

SAYINGS OF SOME OF THE MAJOR SCHOLARS CONCERNING PRAYING CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER BEHIND THE IMAAM WHILST OUTSIDE THE MOSQUE:

1. SHAIKH AL-ALBAANEE'S REBUTTAL OF AS-SAYYID SAABIQ'S USE OF A HADEETH OF `AA-ISHAH -radiyallaahu `anhaa- TO SHOW THE UNRESTRICTED PERMISSIBILITY OF FOLLOWING AN IMAAM WHEN THERE IS A WALL OR BARRIER BETWEEN THE IMAAM AND THE FOLLOWER:

*Imaam al-Bukhaaree -rahimahullaah- reported in his 'Saheeh' (no.729) from `Aa-ishah -radiyallaahu `anhaa- that she said: "Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) used to pray behind his *hujrah* (screened area) during the night, and the wall of the screen was short. So the people saw the Prophet (ﷺ), and some people stood and prayed along with his Prayer. Then in the morning they talked about that. So he stood on the second night, and some people stood and prayed along with his Prayer. They did that for two or three nights. After that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) sat, and he did not come out. Then in the morning the people spoke about that, so he said: << **I feared that the Night Prayer might be written as an obligation upon you.** >>

*Shaikh Muhammad Naasiruddeen al-Albaanee -rahimahullaah- said in 'Tamaamul-Minnah fit-Ta'leeq `alaa Fiqhis-Sunnah' (p. 283, 2nd edn.), his critique and checking of 'Fiqhus-Sunnah', a three volume work of Fiqh by Sayyid Saabiq -rahimahullaah- (d 1420 H.):

"His saying, under the heading: 'The follower following the imaam'...: 'And there has already preceded the hadeeth of the Prophet's (ﷺ) praying, and the people following him, behind the apartment (*hujrah*), following his Prayer.'

I say: He is indicating the hadeeth of `Aa-ishah, which has preceded with him at the start of 'Qiyaamu Ramaḍaan' (The Night Prayer during Ramaḍaan)¹, however it does not contain a mention of the 'Hujrah' (apartment/screened area), and it is referenced in 'Saheeh Abee Daawood' (no. 1243). Rather that just occurs in a narration of al-Bukhaaree.²

¹ Translator's footnote: Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no. 1129) from `Aa-ishah - the Mother of the Believers -radiyallaahu `anhaa- that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) prayed in the mosque one night, and some people prayed along with his Prayer. Then he prayed on the next night, and the people became many. Then they gathered on the third, or the fourth night, but Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) did not come out to them. So when he entered the early morning, he said: << **I saw what you did, and nothing prevented me from coming out to you except that I feared that it would be made obligatory upon you.** >> And that was in Ramaḍaan."

² Translator's footnote: Reported by al-Bukhaaree (no.729): from `Aa-ishah -radiyallaahu `anhaa.

So it is befitting that attention be drawn to the fact that the word '*hujrah*' does not mean what first comes to mind, which is that it was his (ﷺ) house; rather it is the screened area which he (ﷺ) used to make in the mosque at night. This was pointed out by al-Haafiz [Ibn Hajr], based upon some of the narrations of this hadeeth³, so refer to my book '*Mukhtasar Saheehil-Bukhaaree*', and the notes to it.⁴

2. SHAIKH AL-ALBAANEE'S REBUTTAL OF AS-SAYYID SAABIQ'S USE OF SOME NARRATIONS FROM THE SALAF TO SAY THAT IT IS UNRESTRICTEDLY PERMISSIBLE FOR PEOPLE TO FOLLOW AN IMAAM IN PRAYER WHEN THEY ARE OUTSIDE THE MOSQUE:

*Shaikh al-Albaanee said in '*Tamaamul-Minnah*' (pp. 281-282):

"His saying, after having mentioned some narrations (aathaar) about Prayer on top of the mosque, and outside it, whilst following the imaam: 'The basic principle is its permissibility, until an evidence for prohibition is established.'

He quoted it from ash-Shawkaanee.

And I say: These narrations (aathaar) are countered by other narrations from `Umar, and ash-Sha`bee, and Ibraaheem: reported by Ibn Abee Shaybah (2/223), and by `Abdur-Razzaaq (3/81-82)⁵: showing that he may not do this if there is a path or the

³ Translator's footnote: From them is what al-Bukhaaree reported (no.730) from `Aa-ishah - radiyallaahu `anhaa- "That the Prophet (ﷺ) had a reed mat, which he would lay out during the day, and which he would use to screen an area during the night; and people gathered at night facing it, and they prayed behind him."

And what al-Bukhaaree reported (no.731): from Zayd ibn Thaabit: "That Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) used to take a '*hujrah*' (screened area). He said: I think he said: With a reed mat, in Ramaadaan. So he prayed within it for some nights, and some people from his Companions prayed along with his Prayer. so when he came to know of them he sat. Then he came out to them, and he said: << **I was aware of what I saw from what you were doing, so pray, O people in your houses; for the most excellent Prayer is the Prayer of a person in his house, except for the Obligatory Prayer.** >>

⁴ Translator's footnote: Shaikh al-Albaanee said in his footnote (p.184, 1st edn.): "al-Haafiz said in 'The Night Prayer': "It does not mean his house, rather what is meant is the straw mat with which he used to make a private enclosure, at night, in the mosque. So he would make it next to the house of `Aa-ishah, and he would pray in it, and sit upon it during the day..." And like it is the addition: "in the mosque", since the '*hujrah*' (apartment) of his house is not from the mosque. So it becomes certain that it must be explained with what we have mentioned."

⁵ Translator's footnote:

(i) Ibn Abee Shaybah reported in his '*Mu'annaf*' (2/223) [The Book of the Prayers: Chapter: Regarding a man and a woman who pray, and there is a wall between him and the imaam]: "Hafs ibn Ghiyaath narrated to us: from Layth: from Nu`aym who said: "'Umar said: 'If there is between him and the imaam a path, or a river, or a wall, then he is not along with him'."

like between him and the imaam. So perhaps what the first narrations contain is to be taken to apply in cases where there is a valid excuse, such as the mosque being full, just as Hisham ibn `Urwah said: 'I and Aboo Murrah came, and we found that the mosque was full. So we prayed along with the Prayer of the imaam in a house by the mosque, and there was a path in between.'

`Abdur-Razzaq reported it (3/82) with a 'Saheeh' chain from him.

So it will not be hidden from a person possessing Fiqh that unrestrictedly stating it to be permissible runs contrary to the ahaadeeth which command the joining of the rows, and the closing of the gaps⁶. So these must be acted upon, and adhered to, unless there is a valid excuse; and therefore Shaikhul-Islam [Ibn Taimiyyah] said in 'Majmoo`ul-Fataawaa' (23/410):

- `Abdur-Razzaq reported in his 'Musannaf' (3/81) [The Book of the Prayer: Chapter: a man prays behind the imaam outside the mosque] : "From Ibn at-Tayme: from his father: from Nu`aym ibn Abee Hind: from `Umar ibn al-Khattaab that he said concerning a man who prays along with the Prayer of the imaam: 'If there is a river, or a path, or a wall between them, then he should not follow him'."

[Shaikh Yahyaa al-Hajooree said in 'Ahkaamul-Jumu`ah wa bida`uhaa' (p. 173): "The narrators of its chain to `Umar are reliable, however Nu`aym did not reach `Umar, and I do not see any narration of his from him."]

(ii) Ibn Abee Shaybah reported in his 'Musannaf' (2/223): "Ibn Mahdee narrated to us: from Israa-eel: from `Eesaa ibn Abee `Azzah: from ash-Sha`bee, that he asked him, saying: I asked him about a woman following the imaam when there is a path between the two of them, so he said: 'That is not for her'." [`Abdur-Razzaq reported it (3/81) from Israa-eel ibn Yoonus: from `Eesaa- with it.]

[Shaikh Yahyaa said (p.174) : "This is a 'saheeh' chain to ash-Sha`bee."]

(iii) Ibn Abee Shaybah reported in his 'Musannaf' (2/223): "Ibn Mahdee narrated to us: from Sufyaan: from al-A`mash: from Ibraaheem [i.e. an-Nakha`ee] that he used to dislike/hate that a man should pray following the Prayer of the imaam if there is a path, or women, between them."

- `Abdur-Razzaq reported in his 'Musannaf' (3/82): "From Ibnul-Mujaalid: from his father: from Ibraaheem an-Nakha`ee that he used to say, concerning a man who prays following the Prayer of the imaam, when there is a wall between them: 'It is fine as long as there is not a path, or women, between them.'"

⁶ Translator's footnote:

Such as the hadeeth reported by Muslim (no. 438) from Aboo Sa`eed al-Khudree: that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) saw amongst some of his Companions an inclination to stay back, so he said to them: << **Come forward, and follow my lead, and let those who come after you follow you; and a people will not cease falling back until Allaah puts them back.** >>

And the hadeeth of Anas ibn Maalik: that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:<< **Make your rows tight, and make them close to each other, and have your necks in line. For, by the One in Whose Hand is my soul, I can see the devil entering through the gaps in the row, as if they are little black sheep.** >> [Saheeh: Aboo Daawood (no. 667)].

And the hadeeth of Anas ibn Maalik: that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:<< **Complete the front row, then that which follows it, and whatever deficiency there is then let it be in the last row.** >> [Saheeh: Aboo Daawood (no.671)].

“He may not form a row in the pathways, and the shops, when there is space in the mosque.⁷ Whoever does that deserves correctional punishment, and whoever comes after him has the right to step over him, and to enter to complete the rows in front; since there is no forbiddance in this. He said: so if the mosque becomes full with rows, then they should form rows outside the mosque. So if the rows in the paths and the markets are a (connected) continuation then their Prayer is correct. However, if they form a row and there is between them and the other row a pathway upon which the people are walking, then their Prayer will not be correct in the most apparent of the two sayings of the scholars. Likewise if there is a wall between them and the rows, such that they cannot see the rows, and they can just hear the takbeer - without a need, since their Prayer will not be correct in the most apparent (saying). Likewise one who prays in his shop when the path is empty, his Prayer will not be correct; and he may not sit in the shop waiting for the rows to join with him. Rather he must go to the mosque, and fill the first row, then the next, and then the next.”

3. IBNUL-MUNDHIR -rahimahullaah- (d.308 H) said in ‘al-Awsat’ (4/119):

“A mention of Prayer in the courtyards attached to the mosques:

The people of knowledge disagreed with regard to Prayer in the courtyards attached to the mosques.

So a group said: There is no Jumu`ah if he does not pray in the mosque. This was said by Aboo Hurairah and Qays ibn `Ubaad.

- Ishaq narrated to us, saying: `Abdur-Razzaq related to us, saying Ma`mar related to us: from Qataadah: from Zuraarah ibn Awfaa: from Aboo Hurairah that he used to say: “Whoever, on the day of Jumu`ah, does not pray in the mosque, then there is no Jumu`ah for him.”

- Muhammad ibn Ismaa`eel narrated to us, saying: `Affaan narrated to us, saying: Hamaam narrated to us: from al-Hasan: from Qays ibn `Ubaad, who said: “There is no Jumu`ah for the one who does not pray in the mosque.”

And a group said: Prayer outside the mosque, following the Prayer of the imaam is permissible. We have that narrated to us from Anas ibn Malik (that he used to pray)

⁷ Translator’s note: Concerning the issue of crowding, then an indication of how crowded the mosque of Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to become is contained in the long hadeeth of Faatimah bint Qays - radiyallaahu `anhaa-, describing the Dajjaal, and the spy of the Dajjaal. Muslim reported it in the Book of Tribulations (no. 2942/119), and within it she said: “So I prayed along with Allaah’s Messenger (ﷺ), and I was in the row of the women which was next after the backs of the people (*fakuntu fee saffin-nisaa’ il-latee talee zuhooril-qawm*)...”; and he reported it (no. 2942/120) with the wording: “So I was in the front row of the women, and it was next after the back one of the men (*fakuntu fis-saffil-muqaddami minan-nisaa’, wa huwa yalee al-mu-akhkhari minar-rijaal*)...”.

in the house of Aboo `Abdillaah, in the small gate which overlooks the mosque, and he could see their *rukoo`* and their *sujood*. And Anas prayed Jumu`ah with the imaam whilst he was in the house of Naafi` ibn `Abd al-Haarith: a house which overlooked the mosque, and which had a door opening into the mosque, following the imaam....”

4. A VERDICT OF SHAIKH `ABDUL-`AZEEZ IBN BAAZ- rahimahullaah:

“THE RULING REGARDING FOLLOWING THE IMAAM FOR ONE WHO IS OUTSIDE THE MOSQUE, AND HE CANNOT SEE THE IMAAM OR THOSE WHO ARE PRAYING BEHIND HIM.⁸”

The honourable Shaikh M.Kh.S., Nice, France - may Allaah grant him success.

“Salaamun `alaikum wa rahmatullaahi wa barakaatuhu, to proceed:

I have come across a question that you posed via the telephone, and it was:

‘What is the ruling on women following the imaam, when they are praying in a room on the ground floor with respect to the mosque, within the offices of the society?’

And the response is:

As for the Prayer of the women in a room on the ground floors, along with the congregation of the mosque, then it is not for them to follow the imaam, because a condition (*shart*) for following, for one who is outside the mosque, is that he can see the imaam, or those praying behind him -in the most correct of the sayings of the people of knowledge; and merely hearing the voice of the imaam will not be sufficient, except for one who is within the mosque.

So I hope that this is comprehended; and may Allaah bless you, and may He grant us and you beneficial knowledge, and righteous action. Indeed He hears and responds, and is near. was-Salaamu `alaikum wa rahmatullaahi wa barakaatuhu,”

The head of the departments for scholarly Research, Verdicts, Da`wah, and Direction:

`Abdul-`Azeez ibn `Abdillaah ibn Baaz. ”

[Reference: ‘Majmoo` Fataawaa wa maqaalaat mutanawwi`ah’ (3rd edn. 1423H) of Shaikh `Abdil-`Azeez ibn Baaz -rahimahullaah- (12/215-216).]

⁸ Issued from the office of his Eminence, no. 2130/1, dated 13/9/1413H

5. A VERDICT GIVEN BY SHAIKH MUHAMMAD IBN SAALIH AL-`UTHAYMEEN -rahimahullaah:

Shaikh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-`Uthaymeen -rahimahullaah- was asked:

“What is the ruling concerning the Prayer of the women within the mosques where they cannot see the imaam or the followers, but rather they just hear the voice? Give us a verdict, may Allaah reward you with good on our behalf, and on behalf of the Muslims.”

So he responded:

“It is permissible for the woman, and for the man also, to pray with the congregation in the mosque, even if he does not see the imaam or the followers, as long as he is able to follow. So if the voice reaches the women in their place in the mosque, and they are able to follow the imaam, then it is correct for them to pray the Congregational Prayer along with the imaam; because the place is one (and the same), and following is possible, whether that be by way of the microphone, or whether they can directly hear the voice of the imaam himself, or the voice of one who is conveying from him. It will not harm if they cannot see the imaam or the followers. Rather some of the scholars lay down a condition that the imaam or the followers must be seen if the one who is praying is outside the mosque. So the jurists say that it is correct for the follower who is outside the mosque to follow if he can see the imaam or those praying behind him.

However the more correct saying in my view is that it is not correct for the follower to follow the imaam if he is in other than the mosque, even if he can see the imaam or those praying behind him, if there is a space where he could pray within the mosque. This is because what is required from the Congregation is to be together in the place and in the actions.

However if the mosque is full, and those who are outside the mosque are praying with the imaam, and it is possible to follow him, then the correct saying is that it is permissible to follow and to pray along with the imaam, whether he can see the imaam or not, as long as the rows are a (connected) continuation.

So, to further clarify the matter, I say:

Firstly: If the follower is within the mosque, then his following the imaam is correct in every case; whether he can see the imaam or not; whether he can see those praying behind the imaam or not, because the place is one (and the same).

An example is the follower being on an upper floor; or a lower floor, with the imaam above; or when there is a barrier between them: a wall or a screen.

Secondly: If the follower is outside the mosque. So if there is space in the mosque, then his following the imaam will not be correct; whether he can see the imaam, or someone praying behind him, or he cannot see them; because what is obligatory is that the place of the Congregation should be one (and the same).

Thirdly: If he cannot find a place in the mosque, and he is outside the mosque, then if the rows are a (connected) continuation, then it is correct for him to follow the imaam, even if he cannot see him; because rows which are a (connected) continuation are as if they are within the mosque.”

[‘Majmoo` Fataawaa wa Rasaa-il Fadeelatish-Shaikh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-Uthaymeen’ (15/211-212/no. 1055), 1st edn.]

6. SHAIKH SAALIH AL-FAWZAAN -hafizahullaah.

He said, in his abridged explanation of ‘Zaadul-Mustaqni`’ (2/5-6), commenting upon the saying of the author:

‘(Section) It is correct for the person praying behind the imaam to follow the imaam within the mosque, even if he does not see him or those who are behind him, if he can hear the *takbeer*; and likewise if he is outside it, if he can see the imaam or the followers’:

“The explanation: (Section): This section is to explain the rulings for the one praying behind the imaam: when will his following him be correct, and when will it not be correct?

(It is correct for the person praying behind the imaam to follow the imaam): if the follower is within the mosque, (even if he does not see him or those who are behind him, if he can hear the *takbeer*): because they are all within the mosque; and because the Companions used to pray behind the Prophet (ﷺ), whilst he was beyond the reed mat which was placed for him (ﷺ). So he used to pray the Night Prayer in the screened place, and the Companions would come and pray behind him, praying behind the reed mat. So that shows that if there is a barrier between the imaam and the follower, within the mosque, then that will not harm. (And likewise if he is outside it, if he can see the imaam or the followers’): however if the follower is outside the mosque, because the mosque is full, then it is not correct for him to follow the imaam, except with the condition that he can see him, or see those who are behind him; and with the condition that the rows are a [connected] continuation. Because if he cannot see him, and he cannot see those who are behind him, then he will not be able to follow.”

[Translated by Aboo Talhah Dawud Burbank.]