Muhtaram Ulama,

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa-rahmatullāhi wa-barakātuh,

What type of mistake in *qirā'ah* in *salāh* invalidates the *salāh*? Attached is a simple guideline prepared by Mawlana Faraz ibn Adam, a student of the Darul Iftaa from UK. The guideline will be useful for the Imams of the *masājid*.

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Guidelines for mistakes in Qirā'ah in salāh

 Errors in recitation can take place in 5 different areas[1]:

1) *'i'rāb* and *harakāt* (Diacritics)

2) *Hurūf* (Letters)

3) *Kalimāt* (Words)

4)   *Jumal wal-āyāt* (Sentences)

5) *Wuqūf* (Pauses)

1) Errors in *'I'rāb* and *harakāt* (Diacritics)

This refers to changing a *dhammah* for a *kasrah*, or a *fathah* for a *dhammah* etc. Also included here is the reducing of a *mushaddad* to one letter or stretching a letter more than it should.

According to the earlier scholars, any mistake which results in such a meaning which can nullify one's faith will invalidate the salāh.

According to the later scholars like Muhammad ibn Muqātil, Muhammad ibn Salām, Ismā'īl al-zāhid, Abu bakr ibn Sa'īd al-Balkhī, al-Hindwānī, ibn al-Fadhl and al-Halwānī *rahimahumullah,* if a person errs in the *'i'rāb* and the *harakāt* then it will not invalidate the *salāh* at all. This view is the preferred opinion.[2]

If a person intentionally recites in such a manner which gives an indecent meaning, then his salāh will be void. His recitation can lead to disbelief (kufr).[3]

2) Errors in *hurūf* (letters)

Mistakes in letters can take place by:

- changing a letter

- adding a letter

- omitting a letter

- joining letters

- disorder in the letters.[4]

Changing letters:

By the changing one letter to another, it will not invalidate the *salāh* as long as the meaning is not changed to an unreasonable meaning. For example, if somebody recites إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمُونَ instead of إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ then one's *salāh* will still be intact. Likewise, if somebody recited انْفَرَجَتْ in the place of انْفَجَرَتْ or إِيَابٌ in the place of أَوَّابٌ, then even in this scenario the *salāh* will be valid.[5]

If the letter recited by mistake sounds close to the original letter and it is difficult to distinguish between the two, then such an error will not invalidate the *salāh*. For example if somebody utters *sīn* (س) in the place of *sād* (ص) or thā' (الظَّاء) in the place of dhād (الضَّادِ) or ṭā' (الطَّاءِ) in the place of tā' (التَّاء) then all such errors will not invalidate the *salāh*, as long as a corrupt meaning is not portrayed.

If the letter is changed into such a letter which does not have a resemblance to the first and it can be easily distinguished from the first, then this will invalidate the *salāh*. For example, if one recites the word الطَّالِحَاتِ in the place of الصَّالِحَاتِ, then one's *salāh* will be deemed invalid, as the meaning has changed dramatically. [6]

Adding letters:

If a letter is added to a word, it will not invalidate the *salāh* as long as the meaning has not become unreasonable. For example, if somebody recites وَانْهَى عن الْمُنْكَرِ instead of وَانْهَ عن الْمُنْكَرِ then this will not invalidate the *salāh* as the meaning has not become unreasonable and unbearable.[7]

Omitting letters:

If a letter is omitted but it does not change the meaning, then the *salāh* will be valid. For example, if somebody recited وَلَقَدْ **جَاءَهُمْ** رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ in the place of وَلَقَدْ **جَاءتهُمْ** رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ then the *salāh* will still be intact. However, if somebody recited فما لهم **لا** يُؤْمِنُونَ in the place of فما لهم يُؤْمِنُونَ then due to the corruption in the meaning, the *salāh* will become invalid.[8]

Joining letters:

The joining of the letters from two separate words will not nullify the *salāh*. If the *kāf* is joined to the *nūn* in إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ for example إِيَّا كَنَعْبُدُ then this will not nullify the *salāh*.[9]

Disorder in letters:

Disorder in the letters which give a different meaning altogether from the original word in the Qurʾān and this word is not found in the Qurʾān, then according to all the scholars the *salāh* will be void. For example, if قوسرة was read in the place of قسورة or عفص in the place of عصف then the *salāh* will become invalid.[10]

To sum up, a mistake made in the letter of a word which alters the meaning to a corrupt meaning will invalidate the *salāh*.

3) Errors in words[11]

If the different word recited is **identical** to the original word in connotation and it is found in the Qurʾān, then according to all the scholars the *salāh* will be valid. An example of this is to recite طعام الأثيم in the place of طعام الفاجر.[12]

If the mistakenly recited word is **similar** to the original word in meaning and the word recited is somewhere else in the Qurān then also the *salāh* will remain intact. For example, if الْحَكِيمَ was recited in the place of الْعَلِيمِ or السميع in the place of البصير or خبيرا in the place of بصيرا then in all cases the *salāh* will remain valid.[13]

If the mistakenly recited word is similar to the original word in meaning but the word recited has **not come** in the Qurʾān, then according to Imam Abū Hanīfah and Imam Muhammad *rahimahumallah* the *salāh* will still be valid. According to Imam Abū Yūsuf the *salāh* will be invalid. The preferred opinion is that of Imam Abū Hanīfah rahimahullah. For example, if one recites تجحدان in the place of تُكَذِّبَانِ or لا شك فيه in the place of لاَ رَيْبَ فِيهِ.[14]

If a word is added to the text of the Qurʾān and the added word is found in the Qurʾān but the addition has changed the meaning then this will invalidate the salāh. For example, if somebody recited

وَكَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ, where he added the words وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا **وَكَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ** وَرُسُلِهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ الصِّدِّيقُونَ then such a mistake will invalidate the *salāh* due to corrupting the meaning.

Likewise, if a word was added to the text of the Qurʾān but the added word is not found in the Qurʾān then this will also invalidate the *salāh*. For example, if somebody recites إِنَّمَا نُمْلِي لَهُم وَإِجْمَالًا where he added the word وَإِجْمَالًا then this will invalidate the *salāh*. لِيَزْدَادُوا إِثْمًا وَإِجْمَالًا

If the additional word does not change the meaning and it is found in the Qurʾān then this will not invalidate the *salāh*. For example, the recitation of إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَان بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا بَصِيرًا will not invalidate the *salāh*.

If the additional word does not change the meaning and the word is also not found in the Qurʾān, then the *salāh* will still not be invalidated. For example if somebody added the word وَتُفَّاحٌ in the following *āyah* فَاكِهَةٌ وَنَخْلٌ وَتُفَّاحٌ وَرُمَّانٌ.[15]

A repeated word that does not change the meaning will not invalidate the *salāh*. However, if a repeated word alters the meaning to a corrupt meaning then the *salāh* will be void.   For example, the recitation of مَالِكِ مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ or رَبِّ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ will invalidate the *salāh*.[16]

Words which are recited in the incorrect order will only invalidate the *salāh* if the meaning is corrupted. If somebody recited لَهُم فِيها ○○ شَهِيقٌ و زَفِيرٌ then the *salāh* will remain valid as the meaning has not altered. However, if somebody recites إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ then the *salāh* will become invalid as an incorrect meaning totally opposing reality has been portrayed by the words.[17]

4) Errors in sentences

Verses which are recited from different chapters one after another with pauses in between will not nullify the *salāh*. The recitation of sentences of the Qur'ān in the following order with a pause in between each verse will not invalidate the *salāh*:

وَالْعَصْرِ......إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ ..... إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ...... أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ

Even though the latter verse is at odds with the former, as there is a pause in between, the *salāh* will not be nullified.[18]

If the person who recites verses disorderly does not pause between each verse, then the *salāh* will only be invalid if the meanings of the two verses oppose each other. For example, if somebody recited

كَانت لَهُم جَنَّاتُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا instead of إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ جَزَاءً الْحُسْنَى then this will not render the *salāh* invalid as the meaning has not been altered dramatically. However, if one recited

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ then his *salāh* will become void.[19]

5) Errors in pausing

If one pauses in a place where there is no pause or commences recitation from a place where recitation is not started from, then as long as the meaning does not change, the *salāh* will be valid. For example, if somebody recites إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ and then he pauses and carries on reciting

أُولَئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ, then his *salāh* will not be invalid as the meaning has not been altered.

If somebody does not pause in a place where one should pause, for example after أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ he joins it with الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ الْعَرْشَ then although this will not invalidate the *salāh* it will be disliked to do this.

If the meaning is changed due to pausing incorrectly, then the *salāh* will still not become invalid. For example, if someone recited شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ after which he paused for a while and then recited إِلَّا هو, then the *salāh* will not be invalidated, even though the meaning is incorrect.[20]

In conclusion, errors in the *harakāt* (diacritics) will not render the *salāh* invalid no matter how severe the mistake. A mistake made in the letter of a word which alters the meaning to a corrupt meaning will invalidate the *salāh*. Faults in the recitation of the word will invalidate the *salāh* when the meaning of the word is totally different and the word is not found in the Qurʾān. Similarly, the addition of a word-whether it is found in the Qurʾān or not- will invalidate the *salāh* if the proposed meaning is inappropriate. Repetition and disarray of words will only nullify the *salāh* if the meaning portrayed is incorrect. Verses recited disorderly without pauses in between will invalidate the *salāh* when two verses are at odds with each other. Besides these errors, all other others will be overlooked and the *salāh* will be deemed as valid.

Nevertheless, if a recitation was made in such a way that it had the potential to invalidate the prayer, however the error was immediately corrected, then the *salāh* will remain valid.[21]

And Allah Taʾāla Knows Best

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