

Excellence of standing in first row and closing gaps in a row

- ❖ Jabir bin Samurah (May Allah be pleased with them) reported: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) came out to us (once) and said, "Why do you not stand in rows as the angels do before their Rubb?" We asked: "O Messenger of Allah! how do the angels stand in rows before their Rubb?" He (PBUH) replied, "They complete each row beginning with the first and filling all the gaps." [Muslim] [Riyad As. #1082]

Commentary: *Taras* means to stand in the style of a wall, each brick of which is interlocked with another so much so that there is not even the slightest gap between two of its bricks. When people array themselves for Salat, they should keep their feet and shoulders so close with one another on their left and right that there is no gap or space between them. Moreover, the front rows should be completed first. One should never take place in the second row if there is place in the first. Similarly, one should never take place in the third row if there is room in the second line. And so on and so forth.

- ❖ Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "If people came to know the blessing of calling Adhan and the standing in the first row, they could do nothing but would draw lots to secure these privileges." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim] [Riyad As. #1083]
- ❖ Al-Bara' bin `Azib (May Allah be pleased with them) reported: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) used to pass between the rows from one end to the other, touching our chest and shoulders (i.e., arranging the rows) in line and saying, "Do not be out of line; otherwise your hearts will be in disagreement". He would add, "Allah and His angels invoke blessings upon the first rows." [Abu Dawud] [Riyad As. #1090]
- ❖ Ibn `Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) reported: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "Arrange the rows in order, stand shoulder to shoulder, close the gaps, be accommodating to your brothers, and do not leave gaps for Satan. Whoever joins up a row, he will be joined to Allah (i.e., to the Mercy of Allah); and whoever cuts off a row, he will be cut off from Allah (i.e., from His Mercy)." [Abu Dawud] [Riyad As. #1091]

Commentary: *This Hadith also tells us about the straightening of rows. Here the phrase "be accommodating to your brothers" means that one must cooperate with him who tries to set the rows in order, and rather than feeling annoyance on his action, one should happily set the rows right according to his instructions.*

This Hadith tells us that leaving gaps in rows amounts to leaving space for Satan to get in them. To join rows means that no space should be left between the two persons who stand in a line. Similarly, a second row should not be started without completing the first one. To break a row means to leave space in it or start the second row without completing the first. "Break him and Join him" can be the words of prayer as well as imprecation, for what they mean is "May Allah join him or break him." This is a prayer from the Prophet (PBUH) for the person who straightens the rows as well as an imprecation for the one who breaks the rows.

- ❖ Anas (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "Keep your rows straight (during Salat in congregation), for keeping the rows straight is part of the perfection of Salat." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim] [Riyad As. #1087]

Commentary: *This Hadith also highlights the importance of setting the rows straight. In fact, this is part of the perfection of Salat. In other words, Salat in congregation does not become perfect without setting the rows in order.*