

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, most Kind, most Merciful



Surat al-Baqarah 2:43

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ
وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

And establish salah, and give the zakah,
and bow along with those who bow
[in salah].

Learning Objectives

- To identify the benefits of *salat al-jama'ah*
- To explain the conditions of *salat al-jama'ah*
- To list the conditions of the *imam* of *salat al-jama'ah*

Key Words

جَمَاعَةٌ Jama'ah
congregation

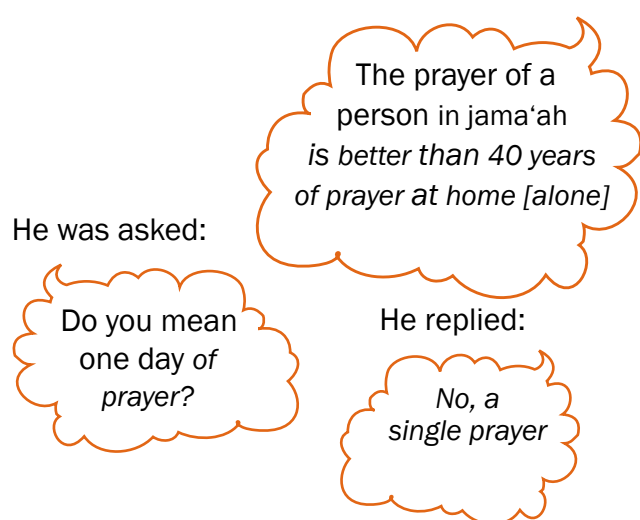
فُرَادِي furada
individual

إِمَامَ الْجَمَاعَةِ Imam al-Jama'ah
leader of the
congregational prayers

Salat al-Jama'ah

Islam has a strong social dimension to it. It encourages unity, solidarity, and consistency among the believers. This is manifest in many of its practices, such as *hajj*, *zakat*, and *amr bil-ma'ruf*. This unity is most evident in the practice of daily *salat al-jama'ah* for the *wajib salahs*. *Salat al-Jama'ah* is people praying their daily *salahs* together in congregation following an imam. There are great rewards mentioned for *salat al-jama'ah* in the *ahadith*.

For example, **Rasulullah (s)** said:



If there is one person following the *imam*, the reward of the *salah* compared to that which is done individually is 25 times.
 For two persons, the reward is 150 times.
 For three, the reward is 600 times.
 For four, the reward is 1200 times.
 For five, the reward is 2400 times.
 For six, the reward is 4800 times.
 For seven, the reward is 9600 times.
 For eight, the reward is 18,200 times.
 If the followers and the *imam* are ten in total, the reward of the prayer is 72,800 times.
 And if the number of the persons praying exceeds ten, nobody knows its reward except *Allah*.



In addition to the abundant rewards, *salat al-jama'ah* also has a positive effect on the individual and the Muslim society at large. Some of these effects are:

1 Spiritual effects

Divine rewards are showered upon those that pray in congregation according to the *ahadith*. *Salat al-jama'ah* also helps in concentration and creates a sense of spiritual warmth.

2 Social effects

It creates unity among the ranks of believers, closeness of hearts, and promotion of the spirit of brotherhood. It allows people to meet each other regularly and enquire about one another's problems and difficulties, and allows people to get to know each other and cooperate with one another.

3 Political effects

It is a symbol of the power of Muslims, closeness of their spirits, and their solidarity in their purpose. It can eliminate disagreements, and strikes fear in the hearts of their enemies.

4 Moral and educational effects

Individuals stand in a single row, setting aside all distinctions of position, race, language, wealth, etc. This breaks any sense of arrogance or pride. *Salat al-jama'ah* creates a sense of order and discipline, alignment, and time-consciousness. Praying behind the most pious and knowledgeable person leads to a respect and promotion of knowledge, piety, and justice.



FIQH FACTS

Ruling 1460

If both the imam and the followers are women, the obligatory precaution is that all of them must stand in one line and the female imam must not stand in front of the others.

- 1 *Niyah* of the *salah* should be that one is following the *imam* of the *salat al-jama'ah*.

Rules of *salat-Jama'ah*

- 5 If a follower arrives late, he/she can join the *salat al-jama'ah* at any point in any *rak'ah* up to and including the *ruku'*. The person needs to pray any missed *rak'ah* in *furada* themselves immediately after *salah* if they joined late and missed any *rak'ah*.

As with all things that are done in congregation, there are some guidelines to make it disciplined and systematic. Some of the rules of *salat al-jama'ah* are:

- 2 People in the congregation should stand close together without leaving any gaps, in order to maintain a connection to the *imam*.

- 4 The followers should not perform any actions before the *imam*, such as *ruku* or *sujud*.

- 3 The followers should recite all the *adhkar* themselves, except for the *surahs* recited in the first and second *rak'at*.

Qualifications of the *imam* of *salat al-Jama'ah*

The *imam* of the prayer holds a great responsibility, and must have certain qualities to be able to lead people in *salah*. Some of the conditions for the *imam* of *salat al-jama'ah* are:

Able to offer the prayers correctly

Ithna-Ashari

Of legitimate birth

Sane

Adil (Just)

Baligh



A man woke up early in order to pray *fajr salah* in the *masjid*. He got dressed, did *wudhu*, and was on his way to the *masjid* when he fell and his clothes became dirty. He got up, brushed himself off, and headed home.

At home, he changed his clothes, did *wudhu* again, and started walking to the *masjid*. He fell again at the same spot! Again, he got up, brushed himself off, and headed home. At home, once again, he changed his clothes and did his *wudhu*. On the way to the *masjid* he met a man holding a lamp. He asked the man who he was, and the man replied:

I saw you fall twice on your way to the *masjid* so I brought a lamp so I can light your way.

The first man thanked him and they both made their way to the *masjid*. Once at the *masjid*, the first man asked the man with the lamp to come in and pray with him. The second man refused.

The first man asked him a couple more times and, again, the answer was the same.

The first man asked him why he did not wish to come in and pray. The man replied:

I am Shaytan.

The man was shocked at this reply.

Shaytan went on to explain:

I saw you on your way to the *masjid* and it was I who made you fall. When you went home, cleaned yourself, and went back on your way to the *masjid*, Allah forgave all of your sins. I made you fall a second time, and even that did not encourage you to stay home, but rather, you went back on your way to the *masjid*. Because of that, Allah forgave all the sins of the people of your household. I was afraid if I made you fall one more time, then Allah will forgive the sins of all the people of your village, so I made sure that you reached the *masjid* safely.



FIQH FACTS

RULE 1451-1452

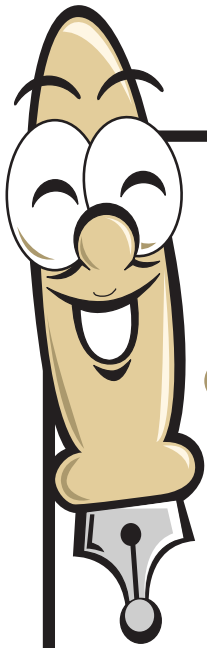
If after rising from *ruku* or *sujud* the *ma'mum* finds out that the Imam is still in *ruku* or *sajdah*, it is better for him to go back and rise with the Imam. In such cases addition of a *ruk'n* would not invalidate the *salah*.

HIGHER LEVEL



Allah uses the term *iqamat as-salah* (Establish prayer) in the Holy Qur'an when commanding us to perform *salah*. From this we can understand that *salah* should not merely be 'performed' or 'prayed', but it should be 'established'. Performance of *salah* would mean a mechanical type of prayer that lacks spirit. Whereas establishment of *salah* is praying correctly according to *fiqh* rules, together with a strong sense of unity with all the other praying persons all over the world. This allows a person to feel perfect submission and humility before Allah.





KEYPOINTS

- 1 It is highly recommended by the *ma'sumin* to pray *salah* in *jama'ah*.
- 2 There are spiritual, social, political, and moral benefits of *salat al-jama'ah*.
- 3 When praying in *jama'ah*, the followers must stand close to each other, and follow the *imam*'s actions.
- 4 The *imam* of *salat al-jama'ah* must fulfil certain conditions, such as being just and able to offer the *salah* correctly.

DID YOU KNOW?

Only *wajib salahs* can be performed in *jama'ah*. The only two exceptions to this rule are the *Eid salahs*, and *salat al-istisqa* (*salah* to pray for rain).



Faith in Action

At some point during this week, visit a *masjid* at any prayer time and offer a *salah* in *jama'ah*. Think about what you have learned regarding *salat al-jama'ah* and evaluate which ones you felt during or after your *salah*. If you are unable to visit a *masjid*, conduct *salat al-jama'ah* with your family members at home.



NOTES

- 3** List three rules of *salat al-jama'ah*.

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A vertical sheet of lined paper with a green cloud-shaped sticker at the top that says "NOTES". The bottom of the paper is curled up.