

Two Points of Neglect During Ḥajj

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Throughout the world, thousands are graced every year by Allāh ﷻ to carry out one of the greatest obligations and worships - ḥajj. The many virtues and rewards related to this great act of worship have been mentioned in the last issue. However, for ḥajj to be accepted and for one to reap all its spiritual fruits, it will need to be performed with due care, ensuring that all its rituals are carried out correctly, along with assuring that no sin is committed. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Whoever performs ḥajj for the sake of pleasing Allāh, and therein utters no word of evil, nor commits any evil deed, shall return from it free from sin as the day on which his mother gave birth to him.” (Al-Bukhārī, Muslim)

He ﷺ also said:

“There is no reward for a mabrūr ḥajj except Jannah.” (Al-Bukhārī, Muslim)

The ‘Ulamā have stated that a mabrūr ḥajj is that in which a person carries out all the rituals of ḥajj properly and does not disobey Allāh ﷻ. It is saddening to see that we spend thousands of pounds to fulfil this important obligation, yet we become negligent with regards to certain important commands of Allāh ﷻ, consequently becoming deprived of the spirituality of ḥajj and adversely polluting our hearts with sin, rather than enriching them with the spiritual vibes of ḥajj.

I would like to address two issues in which much negligence has become prevalent on the part of many of my brothers and sisters undertaking this sacred journey.

1) Ṣalāh – A Fundamental Worship

Ṣalāh is a fundamental worship - a pillar of Islām, the significance of which needs no elaboration. Allāh ﷻ has commanded us over and over again to perform ṣalāh. In the glorious Qur’ān, the order of establishing ṣalāh has been repeated at least 15 times. The extreme importance of ṣalāh can easily be understood from the many warnings of the Prophet ﷺ in regards to missing it:

- “Verily, between a person and kufr and shirk, is leaving ṣalāh.” (Muslim) This ḥadīth warns that discarding ṣalāh destroys the barrier between a person and kufr or shirk; he can easily fall into disbelief ignoring this important pillar of Islām.
- “Whoever misses a ṣalāh, it is as if he has lost all his family and wealth.” (Aḥmad and Al-Bayhaqī) From this ḥadīth we learn that the ultimate loss incurred by missing one ṣalāh is in no way less than the loss of the whole family and all wealth.

Moreover, there are many virtues mentioned regarding this great worship:

- “Allāh has ordained five ṣalāhs upon His servants. Whoever brings them to Allāh, not having missed any of them out of levity, will have a covenant with Allāh that He will enter him into Jannah. Whoever does not bring them, will not have [such] a covenant with Allāh; if He wishes He will punish him, and if He so wishes He will enter him into Jannah.” (Abū Dāwūd and An-Nasa’ī)
- Once the Prophet ﷺ asked his Ṣaḥābah ﷺ, “Do you believe that dirt can remain on a person bathing five times a day in a brook running in front

of his door?” “No”, replied the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ, “No dirt can remain on his body.” The Prophet ﷺ remarked, “So, likewise [is the effect of] ṣalāh offered five times a day. Through it, Allāh washes away all sins.” (Muslim)

Despite these virtues and warnings, we become negligent with regards to ṣalāh during the blessed journey of ḥajj. Some common instances are:

- **Motorway and Airport**

When travelling, we seldom keep ṣalāh in mind. Ṣalāh is not a factor when planning out travel arrangements. If our travel arrangements are such that we have to perform ṣalāh at the caf or the airport, then this becomes a great burden on us and many people will just omit the ṣalāh altogether. We are very fortunate that dedicated spaces are now available at airports with ablution facilities where we can perform ṣalāh in relative peace and seclusion, and so there should be no excuse to miss it out.

- **Aeroplane**

This is also another place where we become negligent with regards to ṣalāh. Even religious people are found wanting in this regard. For many it is a factor of inferiority complex and insecurity in expressing ones religious beliefs. For others it is just a matter of it being inconvenient.

The flight staff should be approached in a respectable manner and requested to arrange an appropriate place to perform ṣalāh. Merely assuming that it is too inconvenient is unacceptable. Alḥamdulillāh, in all my travels, I have never been declined such a request. The aeroplanes nowadays accommodate the need of a person to perform ṣalāh.

- **Madīnah - Al-Ḥujjāj**

In the ḥajj terminal at the Jeddah Airport, much confusion and hustle bustle is observed, both on arrival and departure. At this time, one needs to keep a cool head and not let the situation get the better of him. Many fall prey to the commotion at this place and, in making arrangements for travel, food etc. end up committing sins, and especially neglecting their ṣalāh.

This is our condition despite being very close to the blessed places and every facility being available, to the extent that even the adhān is called out. May Allāh have mercy on us.

- **In Makkah and Al-Madīnah**

Performing ṣalāh in the two ḥarams is worthy of great reward. The Prophet ﷺ said, “One ṣalāh in this masjid of mine (Al-Masjid An-Nabawī) is better than a thousand prayers in any other, except for Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām.” (Al-Bukhārī and Muslim) The actual virtue of performing ṣalāh in Al-Masjid Al-Ḥaram is understood from another ḥadīth to be 100,000 times more than any other. (Ibn Mājah) Despite there being such a great virtue, many people are observed missing ṣalāh altogether. How grieving it is that we should have such a disregard for a fundamental pillar of Islām even in sacred places! Indeed, we are inviting the wrath of Allāh. ‘Umar ؓ said, “O people of Makkah! Fear Allāh with regards to this ḥaram of yours! Do you know who resided in this ḥaram before you? Such and such a tribe was residing in it, and they violated its sanctity and so were destroyed...” he then went on mentioning a number of tribes, and then said, “By Allāh! That I commit ten sins outside Makkah is more desirable to me than that I commit even one inside Makkah!” (Ibn Abī Shaybah and Al-Bayhaqī)

The importance of ṣalāh and the great virtue for it in the ḥaram should compel us to ensure we perform every ṣalāh there, let alone miss it altogether or even perform it elsewhere. Even if our place of residence is at a considerable distance from the ḥaram, we should endeavour to make it there to reap the rewards. After all, we are closer than most, and may never get the opportunity again in our lives.

Similarly, if we happen to go for ziyārah anywhere, we should arrange it at a time when we are unlikely to miss any ṣalāh with jamā‘ah in the ḥaram.

It is unfortunate to note that some people miss their ṣalāh in Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām due to being pre-occupied with shopping, or going to dine further away from the vicinity of the ḥaram. This is inexcusable and completely incomprehensible, and should never happen. *Lā ḥāwla walā quwwata illā billāh.*

- **Travelling During the Days of Ḥajj**

Another instance where there is much neglect in ṣalāh is whilst travelling during ḥajj, between the different places, e.g. going to and returning from Ṭawāf-Az-Ziyārah. It is often found that whilst stuck in traffic, the times of different ṣalāhs pass, but hardly anyone has alighted from their means of conveyance to perform ṣalāh.

Similarly, on the final day of ḥajj, the 12th of Dhul-Ḥijjah, in a mad rush to get back to Makkah and out of Minā, people leave in large numbers for Makkah, resulting in much congestion. Whilst stuck in traffic, the adhān for the Maghrib ṣalāh is heard, but no-one leaves their vehicles to perform ṣalāh. It is observed that the traffic remains at a standstill till the ‘Ishā ṣalāh and beyond, yet no one has come out of their vehicles and performed Maghrib. How sad that we have just pelted

the Jamarāt, and expressed our resolve in not falling prey to Shayṭān, only to make him happy in the next hour!

Ṣalāh was at the forefront of our pious elders in every circumstance. ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, expressing the importance of ṣalāh, wrote to his governors during his reign of khilāfah, stating, “Verily, the most important of your affairs to me is ṣalāh; whoever safeguards it and is punctual upon it, safeguards his Dīn, and whoever lets it slip, he is likely to let slip other things too.” (Mālik)

It has been recorded regarding Shaykh Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad As-Sahrānpūrī رحمته الله that he would perform all his ṣalāh in the ḥaram, in the first row, on the right side of the imām, whatever the circumstance. Even in the scorching heat of Arabia when the ground would become so hot that putting ones foot down would cause burns and scolds, he would hastily tip toe towards the first row and ensure that he would be standing close to the imām.

Whilst travelling, he would also be particular about performing ṣalāh with congregation. It has been written about his travelling to Al-Madīnah that he would get off his camel for every ṣalāh and perform it with congregation. Getting on and off a camel during travel is not an easy task, and many a young and strong are fearful of endeavouring such an act, but Mawlānā Khalīl Aḥmad رحمته الله was observed to be mounting and dismounting for every ṣalāh to perform it in its preferred time with congregation. He would dismount his camel, perform wuḍū, thereafter run and advance further than where the camels had reached, and perform ṣalāh with congregation. When the camels then passed him during ṣalāh, after finishing he would again run a considerable distance ahead of them and perform his sunan mu’akkadah. Meanwhile, the camels would have passed him so he would run and once again mount the camel.

I myself have observed the late Shaykh Mawlānā As‘ad Al-Madanī ؒ that he would search various flight options when planning his journey, to determine in which option he would miss the least amount of ṣalāh with jamā‘ah, and he would take such an option although it meant he may have to incur a larger expense.

These pious servants of Allāh ؒ were so particular in regards to ṣalāh that the missing of the first takbīr would grieve them. At an event in Darul Uloom Deoband, Shaykh Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Al-Gangohī ؒ got held back a little due to the large crowd trying to meet him, and was unable to join the row when the Imām said the first takbīr. Upon this he was much grieved. (Tadhkiratur Rashīd)

Allāh ؒ’s Command is not something which we should take lightly; we should not be embarrassed in fulfilling the Commands of Allāh ؒ at any given time or place. If it is a matter of inconvenience, then too the obligation of ṣalāh is not excused, and should not be missed. Even an ill person is not excused from ṣalāh to the extent that if he/she is only capable of performing ṣalāh by indication, he/she will still be obliged.

May Allāh ؒ instil in us all the importance of this great worship, and make us all true establishers of ṣalāh. Āmīn.

Note: The second issue in which there is much neglect will, inshā’allāh, be discussed in the next editorial.

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