



The Significance and the Role of Juma'at Prayer and Its Sermon (Al-Kutdba) in Inculcating Good Moral Conducts to the Muslim Ummuh

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to examine the significance of the Juma'at prayer to the Muslim community. Juma'at prayer is highly emphasized in Islam to the extent that anyone who abscond it for a three consecutive times is even considered to have left the religion of Islam behind. Because of its significance, all people around the town where the Juma'at prayer is being observed are compelled to participate to the prayer. Moreover, the Almighty Allah in order to tell us how important the Juma'at prayer is, He even reveled a whole verse of the Glorious Qur'an and named the verse after the this prayer that (Surat al-Jumu'ah); in this verse, many of the main functions of the Juma'at prayer are indicated while the remaining details of that are left for the traditions of the Prophet and the commentary of the scholars of the Islamic jurisprudence (the Islamic Fiqh).

Keywords: *Juma'at, Prayer, Significance, Sermon and Moral.*

Introduction

Prayer or *Salat* is one of the five pillars of Islam, in fact the second most important one after the word of proclamation (Kalimat al-Shahada). The prophet peace be upon him in an

authentic narration said: "Islam is established upon five pillars: To bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah,

and to establish the prayer (Salat), and giving out the poor dues (Zakat) and to fast the duration of ramadhan, and to perform the pilgrimage (Hajj). This hadith is reported by both Bukhari and Muslim. Furthermore, the five daily prayer namely; al-Subh, al-Zuhur, al-Asr, al-Maghrib and al-Isha' are a special consideration and emphases in Islam as Allah the Almighty in the Glorious Qur'an has enjoyed Muslims in a number of verses to establish the prayer. And establish the prayer and pay out zakat (Qur'an, 2:43). In another verse, the Almighty Allah says: Surely the prayer has a stipulated time for the believers. (Qur'an,4:103).

The Prophet peace be upon him in one of his tradition, indicated that, on the day of judgment, prayer is number one thing to be investigated; if found to be good, all other acts of worship will be marked as good And if found to be bad, all the remaining acts of worship will marked as bad. (Ahmad)

So, based on the above account, prayer should never be neglected in any situation one found himself in. Islamic scholars maintained that a person must pray in whatever condition, so long as he is sensibly conscious. Juma'at prayer replaces one of these five daily prayers in a week base, it therefore carries the same weight like the other compulsory prayers and even more hevir than the remaining ones because it is a weekly congregation that joins Muslims from different areas of a stipulated proximity as dictated by Islamic law. More so, it contains some features that are not there in the other daily prayers, like the sermon where the participants are called upon to the remembrance of their Creator the Almighty Allah and His commandments upon them. The Prophet peace be upon him says: "Between the each of the five daily prayers and between a Friday and another Friday, is an expiation for the sins committed within those intervals so long as the person has avoid major sins. (Muslim)

THE ORIGIN OF JUMA'AT PRAYER.

All Islamic injunctions and rituals activities (Ibadat) took a gradual development during the life time of the Prophet peace and blessing of Allah be upon him. The prayer in general was given and declared to be compulsory on the *ummah* of the Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be upon him during his miraculous night journey (al-Isra' wa la-Mi'raj). Allah the Almighty says: "Glory is He who made a night journey with his servant from the holy mosque to the mosque of al-Aqsa (in the heaven) in order to show him among his signs. (Qur'an, 16:1). A popular hadith of *Isra' and Mi'raj* was narrated by Imam Muslim as follows: "The Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be upon him says: Allah has made compulsory upon my nation fifty prayer (a day), he said I returned with that until I made prophet

Musa; he asked me what did your lord tasked your people with? I said: “He tasked them with fifty prayers”. Then Musa peace be upon him said to me that “your people cannot afford it, go back to your lord and asked him reduce it for your people” . Then I went back to my lord and He took away half of the it. He said “When I came back, I informed Prophet Musa about the development, he said: “go back to your lord because your people cannot afford it. He said “I went back to my lord and lodged the complain again, then He said: “they are now five and are equal to fifty... (in reward) (Bukhari). The above hadith is an indication of the origin of the prayer (salat) and the exact period when the prayer was made to be a compulsory duty of *ibadah*.

THE IMPORTANCE OF JUMA’AT PRAYER.

Juma’at prayer is a very unique one and a very important one in the life of the Muslim community. Juma’at prayer is compulsory prayer based on the evidences from the Glorious Qur’an and prophetic traditions and the consensus of the Muslims scholars. Allah the Almighty says: “Oh! You who believe when it is called form prayer on the Juma’at day, you walk to the remembrance of Allah and live away your business” (Qur’an, 62:9). Almost all the scholars of *Tafsir* are on the view that this verse is a clear evidence which established that Juma’at prayer is compulsory upon every Muslim on an individual capacity (fard ainin). Moreover, the Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be upon him in many traditions, has asserted the same emphasis on the compulsory position of the Juma’at prayer upon his *Ummah* with the exception of a very few individuals with special considerations as that will soon be discussed in the relevant area of this write up.

Before coming to the traditions of the Prophet peace be upon him, I will like to first present some views of some prominent Muslims scholars on the issue as follows: Immam al-Nawawi say: “Juma’at prayer is compulsory because of this verse; “And when it is called for the prayer on he Juma’at day...” (ibid). And also because of the saying of the Prophet peace be upon; “Juma’at prayer is compulsory upon every Muslim with the exception of four people: A slave, a woman, an underage and a sick person”. However, Imam al-Shaukani says: “the traditions of the Prophet that talk about the Juma’at prayer have been used to prove that Juma’at prayer is compulsory upon every Muslim as an individual”. Now among the numerous traditions of the Prophet that established the significance to the Juma’at prayer are as follows: the Prophet says in one of his tradition which is narrated by “Observance of five daily prayers and the Juma’at prayer to another Juma’at prayer and Ramadhan to another Ramadhan is expiation for the sins committed in between so long as the capital sins are avoided. (Muslim).

The above evidences are quit enough for one to be convinced that observance of Juma’at prayer a compulsory act of worship upon each and every individual with the above mentioned exceptions.

THE CONDITIONS FOR JUMA'AT PRAYER

Juma'at prayer like any other act of *Ibadah* or ritual act, it has some conditions attached to it. The fulfillment of such conditions or otherwise is what will make the prayer to be valid or invalidated. Muslim jurists and scholars have extracted those conditions mainly from the traditions of the Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be on him and the verses of the Glorious Qur'an. there are some eight conditions identified by scholars as what will make the Juma'at prayer to be compulsory upon a person as an individual as follows:

- a. ISLAM. One has to be a Muslim first before the Juma'at prayer shall be considered compulsory upon him or even to be accepted: this is because all acts of Islamic rituals shall never be accepted by Allah unless the person who do the act is a Muslim; Islam is therefore a precondition for validation of any act of worship in Islam. Allah the Almighty says: *Those who believed and do not mix their believe with any thing. (Qur'an,4: 88)*
- b. BULUGH (that is the attainment of the age of puberty). This condition is because according to the teaching of Islam, a person shall never be responsible until he or she has attained puberty; that is when one shall be Islamically responsible and all compulsory acts of worship as according to the dictate of Islamic law shall be considered mandatory upon him or her. The Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be upon him had the following to say: "Sleeping person, a child who is bellow the puberty age and a mad person, all are not responsible when in their stated conditions" (Ahmad).
- c. AQL (Sense). The state of sensibility or consciousness is another condition that must be there for the Jma'at prayer to be considered as a compulsory act of responsibility upon an individual. The above condition is based on the previous tradition of the Prophet peace be upon him of which part says that a mad person shall not be responsible in Islam until he has regained his sense or consciousness.
- d. DHUKURIYYAH (To be a male). For one to be a male is another principal condition for the attendance of the juma'at prayer to be considered as a compulsory act of worship in Islam. Ibn al-Mundhir in his book titled *al-Ijma'* had noted that Muslim scholars had unanimously agreed that observing juma'at prayer is not compulsory upon women. The above assertion simply means that women are only allowed to attend juma'at prayer not on the basis of being compulsory but as a simple permission, unlike their male counterparts to whom its attendance is compulsory in the presence of other prescribed conditions and the absence of all impediments.
- e. AL-HURIYYAH (Freedom). Attendance of juma'at prayer is not considered compulsory upon a slave. It is reported that the prophet peace and blessings of Allah be on him have said that "Observing the juma'at prayer is necessary on every Muslim with the exception of four; a slave, a women, a child and a sick person".

- f. Al-Istidan (Normal settlement). Juma'at prayer is only compulsory on normal settlements; therefore, people or communities on temporary settlements are not mandated to observe juma'at prayer. Thus, permanent settlement is considered whether it is a big town or village but it has to a normal and permanent one. Therefore, nomadic settlements, people on traveling camps and any other abnormal settlement are all exempted from observing juma'at prayer as a compulsory act of worship. The consideration is on a collective basis. However, any person who has become a traveler is also exempted from observing juma'at prayer as a compulsory. It is reliably narrated that the Prophet throughout his journeys, he had never observed juma'at prayer in any of them, in spite of the fact that he had embarked on several number of journeys which include the ones he made for the purpose of pilgrimage and some for the purpose of wars he fought during his life.
- مسلم كتاب الحج باب حجة النبي
- g. SIMA' AL-NIDA'I (Hearing of the calling for prayer). Possibility to hear the calling for the prayer (al-Azan), is another condition which makes to participation a compulsory one, but one important thing to be noted here is that this condition is only applicable on the communities who live in away from the main town or village where the prayer is observed; for them, if their houses are far away such that the sound of calling for the prayer cannot reach them, then it is not compulsory on them. But for the other communities who live inside the town where the prayer is being observed, the above condition shall not be applicable on them; whether they can hear the *Azan* or not they must make their own necessary arrangement to attend the prayer. Allah the Almighty says: "When the call for prayer is declared on the day of Jumu'ah, you should walk toward the remembrance of the Almighty Allah (that is the Juma'at prayer)" (Qur'an,62:9).
- h. IINTIFA'U AL-A'DHAR (Absence of other impediments). If all the above mentioned conditions are fulfilled, then attendance of juma'at prayer becomes compulsory upon a one but in the absence of other permissible justifications that can legally warrant for somebody to abscond himself from its participation. These justifications may include sickness, insecurity, rainfall and any other obstacle.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE JUMA'AT SERMON

As an essential part of the Juma'at prayer, the *khudubah* or the sermon delivered in respect of Juma'at prayer has its own characteristics and main features; following are some of the main features of it.

- a. Saying of thanks to Allah the Almighty. Muslim scholars have opined that in delivering the Juma'at sermon, the speaking or the *Imam* must include

as its part the expression of gratitude to Allah for all bounties and favors he has given us.

- b. Salutation to the noble prophet, that is to recite any authenticated form of *salat* or salutation for the Prophet may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.
- c. The *khudba* must include a call for the fear of the Almighty Allah. Allah says in the Glorious Qur'an: "And surely, we have implored those who wear given the book before you and you that you should fear Allah... (Qur'an, 4:131).
- d. Recitation from the Glorious Qur'an. Muslim jurists are on the view that the Juma'at sermon must include some verses from the Qur'an to be recited during the process of delivering the sermon. However, according to the scholars, the verses to be read in the *khudba* should be relevant to the topic of the sermon so that they can serve as supportive evidences to what is being stated in the sermon.
- e. Another basic component of the sermon which should never be omitted in it is prayer for the faithful Muslims. Some part of the sermon should be dedicated for the prayer for good Muslims; the *Imam* in delivering the sermon, is strongly expected to take some time to pray for prosperity of the Muslim *Ummah* and their success both in this world and beyond. Allah says: "And they say our lord, forgive us and our brethren who have passed before us. (Qur'an, 59:10). It is also recommended that people with special needs should be considered for prayer in the sermon. Special instances such as natural outbreaks, war conditions and other similar situations, all these are expected to be covered in prayer during the sermon of Juma'at prayer.
- f. Prayer for leaders. A special prayer should also be offered inside the sermon for the success, Allah's guidance and prosperity of the political and spiritual leaders. Above are some of the characteristics of Juma'at sermon.

THE QUALITIES OF THE IMAM OF THE JUMA'AT PRAYER

Imam simply means a leader but here this term refers to the person who leads the prayer (Salah). The Imam is the centre point of the prayer, because he is one who leads the other members through the prayer from its beginning to its end. Thus, any congregational prayer (Salat al-Jama'ah) cannot take place without an Imam; he is the one to be followed in a step by step process by his followers in the prayer. The Prophet peace be upon him says: "Imam is appointed for you to follow him in the prayer. (Malik).

As that being the case, there must be some qualities for the person who shall be due for leading the prayer and most especially the Juma'at prayer. Muslim scholars have identified things that should be the qualities of the Imam as follows:

- a. **Full knowledge of the prayer:** The Imam of the prayer should be a knowledgeable person enough particularly in the area of knowledge which is having much with the prayer; he should be able to know the entire practical and the technical aspect of the prayer. He should have the knowledge of the conditions of the prayer, the importance of the prayer, obligatory and non obligatory acts of the prayer, things that nullify the prayer, remedy to problems that infrequently occur in the prayer (Sujud al-Sahwi). To summarize this up is to say that the Imam must be a capable person who can provide solutions to different problems that may occur during the prayer and can also guide his followers on how to pray correctly according to the teaching of the Prophet peace be upon him.
- b. **Knowledge of the sermon (Khudbah):** The Imam who leads the Juma'at prayer must in addition to the above mentioned condition, also has a good knowledge of the Khudbah; that he should know all about the conditions, obligations, nature and the characteristics of an accepted Juma'at sermon (Khudba).
- c. **Fluency in Arabic Language:** The person in charge of leading juma'at prayer is expected good command of Arabic language, because the sermon is always delivered in Arabic language and in addition, all the books of references from where he is expected to read more about the rules and the regulations of the prayer are written in Arabic language, however, it is not expected that the Imam should wait for somebody else from somewhere to prepare the sermon for him. It is also quite unacceptable for the Imam to be reading something he doesn't understand its meaning; this happened when he cannot speak the Arabic language.
- d. **Good personality:** The Imam of the juma'at prayer is among the recognized leaders in his community. The Imam is considered as a father, guardian, a judge and so on. Thus, the Imam should be a good person with good characters who always maintained a very high level of moral conducts worthy of emulation by his followers. Allah the Almighty says about about the Prophet peace be on him: *أسوة* thus, every Imam in his community is a replica of the prophet in terms of offering guidance to Allah.
- e. **Acceptance to the community:** The Imam of the juma'at prayer should be a well accepted person by the community to whom he offers this spiritual service. Therefore, the people responsible for the appointment of the Imam should have the fear of Allah in appointing acceptable persons on this important divine responsibility; moreover, they should avoid imposing Imams on the followers. However, it is very unfortunate that in some cases some people impose themselves as Imams of some mosques, even when

more than half of the followers are not happy with them as the Imams in the mosques but they will still insist to be, just further cause a lot of conflicts between Muslim Ummah.

LISTENING TO THE JUMA'AT SERMON

(Al-Khudba) that is the sermon is a very essential part in the juma'at prayer, the majority of the Muslim scholars believed that the sermon is a condition in the prayer; that if a juma'at prayer is offered without the Khudba, then the prayer is null and void. Furthermore, listening to the sermon is compulsory upon the participants of the prayer. The Prophet peace be on him says:

CONCLUSION

Juma'at prayer is an important act of worship in Islam, it come every week and is considered a compulsory upon every individual Muslim who is a mature one and is sensible. Juma'at prayer is a direct replacement of one of the five daily prayers we regularly observe and that is the Zuhur prayer. A Muslim is not expected to deliberately abscond himself from attending the Juma;at prayer so long as he is healthy and has no any legal rescues for him to abscond from it. The sermon or khudba is one the compulsory components of the Juma'at prayer; the Imam is to deliver this sermon before the congregation of the attendants shortly before he lead the prayer. It however a compulsory for the participants to listen to the khudba attentively as any misbehavior at that point may lead to the nullification of the person's prayer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As we realized through this research that, prayer is the most important act of ibadah or worship in Islam, there is need for the intensification of efforts to teach particularly the young Muslims about the importance of this act of worship. Therefore, more researches are needed on this area.

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