

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPHET'S (PEACE BE UPON HIM) PRAYER

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All praise is to Allaah Alone, and may His peace and blessings be upon His Messenger and slave, our Prophet Muhammad, his Family and his Companions.

The objective of this concise pamphlet is to explain how Prophet Muhammad used to perform his Salâh (prayers). I would like to present this explanation to every male and female Muslim so that they may strive to take up the Prophet's manner in performing their Salâh (prayers) as a model for them. It was narrated by Al-Bukhari that Prophet Muhammad said:

صلوا كما رأيتموني أصلي

“Pray as you have seen me pray.”

Therefore, here is the explanation for the Prophet's manner of prayer:

To perform completely the Wudu (ablution), adopting the method commanded by Allaah in the Qur'ân:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ

“O you who believe! When you intend to offer prayer, wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows, rub (by passing wet hands over) your heads, and (wash) your feet up to ankles.” [Quraan 5: 6]

The Prophet said: لا تقبل صلاة بغير طهور

“Salâh (prayer) without purification (ablution) is not accepted.”)

To start the prayer follow these steps:

1. To turn one's face and the whole body towards the Ka'ba, the Sacred House at Makkah, intending by heart to perform the prayer which he/she wants to fulfill, whether it is a Fard (obligatory) prayer or a Sunnah (optional) prayer, the worshipper in all cases, should not pronounce his/her Niyah (intention) openly, because neither the Prophet nor his Companions رضي الله عنهم used to utter the intention for Salâh. Thus, pronouncing the intention for Salah in audible voice is a heresy and an illicit action, intention must be in the heart only. Whether the individual be an Imâm or performs his Salâh individually, he should pray to a Sutra (i.e.

any object equal to 3 arms-length in height placed in front of the one praying).

2. Directing the face towards the Qiblah (the Ka'ba at Makkah) is an imperative condition for every Salah. However, there are few exceptions for this rule. An example is if the Muslim can not face Qiblah due to sickness or does not know the direction of of Makkah .
3. To pronounce Takbirat-al-Ihram that is to say **Allaahu Akbar** الله أكبر (Allaah is Great) proclaiming by that the Greatness of Allaah and looking meanwhile, downwards to the place where he/she will prostrate.

To raise one's hands up to the level of the shoulders or near to the lobes of the ears, while pronouncing Takbirat-al-Ihram.

4. To put one's right hand over his/her left hand and left wrist, and put them both over the chest, as the Prophet used to do.
5. It is advisable that the worshipper recites Du`aa al-Istiftah (opening supplication) saying:

سبحانك اللهم وجمدك وتبارك اسمك وتعالى جدك ولا إله غيرك

“Subhanaka Allaahumma wa bihamdika wa tabaraka ismuka wata aa`la jadduka wala ilaha ghayruka.”

(“Praise and glory is to Allaah. Blessed is Your Name, Exalted is Your Majesty and Glory. There is no god but You.”)

Or he may say any other of the supplications which the Prophet used to say in his prayers.

After reciting the opening supplication, the worshipper says: أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم

“A`ûdhu billahi min ashaytan arrajeem”

(“I seek protection of Allaah against the accursed Satan”)

Then say: بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

“Bismillahi Arrahmani Arraheem”

(“In the Name of Allaah, the source of mercy and the Merciful.”)

and recites the Fâtiha (the opening Surah of the Glorious Qur`ân). Prophet Muhammad said:

لا صلاة لمن لم يقرأ بفاتحة الكتاب

(“Salâh without reciting the Fatiha is invalid”).

The worshipper should say Ameen after reciting the Fâtiha loudly if the Salâh is to be said loudly, and whisper it in inaudible prayers.

the worshipper is advised to recite verses from medium size Surah of the Qur'ân after recitation of the Fatiha.

Then, the worshipper bows in Rukû raising hands up to the level of his/her shoulders or ears while saying **Allaahu Akbar** الله أكبر (Allaah is Great) then bends down, making his head and back on one level and putting his hands with the fingers spread on his knees. The worshipper should feel serenity and tranquility while bowing, he should say thrice :

سبحان ربي العظيم "Subhana Rabbi Al`Azim"

("Glory is to my Lord, the All-Mighty.")

It is advisable to say while bowing in addition to that:

سبحانك اللهم ربنا وجمدك اللهم اغفر لي

"Subhanaka Allaahumma Rabbana wabi hamdika, Allaahumma eghfir li"

("Glory is to You O Allaah, Our Lord, I praise You, forgive me my sins.")

6. To raise one's head up from bowing, raising one's hands to the level of his shoulders or ears, saying, in case of being Imâm or praying alone:

سمع الله لمن حمده

"Samî`a Allaahu liman hamidah".

"Allaah listens to him who praises Him".

While resuming the standing position, he/she may say: ربنا ولك الحمد

"Rabbana wa laka alhamd,

("Our Lord, praise is due to You")

The worshipper is advised to put his hands on his chest, as he had done before he bowed, but if the worshipper did not put his hands on his chest, there is no harm.

7. To prostrate saying **Allaahu Akbar** الله أكبر (Allaah is Great). He should touch the ground with his knees before touching it with his hands, if that is possible to him. If not, he is permitted to touch the ground by his hands before his knees. His fingers and toes should be directed towards the Qiblah at Makkah, and his hands should be stretched, and the fingers close together and not separated. In Sajdah (prostration), the worshipper should use and keep on ground these seven organs:

The forehead, the nose, both hands, both knees and the bottom parts of the toes.

These seven organs should touch the ground. Then the worshipper should say thrice :

"Subhana Rabbi Al Aa`la" سبحان ربي الأعلى

("Glorified is my Lord, the Exalted.")

It is advisable to say:

اغفر لي اللهم سبحانك اللهم ربنا وجمدك

"Subhanaka Allaahumma Rabbana wa bi
hamdika,
Allaahumaghfiri."

("Glory is to You O Allaah, Our Lord, I praise
You. Our Lord, forgive me my sins.")

It is recommendable for the worshipper to say more supplications while in sojood and ask for more from his Lord, because the Prophet said:

"As for Rukû' (bowing), you should glorify your Lord during performing it; as for Sojood (prostration), you should do your best to supplicate and ask for more from Him, because your supplications during prostration are more worthy to be accepted." The worshipper should ask his Lord for prosperity both in this worldly life and in the Hereafter. Whether it is an obligatory prayer or an optional prayer, the worshipper, while prostrating, should neither bring his hands close to his sides, nor stick his abdomen to his thighs, or his thighs to his legs. The worshipper's arms should be raised up from the ground because the Prophet prohibited putting the arms and stretching them on the ground, ordering that "adjust your prostration, keep straight in it, and stretch not your hands on the ground as dogs do."

8. He should raise his head from prostration saying **Allaahu Akbar** الله أكبر and lay his left foot flat on the ground and sit upon it, keeping his right foot erected, his hands on his thighs and knees, and say: رب اغفر لي وارحمني واهدني وارزقني وعافني واجبرني
"O my Lord, forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, provide me with Your sustenance, save me and console me."
9. To prostrate again saying **Allaahu Akbar** الله أكبر and repeating during his prostration what he did and said in the first prostration.
10. Then the worshipper raises his head saying **Allaahu Akbar** الله أكبر after taking a pause similar to the pause between the two prostrations; this is called Jalsat-al-Istirâhah (the pause for rest). It is recommended for the worshipper to do such a pause, but there is no sin if he desists from it. Then the worshipper rises up and stands supporting on his knees, or on the ground if he

cannot support himself on the knees, reads the Fâtiha (the opening Surah of the Glorious Qur'ân) and some other verses of the Qur'ân and does just as he did in the first Rak`a (unit of prayer). Those who pray behind the Imâm should not compete with him in the prayer actions as the Prophet said: **“The Imâm is to be followed, if he says Allaahu Akbar (Allaah is Great), then say the same after him. If he bows in Rukû’, bow after him. If he says Sami`Allaahu liman hamidah (Allaah hears him who praises Him), then say Rabbana wa lakal-hamd (Our Lord! All praises are for You); and if he prostrates, then prostrate after him.”** [Agreed upon]

11. If the prayer consists of two Rak`a (two units of prayer) as the Fajr (morning) prayer, Eid (feast) prayer, or the Jumuah (Friday) prayer, the worshipper sits after the second prostration, with his right foot erect, sitting on his left foot laid down, putting his right hand on his right thigh, all his fingers close-fisted except the index finger which he uses to point out as a sign for his Monotheistic Belief, and his left hand is put on his left thigh. There is no harm if the worshipper keeps both the little and ring fingers closed, while rounding his thumb and middle finger in a ring-shape, and uses his index finger to point out as a sign for his Monotheistic Belief. It has been related that the Prophet had practiced both of these ways, thus, it is advisable for the worshipper to perform the first way once and the other on the second time.

The worshipper reads the Tashahhud while sitting and says:

التحيات لله والصلوات والطيبات السلام عليك أيها النبي
ورحمة الله وبركاته السلام علينا وعلى عباد الله الصالحين. أشهد
أن لا إله إلا الله وأشهد أن محمدا عبده ورسوله.

اللهم صل على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما صليت على
إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد وبارك على محمد
وعلى آل محمد كما باركت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك
حميد مجيد.

“Attahiyatu lillahi wassalawatu wattaiyibat
assalamu alayka aiyuha annabiyu wa rahmatullahi
wa barakatuhu. Assalamu alaina wa ala ibadillahis-
salihin. Ash-hadu an la ilaha illa Allaah wa ash-
hadu anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasûluh.
Allaahumma salli ala Muhammad wa ala aali
Muhammad, kama sallayata ala Ibrahim wa aali
Ibrahim. Innaka Hameedun Majeed. Wa barik ala

Muhammad wa ala aali Muhammad kama barakta ala Ibrahim wa aali Ibrahim. Innaka Hameedun Majeed.”

“Greetings, prayers and the good things of life belong to Allaah. Peace, mercy and blessing of Allaah be on you, O Prophet. May peace be upon us and on the devout slaves of Allaah. I testify that there is no God but Allaah and I testify that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger. O Allaah, bless Muhammad and his family as You blessed Abraham and his family. You are the Most Praised, The Most Glorious. O Allaah, bestow Your grace on Muhammad and his family as You bestowed it on Abraham and his family. You are the Most Praised, The Most Glorious.”)

After reciting the Tashahhud, the worshipper asks Allaah’s protection from four evils, he should say:

اللهم إني أعوذ بك من عذاب جهنم ومن عذاب القبر
من فتنة المحيا والممات ومن فتنة المسيح الدجال

“My Lord, I ask your protection from torment of the Hell, torment of the grave, the trials in lifetime and after death, and from the impostor Al-Maseeh Addajjal (False Messiah).”

The worshipper may ask Allaah for prosperity in this worldly life and in the Hereafter, supplicate Allaah to bestow His favours on his parents and other Muslims. He could do this in both obligatory and optional prayers. It has been narrated by Ibn Mas’ud that the Prophet taught him how to recite the Tashahhud and told him that the worshipper should invoke Allaah and ask Him for the more beloved wishes which he likes, or, as it has been related in other wordings, the worshipper should ask Allaah for whatever he wishes. In this manner, the slave can ask Allaah for all the prosperities of this worldly life and the life to come. The worshipper terminates his Salah by turning his face first to the right and second to the left saying in both:

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله

“As-salamu alaikum wa rahmatullah”

“Peace and mercy of Allaah be on you.”)

12. In case of a three Rak`a prayer (prayer consisting of three units) as that of Maghrib (evening) prayer,

or a four Rak`a prayer like that of Zuhr (noon) prayer, Asr (afternoon) prayer, and `Ishâ (night) prayer; the worshipper stands up after reciting the Tashahhud according to the manner stated before, and raises his hands upto the level of his shoulders saying **Allaahu Akbar** الله أكبر. The worshipper puts his hands over his chest as it had been explained before and recites only the Fâtiha. There is no objection if he adds to the Fâtiha some other verses of the Qur`ân while performing the third or fourth Rak`a of Zuhr (noon) prayer, because this was stated to be one of the manners adopted by the Prophet according to the Hadeeth (tradition) narrated by Abû Sa`ied.

After the third Rak`a of Maghrib (evening) prayer, and the fourth Rak`a of Zuhr (noon), Asr (afternoon) and `Ishâ (night) prayers, the worshipper recites the Tashahhud and terminates his Salât by saying:

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله

“Assalamu-alaikum wa rahmatullah”

While turning first to the right, and second to the left as it has been explained before, by doing the salaam, the salah is finished.

Important notes:

1. During the prayer all recitation and reading must be in Arabic.
2. There is no difference between man and woman in all actions of the prayer.
3. "صلى الله عليه وسلم" (Peace Be Upon Him).

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