

Philosophy of Circumambulation (Tawaf)

[Oneness of Allah \(swt\) {Tawhid}](#)

Circumambulation around Kaba does not mean that the body goes around in circles. The real reason for this rite is that the heart and soul of the pilgrim should move around the House of Allah (swt) and his love for Allah (swt) should become so great that no worldly attraction should distract him from this path. Neither east nor west should distract him only Tawhid should attract him.

[Unity](#)

The pilgrims were residing in different countries of the world. They all gathered in Makkah then moved to Masjid al-Haram and with great love and enthusiasm started circumambulating around Kaba. This makes them realize that they were like a drop of water but now this gathering has made them part of a huge ocean.

[Act of Angels](#)

The angels circumambulate in the heavens likewise pilgrims do it on the earth. Earth dwellers are compared to heaven dwellers, because pilgrims circumambulate around Kaba on the earth and exactly above this is Bait-ul-Mamur in the heavens where angels are doing the same.

During circumambulation it is a must that Kaba should be towards ones left side. The reason might be that the heart is also on the left side of the body. Heart is the House of Allah (swt) so it should always be completely attentive to House of Allah.

[Rules of Circumambulation](#)

Circling seven times around Kaba is called one Tawaf. There are several conditions for tawaf.

1. **Niyyat:** Tawaf is invalid if there is no intention to perform it for the purpose of attaining closeness and obedience to Allah (SWI). In addition one must mention for which Umra or Hajj tawaf is being performed and whether it is an obligatory or recommended tawaf.

2. **Taharah (Cleanliness):** Cleanliness both major (such as jinabat, haidh and nifas) and minor causes of impurities (such as urine and excrement) is compulsory. If one performs tawaf despite such uncleanness, whether deliberately, out of ignorance, or inadvertently, the tawaf is invalid.

If in the course of tawaf, the pilgrim who is in a state of ihram, passes wind, urine or stool, the following rules must be taken into consideration:

- If he does so before completing the fourth round, the tawaf is invalid and he must repeat it after performing Wudhoo (Ablution);
- If it occurs involuntarily after completing the fourth round, he must interrupt the tawaf, perform Wudhoo, and complete the tawaf from where he had interrupted it;
- If the occurrence, after completing the fourth round was by choice, as a matter of precaution he must complete the tawaf after performing Wudhoo, and repeat the tawaf for a second time as well.

Rules for a Menstrual Lady during Circumambulation

If a lady begins her menstrual cycle during tawaf and sees blood before the fourth round then her tawaf is invalid. But if she sees it after the fourth round then the tawaf is valid and after her ghusl of haydh she can complete the remaining rounds. As a precaution she should complete the rounds and do another tawaf if there is enough time. But if her schedule is tight then she should perform Sa'ee, cut her hair and wear the ihram for Hajj, and on return from Mina before performing the tawaf for Hajj she should do her Umra tawaf with Qadha (Delayed performance) intention.

After performing the tawaf and its prayers, a lady finds out that she is having menstruation but has no idea when it started, that is:

- A – Before the tawaf.
- B – Before the special prayers for the tawaf.
- C– During tawaf
- D – During the prayers.
- E – After the prayers.

In such a case she should take it as definite that the tawaf and its special prayers were performed in acceptable conditions. If she has definite knowledge that her menstruations started before or after her prayers then she should perform ghusl of haidh and say her special prayers. But if there is not enough time then before performing the tawaf of Hajj she should offer delayed prayers.

After completing tawaf but before offering its prayers, if the menstruation starts then the tawaf will be considered correct and she will offer its prayers after her menstruation cycle ends and she has had her ghusl. But again if there is not enough time then she should perform Sa'ee between Safa and Marwa and have her hair cut and offer the tawaf prayers with delayed intention before doing the tawaf for Hajj.

If a lady at the time of Umm-ut-Tamatu spots blood before wearing ihram or while wearing it or after having done so, but before performing tawaf, then if there is sufficient time then she should wait for her cycle to end, do her ghusl, and then perform all the rites of Umra-ut-Tamatu. But if there is not enough time then she has two choices.

1. If she spotted blood before donning ihram or while donning it then her Hajj-ut-Tamatu will be changed to Hajj al-Ifraad and if possible she should perform Umra al-Mufrida after completing the pilgrimage rites.
2. If she spots blood after donning ihram then as a compulsory precaution she should change her intention of Hajj-ut-Tamatu to Hajj al-Ifrad. But she should perform Sa'ee of Safa and Marwa and cutting of hair which are part of Umra-ut-Tamatu, wear ihram for Hajj per form her Mina rites, then perform tawaf and its prayers for Umra-ut-Tamatu with delayed Intention, before performing the tawaf for Hajj.

But if she knows for sure that her cycle will not end even after completion of Mina rites then she should let an agent perform tawaf and prayers but perform the Sa'ee and cutting of hair herself.

There is sufficient time for a woman to perform all the rites of Umra-ut-Tamatu but she does not take the opportunity to do so, even though she is sure that later she will not be able to perform the Umra-ut-Tamatu rites because of lack of time and her menstrual cycle, and then what she feared actually occurs. That is her menstrual cycle begins and there is not sufficient time left to perform all the rites of Umra, then her Umra is invalid and her ihram also becomes invalid.

She cannot change her Hajj-ut-Tamatu to Hajj al-Ifraad. But as a precaution she should perform all rites of pilgrimage with the intention of Hajj-elfraad, keeping sincere hope in heart towards their acceptance. Infact as a precaution she should perform tawaf, prayers for it, Sa'ee and cutting of hair for both Umra al-Mufrida and Hajj-elfraad.

Questions and Answers

Q1. During tawaf the area between Rukn al-Yamani and Maqam al-Ibrahim is very crowded and there is a lot of contact with men, because of this is it permitted to perform circumambulation on the outer side of Maqam al-Ibrahim? (As contact with men is less likely in this area)

Ans: If the contact between men and women performing circumambulation is the one which is unavoidable in a big crowd then it is permitted. But If it becomes too intimate then it is not permitted. So because of unavoidable contact one cannot perform circumambulation on the outer side of Maqam-e-

Ibrahim.

Q2. Is there any difference between covering the parts of body during Prayers and during Tawaf?

Ans: Yes there is some difference. Those parts of the body which must be covered in prayers, like one's hair, arms down to the wrists, legs down to the ankles, if revealed during tawaf do not make the tawaf invalid. But as a recommended precaution it is better to take care that they are covered as in prayers like prayers.

As an obligatory precaution it is not permitted to cover one's face with a veil while performing tawaf even if the lady is not in ihram. For example when she performs the tawaf of Hajj after the rites in Mina on the day of Eid-al-Adha, she should not use a veil. If she wants she can pull down her head covering to hide her face but it should not touch her face.

Q3. What happens if during tawaf, a lady's (beauty spots) are revealed or a little hair is revealed?

Ans: Her tawaf is valid but she has committed a sin.

Q4. What happens if a lady spots blood after realizing that her Urnra-ut-Tamatu circumambulation has become invalid?

Ans: In such a case the same rule applies as the one where blood is spotted before starting circumambulation.

Q5. If a lady is using precautionary medication to stop her menstrual cycle but sees some spots on her due date, which do not have the properties of menstruations, what should she do? She is aware that stopping the use of medication will start her cycle.

Ans: Such spotting will not be considered as menstruation. It will be treated as istihaza (yellowish or brown spotting) and the rules of istihadha will apply to her.

Q6. If a lady is unsure whether to use medication in order to be able to perform tawaf and its prayers herself, or to assign the rites to an agent is it a must for her to use medication?

Ans: If there is no danger of any harmful effect on her health then use of medication is obligatory.

Q7. While performing recommended tawaf if there is a contact with men and gaze falls on male bodies, is the tawaf valid?

Ans: Circumambulation is valid, but the lady should not touch or gaze intentionally.

[Rules for a Lady Having Istihadha](#)

There are three types of menstruations.

1. Qalila (Little blood)
2. Mutawassita (Medium blood)
3. Kathira (Excessive blood)

If a lady starts light bleeding of her menstrual cycle during circumambulation after the fourth round then after washing her private parts and performing wudhu she should complete her rounds. But if it happens before the fourth round then the entire tawaf will have to be performed again.

Only a lady having light bleeding can enter Masjid-ul-Haram without ghusl.

Conclusion

A woman with light bleeding should follow the rules that apply to one's daily prayers, and wash the private parts for every tawaf, using fresh sanitary towels and performing wudhu. Then for tawaf prayers she should again perform wudhu.

A woman with medium bleeding should perform one ghusl for tawaf and its prayers. But wudhu for both rites will be performed separately.

A woman with heavy bleeding should perform separate ghusls for tawaf and its prayers. She does not have to do wudhu but if there is any act which causes minor impurity then she has to do wudhu also.

Q. If a lady having menstruations who is supposed to perform ghusl and wudhu before every tawaf and prayers for it, offers obligatory prayers during tawaf with the same wudhu and continues her rounds after her prayers again with the same wudhu, is her action valid?

Ans: In such a condition neither her tawaf nor her obligatory prayers are valid.

Body and Clothes should be Free of all Impurities

As a compulsory precaution it is better to avoid even those impurities which do not matter in obligatory prayers. For example a blood spot less than a dirham size, cap, socks, handkerchief or ring which is not ceremonially pure.

Body Covering

The whole body has to be covered except for face and hands up to wrists.

Q. What is the rule about performing circumambulation wearing dress or outer covering made of see-through (transparent) cloth? ·

Ans: It is a sin to wear dress made from see-through or transparent cloth; and complete covering is

obligatory during circumambulation.

Obligations in Cirumambulation

There are eight obligations to be fulfilled in circumambulation.

1. It must be commenced at Hajar-ul-Aswad (The Black Stone).
2. At the end of the whole round, it should end here also.
3. At all times, during the circumambulation, the Holy Kaba must be to the left of the pilgrim.
4. Hijr Ismail must be included in tawaf; that is to say, a pilgrim must turn around the Hijr without entering it or climbing its wall.
5. One must circumambulate keeping clear of the Holy Kaba and its protection is known as Shadharwaan.
6. One must circumambulate seven times continuously. Less than seven rounds will invalidate the tawaf; if more than seven rounds are made deliberately, the tawaf will be invalid too.
7. The seven rounds must follow each other without considerable interruption between them.
8. The circumambulation must be performed by free movement of the pilgrim. If he was made to move by being pushed by the crowd this will not be acceptable.

As is widely held, circumambulations performed between the Holy Kaba and Maqame (the station) of Ibrahim (A.S.) – a distance of twenty six and a half arm lengths (about 12 meters). As one has to go around the wall of Hijr Ismail, the distance is reduced to six and a half arm lengths (about 3 meters). However, if one moves outside this ambit, it is acceptable, though makrouh (Not desirable), particularly if one is unable to remain within the limits, or harm could befall him, if he did so.

Nevertheless, where possible, observing precaution is recommended.

As soon as a lady realizes that her menstruations have started she must leave Masjid al-Haram. Rules for her circumambulation have been mentioned before.

Prayers for Circumambulation

The third obligation in Umrat-ut-Tamatu consists of two units of prayers to be said after circumambulation. It is performed like morning prayers except that the worshipper has the option to say it aloud or in a whispered way. It is obligatory to say it close to Maqam al-Ibrahim (as). Evidently, it must be said at its rear. If it is not possible to do so then as a precaution one must offer two sets of prayers. One set one may say on any of its both sides and in addition another set far from the Maqam but at its

rear.

If this is not possible, any of the two is sufficient. However, if this is not possible, then one may, as a matter of precaution, say it anywhere in the Mosque, and as close to the Maqam as possible. This is so when the tawaf is obligatory, but when it is optional, one may pray anywhere in the Mosque.

Sa'ee

This is the fourth obligation in Umrat-ut-Tamatu. In sa'ee too, intention to seek nearness to Allah (swt) is obligatory but there is no obligation to cover the private parts, [although exposing one's genitals in a public place is not allowed], or for purity from urine or excrement, although it is preferable (*al awla*) to be ritually clean during sa'ee.

Sa'ee is to be performed after circumambulation and its prayer. If it is performed before the circumambulation or prayers, it is obligatory to repeat it after performing both.

Niyat (Intention) to attain closeness to Allah (swt) is essential in sa'ee performed for Umrah or Pilgrimage, whichever is applicable. ·

Sa'ee consists of seven laps. The first round starts at Safa and ends at Marwah. The second round is a reversal of the first; the third is like the first, and so on until the seventh round ends at Marwah. One can delay performance of sa'ee till night without any valid reason, but as a precaution it is better not to delay. A lady having menstruation who employs an agent for circumambulation and its prayers should perform the sa'ee herself because this area is not part of mosque.

Q. If a lady after her purifying bath performs circumambulation and its prayers, then starts sa'ee but between rounds realizes that she is still having menstruations, is her sa'ee valid?

Ans: No it is invalid. She should perform her circumambulation again offer its prayers and then perform sa'ee.

Taqseer (Cutting of Hair)

It is the fifth obligation in Umrat-ut-Tamatu. It must be embarked on with the niyyat (Intention) of closeness to Allah (swt). It is materialized by cutting some hair of the head.

- Cutting is a must, plucking is not valid.
- As it is widely held, it is accepted by cutting the nails of hand or foot, as an alternative. However it should, as a matter of precaution not be performed independent of cutting the hair first.
- A lady can only do taqseer for another if she has already done it for herself.

- It is not obligatory to perform taqseer there and then. In fact if there is a danger of exposing hair in front of men then it is better to do it on reaching their accommodation.
- If a pilgrim, knowingly and deliberately, engage in a sexual act after sa'ee, but before taqseer, he is liable to bear a kaffarah (Penalty) of a camel. However, if she did so in ignorance of the rule, she should be relieved of the penalty.

Change of Hajj al-Tamatu to Hajj al-Ifraad

One of the essential parts of Hajj-e-Tamatu is Umra al-Tamatu. A lady who has to perform Hajj al-Tamatu but because of menstruation or lack of time could not perform Umra al-Tamatu, then she should change her intention to Hajj al-Ifraad, because for this type of pilgrimage Umrah is not required. She should stay in Arafat with other pilgrims, go to Muzdalifa and perform all rites of Mina. But sacrificing of sheep is not obligatory for her. On return to Makkah she should perform circumambulation of Ziarat (visit to Holy place) and its prayers, sa'ee and Tawaf-un Nisa (The circumambulation which makes husband and wife valid for each other) with its prayers. Then she can shed her ihram. She should return to Mina spend night there and perform all rites which are done on 10th, 11th and 12th of Dhil Hajjah.

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