

## PLACE OF PRAYER

## مكان المصلي

### Objectives >>>

#### Students should:

- Understand the seven conditions of the place of prayer with their most important details
- Be reminded of the rewards of praying at the mosque

### Lesson 1: The Place of Prayer

In this lesson, we will discuss the conditions for the place in which we choose to perform our prayer. We will discuss each condition in some detail. Before we begin the discussion it is important to remember that we should not delay our prayer unnecessarily because most places are appropriate for prayer. If the conditions we are about to discuss are met, then we can pray in that place and should not delay our prayers till for example, we arrive home.

#### 1. THE PLACE OF PRAYER SHOULD BE PERMISSIBLE TO USE

We learnt last year that we cannot pray in a place that we do not have permission to pray in. Therefore, if we are at someone's house or on their property, we cannot pray there without their permission. However, this rule

### JURISPRUDENCE

### LEVEL 5

does not apply to public places or large lots of land such as farms etc...

There are three other major common examples of praying in a place which is usurped:

- Taking someone's place in a mosque without their satisfaction and then praying there instead of them. If one does this, they need to repeat their prayer. This might especially be the case if that person needs that place for a certain purpose (e.g. back pain)



- Praying on land or in a property that one owns but whose Khums he has not been paid. Such land or property is considered usurped and thus one cannot pray there

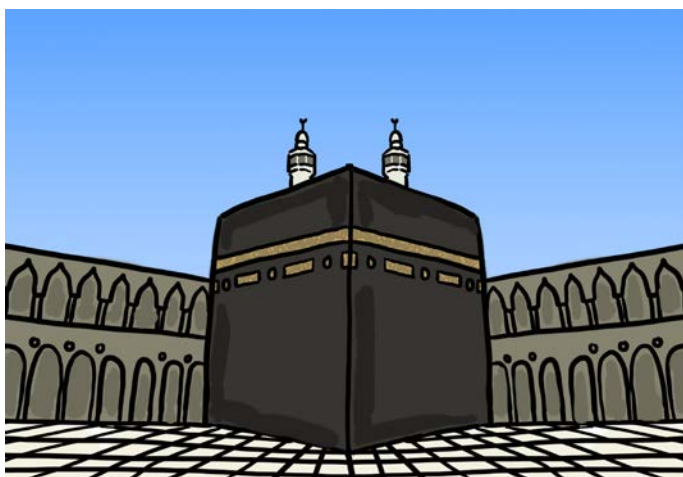


- If two people share a property, then one partner must seek the permission of the other before using that place for prayer

## 2. THE PLACE OF PRAYER MUST BE STABLE

The place for prayers should not have such a vigorous movement which would make normal standing, bowing (rukū') or prostration impossible. In fact, as an obligatory precaution, it should not prevent the body from being at ease. But if one is forced to pray at such places, due to shortage of time, or any other reason, like in a car, on a ship or on train, then one should try to remain still, and to maintain the direction of Qibla, as much as possible, even if this requires moving their whole body. If the vehicles move away from the direction of the Qiblah. There is no harm in offering prayers in a car or a boat, or on railway trains or other vehicles, while they are motionless. If they do not cause the body to sway excessively, when they are in motion, one can pray in them. This includes praying on airplanes. This is not an excuse to miss or delay prayers.

## 3. ONE MUST BE RELATIVELY SURE THEY CAN COMPLETE THEIR PRAYER AT THAT PLACE



If there is a place where one thinks they may not be able to complete their prayers because of, for example, a strong wind or a huge crowd, then they should not pray there. If, however, they do pray there and are able to complete their prayers, their prayers are still void according to some scholars, but valid according to others.<sup>i</sup>

This rule is particularly important during Ḥajj, where the Holy Mosque is often so full that one needs to remain at

a distance from the Holy Ka'bah in order to pray without having their prayer interrupted.

## 4. THE PLACE OF PRAYER MUST BE SUFFICIENTLY SPACIOUS

The place of prayer must be spacious enough to allow the person to stand upright and perform prostration and bowing (rukū').

This is often an issue at Ḥajj, where due to great congestion it is not possible to perform bowing and prostration and one must find a suitably spacious place. It is not permissible to perform prostration on someone's back.

## 5. THE PLACE OF PRAYER MUST BE ṬĀHIR

We learnt last year that the place in which we are praying must be Ṭāhir. If it is Najis but dry, we can still pray on it, except for the place of Sujūd which must be Ṭāhir, even if it is dry.

For further details, refer to last year's lesson on this topic.

## 6. A WOMAN MUST PRAY BEHIND A MAN IF IN CLOSE PROXIMITY

We learnt previously that if a man and a woman are praying close to one another, the man needs to pray ahead of the woman. For further details on this rule, refer to last year's lesson.

## 7. THE PLACE OF PROSTRATION AND PLACE OF STANDING MUST BE CLOSE IN HEIGHT

It is a condition that the spot where a person places their head during prostration is not more than four finger-widths higher or lower than the place of the toes or knees. This rule applies to when there is a sudden step-down between the position of standing and the position of prostration- such as standing on the floor but performing prostration on a thick mattress- or when there is a steady incline- such as when one is praying on a hill.

## PRAYING IN A MOSQUE



As we have learnt in previous years, it is highly recommended to pray at the mosque and that the rewards of a prayer prayed at the mosque are far greater than a prayer prayed at home. This is especially the case for people who live close to a mosque or Islamic centre.



“He who walks to a mosque intending to join the congregation gets the equivalent of seventy thousand good deeds for every step he takes, and he is raised just as many levels...”<sup>iii</sup>

## Homework

1. List four of the conditions of the place of prayer.

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2. If I am praying in a place which is najis but dry and I place a pure cloth on the place of prostration and pray, is my prayer valid?

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3. If I have not sought permission from a person to use their house, can I pray there?

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4. Extra research:

- a. Find out if there are any mosques around the world in which it is particularly rewarding to pray.

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- b. Are we allowed to pray inside the Holy Ka'bah?

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<sup>i</sup> Ayatollah Sistani deems such a prayer void, whilst Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi deems it valid.

<sup>ii</sup> **References**

Islamic Laws, Ayatollah Sistani

Practical Laws of Islam, Ayatollah Khamenei

Islamic Laws, Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi

<sup>iii</sup> Mizanul Hikmah, no. 2930