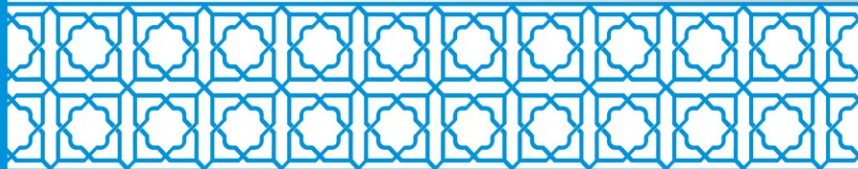




**THE CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE VALIDITY OF THE  
PRAYER & PROSTRATION FOR FORGETFULNESS FOR  
THE COMPENSATION OF ERRORS  
(SUJUDUS-SAHW)**

**BY**  
***Dr. Muhammad A. Muhammad***  
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***Mustafa Bulu Ibrahim***



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May Allah (*Subhanahu Wata'Alah*) abundantly reward those who circulate or use other means of enhancing wider publicity and application of the lessons of this Treatise to benefit the Muslim Ummah. PDF copy is available on the website for download.

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## **PART I**

### **Introduction:**

All praise is due to Allah (*Subhanahu Wata'Alah*), we praise Him and we seek His aid and we ask His forgiveness, we seek shelter from the evil of ourselves and from the wickedness of our deeds. Whom so ever Allah (*Subhanahu Wata'Alah*) guides, there is none who can misguide him and whomsoever Allah (*Subhanahu Wata'Alah*) sends astray, there is none who can guide him. And we testify that none is worthy of worship except Allah (*Subhanahu Wata'Alah*) Alone, without partners and we testify that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is His slave and His Messenger.

Prayer is established on emphatically defined conditions, pillars, obligations, and emphatic *Sunnan*. They are the foundation for the validity and correctness of the prayer – and indeed an epitome of the Prophet's manner of prayer. The principles for prostration for forgetfulness for the compensation of errors of forgetfulness or doubts in prayers are established based on forgetfulness relating to the pillars and obligations only. Thus, sound knowledge of the pillars and obligations is prerequisite for the correct determination of the nature of the error of forgetfulness and the type of prostration necessary for its compensation. It is significant to note that there is no prostration for the omission of the emphatic *Sunnah*.

Ibn Qudama (may Allah grant him mercy) said: "And know that the prayer has actions which are pillars, actions which are obligatory, and actions which are *Sunnah*. The spirit of prayer is in the *Niyyah* (intention), *Ikhlas* (sincerity), *Khushuu* (awe coupled with humility

and submissiveness) and the presence of the heart. The prayer also contains remembrances, private conversation [with Allah (the Exalted)] and physical actions. When the heart is not present, the desired goal is not obtained by the remembrances and private conversations with Allah (the Exalted). Because speech, when it does not express the innermost feelings or what is in the heart, is (nothing but) absent mindedness and folly."

Accordingly, it is incumbent upon every Muslim to have sound knowledge and understanding of the conditions for the prayer and authentic categorisation of the acts of the prayer into their three main classes (i.e. pillars (*Arka'an*), obligations (*Wajibaat*) and emphatic *Sunnan* (*Sunnah Mu'akkadah*), before conducting it. Thus, it is obligatory to learn the jurisprudence of prayer for the sake of its correct performance. This is because prayer is a pillar of the religion, the second pillar of Islam after the two testimonies, and the first thing for which a servant will be held accountable for his work. If it is righteous, then he has succeeded, as the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: *"The first thing for which a servant will be held accountable on the Day of Resurrection for his work is his prayer. If it is sound, then he has succeeded and prospered, and if it is corrupt, then he has failed and lost."* [Agreed upon].

Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) used to write to his Governors saying that: *"Indeed the most important of your matters to me is prayer. Whoever preserves them has preserved his religion, and whoever misses them, will be even more likely to miss*

*performing anything else. There is no portion of Islam for the one who leaves the prayer."*

Ibn Hubairah said, what is meant by 'abandonment' in the above *Hadith*: "Includes abandoning it completely or abandoning some aspects of it, or delaying it beyond its due time. It also includes abandoning learning its rulings and jurisprudence."

Unfortunately, some *Fiqh* books such as *Al-Akhdari*, *Al-Izziyah* and *Al-Risala*, almost absolutely relied upon for the guidance of our prayers in Nigeria, contain wrongful categorisation of the acts of the prayers, thereby leading to misrepresentation on the principles of prostration for forgetfulness. In some instances, such books recommend prostration for acts which do not require prostration and often omit to prescribe where the prostration is obligatory. Consequently, reliance on them may, often lead to upholding invalid prayer, in some instances. It is therefore, imperative to take corrective measures to ensure adherence to the categorisation established based on authentic *Ahadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Al-Uthaimeen (may Allah grant him mercy), in his book, "The Prophet's Prayer Described", has provided the categorisation of the actions of the prayer into pillars (*Arka'an*) and obligations (*Wajibaat*) with justifications from the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*. And this categorisation is in agreement with the majority opinion of the scholars of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamah*. It is imperative to study and memorise the pillars (*Arka'an*) and obligations (*Wajibaat*) based upon which prostrations for forgetfulness are established, as discussed in this Treatise. We



fervently pray to Allah (the Exalted) to make it of beneficial reading to the Muslim Ummah.

### **Clarification on the Misconceptions about *Madhhab* (School of Thought):**

We wish to clarify to our readers that this Treatise is not based on dogmatism about any of the four *Madhhab* (Schools of Thought) and indeed we do not have any inclination to any of them. The Treatise is based on the Qur'an and *Sunnah* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). If any aspects of the contents agree with the teachings of any *Madhhab*, then it is so, because the position of the *Madhhab* on that issue is in agreement with the *Sunnah*. Conversely, if any aspect of it did not agree with the stand of a particular *Madhhab*, then it is so because the stand of the *Madhhab* on those aspects are not in accordance with the *Sunnah*.

Our position regarding *Madhhab* is emphatic and is in line with the position of our revered scholars of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamah*. It is a settled matter in Islamic literature that all of the four Imams, attributed with *Madhhab*, have declared unequivocally that whenever their opinions or verdicts differ with an authentic *Hadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), then the *Hadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is their opinion (and if you wish is there *Madhhab*). Thus, their collective position is crystal clear that, if at all, they are to be attributed with any *Madhhab*, then their *Madhhab* is the *Hadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

*Imam Abu Hanifah* (may Allah grant him mercy) said: "When a *Hadith* is found to be *Sahih*, then that is my *Madhahhab*. "He also said: "It is not permitted for anyone to accept our views if they do not know from where we got them."

*Imam Malik* (may Allah grant him mercy) said: "Everyone after the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) will have his sayings accepted or rejected – not so that of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)."

*Imam Shafi'i* (may Allah grant him mercy) said: "The Muslims are unanimously agreed that if a *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is made clear to someone, it is not permitted for him to leave it for the saying of anyone else."

*Imam Ahmad* (may Allah grant him mercy) said: "The opinion of al-Awza'i, the opinion of Malik, the opinion of Abu Hanifah: all of their opinions are equal in my eyes. However, the proof is in the narrations [from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his Companions]. He also said: "Whoever rejects a statement of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is on the brink of destruction."

Accordingly, with these statements of theirs, no one with intellect will say that the four *Imams* have established a pathway (called *Madhhab*) which must be followed to get to the message of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Neither did anyone of them declare a *Madhhab* for himself, thereby limiting

Islamic scholarship and practices to its members to the detriment of authentic *Ahadith* and more superior or consensus view point of other scholars. Thus, the scholars of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamah*, are of the understanding that the four *Imams* are notable scholars whose verdicts can be relied upon, in the absence of authentic *Hadith*, subject to the superiority of the opinion on the matter and without preference to their personalities.

Sha'rani in *Al-Mizan* writes that Abu Dawood reported that he asked from *Imam Ahmad*, whether he (Abu Dawood) should follow *Imam Awza'i* or *Imam Malik*? *Imam Ahmad* answered: "Do not follow me or *Imam Malik*, *Imam Shafi'i*, *Imam Abu Hanifah*, *Imam Awza'i*, or *Imam Sufyan Thauri*, but always follow the first source which all of them have followed, and that is the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. It is stupidity to include the views of others in one's faith and stick to them."

Paraphrasing Ibn Qayyim's (may Allah grant him mercy) opinion on the issue of following *Madhhab*, he said that: "Is it that the *Madhhabs* of the Companions of Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) died out and those who came after them and those of the rest except the *Madhhabs* of four men only from amongst all the rest of the scholars and *Imams*?! Whosoever follows anyone except the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is bound to loose. Whosoever is prejudiced and regards his *Imam* exclusively right among all others and thinks only of his *Imam's* following and obedience is mistaken."

Further to the above, Ibn Qayyim (may Allah grant him mercy) also said: "There is nothing obligatory except what Allah, the Most High, and His Messenger have made obligatory. Neither Allah nor His Messenger made it obligatory to follow the school of thought, *Madhhab*, of any person from the *Ummah* and to follow him alone in the Religion. The best generations passed by without anyone doing this. Rather, that which Allah, the Most High, and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made obligatory upon the Companions, the *Taabi'een* and those who came after them is the same as that which He made obligatory upon those after them until the Day of Resurrection."

In the *Kitab al-Qada* of *Al-Insaf*, it has been quoted from Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyyah (may Allah grant him mercy) that: "Anyone who makes it obligatory to blindly follow a specific *Imam* should be asked to repent and give up fixated following and if he is not prepared for it, he should be executed, since this is associating partners with Allah in setting down *Shari'ah* which is one of the unique rights of the Lord."

Ibn Taimiyyah (may Allah grant him mercy) also said: "Bigots try to defend their religious leaders with flimsy arguments. For example, they say 'there must be some very strong arguments, that is why their *Imam* left this *Hadith* and did not act according to it' or 'he might have discovered fault, and for this reason he left this *Hadith*.' These arguments cannot be called arguments at all. Bigots talk such absurdities and blind followers play yes men."

We conclude on this matter by quoting Ibn Qayyim (may Allah grant him mercy) so that you take a stand on this issue and he said: "It would still not be obligatory upon any one to ever have to follow the *Madhhab* of a certain man from the *Ummah*, to the extent that he accepts all his sayings and rejects everyone else's sayings. No scholar of Islam has ever said this. Even further from the truth is the saying of those who say that one must stick to the *Madhhab* of a single scholar and further still from the truth is the one who says, he must follow one of the four *Madhhabs*! O Allah, how strange!"

We hope that our readers will find the above exposition beneficial and be a justification for them to unquestionably change any perspectives of dogmatic inclinations to *Madhhab* in favour of the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). We equally believe that this Treatise will be a justification for discarding some of the deep rooted errors on prostration for forgetfulness in the prayer, which are of *Madhhab* connotations, contained in *Al-Ahkdari* and some other *Fiqh* books, especially those mentioned earlier.

For a more detailed study on the misconception about *Madhhab*, we urge our readers to study the introductory part of "The *Salah*: The Prophet's Prayer Described" by *Imam* Muhammad Nasrudeen Al-Albani; "The Evolution of *Madhhab*" by Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips; and "Should a Muslim Follow a Particular *Madhhab*" by Sheikh Muhammad Sultan Al-Ma'soomi Al-Khajnadee.

## PART II

### The Conditions for the Validity of the Prayer

Prayer is established and validated on three imperatives. They are the conditions, pillars, and obligations. A fourth requirement that perfects the physical actions of the prayer and provides completeness of the reward is the emphatic *Sunnah*. Thus, prayer is not valid, if performed without prior knowledge of these imperatives and the emphatic *Sunnah* acts.

#### **The Conditions (*Shuruut*) of the Prayer:**

The conditions of the prayer are those on which the correctness of the prayer is dependent upon. Therefore, the absence of any of the conditions compels the absence of the prayer.

#### **The First:** Entry of the time.

The evidence that the entry of time is a condition for prayer is the statement of Allah, the Most High: "*Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours.*" (Al-Nisa: 103), meaning it is obligated at fixed times.

#### **The Second:** Purification (*Wudu*).

Due to the statement of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) "*A prayer is not accepted without purification.*"

#### **The Third:** Avoidance of Impurity.

There must not be any impurity on your garment, nor on your body, nor on the ground which you will pray upon.

An Important Point to Note on this Third Condition:

- If an individual nullified his *Wudu* (breaking wind, urinating, etc.) and he ended up praying forgetfully in that state of non-*Wudu*, it will be incumbent upon him to make *Wudu* and repeat the prayer.

The scholars said, that which is found in the *Sunnah* is the statement of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), *“Allah does not accept the prayer of one of you who performs Hadath (passes wind, urine or stool) until he makes Wudu.”*

- If, however, a person had upon him impurity and he forgot and prayed before washing it off, repeating the prayer is not necessitated.

As for the issue of impurity, that is because when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) became aware of the impurity in his shoes he didn't start the prayer from the beginning again (he just took the shoes off and continued).

#### **The Fourth:** Covering the 'Awrah.

The proof is the statement of Allah, the Most High: *“O Children of Adam! Take your adornment (by wearing your clean clothes), while praying and going round (the Tawaf of) the Ka'bah, and eat and drink but waste not by extravagance.”* (Al-A'raf: 13).

And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to Jabir b. Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) regarding clothing. *“If the garment is large enough wrap it around the body (covering the shoulders), and if it is tight (too short) then use it as an Izar (tie it around your waist only).”*

**The Fifth:** Facing the Direction of the *Qiblah*.

Due to the statement of Allah, the Most High: *“And from where so ever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah), and where so ever you are, turn your faces towards it (when you pray) ...”* (Baqarah: 150).

**The Sixth:** The Intention. The intention is a condition for the correctness of the prayer.

The proof is the statement of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) *“Deeds are purely according to intention and every person shall have what he intended.”*

**The Pillars (*Arka'an*) of the Prayer:**

The Pillars of *Salah* are imperative and if deliberately omitted or added to, the *Salah* is nullified. But if a person forgetfully omits any of them, he must either get back to it and perform it and then continue with his prayer or he discards that deficient *Raka'ah* and perform a replacement of it and proceed on, depending on the stage at which he remembers the omission. And if a person forgetfully adds a pillar in a *Raka'ah* (and if that is the only addition in the prayer), then he should discard that *Raka'ah* and perform a replacement of it and proceed on with his prayer to completion. Thus, in both cases *Sujudus Sahw* (prostration for forgetfulness) is obligatory to compensate for the mistake and uphold the validity of the prayer. The pillars are as follows: -



**The First:** Standing; with ability to do so.

**The Second:** *Takbirah al-Ihram*, the opening 'Allahu Akbar'.

**The Third:** Recitation of *al-Fatihah*.

**The Fourth:** The Bowing (*Ruku*).

**The Fifth:** Rising up from bowing.

**The Sixth:** The prostration (*Sujud*).

**The Seventh:** Sitting between the two prostrations.

**The Eighth:** The second prostration, because every unit of prayer must have two prostrations.

**The Ninth:** The final *Tashahhud*.

**The Tenth:** The sitting for the final *Tashahhud*.

**The Eleventh:** Prayers upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the final *Tashahhud*.

**The Twelfth:** Correct order of the pillars; the standing, then the bowing, then rising up from it, then prostration, then sitting between the two prostrations, then the second prostration. So, for example, if he began with the prostration before the bowing, his prayer would be invalid, because he has contravened the order.

**The Thirteenth:** Tranquility (being at ease and settled) in the pillars.

Tranquility is that a person is at ease in the position of that particular pillar until every bone returns into its natural position. The scholars have said that is what tranquility is, even a little of it, so whosoever

does not have tranquility in his prayer then there is no prayer for him even if he prayed a thousand times.

Shaikh Al-Uthaimeen (may Allah grant him mercy) said, in this regard, we realize the error of what we witness from many people who pray without having tranquility, especially in the standing after the bowing, and the sitting in-between the two prostrations. So you see, before a person is even upright in standing from the bowing, he has already gone down into prostration again. This is a great error, if a person prays upon this way a thousand times it would not be accepted from him, since the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to the man who was missing out the tranquility in his prayer – after the man came and gave *Salam* to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), “*Go back and pray again, for you have not prayed...*” This indicates that if someone prays a prayer and misses any of the pillars or obligations generally speaking, then there is no valid prayer for him. Even if he was ignorant of the issue of the pillars, there is still no valid prayer for him.

**The Fourteenth:** The *Taslim* (*Salam*) is a pillar, and it is not permissible to miss it, either in the obligatory or supererogatory prayers.

### **The Obligations (*Wajiba’at*) of the Prayer:**

The obligations are the statements or actions that if a person left [one of them] deliberately, his prayer would become invalid, but if he left them forgetfully then he can compensate for them with the prostration of forgetfulness. These acts are considered mandatory because they were either commanded by the Prophet (peace

and blessings of Allah be upon him) or routinely practiced by him without interruption or both. They are:

1. The *Takbira'at* (saying '*Allahu Akbar*') other than the opening *Takbir*.

**The Exception is:** The *Takbir* to enter into bowing for the one who is late and catches the *Imam* in bowing (*Ruku'u*), for that is an Emphatic *Sunnah* only according to the scholars of jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) (may Allah have mercy upon them).

2. Adherence to the sequence of reciting *al-Fatihah* before the recitation of *Surah*.
3. Saying the supplication of bowing such as '*Subhana Rabbi al-Adhim*, while bowing.
4. Saying the supplication of raising from bowing '*Sami' Allahu Liman Hamidahu*' when rising up from bowing by the *Imam* and the one following *Imam* or the one praying alone.
5. Saying the supplication '*Rabbana'a wa lak al-Hamd*' after having risen up from bowing (i.e. while standing in the upright position), by the *Imam* and the one following *Imam* or the one praying alone.
6. Saying the supplications of prostration such as '*Subhana Rabbi al-'Ala*' while in prostration.
7. Supplicating for forgiveness in between the two prostrations such as '*Rabbi Ighfirli ighfirli*' while sitting between the two prostrations.
8. The first *Tashahhud*.
9. The sitting for the first *Tashahhud*.

Please note that there is no prostration for forgetfulness in forgetfulness relating to matters other than the above mentioned **pillars** and **obligations** of *Salah*. And every other acts of prayers, other than the aforementioned pillars and obligations, are Emphatic *Sunnah*. The Emphatic *Sunnah* for prayer are at least sixty-five and are listed in Part V of this Treatise.

### **PART III**

## **Prostration for Forgetfulness (*Sujudus-Sahw*) for the Compensation of Mistakes in the Prayer:**

### **Introduction:**

Prayer is a sacred duty for which mankind is created. It accords the servants of Allah (the Magnificent) the privilege to stand, five times, before their Lord, in awe coupled with humility, and submissiveness. In view of the significance of prayer in the life of a servant, it is incumbent upon every Muslim to study and comprehend all that prayer encompasses; as precondition for ensuring and safeguarding the validity of his prayers. Once a person stands for prayer, he must recognise that he is standing before his Lord and therefore must do everything conscientiously and categorically as commanded of him, to discharge that obligation, with the utmost presence of the heart and in accordance with the *Sunnah*, as demonstrated by the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

It is also important to be aware that the structure of the *Salah*, as demonstrated and taught by the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is sacrosanct and so must be preserved under all circumstances. The structure of the prayer is established on fourteen pillars, connected by nine obligations and fortified by more than sixty-five emphatic *Sunnah*. Thus, all the fourteen pillars of the prayer and the nine obligations must be preserved without willful repetition or omission while inadvertent acts of repetitions and omissions (tolerated to be rectified in the *Sunnah*) are appropriately compensated for, to restore and

preserve the structure and form of the prayer. This is the reason why the two prostrations for the compensation of forgetful mistakes and doubts are established in the *Sunnah*. It should be noted that absolute presence of the heart in the prayer is imperative upon every praying person, to enjoy the fruits of his *Salah* and avoid any desire for compensation for mistakes in the prayer.

Ibn Qayyim (may Allah grant him mercy) said: "The fruit of *Salah* is the attention of the servant upon his Lord and the attention of Allah given to His servant. And Allah made the spirit of *Salah* and the means to reap its fruits that the slave gives his full attention and complete devotion to Him" Allah (*Subhanahu Wata'Alah*) commanded: "And stand before Allah in devout (frame of mind)" (2:238). This standing is of utmost greatness and magnificence for a servant as to be negligent to effortlessly commit compound mistakes in the *Salah*, intentional or otherwise. And worst still, even when a person commits correctible mistakes, he displays inability to resolve and preserve the validity of his prayer such that he shamelessly abandons it to restart afresh. Such a person is so oblivious of the magnificence of his standing before his Lord and callous of his venerated status in that situation, if he could abandon his prayer, as if is a comedy. Inability to compensate for errors as sanctioned in the *Sunnah* and ignorance that induces abandonment of the prayer, on account of mistakes, are both self-inflicted diseases, one must escape from, without a moment's delay.

In view of the above, scholars have warned that he who, on account of occurrence of mistakes or doubts in his prayer, discards the prayer due to inability to correctly compensate for his mistakes or doubts as established in the *Sunnah*, is liable to the following three restraints in combination:

- He has committed a sinful conduct;
- he has shown disobedience to Allah; and
- consequently, he must repent and seek His forgiveness.

### **Justification for Discarding Inappropriate Principles of Prostration for Forgetfulness in the Prayer:**

The established principles of prostration for forgetfulness, as practiced over here, in Nigeria, are fundamentally sourced from Al-Ahkdari, Risalah, and similar Fiqh books. However, our comparative review of these principles with those in the Treatise on Prostration for Forgetfulness by Al-Uthaimeen (may Allah grant him mercy) revealed seeming differences. This led to further research on the matter and the findings are thoroughly analysed and discussed in this Part. Indeed, they are sources of enhanced guidance for all of us.

It is notable that, most often than not, errors of religious practices originate and persist, from scholarly publications not because they have not been refuted but mostly because the authors perhaps refuse to accept the corrections and publicise. Then, such errors are passed on from generation to generation, through such publications, as if they have never been justifiably refuted, until they

come to terms with the generation of readers who are incapable of questioning them, even when there are glaring justification for the refutation and rejection of the mistakes.

Hence, we are neither swayed by the longevity of the enshrinement of the practices established in Al-Akhidari and similar Fiqh books, in our prayers nor the muteness of our scholars over the errors contained therein, to unquestionable accept the authenticity of his classification of the obligatory and *Sunnah* acts of the prayer and the principles for the prostration for forgetfulness. We are equally not in agreement with what he classified as recommended acts of the prayer. Accordingly, we have analysed and displayed the mistakes involved in the prostrations for forgetfulness contained in Al-Akhidari in Part IV of this Book. In articulating our position regarding this matter, we are persuaded by one of the statements of Ibn Qayyim.

**Ibn Qayyim** (may Allah grant him mercy) says: *“A person is to pay no attention to the words of those (people of knowledge) who always seek concessions and only comply with minimum obligatory aspects, all the while, other (people of knowledge) dispute with them over such understanding and views and so declare what those people deem as optional to be obligatory. It is also possible that they disregard authentic Ahadith and established acts of Sunnah that oppose what they are upon, on grounds that they are following the Madhhab of so and so. Evidently, this is an invalid excuse that Allah does not accept and also does not relieve a person from responsibility for not practicing the Sunnah after*



*knowing about it."* Thus, acts of religious practices that cannot be justified by any *Hadith* or are even contradictory to authentic *Ahadith*, contained in some scholars' publications, have become religious norm not because there wasn't any refutation against them (by even scholars of superior refute) but because the authors were, perhaps, adamant even after knowing the truth and ignorant readers play yes men to it.

Consequently, it shouldn't be strange to our readers that we are raising justifications for the rejection of some of the matters for which prostration for forgetfulness are established by Al-Ahkdari. A person should not be misguided by the longevity of the practice, rather he should be impelled by the authenticity of the position articulated and its consonance with the *Sunnah*. Thus, we believe it is most rational, for our readers, to discard the erroneous principles of prostration for forgetfulness in the prayer as enunciated in "Al-Ahkdari" to the authentic ones established and practiced by the majority of the scholars of *ahlus-sunnah wal Jamah*.

### **Prostration for Forgetfulness (*Sujudus-Sahw*) – Principles & Practice:**

Forgetfulness and doubts are inevitable human attributes. But their causes in prayer are mostly induced by our enemy, the Satan, out of envy for the abundance of the reward of its successful outcome. Sometimes forgetfulness and doubts come to us due to our absent mindedness, negligence, and weak minded perception of the magnitude and significance of that choicest standing before the Lord. Accordingly, because of our inherent weaknesses, Allah (the Most Gracious) gifted His servants with the solution of two

prostrations to compensate for certain errors of forgetfulness and doubts that inevitably occur to a person during his prayers. Indeed, Allah caused His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to forget in his prayer, in some instances, to set example on how to compensate for forgetful mistakes in the prayer. This has therefore, foreclosed the possibilities of abandoning prayer whenever a person encounters mistakes or doubts. Accordingly, knowledge of the prostration for forgetfulness is obligatory upon every Muslim.

The Prostration for Forgetfulness is “two prostrations” that the one praying makes in order to compensate for his mistakes, occurring in the prayer, due to forgetfulness. The two prostrations are sanctioned as compensation for specific mistakes or doubts and must be applied in accordance with their established principles to preserve the structure and validity of the prayer. The prostrations are done after the *Tashahhud*, either **before** *Salam* or **after** *Salam* depending upon the nature of the error. And for emphasis, note that there is no *Tashahhud* after the prostration. Its causes are three:

- i. Addition of something.
- ii. Omission of something.
- iii. Being in a state of doubt.

It is noteworthy that the most authentic practices for prostrations for forgetfulness in the prayer are established only on forgetfulness associated with the pillars, with the exception of *Takbirah al-Ihram*, (and they are thirteen in number) and the obligations (which are nine in number). They are as enumerated in Part II and knowledge

of them is a condition for the validity of one's prayer. It is unequivocal that any acts of forgetfulness in prayers, entailing other than these pillars and obligations, do not require prostrations for forgetfulness. Rather, prostration for forgetfulness for acts of omission or addition other than them invalidates the prayer. And it is also important to note that deliberate addition or omission of any pillar or obligation automatically invalidates the prayer and the prayer must be repeated.

Al-Uthaimeen (may Allah grant him mercy) said "Many people are ignorant about many of the "**correct**" rulings concerning the *Sujudus-Sahw* (prostration for forgetfulness) in the prayer. Some of them leave the *Sujudus-Sahw* when it is obligatory upon them; others perform the prostration in other than its correct place; some perform it before the *Salam* (salutation at the end of the prayer) even in cases when it has to be performed after the *Salam*; others prostrate after the *Salam* even when it should be performed before it." He made this affirmation in his Treatise "Prostration for Forgetfulness in the Prayer" (*Risaalah fee Sujudus-Sahw*). We find his exposition vital to everyone, and in particular to those who rely on the likes of "Al-Risala, Al-Izziyah and Al-Ahkdari for the conditions governing their prayers and prostration for forgetfulness.

**Acceptable timeframe for the correction of mistakes remembered after the *Salam*:** It is imperative to note that errors of forgetfulness, for which prostration for forgetfulness is necessary, if remembered a short while after prayer and before leaving the *Masjid* can be corrected while the one remembered long time afterwards (even

if one hasn't left the *Masjid*) cannot be corrected and/or compensated for. Accordingly, it is significant to point out to our readers, what is meant by a 'short while' time duration after prayers, within which it is acceptable for one to compensate for his mistakes for forgetfulness, remembered after exiting the prayer. Shaikh Al-Uthaimeen (may Allah have mercy on him) has given a verdict of a time frame of 2 to 3 minutes, after *Salam*, as an acceptable short while, provided the person has not left the *Masjid*. Thus, all references to a short while after prayer, in the context of prostration for forgetfulness in this Treatise, relate to this time duration suggested by our noble Shaikh (may Allah have mercy on him).

We also urge our readers to note that, in the context of our discussion of prostration for forgetfulness in this Treatise, unless otherwise categorically stated, all generic phrases that say "*make Tashahhud and make Salam*" mean: "*The recitation of the final Tashahhud, the sending of salutations on the Prophet, seeking refuge from the four matters [i.e. the punishment of Hellfire; the punishment of the grave; the trials of living and dying; and the evil (trials) of the False Christ], and also other subsequent supplications that are emphatic Sunnah for that stage, before making Salam.*" Thus, it is never intended to request the one praying to only recite the *Tashahhud* and make *Salam*.

It is equally very important to take careful note of the following matters for correct usage in the context of prostration for forgetfulness:

- **A Raka'ah** in prayer is, all acts of prayer, starting from and including the *Takbir*, at standing, to the end of the second *Sujud*.
- **The Tashahhud** and sitting for it are independent of *Raka'ah* and are performed either at the end of the second *Raka'ah* and/or at the completion of the *Salah*.
- **Making Intention for Acts of Correction in the Salah:** Whenever a person takes corrective action that entails the discarding of *Raka'ah* or a part thereof or going back to perform an omitted pillar, then this must be based on prior intention. That is, he must make intention (within his mind without utterance) to discard the invalid *Raka'ah* or pillar(s) as well as the act of performing its replacement or the appropriate correction. This is applicable in the context of our discussion on the prostration for forgetfulness, whether or not categorically specified.

We have arranged the subject of prostration for forgetfulness in an easy to understand and remember pattern. If you endeavour to confine issues to the classification outlined below (i.e. block issues to the topics outlined) you may find it easy to recall and apply the same principles on the occurrences of related matters, not categorically mentioned as examples. Thus, the broad outline of our discussion on prostration for forgetfulness is as follows:

1. Forgetfulness Relating to Pillars (*Arka'an*): -
  - A. Forgetful Addition of Pillar.
  - B. Giving Salutations (*Salam*) before the Completion of the Prayer.
  - C. Omission of Pillar.

## 2. Forgetfulness Relating to Obligations (*Wajiba'at*): -

- ✓ Omission of Obligation.
- ✓ Addition of Obligation i.e. the first *Tashahhud*.

## 3. Doubt (*Shak*):

- ✓ Doubt in prayer are of two kinds.
  - i. Doubt over two possibilities, with a **Resort** to that which is Overwhelming.
  - ii. Doubt over two possibilities, with a **Resort** to that which is the minimum, certain (*Aqal*).

## 4. Forgetfulness Entailing *Qabla Salam* and *Ba'ada Salam*, Occurring at the Same Time.

## 5. Forgetfulness for one Praying Behind an *Imam*.

## 6. Summary of the Acts of Prostration for Forgetfulness.

## 7. Errors of Forgetfulness and Consequential Acts that Invalidate the Prayer.

### 1. Forgetfulness Relating to Pillars (*Arka'an*): -

Forgetfulness relating to pillars can be viewed from three perspectives i.e.

- a. forgetful addition;
- b. giving *Salam* before the completion of the prayer; and
- c. forgetful omission.

Forgetfulness related to pillars entail *Ba'ada Salam* (prostration after *Salam*) in all circumstances, except for two situations and the exceptions are discussed under the last bullet point below. The following are the reasons for making *Ba'ada Salam* or *Qabla Salam* for the forgetfulness relating to pillars:

- It may be an outright addition of a pillar in a *Raka'ah* which automatically invalidates the *Raka'ah* and impels discarding and performance of a replacement *Raka'ah*. The mistake is then, compensated with prostration after *Salam*.
- It may be that a person forgetfully repeats the final *Tashahhud* or the Salutation on the Prophet, and then he compensates his mistake with *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam*.
- It may be an omission which must be corrected by going back to perform the particular act of omission, thereby resulting in addition of a part of *Raka'ah*; or salvage the act of omission by discarding the deficient *Raka'ah* and performing a replacement of it. And in either case the compensation is *Ba'ada Salam* except for the situation in the next bullet point.
- However, a person compensates omission or addition of pillar(s) with prostration before *Salam* (*Sujudu Qabla Salam*): If one omits or adds a pillar in the first or second *Raka'ah* of a four-*Raka'ah* prayer and remembers his omission or addition in the fourth *Raka'ah* or shortly after the *Salam*, then he must discard the deficient *Raka'ah* (i.e. the *Raka'ah* in which the omission occurred) or the *Raka'ah* with a repeated pillar and perform its replacement. In such circumstance, as the first or the second *Raka'ah* is discarded, the first *Tashahhud* will cease to be established in its rightful place (i.e. after the second *Raka'ah*), due to the adjustment of the counting sequence of the *Raka'ah*. Thus,

a case of omission of the first *Tashahhud* will automatically manifest, impelling the performance of *Qabla Salam*. And according to the principles of Jurisprudence, when mistakes necessitating *Ba'ada Salam* and *Qabla Salam* occur in the prayer, the *Qabla Salam* prevails.

#### **A. Forgetful Addition of Pillar(s):**

You are reminded that deliberate addition or repetition of any of the pillars automatically invalidates the prayer. However, if the addition or repetition of a pillar is due to forgetfulness, then there are established avenues for compensation to validate and preserve the prayer.

Similarly, forgetful addition of a complete *Raka'ah*, over and above the fixed number of the *Raka'ah* for the particular prayer, can equally be compensated for to validate the prayer.

*Shaikh Al-Uthaimeen* (may Allah grant him mercy) explained in his *Risaalah fee Sujudus-Sahw* that, if a person praying, forgetfully adds an extra standing, sitting, bowing or prostration, or any of the pillars, he should compensate for the error by making *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* [i.e. two prostrations after *Salam* followed with a *Salam*]. And he did not specify any limit as to the number of addition of the pillars that would invalidate a *Raka'ah* or the *Salah*. Thus, his position apparently suggests the possibility of a *Salah* in which a *Raka'ah* with more than one duplicated pillar or even with all the *Raka'ah* with duplicated pillars being salvaged and validated by *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam*. Incidentally, we were earlier, mistakenly, swayed by his position and have



conveyed this understanding through our presentations and Bulletins on this subject.

However, we find the application of the principles opined by Al-Uthaimen (i.e. compensating addition of pillar(s) with *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* without restriction) detrimental to the preservation of the structure of the prayer within the scope of its established pillars. His opinion has the consequence of padding the structure of the prayer with pillars without increasing the number of the *Raka'ah*. Thus, it implies that addition of pillar/pillars does/do not invalidate a *Raka'ah* or the prayer, no matter how many times it happens in the prayer. In this regards, the total number of *Raka'ah* of the prayer will never increase. For instance, if a person forgetfully adds a pillar in each *Raka'ah* of a four *Raka'ah* prayer, he can uphold the validity of his prayer by making prostration for forgetfulness after the *Salam*.

We also find this position opposed to the case of omission of pillar even though both omission and addition of pillar in the prayer are of the same consequence and hence ought to be governed by the same jurisprudential principles. It is notable that they are of the same class and status, and possess the same consequence in both deliberate and unintentional acts.

It is noteworthy that, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) established and preserved the prayer with the pillars and obligations as earlier explained. No single prayer was reported from him (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) where he performed a *Raka'ah* with a

duplicated or omitted pillar. Therefore, both omission and addition of pillar(s) in any *Raka'ah* of the prayer affect the structure of the prayer in the same manner, as they result in excess or deficiency as the case may be. Accordingly, forgetful addition or omission of pillar(s) must be tackled by the same jurisprudential principles to ensure that their occurrences are of the same consequence on the prayer.

Fortunately, Ibn Qudama, Ibn Rushd and Ibn Hubairah (may Allah grant them mercy) have given a more cogent verdict on the forgetful addition of a pillar in a *Raka'ah* of a prayer in *Al-Mughni*, *Al-Bida'ayah* and *Al-ifsah* respectively. They said if a person forgetfully adds any pillar (such as an extra standing, sitting, bowing, prostration, or recitation of *al-Fatihah*) in a *Raka'ah*, then that *Raka'ah* is invalidated and should be discarded. A replacement *Raka'ah* should be performed and then compensate the error with the prostration for forgetfulness after the *Salam*. And if a person forgetfully adds two pillars in a *Raka'ah* or in the prayer, then the prayer is invalidated and he must repeat it. This is a very cogent position that ensures the preservation of the structure of the prayer and aligns and harmonises the consequences of forgetful addition and omission of pillars in the prayer on the same jurisprudential principles. Accordingly, we have dropped Al-Uthaimeen's opinion in favour of the verdicts of Ibn Qudamah, Ibn Rushd and Ibn Hubairah (may Allah grant them mercy).

For further clarity, it is notable that the structure of the prayer is established by the pillars and reinforced by the obligatory acts and fortified by the *Sunnah* acts. The preservation of the pillars in their sequence of performance is also a pillar. This is why if a person forgetfully omits a pillar and remembers before reaching its place, then it is obligatory for him to go back to it and perform it and validate that particular *Raka'ah* before proceeding on. But if he remembers after exceeding its place, then he discards the *Raka'ah* for its deficiency and perform a replacement *Raka'ah* instead. Similarly, if a person forgetfully adds a pillar in a *Raka'ah*, then he has created an excess without an opportunity to correct and so he promptly discards it and perform a replacement *Raka'ah* instead. This means that a valid *Raka'ah* is neither padded with a pillar nor is deficient of a pillar but is a *Raka'ah* with its pillars as sequentially established and preserved in the *Sunnah*. Accordingly, if a *Raka'ah* is inadvertently padded or rendered deficient, then in either case it must be promptly discarded for a perfect and valid *Raka'ah*.

In view of the foregoing, forgetful addition of pillar(s) can be analysed into three categories as follows:

- a) Addition of pillar or pillars in a *Raka'ah* or in the *Salah*.
- b) Addition (Repetition) of the final *Tashahhud* or the Salutation on the Prophet.
- c) Addition of a *Raka'ah* over and above the fixed number of *Raka'ah* for the particular *Salah*.

#### a. Addition of Pillar(s) in a *Raka'ah* or in the *Salah*:

- ✓ Forgetful addition of a pillar (*Rukn*) in a *Raka'ah* invalidates the *Raka'ah*. Thus, if a person adds a pillar in a *Raka'ah* in the course of his *Salah*, he must discard that *Raka'ah* and then, perform a replacement *Raka'ah* and compensate for his mistake with *Ba'ada Salam* [i.e. two prostrations after *Salam* followed with a *Salam*] or *Qabla Salam* [i.e. two prostrations before *Salam*], depending on the stage at which he discarded the *Raka'ah*.
- ✓ Forgetful addition of two pillars in a *Raka'ah* or in the prayer invalidates the prayer and necessitates repetition. Thus, if a person adds two pillars in a *Raka'ah* or in the *Salah*, then the *Salah* is invalidated, he should make *Salam* and exit the *Salah* and repeat it.

It is important to note that if a person commits forgetful mistake relating to a pillar in the course of his prayer, then he must resort to solution, immediately he remembers it. Consequently, if a person adds a pillar or pillars in the course of the prayer, then there are **three** possible stages at which he might remember his addition. He may remember it:

- while doing the act of addition; or
  - after making the addition but before *Salam*; or
  - after making the *Salam*.
- i. If a person forgetfully adds a pillar (e.g. extra *Ruku'u* or *Sujud*) in one of the *Raka'ah*, in the course of his prayer, and he remembers while still in the act of making the addition, then he must promptly leave that addition (i.e.

he must not complete it) and discard the *Raka'ah*. Then, if he is not already in the standing position, he should, straight away make *Takbir* and move to the upright standing position to perform a replacement *Raka'ah*. And on the completion of his prayer and after making *Salam* he should make two prostrations and make *Salam* again.

It is indeed, very significant to note that, if a person remembers the addition, while in the course of making it, and still ignores to stop it forthwith, then the prayer is invalidated. This is because, the forward action taken to complete the addition (after remembering his mistake) tantamount to intentional act of addition and thus automatically invalidates the prayer.

An example is, a person rose from *Ruku'u* in the second *Raka'ah* of, say, *Isha* prayer and after standing upright (instead of going for *Sujud*), he forgetfully made *Ruku'u* again (thinking that he did not do it) but as soon as he started making the glorification, he remembered that he was repeating the *Ruku'u* for the second time. Then, he must promptly stop the glorification and he discards the acts of the *Raka'ah* so far performed and reverts to the starting point of a *Raka'ah*. Accordingly, he rises up by making *Takbir* (and certainly not by saying *Sami Allahu liman hamidahu*) to the upright standing position, and recites *al-Fatihah* and a *Surah* and proceeds to perform

a replacement of the discarded *Raka'ah*. Then, on completion of his prayer and after making *Salam*, he should make *Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

Another example is that, a person forgetfully made a third *Sujud*, say, in the last *Raka'ah* of *Zuhr* prayer and immediately on placing his forehead and nose on the ground, he remembered that he was in the act of making a third *Sujud*. Then, he should promptly abandon the *Sujud* and rise up and while doing that, resolves his intention to discard that *Raka'ah*, make *Jalsatu-al-istirah*, and then stand up to perform the last *Raka'ah* as a replacement of the discarded, last *Raka'ah*. He then, proceeds to complete the *Salah* and make the final *Tashahhud* and all that follows and make *Salam* and perform *Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

- ii. If a person forgetfully adds a pillar (e.g. extra standing, sitting, bowing or prostration) in the course of his prayer, and he remembers after performing the act of addition, then he should discard the *Raka'ah*, in which he added the pillar and perform a replacement *Raka'ah* instead. And on completion of his prayer and after making the final *Tashahhud* and what follows, he either makes *Sujudu Qabla Salam* or *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* depending on the stage at which he recalled his mistake.

For instance, a person praying forgetfully recited *al-Fatihah* twice in the first *Raka'ah* of, say *Asr* prayer. And

he recalled his mistake in the third *Raka'ah*, then he should discard the first *Raka'ah*, as is invalid, and the third *Raka'ah* he was upon it becomes the second and on completion of the *Raka'ah*, he should sit for the first *Tashahhud* and make it. He should perform two more *Raka'ah* to complete his prayer. Then, after the final *Tashahhud* and *Salam*, he should make two prostrations and make *Salam* again.

Another example is, say, a person made three *Sajdah* in the first *Raka'ah* of *Isha* prayer. He recalled his mistake while standing for the fourth *Raka'ah*. He should discard the first *Raka'ah* and then the *Raka'ah* he is upon it becomes his third *Raka'ah* after which he performs the fourth *Raka'ah* to complete his prayer. Then, after making the final *Tashahhud* and what follows, make *Qabla Salam* and make *Salam*. He is impelled to do *Qabla Salam*, as compensation for his error, because as a result of discarding the first *Raka'ah*, the first *Tashahhud* has seized to be established in its rightful place, of being after the second *Raka'ah* in the adjusted counting sequence of the *Raka'ah*.

- iii. If a person forgetfully adds a pillar (e.g. extra standing, sitting, bowing or prostration) in one of the *Raka'ah*, in the course of his prayer, and he remembers the addition after the *Salam*. Then,

- If he remembers within the acceptable short while for making compensation for the mistake, then he should discard the particular *Raka'ah* in which the addition was made and he stands up to perform a replacement *Raka'ah* for the one discarded and completes his prayer. Then, if the addition was in the first or the second *Raka'ah*, he compensates his mistake with *Sujudu Qabla Salam*. But if the addition was either in the third or fourth *Raka'ah*, then he compensates with *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam*.
- If, he remembers his addition long after the *Salam*, then his prayer is invalidated, he must repeat it.

For example, a person praying *Asr*, forgetfully made *Ruku'u* twice in the last *Raka'ah*. And he recalled his mistake, shortly after making the *Salam*. Then he is impelled to discard his fourth *Raka'ah* and perform a replacement *Raka'ah* for it and make the final *Tashahhud* and what follows and make *Salam* and make *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

But if the addition of the *Ruku'u*, in the above example, were to be in the first or second *Raka'ah* and he recalled his mistake, shortly after making the *Salam*, then after discarding the *Raka'ah* he should compensate his mistake with *Sujudu Qabla Salam*.

- iv. If a person forgetfully adds two pillars in a *Raka'ah* or in the *Salah* [i.e. in two separate *Raka'ah*], then the prayer



is invalidated and he must repeat his prayer as soon as he remembers. This is so, whether he remembers it before exiting the *Salah* or afterwards.

For example, a person praying *Maghrib*, forgetfully recited *al-Fatihah* twice in the first *Raka'ah* and made three *Sajdah* in the same *Raka'ah*. And he did not recall the first mistake until after committing the second one, as he stood for the second *Raka'ah*. Therefore, his prayer is invalidated, he should make *Salam* to exit the prayer and start it afresh.

Another example is, a person praying *Asr*, forgetfully made *Ruku'u* twice in the second *Raka'ah* and made three *Sajdah* in the last *Raka'ah*. Then his prayer is invalidated. He must repeat his *Salah* as soon as he recalls his mistakes.

**b. Repetition of the final *Tashahhud* or the Salutation on the Prophet:**

If a person forgetfully repeats (i.e. recites twice) the final *Tashahhud* or the Salutation on the Prophet, then he should compensate his mistake with *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam*. But if he remembers his mistake long after the *Salam*, then his prayer is invalidated and so he should repeat it.

**c. Addition of a *Raka'ah* (or Pillars) above the Fixed Number of *Raka'ah* for the Particular *Salah*:** If, a person adds a complete *Raka'ah* (or pillars) over and above the fixed number of *Raka'ah* for the particular prayer; then there are five stages at which he

could remember his mistake. For instance, a person prayed the *Zuhr* prayer as five *Raka'ah*, **but**:

- i. He remembers the addition a short while after making Salam (short-while is defined above) and has not left the *Masjid*, then he should face the *Qibla*, make *Takbir* and perform *Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.
- ii. He remembers the addition at the point of final *Tashahhud*, then he should complete the *Tashahhud* and all that follows, make *Salam* and perform *Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.
- iii. He remembers whilst performing that particular addition, i.e. the fifth *Raka'ah* in the *Zuhr* prayer, then it is obligatory upon him to promptly leave that addition and go straight and sit for the *Tashahhud*, recite the *Tashahhud* and all that follows and make *Salam* and then perform *Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again. Note that if, in that circumstances, he goes ahead to complete the fifth unit of *Raka'ah*, his prayer would be invalidated, for willfully altering the established structure of the *Zuhr* prayer from four to five *Raka'ah*. And this means that, for instance, if one remembers it while in *Ruku'u*, he should, without rising from it, proceed to sit for the *Tashahhud*.
- iv. He rose for the fifth *Raka'ah*, after he had sat at the end of the fourth *Raka'ah* and recited the final *Tashahhud* and the salutation on the Prophet and the subsequent supplications. He then, remembers that he was making

the fifth *Raka'ah*, he must promptly sit down in the position of the final *Tashahhud* – but he should not recite the *Tashahhud* and the salutation on the Prophet as he had already done that – he should go ahead straight to make *Salam* and make the two prostrations and make *Salam* again.

- v. He remembers the addition after a long time, then his prayer is invalidated, he should repeat it.

**The proof of this** is the *Hadith* of Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood (radiallahu anhu) who said that, “*The Prophet (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) prayed Zuhr with five Raka'ahs, so someone said, 'Has increase been made in the prayer?' So he replied, 'And why is that?' They said you prayed five (Raka'ahs).' So he performed two prostrations after having given the salutation*” and in a narration (there occurs) “... so he turned his feet and faced the Qiblah, and performed two Prostrations, then he gave the Salutation.” Reported by the whole group.’

## **B. Giving Salutations (*Salam*) before the Completion of the Prayer:**

Giving salutation before the completion of the prayer is a case of addition in the prayer. It is an addition and not omission, since the net actions of the prayer after he makes up for what he missed would be more, for they will include an added *Tashahhud* and *Tasleem*, at least. So whoever gives

the salutation before the completion of the prayer forgetfully and:

- i. Remembers a short while afterwards and has not left the *Masjid*, then he should complete his prayer and make salutation, and then prostrate for forgetfulness, and give salutation again.
- ii. Remembers after a long time, then he should repeat his prayer.

For instance, a person prayed *Maghrib* as two *Raka'ah* and gave *Salam*. And shortly afterwards he remembered that he prayed only two *Raka'ah* as *Maghrib*, then he should stand up promptly and perform one more *Raka'ah*, make the *Tashahhud* and all that follows and make *Salam* and perform the two prostrations and give *Salam* again.

**The proof for this** is the *Hadith* of Abu Hurairah (*Radiallahu anhu*) who said that, "The Prophet (*Sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam*) led them in the *Zuhr* prayer or the '*Asr* prayer and gave the salutation after two *Raka'ah*. Then he departed quickly from one of the doors of the mosque, and the people were saying that the prayer had been decreased. The Prophet (*sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam*) meanwhile, stood by a piece of wood placed in the mosque, leaning against it, as if he was angry. So a man stood and said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Have you forgotten or has the prayer been reduced? So the Prophet (*sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam*) said, 'I did not forget nor has it been reduced.' So the man said, 'Rather you have indeed forgotten.' So the Prophet

(sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) said to the Companions, 'Is what he is saying true. They said, 'Yes.' So the Prophet (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) went forward and prayed what remained of his prayer, then he gave the salutation, then he prostrated twice, then he gave the salutation.'" Agreed upon.

### **C. Forgetful Omission of Pillar:**

If a person omits *Takbeeratul Ihraam*, whether deliberately or forgetfully, his prayer is voided. Deliberate omission of any of the other thirteen pillars would also invalidate the prayer. But if one omits anyone of them forgetfully, then he can rectify his prayer. And depending on the stage at which a person remembers the pillar he omitted, he should either go back to perform the omitted pillar and proceed on or he would have to discard the deficient *Raka'ah* and perform a replacement of it and then proceed to complete his prayer. He then compensates his mistake with the prostration for forgetfulness. And the correction must be based on intention to perform that particular act of the correction i.e. going back to perform the omitted pillar and then proceeding on or discarding the deficient *Raka'ah* and performing a complete one in its place. The circumstances compelling the appropriate option for the correction to be performed at either situation will be explained subsequently.

It is noteworthy that, if a person omits a pillar in the first *Raka'ah* and remembers it in the second *Raka'ah* and he discards the first; or if he omits a pillar in the second *Raka'ah* and

remembers it in the third *Raka'ah* and discards the second; then he is still in a good position to perform the first *Tashahhud* in its rightful place. Similarly, if one omits a pillar in the third *Raka'ah* and remembers it in the fourth *Raka'ah* and discards it; then there wouldn't be any effect on the position of the first *Tashahhud* because it is already rightfully established and he has already exceeded its position. And in all these cases, he compensates his mistake with *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam*.

But if a person omits a pillar either in the first *Raka'ah* or the second *Raka'ah* and remembers it in the fourth *Raka'ah* and discards either of the two; then the first *Tashahhud* would be dislocated from its rightful position, leading to a case of omission of the first *Tashahhud*, necessitating *Sujudu Qabla Salam*. Thus, for discarding the *Raka'ah* the compensation is *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* while for missing out the first *Tashahhud*, due to the adjustment of the counting sequence of the *Raka'ah*, the compensation is *Sujudu Qabla Salam*. And with the occurrence of the two forms of compensation in the *Salah*, the *Sujudu Qabla Salam* prevails.

Forgetful omission of *Rukn* or *Arka'an* {pillar(s)} in prayer can be categorised into two landmark stages of remembrance as follows:

- a. Omission remembered in the course of the prayer before *Salam*; and
- b. Omission remembered shortly after *Salam*.

**a) Forgetful Omission of *Rukn* or *Arka'an* [pillar(s)] Remembered in the Course of the Prayer, before *Salam*:**

If a person forgets pillar(s) in the course of the prayer, then he remembers it at three possible stages in the prayer. And the methodology of the correction of the omitted pillar is tied to the stage. One may remember the omission of the pillar:

- before reaching its place in the prayer; or
- on exactly reaching its place in the prayer; or
- after passing its place in the prayer but before *Salam*.

The details on how to make the corrections are as discussed below:

- i. If, a person forgets a pillar in a *Raka'ah* and remembers it before reaching its place, in the *Raka'ah* that is next to it, then it is obligatory upon him, to promptly discard whatever he was doing, to return to the missed pillar and perform it to validate the *Raka'ah* and then proceed with his prayer to completion. He then, compensates his mistake by performing the prostration for forgetfulness after the salutation.

An example may be the case of a person who forgets the second prostration and the sitting before it in the first *Raka'ah*. But he remembers this while reciting *al-Fatihah* in the second *Raka'ah* or after standing straight from the *Ruku'u* of the second *Raka'ah* or while at any point in the second *Raka'ah* before going to *Sujud*. He should promptly

go back to sit (in-between the two *Sajdah*), then make the applicable obligatory supplication, and prostrate for the second *Sujud*, and then proceeds to complete his prayer from there on. Then, after the final *Tashahhud* and what follows, he makes *Salam* and prostrates for forgetfulness and give salutation again (i.e. make *Ba'ada Salam*).

It is important to note that in the above example, if he were to remember his omission while in *Ruku'u* of the second *Raka'ah*, he should proceed to the sitting position without rising up from his *Ruku'u* because if he rises up from his *Ruku'u* before going to the sitting position, he would have added an extra pillar and that addition invalidates his prayer.

- ii. If he forgets a pillar in a *Raka'ah* and proceeded in his prayer and reached its place in the *Raka'ah* that followed it, and remembers his omission at exactly that same place; then, he discards the *Raka'ah* in which he forgot the pillar and upholds the *Raka'ah* that he is on it instead. He therefore, proceeds to complete his prayer and make *Tashahhud* and make *Salam*. He then, performs prostration for forgetfulness and make *Salam* again.

An example is the case of a person who forgets the second prostration in the first *Raka'ah* of *Zuhr* prayer, but remembers this whilst sitting in-between the two prostrations in the second *Raka'ah*, so he should discard the first *Raka'ah* (as it was deficient of the second *Sujud* and the



sitting in between) and this second *Raka'ah* will take its place in the count sequence, so he upholds it as his first *Raka'ah* and then perform another *Raka'ah* which becomes his second *Raka'ah* and then he sits for the first *Tashahhud*. He then goes ahead to complete his prayer by performing two more *Raka'ah*, make the final *Tashahhud* and what follows. Then he should give the salutation, prostrate for forgetfulness and then give salutation again (i.e. make *Ba'ada Salam*).

- iii. If he forgets a pillar in a *Raka'ah* and proceeded in his prayer and remembers his omission after passing its place in the *Raka'ah* subsequent to it; then, he discards the *Raka'ah* in which he omitted the pillar and reduce his count of the total number of *Raka'ah* performed, up to that point, by one. He then makes the *Raka'ah* in which he recalled his omission as the number after the reduction of one. That is, if he omitted a pillar in the first *Raka'ah* of a four-*Raka'ah* prayer, and only remembered of it in the third *Raka'ah*, then his third *Raka'ah* now becomes  $(3-1=2)$  i.e. his second *Raka'ah*, he sits for the first *Tashahhud* and he performs two more *Raka'ah* after it to complete his four units of *Raka'ah* for that prayer, make *Tashahhud* and then, make *Salam* and perform *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

An example is the case of a person who forgets the *Ruku'u* or second prostration in the first *Raka'ah* of *Zuhr* prayer, but

remembers this whilst performing the third *Raka'ah*. He discards the first *Raka'ah* for being deficient of pillar(s) and then, his third *Raka'ah* now becomes his second *Raka'ah* and he sits for the first *Tashahhud* at the end of it. He should then proceed to complete his prayer by performing two more *Raka'ah*, make the final *Tashahhud*, give the salutation, prostrate for forgetfulness and then give salutation again.

A further example is the case of a person who forgets the recitation of *al-Fatihah* or second prostration, say, in the first *Raka'ah* of *Asr* prayer, but remembers this whilst performing the fourth *Raka'ah*. He discards the first *Raka'ah* for being deficient of pillar(s), then, his fourth *Raka'ah* now becomes his third *Raka'ah* and he then proceeds to complete his prayer by performing one more *Raka'ah*, make the final *Tashahhud*, prostrate for forgetfulness before *Salam* and make *Salam*. He compensates his mistake with prostration before *Salam* because, by discarding the first *Raka'ah* (at the stage of the fourth *Raka'ah*) the first *Tashahhud* has ceased to have been rightfully established after the second *Raka'ah*. Thus, first *Tashahhud* was manifestly omitted, necessitating *Sujudu Qabla Salam*.

**b) Forgetful Omission of *Rukn* or *Arka'an* [pillar(s)] Remembered Shortly After *Salam*:**

Forgetful omission of pillar(s) remembered shortly after *Salam* can be viewed in two broad ways:

- Omission Compensated with a Complete *Raka'ah*.
- Omission Compensated with the Omitted Pillar and all Subsequent Acts.

i. **Omission Compensated with a Complete *Raka'ah*:**

Forgetful omission of any pillar in any of the *Raka'ah* from the first *Raka'ah* of the prayer to the omission of the recitation of *al-Fatihah* in the last *Raka'ah* of the prayer is compensated for with a complete *Raka'ah*.

If a person forgets the recitation of *al-Fatihah* in the last *Raka'ah* (and perhaps, instead he recited a *Surah*) and did not remember until after *Salam*, then he should promptly stand up and repeat the last *Raka'ah* by reciting in it, *al-Fatihah*. He makes the final *Tashahhud* and all that follows and make *Salam* and perform the two prostrations and make *Salam* again.

For instance, if a person forgets to recite *Surah al-Fatihah* in the last *Raka'ah* of say, *Maghrib* prayer, instead he recited a *Surah* and proceeded to complete his *Salah*. And shortly after making *Salam*, he remembered that he omitted to recite *al-Fatihah* in his last *Raka'ah*. Then, he should rise up to perform a complete *Raka'ah* (in which he recites *al-Fatihah*) and at the end of the *Raka'ah* make the final *Tashahhud* and what follows, and make *Salam*, and perform *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

Similarly, if a person forgets any pillar in any of the *Raka'ah* before the last *Raka'ah* and only remembers his omission after the *Salam*, then he should discard the *Raka'ah* in which the omission occurred and perform a complete *Raka'ah* as replacement for the discarded one. He then, makes the final *Tashahhud* and what follows and makes *Qabla Salam* or *Ba'ada Salam* depending on the *Raka'ah* he has discarded and at what stage.

It is noteworthy that if a person omits a pillar in the first or the second *Raka'ah* of a four-*Raka'ah* prayer, and remembers his omission, **after** the *Salam*, he would be impelled to discard the particular *Raka'ah*. Then the first *Tashahhud* would, automatically, seize to be established in its rightful position in the revised counting structure of the prayer. And the compensation after the replacement of the discarded *Raka'ah* would be *Sujudu Qabla Salam*. But if he omits a pillar in the third or fourth *Raka'ah* of a four-*Raka'ah* prayer, then the discarding of the third or the fourth *Raka'ah* would have no effect on the first *Tashahhud*. And thus, the compensation after the replacement of the discarded *Raka'ah* would be *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam*.

An example is, if a person forgets the second prostration in the first or second *Raka'ah* of say, *Asr* prayer, and he did not remember his omission until shortly after *Salam*. Then, he should discard the *Raka'ah* (be it the first or the second) and promptly stand up and perform a replacement

*Raka'ah* for the one discarded and make *Tashahhud* and make prostration before the *Salam* (*Qabla Salam*) and make *Salam*. For discarding the first or the second *Raka'ah*, he has a case of *Ba'ada Salam* but with the change in the counting sequence of the *Raka'ah*, the first *Tashahhud* has been dislocated from its rightful place. Thus, you notice that the first *Tashahhud* has seized to have been rightfully established after the second *Raka'ah* in the revised counting order of the *Raka'ah* of the prayer. The omission of the first *Tashahhud* in its rightful place has therefore, earned him *Qabla Salam* and the *Qabla Salam* prevails.

Another example is, if a person forgets the second prostration in the third *Raka'ah* of say, *Asr* prayer, and he did not remember his omission until shortly after *Salam*. Then, he should discard his third *Raka'ah* and promptly stand up and perform a replacement *Raka'ah* for it and make *Tashahhud* and make *Salam* and perform the two prostrations and make *Salam* again.

- ii. **Omission Compensated with the Omitted Pillar and all Subsequent Acts:** This relates exclusively to forgetful omission of *Ruku'u* or any of the pillars subsequent to it, up to the salutation on the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the last *Raka'ah* of the prayer.

If a person forgets *Ruku'u* or any of the subsequent pillars in the last *Raka'ah* (i.e. rising from *Ruku'u* or any of the two prostrations or the sitting in-between them or the final

*Tashahhud* or the salutations on the Prophet) and he did not remember until after *Salam*, then he should **ONLY** make up for the pillar he missed and all acts subsequent to it, up to the point of *Salam*, without performing a complete *Raka'ah*.

- If he omits the *Ruku'u* in the final *Raka'ah* and remembers shortly after making *Salam* and has not left the *Masjid*, then he should stand upright, while making *Takbir*, then pronounce the *Takbir* for *Ruku'u* and make it; then rise from *Ruku'u* and proceed to complete what follows and make *Salam* and perform *Ba'ada Salam*.
- If he omits the second *Sujud* in the final *Raka'ah* and remembers shortly after making *Salam* and has not left the *Masjid*, then he should make *Takbir* to sit back in between the Sajdah, make the obligatory supplication between the two *Sajdah* and make the second *Sujud* and complete what follows and make *Salam* and perform *Ba'ada Salam*.
- If he omits to make the final *Tashahhud* and remembers that shortly after making *Salam* and has not left the *Masjid*, then he should make *Takbir* to sit back and recite the *Tashahhud* and what follows and make *Salam* and perform *Ba'da. Salam*
- If he omits to invoke *Al-Salat 'Ala Al-Nabiyy* (sending prayers on the Prophet) after the final *Tashahhud* and remembers that shortly after making *Salam* and has

not left the *Masjid*, then he should make *Takbir* to sit back and recite *Al-Salat 'Ala Al-Nabiyy* (sending prayers on the Prophet) and what follows and make *Salam* and perform *Ba'ada Salam*.

## **2. Forgetfulness Relating to Obligations (*Wajiba'at*):**

The obligatory acts (*Wajiba'at*) of the prayer are nine and are as listed in Part II. If a person deliberately omits any of them, his prayer is invalidated. But if he forgetfully omits any, he can compensate for his errors to preserve the validity of his prayer, depending on the number of omissions. Thus, it is imperative to understand and preserve these obligations in order to correctly compensate for errors of forgetfulness relating to them in the prayer. It is also important to stress the significance of preserving these obligations, especially because, if a person forgets two obligations in a single *Raka'ah*, then the *Raka'ah* is invalidated and he must discard it for a new one. And if a person forgetfully omits three or more obligations in the *Salah*, then the prayer is invalidated. These and further implications of the omission of the obligatory acts are discussed in details below.

### **The Implications of Omission of Obligations (*Wa'jiba'at*):**

The people of knowledge said:

- a. If a person leaves any obligation of the prayer forgetfully, then he does not return to it, if he goes beyond its place; he should proceed to complete his prayer and prostrate for forgetfulness **before** the *Salam* (make *Sujudu Qabla Salam*). It

is noteworthy that all the obligatory acts, except for the first *Tashahhud*, are almost inseparably linked to the pillars such that an exit from each of their positions, instantaneously leads to the next pillar, following it. Thus, once a person exits the position, returning to it would make him to duplicate a pillar and render the prayer invalid.

An example is, if one forgets to say, in the bowing, '*Subhana Rabbi Al-Adhim*', and only remembers after saying, '*Sami Allahu liman Hamidahu*', then he does not go back into bowing to say it because he has surpassed its place. Rather, on completion of the prayer, after making the final *Tashahhud* and all the subsequent supplications, he prostrates for forgetfulness before the *Salam* and make the *Salam*. The same principle governs the omission of the other obligations.

Another example is, if one changes the sequence of reading *Fatihah* before *Surah* i.e. he forgetfully recites a *Surah* before *Fatihah*, then if: -

- he remembers before making *Ruku'u*, he should just recite a *Surah* after the *Fatihah* and proceed with his prayer and there is nothing upon him.
- he did not remember until after making *Ruku'u*, then he should proceed to complete his prayer and prostrate for forgetfulness before *Salam*.

**b.** Unlike the case of the other obligatory acts of prayer in which only omissions take place; both omission and addition are peculiar to the first *Tashahhud*. In the case of the first



*Tashahhud*, one may encounter omission entailing prostration before the *Salam* or addition necessitating prostration after the *Salam*. And there are five possible scenarios relating to forgetfulness associated with the first *Tashahhud*.

- i. A person may encounter a situation of an addition of the first *Tashahhud*, if he forgetfully sits for and recites it, after the first *Raka'ah* or the third *Raka'ah* of a four-*Raka'ah* prayer. And because it is not its rightful place in either situation, a case of addition has occurred requiring *Ba'ada Salam*.
- ii. Another situation could be that, a person forgetfully sits for *Tashahhud* in the first *Raka'ah* of say, *Zuhr* prayer, thinking that it was the second *Raka'ah*, but he remembers that before he commences the recitation of the *Tashahhud*, then he should get up to continue his prayer and sit for the *Tashahhud* in the second *Raka'ah* and there is no prostration upon him. This is because, his action was merely an attempted sitting for the *Tashahhud* and not an addition. The same principle applies if he were to make such an attempted sitting in the third *Raka'ah*.
- iii. The other three perspectives, in which a person encounters forgetfulness associated with the first *Tashahhud* are such that: the first condition does not entail prostration, the second one demands prostration after *Salam*, while the third scenario requires prostration before *Salam*. The situations are: -

- If he forgets to sit for the first *Tashahhud* and remembers that while attempting to raise for the third *Raka'ah*, then he should sit back, and there is nothing upon him. This is where a person raises himself up from the second prostration in the second *Raka'ah* in order to stand for the third *Raka'ah*, forgetting the first *Tashahhud* but he remembers **before lifting his hands from the ground**. Then, he should remain in the sitting position, perform the *Tashahhud*, and then complete his prayer and there is nothing upon him.
- If he forgets to sit for the first *Tashahhud* and remembers that after **lifting his hands from the ground**, but before standing straight, then he should sit back and perform the *Tashahhud*. This is because he hasn't exited its place as he hasn't reached the next pillar, following it i.e. standing. Then he completes his prayer and gives salutation, and perform *Ba'da Salam*.
- If, however, he forgets to sit for the first *Tashahhud* and only remembers that after **standing upright** for the third *Raka'ah*, then the omission of the *Tashahhud* is established for him, he does not return to it. This is because he has exited its place as he has reached the next pillar, following it i.e. standing. Therefore, rather than returning, he continues and completes his prayer and prostrates for forgetfulness **before** giving the salutation and then give the salutation.

**The proof for this** is what is reported by al-Bukhaaree and others from 'Abdullah ibn Buhaynah (*radiallahu anhu*) who said that, "*The Prophet (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) led in Zuhr prayer. He stood after the first two Raka'ah and did not sit (meaning for the first Tashahhud), so the people stood along with him. Then when it came to the completion of the prayer and the people awaited his salutation, he said Takbeer whilst sitting and performed two prostrations before giving the salutations. Then he gave the salutation.*"

c. In accordance with the principles of the above quoted *Hadith*, the scholars of jurisprudence have also clarified some additional matters relating to forgetful omission of obligatory acts (*Wajiba'at*) of prayer. Accordingly, it is imperative to note the following consequences of the forgetful omission of obligatory acts (*Wajiba'at*) of prayer:

- i. If a person forgetfully omits one *Wajib* in a *Raka'ah* and thus, in the *Salah* or two *Wajib* in different *Raka'ah* and thus, in the *Salah*, and also forgets to perform the prostration for forgetfulness before *Salam*: -
  - If he remembers shortly after making *Salam* and has not left the *Masjid*, then it is obligatory upon him to make the prostration for forgetfulness after *Salam*. And this suffices for him and his prayer is valid.
  - If he remembers shortly after making *Salam* and has not left the *Masjid*, but he refuses to perform the prostration, then his *Salah* is invalidated.

- If he remembers long afterwards, there is nothing upon him, and his prayer is valid.
- ii. If a person omits two obligations (*Wajib*) in a single *Raka'ah*, then the *Raka'ah* is invalidated, he should discard the *Raka'ah* and perform a replacement *Raka'ah* and complete his *Salah*, make *Salam* and prostrate for forgetfulness and make *Salam* again.
- iii. If a person omits three obligations (*Wajiba'at*) in separate *Raka'ah* of the *Salah* (i.e. in three different *Raka'ah*), his *Salah* is invalidated and he should repeat it.
- iv. But there is an exception to the invalidation of the *Salah* with the following two patterns of omission of three obligations:
  - if all the three omissions are in a single *Raka'ah*, then it is only that particular *Raka'ah* that is invalidated, in which case he discards the *Raka'ah* and perform a replacement of it. He then completes his prayer and make *Tashahhud* and what follows and make *Salam* and perform *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.
  - if after the first of the three omissions, he made the subsequent two omissions in a single *Raka'ah*, then he discards that *Raka'ah* and perform a replacement of the discarded *Raka'ah*, and completes his *Salah*. He then makes *Tashahhud* and what follows and perform *Sujudu Qabla Salam* and make *Salam*.

- v. If a person forgets two obligations in separate *Raka'ah* and also omits the first *Tashahhud* in that *Salah*, then the *Salah* is invalidated.
- vi. If a person forgets the first *Tashahhud* in the *Salah*, then:
  - If he remembers his omission of the first *Tashahhud* before making *Salam*, then he should perform *Sujudu Qabla Salam* and make *Salam*.
  - If he forgets to perform *Sujudu Qabla Salam* for his omission of the first *Tashahhud*, and remembers his omission shortly after making *Salam*, then it suffices for him to perform *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* instead.
  - If he forgets to perform *Sujudu Qabla Salam* for his omission of the first *Tashahhud*, and remembers his omission, long after making *Salam*, then his mistake is tolerated and his prayer is valid.
  - If he remembers his omission of the first *Tashahhud*, either before the *Salam* or shortly after making *Salam*, but refuses to perform the *Sujudu Qabla Salam* or *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* as the case may be, then his prayer is invalidated. He must repeat that prayer.
- vii. If a person forgetfully makes the supplication of *Sujud* while in *Ruku'u* or vice versa, or makes other than the prescribed glorification or supplication in any of the positions, then, if he remembers before rising from the position, he should recite the correct one for that position. If, however he has exited the position, then his

error is overlooked and he does not prostrate for forgetfulness.

### **3. Doubt (*Shak*):**

Doubt is to be uncertain about which of two matters has occurred; and doubt is not taken notice of, in matters of worship in three cases: -

- i. If it is just a self-delusion, having no reality, like devilish whisperings.
- ii. If it occurs very frequently to a person such that he does not perform an act of worship except that he is caused to doubt in it.
- iii. If it occurs after the completion of the acts of worship, then it is not taken account of, as long as he is not certain of it, in which case he will act upon what he is certain of. An example is that a person prays *Zuhr*, and after finishing his prayer he doubts whether he prayed three or four *Raka'ah*. Then he takes no notice of this doubt unless he is certain that he only prayed three *Raka'ah*, in which case he must complete his prayer. This is so, if it occurs to him a short while after the *Salam*. Then, on completion, he should give the salutation, prostrate for forgetfulness and then make the salutation again. If, however, he became certain that he prayed three *Raka'ah* after a long time has passed, then he must repeat the prayer.

As for doubt in other than these three cases, then it is taken account of in the manner described below.

## **Doubt in the Prayer are of Two Types:**

Doubt, once exercised in prayer, must be resolved and cleared, by making compensation with the applicable prostrations (either before or after *Salam*), before exiting the prayer. Certainty of compliance and fulfilment of all the conditions (*Shuru'ut*), pillars (*Arka'an*) and obligations (*Wajiba'at*) is a pre-condition for the validity of the prayer. A prayer that is concluded and exited with elements of doubt is invalid and must be repeated.

It is also noteworthy that a person who is obsessed with doubt, must not swing towards the whims of his doubt, in his prayer (i.e. he must always strive to establish what is overwhelming or that which is certain/minimum) and proceed on that basis, otherwise his prayer would be invalidated. Thus, the *Muwaswis* (the one obsessed with doubt) must remove the whisperings from his heart and should not perform what he has doubts about. And habitual resort to *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* after every prayer, as recommended by some scholars (including Al-Ahkdari) is not from the *Sunnah*.

Accordingly, if any of the following two types of doubts occurs to a person in his prayer, he must resolve it according to the explanation provided and must not exit the prayer without resolving it. Therefore, if doubt occurs to a person in his prayer, then it must be either:

- i. That, of the two matters over which he exercises doubt, one is weightier (overwhelming) in his mind, so he will act upon what is weightier to him, then he will complete his prayer based

upon that, after which he should give the salutation and perform *Ba'ada Salam*.

An example is, if a person praying *Zuhr* doubts in a *Raka'ah* as to whether it is the second or the third *Raka'ah*. But the weightier case in his mind is that it is the third *Raka'ah*, so he makes it the third. So after performing one further *Raka'ah*, he makes *Tashahhud* and gives the salutation, prostrate for forgetfulness and then gives the salutation again.

Similarly, if the weightier case in his mind, in the above example, were to be that it is the second *Raka'ah*, so he makes it the second. So after performing two more *Raka'ah*, he makes *Tashahhud* and gives the salutation, prostrate for forgetfulness and then gives the salutation again.

**The proof for this** is what is established in the two *Saheeh* and elsewhere from the *Hadith* of 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood (*radiallahu anhu*) that the Prophet (*sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam*) said, "*If one of you doubts in his prayer, then let him strive to arrive at what is correct, and complete it upon that basis. Then let him give the salutation and perform two prostrations.*" This is the wording of al-Bukhari.

- ii. That neither of the two possibilities over which he exercises doubt is weightier (overwhelming) in his mind. Therefore, he should act upon what he is certain of, which will be the lesser of the two possibilities, he then resorts to it and completes his



prayer based upon that, and then prostrate for forgetfulness **before** giving the salutation and then give the salutation.

An example of this is, say, a person praying 'Asr doubts in a *Raka'ah* as to whether it is the second or the third and neither, it being second nor third, is weightier in his mind. So he makes it the second (establishing what is certain), performs the first *Tashahhud* and the two subsequent *Raka'ah* after it, makes *Tashahhud* and then prostrates for forgetfulness **before** giving the salutation and then give the salutation.

A further example is, if a person praying 'Asr, after standing upright for the second *Raka'ah*, doubts as to whether or not he performed the second *Sujud* in the first *Raka'ah*, and neither possibility is weightier, then he should act upon what he is certain of i.e. he has not performed it, and he should sit back promptly and make the obligatory supplication for the sitting in-between the two *Sajdah*, perform the second *Sujud* and then continue onward to complete his prayer. Then, after making the final *Tashahhud* and what follows, prostrate **before** *Salam* and make *Salam*. This is because the doubt he exercised compelled him to the option of what is certain, entailing *Qabla Salam*, while the additional standing entailed *Ba'ada Salam*, and whenever the two occur in the *Salah*, the *Qabla Salam* prevails.

**The proof for this** is what Muslim reports from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree (*radiallahu anhu*) that the Prophet (*sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam*) said "If one of you doubts in his prayer and does

*not know how many he has prayed – whether it is three or four – then let him cast away the doubt and build upon what he is certain of. Then let him perform two prostrations **before** giving the salutation. So if he has prayed five, then they will make his prayer even for him, and if he has prayed the full four, then they will be a humiliation for Satan."*

- iii. If in any of the aforementioned situations, it becomes clear to the person that the course of action he has proceeded upon is indeed the reality and that he neither added nor left anything from his prayer; then, there is no prostration for forgetfulness upon him and his prayer is valid

An example is, if a person praying doubts in a *Raka'ah* as to whether, it is the third or the fourth *Raka'ah*. And neither of these two possibilities carries more weight in his mind, so he makes it the third *Raka'ah* (i.e. by resorting to the minimum of the two possibilities – *Aqal*) but while continuing on that basis, it becomes clear to him that it was indeed the third *Raka'ah*. Then, he upholds his certainty and proceeds to complete his prayer. Thus, in this a case there is no prostration for forgetfulness due upon him.

#### **4. Forgetfulness Entailing *Qabla Salam* and *Ba'ada Salam* Occurring at the Same Time:**

If two cases of forgetfulness occur to a person, one of them requiring prostration before the salutation and the other requiring prostration after it, then the scholars say that prostration before salutation predominates, so he should prostrate before *Salam*.

It is noteworthy that forgetfulness relating to pillars, i.e. the cases of addition or omission of pillars or making *Salam* before the completion of the prayer, as aforementioned are compensated with *Ba'ada Salam* and we have provided justification for each of the possible situations. The only exception, in which a person encounters *Qabla Salam* relating to forgetfulness of pillars, as clarified earlier, is the case of addition or omission of pillar(s) resulting in discarding the first or the second *Raka'ah* while performing the fourth *Raka'ah* or shortly after the *Salam*. And we demonstrated that in that situation, the first *Tashahhud* seizes to be rightfully established at the end of the adjusted second *Raka'ah*. And this manifests a case of omission of an obligatory act (i.e. the first *Tashahhud*) entailing *Qabla Salam* and the discarding of a *Raka'ah* entailing *Ba'ada Salam*. Therefore, the *Qabla Salam* shall prevail.

Then, further to the above, other situations of forgetfulness in which a person encounters *Qabla Salam* occurring in combination with *Ba'ada Salam* are:

- if any of the three perspectives of forgetfulness relating to pillars (i.e. addition or omission of pillars or making *Salam* before the completion of the prayer – necessitating *Ba'ada Salam*) is coupled with omission of obligation(s) (necessitating *Qabla Salam*) occur to a person in the prayer, then prostration before *Salam* takes precedence; and

- if a person encounters addition of obligations (necessitating *Ba'ada Salam*) and omission of obligations (necessitating *Qabla Salam*) in the prayer, prostration before *Salam* takes precedence.
- i. An example is the case of a person who forgets the *Ruku'u* or second prostration in the first *Raka'ah* of *Zuhr* prayer, but remembers this whilst performing the fourth *Raka'ah*, he discards his first *Raka'ah* (which was deficient of a pillar i.e. *Ruku'u* or second prostration) and the fourth *Raka'ah* now becomes the third, and he should then perform the fourth one, after it, and make the final *Tashahhud*; prostrate for forgetfulness **before** *Salam* and then give the salutation. This is because the first *Tashahhud*, already established, has seized to be in its rightful position, thereby creating a case of omission, necessitating prostration before *Salam* (i.e. *Sujudu Qabli*) and has added a deficient *Raka'ah* (which he has discarded) requiring prostration after *Salam*, thus, prostration **before** *Salam* predominates.
  - ii. Another example is, if a person praying *Zuhr* forgetfully stands up for the third *Raka'ah* without sitting for the first *Tashahhud*, and he sits after the third *Raka'ah* for the first *Tashahhud* (and started making the *Tashahhud* or has made it), thinking it to be the second *Raka'ah*. He then remembers that it was actually the third *Raka'ah* – so he stands up promptly, prays further *Raka'ah*, makes the final *Tashahhud* and prostrates for forgetfulness before *Salam* and then makes *Salam*. So this person left the first *Tashahhud*, which requires prostration

before salutation (i.e. *Sujudu Qabli*), and added a sitting and *Tashahhud* (or part thereof) in the third *Raka'ah*, which requires prostration after the salutation (i.e. *Sujudu Ba'adi*), so the prostration before the salutation predominates.

- iii. A further example is the case of a person who forgetfully made *Ruku'u* twice in the first *Raka'ah* of *Zuhr* prayer, and remembered that while performing the second *Raka'ah*. As he remembers the addition of *Ruku'u* in the first *Raka'ah*, the *Raka'ah* is invalidated and he discards it. Then, the second *Raka'ah* he is upon it, becomes his first *Raka'ah*, and on this basis he proceeds to complete his prayer. But while continuing with his prayer, he forgot to say the supplication in-between the two *Sajdah* in the fourth *Raka'ah*. Thus, for discarding the first *Raka'ah*, he has a case of *Ba'ada Salam* while the omission of the supplication in-between the two *Sajdah*, earned him *Qabla Salam*. Accordingly, the *Qabla Salam* prevails, he therefore, makes the final *Tashahhud* and prostrates for forgetfulness and then gives the salutation.
- iv. A final example is the case of a person who forgetfully omitted the second prostration in the first *Raka'ah* of *Zuhr* prayer, but he remembers this while performing the third *Raka'ah*, he discards his first *Raka'ah* [which was deficient of a pillar] then, the third *Raka'ah* now becomes his second *Raka'ah* and he sits for the first *Tashahhud* at the end of it. As he proceeded to complete his prayer, by performing two more *Raka'ah*, he forgot to make the glorification in *Ruku'u*, in the fourth *Raka'ah*. In this example, he has a case of *Ba'ada Salam* for

discarding a *Raka'ah* and *Qabla Salam* for omitting a *Wajib* (i.e. the glorification of *Ruku'u*). Therefore, *Qabla Salam* prevails. Accordingly, he makes the final *Tashahhud* and prostrates for forgetfulness and makes *Salam*.

#### **5. Forgetfulness for the One Praying Behind an Imam:**

- i. If the *Imam* forgets in his prayer and has to make prostration for forgetfulness, then it is obligatory upon the congregation to follow him in the performance of the prostration for forgetfulness, even if the follower joined the prayer at the point of the final *Tashahhud*. This is due to the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him): "*The Imam is appointed to be followed, so do not differ with him ...*"
  - ✓ If the *Imam* compensates his error with prostration before *Salam*: The person who joined the congregation lately, even if at the point of the final *Tashahhud*, must also follow the *Imam* and prostrate with him, and it is only after the *Salam* of the *Imam* that he should proceed to complete the missing aspect of his prayer.
  - ✓ If the *Imam* compensates his error with prostration after *Salam*: Then, the person who joined the prayer lately must delay his prostration and make up the missed part of his prayer and make *Salam* and then perform the prostration for forgetfulness and make *Salam* again. But he must wait for the *Imam* to make the second *Salam* (if the *Imam* exits the prayer with two *Salam*) before he rises up to complete his prayer.

- ii. If the *Imam* compensates his error with prostration before *Salam*, the follower of *Imam* who missed one or more *Raka'ah*, as we said, must follow the *Imam* and perform same before proceeding to complete what he missed. And no further prostration for forgetfulness is required from him on account of his prayer with the *Imam*. However, if he encounters forgetfulness or doubt while completing what he missed of the prayer with the *Imam*, then his error has no relationship whatsoever with what preceded with the *Imam*. He should compensate for his error in accordance with the nature of his forgetfulness or doubt.
- iii. If the *Imam* compensates his error with prostration after *Salam*, then the follower who missed one or more *Raka'ah*, as we said, must delay and perform the prostration after the completion of his prayer.
- And if, in the course of completing what he missed of his prayer with the *Imam*, he encounters further errors compelling *Ba'ada Salam* on him, then his obligation for compensation is still the same *Ba'ada Salam* and thus he should perform *Sujudu Ba'adi*.
  - But if in the course of completing what he missed of his prayer with the *Imam*, he encounters errors entailing compensation with *Qabla Salam*, then the *Ba'ada Salam* pending against him from his prayer with the *Imam* is now superseded by the *Qabla Salam*, and he performs *Sujudu Qabli*.

- iv. If the follower of *Imam* deliberately omits any of the obligations (*Wajiba'at*), then his prayer is invalidated. He should make *Salam* and restart the prayer by making *Takbiratul Ihram* and then completes his prayer, after the *Salam* of the *Imam*.
- v. If the follower of *Imam* forgets, not more than two obligations (*Wajiba'at*) in two different *Raka'ah* of the prayer, then no prostration is due from him. But if the omission of the two obligations, in separate *Raka'ah*, is coupled with the omission of the first *Tashahhud*, then his prayer is invalidated.
- vi. If the follower of *Imam* forgets two obligations (*Wajiba'at*) in a single *Raka'ah* (i.e. in any of the *Raka'ah* of the *Salah*) then that particular *Raka'ah* is invalidated, he should make intention to discard the *Raka'ah* while continuing with his prayer, and on the completion of the prayer by the *Imam*, he should rise up and perform replacement *Raka'ah* and complete his *Salah*, make *Salam* and prostrate for forgetfulness and make *Salam* again.
- vii. If the follower of *Imam* forgets three obligations (*Wajiba'at*) in different *Raka'ah* of the *Salah*, his *Salah* is invalidated and so he should make *Salam* and restart his prayer afresh, with the *Imam*. And after the *Salam* of the *Imam*, he should proceed to complete whatever he lost of the prayer and there is no prostration upon him unless he encounters forgetfulness or doubt in the course of completing what he lost of the prayer.



- viii. But if the follower of *Imam* forgets:
- three obligations in a single *Raka'ah*, then that *Raka'ah* is invalidated, he should make intention to discard it and continue with his prayer and after the *Salam* of the *Imam*, he should perform a replacement of the discarded *Raka'ah*, make *Tashahhud* and *Salam* and perform *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.
  - three obligations but two of the obligations are omitted in a single *Raka'ah*, then he should make intention to discard the particular *Raka'ah* in which he omitted the two obligations and continue with his prayer and after the *Salam* of the *Imam*, he should perform a replacement of the discarded *Raka'ah*, make *Tashahhud* and perform *Sujudu Qabla Salam* and make *Salam*.
- ix. If the follower of *Imam* forgetfully lags behind and misses performing a pillar with the *Imam*, then:
- ✓ If the *Imam* has not reached the next pillar following that, he should perform the pillar and catch up with him and his prayer is in order, no prostration is due upon him.
  - ✓ If the *Imam* has reached the next pillar following that, he should abandon the pillar and join the *Imam* and after the *Imam* has given *Salam*, he should perform a complete *Raka'ah* as replacement and make *Salam* and prostrate for forgetfulness and make *Salam* again.

- x. If the follower of the *Imam* forgetfully raises up from *Ruku'u* or *Sujud* and discovers that the *Imam* is yet to perform that act, if he is able to catch the *Imam* again, in that same position and perform that same act again with the *Imam* with tranquility, then his prayer is valid. But if he is unable to catch up with the *Imam* to perform the act with tranquility with him, then that particular *Raka'ah* is invalidated for him. Hence he should discard it and perform a replacement *Raka'ah* after the *Salam* of the *Imam* to complete his prayer, make the final *Tashahhud* and make *Salam*. He should then, prostrate for forgetfulness (*Sujudu Ba'ada Salam*) and make *Salam* again.
- xi. If the follower of *Imam* forgetfully makes *Salam* before the *Imam*, after the first *Tashahhud* or the final one, he should ignore his mistake and make *Salam* after the *Salam* of the *Imam* and there is nothing upon him; his prayer is valid.
- xii. If the follower of *Imam* performing the last *Raka'ah* got cut off from the *Imam* due to inaudibility of the *Imam's* voice and only heard the *Salam*, then he should continue and complete his prayer on his own and there is nothing upon him; his prayer is valid.
- xiii. If the follower of the *Imam* who joined the prayer while the *Imam* was in *Ruku'u* later doubts as to whether he has actually caught up with the *Imam* whilst performing *Ruku'u* such that he catches that *Ruku'u* and thus the *Raka'ah* or not; then there are three possibilities for him: -

- If he joined the prayer in the first *Raka'ah* and later doubts as to whether he actually caught the *Imam* in *Ruku'u* or the *Imam* has raised up before he made the *Ruku'u*. Then, if the possibility that he has caught the *Imam* while in *Ruku'u* is weightier to him, he acts upon that and there is no prostration for him.
- If he joined the prayer in the second *Raka'ah* (or any of the subsequent *Raka'ah*) and later doubts as to whether he actually caught the *Imam* in *Ruku'u* or the *Imam* has raised up before he made *Ruku'u*. Then, if the possibility that he has caught the *Imam* while in *Ruku'u* is weightier, he acts upon that (i.e. he has actually gotten the *Raka'ah*) and proceeds to complete his prayer by performing that which he actually missed with the *Imam* and make *Salam* and compensate for his doubt by performing prostration for forgetfulness after the *Salam* and make *Salam* again.
- If, whether he joined the prayer in the first or second *Raka'ah* (or any of the subsequent *Raka'ah*) and later doubts as to whether he has actually gotten that particular *Raka'ah* or not, and neither of the two possibilities is weightier, he should cast away the doubt and establish what is certain i.e. consider that he has actually missed that *Raka'ah*. And on that basis, he should proceed to perform all the *Raka'ah* he missed and complete his prayer and perform

prostration for forgetfulness before *Salam* and make *Salam*.

- xiv. If a follower of *Imam* who missed one or more *Raka'ah* deliberately gets up, to make up for what he missed, before the *Imam* pronounces the second *Salam* (i.e. if the *Imam* makes two *Salam* for that prayer), his prayer is invalidated but if he does so forgetfully then his prayer is valid. But one should always avoid hastiness while following *Imam* in prayer.
- xv. If a follower of *Imam* joined the prayer in the second *Raka'ah*, for instance in *Zuhr* prayer, and the *Imam* mistakenly prayed five *Raka'ah* in that prayer, then since he missed the first *Raka'ah*, he has gotten four complete *Raka'ah* and thus his prayer is complete. But he must follow the *Imam* in performing the prostration for forgetfulness after the *Salam*.
- xvi. If the follower of *Imam* who forgetfully omits to make the final *Tashahhud*: -
  - ✓ Remembers before making *Salam*, following that of the *Imam*, that he has omitted the final *Tashahhud*, he should recite the *Tashahhud* and all that follows and make *Salam*, and his prayer is in order.
  - ✓ Forgetfully follows the *Imam* to make *Salam* after him, then if he remembers a short while afterwards, he should repeat the last *Raka'ah*, make *Tashahhud*, and make *Salam* and prostrate for forgetfulness and give *Salam* again.

- ✓ Forgetfully follows the *Imam* to make *Salam* after him but he remembers long afterwards, his prayer is invalidated and he must repeat it.
- xvii. If the follower of *Imam* forgetfully omits to sit for the first *Tashahhud* (i.e. he stood up while the *Imam* was making the first *Tashahhud*) and before he sits back to join the *Imam*, the *Imam* has risen up for the third *Raka'ah*, then he should maintain his standing position and follow the *Imam* to complete his prayer. And his prayer is valid, there is nothing upon him. But if this omission is coupled with the omission of two obligations, in two different *Raka'ah*, then his prayer is invalidated.
- xviii. If the *Imam* made the *Takbir* for going to *Ruku'u* and a follower forgetfully proceeded to make *Sujud* but either he realises his error of hastiness or his attention was drawn to it and he got up to join the *Imam* in *Ruku'u*, then since he did not miss the *Ruku'u* with the *Imam*, his prayer is valid and there is nothing upon him. But if he is unable to catch up with the *Imam* in *Ruku'u*, then he has to discard the *Raka'ah* and perform its replacement after the *Salam* of the *Imam* and perform *Ba'ada Salam*.
- xix. If the *Imam* gives the salutation before completion of his prayer and there are some followers who missed part of the prayer and have stood up to make up for what they missed, and then the *Imam* remembers that his prayer is incomplete, he stands up to complete that. Then the

followers who have already stood up to complete what they missed have a choice either to:

- continue and make up for what they missed and then perform prostration for forgetfulness as performed by the Imam; or
- join the *Imam* [if he has not yet performed *Ruku'u*, in his first make-up *Raka'ah*] and when the *Imam* performs the salutation, each one should complete what he missed and then perform prostration for forgetfulness as performed by the *Imam*; and this option is more right and prudent.

**6. Forgetfulness of the Act of *Qabla Salam* or *Ba'ada Salam*:** If a person whose act of forgetfulness entails prostration before *Salam*, forgetfully makes *Salam* without doing the prostration, then he should make prostration for forgetfulness after *Salam* instead. Conversely, if the person embroiled in *Ba'ada Salam* forgetfully makes *Qabla Salam* to rectify his error, then that suffices him. But note that ignorance of the correct act of prostration for forgetfulness is not an excuse and deliberate swapping of prostration before *Salam* with after *Salam* or vice versa invalidates the prayer.

**7. The *Takbir* to enter into bowing to catch the *Imam* in *Ruku'u* is *Sunnah*, for the latecomer joining the *Salah* at that stage.** So if a person catches the *Imam* in *Ruku'u*, and makes the opening *Takbir* while standing upright but omits to say the *Takbir* for bowing, no prostration is required from him and his prayer is valid.

The *Takbir* there is *Sunnah* for him, in this particular situation, according to the scholars of jurisprudence.

### **Summary of the Acts of Prostration for Forgetfulness:**

The foregoing exposition of prostration for forgetfulness after salutation and before salutation can be summarised as follows:

#### **A. Forgetfulness Compensated with *Ba'ada Salam* (After *Salam*):**

##### **1. Addition of Pillar or Obligatory Act(s) or Omission of Pillar(s):**

- i. Addition of pillar in a *Raka'ah*, resulting in the *Raka'ah* being discarded (except where, a person discards, the first or the second *Raka'ah* while he was performing the fourth *Raka'ah* or shortly after the *Salam*);
  - ii. making *Salam* before finishing the prayer;
  - iii. addition of obligatory act i.e. the first *Tashahhud*; and
  - iv. omission of pillar(s) (except where, a person discards, the first or the second *Raka'ah* while he was performing the fourth *Raka'ah* or shortly after the *Salam*).
2. **Doubt:** When one is able to determine that which is overwhelming of the two possibilities.

#### **B. Forgetfulness Compensated with *Qabla Salam* (Before *Salam*):**

1. Omission of obligatory acts (*Wajiba'at*).
2. **Doubt:** When one is unable to determine which of the two possibilities over which he is doubting is overwhelming and had to resort to that which is minimum of the two possibilities (*Aqal*).
3. If the occurrence of either omission of *Wajib* (as in No. 1 above) or doubt with resort to *Aqal* (as in No. 2 above) is

coupled with any of the four forms of forgetfulness entailing *Ba'ada Salam* listed under 'A' above, numbered: **i to iv**.

It is noteworthy that scholars have addressed the case of addition and omission occurring at the same time. According to the scholars of jurisprudence, if two cases of forgetfulness occur for a person; one of them requiring prostration before the salutation and the other requiring prostration after it, then the prostration before salutation predominates, so he should prostrate before *Salam*.

### **Errors of Forgetfulness and Consequential Acts that Invalidate the Prayer:**

It is imperative to note that the occurrence of the following matters, related to prostration for forgetfulness, invalidates the prayer and necessitates its repetition. It is noteworthy that Al-Uthaimeen (may Allah have mercy on him), has given a verdict of a short while timeframe allowed for the compensation of errors of forgetfulness after the *Salam* as the equivalent of 2 to 3 minutes after *Salam* and before leaving the *Masjid*. Thus, any error of forgetfulness and doubts subject to compensation, remembered more than 3 minutes after the *Salam* cannot be corrected. The following matters emanating from or consequential to forgetfulness invalidate the prayer.

- i. Forgetful addition or omission of pillar (*Rukn*) or doubt as to the performance or otherwise of any pillar or omission of three obligations, remembered long after the prayer.
- ii. Duplication of the total number of *Raka'ah* in the particular



prayer, for instance praying *Fajr* prayer as 4 *Raka'ah* or *Zuhr* prayer as 8 *Raka'ah*.

- iii. Deliberate swapping of prostration for forgetfulness to compensate for acts of forgetfulness entailing prostration before *Salam* with prostration after *Salam* or vice versa.
- iv. Forgetful omission of 3 or more obligations (*Wajiba'at*) in a *Salah*.
- v. Forgetful addition of more than one pillar in a *Raka'ah* or in the *Salah*.
- vi. Forgetfulness of two obligations in separate *Raka'ah* coupled with omission of the first *Tashahhud* in a *Salah*.
- vii. If one encounters act of forgetfulness or doubts requiring prostration for forgetfulness but neglects to do the requisite prostration.
- viii. If a person who is obsessed with doubt, swings towards the whims of his doubt and proceeds in his prayer on that basis, without striving to establish what is overwhelming or that which is minimum, then, his prayer is invalidated.
- ix. If a person joins a congregational prayer lately, even if it was at *Tashahhud*, and the *Imam* performs *Sujudu Qabli* and he refuses to follow the *Imam* to do the *Sujudu Qabli*, then his *Salah* is invalidated.
- x. Performing prostration for forgetfulness for the omission or addition of any of the emphatic *Sunnah* acts of prayer. For instance, making prostration for forgetfully reciting inaudibly in an audible prayer or audibly in an inaudible prayer or for the omission of recitation of *Surah* or indeed the addition or omission of any of the emphatic *Sunnah* acts of the prayer.

Please note that the questions and answers presented as **Appendix** to this Treatise is a complementary reading material for enhanced understanding of the subject matter of prostration for forgetfulness in the prayer. Accordingly, do not neglect to read.

## PART IV

### Some Questionable Bases for the Prostration for Forgetfulness and Questions for the Validity of the Prayer

Prayer must be performed with full knowledge and consciousness of its *Arka'an* (pillars), *Wajiba'at* (obligations) and *Sunnah Mu'akkadah* (emphatic *Sunnah*). The categorisation of the acts of prayer into these three classes makes it possible to determine the validity or otherwise of the prayer. Therefore, prior knowledge and understanding of the prayer is obligatory before its performance. Otherwise, a person may be performing incorrect and unacceptable prayers without realising it.

It is not likely for anyone to make a valid prayer without requisite knowledge of the proper and correct categorisation of the acts of the prayer. This is more so, because forgetfulness and doubt are inevitable in prayers and therefore, it is imperative to understand the consequences of forgetful mistakes relating to each category. Accordingly, some acts of forgetfulness invalidate the prayer, some are compensated for by prostration for forgetfulness while some are tolerated without any compensation. Detailed discussions on this matter has preceded in Parts II and III of this Treatise. Thus, the acts of forgetfulness and doubt in the prayer, already discussed, could be reviewed as follows:

- Forgetfulness relating to pillars (*Arka'an*): If it is omission of pillar, then a person must return to it and perform it but if he has exceeded its place, then he discards the *Raka'ah* in which he made the omission and perform a replacement *Raka'ah* in its place and proceed with his *Salah* and complete

it. And if it is addition of pillar, then the *Raka'ah* with the added pillar is invalidated, and so he discards it and performs a replacement *Raka'ah* instead and proceeds with his *Salah* and completes it. In both cases the compensation for his forgetful mistakes are prostration after *Salam*.

However, it is noteworthy that, if he discards any of the first two *Raka'ah* of a four-*Raka'ah* prayer while performing the fourth *Raka'ah* or shortly after *Salam*, then he compensates his mistake with *Sujudu Qabla Salam*.

- Forgetfulness relating to obligations (*Wajiba'at*): It is significantly of omission and if one remembers of it after leaving its place then, he should not return to it rather he compensates with prostration **before** *Salam*. However, in the case of the first Tashahhud, a person may encounter both omission and addition. Accordingly, the omission is compensated for with prostration **before** *Salam* while the addition is compensated for with prostration **after** *Salam*.
- Doubt in which a person has an overwhelming position over one of the two possibilities he exercises doubt about is compensated for with prostration after *Salam*.
- Doubt in which **none** of the two possibilities is overwhelming to a person impels the person to **resort** to that which is certain, (i.e. the least of the two possibilities) is compensated for with prostration before *Salam*.

- Forgetfulness relating to *Sunnah Mu'akkadah*: Omission or addition of any act of *Sunnah Mu'akkadah* does not require any compensation.

Al-Uthaimeen (may Allah grant him mercy) said "Many people are ignorant about many of the "**correct**" rulings concerning the *Sujudus-Sahw* (prostration for forgetfulness) in the prayer. Some of them leave the *Sujudus-Sahw* when it is obligatory upon them; others perform the prostration in other than its correct place ..."

In view of the foregoing preamble, we have carefully made comparative evaluation of the categorisation of the acts of the prayer into *Fard* (obligatory), *Sunnah*, and *Mustahabbih* (recommended) as contained in *Al-Ahkdari* against our presentation in this Treatise, categorised and corresponding in that order, as *Arka'an* (pillars), *Wajiba'at* (obligatory) and *Sunnah Mua'kkadah* (emphatic *Sunnah*). We observe that the acts of forgetfulness and doubts for which *Sujudus-Sahw* are prescribed in *Al-Ahkdari*, in some cases, apparently lead to the following outcomes:

- i. Performing *Sujud Sahw*, when it is not required (and if done will invalidate the prayer); or
- ii. Ignoring to perform *Sujud Sahw*, when it is obligatory (and if not done it invalidates the prayer); or
- iii. Performing *Sujud Sahw*, in other than its correct place (and if done will invalidate the prayer); or
- iv. Performing *Sujud Sahw*, in other than its correct manner (and if done deliberately or ignorantly will invalidate the prayer).

We urge our readers to carefully cross check the justifications of our comparative analysis and indeed the entire contents of the Treatise, against the *Ahadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the verdicts of the scholars of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamah* and be guided by them. It is against the foregoing background that we request you to be very mindful of the analysis below and only make prostration for forgetfulness when it is obligatory or emphatic *Sunnah* and avoid making it, in other than its correct place or correct manner.

**i. Why there is no *Sujudu Sahw* for the Omission of the Recitation of *Surah* after *al-Fatihah* in the First Two *Raka'ah* of the Obligatory Prayer:**

Al-Ahkdari holds the view that if you forget to recite a *Surah* after *al-Fatihah* in the first two *Raka'ah* of the obligatory prayers, then you must prostrate before *Salam* (i.e. perform *Sujudu Qabla Salam*) to compensate for your mistake. This opinion is incorrect as it is contrary to the *Hadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) quoted below and therefore, prostrating for the omission of a *Surah* after *al-Fatihah* invalidates the prayer.

If you forget to recite *Surah* after *Al-Fatihah* in the first two *Raka'ah* of the obligatory prayer, then, *Al-Fatihah* alone is sufficient and the prayer is complete and valid. The recitation of *Surah* after *al-Fatihah* is *Sunnah Mua'kaddah* and its omission does not entail making prostration for compensation. And since prostration for its omission is not part of the *Sunnah* of prostration for forgetfulness, doing so invalidates the prayer.

Thus, there is no room for the correction of a complete and valid prayer.

The justification is the *Hadith* of Abu Hurairah reported by Bukhari: *"The Qur'an is recited in every prayer and in those prayers in which Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) recited aloud for us, we recited aloud in the same prayers for you; and in the prayers in which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) recited quietly, we recite quietly. If you recite "Al-Fatihah" only it is sufficient but if you recite something else in addition, it is better."*

'Ata' narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira who said that one should recite (*al-Fatihah*) in every (*Raka'ah* of) prayer. What we heard (i.e. recitation) from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), we made you listen to that. And that which he (recited) inwardly, we (recited) inwardly for you. A person said to him: If I add nothing to the (recitation) of the *Umm-al-Qur'an* (*Surah al-Fatihah*), would it make the prayer incomplete? He (Abu Huraira) said: If you add to that (if you recite some verses of the Qur'an along with *Surah al-Fatihah*) that is better for you. But if you are contented with it (*Surah al-Fatihah*) only, it is sufficient for you.

**ii. Why there is NO *Sujudu Sahw* for the Omission of Loud and Silent Recitation:**

Contrary to the position of Al-Ahkdari, the loud and silent (subdued) recitations are *Sunnah Mua'kaddah* and there is no compensation for forgetfully omitting to make it loud or silent where they are specified to be so. If a person praying with loud recitation remembers that he is supposed to recite in subdued voice, he should simply switch to subdued recitation, onward from that verse, without any repetition. Similarly, if he was mistakenly reciting in subdued voice and remembers that he ought to recite loudly, he should change to loud recitation, moving forward from that verse, without any repetition. This position and the fact that there is no prostration for this omission are also contained, even, in *Fiqh-us-Sunnah*. And there is no prostration for compensation for such error. Any attempt to correct a prayer rightfully established in accordance with the *Sunnah*, with additional prostration, is a negation of the *Sunnah* and it invalidates the prayer.

The justification is the Hadith narrated by Abu Qatadah (may Allah be pleased with him):

*“Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to lead us in prayer and recite in the first two Raka'ah of the Zuhr and 'Asr prayers Surah al-Fatihah and two (other) Surah. And he would sometimes recite loud enough for us to hear the Verses. He would prolong the first Raka'ah, and*



would recite in the last two Raka'ah Surah al-Fatihah (only)."  
[Agreed upon].

This Hadith shows that if the silent recitation were obligatory (*Wajib*) then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) wouldn't have made some of the verses loud enough to the hearing of the Companions. Thus, the majority of the scholars say the audible and inaudible recitations are *Sunnah* and that whoever abandons it intentionally, his prayer is valid and there is no compensation upon him but his action is hateful and contrary to the *Sunnah*.

- iii. If one forgetfully recites *al-Fatihah* in subdued voice in the position of loud recitation or vice versa as we have articulated above, there is nothing upon him and his prayer is in order and valid. But if, because he remembers his mistake of inappropriate use of inaudible recitation before making *Ruku'u*, and he goes ahead to repeat the recitation of *al-Fatihah* in audible voice by way of correction, as prescribed by Al-Ahkdari, then his prayer is invalidated. This is so, as he has duplicated a pillar i.e. the recitation of *al-Fatihah*, intentionally or inappropriately and negligently.
- iv. Contrary to what is in Al-Ahkdari, there is no prostration for speaking or blowing air during prayer either forgetfully or intentionally and doing so invalidates the prayer. Speaking or blowing air is completely alien to prayer, except speaking for the purpose of correction in prayer which is sanctioned in the *Sunnah*. Therefore, speaking or blowing, without necessity or

intentionally, is either a prohibited act or it invalidates the prayer. Prohibited Acts and Invalidators of the Prayer are discussed in Part VI.

- The 'speaking' or 'blowing air' that is prohibited is sinful and it does not invalidate prayer and no compensation is required.
  - The 'speaking' that is desirable by necessity is for the correction of *Imam* and is restricted to what must be said for the *Imam* to understand or take note of his error.
  - The 'speaking' that invalidates prayer, once made, renders the prayer invalid and the person must make *Salam* and start afresh.
- v. If one forgets a *Ruku'u* and remembers it while in prostration, he must return to the standing position and then make *Ruku'u* and proceed with his prayer. That standing position is inevitably made because the *Ruku'u* is attained only while one is in a standing position. To recite a portion of the Qur'an at that point, as prescribed in Al-Ahkdari, merely because one has stood up to make-up for missed *Ruku'u*, is an addition without justification and must be ignored as it may affect the validity of one's prayer.
- vi. **Prostration on the Nose is a *Rukn* (pillar) but is incorrectly classified as a '*Sunnah*' by Al-Ahkdari:**  
According to Al-Ahkdari, placing the nose on the ground in prostration is a '*Sunnah*' and if a person omits it twice in his prayer or omits it once along with another *Sunnah*, then he should perform *Sujudu Qabla Salam* to compensate for his

mistake. Al-Ahkdari's classification of it as *Sunnah* is completely wrong as is contrary to the *Hadith* of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the prescribed mode of compensation for its omission is invalid and invalidates the prayer.

The nose is part and parcel of the forehead in prayer. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) described the forehead and the nose as a 'single inseparable unit' and in one narration he described it as 'the face'. Thus, placing the forehead together with the nose on the ground, equally forcefully, is a pillar. There is no valid *Sujud* for the one whose nose is not pressed to the ground as the forehead. And there is no valid prayer without valid *Sujud*. Emphatically, it is an error to classify it as a "*Sunnah*" that if one forgetfully omits can compensate for by *Sujudu Qabli*.

Rather what is authentic is that, if one forgetfully omits to place his nose on the ground in his prayer, then he must repeat that particular prostration to correct his mistake or discard the *Raka'ah* and perform its replacement, depending on the stage at which he recalled his mistake. And after such correction, he compensates his mistake with *Sujud Ba'ada Salam*. But if instead, he merely makes *Sujud Qabli* as compensation for his omission, believing that he has omitted a "*Sunnah*:", his prayer is invalidated and he must repeat it.

**Justification:** The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "*There is no prayer for the one whose nose*

does not feel as much of the ground as the forehead." Reported by Al-Daraqutni, al-Tabarani and Abu Nu'aym.

In another *Hadith*, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said "When you prostrate, put your face [forehead and nose] and hands down firmly, until all of your bones are relaxed in their places." Reported by Ibn Khuzaymah with a *Hasan Isnad*.

vii. **The Final *Tashahhud* is a *Rukn* (pillar) and must not be Accepted as '*Sunnah*':**

The final *Tashahhud* and sitting for it are classified as '*Sunnah*' in Al-Ahkdari and some other Fiqh books. And this implies that if you forget the final *Tashahhud*, then you compensate for your omission with *Sujudu Qabla Salam*. But this classification is erroneous, otherwise a prayer can be valid without the final *Tashahhud*. Rather what is correct is that the final *Tashahhud* is a *Rukn* (pillar) and this is the most correct view point of the scholars. Since it is a *Rukn* (pillar), prayer is not valid without the final *Tashahhud*.

But if a person accepts it to be a '*Sunnah*' as opined by Al-Ahkdari, then one is invariably saying that prayer without final *Tashahhud* can be valid. Let us analyse this "misconceived position of it being *Sunnah*":

- According to the established principles of *Sujud Sawh* in Al-Ahkdari, if one omits one *Sunnah*, there is no *Sujud* and the prayer is valid. And by this principle, for instance, if you sit for the final *Tashahhud* but forgetfully pronounce

the *Salam* without reciting it, you have omitted only one *Sunnah* act which does not require compensation for its omission. This is because the rule says you only prostrate for omitting two or more '*Sunnah*' and not one. Thus, the sitting is accomplished but only the recitation was omitted, then there is no prostration. Apparently, this prayer is deemed to be valid according to Al-Ahkdari.

- If, on the other hand, one forgets to recite the *Tashahhud* and the salutation of the Prophet in the final sitting and pronounces the *Salam*. According to the principles of the *Fiqh* under discussion, *Sujud Qabli* is required to compensate for the omission of the two *Sunnah* acts. Perhaps, because of its wrongful categorisation the window for the compensation of the omission of the final *Tashahhud* with *Sujud Qabli* does not even exist in the first place and surprisingly most people seem to be unaware of this. Therefore, since its omission can only be remembered after *Salam*, then one will be forced to make *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* as an alternative.
- We wish to emphasise here that the scholars of Jurisprudence are agreed that if, the follower of *Imam*, who forgetfully omitted to recite the final *Tashahhud*, makes *Salam*, following that of the *Imam*; then if he remembers that shortly afterwards, he should repeat the last *Raka'ah*, make *Tashahhud* (and all that follows) and make *Salam*, prostrate *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again. But if he did not remember the omission

until a long while afterwards, then he must repeat the prayer. This position of the Scholars of Jurisprudence shows that the final *Tashahhud* is a *Rukn* (pillar) rather than “*Sunnah*” as in Al-Ahkdari and other *Fiqh* Books. Worst still, based on the classification of it being *Sunnah*, the follower of the *Imam* in this particular case is not even required to do anything as his prayer is valid according to the rule therein.

- If it were “*Sunnah*” and its omission is compensated with *Sujudu Qabli*, in accordance with the principles of the *Fiqh*, then we say no possibility exist for the compensation of its omission with *Sujudu Qabli*. The final *Tashahhud* and salutation on the Prophet are the last acts of prayer before *Salam* and if you forget and perform the next act which is *Salam*, you are out of the prayer. Then, either the principles for the compensation of its omission with *Qabla Salam* is ab initio wrong or its classification as a ‘*Sunnah*’ is incorrect. And comparatively, the case of omission of the first *Tashahhud* and its compensation with *Sujudu Qabli* is straight forward, perhaps because it is rightfully classified. How strange it is to accept classifying the first and the final *Tashahhud* under one category of being *Sunnah*.

**Justification for the Final *Tashahhud* being a *Rukn* (pillar):** The *Hadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) shows that the final *Tashahhud* is obligatory. Abdullahi ibn Mas'ud said “We used to say in the prayer before the

Tashahhud was made obligatory": "Whenever we prayed behind the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) we would say: 'Peace be on Jubril, Mikail and peace be on so-and-so.' Once the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) looked back at us and said: 'Allah Himself is As-Salam (Peace), and if anyone of you prays then he should say: All compliments, prayers and good things are due to Allah. may the Peace of Allah be upon you, O, Prophet and may Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you. Peace be upon us and upon the true pious slaves of Allah."

**viii. Why You Must Prostrate with the Imam or Perform the Prostration of the Imam for Joining the Congregation at Tashahhud:**

The position of Al-Ahkdari that says: "The one who does not catch at least one unit (*Raka'ah*) with the *Imam* should not prostrate with him, whether a *Qabli* or *Ba'adi* ...", if the *Imam* was involved in either form of the prostrations is incorrect and must be discarded. If a late comer joins the *Imam* while the *Imam* was making the final *Tashahhud*, then, even though he has not gotten the congregational prayer, he joined the congregation and connected his prayer to that of the *Imam*. Therefore, he must respectfully follow the *Imam*, until he makes the final *Salam* before he proceeds to complete his prayer. If the *Imam* makes *Sujud Qabli* before making *Salam*, then he must follow him to make that *Sujud* and wait for the *Imam* to make the *Salam* before he rises up to complete his prayer. Doing otherwise is going against the Prophetic *Hadith* which

says: *"The Imam is appointed to be followed ..."* Accordingly, if a person who joins a congregational prayer at *Tashahhud*, refuses to follow the *Imam* to do the *Sujudu Qabli*, for the compensation of the *Imam's* mistake, then his *Salah* is invalidated for going against the *Imam* and he must repeat it.

Similarly, if the *Imam* was involved in an error of forgetfulness requiring *Ba'ada Salam*, then, after the complete *Salam* of the *Imam* he should rise up to complete his prayer and make *Ba'ada Salam* as done by the *Imam*. Because the latecomer has connected his prayer to that of the *Imam*, and so he must not go against him, as the foundation of his prayer is that which was established by the *Imam*. therefore, if he refuses to do the *Sujud Sawh* of the *Imam*, negligently or ignorantly his prayer is invalidated and he must repeat that prayer.

**ix. Why the saying of *Sami-Allahu-liman-hamidah* when rising from *Ruku'u* in combination with *Rabbanaa walakal hamdu* while standing upright are obligatory:**

The Prophet's command to say *"Allah listens to the one who praises Him"* is conveyed in the same *Hadith* in which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded us to say, while standing, *"Our Lord, and to You be all Praise."* The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: *"The Imam is there to be followed ... when he has said 'Allah listens to the one who praises Him' then say: '[O Allah!] Our Lord, and to You be all Praise'; Allah will listen to you, for indeed Allah, Blessed and Exalted, has said via the*



tongue of His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): ‘Allah listens to the one who praises Him’.” He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has also commanded all worshippers, whether behind an *Imam* or not, to do the above on rising from *Ruku’u*, by saying “Pray as you have seen me pray.”

Imam Nawawi (may Allah grant him mercy) has further clarified this *Hadith* as quoted in *Fiqh us-Sunnah*, as he said: “Our companions say that the mentioning of the command, ‘And you should say, O! Allah, our Lord ...’ is in conjunction with ‘Allah hears him who praises him.’ But the Prophet, (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) only mentioned the statement, ‘O! Allah, our Lord, to you is the praise,’ because they had already heard the statement, ‘Allah hears him who praises Him’ aloud from him. it was his *Sunnah* to say that phrase aloud, but they did not hear him say, ‘Our Lord, to you is the praise’ because he said it in subdued voice.’

The command for the person praying alone or with the *Imam* to say both *Sami-Allahu-liman-hamidah* and *Rabbanaa walakal hamdu* is emphatic and is reported in the same *Hadith*. It is inappropriate to dissect such a command into two parts, one being *Sunnah* and the other being *Mustahabi* (recommended) in the prayer. This segregation into two classes with different levels of significance in the prayer is not only erroneous but affects the validity of one’s prayer. This is because, if a person forgets to say *Rabbanaa walakal hamdu*

which is classified as recommended by Al-Ahkdari, he is not required to compensate for, as it is a recommended act in the prayer.

It is noteworthy that the most correct position is that, both acts are obligatory as classified in this Treatise. If a person forgetfully omits either, he must compensate for his error of omission with prostration of forgetfulness before *Salam*. And if a person deliberately omits either of the two in his prayer, then his prayer is invalidated.

**x. Why the Glorification in *Ruku'u* and the Supplication in *Sujud* and between the two *Sajdah* are all Obligatory and not merely Recommended Acts:**

These acts are considered mandatory because they were either commanded by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) or routinely practiced by him without interruption or both. Accordingly, the opinion of Al-Ahkdari that the glorification in *Ruku'u*; the supplication in *Sujud*, and the supplication between the two *Sajdah* are merely recommended (*Mustahabi*) acts of the prayer is weak and must be discarded. If this opinion were to be accepted as correct, then a prayer without any glorification in all its *Ruku'u* and without any supplication in all of its prostrations and the sittings in-between the two *Sajdah* would be valid without any doubt! This is because according to the principles of the Fiqh under reference, a recommended act is discretionary and its omission has no consequence on the prayer.

It is notable that, Uqba bin 'Amir reported: When this verse was revealed, *'Then Glorify the Name of Thine Lord, the Great'*, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: *"Make use of it in your Ruku'u (bowing)"* and when this verse was revealed, *"Glorify the Name of Thine Lord, the Highest"*, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: *"Make use of it in your Sujud (prostration)."*

It is imperative to note that the most correct position is that the glorification in *Ruku'u* and the supplications in prostrations and in the sitting between the two *Sajdah* are all obligatory (*Wajib*). The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would say different types of remembrance of Allah and supplications in his *Ruku'u* and *Sujud*. In his *Ruku'u* for instance, sometimes he would say: *"How perfect is my Lord, the Supreme!"* (three times) – and there is established from him (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) seven varieties of *Adhkar* – remembrances and supplications for this stage. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would sometimes say: *"How Perfect is my Lord, the Most High"*, (three times) in his prostration – and there is established from him (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) twelve types of supplications for this stage. And while sitting in-between the two *Sadjah* he would sometimes say: *"O my Lord! Forgive, forgive me"* – and there is established from him (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) two manners of supplications for this stage. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be

upon him) would make different types of glorifications and supplications in the *Ruku'u*, *Sujud*, and in the sitting between the two *Sajdah* as amply described in "The Prophet's Prayer Described" by *Imam Al-Albani*. And the stronger opinion about the statuses of these glorifications and supplications are of obligation and not of being recommendable acts that can be ignored at will. Rather they are the landmarks of tranquility which is a pillar of the prayer. You find the sweetness of prayer, largely in *Surah al-Fatihah* and the glorifications and supplications in these various positions.

- xi. **The widely practiced opinion of Al-Ahkdari that, whenever you exercise doubt in the prayer you always resort to what is minimum and compensate with *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* is contradictory to the *Hadith* of the Prophet** (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) **and must be rejected:**

The opinion of Al-Ahkdari as regards doubt in prayer is that, each time a person exercises doubt in his prayer, for example, as to the number of *Raka'ah* he has prayed (assuming he wasn't sure whether it was two or three), then he should resort to what is minimum (in this case two) and complete his prayer based on that and compensate with *Ba'ada Salam*. In this opinion, two matters are incorrect and they contradict the *Hadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him):

- It is incorrect that each time one exercises doubt in his prayer he should resort to what is minimum. This is because doubt in prayer are of two perspectives, and each one is

supported by a *Hadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

- i. One form of doubt is where a person is able to determine what is overwhelming over the two possibilities on which he is exercising doubt and the compensation for this form of doubt is *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam*. This is based on the *Hadith* of 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood (*radiallahu anhu*) established in the two *Sahih* and elsewhere, that the Prophet (*sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam*) said, “If one of you doubts in his prayer, then let him strive to arrive at what is correct, and complete it upon that basis. Then let him give the salutation and perform two prostrations.” This is the wording of al-Bukhari.
- ii. The second form of doubt is where a person is unable to ascertain what is overwhelming and therefore had to resort to that which is minimum (*Aqal*) of the two possibilities on which he is exercising doubt and the compensation for this form of doubt is *Sujudu Qabla Salam*. This is based on the *Hadith* of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree (*radiallahu anhu*) that the Prophet (*sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam*) said “If one of you doubts in his prayer and does not know how many he has prayed- whether it is three or four – then let him cast away the doubt and build upon what he is certain of. Then let him perform two prostrations **before** giving the salutation. So if he has prayed five, then they will make his prayer even for him,

*and if he has prayed the full four, then they will be a humiliation for Satan.”*

- The second incorrect matter is the mode of compensation for the doubt i.e. the performance of *Ba'ada Salam* as compensation for the doubt. Al-Ahkdari opined that whenever one exercises doubt in his prayer he should resort to that which is minimum (*Aqal*) of the two possibilities and compensate with *Ba'ada Salam*. And this is contrary to the *Hadith* of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree (*radiallahu anhu*) which commands the performance of *Qabla Salam* as given above.

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree's (*radiallahu anhu*) *Hadith* is reported by Muslim and it is even recorded in *Bulughul Maram*, a widely read Book of *Hadith*. We are at a lost as to why some scholars are still relying on an opinion that directly contradicts (readily accessible) *Hadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The foregoing matters are some of the apparent errors resulting from the wrongful classification of the acts of the prayer in Al-Ahkdari and their consequential effects on the prostration for forgetfulness.

## PART V

### **Emphatic *Sunnah* (*Sunnah Mua'kkadah*) of the Prayer:**

It is explicitly required to perform all the Emphatic *Sunnah* acts of the prayer for the completeness and perfection of the *Salah* and the fullness of the rewards associated with the physical acts of prayer. And take note that the Prophetic command of “*pray as you have seen me pray*” is accomplished relative to one’s compliance level with the emphatic *Sunnah* acts, after preserving the pillars and the obligations. Allah (the Most High) says in Qur’an (33:21): “*Indeed in the Messenger of Allah [Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)] you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much.*” Thus, strict compliance and dutiful preservation of the emphatic *Sunnah* acts of the prayer is imperative for everyone.

It is also very significant to note the following three matters as regards one’s attitude towards the Emphatic *Sunnah* acts of the prayer:

- i. Forgetful omission of any of these *Sunnah* do not invalidate *Salah* but it reduces the reward of the *Salah*.
- ii. Negligent or deliberate omission of any of these Emphatic *Sunnah* is an act of disobedience to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and is sinful.
- iii. Defiant omission of any of these Emphatic *Sunnah* acts invalidates the prayer.

The emphatic *Sunnah* acts of prayer are at least sixty-five (65) in number, according to what we are able to identify, mainly, from the Prophet's Prayer Described by *Imam Al-Albani* (may Allah grant him mercy). They are enumerated below, according to the different positions in the prayer.

### **1. While Standing – Twenty (20).**

1. Recitation of *Iqama* in the obligatory prayers.
2. Placing the right arm on the back of the left palm, wrist and forearm and sometimes grasping the left arm with the right. And placing them on the chest and not any other location. The prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "*We the company of prophets, have been commanded to hasten the breaking of fast, to delay the meal before the fast, and to place our right arms on our left arms during prayer.*"
3. Positioning the feet straight with the toes pointed towards the *Qiblah*.
4. Standing with the feet apart, as in normal standing posture (without keeping them unreasonably apart or closely).
5. Raising the hands simultaneously with the *Takbiratul-Ihram* or raising them after pronouncing the *Takbiratul-Ihram* or raising them before pronouncing the *Takbiratul-Ihram*.
6. From time to time alternating the above three forms of raising the hands while making *Takbiratul-Ihram*.
7. Raising the hands with the fingers straight and apart (i.e. neither spaced out nor together).
8. Raising the hands to equivalent level with the shoulders and occasionally, equivalent level with the tops of the ears.



9. Fixing the sight towards the ground, at the place of prostration while in standing position throughout the prayer.
10. Recitation of the opening supplication.
11. Saying *Isti'adhah* and *Basmalah* (silently), before commencing the recitation of *al-Fatihah* in every *Raka'ah*.
12. Adhering to the command of recitation of one verse at a time, pausing after each verse while reciting *Surah al-Fatihah* (i.e. reading at moderate pace with *Tarteel*, *Tajweed*, and beautified voice).
13. Saying *Amin* on the completion of the recitation of *al-Fatihah* whether praying alone or with the *Imam*; loudly with prolonged voice (in prayers with loud recitation) and silently (in prayers with silent recitation).
14. The recitation of *Surah* or a part thereof, after *al-Fatihah*.
15. Saying *Basmalah* (silently), before commencing the recitation of *Surah* or a part thereof.
16. Observance of *Tartil* in the recitation of *Surah* i.e. recitation in slow, rhythmic tones and beautifying one's voice when reciting (not racing or hurrying).
17. Recitation of *al-Fatihah* and *Surah* by those praying behind the *Imam* in the prayers with silent recitation.
18. Making the first *Raka'ah* longer than the second one by reciting longer *Surah* in the first *Raka'ah* than in the second one.
19. Adherence to loud and silent recitation where applicable.

20. Pausing for a moment, after completing the required recitations for a *Raka'ah*, before making *Takbir* to make *Ruku'u*.

## **2. While Bowing – Two (2).**

1. The act of starting the pronouncement of the *Takbir* for bowing simultaneously as you begin bowing.
2. Raising the hands with the *Takbir* for bowing to the shoulder level and occasionally to equivalent level to the tops of the ears.

## **3. In Bowing – Five (5).**

1. Placing the hands firmly on the knees in *Ruku'u*, grasping them, with the fingers spaced out.
2. Fixing the sight at the place of prostration while in *Ruku'u*.
3. The act of not letting the head to droop or raise i.e. not higher than his back, but keeping it in-between these two positions, while in *Ruku'u*.
4. The act of spreading oneself while in *Ruku'u* (i.e. not to be in compact position) and making the back flat.
5. The act of keeping the elbows away from the sides while in *Ruku'u*.

## **4. While Rising from Bowing – One (1):**

1. The act of beginning the saying of the supplication for rising from the *Ruku'u* [i.e. '*Sami' Allahu Liman Hamidahu*'] while rising up and completing it as you attain the upright standing position.

## **5. While in the Upright Standing Position (after rising from bowing) – Four (4).**

1. Being in the upright standing position for making the supplication: '*Rabbana'a wa lak al-Hamd*' and associated supplications subsequent to it.
2. Making the supplications subsequent to '*Rabbana'a wa lak al-Hamd*' such as *Hamdan kathiiran tayyiban, mubaarakan fii* and its likes while in this standing position.
3. Raising the hands to the shoulder level and occasionally to equivalent level to the tops of the ears while in this standing position.
4. And then returning the hands to the sides, as in normal posture, while in this standing position.

## **6. While Moving to Sujud from the Standing Position (after Rising from Bowing) – One (1).**

1. The act of starting the pronouncement of the *Takbir*, to go down for *Sujud*, while at the standing position and completing it before placing your face on the ground for the *Sujud*.

## **7. While in Sujud – Seven (7).**

1. Placing the hands on the ground before the knees while making *Sujud*.
2. Putting the fingers of the hands together and pointing them towards the *Qiblah* in *Sujud*.
3. Putting the palms level with the shoulders or level with the tops of the ears in *Sujud*.

4. The act of firmly pressing the seven limbs of prostration (the forehead & nose, the palms, the knees, the inner parts of the toes) to the ground while in *Sujud*.
5. The act of putting the two heels together in upright position and pointing the inner parts of the toes towards the *Qibla* while in *Sujud*.
6. The act of keeping the elbows away from the sides in *Sujud*.
7. Ensuring that the belly is away from the thighs and the thighs from the calves while in *Sujud*.

#### **8. While Sitting Between the Two *Sajdah* – Four (4):**

1. Sitting *Muftarishan* between the two *Sajdah* i.e. putting the left foot along the ground and sitting on the inner part of it and keeping the right foot upright with the inner part of the toes firmly pressed to the ground and pointed towards the *Qiblah*.
2. Sometimes, sitting *lq'a* between the two *Sajdahs* i.e. resting on both the heels and (all) the toes, with the inner parts of the toes pressed to the ground.
3. Placing the right palm (with the fingers spaced out) on the right thigh or the knee and the left palm (with the fingers spaced out) on the left thigh or the knee.
4. Fixing the sight at the place of prostration while sitting after raising from the *Sujud*.

#### **9. While Sitting after the Second *Sujud* (*Jalsatu al-Istirahah*) – Four (4):**

1. *Jalsatu al-Istirahah*, the sitting of rest, *Muftarishan*, (after raising from the second *Sajdah* of the first *Raka'ah* or the third

*Raka'ah*) before getting up for the second or the fourth *Raka'ah* as the case may be.

2. Placing the right palm (with the fingers spaced out) on the right thigh or the knee and the left palm (with the fingers spaced out) on the left thigh or the knee, while at *Jalsatu al-Istirahah*.
3. Fixing the sight at the place of prostration while sitting after rising from the *Sujud*.
4. Supporting oneself with the hands with clenched fists when getting up from the second *Sujud* for any subsequent *Raka'ah*.

#### **10. While Sitting for the First *Tashahhud* – Seven (7):**

1. Sitting *Muftarishan* for the first *Tashahhud* (of 3 or 4 *Raka'ah* prayer) or the *Tashahhud* of a two-*Raka'ah* prayer.
2. Placing the left palm (with the fingers spaced out) on the left thigh or the knee while making the *Tashahhud*. And clenching all the fingers of the right hand, putting the thumb on the middle finger or making circle with these two, pointing with the index finger (the finger next to the thumb) towards the *Qiblah* in the *Tashahhud*.
3. Putting the end of the right elbow on the right thigh in *Tashahhud*.
4. Moving the index finger in *Tashahhud* until you get up for the next *Raka'ah*.
5. Fixing the sight on the index finger while making *Tashahhud*.

6. Prayer upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the first *Tashahhud*.
7. Sometimes making *Du'a* (supplication) after the prayer upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the first *Tashahhud*.

#### **11. While Sitting for the Final *Tashahhud* – Eight (8):**

1. Sitting *Mutawarrikan*, with the left upper thigh on the ground with both feet protruding to the right side in final *Tashahhud*.
2. Sitting *Mutawarrikan*, with the left foot under the (right) thigh and shin, the right foot upright or laid along the ground in final *Tashahhud*.
3. Placing the left palm (with the fingers spaced out) on the left thigh or the knee while making the *Tashahhud*. And clenching all the fingers of the right hand, putting the thumb on the middle finger or making circle with these two, pointing with the index finger (the finger next to the thumb) towards the *Qiblah* in the *Tashahhud*.
4. Putting the end of the right elbow on the right thigh in *Tashahhud*.
5. Moving the index finger in *Tashahhud* until you make the *Taslim*.
6. Fixing the sight on the index finger while making *Tashahhud*.
7. Seeking refuge with Allah from four things (punishment of Hellfire; punishment of the grave; the trials of living and dying; and the evil (trials) of the False Christ) after prayer upon the

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the last *Tashahhud*.

8. After seeking refuge from the four things, making *Du'a* (supplication), (choosing the ones most pleasing to you from those established in the *Sunnah*), in the final *Tashahhud* before *Salam*.

## **12. At Taslim (Salutation) – Four (4).**

1. While making *Taslim (Salam)* twice, turning to the right, such that the whiteness of the right cheek is visible and likewise while turning to the left.
2. While making *Salam* once: looking towards in front of his face, turning to the right side a bit or a little.
3. Making the *Taslim* in audible voice by the *Imam* and the person praying alone.
4. Alternating the four different forms of making *Taslim*.

## **13. Generic Ones – Seven (7).**

1. Making the supplication in *Ruku'u*, *Sujud*, and in between the two *Sajda* at least three times, in cases of supplications specified as such in the *Ahadith*, and one can increase any such supplication to five, seven or any upward odd numbers as one wishes.
2. Making the supplication in *Ruku'u*, *Sujud*, and in between the two *Sajdah* slowly with contemplation i.e. without rushing through as a routine.

3. Making the *Ruku'u*, the standing after *Ruku'u*, the *Sujud*, and the sitting in between the two *Sajdah*, nearly equal in length (i.e. time duration).
4. Sometimes prolonging the standing after *Ruku'u* and the sitting in between the two *Sajdah* by choosing to make longer supplications, as given in some of the *Ahadith* (such that a person may be tempted to think that you have forgotten that you are in *Salah*).
5. Alternating the different forms of supplications applicable in the various positions in *Salah*. Specifically, the *Adhkar* – remembrances and supplications for opening the prayer; in *Ruku'u*; the additions to “*Rabbana Walakal Hamdu*”; in the two *Sajdah*; and in between the two *Sajdah*.
6. Attaining tranquility in *Ruku'u*, *Sujud*, and the sitting in between the two *Sujud* before making the applicable supplications in those positions.
7. Use of *Sitrah* (barrier): Prayer barrier for *Imam* or one praying alone to prevent passage in front of him.



## PART VI

### Prohibited Acts and Invalidators of the Prayer

Standing for prayer is a highly venerated position of engagement of a servant with his Lord. And due to the boundless significance of the prayer, the servant must stand in awe coupled with humility and humbleness and strictly observe the epitome of all respectful conduct with modesty, to ensure the acceptability of his prayer. Thus, as a person makes the *Takbirah al-Ihram*, then there are matters which he must avoid to display his servitude and earn the reward of the prayer and there are matters which he must avoid to preserve the validity of the prayer. Accordingly, these matters are broadly classified as acts which are prohibited and those which invalidate the prayer.

#### Prohibited Acts in the Prayer:

The following acts are prohibited during prayers:

- i. Thinking of worldly affairs, without struggling to attain *Khushuu* – awe coupled with humility and submissiveness.
- ii. Looking around like fox.
- iii. Raising one's gaze to the sky or upwards.
- iv. Fixing one's sight on something that attracts attention.
- v. The presence of distractive decoration on the wall in the direction of the *qiblah* or something that would attract one's attention.
- vi. Squatting like monkey i.e. leaning on the hand.
- vii. Resting the arms on the ground in *Sujud*, the way a dog rests them.

- viii. Stealing from one's prayer i.e. not completing *Ruku'u* and *Sujud*.
- ix. Exiting *Salah*, whenever voided, without making *Taslim* (*As-salam*).
- x. Fidgeting with one's clothing or body or dusting away pebbles in place of *sujud* without necessity.
- xi. Motioning with both hands while making the *Taslim* (Salutation).
- xii. Induced noise such as letting telephones to ring or vibrate or other distractions associated with telephone.
- xiii. Talking without absolute necessity on matters related to the prayer.
- xiv. Yawning with sound.
- xv. Indecent dressing: such as tied clothes displaying the organs or constraining the correct performance of the acts of prayer or use of clothes with pictures, and others opposed to Islamic values.
- xvi. Praying while food has been served and the urge for it is prevalent.
- xvii. Praying while being pressed by the call of nature.
- xviii. *Ikhtisar* in prayer – standing akimbo (i.e. placing one's hands on one's hips).
- xix. Spitting of saliva or mucus to one's front or to one's right side.
- xx. Praying towards graves.
- xxi. Praying at a fixed place in the *Masjid* except in the case of Imam.

- xxii. Making *Ruku'u* before joining the row.
- xxiii. Pronouncing the *Takbir* for making *Ruku'u* while in the standing position before making the *Ruku'u* or pronouncing it after completely making *Ruku'u*, even if it were an *Imam* that would want to convey his voice through the microphone. [The *Sunnah* is to start saying it, from the standing position, as you are set to make *Ruku'u* and complete it as you bow].
- xxiv. Saying "*Sami-Allahu-liman-Hamidah*" before rising from *Ruku'u* or saying it after standing, even if it were an *Imam* that would want to convey his voice through the microphone. [The *Sunnah* is to start saying it, as you begin to rise from *Ruku'u* and complete it, as you attain the upright standing position].
- xxv. Joining the congregation while having eaten garlic or onion or other things with similar offensive odours.
- xxvi. Praying voluntary prayer while one is overwhelmed by sleep.
- xxvii. Letting one's garment down to touch the ground.
- xxviii. Clasping the hands together.
- xxix. Closing the eyes.
- xxx. *At-Talththum* – (deliberately) covering the mouth.
- xxxi. Restraining one's garment (i.e. folding and hanging cloth behind oneself) or tying hair behind oneself during *Salah*.
- xxxii. Reciting *Fatihah* speedily.

### **Acts which Invalidate Prayer:**

In addition to the ten invalidators of prayer related to the conduct of prostration for forgetfulness discussed at the end of Part II, under the caption “*Errors of Forgetfulness and Consequential Acts that Invalidate the Prayer*”, it is imperative to note that the occurrence of the following matters also invalidates the prayer and will necessitate its repetition:

- i. *Salah* is voided once one's ablution is invalidated. Thus, the occurrence of any of the acts that invalidates ablution equally invalidates *Salah*.
- ii. Deliberating saying the *Salam* before completing the prayer whether praying alone or with the *Imam*.
- iii. Deliberate omission of any *Rukn* (pillar) or *Wajib* (obligation).
- iv. Deliberate addition of any *Rukn* (pillar) or *Wajib* (obligation).
- v. Deliberately or forgetfully ignoring to place the nose on the ground, in prostration.
- vi. If the follower of the *Imam* precedes the *Imam* or competes with him (i.e. who does the acts along with him) in performing any of the pillars, negligently or deliberately, his prayer is invalidated.
- vii. Deliberately or negligently rising up to complete missing parts of prayer after the first *Salam* of the *Imam* but before his second *Salam*, in case the *Imam* makes two *Salam* to exit the prayer; because the *Imam* has not in reality finished his prayer until he gives the second *Salam*. So long as the *Imam* has not given the second *Salam* too, then one is still connected to him.

- viii. Defiant omission of any Emphatic *Sunnah* act of prayer.
- ix. Prayer without established knowledge of the conditions (*Shuruut*), pillars (*Arkaan*), obligations (*Wajibaat*), and Emphatic *Sunnah* of the prayer as well as knowledge of the principles of prostration for forgetfulness.
- x. Excessive continuous movement during the prayer for no essential reason.
- xi. Changing the sequence of the pillars.
- xii. Passage of a menstruating woman or a donkey or a black dog in front of a person praying without *Sutrah*.
- xiii. Turning away from the *Qiblah* to a large extent.
- xiv. Deliberately uncovering the *al-Awrah*.
- xv. Laughing loudly.
- xvi. Intentional eating and drinking while praying.
- xvii. Deliberate speaking.
- xviii. Deciding (intending in the heart) to stop praying.
- xix. Self-induced yawning.
- xx. Covering the nose with mask.
- xxi. Pressing need for the urge to go to the bathroom which affects the correct performance of the pillars and obligatory parts of prayers.
- xxii. Pecking like cockerel.

## PART VII

### Caution for *Imams* and Followers of Congregational Prayer

*Imam Ahmad* (may Allah grant him mercy) said: Take note that "There is no *Salah* for those who precede the *Imam* in bowing, prostrating, straightening up and going down or those who compete with the *Imām* [i.e. their *Salah* are not accepted]." The proof of this is in the *Hadīth* of the Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the narrations of his Companions, (may Allah be pleased with them all), such as the *Ahadith* in which he said:

- "The *Imam* is appointed) to be followed. So do not differ from him, bow when he bows, and say: 'Rabbanaa wa lakal hamd' (Our Lord! All praise and thanks are due to you), when he says *Sami Allahu liman hamidah* (Allah hears the one who praises Him). And when he prostrates, prostrate (after him) ..."  
(Narrated by Ahmad, Al-Bukhari, and Muslim).
- "O people! I am your *Imam*, so do not anticipate me in bowing, prostrating, standing, sitting or turning (to right and left for the *Tasleem*)."  
(Narrated by Ahmad and Muslim).
- "Does not the one who raises his head before the *Imam* fear that Allah (*Subhanahu Wata'Alah*) will change his head into that of a donkey?" (Narrated by Bukhāri and Muslim). In another narration he said: "into the shape of (that of) a dog?" (Ibn Hibbān).

The correct manner of following the *Imam* is to ensure that you only start your act of following the *Imam*, in every step of the prayer,

after he has completed his action. The indicator of completeness of the *Imam's* action is the termination of his voice followed by the **“actual physical movement”** or performance of the particular act of prayer by him. Thus, if you are in a position that you can see the *Imam*, then you must wait for him to complete his action before you start yours. But if you are not in a position to see him, then you are excused to resort to following him on the termination of his voicing of the *Takbir* or ‘*Sami Allahu liman Hamidahu*’. Accordingly, if the *Imam* says ‘*Allahu Akbar*’ to go to prostration, and he finishes saying the *Takbir* before reaching the ground, then, if you can see him, do not start prostrating yet, until he has placed his face on the ground. And if you cannot see him, you start the act of following him only after the termination of his voice for the performance of the particular action. It is imperative to take note of this very important principle and ensure compliance to preserve the validity of your prayer.

Accordingly, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari reported Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying: When you pray make your rows straight and let one of your number act as your *Imam*. If you say the *Takbir* when he says it and say Amen when he says “*Not of those with whom Thou art angry nor of those who go astray*”, Allah will accept your prayer. When he says the *Takbir* and bows, say it and bow, for the *Imam* bows before you and raises himself before you. Then Allah's Messenger said, “The one is equivalent to the other.” ...” The Prophet's statement: “*The one is equivalent to the other*”, in this *Hadith* means: “*Although the Imam*

*begins and ends his bowing before you do, **your bow lasts the same length of time as his.***" (Muslim).

As noted above, the followers of *Imam*, in congregational prayer, must wait for the *Imam* to pronounce the *Takbir* or say *Sami Allahu liman hamidah*, as the case may be, before they start following him in his actions, it is then, incumbent upon the *Imam* to prolong his glorifications or supplications (longer than the minimum requirement of three times) in the various positions of prayer to enable the followers perform their own acts with equal tranquility by making the glorifications at least three times. In this regards, our noble Shaikh, Al-Uthaimeen (may Allah grant him mercy) cautioned that when leading the congregation, "It is obligatory upon the *Imam* to take into consideration those behind him, such that they are able to perform the minimum of perfection in their prayer (i.e. he is not to suffice with such a minimum level when leading that those behind him find it difficult to offer the prayer in a sufficiently accurate manner), because the *Imam* isn't praying for himself only, rather he is praying for himself and has the congregation behind him to consider. Therefore, he must fear Allah regarding them and not deprive them of performing the minimum perfection at least."

It is noteworthy that the minimum perfection for tranquility in bowing, prostration, sitting between the two prostrations are marked by the easing of the bones to normal posture, affirmed by making the designated supplications at least three times. If the *Imam* were to make the minimum of the supplications i.e. only three



times (in *Ruku'u*, *Sujud*, between the two *Sajdah*), then, certainly the followers will not be able to get the minimum of three. And since the *Imam*, in congregation, is being followed and the followers must wait for him to complete his utterance of *Sami Allahu liman hamidah* or the *Takbir* and complete the associated action, before they start the act of following, then it is incumbent upon the *Imam* to say the supplications at least five times or even seven times to enable the followers say at least the minimum of three and follow him, with tranquility, in their actions.

Ibn al-Mubarak (may Allah grant him mercy) said: "It is preferred for the *Imam* to make five glorifications. Therefore, all the people behind him would be able to make (at least) three."

Similarly, Al-Hasan al-Basri (may Allah grant him mercy) said: "The most perfect *Tasbeeh* (in *Ruku'u*, *Sujud*, and in-between the two *sujud*) is repeated seven times, the midmost *Tasbeeh* is repeated five times and the least *Tasbeeh* is repeated three times."

Also the *Imam* must ensure adherence to the Prophet's *Hadith* by saying *Rabbanaa walakal hamdu* and the additional supplication associated with it only while standing upright, after raising from bowing, otherwise the followers will be rushed to prostration. *Imam* Ahmad (may Allah grant him mercy) said "And order him (the *Imam*), when he raises his head from bowing and says: '*Sami' Allahu liman Hamidah*', to remain standing until he has said, '*Rabbana wa Lak al-hamd*,' without haste in his speech; should he wish to say more than this, then let him say ..." (he mentioned one of the additional subsequent supplications).

In conclusion, we commend to our dear brothers and sisters the combined reading of this Treatise with Brother Mustafa Bulu Ibrahim's Treatise on the "Fundamentals of Prophet's Manner of Purification and Prayers Described." PDF copies of both as well as video on practical demonstration of the Prophet's manner of ablution and prayer are downloadable at: [masjid-abi-zar-al-ghifari.org](http://masjid-abi-zar-al-ghifari.org)

We hope that Allah will make this publication sincerely for His Face, full of Honour, and a guide to the *Sunnah* of His kind and merciful Prophet. And we ask Allah (the Exalted) to grant us understanding of His Book and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (peace and blessing be upon him) and that we act upon them inwardly and outwardly, in matters of *Aqeedah*, worship and dealings. And that He grants us all, a good outcome, indeed He is the Most Beneficent, Most Generous. And all praise is for Allah (the Most High), the Lord of all creation, and may Allah extol and send blessings of peace upon our Prophet Muhammad, upon his family, all his Companions and his true followers.

## APPENDIX

### Questions and Answers on Prostration for Forgetfulness (*Sujudu Sahw*)

We want to clarify to our readers that, as articulated in Part II of this Treatise, all references to “shortly after *Salam*” mean time duration after *Salam*, within which it is acceptable for a person to compensate for his mistakes for forgetfulness, remembered after exiting the prayer. To this effect, Shaikh Al-Uthaimeen (may Allah have mercy on him) has given a verdict of\_a time frame of 2 to 3 minutes, after *Salam*, as an acceptable short while, provided the person has not left the *Masjid*. Thus, the term ‘shortly after *Salam*’, in any of the questions below relates to 2 to 3 minutes after *Salam* and no more.

1. A person praying *Asr*, after rising from *Ruku’u* in his second *Raka’ah*, forgetfully made *Ruku’u* again. And immediately, as he started reciting the glorification in *Ruku’u*, he remembered that he was making, an inadvertent, second *Ruku’u*. What is the right course of action for him to take at that stage?

**Answer:**

That *Raka’ah* is invalidated because of the repetition of a pillar. He should therefore, promptly stop the glorification and based on intention, discard the *Raka’ah* and rise up to the upright standing position while pronouncing *Takbir*. He then recites *al-Fatihah* (and a *Surah*, where applicable) and proceeds with his prayer to completion. Then, on completion

of his prayer and after making *Salam*, he should make *Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

It is notable that as soon as he remembers that he was in the act of repeating the *Ruku'u*, then, it is incumbent upon him to stop forthwith and rise up as any forward action, from that moment, would amount to intentional repetition of the pillar and thus will invalidate the *Salah*.

2. A person praying *Zuhr*, forgetfully recited *al-Fatihah* twice in the first *Raka'ah*. What is the right course of action to take:
- i. **Case I:** if he remembers, while in the act of making the addition?
  - ii. **Case II:** if he remembers, after making the third *Raka'ah*?
  - iii. **Case III:** if he remembers, shortly after making *Salam*?
  - iv. **Case IV:** if he remembers, long after making *Salam*?

**Answer:**

- i. **Case I:** The *Raka'ah* is invalidated and he should promptly stop the recitation to preserve his prayer from being rendered invalid. As he stops the recitation, he discards the *Raka'ah* and starts a new one in its place. Then, on completion of his prayer and after making *Salam*, he should make *Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.
- ii. **Case II:** He should discard the first *Raka'ah* as is invalidated. Then, the third *Raka'ah* he is upon it becomes the second *Raka'ah* for him and he sits for the

first *Tashahhud* at the end of it. He should then proceed to complete his prayer and after making *Salam*, he should make *Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

iii. **Case III:** The first *Raka'ah* is invalidated and he should discard it. He should then stand up and make *Takbir* and recite *al-Fatihah* and proceed to complete the *Raka'ah* and make the final *Tashahhud* and what follows and then make the two prostrations before *Salam* and make *Salam*.

iv. **Case IV:** His prayer is invalidated; he must repeat it.

3. A person praying *Ishah*, forgetfully recited *al-Fatihah* twice in the first *Raka'ah* and made the *Sajdah* three times in the third *Raka'ah*. And he remembered that he repeated these pillars while he was making the final *Tashahhud*. What is the right course of action for him to take?

**Answer:**

His prayer is invalidated and he must repeat it. He should promptly make *Salam* to terminate it and perform a new one.

4. A person praying *Zuhr*, forgets to sit for the final *Tashahhud* after the fourth *Raka'ah* and he stood up. And as he was reciting *al-Fatihah*, he remembered that he was in the act of making a fifth *Raka'ah*.

i. **Case I:** What is he supposed to do at that stage?

ii. **Case II:** What is he required to do, if at the end of the fourth *Raka'ah*, he sat and made the final *Tashahhud* and the salutations on the Prophet, before inadvertently

standing up for the fifth *Raka'ah* and remembers his mistake while making *Ruku'u* of the fifth *Raka'ah*?

**Answer:**

- i. **Case I:** He should promptly stop the recitation and sit down and recite the final *Tashahhud* and what follows and make *Salam* and perform *Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again. But note that if instead of promptly sitting, he proceeds to complete the recitation of *al-Fatihah*, then his payer is invalidated and he must repeat it.
- ii. **Case II:** In this case, he should promptly proceed to sit, without rising up from his *Ruku'u*. Then, without reciting the final *Tashahhud*, he should make *Salam* and perform *Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again. However, if he wishes he could make the supplications subsequent to the salutations on the Prophet and then make *Salam* and perform *Ba'ada Salam*.

But also note that if, after sitting, he repeats the final *Tashahhud* and the salutations on the Prophet, which are pillars, his prayer is invalidated.

5. A person praying *Fajr*, forgetfully recited the final *Tashahhud* twice but recited the salutation on the Prophet once. What is the right course of action if he remembers:
- i. Before making *Salam*?
  - ii. Shortly after making *Salam*?
  - iii. Long after making *Salam*?

**Answer:**

- i. He should, go ahead and make *Salam*, perform *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.
  - ii. If he remembers a short while after the *Salam*, he should perform *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.
  - iii. His prayer is invalidated; he should repeat it.
6. A person prayed *Maghrib* as two *Raka'ah* and gave *Salam*. What is the right course of action to take, if:
- i. he remembers shortly after making *Salam*.
  - ii. he remembers long after *Salam*.

**Answer:**

- i. He should stand up promptly and perform one more *Raka'ah*, make the final *Tashahhud* and all that follows and make *Salam* and perform the two prostrations and give *Salam* again.
  - ii. The prayer is invalidated and he must repeat it.
7. A person praying forgot the second *Sujud* in the first *Raka'ah*. What is the corrective action:
- i. **Case I:** if he remembers the omission, while in *Ruku'u* of the second *Raka'ah*?
  - ii. **Case II:** if he remembers the omission, while sitting in-between the two *Sajdah* of the second *Raka'ah*?
  - iii. **Case III:** if he remembers the omission, while sitting in-between the two *Sajdah* of the third *Raka'ah*?

**Answer:**

- i. **Case I:** He should, without rising from that *Ruku'u*, proceed to the sitting position between the two *Sajdah*,

make the relevant supplication for that position and then make his second *Sujud*. He should then count this as his first *Raka'ah* and proceed to complete his prayer and after *Salam* make *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

- ii. **Case II:** He should, discard the first *Raka'ah* (as it was deficient of the second *Sujud* and the sitting in between) and this second *Raka'ah* will take its place in the count sequence, so he upholds it as his first *Raka'ah* and then perform another *Raka'ah* which becomes his second *Raka'ah* and then he sits for the first *Tashahhud*. He then, goes ahead to complete his prayer by performing two more *Raka'ah*. He then makes the final *Tashahhud* and what follows, and then give the salutation, prostrate for forgetfulness and then give salutation again (i.e. make *Ba'ada Salam*).
  - iii. **Case III:** Immediately he remembers, he should discard the first *Raka'ah* and uphold the *Raka'ah* he is upon it as the second *Raka'ah* and sit for the first *Tashahhud*. He should, then complete his prayer and after *Salam* make *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.
8. A person praying forgot the second *Sujud* in the second *Raka'ah* of *Zuhr*. What is the corrective action:
- i. **Case I:** if he remembers his omission while sitting in-between the two *Sajdah* of the third *Raka'ah*?
  - ii. **Case II:** if he remembers his omission while standing for the fourth *Raka'ah*?



**Answer:**

- i. **Case I:** As he remembers, then he should, make intention and discard the second *Raka'ah*. Therefore, his third *Raka'ah* becomes the second *Raka'ah* and after performing the second *Sujud* he sits for the first *Tashahhud* and makes it. He then proceeds to complete his *Salah* and after the final *Tashahhud* makes *Salam* and make the two prostrations and make *Salam* again.
  - ii. **Case II:** He should discard the second *Raka'ah* and uphold the fourth *Raka'ah* he is upon it as the third *Raka'ah* and after it, perform the fourth *Raka'ah* to complete his *Salah*. Then, after the final *Tashahhud* and the salutation upon the Prophet, he should perform *Sujud Qabla Salam* and make *Salam*. He compensates his mistake with *Sujud Qabla Salam* because, by discarding the second *Raka'ah* while at the fourth *Raka'ah*, the counting sequence of the *Raka'ah* is automatically adjusted. Thus, the first *Tashahhud* has seized to have been established after the second *Raka'ah*, thereby necessitating *Sujud Qabla Salam*, while the addition of the discarded deficient *Raka'ah* entails *Sujud Ba'ada Salam*; accordingly, *Sujud Qabla Salam* prevails.
9. A person praying *Zuhur* prayer, when he sat for the final *Tashahhud*, he only recited the *Tashahhud*, and ignored to send salutations on the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). And he forgetfully stood up, thinking that it was his second *Raka'ah*. But he then remembered while in *Ruku'u*

that it was actually the fourth *Raka'ah* and that he was in the act of adding a fifth one. What is he required to do?

**Answer:**

He should proceed to sitting position without rising from the *Ruku'u* (because if he rises up to the standing position, it amounts to duplication of pillar which invalidates his prayer). As he sits down, then without repeating the *Tashahhud*, he should go ahead to send salutations upon the Prophet and recite what follows and make *Salam* and make *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

- 10.** A person praying forgot the second *Sujud* in the first *Raka'ah* and did not remember that until shortly after making *Salam*. What does he do and what, if he remembers long after making *Salam*?

**Answer:**

- i. He should stand up and perform a replacement of the first *Raka'ah* and then sit for the final *Tashahhud* and recite it and all that follows and make *Sujud Qabla Salam* and make *Salam*. He compensates his mistake with *Sujud Qabla Salam* because, as he discards the first *Raka'ah*, the first *Tashahhud* ceases to be established after the second *Raka'ah*, resulting in omission of the first *Tashahhud* in the *Salah*.
  - ii. If he remembers long after *Salam*, his prayer is invalidated and he must repeat it.
- 11.** A person praying *Asr* forgetfully omitted *Ruku'u* in the first *Raka'ah* and also omitted the second *Sujud* in the third

*Raka'ah*. He remembered his omissions shortly after making *Salam*. How does he rectify his mistake?

**Answer:**

The first and the third *Raka'ah* of his *Salah* are invalid. Therefore, he should promptly, make intention to discard the first and the third *Raka'ah* and rise up and make *Takbir*, and perform replacement of the two *Raka'ah* he has discarded. The two *Raka'ah* he would perform now become his third and fourth *Raka'ah* in the *Salah*. And on completion, he should make the final *Tashahhud* and make *Salam* and make the two prostrations and make *Salam* again.

For clarity, one may note that the first *Tashahhud* has been established in this *Salah*. This is because as the first *Raka'ah* is discarded, the second becomes the first; and as the third *Raka'ah* is discarded, the fourth becomes the second, with the final *Tashahhud* taking the place of the first *Tashahhud*. Then two more *Raka'ah* are added to complete the *Salah*, and the person compensates his mistakes with *Sujud Ba'ada Salam*.

But, if he remembers his omission long after *Salam*, his prayer is invalidated and he must repeat it.

- 12.** A person praying *Zuhr* forgetfully omitted *Ruku'u* in the first *Raka'ah* and remembers it while reciting *al-Fatihah* in the second *Raka'ah*. How does he rectify his mistake?

**Answer:**

Immediately he remembers the omission of the *Ruku'u* in the first *Raka'ah*, he should leave the recitation of *al-Fatihah* and promptly make *Ruku'u* and proceed to complete the first *Raka'ah*. He then performs three more *Raka'ah* to complete his prayer and compensate for his error with *Sujud Ba'ada Salam*.

- 13.** A person praying, forgot four prostrations out of four *Raka'ah* (i.e. he made one prostration each, in all the four *Raka'ah*), and he remembered all his omissions while he was making the final *Tashahhud*. How does he correct his mistake? What if, he remembers his omissions shortly after making *Salam*?

**Answers:**

He should, promptly stop making the *Tashahhud* and swiftly switch on to make the supplication in-between the two *Sajdah* and make the second prostration, to validate the last *Raka'ah* and thus save his *Salah*. Then, based on intention, he discards the first three *Raka'ah*, and proceed to perform three more *Raka'ah* to complete his prayer. And after the final *Tashahhud* and what follows, he should make *Salam* and perform the two prostrations and make *Salam* again.

And if he remembers shortly after making *Salam*, then he should sit back in the position in-between the two *Sajdah* and make supplication in-between the two *Sajdah* and make the second prostration to validate the last *Raka'ah* and thus save

his *Salah*. He then proceeds with the course of action already described above.

- 14.** A person praying, after sitting at the end of the fourth *Raka'ah*, forgot to recite the final *Tashahhud* and what follows and made *Salam*. Shortly afterwards, he remembered his omission. What happens to his prayer?

**Answer:**

He should sit back for the final *Tashahhud*, recite it, send salutations on the Prophet and recite all that comes after it and make *Salam* and make *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

But if he remembers long after *Salam*, then his prayer is invalidated and he must repeat it.

- 15.** A person praying *Maghrib* forgot *Ruku'u* in the first *Raka'ah* and he remembered that while making the first *Sujud* in the second *Raka'ah*. And he forgot to make the second *Sujud* in that second *Raka'ah* and he remembered this while making *Tashahhud* after his new second *Raka'ah*. He then performed yet another second *Raka'ah* and performed the *Tashahhud*. But while making the final *Raka'ah* he forgot to recite *al-Fatihah* (instead he recited a *Surah*) and made *Ruku'u* and then remembered that while making the final *Tashahhud*. How can he compensate for his error?

**Answer:**

His error is such that, if corrected, it would double the number of *Raka'ah* of *Maghrib* prayer (i.e. make it six *Raka'ah*) and

that will render his prayer invalid. It is noteworthy that the first *Raka'ah* was discarded for omitting *Ruku'u*. The second *Raka'ah* which would have taken the place of the first was also discarded for omitting the second *Sujud* in it. And the final *Raka'ah* was discarded for omitted the recitation of *al-Fatihah*. Then this person should make *Salam* to exit the *Salah* and start his *Maghrib* afresh. But we caution such a person to endeavour to attain *Khushuu* in his *Salah* to benefit from its bounteous rewards.

- 16.** If a person forgetfully recites *Suratul Fatihah* silently in place of a loud recitation and remembers that before making *Ruku'u*.
- i. **Case I:** what is the right course action for him to take?
  - ii. **Case II:** what if he repeats the recitation in a loud manner to correct his mistake?
  - iii. **Case III:** what if, it was the first *Raka'ah* of *Maghrib* and he forgetfully repeats the recitation in loud manner?

**Answer:**

- i. **Case I:** He should proceed with his prayer and his prayer will be valid as there is no compensation for this omission. Loud and inaudible recitations are emphatic *Sunnah* whose omission do not require compensation. The majority of the scholars say the audible and inaudible recitations are *Sunnah* and that whoever abandons it intentionally, his prayer is valid and there is no compensation upon him but his action is hateful and contrary to the *Sunnah*.

- ii. **Case II:** If he repeats the recitation of *al-Fatihah* as a corrective measure, his prayer is invalidated for unwarranted duplication of a pillar because his ignorance of the acts of the prayer is not an acceptable excuse to validate his prayer. Thus, the ruling for deliberate repetition of a pillar applies to this case.
- iii. **Case III:** If he forgetfully repeats the recitation *al-Fatihah* in loud voice, it means that he has duplicated a *Rukn* forgetfully, then the *Raka'ah* is invalidated. He should discard the *Raka'ah* and perform its replacement and on completion of his prayer compensate his mistake with *Sujud Ba'ada Salam*.

**17.** A person praying, forgot to say, *Sami Allahu liman Hamidah* and *Rabbana Walakal Hamdu* in the first *Raka'ah* of a four *Raka'ah* prayer. And he remembered that while standing for the third *Raka'ah*. What does he do?

**Answer:**

Because he has omitted two obligations (*Wajib*) in a single *Raka'ah*, that particular *Raka'ah* is invalidated and has to be discarded (otherwise the prayer itself would be rendered invalid). Therefore, he should discard the first *Raka'ah* and the third *Raka'ah* he is upon it, becomes his second *Raka'ah* and as he completes it, he should sit for the first *Tashahhud* and thereafter proceed to complete his prayer, make *Salam* and make *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

**18.** A person praying *Asr* prayer, forgot to say, *Sami Allahu liman Hamida* in the first *Raka'ah*; *Rabbana Walakal Hamdu* in the

second *Raka'ah*; and the supplication between the two *Sajdah*, in the third *Raka'ah*. And he remembered this while making the final *Tashahhud*. What does he do?

**Answer:**

His prayer is invalidated because he has omitted three obligations (*Wajiba'at*) and at that point, he should promptly make *Salam* to exit the *Salah* because of its invalidity. He must repeat that prayer.

- 19.** A person praying omitted two obligations (*Wajib*), in separate *Raka'ah* of the prayer, and he forgot to make *Sujud Qabli* as he completes his prayer. He did not remember this until a long while afterwards, say, after getting back home from the *Masjid*. What should he do? What if, he remembered shortly afterwards but he deliberately ignored to perform the prostration for forgetfulness?

**Answer:**

- i. If he only remembered, his omission, long afterwards as indicated in the first part of the question, then there is nothing upon him and his prayer is valid.
- ii. If he remembered shortly afterwards and he deliberately refused to compensate for his mistake; his prayer is invalidated and he must repeat it.

- 20.** How many obligations (*Wajiba'at*) if, omitted in a prayer, invalidates the prayer?

**Answer:**

- i. If a person, whether praying alone or with an *Imam* forgetfully omits three obligations, in three different



*Raka'ah* of the prayer, the prayer is invalidated and he should make *Salam* to terminate the *Salah* and start afresh.

- ii. But if a person praying alone or with an *Imam* forgetfully:
  - omits three obligations in a single *Raka'ah*, then that *Raka'ah* is invalidated. He should discard it and perform a replacement *Raka'ah* and compensate his error with *Sujud Ba'ada Salam*.
  - omits three obligations; one obligation in one of the *Raka'ah* while two of the obligations are omitted in a single *Raka'ah*, then the *Raka'ah* with two omissions is invalidated. He should discard it and perform a replacement *Raka'ah*. And since there still remains an omission of one obligation in the *Salah*, then there occurs a case of combination of *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and *Sujud Qabla Salam* in this *Salah*. Accordingly, he compensates his errors with *Sujud Qabla Salam*.
  - omits two obligations in a single *Raka'ah*, then that *Raka'ah* is invalidated. He should discard it and perform a replacement *Raka'ah* and compensate his error with *Sujud Ba'ada Salam*.
- iii. If one omits one obligation or two obligations in separate *Raka'ah* of the prayer, then:
  - He compensates his omission with *Sujud Qabla Salam*.
  - If he forgets to compensate for his error with *Sujud Qabli* and remembers his omission shortly after *Salam*,

then he should compensate it with *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* instead.

- If he remembers shortly after *Salam* but refuses to compensate for his mistake, then his prayer is invalidated.
- If, however, he doesn't remember his omission until long afterwards, then there is nothing upon him and his prayer is valid.

**21.** A person praying *Asr*, omitted two obligations (*Wajib*), one each in the first and second *Raka'ah* and he forgot to sit for the first *Tashahhud* at the end of the second *Raka'ah*. What is the status of his prayer?

**Answer:**

His prayer is invalidated and he must repeat it. Immediately after the omission of the first *Tashahhud*, he should make *Salam* to terminate the prayer and start a new one.

**22.** A person praying, while rising from *Ruku'u*, forgetfully pronounced *Takbir* instead of saying *Sami-Allahu-liman-hamidah* and he did not remember to correct it. He followed it up with *Rabbaa walakal hamdu* and made *Takbir* and proceeded to make *Sujud*. And while rising from the first *Sujud*, he pronounced *Salam* instead of the *Takbir* and then remembered and pronounced the *Takbir* afterwards. What happens to his *Salah*?

**Answer:**

His prayer is valid and there is nothing upon him. Both utterances were involuntary and without consequence on

one's prayer. The *Salam* here was an unintended utterance unlike the *Salam* for exiting the *Salah*.

- 23.** A person praying forgetfully recited the supplication for sitting between the two *Sajdah* i.e. *Rabi-ighfirli, ighfirli*, three times in his *Ruku'u*; in the first and second *Sajdah* of the same *Raka'ah* he recited *Allahuma a'inni 'Ala'a dhikrika wa shukrika wa husni iba'adatika*; and in-between the two *Sajdah* he recited *Subhana Rabiya Azhim wa bi hamdik*. And he remembered his errors while still in the *Salah*. What does he do?

**Answer:**

His errors are tolerable and there is nothing upon him. But he needs to be very attentive in his prayers to enhance his reward.

- 24.** A person praying exercised doubt, in the last *Raka'ah* of his prayer, as to whether he made the second *Sujud* or not but he merely ignored the doubt (without resort to that which is overwhelming or minimum) and proceeded to make the final *Tashahhud* and *Salam*. Shortly after the *Salam* he became uncomfortable and was remorseful about the status of his prayer. How can he compensate for this doubt, if he was still within 2 – 3 minutes of his *Salam*? What if, he went away with the witch-hunt of the doubt?

**Answer:**

- i. If it is overwhelming to him that he has made the second *Sujud*, then he should make *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam*.
- ii. If nothing is overwhelming to him, then he should resort to that which is certain (*Aqal*) i.e. that he did not do the

second *Sujud*. He should sit back in the position of the sitting between the two *Sajdah*, recite the applicable supplication for that position and make the second prostration and make *Tashahhud* and make *Sujud Qabli* and then make *Salam*. The occurrence of an act of *Sujud Qabla Salam* as compensation supersedes the issue of *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* that is present in this matter.

- iii. If he goes away with the element of doubt about his prayer, that prayer is invalidated and he must repeat it, no matter how long it takes.

Please note that a valid prayer is only exited with certainty for its completeness and compliance with the *Sunnah*.

**25.** A person pronounced the *Takbitatul-Ihram* while standing upright and joined the congregation while they were in *Ruku'u* without saying the *Takbir* for going to *Ruku'u*. He later exercised doubt as to whether he has actually gotten the *Ruku'u* or not. What is he required to do?

**Answer:**

- a) As regards omitting the *Takbir* for *Ruku'u*, there is nothing upon him, because the *Takbir* to enter *Ruku'u* in that particular situation is an emphatic *Sunnah*.
- b) But the answer to the second part of the question depends on whether he joined the congregation while the *Imam* was in the first *Raka'ah* or second *Raka'ah*.
  - i. If he joined the *Imam* while in the *Ruku'u* of the first *Raka'ah*, and he exercised the doubt, then if what is

overwhelming to him from his doubt is that he has gotten the *Raka'ah*, then there is nothing upon him and his prayer is valid.

- ii. If he joined the *Imam* while in the *Ruku'u* of the second *Raka'ah* (or any of the subsequent *Raka'ah*) and he exercised the doubt, then if what is overwhelming to him from his doubt is that he has gotten the *Raka'ah* then after the *Salam* of the *Imam*, he should proceed to perform the *Raka'ah* which he actually missed, and in this case the first *Raka'ah* (or what he missed, depending on the stage at which he joined the *Imam*) to complete his *Salah*, make *Tashahhud* and what follows, and make *Salam* and perform *Ba'ada Salam* to compensate for his doubt.
- iii. If, whether he joined the *Imam* while in the *Ruku'u* of the first *Raka'ah*, or the second *Raka'ah* (or any of the subsequent *Raka'ah*) and he exercised the doubt as to whether he has gotten the relevant *Raka'ah* or not. And if neither having gotten the *Raka'ah* nor having missed it is overwhelming to him, and he resorted to that which is the minimum of the two options i.e. that he has not gotten it. Then, in this case, after the *Salam* of the *Imam* he should proceed to perform the *Raka'ah* he missed (including the one over which he doubted) to complete his *Salah*, make *Tashahhud* and perform *Sujud Qabla Salam* and make *Salam*.

**26.** A person praying *Asr* exercised doubt as to whether he was making the second or the third *Raka'ah* and what was overwhelming to him was that it was the second *Raka'ah* and he built on that. But while sitting between the two *Sajdah* he also exercised doubt as to whether he made two *Sajdah* or one and neither one nor two was overwhelming to him. What is the way out for him?

**Answer:**

As for his doubt regarding the number of *Raka'ah* performed, he has already taken to what is overwhelming (and for this, he has a pending case of *Ba'ada Salam*).

Then regarding his doubt as to whether he made one or two *Sajdah*, since neither is overwhelming he has to resort to that which is the minimum (or certain) of the two possibilities (*Aqal*) i.e. he performed one *Sujud*, then he should make the second *Sujud* and sit for the first *Tashahhud*. Thus, his resort to the minimum of the two possibilities has earned him *Sujud Qabla Salam*. Accordingly, on completion of his prayer, he makes the final *Tashahhud* and what follows after it and then, makes *Sujud Qabla Salam* and make *Salam*.

**27.** A person prayed *Asr* and shortly after *Salam*, he started doubting whether he prayed three or four *Raka'ah* and he wasn't sure of either? What is the solution?

**Answer:**

He should ignore the doubt and does not act upon it unless he gets what is certain. If, subsequent to his doubt, he becomes certain that he actually performed four *Raka'ah*

then his prayer is valid and there is nothing upon him. But if, contrarily, he becomes certain that he prayed three *Raka'ah*, then:

- If he was within the acceptable short while timeframe, he should make one additional *Raka'ah* to complete his prayer and make *Salam* and then make two prostrations after the *Salam* and make *Salam* again. This is because by being certain, he has escaped the realm of doubt and has to compensate only for his addition of pillar i.e. for making *Salam* before the completion of his prayer.
- If he was outside the acceptable short while timeframe, then he must repeat his prayer.
- If nothing is certain about his doubt he should ignore it as whispering of Satan and his prayer is valid.

**28.** A person praying *Ishah* performed *Ruku'u* twice in his first *Raka'ah* and only remembered while standing for the fourth *Raka'ah*. And while performing the fourth *Raka'ah*, after rising from the second *Sujud*, he exercised doubt as to whether that was his first or second *Sujud*. He was unable to establish an overwhelming position and resorted to the minimum of the two options (*Aqal*) i.e. he has not performed the second *Sujud*. He therefore went ahead to perform it. What is the compensation for his error?

**Answer:**

For making *Ruku'u* twice, his first *Raka'ah* is invalidated. He discards it and performs a replacement of it. And for discarding the first *Raka'ah* at the stage of the fourth *Raka'ah*,

the first *Tashahhud* has seized to be after the second *Raka'ah*. Then, there are cases of *Ba'ada Salam* for discarding the *Raka'ah* and *Sujud Qabla Salam* for the omission of the first *Tashahhud* resulting from the adjustment of the *Raka'ah*. As regards his doubt about the second *Sujud* in the fourth *Raka'ah*, his resort to what is minimum (*Aqal*) has also placed *Sujud Qabli* upon him. And if one is involved in compensation for error requiring *Ba'adi* and *Qabli*, then according to the scholars, *Sujud Qabli* supersedes. Then, after the final *Tashahhud*, he should make *Sujud Qabli* and make *Salam*.

**29.** A follower of *Imam* forgot to recite the final *Tashahhud* and he followed the *Imam* to make *Salam*. Immediately afterwards, he recalled that he did not recite the *Tashahhud* & salutation on the Prophet. What does he do? And why?

**Answer:**

- i. He should stand up and repeat his last *Raka'ah*, make the *Tashahhud* and what follows and make *Salam* and make *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.
- ii. He must repeat his last *Raka'ah* before making the *Tashahhud* because he disconnected his last *Raka'ah* from the *Imam* (while being deficient of two pillars) by making the final *Salam* along with him. Thus, in this particular case, the *Imam* has exited the *Salah* and the follower too (by making the final *Salam*). Therefore, the follower has lost the last *Raka'ah* because he did not follow the *Imam* to perform the last two pillars i.e. final *Tashahhud* and salutations upon the Prophet. Therefore,



his last *Raka'ah* is invalidated by his negligent omission to perform the last two pillars with the *Imam* before making *Salam*.

- 30.** If a follower of *Imam* forgetfully recites *Fatihah* twice, what happens to his prayer.

**Answer:**

There is nothing upon him and his prayer is valid.

- 31.** If a follower of *Imam* forgetfully omits to sit for the first *Tashahhud* and stood up and before he could return to the sitting position, the *Imam* stood up and met him in the standing position. What does he do?

**Answer:**

There is nothing upon him and his prayer is valid. But he should avoid hastiness and be more conscious in his prayer.

- 32.** If a follower of *Imam* was sitting in-between the two *Sajdah* and next he only heard the *Imam* reciting *al-Fatihah*. What does he do?

**Answer:**

He should make his second *Sujud* and rise up to join the *Imam* because there is ample time for him to do that and still catch up with the *Imam* in that position.

- 33.** A follower of *Imam* forgot to say *Sami-Allahu-liman-hamidah* in one of the *Raka'ah* and in that same *Raka'ah* he also omitted to recite the supplication in-between the two *Sajdah*. What is he required to do?

**Answer:**

That particular *Raka'ah* is invalidated. Then after the *Salam* of the *Imam*, he should rise up, with an intention to perform a replacement *Raka'ah* in place of the invalidated one and then, make *Tashahhud* and make *Salam* and perform two prostrations and make *Salam* again.

- 34.** A follower of *Imam* omitted three obligations in his prayer, for instance he forgot to say *Sami-Allahu-liman-hamidah* in one *Raka'ah* and forgot to make the glorification in *Ruku'u* in another *Raka'ah* and also forgot to make the supplication in the second *Sujud* of yet another *Raka'ah*. How is he going to compensate for his error?

**Answer:**

His prayer is invalidated, for omitting three obligations (*Wajiba'at*) in three different *Raka'ah* of his prayer. After the third omission, he should make *Salam* and re-enter the prayer by making the opening *Takbir* and then after the *Salam* of the *Imam*, he proceeds to complete whatever he lost out due to the invalidation.

- 35.** A person praying behind an *Imam* forgot to say *Rabba'a walakal hamdu* in both *Raka'ah* of *Fajr* prayer. Is there any compensation upon him?

**Answer:**

There is nothing upon him and his prayer is valid because what he omitted is two obligations (*Wajib*) in two different *Raka'ah* in the *Salah*, behind an *Imam*.

**36.** A follower of *Imam* forgetfully omitted to say the glorification of *Ruku'u* in the first *Raka'ah* of, say, *Asr* prayer, and in the second *Raka'ah* he forgot to make the supplications of *Sujud* in both *Sajdah*. What is the status of his prayer in this particular circumstance?

**Answers:**

Ordinarily, one would be tempted to hastily say that his *Salah* is invalidated because he has omitted three obligations. But a careful study of the question indicates that the last two omissions were made in a single *Raka'ah* and thus, he discards the second *Raka'ah* and continues to complete his prayer. And after the *Salam* of the *Imam*, he performs a replacement of the discarded *Raka'ah*, makes *Tashahhud* and performs *Sujudu Qabla Salam* and make *Salam*. This is because after discarding the second *Raka'ah*, for which he has earned *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam*; there remains the omission of one obligation in the first *Raka'ah*, thus, necessitating *Sujudu Qabla Salam* and then, *Sujudu Qabla Salam* prevails.

**37.** A follower of *Imam* forgetfully omitted to say *Sami-Allahu-liman-hamidah* on rising from *Ruku'u* in all the four *Raka'ah* of *Asr* prayer. Is there any compensation upon him for the omissions?

**Answer:**

His prayer is invalidated because he omitted four obligations (*Wajiba'at*) in the *Salah* and he must repeat it.

**38.** A person praying behind *Imam* only prostrated on the forehead without placing his nose on the ground in the first two

*Raka'ah* of, say *Zuhur* prayer. Is there any compensation upon him?

**Answer:**

The first two *Raka'ah* in which he did not place his nose on the ground are invalid because he omitted *Rukn* (pillar) in each one of them. He should discard the first two *Raka'ah* and after the *Salam* of the *Imam*, he should proceed to perform two more *Raka'ah*, make *Tashahhud* and make *Salam* and then make *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam*.

39. A person joined the congregation while the *Imam* was making the final *Tashahhud*. And as the *Imam* finished the *Tashahhud*, without making *Salam*, he pronounced *Takbir* and made two *Sajadah* and then made *Salam*. Is the latecomer supposed to follow him to make the *Sujud Qabli* or he is to ignore the *Imam* and proceed to complete his prayer because he didn't get a *Raka'ah* in that prayer?

**Answer:**

The latecomer must follow the *Imam* to do the *Qabla Salam* before proceeding to complete his prayer. Since he has joined the congregation he was connected to the *Imam's* prayer and therefore, he must not go against the *Imam*. Getting at least a *Raka'ah* is not the condition for him to respectfully follow the *Imam* in all his actions. And if he refuses to perform the *Qabla Salam* with the *Imam*, his prayer is invalidated and so he must repeat it.

40. A person joined the congregation of *Asr* prayer in the second *Raka'ah* and the *Imam* inadvertently, prayed five *Raka'ah*

and compensated his mistake with the prostration after *Salam*. Is the latecomer, who missed the first *Raka'ah*, required to do anything?

**Answer:**

The latecomer's prayer is complete and perfect as he prayed four complete *Raka'ah* with the *Imam*. But he must make the prostration after the *Salam* with the *Imam*.

- 41.** A person praying behind an *Imam*, while standing for the fourth *Raka'ah* of *Zuhr* or *Asr* prayer, did not hear the *Takbir* of the *Imam* to go on *Ruku'u* and he unexpectedly heard the *Imam* saying *Sami-Allahu-liman-Hamidah*. What is he going to do? What if, while still in that standing position for the recitation of *al-Fatihah*, in the fourth *Raka'ah*, he suddenly heard the *Salam* of the *Imam*?

**Answer:**

- i. He is to make *Takbir* and bow and rise up and catch up with the *Imam*, if only after making perfect *Ruku'u*, the person is sure of catching up with the *Imam* in the position of the first *Sujud*. If he is unable to catch the *Imam* in the first *Sujud*, then any attempt to make-up for what he missed would put him on competition race with the *Imam*. Thus, he should abandon the idea of catching up with the *Imam* and join the *Imam* wherever he is and then discard that *Raka'ah* and perform its replacement after the *Salam* of the *Imam* and make *Tashahhud* and *Salam* and make *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam*.

- ii. If while standing, the next thing he heard was the *Salam* of the *Imam*, then he should make *Takbir* and perform *Ruku'u* and proceed to complete his prayer. There is nothing upon him and his prayer is valid. And this principle applies, if one is cut-off from the *Imam* due to not hearing his voice at any stage of his prayer and did not hear the *Imam's* voice again or only heard his *Salam*.

**42.** (i) A latecomer joined the *Imam* in *Ruku'u* and made *Takbir* once and made *Ruku'u* to catch up with the *Imam*. What is the position of his *Salah*?

(ii) Another one joined the *Imam* in *Ruku'u* without making *Takbir* and only remembered that in the second *Raka'ah*. What is the position of his *Salah*?

(iii) The *Imam* leading congregation forgot to say the opening *Takbir* and neither remembered his omission nor his attention was drawn to it to correct the omission at the start of the prayer. And some of the congregation made the opening *Takbir*. On making *Salam*, one of the followers drew the attention of the *Imam* to the conspicuous omission and he confirmed that from the congregation. What is the position of this *Salah*?

**Answer:**

In the first case, if the *Takbir* he made was intended to be the opening *Takbir* to enter *Salah*, then it suffices for him and his *Salah* is valid.

In the second case, the person hasn't joined the *Salah* because *Salah* is established with the opening *Takbir*.

Therefore, immediately he remembers, he must make *Salam* to exit the prayer and then make the opening *Takbir* to enter the *Salah* afresh and complete what he lost after the *Salam* of the *Imam*.

In the third case, the *Imam* did not establish *Salah* because *Salah* is established with the opening *Takbir* and exited with *Salam*. Accordingly, all his actions were without foundation and cannot stand and therefore invalid. The *Imam* and the congregation, including those who made the opening *Takbir*, must repeat their prayer.

The issues raised in these questions are aptly captured in Muwatta Malik and the position is given below:

Yahya related to me from Malik that Ibn Shihab used to say, "When a man catches the *Raka'ah* he says, 'Allah is greater' once, and that *Takbir* is enough for him." Malik added, "That is if he intended to begin the prayer by that *Takbir*"

Malik was asked about a man who began with the *Imam* but forgot the opening *Takbir* and the *Takbir* of the *Ruku'u* until he had done one *Raka'ah*. Then he remembered that he had not said the *Takbir* at the opening nor in the *Ruku'u*, so he said the *Takbir* in the second *Raka'ah*. He said, "I prefer that he starts his prayer again, but if he forgets the opening *Takbir* with the *Imam* and says the *Takbir* in the first *Ruku'u*, I consider that enough for him if he intends by it be the opening *Takbir*."

Malik said, about someone who prayed by himself and forgot the opening *Takbir*, "He begins his prayer afresh."

Malik said, about an *Imam* who forgot the opening *Takbir* until he had finished his prayer, "I think that he should do the prayer again, and those behind him, even if they have said the *Takbir*." Muwatta Malik.

- 43.** An *Imam* leading *Maghrib* prayer recited, in the first *Raka'ah*, *Surah al-Fatihah* only and in subdued voice. As he made *Takbir* to make *Ruku'u*, some followers drew his attention by saying 'Subha'anallah', to what they thought was an apparent omission, but he ignored and bowed. And in the second *Raka'ah* he recited *al-Fatihah* audibly (without adding *Surah*) and made *Takbir* and proceeded to *Ruku'u*. Yet some followers said *Subha'anallah'* but he did not pay attention to it. As he completed the prayer and made *Salam*, he didn't do anything further. Then, there was murmuring in the congregation that he ought to compensate for his error. What is the correct position according to the *Sunnah*? Please enlighten us.

**Answer:**

His *Salah* is complete and correct and there is nothing upon him. Because:

- i. The recitation of *Surah* in the first two *Raka'ah* is *Sunnah Mu'akkadah* and there is no compensation for its omission.



The justification is the *Hadith* narrated by 'Ata' on the authority of Abu Huraira who said that one should recite (*al-Fatihah*) in every (*Raka'ah*) of prayer. What we heard (i.e. recitation) from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), we made you listen to that. And that which he (recited) inwardly, we (recited) inwardly for you. A person said to him: If I add nothing to the (recitation) of the *Umm-al-Qur'an* (*Surah al-Fatihah*), would it make the prayer incomplete? He (Abu Huraira) said: If you add to that (if you recite some of verses of the *Qur'an* along with *Surah al-Fatihah*) that is better for you. But if you are contented with it (*Surah al-Fatihah*) only, it is sufficient for you.

- ii. The recitation in subdued voice (inaudible) is also *Sunnah Mu'akkadah* and there is no compensation for its omission.

The justification is the *Hadith* narrated by Abu Qatadah (may Allah be pleased with him): "Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to lead us in prayer and recite in the first two *Raka'ah* of the *Zuhr* and '*Asr* prayers *Surah al-Fatihah* and two (other) *Surah*. And he would sometimes recite loud enough for us to hear the Verses. He would prolong the first *Raka'ah*, and would recite in the last two *Raka'ah* *Surah al-Fatihah* (only)." [Agreed upon].

- iii. It is also noteworthy that in this Treatise, the obligations (*Wajiba'at*) for *Salah* are nine in number and audible

and inaudible recitations are not part of it. They are rather appropriately classified and listed under *Sunnah Mu'akkadah*.

- 44.** An *Imam* has an understanding that the final *Tashahhud* and sitting for it as well as sending salutation upon the Prophet are *Sunnah* acts of prayer. And based on the principles of the Fiqh, if two of these matters are omitted, one should compensate for it with *Sujud Qabli*.

Nevertheless, some of those who pray behind him clarified to him that the final *Tashahhud* and the sitting for it as well as salutation upon the Prophet are all *Arka'an* (pillars) of *Salah* and once omitted must be performed before compensating for the mistake with *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam*. He refused to accept the clarification, on the mere pretext, that his position is in accordance with his *Madhhab*. Is it correct to follow him in prayers, considering the fact that if, he omits the final *Tashahhud* and the salutation upon the Prophet, his manner of compensation would invalidate the prayer?

**Answer:**

It is correct to follow such *Imam* and the prayer is valid. The prayer of, say, a Hambali or Hanafi being led by an *Imam* who is Maliki or Shafie is valid even if the *Imam* omits an act of prayer which is regarded as *Rukn* in the *Madhhab* of the follower but is considered a *Sunnah* according to the *Madhhab* of the *Imam*. The prayer is valid, in this circumstances and similar ones, in the opinion of the majority

of the *Salaf*; it is the doctrine of Malik, and it is the other opinion in the doctrine of Al-Shafie, Ahmad, and even Abu Hanifa. And most of *Imam* Ahmad's texts are on this and it is the correct view.

But note that the above position relates to matters of jurisprudence arrived at through *Ijtihad* or their understanding and interpretation based on clear text of *Hadith*. However, where any such position of a *Madhhab* is opposed to an authentic *Hadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then the ruling of the *Hadith* according to the understanding and majority view point of scholars of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-jama'* prevails.

- 45.** It is perhaps of common occurrence that in most of our mosques, the *Imam's* inaudible recitations of *al-Fatihah* and *Surah*, are often, so swift that a follower hardly recites one or two verses of *al-Fatihah* before the *Imam* makes the *Takbir* for *Ruku'u*. And in the last two *Raka'ah*, the recitation is even more rapid that it, sometimes, makes you to doubt, the *Imam's* proper recitation of *al-Fatihah*. What is the Prophetic rule for the recitation in inaudible prayer?

**Answer:**

It is rather unfortunate that this situation is becoming commonplace in our Mosques. This matter is succinctly addressed in "The Prophet's Prayer Described" by Imam Al-Albani, relying on the *Hadith* of the Prophet (*Salallahu alahi wa Sallam*) where he said that the recitation of *al-Fatihah* in

prayer, is one verse at a time (*ayatan-ayatan*) and he (*Salallahu alahi wa Sallam*) would pause after every verse (and continued in this pattern) until the end of the *Surah*. Al-Albani commenting on this matter said: "... several of the past *Imams* and reciters preferred to stop at every verse ..." This is a *Sunnah* which has been neglected by the majority of the reciters of this age, let alone others."

As for the recitation of a *Surah* after *al-Fatihah*, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to recite the Qur'an in slow, measured rhythmic tones. This is as Allah had instructed him, not to be racing or hurrying; rather his was a recitation clearly distinguishing each letter.

The command for the verse by verse recitation of *al-Fatihah* and recitation of *Surah* with *Tartil* in prayer is the same in both audible and inaudible prayers. The *Imam* should not recite *al-Fatihah* hastily or quietly in his heart, without uttering the verses. The length of time taken for the recitation of *al-Fatihah* in audible and inaudible prayers should, almost be the same. An *Imam* should not recite *al-Fatihah* in inaudible prayer negligently and hastily as if the conditions for the recitations are different from the audible ones.

- 46.** In some congregational prayers, you find that the *Imam* is so hasty in his *Ruku'u*, *Sujud*, and in the sitting in between the two *Sajdah* such that one hardly makes two *Tasbih* before the *Imam* says the *Takbir* to rise up from those points. The *Tasbih* may, sometimes, even be one, especially at the sitting

between the two *Sajdah*. Virtually, the *Imam* rushes the congregation through the prayer, in both his recitation and glorifications or supplications. He does not create room for the followers to make the minimum of three *Tasbih* in all the stages. What is the right position in terms of tranquility, lightening the prayer, and obligation in inaudible recitations of the *Imam*?

**Answer:**

The *Imam* is a leader of the congregational prayer, and in that capacity is required to imitate the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in all his conducts and ensure that the prayers of those he is leading are also in accordance with the *Sunnah* in all respects. The *Imam* should ensure that those following him in prayers are able to attain the same level of tranquility in their prayer. Accordingly, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari reported Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying: "*When you pray make your rows straight and let one of your number act as your Imam. If you say the Takbir when he says it and say Amen when he says "Not of those with whom Thou art angry nor of those who go astray", Allah will accept your prayer. When he says the Takbir and bows, say it and bow, for the Imam bows before you and raises himself before you.*" Then Allah's Messenger said, *\*The one is equivalent to the other.\* ...*" The Prophet's statement: "*The one is equivalent to the other*", in this *Hadith* means: "*Although the Imam begins and ends his bowing before you do, **your bow lasts the same length of time as his.***" (Muslim).

Regarding this matter, our noble Shaikh, Al-Uthaimeen (may Allah grant him mercy) cautioned that when leading the congregation, "It is obligatory upon the *Imam* to take into consideration those behind him, such that they are able to perform the minimum of perfection in their prayer (i.e. he is not to suffice with such a minimum level when leading that those behind him find it difficult to offer the prayer in a sufficiently accurate manner), because the *Imam* isn't praying for himself only, rather he is praying for himself and has the congregation behind him to consider. Therefore, he must fear Allah regarding them and not deprive them of performing the minimum perfection at least."

Furthermore, Ibn al-Mubarak (may Allah grant him mercy) said: "It is preferred for the *Imam* to make five glorifications. Therefore, all the people behind him would be able to make (at least) three."

Similarly, Al-Hasan al-Basri (may Allah grant him mercy) said: "The most perfect *Tasbeeh* (in *Ruku'u*, *Sujud*, and in-between the two *Sujud*) is repeated seven times, the midmost *Tasbeeh* is repeated five times and the least *Tasbih* is repeated three times."

*Imam* Ahmad (may Allah grant him mercy) has captured the very essence of this particular question in his Treatise on Prayer and what follows is taken from it, because it suits our purpose here: -

He, *Imam* Ahmad (may Allah grant him mercy) said: “And direct the *Imām* – O slave of Allah (the Most High)! - to take care in his *Salāh*, to take pains in it, whenever he bows or prostrates, for I prayed with you one day and I was unable to make *Tasbih* (i.e. to say: *Subhana Rabbial Adhim* or *Subhana Rabbia Ala*) three times in *Ruku’u* or *Sujud*, and this was due to the haste of the *Imam* – he neither permitted himself, nor the worshippers to take their time, instead he rushed (through the *Salāh*). So inform him that the *Imām* – if he prays well – will receive the reward of his *Salāh* and the equivalent to the reward of those performing *Salah* behind him. But if he performs *Salah* badly, he will bear that sin and the sin of those who performed *Salāh* behind him.”

“The least number of times which the *Imām* should repeat *Subhāna Rabbial Adhīm* in *Rukū’u* is three and the least number of times he should say *Subhaa Rabbial Ala* in *Sujūd* is also three. When he repeats the *Tasbīh* in *Ruku’u* and *Sujud* three times, he should not rush through it hastily - he should say it properly, enunciating carefully and clearly, for if he says it hastily, those behind him have no time to say it, and they will likewise pronounce it hastily, and may anticipate him and then their *Salah* will be spoilt and he will bear a sin equivalent to all their sins. However, if he does not pronounce it hastily and completes his *Salah* and his *Tasbīh* perfectly, then those behind him will do likewise and he will have performed that

which is obligatory for him and there will be no sin or burden upon him."

"And order him, when he raises his head from bowing and says: *Sami' Allāhu limān hamidah*', to remain standing until he has said: *'Rabbanā wa Lakal hamd,*' without haste in his speech; should he wish to say more than this, then let him say: *'Raba'nā wa Lakal hamd, mil' as-samawāti wa mil' al- ardh wa mil'a ma shi' ta min shay 'in bad, lā māni'a limā ātayt wa la mutiya limā manat, wa la yanfa 'u zaljaddi minkaljad.'* (Narrated by Muslim and An-Nasā'i) (i.e. Our Rabb! All praise is due to You, filling the heavens and the earth and filling whatever else You wish, none can withhold what You grant, and none can grant what You withhold, nor can the possessions of an owner benefit him in front of You). This is almost never seen nowadays among the people."

It is narrated from Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: "Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to stand, after raising his head from *Rukū'u* for so long that it was said: He has forgotten."

It is imperative to note that the saying of *Sami' Allāhu limān hamidah*', and *'Rabbanā wa Lakal hamd* are two separate acts with separate stages; they are never joined. *Sami' Allāhu limān hamidah*' is said while rising from *Ruku'u* and must be completed as you attain the standing position. *'Rabbanā wa Lakal hamd* is said while one is in the upright standing position



and must remain standing until he has finished it and perhaps, adds further supplication before making *Takbir* to proceed to *Sujud*.

- 47.** The *Imam* is advised to lighten the prayer for the followers, especially when there are weak or elderly people in the congregation. Even energetic people may, sometimes, have some engagements that would make them feel worrisome, if the prayer is prolonged, in which case they too deserve consideration. Please explain to us, what is meant by 'lightening the prayer for the congregation, according to the understanding and practice of *Ahlus-Sunnah-wal-Jamah*.

**Answer:**

We wish to be emphatic that, in easing prayer for the weak and others, the *Imam* is neither allowed nor is it correct for him to reduce the number of glorifications or supplications in *Rukuu*, *Sujud*, and between the two *Sajdah*, to make the prayer light. Neither is he supposed to hastily go on prostration, after rising up from *Ruku'u*. Under no circumstance should an *Imam* compromise the *Tasbiha'at* (glorifications and supplications) in the various stages of the prayer, which are the landmarks of tranquility. Tranquility in prayer is a pillar (*Rukn*) and once compromised, the prayer is gone! Prayer is made light by reciting shorter *Surah* or very few verses after *al-Fatihah* or the *Imam* shall even be content with *Surah al-Fatihah* only, in all the *Raka'ah*. An *Imam* should further note that his actions in the prayer are such that the followers are

accorded the chance to attain equal level of tranquility with him in all the stages.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would recite *Surah* after *al-Fatihah*, making it long sometimes, and on other occasions making it short because of travel, cough, illness or the crying of infants.

Anas bin Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made it (i.e. the recitation) short one day in the dawn prayer.” [In another *Hadith*: He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prayed the morning prayer and recited the two shortest *Surah* in the Qur’an.] So it was said: O Messenger of Allah, why did you make it short? He said: “I heard the crying of a child, and I supposed that his mother was praying with us, so I wanted to free his mother for him.”

Therefore, it is permissible for an *Imam* to lighten the prayer to ease perceived difficulties for some of the followers only by shortening the recitation of *Surah* after *al-Fatihah* or by choosing to recite shorter *Surah*. This is the clear position of the above *Ahadith* and all the *Ahadith* relating to the Prophetic command for the *Imam* to make the prayer light – for the elderly, the weak, those with urgent compelling needs, etc.

- 48.** What is the correct manner of following the *Imam* in congregational prayer?

## Answer:

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) taught his Companions how to follow him in congregational prayer and the *Imam*, whenever appointed to lead people in prayer. His, is the best example to follow and no good Muslim ever deviates from his guidance. Thus, the *Imam* must be followed in all his actions, in the strictest meaning of following – **one must not do any act ahead of him or along with him.** Doing any act of prayer ahead of the *Imam* or along with the *Imam* (i.e. at the same time) are direct contradiction of the *Hadith* of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and renders the prayer invalid. Abu Musa al-Ash'ari reported Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying: When you pray make your rows straight and let one of your number act as your *Imam*. If you say the *Takbir* when he says it and say *Amen* when he says "*Not of those with whom Thou art angry nor of those who go astray*", Allah will accept your prayer. When he says the *Takbir* and bows, say it and bow, for the *Imam* bows before you and raises himself before you. Then Allah's Messenger said, "The one is equivalent to the other." And he said: If you say, "O Allah our Lord, to Thee be the praise," when he says, "Allah listens to him who praises him," Allah will listen to you. Muslim transmitted it. In a version by him from Abu Huraira and Qatada the words occur, "And when he recites listen silently." *Mishkat al-Masabih*. Al-Albani says this *Hadith* is *Sahih*.

The Prophet's statement: "*The one is equivalent to the other*", in the above *Hadith* means: "*Although the Imam begins and ends his bowing before you do, **your bow lasts the same length of time as his.***"

*Imam Ahmad* (may Allah have mercy upon him) wrote: "It has also been said that the *Imām* is a guardian for the worshippers whom he leads in *Salāh*, and there is nothing more important for the *Imam* than to advise those who perform *Salah* behind him and forbid them from anticipating him in *Rukū* and *Sujud* or from doing so along with him. Instead he should order them to ensure that their bowing, prostrating, straightening up and going down be after his, and he should improve their manner and teach them well – then he may claim to be a guardian over them, for tomorrow (i.e. the Day of Resurrection) he will be asked about them."

49. Some *Imams* are very hasty in their prayer such that sometimes it is even difficult to follow them. For instance, in some cases as you keep standing and watching until the *Imam* places his face on the ground in prostration before you start moving to prostration, as reported by Bara'a ibn Azib, such *Imam* might be almost one *Tasbih* away from raising his head to sit in-between the two *Sajdah*. In such case, perhaps before you place your face on the ground, the *Imam* has said the *Takbir* to rise up or as you place your face on the ground, before attaining tranquility, the *Imam* pronounces the *Takbir* to rise up. In sitting between the two *Sajdah*, as you rise up before even

your bones become relaxed, the *Imam* has said the *Takbir* for the second *Sujud*. Is it correct to follow such *Imams* in prayer? What is the status of the prayer? Is it permissible to exit the *Salah* in such situations?

**Answer:**

*Imam Ahmad* (may Allah have mercy upon him) has addressed this matter in his *Treatise on Salah*, as he said: "It is of paramount importance for the *Imam* to perform *Salah* well and completely, to concentrate upon it, for his reward will be good reward, like that of those who follow him, if he performs *Salāh* well; but he will share in their sin, if he performs *Salah* badly (causing them to do so). It is a right and obligation of the Muslims to send forth, as *Imam* the best, the most pious, the most knowledgeable in religious matters that they may observe him. It has been mentioned in a *Hadith*: "When a man leads his people in *Salah* while better men perform *Salah* behind him, they remain in a state of ignorance." (At-Tabarānī)"

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "*The Imam is appointed, so that he should be followed, so don't be at variance with him. Recite Takbir when he recites it; bow down when he bows down and when he says: "Allah listens to him who praises Him," say: "O Allah, our Lord, to Thee be the Praise."* And when he (the *Imam*) prostrates, you should also prostrate, and when he says prayer sitting, you should all observe prayer sitting." (Muslim).

Therefore, if the *Imam* is such that he prays in a manner that is not possible for the congregation to follow him in accordance with the *Sunnah*, then practically, you will be competing with him in the prayer and this act renders your prayer invalid. If you find yourself in such a situation you make *Salam* and exit the *Salah*. If you are within time to get a congregational prayer that observes the *Sunnah*, in a nearby *Masjid*, you proceed to catch that; otherwise you pray alone, Allah (the Most High) knows your intention and efforts and the rewards are with Him. Therefore, more specifically:

- i. You shouldn't follow such *Imam* for prayer.
- ii. A prayer of the nature described is short of tranquility and is invalid for the *Imam* as well as for those following him.
- iii. If you find yourself behind such an *Imam*, it is permissible to make *Salam* and exit the *Salah* and find alternative congregation or pray alone.

**50.** An *Imam* led congregational prayer for a four-*Raka'ah* prayer and forgot to make the second *Sujud* in the third *Raka'ah*. Some followers pronounced '*Subhannallah*' but he ignored and continued. On completion of the prayer and after making *Salam*, he asked of what happened. They told him that he didn't do the second *Sujud* in the third *Raka'ah*, he then made *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and explained that it is the compensation for his error. Some of the followers didn't agree with him and they insisted that the second *Sujud* is a *Rukn* (pillar) and once

omitted, must be performed or that particular *Raka'ah* should be discarded for a new *Raka'ah* (as in this particular case). Accordingly, they advised that they should perform one more *Raka'ah* and after the completion *Salam*, make *Sujud Ba'ada Salam*. He ignored the advice and left, and some of the followers too left. What is the status of this prayer and what are the actions required, individually and collectively?

**Answer:**

- i. This prayer is invalid for the *Imam* and those who left with him as they have lost the opportunity of correction and so they must repeat their prayer.
- ii. Those who discarded the third *Raka'ah* and thus, proceeded to perform a replacement *Raka'ah* and compensated their mistake with *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* have validated their *Salah*.

**51.** An *Imam* leading congregation forgot two obligations (in different *Raka'ah* of the *Salah*) and he didn't remember until he left the *Masjid*. What is he going to do? What if, he remembered even before making *Salam* but he deliberately ignored to compensate for his mistake and left the *Masjid*?

**Answer:**

- i. The omission of two obligations (in different *Raka'ah* of the *Salah*) remembered long after *Salam* is without consequence and the prayer is valid.
- ii. If after remembering, the *Imam* deliberately refuses to compensate for his mistake, then his prayer is invalidated. But because he did not inform the congregation, it

wouldn't have been possible for the congregation to be aware of the omission, then their prayer is valid.

**52.** An *Imam* forgot the supplication of *Sajdah*, in the two *Sajdah* of the last *Raka'ah* of *Zuhr* prayer. Accordingly, he discarded the *Raka'ah* and did not sit for the final *Tashahhud* and thus, stood up to perform a replacement *Raka'ah*. The congregation pronounced '*Subhanallah*' but he ignored. He indicated with his hand to the congregation to get up and join him but only few understood and followed him. Majority of the congregation thought that the *Imam* was proceeding on an unwarranted fifth *Raka'ah* and refused to follow him. On completion of the prayer, the *Imam* made the final *Tashahhud* and made *Salam* and performed *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* made *Salam* again. And those who refused to follow him in performing the replacement *Raka'ah* also performed the *Ba'ada Salam* with him.

Immediately after the *Salam*, the *Imam* explained to the congregation that he omitted two obligations in the last *Raka'ah* and he had to discard it. Therefore, the fifth *Raka'ah* he performed was a replacement of the discarded one and so it was actually the fourth *Raka'ah*. What is the status of the *Salah* of the congregation members who did not follow the *Imam* to perform the replacement of the discarded *Raka'ah*?

**Answer:**

The *Imam* acted rightly by indicating to the congregation to get up and follow him and also provided timely information to



them to correct their *Salah*, after the *Salam*. His counter response, urging them to get up shows that he was conscious of the course of action he has taken in the situation and the followers ought to have followed.

But as regards the status of the *Salah* of the congregation members who did not follow the *Imam* to perform the replacement *Raka'ah*, they were within the short while time to correct it. Accordingly, each one should promptly stand up and perform the replacement *Raka'ah* for the discarded one to complete his *Salah* and after the *Salam* make *Sujudu Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

- 53.** An *Imam* leading *Zuhur* prayer forgetfully sat for the final *Tashahhud* after the third *Raka'ah* and when the followers pronounced *Subhallah* he was at a loss as to what happened. What will he do in that situation? When an *Imam* becomes confused about the number of *Raka'ah* he has prayed. What should he do?

**Answer:**

- i. (a) The *Imam* should, without turning back, request to know, by indicating with his fingers, the options for the number of *Raka'ah* he thinks he has prayed, pointing to them, with the fingers, the two options of the number of *Raka'ah* over which he is doubting, so that the congregation will select the correct option and accordingly respond. For instance, if he is at a lost to as whether the number of *Raka'ah* prayed is two or three,

he should indicate two by pointing & holding two fingers and then three by pointing & holding three fingers, then the congregation would say *Ithnain* (for two) or *Thalatha* (for three).

(b) If the response is not clear to the Imam, he can ask verbally saying: "Two or three *Raka'ah*"

- ii. If the *Imam* is totally confused about what is wrong with the prayer, he should enquire about what happened using very short and understanding sentence. He can ask the congregation by saying, for instance: "What happened?"

**54.** An *Imam* leading *Maghrib* prayer while making *Tashahhud* exercised doubt as to whether it was the first or the final *Tashahhud*. He enquired from the congregation by indicating with his fingers whether it was two or three *Raka'ah*, there was no response. He verbally asked the congregation to tell him whether it was the second or the third *Raka'ah* they were upon it, but the congregation was also not sure of the number. What is he supposed to do under the circumstances?

**Answer:**

The *Imam* should use his own judgment to tackle his doubt.

- First, he should determine, of the two possibilities, of having prayed two or three *Raka'ah*, that which is overwhelming to him. If what is overwhelming to him about his doubt is that he prayed three *Raka'ah* and that the *Tashahhud* he was making was the final one, then he should make *Salam*

after the *Tashahhud* and make *Sujud Ba'ada Salam* and make *Salam* again.

- But if he is unable to determine what is overwhelming of the two possibilities, of having prayed two or three *Raka'ah*, then he should resort to (*Aqal*) that which is minimum of the two numbers i.e. that he prayed two *Raka'ah* and that the *Tashahhud* he was making was the first one, then he should rise for the third *Raka'ah* after the *Tashahhud* and then complete his prayer and make the final *Tashahhud* and perform *Sujud Qabla Salam* and make *Salam*.

**55.** A person praying *Rawatib Nafil* or other non-specific *Nafil* forgot to sit for the *Tashahhud* after making two *Raka'ah* and he remembered that after the third *Raka'ah*. What is his most suitable option?

**Answer:**

- i. He should proceed to make the fourth *Raka'ah* straight and then sit for the *Tashahhud* and recite it and make *Salam*. There is no prostration upon him and his prayer is valid. And this option is more prudent because he would achieve the benefit of making four *Raka'ah* at a go. But note that this is tolerable only on condition of forgetfulness, otherwise the *Nawafil* prayer in the day time are in units of two *Raka'ah*.
- ii. Alternatively, as soon as he remembered, he could as well, at that stage sit for the *Tashahhud* and recite it and make *Salam* and make *Ba'ada Salam*.

**56.** Permissibility or otherwise of changing intention in the course of performing prayers: There are three issues under this question as thus:

- i. Can one performing non specified (i.e. general) supererogatory (*Nafil*) prayer change his intention to make it obligatory prayer?
- ii. Is it permissible for a person praying obligatory prayer to change his intention to make that prayer *Sunnah Rawatib* (i.e. specified *Sunnah*)?
- iii. Is it permissible for a person praying obligatory prayer to change his intention to make that prayer non specified *Sunnah* (i.e. general *Sunnah*)?

**Answer:**

Shaikh Al-Uthaimeen (may Allah grant him mercy), in his book "The Prophet's Prayer Described" clarified the permissibility or otherwise of changing intention in the course of prayer and we present his verdict, especially as it aptly answers the above questions.

- i. If a person makes *Takbir* with the intention of praying supererogatory (*Nafil*) prayer and in the course of his prayer he desired to change his intention to make the prayer obligatory (*Fard*), then this is not correct and therefore, is not allowed.
- ii. If a person makes *Takbir* with the intention of praying obligatory prayer, say *Zuhr* and then it occurs to him to make the *Sunnah* of *Zuhr* i.e. *Rawatib*, perhaps because he discovered that the *Zuhr* congregation was yet to be

conducted. This is not permissible because the intention for *Sunnah Rawatib* must be from the beginning.

- iii. If a person makes *Takbir* with the intention of praying obligatory prayer, say *Asr* and then he decides to change it to non-specified (general) supererogatory (*Nafil*) i.e. other than *Rawatib Nafil*; it is permissible. This is because the intention to pray *Asr* (or any of the obligatory prayer) is of two parts – an intention to pray as well as an intention that it is *Asr* (or any of the obligatory prayer, for that matter). Then, if one eliminates the intention of the *Asr* obligation, the general intention of just praying remains and it suffices for the *Nafil*.

**57.** At a time when the entry of *Asr* time in Maiduguri was 3.38pm, in one of the mosques a call for the prayer was made at 3.30pm. Then, the *Iqama* was made at 3.35pm. and as the prayer was on course, some people joined the congregation at 3.40pm and afterwards. Please clarify to us, the validity of this prayer?

**Answer:**

- i. In the first place, the *Ahzan* was invalid and should have been ignored. The *Mua'zzin* should repeat the *Ahzan* anytime from 3.39pm to validate and justify it.
- ii. The *Iqama* for the prayer was established before the entry of time for that prayer. It is noteworthy that the entry of time is one of the conditions for the validity of the prayer. As at the time of the *Iqama* i.e. 3.35pm that

particular Asr was not obligatory upon them. Therefore, a valid prayer was not established ab initio.

- iii. Those who joined the congregation at 3.40pm and afterwards, did so after the entry of Asr time. But they joined an invalid congregation and their prayer is equally invalid.
- iv. In summary, the prayer is invalid for the *Imam* and everyone else, including those who joined at the stage of the final *Tashahhud*. They must all repeat their prayer. They must also avoid this kind of negligence relating to the entry of the time for prayers since it is one of the conditions for the validity of the prayer.

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