

Lesson 36: Qir'at

Now we come to those 6 wajib acts which are *ghayr rukn*. i.e.. if anyone of them is added or left out intentionally, the prayer would be invalid (*batil*); but if it is added or left out by mistake or unintentionally, no harm will come to the prayer (except that some remedial actions are prescribed in certain cases).

6. Qira'at

It is obligatory to recite Surah al-Hamd and then any other Surah (with certain conditions) in the first two *rak'ats* of every prayer (except *Salat al-mayyit*), and to recite either *Tasbihat al-'Arba'ah* (*Subhanallahi wal-hamdu lillahi wa la ilaha illal-lahu, wallahu akbar*) or Surah al-Hamd in the third and fourth *rak'ats*. Certain things are *wajib* in the *qir'at*;-

1. Correct pronouncement of the words and letters, so as the similar letters may be distinguished from each other in a correct way. This needs practice and training.
2. *Fatha*, *kasra*, *damma*, *tashdid*, *madd*, and *jazm* should be pronounced correctly ..
3. When stopping on a word, its last *I'rab* should be replaced by *jazm*, compulsorily. Likewise, when two words are joined, the first word's *I'rab* should not be omitted.
4. *Bismillahir-Rahmanir Rahim* should be recited before every Surah except Surah al-Bara'ah, because it is part of every Surah (except al-Bara'ah).
5. The four Surahs in which *wajib sajdahs* occur, should not be recited in obligatory Salat. But it is allowed in *mustahab* prayer. If he recited that Surah in a *mustahab* prayer, he must do *sajdah*, just after reciting the verse of *sajdah*, then stand up and finish the Surah and prayer as usual. If he recited that Surah in *wajib* prayer by mistake, or if he heard someone else reciting the verse of *sajdah* (when the hearer is praying *wajib* prayer), he should do the *sajdah* after prayer. It is better to do *sajdah*, by gesture of head only during prayer itself, and then to do *sajdah* after finishing the prayer.
6. Reciting the Surahs and *Tasbihat al-'Arba'ah* with *tama'ninat*.

7. A man should recite al-Hamd and Surah loudly in the first two *rak'ats* of Subh, Maghrib and 'Isha; and in a whisper in the first two *rak'ats* of Zuhr and 'Asr. 'Loudly' does not mean shouting, which many people resort to behind the prayer leader. If someone prays so loudly that it may be said that he is 'shouting' his prayer is *batil* (invalid). The whisper should be audible to the person himself. The *qir'at* in the 3rd and 4th *rak'ats* of every prayer should be in a whisper.

A woman should recite her prayers in a whisper, though she is allowed to pray loudly (where a man should pray loudly) when there is no danger that any *ghayr mahram* is nearby who may hear her voice. If someone intentionally prays loudly in place of "whispering", or vice-versa, his prayer is *batil* (invalid).

8. Reciting the Surah al-Hamd and Surah with *tartib* (in the sequence which is prescribed).

9. *Muwalaat* in the *qir'at*.

10. Surah al-Duha' and Surah Alam Nashrah are one Surah.

Likewise, Surah al-Fil and Surah al-Qur'aysh are one Surah. If one of the Surahs is recited, the other one also should be recited.

11. A man who has started reciting any Surah after al-Hamd, may change to another Surah so long as he has not reached to the exact middle of that Surah. If he has, on the other hand, recited half that Surah, he is not allowed to change it. But he cannot leave Surah al-Ikhlās or Surah al-Kafirun even if he has just recited *Bismillahir Rahmanir-Rahim* with the intention of these Surahs.

If he forgets any word or verse from the Surah which he is reciting, he may leave the Surah and start another one, even if he has already recited more than half, or even if it is Surah al-Ikhlās or Surah al-Kafirun.

12. It is allowed to recite the Surah by looking into the Qur'an in Prayer; but it is not good and one should not resort to it except in emergency when there is no time to learn by heart, nor is there any *Salat al-jama'ah* (congregational prayer) to join.

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