

How Is It to Pray in A Place with A Lot of Noise Like a Factory?

Darulifta Ahlesunnat

(Dawateislami)

Question

What do the noble scholars and jurists of Islamic law say about the following matter: I work in a factory. There is a designated area where employees pray during prayer times, but it's very noisy there. Is it permissible to pray in such a place?

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ اللَّهُمَّ هِدَايَةَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

Ṣalāh is the time for presenting oneself in the court of the Lord Almighty, and the Sharī'aḥ requires complete Khushū' and Khudū' (humility and concentration) during it. It is this type of prayer that the Qur'ān describes as the prayer of the Aṣḥāb Al-Falāḥ, i.e., the successful ones. It is stated:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خِشْعُونَ﴾

Translation: "Certainly, the believers have succeeded; those who are deeply humble in prayers."

(Chapter 18, Surah Al-Mu'minūn, Verse 1-2)

During Ṣalāh, a distracted mind, lack of attention, and haste are not befitting of the Divine Court. Instead, the presence of the mind, full attention, and maintaining balance and calmness are the beauty of Ṣalāh, which the Sharī'aḥ requires. If we understand the philosophy of 'Ibādāt, we find that we are commanded to perform every act of worship in the manner of Iḥsān (the most excellent manner), as the Ḥadīth of Jibrīl testifies to this. It is for the examination of this "best act" that life and death were created, as stated:

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا﴾

Translation from Kanz-ul-Iman: "He who created death and life to test you as to which of you is best in virtue."

(Chapter 29, Surah Al-Mulk, Verse 2)

Due to the immense significance and rank of Ṣalāḥ over other ‘Ibādāt (acts of worship), the jurists of Islām have meticulously detailed the manners of Ṣalāḥ, mentioning specific places and locations that, due to various reasons, especially those that disturb Khushū’ and Khuḍū,’ are deemed disliked for offering Ṣalāḥ. Among these are places where there is excessive noise, or people are engaged in loud conversations nearby, causing the Ṣalāḥ offering person’s attention to be distracted and leading to a disturbed state of mind. Praying in such places is considered Makrūḥ and undesirable, according to Sharī’aḥ. Therefore, in the case at hand, first, remember that it is Wājib for men to perform Ṣalāḥ with Jamā’at (congregation) in the Masjid, and neglecting this without a Shar’ī excuse is prohibited and sinful. If, from a Shar’ī perspective, Ṣalāḥ with Jamā’at is not Wājib, then avoid praying in places where there is severe noise. Instead, if there is a quiet place available within the factory or a place outside that can be found where such noise is not present, perform your Ṣalāḥ there.

When Sayyidunā Jibrīl Amīn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام asked about the meaning of ‘Iḥsān,’ the Noble Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ stated the general standard of ‘Ibādah:

“أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه، فإن لم تكن تراه فإنه يراك”

Translation: “Iḥsān is that you worship Allāh as if you see Him; and if you cannot achieve this state, then know that He surely sees you.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, vol. 1, Chapter of the Questions of Jibrīl from Nabī, p. 19, Publ. Dār Ṭawq Al-Najāḥ, Beirut)

Sirāj Ad-Dīn ‘Allāmaḥ Ibn An-Nujaym Al-Miṣrī Al-Ḥanafī رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ writes:
(D. 1005 AH/1596 CE) writes:

“وما عن ابن عباس (نهينا أن نصلي إلى النيام والمتحدثين) فمحمول في الأول على ما إذا خاف ظهور ما يضحكه من النائم أو يخجله إذا انتبه، وفي الثاني ما إذا رفعوا أصواتهم وخشي المصلي أن يزل في القراءة أو شغل البال.”

(Naḥr Al-Fā’iq, Vol. 1, p. 286, Dār Al-Kutub Al-‘Ilmiyyah, Beirut)

‘Allāmaḥ ‘Alā’uddīn Al-Ḥaṣḥafī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ (d. 1088 AH/1677 CE) writes:

“تكره في اماكن... زاد في الكافي: ومرابط دواب وإصطبل وطاحون”

(Al-Durr Al-Mukhtār Ma‘a Radd Al-Muḥtār, Vol. 2, p. 557-562, Dār Al-Thaqāfaḥ Wa Aa-Turāth, Damascus)

Under this, ‘Allāmaḥ Ibn ‘Ābidīn Al-Shāmī Ad-Dimashqī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ

(d. 1252 AH/1836 CE) wrote:

“لعل وجهه شغل البال بصوتها تأمل”

(Al-Durr Al-Mukhtār Ma‘a Radd Al-Muḥtār, Vol. 2, p. 562, Dār Al-Thaqāfaḥ Wa Al-Turāth, Damascus)

Imām Aḥmad Raza Khān رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ (D. 1340 AH/1921 CE) wrote:

“ولذا خصوا الكراهة بحال الطحن”

Translation: For this reason, the jurists specifically restricted the disliking to when the mill is running.

(Jidd Al-Mumtār, Vol. 3, p. 42, Dār Al-Kutub Al-‘Ilmiyyaḥ, Beirut)

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

(Allah Almighty knows best and His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ knows best.)

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