

The Follower Should Complete Tashahhud And Then Follow The Imam

Darulifta Ahlesunnat

(Dawateislami)

Question

What do the scholars of Islam say regarding the following matter: What is the ruling for the follower of an imam, if the imam rises up from the first sitting in salah or has given salam at the end of the final sitting, before the follower has completed recital of tashahhud? Must he complete the recital of tashahhud or immediately follow the imam?

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ اللَّهُمَّ هِدَايَةَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

Considering principles of Islamic law, it is wājib for the congregant to follow the imam in the farḍ and wājib acts of prayer without any delay. However, if following the imam would result in the abandonment of a wājib, then the ruling in such a scenario is that he should first complete the wājib and then follow the imam.

Since reciting the entire tashahhud is also wājib, if the imam rises up in the first sitting before the follower has completed its recital, he should first complete it and then follow the imam by standing up. Likewise, if the imam has given salam in the final sitting before the follower has completed reciting tashahhud, he should first complete it and then give salam. If the follower has completed tashahhud and is reciting ṣalāt on the Prophet or a du‘ā when the imam gives salam, he should also give salam immediately with the imam.

The scholar Ibn ‘Ābidīn al-Shāmī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ (passed away in 1252 AH) writes in Radd al-Muḥtār:¹

أن متابعة الإمام في الفرائض والواجبات من غير تأخير واجبة، فإن عارضها واجب لا ينبغي أن يفوته بل يأتي به ثم يتابع، كما لو قام الإمام قبل أن يتم المقتدى التشهد فإنه يتمه ثم يقوم لأن الإتيان به لا يفوت المتابعة بالكلية، وإنما يؤخرها، والمتابعة مع قطعته تفوته بالكلية، فكان تأخير أحد الواجبين مع الإتيان بهما أولى من ترك أحدهما بالكلية

The jurist, Imam Ḥasan b. Maṣṣūr al-Awzajandī, famously referred to as Qāḍī Khan رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ (passed away in 592 AH) states in his fatāwā:²

إذا قام الإمام إلى الثالثة قبل أن يفرغ المقتدى من التشهد فإن المقتدى يتم التشهد ثم يقوم وكذا لو سلم الإمام قبل أن يفرغ المقتدى من التشهد فإنه يتم التشهد -- لأن قراءة التشهد واجبة ولهذا يلزمه السهو بتركه ساهياً (ملتقطاً)

In Fatāwā al-Raḍawīyyah, it is explained how the Imām of the Ahl al-Sunnah, Imām Aḥmad Razā Khan رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was asked:

¹ Radd al-Muḥtār ‘alā al-Durr al-Mukhtār, Kitāb al-Salah, vol. 2, p. 202, Dār al-Marifah, Beirut

² Fatāwā Qāḍī Khan, Kitāb al-Salah, vol. 1, pp. 90,91, Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut

What do the scholars of Islam say regarding this case: If the follower had not completed the recital of tashahhud and the imam stood up or gave salam, should the follower complete tashahhud or suffice with what he has recited and leave the remainder?

He replied, "In both scenarios he should complete it; however long it takes."³

وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَرَسُوْلُهُ اَعْلَمُ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَاٰلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

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³ *Fatāwā al-Radawīyyah, vol. 7, p. 52, Raza Foundation, Lahore*