

## 9062 - Saying "A'oodhu Billaah..." during prayer

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### the question

Must a person say "a 'udhu biLLAAH..." (seek refuge with Allah) in each standing rak'ah or only in the first?.

### Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

Allaah has commanded us to seek refuge with Him from the accursed Shaytaan when reciting Qur'aan. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"So when you want to recite the Qur'aan, seek refuge with Allaah from Shaytaan (Satan), the outcast (the cursed one)"

[al-Nahl 16:98]

What seeking refuge with Allaah means is turning to Allaah for protection from the evil of every evil one. It is said in order to ward off evil from a person. It is as if the one who says it is saying: I am seeking refuge with Allaah from the accursed Shaytaan lest he harm me in my spiritual or worldly affairs, or he prevents me from doing what I have been commanded or he makes me do something that I have been forbidden to do.

The majority of scholars say that saying "A'oodhu Billaah..." is mustahabb (encouraged), it is not obligatory.

Some scholars said that it is obligatory, quoting this aayah as evidence and saying that the

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command mentioned therein implies that it is obligatory. This is the view of Ibn Hazm, and Ibn Katheer was also inclined towards this view.

See Tafseer Ibn Katheer, 1/14

The Standing Committee favoured the view that saying “A’oodhu Billaah...” is Sunnah.

It says in Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah:

Saying “A’oodhu Billaah...” is Sunnah and if a person does not say it in his prayer, either deliberately or because he forgot, that does not affect him.”

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah, 6/381

Secondly:

There are different ways of saying these words of seeking refuge with Allaah:

1-A’oodhu Billaahi min al-Shaytaan ir-rajeem (I seek refuge with Allaah from the accursed Shaytaan)

2-A’oodhu Billaah il-samee’ il-’aleem min al-Shaytaan ir-rajeem (I seek refuge with Allaah, the All-Hearing, All-Knowing, from the accursed Shaytaan)

3-Adding to the second version the words min hamzihi wa nafkhihi wa nafathihi (from his suffocation, his arrogance and his poetry).

See Tafseer Ibn Katheer, 1/13

Thirdly:

The words “A’oodhu Billaah...” may be said during prayer and at other times. In prayer it is

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sufficient to recite them once, in the first rak'ah. This does not have to be said in every rak'ah.

Ibn Qudaamah said:

Muslim narrated that Abu Hurayrah said: "When the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) got up from the second rak'ah, he would start to recite al-Faatihah from the words Al-hamdu Lillaahi Rabb il-'Aalameen, and he did not pause beforehand." This indicates that he did not recite the opening du'aa' or say "A'oodhu Billaah..."

With regard to saying "A'oodhu Billaah..." there is a different report from Ahmad which says that it should be said in every rak'ah. It was also narrated from him that it should be said in the first rak'ah only. This is the view of 'Ata', al-Hasan, al-Nakha'i and al-Thawri, because of the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah mentioned above, and because the prayer is considered to be a single action, so it does not have to be said again.

The second report, which is that one should say "a'oodhu Billaah..." in each rak'ah, is the view of Ibn Sireen and al-Shaafa'i, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"So when you want to recite the Qur'aan, seek refuge with Allaah from Shaytaan (Satan), the outcast (the cursed one)"

[al-Nahl 16:98]

That implies that one should repeat the words "a'oodhu Billaah..." each time one wants to recite again, because it is prescribed when reciting Qur'aan, so if you want to recite Qur'aan again you should say these words again, as if each rak'ah is an independent action.

Al-Mughni, 2/216

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

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The view that it is sufficient to say “a’oodhu Billaah...” once is more correct.”

Zaad al-Ma’aad, 1/242

Al-Shawkaani said:

The ahaadeeth which were narrated concerning seeking refuge with Allaah indicate only that this should be done in the first rak’ah...

In order to be on the safe side, we should limit ourselves to what has been narrated in the Sunnah, which is to say “a’oodhu Billaah...” before the first rak’ah only.

Nayl al-Awtaar, 2/231

Fourthly:

The fuqaha’ differed as to where in the prayer the words “a’oodhu Billaah...” should be said. Some said that it should be after reciting Qur’aan, which is a da’eef (weak) view.

Ibn Katheer (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The well-known view, which is that of the majority, is that the words “a’oodhu Billaah...” should be said before reciting Qur’aan, to ward off whispers from the Shaytaan therein.

Tafseer al-Qur’aan il-’Azeem, 1/13

Al-Jassaas said:

The view of those who say that the words “a’oodhu Billaah...” should be said after finishing the recitation from the Qur’aan is odd. Rather these words should be said before reciting, to ward off the whispers of the Shaytaan from the recitation. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

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“Never did We send a Messenger or a Prophet before you but when he did recite the Revelation or narrated or spoke, Shaytaan (Satan) threw (some falsehood) in it. But Allaah abolishes that which Shaytaan (Satan) throws in”

[al-Hajj 22:52]

Allaah has commanded us to seek refuge with Him before reciting, for this reason.

Ahkaam al-Qur’aan, 3/283.