

Cultivating young Hearts on the Fertile soils of Islam

شروط الصلاة

The Conditions of the Prayer¹

Lesson 2

Now that we have a good understanding of the word **شَرَط**, let us now study the first **شَرَط** for the prayer.

دُخُولُ الْوَقْتِ - the entrance time for the prayer

This is the first condition (**الشَّرْطُ الْأَوَّلُ**) of the prayer from the **شُرُوطُ الصَّلَاةِ**. The evidence from the Book of Allah (**كِتَابُ اللَّهِ**) for time (**وَقْتٌ**) being a condition for the validity of the prayer is Allah's statement:

¹ Compiled by Abu Ameenah AbdurRahman Bennett.

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا ۝۱۳

Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at **fixed hours**.

[An Nisaa' 103]

This verse clearly teaches us that the five daily prayers (الصَّلَاةُ الْخَمْسُ) were enjoined on the believers at fixed times. Allah also says in His Mighty Book,

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى عَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنِ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا ۝۷۸

Perform the prayer from **mid-day till the darkness of the night** (i.e. the Zuhr, 'Asr, Maghrib, and 'Ishâ' prayers), and **recite the Qur'an in the early dawn** (i.e. the Morning Prayer).

[Al Israa' 78]

Even though this verse does not mention the five daily prayers (الصَّلَاةُ الْخَمْسُ) by name, it does mention the time frame that includes all the five prayers.

As for the evidences from the Sunnah for the entrance of time being a condition of the prayer then we have the hadith of Abdullah ibn Amr who said that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

إِذَا صَلَّىتُمْ الْفَجْرَ فَإِنَّهُ وَقْتُ إِلَى أَنْ يَطْلُعَ قَرْنُ الشَّمْسِ الْأَوَّلُ ثُمَّ إِذَا صَلَّىتُمْ الظُّهْرَ فَإِنَّهُ وَقْتُ إِلَى أَنْ يَحْضُرَ الْعَصْرُ فَإِذَا صَلَّىتُمْ الْعَصْرَ فَإِنَّهُ وَقْتُ إِلَى أَنْ تَصْفَرَ الشَّمْسُ فَإِذَا صَلَّىتُمْ الْمَغْرِبَ فَإِنَّهُ وَقْتُ إِلَى أَنْ يَسْقُطَ الشَّفَقُ فَإِذَا صَلَّىتُمْ الْعِشَاءَ فَإِنَّهُ وَقْتُ إِلَى نِصْفِ اللَّيْلِ

When you pray **Fajr**, its time is until the first horn of the sun appears (i.e., until it begins to appear over the horizon). When you pray **Zuhr**, its time is until '**Asr** comes. When you pray 'Asr, its time is until the sun becomes yellow. When you pray **Maghrib**, its time is until the reddish glow disappears. When you pray '**Ishaa**', its time is until midnight.²

² Saheeh Muslim (612).

Not only does this hadith mention **الصَّلَاةُ الْخَمْسُ** by name, it also teaches us the beginning and end times for each prayer.

What happens if we pray one of **الصَّلَاةُ الْخَمْسُ** before its entrance time? Prayer offered before its time is **invalid** by scholarly consensus (**الإجماع**). If someone intentionally prays before its time of entry, his prayer is not only **invalid**, he has also fallen into sin. If, however, he prayed it thinking that the time had entered then he is not sinful and his prayer is recorded as voluntary prayer, but he must repeat his prayer because from the conditions of the prayer is its entry time (**دُخُولُ الْوَقْتِ**).

Can we pray after the time of a prayer has gone out? We can pray a specific prayer after its time has gone out as long as we have a valid excuse to do so. This is based on the hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ) who said,

فَإِذَا نَسِيَ أَحَدُكُمْ صَلَاةً أَوْ نَامَ عَنْهَا فَلْيُصَلِّهَا إِذَا ذَكَرَهَا

If any one of you forgets a prayer or sleeps and misses it, let him pray it when he remembers it.³

It is also authentically established that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed the Fajr prayer (**صَلَاةُ الْفَجْرِ**) after the sun had risen.

So the prayer offered before its time is not valid, but the prayer offered after its time remains valid as long as he had a valid excuse, such as, forgetfulness, sleeping or he had to delay it due to necessity.

What happens if someone delays his prayer without any valid excuse beyond its time? The majority of the scholars are of the view that the prayer remains valid but the person is sinful. Some scholars, however, believe that if he intentionally offers his prayer after its time without a valid excuse, his prayer is invalid even if he prayed it a thousand times! They say that this is because the evidences have determined its time, and so if a person

³ Sunan an-Nasaa'i (616).

purposely prays his prayer after its time, he has not fulfilled the command of Allah. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُنَا فَهُوَ رَدٌّ.

Whoever does an action that is not in accordance with this affair of ours then it will be rejected.⁴

So they argue, based on these clear words of the Prophet (ﷺ), his prayer is rejected because he intentionally prayed it after its time.

⁴ Saheeh Muslim (1718).

Answer the following questions:

1. What is **الشَّرْطُ الْأَوَّلُ** (the first condition of the prayer)?
2. Can you quote an evidence from the Book of Allah for **الشَّرْطُ الْأَوَّلُ** (the first condition of the prayer)?
3. Can you quote an evidence from the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger for **الشَّرْطُ الْأَوَّلُ** (the first condition of the prayer)?
4. What happens if we pray **الصَّلَوَاتُ الْخَمْسُ** (the five daily prayers) before their entrance time?
5. Can we pray after the time of a prayer has gone out? Quote an evidence to validate your answer.
6. What happens if someone delays his prayer without any valid excuse beyond its time?