

---

THE SHĀFI'Ī MANUAL OF  
PURITY, PRAYER & FASTING

---

Tashfeen Ekram



*White Thread*

P R E S S

LONDON 2014

---

# Contents

<b>Preface</b>	11
The Shāfiʿī School	12
<b>Purification (<i>Tahāra</i>)</b>	13
Water	13
Filth ( <i>Najāsa</i> )	14
Closing Points	16
Ablution ( <i>Wuḍūʿ</i> )	16
Step-by-Step Procedure for Ablution	19
Closing Points	20
Things Necessitating Ablution	20
Female Relatives Not Invalidating Ablution	21
Female Relatives Invalidating Ablution	22
Male Relatives Not Invalidating Ablution	22
Male Relatives Invalidating Ablution	22
Closing Points	23
Ritual Bath ( <i>Ghusl</i> )	23
Step-by-Step Procedure of the Ritual Bath	24
What Necessitates Ritual Bath	24
<b>The Prayer (<i>Ṣalāt</i>)</b>	27
What Obligates Prayer	27
Conditions for Prayer	29
Integrals of Prayer	30
Step-by-Step Description of the Prayer	31
Differences Between Men and Women in Prayer	33

Things that Invalidate Prayer ( <i>Nawāqid</i> )	33
Main Recommended Acts in Prayer	34
Additional Recommended Acts of Prayer	35
<i>Rak'as</i> of the Obligatory Prayers	37
Recommended Prayers	37
Prohibited Times of Prayer	38
Things that Are Disliked in Prayer ( <i>Makrūhāt</i> )	38
<b>Fasting (<i>Ṣawm</i>)</b>	41
What Obligates Fasting	41
Integrals of Fasting	42
Acts that Nullify the Fast	42
Acts that Do Not Nullify the Fast	43
Recommended Acts while Fasting	44
Dispensations for Not Fasting	45
Making Up Fasts	46
Closing Points	46
<b>Conclusion</b>	47
<b>Faith</b>	49
Allāh Most High	49
Personal Attribute	50
Affirmative Attributes	50
Negating Attributes	50
Prophets	51
Books	51
Angels	52
Last Day	52
Destiny	52
<i>Appendix (Selected Prayers &amp; Sūras)</i>	53
Purification	53
Prayer	54
Short <i>Sūras</i>	55
Other Invocations	56

---

# Preface



The purpose of this brief work is to provide the essentials of praying and fasting validly according to the Shāfi‘ī school of law. This book is ideal for those without any prior knowledge of what is required for prayer and fasting, covering everything one needs to ensure that one is praying and fasting in a valid manner. The Prophet ﷺ mentions that “Seeking knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim” (*Tirmidhī*). Although many of us who were born Muslims learned to pray from our parents, perhaps by watching them, it is important to read through a text similar to this one to ensure the essentials of prayer have been covered. While prayer is not meant to be a difficult task, it does require learning even if you have been praying your entire life. It is not something that can be inherently learned but must be studied. This was the way of the Companions with the Prophet ﷺ. The goal of prayer is to have personal and direct communication with our Lord. However, in order to have this communication, we need to learn the rules by which our Lord would like to be addressed. This is similar to when you give a talk at work or school. There are expectations of what should be the dress code, the length of the talk, the type of language used, etc., which may be defined by your boss or teacher. Similarly, our Lord has set rules of how we should address Him in a manner befitting His Greatness.

## The Shāfi'ī School

The rulings of purity, prayer, and fasting presented here are according to the Shāfi'ī school and its understanding of the primary sources, mainly the Qur'ān and the Sunna. The Prophet ﷺ commanded: “Pray like you see me pray” (*Bukhārī*). However, the varied Qur'ānic verses and ḥadīths relating to prayer make it practically difficult to determine the rulings on our own. It is a great blessing that scholars of the four schools (Mālikī, Ḥanafī, Shāfi'ī, and Ḥanbalī) have studied the primary sources and formulated simple rules for us to follow. Similar to the other schools, the rulings of the Shāfi'ī school are not the work of one individual, Imām Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī, even though the school is named after him. The rulings are the work of generations of subsequent scholars who analyzed the work of their predecessors and refined them. The rulings mentioned in this work have gone through thorough verification over the generations to ensure that they were grounded in the primary sources. In this regard, a brief mention of the relevant verses of the Qur'ān and ḥadīth have been provided here for some rulings in the ablution and prayer sections. Rulings are rarely based on just one piece of evidence. However, the proofs presented are to help assure the readers that they are indeed following the way of our beloved Prophet ﷺ.

## Conditions for Prayer

A condition (*shart*, pl. *shurūṭ*) is defined as an external factor required for the prayer but that is not part of the prayer. There are five conditions.

1. Purity from major and minor ritual impurity.<sup>15</sup>
2. Purity from filth on one's body, clothes, and the part of the ground that one comes into direct contact with while praying.
3. Facing the *qibla*—One must make their best effort at facing the *qibla* with as little deviation possible. Facing the *qibla* is done with one's chest. Thus, turning only one's face or lower torso away from the *qibla* would not invalidate one's prayer.<sup>16</sup>
4. Entrance of the time—For the five obligatory prayers, one must begin the prayer within the time of the prayer. Prayer times are based on the positioning of the sun.<sup>17</sup> One can rely on prayer timetables generated by reliable sources such as their local mosques or [islamicfinder.com](http://islamicfinder.com).<sup>18</sup>
5. Covering one's body—For men, everything between the navel and knees must be covered. In order to ensure this area is covered, a small portion of both the navel and knees also needs to

---

<sup>15</sup> A ḥadīth states, “Allāh only accepts a prayer done in a state of purity” (*Muslim, Tirmidhī, Ibn Māja*).

<sup>16</sup> As long as it would not be considered a significant movement as discussed below.

<sup>17</sup> Fajr time enters at the break of dawn when whiteness spreads along the horizon from the rising sun. Fajr time ends once the top edge of the sun is above the horizon. Zuhr time enters when the sun is at its zenith and ends once ‘aṣr enters. The start of ‘aṣr time is when the shadow of an object is the same length as the object plus the length of its shadow at noon. ‘Aṣr time ends with the starting of maghrib once the sun has completely set. Maghrib time ends with the beginning of ‘Ishā’ time. ‘Ishā’ begins once the redness in the horizon from the sun has disappeared and all that remains is the yellowness and whiteness. ‘Ishā’ ends with the start of fajr.

<sup>18</sup> One should take care to use the eighteen degree calculation for the start of fajr for fasting as this is more reliable and precautionary for the sake of fasting. Most prayer timetables distributed in the West list a start time for fajr later than this.

be covered. For women, everything except the hands including the wrist bone and the face must be covered. The boundaries of the face are exactly the same as described in the ablution section.

### Integrals of Prayer

An integral (*rukʿn*, pl. *arkān*) is that which is a required component of the prayer. If it is left out, the prayer is invalid and must be repeated. Some of the integrals are required in every *rakʿa* of the prayer. The following is a list of all of the integrals of the prayer, followed by a description of the prayer along with the recommended acts. The associated supplications (*dhikr*, pl. *adhkār*) with each posture of the prayer can be found in the appendix.

1. Intention—As discussed earlier, the place of the intention is in the heart and it need not be uttered. You must intend that you are praying, which prayer you are praying, and whether it is obligatory or not. For example, for the obligatory maghrib prayer, you intend the obligation of maghrib prayer. The intention must coincide with the beginning of your prayer. The beginning of the prayer is the opening *takbīr*. Thus, during the *takbīr*, you must make this intention.
2. Opening *takbīr*—To begin the prayer, *Allāhu akbar* is said. Care should be taken to pronounce each letter without any change.
3. Recitation of the Fātiḥa—The entire first chapter of the Qurʾān called the Fātiḥa, including the *basmala* before it, must be recited in each unit of the prayer, even when being led in prayer.
4. Bowing (*rukūʿ*)—Following the recitation, you must bow such that the palms of your hands could reach your knees. You must pause in this position, even if for just a short moment.

5. Standing (*qiyām*)—Following the bowing, you must stand straight and pause in this position, even if for only a moment.
6. First prostration (*sajda*)—Next, prostrate such that your bare forehead touches the ground. You need to place both hands flat on the ground with your knees touching the ground and the bottom parts of the toes also touching the ground. You should pause in this position even if only for a moment.
7. Sitting—You then rise from prostration to the seated position, which is defined as placing your weight on your rear end, whether directly on the ground or on your legs folded underneath. You should pause in this position even if for a moment.
8. Second prostration—This is identical to the first prostration.
9. Recitation of the testification of faith (*tashahhud*)—This must be recited in the final sitting.
10. Invoking blessings on the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ—The blessing must be recited in the final sitting.
11. Ending salutations—The prayer is ended by saying *As-salāmu ʿalaykum*.
12. Order—The aforementioned order must be observed. If an integral is mistakenly skipped, then you must immediately return to it and then proceed to perform it and all the integrals that follow.

### Step-by-Step Description of the Prayer

Here is a step-by-step description of the prayer, including the important recommended acts.