



The Rules and Regulations of Salaatul Jamaa'ah

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Al-Khutub al-Mimbarriyyah

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

All praise is due to Allaah, Lord of the worlds. He ordered us to unite upon His religion and hold firmly to His rope, and He forbade us from division and differentiation, because of that which is found in unity from strength and closeness, and because of that which is found in disunity from weakness and separation. I praise him for the blessing of Islaam, and I bear witness that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allaah, alone, with no partners; the declaration that opens the world of Islaam for the one who says it with a truthful tongue, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger. May the blessings of Allah be upon him, his family, and his noble companions.

As for what follows:

O' people! Fear Allaah and know that the Salaatul Jamaa'ah is from amongst the greatest religious rites of Islaam. In it is great benefit and much good. Acquaintance, closeness, and cooperation between the Muslims is achieved through it, and through it the strength of the religion and the infuriation of the disbelievers and the hypocrites are displayed. Achieved through it is the energy for action (upon good deeds), a safeguard from laziness, and protection from the whispers of the Shaytaan, for indeed the Shaytaan can overpower the one who prays alone, but he distances himself from the one who prays in Jamaa'ah. And in it is the multiplication of reward, and an increase in levels, and the abandonment of evil deeds, and in it is isolation from hypocrisy, and one acquires through it the characteristics of the believers who maintain the houses of Allaah (i.e. Masaajid) with obedience. As Allah the Most High says:

The Mosques of Allaah shall be maintained only by those who believe in Allaah and the Last Day; perform As-Salat, and give Zakat and fear none but Allaah. It is they who are expected to be on true guidance. (At-Tawbah 9:18)

O Slaves of Allaah! Indeed for the Salaatul Jamaa'ah are a set of rules and regulations which are an obligation upon every Muslim to know, so that he may perform it in the requested manner and attain from that its protection and reward.

From those rules is that it is legislated to arrive early for its attendance, be seated, and wait for the Iqaamah in the Masjid, and many people have failed to achieve this virtue. They greatly delay themselves in arrival for its attendance, so much so, that much good passes them by!

Also from the rulings of Salaatul Jamaa'ah is that the one who enters the Masjid after the Iqaamah, then he proceeds with tranquility and calmness, so he does not hurry or run, in accordance with the saying of the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam), *“If you hear the Iqaamah then proceed and upon you is calmness, so whatever you catch, then pray it, and whatever passes you by, then complete it.”* Verily, many people have failed to meet this Hukm, so you will find them hurrying and running if they enter the Masjid after the Iqaamah, especially if they find the Imaam in Ruku'. So they oppose the Sunnah and they disturb the Imaam and those who are praying, and they don't fulfill the responsibility for the sanctity of the Masjid, and they enter the Salaah in irritation and with preoccupied thoughts, and sometimes they overlook the Takbeeratul Ihraam¹, or they come with it after they are in Ruku', and it is known that the Takbeeratul Ihraam is a pillar from the pillars of the Salaah, and the Salaah is not complete or correct except that one comes with it. He must be standing upright before he goes into the Ruku', then he says the second Takbeer while he is descending for it. And if these people arrived earlier to the Masjid, then they would have been saved from this deficiency and they would have received a great reward.

Also from the rules and regulations of Salaatul Jamaa'ah is that it is not correct for a man to stand behind a row by himself, in accordance with the statement of the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam), *“There is no Salaah for the one (who stands alone) behind the row.”* Ahmad and ibn Maajah have narrated it. Indeed the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) saw a man pray by himself behind a row, so he ordered him to repeat his Salaah. Narrated by the al-Khamsah (the five)² excluding an-Nisaa'ee. So it is a must to be included in a row for Salaatul Jamaa'ah because the Salaah of the one who stands alone behind a row is not correct, but it is mandatory for him to join into a row, or stand on the right side of the Imaam, or wait until someone enters the Masjid who will form a row with him.³

¹ Translators note: the Takbeer which enters one into the Salaah.

² Translators note: Narrated by the Five meaning, “Ahmad, at Tirmidhee, an Nisaaee, Abu Dawud, and ibn Maajah”

³ Translators note: A question was put to Shaykh al-Albaani about a person entering a Masjid and finding that all the rows are complete and if it was permissible to pull someone from the last row and form a new row. The Shaykh answered by saying that he should try to squeeze in the last row if possible. If this is not possible then he should pray by himself by beginning the new row. This he stated by explaining that the aforementioned hadeeth is in reference to ones ability, like the Messenger said that one should not pray while sitting, but if someone does not have the ability to stand can pray sitting. He also mentioned that the hadeeth that says that one should pull someone from the last row and begin a new row with two people (i.e. himself and the one he pulled from last row) is not authentic, and it should not be followed. (Refer to al-Asalah issue # 10) We are

Also from the rules and regulations of Salaatul Jamaa'ah is that it is desirable for those older in age and the people of knowledge to be closest to the Imaam, and the younger ones after them in accordance with the statement of the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam), *“Let the people of insight and intellect from amongst you be nearest to me.”* Narrated by Imaam Ahmad and Imaam Muslim. Also, the women should stand behind the men. Even if there is only one woman, she stands behind the row and she does not join the men's row. If a woman prays with a man, then she stands behind him and not next to him.

Also from the rules and regulations of Salaatul Jamaa'ah is that no one leads the Salaah in the Masjid other than its Imaam except with his permission or an excuse. It is compulsory for the Jamaa'ah to honor the rights of the Imaam as long as he is establishing his duties, as it is an obligation upon the Imaam to respect the rights of the believers, and not to put them into a difficult situation, and not to cause inconvenience to them by making them wait for his arrival longer than the normal amount of time, and it is not permissible for him to appoint someone inappropriate for the position in his absence, but he should appoint one who is capable and through whom the obligation can be completed.

Also from the rules and regulations of Salaatul Jamaa'ah is that if the Salaah has started by way of the Muaddhin starting the Iqaamah, then it is not permissible to start the Salaatun Naafilah (supererogatory prayers); not the designated supererogatory prayers, nor those prayed upon entering the Masjid, and not anything other than these two in accordance with the statement of the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam), *“If the Salaah has started, then there is no Salaah except the obligatory Salaah.”* Narrated by Imaam Muslim, and in another narration, *“There is no Salaah except the one that has started.”* If one is already in a supererogatory salaah and then the Salaah starts, then he should complete his Salaah quickly and not cut it off in accordance with the statement of Allaah, *“And render not vain your deeds.”* (Muhammad 47:33).⁴

mentioning this so that it can be known to the general masses that this is an affair that the scholars of Ahluls Sunnah wal Jamaah have differed in. And this does not degrade any one of the two noble and esteemed Shaykhs in any way or form. We ask Allaah to send his mercy upon the Imaam of our times Shaykh Naasir and safeguard and preserve al-Allaamah Shaykh Fawzaan.

⁴ Translators Note : A question was put to Shaykh ibn Baaz and his reply is as below:

Question: A man entered the mosque to perform the Sunnah of Zuhr and after he made the Takbir, the prayer started.. Should the man break off his prayer, or complete it? I request an explanation of this matter.

Answer: If the prayer begins while one of the congregation is praying Tahiyatul-Masjid, or the fixed Sunnah prayers, he should break off his prayer and prepare to offer the obligatory prayer, as the Prophet (sallallaahu Alaihi wassallam) said, *“If the (obligatory) prayer begins, then there is no prayer except the obligatory one.”* (Muslim). Some scholars held the view that he should complete it quickly, based upon the words of Allaah, *“O you who believe! Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger and render not vain your deeds.”* (Muhammad 47:33). And they interpreted the above-mentioned Hadeeth as pertaining to one who began the (Sunnah) prayer after the Iqaamah. But the correct view is the first saying, because the aforementioned Hadeeth covers both situations. Other Hadeeths have been narrated which prove that this is general, and

And from the regulations of Salaatul Jamaa'ah that whosoever enters and finds the people already offering the Salaah, that he enters the Salaah in the condition he finds the people in, whether it be standing, or in Ruku', or in Sajdah, or sitting. So if he finds them in Ruku', then he enters with them into Ruku', and with that he would have caught the whole Raka'ah upon what is correct, and if the Ruku' passes him by, then enters on whatever is left from that Raka'ah and he does not get that Raka'ah (i.e. he offers that Raka'ah after the Salaah). Some of the people, if they come after the Ruku', then they stay standing until the Imaam stands for the following Ruku', and this is incorrect and in opposition to what has been legislated, and some of them, if they come and find the Imaam in the last Tashahhud, they do not enter into the Salaah, and this is also incorrect, because it is in opposition to the Sunnah.

On the authority of Abu Huraira (radiallaahuAnhu) who said the Messenger of Allah (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) said, *"If you come to the Salaah and we are prostrating, then prostrate, and do not include it (i.e. the Raka'ah) in anything, and whosoever catches a Raka'ah, has caught the Salaah."* Narrated by Imaam Abu Dawud.

On the authority of Ali bin Abi Taalib and Muaadh bin Jabal (radiallaahuAnhu) who said that the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) said, *"If one of you comes to the Salaah and the Imaam is in a certain state (i.e. standing, Ruku', Sajdah, etc.), then do as he is doing."* Narrated by Imaam at Tirmidhee.

And from the rules and regulations of Salaatul Jamaa'ah is that the one being led in prayer by the Imaam follows him with a completely so that his statements and actions in the Salaah are after the statements and actions of the Imaam, because the one being led is a follower of the Imaam, and the follower does not precede the one followed or the exemplar. The Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) said, *"Do you not fear that if one of you were to raise his head before the head of the Imaam that Allaah will change his head to the head of a donkey, or change his form to the form of a donkey."* Narrated by Imaam Bukhaari and Imaam Muslim. So the one who precedes the Imaam is like the donkey that does not understand its actions, and whoever does that, then he is deserving of punishment.

It has been narrated in a hadeeth which is authentic, *"Indeed the Imaam has been designated to be followed, so do not bow until he bows, and do not prostrate until he prostrates."* Imaam Ahmad and Abu Dawud have narrated,

that he (sallallaahu Alaihi Wasallam) spoke these words when he saw a man praying while the Mu'adhin was calling the Iqaamah. As for the Qur'anic Verse, it is general, while the Hadeeth is specific. And the specific takes precedence over the general and does not contradict it, as is known from the study of Usoolul-Fiqh(Fundamental principles of Islamic Juriprudence). However, if the prayer begins and the person has already performed the second Rak'ah, there is no sin in completing it, because the prayer is almost over and nothing remains from it except a small part of one Rak'ah. And Allaah is the Granter of Success." – Imaam ibn-Baaz (taken from Fataawa Islaamiyyah, v.2 p.297 , published by DaarusSalaam)

“Indeed the Imaam has been designated to be followed, so if he bows, then bow, and do not bow before he bows, and if he prostrates, then prostrate, and do not prostrate before him.”

And the companions, behind the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam), never used to bend their back until the Prophet of Allaah (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) was in Sajdah, they would go down in to prostrations after him, and when Umar (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) saw a man precede the Imaam, he struck him and said, “You did not pray by yourself, nor did you follow your Imaam.” Some of the people are lenient in this affair or are ignorant of it so they precede the Imaam and make themselves vulnerable to a threatening sin and the nullification of their Salaah.

Shaykhul Islaam ibn Taymiyyah (rahimahullah) said, “Preceding the Imaam is forbidden with consensus of the Imaams. It is not permissible to bow down before the Imaam bows down, nor is it permissible to come up before him, and nor is it permissible to prostrate before him, and there are many Ahaadeeth from the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) which have elaborated upon the prohibition of this, and preceding the Imaam is only trickery from the Shaytaan so that the one praying may violate (the rules of) Salaatul Jamaa'ah. For if this is not the case, then what does one gain from preceding the Imaam in his actions since he can not leave the Salaah until after Imaam's Tasleem.”

And from the rules and regulations of Salaatul Jamaa'ah is that one who enters the Jama'ah late, stands up after the Imaam completes the second Salaam to complete what he missed from the prayer, and he does not stand before that, for some people are hasty so they stand upon hearing the first of the Salaams, and this is in violation of the Salaah, and with some, it may even nullify it with some of the scholars!

Also from the rules and regulations of the Salaatul Jamaa'ah is that the one being led in the Salaah, should listen to the recitation of the Imaam if he is reciting out loud in obedience to the statement of Allaah, “So, when the Qur'aan is recited, listen to it, and be silent that you may receive mercy.” (al-Araaf 7:204), and if the Imaam is not reciting out loud, or the one being led can not hear the recitation of the Imaam because of the distance between the two of them, then he can recite as long as he does not disturb those on his side.

Also from the rules and regulations of Salaatul Jamaa'ah is to complete each and every row and tightening and straightening them. On the authority of Jaabir (radiallaahuAnhu) who said, the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) came in upon us and said, “*‘Will you not line up as the angels line up in front of their Lord.’ So we said, ‘O Messenger of Allah (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam), how do the angels line up in front of their Lord?’ He said, ‘They complete the first row and they tighten the row.’*” Narrated by Imaam Muslim and other than him.

On the authority of Anas (radiallaahuAnhu) who said that the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) said, *“Straighten your rows, for indeed the straightening of the row is from the completion of the Salaah.”*

On the authority of Anas (radiallaahuAnhu) who said, *“The Messenger of Allah (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) used to face us before the Takbeer and he used to say, tighten and straighten (the rows).”*

On the authority of Nu'maan bin Basheer (radiallaahuAnhu) who said, *“The Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu Alaihi wasallam) used to straighten our rows as if he was straightening an arrow until he saw that we understood that from him. Then one day he came out and he stood up and was about to say the Takbeer until he saw a Bedouin protruding the row, so he said, ‘Slaves of Allaah! Straighten your rows or Allaah will cause dissension to appear upon your faces.’ He (i.e. Nu'maan bin Basheer) said, ‘ So I saw a man join his ankle to the ankle of his companion and his knee to the knee and shoulder to shoulder.’”*

On the authority of Abi Umaamah who said that the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu Alaihi wasallam) said, *“Straighten your lines, and align your shoulders, and yield your hands to your brothers, and close the gaps, for indeed Shaytaan comes between you through them, just as the small lamb does.”* Narrated by Imaam Ahmad.

So these Ahaadeeth are a proof upon the obligation to take heed to the completion, straightness, and the closing of the gaps in the row, and that is achieved through the closeness of those praying. And joining ankles does not mean for a person to stand like one is bowlegged (or varus) as some of the people do today by distancing one of his foot from the other until he takes the space of two men and harms the one who is by his side and leaves a wide opening between his legs, for indeed this is in opposition to the Sunnah. For indeed the Sunnah is tightening the rows by those praying coming close to each other until they do not leave between them any gap.

Also from the rules and regulations from the Salaatul Jamaa'ah is that the one being led in the Salaah corrects the Imaam if he makes a mistake in his recitation or forgets it. So he lets the Imaam hear the correct recitation so that it reminds him.

On the authority of Miswar bin Yazeed al-Maaliki said, *“The Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) prayed with us and he left out an Aayah (in his recitation) , so a man said to him, ‘O Messenger of Allaah, the Aayah is such and such.’ He said, ‘Then why did you not remind me of it?’”* Abu Dawood.

And on the authority of ibn Umar who said, *“The Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) prayed with us in which he recited (loudly) and*

forgot (an Ayah or part) in it. So after finishing he said to my father, 'Did you pray with us?' He said, 'Yes' He said, 'Then what prohibited you.'" Abu Dawood.

And on the authority of Anas who said, *"The companions of the Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) used to cue each other in the Salaah."* Narrated by al-Haakim and other than him.

Also from the rules and regulations from the Salaatul Jamaa'ah is if the Imaam omits some element in the Salaah those following him point it out to him by the men saying , 'SubhaanAllaah', and the women clapping if they are behind him.

So on the authority of Sahl bin S'ad (radiallaahuAnhu) who said that the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) said, *"If you misplace something in Salaah then the men say 'SubhaanAllaah' and the women clap."* Narrated by Abu Dawood and its original is in al-Bukhari and Muslim. And it is proof upon the permissibility of reminding the Imaam if he is omits in the Salaah.

Also from the rules and regulations of Salaatul Jama'ah that the Imaam should be considerate of the condition of the believers, so he does not lengthen the Salaah so much so that it becomes a difficulty upon them. And he does not shorten it so much so that he is neglectful of it.

The Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) said, *"If one of you prays with the people then let him shorten (the Salaah), for indeed amongst them are the sick and the weak and those who have needs."* Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim. And what is meant here is moderation so he does not lengthen it so much that it becomes a difficulty upon them nor does he shorten it with a neglectful shortening, such that the one behind him cannot complete that which is obligatory upon him from the pillars of the Salaah and its obligations.

So fear Allaah O slaves of Allaah in your affairs generally and your Salaah specifically. For indeed it is a pillar of al-Islaam.

I seek refuge in Allaah from the cursed Shaytaan.

And perform as-Salaat (Iqaamat-as-Salaat), and give Zakaat, and Irka' (i.e. bow down or submit yourselves with obedience to Allaah) along with ar-Raki'oon. (Suratul-Baqarah 2:43)