

Chapter Two

Saying Intention before Salaah

Pronouncing the intention with the tongue is not a pre-condition for Salaah but is desirable (Mustahab) so as to assist the heart in allying its intention with the speech of the tongue.

The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “Every action is based upon intention. For everyone is what he intended. Whoever made the migration to Allah and His Prophet, his migration is to Allah and His Prophet. Whoever’s migration was for something of this world or for the purpose of marriage; his migration was to what he migrated to.”¹

Some say that when saying the intention allows Shaytan to put irrelevant words in the mouth, but it is not the utterance that causes the mistake, but the fact that one is acting out of habit and without thinking, and this takes place in the heart. Had that person not pronounced his intention, he would not have realised his mistake, and so would have proceeded with his prayer unaware that it was based on the wrong intention and therefore invalid. The intention must include naming the status of the question, specifying its quantity, type, time and the status of the person making prayer.

Note: The hadith numbers before the hadith indicate the different chains of narrations; hence, each chain will count as a separate hadith.

Hadith 1-4

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “Keep on renewing your faith (Imaan).” The companions enquired: “O Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), how should we renew our faith?” “Recite ‘Lailaha Illallah’ very often.”²

¹ Bukhari

² Ahmad, Tabarani, Haakim, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi etc.

Faith is to believe, its either you believe, or you don't. What is the purpose of a believer to say the words of belief? Although a believer knows who The Lord it is to remind a person, hence renew your faith by reciting it. Similarly, to say the intention is to remind a person that one is praying for the sake of Allah (The Exalted), facing the blessed Ka'ba, and the Salaah.

Hadith 5

A hadith in Bukhari narrated by ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) regarding the three persons who were travelling, they were overtaken by rain and they took shelter in a cave in a mountain. A big rock fell from the mountain over the mouth of the cave and blocked it. They said to each other, 'Think of such righteous deeds which you did for Allah's sake only and invoke Allah by mentioning those deeds so that Allah may relieve you from your difficulty.' They all supplicated one after the other and Allah (The Exalted) made them an opening until they could get out.

Allah (The Exalted) knew their deeds and they could have supplicated in their hearts, however, they did this to remind them of the deeds and their sincerity of the deeds which made them feel better, hence Allah (The Exalted) removed the rock.

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) stressed in many hadiths the necessity of coordinating the acts of the tongue with those of the heart and vice-versa. It should be understood that the seat of the intention is the heart, and the majority of the scholars said it is praise worthy.

Common Sense

- People lead busy lives today; hence in order that one rids the worldly thoughts from the mind it is praiseworthy for one to say the intention to remove any mistake.
- It helps one's concentration to pronounce it.
- A person's feelings can be hurt inside; however, these feelings are expressed by crying making one feel better.

•Du'a can be made from the heart and without doubt Allah (The Exalted) knows what is in your heart. However, when du'a is made with the tongue it makes it more affective and sincerer.

Is saying the intention a bad bid'ah or a good bid'ah? The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "The person who introduced a good thing (bid'ah Hasanah) in Islam, shall obtain the reward for it and also the reward for those who adopt it. As for the one who introduces a bad thing (Bid'ah Sayyi'ah) he will obtain the punishment for introducing it and also for those who adopt it, will also be punished." ³

To call a 'good thing' as saying intention before the Salaah is a bad bid'ah is in itself a bad bid'ah as it goes against a hadith of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

Shawkani⁴ writes "In Islam there are two kinds of Bid'ah: Bid'ah Sayy'iah and Bid'ah Hasanah. If a new thing opposes the Qur'an and Sunnah then it is Sayy'iah, but if it is not against the Shari'ah it is Hasanah." ⁵

My question to those who say to say the intention before Salaah is a bid'ah to show me a hadith that says that it is not permissible to make say the intention before Salaah or that it is bid'ah.

Hope you can prove this and when doing so I do not want to hear the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) he did not say intention etc. but I want Sahih hadith that clearly (no meanings or interpretations) states the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) never said the intention and that he did this action until he passed away. Good luck!

3 Sahih Muslim. Tirmidhi.

4 A Ghayr Muqalid

5 Nayl-ul-Autaar, Shawkani chapter Salaah Al Tarawih.