

Tawaf

Tawaf is an essential part (*ruk'n*) of 'Umrah, and the *tawaf al-ziyarah* (also called '*tawaf al-'ifadah*') is a *ruk'n* of the *Hajj al-tamattu'*; *Hajj al-'ifrad* and *Hajj al-qiran*. As said earlier, the assumption of *ihram* is the first act of the pilgrim regardless of whether he comes for '*Umrah mufradah*' or for any of the three types of Hajj.

Now, after the assuming of *ihram*, what is the next step for the pilgrim? Is it *tawaf*, or *wuquf*, or something else? The answer is: it depends on the purpose (*niyyah*) with which the pilgrim assumes *ihram*. If it is 'Umrah, then the next step is *tawaf*, regardless of whether it is '*Umrah mufradah*' or '*Umrat al-tamattu'*.' Thus *tawaf* is the second step for the *mu'tamir* (pilgrim intending 'Umrah), by agreement of all the legal schools.

However, if the purpose of *ihram* is Hajj only—such as in the case of pilgrim on *Hajj al-'ifrad*, or one intending to perform the *Hajj al-tamattu'* after getting through the acts of 'Umrah—the second step is (as shall be explained later) *wuquf* in 'Arafat.

In other words, one who enters Makkah with the sole purpose of 'Umrah or *Hajj al-tamattu'* performs *tawaf* before everything else, then *sa'y* and then *taqsir*. After this, if on *Hajj al-tamattu'*, he assumes *ihram* for a second time; but he is not required to perform another *tawaf* after this *ihram*. The *tawaf* (pertaining to the Hajj acts), as we shall explain, comes after getting through the *wuquf* at 'Arafat and passage through Mina.

Kinds of 'Umrah in View of the Ahl al-Sunnah

The imams of the four Sunni schools distinguish between three kinds of *tawaf*:

1. Tawaf al-Qudum

It is the *tawaf* performed by the 'outsiders', (i.e. those coming from outside Makkah and from beyond its outskirts within a radius of 88 km) on entry into Makkah. It is similar to the two *raka'at* of *salat* performed

as *tahiyyat al-masjid* (lit. 'greeting of the mosque'), and so is also called '*tawaf al-tahiyyah*' The four Sunni schools agree on its being *mustahabb*, and no penalty is required for default according to all except the Malikis who require a blood sacrifice.

2. Tawaf al-Ziyarah

This *tawaf* (also called '*tawaf al-ifadah*') is performed by Hajj pilgrims after getting through the acts of Mina, the *ramy* of *jamarat al-aqabah*, the sacrifice (*dhibh*), and the *halq* or the *taqsir*. The pilgrim performs this *tawaf* on returning to Makkah. It is called '*tawaf al-ziyarah*' because it is performed on the visit (*ziyarah*) to the Ka'bah after leaving Mina. It is called '*tawaf al-ifadah*' because the pilgrims pour forth (*ifadah* means 'pouring forth') into Makkah from Mina. It is also called '*tawaf al-hajj*' because by consensus of all the schools it is *rukun* of the Hajj.

After performing this *tawaf* all things become permissible for the (Sunni) Hajj pilgrim, even sexual intimacy with women. The Imamiyyah, who disagree, say that sex is not permitted before performing the *sa'y* between Safa and Marwah followed by a second *tawaf*, which they call '*tawaf al-nisa*.' This shall be further clarified presently.

3. Tawaf al-Wada'

It is the last *tawaf* performed by the *Hujjaj* before departing from Makkah. The Hanafi and Hanbali schools consider it obligatory, though all that is required of the defaulter is a sacrifice. The Malikis consider it *mustahabb* and do not require any penalty for the default. Al-Shafi'i has two opinions on this matter. (*al-Mughni, al-Fiqh 'ala al-madhahib al-arba'ah, Fiqh al-Sunnah*)

Kinds of Tawaf from the Imamiyyah Viewpoint

The Shi'ah agree with the Sunni schools about the legitimacy of the above three kinds of *tawaf*, and regard the second *tawaf* i.e. *tawaf al-ziyarah* as a *rukun* of the Hajj whose omission makes the Hajj invalid.¹ However, the first kind, i.e. *tawaf al-qudum* is considered *mustahabb*, and may be omitted. Regarding the third, i.e. *tawaf al-wada*; they agree with the Maliki school in its being *mustahabb*, there being nothing on the defaulter.

However, the Shi'ah add another kind of *tawaf* to the above three, the *tawaf al-nisa*, which they consider obligatory, its omission being impermissible in '*Umrah mufradah* as well as in all the three kinds of Hajj (i.e. *tamattu*; *qiran*, and *ifrad*). They do not permit its omission except in case of '*Umrat al-tamattu*'; considering the *tawaf al-nisa* performed during the course of *Hajj al-tamattu*' as sufficient.

The schools of the Ahl al-Sunnah state that there is no obligatory *tawaf* after the *tawaf al-ziyarah*, after which sexual intimacy is permissible. The Shi'ah say that it is obligatory upon the pilgrim, after performing *tawaf al-ziyarah* and the *sa'y*, to perform another *tawaf*, the *tawaf al-nisa*; which derives its

name precisely because of the sanction of permissibility of relations with women (*nisa'*) following it.

They say that if the pilgrim defaults in regard to this *tawaf*, sexual relations are forbidden for man and woman (for men even the conclusion of marriage contract), unless he/she performs it in person or deposes another to perform it on his/her behalf; and if he/she dies without performing it or without deposing someone to do it for him/her, it is incumbent upon the heir (*wali*) to have it performed on the behalf of the dead person.

According to them, even in case of a *mumayyiz* child who fails to perform the *tawaf al-nisa'* while performing the Hajj, even if he omits it by mistake or on account of ignorance, women are forbidden to him after adulthood nor he may conclude a marriage contract (*'aqd*) unless he performs it himself or deposes another for the job.

To summarize, the Shi'ah consider three *tawaf's* to be obligatory for the pilgrim on the *Hajj al-tamattu'*: (1) the *tawaf* of the conjugate 'Umrah, of which it is *rukn*; (2) the *tawaf al-ziyarah* (or *tawaf al-hajj*), which is a *rukn* of the Hajj; and (3) the *tawaf al-nisa'*, which is also an obligatory part of it, though not a *rukn* similar to the *Surat al-Fatihah* in relation to the *salat*. The Ahl al-Sunnah agree with the Shi'ah in all except *tawaf al-nisa'*; which they do not recognize. However, of a pilgrim on the *Hajj al-Ifrad* or *Hajj al-qiran*, only two *tawaf's* are required by the Shi'ah.²

Entry into Makkah

All the schools agree that it is *mustahabb* for one entering Makkah to take a bath, pass through its heights during the approach towards the city, enter through Bab Bani Shaybah, raise his hands on sighting al-Bayt al-Haram, pronounce *takbir* and *tahlil*, and to recite whatever he can of certain prayers prescribed by tradition. The Malikis, however, disagree about the *istihbab* of raising the hands for the *du'a'*.

Thereafter, he approaches the Black Stone; if possible kisses it or caresses it with his hand or else just makes a gesture with his hand, and prays.

According to the Imamiyyah, it is *mustahabb* while entering the *haram* of Makkah to be barefooted, to chew the leaves of a plant called '*adhkhir*' used for refreshing the mouth, or to clean the mouth to purge its odour.

The Conditions (Shurut) of Tawaf

According to the Shafi'i, Maliki, and Hanbali schools ritual purity (*taharah*, i.e. freedom from *hadath* and *khabath*) is required; thus the *tawaf* of one who is *Junub* or a woman undergoing *hayd* or *nifas*, is not valid. Also, it is necessary to cover one's private parts completely as in *salat*.

The author of the *Fiqh al-Sunnah* (p. 154, 1955) says: "In the opinion of the Hanafis, freedom from

hadath is not an essential requirement. However, it is an obligation whose omission may be compensated through a blood sacrifice. So, if one performs *tawaf* in the state of minor impurity (*hadath asghar*) his/her *tawaf* is valid, though one is required to sacrifice a sheep. If *tawaf* is performed in the state of *janabah* or *hayd*,³ the *tawaf* is valid, though the sacrifice of a camel is required during the pilgrim's stay in Makkah."

According to *al-Fiqh 'ala al-madhdhib al-'arba 'ah* (vol.I, p. 535, 1939): "The *taharah* of the clothes, the body, and the location of prayer (in *salat*) is (only) a highly recommended sunnah (*sunnah mu'akkadah*) from the Hanafi viewpoint; (this is true) even of *tawaf*, there being no penalty even if all the clothes are completely ritually unclean (*najis*)."

According to the Imamiyyah, *taharah* from *hadath* and *khathath* is a proviso for validity of an obligatory *tawaf*. In the same way, covering the private parts (*satr al-'awrah*) with a ritually clean cloth legitimately owned (*ghayr maghsud*) is also a requirement. Moreover, it should not be made of silk or the skin of an animal whose flesh may not be eaten, nor made of golden fabric –requirements which are the same as for *salat*.

It may be said that the Imamiyyah are even more stringent with regard to *tawaf* than *salat*. They consider a blood spot of the size of a *dirham* as pardonable for one performing *salat*, but not for one performing *tawaf*. Further, they consider wearing of silk and gold as impermissible even for women during *tawaf* (which is permissible for women in *salat*). According to the Imamiyyah, circumcision is a requirement for *tawaf* without which it is invalid, both for an adult man and a child (*al-Jawahir, al-Hada'iq*).

The manner of Performing Tawaf

According to the Imamiyyah and Hanbali schools, the purpose or *niyyah* must be specified in every *tawaf*; but according to the Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali schools, a general *niyyah* for the Hajj is sufficient and no separate *niyyah* for *tawaf* is required. (*al-Jawahir, Fiqh al-Sunnah*) As pointed out earlier, *niyyah* as a motive behind all voluntary actions is an inevitable and necessary matter; as such, debate and controversy regarding it is futile.

Ibn Rushd, in his *Bidayat al-mujahid*, writes: "The Sunni legists are in consensus on the opinion that every *tawaf* whether obligatory or not, begins from the Black Stone (and according to the *Fiqh al-Sunnah* ends thereat). The pilgrim, if he can, kisses it, otherwise touches it with his hand. Then, with the Ka'bah on his left, starts moving towards the right to make the seven circumambulations, walking with a moderately fast pace (*ramal*) during the first three rounds and with an ordinary pace during the last four rounds. (The *ramal*⁴ applies to the *tawaf al-qudum* performed on entry into Makkah by the 'Umrah and Hajj pilgrim, not one on *Hajj al-tamattu*; also no *ramal* is required of women pilgrims). Then he kisses al-Rukn al-Yamani" (the south-western corner or *rukn* of the Ka'bah which falls before the one with the Black Stone mounted on it during the anti-clockwise rounds made during *tawaf*. — Tr.).

According to the Imamiyyah, there are certain things obligatory (*wajib*) in *tawaf* they are as follows:

1. The *niyyah*, to which reference has already been made.
2. The *tawaf* should be made on foot, and in case of inability on a mount. Many Imamiyyah fuqaha' do not recognize this requirement and a group of them explicitly permit *tawaf* on a mount. They cite the precedent of the Prophet (S) who performed *tawaf* on camelback, according to traditions in *al-Kafi* and *Man la yahduruhu al faqih*.
3. The condition that the *tawaf* should begin and end at the Black Stone is stated in this manner in many books of fiqh: "The *tawaf* should be begun at the Black Stone, so that the first part of one's body is in front of the first part of the Black Stone. Then the pilgrim begins moving with the Black Stone on his left, ending the last circumambulation exactly in line with the point where he commenced his first, thus ensuring that the seven rounds are completed without advancing or falling behind a single step or more.

The danger of advancing or falling behind necessitates that the first circumambulation should commence at the beginning of the Black Stone; because if begun in front of its middle, one cannot be sure of having advanced or fallen behind some steps; and if one began from its end, then the beginning may not be said to have commenced from the Black Stone" and so on and so forth.

The author of the *Jawahir al-kalam* makes elaborate critical remarks about this kind of meticulousness, which show his balanced and moderate taste and temperament. This is the substance of what he has to say: "The difficulty and the exasperating *haraj* (impediment) inherent in realizing such a requirement is not concealed To give it consideration is to fall into silly scruples. The debate is similar to the depraved and unseemly musings of madmen.⁵ And it has been narrated of the Prophet (S) that he performed *tawaf* on camelback, and attaining this kind of precision is infeasible when on a mount."

That which can be understood from the remarks of the author of *al-Jawahir* is that he agrees with the author of *al-Shara'i'*, who confines himself to this statement, without adding another word: "It is obligatory to begin and end the *tawaf* at the Stone." It means—as is also apparent from his above-mentioned remarks—that in the opinion of the author of *al-Jawahir* it is sufficient to fulfil this condition in the commonly understood sense. Al-Sayyid al-Hakim, in *al-Munsik*, holds a similar position when he says, "The pilgrim performing *tawaf* should begin a little before the Stone with the intent of performing what is really obligatory. When he performs in this fashion he knows that he began at the Stone and finished thereat."

4. The Ka'bah must be on the left during *tawaf*. According to al-Sayyid al-Khu'i, it is sufficient to realize this requirement in the commonly understood sense (i.e. without giving scrupulous attention to precision); slight shifts of direction do not matter as long as the movement meets the requirement in the ordinary sense. According to him the only crucial factor is satisfaction of the requirement in its ordinary sense.

5. The Hajar Isma'il must be included in *tawaf*. That is the circumambulation should be made around it and without entering it, [6](#) and it should be kept to the left while making the *tawaf*. Thus if one passes between it and the Ka'bah during *tawaf* making it fall to his right, the *tawaf* becomes invalid.
6. The body should be completely out of the Ka'bah (because God says **وَلْيَطَّوَّفُوا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ** which means that *tawaf* should be made around and outside the Ka'bah, not inside it). Also if one were to walk on its walls or on the protruding part of its walls' foundations, the *tawaf* would be invalid.
7. The *tawaf* should be performed between the Ka'bah and the rock called *Maqam Ibrahim*, which is a stone on which Abraham ('a) stood during the building of the Ka'bah.
8. The *tawaf* should consist of seven rounds, no more and no less. Obviously, recognition of these points requires an informed guide to indicate them to the pilgrims.

After finishing *tawaf* it is obligatory to offer two *rak'ah's* of *salat* behind the Maqam Ibrahim regardless of the crowd; but if it is not possible, one may offer the prayer in front of it, and if that, too, is not possible, anywhere in al-Masjid al-Haram. It is not permissible to begin a second *tawaf* without performing the two-*rak'ah* prayer. If one forgets performing them, it is obligatory on him to return and perform them. But if returning were not feasible, he can offer them wherever he can. This is true of the obligatory *tawaf*. But if the *tawaf* were a *mustahabb* one, he can offer the two *rak'ah's* wherever he can. (*al-Tadhkirah*, *al-Jawahir*, *al-Hada'iq*)

This shows that the jurists of all the legal schools are in agreement over certain points: the *tawaf* starts and ends at the Black Stone; the Ka'bah should be on the left during *tawaf*; the *tawaf* should be made outside the Ka'bah; seven rounds should be made; kissing the Black Stone and the Rukn is *mustahabb*. However, they disagree with respect to the permissibility of break between successive rounds of the *tawaf*.

According to the Maliki, Imamiyyah, and Hanbali schools, continuity without break (*muwalat*) is obligatory. According to the Shafi'i and Hanafi schools, it is *sunnah* (i.e. *mustahabb*) to observe *muwalat*, so if there is a substantial break between the rounds without any excuse, the *tawaf* is not invalidated. (*Fiqh al-Sunnah*). Similarly according to Abu Hanifah, if one leaves off after the fourth round, he must complete his *tawaf* if he is in Makkah; but if he leaves Makkah, he must compensate it with a blood sacrifice. (*al-Tadhkirah*)

The schools disagree with respect to the necessity of the *tawaf* being undertaken on foot. The Hanafi, Hanbali, and Maliki schools consider it obligatory. According to the Shafi'i school and a group of Imamiyyah scholars it is not obligatory and one may perform *tawaf* on a mount. Also, they disagree with respect to the two-*rak'ah* prayer (*rak'atan*) after *tawaf*. According to the Maliki, Hanafi, and Imamiyyah schools, the *rak'atan*—which is exactly like the daybreak prayer—are obligatory. The Shafi'i and Hanbali schools regard it as *mustahabb*.

The Mustahabbat of Tawaf

The book *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, discussing the topic under the heading “*Sunan al-tawaf*,” states, “Of things which are sunnah in *tawaf* are: kissing the Black Stone while starting the *tawaf*, accompanied with *tahlil* and *takbir*, to raise the two hands as in *salat*, to greet the Stone by drawing one's hands upon it (*istilam*), to kiss it soundlessly, to lay one's cheek on it if possible, otherwise to touch it only.” Other *mustahabbat* are: *idtiba* ⁷ for men, *ramal*, and *istilam* of *al-Rukn al-Yamani*.

According to *al-Lum'at al-Dimashqiyyah*, an Imamiyyah work, of things *mustahabb* in *tawaf* are: to halt in front of the Black Stone, to make the prayer later offered with the hands raised, to recite the Surat *al-Qadr*, remember Allah—*subhanahu wa ta'ala*—, to walk peacefully, to draw one's hand on the Black Stone, to kiss it if possible otherwise to make a gesture, to draw one's hand on every corner of the Ka'bah every time one passes by or to kiss it, to draw one's hand on *al-Mustajar*—which is in front of the door and before *al-Rukn al-Yamani*—during the seventh round, and to keep oneself as near as possible to the Ka'bah. To speak during *tawaf* apart from *dhikr* and recitation of the Qur'an, is *makruh*.

The Ahkam of Tawaf

According to the Imamiyyah, if a woman undergoes *hayd* during *tawaf* she discontinues *tawaf* and performs *sa'y*, if it happens after the fourth round. Then she completes the *tawaf* after attaining *taharah*, and she is not required to repeat the *sa'y*. But if the *hadath* occurs before completing the fourth round, she waits until the day of 'Arafah. If by that time she regains *taharah* and is in a position to complete the remaining acts, she does so. Otherwise her Hajj is converted to *Hajj al-'ifrad*.

As mentioned earlier, the Hanafis permit *tawaf* for a woman in the state of *hayd*, and do not require *taharah*. According to the Hanafi work *Fath al-Qadir*, one who leaves three or fewer rounds of the *tawaf al-ziyarah* should sacrifice a sheep; if four, he remains in the state of *ihram* as long as he does not complete the rounds of *tawaf*. But if he leaves off more than four rounds, it is as if he had not started the *tawaf* at all.

According to the Imdmiyyah, if after completing the rounds of *tawaf* one doubts whether he performed them correctly as required by the Shari'ah or whether he performed the exact number of rounds, his doubt is of no consequence. His *tawaf* is considered valid and complete and there is nothing upon him. But if the doubt occurs before finishing the *tawaf*, he should consider whether he has performed at least seven rounds, such as when he doubts whether he made seven or eight rounds. If he is certain of having performed seven rounds, then his *tawaf* is considered valid.

However, if he is not certain of having performed seven rounds— as in the case when he doubts whether he is in his sixth or seventh round, or in his fifth or sixth— in that case his *tawaf* is invalid and he should start afresh. It is preferable in such a case to complete the present *tawaf* before starting afresh.⁸ This is true of a *wajib tawaf*. In case of a *mustahabb tawaf*, the basis is the least number of

rounds under seven one is certain of having performed, regardless of whether the doubt occurs during or after the last round.

For the non-Imamiyyah schools, the rule is the least number of rounds one is certain of having performed—a rule which is similar to the one they apply to the doubt in the number of *rak'ah's* of *salat*.

These are the *ahkam*, the *mustahabbat*, and the *wajibat* of *tawaf*, which, like the *ruku'* and *sujud* in *salat*, is always the same in all cases, whether as a part of the '*Umrah mufradah*, '*Umrat al-tamattu*; *Hajj al-qiran*, or *Hajj al-ifrad*, and regardless of whether it is *tawaf al-ziyarah*, *tawaf al-nisa*; *tawaf al-qudum*, or *tawaf al-wada'*.

As mentioned above, the *tawaf* is the next act after *ihram* in '*Umrat al-tamattu*'; but in the Hajj its turn comes after the pilgrim has gone through the rituals of Mina' (on the '*Id* day) as shall be explained later.

- [1.](#) According to the author of al-Hada'iq, Hajj is invalid if tawaf is omitted intentionally, but not if omitted by mistake; although it is obligatory to perform it after omission.
- [2.](#) According to Ibn Rushd, in his Bidayah, the four Sunni schools agree that the pilgrim of Hajj al-ramattu 'and its related 'Umrah is required to perform tawaf twice; the one on Hajj al-afrad is required to perform tawaf once. They disagree regarding Hajj al-qiran, in which case according to al-Shafi'i, Malik, and Ahmad ibn Hanbal, one tawaf is required, but two according to Abd Hanifah.
- [3.](#) According to al-Jawahir, al-Masalik al-'Urwat al-wuthqa and other works of Imamiyyah fiqh, it is not permissible for one in the state of janabah or hayd to enter or pass through al-Masjid al-Haram or Masjid al-Rasul (al-Madinah), to say nothing of tarrying (makth) therein. However, it is permissible for one in the state of janabah or hayd to pass, without stopping or halting, through other mosques.
- [4.](#) 'Ramal' means walking fast, without running or making a rush. According to the Imamiyyah work al-Lum`ah, ramal is mustahabb in the first three rounds of tawaf—a position which is exactly the same as that of the four Sunni schools.
- [5.](#) The author of al-Jawahir makes this remark when comparing those who stipulate such kind of conditions for tawaf to others with a similar attitude with regard to the niyyah of salat.
- [6.](#) Hajar Isma'il ibn Ibrahim ('a) is the place where his house was built, and there he buried his mother.
- [7.](#) By 'idtiba is meant the style of wearing the rida' whose hanging sides are drawn under the right armpit and then thrown over the left shoulder. In the book al-Fiqh `ala al-madhahib al-'arba`ah, the istihbab of idtiba'is ascribed to the Hanafi, Shafi'i, and the Hanbali, not to the Maliki, schools.
- [8.](#) This is in agreement with the fatawa of al-Sayyid al-Hakim and al-Sayyid al-Khu'i.

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