36738 - Is Praying While Sitting During Pregnancy Permissible?

the question

I am pregnant, and now I have concerns about praying while sitting down. Usually I am able to do Ruku`, sit on the ground and almost complete the salah, except for sujud which may not be completely correct as it is very uncomfortable. So I am wondering, should I sit and pray even though I am capable of praying most of the salah, or should I pray the best I can. Also what is the proper way of praying sitting down, is it in a chair or on the ground? Also, if I can stand and do Ruku`, but I cannot go down, should I stand for the standing parts and sit in a chair for the sitting parts. Please answer soon, since I cannot find any information on this and am confused as to what to do.

Summary of answer

If a pregnant woman is able to pray standing up then she has to stand. Then if she becomes unable to stand or it is too difficult for her to stand, then she can sit down while praying.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

How should sick people pray?

The basic principle concerning the prayer of one who is sick is that he should do whatever he is able to of the essential parts of the prayer, and he does not have to do what he is unable to do. This is indicated by a great deal of evidence from the Quran and Sunnah. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So keep your duty to Allah and fear Him as much as you can” [At-Taghabun 64:16]

“Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope” [Al-Baqarah 2:286]

And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “If I command you to do a thing, then do as much of it as you can.” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 7288 and Muslim, 1337)

`Imran ibn Husayn (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “I was suffering from haemorrhoids and I asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) about praying. He said, ‘Pray standing, and if you cannot, then sitting down, and if you cannot, then lying on your side.’” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 1117)

Can a pregnant woman pray sitting down?

Based on the above, if you are able to pray standing up then you have to stand. Then if you become unable to stand or it is too difficult for you to stand, then you can sit down whilst praying.

It is permissible to sit on a chair or on the ground, depending on what you are able to do and what is easy for you. But it is better to sit on the ground, because the Sunnah is for a person to sit cross-legged in the place where one would stand and bow, and this is not easy to do on a chair.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“If a person cannot pray standing, he should pray sitting , but it is better to sit cross-legged in the place of standing and bowing.” (From his essay, Taharat Al-Marid wa Salatuhu)

This sitting cross-legged is not obligatory; one may sit however he wants because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “If he cannot then sitting,” and he did not explain how he should sit. (Ash-Sharh Al-Mumti`, 4/462)

If it is too difficult for you to prostrate and bow, then you can lean forward and make the leaning for sujud deeper than that for Ruku`.

If you can stand, then lean forward for Ruku` whilst standing, and lean forward for Sujud whilst sitting, then you should do that, because standing is closer to bowing than sitting, and sitting is

closer to Sujud than standing.

Shaykh Ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Whoever is able to stand but is unable to bow or prostrate is not relieved of the obligation to stand, rather he should pray standing up, then lean forward for Ruku` (i.e., whilst standing) then sit and lean forward for Sujud… and he should make leaning for Sujud deeper than that for Ruku`. If he is only unable to prostrate then he should do Ruku` and then lean forward for Sujud.

If during the prayer the sick person becomes able to do something that he was unable to do, such as standing, sitting , bowing or prostrating, he should start to do that and continue from whatever he has already completed of his prayer.” (From his essay Ahkam Salat Al-Marid wa Taharatihi)

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Whoever is unable to bow should lean forward whilst standing, and whoever is not able to prostrate should lean forward whilst sitting .” (Ash-Sharh Al-Mumti’, 4/475)

For more details, please see the following answers: 142657 , 143720 , 226368 , and 115143 .

And Allah knows best.