



What you should do
in the following situations

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Introduction

Praise be to Allaah, the Lord of the worlds, and peace and blessings be upon the most noble of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and upon all his family and Companions.

The Muslim may be faced with a number of emergency situations in his life, where he needs an immediate answer as to how he should act in that particular situation. In most cases, however, it is not possible to look for or ask about the appropriate Islamic rulings at that time.

This proves the importance of learning about Islam and knowing the rules of *Sharee'ah* (Islaamic legislation), so that when a Muslim needs this information, he will have it at hand and will thus be able to save himself or his Muslim brother from doing something *Haraam* (unlawful) or making a mistake. In so many cases, ignorance can lead to corruption of worship or – at the very least – acute embarrassment.

It is unfortunate that an Imaam may mistakenly stand up for a fifth *Rak'ah*, and there may be nobody in the congregation or the mosque who knows what the rulings of the *Sharee'ah* say should be done in such a situation. Or a traveler who is intending to perform *'Umrah* may come to the airport at the last minute, and suddenly discover that he has forgotten his *Ihraam* garments, but he has no time to do anything about it, and there is nobody among the Muslims at the airport who can tell him what he should do in this emergency. Or a man may come to the mosque on an occasion when the prayers have been joined together because of rain: the congregation is already praying *'Ishaa'* but he has not yet prayed *Maghrib*, so he is confused as to what he should do. In such a situation the people may embark upon a debate based only on ignorance, and so confusion will reign in the mosques. In many individual and personal matters, ignorance may lead to embarrassment and even sin, especially when a person is in the position of having to make a decision and he does not have sufficient knowledge on which to base that decision.

There is plenty of information available telling people how to behave in emergency situations: what to do if a fire breaks out, if someone is drowning, if a scorpion bites, if there is a car accident, if someone is bleeding or has broken a bone... all of these first aid procedures are well known and are taught to people by holding special courses. How much more important is it, then, that those who are concerned with the Hereafter should learn and teach the rules of this religion!

At this point, we should note the importance of differentiating between hypothetical matters which rarely, if ever, happen, and matters which we know from experience do happen to people and are asked about.

With regard to the first type (hypothetical situations), asking about them is a fruitless waste of time, which is not allowed in Islam. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, warned us against this when he said: **“Accept what I have left you with, for the people who came before you were only destroyed because of their excessive questioning and their disputing with their Prophets...”** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari and Muslim; this version was reported by Muslim, no. 1337, vol. 2, p. 975)

Commenting on this *Hadeeth* (Prophetic narration), Ibn Rajab, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: *“These Ahaadeeth indicate that it is forbidden to ask questions unnecessarily... or to ask questions out of stubbornness or an intention to mock.”* (*Jaami' al-'Uloom wa al-Hikam* by Ibn Rajab, 1/240, edited by al-Arna'oot)

This is how we interpret the words of a group of the *Salaf* (righteous predecessors), such as the report that when Zayd ibn Thaabit, may Allaah be pleased with him, was asked about something, he would say: *“Has it really happened?”* If they said: *“No,”* he would tell them: *“Leave it until it really happens.”* (Reported by Ibn Rajab, *op. cit.*, 1/245; see also similar reports in *Sunan ad-Daarimi*, 1/49, and *Jaami Bayaan al-'Ilm* by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, 2/174)

With regard to the second type, matters that really happen, then it is good to ask about them. The Companions of the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, sometimes asked him about things before they happened, but it was so that they could act accordingly when these things did happen. For example, they asked him: *“We are going to meet with the enemy tomorrow, and we do not have knives, so should we use dried sugar canes as weapons?”* They asked him about the rulers who he had told them would come after him, and whether they should obey them or fight them. Huthayfah, may Allaah be pleased with him, asked him about *al-Fitan* (times of tribulation) and what he should do at such times. (*Jaami' al-'Uloom al-Hukm*, 1/243) This indicates that it is permissible to ask about things which are expected to happen.

The following is a discussion about some issues that people are likely to face in real life. These are practical matters which have happened and could happen to some people. In each case, the answer is accompanied by a reference to the sources in the work of trustworthy scholars. There may be differing opinions in some cases, but the answer has been limited to one viewpoint, the one based on the soundest evidence, for the sake of brevity and ease of understanding. I ask Allaah to benefit me and my brothers in Islam in this world and on the Day of Judgment. May He reward with good all those who share in this endeavor, for He is

the Most Kind and Generous. Allaah knows best. May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and all his family and Companions.

Tahaarah (purity and cleanliness)

- Paint or dirt on hands when making *Wudhoo'*

If a person finds something like paint or dirt on his hands whilst making *Wudhoo'* (ablution), and tries to remove it, does this break the continuity of his *Wudhoo'* and mean that he has to start again?

Answer: According to the most sound opinion, this does not break the continuity of his *Wudhoo'*, even if the parts of his body that have already been washed become dry, because he was delayed by something that is connected to *Tahaarah* (state of ritual purity). Similarly his *Wudhoo'* is not affected if he moves from one tap to another in order to get water, etc.

But if he is interrupted by something that is not connected to his *Wudhoo'*, such as removing some impurity from his clothes, or eating or drinking, and so on, and the parts of his body that he has already washed during *Wudhoo'* become dry, then he has to repeat his *Wudhoo'*. (*Fataawa Ibn 'Uthaymeen*, 4/145-146)

- Dressings on wounds

If a person has an injury in any part of his body that should be washed during *Wudhoo'*, and cannot put a band-aid or dressing on it, then he should do *Wudhoo'*, and do *Tayammum* for the wounded part (*al-Mughni ma'a al-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 1/282) He does not have to wash the wounded part if this will be harmful.

- Traces of *Janaabah* (sexual impurity) on clothes

If a person sees some traces of *Janaabah* (impurity such as semen, etc.) on his clothes, and he has already prayed some prayers without realizing that this was there, he should do *Ghusl* (ritual bath) and repeat the prayers done since the most recent period of sleep wearing these clothes. If, however, he knows that this *Janaabah* is from a previous period of sleep, he should repeat all the prayers since the end of the sleep in which he thinks the *Janaabah* occurred. (*al-Mughni ma'a al-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 1/199).

The evidence that he should perform *Ghusl* for *Salaah* in cases of *Janaabah* is to be found in many places, such as the verses in which Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{O you**

who believe! Approach not the prayer when you are in a drunken state until you know [the meaning] of what you utter, nor when you are in a state of janaabah [i.e., in a state of sexual impurity and have not yet taken a bath], except when travelling on the road [without enough water, etc.], till you wash your whole body... [Qur'aan, 4:43] Similarly, there is the *Hadeeth* of 'Ali, may Allaah be pleased with him, in which he said: "I was a man who experienced a lot of urethral discharge, so I kept washing myself (doing *Ghusl*) until the skin on my back started to crack. I mentioned that to the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, or it was mentioned to him, so he said: **"Don't do that. If you see discharge, wash your private parts and do *Wudhoo'* for prayer as usual. If water [i.e., semen] gushes out, then do *Ghusl*."** (Reported by Abu Daawood, no. 206; classed as *Saheeh* by al-Albaani in his book *Irwaa' al-Ghaleel*, no. 125). This indicates that when semen is emitted, *Ghusl* is a must, but when there is discharge, it is enough just to wash the private part and do *Wudhoo'*.

- *Janaabah* whilst travelling

A traveler may find himself on a long plane journey during which he becomes *Junub* (impure). He has no way of performing *Ghusl*, and there is nothing on the plane that he could use for *Tayammum*. If he waits until he reaches his destination, the time for prayer will be over, and it may be a prayer that he cannot join with another, such as *Fajr*, when he set out before *Fajr* and will not arrive until after sunrise, or the time for joining two prayers such as *Thuhr* and 'Asr may also be over, because he set out before *Thuhr* and will not arrive until after *Maghrib*. What should he do in such a situation?

If we accept that he has no means of performing *Ghusl* on board the plane, then he is in the situation known by the scholars as "the one who does not have access to the two purifying materials (i.e., water or earth)." There are varying opinions on this situation. Imaam Ahmad and the majority of *Muhaddithoon* say that he should pray as he is, because this is all that he can do, and (what means): **{Allaah burdens not a person beyond his scope.}** [Qur'aan, 2:286]. The specific evidence in this case is the report narrated by Muslim in his *Saheeh*, where it states that the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, sent some people to look for a necklace that 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, had lost. The time for prayer came, and they prayed without *Wudhoo'* (because they could not find water). When they came to the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, they told him about it and then the *Aayah* of *Tayammum* was revealed. (Reported by Muslim, 367). The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, did not blame or criticize them, neither did he tell them to repeat the prayer. This indicates that prayer is obligatory, and even though *Tahaarah* is a condition for prayer, prayer should not be delayed when *Tahaarah* cannot be accomplished. (*Al-Mughni ma'a al-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 1/251). A similar ruling applies to the sick who cannot move their limbs at all, and people who are imprisoned and chained up or suspended.

What is meant is that the prayer should be performed in the best way possible under the circumstances, and it should not be delayed beyond its set time. According to the soundest opinion, it does not have to be repeated, for Allaah does not lay upon us in religion any hardship.

- Bleeding after miscarriage – Nifaas or not?

If a woman miscarries and bleeds, should she pray or not?

The answer to this question depends on the kind of blood: is it *Nifaas* or not? The scholars have mentioned the regulations concerning this: *“If she sees blood after passing something that has any human features, then it is Nifaas, but if she sees it after passing something that resembles a blood clot (Nutfah or ‘Alaq), then it is not Nifaas.”* (*al-Mughni ma’a al-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 1/361).

In the latter case, this is *Istihaadah* (irregular bleeding), so she should do *Wudhoo’* for each prayer after the time for that prayer has started, and then pray. If what she passed is a fully formed fetus or has some formed limbs, such as a hand or a foot or a leg, then this is *Nifaas*. If she says that they took it away in the hospital and threw it away, and she did not see it, then the scholars say that the shortest time in which human features could be formed is eighty-one days from the time of conception. (*Majmoo’at Fataawa al-Shaykh ibn ‘Uthaymeen*, 4/292). This is based on the *Hadeeth* narrated by ‘Abdullaah ibn Mas’ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, according to which the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, who is the one who speaks the truth, said: **“The creation of each one of you is gathered for forty days in his mother’s stomach [womb], then he is ‘Alaqah [something that clings] for a similar length of time, then he is Mudghah [something like a lump of chewed flesh] for a similar length of time. Then Allaah sends an angel who is commanded to do four things: he is told to write down his deeds, his provision and whether he is to be unfortunate [doomed to Hell] or blessed [destined for Paradise]...”** (This version is reported by Al-Bukhaari, *Fath*, 6/303).

Any woman facing this problem should try to seek the advice of doctors to find out exactly what her situation is.

With regard to the blood which may be discharged just prior to a normal birth: if it is accompanied by labor pains or contractions, then it is *Nifaas*, otherwise it is not. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: *“What she sees when the labor pains begin is Nifaas. What is meant here is contractions followed by delivery; if this is not the case then it is not Nifaas.”* (*Majmoo’ Fataawa Ibn ‘Uthaymeen*, 4/327).

Salaah (prayer)

- Waswaas (insinuating thoughts from Shaytaan)

If, when praying, a person experiences *Waswaas* (insinuating thoughts) from the Shaytaan, which cause him to falter in his recitation of the Qur'aan, think bad thoughts and doubt the number of *Rak'ahs* he has completed, what should he do?

This happened to one of the Companions, namely 'Uthmaan ibn Abi al-'Aas, may Allaah be pleased with him. He came to the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and complained about it: "*The Shaytaan comes between me and my Salaah, and causes me to falter in my recitation.*" The Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "**That is a Shaytaan [devil] called Khanzab. If you sense his presence, seek refuge with Allaah and spit [dry spitting] to your left three times.**" 'Uthmaan, may Allaah be pleased with him, (later) said: "*I did that, and Allaah rid me of him.*" (Reported by Muslim, no. 2203)

This *Hadeeth* indicates two ways in which one may ward off the Shaytaan who tries to disrupt one's prayers. The first is to seek refuge with Allaah from the evil of Shaytaan, even by pronouncing these words whilst praying – there is nothing wrong with doing so in this case. The second is to spit (dry spitting) to the left three times. This means blowing air in a manner similar to spitting but ejecting more a very small amount of saliva, so long as this will not affect the person next to you or making the *Masjid* dirty.

- What if something happens during prayer?

If something happens to a person whilst praying, men should say "*Subhaan Allaah*," and women should clap. The evidence for this is the *Hadeeth* narrated from Sahl ibn Sa'd, may Allaah be pleased with him, according to which the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "**If something happens to you during Salaah, men should say 'Subhaan Allaah' and women should clap.**" (Reported by Abu Daawood). According to the version narrated by Al-Bukhaari and Muslim: "**Tasbeeh [saying 'Subhaan Allaah'] is for men, and clapping is for women.**" (Reported by Abu Daawood, 941 in his book *as-Sunan*; Al-Bukhaari (*al-Bugha* edition), 1145; and Muslim, 106)

- Call of nature when the Iqaamah is given

If the prayer is about to start (the *Iqaamah* is given) and a person feels the call of nature, he should go to the bathroom and attend to his need, even if this means he will miss the congregational prayer. The evidence for this was narrated by 'Abdullaah ibn Arqam, may Allaah be pleased with him: "*The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'If any*

one of you needs to answer the call of nature and the prayer is about to begin, let him tend to his need first.'" (Reported by Abu Daawood, no. 88; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 373)

- Doubts about passing wind

If a person who is praying is in doubt as to whether he has passed wind or not, or he feels some movement in his abdomen, should he stop praying or should he continue?

If he is certain that he has passed wind, he should stop praying, but if he is uncertain or doubtful, he should not stop – until he becomes sure of it, either by hearing a sound or by smelling an odor. If he finds that he has passed wind, he should stop praying; otherwise he should not pay any attention to it.

The evidence for this is the *Hadeeth* reported by Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him: *"The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'If any one of you is praying and feels some movement in his back passage, and is in doubt as to whether he has passed wind or not, he should not stop praying until he hears a sound or detects an odor.'"* (Reported by Abu Daawood, 177; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 750)

This is one of the important Islamic prescriptions for curing *Waswaas*.

- If *Athaan* for *Fajr* is called whilst one is praying *Witr*

If a person is praying *Witr* and the *Muath-thin* calls the *Athaan* (call to prayer) for *Fajr* whilst he is still praying, should he continue with his *Witr*?

Yes, if the *Athaan* comes whilst he is praying *Witr*, he should complete the prayer, and there is nothing wrong with doing so. (Ibn 'Uthaymeen, *Fataawa Islaamiyyah*, 1/346). This matter has to do with the timing of *Witr* prayer and whether it ends at the start of *Fajr* or the end of *Fajr*. The majority (of scholars) say that it ends at the start of *Fajr* prayer. (*Is'aaf Ahl al-'Asr bima warada fi Ahkaam Salaat al-Witr* by Fayhaan al-Mutayri, p. 33)

- Missed '*Asr* and reaches *Masjid* when the *Maghrib* prayer has started

If a person has missed '*Asr* prayer and arrives at the *Masjid* to find that *Maghrib* prayer has started, what should he do?

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

"He should pray Maghrib with the Imaam, then pray 'Asr, as is agreed upon by all leading scholars. As to whether he should repeat Maghrib, there are two opinions. The first is that he should repeat it; this is the view of Ibn 'Umar, Maalik and Abu Haneefah, and the most well known view of Ahmad. The second opinion is that he does not have to repeat it; this is the view of Ibn 'Abbaas and al-Shaafi'i, and the second view of Ahmad. The second view is more correct, because Allaah did not make it obligatory for a person to pray a Salaah twice if he has feared Allaah as much as he can. And Allaah knows best." (Majmoo' Fataawa Ibn Taymiyyah, 22/106)

- Traveler joining congregation without knowing if Imaam is also a traveler

If a traveler comes upon a congregation praying, and he does not know if the Imaam is also a traveler (so that he can join the prayer with the intention of shortening it), or he is a resident (so that he can pray the complete prayer behind him), what should he do?

According to the strongest opinion, he should act on the basis of what he sees of signs of travel on the Imaam, such as clothing or travel gear. If it appears to him that the Imaam is a resident, then he should pray the complete prayer behind him.

The evidence for this is the report narrated by Ahmad from Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him who was asked: *"What is the reason why a traveler prays two Rak'ahs if he is alone and four Rak'ahs if he prays behind a resident?"* He, may Allaah be pleased with him, replied: *"That is the Sunnah."* According to another report he, may Allaah be pleased with him, replied: *"That is the Sunnah of Abu al-Qasim [i.e. Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam]."* (Al-Haafith ibn Hajar did not comment on this Hadeeth in *at-Takhlees*, 2/50, but Ahmad Shaakir classed its *Isnaad* (chain of narrators) as *Saheeh* in his commentary on *al-Musnad*, 3/260)

If he assumes that the Imaam is a traveler, and prays two *Rak'ahs* with the intention of praying a shortened prayer, then after *Salaam* (completion of the prayer) he discovers that the Imaam is in fact a resident and that these two *Rak'ahs* were the third and fourth prayed by the Imaam, in this case he should stand up, pray two more *Rak'ahs* to complete the prayer, and do *Sujood as-Sahw* (an extra two prostrations for forgetfulness) (*Al-Majmoo' li'l-Nawawi*, 4/356) There is no harm done by any speaking or asking that were necessary for the sake of his prayer.

- Being unable to stand for the rest of a prayer

If a person who is praying is suddenly unable to stand up for the rest of his prayer, or a person who had to pray sitting down is suddenly able to stand, what should he do?

Ibn Qudaamah, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

“As soon as a sick person who is praying becomes able to do what he could not do at the beginning of his prayer, whether it be standing, sitting, bowing, prostrating or any other movement, then he should continue and build on what he has already completed. Similarly, if a person begins the prayer capable of performing all actions, then suddenly becomes unable to do certain things, he should carry on as best he can, and build on what he has already completed as if nothing has changed.” (Al-Mughni ma’a ash-Sharh al-Kabeer, 1/782; see also al-Majmoo’ li’l-Nawawi, 4/318)

The evidence for this is the *Hadeeth* of ‘Imraan ibn Husayn, may Allaah be pleased with him: *“I had hemorrhoids (“piles”), so I asked the Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, about Salaah. He said: ‘Pray standing up, but if you cannot, then sitting down, and if you cannot, then on your side.’”* (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, *Fath*, 2/587)

- A knock on the door when one is praying, or a mother seeing her child do something dangerous

If someone knocks on the door whilst one is praying, or a mother who is praying sees her child playing with an electrical outlet or doing something similarly dangerous, what should be done?

If a person who is praying needs to do something relatively minor, such as opening a door, there is nothing wrong with doing so, so long as he continues to face the *Qiblah*.

The evidence for this is the *Hadeeth* narrated by Abu Daawood from ‘Aa’ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, who said: *“The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, used to pray with the door closed. I came and asked him to open it, so he came and opened it for me, then went back to his prayer.”* The narrator mentioned that the door was in the direction of the *Qiblah*. (Reported by Abu Daawood, no. 922; Al-Albaani in his book *Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood*, 815)

The same applies if a mother is praying and needs to move her child away from something dangerous or harmful, and so on. A simple movement to the right or left, or forwards or backwards, will not affect her prayer. Similarly, if one’s *Ridaa’* (upper garment) falls off, the one who is praying can pick it up, and if the *Izaar* (lower garment) becomes loose, he can tighten it. In certain cases, *Sharee’ah* allows excessive movements during prayer, even if this means moving away from facing the *Qiblah*, as is reported in the *Hadeeth* narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him: *“The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa*

sallam, said: **'Kill the two black things while in prayer: the snake and the scorpion.'**" (Reported by Abu Daawood, no. 92; Al-Albaani in his book *Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood*, 814)

- Responding to *Salaam* when praying

If *Salaam* (Islamic greeting) is given to a person whilst he is praying, he can reply with a gesture, as was reported from Suhayb, may Allaah be pleased with him, who said: "I passed by the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, as he was praying. I greeted him with *Salaam*, and he responded with a gesture." (Reported by Abu Daawood, 925; Al-Albaani in his book *Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood*, 818)

The gesture is described in a number of *Ahaadeeth*, such as that narrated by Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, who said: "The Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, went out to Qubaa' to pray there. The Ansaar came to him and greeted him with *Salaam* whilst he was praying. I asked Bilaal: 'How did you see the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, reply to them when they said *Salaam* to him and he was praying?' He said: 'Like this,' and flattened his hand." Ja'far ibn 'Awn (one of the narrators) flattened his hand with the palm facing downwards and the back of his hand facing upwards. (Reported by Abu Daawood, 927; Al-Albaani in his book *Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood*, 820)

- Joining a prayer in progress

If a man enters the *Masjid* while the Imaam is praying, should he join the Imaam immediately in whatever position he is in and start praying, or should he wait to see whether the Imaam is going to sit or stand?

The correct answer is that which is indicated by the evidence (*Daleel*): he should join the Imaam no matter what part of the prayer he has reached – prostrating, standing, bowing or sitting. The evidence is the *Hadeeth* of Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him: "The Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **'If you come to the prayer and we are prostrating, then prostrate, but do not count it, and whoever catches a *Rak'ah* has caught the prayer.'**" (Reported by Abu Daawood, 893; Al-Albaani in his book *Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood*, 792) Mu'aath said: "The Messenger of Allaah said: **'If one of you comes to prayer and the Imaam is in a certain position, then do as the Imaam is doing.'**" (Reported by At-Tirmithi, 591; Al-Albaani in his book *Saheeh Sunan At-Tirmithi*, 484) Also, there is the general meaning of the *Hadeeth*: **"Whatever you catch up with, pray."**

- Not hastening unduly to join a prayer in progress

If the prayer starts and a person is still on his way to the mosque, he should not hasten unduly; he should walk with calmness and dignity, as indicated in the *Hadeeth* of Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him: *"The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'If the prayer starts, do not approach it running; approach it walking with calmness and dignity. Whatever you catch up with, pray, and whatever you miss, complete it [afterwards].'"* (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, *Fat-h*, 2/390)

- Breaking wind during a congregational prayer

If a man breaks wind during a congregational prayer, what should he do in this embarrassing situation?

He should put his hand over his nose, and go out. The evidence for this was reported by 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, who said: *"The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'If one of you passes wind whilst he is praying, he should hold his nose and leave.'"* (Reported by Abu Daawood, 1114; Al-Albaani in his book *Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood*, 985).

At-Teebi, may Allaah have mercy on him said: *"The command to hold one's nose is to make it appear as though one is bleeding. This is not lying; it is a form of action that is allowed so that the Shaytaan will not convince a person in this situation not to leave because he feels too shy of others."* (*Mirqaat al-Mafaateeh Sharh Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh*, 3/18)

This is an example of the kind of ambiguity that is allowed and approved of, in order to avoid embarrassment, as whoever sees him leaving in this manner will assume that he is suffering a nosebleed. Another benefit of this Prophetic advice is that it puts a stop to the insinuating whispers of the Shaytaan, which may otherwise cause him to stay in the row or continue praying with the congregation when he has passed wind, and this does not please Allaah. How can he stay when the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, has commanded him to leave? In this case he is permitted either to pass through the rows, or to walk to the edge of the mosque, in order to leave, so that he can go and make *Wudhoo'*, then come back and rejoin the prayer.

- When one has already prayed and comes to another mosque to find the people there praying

If a person has already prayed in one mosque, then he comes to another mosque for a lesson or for some other reason, and finds the people there praying, then he should join them and his prayer would be considered a *Naafil* (supererogatory or "extra") prayer. He should do so even if it is during the prohibited times of prayer because there is a reason behind it. The

evidence for this comes from the *Hadeeth* of Yazeed ibn al-Aswad, may Allaah be pleased with him:

“I performed Hajj with the Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, and prayed Fajr with him in Masjid Al-Khayf. When he completed his prayer and turned around, he found two people at the back who did not pray with him. He, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said: ‘I have to talk to them.’ So he came to them, and they were trembling. He, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, asked them: ‘What prevented you two from praying with us?’ They said: ‘O Messenger of Allaah! We had already prayed in our places.’ He, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said: ‘Do not do that. If you have already prayed at your places and then came to a congregational mosque, pray with them too and it will become a supererogatory prayer for you.’” (Reported by At-Tirmithi, no. 219; *Saheeh al-Jaami’*, 667)

In another *Hadeeth* it is narrated that the two came after the *Fajr* prayer which is a time when prayer is prohibited. Imaam Maalik has reported in his book *Al-Muwatta’* in the chapter on “What has been narrated about repeating the prayer with the Imaam after a person has prayed individually”:

“Mihjan, may Allaah be pleased with him, said that he was in the company of the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, when the call to prayer was given. The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, got up and prayed in congregation, then came back, while Mihjan stayed in his place and did not pray with them. So the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said to him: ‘What prevented you from praying with the people? Are you not a Muslim?’ He said: ‘Indeed I am, O Prophet of Allaah! But I had already prayed at home.’ The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said to him: ‘When you come [to the mosque] then pray with the people, even if you have already prayed.’” (Reported by Maalik in his book *Al-Muwatta’*, 1/130; *as-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, no. 1337)

- Still praying *Sunnah* when the *Iqaamah* is given

If a person has entered the mosque and is praying *Sunnah*, then the *Iqaamah* is called, the best opinion in this case is that if he is in his second *Rak’ah*, he should finish it quickly, and if he is in the first *Rak’ah*, he should just break his prayer and enter the congregation with the Imaam. (*Fataawa Ibn ‘Uthaymeen*, 1/345) The basis for this is the report which Imaam Muslim narrated in his *Saheeh*: “The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said: ‘**If *Iqaamah* is called for the prayer then there is no prayer except the obligatory one.**’” (Reported by Muslim, 1/493)

So, if a person has performed the *Rukoo'* of the second *Rak'ah* when the *Iqaamah* is called, then he should complete his prayer. If the *Iqaamah* is called before he does the *Rukoo'* of the second *Rak'ah*, then he should discontinue because what is left of *Sujood* and *Tashahhud* is not needed any more. Moreover, he should break without *Salaam*, and it is enough to have the intention in the heart, contrary to common misconception.

- Being informed of the correct direction of the *Qiblah* whilst praying

If there is a congregation praying, and during their prayer they are informed that the *Qiblah* is in a direction other than that which they were facing, they should all turn towards the correct direction. The same is also true for someone praying individually. Whatever part of their prayer has been performed (before changing direction) will be correct.

The evidence for this is a narration reported by Imaam Muslim, may Allaah have mercy upon him, from Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him:

“While the Prophet of Allaah, sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, was praying towards Bayt-al-Maqdis [Jerusalem], the Aayah was revealed to him (which means): {Verily! We have seen the turning of your face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall turn you to a Qiblah that shall please you, so turn your face in the direction of al-Masjid al-Haram.} [Qur'aan 2:144]. A man from Bani Salamah was passing by and found them (i.e., the people of Bani Salamah) in the state of Rukoo' in the second Rak'ah of the Fajr prayer. He called out to them: ‘The Qiblah has been changed,’ so they changed direction while they were still in Rukoo’.” (Reported by Muslim, No. 527)

If some of the people were informed and the others were not, then the one to whom it was made clear should turn to the direction which he believes to be the correct direction of *Qiblah*. Now if all of these people were originally praying together in the same direction, then some of them turned towards the right and some towards the left, it is still valid for one of them to lead the others in prayer. But the scholars have a difference of opinion about some people following others in cases of complete disagreement about the direction of the *Qiblah*. If there is someone among them who is completely ignorant about the direction, he should follow the one who is more aware amongst them of the direction of the *Qiblah*. (*Al-Mughni ma'a al-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 1/473) If someone does not know the direction of the *Qiblah*, he must ask someone if he can, or else he should make *Ijtihad* (make a judgment to the best of his ability based on the information available) if he is able to, otherwise he must follow someone who is reliable. If he cannot find such a person, then he should fear Allaah, do his best and pray, and his prayer is valid. This sometimes happens to people who travel to the lands of the disbelievers and find no Muslim or anybody else who could tell them the correct direction of the *Qiblah*, and have no means of finding out. But if a person is capable

of finding out the direction of the *Qiblah*, but was neglectful and prayed without making all possible efforts, he should repeat his prayer because he was careless. (*Al-Mughni ma'a al-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 1/490)

- Falling behind when praying in congregation

If a person is praying in a congregation and the loudspeaker stops working or he becomes drowsy and he lags behind the Imaam by one or more obligatory acts (*Arkaan*) of prayer (i.e., the Imaam performed it and he did not because of not hearing the Imaam's voice), then when he wakes up again or the sound of the speaker comes back, he should complete the obligatory acts that he has missed, then continue following the Imaam.

This problem may arise in many cases. For example: the Imaam recites a verse that contains the word of prostration (*Sajdah*) and some of the people misunderstand it to be a verse of prostration while in reality it is not, so when the Imaam says *Takbeer* for *Rukoo'* at the end of the verse and performs *Rukoo'*, some of the followers (especially those towards the rear of the congregation) take it to be the *takbeer* for the prostration of recital, so they prostrate. When the Imaam stands up from the *Rukoo'* saying "*sami'a Allaahu li man hamidah*", they stand up from their prostration, thus having missed the act of *Rukoo'* and standing up from it. So it is incumbent on them to complete what they missed and then catch up with the Imaam. This is because they did not do it intentionally. However, in the case of one who intentionally lags behind the Imaam (e.g., someone who prolongs his prostration to make a long supplication such that he misses the obligatory act which comes after the prostration), the majority of scholars say that the prayer of someone who misses two consecutive obligatory acts of prayer without a valid excuse, is void and he is a sinner. (*Kashshaaf al-Qinaa'*, 1/467; *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah*, 6/29).

However, the principle is that the Imaam must be followed, as the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"The Imaam is there to be followed, so do not differ from him. When he goes into *Rukoo'*, make *Rukoo'*. When he says "*Sami'a Allaahu li man hamidah*" [Allaah hears the one who praises Him], say "*Rabbanaa laka al-hamd*" [O our Lord! To You belongs the Praise]. When he goes into *Sajdah*, make *Sajdah*. If he prays sitting, then all should pray sitting."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, no. 689)

- When the Imaam nullifies his *Wudhoo'*

If the Imaam nullifies his *Wudhoo'* whilst he is praying, or remembers during the prayer that he did not perform ablution, then he should come out from prayer and appoint someone to finish leading the prayer, as was narrated from 'Umar, 'Ali, 'Alqamah and 'Ataa', may Allaah be pleased with them all. If he does not appoint anyone, and the people pray

individually, this is also acceptable, and this is the opinion taken by Imaam Al-Shaafi'i, may Allaah have mercy on him. If he brings someone forward to lead them, that is also permitted.

The evidence for this is what has been narrated regarding 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, when he was stabbed: he took the hand of 'Abdur-Rahmaan bin 'Awf, may Allah be pleased with him, and made him step forward, and he led the prayer to completion. (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, *Fath*, 7/60) The reason for this deduction is that 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him did this in the presence of a number of Companions and others and no one opposed this act, so it became a consensus (*Ijmaa'*). (*Ahkaam al-Imaamah*, al-Muneef, p. 234)

If the Imaam remembers that he is not in a state of purity, he should indicate to the people to remain as they are and go and purify himself, then come back, say "*Allaahu Akbar*" and lead them in prayer. This is valid. The evidence for this is the report narrated by Abu Daawood from Abu Bakrah: "*The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, started to lead the Fajr prayer, then he indicated to the people that they should stay in their places. Then he came back and water was dripping from his head.*" (Reported by Abu Daawood, no. 233; Al-Albaani in his book *Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood*, 1/45. Abu Daawood included a chapter entitled *Fi al-Junub yusalli bi al-qawmi wa huwa naasin*, i.e. one who inadvertently leads the people in prayer when in a state of *Janaabah*)

Commenting on this *Hadeeth*, Imaam Al-Khattaabi, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "*In this Hadeeth there is evidence that if one is leading the people in prayer while in a state of Janaabah and the people do not know of it, then their prayer is unaffected and there is no need for them to repeat it. But the Imaam has to repeat his prayer.*" (*Sunan Abu Daawood wa ma'ahu Ma'aalim al-Sunan* by al-Khattaabi, edited by ad-Da'aas, 1/159.)

- When the Imaam's 'Aurah becomes uncovered

If someone is praying in congregation behind the Imaam and sees his 'Aurah (those parts of the body that must be covered) uncovered due to an opening in his clothes or due to his clothes being thin and transparent, then if it is possible he should go ahead and cover it with something, otherwise he should come out of his prayer and inform the Imaam by saying "cover your 'Aurah" (in Arabic "*ghatti'l-'Aurah*"), or "protect what has been uncovered". He should not stay quiet and continue to pray because it is known that the Imaam's prayer (in this condition) is incorrect and following him is incorrect as well. (From the oral *Fataawa* of Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azeez ibn Baaz)

- Realizing that one's Wudhoo' is invalid because of wiping over socks when doing so is no longer acceptable

If one is praying (either as an Imaam or as a member of a congregation or individually) and recalls that he had wiped over his socks (*Khuff*) during *Wudhoo'* at the time when the period during which this is acceptable had expired, he should terminate his prayer because his ablution is incorrect. This is what has been quoted from Imaams Ahmad and al-Shaafi'i. (*Al-Mughni*, 2/505)

- When the Imaam forgets the ending of an Aayah

If the Imaam recites a part of the Qur'aan in the prayer and forgets the ending of the verse, and none of the members of the congregation remind him of it, he can choose either to say the *Takbeer* and discontinue the recitation, or to recite one verse or more from another *Soorah*. But this is allowed only if the forgotten part is not from *al-Faatihah*. As far as *al-Faatihah* is concerned, it must be recited in its entirety, as reciting it is an obligatory act of prayer. (Ibn Baaz: *Fataawa Islaamiyyah*, 396)

- Intending to pray for rain, then it rains before the people start the prayer

If the people go out to gather for *Salaat al-Istisqaa'* (prayer for rain), or were intending to do so, and then it rained, then either of the following apply:

If they had got ready to go out and it rained before they left, then they should thank Allaah (*subhanahu wa ta'ala*) for His blessings and not go out.

If they had already come out, and it rained before they could pray, they should offer a prayer in gratitude to Allaah, may He be exalted. (*Al-Mughni*, 2/296)

- Feeling sleepy when listening to Friday sermon

If a person becomes sleepy or dozes while listening to the Friday sermon, it is recommended for him to change places with the person next to him. In doing this he should be careful not to speak; rather, he should communicate by gestures. The evidence for this is the *Hadeeth* narrated by Samurah who said: "*The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'If one of you dozes during the Friday sermon, he should change places with the person sitting next to him.'*" (Al-Bayhaqi, 3/238; *Saheeh al-Jaami'* no. 812)

Another *Hadeeth* was narrated by Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with them both, who said: "*The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'If one of you dozes in the*

mosque on Friday, he should move to another place to sit.'" (Reported by Abu Daawood, no. 1119; *Saheeh al-Jaami'* no. 809)

Rulings about Forgetfulness during Prayer (as-Sahw)

- Doubt about number of *Rak'ahs* prayed

If a person is in doubt as to whether he prayed, for example, three or four *Rak'ahs*, he should act according to what is most likely. However, if he cannot be sure which is more likely, he should assume what he can be certain of, which is the lesser amount, and make the prostrations of forgetfulness (*Sujood as-Sahw*).

The evidence is the *Hadeeth* narrated by Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allaah be pleased with him, who said:

"The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: 'If one of you has doubts during his prayer and he does not recall how many *Rak'ahs* he has prayed, whether three or four, then should forget about his doubt and complete his prayer on the basis of that of which he is certain, and then make two *Sujood* before the *Salaam*. If it turns out that he had prayed five *Rak'ahs*, the two *Sujoods* would make it even, and if he ended up completing his four *Rak'ahs*, they would be in defiance of the *Shaytaan*.'" (Reported by Muslim, no. 571)

- Imaam remembers that he forgot to recite *al-Faatihah* during a silent *Rak'ah*

If the Imaam remembers in the final *Tashahhud* (sitting of the prayer) that he had recited *at-Tahiyyaat* (the greetings mentioned during the sitting) in the beginning of a silent *Rak'ah* instead of *al-Faatihah*, he should stand up and offer another, correct, *Rak'ah*, to make up for the one he performed incorrectly where he did not recite *al-Faatihah*. This is because the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"There is no prayer for the one who did not recite (in it) *al-Faatihah* [the opening chapter of the *Qur'an*]."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, no. 723)

It is also required for the members of the congregation behind him to follow him, even though it would be the fifth *Rak'ah* for them. If they do not understand and do not stand up, but say "*Subhaan Allaah*" as if to indicate to the Imaam that he is in error, the Imaam should gesture with hand movements to the right and left to inform them that he did it purposefully and to indicate to them that they should stand up and that he knows what he is doing.

However, if something like this happens to one of the people praying behind the Imaam, his prayer will be correct as long as he followed the Imaam.

The evidence for this is the *Hadeeth* of Abu Bakrah which describes when he joined the prayer in the position of *Rukoo'* and did not recite *al-Faatihah*. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said to him: **“May Allaah increase your endeavor. You do not need to repeat.”** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, no. 750)

- A member of a congregation forgetting to recite *al-Faatihah*, or joining the prayer at the moment of *Rukoo'*

If the person following the Imaam forgets to recite *al-Faatihah*, or is ignorant of its obligatory nature, or joins the prayer when the Imaam is in the state of *Rukoo'*, then his *Rak'ah* will be considered as complete and his prayer correct. He does not need to repeat the *Rak'ah*, as he is excused for his ignorance or forgetfulness, or for not joining the prayer in time for the *Qiyaam* (the part of the *Rak'ah* when one is standing upright). This is the opinion of the majority of scholars. (Ibn Baaz: *Fataawa Islamiyyah*, 1/263)

This is one of the things which the Imaam bears on behalf of those whom he leads in prayer.

- Raising one's head from *Rukoo'* then realizing that one forgot to say the *Tasbeeh*

If a person raises his head from *Rukoo'* then remembers that he did not say the *Tasbeeh* of *Rukoo'*, he should not return to the *Rukoo'* because the requirement for supplication of *Rukoo'* is no longer applicable by virtue of his having raised his head. If he returns to the *Rukoo'* intentionally, this action would render his prayer invalid since he has added an extra *Rukn* (obligatory act of the prayer) which is this second, superfluous, *Rukoo'*. However, if it was due to ignorance or forgetfulness, his prayer will not be nullified, but in this case he must make the prostration of forgetfulness if he was praying individually or leading a congregation. This is because saying *Tasbeeh* (“*Subhaana Rabbi al-'Adheem*, How Perfect is my Lord, the Supreme”) is *Wajib* (obligatory), and if one forgets it, it can be compensated for by making the prostration of forgetfulness. If he was praying behind an Imaam and forgets the *Tasbeeh*, then he is no longer considered to have omitted an obligatory act. (*al-Mughni ma'a al-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 1/679)

- Forgetting the first *Tashahhud*

If a person forgets the first *Tashahhud*, stands up for the third *Rak'ah* and starts the recitation of *al-Faatihah*, then according to the majority of scholars, he should not return to the sitting position. If he does so knowing that his return is unapproved of, his prayer will be nullified

because he has already started another obligatory act. The obligatory act that he forgot (i.e., *Tashahhud*) can be made up for by making the prostrations of forgetfulness. The evidence is the *Hadeeth* narrated by al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah: "*The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'If the Imaam begins to stand up after the second Rak'ah, then remembers, before he has stood fully upright, that he should sit, then he should sit down, but if he has already stood fully upright, he should not sit, but should make two prostrations of forgetfulness.'*" (Reported by Abu Daawood, no. 1036; *as-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, 321)

In short, if someone stands up for the third *Rak'ah*, forgetting the *Tashahhud*, one of the three following scenarios apply:

If he remembers it before standing up straight: then he should return to *Tashahhud*.

If he remembers after standing up straight, and before starting the recitation of *al-Faatihah*: then it is better for him not to sit, but if he sits his prayer will be valid.

If he remembers it after starting the recitation of *al-Faatihah*: then he is not allowed to return to *Tashahhud*. (*al-Mughni ma'a al-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 1/677)

These three cases have been deduced from the *Hadeeth* quoted above.

- *Imaam says the Salaam then makes prostrations of forgetfulness, but a latecomer stands up to complete his prayer*

If the Imaam says the *Salaam* and a person who joined the prayer late stands up to complete what he missed, then suddenly he sees the Imaam making prostrations of forgetfulness after the *Salaam*, the latecomer should sit back down and make prostrations with the Imaam, if he has not yet stood fully upright. Otherwise he should not sit back down; he should complete his prayer, then he should make the missed prostrations of forgetfulness. The evidence for this is the same as presented in the discussion on forgetting to sit for *Tashahhud* between the second and third *Rak'ahs*. (*al-Mughni ma'a al-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 1/697)

- *Imaam makes a mistake but doesn't understand what the congregation is referring to when they say "Subhaana Allaah" to draw his attention to it*

If the Imaam makes a mistake and misses an obligatory part of the prayer, and the congregation remind him of the mistake (by saying "*Subhaan Allaah*"), but he does not understand what they mean or does not know when or where he made the mistake, and continues to move on to other obligatory acts which do not include the missed act, then there a number of opinions as to how they should make him understand. The best of these

opinions is that they should remind him of the act by the particular supplication for that act, e.g., saying “*Subhaana Rabbi al-‘Adheem*” if it was the *Rukoo’* or “*Subhaana Rabbi al-A‘la*” if it was the prostration, or *Rabbighfir li* if it was the sitting between the two prostrations, etc. (*Al-Mughni ma’a ash-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 1/707)

Miscellaneous Rulings

- Forgetting to wear Ihraam for Hajj or ‘Umrah

If someone is travelling in an airplane and forgets to wear the garments of *Ihraam*, and the plane takes off, he should try to make it out of two pieces of cloth, whatever color they may be, or with any type of sheets or towels he can get hold of. If he cannot find anything appropriate, he should remove whatever sewn clothes and head covering (if he is wearing one) he can, and enter the state of *Ihraam* in whatever he is wearing when he passes by the *Meeqaat* in the air. He should not cross the *Meeqaat* without being in a state of *Ihraam*. Once he reaches a place where he can change his clothes and wear two sheets of cloth (proper *Ihraam* garments), he should do so; in addition, he must pay a penalty (*fidya*) of either sacrificing a sheep or fasting for three days or feeding six needy people. He has the choice of doing any one of these three and his *Ihraam* is correct.

- Interruption of Tawaaf or Sa’y

If a person is performing *Tawaaf* (circumambulation around the *Ka’bah*) or *Sa’y* (between as-Safa and al-Marwah), and he finds himself in need (e.g., he is thirsty and needs to drink something, or loses one of his family members and stops to look for him, or becomes tired and needs to take some rest), then if the break is short and is recognized as such (*‘Urfan*), he may then continue from where he left off. In the case where the prayer is called and he interrupts his *Tawaaf* to pray, the scholars have disagreed on this issue. The most cautious opinion is that when he continues his *Tawaaf*, he should not count the last round which he left incomplete when he interrupted his *Tawaaf* in order to pray. (Ibn Baaz: *Fataawa al-Hajj wa al-‘Umrah*, p. 80; *al-Majmoo’ li’l-Nawawi*, 8/49)

The issue of taking a rest in *Tawaaf* and *Sa’y*, however, is based on the condition that *Tawaaf* and should be uninterrupted. In *Sa’y*, continuity is not a requirement according to the best opinion. (*al-Mughni ma’a al-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 3/414) So, if a person is performing *Sa’y*, and he breaks after some of the rounds, and then comes back to complete them, this would be considered permissible. However, regarding continuity of *Tawaaf*, the scholars have two opinions:

That continuity is *Waajib* (mandatory), and that a long interruption without due justification nullifies the *Tawaaf*.

That continuity is a *Sunnah*, and the *Tawaaf* is not nullified even though the break was long. (This is the opinion favored by an-Nawawi in his book *al-Majmoo'*, 8/47)

However, it is better to act according to the first opinion, to be on the safe side.

- Burial of one who dies at sea

If a person dies on a ship while travelling at sea, according to Imaam Ahmad, may Allaah have mercy on him, the people should wait if they hope to reach some place where they can bury him (such as an island or beach) in a day or two, and if they are confident that the body will not decay. However, if this is not possible, they should wash the body, shroud and embalm it, then pray the funeral prayer, and finally, tie something heavy to it and drop it in the water. (*Al-Mughni ma'a al-Sharh al-Kabeer*, 2/381)

- Changing money (same currency)

Suppose a person has, for example, a currency note with a face value of 50, and he wants to change it into five 10's, and asks another person to provide the change for him, but this person has only three 10's. Is it permitted for the first person (i.e. the one who wants the change) to give him the 50 and take the three 10's, leaving the remaining 20 as a loan to be collected by him later?

Since such a practice is widespread nowadays, most people would be taken aback if they are informed that this is *Riba* (usury). The reason (for such a practice being usury) is that the amount each one of the two took is different, whereas the condition in selling and changing currency notes is that if they belong to the same type of currency (e.g., dollars in exchange for dollars, or *Deenaars* in exchange for *Deenaars*, etc.) then they must be the same in monetary value and exchanged "cash down" (hand in hand, not deferred). This is because the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **"Do not sell gold for gold unless the two are equivalent, and do not sell a lesser amount for a greater amount or vice versa. Do not sell silver for silver unless the two are equivalent, and do not sell a lesser amount for a greater amount or vice versa. Do not sell gold and silver that is not present at the moment of exchange [i.e. a deferred amount] for gold or silver that is present."** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, No. 2068)

This *Hadeeth* prohibits both *Riba al-Fadhl* (usury of surplus) and *Riba an-Nasee'ah* (usury of credit or delayed payment).

So the way for people to avoid this, as they are always in need of exchanging currency notes, is as follows: the one who has a currency note of 50 should give it to the other as collateral and take the 30 from him as a loan. Later he should repay the loan and take his 50 back. (N.B. Although the net result may appear the same, there is a difference in the way the transaction takes place.) (From the oral *Fataawa* of Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz)

- Being asked to do something at work that is against Islamic teachings

What should one do if one is asked to do something at work that he feels is contrary to the teachings of Islam?

If a person is ordered to do a certain assignment at his work, he should think about it—if the act does not involve any disobedience to Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted, he should go ahead and do it. Otherwise, if it does involve some disobedience to Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted, he should not obey the command, or else he will be a party to sin and wrong-doing. The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“A human being must not be obeyed if that involves disobedience to Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted. Indeed, obedience only applies in the case of righteous deeds.”** (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, with *Fat-h al-Baari*, 13/121; Ahmad, 1/91; this version was narrated in *as-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, No. 181)

Allaah The Almighty said in the Qur'an (about the people who went astray) (what means): **{They will say: 'Our Lord! Verily, we obeyed our chiefs and our great ones, and they misled us from the [Right] Way.'}** [Qur'aan 33:67]

General Behavior and Sunnah of the Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam

- The proper way to thank Allaah The Almighty

If a Muslim receives a bounty or is rescued from some trial, it is recommended for him to perform the prostration of thankfulness. Abu Bakrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, reports that: *“When the Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, received something which pleased him or glad tidings, he would make prostration in thanks to Allaah.”* (Reported by Abu Daawood, no. 2774; it is *Saheeh*, and was also reported in *Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh*, no. 1494)

Ritual purity (*Tahaarah*) and facing the *Qiblah* is not a requirement to make the prostration of thankfulness, however, if one makes *Wudhoo'* and faces the *Qiblah*, that is preferred. (*Majmoo' Fataawa* by Ibn 'Uthaymeen, 4/216.)

- Accepting money or property received without asking for it

If something (e.g., money, property, etc.) which is *Halaal* (lawful in Islam) comes to you, whether through another person or other entity, without you asking, yearning or begging for it, and without you having degraded yourself, then he should accept it. 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that: *"The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'If something [i.e., money, property, etc.] comes to you for which you did not yearn or ask for, then accept it. Otherwise do not bother about it.'"* (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, no. 1404)

- Asking a Muslim host about food or drink he serves

If a Muslim is served food in his Muslim brother's house, and he is worried about whether the meat is *Halaal* or *Haram*, he may eat it without questioning because, in Islam, the principle is that a Muslim is trustworthy. The evidence for this is the saying of the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: **"If one of you enters the house of his Muslim brother and he offers him food, let him eat it and not ask anything about it, and if he offers him something to drink, let him drink it and not ask anything about it."** (Reported by Ahmad, 2/399; *as-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, no. 627)

This is also because such interrogation may insult his host and make him feel that he is being doubted.

- Walking with only one shoe on if the other one is damaged

If someone walking with shoes on, and breaks or tears one of them, he should not walk with only one shoe, while his other foot is bare. He should either repair the broken shoe and wear both, or take off both and walk barefoot. Walking barefoot at times is *Sunnah*. The evidence for this is the narration of Abu Hurayrah that: *"The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'One should not walk with only one shoe. One should either wear both or take both of them off.'"* (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, no. 5518)

The scholars have said a number of things about the reason for doing so. The most authentic of these is what has been described by Ibn al-'Arabi and others that *"It is the way of walking of the Shaytaan"*. (*Fath al-Baari*, 10/310) The evidence for this is the report of Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him: *"The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'Indeed the Shaytaan walks in one shoe.'"* (*As-Silsilah as-Saheehah*, no. 348)

- Good dreams

If a Muslim sees a good dream, it is recommended for him to do the following:

He should praise and thank Allaah, may He be glorified.

He may interpret it himself or discuss it with a knowledgeable person who may interpret it for him.

He should not tell anyone about it except someone who may give him good advice, or someone who is wise, or someone he loves. He should not inform someone who may become jealous of him.

The evidence for this is the report of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, may Allaah be pleased with him: *"The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'If anyone of you sees a dream that he likes, then it is from Allaah, and he should thank Allaah for it and tell it to others.'"* (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, no. 6584)

And it was also reported from Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, that: *"The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'Do not narrate your good dreams to anyone except a knowledgeable person or someone who may give you good advice.'"* (Jaami' at-Tirmithi, no. 2280; as-Silsilah as-Saheehah, no. 1119)

This is because such persons may interpret it in the most appropriate way, unlike one who is jealous or ignorant.

- Bad dreams

If a Muslim sees a bad dream (nightmare), he should do the following:

- He should spit (dryly) to his left three times.
- He should seek refuge in Allaah from Shaytaan three times.
- He should seek refuge in Allaah from the evil of the dream.
- He should stand up and pray.
- He should change the side on which he was sleeping if he wants to continue to sleep, even if that means turning onto his left side.
- He should not inform anyone.
- He should neither interpret it himself nor ask anyone else to interpret it.

The evidence for this is the narration of Jaabir, may Allaah be pleased with him, that: *"The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'If any one of you sees a dream that he*

dislikes, he should spit to his left three times, seek refuge in Allaah from the Shaytaan, and turn over on to his other side.’” (Reported by Muslim, no. 2262)

According to another report, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“He should seek refuge in Allaah from its evil, so that it does not harm him.”**

The narrator of this *Hadeeth* said: *“I used to see dreams that weighed heavier on me than a mountain, but as soon as I heard this Hadeeth, I never worried about it again.”* (Reported by Muslim, no. 2261)

Jaabir, may Allaah be pleased with him, reported that a Bedouin came to the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and said: *“O Prophet of Allaah, I saw a dream that my head was chopped off and rolled away, and I ran after it.”* The Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said to him: **“Do not tell people the Shaytaan is playing with you in your dreams.”** (Reported by Muslim, no. 2268)

According to another report, the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“If anyone sees something he dislikes, he should get up and pray.”** (*Jaami' at-Tirmithi*, no. 2280; *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, no. 3533)

- Being affected by seeing a woman

If a Muslim sees a non-*Mahram* woman, and this has an effect on him, then if he has a wife he should go home and have intercourse with her so that he may rid himself of whatever affected him. The evidence for this is the narration of Jaabir, may Allaah be pleased with him: *“The Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ‘If any one of you is attracted to and likes a woman, he should go back to his wife and have intercourse with her, because this will rid him of whatever affected him.’”* (Reported by Muslim, no. 1403)

- Sitting between the sun and the shade is not allowed

If the place where one is sitting falls between the sun and the shade, he should change his place, because the Prophet of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: **“If one of you is (sitting) in shade that diminishes in size, resulting in part of his body remaining in the sun and the rest under shade, he should get up and move.”** (Reported by Abu Daawood, no. 4821; *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, no. 748)

The reason for this is that this is the position favored by the Shaytaan. The evidence is the Prophet’s prohibition of sitting partially in the sun and partially in shade. He, *sallallaahu*

'alayhi wa sallam, said: **"This is the place where the Shaytaan sits."** (Reported by Ahmad, 3/413; Saheeh al-Jaami', No. 6823)

- When illness strikes one's wife

If an illness strikes someone's wife, it is recommended for him to do what the Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did: "When an illness struck one of his wives, he ordered for soup to be prepared. Then he ordered her to drink from it. He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, used to say: **'This strengthens the heart of the one who is distressed, and cleans the heart of the sick person just as one of you cleans her face with water.'**" (Jaami' at-Tirmithi, no. 2039; Saheeh al-Jaami', no. 4646)

- If one's children or family members lie

If one of the children or family members of a person lies, he should treat this issue as did the Prophet of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam: "If he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, came to know that one of his family members had lied, he would keep away from him until he repented." (As-Silsilah as-Saheehah, no. 2052; Saheeh al-Jaami', no. 4675)

- When telling the truth is not the best option

If a Muslim faces a difficult situation where he needs to say what is against the truth in order to protect himself or someone who is innocent, or to save himself from serious trouble, is there a way for him to escape the situation without lying or falling into sin?

Yes, there is a legitimate way and a permissible escape that one can make use of if necessary. It is equivocation or indirectness in speech. Imaam Al-Bukhaari, may Allaah have mercy on him, entitled a chapter of his Saheeh: "Indirect speech is a safe way to avoid a lie". (Reported by Al-Bukhaari, Kitaab al-Adab (Book of Manners), chapter 116)

It was reported about Hamaad, may Allaah have mercy on him, that if someone came that he did not want to sit with, he would say as if in pain: "My tooth, my tooth!" Then the boring person whom he did not like would leave him alone.

Imaam Sufyaan Ath-Thawri, may Allaah have mercy on him, was brought to the Caliph al-Mahdi, who liked him, but when he wanted to leave, the Caliph told him he had to stay. Ath-Thawri swore that he would come back. He then went out, leaving his shoes at the door. After some time he came back, took his shoes and went away. The Caliph asked about him, and was told that he had sworn to come back, so he had come back and taken his shoes.

Imaam Ahmad, may Allaah have mercy on him, was in his house, and some of his students, including al-Mirwathi, were with him. Someone came along, asking for al-Mirwathi from outside the house, but Imaam Ahmad did not want him to go out, so he said: "*Al-Mirwadhi is not here, what would he be doing here?*" whilst putting his finger in the palm of his other hand, and the person outside could not see what he was doing.

Other examples of equivocation or indirectness in speech include the following:

If someone asks you whether you have seen so-and-so, and you are afraid that if you tell the questioner about him this would lead to harm, you can say "*Ma Ra'aytuhu*", meaning that you have not cut his lung, because this is a correct meaning in Arabic ["*Ma Ra'aytuhu*" usually means "I have not seen him," but can also mean "I have not cut his lung"]; or you could deny having seen him, referring in your heart to a specific time and place where you have not seen him. If someone asks you to swear an oath that you will never speak to so-and-so, you could say, "*Wallaahi lan ukallumahu*", meaning that you will not wound him, because "*Kalam*" can also mean "wound" in Arabic [as well as "speech"]. Similarly, if a person is forced to utter words of *Kufr* and is told to deny Allaah The Almighty, it is permissible for him to say "*Kafartu bi'l-laahi*", meaning "I denounce the playboy" [which sounds the same as the phrase meaning "I deny Allaah."]

(*Ighaathat al-Lahfaan* by Ibn al-Qayyim, 1/381 ff., 2/106-107; see also the section on equivocation (*Ma'aareed*) in *Al-Aadaab ash-Shar'iyyah* by Ibn Muflih, 1/14)

However, one should be cautious that the use of such statements is restricted only to situations of great difficulty, otherwise:

- Excessive use of it may lead to lying.
- One may lose good friends, because they would always be in doubt as to what is meant.
- If the person to whom such a statement is given comes to know that the reality was different from what he was told, and he was not aware that the person was engaging in deliberate ambiguity or equivocation, he would consider that person to be a liar. This goes against the principle of protecting one's honor by not giving people cause to doubt one's integrity.
- The person who uses such a technique frequently may become proud of his ability to take advantage of people.

Finally, I ask Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted, to give us a proper understanding of our religion, to teach us that which will benefit us, and benefit us from what He teaches us,

to guide us, and to protect us from the evils of our own selves. Allaah is the best Protector and He is the most Merciful of all.

May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and his family and Companions.