



The Place of the Imaam When Two are Praying

Prepared by the Sunnah Publishing Editorial Staff

Version 1.0

Imaam al-Bukhaaree (d.256H) – *rahimahullaah* – has a chapter in his *Saheeh* entitled, “Chapter: He must stand at the right of the Imaam in line with him if they are two.” (*Baab: Yaqoomu 'an yameenihil-Imaam bi hidhaa'ih sawaa' idhaa kaanaa ithnayn*).

Within this chapter, Imaam al-Bukhaaree mentions the *hadeeth* of 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Abbaas (*radiyallaahu 'anh*) who said, “I stayed overnight at the house of my maternal aunt Maymoonah, and the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) prayed 'Ishaa', then he came and prayed four *raka'aat* (units), then he slept, then he got up and I came and stood at his left, but he put me at his right and prayed four *raka'aat*, then two *raka'aat*, then he fell asleep and I heard his snoring. Then he went out for the Prayer.”

Additionally, Ibn 'Abbaas (*radiyallaahu 'anh*) also said, “I came to the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) at the end of the night and prayed behind him. He pulled me until I was in line with him, and when the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) turned back to his Prayer, I went back to my original position behind him. The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) prayed, and when he had finished his prayer he said to me, “What is with you? I made you stand in line with me and you moved back.” I said, “O Messenger of Allaah, is it right for anyone to pray alongside you when you are the Messenger of Allaah whom Allaah has blessed?” He liked what I said and prayed that Allaah would increase me in knowledge and understanding.”¹

Imaam Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee (d.1420H) – *rahimahullaah* – commented upon this *hadeeth* saying, “From this *hadeeth* we have understood that the *Sunnah* is when one man is praying alone following the Imaam, that he must stand alongside him at his right, not in front of him or behind him. This is the *madhhab* of the *Hanaabilah*, as stated in *Manaarus-Sabeel* (1/128).”²

¹ **Saheeh:** Related by Ahmad in *al-Musnad* (1/330), and it was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *Silsilatus-Saheehah* (no. 6060).

² Refer to *Silsilatus-Saheehah* (no. 6060) of al-Albaanee.

And al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr (d.852H) said, “Some of them narrated that there was a scholarly consensus that one person praying alone with the Imaam should stand to the right of the Imaam.”³

³ Refer to *Fathul-Baaree* (2/191) of Ibn Hajr.