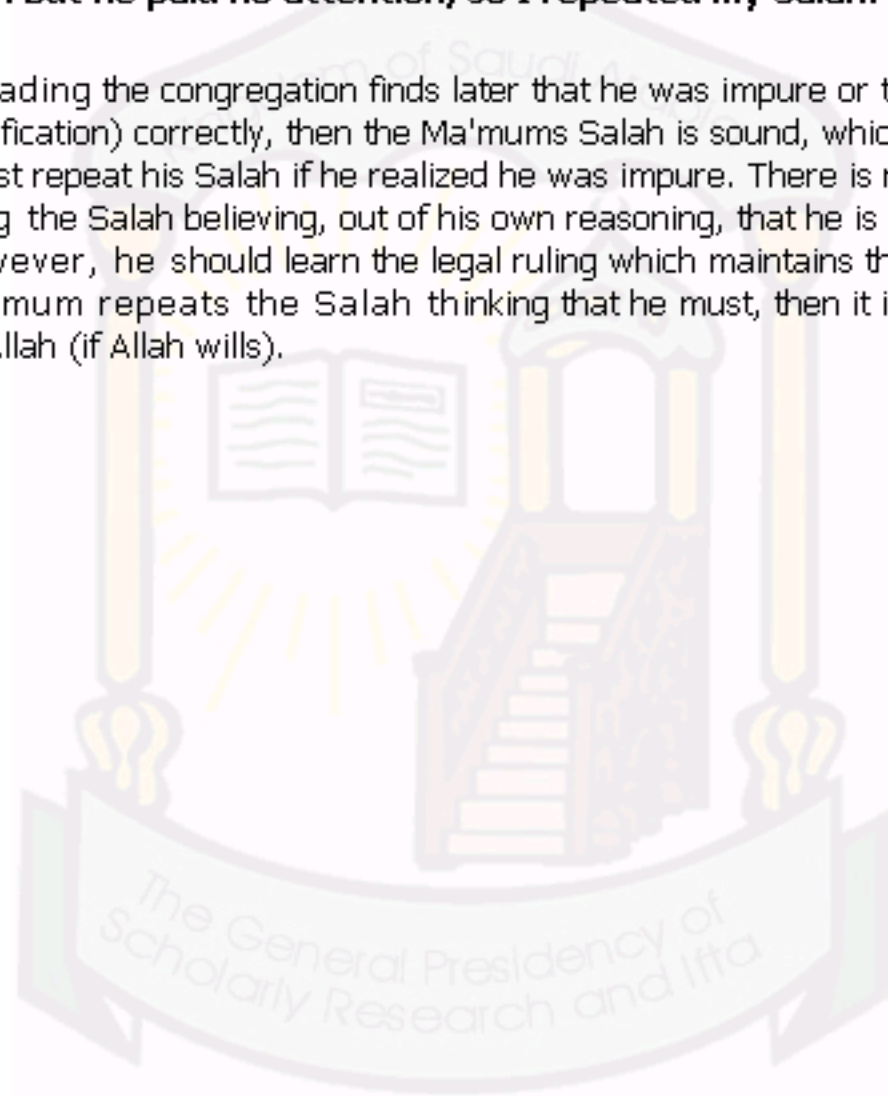
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then the Ma'mums' Salah is correct, but the Imam must repeat the Salah. Still, if the Imam remembers during the Salah that he is impure, he has to separate himself from the congregation and bring forward another Imam from behind him to complete the congregational Prayer. Praise be to Allah.



Q: I stood in Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and I noticed that a spot on his foot had not been covered by water, and I informed him right after Salah but he paid no attention, so I repeated my Salah. What is the ruling in such case?

A: If the Imam leading the congregation finds later that he was impure or that he did not perform Taharah (ritual purification) correctly, then the Ma'mums Salah is sound, which is the sound opinion, and the Imam must repeat his Salah if he realized he was impure. There is nothing wrong with the Ma'mum repeating the Salah believing, out of his own reasoning, that he is acting according to the right opinion. However, he should learn the legal ruling which maintains that he does not have to repeat it. If a Ma'mum repeats the Salah thinking that he must, then it is hoped that he will be rewarded In Sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills).





Q: What advice would you give to a man who entered a Masjid (mosque) thinking that he was in a state of Taharah (ritual purification) and so he joined

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the congregation, then he realized that he was not in a state of Taharah?

A: If he remembers after finishing the Salah (Prayer), then he has to repeat the Salah and nothing more. However, if he remembers while still in the Salah, he has to leave the congregation, and not continue the Salah while he is not in a state of purity.



75 - Offering obligatory Salah behind someone offering a supererogatory Salah

Q: What is the ruling on offering obligatory Salah (Prayer) behind someone offering a supererogatory Salah?

A: This is nothing wrong with offering obligatory Salah (Prayer) behind someone offering a supererogatory Salah. If someone, offering a supererogatory Salah, leads a congregation offering an obligatory Salah, their Salah will be valid. It was authentically related in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that Mu'adh (may Allah be pleased with him) used to offer `Isha' (Night) Prayer with the Prophet (peace be upon him) then go to his people and lead their congregation as an Imam for the same Salah, which was counted as a supererogatory Salah for him and an obligatory one for them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not express disapproval of that practice, and he (peace be upon him) would never overlook something like this. It was authentically related that the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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offered Salat-ul-Khawf (Prayer in times of fear) as two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) leading a congregation then pronounced Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and offered two further Rak`ahs leading another congregation. So, in the first congregation he (peace be upon him) offered the obligatory Salah, and the second was considered a supererogatory Salah for him but an obligatory Salah for his Sahabah (Companions, may Allah be pleased with them). This evidence provides the permissibility of offering an obligatory Salah behind an Imam who is offering a supererogatory Salah.



Q: Is it permissible to take as Imam a person performing a supererogatory Salah if I enter the Masjid (mosque) after the end of the congregational Salah? What should I do if while performing a supererogatory Salah a person enters the Masjid and joins me in Salah (Prayer) thinking that I am performing an obligatory Salah? Is it permissible to serve as his Imam, or should I push him away or step away from him? Answer me, may Allah reward you with the best.

A: There is nothing wrong with your joining one who is performing a supererogatory Salah while your intention is to perform an obligatory Salah. You are also allowed to lead the one who joins you to perform the obligatory Salah he missed, as the congregation is desirable. This is the correct opinion. However, some scholars maintained that this is valid only for supererogatory Salah, but the sound view maintains the permissibility for both supererogatory and obligatory Salah. The evidence is the Hadith that Mu`adh (may Allah be pleased with him) used to perform `Isha' (Night) Prayer with the Prophet (peace be upon him) as the obligatory Salah, then go to his people and lead their congregation as Imam

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which was counted as a supererogatory Salah for him and as obligatory for them, because he had performed the obligatory Salah with the Prophet (peace be upon him). This proves the permissibility of performing an obligatory Salah behind a man performing a supererogatory Salah. It has also been authentically related that in some forms of Salat-ul-Khawf (Prayer in times of fear), the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed two Rak`ahs as the Imam for a congregation and then said Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), and then performed two further Rak`ahs leading another congregation. So in the first congregation he (peace be upon him) performed the obligatory Prayer, and the second was supererogatory for him (peace be upon him) but obligatory for his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them). This provides evidence for the permissibility of performing an obligatory Salah behind an Imam who is performing a supererogatory Salah.



76 - Ruling on missing `Isha' Prayer and joining the Imam in Tarawih

Q: It often occurs that a second congregation is held for `Isha' (Night) Prayer while the first congregation is offering Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan). Should the second congregation (offering `Isha') join the congregation offering Tarawih or should they offer their Salah separately? May Allah reward you.

A: It is permissible for late-comers to offer `Isha' Prayer separately, which may be recommended to avoid the controversy on this issue. It is also permissible, according to the correct scholarly opinion, for them to join the congregation offering Tarawih and when the Imam pronounces Taslim (salutation of peace marking the end of Prayer) they stand and complete their Salah. However, it is preferable and more correct, according to all scholars, that they offer `Isha' Prayer in a separate congregation. If they offer their Salah behind someone offering a supererogatory Salah

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and then they stand to complete their Salah, this will discharge the obligation and the Salah be valid according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars.



Q: If, during the month of Ramadan, the Imam finishes `Isha' (Night) Prayer and starts offering the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of Tarawih (special supererogatory night prayer in Ramadan), is it permissible for me to offer these two Rak`ahs of Tarawih with the Imam and then stand to offer two more Rak`ahs and make Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), counting it as `Isha' Prayer? What is the correct course of action in this case?

A: It is permissible for a person who arrives at the Masjid after the congregation has performed the `Isha' Prayer and started offering Tarawih Prayer to join the Imam in Tarawih Prayer with the intention of offering `Isha' Prayer, and then stand to complete it after the Imam makes Taslim. It is hoped that they receive the reward of praying in congregation. While it is preferable to act in a like manner, if a latecomer offers `Isha' Prayer individually, it shall count. Still, it is preferable for them to join the congregation for Tarawih so that they can hopefully receive the reward of praying in congregation, and after the Imam makes Taslim, they stand and complete their Salah. Praise be to Allah.



Q: When I entered the Masjid (mosque) for `Isha' (Night) Prayer during the month of Ramadan, I found that the congregation had finished `Isha' and was offering Tarawih (special supererogatory night prayer in Ramadan). Is it permissible for me to join the congregation with the intention of offering the obligatory Prayer of `Isha', and so offer two more Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) after Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer)? And shall I then get the reward of the congregational prayer or should I offer the `Isha' Prayer individually?

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A: You can offer `Isha' Prayer individually, but it is preferable to join the congregation seeking the reward of praying congregationally. So, join the congregation and then complete your `Isha' Prayer by offering two more Rak`ahs after the Imam makes Taslim, and you shall hopefully receive the reward of praying congregationally. It has been related in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) on the authority of Mu`adh (may Allah be pleased with him) [\(that he used to perform the obligatory Prayer of `Isha' with the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) and then go to his kin to lead them in `Isha' \(Night\) Prayer, which is counted as Nafilah \(supererogatory\) for him, but obligatory for his congregation. The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) approved this practice of Mu`adh.\)](#) The point is that it is permissible that one offering obligatory prayer be led by one offering supererogatory prayer, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) approved it when Mu`adh used to practice it. It was also authentically related that the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered two Rak`ahs as Salat-ul-Khawf (Prayer in times of fear) while leading a congregation in a prayer which was obligatory both for him and them, and then he led another congregation offering two other Rak`ahs but this time it was Nafilah for him but obligatory for the congregation behind him (peace be upon him). These Hadiths prove that it is permissible for one offering an obligatory prayer to be led by an Imam offering a supererogatory prayer. This case applies to the latecomer who joins the congregation offering Tarawih during the month of Ramadan with the intention of offering `Isha' Prayer, and completes his prayer after the Imam makes Taslim.



Q: I once missed the congregational `Isha' (Night) Prayer during the month of Ramadan as the Imam

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was offering Tarawih (special supererogatory night prayer in Ramadan) when I entered the Masjid (mosque). So I joined the congregation with the intention of offering `Isha' (Night) Prayer. When the Imam made Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), I stood up for the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of `Isha', and the Imam stood up for the next two Rak`ahs of Tarawih, so I followed him in these two Rak`ahs to complete the four Rak`ahs of `Isha' Prayer. Is it permissible to do so? And is my prayer valid in such a case?

A: You should have stood and completed your prayer individually after the Imam had made Taslim. This is similar to the case when a latecomer joins the Imam in a prayer and misses some Rak`ahs, in which case he stands after the Imam makes Taslim and completes his prayer. However, the correct view maintains that the prayer is valid, and the one offering an obligatory prayer can be led by one offering a supererogatory prayer. This is according to the preponderant view. This is supported by the practice of Mu`adh (may Allah be pleased with him) [\(who used to perform the obligatory prayer of `Isha' with the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) and then go to his kin to lead them in `Isha' Prayer which is counted as Nafilah \(supererogatory\) for him, but obligatory for his congregation.\)](#) As for the questioner's case, the validity of his prayer is questionable; however, it seems to be valid and therefore he does not have to repeat it, and Allah knows best. But if this case recurs, it is better to stay on the safe side and complete your prayer individually after the Imam makes Taslim.

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77- Ruling on offering Tarawih before `Isha' Prayer

Q: I entered the Masjid (mosque) to perform `Isha' (Night) Prayer and joined the congregation. I then realized that they were performing Tarawih (special supererogatory night prayer in Ramadan), so I offered Tarawih with them and then I performed `Isha' Prayer. Is it valid to offer `Isha' after Tarawih?

A: The Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet) is to offer Tarawih after `Isha' Prayer during the month of Ramadan. The prayer you offered with the congregation before you performed `Isha' Prayer is a Nafilah (supererogatory) prayer that can be offered between Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and `Isha' Prayer. However, this form of Nafilah does not count for Tarawih, which is offered after `Isha' Prayer. So the prayer you offered with the congregation is Nafilah and the `Isha' Prayer you offered afterwards is valid. Still, it is far more preferable if you first offer the obligatory prayer then offer Tarawih with the congregation. This is what you should do in order to be acting according to the Sunnah and also to fulfill the obligatory prayer. It would have counted if the questioner had joined the congregation with the intention of offering the obligatory prayer and had not made Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) with them, but rather had stood up and completed `Isha' Prayer. However, the questioner is not sinful by praying in such a manner. His (obligatory) prayer is valid and

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the Tarawih he offered counts as Nafilah but not as Ramadan Qiyam (optional Prayer at night), which is known to be offered during the month of Ramadan, and immediately after performing `Isha' Prayer. As for the prayer offered by the questioner before `Isha' Prayer, it is regarded as a Nafilah, which is desirable between the Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers.



Q: A person joined a congregation on the assumption that they were offering `Isha' (Night) Prayer, when in fact they were offering Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan). What is the ruling on his Salah (Prayer)?

A: If a person joins a congregation during the nights of Ramadan thinking that they are offering the obligatory Salah, but find out that they are in fact offering Tarawih, they should continue with the congregation and then complete their obligatory Salah after the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) makes Taslim (salutation of peace marking the end of Prayer) for the Tarawih Prayer. The Salah is valid because the sound opinion maintains the permissibility of offering an obligatory Salah behind an Imam who is offering a supererogatory Salah. (Mu`adh (may Allah be pleased with him) used to perform the obligatory Prayer of `Isha' with the Prophet (peace be upon him) and then go to his kin to lead them in `Isha' (Night) Prayer, which is counted as Nafilah (supererogatory) for him, but obligatory for his congregation.) The Prophet (peace be upon him) led his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) in Salat-u-Khawf (Prayer in times of fear) firstly with the intention of fulfilling the obligatory Salah and then led another congregation with the intention of offering a Nafilah, but it was the obligatory Salah for the second congregation who followed him. So there is nothing wrong if one offers Salah in such a manner; if a person finds a congregation offering Tarawih,

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they can join them with the intention of offering the obligatory Salah, and then complete the Salah after the Imam makes Taslim. This is the correct opinion, and praise be to Allah.



78- Ruling on Imam and Ma'mum praying with different intentions

Q: Is the Salah (Prayer) offered by the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) valid if they have two different intentions?

A: The correct opinion is that their Salah is valid, because the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) led a group of Muslims in the two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Salat-ul-Khawf (Prayer in times of fear), and led another group in other two Rak`ahs. Thus, the first Salah was considered as obligatory and the other was considered as Nafilah (supererogatory) for him; however it was regarded as obligatory for them. Mu`adh (may Allah be pleased with him) used to offer the `Isha' (Night) Prayer with the Prophet (peace be upon him) in congregation. And when he returns home, he would lead his family in `Isha' Prayer as a supererogatory Salah for him and as an obligatory Salah for them. This indicates that there is nothing wrong with having different intentions. Likewise, if someone comes to the Masjid (mosque) while people are offering the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, and he has not yet offered the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, he can offer the `Asr Prayer with them in congregation with the intention of offering the Zhuhr Prayer. There is nothing wrong with this according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars.

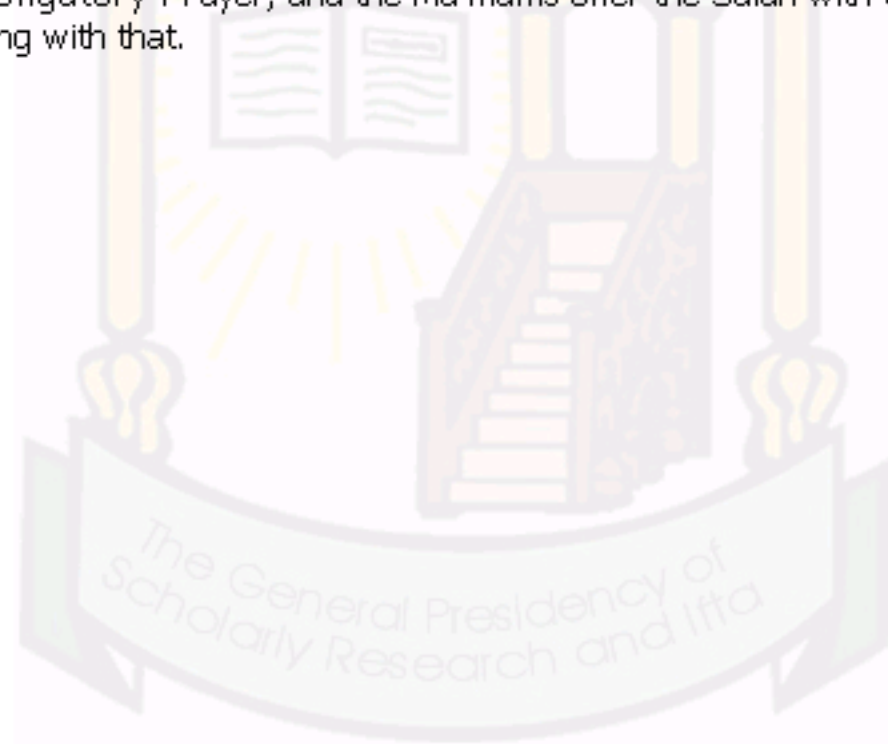
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Then, he can offer the `Asr Prayer later.



Q: A questioner asks: Is the Salah (Prayer) offered by the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) valid if they have two different intentions?

A: The Salah is valid. If the Imam is offering the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, for example, and one who has not yet offered the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, performs the Salah behind him with the intention of offering the Zhuhr Prayer, the Salah is valid according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. If an Imam has offered the obligatory Prayer and leads others in his Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayer, it is considered as an obligatory Prayer for them, and Nafilah for him. This is as Mu`adh did, when he offered the obligatory Prayer with the Prophet (peace be upon him), then at home he led his family in their obligatory Prayer with the intention of offering Nafilah. If the Imam offers the Salah with the intention of the obligatory Prayer, and the Ma'mums offer the Salah with the intention of Nafilah, there is nothing wrong with that.





79- Ruling on performing Salah behind a person who was performing Nafilah, thinking that he was performing an obligatory Salah

Q: What is the ruling on a person who performed his obligatory Salah (Prayer) behind me, while I was performing Nafilah (supererogatory) Salah, thinking that I was performing an obligatory Salah? Should I draw his attention before he join me in the Salah, taking into consideration that I know that a person should differentiate between the obligatory Salah and the Nafilah by saying Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]")

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out loud in the obligatory Salah unlike the Nafilah. What is your opinion in this regard?

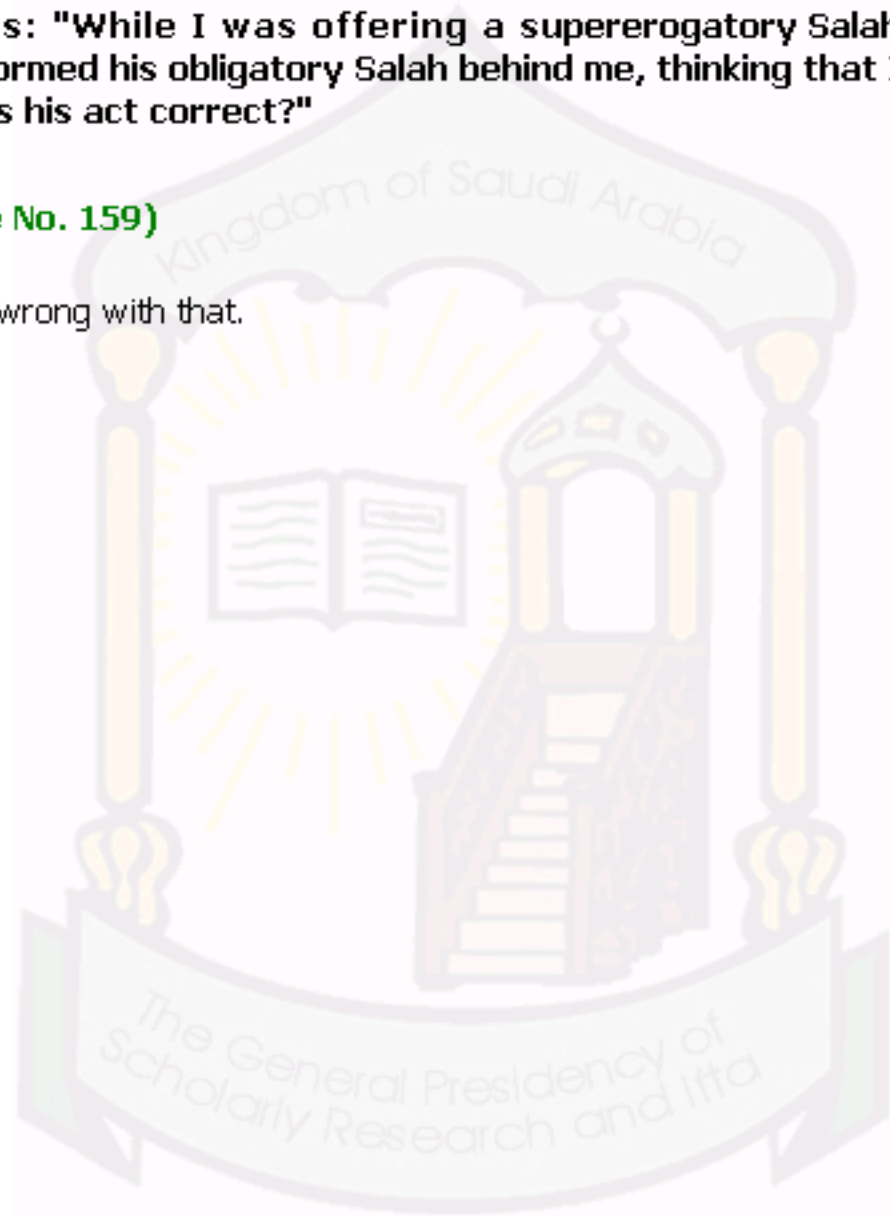
A: The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) indicates that there is nothing wrong for the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to perform an obligatory Salah being led by an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), who is performing a Nafilah. If you, questioner, are performing a Nafilah, and a person comes to stand to your right to perform an obligatory Salah, there is nothing wrong with that according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. Some scholars say that the person who is performing a Nafilah should not lead a person performing an obligatory Salah. However, it is a weak opinion, according to many evidences. The correct opinion is that there is nothing wrong in performing Salah in this way. If he joins you in the Salah, there is nothing wrong with you leading him, while you are performing a Nafilah and he is performing an obligatory Salah. As far as I know, there is no basis to what you said concerning raising the voice in saying Takbir in the obligatory Salah and lowering it in the Nafilah. Takbir in the obligatory Salah and the Nafilah is the same. As far as I know, the Imam raises his voice in saying Takbir to draw the people's attention, while the voice of the Ma'mum and the Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually) in the obligatory Salah and the Nafilah is the same. There is nothing in the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) that differentiates between them, as far as I know.



Q: A person says: "While I was offering a supererogatory Salah (Prayer), a person entered and performed his obligatory Salah behind me, thinking that I was performing an obligatory Salah, is his act correct?"

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A: There is nothing wrong with that.





80- Ruling on having the intention of leading others in Salah

Q: A questioner from the Eastern region asks: Is the intention a condition for leading others in Salah (Prayer)?

A: Yes, it is a condition to have the intention while leading others in the Salah.





81- Ruling on joining a Munfarid in Prayer

Q: I was offering Prayer individually when a person joined me with the intention of praying in congregation. Is the person's Prayer valid? Or should one decide from the beginning whether to pray in congregation or as a Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually)?

A: There is nothing wrong with taking a Munfarid as Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) by standing on his right and following him in Prayer. It was reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) was offering Prayer at night individually; then Ibn `Abbas came and stood on the left of the Prophet and the Prophet moved him to his right and completed the Prayer.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) started the Prayer alone with no intention of congregation, but when Ibn `Abbas joined him and stood on his left, the Prophet moved him to the right and completed the Prayer. Building upon this, if a person missed the congregational Prayer and prayed alone then another one stood on his right taking him as an Imam, there would be nothing wrong with this. As for the intention of congregation, it can be established once he joins the person in Prayer.



Q: Is it permissible to join a person praying individually, so that it becomes a congregational Prayer?

A: This is good, for congregational Prayer is desirable. So, if a person starts Prayer alone and another one joins him, this is quite acceptable.





Q: What is the ruling on joining a person who is praying individually in Prayer? Is it considered a congregational Prayer or not?

A: According to the correct opinion, there is nothing wrong with joining a Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually) so as to receive the reward of congregational Prayer. It was reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) [was praying](#)

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[individually when Ibn `Abbas joined him and stood on his left, and the Prophet moved him to his right.](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) started the Prayer alone, and then Ibn `Abbas joined him with no objection on the part of the Prophet. It was also reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a person having missed the congregational Prayer, so the Prophet said: [Is there any man who may do good for this \(man\) and pray with him?](#) If a person missed the congregational Prayer and started to pray alone then another person or a group of people joined him taking him as an Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer), there would be nothing wrong with this, according to the correct opinion. It was reported that [the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) was praying alone when Jabir ibn `Abdullah and Jabbar, both from among Ansar \(Helpers, inhabitants of Madinah who supported the Prophet\), stood on his right and left respectively. The Prophet made them both stand behind him and completed the Prayer,](#) which he had started alone. To summarize, the Prophet started the Prayer alone and a person joined him, he (peace be upon him) made him stand on his right. When they were more than one, he (peace be upon him) made them stand behind him.

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This is Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet).



Q: So many times I offer obligatory Prayer individually and a person comes and stands on my side with the intention of praying in congregation. And when another one comes, I move forward and they follow me in Prayer, bearing in mind that I have started the Prayer with the intention of praying individually. So, what is the ruling on my Prayer and on theirs? May Allah bless you.

A: It is incumbent to go early to the mosque to attend Prayer in congregation on time and not to delay it except for a legally acceptable excuse. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

«Anyone who hears the Nida' (i.e. Adhan; call to Prayer) and he does not come to it (the Masjid), then there is no prayer (counted) for him except if he has a valid excuse.» When a blind man asked the Prophet (peace be upon him): «O Messenger of Allah, I have no one to accompany me to the mosque; may I have a Rukhsah (concession) to offer Prayer at home?

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the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Do you hear the Nida'?" The man replied: Yes. The Prophet said: "So, you must respond (i.e. by attending the Prayer in the mosque)." (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) Indeed, offering Prayer in congregation has great reward, and a Muslim should not miss that reward. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: «The reward of Salah performed congregation outweighs that of Salah performed individually by twenty-seven degrees.» (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) However, if it so happened that a person came late to the mosque and, consequently, missed the congregational Prayer and had to pray alone, and another person came and stood on his side, taking him as an Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer), there would be nothing wrong with this, though the Imam in this case did not have the intention to be an Imam from the beginning. If a third person joined them, they should move backward and the Imam forward, as you (the questioner) did. It was reported that «the Prophet (peace be upon him) was praying individually at night when Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) came and stood on his left, and the Prophet moved him to his right and completed

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the Prayer,» bearing in mind that the Prophet had not started the Prayer as an Imam. (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). The same was mentioned in another Hadith reported by Anas ibn Malik «that the Prophet (peace be upon him) visited his (Anas's) grandmother and offered Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) at her house, where Anas stood on the right of the Prophet. The Prophet completed the Salah with Anas standing beside him and the woman (Anas' grandmother) behind them.» It was also reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) «was praying alone when Jabir ibn `Abdullah and Jabbar came and stood on his right and left respectively, and the Prophet made them stand behind him and completed the Prayer.» (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) This is what is legally established. Allah (Exalted be He) knows the best.



Q: If I enter a Masjid (mosque) or any other place and find a person praying individually, can I join him in Salah by taking him as an Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer), bearing in mind that he did not intend from the beginning of Salah to be an Imam but he started it individually? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: There is nothing wrong with joining a person praying individually and taking him as an Imam so as to have the reward of congregational Prayer.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a person coming to the Masjid after the end of congregational Prayer, so he said: *(Is there any man who may do good for this (man) and pray with him?)* What is desirable is to get the reward of congregational Prayer. *(The Prophet (peace be upon him) was praying individually at night when Ibn `Abbas came and stood on his left, and the Prophet moved him to his right and completed the Salah.)* This indicates that it is desirable to look for a congregation whether for obligatory or supererogatory Prayer. So, if you come late to the Masjid after the end of congregational Prayer and find a person praying individually, you can join him by standing on his right.



Q: If I start obligatory or supererogatory Prayer and after I pronounce Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer), a person joins me in Prayer, is it considered a congregational one? What is the ruling if it is a supererogatory Prayer? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: Yes, this is considered a congregational Prayer whether it is an obligatory or supererogatory one. The person joining the Prayer should stand on the right of the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer), and both of you will be given the reward of praying in congregation.





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82- Ruling on the Imam and the Ma'mum having different intentions in Salah

Q: What is the ruling on a person acting as Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) with the intention of offering a Prayer other than the present one? Is the Prayer rendered invalid in this case?

A: There is nothing wrong with this. If a person acts as Imam in the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer and some people pray behind him with the intention of Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, their Prayer will be valid, according to the correct opinion. It was [reported that Mu`adh ibn Jabal \(may Allah be pleased with him\) used to offer the `Isha' \(Night\) Prayer as Ma'mum \(person being led by an Imam in Prayer\) with the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) and then go back home to lead his family in Prayer, which was obligatory for them but supererogatory for him.](#) A person who has missed the Zhuhr Prayer can offer it with an Imam offering the `Asr Prayer and then offer `Asr Prayer later.



83- Ruling on offering Salah in congregation and then going home to lead one's family in the same Prayer

Q: I offer the `Isha' (Night) Prayer in congregation in the Masjid (mosque) and then go back home to lead my wife in `Isha', which is supererogatory for me but obligatory for her. Is there anything wrong with this?

A: There is nothing wrong with this at all, if it is done for the purpose of teaching the wife Prayer according to its legally established way. Mu`adh ibn Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him) used to offer the `Isha' Prayer as Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) with the Prophet

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(peace be upon him) and then go back home to lead his family in Prayer, which is obligatory for them but supererogatory for him. So, there is nothing wrong with this. Rather it is useful in teaching and directing one's family.



Q: A questioner asks: Is it permissible for a person offering obligatory Prayer to be led in Salah by one offering a supererogatory one?

A: Yes, it is permissible and there is nothing wrong with it. If a person offering obligatory Prayer is led by one who is offering a supererogatory one, the Prayer is valid. Mu`adh ibn Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him) used to lead his companions in `Isha' (Night) Prayer as a supererogatory one, for he had already prayed it with the Prophet (peace be upon him), though the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) in such a case were offering obligatory Prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) led a group of his Companions in the first two Rak`ahs of Salat-ul-Khawf (Prayer in times of fear), and then they ended their Prayer and another group came and the Prophet led them as well in two Rak`ahs that were supererogatory for him but obligatory for them.





84- Ruling on Ma'mum's performing Zhuhr Prayer behind one performing `Asr Prayer

Q: I was traveling and the time for `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer came, but I did not perform the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer. I came across a Masjid (mosque) on my way, then I performed Wudu' (ablution) and performed the Zhuhr Prayer after intention. I performed the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) alone, and when I stood up to perform the second Rak`ah,

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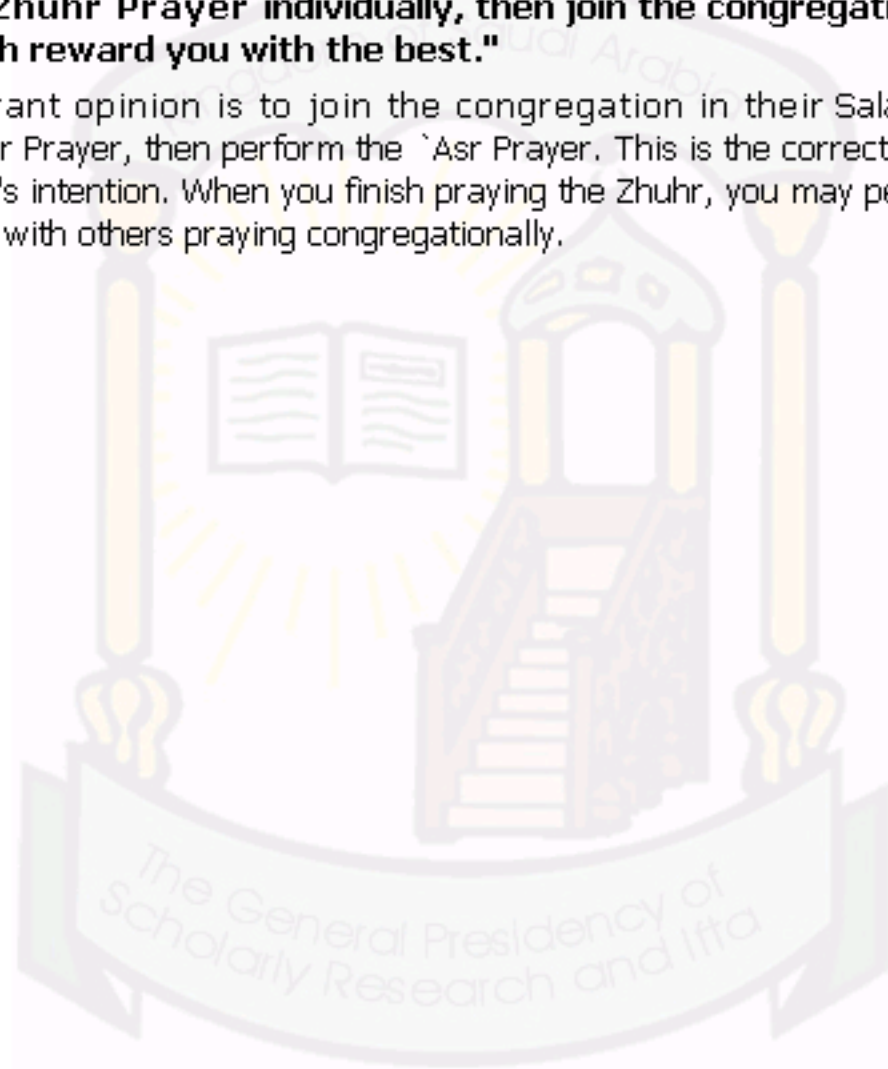
two men came and joined me in the Salah (Prayer) with the intention of performing the `Asr Prayer, while I was performin the Zhuhr Prayer. Is their Salah behind me valid?

A: Yes, their Salah is valid, because each of you had his own intention. You intended to perform the Zhuhr Prayer, while they intended to perform the `Asr Prayer. This is the correct opinion. All praise be to Allah.



Q: A brother asks: "If I enter a Masjid (mosque) and find the worshipers performing the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, while I have not yet performed the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, should I join the congregational Prayer with the intention of performing the Zhuhr Prayer or perform the Zhuhr Prayer individually, then join the congregational Prayer? Please guide us, may Allah reward you with the best."

A: The preponderant opinion is to join the congregation in their Salah with the intention of performing the Zhuhr Prayer, then perform the `Asr Prayer. This is the correct opinion. This does not contradict with one's intention. When you finish praying the Zhuhr, you may perform the `Asr Prayer either individually or with others praying congregationally.





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85- Ruling on performing the `Isha' Prayer behind a person performing Tarawih

Q: If I enter the Masjid (mosque) in Ramadan and find the worshippers praying Tarawih (supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) congregationally, while I have not yet performed the `Isha' (Night) Prayer, should I join them or perform the Salah as a Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually)?

A: There is nothing wrong with performing the Salah as a Munfarid. If you join them with the intention of the performing the obligatory Salah, and complete your Salah after the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) says Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), there is nothing wrong with that. All of these cases are fine.



Q: I differed with one of my colleagues concerning the manner of performing congregational Prayer with two persons; for example, at the time for `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, one of them forgot to perform the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, but he realized that at the time for `Asr Prayer. The question is: "Should he join the congregational Prayer with his colleague who will perform the `Asr Prayer while he himself has the intention to perform the Zhuhr Prayer, and after finishing it perform the `Asr Prayer or not?

Second: Which one of them should be the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), while each one of them intends to perform a Salah (Prayer) different from the other? The first one intends to perform the Zhuhr Prayer and the second intends to perform the `Asr Prayer. Please, take into consideration that each one of them is qualified to be the Imam."

A: Yes, if the matter is as mentioned, there is nothing wrong with performing Salah with each other congregationally. It does not matter which one of them is the Imam. If the one who intends to perform the `Asr Prayer is the Imam, the person who intends to perform the Zhuhr Prayer should follow him in performing the Salah with the intention of the Zhuhr Prayer. When

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they finish performing this Salah, the other performs the `Asr Prayer according to the Islamically prescribed order. On the other hand, if the one who intends to perform the Zhuhr Prayer is the Imam because he is more versed in Qur'anic recitation, older in age, etc., the other person performs the `Asr Prayer at its time with its intention. This is what should be done.



86- Ruling on Ma'mum's performing the `Asr Prayer behind an Imam who is performing the Maghrib Prayer

Q: If one of us has not prayed the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, and the time for Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer has come and the worshippers have arrived to attend the Maghrib Prayer in congregation; should he perform the `Asr Prayer or join the congregational Prayer? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If there is time enough for him to perform the `Asr Prayer first, he should do so, then join them in performing the Maghrib Prayer. If he fears missing it, he should perform the Maghrib Prayer with them having the intention of performing `Asr Prayer. When the worshippers say Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), he should stand to perform the fourth Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of the `Asr Prayer. Then, he should perform the Maghrib Prayer later. This is according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars.



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87- Offering Maghrib Prayer behind an Imam offering `Isha' Prayer

Q: If a person enters the mosque to offer Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and joins one whom he discovered was offering `Isha' (Night) Prayer, what should the one offering Maghrib do? Should he complete the Prayer with the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) or end his Prayer after the third Rak`ah?

A: If a person who intends to offer Maghrib Prayer joins one who is offering a four-Rak`ah Prayer, as it happens on journey and in times of rain, then when the Imam stands for the fourth Rak`ah, the person offering Maghrib should sit down and offer Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second and last unit of Prayer) and supplicate to Allah till the Imam offers Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). Then he should offer Taslim with the Imam. For the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Actions are but by intention.\)](#) In such a case, the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in congregational Prayer) has an intention different from that of the Imam. [\(Actions are but by intention and every person shall have but that which they intended.\)](#) This is reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). In the same way, if the Imam is on a journey and offers the `Isha' Prayer as two Rak`ahs only, the Ma'mum who is offering Maghrib Prayer must stand for the third Rak`ah. Their Prayer will be valid, for each one of them has his own intention. The Ma`mum intended to offer Maghrib, which consists of three Rak`ahs, and the Imam intended to offer the `Isha' as two Rak`ahs because he is on a journey and has the concession to shorten Prayer.

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The same is true if a person joins a group of people who are on a journey in Salah, thinking that they are offering the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer but discovers that they are offering `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, for they have the concession to combine and shorten Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers. In this case, the Salah is valid, and the person offering Zhuhr Prayer has to complete his Prayer after they offer Taslim. This is the correct opinion, depending on the Prophetic Hadith mentioned above that reads: "Actions are but by intention."



88- The proper manner of performing Salah for one who catches the congregation in the `Isha' Prayer and has not yet performed the Maghrib Prayer

Q: A message was received from one of the audience, at the end of which he wrote his first name: Abu `Abdul-`Aziz. Our brother asks: "A person delayed and had not performed the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer until the time for `Isha' (Night) Prayer came. When he came to the Masjid (mosque) and found the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) performing the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of the `Isha' Prayer with the congregation, he joined them in performing the `Isha' Prayer. Then, he performed the Maghrib Prayer. I told him that it is preferable to join the congregational Prayer with the intention of performing the Maghrib Prayer, then perform the `Isha' Prayer either as a Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually) or in another congregation." He said: "How can I perform Salah with the intention of the Maghrib Prayer, while the Imam is performing the second Rak`ah? Should I perform Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) with the Imam or stand to perform the missing Rak`ah for fear that the person next to me may reprove me, as he will urge me to make up for the missing Rak`ah?" I was puzzled about this matter and I sent my question

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to you. I hope you will give me your opinion, may Allah bless your life, deeds, and knowledge.

A: It is prescribed for you and all Muslims that if you arrive and the Imam is performing the `Isha' Prayer, for example, and you have not yet performed the Maghrib Prayer, you should join the congregation with the intention of performing the Maghrib Prayer. There is nothing wrong with this according to the most correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars. If the Imam has performed a Rak`ah, you should join him in performing the remaining three Rak`ahs with the intention of performing the Maghrib Prayer. This will suffice for the Maghrib Prayer, and you should say Taslim with them. If you joined them from the beginning of the `Isha' Prayer, then after finishing your third Rak`ah you should remain sitting until the Imam says Taslim; then, you repeat Taslim after him. You can perform the `Isha' Prayer individually if you do not find another congregation to join. There is nothing wrong with differing in the intention of the Salah. There is no harm if you intend to perform the Maghrib Prayer and worshipers in the congregation intend to perform the `Isha' Prayer, because performing the Salahs in order is obligatory. You should perform the Maghrib Prayer before the `Isha' Prayer, and the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer before the `Asr Prayer. If one arrives at the Masjid and finds the congregation performing the `Asr Prayer and he has not performed the Zhuhr Prayer yet, he should join them in performing the `Asr Prayer with the intention of performing the Zhuhr Prayer. When he finishes the Salah with them, which is intended as Zhuhr, he should perform the `Asr Prayer individually or in congregation, if possible. This is the correct view in this respect. May Allah grant us success.



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Q: One of the audience asks: "What is the ruling on a person who performs the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) shortening the `Isha' (Night) Prayer?"

A: The question is complicated. It is not permissible to perform the `Isha Prayer before the Maghrib Prayer, as a person should perform the Maghrib Prayer before the `Isha' Prayer, according to the prescribed order, and should not perform the `Isha' Prayer before the Maghrib Prayer. If he joins the congregation in the `Isha' Prayer intending the Maghrib Prayer, while they are shortening the Salah (Prayer) due to traveling, he should stand up after the Imam says Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and perform the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). On the other hand, if the persons praying in congregation were residents, he should perform with them the `Isha' Prayer intending the Maghrib Prayer, then remain sitting after performing the third Rak`ah, and say Taslim when the Imam says it. Then, he should perform the `Isha' Prayer. There is nothing wrong with doing that according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars.



Q: I wish to inform Your Eminence that one of my colleagues and I were coming back from traveling a distance over which it is permissible to shorten Salah (Prayer), and it was time for Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer. I asked my colleague while we were walking to delay and combine the Maghrib Prayer with the `Isha' (Night) Prayer. When we reached Riyadh, we heard the Adhan (call to Prayer) for `Isha' Prayer. On our way home, my colleague asked me to perform the `Isha' Prayer at the Masjid (mosque), then the Maghrib Prayer, either at home or at the Masjid after performing the `Isha' Prayer. I refused and said that we should perform the Maghrib Prayer first at the Masjid,

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then catch the congregation in the `Isha' Prayer. I performed the Maghrib Prayer, then caught the congregation in the `Isha' Prayer. However, he insisted on his opinion, and performed the `Isha' Prayer first. After finishing it, he performed the Maghrib Prayer. Which of us did what is right?

A: You did the right thing, because Allah makes it obligatory to perform Salah in the right order. It is obligatory that you perform the Maghrib Prayer first, then join the congregation in the `Isha' Prayer. Your action was correct, and he should make up for the `Isha' Prayer, as he performed it before the Maghrib Prayer, while it is obligatory to be performed after the Maghrib Prayer. He performed the `Isha' at a wrong time. May Allah grant us all success.



89- Explaining what to do when arriving at the Masjid while people are performing Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers combined

Q: I came to the Masjid (Mosque) and found a group of people combining Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers for a certain reason; they had finished Maghrib and stood for `Isha' immediately after Maghrib. I had not performed Maghrib yet.

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Should I join them in `Isha' and then perform Maghrib afterwards? Or what should I do?

A: In this case, the person who is going to perform Maghrib Prayer has to join the congregation in `Isha' Prayer with the intention of performing Maghrib, according to the preponderant opinion, and when the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) stands for the fourth Rak`ah, the person performing Maghrib has to sit and recite Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) and invoke Allah's Blessings and Peace for the Prophet (peace be upon him) and supplicate to Allah until the Imam offers Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and then offer Taslim following the Imam. After the end of the Salah (Prayer), he has to perform `Isha' Prayer. According to the correct opinion, there is nothing wrong with the difference between the intention of the Imam and that of the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in congregational Prayer). Each of them can have his own intention. If they are on a journey, the person performing Maghrib can also join them in `Isha' with the intention of Maghrib, and when the Imam offers Taslim after only two Rak`ahs, since a person on a journey has the Rukhsah (concession) to shorten Salah, the person performing Maghrib stands for the third Rak`ah of Maghrib. Afterwards, he has to perform `Isha' Prayer. He can also perform `Isha' with them as a supererogatory Prayer and then perform Maghrib and `Isha' individually. However, the first way is much better so as to receive the reward of congregational Prayer in Maghrib.

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All in all, if the people performing `Isha' in congregation are not on a journey, the person performing Maghrib can join them with the intention of Maghrib and sit down after the third Rak`ah, waiting for the Taslim of the Imam and end the Salah with them. On the other hand, if they are on a journey, i.e. enjoying the Rukhsah of shortening Salah, the person performing Maghrib can also join them in `Isha' with the intention of Maghrib but stand for the third Rak`ah after they offer Taslim.



Q: If a person comes to the Masjid (Mosque) from a distant place, and when they arrive at the Masjid, the time for `Isha' (Night) Prayer becomes due, bearing in mind that they have not yet performed Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, should they start `Isha' in congregation with the people or perform Maghrib first?

A: If a person misses Maghrib Prayer and comes to the Masjid at the time of `Isha' Prayer, they have to join the congregation in `Isha' with the intention of Maghrib so as not to miss the congregational Prayer. So, they should join the congregation with the intention of Maghrib and sit down after the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) until the people performing `Isha' finish the fourth Rak`ah and then offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) with them. This is intended to maintain the reward of congregational Prayer, and it is the preponderant opinion.





90- Ruling on joining a Munfarid in Salah to gain the reward of congregational Prayer

Q: If a person misses the congregational Prayer and prays individually, and during Salah (Prayer) another person joins him in Salah, is that Salah considered a congregational one? Or is congregational Prayer confined to performing it with the regular imam (one who leads congregational Prayer)?

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A: If a person comes late and misses the congregational Prayer, it is preferable to join a Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually) by standing to his right. If they are two people, they have to stand behind him instead. This is done for the purpose of gaining the reward of congregational Prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have found a person coming late to the Masjid (Mosque) who had missed the congregational Prayer; then he (the Prophet) said: ["Is there any man who may do good with this \(man\) and pray along with him?"](#) It is Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) for one of the people who had attended the Salah in congregation to pray along with the person who came late so as to gain the reward of praying in congregation. It is also Sunnah for the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in congregational Prayer) to stand to the right of the Imam. If there are more than one Ma'mum, they stand behind the Imam, bearing in mind that the reward of congregational Prayer is gained even if there is only one Ma'mum.

It is incorrect to consider congregational Prayer as confined to be performed with the regular Imam. Either way, it is incumbent to come early to perform congregational Prayer with the Imam. However, if a person comes late due to a certain reason, it is recommended to pray along with someone else to gain the reward of congregational Prayer, for the purport of the legal evidences in this regard.



Q: If I perform Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer in congregation and after finishing the Salah (Prayer), a person (who has missed the Prayer) comes and wants to pray, is it permissible for me to pray with him in congregation? Who should act as Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer)?

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A: There is nothing wrong with praying with that person in congregation, and the one who is more versed in reciting the Ever-Glorious Qur'an should act as Imam in the Salah. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) found a man coming late to the Masjid (Mosque) after the end of the Salah, he said: ["Is there any man who may do good with this \(man\) and pray along with him?"](#) Then one of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) prayed along with the man. So, you can pray with him and the one of you who is more versed in the Qur'an should lead the Salah. And last, all Praise is due to Allah (Exalted be He).



Q: I entered the Masjid (Mosque) and found a person praying individually, but I did not know whether he was performing an obligatory or supererogatory Prayer. What should I do?

A: If the congregation has not been held yet, you have to perform Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to greet the mosque) or Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer usually on a regular basis) and wait for the people to pray with them in congregation. On the other hand, if the congregational Prayer is over, you can join the person praying individually and be led by him so as to gain the reward of congregational Prayer, even if he is performing a supererogatory Prayer. In order to determine whether the congregational Prayer is over or not, you can ask one of the people present in the Masjid. If you are told that it has not been performed yet, you have to wait and perform it in congregation with the people. If it is over, you can join the person praying individually and, consequently, receive the reward of praying in congregation.





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91- Ruling on a latecomer leading the Salah

Q: If two people come late to the Masjid (Mosque) after the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) has performed the last Ruku` (bowing) of the Salah (Prayer), is it permissible for them to join the congregational Prayer and after the Imam offers Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) complete it in congregation with one of them acting as the Imam and the other as a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in congregational Prayer)?

A: There is nothing wrong with this, but it is preferable to complete the Salah individually. For ﴿ `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf led the people in Salah during the Battle of Tabuk when the Prophet (peace be upon him) left for a job and stayed for a long time, so the people asked `Abdul-Rahman to lead the Salah. The Prophet came later with Al-Mughirah ibn Shu`bah and found `Abdul-Rahman leading the Salah and had performed one Rak`ah. When `Abdul-Rahman saw the Prophet, he wanted to draw back and let the Prophet lead the Salah. But the Prophet signaled for him to go ahead, and he did. The Prophet (peace be upon him) and Al-Mughirah followed `Abdul-Rahman in what remained of the Salah. When `Abdul-Rahman offered Taslim, the Prophet

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(peace be upon him) made up for his missing Rak`ah, and Al-Mughirah made up for his.﴾ That is, the Prophet did not lead Al-Mughirah in the missing Rak`ah. This indicates that it is preferable for a latecomer to complete the missing Rak`ah(s) individually without leading or being led by another latecomer. Still, if they lead one another for the rest of the Salah, it will be valid. However, it is recommended to make up for the missing Rak`ah(s) individually as the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Al-Mughirah did.



Q: A questioner asks: A group of people entered the Masjid (Mosque) while the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) was performing the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer). They joined the Imam, and when he offered Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), they stood to complete the Salah (Prayer) with one of them acting as the Imam and the rest as Ma'mums (persons being led by an Imam in congregational Prayer). Is this correct? I hope you will clarify this point.

A: The Salah is valid in this case and there is nothing wrong with it at all. But it is preferable to make up for the missing Rak`ah(s) individually. For when the Prophet (peace be upon him) came to Salah during the Battle of Tabuk and found that `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf had led the people in Salah and had already performed one Rak`ah, he (the Prophet) followed `Abdul-Rahman in the remaining Rak`ah. Al-Mughirah ibn Shu`bah did the same as the Prophet. When `Abdul-Rahman offered Taslim, the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Al-Mughirah stood up to make up for the missing Rak`ah

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individually. So, it is preferable to make up for the missing Rak`ah(s) individually with no one leading the make-up Rak`ah(s). Either way, the Salah is valid and there is no problem with it.



Q: Is it permissible for a latecomer to act as Imam?

A: According to the preponderant opinion, if a latecomer (to the prayer) is taken as Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer), the Salah (Prayer) will be valid and there will be nothing wrong with it. That is, if one misses one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) or more, and when he starts making up for the missing Rak`ah(s) after the Imam offers Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), another person stands beside him taking him as an Imam, there will be no problem with the Salah.





Q: Another person and I came late to the Salah (Prayer) and missed part of it. And when the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) offered Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), we stood up to make up for what we had missed, and that person took me as an Imam in the make-up Rak`ah(s) (unit of Prayer). Is this correct?

A: There is nothing wrong with this, but it is preferable to make up for the missed Rak`ah(s) individually. There is no need to pray the make-up Rak`ah(s) in congregation. It was reported that a group of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) were led in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer by `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf during the Battle of Tabuk because the Prophet (peace be upon him) was late to the Salah. They asked `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf (may Allah be pleased with him) to lead the Salah. When the Prophet came, `Abdul-Rahman was in the second Rak`ah and wanted to draw back and let the Prophet lead the Salah, but the Prophet signaled to him to go ahead. Therefore, `Abdul-Rahman went on

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and the Prophet performed the second Rak`ah along with Al-Mughirah ibn Shu`bah (may Allah be pleased with him). When `Abdul-Rahman offered Taslim, the Prophet and Al-Mughirah stood up and made up for the missing Rak`ah each one individually, i.e. Al-Mughirah was not led by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the make-up Rak`ah. So, it is preferable to make up for the missing Rak`ah (s) individually following the example of the Prophet. However, if one of the latecomers leads the rest of them in the make-up Rak`ah(s), there will be nothing wrong with the Salah.



Q: Is it permissible for the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in congregational Prayer) to lead others in Salah (Prayer)? For example, if a Ma'mum misses two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and when he stands up to complete the missing Rak`ahs, another person joins him taking him as an Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer), Is this permissible or not? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If the latecomer acts as Imam, the Salah will be valid. That is, there is nothing wrong with following a person who has missed one Rak`ah or more in Salah, according to the preponderant opinion. However, it is preferable in such a case to make up for the missing Rak`ah(s) individually.



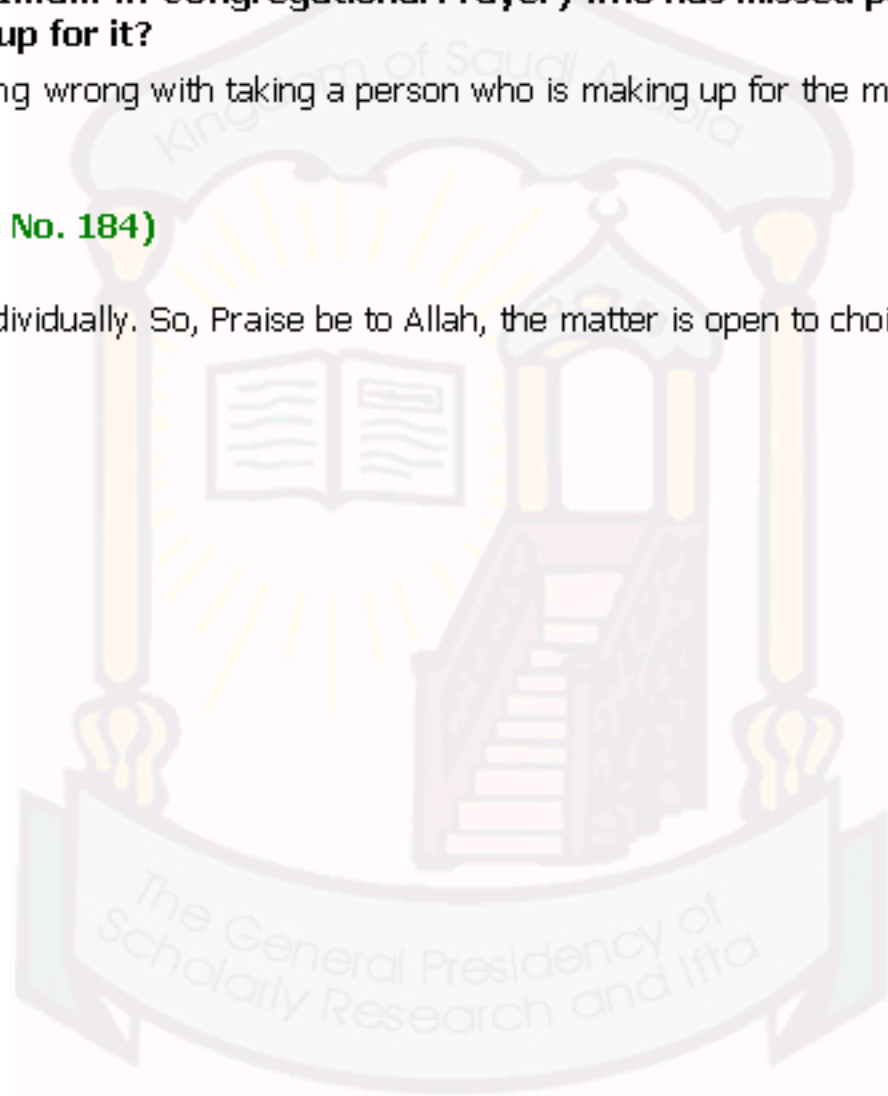


Q: If I enter the Masjid (Mosque) after the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) has finished the Salah (Prayer), is it permissible for me to pray behind a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in congregational Prayer) who has missed part of the Salah and stood up to make up for it?

A: There is nothing wrong with taking a person who is making up for the missing Rak`ah(s) as an Imam.

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You can also pray individually. So, Praise be to Allah, the matter is open to choice.





Q: A questioner from Sabiya asks: What is the ruling on praying behind a person who has missed some Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of the congregational Prayer?

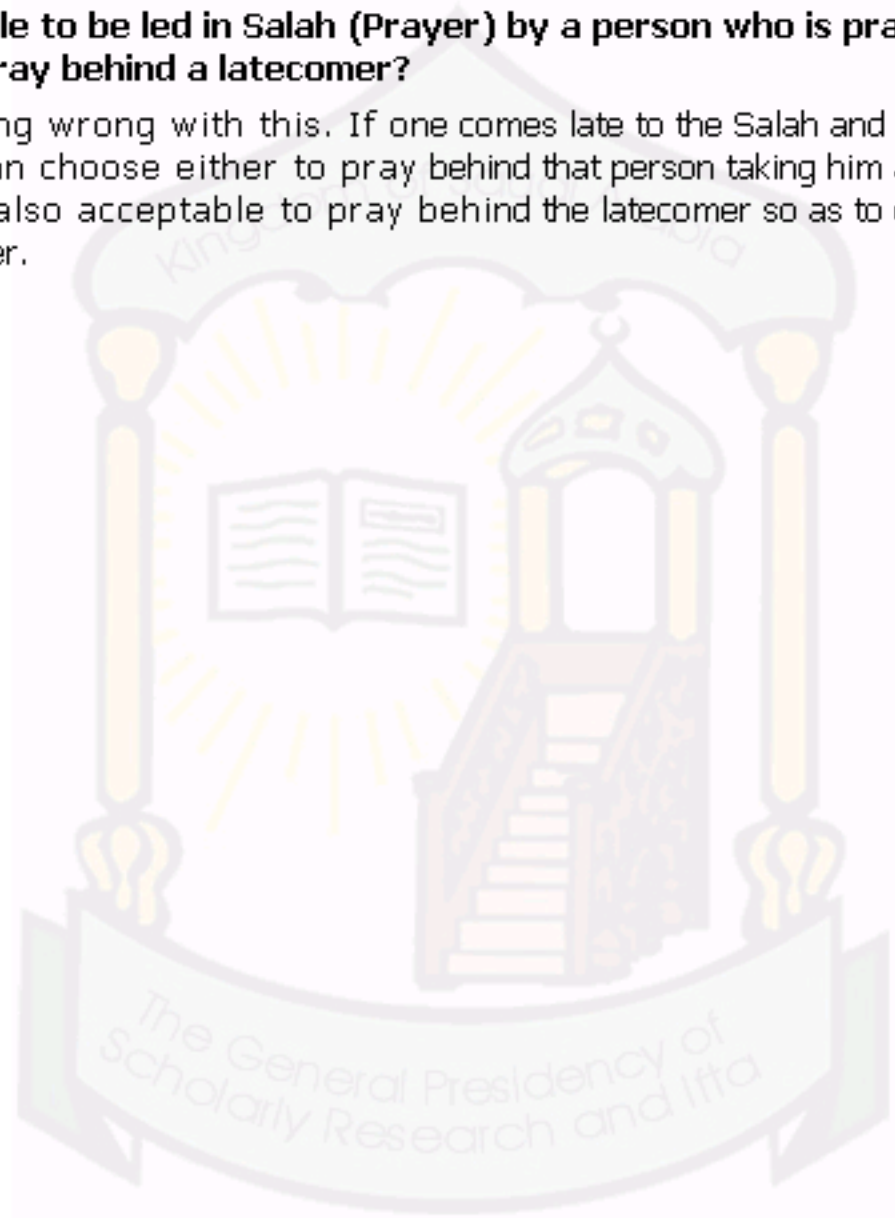
A: There is nothing wrong with being led in Salah (Prayer) by one who has been acting as Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in congregational Prayer) and has missed some Rak`ahs of the Salah. In such a case, when that person ends the Salah, the latecomer has to make up for the missing Rak`ahs. Praise be to Allah, there is also nothing wrong with praying individually instead of praying behind a Ma'mum.





Q: Is it permissible to be led in Salah (Prayer) by a person who is praying individually? Is it permissible to pray behind a latecomer?

A: There is nothing wrong with this. If one comes late to the Salah and finds a person praying individually, he can choose either to pray behind that person taking him as an Imam or to pray individually. It is also acceptable to pray behind the latecomer so as to gain the reward of the congregational Prayer.





92- Explaining what to do when one joins the Imam in `Isha' Prayer and then remembers that he has not yet prayed Maghrib

Q: If I start `Isha' (Night) Prayer individually and then remember that I have not yet performed Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, is it permissible to change my intention from `Isha' to Maghrib, bearing in mind that I have not reached Ruku` (bowing) of the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer)? If this happens

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while I am performing `Isha' in congregation, should I interrupt it and perform Maghrib first, whereby I will miss the reward of congregational Prayer? I hope you will clarify this point. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If you remember that you have not performed Maghrib while you are performing `Isha', you should interrupt the Salah (Prayer) and offer Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) with the intention of starting Maghrib Prayer, whether you are praying individually or in congregation. For there is nothing wrong with the difference between the intention of the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) and that of the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in congregational Prayer). Building upon this, you can perform Maghrib Prayer behind an Imam who is praying `Isha'. After you finish Maghrib, you start to pray `Isha'. All Praise is due to Allah (Exalted be He).



93- Explaining what to do when one starts Salah individually and then finds a group of people praying in congregation

Q: I started to perform Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer individually and during the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) I noticed a group of people praying in congregation in front of me, should I follow the congregation while standing in my place or should I complete the Salah (Prayer) individually?

A: In this case, you can interrupt the Salah and join the congregation, and when they end their Salah, you have to make up for what you have missed.

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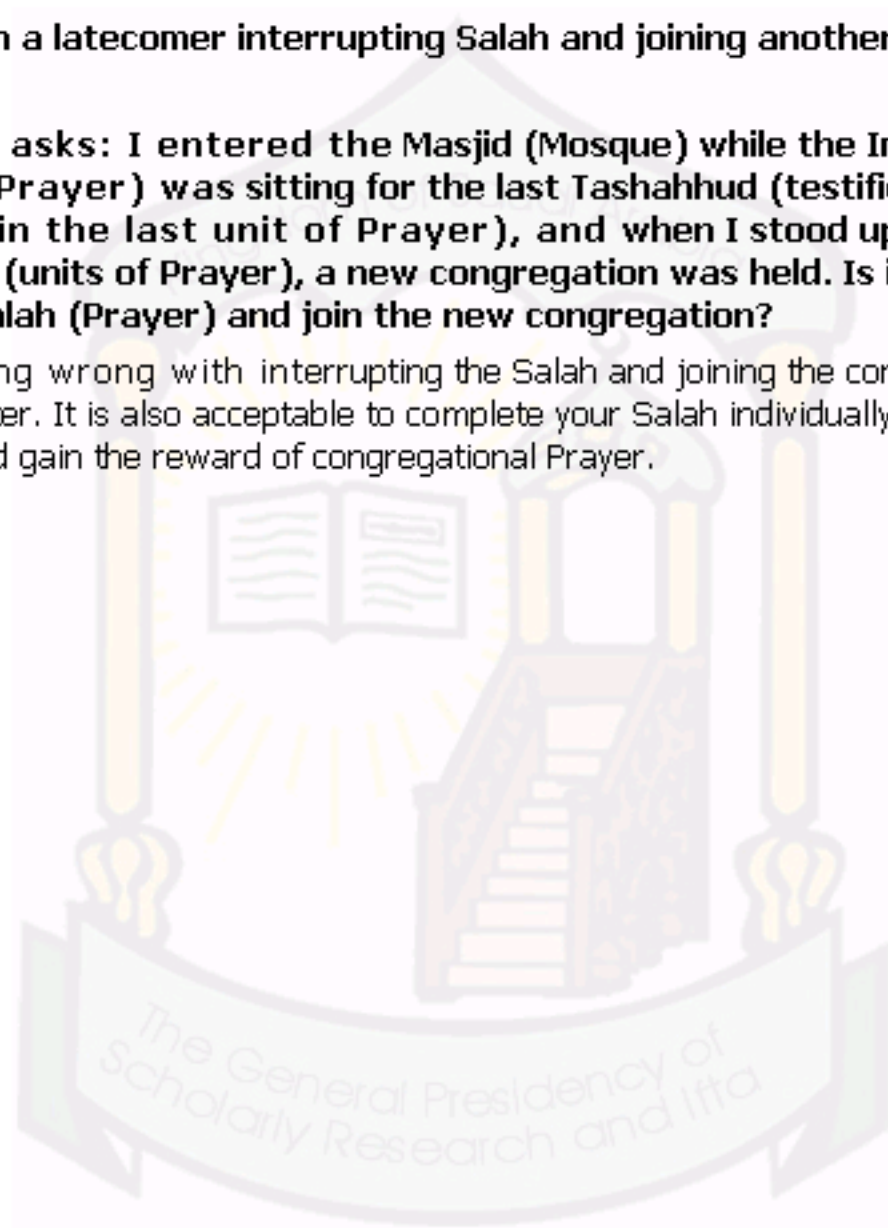
If you complete your Salah individually, this will be acceptable. But it is desirable to pray in congregation. Therefore, you are recommended to join them to gain the reward of congregational Prayer.



94- Ruling on a latecomer interrupting Salah and joining another congregation

Q: A questioner asks: I entered the Masjid (Mosque) while the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) was sitting for the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer), and when I stood up to make up for the missing Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), a new congregation was held. Is it permissible for me to interrupt my Salah (Prayer) and join the new congregation?

A: There is nothing wrong with interrupting the Salah and joining the congregation, for this is a change to the better. It is also acceptable to complete your Salah individually. But it is better to join the congregation and gain the reward of congregational Prayer.





95- Ruling on a traveler leading a resident in Salah and vice versa

Q: What is the ruling on a traveler [who enjoys the Rukhsah (concession) to shorten the four-Rak`ah Prayer] being led in Salah (Prayer) by a resident (who has to pray it fully) and vice versa? And what should be done in both cases?

A: If a person with the Rukhsah to shorten Salah leads a person who should perform Salah fully, the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in congregational Prayer) has to complete the four Rak`ahs of the Salah after the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer)

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ends his own Salah as two Rak`ahs only. The Ma'mums who are travelers offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) with the Imam after two Rak`ahs as well. On the other hand, if the Imam is resident and the Ma'mums are travelers, they have to follow the Imam and perform the Salah fully and they are not allowed to shorten it. Al-Bukhari related in his Sahih on the authority of Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) (that he (Ibn `Abbas) was asked: O Ibn `Abbas, why do we have to perform a four-Rak`ah Prayer fully when we are praying behind a resident (Imam), and perform only two Rak`ahs when we are all travelers [including the Imam]? He replied: This is the method taught by the Prophet (peace be upon him).) This was also related by Ahmad in his Musnad through a Hassan (good) Isnad (chain of narrators), and by Muslim in his Sahih. This indicates that a traveler should perform the Salah fully and not shorten it when he is led by a resident. But if he is led in Salah by a fellow traveler, he performs the four-Rak`ah Prayer as two Rak`ahs only. When a resident, on the other hand, prays behind a traveler, he should complete the Salah after the Imam offers Taslim in the second Rak`ah, for a traveler has the Rukhsah to shorten the four-Rak`ah Prayer and reduce it to two Rak`ahs only, but a resident does not.



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96- Ruling on the Salah of a traveler when led by a resident

Q: A traveler entered a Masjid (Mosque) and found a group of people praying in congregation and they were up to the last two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). The Masjid is located between Makkah and Al-Madinah. But he did not know whether they were shortening the Salah (Prayer) or performing it fully. Should he complete the Salah or offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) with them as a shortened Salah? Which is better? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: In this case, the traveler must perform Salah fully, i.e. four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), for the people of the Masjid do so. Therefore, if he joins them in the last two Rak`ahs, he must stand up for the missing two Rak`ahs after they offer Taslim. For it was reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(ordered that a traveler should perform the Salah fully when led by a resident, and he is not allowed to shorten it.\)](#) However, if he knows that they are on a journey and not residents, he should perform only two Rak`ahs and end the Salah with them. The same is true if he notices on them signs of travel and builds on the assumption that they are on a journey. If he cannot, by any means, know whether they are on a journey, he has to perform the Salah fully, for the people of the Masjid are usually residents. So, if he joins them in two Rak`ahs, he must stand up after they offer Taslim to make up for

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the two missing Rak`ahs.



Q: I was on a journey and hence shortened Salah (Prayer), and I joined a group of people performing `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer in congregation. After I had performed one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) with them, the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) ended the Salah and I did not know whether they were shortening the Salah or performing it in full. What do you advise me to do in such a case? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If the Imam you prayed behind was on a journey and it appeared that they were all travelers, you should only pray one Rak`ah after he offers Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). On the other hand, if the Imam was not a traveler, i.e. performing Salah fully, you should make up for the missing three Rak`ahs. That is, if it appears that the Imam is a traveler, you can shorten the Salah and hence make up for one Rak`ah only. And if he appears to be a resident, you should complete the four Rak`ahs with no shortening.



Q: What is the ruling on shortening the Salah (Prayer) while being led by an Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) who is performing it fully? In other words, what is the ruling on a person performing two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) only with the Imam in a four-Rak`ah Prayer and then ending the Salah while the Imam is still completing it?

A: Shortening the four-Rak`ah Prayer is a stressed Sunnah reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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only in the case of travel. Yet, if a traveler is led in Salah by a resident (Imam), he must follow the Imam and perform the Salah fully, according to the correct opinion of scholars. It was reported on the authority of Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) that this was the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Ibn `Abbas once was asked: [«Why do we have to perform a four-Rak`ah Prayer fully when we are praying behind a resident \(Imam\), and perform only two Rak`ahs when we are all travelers \[including the Imam\]? He replied: This is the method taught by the Prophet \(peace be upon him\).»](#) Related by Imam Ahmad and Imam Muslim (may Allah be merciful to them). This indicates that a traveler should perform the Salah fully when led by a resident (Imam), and when the Imam is a traveler, the Salah is shortened, whereby it is reduced to two Rak`ahs only. If a traveler prays behind a resident and performs two Rak`ahs only without completing the Salah with the Imam, he has to perform the Salah fully once again, for this is wrong, according to the way taught by the Prophet (peace be upon him).



Q: I performed `Asr (afternoon) Prayer with the imam (the one who leads congregational prayer) in the city of Riyadh while I was traveling. I joined the imam in the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) and then continued the prayer on my own and performed only one Rak`ah and concluded the Prayer with Salam since I was shortening the Prayer. After I finished my Prayer, some brothers asked me why I performed only two Rak`ahs and I replied that I

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was traveling and that I performed Zuhr (noon) in two Rak`ahs alone and that I joined the imam in the last Rak`ah, continued the second Rak`ah on my own and then concluded the Prayer. He replied that this is impermissible because if I join the imam in a congregational Prayer, it is impermissible to shorten the Prayer and that I must follow the congregation whenever I join it. I followed his fatwa but what am I to do about the Prayers I have previously performed before becoming aware of this ruling, if it is correct?

A: Yes, this fatwa is correct. A person who is either traveling alone or with a group may pray two Rak`ahs. But if they pray with a residents who pray four Rak`ahs, they are to pray the same number of Rak`ahs as residents and are not to shorten the Prayer. If they join Prayer with residents, such as joining them in the last Rak`ah of the Zuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon) or `Isha (Night) Prayer, then they are to pray the remaining three Rak`ahs until they complete four. And, if they join them in the last Rak`ah of Maghrib, they are to pray two Rak`ahs until they complete three. If they join residents in the last Rak`ah of Jumu`ah (Friday) or Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, they are to pray the remaining Rak`ah. This has been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) through Ibn Abbas, (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) that he was asked about the Prayers of traveling persons who pray behind an Imam. He replied: "Pray four (Rak`ahs). If they pray with others who are traveling, they are to pray two (Rak`ahs)", and he said that this is the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet). The inquirer then asked: [\("What if we pray four Rak`ahs with the imam and two Rak`ahs when traveling?"](#) Ibn Abbas said: "This

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[is the Sunnah.](#)) Reported by Muslim in his Sahih and Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him), with a good chain of transmission. This is the correct action; that a traveler is not to shorten their prayers except if they were praying alone or with other travelers. But if travelers pray with the residents who pray four Rak`ahs, then travelers are to pray with residents the same number of Rak`ahs whether or not they joined residents in the first or second Rak`ah. If they joined residents after they started praying and the Imam makes Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), a traveler is to continue the rest of the four Rak`ahs. As for the prayers which you have previously performed in two Rak`ahs, if they are few then you are to perform them out of religious precaution. But if they are many, Allah may forgive you In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills) because you performed them in this manner out of ignorance. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a person who prayed carelessly, he ordered him to repeat the presently due Prayer but did not order him to make up the missed Prayers due to this person's ignorance. Your situation is the same. If the Prayers you have

previously performed are few and you repeat them, then this is good. Otherwise, you are not blameworthy since you are only required to do what you know of the rulings of the Shari`ah. When you became acquainted with the ruling, you followed it, praise be to Allah. As for the rest, we pray that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) forgives you. The most probable-and Allah knows best- is that you are not blameworthy for any of the past Prayers for which you performed the wrong number of Rak`ahs since you only performed them thinking you were doing the right thing while you were in doubt as to the number of Rak`ahs for a traveller, which are two. Allah forgives everyone's sins. You do not have to repeat what you have omitted In sha'a-Allah but in the future, if you join prayers behind an Imam who is a resident, you are to pray four Rak`ahs with

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them, and if you miss anything, you are to complete the Prayer to four Rak`ahs.



Q: A message from a questioner from Al-Qasim says: "We hope your Eminence can give us Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) regarding the following: some people traveled a distance over which it is permissible to shorten Salah (Prayer). During their travel, they passed by a village at the time of `Isha' (Night) Prayer, but they had not offered Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, and thus they joined the worshipers in the mosque. Some of them joined the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) with the intention of offering `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and after Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), they offered Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer; the second group joined the Imam with the intention of offering Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, and when the Imam stood for the fourth Rak'ah (unit of Prayer), they remained seated until he finished, and then they performed 'Isha' (Night) Prayer; the third group joined the Imam with the intention of offering Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, but when the Imam stood up to complete the fourth Rak'ah, they remained seated for Tashshahud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer) and to conclude the prayer. After that, they joined the Imam in the fourth Rak'ah with the intention of offering `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and then completed three Rak'ahs. Which of these groups is correct? Which of these groups should offer the prayer again? Please, give us a Fatwa. May Allah reward you with the best!

A: Regarding the first group who offered 'Isha' (Night) Prayer with the Imam and then offered Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer , they should

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perform 'Isha' (Night) Prayer again, as they changed the order of prayers. Instead, it is obligatory on them to offer Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and then 'Isha' (Night) Prayer respectively, taking into consideration that the congregational prayer is not a pretext to give up the order. Thus, they should offer `Isha' (Night) Prayer after Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer.

As for those who first joined the Imam with the intention of offering Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, sat down in the third Rak'ah and after that waited to perform Taslim following the Imam, they correctly performed the Prayer, and there is no blame on them. Praise be to Allah.

Finally, the third group who sat down after the third Rak'ah, and performed Tashshahud and finished Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer then joined the Imam with the intention of offering 'Isha' (Night) Prayer, is correct-In sha-Allah (if Allah wills)-and their prayer is valid, but those who sat down and waited until the Imam completed his prayer and performed Taslim with the Imam is the most appropriate and accurate manner.



97- Ruling on a traveler leaving congregational prayer to perform a shortened prayer on their own

Q: Is it permissible for a traveler who has reached Madinah to pray a shortened Prayer on their own? Please take into account that such traveler can hear the Adhan (call to Prayer) and is close to the Masjid (mosque) and can join the congregational Prayer?

A: It is impermissible if the traveler is alone, but he or she is to pray with the people because congregational Prayer is obligatory. But if the number of travelers are two or more, then they are to choose; if they wish, they

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may pray alone and shorten their Prayer and if they wish, they may pray behind the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) at the Masjid and pray the full number of Rak`ahs.



Q: The questioner from Yemen asks: "If a traveler arrives during congregational prayer, is it be better for them to join in the congregational prayer or to pray alone Salat-ul-Musafir (the prayers a person is allowed to shorten and combine while traveling, i.e., both Zhuhr (Noon) and 'Asr (Afternoon), and both Maghrib (Sunset) and 'Isha' (Night))?"

A: If a traveler is alone , it is obligatory on him or her to join the congregational prayer, offering four Rak'ahs (unit of Prayer), and is not to pray individually. In this case the congregational prayer is obligatory, whereas Salat-ul-Qasr (shortening of Prayers) is optional; thus, it is not reasonable to leave the obligatory for the optional. It is obligatory to join the congregational prayer, completing four Rak'ahs. On the other hand, if travelers are two persons or more, they are free to either offer Salat-ul-Qasr alone, or to join the congregational prayer, offering four Rak'ahs.





98- A traveler leading residents in Salah

Q: Is it permissible for a traveler to shorten and join the Salah (Prayer) when leading residents?

A: Yes, the Salah of a traveler leading residents is valid and when he pronounces Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the end of his shortened Salah, the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) are to complete the full number of Rak`ahs. For instance, if he prays two Rak`ahs for either Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon) or

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`Isha (Night) Prayers, and he pronounces Taslim, they are then to complete the number of Rak`ahs to four. But when a traveler prays behind a resident, he is to pray the full number of Rak`ahs which is the better course of action and the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet).



Q: A questioner from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan asks: "When one shortens the prayer, is it permissible for them to be an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) for the residents? May Allah reward you with the best! In such a case, is it permissible for him to announce: "Complete your prayer as I have shortened the prayer"?"

A: There is nothing wrong with that; if he, as an Imam, offered Salah (Prayer) with them while traveling, he offers two Rak'ahs (unit of Prayer), provided that he informs them prior to performing Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) or before Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer: "Complete (your prayer).") It is narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did this in the Year of Fat-h (the Conquest of Makkah); and if he offers four Rak'ahs with them, there is nothing wrong with that, even if he is a traveler, as `Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) offered four Rak'ahs with worshipers during his caliphate in his final Hajj (a prescribed pilgrimage undertaken to Makkah during the month of Thul-Hijjah in accordance with Islamic law). Therefore, there is no blame on him if he offers the four Rak'ahs with them, or offers two Rak'ahs only with them, and announces: "Complete (your prayer).") Both ways are valid.



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99- Ruling on holding two congregational Salahs in a Masjid for different obligatory Salahs

Q: What is the ruling on holding two congregational Salahs (Prayer) at the same time in the same Masjid (mosque) but for different obligatory Salahs?

A: If they are praying at the same time, then it is an obligation on them to pray together and they are not to hold separate congregational Salahs. But if the first group finishes the first congregational Salah, it is permissible for the second group to hold another congregational Salah. But as long as they are all present for the first Salah, they must perform the presently due Salah and must not hold separate ones. They must all pray behind one imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer).



100- Ruling on passing between the rows of worshipers

Q: What is the ruling on passing between the rows of worshipers to find a place to offer Salah (Prayer) ?

A: There is nothing wrong in a Muslim passing in front of worshipers, while the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is offering Salah with them to find room to pray in when necessity demands, but if there is a way

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to reach the back rows, then it is preferable lest these who pass distract others from their prayer. However, if it is not possible, then there is no blame if one walks in front of those who are praying, as the Ma'mum (a person being led by an Imam in prayer) is following the Imam, and thus passing in front of them does not affect their prayer. In this regard, it is narrated in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) on the authority of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) that he said: [\(I came to the Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\) while he was performing Salah in Mina, I was riding a female donkey, so I got off and let it go, and I joined the row.\)](#) The female donkey passing in front of them had no affect, as the Ma'mum is subject to the rulings of the Imam. In other words, the Sutra (barrier placed in front of a praying person) of the Imam is a Sutra for the congregation; thus, there is nothing wrong when a female donkey or any human being passes in front of the worshipers. However, if it is possible for one, or their Dabbah (a riding animal), to take another way in order not to distract other worshipers; it is the most proper action. Apparently, it was most likely unavoidable for the female donkey of Ibn Abbas to pass in front of worshipers at that time.



101- Passing in front of those praying in the Masjid

Q: What is the ruling on passing in front of those praying in the Masjid (mosque)? Is there a particular distance

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one must keep between him and the person who is praying?

A: There is nothing wrong with passing in front of the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer). But it is impermissible to pass in front of the Imam or the Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually). The Prophet (peace be upon him) warned against passing in front of the one who is praying saying that: **(If the one passing in front of a praying person were to know what (sin) is (incurred) upon him, it would have been better for him to stand for forty than to pass in front of him.)** Therefore, it is impermissible to pass in front of those praying for a distance of three arms length or less or between him and his Sutra (barrier placed before a person praying). But if it was at a distance more than three arms length, there is nothing wrong in passing in front of him because it is not feasible to push him back due to the distance and because he is not actually considered to be in front of him. The reason for this is because when the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed prayers at the Ka`bah, he stood at a distance of three arms length between him and the western wall. This demonstrates that the Sutra is to be placed in front of a person who is praying either at this distance or less. It is more of a priority to stand at a greater distance than this from the praying person to avoid controversy. But if the praying person puts a Sutra in front of him, then a person is not to pass between him and the Sutra, but he is to pass behind it. This ruling applies if the passerby is a woman, and also applies in case of a donkey or a dog passing in front of a praying person; it is permissible if they pass at a distance of three arms length or more from him or behind the Sutra.



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102- The ruling on passing in front of someone offering Salah in the Haram

Q: Do Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) and Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy (the Prophet's Masjid) have a special ruling for the passing of women and men in front of worshipers without being blameworthy?

A: The correct ruling on offering Salah (Prayer) in Al-Masjid Al-Haram is that the prayer is not to be interrupted, and those who pass before their Muslim brothers or sisters while praying do not nullify their prayer; and thus the passer-by should not be prevented from passing, as the passer-by does not interrupt the Salah in Al-Masjid Al-Haram due to the crowds and difficulty of pushing people away. It is inevitable to pass in front of those praying during Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka'bah) or the like. Consequently, it is more suitable for the one praying in Al-Masjid Al-Haram not to prevent the passers-by, especially if they are women, as there is nothing related to such a matter narrated from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). On the contrary, there are some Hadiths, though classified as Da'if (weak), which [emphasize that he \(the Prophet\) did not use to prevent the passer-by in Al-Masjid Al-Haram, and he used to offer Salah while people were passing in front of him,](#) ; but it is proved that this Hadith is weak. In addition, it was narrated by some of the Companions that Ibn Al-Zubayr was praying while some people were passing in front of him, and because Al-Masjid Al-Haram is a very crowded place, especially during the days of

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Hajj and 'Umrah in Ramadan Thus it is difficult to prevent those passing by or to be ready to hinder them. Similarly, the ruling includes all other days as well. As for Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy, the ruling on passing in front of worshipers in prayer differs from that in Al-Masjid Al-Haram. In addition, it is proved that Abu Sa`id (may Allah be pleased with him) was praying in Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy, and someone wanted to pass in front of him, but he prevented him. He complained to Marwan, who summoned Abu Sa`id, asking him about that matter, and he told him that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [When any one of you prays facing a Sutra \(barrier placed in front of a person praying\) and someone tries to pass in front of them \[in between the Sutra and the praying person\], the praying person should push that passer by away. If they resist pushing, a praying person should combat them, for such a passer by is a devil.](#) Abu Sa`id was of the opinion that Masjid Al-Naby (Prophet's Mosque) (peace be upon him) is like any mosque, and those who pass in front of worshipers while praying should be prevented, and Allah knows best. In cases of large crowds, the passer-by should not be prevented in Al-Masjid Al-Haram. Similarly, any praying person should not prevent the passers-by in any crowded place. So, when someone intends to perform their obligatory or supererogatory Salah, they should not prevent anyone from passing in front of them due to overcrowding. In this regard, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [And why should you not eat of that \(meat\) on which Allâh's Name has been pronounced \(at the time of slaughtering the animal\), while He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, except under compulsion of necessity?](#)

Thus, when necessity demands, the rules may be relaxed, and Allah knows best.



103- Ruling on the Hadith, i.e., (The prayer is invalidated by a woman, a donkey, or a dog (when they pass in front of one praying).)

Q: It is commonly known by the majority of people that a woman, a donkey, or a black dog invalidate prayer when any of them passes in front of one praying; is this position correct?

A: This question requires explanation. The prayer is invalidated if a woman, a donkey, or a black dog passes in front of a praying person according to what is mentioned in Sahih (authentic) Hadith that is narrated by Abu Dhar, and another Hadith by Abu Hurayrah, and ibn `Abbas; however, if anyone other than these three passes in front of a praying person, the prayer is considered valid, but the reward will be decreased. It is recommended that the passer-by should be stopped if possible; but if one cannot stop them, the passer-by, and not the praying person, will be considered sinful. This ruling does not apply to Al-Masjid Al-Haram as mentioned above, and also it does not apply to overcrowded places where passing in front of a praying person is inevitable.



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104- The ruling on passing in front of praying people in other mosques than Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah)

Q: Is it Haram (prohibited) to pass in front of praying people in all mosques, taking into consideration that this frequently takes place in Al-Masjid Al-Haram? Please, give us a Fatwa! May Allah grant you success!

A: It is impermissible for Muslims to pass between or in front of people while they are praying as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“If the one passing in front of a praying person were to know what (sin) is (incurred) upon him, they would prefer to stand for forty than to pass in front of them.”*

So, it is impermissible for Muslims to pass in front of fellow worshipers, who are praying supererogatory prayers individually without an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer). In other words, one should wait until they finish, or try to find another way to pass. One should not pass in front of a person praying, but if they are praying at a distance, there is no blame. Similarly, there is no harm in one passing in front of a Sutra (a barrier placed in front of a praying person) or when the prayer is being led by an Imam, who serves as the Sutra for the congregation. In addition, it is not permissible to pass in front of a worshiper praying individually, or in front of the Imam, or between the praying persons and their Sutra. However, they should maintain their distance and pass behind the Sutra instead, thus there is nothing wrong with the previous Hadith.



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105- The ruling on those who come to the mosque early and take the seats of their choice before others arrive

Q: I went to the mosque on Friday and stood in the first row. Before starting the prayer, the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) ordered me to go to the back row to make room for an elderly person. What is the ruling on this matter? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: Whoever arrives first to the mosque and occupies a place before others, then they exclusively have the right to remain in it. In other words, when you precede others and sit in the first row, then you are worthier to occupy that place than any person even if that person is better than you or has more knowledge than you, you have the right to sit in the place you occupied first; be it the first, the second, or the third row, unless you allow your father, your Shaykh (Islamic scholar), an elderly person, or some dignitary to take your place. There is nothing wrong with this, and there is no blame on you if you voluntarily give your place to another. However, it is not permissible for anyone to take your place because those who come first have the right to sit where they like. In this regard, it is narrated in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith that [\("Whoever leaves his place and then returns to it has the right to occupy it."\)](#) That is, first come first sit, whether in the first or the second row; the same applies to circles of knowledge.



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106- The ruling on reserving a place in the mosque by putting a rug or the like

Q: Is it permissible for those who go to the mosque late to offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) in front of another praying person, annoying the praying people sitting in the first row, to the extent that some of them quit their place, and this action frequently takes place, and some people put a rug or his Ihram (clothing worn during the ritual state for Hajj and 'Umrah) to occupy a place in Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) until they perform Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka'bah)? Please, give us a Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) regarding the two previous matters!

A: It is not allowed for a believer to bother his Muslim brother, who sits in the row, but he should pray at a vacant place and stay where he is, being in line with the row. In other words, he is not allowed to separate between two people according to the texts, i.e. the Qur'an and the Sunnah. However, if there is enough room for him to sit between two worshippers, then there is nothing wrong to occupy it, as Muslims are obliged to occupy vacant places while standing in the rows, and he is allowed to offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid or Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis), even if there is a person sitting in front of him like the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) or anyone else, provided that he should not annoy his Muslim brothers. In brief, a praying person should sit where there is a vacant place to be in line with the rows, provided that he should not bother his neighboring Muslims.

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Similarly, it is not permissible for a Muslim to reserve a place whether on Friday or the like. On the contrary, one should go to the mosque with the intention of staying in it until the end of prayer, offering Salah (Prayer) with his Muslim brothers. Thus, it is not permissible for a praying Muslim to put a rug or the like where he sits in the mosque until he comes back, intending to go home for a while or to perform Tawaf or the like. In doing so, he prevents his Muslim brothers from making use of such a place. Consequently, it is obligatory on a Muslim to abandon all such things, thinking of nothing but offering Salah and staying in the mosque in person, i.e., not to reserve a place through putting a turban, `Aba'ah (a loose outer garment) or a rug where he sits, then he goes out of the mosque to meet other needs.



107- Ruling on sitting in the Masjid for a purpose other than Salah

Q: Is it permissible to sit in the Masjid (mosque) for a purpose other than Salah (Prayer) until the time for the Adhan (call to Prayer)? Please give me your opinion, may Allah reward you abundantly.

A: There is nothing wrong with sitting in a Masjid to rest, sleep for a short time, or the like. Some of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) used to sleep at the Masjid during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, one should not sit in the Masjid except after offering Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to greet the mosque), if one is Tahir (ritually pure). One should offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) upon entering the Masjid, if one has performed Wudu' (ablution). However,

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if one is not Tahir, there is nothing wrong with sitting at the Masjid. All praise be to Allah.



108- The ruling on offering Tahiyat-ul-Masjid during the times when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah

Q: A questioner from Yemen asks: A person entered the Masjid (mosque) ten or fifteen minutes before the Adhan (call to Prayer) for Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer. Was he to offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to greet the mosque), or stand until the Adhan for Maghrib Prayer?

A: The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) upon entering the Masjid, even before the sunset, because of the general meaning of the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(When anyone among you enters the Masjid, he should not sit till he has performed two Rak'ahs.\)](#) These two Rak`ahs are occasional Salahs (Prayers) offered for specific reasons, which a person is permitted to offer at any time, like Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation) and Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse). When there is a solar eclipse, Muslims should offer Salat-ul-Kusuf, even after the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer. Similarly, the ruling on occasional Salahs offered for specific reasons applies to the two Rak`ahs of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid, as they do not have a time in which it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah.



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109- Where to stand if the Imam leads only one person standing to his right?

Q: A questioner from Yemen asks: "If two persons offer Salah (Prayer) in congregation, the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) stands to the right of the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer). If another person joins them while they are offering Ruku` (bowing), should he stand beside the Ma'mum? If he does this, he will not be able to offer Ruku` (bowing). Please guide us, may Allah reward you with the best."

A: The Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet) indicates that if two persons offer Salah in congregation, the Ma'mum should stand to the right of the Imam. If another person comes, both of the two Ma'mums should stand behind the Imam. They should not stand to the right or the left of the Imam. It was authentically reported in Muslim's Sahih from the Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(that he was offering Salah individually. Then, Jabir and Jabbar, the two Ansars \(Helpers, inhabitants of Madinah who supported the Prophet\), came and one of them stood to the right of the Prophet, and the other stood to his left. Then, the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) held their hands and brought them behind him.\)](#) Once the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Salah with Ibn `Abbas in congregation at night and let him stand to his right. Also, he (peace be upon him) offered Salah with Anas, letting him stand to his right. This is the Sunnah. If a person comes

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while the Imam offers Salah with one Ma'mum to his right, he takes the Ma'mum kindly to stand behind the Imam. If he fears that he may miss the Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), he may stand to the right of the Ma'mum or to the left of the Imam and offer Ruku` (bowing) with him to catch the Rak`ah. Then, the two Ma'mums should stand behind the Imam.



110- The ruling on moving the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) forward or backward if a third person or more joins them

Q: If two worshipers are offering congregational Salah (Prayer) while one of them is on the right and a third one wants to join them; is it permissible for the Imam to move forward and continue praying?

A: There is nothing wrong with this, whether one moves forward or backward; it is narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(was praying, and then Jabir lined up on the right, and after that Jabbar ibn Sakhr lined up on the left. The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) had them move back and stand behind him,\)](#) while he remained in his place. Thus, the Imam is free to choose what is suitable, either to move himself forward if there is no room for them behind him, or to let them move backward, while he remains

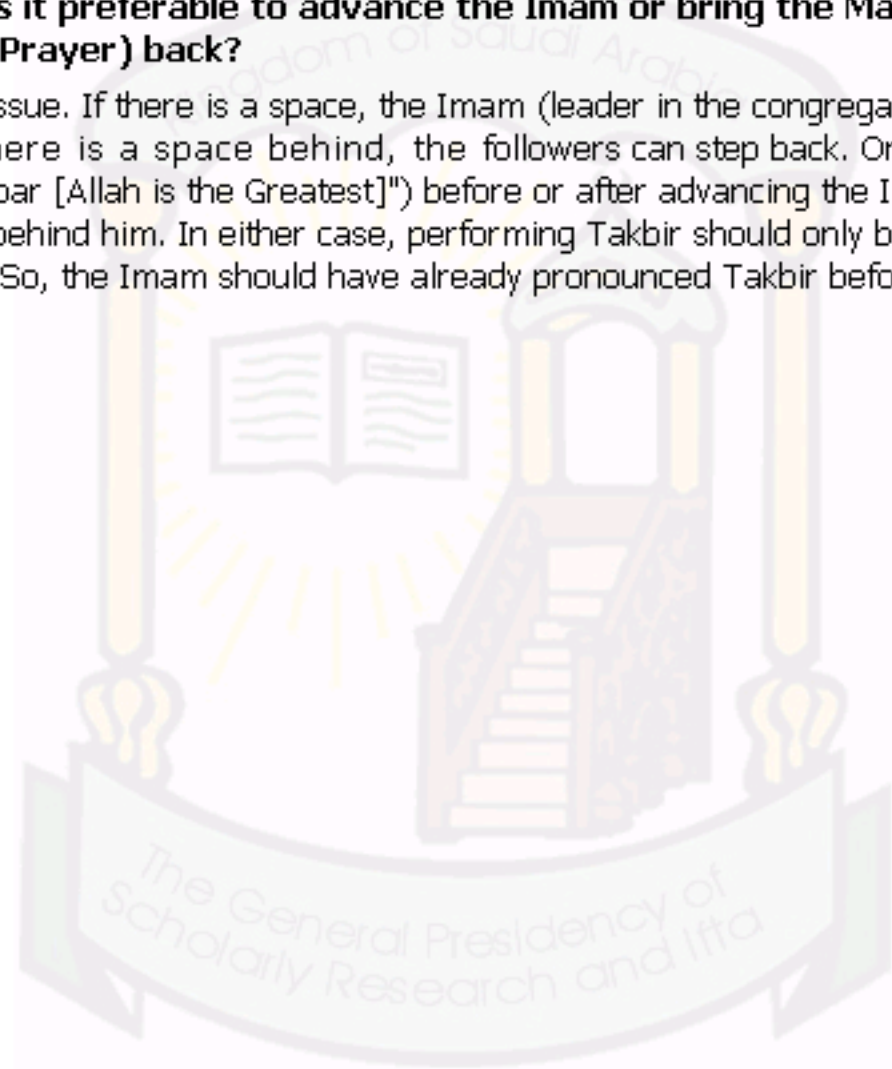
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in place leading them in prayer.



Q: If two persons are performing Salah (Prayer) in congregation and I want to join them, should I perform Takbir Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") before I advance the Imam forward (leader in congregational Prayer) or advance him and then perform Takbir? Is it preferable to advance the Imam or bring the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) back?

A: This is a broad issue. If there is a space, the Imam (leader in the congregational Prayer) can step forward; and if there is a space behind, the followers can step back. One may perform Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") before or after advancing the Imam and then join the row of followers behind him. In either case, performing Takbir should only be done after the Imam pronounces Takbir. So, the Imam should have already pronounced Takbir before you advance him or bring the row back.





Q: Dear Sheikh, if I enter into Salah (Prayer) with a worshiper and then another comes and joins us. Where are the Imam and the followers to stand? May Allah Reward you with the best!

A: If one is performing Salah alone and someone comes and joins him, the latter should stand on the right, just as the Prophet (peace be upon him) did with Ibn Abbas and others. Then,

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if another worshiper joins them, the two followers should step back and make a row behind the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), and so on if others join the Prayer. [\(When Ibn Abbas came to the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) at night and stood by the left side of the Prophet, the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) brought him by his right.\)](#) Also, it was authentically reported in the hadith of Anas that the Prophet (peace be upon him) visited them and offered Prayer in their home. The Prophet brought Anas to his right. Also, it was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(was offering Prayer alone and Jabir and Jabbar \(from Al-Ansar\) came and stood beside him. He had them stand behind him.\)](#) This is the Sunanah (action following the teachings of the Prophet).



Q: The questioner asks: If one follower is praying with an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and then a third person comes while the Imam is bowing and that latecomer wants to catch the Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), should they stand to the right of the first follower or move him back to form a second row behind the Imam?

A: One should bow to the right of the first follower or to the left of the Imam (leader in congregational prayer), so as not to miss

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the Rak`ah. Then, both followers should step back to form a new row behind the Imam. If the latecomer arrives while the Imam is offering Ruku` (bowing) and he has one follower on his right, the latecomer may either stand to the right of the follower or to the left of the Imam because the Imam's right side is occupied. After standing erect after bowing, the followers should step back behind the Imam and form a new row. This is the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet).



111- The ruling on a man and a boy forming a row behind the Imam

Q: If the time of Prayer is due and we are a group of three persons, one of whom is a 12 year old who has not reached puberty, should one of us and the boy pray beside the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), or one of us stand behind the Imam - who is one of us- and then the boy behind us? May Allah reward you with best!

A: If there are three persons, the Imam should stand in front and the second man and the boy are to form a row behind him, even if the boy is less than twelve. A child of 7 or 8 years of age can pray in the same row with adult worshipers. The Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Prayer with Anas and had Anas and the orphan boy behind him in a row. So, the point is that if the Imam is followed by two men, two boys, or a man and a boy, they should form a row behind him.

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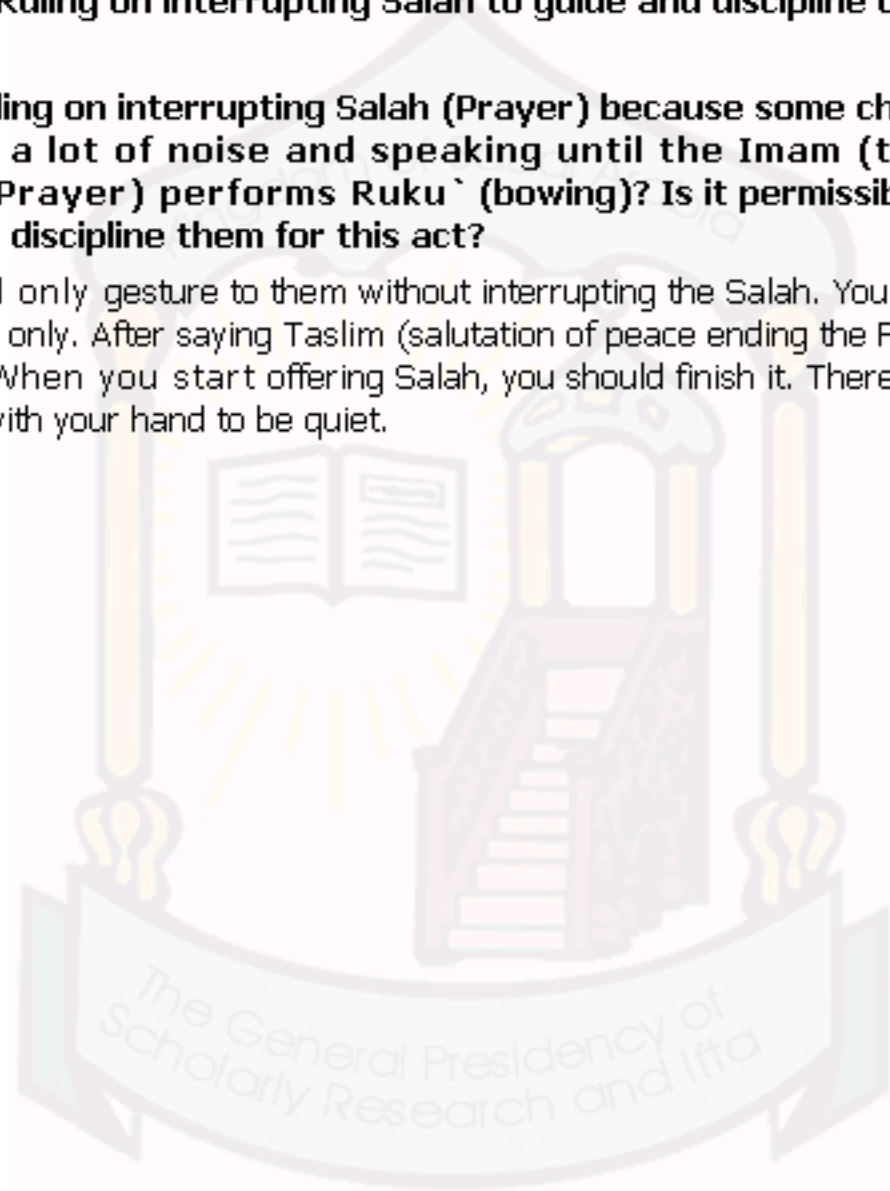
However, if there are women, even one, they should stand behind the men and not to stand beside men in the same row. Men are allowed to pray to the right or left side of the Imam, but the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to stand behind the Imam. [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) had Jabir and Jabbar stand in a row behind him.\)](#) Also, [\(he \(peace be upon him\) prayed in the house of Anas leading him and his brother and placed them behind him.\)](#) The brother of Anas was younger than Anas.



112- Ruling on interrupting Salah to guide and discipline children

Q: What is the ruling on interrupting Salah (Prayer) because some children in the second row are making a lot of noise and speaking until the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) performs Ruku` (bowing)? Is it permissible for me to turn to them to guide and discipline them for this act?

A: No, you should only gesture to them without interrupting the Salah. You should deal with them quietly by gesturing only. After saying Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), you can advise and guide them. When you start offering Salah, you should finish it. There is nothing wrong with gesturing for them with your hand to be quiet.





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113- Ruling on children standing in the first rows

Q: When we offer Salah (Prayer), we find children standing with the men in the first rows. Should we prevent this and move them to the last rows to offer Salah? Please advise. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If they reach the age at which it is obligatory to offer Salah, i.e., seven years or more, they are ordered by the Prophet (peace be upon him) to offer Salah, and their fathers are ordered by the Prophet to urge them to offer Salah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Tell your children to pray when they are seven years old and smack them if they do not pray when they are ten.\)](#) If they reach this age, they are permitted to offer Salah with the praying people, unless they fidget. Thus, they are moved from the place in which they are fidgeting, or they may be separated in the row so that they don't fidget. If they are less than seven years old, they are not obliged to offer Salah. There is nothing wrong with leaving a child to stand beside his father, if necessary. He does not harm the row, it is as if there is a column, chair or something similar between the two praying people. If the child is less than seven years old, it is better to leave him at home, so that he won't disturb the people or fidget. Also, he may wait for his father behind the rows until he finishes the Salah.

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If the father fears for him and lets him stand beside him, there is nothing wrong with that In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), if he does not fidget or harm anyone.



114. The ruling on an adult Imam leading boys in prayer and their place behind him

Q: I have children ranging between 7 and 11 years old. During congregational Prayer, which is better? to have them form a row behind or beside me? Please answer. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: The Sunnah Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to arrange them in a row behind you, as long as they are at least 7 years old. The Prophet (peace be upon him) led prayer in the home of some of the companions when he visited them in the morning. He led them in Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) and had Anas and the orphan boy behind him. Thus, the Sunnah is to have young children form a row behind you, so long as they are at least seven years old. But there is a problem, which is that you perform obligatory Prayer at home. It is compulsory on you to pray in congregation at the mosque and to have your children accompany you. Children around 7 or 8 years of age should be encouraged to pray, and by the age of 10, they should be ordered to pray and punished when showing disobedience. This will help get them used to Prayer and visiting mosques. However, in Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) at night or Salat-ul-Duha,

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it is ok for them to pray behind you. If you live in a desert town, you and your children should pray at the neighborhood mosque. But if there are no people around, then you can pray with your children at home.



Q: If an Imam (leader in congregational Prayer) is leading two or three children who are less than ten years old, should he stand to their left or in front of them?

A: The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is that boys are to make a row behind the Imam. If they are at least seven years of age and discerning in Salah (Prayer), they can pray behind the Imam just like men, and if there are men present, they can join rows with them behind the Imam and there is no problem because this is the correct way. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) [led Anas ibn Malik and an orphan with him named Hasan ibn Damirah, who made a row behind the Prophet \(peace be upon him\).](#) [Also, when the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) led Ibn `Abbas in Salah he stood to the left of the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) so he moved him to his right side](#) In congregational Salah, children are to stand behind the Imam like men do as long as they number two or more.

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If alone, the child should stand to the right of the Imam, like men. This applies to both obligatory and supererogatory Salah. Some scholars maintain that this is restricted to supererogatory Salah, but the right opinion here is that it applies to both. The general rule is that something that applies to supererogatory Salah also applies to obligatory Salah, unless there is a legal justification for a specific act applying to one and not the other.



Q: I am an adult man. Once, I missed congregational Salah (Prayer), and when I went to pray alone, children between the ages of ten and fifteen came to join me. Should I have advanced or let them all stand by my right side? One man told me that I should not advance if all the people praying are that young, since they cannot perform Salah adequately alone. Please give me your Fatwa. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If the reality is as mentioned, you should advance and make them form one or more rows behind you, as long as they are at least seven years old. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [«Command your children to offer Salah when they are seven years old.»](#) Seven-year-old children are required to perform Salah, since they are discerning, and they should stand in a row behind

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the Imam when they number more than one. [«The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) led Anas and the orphan and they both made a row behind him.»](#) If there is only one boy, he should pray to the right side of the Imam, just like an adult. [«Ibn Abbas prayed behind the Prophet to the right of him in optional Salah at night.»](#) Also, [«Anas prayed to the right of the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) when the Prophet visited the grandmother of Anas.»](#) That is, if there is one person, he should pray by the side of the Imam; if there is more than one person, they should line up behind him, even if they have not yet reached puberty but are over seven years of age



115- Ruling on a man praying between two undiscerning children in one row

Q: Does it affect the validity of Salah (Prayer) if a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) prays among several children below discerning age to his right and left in one row?

A: Yes. If they are under seven years old and there are no other persons, he will be considered to be praying alone in the row, which is invalid. He should repeat his Salah,

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as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) As long as the children are less than seven years of age, it will be as if he is standing alone in the row.



116- Ruling on a boy younger than seven standing in a men's row

Q: This question was sent to the program from an anonymous questioner: Can a boy stand in the middle of the prayer row? Some people bring their young children with them to Salah (Prayer), and position their children beside them and the worshipper standing next to them.

A: It is preferable that parents do not bring their children with them to congregational Salah if they are less than seven years old. It is better to leave them at home. If older than seven, they will not be breaking the row, and their standing in the row will be valid. Leaving young children at home is better, since they may disturb other people praying. But if a child happens to be accompanying his father, there will be no problem if he joins the row, just analogously to a column or a block of bricks between two rows. More clearly, if a father brings his child with him to Salah out of necessity, such as when leaving him at home may cause trouble, it is all right. [\(It was reported that Al-Hasan would come](#)

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[while the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) was offering Salah and he would sit on his back while the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) was offering Sujud \(prostration\).](#) Also, out of necessity the Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed while carrying Umamah, his granddaughter, to teach her Salah. By doing so, he was teaching Muslims that there is nothing wrong with this. If a father cannot leave his child at home because he may cause trouble or there is no one at home to look after him, this is an acceptable justification for bringing him to the Masjid (mosque). In this case, the child's presence will be likened to the positioning of a stone or chair between two rows, if necessity calls for bringing him. There is nothing wrong in this case, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills).



117- Ruling on praying among Masjid columns

Q: In my neighborhood, there is a small Masjid (mosque) that cannot hold all the people praying, especially during `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), and `Isha' (Night) Prayers. In the middle of the Masjid, there are columns that people pray beside if there is not enough space. But the Imam told people that praying around such columns is not valid. Now people avoid praying around them,

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which has limited the space inside the Masjid. What is your opinion regarding this?

A: There is nothing wrong with performing Salah among the columns if there is a real need for this. But if not, this becomes Makruh (reprehensible), since it entails breaking prayer rows. The Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet), as well as the practice of Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them all) shows that need removes undesirability and makes it all right to pray among the columns.



Q: In some Masjids (mosques), there are columns that break prayer rows. Is it better to pray beside a column, which breaks the row, or is it better to unite the row by having the column behind it? In the latter case, the row will be connected but bent around the column. Kindly clarify this question. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: The Sunanah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to make rows straight and connected, with columns behind the people praying. Rows are to be broken only when necessary, such as when there are more people praying than the reasonable capacity of the Masjid, in which case there is nothing wrong with praying among columns. Otherwise, people should shun interrupting rows.

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For compliance with the Sunnah, praying persons should have the columns behind them, provided that the whole row is straight and not bent by columns. Moreover, those between rows should advance a little so that the row is straight but none should be advance more than the other.



118- Ruling on a person leading his wife or other women in Salah

Q: Is it permissible for a man to lead his wife in Salah (Prayer) at home? If so, where should his wife stand? Should she stand to his right, to his left, or behind him? Please advise, may Allah reward you with the best.

A: He should offer the obligatory Salah with the Muslims at the Masjid (mosque). He is not permitted to offer Salah at home, either with his wife or with any other person. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever heard the call \(to Salah\) and he did not come to it, then there is no \(reward for the\) Salah for him except with an excuse.\)](#) A blind man asked the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(O Messenger of Allah, I have no one to take me to the Masjid. Is it possible that permission be granted to me for offering Salah in my house?\)](#) He (peace be upon him) asked:

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["Do you hear summons \(Adhan\)?" He said: "Yes." He said: "Then, respond \(to it.\)"](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not give this person permission to offer Salah at home, even though he was blind and had no one to take him to the Masjid. Thus, Muslim men should offer Salah at the Masjids with their Muslim brothers; they are not permitted to abandon the congregational Salah. There is nothing wrong with a person leading his wife in a Nafilah (supererogatory) such as Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) or Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon). In this case, she should stand behind him. If there is one man only, he should stand to his right, because when the Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(offered Salat-ul-Duha at the house of Anas, he let Ansa stand to his right, and Um Anas behind them. In other words, when he led Anas and the orphan in Salah, they stood behind him, and the woman stood behind them.\)](#) This woman is the grandmother of Anas. This means that the woman, whether she is a wife, mother, or sister, should not stand with a man in the same row, but she should stand behind him, whether he is an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) or Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer). If there are many rows of men, she should stand behind them. This is the case with the Nafilah. A man should offer the obligatory Salah at the Masjid with the other men. However, if he is ill or has missed the Salah at the Masjid, and offers it at home leading a woman, there is nothing wrong with that in the case of the obligatory Salah, as long as he has an excuse.



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Q: A questioner from Makkah Al-Mukarramah asks: If one leads his wife in Salah (Prayer), should she stand on his right or his left? What is the ruling according to which the man, his wife, and children who have not reached the full legal age stand, i.e., nine years and around this age? Should the children stand behind the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) or behind the women? Please advise, may Allah reward you with the best.

A: There is nothing wrong with each of them offering Salah individually. As far as we know, it was not reported that he (peace be upon him) led `Aishah or any other woman in the Salah. If one leads his wife or any other woman in Salah, they should stand behind him, and not on his right or left. Woman should stand behind men, whether she is his wife, mother, or the like. As for boys, if they have reached the age of seven, they should stand behind him. Also, when girls reach the age of even, they are to stand behind him. They should not stand in the ranks with men. If there is only one boy, he should stand on the right of the Imam, as Ibn `Abbas offered Salah on the right of the Prophet (peace be upon him). There are two cases concerning the boys: If they are two or more, they should stand behind the Imam according to the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet). If there is only one boy, he should stand on the right of the Imam like a man.

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Women, whether they are many or few, should stand behind the Imam. Also, if there is only one woman, she should stand behind the Imam, even if he is her husband. If the children consist of boys and girls whose ages range from seven to ten, they should stand behind the Imam. They are to complete the first row, then the second. If there are two boys or more, the girls stand behind them. The adults stand right behind the Imam, as they precede the children. There is nothing wrong with their standing in one row. If there are adults, the girls stand behind them. If they stand with them in the row, there is nothing wrong with this. However, women should stand behind the boys, even if the women are adults.



Q: If a worshiper and his mother or any one of his Mahrams (spouse or unmarriageable relatives) offer Salah (Prayer) individually in one room, should the woman stand behind the man, taking into consideration that they are not offering Salah in congregation? Please give us your answer supported by evidence, if possible. May Allah grant you success.

A: If one leads a woman in Salah, she should stand behind him, not in the same row, even if she is his wife, mother, sister, or daughter. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) led Um Sulaym in Salah, Anas stood to his right, while Um Sulaym, who is the mother of Anas, stood behind him. Also, when he led Anas and Al-Hasan, they stood in a row behind him, and Um Sulaym stood behind them. She neither

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stood beside them in the same row, nor did she stand in the same row with the Prophet (peace be upon him). The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is for women to stand behind men, even if she is the mother or the wife of the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer). It is not necessary that they offer Salah together in congregation. There is nothing wrong with their offering Salah individually. If he wants to lead her in Salah such as Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) or an obligatory Salah, for example, if he is ill and is not able to offer Salah in the Masjid, or if he missed the obligatory Salah in the Masjid, there is nothing wrong in leading her in the Salah, either the obligatory or the Tahajjud. However, she should stand behind him, not in the same row.



Q: How can a man and a woman offer Salah (Prayer) with each other in congregation?

A: There are many cases: A person may lead his wife and his family members at home in the Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayers such as Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer), or Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). In this case, all of the women should stand behind him, including his wife; she should not stand beside him in the same row. Likewise, if women offer Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) with the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) or with the householder, they stand behind him. If there is only one woman or many women, they should stand behind him. The same applies to the obligatory Prayers, if women come to offer Salah with men in the Masjid (mosque), they should stand behind the Imam and

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the male Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer). Woman should not offer Salah in the same row with man, even if he is her husband, father, or any other person. She should stand behind men, either in the obligatory or Nafilah Prayers at night or in the morning. In all cases, women should stand behind the Imam and male Ma'mums and they should not stand with either of them in the same row when they offer Salah. If they are women only, the female Imam should stand amidst them, as she should not stand in front of them like men.



Q: Where should a wife stand while praying behind her husband?

A: If a wife is led in Salah (Prayer) by her husband, she should stand behind him. If there are other women praying, they should make a row with her. She should never stand beside the man leading Salah, whether he is her husband or not. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) led some women in Salah, they made rows behind him. Therefore, if there is a man, a woman's position in Salah should be behind him, even if there are no other women to make a row with her and even if the man is her husband.





Q: A Sudanese man living in Ha'il posted this question: Once I was praying with my wife, and she stood beside me in the same row. I heard some people saying that it is not permissible for a woman to stand beside a man in Salah (Prayer).

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I am worried about the time when my wife used to pray beside me. Should I repeat those Salahs?

A: You do not have to repeat them. But from now on, she should stand behind you. The Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered women to pray behind men. Once the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Salah in the house of the mother of Anas. Anas stood to his right and the woman, the grandmother of Anas, prayed behind them. So, the point is that women should stand behind men in Salah; even a wife should not stand beside her husband.



119- Ruling on a man leading women in Salah

Q: Is it permissible for a man to lead women in Salah (Prayer)?

A: Yes, it is permissible for a man to lead women in regular Salahs and in Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan). It is reported that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) visited Anas ibn Malik and led his family in Salah; Anas ibn Malik and an orphan with them prayed behind him in a row and Um Sulaym prayed in another row behind them. Women used to pray behind the Imam (leader in congregational Prayer) in Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy (the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah), both in the Prophet's life and after his death. Thus, there is nothing wrong if women pray behind an Imam, even if he is the only man in the place, since a man's being in seclusion with two or more women,

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but not a single woman, is not forbidden. This applies when being alone with one woman: [\(No man should be alone with a woman, for the third of them is the devil.\)](#) It is not Khulwah (being alone with a member of the opposite sex) if there are other men or women present in the same place with the man or the woman. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was with Anas, the orphan, and Umm Sulaym and led them in Salah. The same applies to Tarawih in Ramadan. It is all right for a group of women to be led by a man in Tarawih at home, if the Imam is blind. If not, the women should have a cover or veil to conceal them from the Imam, so that he cannot see them when he meets and greets them. The purpose here is to prevent being alone with or looking at the opposite sex, which is secured when they are veiled or when the Imam is blind. The latter choice in particular is the safest and farthest from Fitnah (temptation).



Straightening rows and avoiding breaks

Q: What are the Hadiths that dealt with the matter of straightening lines in Salah (Prayer)?

A: There are many Hadiths tackling this matter. For example, before leading Salahs, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would look to people and urge them to line up properly, saying: [\(Straighten your rows,](#)

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[bring them near one another, and stand neck to neck.\)](#) (Anyone who joins up a row will be joined to Allah (i.e. to the Mercy of Allah); and anyone who cuts off a row will be cut off from Allah (i.e. from His Mercy).) He (peace be upon him) urged them to straighten the rows and would say: [\(Fill the gaps, for devils enter into the empty spaces between \(praying\) Muslims like lambs.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) always stressed the importance of arranging prayer lines and filling gaps between praying people, saying, [\('Why do you not align yourselves in rows as angels do before their Lord.'](#) They said, 'O Messenger of Allah! How do the angels align themselves before their Lord?' He (peace be upon him) said, 'They fill the front rows first and stand close to one another in the rows.') That is, praying people should complete the first line, then the next, and so on, and be careful when positioning each line. He would say: [\(Straighten your rows, bring them near one another, and stand neck to neck\)](#) Such directions were repeatedly emphasized by the Prophet (peace be upon him) to draw people's attention to them

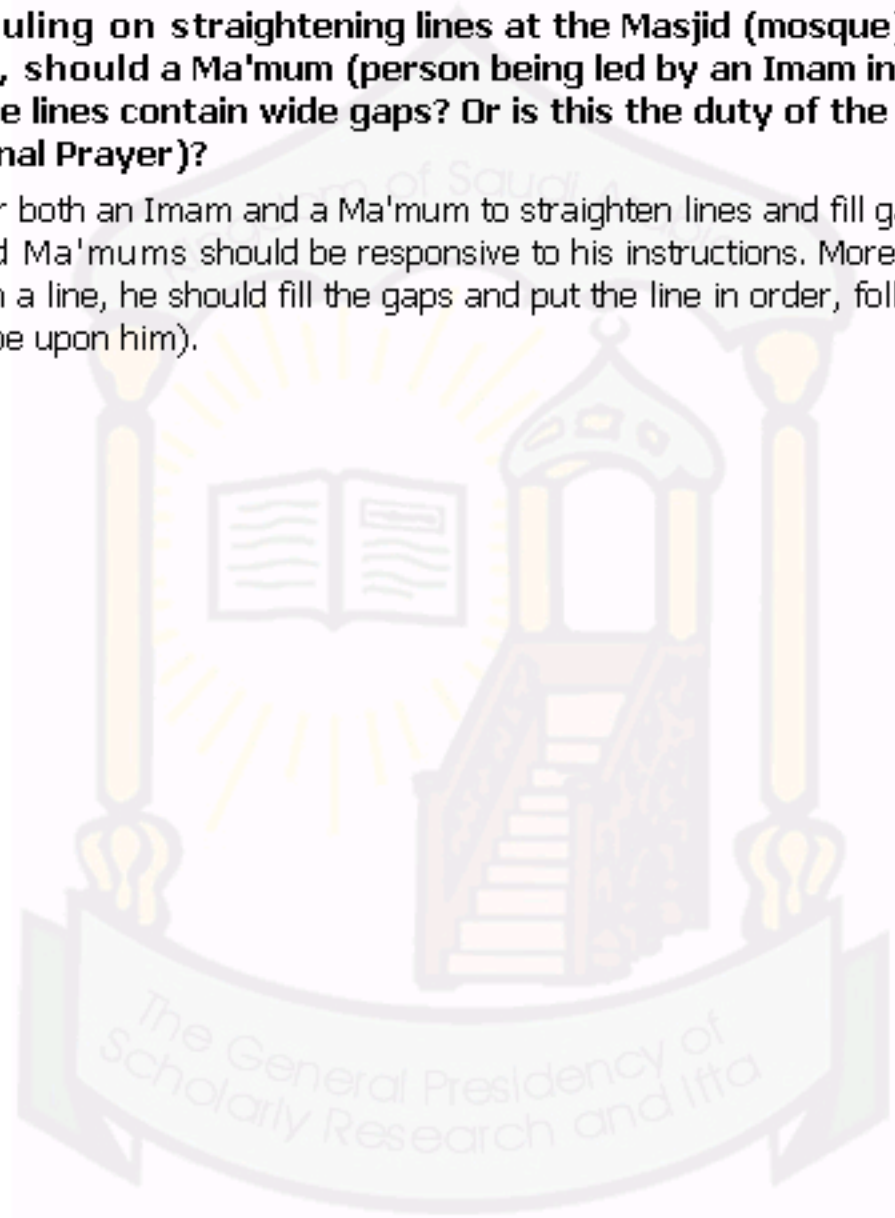
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and make them advise one another on this. Once, he (peace be upon him) was about to start Salah when he noticed a man standing a little bit forward in the middle of the line. He (peace be upon him) said: [\(O slaves of Allah, either you straighten your rows or Allah will alter your faces.\)](#)



Q: What is the ruling on straightening lines at the Masjid (mosque)? And if there is an unarranged line, should a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) arrange it, especially as some lines contain wide gaps? Or is this the duty of the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)?

A: It is necessary for both an Imam and a Ma'mum to straighten lines and fill gaps. The Imam should instruct them, and Ma'mums should be responsive to his instructions. Moreover, if someone finds something wrong in a line, he should fill the gaps and put the line in order, following the guidance of the Prophet (peace be upon him).





Q: A questioner from Riyadh asks: I heard that each person praying in the same row should touch with his feet the feet of the people praying on either side of him. Is there a religious ruling on this, revered Shaykh?

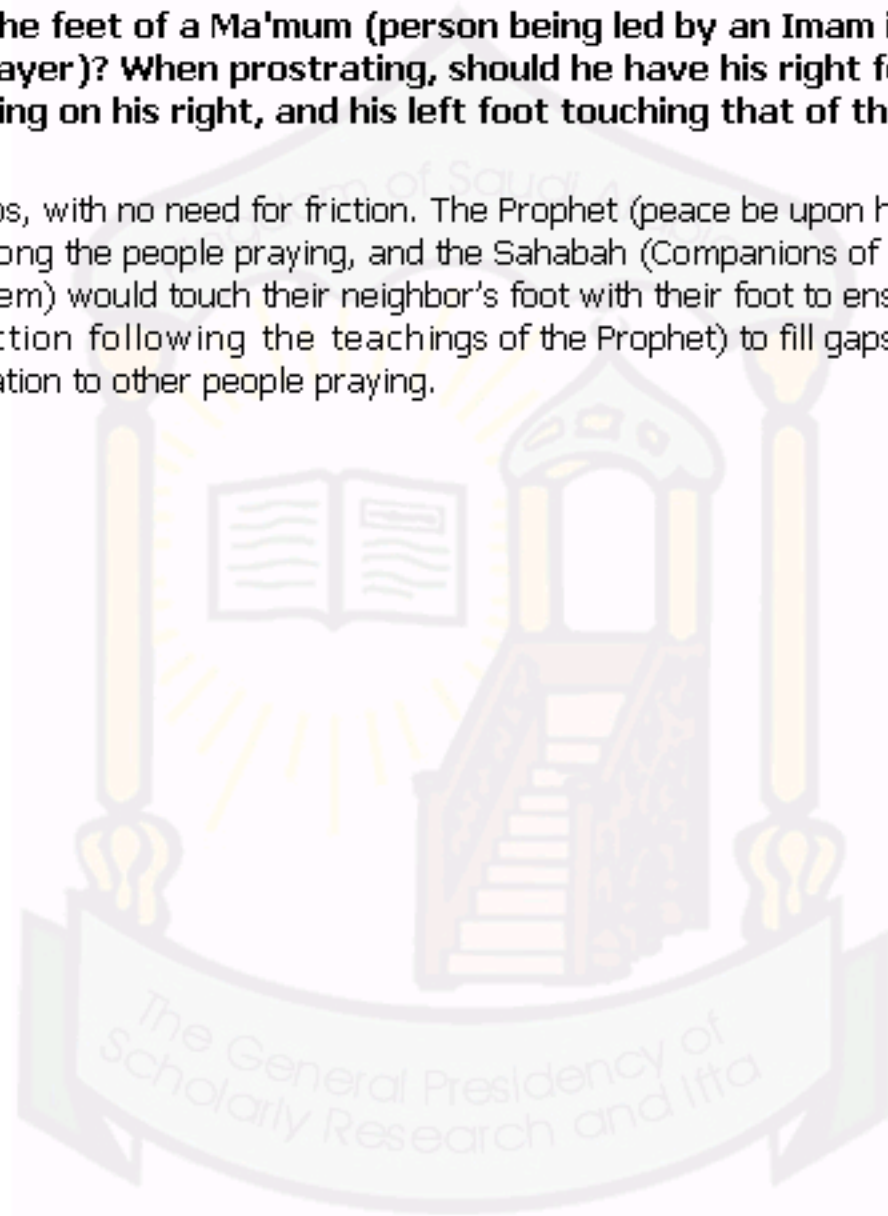
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A: It is reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) enjoined straightening lines and filling gaps. Some Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) would adjoin their feet to their neighbors' in Salah (Prayer) to make sure there were no gaps, without causing friction or annoyance. They would be as close as possible to the person next to them to prevent gaps, in compliance with the Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet). Making friction between feet is not necessary so long as gaps are avoided. Some people cannot bear their feet being touched by others, so feet should touch without friction, thus preventing both annoyance and gaps.



Q: How should the feet of a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) be placed during Salah (Prayer)? When prostrating, should he have his right foot touching that of the person praying on his right, and his left foot touching that of the person praying on his left?

A: He should fill gaps, with no need for friction. The Prophet (peace be upon him) always focused on avoiding gaps among the people praying, and the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them) would touch their neighbor's foot with their foot to ensure there was no gap. The Sunnah is (action following the teachings of the Prophet) to fill gaps by making feet touch, without causing irritation to other people praying.





Q: Does lining up in Salah (Prayer) include touching a neighbor's foot

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with one's foot?

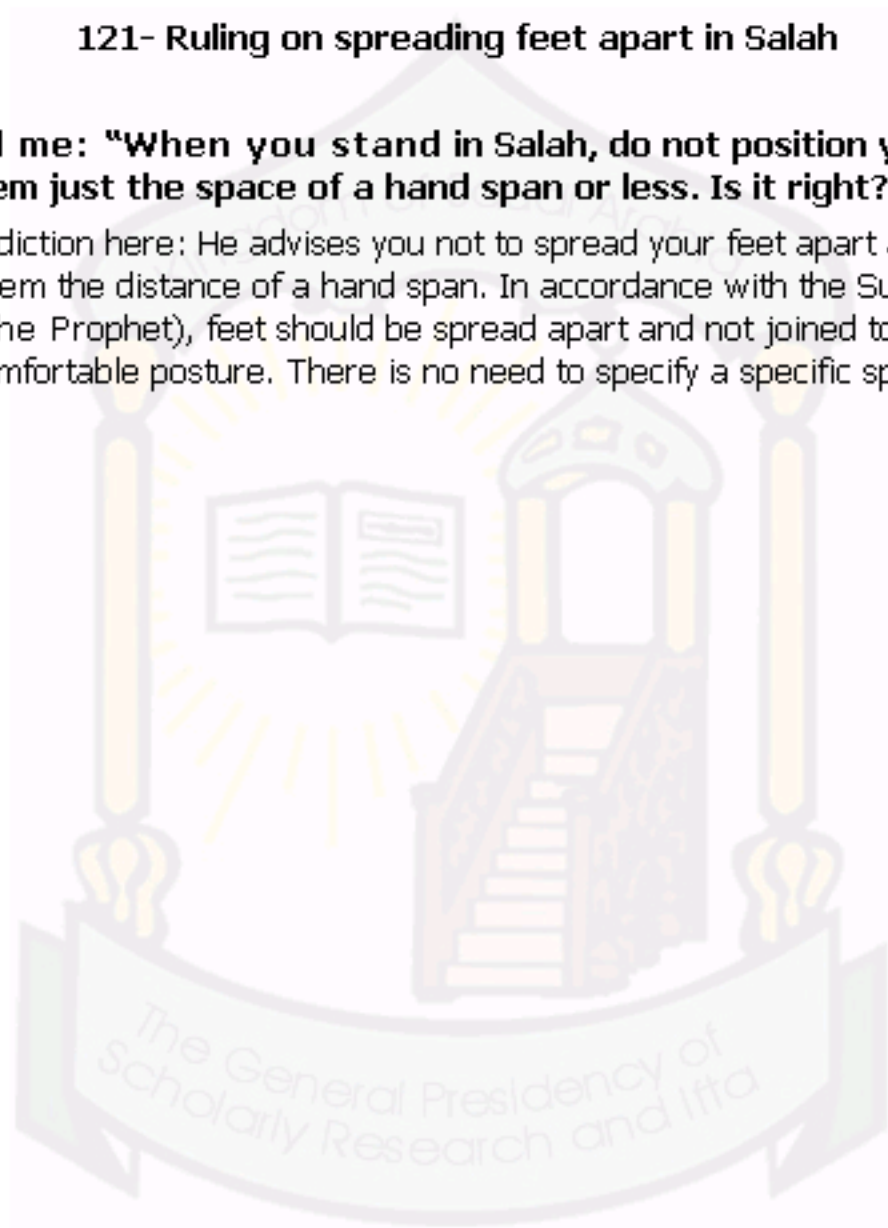
A: Yes. Gaps should be filled. The Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) said: [\(Each one of us would be about to stick his foot to the foot of the one beside him.\)](#) The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is that one's foot should be touching his neighbor's foot, so that there are no gaps, without causing annoyance to neighbors in Salah.



121- Ruling on spreading feet apart in Salah

Q: Someone told me: "When you stand in Salah, do not position your feet apart, and leave between them just the space of a hand span or less. Is it right?"

A: There is a contradiction here: He advises you not to spread your feet apart and, at the same time, to leave between them the distance of a hand span. In accordance with the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet), feet should be spread apart and not joined together, for the person praying to have a comfortable posture. There is no need to specify a specific space between the feet.





Q: A questioner from Jeddah said that he watches some people praying

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who exaggerate when separating their feet in Salah (Prayer). He seeks an explanation from the respectable Shaykh.

A: The Sunnah-compliant choice in this case is to draw the feet together, in order not to annoy the neighbors in Salah. Thus, all people praying would be close to one another and all gaps in the rows would be filled, and they would not annoy one another with friction of feet. It is impermissible to separate one's feet to a degree that annoys others. They should position their feet properly. Each person praying in the same row should touch with his feet the feet of the people praying on either side of him to close gaps without causing annoyance to neighbors in Salah. Each person praying should bring his neighbor close to him, and so on, until all gaps are filled. Convergence should remove breaks in rows but not cause disturbance.



Q: It is noticed that some people praying make a space between themselves and their neighbors in Salah (Prayer) as long as one foot span. Please illuminate this point. May Allah grant you all good.

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A: Muslims should get close to one another and line up properly. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **(Straighten your rows.)** When the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) were forming rows for Salah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would tell them to straighten their rows and fill the gaps. This order necessitates filling gaps and lining up well, with each person praying having his feet touching his neighbors' feet. Nevertheless, some people praying may spread their feet apart to a degree that annoys other people praying. To comply with the Sunnah, one should stand appropriately and have the neighbors on either side as close as required to ensure the soundness of the row. One should not extend the feet on both sides to touch the feet of others in an annoying manner. One should stand properly and gently draw to oneself the person praying to one's right and left, reasonably blocking all breaks in the row and causing no trouble, as mandated by the Prophet (peace be upon him).



122- Ruling on exaggerated separation of feet

Q: Some people noticeably over-separate their feet in Salah (Prayer) to an extent that

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annoys the people praying on either side of them.

A: A person praying should never annoy his neighbor and should make sure to fill gaps without vexing others. He should ask his neighbors to get close to him and put their feet beside his feet without friction. The purpose here is to eliminate breaks. One should not separate the feet to a degree that annoys others. And people praying should not avoid getting close to the people standing beside them. Each one has to do his part to straighten the line and close the gaps. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Fill the gaps." Also, Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) commanded, saying: [\(Each one of us would stick his foot to the foot of the one beside him.\)](#) So, servant of Allah, you should watch the soundness of the row without disturbing the other people praying. On their part, your neighbors in the row should do the same and help arrange the row without causing trouble.



Q: In congregational Salah (Prayer), when a praying person sits in Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/last unit of Prayer), should he line himself up so that his knees are parallel to the knees of those on either side of him, or is it enough to be roughly adjacent to the neighbors?

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May Allah reward you with good.

A: Essentially, the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) should stand exactly as the Imam stands, making sure that the feet are parallel and the heels are in line. In general, it is enough to put the feet side by side. The Sunnah dictates that feet and heels be parallel. If the Ma'mum is praying alone with the Imam, he should not stand out either forward or backward. Feet should be parallel and at the same level as the Imam if there is only one Ma'mum; if there is more than one Ma'mum, they should stand (behind him) with their feet parallel.



123. Ruling on Imam saying, "Line feet up in obedience to your Lord"

Q: Is it permissible for an Imam to say, before the establishment of Salah (Prayer): "Line your feet up in obedience to the Most Gracious. Line your feet up in obedience to the Lord"?

A: To the best of my knowledge, there is no basis for this. An Imam may say, "Line up and straighten. Make your feet parallel. Make your shoulders parallel." These are the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Of course, it is better to use the words of

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the Prophet (peace be upon him).



124- Ruling on Imam saying, "Line up. Straighten. Get close."

Q: Please give the people praying advice from the Qur'an and the Sunnah on this. The Imam keeps saying, "Straighten, line up, etc.", but none of the people praying listen to him. Please guide us.

A: People praying should fear Allah, and they should line up and get close to one another, even if the Imam does not urge them to do so. With the Imam reminding them with the words, "Line up. Straighten. Get close to one another. Complete the first row and then the next", it becomes worthier of listening and response. Even if the Imam does not remind them, they by themselves should fill the first row, then the second and so on, and line up to block gaps. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Do not leave gaps for Satan; fill the gaps.\)](#) Those praying should place their feet so they are touching those of the person on either side of them, without friction or annoyance, to close any gaps. They should straighten, so that no one is standing ahead of others. Chests should be in line,

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and when a row is completed, additional people should start joining the next row, and so forth. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Straighten your rows, bring them near one another, and stand neck to neck\)](#) And: [\(Anyone who joins up a row will be joined to Allah \(i.e. to the Mercy of Allah\); and anyone who cuts off a row will be cut off from Allah \(i.e. from His Mercy\).\)](#) And: [\(Fill the gaps, do not leave spaces for Satan.\)](#) A congregation at the Masjid (mosque) should stand side by side, blocking breaks, and completing rows in a sequential order. It is the duty of the whole congregation.



Q: Is it an act of Sunnah that the Imam says to Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer), when straightening lines for Salah (Prayer), "Line up. Straighten. May Allah confer mercy on you and me"?

A: There is no problem with the Imam supplicating to the Ma'mums, while he is urging them to straighten, arrange their rows, and fill the gaps. I think there is nothing wrong if he adds some supplications, such as, "May Allah forgive you and me" or "May Allah confer mercy upon you and me." In any case, this is not something to be shunned.





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125- Ruling on Ma'mums helping the Imam straighten rows

Q: A questioner from Riyadh asks: Some Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) lend a hand to the Imam in straightening rows for Salah (Prayer). For example, they might say, "O so-and-so, step forward. O so-and-so, retreat." What is the ruling on those Ma'mums who straighten rows? May Allah grant you reward.

A: There is nothing wrong with this. It is an act of cooperation in goodness and piety. The Messenger (peace be upon him) enjoined straightening rows, saying: [\(Straightening the rows is part of perfecting Salah.\)](#) If some Ma'mums act to help the Imam in lining up the rows around them, making the rows more orderly, this will be a benevolent act and participation in goodness. Any kind of good-doing is desirable.



126- Ruling on joining a row from the right

Q: A questioner from Ha'il: We have confusion about completing a row from the right and the left.

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If the right side is longer than the left side, can the Imam move some Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) from the right to the left in order for the row to be even? Or should he leave it as is? May Allah reward you.

A: The Imam is not allowed to move extra Ma'mums from the right side to the left. Rather, he should make no intervention. The right side of everything is always better; so, if the right side of a row has more followers than the left, it is all right, as long as the Imam is in the center. In addition, there is no harm if the left side is longer than the right side. Yet, in this case, he can advise them that joining the right side is better than joining the left side.



127- Row should start in the center behind the Imam

Q: When the first row of Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) is complete, we start to form a second row. Should we begin forming it from exactly behind the Imam and extend it evenly in each direction? Or should it start from the right or the left? Please guide us.

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A: When forming a new row, you should start from the center of the front row, immediately behind the Imam. From this position, Ma'mums should join the row on the right and the left. Thus, the starting point is the center of the row, just like the first row.



128- Explaining the excellence of the first row

Q: Does Salah (Prayer) in the first row of the Masjid (mosque) outweigh Salah in other rows or in the last row? Guide us, may Allah reward you.

A: Yes. Salah in the first row is better. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If people were to know what is in the call \(to Prayer\) and the first row, then they found no other way but to draw lots over it, they would draw lots.\)](#) Thus, it has great merit. It is reported in other Hadiths that whoever prays in the first rows gets, besides his reward, a reward similar to those praying in the next rows; he is like the leader and Imam for them. The Messenger (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever guides to goodness,](#)

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[takes reward equal to its doer.\)](#) So, whoever prays in the first row gets the reward of both the first and next rows. Verily, this is of great merit. Moreover, it involves a sort of hastening to good deeds and obedience to Allah and in addition a praying person gains the advantage of being closer to the Imam to hear his voice and see his movements. If the voice of the Imam becomes very quiet or inaudible, the man in the first row will be able to view the Imam. In brief, Salah in the first row is of great merit owing to what it involves of hastening to good deeds and obedience and encouraging people to compete in doing good.



129- Ruling on stepping over people's necks to reach the first row

Q: A man used to come late for Salah (Prayer) and wanted to join the first row. So he would squeeze between those sitting in the first row to get a place. Is this permissible?

A: It is prescribed for a praying person to sit down wherever rows end in order not to harm people. If there is no place in the first row, then he should sit down in the second row.

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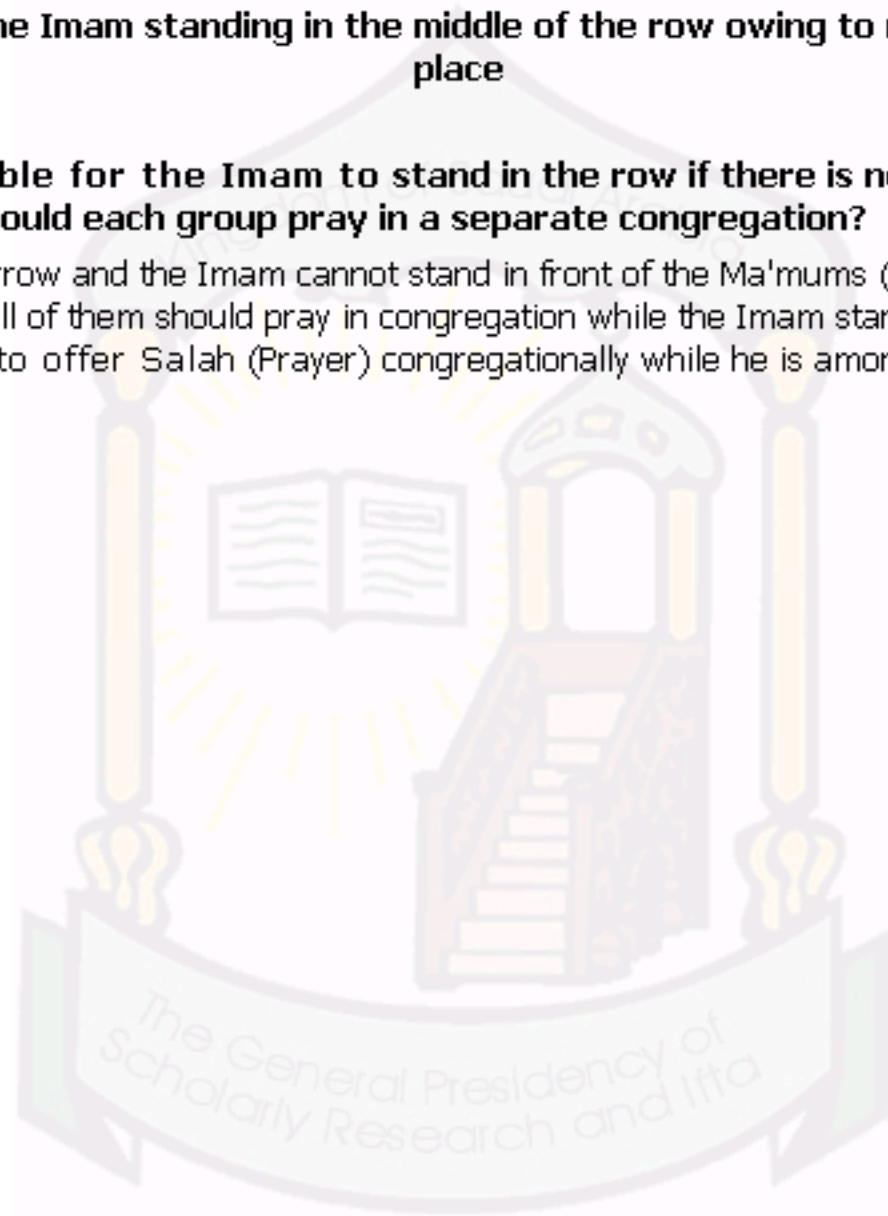
If there is no place in the second row, he should sit down in the third row, and so forth, until he finds an empty place. If there is no place, he should not squeeze himself between people while asking them to make place for him. Rather, he should sit down wherever he finds a place in order not to harm people, cut the rows, or step over people's necks. If the first row is incomplete and the second row has been started, it is allowable for him to complete the first row. Similarly, if an empty place has been left, there is no harm in standing or sitting in it, because people have neglected it.



130- Ruling on the Imam standing in the middle of the row owing to narrowness of the place

Q: Is it permissible for the Imam to stand in the row if there is not enough space for another row or should each group pray in a separate congregation?

A: If the place is narrow and the Imam cannot stand in front of the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer), all of them should pray in congregation while the Imam stands amongst them. So, they are allowed to offer Salah (Prayer) congregationally while he is amongst them. Praise be to Allah!





131- Ruling on putting cupboards for Mushafs behind praying people

Q: In some Masjids (mosques), there are cupboards in which to keep Mushafs (copies of the Qur'an)

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that are opened from the front and back. When Salah (Prayer) is offered, the cupboards containing the Mushafs will be behind some rows. Is this permissible or should the cupboards be blocked from the side behind praying persons?

A: There is latitude in this matter, because people do not intend to turn their backs to the Mushafs. These Mushafs are put there for Muslims to benefit from them. However, it is better to put them in front of the praying people so as to avoid this and not to be similar to those who belittle Mushafs. In one word, putting them in the front or on the sides of the Masjid is better. With regard to the praying people, they do not intend to belittle the Mushafs or despise them because putting the Mushafs in such places is done unintentionally. Rather, it is intended to make it easy for people to take a Mushaf without crossing in front of the rows, though it is better to put them in the front part or close to the sides of the Masjid. Moreover, there is no harm in keeping the cupboard open from the two sides in order to make it easy for people to take the Mushafs.

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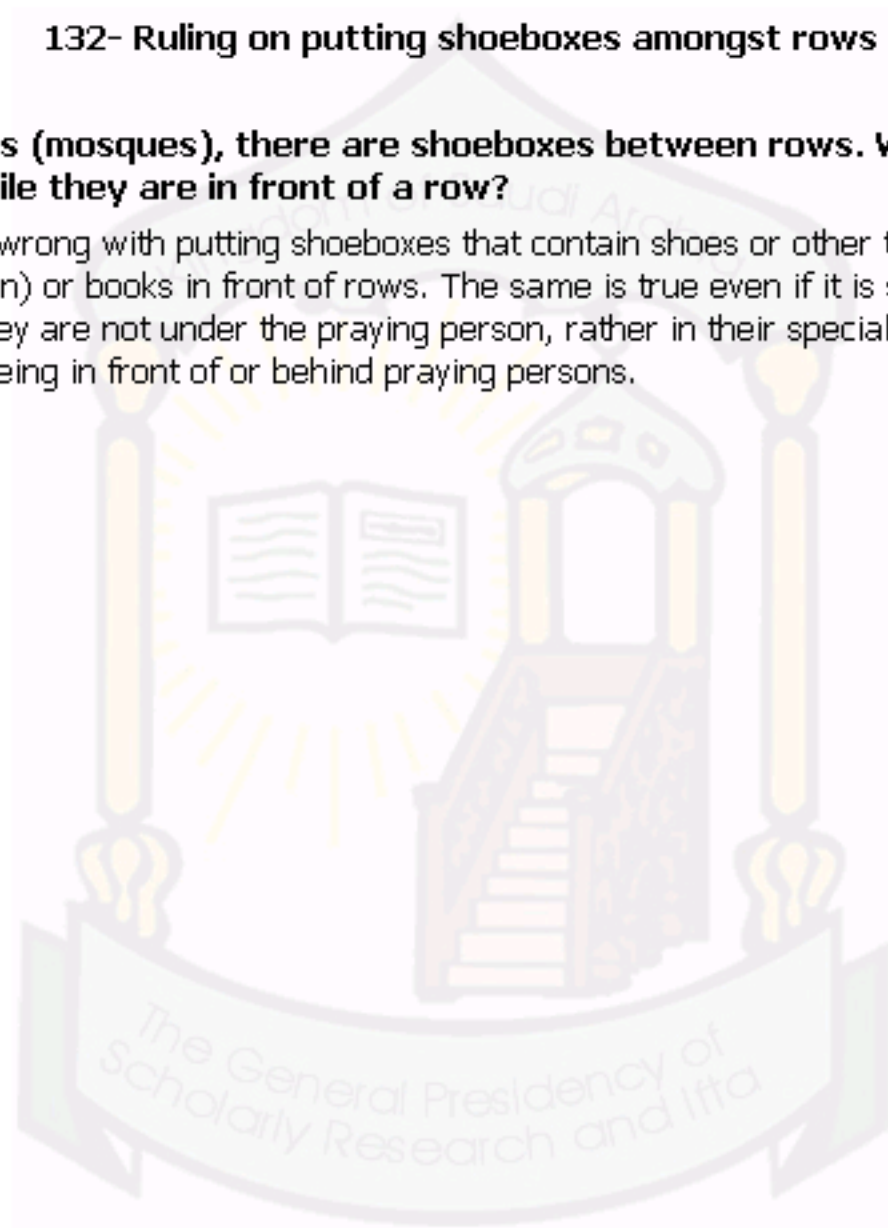
Moreover, even if they block one of the sides of the cupboard, it is of no use as people will still turn their backs to them during Salah.



132- Ruling on putting shoeboxes amongst rows

Q: In some Masjids (mosques), there are shoeboxes between rows. What is the ruling on Salah (Prayer) while they are in front of a row?

A: There is nothing wrong with putting shoeboxes that contain shoes or other things such as Mushafs (copies of the Qur'an) or books in front of rows. The same is true even if it is supposed that they are impure, because they are not under the praying person, rather in their special place, therefore there is no harm in their being in front of or behind praying persons.





133- Ruling on praying standing alone behind the congregational rows

Q: What is the ruling on praying while standing alone behind the rows of Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer)? Does it affect the validity of Salah (Prayer)?

A: Any man or woman who prays standing alone behind the congregational rows must repeat the Salah.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) A man praying while standing alone behind the rows was seen by the Prophet (peace be upon him) who ordered him to repeat the Salah, which constitutes evidence that anyone who prays standing alone behind the congregational rows must repeat the Salah. This ruling is in compliance with the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) An exception is a woman praying alone behind the rows of men, when there are no other women present to stand beside her in the row. Yet this ruling becomes applicable to her if there are other women present but she leaves them and prays standing alone behind their row. In this case she must repeat the Salah the same as men. It is reported that Um Sulaym prayed behind the Prophet (peace be upon him) standing in a row alone, behind those of the men. As for men, this does not apply to them, and they must make up for the Salah if anyone prays standing alone behind the congregational rows. This is based on the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) [\(It was narrated on the authority of Wabisah ibn Ma`bad that the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row while praying in congregation and ordered him to repeat the Salah.\)](#)



Q: What is the ruling on praying alone behind the rows?

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A: It is not valid. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **«No Salah (is valid) for someone (praying in congregation) alone behind the row.»** **«The Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row while in congregation and ordered him to repeat the Salah.»** He (peace be upon him) did not ask him whether or not he found an empty place but he ordered him to repeat the Salah to block the way to doubt. So, it is not permissible for anyone to stand alone behind the row. Rather, he should wait; if he does not find a place, he should advance and stand on the right of the Imam, if it is possible. Otherwise, he should wait until he finds a place or finds someone to offer Salah with him in the row or waits until congregational Salah ends and offers it individually.



Q: What is the ruling on offering Salah (Prayer) alone behind the row?

A: Salah in this case is invalid. The Salah of anyone who prays alone behind the row while in congregation is invalid. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row while in congregation and ordered him to repeat the Salah.\)](#) So, one should look for an empty place in order to stand in the row. If this is not possible for him, he should stand on the right of the Imam

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or wait until someone comes and stand with him in the row.



Q: A questioner from Syria is asking about praying standing alone behind the congregational rows: If I find the congregational rows complete should I start praying standing alone in a new row? What is the prescribed course of action? May Allah reward you with best.

A: The course of action prescribed by Shari`ah (Islamic law) in this case is to wait until some empty place is available in a row, that is to seek some unfilled gap and join the Salah. Another alternative is to stand on the right of the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), if this is possible. Otherwise, it is prescribed to wait and not pray standing alone until some latecomers arrive and they form a row with him. It is not permissible to pray standing alone (behind the congregational rows). Salah in such a case will not be valid. A person should either search for a gap or wait until some unfilled gap is available. Patience should be practiced in such a situation. It is advised not to hurry and try to stand on the right of the Imam. If attempts to find a place fail, still the person should wait; perhaps a latecomer arrives and forms a row with him. In case no more worshipers come, the person is to pray individually (after the end of congregational Salah). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) saw a man offering Salah standing alone behind the row while in congregation and ordered him to repeat the Salah.\)](#) When Abu Bakrah bowed before joining the row, the Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed him not to do this again, saying: [\(May Allah increase your keenness \(to do good\), but do not repeat it again \(bowing in this manner\).\)](#) Accordingly, a worshiper is prohibited from both, bowing before joining the row and praying standing alone behind the congregational rows.

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The worshiper can either stand on the right of the Imam or try to find an unfilled gap in a row and stand there. If, after trying to find a gap, the person cannot find a place, he should wait. It is not permissible to draw any person from a row to pray beside him. This is improper behavior that serves the person's personal interests but offends the person who is displaced and causes an opening in the row which should, instead, be closed. Every worshiper prefers to stay in his place in the row. In short, it is not right to draw a person out of any row. The Hadith saying: [\(Why did you not join the row with them or draw someone \(from the row to stand with you\)?\)](#) is ranked as Da`if (weak). The correct scholarly opinion is not to draw any person praying from a row. Either seek an unfilled gap or wait until one becomes available, or stand on the right of the Imam. If this is not possible, the person must be patient and there is no blame on him. All praise be to Allah.



Q: Tell us about praying alone in a row behind the Imam (leader in congregational Prayer). Is it permissible? Is the Salah (Prayer) valid?

A: It is not permissible for you to stand alone behind the Imam while in congregational Salah. Consequently, your Salah is invalid. In this context the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind](#)

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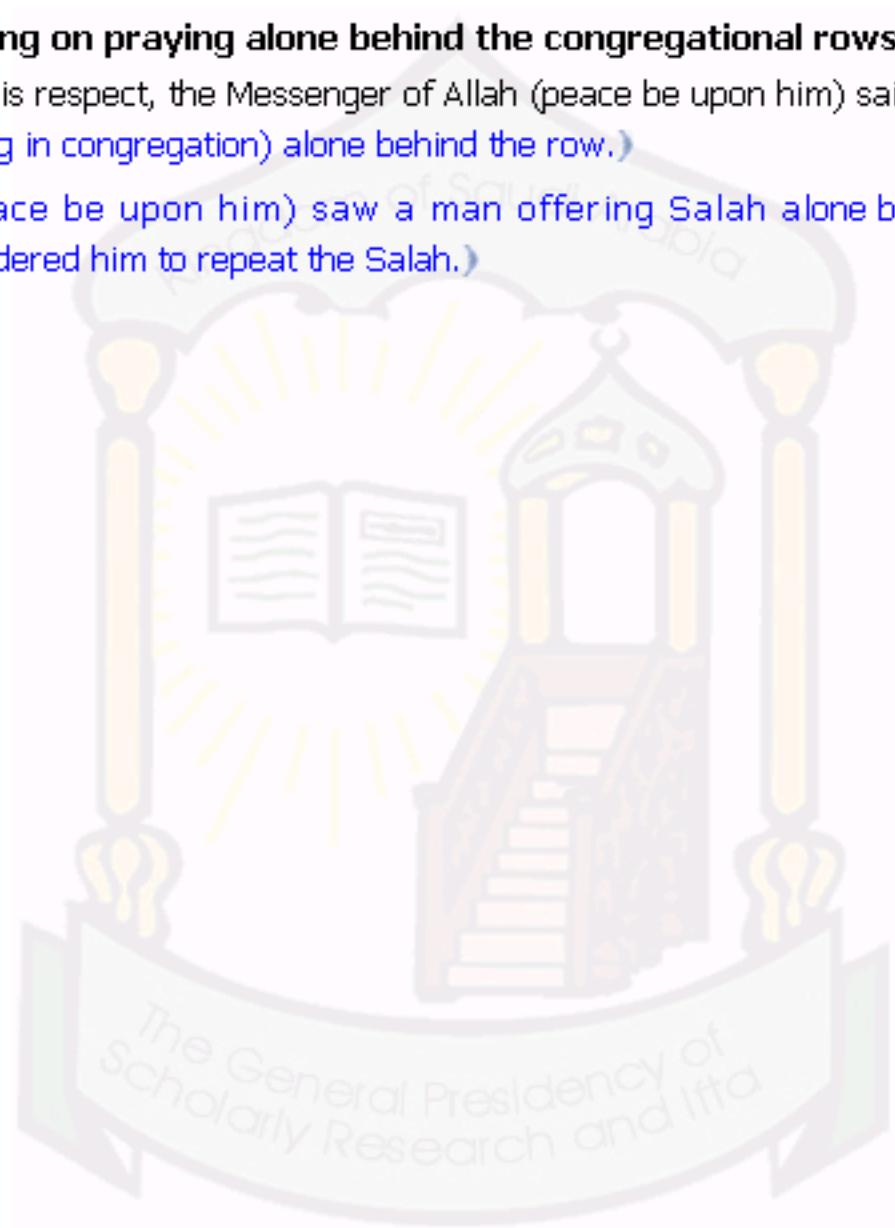
[the row.\)](#) [\(He \(peace be upon him\) saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row and the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) ordered him to repeat the Salah.\)](#) One should not offer Salah alone behind the Imam, but he should look for an empty place or wait for another man to pray with him in the row, or step forward and stand on the right of the Imam. He should not offer Salah alone but wait for another man or find an empty place in the row.



Q: What is the ruling on praying alone behind the congregational rows?

A: It is invalid. In this respect, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: **(No Salah (is valid) for someone (praying in congregation) alone behind the row.)**

(The Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row while in congregation and ordered him to repeat the Salah.)





Q: A questioner from Riyadh asks: What is the correct scholarly opinion regarding praying standing alone behind the congregational rows?

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If a person prays one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) in a row alone, which is later completed by other worshippers joining it, is the Salah (Prayer) valid or must it be repeated?

A: Any person who prays standing alone behind the congregational rows must repeat the Salah, based on the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) standing alone behind the row.\)](#) [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row while praying in congregation and ordered him to repeat the Salah.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) did not inquire why the man did so, which indicates that anyone who prays standing alone behind the rows must be ordered to repeat the Salah. However, if the person arrives while the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is performing Ruku` (bowing) and bows alone, then another joins him before performing Sujud (prostration), the Salah will be valid. But, praying a Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) in full while standing in a row alone makes Salah invalid. This is so unless the intention is renewed upon being joined by another worshipper after this invalid Rak`ah and Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) is made again. Thus, if the person cancels the Rak`ah offered while standing alone, considering it invalid, and says Takbirat-ul-Ihram and resumes praying the remaining Rak`ahs with the Imam, his Salah will be valid and he only has to make up for the missed parts. It is absolutely invalid to pray standing alone behind the congregational rows; whether one finds someone to align with him (yet prefers to pray standing alone) or does not find anyone at all, it is absolutely invalid for a person to pray standing alone behind the congregational rows. Instead, a person must wait until another comes and forms a row with him, seek some unfilled gap, or stand on the right of the Imam, if this is possible. This is what should be done.

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But if a worshipper just makes Takbir or Ruku` (bowing) alone, then another joins him in the row (before performing Sujud), this counts as being valid.



Q: What is the ruling on offering Salah (Prayer) alone behind the congregational row, taking into consideration that the worshipper found the row totally complete? What is obligatory on him in this case?

A: There should be two or more people praying; he should not offer Salah alone. If he cannot find an empty place, he should stand beside the Imam on his right side. If there is another person, there is no harm in them standing behind the row together. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **(No Salah (is valid) for someone (praying in congregation) alone behind the row.)** **(The Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a man offering Salah behind the row alone while in congregation and ordered him to repeat the Salah.)**





Q: A man found all rows complete while in congregational Salah (Prayer) and prayed while standing alone behind the rows. What do you say to him?

A: He should repeat his Salah as the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered somebody with a similar case to repeat the Salah. One may hasten to join the congregation and if one is patient, he will find an empty place or may stand beside the Imam on his right. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row and ordered him to repeat the Salah.

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He (peace be upon him) did not ask the man if he had found an empty place or someone to stand beside him. In doing so, the Prophet (peace be upon him) blocked the way before laxity in this matter. Therefore, one should wait for another person, or find a place in the row, or pray on the right of the Imam. His attempt to draw someone from a row to pray beside him is not legally permitted. As for the Hadith which reads, "Why did you not join the row with them or draw someone?" it is a weak Hadith and cannot be taken as evidence.



Q: What is the ruling on praying alone behind the row? We want to know the most preponderant opinion in this regard.

A: Offering Salah alone behind the row invalidates the Salah. This is based upon the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): **(No Salah (is valid) for someone (praying in congregation) alone behind the row.)** Praying alone behind the row makes Salah invalid. Instead, one should look for an empty place in the row, stand on the right of the Imam, or wait for another person.

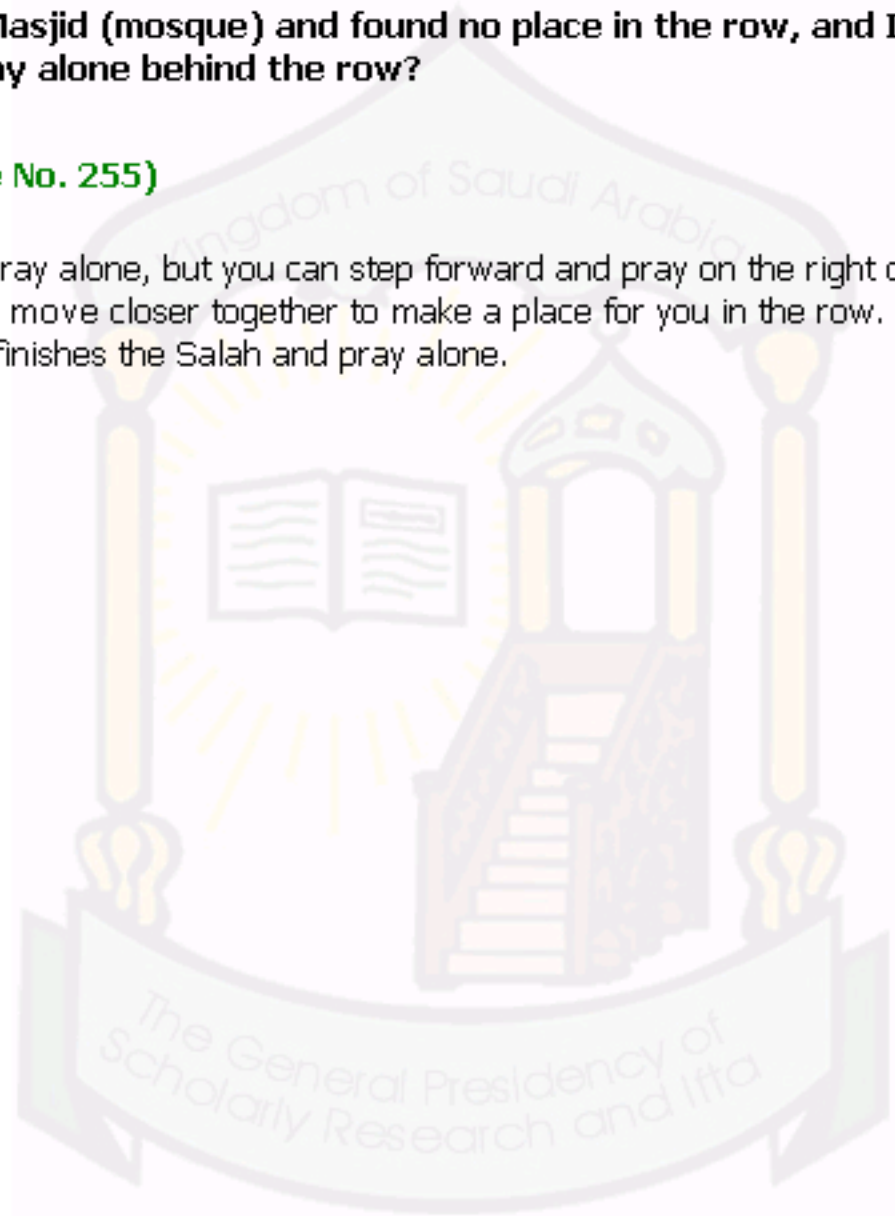




Q: I entered the Masjid (mosque) and found no place in the row, and I waited but nobody came. Should I pray alone behind the row?

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A: You should not pray alone, but you can step forward and pray on the right of the Imam or ask the people praying to move closer together to make a place for you in the row. Otherwise, you should wait until the Imam finishes the Salah and pray alone.





Q: A questioner from Syria asks: A person prayed a Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) standing alone behind the congregational rows, and after the Imam offered Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) he prayed a fifth Rak`ah.

A: The opinion that seems correct is that his Salah (Prayer) is invalid, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) Praying a Rak`ah or more while standing alone does not count as a valid Salah. However, if one prays a small part of the Rak'ah, such as standing briefly behind the rows to be soon joined by another, finds a gap in a row and stands in it, bows then enters the row, or arrives with another latecomer, there is nothing wrong with all of this. But if the person in question completed a Rak`ah, Salah does not count as being valid, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) On the other hand, when Abu Bakrah bowed outside the row and then joined it, the Prophet (peace be upon him) approved the validity of the act as he did not order him to repeat the Salah. This constitutes evidence that performing Ruku` (bowing) or the standing position before Ruku` alone counts as being valid if a person later joins a row or is joined by another to form a row. But prostrating alone without any worshiper praying by one's side or praying any more than this renders the Salah invalid. The Prophet (peace be upon him) once saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row while in congregation and ordered him to repeat the Salah.

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He (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#)



Q: A man entered the Masjid (mosque) while the Imam was in the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) in Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and did not find an empty place. So, he prayed alone. In the next Rak`ah, some people came and completed the row. Is the Rak`ah which this man offered alone valid or should he have repeated it only? Guide us, may Allah reward you.

A: His Salah (Prayer) is invalid based on the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) No matter how many Rak`ahs he prayed, his Salah is invalid unless he canceled it. Then, he should have renewed his intention, upon being joined by another worshipper, and made Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) and started his Salah. The parts that he prayed after that would count as valid. In other words, if a man joined him in the last Rak`ah and so he stopped his Salah and made Takbirat-ul-Ihram anew with the intention of praying behind the Imam (leader in congregational Prayer), when the other man came and prayed one Rak`ah with him, in this case one Rak`ah is counted for him. Yet, if he based his Salah on what he offered alone, his Salah is invalid.

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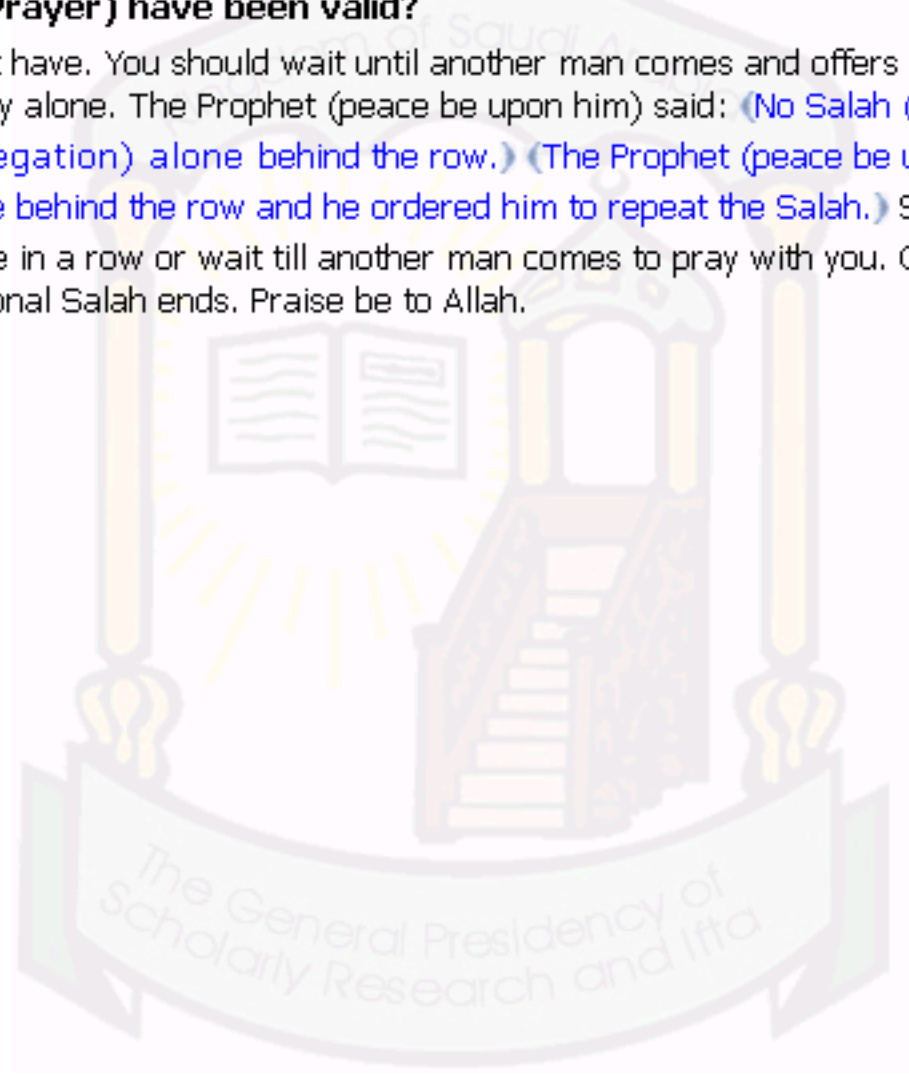
In this regard, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row, so he \(peace be upon him\) ordered him to repeat the Salah.\)](#)

This means that praying behind the row invalidates the Salah and the one who does so should repeat the Salah if it is Faridah (obligatory Prayer).



Q: A questioner from Al-Qasim, Buraydah asks: I entered the Masjid (mosque) while the Imam (leader in the Congregational Prayer) was in the last Rak`ah (unit of the Prayer) and there was no empty place in the row. Should I have prayed alone behind the row? Would my Salah (Prayer) have been valid?

A: You should not have. You should wait until another man comes and offers Salah beside you and you should not pray alone. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row and he ordered him to repeat the Salah.\)](#) So, you should search for an empty place in a row or wait till another man comes to pray with you. Otherwise, pray alone after the congregational Salah ends. Praise be to Allah.





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134- Ruling on drawing a worshiper from a row to form a new row with

Q: We heard many people quoting the opinion that maintains that if a Muslim arrives at the Masjid (mosque) and finds the rows complete on both sides, he should draw one of the worshipers to pray beside him. Others maintain that this is not permissible; rather, one should pray alone without drawing anyone. Please clarify this issue. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: As the questioner said, this is a controversial issue where some scholars maintain that if the rows are complete without any available gap, there is nothing wrong with drawing one of the worshipers from a row and forming a new row behind the last row. There is a Hadith that says: [\(Why did you not join the row with them or draw someone \(to stand with you while praying\)?\)](#) Yet it is ranked as Da`if (weak) and cannot be used as evidence. Accordingly, the second statement is the correct opinion, which refutes drawing anyone as this will cause gaps in the row, which the Messenger (peace be upon him) ordered to be closed with the shoulders touching each other. Also, displacing a worshiper to a row at the back will deprive him from the merit of praying in a row in the front. Therefore, it is improper to do this; rather, the correct course of action is for the worshiper to try to find a gap, stand on the right of the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), if this is possible, or wait until someone arrives and forms a row with him. If the congregational Salah ends and no one came, he is to pray alone in compliance with the injunction of the Prophet

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(peace be upon him): [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row while in congregation and ordered him to repeat the Salah. Also, when Abu Bakrah bowed behind the row before joining it, the Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed him not to do this again, saying: [\(May Allah increase your keenness \(to do good\), but do not repeat it again \(bowing in that manner\).\)](#) To summarize, it is not permissible to form a row alone; rather, a person must wait until another comes and forms a row with him, try to find an unfilled gap, or stand on the right of the Imam if this is possible. If the congregational Salah ends before any of these options can be implemented, the person may pray individually, as there is an excuse. The reward received for praying in congregation is still the same, as the reason for not joining the congregational Salah is Shar`y (Islamic legal). Thus, the person deserves the reward of praying in congregation the same as the ill and those falling under their ruling who cannot attend congregational Salahs.



Q: If a praying person enters the Masjid (mosque) and finds that the first row is complete, and he wants to catch up with the Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), what should he do? Should he stand alone or draw someone from the praying persons in the first row? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: He is required to search for an empty place and if he does not find one, he should not draw anyone but wait until

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another person arrives, even if this means missing the Rak`ah. If it is possible for him to go forward and stand on the right side of the Imam (leader in the congregational Prayer), this is good. Otherwise, he should wait until someone else arrives; he should not stand alone or draw someone from the row. As for the Hadith that indicates this and reads: [\(Why did you not join the row with them or draw somebody\)](#) it is questionable because drawing someone from the row will leave an empty space in the row, which is not right. So, you should neither draw anyone from the row nor offer Salah alone, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.\)](#) One should wait until someone comes and stands in the row with him. If nobody comes, he may offer the Salah after the Imam finishes the congregational Salah with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). He would be legally excused and we hope that he takes the reward of praying in congregation.



135- Ruling on refusing to be drawn back to form a row

Q: Is it permissible to draw a worshiper from a front row, even though it is still incomplete? Am I sinful if someone tries to draw me to stand in line with him and I do not respond? The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (If people were to know what (blessings) is in the call to Prayer and the first row, but they found no other way but to draw lots over it, they would draw lots.) Please clarify the different opinions on this issue and point out to us the preponderant one.

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May Allah reward you.

A: No one should draw a person praying from a front or any other row to align with him. A latecomer must seek some unfilled gap in a row and stand there. If none is available, patience should be maintained until another comes and forms a row with him. Another alternative is to step forward and pray on the right of the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer). Drawing a worshiper from the front or second row is a wrong action. The Hadith saying: (Why did you not join the row with them or draw someone (to stand with you while praying)?) is Da`if (weak) and cannot be depended on. Another reason is that no one has the right to draw another from a row. Therefore, no one should draw a person who is praying from any row, and the one drawn is not obliged to respond. Rather, such a person may stay in his row, if that is what he prefers. Moreover, drawing worshipers from the front rows may cause gaps and disorder in them, but the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered that rows be aligned, straight, and without gaps. Anyone who arrives and cannot find a place in any row should not draw another from any row, but should seek to find some gap to fill in a row and pray there. If none can be found, he may step forward to be in line with the Imam on his right. If this is not possible, patience should be maintained until someone arrives and they form a new row together. If the congregational Salah ends before anyone arrives, he may pray individually and there is no blame on him. All praise be to Allah. This is in compliance with the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): (No Salah (is valid)

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for someone (praying in congregation) alone behind the row.) It is not permissible to pray standing alone behind the congregational rows; rather, a person should wait until someone is found to stand with him in a new row. Some scholars are of the opinion that if a worshiper cannot find anyone, he may pray in a row standing alone. Yet this is a weak opinion that contradicts the apparent meaning of the Sahih (authentic) Hadiths stated in this regard. Therefore, it cannot be relied on. Rather, a believer must be patient, perhaps someone arrives and stands with him. He may also find a gap and stands in it, or prays on the right of the Imam, if this is possible. This is the permitted course of action that we know.



136- Ruling on standing to the right of the Imam if the rows are complete

Q: If a worshiper finds no empty space in the first row and there is no one with him, should he pull someone back from behind the Imam or from the end of the row? We often see that many worshipers, in this case, pull someone back from the row. Also, I notice many people who form a new row to the right or the left of the Imam if the rows are complete. What is the ruling on this? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If the row is complete, it is impermissible for you to move anyone back. Actually the Hadith reported in this regard is Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan, due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators); it reads: [\(Did you not join them or pull someone back.](#)

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› This Hadith is Da`if. So, you have either to wait until someone else arrives to form a row with you or to advance and stand to the right of the Imam, and there is nothing wrong with this. However, you are not permitted to draw someone back from the row because this leaves a gap in the row, and the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded that gaps in rows be filled. Therefore, one is either to search for an empty space, wait until someone arrives to form a row with you or to advance and stand to the right of the Imam. Do not be hasty, even if you miss a Rak`ah (unit of Prayer).



137- Ruling on standing behind the rows in congregational Prayer awaiting someone to form another row

Q: A questioner asks: It is known that the Prayer of one individual in a separate row is not permissible. But, if a worshiper enters (the mosque) and finds the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in Ruku` (bowing) position, should he pull someone back from the middle or the right side of the row? Or should he start alone expecting someone to arrive and form a row with him even if he misses a Rak`ah (unit of Prayer)?

A: You should not be hasty. If you enter the mosque while the Imam is in the Ruku` position, you should find a suitable place or a gap at the end of the row and fill it. You should wait, even if you miss a Rak`ah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(Whatever you catch, pray it](#)

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[and whatever you miss, complete it.\)](#) The Prophet forbade hastiness. So, a Muslim in this case is either to find a gap, stand at the end of the row or advance and stand to the right of the Imam. He is not permitted to pray individually, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(There is no Prayer \(invalid\) for one who prays individually behind the rows.\)](#) [\(Also, when the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) saw a man performing Prayer individually behind the ranks, he ordered him to repeat the Prayer.\)](#) Thus, it is not permissible to pull anyone back, because this is a kind of encroaching on other worshipers' rights and leaves a gap in the row, while it is obligatory to fill the gaps in the worshipers' rows. Therefore, if the row is complete or there is no empty place beside the Imam, a latecomer to a congregational Prayer should wait (for someone to come and form a new row with him), advance to stand to the right of the Imam, or push the worshipers in the row gently until a space is made for him to stand. But he should not pray alone.



Q: If I enter the Masjid (mosque) to pray in congregation

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and I find the first row complete, can I pray behind them standing alone in a second row, or should I draw someone from the first row? Please advise me. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: In this case, a person should try to find an empty place in the row and stand there, but not pray standing alone. It is necessary to either try to find some unfilled gap or stand in line with the Imam on his right, without attempting to draw anyone from any row. This will cause a gap in the row, but the Messenger (peace be upon him) ordered that the rows be closed and straightened. Instead, the person is advised to wait, perhaps a latecomer arrives and stands with him in a new row. If the congregational Salah ends, he may pray individually and he is excused. All praise be to Allah. Praying standing alone behind the congregational rows is prohibited due to the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [﴿No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.﴾](#) [﴿The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) saw a man offering Salah alone behind the row while praying in congregation and ordered him to repeat the Salah.﴾](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not inquire whether or not the man found a place, but ordered him to repeat the Salah when he (peace be upon him) saw him praying standing alone behind the row, and clarified the ruling: [﴿No Salah \(is valid\) for someone \(praying in congregation\) alone behind the row.﴾](#) Accordingly, it is not permissible to pray alone behind the row while in congregation, but the person must wait until another arrives, try to find an empty place, or stand on the right of the Imam. This is what is obligatory to do.



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138- Ruling on someone who arrives during the last Rak`ah in congregational Prayer while the row is complete

Q: I arrived while the Imam (the one who leads the congregational Prayer) was performing the last Rak'ah (unit of Prayer). The row was full and I could not draw anyone back from the first row, was it permissible for me in this case to pray alone in a separate row?

A: It is not permissible to do so. You should find a gap in a row or stand to the right of the Imam. It is impermissible to pray individually. If nobody comes, you should wait and when the Imam concludes the Prayer with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), you may pray alone if no one arrives to join you.



139- Ruling on a Ma'mum who performs a Rak`ah alone behind the ranks

Q: I entered the Masjid (mosque) and found one of the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) standing alone behind the ranks. I stood beside him and started Salah (Prayer) and then others came and lined up with us. After the Salah, I told him that standing alone behind the ranks invalidates the Salah, according to what I heard on this program. He informed me that he tried to move someone back from ranks but nobody responded to him. So, is his Salah valid? Is what I did correct? May Allah reward you with the best.

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A: If this man lined up before you and you came before or after Ruku` (bowing), the Salah is valid for both of you. If you came after he offered one Rak`ah or more, your Salah is valid because you thought that his Salah was also valid but his Salah is invalid and he has to repeat it. Similarly, if you knew when you lined up with him that his Salah was invalid, you should repeat your Salah too. But if you had no idea about the Shar`y (Islamically lawful) ruling, your Salah is valid. If you stood with him before he prostrated in the first Rak`ah, the Salah of both of you is valid. The evidence is the story of the Companion Abu Bakrah (may Allah be pleased with him) who came while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was offering Ruku`. Abu Bakrah started Ruku` away from the row and then he entered in the row. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him: [\(May Allah increase your love for the good. But do not repeat it again \(bowing in that way.\)\)](#) He did not order him to repeat his Salah which indicates that whoever stands in the row in or after Ruku` but catches the Sujud in the row or someone else lines up with him, his Salah is valid.



140- Ruling on putting up a barrier between men and women in the Masjid

Q: Our Masjid (mosque) includes a place of Salah (Prayer) that is separated by a wall for women and there is a loudspeaker in it to help them hear the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and instructors. Then, a man wants to tear down the wall making woman visible to men. He quoted the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him): (Men should line up in the row, then boys, then

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women.) There is a great debate around this issue. What is your advice in this concern? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: There is nothing wrong with all of that. At the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him), women would pray behind men without a wall or anything like that. The women would be appropriately dressed and wear the Hijab (face veil) and pray with men in the last part of the prayer place. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The best of the men's rows (in Salah) is the first row and the worst is the last; but the best of the woman's rows is the last and the worst of their rows is the first.) This is because the first of the women's rows is close to men. So, if they offered Salah with men and wear proper clothes, there is no harm and there is no need to build a wall or anything else. However, if you set up a wall or a curtain in order that they be at ease and unveil their faces, there is no harm in doing this, so that they feel at rest in their place. This is permissible as long as they can hear the Imam through the loudspeaker or from the Imam if they hear him without a loudspeaker.

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The matter is open to choice. If they set up a barrier and can see the Imam (the one who leads the congregational Prayer) and the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) and they can hear the voice, there is no harm. Praise be to Allah. People should not be extreme in insisting on building a wall, a grid, a curtain, or not having anything at all, as it is all good. During the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him), there was no walls or anything else but women would be dressed correctly and offer Salah behind men. It may be better to establish a wall or the like in order to veil them so that they are able to remove their cloaks and unveil their faces without men seeing them.



Q. It is widely believed that today's people are not as good as those who lived in the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), so there should be veils or curtains at mosques to prevent men from seeing women. What do you think?

A: This is a must if women are not adequately dressed. In some countries, women do not usually observe modest clothing, so there should be a wall or curtain to protect their privacy. If they are keen on veiling themselves well, as women used to do in the time of the Prophet, there is no problem for them to perform Prayer

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in rows behind men's rows. The farther females rows, the better. But if there is no strict observance of the Islamic code of dressing, it becomes necessary to establish some screen to hide women, so that they are not distracting for or distracted by men.



141- Ruling on a woman praying between the rows of men

Q: Once I went to perform Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer, and the huge Masjid (mosque) was very crowded, so I had to pray outside where there were some poor women sitting. When the Prayer started, one of these women stepped into one of the rows for congregational Salah (Prayer) and prayed among the men. She was surrounded by men from all directions, and she was sitting during the Salah. Is it permissible to perform Salah with women? What should I do, reverend Shaykh?

A: Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah), your Salah is valid. This happens frequently at Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) and Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy (the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah), as millions of men and women gather in one place to perform Hajj. Typically, women should pray behind, not in front of or among, men. But if this happens

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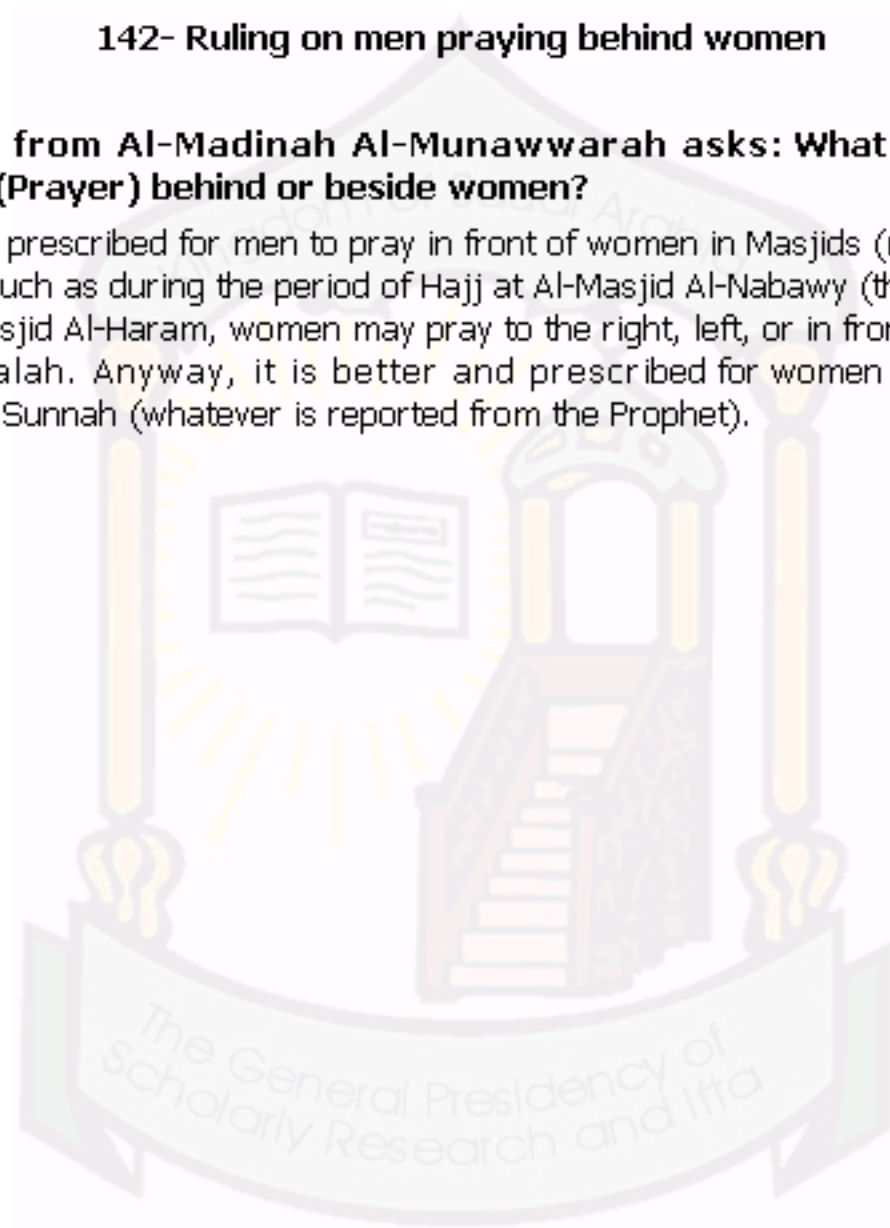
due to overcrowding, the woman's Salah will be considered valid; otherwise, she should be told to step back. Sitting while performing Salah is invalid if she is able to stand during obligatory Salah, whether Jumu`ah or any other Salah, and whether she is alone or in congregation. If she is unable to stand, however, it is permissible for her to sit down in the Salah.



142- Ruling on men praying behind women

Q: A questioner from Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah asks: What is the ruling on men performing Salah (Prayer) behind or beside women?

A: As a rule, it is prescribed for men to pray in front of women in Masjids (mosques). However, in cases of necessity, such as during the period of Hajj at Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy (the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah) and Al-Masjid Al-Haram, women may pray to the right, left, or in front of men; and this will not affect their Salah. Anyway, it is better and prescribed for women to pray behind men, in compliance with the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet).





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143- Ruling on a woman leading other women in Salah

Q: What is the ruling on a woman leading Salah (Prayer)? What is the evidence about this in the Qur'an, Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet), or Ijtihad (juristic effort to infer expert legal rulings) of the Four Imams (Abu Hanifah, Malik, Al-Shafi`y, and Ahmad)?

A: It is permissible for a woman to lead other women in Salah; it can even be preferable when needed, as in teaching women how to pray. Women are included in the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(The one who is most versed in Allah's Book should act as Imam for the people, but if they are equally versed in reciting it, then the one who is most knowledgeable of Sunnah. Again, if they are equal regarding the Sunnah, then the earliest immigrant.\)](#) It is authentically reported that `Aishah and Um Salamah (may Allah be pleased with both of them) led a group of women in Salah. Thus, it is something commendable if a pious woman leads female family members or friends who are visiting her in Salah. It is narrated that Umm Waraqah used to lead her own family in Salah. Thus, a woman leading other women in Salah

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is acceptable and in some cases even preferable, providing that she is knowledgeable and pious, so that she can teach her fellow Muslim women proper recitation in Salah, Ruku' (bowing), Sujud (prostration), standing erect after bowing, sitting between prostrations, etc. This is beneficial for other women, just as male worshipers learn from their Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer).



144- A woman leading other women in Salah: Where to stand?

Q: I led a group of women in congregational Salah (Prayer). I stood in the middle of the row and announced the Iqamah (call to start Prayer) of Salah. After Salah, we supplicated collectively. Is there anything wrong with this? Please guide me. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: Your leading the women in congregational Salah was a good opportunity for them to learn from you. However, you should not have pronounced the Iqamah (call to start Prayer), as women are not to announce the Adhan (call to Prayer) or Iqamah. The Adhan called by men is enough, and it is not required from women. When you stand to lead Salah, you just perform Takbirah Al-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer), and the women are to do the same following you. As for collective supplication, it has no basis in Shari'ah (Islamic law). When you finish Salah, recite the Adhkar (invocations and remembrances said at certain times on a regular basis) which are as following: "Astaghfiru Allah (i.e. I ask Allah for forgiveness)" three times audibly; then, "Allahuma Anta As-Salam wa Minka As-Salam

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Tabarakta ya Dhal-Jalali wa Al-Ikram (O Allah, You are the Giver of Peace, and from You comes peace. Blessed are You, O Owner of Majesty and Honor)"; then, "La ilah illa Allah, Wahdahu la harik lah. Lahu Al-Mulk wa lahu Al-Hamd, wa Huwa `ala kuli shay'in qadir. La hawla wa la quwata illa bi Allah. La ilaha illa Allah, wa la na`budu illa Iyyah. Lahu an-ni`matu wa lahu al-fadl wa lahu ath-thana' al-hasan. La ilah illa Allah, mukhlisina lahu-l-dina wa law kariha al-kafirun. Allahuma la mani' lima a'tayt wala mu'ty lima mana't wala yanfa'u dha al-jaddi minka al-jadd (There is no god but Allah Alone, He has no partner or associate, His is the sovereignty and to Him be praise, and He is Able to do all things. There is no power and no strength except with Allah, and we worship none but Him. From Him (Alone) come all blessings and favors, and all praise is due to Him. There is no god but Allah, and we dedicate our worship purely for Him (Alone) however much the disbelievers may hate it. O Allah, none can withhold what You give and none can give what You withhold, and no wealth or majesty can benefit anyone, as from You is all wealth and majesty.) After you teach these Adhkar to them, they should say the Adhkar in a low voice. These Adhkar were said by the Prophet himself, as narrated by Al-Mughirah ibn Shu`bah and Ibn Al-Zubayr in addition to other Hadiths. You should recite these words audibly, while women are listening and repeating silently. Then, it is recommended for each one to say, "Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah), Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah), Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" 33 times each, counting on the fingers. Then, they should say, "La ilaha illa Allah wahdahu la sharika lahu, lahu-l-mulku

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wa lahu-l-hamdu wa huwa `ala kulli shai'in qadir (There is no god but Allah, Alone, with no partner or associate; to Him belongs Sovereignty and Praise and He has power over all things). The Prophet (peace be upon him) urged Muslims to say these Adhkar and informed us that they are a means to attain Allah's Forgiveness. It is also commendable to recite Ayat-ul-Kursy (the Qur'anic Verse of Allah's Chair, Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:255) [\(Allâh! Lâ ilâha illa Huwa \(none has the right to be](#)

worshipped but He), Al-Hayyul-Qayyum (the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists).) Surah Al-Ikhlâs: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.) Surah Al-Falaq: (Say: "I seek refuge with (Allâh), the Lord of the daybreak,) and Surah Al-Nas: (Say: "I seek refuge with (Allâh) the Lord of mankind,) following every obligatory Salah. After Maghrib (Sunset) and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers in particular, it is best to recite these three Surahs three times. May Allah guide you and your sisters and enable you to help others.



Q: If a woman meets the conditions of imamate, can she lead other women in congregational Salah (Prayer)?

A: If she is to lead women in Salah, it is best to do so in her home. After all, congregational Salah is not obligatory on women. However, it is commendable if a woman leads other women in Salah to teach them how to pray. It was reported that Um Salamah and `Aishah led some women in congregational Salah. This is permissible as a way of teaching and guiding to good, but it is not obligatory. A female Imam should stand in the middle of the females' row.





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145- Ruling on women praying in congregations

Q: What is the ruling on women offering Salah (Prayer) in congregation while at school or any other place? Please advise us.

A: Salah in congregation is not obligatory for women; however, if this is possible, it will be better, so as to learn and benefit from one another. It is reported from Um Salamah and `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with them) that they led some women in Salah. This indicates that it is a well-known, established matter since the first Islamic century. It will certainly be very good and beneficial that a woman of knowledge and insight leads a group of women in Salah. They can greatly benefit from her and learn how to pray, bow, prostrate, and so on. Undoubtedly, having her standing amid them and hearing her recitation of the Qur'an in Jahri Salaha (Prayers recited out loud), such as the Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers will benefit all. In a word, it is Mustahab (desirable), if possible. However, it is not obligatory. Salah in congregation is only obligatory for men at Masjids (mosques), as prescribed by Shari`ah (Islamic law). Women are permitted to pray individually, and whenever it is possible for them to offer Salah together, this will be good.

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This is so especially if there is among them a knowledgeable woman endowed with insight to lead them in Salah and teach them how to pray in accordance with Shari`ah, as taught and done by the Prophet (peace be upon him) who said: [\(Pray as you have seen me praying.\)](#) This includes both men and women alike. Muslims must pray in the same way the Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed. Any knowledgeable and enlightened woman should teach her sisters in faith, her daughters, and other women the Shar`y (Islamically prescribed) way of performing Salah. Certainly, her leading them in Salah will be a more influential way of teaching them.



Q: Is the merit of congregational Salah (Prayer) the same for women as for men?

A: I do not know. Allah knows best, as congregational Salah is legislated for men. All that can be said is that it is permissible for women to pray in congregation. Women are enjoined by Allah to pray at home, but they are not enjoined to pray in congregation. If they do, there is nothing wrong with this, and it is thought to be good for them if it aims at mutual benefit and learning. It is narrated that Um

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Salamah and `A'ishah led some women in Salah to guide and instruct them. This is acceptable, but whether or not women receive the same merits that men receive from congregational Salah is something about which I have no idea.



**Q: If there is a group of women present in one place, should they pray in congregation?
Is there anything wrong if each one prays individually?**

A: There is no blame if each woman prays individually, as congregational Salah (Prayer) is obligatory on men only, not women. However, if one of the women leads others in Salah, especially one with knowledge and piety, it is something Mustahab (desirable) since they can learn from her. It is narrated that Um Salamah and `A'ishah led some women in Salah. When a woman who is proficient in matters of worship and recitation of the Qur'an leads other women in Salah, she can teach them how to pray well in terms of, for example, (Ruku`) bowing, tranquility, and Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship). She should stand in the middle of them.

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She is to pray Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) audibly, just like men. If she notices some women committing mistakes, she should correct and advise them. This is something desirable, but there is no blame if each woman prays by herself, even if they are all in the same place.



Q: If there is a group of women present in the Masjid (mosque) or any pure place at the time of Salah (Prayer), should they pray in congregation or individually? If they pray together in congregation, who should be the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)? Should she recite the Qur'an audibly or subvocally? And is congregational Salah obligatory or supererogatory on the women in this case?

A: If a group of women gathers at any place, they are not obligated to pray in congregation. There is no blame if each woman prays alone, as congregational Salah is obligatory on men only, not women. However, if one of the women leads others in Salah, it is acceptable. It is narrated that `Aishah and Um Salamah (may Allah be pleased with them both) led some women in Salah several times. Thus, it is permissible for a woman to lead females in congregational Salah, whether at her own home or elsewhere. When a woman leads females in Salah, she should stand in the middle of the first row,

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not in front of them like men. She should perform Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers audibly. Other Prayers should be performed subvocally, just like men. The female Imam is to raise her voice when saying, "Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest)" and "Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah (Allah listens to those who praise him)". Women will learn from her, so she should perform Salah with tranquility and Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship).



Q: At places where women gather, such as girls' schools, hospitals, etc.; is it better for them to pray in congregation than praying individually?

A: Yes. If they can pray in congregation, it is good, since they can teach one another. It is narrated that `Aishah and Um Salamah (may Allah be pleased with both of them) used to lead women in congregational Salah (Prayer). Therefore, it is generally commendable, and every woman can benefit by learning from others. If the female Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is well-educated in Islam, she can advise them on how to pray well. She should pray in the middle of the row, not in front of other females, who are to stand to her right and left and behind her. She should recite the Qur'an audibly in the first two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers,

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and inaudibly in Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers, the last two Rak`ahs of `Isha' Prayer, and the last Rak`ah of Maghrib Prayer, just like men.



Q: Is it better for a woman to pray alone or in congregation?

A: Both are permissible, and this matter is open to choice. It is permissible for a woman to pray in congregation or alone. During the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him), women used to perform pray alone. If there is a group of women present at the home of one of them, it is preferable that the most religious among them lead them in congregational Salah (Prayer). It is narrated that Um Salamah and `Aishah sometimes led women in congregational Salah. Therefore, it is generally permissible for a woman to lead other women in Salah, she should stand in the middle of them, and they stand to her right and left. She should raise her voice in Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") and recites the Qur'an out loud in the Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers. Just like men, she should say Takbir, raise her hands parallel to her shoulders or ears, and say, "Subhanaka Allahumma wa bihamdika wa tabaraka ismuka wa ta`ala jadduka wa la ilaha ghayruk (Glorified be You, O Allah! And all praise is due to You. Blessed is Your Name and Lofty is Your Majesty. There is no deity but You) or any other piece of Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer) that are authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). Then,

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she should say, "A`udhu-Billahi mina Al-Shaytan -ir-Rajim [I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Satan]", then, "Bismillah Al-Rahman, Al-Rahim [In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful]", and then recite Surah (Qur'anic chapter) Al-Fatihah and another Surah. This is to be done in the first two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers. In the last two Rak`ahs of the same Prayers, she should recite Al-Fatihah only. In the Fajr Prayer, she should recite Al-Fatihah and a longer part of the Qur'an than in Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers. In Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers, she should recite the Qur'an subvocally. All parts of Prayer should be done exactly as done by men, but the female Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) should stand in the middle of the praying women, and she should pray calmly and submissively to Allah. If she is well-educated, she should also teach the other women about the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet), so that they may imitate her and she receive reward from Allah. Therefore, it is favorable, but not obligatory, for a woman who is knowledgeable of the religious teachings to lead other women in congregational Salah inside her own home and educate them. Yet, if she prays alone, there is nothing wrong at all.



Q: A question from Al-Ta'if reads: Is it permissible for a woman to lead other women in prayer? If yes, do they receive the reward for congregational prayer? May Allah grant you all good.

A: It is permissible for a woman to lead other females in congregational prayer, as this was reported from `Aishah and Um

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Salamah (may Allah be pleased with both of them). We thus hope that they will receive the reward for performing congregational prayer, which involves benefit for women, since a woman's leading other women in prayer embodies teaching and guidance for them. Then, each one learns religious rulings pertaining to Salah from her fellow Muslim sisters, especially when the female Imam (the one who leads congregational prayer) well read in religious knowledge. Hence, their praying in congregation entails much benefits for them.



Q: A female questioner from the South asks: O respected Shaykh, I am a teacher and I lead girl students in prayer in school yard, which is not clean. Some girls pray on some carpets, which are dusty as well. We reported this to the school's administration, but nothing has changed due to lack of financial resources. What is the ruling on our prayers? May Allah best reward you.

A: It is permissible for you to lead them in prayer, to teach them how to pray. Also, there is no problem if they pray on unclean carpets, as long as they are free from impurities. Dust or papers do not affect

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prayer so long as the ground and the carpets are not impure. They can pray on them even if they are a bit dirty. The girls will benefit from praying with their teacher. The female imam should stand in the middle of the student's row.



Q: O respected Shaykh, I am a young woman and I lead my mother in congregational prayer at home. Is this permissible, and can I raise my voice so that she can hear my recitation? Is it permissible to do so in all Rak`ahs (units of prayer)?

A: It is permissible for you to lead your mother or daughters in prayer, so that they can learn from you. If there is only one woman praying, she is to stand to the right of the imam; if there be more than one, the female imam should stand in the middle of their row. They will benefit from her guidance on Islamic teachings and receive the reward for congregational prayer. You are to recite audibly in the Fajr (Dawn), Maghrib (Sunset), and Isha' (Night) prayers , so that your mother and other women can hear you. This was the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him) .





Q: How can women offer Salah (Prayer) in congregation at home, if it is permissible for them?

A: This will be preferable if it is possible for them to do so. It is reported that Um Salamah and `A'ishah

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led women in congregational Salah. If it is possible for the lady of the house to lead her sisters, daughters, or maid in congregational Salah, this is good. In this case, she should stand in the middle, and they should stand to her right and left. She should recite the Qur'an and Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") out loud to teach and benefit all of them. We recommend that the mother of the girls does this if she is acquainted with the way of doing so. If one of her daughters or sisters is more knowledgeable, she should lead them in congregational Salah. We deduce that the woman who leads the other women in congregational Salah should be the most knowledgeable of the Qur'an. This is Mustahab (desirable) because it involves a great benefit and reward. The correct opinion is that there is nothing wrong with women offering Salah in congregation, due to the evidence that in general proves this, and that this act was done by `Aishah and Um Salamah.



146- A woman following the Imam in Salah if she enters the Masjid

Q: My wife and I passed by a Masjid (mosque) when we were in our car. The Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) was making the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer); my wife entered the Musalla (place for Prayer) for women, and I joined the men. Which is better for my wife to do: to follow the Imam in the Salah (Prayer) or to offer Salah individually?

A: The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to follow the Imam with the other women in the Musalla. She should offer with them

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whatever parts of the Salah she catches with the Imam, and make up for the missed parts in the manner a man does. If there are no women in the Musalla, she has no one to stand next to, and so she should offer whatever parts of the Salah she catches with the Imam, and make up for the missed parts. If she offers with the Imam two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), she should make up for the other two Rak`ahs after the Imam says Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). This should be done in case she offers the Zhuhr (Noon), the `Asr (Afternoon), or the `Isha' (Night) Prayers. In case of the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, if she catches two Rak`ahs with the Imam, she should make up for the missed Rak`ah in the manner a man does.



147- Preference of women offering Salah at home

Q: The questioner who is from Jordan asks: Respected Shaykh, which is better for a woman to do: to offer Salah (Prayer) at home or at the Masjid (mosque)?

A: It is preferable that a woman offers Salah at home, with tranquility and Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship), in its due time and in a state of Taharah (ritual purity). Also, there is nothing wrong with offering Salah at the Masjid to seek any benefits and to listen to the sermons and Hadiths, but she should cover herself and be modest in her dress. The Messenger of Allah forbade the people to prevent women from going to the Masjids, but they should cover themselves and dress modestly.



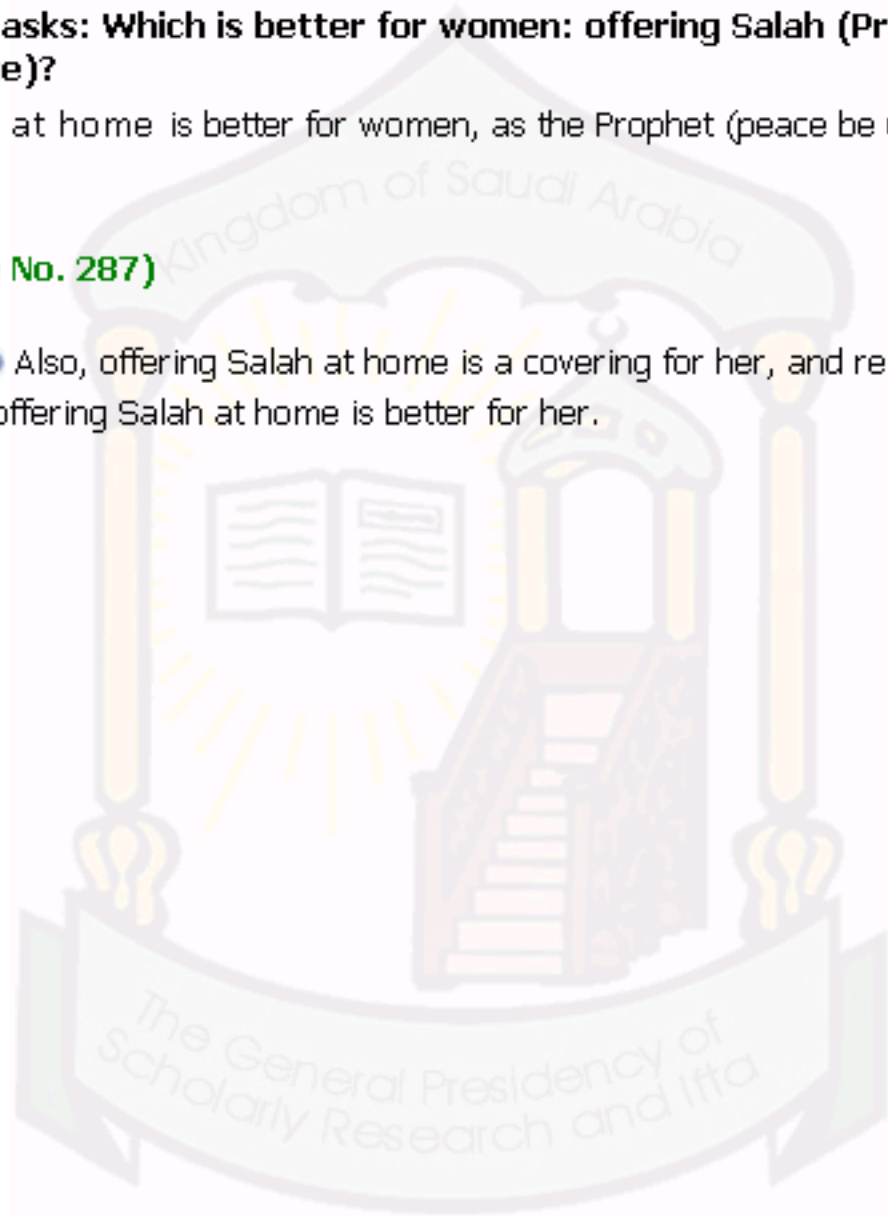


Q: A questioner asks: Which is better for women: offering Salah (Prayer) at home or at the Masjid (mosque)?

A: Offering Salah at home is better for women, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Their houses](#)

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[are better for them.](#)) Also, offering Salah at home is a covering for her, and removes her from Fitnah (temptation). Thus, offering Salah at home is better for her.





Q: Is the virtue of the Salah (Prayer) offered by a woman in her house equivalent to the virtue of the Salah offered by men at the Masjid (mosque)?

A: The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(A woman's Salah in her house is better.\)](#) It has a great virtue, that may be equal to, better than, or less than the virtue of offering Salah at the Masjid. The point is that the best Salah she may offer is that which she offers in her house. As long as offering Salah in her house is better than offering it at the Masjid, this means that she will be granted the same reward as offering Salah at the Masjid or even more, because the Messenger (peace be upon him) said: [\(A woman's Salah in her house is better.\)](#) This means that she will gain the same reward granted to the man who offers Salah at the Masjid, or even more because she is obeying Allah (Exalted be He) and His Messenger (peace be upon him), and following Allah's Command and that of His Messenger. Thus, she does a great deed, because offering Salah in her house is more protective for her, and removes her farther from Fitnah (temptation). If she obeys the command of the Messenger (peace be upon him), and offers Salah in her house, she may be granted the same reward of the Salah offered by men at the Masjid, or even more.



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Q: A questioner asks: I love the Masjids (mosques), as they are the Houses of Allah, but I do not go to them because I am a woman. It is not Mustahab (desirable) for women to go to the Masjids. Will I be one of the seven whom Allah will shade with His Shade on the Day when there will be no shade except His?

A: We hope that you will be one of them, because you mentioned that offering Salah (Prayer) in your house is better for you according to Shari'ah (Islamic law). If the Messenger (peace be upon him) had not prescribed that women should offer Salah at home, you would have hastened to offer it at the Masjid, as you like the Masjids. An excused person such as someone who is sick or handicapped, may have the intention of offering Salah at the Masjid, and would like to do that, but they are prevented by a valid excuse. Thus, they will gain the reward granted to those who offer Salah at the Masjid. The same applies to women who like to offer Salah at the Masjids. As Allah (Exalted be He) prescribes for them that they offer Salah at home, they will attain the reward gained by those who offer Salah regularly at the Masjid, and will be among those who will be shaded with Allah's Shade. They would have offered Salah at the Masjid if Allah (Exalted be He) had not prescribed that they offer Salah at home. Among the pieces of evidence proving that is the Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith) said by the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(When a servant of Allah suffers from illness or sets on a journey, he is credited with the equal of whatever good works he used to do when he was healthy or at home.\)](#) Allah (Exalted be He) grants them the reward attained by those who observe Sawm (Fast) even if they do not observe Sawm, because they are prevented by illness or traveling. Also, he (peace be upon him) said during

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the Tabuk Battle: [\(In Madinah there are people who, whenever you traveled any distance or crossed any valley, were with you. They said: O Messenger of Allah, even though they are in Madinah? He said: Even though they are in Madinah, because they were kept there by excuses.\)](#) In another wording of the Hadith: [\(illness\)](#) Also, in another wording: [\(They attain the same reward you are granted.\)](#) This indicates that a person who does not do a certain deed due to a legal excuse, even though he likes to do it, is granted the same reward attained by those who do it.



Q: Is it permissible for a woman to offer Salah (Prayer) in her house on a rug? Is there anything wrong with that, Shaykh?

A: There is nothing wrong with offering Salah on a rug or mat. The Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Salah on a mat. Thus, there is nothing wrong with this.





148- Ruling on reciting Al-Fatihah by a Ma'mum

Q: What is the ruling on reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an)

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for a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer)?

A: According to the more correct opinion, a Ma'mum, unlike an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and a Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually), has to recite Al-Fatihah. However, the Jumah (dominant majority of scholars) are of the opinion that it is not binding on the Ma'mum and it is rather Mustahab (desirable) during Sirri Salahs (Prayers with subvocal recitation) and pauses taken by the Imam during Jahri Salahs (Prayers recited aloud). However, according to the more correct opinion, a Ma'mum has to recite Al-Fatihah because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The Salah \(Prayer\) of whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah is invalid.\)](#) This is a general ruling. Again, the Prophet (peace be upon him) asked: [\(Do you recite the Qur'an as Ma'mums during the congregational Salah?\)](#) "Yes," they replied. ["Do not recite any Surahs \(Qur'anic chapters\) except Al-Fatihah as the Salah of whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah is invalid," the Prophet instructed.](#) It is a plain ruling that a Ma'mum has to recite Al-Fatihah and there is no valid Salah without reciting it. However, if the Ma'mum does not recite it out of forgetfulness or ignorance of the legal ruling, his Salah will still be valid for it is not as obligatory for him as for an Imam or a Munfarid given that a Ma'mum joining the congregational Salah while the Imam is making Ruku` (bowing) has a Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) counted. It is reported that Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafy, as related by Al-Bukhari (may Allah be Merciful to him), joined the congregation while the Prophet was making Ruku`. So he made Ruku` outside the row for congregational Salah, but then he entered the row.

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So the Prophet did not command him to repeat the Salah that indicates that he had a Rak`ah counted though he had not stood up or recited Al-Fatihah. In this case, he was exempted from the obligation to recite Al-Fatihah. Similarly, a Ma'mum who forgets to recite Al-Fatihah or is ignorant of the legal ruling does not have to recite it just like the case where a Ma'mum joins the congregation while the Imam is making Ruku`. He does not have to recite it because he does not join the congregation in the standing position. However, if a Ma'mum joins congregation in the standing position and is able to recite Al-Fatihah while being aware of the legal ruling, he has to recite it according to the legal evidence to avoid differences between scholars (may Allah be Merciful to them).



Q: A questioner says: "What is the ruling on reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) for a Ma'mum (a person being led by an Imam in Prayer)? If it is obligatory, how can a Ma'mum recite it and listen to the Qur'an at the same time given that some brothers told me that an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) should continue reciting the Qur'an and may not keep silent after the recitation of the Al-Fatihah?"

A: According to the more correct opinion, a Ma'mum has to recite Al-Fatihah. However, the majority of Muslim scholars are of the opinion that a Ma'mum does not have to recite Al-Fatihah and it is enough for him to listen to the Imam. But, the more correct opinion is that he has to recite it during both Sirri Salahs (Prayers with subvocal recitation) and Jahri Salahs (Prayers recited out loud) as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Do you recite the Qur'an as Ma'mums during the congregational Salah \(Prayer\)?\)](#) "Yes," they replied. ["Do not recite any Surahs \(Qur'anic chapters\) except Surat Al-Fatihah as the prayer of whoever does not recite Surat Al-Fatihah is invalid,"](#)

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[the Prophet instructed.](#)) This is a Sahih (authentic) Hadith related by Ahmad and other Hadith compilers. The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(The Salah of whoever does not recite Surat Al-Fatihah is invalid.\)](#) Thus, a Ma'mum has to recite Surat Al-Fatihah. However, if he does not recite it out of forgetfulness or ignorance of the legal ruling or for joining the congregation during Ruku` (bowing), he does not have to recite it. It is reported that Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafy (may Allah be pleased with him) joined the congregation while the Prophet was making Ruku`. So he made Ruku` outside the row for congregational Salah (Prayer), then he entered the row. He told the Prophet (peace be upon him) about that after Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah increase your love for the good. But do not repeat it again \(bowing in that way.\)](#)) The Prophet did not command him to repeat the Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). However, an Imam and Ma'mum have to recite Al-Fatihah for it is a pillar of the Salah for them. If they do not recite it intentionally, their Salah will not be valid. If they forget to recite it during one Rak`ah, they should offer an additional Rak`ah and then make Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness). Yet, though reciting Al-Fatihah is still binding on the Ma'mum, if he does not recite it out of forgetfulness or ignorance, his Salah will still be valid for he has to follow the Imam in the first place. Though there are pieces of evidence obligating followers to listen attentively to the Imam's recitation, they are general, but those obligating the recitation of Al-Fatihah are specific.

As for an Imam, he can take a pause after the recitation of Al-Fatihah or continue recitation.

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There is no conclusive evidence about that; some Hadiths indicate that the Imam should not take a pause after saying: [\(nor of those who went astray.\)](#) However, some other Hadiths indicate that he should take a pause after the recitation of Al-Fatihah. So he can take a pause after the recitation of Al-Fatihah or continue recitation. Both acts are permissible In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills).



Q: A brother asks about the ruling on the recitation of Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) by a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer). He says that he heard a Hadith reading: (The Salah (Prayer) of whoever does not recite Surat Al-Fatihah is invalid.) He wants to know whether a Ma'mum has to recite Al-Fatihah after the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) recites it during a Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud) and whether he should continue reciting it even if the Imam resumes recitation. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: You have to recite Al-Fatihah for it is binding on a Ma'mum according to the more correct opinion. During the Jahri Salah, a Ma'mum has to continue reciting Al-Fatihah even if the Imam resumes recitation. After finishing the recitation of Al-Fatihah, a Ma'mum then is to listen to the recitation of the Imam. During a Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation), a Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah and another part of the Qur'an as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Do you recite the Qur'an as Ma'mums during the congregational Salah (Prayer)?" "Yes," they replied.

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"Do not recite any Surahs (Qur'anic chapters) except Al-Fatihah as the Salah of whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah is invalid," the Prophet instructed.) So a Ma'mum has to recite Al-Fatihah even if the Imam does not pause long enough to do so and resumes recitation; but after finishing the recitation of Al-Fatihah, the Ma'mum should listen to the recitation of the Imam.



149- Ma'mum's recitation of Al-Fatihah during Imam's recitation

Q: What is the ruling on the recitation of Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) by the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) during recitation by the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)? What should a Ma'mum do if the Imam continues recitation after Al-Fatihah? Does a Ma'mum have to recite Al-Fatihah during Imam's recitation or should he listen to the Imam whose recitation will be enough for Ma'mums?

A: There is a difference between scholars over this question and they have three opinions as follows: Some scholars think that the Imam recites Al-Fatihah on behalf of the Ma'mums so they do not have to recite it either during Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) or Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud). Other scholars hold that a Ma'mum has to recite it during both Sirri and Jahri Salaha. Other scholars are of the opinion that a Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah during Sirri Salah rather than Jahri one. The preponderant opinion is that a Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah during all Salaha given the generality of the following Hadith: [\(The Salah \(Prayer\) of whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah is](#)

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[invalid.](#)) The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Do you recite the Qur'an as Ma'mums during the congregational Salah?" "Yes," they replied. "Do not recite any Surahs \(Qur'anic chapters\) except Al-Fatihah as the Salah of whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah is invalid," the Prophet instructed.\)](#) This indicates that a Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah during both Jahri and Sirri Salaha. If the Imam continues recitation without taking a pause, a Ma'mum should make subvocal recitation and then listen to the Imam. If an Imam continues recitation after Al-Fatihah or had already read a part of Al-Fatihah, a Ma'mum should finish the recitation of Al-Fatihah and then listen to the Imam. Anyhow, a Ma'mum can recite Al-Fatihah either with, before, or after the Imam's recitation. If the Imam takes a pause, a Ma'mum can recite Al-Fatihah at that time. He should seize this opportunity to listen to the Imam's recitation. Again, he should recite Al-Fatihah and then listen to the Imam's recitation. This is an exception to the following prophetic statement: [\(When he recites \(the Qur'an\), keep silent,](#)) and the generality of the following Ayah (Qur'anic verse): [\(So, when the Qur'ân is recited, listen to it, and be silent\)](#) So Ma'mum's recitation of Al-Fatihah is an exception to the above texts.



Q: What is the ruling on reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) during the third and fourth Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) in the congregational Salah (Prayer) by a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) if the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) does not give him enough time to finish reciting Al-Fatihah?

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A: A Ma'mum has to hasten to recite Al-Fatihah during the third and fourth Rak`ahs once he gets up as he does in the first and second Rak`ahs. He should not make a slow recitation. Rather, he should make an uninterrupted recitation so that he will not miss it. If the Imam makes Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") but a Ma'mum does not get to finish it, he should finish it if it is a matter of a few Ayahs (Qur'anic verses); one or two Ayahs, and then make Ruku` (bowing). If the Ma'mum fears he should miss Ruku`, he may make the Ruku` without finishing the recitation of Al-Fatihah for he is a Ma'mum. For example, if a Ma'mum joins the congregation while the Imam is making Ruku`, he may make Ruku` without reciting Al-Fatihah. It is reported that Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafy (may Allah be pleased with him) joined the congregation while the Prophet was making Ruku` (bowing). So he made Ruku` outside the row for congregational Salah (Prayer) and then he entered the row and continued Salah. So the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him: **(May Allah increase your love for the good. But do not repeat it again (bowing in that way).)** He did not command him to repeat the Rak`ah. The ruling is easier for the Ma'mum than an Imam or Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually). If he is able to recite Al-Fatihah, he should recite it. If he misses it because he joined the congregation while the Imam is making Ruku` (bowing) or due to a quick recitation where he made Ruku` before Ma'mums could finish reciting Al-Fatihah, a Ma'mum then does not have to recite it. All praise be to Allah. This is the soundest opinion.



Q: It is reported that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: (The Salah (Prayer) of whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) is invalid.) Is the Salah of a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) rendered Batil (null and void) if he does not

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recite Al-Fatihah, especially in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer?

A: Everybody offering Salah has to recite Al-Fatihah for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The Salah of whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah is invalid.) But if a Ma'mum joins the congregation late while the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is making Ruku` (bowing), he will have a Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) counted. If he forgets to recite it or happens to be ignorant of the ruling, his Salah will be valid for having a legitimate excuse. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Abu Bakrah who joined the congregation while the Prophet was making Ruku` and so he made Ruku` outside the row for congregational Salah (Prayer) and then he entered the row: (May Allah increase your love for the good. But do not repeat it again (bowing in that way.)) The Prophet only commanded him not to make Ruku` outside the row. He instructed him to remain patient until he entered the row. He did not command him to repeat the Rak`ah. This indicates that a Ma'mum joining the congregation while the Imam is making Ruku` or is about to make Ruku` will be excused if he does not recite Al-Fatihah for having no opportunity to recite it. Similarly, if he is ignorant of the legal ruling or forgets to recite it, his Salah will be valid. However, an Imam as well as a Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually) have to recite it. If they forget to recite it during any Rak`ah, they should perform an additional Rak`ah instead of it and then make Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness).



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Q: A questioner says: If I happen to be a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) in a Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), when should I recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and some Ayahs (Qur'anic verse) after it? Can I recite them during the recitation of the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), or what else can I do?

A: If the Imam pauses, you may recite it while he is keeping silent. Otherwise, you can recite it during his recitation. After you finish the recitation of Al-Fatihah, you should then listen to the Imam for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Do you recite the Qur'an as Ma'mums during the congregational Salah \(Prayer\)?](#) "Yes," they replied. ["Do not recite any Surahs \(Qur'anic chapters\) except Al-Fatihah as the Salah \(Prayer\) of whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah is invalid," the Prophet instructed.](#)) This Sahih (authentic) Hadith indicates that a Ma'mum has to recite Al-Fatihah and then listen to the Imam in the Jahri Salah. If the Imam pauses after reciting Al-Fatihah, a Ma'mum may recite it while the Imam remains silent. Otherwise, he can recite them during his recitation. After he finishes the recitation of Al-Fatihah, he should then listen to the Imam. In a Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) like Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, a Ma'mum is to recite some Ayahs from the Qur'an after Al-Fatihah during the first and second Rak`ahs (units of Prayer).



Is it obligatory to recite Al-Fatihah in each Rak`ah of Salah?

Q: A questioner asks: Is it obligatory to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in each Rak`ah of Salah (Prayer)? Is there some other thing that may make up for it? If an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) does not give the opportunity to recite it, will his recitation be enough for us? May Allah reward you with the best.

You have to recite Al-Fatihah in each Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The Salah of whoever](#)

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[does not recite Al-Fatihah is invalid.](#)) [\(The Salah of whoever does not recite the Mother of the Qur'an \(Al-Fatihah\) is invalid.\)](#) [\(A Salah in which the Mother of the Book \(Al-Fatihah\) is not recited is unacceptable.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite it in each Rak`ah. He used to say: [\(Pray as you have seen me praying.\)](#) So a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) should recite it even if the Imam does not take a pause in each Rak`ah for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Do you recite the Qur'an as Ma'mums during the congregational Salah \(Prayer\)?](#) "Yes," they replied. ["Do not recite any Surahs \(Qur'anic chapters\) except Al-Fatihah as the Salah of whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah is invalid," the Prophet instructed.\)](#) Thus, a Ma'mum has to recite it even if the Imam does not pause. He is to recite it in a low voice. After he finishes the recitation of Al-Fatihah, he then should remain silent and listen to the Imam.



151- Ruling on the pause made by the Imam after Al-Fatihah

Q: The questioner asks: "What is the ruling on the pause made by some Imams (the ones who lead congregational Prayer) after Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter in the Qur'an) to give a chance to the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) to recite Al-Fatihah?"

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A: There is nothing wrong with that, as there is flexibility in this matter. Also, if he does not make pause, this is nothing wrong with that. The Ma'mums should recite Al-Fatihah whether the Imam pauses or not. The Imam has the choice whether to pause or not; if he does, this will be good. If not, there is nothing wrong with that, as the Hadiths concerning pausing are not clear, and there is no Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith) referring to pausing. What is meant by pausing is that the Imam keeps silent after reciting Al-Fatihah. As for pausing after Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer), it is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). He pauses to say Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer). The Prophet used to say Du`a'-ul-Istiftah after Takbirat-ul-Ihram. Then, he sought refuge with Allah from Satan, and recited Tasmiyah (saying, "Bismillah [In the Name of Allah]") subvocally. Then, he recited Al-Fatihah out loud in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), and subvocally in the Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation). Also, the Ma'mum should say Du`a'-ul-Istiftah after Takbirat-ul-Ihram before the Imam starts reciting.



Q: Upon performing the congregational Salah (Prayer), the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) recites Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and then remains silent for a while to allow us recite it, but a little while later, he starts reciting a short Surah (Chapter of the Qur'an) before we have finished Al-Fatihah. Should we complete Al-Fatihah quickly in this case? Or should we stop reciting immediately to listen to the Imam? May Allah reward you with the best. Is it permissible that we do not recite Al-Fatihah altogether after him even if he has given us sometime to do this, because he has recited it on our behalf?

A: It is obligatory upon the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to recite Al-Fatihah in both Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) and Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud),

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according to the most correct opinion maintained by scholars in this respect. Some scholars believe that the Ma'mums are not to recite Al-Fatihah in the Jahri Salah; they, rather, are required to recite it in the Sirri Salah only. Some other scholars hold that the Ma'mums are not required to recite Al-Fatihah neither in the Jahri, nor in the Sirri Salah, as the Imam has recited it on their behalf. But both opinions are weak. The correct opinion maintained by scholars here is that the Ma'mums are to recite Al-Fatihah in both Jahri and Sirri Salahs. In the Sirri Salahs, i.e., the Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers, they are to recite Al-Fatihah followed by some other verses of the Qur'an during the first two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer); while in the Jahri Salahs, they are required to recite Al-Fatihah and then listen to their Imam; if the Imam stood silent for a while after reciting Al-Fatihah, they may recite it during this period of silence; and if the Imam starts reading before the Ma'mums have finished Al-Fatihah, they should complete it and then listen to the Imam. If the Imam does not stand in silence for a while after recitation of Al-Fatihah, the Ma'mums are to recite it subvocally and then listen to their Imam. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to his Companions: [«Perhaps you recite behind your Imam? They said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Do not do that except for Fatihatul-Kitab, for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it \(in Salah\).»](#) This Hadith clearly indicates that the Ma'mums are to recite Al-Fatihah behind their Imam during all Salahs. But if a Ma'mum is a latecomer and joined the Salah while the Imam is performing Ruku` (bowing), they are to follow the Imam immediately and are exempted in this case from reciting Al-Fatihah; this Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) would be counted for them. Likewise, if they have forgotten to recite it or have not recited it out of ignoring the obligation of reciting it behind the Imam, their Salah remains valid. This is because reciting Al-Fatihah by the Ma'mums is obligatory, and not reciting it may be overlooked if it is done out of forgetfulness or ignorance of the ruling on it. But recitation of Al-Fatihah by the Imam or Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually) is a Rukn (integral pillar); this means they must recite it and they are not exempted from it either by forgetfulness

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or out of ignorance. According to Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars), not reciting Al-Fatihah by the Ma'mum would be overlooked if they did so due to forgetfulness or ignorance of the obligation of it. This would also be the case if they were latecomers and joined the Salah while the Imam was bowing; and this Rak`ah would be counted for them.



Q: If we are offering Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), and the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) recites Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) without pausing after it, should the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) recite Al-Fatihah or listen to the Imam? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: The Ma'mum should recite it. When the Imam recites Al-Fatihah, he should recite it, then listen to the Imam, because the Ma'mum is obliged to recite it according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam?" We replied: 'Yes, it is so, Messenger of Allah.'" He said: "Do not do so except with Al-Fatihah, for he who does not recite it is not credited with having prayed.\)](#) This Hadith indicates that it is obligatory. Thus, the Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah. However, if the Imam makes a long pause, the Ma'mum should recite it in this pause. If the Imam does not pause or makes a short pause, the Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah, even along with the recitation of the Imam, then listen to him.



Q: A brother asks: "When the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) recites Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) out loud and another Surah (Qur'anic chapter) after it, is it permissible for the Ma'mum (the person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to

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recite Al-Fatihah?

A: Yes, the Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah. Some scholars said that the Ma'mum is not obliged to recite it. However, the correct opinion is that the Ma'mum is obliged to recite it only. If the Imam does not pause after reciting Al-Fatihah, the Ma'mum should recite it, and then listen to him, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The Salah \(Prayer\) of whoever does not recite Surah Al-Fatihah is invalid.\)](#) (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). Also, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam?" We replied: "Yes, it is so, Messenger of Allah." He said: "Do not do so except with Al-Fatihah, for he who does not recite it is not credited with having prayed.\)](#) This is the correct opinion. If the Ma'mum does not join the Salah while the Imam was standing, as he joins it while the Imam is performing Ruku' (bowing), he is excused in this case and the Rak`ah is counted.



Q: Is it permissible for the Ma'mum (the person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud)? Please, take into consideration that the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) does not give a chance to the Ma'mums to recite it, as he recites another Surah (Qur'anic chapter) immediately after the Ma'mums say Amen. What is the ruling on that situation?

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A: Yes, he should recite Al-Fatihah even if the Imam is still reciting, because he is commanded to recite it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The prayer of whoever does not recite Surah Al-Fatihah is invalid.\)](#) (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam?" We replied: "Yes, it is so, Messenger of Allah." He said: "Do not do so except with Al-Fatihah, for he who does not recite it is not credited with having prayed."\)](#) The Ma'mum should recite it; if the Imam pauses, he should recite it during this pause. If the Imam continues reciting without pausing, he should recite it, and then listen to the Imam, abiding by all of the Hadiths mentioned in this regard. There is nothing wrong with reciting it, and then listening to the Imam. This is the correct opinion. Some scholars said that the Ma'mum is excused from reciting Al-Fatihah, and quoted in support of their opinion a Hadith Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan, due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators) narrating that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever is praying behind the Imam, then the Imam's reading is a reading for him as well.\)](#) However, the scholars ranked this Hadith as Da`if. The correct opinion is that the Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah during the pause made by the Imam if the Imam pauses. If the Imam does not pause, he should recite it while the Imam is reciting, and then listen to the Imam. This is the preponderant and correct opinion.



Q: The questioner asks: I was a Ma'mum (the person being led by an Imam in Prayer) in a Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), and the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) did not

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pause between Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and the Surah (Qur'anic chapter) recited after it. Should I recite Al-Fatihah while the Imam is reciting or listen to him?

A: You should recite Al-Fatihah even if the Imam does not pause, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) told the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet): [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam?" We replied: "Yes, it is so, Messenger of Allah." He said: "Do not do so except with Al-Fatihah, for he who does not recite it is not credited with having prayed.\)](#) The Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah. If the Imam continues reciting, he should recite Al-Fatihah, and then listen to the Imam. If the Ma'mum does not recite it out of ignorance or forgetfulness, his Salah (Prayer) is valid. However, it is obligatory that the Imam and the Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually) recite Al-Fatihah, and their Salah is not considered valid without reciting it, even if he does that out of forgetfulness or ignorance. As for the Ma'mum, the matter with him is easier, because the Messenger (peace be upon him) said when Abu Bakrah performed Ruku` (bowing) before he could join the row while the Prophet was performing Ruku`, and then he stood in the row: [\(May Allah increase your love for the good. But do not repeat it again \(bowing in that way.\)](#) He did not command Abu Bakrah to make up for the Rak`ah. This means that if the Ma'mum joins the Salah while the Imam is performing Ruku`, the Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) is counted even if he misses the recitation. Also, if he does not recite it out of ignorance or forgetfulness, the recitation of the Imam suffices for him. However, he should not intentionally abandon reciting it.



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152- Scholarly opinions concerning the Ma'mum reciting Al-Fatihah

Q: If the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) recites Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud) and another Surah (Qur'anic chapter) without pausing between them, should I recite Al-Fatihah or keep silent? If the pause he makes is too to complete the recitation of Al-Fatihah, and he starts reciting another Surah, should I complete reciting Al-Fatihah or keep silent?

A: It is obligatory to recite Al-Fatihah whether the Imam pauses or not. If he pauses, it is prescribed for the Ma'mum to recite Al-Fatihah during the pause to combine between reciting and listening to the Imam. If you start reciting Al-Fatihah, then he starts reciting another Surah while you have not completed reciting Al-Fatihah yet, you should complete Al-Fatihah. If he does not pause, you recite while he is reciting, then you listen to his recitation. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam? We replied: 'Yes, it is so.' He said: 'Do not do so except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab \(the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah\), for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it.'\)](#) This is an explicit text that commands the Ma'mum (the person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to recite Al-Fatihah in the Jahri Salah and the Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation). Also, this is supported by the general meaning of the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(There is no Salah for the one who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) also said: [\(Anyone who performs a Salah without reciting](#)

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[Fatihat-ul-Kitab in it, his Salah is imperfect, imperfect.\)](#) This means that the Salah becomes defective. It is obligatory that the Ma'mum recites Al-Fatihah in the Sirri Salah and the Jahri Salah according to the most correct opinion maintained by scholars. The scholars have three opinions: First, the Ma'mum is not to recite Al-Fatihah at all whether in the Sirri Salah or the Jahri Salah, as he is excused from reciting due to the recitation of the Imam. Second, the Ma'mum should recite it in the Sirri Salah only, based on the general meaning of the Saying of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He): [\(So, when the Qur'ân is recited, listen to it, and be silent\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(When he recites \(the Qur'an\), keep silent.\)](#) Third, the Ma'mum should recite it in the Jahri Salah and the Sirri Salah, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(There is no Salah for the one who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) also said: [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam? We replied: 'Yes, it is so.' He said: 'Do not do so except for Al-Fatihah, for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it.'\)](#) This is a Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith) indicating that the Ma'mum should particularly recite Al-Fatihah in the Jahri Salah and the Sirri Salah, and then listen to the Imam in the Jahri Salah. As for

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the Sirri Salah, he may recite another Surah after reciting Al-Fatihah, because there is no recitation

to listen to. As for the Saying of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He): [﴿So, when the Qur'ân is recited, listen to it, and be silent﴾](#) It is a general rule that has exceptions. The Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) specifies the general statements found in the Qur'an. This Ayah (Qur'anic verse) refers to the Qur'an in general and not Al-Fatihah. As for the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [﴿When he recites \(the Qur'an\), keep silent,﴾](#) it is a general rule that excludes Al-Fatihah. The basic rule is that the Sunnah specifies the general statements found in the Qur'an. Also, the Hadiths specify each other, as it is a rule well-known by the scholars of Usul-ul-Fiqh (principles of Islamic jurisprudence) and of Mustalah Al-Hadith (Hadith terminology). If the texts contradict each other, the general statements should be specified and limited. This matter is known by the scholars. May Allah grant us success.



Q: Is it permissible for me to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) if the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) starts reciting a Surah (Qur'anic Chapter) after it?

A: Yes, you should recite Al-Fatihah. If it is possible for you to recite it in the pause made by the Imam, this will be better. If the Imam does not pause, or you could not recite it in the pause, you should recite it, even if the Imam is reciting. Then, you should listen to the Imam. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Perhaps](#)

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[you recite behind your Imam? We replied: 'Yes, it is so.' He said: 'Do not do so except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab \(the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah\), for there is no Salah \(Prayer\) for the one who does not recite it.'](#) If you are able to recite Al-Fatihah during the pause made by the Imam, do it. If not, you should recite it, and then listen to the Imam. However, if the Ma'mum (the person being led by an Imam in Prayer) does not recite it out of forgetfulness or ignorance, or because he joins the Salah (Prayer) while the Imam is performing Ruku` (bowing), the Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) is counted. All praise be to Allah. The Ma'mum, unlike the Imam and the Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually), is excused from reciting Al-Fatihah in this case. It is a Rukn (integral pillar) of the Salah that should be performed on the part of the Imam and Munfarid. As for the Ma'mum, it is regarded as Sunnah (Supererogatory) according to some scholars. However, the correct opinion is that the Ma'mum is obliged to recite it. However, if he does not recite it out of forgetfulness or ignorance, this obligation is waived. If the Ma'mum joins the Salah while the Imam is performing Ruku`, the Rak`ah is counted. When Abu Bakrah came and the Prophet (peace be upon him) was performing Ruku`, he performed Ruku` before he could reach the row, and then he stood in the row. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah increase your love for the good. But do not repeat it again \(bowing in that way.\)\)](#)



153- Ruling on the Imam praying without tranquility

Q: What is the ruling on the Salah (Prayer) offered by an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who offers Salah hastily to the extent that the Ma'mum (the person being led by an Imam in Prayer) cannot recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an)? Is his Salah valid?

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A: The Imam, the Ma'mum, and the Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually) should maintain tranquility in Salah, as tranquility is one of the great Rukns (integral pillars), which the believer should not ignore in Salah. It is authentically reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) told the person who does not offer Salah properly: **«Bow until you are at ease in bowing, then stand up until you are standing straight. Then prostrate until you are at ease in prostration, then sit up until you are at ease in sitting, then prostrate until you are at ease in prostration, then do that throughout your Salah.»** When the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed Ruku` (bowing), he was ease until every vertebra returned to its place. When he stood up, he would stand until every vertebra returned to its place. He would perform Sujud (prostration) until every vertebra returned to its place. He would raise his head and sit straight between the two Sujuds until every vertebra returned to its place. This is what should be done. If the Imam offers Salah hastily, his Salah is not valid and is considered as Batil (null and void). Someone should draw his attention to this point. If he does not maintain tranquility in his Salah, he should be deposed, and no one should offer Salah behind him. He should maintain tranquility in Salah, and say Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great) in tranquility while performing Ruku`. It is obligatory to say it once, but it is preferable to repeat it three, five, six, or seven times. The least perfect recitation is to say it three

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times. The praying person should say Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim three times in tranquility. If they say it five or seven times, this will be better, but it is obligatory to say it once. As for Sujud, they should say Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High) three times. The least perfect recitation is three times, and it is obligatory to say it once. If they say it five, seven, or ten times, this will be better. It is Mustahab (desirable) to make Du`a' (supplication) during the Sujud, as mentioned in the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet). However, offering Salah hastily is not permissible at all, as this nullifies the Salah. May Allah protect us.



154- Ruling on the Ma'mum reciting Al-Fatihah in the Jahri Salah

Q: Is it permissible for the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud)? Should the Ma'mums recite Al-Fatihah when the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) recites it and pauses? If the Imam does not pause, should the Ma'mums listen to the Imam or recite Al-Fatihah? As far as I know, the pause of the Imam is too short to recite Al-Fatihah in it, will it be considered as an act of Bid`ah (innovation in religion) if the Imam prolongs his pause? Please give us your legal opinion, may Allah reward you with the best.

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A: The scholars hold controversial opinions concerning the Ma'mum reciting Al-Fatihah. The majority of scholars maintain that it is a Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) for the Ma'mum to recite it and not obligatory. Other scholars such as Al-Shafi`y (may Allah be merciful to him) and Al-Bukhari say that it is obligatory. This opinion is likely more correct based on the apparent meaning of the legal proofs, including the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(There is no Salah for the one who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab \(the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah\).\)](#) (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam? We replied: 'Yes, it is so.' He said: 'Do not do so except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab, for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it.'\)](#) (Related by Imam Ahmad through authentic Isnad [chain of narrators]) This Hadith explicitly proves that the Ma'mum is obliged to recite Al-Fatihah: [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam? We replied: 'Yes, it is so.' He said: 'Do not do so except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab, for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it.'\)](#) Its obligation on the Ma'mums is easier than its obligation on the Imam and the Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually). If the Ma'mum joins the Salah while the Imam is performing Ruku`, the Ruku' suffices for him, and the Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) is counted for him, for Al-Fatihah is waived because he misses the standing position. Likewise, if he does not recite it out of forgetfulness, ignorance, Taqlid (strictly following a specific School of Jurisprudence), or Ijtihad (juristic effort to infer expert legal rulings), the obligation of reciting Al-Fatihah is waived. Also,

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it is waived if the Ma'mum does not join the Salah during the standing position in which Al-Fatihah is recited, and joins the Salah while the Imam is performing Ruku`, according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars. Also, it is the opinion of the Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars, may Allah be merciful to them).



Q: The questioner asks: Should I recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) while offering Salah (Prayer) behind the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) or not?

A: You should recite it while offering Salah behind the Imam, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in a Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith): [﴿Perhaps you were reciting behind your Imam?﴾ We said: "Yes, that is so, O Messenger of Allah." He said: "Do not do that, except for the Opening of the Book, for the Salah of the one who does not recite it is invalid.﴾](#) This indicates that the praying person should recite Al-Fatihah while offering Salah behind the Imam, then listen to him without reciting any more Surahs (Qur'anic chapters) except in the Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) such as the Zhuhr (Noon) and the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers. They should recite in the first and second Rak`ahs (units of Prayers) a Surah after Al-Fatihah because they are not listening to anything. As for the Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers, Al-Fatihah suffices for them without reciting any more Surahs, as they should be listening to the Imam. If they join the congregational Salah while the Imam is offering Ruku` (bowing), this suffices for him, all praise be to Allah, according to the correct opinion maintained by the majority of the scholars. If they did not recite Al-Fatihah out of ignorance or forgetfulness while offering Salah behind the Imam, they are regarded as the person who joins the Salah during Ruku' and this suffices for them for this legal excuse. It is obligatory for you, unlike the Imam and the Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually), as it is Rukn (pillar) for them. Its obligation is easier for the Ma'mum. Thus, the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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did not order the person who joins the congregational Salah while the Imam is offering Ruku`. However, he said: [﴿May Allah increase your love for the good. But do not repeat it again \(bowing in that way\),﴾](#) when he offered Ruku` before reaching the row, then he stood in the row for fear that he might miss the Rak`ah.



155- Divergent opinions concerning reciting Al-Fatihah behind the Imam

Q: A questioner from Ghana, West of Africa, asks: The scholars in our country have divergent opinions concerning reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the congregational Salah (Prayers) behind the Imam. Some of them say that it is permissible to recite it, supporting their opinion by the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(Salah of anyone who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab \(the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah\) is invalid.\)](#) Others say that it is not permissible and they support their opinion by the following Ayah (Qura'nic verse): [\(So, when the Qur'ân is recited, listen to it, and be silent\)](#) Which of these evidences is correct?

A: It is a controversial issue among scholars. Some scholars hold that the recitation of the Imam (the one who leads the congregational Prayer) suffices for the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer). It is not necessary for the Ma'mum to recite Al-Fatihah or any other recitation. The second opinion is that reciting Al-Fatihah is obligatory, which is the correct opinion, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam?\)](#)

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They said, "Yes," He said: Do not do that, except for the Al-Fatihah, for there is no Salah for anyone who does not recite it.) The Prophet stated that the Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah, then listen to the Imam. In the Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation), they should recite it and any Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) they know. However, in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited aloud), they are to recite it and listen to the Imam. This is the correct opinion.



156- Ruling on Salah of anyone who does not recite Al-Fatihah behind the Imam out of ignorance

Q: A questioner from Jeddah asks: When I was attending the Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer, the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) said that the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) should listen to the Imam while he is reciting, and does not have to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an). Actually, I offered few Salahs (Prayers) without reciting Al-Fatihah, especially when the Imam does not give the Ma'mums the time to recite and continues his recitation in the Salah. I listened to the Imam while he was reciting and when I asked about this matter, I learned that I should recite Al-Fatihah. Am I obliged to do anything to compensate for the previous Salahs in which I did not recite Al-Fatihah?

A: There is controversy among the scholars concerning this matter. The Jumah (dominant majority of scholars) of the scholars say that the Ma'mum is not obliged to recite Al-Fatihah, and the recitation of the Imam suffices. The second opinion is that

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the recitation of Al-Fatihah is obligatory. This is the correct opinion, as the Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah according to the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(Salah of anyone who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab \(the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah\) is invalid.\)](#) Also, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam? They said, "Yes," He said, "Do not do that, except for Al-Fatihah, for there is no Salah for anyone who does not recite it."\)](#) The Ma'mum should recite it even if the Imam does not pause, then listen to the Imam. If one does not recite it out of ignorance, as some scholars told him that he should not recite it, or out of forgetfulness, their Salah is still valid. They are not obliged to make up for this Salah, as they did not recite it because of the opinion of some scholars. Also, if the Ma'mum did not recite it out of ignorance, they are not obliged to make up for it. If the Ma'mum arrives while the Imam is offering Ruku` (bowing), they should offer Ruku` with him, and they are excused from reciting Al-Fatihah.



Q: Should I recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) if I am a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) or not? Some scholars say that we have to listen attentively to the Glorious Qur'an, especially to Al-Fatihah, as it is the mother of the Qur'an. In addition, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (So, when the Qur'ân is recited, listen to it, and be silent that you may receive mercy. [i.e. during the compulsory congregational prayers when the Imâm (of a mosque) is leading the prayer (except Sûrat Al-Fâtihah), and also when he is delivering the Friday-prayer Khutbah]. (Tafsir At-Tabari).)

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According to this scholarly view, a Muslim ought to listen to the Qur'an, whether during Salah (Prayer) or at any other time, because a person who says 'Amen' to another person's supplication shares the latter's supplication. This is obvious in Allah's Words about Prophet Musa (Moses) and his brother Harun (Aaron): (Allah said: "Verily, the invocation of you both is accepted"); while Harun (peace be upon him) was only saying 'Amen'. On the other hand, some other scholars believe that both the Imam and Ma'mum have to recite Al-Fatihah, because the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (Salah of anyone who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab (the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah) is invalid.) How can we conciliate between the Qur'anic verse cited above and this Hadith? Please, benefit us with a proof-detailed answer. May Allah reward you with the best. I ask this question, because the proponents of the first scholarly opinion say the Hadith: (Salah of anyone who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab (the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah) is invalid.) refers to the Imam and Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually) only, not to the Ma'mum.

A: There is a difference of opinion over the point in question among the knowledgeable scholars (may Allah be merciful to them). A group of them hold that the Ma'mum is not required to recite Al-Fatihah as you have been told according to your question. This group holds that the Ma'mums have to listen to the Imam in both Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud) and Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) as the Imam recites on their behalf in both cases. Some other scholars say that the Ma'mums have to recite it only in the Sirri Salah, not the Jahri one; in the latter, they are, rather, to listen to the Imam.

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They cite as proof for their opinion the Ayah (Qur'anic verse) you have quoted: (So, when the Qur'ân is recited, listen to it, and be silent that you may receive mercy. [i.e. during the compulsory congregational prayers when the Imâm (of a mosque) is leading the prayer (except Sûrat Al-Fâtihah), and also when he is delivering the Friday-prayer Khutbah]. (Tafsir At-Tabari).) and the Hadith: (When he (the Imam) recites (the Qur'an), listen attentively.) There is a third viewpoint that says the Ma'mum has to recite Al-Fatihah in both Sirri Salah and Jahri Salah because of the Hadith you have mentioned in the question: (Salah of anyone who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab (the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah) is invalid.) and because of another Hadith of the Prophet (peace

be upon him): ﴿Perhaps you recite behind your Imam? They said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Do not do that except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab, for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it (in Salah).﴾ (Related by Imam Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhy, and another group of scholars through good chain of narrators) This Hadith also has other narrations supporting it. This opinion is the most correct scholarly view among the above three cited opinions. According to this latter opinion, the Ma'mums are to recite Al-Fatihah with their Imam in both Jahri and Sirri Salahs and then listen to him. This Hadith and the other Hadiths indicating the same meaning narrows down the meaning of the Glorious Ayah: ﴿So, when the Qur'ân is recited, listen to it, and be silent that you may receive mercy. [i.e. during the compulsory congregational prayers when the Imâm (of a mosque) is leading the prayer (except Sûrat Al-Fâtihah), and also when he is delivering the Friday-prayer Khutbah]. (Tafsir At-Tabari).﴾ This Ayah is general and the Hadith mentioned

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narrows down its meaning. There is a Shar`y (Islamic legal) rule that says: The specific rules over the general and restricts its meaning. Thus, it becomes evident that there is no contradiction between the Hadith and the Ayah in question. The Ayah is general, while the Hadith about the Ma'mum's having to recite Al-Fatihah is specific, and the specific rules over the general. So I advise you and every Muslim to recite Al-Fatihah behind the Imam in both Sirri and Jahri Salahs and then listen to the Imam's recitation of other portions of the Qur'an. If the Imam stands silent for a while after reciting Al-Fatihah, the Ma'mum can recite Al-Fatihah at this time; and if the Imam does not do this, the Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah, even if the Imam is reading the Qur'an, and after finishing it, the Ma'mum is to listen to the Imam. May Allah grant us success.



157- Ruling on reciting a Surah after Al-Fatihah by the Ma'mum during the Sirri Salah

Q: Owing to the extreme speed with which some Imams (the persons who lead congregational Prayers) perform the Salah (Prayer), the Ma'mums often find themselves compelled not to recite a short Surah (Chapter of the Qur'an) after Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) during the Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation). Should I repeat the Salah I have performed behind an Imam of this kind. Please, note that Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship) and serenity are lacking when praying behind those Imams.

A: It is obligatory upon Imams to fear Allah and be serene while praying during Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration), and to recite the Qur'an calmly

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so that the words of our Lord are rehearsed clearly. This is an obligation on the Imams. They have to do their best in having serenity and Khushu` during Salah to benefit themselves and those praying behind them and to perform the Salah as Allah has ordained. Allah (Glorified be He) says: **«Successful indeed are the believers.» «Those who offer their Salât (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness.»** The Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered the person who had performed the Salah badly to have serenity while offering it. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) told him: **«When you get up for Salah, perform Wudu' (ablution) properly and then face the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer) and say Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"), and then recite of what you know of the Qur'an, and then bow, and remain in this state till you feel at rest in bowing, and then raise your head and stand straight; and then prostrate yourself till you feel at rest in prostration.»** The Imams have to pay attention to this matter; they have to attain serenity during their Ruku`, after Ruku`, during Sujud, and between the two Sujuds. They also have to give heed to their recitation, reciting the Qur'an clearly without ruling out any letter, and enable the people praying behind them to recite a short Surah after Al-Fatihah. Although reciting a short Surah after Al-Fatihah by the Ma`mum is not obligatory; it is preferable in the Sirri Salah. The Ma`mum recites Al-Fatihah and other verses of the Qur'an with the Imam in the Sirri Salah. The Imam recites a short Surah or some verses of the Qur'an after Al-Fatihah in both Sirri and Jahri Salaha, while the Ma`mums recite Qur'anic verses after Al-Fatihah only in the Sirri Salah, and in the Jahri one it is sufficient for them to recite Al-Fatihah.

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After this, they are to listen to the Imam's recitation in the Jahri Salah. Again it is sufficient for them to recite Al-Fatihah in the Jahri Salah, but in the Sirri one they are to recite some other verses after Al-Fatihah, and if they are not able to do so due to the Imam's quick recitation, there is no problem with this. This is because it is obligatory to recite Al-Fatihah only while the additional verses after it are not obligatory to recite, so this does not affect the validity of the Salah. But the Imam ought to pay attention to attaining serenity during Ruku`, Sujud, between the two Sujuds and after Ruku` also. This is important and obligatory; it is a must to have serenity and sufficient repose in

performing these acts. The recitation of verses other than Al-Fatihah in the Salah is not obligatory; it is only Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet); so if it is available to do it, this is preferable for both the Imam and Ma'mum, and if it is not available, it does not affect the validity of the Salah.



158- The Imam makes Ruku` before the Ma'mum recites Al-Fatihah

Q: If a person approached the Masjid (mosque) while the Imam (one who leads the congregational prayer) and the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in prayer) were still standing in Salah (prayer) and he made Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting prayer), and when he recited three Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) of Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), the Imam made Ruku` (bowing). Should he make Ruku` or complete Al-Fatihah first, noting that if he completed Al-Fatihah, he would be far behind the Imam and the Ma'mums in Ruku` and Sujud (prostration)?

A: It is obligatory for the Ma'mum, whenever he reaches the Masjid while the Imam is in Salah,

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to start praying behind him immediately. If the Imam is still standing, he should recite Al-Fatihah. It is Mustahab (desirable) for him to make Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the prayer), Ta`awwudh (seeking refuge with Allah) and say the Basmalah (saying, "Bismillah Al-Rahman, Al-Rahim [In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful]"), then recite Al-Fatihah. If he can complete it, then praise be to Allah, otherwise he should make Ruku` with his Imam without completing it. In this case, it will be sufficient for him that his Imam had recited Al-Fatihah and it will not be due on him to complete it himself, as previously mentioned, while his Imam is making Ruku`. According to the correct opinion maintained by scholars, the Rak`ah (unit of prayer) performed in this way is sufficient for fulfilling the obligation and one will be exempted from the obligation of recitation since he has missed the standing. This is the opinion adopted by the majority of scholars, including the Four Imams (Abu Hanifah, Malik, Al-Shafi`y, and Ahmad) and others. This stance is supported by the Hadith of Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafy (may Allah be pleased with him) who mentioned that he went to the Prophet (peace be upon him), i.e. to the Masjid (mosque), while the latter was making Ruku`, hence, he made Ruku` outside the row for congregational Salah, and then joined the row after that (after finishing Ruku`). Upon making Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

﴿May Allah increase your keenness on good. But do not repeat it again (bowing in that way.)﴾ He meant: Do not make Ruku` outside the row again. He (peace be upon him) did not order him to make up for that Rak`ah and this indicated that he was exempted from the Qur'anic recitation of that Rak`ah because he missed the position where it should have been recited. The same applies to the one who reaches the Masjid while the Imam is still standing before making Ruku`, but he could not complete Al-Fatihah. In this case, he should make Ruku` with him for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿If he (the Imam) makes Ruku`, you too should make Ruku`﴾ Thus, the Ma'mum is commanded to follow his Imam. Nonetheless, if only one Ayah

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or two are left, he can recite them. To sum up, if he can complete Al-Fatihah, that will be good; otherwise, he has to make Ruku` with his Imam because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿If

he (the Imam) makes Ruku`, you too should make Ruku`) He will then be exempted from reciting Al-Fatihah because he is commanded to follow his Imam.



Q: The questioner says: "Should the Ma'mum (one lead by the Imam in congregational prayer) recite Qur'an in Salah (Prayer)?"

A: The Ma'mum must recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud). Whereas in the Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation), the Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah and any other Surah (Qur'anic chapter) in the Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr (afternoon) Prayers. Moreover, he must recite Al-Fatihah in the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, and the third and fourth Rak`ahs of the Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers.





Q: Some claim that the recitation of the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is a recitation for the Ma'mum (one led by the Imam in congregational Prayer) as well. Our eminent Shaykh, what is your opinion on this?

A: This is the view of the majority, however, it is Da`if (weak) one. The majority says that the recitation of the Imam is sufficient for the Ma'mum as well. However, this is a weak opinion that is based on a Hadith related by some Imams that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever prays behind an Imam, then the Imam's recitation is a recitation for him as well.\)](#) However, this Hadith is classified as Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan, due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators) by scholars. Thus, the correct opinion is that the Ma'mum should recite Al-Fatihah because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(There is no Salah \(no reward\) for one who does not recite](#)

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[Al-Fatihah.](#)) Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(You probably recite behind your Imam." We said: "Yes, we do." Thereupon, he \(peace be upon him\) said: "Do not do that except with Al-Fatihah for there is no Salah for one who does not recite it."\)](#) Hence, the Ma'mum must recite Al-Fatihah; however, if one misses it by forgetting or for being ignorant thinking that no recitation is required, the Salah is valid. Furthermore, if one reaches the Masjid while the Imam is performing Ruku` (bowing), the Rak`ah (unit of prayer) performed by the Imam will be sufficient for the Ma'mum according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. The matter is easier when it comes to the Ma'mum, but it is essential for the Imam and the one praying individually. Hence, the majority believe that reciting Al-Fatihah is not obligatory for the Ma'mum although the soundest opinion is that it is obligatory if one knows and remembers. Nonetheless, if one forgets, or does not know, it will not affect the validity of the Salah. The same applies if one arrives while the Imam is in Ruku` and fails to recite it before Ruku`. Nothing is due on them because it was proven in the Hadith of Abu Bakrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that he arrived while the Imam was in Ruku`, so he performed Ruku` with him and he (peace be upon him) did not order him to make up for that Rak`ah.



159- Ruling on Ma'mums reciting Al-Fatihah during the Imam's recitation

Q: Our Eminent Shaykh, people often ask about the recitation of Al-Fatihah (opening chapter of the Qur`an) in the congregational Salah (prayer) if the

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Imam (one who leads the congregational Prayer) starts the recitation while the Ma'mums (people led by the Imam in the congregational Prayer) have not yet recited Al-Fatihah. Should they recite Al-Fatihah even while the Imam is reciting?

A: Yes, they should recite Al-Fatihah inaudibly and then listen to the Imam unless it is known that the Imam makes a long pause after his recitation of Al-Fatihah. In this case, they are to delay their recitation until he finishes his, then recite Al-Fatihah inaudibly. However, if the Imam is not known to pause after his recitation, they should recite Al-Fatihah even during the recitation of the Imam, then they should listen to him according to the Shari`ah-approved evidence.



160- Ruling on not saying 'Amen' after the Imam recites Al-Fatihah

Q: Is it correct that the Ma'mums (the people being led by an Imam in Prayer) are not required to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) behind the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), nor are they required to say 'Amen' after the Imam finishes Al-Fatihah, according to the Hanafi Madh-hab (School of Jurisprudence)? If this is correct, what should the Ma'mums do?

A: The Hanafi Madh-hab here is not the preponderant opinion; it is the view of the Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars) in this respect that is more correct, this is, the Ma'mums are to follow the Imam in saying 'Amen', as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Say: 'Amen', when the Imam says: 'Amen'.\)](#) Another narration of this Hadith says: [\(When the Imam says: \(not \(the way\) of those who earned Your Anger \(i.e. those who knew the Truth, but did not follow it\) nor of those who went astray \(i.e. those who did not follow the Truth out of ignorance and error\).\)](#)

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[say: 'Amen'; if anyone's words coincide with the angels' words, their \(past\) sins will be forgiven."](#))

This is the correct opinion maintained by the majority of scholars, although it contradicts the Hanafi Madh-hab. The latter is not dominant here. Also, according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars, the Ma'mums are to recite only Al-Fatihah in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud) and then listen to the Imam. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam? They said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Do not do that except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab, for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it \(in Salah\).'\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) here excluded Al-Fatihah; this indicates that the Ma'mums are to recite it behind their Imams in both the Sirri and the Jahri Salahs. This is to say, when the Imam completes Al-Fatihah and starts reading other verses without waiting silently for a while, the Ma'mums have to recite Al-Fatihah subvocally even if the Imam is praying a Jahri Salah. Then, the Ma'mums are to listen to the Imam. This is in accordance with the many Sahih (authentic) Hadiths transmitted from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) in this respect. As for the Sirri Salahs like Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, the third and fourth Rak`ahs of `Isha' (Night) Prayer; the Ma'mums are to recite Al-Fatihah anyway. They are required to recite the same in the Sirri Salahs, according to the majority of scholars, as the Prophet

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(peace be upon him) said: [\(Salah of anyone who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab \(the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah\) is invalid.\)](#) This is also based on the Hadith quoted above:

[\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam? They said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Do not do that except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab, for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it \(in Salah\).'\)](#) This is related to the Jahri Salahs. As for the Sirri ones, the Ma'mums are to recite Al-Fatihah and whatever is easy to recite from the Qur'an in the first and second Rak`ahs of Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers, and recite only Al-Fatihah in the third and fourth Rak`ahs of Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers and the third Rak`ah of Maghrib



161- Ruling on the Ma'mums' recitation of Al-Fatihah in the Jahri Salah

Q: I heard some brothers say that reciting Al-Fatihah (opening chapter of the Qur'an) is obligatory for the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud). Conversely, others say that it is not obligatory in the Jahri Salah because Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: [﴿So, when the Qur'ân is recited, listen to it, and be silent that you may receive mercy. \[i.e. during the compulsory congregational prayers when the Imâm \(of a mosque\) is leading the prayer \(except Sûrat Al-Fâtihah\), and also when he is delivering the Friday-prayer Khutbah\]. \(Tafsir At-Tabari\).﴾](#)

A: Yes, reciting Al-Fatihah is obligatory for the Ma'mums in the Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) as well as the Jahri Salah according to the soundest opinion maintained by scholars. In the Jahri Salah, the worshipers should recite Al-Fatihah and then listen to the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), whereas in the Sirri Salah, the worshipers should recite Al-Fatihah and then what is easy for them to recite of the Qur'an in the first and second Rak`ahs (unit of Prayer) of the Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [﴿There is no Salah \(valid\) for the one who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab \(the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah\).﴾](#) Also, he Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [﴿May be you recite after your Imam. We said: 'Yes we do.' Thereupon, he \(peace be upon him\) said: 'Do not do that except with Al-Fatihah for there is no Salah for one who does not recite it.﴾](#) This indicates the obligation of recitation for the Ma'mums in both the Jahri and Sirri Salaha. However, if a Ma'mum misses the recitation of Al-Fatihah out of ignorance or forgetfulness, the obligation of reciting it is waived because it is obligatory but not a pillar affecting the validity of the Ma'mum's Salah. The same applies if a worshiper arrives at the Masjid (mosque) while the Imam is in Ruku` because the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command Abu Bakrah to make up for the Rak`ah that he missed when he arrived at the Masjid while the Imam was in Ruku`, rather he (peace be upon him) said: [﴿May Allah increase your keenness for good, but do not repeat it again \(bowing in that manner\).﴾](#) When he bowed outside the ranks, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [﴿May Allah increase your keenness for good, but do not repeat it again \(bowing in that way\).﴾](#) He (peace be upon him) did not order him to make up for the Rak`ah that he missed, i.e. the one in which he did not recite Al-Fatihah. As for the Hadith: [﴿Whoever prays behind the Imam, then the Imam's recitation is a recitation for them as well,﴾](#) it is Da`if (weak) and the correct thing is that the Ma'mums are required to recite Al-Fatihah in the Jahri and Sirri Salah. In the Sirri Salah, the Ma'mums are required to recite after Al-Fatihah what is easy for them to recite of the Qur'an and that is in the first and second Rak`ahs.



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162- Reciting Al-Fatihah in the Jahri and Sirri Salahs

Q: Is there a difference between the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud) and the Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) in terms of the obligation of reciting Al-Fatihah (opening chapter of the Quran) for the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer)?

A: No, there is no difference, because the ruling is general and includes both the Jahri and Sirri Salahs. This is supported by the Hadith related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih on the authority of Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafy who said that he came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) while he was in Ruku` (bowing). Thus, he performed Ruku` with him and did not recite Al-Fatihah ; rather, he missed the standing, so he performed Ruku` first outside the row, then he walked and joined the row while the Imam was still in the position of Ruku`. Hence, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated:

«May Allah increase your keenness for good, but do not repeat it again (bowing in that way.)» He (peace be upon him) did not command him to make up for the Rak`ah that he missed. This indicates the fact that whoever joins the Imam while he is in Ruku`, the Rak`ha (unit of Prayer) performed by the Imam will be sufficient and one will not be required to recite Al-Fatihah for he is excused by missing the standing in which Al-Fatihah is recited. The same applies if one is ignorant of the Shar`i (Islamically prescribed) ruling or forgets to recite Al-Fatihah, in which case the Imam's recitation will be sufficient for them.



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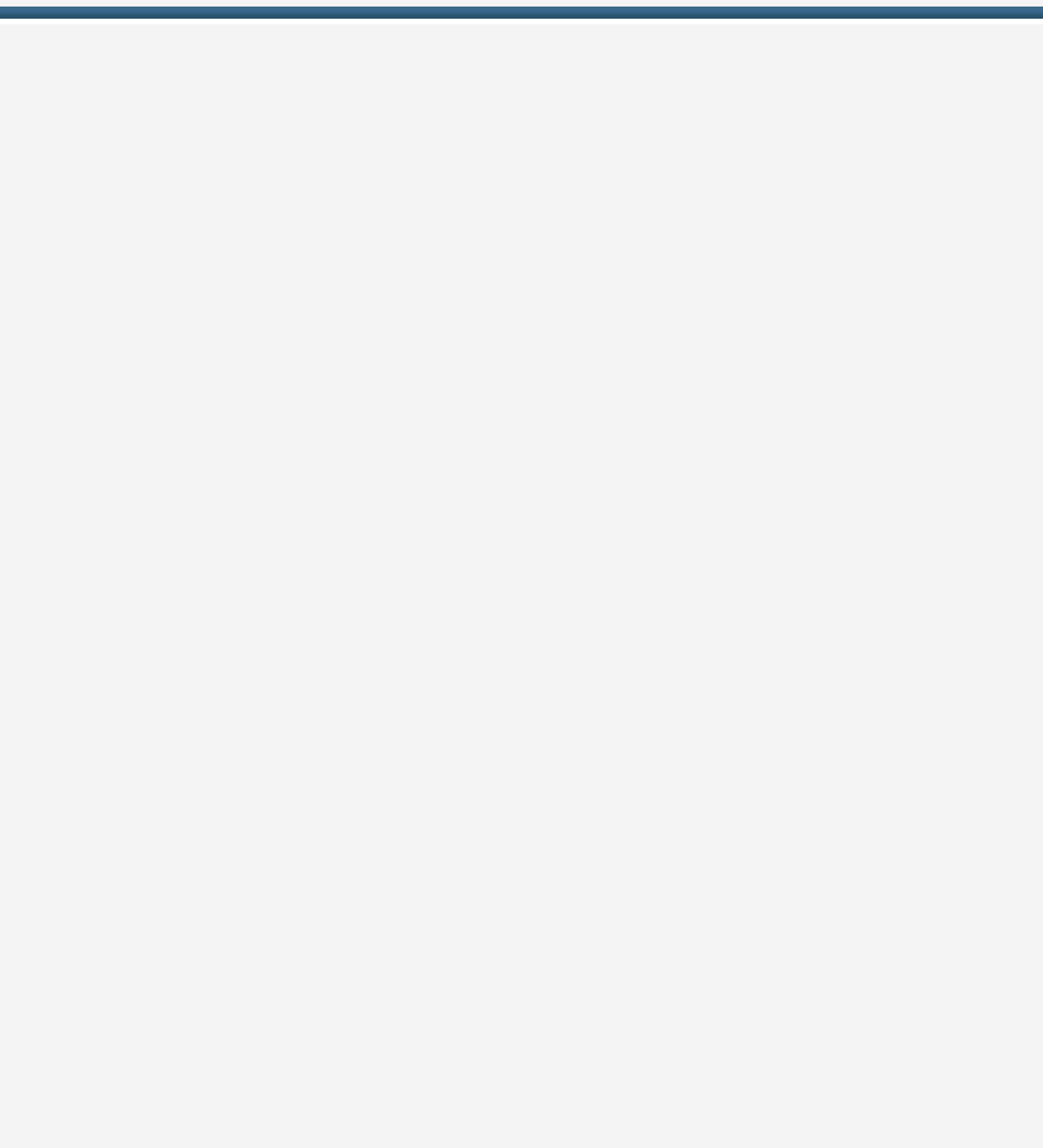
163- Ruling on the Ma'mum praying without reciting Al-Fatihah

Q: What is the ruling on a person who prays behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and does not recite anything, not even Al-Fatihah (opening chapter of the Quran), and does not say, 'Amen' after the Imam concludes the recitation of Al-Fatihah?

A: The majority of scholars are of the opinion that the Salah (Prayer) of such a person is valid and that the Imam's recitation of Al-Fatihah is sufficient for them as well. However, this person does not fulfill what is Mashru` (Islamically prescribed) because it is Mashru` for the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) to recite Al-Fatihah in the Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) and then they may recite what is easy for them to recite of the Qur'an in the first and second Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of the Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers. In the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), it is sufficient for the Ma'mums to recite Al-Fatihah only. This is the Mashru'. If the Imam pauses, the Ma'mums may recite Al-Fatihah during that pause. Some scholars consider it obligatory for the Ma'mums to recite Al-Fatihah if possible. This is the correct opinion, the Ma'mums must recite Al-Fatihah if possible because of the general indication of the Hadith where the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(There is no Salah \(valid\) for the one who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab \(the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah\).\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) said as well: [\(Perhaps you recite after your Imam. We said: 'Yes, we do.' Thereupon, he \(peace be upon him\) said: 'Do not do that except with Fatihat-ul-Kitab for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it.\)](#) This is a Sahih (authentic) Hadith that was related by Ahmad, Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Al-Nasa'y, and Ibn Majah

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with a Sahih authentic Sanad (chain of narrators). However, if the Ma'mum misses standing with the Imam and only performs the Ruku` (bowing), this Rak`ah that is performed by the Imam will be sufficient for the Ma'mum as well according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. It is authentically reported in the Sahih of Al-Bukhari (may Allah be merciful with him) that Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafy (may Allah be pleased with him) joined Salah with the Prophet (peace be upon him) while the Prophet was in Ruku`, hence he performed Ruku` outside the ranks then he joined the row. After the Prophet (peace be upon him) pronounced Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), he said to him: [\(May Allah increase your keenness for good, but do not repeat it again \(bowing in that manner\).\)](#) He (peace be upon him) did not command him to make up for the Rak`ah that he had missed. This indicates that he was excused because he was absent at the time when Al-Fatihah was recited while the Imam was standing. The same applies to one who is ignorant of the Shari`ah ruling or forgets to recite Al-Fatihah, because for the Ma'mum the recitation of Al-Fatihah is obligatory and not a pillar affecting the validity of the Salah. That is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command Abu Bakrah to make up for that Rak`ah in which he missed the standing.





164- Ruling on listening to the Imam after his recitation of Al-Fatihah

Q: When the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) recites Al-Fatihah (opening chapter of the Qur'an) and then recites a long Surah (Qur'anic chapter), should I use this time to offer Du`a' (supplication), recite something of the Qur'an or should I listen to the Imam?

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A: It is your duty to listen to the Imam as Allah (Glorified be He) states: [﴿So, when the Qur'ân is recited, listen to it, and be silent﴾](#) Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [﴿When he recites \(the Qur'an\), remain silent and listen.﴾](#) An exception to this rule is Al-Fatihah, for the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) has to recite it whether the Imam pauses or not. If there is a pause, the Ma'mum should recite it during that time; otherwise, he has to recite it during the Imam's recitation and then continue to listen to him as the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [﴿There is no Salah \(valid\) for the one who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab \(the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah\).﴾](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also stated: [﴿There is no Salah for the one who does not recite it \(Al-Fatihah\)﴾](#) Therefore, the Ma'mum must recite it inaudibly and then listen to the Imam.



165- Ruling on repeating a Surah after Al-Fatihah until the Imam performs Ruku`

Q: I memorize only some short Surahs (Qur'anic chapters) and when the Imam (one who leads the congregational prayer) makes Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer), I recite Al-Fatihah (opening chapter of the Qur'an) and a short Surah. Once I finish, I become greatly confused and I do not know whether I should keep on reciting short Surahs or keep silent until the Imam makes Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") for Ruku` (bowing). Please advise me about what I should do

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and may Allah reward you with the best.

A: The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to recite whatever you memorize of the Qur'an until the Imam makes Ruku`. It is also permissible for you to repeat the Surah that you memorize or other Surahs along with Al-Fatihah until the Imam makes Ruku`. You should not keep silent because of the great virtue of the Qur'anic recitation, even if it is Al-Fatihah and even if you memorize nothing but Al-Fatihah because one gets a reward for every letter they recite of the Qur'an and the reward is multiplied ten fold.



Q: In the third and fourth Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), I finish reciting Al-Fatihah (opening chapter of the Qur'an) while the Imam has not yet performed Ruku` (bowing). Should I repeat Al-Fatihah or should I recite other Surahs (Qur'anic chapters)?

A: You should recite anything else of the Qur'an or keep silent but do not repeat Al-Fatihah. You may recite an Ayah (Qur'anic verse) or two or keep silent until he makes Takbir (says Allahu Akbar: Allah is the greatest) for Ruku`.





Q: When I offer the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer or `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and he prolongs the recitation, is it permissible for me to recite another Surah (Qur'anic chapter) after reciting a short Surah or should I keep silent

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until he performs Ruku` (bowing)?

A: You should continue recitation of another Surah or Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) until the Imam performs Ruku`, because the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) should remain silent; one should either continue reciting or listen to the Imam. If the Salah is Sirri (Prayer with inaudible recitation), you must recite until the Imam performs Ruku`.



Q: If a worshiper joins the Salah (prayer) while the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is reciting a Surah (Qur'anic chapter) after Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), should they recite Al-Fatihah or listen to the recitation of the Imam?

A: The Ma'mums should recite Al-Fatihah and then listen to the Imam, because it is mandatory for them to recite Al-Fatihah as the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded them to do so.





166- Ruling on Salah by a Ma'mum who doubts having recited Al-Fatihah

Q: A questioner asks: If a person is not sure whether they have recited Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) and this doubt persists in the second Rak`ah, what should they do?

A: If a person is a Ma'mum (one being led by an Imam in Prayer), there is no harm, all praise be to Allah, as the Imam assumes this responsibility on the congregation's behalf. If a person does not recite it out of ignorance or forgetfulness or doubts having recited it, there is no harm in this. However, a person is not permitted to abandon Al-Fatihah intentionally, and one is to recite it along with the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer). This is the proper way.





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167- Ruling on audible recitation of the Ma'mum behind the Imam

Q: When should a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) recite audibly behind the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in the Salah (Prayer)?

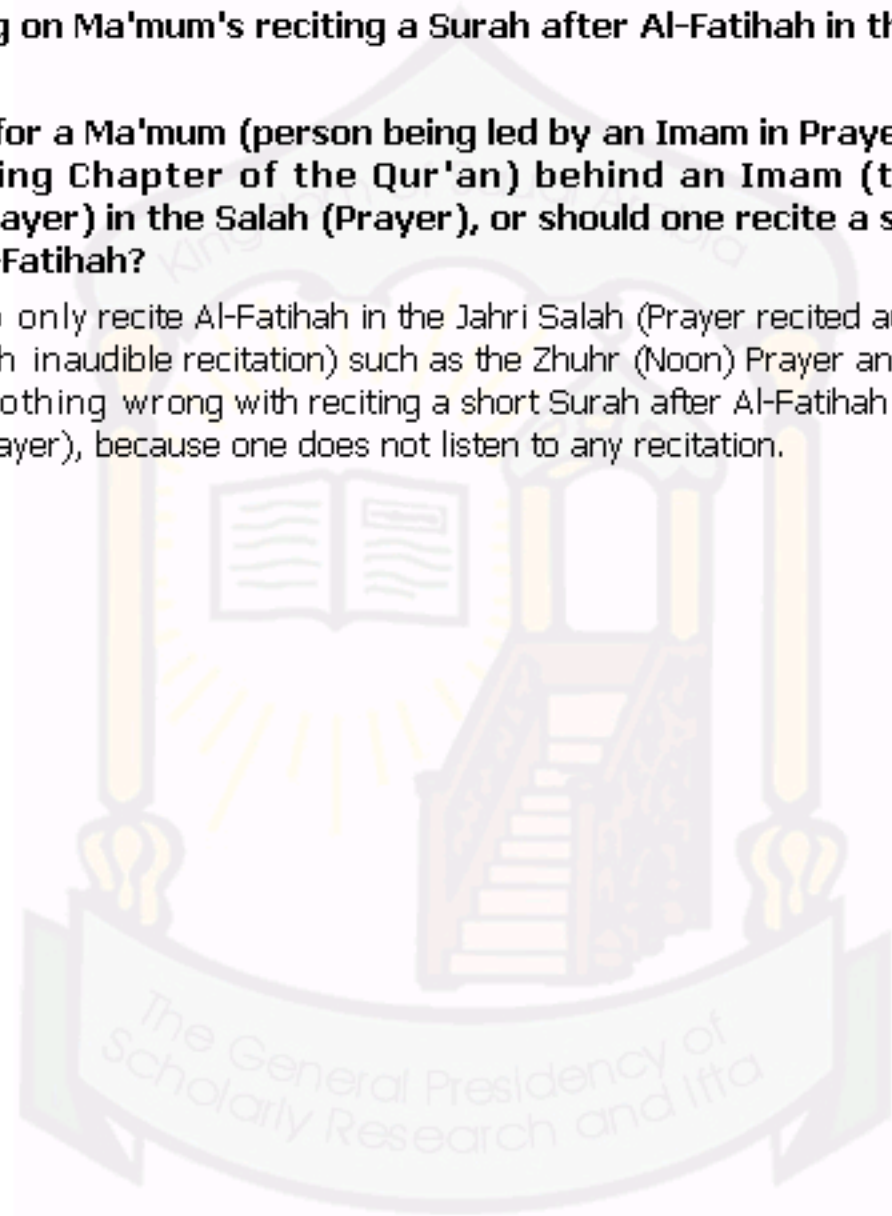
A: The Ma'mum should not recite audibly behind an Imam in the Salah, but should recite inaudibly. The Imam is the one who should recite aloud in the first two Rak'ahs (units of Prayer) of the Maghrib (Sunset), 'Isha' (Night), Fajr (Dawn), Jumu'ah (Friday), Salat-ul-'Eid (the Festival Prayer), Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse), and Salat-ul-Istisqa' (Prayer for rain) Prayers. This is what is prescribed.



168- Ruling on Ma'mum's reciting a Surah after Al-Fatihah in the Sirri Salah

Q: Is it enough for a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to only recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in the Salah (Prayer), or should one recite a short Surah (Qu'anic Chapter) after Al-Fatihah?

A: It is enough to only recite Al-Fatihah in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited audibly). As for the Sirri Salah (Prayer with inaudible recitation) such as the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, there is nothing wrong with reciting a short Surah after Al-Fatihah in the first and second Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), because one does not listen to any recitation.





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169- Ruling on a Ma'mum reciting Al-Fatihah when the Imam pauses

Q: A questioner from Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah asks: When should the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited audibly)?

A: A person should recite Al-Fatihah during the pause left by the Imam. After the Imam recites Al-Fatihah, he pauses to allow the Ma'mums to recite it. If the Imam does not pause, the Ma'mum is permitted to recite it at anytime. There is nothing wrong with that. Also, they may recite it while the Imam is reciting it, then they can listen to his recitation either before or after Al-Fatihah. However, if the Imam usually leaves a pause, the Ma'mum should recite it during this pause, thus serving both interests; the interest of recitation and that of listening to the Imam during his recitation.



Q: What is the ruling on the recitation of a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited audibly)? Should the Ma'mum only listen to Imam or offer the Salah (Prayer) as when one is Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually)? I hear some worshipers repeating Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) quickly without reflecting deeply on its meaning.

A: There is no difference of opinion among scholars concerning this matter. The correct manner is for one to recite it in the Sirri Salah (Prayer with inaudible recitation) and the Jahri Salah. If the Imam leaves a pause, one is to recite it during this pause. If the Imam does not pause,

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they should recite it, then listen to him, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The Salah of anyone who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab \(the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah\) is invalid.\)](#) Also, he said: [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam? They said: Yes. He said: Do not do that, except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab, for there is no Salah for anyone who does not recite it.\)](#) It should be recited in the Jahri and Sirri Salah silently, then one should listen to the Imam.



170- Issue on Imam's pausing after the recitation of Al-Fatihah

Q: Should the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) pause briefly after reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an)? How long should the pause be?

A: There is no evidence in support of this short period of silence and the Imam is not required to do so; however, there is nothing wrong with doing or leaving this act, because the Hadith reported in this regard is unauthentic. Scholars differ in this issue; some of them maintain that this short period of silence is to be observed after reciting Al-Fatihah to allow time for the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to recite Al-Fatihah; however, other scholars are of the opinion that there is no pause. Thus, there is much latitude in this regard as this pause is not obligatory. In conclusion, if the Imam begins recitation immediately after Al-Fatihah, there is nothing wrong in doing so. Moreover, if he pauses briefly, this is permissible; and the Ma'mum is to recite Al-Fatihah inaudibly in both cases and then listen to the Imam. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [«Perhaps you recite behind your Imam?» We said: "Yes." He thus said: "Do not do that except](#)

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[for reciting Al-Fatihah, because there is no Salah for one who does not recite it.»](#) The Ma'mum should, thus recite Al-Fatihah in the Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) and the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud). If the Imam pauses briefly, one should recite Al-Fatihah during this interval; and if the Imam does not pause, he should recite Al-Fatihah inaudibly and then listen to the Imam. This applies; however, to the Jahri Salah, but in cases of the Sirri Salah such as the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, one should recite Al-Fatihah and what he can recite of other Surahs (Qur'anic chapters).



171- Ruling on reciting the Du`a'-ul-Istiftah upon joining the Salah after the Imam has finished recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah

Q: Abu `Abid, from Riyadh, asks: What is the ruling on the Salah (prayer) of a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) who joins the ranks after the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) has recited Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and is reciting a Surah (Qur'anic chapter) while the Ma'mum has not recited Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer)? Is the Salah invalid in this case?

A: If the Ma'mum joins the Salah after the Imam has finished recitation of Al-Fatihah, they should recite Al-Fatihah only and should not recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah, because Du`a'-ul-Istiftah is a supererogatory act and the Ma'mum must to listen attentively to the Imam, while recitation of Al-Fatihah is obligatory. Thus, one should recite Al-Fatihah and listen to the Imam and there is no need to recite the Du`a'-ul-Istiftah.



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172- Ruling on the Salah of a Ma'mum who does not complete the recitation of Al-Fatihah before the Ruku` of the Imam

Q: If the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) performs Ruku` (bowing) before I complete the recitation of Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), should I bow with him or complete Al-Fatihah? In which cases would the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) be exempted from reciting Al-Fatihah?

A: If only a short portion, such as one or two Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) of Al-Fatihah, remains, he should complete it. However, if the Ma'mum fears lest the Imam should finish Ruku` before he ends the recitation, he has to follow the Imam and he is exempted from reciting the remaining part. The same applies to the case of a Ma'mum who joins the Imam during Ruku`; he should bow with the Imam and the recitation of Al-Fatihah is waived. For example, when the Ma'mum joins the congregational Salah while the Imam is performing Ruku` and he follows him in Ruku`, this Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) is counted as valid and sufficient as authentically reported in Sahih of Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Bakrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that he arrived while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was in Ruku`, so he bowed before joining the row of worshipers and then joined them. After Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah increase your keenness \(for good\), but do not repeat it again \(bowing in that manner\).\)](#) He (peace be upon him) did not command him to make up for the Rak`ah. This is the view held by the Four Imams (Abu Hanifah, Malik, Al-Shafi`y, and Ahmad) who maintain that if the Ma'mum joins the congregational Salah while the Imam is in Ruku`, the Rak`ah is counted as valid and the recitation of Al-Fatihah is waived. Similarly, if the Ma'mum only recites the first part of Al-Fatihah and fears lest he should miss Ruku` with the Imam, he should follow the Imam in Ruku` and there is nothing wrong on his part. Similarly, when the Ma'mum forgets to recite Al-Fatihah (after the Imam finishes reciting it) or is unaware of the ruling that necessitates this, he is excused from reciting Al-Fatihah and his Salah with the Imam is valid. But this does not apply to a Munfarid (person offering Salah individually), as his Salah is rendered invalid if he forgets to recite Al-Fatihah or is unaware of the obligation of reciting it; it is necessary that he recites it as it constitutes a Rukn (integral pillar) of his Salah.

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It is only obligatory for a Ma'mum to recite it if he is aware of the ruling and remembers to do so. This ruling is based on the fact that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafy to repeat the Rak`ah in which he joined the congregational Salah while the Imam (the Prophet) was performing Ruku`.



173- Ruling on following the Imam in Ruku` before a Ma'mum completes Al-Fatihah

Q: A questioner asks: I suffer from partial hearing loss and the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) starts Ruku` (bowing) during the last two Rak`ahs (units of prayer) or the third Rak`ah of Maghrib (sunset) Prayer before I can complete recitation of Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an). He rises from Ruku` after I finish recitation of Al-Fatihah or before I start to bow, especially when the Imam happens to be lightening his Salah (prayer). Now, should I complete recitation of Al-Fatihah even if the Imam finishes Ruku` or should I follow the Imam even if I cannot recite Al-Fatihah in the Salah? I heard some seekers of knowledge say that following the Imam is more important and more binding than completing recitation of Al-Fatihah in each Rak`ah, is this correct?

A: You have to follow the Imam even if you have not completed Al-Fatihah, because the Prophet

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(peace be upon him) stated: [﴿If he \(the Imam\) bows, you should bow after him.﴾](#) Thus, you should bow after the Imam even if you have not completed Al-Fatihah. However, you should be careful to recite Al-Fatihah immediately after Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") and also after standing up from Sujud (prostration). You should stand moderately and start to recite it without delay. Recite quickly to complete the recitation of Al-Fatihah before Ruku`. Beware of evil thoughts and read well even if you recite it quickly. Some people recite so slowly that they are too late to finish Al-Fatihah. Rather, you should recite continuously and clearly after Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting prayer) and Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the prayer). The same equally applies in other Rak`ahs (units of prayer); you should hasten to recite without slackening or delay. However, if it happens that the Imam starts Ruku` before you recite some Ayahs (Qur'anic verses), you have to follow him unless the remaining portion is only one or two Ayahs, so you may complete them and follow him in Ruku`. If you fear that you may miss the Ruku`, there is no blame on you in not completing recitation; all praise is due to Allah. For example, if you come while the Imam is in a state of Ruku`, you should bow with him and the obligation on you to recite Al-Fatihah is dropped; if one comes late while the Imam is in a state of Ruku`, he is exempted from reciting Al-Fatihah, and the Rak`ah is valid as is authentically reported from Abu Bakrah (may Allah be pleased with him). He came (to prayer) while the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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was in a state of Ruku`, so he bowed before reaching the row of Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in prayer) and then joined the row. The Prophet (peace be upon him) then said to him: [﴿May Allah increase your keenness to do good deeds, but do not repeat this act again!﴾](#) Similarly, if the Ma'mum (pl. Ma'mums) forgets to recite Al-Fatihah or is unaware of the obligation of reciting it, he is forgiven. For, though recitation of Al-Fatihah is obligatory on the Ma'mum, such obligation is dropped in case of forgetfulness, ignorance, or missing it, as is the case when a Ma'mum joins the Imam while the latter is standing. These are among the reasons for which recitation of Al-Fatihah is

dropped; if a person forgets to recite Al-Fatihah, is unaware of the obligation of reciting Al-Fatihah, or joins the Imam while in a state of Ruku` or close to starting Ruku` and one has no time to recite it, the obligation is dropped, praise be to Allah. This is the correct view. Here, the majority of scholars are of the view that reciting Al-Fatihah is not obligatory on the Ma'mum, but the correct view is that it is obligatory on the Ma'mum. Again, if one forgets to say: Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great) or Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High) or O our Lord and all praise is due to You, and the like of formulas of glorifications, the obligation to recite them is dropped. For, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(Do you recite behind your Imam? We said: Yes. He replied: Do not recite other than Al-Fatihah, because there is no Salah for one who does not recite it.\)](#) This indicates that the Ma'mum should recite behind the Imam and this is an obligation on him. However, when

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one forgets or is unaware of the Islamic ruling about it, one is pardoned: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) The basic evidence in support of this ruling is the Hadith reported from Abu Bakrah; when he came (to prayer) and found the Prophet in a state of Ruku`, he joined him and the Prophet did not command him to make up for the Rak`ah although he did not recite Al-Fatihah, as he was excused for missing the standing when the Imam recited in Salah.



174- Ruling on reciting Al-Fatihah as the Imam or the Munfarid

Q: If a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) omits the second pillar of Salah (Prayer), i.e. Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), does this invalidate the Salah, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated that the Salah that lacks Al-Fatihah is imperfect, imperfect, imperfect. He (peace be upon him) also stated, (There is no valid Salah for a person, who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab (the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah).)

A: As for the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and Munfarid (person offering Salah individually), their Salah is invalid when they do not recite Al-Fatihah based on the two Hadiths mentioned above. As far as the Ma'mum is concerned, the validity of the Salah is a point of dispute; if one intentionally omits the recitation of Al-Fatihah while being aware of the evidence related in the Sunnah regarding it, the Salah is valid provided that one believes that there is no other counterevidence for this issue. This is

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according to soundest of the opinions maintained by scholars. However, if one omits the recitation of Al-Fatihah after Ijtihad (juristic effort to infer expert legal rulings) and concludes that it is obligatory on the Imam and the Munfarid only or if one omits it due to not being aware of the ruling of Shari`ah, the Salah is valid. This is because it is done without intending to commit a forbidden act or to ignore an obligation; one only leaves it due to Ijtihad or unawareness, so the Salah is valid. This is unlike a person who knows the ruling of Shari`ah and believes that it is obligatory, then he omits it on purpose. In this case the Salah is invalid because one differs from what one believes and opposes the truth. There is no doubt that reciting Al-Fatihah is a very important matter. The scholars differ concerning the ruling of reciting Al-Fatihah and the preponderant view is that it is obligatory on the Ma'mum, for the generality of the Hadiths related in this regard. Therefore, a Ma'mum should not omit the recitation of Al-Fatihah and must recite it. If one forgets or is unaware of the ruling, or misses standing with the Imam; e.g. one arrives late during the Ruku` (bowing) of the Imam, one's Salah is valid. The Rak`ah (unit of prayer) is thus acceptable and one is not required to make up for this Rak`ah, which one started at the pillar of Ruku` behind the Imam. This is the correct view held by the majority of Muslim scholars.



175- Ruling on making up for the Rak`ah in which the Ma'mum forgot to recite Al-Fatihah

Q: The questioner says: I performed the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer in congregation at the Masjid (mosque),

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but I forgot to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) during the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). When the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) made Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), I stood to make up for the first Rak`ah in which I had forgotten to recite Al-Fatihah, owing to the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him): (Salah of anyone who does not recite Fatihat-ul-Kitab (the Opening of the Book, i.e. Al-Fatihah) is invalid.) I finished making up for the first Rak`ah and then remembered that I have to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness), so I offered it. I would like Your Eminence to inform me if this act is according to the right way of Shari`ah (Islamic Law)?

A: There is no problem regarding what you have done In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills). But the correct scholarly opinion is that you do not have to make up for this Rak`ah. What you have done is also in accordance with the viewpoint of some scholars who hold that the person who has forgotten to recite Al-Fatihah is to make up for the Rak`ah in which they has forgotten it. But the correct scholarly opinion is that if the Ma'mum forgot to recite Al-Fatihah or was ignorant of the legal ruling on the obligation of reciting it, or joined the Salah while the Imam was bowing, they are exempted from the obligation of reciting Al-Fatihah and joining the Rak`ah while the Imam was bowing will be sufficient to stand for this Rak`ah and there is no need for making up for this Rak`ah in these cases. This is based on the Hadith related by Al- Bukhari (may Allah be merciful to him) in his Sahih on the authority of Abu Bakrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that Abu Bakrah went to the Masjid while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was bowing, so he bowed immediately without positioning himself in the row behind the Prophet; then he entered the row. After the Salah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him: (May Allah increase your love for what is good. But do not repeat it again (bowing in that way.)) The Prophet here did not order Abu Bakrah to make up for this Rak`ah, because he was excused for missing standing of it.

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Likewise, a person who forgot to recite Al-Fatihah, or was ignorant of the legal ruling on the obligation of reciting it, or joined the Salah while the Imam was bowing, this same Rak`ah will be sufficient for them and Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah). This is the correct opinion maintained by scholars here. On the other hand, the Imam is required to recite Al-Fatihah, and should he forget it in the first Rak`ah of Fajr Prayer, for example, the second Rak`ah would stand for it and he would be required to offer an additional Rak`ah to make up for it. This is also the case with a Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually). Reciting Al-Fatihah by both of them is a Rukn (integral pillar) of the Salah, while the ruling on it with regard to the Ma'mum is more flexible. That is why the majority of scholars believe that the Ma'mum does not have to recite Al-Fatihah in the Salah

and that the Imam recites it on their behalf; but the correct scholarly opinion is that the Ma'mum who knows the ruling on the obligation of reciting it in the Salah is to recite it when they remember. This is based on the obvious meaning indicated by the Hadiths related in this respect, including the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(Perhaps you recite behind your Imam? They said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Do not do that except for Fatihat-ul-Kitab, for there is no Salah for the one who does not recite it \(in Salah\).'\)](#) This Hadith indicates the obligation of reciting Al-Fatihah by the Ma'mum; but should the latter forget to recite it or be ignorant of that ruling, they would be exempted from it as is the case on forgetting Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") during Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration). Likewise, if the Ma'mum joins in the Prayer while the Imam was in Ruku`, they are exempted from reciting Al-Fatihah, this is according to the Hadith narrated by Abu Bakrah. The Hadiths explain one another.



176- Ruling on a Ma'mum who intentionally or unintentionally leaves out recitation of Al-Fatihah behind the Imam

Q: What is the ruling on the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) who fails to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), intentionally or unintentionally, while praying behind the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in

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the Sirri Salah (Prayer with inaudible recitation) or Jahri Salah (Prayer recited audibly loud)?

A: It is obligatory on the Ma'mum to recite Al-Fatihah. This is the most correct of the opinions maintained by scholars. The majority of scholars are of the view that reciting Al-Fatihah is not obligatory on the Ma'mum and the Imam's recitation exempts the Ma'mum from it. However, the preponderant view is that the Imam's recitation does not exempt the Ma'mum, and both must recite it, because of the general statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(There is no valid Salah for one who does not recite the Opening \(Surah\) of the Book \(the Qur'an, i.e. Al-Fatihah\)\)](#) In addition, there are other relevant Hadiths to the same effect. However, if the Ma'mum forgets to recite Al-Fatihah or is unaware of the obligation of reciting Al-Fatihah, or thinks that the Imam's recitation is sufficient, the Salah is valid. One should not omit it intentionally; rather, one must recite it in conformity with the view of a group of scholars. If one leaves it out intentionally, one should make up for that prayer in which the recitation of Al-Fatihah, to be on the safe side, if one has not left it out out of Ijtihad (juristic effort to infer expert legal rulings) or Taqlid (strictly following a specific School of Jurisprudence) of scholars. Similarly, if a seeker of knowledge, who has studied the issue, omits the recitation of Al-Fatihah on purpose after reflecting on the relevant declarations of Shari`ah, they are excused. As for one who does not know the ruling but knows that they must recite Al-Fatihah in prayer, and yet intentionally leaves it out, they should make up for that prayer to avoid the divergent opinions of scholars.

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This is unlike one who forgets to recite Al-Fatihah, is unaware of the obligation, or omits it after exerting Ijtihad and concluding that it is not obligatory, or follows the view that it is not obligatory thinking that this is the preponderant view. This person does not need to make up for the prayer, because one has reached this view based on their Ijtihad or following other scholars who maintain that it is not obligatory. The same ruling equally applies to the person who forgets it or is unaware of the obligation; there is no need that they make up for the prayer. Only a person who knows the ruling and the obligation of reciting it must make up for the prayer, if one has neglected or left it out intentionally. Such a person must make up for the prayer, due to their acting against their own belief.



177- Ruling on the Salah of a Ma'mum who omits a pillar or an obligatory act behind the Imam

Q: What should I do, if I forget to perform a pillar or an obligatory act while praying behind the Imam (the one who leads congregational prayer); should I repeat the Salah (prayer) or perform Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness)?

A: If the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in prayer) forgets an obligatory act in the Salah, they are pardoned, such as when one forgets to say "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High)" in Sujud (prostration), or forgets to say "Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great)" in Ruku` (bowing), or to say Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") upon Ruku` or Sujud or after raising from Sujud. In all these cases, the obligation is dropped from the Ma'mum and there is no blame on them, because they are following the Imam. Likewise, the same applies if one forgets the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of prayer) and does not recite it out of preoccupation with another act in prayer.

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If one stands up following the Imam and forgets to recite it, there is no blame on them and the Imam bears that duty. Only the pillars that are major obligations are necessary, and if one forgets any of them one has to perform it and then resume prayer following the Imam. For example, if the Imam starts Ruku` while the Ma'mum is heedless and then after rising from Ruku` the Ma'mum remembers, they must then perform Ruku` and after it resume following the Imam. Similarly, if one forgets the first Sujud and after the Imam finishes it one notices this, one must perform it and then follow the Imam in the second Sujud. In conclusion, the obligatory acts of Salah are not dropped due to the forgetfulness of the Ma'mum. Thus, one has to perform them and then resume following the Imam.



178- Aspects of the Salah that are sufficient to be performed by the Imam on behalf of the Ma'mum

Q: A female questioner asks: If I offer the Salah (prayer) with the congregation and I make a mistake that necessitates performing Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness), what should I do?

A: If you offer the Salah with the congregation and join the Salah from the beginning and then forget some things or acts, such as saying: "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High)" in Sujud (prostration) or "Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great)" in Ruku` (bowing), or "O my Lord, forgive me" between the two prostrations, Sujud-ul-Sahw is not due on you. The Imam (the one who leads congregational prayer) bears these acts, and all praise is due to Allah. Similarly, if you forget to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), the Imam bears it and all praise is due to Allah.



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Q: A female questioner asks: Your Eminence Shaykh, during my sitting for the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer) for the congregational Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, I recited Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) instead of reciting the last Tashahhud. Realizing that I committed a mistake, I recited the last Tashahhud, should I offer Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) after the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) finishes the congregational prayer, or what should I do?

A: As long as you have recited the last Tashahhud, this is sufficient, and all praise is due to Allah. There is no blame on you, because the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) follows the Imam and Sujud-ul-Sahw is not due on the Imam. All praise is due to Allah.



179-Ruling on invoking Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet when his name is mentioned during the Imam's recitation in Salah

Q: If I offer a Jahri Salah (Prayer recited audibly) with the congregation and during the Imam's (the one who leads congregational Prayer) recitation, the Prophet's (peace be upon him) name is mentioned, such as in the verse where Allah (Glorified be He) states: ﴿Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is the Messenger of Allāh. And those who are with him...﴾ is it permissible for me to say then: "May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him"?

A: It is better to remain silent and listen when the Imam recites during Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, `Isha' (Night) Prayer, Fajr (Dawn) Prayer or Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer. Keeping silent and listening attentively to the Imam is preferable. You should not say 'Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]")' upon the mention of Tasbih, or say Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]")

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or invoke Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet when his name is mentioned within the Imam's recitation, because Allah states: ﴿So, when the Qur'ān is recited, listen to it, and be silent﴾ Remaining silent is best, but if one invokes Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet or says "Subhan Allah" upon the mention of Allah's Names, there is nothing wrong with it. However, it is better not to do so, because authentic reports from the Prophet (peace be upon him) indicate that he did not stop recitation at Ayahs (Qur'anic verse) where Mercy, Punishment, or Allah's Names and Attributes are mentioned. Rather, he continued recitation. So, it is better to listen and not stop or say anything upon hearing these Ayahs during the Imam's recitation. The same ruling applies in case you recite yourself. As for the supererogatory prayers, such as the night prayer and the like, the matter is flexible; if you stop recitation upon the mention of Allah's Mercy to ask Allah for it, or upon the mention of the punishment to seek refuge with Allah from it, or upon the mention of Allah's Names and Attributes to say "Subhan Allah", this is acceptable. Similarly, if you invoke Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet when mentioning his name during Salah, this is acceptable. This is also permissible in Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) and Tahajjud (optional late night prayer) in Ramadan when you are praying behind the Imam; you can supplicate Allah during the recitation when the Imam stops. You can invoke Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet when the Imam stops recitation to invoke Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet. Then, when he resumes recitation, you should listen, because you are commanded to keep silent and listen attentively.



180- Explaining the beginning of a valid Rak`ah

Q: Is the Rak`ah (unit of prayer) valid when I join the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) during Ruku` (bowing) or should I

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repeat it? It should be noted that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(There is no valid Salah for a person who does not recite Al-Fatihah.\)](#)

A: This is a point of difference among the scholars; the majority of them maintain that the Rak`ah is acceptable and valid. This is the view maintained by the Four Imams (Abu Hanifah, Malik, Al-Shafi`y, and Ahmad) and other knowledgeable scholars. They argue that when Abu Bakrah asked the Messenger (peace be upon him) about this issue, he did not command him to repeat the Rak`ah. [\(When Abu Bakrah came \(to join congregational prayer\) while the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) was in Ruku`, he began to bow before joining the row of worshipers and then joined them. After Taslim \(salutation of peace ending the prayer\), the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) asked: Who did that? Abu Bakrah said: I did it, O Messenger of Allah. The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) said: May Allah increase your keenness to do good deeds, but do not repeat this act again!\)](#) He did not command him to make up for the Rak`ah; rather, he instructed him not to bow before joining the row. It is not prescribed for a worshiper to start Ruku` before reaching the row. One should keep calm until reaching the row and take one's place in it, but one should not bow before reaching the row. The Prophet did not command him to make up for the Rak`ah, because he was excused (for his haste) as he had missed the (standing position of) recitation, so he was forgiven. This Hadith qualifies the report that the questioner cites, which is the statement of the Messenger (peace be upon him):

[\(There is no valid Salah for one who does not recite Al-Fatihah.\)](#) This is a general declaration from which is excepted the one

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who joins the Imam during Ruku`. Other similar cases that are also exceptions to the rule include the case of one who forgets to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) or thinks that it is not obligatory to recite it, according to the majority of scholars who are of the opinion that it is not obligatory on the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to recite Al-Fatihah. Such a person is thus exempted from this obligation. The correct view is that the Ma'mum should recite it, but if one forgets it or omits it out of following scholars who maintain that view, one is excused. The same ruling applies in case a person catches the congregational prayer during Ruku`, they are excused, and the correct view is that the Rak`ah is valid. This is the correct view maintained by the majority of scholars, although some are of the view that it is not a valid Rak`ah. This is the opinion of Al-Bukhari (may Allah be merciful to him) and other Hadith scholars, who drew on the Hadith: [\(There is no valid Salah for a person who does not recite Al-Fatihah.\)](#) However, their view is refuted by the Hadith of Abu Bakrah, which provides legal grounds for the other opinion. In conclusion, a Ma'mum in this case is excused, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command Abu Bakrah to make up

for the Rak`ah. Had it been obligatory for one who misses the recitation of Al-Fatihah to make up for the Rak`ah, the Prophet would have commanded Abu Bakrah to make up for the invalid Rak`ah, knowing that it is not permissible to delay the declaration of a ruling of Shari`ah beyond the time of need and this case constituted a time of need. Therefore, when the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command him to make up for the Rak`ah, this indicated that a Ma'mum is not required to make up for the Rak`ah when joining the Imam during Ruku` and this is a case of exception.



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181- Ruling on the Salah of a Ma'mum who supplicates or recites Tasbih during the Imam's recitation in Salah

Q: A questioner asks: During the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and when the Imam was reciting a Surah (Qur'anic chapter), I heard a person saying audibly: "O Allah, show mercy to me and to all the Muslims", what is the ruling on this? May Allah guide you!

A: It is obligatory on the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to listen attentively to the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), and one should not say anything. A worshiper is to listen, reflect upon the recitation and ponder on the words recited, because Allah (Glorified be He) states: [\(So, when the Qur'ân is recited, listen to it, and be silent\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also stated: [\(When the Imam recites, be silent \[and listen\].\)](#) This is obligatory and the Ma'mum should not speak, but if one says this inaudibly during the short pauses when the Imam stops, there is no blame. For example, if one says: "O Allah, make me of the company of Paradise" upon the mention of Paradise, or : "O Allah, protect me from Hellfire" upon the mention of Hellfire, this is acceptable. There is nothing wrong with supplication during the pauses. But during the time of recitation, a Ma'mum should listen attentively and should not say anything except the Al-Fatihah that must be recited. If the Imam

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pauses during recitation, one is to recite at this time; yet, if he recites continuously, the Ma'mum should recite it with him during the recitation and then listen attentively. This surely applies in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited audibly loud) according to correct opinion maintained by scholars.



182- Ruling on saying 'Amen' for the Imam, the Ma'mum, and the Munfarid

Q: Should we recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) intending it to be a recitation of the Qur'an or a supplication? Why do we say "Amen" after the supplications recited in it?

A: Recitation of Al-Fatihah is meant as a part of the Qur'an which also contains supplications. As such, we say "Amen" after reciting it. This ruling equally applies to the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) and the Munfarid (person offering Salah individually), because the worshiper is supplicating when reciting: [\(Guide us to the Straight Way.\)](#) Thus, the Imam says "Amen" and the Ma'mum also says the same behind the Imam. They ask Allah to guide them to the Straight Way, which is the path of Islam, and to drive them away from the way of those who earned Allah's Anger, namely the Jews, and the way of those who went astray, meaning Christians.



183- Ruling on conveying the voice of the Imam when necessary

Q: What is the ruling on repeating after the voice of the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) for the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) who cannot hear the voice of the Imam clearly? Is it necessary for every Salah (Prayer)

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or only when the Imam's voice is not heard by all Ma'mums? How many times did this action take place in the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)?

A: It is permissible to convey the Takbir (saying: Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]), Tasmi` (saying: "Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah [Allah listens to those who praise Him]", when standing after Ruku`), and Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) of the Imam when necessary, so that the Ma'mums can follow the Imam. However, if it is not necessary as the Imam's voice is clearly heard, there will be no need for it. If there are loudspeakers available in the Masjid (mosque), there is no need to convey the voice of the Imam to the Ma'mums, unless the Masjid is so large and vast that the congregation may not hear the Imam, in which case there is no objection to do so as in Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) and Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy (the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah) where the Imam's voice may not be heard in some places. In a word, it is permissible to repeat the voice of the Imam for those who are too far away to hear it when necessary. It is not necessary if you have speakers or the congregation is small to the extent that they can hear the Imam's voice. In these cases it is not permissible to repeat the voice of the Imam.

It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Salah while he was sitting down during his last illness, Abu Bakr was standing on his right side, and people were standing behind them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was leading the Salah, while Abu Bakr was repeating his voice after him for those who were too far away to hear it,

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as the Prophet's voice was too low to be heard as a result of his illness. Abu Bakr was repeating after him for the congregation. This is a well-known incident that took place during the Prophet's lifetime. This general ruling applies to every subsequent incident. Whenever it is necessary, it will be permissible to repeat the voice of the Imma for those who are too far away to hear it. When it is not necessary, this will not be permissible.



Q: What is the ruling on repeating the Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]) of the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in a loud voice, despite the fact that all people attending the Salah (Prayer) can hear the Takbir and Tahmid (saying: "Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah])"?)

A: If the people attending the congregational Salah can hear the Imam's voice, then there is no need for conveying what he says. However, if it is hard for some to hear him, like those standing in the back rows, then it is Mustahab (desirable) to convey what he says. This is supported by the fact that the Prophet (peace be upon him) led people in Salah one day while he was sick and his voice was weak, hence, Abu Bakr As-Siddiq conveyed what he said to the people. So, this is permissible if needed like in the case of praying in a large Masjid (mosque), having many people or if the Imam's voice is weak out of sickness or any other reason. However, if the Imam's voice is clear and can be heard by all people in Salah, then there is no need to repeat what he says; rather, this will not be permissible.



Q: Is it obligatory upon the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), if his voice does not reach the worshipers for any reason, to move backward and let someone else

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stand in his place, or should the worshipers imitate his actions, while the one behind him raises his voice to let the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) hear?

A: This is the opinion that seems correct; that is, if something accidental happens, leading to the Imam's voice being lowered to a whisper, there should be someone who reports his Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") for Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration) for the worshipers. All praise is due to Allah.



184- Ruling on following the Imam and listening to his recitation

Q: A questioner asks: What are the rulings that a worshiper must abide by when offering prayer behind the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, and `Isha' (Night) Prayer? Should one recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and a short Surah (Qur'anic verse) when the Imam recites, or just listen to the recitation of the Imam?

A: The Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) follows the Imam in all prayers, because the Imam is meant to be followed and the Ma'mum should not differ with him; when the Imam pronounces Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"), the Ma'mum should follow him; when he performs Ruku` (bowing), the Ma'mum should do the same; and when he rises from Ruku`, the Ma'mum must follow him. The Ma'mum should also attentively listen to the Imam's recitation during Fajr Prayer, Maghrib Prayer, and `Isha' Prayer, and should also recite Al-Fatihah inaudibly in the Jahri Salah (Prayer recited audibly loud). This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [Do you](#)

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[recite behind your Imam? We \(Companions\) said: Yes. He said: Do not do that except for reciting Al-Fatihah, because there is no Salah for one who does not recite it.](#) During the last two Rak`ahs of `Isha' Prayer and the third Rak`ah of Maghrib Prayer, one should recite Al-Fatihah only. As for the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, one should recite Al-Fatihah and what is easy of the Qur'an during the first two Rak`ah, because these are two Sirri Salah (Prayer with inaudible recitation), and should recite Al-Fatihah only in the last two Rak`ahs of Zhuhr Prayer and `Asr Prayer. If one recites other than Al-Fatihah in the last two Rak`ahs of Zhuhr, this is permissible. It is reported in the Hadith of Abu Sa`id as related by Muslim what lends support to this practice. He (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that they described the prayers of Zhuhr and `Asr as practiced by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said that the Prophet used to recite about thirty Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) in the first two Rak`ahs of Zhuhr and `Asr prayers and only half of that number (fifteen Ayahs) in the last two Rak`ahs of Zhuhr and `Asr prayers. This indicates that he used to recite more than Al-Fatihah in the third and fourth Rak`ahs of Zhuhr. However, this may have taken place on some occasions only, because Abu Qatadah was reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) to have said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) only recited Al-Fatihah in the third Rak`ah of Maghrib Prayer and in the (third and) fourth Rak`ahs of Zhuhr and `Asr prayers.



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185- Ruling on following, preceding or dropping far behind the Imam in Salah

Q: Sometimes I see that some worshipers do not perform Ruku` (bowing), Sujud (prostration), and Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the same time; some of them do these acts before or after some others. Does this affect the validity of their Salah (prayer)?

A: It is obligatory on the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to follow the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) constantly; they should follow the Imam immediately after the end of the voice of the Imam, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The imam is appointed only to be followed, so do not be at variance with him; when he says "Allahu Akbar \[Allah is the Greatest\]," say "Allahu Akbar" and do not say "Allahu Akbar" until he says "Allahu Akbar." When he bows, then bow; and do not bow until he bows. And when he says "Allah listens to one who praises Him," say "O Allah, our Lord, to You be the praise." And when he prostrates, then prostrate; and do not prostrate until he prostrates.\)](#) His saying: [When he says "Allahu Akbar," say "Allahu Akbar" and when he bows, then bow...] refers to the obligation to immediately follow the Imam, as this form of conjunction indicates immediate following according to the view of knowledgeable scholars. However, the Ma'mum should not bow or rise from bowing until the Imam's utterance declaring either act is finished. The same also applies to Sujud; the Ma'mum should not prostrate until the Imam's utterance is finished and so on.

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The acts of the Ma'mum should not precede or coincide with those of the Imam; he should follow the Imam immediately. However, a short delay, such as that done by some people due to obesity, old age, sickness, and other such excuses, is pardoned. To conclude, the Ma'mum should follow the Imam immediately and exactly. Similarly, if the Ma'mum delays Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) for a while, this does not affect his Salah so long as he follows the Imam. The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to hasten to follow the Imam in all acts, including Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"), Ruku`, Taslim, and so on. This following should be constant, without either preceding or coinciding with him.



Q: Your Eminence Shaykh, you already said that a short delay in following the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is pardonable and recommended immediate following of the Imam. But, what is the ruling on the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) who moves (to perform an act in prayer) before the Imam's utterance (announcing that move) is finished?

A: This form of action is called undesirable following; some scholars are of the view that it is forbidden depending on the evident declarations of Hadiths. They judge the Salah (prayer) as valid, because the worshipper may or may not be sinful as he is committing an undesirable act. It is obligatory to avoid hasty following of the Imam before the latter's announcement is ended. As for preceding the Imam, it is forbidden since the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Does anyone of you, who lifts up his face towards the sky, not fear lest Allah should turn his head into that of a donkey or](#)

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[turn his face into that of a donkey?\)](#) This act invalidates the Salah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(I am your Imam, so do not precede me in Ruku` \(bowing\), Sujud \(prostration\), standing or Taslim \(salutation of peace ending the Prayer\).\)](#) Hence, it is obligatory on the Ma'mum to beware of preceding the Imam. The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to follow the Imam in all acts without preceding or running parallel to him. He should be followed immediately, because preceding the Imam invalidates the Salah while running parallel to him is undesirable in Salah. The Sunnah is to follow him in all the acts of Salah and to start one's movement after the end of his voice (announcing the move).



Q: What is the ruling on the Salah (Prayer) in which I raised my head from Sujud (prostration) before the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer)?

A: If you raised your head before the Imam, you should have prostrated again and then raised it after him again. If you did not do this because you were ignorant of it, there is no sin on you and your Salah is valid. However, if you know the Shar`y (Islamically lawful) ruling on this, and did not offer Sujud again on purpose, your Salah is not valid, and you should repeat it. But if you were ignorant of the ruling, your Salah is valid, but you should not do this again.

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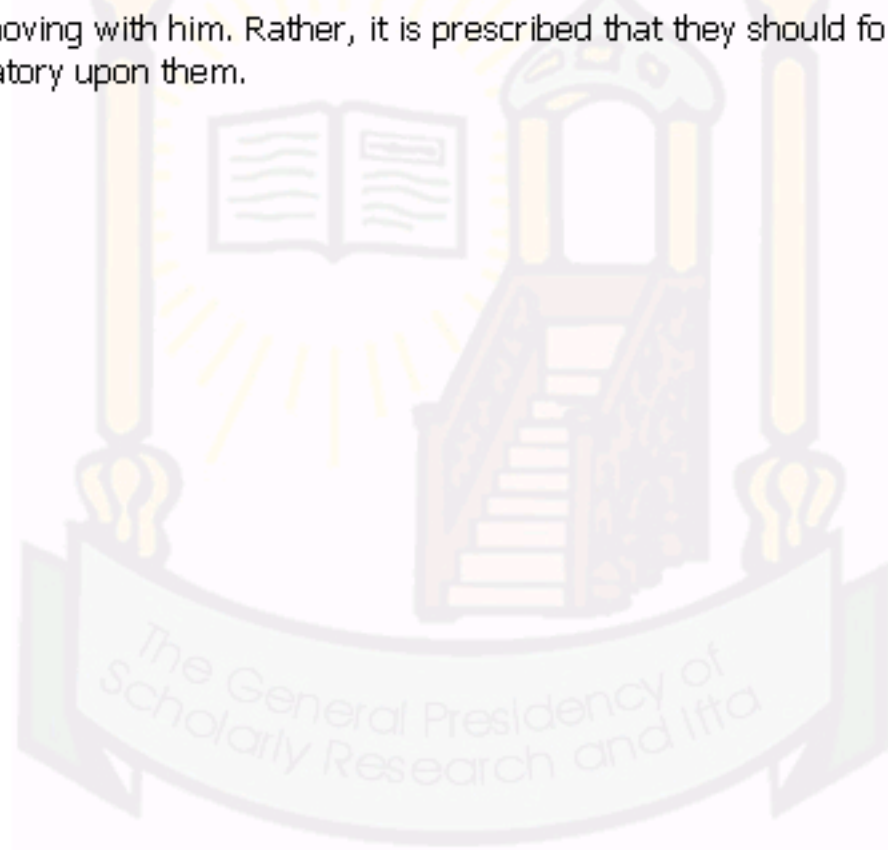
Thus, if you raise your head thinking that the Imam has raised his head, and you discover that he has not raised it yet, offer Sujud again, and then raise your head after the Imam.

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Q: What is the ruling on the Salah (Prayer) of those who do not follow the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) strictly enough, by being sometimes much later than him, sometimes preceding him, and sometimes following him?

A: It is obligatory to follow the Imam, not to precede him or to move with him, but to act soon after him, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *(The Imam is to be followed; so when he offers Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"), you should offer Takbir as well, and do not offer it until he does; and when he offers Ruku` (bowing), you should bow, and do not bow before he does)* etc. Therefore, it is obligatory upon them to follow the Imam closely, without being late or preceding him or moving with him. Rather, it is prescribed that they should follow him as soon as he moves. This is obligatory upon them.





186- Ruling on the Ma'mum who misses a Ruku with the Imam as he is reciting Surah Al-Fatihah

Q: Some people take a long time in reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), such that the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) offers Ruku` (bowing) while the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) is still reciting Al-Fatihah, and then when the Imam stands upright after Ruku`,

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the Ma'mum starts Ruku`, having missed the Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) with the Imam? What is the ruling on the Salah (Prayer) of these people?

A: This is not permissible. It is obligatory upon the Ma'mum to bow if his Imam offers Ruku`, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(When the Imam offers Ruku`, you should bow; and when he stands upright, you should stand upright; and when he says: "Allah listens to those who praise him", say: "O Allah, all praise is due to You"; and when he offers Sujud \(prostration\), you should prostrate.\)](#) Therefore, if his Imam offers Ruku`, he should bow, and he is excused from the obligation of reciting the rest of Al-Fatihah, as is the case if he arrives while the Imam is bowing, when he should bow with him and the obligation of reciting Al-Fatihah is waived. That is according to the Hadith narrated on the authority of Abu Bakrah in the Sahih (authentic) Book of Al-Bukhari (may Allah be merciful to him), in which Abu Bakrah (may Allah be pleased with him) arrived while the Imam was bowing - that is, while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was bowing - so he offered Ruku` outside the row for congregational Salah, and then joined the row. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) he told him: [\(May Allah increase your love to do good. But do not repeat it again \(bowing in that way.\)](#) Therefore, the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not command him to compensate for his Salah, which shows that his Salah was valid, because he had an excuse. Thus, when he missed joining the Imam while standing up, he was excused from the obligation of reciting Al-Fatihah. Similarly, if the Imam offers Ruku` before the Ma'mum finishes the recitation of Al-Fatihah, the latter should offer Ruku` with his Imam, and he is excused from the obligation of completing the recitation of Al-Fatihah. He should be attentive while standing so that he is able to recite it before the Imam bows. That is, he should start reciting it at the beginning of

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the Rak`ah in order to complete it before his Imam offers Ruku` and he should not be careless regarding this.



187- Ruling on snoozing in Salah until the worshiper misses a Rak`ah with the Imam

Q: A worshiper sat with the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) to offer the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer), and did not stand up with him when he stood up to perform the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), because he was drowsy and snoozed while reciting the Tashahhud. He kept sleeping until the Imam finished the third Rak`ah, in which recitation is in a low voice of course, and when the Imam offered Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"), the worshiper woke up and stood up to find out that the Imam was standing upright after Ruku` (bowing). How should this worshiper complete his Salah (Prayer)?

A: If the worshiper snoozes while he is sitting until the Imam offers Ruku`, he should get up and bow with the Imam. That is, if the Imam precedes him by bowing, he should bow, then stand upright and prostrate, following the Imam. This is sufficient for him in case he has not fallen deeply asleep, but was still aware or cautious, and he has just not heard the Takbir of the Imam when rising from Tashahhud, and has not slept deeply. However, if he has slept deeply, his Salah becomes void and he should repeat it, because deep sleeping invalidates Wudu' (ablution). On the other hand, if the worshiper

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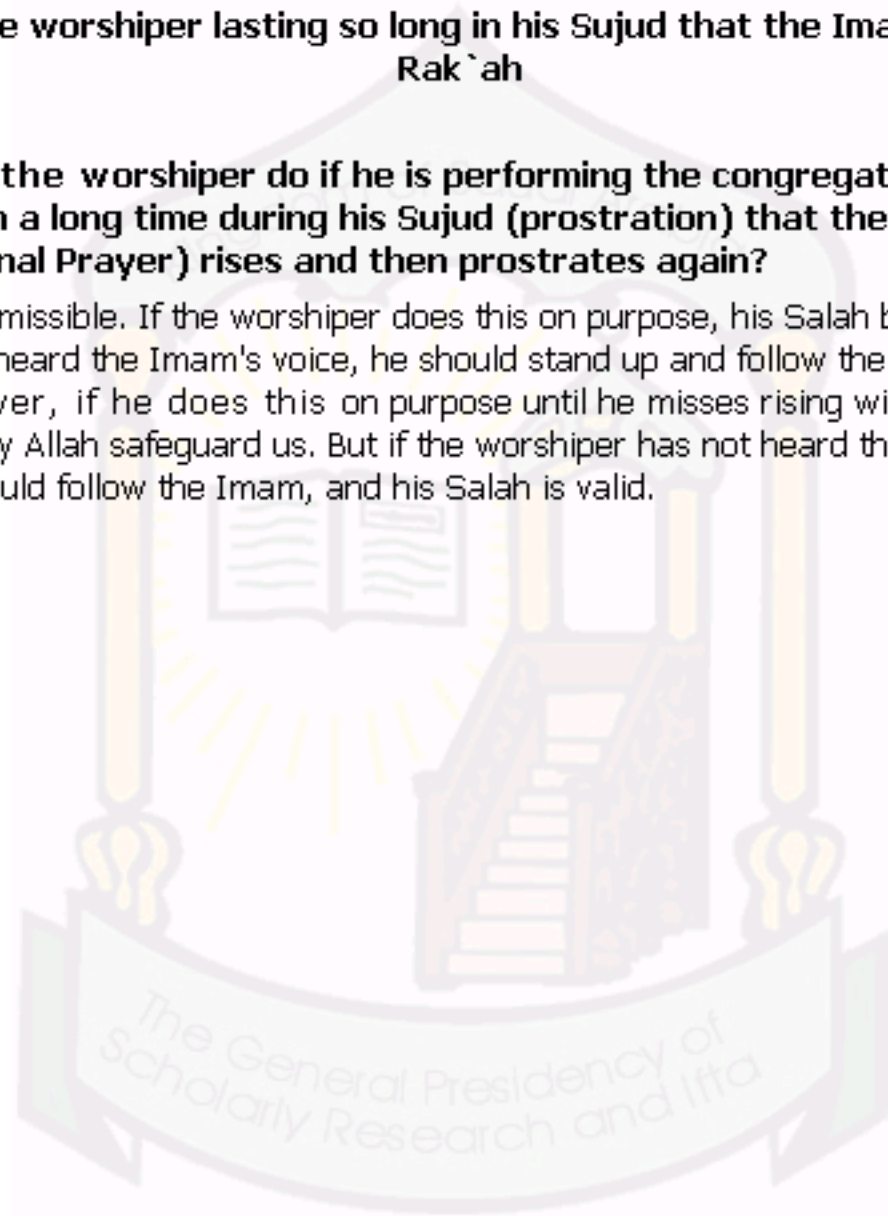
just snoozes, that is, has not slept deeply, he should follow the Imam, and he is excused from the obligation of reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), because he has not abandoned it on purpose, but was overcome by sleeping.



188- Ruling on the worshiper lasting so long in his Sujud that the Imam finishes another Rak`ah

Q: What should the worshiper do if he is performing the congregational Salah (Prayer) and lasts for such a long time during his Sujud (prostration) that the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) rises and then prostrates again?

A: This is not permissible. If the worshiper does this on purpose, his Salah becomes void. But if he snoozes or has not heard the Imam's voice, he should stand up and follow the Imam, and there is no sin on him. However, if he does this on purpose until he misses rising with the Imam, his Salah becomes void; may Allah safeguard us. But if the worshiper has not heard the Imam's voice, or has fallen asleep, he should follow the Imam, and his Salah is valid.





189- Ruling on offering Takbirat-ul-Ihram before the Imam

Q: This questioner says: I prayed as an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) with two men, and while I was offering Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer), I heard one of the two worshippers offering Takbirat-ul-Ihram at the same time, and I pursued my Salah (Prayer) with the belief that the Salah of this person is void. What is the ruling on this, may Allah safeguard you?

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A: The opinion that seems correct is that your Salah is valid, as well as the Salah of the other worshipper, but the one who offered Takbirat-ul-Ihram should be ordered to repeat his Salah, because he has offered Takbirat-ul-Ihram with the Imam, and he must have offered it after him, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(When he \(the Imam\) offers Takbir \(saying: "Allahu Akbar \[Allah is the Greatest\]"\), you should offer Takbir as well.\)](#) Thus, you should order him after the Salah to repeat his Salah. As for you, you are excused, because you heard him while you were praying; and the other Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) is also excused for praying behind you (and not beside you), as he was praying with his companion, thinking that his companion's Salah is valid.. You are also excused for not advising the other Ma'mum to stand beside you, and not with the Ma'mum whose Salah is not valid, because you were unable to do so as you had already offered Takbir. Therefore, the opinion that seems correct is that the Salah of the other Ma'mum (who said Takbirat-ul-Ihram after the Imam) is valid Insha'a-Allah (if Allah wills) because he did not know that the Salah of his companion who was standing beside him was not valid and you could not advise him while you were praying.



190- Ruling on joining an Imam who prays quickly

Q: If the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) prays quickly, causing the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) to be unable to perform some Sunnah (supererogatory) actions while praying, is it permissible for the Ma'mums to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), the Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) and other supplications quickly?

A: Yes, they should join their Imam so as not to miss his actions, and they should advise him to be calm while praying and not to hurry; otherwise, it suffices to offer Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") just once or twice during Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostrating); there is nothing wrong with this. However, the Imam should be advised and guided to be calm, and not to hasten so that

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the congregation can perform the Sunnah actions. This is what should be done.



191- Ruling on the latecomer standing up before his Imam offers the second Taslim

Q: What is the ruling on the latecomer who arrives after part of the Salah (Prayer) has been performed, and when the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) offers Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), he stands up to make up for what he has missed, but he stands hastily before the Imam offers the second Taslim; that is, he stands up after the first Taslim, which is done repeatedly by many people. May Allah guide them.

A: The latecomer who stands up before the Imam offers the second Taslim to make up for the part of the Salah that he has missed is wrong, because the correct opinion is that the second Taslim must be offered. However, the Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars) said that the first Taslim is sufficient, but the authentic Hadiths show that the second Taslim must be offered. Therefore, if the worshiper stands up before the Imam offers the second Taslim, he is abandoning an obligatory action, which is sitting until the Imam completes the Salah. It is therefore obligatory on him to repeat his Salah to avoid the divergent opinions of scholars, and to keep himself on the safe side concerning his religion. This is because his Salah became void when he stood up before his Imam had completed his Salah, and the latecomer should not stand up before his Imam offers Taslim. This is what the Prophet (peace be upon him) did when

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ʿAbdul-Rahman ibn ʿAwf offered Taslim while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was praying with him during the battle of Tabuk, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) stood up to make up for what he had missed, which shows that any expiation should be done after the Imam offers Taslim, and this is done to be cautious.



192- Ruling on the Ma'mum performing Ruku` while the Imam is offering Sujud-ul-Tilawah

Q: A letter was delivered to the program from one of the listeners, from Makkah, which reads as follows: I am a girl, and I once joined the congregational Salah (Prayer) of the Fajr (Dawn) in the Masjid (mosque). While the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) was reciting the Surah (Qur'anic chapter) which is recited after Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), he offered Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") and performed Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation). I did not know that this was Sujud-ul-Tilawah, so I offered Ruku` (bowing), as well as the women who were beside me. Then, the Imam offered Takbir again, resumed the recitation of the Surah, and then he offered Ruku`, so I offered Ruku` with him again, and some women offered Sujud (prostration). What is the ruling on my Salah and the Salah of the other women?

A: The ruling on this is that the Salah of the women who offered Ruku` after the Imam is valid, because the first Ruku` that they performed was out of ignorance. Therefore, there is no sin on them, and there is no problem with this Ruku` that they offered instead of performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah, because it was out of ignorance. However, the women who did not offer Ruku`, but prostrated and resumed

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their Salah, without bowing with the Imam, and without performing one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) after Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) to make up for this Rak'ah, should perform the whole Salah again now, with the intention of making up for it. This is because they violated one Rak`ah of the Salah, and a long time has passed after it, so they must perform it all again. May Allah grant us success.



193- The Salah of the Ma'mums if the Imam forgets to sit to recite the first Tashahhud

Q: While performing the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) forgot to sit to recite the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer). The Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) reminded him, but he insisted on standing up to perform the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) without reciting the Tashahhud, so the Ma'mums followed him except two men, who sat and recited the Tashahhud and kept sitting until the Imam offered the Sujud (prostration) of the the third Rak`ah, and then stood up to perform the fourth Rak`ah, when they stood up with him. Accordingly, this Rak`ah was considered the fourth one for the Imam and the worshippers who followed him, but without reciting the first Tashahhud, and the third Rak`ah for these two men. Then, after the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer), the Imam performed Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) and then offered Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), and all the worshippers, including the two men, offered Sujud-ul-Sahw, but the two men did not offer Taslim with the Imam, they rather stood up to perform their fourth Rak`ah. Afterwards, those who followed the Imam told the two men that they should have followed the Imam and imitated him, but the two men said: We should have followed him if we were certain that we were

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wrong, or if we were unsure, but we were certain that we were right and that he was the one who acted in a wrong way; therefore, we could not follow him, because one must behave on the basis of Yaqin (certainty), and we were certain that he was wrong, and the Imam himself was not certain about what he had done, or he was even certain that he was wrong, because he offered Sujud-ul-Sahw. Who is the one who behaved correctly? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: Those who stood up with the Imam behaved in the right way, while the two men who stayed sitting were wrong, because it has been authentically reported that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) stood up without offering the first Tashahhud, the worshippers stood up with him and did not stay sitting down, and when he finished his Salah, he offered Sujud-ul-Sahw before Taslim, and then offered Taslim. He performed these two prostrations because he forgot to recite the first Tashahhud. Some scholars state that the first Tashahhud is Wajib (obligatory), and some state that it is stressed Sunnah (supererogatory), which can be compensated by offering Sujud-ul-Sahw. The correct opinion, however, is that it is Wajib, but is not one of the pillars of Salah. Therefore, if the Imam stands up without sitting for the Tashahhud, the Ma'mums should stand up like him, and try to remind him before he stands upright. If they succeed to remind him before he stands upright, he should sit down again. However, if he does not sit down again, they should stand up with him, because he might be ignorant of the Shar`y (Islamically legal) ruling, or he might have not heard them. In any case, therefore, they should

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stand up with the Imam, resume the Salah with him, and offer Sujud with him; and no one should sit alone, because the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) did not do this with the Prophet (peace be upon him), and he did not tell them: "Those who did so and so, should have done so and so"; rather, he approved of their action. Therefore, those two men who had sat down were wrong. On the other hand, if the Imam stood up while performing the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer to offer a third Rak`ah, those who know that he is wrong should not stand up with him to perform an extra Rak`ah. The same also applies if the Imam stands up to perform a fifth Rak`ah while praying the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer. In this case, the worshipers should not follow the Imam, but they should wait until he offers Taslim, and then offer Taslim, but after having tried to remind him. This also applies if the Imam sits in the third Rak`ah of the Zhuhr, `Asr, or `Isha' (Night) Prayers, thinking that it is the last Rak`ah; they should remind him, or else they should stand up (after finishing the Salah with him) and complete their Salah.



194- How the Ma'mums should behave if the Imam performs an additional Rak`ah

Q: A questioner from Sudan asks: What should we do if we were performing a Salah (Prayer) consisting of three or four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer), and the Salah was completed, but the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) forgot and stood up to perform an additional Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). We said: "Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah)", but he did not correct his fault, and then we said: "Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah), the Salah has finished"; but the Imam did not correct himself?

A: It is obligatory upon the Imam to correct himself if the Ma'mums called to his attention that he had performed an additional Rak`ah, or that he had abandoned a Rak`ah, if those who reminded him were two or more, unless he thought that he was

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correct and they were wrong; in this case, he should perform what he believes is right and go on with it. As for the Ma'mums, they should do what they believe to be right as well; if they think that the Imam is right, they should follow him, and if they believe that he is wrong as he is performing an extra Rak`ah, such as performing a fourth Rak`ah in the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, or a fifth Rak`ah in the Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), or `Isha' (Night), or a third Rak`ah in the Fajr (Dawn) or the Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayers, they should not follow him. Rather, they should sit down and wait until he offers Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and then offer Taslim after him. However, if someone does not know which is the correct action, but is unsure whether to follow the Imam in performing the extra Rak`ah or not, he should stand up with him, as well as anyone who is ignorant of the Islamically legal rulings, and there is nothing wrong with their action. However, according to the Islamically legal ruling, it is obligatory upon the worshiper who knows that the Imam is performing an extra Rak`ah not to stand up with him. Rather, he should sit down and not follow the Imam in performing the extra Rak`ah, and then follow him in offering Taslim. This also applies in case the Imam misses something, such as sitting after the third Rak`ah while performing the four-Rak`ah Salah (Prayer consisting of four Rak`ahs), or after the second Rak`ah while performing the three-Rak`ah Salah, or after the first Rak`ah while performing the two-Rak`ah Salah. In this case, the Ma'mums should try to draw the Imam's attention by saying: "Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah), Subhan Allah", not by saying: "The Salah has finished", or "the Salah is not complete"; they should rather try to draw his attention by Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]"), because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Men should offer Tasbih, and women should clap their hands \(by beating the left hand with two fingers of the right hand\).\)](#) He also said: [\(If something happens to you during your Salah, say: "Subhan Allah".\)](#) This is what is prescribed, that is, to say: "Subhan Allah, Subhan Allah". However, if

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the Imam does not respond and keeps sitting, the Ma'mum should stand up if he believes that the Salah is not complete, and he should complete his Salah after the Imam ends the Salah, and all

praise is due to Allah. Additionally, if the Imam thinks that he is right, his Salah becomes valid; and if he believes that he is wrong, he should respond to those who draw the fact to his attention by completing the Salah if they remind him that it is not complete, or by returning to his posture if the Ma'mums remind him that he is performing an additional Rak`ah. This is the case if those who try to draw his attention are two or more. However, if it is only one person, he must not respond, but he should perform what he believes to be right. That is, if he believes that he has not yet completed the Salah, he should stand up and resume it, and if he believes that he has performed an extra action, he should return to his former posture; and if he is unsure, he should behave on the basis of Yaqin (certainty). That is, if he suspects whether he is performing the fourth or the fifth Rak`ah, he should act as if it is the fourth and sit down; and if he suspects whether he is performing the third or the fourth Rak`ah, he should act as if it is the third and sit down. However, if he is hesitant and has no certainty to build upon, he should follow those who remind him if they are two persons or more. This is what is prescribed for both the Imam and the Ma'mum. In short, if the Ma'mum thinks that the Imam behaves in the right way, or if he is not certain about anything, but is unsure, he should follow the Imam, whether he adds or abandons something. On the other hand, if the Ma'mum knows that the Imam is wrong, he should not follow him, neither if he adds nor if he abandons something.



Q: An Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) stood up after the Salah (Prayer) was completed and before offering Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), and was about to perform an extra Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). The Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) noticed that and tried to draw his attention

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by saying: "Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah)", but he insisted upon performing an extra Rak`ah. What is the ruling on this? And what should the Ma'mums do after it? Please benefit us, may Allah benefit you.

A: It is obligatory upon the Ma'mums to try to draw the Imam's attention, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *(Whoever is unsure about anything during his Salah should offer Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]"), because if he does, he will be noticed; while women should clap their hands (instead of offering Tasbih).)* Additionally, it is also obligatory upon the Imam to correct himself if he is reminded, unless he believes that he is correct and that they are wrong, because in this case he should behave according to his own belief, and resume his Salah until he finishes it according to his own belief. Concerning those who remind the Imam, if they are certain that he is wrong, they should not stand up with him, but they should sit and recite the Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer), invoke Allah's Blessings and Peace upon the Prophet, and offer Du`a' (supplication), waiting for the Imam till he offers Taslim and then offer Taslim after him, because they are all excused. The Ma'mums are excused because they believe that the Imam is wrong; and the Imam is excused because he believes that he is right and they are wrong. Therefore, each is excused for his effort and his Yaqin (certainty) about being right. Therefore, when the Imam offers Taslim, they should follow him. However,

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if the Imam has no Yaqin, he should respond to them if those who draw his attention are two or more, because he is just unsure and not certain, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) responded to Dhul-Yadayn when he reminded him, and he asked people, who approved of what Dhul-Yadayn said. Then, the Prophet (peace be upon him) returned and completed his Salah; but he did not respond to Dhul-Yadayn alone because he was only one person. Therefore, the Imam is not obliged to respond to one person, unless he believes that he is right. However, if those who remind the Imam are two or more, he should respond to them and behave according to their opinion, and neglect his doubts. This is what is obligatory for him to do. As for the Ma'mums, they should not follow the Imam if they believe that he is wrong, whether he adds or abandons something in the Salah. If he adds a Rak`ah, they should sit and wait until he offers Taslim, and then offer Taslim as well; and if he abandons something and does not respond to them, such as sitting after the third Rak`ah of the Zhuhr (Noon), `Isha' (Night), or `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers, or after the first Rak`ah of the Fajr (Dawn) or Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayers and does not obey them, they should stand up, resume their Salah, and complete it, even if they contradict him, because they believe that he is wrong.



Q: This questioner says: An Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) stood up to offer a fifth Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) while performing the `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and the worshipers said: "Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah)", but he did not sit down. On the contrary he resumed the Rak`ah, so the worshipers stood like him as well. What is the ruling on this Rak`ah? And what is the ruling on

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the action of this Imam?

A: This Imam should be reminded by offering Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]"), and if he does not return, they should wait for him, because he thinks that he is correct. Therefore, they should wait for him until he offers Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), and then they offer Taslim as well. Additionally, if there are some worshipers who do not know that the Imam is wrong, they should stand up with him, in order to follow their Imam; while those who know that he is wrong should stay sitting down and wait for him till he offers Taslim to offer Taslim after him, and they should not stand up; they should rather wait as long as they believe that he is wrong to stand. However, if someone does not know whether the Imam has behaved wrongly or correctly, he should follow the Imam, because the basic principle is to follow the Imam until he offers Taslim, and then offer Taslim after him.



Q: What should we say if the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) forgets and stands up to perform a fifth Rak`ah (unit of Prayer)? Should we say: "Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah)", or "Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah)"? Please guide us.

A: The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is that the Mam'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) should say: "Subhan Allah, Subhan Allah", until the Imam notices. There is also no problem if there is a need for the Ma'mum to recite an Ayah (Qur'anic verse) to remind the Imam, such as saying [﴿Fall prostrate and draw near \(to Allâh\)﴾](#) if the Imam misses Sujud (prostration), or saying: [﴿O believers, bow﴾](#)

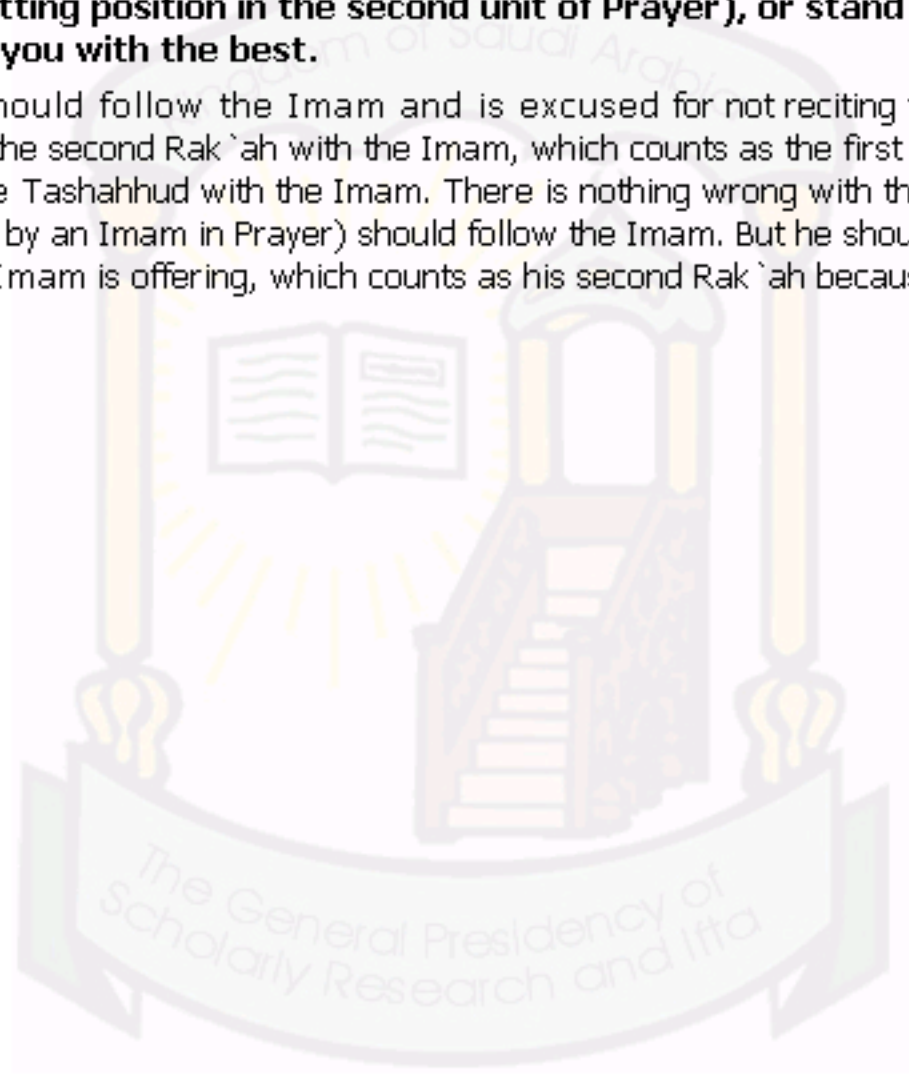
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if the Imam forgets to offer Ruku` (bowing). In short, the basic principle is to say: "Subhan Allah, Subhan Allah"; and it is also permissible to recite an Ayah to guide the Imam.



Q: If the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is performing the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) and a latecomer has missed one Rak`ah, which means that he is performing the second Rak`ah, should he sit for reciting the Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer), or stand up with the Imam? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: A latecomer should follow the Imam and is excused for not reciting the Tashahhud. If the latecomer catches the second Rak`ah with the Imam, which counts as the first for him, he should sit down to recite the Tashahhud with the Imam. There is nothing wrong with this, since the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) should follow the Imam. But he should not sit down in the third Rak`ah the Imam is offering, which counts as his second Rak`ah because he must follow the Imam.





195- Ruling on a Ma'mum who knowingly follows the Imam in an additional Rak`ah

Q: The questioner says: Should the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) stand up with the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) if he stands to perform an additional Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) out of forgetfulness, although the Ma'mum knows that the Salah (Prayer) is finished? If he stands up with the Imam to perform this additional Rak`ah although he knows that it is additional, is his

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Salah valid or not?

A: If the Ma'mum knows that the Imam has added a Rak`ah, he should not stand up with the Imam, but should draw his attention by saying: "Subhan Allah (Glorified be Allah), Subhan Allah", and the Imam should respond if those who offer Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah") are two or more; he should sit again and recite the Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer), offer Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) and then offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). However, if the Imam refuses to obey them, the Ma'mums should not follow him, they should rather sit and await him; even the latecomer should not follow him, but should sit, because the Imam is wrong, and they all know that he is wrong, so they must not follow him. However, if they follow the Imam out of ignorance of the legal ruling, their Salah is valid; and if they know that the Imam is performing an additional Rak`ah, but they think that they must follow him, because they are ignorant of the legal ruling, their Salah is also valid. However, if they are aware of the ruling, they should not follow the Imam, and if they follow him, their Salah becomes void, because they will be performing an additional Rak`ah on purpose. On the other hand, if they are ignorant, or they think that even if they know that the Rak`ah is additional, they have to follow the Imam, there is nothing wrong with their standing with him, and their Salah is valid, because they are ignorant. As for those who know the legal ruling that they should not follow the Imam, they should not stand up or follow him, and if they follow him, their Salah will be void. The same applies if the Imam abandons a Rak`ah. That is, when the Imam sits after the third Rak`ah in Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon) or `Isha' (Night) Prayers, and the Ma'mums remind him, but he does not stand. In this case, they should stand to complete

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the Salah for themselves. If the Imam thinks that he is right, his Salah is valid; but if he does not believe that he is right and has not stood up, his Salah becomes void, because he should follow them if those who remind him are two or more. Then, if he keeps sitting and ends the Salah by offering Taslim, his Salah becomes void, because he has abandoned a Rak`ah on purpose, unless he believes that he is right, because in this case, that is, if he thinks that he is right and the worshippers are wrong, his Salah is valid, and the Salah of each the Imam and the Ma'mums depends upon their belief. Therefore, if the Ma'mums believe that they are right, their Salah is valid; and if the Imam believes that he is right, his Salah is valid. In all cases, they should all be alert in order not to commit something void. When a Muslim starts a Salah, he should concentrate with all his heart, and make his heart submissively attuned to his Lord while performing Salah, so as not to forget anything. If he

forgets something, he should act according to Allah's Shar` (Law). That is, if he is the Imam, the worshippers should draw his attention by saying: "Subhan Allah, Subhan Allah". If he performs an additional Rak`ah or abandons a Rak`ah, the Ma'mums should not follow him if they know that he has added or abandoned a Rak`ah. Rather, they should sit and wait for him if he adds, or stand up and resume if there is a Rak`ah to be performed; and in both cases, he should perform Sujud-ul-Sahw, also the Ma'mums should follow him in performing it. Therefore, if he performs an additional Rak`ah, he should offer Sujud-ul-Sahw, and if he abandons a Rak`ah, he should stand up to perform it and then offer Sujud-ul-Sahw as well. They should offer Sujud-ul-Sahw with him in both cases.

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196- Ruling on invoking Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet in the first Tashahhud

Q: If the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) sits for a long time during the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer), is it permissible to invoke Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet after reciting the first Tashahhud, or should we keep silent after reciting the first Tashahhud until the Imam stands up?

A: The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to recite Al-Salat-ul-Ibrahimiyyah (the second part of the Tashahhud: the reported formula of invoking Allah's Peace and Blessing upon the Prophet) if possible, whether the worshipper is an Imam, a Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually) or a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer), because when the Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked about this, he described to them the way of invoking Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet, and did not say that it is to be said in the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer) only. The Prophet, therefore, did not specify a posture in which the invoking of Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet should be said in particular, which shows that it is permissible to recite it in the first Tashahhud as well as the last Tashahhud. Thus, it is better for the worshipper to say: "I testify that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger, I invoke Allah's Blessings upon Muhammad and his family, etc". The preponderant opinion is to say this during both the first and the last Tashahhud. Additionally, if the Imam stands up without completing the Tashahud, the Ma'mum should stand up as well, and it suffices to say: "And Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger". However, it is better to invoke Allah's Peace and Blessings upon the Prophet if possible, whether the worshipper is an Imam, a Munfarid, or a Ma'mum, because the literal meaning of the authentic Hadiths shows this.



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197- Ruling on an Imam who performs an additional Rak`ah out of ignorance

Q: I performed Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer as a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) with my grandfather, who had preceded me with one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), and instead of sitting to recite the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer), my grandfather stood up to perform an additional Rak`ah, so I grabbed his hand and said: "Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah)", but he insisted on performing the additional Rak`ah. When he finished that Rak`ah, I did not offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) with him, but stood up to complete my Salah (Prayer) by adding one Rak`ah, which was the fourth Rak`ah for me, without counting the Rak`ah which was the fourth for him and the third for me. After the Salah ended, I asked him: "Why did you perform an additional Rak`ah?" He said out of ignorance: "So that you could complete your Salah with me!" What is the ruling on this additional Rak`ah that was performed out of ignorance, and not out of forgetfulness? What should he do now? What is the ruling on my Salah since I added a fourth Rak`ah while not counting the additional Rak`ah that he performed, and I also offered Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) to make up for this addition that I knew about?

A: You did well when you reminded your grandfather by saying: "Subhan Allah" and holding him to sit down, because it was obligatory upon him to sit down when reminded, and not to perform an additional Rak`ah. You should have sit and waited, and when he sat and offered Taslim, you should have stood up and performed the Rak`ah that you had missed, and not have followed him in performing the additional Rak`ah. This is what is prescribed, that is, if the Imam performs a fourth Rak`ah in Maghrib Prayer, or a third Rak`ah in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, or a fifth Rak`ah

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in a four-Rak`ah Salah (Prayer consisting of four units), such as the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, the Ma'mum should remind him, saying: "Subhan Allah, Subhan Allah", while the woman should clap her hands, then the Imam should obey them, unless he is certain that he is not wrong and that they are wrong, or else he should respond to them and sit down until he ends his Salah and offers Taslim, and he should also offer Sujud-ul-Sahw, by performing two prostrations before Taslim. If, on the other hand, the Imam is certain that they are wrong and he is right, he should resume his Salah and complete it. As for the Ma'mums, they should act according to their Yaqin (certainty). That is, if they are certain that the Imam is performing an additional Rak`ah, they should sit and wait for the Imam, then make Taslim with him; and if they are not certain, they should follow him and complete the Salah with him, because he is their Imam and they must follow him. They should not contradict him except when they are certain that he is wrong, because in this case, they should sit and not follow him in performing an additional Rak`ah. Accordingly, the Salah of this person who performed a fifth Rak`ah, by adding a Rak`ah to his Salah out of ignorance, so as to let you complete your Salah with him, is valid, because it is the result of ignorance. This case is similar to a worshipper who performs a fifth Rak`ah in the four-Rak`ah Salah, a third Rak`ah in the two-Rak`ah Salah, or a fourth Rak`ah in the three-Rak`ah Salah out of ignorance, thinking that he should not get back to his former

posture if he stands upright, because some people think that if they stand upright, it is not permissible for them to sit down again, but that they should go on with the Rak`ah. This is of course wrong and is considered ignorance. Therefore, the Salah is valid because of the action that he did out of ignorance, but he should learn the way of performing Salah and learn the jurisprudence of Salah, so as not to commit this mistake again. So, if a worshipper performs an additional Rak`ah out of ignorance or forgetfulness, his Salah is valid, but he should offer Sujud-ul-Sahw if it

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is out of forgetfulness. However, if the worshipper performs an additional Rak`ah on purpose, despite his knowledge of the Islamically legal ruling, he is playful and his Salah is not valid. However, this does not happen on purpose in most cases, but it happens either out of ignorance or of forgetfulness, and in this case, the Salah is valid and the worshipper must offer Sujud-ul-Sahw if he forgets something. Also the Ma'mum should not follow him if he does something wrong if he knows that he is wrong. Rather, he should draw his attention and not follow him if he adds or abandons anything. He should act according to his Yaqin; if the Imam adds a Rak`ah, the Ma'mum should sit, and if the Imam abandons a Rak`ah, the Ma'mum should complete what he should perform alone if the Imam does not obey him. This is what is obligatory upon both the Imam and the Ma'mum.



198- Reconciling between the prohibition of following the Imam in an additional Rak`ah and the Hadith: (The Imam is appointed to be followed.)

Q: Why do the Fuqaha' (Muslim jurists) maintain the opinion of not following the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in performing an additional Rak`ah, although the Hadith Marfu` (a Hadith narrated from the Prophet with a connected or disconnected chain of narration) shows that the Imam should be followed and not contradicted if he forgets anything, such as the Hadith related in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim), which is narrated by Abu Hurayrah, showing that the Imam should be followed if he forgets something, even if he performs an additional Rak`ah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The Imam is appointed to be followed,

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so, when he offers Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"), you should offer Takbir too,) In another Hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Do not be controversial about him"?

A: It has been determined by the Nas (Islamic text from the Qur'an or the Sunnah) and the Ijma` (consensus of scholars) that the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of the Salahs (Prayers) is known and must not be added to or subtracted from. The Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer consists of four Rak`ahs, as well as the `Asr (Afternoon) and the `Isha' (Night) Prayers. The Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer consists of three Rak`ahs and the Fajr (Dawn) and Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayers consist of two Rak`ahs each. Thus, each Prayer consists of a certain number of Rak`ahs. Therefore, if the Imam adds a Rak`ah, he has either forgotten or has done this on purpose; and no one can imagine that someone might add a Rak`ah to the Salah except if he does not know the rulings of what he is doing. In fact, this happens out of forgetfulness. Therefore, if the Imam adds a Rak`ah out of forgetfulness, he should be reminded, and if he pays attention and sits down again, then all praise is due to Allah. If he does not pay attention and insists on performing the additional Rak`ah, it is obligatory upon those who know that this Rak`ah is additional not to follow, because this is an incorrect following and Muslims are commanded not to obey their Imams in what is wrong, but to obey them only in doing the Ma`ruf (that which is judged as good, beneficial, or fitting by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). That is, we should follow the Imam but in Ma`ruf, not in wrong actions; and adding a Rak`ah to the Prayer by way of forgetfulness is wrong, and is an addition to the Shar`y (Islamically legal) Salah. Therefore, anyone who knows that this is wrong

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should not follow the Imam in doing it, but should sit and should not follow the Imam in performing a fifth Rak`ah in the Zhuhr, the `Asr, or the `Isha' Prayers, or a fourth Rak`ah in the Maghrib Prayer, or a third Rak`ah in the Fajr or the Jumu`ah Prayers. Rather, he should sit still. On the other hand, if someone does not know that the Rak`ah performed is additional, he should follow the Imam, abiding by the Hadith mentioned by the questioner: (The Imam is appointed to be followed; so do not be

controversial about him; and when he performs Ruku` (bowing), you should bow.) Therefore, anyone who is ignorant about whether there is an addition or not should follow the Imam, because the basic principle is to follow the Imam. As for those who know that the Rak`ah is additional and is, in turn, wrongly performed, they should not follow the Imam; they should rather keep sitting. As far as I know, this matter is not controversial among scholars. Additionally, if a person knows that the Imam is performing an additional Rak`ah, he should draw his attention by saying: "Subhan Allah (Glorified be Allah), Subhan Allah", so that the Imam might respond and correct himself, or else he should keep sitting and wait for the Imam so as not to follow him in his wrong action. This is what is known by all scholars, and what agrees with the Shar`y evidence. Obedience should be but in Ma`ruf, and no one should obey another in committing sins at all, or in doing wrong. If you know that something is wrong, do not follow your Imam in it. However, if the Imam insists and does not correct himself, there are but two scenarios: He either believes that what he has done is correct and that he is right while those who have reminded him are wrong. In this case he is correct and there is

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nothing wrong with him, as long as he thinks that he is right; and in this case he should resume his Salah according to his intention and his belief, and his Salah is valid, and the Salah of those who think that he is performing an additional Rak`ah is valid too, and there is no sin on them all, because everyone behaves according to his own belief, and according to what he thinks is correct. However, if the Imam has no retentive memory, but insists on doing wrong, it is not permissible for him to do this, because he is insisting on doing the wrong action, which is performing an additional Rak`ah after being reminded by two or more of the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer). In this case, his action is not correct, and the additional Rak`ah invalidates his Salah. Additionally, he is responsible for his belief and there is nothing wrong with him. However, if the Imam resumes the additional Rak`ah and does not obey the Ma'mums, it is better for them to await him, but their Salah will be valid if they offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), because they are excused in their acting on their own. But it is better for them to await him,

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because he might be excused, as he might think that he is right; therefore, it is better if they await him and offer Taslim with him.



199- Ruling on the Imam not offering the Fajr Prayer in congregation

Q: Is it permissible for the person who does not offer the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer in congregation and trims his beard to lead the Muslims in Salah (Prayer)?

A: The person who does not offer the Fajr Prayer in congregation, trims his beard, smokes tobacco, and drinks Khamr (intoxicant) is disobedient and should not lead the Muslims in the Salah. The responsible people should not assign such a person to this position. If you are unfortunately led by anyone of them in Salah, your Salah is valid, as he is a Muslim but disobedient. Ibn `Umar and other Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) offered Salah behind Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, who was one of the most tyrannical people. He was Muslim, but he committed sins. Sins do not prevent a person from being an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), but makes him an imperfect Imam. It is preferable to offer Salah behind another Imam and this person should be dismissed from this role if his sins are apparent. The people responsible for assigning and dismissing Imams should dismiss him and assign a person who does not commit these sins as much as they can. However, if

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he abandons the Fajr Prayer and the other Salahs, he is Kafir (disbeliever). He should not be an Imam; we seek refuge with Allah from him. The question apparently implies that this person feels too lazy to offer it in congregation. Thus, he is disobedient. Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: [\(I have seen the time when no one failed to attend it \(i.e., Salah\), except a hypocrite, who was well known for his hypocrisy.\)](#) This refers to congregational Salah. The person who does not offer the Fajr Prayer, Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, or `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer in congregation without an excuse, he is disobedient. The person who is known to commit this sin should not be an Imam and should be dismissed from this role. A better person who does not commit sins should be assigned as Imam. However, the Salah of the person who is afflicted with these sins is valid. He should not offer Salah individually, but he should offer Salah with the people. It is permissible to offer Salah with an Imam who trims his beard, smokes, or neglects some Salahs in congregation. Offering Salah in congregation is necessary. This disobedient person harms himself only, and the people should advise, guide, and warn him against the outcomes of his sins. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is Merciful and Kind towards His Worshipers.

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This person may repent to Allah when his Muslim brothers advise and guide him.



200- Ruling on making up for Sunnah Ratibah after offering obligatory Salah

Q: A questioner says: When I go to the Masjid (mosque) for the Fajr (Dawn) and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers, I find that the muezzin is pronouncing Iqamah (call to start prayer) or find that the people are already performing the congregational prayer. In such case, should I perform the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory prayer performed on a regular basis) after performing the Fajr and `Asr Prayers? And what about Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque)?

A: If you have entered the Masjid while the congregational prayer is being performed or the muezzin is pronouncing Iqamah, you are to join the congregational prayer immediately. Do not offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid or the relevant Sunnah Ratibah at that time. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(When the \(obligatory\) Salah is commenced, then there is no Salah to be offered but the obligatory one.\)](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih [Authentic Hadith Book]) So if you go to the Masjid while the muezzin is pronouncing the Iqamah, line yourself up in the rows established for the congregational prayer and say: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" to start Salah with them. Do not offer the supererogatory prayer at that time, neither that related to the Fajr Prayer nor Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. This is also the case, when you go to the Masjid while the congregational prayers are already being performed. When you finish the obligatory Salah, you can then offer the Sunnah Ratibah. In case of the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, after finishing the same, you can offer the Sunnah Ratibah, intending first its Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) and then the relative Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory prayer). The same applies to the Fajr Prayer, after finishing it, you can offer its Sunnah Ratibah, i.e., two units of supererogatory prayer immediately after finishing it

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or after sunrise. As for the Sunnah Ratibah relative to the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, it is principally performed after it, and so is also the case with the Sunnah Ratibah relative to `Isha' (Night) Prayer. Praise be to Allah.



201- Ruling on interrupting the Nafilah Prayer when the Fard Prayer commences

Q: If the Fard (obligatory) Prayer commences while I have already started the Sunnah (supererogatory) Prayer, should I interrupt the same; if so, how should I do it? Or should I complete the Sunnah Prayer even if I have to miss one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of the Fard Prayer?

A: According to the correct opinion maintained by scholars, you are to interrupt the Sunnah Prayer in this case; you do so only by intending the interruption of the same; there is no need to offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) to interrupt it. Then you are to focus on lining up in the row for the Congregational Prayer and preparing yourself for Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer), as the Fard Prayer has priority over the supererogatory one. This is based on the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(When the \(obligatory\) Salah is commenced, then there is no Salah to be offered but the obligatory one.\)](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih [Authentic Hadith Book]) The Fard Prayer is more important, therefore you are to interrupt the Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayer and prepare yourself for the Fard. Some scholars hold that in such case the person may complete the supererogatory Salah briefly, but this is a weak opinion that is contradictory to the relative authentic Hadith. But if the Fard Prayer commences while you are performing the last Rak`ah of the supererogatory Salah, making Sujud (prostration) or saying Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer), you can complete the Salah, because the remaining part will not make you miss standing for the Fard Prayer. Also, if you also have made Ruku` (bowing)

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for the second Rak`ah of the supererogatory Salah, you can complete it, because the remaining part of the same is less than one Rak`ah. Yet if the Fard Prayer commences while you are still in the first or the second Rak`ah before Ruku`, you are to interrupt it. This is the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet).



Q: If a person has started a Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayer and then the call to start the Fard (obligatory) Prayer is pronounced, should they complete the Nafilah Prayer or interrupt the same to join the Fard Prayer? If you say they should interrupt it, would they be required to make up for it after performing the Fard or not? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) has ordained that when the Muslim hears the Iqamah (call to start the obligatory prayer), they are to interrupt the supererogatory Prayer they are performing and focus on observing the Fard Prayer. It is authentically reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: [\(When the \(obligatory\) Salah is commenced, then there is no Salah to be offered but the obligatory one.\)](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih [Authentic Hadith Book]) Accordingly, if the Iqamah for the Fard Prayer is pronounced while a believer is performing a supererogatory Prayer, whether it is Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) or Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis), they are to interrupt it and focus on observing the Fard Prayer. They are not required to make up for this supererogatory Prayer after that, as it is a voluntary one.



Q: If a congregational Salah (prayer) commences while I am offering a Nafilah (supererogatory) prayer, should I discontinue it and join

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the Imam (the one who leads congregational prayer) in the Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting prayer)?

A: It is preferable to discontinue it, according to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(When the \(congregational\) prayer commences, then there is no prayer \(valid\) except the obligatory prayer.\)](#) You should stop the Nafilah and join the congregational Salah with the Imam, unless you are about to conclude it after offering Ruku` (bowing) in the second Rak`ah (unit of prayer). In this case, it is preferable to finish it, as what is left of the Salah is less than a full Rak`ah and this is acceptable, knowing that the minimum part that could be called Salah is one Rak`ah. If you have offered two Rak`ahs and already performed the second Ruku` (bowing), and what is left is Sujud (prostration) or Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of prayer), it is more likely - and Allah knows best - that there is nothing wrong with finishing it. This is because what is left is only a part of a Rak`ah.



Q: If the obligatory Salah (prayer) begins while I am offering the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory prayer performed on a regular basis), should I discontinue the Sunnah Ratibah and offer the obligatory Salah, or complete the Sunnah Ratibah? How do I conclude the Sunnah Ratibah?

A: As long as you offer the obligatory Salah, this is sufficient. If you have begun the Nafilah (supererogatory) prayer, you should finish it; there is no need to interrupt it to offer Salah with others. There is nothing wrong in offering the Salah with them before performing the Nafilah. However, they are not in need of your joining them. If there is only one person, you can offer congregational Salah with him, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said

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when a man entered and the people had finished their Salah: [\(Is there any man who will do good to this \(man\) and pray together with him?\)](#) If one misses the Salah and you offer Salah in congregation with him, this is fine. If the congregational Salah begins, you have the choice either to join it, and you will be rewarded for that, or to finish the Nafilah. There is nothing wrong with this. In this respect, the Prophet (peace be upon him) told Abu Dharr that toward the end of time there would arise people who defer Salah beyond its prescribed time. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(Observe Salah at its prescribed time, but if the Iqamah \(call to start the prayer\) is announced for \(congregational\) prayer, then perform Salah along with them \(the congregation\); for therein is abundant virtue.\)](#)



Q: A questioner asks: "If a congregational Salah (prayer) begins while I am offering a Nafilah (supererogatory) prayer and there is a gap between me and the row, is it permissible for me to walk to the end of the row?"

A: You should discontinue the Nafilah prayer, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [﴿When the \(congregational\) prayer commences,](#)

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[then there is no prayer \(valid\) except the obligatory prayer.﴾](#) Thus, you should discontinue it and join the obligatory Salah. Also, you should close the gap, unless you are at the end of the Nafilah, as when you have offered the second Ruku` (bowing) or Sujud (prostration) or are reciting Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of prayer). In this case, you should finish the Salah, then join the Imam and stand in the row. However, if there is one Rak`ah (unit of prayer) or more left, you should discontinue it, according to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [﴿When the prayer commences then there is no prayer \(valid\) except the obligatory prayer.﴾](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih).



202- Ruling on a person who has offered Salah individually and then a congregational Salah begins

Q: What is the ruling on a person who has offered Salah (prayer) individually and then a congregational Salah begins? Should they repeat the same Salah in congregation? If so, should they offer it with the intention of making up for the Salah or of offering it as Nafilah (supererogatory) prayer, or as a repetition of the very obligatory Salah one has already offered individually?

A: It is prescribed for the person who has already offered Salah individually and then a congregational Salah is held, to join the congregational Salah to attain the virtue of the congregational Salah. The Salah one then offers with the congregation is considered as Nafilah, since the Salah one had offered individually is considered as the obligatory Salah. This is the correct manner, which is supported by the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Abu Dharr when speaking about rulers who will defer Salah beyond its prescribed time. He stated: [\(Observe prayer](#)

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[at its prescribed time, but if the Iqama is announced for \(congregational\) prayer, then observe prayer along with them. For therein is an abundance of virtue.\)](#) When a man entered (the Masjid, i.e. mosque, to perform Salah) and the people had offered Salah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Is there any man who will do good to this \(man\) and pray together with him.\)](#) If one has offered an obligatory Salah individually and then a congregational Salah is held, one should join the congregation to attain its virtue. If one offers Salah individually thinking that the congregational Salah has already been held and then discovers that the congregational Salah is yet to be held, it is prescribed that one then join the congregation. Thus, the first (offering of) Salah is considered as the obligatory Salah, while the second is considered as Nafilah; if one offer it individually or in congregation. If one has offered their first obligatory Salah individually or in congregation, then another congregation is held, their Salah offered with the second congregation is considered as Nafilah and not as the obligatory Salah. This is supported by the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him), during Farewell Hajj, when he was informed in Mina about two persons who did not offer Salah. He summoned them and asked: [\(What prevented you from praying along with us \(in congregation\)? They replied: We have already prayed in our houses. He said: Do not do so. If any of you prays at home and finds that the Imam has not prayed, he should pray along with him; and that will be a supererogatory prayer for them.\)](#)

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203- Ruling on an Imam who begins the Salah early before worshipers arrive

Q: If the Imam (the one who leads congregational prayer) comes to the Masjid (mosque) while the worshipers have not yet arrived to offer Salah (prayer), and however offers Salah, and after that people arrive; should he lead them in their Salah, or the Salah he offered (individually) is sufficient (for him)? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: It is prescribed for the Imam not to hasten to offer the Salah, and to wait for the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in prayer). He should delay it slightly more than usual as people may be preoccupied with matters that prevent them from coming to the Masjid early. If they are unusually late and he offers Salah (individually) and then they come, it is prescribed for him to lead them in the Salah, which is considered as Nafilah (supererogatory) prayer for him. Mu`adh ibn Jabal used to lead his companions in the Salah after offering Salah with the Prophet (peace be upon him). Thus, it was Nafilah for him and obligatory for them. If this person leads them in their Salah, may Allah reward him with the best. If someone else leads them, there is not blame on him (the Imam).



204- Ruling on having several congregations for the same Salah in one Masjid

Q: Is it lawful to move from a congregation for Salah (Prayer) to another congregation in the same Masjid (mosque)? In such case, which prayer

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is considered the obligatory and which would be the Sunnah (supererogatory)?

A: If a person has started a Salah with a certain congregation, there is no reason for his moving to another congregation; he should complete the Salah with which he has already started the Salah. If a group of people entered a Masjid (mosque) while there is a congregational prayer being performed, they are to join this congregational prayer and should not form another congregation on their own. Having two or more congregations for Salah at one Masjid at the same time reflects groundless disagreement and is considered Bid`ah (innovation in religion). The obligation to be observed here is that when a group of people enter the Masjid while the Imam of the first congregation has not yet started the Salah, they are to line themselves up in the row behind him, unless there is a Shar`y (Islamically lawful) reason for not observing Salah behind that particular Imam like his being a disbeliever, for example. But if there is no objection to offering prayer behind that Imam, there should not be more than one congregation for the same Salah in one Masjid. On the other hand, if the first congregation has already finished observing the Salah, and then some people who have not performed the Salah entered the Masjid, they may hold a congregation on their own. As for the opinion of some Salaf (righteous predecessors) that they are to observe the Salah individually, this is a weak viewpoint that is not correct. The correct opinion maintained by scholars in this regard is that when some people come to the Masjid while the congregational prayer has already been performed,

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they are to form a congregation for Salah on their own. There is nothing wrong with this. This is a way for showing interest in gaining the reward of the congregational prayer and acting upon the general Hadiths related in this concern. For instance, the Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said: [«A man's Salah with another is better than his Salah alone, and his Salah with two men is better than his Salah with only one, but if there are more, it is more pleasing to Allah.»](#) The congregational prayer is a requirement. If a person has missed the basic congregational prayer at a Masjid, and then observed another group performing the obligatory prayer, he is to join them and not pray on his own.



205- Ruling on the Salah of a person who makes Taslim before the Imam has made the second Taslim

Q: Brother A. . N. M. S. from the Arab Republic of Yemen asks: I have observed Salah (Prayer) at some Masjids (mosques) where I found people making Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) in a strange way. That is, the Imam makes the first Taslim and the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) follow him in the same manner; then he makes the second Taslim and they do the same after him. Is this correct?

A: The Sunnah (act following the example of the Prophet) is that the Imam makes the two Taslims first and then the Ma'mums make Taslim after this. But what the people in the question did is correct; their Salah is correct.

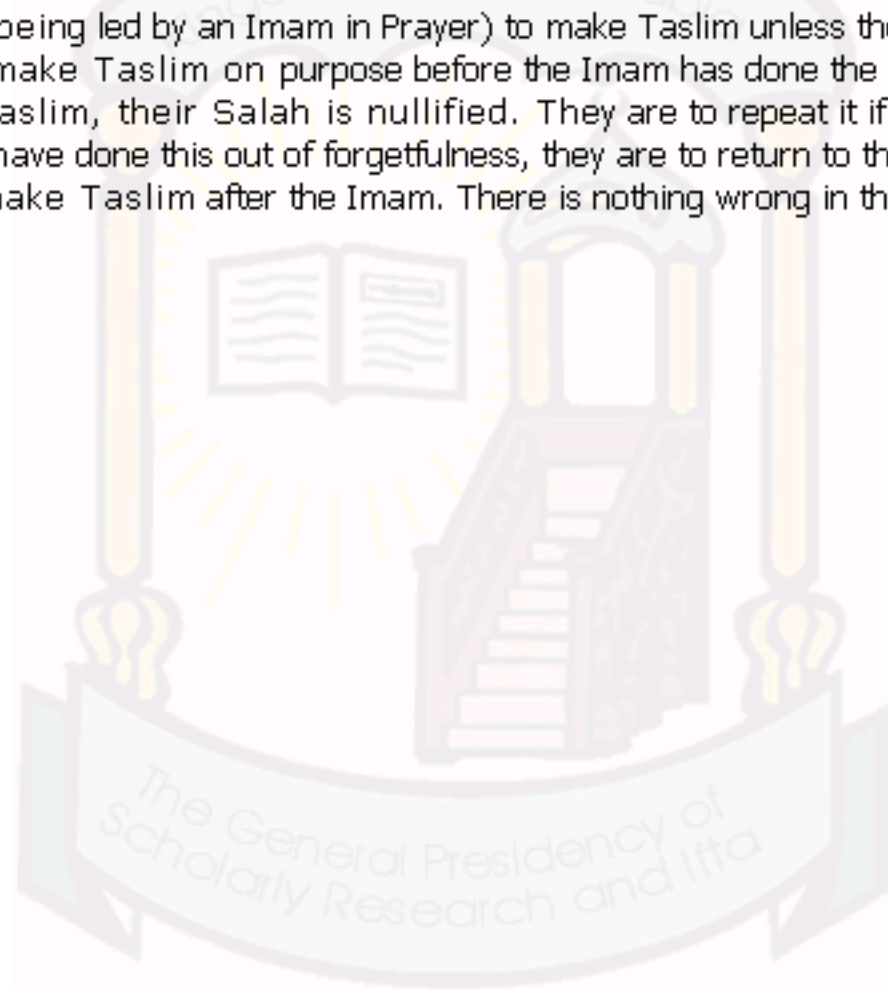
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If they made the first Taslim after the Imam made the first and the second also after him, there is no problem with this; it only contradicts what is preferable according to the Sunnah. The Sunnah in this regard is, rather, that the Ma'mums wait until the Imam finishes both Taslims and then they make Talsim. This is the act reported to be done by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) in this respect. But there is nothing wrong with the people in question making the first Taslim after the Imam and the second also after him, as they did not precede him in either.



Q: A questioner from Riyadh says: Some people make Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the same time the Imam does and some others say it after the first Taslim made by the Imam. Are their Salah (Prayers) correct? What is the legal ruling on this?

A: The obligation here is to make Taslim after the Imam has finished it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered that no one would offer Taslim until after the Imam had done it. So it is not lawful for a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to make Taslim unless the Imam has finished it. Should a person make Taslim on purpose before the Imam has done the same or before he has finished second Taslim, their Salah is nullified. They are to repeat it if it is an obligatory one. However, if they have done this out of forgetfulness, they are to return to their Salah intending the same, and then make Taslim after the Imam. There is nothing wrong in the case of forgetfulness here.





Q: A questioner says: When the Imam makes Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), would the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer)

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make Taslim after the second Taslim made by the Imam or immediately after the first one made by him?

A: They are to make Taslim after the second Taslim of the Imam; they are not to make it unless the Imam has finished the second Taslim.



206- Ruling on making Taslim before the Imam out of forgetfulness

Q: What is the ruling on making Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) before the Imam out of forgetfulness? Would the Salah (Prayer) of the person who has done this be correct or not?

A: If the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) has made Taslim before the Imam due to forgetfulness, he is to re-intend going back into Salah and then make Taslim once again after the Imam finishes the same. There is nothing required from him in such case, unless he is a latecomer and still has one or more Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) to offer; in the later case, he is to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) for making Taslim before the Imam after making up for the missing Rak`ahs.



207- Ruling on the Imam making Taslim to the right only

Q: A questioner says: We have a Masjid (mosque) at our village where the people observe the congregational Salah (Prayer), but at the end of Salah, the Imam makes Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) only to the right, this is to say he makes one Taslim. Is this lawful?

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A: The correct opinion maintained by scholars here is that this is unlawful. He is to be taught that he is required to offer two Taslims and his former way of Taslim is to be overlooked. This is because it has been authentically proven that the Prophet (peace be upon him) would make two Taslims. So, this Imam is to be taught the same and Allah forgives his bygone act In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), as he has been ignorant of the correct way of Taslim and believed that it was sufficient to make only one Taslim. He should strive in the future not to do this again; he is to be instructed and awakened to the fact that it is obligatory on him to make two Taslims.



208- Ruling on a Ma'mum's going out of the Masjid before the Imam's turning toward the Ma'mums

Q: Regarding the Imam turning toward the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) following the end of the Prayer, some people say it is not lawful for a Ma'mum to depart from the Masjid (mosque) unless the Imam turns his face toward him. Is this right or not?

A: This is probable, but the opinion that seems most correct is that it is not right. However, it is preferable for the Ma'mum not to leave the Masjid before that, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said: [\(I am your Imam, so do not precede me in bowing, prostration, standing, and Insraf \(saying Taslim to the left and to the right\).\)](#) It is widely known here that Insraf, according to this hadith, refers to Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). This is derived from the report of Thawban: "When the Prophet would make Insraf (i.e., finish his Salah by pronouncing Taslim), he would seek Allah's Forgiveness three times." As for Insraf meaning the Imam's turning toward the Ma'mums, it is preferable that they wait until he turns his face toward them, but if they left the Masjid before that,

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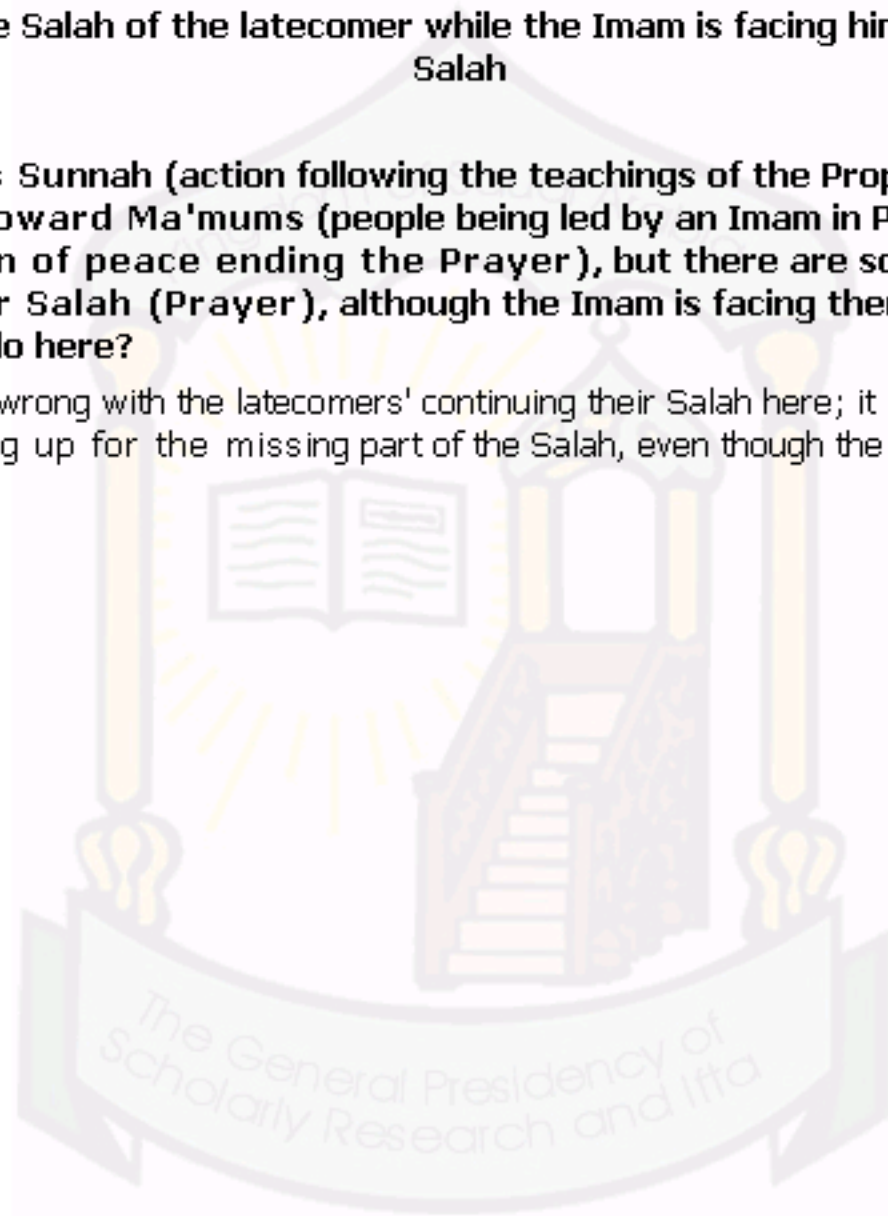
there would be no problem with this, as Insraf meant in the Hadith reported above refers to Taslim. This is the opinion that seems most correct as understood from the Hadiths related in this regard.



209- Ruling on the Salah of the latecomer while the Imam is facing him after finishing the Salah

Q: We know it is Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) that the Imam turns his face toward Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) after making Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), but there are some latecomers who continue in their Salah (Prayer), although the Imam is facing them in this case. What should the Imam do here?

A: There is nothing wrong with the latecomers' continuing their Salah here; it is permissible for them to continue making up for the missing part of the Salah, even though the Imam is facing toward them.





210- Ruling on following a broadcast congregational Salah

Q: When I watch a congregational Salah (Prayer) broadcast on T.V. or listen to it through a radio, is it permissible for me to follow it in Salah?

A: No; it is not lawful to do so. You are required to go out for the congregational prayer in the Masjid (mosque) unless you are ill, in which case you may perform the obligatory Salah individually at home. If you have some person with you at home, such as your wife, you can offer the Salah together;

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otherwise, pray alone- praise be to Allah. But if you are able to go to the Masjid, it is obligatory upon you to observe the congregational Salah there, to avoid the way of the hypocrites. As for following the congregational Salah which is being broadcast on radio or television, or when you hear the Imam through a microphone while you are not attending the same in person, this is not lawful.



Q: A female questioner asks: is it permissible for me to pray following a congregational Salah (Prayer) I listen to through a radio?

A: It is not permissible for you to do so. Pray on your own and do not follow a Congregational Salah transmitted from a radio.





Q: If a person hears the voice of Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer), is it permissible for him to follow the Imam while there is a radio for this, for example?

A: If the questioner is asking about praying following a congregational Salah broadcast on a radio for a prayer at a remote mosque, this is not lawful. But if he means that there is a radio switched on and distracts the worshippers while praying, it ought to be turned off. If he means to follow a Salah transmitted from a radio for the congregational Salah at the Sacred Mosque in Makkah, the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah, or any other mosque, this is not lawful. The transmission may stop suddenly, affecting the validity of the performance of the act of worship; besides, he is not attending the Salah personally as he is

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away from them. Therefore, it is not lawful for a person to follow a Salah broadcast on a radio; they are, rather, to observe the Salah on their own, without relating themselves to the transmission of the radio. This is what is obligatory in this concern.



211- Following congregational Salah performed at a nearby Masjid from one's house

Q: A questioner asks: My wife follows the Congregational Maghrib (sunset) Prayer being performed at the nearby mosque while she is at home; is this correct or not?

A: If she can see the Imam or the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer), there is no problem with this. But if she does not see them, it is not correct. She is to offer Salah (Prayer) on her own, but she does not have to make up for the Salah she has already performed in this way. Some scholars hold that this is permissible. Anyway, in the future, she is not to follow a Congregational Salah in this way, unless she can see the Imam or some Ma'mums or she is with them at the Masjid (mosque).





212- Ruling on women offering Salah at a place adjacent to men's

Q: In Hadramawt there are Masjid (mosques) for women adjacent to men's Masjids, where they observe the Obligatory Salah (Prayers). Should there be Masjid specified for women? Please, note that they build such women's Masjids in such a way that their rows are positioned in the same lines with those of men, not behind them. There are doors specified for their Masjid.

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When the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) is pronounced, the rows of women stand in line with those of men behind the Imam.

A: We do not know of any grounds for women having separate Masjids of their own. What is widely known is that they may pray behind the rows of men at the rear part of the mosque. This is preferable regarding their prayer congregationally. This is the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) in this respect, i.e., to be positioned in rows behind the men's rows at the rear part of the Masjid. As for the case in question, there is no problem to have the women's rows at the right or the left side of those of the men as they are not mixed with them. The Salah is correct in this case, but it is preferable to have their rows behind those of men at the rear parts of Masjid with a screen between them. This is better so that they can offer the Salah without a hardship being involved. The screen here is not to be of a type that prevents them from seeing the Ma'mums (people led by an Imam in Prayer) or hearing the Imam's voice. But there is no problem In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills) with the women's rows being at the right or left side of the men's as mentioned in the question, as they benefit from the congregational Salah

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and from the sermons that they may listen to. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **«Do not forbid the female Servants of Allah from (going into) the Masjids of Allah.»** However, women should not display their adornments or wear perfumes when going to Masjids, so they do not cause Fitnah (temptations) for men.



213- Ruling on following a congregational Salah from outside the Masjid

Q: In the district where we live, there is a Masjid (mosque) behind which there is a place for women to offer Tarawih (special supererogatory night prayer in Ramadan). This place is separated from the Masjid via a wall in front of which pass some men going out from the Masjid and we do not see the Imam; is it lawful to follow the congregational Salah (Prayer) from that place? May Allah reward you with the best. Please, note also that we have observed Salah in that place for some years. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If you are see the Ma'mums (people led by an Imam in Prayer) or some of them, there is nothing wrong with praying this way.

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But if you do not see the Imam nor the Ma'mums, do not observe Salah in that place. Rather, pray at your homes, or some windows are opened in the wall separating that place from the mosque so that you can see the Ma'mums. As for the Salah you have observed in this way in the past, there is no problem with them, as some scholars believe that this is permissible. However, the most correct scholarly opinion in this respect is that if there is a place outside a Masjid, no person should follow the congregational Salah performed in the Masjid from that place unless they can see the Imam or Ma'mums. It is not sufficient here to listen to the Salah through the microphone transmitting the same, unless that place is a building adjoined to the Mosque such as Al- khulwa (a place annexed to a Masjid for teaching the Qur'an) or the like.



214- Ruling on women offering Salah in a Musalla separated from the Masjid

Q: There is a Musalla (place for Prayer) in some markets for women. It is attached to the Masjid (mosque) in the market. Should women who offer Salah (Prayer) in it follow the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in his Salah or should they offer Salah individually, taking into consideration that they hear the voice of the Imam?

A: These women should offer Salah individually and should not follow the Imam as long as they do not see either the Imam or the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer). Hearing the voice of the Imam is not enough as long as they are outside the Masjid. Thus, they should offer Salah individually.

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Everyone of them may offer Salah individually. If they can see the Imam or the Ma'mums or they are inside the Masjid, there is nothing wrong with them following the Imam in the Salah. However, if they are outside the Masjid or cannot see the Imam or the Ma'mum, they should offer Salah individually.



215- Ruling on a woman offering Salah following the Imam in her room above the Masjid

Q: A questioner from Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah asks: "A woman lives with her husband on the top floor above the Masjid (mosque). She follows the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in the Salah (Prayer) while she is in her room above the Masjid. Is her Salah valid or not, taking into consideration that she has been following the Imam for two years? If her Salahs are invalid, should she make up for them?"

A: If she cannot see either the Imam or the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer), she should not follow the Imam in the Salah. Rather, she should offer Salah individually. She is not obliged to make up for the Salahs she offered previously, because this is a matter of debate among the scholars. As some of them consider her actions to be permissible, we hope that she is not obliged to make up for her previous Salahs. However, we advise her to offer Salah individually in the future, and not to follow

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the Imam if she is unable to see him or the Ma'mums. Also, the place where she offers Salah is not part of the Masjid, which is separate from the upper floor as the questioner mentioned. The person who built the Masjid intended to dedicate only the lower floor to the Masjid and made the upper floor a dwelling for himself and his family. Therefore, if the upper floor is not part of the Masjid, the person and his family can live, have sexual intercourse, and relieve themselves there, as it does not belong to the Masjid and the Masjid is only on the lower floor. However, if the upper floor is intended to be part of the Masjid, it should not be dwelled in by the family, where they have sexual intercourse, relieve themselves, and the woman menstruates. Rather, it should be consecrated and protected for Salah as it is part of the Masjid. However, if the person who built the Masjid did not intend the upper floor to be part of the Masjid but, rather, intended it to be dwelled in or rented, it is considered to be a separate place, and the ruling on the Masjid does not apply to it. The inhabitants of this floor should not follow the Imam of the Masjid in Salah, unless they are able to see the Imam or some of the Ma'mums. Otherwise, the woman or the ill person dwelling on this floor should offer Salah individually. If this floor belongs to the Masjid, it should not be used as a dwelling where a person has sexual intercourse with his wife,

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relieves himself, or the menstruating woman sits. If it does not belong to the Masjid, it is owned by its inhabitants. If the Masjid is composed of two floors, it is not a necessity for the persons on the upper floor to see the Imam or some of the Ma'mums, as it belongs to the Masjid and the people can offer Salah there on the condition that they are able to hear the voice of the Imam.



216- Ruling on following a congregational Salah from above the roof of the Masjid

Q: What is the ruling on following a congregational Salah (Prayer) from above the roof of the Masjid (mosque), noting that the roof is separated from the Ma'mums (people led by an Imam in Prayer) and the rows of the Ma'mums on the roof may be preceding the Imam?

A: Observing congregational Salah from above roofs of the Masjids or roofs of places annexed to the Masjid is valid, so long as the persons observing the Salah from the said roofs can follow the Imam by seeing him or hearing him saying the Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"). This is because they are considered to be in the Masjid where the Imam is, but they should not precede the Imam; they are to stand behind him just as the rows stand behind him in the same floor where the Imam is, or, when necessary, to stand on the Imam's right or left side. It is not lawful to precede the Imam.

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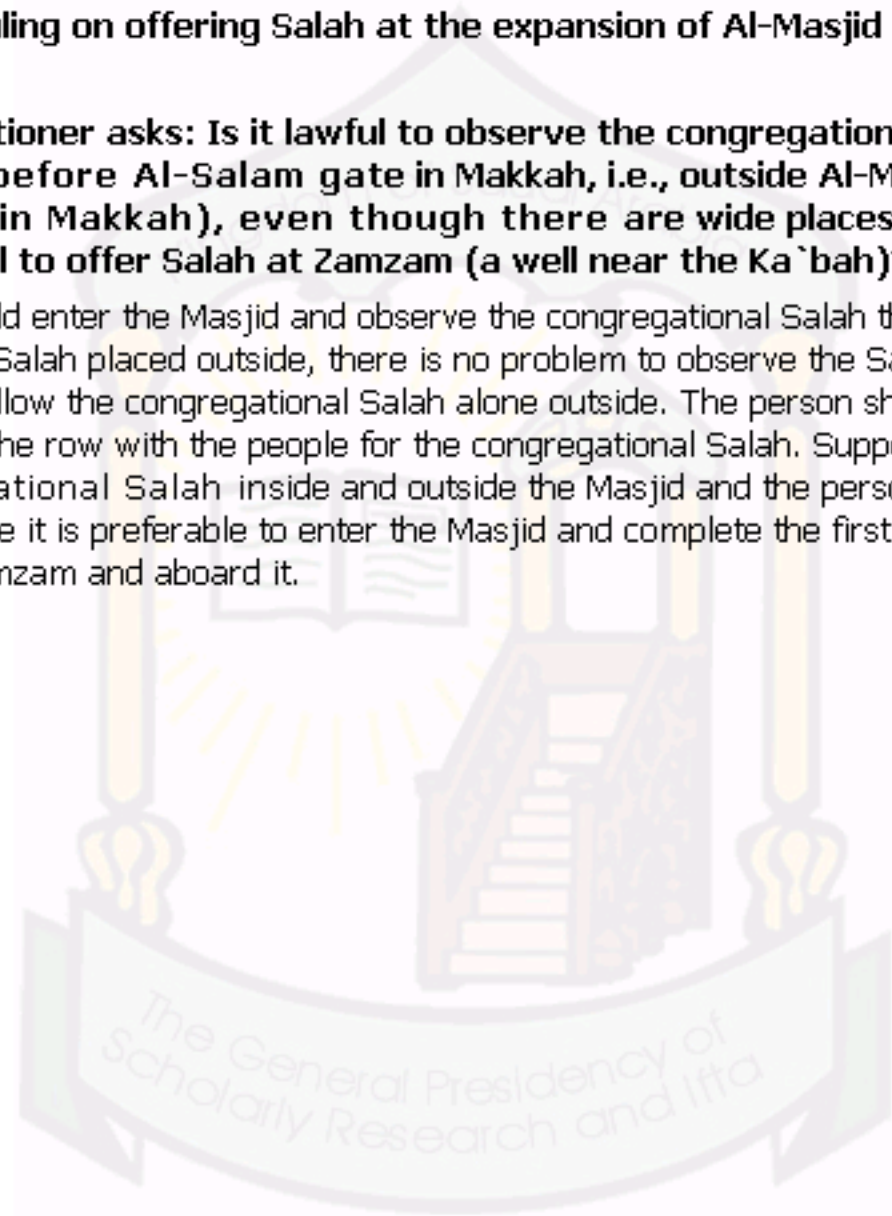
Minding this, the Salah of the people on the roof is valid so long as they can follow the Imam by seeing him or the Ma`mums behind him or by hearing his voice while praying.



217- Ruling on offering Salah at the expansion of Al-Masjid Al-Haram

Q: A female questioner asks: Is it lawful to observe the congregational Salah (Prayer) at the wide place before Al-Salam gate in Makkah, i.e., outside Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred Mosque in Makkah), even though there are wide places inside Al-Masjid Al-Haram? Is it lawful to offer Salah at Zamzam (a well near the Ka`bah)?

A: The person should enter the Masjid and observe the congregational Salah there. If there are rows for congregational Salah placed outside, there is no problem to observe the Salah there. However, it is not lawful to follow the congregational Salah alone outside. The person should, rather, enter the Masjid and enter the row with the people for the congregational Salah. Suppose also that there are rows for congregational Salah inside and outside the Masjid and the person can enter inside the Masjid; in such case it is preferable to enter the Masjid and complete the first rows. It is permissible to offer Salah at Zamzam and aboard it.





218- Lawful excuses for not attending the congregational Salah

Q: A questioner asks: What are the lawful excuses for the Muslim

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not to attend the congregational Salah (Prayer) at the Masjid (mosque)?

A: The scholars have referred to some of these lawful excuses. This includes the disease with which the person cannot go out; fear for one's safety on going out; the call of nature, as the person may respond to the call of nature until he misses the congregational Salah. However, in the later case, the person ought to prepare himself an appropriate amount of time before the congregational Salah so that he can join the same. But should a person intend to go out for Salah and suddenly he feels the need to answer the call of nature, he ought to do so, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **(No Salah can be (rightly performed) when the food is present (before the worshipper) or when he is prompted by the call of nature.)** Among the other lawful excuses is when food is served in front of a person. The person here should not make it a habit that the food is served usually at the time of Salah; but if it happens that the food is served at the time of Salah at the person's home or at his hosts', he is permitted to eat even if he will miss the congregational Salah. Another lawful excuse is when the person is away from the Masjid and did not hear the call to Salah called loudly by the muezzin, not through a microphone; as the person may hear the call transmitted by the microphone.

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from a remote place without being obliged to answer the same. It is when he hears the call loudly by the muezzin without it being transmitted through the microphone that he is required to answer the same, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **(Anyone who hears the Nida' (i.e. Adhan; call to Prayer) and he does not come to it (the Masjid), then there is no prayer (counted) for him except if he has a valid excuse.)** Also, if he is in a small town, he is to answer the call and attend the congregational Salah, because if there is no noise, he will hear the same.



219- Ruling on missing congregational Salah due to an excuse

Q: I live in a house where there is no one but my father, my wife and two children. Once my father ordered me to offer the Fajr Prayer in the Masjid (mosque), however, my wife begged me not to leave except after my father returned from the Masjid out of fear of staying alone. When my father returned and asked me why I did not go to the Masjid, I told him the reason. He then begged me not to go and to pray at home. I told him that praying in the Masjid is better and that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(There is no Salah for a neighbour of the Masjid except in the Masjid.\)](#) However, my father insisted that I should pray at home. He even told me that if I go out, I will not

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be permitted to come back in again and I obeyed him. Please advise me regarding what happened knowing that my wife always complains of having to stay at home alone. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If your wife is unsafe when left alone at home and may be exposed to some danger, as there is likelihood that she may be attacked, then you have an excuse to pray at home out of fear for her. However, if the place is safe and there is no significance for what your wife says and this is only out of her taking things lightly, then pray in the Masjid and obey Allah before obeying your father. You have to pray in the Masjid with the Muslims as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever hears the call \(to Salah\) and does not come, there is no Salah for him, except for one who has an excuse.\)](#) In another Hadith, a blind man asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) saying: [\('O Messenger of Allah, I have no one to take me to the Masjid, is there a Rukhsah \(concession\) for me to pray at home?' The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) answered him saying, 'Can you hear the call to Salah?' The man replied in the affirmative. Hence, he \(peace be upon him\) said, 'Then respond \(to the call by going to the Masjid\).'](#)) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) Since the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded the blind man who had no one to guide him to the Masjid to pray in the Masjid and did not excuse him from that, then you are more required to pray in the Masjid. The father must not be obeyed when it comes to disobeying Shari`ah (Islamic law) because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

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[\(No one is to be obeyed except in Ma`ruf \(that which is judged as good, beneficial, or fitting by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect\).\)](#) He (peace be upon him) also said: [\(No one should be obeyed when it comes to disobeying Allah \(Glorified and Exalted be He\).\)](#)

However, if the wife is not safe and the place itself is not safe and danger exists, then this is a Shar`y (Islamically lawful) excuse for you to pray at home. Regarding the Hadith: [\(There is no Salah for a neighbour of the Masjid except in the Masjid\)](#), it is Da`if (weak). It was not reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him), rather, it was reported from `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him).

Nevertheless, the two previous Hadiths were authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) and this is enough. [\(Whoever hears the call \(to Salah\) and does not come, there is no Salah for him, except for one who has an excuse.\)](#) Also, the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah about the story of the blind man that was mentioned previously when the Prophet (peace be upon him) answered him saying: [\(Respond \(to the call by going to the Masjid\).\)](#) These two Hadiths are sufficient and dispense with the Hadith that reads: [\(There is no Salah for a neighbour of the Masjid](#)

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[except in the Masjid.\)](#) This means that it obligatory for Muslim men to pray in the Masjid and not to act like the hypocrites. Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: [\(I witnessed the time when none of us would miss it \(the congregational Salah\) except a hypocrite known for his hypocrisy.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) was on the verge of setting the houses of those missing the congregational Salah on fire. Hence, it is your duty and the duty of every able Muslim to pray in the Masjid except a person who has an excuse like illness or fear. May Allah grant us all guidance and success.



220- Ruling on performing the obligatory Salah at work because of an excuse

Q: A questioner from Riyadh says: Your Eminence, is it lawful for the man whose work prevents him from attending the congregational Salah (Prayer) at the mosque to offer Salah alone, if there is no one with him at the workplace to pray with him congregationally? Or is he required to leave the work in this case?

A: There are detailed aspects for answering this question: If a man's work prevents him from attending the congregational Salah, because leaving it will bring about danger like being a guard, for instance, this is a lawful excuse for observing the obligatory Salah at his workplace. But if he can leave the work for Salah and then go back to it without this involving danger,

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he is required to go out for Salah and then return to his work like the majority of employees. Upon hearing the Adhan (call to Prayer) for the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, for example, male employees are to go out for Salah at mosques and then go back to their works. This causes no problem. It is not lawful for them to observe the Salah, each on his own; it is, rather, obligatory upon them to attend the congregational Salahs at mosques. As for those whose nature of work requires them to stay at the workplaces where they are appointed such as in the case of guards and the like, they are to pray at their workplaces, because departing the same may result in harmful consequences; the nature of work in this case is a lawful excuse for not attending the congregational Salah at the mosque.



221- Ruling on delaying performance of the obligatory congregational Salah because of work

Q: A questioner asks: I work as a supervisor at a school, and the duration of work lasts until the people have finished observing the congregational Salah of the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer. I cannot go out of the school to perform the congregational Salah at its first time; is it lawful for me to delay observing the same until after finishing my work time?

A: It is obligatory upon you to observe the congregational Salah at the mosque or at your workplace. If you and your colleagues, can go out for Salah at the mosque, if it is in your vicinity and you hear the Adhan (call to Prayer), it is obligatory upon you to attend the congregational Salah at the mosque.

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But if the mosque is far away, you are required to form a congregation for Salah at your workplace. You should not pray individually because the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) ordered that men pray in congregations. He said: [\(Anyone who hears the Nida' \(i.e. Adhan; call to Prayer\) and he does not come to it \(the Masjid\), then there is no prayer \(counted\) for him except if he has a valid excuse.\)](#) A blind man said to the Prophet: [\('O Messenger of Allah! I have no person to guide me to the mosque. Is there a Rukhsah \(concession\) for me to pray at home?'\)](#) The Prophet said to him: [\('Do you hear the Nida' \(i.e. Adhan; call to Prayer\)?'\)](#) The man said: 'Yes.' Upon this the Prophet said: [\('So, answer it.'\)](#) Accordingly, it is obligatory on the male Muslims to attend the congregational Salah at the mosque, if this is possible; and if the mosque is far, they are to form a congregation for Prayer and observe the same at their workplace; no one of them is to lag behind in this concern.



222- Ruling on a traveler praying at his residence although the Masjid is nearby

Q: I had guests one day, and when the time of `Isha' (Night) Prayer set in, I said to them it is the time for `Isha' Prayer at the Masjid (mosque), but they did not answer me. I reiterated this several times but they remained at home. Have I observed my duty of propagating virtue by this?

A: If they were travelers, they had a Rukhsah (concession) to shorten the Salah (Prayers) and observe the same at their place of residence. If they passed by you

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while they were travelers, not residents for a period of more than four days, they would be permitted to shorten the Salah and offer the same at their place of residence. But if they were to attend the congregational Salahs at the Masjid, they would have been required to pray four- Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). If they are not travelers, but citizens of your country, or residents at the same for a period of more than four days, they are required to attend the congregational Salah at the Masjid. In such case, they were required to listen to your words and follow your advice, as it is obligatory on them to go out for the congregational Salah at the Masjid. If they refused this, you have done your duty, and you are required to go out for the congregational Salah and then go back to them.



223- Ruling on a guard observing the obligatory Prayer at his workplace

Q: I live in Riyadh now where I work at a farm near a Masjid (mosque). Some sheep were stolen from the farm during day time, the owner of the farm prevented me from observing the congregational Salahs (Prayers) at the mosque and ordered me to offer the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers at the farm to guard the same and prevent further thefts. Is my Salah at the farm in such circumstances valid or not? May Allah reward you.

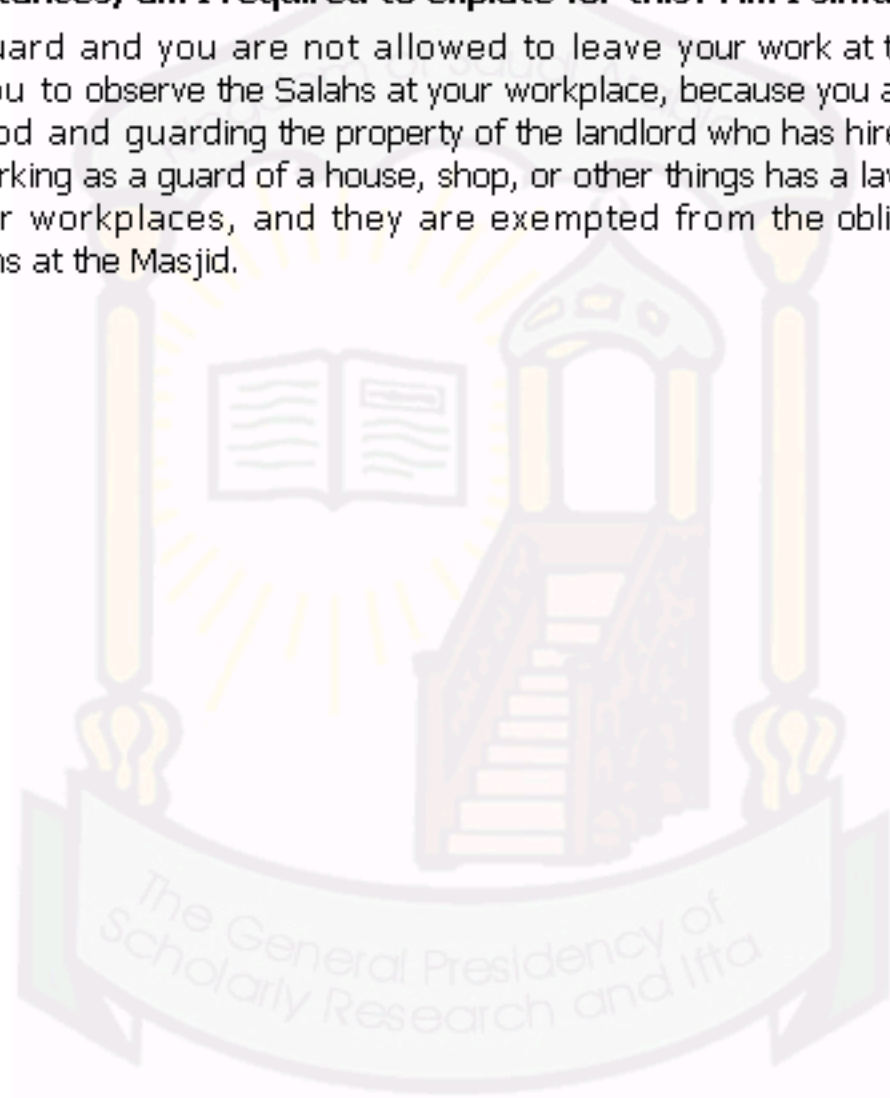
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A: Guarding is a lawful excuse for not attending the congregational Salahs at the Masjid. There is nothing wrong with you offering the obligatory Salahs at the farm, as guards of farms, shops, or houses are excused for not attending the congregational Salahs at the Masjid. There is no problem about this In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills).



Q: I work as a guard of a building so I cannot attend the congregational Salahs (Prayers) at the Masjid (mosque) except on Friday and the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer only. This is because of certain circumstances; am I required to expiate for this? Am I sinful by doing this?

A: If you are a guard and you are not allowed to leave your work at the time of Salahs, it is permissible for you to observe the Salahs at your workplace, because you are excused as you are earning a livelihood and guarding the property of the landlord who has hired you for the same. A person who is working as a guard of a house, shop, or other things has a lawful excuse to observe the Salahs at their workplaces, and they are exempted from the obligation of attending the congregational Salahs at the Masjid.





224- Ruling on a shepherd observing the obligatory Salahs alone in the desert

Q: I am a resident in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and work as a camel shepherd. There is no city or village in the vicinity where I work. I am a Muslim person who loves Salah (Prayer).

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What should I do about this as I do not find a congregation to pray with while in the desert shepherding the camels?

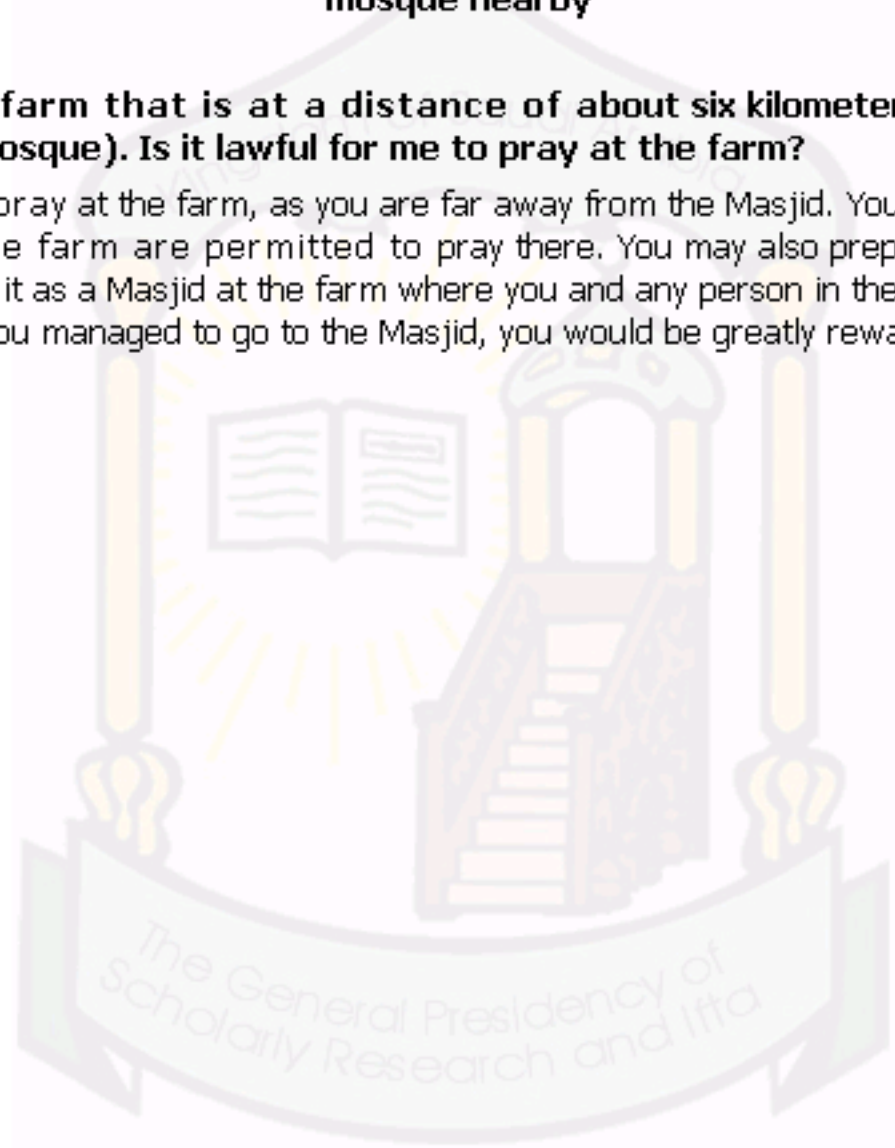
A: Praise be to Allah. Allah (Glorified be He) says: **(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can)** Accordingly, you may pray at your place where you are. You are not required to go to the mosque, as you have no mosque where your work is. You have only the desert. So you are permitted to pray where you are- praise be to Allah. There is no problem about this. When you go to a populated area, you are to attend the Congregational Prayer, but so long as you are in the desert shepherding camels, sheep, or cattle, it is permissible for you to pray where you are, and praise be to Allah.



225- Ruling on a farmer observing the obligatory Salahs at his farm as there is no mosque nearby

Q: I reside at a farm that is at a distance of about six kilometers and half from the nearest Masjid (mosque). Is it lawful for me to pray at the farm?

A: Yes, you may pray at the farm, as you are far away from the Masjid. You and the workers who are with you at the farm are permitted to pray there. You may also prepare a place for Salahs (Prayers) and take it as a Masjid at the farm where you and any person in the farm can observe the Salah. However, if you managed to go to the Masjid, you would be greatly rewarded.





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226- Ruling on a warehouse guard praying alone due to the circumstances of his work

Q: The questioner, Q. M. S. from the Arab Republic of Egypt, works at Al-Kharj Road, Riyadh. He says: I work as a guard at a warehouse of a company. The circumstances of my work require me to stay at work for twenty-four hours, as I am the only guard. I have to observe Salahs (Prayers) alone as there is no Masjid (mosque) nearby. Are my Salahs lawful in these circumstances? May Allah reward you.

A: Yes, there is nothing wrong with this. Your Salahs are correct - praise be to Allah. You are excused for not attending the congregational Salah at the Masjid even if the latter is nearby. If your going out for the congregational Salah may endanger the safety of the warehouse, you are to pray individually at the workplace. But if there is no danger involved when you leave the work for Salah, if you have a nearby Masjid to pray in, it is obligatory on you in this case to go to the Masjid. If your employers object to your going to the Masjid for fear of the safety of their warehouse, you have a lawful excuse in this case to pray at your workplace.



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227- A person who does not attend congregational Salah due to a lawful excuse will get the same reward as those that do

Q: We do shift work in industrial safety. Sometimes we each have to pray alone. Our question is: Will we be worthy of the reward for attending the congregational Salah (Prayer), noting that we sometimes observe the Salahs individually?

A: If the person has to pray alone due to a lawful excuse like being ill or working as a guard, it is hoped that he will be worthy by Allah's Will of the reward specified for attending the congregational Salah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If a Servant of Allah falls ill or travels, the good deeds he used to do while residing \(at his homeland\) or healthy will also be recorded for him.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said something similar about the believers who could not go with the Muslim army to the Battle of Tabuk and remained at Madinah; he (peace be upon him) said to the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) who were with him at that battle: [\('At Madinah there are some people who have been accompanying you at every distance you have walked and every valley you have crossed.'](#) The Sahabah wondered, 'O Messenger of Allah! They have done so, while they are at Madinah!' The Prophet (peace be upon him) affirmed, 'They have done so while they are at Madinah. Yet they have been prevented - from going out for the battle - by excuse.'['\)](#) The last sentence, according to another wording of this Hadith, goes: [\(They have been prevented by illness.\)](#)

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Accordingly, the person who cannot do a good deed which he used to do in the past due to a lawful excuse will attain a reward similar to that of those who are doing the same.



228- The persons excused from observing Jumu`ah Prayer and other congregational Salahs

Q: Are soldiers exempt from observing Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer and the other congregational Salahs (Prayers) when they are working?

A: There are detailed aspects involved in answering this question: if the soldier is guarding something for the interest of his country, like a prison or a property or a certain shop against violation, he is not required to observe Jumu`ah Prayer or the other congregational Salahs at the Masjid (mosque); rather, he may pray alone. As for soldiers in general, who are not guards or ill, they are required, as all other Muslim men, to observe Jumu`ah and the other congregational Salahs at the Masjid. There is nothing peculiar to soldiers in this respect; they are like their fellow Muslims in this regard, unless they have lawful excuses, such as disease, fear of some harm when going out to the congregational or Jumu`ah Prayers, or being assigned to guard something against violation like a prison, or certain property, or the like.



229- Ruling on attending congregational Salah with a bad odor offending the worshippers

Q: A letter reached the program from Khartoum, in which the inquirer says: I, praise be to Allah, attend the congregational Salah (Prayer) regularly at the Masjid (mosque).

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Yet I have been suffering cricoidynia for several years, which results in my emitting a bad odor that offends the worshippers beside me during Salah. This causes me great embarrassment and I lose Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship) while praying. Please guide me, may Allah grant you success. What should I do? Is this one of the reasons justifying not attending Salah in congregation? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade a Muslim who eats garlic, onion or leek from attending congregational Salah because this offends the Muslims and the angels in the Masjid. Accordingly, if you emit a bad odor that offends the Muslims, and you cannot treat it, there is no blame on you if you do not attend congregational Salah. It is actually permissible for you not to attend the congregational Salah so as not to offend people. To put it in other words, you should pray at home, unless you can find a solution or remedy enabling you to get rid of this bad odor, in this case it becomes obligatory for you to use such a lawful remedy to be able to attend congregational Salah. In conclusion, it is Mashru` (Islamically prescribed) for you to seek treatment for this disease to get rid of this bad odor. If this is beyond your capacity, or if you sought treatment but in vain, and you know that this offends the surrounding worshippers, you are excused.



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230- The Shar`y excuse for not attending the congregational Salah in the Masjid

Q: I live in an area far away from the nearest Masjid (mosque), which prevents me from performing Fajr (Dawn) Prayer at the Masjid. Yet, I perform it at its due time at home. Am I sinful?

A: If the Masjid is too far away for you to hear the Adhan (call to Prayer), you are excused. On the other hand, if you can hear the Adhan in normal circumstances, i.e. if you can hear the voice of the muezzin without a microphone and there is no noise preventing you from hearing it, it is obligatory for you to go to the Masjid. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *«Anyone who hears the muezzin and is not prevented from joining the congregational Salah by any excuse - the Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked what an excuse consisted of and he replied that it was fear or illness - the Salah (Prayer) he performs will not be accepted from him.»* In another Hadith, it is related that there came to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) a blind man and said: *«O Messenger of Allah, I have no one to guide me to the Masjid.»* He, therefore, asked permission from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) to pray in his house. He (peace be upon him) granted him permission. Then when the man turned away he called him and said,

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'Do you hear the call to Salah?' He said, 'Yes.' He (peace be upon him) said, *'Respond to it.'* In spite of knowing that this was a blind man who had none to guide him to the Masjid, the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered him to respond and pray at the Masjid. It goes without saying that this is all the more incumbent upon those whom Allah has endowed with eyesight and the ability to do so. What is meant is that you should respond and pray at the Masjid if you are in a place where you can hear the Adhan. On the other hand, if you are far away and cannot hear the Adhan, it is not obligatory for you to come and pray at the Masjid. However, if you take the trouble to come and pray at the Masjid - either getting there by car or on foot - you are doing an act of immense goodness.



Q: If a man lives on top of a mountain and there are no houses beside him, can he perform Salah (Prayer) in congregation with his family? How will they behave? May Allah reward with the best.

A: If one is far away from the Masjid (mosque) to the extent that he cannot hear the Adhan (call to Prayer), he can pray alone. Moreover, there is nothing wrong with him leading his family, women, children, brothers, or staff in Salah. If there are women present, they should stand behind men. However, if there are Masjids nearby and they can hear the Adhan, they should go to the Masjid. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Anyone who](#)

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[hears the Nida' \(i.e. Adhan; call to Prayer\) and he does not come to it \(the Masjid\), then there is no Salah \(counted\) for him except if he has a valid excuse.\)](#) If one is close enough to the Masjid to hear the Adhan without a loudspeaker, they have to go to the Masjid. However, if one is too far away to hear the Adhan except through a loudspeaker, they are not required to go to the Masjid. Moreover, if one goes to the Masjid despite being far away, seeking Allah's Reward, it will be preferable and perfect.



Q: There is a group of men who live in a remote house away from other people. The nearest Masjid (mosque) to this house is one kilometer away. Due to powerful loudspeakers, they hear the Adhan (call to Prayer) from Masjids that are two kilometers away from them. One of those men who can read and write was appointed as an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer). They have dedicated a certain place for performing Salah (Prayer), as they perform all Salahs in congregation. They only announce Iqamah (call to start the Prayer). Can those people perform Salah in their private Masjid even if they are only three or four and if occasional means of transportation are available? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If they hear Adhan that is not announced through loudspeakers in quiet times, they have to go to the Masjid on foot or

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by other means of transportation. Moreover, if they are away from the Masjid and cannot hear the Adhan except through loudspeakers, they are not required to go to the Masjid. They can perform congregational Salah at their home. However, if they endure this hardship and go to the Masjid without hearing Adhan except through loudspeakers, whether on foot or by other means of transportation, it will be good and preferable and remove any doubt or temptation to be lenient in this great matter. I advise those persons to endure these hardships patiently and go to the Masjid as Satan may induce them to be lenient in this regard, whispering to them that they do not hear the Adhan. However, believers should investigate what is good and hasten to do it. They should also avoid suspicious matters in order not to be accused of negligence in following Allah's Commands. Moreover, going to the Masjid on foot brings great benefits to a person as Allah raises them in ranks, removes a sin from them, and grants them a reward for a good deed with every step they walk. This great reward is also attained by those who go by car. My advice to all people is to make every effort to pray in congregation and go to Masjids even if it involves some hardship. All praise is due to Allah alone. However, they have a Rukhsah (concession) to pray at their home if they do not hear Adhan except through loudspeakers due to the distance from the Masjid. In this case, there is nothing wrong with them praying at their home.



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231- Ruling on offering Salah while food is ready

Q: If the Muezzin calls the Adhan (call to prayer) while I am eating dinner, should I leave the food and go to the Masjid (mosque)? Does this ruling apply if I have not eaten yet? Please clarify this matter for me. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: Yes, if the food is ready at the time of the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, `Isha' (Night) Prayer, or `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, you should eat first, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If the Salah is held while the food is ready, start to eat first.\)](#) In another wording: [\(If the dinner is ready, start to eat before offering the Maghrib Prayer.\)](#) In another wording: [\(There is no Salah \(to be offered\) when food is ready or when one is resisting the urge to urinate or defecate.\)](#) If food is ready, the believer should eat first, because if he goes to offer the Salah while his mind is distracted with thoughts of food, he will not offer the Salah properly. Thus, he should eat first and then offer Salah with

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an attentive heart submissively attuned to the Salah without any distractions. However, a person should not make a habit of ordering his family to prepare food at the time of Salah to miss the congregational Salah. We seek refuge with Allah from this. A person should offer Salah first, but if it happens that the food is prepared at the time of Salah, he should eat first.



232- Ruling on a man performing Salah at home due to hardship in going to the Masjid

Q: A questioner from Makkah Al-Mukarramah has a long question wherein he says: Eight years ago, I suffered from a severe depression that caused me to stay at home and to resign from my work. I am not able to get out of the house to go the Masjid (mosque) as it is in a high place. As you know, most houses in Makkah are in lofty places, so I cannot go up to them as I am a sick person. However, I perform Jumu`ah Prayer at the Masjid. As for other Prayers, I perform them at home. Am I a sinner because for doing so even though, all praise due to Allah, I perform supererogatory Salahs and offer much Tasbih (glorification of Allah)?

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All praise be to Allah. Please, advise me, may Allah reward you with the best.

A: We ask Allah (Exalted be He) to grant you good health and well-being and to keep us and you firm with true guidance. Allah (Glorified be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(When I command you to do anything, do of it as much as you possibly can.\)](#) Therefore, if you cannot reach the Masjid for the Five Daily Prayers, there is nothing wrong with performing Salah at home. However, if you are able to go to the Masjid to pray with other Muslims, it will be better in order to avoid laziness, obedience to Satan, and being similar to hypocrites in their negligence of performing Salah in congregation. Allah says: [\(And whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out \(from every difficulty\).\)](#) And: [\(and whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him.\)](#)

We advise you to exert much effort and to seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Satan. You should also ask Allah to

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grant you well-being and good health during your Sujud (prostration), at the end of your Salah, during Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night), and between Adhan (call to Prayer) and Iqamah (call to start Prayer). You should ask Allah sincerely to grant you well-being and good health and to support you in doing what pleases Him. You should expect good from your Lord if you are truthful. Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) will help you to do what He prescribes for you in the way that pleases Him.



233- Ruling on Salah of someone who resists going to the bathroom

Q: A person is afflicted with a disease of urinating uncontrollably. When he goes to the toilet, makes Wudu' (ablution) and then goes to the Masjid (mosque), ten minutes later, he feels that he needs to urinate. Should he offer Salah (Prayer) or should he leave the Masjid and go to toilet? Please, advise, may Allah reward you with the best.

A: If it is time for Salah and there is present what disturbs the worshippers of urine or any other thing, he should leave the Masjid to perform Wudu' (ablution) because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No Salah can be \(rightly performed\) when food is present \(before the worshipper\) or when they are prompted by the call of nature.\)](#) If the worshipper is prompted to urinate or defecate, they should not

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offer Salah but go home to relieve themselves and then offer Salah even at home. If they cannot catch the congregational Salah, they should offer Salah at home. Offering Salah at home with Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship) and without resisting (the call of nature) has a higher priority and is preferable to offering Salah with the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) while resisting going to the bathroom. The aim of the Prophet (peace be upon him) from this order is to maintain and glorify Salah so that it would be performed properly. Whoever is busy with resisting urine or excrement might not perform Salah perfectly. They may become busy with resisting the call of nature and thus they may not perform Salah properly. However, if resisting the call of nature has little impact on the worshipper and does not disturb their Salah, they should offer Salah in the Masjid. If the question of resisting the call of nature was weak and did not affect their Salah or Khushu`, they should offer Salah. However, if resisting the call of nature was strong, they should get out of the Masjid and not perform their Salah until they relieve themselves. In the case of the questioner who is afflicted with the disease of uncontrollable urine, it is preferable for them not to hasten going to the Masjid in state of Wudu' until near the time of the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) of Salah in order to be able to perform it with the congregation and then return while still being in a state of purity. This is what should be observed by the one who is afflicted with uncontrollable urine, or wind, and so on. He should make sure it is near the time of the Iqamah before going, so that he may be able to catch both: congregational Salah and sound purity.



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234- Ruling on missing congregational Salah due to sleep

Q: Is sleep considered an excuse for missing congregational Salah (Prayer) or delaying it within its given time, particularly if a person is exhausted due to work, according to the Hadith: (He who forgets Salah or misses it due to sleep...) and Hadith: (There are three (persons) whose actions are not recorded...) and from among them the sleeper was mentioned? I ask Your Eminence most kindly for an explanation.

A: There is no problem if the sleeper is excused in the sense that he takes the necessary measures and exerts an effort to wake up, but sleep overcomes him, according to what the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (If a person forgets a Salah or sleeps and misses it, the expiation is to offer it when he remembers it.) This happened to the Prophet (peace be upon him) several times on journeys. They missed Salah due to sleep and when they got up, they made up for it. A person should take precautionary measures in the sense that he sets an alarm clock to be able to get up for the time of Salah or one of his family members wakes him up, and he should not stay up late, but go to bed early and follow the necessary precautions which

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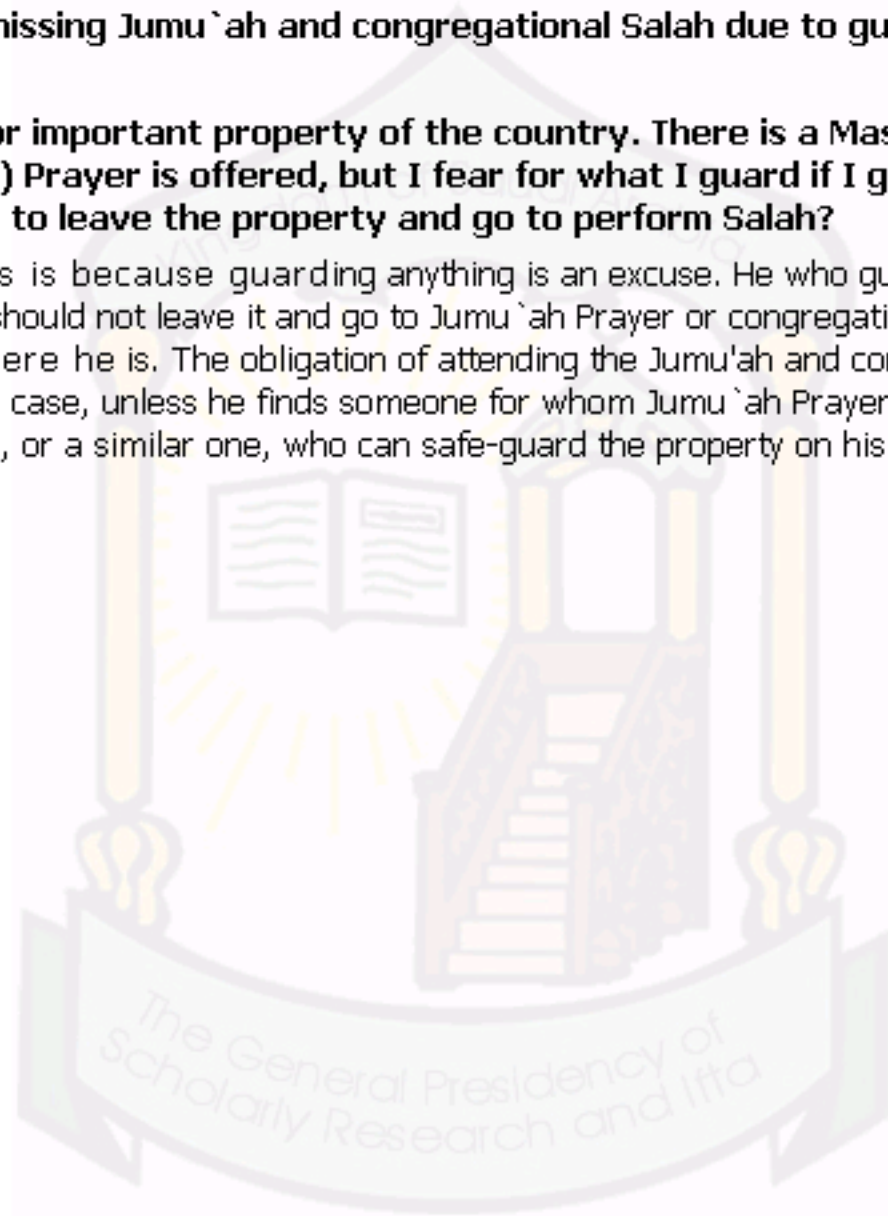
help him get up. If he is overcome and the measures were of no benefit to him, he is excused. However, if he is indifferent and stays up late and then says: 'I will get up,' this is the person who takes the measures so as not to get up. He is sinful until he takes the Islamic legal measures of not staying up late, and using the alarm clock to help him or one of his family members to wake him up. What is meant is that a person should take necessary measures. If he follows the Islamic legal measures and exerts effort but then sleep overcomes him, he will be excused.



235- Ruling on missing Jumu`ah and congregational Salah due to guarding belongings

Q: I am a guard for important property of the country. There is a Masjid (mosque) where Jumu'ah (Friday) Prayer is offered, but I fear for what I guard if I go to the Masjid. Is it permissible for me to leave the property and go to perform Salah?

A: Do not go! This is because guarding anything is an excuse. He who guards an important and valuable property should not leave it and go to Jumu`ah Prayer or congregational Salahs. He should perform Salah where he is. The obligation of attending the Jumu'ah and congregational Prayers is lifted for him in this case, unless he finds someone for whom Jumu`ah Prayer is not obligatory, such as a slave, a woman, or a similar one, who can safe-guard the property on his behalf.





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236- Ruling on offering Salah where one is if he does not hear Adhan due to the remoteness of the distance

Q: A questioner says: "My work requires my presence all the time and the Masjid (mosque) is so far from me that I do not hear the Adhan (call to Prayer); is my performance of Salah individually valid?"

A: If you do not hear Adhan although there is not much noise and time allows you to hear it, you are under no obligation to come to the Masjid. However, if, for instance, noise, or sound of winds prevents you from hearing Adhan, you should come (to the Masjid). This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever hears the call \(to Salah\) and does not come to it, then there is no \(reward for the\) Salah for him except with an excuse.\)](#) If you exert efforts to catch Salah with Muslims (in congregation) - even if you are far from the Masjid- it would be better and more preferable for you, and would dispel the suspicion of negligence on your part, not to mention the great reward you will get for performing congregational Salah. However, this is not obligatory for you except if you hear Adhan at its time and there is nothing that prevents you from hearing the voice of the Muezzin.



Q: An Egyptian fellow living in Jordan asks: I work in

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a farm and I live there as well. This farm is about four kilometers away from the Masjid (mosque), and I do not have means of transportation. Is it permissible for me to perform Salah with my wife (there in the farm)? Is it valid to perform Salah with her if someone else (a third person) performs Salah with us? What are the conditions for this?

A: If the matter is as you mentioned, you should perform Salah alone and there is no need for your wife to offer Salah with you; but it is acceptable if she offers Salah behind you and not next to you. A woman should not stand shoulder to shoulder with a man. However, if an Ajnaby (a man other than a husband or unmarriageable male relatives) performs Salah with you, this is forbidden (for her to join you both in Salah). However, if that person be her brother, sister or father, they should be on your right-hand side and she is to stand behind you. If an Ajnaby is present, she should not perform Salah with you unless she does so while remaining out of sight. This is permissible, Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah), as women used to perform Salah with the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, she should not offer Salah while she is uncovered or indulgent; rather, she should offer Salah alone in another place if other workers or Ajnabys are present.



Q: A listener asks: I am a farmer and the farm (where I work) is far from

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the Masjid (mosque), and thus I cannot perform congregational Salah (prayer), what is your advice to me in this regard? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: If you live so far (from the Masjid) that you cannot hear the Adhan (call to prayer), you should offer Salah in the farm, Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah). However, if you live near (the Masjid) and can hear the voice of the Muezzin announcing the Adhan, you should perform Salah in congregation. If you can hear the sound only through a loudspeaker, still you are not required to attend the congregation, because in this way it could be heard from afar. Only if you hear Adhan in the normal voice of the Muezzin, and not through a loudspeaker, when there is no surrounding noise and no impediments, it is obligatory for you to set out to perform Salah with people (in congregation). Similarly, if you do not fear for the place, you should set out to perform congregational Salah. Hence, there is nothing wrong with you when you miss congregational Salah if you do not hear Adhan, in which case you should offer Salah in your place. Likewise, if you are in a place, for which you fear if you leave it, you should offer Salah there in order to preserve and protect it from danger, if there is no one else to guard it. However, if you can shut its entrances or there is another guard who can replace you, in the sense that there is no danger for it, it is obligatory for you to offer congregational Salah. This is applicable when you hear Adhan at times when nothing prevents you from hearing the Adhan in the voice of the Muezzin.

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Q: A male questioner asks: I work in a farm in the Eastern Region, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and it is a full time job. So, I perform obligatory Salahs (prayers) inside the farm, but on Fridays the owner of the farm does not allow me attend Jumu`ah (Friday Prayer). What is your advice to me? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: If you are near the Masjid (mosque) and can hear the Adhan (call to prayer), you are then required to go to the Masjid, but if you are far away and cannot hear the Adhan, it is acceptable that you offer Salah in the farm, according to the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(Whoever hears the caller \(to prayer\) and has no excuse for not answering the call \(is not excused for not answering it\). They asked: What is the excuse? He answered: Fear or illness. The Salah which he performs will not be accepted from him.\)](#) Also, a blind man came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said: [\(O Messenger of Allah! I have no one to lead me to the Masjid. Is there any concession for me to offer Salah at home? The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) replied: "Do you hear Adhan?" He said: Yes. The Prophet said: Then, answer \(it\)](#) Although that blind man had no guide, the Prophet ordered him to respond to the call of Muezzin and join the congregation. Therefore, he should offer Salah with the congregation in the Masjids,

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provided that they are close by and can hear the Adhan; otherwise, they may offer congregational Salah at their place.



Q: If the Masjid (mosque) is far from the worshipper who does not have a car, should he rent a car or should he not go to the Masjid?

A: As long as the worshipper does not hear the sound of the muezzin if it is without a loudspeaker, he does not need to go to the Masjid provided that it is the normal voice of the normal muezzin. If he does not hear the muezzin, there would be nothing wrong with him to offer Salah at home. However, if going to the Masjid is difficult and he is patient and enduring, this would be better and more preferable.





237- Congregational Salah at home

Q: My house is far away from the Masjid (mosque) but I can still hear the Adhan (call to Prayer) through the speaker. However, we offer Salah (Prayer) at home. Do we commit a sin by so doing? Is our Salah valid? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If the Masjid is so far away from you that you do not hear the Adhan through the normal voice when there is no noise, the congregational Salah will not be binding on you. But

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it is preferable to go to the Masjid even if you have to use a means of transport or suffer a kind of hardship due to the great benefit, the double reward, and the chance to meet fellow Muslims and cooperate on good deeds. As for the speaker sound, it does not make attendance binding as it can be heard from a long distance. However, he who responds to the speaker sound, attends the congregational Salah, and tolerates hardship will have a great reward.



Q: A questioner from Morocco asks: The Masjid (mosque) is about one kilo meter away from my house. So the Adhan (call to Prayer) can only be heard through a speaker. So my father would pronounce the Adhan and Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) and then lead all members of the household in Salah (Prayer). Is this Salah valid?

A: There is nothing wrong with that if the Masjid is so far away from you that you can hear the Adhan only through a speaker. However, going to the Masjid on foot or by, for example, a car is more preferable and has a greater reward due to the great benefit, the chance to meet fellow Muslims and the fact that Allah raises the believer's rank, forgives a sin and counts a good deed for every step he makes (towards the Masjid). Undoubtedly, this is a great reward. Therefore, going to Masjids on foot or by, for example, a car, even if they are far away, is more preferable and has a great reward. But, if you offer Salah at home after pronouncing Adhan and Iqamah, this is permissible

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when the Masjid is far away and the Adhan is not heard for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [«Whoever hears the call \(to Salah\) and does not come to it, then there is no \(reward for the\) Salah for him except with an excuse.»](#) If the Masjid is so far away that the Adhan is only heard through speakers, this will be considered a legal excuse.



Q: My house is 15 minutes away from the Masjid (mosque) but I still hear the call to Salah (Prayer) through speakers. Will I commit a sin if I offer the congregational Salah with my brothers at home?

A: You should hasten to offer the Salah in the Masjid either on foot or by, for example, a car, rejoicing at the great benefit, as the 15-minute distance is not long for those who have cars or good health. However, if you suffer hardship as a result of old age and the like, there will be nothing wrong to offer Salah at home. It is not the sound of the speaker but the normal voice of the muezzin that is taken into consideration. If the normal voice of the muezzin is heard in your place when there is no noise, you have to go to the Masjid for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever heard the caller \(to Salah\) and did not answer without excuse.'](#) Someone asked, 'What kind of excuse is that, Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'Fear or sickness - he will not have

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[his Salah accepted.](#)) A blind man came to the Messenger of Allah and said: [\('O Messenger of Allah, may I offer Salah in my house as I have nobody to lead me to the Masjid.'](#) He (peace be upon him) asked, 'Do you hear the call for Salah?' The man said, 'Yes.' The Prophet said, 'You have to answer.')

So you have to answer the call and go to the Masjids if you can. But if you cannot do so due to the long distance, illness, or fear, then you have a valid excuse to offer Salah at home. May Allah grant all of us success.



238- Merit of bearing hardship to go to the Masjid

Q: I wake up to offer the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. All praise be to Allah. However, there is no nearby Masjid (mosque). Masjids are far away, but I still hear the Adhan (call to Prayer). Yet, I offer the Fajr Prayer at home. Is my Salah valid?

A: If Masjids are so far away that Adhan is only heard through speakers, there is nothing wrong with this (your case). However, if you bear the hardship of

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going to the Masjid, either on foot or by, for example, a car, this is more preferable. Again, if you hear the Adhan without a speaker as there is a nearby Masjid, you have to go and join the congregational Salah. However, if the distance is so long that Adhan is only heard through speakers, there will be nothing wrong if you offer Salah at home. Still, it is more preferable to go to the Masjid and bear the associated hardship.



Q: A questioner asks: My home is far from the Masjid (mosque), and I cannot hear the Adhan (call to prayer). Thus, I offer Salah (prayer) without hearing the Adhan, is what I do correct?

A: You should make sure of the start of the due time of every Salah by hearing the Adhan, by a clock, or any other way if the Masjid is far from you and you are not able to hear the Adhan. If the Masjid is nearby and you hear the Adhan, you should offer Salah in the Masjid. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(Whoever hears the caller \(to prayer\) and is not prevented from joining the congregation by any excuse - when asked what constitutes an excuse he replied that it was fear or illness -, the prayer he offers will not be accepted from him.\)](#) The believer should be mindful of the due time of the Salah, and should offer it with the Muslims in the Masjid, unless the Masjid is far away and he cannot hear the natural voice (of the Muezzin Adhan). Thus, he is permitted to offer Salah in his place. If he endures

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the difficulty, and offers Salah in the Masjid, he will receive great reward. Here, the criterion is hearing the natural voice of (the Muezzin announcing) the Adhan, and not the sound of a loudspeakers, as it is heard from far away. However, one who does not know the due time of Salah, because he cannot hear the Adhan, should make sure of its start by any means or estimate the probable time. Also, they should not hasten to perform Salah unless they are mostly sure that its time is due.



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Chapter on the manner of Salah for people with legal excuses

239- Clarifying the manner in which the sick should purify themselves and perform Salah

Q: A brother from The Republic of Iraq sent a long message, in which he complained of his condition. He had a car accident, which caused him to lose control (of parts of his body) due to suffering from hemiplegia. In this condition, he asks the Shaykh about the manner in which he should perform Wudu' (ablution) and Salah (prayer) and recite the Qur'an. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: He should cat upon Allah's (Glorified be He) statement: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) and the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying: [\(When I command you to do anything, do of it as much as you possibly can.\)](#) If he suffers from hemiplegia, which leads to his inability to stand, he is permitted to offer Salah according his ability. He may offer Salah

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while sitting, and perform Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration) if he can. The Prophet (peace be upon him) told `Imran ibn Al-Husain: [\(Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting and if you cannot do even that, then pray lying on your side.\)](#) (Related by Al-Bukhari [may Allah be merciful to him] in his Sahih and Al-Nasa'y's narration contains the addition: [\(If you cannot do even that, you can pray lying on your back.\)](#) This is what should be done: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) If he is unable to use water, as it may harm him, he should perform Tayammum (dry ablution with clean earth). Someone may bring him dust, as he should strike both palms on dust and wipe his face and palms if need be. Also, it is permissible for him to combine the Zhuhr (Noon) and the `Asr (Afternoon) prayers and the Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers, like all sick worshipers, if he finds difficulty in offering every Salah at its due time.

As for matters concerning answering the call of nature, it is enough to use tissue paper or the like to cleanse himself, and there is no need to use water. Here, if he is able to use water, this is good, as water is preferable, but if he is not able to use water, he should perform Istijmar (cleansing the private parts with hard material after urination or defecation) using tissue paper, stone, or adobe. Tissue paper is softer, and he may use pure and coarse tissue paper to cleanse himself from urine and feces three times. If this is not enough, he may repeat it four or five times and

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so on. It is better to stop at an odd number. If four times are enough, it is preferable to repeat it one more time to stop at an odd number. If five times are not enough, he may repeat it one more time, and if the sixth time suffices, it is preferable that he adds one more time to stop at an odd number. It is important to use tissue paper or the like to cleanse himself from urine and feces, on the condition

that he does this at least three times. The Prophet (peace be upon him) prevented Muslims from performing Istijmar less than three times. If three times are enough to remove the traces of urine and feces, all praise be to Allah. If they are not enough, he should repeat this until he removes these traces. There is no need for water, even if he is able to use it, as Istijmar is enough. However, water is better; if he can use both of them for removing the traces of urine and feces, using tissue paper or stone and then performs Istinja' (cleansing the private parts with water after urination or defecation), this will be better. But, performing one of them suffices for him and for a healthy person as well.

As for his inability to maintain minor ceremonial purity, while having not enough time to offer Salah, he should keep his duty to Allah and fear Him as much as he can. He should perform Wudu' for every Salah; if he cannot control the discharge of urine or feces due to hemiplegia, he should offer Salah according to his condition.

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If the time of Zhuhr Prayer is due, he should perform Wudu' or Tayammum, according to his condition, and combine it with the `Asr Prayer. Also, it is permissible for him to combine the Maghrib Prayer and the `Isha' Prayer.

If it is difficult for him to do that, he is permitted to offer every Salah at its due time, like a woman in a state of Istihadah (abnormal vaginal bleeding outside the menstrual or post-partum period), a person who suffers from urinary incontinence, and a person who cannot attend congregational Salah. They can combine the Salahs if they cannot offer each Salah at its due time and if it is easier for them. If they offer each Salah at its due time, there is nothing wrong with that. As for one who does not have any legal excuse that prevents them from offering Salah in congregation, they should offer it in congregation and should perform Wudu' for each Salah.

As for the Qur'an recitation, he may recite the Qur'an from the Mus-haf (copy of the Qur'an) after performing Wudu' between two times of prayer. If his Wudu' is nullified due to incontinence, he may recite the Qur'an after performing Wudu' for the Zhuhr Prayer until the time of the `Asr Prayer. If he performs Wudu' for the Maghrib Prayer, he may recite the Qur'an until the time of `Isha' Prayer. He may offer supererogatory Salah in the time between the Zhuhr Prayer and the `Asr Prayer, or in the time between the Maghrib Prayer and the `Isha' Prayer, even if urine is discharged, because he is unable to control it. The ruling on a woman in a state of Istihadah applies to him in these cases. He may offer Salah and recite the Qur'an in the time between two due times of Salah. Allah has made things easy for His Servants, as He (Glorified and Exalted be He) states in the Noble Qur'an: [﴿Allâh intends for you ease﴾](#)

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Also, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: [﴿and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship﴾](#)

It is out of Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) Mercy that one who suffers from incontinence, inability to control wind, or Istihadah is permitted to combine two Salahs, and one Wudu' suffices when the time of every Salah is due. This is because they are suffering incontinence or Istihadah or the like. They may offer whatever Salahs they want, recite the Qur'an, and perform Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka`bah) if they are in Makkah during the time between two Salahs. There is nothing wrong with this because they have legal excuses, and the ruling on the ceremonially pure persons applies to them, because the Messenger ordered the woman suffering from Istihadah to do this in the case of Hamnah and others. Concerning observing Sawm (Fast), they are permitted to break Sawm and make up for the days in which they break Sawm. Shari`ah (Islamic law) eases matters for the sick who are not able to observe Sawm due to illness by this concession. It is out of Allah's Benevolence that the traveler, pregnant woman and breastfeeding mother are permitted to break Sawm if they find difficulty in it, and they should make up later for the days in which they break



Q: A questioner hopes that you will guide him to know if there is a special way for sick people to offer Salah (prayer). Is there any evidence mentioned in this respect? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: As far as I know, there is nothing specific regarding (prayer of) the sick, but they should keep their duty to Allah (Exalted be He) and fear Him as much as they can. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) will reward them, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in a Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith): *«When a slave of Allah suffers from illness or sets out on a journey, he is credited with the equal of whatever good deeds he used to do when he was healthy or at home.»* All praise be to Allah. They are rewarded for the good deeds which they used to do, such as offering Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), observing Sawm (Fast) and so on, when they were healthy. If illness prevents them from performing these deeds, they are rewarded for them, because a legal excuse prevents them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said when he was in the battle of Tabuk: *«There are some people in Madinah who were with you all the time, you did not travel any portion of the journey nor crossed any valley, but they were with you. In other words: "Sharing with you the reward (even without physically participating in the battle).»* *«They (i.e. Companions) said, "O Messenger of Allah! Even though they were at Madinah?" He said, "Yes, because they were withheld by a genuine excuse.»* Those are the sick who are restrained by illness. The sick are rewarded for the good deeds which they used to do when they were healthy. They are permitted to offer the obligatory Salah according to their ability. And if they offer Nafilah (supererogatory)

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according to their ability, this will be better.



Q: Is it permissible for a paralyzed person to offer Salah while sitting?

A: It is permissible for someone who is sick to offer Salah while sitting if it is too difficult for them to offer Salah while standing, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) told `Imran ibn Al-Husain in a Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith), when he complained (of his inability to perform Salah while standing): [﴿Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting, and if you cannot, then pray lying on your side, and if you cannot even do that, then pray lying on your back.﴾](#) This is how Allah (Exalted be He) makes things easy for His Servants, all praise be to Him. [﴿So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴾](#)

Those who are sick and are not able to offer Salah while standing are permitted to offer it while sitting. If they are not able to sit due to extreme illness, it is preferable that they offer Salah while lying on their right side. Also, they are permitted to offer it while lying on the left side, whatever is possible. If they are not able to do that, they are permitted to offer Salah while lying on their back, directing their faces towards the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer). Also, anyone who is paralyzed and cannot stand is permitted to offer Salah while sitting and facing the Qiblah, all praise be to Allah. Such a person may perform Sujud (prostration) on the ground and perform Ruku` (bowing) in the air,

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unless he is not able to perform Sujud on the ground due to illness. He is then permitted to perform Sujud in the air like the Ruku`, but he should lower himself to perform Sujud more than he does when performing Ruku`. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) does not burden a person beyond their scope. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [﴿So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴾](#)



Q: This message was received from a program listener in which he said: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said regarding the Salah prescribed for the sick: (Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting, and if you cannot do even that, then pray lying on your side.) How can a sick person offer Salah while lying on his side? How can he perform Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration)? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: It is out of Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) Mercy that He says: (Allâh burdens not a person beyond his scope.) And, (So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can) So, if a person is not able to offer Salah while standing, they

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may sit cross-legged or on the buttocks with the knees drawn up to the chest or in any other sitting posture. It is preferable that the person sits cross-legged. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Salah while sitting, he used to sit cross-legged. If he is not able to sit, he is permitted to offer Salah while lying on his side. It is preferable to offer it while lying on the right side. If not, he may offer Salah while lying on his left side. If he cannot do that, he is permitted to offer Salah while lying on his back, with his legs directed toward the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in prayer). If he offers Salah while lying on his side or on his back, he should say Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting prayer) with the intention of starting Salah, and recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and any other Surah (Qur'anic Chapter). Then, he should say Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar") with the intention of performing Ruku` and say "Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim [Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great]". Also, he says Tasmi` (saying: "Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah [Allah listens to those who praise Him]" when standing after Ruku`), whether he is an Imam (the one who leads congregational prayer or a Munfarid (person offering prayer individually). Then, he says "Rabbana walaka alhamd [Our Lord, to You be the praise]" when he intends to stand up after performing Ruku`, and says Takbir with the intention of offering Sujud and "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la [Glory be to my Lord, the Most High]". Then, he says Takbir with the intention of sitting a little between the two Sujuds and "Rabbi ighfir li [O my Lord, forgive me]". He says Takbir while lying on his side with the intention of performing the second Sujud, and says "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la". He finishes the Salah in this way.



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Q: I am an ill man as I have a broken spine and suffer persistent Hadath (ritual impurity). How can I offer Salah (Prayer)?

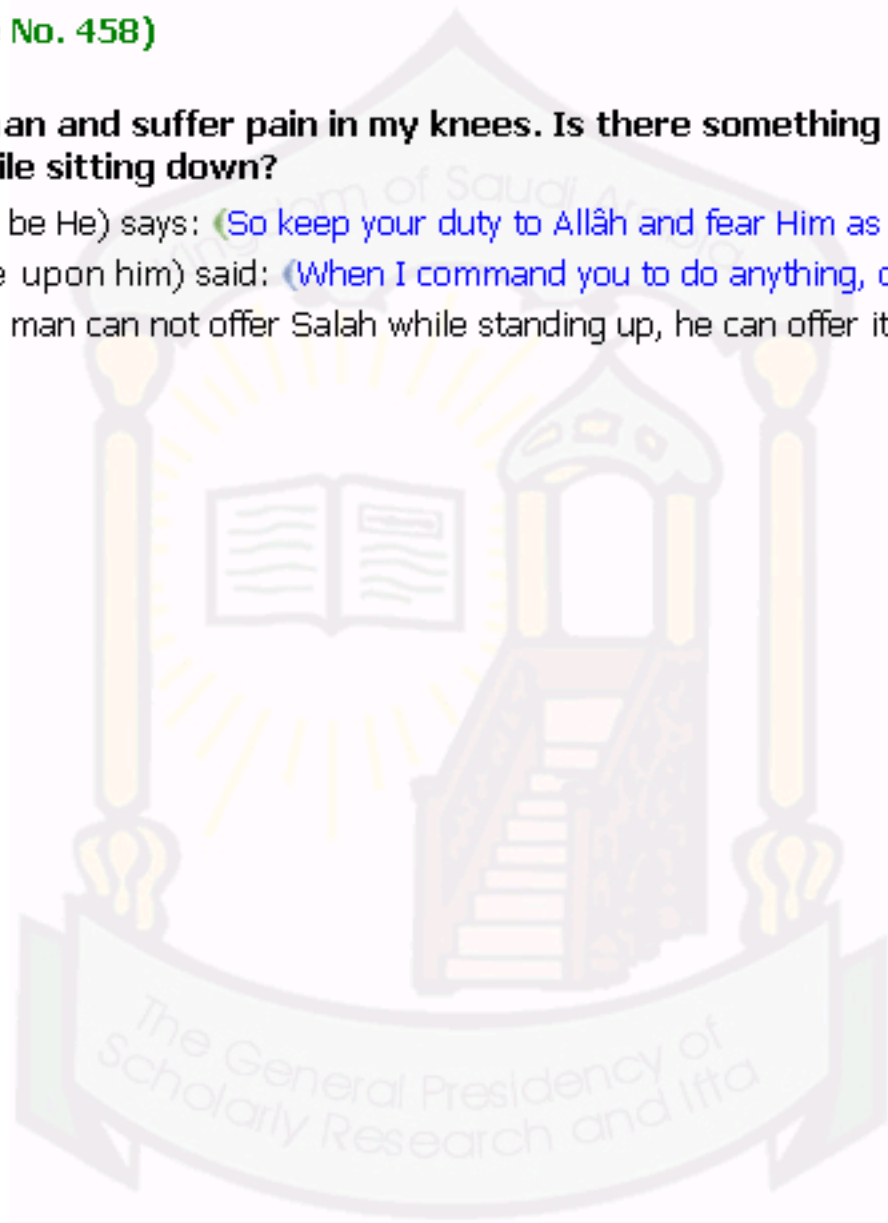
A: Allah (Glorified be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) So offer Salah in your present state even if Hadath is continuous. When it is time to offer a Salah, you may cleanse the private parts even with tissue paper thrice or more, perform Wudu' (ablution), and offer Salah in your present state even if urine is passed. [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) This resembles the case of a woman who suffers Istihadah (abnormal vaginal bleeding outside the menstrual or post-partum period). She can offer Salah in her present state even if blood dribbles so long as the bleeding is persistent. Thus, she has to offer Salah outside her menstrual cycles, but she is to stop Salah during her menstrual cycles. She has to perform Wudu' for every individual Salah. The same applies to a man who suffers urinary incontinence as a result of some illness, broken spine, or the like and, therefore, has persistent urination or defecation. In this case, he can offer Salah in his present state. When it is time to offer a Salah, he should cleanse his private parts with rags, tissue paper, or water, then perform Wudu' and then offer Salah even if something impure passed after performing Wudu'. [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#)



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Q: I am an old man and suffer pain in my knees. Is there something wrong with offering Salah (Prayer) while sitting down?

A: Allah (Glorified be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(When I command you to do anything, do of it as much as you possibly can.\)](#) If a man can not offer Salah while standing up, he can offer it while sitting down. All praise be to Allah.





Q: How can a renal failure patient offer Salah (Prayer) and observe Sawm (Fast)? Does bleeding invalidate Wudu' (ablution)? May a patient combine Salahs during dialysis treatment?

A: Allah (Glorified be He) says: [﴿So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴾](#) He also says: [﴿Allâh burdens not a person beyond his scope.﴾](#) Like other patients, a renal failure patient can offer Salah to the extent that he can. If he can offer Salah while standing up, he should offer Salah while standing up. If he can offer Salah only while sitting down, he may offer Salah while sitting down. If he suffers hardship offering individual Salahs on time, he may combine two Salahs. There is nothing wrong with any of this.

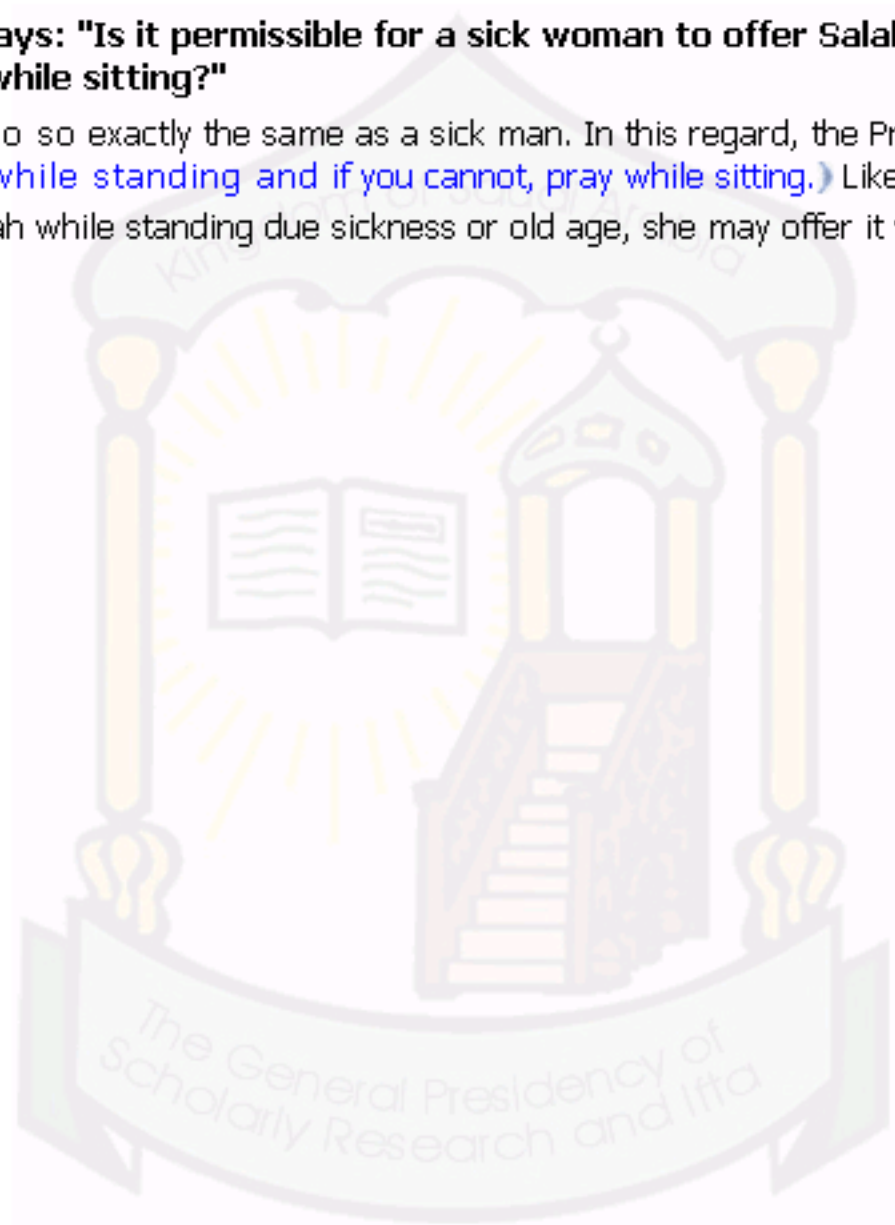
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If he suffers some fluid discharge, like continuous bleeding, he may combine two Salahs. But he has to perform Wudu' (ablution) like the woman who suffers Istihadah (abnormal vaginal bleeding outside the menstrual or post-partum period). If nothing is discharged from his body but offering individual Salahs on time is difficult for him, he may combine Salahs like other patients. On the day of dialysis treatment, a patient may make up for Salahs as blood is being injected and discharged. He should perform Wudu' for every Salah after the dialysis treatment.



Q: A questioner says: "Is it permissible for a sick woman to offer Salah (Prayer) inaudibly and motionlessly while sitting?"

A: Yes, she can do so exactly the same as a sick man. In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting.\)](#) Like a man, if a woman is unable to offer Salah while standing due sickness or old age, she may offer it while sitting, all praise be to Allah.





Q: A listener says: "Is it permissible for me to combine Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers, or Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers?"

A: If she is sick or undergoing Istihadah (abnormal vaginal bleeding outside the menstrual period) and it is difficult for her to offer each Salah (Prayer) at its due time, it is permissible for her to combine Prayers.

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This means that she can combine both Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers and Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers at the time of the former or the time of the latter. For example, she can delay Zhuhr till the time of `Asr or Maghrib till the time of `Isha'. However, it is better for her to offer each Salah at its due time. Anyway, if, under certain circumstances, she needs to combine Prayers, there will be nothing wrong with doing so as was the case with Hamnah (may Allah be pleased with her) whom the Prophet (peace be upon him) permitted to do so.



Q: A questioner says: "My mother offers Salah (Prayer) while sitting as she cannot stand, or perform Ruku` (bowing) or Sujud (prostration). Instead, she makes a sign with her hand signaling each of these fundamentals of Salah. Is her Salah as such valid?"

A: Allah (Glorified be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) He (Glorified be He) also says: [\(Allâh burdens not a person beyond his scope.\)](#) Accordingly, your mother can perform Salah while sitting if she cannot stand up, while lying if she cannot sit, or while lying on her back with her legs facing the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer) if she cannot even lie on her side. Asked by a Sahaby (Companion of the Prophet), who was sick, about

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how to perform Salah in such a case, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting and if you cannot, then pray lying on your side, and if you cannot even do that, then pray lying on your back.\)](#) This is the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet). To clarify more, one who cannot perform Ruku` or Sujud should perform it as much as possible, i.e. bowing their head on performing Ruku` and bowing it a little lower on performing Sujud. However, if this is also impossible, it will be enough just to make the intention of performing Ruku` and Sujud and they do not need to bow at all. [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) To explain, after finishing the Qur'an recitation, those who cannot bow at all should just intend Ruku` while in the same position, standing or sitting, and then say Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah) utterances of Ruku`, e.g., Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great), Subhanaka Allahumma Rabbana wa bihamdika, Allahumma ighfir li (Glory and praise be to You, O Allah, our Lord; O Allah, forgive me). Then they should just say: Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah (Allah hears whoever praises Him) if offering Salah alone or say Rabbana walaka-l-hamd (Our Lord, all praise is Yours) if offering it in congregation, while in the same position, i.e. sitting or standing; whichever is possible. The same applies to Sujud, where a person who cannot prostrate himself should just intend Sujud while in the sitting position and lower his head and back a little if possible. If this is not possible, he should say: Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest) without changing his position and then say: "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High)." He can then supplicate Allah (Exalted be He) for whatever he likes. All he needs is just to intend Sujud.

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He should then intend to rise from Sujud saying Allahu Akbar while also in the same position and then say: "O Allah, forgive me and have mercy on me." He should then intend to perform the second Sujud saying: "Allahu Akbar," and then say: "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la". Then, he should say: "Allahu Akbar," once again intending rising from Sujud and so on. This is what he should do regarding all the acts of Salah. [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#)



Q: Sometimes I have a headache which continues for a while and thus I cannot perform Sujud (prostration). I only bow my head signaling Sujud. What is the ruling on doing so? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [﴿So keep your duty to Allāh and fear Him as much as you can﴾](#) He (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: [﴿Allāh burdens not a person beyond his scope.﴾](#)

Accordingly, if someone finds it difficult to perform Sujud because he has a headache, there will be nothing wrong with bowing his head signaling Sujud; however, he should bow it a little lower for Sujud than for Ruku` (bowing). In other words, if someone is so sick that his head cannot touch the ground while performing Sujud, he may perform Sujud without touching the ground in the sense that he should bow his head a little lower than he bows it for Ruku` if he has

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a headache, or any other sickness that make it difficult for him to perform Sujud.



Q: A listener says: "I suffer from backache that makes me unable to perform Ruku` (bowing) while offering Salah (Prayer). Nevertheless, praise be to Allah, I perform all the fundamentals of Salah (Prayer). Please, instruct me in this regard. May Allah reward you with the best."

A: Allah (Glorified be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) Accordingly, if you cannot perform Ruku`, you should bow as much as possible; just bend your head and back a little and, with this there will be nothing wrong. However, if you cannot even do this, you should just say: "Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest)," intending Ruku`, whether you are offering congregational or supererogatory Salah, while still you are standing. [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) The same applies to Sujud (prostration); if someone cannot perform Sujud, he should perform it without needing to touch the ground, in the sense that he should just bow his head a little as possible and then say: "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High)". [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) He should then raise his head. In brief, such a person should do all acts of Salah normally with the exception of Ruku` and Sujud which should be performed in a way that is possible. If one cannot perform Ruku`, he should just say: "Allahu Akbar," intending Ruku` and then say: "Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great)". He should then just say: "Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah (Allah hears whoever praises Him)," if offering Salah alone, or say: "Rabbana walaka-l-hamd (Our Lord, all praise is Yours)," if

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offering it in congregation. The same applies to Sujud; if someone cannot perform Sujud, he should just say: "Allahu Akbar," intending Sujud, after trying to bow his head a little, if possible. He should then say: "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High)," and then supplicate Allah (Exalted be He). He should then say Allahu Akbar intending to rise from Sujud if he is offering Salah alone or he should say so following the Imam's rising from Sujud and saying Allahu Akbar. [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(When I command you to do anything, do of it as much as you possibly can.\)](#) Actually, this text has general meaning. It also applies to Sawm (Fast); an elderly person or an incurably ill person are allowed not to observe Sawm but have to feed a poor person half a Sa` (1 Sa` = 3 kg. approx.) for each day of Sawm they miss. This ruling applies to elderly men and women and incurably sick persons who cannot observe Sawm and it should be based on a trustworthy doctor's report. Such persons are not required to observe Sawm or to make up for a missed Sawm. They should just feed a poor person for each day they miss; half a Sa`; however, they can give the total amount due on all days to one poor person. Nevertheless, sick persons, who can make up for the missed Sawm later, are allowed not to observe Sawm, but have to make up for it later. The same applies to a person who is traveling; he is allowed to break his Sawm, but he has to make up for it later. In this regard, Allah (Glorified be He) says: [\(and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number \[of days which one did not observe Saum \(fasts\) must be made up\] from other days.\)](#) The word "ill" in this Ayah (Qur'anic verse)

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refers to an ill person who can make up for the missed Sawm later. As for he who cannot make up for it later because of old age, he is not required to observe Sawm, but he should feed one poor person for each day he missed. He can also gather the total amount of food and give it all at once to a number of poor persons. However, it will be sufficient if he invites a poor person to a meal on a daily basis. Anyway, it will be sufficient to give the food to the poor. All praise be to Allah alone.



240- Explaining how a sick or aged person who cannot stand should perform Salah

Q: A questioner from Jazan asks: My elderly father cannot stand for a long time while performing Salah (Prayer) and cannot perform Ruku` (bowing) or Sujud (prostration) as he suffers from arthritis. Therefore, he performs Salah only while seated in a chair and thus, does not touch the ground. Moreover, he performs all Salahs at home with the justification that Allah (Exalted be He) knows he is weak and unable. Please bear in mind that we advised him much in this regard. The question is: Is my father excused for performing Salah at home? Is his Salah, during which he does not touch the ground, valid?

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A: Yes, if he is disabled, his Salah as such is valid. He may perform Sujud like Ruku`, i.e. without his head touching the ground. He may also perform Salah while sitting. In fact, every one is capable of estimating their ability. Allah (Exalted be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to `Imran ibn Al-Husayn when the latter was sick: [\(Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting and if you cannot, then pray while lying on your side, and if you cannot even do that, then pray while lying on your back.\)](#) Accordingly, a believer may perform Salah in such a way as may suit his ability. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) He (Exalted be He) also says: [\(Allâh burdens not a person beyond his scope.\)](#) To the same effect, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(When I command you to do anything, do of it as much as you possibly can.\)](#) Thus, if he is unable to make his head touch the ground while performing Sujud and to perform Ruku`, he should perform them in a way that is possible. To explain, he should just bow his head a little for Ruku` and Sujud but should bow it a little lower for Sujud.



Q: Some elderly people start reciting Surah Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) (in Salah [Prayer]) while still sitting (before rising from Sujud [prostration]) and complete it after standing up. What is the ruling on doing so?

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A: If they are so disabled that they cannot stand up straight, there is nothing wrong with doing so, i.e. starting to recite the Fatihah before rising, if they fear that they might miss it if they wait until they are completely upright. However, if it is possible for them to recite it in full after standing up straight, they should do so. However, if it is likely that they will miss it because the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) will perform Ruku` (bowing) before they can get up, they should start reciting it while still sitting and then complete it after standing up. This only applies to the case of disabled persons. However, it is impermissible to do so out of negligence and laziness. In fact, one should hasten to get up following his Imam and should not remain sitting, for remaining sitting after the Imam gets up invalidates Salah. However, a disabled person who cannot get up immediately after the Imam gets up is legally excused. In such a case, he can start reciting the Fatihah while still sitting because the Imam will perform Ruku` before he can recite it in full after getting up. Actually, there is nothing wrong with doing so under such a Shar`y (Islamically legal) excuse. In this regard, Allah (Exalted be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to a person who was unable to stand while performing Salah: [\(Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting, and if you cannot, then pray while lying on your side, and if you cannot even do that, then pray while lying on your back.\)](#) The Hadith means that each person should perform Salah in such a way as may suit their ability and capability.



Q: A questioner says: I am elderly and suffer from pains in my vertebrae,

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so, I sometimes perform Salah (Prayer) while sitting. What is the ruling on doing so?

A: Allah (Glorified be He) says in the Glorious Qur'an: **﴿So keep your duty to Allāh and fear Him as much as you can﴾** Thus, if you cannot stand while performing Salah, because of a backache, for example, there will be nothing wrong with performing Salah while sitting if standing will cause hardship. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to `Imran ibn Al-Husayn when the latter was sick: **﴿Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting and if you cannot, then pray while lying on your side, and if you cannot even do that, then pray while lying on your back.﴾** Moreover, Allah (Glorified be He) says: **﴿Allāh burdens not a person beyond his scope.﴾** Praise be to Allah.



Q: A questioner asks: There is an elderly man suffering from hemiplegia who is regular in attending the Salah (Prayer) in congregation at the Masjid (mosque). He sits on a chair and puts some high objects in front of him so that his head can touch them while performing Sujud (prostration). Is it permissible to do so? Or, is it sufficient to bow his head for Sujud a little lower than for Ruku` (bowing) as it is not

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obligatory that the head touches the ground in such a case?

A: He need not do so. He should just bow his head signaling Ruku` as stated in the Hadith Marfu` (a Hadith narrated from the Prophet with a connected or disconnected chain of narration) to the effect (that Jabir told a man who was performing Sujud on a cushion to remove the cushion and just make a gesture signaling Ruku` and Sujud.) Therefore, he does not have to perform Sujud on a cushion and can perform Sujud without necessarily touching the ground. It is sufficient for him to bow his head a little lower for Sujud than for Ruku`. However, there is nothing wrong with putting a high object in front of him to perform Sujud thereon. Anyway, it is far better for a person who cannot perform Sujud to bow his head without necessarily touching the ground but a little lower than for Ruku`. In fact, this is the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) for a person who is unable to perform Sujud and there is no need to perform Sujud on a cushion or anything else.



Q: A questioner asks: Is it permissible for someone suffering from renal failure to offer Salah (Prayer) while sitting, bearing in mind that standing while offering Salah causes them hardship? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: They are more capable of assessing their case. To clarify, if they cannot stand, they may offer Salah while sitting if standing

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will cause them severe hardship. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to `Imran ibn Al-Husain who had hemorrhoids: [﴿Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting and if you cannot, then pray lying on your side, and if you cannot even do that, then pray lying on your back.﴾](#) Moreover, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [﴿So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴾](#) Praise be to Allah.



Salah of pregnant woman unable to stand up

Q: At the time of writing this message, it is the last month of pregnancy for my wife. So she cannot stand up for Salah (Prayer) as the postures of Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (Prostration) cause acute pain for her, nor can she offer Salah while sitting down either. May she offer Salah in another posture?

A: It is authentically reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said to `Imran ibn Al-Husain when he complained about Salah: [﴿Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting and if you cannot, then pray lying on your side, and if you cannot even do that, then pray lying on your back.﴾](#) Allah (Glorified be He) says:

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[﴿So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴾](#) All children of Adam, both men and women, are equal in this ruling. If a man or woman cannot offer Salah while standing up or sitting down, they may offer Salah to the extent that they can, whether on the right side, the left side, or their back. [﴿Allâh burdens not a person beyond his scope.﴾](#) They should imagine they are doing all the acts of Salah while lying on their side or back; they should imagine they are standing up, so say Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer), Isti`adhah (saying: "A`udhu-Billahi mina Al-Shaytan -ir-Rajim [I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Satan]"), and Basmalah (saying, "Bismillah Al-Rahman, Al-Rahim [In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful]"), and then recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and then what is easy for them to recite of the Qur'an. Then they should imagine they are performing Ruku` and so make Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"), and say: "Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim" (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great). Then, they should imagine they are rising and so say: "Sami Allahu Liman Hamida. Rabbana wa Laka Al-Hamd" (Allah listens to him who praises Him. Our Lord, all praise be for Thee only...etc.). Then they should imagine they are performing Sujud, and so make Takbir, imagining they are prostrating, and so on.



Q: How can a pregnant woman who is unable to offer Salah while standing up during the last months of pregnancy offer Salah?

A: She should offer Salah to the extent that she can. Allah (Glorified be He) says: [﴿So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴾](#) If she is unable to stand up, she may offer Salah while sitting down with her legs crossed, or making Iftirash (placing the left foot to the side and sitting on it while keeping the right foot vertical)

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or sitting down with her knees and thighs pulled up towards her abdomen. She can choose the easiest way of sitting, crossing legs, Iftirash or Ihtiba'. All of them are permissible. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to `Imran when he was sick: [﴿Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting and if you cannot, then pray lying on your side, and if you cannot even do that, then pray lying on your back.﴾](#) His saying: "while sitting" includes all ways of sitting. This is permission from Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). If a pregnant woman is unable to stand up, she may offer Salah while sitting down in any way as she likes. All praise be to Allah.



Q: What is the ruling of a woman who undergoes a surgery and so cannot perform Wudu' (ablution) or Tayammum (dry ablution with clean earth), nor can she offer Salah (Prayer) while standing up or sitting down? How can she offer Salah?

A: She can perform Tayammum if she can not perform Wudu'. Her brother, mother, husband, or another Mahram (spouse or unmarriageable relative) may help her perform it. She should have the intention of Tayammum while she has her face and palms rubbed with dust as she does not have to perform Tayammum herself.

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If she is unable to perform Tayammum herself, her mother, brother, father, husband, or another Mahram may assist her with it by hitting their hands against dust and then rubbing her face and palms with the dust with the intention of performing Wudu' (ablution). She may ask them to help her perform Tayammum, having the intention for it. It suffices her to do this. All praise be to Allah. She cannot offer Salah without Tayammum if she cannot perform Wudu'. As for excretions (urine or stool) from the anus or urethral opening, it is enough to practice Istijmar (cleansing the private parts with a hard material after urination or defecation) with clay bricks, stones, or tissue paper. In this case, a patient should rub their anus or urethral opening thrice or more with tissue paper until they remove impurity from their anus or urethral opening. If the patient is unable to do that, the one who nurses them may help them, removing impurity by means of, for example, tissue paper. If the patient is a woman, she should be attended by a female nurse and if the patient is a man, he should be attended by a male nurse or his mother, sister, or wife. This is a kind of necessity.



Offering Salah on behalf of somebody unable to offer it

Q: My mother sometimes becomes unable to offer Salah (Prayer). Can I offer Salah on her behalf?

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A: Nobody can offer Salah on behalf of somebody else. If your mother still has her mental faculties but is unable to offer Salah while standing up, she may offer it while sitting down. If she cannot offer it while sitting down, she may offer it while laying on her side or even back with her legs stretched in the direction of the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer). This is incumbent on her. [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) However, if she has lost her mental faculties due to old age, Salah is not incumbent on her. In this case, you do not have to offer Salah on her behalf. The same ruling applies if she is insane. However, a sane person has to offer Salah according to his mental state. After all, the Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) has to offer Salah to the extent that they can, either standing up, sitting down, or laying on the side or the back, according to the Prophet's commandment. Allah (Glorified be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#)



243- Ruling on abandoning Salah because of illness

Q: Some sick people do not offer the obligatory Salah (Prayer) during their illness, either because they are not able to offer it or because they give themselves the hope that they will make up for it after recovering. If the sick person cannot

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get out of bed, will their Salah be valid if they offer it without Wudu' (ablution)? And where should they turn their face while they are in bed? Kindly guide us, may Allah reward you with the best.

A: The Five Obligatory Daily Prayers the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, and `Isha' Prayer are obligatory upon the sick persons; each person should offer Salah with Taqwa (fear/wariness of offending Allah) according to their ability. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to the one who asked him about Salah: [\(Pray while standing; if you cannot, pray while sitting; if you cannot, pray while lying on your side.\)](#) (Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih) It is obligatory upon the sick person to offer Salah while standing if they are able to do so; and if they cannot, they should offer Salah while sitting, performing Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration). Again, if they cannot do so, they should offer Salah while lying on their side, making the verbal statements and actions of Salah by intention; and making Ruku`, Sujud, rising from Ruku` and from Sujud by intention, i.e. without moving one's body, along with uttering the prescribed Adhkar (invocations). If they cannot offer Salah while lying on their side, they can offer it while lying on their back with their legs facing toward the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer); they make Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"), then recite the Qur'an, then make Takbir, and then offer Ruku` with intention, i.e. without moving one's body, saying "Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah [Allah listens to those who praise Him]", then they rise from Ruku` with intention, then make Takbir with intention of performing Sujud, saying "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la," then they make Takbir with intention of rising from Sujud to sit between the two prostrations, saying "O my lord,

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forgive me. O my Lord, forgive me." Then they make Takbir for the second prostration. They do the same in the rest of Salah. Allah (Exalted be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) Accordingly, the sick person should not abandon Salah; they should offer it in the way that is possible for them. If the sick person is unable to use water or there is no one to help them perform Wudu', they should perform Tayammum (dry ablution with clean earth), wiping their face and hands with earth.



Q: I used to offer Salah (Prayer), observe Sawm (Fast), and recite the Qur'an - Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah) - but I abandoned Salah three years ago, after I was stricken with 100 % paraplegia. I cannot offer Salah because there is no one to help me. Kindly, guide me, may Allah reward you with the best. Please take into consideration that I drink half a liter of water every two hours, at the direction of the physician.

A: You have to offer Salah according to your ability, as Allah (Glorified be He) says: [﴿So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴾](#) He (Glorified be He) also says: [﴿Allâh burdens not a person beyond his scope.﴾](#) Besides, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [﴿Pray while standing;](#)

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[if you cannot, pray while sitting; if you cannot, pray while lying on your side; if you cannot, pray while lying on your back.﴾](#) You have to perform Wudu' (ablution) if you can find someone to help you; if you do not have access to water, you should perform Tayammum (dry ablution with clean earth). If you cannot use your hands to perform Tayammum, you can seek help from your wife, attendant, child, brother, or anyone else to help you perform Wudu', if possible, or Tayammum; they wipe your face and hands on your behalf after you make the intention. As for what comes out of the front and back passage (urethra and anus), this should be removed by Istijmar (cleansing the private parts with a hard material after urination or defecation); if you can remove this with water, do so; otherwise, you remove this with a stone, brick, or tissues, rubbing this place three times or more until all traces of urine or feces are removed.



Q: My father underwent surgery and stayed in hospital for more than fifteen days. He did not offer forty-four obligatory Salahs (Prayers) before this surgery. He was extremely ill, and this prevented him from

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offering these Salahs. Also, he was under anesthetic and was not able to perform complete ritual purity to offer Salah. Thus, I hope that you will tell him how to make up for the Salahs and the Kaffarah (expiation). May Allah grant you success.

A: If a person dies while missing some Salahs, no one is obliged to make up for them on his behalf, according to Shari`ah (Islamic law). However, the family of the sick person should guide him to offer Salah while sitting, standing, or lying on his side or back, in the way the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered `Umr an ibn Husayn. He (peace be upon him) said: [«Pray while standing and if you can not, pray while sitting and if you can not, then pray lying on your side, and if you can not even do that, then pray lying on your back.»](#) The family of the sick person should take notice of this, and encourage, and guide him to offer Salah according to his condition. If his clothes are not ritually pure, he may change them or have them washed, if possible. If not, he may offer Salah according to his status and condition, according to the saying of Allah (Glorified be He): [«So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can»](#)

Also, if the bed is ritually impure, the patient is permitted to offer Salah on it. [«So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can»](#) The bed sheets and the clothes should be changed with ritually pure ones, if possible.

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If not, the sick person is permitted to offer Salah in his condition, even if he could not perform Wudu' (ablution). If the clothing or the bed sheet is Najis (ritually impure), and the sick person is able to perform Wudu' or Tayammum (dry ablution with clean earth), he is obliged to do so. If he is able to perform Wudu', someone should bring water for him to perform Wudu'. If he cannot use water, some dust may be brought for him to perform Tayammum by wiping his face and hands with it, as is well-known. If he is not able to perform either Wudu' or Tayammum, he is permitted to offer Salah in his condition. [«So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can»](#) However, many people are heedless about this matter, as they do not advise the sick person to offer Salah, claiming that he will offer the Salahs he missed after his recovery, but he may die without making up for these Salahs. This should not be done, as the sick person should offer Salah according to his condition, as he is permitted to perform Wudu' or Tayammum, and to offer Salah while standing, sitting, or lying on his side or on his back according to his condition and ability. [«So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can»](#) This is what should be done.

If the patient loses consciousness or reason, he is not obliged to offer Salah. However, if he is still in possession of his faculties of reasoning, he is obliged to offer Salah. If he was under anesthetic, losing consciousness for a day or two, the ruling on the sleeper applies to him, as a person should make up for the Salahs he missed while sleeping. However, if he lost his reasoning and

consciousness for a long time

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due to illness, he is not obliged to do anything, and is not obliged to make up for the Salahs he missed, even after his recovery. If he makes up for these Salahs to be on the safe side, this will be good. However, he is not obliged to make up for anything according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars, if he lost his reason for a long time. If he lost his reason for one, two, or three days, he should make up for the Salahs after regaining his reason and consciousness. Whatever the case, no one is obliged to make up on his behalf for the Salahs he missed either deliberately or out of ignorance or for any other reason. If he broke his Sawm before he dies and does this because of heedlessness, someone else should make up for the Sawm he broke on his behalf. If he dies without making up for the Sawm he broke during his illness, no one is obliged to make up for the Sawm he broke during his illness. Sometimes a sick person regains his health but delays making up for the Sawm he broke, so his heirs should make up for the Sawm he broke, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If anyone dies in a state \(that he had to complete\) some days of Sawm, their heir must observe Sawm on their behalf.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked many questions, including the following: "O Messenger of Allah, my mother died without observing the Sawm of one month." Another person asked: "My father died without observing the Sawm of a number of days. The Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered them to make up for the days in which the deceased broke their Sawm. He (peace be upon him) said: Do you not think that if your father, mother, or sister owed a debt that you would pay it off for her? Fulfill her debt to Allah (Exalted be He), for He is more deserving that what is owed to Him should be paid. The Prophet (peace be upon him) likened the Sawm that a person did not make up for to a debt.

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He ordered the heirs to make up for it on behalf of the sick person. However, for the Salah, he (peace be upon him) did not order anyone to make up for it.

As for Sawm, whether or not it concerns Ramadan or any other Sawm, the correct opinion is that it concerns every Sawm. Some scholars say that the Sawm that is meant in this respect is that of a vow. But this is a weak opinion, and the Hadiths mentioned in this regard concern Ramadan and Sawm offered as a Kaffarah (expiation). Both of them should be made up for by the heirs.



244- Ruling on the sick, upon recovery, making up for the Salahs they missed

Q: I was sick for three years in which I offered few Salahs (Prayers) only. I did not offer the other Salahs because I was in a coma. Also, I would like to ask about Sawm (Fast); I did not observe Sawm for two years due to extreme illness. I hope that you will inform me about what I should do concerning the missed Sawm and Salahs. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: You should make up for the days in which you broke Sawm, because a person should make up for the days in which they broke Sawm due to illness if Allah (Exalted be He) restores them to health. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says,

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If any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number should be made up from other days.

If this illness caused you to lose reason, and this occurred in Ramadan, you are not obliged to observe Sawm, as Taklif (meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for actions) is linked to reason. Taklif is waived when the person has lost the faculty of reasoning. If you were extremely sick, you should make up for the days in which you broke Sawm. If Salah was left due to the coma you suffered for one or two years, you are not obliged to make up for the Salah missed during this period. The ruling on someone who is insane applies to the person who loses reason, as neither of them are obliged to make up for Salah or Sawm. As for the Salahs that you missed due to thinking that you are permitted not to offer them due to illness, you should make up for them according to your ability and what you think is the probable number (of prayers). You may combine and make up for many Salahs, as you failed to offer them because of a mistake and out of ignorance. A sick person should offer Salah according to their condition. They may offer Salah while sitting; if they cannot, they are permitted to offer Salah while lying on their side. Also, if they are not able to do that, they may offer it while lying on their back. They should not be heedless of Salah. The Prophet (peace be upon him)

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told a sick person: **(Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting, and if you cannot, then pray lying on your side, and if you cannot even do that, then pray lying on your back.)** The believer should offer Salah, in case of illness, while standing if they can. If they cannot stand, they may offer Salah while sitting, and perform Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration) while in that position. If they are not able to sit, they are permitted to offer Salah while lying on their side. It is better to lie on the right side. One should recite (Qur'an) and say Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") and the legal recitations, and intend only to do the acts of Salah. Here, one is permitted to perform Ruku' and Sujud, sit between the two Sujuds and sit to recite Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) by intention only. If one is not able to do that, one is permitted to offer Salah while lying on the back and directing the legs to the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer). Afterwards, one should say Takbir and recite, then say Takbir and perform Ruku` (bowing) by intention only along with saying Tasmi` (saying: "Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah [Allah

listens to those who praise Him]" when standing after Ruku`). Then, one should stand up by intention only and say "Rabbana walaka Al-hamd [O our Lord, all praise is due to You]. Afterwards, they should say Takbir and intend to perform Sujud. This is what should be done and recited when the sick person offers Salah while lying on their side or back. However, if you lost consciousness or reason for a long period of illness, you are not obliged to make up for the Salahs you missed during that time. If the period in which you lost consciousness is short, i.e. one, two, or three days, you are obliged to make up for the Salahs you missed, because in this case the ruling on one who misses Salah due to oversleep applies to the person who loses consciousness for a maximum period of three days. However, if the period in which a patient loses consciousness or reason exceeds three days, making up for the Salahs is waived according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. I mean that you are obliged to make up for the Salahs you misses due to severe

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illness not due to losing your consciousness. If you have not offer Salah due to extreme illness, this is regarded as heedlessness on your part. Hence, you should make up for the Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers in order, even if this is done in a few days, by offering many Salahs at the time of each Salah according to what you think is the most probable number. You should try hard to make up for these Salahs, and that is better as it makes you on the safe side. You should make up for the Sawm you broke due to illness. As for the time in which you lost consciousness, you are not obliged to make up for the Sawm you broke during that period, because in this case the ruling on the insane person concerning Sawm applies to you, as you have a legal excuse.

If you did not offer Salah during this period of time deliberately and out of carelessness, not because you thought that illness is an excuse for abandoning Salah, this is regarded as Kufr (disbelief) and aberration. In this case, you are not obliged to make up for the Salahs you missed, but repentance to Allah (Exalted be He) suffices for you, because the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) told us that abandoning Salah is regarded as Kufr. He (peace be upon him) said: [\(That which differentiates us from the disbelievers and hypocrites is \(our performance of\) Salah. He who abandons it, becomes a disbeliever.\)](#) Abandoning Salah on purpose and not out of doubt or thinking that it may be delayed due to illness, is regarded as a horrible Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) and explicit Kufr. However, repentance to Allah (Exalted be He) suffices for you, and you are not obliged to make up for the Salahs you missed. Likewise, abandoning Salah without a legal excuse is regarded as Kufr, aberration, and Riddah (apostasy) according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars. If the Servant of Allah repents, their repentance suffices for them. May Allah keep us safe.



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245 - How to make up for Salah missed during a long illness

Q: The questioner says: I was very sick for a week in the hospital and I could not pray then. When I left the hospital, I offered all the Salahs (Prayers) I missed at the time of `Asr (Afternoon) and I prayed them shortened, two Rak`ahs (unit of Prayer) each. Is my Salah valid this way or not?

A: First of all, you have to pray at times of sickness even while sitting or lying down. You have to pray in any way you can, according to your state because Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: **﴿So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴾** The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to the sick person: **﴿Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting. If you cannot, pray lying on your side. If you cannot, then pray lying on your back.﴾** This was how the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded him to pray.

Hence, a sick person must do what he can. He can either pray standing, or sitting if he cannot stand, or lying on any of his two sides, though the right side is better, or lying down on his back with his legs directed towards the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer). This is what is considered Mashru` (Islamically prescribed) in this regard. If the sick person does not do any of this, he will have to make up for the Salahs he missed. However, it is wrong not to pray while being sick or to postpone Salah for a while until health is restored.

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In such a case, one will have to make up for the Salahs he missed because he missed them for thinking that it is permissible to postpone them because of sickness. He must hasten to make up for them if he can. Another thing, he must not shorten the Salah because this is only for a traveler. The sick are not permitted to shorten Salah; they are permitted only to combine two Salahs: the Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr (Afternoon) together and the Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) together. Hence, it is impermissible for the sick person to shorten Salah. It must be noted that some common people say it is permissible for the sick person to shorten Salah although they mean combine Salah. So they mistake shortening for combining, though the latter means combining two Salahs at the time of one of them, whereas the former means offering two Rak`ahs (unit of Prayer) instead of four in the Salah of Zhuhr, `Asr and `Isha'.

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Shortening Salah is permissible only for travelers. However, a sick person must offer Salah in its complete number of Rak`ahs. Yet he may combine the Zhuhr and the `Asr together and the Maghrib and the `Isha' together.



246- Ruling on the deceased abandoning Salah for absence of Taharah

Q: My grandmother was very old; she loved Salah (Prayer) and Sawm (Fast) very much and sought to draw close to Allah. Unfortunately, she could not offer Salah during the last months of her life, because she was unable to perform Taharah (ritual purification), recite Qur'an, or do the acts of Salah, although she was mentally sound. Is there a sin on her? When we told her, "Try to perform Salah," she would say, "I am very convinced of Salah." But she was short of breath after doing any act, as if her soul was leaving her body. What is the ruling on her case?

A: She should have offered Salah while standing, sitting, lying on her side, or lying on her back, after performing Wudu' (ablution) or Tayammum (dry ablution with clean earth). She was not permitted to abandon

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Salah, because Allah (Exalted be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to `Imran, when he was sick: [\(Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting and if you cannot, then pray lying on your side, and if you cannot even do that, then pray lying on your back.\)](#) Every male or female Mu'min (believer) should perform the obligations according to their ability. It is not permissible to abandon Salah out of weakness or old age; rather, the sick and old-aged persons should offer Salah in a way that is easy for them, even lying on their side or back. They say "Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest)" after making the intention to offer Salah, then they recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and whatever is easy to recite of the Qur'an, then they say "Allahu Akbar", with the intention of performing Ruku` (bowing), saying "Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great)". Then they say "Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah (Allah listens to those who praise Him)" and "Rabbana wa Lakka Al-Hamd (All praise is Yours) with the intention of rising from Ruku`. Then they say "Allahu Akbar" with the intention of making Sujud (prostration), saying "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High)". Then they say "Allahu Akbar", with the intention of sitting between the two prostrations, saying "Rabby ighfir li (O my Lord, forgive me)". Then they say "Allahu Akbar", with the intention of making the second Sujud. Thus, any person who is physically unable to do the acts of Salah can just utter their supplications. As for your grandmother who did not offer Salah while she was mentally sound, she is sinful and there is a great risk that she may be considered a Kafir (disbeliever) because she abandoned Salah while having the ability and reason to do it. In conclusion, her actions were bad and Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). As she was mentally sound, she should have offered Salah.

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according to her ability. Allah (Exalted be He) says: [\(So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) As for what you should do after her death, there is nothing for you to do, for her situation is up to Allah. She is apparently Kafir - we ask Allah for safety - because she abandoned Salah due to her ignorance; however, her matter is up to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). As she

abandoned Salah while being mentally sound, you should not make Du`a' (Supplication) for her or give Sadaqah (voluntary charity) on her behalf. As abandoning Salah while having reason and being Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) is considered major Kufr (disbelief that takes the Muslim out of Islam), according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Between a person and Kufr \(disbelief\) and Shirk \(associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship\) is the negligence of Salah.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(The covenant that distinguishes between us and them \(the hypocrites\) is Salah. Anyone who abandons it is a Kafir.\)](#) We ask Allah to grant us safety.



Q: My mother had a disease that made her unable to offer Salah (Prayer), and she died in this condition. What do you advise me to do for her? May Allah reward you with the best.

A: If she lost her reason, there is no sin on her. Otherwise, she should have offered Salah, even lying on her side, if she was unable to offer Salah while standing or sitting. The Prophet

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(peace be upon him) said: [\(Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting and if you cannot, then pray lying on your side, and if you cannot even do that, then pray lying on your back.\)](#) If a sick person is able to offer Salah while standing, they should do so, making Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration). If they are unable to stand, they should offer Salah while sitting, making a gesture for Ruku` and making Sujud on the ground if possible; otherwise, they should lean forward as far as they can for Ruku` and Sujud, making the leaning for Sujud deeper than that for Ruku`. If they are unable to do so, they should offer Salah while lying on their side, preferably the right side. They offer Salah while uttering the supplication of Salah and making the intention. They say "Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest)" then they recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and whatever is easy for them to recite of the Qur'an, then they say "Allahu Akbar", with the intention of performing Ruku`, saying "Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great)". Then they say "Sami`a Allahu liman hamidah (Allah listens to those who praise Him)" and "Rabbana wa Lakka Al-Hamd (All praise is Yours)", with the intention of rising from Ruku`, while still lying on their side. Then they say "Allahu Akbar", with the intention of making Sujud (prostration), saying "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High)" and supplicating to Allah. Then they say "Allahu Akbar", with the intention of rising from Sujud and sitting between the two prostrations, and say "Rabby ighfir li (O my Lord, forgive me)". Then they say "Allahu Akbar" with the intention of making the second Sujud. They should do the same for the rest of the Salah, while lying on their side or back. If they offer Salah while lying on their back, they should have their legs pointing toward the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer), raising their head a little to be facing the Qiblah, and offer Salah with intention and supplications. If possible, they should raise their hands when making Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer), and when making Ruku`, when rising from Ruku`, when rising for the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer), even if lying on their side or back or sitting.