



Facing the Qiblah

The first question of Fatwa No. 3534

Q: In our country, the Mihrabs that are found in many Masjids (mosques) are inclined towards the right direction. The reason for this is the misinterpretation of the following saying of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him): [\(Any direction that is between east and west can be regarded as a Qiblah. \)](#) I wonder if it is permissible for only the Imam to face the Qiblah (direction faced for Prayer towards the Ka`bah) without those who pray behind him?

A: Both the Imam and those who are praying behind him have to face toward the Ka`bah.

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Allah (may He be Praised) says: [\(And wheresoever you people are, turn your faces \(in prayer\) in that direction. \)](#) Also Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: [\(Any direction that is between east and west can be regarded as a Qiblah. \)](#) Related by Al-Tirmidhy who classified it as a Sahih Hasan Hadith.

This Hadith was addressing the people of Madinah and those who live to the north or the south of Al-Ka`bah. Its apparent meaning indicates that all the area between the north and south is considered as a Qiblah. However, those who live to the west or east of the Ka`bah, the Qiblah for them will be the area between the north and the south. If the people who are far from the Ka`bah are to face the exact direction of one of its sides, the Salah of those standing in a very long straight row will not be considered valid. The same will apply for the Salah of any two people standing on the same row while separated by a large distance while facing the same Qiblah. This is so because in these cases it is impossible for people to face the exact side of the Ka`bah, since the row is longer than any of the sides of the Ka`bah.

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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