



Prostration

Fatwa No. 1427

Q: There was a dispute between two groups regarding what the performer of Salah (Prayer) should begin with when he descends to prostrate. Should he start prostration by descending on his hands then his knees or his knees first then his hands and which is better?

A: The majority of scholars held the view that it is better for the performer of Salah to descend on his knees first before his hands upon prostration and should lift his hands from the ground before his knees when leaving prostration on his way up for the next Rak'ah. They substantiated their view by the Hadith narrated by Wa'il ibn Hujr in which he said: [\(I saw that the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) placed his knees \(on the ground\) before placing his hands when he prostrated himself. And when he stood up, he raised his hands before his knees. \)](#) Related by [Abu Dawud](#), [Al-Nasa'y](#), [Al-Tirmidhy](#) and [Ibn Majah](#). However, [Sharik Al-Qady](#) is one of the narrators of this Hadith with whom he was singled out and Sharik is not a strong narrator to hold his single narration. They also substantiated their view by the Hadith narrated by Anas (may Allah be pleased with him):

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[\(Whenever the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) descended to prostrate in prayer, his knees preceded his hands. \)](#) Related by [Al-Hakim](#), [Al-Bayhaqy](#), and [Al-Daraqutny](#). [Al-Hakim](#) said: The Hadith is in match with the conditions set by [Al-Bukhari](#) and [Muslim](#) and I see no weakness in its chain of narration. [Al-Daraqutny](#) said: It is narrated solely by [Al-'Ala' ibn Isma'il](#) while his condition of trustworthiness is unknown. [Ibn Abu Hatem](#) reported from his father that it is a Munkar (rejected Hadith reported by a weak narrator whose narration conflicts with an authentic Hadith) . There are many Hadiths reported in this context; some of them are Maqtu' (a Hadith narrated from a Follower, the generation after the Companions of the Prophet) and others are Mursal (a Hadith with no Companion of the Prophet in the chain of narration).

Other scholars held the view that it is a desirable act to descend on the hands before the knees for prostration such as [Al-Awza'y](#), [Malik](#) and [Ibn Hazm](#). [Ibn Abu Dawud](#) said: This is the view of the people of Hadith. They substantiated their view by the Hadith narrated by [Abu Hurayrah](#) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: [\(When one of you prostrates himself, he should not kneel like a camel, but he should place his hands before his knees. \)](#) Related by [Ahmad](#), [Abu Dawud](#) and [Al-Nasa'y](#). According to another narration: [\(He should place his hands \(on the ground\) before placing his knees. \)](#) But there is a dispute concerning the Sanad (chain of narration) of this Hadith. Some scholars gave preference to the Hadith narrated by [Wa'il Ibn Hujr](#), and to other Hadiths that have the same meaning including [Ibn Al-Qayyim](#) in his book [Zad Al-Ma'ad](#). However, others gave preference to the Hadith narrated by [Abu Hurayrah](#) and other Hadiths that have the same meaning. Therefore, This issue depends on Ijtihad and it is a flexible matter, so some jurists gave the performers of Salah the choice between both matters either due to the weakness of Hadiths from

both sides or their contradiction because none of them overbalances the other in his view. As a result, there is flexibility in the two matters.

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

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