



INVALIDATORS OF PRAYER

مبطلات الصلاة

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand why prayers has restrictions in what one can or cannot do
- Learn more of the actions that invalidate prayer
- Know when prayers can be broken
- Know the Makrūh acts in prayers

Invalidators of Prayer

Activity: Review Quiz

In the quiz below, the situations given are those occurring during your prayer. Some invalidate prayers and some do not. Using the knowledge you have gained from previous lessons, place a tick in the appropriate columns on the right. On completion, ask you teacher for the answers and give yourself a score out of 10.

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 4

SITUATION IN PRAYER	Invalidates Prayer	Does not invalidate prayer
I reply to Salamun 'Alaykum		
Wearing a shirt that I had stolen		
Forgetting both sajdahs of the same rak'ah		
Crying due to fear of Hell		
My face turns away from the Qiblah completely		
Only eating half an apple while in Qiyam (standing)		
Sleeping for only five seconds in sajdah		
Crying because I failed my exam		
Forgetting tashahhud of the second rak'ah		
Laughing loudly and uncontrollably		

THE ETIQUETTE OF PRAYER

As Muslims we get an opportunity to communicate with Allah (SWT) throughout the day by praying. This is not an ordinary opportunity but a very special one because we are talking to the Lord of the Worlds, The Most Powerful. Allah (SWT) sees, listens and pays attention to us when we stand for prayer. For this reason we have to be very careful that we do not show negligence and

inattentiveness towards Him because that, in the least, is rude. In this regard, Imam al Reḍa (as) says:

“Stand in front of your Lord as a slave appears before his master. Keep your feet in order and your stature (body) firm. Do not look here and there. Be as if you could see Him, and if you do not see Him, He sees you”

Eating and laughing loudly whilst talking to Him are some of the things that are not supposed to be done whilst praying and thus they invalidate our prayer. Even if you stand in the presence of the president of your country and act in a rude manner, he will not accept your request or he will be unhappy with you. Similarly, we have to be very careful to avoid all things that our Prophets and Imams have taught us that are rude and inappropriate to do when standing in front of Allah (SWT).

INVALIDATORS OF PRAYER

LAUGHING OR CRYING

- If a person laughs loudly and uncontrollably, whether intentionally or unintentionally, then his prayers become invalid. If he laughs without emitting any voice then his prayers will be valid. If however in order to control himself, the condition of the person praying changes, like if the colour of his face turns red, then he should as an obligatory precaution pray again.
- If a person cries for worldly reasons e.g. loss of property or loss of a dear one then his prayers will be void. But if he cries for the fear of Hell or begging for paradise or on the pain that the Ahlul Bayt (as) suffered, then his prayers will be in order.

TALKING

- Deliberately uttering any words which are not part of prayer invalidates the prayer.
- Replying to salaam is wājib even if one is praying. The reply should however be identical to the greeting. So if one says “Salāmun ‘Alaykum”, the reply should be “Salāmun ‘Alaykum”. It is also important that the reply should be given immediately. Not replying to salām does not invalidate the prayer but it is counted as a sin. One does not have to reply to a salām that is done out of fun.

EATING OR DRINKING

- If a person eats or drinks in such a way that it changes the form of the prayer (similar to laughing, jumping and talking) then he has to repeat it.
- If he however only swallows the food from between his teeth, then his prayers will be in order.

OMISSION OR ADDITION OF CERTAIN ACTS

- If one adds or omits a foundational obligation (wājib rukni) intentionally or unintentionally then the prayers will become void.
- If one adds or omits a non-foundational obligation (wājib ghayr rukni), then his prayer is void.

FRUTHER ETIQUETTE OF PRAYER

So far, we have discussed the Wājib rules about which things break the prayer. Now let us look at some other things which are makrūh (disliked or better to avoid) things during prayer:

- To face slightly towards the right or left, remember if one turns completely away, it breaks the prayer, but turning away only a little is makrūh
- To close the eyes
- Fidget and play with one’s hands
- Anything that disturbs us while we are praying is makrūh (for example praying near the TV, or praying in front of a picture or a mirror or next to noisy friends so that we can hear what they are saying)



- Praying when one has the urge to use the toilet is makruh

- It is also makrūh to pray when one is tired and drowsy



- One common problem is trying to pray when we have noisy younger brothers or sisters. The best way to deal with this is to find a quiet room and close the door so that our siblings can't get in and disturb us. If this is not possible, give them something to play with to distract them or promise them that if they are quiet during prayer, you will play with them afterwards.

Homework

Analyse how you pray from the beginning to the end and list down the things that break prayer and the makrūh things that you have been doing. Make sure to eliminate all invalidators and aim to reduce the Makrūh acts when you stand for prayer again.

Review Questions

1. Turning slightly to the right or left:

- a. Breaks the prayer
- b. Is makrūh
- c. Is okay

2. Laughing out loud during prayer:

- a. Is makrūh
- b. Breaks the prayer
- c. Is okay

3. Replying to 'Salamun 'Alaykum' during prayer is:

- a. Wājib
- b. Mustaḥab
- c. Breaks the prayer