

72895 - Their boss does not let them offer prayer in congregation in the mosque

the question

We are a group of doctors who have been working in a complex of private clinics for six months during which – praise be to Allah – we used to offer prayers in congregation in the mosque, because we worked, and most of us lived, in one building that was opposite a mosque and it was easy for us to go and pray there. We would do wudoo' in the building and go down to the mosque just before the iqamah, and go back to the building quickly after the prayer was over, and we would pray Sunnah in the building, as we were keen not to miss too much time at work. , during these six months there was no problem due to our praying in the mosque, but then the administration of the building began trying to force the workers to offer the obligatory prayers in the building, even though there is no place set aside for prayer, rather we have to put down prayer mats in the foyer at the time of prayer, then the iqamah for prayer is given with no adhaan. Please note that the distance between the mosque and the clinic building is less than fourteen metres.

We refused to pray in the building without a shar'i fatwa from a scholar who fears Allah. We looked for a fatwa from Shaykh Ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) on this issue, and this fatwa is published on your website in question no. 21345. We showed this fatwa to the manager but he insisted on his view, saying that our jobs require us to be present in the building throughout our working hours, so as to be prepared to deal with any emergency. Please note that staff are not present 24 hours a day, rather doctors are on call for emergencies outside of regular working hours which means that in such cases a doctor will be delayed between fifteen and twenty minutes at least, if he happens to be home when he is called.

Does the boss or manager have the right to oblige us to pray in the building and not pray with the congregation in the mosque?

If we have to stay in the workplace in obedience to the administration's orders, and not pray in the mosque, then should we leave this job, even though some of us are in great need of the money? Or will we be excused for not attending prayer in congregation in this case?.

Detailed answer

Firstly:

What you did by praying with the congregation in the mosque is the right thing, and it is what is required of you and of everyone in the building except those who have a legitimate shar'i excuse such as sickness and the like. The saheeh evidence indicates that it is obligatory to pray with the congregation in the mosque when the call to prayer is given. For more information on the evidence please see question no. [8918](#). The boss has no right to force the employees to stay away from praying in congregation in the mosque, because this is forcing you to abandon a shar'i duty. Rather he should help them and encourage them to go to the mosque, in obedience to the command of Allah, may He be exalted, and the command of His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). In that there are goodness and blessings many times greater than the loss of work that he imagines. This will also remind visitors to the clinic and others of the importance of prayer, which is so important that work should stop for it and employees should be given time off for it, for it is indeed so important. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) even thought of burning down the houses of those who stayed away from prayer in congregation, even though they may have been praying in their houses, whether in congregation or individually. And he ordered the blind man to come to the mosque, and he did not grant him a concession allowing him to pray in his house. This indicates that it is obligatory to pray in the mosque. This is clearly stated in the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): "Whoever hears the call to prayer and does not come, there is no prayer for him, unless he has an excuse." Narrated by Ibn Maajah (793) from the hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him); classed as saheeh by al-Albani in Saheeh Ibn Maajah.

Think about this great hadeeth and the stern warning that it contains for the one who stays away from prayer in congregation and does not come to the mosque when he hears the call, and states that there is no prayer for him unless he has an excuse. Would any Muslim agree to among those for whom there is no prayer, whether that means that it is not accepted at all or that the reward is reduced? No wise man who is keen to please his Lord would accept that.

We ask Allah to guide the boss and manager, and to open their hearts to obeying the command of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), so that they may attain the goodness, blessing and provision that come from obeying him. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Whoever works righteousness — whether male or female — while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter)”

[al-Nahl 16:97]

And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The Holy Spirit (Jibreel) has inspired to me that no soul will die until it has completed its appointed term and received its provision in full, so fear Allah and do not be desperate in seeking provision, and no one of you should be tempted to seek provision by means of committing sin if it is slow in coming to him, for that which is with Allah can only be attained by obeying Him.” Narrated by Abu Na’eem in al-Hilyah from the hadeeth of Abu Umaamah; classed as saheeh by al-Albani in Saheeh al-Jaami’, no. 2085.

Thirdly:

With regard to the fatwas of the scholars on this issue, they are many and are well known. We will quote a few of them here:

1 -It says in Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah (7/298):

Question: A man works in a company and there are more than three mosques around the company's building. He always goes out to pray in the mosque, but his colleagues pray at the company's door, and they want him to pray with them in the building and not go to the mosque. Some of his brothers suggested that he should pray with them and give a lesson to them after the prayer, on the grounds that he has more knowledge of the Sunnah than them, and he should lead them in prayer, even though there are others there who know more Qur'aan than he does. Should he listen to their advice, or should he continue to pray in the mosque, regardless of what they said to him?

Answer: The workers in this company should pray in congregation in one of the mosques that are close to the company's building, as their colleague is doing. He is doing the right thing by praying in the mosque, and they are mistaken by praying at the company's door, because the saheeh ahaadeeth from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) indicate that it is obligatory to offer the prayer in congregation in the mosque, and it is not permissible to stay away without a legitimate shar'i excuse. End quote.

2 - Shaykh Ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked: We are a group of employees working in a government department and there is a mosque close to us, separated from us by a street that is only thirty metres wide and we can hear the call to prayer clearly. But we pray in a musalla (prayer room) that we have made in the office. We have read the fatwa of the Standing Committee for Academic Research and Issuing Fatwas which says that it is not permissible to pray in a government department when there is a mosque nearby, and that the employees must pray in the mosque. Our question is: Is it permissible for us to pray in congregation in our office or must we pray in the mosque? Is it permissible for our boss to force us to pray in the office even though there is no shar'i excuse for that?

He replied: What you and your boss must do is pray in the mosque; it is not permissible for you to fail to attend, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever hears the call to prayer and does not come to prayer, there is no prayer for him, except for the one who has an excuse." Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) was asked what was meant by an excuse and he said: "Fear or sickness." And it is proven that a

blind man asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “O Messenger of Allah, I do not have a guide to bring me to the mosque; is there any concession that will allow me to pray at home?” The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to him: “Can you hear the call to prayer?” He said: “Yes.” He said: “Answer it.” Narrated by Imam Muslim in his Saheeh.

Ibn Mas’ood (may Allah be pleased with him), who was one of the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “I remember a time when no one stayed away from it (the prayer) except a hypocrite who was known for his hypocrisy or one who was sick.”

So what you must all do is persist in praying in the mosque with the congregation, and do not be like the enemies of Allah, the hypocrites. May Allah help you and make things easy for you. End quote from Majmoo’ Fatawa al-Shaykh Ibn Baz (12/64).

Thirdly:

Many employees, unfortunately, go out to pray in the mosque, but then they waste a lot of time by coming back to work late after the prayer, chatting with the brothers they meet in the mosque. Some of them even go to do other things after the prayer and that makes them late in coming back to work. Some of them do not go and pray at all, rather they go home or someplace else, then they go back to work as if they had gone to pray. If the boss fears that this is happening, then he has the right in that case to prevent them from praying in the mosque, but he should oblige them to pray in the workplace, to protect the interests of the work and to prevent negligence on the part of some employees.

Moreover, the work may require some employees to stay there so as to check on some patients who require constant supervision, or some doctors to deal with emergencies. In such cases there is no sin on the people who do not attend prayer in congregation in the mosque, and they may pray in congregation in the workplace if that is possible, but that should only be done by those who need to do it, not all the doctors and employees. In the answer to question no. [22185](#) we have explained that if a doctor is required by his work to

be present in the hospital at the time of Jumu'ah prayer in order to deal with emergencies, there is no sin on him if he misses Jumu'ah prayer, but he must pray Zuhr in the workplace.

Fourthly:

If the administration insists on its attitude, and your continuing to go to the mosque means that you will be fired, then it seems that those who need this work are excused for not praying in congregation in the mosque, but they should try to pray in congregation in the workplace. The fuqaha' have stated that one of the excuses that make it permissible to miss praying in congregation is fear of losing livelihood that one needs, as is stated in *Kashshaaf al-Qinaa'* (1/496).

We ask Allah to guide you.

And Allah knows best.