

By his eminence shaykh Abdul Aziz Ben Abdullah Ben Baz:

In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the merciful

It was narrated by Al Bukhari that prophet Mohammed (May peace and blessings of Allah be unto him) had said:

“Perform your prayers in the same manner you had seen me doing.” Therefore, here is the explanation for the Prophet's manner of prayer:

1. To perform completely the ablution, adopting the method commanded by Allah in the Qur'an: “O ye who believe, when ye prepare for prayer, wash your faces and your hands (and arms) to the elbows, rub your feet to the ankles.” (5:6)

The prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be unto him) said: **“Prayer without ablution is invalid**

2. To turn one's face and whole body towards the Ka'aba, The Holy House at Makkah, intending by heart to perform the prayer, which he wants to fulfil.

3. To pronounce “Takbirat Al Ihram” that is to say “Allahu Akbar” celebrating by that the greatness of Allah and looking meanwhile, downwards to the place where he will prostrate.

4. To raise one's hands up to the level of the shoulders or near to the lobes of his ears, while pronouncing “Takbirat Al-Ihram”.

5. To put one's right hand over his left hand and left wrist, and put them both over his chest, as the prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be unto him) used to do.

6. It is advisable that the worshipper recite this opening supplication saying: **“ Sobhanaka Allahumma wa bihamdika watabaraka Ismoka wata'la jaddoka wala ilaha ghayroka”**
“Praise and glory be to Allah. Blessed be Your Name, exalted be Your Majesty and Glory. There is no god but You.”

After reciting the opening supplication, the worshipper says:

“Aouzo billahi min al-shaytani-r-ragim”

which means:

“I seek protection of Allah against the accursed satan.”

Then he says:

“Bismillahi-Rahmani Raheem”

Which means:

“In the name of Allah, the all Merciful, the all Compassionate.”

Then recite the Fatiha (The opening sura of the glorious Qur'an). Prophet Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be unto him) said:

“Prayer without reciting the Fatiha is invalid”.

The worshipped should say “A'meen” after reciting the Fatiha loudly if the prayer is said loudly, and whispers it in inaudible prayers. To be in conformity with the traditions of the Prophet, the worshipper is advised to recite verses from medium size suras of the Qur'an.

7. Then, the worshipper bows in “Ruku” raising his hands up to the level of his shoulders or ears while saying “Allahu Akbar” “Allah is Great” then bends down, making his head and back on one level and putting his hands with the fingers spread on his knees. The worshipper should feel serenity and tranquillity while bowing, he should say thrice at least: **“Subhana Rabbiyl –a'zim”**

Which means:

“Glory be to my Lord, the Almighty.”

8. To raise one's head up from bowing, raising once hands to the level of his shoulders or ears, saying, in case of being Imam or praying alone: **“Sami'a Allahu liman hamidah”** Which means:

“Allah listens to him who praises Him”

While resuming the standing position, he should say:

“Rabbana wa laka al hamdu”

This supplication means:

“Our Lord, praise be for Thee only”

But if the worshipper is a follower, and led in his prayer by the imam he should say when rising up:

“Rabbana wa laka al hamd...etc.”

9. To prostrate saying **“Allahu Akbar”** “Allah is great” He should touch the ground with his knees before touching it with his hands, if that is possible to him. If not, he is permitted to touch the ground by his hand before his knees. His fingers and toes should be directed towards the Qibla Makka, and his hands should be stretched, and the fingers close together and not separated. In prostration, the worshipper should use these seven organs: The forehead, the nose, both hands, both knees and the internal parts of the toes. These seven organs should touch the ground. Then the worshipper should say thrice or more:

“Subhana Rabbiyl A'ala”

which means:

“Glorified is my lord, the Exalted.”

Worshipper, while prostrating, should neither bring his hands close to his sides, nor stick his abdomen to his thighs, or his thighs to his legs. The worshipper's arms should be raised up from the ground because the Prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be unto him)

prohibited putting the arms and stretching them on the ground, ordering that **“adjust your prostration, keep straight in it and stretch not your hands on the ground as dogs do.”**

10. He should raise his head from prostration saying **“Allahu Akbar”** and lays his left foot flat on the ground and sits upon it, keeping his right foot erected, his hands on his thighs and knees, and says: **“O my Lord forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, provide me with your blessings and console me”**

The worshipper should feel tranquillity during this pause.

11. To prostrate again saying **“Allahu Akbar”** and repeating during his prostration what he did say in the first prostration.

12. Then the worshipper raises his head saying **“Allahu Akbar”** taking a pause similar to the pause between the two prostrations; this is called “the pause for rest.” It is recommended for the worshipper to do such a pause, but there is no sin if he desists from it. Then the worshipper rises up and stands supporting in his knees, or on the knees, reads the Fatiha (The opening sura of the glorious Qur'an) and some other verses of the Qur'an and do as just as he did in the first Rakaat (unit of prayer). Those who pray behind the Imam should not compete with him in the prayer actions as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be unto him) said: “The imam is to be followed, if he says

“Allahu Akbar”

which means “Allah is great” then say the same after him. If he bows in **“Ruku”**

bow after him. If he says:

“Samia-lahu liman hamidah”

which means:

“Allah hears him who praises him”,

then say:

“Rabbana wa laka-l-hamidah”

which means:

“Our Lord! All praises are for Thee”;

and if he prostrate, then prostrate after him. (Bukhari V:1 P.37)

13. If the prayer consists of two Rakaat (two units of prayer) as the morning prayer “Fajr”, Feast prayer “Eid” or the Friday prayer “Jumu'a”, the worshipper sits after the second prostration, with his right foot erect, sitting on his left foot laid down, putting his right hand on his right thigh, all his fingers close-fisted save the index finger which he uses to point out as a sign for his monotheistic belief, and his left hand is put on his left thigh. There is nothing in the way, if the worshipper keeps both the little and ring fingers closed, while rounding his thumb and middle finger in a ring shape, and uses his index finger to point out as a sign for his monotheistic belief. It has been related that the prophet, (May peace and blessings of Allah be unto him) had practised both of the ways, thus, it is advisable for the worshipper to perform the first way once and the other on the second time. The worshipper should ask his Lord for prosperity both in this worldly life and in the Hereafter. Whether it is an obligatory prayer or an

optional prayer. The worshipper reads the Tashahud while sitting and says: **“Al-tahiyatu lilahi wasalawatu watayibatu Assalamu alayka ayuha-n-nabiyu wa rahmat-u-llahi wa barakaatuh. Assalamu alayna wa ala ibadi-l-lahi salalihiyn. Ashadu ala ilaha ila lahu wa ashadu anna Muhammadan andoho wa raswuloh. Allahuma sally ala Muhammad wa ala aali Muhamad, kama salayata ala Ibrahim wa aali Ibrahim. Innaka hamidon Majid. Wa barik ala Mohammad wa ala aali Muhammad kama barkta ala Ibrahim wa aali Ibrahim. Inaka Hamidon Majid.”**

Which means:

“Greetings, prayers and the good things of life belong to Allah. Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be on you, O Prophet. May peace be upon us and on the devout slaves of Allah. I testify that there is no god but Allah and I testify that Mohammad is His slave and messenger. O Allah, bless Muhammad and his family as You blessed Ibrahim and his family. You are the most-Praised, the Most glorious. O Allah, bestow Your grace on Muhammad and his family as You bestowed it on Ibrahim and his family. You are the Most-Praised, the Most-Glorious.”

After reciting the Tashahud, the worshipper asks Allah's protection from four evils, he should say:

“My Lord, I ask Your protection from torment of the Hell, torment of the grave the trials in life-time and after death, and from the imposter Antichrist.”

The worshipper may ask Allah for prosperity in this worldly life and in the hereafter, supplicate Allah to bestow His favours on his parents and other Muslims. He could do this in both obligatory and optional prayers. It has been reported by Ibn Massoud that the prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be unto him) taught him how to recite the Tashahud and told him that the worshipper should invoke Allah and ask Him for the more beloved wishes which he likes, or as it has been related in other wordings, the worshipper should ask Allah for whatever he wishes. In this manner, the servant can ask Allah for all the prosperities of this worldly life and the life to come. The worshipper terminates his prayer by turning his face to the right saying:

“Assalamu alai kum wa rahmatu Allah”

and to the left saying this salutation which means “Peace and mercy be on you”

14. In case of a three Rakaat prayer (prayer consisting of three units) as that of Maghrib prayer, (evening prayer), or a four Rakaat prayer like that of noon prayer (Zuhr), Asr prayer (late afternoon prayer) or Isha prayer (night prayer), the worshipper stands up after reciting the Tashahud according to the manner stated before, and raises his hands up to the level of his shoulder saying Allahu Akbar. The worshipper puts his hands over his chest as it had been explained before, and recites only the Fatiha. There is no objection if he adds to the Fatiha some other verses of the Qur'an while performing the third or fourth Rakaat (units of prayer) of noon prayer (Zuhr), because this was stated to be one of the manners adopted by the prophet (May peace and blessings of Allah be unto him) according to the tradition reported by Abi Saied. After the third Rakaat of Maghrib prayer (evening prayer), and the fourth Rakaat of Zuhr (noon), Asr (afternoon) and Isha (night) prayers, the worshippers recites the Tashahud and terminates his prayer by saying: **“Assalamu-alaikum wa rahmatu Allah”** While turning first to the right, and second to the left as it has been explained before. It is not an obligatory duty, but it is a recommendable prophetic tradition to invoke Allah after terminating the prayer by asking Him forgiveness thrice and saying before turning one's face towards his followers if

he is the imam:

“O Allah, thou art peace and from Thee is peace, Thou art blessed, O possessor of WALAHUL HAMD WA HUA ALAA KULLLI SHAIN QADIR. Glory and Honour.”

It is also advisable to the worshipper to extol Allah 33 times by saying

“Subhaan Allah”

Praise Him by saying

“Al hamdulillah”

33 times also by saying

“Allahu Akbar”

and the worshipper completes his supplications to be one hundred by saying once:

**LAA ILAHA ILLA LLAH WAHDAHU LAA SHRIKA LAHU LAHUL MULK WA LAHUL HAMD,
WAHUA ALAA KULLLI SHAI`IN QADI**