

Congregational Prayers

1408. Offering obligatory prayers and especially the Five Daily Prayers in congregation is recommended and offering dawn, dusk and night prayers in congregation has been specially stressed on those persons, who live near a masjid or hear Azan being announced from it.

1409. It has been stated in authentic narrations that the spiritual reward for congregational prayers is twenty-five times as much as that for prayers offered individually.

1410. It is not permissible to abstain from participation in congregational prayers on account of levity and it is not proper for one to abandon congregational prayers without a just excuse.

1411. It is recommended that a person should wait in order to participate in congregational prayers, because congregational prayers are better in comparison to the prayers offered individually in the early part of the time prescribed for prayers. However, it is better to offer prayers individually at the recommended time as compared with the congregational prayers which is not offered during such time. Furthermore, a comparatively brief congregational prayer is better than a long prayer which is offered individually.

1412. When congregational prayer is going to be offered, it is recommended for a person, who has already offered the prayer alone, to reoffer the prayer in congregation. And if it transpires later that his first prayer was void, the second prayer will suffice.

1413. If the imam (leader) or the Mamum (follower) wishes to offer in congregation once again the prayer already offered in congregation, and even if there is no probability of any flaw in that prayer, it is difficult to say that which prayer is in order, except when he offers the prayer again as an Imam; provided that there is a person among the followers who has not offered obligatory prayers.

1414. If a person is so whimsical during prayers that it becomes the cause of invalidity of his prayer and gets rid of his whim only when he offers prayers in congregation, he should offer prayers in congregation.

1415. If a father or a mother orders his/her child to offer prayers in congregation, and if his failing to do so becomes the cause of their disobedience, congregational prayers becomes obligatory on him, but otherwise it is not obligatory.

1416. Recommended prayers cannot be offered in congregation except Isatasqa prayers (which is offered for rains) or prayers which were obligatory at one time, but became recommended later (e.g. Eidul Fitr and Eidul Azha prayers, which were obligatory during the period of Imam Mahdi (P) and have become re-commended since his Occultation).

1417. When the Imam of the congregation is leading one of the five daily prayers, any of the daily prayers can be offered behind him.

1418. If the Imam of the congregation is offering his own daily lapsed prayers, or on behalf of another person whose prayers has certainly lapsed he can be followed. However, if he is offering as a precautionary measure his own lapsed prayers or of the prayers of another person. it is not permissible to follow him.

1419. If a person does not know whether the prayers which is being led by the Imam is an obligatory daily prayers or a recommended prayers, he cannot follow him.

1420. For the congregation being in order it is a pre-requisite that there is no barrier between the imam and the follower (Muqtadi) and between one follower and the other follower, who is a link between that follower and the Imam. And a barrier is something which obstructs seeing, such as a curtain or a wall etc. Hence, if in all or some conditions of the prayers there is such a barrier between the Imam and the follower or between one follower and the other follower, who is the means of connection, the congregation will be void. However, it will be explained later, a woman is exempted from this order.

1421. If the persons standing on the two sides of the first row cannot see the Imam owing to the row being long, they can follow the Imam; and similarly if out of the other rows, the persons, standing on the two sides of a particular row, cannot see, owing to their row being long, the row, which is in front of them even then they can follow the Imam.

1422. If the rows of the congregation reach the gate of the masjid, the prayer of a person, who is standing in front of the gate behind the row is in order and the prayers of those persons, who are following the Imam while standing behind that person, is also in order. Rather, the prayers of those persons who are standing on both the sides and are linked with the congregation by means of some other followers are also in order.

1423. If a person who is standing behind a pillar. is not linked with the Imam by means of another follower from the rift of the left side, he cannot follow the Imam.

1424. The place where the Imam stands should not be more than an ordinary span higher than the place

of the follower and there is no harm if it is less than a span. Furthermore, if the ground is sloping and the Imam stands on the higher side of it there is no harm if the slope is not much, and is such that the people call it flat.

1425. In the congregational prayers there is no harm if the place of the follower is higher than that of the Imam. In case, however, it is so high that it cannot be said that they have gathered together, the congregation is not in order.

1426. If there is a distance of one person whose prayers is void, between the persons who are standing in the row, they can follow the Imam. However, if there is a distance of a few persons, whose prayers are void, between them or the distance becomes much owing to some other reason, they cannot follow the Imam.

1427. If after the takbir of the Imam the persons in the front row are ready for prayers and are about to say takbir, a person standing in the back row can also say takbir. However, the recommended precaution is that he should wait so that the takbir of the front row may be completed.

1428. If a person knows that the prayers of one of the followers of front rows is void, he cannot follow the Imam in the back rows, but he can follow the Imam, if he does not know whether or not the prayers of those persons is in order.

1429. If a person knows that the prayer of the Imam is void – for example, if he knows that the Imam is without ablutions, though the Imam may not be attentive to this fact himself – he cannot follow that Imam.

1430. If the follower learns after the prayers that the Imam was not a just person (or was an unbeliever, or for some reason, for example, owing to his not having performed ablutions, his prayers was void, but he himself (i.e. the follower) has not performed any act which makes individual prayers void, even if performed by mistake (e.g. an additional bowing) his prayers is valid.

1431. If a person doubts while offering prayers whether he has followed the Imam or not, and if he was offering prayers under the impression that he was offering congregational prayers and it is probable that owing to forgetfulness he did not make the intention of congregational prayers and if (at the time doubt crosses his mind) he is in the condition which is the obligation of a follower e.g. if he is listening to Surah al-Hamd and surah of the Imam, he should end his prayers with the congregation, but if at the time of having doubt he is busy in an act which is the obligation of both himself and the Imam (e.g. if he is in bowing or prostration posture) he should end his prayers with the intention of individual prayers.

1432. If while offering the prayer the follower wishes to make intention of individual prayer, and he did not have such intention from the very outset, there is no harm in it. However, if this was his intention from the very beginning, it is difficult that this act of his is in order.

1433. If the follower makes an intention of individual prayers after the Imam has recited Surah al-Hamd and surah, he should, on the basis of obligatory precaution, recite entire Surah al-Hamd and surah, and if he makes the intention of individual prayers before (the Imam's) ending Surah al-Hamd and surah, it is necessary that he recite, the portion, which the Imam has recited.

1434. If a person makes the intention of individual prayers during the congregation prayers, he cannot make the intention of congregational prayers again. Rather, if he is undecided as to whether or not he should make the intention of individual prayers, and eventually decides to end the prayers with congregation, it is difficult to say that his congregational prayers is in order.

1435. If a person doubts whether or not he has made intention of individual prayers during the congregational prayers, he should consider that he has not made the intention of individual prayers:

1436. If a person follows the Imam at the time when the Imam is in bowing state and participates in the bowing of the Imam, his prayers is in order, though the recitation by the Imam may have come to an end, and it will be treated as one unit. However, if he bends to the extent of bowing but does not join the bowing of the Imam, his prayers void.

1437. If a person follows the Imam when he is in bowing and bends to the extent of bowing and doubts whether or not he has joined the bowing of the Imam, his prayers is void.

1438. If a person follows the Imam when he is in bowing and before he bends to the extent of bowing, the Imam raises his head from bowing. that person should, on the basis of obligatory precaution, make the intention of individual prayers.

1439. If a person follows the Imam from the beginning of the prayers or during the time Surah al-Hamd and surah are being recited and by chance, before he goes into bowing, the Imam raises his head from bowing, the prayers of that person is in order.

1440. If a person arrives for prayers when the Imam is reciting the last tashahhud of the prayer, and if he wish to earn the spiritual reward of congregational prayers, he should sit down after making intention and pronouncing takbiratul ehram, and should recite tashahhud with the Imam, but should not say salaam and should wait till the Imam says salaam of the prayers. Then he should stand up and without making an intention again should pronounce takbir and recite Surah al-Hamd and surah and should treat it as the first unit of his prayers.

1441. The followers should not stand ahead of the Imam, and, on the basis of obligatory precaution, if the follower is one man he should stand a little behind the Imam on his right-hand side and if there are many men, they should stand at the back of the Imam. And in the first case, if the follower is taller than the Imam, he should, on the basis of obligatory precaution, stand in such a way that at the time of bowing and prostration he should not be ahead of the Imam.

1442. If the Imam is a man and the follower is a woman, and if there is a curtain or something similar to it between that woman and the Imam, or between that woman and another follower, who is a man, and the woman is linked with the Imam through him, there is no harm in it.

1443. If after the commencement of the prayers a curtain or something else intervenes between the follower and the Imam, or between the follower and the person, through whom the follower is linked with the Imam, the congregation is invalidated, and it is necessary that the follower should act according to his individual obligation.

1444. The obligatory precaution is that the distance between the place where the follower performs prostration, and the place where the Imam stands, is not as much as a meter, and the same order applies, if a person is linked with the Imam through another follower, who is standing in front of that person. And the recommended precaution is that there should be no distance between the place where the follower performs prostration and the place, where the person in front of him stands.

1445. If a follower is linked with the Imam by means of a person, who has followed the Imam on his right or left side and is not linked with the Imam from the front the obligatory precaution is that he should not be at a distance of one meter from one, who has followed the Imam on his right or left side.

1446. If during the prayers a distance of one meter takes place between the follower and the Imam, or between the follower and the person, through whom the follower is linked with the Imam, he (the follower) should make an intention of individual prayers and his prayers will be in order.

1447. If the prayers of all the persons, who are in the front row comes to an end; and if they follow the Imam at once for another prayers, the congregational prayers of the persons in the back row is in order.

1448. If a person follows the Imam in the second unit, it is not necessary for him to recite Surah al-Hamd and surah, but he should recite qunut and tashahhud with the Imam, and the precaution is that, at the time of reciting tashahhud, he should place the fingers of his hands and the front part of his feet on the ground and raise his knees. And after the tashahhud he should stand up with the Imam and should recite Surah al-Hamd and surah. And if he does not have time for the surah, he should complete Surah al-Hamd, and should join the Imam in bowing and if he cannot join the Imam in bowing he should, on the basis of obligatory precaution, make an intention of individual prayers.

1449. If a person follows the imam, when he is in the second unit of the prayers consisting of four units, he should sit after the two prostrations in the second unit of his prayers, which is the third unit of the Imam, and should recite tashahhud to the extent it is obligatory, and should then stand up. And if he does not have time to recite the Tasbihat Arba'ah thrice, he should recite the same once and should then join the Imam in bowing.

1450. If the Imam is in the third or fourth unit and the follower knows that if he follows him and recites Surah al-Hamd he will not be able to join the Imam in bowing he should wait on the basis of obligatory

precaution till the Imam goes in bowing and should then follow him.

1451. If a person follows the Imam, when he is in the state of qiyam of third or fourth unit he should recite Surah al-Hamd and surah. and if he does not have time for the surah he should complete Surah al-Hamd and should join the Imam in bowing. And if he cannot join the Imam in bowing he should, on the basis of obligatory precaution, make intention for individual prayers.

1452. If a person, who knows that, if he completes surah or qunut, he will not be able to join the Imam in his bowing, purposely recites surah or qunut and does not join the Imam in bowing what is more apparent is that his prayers is in order and he should act according to the obligation of a person offering prayers individually.

1453. If a person is satisfied that if he commences a surah or completes it, he will join the Imam in his bowing provided that the surah is not very long, it is better for him to commence the surah or to complete it, if he has already commenced it, and if the surah is too long the obligatory precaution is that he should not commence it, and if he has commenced it he should not complete it.

1454. If a person is sure that if he recites the surah he will join the Imam in bowing and if he recites the surah and cannot join the Imam in bowing his congregational prayers is in order.

1455. If the Imam is standing and the follower does not know in which unit he is, he can follow him, but he should recite Surah al-Hamd and surah with the intention of complying with the orders of the Almighty Allah, though he may come to know after that the Imam was in the first or second unit.

1456. If a person does not recite Surah al-Hamd and surah under the impression that the Imam is in the first or second unit and realizes after bowing that he was in the third or fourth unit his prayers is in order. However, if he realizes this before bowing he should recite Surah al-Hamd and surah and if he does not have sufficient time for this he should recite only Surah al-Hamd and should join the Imam in bowing and if he cannot do so he should, on the basis of obligatory precaution, make an intention of individual prayers.

1457. If a person recites Surah al-Hamd and surah under the impression that the Imam is in the third or fourth unit and realizes before bowing or thereafter that he was in the first or second unit his (i.e. the follower's) prayers is in order, and if he realizes this while reciting Surah al-Hamd and surah it is not necessary for him to complete them,

1458. If a congregational prayers is established while a person is offering a recommended prayers, and he is not sure that. if he completes his (recommended) prayers, he will be able to join the congregational prayers, it is recommended that he should abandon the recommended prayers, and should engage himself in congregational prayers. Rather, if he is not certain that he will be able to join the first unit, he should follow this very order.

1459. If a congregational prayers is established while a person is offering a three unit or four unit prayers, and if he has not gone into the bowing of the third unit and is not sure that if he completes his prayers he will be able to join the congregational prayers, it is recommended that he should bring the prayers to an end with the intention of offering a recommended prayers of two units and should then join the congregational prayers.

1460. If the prayers of the Imam comes to an end, but the follower is still busy reciting tashahhud or the first salam, it is not necessary for him to make the intention of individual prayers.

1461. If a person has lagged behind the Imam by one unit it is better that when the Imam is reciting tashahhud of the last unit he (the follower) should place the fingers of his hands and put front part of his feet on the ground and should raise his knees, and wait till the Imam says salaam of the prayers and should then stand up. And if he makes intention of individual prayers at that very time there is no harm in it, but if he intended this from the very beginning, it is difficult to say that his prayers, may be valid.

Pre-Requisites For An Imam Of Congregational Prayers

1462. The Imam of a congregational prayers should be Adult, Sane, an ithna 'Ashari Shia aadil, and Legitimate, and should offer the prayers correctly. Furthermore, if the follower is a man the Imam, too, should be a man. And there is no harm in a discerning child (i.e. a child who can distinguish between good and bad) following another discerning child, although it does not fulfil the conditions of a congregational prayer (i.e. it cannot be called a congregational prayers).

1463. If a person, who once considered an Imam to be 'Adil, doubts whether he is still adil, can follow him.

1464. A person who offers prayers in a standing posture cannot follow a person, who offers his prayers while sitting or lying, and a person who offers his prayers in a sitting posture cannot follow a person, who offers his prayers while lying.

1465. A person, who offers prayers in a sitting posture can follow another person, who offer his prayers while sitting. However, it is difficult that, if a person offers prayers while lying, his following a person, who offers prayers in sitting or lying posture, is in order.

1466. If the Imam of a congregation leads the prayers in an impure dress, or with tayammum, or jabira ablutions, for some excuse, it is permissible to follow him.

1467. If the Imam is suffering from a disease, owing to which he cannot control his urine or faeces, it is permissible to follow him. Moreover, a woman, who is not mustahaza (in a state undue menses) can follow a woman who is mustahaza.

1468. It is better that a person who suffers from leukemia or leprosy should not lead the congregational

prayers and, on the basis of obligatory precaution, a person, who has been subjected legal punishment, should not be followed. Similarly inhabitant of urban area should not follow a bedouin.

Orders Regarding Congregational Prayers

1469. When a follower makes his intention, it is necessary for him to specify the Imam. However, it is not necessary for him to know his name, and if he makes the intention that he is following the Imam of the present congregation, his prayers is in order.

1470. It is necessary for the follower to recite all the things of the prayers himself, except Surah al-Hamd and surah. However, if the first or second unit of the follower is the third or fourth unit of the Imam, he should recite Surah al-Hamd and surah.

1471. If the follower hears Surah al-Hamd and surah of the Imam in the first and second unit of the dawn, dusk and night prayers he should not recite Surah al-Hamd and surah although he may not be able to distinguish the words. And if he does not hear the voice of the Imam it is recommended that he should recite Surah al-Hamd and surah. However, he should recite them in low voice, but if he recites them loudly by mistake there is no harm in it.

1472. If the follower hears some words of Surah al-Hamd and surah recited by the Imam, the obligatory precaution is that he should not recite Surah al-Hamd and surah.

1473. If the follower recites Surah al-Hamd and surah by mistake recites Surah al-Hamd and surah thinking that the voice which he is hearing is not the voice of the Imam and realizes later that it was the voice of the Imam his prayers is in order.

1474. If a follower doubts whether he is hearing the voice of the Imam or hears a voice and does not know whether it is the voice of the Imam or of some one else, he can recite Surah al-Hamd and surah.

1475. The follower should not recite Surah al-Hamd and surah in the first and second unit of midday and afternoon prayers and it is recommended that instead of them he should utter some recital (e.g. Subhan allah)

1476. The follower should not say Takbiratul eham before the Imam. On the other hand the obligatory precaution is that he should not, say the takbir until the takbir of the Imam comes to an end.

1477. If the follower says the salaam by mistake before the Imam does it, his prayers is in order, and it is not necessary that he should say salaam again along with the Imam. On the other hand what is apparent is that even if he says salaam before the Imam intentionally there is nothing wrong with his prayers. provided that he did not intend doing so from the very start.

1478. If a follower says other things of prayers (i.e. other than Takbiratul eham and salaam) before the

Imam, there is no harm in it. However, if he hears them (being said by the Imam) or knows when the Imam is going to say them the recommended precaution is that he should not say them before the Imam.

1479. It is necessary for the follower that besides that which is recited in the prayers, he should perform other acts like bowing and prostration along with the Imam or a little after him, and if he performs them before the Imam or a considerable time after him intentionally, his congregational prayers becomes void. However, if he acts according to the obligation of an individual worshipper, his prayers is in order.

1480. If a follower raises his head from bowing before the Imam by mistake, and if the Imam is in bowing. he (the follower) should return to bowing, and should raise his head with the Imam, and in this case the excess of a bowing, which is a rukn, does not invalidate the prayers. However, if he returns to bowing and the Imam raises his head before he (the follower) joins him in bowing his prayers is void.

1481. If a follower raises his head by mistake and sees that the Imam is in prostration he should return to prostration, and if this thing happens in both the prostrations the prayers becomes void, only to the excess of two prostration which is a rukn

1482. If a person raises his head from prostration before the Imam by mistake, and when he returns to prostration he comes to know that the Imam has already raised his head, his prayers is in order. However, if this thing happens in both the prostrations his prayers is void.

1483. If a follower raises his head from bowing or prostration by mistake and does not return to bowing or prostration by mistake, or under the impression that he cannot join the Imam, his congregational prayers is in order.

1484. If a follower raises his head from prostration and sees that the Imam is in prostration and thinking that it is the first prostration of the Imam he goes into prostration with the intention of performing prostration with the Imam and comes to know later that it was the second prostration of the Imam, it will be deemed to be the second prostration of the follower. And if he goes into prostration under the impression that it is the second prostration of the Imam and then learns that it was his first prostration he should complete the prostration with the intention of performing prostration with the Imam and should go into prostration again along with the Imam. And in both the cases it is better for him to complete the prayers with the congregation and offer it again.

1485. If a follower bows before the Imam by mistake and the position is such that if he raises his head he may hear some part of the qir'at (Surah) of the Imam, and if he raises his head and goes into bowing with the imam, his prayers is in order, and if he does not return intentionally, his prayers is void.

1486. If a follower bows before the Imam by mistake and the position is such that, if he returns to the state of qiyam, he cannot hear anything of the qir'at of the Imam, and if he raises his head with the intention of offering prayers along with the Imam and goes into bowing with the Imam, his congregational

prayers is in order. In case, however, he does not return (to the state of qiyam) intentionally his prayers is in order and becomes the prayers of an individual.

1487. If a follower prostrates before the Imam by mistake and if he raises his head with the intention of offering prayers along with the Imam and prostrates with the Imam his congregational prayers is in order, and if he does not return intentionally, his prayers is in order, and becomes the prayers of an individual.

1488. If, owing to mistake, the Imam recites qunut in a unit which does not contain qunut or recites tashahhud in a unit which does not contain tashahhud the follower should not recite qunut or tashahhud. However, he cannot go into bowing before the Imam or stand before the Imam stands. On the other hand he should wait until the qunut or tashahhud of the Imam comes to an end, and should offer the remaining prayers with him.

Recommended Things In Congregational Prayers

1489. On the basis of obligatory precaution if the follower is one man, he should stand a little behind on the right-hand side of the Imam, and if there are one or several women they should stand behind the Imam, and if they are one man and one woman or one man and several women, the man should stand a little behind the Imam on his right-hand side, and one or several women should stand behind the Imam and if there are a few men and one or a few women the men should stand behind the Imam and the women should stand behind the men.

1490. If the Imam and the followers are both women the obligatory precaution is that all of them should stand in a row and the Imam should not stand ahead of others.

1491. It is recommended that the Imam should stand in the middle of the row and the learned and pious persons should stand in the first row.

1492. It is recommended that the rows of the congregation are properly arranged and there should be no distance between the persons who are standing in one row; their shoulders should be adjacent to one another's.

1493. It is recommended that after the iqamah 'Qadqa matis salah(the prayers has certainly been established) has been said, the followers should stand up.

1494. It is recommended that the Imam of the congregation should take into account the condition of the follower who is weaker than others and should not prolong qunut, bowing and prostration except when he knows that all those who are following him are in favor of their prolongation

1495. It is recommended that while reciting Surah al-Hamd and surah and the recitations which he is saying loudly, the Imam of the congregation should make his voice so loud that others may hear it. However, he should not make his voice extraordinarily loud.

1496. If the Imam realizes in bowing that a person has just arrived and wants to follow him it is recommended that he should prolong the bowing twice as much as usual and then stand up, although he may come to know that another person has also arrived to follow him.

Things Which Are Abominable In Congregational Prayers

1497. If there is space in the rows of the congregation it is abominable for a person to stand alone.

1498. It is abominable that the follower recites the recitations of the prayers in such a way that the Imam may hear them.

1499. It is abominable for a traveller, who offers midday, afternoon and night prayers in shortened form (two units), to follow in the prayers a person, who is not a traveller. And it is abominable for a person who is not a traveller to follow a traveller in these prayers.

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