

119576 - Ruling on lifting the gaze to heaven when offering supplication (du`a) following the prayer

the question

What is the ruling on looking to the sky when offering supplication (du`a) following the obligatory prayer?

Detailed answer

Du`a after the obligatory prayer, if it is always done raising the hands, or is recited by everyone in unison, or the imam says du`a and the people behind him say Ameen, is something for which there is no basis, and it comes under the heading of innovations (bid'ah) that are widespread nowadays. If it is free of these things, then there is nothing wrong with it, because it is proven that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) offered du`a before the salaam at the end of the prayer and after it.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were asked: Is offering du`a after the obligatory prayer Sunnah? Should the du`a be accompanied by raising the hands? Is raising the hands with the imam better, or not?

They replied:

Du`a after the obligatory prayer is not Sunnah if that is done raising the hands, whether that is done by the imam on his own, or the individual worshipper on his own, or by both of them. Rather it is an innovation (bid'ah), because that is not reported from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) or from any of his Companions (may Allah be pleased with them). As for offering du`a without that, there is nothing wrong with it, because there are some hadeeths that speak of that. End quote.

Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Daa'imah (7/103)

They also said: Saying du`a out loud following the five daily prayers and the regular Sunnah prayers, or offering du`a in a communal fashion on a regular basis is a reprehensible innovation, because no such thing is proven in reports from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) or from his Companions (may Allah be pleased with them).

End quote from Fatawa Islamiyyah (1/319).

See also the answer to question no. [26279](#)

Secondly:

Concerning the prohibition on the worshipper lifting his gaze to heaven, there is the report that was narrated by al-Bukhari (750) from Anas ibn Maalik (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “What is the matter with people who lift their gaze to heaven whilst praying?” And he spoke sternly concerning that, until he said: “They should stop that, or else their eyesight will be snatched away”

The reason for that is that lifting the gaze whilst praying is contrary to proper focus (khushoo‘), and it exposes the worshipper to the risk of being distracted by what he sees.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Because lifting the gaze to heaven is contrary to proper focus (khushoo‘), the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) stated that it is haraam and warned against it.

End quote from al-Qawaa'id an-Nooraaniyyah, p. 46

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: The words “and lifting his gaze to heaven” mean it is makrooh (disliked) to lift one’s gaze to heaven whilst praying, whether that is when one is reciting, or when one is bowing, or when one is rising from bowing, or at any stage in the prayer, based on both evidence and reasoning. With regard to the evidence, that is because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “People should stop lifting their gaze to heaven whilst praying, or else their eyesight will be snatched away.” In other words, either they should stop or this punishment will be inflicted on them, which is that their eyesight will be snatched away, and will not be given back to them. The Prophet (blessings and

peace of Allah be upon him) spoke sternly concerning this matter. ... With regard to reasoning, that is because this reflects bad etiquette towards Allah, may He be exalted, because the worshipper is standing before Allah, so he should observe proper etiquette before Him, and not lift his head; rather he should be humble. Hence 'Amr ibn al-'Aas (may Allah be pleased with him) said that before he became Muslim, he hated the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) so much that he wished that he could be able to kill him. But when he became Muslim, he said: I could not look directly at him, out of awe and respect for him, and if you asked me to describe him I would not be able to.

Hence the most correct (scholarly) view concerning lifting the gaze to heaven whilst praying is that it is haraam, and not merely makrooh. End quote.

Ash-Sharh al-Mumti' (3/226).

With regard to lifting the gaze to heaven outside of prayer, there is nothing wrong with it, because there is no evidence to suggest that it is not allowed; rather some of the fuqaha' were of the view that lifting the gaze is preferable.

It says in al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah (8/99): The Shaafa'is stated that when offering du'a (supplication) outside of prayer, it is preferable to lift the gaze to heaven. However, al-Ghazaali said: The one who is offering supplication should not lift his gaze to heaven. End quote.

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Sharh Muslim: al-Qaadi 'Iyaad said: They (the scholars) differed as to whether it is makrooh to lift the gaze to heaven when offering du'a other than during the prayer. Shurayh and others regarded it as makrooh, but the majority regarded it as permissible. End quote.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said: It is not makrooh to lift the gaze to heaven when offering du'a, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did that. This is the view of Maalik and ash-Shaafa'i. But it is not mustahabb. End quote.

Al-Fatawa al-Kubra (5/338)

Al-Bukhari (may Allah have mercy on him) included a chapter in his Saheeh entitled: Chapter on lifting the gaze to heaven, and he quoted the verse in which Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “Do they not look at the camels, how they are created? And at the heaven, how it is raised?” [al-Ghaashiyah 88: 17, 18]. And ‘Aa’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) lifted his head (and looked) to heaven, i.e., when he died (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

What al-Bukhari (may Allah have mercy on him) meant here was to show that it is permissible to lift the gaze to heaven, and that the prohibition applies only to when one is praying. The fact that it is permissible to lift the gaze to heaven when offering du`a outside of prayer is indicated by the report was narrated by Muslim (2055) about al-Miqdaad (may Allah be pleased with him) who drank the drink of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) without his knowledge. In this report it says: then he went to the mosque and prayed. Then he came to his drink and uncovered it, and he did not find anything in it. He looked up at the sky and I said: Now he is praying against me and I am doomed. But he said: “O Allah, feed those who have fed me and give drink to those who have given me to drink.”

Abu Dawood (3488) narrated that Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: I saw the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) sitting by the Corner. He looked up at the sky and smiled, then he said: “May Allaah curse the Jews” three times. “Allaah, may He be exalted, forbade fat to them, but they sold it and consumed its price. When Allaah forbids a people to eat a thing He forbids its price to them.”

Classed as saheeh by an-Nawawi in al-Majmoo‘, and by al-Albani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

To sum up: lifting the gaze to heaven when offering du`a outside of prayer is permissible and there is nothing wrong with it.

And Allah knows best.