

## Ash-Shakk in the Salat [Doubt in the Prayer]

A *Musalli* may doubt the number of *Rak'ahs* he has already performed, while still in the *Salat*. That is, he may doubt whether he has performed one or two *Rak'ahs*, three or four *Rak'ahs*, etc. Certain cases of *Shakk*<sup>1</sup> [doubt] in the *Salat* can be corrected, allowing the *Musalli* to continue his *Salat* and regard it to be valid, then to perform *Salatul-Ihtiyat*<sup>2</sup>, after finishing the original *Salat*.

In this way he can correct the *Shakk*, provided that he has not done any of the acts which invalidate the *Salat*. There are irremediable doubts which invalidate the *Salat* and thus must be repeated. Hereunder we are expounding the most important cases, and how to make remedial measures where it is possible:

1. If the *Musalli* doubted (had *Shakk*) between the first and the second *Rak'ahs* in the 4 *Rak'ah Salat*, his *Salat* would be invalid, and he must repeat it.
2. If he doubted in the number of the *Rak'ahs* of *Salatus-Subh* and *Salatul-Maghrib* in any position of the *Salat*, his *Salat* would be invalid, and he must repeat it.
3. The *Shakk* between performing two and three *Rak'ahs*: If the *Shakk* occurred after the second *Sajdah* it could be corrected. But if it occurred before finishing the second *Sajdah*, the *Salat* would be *Batil*. In the first case, it is to be regarded as the third *Rak'ah* and one is to perform the fourth, the *Tashahhud* and *Taslim*, then one is to perform *Salatul-Ihtiyat*: one *Rak'ah* in standing position, or two *Rak'ahs* in sitting position.
4. The *Shakk* between the second and the fourth, after reciting the *Dhikr* of the last *Sajdah*: In this case one is to regard it as the fourth, and finish the *Salat*. Then one is to perform *Salatul-Ihtiyat*, which is the same as *Salatul-Subh* with reciting only *Sutratul-Fatihah*.
5. The *Shakk* between the third and the fourth. This *Shakk* can be corrected in any position of the *Salat*: in the *Ruku*, the *Sujud*, the *Qiyam*, etc. Correction of the *Shakk* is done by regarding it as the fourth *Rak'ah*, finishing the *Salat*, then performing *Salatul-Ihtiyat*, which is one *Rak'ah* in the standing position, or two *Rak'ahs* in the sitting position.

6. *Shakk* between the fourth and the fifth, after the *Dhikr* of the last *Sajdah*: In this case one is to regard it as the fourth, finish the *Salat*, then perform the two *Sajdahs* of *Sahw*, with no need for *Salatul-Ihtiyat*.
7. The *Shakk* between the fourth and the fifth, during the *Qiyam* position: One is to return to the sitting position, regarding the doubted *Rak'ah* as the fourth, and finish the *Salat*, then perform *Salatul-Ihtiyat*; one *Rak'ah* standing, or two *Rak'ahs* sitting.

## Salatul-Ihtiyat

It consists of:

1. The *Niyah*: (*Usalli Salat-ul-Ihtiyat Qurbatan Ila-Llahi Ta'ala*) [I perform *Salatul-Ihtiyat* to please Almighty Allah].
2. *Takbiratul-Ihram*
3. Reciting *Suratul-Fatihah*<sup>3</sup> only, without reciting any other *Surah*.
4. *Ruku*.
5. *Qiyam* (if done in the *Qiyam* position).
6. *Sujud*.
7. *Tashahhud*.
8. *Taslim*.

In *Salatul-Ihtiyat* all the usual conditions required for any obligatory *Salat*, such as *Taharah*, orientation to the *Qiblah*, etc. are to be observed.

## Discussion

Q1. Correct that which is incorrect in the following statements:

- a. Every *Shakk* in the *Salat* can be remedied by *Salatul-Ihtiyat* after the end of the *Salat*.
- b. It is not allowed to stop a 4 *Rak'ah* *Salat* and repeat it, if the *Shakk* was between the first and the second.
- c. If the *Shakk* was between the fourth and the fifth *Rak'ahs*, in the *Qiyam* position, the *Musalli* must return to the sitting position, consider it to be the fourth and finish his *Salat*.

Q2. What would you do if you doubted between the third and the fourth *Rak'ahs* of your *Salatul-Isha*, before finishing the second *Sajdah*?

Q3. Hearing a friend of yours saying that *Salatul-Ihtiyat* is two *Rak'ahs* in all cases, would you confirm him or not?

1. The Shaf'is, the Malikis and the Hanbalis say: "If one doubts the number of the Rak'ahs knowing not how many Rak'ahs one has performed, one is to consider it to be the least and complete it." The Hanafis say: "If it was his first Shakk in his life, he must repeat his Salat from the beginning. If it was not his first Shakk, he must think and ponder, and then act according to his most probable guess. If the Shakk is still there, he is to consider it to be the least, taking it as a matter of fact.

2. *Salatul-Ihtiyat*: This Salat is to be demonstrated by the teacher to the students so that they may learn it. It is either one Rak'ah in the Qiyam position or two Rak'ahs in the sining position, or two Rak'ahs in the Qiyam position and two Rak'ahs in the sining position.

3. As a precaution, this Surah is to be recited in Ikhfat.

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