

Constituents of Salah

Prerequisites for validity of Salāh

There are some things which are not included in the essence of Salāh but are necessary for validity of Salāh. If one of these things is missed, Salāh will not be valid. These things are called prerequisites of Salāh and they are six:

1. Purity: Salāh will not be valid without Purity.

The scope of Purity includes:

- a) Purity of body from Hadath Asghar: The body of the Salāh-performer should be Pure from both minor and major Hadath Asghar.
- b) Purity of body from Hadath Akbar: The body of the Salāh-performer should be free of Hadath Akbar in an inexcusable quantity.
- c) Purity of garments: The garments on the Salāh-performer's body should be free of Hadath Akbar in an inexcusable quantity.
- d) Purity of place: The place where the person is performing Salāh should be Pure from Hadath Akbar.
“Purity of place” requires that that the places where the Salāh-performer's feet, hands, knees and forehead will be falling on the ground at the time of Prostration should be Pure.

2. Covering the organs to be hidden: Salāh will not be valid if he does not hide the organs to be hidden when he is capable of it.

It is necessary that the organs to be hidden should remain hidden from the start of the Salāh till the end.

If a quarter or more of an organ to be hidden is uncovered before starting the Salāh, the Salāh will not be valid.

If a quarter or more of an organ to be hidden gets uncovered during Salāh for a period in which the smallest Salāh-essential may be performed, then his Salāh will become invalid.

- Limits of organs to be covered for man: from the navel to the end of knees. Knees are organs to be hidden unlike the navel which is not an organ to be hidden.
- Limits of organs to be covered for free woman: entire body excluding the face, palms and feet
- Limits of organs to be covered for slave woman: from navel to the end of knees in addition to her abdomen and back

3. Facing the holy Ka’bah: Salāh will not be valid without facing the Ka’bah if he is capable of it.

- The exact position of Ka’bah: It is the direction-to-face for a person who is in the holy city of Makkah and is able to view the Ka’bah from his place.
- The general direction of Ka’bah: It is the direction-to-face for a person who is unable to view the Ka’bah.

The general direction of Ka’bah is also the direction-to-face for a person away from the holy city of Makkah.

If a person is unable to face the stipulated direction owing to a disease or fear from an enemy, it is permissible for him to face whichever direction he is capable of.

4. Time of Salāh: Salāh will not be valid before its start-time. The times of Salāhs have been described in detail previously.

5. Intention: Salāh is not valid without intention. If the Salāh is obligatory, specifying it is compulsory, like intending for Zuhr or Âsr.

Similarly, if the Salāh is compulsory, specifying it is compulsory, like intending for Witr or Êd Salāh.

If the Salāh is supererogatory, specifying it is not a prerequisite. Intending just for a Salāh is enough.

If the Salāh-performer is an Imām-follower, it is necessary for him to intend to follow the Imām in the Salāh.

6. Takbeer of Salāh: This means that the Salāh should be started with a remembrance formula meant only for Allāh, like saying Allāhu akbar; Allāhu a‘zam; Sub-hānallāh.

The Salāh-performer should not separate his intention of Salāh and the starting Takbîr by an act that is contrary to the Salāh like eating or drinking.

It is a prerequisite that the person should:

- a. Say the Takbeer before bending for Bowing.
- b. Not make the intention after the Takbeer.
- c. Say Allāhu akbar in a manner that he himself is able to hear it.

Other rulings related to Prerequisites of Salāh

If a person does not find anything with which to remove de facto Filth, he should perform Salāh with the Filth on him. He does not need to repeat the Salāh.

If a person does not find a garment to hide his organs to be covered nor grass or clay, then he should perform Salāh without garments. He does not need to repeat the Salāh.

If a quarter of the person's garment is Pure, performing Salāh without clothes is not permissible for him.

If a person's garment is Filthy, then performing Salāh in the Filthy garment is preferable to performing it without clothes.

A person without cloths when performing Salāh should sit and spread his legs towards the Salāh direction and should Bow and Prostrate through gesture.

Salāh is permissible on the Pure side of a Filthy cloth-sheet if the sheet is so large that shaking one of its ends does not cause movement in the other end.

Salāh is permissible on a mattress whose top surface is Pure and bottom surface Filthy.

If a person is confused about the Salāh-direction and he is unable to find another person whom to ask about it nor does he find anything that can help him in determining the Salāh-direction, then he should perform Salāh on the basis of his guess.

If he performed Salāh based on his guess but later it turned out that his guess about the Salāh-direction was wrong, then also his Salāh will be valid.

If he comes to know of his error during his Salāh, he should turn towards the Salāh-direction immediately and continue with his Salāh.

If several of the organs to be hidden get bare during Salāh and if the total of bare parts adds up to the size of a quarter of the smallest bare organ-to-be-hidden, then his Salāh will be invalid.

But if the total of the bare parts is less than the above mentioned amount, his Salāh will be valid.

Essentials of Salāh

There are five essentials of Salāh which are also its obligatory constituents. If a person misses one of them, his Salāh will be invalid no matter whether he missed it knowingly or unknowingly.

1. Standing: Salāh that does not include standing will be invalid if the person is capable of standing.

- Standing is obligatory in obligatory and compulsory Salāhs.
- Standing is not obligatory in supererogatory Salāhs.

- So a supererogatory Salāh is valid without standing even if the person is capable of standing.

2. Qur'ān recitation: of at least a small verse. A Salāh without recitation is invalid.

- Qur'ān recitation is obligatory in two Salāh-units of obligatory Salāhs.
- Qur'ān recitation is obligatory in all the Salāh-units of compulsory and supererogatory Salāhs.
- If a Salāh-performer is an Imām-follower, then he is relieved of the duty of Qur'ān recitation. In fact, it is avoidable for him.

3. Bowing: Salāh without Bowing is invalid.

The obligatory amount of Bowing is established by lowering his head in a manner that his body gets closer to the state of perfect Bowing than to the state of standing.

As for perfect Bowing, it is established by lowering the back in the forward direction to the extent that the head is in level with the posterior.

4. Prostration: Salāh is invalid unless one performs two Prostrations in every Salāh-unit.

The obligatory amount of Prostration is established by placing upon the ground a part of the forehead, one of the palms, one of the knees and some part of a side of one of the feet.

The perfect Prostration is established by placing both hands, both knees, both feet, the forehead and the nose upon the ground.

Prostration is valid only if done upon a thing on which the forehead can rest stably such that if the person forces down his forehead it does not go lower than the initial position.

Prostrating only upon the nose and excluding the forehead will not be valid unless he is suffering from an excusable difficulty

If a person prostrates upon his palm or upon a side of his garment, it will be valid but avoidable.

For the validity of Prostration, it is a prerequisite that the place of prostrating the head should not be higher than the place of the feet by more than half cubit.

If the place of prostrating the head is higher by more than half cubit, Salāh will not be valid unless it is highly overcrowded there.

5. The last sitting for the duration of **Tashahhud-recitation**

Some Islamic jurists have included “coming out of the Salāh by a voluntary act” in the essentials, but according to authoritative scholars, it is not obligatory, rather it is compulsory.