

Is Looking Around in Salah Forbidden? Sharia View on Eye Sight Risks

Darulifta Ahlesunnat

(Dawateislami)

Question

What do the noble scholars and jurists of Islamic law say about the following: I have heard from some people that it is a sin to look around in Ṣalāh. Is this true, and is there a risk of losing one's eyesight because of it?

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ اللَّهُمَّ هِدَايَةَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

Ṣalāh is the most essential act of worship and a means to gain closeness to Allāh. During Ṣalāh, a person stands before Allāh Almighty and engages in supplication. According to the noble Aḥādīṣ, Allāh's mercy is directed towards the worshipper as long as they do not turn their attention elsewhere. Therefore, Ṣalāh should be performed with Khushū' and Khuḍū' (humility and concentration), avoiding looking around. Turning the face deliberately to the right or left during Ṣalāh, whether partially or entirely, is Makrūh Taḥrīmī and impermissible. Moving the eyes without turning the face unnecessarily is Makrūh Tanzīhī and a disliked action. If done for a valid reason, it is permissible.

Regarding the fear of losing one's eyesight, this warning pertains not to looking around during Ṣalāh but specifically to looking upwards towards the sky during Ṣalāh, which is Makrūh Taḥrīmī.

The mercy of Allāh is directed towards a person during Ṣalāh. It is mentioned in *Sunan Al-Kubrā*, *Musnad Ad-Dārimī*, and *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaimah*, among other books of Ḥadīth, with the wording of *Sunan Al-Kubrā*:

”قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا يزال الله مقبلا على العبد ما لم يلتفت، فإذا صرف وجهه، انصرف عنه.“

Translation: The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: “(The mercy of) Allāh remains attentive to the bondsman as long as he does not turn away; when the worshipper turns his face, Allāh's mercy also turns

away from him.” (Sunan Al-Kubrā, Chapter on Emphasis Against Turning in Ṣalāḥ, Vol. 2, p. 37, Publ. Mu’asasah Al-Risālah, Beirut.)

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*, it is narrated:

”قالت عائشة رضي الله عنها، سألت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم عن التفات الرجل في الصلاة، فقال: هو اختلاس يختلسه الشيطان من صلاة أحدكم”

Translation: ‘Ā’ishaḥ رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهَا asked the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ

about a man turning his head during Ṣalāḥ. He replied: ‘This is an action by which Satan snatches the reward of a person’s Ṣalāḥ.’ (Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, Book of the Beginning of Creation, Vol. 1, p. 580, Publ. Lahore.)

‘Umdat Al-Qārī, the commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*, explains:

”والمعنى أن المصلي إذا التفت يمينا أو شمالا يظفر به الشيطان في ذلك الوقت ويشغله عن العبادة فر بما يسهو أو يغلط لعدم حضور قلبه باشتغاله بغير المقصود ولما كان هذا الفعل غير مرضي عنه نسب إلى الشيطان وعن هذا قالت العلماء بكراهة الالتفات في الصلاة... أن الاجماع على أن الكراهية فيه للتنزيه”

Translation: The meaning is that when a worshipper turns their attention to the right or left during Ṣalāḥ, Satan succeeds in diverting their focus from worship. This distraction can cause the worshipper to forget or make mistakes because their mind is occupied with matters other than the intended worship. Since this act is undesirable, it has been attributed to Satan. Therefore, scholars state that turning one’s attention right or left in Ṣalāḥ is Makrūh. There is consensus that the dislike in this matter is considered Makrūh Tanzīhī. (‘Umdat Al-Qārī, Book of Ṣalāḥ, Chapter on Turning in Ṣalāḥ, Vol. 5, p. 310, Publ. Beirut.)

Fatāwā ‘Ālamgīrī states:

”ويكره أن يلتفت يمينا أو يسرة بأن يحول بعض وجهه عن القبلة فأما أن ينظر بمؤق عينه ولا يحول وجهه فلا بأس به، كذا في فتاوى قاضي خان. ويكره أن يرفع بصره إلى السماء”

Translation: Turning the face slightly away from the Qiblaḥ to the right or left is Makrūh. However, there is no harm in looking to the side with the corners of the eyes without turning the face (not Makrūh Taḥrīmī). Similarly, it is stated in *Fatāwā Qādī Khān* that raising the gaze towards the sky during Ṣalāḥ is Makrūh Taḥrīmī.

(Fatāwā 'Ālamgīrī, Book of Ṣalāh, Chapter 2, Vol. 1, p. 106, Publ. Quetta.)

In *Baḥār-e-Sharī'at*, it is mentioned:

ادھر ادھر مونھ پھیر کر دیکھنا مکروہ تحریمی ہے، کل چہرہ پھر گیا ہو یا بعض اور اگر مونھ نہ پھیرے، صرف کنکھیوں سے ادھر ادھر بلا حاجت دیکھے، تو کراہتِ تنزیہی ہے اور نادر اُکسی غرض صحیح سے ہو، تو اصلاً حرج نہیں۔ نگاہ آسمان کی طرف اٹھانا بھی مکروہ تحریمی ہے۔

Translation: Turning the face to look around during Ṣalāh is Makrūh Taḥrīmī, whether the whole face is turned or partially. If one's face is not turned and he only glances to the side without necessity, it is Makrūh Tanzīhī. However, if done for a valid reason, there is no issue. Looking upwards towards the sky in Ṣalāh is also Makrūh Taḥrīmī. (Baḥār-e-Sharī'at, Section on Makrūhāt, Vol. 1, p. 626, Publ. Maktaba-tul-Madīnah, Karachi)

Raising one's gaze towards the sky in Ṣalāh is strictly forbidden. As stated in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*:

"قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: ما بال أقوام يرفعون أبصارهم إلى السماء في صلاتهم، فاشتد قوله في ذلك، حتى قال: لينتهن عن ذلك أولتخطفن أبصارهم"

Translation: The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, 'What is the matter with people who lift their gaze towards the sky in their Ṣalāh?' He warned strongly against this and said, 'They should stop, or their eyesight may be taken away.' (Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, Book of Azān, Chapter on Lifting the Gaze Towards the Sky, Vol. 1, p. 173, Publ. Lahore)

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

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

Answered By: Mufti Muhammad Qasim Attari

Ref No: FSD-8569

Date: 2nd Rabi' al-Awal 1445 AH/18th October 2023



Dar-ul-Ifta Ahlesunnat (Dawat-e-Islami)



www.fatwaqa.com



daruliftaahlesunnat



DaruliftaAhlesunnat



Dar-ul-ifta AhleSunnat



feedback@daruliftaahlesunnat.net