

## Salatul-Jama'ah [Congregational Salat]

### Salatul-Jama'h<sup>1</sup>

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah (s) said: "Whoever has performed his five *Salats* in *Jama'ah*, think good of him." The first congregational *Salat* performed by the Messenger of Allah (s) was in the Holy Mecca, with Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) in *AlMasjidul-Haram*. When his uncle, Abo Talib, saw him, he said to his son, Ja'far: "My son, join the wing of your cousin", that is, join him on the other side, beside Ali (a.s.), behind the Prophet (s).

Hence, the Messenger of Allah (s) performed his first congregational *Salat* with the *Imam* Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and Ja'far Ibn Abi Talib. *Salatul-Jama'ah* is *Mustahabb<sup>2</sup>* is all five *Salats<sup>3</sup>*. It is preferred to the individual *Salat*, and its reward is greater with Allah, the Glorified.

Congregational *Salat* teaches us how to unite with our brothers, the *Musallis*, and makes us feel that we are all equal brothers, standing in rows of *Musallis*, worshipping Allah and invoking Him. That was why the Messenger of Allah (s) ordered the *Musallis* to perform *SalatulJama'ah*.

### Rules of the Congregational Salat

There are certain conditions and regulations related to *SalatulJama'ah*, which we must learn. Some of these rules are as follows:

1. The *Imam* [the leader of the *Salat*] is to be sane, of full age, and of legitimate birth, as it is not allowed to perform the *Salat* behind a boy, an insane person, or somebody of illegitimate birth.
2. The *Imam* must recite correctly and perform the *Salat* well.
3. He must be a God-fearing believer, as it is not allowed to follow a corrupt leader in the *Salat*.
4. The place of the *Imam* must not be higher than the place on which the *Ma'mums* [the *Musallis* standing behind the *Imam* to perform the *Salat*], unless the difference in height is slight, not more than

commonly allowed, so that the people would not think him too lofty above them.

5. It is the *Imam* of the *Jama'ah* who recites the *Fatihah* and the other *Surah* in the first and the second *Rak'ahs*, while the *Ma'mums* recite nothing, but they just listen.
6. There must be no divider between the *Imam* and the *Ma'mums*,<sup>4</sup> such as a wall, or even a vacant space, and the like. It is allowed, however, to hang a curtain between the men and the women *Musallis*.
7. The *Musallis* are to imitate the *Imam* in the acts of *Salat*, such as the *Ruku*, the *Sujud*, *Takbiratul-Ihram*, etc. and are not to precede him in doing them.
8. Masculinity: That is, the men are allowed to perform the *Salat* only behind a male *Imam*. As to the women they may choose to follow a male or a female<sup>5</sup> *Imam*.
9. The women are to stand behind the men in *Salatul-Jama'ah*.
10. The least number of people who may form a *Salatul-Jama'ah* is two persons, the *Imam* and a follower. (*Ma'mum*)

## Discussion

Q1. Write T for the true statement and F for the false one.

- a. A woman may follow another woman in *Salatul-Jama'ah*.
- b. It is allowed to follow a boy as the *Imam* in *Salatul-Jama'ah*.
- c. *Salatul-Jama'ah* is correct if there was a partition between the *Imam* and the *Musallis*.
- d. D. To perform *Salatul-Jama'ah* behind a corrupt *Imam* is allowed.

<sup>1</sup>. Brother teachers are requested to practically perform *Salatul Jama'ah* at school so that the students may grow accustomed to it.

<sup>2</sup>. The Hanbalis say that *Salatul Jama'ah* is an individual *Wajib* required of every person capable of performing it. But if one performed the *Salat* individually, it would be valid, though one would be considered a sinner.

<sup>3</sup>. Except *Salatul Jumu'ah* and *Salatul Eid*, which must be performed congregationally, in case their other conditions allowed.

<sup>4</sup>. The Shafilis say: "Between the *Imam* and the *Ma'mum* there may be a distance of more than 300 cubits (a cubit = 45-56cms.), provided that there is no barrier." The Hanafis say: "If a person in his house followed, in his *Salat*, the *Imam* of the *Jama'ah* in the mosque, his *Salat* would be valid, if his house was next to the mosque with only a wall in between, provided that he could make no mistake about the *Imam's* postures. If the house, however, was separated from the mosque by a road or a river, one is not to follow the *Imam* as *Mu'mum*." The Malikis say: "The difference of place would not prevent the legality of following the *Imam*, if the *Ma'mum* was sure of his imitation of the *Imams* acts of the *Salat*."

<sup>5</sup>. The Malikis say that a woman is not to be an *Imam*, even for a woman *Ma'mum*.

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