

Performing Prayers in Congregation at the Mosque

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 ﴿ إِنَّمَا يَغْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى
 الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنْ يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴾
 سورة التوبة 18

قَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عُمَرَ: قَالَ لِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ:
 « مَنْ بَنَى مَسْجِدًا يَبْتَغِي بِهِ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ بَنَى اللَّهُ لَهُ مِثْلَهُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ »
 مسلم، كتاب المساجد، 533

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Prayer is the pillar of Islam, the strongest bond between a servant and Allah (swt). While it can be performed individually, Salah takes on a deeper, communal meaning when offered in congregation. Mosques are the houses of Allah and it is the congregation, the community of believers, that keeps these blessed spaces alive. The Messenger of Allah (saw) praised congregational prayer, encouraging believers to join together in worship. He also cautioned against isolating oneself from the community, saying: *“Allah’s mercy is with the congregation. Whoever separates from the congregation will have a share of the Fire.”*¹

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The Prophet (saw) never delayed his prayers nor neglected performing them in congregation. He would come to the mosque, stand in rows with his companions and always perform his prayers with them. The Sahabah showed great care in upholding this Sunnah. For them, the mosque was the heart of life itself. Missing even a single congregational prayer would weigh heavily on their hearts. Abdullah ibn Mas‘ud (may Allah be pleased with him) once said: *“During the time of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), I observed that no one failed to attend the congregation except those known to be hypocrites.”*²

Dear Jama’ah!

Mosques are not only places of worship, they are centres of faith, knowledge, culture and brotherhood. When the Prophet (saw) migrated to Madinah, the very first thing he did was build the Prophet’s Mosque (Masjid al-Nabawi). That mosque was not merely a place for prayer, but also a centre for education, consultation, mutual support and unity. Allah says in the Qur’an: **“The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, establish prayer, give zakah, and fear none but Allah.”**³ The Messenger of Allah (saw) also said: *“Whoever builds a mosque for the sake of Allah, Allah will build for him a house in Paradise.”*⁴ Therefore, building, maintaining, protecting and keeping mosques

active with knowledge and worship are among the greatest acts of ongoing charity (sadaqah jariyah).

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

There are countless wisdoms in performing prayers in congregation. Congregational prayer unites hearts and strengthens brotherhood. In the same row, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, the employer and the worker stand side by side. Believers who stand together in prayer lay the foundations of solidarity, justice and peace in society. Congregational prayer also means discipline and order. Observing the prayer times brings balance and stability to life. A person who joins the congregation keeps alive the awareness of responsibility toward Allah, themselves and their brothers and sisters.

Dear Brothers and Sister!

Praying in congregation is a manifestation of faith. However, today many Muslims stay away from the mosque without a valid excuse, continuously delay their fard prayers and unfortunately turn this into a habit. The Messenger of Allah (saw) warned that one of the gravest signs of hypocrisy is not attending the congregation.⁵ In the Qur’an, this is described as the hypocrites being sluggish to rise when called to prayer.⁶ Meetings, work and appointments are not more important than prayer. A believer should respond to the call to prayer, setting aside worldly distractions and turning to Allah (swt).

Let us remember that a mosque exists because of its imam and congregation. A mosque without an imam is directionless and a mosque without a congregation is lifeless. Without a congregation, a mosque is merely stone and concrete; with a congregation, it becomes a place that breathes faith and gives life. Therefore, let us strive to perform our fard prayers in congregation at the mosque. Let us introduce our children to the mosque and raise them with the spirit of the congregation.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Let us revive our awareness of praying in congregation. O Allah! Make us among Your servants who perform their prayers in congregation. Do not leave our mosques empty. Tie our hearts to the mosques. Make our children good friends of prayer, congregation and the mosque. Ameen.



¹ Tirmizî, Fiten, 7

² Müslim, Mesâcid, 49

³ Surah At-Tawbah, 9:18

⁴ Buhârî, Salât, 65; Müslim, Mesâcid, 24

⁵ Buhârî, Ezan, 30

⁶ Surah An-Nisa, 4:142