

The Friday Prayer

[Its Wujub \(necessity\)](#)

There is consensus among all the Muslims regarding the Friday prayer (*salat al-jumu'ah*) being *wajib* in accordance with the words of God, the Exalted:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ

O believers, when proclamation is made for prayer on the Day of Congregation (yawm al-jumu'ah) hasten to God's remembrance and leave trading aside (Qur'an 62:9)

as well as the *mutawatir* traditions narrated both by Shi'i and Sunni sources.

They differ as to whether its *wujub* is conditional to the presence of the ruler or his deputy in it or if it is *wajib* unconditionally.

The Hanafis and the Imamis state: The presence of the ruler or his deputy is necessary; the Friday prayer is not *wajib* if neither of them is present. The Imamis require the ruler to be just (*'adil*); otherwise his presence is equal to his absence. To the Hanafis, his presence is sufficient even if he is not just.

The Shafi'is, Malikis and Hanbalis attach no significance to the presence of the ruler, and a large number of Imamis observe: In the absence of a ruler or his representative and the presence of a just *faqih*, there exists an option between performing either the Friday or the *zuhr* prayer, although preference lies with the performance of Friday prayer. ¹

[Conditions](#)

The schools concur that the requirements for other *salats* (such as *taharah*, covering the body, and facing the *qiblah*) also apply to Friday prayers, that its time is from when the sun crosses the meridian up

to when the shadow of an object equals its height, and that it can be performed in a mosque as well as any other place, except in the opinion of the Malikis who don't consider it valid except in a mosque.

There is also consensus that it is *wajib* for men and not for women, and that one who performs is not required to perform the *zuhr* prayer, and that it is not *wajib* for the blind, and that it is not valid except when performed in *jama'ah* (congregation).

They differ regarding the minimum number of persons required to form a *jama'ah*; the Malikis state: Its minimum is 12, excluding the imam. The Imamis consider it to be 4, excluding the imam. In the opinion of the Shafi'is and Hanbalis, it is 40, including the imam; according to the Hanafis it is 5, though some of them say it is 7.

The schools, except the Hanafi, concur in its being prohibited for someone upon whom the Friday prayer has become *wajib* and its conditions fulfilled, to travel after the sun has crossed the meridian before performing it. The Hanafis allow it.

The Friday Sermons

There is consensus that the two sermons are required for convening the Friday prayer and that they are to be delivered before the *salat*, though after the setting in of its time and not earlier. They differ regarding the *wujub* of standing while delivering them. The Imamis, Shafi'is and Malikis require it, but not the Hanafis and Hanbalis.

As to their content, the Hanafis say: The sermon will be considered delivered even by a minimal *dhikr*, such as uttering "*al-hamdulillah*" or "*astaghfirullah*", though such brevity is *makruh*.

The Shafi'is observe: It is necessary in both the sermons to praise God, invoke blessings on the Prophet (S), to exhort to piety, to recite a verse in at least one of the sermons, though reciting it in the first is better, and to supplicate for the faithful in the second sermon.

According to the Malikis anything considered by custom as a sermon suffices, provided it includes exhortation and announcement of good news.

The Hanbalis consider it essential to praise God, invoke blessings on the Prophet (S), recite a verse and counsel piety.

The Imamis state: It is *wajib* in each of the sermons to praise and extol God, invoke blessings on the Prophet (S) and his Family (A), preach, and recite something from the Qur'an, and in the second sermon, to implore God's forgiveness and to pray for the faithful.

The Shafi'is and Imamis observe: It is *wajib* for the preacher to separate the two sermons by sitting down for a short while between them.

The Malikis and Hanafis consider it *mustahabb*.

According to the Hanbalis, the sermon should be delivered in Arabic, if possible.

The Shafi'is consider Arabic necessary if the people are Arabs, and if they are non-Arabs, the preacher should preach in their language even if he is well-versed in Arabic.

The Malikis say: It is *wajib* to preach in Arabic even if the people are non-Arabs and do not understand a word of Arabic. If there is no one among them who knows Arabic, there is no obligation to perform the Friday prayer.

The Hanafis and the Imamis do not consider Arabic a condition for delivering the sermons.

Its Mode of Performance

The Friday prayer comprises two units (*rak'ahs*), just like the morning prayers. The Imamis and the Shafi'is observe: After *Surat al-Hamd* of each *rak'ah*, it is *mustahabb* to recite *Surat al-Jumu'ah* in the first *rak'ah* and *Surat al-Munafiqun* in the second.

The Malikis state: *Surat al-Jumu'ah* will be recited in the first *rak'ah* and *Surat al-Ghashiyah* in the second. According to the Hanafis, it is *makruh* to confine to a particular *surah*.

¹. Al-Shahid al-Thani in al-Lum'ah, vol. 1, "bab al-salat", fasl 6, observes: The wujub of salat al-jumu'ah during the occultation of the Imam is obvious in the opinion of most 'ulama'... and if there has been no claim of ijma' regarding its not being wajib, the opinion that it is wajib 'ayni would have been extremely strong. Therefore, the least that can be said is that there is an option between it (salat al-jumu'ah) and the zuhr prayer, with the Jumu'ah (prayer) enjoying preference".

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