
The intention for the Prayer

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

At-Takbeer¹

Then the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم)² used to begin the prayer by saying: ‘Allaahu Akbar.’

In this is an indication that the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) never used to say anything before the takbeer, like pronouncing the niyyaah (intention).

Like some people say: ‘I have intended to pray for Allaah Ta’ala³ so many rakat facing the Qiblah.....’ to the end of what is well-known amongst many of the people!

All of that is bida’; it has no foundation in the Sunnah. This is something which the scholars are in agreement about.

It was not narrated on anyone of the Companions, nor did one of the Taabi’een regard it as appropriate. Nor did any of the four Mujtahid Imaams. But rather it was mentioned by some of the companions of Imaam Shaafi’ee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)⁴ when he said about the Hajj:

‘It is not necessary for the one who enters into the state of Ihraam and makes his intention with his heart, that he mentions it with his tongue. Not like the prayer which is not correct except by an utterance.’

Ar-Raafi’ee said in ‘Sharh al-Wajeez’ (3/263):

‘The majority – i.e. From the scholars of the Shafi’eeyah – said: that Imaam Shaafi’ee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) did not intend by his statement the pronunciation of the intention with an utterance, rather he intended pronouncing the takbeer; since the prayer is begun by this, and in the Hajj a person can become Muhrim without pronouncing the intention.’ It is similarly mentioned in ‘al-Majmoo’ 3/276-277

Indeed he has indicated this in ‘al-Muhadhib’ by saying: ‘And from amongst our companions there are those who say: Make an intention with the heart, and an utterance with the tongue. This is nothing since the niyyaah is the intent with the heart.’

‘Allaama Shaykh muwafeeq ad-Deen Ibn Qudamaah al-Maqdasee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said in his book ‘Dhum al-Moowasweseen’ p.7:

‘Know, may Allaah have mercy on you, that the niyyaah is the intent and decision to do an action and its place is the heart. It has no connection with the tongue.

¹Taken from the Original Sifat as-Salaah vol 1 p.175-176

² (صلى الله عليه وسلم) May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him

³ Ta’aala (He, The Most High)

⁴ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

The intention for the Prayer

It has not been narrated on the authority of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) nor his Companions that they uttered the niyyaah in any situation.

These types of worship are ones which have been innovated at the beginning of purification and prayer, are not derived from the principles of worship.

So, the niyyaah is the intent of performing an action. Therefore, everyone who is decided on performing an action, then he has an intention. And everyone who aims to perform an action, then he has an intention. It is inconceivable to separate the intent from the niyyaah, because that is its true nature. So, the absence of the niyyaah is inconceivable when it is present.

Therefore, the one who sits to perform wudoo, then he has indeed intended to perform wudoo. The one who stands to pray, then he has indeed intended the prayer. An intelligent person will not perform an action from his worship or any other action without an intention (niyyaah). So, the niyyaah is a matter which is inherent in actions which a person intends, and the niyyaah is not something that needs to tire a person out, nor does he need to acquire it since it is inherent.' summarised.

So, if you know that it was not from the guidance of the Salaf as-Saalih to pronounce the niyyaah; then it is obligatory upon you to follow them; since they are the example: *All good is in following the Salaf. And all evil is in the innovating of the Khalaf.*