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How to Join Salat-ul-Jama'ah

1. If someone could not be present at the start of *Salatul-Jama'ah*, he may join it at any *Rak'ah* he please, and he would still get its reward. The condition for joining the *Salat* is that; it should be before the *Imam* finished a *Ruku*, as he is to catch him in *Ruku*, so that it can be counted a *Rak'ah* for him.
2. If the *Musalli* joined the *Jama'ah* in the third *Rak'ah* of *SalatuzZuhr*, for example, he would perform with them the third and the fourth *Rak'ahs*, though, for him, these two *Rak'ahs* would be his first¹ and second. So, he would have to recite *Al-Fatihah* and a *Surah* in both of them. If there was not enough time, he is to recite only *Al-Fatihah*, and, when the *Jama'ah Musallis* finish their fourth *Rak'ah*, he is to continue to perform his third and fourth *Rak'ahs* individually.
3. If the person who wants to join the *Jama'ah* knows that there is not enough time to allow the recitation of *Al-Fatihah*, it is preferred to wait until the *Jama'ah Musallis* enter the *Ruku*, then he would make his *Niyyah Takbiratul-Ihram*, and go to the *Ruku* with them.
4. If the *Musalli* joined the *Jama'ah* without knowing which *Rak'ah* was being performed by the *Jama'ah*, the second or the third, for example, he would have to recite *Al-Fatihah* and another *Surah*, if time was enough for both. Otherwise, recitation of *Suratul-Fatihah* alone would be satisfactory.

Discussion

- Q1. If you entered a mosque and saw the *Musallis* in the *Sujud* position, would it be correct if you joined them in the *Sujud*, or not?
- Q2. If the *Musalli* joined the *Jama'ah Musallis* in their fourth *Rak'ah*, what should he do when they have finished this *Rak'ah*?
- Q3. If you joined the *Jama'ah Musallis* in their second *Rak'ah*, which they finished by the *Tashahhud*, would you follow them in that, or not? Why?

¹ The Hanafis, the Malikis and the Hanbalis say that the part of the *Salat* which the *Musalli* joins the *Jama'ah* is regarded to

be the end of his Salat, so, if he caught them at the last Rak'ah of Salatul-Maghrib, he would also regard it to be the last Rak'ah of his Salat, then he would perform a Rak'ah, in which he recites Al-Fatihah a Surah, and the Tashahhud, then another Rak'ah in which he recites Al-Fatiha and a Surah. The Shafi'is and the Imamis say: The part in which the Musalli joins with the Imam is regarded as the beginning of his Salat, not its end.

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